

VLA SITE NEWSLETTER

All the News that is News on the San Augustin Plains

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations to all!

Dave and Magdalene Romero welcomed Jacob to their family on December 12. He weighed 7 lb. 15 oz.

Larry Brothers passed the qualification test for flying in a glider. His score was 92. Way to go, Larry!

Steve Tenorio recently completed the NM Tech Electronics Technology Certificate program. No more lectures and labs!

AROUND THE VLA

Walter McLain is our new machinist, in case you haven't met him yet.

Chester Moeller transferred from the Track Crew to the Antenna Mechanics on January 6.

Gayle Rhodes recently resigned as the PRA Employee due to

more pressing obligations. Patty Lindsey will become the new PRA Employee so for problems with machines or requests for merchandise please contact her.

PROGRAM PLAN

Next year's Program Plan for NRAO reports that more than 600 scientists used the VLA in 1996. An even larger number are expected to use the VLA in 1997 since the completion of the NRAO VLA Sky Survey in 1996. Demand for the VLA comes from the flexibility of the instrument to observe at different frequencies and different baselines. Data from the VLA complement observations in visible, infrared, gamma-ray, and x-ray wavelengths at other facilities. Here are some of the major projects planned for the VLA in 1997 according to the report:

1. Two prototype K band receivers are under construction and planned for installation at the VLA in April. To permit a single receiver to operate over

the band 18 to 26.5 Ghz, a circular polarizer has been designed and fabricated at the NRAO Central Development Laboratory in Charlottesville.

2. The maintenance of the VLA infrastructure "continues as a high priority." Major long-term projects listed in the report are rail maintenance, manhole replacement, antenna painting, and azimuth bearing replacement.
3. The ES Division will continue to contribute to the VLA Upgrade, a major project to add additional antennas, update the receivers, and replace the waveguide with fiber optics.
4. The list of astronomical studies planned is long but two highlights are 1) observations of Comet Hale-Bopp which will provide an opportunity to resolve important questions about water in comets and their comas, and 2) studies of the proto planetary disks of young stars at the full 40 milli arcsecond resolution capability of the VLA, using the new 7 mm receivers.

Meanwhile at the VLBA, observing has increased from 50 to 60 percent of the available time, and the time lag between observing and correlation has dropped to 10 days on average according to the report. Major projects mentioned are the following:

1. 3mm receivers are to be installed at more sites; the first receiver is being tested now at Pie Town. Observing at 86 Ghz will extend the highly successful SiO maser observations and greatly benefit the study of active galactic nuclei. Parts for the receivers are being fabricated by the ES Division Machine Shop. FRM adjustments are planned for several VLBA sites to improve the efficiency of 86 Ghz observations.

2. Very Long Baseline Interferometry (VLBI) observations using an antenna in space and the VLBA will permit an enormous improvement in image resolution. Resolution increases proportionally with the distance between antennas. The orbiting antenna, called the VLBI Space Observing Program (VSOP), will be launched in 1997 by the Japanese Institute for Space and Astronaut Science. According to the report, up to 30 percent of the science time of the VLBA in 1997 will be co-observing with VSOP.

C. Janes

OMBUDS PROGRAM

This is a reminder to all employees of the role of the ombuds representative. The ombuds serves as an impartial source of assistance in resolving employees problems. He/she has the authority to look into any situation presented, to meet and discuss with anyone having knowledge of the matter, and to give advice or an opinion as his or her judgement dictates. The ombuds acts not as a member of management, but as a neutral member of the organization who provides confidential assistance in resolving work-related concerns.

Sometimes an employee simply needs someone to listen to the problem, explore the options but take no further action. At other times, the ombuds may play an active role in investigating the actions or decisions which have affected the employee. At the present time, Patty Lindsey is the designated ombuds.

Also, for employees' reference, the following manuals are located in the VLA library in the Control Building:

Salary & Wage Manual
Safety Manual
Supervisors' Manual
Travel Policy Manual

REMINDERS

The gasoline credit cards provided by GSA for the vehicles we lease from them are equipped with a magnetic strip on the back. However, these credit cards are not always able to be processed in the new readers that are becoming more common at fuel stations. The credit card is valid, but instead must be processed the manual method, with the imprinting machine.

GSA has agreements with most major fuel vendors, but the user is cautioned to ask first and pump later if there is a doubt. GSA also requires that the fuel receipt include the purchase description and quantity, unit price, total cost, and signature. Otherwise, the purchase is not paid by GSA, NRAO ends up paying (twice).

S. Lagoyda

Drivers of government vehicles from the VLA to the AOC are reminded to hang the keys on the keyboard inside the AOC building. Keys should be tagged with the red tags on the board "reserved for _____" or "return to site."

Edited by
P. Lindsey