General Meeting News
Lynne Olson

TAAS General Meeting
Saturday, December 6, 7:00 P.M.
UNM Science and Math Learning Center

The Long Wavelength Array

OUR GUEST for this last meeting of 2014 will be Dr. Lee Rickard, adjunct professor in the UNM Department of Physics and Astronomy, speaking on the role of the Long Wavelength Array in astronomy, how it works, and current research in the field. The LWA is a premier U.S. facility for exploring the low-frequency radio spectrum, located on the grounds of the VLA.

Dr. Rickard received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1975, where his research was on the presence of carbon monoxide in galaxies. He came to New Mexico in 2007 as Director of the Long Wavelength Array project in Magdalena,

continued on page 3 . . .

TAAS Perihelion Banquet
Saturday, January 10, 2015
6:00–10:30 P.M.
Eleganté Hotel, 2020 Menaul NE

by Lynne Olson

OUR ANNUAL dinner and soiree is coming up to bring sparkle to the New Year for TAAS members and guests. As in the past few years, it will be held at the MCM Eleganté Hotel, which takes good care of our Society with fine food, lovely table presentations, and all the extras we need to offer our members a memorable evening.

The menu will be a diverse buffet of meat and chicken, vegetable dishes, beverages, and desserts, and a cash bar will be open from beginning until 9:00 p.m. Please arrive early to check in at our reception and find your table for the evening with friends, old and new, as there is no assigned seating.

Your invitation was sent out on November 19 to your listed e-mail address and should contain all the information you need to RSVP, make payments, and submit your proxy ballot for the slate of officer candidates. We need to have all these items completed as soon as possible to allow the hotel to accommodate our needs and our continued on page 3 . . .

Chaco Canyon under Threat from Oil and Gas Rigs

by David Penasa

CHACO CANYON, home to Chaco Culture National Historical Park, a Dark Sky Park, is located in one of the most productive oil and gas basins in the United States and is increasingly being targeted for drilling. The Santa Fe New Mexican and New Mexico Wilderness Alliance are against the drilling. Not only would it create light pollution, it would threaten the lands sacred to both the Pueblo Indians and the Navajos. The International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) is also concerned and currently looking into the issue.
Ballot For TAAS Officer Election 2015

Listed below are the candidates nominated to serve as officers during the 2015 calendar year.

Steve Snider, President
David Frizzell, Vice President
Dan Clark, Treasurer
Sigrid Monaghan, Secretary

TAAS members can participate in the election in three different ways:
- First, attend the Perihelion Banquet on Saturday, January 10, 2015, at 6:00 p.m. and vote in person.
- Second, you can print out, mark, sign, and return the proxy ballot below to the address on the ballot.
- Third, you can print the ballot, mark, sign, scan and e-mail to TAAS.rsvp@gmail.com.
We appreciate your response to this request.

Proxy Ballot

I, (please print) _________________________________________, a full (regular) member with voting privileges of The Albuquerque Astronomical Society, hereby authorize Dan Clark to cast my Proxy Vote at the January 10, 2015, Annual Meeting of the Society, or any subsequent rescheduled date for that meeting, including, but not limited to, the electing of officers for the corporation.

Signed:___________________________________________Date:_________________

Mail the ballot to  
TAAS Treasurer
6932 Glen Hills Dr.
Rio Rancho, NM  87144
Under the Dome

Notes from and about GNTO

Mike Molitor

AS THE YEAR draws to a close, I reflect on the good things accomplished at GNTO. The Cosmic Café is operational. It replaces the cramped space previously provided by a small trailer. Ray Collins’s dedication and skill transformed a bare shed into the cooking and eating space we are all proud of. The Isengard telescope right ascension drive and clutch were upgraded, and now the scope tracks and slews properly. Vance Ley has gotten the imaging scope into nearly routine operation, and a few other TAAS members are getting up to speed on its use. In the people department, we have a good group of TAAS members on the GNTO Committee, including a few new members. All these folks are dedicated to maintaining and operating GNTO for the benefit of all members of TAAS. And, we have established a procedure that enables TAAS members to access and use the GNTO observing field any time. I hope that more members will take advantage of this access in the coming years.

Paul Grunwald was the site opener and hosted the October 25 new moon event under near-perfect weather. He reported that there were about 25 persons and 14 scopes on the field by sundown. Also, the Cosmic Café was “christened” with a batch of fresh-baked cookies. Mike Fuge, opened and operated the Isengard telescope and was joined by a few others. Mike attended the spring equipment training session and this was his first time operating the scope solo. Congrats, Mike! Vance and Paul concentrated on getting the SBIG 8300M camera operating on the imaging scope.

On Saturday, November 15, Hy Tran took advantage of the new “access-anytime” procedure to spend some time imaging from the GNTO observing field. He was joined by Will Ferrell for a few hours. The sky was not very cooperative however, with zenith somewhat clear but clouds obscuring all points of the compass.

By the time this is published, the November 22 TAAS 200 Scavenger Hunt will have passed. The observing dates for December are the 13th and 20th, and for January it is the 17th.

The GNTO Committee will meet Thursday, December 11, at 7:00 p.m. at the North Domingo Baca Multigenerational Center located near Paseo del Norte and Wyoming. The GNTO Committee will meet Thursday, December 11, at 7:00 p.m. at the North Domingo Baca Multigenerational Center located near Paseo del Norte and Wyoming.

As always, check TAAS_Talk and the TAAS website for last-minute changes and updates.

GNTO is open to all TAAS members and their guests. TAAS members are encouraged to become involved in using and running your observatory. Contact me or speak with one of the Committee members.

GNTO Director e-mail: gnto@taas.org. Or, 518-225-7077 (cell); 505-717-2601 (land).

Treasure to monitor the attendance and ballots.

We look forward to seeing you there, and thank you for helping us make this the most successful Banquet ever!

Go to www.TAAS.org for all the details, a link to the invitation, ballot, and map to the venue.

Send any questions to TAAS.rsvp@gmail.com.
December 2014

TAAS General Meeting

Saturday, December 6, 2014, 7:00 P.M.

University of New Mexico Science and Math Learning Center

The Long Wavelength Array

Dr. Lee Rickard

UNM Department of Physics and Astronomy

Need help with your Telescope?

Attend the ATM meeting and receive assistance.

First and third Wednesday of the month.

Manzano Mesa Multi-Gen Center
501 Elizabeth St SE, Albuquerque, NM

map is available at  www.TAAS.org

Happy Holidays!
### January 2015

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**Notes**

  - Hotline 505-254-TAAS (8227).
  - School Star Party
- **ATM** – Amateur Telescope Making and Maintenance. Call Michael Pendley for information at 296-0549, or e-mail atm@TAAS.org.
- **GNTO** – General Nathan Twining Observatory
  - **GNTO Saturday events** may be held on the Friday before, according to the weather forecast.
- **GNTO Training** – GNTO Observing and Training
- **GNTO NM** – New Moon Premium Observing Night
- **NMMNH&S** – New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science
- **P & A** – UNM Physics and Astronomy Building, Corner of Lomas and Yale
- **SIG** – Special Interest Group
- **TBA** – To Be Announced
- **UNM** – University of New Mexico Observatory.
  - Call the UNM hotline at 277-1446 to confirm, or e-mail unm_coordinator@TAAS.org.

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**PERIHELION BANQUET**

**THE ALBUQUERQUE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY**

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 10, 2015**

6:00–10:30 P.M.

MCM Eleganté Hotel

2020 Menaul Blvd, NE

Albuquerque, NM

$20.00/PERSON
Back to the Barnyard

by Dee Friesen

I DO NOT KNOW the exact time I first looked through a telescope. Living on a small farm in Kansas, we did not have any observatories nearby. Looking around the area I could see a number of domes but they were all the tops of silos. For you city folks, a silo is where we stored the silage fed to the cows in the winter. I will leave a description of what silage is for another column should I backslide again and decide to write about something else.

I do remember telescope number two. It was a 4-inch reflector called a Dynascope. I spent many long hot and cold nights with it observing in the middle of the barnyard. Frequently, my parents would show me off to their friends and I would have to drag the scope out to the yard and give a quick tour of the night sky to people who had no idea of how to spell astronomy. However, they knew the earth was 6,000 years old and that there were no believers on Mars.

After the barnyard career, I followed the familiar path of college, a 40-year flying career and no telescope in the barnyard. Now I want to get back to the barnyard, but this time I will have three telescopes and a brand new telescope mount. I want to get back to just observing and having fun. Should you or the neighbors come by, I will be happy to give a quick tour of the night sky. However, my emphasis will be on taking my observing to the next level.

Back in my early barnyard observing days, I did not keep records, certainly did not sketch or, heaven forbid, photograph objects. I just observed. I had no mentors, no fancy star charts, and of course no computer-assisted finding tools. I remember learning the major constellations from a small book I got when visiting the Adler Planetarium one summer at age 13. I still have that book and I enjoy looking at it. Mostly, I would just point my telescope and observe. It was a special time for me, alone in the barnyard but connected to the universe through the Dynascope.

Now, I am attempting to better organize my observing. I began by deciding to use the various observing programs of the Astronomical League (AL). The observing programs are terrific. There is enough variety to meet the interests of most amateurs. I have completed two binocular observing lists (Messier and Southern Sky) and I am almost done with a third (Binocular Deep Sky). My favorite list, which I need five more objects to complete, is the Stellar Evolution list. I have almost completed the telescope double-star list, and when the weather warms up, former TAAS vice president Dick Fate and I intend to complete the Lunar Objects list. Dick is leading this effort and we will keep TAAS informed so anyone interested can join us.

THE PRIMARY REASON I am using the AL lists is to help me organize my efforts. They require that I record details about my observing which allow me to better understand what I observe and how I observed it. This becomes important to me when I observe the object a second or third time.

Thanks to TAAS’s Master Observer Becky Ramatowski, I now have observing forms or logs to easily record my observations and then submit the information to Becky. She reviews the log, assists me with any corrections, and submits them to the AL so that I can earn the appropriate observing award. Her assistance and counsel is invaluable, and I urge all TAAS members to follow her advice. Three other TAAS members about to earn their Master Observer award from the AL are TAAS Board members Gordon Puge and Gordon Schaefering and TAAS president Steve Snider. All three have very graciously given of their time assisting me back into the barnyard. One of the beautiful things about TAAS is how willing people are to share their knowledge and experience with a new and inexperienced observer like myself.

So, what is in the new barnyard? It’s actually in front of my garage. No cattle are anywhere near, although deer, coyotes, bobcats, and even bears have visited. Fortunately, none of them asked for a tour of the night sky. In the barnyard is my very favorite Orion StarBlast 6-inch reflector. This is a rapidly set up telescope enabling me to get a quick look at whatever tickles my interest. I am using it to complete the Stellar Evolution list.

The second telescope is my Orion 12-inch reflector, now on its third life. At one time, TAAS treasurer Dan Clark viewed the same night sky with it. In a second lifetime, it was the telescope used by former TAAS president Sy Santos. There is of course no requirement that you be a TAAS officer to use this scope. It is my deep-sky scope, and I will be using it to complete the Herschel 400 list.

My third telescope is the Meade f/8 6-inch refractor that proudly rests on my latest purchase, the Orion Atlas Alt/Az go-to and

continued on page 7 . . .
New Loan Program Items Now Available

by Jim Fordice

I AM PLEASED to announce the addition of three new telescopes to the Loan Program. We have acquired three Orion XT6 Skyquest Intelliscopes. These excellent 6" Dobsonians are equipped with the Intelliscope Computerized Object Locator. After you perform a simple two-star alignment you can use Intelliscope to "push-to" over 14,000 celestial objects. These easily portable scopes will allow you to learn about the use of digital setting circle systems. Try one out.

Current telescopes available for immediate loan are:

- Orion XT6 Skyquest Intelliscope (three available)
- 6" Criterion Equatorial Dynascope
- 6" Meade Starfinder Dobsonian
- 6" Blue Base Dobsonian
- Orion 6" Skyquest
- 12.5" Travel Scope
- Celestron 8" SCT
- Meade 8" SCT
- Orion 6" Star Blast
- Meade ETX90
- Meade 90-mm Refractor
- Astro Tech AT80

Solar Observers: The reservation list for the Lunt H-Alpha is short. The scope is available anytime after December 16. Send in your reservation requests.

There are several premium eyepieces available for immediate loan:

- Tele Vue 13-mm Nagler
- Tele Vue 9-mm Nagler
- Tele Vue 22-mm Panoptic
- Orion 22-mm Lanthanum
- Meade 4.8-mm Nagler
- Tele Vue 35-mm Panoptic
- Orion Edge-On Planetary 6mm
- Orion Edge-On Planetary 9mm
- Orion Ultrascope 30mm

Visit the TAAS website and go to the Loan Program page to take a look at these items. Contact Jim Fordice at telescope_loans@TAAS.org if you are interested in borrowing an item.

tracking mount. I must confess that I paid more for this mount than I have for all the other astronomical gadgets together, including my very limited supply of eyepieces. This telescope will be used for what I intend to be an increased viewing of double stars. Later this winter I will attempt to again split Sirius. Gordon Pegue and I successfully split it a few years ago in my new barnyard.

So, the tools are in place for me to begin a higher level of observing. The equipment is newer and more capable, but the night sky still has the Pleiades, the planets, Andromeda, and of course those beautiful double stars. I invite you to join me in upgrading your observing efforts and together we will observe, educate, and have fun.
WHEN AN EVENT captures your basic heartfelt feelings it is a major event in your life and often hard to explain in a rational manner or in one that transfers your feeling to the reader. When your fellow TAAS members volunteer to go to a school star party on a cold full-moon night, in a not-so-good neighborhood, it gives me a sense of pride to associate with such a knowledgeable group of people trying to make the world a little better place and teach kids just a smidgen about our universe.

Our volunteer astronomers usually wake up, go to work, look at the weather and think “Uh!” What is the weather going to do and I wish it was tomorrow we had the star party. However if you catch them at the end you will see upbeat people who were glad they came out and will be back again. They meet people who have never looked through a telescope before; you can explain what a crater is to an inquiring mind. Sharing your knowledge is free and fun.

Roger and Linda Kennedy warm the crowd up with some solar observing just as the Sun is setting. If you are strong, you can, like Trish Logan, say “move this scope to the Moon” and trust a child not to wreck your scope. John Laning answers more questions for me than Google does in a day and wows the kids with pictures on his laptop even with a full Moon. Jim Fordice can calmly explain just about anything—must be all that underwater time and trying to be somewhat quiet. He has patience. Jim Greenhouse and Judy Stanley ran the planetarium like a Swiss watch. Bob Hufnagel is impossible to get rattled; he can set up the planetarium and be ready to go for telescope viewing all as calm as can be and then explain things to kids in a way they understand. Our Chief Astronomer Bob Havlen, is...well...the Chief Astronomer, and when he speaks it is like E. F. Hutton: people listen.

If you are looking for an entry into TAAS that has an impact on kids and an impact on you, come on out to our next School Star Party in December (check the Web page and make our VP happy).
Solar Astronomy Outreach
November 2014

by Roger Kennedy

Two days of solar observing at the Arizona Astronomy and Science Expo in Tucson. Conference was attended by TAAS members Becky and Shane, Mike Molitor, Jim and Ann Seargeant, Roger and Linda, and Tad LaCoursiere. Over 780 people came by to learn about the Sun.

Tad, Roger, Linda, Irais Strong and Greg (?) provided solar observing for the New Mexico chapter of the National Science Teachers during their Fall Conference in Albuquerque.

Timmy has been doing some moonlighting events this month. We started our Lunar Monday programs at the Natural History Museum. Jim Fordice, Jim Greenhouse, Tad LaCoursiere, Asis Carlos, and Roger and Linda provided scopes and expertise. We Also visited the Oliver LaFarge Library in Santa Fe for evening observing.

TAAS was also involved in the North Valley STEM education day at Valley High School. Some 491 Students and teachers engaged in various activities including our solar observing. The teachers “voted” our offering as the best of the day. We look forward to working with this STEM group at other venues.

In November we provided 15 educational observing events to 2,070 adults and children. This brings our totals for 2014 to 163 events for over 26,000 people.

Follow us at: http://www.taas.org/solar.html
NGC 7331, NGC 7335, and NGC 7337: The Deer Lick Galaxy Group

THE BRIGHTEST GALAXY in this group, NGC 7331, is a spiral—thought to be very similar to the Milky Way—approximately 40 million light-years away in the direction of the constellation Pegasus. Interestingly, the central bulge of NGC 7331 is thought to rotate in the direction opposite that of the rest of the galaxy. This feature does not, so far as I know, apply to the Milky Way. The mechanism by which this counter rotation was established is currently unknown. In addition to the two bright, and much more distant, galaxies NGC 7335 and NGC 7337, a number of other, more distant, galaxies can be found in this image.

This image was captured on October 23, 2014, at GNTO using a Celestron C11 Edge, with f/7 focal reducer, mounted on a Losmandy G11 mount. The camera was an SBIG ST400XCM. 18 x 10-minute sub frames were made at -10º C. The sub frames, together with dark frames, were combined using DSS. Further processing was done in Photoshop CS2.

—Vance Ley

New and Improved TAAS Fabulous 50 Website

by Dee Friesen

THE TAAS FABULOUS 50 program is about to enter its third year of existence. To make things better for 2015 participants, the web site for the program is being revised with new information and more advanced notification of observing events. Included is a tutorial on how to use the free computer astronomy software program, Stellarium.

New star charts are being prepared for each season and more photographs of the TAAS Fabulous objects will be included. The TAAS Fabulous 50 web site can be accessed from the left side of the TAAS web site home page at www.TAAS.org

Questions and suggestions can be sent to Dee Friesen at TAASdee@comcast.net.
Welcome to New and Returning TAAS Members

Corey Alden
James Carr
Guy Kent
Charles Rowland
Terry Warner

Donations to TAAS

GENERAL
Mike Crowley, Rick Hudson,
Guy Kent, Alison Schuler

EDUCATION
Al Brettner, Rick Hudson,
EP Middle School

GNTO
Rick Hudson, Alison Schuler

DARK SKY
Nathan Devilbiss, Rick Hudson,
Alison Schuler

SPECIAL PROJECTS
Rick Hudson

The Albuquerque Astronomical Society is a 501(c)(3) organiza-

Location, Location, Location

- Chaco Canyon
  6185’ elevation
  Latitude  Longitude
  36˚ 01’ 50"N 107˚ 54’ 36"W

- Oak Flat
  7680’ elevation
  Latitude  Longitude
  34˚ 59’ 48"N 106˚ 19’ 17"W

- UNM Campus Observatory
  5180’ elevation
  Latitude  Longitude
  35˚ 5’ 29"N 106˚ 37’ 17"W

For security reasons, GNTO location is available by request only, so please contact Mike Molitor, GNTO Director, for GNTO information.

Editor’s Note

The deadline for the next issue of The Sidereal Times is Friday, November 21. The newsletter editor’s e-mail address is TAASeditor@gmail.com.

Text: E-mail text as an attachment, preferably in Microsoft Word or compatible format.

Photos: Caption and credit needed. Attach photos or graphics in separate graphics files. Photos or graphics in Word files are no longer acceptable.

Monthly Membership Report

October 2014

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Explanation of Dues and Membership Renewal Date

New memberships will be posted as beginning the first day of the month regardless of what day during that month the check is received. Notice of renewal will be sent out the month before the due date. You will have until the end of the month after your renewal date to send your membership check.

If you fail to pay and renew at that time, your membership will lapse. When you pay on a lapsed membership you will be reinstated in the month that the membership was originally due. (If dues were due in March and you did not renew until May or June or July, etc., the date of your renewal will be in March. If your dues are due in April and you pay in March, your membership will still be renewed in April.)

In a nutshell, if you pay late or early your membership date stays the same and your next year’s dues will be due on that date next year.

—Dan Clark

Membership Services

for:
- Membership Inquiries
- Events Information
- Volunteer Opportunities

Contact Bob Anderson at membership@TAAS.org

for:
- Membership Dues
- Magazine Subscriptions
- Address/e-mail changes

Contact Dan Clark at treasurer@TAAS.org

P.O. Box 50581
Albuquerque, NM 87181

The Official Newsletter of The Albuquerque Astronomical Society
## 2014 TAAS Board of Directors/Staff

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<td>Steve Snider</td>
<td><a href="mailto:president@TAAS.org">president@TAAS.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice President / General Meeting Coordinator</td>
<td>David Frizzell</td>
<td><a href="mailto:vp@TAAS.org">vp@TAAS.org</a></td>
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<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Sigrid Monaghan</td>
<td><a href="mailto:secretary@TAAS.org">secretary@TAAS.org</a></td>
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<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Dan Clark</td>
<td><a href="mailto:treasurer@TAAS.org">treasurer@TAAS.org</a></td>
<td>505-771-4346 (H)</td>
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<td>Membership Coordinator</td>
<td>Robert Anderson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:membership@TAAS.org">membership@TAAS.org</a></td>
<td>505-275-1916</td>
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<td>Director / Volunteer Coordinator</td>
<td>Amy Estelle</td>
<td><a href="mailto:adestelle2000@yahoo.com">adestelle2000@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<td>Education Outreach Coordinator</td>
<td>Tom Graham</td>
<td><a href="mailto:education_coord@TAAS.org">education_coord@TAAS.org</a></td>
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<td>Director</td>
<td>Bob Havlen</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gnto@TAAS.org">gnto@TAAS.org</a></td>
<td>505-856-3306</td>
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<td>Director / Solar Outreach</td>
<td>Roger Kennedy</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gnto@TAAS.org">gnto@TAAS.org</a></td>
<td>land: 505-717-2601, cell: 518-225-7077</td>
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<td>Director / Events Coordinator / Public Relations</td>
<td>Lynne Olson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pr@TAAS.org">pr@TAAS.org</a></td>
<td>505-856-2537</td>
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<td>Director</td>
<td>Gordon Pegue</td>
<td>gpegue at comcast dot net</td>
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<td>Director</td>
<td>Steve Riegel</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gnto@TAAS.org">gnto@TAAS.org</a></td>
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<td>Telescope Loan Coordinator</td>
<td>Jim Fordice</td>
<td><a href="mailto:telescope_loans@TAAS.org">telescope_loans@TAAS.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Archivist</td>
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