

Astronomy moving.
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the sky doesn't



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

AstronomySecond Paper 11-27-00I attended the Wagner College Planetarium(located in Spiro Hall)on November 15, 2000 at 11: 00 for research and to observe the stars, planets and our entire solar system more closely. There was a clear dome on the ceiling for us to see the sky.

The director of the show was Dennis Anderson. He put the latitude to forty degrees, and dimmed the lights. Up in the sky the stars are beautiful and bright. They seem, by the naked eye to be moving but the earth is what is actually moving. Everyone knows that the sky doesn't move. The earth rotates around the sun.

The earth being in a different spot in its' orbit all the time gives us different stars to see at different times out of the year. A star is a huge ball of glowing gas in the sky. The Sun is a star. It is the only star close enough to the earth to look like a ball.

The other billions of stars are so far away that they are no more than a pinpoint of light. A constellation is a bunch of stars in the sky that form a picture. Each Constellation has a definite time of the year when it reaches its highest point. At latitudes to far north or to far south of the equator, many constellations do not reach there culminates high enough to be seen. The constellations appear to move westward as the earth rotates around the Sun. For this reason, certain constellations can only be seen during one season of the year. There is Pegasus which is extremely large.

If you connect the stars of Pegasus it is supposed to look like a horses body. However it is upside down. The instructor put a line going across the middle

of the dome. It separated the sky from north to south. He said this line is called the Meridian. When a star is at the Meridian it is at its highest point.

It is nine degrees elliptical on each side. The second brightest star is Mercury it has a very thick atmosphere. However the brightest star nearest to the horizon is Venus. We also saw Jupiter it was also a very bright star but not as bright as Venus. Jupiter has four moons' which was very interesting to see. We live in a spiral Galaxy.

It has one to four billion stars. Some people believe we live in the barred galaxy. It is also called the Milky Way galaxy. If stars or galaxies explode we would not know until light years later. This is due to the great distance between us and other stars or galaxies.

Light years are a measure of distance. Some bi-global clusters of stars are a numbered at 150, 000 to one million stars bunched together. This is called Messier 13. Messier 13 is 30, 000 light years away. It was discovered by a man named Charles Messier. Charles Messier also discovered the Stellar Nebular. He got a lot of credit for his time, which was around the 1700's.

Many years ago stars were known as navigation systems. Sailors used the stars to guide them on where they wanted to go. They would look at the stars and try to judge where they were by where the stars were located in the sky. Thus turning the stars into a navigation system. If we were in the country side and not the city we would be able to see the stars much better. They would seem brighter to the naked eye.

The instructor at the planetarium explained to us that in New York City the street lights and car lights seem to drown the energy of the stars. He also said that if something isn't done about it in a couple of decades we will not be able to see any stars from our city. A set of stars everyone is familiar with is the Big Dipper, but it is only part of a constellation called the Big Bear. There is also the Little Dipper. At the handle of the Little Dipper is a star called Polaris, which is also known as the North Star it stands out in the sky when you look