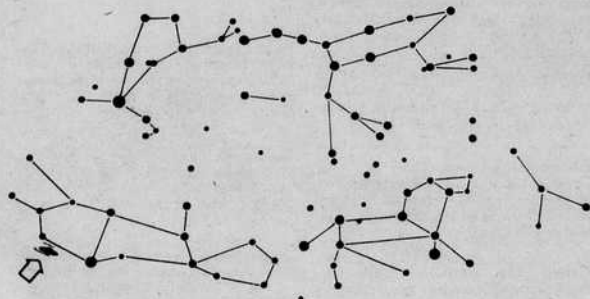


What's Happening in the Sky

Last week I hinted at the existence of a "galactic network." Whenever there is life in one of the hundred thousand million solar systems of our galaxy, it can potentially evolve to the point where it is capable of exchanging radio waves and communicating with its cosmic environment. The term "galactic network" implies that thousands (or millions) of systems older than ours have evolved this far and are now a confederation of intelligence with long traditions of information exchange. Meanwhile we on earth, like a loner on the outskirts of a tremendous city, await the day when we can enter into the benefits and responsibilities of citizenship in our galaxy. Once that day arrives we will have entered a gigantic pool of knowledge reaching from techniques for solar energy use to new perspectives on religion. 1492 and the discovery of the Americas would pale in significance compared to the first year of contact with this really "new world."



Looking again at the Zodiacal constellations Cancer, Leo and Virgo, we can see that above them in the sky is the interaction of Bootes and Ursa Major. The herdsman can be seen pushing the bear (or Dipper) with the bear's nose above Cancer, its body above Leo, and its tail or handle above Virgo. The coming May nights showcase these constellations and once you're able to find one you should be able to pick out the others. This week may be particularly good for viewing, as the Moon will soon be new (May 12th) and won't obscure our starry skies.

On Monday, May 9th, look for Venus setting as far north as it will reach in 1983. The point of its departure also marks where the Sun will set on the longest day of the year, June 21st. Saturn continues to display its rings next to the brightest star in Virgo (see map) and is easily visible as a bright yellow light in the southeast at sunset. Whittish Jupiter rises at about 10 pm also in the southeast and is even more brilliant than Saturn as it proceeds westward amidst the far dimmer stars. Incidentally, sunrise during the coming week occurs at approximately 6 am; get out a few minutes before this hour for a truly inspiring spectacle.

This Week's Terrestrial Eye-Opener (taken from Hal Borland's *Book of Days*): "Geologic evidence indicates that during the first few hundred million years the earth was completely covered with water. If there had been no internal stresses, which heaved great land masses upward and created the continents, it would still be covered with water to a depth of almost 8000 feet, a mile and a half."

—Larry Deckman

Glow-in-the-dark maps of the Heavens over Eugene/Springfield are now locally available. Forget the rain outside as you look above your bed each night and see the stars shine! The map also makes a "glowing" birthday or holiday gift. They can be purchased for \$7 from Larry Deckman at 2406 Lawrence St. in Eugene. Call 343-7166.

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Book Review

Maximum Life Span

By Roy L. Walford, M.D., W. W. Norton & Co., New York/London, 1983, 202 pages, \$15.50. Available at Marketplace Bookstore at the 5th Street Public Market.

Walford, a physician and medical researcher at UCLA Medical School, asserts that before the end of the century the human lifespan will exceed 120 years. In *Maximum Life Span* Walford tells how to lengthen lifespan. He writes of everything from recombinant DNA and cell repair to nutritive values for breakfast menus he provides.

Walford is fascinated with the age-old dream of longer life and he has made research in aging his life's work. The book is an intermingling of fact and the author's opinion and values. It is a conglomeration of history, scientific experimentation, and specific recommendations and methods to promote better health and prolong life.

Although an excessive amount of scientific material makes for slow reading in certain sections of the book, the book as a whole is worth reading and having as a reference. The book is invaluable for anyone in the field of gerontology, useful as a health improvement guide, and just plain interesting reading. I know of no other book which gives such comprehensive coverage of the history, myth and scientific inquiry of the field of aging, as well as offering practical suggestions for achieving optimum health.

The author sees gerontology on the verge of advances in research which will show ways to substantially slow the advance of aging. *Maximum Life Span* offers readers an understanding of the fundamental biologic process of aging and outlines Walford's methods for life extension.

Walford suggests metabolic adaptation through a regime of dietary restriction as one of the keys to slowing the rate of biologic aging. He recommends total intake of calories be sharply limited, while insuring that there is no lack of vital nutrients such as vitamins, fatty acids, minerals and amino acids. Walford believes one should slowly decrease caloric consumption to 60 percent of the original unrestricted diet over a period of five to seven years. The result will be a loss of one fifth to one half of initial body weight, and a change in the body's metabolism.

According to Walford this exceedingly stringent "undernutrition without malnutrition" may well slow biologic aging and contribute to an individual's chance for a longer life.

The concluding sections of the book contain graphs, menus and charts of such useful listings as nutritive food values and calorie counts for planned menus. The book can be used as a guide to Walford's recommended "restricted diet" to prolong one's life, or read as an enjoyable and educational insight into aging. *Maximum Life Span* is a book for those of us who know we are getting older and for those of us who think we aren't.

—Sandra Bishop

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