TO USE MAP:
Hold the map in front of you so that the direction you are facing is on the bottom. The stars on the lower half on the map will match up with the stars in the sky. The center of the map is directly overhead in the sky. Constellation and star pattern names are all capitalized. Names of stars have only the first letter capitalized. The map is valid within an hour of:
8:30pm Mid-Jan. EST
6:30pm Mid-Feb. EST

MAGNITUDE is a measure of a star's brightness. The lower the number, the brighter the star
- 1st or brighter magnitude star
- 2nd magnitude star
- 3rd magnitude star
- 4th or fainter magnitude star

ECLIPTIC:
The imaginary path of the Sun through the year. Constellations of the Zodiac surround the Ecliptic and the Moon and planets appear along it.
IN THE JANUARY/FEBRUARY SKY

Jan 1  Mercury at greatest elongation (morning)  Full Moon
Jan 3  Earth at Perihelion
Jan 5  Moon near Regulus (Morning)
Jan 7  Mars near Jupiter (Morning)
Jan 8  Last quarter Moon
Jan 9  Superior conjunction of Venus
Jan 11  Mars, Jupiter, and Moon in a group (after 3am)
Jan 15  Moon near Mercury and Saturn (Morning)
Jan 17  New Moon
Jan 24  First quarter Moon
Jan 26  Moon near Aldebaran
Jan 31  Full Moon/Blue Moon

Feb 1  Moon near Regulus
Feb 7  Last quarter Moon near Jupiter (Morning)
Feb 9  Moon near Mars (Morning)
Feb 11  Moon near Saturn (Morning)
Feb 15  New Moon
Feb 16  Venus near crescent Moon
Feb 17  Superior conjunction of Mercury
Feb 23  First quarter Moon near Aldebaran

= Observatory events

CELESTIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Quadrantid meteors peak January 3 - A meteor shower is a high frequency of meteors that seem to come from one area of the sky. This one offers up to 120 meteors per hour. Meteors are small bits of space debris that burn up in Earth's atmosphere, creating a quick flash or streak of light in the sky. Meteor showers are usually named for the constellation they appear to radiate from, but in the case of the Quadrants, their constellation Quadrans Muralis is no longer on modern star maps. Instead, look for Quadrantid meteors near the Big Dipper.

Earth at Perihelion, January 3 - Perihelion is a planet's closest point to the Sun in its annual elliptical orbit. This year, Earth reaches perihelion on January 3, with a distance of 91,401,983 miles making it closer to the Sun than the average distance of 93,000,000 miles. Despite the variable distance between the Earth and the Sun, changing temperatures and seasons are caused by the tilt of the Earth.

Planet groupings - Early morning before sunrise the planets are joining each other in a bit of a dance. On January 7, look for Mars near Jupiter in the southeastern sky as early as 3am. The Moon joins this planetary pair on January 11, then moves on to join Mercury and Saturn on Jan 15. In February the moon visits these planets individually a little higher in the sky starting with Jupiter on February 7, Mars February 9 and Saturn on February 11.

Blue the Moon, January 31 - The phrase, "Once in a blue moon" typically references something that doesn't happen very often. Another definition uses the term 'blue moon' to define a second Full Moon in a calendar month - that happens roughly every 3 years or so. 2018 is unique for Blue Moon's since January and March both have Full Moon’s on the 1st and again on the 31st. The way this year’s calendar plays out, our January/March double Blue Moons are a result of February being a short month and not having a Full Moon at all.

The bi-monthly STARMAP is available on the web at http://www.mdsci.org/pdf/Planetarium/STARMAP.pdf

CROSBY RAMSEY MEMORIAL OBSERVATORY
INFO 410-545-2999
Free public observing nights are held Friday evenings, weather permitting. Observatory hours are 5:30-9:00 p.m. The Observatory is also open Saturdays from 1:00-4:00 p.m., included in Maryland Science Center admission. Please call after 5:00 p.m. on Friday or after 12 noon on Saturday for observing conditions.