

Fall back: Daylight Savings Time ends Oct. 25



RAYMOND E. BULLOCK

On the morning of Oct. 18th, the moon passes two degrees above Mars, Castor and Pollux are above and to the left of Mars, but the isosceles triangle they formed 12 days ago is long gone. Now the grouping looks more like a right triangle. Last quarter moon will occur at 11:12 p.m. EDT on Oct. 18. The moon is beginning the last quarter of its orbit around the earth.

The annual Orionid (oh RYAN id) meteor shower is at its peak between midnight and sunrise on the 21st. This is a moderate shower; expect to see an average of 25 meteors each hour. These "falling stars" seem to radiate from the constellation of Orion (oh RYAN) the hunter, hence the name.

Between midnight and sunrise Orion moves from the southeast part of the sky past due south. The Orionid stream is associated with Comet Halley (HAWL ley); they both share the same orbit. The star four degrees to the left of the moon on the morning of the 21st is Regulus (REG u lus), the

"heart" of Leo.

This blue-white star is about 85 light-years away, so the light we see this morning left Regulus 85 years ago.

Look for Venus once again on the evening of the 21st. The planet is less than one degree above the star Delta Scorpii (SCOR pee ey). This star, the fourth brightest in Scorpius, was given the fourth letter of the Greek alphabet. Binoculars will be needed to see this star next to brilliant Venus. Meanwhile, Venus has moved within eight degrees of An-

tares, the bright star to the left. Jupiter crosses the celestial equator on the 23rd. The celestial equator is an extension of the earth's equator into space. Just as the earth's equator divides the planet into a northern and southern half, so the celestial equator divides the sky. Jupiter will be located below the celestial equator until Feb. 24, 1993. The higher an object is in the sky, the less atmospheric distortion we have to look through to see it.

Telescope views of Jupiter from the earth's northern hemi-

sphere will suffer because of Jupiter's lower altitude, while views from the southern hemisphere will improve.

Bright Jupiter will be six degrees to the left of the moon on the morning of October 23. The two objects are in the constellation of Virgo. On the following morning the waning (fading) crescent moon will be 12 degrees below Jupiter.

Daylight Saving Time officially ends at 2 a.m. on Oct. 25. Clocks need to be set back one hour, and we gain the hour we lost in April when the clocks were set forward. Returning to Eastern Standard Time has no astronomical significance; we are altering the device by which we measure time, which has no effect on the rotation or orbit of the earth.

There will be a noticeable change however: Sunset on the 24th was at 6:37 p.m. EDT; on the 25th sunset is at 5:35 EST.

New Moon is at 3:34 p.m. EST on Oct. 25. The moon is located between the earth and the sun and is not visible. It will return to the evening sky on the 27th, but it will be difficult to see. Look 45 minutes after sunset and face the southwest. Bright Venus can't be missed; it is three degrees above the star Antares. The waxing (growing) crescent moon is eight

degrees below and to the right of Venus. The moon is only two degrees above the horizon, but that sure beats Mercury's location. Mercury is "officially" an evening object, but it's less than one degree above the horizon, two degrees to the right of the moon.

A nice grouping between the moon, Venus and Antares occurs on the evening of the 28th. The moon is three degrees to the left of Venus, and Venus is three degrees above Antares. Look 45 minutes after sunset; the moon and Venus are easy to see, but Antares will be more difficult because of interference from the glow of evening twilight. (Binoculars will help you locate Antares.)

Venus, which has been approaching Antares all month, will now draw away from that star. The planet continues to move eastward (forward) through the sky, and if you watch Venus' motion from night to night, you will have a better understanding of what direct (forward) motion means. It will more than double its distance from Antares in just three nights!

Bright Jupiter dominates the morning sky by month's end. It will be 22 degrees high in the east southeast at the start of morning twilight.

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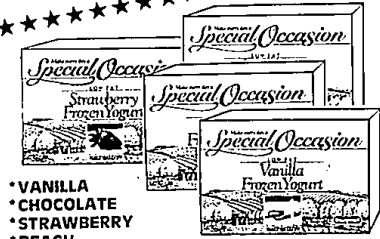
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