

Nature Notes

by Patricia Clark-Gray

Look Up at the Night Sky



I just came back from a marvelous training session at Yosemite that was sponsored by the National Park Service and the Astronomical Society of the Pacific. It was an intensive workshop to prepare me to give Night Sky programs and to train our local State Park staff. We learned about the basics of Astronomy, telescopes, and how to teach Astronomy through games and activities.

distances of the planet from the sun and was especially impressed by looking way up the trail from where we first started. On a side note, Pluto was downgraded to a dwarf planet in 2006 but was still included in the Planet Walk.

We learned that star clusters, galaxies and nebulas usually have names like M35 or NGC 1365. M-numbers (110) were assigned by Charles

legends associated about the constellations. I also had to select a constellation that was visible in the night sky during this time of the year so I selected Delphinus which looks like a dolphin leaping from the waves. The Greek legend associated with Delphinus is that the Greek poet and musician Arion was saved by dolphins when he was tossed overboard by his enemies. But, I also learned that the Italians in 400 BC admired this legend so they made some coins that had an illustration of a young man riding a dolphin. They also later commemorated their win over the Athenians with a beautiful coin that on one side had a man riding a chariot with six horses and on the other side three dolphins swimming by the portrait of a woman's face.

The most important lesson that I learned during the training is that we need to take action on light pollution. They showed us two images that were taken from space at different years and the current photo shows light emitting from every continent. Because of this increased light we can no longer see all the stars in many cities. Fortunately, you can still see the night sky in National Parks like Bryce Canyon and Joshua Trees and there are things that you can do. You can replace poor quality outdoor lights with modern, efficient fixtures and you can shield lights and direct them downward which will reduce unwanted glare and return the beautiful night sky. I hope you will join me and look up at the night sky in Marina and look for the planets, the galaxies, the nebulas and the shooting stars.

The night sky is the world's largest national park with its beauty available to anyone who steps outside and looks up.

Geoff Chester, U.S. Naval Observatory



Messier who lived in the late 1700s and discovered many of these objects while he was looking for

One of my favorite activities was the Planet Walk because you can do the walk during the day. We walked along the bike trail at Yosemite and we started with the sun, as all the planets rotate around the sun. Ranger Angie had placed markers for all the planets that had the name of the planet and a diagram of the planet that was in relationship to the size of the planet. As we walked along we visited Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and ended with Pluto. The stops were in relationship to distance from the sun. The closet planet, Mercury, is 36 million miles and the farthest is Pluto which is 3.675 billion miles. As we walked along the trail and ended up at Pluto I got a sense of the

comets. The NGC-numbers come the New General Catalogue, a giant list of discoveries collected in the late 1800s. I had to select an object for my Sky Talk and I selected M 27 which is the Dumbbell Nebula. It is a planetary nebula which is a cloud of gas puffed off by a dying star so another name could be a ghost star. Think of the nebula in the shape of a dumbbell so when you look in a telescope at the nebula you would be seeing only one of the round ends of the nebula and not the entire nebula.

I am sure that all of you look up at the night sky (on a clear night in Marina) and can spot the Big Dipper or the Seven Sisters (Pleiades) and you probably had heard many of the Greek

On The Senior Side

by Bob Petty

Medicare 2011 Annual Election Period



tance will pay less.

During the Annual Election Period (AEP) Medicare beneficiaries can make changes to a Part D prescription drug plan (PDP) or even change their primary Medicare health plan. When can I enroll or change my drug plan? The (AEP) goes from November 15-December 31. You can switch plans or enroll for the first time.

When will new plans start? January 1, 2011.

Can I be turned down because of the drugs I take or my health history? No. There is no medical underwriting. All plans must take all applicants no matter what prescriptions you have.

But will my out-of-pocket charges be more if I have a poor health history? No. Premiums, copays, and deductibles are the same for everyone enrolled in the same PDP. Only people receiving extra financial assis-

Do I have to re-enroll every year? No. If you want to stay with your current PDP, you don't have to do anything. You will be automatically continued and charged the new rates for 2011.

If my plan has changes for 2011, how will I know? Starting about October 15, PDPs are required to send all enrollees an annual notice of coverage (ANOC) describing any changes for 2011. These could be changes to the plan's formulary, cost structure, benefit designs, or monthly premium. Companies also must notify enrollees if a plan is being terminated. Earlier I dropped my Original Medicare and purchased a Medicare Advantage Plan. What if my MA plan's Rx benefits have changed and my drugs aren't covered as well? During the AEP you have the option of dropping the MA plan and returning to Original Medicare. You will pay the same premium as if you'd never left Original Medicare. You can pick any PDP for your drug insurance, but you cannot have both a MA Plan with drug benefits and a PDP. Can I change my MA Plan even if drug coverage isn't the issue? Yes. During the AEP you can change MA plans or return to Original Medicare for any reason. You want to have the Medicare and drug plans that are the best for you.

What about Medigap insurance? If you return to Original Medicare, you also can get a Medigap plan to be your supplemental insurance.

How can I determine which of the PDPs is the best one for me? Shortly after October 15 the Drug Plan finder on the Medicare web site (www.medicare.gov) will have the data for 2011. You can see which plans cover your drugs and the prices. How many choices will I have? California is scheduled to have 33 PDPs in 2011.

For help with this, attend one of my "Medicare Update 2010" seminars or meet with one of our certified Medicare counselors. The seminar schedule is on our web site (www.allianceonaging.org). Or you can call us (1-800-434-0222) for more information or to make an appointment.

Rock Star

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Campaigns (use social media to promote yourself, business, product)

8. Often, small business owners don't have the time to do it all themselves, and they should outsource. It's kind of like changing the oil on your car. You know you

have the ability to do it, but it's much faster and cheaper to outsource the job to someone who does it all the time. The same thing goes with your business.

In sum, there is a lot to learn in order to market your business effectively. If marketing doesn't sound like fun to you, give it over to someone who LOVES it!

If your eyes have glazed over at some point while reading this article and you need help with your marketing and sales projects, contact Jennifer Filzen of Rock Star Marketing. For a free consultation, call 408-833-9868 or email jennifer@rock-star-mktg.com. Rates and helpful tips can be found on our website at www.rock-star-mktg.com.

RAW

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dressing.

The Marina Farmer's Market is a wonderful place to purchase fresh produce, and seems to be growing more and more popular and I've talked to folks from Seaside and Monterey who shop there on Sundays.

Coast Water District and give him support by electing Jan Shriner as well. Together they will work on the critical water issues that need addressing.

(They go to the Grocery Outlet too!) As always, please support as many locally-owned businesses as you possibly can, and remember, fellow citizens, keep eating those onions--RAW--for your own health and well-being. The old saying was, "an apple a day keeps the doctor away." The new saying is, (coupled with the old saying, because raw apples are good for you), "a raw onion a day (may help) keep the doctor away," Seriously, force yourself to eat them, as raw onions are therapeutic. Peace and Harmony for all!

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