

OU sets workshop on getting ahead

Not everyone suffers in a tight job market. The Oakland University Continuum Center is offering an evening workshop that shows unique opportunities available to employees who survive cutbacks and downsizing. "How To Progress On The Job In Tough Times" will be presented from 7-10 p.m. Wednesday on the Rochester campus. Fee is \$39; MasterCard/VISA accepted. Register by Tuesday; call 370-3033.

Stars still up there shining despite cold temperatures



RAYMOND E. BULLOCK

The annual Perseid meteor shower will suffer this year because of interference by moonlight (if not by clouds), but Jupiter and Venus have an evening conjunction (grouping) that is the brightest and closest of 1992.

Saturn is at opposition, making it visible all night long. Mercury and Mars are morning objects this month.

Also, the days are getting noticeably shorter; there is an overall decrease of one hour and 16 minutes in the amount of sunlight we receive this month. There were 14 hours and 26 minutes of sunlight on Aug. 1 (sunrise at 6:30 a.m.; sunset at 8:56 p.m.) and 13 hours and 10 minutes on the 31st (sunrise at 7:02 a.m.; sunset at 8:12 p.m.).

First Quarter moon is at 6:58 a.m. on Aug. 5. The moon has completed the first quarter of its orbit around the earth. It will be visible in the south at sunset and set after midnight.

On the evening of the 6th the moon is in Scorpius, five degrees to the right of fiery-red Antares (an

TAURUS). This star is a supergiant 700 times the diameter of the sun. On the following evening the moon is six degrees to the left of Antares.

Saturn is at opposition on the 7th. It is opposite the sun, as seen from the earth, will rise at sunset, be visible all night, and set at sunrise. Look toward the southeast, 90 minutes after sunset, and you will find Saturn 15 degrees above the horizon.

The gibbous moon, waxing (growing) larger each night, is in Sagittarius on the evening of the 8th. It is located above three stars that form a triangular pattern, which marks the "spout" of the "teapot," representing the constellation. (You didn't actually expect to see the outline of a teapot here, did you?) On the following night the moon is above four stars that form the teapot's "handle."

The Perseid (PER see id) meteor shower doesn't reach its maximum until the predawn hours of Aug. 12, but the intensity of the shower builds over several days. The moon will interfere with the peak morning of the shower, but there is an opportunity to see some of the Perseids in darkness on the morning of Aug. 9 and 10. That's the good news; the bad news is you have to look between moon set (3:08 a.m. on the 9th and 4:05 a.m. on the 10th) and dawn. That will severely limit the available amount of time to enjoy the shower.

Two bright orange-red objects are within five degrees of each other on the morning of the 10th. Look high in the east-southeast. The brighter of the two is Mars; the other object,

below and to the right of Mars, is Aldebaran (al DEB a ran), the "eye" of Taurus the bull.

As mentioned earlier, one of the year's best meteor showers, reaches its peak on the morning of Aug. 12. Meteor showers are named for the constellation from which they appear to radiate, in this case Perseus.

Meteors are more commonly known as "falling stars" because they look like little stars falling from the sky. Some American Indians thought they were stars running from danger. But they have nothing to do with stars; meteors are rocks falling out of the sky.

Out in space there are rocks, stones, grains of dust, and other rubbish tumbling around. If one of these objects falls into our atmosphere it heats up because of friction and burns, and gives off light. A patient skywatcher can expect to see a few sporadic (occasional) meteors any clear night.

Many of these meteors are orbiting around the sun in well-defined orbits. They may be trailing along as the debris of a comet, or they may be the remains of a comet that disintegrated long ago. When the earth passes through the orbit of a meteor swarm, many more meteors than usual can be seen, and we can predict precisely when that will happen.

The Perseid swarm is one of the richest. A patient observer can expect to see an average of 50 meteors every hour, which is about one every minute. The best meteor display occurs between 2 a.m. and sunrise.

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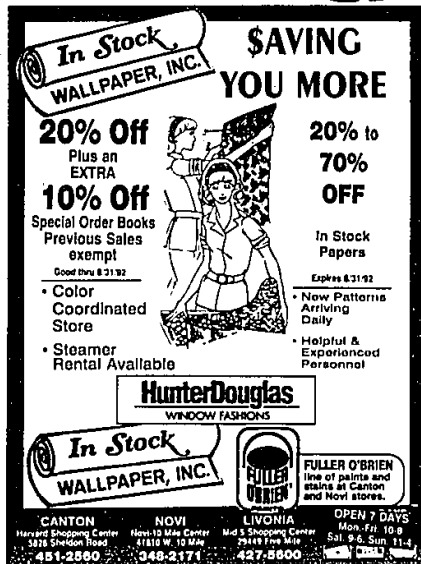
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