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## **Currents**

### **In this Issue...**

**Workshop Announcement** ([Summer Workshop on Gemini Data](#)): NOAO, along with the Gemini Observatory, will present a workshop on Gemini instrumentation and data reduction techniques in Tucson on 19-22 July 2010. There is no registration fee and partial travel support is available. Space is available but limited, so register soon!

**NOAO's 50th** ([Anniversary Symposia Presentations Available Online](#)): In March we celebrated, with a series of scientific meetings and public talks, the 50th anniversary of NOAO and NSO. Many of the presentations from these events are now available online. These include those from the scientific meetings "From First Light to Newborn Stars," "The Eventful Universe," and the joint session, "50th Anniversary Symposium, Celebrating the Past, Looking to the Future," as well as public evening talks by guest speaker Alan Dressler; the first KPNO Director Aden Meinel; and Bernard Siquieros, the Education Curator of the Tohono O'odham Nation's Cultural Center and Museum. Please enjoy these presentations and join with us in celebrating our 50th anniversary!

**Milestone** ([Jannuzzi Stepping Down as KPNO Director](#)): Buell Jannuzzi will be stepping down after 5 years of service to the community and NOAO as Director of the Kitt Peak National Observatory and Associate Director of NOAO. During this period, KPNO experienced resurgence and revitalization. AURA is initiating an international search for a new Director, and in parallel, an interim management team is being put in place to allow for a smooth transition between Directors.

**System Update** ([Large Science Program Opportunity at the Mayall 4-m](#)): In the November 2009 issue of *Currents*, we announced an opportunity for groups in the community to partner with NOAO and the NSF in developing a major new capability for the Mayall that the proposing team will use in carrying out a large science program of very high scientific impact. Several groups expressed interest in the opportunity and contacted us for additional information. One group submitted a letter of intent to propose. We report on these developments and summarize the next steps in the proposal process.

**Spotlight on You** ([Images Needed for the NOAO Homepage](#)): Last, but not least, we invite you to bring to our attention images that we may feature on the NOAO homepage. Eye-catching images of your science results or your research team at work will help us communicate to a broader audience the discoveries and advances made with NOAO facilities. Please contact Katy Garmany ([garmany@noao.edu](mailto:garmany@noao.edu)) with ideas or questions.

### **In this Issue**

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Your input is welcome on any of these issues. Please send your thoughts to [currents@noao.edu](mailto:currents@noao.edu).

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## Summer Workshop on Gemini Data

NOAO, along with the Gemini Observatory, will present a summer workshop on Gemini data. The workshop, to be held in Tucson on 19-22 July 2010, will cover the basics of astronomical data reduction and include breakout sessions focused on specific Gemini instruments and capabilities. The goal of the workshop is to provide the community with tools and skills to help maximize the scientific return from Gemini.



Gemini Data Workshop, July 19-22, 2010

There is no registration fee, and the workshop is open to any interested member of the NOAO and Gemini communities. NOAO will offer partial travel support for up to 60 registrants, with preference given to US-based graduate students and postdocs. If you are interested in attending, please [register at the workshop web site](#).

Questions about the workshop may be addressed to the workshop coordinators Verne Smith ([vsmith@noao.edu](mailto:vsmith@noao.edu)), Tom Matheson ([tmatheson@noao.edu](mailto:tmatheson@noao.edu)), and Nancy Levenson ([nlevenson@gemini.edu](mailto:nlevenson@gemini.edu)).

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## NOAO 50th Anniversary Celebration Presentations Now Available Online

In March of this year we celebrated, with a series of scientific meetings and public evening talks, the 50th anniversary of the National Astronomy Observatory (now NOAO and NSO). As described in the February issue of *Currents*, the dedication in 1960 of Kitt Peak National Observatory marked the beginning of merit-based access to world-class facilities for all astronomical researchers. The subsequent creation of the Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory added access to the southern skies through the National Observatory. Open access to facilities based only on merit, then a relatively new paradigm for observing facilities, has played an important role in the rich achievements of the US astronomical community over the past 50 years.

Many of the presentations made at these events are now available online. [From First Light to Newborn Stars](#) focused on the physics of star formation in galaxies, from early times to the present and in both distant and nearby galaxies, including the Milky Way. [The Eventful Universe](#) explored the time domain in astrophysical phenomena, including solar system, Galactic, and extragalactic objects, with a common theme of understanding the best observational strategies for detecting, characterizing, and following up transient events.

Participants from the two science meetings came together for a joint session, [50th Anniversary](#)

[Symposium, Celebrating the Past, Looking to the Future](#), that looked back at the contributions of NOAO and NSO to several important areas of astrophysical research as well as forward to the discoveries that will be enabled by the future activities of NOAO and NSO. Talks by Alan Dressler, Charles Lada, Heather Morrison, Douglas



Banners from the 3 symposia celebrating the 50th anniversary of the National Astronomy Observatory

Rabin, Vera Rubin, and Nick Suntzeff covered topics such as dark matter and dark energy, the solar corona, star and galaxy formation, and the history of the Universe.

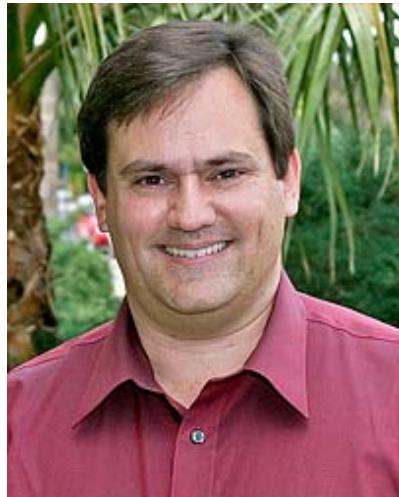
Presentations from these events are now available online in either PDF or PowerPoint format at <http://www.noao.edu/kp50/> under the program links for each symposium.

At the same site, we have archived video presentations of the public evening lecture by Alan Dressler ("The Living History of the Universe") as well as those from a second public evening "Why Kitt Peak? The History of Iolkam Du'ag and the Birth of Kitt Peak National Observatory" that featured presentations by Dr. Aden B. Meinel and Bernard Siquieros. The first Director of Kitt Peak National Observatory, Meinel spoke about the history of the selection of Kitt Peak as the location for the National Observatory. Siquieros, the Education Curator of the Tohono O'odham Nation's Cultural Center and Museum, shared a Tohono O'odham perspective on the meaning and history of Iolkam Du'ag, or Kitt Peak, Baboquivari, and the other mountains of the Tohono O'odham Nation. Please enjoy these presentations and join with us in celebrating our 50th anniversary!

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## **Jannuzzi Stepping Down as Director of the Kitt Peak National Observatory**

Buell Jannuzzi will be stepping down as Director of the Kitt Peak National Observatory (KPNO) effective 1 June 2010. During his five years as Director of KPNO, the Observatory experienced resurgence and revitalization. A major new capability, the wide-field near-infrared imager NEWFIRM, was commissioned on the Mayall 4-m telescope. The bright future for KPNO includes a new spectrograph (KOSMOS) and an upgraded wide-field imager (MOSAIC 1.1) for the Mayall, as well as the One-Degree Imager (ODI) on the WIYN 3.5-m telescope, which will be the premier wide-field imager in the northern hemisphere. Over the longer term, a Large Science Program at the Mayall has the potential to bring a powerful new capability to that facility (see related article below).



Dr. Buell Jannuzzi

In announcing his decision to step down, Jannuzzi acknowledged the Kitt Peak staff for their role in the Observatory's revival. He recollected that, "When I became KPNO Director almost five years ago, many people thought I would be presiding over the closing of the 4-m and the rest of the facilities on Kitt Peak, at least as national facilities. I was confident, however, that the scientific potential of the site, the facilities and, most importantly, the staff of KPNO would allow a scientifically exciting future for KPNO to be realized. I am proud of how we worked together to bring KPNO through this stormy period of its history, to rejoin the fleet of NOAO, intact and improved, as a key component of the US System of astronomical facilities."

NOAO Director David Silva thanked Jannuzzi for his service, remarking that "Buell has accomplished many great things at KPNO in the face of significant financial and managerial adversity, both as a member of the science staff and as KPNO Director. I am extremely grateful for his years of service to the Observatory and to the US community at large as well as for his direct support and assistance to me during my first two years as NOAO Director."

AURA is initiating an international search for a new KPNO Director. In parallel, an interim management team is being put in place to allow for a smooth transition between Directors. We will provide updates on the KPNO Director search in future issues of *Currents*.

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## Update on the Large Science Program Opportunity at the Mayall 4-m

As described in the [November 2009 issue of Currents](#), NOAO has announced an opportunity for groups in the community to partner with NOAO and the National Science Foundation in developing a major new capability (an instrument and associated data processing system) for the Mayall 4-m telescope that the proposing team will use in carrying out a large science program of very high scientific impact. The dual goals of the large science program are to enable frontier science and to improve the US system of ground-based O/IR facilities.

The announcement of opportunity for the [Mayall Large Science Program](#) requested letters of intent outlining the instrument concept, partnership, and proposed science project. These letters, the first required element of the proposal process, were due to the Kitt Peak Director on 1 March 2010. In response to the announcement, the Kitt Peak Director's office received multiple inquiries and one official letter of intent to propose. NOAO responded to the letter with a request for a full proposal.

The full proposal, which is due on 1 October 2010, will be evaluated by a non-advocate peer review committee charged with advising the NOAO Director regarding the quality of the proposed capability and the proposed science project within the context of the System of capabilities available to the US community and the high impact science to be carried out in the next decade.

If the proposal is successful, NOAO will make available to the proposing team, in exchange for providing a new, front-line capability for the Mayall, dedicated telescope time on the Mayall for the proposed large science program. The capability provided by the team must also enable frontier science to be carried out by the community, beyond the specific science program of the proposing team. A proposal will only be selected if it meets these requirements. In the event that no proposal meets these requirements, none will be selected.

Should the proposal be successful, the NOAO community will have direct access, via the NOAO open-access process, to the new observing capability while the proposed large science program is being carried out. The instrument will also be available for open-access use for a significant amount of time (years) after the proposed large science program is completed. The community will also have access to the archive of



Mayall Telescope at sunset



Mayall Telescope

data produced by the large science program. We will provide updates on this Large Science Program opportunity in future issues of *Currents*.

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## Contact Us

Did something interesting, inspiring, or surprising happen on a recent observing run? Please tell us about it! Is there a topic that you would like to see covered in a future *Currents*? If you are planning a regional astronomy meeting or department internal symposium, would you like someone from NOAO to give a presentation on our new program? Please contact us at [currents@noao.edu](mailto:currents@noao.edu). We look forward to hearing from you!

*Currents* is a sparkplug for communication between NOAO and our community. It provides updates—and solicits community input—on NOAO observing opportunities and NOAO programs and policies on a more rapid timescale than is possible with the quarterly *NOAO Newsletter*.

NOAO is the national center for ground-based nighttime astronomy in the United States and is operated by the Association of Universities for Research in Astronomy (AURA), Inc. under cooperative agreement with the National Science Foundation.

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