UPCOMING EVENTS

MAY

5-4 Thr: Observatory committee meets.
5-5 Fri: Cuba star party.
5-7 Sun: First quarter moon.
5-9 Tue: Public star party at Bellehaven Elem. School. Call Education Coordinator to confirm.
5-11 Thr: Board meeting.
5-13 Sat: Regular meeting of TAAS @ 7:00 p.m. at Regener Hall on the UNM campus (see map on back)
5-14 Sun: Full moon.
5-16 Tue: Public star party at Hawthorne Elem. School. Call Education Coordinator to confirm.
5-19 Fri: Public star parties at Sandia Base and Zia Elem. Schools Call Education Coordinator to confirm. Ladies Only night at The GNTO. Call Lisa Wood for details @ 344-8308.
5-20 Sat: QNTO Observing Call Bill Tondeau to confirm @ 263-5949.
5-21 Sun: Last quarter moon.
5-27 Sat: Camp/Observe at Chaco Canyon. See article in this issue.
5-29 Mon: New moon. Memorial Day.

JUNE

6-3 Sat: QNTO Observing. Bill Tondreau to confirm @ 263-5949. Star party at Oak Flat Picnic area. Call Carl Frisch @ 272-7238 to confirm.
6-6 Tue: First quarter moon.
6-8 Thr: Observatory committee meets.
6-13 Tue: Full moon.
6-15 Thr: Board meeting.
6-17 Sat: Regular meeting of TAAS.
6-19 Mon: Last quarter moon.
6-24 Sat: Sunspot/Apache Point tour and camping trip.
6-27 Tue: New moon.

(GNTO: The General Nathan Twining Observatory)
(TAAS: The Albuquerque Astronomical Society)

THE MAY MEETING

The guest speaker for the May 13, 1995 meeting (7:00 p.m. at Regener Hall on the UNM campus—see map on back of newsletter) will be a representative from Phillips Laboratories. The subject will be a status report on the new 4 meter adaptive optic telescope that is now under construction in Hawaii. This exciting new telescope will resolve objects as well as the Hubble space telescope. This event will mark the debut of adaptive optics for strictly astronomical research applications.

The project, under the direction of Phillips Labs, should prove to be a most interesting subject for our membership. The individual that will give the presentation is yet to be named, due to a heavy schedule that the labs must maintain during the construction startup.

Most of the involved personnel are busy shuttling between Albuquerque and the construction site in Hawaii. The question of who will speak at our meeting will depend on who is in town at the time. As usual, there will be a social hour with refreshments after the meeting, so bring the cookies.

Brock Parker

PRESIDENT’S UPDATE

Astronomy Day ’95 was a fantastic success! We now have a new bench mark by which to measure the success of future celebrations of this international event. This success is due to the tireless efforts of many people and the exceptional efforts of their coordinators: Brock Parker, this year’s chief coordinator; Lisa Wood, our vice president and person in charge of procuring professional exhibits; Bill Tondreau, in charge of graphics arts and the society’s astronomy display walls; Mike Pendley, creator and director of our newest exhibit, telescope making; Bruce Levin, in charge of daytime observing; and last but by no means least Greg Hansen, our nighttime observing coordinator for Astronomy Day.

These people and many, many more deserve our most heartfelt gratitude for what they accomplished. The image of The Albuquerque Astronomical Society has been greatly enhanced thanks to what they did.

In other areas, our observatory committee has raised almost $200 in an effort to replace the items stolen from the General Nathan Twining Observatory (see the April issue of the Sidereal Times for more information. Remember that any donations you make are tax deductible. Your continued support and efforts to help are always appreciated.

One last item for this “Update.” The Albuquerque Astronomical
SCIENCE FARE

Science and Natural History
Educational Toys and Supplies

HELEN ZEYEN
(505) 299-3420
8246 Menaul Blvd. N.E.
Albuquerque, NM 87110

Society BBS is now on line! Yes, that's right, our own Electronic Bulletin Board Service is now "plugged in." Thanks to former president and long time member Steve Snider, we have our own BBS. If you have a modem and communication software, set your port to N, 8 and 1. Then have your modem dial on the dedicated line that is active 24 hours a day. The number is 867-4295. Have fun!

George Pellegrino, President

MONTHLY BOARD MEETING

Lisa Wood called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Last month's board meeting minutes were read by Heather Vogel. With the exception of a minority addition, Gordon moved, and Carl seconded to approve the minutes as read. Passed unanimously.

Gordon read the treasurer’s report. The current funds include: $355.50 in Education, $2780.84 for the Observatory, and $1816.07 in the General fund. We experienced a net loss of $414.16 due to insurance payments, supplies, and dues. Allen motioned to approve the report. Carl seconded, and it passed unanimously.

Gordon also presented the observatory committee's report. Two issues of importance were brought up. The first being the Isengard telescope. On April 8, the tube was cleaned and painted as well as an attempt made to strip the mirror. The guidescope is ready to be picked up by Kevin Beverage. Lisa Wood has the telescope mount. Tests after the removal on the 25” scope resulted in the discovery of floor vibrations and several methods to reduce that were discussed. John Triarchis and Richard Morgan are still working on the electrical system. Kevin McKeown is going to ask for a donation of several eyepieces from Koenigs. The second issue was the recent break-in at Twining. Jim Cox repaired the door to the facility. A discussion followed with possible deterrent mechanisms for future incidents. Additionally, Gordon read a list of all items that were taken. Finally, the dome drive will be installed May 13-14.

Jay presented the membership committee report. We now have members as distant as New York and Thailand. The new members are also requesting member packets which will be distributed shortly. Jay also suggested a new members' night with coffee, doughnuts, and telescopes. A date will be set later.

Brock and Jay also made donations to TAAS for the expense of repairs and replacement of equipment that was stolen in the break-in.

An Astronomy Day update was given by Brock. The pasting for the display panels will be held at Bill Tondreau's home. Explora/UNM will be in attendance as will Apache Peak, Phillips Lab, Meteoritics, NRAO, and Alamogordo. Brock mentioned that the construction and renovations at the mall will most likely be confined to the lower level. A rental van will be obtained to transport the panels to Coronado.

Brock also mentioned the Cuba Star Party. Participation will be on a reservation only basis, and he needs to know who plans to attend. There will be camping, several hotel rooms, and the dormitory available for overnight stays.

Brock will obtain the guest speaker for the May meeting, and Ellie Gates will select the speaker for June. Several future ideas for the meeting were also discussed.

Lisa Wood presented a proposal for an observer's program. It will include observing activities for all ages and levels. At the completion of each program, certificates of accomplishment will be awarded.

After several miscellaneous items and the distribution of newsletter articles, the meeting was adjourned at 9:51 p.m.

CHACO CANYON STAR PARTY

Observing In The Shadows Of The Ancient Ones

On Saturday, May 27, we will have our second star party and campground at Chaco Canyon, N.M. Members of TAAS are invited to camp, listen to a fireside talk about the ancient Chacoan night sky and observe through some wonderful scopes owned by the park rangers and fellow members.

This is, of course, a dark sky location, so the "seeing" will be good. This is your chance to see the Horsehead Nebula, and other elusive objects. Several large aperture scopes will be there.

The drive to Chaco takes about two and a half to three hours. There is a restroom with running water at the campgrounds. But that's where the luxury stops. You'll need a tent, sleeping bag, warm clothes and food.

We are meeting at the campgrounds between noon and 5 p.m. on Saturday, May 27th. At 5 p.m. there will be an orientation. You are certainly encouraged to arrive earlier and go on hikes and see the sights. Bring a camera and enjoy the many photo opportunities there. After breakfast on Sunday morning, Great Bear will lead us to numerous sites in the canyon to look at ruins and petroglyphs.

Additional updates will be announced at the TAAS monthly.
meeting on May 13th. That meeting is two weeks before the Chaco campout, and would be a good time to work out carpooling or car caravan details. I, for one, can take one passenger in my vehicle, but you need your own tent and equipment.

Come with us and observe In The Shadows Of The Ancient Ones.

Blair Johanson

OBSEVER'S NOTEBOOK

Cavewoman Astronomy

Many years ago I stood on the deck of our home in Utah with a family friend who was a professor of astrophysics at the nearby university. It was a crystal clear night, and it occurred to me that it might be fun to have a little naked eye observing contest with someone that I knew for a fact was at least ten times smarter than Mr. Brain on Jay Leno. Unfortunately the contest was over before it began. My friend didn't know where I was. Nothing! Now granted, his specialty is black holes, an object not known for revealing itself to the eye, naked or otherwise, but I'll bet it would have been fun for him to at least point out the central area of Cygnus X-1, and warn me that this is a very dangerous location of the universe to be chancing by in a Galaxy Class starship.

It was that night that I learned what other lovers of the night sky already know: many professional astronomers lack familiarity with the constellations, some of which have been passed to us from ancestors millennia in the past. As I mentioned before, this is not to impugn the intelligence of licensed astronomers, but only to point out what a precious legacy we amateurs hold and hopefully pass on to future generations.

Luckily this trend among the professionals may be shifting. It is not unusual to find UNM astronomy students observing at the Twinning site, and I'm told they are now subjected to more rigorous field requirements. Grad students in astrophysics run the Yale observatory open to the public on Friday nights, and undoubtedly have become quite proficient in the art of navigating the skies. Does this in any way increase their ability to unlock the secrets of the universe for us? Probably not. But naked eye observing is the common language of our species, the "Esperanto of astronomy," and I am personally interested in preserving it. The availability of the NGC Max. CCD camera and computer-assisted telescope to amateurs worries me a little. Not because there is anything wrong with them. In fact, I have finally come around to seeing what terrific additions they are to our hobby, and how they can even allow amateurs to continue in the time-honored tradition of actually doing real science. What worries me is our tendency to substitute these devices for working knowledge of the skies. Will the appearance of these affordable technologies come between the amateur astronomer and the night sky as the advent of computers, interferometry, and adaptive optics have for the professional? I sincerely hope not. In light of these concerns the Board this year is concocting some fun lists of naked eye, telescopic and binocular objects that members may wish to conquer. It is my hope that we will not forget to occasionally get back to the basics of 'Caveman Astronomy', and reacquaint ourselves with the night sky, if only for the sake of dodging those pesky black holes.

Lisa Wood, VP

ASTRONOMER'S ANONYMOUS

Have you been spending entirely too much time alone with your telescope? Have you circumnavigated the night sky searching for new photon thrills at the expense of your loved ones? Then bring your astronomy widows, widowers and orphans along with you on a trip to the National Solar Observatory and nearby observatory Apache Point. These facilities are located near Sunspot, New Mexico, not far from Alamogordo. This is about a 1 1/2 hour drive from Albuquerque. Camping and observing will also be featured, as well as a trip to Alamogordo's Clyde W. Tombaugh Space Theater and Hall of Fame the following day. Here is the tentative schedule. Watch next month's newsletter for more details, revisions or updates.

Saturday, June 24

11:30 a.m.: Meet at parking lot at Apache Point
12:00 noon: Tour Apache Point
2:00 p.m.: Tour Solar Observatory (public & behind the scenes)
6:00 p.m.: Dinner in Alamogordo
7:00 p.m.: Set up for camping and observing (place TBA)

Sunday, June 25

11:00 a.m.: Space Theater and Hall of Fame

Prices: Adult $5.25
Family $15.50
Under 5 Free

Questions? Call Lisa Wood at 344-8308.

LIBRARY NEWS

Many thanks to members for the following donations:

To Bill Tondreau for donating to our library the "Colors of the Universe" slide set. Nineteen colorful celestial objects are featured in this set—a real treat for the eyes.

To George Pellegrino for donating quite a few slides of interesting celestial objects, as well as many examples of different types of telescopes, from the simplest to the most complex.

To Bart Kinney Jr. for donating a set of 1994 Sky and Telescope magazine to be added to our historic collection.

My very short wish list for the TAAS library:

3. Any astronomy slides you might have, gathering dust in the back room.

Librarian

NMA OBSERVATORY OPEN HOUSE!

Since school days it has always been my dream to have a backyard observatory with a big powerful telescope to study the heavens, and after a year of painstaking work on evenings and weekends our backyard observatory was finally completed!

The NMA Observatory is located at New Mexico Astronomical, which is in the country north of Belen with beautiful dark skies. We have a 10 foot dome with a 12.5 inch Newtonian. Being situated on 2 acres, there is plenty of parking.

As many will tell you, half the fun of astronomy is sharing it with others, and that is why we are going to have open house for TAAS members. To manage the number of visitors, we are asking for reservations by calling 864-2953. Group size will be first come first serve and limited to 10 people. Dark sky observing nights will be the same as those for the GNTO. Please join us. We look forward to meeting you.

Sidereal Times May, 1995
DUES: Please note the expiration date on your mailing label. If you are due for membership renewal, you may send your dues by mail to our newsletter return address with your check written out to The Albuquerque Astronomical Society or give your check to the Treasurer at the next meeting. Please include the membership application that is sent with your newsletter when it is time to renew. Discount subscriptions to Sky and Telescope ($20/12 issues), Astronomy ($18/12 issues) and Odyssey ($19.51/12 issues) magazines, and books through Sky Publishing Corporation are available at a reduced cost when purchased through The Albuquerque Astronomical Society members through our Society. Include any of the above magazine renewal mailers and subscription payment as part of your renewal check. Membership dues are $20.00 per year and $3.00 per additional family member. Membership Packets cost $1.75 each for new members or renewing members without the Packet. Contact the Treasurer for more information.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES: Personal astronomical classified advertisements and articles can be submitted within 3 days after the latest Society meeting in order to make it into the next newsletter. Business card size advertisements for businesses related to astronomy are accepted with the same deadline as articles and personal classified advertisements. Rates for business card size ads are $10/ad per issue of the Sidereal Times, $7/ad per issue for six continuous issues, and $5/ad per issue for twelve continuous issues. The Newsletter Editor reserves the right to include and/or edit any article or personal classified or business card size advertisement. Computer files in ASCII format are preferred. Contact the Newsletter Editor for more information.

TAAS LIBRARY: Please call the Librarian at the number below to check out a book.

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**The Albuquerque Astronomical Society**

P.O. Box 54072
Albuquerque, NM 87153-4072

Address Correction Requested

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**- Society Staff -**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>President</td>
<td>George Pellegrino</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice President, Librarian:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary:</td>
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<td>Education Coordinator:</td>
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<td>Membership Roster:</td>
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<td>Event Coordinator:</td>
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<td>Board Member:</td>
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<td>Official Photographer:</td>
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<td>Board Member:</td>
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<td>Membership Committee Chair:</td>
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<td>Board Member:</td>
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<td>Board Member:</td>
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**Non-Board Members**

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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