report, "the highly uneven distribution amplifies the impact. It causes severe pain for some departments and almost no pain for others."

The no-shows take a toll on physics departments, many of which reported cancelled graduate courses and a shortage of teaching and research assistants. Some departments worry that unfilled teaching-assistant slots will be permanently lost. In response to the visa difficulties, most physics departments have not changed their admissions policies, but 10% have begun accepting fewer foreign students, "to insulate themselves from the associated problems and uncertainty," and 9% are accepting more, to keep up their enrollment tallies.

These and other data are presented in the report, *Physics Students From Abroad in the Post-9/11 Era.* Single copies may be obtained free of charge from AIP, Statistical Research Center, One Physics Ellipse, College Park, MD 20740; e-mail stats@aip.org; electronic copies can be downloaded from http://www.aip.org/statistics/trends/undtrends.htm. **Toni Feder**

News Notes

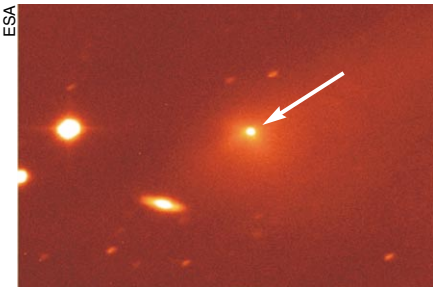
Nanos made permanent. After serving several months as interim director of the troubled Los Alamos National Laboratory, physicist and former US Navy vice admiral George "Pete" Nanos has been named the permanent director. "I had intended to conduct a national search for a new director . . . but Pete Nanos's superb performance over the last several months makes such a process unnecessary," said University of California President Richard Atkinson when he named Nanos in mid-May. The university manages Los Alamos.

Nanos became interim director on 6 January after a string of accounting and security controversies and crises led to the resignation of John Browne, a physicist who had led the lab for five years. "Under the most trying of circumstances, Pete has provided bold, innovative, and compassionate leadership to the hard-working men and women of the . . . laboratory," Atkinson said.

Nanos, the former commander of the Naval Sea Systems Command and the navy's strategic nuclear program, has instituted a series of reforms at the lab, the most recent of which was a restructuring of the business operations division. "I have to have a very direct relationship with how this laboratory does business," Nanos told the Los Alamos staff. **JLD**

Rosetta's new rendevous. The comet 67P/Churyumov–Gerasimenko is the new destination of Rosetta, a European Space Agency mission. Originally scheduled for launch this past January to the comet Wirtanen, Rosetta was postponed after an Ariane 5 launch rocket failed (see PHYSICS TODAY, March 2003, page 28). A later trip to Wirtanen was ruled

ESA



out because it would require a more powerful rocket—exactly the type that failed—so ESA now plans to send the spacecraft to Churyumov–Gerasimenko on 26 Feburary 2004. The change of plans will cost ESA about €73 million ($85 million). **TF**

Media lab leaves Asian offshoot. MIT has pulled out of Media Lab Asia, citing conflict with the Indian government, its partner in the venture. Spawned from MIT's renowned media lab, the Indian incarnation aims to use information technology to improve life for the masses (see PHYSICS TODAY, March 2002, page 27). Among the projects already under way are creating low-cost rural manufacturing systems, developing cheap Intenet access in remote areas, and providing computer access for youths in poor neighborhoods.

The partners had foreseen locking in a 10-year collaboration agreement after an initial phase, but MIT and Arun Shourie, India's new minister for information technology and communications, have diverged on how to run Media Lab Asia, according to Walter Bender, executive director of the MIT Media Lab. For example, the minister unilaterally sacked employees, including the CEO, says Bender. "The bottom line is we did not agree on how to manage the lab and so we decided not to continue."

But the experience has not dampened talk of new offshoots: "We remain passionate about the media lab model and we remain passionate about the importance of international engagement," says Bender. **TF** ■

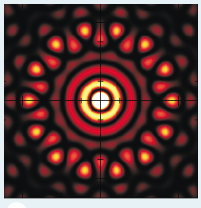
Letters and opinions are encouraged and should be sent to Letters, PHYSICS TODAY, American Center for Physics, One Physics Ellipse, College Park, MD 20740-3842 or by e-mail to ptletter@aip.org (using your surname as "Subject"). Please include your affiliation, mailing address, and daytime phone number. We reserve the right to edit submissions.

Web Watch

http://www.aps.org/intaff/visa

Visitors to the US now face increased scrutiny from both the State Department, which issues visas, and the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services, which controls entry. To advise students and academic visitors, the American Physical Society's Office of International Affairs has created a Web page of **Preliminary Visa Information**.

http://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/mineralogie/crystal/teaching/teaching.html



Now in its second generation of modifications, the **Interactive Tutorial about Diffraction** sets out to teach students how diffraction patterns reveal crystal structure. The tutorial, which was written by Thomas Proffen of Los Alamos National Laboratory and Reinhard Neder of the University of Würzburg, makes use of a program that can simulate any type of structure and calculate the corresponding Fourier transform in any section of reciprocal space.

http://birds.cornell.edu/brp/soundsmarmamm.html

The biophysical acoustics program at Cornell University's ornithology lab doesn't restrict its research to birds. Whales are also studied. If you visit the program's Web site, you can listen to **Recorded Marine Mammal Vocalizations** and view the corresponding sound spectra.

To suggest topics or sites for Web Watch, please phone the editor at (301) 209-3036. *Compiled and edited by* **Charles Day**