

4 planets to be visible in June night sky

June brings us the greatest amount of sunlight for the year, the start of summer for the northern hemisphere and another chance to find the faint planet Uranus.

Four of the five naked-eye planets will be visible in June.

Saturn can be seen in the evening sky. Mars and Jupiter are in the morning sky, while Venus moves swiftly from the evening to the morning sky. Mercury is not easily visible in June.

Volunteers are needed

Michigan Cancer Foundation, 110 E. Warren, Detroit, needs volunteer information specialists for the telephone information and referral system. Training will be held on Wednesdays and Thursdays, May 25, June 16, noon to 4 p.m. Volunteers who have experienced a diagnosis of breast cancer are also needed to provide peer support for newly diagnosed patients. Call Catherine Cameron, 833-0710, extension 245, 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m., weekdays.

The United Foundation, 1212 Griswold, Detroit, needs records specialists who have good communication skills. Prior telephone experience would be helpful and volunteers must be high school seniors or have a diploma. Duties will be making phone contacts to verify information. Call Michael Brennan, 226-9255, weekdays, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

For information on other opportunities or if your organization needs volunteers, call The Center for Volunteers, United Community Services of Metropolitan Detroit, 226-0429 weekdays, or write 1212 Griswold, Detroit 48226-1899.

skywatch

Raymond E. Bullock

Look toward the southeast horizon on June 1, about 2 1/2 hours after sunset to locate the rising moon. The star above the moon is actually the planet Saturn. If you look at Saturn with even a low-power telescope, you should be able to see the planet's rings. Saturn's rings are tilted 23.5 degrees from edge-on this month. The diameter of the ring system is 275,000 kilometers (171,000 miles).

YOU MIGHT BE able to see Venus very low in the west-northwest, on June 2. Look about a half-hour after sunset. Venus as seen from earth is just 2 percent lighted by the sun, but it is still a very bright object.

Binoculars will show Venus as a thin crescent. Venus will be just a few degrees above the horizon, so you must have an unobstructed view

of the moon.

The moon is at last-quarter phase on the morning of June 7. Notice how far the moon has moved, with respect to Mars, in just one day. Now the moon is to the east (left) of Mars.

JUPITER WILL be eight degrees below the crescent moon on the morning of the 11th. Jupiter can be seen as a disc through seven-power binoculars.

In addition, Jupiter's four largest moons can be seen in binoculars. The moons will look like stars stretched out along Jupiter's equatorial plane.

The moons provide an ever-changing view. Sometimes there are two on each side of Jupiter. Sometimes all four are on the same side. Sometimes just three or two are visible;

the others being hidden behind, or camouflaged in front, of Jupiter.

About eight degrees to the north (left) of Jupiter is the beautiful Pleiades (PLEE-ades) star cluster. The Pleiades looks like a tiny "dipper" and is a beautiful sight through binoculars.

AN EVEN MORE beautiful sight for binoculars occurs on the following morning, the 12th. The thin waning ("getting smaller") crescent moon, just two days before new moon, is immediately to the east (right) of the Pleiades.

Mercury and Venus are both at inferior conjunction on June 12. Both are between the earth and the sun and are not visible.

The moon is between the earth and the sun on June 14 and is not visible. This is the date of the new moon, which officially occurs at 5:14 a.m.

On the evening of the 15th, the waxing ("getting larger") crescent moon forms a large triangle with the stars Pollux and Castor, the heads of

the Gemini twins.

Castor is the star directly above the moon; Pollux is to the west (left) of Castor. On the following night, the two stars and the moon form a line, the moon having moved to the west of Pollux.

THE MOON IS in the constellation of Leo the lion on the evening of June 18. It is approaching the bright star Regulus (REG-u-lus), the "heart" of the lion, which is above and to the left of the moon. One night later the moon has passed Regulus.

Also on the evening of the 19th, Saturn is at opposition. It is opposite the sun, as seen from the earth.

Saturn will rise in the southeast as the sun sets in the northwest, be visible all night, and set in the southwest as the sun rises in the northeast.

Raymond Bullock, now with Image Engineering Corp. working on laser displays, is former coordinator of the planetarium at Cranbrook Institute of Science.

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