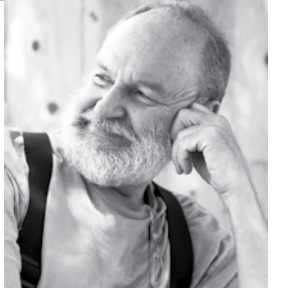


**THE STARRY SIDE**

**The Summer Triangle heralds summer nights**

BY GREELEY WELLS



Greeley Wells

At 6:30 am Thursday, March 30, for the first time this year I finally saw the whole Summer Triangle, one of my favorite summer sights! It had cleared the horizon and was fully up in the early-morning sky. By June it'll be rising in early evening instead of early morning, and it will continue to grace our summer nights as it moves across the sky, going round and round as predictably as a clock.

The movement of the stars marks the passing of time. The night sky is full of stars that form a beautiful background pattern telling time in relation to the movements of the planets, the moon, and our seasons here on Earth. Whether we actually know details about the stars, such as the constellations they form or the elements they're made of, they are there like a clock on the wall that tells the time whether you notice it or care what time it is.

This steady movement of the stars has fascinated me throughout my life. There's something comforting about its familiarity. Even though I really know only a modest number of the constellations that define each season, that knowledge is enough to bring me joyful recognition of old friends.

Our friend the Summer Triangle is technically not a constellation, but

an *asterism* or an obvious pattern of stars: the three stars at the points of the triangle are each the brightest star in their own constellations. The star at the top of the Summer Triangle, Vega, high in the east, is part of the constellation Lyra. Altair, at the horizon line and not quite as bright as Vega, is part of the constellation Aquila. The third point of the triangle, Deneb, is part of the constellation Cygnus the Swan.



Image: Sky & Telescope (skyandtelescope.org).

(Deneb is the star at the end of the swan's short tail.)

From Deneb, follow the wings of the swan to the right (south) to the long neck and head of Cygnus the Swan. But now imagine the swan's wings are the arms of a cross, the tail the top of the cross, and the long neck the post in the ground. It works as the Northern Cross too! Two for one! This is another thing I love about

the sky: how different cultures see different but believable things.

As if that's not enough, our own home galaxy sweeps into it from the north, flying perfectly right through the triangle's long horizontal post of the cross or neck of the swan and out the southern side.

Facing headfirst into the west and soon to set is Leo the Lion, from last season, with his curving question-mark lion's mane and his hind-end-and-tail triangle. He's another favorite of mine. Well, okay, maybe they are all my favorites!

Greeley Wells  
greeley@greeley.me

**— OF NOTE —**

**Planets**

**Mercury** shows up for July and August from dusk to dawn, and in September at dawn only. He's always near the sun, whether setting or rising.

**Venus** doesn't show up for June or July. (I want my money back!) He shows up at dusk in August and September.

**Mars** graces our mornings each month this year.

**Jupiter** graces our dawn sky in June. He then goes behind the sun and switches to morning for the rest of the season.

**Saturn** is faithful in the mornings until September, when he's visible all night. (What a guy!)

**Meteors**

**Arietids** are most active the morning of June 7, along with a new moon. The radiant point is below Cassiopeia, but meteors can show up anywhere.

**Delta Aquariids** show up late July through early August, mid-evening to dawn. The hourly rate can reach 15 to 20 meteors in a dark sky with no moon.

**The Perseids** are always impressive! The peak is predicted for August 12 at 6 am, Pacific time. So the mornings of August 11, 12, and 13 are probably your best bet because of a half-moon in the evenings. The August Perseid meteor shower is rich and steady, from early August through the peak. Under a dark sky with no moon, sky watchers frequently report 90 meteors or more per hour. The meteors are colorful, and they often leave persistent trains. All these factors make the Perseid shower perhaps the Northern Hemisphere's most beloved meteor shower.

**Ad Rep for Jackson County Needed**

*Applegater* Newsmagazine needs a self-motivated Advertising Representative. Existing book; generous commission. Perfect for retired or self-employed person. Submit inquiries and resume to [gater@applegater.org](mailto:gater@applegater.org).

**Jack Smoot**  
REAL ESTATE BROKER

[jacksmoot@windermere.com](mailto:jacksmoot@windermere.com)  
<http://jacksmoot.withwre.com>  
541-200-5211

**CECE SHOOP**  
HOUSE KEEPING

**CT Shoop Incorporated**

P.O. BOX 5557  
Central Point, OR 97502  
(541) 930-2437  
[ctshoop15@gmail.com](mailto:ctshoop15@gmail.com)

**RISE UP!**  
- ARTISAN BREAD -

"Thanks for loving the bread, Applegate!"

**Grants Pass Water Lab**

Eric Schaafsma  
Technical Director  
[eric@gpwaterlab.com](mailto:eric@gpwaterlab.com)

541-476-0733  
Fax 541-476-8132

964 SE "M" Street  
Grants Pass, OR 97526

**The Cleaning Crew, LLC**  
Residential & Commercial Cleaning Services

Natural Products Used for:

- House & Office Cleaning
- Window • Gutters
- Pressure Washing
- Moss Removal

**541-601-6236**  
Licensed Bonded Insured

[TheCleaningCrewOnline.com](http://TheCleaningCrewOnline.com)

**Ramsay Realty**  
The Applegate Jacksonville Experts  
[www.ramsayrealty.com](http://www.ramsayrealty.com)

**I Know Your Neighborhood**

17 Years of Experience!

Jayda Wood Principal Broker  
[jayda@ramsayrealty.com](mailto:jayda@ramsayrealty.com)  
541-973-9105

**Pegasus Sound Therapy**  
PEGGY LEVITON, MM, CERTIFIED  
Jacksonville, OR  
707-382-8641  
Individual Sessions • Acoustic Modalities

**Jeanne Schattler**  
(541) 621-2480  
Principal Broker, PSA, GRI  
Windermere Van Vleet Jacksonville  
505 N 5th St, Jacksonville, OR 97530  
[jvillejeanne@gmail.com](mailto:jvillejeanne@gmail.com)  
[www.jeanne4land.com](http://www.jeanne4land.com)  
Specializing in Farms & Ranches / Eco-Friendly Lifestyle

CCB# 177466  
NV 42066  
CA 809835

**ACTION ELECTRIC**

Quality is doing the job right the first time.  
Commercial • Residential • Design Build

[paul.actionelectric@yahoo.com](mailto:paul.actionelectric@yahoo.com)  
P.O. Box 537, Jacksonville, OR 97530

Paul Crean  
541-415-1081