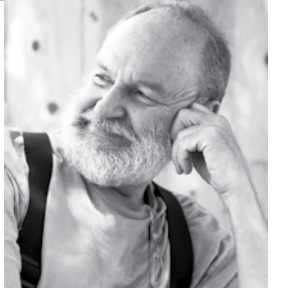


THE STARRY SIDE

Hope to see *all* the stars

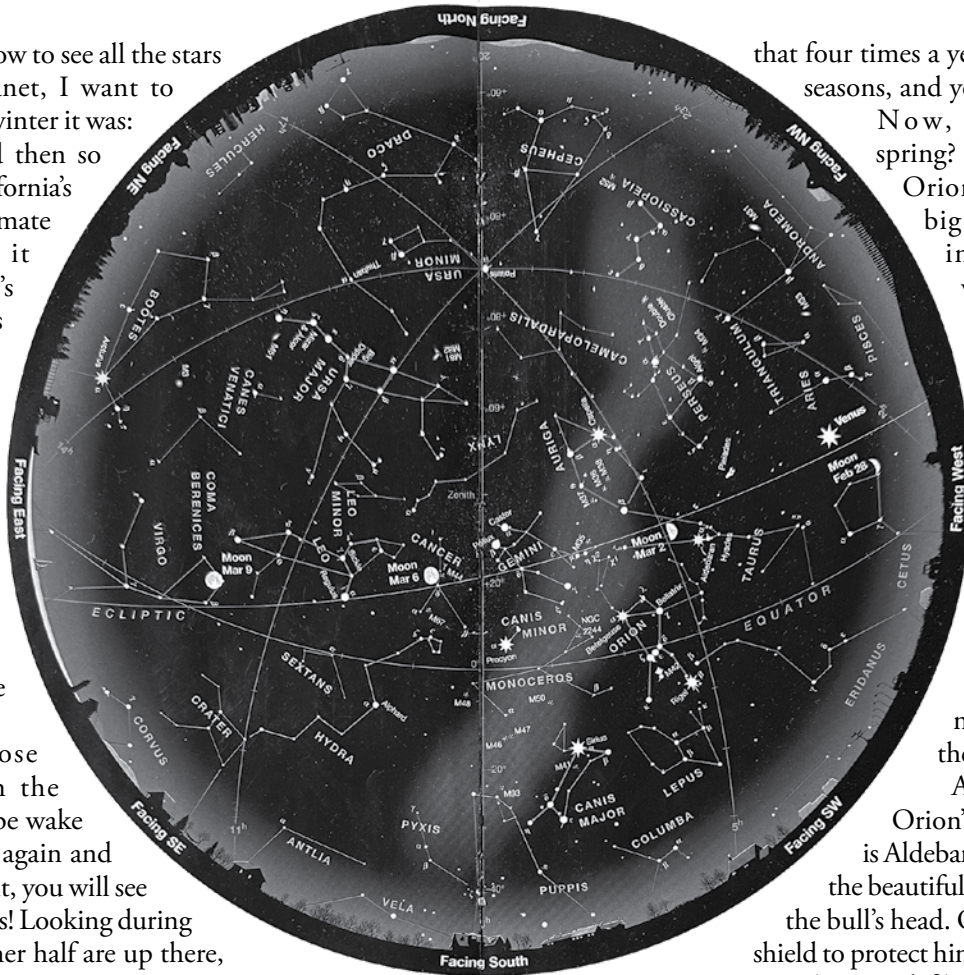
BY GREELEY WELLS



Greeley Wells

Before I tell you how to see all the stars visible from our planet, I want to comment on what a winter it was: so cold early on and then so wet! I'm sorry for California's hard time and the climate change that made it happen, but maybe it's an opportunity for us to take a moment to look at our lives and what we can actually do to help the climate change problem. One person can't literally make a difference, but it does feel right to try, and if most of us did, it *would* make a big difference.

Now, about those stars. If you watch the sky all night, or maybe wake up to look at the sky again and again during one night, you will see only half of all the stars! Looking during the day, when the other half are up there, won't do you any good, of course. Every 24 hours the same constellations reappear to us but move slightly towards the west as the earth rotates, about one degree each night. (This means that each night, the constellations rise about four minutes earlier than the night before.) So only half the starry sky—any given 180 degrees—is viewable in one whole night.



Sky & Telescope (skyandtelescope.org).

In order to complete your experience and see the other half of our stars, you'd have to stay up all night in fall, the opposite season! For a far better solution, pick one night in the fall and look early in the evening and then again late that night; you'll see a quarter of the stars. Then do

that four times a year, in each of our four seasons, and you'll see them all.

Now, what's up this spring? Each time I mention Orion it's because he's so big and obvious, rising in winter and going west in spring. The brightest star in the sky, Sirius, is Orion's dog star, following him. Sirius is to the left of Orion's three-in-a-row belt. Orion and Sirius will both be a little right of due south when you get this issue of the Gater and will be sinking into the northwest by the end of the season.

Almost in line with Orion's belt and to his right is Aldebaran, the brightest star in the beautiful little V shape of Taurus the bull's head. Orion is holding up his shield to protect himself. He raises his right arm (on our left), holding his sword to fight the bull. And for a while now, nearby and overhead is the very bright and red Mars, heading west. Farther on, about the same distance again, is Capella in Auriga, that five-sided shape with a gorgeous little triangle on the northwest edge.

These are some of my favorite constellations and stars, making a beautiful

sweep from the lower southwest, rising around west to the northwest and closer to the zenith (top of the sky). Squint your eyes, and enjoy the arc of bright stars that will show up!

Greeley Wells
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— OF NOTE —

Mercury is in the dawn during February. He's unseen in March, but April will find him in the afternoon dusk in the west just after the sun sets.

Venus stands strong in the dusk for February and then further west in March. She's near the sunset, bright, and might be the first star (planet) you can see after sunset.

Mars is an evening star high up in the sky, very gradually getting dimmer and dimmer as he travels away from us in his path around the sun. Look for *red!*

Jupiter is an evening star in February and March; he'll be moving westward at dusk and will set by April. He's always very bright. He'll be competing with Venus, who's just a little brighter.

Saturn is not visible in February, but will be visible in the dawn in March, and after midnight (early morning) in April.

Sorry, no good meteor showers this spring.

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 write-up and photos to gater@applegater.org.

Thanks! See you in the *Applegater*....

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