Bright planet Jupiter is December's 'star'

Look high in the west southwest before sunrise in December and you cannot fall to see a brilliant start. It's actually not a star at all; it's the planet Jupiter, one of the brightest objects in the night sky, Only the sun, the moon and Venus are brighter. Meanwhile, after, sunset you can see bright red Mars, currently the 4th brightest-object in the sky, in the cast.

originest object in the sky, in the sate, and the sate of the called the "morning star," seen after sunset it's the "evening star," seen after sunset it's the "evening star," when seen in December it is often given another name, the "Christmas Star," and that makes people wonder about a special "star" that appeared nearly 2,000 years ago. What was the "star" that guided the wise men to Betthehem? That question has puzzled people for centuries.

question has puzzied people for teaming.

To try and determine the nature of the Christmas Star, we must look back in time. Back in antiquity, birth records for only the most important people were made, so we can't simply look up a record of birth. Besides, the calendar in use at the time fifffwas very different from the one we use today. It was based on the legendary founding of the city of Rome.

legendary founding of the city of frome.

In our attempt to calculate a date for the bitth, we must take clues from early historical records. The client clue is a direct statement from the Bible. "Now when Jesus work the state of the control of t

It is possible to determine when that taxation (actually a census) occurred.
We can almost be certain the birth did not occur on Dec. 25. Another the control of the control of the central of the centra

celebrate an event, such as the birth of Jesus, during the same time, they would not be noticed.

COULD THE "STAR" the wise men saw have been what we call a "falling" stars are not stars at all; they are bits of rock and dust that fall into our atmosphere from space. As they fall they heat up because of friction and burn, producing streaks hely fall with falling stars, more commonly called meteors, are not very speciacular.

A "hairy" star, or comet, would last long enough. Comets can appear in any part of the sky, at any time of the year, and last for several weeks. They were called "hairy" stars because the comet's tall looked like a wispy beard. A comet is not a good candidate to be used to herald a birth and it is unlikely that anyone would be they can be comed any would be used to the comet any they were called "full and they have been any come any they were called they that anyone would be used to the comed any they were were they wer COULD THE "STAR" the wise

skywatch Raymond E. Bullock

Bullock

ticed a "new" star blaze-into view where there had been no star before. This is called a nova, which actually means "new" star, and one can appear at any time and remain visible for weeks. A supernova can be bright enough to be seen even during the day. A nova is really not a "new" star, it's a very old star going through a violent death. A supernova is easily visible to anyone who looks up. But not everyone saw the "star." There is no record that King fierod ever so may be the supernova and this made, him wonder about the star for the supernova and this made, him wonder about the supernova and the s

"When they saw the star, they re-jolced with exceeding great joy." (Matthew 2:10) Kepler also knew that everything in the sky was called a "star" at that time.

To the early skywatcher, the plan-

time.

To the early skywatcher, the planets were mysterious wandering lights, or stars. They had no idea what the planets realily were, but it was assumed that the planets must be remained to the planets must be remained to the planets amongst the stars and they was influenced by the location of the planets amongst the stars and they devised complex interpretations of their movements.

Kepler calculated the position of the planets far back in time and found that Jupiter and Saturn appeared close together in the early evening sky in 7 B.C. that they would soon be in conjunction close grouping of planets is not very spectacular, not everyone would notice it. But astrologers would consider it as being something special, and it is believed, that the wise men were astrologers.

A CONJUNTION such as this is

A CONJUNCTION such as this is



Kids & Collectors

rare. Kepler used multiples of Jupi-ter-Saturn conjunctions to claim that special events in history occurred every 800 years. This same gather-ing would have occurred around the year 1600 B.C., about the time of the birth of another great leader: Moses. year 1600 B.C., about the time of the birth of another great leader. Moses. Could the early astrologers have known that?

Was the Jupiter-Saturn conjunction the "Star" of Bethlehem?
No one can really be certain.
Perhaps the Christmas Star was a secretal nearting only went power.

Perhaps the Christmas Star was a special, nove-time only event, never to happen again. But is it, after all, moprism (as know Just what the Christmas Star was? The important fact to that a man named Jeans was form, that he lived for a time on earth, and his teachings altered the history of the world.

Raymond Bullock was former coordinator of the Cranbrook Institute of Science planetarium and observatory in Bloomfield Hills. He now works for a True company which specializes in inser displays and effects.





at. . . \$997 Through 2 p.m. Christmas Eve Bloomfold Kitts

Don't be misled into thinking you get value in a low priced fur . . . Fur is a long time investment. Can you afford to buy yours anywhere but Dittrichs?

IMPRESSIVE SAVINGS NIQUE PAYMENT TERMS 204 Down and you don't preceive a bill until February

DETROIT - \$23.0 MD-2523 TOUR AVE BLOOMITEED HELLS - 642, MID 1515 N. Windowsk Ave Mar 5 to 10 am. 6 p.m. Bloomfeld. That & Pri. and \$ 30 p.m.

OUTSTANDING HOLIDAY GIFTS FOR OUTSTANDING BUSINESS PEOPLE.



Extended Holiday Hours In Most Stores

Monday - Friday 10 A.M. - 9 P.M. Saturday 10 A.M. - 6 P.M. Sunday 12 Noon - 5 P.M.

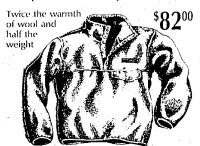
Tempting Fashions, Gifts and Food To Satisfy All Your Appetites.

CROSSWINDS MALL

Orchard Lake Road At Lone Pine Road West Bloomfield

patagonia

Synchilla Snap T-Neck



The ultimate outdoor sweater

luxuriously soft No Itch

Wears Like Iron No Pilling or Sagging

Available At These Fine Outfitters:

E Bardeak

Farmington Hills 32715 Grand River Av between Farmington and Orchard 1k Rds 477-8116 The Riverbend Sport Shop Southfield

the yachtsman Royal Oak 4316 N. Woodward Ave between 1312 350-8484 and 14 Mile Rd 549-5070

ACTIVATE and ACCELERATE YOUR ABILITIES IMPROVE: Self Confidence, Poise, Speaking Skills.

BECOME: Self Motivated, Popular, Advanced. REMAIN: Self Assured, Communicative, Dynamic.

- ENJOY: -

New Friendships • New Horizons • New Competence - join -

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL 6.900 Clubs

150,000 Members

RECOGNIZED

WORLDWIDE

Clubs in the Observer & Eccentric Area:

(Find a Time, Day or Location to SUIT YOUR NEEDS)

NOVI, PLYMOUTH, LIVONI AD pm., DENNYS S. 120 245 Mail. NonORD Speak Easy: 2nd 8 4th Mona. 7 00 pm., DENNYS S. 120 2445 Mail. NonORD Makeyth; Ferry Tue 5 45 pm., DENNYS S. An Abox R 6 1 2175, Pymouth
Sahutday Suniters: Every Sail 8 48 am. "UNITY MALL", 3860 3 Mail. Livonia
SIRMINGHAM, FARINMOTON, SOUTHFIELD
Demonpham T.Ms. 2nd 4 4th Tues 6 30 pm., COMMUNITY HOUSE, 200 S. Bates, Demonpham
Workslopper: Every Thue 8.50 pm., SYDEDH HOUSE, 31305 Grand River, Farmington
Folderal Moyal T.Ms. 2nd 4 4th That I2 noon, 26533 Northeestern Hey, Southfield
Demonpham Hey Sout

Lawrence Tech U.- Every Thus 6 OB p.m., 21000 W. 10 Male, eE-199, Southheld REDFORD, WESTLAND, WANTH FERNAUL CIUD, 800 Labray, 7000 Farahin, Southheld REDFORD, WESTLAND, WANTH FERNAUL CIUD, 800 Labray, 7000 Farahin, Southheld REDFORD, WESTLAND, WANTH FERNAUL FER

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Contact A.I. Moore ATM 422-8364, B. Boylan ATM 538-4884, D. Renaud ATM 494-2853

