

# VLA/VLBA NEWSLETTER

From the World's Premier Centimeter Wave Radio Synthesis Telescopes

## PPO ASSISTANCE

PPO problems? Claims dispute? First try calling the Cigna Careline at 1-800-982-8958. The NRAO account number is 0220016. Both of these numbers are shown on your insurance ID card. If you can't get through or you are dissatisfied with the answer, contact Billie Jo Mattox in Charlottesville, VA, at (804)296-0318, or e-mail her at bmattox, or write her at NRAO, 520 Edgemont Road, Charlottesville, VA 22903-2475. From the VLA, you can send Billie Jo material through the internal mail distribution - just mark the envelope "CV".

Although the Socorro office is not officially in the loop any more on personal medical claims, Judi and Theresa have worked out a very good relationship with the local Cigna rep. For example, a recurring problem has been mix-ups concerning bills for lab work from Quest Diagnostics. Judi, Theresa, and the Albuquerque rep have been successful in obtaining payment when Quest claimed a bill was not covered; just send or FAX (505-835-7024) your Quest Diagnostic bills to Theresa for help.

Your last resort is to contact Monroe Petty, also at the Charlottesville office. Phone (804)296-0234 or e-mail mpetty.

J. Lowell

## PHONE SYSTEM UPDATE

The new NEC NEAX 2400 IMS phone system, placing all the VLA Site extensions on the same exchange as the AOC, is getting closer to completion. There will be new phone units necessary in some cases due to the voice-mail capability. If all goes well and as currently planned, the changeover should take place

some time near the end of March. G. C. Dean and Mark Reynolds from NM Tech ISD plan to come to the site to talk about the new system on March 10.

A. Patrick

## ES DIVISION CELL PHONE

Sheila Reasoner has acquired a cellular bag phone for ES Division (thanks Sheila). The ES Division cellular phone will be used for business on road trips such as Tiger Team, Rail, Surplus acquisition or occasional trips to Albuquerque. Calls made on this phone should only be urgent business calls since there are additional charges when this phone is used. Personal calls from this phone should be avoided and will be charged to the caller. The phone is kept by Lew Serna and is logged out before each use. Instructions will accompany the phone.

L. Serna

## WORKER'S COMP

Personnel has asked for help in reminding everyone of the Worker's Comp procedures. Employees are still neglecting to complete the half-sheet Notice of Accident form (found on the Worker's Comp posters) that protect their rights to Worker's Comp. Following an accident or incident, these events should occur:

First, and most important, get appropriate medical attention. EMTs only if minor; EMTs and Dr. Markwell, or the ER if more serious. The employee must inform the care provider when it is a Worker's Comp visit to be sure it gets billed correctly. If you need a prescription filled, go to Big Value Pharmacy and inform them to bill NRAO for the charge. **DO NOT USE YOUR RX PRIME.**

Second, notify Personnel (Judi or Theresa) or Skip Lagoyda immediately for any injury requiring outside medical attention.

Third, fill out an NRAO Accident/Incident Report immediately, either by the employee or supervisor and forward as listed.

And finally, for any accident, whether or not you think you are injured, you must complete a Notice of Accident form within 15 days of that accident. The supervisor is responsible to insure that this happens. Employee and supervisor both sign the form, employee should keep a copy and send the original to Personnel. **THIS IS THE ONLY FORM THAT WILL INSURE YOUR RIGHT TO COLLECT WORKER'S COMP.**

A. Patrick

## CHECK ORDERS

A reminder to site employees that when receiving merchandise they have ordered, please check it to see if it meets their specifications. It is very hard to try to exchange a wrong part after it has been sitting around for months. Also, if there are any overages, please indicate on the paperwork whether or not it will be kept.

B. Guzman

## VLA LANDFILL

From all research, we believe we do not need a permit to operate our solid waste landfill. However, a strong note of caution is needed. We can operate without a permit for as long as we do not put hazardous materials in the landfill; put only solid materials in the landfill and do not burn anything in the landfill. All VLA employees should be reminded of these rules. If we do not follow them, we may be sitting on a ticking environmental bomb that could go off and cause us great problems.

J. Spargo

## MAGDALENA SCIENCE FAIR

The Magdalena Public School has a unique diversity and family orientation reflected in the annual Science Fair. Projects included studies of guns and ammo, arrows, hunting gear, native grasses and herbs, water beetles, cows and horses, lightning, computers, cosmetics, and environmental issues. Experiments frequently credit grandparents and other family members for their help and inspiration. Judges Bob Broilo, Clint Janes, Pat Lewis, Adrian Morris, Guy Stanzione, and Jon Thunborg picked two projects for NRAO awards, the "Elk Locator" by Jason Otero and "Smashing Huevos" by C.V. Harris. Both receive \$50 savings bonds.

C. Janes

## ACU TESTING

Each 25 meter antenna at the VLA site is controlled through an electronics chassis called the Antenna Control Unit (ACU). An Antenna Control Test Unit (ACTU) connects to the ACU for testing the servo loop, antenna stow, oscillation problems, fire alarms, temperatures, FRM operation, and many other functions. The existing ACTU is a large, heavy box that servo techs must lug to an antenna. There is only one ACTU, so if it fails, ACU tests can no longer be performed.

Wayne Koski and the DCS Group are developing a new FRM tester that uses a laptop and an NRAO designed and built PCMCIA card that contains the interfacing circuitry to the DCS system and the laptop. Measuring only 2" X 3 1/2", the PCMCIA card slips right into the side of the laptop. It was quickly determined that the FRM PCMCIA project could be easily adapted to become an ACTU. A different cable between the card and ACU, and a small modification to the chipset in the PCMCIA card, and the hardware will be ready. All that is left is some software writing to give the operators of the new ACTU a user-friendly environment on the laptop. The new ACTU will be easier to take to the antennas and used with much more convenience. With the PCMCIA card and software, it will be easier in the future to add additional tests to the software and replace or upgrade the laptop.

A. Morris

## ANTENNA MOVE XIV

Congratulations to Martin Lopez and the Transporter Crew, the antenna mechanics, and several members of the Track Crew who made February's move to A configuration successful and uneventful. The move was completed on time despite a series of storms, one day lost to testing, one holiday, the arm change, a re-commission (Ant. 17), and an emergency set down because of wind. This was the 14<sup>th</sup> move to A configuration in the life of the array and the first one without Nick Montoya.

C. Janes

## EQUIPMENT CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

We have recently started our in-house certification program. The intent of the program is to meet current OSHA standards and ensure only trained and authorized personnel be permitted to operate our heavy equipment. In short, these standards imply that before authorizing an operator to operate a piece of equipment, NRAO shall ensure that the operator has:

- (1) Been instructed by a qualified person in the intended purpose and function of the equipment.
- (2) Read and understood the manufacturer's operating instructions and company safety rules, or been trained by a qualified person on the contents of the manufacturer's operating instructions and NRAO safety rules.
- (3) Understood by reading or having a qualified person explain all decals, warnings, and instructions and NRAO safety rules.
- (4) Been informed that the purpose for which the equipment is to be used is within the scope of the intended applications defined by the manufacturer.

We have designated qualified persons to instruct authorized employees in the safe operation of a broad list of equipment. Upon successful completion of this process, the operator receives certification. Depending on OSHA requirements, most certifications will expire in two years. Persons without certification may not operate designated equipment except for training under direct supervision.

We are now working on certification for crane operators. This will be followed by

earth moving equipment certification. We hope to finish these items by the time our summer work season begins. Since starting the program, we have had 22 employees receive certification for use of the new Terex aerial lift. Congratulations to all of you!

All completed certifications are kept on file by the Personnel Department with a copy held by the safety officer.

G. Cole

## VLA TRACK INSPECTION

On February 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1998, the Holland Company arrived at the site to inspect our rail system. Their prototype Gauge Restraint Measurement System (GRMS) high rail vehicle operates on standard gauge track. The on board equipment collected data based on specified threshold limits. Where ever the threshold limit was exceeded, the area was spray painted. It took two days to ride our track system with the GRMS.

A report from Holland Company, expected in March, will provide a foot by foot breakdown for each arm of unloaded track gauge, loaded track gauge, and delta gauge (difference between loaded and unloaded). Based on this information, an additional tie statistics analysis report will be provided, locating bad ties and groups of bad ties based on delta gauge thresholds. This information can be used to plan tie replacements over the next several years. Based on the preliminary raw data (strip charts), the track system did not look bad. There does not appear to be any areas that are worse than the FRA guidelines for Class 1 track; that is, track being used at 10 mph or below.

G. Stanzione

## INSURANCE RECORDS

Since employees medical claims are no longer filed through NRAO, there is no longer any need for the Personnel Office to maintain individual medical insurance files. We plan to destroy these files in the near future. If you would like to have your medical file sent to you, please contact Billie Jo Mattox in Charlottesville or Theresa McBride in Socorro no later than March 6.

T. McBride

**SEAT BELTS ARE REQUIRED**