## Good weather May be on its way

LAST MONTH: LIVED up to its reputation of being the "cruelest month"; snow, rain, cold, fog, abundant clouds and a tornadot We can only hope for more pleasant weather in May. Weather conditions aside, there will be two new moons, a meteor shower, and cellpses involving a moon; not the earth's, one of Jupiter's!

The sun will rise at 8:28 a.m. on May 1 and set at 8:27 p.m. That makes for 14 hours and nine minutes of sunshine. By the end of the month we will have gained nearly one hour more; sunrise on the 31st will be at \$550 a.m. with sunset at 9:30 p.m. giving us 15 hours and eight minutes of sun.

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Face toward the east southeast, about 45 minutes before sunrise on May 1 and look for Mars. This planet is located in the faint censtellation of Pisces. Mars has a distinct red color, making it eastly recognizable. Forty degrees to the right of Mars is Saturn, in Capitoruns. It will be about as bright as Mars, but without the red color.

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The first new moon of the month is a 19:48 p.m. on the 2nd. The moon is located between the earth and the sun and is not visible. The moon takes 29 days, 12 hours and 44 minutes (on average) to repeat a given phase, whether it be new or full.

Because the new moon occurs early in May, it completes a cycle before the month is over, hence May, will have two new moons.

THE EARTH, of course, is not the only planet to have a moon. In fact, only two planets in our solar system, Mercury and Venus, do not have

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moons. Jupiter has 16 of them, two of which are the size of Mercury! There will be an eelipse of one of these moons and it is easily observ-able with a small telescope or binoc-

of which are the size of Mercury! There will be an eclipse of one of these moons and it is easily observable with a small telescope or blooculars.

Jupiter is easy to identify; go outside in May and look nearly straight. Jupiter in Lee, is shining like a beacon.

If you observe Jupiter with binoculars or a telescope, from night to night, you can post the four largest moons. In various configurations. Their names are to GVE allo, honor, and are the control of the cont

In 1616, Galileo thought it might be possible to use observations of

celipses of Jupiter's moons as a timing method to determine longitude at sea. (This was before the "time" of reliable clocks, and ships were always going off course.) There were two problems with the concept; predictions couldn't be made accurately enough, and an unsteady ship did not make for the best observing platform.

Datch astronomer Claus Roemer (1646-1716) was very involved in observing eclipses of Jupiter's moons, lie discovered that the times that had been predicted for the eclipses did not agree with his observations. Roemer assumed the difference was caused by the amount of time it took light to travel from Jupiter to the occur. He made calculations and described in the state of the described has a short of the actual number (200,000 km per see,) it was very close for an era when the speed of light was a difficult encept to understand.

THE ETA AQUARID meteor shower is at its peak on the morning of the 5th. You'll need to be a patient observer if you go meteor spotting; expect on average of only '20 meteors each hour. You won't need binoculars for this; just look up. The

meteors will radiate from the constellation of Aquarius, which is in the southeast at 5 a.m.

The crescent moon is located near the feet of Pollux, one of the Gentalivinis, on the evening of the 6th. Pollux's head is the star above themon, the twin, Castor, is to the right of Pollux. The bright star to the left of the moon is Procyon (PRO eee on) in Canis Minor, the little dog. On the following night the moon has moved between Procyon and Pollux.

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First quarter moon is at 11:43 a.m. on the 9th. The moon has completed the first quarter of. its orbit around the earth. The moon is in Leo and you'll find Regulus (REG u lus), the heart' of the lion, above and to the left of the moon on the evening of the 9th. Jupiter is to the left of Regulus.

Another eclipse of Ganymede oc-curs on the evening of the 10th. This time Ganymede enters Jupiter's shadow to the east of that planet. It will disappear at 10:21 p.m., but will be slowly fading beginning five min-utes before that time.

The moon has gone from Leo into Virgo and is approaching the bright star Spica (Spy ka) on the evening of the 12th. On the following evening the moon is three degrees to the right of Spica.

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