

Central Florida Astronomical Society, Inc.

PO Box 917701
Longwood, FL 32791

<http://www.cfas.org>

Mission

CFAS serves Orlando's four county metropolitan area. Comprised entirely of volunteers, CFAS provides astronomy related programs to public, private, and home schools (elementary, middle, and secondary) and the public at large. CFAS members support the operation of the local observatories (University of Central Florida and Orlando Science Center) and the planetarium (Seminole Community College).

CFAS membership includes all family members. All area students are encouraged to attend our viewing sessions. Several of CFAS's active members have been published in well-known astronomical publications. The membership provides a forum for the interchange of knowledge and ideas between the experienced and those desiring to learn, removing the barrier of age. CFAS's major achievements include the restoration and the continuing maintenance of the 26" Tinsley research telescope at UCF's Robinson Observatory. CFAS provides free training to members at Robinson in the use of the telescope. Upon certification, members may open the observatory on weekends for recreational observing and/or study and research. This telescope is one of the largest telescopes available for continuous amateur use east of the Mississippi River.

Programs

CFAS responds to requests for astronomical related presentations from schools, scout and youth groups, and community organizations. CFAS volunteers respond by bringing telescopes and related materials to the audiences throughout the metropolitan Orlando four county areas. Programs include audience presentations and telescope viewing with hands-on participation. CFAS also provides the television and radio media with material and live broadcast opportunities during major astronomical events, such as solar and lunar eclipses, Mercury transit across the sun, and alignment of the planets.

CFAS conducts monthly membership meetings that include one or more programs on astronomical related subjects, committee reports, and a social. In order to service the area more completely, meetings are held at two locations: the Seminole Community College Planetarium (Lake Mary Campus) and at the Orlando Science Center (downtown Orlando).

Any member, from novice to expert, has the opportunity to receive training and certification in the use of the 26" Tinsley Schmidt-Cassegrain (SCT) telescope, located at the University of Central Florida's Robinson Observatory. Through CFAS's small but growing endowment, it uses a portion of earnings to continually acquire a variety of scientific observation and measurement equipment for use with the Tinsley. This affords both members and visitors (during public viewing sessions) the unique opportunity to have hands-on experience without years of preparatory academic study. Capabilities include astrophotography, stellar photometry and CCD imaging.

In a joint effort with the University of Central Florida (UCF), CFAS holds

Basic Information

This organization is not required to file an annual return with the IRS because its income is less than \$25,000.

EIN: 59-1820784

Contact: Mr. Alan Hoffberg,
Treasurer

Phone: (407) 869-6900

Fax: (407) 774-7774

E-mail: treasurer@cfas.org

Income: \$16,511

Assets: \$71,228

Fiscal Year: 2002

Year 1977

Founded:

No. of 13

Board

Members:

No. of Full 0

Time

Employees:

No. of Part- 0

Time

Employees:

Volunteers: 21-100

Funding: This organization is seeking funds from contributions and grants. These funds will be used for unrestricted operating expenses, special projects, building improvements and endowments.

Locations Orlando Metropolitan

Served: Area

Board of Directors

Ray Jones, President

David Furrow, Vice President

Alan M. Hoffberg, Treasurer

Pat Weeks, Secretary

Paul Kronenwetter, Board Member at Large

Frank Sperl, Board Member at Large

public viewing sessions on the first and third Wednesday at the Robinson Observatory. These sessions are held during the Spring and Fall school semesters. Additional public observing sessions are held at two dark sky locations in the central Florida area. These sessions are held on the weekends closest to the new moon.

CFAS holds two major observing and social events each year: the Central Florida Star Party takes place at the CFAS dark sky site on the four-day weekend closest to the new moon occurring nearest to April 1; the Holiday Party takes place at Robinson Observatory in lieu of CFAS's December membership meeting at Seminole Community College Planetarium.

At the Star Party, CFAS presents lectures, demonstrations, workshops and other activities during the event. There is no charge to members, with a modest food charge to non-members, many of which come from other states.

Accomplishments for Fiscal Year Ending 12/31/2003

1. CFAS initiated and managed the project to refurbish and recoat the Tinsley primary mirror. This enabled the telescope to return to research status, and should provide for many years of excellent optical use.

CFAS raised funds through its members to purchase a TEC 140 mm Refractor for use at the Robinson observatory. This telescope compliments the 26 inch Tinsley Schmidt Cassegrain, and is available for research, student and member use.

CFAS also purchased and installed a video camera and video monitors for use at the Robinson Observatory. This video system allows for extended viewing by both visitors and students. This system also allows viewing by handicap viewers who are unable to access the observatories second floor.

CFAS refurbished its loaner telescope inventory. CFAS provides five telescopes for loan to members for up to a month at a time. Telescopes include refractors, Newtonians and an SCT. Aperture sizes run from 80 mm to 10 inches.

2. Throughout the year CFAS provided volunteer staff, telescopes and demonstrations for astronomy related educational programs at many locations in the Central Florida region.

Provided five nights worth of viewing for the general public of the Mars closest approach to earth in over 60,000 years. Over 5,000 visitors attended these sessions that ran until after midnight each night.

Provided three astronomical observing classes for members. Provided practical observing training sessions for members at our dark sky sights. Provided equipment and personnel to collimate member telescopes.

Established a new dark sky observing sight with the Harmony Institute that allows members the opportunity to use an excellent dark sky location two nights a month from two locations in the area.

3. Concluded a joint five year agreement with the University of Central Florida that ensures continual CFAS support to the university and access to the Robinson Observatory by CFAS members.

Established an agreement with the Orlando Science Center (OSC) to provide a second location to hold CFAS meetings. In return CFAS members volunteer and assist the OSC staff at weekly astronomy observing and educational programs.

Worked with several local governments in developing new local laws governing light pollution. Presented a Special Award to the city of Casselberry for its outstanding work in reducing light pollution in its

city.

Objectives for Fiscal Year Beginning 01/01/2004

1. Continue the programs provided to members and the public from the previous years. Develop and implement a marketing program to increase public awareness of the CFAS organization, increase membership, and increase the resources satisfying the community's demand for programs.

Continue to work with UCF to further assist their developing astronomy program and joint efforts to bring astronomy to general public.

Continue to improve the CFAS website and restart the quarterly news letter, Astrolog. Establish a members group website so that questions, information, pictures and other astronomy matters may be freely discussed and shared by the membership.

2. Design and implement more hands-on educational programs to encourage understanding and interest in astronomy.

Reactivate the CFAS Scientific Committee to encourage amateur astronomer participation in national astronomy research programs.

Become part of the NASA Night Sky program.

Reactivate the CFAS Scientific Committee to encourage amateur astronomer participation in national astronomy research programs.

Increase the quality of the CFAS astronomy lecture programs.

Develop digital astrophotography workshops for CFAS members.

Start work on establishing a permanent dark sky location in which an observatory can be built for use by CFAS membership to extend its public offerings to the general public. Present telescope locations are in light polluted areas that greatly limit observing opportunities.

3. Establish a yearly Scholarship Grant for a deserving UCF student studying astronomy.

Establish a yearly grant to support the SCC Planetarium.

Increase CFAS's endowment to enable the CFAS organization to expand its offerings without increasing the dues costs to members. CFAS seeks grants, donations, and legacies to augment the endowment.

Self Assessment

CFAS constantly monitors its performance by utilizing state of the art accounting software for managing its finances and monthly reporting to the Board and membership. Through its two Board Members at Large, CFAS maintains statistics and interviews participants to measure the effectiveness of its numerous astronomical programs. CFAS also conducts web site surveys.

Chief Executive Profile

CFAS President, Ray Jones is a retired Naval submarine officer who has been an active amateur astronomer for over 30 years. With an extensive background in nuclear engineering, the physics of astronomy first drew him to studying astronomy, but the joy of viewing the night sky has fully hooked him with a life long interest. Although retired from the Navy and the business world, he teaches Introductory Astronomy at the University of Central Florida on a part time basis. He is active in solar as well as deep sky observing and

astrophotography, and has recently completed building an 18 inch Dobsonian to compliment his other scopes. Providing CFAS members a meaningful organization to develop their astronomy interests and bringing Astronomy to the general public are his highest priorities as President.

Additional Comments

CFAS volunteers refurbished and assembled the 26" Tinsley telescope, housed at UCF's Robinson Observatory. CFAS has a lifetime commitment to help maintain the telescope for UCF, in exchange for the exclusive privilege of using the facility on weekends for observing and other astronomy related activities. The observatory includes a classroom as well as a control room, yet to be furnished with remote control equipment. The awesome thrill of astronomy becomes a reality, as CFAS members watch the thrill experienced by the public during its monthly viewing sessions and other public presentations. The network and local television media also take advantage of CFAS's expertise and program offerings preceding and during major astronomical events.

Financial Data

Revenue and Expenses: Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2002

| Revenue | | Expenses | |
|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Contributions | \$7,803 | Program Services | \$7,108 |
| Government Grants | \$0 | Administration | \$1,100 |
| Program Services | \$0 | Other | \$0 |
| Investments | \$4,015 | Total Expenditures | \$8,208 |
| Special Events | \$241 | | |
| Sales | \$0 | | |
| Other | \$4,451 | | |
| Total Revenue | \$16,511 | NET GAIN/LOSS | \$8,303 |

Balance Sheet: Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2002

Notes

The balance sheet gives a snapshot of the financial health of an organization at a particular point in time. An organization's total assets should generally exceed its total liabilities, or it cannot long survive, but the types of assets and liabilities also must be considered. For instance, an organization's current assets (cash, receivables, securities, etc.) should be sufficient to cover its current liabilities (payables, deferred revenue, current year loan and note payments). Otherwise, the organization may face solvency problems. On the other hand, an organization whose cash and equivalents greatly exceed its current liabilities might not be putting its money to best use.

| Assets | Jan 1, 2002 | Dec 31, 2002 | Change |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Cash & Equivalent | \$2,889 | \$6,490 | \$3,601 |
| Accounts Receivable | \$(1,721) | \$2,375 | \$4,096 |
| Pledges & Grants Receivable | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Receivables/Other | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Inventories for Sale or Use | \$0 | \$1,754 | \$1,754 |
| Investments/Securities | \$57,547 | \$57,055 | \$(492) |
| Investments/Other | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Fixed Assets | \$2,133 | \$2,834 | \$701 |
| Other | \$1,547 | \$720 | \$(827) |
| Total Assets | \$62,395 | \$71,228 | \$8,833 |
| Liabilities | Jan 1, 2002 | Dec 31, 2002 | Change |
| Accounts Payable | \$73 | \$35 | \$(38) |
| Grants Payable | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Deferred Revenue | \$183 | \$0 | \$(183) |
| Loans and Notes | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Tax-Exempt Bond Liabilities | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Other | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Total Liabilities | \$256 | \$35 | \$(221) |
| FUND BALANCE | \$62,139 | \$71,193 | \$9,054 |

Comments from the organization

Gross Revenues: Cash \$9,490

Includes dues and voluntary contributions

Donations in Kind: \$53,800

The organization files a Form 990 even though the IRS regulations do not require it.

As a condition of using this site, you agree to follow GuideStar's [policies](#), including the stipulation that the GuideStar site is for personal, informational use only. Any other use, including resale of the information or use for commercial gain, is prohibited, except in accordance with a GuideStar licensing agreement.

GuideStar is the registered trademark and operating name of Philanthropic Research, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
Copyright 2004, Philanthropic Research, Inc. All Rights Reserved.