Sidewalk Astronomy Returns
by Patricia Rose

The revival of The Albuquerque Astronomical Society’s Sidewalk Astronomy Night program is at hand!
To all who are interested. Our first official event is approaching. Details below.

What: (The plan!) To bring the night sky a bit closer to those walking by our setups. No, these are not dark sky locations, but that is the point - to bring telescopes and binoculars to the people not the people to the telescopes and binoculars. The Moon, always a crowd favorite, will be visible the whole evening, as will Jupiter. And of course the early evening eye pleaser Venus.

When: Sunday, July 22, 2007  Setup: 8:00—8:30 p.m.  The cafes are both open until 11:30 p.m.

Where: At two (yes 2 - hopefully one near you) Flying Star Cafes (www.flyingstarcafe.com):
One in Corrales at:  10700 Corrales Road, Albuquerque, NM 87114
    Phone: 505-938-4717
    Get directions online
One on Juan Tabo at:  4501 Juan Tabo NE, Albuquerque, NM 87111
    Phone: 505-275-8311
    Get directions online

Who: We need you to bring your telescopes, binoculars, or other astronomy talents to the folks passing by and entering either of these two fine establishments. So, if you are interested, want to be interested but the timing is not good, or have questions, contact me, Patricia Rose, either through the listserv or at patr818@aol.com or at 505-268-3747.

Thank You and Clear Skies.
July 28, 2007 at 7:00 P.M. Regener Hall
TAAS General Meeting Topic:

“Inertia vs. Momentum”
or
What’s New and Old at the UNM Campus Observatory

Moving forward in the Golden Age of Astronomy nestled in the Land of Enchanted Dark Skies has been challenging these past several months. A temporary band of thick clouds had stalled all around preventing a clear view of the overall big picture.

Fortunately these cloud bands have been overcome by the sheer magnitude of the determination of the mass times the velocity of the Astronomy Outreach Community. The increasing momentum concerning Astronomy Outreach has not allowed outside forces to have a negative effect. In other words, Astronomy Outreach Education is alive and well and thriving at the UNM Campus Observatory and the UNM Physics and Astronomy Department known affectionately as “PandA”!

What does all this mean for TAAS and the Astronomy Community at Large? Opportunity! And I’m not talking about the Rover; I’m talking about the opportunity to revive and energize TAAS and the popular Friday Night UNM Observatory Program. There have been some exciting new developments at the UNM Observatory. Plan to attend the next TAAS General Meeting July 28 at 7:00 p.m., at Regener Hall on the UNM Campus to find out all about these new developments, history of the Observatory, and the opportunities that await TAAS.

Mr. Bill Miller, PandA’s Teaching Lab Supervisor, will enlighten, inform, and answer questions. Mr. Bill Miller has been at UNM for many years. His experience and knowledge will provide a unique perspective on this “in-depth” look at our own UNM Observatory.

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Meeting Minutes

TAAS Officers MEETING

Conference call June 28, 2007
Approximately 2:30 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

Officers present: Sy Santos (President), Tom Graham (Secretary), Dan Clark (Treasurer)
Judy Stanley (Vice President) excused

Meeting called to order at approximately 2:30 p.m.

Corrections to the May Minutes:
None to report.

New Business:
None.

Correspondence:
None

Treasurer’s Report:

Account balances (as of the end of May):

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Total membership count (all categories): 308

Committee Reports:
All committee reports will be published in the Sidereal Times. (Note: All committee chairs will send their reports directly to the Newsletter Editor, Gary Cooper.)

Official Calendar Update:
No changes reported

Old Business:
None

Meeting adjourned at approximately 2:40 pm.
As I indicated last month, we are conducting a fund-raising drive for road improvements on the route to GNTO. TAAS is making a $500 one-time contribution, and TAAS will contribute $200 in future years for annual road maintenance. Mesa area residents are making similar contributions, and TAAS members are encouraged to help with individual donations. Road work is being done by a professional contractor using heavy equipment. Once the project is complete, we will have a much smoother drive to GNTO and a route that is easier to maintain. Karen Keese is our project treasurer and she asks that checks be made payable to Jerry Rogers Rock Company. To mail a check to Karen, sign up for road work-party notification, or ask any questions about the project, please phone 261-0040, e-mail skywriter@wildblue.net, or contact her at any TAAS event. I’ve sent my check to Karen, have you?

Our “New Moon” observing event on June 16 was a victim of uncooperative weather conditions. Thanks to Steve Welch for opening the observatory and hosting the Isengard telescope, and thanks to Bill Wallace for backing up Steve as opener for this event. Around eight people were at GNTO in the early evening. Steve said it was nearly total overcast when he showed up, with only one tiny hole in the clouds to the southeast and very dark clouds to the south. Steve spent some time helping Tom Davies install new shelving that Tom had constructed for our 10-foot dome. Eventually Steve urged folks to leave as rain began to threaten, and then pour. Everyone made it out OK before the road became too wet.

We have a new Peltier-cooled StellaCam III video camera from Astrovid. It will extend our video monitoring of various astronomical events and enhance our video outreach to the public. This purchase was made using funds from the Intel grant we received in the fall of 2004. We plan to continue to use the older StellaCamEX video camera for bright objects and the new camera for deep space objects.

The only scheduled event for August is a “New Moon” observing session on August 11. Our next Training session will be part of our September 22 event, which also features our GNTO Open House and Fall Equinox picnic. When sky conditions are favorable, Steve Welch plans to have our CCD imaging equipment ready in our 10-foot dome for all events. If you are interested in CCD imaging, please be sure to check with Steve. We will have the comfortable Robert Ortega Building open for all events. Our Guest Trailer is available for coffee, hot chocolate and any snacks you might want to share. We’ve got a bunch of great equipment waiting for you at GNTO, so plan your trip to GNTO soon. Why wait?

When driving to or from GNTO, please be on the lookout for free-range cattle and be especially cautious around calves. The young ones are very unpredictable, and they love to run right in front of your vehicle at the last minute!

GNTO committee meetings are open to any interested TAAS members, and they provide a great way to get more involved with your observatory. We need your help. Our next scheduled meetings are August 9 and October 4. We meet every other month 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.

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**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 e-mail address is GNTO@TAAS.org.
**Dark Sky (SIG)**

**Saving the Night Sky Conference, September 13—15, Taos**

The inaugural southwest conference on Saving the Night Sky will be held September 13—15, 2007 at the Taos Convention Center. Co-sponsored by the International Dark-Sky Association (Tucson), it is designed for preservationists, astronomers, lighting design professionals, cultural landscape stewards, historic property owners, builders, local and government officials/planners, and conservationists.

The event will feature 10 educational sessions, a Friday Star Party on “NM Dark Sky Appreciation Night,” and tours of the historic Taos Pueblo. National presenters and special keynotes include Alan Hale, co-discoverer of Hale-Bopp comet; Anna Sofaer, Chaco Canyon “Sun Dagger” discoverer, William Wren of the University of Texas/McDonald Observatory, and Night Sky Tourism with Geoff Goins and Peter Lipscomb, NM Heritage Preservation Alliance Night Sky Program director. Local lighting ordinance best practices will also be presented.

The online brochure lists Taos lodging at rates reduced for the conference.

In addition to an invigorating conference, treat yourself to a world-class resort and spa at El Monte Sagrado. They have generously designated a select number of rooms at a greatly reduced $129 per night. Call early for your room.

Conference online registration and brochure are available at [www.nmheritage.org](http://www.nmheritage.org) or by calling (505) 989-7745.

For program inquiries, please contact Night Sky Program director Peter Lipscomb at (505) 989-3696 or plipscomb@nmheritage.org.

Taos and the Night Sky are great in September! Please join us.

Gary Wolff is the Executive Director, New Mexico Heritage Preservation Alliance, Santa Fe, NM, (505) 989-7745 / cell (505) 920-7275, [www.nmheritage.org](http://www.nmheritage.org).

**Boy Scouts of America Know About Dark-Sky Camping**

See “Best Practices in Illumination for the Boy Scouts” written by Robert Wagner, Heart of America Council; Chad Moore, National Park Service; and Leo Smith, International Dark-Sky Association: [http://darkskycamping.googlepages.com](http://darkskycamping.googlepages.com)

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**Luminarias 2007 Lighting Tradeshow/Conference, Oct 4, Albuquerque**

The Rio Grande Section of the IESNA (Illuminating Engineering Society of North America) Luminarias 2007 Tradeshow/Conference will be held Thursday, October 4, from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Embassy Suites in Albuquerque. There will be technical talks on lighting as well as product booths filled with the latest lighting products. One of the talks will be on the topic of LED outdoor lighting (including streetlighting). This is an opportunity to ask lighting manufacturer representatives about the latest dark sky lighting product offerings. For further information and registration go to [http://www.iesriogrande.org](http://www.iesriogrande.org) and click on “Featured Events.”

**Santa Fe Considers Other Streetlights**

Did you happen to see the Monday, July 2, 2007, *Albuquerque Journal* article about the City Different wanting to study the costs and energy savings of using fluorescent or LED lamps in city street lights to comply with the state’s Night Sky Protection Act?

No fluorescent or LED lamps are on the state’s approved list of lamps that cities can use to comply with the Act, which is designed to lessen the impact of lights on the night sky. Santa Fe engineering supervisor Rick Devine said that to date the list includes three different wattages of HPS (high-pressure sodium vapor) lamps. The street lights are maintained by Public Service Company of New Mexico, which charges the city various amounts (depending upon wattage) per light per month for electricity and basic maintenance.

City Councilor Chris Calvert stated that he’d “like to see the most energy-efficient bulbs put in there.”

**Donations to TAAS**

**General:** Steve Welch  
**Education:** Rick Thiem  
**GNTO:** Steve Welch  
**Dark Sky:** Randy Gaunt, Roger Stansbury, Rick Thiem, Steve Welch

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**Welcome to New TAAS Members**

TOM ANDREWS  
JAMES AND TOMMY DEARING  
JACQUES DUVOISIN  
JOHN HAYNES  
ANDREA GALLAGHER  
SANDRA LYNN  
LINDA TRAPPE

---

**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.

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**Monthly Membership Report (June 2007)**

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<th>Past Month</th>
<th>Change</th>
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<td>68</td>
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<tr>
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**Location, Location, Location**

- **Chaco Canyon**
  - Elevation: 6185’
  - Latitude: 36˚ 01’ 50”N
  - Longitude: 107˚ 54’ 36”W
  - Coordinates: 36.03˚ -107.91˚
- **Oak Flat**
  - Elevation: 7680’
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The best introduction to astronomy is to think of the nightly heavens as a little lot of stars belonging to one’s own homestead.

-George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans)
### August 2007

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**TAAS General Meeting**

**Saturday, July 28, 2007**

7:00 P.M.

Regener Hall

University of New Mexico

(See map, back page)

**Inertia vs. Momentum**

**OR**

What’s New and Old at the UNM Campus Observatory

Bill Miller

UNM Physics and Astronomy

Teaching Lab Supervisor

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**Notes**


GTNO = General Nathan Twining Obs.

GTNO Training = GTNO Observing and Training.

GTNO NM=New Moon Premium Observing Night.

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.
Cosmic Carnival Kids

Photos by Karen Keese
April 21, 2007
New Home Dome

by Bill Wallace

I purchased a POD (Personal Observation Dome) from Sky Shed, a Canadian company. They originally (still do) made roll-off roof observatories. The price for a basic unit, like mine, is under $1500.

The dome was delivered a couple of weeks ago. With extensive help from Steve Welch, I built a wooden platform on an already existing concrete pad. After building a small observing shed next to it, Steve and I finished it about 10PM, July 11th.

I am in the process of outfitting it to contain my C-14 to do my asteroid work from the back yard. Deep sky objects will be on the agenda also. In the near future I will be offering remote access to my observing via the Internet. Those details will be forthcoming.

Here are a couple of pictures of the dome.

Do you have experience with a piece of astronomy equipment you'd like to tell your fellow TAAS members about? It could be brand new or tried and true, for novices or experts. Share your experiences good or bad, what works, what doesn't, features you love, quirks you can't stand. Send equipment reports and photos to editor@taas.org. They may appear in future issues as space permits. --Editor
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.

FOR SALE

Takahashi 5-inch refractor telescope with mount, tripod and extra lenses in new condition

Takahashi FS-128 5” f/8.1 Fluorite Apochromat Refractor with EM-200 Mount (equatorial mount with remote control, polar alignment telescope, and counter weights), wooden tripod SE-L, 7 x 50 Takahashi finder scope with holder, diagonal prism (1.25”), and 5 oculars. Oculars: MC LE 5 mm, MC LE 7.5 mm, MC LE 18 mm MC LE 30 mm and Televue 2X Barlow. All equipment (except tripod) in original boxes. Used twice due to personal eye damage. A Rolls Royce of scopes in perfect, new condition. Price: $7,950 OBO

Contact Stan Schmidt at (505) 856-1592.

TAAS Sky Quality Meter

TAAS has a Unihedron Sky Quality Meter available for use by members. You can borrow this meter from David Penasa at (505) 277-1141 (W) or (505) 275-2480(H). The SQM may be reserved on a first come, first served basis for durations up to one week. Compare the sky brightness at your favorite viewing site with other sites. TAAS events such as school star parties, Messier SIG, and GNTO take priority. The following links give information on checkout and operating procedures for our SQM.

## 2007 TAAS Board of Directors/Staff

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Sy Santos</td>
<td><a href="mailto:president@taas.org">president@taas.org</a></td>
<td>890-1982 (H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President / General Meeting Coordinator</td>
<td>Judy Stanley</td>
<td><a href="mailto:vp@taas.org">vp@taas.org</a></td>
<td>269-4833 (H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Tom Graham</td>
<td><a href="mailto:secretary@taas.org">secretary@taas.org</a></td>
<td>897-9034 (H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Dan Clark</td>
<td><a href="mailto:treasurer@taas.org">treasurer@taas.org</a></td>
<td>771-4346 (H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director / Observatory Director</td>
<td>Pete Eschman</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gnto@taas.org">gnto@taas.org</a></td>
<td>873-1517 (H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director / Events Coordinator</td>
<td>Larry Cash</td>
<td><a href="mailto:events_coord@taas.org">events_coord@taas.org</a></td>
<td>299-4686 (H)</td>
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<td>Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Archivist</td>
<td>Pat Appel</td>
<td>292-0463(H)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:archivist@taas.org">archivist@taas.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATM Coordinator</td>
<td>Ray Collins</td>
<td>344-9686(H)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:atm@taas.org">atm@taas.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>ATM Coordinator</td>
<td>Michael Pendley</td>
<td>296-0549(H)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:atm@taas.org">atm@taas.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dark Sky Coordinator</td>
<td>David Penasa</td>
<td>277-1141(W)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:darksky@taas.org">darksky@taas.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Coordinator</td>
<td>Shannon Mann</td>
<td>771-0126 (H)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:education_coord@taas.org">education_coord@taas.org</a></td>
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<td>Barry Spletzer</td>
<td>294-4601(H)</td>
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<td>899-0950(H)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:membership@taas.org">membership@taas.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletter Editor</td>
<td>Gary Cooper</td>
<td>321-5404(H)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:editor@taas.org">editor@taas.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Relations Officer</td>
<td>Melissa Kirk</td>
<td>385-0113</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pr@taas.org">pr@taas.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telescope Curator</td>
<td>Dale Murray</td>
<td>296-2479(H)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:telescope_loans@taas.org">telescope_loans@taas.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNM Observatory Coordinator</td>
<td>Brock Parker</td>
<td>268-3747 (H)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:unm_coord@taas.org">unm_coord@taas.org</a></td>
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<td>Web Master</td>
<td>Alan Scott</td>
<td>864-4490(H)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:webmaster@taas.org">webmaster@taas.org</a></td>
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The Albuquerque Astronomical Society
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