September 2009

The Official Newsletter of The Albuquerque Astronomical Society
P.O. Box 50581, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87181-0581 www.taas.org
505/254-TAAS (8227)

Photo courtesy of John Sochinski.

Nikon D80 DSLR on a tripod Nikon 18-70mm lens (18mm setting used) f/3.5, 15 sec, ISO 800. White balance set to Direct Sunlight.

TAAS Pride and Joy Spruces Up for Equinox
Will Ferrell

TAAS has our own observatory located near Belen, New Mexico, the General Nathan Twining Observatory (GNTO)—the club’s pride and joy. Twice a year, in spring and fall, we ask for volunteers to spend a few hours cleaning the Robert Ortega Building, the large and small domes, the viewing area with its concrete pads, the picnic area, and the parking lot. The timing of these cleanups ensures that things are spruced up prior to our Equinox events. The next cleanup is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, September 6 in preparation for the Fall Equinox Open House, Picnic, and other activities that will take place on September 26. More details on specific cleanup tasks will be announced on our TAAS e-mail list. I am heading up this cleanup, so you can contact me at will@taas.org if you have questions. We look forward to seeing you at your GNTO observatory.

General Meeting, Sept. 5

What’s a Nice Girl Like You Doing in a Place Like This? Pursuing the Jabberwock Across the Mud, the Slime, and the Rest of the Galaxy
Penelope J. Boston
New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, Socorro, NM & the National Cave and Karst Research Institute, Carlsbad, NM

AS A LITTLE KID, I wanted to cruise the galaxy looking for weird lifeforms...the more tentacles, the better. Alas, there has been the small matter of inadequate transportation so far to accomplish this childhood aspiration. Instead, I have turned my eyes inwards to our planet to seek out life wherever it is living on the edge. Extreme temperatures, darkness, radical chemistry, no nutrients, heavy metals, ionizing radiation, being trapped for millennia within crystals...whatever would kill a more conventional example of Earth life is greeted with glee by my little pets. At the dawn of our understanding of exoplanets around other stars, we can begin to compare what we know about extreme life on our planet with what we might find in our Solar System and far beyond. The beginning of truly comparative astrobiology is now upon us. Join me for a guided tour of the micro-aliens here on Earth, and speculate with me about life on Mars, Europa, Titan, Enceladus, and good old HD 189733b.

New Membership Program Begins

TAAS WILL INAUGURATE three new aspects of the TAAS Membership Program at the September 5 general meeting. Under the leadership of Bill Firth, a membership table will be set up at the meeting. The format for the new membership cards will be on display as well as the newly created TAAS marketing brochure. The brochure provides an overview of TAAS activities, contact information, and an application for membership.
President’s Message

Dee Friesen

Going to the Fair

AS YOU ALL KNOW, I love summer with the hot weather, warm nights and the beautiful Milky Way. The end of summer means we start getting ready to go to the fair. At home on the farm, it was the 4-H Fair. For you city slickers, 4-H is a rural program for farm children. The four H’s are Head, Heart, Hands, and Health. It was a fun activity and is still very active in rural America today. At the fair, I would always exhibit something. Usually it was livestock—for me, pigs. One time I exhibited a picnic table that my father helped me build. We would get prizes, and then there would be a sale where the livestock was sold to philanthropic-minded businessmen of the community.

In mid-September, I will again go to the fair. This one is the Okie-Tex Star Party, and it is in the far northwest corner of Oklahoma. Once again, I will exhibit something. This time however, it will not be animals; it will be astronomy stuff. People from many states will be there exhibiting their stuff as well. All kinds of interesting astronomy gear will be on display. Telescopes, binoculars, binocular chairs, cameras, star plotters, and some objects I will not recognize.

Every day as the sun sets and the night approaches, stuff comes out of trailers, campers, pickup trucks, vans, and tents. Other apparatus that has been under alien-looking covers also emerges. It is a grand sight. There is no formal judging of exhibits, no categories of items on display, but there most certainly is an informal evaluation of what is set out. This is a fascinating time and, for me, probably the best time of the day next to the very dark hours of the night.

This is how I meet people. I start by looking at their things on display. This always leads to a discussion of who they are, where they are from, and what they do with astronomy. The answers are always interesting, and everyone wins the award of friendship and cooperation.

If you never go to the fair, try attending a star party. It is vastly more entertaining than the collection of vendors and crowds that our local fairs have degenerated into. Sometimes I miss the animals who were the stars at the 4-H Fair. Fortunately, this is seldom the case at the star fair. Sometimes, in the wee hours of the morning, dark shadows and strange sounds move around the observing field in a ghostly fashion. Could they be star fair animals?

OBSERVE - EDUCATE - HAVE FUN

Bino Telescope Ready for TAAS Use

TAAS NOW has a very useable binocular telescope for club members to enjoy. Former TAAS member Dave Mesera donated the telescope to TAAS before moving back to Houston. TAAS member Jim Lawrence, a master telescope technician, renovated the telescope making it easy to operate and suitable for public star parties. The bino scope will be on display at the next TAAS general meeting Saturday, September 5, at Regener Hall on the UNM campus. Plan to attend the special presentation of alien life forms by Dr. Penelope Boston, and after the meeting, peek through the latest addition to the TAAS inventory of observing equipment.

Jim Lawrence with TAAS bino scope

On the Event Horizon

ATM Meeting Wednesday, September 2
TAAS Board Meeting Thursday, September 3
General Meeting Saturday, September 5
GNTO Fall Cleanup Sunday, September 6
Ernie Pyle Middle School Star Party Tuesday, September 8
Oak Flat Star Party Saturday, September 12
Okie-Tex Star Party September 12–20
ATM Meeting Wednesday, September 16

Sidereal Times Deadline Friday, September 18
Star-Hoppers Weekend Workshop September 18–20
GNTO New Moon Observing Saturday, September 19
Chaco Canyon Star Party begins September 19
GNTO Equinox Open House, Picnic, Training, Astrophoto Boot Camp Saturday, September 26
MARGINAL WEATHER conditions returned to GNTO in an attempt to spoil our “New Moon” observing opportunity on July 18. Under the circumstances, we had a very good turnout with 19 observers and 7 telescopes in operation. Lance Hurt opened the facility, while Larry Cash and Gordon Pegue hosted our Isengard telescope. Conditions were a bit breezy at times, but we had some open skies until the clouds rolled in around 10:15 p.m. Light rain began falling around 10:30 p.m., ending the event. We were treated to good lightning shows from a variety of storms both near and far. John Sochinski posted a stunning lightning photo to our TAAS-L electronic mailing list, and that image appears elsewhere in this newsletter.

Our most recent GNTO committee meeting took place on August 20 with Larry Cash, Ray Collins, Pete Eschman, Will Ferrell, Lance Hurt, Gordon Pegue, and Steve Welch in attendance. We reviewed previous events and set duty assignments for the future. We spent some time planning for our Fall Cleanup session scheduled for 10 a.m., September 6. We schedule two cleanups per year, in preparation for our twice-a-year Equinox events. Will is organizing this event. Please see a separate article in this newsletter for more details.

I noted that Jim Lawrence completed his rebuild of our double-tube 10" f/5 GNTO binocular telescope, originally donated by Dave Masera. We reviewed the new proposed checklist written by Lance and Dee Friesen to tracks tasks related to opening and closing the facility. We intend to implement this as part of our standard key holder procedures. Our final meeting topic was review and approval of our GNTO budget, to be presented at the Board meeting on September 3.

Our single event for August is a New Moon observing chance on August 22. We have two events scheduled for September, starting with a New Moon observing event on September 19. This event overlaps the Okie-Tex star party, so it will offer a local option for those who can’t make the longer trek to Kenton, Oklahoma for the regional star party. Kenton is located a few miles outside of New Mexico, in the Oklahoma panhandle.

Steve Welch heads up our CCD imaging program. If you are interested in taking part in this program, Steve asks that you contact him at 505-866-7668 to make arrangements. Steve can have our CCD imaging equipment ready in the 10-foot dome so you can learn about the imaging process and take some images of your own. We will have the Robert Ortega Building open and our Guest Trailer available for coffee, hot chocolate and any snacks you might want to share.

OUR SECOND SEPTEMBER EVENT is the Fall Equinox event on September 26. We have lots of stuff planned for this event, including our next GNTO Training session, in conjunction with our GNTO Open House and Fall Equinox Picnic. The GNTO Open House starts at 3 p.m. followed by our Fall Equinox Picnic at 5:30 p.m.

The picnic will be a potluck with hot dogs and hamburgers provided. Becky Ramotowski will use our TAAS-L e-mail list to help coordinate the potluck. After the picnic, we will conduct training sessions, along with our popular “Eye Candy” Sky Tours. Becky plans to offer a “Rain Check” session of her Astrophotography Boot Camp, which was originally planned for several earlier Oak Flat events.

“Introduction to GNTO and the Isengard Telescope” begins at 6:45 p.m. This covers most of the equipment used at GNTO, from the Isengard 16” reflector down to our 6” and 16” loaner Dobsonian scopes. Once skies darken, Larry Cash along with Robert Williams or Karen Keese will offer “Eye Candy” Sky Tours. This is a two-part tour, with Robert or Karen pointing out objects using a laser pointer, while Larry follows up later, offering telescope views of the more impressive tour objects.

If enough people are interested, we will offer “An Introduction to GNTO Astro-Computing Resources” session prior to the sky tours. This session covers computer hardware and astronomy-related software available at GNTO. Steve Welch plans to offer a CCD imaging demonstration, using equipment set up in our 10-foot dome. If you are interested in CCD imaging, please be sure to check with Steve.

MAKE PLANS NOW to learn about your observatory and enjoy the relaxed company of fellow observers. Between the Open House, Picnic, Training, Sky Tours, and Astrophotography Boot Camp, this will be a great chance to visit GNTO for the first time or to renew your interest and check on recent observatory improvements. We’ve got a bunch of great equipment waiting for you at GNTO, so plan your trip to GNTO soon. Why wait?

GNTO committee meetings are open to any interested TAAS members, and they provide a great way to get more involved with your observatory. We meet every other month at 6:30 p.m. Our next committee meetings are October 22 and December 17. We are seeking a new meeting location, so I will provide more details later. 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.
Astronomy 101 Begins October 3

TAAS member Neil Goldberg will lead the first TAAS Astronomy 101 session, scheduled for 6 p.m. on Saturday, October 3, prior to the general meeting. The session topic will be “How to Observe the Moon.”

During the social hour after the general meeting, telescopes and binoculars will be available to observe the moon. Watch the TAAS Web site for more details (www.TAAS.org).

TAAS board member Dave Pitonzo has volunteered to lead the Astronomy 101 program. He is looking for people to help provide practical instruction and experiences to TAAS members. Please contact Dave at taas@taas.org if you have suggestions for future Astronomy 101 topics.

Star-Hoppers Targets “Grands” for Second IYA Offering September 18–20

STAR-HOPPERS Weekend Workshops in Astronomy, a not-for-profit program created by TAAS members Judy Stanley and Karen Keese in celebration of the International Year of Astronomy, is now accepting registrations for the September 18–20 workshop for grandparent/grandkid teams, to be held at the Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge.

“Grands” will learn astronomy together in a beginner-friendly, hands-on environment. The workshop includes a biologist-led refuge tour and a guided tour of the Very Large Array. After September 4, registrations for parent/child teams will be accepted for any slots not filled by grands.

Star-Hoppers operates in partnership with the UNM Sevilleta Field Station. For more information and registration details, visit www.astronomyworkshops.org or call 505-261-0040.

Los Lunas Star Party Canceled

Jim Rickey

Karen Keese and I had arranged for a star party at the state complex of buildings in Los Lunas, for the evening of Saturday, October 10. This event has been canceled because of liability insurance issues.

Annual Star Party Happens in Placitas October 24

Shannon Mann

ON SATURDAY, October 24, TAAS and Las Placitas Association will co-host the annual star party to promote dark skies in the Placitas community. The party begins around sunset (6:22 p.m. MDT.) Plan to arrive closer to 5:45 p.m. for setup and, just like the last several years, the event will be at the Homestead Village Shopping Center (Merr) with telescopes set up along the dirt road immediately east of the public parking lot. A waxing crescent moon will set around 11:26 p.m., and docents may want to show visitors the Apollo 11 landing area some forty years after the fact. Jupiter will be another showpiece object with Uranus, Neptune, and even the dwarf Pluto possibly being visible with enough aperture. Come ready to show off your favorite objects to those who want to see them—you yourself and everyone else! For additional information, call Shannon Mann 771-0126.

LUNAR ECLIPSES
Donations to TAAS

General
ASTRONOMICAL LEAGUE
ALEX BURD
JAMES HICKERSON
DONALD PETERSON
SIDNEY STONE
UNITED WAY

GNTO
DALE MURRAY
ALAN SCOTT

Dark Sky
MARILYN CHILDS
JOHN REMALY

Welcome to New and Returning TAAS Members

SUSAN AND LILI BANKS
ALEX, AMELIA, AND STEVE BURD
CHERYL GRAHAM
DEIRDRE KANN
BARBARA MALONE
LUCY AND ALLEN NICHOLS
DONALD PETERSON
DAVID TRUJILLO

Location, Location, Location

• Chaco Canyon
6185’ elevation
Latitude  Longitude
36˚ 01’ 50”N 107˚ 54’ 36”W
36.03˚ -107.91˚
36˚ 1.83’ -107˚ 54.60’

• Oak Flat
7680’ elevation
Latitude  Longitude
34˚ 59’ 48”N 106˚ 19’ 17”W
34.99˚ -106.32˚
34˚ 59.80’ -106˚ 19.28’

• UNM Campus Observatory
5180’ elevation
Latitude  Longitude
35˚ 5’ 29”N 106˚ 37’ 17”W
35.09˚ -106.62˚
35˚ 5.48’ -106˚ 37.29’

Note from Treasurer

Clarification of Member and Renewal Policy

Renewal notices will be mailed out one 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.

Monthly Membership Report

August 2009

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<td>Total Members</td>
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Editor’s Note

The deadline for the next issue of The Sidereal Times is Friday, October 23.

Please e-mail text as an attachment, preferably in Microsoft Word or OpenOffice.org Writer. Please do not embed photos in text. Attach photos and illustrations separately. The e-mail address for the newsletter editor is editor@taas.org.

Contact Dan Clark at treasurer@taas.org
P.O. Box 50581 Albuquerque, NM 87181
# September 2009

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<td>18 Sidereal Times Deadline, Star-Hoppers Workshop 9/18-20</td>
<td>19 GNTO: NM Observing, Chaco Canyon Star Party begins</td>
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<td>26 GNTO: Equinox Picnic, Open House, Astrophoto Boot Camp, and more</td>
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## Dark Sky SIG

**David Penasa**

### The Latest from IDA

The International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) is working hard towards the benefit of astronomers, and everyone affected by light pollution—not only sky glow, but glare, light trespass, energy waste, visual confusion, and the health issues associated with light at night.

Will 2009 be the year the federal government finally takes light pollution seriously? That’s certainly the hope of the IDA. Your support is very much desired. See the following page to find out how you can help: [http://www.darksky.org/mc/page.do?sitePageId=86221](http://www.darksky.org/mc/page.do?sitePageId=86221)

### IDA Briefs U.S. Congress

On July 13—14, IDA conducted informational briefings for the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate. Briefings were also held last summer, all intended to introduce legislators to the problems caused by light pollution and what can be done to reduce wasted outdoor lighting. The July briefings included the possible impacts of current legislation on light pollution, energy use, and conservation. Going forward, IDA also plans to educate the federal government—specifically the EPA—on the subject. [http://www.darksky.org/mc/page.do?sitePageId=55055&orgId=idsa](http://www.darksky.org/mc/page.do?sitePageId=55055&orgId=idsa)

### IDA Washington DC Office Opens

Timed for maximum impact, the IDA established a new office in Washington, DC earlier this year. [http://docs.darksky.org/PR/PR_WashingtonDC_final%20(2).pdf](http://docs.darksky.org/PR/PR_WashingtonDC_final%20(2).pdf)

### 2009 IDA Annual General Meeting and Conference

For the first time in IDA history, the 2009 Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Conference will be held in another location besides Tucson. This year, the 21st AGM will be held November 14—15 in Phoenix. The theme is “Sustainable Skies.” [http://www.darksky.org/mc/page.do?sitePageId=55062&orgId=idsa](http://www.darksky.org/mc/page.do?sitePageId=55062&orgId=idsa)
## October 2009

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### TAAS General Meeting

**Saturday, September 5**

7:00 P.M.

Regener Hall

University of New Mexico

*(See map, back page)*

**What’s a Nice Girl Like You Doing in a Place Like This?**

Pursuing the Jabberwock Across the Mud, the Slime, and the Rest of the Galaxy

**Penelope J. Boston**

New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, Socorro, NM & the National Cave and Karst Research Institute, Carlsbad, NM

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**Notes**


GNTO = General Nathan Twining Observatory
GNTO Training = GNTO Observing and Training
GNTO 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 Building, Corner of Lomas and Yale

School Star Party

SIG = Special Interest Group

TBA = to be announced

*Blue Italic* = Non-TAAS events
When Girl Power Met Astronomy
by Judy Stanley & Karen Keese

THE “SHE IS AN ASTRONOMER” event on August 9 attracted around 350 attendees—girls and their families—to the Open Space Visitor Center in Albuquerque. This successful TAAS/NRAO partnership provided a unique opportunity for girls to explore astronomy as a career and rewarding hobby.

Many thanks to TAAS, NRAO, Visitor Center staff, Explora Science Center, participating astronomers and scientists, and our invaluable volunteer corps. This was a remarkable team effort.

As volunteer Amy Estelle eloquently put it: “I felt my lifelong fascination with astronomy came full circle on Sunday. At the age of six, I told one of the adults who drove in the carpool to school, that all I wanted to do was go out on a hill by myself and watch the stars. Later as a teenager during the early manned space program, I wanted to be an astronaut. No one in my small town in Georgia could help me figure out how to do that. I had no mentors. Instead, I became an avid amateur astronomer and educator. On Sunday, I saw a generation of young girls who will not have that same problem. Thanks to your work and the volunteer presenters, if any of the girls who showed up Sunday wants to be an astronomer, she has role models and mentors who are ready to assist her. What a wonderful gift.”

Bears need their photons, too.

PHOTOS: ARIEL BOSTON
There Goes the Neighborhood

Barry Spletzer

MY NEIGHBORS think, rightfully so, that I’m a little strange. With no neighborhood association to keep crazy ATMs (amateur telescope makers) indoors, I lug odd things out onto my driveway, often in the middle of the night. I’ve been asked if they are cannons or fireworks launchers. Of course, you would know them as telescopes.

I did wonder if anyone was watching my latest driveway adventure. I was testing the strength of the joint design for my travel scope truss. The apparatus is shown here. It consists of a bathroom scale, an 80-pound rotary table, a 5C collet chuck, 12 feet of tubing, and a large stepstool. The final component, not shown here, is me on the top of the stool reaching up above the coupling (way in the top of the photo) and trying to lift the whole thing while reading the scale to measure the coupling strength. Despite the strange appearance, it worked, and I cleared the last major hurdle in designing my 13-inch packable telescope. After literally years of mulling over truss-joint designs, this final workable solution is simply a slightly modified plumbing part.

I MIGHT be getting a little ahead of myself, or worse, ahead of my readers. Before discussing the marvels of a joint for my truss, maybe I need to explain what a truss is and why I need a joint in it. Most small telescopes have the components mounted in a tube. It works well. A tube is simple, rigid, inexpensive, protects the delicate optics, and keeps everything aligned. However, for scopes larger than about 12 inches, the tube becomes unwieldy, and it takes a truck to haul the thing. Enter the truss. By removing the central portion of the tube and connecting the top and bottom parts of the scope with a collection of removable rods, the scope can be packed much more compactly for transport. This collection of rods is the truss. It allows the majority of the tube to be reduced to a handful of rods and is very common for large telescopes.

For my scope, an ordinary truss is not enough. Since I am building a large scope to take on an airplane, the rods of a truss are just too long (over 4 feet in this case). I need a way to break them down to shorter pieces to pack in a suitcase. The difficulty that took “years of mulling over” is that the joint must be rigid in tension, compression and bending, provide precise repeatability, be quick and easy to connect/disconnect in the dark, and be lightweight. This current joint, which was the subject of my unusual driveway test, followed at least half a dozen failed ideas, so I was rightfully excited to have something that worked.

With a workable joint, I went on to build the truss over the last month. It is made from ½-inch thin-walled aluminum tubing and breaks down into 12 pieces. I figure that is the minimum number to get a 4-foot-long by 16-inch-diameter truss into a medium-sized suitcase. The disassembled truss is pictured here. The pieces are about 17 inches long. This large number of pieces may cause me to violate my own mantra about telescope setup: “In five minutes, in the dark, wearing gloves.”

The blob in the top of the photo is the black spandex shroud. As with most of my lightweight scopes, the stretchy material holds the assembly together eliminating the need for nuts and bolts while providing substantial vibration damping.

THE WEIGHT of the optical tube is critical in a lightweight scope since the center of gravity and ultimately the size and weight of the scope base rely heavily on it. After much effort, I was pleased to find that the full optical tube assembly, including everything except the glass, weighs 5.5 pounds. This is less than the weight of a typical mirror cell. This scope does not use an ordinary mirror cell or secondary mount. Both mirrors are fixed in place with collimation adjustment provided by the truss. The assembly is shown here with and without the shroud.

By the next Sid Times issue, I expect to have this project nearly completed. I intend to use the scope in my presentation on telescope engineering at the Enchanted Skies Star Party in Socorro October 14–17 so I do need to wrap it up.
The Sidereal Times
September 2009

TAAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
July 30, 2009
University of New Mexico Physics and Astronomy Building

MEETING MINUTES

Directors present: All Directors.

The Officers met from 6:45 p.m. to 7 p.m. The meeting with the full board started at 7:05 p.m.

The June 4, 2009, Board meeting minutes are corrected to indicate that Jim Rickey is leading the Los Lunas star party.

President’s Remarks:

1. TAAS needs to obtain the list, from the University of New Mexico, of science fair winners.
2. One TAAS member asked Dee if TAAS will have a senior membership rate.
5. An Astronomy 101 meeting will take place next Tuesday at the home of Dee and Ruth Friesen.

Committee Reports

Treasurer’s Report:
Account balances at the end of July 2009:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Balance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Fund</td>
<td>$18,224.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>GNTO Fund</td>
<td>$7,327.09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dark Sky S.I.G. Fund</td>
<td>$1,286.91</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Projects Fund</td>
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<td>Science Fair Fund</td>
<td>$600.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cosmic Carnival Fund</td>
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<td>Astronomical League Reserve</td>
<td>$300.96</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Funds on Deposit</td>
<td>$39,546.76</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Expenses for July 2009</td>
<td>$89.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Income for July 2009</td>
<td>$597.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Education: The next school star party will be held on September 8 at Ernie Pyle Middle School.

Membership: The membership committee will prepare a marketing brochure. They are investigating name tags that could be printed by the committee and slipped into a holder with a lanyard. No samples have been made, and they are still looking at the name tag option in the TAAS Membership Computer.

Astronomy 101 Special Interest Group: Bob Havlen said he is willing to conduct pre-general meeting science sessions.

Events Retrospect:
At the Rotary Club Solar Fiesta, there were 7 solar telescopes and 50 people.

Events Prospect:
Robert Williams will lead the Maize Maze star party.

Old Business:
Dee Friesen, had asked that a committee be formed to answer questions regarding the TAAS pyrex glass blanks. The committee consists of Chairman Dick Fate, Barry Spletzer, Gordon Pegue, Judy Stanley, Ray Collins, and Will Ferrell. They met three times, and Dick Fate reported their progress during this Board meeting.

The meeting ended at approximately 8:40 p.m.

Beautiful Skies for Oak Flat Star Party August 15

Ric Thiem

AT THE OAK FLAT public star party August 15, I counted 21 scopes—3 18-inch Dobs, 2 world-class refractors on AP mounts (drool!) numerous SCTs, and smaller scopes. I’m guessing 50—75 public stargazers. Weather conditions started out with a little wind and some clouds but cleared off shortly to beau-
tiful skies. Jupiter, M31, M57, M13, and many others inspired ooh’s and ah’s heard all over the field. One young girl with the biggest smile came back to my scope three times. Hearing her ask, “Can I see the Ring again, please?” made the work so worthwhile. Furthermore, when I woke up to clean the field in the morning, there was nada. Way to go, TAAS!
## 2009 TAAS Board of Directors/Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>866-7668 (H)</td>
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<td>417-9754</td>
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<td>Robert Williams</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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- Educational Outreach
- Programs: TAAS 200, Equipment Trader, Telescope Loaner Program, and more
- SIGs
- Members Guide
- Links to Astronomy Resources and Members’ Blogs

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