I was contacted recently by Rick Nathanson, a reporter from the Albuquerque Journal, with a pitch. He said he wanted to do a story on “backyard astronomy” which would include advice to the public on how to go about buying a telescope.

Well friends, after doing the happy dance, I informed Rick that that was one of TAAS’s niches—telescope expertise and educating the public about telescopes. When he told me he wanted to run the story in time to promote the upcoming close approach of Mars at the end of October, my pulse began to race. Here was a great opportunity for TAAS to beat back the scourge of the “department store telescope” that so many consumers fall prey to in the months before the holiday gift-giving season.

So on August 30, TAAS president Dale Murray and member Mark Nagrodsky held court for Rick and his photographer at New Mexico Astronomical, Mark’s telescope shop in Belen. They covered types of telescopes, types of mounts, prices, and how to make a selection. They debunked the myth about power (magnification) being EVERYTHING, the message that is so crudely and misleadingly used by the department store telescope marketers, and they critiqued those telescopes’ poor product design. In short, they gave them all the news that’s fit to print.

The Journal article will be illustrated with ‘product shots’ of a number of the telescopes examined that day in Mark’s shop, to help readers understand the differences. The article is slated to run in late September or early October. I will put out a message on the listserv when I have the publication date.

Many thanks to Dale for taking time off from a busy work schedule to be interviewed and to Mark for making his shop and his expertise available on short notice. This is an important opportunity for TAAS, and I know we all appreciate their making it happen.

Night Sky Appreciation Day

Lazlo Lazowska

I am pleased to announce that we have obtained the Governor’s proclamation, again this year, for a Night Sky Appreciation Day. The date this year is October 8, to coincide with the final evening of the Enchanted Star Party in Socorro.

I will soon be launching a statewide media campaign to announce the Governor’s proclamation and to encourage New Mexico residents to celebrate NM’s majestic night skies. In press releases and feature articles I will be publicizing: (1) the date of the proclamation and its significance for New Mexicans; (2) a list of events for folks to enjoy on October 8 and throughout the entire month of October; (3) a list of “darkest sites” to view the stars in New Mexico; (4) information on light pollution; and (5) key websites to visit and other resources to visit.

If your organization would like to plan a special event celebrating the Governor’s proclamation, I would greatly appreciate knowing about it so that I can advertise it in press releases that will be sent to media statewide. I would also like to list any already planned events you may be having in October.

As part of the information to share with people interested in star gazing, I would like to submit to the “Dark Sky Site Directory” a list of “darkest places” in New Mexico. Phil Harrington has created a dark site directory for the entire United States. As of yet, New Mexico has nothing listed. If anyone can provide me with darkest sites in New Mexico (rated by the Bortle’s system, or the “naked eye magnitude limit”), I would really appreciate it. It’s a great site and you can find it at: http://www.philharrington.net/dssd.htm.

Lastly, I will be also be submitting an article soon to Trails and Treasures, the magazine of REDTT (Rural Economic Development Through Tourism) and would like to know about any and all events you may have scheduled for 2006. You need not know specific dates, but month or even season will suffice, as this list will be designed to simply describe your event and point interested readers to you for you for more information.

Thank you all for your consideration and any information you can share.

Lazlo Lazowska
Night Sky Program Director
New Mexico Heritage Preservation Alliance
P. O. Box 2490
Santa Fe, NM 87504
(505) 989-3696
President’s Message

What happened to this year? It seems like only yesterday I was writing about how we would soon be welcoming the summer constellations and now autumn is almost here. The school star party season is in full swing and we have only one more Oak Flat event. From an astronomy point of view this is a great time of year. The days are getting shorter so there will be more time in the early evening to view the skies. This is good news for the younger kids who have to go to bed early. We have a Mars opposition coming in late October. It will not be as close a pass as in 2003 but it will still be a nice opportunity for red planet viewing.

Hopefully, the news is getting out that the Mars opposition is in October since there was a hoax email circulating over the past several months that announced it would be in August and would be the closest approach in our lifetimes. I cannot imagine why someone would start such a silly rumor. The details were mostly correct for the 2003 opposition except for the year. Since the end of the letter said to pass this information on to others so they would not “miss this great event,” it was an attempt to see how far this email would spread. It must have been an astronomical chain letter. I have had to respond to many emails and even had one last week from someone wondering why TAAS was not holding viewing events. At least I was able to inform him that he had not missed the opposition and that this year’s approach would still provide some good views.

Other upcoming astronomical events include our celebration of Astronomy Day at Cottonwood Mall and Oak Flat star party, both on September 10th, and the GNTO picnic and training on September 24th. Astronomy Day is always a fun event and I hope this year is well supported. Even though Oak Flat is the same day, Astronomy Day ends early enough for people to get out to Oak Flat well before dark. The GNTO picnic offers the opportunity to eat some good food and enjoy some great company. Later there will be the introduction to GNTO training and the ever popular sky and constellation tours presented by Karen Keese and Larry Cash. Venus and Jupiter are lining up nicely now and I hope some of our astrophotographers are capturing some pictures.

With all these events and our school star parties in September and October, it promises to be busy but fun for all. Also, do not forget that, with UNM back in session, TAAS will be at the UNM observatory nearly every Friday night.

TAAS General Meeting News

September 17th
Regener Hall 7:00 P.M.

Our September speaker, Larry S. Crumpler, Ph.D., is a field geologist, and specializes in physical volcanology. He’s the Research Curator at the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science in Albuquerque.

Dr. Crumpler’s current work involves geology of the terrestrial planets with an emphasis on planetary volcanism. He has also participated in many of NASA’s planetary missions including landing site searches for the Viking lander 2, Mars pathfinder, and the Mars Exploration Rovers. He has also worked with the Magellan synthetic aperture radar mapping mission to Venus.

He continues important work as a Science Team member on the Extended Mission phase of NASA’s Mars Exploration Rover mission.

Please join us for an exciting evening with Dr. Crumpler as we find out more about his endeavors near and far. The general meeting begins at 7:00 P.M. at Regener Hall on the UNM campus. A Social hour follows the meeting.

TAAS General Meeting Recap
August 20

New Mexico to Mars: Caves, Astrobiology, and Future Planetary Missions

A large crowd enjoyed a captivating presentation by Dr. Penelope Boston, astrobiologist and Associate Professor in the Earth & Environmental Sciences Department at the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology.

Her lecture covered the amazing microbial inhabitants of subsurface cave worlds and the evidence left by their activities. These traces, or 'biosignatures', are helping to shape our ideas of how to go about finding life on other planets. The science and techniques inspired by the caves of New Mexico are finding their way into mission planning for future life-detection missions for Mars, Jupiter’s ice-encrusted moon Europa, and beyond. Her work has been featured in the PBS Nova programs "Mysterious Life of Caves" and "Origins."

Dr. Penelope Boston

The Official Newsletter of The Albuquerque Astronomical Society
Our only August GNTO event was clouded out on August 6. Alan Scott and Dale Murray were there to open and close the facility, and three other TAAS members showed up to witness extensive cloud cover. No telescopes saw any action that evening and everyone headed home in the early evening.

Our most recent GNTO committee meeting was on August 11, when eight of us met at JB’s Restaurant on Eubank just north of I-40. Those attending included Larry Cash, Pete Eschman, Dee Friesen, Dale Murray, Gordon Pegue, Shane Ramotowski, Alan Scott, and Bill Wallace. Major meeting topics included planning for upcoming events, and a discussion of how to split up the GNTO work load. A working group consisting of Dee, Bill and Gordon will make recommendations on the work load topic at the full committee meeting in October.

Alan has volunteered to head up the effort to paint parts of the upper dome level, while Dee and Ray have offered to engineer some folding seats for the main dome observing level. Dale is working on two projects for the Isengard, including building a splitter box for the external encoders and implementing slew limit switches. We are also beginning work on revisions to the GNTO Manual and both Alan Scott and Steve Welch have expressed an interest in working on this project.

Jim Lawrence has volunteered to work on the Meade 16” dobsonian scope at GNTO. Jim will be doing a nearly complete rebuild that is aimed at making the scope much more portable and easier to use. Jim plans to have transport wheels integrated into the base of the scope, while replacing the heavy original sonotube with much lighter material. Large side bearings and improved bearing surfaces are also planned in this major overhaul.

Our remaining scheduled event for September is the GNTO Open House, Equinox Picnic and Introductory Sessions on September 24. The GNTO Open House will start at 3:00 P.M. If you are new to GNTO or if you have not visited in a while, this is the perfect opportunity to visit GNTO for the first time, or to check on recent site improvements. The Fall Equinox Picnic will start a bit later at 5:00 P.M. and will consist of our usual semi-coordinated mix of potluck dishes and good fortune. The barbecue grill will be available for those who want to use it. Hot dogs and hamburgers will be provided. More details on the event will be available via email on the Board of Directors Email list (the BODOEL) as well as our TAAS-L listserv. I will also have more information at our general meeting on September 17.

Sunset is at 7:00 P.M on September 24 so we will begin the Introduction to GNTO and the Isengard Telescope session around 6:30 P.M. This introduction covers most of the equipment used at GNTO, from the Isengard 16” reflector down to our 6” and 16” loaner dobsonian scopes. Once the skies are dark enough, we will offer another in our popular series of two-part Constellation Tours, hosted by Larry Cash and Karen Keese. If enough people are interested, we may offer an Introduction to GNTO Astro Computing Resources prior to the constellation tours. This second introductory session covers computer hardware and astronomy-related software available at GNTO.

If conditions permit, we may offer a CCD Imaging demonstration as part of our efforts to revive our CCD imaging program. Be sure to mark your calendars now for this opportunity to learn about your observatory and enjoy the relaxed company of fellow observers. Between the open house, picnic, training and constellation tours, this will be a great chance to visit GNTO, especially if it is your first time at your observatory!

Our events for October start with a “new moon” observing session on October 1, followed by a second observing opportunity on October 29.

You really should plan a trip to GNTO soon. We have two great loaner scopes on easy to use dobsonian mounts, and our Isengard 16” is providing some really great views these days. If you have not seen it yet, you need to check out the new drive system on the Isengard and the new flooring on the main dome! The comfortable Ortega Building is available for socializing and our Guest Trailer is available for coffee, hot chocolate and any snacks you might want to share. With all this great equipment at GNTO, what are you waiting for?

GNTO committee meetings are open to any interested TAAS members and this is a great way to get more involved with your observatory. We need your help. Our next scheduled meetings are September 8 and November 3. We meet at 6:30 P.M. at JB’s Restaurant on Eubank just north of I-40. If you have questions about access and availability of GNTO, please contact me (Peter Eschman, gnto@taas.org, home phone: 873-1517).

I hope to see you soon at your observatory.
### Educational Outreach

**Cochiti Elementary School Star Party**  
**Tuesday, August 30th, 2005**

What a great star party! The first one of the new school year was both well put on and well attended! I even heard that Channel 7 News had been by to check it out. Many thanks to those from TAAS in attendance - Barry Spletzer, Bob Hufnagel, Sandra Tatum, Larry Cash, Brock Parker, Ed and Brittany Schneider, Shannon Mann, Ray Collins, Tom Graham, John Laning and Tom Krajci. A BIG special thanks to Ed and Brittany Schneider for running 10 Starlab presentations continuously without a break. Thanks too to the help at Cochiti Elementary including Julie Wainright and many other school volunteers. In addition to the great telescope line-up that made TV news, we had comet making (Sandra Tatum) and our own in-house spectral demonstration (Ray Collins). For those of you that do not know Sandra, she is a photo-journalist with amazing photos of Tibet and beyond. She was “recruited” at August’s Oak Flat to come and join TAAS.

**Griegos Elementary School Star Party**  
**Tuesday, September 20th, 2005**

Please join us for our second school star party of the school year. We will need your help in making this a success. The school is very close to our last star party location, this time the School is at 4040 San Isidro NW. This location in roughly halfway between Candelaria and Griegos on the N-S running San Isidro. The party will run from 7 P.M. to 9 P.M., but again please plan on being there by 6pm. Contact Shannon Mann for further information: education_coord@taas.org or 505-771-0126.

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### ATM Workshop

**Ray Collins/Mike Pendley**  
**atm@taas.org**

The Amateur Telescope Making Workshop meets the first and third Wednesdays of each month at Valley High School, 1505 Candelaria—the north side of Candelaria, just west of 12th street. The meetings begin at 7 P.M. and are in Building E, Room #3.

### TAAS General Meeting

**Saturday, September 17th, 2005**  
**7 P.M.**  
**Regener Hall, UNM Campus**  
*(see map on back page)*

**Subject:**  
Planetary Volcanism

**Speaker:**  
Larry S. Crumpler, Ph.D.

### Notes

TAAS = The Albuquerque Astronomical Society. Hotline **254-TAAS (8227)**.

GNTO = General Nathan Twining Obs.

GNTO Training = GNTO Observing and Training.

UNM = University of New Mexico Observatory. Call the TAAS hotline @254-8227, or the UNM hotline @277-1446 to confirm, or unm_coordinator@taas.org.

ATM = Amateur Telescope Making. Call Michael Pendley for information @ 296-0549, or atm@taas.org.  
P & A = UNM Physics and Astronomy. Corner of Lomas and Yale.

= School Star Party.

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The Official Newsletter of The Albuquerque Astronomical Society
We had a pretty good night of viewing at Oak Flat on Saturday, August 27th. It started with about 15 minutes of rain starting at 6 P.M. It had the effect of cutting down on the dust problem for a few hours, but didn’t stop TAAS members from setting up over 20 telescopes and 3 mounted binoculars. There were over 100 people who braved the cloudy weather and spotty rain to look through our scopes (and through the holes in the clouds) at the skies. The last of the serious viewers left by 1 A.M. on Sunday morning, when the holes in the clouds were slowly being overwhelmed by the fast moving clouds. We will have one more Oak Flat Star Party on Saturday, September 10th, after Astronomy Day at Cottonwood Shopping Center.

The Albuquerque Astronomical Society (TAAS) and the Sandia Ranger District will co-host the final evening of their 2005 season of free public stargazing in the Manzanos on Saturday, September 10, at Oak Flat Picnic Area. The dark skies of the East Mountains and the large telescopes of TAAS astronomers together provide great views of Venus, Jupiter and Mars, as well as more elusive deep-sky objects such as galaxies, nebulae, and star clusters. Observing begins at sunset, weather permitting, and is suitable for all ages. Picnic facilities are available for those who would like to come early, and adjacent parking is available. Alcoholic beverages and pets are not allowed in the telescope viewing area. To get there, take NM Highway 337 nine miles south of Tijeras, and follow the signs to Oak Flat and Juniper Loop. For information and a map, visit www.taas.org or call 254-TAAS.

In a sweeping move to provide top quality communiques to our members while conserving our precious resources, TAAS is pleased to re-announce the availability of this newsletter the Sidereal Times in full color. That’s right, catch the blush of the monthly speaker, the blue eyes and red hair of that cute 6-year-old at the School Star Party, the depth and vibrance of all the full-color illustrations. The catch is that the full-color version is only available at our website: www.taas.org. If you prefer to download and read your newsletter on your computer rather than receive a paper copy by mail, please notify the TAAS treasurer, Shannon Mann at treasurer@taas.org to have your name removed from the Sidereal Times mailing list. This will provide you with the newsletter of your choice, save TAAS money, and earn you the undying (okay, maybe slowly dying) gratitude of our Sid Times printer – me.

Now that many of our members are taking advantage of this offer, our mailing list is less than required to get a bulk-rate postage discount. The newsletter is now mailed at first-class rates. So, it is more important than ever for you to get your newsletter online. Thanks for your consideration.

Please note that the deadline for the October 2005 issue of the Sidereal Times will be Friday, September 30th, as the finished manuscript must be at the bulk-mailer before Monday, October 3rd, so that you will receive it by e-mail that day or by s-nail mail the following Saturday. My e-mail address is editor@taas.org. This summer marks my 5th year of editing the TAAS newsletter. While I have enjoyed this job very much, it is time to move on. I will remain on the job until the end of 2005, but then retire. I will help anyone get started on this rewarding and challenging position and remain available for consultation if asked. Thanks to all TAAS members who have contributed to the newsletter, you made the job very enjoyable.
Improbable Bulls Eye

Dr. Tony Phillips

Picture this: Eighty-eight million miles from Earth, a robot spacecraft plunges into a billowing cloud almost as wide as the planet Jupiter. It looks around. Somewhere in there, among jets of gas and dust, is an icy nugget invisible to telescopes on Earth—a 23,000 mph moving target.

The ship glides deeper into the cloud and jettisons its cargo, the “impactor.” Bulls-eye! A blinding flash, a perfect strike.

As incredible as it sounds, this really happened on the 4th of July, 2005. Gliding through the vast atmosphere of Comet Tempel 1, NASA's Deep Impact spacecraft pinpointed the comet’s 3x7-mile wide nucleus and hit it with an 820-lb copper impactor. The resulting explosion gave scientists their first look beneath the crust of a comet.

That’s navigation.

Credit the JPL navigation team. By sending commands from Earth, they guided Deep Impact within sight of the comet’s core. But even greater precision would be needed to strike the comet’s spinning, oddly-shaped nucleus.

On July 3rd, a day before the strike, Deep Impact released the impactor. No dumb hunk of metal, the impactor was a spaceship in its own right, with its own camera, thrusters and computer brain. Most important of all, it had “AutoNav.”

AutoNav, short for Autonomous Navigation, is a computer program full of artificial intelligence. It uses a camera to see and thrusters to steer—no humans required. Keeping its “eye” on the target, AutoNav guided the impactor directly into the nucleus.

The system was developed and tested on another “Deep” spacecraft: Deep Space 1, which flew to asteroid Braille in 1999 and Comet Borrelly in 2001. The mission of Deep Space 1 was to try out a dozen new technologies, among them an ion propulsion drive, advanced solar panels and AutoNav. AutoNav worked so well it was eventually installed on Deep Impact.

“Without AutoNav, the impactor would have completely missed the nucleus,” says JPL’s Ed Riedel, who led the development of AutoNav on Deep Space 1 and helped colleague Dan Kubitschek implement it on Deep Impact.

En route to the nucleus, AutoNav “executed three maneuvers to keep the impactor on course: 90, 35, and 12.5 minutes before impact,” says Riedel. The nearest human navigators were 14 light-minutes away (round trip) on Earth, too far and too slow to make those critical last-minute changes.

Having proved itself with comets, AutoNav is ready for new challenges: moons, planets, asteroids … wherever NASA needs an improbable bulls-eye.


Comet Tempel 1, as seen by the Deep Impact impactor’s camera. Three last-minute AutoNav-controlled impact correction maneuvers enabled the Impactor to hit the bulls-eye.
Minutes of the Board of Directors
Gordon Pegue

August 18th 2005
UNM Physics and Astronomy Building Conference Room

MEETING MINUTES

Directors present: Dale Murray (President), Becky Ramotowski (Vice President), Gordon Pegue (Secretary), David Blair, Barry Cash, Ray Collins, Pete Eschman, Dee Friesen, Bob Hufnagel and Shannon Mann. Dan Clark and Barry Gordon were in attendance as observers.

Directors absent: Heather Mann (Treasurer), and Shane Ramotowski.

Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm.

Executive Session
After a brief discussion about the membership status of Heather Mann and the current disposition of the Treasurer position, Gordon motioned that Dan Clark, who was present for the meeting and had agreed to take the position, be accepted as our Treasurer. Dee seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Dan was then warmly welcomed to the Board by all present.

Corrections to the July Minutes
None to report.

Treasurers Report – report provided by Pete
Account balances (as of the end of July):
General Fund: $ 7,399.81
GNTO Fund: $ 8,141.28
Education Fund: $ 3,404.71
Dark Sky Fund: $ 530.21
Special Projects Fund: $ 3,290.18
Broline Memorial Fund: $ 0.00
Total Funds on Deposit: $22,766.19

Total membership count (all categories): 365

Correspondence
None to report.

Event Retrospect
a. The Saturday, July 23rd General Meeting featured the TAAS Astro Trash & Treasure Extravaganza and Swap Meet and was deemed both fun and successful.
b. Our fourth Oak Flat Public Star Party of the season is scheduled for Saturday, August 27th. Bob Hufnagel is the event owner. Contact him for more details about this event.
c. Our first school star party of the new school year is scheduled for Tuesday, August 30th at Cochiti Elementary School. See the Education Outreach report elsewhere in this issue of the newsletter for more details.
d. The Saturday, September 3rd GNTO observing session will be a “new moon” event. Also scheduled for this date is the TAAS Chaco observing session.
e. The regularly scheduled meeting of the GNTO Committee will take place on Thursday, September 8th.
f. Astronomy Day activities are scheduled to take place on Saturday, September 10th at the Cottonwood Mall from 9am till 5pm. Dee noted that 11 exhibitors have confirmed their participation in the event. A special Astronomy Day public observing session is also scheduled to take place at Oak Flat that evening. Be sure to check elsewhere in this issue of the newsletter for more details on how you can participate in these activities or you may contact Dee directly.
g. The regularly scheduled meeting of the TAAS Board of Directors will take place on Thursday, September 15th at the Physics and Astronomy Building on the campus of UNM.
h. The Saturday, September 17th General Meeting will feature a presentation by a speaker yet to be determined.
i. A school star party is scheduled for Tuesday, September 20th at Griegos Elementary School.
j. The Edgewood Star Party is scheduled for Friday, September 23rd. See the article elsewhere in this issue of the newsletter for more details or contact Shane or Becky Ramotowski.
k. The September 24th GNTO observing session will feature additional member activities including an open house, Equinox picnic, training sessions and constellation tours.
l. The regularly scheduled meeting of the TAAS Board of Directors will take place on Thursday, October 13th at the Physics and Astronomy Building on the campus of UNM.
m. The Saturday, October 15th General Meeting will (tentatively) feature a presentation by author and Johnson Space Center engineer Dennis Webb. This meeting will be held at the Lodestar Planetarium.
n. The 2005 edition of the Placitas Star Party is scheduled for Saturday, October 22nd.
o. A school star party is scheduled for Tuesday, October 25th at Chelwood Elementary School.
p. The Saturday, October 29th GNTO observing session will be a “new moon” event.

Committee Reports
a. Membership: As part of the Treasurers Report provided by Pete: 236 full, 74 family, 16 educator, 3 honorary and 36 complementary members comprise the total membership of TAAS.
b. GNTO: Refer to the full GNTO report by Pete Eschman elsewhere in this issue of the newsletter.
c. Education: Shannon reported that 3 schools have been “booked” and that the school star party schedule for the balance of the year is nearly complete. He then passed
around for review and comment the Education Outreach Mission Statement and the School Responsibilities Guidelines documents. He indicated that the School Responsibilities Guidelines document would be an important part of the school star party “booking” process and that a copy of the guidelines would be given to the agent representing a given school so that a complete understanding of what is to be provided by TAAS and what is expected to be provided to TAAS in the way of support is fully understood and accepted by both parties prior to the official booking of the event. After a brief discussion, the Board fully endorsed the usage of the documents. Shannon also noted that he has started drafting an Event Owner Guidelines document, which would describe the responsibilities of the TAAS school star party event owner.

d. Grants and Other Income: Larry reported that TAAS has received a wonderful donation to TAAS from Meade. The donation consists of a Meade Deep Sky Imager, an entry-level color CCD camera complete with cables and software and valued at $450. Larry noted that he would prepare a donation acknowledgement letter to Meade, make an announcement at the next General Meeting and also prepare an article for the Sidereal Times. After an equipment evaluation, a checkout and usage protocol will be developed.

e. Special Projects: No report.

f. Special Interest Groups (SIG’s):
1. Messier 2005: Dee noted that the next SIG event is a “Pot Luck” get-together at his home for SIG participants and Board members on Friday, August 26th. The next SIG observing event coincides with and takes place at our Oak Flat event on Saturday, August 27th. The schedule for September is still being worked out.

2. ATM: David noted that meeting attendance has been good with 7 to 8 TAAS members participating. David said that 3 mirrors are in various states of completion.

3. Dark Sky: On behalf of David Penasa, coordinator of the Dark Sky SIG, Pete reported that the electronic Sky Quality Meter (SQM) has been purchased and he passed around the device for everyone to examine. Pete noted that David Penasa has agreed to be the “owner” of the device and to prepare the checkout and usage guidelines documents. Pete also noted another important Dark Sky issue involving the potential construction of a church camp very close to the Oak Flat Picnic Grounds. For more information on this potential threat to the dark skies at Oak Flat, call David Penasa.

Old Business
Due to the advancing hour, open old business items were tabled until the next Board of Directors meeting.

New Business
a. Pete provided an informational report on the physical move of the server computer that hosts the TAAS website and email services. The server was successfully moved and after a short time, web and email services returned to normal.

Meeting adjourned at 9:04 P.M.
FOR SALE: 8" Coulter Truss (Dob Telescope) (11/4 inch adapter)
• M1 focusers  • Telrad Finder  • And more.....
Asking $300
Contact: Brock Parker  213 Garcia NE  Albuquerque, NM 87102
or Larry Cash  307-1880  lcash16@comcast.net for more pictures.

Free Telescope Offer
What’s that? Did you say Free? That’s right FREE!
Any TAAS member can use this coupon to borrow a TAAS telescope.
Contact Dale Murray at telescope_loans@taas.org or 296-2479 and
receive a loaner telescope absolutely free. You can choose from scopes with
apertures ranging from 6" to 13".
Some restrictions apply. Offer valid for current TAAS members. Offer is first
come first served. Late comers will be put on a waiting list. Neither TAAS nor
the telescope curators will be held liable for any lost sleep or other problems
arising from the use of TAAS scopes.
Borrowers are required to enjoy the telescopes.

Car Pooling to GNTO

Have you ever decided to not attend a TAAS function at GNTO
because you did not want to make the drive to the observatory?
If your answer to this question is yes, you may be interested
in the idea of car-pooling to GNTO. The GNTO committee is
investigating the interest in and options for a car-pool program
to the observatory.

The purpose of the program would be to make GNTO more
accessible to TAAS members who otherwise are unable to attend
functions at the observatory. GNTO is a wonderful asset that
all TAAS members should be able to utilize and enjoy. We all
need to decide if a car-pool program would help accomplish this
goal.

Your assistance is needed in determining if there is a sufficient
interest in this effort to continue with the idea. We would also
like to get your ideas on how a car-pooling program should be
conducted.

There are several general options that can be considered. First
would be to car-pool from an Albuquerque location. Second,
we could arrange for a meeting spot off the interstate, (a large
store parking lot for example), from which we would car-pool
the final distance to GNTO.

Some of the things that need to be considered when car-pooling
are (1) equipment of attendees (2) arrival and departure times and
(3) willingness of TAAS members to be the car-pool drivers.

If you are interested in this idea and have comments or
suggestions, please forward them to Dee Friesen or any other
member of the GNTO committee. Dee can be reached at 856-
1593 or friesend@comcast.net. The GNTO email address is
GNTO@TAAS.org.

Greetings astrophotography enthusiasts!

Start clicking, cropping, mounting, and matting, because the
deadline to submit your entries for the 2005 Astro-Images of
New Mexico photo contest is next Friday, September 9, just ONE
WEEK FROM TODAY.

Entries must be DELIVERED to the Museum of Natural History/
LodeStar Astronomy Center in Albuquerque by September 9, OR
they must be POSTMARKED no later than September 9.

Questions? Email Karen Keese at pr@taas.org or call her at 261-
0040.

Hurry hurry hurry!

Volunteer Positions Available at TAAS

Now is the time to step up and be a larger part of your astronomical
community. The Albuquerque Astronomical Society has the following volunteer
positions available.

If you’ve got some free time and enjoy editing, web-mastering, or
putting a great party together and want to get more involved with
TAAS, here’s your chance.

A librarian to oversee books and media available for check-out to TAAS
members and a UNM Campus Observatory Coordinator position are
also open at this time.

TAAS currently has the following positions to fill.

Newsletter Editor
Webmaster
Librarian
UNM Campus Observatory Coordinator
Solstice Banquet Coordinator

The Official Newsletter of The Albuquerque Astronomical Society
MEMBERSHIP: You may request a membership application by sending e-mail to membership@taas.org or calling (505) 254-TAAS(8227). Applications may also be downloaded from the Web site. Annual dues to The Albuquerque Astronomical Society are $30/year for a full membership and $15/year for a teacher or student (grades K-12). Additional family members may join for $5/each (teacher, student and family memberships are not eligible to vote on society matters). New member information packets can be downloaded from the website or requested from the TAAS Membership Services Director at membership@taas.org. You may send your dues by mail to our newsletter return address with your check written out to The Albuquerque Astronomical Society or give your check to the Treasurer at the next meeting.

MAGAZINES: Discount magazine subscriptions to Sky and Telescope and Astronomy as well as discounts on books from Sky Publishing Corporation are available when purchased by TAAS members through our society. Include any of the above magazine renewal mailers and subscription payments as part of your renewal check. Make checks out to TAAS (we will combine and send one check to the publisher). Warning: publishers take several months to process magazine subscriptions.

ARTICLES/ADVERTISEMENTS: Articles, personal astronomical classified advertisements and business card size advertisements for businesses related to astronomy must be submitted by the deadline shown on the Society calendar (generally the Saturday near the new Moon). Rates for commercial ads (per issue) are $120 per page, $60 per half page, $30 per quarter page, $7 for business card size. The newsletter editor reserves the right to include and/or edit any article or advertisement. E-mail attachments in Microsoft Word, 11 point Palatino, justified, no indent at paragraph beginning, one space between paragraphs is preferred. ASCII and RTF are acceptable. One column is approximately 350 words. Contact the Newsletter Editor at editor@taas.org for more information.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Note that the Sidereal Times is mailed at a nonprofit organization bulk mail rate. As a result, the newsletter will NOT be forwarded to your new address should you move!! Please provide the Treasurer (treasurer@taas.org) with your new mailing address or e-mail address to ensure that you receive your newsletter.

TAAS LIBRARY: Please contact the Librarian at librarian@taas.org or 856-2054 to check out a book or make a contribution.