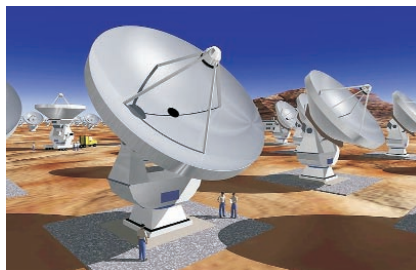


Among the journal publishers caught off-guard by the bankruptcy were Elsevier Science, Oxford University Press, the American Institute of Physics, the American Physical Society, the American Association of Physics Teachers, the Optical Society of America, and the American Geophysical Union. Those publishers have had to quickly develop procedures to limit their more than six-figure losses and help their subscription bases. The publishers helped form a creditors' committee with the libraries and, in some cases, they have offered to provide the libraries with 2003 subscriptions on the understanding that the libraries let the publishers take over financial claims against RoweCom. "I have been surprised and even touched by the generosity of many publishers during this difficult time," says Spurlock.

The RoweCom bankruptcy may lead to a reluctance by libraries in the future to use subscription agents, says Spurlock, as online site licenses become more attractive. "These are actually easier to handle without an agent as a middle person in the communication cycle," she says. **Paul Guinnessy**

ALMA green light. A powerful tool for peering at the early universe got the go-ahead on 25 February, when the North American and European partners signed an agreement to jointly build and run the Atacama Large Millimeter Array. The partners, represented by Rita Colwell and Catherine Cesarsky, directors, respectively, of NSF and the European Southern Observatory, will split the \$620 million tab.



"ALMA heralds a breakthrough in submillimeter and millimeter astronomy, allowing some of the most penetrating studies of the universe ever made," says Piet van der Kruit, director of the Kapteyn Astronomical Institute at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands and president of the ESO council. "It is safe to predict that there will be exciting scientific surprises when ALMA enters into operation."

Irish visitor awards. Fourteen scientists from abroad have been invited to Ireland for research stays. The new

The awards are to scientists in SFI's chosen niche investment areas of information and communications technology and biotechnology (see PHYSICS TODAY, April 2002, page 26). The awards total €1.7 million (roughly \$1.8 million), with recipients getting up to €200 000 each to cover their relocation, research, conference attendance, and stipends for stays in Ireland of 3 to 12 months.

The inaugural E. T. S. Walton visitors in physics-related fields are Vladimir Buzek of the Institute of Physics in Slovakia, who will spend time at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth; Michael Carroll of Rice University (NUI, Galway); Christopher Fuchs of Lucent Technologies' Bell Labs (Dublin Institute of Technology); Atsuo Fukuda of Shinshu University, Japan (Trinity College Dublin); Mary Beth Ruskai of the University of Massachusetts at Lowell (DIT); and Stafford Withington of Cavendish Laboratory in Cambridge, UK (NUI, Maynooth). **TF ■**

The **Astronomical Applications Department** of the US Naval Observatory provides precise astronomical data for defense, scientific, commercial, and civilian communities. Among the offerings on the department's Web page is a tool that calculates the times of sunrise and sunset for any day of the year and any location on the globe.

Compiled and edited by **Charles Day**