

MAGIC

2013-01-30

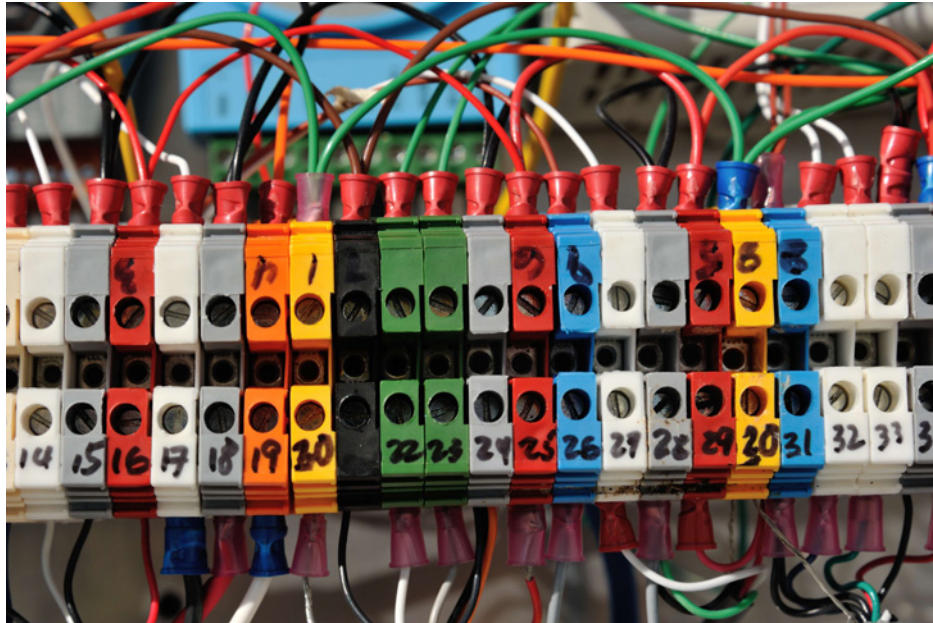
In the last update I described plans for my upcoming trip to Los Angeles to ride the *Spirit* to Honolulu, launching weather balloons every three hours along the way. However, as Robert Burns put it, “The best-laid schemes o’ mice and’ men / Gang aft a-gley,” so as you might surmise, things didn’t quite occur as I had planned. The exciting thing about field work is its unpredictability. Of course, the frustrating thing about field work is also its unpredictability, but I prefer the first option.



L to R: Super techs Mark Smith, Tom Flannery, Brett Bersche, and Pat Dowell on the bridge of the *Horizon Spirit* in their MAGIC attire. These guys are the troops on the ground (so to speak).

I was backing up my computer at work the day before I was to fly to Los Angeles when Nicki (from Argonne National Lab – she is in charge of the physical deployment of the AMF2 and all our instruments) called and asked if I was sitting down. Now Nicki and I have spoken several times each week for most of the last year, and this is the first time she has asked me this question, so I did not take this as a good omen. It turned out that Horizon was revising their shipping schedule and that the *Spirit* was going to go on a different route for a while before heading to its previously scheduled dry dock, so we had to get everything off while it was in port in Los Angeles. We had

known that we would have to take everything off before the *Spirit* went into dry dock anyway, but this was originally planned for late February. Nicki did a wonderful job in scheduling and organizing (upon very short notice) cranes, electricians, dockworkers, welders, transportation, and warehouse and storage space, not to mention changing transportation and lodging plans for the techs. In the end things worked out fine and it wasn't a big issue, but it was a bit of shock upon first hearing the news.



Even though we carefully noted the location of each wire before disassembly, a picture for further backup information never hurts.

As Pat and Brett were flying to Los Angeles to replace Tom and Mark as techs, everyone would be present to help with the uninstall. Mark and Tom had already started turning instruments off and packing things during the last day or two before arriving in port, so uninstallation proceeded rather smoothly and we were off the ship the day after it arrived in port. We moved supplies, spare parts, backups, and other items to one warehouse, where we carefully packed and labeled them. We took the three 20-foot vans that comprised AMF2 to another warehouse where we unpacked them, set them up, turned the power on, and set up remote communications so that the mentors could operate and troubleshoot their instruments, back up data, and so forth without having to fly to Los Angeles. There we sit for now, and that is where we will be for the next few months.



Spare parts, supplies, etc., carefully packed and labeled in one warehouse.



The three AMF2 vans at another warehouse.

The current plan is to use the down time to service instruments, have first looks at the data, etc., and then reinstall everything when the *Spirit* returns from dry dock in late April or early May, after which we will (hopefully) continue operations uninterrupted until the end of September, 2013. That will provide us with an additional five months of data in addition to the three we have already.

Ernie Lewis
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Please address any questions or comments to elewis@bnl.gov.

All updates and other MAGIC information can be found at <http://www.bnl.gov/envsci/ARM/MAGIC/>.