

# Stars over Sisters

By Ron Thorkildson  
Correspondent

No unicorns inhabit the earth. But according to sky lore, there is one in the starry realm.

Monoceros the Unicorn is a faint wintertime constellation that lies due east of Orion. One would need a dark, clear night just to have a shot at finding it. It extends about 10 degrees north and south of the celestial equator.

While none of the stars in this constellation are bright, a few of them are of special interest. Beta Monocerotis is an impressive triple star system. When William Herschel discovered it in 1781, he remarked that it is "one of the most beautiful sights in the heavens." In a telescope these pale blue stars appear to form a curved line. The star system lies at a distance of about 700 light-years.

Plaskett's Star is a giant binary system that has a combined mass about 100 times greater than the sun. The two stars rotate around a common center of gravity in just over 14 days. It is about 5,245 light-years from the earth.

Several deep-sky objects are scattered throughout Monoceros, but the largest and most impressive is the Rosetta Nebula. Discovered independently in the early

1800s by comet hunters Lewis Swift and Edward Emerson Barnard, this object is a large, circular-shaped diffuse nebula where new stars are being born. It is roughly 130 light-years in diameter and lies at a distance of some 5,200 light-years.

After passing to within 43 million miles of the earth on January 7, and coming as close as 120 million miles of the sun on January 30, comet Lovejoy is heading back toward the outer reaches of the solar system. Though dimming, it should be easily visible in a pair of binoculars. The comet will lie very close to the star Almach in Andromeda on February 4, and graze the planetary nebula M76 in Perseus on February 20 before moving into Cassiopeia thereafter. A nearly full moon early in the month will interfere with efforts to locate the comet, but from about February 11 through February 20 a moonless evening sky will make the task much easier.

As the month progresses, Venus slowly climbs higher in the western sky while Mars sinks lower toward the horizon. On February 20 the two planets are joined by a thin crescent moon, creating a picturesque setting. Jupiter reaches opposition on February 6, meaning it will

be positioned directly opposite the sun as viewed from the earth, and be visible all night long. Currently residing in Cancer, the giant planet is the brightest object in the night sky after the moon.

Speedy Mercury will hang out in Capricornus most of the month and become visible very low in the southeastern sky about 45 minutes before sunrise toward the end of February.

Saturn is in Scorpius this month, and by about 4 a.m. both it and the orange star Antares show prominently above the southeastern horizon.

The month begins with a brightening moon that becomes the Snow Full Moon (boy, what a misnomer this year in Central Oregon!) on February 3. Then the illumination of our only natural satellite begins to wane,



PHOTO BY BRIAN DAVIS

The Rosetta Nebula is a diffuse nebula located in the constellation of Monoceros.

reaching last quarter by February 11. The dimming continues until the moon goes dark on February 18.

Past its new phase, the moon once again begins to wax, appearing half illuminated at first quarter on February 25.

## SISTERS ENTERTAINMENT, ARTS, SPECIAL EVENTS

### Thursday~Feb. 5

**Faith Hope & Charity Vineyards Live Music with Heather & Tom Duo** 6 to 9 p.m. \$5 cover. Go to [faithhopeandcharityevents.com](http://faithhopeandcharityevents.com) or call 541-526-5075.

### Friday~Feb. 6

**Sisters High School Sisters Folk Festival Winter Concert with Foghorn Stringband & Beth Wood** 7 p.m. \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door (\$10 students). For tickets call 541-549-4979 or go to [sistersfolkfestival.org](http://sistersfolkfestival.org).

**Faith Hope & Charity Vineyards Live Music with Bobby Lindstrom** 6 to 9 p.m. \$10 cover. And Fondue Friday is \$30 for two! Go to [faithhopeandcharityevents.com](http://faithhopeandcharityevents.com) or call 541-526-5075.

### Saturday~Feb. 7

**Hoodoo Winter Carnival** 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Kids' games, live music, BBQ, the annual "dummy downhill" and fireworks! An all-day family affair! For info go to [hoodoo.com](http://hoodoo.com) or call 541-822-3799.

**Black Butte Ranch Fat-bike Cow Patty Crit** 12 to 4 p.m. This 2- to 4-person short-track fat-bike race is for riders 15 or older. \$15 online in advance by Feb. 5, or \$25 the day of the event (fat bikes provided; helmets and closed-toe shoes req.). [blackbutteranch.com](http://blackbutteranch.com).

### Sunday~Feb. 8

**Sisters Library Gary Albertson Presentation** 1:30 p.m. The photographer on "Journey into Darkness," presented by Friends of the Sisters Library as part of the Diane Jacobsen Speakers Series. Info, call 541-977-8285.

### Monday~Feb. 9

**The Open Door at Clearwater Gallery Live Music!** 7 p.m. No cover! For additional information call 541-549-4994 or go to [theclearwatergallery.com](http://theclearwatergallery.com).

### Wed.~Feb. 11

**The Belfry Live Music with Carolyn Wonderland** 7 to 10 p.m. for 4 Peaks Preview Party! \$17 online at [bendticket.com](http://bendticket.com) and \$20 at the door the day of show. Pub doors open 90 minutes before the show. For more info: 541-815-9122 or go to [belfryevents.com](http://belfryevents.com).

### Thursday~Feb. 12

**Faith Hope & Charity Vineyards Live Music with The Substitutes** 6 to 9 p.m. \$5 cover. For additional information go to [faithhopeandcharityevents.com](http://faithhopeandcharityevents.com) or call 541-526-5075.

### Friday~Feb. 13

**Sisters High School Sisters Folk Festival Winter Concert: The Stray Birds with Cahalen Morrison & Eli West** 7 p.m. \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door (\$10 students). For additional information or to purchase tickets call 541-549-4979 or go online to [sistersfolkfestival.org](http://sistersfolkfestival.org).

**The Belfry Author Reading, Garth Stein, "A Sudden Light"** 6 p.m. Free! Paulina Springs Books presents the bestselling author of "The Art of Racing in the Rain," sharing his new novel. Pub doors open at 5 p.m. Info, call 541-549-0866 or go to [paulinasprings.com](http://paulinasprings.com).

**Faith Hope & Charity Vineyards Live Music with JazCru** 6 to 9 p.m. \$5 cover. And Fondue Friday is \$30 for two! For more info go to [faithhopeandcharityevents.com](http://faithhopeandcharityevents.com) or call 541-526-5075.

### Saturday~Feb. 14

**The Belfry Valentine's Dance & Dessert with The Notables Swing Band!** 7 to 10:30 p.m. \$10 online at [bendticket.com](http://bendticket.com) or \$12 at the door the day of show. Info: 541-815-9122 or go to [belfryevents.com](http://belfryevents.com).

Listings subject to change. Submit by 5 p.m. Fridays to [Teresa@NuggetNews.com](mailto:Teresa@NuggetNews.com)

**Bronco Billy's Ranch Grill & Saloon Live Music with the Bella Acapella Quartet** 7 p.m. For info: 541-549-7427 or go to [broncobillysranchgrill.com](http://broncobillysranchgrill.com).

**Faith Hope & Charity Vineyards Valentine's Dinner & Dance with The Substitutes** 6 to 10 p.m. \$115. 21 and over. Special menu with guest chef Cerstin of Bleu Bite. [faithhopeandcharityevents.com](http://faithhopeandcharityevents.com) or 541-526-5075 to reserve.

**Sisters Schools "Sisters Shootout" Basketball Tourney** 8 a.m. and day-long. For boys and girls in grades 5 to 8. Info: [sistersshootout.com](http://sistersshootout.com) or call SPRD at 541-549-2091.

### Sunday~Feb. 15

**Sisters Schools "Sisters Shootout" Basketball Tourney** 8 a.m. and day-long. For boys and girls in grades 5 to 8. Info: [sistersshootout.com](http://sistersshootout.com) or call SPRD at 541-549-2091.

### Monday~Feb. 16

**The Open Door at Clearwater Gallery Live Music!** 7 p.m. No cover! Info, call 541-549-4994 or go to [theclearwatergallery.com](http://theclearwatergallery.com).

### Tuesday~Feb. 17

**The Belfry Frontiers in Science, "Climate Change: What's Real?"** 7 p.m. Free, with Dr. Constance Millar. Presented by the Sisters Science Club. Doors open at 6 p.m. for refreshments. Info, go to [sistersscienceclub.org](http://sistersscienceclub.org).

**Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper** 5 to 7 p.m. Enjoy pancakes, homemade applesauce, sausage, OJ, coffee & tea! \$4 adults, \$2 kids 4 to 12; free under 4, \$10 for a family of 4 or more. Info, call 971-237-1876.

**Sisters City Hall Habitat Slideshow of Kyrgyzstan Build** 7 p.m. Free! Jack & Mary Ann McDonnell will share slides of a global village build last fall, and discuss another trip planned for September. For more info call 541-549-1193.

## The Belfry

Feb. 11th / Wed.  
**Carolyn Wonderland**  
4 Peaks Preview Party!  
Heralded as one of the best vocalists in Austin!  
7 PM • \$17 online

Feb. 13th / Fri.  
**Garth Stein**  
Author Showcase  
Paulina Springs Books hosts best-selling author of "Racing in the Rain" for his new novel "Sudden Light."  
6 PM • FREE

Feb. 14th  
7pm

**Valentine's Dance with The Notables**  
Swing Band  
Desert & Dance Swinging Fun!  
7 PM • \$10 online

PUB OPENS 1-1/2 HOURS PRIOR TO SHOWS  
**BelfryEvents.com**  
Call for Details  
541-815-9122

## Sisters MOVIE HOUSE

**STARTS FRIDAY**  
FRI., FEB. 6 - THURS., FEB. 12

**Jupiter Ascending** (PG-13)  
Fri 5:00, 7:30  
Sat 2:30, 5:00, 7:30  
Sun 1:45, 4:15, 6:45  
Mon-Thurs 6:15

**Sponge Bob** (PG)  
Fri 4:30, 6:45  
Sat 2:15, 4:30, 6:45  
Sun 1:30, 3:30, 5:45  
Mon-Thurs 3:30, 5:45

**Theory of Everything** (PG-13)  
Fri 4:45 • Sat 2:00  
Sun 1:15 • Mon-Thurs 3:45

**The Imitation Game** (PG-13)  
Fri 7:15 • Sat 4:45, 7:15  
Sun 4:00, 6:30  
Mon-Thurs 6:15

**American Sniper** (R)  
Fri 4:15, 7:00  
Sat 1:30, 4:15, 7:00  
Sun 1:00, 3:45, 6:30  
Mon-Thurs 3:15, 6:00

Movie times and titles are subject to change. Visit website or call for latest information.  
**WWW.SISTERSMOVIEHOUSE.COM**  
**541-549-8800**