



June, 2020

Notes from the President

The Big TAAA Event for June 2020, has been the same centering TAAA event for June, every year: The Grand Canyon Star Party! The 2020 Virtual Grand Canyon Star Party was scheduled for the same dates as the original event: Saturday June 13th through Saturday June 20th. As with the in-person GCSP, there was a speaker on an astronomy topic each evening and then the star-party segment will begin. For the Virtual Grand Canyon Star Party this year, there were four video star-party segments and each of the four was shown twice. Two of the four star-party videos were made by the TAAA Virtual GCSP Team and two were made in coordination with TAAA by Kevin Legore from Focus On Astronomy (Kevin assists with GCSP each year.). Viewing of the virtual speaker presentations and star-parties has been made available through Facebook, through the virtual Grand Canyon Star Party section of the National Park Service website, through the Grand Canyon Star Party section of the TAAA website, through the Grand Canyon Conservancy website, through Facebook.com TAAA Events or by checking the information emailed to TAAA members. The video arrangements allowed for viewing the individual videos at the actual times they were being shown for the Virtual GCSP or for viewing at a later time. **The videos from the Virtual GCSP are expected to remain posted for some time, so if you missed them and would like to see them, you still can. If you viewed them but would like to take a second look and/or share them with friends, please do.**

The TAAA Grand Canyon Star Party Team has done wonderful work on the GCSP throughout the last year and our special GCSP Virtual Team produced very professional, interesting star-party videos. All of us at TAAA who normally participate in the GCSP, of course, missed the wonderful shared in-person experiences of the GCSP that we are accustomed to having each year. But, it was a phenomenal accomplishment of our NPS Ranger, Rader Lane, to be able to conceptualize and actualize the Virtual GCSP this year on the dates of what would have been the 30th in-person GCSP. We hope that as many of us as possible will be able to gather again in-person in June 2021!!

On June 5th, TAAA held its second TAAA Monthly Member Meeting on Zoom. For the prior, or first (May), Monthly Member Meeting on Zoom, we had 69 in attendance and for the second (June) Member Meeting on Zoom, we had 84 members in attendance. A number of the attendees hung around after the June meeting for an informal, very enjoyable chat session where we not only got to chat, in general, but various members shared with us their recent observing or imaging activities. Several TAAA members have requested that in the future when we resume in-person meetings, we also continue using Zoom in addition to the in-person format. They suggest that the offering on Zoom meets more needs as some members do not drive at night, don't live in Tucson, or have trouble making it from work to the meeting on time. In addition, some have indicated the Zoom option would provide an improved way to deal with parking difficulties on UArizona ball game nights.

Some of the activities at the June 10th TAAA Board Meeting (also via Zoom) included:

1. Update on CAC Construction and review of CAC Construction expenditures to date.
2. Approval of TIMPA Current COVID Rules of Use (Contact Ralph Means, if questions)
3. Some Revision of CAC Current COVID Rules of Use (Contact John Mead, if questions)
4. A decision to instruct NVRC to begin the TAAA Election Process. (While the Board prefers to conduct elections through the regular in-person process, it has become evident, that we cannot predict how long it will be until we can hold large, in-person Member Meetings. We began the delay of the regular in-person election process in April. A decision was made at the June Board meeting to move forward and allow NVRC to proceed with a new election process that it has developed and recommended.)
5. TAAA will allow non-members to attend the July Member Meeting. While Members will be provided Zoom information to use to attend, the Zoom meeting will be connected to the TAAA Facebook Events page so that nonmembers may use Facebook to attend. This will allow us to experiment to see how well this system works for the Member Meetings and to verify that we can meet security concerns through this combination of Zoom and Facebook.
6. Discussion of the TAAA Bulletin. General information for the Bulletin should be in to the Editor by the 15th of the month and the Bulletin will be expected to be published during the first week of the next month.

TAAA Trivia!

NOTE: Sometimes people have questions, comments, or additional information related to content in the TAAA Trivia that they wish to discuss. If you do, contact Mae at ssmith@email.arizona.edu

Trivia Question 1: This month TAAA Trivia Questions that focus on GCSP have been contributed by Dean Ketelsen and Jim O'Connor. Question 1a: When was the first TAAA Grand Canyon Star Party? Question 1b: When and why did the month of the GCSP move from May to June? Question 1c: Who were the TAAA members that conducted the first TAAA GCSP?

Question 1d: For the second TAAA GCSP in June 1992, what benefit did the National Park Service provide to TAAA astronomers? **Question 1e:** What problem did John Dobson later develop with the National Park Service (a problem that was not generalized to the other astronomers)? **Question 1f:** After the above incident, did John Dobson ever return to GCSP? **Question 1g:** What were the names of the couple that used to provide significant help during the GCSP to Dean and Vicki Ketelsen (who started distributing red flashlights and handouts) and who were the subject of a GCSP t-shirt? **Question 1h:** Steve Ratts who got married at the GCSP, helped organize Huevos Rancheros for GCSP astronomers for several years. What was his dog's name and how did the dog daily entertain the astronomers? **Question 1i:** After several years of the GCSP, the National Park Service started assigning specific Rangers to be in charge of working with TAAA during the GCSP. What are the names of those NPS rangers? **Question 1j:** What was Marker's Surveillance Camera and why did she develop it? **Question 1k:** How did the O'Connors add to the attendance at GCSP? **Question 1L:** What is the highest number of infractions of rules in the GCSP free campsites in one year; which year was it, and what correlated with raising our typical number of infractions in a year from one or two to that vast number? **Question 1M:** What animal in the GCSP campground will break into plastic containers, and steal sunglasses and cellphones? They will also steal medicine containers and poke holes in any fabric left out.

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Trivia Question 2: Who were the members of the TAAA GCSP Virtual Star Party Team that put together the TAAA star party videos for the Grand Canyon Star Party?

(Trivia answers are at the end of this document.)

TAAA was asked to participate in the second **National Virtual Sky Show. Bernie Stinger** volunteered to represent TAAA for that event. It was a Solarbration, "sun party" scheduled for Saturday June 20th. In addition to TAAA, it was also sponsored by Feynman Observatory, Central Florida Astronomical Society, Emil Buehler Planetarian and Seminole State College, and the Fred W. Lawrence Whipple Observatory, and it appeared on Facebook and youtube. Thanks, Bernie for doing this for us! (Note: there were some technical difficulties with some parts of this show, but it is interesting and available at <http://youtu.be/2X14HXTQrSk/>)

On **June 27th**, **SMSIG** will be hosting an [astronomy education event for youth and families using Facebook](#). The event will feature several activities focusing on the moon. The activity will appear at Facebook.com Tucson Amateur Astronomy Association Event.

Some recent changes in TAAA leadership:

Mike McDowell is continuing as Project Manager for the Construction Project at CAC and can now be reached as cac-construction@tucsonastronomy.org

John Mead is now serving as CAC Director and can now be reached at cac-director@tucsonastronomy.org

Bob Reynolds is now serving as Chair of Strategic Planning Committee (SPG) and can now be reached at cac-strategy@tucsonastronomy.org

Access to recent TAAA videos:

1. May 2020 and June 2020 Member Meeting Zoom Recordings and

2. The Two Recent TAAA Virtual Star Party Events.

The four videos mentioned above may be accessed by TAAA Members by:

(1) Accessing the TAAA webpage at www.tucsonastronomy.org/

(2) Move toward the right across the different section titles until you see the **Members Only** section and click on that section

(3) Then complete the blanks by entering the email address you use for your TAAA membership and the password you previously set up (or you may establish one, as long as your membership is current) and click

(4) You will now be on the Member's Only page and as you scroll down the left side you will see a section titled "Videos".

(5) The June 2020 meeting will occur first; the second square with Mae's picture is the May 2020 meeting recording. The third and fourth squares with pictures of Jim Knoll and Bernie Stinger are the two star party videos.

Note: information about the current [CAC site use policies](#) and current [TIMPA site use policies](#) have also both been posted on the same TAAA Member's Only page where the videos are posted (follow above instructions).

Thanks to members of our CAC telescope team of Carter Smith, Mike McDowell, Joe Jacoby and John Kalas who participated in working with the builder of the 40" scope on several days of successful updates, adjustments and improvements on that scope. Alas, life challenges are never-ending and yet-one-more computer program update is still needed.

Answer to Trivia Questions:

Question 1a: When was the first TAAA Grand Canyon Star Party? The first GCSP conducted by TAAA members was in early May (NOT JUNE) 1991. Actually, the first GCSP was conducted on May 6, 1990 by John Dobson of the San Francisco Sidewalk Astronomers. Dean and Vicki Ketelsen were at the GC then, participated and decided to conduct a repeat GCSP using TAAA members in 1991.

Question 1b: When and why did the month of the GCSP move from May to June? GCSP was moved from a May to a June date in 1992. It was decided that the 1990 and 1991 experiences had been too cold, and that June would be much more comfortable for both people and telescopes.

Question 1c: Who were the TAAA members that conducted the first TAAA GCSP in 1991? Dean Ketelsen (who was TAAA President in 1991), Vicki Ketelsen, Mike Terenzoni, Derald Nye,

David Levine and Elinor Levine.

Question 1d: For the second TAAA GCSP in June 1992, what benefit did the National Park Service provide to TAAA astronomers? In 1992, NPS provided free rooms for 6 astronomers at the Albright Training Academy.

Question 1e: What problem did John Dobson later develop with the National Park Service (a problem that was not generalized to the other astronomers)? John Dobson gave a presentation at the GC including a statement related to evolution to which a visitor took offense. The result was that John Dobson was invited not to return to GC by the NPS, but the ban did not include any other astronomers.

Question 1f: After the above incident, did John Dobson every return to GCSP? Yes, in 2008 (age 94), John Dobson spent the year traveling. That year he returned to the GCSP and repeated the exact same presentation for which years before he had been invited not to return.

Question 1g: What were the names of the couple that used to provide significant help during the GCSP to Dean and Vicki Ketelsen including distributing red flashlights and handouts and who were the subject of a GCSP t-shirt? Valerie and Bob Goff were enthusiastic, important supporters of the TAAA GCSP efforts and often organized social events.

Question 1h: Steve Ratts, who got married at the GCSP, helped organize Huevos Rancheros for GCSP astronomers for several years. What was his dog's name and how did the dog daily entertain the astronomers? Steve's dog, "Yakta", would play with a laser beam for hours.

Question 1i: After several years of the GCSP, the National Park Service started assigning specific Rangers to be in charge of working with TAAA during the GCSP. What are the names of those NPS rangers? First was Chuck Wahler for a few years, then Marker Marshall for a few years, then Chuck Wahler was re-assigned, then Marker Marshall was assigned for several more years. (Marker served a total of 11 years officially with us and still volunteers as a civilian and joins us each year.) Our Ranger for the last few years has been Rader Lane.

Question 1j: What was Marker's "Surveillance Camera" and why did she develop it? One year there was no one to monitor the telescopes left on the telescope field during the night and Marker was concerned that they might be stolen or damaged. So, she placed some red lights high in the trees that from a distance looked like a surveillance camera.

Question 1k: How did the O'Connors add to the attendance at GCSP? They brought 2 to 4 helpful grandchildren with them who not only increased attendance but also added to the volunteers. (And, each of them is an expert at distributing your preferred flavor of Otter Pops!)

Question 1L: What is the highest number of infractions of rules in the GCSP free campsites in one year; which year was it, and what correlated with raising our typical number of infractions in a year from one or two to that vast number? In 2017, there were 57 rule infractions in the GCSP free campsite area of the campground. GCSP campers in the free campsites are typically very conscientious and create very few problems. In many years, the total number of rule violations have been 0, 1, or 2. In that particular year, also, the temperature in the campground was extremely high, the heat seemed to never lessen, and the sun by 7am just seemed to be everywhere.

Question 1M: What animal in the GCSP campground will break into plastic containers, and steal sunglasses and cellphones? They will also steal medicine containers and poke holes in any fabric left out. Ravens

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Trivia Question 2: If you look at the TAAA Grand Canyon Star Party Videos, you will see our TAAA Members, **Jim Knoll**, **Bernie Stinger**, and **Jim O'Connor** presenting material on the videos. **Terri Lappin** ran the Zoom recording sessions for both the practice sessions and the actual videos. **Ed Foley** was responsible for insuring that the TAAA logo was prepared correctly to be added to the videos (which turned out not to be a small task). **NPS Ranger, Rader Lane**, insured the quality of the video recordings and introductions and also managed the video process in accordance with the federal requirements followed by the National Park Service.

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