

Everyone:

It has been brought to my attention that the privilege of visiting and working at the MMT Observatory has been abused. Certainly, most individuals abide by our operating procedures, and we value their cooperation. I have learned, however, of cases of individuals or groups arriving unannounced at the MMT and wanting access to areas that the Telescope Operators have deemed off limits; family members or friends of observers unrelated to the scheduled observing who have occupied mountain dormitory facilities; overcrowding of summit facilities. Accordingly, I am instituting new policies (or, in some cases, drawing your attention to policies that already exist), and reminding you of the MMTO's priorities.

On the mountain, our priorities in order are:

- Safety of personnel
- Safety of hardware
- Science

#### Daily Operations

During daily mountain operations, the MMT staff present at the summit have the authority to limit personnel and the actions of individuals.

During nightly mountain operations, the Telescope Operator has authority. ALL individuals must abide by his/her decisions. If the telescope operator states that access to an area is limited, the telescope must close down, there are too many people in the control room, whatever s/he deems necessary to operate safely and effectively, *this is the final decision*. The Mountain Operations Manager, Dr. John Glaspey, and I as the MMT Director, expect to back their decisions entirely.

#### Visitors

ALL people planning to visit the telescope during the day should contact Dr. John Glaspey, Mountain Operations Manager, 520-670-6747, at least two days prior to a desired visit, and before the close of business on Friday for a weekend visit, to ensure that it is OK to visit the telescope. If a party arrives at the telescope, and their visit has not been cleared with the mountain staff, they can be denied admission.

#### Dormitories

We have limited dorm space for observers. If you sign up for a dorm room, use it. I have authorized Ms. Karen Erdman-Myers at the Whipple base camp to limit use of dorm space by users of the MMTO as she deems necessary.

#### Necessary Observers

There is not room enough on the mountain for your family or good friend to hang out on the mountain for a couple of nights while you are observing. Accordingly, we are now

taking the list of investigators supplied on the application for telescope time as the approved persons on the mountain. The PI must otherwise authorize additional personnel by sending a list of names to Ms. Barbara Russ ([bruss@mmto.org](mailto:bruss@mmto.org)). The function and number of personnel present on the mountain for a given observing program will be scrutinized before approval. We expect, of course, to allow the necessary personnel for the successful completion of the scientific program.

As always, I appreciate those people who have cleared their visits through the MMT staff and honored our operating procedures.

Faith Vilas  
Director, MMTO