Beth Fernandez discusses her experiences at Astrocon ’99 on page 8 of this edition of The Sidereal Times. What Beth fails to mention in her story is that she was surprised to learn at the convention that TAAS was awarded one of a handful of Honorable Mentions for our efforts in Astronomy Day 1999 (see the June edition of The Sidereal Times). Beth accepted the award for TAAS and presented it to President David Blair on her return. Dave displayed the award at the July general meeting.

Much has already been said about Astronomy Day 1999 so I will simply close this chapter with another thanks to all the volunteers that made the event a success, a big thanks to Beth for accepting the award for us, and a really big congratulations to Puerto Rico Astronomy Society—the 1999 Astronomy Day Award winner.
Sharing the burden was the major theme of TAAS’s first-ever special board meeting, held at Vice President George Pellegrino’s home on July 18.

I called the meeting so that we could look at TAAS’s long-term health outside the constraints of our regular, business-of-the-moment Board meetings—which have tended to grind on much too long since Mike Pendley, a skillful gavel-wielder, retired as president.

The long-term prognosis for TAAS is very good, provided we keep our eye on a potentially destabilizing trend: too much concentration of Society responsibilities. The danger is not abuse, but rather core burnout. Almost all volunteer organizations at one time or another overextend their most active volunteers, sometimes resulting in a fatal mass flight of those most critical volunteers. TAAS has overcome this danger before, and I am happy to report that the current situation is not severe. The members attending the special meeting attacked the problem with a vitality that leaves me feeling confident in the Society’s future. Conversations I’ve had since then reinforce that feeling.

We started out by reviving small things, which were put into effect at our general meeting of July 24: the positioning of greeters, the use of introductions and badges by officers and board members—all for the purpose of breaking the ice more easily when new members and guests are present.

We also began a review of Society committees and positions, and here is where our main work lies for the time being. One key position, Public Relations Director, has remained vacant since January, despite two false starts. Meanwhile, some of the more active volunteers hold multiple positions, each requiring substantial effort. The danger here is that the loss of even one of those volunteers could leave the Society in the lurch.

Our main hope is to find new volunteers so that some of the effort can be spread. A Society of 430 people should be able to achieve that.

Meanwhile, we will be actively maintaining current programs, but while the core is stretched, we’ll be holding it to that. Many excellent ideas have been proposed—scouting associations, research programs, publishing projects—but without people they must remain just ideas.

That’s not to say we’re stagnating. I can’t stress how successful our ongoing programs have been and continue to be. And I repeat: dynamic, dedicated leaders of the Society are looking at ways to spread the duties—satisfaction and opportunity along with burden—of the Society. We’ll be holding a second special session August 22 to continue that process.

I’m looking forward to seeing more of the hundred of TAAS members coming forward in active roles. To encourage that—and to discourage fears of being “sucked in”—I’ll repeat a pledge that I’ve made before. All volunteers are allowed, even encouraged, to set limits on their participation, and the Society will respect those limits.

**Wider Circulation**

In last October’s issue of *The Sidereal Times*, TAAS’s prolific writer and Skywatch author, Kevin McKeown, shared with us his observations of the far southern horizon. His article has now been reprinted in the periodical *Amateur Astronomy*. Meanwhile, Andrea Jones, a relative newcomer to New Mexico and a writer for *The Albuquerque Journal*, interviewed the Society’s president and included those comments in an article on recreational astronomy that appeared July 29 in the paper’s GO! section, the Thursday outdoors page. Good luck in the future, Andrea!

**New Member**

On behalf of the membership and Board of Directors of the Society, I’d like to extend a warm, TAAS welcome to a new member

P. Turtle-Bear Guillermo.

I hope your experiences with the Society are rich and enduring.

---

—the Official Newsletter of The Albuquerque Astronomical Society—
President David Blair called the July 22, 1999 Board of Directors meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. Other board members present were George Pellegrino, Robert Williams, Gordon Pegue, Robert Ortega, Allan Green, Kevin McKeown, Bruce Levin, and Carl Frisch. Other Society members present were Mike Pendley, Lisa Wood, Barry Gordon, Beth Fernandez, and Pete Eschman. Tom Pannuti and Rose Fernandez were also present. David Blair read the minutes of the June 24, 1999 board meeting.

Gordon Pegue moved to accept the minutes. Robert Williams stated that the minutes needed to be revised to reflect that $259.97 was transferred from the general fund to the GNTO fund instead of $335. Gordon amended the motion, George Pellegrino seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved.

The treasurer’s report was presented by Robert Williams. Funds on deposit total $4871.36 of which $1581.96 are designated in the education fund, $3631.91 are designated in the observatory fund, and the general fund has a deficit of $342.51. Gordon motioned to move $1000 from the observatory fund to the general fund (from the savings account to the checking account) as a loan. Robert Williams seconded the motion and the motion carried.

George Pellegrino presented the assets and EPPC committees reports. Society assets which include the observatory, telescopes, library books, etc. total approximately $100,000. George expects to have a vote on the Events Program Planning Committee issues at the next board meeting.

Robert Ortega then gave the Observatory Committee meeting report. The committee discussed the possibility of purchasing a manufactured home in the range of $5000 to $10000 for the Fall of year 2000 for sleeping accommodations (Sleeping Giant) at GNTO. A permanent structure could also be designed in the future to promote more participation at the site. Carl Frisch was recognized for his help in installing perimeter posts and working on a minor dome leak. A facility check out form has been completed for Society member use of the observatory. A telescope pier was made for the Astrophysics refractor for future installation. A windbreak wall is expected to be constructed at the end of the year for an installed cost of $1800. Gordon mentioned three goals being evaluated by the committee: being able to utilize the Astrophysics refractor for research and public observing, obtaining a mobile home for astronomer sleeping accommodations, and designing another type mounting to accommodate the Isengard Newtonian for public viewing and enjoyment. The July 10th weekend picnic was a great success. Carl mentioned that he can be contacted for any lost-and-found items from the picnic.

Much discussion took place about the use of the GNTO telescopes. Lisa Wood expressed concern about only using the Isengard telescope for fun. The scope can still be used for research. On formal GNTO nights, the Isengard scope is available for fun and can be used for research on other nights. Tom Pannuti inquired about the types of research. Gordon mentioned that the committee is open to different types of research that can be done. After much discussion, the consensus was that both the Isengard Newtonian and the Astrophysics refractor are good for both research and fun observing.

Allan Green talked about future grant opportunities with Intel Corporation. Intel accepts one request per year from organizations. Allan submitted an initial request for approximately $15,000 that could not be granted to a single organization. The Society is scaling down its request to look for a grant that will fund the purchase of a CCD, filter wheel, and computer monitor for a cost of approximately $4000. The observatory fund can be used to buy adaptive optics and software for approximately $1050. The proposed equipment will lend itself to more research type activities. Allan will resubmit the grant request for the revised amount.

The activity calendar was the next item on the agenda. Carl Frisch reintroduced the motion to add GNTO nights to Fridays and Saturdays on the monthly calendars in the newsletter. Significant discussion followed. Rose Fernandez suggested putting the word “optional” by the GNTO nights. Mike Pendley stated that putting GNTO down on Friday evenings would be in conflict with the University of New Mexico (UNM) Campus Observatory open house public outreach nights. Bruce Levin suggested that a statement can be made on the calendar that the GNTO is available any night of the month without having to list GNTO on nights that are in conflict with other activities. George Pellegrino suggested that observing at GNTO could be promoted with advertisements in the newsletter and general meetings. Robert Williams reiterated the concern about conflicts with public outreach activities. Mike added that placing GNTO on the calendar becomes a political issue when in conflict with other activities. Bruce stated that GNTO conflicts then become a perception issue by Society members and those people outside of the organization about Society commitment to other scheduled activities. Finally, a vote was taken on the motion with none in favor, 4 opposed, and 5 abstained.

Gordon Pegue moved that GNTO nights be scheduled for the additional Saturdays where no conflicting events are scheduled for the balance of 1999 and year 2000. The motion was seconded by Robert Ortega and passed unanimously. Gordon suggested that the observatory director, Robert Ortega, write an article in the newsletter advertising the availability of GNTO.

Continued on page 8
September 1999

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<td>Moon ~3° SSE of Saturn</td>
<td>Moon at perigee at 12:00</td>
<td>Last quarter at 16:18</td>
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<td>Venus 04:15/17:15</td>
<td>Moon at perigee</td>
<td>Moon at perigee</td>
<td>Moon ~0.8° N of Aldebaran</td>
<td>ATM Workshop 7pm, Valley HS</td>
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<td>Mars 13:15/22:30</td>
<td>Mercury at superior conjunction</td>
<td>Venus stationary in RA. End retrograde motion</td>
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<td>ATM Workshop 7pm, Valley HS</td>
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<td>Mercury at superior conjunction</td>
<td>Sun's north pole most inclined toward Earth</td>
<td>First quarter at 14:06</td>
<td>UNM (call to confirm)</td>
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<td>Saturn 21:30/11:15</td>
<td>Mercury at superior conjunction</td>
<td>Sun's north pole most inclined toward Earth</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Moon ~2.1° S of Beehive Cluster</td>
<td>Venus ~8° from Moon</td>
<td>Mercury at superior conjunction</td>
<td>Sun’s north pole most inclined toward Earth</td>
<td>New Moon 16:02</td>
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<td>First quarter at 14:06</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Moon ~0.7° N of Neptune</td>
<td>Venus ~8° from Moon</td>
<td>Mercuria at superior conjunction</td>
<td>Sun’s north pole most inclined toward Earth</td>
<td>UNM (call to confirm)</td>
<td>First quarter at 14:06</td>
<td>Moon ~1.7° S of Beehive</td>
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<td>• Moon at perigee. 57.4 earth-radii at</td>
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<td>Venus stationary in RA. End retrograde motion</td>
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<td>• Jupiter ~4° from Moon</td>
<td>• Jupiter ~4° from Moon</td>
<td>• Moon at perigee. 57.4 earth-radii at</td>
<td>• Autumn (Fall) equinox 5:30</td>
<td>• Board Mtg. (7pm @ PandA building)</td>
<td>• UNM (call to confirm)</td>
<td>Full Moon 4:52</td>
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<td>General Meeting</td>
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July Trivia Contest

The human mind tends to associate recognizable objects when processing the visual data for unknown or previously unrecognized objects. Such is the case with nebulae. Different people see different earthly things when they view these kinds of objects for the first time.

Which of the following objects is also known as the “Chipmunk Nebula?”

(A) M42    (B) M8
(C) M17    (D) M76
(E) M97    (F) M20
(G) M16

Answer = (C) M17

July’s winner was Tara Ransom

ATM Workshop

by Mike Pendley

The Amateur Telescope Making workshop is now in operation. The workshop meets the first and third Wednesdays of each month at Valley High School. Valley High School is located at 1505 Candelaria—the north side of Candelaria, just west of 12th street. The meetings begin at 7 PM in building A, room 7.

The workshop is intended to be a place where experienced telescope makers, beginning tele-
## October 1999

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<th>SUN</th>
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| • Last quarter 5:05  
• Cross-quarter day  
Hallowe’en  
• Begin std. time |
| • Moon ~1.9°  
SSW of Beehive  
• Mars at heliocentric conjunction with Neptune |
| • Pluto ~0.3° SSW of Juno at 0:00  
• Mercury at aphelion  
• ATM Workshop  
7pm, Valley HS |
| • UNM (call to confirm)  
• New Moon at 05:34  
• GNTO |

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<td>12</td>
<td>Osuna Elementary School</td>
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<td>• Neptune Stationary in RA at 13:00. End retrograde motion</td>
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|      |      | • GNTO Mtg.  
Moon at apogee.  
63.5 Earth-radii at 08:00 |
|      |      | • UNM (call to confirm)  
• Moon ~5° N of Mars |

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</table>
|      | • First quarter at 09:00  
• Moon ~0.5° NW of Neptune |
|      | • Moon ~0.5° NW of Uranus  
• ATM Workshop  
7pm, Valley HS |
|      | • Board Mtg.  
(7pm @ PandA building)  
Orionid Meteor Shower |
|      | • UNM (call to confirm)  
• General Meeting  
• Uranus stationary in at 01:00. End retrograde motion  
• Jupiter @ opposition |

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</table>
| • Full Moon 15:03  
• Mercury at greatest elongation east |
| • Neptune at east quadrature  
• Moon ~2.4° SSE of Saturn |
| • Moon at perigee.  
56.6 earth-radii at 07:00  
• Moon ~1.2° NNW of Aldebaran |
| • UNM (call to confirm)  
• GNTO |

### NOTES:

**TAAS**=The Albuquerque Astronomical Society  
**GNTO**=General Nathan Twinning Observatory. Call Gordon Pegue @ 332-2591 to confirm.  
**UNM**=University of New Mexico Observatory. Call the TAAS hotline @ 296-0549, or the UNM hotline @ 277-1446 to confirm.  
**ATM**=Amateur Telescope Making. Call Michael Pendley for information @ 296-0549.  
**PandA**=UNM Physics and Astronomy. Corner of Lomas and Yale.
You Have Mail
by Robert Williams

Robert Williams composed the following text and intends to e-mail it to as many TAAS members as possible. This may or may not have happened by the time this newsletter reaches your mailbox. He also asked that it be published in the newsletter so TAAS members without an e-mail address on file would be informed of the TAAS List Server — an exciting new service available to all TAAS members — ed.

For many years now TAAS has had a spot on the membership application for your e-mail address. E-mail has become one of the most convenient ways to communicate information to one or many individuals on one time. Until now, TAAS has done nothing more than place your e-mail addresses in the appropriate field of the TAAS database. This is about to change.

At the special board meeting held on July 18, 1999 discussion centered on ways to improve membership participation in TAAS. It was suggested that we should use the e-mail addresses in the database to inform TAAS members of upcoming events and board announcements. At the board meeting on July 22nd an e-mail committee was formed consisting of Pete Eschman, Mike Pendley and me. We were given the tasks of verifying the accuracy of our e-mail address data and determining the best way to use this information.

To insure the accuracy of our e-mail address data, we decided to send this message out to all addresses in the database. This will allow us to weed out undeliverable addresses. Please note that this message—and all future messages sent by the Board of Directors—was addressed to you through the Blind Carbon Copy option. This means that your e-mail addresses was not divulged to anyone else and you will not be bothered by anyone replying to this message.

The Board of Directors recognizes the general problem of unsolicited e-mail. We assure you that this distribution list will only be used to communicate important TAAS information. Messages will be as short as possible and only sent by individuals authorized by the Board of Directors.

The committee also decided to develop a method for interested TAAS members to communicate with each other via e-mail. A list server has been configured and will soon be made available to all TAAS members. Use of this resource is limited to TAAS members only and participation is voluntary. Your e-mail addresses will not be added unless you explicitly ask.

The list server is basically an e-mail relay. E-mail addressed to the list is re-sent to all list members. Individuals wishing to reply to a message may do so in a public way by addressing their response to the list or reply in private by addressing a response directly to the originator. More information on the list server can be found below.

If you wish to have your e-mail address removed from the database, please contact Robert Williams at (505) 839-2840. If you have any questions regarding this matter or you would like to add your e-mail address to our list you can e-mail any member of the committee and we will get you more information and add your e-mail address to the list:

- Robert Williams
  rawilliams1@compuserve.com

- Pete Eschman
  eschman@unm.edu

- Mike Pendley
  mycall@rt66.com

If you wish to participate in the TAAS listserv email discussion list, then you can subscribe to the taas-l distribution list by sending a message as follows:

To: listserv@list.unm.edu
Subject: <leave blank!>
Message body: subscribe taas-l <your first name> <your last name>

Example message body for a new subscription:

subscribe taas-l Pete Eschman

Note that you send your message to listserv@, NOT listserv@ (that is, there is no “e” on the end of listserv.) Be sure to send the message from the email provider you wish to receive the taas-l messages at. When sending messages to the listserv, the message body should only contain the appropriate commands, so there should be no footer or sender’s signature or other extra text. Messages to the listserv should be in plain text, not formatted text nor HTML.

Please remember to print or save the rather lengthy subscription acknowledgment you will receive after your subscription has been approved. TAAS specific instructions can be found at the end of the initial acknowledgment. This document contains detailed instructions, including how to unsubscribe from the list.

Oak Flat Updates
—The Lost Episodes—

Your editor must confess that he misplaced these stories. Here are the last two Oak Flat updates from Carl Frisch — ed.

Oak Flat Update
by Carl Frisch

Last month’s (June 19th) Oak Flat star party almost wasn’t. A late afternoon shower, accompanied by pea sized hail, made it necessary to close our normal viewing field. By sunset, enough of the sky presented itself for our normal viewing field. About three dozen folks and kids were treated to outstanding views of the moon, Venus, Mars, globs, nebulae, and galaxies through about 10 nice scopes; thanks everyone for supporting this iffy night. Bill Tondreau debuted his new 14.5” f/5.5 homebuilt—very good views Bill. Some clouds made the going a bit rough and shut things down around 11PM.

The next Oak Flat date is July 17, with a five-day-old crescent moon in the sky. Don’t forget to come early and join in on the impromptu potluck be-
fore things kick off. Directions: take I-40 about 10 miles east of town to the Tijeras exit, south on 337 (old S-14) for about 8 miles and follow the signs to the Oak Flat Juniper loop picnic ground. Additional information can be obtained from the Forest Service office at 281-3304.

Oak Flat...clouds again

by Carl Frisch

The July 17th Oak Flat star party was a wash out again thanks to the July monsoons. Kevin McKeown, Gordon Pegue, Barry Gordon, and Carl Frisch answered questions and discussed light pollution with about a dozen souls that came in spite of the damp weather. Jacklyn, Diane, and other forest service volunteers again provided scrumptious food including dynamite brownies. When most everyone left, only a star or two could be detected through the muck. Later, some clearing to the south gave way to heavy fog that rolled through in clumps leaving heavy dew in its wake.

Don’t let this discourage you from putting August 14th on your calendar for the next Oak Flat event. That evening a three-day-old crescent moon will be near Venus. Much later that evening maybe a few Persieds will still be visible. Come early to picnic or solar gaze before dark. Take S-14 from Tijeras for about 8 miles and watch for the signs. Again, this will be in the Juniper loop. Looks like this one was also a washout. More information next month — ed.

Sevilleta Open House Canceled

by Dave Siegel

Please note that the Sevilleta Open House, originally scheduled for September 11, has been canceled due to scheduling constraints (at the Sevilleta end).

TAAS Family Nights
(or—No More Whining—Just Mark Your Calendars!)

I sometimes hear that TAAS needs to become more family oriented. While it is true that a general meeting could prove to be a soporific concoction for our younger set, I’d like to propose that TAAS families mark our School Star Parties on their calendars. Let’s call them TAAS Family Nights!

These events are held free of charge, once a month at schools throughout the city, and are especially geared to families and new astronomers. You need not attend the school where we are hosting the event to attend! TAAS Families are officially invited to every event. This year our events are on Tuesday nights, 7-9 pm, clear or cloudy! Please come introduce yourselves to me (in the demonstration room) if you would like to get complimentary tickets to the Starlab. Enjoy our planetarium shows, slide shows, science demonstrations and brilliant “folks with scopes”! See the next column for the current School Star Party schedule.

1999-2000 School Star Party Schedule

September 14, 1999
Central Elementary—Belen—520 N. Main Street Take I-25 south. Take first Belen exit (there are 3). Go long. Across from McDonalds is the administrative bldg. Behind that is the school.

October 12, 1999
Osuna Elementary—Alb—4715 Moon Street NE On the NE corner of Osuna Rd and Moon St. Osuna is north and parallel to Montgomery. Moon runs between Eubank and Wyoming.

November 9, 1999
Queen of Heaven —Alb—5303 Phoenix NE Near the intersection of San Mateo and Phoenix. (Behind Big 5 sport store). Turn east off of San Mateo on Phoenix. School is right there on corner of Phoenix and Claremont.

December 7, 1999
Alvarado Elementary—Alb—1100 Solar Road NW Take Montgomery west—it turns into Montano. Do not cross the bridge! Turn north (right) on 4th street. Go a few blocks. Turn west (left) on Solar Road. School on left.

January 11, 2000

February 8, 2000
El Dorado High—Alb—11300 Montgomery Ave. NE Corner of Montgomery and Juan Tabo

March 7, 2000

April 4, 2000
Menaul School —Alb—301 Menaul Blvd NE Not far from Big I. On corner of Broadway and Menaul.

May 9, 2000
Sunset Mesa School—Alb—3020 Morris NE Near intersection of Eubank and Candelaria. Go east on Candelaria from that intersection. Turn north (left) on Morris.

Subject to changes and additions. Please call the hotline before you leave for any last minute changes. Thanks for your help everyone!
Astrocon '99
by Beth Fernandez

If someone had told me five months ago that I would soon win the National Young Astronomer Award, I would have not believed them. At that time the possibility, in my mind, seemed as remote as the farthest quasar. But I did, amazingly, and I got a new telescope, which I found is the cause of all the bad weather we are having this summer. So instead of standing outside in the dark on a rainy night shaking my fist at the sky, I went to Astrocon '99 in Washington state, which is the annual convention held by the Astronomical League. The trip was part of my award. Now that I’m back — and the weather is still lousy — I thought I would take some time to share with you all of my experiences.

The days were filled with talks about astronomy and the nights with star parties (when it wasn’t cloudy, of course). I saw a telescope called Hercules, and just its name says a lot. It is the largest amateur-built portable telescope in the world, with a 41.2-inch mirror, and stands 15 feet tall. I got a chance to look through it at one of the star parties. Next to it, my ten-inch telescope, which looked monstrous in my living room, looked like a pea.

I went to talks about the southern sky, searching for supernova, and astrophotography. One man built three radio telescopes in his own backyard. Another one built his house around his own personal observatory and some of the amateur astronomers had equipment which was far better than many professionals. These were astronomers with all levels of interest: from observing for fun to doing research with their own telescopes.

I met some interesting people. Story Musgrave, whom you probably know as one of the astronauts who repaired the Hubble telescope, showed us pictures of sunsets, beaches and even the aurora taken from space. David Malin, one of the most famous astrophotographers in the world, not only showed us the universe in amazing color, but also how he took the pictures, which are actually made up of several images using different filters. He took us through the steps of how he removed the blur and brightness to create images that are not only beautiful but scientifically important. I also had the opportunity to see Bill Nye the Science Guy, who tried to blow out a candle by using his hailed “Box of Science.”

The strangest part of the trip was being recognized by people I never met. People came up to me congratulating me and even asked me for my autograph. They all seemed very welcoming and seemed sure that I would go very far in life. They looked forward to the presentation I would give on the last day of the conference.

Did I say presentation? Yikes. I mean, I have given presentations on my research before, but this was in front of a national (dare I say international) group. All too soon my moment came. In front of a crowd of over 100 people, I talked about supermassive black holes and galaxies. And they loved it.

It was an experience, I can tell you that. But most of all, I came back with a desire to look a little deeper into the cosmos. I came back being totally inspired and remembering to dare to dream, even when and especially when others say it is impossible.

Now all I need is for the sky to clear . . .

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Board

Continued from page 3

for observing by members at any time.

Bruce Levin stated that the Brantly State Park activity, presently scheduled for October 2, should be removed as an activity on the calendar when asked by Mike Pendley.

Lisa Wood mentioned that LodeStar will be helping with the first TAAS school star party for this year starting this Fall. Lisa will be booking these school year activities starting August 1.

Beth Fernandez then talked about Astrocon, the astronomical convention sponsored by the Astronomical League. She gave information regarding benefits for astronomy clubs that are members of the Astronomical League. Lisa Wood inquired about the membership cost to the Society. Present rates for Society membership would increase TAAS membership dues. Barry Gordon suggested that the secretary write a letter to the League about the rate structure. Gordon Pogue mentioned that the only way to receive an Astronomical League observing award is to be a member-at-large via an astronomy club that is a member of the league or to be an individual member of the league.

David Blair discussed the special meeting that was held on July 18th to cover long range planning for TAAS. The outcome was for the board and members to provide greater outreach at meetings and events to everyone, especially new and prospective members and guests. The general meeting format and procedures were discussed to incorporate that philosophy.

Carl Frisch and Kevin McKeown agreed to write an article about the TAAS 200 Observing List for the August 28th general meeting. Dave said he would research and write an article for the September 25th meeting. Carl will search for a guest speaker for the October 23rd meeting. George Pellegino said that he will also look into finding future guest speakers.

Carl reminded everyone about the upcoming Bluewater Lake State Park Public Star Party scheduled for the weekend of August 7th and the Oak Flat Public Star Party scheduled for Saturday August 14th. Robert Williams provided details about the Bluewater Lake event. The state park service will publicize the event. TAAS will present a slide show and bring telescopes. There will be a group barbecue Saturday afternoon.

Old business items were then discussed. Mike Pendley handed out a drawing of the standardized Society logo for review. The logo is used for business cards, envelopes, letter heads, membership cards, name badges, the newsletter, and web page. Bruce
Levin, Gordon Pegue, and Mike Pendley will evaluate the dimensional proportions of the logo for the expected uses.

New business items were then presented. Bruce Levin suggested that an endowment fund, annuity, or other appropriate investment be considered to supplement future goals of the Society. Allan Green mentioned that various phone companies contribute a given percentage of their phone bills to participating non-profit organizations. Mike Pendley said that our bylaws prohibit investment with commercial entities.

Mike Pendley talked about the amateur telescope making workshop that he is conducting for the Society. Fees to support the workshop need to be determined. Mike moved to schedule the ATM workshop on the activities calendar. The motion was seconded by Gordon Pegue and approved by the board.

Beth Fernandez said that she would talk about the Astrocon event and present the Astronomical League award recognizing TAAS for its 1999 Astronomy Day activities at the August general meeting.

Robert Williams discussed the e-mail listing and list-serve for board sanctioned e-mail and astronomy related activities that was proposed at the special meeting. Pete Eschman talked about the list-serve that he established through UNM. Pete said that he was sponsoring the list. A message will be sent out to all people on the list-serve providing unsubscribe, mail hold, and e-mail address-conceal options. Barry Gordon expressed concerns about privacy with the list-serve. Mike Pendley suggested that people should request to be members of the list-serve and that explicit instructions need to be provided for subscribe, unsubscribe, and other options. George Pellegrino suggested that a list-serve committee be formed. Robert Williams agreed to chair the committee with Mike and Pete as members.

Good and Welfare: Gordon Pegue thanked Barry Gordon for donating two desktop and one laptop computer systems for the observatory. Gordon then brought up the topic of interaction of Society members and discussed the value of trust in dealing with conflict within a high performance culture. Gordon passed out an information sheet titled “Inclusion” which lists inclusive and exclusive behaviors. Gordon mentioned that he is writing a grievance procedure which will provide a process for setting up a grievance committee for arbitration and resolution issues.

Finally newsletter articles were assigned and the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Bruce L. Levin.

These minutes will not be official until accepted by the Board of Directors — ed.
Stagecoach Observatory

I received the following e-mail message on August 5, 1999. Under normal conditions, I would not run the letter because I was not able to confirm any of the details. However, this facility sounds quite fantastic so, in an effort to keep TAAS members informed on astronomical related events, I decided to run the letter with the warning that my (one) attempt to get additional details went unanswered. Please be careful if you decide to attend — ed.

FIRST LIGHT PARTY
Saturday, 11 September 1999
(sunset-to-sunrise)
Stagecoach Observatory
35-42'25" W 105-55'12" N 2212m
1045 Stagecoach Road,
Santa Fe, NM 87501

I will be completing a private astronomical observatory in Santa Fe this month and would like to invite the TAAS to the First Light party, which is basically star party at the new observatory with refreshments. Stagecoach Observatory is a private domed structure based on a Boyd “Large School Observatory”, a 12’ dome containing a 16’ Meade LX-200. There is also a roll-off shed for additional equipment. It is connected to my house by a ~150’ sidewalk, the last part forms a ~50’x6’ concrete pad which is suitable for setting up portable telescopes, binocular mounts, etc. 110 VAC power and frame-relay Internet connections are available both inside and outside. With luck, it will evolve into an amateur astronomer’s dream, though just the basics are in place so far. You’re all invited!

I note that it’s on the same day as the cancelled “Sevilleta Star Party”, so maybe this will keep your members off (lighted) streets.

Cheers,
Dave Weininger
505-988-7394
dave@daylight.com,

Elvis
(and Dave Sukow)
spotted in Virginia
by Mike Pendley

I can’t confirm the Elvis part but just before the newsletter went to press, I received an e-mail message from Dave Sukow. For you new members, Dave is a past Board of Directors member and past UNM Campus Observatory Coordinator.

Dave says that Gretchen, Carl, and he arrived in Virginia safely and are settling into their Lexington home. He feels bad that he was not able to get around to say good-bye to all his TAAS friends and asked that I say both hi and bye. Dave also said he is quite happy with his position at Washington and Lee University where he will be teaching Physics 151: Stellar Evolution and Cosmology this Fall.

You can contact Dave by e-mail at sukowd@wlu.edu.

GNTO... your observatory
by Carl Frisch

The 16” Isengard telescope has been refurbished with a new drive motor thanks to Bill Tondreau. Telescope tracking is now up to par. The scope has recently been rebalanced and recollimated at the June 5 work party. New flashing has been installed at the dome rotation channel so not quite as much wind and dust blow in. Weather proofing efforts are still continuing.

We now have a Telrad and star diagonal for the Astro-Physics 6”. The eyepieces now focus properly and makes viewing much easier. The RA drive motor and controller have been returned to Astro-Physics for repair. Soon a permanently mounted pier will be installed just southeast of the dome for the 6”er.

The PV (electrical) system is still performing perfectly. Total usage from the system is now around 156 kWh, up from 110 kWh last month. I’m at the observatory just about every night, so come on out for viewing or to get familiar with the systems we have there. A guest trailer is available on a first come basis. As always call Robert Ortega for updates, as I keep him abreast of my schedule.

Library News
by Lisa Wood

Book Wars—Episode 1
Before I have to get out my special Librarian Light Saber and do deadly battle with my favorite members (the ones who read!), a gentle reminder that I would like to have the following books returned ASAP. I’ve put your initials next to the book—NOT a reproach, just a gentle reminder from one “library felon” (just ask the North Valley Librarians about me) to another:

- Tales of the Comet (CR)
- Astronomy (FR)
- Splendors of the Night Sky (BH)
- Echoes of the Ancient Sky (AS)
- Star Testing Astronomical Telescopes (KM)
- The Cosmos (SS)
- Interactions and Life of the Cosmos (PA)
- Field Guide to Stars and Planets (AW)
- Windows into Creation (RO)
- The Astronomers #2,4,5 (SIB)

Web Page Updates
by Mike Pendley

Three new links have been added to the “Astronomy Links” section of the TAAS Web Page. They are:

- Universe Today: A site with space exploration and astronomy day news which is updated every weekday. See http://www.universetoday.com.
- The Space Port: Lots and lots and lots of general space news. See http://members.tripod.com/~adver/index.html
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. Call Dee Friesen at 856-1593 or Jason Vargas at 899-9755 and receive a loaner telescope absolutely free. You can choose from scopes with apertures ranging from 6” to 13”. Call soon because they’ll be going fast!

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.

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Ask about the TAAS member discount

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MEMBERSHIP: You may request a membership application by calling the Hotline or by sending e-mail to the Database Manager (see previous page). Applications may also be downloaded from the Web site. Annual dues to The Albuquerque Astronomical Society are $30/year for a full membership and $15/year for an educator or full time student membership. Additional family members may join for $3/each (educator, student, and family memberships are not eligible to vote on society matters). New member information packets are available for $3.50 (free copies are available from the Web site). 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 (see previous page) at the next meeting.

MAGAZINES: Discount magazine subscriptions to Sky and Telescope ($29.95/12 issues) and Astronomy ($29/12 issues) as well as discounts on books from Sky Publishing Corporation are available when purchased by TAAS members through our society. Include any of the above magazine renewal mailers and subscription payments as part of your renewal check (We recommend you renew 1-2 months early to ensure uninterrupted magazine subscriptions.).

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES/ADVERTISEMENTS: Articles, personal astronomical classified advertisements and business card size advertisements for businesses related to astronomy must be submitted by the deadline shown on the Society calendar (generally the Saturday near the new Moon). Rates for business card size ads are $10/ad/issue or $7/ad/issue for 6 consecutive issues or $5/ad/issue for 12 consecutive issues. The newsletter editor reserves the right to include and/or edit any article or advertisement. E-mail attachments in Microsoft Word, 10 point Palatino, justified, .25 inch indent at paragraph beginning, no spaces between paragraphs is preferred. ASCII and RTF are acceptable. One column is approximately 350 words. Contact the Newsletter Editor (see previous page) for more information.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Note that The Sidereal Times is mailed at a nonprofit organization bulk mail rate. As a result, the newsletter will NOT be forwarded to your new address should you move!! Please provide the Database Manager with your new mailing address to ensure that you receive your newsletter.

The Albuquerque Astronomical Society

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