

# KPNO/KITTPeAK

N A T I O N A L O B S E R V A T O R Y

## Delay for NEWFIRM First Light

*Ron Probst*

We regret to announce that there will be a significant delay in the delivery of the NEWFIRM instrument to the Mayall 4-meter telescope. As of nine months ago, the project plan called for first light in January 2006. Vendor problems with optics completion were evident at that time, so the plan included a review point in early October 2005 to assess progress and revise the schedule if necessary. From our October review, it became clear that continued delay in delivery of crucial elements of the camera optics prevents any chance of first light for NEWFIRM prior to semester 2006B. The revised schedule has a tentative first-light date in October 2006.

This schedule slip also impacts planning for Science Verification (SV) observations. The SV process was discussed in the September 2005 *Newsletter*. A variety of projects have been proposed, and brief descriptions are posted on the NEWFIRM Website ([www.noao.edu/ets/newfirm](http://www.noao.edu/ets/newfirm)).

Since the SV dates are now uncertain, planning will proceed by considering the SV projects as generic, with flexibility as to specific targets. For example, we will plan for broadband and narrowband surveys of a Galactic star-forming region or molecular cloud, and for very deep imaging of an extragalactic field. This will permit definition of time requirements, observing protocols, and data reduction methodologies appropriate to the science goals. The selection of specific targets to observe will be postponed until the observing window is known.

We continue to welcome comments and expressions of interest in participation from members of the potential NEWFIRM user community (contact the project scientist at [rprobst@noao.edu](mailto:rprobst@noao.edu)). We thank those of you who have already expressed an interest.

## SQIID Available for Observing in Semester 2006B

*Buell T. Jannuzi and Michael Merrill*



The delay in commissioning of NEWFIRM until late 2006 has led us to postpone retiring SQIID from service. SQIID will be available for observing in 2006B. SQIID can be used to take simultaneous images of the same field with J, H, Ks filters and has a useful field of view of  $3 \times 3$  arcminutes when used at the 4-meter and  $5 \times 5$  arcminutes when used at the 2.1-meter.

Together with FLAMINGOS, this will ensure continued access to near-infrared imaging capabilities on Kitt Peak telescopes until NEWFIRM can take over the load from SQIID. The adjacent image shows NGC 7538, a star-forming region, as seen by SQIID (composite image from J, H, and Ks band images) at the KPNO 2.1-meter telescope.



## Have Leatherman, Will Travel

*KPNO Staff*

John Glaspey left the staff of Kitt Peak National Observatory on October 17 to start a new job as the Operations Director for the Multiple Mirror Telescope (MMT) project. All of us at KPNO wish John continued success as he takes on new challenges.

John was very successful leading Science Operations on Kitt Peak. He joined us in the fall of 1998 and we immediately began to benefit from his patience, good humor, and intelligence. He has successfully kept us focused on producing quality science while improving the working conditions for all. His relaxed management style and positive encouragement allowed everyone to find ways to contribute to the success of the observatory while satisfying their own creative and professional needs.

When John first arrived with his Leatherman tool and his jeep, he set out to explore Kitt Peak and learn all he

could about the operation. He was particularly valuable in developing strong working relationships with members of the Tohono O'odham Nation government that work with KPNO to provide safety and services for the visitors and scientists. We are sure John will be as successful at the MMT as he has been everywhere that he has worked.



*Hector Rios presents a going-away gift to John Glaspey.*

We are very happy to announce that Michael Merrill has agreed to replace John as Supervisor of Mountain Scientific Support for KPNO. Mike joined Kitt Peak in 1979, and has been an active part of our infrared (IR) detector and instrument development programs for many years. Over the past

few years he has been the Mayall 4-meter telescope scientist, as well as being active in supporting the Gemini Observatory through his work with the NOAO Gemini Science Center and the MONSOON project. We congratulate both Mike and John on their new positions.

## In Appreciation: Khairy Abdel-Gawad

*Tony Abraham & Buell T. Jannuzi*

Khairy Abdel-Gawad retired from NOAO at the end of September after 32 years of distinguished service. As both an engineer and engineering supervisor, Khairy played a major role in the design, development, and maintenance of many of our facilities at both Kitt Peak (1967-1973, 1985-2005) and CTIO (1974-1979). These include the Coudé Feed, NSO vacuum telescope, and the Mayall 4-meter telescope on Kitt Peak, and the Blanco 4-meter telescope on Cerro Tololo.

In recent years Khairy has been responsible for many mechanical upgrades and new designs for Kitt Peak telescopes and buildings. These include the 4-meter dome vents and dome shutter upgrade, the 4-meter primary mirror active support system, and the construction of the new aluminizing room at the 4-meter (used to recoat many other mirrors as well).

We wish Khairy the very best retirement and appreciate that he has agreed to continue to share his extensive knowledge of our telescopes with us in the years ahead, as he continues to support observatory and its production of first-class science.