



May 2009

10:00 p.m. on May 1
 9:00 p.m. on May 15
 8:00 p.m. on June 1

To use this chart: hold the chart in front of you and turn it so the direction you are facing is at the bottom of the chart.

- **Bright Stars**
- **Medium Bright Stars**
- **Faint Stars**

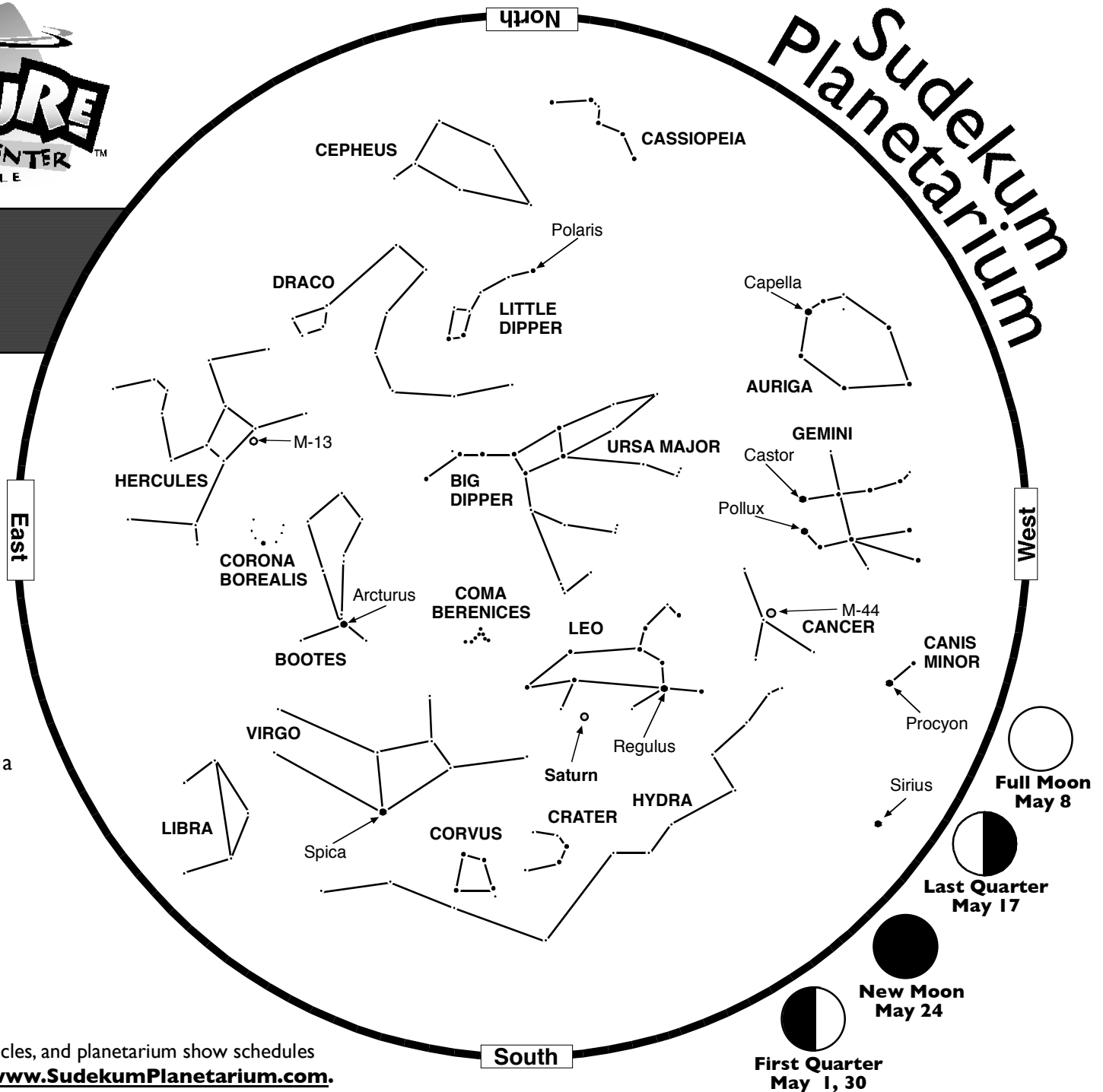
Scan the sky with binoculars: the darker the sky, the better.

• Open Star Clusters:

M-44 - The Beehive Cluster
 M-13 - The Hercules Cluster
 Coma Berenices is a star cluster and a constellation.

From Nashville:		
	Sunrise	Sunset
May 1	5:54 AM	7:35 AM
May 15	5:41 AM	7:47 AM
June 1	5:31 AM	7:59 AM

Monthly star charts, feature articles, and planetarium show schedules are available on our web site at www.SudekumPlanetarium.com.



THE NEW SUDEKUM PLANETARIUM

AT ADVENTURE SCIENCE CENTER

May 2009

See lots of Planets with Patience

As April ends, shy **Mercury** is still visible as a bright point of light above the western horizon until about 30 minutes after sunset, but only through the first week of May. Binoculars usually make Mercury easier to spot before finding it with just your eyes.

High in the southern sky lies **Leo the lion** with regal **Regulus** marking his mighty heart. If you aren't sure which star is Regulus, draw a line across **Orion the hunter's** shoulders toward the east. Continue through **Procyon** in **Canis Minor the little dog** to the next bright star. This is Regulus.

North of Regulus is a curving arc of stars that looks like the hook of a coat hanger. This represents the head and mane of the lion. An irregular rectangle indicates the body of the lion with a triangle at the lion's rear end.

Just below Leo is a star that looks like it might mark the hind leg of the lion. Watch it carefully though, and you'll discover that this 'star' doesn't twinkle. That's because it's not really a star! This dim dot is the second largest planet in our solar system, **Saturn**. Try looking at it with a pair of binoculars. You probably won't see its famous rings, but Saturn should look noticeably bigger than the stars.

Turn away from Leo and face north to see the **Big and Little Dippers**. There aren't very many bright stars in this part of the sky, so the seven stars of the Big Dipper really stand out high overhead.

Halfway between the Big Dipper and the horizon lies the Little Dipper. These stars are not as bright, and some are so faint they disappear in bright moonlight or light pollution.

Jupiter rises in the southeast after 2 AM as a bright point in the relatively dim constellation of **Capricornus the seagoat**. Jupiter will be the brightest "star" in the night sky at this time.

A more convenient time to look for Jupiter is just before sunrise at about 5 AM. Jupiter will be the bright object in the southeast, about one third the distance from the horizon to the **zenith** directly overhead.

At 5 AM, **Venus** will be FAR more brilliant than Jupiter, blazing in the east less than 20° above the horizon. Using binoculars, keen observers might be able to find dim, pale, orange Mars below and to the left of blinding Venus.

On the morning of **May 17**, the **last quarter Moon** passes Jupiter in the predawn sky. On **May 20**, a **crescent Moon** will lie just above and to the right of Venus. The following morning, **May 21**, an even slimmer **crescent Moon** will stand above Mars and to the left of Venus.

Astronomy Day = Telescope Day

May 2, 2009 is **International Astronomy Day**. On this day from 11 am to 3 pm, Adventure Science Center will host activities exploring all aspects of telescopes and amateur astronomy.

Visit the Telescope Showcase, ask questions at the Astronomy Advice booth, and complete a scavenger hunt for a chance to win a \$300 telescope. Tune in the Night Sky Network, and enjoy ViewSpace from the Space Telescope Science Institute.

More activities will be outside, weather permitting. Walk along a scale model of the solar system, create craters, and get a safe close-up look at our own star, the Sun.

Look Through Telescopes at the Real Sky!

The next FREE public star party is set for **Saturday evening, May 2**, from **8:30-10:30 PM** at the **Visitor Information Center at Longhunter State Park**. Directions to this star party are available on our website.

Members of the **Barnard-Seyfert**



Astronomical Society will set up their telescopes so anyone can view a variety of celestial sights, including Saturn, star clusters and nebulae. The best part: it's all **FREE!**

Be sure to check the Sudekum Planetarium web site for helpful hints on enjoying a star party. Please note that star parties may be cancelled due to poor weather. If the weather is questionable, visit our web site or call **AstroLine** at (615) 401-5092 before leaving home.

M Is for Meteorites

The **Barnard-Seyfert Astronomical Society** meets at the Adventure Science Center on the third Thursday of each month starting at 7:30 PM. On **May 21**, **JanaRuth Ford** of Middle Tennessee State University will present a program on meteorites including information about impact sites in Middle Tennessee. Admission is free and guests are welcome. Visit www.basasnashville.com for details.

Coming to a Dome Near You

The new Sudekum Planetarium opened in June 2008. Since then, more than 110,000 people have enjoyed a variety of programs beneath our simulated sky.

STARS, our inaugural show, will exit the current public schedule on Friday, **May 22** along with *Stars of the Pharaohs*. Beginning Saturday, **May 23**, the new main feature program will be *Astronaut*.

Astronaut, narrated by **Ewen McGregor**, takes you from Earth into space and beyond. Experience a rocket launch from inside the human body, and float around inside the International Space Station. Discover the perils that lurk in space as we subject Chad, our test astronaut, to everything that space has to throw at him. Find out what it takes to become part of this incredible journey?

Also, watch our website for details about **music laser shows** starting in June. These Cosmic Concerts will feature a variety of popular music choreographed to lasers, special visual effects, and millions of stars.