

Astronomers scan skies in hope of stagy meteor show

(AP) — Around the world, astronomers and amateur stargazers headed for fields, beaches, deserts and mountaintops yesterday to watch what could be the most spectacular meteor shower since 1966 and for decades to come. The annual Leonid meteor shower was expected to reach its peak overnight yesterday. However, predicting timing and intensity is an inexact science, and the quarter moon, the lights of civilization and cloud cover could obscure the view. "It could be spectacular, or it could be a dud," Williams College astronomer Jay Pasachoff, who picked a beach outside Valencia, Spain, for his viewing spot, said. The best American viewing of the shooting-star show was expected on the East Coast in today's wee morning hours. The National Weather Service forecast showed

thickening clouds across much of the Northeast, but mostly clear skies southward.

"[The meteor shower] could be spectacular, or it could be a dud."

— Jay Pasachoff
Williams College astronomer

However, astronomical calculations put the best spectacle in the Middle East and Europe.

Up to 20,000 shooting stars per hour were predicted during the meteor shower, which occurs when dust and ice shed by the comet Tempel-Tuttle streak into

the Earth's atmosphere at 40 miles a second and burn up.

Since the orbiting comet dumps extra debris every 33 years when it races past the sun, the chances for a meteor storm rise every 33 years. The last great storm was 1966, with a peak of 144,000 shooting stars per hour. A typical year might yield just 20 per hour.

A NASA network of observing stations tallied the Leonid meteor count at 20 to 40 per hour early Wednesday, according to staffer Steve Roy, at the Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala. The number of shooting stars and fireballs was expected to swell during the night.

On Tuesday night, fireballs streaked across the sky and stirred panicky calls to police across the Midwest and as far east as New York state. Some feared plane crashes or UFOs.

Number of women in prison rising

WASHINGTON (AP) — The war on drugs has sent an increasing number of women to prison, according to a study released yesterday. It also said two-thirds of incarcerated women have children under age 18.

The drug war has had a "dramatic and disproportionate impact on women," the report by The Sentencing Project, a private group devoted to finding alternatives to imprisonment, said.

The number of women in state prisons for drug offenses rose from 2,400 in 1986 to 23,700 in 1996, nearly 10 times as many, the study said. For non-drug crimes, the number of imprisoned women more than doubled, rising from 17,200 to 39,400. In other words, drug crimes accounted for half of the overall increase of women in state prisons.

The figures for women imprisoned for drug crimes start from a "relatively low base, but it's still an enormous growth," professor Alfred Blumstein of Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh, said.

The numbers for women still are far below the numbers of men in prison.

In 1986, there were 34,400 men in state prisons for drug crimes, a number that rose to 213,900 in 1996, more than six times as many. For non-drug offenses,

391,400 men were imprisoned in 1986, compared with 767,500, almost twice as many, a decade later. Drug crimes made up one-third of the total increase.

"It is unclear to what extent our findings reflect changes in behavior and criminality or changes in official responses to those behaviors," the Sentencing Project's report said.

James Alan Fox, professor of criminal justice at Boston's Northeastern University, said the study shows a strong impact of the drug war on both men and women.

"This does not suggest that there has been any differential enforcement on women," Fox said. "The impact on families and children is obviously disproportionate when women are locked up."

Two-thirds of female state prison inmates had children under age 18, and half of the women said their children had never visited them in prison. Many children of female inmates were placed in foster care.

"Thus, women's incarceration results in a disruption of children's living situation as well as creating emotional stress for both women and their children," the report said.

Buck's Pizza
PIZZA · STROMBOLI · HOAGIES
Medium One Topping Pizza
\$3.50
*Order 3 for free delivery
409 693-2BUCK 5

HEADS WILL ROLL

A TIM BURTON FILM
Sleepy Hollow
JOHNNY DEPP CHRISTINA RICCI

PARAMOUNT PICTURES AND MANDALAY PICTURES PRESENT
A SCOTT RUDIN/AMERICAN ZOETROPE PRODUCTION A TIM BURTON FILM JOHNNY DEPP CHRISTINA RICCI
"SLEEPY HOLLOW" MIRANDA RICHARDSON MICHAEL GAMBON CASPER VAN DIEN JEFFREY JONES
MUSIC BY DANNY ELFMAN COSTUME DESIGNER KEVIN YACHER EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA LARRY FRANCO
BASED UPON THE STORY BY WASHINGTON IRVING SCREENPLAY BY KEVIN YACHER & ANDREW KEVIN WALKER DIRECTED BY ANDREW KEVIN WALKER
PRODUCED BY SCOTT RUDIN ADAM SCHROEDER DIRECTED BY TIM BURTON
SOUNDTRACK AVAILABLE ON HOLLYWOOD RECORDS
www.sleepyhollowmovie.com READ THE POCKET BOOK

**STARTS FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19
AT A THEATRE NEAR YOU!**

CORY MORROW
IN CONCERT
Plus Special Guest
Granger Smith
at **ON THE NEW STAGE!**
THE TAP FRIDAY
NOVEMBER 19, 1999
ONE NIGHT ONLY!

Tickets in Advance Suggested at Rothers Disc Go Round The Tap

The Great State of Texas Music

Brought to you by Dickson Productions Supporting Texas Music

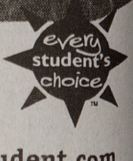


Of course you love music,
your parents conceived you to it.

You can't live without music, and fortunately you'll never have to. Introducing the free internet service that lets you store, share and play your MP3 tracks - anytime, anywhere. We'll even give you a chance at a free Rio MP3 player if you sign up today.



myplay.com. The center of your digital music universe.



©1999 myplay, inc. All rights reserved.