

THE STARRY SIDE

Philosophically speaking

BY GREELEY WELLS

My love for the night sky, which came to me as a child through a grandmother figure (a story I've told before in this column), is deeply ingrained in me. Now that I've taken up video work, I'm capturing movies of the moon, clouds, trees, sometimes a star or planet, sunsets, and other sky-related images. I'm up at all hours noticing things; I often suddenly run outside in the middle of the night with the camera and tripod in order not to miss some colorful dance the moon is doing. These images are finding their way into my films (see greeleyandfriends.com).

It's what the unaided eye sees that fascinates and intrigues me and that I try to capture in my video images. When I look at the night sky, I realize that I am looking at what the whole human race has been looking at during its entire existence. It's hard to explain how connected I feel with that sense of history and with my fellow man and woman across time, place, and culture. I can't be out in the night without looking up and feeling that connection. Looking at the sky, I am sharing the lifetime of humanity. That warm feeling of fellowship and commonality with humanity gives me great joy and peace. I'm so grateful for that beautiful spread of solar and cosmic things over our heads at night.

This season

Summer is upon us. As early as April, by the time I go to bed the Summer Triangle is

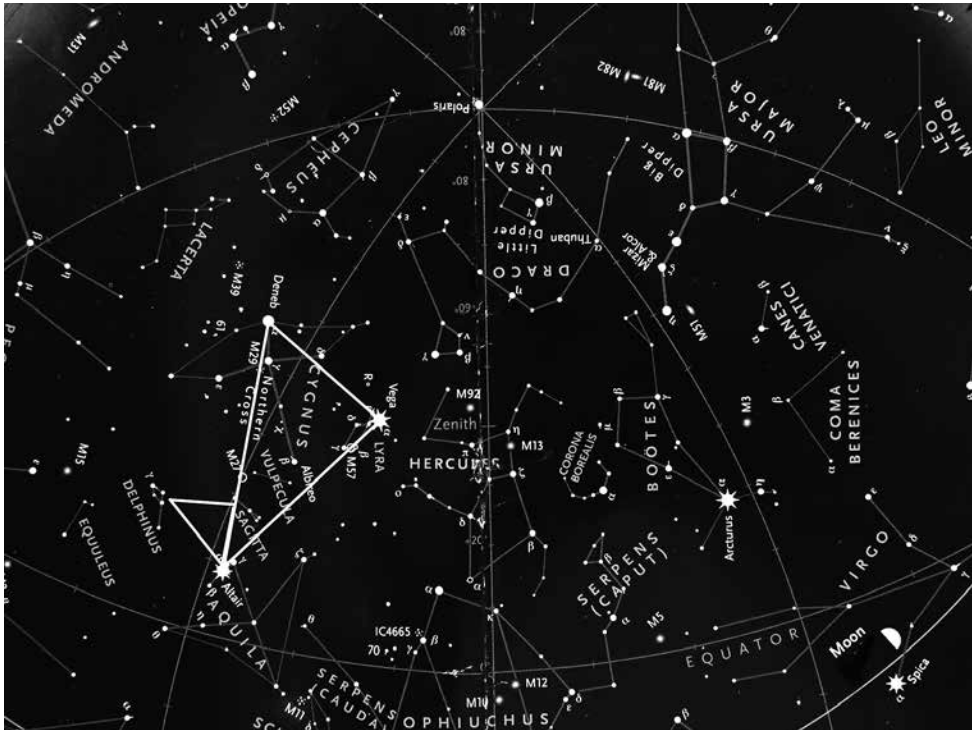


Illustration from stellarium.org.

already coming up in the east. It will soon be the primary celestial object of summer, merged and mingling with the beautiful spread of the Milky Way. In the east, the last rising part of the Summer Triangle is the bright star, Altar. (I've put some lines on the illustration to help you see what I'm describing here.)

Stars on either side of Altar make an almost three-in-a-row, Orion's beltish

look. This constellation is Aquila, the eagle. Just outside the large Summer Triangle is a smaller triangle composed of Aquila the eagle, Delphinus the dolphin, and the little arrow called Sagitta.

There are so many wonderful constellations out there—about 80 in total. This season, one of my favorites is the dolphin, Delphinus. My love for Delphinus comes from how “real” it looks and feels.

Even though it is only five stars, it is clearly—to me at least—a dolphin

jumping over a wave on the surface of the ocean. Even though I don't see the ocean, my mind fills it in. Maybe it's part of the Milky Way? Anyway, it's a constellation that I always look for and enjoy. I hope you find in it the same little treat, a little nighttime gift.

Of note

That brightest of all “stars” in the south is the planet Jupiter, beyond the arch of the Big Dipper's handle. Venus is now a morning star, a real treat for early risers, especially when a crescent moon is in the east, too. Early risers may also be lucky enough to catch a glimpse of little Mercury low in the pre-dawn sky.

The modest Delta Aquarid meteor shower gets as big as it gets on July 28. Your best chance of seeing it is pre-dawn. The wonderful, strong, and predictable Perseids are visible many nights around their peak on August 12. They are a must-see.

Here's to clear, dark night skies and bright stars for you.

Greeley Wells • greeley@greeley.me
(I love hearing from you!)

Note: Don't miss the total eclipse on Monday, August 21. For more information, see my “Starry Side” in the Fall 2016 Applegater.

Sign up for Pacifica Summer Day Camps

Give your kids a summer to remember! Community experts are teaching their skills and specialties to our youth! Join us for a wide range of exciting day camps at Pacifica, 14615 Water Gap Road (2.3 miles from Highway 238, near Williams).

Each camp runs Monday through Thursday from 9 am to 2 pm. See dates below. The cost is \$150. Scholarships are available, as well as discounts for siblings and for multiple camp sign ups.

Yoga Camp: Playful Practice, June 26 - 29 (ages 6 - 12). Kids, summer, and yoga: a great combination! Through a combination of yoga poses, games, themed craft projects and relaxation time, kids will be able to strengthen their bodies, minds, and spirits. Taught by two local

yoga instructors, this camp is sure to create lasting memories, new friendships, and a foundation for health and well-being. Teachers: Clair Highfield RYT, Allee Gus RYT250.

Classic Camp: A Variety of Fun, July 10 - 13 (ages 6 - 10). Summer days filled with arts and crafts, songs, outdoor games, nature activities, and more! If you love to create, play, sing, and explore, this is the perfect camp for you. Join us! Teachers: Patty Goodin, Leah Markman.

Summer Fun: Sewing Camp, July 17 - 20 (ages 8 - 14). Join us for four days of fun learning how to sew. Students will work on basic hand and machine-sewing skills. There will be a number of fun activities that will help build on these skills, time to

play outside in the sun, and focus on fun crafts inside. Teachers: Serene Dussell, Heidi Carlson.

Theater Camp: Dramatic Adventures, July 24 - 27 (ages 8 - 18). Young actors of all skill levels are welcome. Join local experts in discovering the wonderful world of the stage! The focus will be on improvisation, theatre games, and group-building activities that help support building self-confidence and collaboration skills! Shane has over 20 years of experience working in theatre as a performer, director, and producer. Teachers: Shane Skinner, Madeline DeCoursey.

Rock Band Camp: Jammin', July 31 - August 3 (ages 8 - 14). Students will learn the mechanics of song writing, live stage performance, and production, and write at least one original piece to perform at the end of camp! Teacher Brian Risling is a professional educator and musician with extensive stage experience; Frankie Hernandez is a professional musician. Students will view Pacifica's recording studio, originally built by Steve Miller, and record a track there with Grammy-award-winning engineer Dennis Dragon.

Art Camp: Passion for Paint, August 7 - 10 (ages 8 - 18). Explore yourself and the world around you through the medium of paint. Learn the art principles of color, contrast, mark making, layering, and incorporating “self,” while being inspired by nature's beauty. Set your imagination free as you play with paint, creating original drawings, paintings, and creations

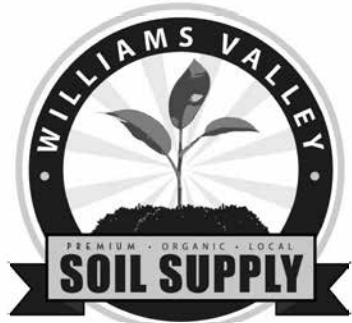
to take home. Teachers: Mary Collins, Shauna Sorce.

Creativity Camp: Makin' Magic, August 14 - 17 (ages 6 - 14). Bring your playful spirit for a fun week of creating from scratch. We will use a variety of materials, including recycled items, to make original creations. The possibilities are endless as we use our imagination, the inspiration of nature, and the support of each other to produce daily creations to keep for ourselves or share with others. Teachers: Patty Goodin, Mary Collins.

Camp Botanica: Plant Fairies of Pacifica, August 21 - 24 (ages 5 - 9). Join Ms. Dandelion for a week of exploring plants from a fairy's perspective. If you were a fairy, how would you use a mullein leaf? If you were an elf, what plants would you use as medicine for a bee sting? Plant-related stories, songs, games, and creative projects will weave together this playful week. Teachers: Lauren Kemple, Alexa Trost.

Connecting with Nature Camp: Ancestral Awareness, August 28 - 31 (ages 6 - 12). Connect with your inner wild child and learn to walk in balance and harmony with the living world. Explore the ponds, creek, and wild areas of Pacifica. Campers can learn and practice a variety of primitive and survival skills. This camp incorporates storytelling, art, games, and sensory-awareness activities with ecology, stewardship, and wilderness skills. Teachers: Shauna Sorce, Vanessa Martinez.

More information: contact Vanessa at 541-621-6278 or vanessa@pacificagarden.org.



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