succeeds Frank Bash, who served as director for about 14 years.

Lambert says his first priority is to get the observatory's Hobby–Eberly Telescope "really up to doing a lot more science." The 10-meter telescope is up and running, he says, but its image quality will be sharpened over the next year or two. A second goal is to explore becoming a partner in a very large telescope. "We would like a significant share in a large telescope—20 meters or whatever," he says.

The search for an observatory director took more than a year. And it will continue even now that Lambert has taken the job because, he says, "I think the community needs a young face that will shake things up a bit." **TF**

Sandia mega-microsystems. Ground was broken on 19 August in Albuquerque, New Mexico, for the biggest project ever undertaken at Sandia National Laboratories, a US Department of Energy defense lab. Research at the $462.5 million Microsystems and Engineering Sciences Applications (MESA) facility will be driven by weapons and other security applications (see PHYSICS TODAY, October 1999, page 65).

The initial research thrust, says MESA Director Don Cook, will be on radiation-hardened microelectronics. Other goals include developing polysilicon actuators for nonvolatile computer memories, environmental sensors, microswitches, radio-frequency microelectromechanical systems, and safety devices for conventional weapons.

MESA is scheduled to be completed in 2008. **TF** ■

RANDY MONTOYA, SANDIA NATIONAL LABORATORIES

The MESA groundbreaking was attended by (third, fourth, and fifth from left) Representative Heather Wilson (R-N.Mex.) and Senators Jeff Bingaman (D-N.Mex) and Pete Domenici (R-N.Mex), along with representatives from Sandia National Laboratories and the Department of Energy.

WEB WATCH

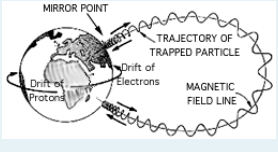
http://www.nobel.se/physics/articles/pais

In 1996, the Niels Bohr Institute in Copenhagen turned 75. To mark the occasion the late Abraham Pais gave a talk at the institute entitled **Physics in Denmark: The First Four Hundred Years**. The talk is now available online thanks to the Nobel e-Museum.

http://www.maths.monash.edu.au/~leo/relativity/sr-photography/sr-photo.shtml

To illustrate the effects of special relativity on photons, Leo Brewin of Monash University in Clayton, Australia, has put together **Special Relativity and Photography**. This online tutorial includes several instructive animations.

http://www.phy6.org/Education/aurora.htm



On vacation in Alaska, retired geophysicist David Stern heard a talk about the aurora borealis that was full of scientific errors and misconceptions. As a corrective, he wrote and delivered **Secrets of the Polar Aurora**, which is now available on the Web.

To suggest topics or sites for Web Watch, please visit http://www.physicstoday.org/suggestwebwatch.html.

Compiled and edited by **Charles Day**