

**Subject:** [allemploy] 16 Dec 2008 BIWEEKY CALENDAR OF THE ALMA PROJECT at NRAO  
**From:** Al Wootten <awootten@nrao.edu>  
**Date:** 12/30/2008, 2:55 PM  
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BIWEEKY CALENDAR OF THE ALMA PROJECT at NRAO  
16 December 2008 - 13 January 2009

\*\*\*\*\* THIS BIFORTNIGHT\*\*\*\*\*  
Happy New Year everyone!

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The year closed with a major milestone for ALMA, the handover of the first of its state-of-the-art production antennas. The first antenna was built by Mitsubishi Electric Company for the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan; three similar antennas and eight Vertex antennas are in various stages of testing expected to lead to acceptance in the near future; elements of the AEM antenna are arriving in Chile also. "We have the front-end electronics and back-end electronics inside that antenna and now we can start the push to the high site, to get three antennas joined together interferometrically and start the process of science commissioning," said Adrian Russell, the North American ALMA Project Director at NRAO. For the complete press release, please see:  
<http://www.nrao.edu/pr/2008/alma/firstantenna.shtml>

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Antenna acceptance is only one of many achievements of ALMA in 2008. The ALMA Test Facility (ATF) in New Mexico continued to demonstrate the operation of the ALMA system now poised for science commissioning in Chile. With its mission complete, the ATF closed down on 20 December. The first quadrant of the mighty ALMA correlator is operating at 16570 feet in the Array Operations Site (AOS) Technical Building. The AOS site has been extensively reworked as roads are emblazoned to antenna locations, where dozens of foundations have received concrete. Hundreds of workers, contractors and ALMA employees, concentrate on everything from heavy construction to the tuning and testing of cutting edge electronics. Antenna production lines continue steady shipments to Chile; there are now twelve antennas on site with more arriving. Both massive transporters traverse the site and have moved several antennas as new ones arrive. The first receiver and backend packages have been installed in the accepted antenna and have passed their initial tests. A second receiver is being tested. During the year, the post construction operational phases of ALMA have been built up; ALMA operations has taken over the day-to-day running of completed ALMA facilities and ALMA Resource Centers operate around the world. 2009 promises to be a very productive year.

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The 213th AAS meeting is held in Long Beach 5-8 Jan. The US national radio science meeting (URSI) will also be held in Boulder on those dates. On Monday morning there will be a special ALMA session in Boulder.

NRAO will have a booth at the AAS meeting; please stop by. On-demand presentations are available on NRAO instruments, including ALMA simulation with CASA, the ALMA Observing Tool and on the Spectral Line Catalog that you may wish to see.

Additionally, on Wednesday night, 7 Jan, there will be an NRAO Town Hall in the Hyatt Regency across the street from the convention center. The time is 5:30-7:30 pm, the venue is the Hyatt Seaview Ballroom. Refreshments will be provided to whet your appetite for the banquet, which follows elsewhere.

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Past issues of this Calendar may be viewed at  
<http://www.cv.nrao.edu/~awootten/mmailcal/ALMACalendars.html>  
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General Happenings  
Photos of activity may be found at NRAO eNews:  
<http://www.nrao.edu/news/newsletters/>

Sky: Jupiter is low in the West, Venus shining brightly above it. At the end of the period, Mercury rises higher in the sunset. After midnight, Saturn appears in the East.

SCO (Santiago Central Office): The first ALMA production antenna was accepted on 19 December.

AOS (Array Ops Site, 16570ft altitude): The Patch Panel for the ALMA Fiber Optic Network was completed. APEX reports that the higher levels of precipitable water associated with the Altiplanic Winter have appeared.

OSF (Ops Support Facility, 9600ft altitude): Acceptance for Melco antenna No 2 occurred for 19 December. That will be followed in Feb 2009 by acceptance for Vertex No 1. The AEM work area construction has progressed, including the erection of a building; some antenna parts have arrived. Elements of the second Front End, an engineering model, were delivered from the East Asian Front End Integration Center (EA FEIC) and are undergoing tests. The OSF Technical Facility Building is becoming a nerve center of the site though many tests are still run from the temporary AIV building.

ATF: The ATF shut down on 20 December after a productive lifetime.

NAASC: See above; visit us at the AAS meeting.

A calendar of NAASC events may be found at:  
<http://www.cv.nrao.edu/naasc/calendar/calendar.php>  
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DAILY CALENDAR (Times EDT/EST ) see  
<https://wikio.nrao.edu/bin/view/ALMA/AlmaCalendar>  
\*\*\*\*\* UPCOMING EVENTS \*\*\*\*\*

- Dec 17-18 Acceptance procedures for Melco No. 2 antenna
- Dec 18 ALMA Board Telecon
- Jan 5-8 AAS Meeting, Long Beach, Ca and  
NA Radio Science Meeting, Boulder, Co

\*\*\*\*\* TECHNICAL NEWS \*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*ALSO OF INTEREST\*\*\*\*\*  
Several ALMA positions are available at NRAO. Example:

The National Radio Astronomy Observatory invites applications for an ALMA Postdoctoral Fellow position with the Commissioning team in Chile. When completed in 2012, ALMA will be the most powerful (sub)millimeter interferometer ever constructed, and will transform our understanding of topics ranging from the formation of nearby protoplanetary disks to the earliest epochs of galaxy formation. This position is assigned to the ALMA project with operational duties in Chile. The position is funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation through the ALMA Construction Project and as an international staff position will exist during the construction period through 2011. There may be possibilities to transfer to the observatory science operations team during or after construction.

Details for all positions may be viewed at:  
<http://members.aas.org/JobReg/JobDetailPage.cfm?JobID=25062>

or

[http://www.nrao.edu/administration/personnel\\_office/careers.shtml#CV4917\\_ALMA\\_POSTDOC](http://www.nrao.edu/administration/personnel_office/careers.shtml#CV4917_ALMA_POSTDOC)

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There will be an NRAO Town Hall meeting at the 213th AAS meeting in Long Beach, Ca on the evening of 7th January. Please visit us at the NRAO booth.

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The US National Radioscience Meeting (USNC/URSI) meets in Boulder on 5-8 Jan 2009. Among the Commission J topics is a session on ALMA Technology, Science and Status.

See: <http://www.astro.caltech.edu/USNC-URSI-J/> for abstracts of this and other sessions.

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Please send information for upcoming calendars by Friday evening of the preceding biweekly period to Jennifer Neighbours or Al Wootten via e-mail (jneighbo at nrao.edu or awootten at nrao.edu).

The calendar will be issued between late Friday and sometime on Monday by e-mail to all NRAO scientific staff members and anyone else interested. A specific mailing list, alma-info, has been created for anyone wishing to receive it.

Past issues are available at

<http://www.cv.nrao.edu/~awootten/mmaimcal/ALMCalendars.html>

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Allemploy mailing list

[Allemploy@listmgr.cv.nrao.edu](mailto:Allemploy@listmgr.cv.nrao.edu)

<http://listmgr.cv.nrao.edu/mailman/listinfo/allemploy>