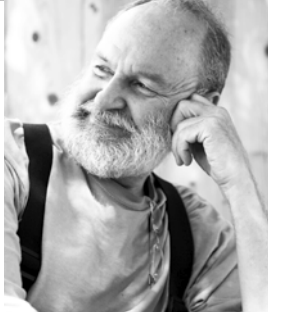


THE STARRY SIDE

Spring swings over – welcome to summer

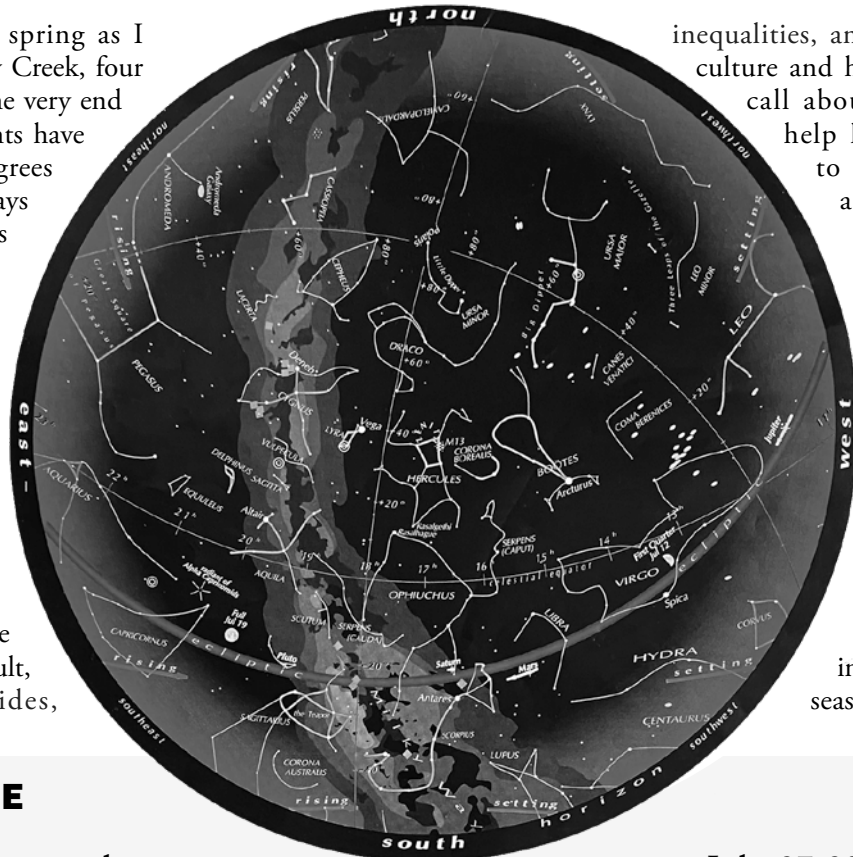
BY GREELEY WELLS



Greeley Wells

We're swinging out of spring as I write this. Here at Carberry Creek, four miles of dirt road west of the very end of Applegate Lake, the nights have still been freezing—26 degrees the other night, and the days have gotten into the 70s and now 80s! What a swing of temperature all in one 24-hour period and repeated day after day. Wow.

Even though spring will have ended by the time you read this, many other things are having trouble ending, like COVID-19. (You can help end the spread of COVID-19 by getting vaccinated!) While the pandemic has been difficult, it has also exposed divides,



Guy Ottewell's Astronomical Calendar

inequalities, and dependencies in our culture and has been a real wake-up call about what we can do to help humanity. Responding to this call, many people and organizations have begun actions to create a better future, a return to a better, fuller, happier, more equal, and safer normal. We should all be a part of this effort!

Meanwhile, the stars continue their normal swing with the seasons. Summer brings the reappearance of the Milky Way rising in the east. Spring is the one season in which our galaxy

is spread out on the other side of the earth, invisible to us at night. The galaxy sinks in the west in early spring, then starts to show up late in the evening towards the end of spring with the rising of our old friend, the Summer Triangle.

Have you noticed how each season has its own set of stars, just as it has its own weather? I am constantly learning new configurations and recognizing old friends up there. Before the invention of electric lights and television, the night sky was an important part of life for the human species. For many people today it has become quite secondary. But a few of us crazies remain fascinated with it.

Greeley Wells
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OF NOTE

A reader asks: "What was that string of strange lights I saw from Williams on May 8, one right after the other? Must have been 30 of them."

The reader saw some of the many satellites launched by Tesla owner Elon Musk's SpaceX Starlink project to provide internet coverage to the world, especially for those in remote and rural areas, according to space.com, which says it may expand service later this year. The satellites are most visible shortly after launch,

before they've reached operational altitude, and Starlink is taking steps to make them less reflective.

We hope so, as we treasure our dark, starry sky over the Applegate!

••
June 21. The sun reaches its northernmost position for the year, and we start back towards shorter days and longer nights, with increasing speed, until the equinox.

July 27-30. Peak of the Delta Aquariid meteor shower, which normally offers up to 20 meteors an hour. This time, however, a mostly full moon will bleach out all but the few best meteors.

••
August 12-13. The wonderful Perseids meteor shower—up to 60 an hour! A crescent moon sets early, so there will be no lunar interference. Later in the night is better for viewing, and just before dawn is best. These meteors frequently leave persistent trains.

Planets

Jupiter is at its brightest, facing the sun and close to us. It's visible all night.

Mercury is visible in the mornings from June 27 to July 16 and in the evenings from August 31 into September.

Venus is in the western sky at dusk throughout the summer. It is always bright and during this season sets after the sun.

Mars will be visible in the evening through August 22.

Saturn is visible in the predawn sky. It's brightest August 1-4.

Got News?

The *Applegater* welcomes submissions! We're your newspaper and want to share your news with readers throughout the Applegate Valley watershed's many neighborhoods. What's going on around you? Let us know! Send your writeup and photos to gater@applegater.org. Thanks! See you in the *Applegater*....

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