

Telescope Operations News

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The Streak - As Much Fun As a Root Canal

The most significant development in TOC is still the "streak" in the FES. For further details please consult the summary by Carini, Weinstein, & Walker elsewhere in this *Newsletter*. We are continuing to obtain spectra in spite of this problem, but it has certainly made the TOC staff's life more difficult. Advanced shift preparation is even more important than ever - a word to the wise.

All I Ask Is a Satellite and a Star to Steer Her By

The availability of on-line star fields generated from a combination of the SAO and HST Guide Star catalogs, as well as a very convenient user interface that Thomas Walker programmed, has been critical for target acquisitions. GOs are welcome to make use of this tool. One of the Resident Astronomers can show you how to access it.

Remote Observing

There are now over a dozen sites, including one in Canada, that have been set up for remote observing. All that is required to become a remote site is that you have some sort of workstation (we have VMS, UNIX, and ULTRIX versions of the program), IDL (version 2), and a network connection. We send a small IDL program which you compile on your machine. It allows you to display the image and do some quick-look analysis on it. Contact the Observatory if you are interested in becoming a remote observing site. Not all types of observations are suitable for conducting as remote shifts. Please consult the remote observing policies for more details. The nature of remote observing makes it all the more important to prepare for observing shifts in advance, and discuss them with the Resident Astronomer who will conduct the shift.

Joining the Twentieth Century

The Proposal Instruction Package for the sixteenth episode had a number of significant changes, which were geared toward making the technical feasibility and peer review processes easier. Electronic submission of target lists was required for the first time this year, and the procedure generally went well. I asked Resident Astronomer Lloyd Rawley to take over the heavy burden of running the feasibility and peer review efforts this year.

Staff Changes

There have been a number of staff changes since the last Telescope Operations News article. Telescope Operator Daryl Weinstein has left us to take a job at IUE's Operations Control Center. Daryl became interested in the work that was being done on the other end of the voice net, and decided on a career change. Replacing Daryl is our newest Telescope Operator, Mark Schlegel, who is currently in training. Mark recently completed his master's degree in astronomy at the University of Colorado. Resident Astronomer Jeff Newmark will be leaving us in March to take a job with the COBE Data Analysis Center.