various AT&T executives for the withdrawal are the following:

▷ the undesirability of being associated with the nuclear weapons complex, from a public relations perspective, now that AT&T is in a competitive market where it has to attract customers and shareholders and now that the Cold War is over

▷ the omnipresent risk of a weapons-related accident

▷ possible liability for environmental cleanup costs, with the issue looming ever larger in the public eye

▷ the possible appearance of conflicts of interest in dealings between the private telecommunications company and the publicly funded laboratory.

But according to Solomon Buchsbaum, senior vice president for technology systems at AT&T, those reasons are mostly beside the point. The main things, he says, were changes in Sandia's mission to de-emphasize nuclear weapons, so that AT&T's expertise in high-reliability engineering no longer was so relevant, and the need for AT&T—now that it no longer is a regulated monopoly—to focus all its energies on the imperatives of the global telecommunications market.

At the time AT&T announced its withdrawal, the company had been in prolonged negotiations with DOE about a proposed cooperative research and development agreement with Sandia involving soft x-ray projection lithography. After its withdrawal, the negotiations were quickly brought to a successful conclusion. While AT&T executives express skepticism about whether there was any direct link between the two events, there is a perception within Bell Labs that the withdrawal from management of Sandia may have helped with the CRADA.

—WILLIAM SWEET

## NATH IS 1993 PRESIDENT-ELECT OF AAPM

The American Association of Physicists in Medicine has chosen a new president-elect, Ravinder K. Nath of Yale University. Nath, who succeeds Richard L. Morin, begins his one-year term on 1 January. He will become president in 1994.

A native of India, Nath earned a BS in 1963 and MS in 1965 at the University of Delhi. He did his doctoral work at Yale, obtaining a PhD in physics in 1971. Nath then joined the Yale faculty, and he is currently a professor of therapeutic radiology and chief of the radiological physics division in the medical school there. His research deals with the physics of radiation oncology, particularly brachytherapy, a treatment for cancer involving the implanting of radioactive sources in tumors.

Ravinder K. Nath

Nath would like to see AAPM do more to assist younger investigators who are trying to establish research careers. He also feels that the society should lead the way in setting higher standards for the clinical training of medical physicists "to ensure the highest possible level of care in hospitals."

## *ASTROPHYSICAL JOURNAL* DISTRIBUTES VIDEOTAPES

This year's 10 July issue of *The Astrophysical Journal* included for the first time a videotape containing motion picture illustrations for some of the papers in that particular issue. According to Helmut A. Abt of Kitt Peak National Observatory, the editor of *The Astrophysical Journal*, the reception has been good so far.

The tape, playable on an ordinary VCR, was provided to all 3000 subscribers of the journal at no extra charge. US subscribers got it in the standard VHS format, European subscribers in PAL or SECAM, the current European television standards.

Abt says he got the idea of providing tapes from recent general meetings of the American Astronomical Society, where usually a dozen or so presentations have included video material. Often such material contains information that is not readily discernible in still photographs. "Examples are hydrodynamic calculations (for example jets moving through a medium), *n*-body simulations (for example interacting galaxies, clustering and galaxy formation) and lapse-time photography (for example solar activity and sequences of spectra of an evolving or orbiting object)," Abt explained in an introduction to the issue.

Abt told PHYSICS TODAY that it cost $6–7 to produce each cassette and that each author's institution was asked to contribute $1000; the balance of the total cost, which was about $20 000, came out of the journal's general budget (of which the balance represents one-half of a percent).

Abt said the journal's budget anticipates that videocassette supplements will be provided twice a year from now on, and CD-ROMs containing computer-readable data sets also will be distributed starting next year for the first time. He points out that astronomers rely heavily on catalogues of fixed celestial objects, and that CD-ROMs are an especially handy way of keeping such catalogues at one's fingertips. Also, he said, authors often have a lot more data than can be presented in a printed journal article.

## APS CREATES NEW AWARD FOR THESIS RESEARCH

The American Physical Society has established a new award to recognize "doctoral thesis research of outstanding quality and achievement in atomic, molecular or optical physics." The annual award consists of $1000 and is sponsored by the APS division of atomic, molecular and optical physics.

The award is open to doctoral students at any university in the US or abroad who defended their theses successfully less than two years before the nomination deadline. Finalists for the award will give invited talks at the division's meeting. The first thesis award will be presented at the division's next meeting, to be held in Reno in May 1993.

## IN BRIEF

The American Geophysical Union has published a pamphlet describing notable developments in geophysics during the past year. For copies of *Geophysics News: 1991*, contact AGU, 2000 Florida Avenue NW, Washington DC 20009. ■