



# November, 2020

## Notes from the President

Months ago the Board contemplated whether we would be having in-person meetings by November and considered scheduling an in-person member meeting for this month. Our hesitancy in seeing COVID 19 as being over by November prevented us from scheduling in-person meetings that soon. When things are so unpredictable, many things can still work out well, as that decision to plan for a further delay in in-person meetings did.

We are grateful and appreciative this holiday season of the many things that have worked out well for TAAA this year and for all the pulling together and cooperative efforts that our members have contributed. Those foundational supportive attitudes and actions have resulted in our rallying during these difficult times. And, we have established a great base to work from in plodding through whatever the future holds.

Our hearts are also with our members who have experienced significant losses, or who are coping with incredibly difficult circumstances, or otherwise need to be less involved during such a difficult time. We miss you when you are not with us and look forward to filling that void when you are able to return.

At the November 11, 2020 TAAA Board meeting:

1. It was announced that Jim Knoll was appointed as Interim CAC Director.
2. The Board approved a list of proposed changes in the TAAA Constitution and Bylaws to be presented to and voted on by TAAA Members. The suggestions would allow for flexibility in TAAA election practices that would accommodate use of both in-person and technology-managed strategies in conducting TAAA elections of Board Members and the NVRC Committee.
3. The Board decided that although the usual Holiday Party would not be held this year, a holiday message would be sent from the TAAA Board to TAAA Members.
4. The decision was made to postpone the usual holiday sale of items to members to a later date when personal contact was more allowable.
5. A revised position description was approved for the CAC Planning Committee Director. (The name, CAC Planning Committee, replaces the former name of SPG or Strategic Planning Committee.)
6. A TAAA member suggested a change in TAAA's name and the suggestion was reviewed. The Board felt that discussion of the TAAA name would best be handled by waiting until personal gatherings were allowable and the topic could be presented for discussion in a TAAA Leader meeting.
7. A change in processing member applications and renewals through the website was approved. This change may result in some extra financial charges but should make the process easier for both renewing and newly joining members.

### TAAA Trivia!

1. What was the name of TAAA when it was first formed and what abbreviation was used for the name? In what year was the organization formed and named, and who was the first President?
2. What was the second name of TAAA and what abbreviation was used for the name? In what year was the second name adopted and who was TAAA President at the time of the name change?
3. What was the third name adopted for TAAA and what abbreviation was used for that name? In what year did that name change occur and who was the TAAA President at the time of that name change?
4. So, currently how old is TAAA? And how old is our current name?
5. After reading the answers to these questions, reflect on TAAA's current name. How well does it represent the focus and membership of our current club? What do you like about the current name? What do you not like about the current name? (If you have comments you are willing to share, email Mae at [ssmith@email.arizona.edu](mailto:ssmith@email.arizona.edu). I would love to put together a collection of responses "without identifying who made what response.")

Please note that the CAC Master Plan has always included the expectation that at some point there may be enough people interested for TAAA to be able to establish a group of Member Observatories at CAC. Names of people interested in the future leasing of a Member Observatory at CAC are currently being collected. If you wish to be on that list, please contact [memberobservatories@tucsonastronomy.org](mailto:memberobservatories@tucsonastronomy.org) The CAC Master Plan has

been in existence for 12 years and sometimes a member has become aware of the possibility of future member observatories and indicated an interest. If you did so, please do not assume that your name is on the current list of interested persons. Please make sure to re-indicate your interest now at the email address to make sure your name has not inadvertently dropped off the list over the years.

At various times over the years, some TAAA members have indicated an interest in pursuing Radio Astronomy but, as far as I know, we have never had a group of members have a real discussion about options in Radio Astronomy and how it could become a part of TAAA (or discuss the pros and cons of pursuing radio astronomy). In taking a more thorough look at the CAC Master Plan, we noted that it also contains the possibility of the inclusion of radio astronomy at CAC. If you have an interest in radio astronomy, have some thoughts about radio astronomy, know about radio astronomy, or would like to participate in a discussion/interaction (via email, zoom or telephone, at present) regarding how radio astronomy could or could not be added to TAAA possibilities/interests/activities (whether related to CAC or not), please contact Mae Smith ([ssmith@email.arizona.edu](mailto:ssmith@email.arizona.edu)) and Doug Smith ([alcor@tucsonastronomy.org](mailto:alcor@tucsonastronomy.org))

#### Answers to Trivia Questions!

- TAAA was formed in 1954 and that year adopted the name, Tucson Amateur Astronomers, which was abbreviated TAA. The first President of TAAA was named Earl Burch and he served as President for one year. The group established a regular meeting place using the Steward Observatory Building and a relationship was established with the Sky and Telescope magazine. Members often brought their telescopes to meetings and shared the sky, and a telescope maker's group was started within TAAA. That year there usually were one to six telescopes at a meeting.**
- The second name of TAAA was Tucson Astronomical and Astronautical Association and was abbreviated TAAA. Don Strittmatter, who was TAAA's third President and served as TAAA's President for 19 years, was President when the name was changed. Unfortunately, I have not located information regarding the specific year that the second name was adopted. Information that I have indicates that the name change occurred between 1955 and 1974. My understanding is that part of the name change related to the national project in which TAAA heavily participated that involved locating and viewing satellites in the sky. TAAA published weekly reports in the Tucson newspaper regarding data on satellites that TAAA had located that week. Also, apparently, part of the reason for the name change from Tucson Amateur Astronomers (TAA) was the development of the Tucson Airport Authority (TAA), which was a popular topic of discussion with Tucsonans and caused some confusion for our members. If anyone has access to the exact date or even the exact year of the name change, please, please, send the information to me. I would love to know.**
- The third name adopted for TAAA was assumed in 1978, and it was the current name of Tucson Amateur Astronomy Association, continuing the TAAA abbreviation. The TAAA president at the time of that name change was Tom Caudell, our fourth President. The name change reflected TAAA's heavy astronomy involvement in the new Flandreau Planetarium, and the TAAA Mirror Grinding Project, located at Flandreau. TAAA member meetings were held at Flandrau.**
- So, currently how old is TAAA? And how old is our current name? 1954-2020; TAAA is approximately 66 years old. TAAA was approximately 24 years old when it adopted its current name; so the name, Tucson Amateur Astronomy Association, has been used for approximately 42 years.**
- In the past, TAAA has changed its name to better reflect who the members are and what their focus is. And, logistical factors have mattered, as well. How well does our current name reflect who we are and what we are about? What are your thoughts and ideas about our current name? I would love to read them and to compile a collection of responses/ideas that we can use for reflection.**

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