Chaco Canyon’s Dark Skies Sparkle

Over 80 Visitors Participate

Judy Stanley

TAAS’ Annual Chaco Canyon Star Party was enjoyed by everyone this year! Saturday, May 27, several TAAS Members hunkered down and waited for the wind to quit. We were not disappointed! Early into the evening the wind died and we were treated to the sparkling Chaco Skies! Eighty plus visitors from the public campground filed in as G.B. Cornucopia, TAAS member and Chaco Ranger began setting up for the program.

If you have never been to a TAAS / Chaco Star Party just ask the following people what you have been missing: Pete Eschmann, Elaine Kroska, Alan Scott, John Sefick, David Frizzle, new member Patricia, Linda Hixon plus family, and me! The skies are so dark that many of us arrive a day early so we have one night to practice before “show time” with the general public.

I had an enchanting encounter with a Chaco Visitor. It was very late, most of the public had disappeared into the darkness. I was at the eyepiece lost in M81 and M82 when a voice asked, “What are YOU looking at?” “Two galaxies in one field of view!” I replied. Looking up I saw a young woman standing before me wrapped in a blanket. I invited her take a look. She told me she was a student from the University of Hawaii visiting Chaco on her school break. She plopped down on my observers chair and glued herself to the eyepiece. She began firing questions and answers at me. I tried to get a word in but soon realized this was her gig. I moved the scope from object to object. The young woman got up just long enough to give me time to focus on the next target, then she plopped back down on the observers’ chair, glued herself to the eyepiece, capturing every photon she could as she continued to fire away her questions and answers! This went on for about ten minutes.

As I tried to focus on yet another celestial treasure, I noticed she was scampering away. I was kind of disappointed to see her go; her questions were insightful, her answers knowledgeable, her energy infectious. Then suddenly she came racing towards me as if she had forgotten something. She threw her arms around me and planted a kiss on my cheek! “Thanks!” she sang, as she faded into the night!

Pete Eschmann and Alan Scott check out Pete’s amazing “time machine.”
President’s Message

Judy Stanley

As promised, here is the information for an amateur astronomers’ trip to Australia for the Astronomy Society of New South Wales’ annual star party in 2007. All the information including photos from past trips to e-mail addresses of those who have been on the adventure “down under” are included:

4-page printable PDF brochure: http://www.adkinsmclaren.com/OZ/OZ_07_4pager.pdf

Sample photos from past trips: http://www.adkinsmclaren.com/OZ/pastTripPixLO.pdf


This is an exciting opportunity to view the spectacular “Southern Skies” through HUGE scopes. I have personally met and observed with this group and they are wonderful, friendly, and just plain good people!

And remember if you are fortunate enough to go on this grand adventure please sign up with Becky Ramotowski when you get back to be a guest speaker at a TAAS general meeting and share your experiences with the TAAS Membership!

Now for events happening closer to home:

Check out www.nmparks.com for the calendar of events. Contact Angie Richman, 505-264-1389, angie4stars@hotmail.com, for details of how to become a volunteer for NM State Parks’ award-winning program, “Reach for the Stars.”

The Enchanted Skies Star Party 2006 will be September 20 through September 23. Contact Dave Finley at dfinley@nrao.edu for more information and/or to sign up as a volunteer to be a dark sky site host at this year’s event. Dave is looking for workshop presenters too! Particularly a workshop geared for those who are just getting started in astronomy. Do contact Dave, as this will be an exciting event right in our own backyard. Dr. Larry Crumpler is this year’s keynote speaker!

Carlsbad Caverns National Park will be holding their annual Celebration of the Night Star Party and Bat Flight Breakfast July 28-29. Shannan Marcak is seeking TAAS astronomers for this big event. Last year TAAS Members John Sefick, Ed Schiender, Brittany Cavet, and I volunteered for Shannan Marcak and were treated like royalty. It seemed as though everyone from the community attended! There were over 500 people! Shannan really needs our help this year. Please contact her at: Shannan Marcak@nps.gov (505-785-3134).

Don’t forget our amazing observatory GNTO and the Oak Flat and Messier SIG group gatherings. TAAS offers something for everyone! I encourage you to join in the fun...............................................

Science Fair Winners Announced

Dale Murray, former TAAS President and judge at the recent Regional Science and Engineering fair, reported the winners of the TAAS Science Fair Awards. Award recipients are:

Alarie Bender: $75 and a one-year TAAS membership

Katherine Sinclair: $50 and a one-year TAAS membership

Nathaniel Pfeifer: $25 and a one-year TAAS membership

Geneva Neiser: $25 and a one-year TAAS membership

Ioan Belovarski: $25 and a one-year TAAS membership

Emma Gould: A one-year TAAS membership

Congratulations to all.
Despite the challenge of early breezy conditions, our “New Moon” observing event on May 27 was very successful. This event date was shared with Chaco Canyon observing, which I attended, so my information about the GNTO event is thanks to Steve Welch and others at GNTO. There were around 30 people in attendance with 14 telescopes in operation. Steve took the lead on opening and closing the facility, while Dee Friesen and other GNTO committee members helped out. Steve worked with the CCD imaging equipment and acquired a few images. Once again, Bob Hufnagel smoothed Twining Lane with the road dragger. Dee took the lead on using the Isengard telescope for visual observing, and later moved to the 16” GNTO loaner telescope when the wind dropped. Once the visual use of the Isengard tapered off, Bill Wallace and Carl Frisch took turns experimenting with video and CCD imaging. It sounded like everyone had a good time.

Ray Collins, Pete Eschman, Dale Murray, Shane Ramotowski, Bill Wallace and Steve Welch attended the GNTO committee meeting on June 1. Discussion topics included planning for our June 3 spring work session, and other events. Bill indicated that we need to repair wind-damaged shingles on the Ortega Building roof. Dale said that Barry Spletzer was organizing a “Summer Celestial Scavenger Hunt” to be held at GNTO on August 26. Steve and Pete discussed recent progress on testing the imaging equipment, and possible new equipment purchases related to the imaging program.

Steve and I continue testing the C-11/Losmandy/ST-9E imaging equipment at GNTO with sessions on May 30 and July 9. We are making good progress defining a system for equipment setup and image acquisition. We now have the SBIG ST-9E CCD camera self-guiding circuitry working to compensate for tracking errors and allow for longer exposures. We are confident that our GNTO imaging program is back and that more TAAS members will use this great set of imaging equipment.

We had a very successful spring work session on June 3 despite a relatively small turnout. Steve and I were at GNTO the day before to take delivery of two truckloads of crusher fines for the observing field. The two truckloads spread some 30 cubic yards of material, leaving a few thick areas and a small stockpile to distribute the following day. Sincere thanks to the twelve people who were able to help on June 3: Ray Collins, Eric Edwards, Pete Eschman, Bob Hufnagel, Elaine Kroska, Jacque Masog, Gordon Pegue, Patricia Rose, Sy Santos, Alan Scott, Bill Wallace, and Steve Welch.

Not only did we get the remaining crusher fines distributed, but we also made headway getting rid of weeds, cleaning buildings, resetting posts, preparing the underside of the dome roof for painting, adjusting the dome centering tires and rotation roller, as well as many smaller tasks. Bob Hufnagel disassembled the road dragger and hauled it back to Accutrak trailers in Los Lunas, where Bob’s friend Don Gibson generously donated additional materials and labor to repair some broken welds and strengthen it. By the end of the day, Bob had the road dragger repaired, reassembled and ready for use. Once again, thanks go to Don Gibson for his support and to Bob for his tireless efforts on the road dragger!

If you were unable to help at the spring maintenance event, don’t worry, we are planning a fall session for site maintenance and improvements. Stay tuned for details later.

In addition to TAAS members I have thanked earlier, thanks to several other folks who have donated time and material to GNTO. Daniel Görlich has donated a copy of the GCC Gemini Control software and Daniel Görlich and Tom Hilton have donated a copy of Gemini Pocket Control software for use on a hand-held computer. These donations will make a big difference in the success of our imaging program, so the contributions are much appreciated. If I have failed to thank anyone else, please speak up, and I will acknowledge you next time!

Our next training event at GNTO will be July 1, when we will offer an Introduction to GNTO and the Isengard Telescope, Introduction to GNTO Astro Computing Resources, and a CCD Imaging demonstration. We will also cover the use of the two GNTO loaner telescopes. This is a great chance to learn more about your observatory, including lots of hands-on experience. Training will start at 8:15 p.m. Our next “New Moon” observing opportunity will follow on July 22. You really should plan a trip to GNTO soon. With all the great equipment and facilities at GNTO, why are you waiting?

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 June 29 and August 3. We meet at 6:30 p.m. at JB’s Restaurant on Eubank just north of I-40. If you have questions about GNTO, please contact me (Peter Eschman, gnto@taas.org, phone 873-1517). I hope to see you soon at your observatory.

See photos, pages 5 and 6.
Spectacular Sagittarius

By Judy Stanley

The “crazed” Messier SIG gathering at Oak Flat is in full swing. The madness continues, this time the target was Sagittarius and the beautiful globular clusters and nebula. The plan was the same as last month. Wait until most of the general public had wandered off, move the scopes together in a semi-circle around Barry Spletzer’s trunk and, this time, dive into the teapot.

Dee Friesen of www.messier2006.org fame has organized a special interest group (SIG) whose goal is to observe all 110 Messier objects in fun, informative, and innovative ways. This is what we did at the last meeting of the Messier SIG at Oak Flat. Last month the group toured the Virgo Cluster’s sixteen Messier Galaxies, challenging faint fuzzies in a sea of non-Messier galaxies. This time the group was treated to thirty magnificent Messier objects including gorgeous globular clusters and my favorite, the Swan Nebula!

I have a modest 8” Orion Sky Quest. I used a 32 mm eyepiece and was rewarded time and again with dazzling globs, each home to thousands of stars. The fact that each globular cluster is a swarm of that many stars never fails to take my breath away each time I take a look. However, I’ve got to say, the Swan Nebula stopped me cold. I had recently read the article in Night Sky magazine July/August 2006 pages 24-27, and thought I was ready. The actual experience of finding and viewing this object was thrilling! The article showed four sketches of the Swan when viewed in various settings, from the first sketch done in an urban setting with tons of light pollution to the fourth sketch done under pristine rural skies. The detail I saw was stunning.

I would have to say that I was seeing the object under pristine rural skies as I was able to resolve all the details included in the fourth sketch of the Swan. It was a good thing this was our last object as I could not take my “eye” off it!

I encourage everyone to check out www.messier2006.org for details and join the fun as Barry promises to lead us, once again, through Sagittarius at our next Oak Flat event on July 29th.

Board Minutes, continued from page 9

take advantage of them instead. Judy said she would so advise Gary.

f. Judy reported that she had received word from Dale Murray, a former TAAS President and judge at the recent Regional Science and Engineering fair, concerning the winners of the TAAS Science Fair Awards. Award recipients are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Alarie Bender</td>
<td>$75 and a one-year TAAS membership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emma Gould</td>
<td>A one-year TAAS membership</td>
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New Business

a. Judy requested on behalf of Tom that a new category of membership be created with discounted dues for active-duty members of the US military. Details of his request were provided to the Board and Shane motioned that the membership category be created, restricted to active-duty personnel, with dues set at $15 per year and with rights and benefits equivalent to the Educator membership. Becky seconded and after a brief discussion, the motion carried with eight Board members voting for, zero against, and two abstentions.

b. Judy noted that she had received a query from a member wondering if Sky Publishing offers a club-member discount on Night Sky magazine. Dan volunteered to check into it with the publisher.

c. Gordon reported that he had recently done some on-line research at the State Corporation Commission Web site and determined 1) TAAS no longer is required to submit descriptive documents concerning changes to our Bylaws and that 2) there appeared to be out-of-date information concerning the list of Officers and Directors on the TAAS page. Dan noted that all required update documents have been submitted as required and that it sometimes takes up to six months for those changes to be reflected on the Web pages.

d. Dan reported on a recent hardware issue he had with the TAAS-owned Treasurer,s laptop computer in which he discovered that the standard Dell warranty of 90 days very nearly did not cover the issue. He suggested that since it is a laptop and subject to a greater possibility of requiring service over its lifetime than a desktop PC, we should enquire as to the possibility of purchasing an extended service warranty from Dell, if it is possible. After a brief discussion, the consensus of the Board was that Dan should pursue the investigation with a cost cap set at $300.

Meeting adjourned at 9:13pm.

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<td>Total Members</td>
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Donations to TAAS

General: Jim Degnan, Richard Sedlack, Ernie Villescas, Ryan Luetkemeier  
Education: Aileen O’Catherine  
GNTO: Rhode Island Astronomical Society, Darrell Eidson  
Dark Sky: Larry Compton, Dee Friesen, Robert Hufnagel, Karen Keese

Welcome to New TAAS Members
Mary Ann Cathopoulis; Cathy Cauley;  
Mark and Suzette Dawson; Susan Fate;  
David Lange; Carl, Robert, and Steven Lucero;  
Luke Murdough; Aileen O’Catherine;  
Noah Silver; Steven Silver; Leo Kohlmann-Reason;  
Autumn Clay; Tammy Crespin; Carlos Reyes;  
Patricia Rose; Irma Ruiz;  
R. Antonio Granillo; Alex Sfarcanos

Note from Treasurer

Clarification of new member and renewal policy. Renewal notices will be mailed out 1 month before expiration date. Renewals and new members will be dated on the first of next month no matter when during the month they arrive. This will help with the database reports and queries. There will also be no grace period for renewals. Please make sure that you send in renewal information and your check before the expiration date. Renewal of magazines and new subscriptions will be sent in twice a month. All checks are to be made out to “TAAS”. Thank you for your attention to this important issue. If you have any questions or special needs pertaining to membership and/or magazine subscriptions, contact the Treasurer, Dan Clark at treasurer@taas.org.

Location, Location, Location

- Chaco Canyon
  Latitude 36° 01’ 50”N  Longitude 107° 54’ 36”W  
  36.03°  -107.91°  
  36° 1.83’ -107˚ 54.60’
- Oak Flat
  Latitude 34° 59’ 48”N  Longitude 106° 19’ 17”W  
  34.99°  -106.32°  
  34˚ 59.80’  -106˚ 19.28’
- UNM Campus Observatory
  Latitude 35° 5’ 29”N  Longitude 106° 37’ 17”W  
  35.09°  -106.62°  
  35˚ 5.48’  -106˚ 37.29’

To convert from Degrees, Minutes, Seconds: Divide seconds by 60, then add minutes, then divide by 60 again.

For security reasons, GNTO location is available by request only, so please contact Pete Eschman for GNTO information.

Membership Services for:
- Membership Inquiries  
- Events Information  
- Volunteer Opportunities

Contact Beverly Firth at membership@taas.org

Contact Dan Clark at treasurer@taas.org

P.O. Box 50581  Albuquerque, NM

Editor’s Note

Please note that the deadline for the August 2006 issue of the Sidereal Times will be Friday, July 28. The e-mail address for the newsletter editor is editor@taas.org.

Left to Right: Jacque Masog, Gordon Pegue, Eric Edwards, Elaine Kroska, and Alan Scott at GNTO June 3. See story, page 3. (Photo: Steve Welch.)
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, Dan Clark, 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.
**Thieves Strike Pima College Observatory**

TUCSON: Thieves broke into the three domes of the Pima College-East Campus Observatory sometime during the night of May 24. The follow equipment was stolen:

- 1 vintage C-14 S/C telescope and its mounting wedge
- 1 Coronado Solar Max 90 H-alpha solar telescope
- 1 Coronado Ca11 40 solar telescope
- 1 Losmandy Equatorial mount
- 3 Video cameras
- 1 Video monitor
- Other assorted pieces of equipment

A complete inventory is to be made. The Ca11 solar telescope was piggy back mounted on the Solar Max and both were mounted on the Losmandy Mount. The power supply for the C-14 was not taken. If you hear of anyone wanted to sell the above-mentioned equipment please contact David Iadevaia, Pima College - East Campus, Tucson, AZ (api@dakotacom.net), and the Pima College Police at 520-206-2700.

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**August 2006**

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**TAAS General Meeting**

Saturday, July 8, 2006
7:00 P.M.
Regener Hall
University of New Mexico
(See map, back page)

Anders Jorgensen, PhD., of Los Alamos National Laboratories

**The Space Elevator**
Gordon Pegue

TAAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
June 8th 2006
UNM Physics and Astronomy Building Conference Room

MEETING MINUTES

Directors present: Judy Stanley (President), Becky Ramotowski (Vice President), Dan Clark (Treasurer), Gordon Pegue (Secretary), Larry Cash, Ray Collins, Pete Eschman, Shannon Mann, Shane Ramotowski, Sy Santos and Steve Welch.

Directors absent: Dick Fate, Dee Friesen, and Tom Graham.

Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm.

Corrections to the May Minutes
None to report.

Correspondence
a. Judy reported on an email she had received from Greg Taylor of UNM, requesting telescopes for an event to be held at the Campus Observatory on Wednesday, June 14th.

b. Judy reported on an invitation she had received concerning the grand opening of the Clayton Lake State Park Astronomical Observatory. The event is scheduled for Saturday, June 17th, beginning at 6:30PM at the State Park facilities.

c. Judy reported on an conversation she had with Ed Isenberg of the Rio Grande Astronomical Society (RGAS) and Dee Friesen. The conversation included a suggestion by Dee that an informal pot luck dinner could be held at Dee’s home where interested TAAS & RGAS members may participate in a sharing of ideas. Judy reported that Dee would take care of planning and notifications for an event to be held in August or September.

Treasurers Report
Account balances (as of the end of May):  
- General Fund: $ 5,076.37
- GNTO Fund: $ 7,133.25
- Education Fund: $ 4,105.48
- Dark Sky Fund: $ 715.21
- Special Projects Fund: $ 3,310.18
- Science Fair Fund: $ 0.00
Total Funds on Deposit: $20,340.49
(Increase of $1,380.69)

Total membership count (all categories): 395
(Increase of 21)

Dan also reported that our Corporate insurance policy has been renewed for another year.

Event Retrospect
a. The Saturday, May 13th General Meeting at Regener Hall featured an outstanding presentation by our very own Judy Stanley on her recent trip to Australia and her experiences at the South Pacific Star Party.

b. Our first Oak Flat Star Party of the season on Saturday, May 20th, was very successful with over 130 folks treated to views of the night sky by our gracious cadre of TAAS telescope docents and the 25 telescopes present.

c. The Saturday, May 27th GNTO observing session was a bit windy for the modest turnout of members present.

d. Also on Saturday, May 27th, Judy Stanley and 9 other telescope docents hosted some 75 folks at the Chaco Canyon Star Party.

e. A Spring Cleanup event was held at GNTO on Saturday, June 3rd. Tasks included the spreading of some 35 cubic yards of crusher fines over the observing field and around the buildings.

f. A very special star party for the American Cancer Society was held on Tuesday, June 6th, at the Manzano Mountain Retreat. At this event, 6 telescope docents had fun hosting the 12 camp counselors and the 48 children.

Calendar & Event Prospect
a. Announcing a new format to this section of the minutes: Only event highlights will be covered herein. Please refer to the full TAAS Calendar of Events, elsewhere in this issue of the Sidereal Times, for the complete event schedule.

b. Sy reported that planning for the 2006 edition of the TAAS holiday banquet is underway, with the date scheduled for Saturday, December 2nd and the location set for Garduño’s on the Green. Sy also noted that Eliesheva Levin will be assisting her with planning.

c. Event highlights include:
   1. Our second Oak Flat Public Star Party of the season is scheduled for Saturday, June 17th. Dale Murray is the coordinating contact for this event. The Messier SIG will also have activities at this event, contact Dee for more information.
   2. The Saturday, June 24th GNTO observing session will be a “new moon” event.
   3. The Saturday, July 1st GNTO observing session will feature training and imaging activities.
   4. The Saturday, July 8th General Meeting at Regener Hall will feature a presentation by Santa Fe resident and science writer George Johnson. An awards ceremony for the recent Regional Science Fair winners in the Astronomy category is also planned.
   5. The Saturday, July 22nd GNTO observing session will be a “new moon” event.
   6. Our third Oak Flat Public Star Party of the season is scheduled for Saturday, July 29th. A coordinating contact for this event is needed. The Messier SIG will also have activities at this event.
   7. The Saturday, August 12th General Meeting at Regener Hall will feature a presentation by a speaker yet to be determined.
   8. Our fourth Oak Flat Public Star Party of the

continued on following page
Board Minutes, continued

July 2006

The Official Newsletter of The Albuquerque Astronomical Society

season is scheduled for Saturday, August 19th. A coordinating contact for this event is needed. The Messier SIG will also have activities at this event.

9. The Saturday, August 26th GNTO observing session will be a “new moon” event. Also planned is Barry Spletzer’s Celestial Scavenger Hunt – a summer observing marathon.

10. Our first school star party of the new school year is scheduled for Tuesday, August 29th. Refer to the Education Outreach report for more details.

Committee Reports

a. Membership: As part of the Treasurers Report provided by Dan: 244 full, 100 family, 11 educator, 7 honorary, and 33 complementary members comprise the total membership of TAAS.

Becky noted that the work on updating the membership packet is continuing, with information on the GNTO portion being complete, and that the committee will report when they have completed the short-form version.

b. GNTO: Refer to the full GNTO report by Pete Eschman elsewhere in this issue of the newsletter. Pete also queried the Board as to the relevance of the $100 cap on observatory expenses and the need to seek Board approval for needs and equipment deemed necessary by the Observatory Committee. After a discussion that included references to a nonexistent resolution concerning the cap limit, the consensus of the Board, confirmed by an inspection of the extant bylaws, was that the GNTO Director has discretionary authority insofar as making decisions about GNTO-related expenditures and that with the reporting procedures already in place, the GNTO Director does not need to seek Board approval for incidental expenditures. Only large capital expenditures that are not otherwise budgeted would require notification and approval by the Board.

c. Education: See the Education Outreach report elsewhere in this issue of the newsletter for details on outreach activities.

1. Shannon noted that work on the “Star Team” policy and protocol is continuing.

2. Shannon noted that the complete schedule of school star parties for the upcoming school year would be complete by the end of July.

3. Shannon and Judy noted that the portable planetarium is on loan to Chaco Canyon.

d. Grants and Other Income: Dan reported that he had succeeded in reaching an agreement with his employer, Accent Windows, wherein the company would provide funds for the TAAS Science Fair Award Fund. Accent Windows agreed to provide $200 a year for 5 years.

e. Special Projects: No report.

f. Special Interest Groups (SIG’s):


2. ATM: As reported last month, Ray Collins is no longer teaching at Valley High School – the usual meeting venue for ATM activities. Ray has decided to step down as leader of the group and suggested that an impassioned plea be made to Mike Pendley to determine the future of the group and a new location for meetings. Judy agreed to contact Mike.


Old Business

a. Gordon presented a brief report on behalf of Dee regarding the recent Astronomy Day planning meeting, held at the Explora Science Center on Saturday, May 20th. Dee’s report included notes that firm participation commitments are in hand from Explora, NMMNH, Lodestar, and the Atomic Museum; that suitable event venues are being studied; and that a tentative schedule would see the event aligned with the National Astronomy Day in the spring of 2007.

b. Discussion concerning George Pellegrino’s new award resolution request continued with opinions offered with respect to the merits and award mechanism. A consensus was not reached, but Larry and Gordon agreed to meet with George to discuss possible modifications to the request that would insure its passage.

c. Judy noted that volunteers are still being sought for the Nomination Committee, whose defined task is the selection of the slate of Officer candidates for the 2007 administrative year. Gordon suggested that one member of the Membership Committee should be required to be a member of the Nomination committee, and Judy agreed to contact Beverly Firth, Membership Chairperson, and pass on the suggestion. Gordon also noted that he wished to withdraw from the Nomination Committee.

d. Judy reported that she had sent the documents and correspondence concerning the Chaco Road improvement project to Allison Schuler, Esq., for her evaluation and comment. Judy noted that she had received word from Allison – Allison noted that she did not see any notable issues with TAAS becoming a “Stakeholder” for the project and that we should go ahead and prepare and submit our letter to the San Juan County Public Works Department requesting that 1) NMDOT consider TAAS to be a “Stakeholder” for the NEPA compliance process and 2) that TAAS be granted “Consulting party status” under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Judy further noted that she would go ahead and advise John Sefick and Neil Goldberg to proceed and that they should consider themselves to be information gatherers and reporters only and that they do not have the authority to speak on behalf of TAAS without prior Board review.

e. Judy reported that she had received a request from our newsletter editor, Gary Cooper, wherein Gary suggested that a $299 expenditure for a year’s worth of Adobe Technical Support be purchased as he was having technical difficulties with certain aspects of the newsletter software. After a brief discussion, it was suggested that there are better, free technical support resources available on the Internet and that Gary should
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.

Manufacturing Quality Portable and Permanent Telescope Piers

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 e-mail address is GNTO@TAAS.org.
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