



Paul Revere Village

Millbury, Massachusetts

The Night Sky in February

A couple of interesting things to see

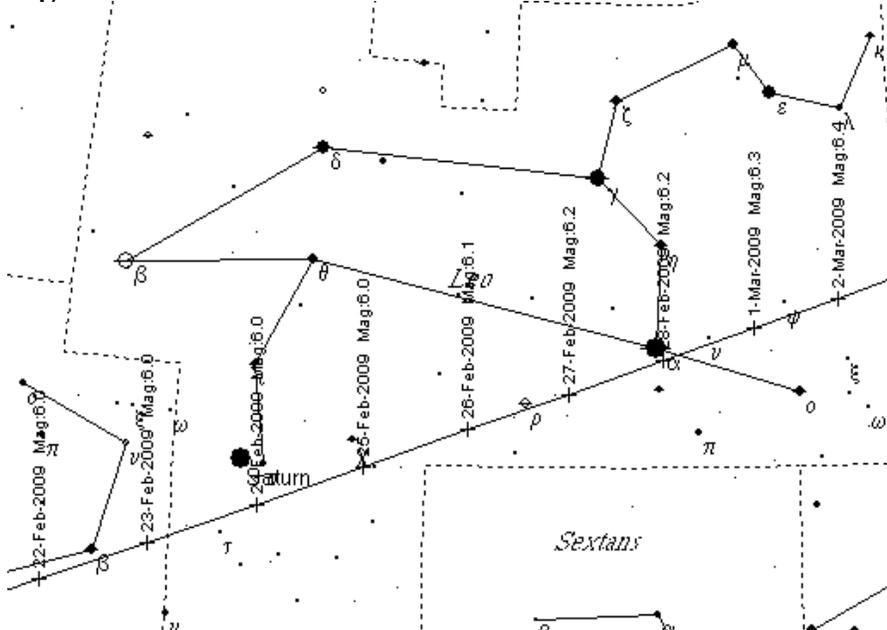
Generally winter is a good time for observing events in the evening sky because the atmosphere is less turbulent and clearer than during the warmer summer months. No doubt you've noticed how on a cold winter evening the stars seems amazingly clear and crisp. The longer period of darkness during the winter months also gives us more hours to observe as well. Of course it is also quite cold so longer observing sessions may not be all that desirable to some.

For those willing to brave the chill of the winter air I have a couple of interesting events in February to choose from.

First we have an opportunity to see Comet Lulin which is currently zipping through our solar system. This comet will reach its brightest around February 23rd - 24th. At that time it is expected to reach magnitude 6 which means it will just be visible to the naked eye under very dark skies. Your best bet is to try to observe with a set of binoculars or a small telescope if you can.

Comet Lulin will be very near the planet Saturn in the constellation of Leo during this period with the closest approach to Saturn taking place on Feb 24th.

Figure 1: Position of Comet Lulin in Leo on various dates



Credit: <http://www.astrodrayer.com>

In this Issue:

- Feb. Night Sky - p.1, 2
- Commercial Vehicles - p. 2
- Winter Parking - p. 3

Dates of Note:

- Groundhog Day - Feb 2
- Valentine's Day - Feb 14
- President's Day - Feb 16
- Mardi Gras - Feb 24
- Ash Wednesday - Feb 25



Recycling for Feb:

- Paper - Feb 4, 18
- Recyclables - Feb 11, 25

Apparent Magnitude:

Astronomers describe the brightness of stars/planets in terms of their apparent magnitude. The dimmer the object the **higher** the magnitude number. Given a dark sky you can see stars down to about magnitude 6 with the naked eye.

some examples...

- Mars, Saturn, Arcturus = Mag 0
- Polaris (North Star) = Mag 2
- Uranus, Comet Lulin (max) = Mag 6

Shortly after observing Comet Lulin you will have the opportunity to view a very close conjunction between the crescent moon and Venus on February 27th.

Venus will be very bright and will be about three moon diameters away from the crescent moon. Simply look up into the sky on the evening of Feb 27th and locate the crescent moon to the

West. The very bright object to the right and slightly above the moon is Venus.

I hope the night skies are clear so that you will have the opportunity to observe these two events.

Below you'll find some links to sites that provide additional information about both of these astronomical events.

New Comet Lulin Easy to Spot this Winter

http://stargazing.suite101.com/article.cfm/new_comet_lulin_easy_to_spot_this_winter

Catch Winter's Comet Lulin

<http://www.skyandtelescope.com/observing/home/35992534.html>

JPL Small-Body Database Browser (orbit diagram for Comet Lulin)

<http://ssd.jpl.nasa.gov/sbdb.cgi?sstr=2007+N3&orb=1>

Star Magnitudes

<http://www.stargazing.net/David/constel/magnitude.html>

Sky Map for February 2009 (pdf)

<http://www.skymaps.com/skymaps/tesmno902.pdf>

Interactive Sky Chart

<http://www.skyandtelescope.com/observing/skychart/>

RESTRICTION OF COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

The Board is actively enforcing the restriction of commercial vehicles. Commercial vehicles are not allowed at PRVA per our condominium documents:

Section 9; RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF TOWNHOUSES page 8:

No part of the premises, including but not limited to the parking areas and driveways, shall be used for parking or storing of commercial vehicles, unregistered vehicles or any motorized recreational vehicles longer than 20 feet.

WINTER PARKING RESTRICTIONS

Once again this is a reminder of the Winter parking restrictions that are in effect from **December 1st** through **April 1st**.

There is **no parking** on the incoming side of **Bunker Hill Road between 1:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.** Also, parking along Bunker Hill Road is banned during snowfalls to allow the plows to effectively clear the road.

There is also no parking in some of the end parking lots during snowfall to allow the plow

crews to more easily push the snow off the roads. See the map below for details.

When you hear the plows, please move your cars from the driveways, so they can be plowed as well. Please help the snow removal crews do their job so everyone can have their drive cleared without undo delay.

Please, slow down when exiting the complex. Because of melting snow, ice may form on Bunker Hill Road just before the intersection with Grafton Street. Accidents have happened before.

Areas of No Parking during snowfall:

