

NRAO NM NEWS

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NOTES FROM THE AD

In the last edition of this column, I discussed the NSF Senior Review of their operating facilities. The NRAO response to the Senior Review was submitted on July 31, 2005, and may be found on the web at <http://www.nrao.edu>. Employees should feel free to take a look at this document in order to understand better the long-term vision for NRAO, as well as the exciting science we aim to be doing in 2011. Of course, the document was produced through heroic efforts, sometimes on short notice, by a number of NRAO employees at different locations; as such, it represents the results of some consensus among the Senior NRAO and AUI Management and Scientific Staff.

There will be all-hands meetings at the AOC and the VLA site on August 16. Topics will include the Senior Review, the ever-popular budget guessing game, updates on the recent progress of EVLA and ALMA, and a few other items.

As many of you know, Greg Taylor will be leaving NRAO on August 12, 2005, to join the faculty at the University of New Mexico. Over my years as A.D., I have relied on Greg as a Division Head, and would like to thank him for all his contributions to NRAO. Since he's just moving up the road, we look forward to seeing Greg in Socorro frequently in his new capacity.

And oh yes, I almost forgot to mention that we really are giving raises in October! Division Heads are working on their recommendations now, and we should have raises in place beginning on October 1, 2005. We think our employees really are worth bigger increases than our budget will allow. But in an environment of apparent flat funding for the National Science Foundation, the raises are a sign that NRAO and AUI recognize the value of all our employees, and the excellent contributions you all make to the organization and to our Scientific Community.

Jim Ulvestad

WELCOME

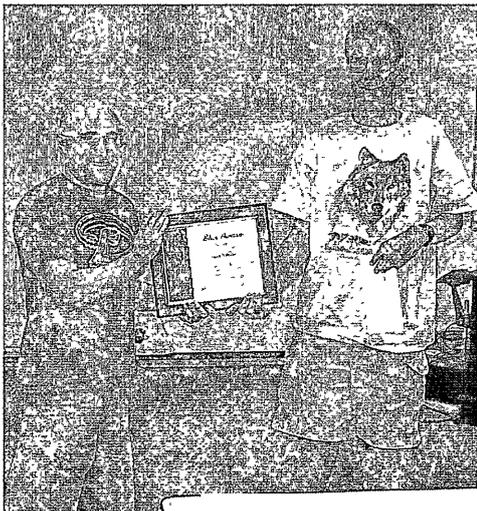
Connie Angel, Rafael Hiriart, Thomas Juerges, Mario Torres ALMA; Jared Simon, (Co-op), Kathleen Young, DSAA-Basic Research; Charles Kutz, Electronics; Jimmie Stuteville, Safety.

CONGRATULATIONS

Ryan Johnson, VLA Array Operator since February 2003, recently received NRAO's

Star Award for his outstanding service to the observatory. In addition to doing an excellent job of keeping the array running, Ryan tackled AIPS, learning to reduce data for our weekly system tests. He also took on the task of preparing the weekly tipping data and preparing the high frequency plots for

our web pages. Ryan prepared the monthly operator schedule and



Ryan Johnson receives his Star Award from Jim Ulvestad, Asst. Dir., Socorro Operations.

assisted with the monthly observing schedule.

Ryan is a graduate of New Mexico Tech, with a major in Astrophysics and a minor in Applied Mathematics. He has been a teaching assistant at Arizona State Univ. and the Univ. of New Mexico. As a Research Assistant for NSF, at the Univ. of New Mexico and the Univ. of Utah, he built and tested optical apparatus for a nitrogen laser and photometer.

Ryan has recently been accepted into the graduate program at Dartmouth College and will be leaving us the end of August. We are very sorry to see Ryan leave, but wish him continued success in his career. We hope he will return to us one day as an astronomer.

David Midgett, a VLA Array Operator since October 2002, has been promoted to the position of Lead Operator. Along with his regular duties as VLA Operator, Dave will tackle the administrative tasks of preparing the operator and observation schedules, assist in the coordination of training for new operators and maintain operations' procedures. Dave has greatly improved our observing log procedures over the past few years and received the Star Award for these improvements last year. He continues to improve these logs and is also developing a modular training course for new operators.

Dave previously operated the Solar Radio Telescope System in San Vito, Italy, where he rewrote the Radio Operations Training Program and trained new personnel to operate the systems.

Please join us in congratulating Dave for the excellent work he has given to the VLA during the past three years.

Pat Van Buskirk



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SPOTLIGHT ON ALMA RF ENGINEER

Laura Leyba-Newton, an NRAO RF Microwave Engineer with the ALMA Front End Group, at the AOC, is featured in the June/July 2005 Edition of *Diversity/Careers in Engineering and Information Technology Journal*. A copy of this publication resides in the AOC Library. A picture of Laura and prototype antennas is seen on page 57, followed with an article about her on page 58.

Clint Janes

OLE BLUE

Those who have visited the VLA recently may have seen a sociable antelope wandering around the central site. This antelope has been given the nickname "Ole Blue." Ole Blue is remarkable in that he will

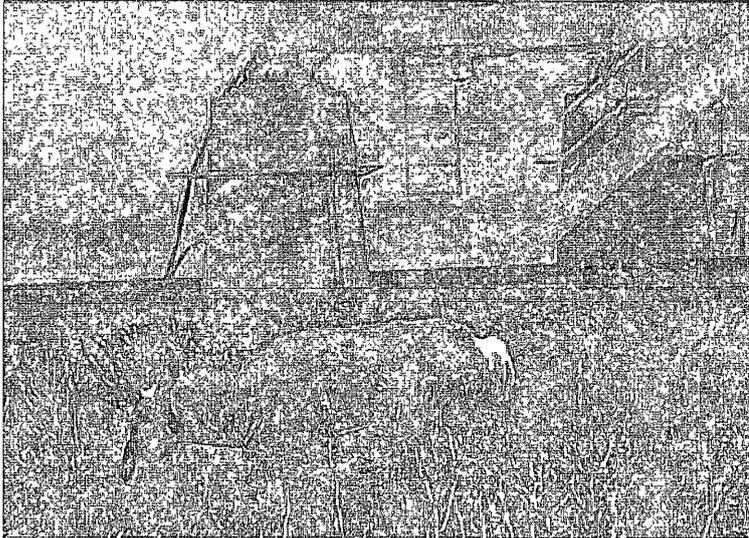


Photo taken by Steve Aragon

let people approach within 30 feet before he slowly trots away. Ole Blue often hangs out near the vehicles parked behind the control building. This buck's peculiar behavior may be due to the fact that he either is sick or has been kicked out of the herd by a younger buck. While you are at the site, look out for Ole blue and be careful when he is near as his behavior could become unpredictable.

Jon Thunborg

SAFETY CORNER: MAKING OUR WORK AREAS SAFER: Hidden Dangers

Employees reach into bins, tool boxes, and work truck boxes daily to retrieve tools and supplies without giving a thought to the possibility of an injury. After all what could happen, maybe a bump or, at the worst, a slight scrape. We need to evaluate bins, tool boxes, and work truck boxes, since the possibility of a severe injury does exist.

A Real Life Accident

An employee was heading back home after working out of town that day, when he thought he detected a problem in the right rear of the truck he was driving. The employee pulled off the road into a bar ditch so that he could inspect his vehicle for the problem. He opened the work truck boxes, looked inside, and saw the flashlight on the top tray of the bin. Just as he was reaching for the flashlight, a car driving by caught his attention. He continued to reach for the flashlight as the car passed and unfortunately struck his hand on the work truck box locking mechanism protruding from the top and onto the space where his flashlight was stored. He didn't think that his hand was seriously injured as he had struck his hand on this same mechanism before and received only minor scrapes. But when he saw his hand was bleeding profusely, he knew the

injury was serious. His Supervisor took him to the emergency room and it took several stitches to close the wound.

Injuries like this can be prevented if you take the time to survey your bins, tool boxes, and work truck boxes, for objects that could cut or puncture the skin upon contact.

Take the time to:

- Check your work truck box locking mechanism and round the edges and corners with a file, or wrap with tape to eliminate sharp corners.
- Check dividers in the bins and if these are sticking up and the edges are sharp, take the time to eliminate the hazard.
- Check screwdrivers and other sharp tools. Store these so that the ends or edges don't present a puncture or cutting hazard for you or others.

It might take a little time to check and correct these hazards, but it's better than an unplanned trip to the emergency room for stitches.

James Sullivan, NRAO Safety Officer

AUGUST 2005 SKIES

August should turn out to be a busy month for sky watchers. Our first treat will be the annual Perseid Meteor Shower. The shower should reach its peak on Thursday and Friday nights, 11th-12th and 12th -13th. The moon will be in its first quarter and will set mid to late evening, making for nice dark skies to watch the shower (weather permitting). Each year the Earth plows through multiple debris trails left by the comet Swift Tuttle.

There are many such debris trails from different epochs of the passing comet. The size of each year's shower is a matter of timing and of how many trails the Earth passes through. Even though the peak, this year, will occur during daylight hours on the 12th, predicted rates for both nights are as high as 60 per hour.

The New Mexico Tech Astronomy Club will hold a Perseid/Star Party on Thursday, August 11th beginning about 9:00 p.m., local time at the Etscom Campus Observatory. To reach the observatory, take Canyon road past the golf course. At the 4-way stop turn right on Buck Wolfe Drive and follow the signs.

Venus and Jupiter still dominate the early evening sky. As the month progresses Jupiter will draw ever nearer to Venus and on August 31st, these two dazzling planets will be only a scant 1.5 degrees apart, about the width of your little finger at arm's length.

Mercury and Saturn both appear in the early morning skies this month. By August 24th, Mercury should be easily visible in the east-northeast skies rising about one and a half hours before the Sun while Saturn will rise one half hour earlier.

The moon will be new on the 4th, first quarter on the 12th, full on the 19th and last quarter on the 26th.

Mars will rise two to three minutes earlier each night coming up around 10:30 p.m., by the end of the month. Headed for opposition in late October, it will grow steadily larger and brighter reaching magnitude -1, by the end of August. It is summer in the southern hemisphere of Mars with the solstice occurring on August 16th. With the southern hemisphere tilted toward the Earth, small telescopes should reveal darkish surface markings. Since it is summer, the south-polar ice cap will have become small and fragmented but nevertheless interesting to look at.

Jon Spargo, New Mexico Tech Astronomy Club