

## Notes from the President—Mae Smith

So far 2021 is proving to be a time of action: Arizona topped the world in COVID cases, the U.S. Capitol was attacked, a new President and Vice-President were inaugurated, vaccines are being administered to our local populations. TAAA is starting 2021 in a similar “action” model. Already in January, (1) the Board developed increased specificity in our COVID criteria policy for use of TIMPA and CAC; (2) planning meetings happened in January for the 2021 GCSP, the Regional Science Fair Virtual Judging, and a TAAA Virtual Astronomy Festival event; and (3) the TAAA Board agreed on a plan for pulling together and making readily accessible a large collection of written and virtual TAAA astronomy materials that previously have been located in many places and often only accessible to a few people. In TAAA, we are starting 2021 with energy and enthusiasm as well as commitment to active movement forward in positive directions while still doing what we can to protect our members. We encourage all of our members to continue to be wise in protecting yourselves, to patiently hang in there, and to continue to work with and support our dedicated TAAA leaders who have been doing such a great job of confronting the challenges before us.

TAAA Board Activities January 2021 include:

1. In response to member requests, a list of specific criteria to be met prior to re-opening CAC and TIMPA was approved and will be shared with Members. (See below for the full criteria.) The TAAA Board continues to review all COVID policies at each monthly Board meeting.
2. The Board was updated on the work of the Content Committee and reviewed possibilities for specific organization of online access to TAAA documents.

Decisions were made regarding public and private access to various documents and types of documents (including videos, images, recordings as well as written). TAAA Special Interest Groups will need to make decisions regarding which of their documents they want made available to the public, and which could only be accessed

by TAAA members and if any would be restricted to leaders only. The collection and posting of these documents is a large project and will take some time.

3. The TAAA Board voted to issue a letter of support for the application for Dark Sky Site approval for the Chiricahua National Monument.

### Criteria for easing of COVID-19 restrictions at CAC/ TIMPA

1. The Site directors will allow no more than half the pad site capacity to attend. In the case of CAC, no more than 5 public pad, and 5 member pad attendees.
2. Those who are more than 1 week from their second vaccination dose, may register for attendance at CAC/ TIMPA when they send a photo of their vaccination card to the CAC/TIMPA director. (COVID protocols in place.)
3. General members will be able to register for attendance at CAC/TIMPA, under the distancing and mask protocols, when AZ state daily infection rate has remained below 1000 per day in the state for 30 days (AZDHS.gov data dashboard). RMO at CAC remains closed.
4. General members will be able to register for attendance at CAC/TIMPA and not be required to wear masks or distance, when Cochise and Pima counties both remove their respective mask requirements.
5. The RMO and the Learning Center buildings will be open to members without COVID restrictions when AZ state daily infection rate has remained below 100 per day in the state for 30 days (AZDHS.gov data dashboard). Site attendance restrictions can be removed AND
6. The following must also be complied with: When sites are open, everyone using either site will be subject to the laws of the county and state they are in.

The TAAA Board continues to review all COVID policies at each monthly Board meeting.

## TAAA TRIVIA

- 1.a. How many years has the Grand Canyon Star Party (GCSP) existed?
- 1.b. What are the dates for the GCSP for 2021 and how can I find dates for future years?
- 1.c. What have been considerations in setting the dates for the GCSP and why are they different each year?
- 1.d. When is the SciTech Festival this year?
- 1.e. Generally, when is the Regional Science Fair and is TAAA Participating this year?
- 1.f. Generally, when is the Tucson Festival of Books and is it happening this year?
- 1.g. Is TAAA doing anything for Astronomy Day this year?
- 2.a. Which TAAA Member in December 2020 presented at the weekly STEM Community lunchtime meeting (a group of Arizona science educators who have met regularly on Zoom throughout the pandemic to advance their knowledge of and teaching in science education.) on the topic of, “Astronomy Bringing the Stars to You” to assist teachers in considering how to present information on astronomy in their current classroom situations?
- 2.b Which TAAA member gave a presentation on virtual techniques in astronomy education at the online Global Star Party, January 12, 2021?

**Trivia Answers are at the end the bulletin.**