

Mountaineer Skies

Volume 2, Issue 8

<http://www.as.wvu.edu/~planet/index.html>

August 2002

From the Editor's Desk

Beginning on Friday evening at 7:00 and 8:00, August 23, we will be presenting our new planetarium show **MarsQuest**, narrated by Patrick Stewart of Star Trek fame. With the exception of our holiday show, *'tis the Season* which will be shown on November 8 and 15 and December 13 and 20, this will be our primary show for the coming academic year.

I was hoping that Mars would be on prominent display during this time when **MarsQuest** is being shown, but, unfortunately, it is now lost in the sunset and will not be visible again until about September 11 and then only in the early morning. Its visibility will grow from a magnitude of +1.8 during the second week in September until it reaches a magnitude of -1.4 at the end of June 2003. For specific times see:

www.as.wvu.edu/~planet/Mars_location_Aug_2002_June_2003.htm

This month, Mercury and Venus will be visible just after sunset, while Jupiter and Saturn are visible in the early morning before sunrise.

In The Sky This Month

The **Perseid meteor shower**, in Perseus, the Rescuer of Andromeda, should be visible from July 23 through August 22, with a predicted maximum of 100 per hour on August 12 at 18:30 EDT. That is quite a few.

Visible Planets in the Sky

Beginning of August

	Const	Rise	Transit	Set	Mag
Sun		6:16	13:26	20:33	- 26.8
Mercury	Leo	7:20	14:17	21:18	- 0.8
Venus	Vir	10:04	16:18	22:31	- 4.2
Jupiter	Cnc	5:27	12:48	20:06	- 1.8
Saturn	Tau	2:50	10:14	17:42	2.5

Middle of August

	Const	Rise	Transit	Set	Mag
Sun		6:30	13:24	20:16	- 26.8
Mercury	Leo	8:26	14:49	21:15	- 0.1
Venus	Vir	10:23	16:14	22:04	- 4.3
Jupiter	Cnc	4:48	12:06	19:21	- 1.8
Saturn	Tau	2:01	9:25	16:53	2.5

End of August

	Const	Rise	Transit	Set	Mag
Sun		6:45	13:20	19:53	- 26.8
Mercury	Vir	9:05	14:57	20:48	0.2
Venus	Vir	10:39	16:04	21:30	- 4.4
Jupiter	Cnc	4:02	11:14	18:29	- 1.9
Saturn	Ori	1:03	8:28	15:56	2.5

Leo	Leo, The Lion
Vir	Virgo, The Maiden
Tau	Taurus, The Bull
Cnc	Cancer, The Crab
Ori	Orion, The Hunter

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About: **The Face on Mars**

One photograph taken by Viking 1 in 1976 has caused a lot of interest among the UFO crowd. The photo seems to show a bilaterally symmetrical face which could only have been built by intelligent beings.



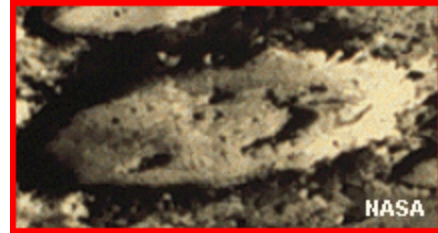
Alas, however, a more recent image, taken by the Mars Global Surveyor (MGS), shows the image more clearly. If you rein in your imagination, you can see that it is really just a raised feature that is fractured on one side but not on the other.



If you are not yet convinced, we might look for similar examples elsewhere. Here on earth there is a feature called “Old Man of the Mountains” which is located in New Hampshire. If you look closely, you can see that it is simply a naturally occurring rock formation that has been weathered into a shape that vaguely resembles a man with a beard in profile.



Another formation that you can see on the surface of Mars is a smiley face. Does anyone seriously think that someone on Mars came up with the smiley face 😊 before Harry R. Ball? (He is the one credited with drawing the first smiley face.)



There is even a bean shaped crater on Venus that looks like a Jack-O-Lantern, and a feature on the moon that looks like a man or, looked at differently, like a women. Are we to seriously consider that they have Halloween on Venus or that moon beings built outlines of a man or women?

The point is that it is possible to see anything you want to if you look hard enough, but are these things what they appear? Probably not.

If you want to find evidence of intelligence on another world, look for straight lines. On a macro level, straight lines are not natural. In fact, this is what Percival Lowell mistakenly thought he saw on Mars. He saw what he thought were straight lines and called these features canals and obviously they had to be built by intelligent beings. Of course, we have since found that what he called canals are not really straight at all.

Request for Articles and Photographs

If you have an article or photographs that you would like to submit for publication, please send them to:

John Hopkins
Subject: Submissions
256 Hodges Hall
West Virginia University
Morgantown, WV 26506

Or email to: jhopkins@mail.wvu.edu with “**Submission**” on the Subject line.

2002 – 2003 Planetarium Shows



Narrated by Patrick Stewart

http://www.as.wvu.edu/~planet/mars_quest.htm

Coming in Early November



http://www.as.wvu.edu/~planet/tis_the_season.htm

August 23, 2002 MarsQuest	September 13 & 27, 2002 MarsQuest	October 11 & 25, 2002 MarsQuest
November 8 & 15, 2002 'TIS THE SEASON	December 13 & 20, 2002 'TIS THE SEASON	January 10 & 24, 2003 MarsQuest
February 14 & 28, 2003 MarsQuest	March 14 & 28, 2003 MarsQuest	April 11 & 25, 2003 MarsQuest
May 9 & 23, 2003 MarsQuest	June 13, 2003 MarsQuest	July, 2003 Closed

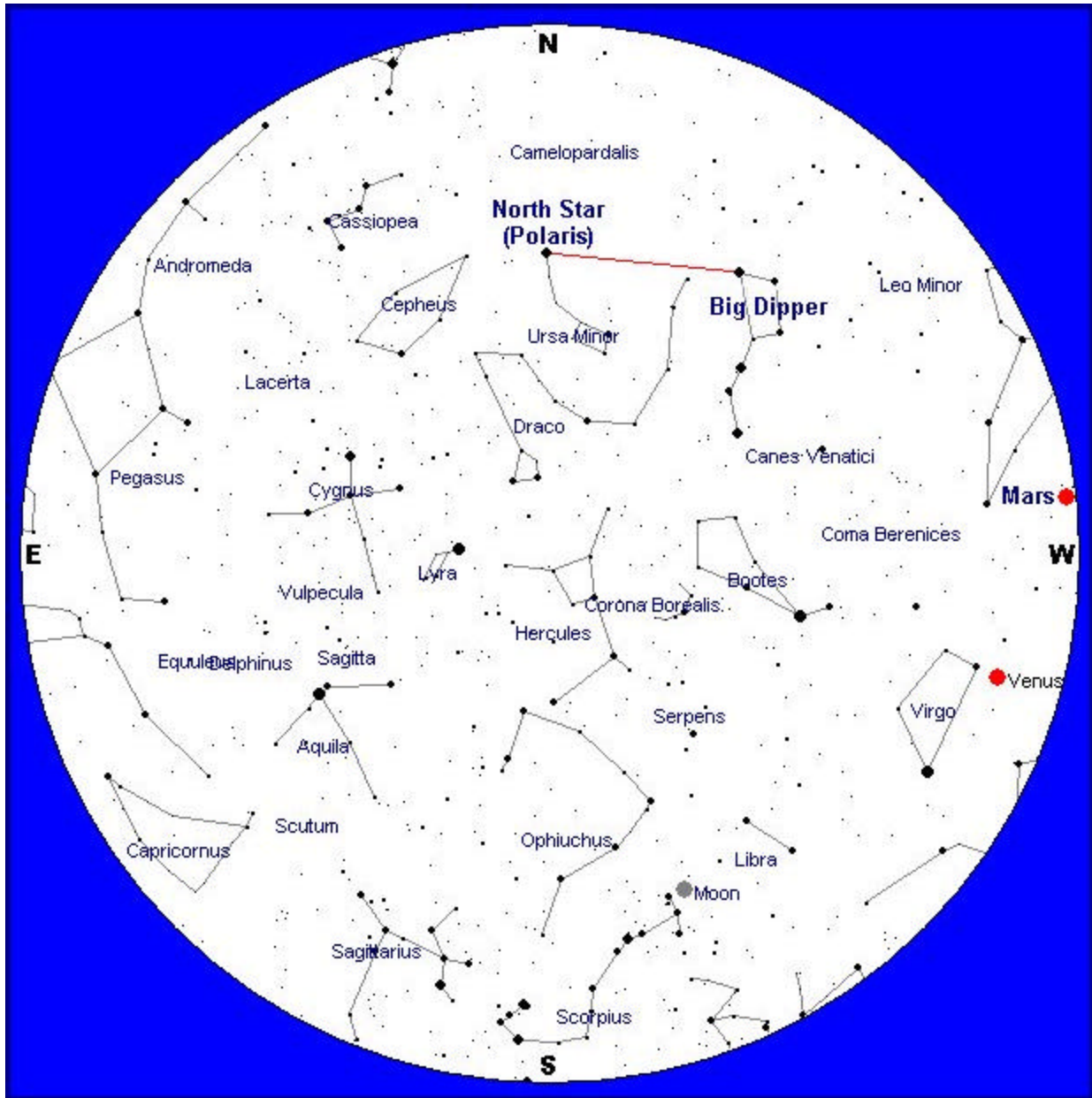
For those who are interested in bringing a group, such as schools or scouts, during the day, please call for more information. These shows are usually given on Tuesday or Thursday mornings.

For further information or reservations, please call John Hopkins at (304)293-3422, extension 1443 or by email at: jhopkins@mail.wvu.edu

Selected Sunrise/Sunset and Moon Rise/Moon Set Times

Date	Sunrise	Sunset	Moon Rise	Moon Set	Moon Phase
Aug 1	6:18 A.M.	8:33 P.M.	12:26 A.M.	2:07 P.M.	Last Quarter
Aug 8	6:24 A.M.	8:25 P.M.	5:54 A.M.	8:50 P.M.	New Moon
Aug 15	6:31 A.M.	8:16 P.M.	2:28 P.M.	12:02 A.M.	First Quarter
Aug 22	6:37 A.M.	8:07 P.M.	8:28 P.M.	6:03 A.M.	Full (Sturgeon) Moon
Aug 30	6:45 A.M.	7:55 P.M.	11:55 P.M.	1:59 P.M.	Last Quarter

August 2002 Sky Chart* for:
 10:00 P.M at the beginning of the month
 9:00 P.M in the middle of the month
 8:00 P.M at the end of the month



* Sky Chart used with the kind permission of **Heavens-Above** at <http://www.heavens-above.com/>

The TOMCHIN PLANETARIUM is named in honor of the late Harold Tomchin, of Princeton, W.Va., who made a generous donation to ensure its continuing operation, and whose family continues to support the planetarium for the educational benefit of WVU students, staff, and faculty members, as well as the local community. Contributions can be made in support of the planetarium through the **WVU Planetarium Project at the WVU Foundation, Inc.**, phone (304)284-4000. Thank You.



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