

## News from the Computing Facilities Group

Don Carlos Abrams  
(Head of Computing, ING)

The CFG recently appointed Juan Vicente Piñero Pérez as the ING's Data Manager. He has taken over this role from Luis Javier Hernández who is now our Network Manager. One of Juan's principal objectives will be the development of a graphical user interface for querying and extracting images from the DVD archive. In the meanwhile, the DVD archiving system continues to write images from the INT to DVDs. Recently we have also started writing images from the WHT to DVDs.

The introduction of the ING's Beowulf cluster for reducing data from the INT has been a total success. Robert Greimel successfully completed the installation several months ago and the system has been operational ever since. The success of this system has attracted a great deal of support and interest, so much so that another Beowulf cluster was purchased and installed to reduce data from the WHT and the JKT.

As part of the ING's computing enhancement strategy we have introduced Sun Microsystems' Sun Ray Appliances as an alternative computing platform. These devices have proved very popular in offices where conventional machines are deemed to be environmentally undesirable in terms of noise pollution or heat production. It is hoped that, where practicable, the Sun Ray Appliances will replace the aging and obsolete X Terminals on the ORM. In addition to the Sun Ray roll out, we have introduced a Sun Enterprise E250 at the SLO. This is a general compute server with two 400Mhz UltraSPARC-II processors and 2Gb of memory. Finally, the FTP server was replaced with an Ultra 10 and



*On 9 June the Spanish Ministro de la Presidencia, Juan José Lucas, visited the WHT. The Spanish government is very interested in the development of the Observatory and in particular the GTC telescope. In this photo we can see the Minister (in front of René Rutten) listening to the explanations given by Francisco Sánchez.*

now boosts in excess of 200Gb of disk space. Similarly, the ING mail server was upgraded to an Ultra 10 with 75Gb of disk space.

Over the last few months we have been engaged in fruitful discussions with IAC personnel, namely; Juan Carlos Pérez Arencibia, Jesús Jiménez Fuensalida and Diego Sierra González. The discussions have centred on improving the computing facilities in the Residencia. As a result of these discussions we have extended the ING network to within the Residencia. A standard 10/100Mbps hub has been installed in the computer room, as well as a wireless hub. These devices are there for the benefit of the ING staff and visitors. To use the wireless hub, you will need a wireless network card, which we can provide. The standard hub can be used as if you were in any of the ING telescopes. Clearly, both of these systems require an ING authorised IP address.

We have been working very closely with Ian Skillen to address a number of problems with the Service System. Whilst we can only apologise for recent problems that have made the system problematic, we have introduced a more robust solution that will be more tolerant of recent problems. In the short term, with the collaboration of Ian, we will be migrating the whole of the Service System to a dedicated machine with the intention of improving this service. □

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## Seminars Given at ING

Visiting observers are politely invited to give a seminar at ING. Talks usually take place in the sea level office in the afternoon and last for about 30 minutes plus time for questions afterwards. Astronomers from ING and other institutions on site are invited to assist. Please contact Johan Knappen (knappen@ing.iac.es) and visit this web page <http://www.ing.iac.es/Astronomy/science/seminars.html> for more details. These were the seminars given in the last six months:

- 30 August. *Two-dimensional spectroscopy of the gravitational lens SBS 0909+532*, V. Motta (IAC)
- 29 August. *Searching for obscured supernovae in nearby starburst galaxies*, S. Mattila (Imperial College)
- 22 August. *Results from the Palomar mirror cleaning and coating conference*, J. Rey & M. Blanken (ING)
- 8 August. *Brown Dwarfs: Origins, Evolution and Fate*, E. Martín (IfA Hawaii)
- 26 July. *Near-Earth Objects: Unanswered Questions*, A. Fitzsimmons (Belfast)
- 24 July. *AXIS (An XMM-Newton International Survey)*, X. Barcons (Santander)
- 10 July. *The Turkish National Observatory in Antalya*, S. O. Selam (Ankara Observatory)
- 27 June. *WHT/INTEGRAL and the VLA give clues on the formation of shell galaxies*, M. Balcells (IAC)
- 31 May. *Probing the Fossil Record of Galaxy Evolution in M31*, A. Ferguson (Groningen)
- 23 May. *CCD Design: Current Developments*, S. Tulloch (ING)
- 27 April. *Spectral analysis of Galactic OB stars*, C. Villamariz Cid (IAC)
- 23 April. *Weird faint wee red beasties that make X-rays (Red counterparts to faint X-ray sources in a deep ROSAT survey)*, A. Newsam (Liverpool JMU)
- 28 March. *WFCAM, quasars, and other things*, S. Warren (Imperial College)
- 27 March. *Quasar absorption lines as a cosmological probe: exploring the Lyman forest with VLT/UVES*, S. Cristiani (ESO)
- 26 March. *Do Luminous Ellipticals Have Young Discs?* R. McDermid (Durham)
- 22 March. *The Galileo telescope and its instrumentation*, E. Oliva (TNG)
- 16 March. *Status of the SAURON Project on Nearby Early-type Galaxies*, T. de Zeeuw (Leiden)
- 12 March. *Observational evidence for black holes*, E. Harlaftis (Nat. Obs., Athens)
- 7 March. *The 2.3m ARISTARCHOS telescope*, E. Harlaftis (Nat. Obs., Athens)