

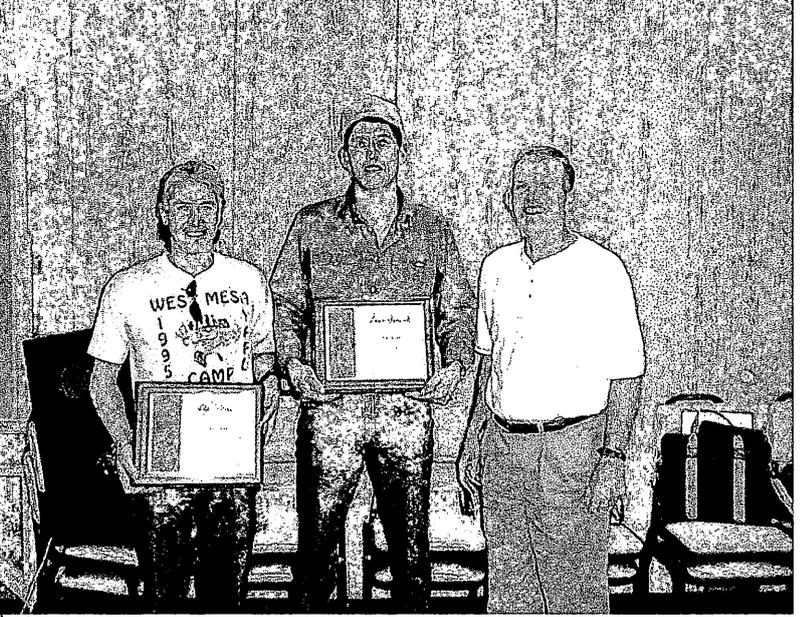
# AOC NEWS

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## SPOTLIGHT ON ACHIEVEMENTS ... CONGRATULATIONS ... NRAO STAR AWARD RECIPIENTS



Stephan Witz receives his award from Gustaaf van Moorsel



Tommy Montoya, Michael Zamora and Mark McKinnon

On Wednesday 29 August, Stephan Witz of the Computer Division received the NRAO Star Award, made available by NRAO Green Bank. When their Head Systems Manager left suddenly in May this year, Green Bank was left without Unix systems support at a time where the GBT was in the process of being made operational. Fortunately, Stephan was prepared to move to Green Bank on very short notice for six weeks and in a concerted effort helped them out substantially. One may argue that for a person like Stephan, used to the many distractions of a city like Socorro, there was very little else to do there but work. But work he did, and in doing so made sure a number of necessary upgrades took place. This should keep them going until their new systems manager arrives.

Gustaaf van Moorsel

Michael Zamora and Tommy Montoya of the VLA Cryogenics Lab were presented Star Awards by Mark McKinnon at the "End of Summer Lunch," held at the VLA on September 27, 2001. Michael and Tommy took the initiative to figure out how to repair stainless steel cryo lines. In the past these had to be sent outside of NRAO for repair.

Their work has already saved the observatory \$20,000!

Lew Serna

## NEW FACES

Welcome aboard - Pre-docs, Ian Hoffman, UNM and Bob Zavala, OSU; VLA Array Oper., Jonathan Jakischa; Electronics, Cody [unclear] and transferring from Charlottesville, Joe McMullin, AIPS++.

## CHRONICLE FROM A CO-OP STUDENT

The Electronics Division has been hiring co-ops since 1996. One of them, Ryan Schmidt, graduated from Tech last May and sends this report from his assignment with the Navy at China Lake.

"The atmosphere out here at China Lake is a lot like NRAO. This first year I am to change departments every three months or so and get to know more of the overall mission and who the different people are. It is similar to job hunting because I have to interview with different department heads and ask for the work. Currently, I've scheduled four of these so called "tours" and hope to get a fifth before I start at a permanent task. I am signed up for the following: 1) Antenna/Radome Test Facility - rewriting some computer control software for an anechoic



charger, 2) ARM Labs - writing some code to communicate with some hardware within the HARM mission, 3) Virtual Prototype Facility - write some new software for the flight simulator, 4) Advanced Weapon Lab - perform radar support of the F/A 18 to the fleet.

As you can see my experiences with NRAO helped me to prepare these tours. Tours one, two and four all deal with RFI, and most of them deal with programming. Tour one is almost exactly what I was doing for RFI monitoring at NRAO. **Please pass along my gratitude to the staff at NRAO for allowing me to learn from them.**"

Ryan Schmidt

## NEW ..... SPEEDY NEWS VEHICLE .....

Sometimes it's tough enough keeping up with activities at the site where you work, but keeping abreast of what's happening at the other site (whether it's the VLA or the AOC) can be nearly impossible!

A new method of spreading the latest news has been created on the Web. Check it out! Both the VLBA and the VLA websites have a "What's New" section on the page for the general public—and that's all of us when it comes to news! For instance, have you seen the pictures from the changing of the azimuth bearing in antenna 17? And what about the cool animation of the speeding Black Hole? These can all be reached from either:

<http://www.aoc.nrao.edu/vla/html/vlahome/genpublic.html>  
or, <http://www.aoc.nrao.edu/vlba/html/vlbahome/genpublic.html>

If news happens, and you think the rest of us should know about it, contact Robyn with the details, and we'll get it up on the web so we can keep up with what's happening!

Robyn Harrison

## COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

On Wednesday, September 26, an Employee Assistance Program was introduced to NRAO Staff. If you were unable to attend either of the sessions, the following information describes the program.

From time to time, the quality of our lives can be affected by personal problems that are difficult to cope with alone. Sometimes these problems can interfere with our professional lives. Because NRAO is committed to helping employees maintain an optimum quality of life, we are offering you an Employee Assistance Program.

The **Employee Assistance Program is a free, voluntary, confidential service**, providing employees with assessments, consultations, and referrals. It is designed to assist employees and household members in dealing with a variety of personal concerns such as depression, marital difficulties, concerns with children, alcoholism, and financial issues.

The EAP counselor, a licensed mental health professional, will listen to your concerns, identify key issues of your particular situation and then assist you in devising a plan of action. Your problem may be resolved through consultation, support, or information. If you need further assistance, you may be referred to a counselor, social service, consumer credit, or self-help groups. Through the Employee Assistance Program, you can find productive solutions to personal problems and improve your health and well-being.

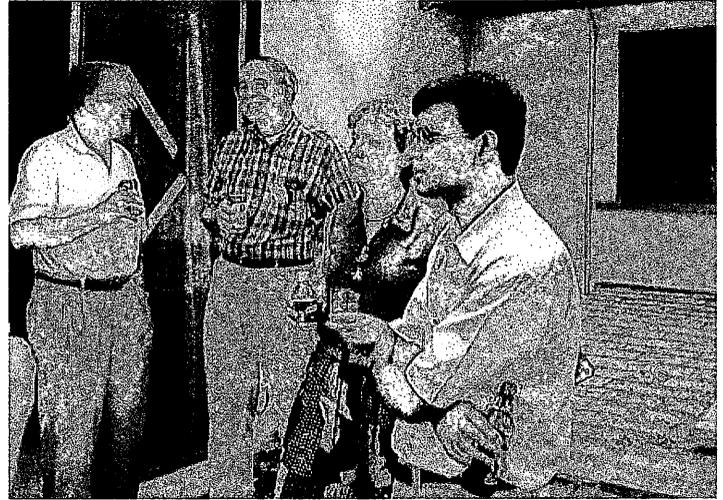
You and all household members are welcome to call for appointments by simply calling (877) 622-4327. An EAP counselor can assist you in selecting a convenient time for a confidential face-to-face meeting in regards to clinical services.

Allen Lewis

## EVLA PLANNING WORKSHOP

Defining the Second Phase: About 100 people converged on the AOC at the end of August, to discuss the next stage of the VLA Expansion Project. Figuring out what to do in the first phase was the easy part: everyone agrees that more sensitivity is a Good Thing, and we have a pretty good idea of how to go about achieving it. That project is now under way, and the questions are those of engineering design rather than basic concepts.

Defining the second phase is more difficult, since it involves building new telescopes, establishing new antenna configurations, and possibly making substantial modifications to the quadropod legs on the existing VLA dishes.



Paul Vanden Bout, Dave Hogg, Alison Peck and Jayaram Chengalur continue EVLA discussions before dinner.

How many new antennas should there be? Should they be huge behemoths like our current dishes, or smaller ones that might be substantially cheaper? We want those telescopes spread over a much



Lost? Joan Wrobel points the way!

larger area than the current VLA; but then how do we bring the signals home for scientific processing? I'm not sure we reached many definitive conclusions, but the discussions were illuminating, and there was clearly substantial enthusiasm for getting this part of the VLA Expansion going.

Michael Rupen

