

The Night Sky

By David Leake

Retired Planetarium Director of
Staerkel Planetarium at Parkland College,
Co-Founder of the
Champaign-Urbana Astronomical Society, Inc

January 14-20
Look westward this week just after sunset and you'll find the stars of our summer triangle, Vega, Deneb (highest of the three) and Altair.

These three stars were high in the sky during June, July and August. You might be thinking "why are we seeing summer stars in January?" Great question!

With the tilt of the Earth's axis, we see the Sun making a short trip across the southern sky, hence our short days. Since it's getting dark early, it gives us a chance to see more of the darkened sky.

At about 6:30pm, the star Deneb is about 26 degrees high in the northwest.

Deneb is part of Cygnus, our celestial swan, but it also

known as the "northern cross."

The tip is the cross is near the horizon in our sky and the cross, well, looks like a cross on the horizon.

It's amazing timing given we just had Christmas, don't you think?

We'll see a waxing crescent Moon in the sky early next week.

Philo Library Weekly Newsletter

1-11-2026
Further to last week's column, I have succeeded in ordering some books and have a long list to try to order this coming week.

For your information, the books I've ordered are, in no particular order:

"The Last Days of Marilyn

Monroe" by James Patterson (true crime)

Proving Ground" by Michael Connelly - a Lincoln Lawyer novel

"Ghost town" by Tom Perrotta

"Librarians" by Sherry Thomas

"the Loneliness of Sonia and

Sunny" by Kiran Desai,

"The Shop on Hidden Lane"

- Jayne Ann Krentz

"The Storm" by Rachel Hawkins.

Some of these are large print, I can tell you more about them once they arrive and are ready for the shelves. That's the news for now, thanks for reading.

The Giving Place Weekly Newsletter & Upcoming Events

"The well-known biblical story of the Magi who journey to find the Christ child and to bring gifts offers an emblematic story of knowing. They are not called wise men for nothing! nor is it a meaningless accident that we use the word epiphany in referring to a moment of insight. Epiphany is the name of the church season in which we celebrate God's revealing himself to these Gentiles--and to us."

— Esther Lightcap Meek, A Little Manual for Knowing

Let the light from the Epiphany star shine on us and show us the unique gifts that we have to offer Christ and to the world.

The TGP News Section

On Wednesday, The Giving Place served 11 family (0 new), 44 people and 25 children. Food totaled \$800.00 (16 boxes at ~\$50.00 per box).

All food is donated or purchased through cash donations from our very generous commUNITY!

Thanks to Jo Ellen, Linda, Karen, Miranda, Cindy, Sharon J, Ernie, Henry, Dale, and Mike for serving our clients Wednesday night.

Feel free to visit some Wednesday and see all the blessings that are happening and maybe become a part of it.

The Giving Place continues as a way for our church and other community churches to minister to the Unit 7 School District and help those in

need.

Mike Williams
The Verses

Matthew 2:1-12 ESV

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: ...

Catholic Charities December Activities Report

Catholic Charities Report December 2025 Activities

St Pat's Pantry, located in the St Patrick Parish Center at 304 E Vine in Tolono, was open 10 times during December (closed 12/26 for Christmas). 43 families were served, 28 multiple times, for a total of 116 visits to the pantry. There were 4 new families and 2 deliveries. 25 Christmas Dinner Boxes were distributed on 12/22. The pantry was able to provide Christmas gifts to 10 families. It should be noted that while SNAP benefits have resumed, many families were cut in the amount they receive.

Donations were received from the following families: Baker, Spencer, Stuber, Bleichner, Huber, Keith, De-franko, Kleiss, Ellers, Jenkins, Kaufman, Hettinger and Wilson. The Philo Exchange Bank of Philo, Dollar General stores and several families provided Christmas gifts. Unity Boys Basketball delivered 245 pounds of food. Unity High School/ FFA provided 25 hams for the Christmas Dinner

Boxes. St Patrick/ Alter and Rosary Society provided toiletries and cleaning supplies. St Thomas School provided hand made Christmas cards for the Christmas Dinner

Boxes. St Thomas parishioners provide nonperishable food weekly. Dollar General stores in Philo, Tolono and Villa Grove donated 417 pounds of food. Aldi of Savoy donated 185 pounds of food. Eastern Illinois Food Bank provided 3,393 pounds of food. Thanks to donations from St Patrick, St Thomas, and St Mary's churches the cost of the Christmas Dinner boxes was covered and the pantry shelves have been kept stocked.

Senior Luncheon was held on December 10 at St Patrick Parish Center with 32 guests in attendance including 2 new guests. Christmas was the theme and decorations were provided by the Blaney family.

The potluck entree was ham supplemented with many side dishes provided by guests. Memorials were

displayed in honor of Roberta Bleichner who passed away in November and had been active at Senior Luncheon since it began; and Bernie Eisenmeyer who passed away during the spring and has served as our Santa Clause for years. 6 birthday, 3 get well and 1 sympathy cards were signed. Santa (played by Barry Leonard) distributed gift bags to all and posed for

pictures with guests. The next Luncheon will be held January 14, 2026 in the Parish Center. The theme will be New year and the entree will be soup and sandwiches. Any one age 55+ is welcome and bring a dish to share. A \$3 donation is requested but not necessary.

18 volunteers provided 193 hours of service to the pantry and luncheon. 2 volunteers are leaving for warmer climates and will return in the spring. 2 new volunteers have been certified. Roberta Bleichner, who volunteered at both the pantry and luncheon since they began, passed away on 11/27 and was laid to rest on 12/13. She will be missed by the volunteers, pantry clients and Senior Luncheon guests.

A huge Thank You goes to the staff of St Patrick Parish. Father Pat O'Neal provides support and problem solving for both the pantry and luncheon. Becky Hand, parish secretary, manages the scheduling, financial contributions and technical assistance for the pantry. Larry Hewing manages maintenance for the Parish Center. The Stuber family provides housekeeping for both the pantry and luncheon. Respectfully submitted, Jan Blaney

It sucks being in the Midwest in winter. It's gray, cold. In your bones you feel the years aging you.

The cicadas, and the pentamer... of cockroaches.

You're stuck there. Somehow your rear end had spun around. Now you're fighting ice and gravity. Another car, a pickup. It stops.

Under clippings of the moon at two forty five AM I study & repeat. Wave it through, wave it through. Once your wheels begin spinning you could go anywhere. They stop.

Ribsomes/ endoplasmic/lactic acid/ stamen.

Men are getting out. Good old Midwestern hospitality, They'll push me out.

It picked its way & stagnated somewhere I can't point

to anymore, maybe/ my gut-

They're screaming.

They're armed.

They reach inside.

I'm scared.

It's the ruler by which I reduce all things now;

I pull away.

Thank god, the ice does not impede me.

Hard-edged & splintering from knowledge

I'm free.

A cloth against fevered forehead.

I can't believe-

"Make room for wonder"

All my understanding dribbles

Down Onto the chest

Life is merely ovum and sperm

What dies there?

I'm free.

THE SIDNEY SCOOP

by Ann Rhoton, 688-2812



Look for your correspondent's January 5 Village of Sidney Board of Trustees Meeting Coverage published in this week's edition of the Southern Champaign County Today Paper.

The next "The Mid Central Woman's Christian Temperance Union" meeting will take place on Saturday, January 17 at 11:30 a.m. at Monical's Pizza in Villa Grove. Tim Black will be the guest speaker giving a testimony about his life.

New members (men and women) are welcome and folks can call Vice President Marjorie Miller at (217) 202-4397 for more information.

The Sidney American Legion Post 433 will hold their next monthly meeting at the Post Home located at 221 South David Street in downtown Sidney on Monday, January 19 at 6:00 p.m. Prospective new members are always welcome and encouraged to attend and all monthly meetings, unless otherwise posted, are held at the Post Home.

The next regular monthly meeting of the Village of Sidney Board of Trustees will take place on Monday, February 2 at 7:00 p.m. in the Sidney Community Building located at 211 East Main Street in Sidney. All monthly meetings,

unless otherwise posted, are held in the Sidney Community Building meeting room.

Have a great week!
If you or your organization have news items you want published drop a line to Ann Rhoton at P. O. Box 491, Sidney, IL 61877 or call (217) 688-2812 between 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Don't hesitate to leave a message if there's no answer.

News items must be turned in by 10:00 a.m. each Friday to be published in the following week's paper. Items submitted after the deadline will be published in the following week's column.

PEACE MEAL WEEKLY MENU

Sidney, Homer, Philo, Tolono, Sadorus, and Pesotum Peace Meal menu for Thursday, January 15 through Wednesday, January 21.

Thursday, 1/15/26 - Swedish meatballs, brussels sprouts, baby baker potatoes, papaya and mango cup, sliced bread served with butter or margarine, and a half pint of milk.

Friday, 1/16/26 - Smothered chicken, corn, broccoli, tropical fruit cup, dinner roll served with butter or margarine, and a half pint of milk.

Saturday, 1/17/26 - Chicken salad, cottage cheese with strawberries, pineapple chunks, hamburger bun, and a half pint of milk.

Sunday, 1/18/26 - OSF Peace Meal is closed.

Monday, 1/19/26 - Chick-

en and dumplings, mashed potatoes, green beans, spiced pears, dinner roll served with butter or margarine, and a half pint of milk.

Tuesday, 1/20/26 - Grilled pork chop, sweet peas, mac and cheese, cinnamon applesauce, sliced bread served with butter or margarine, and a half pint of milk.

Wednesday, 1/21/26 - OSF Peace Meal is closed.

OSF Peace Meal provides seniors, age 60 and older, with a nutritious lunch Monday through Saturday and are closed on Sunday and Wednesday. There is a suggested donation of \$4.00 for each meal, however, no senior will be denied a meal because of an inability to financially contribute. The Illinois Link Card is an accepted form of

payment. For more information, please go to <https://www.osfhealthcare.org/osf-peace-meal/> or call 1-309-665-5900.

The Homer Peace Meal congregate site is at the Homer Village Hall located at 500 East Second Street. It is currently carry-out only. For reservations, please call 1-309-665-5900. Home delivery in southern Champaign County is currently available in Sidney, Homer, Philo, Tolono, Sadorus, and Pesotum.

Menu substitutions may occur due to global supply chain shortages, but a nutritious meal is still guaranteed.

The OSF Peace Meal menu is submitted for the OSF Peace Meal Senior Nutrition Program by Ann Rhoton.

Village of Sidney Board of Trustees Discusses Property Issues cont'd from pg. 1

to keep folks from having to walk on the street if the snow is too deep on the sidewalks under Village of Sidney Maintenance Supervisor Dustin Butts' comments. No action was taken.

Village of Sidney Board Trustee and Finance Chair Donna Hooker gave the finance report. She asked Village of Sidney Clerk/Treasurer Ashley Reinhart if there were any additional bills and was told that there were no additions. A motion from Trustee Donna Hooker seconded by Trustee Bret Harris to pay all of the monthly bills for December as presented with no additions carried.

Village of Sidney Board Trustee and Streets and Alleys Chair Dan Gadeken had nothing to report.

Village of Sidney Board Trustee and Water and Drainage Chair Bret Harris reported that his report had been given earlier in the meeting.

There was no public property report as Village of Sidney Board Trustee and Public Property Chair Tyler Bickers

was not in attendance at the meeting and no building permits had been issued.

Village of Sidney Board Trustee and Parks and Recreation Chair Matt Laurent reported that he had nothing to report.

Village of Sidney Board Trustee and Community Development Chair Leroy Schluter reported that the Saturday, December 6 Sidney Hometown Christmas event sponsored by the Sidney Improvement Group had gone well and commended Trustee and Sidney Improvement Group President Donna Hooker and her team for that. Trustee Schluter additionally reported that the Village of Sidney Code Book published at the Village of Sidney website had not been updated since December 6, 2021 and that the village really needed to see that the code book was updated.

Village of Sidney Clerk Ashly Reinhart reported that she had taken note that updates to the Village of Sidney Code Book were behind and

stated that she was working on getting the code book updated.

Village of Sidney President John Finn asked if there was any New and Old Business.

Trustee Bret Harris brought up some questions about paid leave and the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). No action was taken following a discussion amongst Village of Sidney President John Finn, Village of Sidney Clerk Ashley Reinhardt, and the trustees.

Village of Sidney President John Finn brought the meeting to adjournment at 8:59 p.m. following a motion from Trustee Bret Harris seconded by Trustee Matt Laurent.

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Poets Corner:
e-mail your poems to:
jamie@thecounty-chronicle.com



"On Learning to Love Dissected Pigs"

By Unknown

I want back my rocking chairs,

The minivan is on an icy road.

I recognize it. The back wheels against the curb and the front wheels trying to navigate the slick blue ice.

But there is no traction.

I've donated bibles to thrift stores.