

AOC NEWS



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Notes from the A.D.

-Jim Ulvestad

In late September, Fred Lo, Peter Napier, and Rick Perley visited the National Science Foundation to present a progress report on the VLA Expansion (EVLA) Project. The formal project now has been under way for more than a year. Preliminary design reviews for all major subsystems have been completed, and fiber optics will start going in the ground this autumn. A VLA antenna will be instrumented with prototypes in the spring and will become the EVLA test antenna, to be used for development of production models of various subsystems and components.

Congratulations to all those who participated in the successful change of the azimuth bearing on VLA antenna 7 between September 17 and 19. This is the sixth such bearing change that has been carried out since 1990, and is truly an impressive operation. For those of you who want to view a bearing change virtually, there is a blow-by-blow description, with images, available on the web at <http://www.aoc.nrao.edu/vla/html/work/azbear.html> (Thanks, Robyn!) Antenna 7 will come out of the barn and rejoin the array in October.

Three new Jansky postdoctoral fellows arrived at the AOC in September. Eva Schinnerer earned her Ph.D. from Ludwig-Maximilians University in Munich in 1999, and works on molecular gas dynamics in nearby galaxies. Prior to coming to Socorro, Eva was a postdoctoral scholar at the Millimeter Array at Caltech's Owens Valley Radio Observatory. Yancy Shirley received his Ph.D. from the University of Texas in 2002. He studies the early phases of high- and low-mass star formation. Fabian Walter got his Ph.D. from Bonn University in 1999 (after a Masters degree from the University of New Mexico), and studies the gaseous content of starburst and dwarf galaxies. He also was a postdoc at Caltech's Millimeter Array before coming to NRAO. We welcome all three of the new postdocs, and look forward to some new and exciting scientific results from them over the next several years.

The 18th Annual New Mexico Symposium and the Karl Jansky Lecture will be held in Socorro, on Friday, November 1, 2002. The New Mexico Symposium gathers astronomers from New Mexico and neighboring states for a day of presentations on scientific, engineering, and educational subjects, to help support the network of scientific research in the Southwest. For further information see



Dr. Shrinivas (Shri) Kulkarni
Recipient of the 2002 Jansky Lectureship

<http://www.aoc.nrao.edu/~dshe/nmsymposium02/>.

The Karl Jansky Lecture will be given by Professor Shrinivas

Kulkarni, of the California Institute of Technology. The lecture is entitled "The Brightest Explosions in the Universe," and will be presented at 8:00 p.m., on November 1, 2002, at Macey Center. All employees and families are invited and encouraged to attend.

Welcome aboard

James Anderson, Eva Schinnerer, Yancy Shirley and Fabian Walter, Basic Research; Peter Whiteis and Frank Zhang, Computing; Christopher Patscheck, Electronics Co-op.; Michael Pursley, Data Management.

VLA SITE ACTIVITY

- Lew Serna

This year's End of Summer Party was held at the VLA on Thursday, September 26, 2002. For several years, the ES Division has hosted the End of Summer Party. The party is held to celebrate the end of the summer work, where much of the VLA and VLBA major infrastructure maintenance and upgrading is performed. A great deal of support and contributions from other Divisions is required to accomplish the busy work schedule, and we thank everyone.

This year Tiger Teams visited VLBA Hancock, VLBA St. Croix and VLBA Mauna Kea. Special maintenance teams visited VLBA North Liberty and VLBA Los Alamos to make track repairs. Several temporary workers were hired to help with VLA antenna painting, Site track work and auto shop maintenance. Temporary helper Richard Torres assisted in the auto shop in supporting all groups in keeping vehicles and other special equipment running. Carl Cano and Wade Dixon worked on track repairing four intersections and replacing over 3,500 ties between BN6 - AN5 and between AN6 - AN7. Temporary painters Carlos Soto and Jay Apachito, helped the Antenna Mechanics in painting the final four antennas this year.

A delicious pit barbecue (beef), cooked by the Track Crew, with trimmings prepared by other employees (and their "significant others") was served by the ES Division Supervisors. Neighboring ranchers and retirees were invited and many NRAO/NM employees attended along with the other lucky visitors.

NEWS FROM HUMAN RESOURCES

- Allen Lewis

The HR Department has just received notification that flu shot vaccines are available. We will be scheduling the annual flu shot event soon - please watch your e-mail and the bulletin boards for details.

The HR Department will be presenting two talks in October. The first will focus on our Prescription Plan, the second on the Flexible Spending (FLEX) Accounts. The talks will be presented at the AOC on October 17, 2002 and at the VLA on October 24, 2002.

That's Not What I Meant.....You have the right to work in an environment that is free of harassment and hostility. If anyone has questions about harassment and NRAO's policy on the matter, please call the HR Department. If you feel that you're a victim of harassment, you are encouraged, even required, to promptly report the act to your

supervisor, another member of management or to the HR department. A good rule of thumb - if you can't say it in front of a kindergarten class, you probably shouldn't say it at all!

PUBLIC EDUCATION AT WORK -Robyn Harrison
"Ladies and Gentlemen, a Journey of Discovery." With these words, on September 26, 2002, Richard Murillo introduced the brand new, blockbuster, VLA Visitors Center video, to a standing room only crowd in the VLA cafeteria. Of course, it was standing room only because it was the annual 'End of Summer party and lunch,' for which there are always more people than chairs. The group was treated to the first public viewing of the film that has been six months in the making. Directed and edited by ESI, Inc., the Charlottesville company responsible for the ALMA video, the ten-minute film gives a brief yet understandable overview of radio astronomy and the VLA as an interferometer.

The VLA debut was actually a video tape of the final draft. The format for the visitors center will be DVD, playing on a 60" Mitsubishi large screen TV that will be installed the first week in Oct. 2002, in time for our public tours on Oct. 6, 2002. A showing is scheduled in the AOC Auditorium at the monthly birthday party on Oct. 9, 2002.

DVD and VHS copies will soon be available for purchase. Future DVDs consisting of the VLA, ALMA, and GBT videos are also in the works, as well as an interactive CD.

Thank you to all NRAO employees who contributed their time and effort (and talent!) to this production. You make us look so good!

Public Tour

On Sunday, Oct. 6, 2002, interested employees have an opportunity to show off the VLA and the science we do during an open house for the general public. Visitors to the Albuquerque Balloon Festival, Trinity Site, and Enchanted Skies Star Party are expected to take advantage of our fall quarter tours, as advertised in New Mexico Magazine this month. The tours will run every half hour from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m., with each tour taking about an hour and a half. Of special interest will be our new video as well as a demonstration of our Small Radio Telescope. Lunch and transportation will be provided for volunteers. We still need a couple more tour guides. If you're interested, please see Robyn Harrison.

OPEN INVITATION -The NRAO-NM Employee Committee

The NRAO-NM Employee Committee members invite all NRAO-NM staff to contact them with ideas and/or suggestions for improving the work environment at the AOC and VLA. In addition, please contact us if you are interested in volunteering to serve on the Employee Committee. Current members are:

Laurel Armijo, Tom Baldwin, Claire Chandler, Charley Chavez, Marie Glendenning, Bill Hancock, Wayne Koski, Patty Lindsey, Melcolm Peralta, Peggy Perley, Sheila Reasner, Paul Savedra, Boyd Waters and Brent Willoughby.

OCTOBER SKIES -Jon Spargo, NM Tech Astronomy Club

Fall is my favorite time of the year and October the best month for stargazing in these here parts! Skies in New Mexico are at their clearest and evenings are cool but not too cold. Speaking of Fall, please remember that Daylight Savings Time ends on October 27th this year. On that date you'll need to set your clocks back 1 hour: "spring forward—fall back."

As well, don't forget the Enchanted Skies Star Party (ESSP), taking place October 3-6, 2002. Registration for ESSP, including registration for the one night event at the Pound Ranch on the 5th (including the barbecue dinner), can be organized by contacting the Chamber of Commerce (835-0424). Also remember that on Friday the 4th, the ESSP's keynote lecture at Macey Center at 7:00 p.m., and the

following star party, at the Etscorn Campus Observatory, are both free and open to the general public.

This month the moon will be new on the 6th, first quarter on the 13th, full on the 21st and last quarter on the 29th. If you're an early bird you can watch the waning moon and use it as a planet finder as it moves past Jupiter, Mars and Mercury beginning on the 2nd and ending on the 5th.

Going, going, going, gone! Venus will depart from the evening sky by the end of the month and will be lost from view for several weeks before appearing again as a "morning star." Venus is now very bright and just above the southwest horizon just after sunset.

Saturn now rises around midnight and by the end of the month, after daylight savings time is over, Jupiter will as well. Both will continue to rise steadily in the evening sky as we head towards winter. If you have a small telescope, you might like to watch an interesting occultation involving two of Jupiter's moons. On the 17th, at 0338 to 0342 MDT, Jupiter's moon Europa partially occults the moon Io. Lasting only four minutes, it gives you an idea of the rapid movement of Jupiter's large moons.

Mars and Mercury rise in the due east at about the beginning of morning twilight. Mars will be visible, although very dim, for the whole month while Mercury will only be visible during the middle two weeks of the month. On the 18th Mercury will reach its greatest illuminated extent.

This month's web site features the planets and the solar system. Called "The Nine Planets." It can be found at: <http://seds.lpl.arizona.edu/nineplanets/nineplanets/nineplanets.html>. This is a great site and is very useful for students seeking information on any of the members of our solar system.

TIPS ON FILLING OUT BI-WEEKLY TIME CARDS -Brad Strong

Many of you are familiar with the e-mail message sent out every couple of weeks giving a "friendly" reminder that time cards are due. Fiscal. Thanks to everyone for sending time cards in on time. It is important time cards be received when due. Many things have to be done once the time cards are received in the Fiscal department, coding, checking, data entry etc., with little time to get it done.

Lately we've received some calls about how to figure bi-weekly hours, especially when some hour "juggling" is going on. Bi-weekly employee hours are figured on a weekly basis. If circumstances arise and you weren't able to put in a full workday and you plan to work additional hours to make up the difference, please remember, **make-up hours have to be worked in the same week**. If 39 hours are worked this week and 41 are worked next, the hours add up to 80, but the way it actually works out is 79 regular hours worked and 1 hour at time and a half. This is because the extra hour worked was over the 40 hour workweek and did not coincide with the week that was short an hour.

It is also helpful to remember that EOS (Emergency Operation Status) and Holiday hours are considered hours worked. The exception is California, where a different set of rules applies. Employees based there should contact their supervisor or Fiscal.

If you have questions or concerns regarding bi-weekly payroll, contact your supervisor or Fiscal (Nancy Ortiz or Brad Strong) at extension 7444 or 7448.

SAFETY TIP.....WINTER HEATING -Jon Spargo, Safety Officer

As the days grow shorter and cooler, fireplace, wood stove, pellet stove and furnace season is almost upon us. Time for inspection and maintenance to get them ready for the winter season. Make sure your chimney is clean! And, don't forget to check the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) detectors. Both detector types are recommended if you use any of the systems listed above.