

Tips for summer star-gazing given by physics student

By PAM BARNES
Reporter

When was the last time you went star-gazing? Well it's summer. The nights are warm, the skies are clear and there are many stars, constellations and planets that are visible at this time of year. So, as soon as it's dark, grab a blanket and a buddy and head for a park, or someplace the lights aren't too bright, and look up.

The easiest and most familiar constellation to find is the Big Dipper, or Ursa Major. To find it, face north and look for four stars that form the bowl of the dipper and three stars that form the handle.

The second star from the end of the handle is called Mizar. If you look closely to the right of Mizar, there's a dim star. It's Alcor. If your eyes are good, you should be able to find Alcor. If not, you may need glasses.

John Burciaga, a physics graduate student who teaches the lab for physics 307, says these two stars were once used as an eye test for the Roman Legions. He says that they believed that if you could see Alcor, the dimmer of the two stars, then your eyes were good.

The two stars at the bottom of the bowl of the big dipper are often called pointers because they point to

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the north star, Polaris. To find Polaris, follow a line through these two stars to the right. Continue this line to five times the distance between these two stars, and you find the dim star Polaris. It marks the true direction of north. If you are facing Polaris, south is directly behind you, west is to your left and east is to your right.

Burciaga says the altitude of Polaris is equal to the latitude of your location. For example, he says the latitude of College Station is 30.6 degrees north, so Polaris can be seen 30.6 degrees above the northern horizon.

More interesting things lie in the southern sky, just opposite Polaris. Forty-five degrees above the southern horizon is a bright reddish colored star. This is actually the planet Mars.

Burciaga points out that the star-

gazer's hands can be used as measurements. One hand's width is about 20 degrees, he says, and three fingers held together are about 10. So, two hands (40 degrees) above the southern horizon is Mars. To the right of Mars and up 10 degrees (three fingers) is another planet, Saturn. It isn't quite as bright as Mars, nor is it colored, but it's just as easy to find.

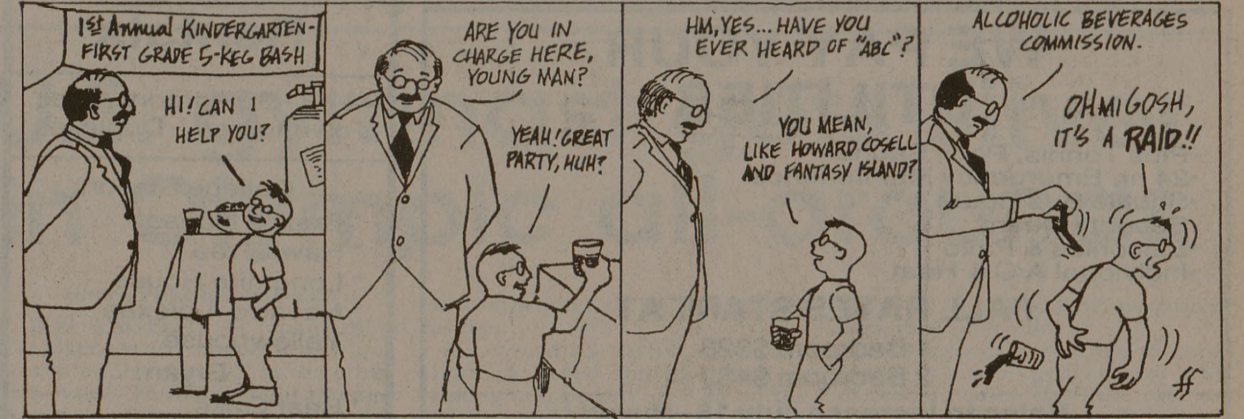
On a line between Jupiter and Mars, there is a bright orange-red star. This is Antares. Antares is a bright star in the zodiacal constellation Scorpius, the Scorpion.

After you find Antares, Scorpius, or commonly known as Scorpio, is easy to find. The two stars above Antares make a slanting line to the right to form the head of the scorpion, and two stars branch to each side of these two stars to form the claws. Below Antares, a line of stars slant toward the horizon to make the body. As the line curls to the left the tail takes shape and two stars together at the end make a stinger.

Burciaga says books can be of some help to star-gazers, but he says that just going out and looking is the best way to learn. The Physics Department at Texas A&M offers two classes that teach astronomy. They are Physics 306 and 307.

On the Fringe

by Fred Leong



Israeli opposition leader wins party endorsement

United Press International

JERUSALEM — Opposition Labor leader Shimon Peres Thursday won a key endorsement to head a national unity government with the ruling Likud bloc and began a second round of talks with Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir on the issue.

Ezer Weizman, leader of the small but pivotal Yahad "Together" Party, declared his support for Peres as the leader of a unity government during a meeting with Israeli President Chaim Herzog.

"We said we are definitely for national unity government and we rec-

ommended he call Mr. Peres as the head of the largest party to try to attempt and form a national unity government," Weizman said afterward.

Weizman refused to say whom his party would support if the unity talk failed.

Weizman's party won a pivotal three seats in deadlocked July 23 general elections that left neither Shamir's ruling Likud bloc nor the Labor party with a clear mandate to form a new government.

Herzog met with Weizman as part of his consultations with leaders of smaller parties aimed at reaching a

decision on whom to ask to try to form a new government.

With Weizman's backing, Peres began a second day of talks with Shamir to explore the possibility of forming a national unity government to end the political uncertainty and deal quickly with an economic crisis marked by 400 percent inflation.

Thursday's talks were to focus on "economic and social matters," according to the party leaders.

They agreed in a four-hour initial session Wednesday to defer the touchy question of who would head a new government, officials said.

Police Beat

The following incidents were reported to the University Police Department through Thursday.

MISDEMEANOR THEFT:
A light-blue Dawes ten-speed bicycle was stolen from the Architecture Building bike rack.

BURGLARY OF A MOTOR VEHICLE:
A Craig stereo, an equalizer, and two stereo speakers were stolen from a 1973 Datsun 240Z in Parking Annex 24.

CRIMINAL MISCHIEF:
The left side of the hood and the left door of a 1982 Chevrolet Suburban were damaged. The car was parked on Fish Tank Road next to the Firemen's Training School.

Gay 'Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf' canceled

United Press International

ARLINGTON — A community theater Thursday canceled the last performances of its all-male "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf" at the request of playwright Edward Albee, who denied he ever intended the play be cast that way.

The homosexual-oriented staging, which was to have had its final performances this Friday, Saturday and Sunday already had drawn the ire of three conservative city councilmen in this city of 100,000 people located midway between Dallas and Fort Worth.

Director Dov Fahrer said he cast the production for the experimental arm of Theatre Arlington with four men, instead of two heterosexual couples as Albee wrote it in 1962, be-

cause he had heard the homosexual angle was Albee's original intent.

Fahrer said he understood Albee changed the characters' genders under pressure from advisers who said homosexuality spelled commercial suicide.

But Albee, reached by telephone in New York, where he is working on new plays and casting two revivals he will direct this fall in Vienna, said the two quarrelsome couples in "Virginia Woolf" were never meant to be homosexual men.

"No, certainly not," Albee said. "Whenever I hear about a production of that sort I have it closed. If I'd wanted to (write a homosexual play) I would have."

"All the copies of my plays have a

The two quarrelsome couples in "Virginia Woolf" were never meant to be homosexual men.

number of clauses which say they must be performed without any changes or deletions or additions and must be performed by actors of the sex as written," he said.

Tate Kelly, chairman of the board of Theatre Arlington, said the play had been canceled at Albee's request.

"As a responsible theater group we want to follow his wishes, especially now that he has finally gone on

record as not having intended it that way," Kelly said. "We are not, double underlined, closing this play at the request of (the) councilmen."

"What my regret is ... is that this whole thing has gotten wrapped up in the censorship issue," he said. "This is going to in a way vindicate the councilmen. We just want it to blow over."

Albee, who won the Pulitzer Prize twice but ironically not for "Virginia Woolf," said there have been three or four other all-male versions of the play.

He believes the homosexuality rumor began with a review of the 1966 movie version that starred Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, Sandy Dennis and George Segal.

"It all came about because when the film came out a movie critic wrote in his review that while he liked it very much he was uncomfortable accepting it as a portrayal of a heterosexual marriage and therefore it wasn't," Albee said.

"There's a certain amount of directorial creativity but it doesn't give permission to distort. If they don't like it as written they should do something else," he said.

He said several aspects of the plot, such as the revelation of an hysterical pregnancy by one character, make a homosexual version ludicrous.

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