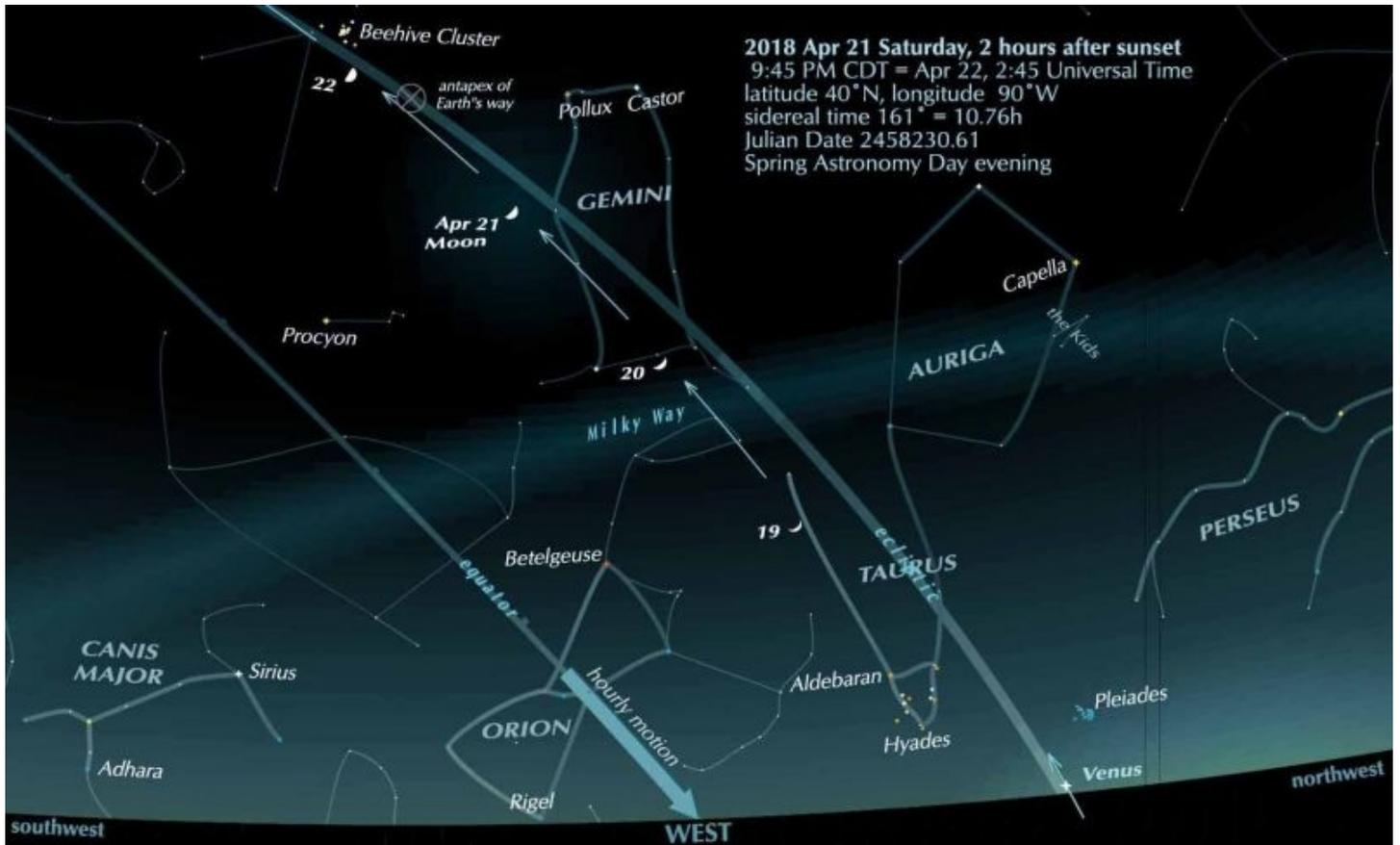


## APRIL 21 IS INTERNATIONAL ASTRONOMY DAY

National Astronomy Day is a step closer to the stars by "bringing Astronomy to the people." Created in 1973 by **Doug Berger**, then president of the Astronomical Association of Northern California, this biannual celebration focuses on bringing the cosmos down to Earth in urban areas with star parties and travelling telescopes. **During National Astronomy Day, we can all become observers, with events across America and throughout the world.** At the time and place of our chart below – Astronomy



A beautiful chart from astronomer Guy Ottewell, showing the evening sky on Astronomy Day 2018.

Day evening, April 21, 2018 – Venus is just setting. Though, as always, brighter than any star or other planet, it has a lot of climbing and brightening to do before reaching its climax in the evening sky four months from now.

Over in the east, the second brightest planet has risen: Jupiter, which will be at opposition on May 8-9. The other planets will rise later through the night, being on the morning side of the Sun.

**And in the northeast, Vega has risen, the bright star of the constellation Lyra, from which radiate the Lyrid meteors. The probable peak of this shower is the morning of April 22, and they may already be putting on a show.**

This is one of the advantages of the timing of the spring Astronomy Day with the moon observable but not too dazzling. The moon will be at first quarter also in the night between April 22 and 23. National Astronomy Day puts the universe within the grasp of your hands. On April 21 celebrate the skies with your local astronomy institution.

We are all astronomers — after all, the sky is right above us, and it's free to observe. Astronomy allows us to see the history of the universe with our own eyes. The stars that twinkle as you look out on a dark, clear night existed at whatever point in history they emitted that light, which could have taken millions of years to reach Earth.

Celebrate this marvellous feat on International Astronomy Day by participating in a little stargazing. Simply find a quiet, dark spot to look out onto the sparkling canvas that lies above our heads.

AK, with EarthSky and Wikipedia Notes