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"Fishing Guide to the Stars: 2008"
ISBN 0-9744983-0-0

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Oh, just who are we kidding here?

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 1.3.2008

"What you do still betters what is done."

Shakespeare's The Winter's Tale [IV.iv.135]

Aries: There's a young lass, a Sagittarius, actually, and she used to work at the Amy's Ice Cream at the Austin Airport. I was flying someplace, home for the holidays, maybe, and she was working the first shift. Not many people order ice cream before noon, but I was. When I walked up to the counter, it was devoid of anyone. She rambled up, sized me up, gave me a perfunctory "hello," then she proceeded to crawl over the counter. It wasn't the view that I was afforded, although, oh never mind, she had garish purple eye shadow make-up stuff. I'm not sure what it's called. She looked at me, sort of tired, then briefly explained that the trip around the counter, back through the security area, the keyed entrance, the "back door" to where she worked? Way too much trouble. It was just easier, on a slow winter morning, to crawl over the counter. Saved her hundreds of paces, maybe even thousands, and while it might not be the most sanitary, she was already wiping down the counter where she crawled over. And she was being polite enough about it all, too. She remembered me when I told her she was still a Sagittarius with a good future in ice cream. The eye make-up was amusing, the banter was slightly brittle, and the idea of taking a good short cut? My fine Aries friend, if you would like too crawl over the counter because it saves about three-quarters of a mile? I'd do it. Just this once.

Taurus: This was really a scene from last fall, but I'm going to use it now because it matches up with the planets and all, the way this year is going to start out. There was a family, apparently a family, and they were all crammed into one side of the booth at a restaurant. Tex-Mex place, passable hot sauce, outstanding taco platter. The family was slightly sunburnt, the dad and son were wearing "sportsmen shirts," as was the wife. I glanced over, pulled the napkin down in my lap to cover my bare legs -- I was obviously wearing shorts -- and the dad figure looked over me. "We were just down at the coast, fished this morning, even, and this booth is right under the AC vent." He smiled. I smiled. We chatted about coastal bay fishing. Their food arrived. They stayed, huddled on one side, while eating dinner. It's a kind of togetherness, but it's not exactly foisted upon you in the manner you'd like. Like huddling for warmth under the AC. With a sunburn. From coastal fishing.

Gemini: It was rather warm the other afternoon. I'm sure, since I was sweating, that a few people had the AC on their cars. Defrost in the morning, AC in the afternoon, then the heater at night. Not all that unusual. Get used to it. South Texas weather. I passed a car, long, low, lean sedan looking kind of a car, expensive and expansive, too. It was buzzing. Humming, really, or so it sounded to me. Maybe I was just addled by the heat. Such noises, like a cooling fan working overtime? That usually doesn't bother me much. Doesn't usually fall into my observation, but on a day in late December, just last year, it

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did catch my attention. My immediate family., they all drive "hybrid" vehicles. So I'm used to odd noises, or no noises, coming out from under the hood. On that luxury boat of a sedan, though, it just struck me as a odd. Especially at this time of the year, but we had a few warm days. Like that car, though, the four-door version of Gemini needs its little cooling fan. You need to cool off, even though you are already -- to an untrained eye and ear -- at rest. Mars dictates you need a little cooling off before you jump to conclusions. Or overheat.

Cancer: I was noticing, after talking to this one guy, he was fishing from a kayak, that most of the guys I know who fish, they all have two or more wives. First wife never takes. Second or third wife, those seem to be doing much better. I'm not sure why this is, either. I have my own theories, but my notes are based on astrological data, and the signs, rather than choices fishermen make in mates. Or the women who choose fishermen as mates. Maybe, too, it's more like fishing, you know, with relationships, have to try a few variations before we all hit that right combination. Right attraction factors, strong enough to endure, light enough to be fun, it's all matter of finding the right gear. Or the correct mate. And when Mars does what he's doing? That's like a snarled fishing line. The true measure of a fisherman is how he behaves when that happens. Me? I'm inclined to patiently unsnarl the knotted mess. Unless there's a lot of action, and at that point, I'm more interested in getting another line out, so I'll put off the patient work until a little later. In Cancer? The way the year is going to start? I'd be patient, now.

Leo: I'm unsure of how close you pay attention to what is going on. I'm not sure you look back over the archives to see where you've been. I'm reminded about one singer/songwriter, from around here, actually, a little west of here, but not too far west, and he was lamenting how he always got in trouble. Every time another singer/songwriter was performing, there was always a fight. Wasn't either guy, but always happened around them. "Yeah, the boys are back in town," only, this isn't a cheap trick, it's the observation by the wistful local singers. How trouble just seems to follow them around. The fact that the guy was on stage with a guitar, and outback was a tour bus? I kind of lose a little empathy, there. But it makes for good stage banter, even if the tale isn't too believable. Which is the problem, here in Leo. The tale, either you're telling it, or you're listening to it, but the tale isn't really that accurate. Maybe it is true, but a lot of us? We're just taking it at entertainment value, only. I'm not saying that there isn't a shred of truth, but be a little more alert, to the broadcast of such stories. Real or imagined.

Virgo: "Hey, sounds like a TB clinic in here!" A Virgo was visiting, and I'd just gotten done with a major sweeping up of the place. So dust was, literally, hanging in the air. I was coughing. A neighbor was over, and he was choking on the dust, and partially, in disbelief that I was actually cleaning. So it did sound like a TB clinic. Only, when was the last time I heard that expression? Not a common form of allusion, not anymore. Sort of out-of-date. Weird, even. A little history and few older films and I can get stuff like that comment. But even I will find it a tad odd. As will anyone who's ever been to my place, I'm neat, just not particularly tidy (not a Virgo). So the dust flying is appropriate at time like this. For me, it was an annual cleaning. A jump on the spring cleaning. For you? Call it what you want, but the idea is to hurry and start the new year correctly. Which is hard with Mars backwards. You can do it, I know.

Libra: The air freshener, it was part of an assortment, all the same size and shape. But the one that caught my eye? There was a fragrance called "cowboy." The fragrant aroma of a cowboy, I'm not sure that's what I want a car to smell like. A truck? Sure. But then., trucks, at least around here, the trucks tend to smell like work trucks in the first place. What would a real "cowboy" fragrance be? Part horse manure, part cow manure, some hay, maybe aromatic sheep by-product, in certain areas. Rope, usually manila rope, worn leather, old motor oil and spilled beer? All that plus some more delicate fragrances, mixed in, like snuff, or chewing tobacco, coffee, bourbon, it all adds up. But once again, I'm not sure that I want an authentic cowboy smell. As I was working on this, though, I wonder, could it be an air freshener strong enough to cover up that cowboy smell? Maybe. But I doubt it. I think the stuff, I didn't buy or sample it in any way, I just figure that it was more about the romance of the cowboy smell. But not the real thing. AS the year starts to unfold, make sure you're on top of the scenario. Like that cowboy fragrance, real? Or are they just selling the dream?

Scorpio: It was a little before Xmas when I saw this sign, it said, "Taxidermy - Game Processing." Underneath the sign, there was an Xmas banner that read, "Fur and Leather Gifts on Sale now." I'm not sure what the connection was, but I was thinking about Scorpio, with the recent movement, or in some cases, lack of movement, of the planets. And to be honest, none of the planets ever really stand still, they just slow down, relative to us. Those two signs, though, I was wondering if the folks who came in for game processing, if they realized that the trimmings left over from their processed game, maybe that material was finding its way into other products? I'm not saying that this is the case, I never stopped to investigate, as I don't have any game that needs to be processed. I don't aim to have any, either. But as a good Scorpio, and you're reading this, so you are a good Scorpio, I want you to think about how you can combine elements from two worlds, and run them together. It's about foraging, and making the best of what's left over. Like taking some of those cast-off, otherwise known as biological waste, materials and putting them to good use. Like fur trimmings for coat collars. And maybe work gloves. Or something. I didn't bother to investigate the idea -- but I'm not a Scorpio, either.

Sagittarius: The waiter was passing, and I asked for some more of the special sauce. It was burger night at a local place, not quite fully a dive and yet, not quite fully an over-priced chain. "Hey," I asked, "more of this. And just what is this stuff, anyway?" He grinned and returned with another small tub of the stuff. "Chipotle Crack Mayo." One taste, and you're hooked? I can't say for sure. As I rolled the taste around in my mouth, I started to get visions of what it really was, like, Miracle Whip, with cayenne and a dusting of chipotle salsa. Smoky, strong and potent, yet mild, too. That smoked-flavor from the jalapeno, enough heat to be interesting, and yet, smooth, too, with that silky essence of mayo. I'm not saying that this new year is going to be like this, smooth, smooth, silky and yet, just enough spice to be interesting, but it certainly could happen. The problem is this next couple of days? It's like my favorite "chipotle crack mayo," it's really good stuff. But it's also highly addictive, and the real secret? That super-secret restaurant ingredient? You don't want to know, it's something like Miracle Whip.

Capricorn: It was a kid, at a restaurant, a loud and boisterous Tex-Mex place, less known for haute cuisine and better known as a place to drink, eat and be merry. A family of four

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was at an adjacent table, mom and dad we getting their drink on, and the two children, the quietest, very patiently explained to the server, "Yes, it is my birthday today." Little Capricorn child. Quiet. Demur. Reserved. Just wait, as I can see, about 30 years into that child's future, he's going to be the loudest, drunkest, most out-of-control party animal -- then. But for now? Quiet. Reserved. Demur. Almost bashful and shaking his head at the "adults" who are not acting very adult-like. Way it goes, too, for lots of Capricorn. Someone has to be the voice of reason. Perish the thought that the adults would act like adults. But someone has to be reasonable, calm, and in control of themselves. Capricorn? That's your goal this week. Maybe not all year long, but for the time being? Act like an adult. Somebody needs a cool head when everyone else starts to panic.

Aquarius: I was thinking about a scene, I was digging through my images to find a way to explain this. I have this picture, and it's a little jolly Santa, just small plastic guy, really, and he's parked on the roof of a building. It took several tries to frame the shot just right, but there was Santa, up on the roof, and next to him, the top of a palm tree. Tropical tree. Always liked the way those two lined up. Think about Santa with his jolly red outfit, fur-trimmed hat, and all that. Look, Xmas is long over, but the spirit of the season lives on. Or, like some of my neighbors, on and on. What this is about, though, is that original image, the Santa on a building with a the fronds of palm tree as a backdrop. I'm sure I've posted that picture on the website, someplace. Or maybe not. Doesn't much matter, though, as what it evokes, the image, Santa and the palm fronds, there's an enduring image and study in contrasts.

Pisces: it was a new logo to me, and don't ruin it all by sending in the name of some band/corporate outfit/artist who uses this as their logo. It was a sort of a Virgen de Guadalupe, only the figure was crossed with the Grim Reaper. So it was sort of a Virgen de Grim Reaper. The adornments, and the rays raadiating outward from the figure? And the dressings? Pure Virgen de Guadalupe. The death-mask skull? The long scythe at one side? Grim Reaper. So it was an odd combination of elements, and one guy, over on the east side, had this figure etched in the back-glass of his pickup. The grim reaper is a frightful figure, but the other image that is similar is "old man time," and we just got done with his holiday, the New Year. Time to think about that, too. As the next year is unfolding at a furious pace, but nothing seems to go quite like it's supposed to? Think about those two elements that don't seem to belong together.

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For the week starting: 1.10.2008

"Ha! Publius, Publius, what hast thou done?"

See, see! thou hast shot off one of Taurus' horns."

Titus in Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus [IV.iii.69-70]

Aries: Given where the planets are? It's all about how you look at the situation. In this example, it's easy for me explain, I passed a place in my daily walk where there was a simple arrow, done in chalk, outlined on the pavement. It was really a lip on the curb, slanted, or canted, at an angle to provide wheelchair access. Convenient for bicycles and skateboards, too. The arrow merely pointed up. I grabbed a portable (cheap) camera, and took a single shot of the chalk arrow. Then, passing it the next day, realizing that the arrow would be gone in a good rain, I took a half-dozen shots. The texture changed. In the first picture, the arrow pointed up, next image, left, then right, then down. All about perspective and how that image, then rotated with software, seemed to change its message, all depending the orientation. It all depends on how you see the image.

Taurus: There's an image I've got, opening shot usually in a movie. Could be a TV show, doesn't much matter. It's the team, the group, the whatever the coherent group is, walking along. Backlit, usually, and the team's not in step, not exactly, but it's only about three or four short steps, done in slow motion, maybe with gear over one shoulder, or a flight helmet in hand, casually dangling to one side. Despite the slow motion, the short clip implies action. Adventure, action and adventure, motion. Activity. As long the planets are thusly arrayed? It's like that long opening shot. I've seen it in movie and on TV. Classic way to frame an image. You've got a classic way to frame an image, too. Action, adventure? Sure, that too.

Gemini: I walked into a Wal-Mart because it was close, cheap, and I just needed a few grocery items. And a pair of shorts. Not fancy or expensive shorts, just cheap shorts. While I was wandering the aisles, I found jeans on sale, marked down from a low price (less than \$20) to an unbelievable low price (\$9.50). That's right, real Levi-brand jeans, less than ten bucks. How could I pass that up? That's a really good deal. The retail giant's mistake is my gain. Or savings, really. What I was thinking. I got home, cut the tags off, and tossed the jeans in the laundry machine. What I usually do. Wash before I wear, I know, tad odd like that, but it works for me. Besides, sale item? Off the bottom of the pile? Never hurts to clean them. A day or two later, I got to looking at the receipt, and then I was mildly irritated with myself. I'd already tossed the price tag, and I'd already washed -- and presumably worn -- the new jeans. On the receipt/ The price wasn't

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discounted like the advertised price. This could be corporate malfeasance on the part of the retail giant. It could be a deliberate "bait & switch," or it could be my mistake. The difficulty with the solution, is there is no right solution. I can't, not after wearing them, take the jeans back because they were over-priced. No sales tag. This isn't a huge mistake, but it's typical of Mars backwards in your sign. The problems didn't start until I'd already gone past the point of no return, washing wearing and throwing away the price markers. I'm going to save you the pain and frustration. Save everything, if only until next week. Better yet? Next month. Save everything until the end of February.

Cancer: "You know, some times, cigarettes and sweets just don't get it some days." What she said. I was going to try and keep this short and sweet, since, there are some days, when cigarettes and sweets just don't get your mind off the problems you've got. The bigger issue though, is what part of these problems did you create yourself? What part is something you could've addressed instead of seeking escape in items like cigarettes and sweets? Mind you, I'm not one who is going to lay any blame here, or any excuses, about sugar and tobacco as escape mechanisms, nope, those of us in glass trailers shouldn't be pitching any heavy stones. But sweets and cigarettes are, ultimately, not really very good for your physical health. The mental health value can be questioned. Personally, I wonder if the mental health attributes, the succor and relief don't outweigh the other health problems. But that could very well be my own way of seeing and understanding. I'm not a medical doctor. I can't even play one on TV. Until this issue gets corrected? Perhaps directly addressing the problem? That might be better of way dealing with instead of trying to hide from the problem. Except, if it were me? I'd just add caffeine to the cigarettes and sweets, see if that didn't help me forget.

Leo: In the past, I've spent a lot of time on short shuttle flights, especially when I'm merely commuting from one end of Texas to the other end. So I've seen it all. The other day, a young man was sitting in the lounge, then he boarded right before me and it was his backpack that intrigued me. There was the top half of a stuffed monkey protruding upwards. As the kid shouldered his pack, it brought a whole new meaning to "Monkey on your back." The kid wasn't a Leo, but as I talked to him, I came to understand a fuller message. It was just like fishing, you know, and that monkey in the backpack was bait. A conversation starter. An introduction. Better yet, as I found out later, that monkey trick was also a "chick magnet," not that it matters, but in this ay and age? Whatever works? Then, too, there's there's the symbolism of advertising that there's a monkey on your back, and being blunt and forward about the problem. AS I've suggested, the kid I ripped this idea from? He's not as Leo. But as a Leo, and a good one at that, can I recommend a similar kind of travel companion? Or advertising? Or just asa toy to have sticking out of the Leo briefcase, if only for a little while? There's a hook here, and the point of the hook is to not get caught. Do so by advertising that you are caught?

Virgo: There's a place, in Bexar County, called Mudd Creek. I was hoping that someone was up to this challenge, use "bear" and "mud" in a scope. But that's not what I was thinking about. We've had a cold snap, in the last week, so I'm less interested in traipsing around in some muddy creek bottom, looking for fish. I am interested in names, though, and I found that one enticing in a weird way. Perhaps it's the the name, or the names, and the way they sound, especially together. Maybe it's the location, close to a sporting goods store. Maybe it's the taco place around the corner. Or the tamale house. Again, this

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is all wide open as to the original appeal. But the idea that you're in a creek, maybe called Mudd Creek? Can't say as I didn't warn you about that. See, the little Mars thing is doing his best to make you a little more uncomfortable. How you deal with that discomfort? Up to your Virgo self. I'd suggest spending less time worrying about the why, like me.

Libra: The things I get to see. It was a classic low-rider. Only, it wasn't a classic car for such modifications, it was a Jeep. Four by Four. I'm not current on model designations and frame numbers, but I do recognize a low-rider when I see it. Lots of hard work goes into a vehicle like that, it becomes, in essence, a rolling piece of art. Magnificent in its obsession. What struck me as odd, though, was the choice of body and frame combination, starting with a Jeep. The four-wheeler of choice, usually, for the off-road set. Or the folks who want to look like they have that "outdoor" image. A real outdoor image to me is one that involves well-worn fishing poles, and I've found that can fit with just about any kind of vehicle. So the low-rider jeep was an anomaly, weird, and yet, given where I live, it sort of fit in. Natural, but not. So that's the image, the idea as the new year starts to roll along. Some things fit together, like a culture that celebrates both off-road, outdoor images and low-ride sensibilities. A little of both. Shoot for that tenuous middle ground -- your Libra self could actually get there.

Scorpio: It's really a brand name. Scorpion (Dirt Devil) cordless. It's a little vacuum cleaner. Handheld, the perfect size, rechargeable and has a very strong motor. Which is usually a very Scorpio quality. But the metaphor of something that sucks? Especially a mechanical device that sucks up dirt? That's such a perfect analogy for what's transpiring in Scorpio. Like that Scorpion vacuum cleaner, you're there, catching every tiny fiber, every speck of dust, all the minute pieces. It's a nasty little job, but at this moment in time and space? It's a job that you're particularly suited for.

Sagittarius: "No, see, it was this fancy place, right? And they brought over three bottles of wine, with the first course, which wasn't really even an appetizer or anything, then they opened the first bottle, and I thought the service sucked so I started to pour some of that wine into a glass, and they guy rushes back, no, that's the dessert wine, it's, like, got to breath. Yeah, whatever." It was a friend of mine, and he was explaining what it was like in a fancy place. Not that all my acquaintances are low-brow, or of poor breeding, but the point has been raised. And the pint with our Sagittarius selves, because we're not really low-brow, when they bring over three bottles of wine, and just when we think the service sucks, take a moment to breath. Like that bottle of wine. Like that guy who was telling the story. Just slow down for a moment. There's an order and procedure in place. The step have to be taken in a particular order. There's a method at work here, and our underlying haste will get us nowhere. At least, I think that was the point of the story, that getting in hurry won't make us appreciate the dessert wine any faster. That's what the guy meant, right?

Capricorn: The sign read, "(Name of pawn shop) Guns. Tools. Jewelry." Makes for complete and balanced shopping experience. Better than "Beer, Bait & Ammo." Or maybe not. However, as signs go, that pawn shop seemed to cover just about everything that was important to Capricorn. There's a touch of material about work, the Tools. There's a touch of the fun stuff, if possible violent overtones, with the Guns part. And for my money, nothing says reconciliation and contrition better Jewelry. Now, that last one,

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could just be my take, but consider that the work and the play usually eats up a lot of free time, and that means it's time to be contrite about some issue. I'm not saying that buying a diamond ring is always the best way to get out of trouble, but I've found, in my limited experience, that it does work miracles. Try the pawn shop.

Aquarius: At one point, there were close to a dozen of the "forensics" Crime Scene shows. When I was eating breakfast in San Antonio, I really saw a San Antonio Crime Scene Unit. The real item, not a make-believe TV cop. I started thinking about a Crime Scene Unit: SA (San Antonio) plot. See, this dead body is getting cut open for an autopsy, and they find taco meat and from the breakdown of the spices used in the taco, they can tell which taco stand the guy last ate at. And from there. They catch the killer. The closing shot, though, it would have to be the investigator, eating at the taco stand. Or maybe the coroner, one of them, since the tacos in SA are good. It's just a matter of finding the right taco stand. So what I've done is given you perfectly acceptable plot outline for a pilot for a new TV series. You just have to flesh out the details. Plot, characters, stuff like that. But I've handed you a viable option -- it's up to you to take advantage of what's been handed to you. So before you start complaining, consider that someone has just handed you a perfectly good option, one you can exploit.

Pisces: It's one of those scenes I've never been able to resolve. It's a cowboy hat on top of someone, a person of obvious non-horse material. I was passing through the airport at vacation time, and there was a guy wearing flip-flops, a t-shirt with the name and brand of a long-board company, jams, and a sharp, black-felt cowboy hat. Just didn't quite all fit together. Surfer attire and the hat? I'm not one for hewing to convention too tightly, but there are a couple of items that just belong together, and the guy's other attire, and the hat, it all just didn't quite fit. Close, but not quite. As if there was something slightly wrong. Having traveled a lot, and having traveled with a disparate items like fishing gear and formal attire, I understand how one can wind up with a hat and surfer shorts. It happens. But it doesn't stop it from being any less odd. Just because you can understand a situation? That doesn't stop it from being any less odd.

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For the week starting: 1.17.2008

"Well said, that was laid on with a trowel."

Shakespeare's As You Like It [I.ii.96]

Sun moves into Aquarius.

Aries: Flow dynamics, I would expect, would have something to do with pipelines and delivered product in sealed canisters. As it turns out, there's flow dynamics that work in our bodies, with the arteries and such. Then, too, when I was at the post office the other afternoon, a little after two. Walked right up to the window and got my package. Paid for some stamps, too, if I recall. However, if I'd been there an hour or two earlier? The way the flow dynamics work? Place would've been packed, and I would have to wait a fraction of hour before I could transact my business. It's all about timing. What astrology is about, too, and what Mars is about: flow dynamics, when and where. If you stop and think about it, you'll easily realize that there's a time and place to act. Maybe hitting a hotspot when it's full? Maybe that's not the right idea. Maybe think and adjust your timing a little, just try a little offset, maybe an hour or so earlier or later, and see if that doesn't help. Walk right in and take charge: the Aries way.

Taurus: File this one under "not clear on the concept." See, we got my dear, sweet (should be a sainted, need to contact the Vatican about that) Ma Wetzel all up to speed using e-mail. That was great. But then, she mailed a small package that contained printed out versions of all the thank-you notes she'd e-mailed. Sort of becomes cyclic, I guess. Or just unclear of the concept of e-mail. "I wasn't sure you saw that last note, so I thought I'd print it out and send it, you know, make sure you got it." Which I did. But that kind of redundancy, that's what this is all about. There are some times when the extra step is gratefully acknowledged. Then, too, there are times when that extra step is just an added burden, and that added burden is something that the sweet Taurus folks have to bear.

Gemini: I'm not a gambling man, not so much. One of the reasons why I don't gamble is I'm a poor loser. As a Gemini, I'm sure you'll understand. I can easily grasp the sentiments of being a good loser, I just can't actually lose well. So I was visibly agitated when I lost. Lost big. I was in Las Vegas, and we were playing Keno in the coffee shop. I pick a few lucky numbers, like my birthday and so forth, and I tend to just let them ride for a dollar. Only the Keno runner didn't pick up my dollar and my slip. When the screen flashed the numbers, over the next few minutes, I realized I had enough for an \$800 win.

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If only. Life is full of "if only" situations. The Gemini life is got more than its fair share of "if only" situations coming up. One might have just passed you by, but there are several more headed your way. I let out a small wail when I realized I'd missed the money on that one bet. I could've raised a lot of hell, too, but that would only have gotten forcibly ejected from the premises. Silly goal of mine is never to get kicked out again. I'm not too keen on the landings when I'm thrown out. Besides, in part, some of the problem was mine, since, if I was so sure, I should've signaled, hunted, or otherwise attracted the Keno runner's attention. My bad. I miss the \$800, but there's an object lesson here. Regrettably, it's a lesson I'm not learning, but I'll pass it on to the Gemini, all about paying attention to the details. If you're going to pony up and make that wager? Make sure the money is in the bookie's hand. If you're going to play that game, make sure you've got a dog in this fight. Chances are, odds are good, you're going to pull a stunt similar to mine. You win, only you don't. That won't do either of us any good.

Cancer: Living close to downtown, close to the freeway and close to the big office buildings, I've got a chance to see a lot of two kinds of people: suits and homeless. I've also got a fairly strict internal rule about the homeless panhandlers: no. I don't give them a penny. There are two exceptions, one guy is a Leo, and our conversations are worth the change I donate to him. The other guy never asks for money. It's charity case that defies any bounds, but again, since he never asks, I gladly donate. But those are the exceptions, the rule is hard and fast with me, don't give them money as it perpetuates a cycle of dependency and fosters a sense of guilty giving in myself. So The first rule is never give them anything and the second rule is an exception to the first rule. Or maybe it's a rule and a dependent clause. Anyway, they are my rules, so I can bend them as I see fit. I'm not sure where you are exactly in the this cycle of giving and receiving. I'm not sure where you stand with your charity work, or your charitable side. I do offer a branch of astrofish.net that is the "not-for-profit" version, astrofish.org, and I'd gladly accept donations there. However, this isn't about me panhandling, this is about how you manage your Cancer resources, and this isn't limited to money, either. Time is a resource, and perhaps donating a little time towards a worthy cause is what is called for. You will have to work it out how you want to, but the message is about managing your resources wisely, fairly, and tithing an appropriate amount. You figure what works for you, like my hard and fast rule about never giving.

Leo: Brush with fame. Near miss. So close you can taste it. Call it the way you want to, but there's a palpable hit, a near miss, a close call, a nearly -- almost -- not quite but kind of event. This next few days, tending towards next week. But I'm willing to be quite incorrect. I'm real willing to be labeled as "wrong" so you can get your just rewards. I'm going to step up and offer my self -- and more important -- my reputation, putting it all on the line for the Leo. However, all my willingness to sacrifice for you? If it doesn't happen, like if you do have that near brush with fame? Then I'm right. You should be discovered, the problem being, not every talent scout is listening to me. Therefore, this is a week of close calls. Near misses. Almost but not quite. I'm thinking, it's one of those scenes where you're the last person on the scene and as such, you wind up on the edited out side of the equation. While I would never edit out a Leo, I'm just suggesting that there is a problem, and rather than get you all worked up with false hopes, when it's turns out that you didn't make the cut this time? I warned you. Consider it all a practice run. Consider a chance to hone that acceptance speech. There is the converse side of the situation, the

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near-miss scenario that bares consideration. The naked truth is that maybe you don't really want to be discovered in this fashion, not right now. That near miss might be for the best.

Virgo: "Here, I've just got a few of these left over, want one?" It was a pink dinosaur Xmas cookie. Two of them, in fact, along with a forlorn sugar-dusted angel. Three little snacks. The dinosaurs were pink, too, from a sugary coating of some sort. I'm not sure what it was. Nor, for that matter, do I get how a dinosaur relates to Xmas. I fail to understand that connection at all, but it might be my own, limited mindset. Leftover Xmas cookies, or goodies of any kind? That's what we're all about here in Virgo land. It's not, like this is a major secret, the real clue is that we're willing to work with disparate elements, like pink-coated Xmas cookies that happen to be in the shape of a T-Rex. And there's also the hint of the scavenger, too, the person willing to dig around and find the left-over Xmas goodies. I was thinking about the leftover stuff, and the deal is that I don't want to put any of this material away and wait for another 12 months, or 11, anyway, until we use them again, That dusty angel? Probably grow pretty stale in that time. The pink T-Rex? Him, too. So it's matter of going ahead and scavenging what you can out of the the material that appears seasonal. And like shopping on the discount aisles. Mr. Saturn is giving us all an interesting time with his antics. Then, too, his action is emphasized by Jupiter. Which is why I'm suggesting that there might be a little bit of luck in scavenger department. Or the pink dinosaur area. Or both of them, together.

Libra: I was at a Starbucks, located inside another business. Bookstore, hotel, resort, someplace. Odd transaction because there was no tip jar. I realize it's kind of like extortion, that tip jar by the cashier in most coffee shops, but long training in Austin stands me in good stead. I generally tip. I do so because I get to ask, "What's your sign?" and I get to leer. Worth a dollar to me, paying my way, as it were. So at this one Bucky's, the absence of a tip jar was a little startling. Plus, there were two guys working. However, my order was rendered quickly and efficiently, the help was appropriately saucy, and that sent me searching for the tip jar. None to be found. I peeled off a single, and laid it on the counter, "I don't see a place to stick this, don't tell me, against company policy?" The guy behind the counter looked, smiled, and he said something about company policy, but if I left it there, he would take care of the health hazard. I left the tip on the counter. Part of that is pure training because I'm used to paying for my own, obnoxious behavior Part of that is tipping karma since, in part, I live on tips. But part of the equation is also human nature. Rules, and how to artfully circumvent those rules? Happens to be a point that Libra could really use taking a second look at. In this case, neither me nor the guy behind the counter was breaking any rules, but we were artfully circumnavigating the the established corporate policies and procedures. Which is just fine by me. Worked well for him, too. And judging from our interaction? Apparently I wasn't the first person offer a way around the established business model. just doing our bit, or 2 bits, 4 bits, 6 bits, a little at a time.

Scorpio: I got tapped for a prediction panel. The only problem was my invite came at the last minute. This has happened twice, three times now. I began to realize I wasn't on the promoters "A Team." I wasn't even on the back-up list. I was some place pretty far down the line, like, the bottom the barrel. Like, "If we can't get anyone else, have you tried contacting Kramer?" Really makes me feel all warm and fuzzy, now doesn't it? This can

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evoke that nasty feeling leftover from childhood when we were the last picked to be on anyone's team. I would hardly ever leave a Scorpio out, though, however, that is more my feeling at this point, knowing what I know about how useful a Scorpio can be on our team. But that's just me. I'm a little different, which, in context, might be why I was picked last. But never mind that point now, this isn't about childhood trauma. It's about that lack of warm and fuzzy feelings. You're not feeling the love from anyone else, well, maybe me, but not many other folks are sharing the goodness and light. But like me, you're going to get called in at a time when no one else will be able to solve the problem. While this kind of lifeline call lacks the material dressings that make it look good, it does prove that you are, indeed, indispensable.

Sagittarius: I was watching a music video. On the computer, one of those shared files sites. I was intrigued, then amused, then I wondered, from the background visuals, if I could see this band locally. Then, as I listened -- and watched -- a little longer? I decided that I'm not really up for seeing this band live. There was loud guitar. There was drumming banging away. The lead singer was swinging the microphone around like bolo. While I appreciated the musical artistry and the choreographed moves, the sheer youthful lust for life, and the inherent teenage angst, I wasn't so sure I wanted to be in the audience when this one band was playing a live set. Might get rowdy. Might get more physical than I'm willing to get. Might get nasty, and in a way I'm not prepared to match. Too much energy, too much angst, a little too into the action of the song itself. While I love me my blazing guitars, I'm less sure that I want to be in the audience when the guitars start to blaze. Or when the lead singer starts to throw a mic stand. Or when he swings the microphone around like a lethal weapon. It's matter of judging what's safe, what's not safe, and then, making an effort to err on the side of a prolonged Sagittarius life. I'm not suggesting that we should all give up loud rock and roll for forever, but in the immediate future? It might not be a particular band, it could be venue. Or a setting? Maybe a setting that sure would be fun, but maybe, not so much fun as a little wild. Perhaps too wild? Not one the shrink from adventure, I'm just saying, this next couple of days? I'm just suggesting more caution. More prudence. Less cowbell.

Capricorn: I was searching for a replacement "power brick" for one of the electrical things I've got. Just needed a power supply. Through the manufacturer? Retail, near as I could tell, old-school retail, price was close to fifty bucks. Problem being, the device won't run without electricity. Funny how that works. Now, I did a little online comparison shopping, and I found a discount place that had the power brick for about a third less than full-on retail. But the place looked shady, to say the least. No address, just take your money. Not a good deal, as far as I was concerned. Then, finally, I looked at the auction site, they don't pay me so I won't advertise, but I'm sure the on-line auction site for electrical goodies is well-known to all. Found the brick there, and with shipping? Less than fifteen bucks. I didn't spend a lot of time on this research. I didn't spend a lot of money, either. Therein is the clue for my Capricorn friends, there's a balance point between shopping, seeking, uncovering, and then, too, a balance that amounts to nothing more than wasting time online. When I'm wasting time online, I call it research, but around here, I can get away with it. What's the balance point between spending too much, and spending too much time to get it cheap?

Aquarius: Happy birthday, it's getting a little better, now isn't it? I was hoping to run some of that material together, but it didn't quite work right. I was sort of imagining that sentence like one, long word. No interruption. No breath marks. No room for rest, either. Sort of rushed, not exactly with panic, just hurried. That's part of the point. But when you run words together like that, it does tend to evoke a sense of panic. Panic and confusion, Perhaps even a little fear. That isn't so good. I'm trying my best to alleviate the fear and panic. The hurried stuff? I can't fix that. There's a persistent rush to just about all the action in the Aquarius corner. I can't make that go away, but I can recommend that you allow a little extra time. What's going to happen, in a rush to get out some mission critical piece of information, another -- non-Aquarius -- party is going to misunderstand your haste. Your Aquarius haste and efficiency will be mis-read as panic. In some situations, this can have dire effects. But as I got to thinking about it, I wonder if this can't be turned to your advantage, at some point? Act like yourself, another person interprets this as panic and rushes to provide succor. Maybe this isn't so bad, after all. And it is your birthday-time starting soon.

Pisces: From the files, from the files of overheard conversations, not from my client files, it's about a situation that's really kind of sad. There was a divided family, the usual messy divorce, and what the evil ex-husband did, the ex-wife gave him money to buy shoes for the kids, and at the end of the weekend, when the kids were exchanged, there were no new shoes and no money. I'm not supposing that this was really that telling of an event. The ex-wife should've known, going in, that this is typical behavior since there was a long precedent of similar actions. Not like this was any surprise. Annoying? To be sure. But to be caught completely by surprise? Can't say it was that new. But let's forget this, and the exasperation that goes with an ex doing exactly what that ex has done so many time before, let's pop on around to your stars. You give someone some money, expecting one action, and for some reason, the money never makes it to its intended destination. Then your Pisces self acts all surprised. But like that ex-husband, you really should've known better. Me? I'd call it a cheap lesson. You? Call it what you want, but be careful about expecting someone else to change, no matter what they say.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 1.24.2008

"I wonder that thou, being, as thou sayest thou art, born under Saturn, goest about to apply a moral medicine to a mortifying mischief."

-- Don John in Shakespeare's "Much Ado About Nothing" [I.iii.7-8]

Aries: It doesn't get much better, much worse, anyway, than this. This is the low point, the new year arrived, and the best wishes have all but fallen by the wayside. "I was going to diet better this year," I heard one client say, as she stuffed tortilla chips in her face, almost handful at a time, "no, really, this was going to be the year." She reached for a double margarita, basically a single with a floater-layer of tequila, "and slow down on my drinking," she added. I could image her reaching for a cigarette, too, but that didn't happen., Except in my mind. Three for three, be my guess. Is this a total loss? Hardly, it's just matter of realizing that the smoking, drinking, and eating? All three of those things at once? Not going to happen. Have to take it a little slower. Gradual like. Not all at once, and certainly not cold turkey, however, if you did go and quite everything? And you've been successful? Made it this far? It gets easier? And if you're zero for three? Consider it time to start with moderation.

Taurus: I've got a client who's an insurance adjuster. Claims negotiator. She ran into a case that was, to me, funny. The legal representative, the leal counsel, the witness and the family to the injured person? All the same person. Sort of like having a sister or a brother who saw it and happens to be a lawyer. Good call for the victim. Bad news for the insurance company. "When I ran it all down, I just put the phone down and said, 'oh man,' because, what can I do?" I'd guess the maximum amount is what's expected. What's fair, right? It's just that a situation like that, like my friend was facing, there's no way to win. Or no way to get out of the deal without it costing the full amount. No room to negotiate, no wiggle space. Not much of a chance. I'm sure, as a Taurus, you're feeling this, too., No wiggle room. Therein is the problem. There are some times, an event occurs, and we all just have to face up to the inevitable consequences. Just the way it is, and the way it goes.

Gemini: I answered a call on my cell, and before I could say a word, "Dude, dude, you've got to help, like, it's, I'm in your end of town, where's a florist that's open? I need roses - fast." I mentioned a location, there is a floral shop there, and that's the last I heard. Emergency roses. Save those emergency roses for the most serious and heinous of transgressions. Or perceptions of transgressions. I never did find out what happened. The floral shop wasn't open at that hour, it was after conventional work time, and the only story I ever heard was the usual, "Oh. Never mind, I mean, I'll tell you later." Only I never heard back. But then, some days, the absence of facts is more entertaining than the truth. "Quick, where can I get roses?" Isn't that the kind of question that just begs a story? I'm leaving that one open, too. You can fill in as many details as you want, love gone awry, missed connection, the plane was late, there was a traffic problem, or the

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worst, "I forgot." That last one, it's a killer. I can also prevent you from having to look for last minute roses, too, if you're a little more careful. Mars is slowing to a stop in the last few degrees of Gemini. You're going to find that good intentions, especially of the romantic kind, all get thwarted. Buy roses ahead of time. Buy before you need to.

Cancer: I went fishing with one of my buddies the other afternoon. He was looking at the new fishing pole I had. It's a fairly expensive model pole, all high-tech and stuff. "What happened to the other pole you were using?" He asked. I had a terse answer, "Couldn't swim." My fishing buddy, he's reasonably alert, and the giveaway of my curt answer was a heads up to not ask. At least, not right away. Some questions are best left unasked. Way it goes. But later in the day, the question was burning a hole in his mind, and he steered the conversation around to fishing gear then fishing reels and finally to that new pole. At Xmas time, my sister gave me a gift certificate to the big fishing store, and that's how I got the new pole. Subsidized by a sibling. However, there was some truth in the demise of the older piece of equipment, it did go for a swim and it didn't resurface. I'm sure I've told that sorry tale over and over. The way the week is? With all that's going on? I'd be careful about how you phrase your questions. And answers.

Leo: The biggest problem is that most of the rent cars are all front-wheel drive. Usually a compact, too. Been a long time since I've had a mid-sized sedan that was rear-drive. Makes this a hard concept to envision, but here's the idea, when the rear-drive vehicle, with power applied, in a curve, when the rear wheels break free, spin, there's a situation called drift. Tail end starts to get all loose, and it's a lot of fun. Short track, dirt track racers, they all spend most of lap with the rear tires loose like that. It's like controlled "out of control" situation. At least one American racer did very well overseas because he was used to the spin and drift, and the fancy Euro-racers were used to being glued to the road. It's about a difference in style, and perhaps, I'd like to think, about the way the American style is a little loose, a little unglued. Some would suggest unhinged, but that's another door we won't open now. So think about that style wherein the rear wheels lose a little traction, break free, if only for a moment, and how the controlled slide, how that's a way to get around faster. It's considered being more efficient by being less efficient. It's a controlled slide, a little bit of drift. Let the back end swing out a little, just to slide on through.

Virgo: I met a pair of sisters, in little town, down south. Both girls, young girls working in a coffee shop, both of them had quotes worked into some extensive tattoos. Both had quotes from Jane Austen. That, was like, so spooky. Weird. Even to a person like myself, one who is tempered and hardened against anything weird. Literary tattoos are not unusual. I met a guy, one time, he had a whole section of Joseph Conrad's work, as a tat. But the two sisters, the Jane Austen quotes, intertwined and yet separate. Like sisters. Which they were. It's time to stop and consider timeless works, like those of Joseph Conrad and Jane Austen. And it's time to consider what you would get inked on your arm, or wrist, or across the tapestry of back, if you're so inclined. Saturn is about permanent solutions. What was nice about the work the sisters had done? It all worked into the design, so the quote wasn't exactly visible. Unless you knew where it was, and if you know what you were looking for. Tasteful. In the Virgo world, one of the sisters was a Virgo, but in the Virgo world, careful attention to aesthetics is required. And with Mars

slowing but not really stopping just yet? Maybe hold off on any more tattoos, just for another week.

Libra: I listened as clearly British person tried to pronounce a local delicacy, "PRAW-lines?" Pralines to me, or pronounced, "Pray-lean." I suppose it comes from living on an island with too much Germanic influence. Or maybe it's the Latin languages, could be that. I'm not sure of the source. But hearing a word badly mangled -- in an unintentional way? Amused me. I was not offended. I didn't worry about it, either. They have sticky toffee, butterscotch and French Vanilla. We have the superior Mexican Vanilla and Pralines. Different but the same. More or less. And we have local produced pecans. Nuts to them. However, as Mars slows down, as Jupiter situates in Capricorn and as the Sun slides through Aquarius, there's a sense, a place and time where you can claim that your Libra brand, your Libra version, your own version of whatever is justifiably superior. The better part is, you can say the words in the correct fashion, with the right inflections, too.

Scorpio: I use astrology for precisely timing certain events. I was watching, recently, as a well-known CEO was introducing a new line of products. Adjunct products, really, and I've heard rumors -- unverified -- that the CEO uses astrology to pick times for event launches. Makes for a more successful presentation. Makes you think differently. I doubted that because the events are always on the same day at the same time. But I wanted to test the theory, a little further, and what I noticed was the exact phase of the moon, at the time of the event launch and how some times, it would take two hours for the moon to switch signs and by the same measure, two hours for that speaker to get around to introducing his big deal for day. So I wondered if that CEO consulted an astrologer. Makes for an interesting game to play. To use some timing hints for Scorpio? This week? Hold off. That simple. Just hold it. Mars is making unkind energy, and supposedly, you're associated with Mars and as such, it's a good time to hold off. Imagine that you're about an hour into a heavily scripted presentation. You've got to stall. It's that simple, stall for a little time, right about now. Just one more thing.

Sagittarius: It's not so much a dire notation for this week as it is about consequences. Consequences of our actions. In some cases, consequences of our inaction. I'm not saying that I've ever lied about anything, but there has been a time or two, when, for the sake of peace, I've omitted several points that might, or might not be, crucial to the narrative. I try to spare an innocent person's feelings. I try and sugar coat a situation to make the bitter pill more palatable. I have heartfelt desire to keep my own skin out of trouble, hence the omission of some details that interested parties might claim are relevant. This is the big warning. Pluto moves from Sagittarius to Capricorn, first pass in several hundred years. Going to be felt with little reverberations throughout the known universe. With this is relief. The caution is to not let the Sagittarius guard down too soon. Or, not to commit an act that could be shown in dubious light.

Capricorn: I warned you. You didn't listen. There's a powerful agent of change at work in the Land of Capricorn. Entering now. Having suffered, cajoled and bludgeoned my way through this kind of an influence, all I can suggest is that it is not one with which an argument will bare fruit. Bear fruit. One of them. Acquiesce to the planet's power. Let the planet dictate a route. There's going to be change and you can either be graceful, or you

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can be like me, and struggle with this, every inch of the way. I've been at this game long enough to recall what it was like last time. Changes like this are best if there is a minimum of struggling. The less you fight the change? The easier it gets. Reminds me a fish. It put up a good fight, but I did win. I outweighed that fish by a factor of a hundred or more. Pluto? It outweighs you by a factor of a thousand or more.

Aquarius: "See, he always buys two tickets," a friend was explaining, about another mutual acquaintance, "and no date. Ever. Be kind of sad, but it means I get to go...." Kind of sad, but yeah, free tickets to concerts, movie previews and other social activities? Just have to be the date for the dateless wonder? Yeah, that works well. And it's not like the dateless wonder is unattractive, or inept, although, in certain social situations, I'd have to wonder. 6 PM on New Year's Eve is the wrong time to be looking for a date. I was thinking about that because that was the date we were talking about, relative to that one guy. Now, think about it, are you the dateless wonder, or are you the beneficiary of the dateless wonder's ineptitude? Are you the one who waits too long to see about a remedy to a situation? Or are you the one who benefits from some one else's lack of forethought and planning?

Pisces: "Sleep is a poor substitute for coffee," suggested a tag line. And I'll agree. The right chemical combination of elements might just help ease our Pisces burden in the next couple of days. I'm not saying that escape action, like drinking too much liquor is called for. What I'm suggesting is a little attention to detail and little more attention to the bigger issues. And then, to facilitate that "looking at the bigger picture," I'd like to suggest more coffee. Can be for real. Can be any number of chemical -- or natural -- enhancements. But something, just a little stimulation, will go a long way to improving the outlook that you have. There's a rather large shift occurring, and while I'd like to tie to Mars, it's more than that. But Mars, and the Mars-flavor, is what this shift is all about. But not really Mars, either. Just that Mars-flavor. I used to buy "fake bacon pieces," which, in all honesty, tasted better than real bacon pieces. The advantage was that the fake bits were made from high-protein soy whereas the real thing? Just pig parts. The message was clear, though, the artificial bacon flavor was better than the real bacon flavor. I'm not a an aesthete, so I might be wrong about the flavor, but for my unrefined senses? It worked. So this Mars-flavor? It might be stronger than the actual Mars. And it does have that Mars-kick. I'm not saying that you're sleepless in San Antonio, or Seattle, or even Austin, but that Mars (thing) is kicking you around. It means change, and better get ready.

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For the week starting: 12.4.2008

"How like a winter hath my absence been

From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!

What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!

What old December's bareness every where!"

Shakespeare's Sonnet XCVII [1-4]

Aries: I was watching the History Channel. Or the National Geographic Channel, but I think it was the history one. The broadcast group had a history special on, about Texas, a subject near and dear to my heart. "First a Texan then an American, a nation and a state, and a state of mind." Sounds good. But the facts, as they resented them that evening, there was some gaping holes in the material. Perhaps I've lived in the capitol, or the cradle of liberty, or maybe I've traipsed up and down the historical routes and visited the sacred shrines at Goliad, Gonzales, and of course, San Antonio de Bexar. I wasn't too offended, as I understand, to make it interesting TV, one must pick and choose what will make it. And what won't make it. I was, on a personal level, offended that the details of the Alamo and the Battle of San Jacinto were kept to sound-bites and popular culture. Again, that's me picking apart a history channel special, a made-for-TV history pitch. Of course, they leave out important bits, makes for better TV. Just hit the high parts, the big, more important points. Miss the details and the motivations. At least they got the cultural part mostly right, with more than a mention of the Tejano components to the Texas Irregular Army. Face-to-face with with a TV program like this, you're going to be like me, irritable. Write a letter? Why? What good will it do? Protest, boycott? Again, who will notice? There's a time, and place, to make a stand. This isn't your Alamo.

Taurus: Crab is a tasty treat. Crab cake, especially, are a favorite with me. However, crab legs? Like, crab, still in its shell? I'm not a big fan of that. Too much work for too little reward. I like my crabs already peeled, if I'm going to enjoy them. I was thinking about crab, crab meat and crab cakes because I was looking at the Taurus chart, and I was thinking about a nice shellfish meal. Then I got to thinking about how much hard work it is to make that meal, like the aforementioned crab cakes. Then I was thinking about how it's really just too much work for "peel and eat" crab legs, at least, for me, it's just too much work. You're a Taurus, though, not like me. And you might not think that the crab legs are too much work. I'm still trying to figure out, though, who cracked the first crustacean to discover the tender flesh inside? Not that it matters. The effort, is it worth the results? That's the question. I can't answer for you, but I suspect, from looking at the

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influences in your chart, that this is a time when the effort is amply rewarded. Me? I'd still complain if I had to crack the crab legs.

Gemini: As Pluto moves out of Sagittarius, that means it moves away from place where it was opposite anything in your chart. That spells out a kind of relief for Gemini. However, the lesser influences, just minor planets like Mars and Mercury, not to mention the Sun itself, are all still opposite you. Happens like this sometimes. Also means you're ratcheted up into some kind of mania. It's not that big of a deal. Well, it is that big of a deal to your Gemini self, and I'll agree with you, it should be that big of a deal, but I'll also warn you, it's really not that big of a deal. It is but it isn't. I'm pretty good at circumloquation, getting around a point rather than just spitting it out. While I might be good at this, the point with Gemini is lost. Big irritant is gone, got it? Lots of little irritants? Still there. How you deal with these? Up to your own personality. One of those little deals will seem like a pretty big deal at the moment. Again, how you deal, that's up to you.

Cancer: The Pluto myth, I've covered it in less details earlier, but the Pluto myth is one that's going to have an impact on Cancer for the foreseeable future. Can't be avoided. Or, you can avoid it, but it's still going to have an influence. I'm an old hand at dealing with Pluto and Pluto-type energy. And I'm rather unwilling to get into the debate as to whether Pluto is a planet, dwarf planet, astroid, or just a Planet X. What Pluto represents is change. It's an urge, a yearning, a persistent pushing, almost like a goading, and it's that going on -- in varying degrees of intensity -- for the next few year. Get used to it. But Pluto -- the planet -- and Pluto -- the character from mythology -- both spend close to half a year in hiding. In the case of the planet it's like 5 months retrograde and the mythological character, it's six months underground. Still, that leaves a lot of leeway for changes to be absorbed. So there's change, in the wind, on the Cancer horizon? When? Soon enough. Best course of action? Have a good holiday. Embrace the changes.

Leo: I tried being nice and I tried to gently warn you about this crap, but you didn't listen. Who's fault is that? I made a good effort, due diligence and all that, but the little Leo wasn't listening. Or, you weren't hearing. Or, you weren't hearing what I was meaning, not what it was that you didn't want to hear. There's a tendency, I'm not saying for sure, but there's a tendency for you get your Leo fur all raised up in defense. You get all whacked out of shape over a perceived slight, which as it turns out is just a perceived slight, not the other kind. Someone makes a mistake, and you take the incorrect information, the misinterpreted situation, the wrong perception, and you run with it. Hey, sometimes a good rant is a lot of big fun. But sometimes you overdo this, and sometimes, tis is what hurts the worst, you have to admit you were wrong. Traced back a faulty perception. Which, I can earn my dollar and save you from the pain, frustration, and what's the worst possible part? The embarrassment. I can save you from all that by just getting you to look twice, listen, but don't jump to a conclusion that it was all about an attack on you. Which it wasn't. Other people usually aren't that stupid.

Virgo: It's time, and I seem to do this every year. I bought a new filler for my little day/datebook. I tend to use the "month at a glance" calendar view. Works better for my style. I can keep track of appointments and such, one month at a time. The spaces for each day aren't too big, and I don't have to worry about overbooking myself. It's a little December

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ritual for myself, I've done this for the past few years, sooner or later, I'll be in an office store, or the office aisle, and I'll see the right size calendar refill. Each year I'll promise myself I'm going to start using paper version of my calendar to keep track of readings, bookings, appointments and so on. And each year, I'll ignore it. But I do go through the little ritual of purchasing the calendar refill pages, and I do think about what it means. I did, before the advent of electronic calendars and web pages, I did use that very calendar. But I don't these days. Haven't in some years, although, there's a certain longing I have for a pencil and paper. To be honest, though, going back to paper and pencil, for me, is that progress? That's my question, and as we all approach the holidays, them the next year, think about that

Libra: Ever heard of the 50/50/90 Rule? It states that "Any 50/50 question stands a 90% chance of you guessing the wrong answer." Maybe I'm not so good at some statistical analysis, but I'll suggest, in my course of dealing with human behavior, that the rule holds up pretty well. I'd also suggest, as we get up to this full Moon that's rapidly approaching, we all pay attention to that rule, all of us here in Libra. Libra is fair-minded and equitable. Always liked my Libra lawyer, as he he would address me as innocent until proven guilty. He could always see both sides of the problem. However, like my lawyer, there is a problem. And like my lawyer, you're jumping in here to defend me, looks like it's a 50/50 chance. Right or wrong? Sort of tough call on that one. However, leap of faith at time like this? Not such a good idea. After all, the 50/50/90 rule isn't in our favor. So what will it be, Libra?

Scorpio: Stupidity, it's like a booger. It'll just stick to anything. And stupidity, it doesn't come unglued, either. I was thinking of Velcro, as an example, but Velcro, or any hook/loop fastener, it will come apart if you yank hard enough, and there's usually no damage.

It's like that, "If they make it foolproof? Someone will come up with a smarter fool."

Sagittarius: I like Marcus Aurelius. Handy reference book, solid quotes, usually with nary a hint of modern irony. "It is the fate of prices to be ill-spoken of for well-doing" (Book Seven, verse 36). I'd like to point out that I do consider most Sagittarius to be regal, prince-like people. There will always be a rogue Sagittarius (or any other sign) that can skew the numbers, but as a rule, we're pretty "prince-like." At least I'd like to think so. And that quite for Marcus? Couldn't fit better. Think about that as the week goes along, as Mars and Mercury fry our best interests and realize that the planets are going to conspire to interfere with our best intentions. Or, like Marcus observed, our best intentions are going to spoken ill of. Can't make them change their minds, either.

Capricorn: Science. We're going to have a science lesson today We're going to look at particle and wave functions, and then, we're going to learn that Light moves faster than Sound. There's the arguably famous "double slit" experiment. You know that one, right? Maybe not. Then there's the question of Quantum Physics. Then there are even more questions. Starts with gravity, I think. Grave issue. Or matters of attraction. Or is it attracting and repelling at the same time? I'm not so sure. I was really going in one direction with all this science stuff, but I got confused, a little. But there is a point, too. Pluto is starting an earnest ascent in Capricorn. Get used to it. Very powerful influence, whether it's a planet asteroid, dwarf planet, or just a cute cartoon animal. And yes, light

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does move faster than sound. That's why someone can appear bright until they start talking. That's the real lesson, now isn't it?

Aquarius: The holiday madness is now. Just a crazy time when everyone starts doing weird stuff. Can't be helped. What I need these days? I could use a good "laying on of hands." "Out, out ye demons!" Imagine a good, old-fashioned circuit riding evangelist preacher, putting his hands on the foreheads of the faithful and then casting the demons out. Consider a form of spiritual exorcise. An evangelical Christian, preferably with Southern Baptist leanings is the best. Or the best to envision. There's a flavor, a sentiment and general air of "holier than thou" that is needed. All right, we've got the scene set, the preacher man, and you need to figure out, right now, are you that preacher man? Are the one with the power of the Spirit to cast devils and demons from your parishioners' souls? Or are you the one who need little exorcise? You get to make the call on this one, but you're on one side or the other, and chasing out demons is more fun than being possessed. Well, usually more fun.

Pisces: It's December, and the winter Texans are here. They arrived, not quite in the large droves, but here, nonetheless. I was sitting in a restaurant, listening to an old hand Winter Texan explain the lay of the land. "Yeah, got to be careful, I mean, I've seen it freezing, not really 'freezing,' but cold enough to be close, and then two days later, it's back up t sunny and seventy. Have to be ready for anything with this winter weather." Which is true. The advice was well-intentioned. I'm thinking though, as I listened over my shoulder, the guys were in a booth behind me, I wondered if they thought to mention that the parcel of land is known as South Texas, and that it is classified as "sub-tropical." Portions of that are also part of the desert, mostly in Mexico, but that arid land does stretch up this way a ways. And as such, we're used to the extremes. Snowbirds, "Winter Texans," and the ilk? Especially on the first trip? Could come as a shock. Then, too, there's the winter wear. I have one "heavy winter coat" that barely qualifies as a windbreaker to some Yankees. To me, though, it's more than adequate for our "winters," such as they are. I'm not saying that it is going to be cold. I'm not saying it's going to be hot, this isn't really about the weather outside, it's about the Pisces astrological weather. And that's all a matter of how you look at it. Me? I tend to see it as ideal, but I'm used to the extreme changes.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 1.31.2008

"Unnatural deeds

Do breed unnatural troubles."

Shakespeare's MacBeth (V.i.75)

Aries: "Dude, get your redneck on." Straight up advice. It was intended for a buddy of mine and he was facing a situation that really, in truly, had only one method of resolution. Yeah, he had to tough it out, he had to get tough, and he had to appear menacing. Wouldn't hurt if he looked like fisherman, a hunter, or some other similar swarthy out-of-doors man, maybe a NASCAR fan, some clue that suggested a rough and tumble attitude. Ready to roll. I'd like to suggest, applied as you see fit, to your scenario this week. The way it looks, a little unconventional, common sense will go a long way to getting you through. Perhaps, even, triumph.

Taurus: The place I'm thinking of, they have this great salsa. It's smoky, with a satisfying heat index, and yet, the heat doesn't over-power the flavor. And that's only the salsa, free with chips. The chops themselves are fried in the kitchen, and kept in the warmer, and now I'm starting to get hungry. I haven't even touched on the tacos, enchiladas "y mas." But that's not the point, they have special dessert menu. Top item? Homemade crepes, topped with homemade caramel sauce, Mexican vanilla ice cream, and sprinkled with nuts. Pecans, I'm sure. The problem was, despite the excellent fare, the way that dessert came out? It was underwhelming pancakes, with caramel sauce straight out of the jar, and plain vanilla (generic bulk) ice cream. Entree and appetizers that are the best, only to lose it on the dessert? I was, to say the least, sorely disappointed. Doesn't mean I won't go back, but for my money, I'll stay away from that place's "much regarded" dessert menu. As the week unfolds and as Mars (and Pluto) do their respective things, let them. As far as repeating a mistake, like the dessert? Don't. Not worth it.

Gemini: If you have to know, I was really just killing a little time, but my Gemini side kicked up into high gear. I cruised along the internet's tubes until I found free adult site. I didn't look for the more graphic and prurient of pictures, what I was looking for was head shots. Not what you think, either. One website requested that I have an "avatar," and while I'm interested in being obliging, I'm also interested in having fun while protecting some shreds of my own human dignity. I clipped a couple of the faces of the "adult entertainment stars" from the web pictures. Perhaps what I did was, strictly speaking, illegal. Immoral? Depends, the pictures offered up on the web had no copyright notice, being of that ilk and all, and besides, I was using the faces. That's the part no one would recognize. I'm guessing here, not my thing. So when you search for my name on a website, and there's a comment, and the little software avatar doesn't look the least like me? That's where, and why, I did it. The point is that it's possible to completely lie about certain interesting points on the internet. I swapped places with a young starlet, at least,

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in my mind. Kept my visage firmly anchored here. There was actually a real reason, on that one site's forum, why I changed my picture, but it goes a long way to serve as a warning to my fine little Gemini friends.

Cancer: I'm not much of a true coffee geek. Some of my practices at home, some of the way I treat the coffee beans, before, during and after the process of making coffee? That would offend a true coffee geek. However, I do know what I like, and I do enjoy the interaction with various coffee experts. One was promoting a new "nozzle - less" basket, or bail, or spigot, the little thing that the espresso is tamped down into? The usual espresso bail has either a single nozzle or, more common in my view, the double spout. So my coffee geek friend was expounding on the virtues of a basket with no nozzle. The coffee, espresso, really, would have less contact with metal. Make for a more flavorful coffee, and less heavy metal, one would suppose. If I have to tell the truth, and I will, I couldn't tell much difference., that one guy can probably tweak delicious coffee out of a simple Mr. Coffee. He's an expert like that. And the subtle variances? I'll trust his judgement on the matter. So I can't officially proclaim that the high-dollar, high-tech coffee-basket (with no nozzle) is the best way to make espresso. However, I did observe that, in a single shot of espresso, that bail with no spout was tiny bit more cream (foam, head, call it what you want). Better flavor? Of that I'm unsure. Better presentation? Definitely. Does the presentation affect the flavor? Yes. From my way of seeing the problem, and its solution, the new device is useful. Will many propel, other than Cancer understand that you needed to the new device in order to make better coffee with better presentation? Probably not so much. But that doesn't matter. Like that true coffee geek, I'm sure Cancer folks need to make some adjustments, and I'm sure the rest of us (non-Cancer) people won't understand the true implications. Doesn't stop it from making life better. Or making better coffee.

Leo: I was wondering about the first term I came up with, and I didn't like it. Not at all. But it did give me an idea. I played around on a musical website, and I found a piece of software that works like a pair of DJ turntables. It's a software version of two turntables and microphone. While I'm not musically inclined, I'm sure that the artist inside your Leo self is struggling to get out. What this software did was let anyone do a fairly respectable mash-up of two (or more) songs. Match and mix the starting points, the beats, the way the songs interact, and since it was, like a virtual turntable, you could also vary the speed of the music. All done electronically, and all in good fun. I'm sure, just to be perfectly clear, that the results probably break a number of laws. I'm not an expert, but I'd hazard guess that it's not exactly legal. But after listening to a well-done version of mash-up, wherein several different audio tracks are layered and laid together, this was a chance to try it myself. Search for a similar tool. You've got a bunch of stuff that's coming together, and it's going to look like a mash-up, audio, or otherwise. Techno-conjunto, country-disco, it all works, although, like my private label reserve mix? I'd suggest you keep the results to yourself. You'll also discover that mixing and match music isn't nearly as easy at it seems. With everything stacked up in Aquarius, that's opposite from Leo. This is a good time to work on making smooth transactions, work on making the point where you dip from one song to the next? Make it as seamless as possible. Either that, or just let your inner Leo roar for a little while. Ever wonder what happens when cross Dance Trance with a Mariachi groove?

Virgo: Some years ago, I was on the "do not contact" list. Supposedly, it was master list of all the number the unsolicited mail, e-mail and phone calls, as I understood it, that was all supposed to stop. The national "opt-out" list did work, sort of. Two or three groups have succeeded in finding my number, my Austin landline. Irritates me to no end. I almost feel sorry for the person who's on the other end. But when you dial a number clearly marked, "do not call," and then, me, on the other end, asking the operator to repeat my instructions back. I got one call, claimed to be survey center. Jerks. "We're not selling anything, so we don't have to abide by that list," and I asked the moron on the other end to repeat back what I said. Don't call means don't call. Especially if it's my nap time, and I forget to turn off the ringer. There's going to be an interruption, or two, in the Virgo lifestyle. If you work in call center? I'm sorry. But shouldn't have called me in the first place. Otherwise, follow my lead on this idea, make the person you're talking to, the person (non-Virgo), make that person repeat back what your Virgo self said. Make sure the point gets across.

Libra: It was a cold winter morning, and I was fixing some oatmeal. Nothing fancy, at least, not really that fancy. Yes, the grains are an effort to curb my cholesterol levels. I added some "natural" granola, more for flavor than anything else. Texture, maybe, but once I added hot water, it was all a soggy mess. Some of the granola nuggets stayed crunchy, and that was a welcome flavor. Although, with soggy granola and oatmeal, there's not a lot there. Sometimes, it just tastes like paste. Kind of bland. I thought about reaching into the cupboard to add elements that would enhance the natural flavor. But that's way too much like cooking, and I'm not a cook. Nor, for that matter, do I intend to get proficient enough to be considered a cook. This about knowing what a person's limits are. What I'm good at, what I'm not so good, and what I don't plan to ever be good at. Like cooking. I understand enough about myself to know that I can expend a lot of energy in trying to be a decent cook, or I can just accept the fact that anything more than coffee, or adding boiling water, or nuking something in the nuker?

Scorpio: "Don't feed my delusions, please." I was listening to a client and that was her plaintive wail. It wasn't so much a matter of me adding fuel to an already raging inferno of self-deception, it was just matter of me, not adding any more combustible material. I was amused. I tend to be amused by what I see from my clients, too. To be sure, I did feel a pang of sympathy, perhaps empathy, and I certainly did experience the pain, in a similar fashion. I live with one foot firmly in reality, and the other two feet? I leave them in place that looks like reality, but it's not. I still believe in the fantasy that people, as whole can get better. I still believe that there is hope for the human race, and I still care. I'm also not very realistic with these hopes. Odds aren't too good on my hopeful outlook.

Sagittarius: "Eat Beef," the bumper sticker read, "The West wasn't won on salad." It was on the back of a large pick up, not that this would be unusual. Unusual? Either that large truck or its bumper sticker. This is, at least nominally, cattle country. I'm not interested in the debate about what food is better for you, or why I shouldn't eat meat, or why I shouldn't eat salads, I'm not going into that discussion. What works for me, and this might just be me, but what works, for a little grounding, a little way around inherent Martian influences? A nice chunk of red meat. I prefer mine on the rare side, but again, that's a matter of choice. And I'm not even sure that this is about what you eat, or that the west wasn't won by a bunch of tree-hugging "wilted baby lettuce" diners, I'm just

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suggesting that a hearty dose of whatever it is that you use to ground yourself? That's where the solution is. That's how to work with this kind of energy. That's what you've got to do to ground yourself. Besides, be realistic, the west wasn't won on salad.

Capricorn: I was downtown, and I was, so it seemed, trailing a little tourist girl. I'd guess in her twenties, although, maybe older or younger, I'm unsure. She paused at an intersection, looked at me, then started addressing the thin air, or me, out of the side of her mouth, "Where's the mall? The shopping? The Post Office?" All I could do was indicate a general direction. Jeans, sandals, could be a tourist, could be a homeless, I wasn't sure. While I'm a nice guy and all, with the recent advent and introduction of Pluto unto thy sign, there's a hint that you're wandering around, kind of lost. Terrifying energies are unleashed. There's a bewildering array of decisions. Trusting some tall guy who looks little worse for the wear? Ponytail and gray hair, and all? Is that the person you really want to ask for directions? Then again, instead of plaintive, out of the side of your mouth kind of comment, how about asking directly? I think a direct question would get an answer. Although, I'm not sure you'll like what you hear. But do ask directly, an indirect question will get an indirect answer, like, "Over yonder."

Aquarius: A little pizza place, not far from here, there's a sign on the wall, "We make the pizza in the world." The addendum to the sign? (And we're the judges.) How perfect, set yourself up as your own jury and judge to gauge whatever Aquarius endeavor there is that needs a judgement. Too bad that's an easy way out. Worked, and worked well at that one pizza place, a little spot that is famous for eccentric help, weird patrons, where Texas-brag and Texas-fact could easily get confused. Not that I would let that get in the way of the of good grub, either. Food's pretty good, although, at that one place, I'm a little unsure of how fresh the majority of the ingredients are -- the stuff that's lying out -- on the salad bar. But then, I don't go to a sleazy, vainglorious pizza joint expecting healthy fare. I'm looking for pizza, Arguably, some of the best in the world. And I'll let them be a judge of that, too. It's easier, sometimes, to make your own judgments and then let everyone else figure out for themselves.

Pisces: "You keep that up and I'll have to spank you," I was telling a Pisces client. She was interrupting and second-guessing -- in the wrong direction -- my every word. "Spank me? Then you'll have to do me." She smiled and got quiet. I blushed, too. Couldn't help it. It was a fitting set of comments to the situation at hand, and what I was trying to describe what was going to be happening in her chart, a very Pisces chart. There's a hint that you're second-guessing, trying to fill out the other person's sentences, jumping and concluding, and usually that's okay. Usually. Usually your timing is okay in this area. But it's not right now. The intuition is still good, the Pisces ability to see into the future is still running just fine. It's the disconnect between the mouth and the brain, the way that intuition gets delivered, therein is the problem. It's not so much Mercury, as it's a different shift. There is a chance that you can land a good one in the melee, and that will suddenly bring down the house. Or, in my case, shut up the astrologer. But other than the one comment? Your timing is off. Be better if you did get spanked, one way or another.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 2.7.2008

"I had rather have

Such men my friends than enemies."

Shakespeare's Julius Caesar (V.iv.32-3)

Mercury is firmly in apparent retrograde motion, using the Planet Earth as the reference point. Air and fixed? Air signs and fixed signs are having the most trouble with this one.

Aries: There are many theories about dealing with Mercury being backwards. I should go over the rules again, but I'm less thrilled at the prospect of trying explain material I've covered numerous times before. Mercury is going to be backwards, in apparent retrograde motion, in Aquarius. Combine that with the rest of the planets now in Aquarius? There's a heady, steamy mixture. As a decent Aries, the biggest mistakes are easily blamed on Mercury. As an indecent Aries, though, you have to wonder if a single, small planet can really wreck so much havoc. Wreak havoc, I suppose, would be more proper. Way it goes. Mercury's Mayhem doesn't have to be too bad, not for Aries, not this time around, but I would implore you to use the usual cautions I tend to observe myself, no new work, wrap up old projects, keep a double check list handy, triple check, even, and consider going back over old material that you already covered. Editing is also a good idea at this time. And that term, editing, that doesn't just apply to written work. It could apply to just about every aspect of your life. Consider what you would trim and toss, if you could. I'm not saying do that, just consider it.

Taurus: St. Joseph is the patron saint of home sellers. To that end, the Catholic stores tend to carry a little figurine of St. Joe, and at least one store had a complete "St. Joseph" home selling kit. Little box, had a St. Joe, he was carpenter, so he's got a plane in hand, bearded fellow, sort of a patron saint action figure, and the rest of the kit was a pamphlet that had a prayer and dubious instructions. I'm not saying that this will work, but South Texas has a strong Catholic flavor, so St. Joe is a big deal. Here's the instructions, maybe more myth than anything else, bury a statue of St. Joe, facing away from the house for sale, on the NW corner of the property. And St. Joe? He needs to be upside down. He'll help sell the place since he wants to be right side up. Might be the SW corner of the property. Maybe he should be right side up. Maybe he should be close to the front door. Perhaps he's supposed to be under the front walk. Or the rear corner of the backyard? I don't know. More myth and superstition than real advice. The confusing instructions, and the fact that these "kits" are available at the Catholic stores? Could be me, but I was wondering if this wasn't like the original problem the Church had? Selling pardons and such? Indulge me here, the idea of a simple figurine, a religious action figure, I'm not so sure that it will help with large financial transaction, like selling a house, but with a ill

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(Mercury) wind blowing? Any kind of help is good. The problem is, like that action figure, what's the right way to use it?

Gemini: I was shredding some records the other afternoon. More than anything else, I couldn't escape the thought that the paper mulch would be so perfect for a small garden. Like mine. The problem being that the shredded records, my old financial files, might contain sensitive data. I'd hate for that to show up in a neighbor's garden. I can hear it now, "I was just turning the compost, and look here, a valid credit card number. Wonder if I can charge anything on it?" I'm not being overtly paranoid and until my neighbor got a shredder, I dealt with this kind of material in slightly different manner, I'd just bury it in the dumpster. Coffee grounds, soiled cat litter and dog excrement is usually off-putting enough to discourage dumpster data mining. As a security system, it's worked without fail for years. However, the shredder was an idea, and I did hang onto old transaction reports longer than was required by law. I switched credit card processing companies a while back, and these days, I have to keep a lot less records. In many cases, I don't even have access to the cc numbers. Makes life a lot easier. Less paperwork for me to control. Less record management. But that's part of what this is all about, too. While I was looking for stuff to shred, I had no problem coming up with records that were easily ten years old, or older. In most, if not all, of the transactions, the numbers had expired. No loss on the shredded documentation. However, with Mercury where he is? And like he is? Think before you start shredding stuff. While most of the files were really old, I did happen across a box of records from last year. Have to hold onto that one.

Cancer: Ever get the feeling you can't do anything correctly? I mean, it's not like you weren't warned about this Mercury thing, but it just seems like no matter what you try, it fails. What's worse? If you were to really examine the root trouble with the failure, the components in the equations that let you down? The part that broke? The pieces that don't fit? They aren't under your direct supervision. It's not you, it is them. Someone else has failed to perform up to your expectations. Your specified standards were not met. Therein is the problem. The solution? I'm not so sure that there's a fast and effective solution to these problems. What it looks like, to me, is this is one of the situations where you have to do it all yourself. The help, the staff, the hired hands, the people who said they would "be there for you" just aren't. And unless you peek at the astrology chart and you ascertain that the other party does, indeed have Mercury Retrograde in the natal chart? Unless you can, without hesitation, verify that one piece of datum? Then I'd plan on doing it all yourself./ The people you usually count on to come through? They probably won't.

Leo: It is just wrong to argue with the Leo. The Leo is no amused by such suggestions, either. There's an easy way to get this done, and then there's the hard way. As the Leo, I'll promise that you're going to run into folks trying to do it the hard way. "Are you just trying to piss me off?" I'd expect that as a typical question over the next few days. I have, on certain occasions, taken it upon myself to piss off a certain Leo. For starters, I'm expert, and for back up, I like to live life dangerously. Irritating a Leo is really living life on the edge. Ragged edge, at that. Ragged edge and fixing to get my butt kicked, too. Like I said, I did this, in a controlled environment, and I did for amusement, plus, I did it to illustrate a point. That anger I aroused, it was useful. Drove home a message. Then, too, I left myself a way out of the mess, a chance for me to grovel, kneel, and beg forgiveness. A

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little self-flagellation, in front of the Leo, that doesn't hurt, either. Got a good image, now, of how to approach a Leo and what to do if someone were to piss off a Leo? Good. Because with Mercury backwards in Aquarius? This scenario is only half right. Means someone will piss you off, only, whomever that is? I don't think that person will be bright enough to grovel, beg, kneel, supplicate, entreat, or even exercise some demonstrative self-flagellation. Nope. And that's the problem. (Simple solution: give the offender enough time, and that person will see the error of his or her ways. But it takes time.)

Virgo: My most august of Virgo friends are sorely put upon by numerous events. Most, if not all, of these events can be traced to a simple misalignment within the sphere of planets' influences. One, of course, is little (mischievous) Mercury. The other planet is, off course, Saturn. I was going to use a different example, but this one idea kept coming back around. It's like a good, used tire I purchased for an old truck, a while back. Tire looked good, for a used radial and it sort of matched the other tires on the truck, and it was just going on the back, with the old whitewall turned in, so it looked fine. Can't really repair a nail in the side of the tire. But a few weeks later, I discovered that the tire was out of balance. Not in a fun way, either, as highway speed this lack of balance even more apparent. Five dollar tire, ten dollar mount fee, total cost was only about \$15. Not like I'm out a lot on the tire. As an experiment with that one place where Spanish is helpful for communication? Worthwhile experiment. And wrong, too. The used tire really didn't work, not for an extended period of time,. Worked for a quick fix, but it lacked long-term function. However, it was price that appealed to me. Price versus function, and which is more important?

Libra: Tread carefully, Libra dear. There's a weird as can be energy that's just kicking and floating and meandering along. It's a strong influence that is determined to skew the direction of Libra travel sideways. Not really knock you completely off course, but it's like trying to keep up with me and my routes as I wander along downtown. I may be just headed to the post office, and maybe a coffee shop, but that doesn't mean I'll take a predictable route. Or that I'll go in anything like a straight line. What should be a twenty minute hike can turn into a two hour meander, and that's with little or no provocation. While this doesn't bother me so much, trying to keep up with me, trying to pace and parse the walk? It's almost impossible, Some weeks, I'll just go the same way, every day. However, there are days, when that predictable route just won't do and I'll use railway right-of-ways, footpaths, alleys, and parking lots as shortcuts. Or long cuts, really. But that doesn't mean that the route is devoid of purpose and meaning for me. But I'm not a Libra. I could play one on TV but doubt I'll get an audition. Look: you're going to be one a straight and narrow path, and that pathway will deviate from its regular route. As long as you keep the central objective in mind? You'll do okay. Getting irritated that I meander so much? Or your route has as many twists? Doesn't do either of us any good.

Scorpio: A buddy of mine has a daughter. She has long legs, long, blond hair, and body that can best be described as "goddess-like." She's all of about 16 or 17 now, I don't recall. I was with him, the daddy, when a date showed up at the front door. My buddy hoisted himself up from the couch and tiredly answered the door. He looked the guy up and down. Then my friend launched into a short, sounded rehearsed to me, speech. "If you hurt my daughter, I should just warn you, I'm not afraid of prison. Any harm comes to her, you remember that." His daughter was not amused. She left, and my buddy grinned.

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"Usually works. Scare them good the first time, and they stay in line." I had a cousin who used to meet potential dates for my niece by cleaning his bird gun. He said that shotgun was the cleanest when she was 15 or so. These are situations where dire, possibly hyperbolic, statements are made. The point of the grand statement, though, is to protect. I doubt you're guarding a teenage daughter. But whatever it is that you're supposed to look out for? I'd borrow my buddy's comment. Or the cousin, either one works.

Sagittarius: The way I heard the joke, it applied to the Yankee states wherein there are two season, winter and road construction. Which, to be more accurate, is more like road repair. I was considering that while I was motoring along some South Texas highway that was, oddly enough, being repaired. The sign said, "No Center Stripe." There was a center stripe, at least, there was some form of white line. I realize it probably should've been a yellow line, but there was lane marking. Sort of. At night, I'm guessing, this would've been a little more difficult. Days are still pretty short, but getting a little longer as the Earth describes another trip around the Sun. However, like that sign, which said, "No Center Stripe," there's a guiding principle in our Sagittarius life, and that simple, clear principal fades in and out, waivers, snakes out of control, or just disappears?

Capricorn: This is just not going the way you want it to go, now is it? The plans were laid with care, and the outline, the form you want to follow, all of that was well-thought out. The problem being, the execution of those plans, you didn't take in account the concept that the trickster would be trying to sublimate your process. I'm not talking about a single person, but the over-all schemata leaves something to be desired. There's a problem with the structure, see, it's like one of those flow charts, used for construction. Project management, one of those kinds of plans. The problem being, we're starting at one end, over here on the left-hand side of the chart, and there's all this dependent action, the stuff that flows down from where we are starting? If there's a break in the process, if there's a halt, or a slowdown? The whole machine comes creeping and shuddering to a halt. Which is going to happen, sure as the sun rises tomorrow, there will a slow-down, some part breaks, stops, or a person doesn't show up, or the pieces don't arrive one time. Everything grinds to a halt. Cry, scream, rant and rave? Waste of energy. Just document what went awry, and where, and then work on fixing the problem. The flow will be restored, and you'll be better off because -- after reading this -- you knew it was going to break.

Aquarius: I was digging through an older copy of Marcus Aurelius Meditations. I was looking for a short, pithy answer, perhaps a good quote, something to plug into the Aquarius scope. Hopeful yet firmly rooted in the real world. For such quotes, I tend to use Marcus Aurelius. Makes it easier, see, the guy who turned me onto Marcus was (still is) a devout Christian. But my friend discovered that quoting scripture didn't always work where as a more neutral source, like Marcus Aurelius Meditations? Much more palatable. Think about that, as you get ready to recite, scripture, chapter and verse, to illustrate a point. I'm not saying the Bible isn't a good book to quote, but judge the audience a little. Instead of offending some of the listeners? How about picking a more neutral source? Could be the exact same message, just delivered in more neutral words. Perhaps something with a less bellicose overtone?

Pisces: I was in El Paso, and I stopped at a boot outlet to purchase a new pair of (discount) boots. I looked for some endangered species, but I couldn't find any. I did find a new pair of ostrich, but the price was a little high. I like the "Handmade in Texas" tag on my boots, call me silly. I found a very light tan pair, and I thought they would look good. I asked my companion, and her eyes lit up. "Muy bueno, tambien, eres hot," she said. (Translation? I'm, guessing "very good, and also you are caliente." But that's a guess.) I got the boots for a very low price, close out special. I like deals. Factory outlet by the airport, shopped there before, can find handmade boots, cheap. In lots of colors. I was wearing black jeans and black t-shirts, so I didn't see a problem with the really light tan-colored boots. Until I looked in the mirror. Didn't exactly go with the black outfits I'd brought. But what do I know? I'm fashion-challenged, at best. I tend to wear black boots with black jeans and black t's. Add a sport coat, and I'm good. However, so I'm guessing, the boots were not a favorable addition, not with the black. They would look good with blue jeans, especially faded blue jeans. Black? Not so much. I was thinking about this combination and the shopping advice, and how I looked "charp" like that. Consider the source, consider the cultural perspective. Consider, too, that listening to friends doesn't always mean you'll get the best advice.

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Where hope is coldest and despair most fits.

Shakespeare's All Well That Ends Well (II.i.144-6)

Happy Valentine's Day. Texas Department of Transportation, that's the source of this week's merriment.

Aries: "Right lane must exit." It's a typical highway sign, and what I've watched a number of humans, as soon as that sign appears, some smart ass shoots into the right lane and tries to pass. It's not a safe move, but safety is overrated as a lifestyle choice. This is a lot less about driving though, and more about looking at what the roadside sign says, up ahead, reading it and anticipating your next move. Better yet, besides just anticipating your own next move, think about that guy, like the guy who is trying to pass on the right, in that lane, which is clearly marked an exit lane, only. We've all seen the guy who fails to read the sign, or doesn't realize that the right lane -- despite the big yellow sign -- is an exit only lane. Right lane, roadway narrows, only stand to reason, but then, expecting the folks on the highway with you to think is clearly out of the question.

Taurus: "Left turn on arrow only." I'm not sure, and I've lived in so many different places, it doesn't matter as much, as the rules change, but what I've seen, most often? Locally, the left lane, left turn arrow, that goes to a green light at certain times, the rest of the message is to yield to oncoming traffic. This one situation is made better by a local traffic situation, near me, like this. The left lane turn signal is either an arrow, or the light is red. A reasonably alert driver will notice that there's a wide-open time, a safe time, to turn left, although, strictly speaking, the light is red. I wouldn't say that I've snuck through that intersection when the light wasn't green. But there wasn't a cop around, and there wasn't a traffic camera, and the traffic was light, conditions were perfect, so it didn't matter as no one got hurt. Feel lucky this week? Like to try and beat the system? Like to get around a traffic light that is clearly a guideline rather than a real law? I don't suppose that you know about the way cops sit there, in unmarked cars, just waiting to get you? I'm not saying you're headed for a ticket this week, but in a situation where the letter of the law reads one way, like the red light, and the Taurus spirit reads another way? Stick to the letter of the law.

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Gemini: "Careful of merging traffic." It's a typical sign, but when I was living under a particular bridge, as us homeless guys do from time to time, there was this one spot, on the highway overhead, I could hear the accidents. No wonder, it was a good overpass to sleep under, and yet, due to the way the traffic engineer laid out the overhead patterns? Lots of squealing tires and honking, Especially late at night. Especially late on a January night when it does get cold, and I was huddled under that bridge. The sign, it warns about the situation that is fast approaching. That sign, the planets., they warn to look out for the other guy. Watch out for the merging traffic, the folks who, although there is a yield sign, those merging cars might not yield in a manner that is consistent with your Gemini understanding of the law. "Rules of the road" are not "rules of engagement." I'd watch out for the other guy who doesn't have the right-of-way, but seems to think that he or she does. Careful when "merging traffic" tries to move in on you.

Cancer: "Nightly Lane Closures Ahead." Typical flashing sign, sort of normal around here as the heart of central Texas is in the midst of a long, continuous freeway overhaul. Widening, striping, guard rail repair, and as soon as the new road is done? They have to resurface it again. So I'm sure that the nightly lane closures ahead are pretty much the way it's been and the way it's going to be. Doesn't mean that everything is down and not working at all, but I'll guarantee, during the next few days, today with it being halloween and all? The one time you can't afford to be late? That freeway you hop on? It crawls to a stop. Can't say you weren't warned about this, and you can't say that you didn't know that this was the time that the highway department decided to work on this one section of the freeway. I'll admit, in your favor, it does seem like the department of highway repair chose the time that is most inconvenient for Cancer.

Leo: "Slow." I was wondering if "slow" was strong enough. I was thinking, maybe, for Leo? "Proceed with caution." Point is that the planets are all nice and correctly aligned for you, for the most part. It's just that I can't make everything happen quite right, although, I'll be looking pretty good by the end of the scope's scope. Yet, that doesn't accurately reflect the weirdness, nor, the intention of the message. It's about a that special pause. I was listening to a comic talk about the work he did. Leo, for what it's worth, and he was describing how every pause, every sip of water, every motion is carefully choreographed for maximum impact. It's all about taking time for that dramatic pause. If I were more Aleo-like, it would be about taking time to consider what seasoning I'd like with the sole of my boot, as I would be about to stick my foot in my mouth. For Leo, though, this is a little less about the "hoof in mouth" syndrome, and it's a little more about just taking the time, going slow, as you proceed forward. I'm not saying don't move, just move with caution.

Virgo: "Yield." It's that simple. No, really, it is. It's a simple yield sign. Yellow, inverted triangle. Although, it could be argued that the triangle is right-side up. I guess it depends on how you want to look at it, and then, we get into an argument about whether the yield sign is right side up or upside down. That's the issue, too. Despite the stars starting to align for Virgo? There's still a little problem with exact details. As in whether that sign is right side up or upside down. And, unlike a lot of the folks you encounter, it doesn't matter to me which side of the issue that you take, I'll support the Virgo wishes. But I'm the oddball, here. Most of the people you encounter are going to be stubborn about whether that's a right side up or upside down. Which is why the inherent message is

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about yielding, not fighting. Figure, as Mercury pulls out of a tailspin, might take a few extra days for folks to get caught up to you being right again. Until then? Yield.

Libra: "Men at Work." There's a tangential allusion to music, and then there's the less-of-a-tangent fact that highway construction? Around here? The fine doubles when workers are present. I know, I found out the hard way. Cost me a lot of money, and there was no way out of the ticket. To be fair, the Texas Department of Public Safety, the highway patrol officer, he was as nice as could be, but then, when I'm dealing with uniformed officer, I tend to be unctuous, too. Just makes the transactions a little easier. I watch for the "Men at Work" signs, and I slow accordingly. I'll also, especially with a boat behind the truck, be careful that when I'm going the speed limit, I want to know that everyone behind me, at least immediately behind me, I'll check the rear view just to be sure. Now, I might look like an old man dawdling in the slow lane, but I've gotten enough tickets so I know to be careful. The "Men at Work" sign carries double, possibly triple, meaning. Consider all those possible variations, too. Music? Maybe. Higher fines? Maybe. Or maybe, it just means that work is starting to go a lot more smoothly now.

Scorpio: "Look right." When I started out a series of horoscopes around a theme, I was thinking of street signs. The Scorpio's "Look right" sign? It's a real street sign. I've seen it on the streets of London, at the "zebra" crossings, pedestrian crossings to the rest of us. The letters themselves are painted or etched into the pavement, usually white lettering and an arrow against the black pavement. Look right, or, on the opposite side, "Look Left." With an arrow indicating the proper orientation. As a tourist, from a place on the planet where we tend to drive on the other side of the road, I'm rather grateful for the little lettering. I oftentimes feel like it was put there, just for me -- think -- the City of London labeled their streets and sidewalks just for one ill-kept Texan. And I'm not even a Scorpio. The signs, more like mere lettering, on the street, at your feet? That's where you can best direct your Scorpio attention. I know it's not an obvious clue, not at first, but when I'm just off an airplane, that lettering helps a poor tourist who is all turned around. Mercury turned you around, follow the arrows artfully placed right at your feet for a good hint at sensible directions.

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Capricorn: "Truck Crossing." I've always found this sign, usually located in and around active construction sites, rather amusing. Born and raised in Texas, I'm used to the sight of construction equipment, it's almost a constant element. So I'm aware, when I see cranes, or heavy trucks, I'm cognizant of the concept that there will big rigs, either

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hauling dirt, or long I-beams, or hauling excavated dirt away, or concrete mixers, something. Plant entrances are the same way, especially, like a quarry. Or a cotton gin. I'm used to the idea that there will trucks, usually large trucks roaring to and from, and the sign, "Truck Crossing," isn't really required. Probably required by some law, or something. The first thought that usually flashes through my brain? "What are they crossing the trucks with?" Which leaves the genetic idea of impregnating a Semi with a sedan of some kind, get a diesel-belching half-breed vehicle. The real meaning behind the "Truck crossing" sign, though, has more to do with slowing down and being aware that there might be a large, perhaps over-sized, vehicle bearing down on your self. Doesn't hurt, given the whole Mercury thing? Doesn't hurt to stop and look both ways before proceeding.

Aquarius: "High Pedestrian Traffic." Near the University of Texas (Austin), in fact, right as a major traffic artery cuts through the campus area, there's a sign, two, really, and they both say, "High Pedestrian Traffic." Given the radically liberal orientation of the university's environment, and the student body's reputation, I couldn't help but giggle. Must've passed that sign hundreds of times before I snapped and started to be amused. I have to wonder if there's a person in the sign committee with serious sense of humor. To be honest, there is a disproportionately high volume of pedestrian traffic in that area, but then located next to major university campus, this can be expected. Expecting the pedestrians to be high? That, too. I'm not saying that they all are, but there is that element, in and amongst the local university environment that suggests that feeling, whether it's true or not. The obvious warning, as this week unfolds with all its Valentine flavors? Watch out for the high pedestrians. Or high pedestrian traffic. It's one of those, I'm sure.

Pisces: "Earth slides." I'm not kidding, I've only seen this sign once, but I kept a picture of the sign, just because it was odd wording. Yet, that's just what's going to happen. It's not an earthquake. It's not a tremendous shift, just sort of like a meander that has a certain direction. Near as I could tell, the sign should've said, "soft shoulders." What happens is that the shoulder of the hillside tends to slump into the road, hence the source of the sign's unusual wording. This is Texas Hill Country, akin to Tuscany, as much as anything, isn't really that unstable, not geologically. It's not about big changes, it's about little changes. And the earthy slides, they aren't too much trouble in old trucks, as long as there's some ground clearance. The problem comes in a low-riding sedan. Rent cars? Not so much. But a family car? That's the problem with the earth slides. Sort of depends on how you approach the problem. What I would suggest, and it doesn't matter what kind of a car or truck you're driving, I'd slow down and carefully nose around the obstacle.

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hauling dirt, or long I-beams, or hauling excavated dirt away, or concrete mixers, something. Plant entrances are the same way, especially, like a quarry. Or a cotton gin. I'm used to the idea that there will trucks, usually large trucks roaring to and from, and the sign, "Truck Crossing," isn't really required. Probably required by some law, or something. The first thought that usually flashes through my brain? "What are they crossing the trucks with?" Which leaves the genetic idea of impregnating a Semi with a sedan of some kind, get a diesel-belching half-breed vehicle. The real meaning behind the "Truck crossing" sign, though, has more to do with slowing down and being aware that there might be a large, perhaps over-sized, vehicle bearing down on your self. Doesn't hurt, given the whole Mercury thing? Doesn't hurt to stop and look both ways before proceeding.

Aquarius: "High Pedestrian Traffic." Near the University of Texas (Austin), in fact, right as a major traffic artery cuts through the campus area, there's a sign, two, really, and they both say, "High Pedestrian Traffic." Given the radically liberal orientation of the university's environment, and the student body's reputation, I couldn't help but giggle. Must've passed that sign hundreds of times before I snapped and started to be amused. I have to wonder if there's a person in the sign committee with serious sense of humor. To be honest, there is a disproportionately high volume of pedestrian traffic in that area, but then located next to major university campus, this can be expected. Expecting the pedestrians to be high? That, too. I'm not saying that they all are, but there is that element, in and amongst the local university environment that suggests that feeling, whether it's true or not. The obvious warning, as this week unfolds with all its Valentine flavors? Watch out for the high pedestrians. Or high pedestrian traffic. It's one of those, I'm sure.

Pisces: "Earth slides." I'm not kidding, I've only seen this sign once, but I kept a picture of the sign, just because it was odd wording. Yet, that's just what's going to happen. It's not an earthquake. It's not a tremendous shift, just sort of like a meander that has a certain direction. Near as I could tell, the sign should've said, "soft shoulders." What happens is that the shoulder of the hillside tends to slump into the road, hence the source of the sign's unusual wording. This is Texas Hill Country, akin to Tuscany, as much as anything, isn't really that unstable, not geologically. It's not about big changes, it's about little changes. And the earthy slides, they aren't too much trouble in old trucks, as long as there's some ground clearance. The problem comes in a low-riding sedan. Rent cars? Not so much. But a family car? That's the problem with the earth slides. Sort of depends on how you approach the problem. What I would suggest, and it doesn't matter what kind of a car or truck you're driving, I'd slow down and carefully nose around the obstacle.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 2.21.2008

"I do desire we may be better strangers."

Shakespeare's As You Like It (III.ii.98)

Aries: There's a King Ranch brand of trucks. Imagine that? A ranch that has its own brand of Ford trucks. Just weird. Wouldn't be a big deal, but I was on the street the other afternoon, and I saw, like, about three different versions of the King Ranch truck. This has exactly what to do with your week? It's matter of seeing some imagine, time and again, and finally, letting all that sink in. The King Ranch, in history and myth? Large ranch. South Texas. Cattle was King. Begat its own town, Kingsville. County. Might be larger than some eastern state, that ranch. Through a careful marshaling of resources, the big bucks from the cattle operation has turned into a business, where, years later, the cattle are but a small portion of the ranch's revenue. There's the deal with the trucks, there's a whole line of saddlebag-inspired luggage, there's probably a magazine, a guest accommodation, maybe an airline or something, all from carefully working with the myth of the cattle empire. In a similar fashion, there's a brand you can develop, a simple, even humble Aries origin, yet, it holds a chance for more, much more. Dream a little, and then, try to see where the extra bucks can be squeezed out of the Aries Empire. Like the King Ranch, only, for an Aries? Bigger and grander?

Taurus: The San Antonio weather has become a running joke for me. The weathermen that I watch, at night, are almost always off. Off by large degrees. It's amusing. Writing horoscopes shares the same hope that those San Antonio weathermen share, we might be wrong, week after week, but we keep trying. I was thinking about the weathermen because one had the perfect prediction the other evening, on the eve of San Antonio's big rodeo "cowboy breakfast." The weathermen made a dire (and wrong) prediction about the weather then he predicted that was a 100% chance of biscuits and gravy. The annual rodeo, like Houston and New York, it's a big deal. To kick off San Antonio's version, there's huge cowboy breakfast for the masses. One year, they almost pulled the white gravy. Uproar. So the white gravy was kept on the menu, and peace was restored. I don't know what the uproar has been in the Taurus camp, not from individual to individual. But it's like the threat of no biscuits and gravy, and the results are typically the same: 100% chance of biscuits and gravy. This week.

Gemini: Progress, and when is progress really a step backwards? I upgraded my phone system, like, got rid of the odd collection of wired and wireless handsets, and I replaced everything with matched set of wireless, latest technology, with built-in satellite imaging, and I think, automatic internet. I'm not sure, whatever was on sale, looked

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good, was cheap, and promised a better quality of life. Bigger numbers usually mean better, am I right? I'm not sure. The old wireless handset, two of them really, the cheaper, cheesier-looking one? It had the best range. From the trailer to the trailer park's laundry room, I could do laundry while listening to one of my buddies complain about Mercury. Or something. Mail letters, fish, and best of all, it was a cheap wireless handset, so I wasn't ever afraid it would fall in the water. However, in the upgrade process, I wound up with a pair of nicely matched, sleek little handsets, and nothing more. Simplify my existence, that was the idea. The problem being that new, better technology? It isn't. Not nearly as good as I thought it would be. Doesn't even stretch to the mailbox. That was irritating to discover. But that's also how it goes. New, better, upgraded? Is it really better? Should I have just stuck with the cheesy-looking mismatched wireless handsets that really did offer good range? Is an upgrade, at this time, really an upgrade?

Cancer: Mars, we talked about Mars, right? Mr. Mars is just about to re-enter your sign, and that's going to make for extra energy. The problem is that this Mars on fast approach? He's not here yet. As such, and with everything else going on, I'd like to sit down with my Cancer friends and have frank discussion. Something about what's going to be happening over the next two weeks. Honestly, and I'll forget all about this conversation by the time next week gets here, but seriously folks, we've got to do a little plotting. I'm not saying that this is hard and fast, must-follow route that we're planning. I'm just suggesting that we get out pencil and paper and plot a possible trajectory for the next two weeks. Get a plan in order. Get plan on paper. Get plan planned. Doesn't mean that you have to follow what you're planning, I'm not so sure that's the right idea. I am sure, however, that formulating a plan will help. I was directing some friends towards the coast. They wanted particulars about locations to fish, guides and hotels, and any good restaurants. Other than that, date and time? That was open. The destinations were clear, but the exact highway, that wasn't so precise. South. South to the Gulf Coast. Either back road or interstate. Either way gets you there, and both have merits. So like my friends, like me, all I'm suggesting is a plan. Don't have to stick to the plan, but an outline, some framework, something as simple as a point of reference, that's all you need.

Leo: I watched as one particular Leo sought my advice, then followed my advice, and, over a period of year, more like three, that advice paid off. We're striking pay dirt now, it's only getting better. But this requires a kind of long-term attention. It's about trimming resources in order to make room for more stuff. Get rid of things to make room for more things. It was a simple shift, there were two deer heads on the wall, over the mantle place. Mantle piece. One of those, I'm guessing. Mounted trophy bucks, one was a decent 8 point, the other was a smaller mule deer, I'm guessing. After a consultation, and it's not really the "art of placement," as much as it's observed behavior, but anyway, moving those two deer heads to the garage? Next season rolled around, last fall? Two more trophy deer. This time, though, the deer weren't mounted. Just cut up and stored in the freezer. Free-range food source. My Leo buddy? He hunts for sport, really, but it's also a food source, as he doesn't like to see anything get wasted. This isn't about whether it's right -- or not -- to shoot animals for food, either, this is about an example of how cleaning something out, how a little bit of cleaning can make room for more.

Virgo: It was sign, at the entrance to large store. The sign read, "Notice: No propane cylinders allowed in store." Like this was a problem. Like this was a common occurrence.

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Like this was something, judging from the hasty nature of the signs themselves, taped up and hand-lettered, this was something that occurred in the recent past with alarming frequency. Could be me, but I would tend to think that refilling a propane canister would be a task left to the propane store, or, at the very least, at the garden section, the outdoor area, off to the side of the big box building. Might be me, though, and I would never think about propane, or any other similar natural gas, in an enclosed space. I've seen what can happen. I've had a chance to make little things go "boom" in a big way. Doesn't take much. The stuff is fiery, dangerous, and I wouldn't be dragging my empty propane cans into a the big store. Now, as a virgo, I'm sure you're up to speed with me on the safety issues here. Im sure you're up-to-date on what is a possible hazard.

Libra: I was trying to wrap my mind around the present positions of the planets and how this is going to play out for you. My fine Libra friends, you guys got it all worked out, don't you? As the planets start get themselves corrected, there's a scene, I saw it while I was walking around one afternoon. Not long ago, either, I'm sure. It was a typically small car, and it was normal driver, I'm guessing, and everything was okay except for a big dog. I'm not sure of the breed. I'm not sure if the dog could hunt. But it was a happy dog. Instead of hanging its head out the window, the dog was upright, with its head sticking through the sunroof of the little car. Might happy dog, I'm guessing. I'm not sure what the wind in the face does to the dog, either. Dogs seem to like that. So the sunroof was a best possible situation. Now, I'm not saying that Libra is a dog, that's not the point, the point is puppy happiness. And how to make a Libra-styled puppy happy. Open the sunroof. Stick your head out. You're not going to have to worry about traffic, or some other driver getting too close to the side window because, you're using the sun roof. Makes it a ll a lot easier, if you think about it. In a slightly insular way, you're doing rather well. The recent planet madness is over. And like that dog with its head stuck out through the sunroof, you're in position that inviable, inevitable, and really, kind of good. You can bark, don't have to worry about anyone getting to close, and best of all, there's the wind in your face.

Scorpio: A cattle hauler was slowly creeping along in the traffic. I was a pedestrian, so I got to observe from a slightly different frame of reference. I'm sure I'd been stuck in the traffic, I'd have a different way of seeing the cattle hauler. It was a trailer behind an older ranch truck. Late model truck, older model trailer. It was, I'm guessing, a horse trailer, but it had two cows in the back, and single bull, separated, in a different compartment, further towards the front. Only makes good sense, a tandem-axle trailer, distribute the load. Then, too, there's the animal husbandry point. Separate the critters. I'm not sure that the old trailer could take the load of the bull doing his business. I'm sure that it would make for interesting discussion about the drivers and traffic, as there's got to be more than ripe metaphor within that tale. But that's not really the point. On several levels, there's a reason why certain items get separated into compartments. Could be a very simple matter of distributing the load in the most efficient manner possible. Or, maybe, that old bull? Maybe he doesn't get along too well with his ex-wives, and that's why they riding in different part of the trailer. Could be a number of attraction and rejection factors. Or it could be as simple as trying to make the load as least contentious as possible. What will it be? Bunch it all up this week, in Scorpio? Or try and separate the distinct item out from each other, to make a more harmonious situation?

Sagittarius: I came across the "Alamo Irish Festival." Yes, anything for a party. I was trying to work out the details on that one, the Irish Alamo thing, and I never could quite get my concepts straightened out. To be sure, there were Irish in the Alamo, that's not the question. But then, there were a lot of different ethnic backgrounds in the Alamo, originally. I'm guessing, more than anything else, the Alamo Irish Festival, it's an excuse to have party. Drink lots of beer, combine St. Patrick and the heros of the Alamo, and so forth. Any excuse for party, huh. Sounds much like a Sagittarius, too. AS this weekend approaches, there's not much trouble with getting party started, not a challenge for our Sagittarius selves. But after the weekend? We're going to need an excuse to keep happy, a goal to strive for, something to look forward to. First it's Xmas, the New Years, then Halloween, then nothing of importance until, like the summer or something. So look forward to the annual Irish Alamo Festival. Or whatever else is clearly manufactured yet perfectly acceptable event. Falling prey to marketing guys, maybe that's not the best point, but after the last round of holidays, it's time to consider a celebration that us Sagittarius will enjoy. Something that's cut out, just for our style and tastes.

Capricorn: Parking ticket. It's a bet, and it's a bet I lost. I was meeting a client for reading, and seeing as how it was a cold day, a neighbor lent me a car. So I drove downtown, and met a client. I parked in an available spot, and I didn't have any change. Half an hour was going to cost fifty cents. I skipped the fifty cents, looked around, decided it was probably too cold for a meter person to be out. Readings cost \$60. I paid for my own espresso, \$2. Tipped a dollar to the cute girl making coffee. I was out for about 45 minutes, total time. I went outside, and as I pulled away, in the borrowed car, I noted a telltale yellow envelope. Parking ticket. \$30. As I went to pay it, as there's a certain amount of honor that I have, not to mention that I'd like to be able to catch a ride again, so I paid up in hurry. As long as the planets are arrayed like they are? My afternoon reading that should've been a net profit of over fifty bucks, by the time I subtract the price of the ticket? Ruins the afternoon. It was a bad bet, on my part? Of course, I'm not Capricorn, but I'm warning you about sucker bets. Just because you're feeling lucky? Remember how actual profit, after subtracting all the expenses, remember how that works out. Maybe, just maybe? Slide a quarter into the meter.

Aquarius: I was standing in line at the counter, waiting to get an afternoon shot of espresso. The lass in front of me, her outfit craved and begged attention. As did the the flames licking upwards from her low-slung jeans. Tight, low-rider jeans. Practically begged attention. I'm not sure what the flames went to as the source of the tattoo was covered by clothing. That's absolutely as far as my investigation went. I was able, through careful questions, ascertain what her birthday was. "Really nice ink, what's your birthday?" And that's as far as I was going to delve into the situation. Which, as far as the rest of my Aquarius friends go? That's about as far as you should go, too. Maybe ask a light and easy question, but the probing, investigative stuff? Leave that for a more agile mind. Or more febrile mind, one of those. My imagination could come up with a any number of possible sources for the flames, the ink on that young lass. I can appreciate the artwork, too, just for what it is. From a tasteful and adult perspective, that location for her tattoo was nice in that she could wear off-the shoulder material and not have anything show. Merely tucking a shirttail into her jeans could, conceivably cover it all up. Which makes it all less provocative. But on that balmy winter afternoon, showing the ink was part of what mattered. The question is, can you show your fine, Aquarius colors

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in way that is tasteful yet provocative, and can the evidence be covered up for a more traditional setting?

Pisces: Happy birthday to that one Pisces. Yeah, and you thought I forgot. Maybe I did. But me forgetting that one Pisces birthday is not going to ruin a week. And the way I see it? It shouldn't be a week, should be more like another three weeks, after this one, for Pisces celebrations. Sun will be in Pisces the whole time, and it's nothing but fun in the sun for the duration. To be sure, there will be a little bit of let down as the lunar phase gets a little sour. We're starting this week's scope on a full moon, and from there, it's on towards the last quarter moon, and that's a bit of a bummer. However, there's still the over-riding "best birthday wishes," and in the card game of life, that trumps just about everything else. Moon notwithstanding. So it's good, maybe not the best ever and always, but good nonetheless. There's a kind of stability that's going to come along, and all I can suggest is that you make a decision to go for the more stable version of whatever it is that is being offered. Part of this is the birthday material and part of this is Saturn, on the opposite side of the chart from you. I was using some new astrology software, strictly beta testing. Program kept blowing up. Part of the problem is my own fingers, part of the problem is the computer I use, and part of the problem is beta nature of the project. For calculating your horoscope, though? I rolled back to an earlier version of the software -- it works and it's solid. Reliable. Which is good at times like this. Go for the most stable option.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

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For the week starting: 2.28.2008

"Such harmony is in immortal souls."

Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice (V.i.72)

Aries: My curious culinary habits are constant sources of amusement for some. I do my best to be obliging. I found, in my freezer, a box of frozen waffles. I'm not sure if there is an expiration date on frozen food like that, but the box looked sound and closer inspection revealed that the contents appeared edible. I prefer my frozen foodstuffs to be frozen. Adds crunch, seems fresher, and, in the case of the waffles, tasted better frozen. There was a wrapper of just three or four waffles in one end of the box. I opened those and set them on the counter. I ate the first one, tasty, in a frozen waffle way. Second one was good, too. Third was even better as it thawed just a little. Then I forgot about the package, did something else, and when I got back to that last frozen waffle? It wasn't frozen. It wasn't soggy, it was just a very stale waffle. So my frozen lifestyle food isn't such a bad idea, as the original condition added a zesty consistency to the grub, whereas the thawed version is just old and stale. I'm trying to keep your ideas fresh. It's all about three quarters, too. The moon is sliding down the skyway, and that old moon is getting smaller and smaller until it virtually disappears. As we process through this lunar cycle, it's like me working my way through that stack of frozen waffles, one at a time. First couple of them are good, the third one is the best, and after that? It isn't as good. The trick is knowing when to quit. I'd guess, after the third, that was my experience, but I'm looking at three-quarters, either way.

Taurus: I started noticing, in South San Antonio, that there was prevalent namesake, "Ice House." Generally preceded by a first name, but the generic title seemed to be "ice house." Two come to mind, immediately, "B & D Ice House" and "Waterloo Ice House." Venerable names. While it's winter in some places, on the south side of San Antonio, it's more summer-like and the more summer-like weather means we turn our thoughts to summer nights hanging out in place like the "ice-house." I can safely assume that the name is derived from history that's not too far gone, when ice was a commodity, and the benefits of ice were shared in place like the old ice houses. It's also a slightly more romantic name than "cheap beer place." The weird weather lately? It's making me think about that place with the suffix "ice house." It's on the south side, but I saw a great number of places like this. East side, too. West side, probably. I don't think it's typically a place that would be found in the more tony sides of town. There's a gradual shift this week. Not like a big, slam, in-your-face move, but a gentle, however perceptible change is occurring. As a Taurus, you're going to feel this gentle shift. It's like the local weather,

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and suddenly, there's a yearning to spend hot summer nights in crowded taverns and beer joints with the last name of "ice house."

Gemini: I was watching as a young lass, maybe not so young, but as this woman popped a quarter in the slot on a phone. She listened to the handset for a minute, then she banged it against the phone kiosk's outside covering. Wasn't even a phone booth, just a phone stuck on a pole in the middle of a neighborhood. I must admit, especially for a pay phone? Banging it on the side usually makes it work better. As a guy, though, I tend to slap the phone against my palm as a more effective method for getting the darn thing to work. Pay phones, aren't they, like, almost antique and disappearing now? Which, of course, makes that recent image of girl slapping the phone against the pole? Makes it that much more amusing. She had on her little black dress, and this was close to sundown. My imagination can run away with reasons for a Gemini to bang the phone against the phone booth, the pole, or, in a similar situation, to bang the phone against the steering wheel of the car. Doesn't make the phone work better, not usually. In some limited cases, I've seen where a portable phone, with one good slap, figures it out and starts dialing correctly. But the pay phone? And the little black dress? I wonder what the tale is there. My imagination, and the GEmini imagination, we can fill whole volumes about why that phone was being banged against the side of the phone booth. Now, with Mars just making what's going to be a hasty exit, ask yourself, does machine violence really help?

Cancer: "Can I get a touch of whip?" As a question, in and of itself, maybe it's not so strange. But I was just sipping on an afternoon espresso, and I was wondering about how that sounded. The guy pulled out his money, the girl making the drink pulled out the whipped cream canister, the guy mumbled something about this was for his sweet tooth, and they both never touched the subject of whipping. To me, there's always been an erotic overtone to the idea of whipping. Real or imagined. I may be flogging a dead horse, or worse. Might be indicative of deep-seated emotional issues. Or maybe indicates I've got a sick sense of humor. Or worse, I've got deep-seated emotional issues and sick sense of humor. Never can tell. Perversions aside, I still thought the comment, and the way it went unnoticed, "a touch of whip," I wondered if there really was some kind of tacit collusion between those two? Who knows? Mars is about to hit Cancer. Get prepared. As everything that's fallen apart, all of that mess will be properly reassembled. Not without some spurring onward by your Cancer self. You might have to help move things along, maybe, even, with a touch of whip.

Leo: The current situation is one of little relief and little recognition -- that's the short version. There is, indeed, a little relief headed your way. Not much, not great, but some kind of relief is always good. And then the problem with little recognition. While the planets line up in Aquarius, that just means the spotlight, the true recognition owed to your Leo self, that just means the public's attention is drawn elsewhere. Just for the time being. It's not a long time, just a short and quick deal, a bite of limelight for another person. It's a function of the pointers in the sky, mostly the Sun, but the tenuous little planets Mercury and Venus, still poking along in position that is opposite you. The Mars thing, too, as he's moving towards you, and when he final arrives, in a few weeks, he's going to roast and cook with glee. There will be a fine Leo party, as only a Leo can make happen. But once again, this little planet isn't there yet, and for the duration, Mars is

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poking along, from Gemini and then on into Cancer. Check your chart: Cancer precedes your fine Leo self. Again, relief, and equally important, recognition, is headed your way. But the relief happens in small doses, and the recognition? Not quite yet. Almost, but not quite yet.

Virgo: Saturn's a tough bear. No way around that. One of the "country crooners" cycled up on the music, background noise. And the gentle yet manly voice, the lilting strains of guitar and the single violin. Fiddle. Whatever. But his reassuring vocal message was what needs to be sung to a Virgo. Strong and self-reliant. Not depending on anyone else for succor. Pushing yourself because, dammit, it needs to get done, and no one around you seems able to get the job. Except for yourself. The oddest echo, the strangest flashback to some previous problem? I'll allow as how there's a momentary time wherein you feel like you've been there before, or that you've seen this pernicious problem in the past. That's also the way this works, that echo, the flashback, the hint from the past? There's a solution that lies within the purview of that hint. What worked last time? Or, to be more precise, what didn't work last time? What was the way you finally sorted out, after a half-dozen tries? What did work? Save yourself the time of repeating the mistakes. You know what works, and for that matters, what doesn't work.

Libra: "Oh man, I don't like this, it's going too easy. Just like it's supposed to go." I handed my buddy a pipe cutter. He was replacing the PVC plumbing in a trailer. In South Austin. I was his swamper for the afternoon. I'm not big on plumbing, freshwater or otherwise. But I'd agreed and I was tool-pushing. I was worried, too. A fifteen minute job takes at least two hours. Way it is. Can take a lot longer, if there's multiple trips to the hardware store and then a place to get more plastic pipe. Sure, can turn into an all-day ordeal. Way it goes when we're involved in manly tasks, doing manly labor. But there isn't catch. That job, we had everything we needed, the rotted out pipe was replaced, and the longest part of the job was the clean-up. Not the cleaning up our mess, but the cleaning up ourselves. To date, the part we replaced? It's holding fine, no leaking. Which just goes to show that something can go smoothly for Libra. Even when it looks like it's going too smoothly, maybe, just maybe, you planned well and it's all going according to the plan.

Scorpio: The cloak of Invisibility? Wouldn't one of those be wonderful? Perfect Scorpio attire, too. You can fade into nothingness and not be observed, and then, you can only reveal yourself, your true, Scorpio self, to those who you want to know what's under that cloak. Two problems: no real cloak of invisibility exists. Yet, anyway. Maybe the military is working on one, but as I understand, our "stealth" technology isn't there yet. Again, I might be wrong, but from what I've seen, it really doesn't exist. The other problem? The second half of that equation? This is the week that you don't want an anonymous nature. Therein is our weekly conundrum, too, because -- oddly enough -- you want draw attention to yourself. You want to make sure that folks know that you've done something. You want to see and be seen.

Sagittarius: One of the pre-manufactured, computer-generated horoscopes I used to check? Without fail, it would cover three items, every day in Sagittarius. Old flames, unexpected money and travel. When I used to travel a lot more? Say, I would be gone every other weekend? Then, that travel prognostication would be accurate, every other weekend. With Sagittarius? That's a safe bet. One or two days out of every two-week

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period, it would be accurate. In as much as I'd like to see foreign travel for the Sagittarius, that's more of hit or miss deal these days. And like as not, all things being equal, it's probably a miss. Might be a near miss, but I'm still suggesting that foreign travel doesn't figure prominently in our horoscope. Nor, for that matter, do old flames or unexpected money. Pains me to write this, but that's the essence of the times. It's a matter of what is rote as opposed to what is wrote. Rote material just doesn't seem to fit. I'd be careful, too, as the odds, that's one out of fourteen, those numbers aren't too good.

Capricorn: I was chatting with a buddy of mine, not named "bubba." He works as a freshwater plumber, laying down water lines. Good work, manual labor, but still, good work. He was wearing a tattered T-shirt, across the front, the shirt said, "GOT JESUS?" I think it was an old design, a riff on the old "got milk" routine. I was curious because I've known this guy for a while. Simple rules, "Water flows downhill, pay day's Friday." So I found the overtly xtian shirt a little misleading. I never knew he had converted from a buddhist/Universalist/pagan to a new religion. I wondered if he had been saved? He looked down at the shirt. "No man, see there's a guy on the crew, carpenter, and he thinks he can save the world. So I just wear a shirt like this to keep him off my back. Praise the Lord. Got Beer?" The story is longer, and I'm all about freedom of religion. I'm all for whatever faith one espouses. I've also worked along side fanatics, folks overly dedicated to one cause. I tend to shy away, in a gentle way, as is my style. I'm not confrontational. Neither is Capricorn, usually. I'm suggesting, in a gentle way, that you adopt an undercover trick like my buddy the plumber. It could save you time, save your patience, and frankly, operating undercover? It's not a bad way to keep folks from directing their attentions towards you. Mars, Mars is fast approaching a point where it's opposite you. Avoid confrontations.

Aquarius: Mercury and Venus begin to pick up speed and that's going to feel like your personal stars are beginning to (finally) line up in a correct direction. The more subtle humors, though, that is really caused by the motion and direction of Mars. The last of the good Mars stuff is this week and there's a chance, one last romp, one last drive, one last "hail mary," whatever that means, one last gasp, one last grasp to get it done. To get that goal accomplished. To get there from here. I'm sure there will always be ongoing Aquarius projects, but as the dark of the moon approaches, early next week, it's matter of getting a number of smaller goals out of the way so you can hit that one big goal. Hit it hard, and finally make a dent in the problem. Finally get enough drive, push, momentum, that's the word, finally get the momentum built up to get over the hill, across the river, build the bridge, tear it down to start over, it's one of those. This might seems a little confusing, but see, there's a rapidly approaching new moon, and the solar alignment late next week gives an added kick to this all. So use it. I'm your cheering squad for the time being, sad state of affairs, but use what you got. It really does turn into a large step towards a permanent resolution, if you'll just make the effort.

Pisces: We're still celebrating Pisces Birthdays here. Still having us a good time. And it's only getting better. The general timbre of the time isn't so hot. Not so bad, really, just not so hot. But that overall ennui isn't going to deter the fine Pisces from having a good time. Birthday parties, yee - (something) - haw! Next week, a couple of star-studded events are going to occur. There's the shift for Mars, from Gemini (air) to Cancer (compatible water), and that means Mars is doing you some good. Or will be. And, it's time for the

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annual, or so it seems, alignment between the Sun and Uranus. That hits next week, too. I think I'll save that news for next week. In the meantime, in the between time, there's a weird, but oh-so-good-for-Pisces thing happening. The main difficulty is with other other people. Personally, as a solution to the problems and the folks who drop out of the parties at the last minute? I'd suggest a solid, Pisces-only party. Makes it easier, makes it better, and you don't have to worry about anyone who's not on the same page as you are. There's a cool, odd, still good, kind of weird influence with the planets. Lot of stuff in the Pisces solar 12th house. Which is good. In a weird way. So enjoy it but also realize that it's mostly Pisces who will understand, and the rest of us? We're behind, as usual.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 3.6.2008

"A lover's eyes will gaze an eagle blind."

Shakespeare's Love's Labour's Lost (IV.iii.281)

Aries: Thai food that goes to 7. I had it. For dinner. "Six peppers (menu rating) is the hottest we've got." I wanted something really hot. Found one that goes to 7.

Taurus: Waiting on bluebonnets. Bluebonnets are the state flower. And they appear, some years in huge numbers, starting as early as February and as late as April. Around here, now is the time. More or less. There's an arcane method for determining what the Bluebonnet season will be like. Has to do with rain last fall, drought in the winter, or is drought in the fall and rain in the winter? I'm already screwing up the way this is figured, and I'm sure I've got the scientific stuff backwards. Not that it matters to me, as wildflowers and their biology really aren't my area of expertise. As I was looking at your stars, what I was thinking about was that I was also waiting on Bluebonnets. In a similar fashion, just like me, waiting on the wildflowers to pop up? There's my fine Taurus friends, waiting on something to happen. Since wildflowers respond to such a diverse and almost unpredictable pattern, Taurus, too, is beset with what seems to be the same. But it's not. There is a pattern here. You just have to wait until the pattern starts to emerge. Like the flowers.

Gemini: It was one of those "art walks," here in the neighborhood. The little art galleries were pushing what starving artists and starving artworks they could. Upstairs from one place, there's a tiny little nook of a studio space. And in that studio space, there was some new art from a talented individual. I'd call it multi-media, but I'm no critic, and I'm not sure what the stuff is called. It jutted out from the wall, and in one piece, the whole wall was part of the design. The bored gallery owner was at one end, talking on her mobile (phone). She glanced up at me and dismissed me as a buyer. Which was true. However, a few minutes later, she did get around to offering me refreshments. Oreo Cookies and a fine, red wine. I'm not much on the oreo thing, the chocolate doesn't do a lot for me. And the red wine, I tend to stay away from fruits of the vine these days. What I was impressed with, though, was the way two items were offered and set out next to each other. Like it's normal to have a decent cabernet with oreo cookies. At this point, a Gemini will pop up and suggest that it's true, those two items do belong together in the Gemini Universe. Which is fine. It's just that the Gemini Universe has to interact with the rest of us and therein is the problem. I'm not suggesting that the cookies and wine aren't a good idea. For some Gemini people I know, it is not only natural, but a good fit. I'm not saying that this is bad, I'm just saying that other people, perhaps the buying public, the Gemini's customers? Might want something that is a little more closely aligned.

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Cancer: There's a well-known but moderately secret Tex-Mex place, just around the corner from me. It has a big parking lot on one side of the building, and at noontime, that lot fills up. There's a second, secret lot, on the other side. Seems that no one is aware of it. A girlfriend wheeled us into the secret parking lot, and as soon as I made note of it, she threatened me with slow and painful death by dismemberment, if I were to mention the name of the place or the location of the secret parking lot, which is either east or west, of the building itself. Or maybe north. Or south. However, the location isn't really that important, not unless you're in my neighborhood at lunch time. What is important is understanding that Mars is careening into your sign. To make the most effective use of the Mars infusion, consider the politic manner in which the little (Cancer) girlfriend suggested I not mention the name of the or location of the secret parking lot. That's the point.

Leo: The thought never crossed my mind, but should you decide to act in a slightly irrational manner? Just let me suggest that you act and err on the side of caution. There's a heavenly push, not so much as a direct influence, but a really indirect, sideways income shove, and that's what I would watch for. You're wandering along the Royal Romance Road for Leo, and then, someone, something pops up and tries to change your direction. How much are you going to let this affect you? Let it change your direction? Or can just swerve and veer a little to the side, and get around the obstacle? That's the suggestion consider that someone is trying to convince you that the person's own, person agenda is clearly more important than the Leo plan. Don't guffaw or snort, just make a course correction and gently sail around the problem. Not through it, around it.

Virgo: I was watching one of my fisher friends. It's a cattle egret, or white egret, or one of those. Not the big snowy egret, although, I've seen one of those, too. Just a long-legged, long-necked white egret. He was ankle deep in the creek. I was going to try the "no egrets" joke but the last time, that one didn't fly. Anyway, this one egret, I was watching him and he was watching me with one eye, but the other eye was scanning the shallow creek bed for a little bit of a repast. Dinner. Lunch. Maybe brunch, I'm not sure what kind of schedule he was on. She? I don't know much about the bird, other than he fishes close by. I watch him -- or her -- and I pay attention to what he's dining on. I see him, most mornings. Since it was cool, cloudy March morning, he was hunkered down, in a fashion I don't usually see. His head was tucked in low, and he wasn't scanning the depth of the pond's water, more like just keeping an eye out, and he wasn't really feeding. I suspect, as I passed fairly close to him, that he was also watching me. Just a wary eye out for interference. The water, it must be a little on the cool side for his yellow feet. The long legs, then, instead of the extended neck, the bird's head was resting on its shoulders, in as much as birds have shoulders. I took it as sign that the fish weren't active. Paying attention to what the birds are feeding on is one way to stay tuned into what the fish are doing. The cattle egret is fairly common, still, though, an elegant critter. I couldn't help but think about virgo, too. I don't know the bird's sign, but I'd bet on some Virgo in the natal chart. A little caution, and ever wary for interference from other, long-legged critters. Like me. Careful observation will reveal valuable details.

Libra: It's like a mosquito bite. Usually, and I'm fairly conversant with these critters, and to be honest? Normally a mosquito bite isn't a big deal. This week, I'm not saying you're going to get bitten by a mosquito, but there 's a similar annoyance. Blame the bug, blame

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Mars, blame me, if you must. Understand that a simple, pesky mosquito bite can be one of two situations. It can either be a simple, small pinprick with minimal swelling and redness. Or you can scratch at it, let it fester, back up against a post and itch it some more, get blood running everywhere, and let this simple inconvenience turn into a major medical problem. Major medical metaphor, anyway. The way it looks, there's a whole lot of tremendously good energy running around. And then there's that mosquito bite from Mars. Again, it's all a matter of how effectively you decide to deal with the first incident, when the bug bites, when Mars stings. How does that hit you? Me? I take a mild antihistamine, and I've found that's the best protection against the pesky bites. It's just a matter of finding something that works for you.

Scorpio: I was walking, in the mall. Could be any generic shopping mall, but in this case, it was a mall with a pair of giant cowboy boots outside. Not that it matter. Typical mall scene, at first, a young couple, she, pregnant and blonde, and I'm guessing, the little tow-headed kid running alongside, then alternately holding hand with "daddy," then "mommy," he must've been the first-born. Just a guess. But the hand he was holding, and when father and son decided that mom would have to shop in a certain store all by herself? The father's calves were covered with ink. Tattoos of death's heads, in various forms. Then, the hand the kid was holding? The arm, the forearm, visible? It was covered in grinning skulls. Like a pile of skulls. Intricate and precise artwork. A lot of it. Since the mom had no visible tattoos, I was wondering about the connection. My mind wandered, not unlike the small son he had. Musician? Famous musician with a "alt-punk" band? Just a roady? Tattoo artist? Could be any number of possibilities. I'm -- perhaps -- a little old-fashioned. I find the heavy "death's head" tattoos, eerily reminiscent of prison artwork, a little out of place with a person who is a caring and doting father. However, that could just be my own, limited perceptions. That's also what I'd be careful about, too, making judgement calls when there's an absence of hard fact. Not that it bothers me, but then, I'm not a Scorpio with a wild imagination this week.

Sagittarius: There's a sign, in front of a taco stand (taqueria), not far from where I live. The letters are shaped to fit the sign's curvature. Some of the letters underneath say, "HUEVOS RANCH." Huevos Rancheros, those I know. Ranch dressing with breakfast, that I understand, too. What I'm afraid, and I might just be judgmental, I'm just guessing that the sign-maker didn't plan well enough. Or that the artist lettering the sign didn't count how many letters were in the words. This is all about planning. Judging the length and duration of an event and being ready at the end of the timed sequence. Or, at the very least figuring out how long it should take to get from here to there. Now the term, as it appears on the sign, "Huevos Ranch," that does have some symmetry. And in a town where Huevos Rancheros are as common as (pick a suitable metaphor), this isn't a big deal. There are two more thoughts that go with the idea of that sign, too, maybe it wasn't poor planning, maybe it was intended that way. For the symmetrical look. Or maybe there really is a place to get eggs and ranch dressing. Or, even now that I think about it, maybe it's not restaurant at all, maybe it's an egg ranch. However, before exploring these other possibilities, I'd like to go back to what the message was originally about, about planning. Preparation and planning.

Capricorn: My note said, "Fresh Fat Cap." Before you even think about getting upset with me, let's look at the shorthand. "Fresh" as in recently made. "Cap" is short for

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Cappuccino, as in espresso with frothed milk on top. "Fat" means it was a not my usual low-fat or 2% milk used for the froth. So I had one of these, it was a Sunday morning, kind of crispy around the edges, not really a sultry spring morning, and I ordered up a quick beverage for the hike. On the hike. During my morning walk. Usually I get fat-free cappuccino. Usually I get espresso, but it was cool out and never mind the details. I get used to one thing, and that morning, the impact of the caffeine, the way the frothed milk tasted, the almost crisp morning air, it all came together. It was an ideal drink. Almost perfect. Part of what made it so tasty -- to me -- was the "fatted milk" indulgence. I don't think I'd tasted a cappuccino quite like that. The way the flavors coalesced and combined, swirled together and slid around in my mouth? I tend to let a coffee beverage get full action from my tongue -- if the beverage is any good. Give me a chance to savor the flavor. As long as you're going indulge yourself. Which, given the way the planets are? A little indulgence goes a long way to making you a happy Cappy. (Hint" it doesn't have to be much.)

Aquarius: You guys, I swear. Anyway. I was walking along, just a little south of downtown. There was a small storefront, and the big plate glass window. A guy was using something, brownish liquid, out of a squirt bottle, to spray cleaner-solution onto the window, then wiping it down with paper towels. I think recycled paper would work better, but he didn't ask me. As I passed right in front of him, the guy was industriously working away, I caught a faint whiff of vinegar. I immediately started to salivate at the idea of crisp farm-fresh greens, maybe some baby Arugula, rocket salad with a nice, heavy on the balsam, vinegarette. Just an association, nothing more. But then, for the rest of the afternoon's stroll, all I could think about was salad. It started as an idea for just a little side salad, what usually comes with a BBQ plate full of dead farm animals. But over the course of the hour or more, I kept imagining the artfully arranged green, then I thought about picking up groceries, then I thought about a larger and larger salad. I got to the point that I was considering a huge platter of lawn clippings. This was all all spurred by that vinegar solution used for cleaning glass. I eventually steered myself into a BBQ place since I was starving from obsessing about salad. I'm rather enamored of the way an Aquarius can take disparate elements and come up with a combination that has nothing to do with where we started. Or does it? I just hope you live close to the good comfort food.

Pisces: "Oh. Oh! You are in so much trouble!" It was a young mom, addressing her darling child. Little girl, long, pink dress. The little girl was looking up with the innocent blue eyes, while she was sucking her thumb. In her other wee child hand? She had a pair of sparkling purple slippers. The mom and daughter were just coming out of a busy restaurant. "That child will be the death of me." Which, if you think about it, is a timeless comment, as I'm sure parents on either side of that generation can identify. The mom was exasperated because, from the ongoing conversation, a little one-sided, it was obvious that the mom and daughter had an agreement that the shoes were to stay on on the kid's feet for the duration of the meal. A prerequisite. And the long face the child had? I was just guessing, but I'd guess some Sagittarius in the kid. Resilient, abhors shoes, finds rules are more like guidelines? Sure. There are some points, in life, that just can't be surmounted. When you're facing just such an obstacle this week? Don't get down and get in the child's face. It's not going to work and the child will win, anyway. It's

matter of realizing when you're up against an obstacle that is stronger and more fixed in its position. Which, if you think about it, is why I spend so much time barefoot.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 3.13.2008

"We know what we are, but know not what we might be."

Shakespeare's Hamlet (IV.v.37)

Aries: I've see this this several times, and it's an almost painful experience for me. I've watched as a car's shock fail to have any rebound dampening. Means the springs are good, but the springs keep on springing. So when I suggest a car is bouncing down the road, I mean, quite literally. It's an easy mechanical problem to correct, new shock absorbers. The spring take the main impact, and the dampening of the shock absorbers keep the spring from continuing to bounce. Simple device, plain idea, works wonders in modern transportation systems. What I'll usually see, what prompted this concept, it'll be a slightly older model of sedan, paint a little thin, and obviously, the vehicle's been used. Perhaps the trunk was used to haul rocks, bags of concrete, earth fill, who knows? But whatever the duty, it wore out the shock absorbers, hence the bounce to the car's behavior. I'm just trying to help my Aries friends. It's a little routine maintenance, but failing that, you're going to be acting like that car with the worn shock absorbers, just bouncing in up and down, looking a little silly with your issue. Dampening, that's all is called for, a little dampening.

Taurus: "Yeah, yeah, 'beware of the ides of March,' and so on. Whatever." Taurus girl, quoting back some Shakespeare. It's from Shakespeare's Julius Caesar. Used the bit several years in a row, and it was a running gag. Problem being, I've over-used it. Properly speaking, too, the title of the play is "The tragedy of Julius Caesar." And properly speaking, the joke went from just being a little un-funny to being very lamentable, tragic, even, in that I kept trying to peddle it again and again. Running gags require rhythm and repetition, in order to be funny. Matter of finding the correct combination, the right way to repeat the material. Make it work together. At the very least, fit the material in with current themes. That kind of rhythm and repetition works well with the current Taurus elements. There's a little of this and little of that, spurious influences, but even an indirect nudge in one area is a help. Look, there's going to be a soothsayer come along, a visionary, maybe a simple astrologer, and that person is going to warn you about upcoming proceedings. I'd suggest, just as an idea, that you pay attention to the warning. You know what happened to Caesar when he didn't listen to the free advice?

Gemini: "Step right up, here, young man, you can take a swing at this, and I'm sure you're lovely friend, is that your wife, I'm sure she will adore you if you win her this big teddy bear..." It's a come, the guy is called a drummer or a barker, and what he does is generate traffic towards a game that can't be won, or if it can be won, it usually takes more than one try. Like multiple ring tosses, or shots with the crooked gun, or whatever the scam

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is. Scams, games, rigged games, come-on artists, salesmen, hype. The odds are against you right now. I'm not saying that the odds are always against you, but the harping of the barker, the general tone, the way this game is a set-up, the way this week is set-up, it's like, and you know this in your heart, the odds are not in your Gemini favor. I'm not saying it's bad, it's just not the best that it can be. To help tilt the game a little more in the house's favor, too, there's a salesman, a front man, a person out in the front, doing a certain amount of fast talking, and this doesn't have to be a male, either. It can be a woman, using her womanly charms. Doesn't much matter at all, either, as my warning is to watch out for the hype. You don't have the luck, and unless you're really sure about your skill set with this one game? I'm not willing to bet on you when the odds are against you like this. If me, a guy who likes the long shot, if I'm not willing to bet on you, that should say something. All I'm suggesting is you cut through the hyperbole before you pony up some cash.

Cancer: I was standing in line at the post office. For me, this is a welcome respite in the middle of the morning, or afternoon, and I have way with timing it, too. Like bad timing. I usually have to mail a package when there's a long line. No line? Nothing to mail. Don't need stamps or anything. But a long line usually occurs when I need to ship something express mail. I'm sure there's a natural law that governs such events in life. In Cancer, even as I'm this pops up on the web page, Mars is in there. And Mr. Mars makes Cancer a little more impatient. Not that this is bad, but as I was standing there, me at the end of the line, a woman comes in with a child in tow. The kid won't settle down, always wanting to run out into the spring sunlight. Kid's a handful, a ball of energy, looking for an escape. The mother -- a Cancer -- gets frustrated and finally leaves, packages not mailed. Stamps not purchased. I was at the end of the line, and although there are a half-dozen windows, there's basically only two clerks working. Now, I know from repeated dealings with the post office that the line will drag on and on, with a factor like that child or similar influence making the service slower. Mars is like that. What I do? I realize that there's a conspiracy, and ten-minute stop might take an hour. I can't fix Mars, but you can adjust your attitude.

Leo: "This call may be monitored or recorded." Or something like that. I hate hearing that. I do record a lot of my phone calls. It's what I do. So I have a recording device hooked up to my phone. I've been tempted to record some of the service calls I've had to make, just to burn that as an audio file then pop it onto the website. Most phone professionals are easy to get along with. Occasionally, though, there will be the odd caller, like me. With my persistent questions, obtuse references, an odd smattering of pop culture that might -- or might not be -- germane, yeah, I can exasperate even the most patient customer service rep. I take it as a challenge, and I hope that I'm not talking to a Leo. Leo seems to have a finite amount of patience these days. Unlike my CSR. I can't really address that, but I can hope that your patience is tested by someone like me. Folks like me, we're easier to ignore. Or you can easily tune us out. We don't matter that much, and in as much as we're a little annoying, we're -- generally speaking -- not so annoying that you have to get a big (cudgel, club, hammer) to hit us over the head. Which is the temptation for this week -- the challenge -- as it were. The real point of your (royal) humanity gets tested by a couple of calls from annoying clients like me. And how you deal with us? That's the answer. Patience, still in short supply, but patience, and a certain amount of mental "whatever" helps move it along.

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Virgo: I worked with one astrology-minded person who was so obsessed with using the stars to manage everyday events, it was almost crippling. In the next week, Venus will move into opposition to Virgo, the Sun will move out of opposition to Virgo, the Moon will move in and out of Gemini, Cancer, Leo, and ultimately, at the very end of this scope, the Moon will line up with Saturn, both in Virgo. That's a lot of material to cover in a week. Too much to try and micro-manage. Get it? There's a point when you can stack the planets in favor of your endeavors. That's a good idea. There's also a point where you can spend too much time trying to make this material work for you, and too much analysis leads to paralysis. What I'm warning you about. Don't over-think a problem, a situation, any of your deals. Mars is loping along in Cancer, adding a little domestic energy to the mess. Instead of spending too much time trying to figure out what means what, and when is a good time to start this? Consider that now is a good time to get your backside into a gear, down the street, out on the road, over to the store, down to the office, and otherwise? Just in motion. Sitting there, thinking about it? That's not going to fix the problem. When is a good time? Anytime is a good time. Now. Do it. Move.

Libra: Techno, which, to me is disco, really, and as such, I have to frown upon it, because really, like any aging rock and roll person, I have to believe that "disco sucks." But Techno music, it's a different brand; therefore, it's okay for me to enjoy it -- as long I don't dance. Unwritten rule, white guys like me can't dance. "I'm just saying," you wouldn't want to be present. Not that it matters. This isn't about the dancing, it's more about the ambiance and the tone you set. It's about choosing background music, it's about making the correct choice. And even though the music is called "techno," or whatever "electronica" that we're calling it these days, it's still, the idea, the musical inspiration comes down to a fast beat with easy-to-circumscribe rhythms. Fast beat, maybe twice as fast the normal heart-beat rate. Moving music. Pretty hard to sit on my butt while that stuff is going. I try and get a thing going with the keyboard and get it synched up to music, but that's like the dancing, not a happening thing. So you're going to be like me, there's going to be hard back beat that's tough to ignore, that's the positive influence. The idea that you're like me, more than ever, and you can't get "in sync" with the rhythm -- whatever the taxonomy of the music is.

Scorpio: Dinner, the other evening, at a Tex-Mex place. I tend to dine at times when I can avoid the crush, but I'd gotten caught, and it was a 20-minute wait for a table then another 20 minutes to dinner. I was casually shoveling hot sauce, rather tasty and piquant stuff, onto broken chips and gulping it down. Good stuff. Excellent hot sauce, that one place. But there was telltale trail of sauce, leading away from the dish, and the drops of sauce told a tale of a man that was hungry. As I looked, and as another drop leaked onto the tabletop, I was wondering if I could make a good ad for this place. Imagine, licking the hot sauce up from the tabletop. Yes, it's that good, the hot sauce, not the tabletop. Gobbling up the last drips, good to the last drop? Wait, I think that's been used already. Too bad, as it's an intriguing visual image, hot sauce so good that someone would lick it straight off the table. Hate to waste it, you know. As this week gets wilder and wilder, and as the Scorpio madness doesn't slow down, consider what it would like, you trying to lick that hot sauce off the table's top. Consider, too, that I understand it would be an amusing visual for advertising, but the hyperbole exercised in the advertising world, and your own excess, might not be perfectly aligned. I'd go slow with some of that Scorpio exuberance.

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Sagittarius: I was fooling around with a set of digital images. I was supposed to be working, but I was just messing around with the photos, instead. I was working on a theme, an idea, a way to display the images. Then, as I got to messing with the photographs, the digital copies, I could see how I could easily get stuck on one way to display the pictures, and how, even though it was a theme that I liked, I would still get to be a little too repetitive. Like, it was a good idea once. Maybe an okay idea twice. Three times was pushing, but then, what I was doing, repeating the same process over and over? After the third batch, it -- the concept -- was worn out. I wasn't, but the idea was. I also had to realize that I was at a stopping point with that one idea. I had to come to grips with the point that it was time to come up with a new idea. Now, how I choose to display my images on the website, that's, like, not really a big deal. I can pick and choose any way I want. But in matters of taste, I also know that it's a good idea to occasionally break up the pattern. That's what this is about, too, breaking up a staid and conservative Sagittarius pattern. I know, I know, you've got to know the rules to break the rules, but still. Consider changing it up. There's pattern, and only you -- me -- us -- Sagittarius -- can change our own pattern. Now's a good time.

Capricorn: It was strange in that it wasn't strange. Warm March afternoon. I was strolling around downtown, me, in and amongst the business suits, hippies and homeless folks. Guy is walking along with a pair of buddies, ostensibly headed out for lunch, The little corporate tag is hanging from his shirt, plastic sleeve, I think, a city employee, might've been state or county, I couldn't really tell. The guy was wearing cowboy boots, clean but faded jeans, and a Hawaiian shirt. Red hair, pulled back in a ponytail, gray at the temples. I paced the crowd for about half a block. I had on a portable music player, Talking Heads, "This must be the place," (Naive Melody). At that one moment, there was a great happiness internally. The musical message, seeing a guy dressed like that, it all made a weird kind synchronistic sense. The attire, boots to ponytail, the gray, the song, the musical interlude. Stop what you're doing. Look. See, see if where you're at is really where you're supposed to be. I suspect, like me, there's a clear message. You might be where you're supposed to be. Are you paying attention to the subtle messages you get?

Aquarius: Red brick courthouse. There's one in downtown Dallas. Downtown San Antonio. Austin doesn't have one like that, but then, Austin's always been a little weird. Fort Worth, they cleaned theirs up some. I can think of a couple of small town that have similar, if not nearly identical structures. The county courthouse. Where it all starts -- and for some of us -- and stops. The, usually, red-brick courthouse will be in the heart of what used to be the center of downtown. All roads led to it. The brick, if those old bricks could just tell stories, I'm sure there's a tale or two that would entertain. When I'm in a new place, or when I'm trying to get oriented in a small town, I've found the easiest place to start is the town square. Looks for the red-brick courthouse. Works in my world. Half the time, the town square has been by-passed by a freeway or highway, and the square rarely ascends to its former grandeur. Doesn't matter. The old stones, the old red bricks, they still hold their stories. This is about trying to find the heart of a place. The geographical, spiritual center of town. Have to find where the heart is, or where the heart once was, and from there, like those roads that branch, there a number of avenues to follow. But first, before we go anywhere, Aquarius, let's find where the heart is. Or was, in some cases. Have to have a starting point in order to have a destination.

Pisces: Between now and the time the next Pisces scope rolls up, we're still in Pisces. By my estimation, the new scope rolls over in Aries about the same time these scopes move forward, afternoon/evening of the 19th. So between now and then, we're firmly in the Pisces quadrant, actually, really, about the last third of Pisces. Tail-end Pisces birthday, yes, happy birthday to you. Full moon, in Virgo approaching. Yes, that one is fun, too. What are going to do, as long as we've got the Venus, Mercury and the full Moon? Pisces birthday energy kicking along? Did you ever notice that harmless act of weirdness can sometimes make somebody's day? Just a tip. One, little random act of weirdness? Whatever it is, and I can't think of example, but just one? Helps with the necessary levity.

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Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing (I.i.30)

Aries: I was in a little BBQ place in the Hill country, west of here. It was late on a Saturday afternoon, before the spring breaks get into gear, and long after the Xmas shopping season is over. Dull time, for the BBQ place. I walk in, road weary, dusty. I order up some brisket and pork ribs, I'm sure, and while I'm ordering, one of the kids slips from behind the counter to head towards the front door. "Hey, I'm just going to wash the sidewalk out front, and if you don't mind, I'll hose of your truck, too. If that's okay with you." Sure, I nod, and I can tell by the grin, the kid is local. And the car wash is some kind of a running gag that I don't get. It doesn't take three kids to make a single BBQ order, but there were three in attendance. I suppose they were getting ready for the big evening rush, although, as I recall, the place closed in an hour or so. A elderly couple came through the front, bringing the total number of patrons to equal the number of present employees. The kid out front, with a hose in hand, he came back in, made another car wash joke, and went back outside.

Taurus: I got stuck with a person bargaining with me. Or trying to bargain. Taurus lass, if you must know. Here's the problem, her desire to strike a bargain didn't sound much like a bargain to me. She didn't offer anything in the way of compensation or inducement to make her extra aggravation worth my while. It wasn't a matter of making a sale, that wasn't the point, it was a matter of lowering a fixed price. For no reason. No added bonus, no offer of anything, tangible or intangible, fungible, or otherwise. Which doesn't make it much of deal for me. In fact, all it did was further irritate me on a morning when I didn't want any more irritants. I'm open to bargaining, especially if there's a little extra something in there for me. I like striking deals. I'm not so much open to barter anymore simply because I've got too much stuff as it is. But I am willing to discuss a simple cash transaction. Yet, what really matters, when I'm getting pitched a deal? What matter is the tone, the way the bargain is being presented. Make it appealing, make the deal look, or feel, like I'm getting a good deal. Make me want to knock that ten percent off the fixed price. Make it seem like your Taurus self is doing me a favor, and that makes a transaction like this go ever so much more smoothly. In the next couple of days, you're going to pitch, sell, up-sell, or negotiate a deal. During the process of negotiation, you're going to want to figure out how to pitch it so that you don't irritate the other party in the

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Gemini: I was watching clerk, in a jewelry shop, work with a customer. Customer pointed to something under the glass, on display. Clerk said, "That's the one I picked for me." I picked up my package, I was getting an older piece of jewelry repaired; I chuckled, paid and left. But I made note of that clerk's comment. Is that, like, the oldest sales routine in the world? "That's the one I wanted," or, "Yes, that my favorite." Which one is my favorite? The one I'm looking at. Yes, we all know how this goes. And what I'm warning you about, is falling for a that kind of a line, Or similar line. Or some kind of sales come-on that treats you in similar fashion. It's where the initial entry point, the first part of the interaction disarms your normally aware and alert Gemini self. The "energy," to use an out-of-date new-age term, the energy is suddenly ratcheted up a notch. In a good way. But the energy might not be entirely honest. And you might not be entirely frugal. Which is why I'm warning you about that. Which is also, why, even when I'm in a store like that, high-end jewelry, I tend not to shop. It's not like I can afford what they're selling, not in the first place. Even if there's a cute clerk, and even if it is her favorite.

Cancer: I was down at the coast, chatting with a local guy. Discussing tips and techniques. He talked about growing up there. We talked about little sand sharks. "Whole reason we caught fish was to play with the sharks," what he claimed. I'm sure. Although, adolescent males, it's not a far stretch of the imagination to see coastal kids doing just that. Live life a little on the edge. Better yet, at the purported age, I'll admit, I was indestructible. Now then playing in tide pools and leaning off the bridge that says, "No Fishing," that fine for an adolescent male. But as a dear, sweet Cancer type, the Moon Child, if you will, I'd warn you about breaking rules. Or bending rules, or not even following your parent's advice. Got it? There's a time to play wild and loose with rule, flaunt convention, and generally act as if you were indestructible. Now, with Mar in your sign? Now is not the time to bend, break, or otherwise fail to follow the prescribed instructions. It's like playing with sharks, you know, someone is bound to get hurt. Probably the Cancer. Mars influence.

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I'm not saying you can't try, either. I'm just saying, you're setting yourself up to be mocked, if you do this in a public place.

Virgo: Saturn is ugly burden to shoulder, all by your Virgo self. I'm not offering to help ease that burden any, nope, I'm not offering a hand, or shoulder, or any other body part, but I am going to offer up a little pesky advice. I've been through Saturn toil and trouble. I've been round and round with Saturn. I've fought Saturn and I've lost to Saturn. "I fought Saturn and Saturn won," maybe it could be song. Maybe I could quite trying to be cute, too. What's happening is that there is a single issue illuminated by Saturn's position. This a single area that needs concentrated effort. Sounds a little redundant to suggest that a Virgo work harder, on the area that needs the most work. Here's the trick, see, you cold just as easily be avoiding the cruel Saturn task by claiming that you're working over here. Or over here. Or wherever, except where you're supposed to be working. AS this week unfolds and as the moon gets really full, watch, That moonlight will show where the real toil is required. Oh yeah, hard work now? I'll promise, there will be a reward for your efforts.

Libra: I was walking, pedestrian route, through a neighborhood, in a warm March (nominally spring) afternoon. The air was redolent in a heady fragrance, sort of like a woman with too much perfume, only, it wasn't sickly or over-sweet. I passed a small, traditional front yard fence, and growing up was a thick veil of Morning Glory. Might've been Honeysuckle, I'm unsure of what kind of planet it was. I know it smelled really good. Intoxicating. Sweet, and yet, not over-ripe. Some days, it's the big things. Some days, a simple hedge full of flowering vine can make all the difference. That's what turned a sour day into a strong, nice and clean day. Also meant, from that point forward, I had a kind of intoxicated outlook. There's something about the way the flowers smell. There's something about the way spring is in the air, there's some kind of tangible intangible feeling that indicates, to your finely tuned Libra senses, that the rebirth and regeneration has begun. Yeah, and Aries has started, too, and that's not without a few little rough points, but still, over-all, the big picture, stop and smell those wonderful morning glory flowers.

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Sagittarius: I was overhearing an office worker complain. "I knew if I set my head down on the desk for even a moment, I'd be asleep. Not good. Not good at all." If it had been me? I would've put my head down on the desk, and I would've gone to sleep. I've found that even a ten or twenty minute power nap can bring renewed vigor and strength. Sometimes, too, a short rest will make it so I can see clearly where I couldn't see a way around the problem, prior to the little rest. Someplace between "I couldn't take a nap," and my own, "I needed some shut-eye," there's a balance point. Like as not, that's what this next few days are all about. It's matter of finding the rest that you need, when you need it. I've found that I can function, for weeks on end, with little rest, maybe just a couple of hours at night. Or in the morning, sometime. But then, I've also found that I'll need to crash for a while. I could go to sleep as the sun was going down, and not wake up until well after the sun had risen -- the next day. Every once in awhile, our body, Sagittarius body - will dictate a clear message. Time for some rest. It will be this week. Grab the rest when you can, things might be busy again in a few weeks.

Capricorn: Shopping day, Hill Country. I was with a friend, and we were cruising along in a little town that was full of market spaces for antiques. How antique, how much was hype? Don't ask. We wandered through one store, out the back door, and there, under a circus-like awning, there were three flat-bed trailers, with various wares on sale. I wandered along, picked at a few items then I found some dustbins. Leather trash cans, like for an office, inverted, the leather resonated in the nicest way. Made an excellent drum. I had three of them turned over, and I was banging away like a chimpanzee on a bongo set. One guy, in tow behind his wife or girlfriend, and I'm guessing wife, looks over, smirks, "No more beer, huh?" Girl I was with rolled her eyes, "More like no more wine." Which is an odd comment, but it fit with the place and the times. And her comment might've been "No more whine." That area has an abundance of little grape-growing, wine-making places. Not being a drinking man, and actively beating on something, the best comment might've been, "No more coffee," but then, that wouldn't really be the case. I tried the tin-sided cans, they didn't sound good. I tried the other ones, wooden, or cardboard, or plastic -- I don't know -- and those didn't resonate at all. But the leather ones did, hence my impromptu, single-serving drum-circle. I was dragged out of there. I was only having fun, but as Mars slips along, think about the fun that you're having. Is it annoying anyone? Should you cut down on the coffee? Cut back on the beer?

Aquarius: There was a local sign up, place around the corner from me. "Lenten Special, so good you'll feel guilty." I'm not sure how that plays out. Isn't Lent (Christian/Catholic season) about giving up something so they can shed the guilt? I never did quite get the symbolism behind the sacrifices. I suspect it dates to an agrarian society and by the time the spring rolls around, the winter stores are depleted. But that's just an extemporaneous theory that popped out of my head fully-formed. Look: this about getting ready. This is about the beginning of the new year. This is about the start to a fresh season -- non-hemisphere specific -- and this is about a Lenten Special (Aquarius only) that is so good you can enjoy it guilt-free. Not that you're typically buying all the material about the church and the whole story, no, that's not entirely your style. You like the myth, though. And better yet, that Lenten Special that is guilt-free? You should enjoy that, practicing Christian or not. It's the whole "guilt-free" emphasis.

Pisces: In the early spring, mid-March or thereabouts, we get these foggy mornings. I'm sure this is a peculiar weather pattern for this time of the year, at least for some folks, but here, it's almost normal. Happens frequently enough that I'm used to it. To glance outside the window would reveal a scene that looks like it's cold. Cold and gray. Relatively speaking, it's not that bad, it's just the atmospheric interaction with moisture, and the ambient temperature, and all that science stuff with high pressure, low pressure, and dew point humidity. I was sitting in a little Tex-Mex diner, not far from here, and the cold, gray clouds formed a continuous, uniform backdrop. Looking out the front pane of the restaurant, I I could see the outline of the windows, the trim for the building, but the building itself? It was painted gray. Seemed to disappear into the gray fog of the morning. The would trim was brightly done in two colors of blue, a turquoise and a lighter shade of blue. That meant the outlines were clearly visible. But against the morning's apparent fog and uniformly dead-pan sky? The building was just the perfect shade of to blend.

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Sagittarius: I was overhearing an office worker complain. "I knew if I set my head down on the desk for even a moment, I'd be asleep. Not good. Not good at all." If it had been me? I would've put my head down on the desk, and I would've gone to sleep. I've found that even a ten or twenty minute power nap can bring renewed vigor and strength. Sometimes, too, a short rest will make it so I can see clearly where I couldn't see a way around the problem, prior to the little rest. Somewhere between "I couldn't take a nap," and my own, "I needed some shut-eye," there's a balance point. Like as not, that's what this next few days are all about. It's matter of finding the rest that you need, when you need it. I've found that I can function, for weeks on end, with little rest, maybe just a couple of hours at night. Or in the morning, sometime. But then, I've also found that I'll need to crash for a while. I could go to sleep as the sun was going down, and not wake up until well after the sun had risen -- the next day. Every once in awhile, our body, Sagittarius body - will dictate a clear message. Time for some rest. It will be this week. Grab the rest when you can, things might be busy again in a few weeks.

Capricorn: Shopping day, Hill Country. I was with a friend, and we were cruising along in a little town that was full of market spaces for antiques. How antique, how much was hype? Don't ask. We wandered through one store, out the back door, and there, under a circus-like awning, there were three flat-bed trailers, with various wares on sale. I wandered along, picked at a few items then I found some dustbins. Leather trash cans, like for an office, inverted, the leather resonated in the nicest way. Made an excellent drum. I had three of them turned over, and I was banging away like a chimpanzee on a bongo set. One guy, in tow behind his wife or girlfriend, and I'm guessing wife, looks over, smirks, "No more beer, huh?" Girl I was with rolled her eyes, "More like no more wine." Which is an odd comment, but it fit with the place and the times. And her comment might've been "No more whine." That area has an abundance of little grape-growing, wine-making places. Not being a drinking man, and actively beating on something, the best comment might've been, "No more coffee," but then, that wouldn't really be the case. I tried the tin-sided cans, they didn't sound good. I tried the other ones, wooden, or cardboard, or plastic -- I don't know -- and those didn't resonate at all. But the leather ones did, hence my impromptu, single-serving drum-circle. I was dragged out of there. I was only having fun, but as Mars slips along, think about the fun that you're having. Is it annoying anyone? Should you cut down on the coffee? Cut back on the beer?

Aquarius: There was a local sign up, place around the corner from me. "Lenten Special, so good you'll feel guilty." I'm not sure how that plays out. Isn't Lent (Christian/Catholic season) about giving up something so they can shed the guilt? I never did quite get the symbolism behind the sacrifices. I suspect it dates to an agrarian society and by the time the spring rolls around, the winter stores are depleted. But that's just an extemporaneous theory that popped out of my head fully-formed. Look: this about getting ready. This is about the beginning of the new year. This is about the start to a fresh season -- non-hemisphere specific -- and this is about a Lenten Special (Aquarius only) that is so good you can enjoy it guilt-free. Not that you're typically buying all the material about the church and the whole story, no, that's not entirely your style. You like the myth, though. And better yet, that Lenten Special that is guilt-free? You should enjoy that, practicing Christian or not. It's the whole "guilt-free" emphasis.

Pisces: In the early spring, mid-March or thereabouts, we get these foggy mornings. I'm sure this is a peculiar weather pattern for this time of the year, at least for some folks, but here, it's almost normal. Happens frequently enough that I'm used to it. To glance outside the window would reveal a scene that looks like it's cold. Cold and gray. Relatively speaking, it's not that bad, it's just the atmospheric interaction with moisture, and the ambient temperature, and all that science stuff with high pressure, low pressure, and dew point humidity. I was sitting in a little Tex-Mex diner, not far from here, and the cold, gray clouds formed a continuous, uniform backdrop. Looking out the front pane of the restaurant, I I could see the outline of the windows, the trim for the building, but the building itself? It was painted gray. Seemed to disappear into the gray fog of the morning. The would trim was brightly done in two colors of blue, a turquoise and a lighter shade of blue. That meant the outlines were clearly visible. But against the morning's apparent fog and uniformly dead-pan sky? The building was just the perfect shade of to blend.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 3.27.2008

"Thy frank ejection make;

Thou hast power to choose, and they none to forsake."

Shakespeare's All's Well That Ends Well [II.iii.43-44]

Aries: There's always that little element of odd. I was hanging out with a guy in a coffee shop. The guy is younger than me by a large degree, at least in years, emotionally, we're on about the same level, I'd hope. He was also wearing his hair in a certain fashion. It was closely cut, had been shaved, along the sides, going up towards his crown. Then, the center strip of hair was left long. Nascent Mohawk. He wears black, usually. Black, black leather, items with studs to match the heavy piercings and ink. Nice guy actually, just hung up in certain style. Not that it's a problem, either. What was odd, though, was to see him walking down the street while he was wearing a nice suit. Light colored, good-looking suit. Shirt. Pressed shirt, even. Tie. Power color. Over his shoulder was the usual laptop tote bag. That was so unexpected. Caught me mid-tortilla. I didn't know what to do. I suppose, he was just walking along to a business meeting of some sort, I mean, it's no unreasonable to expect him to be warmly received in different circles, despite the heavy metal and ink, the hair style, I mean, I'm sure he could make it. It's just not what I expected to see. Secret lives are important aspects to everyone's character. Aries secret lives are good, too. Do like my buddy, and show up in an unexpected manner, like full business dress. Always throws them off.

Taurus: "I'm telling you, the boss was a real jerk today." Taurus buddy, I'm quoting him, and I'm not quoting verbatim. The language was a little more colorful. That's also the way it goes in the last quarter of the moon. Your boss, your significant other, your insignificant other, clients, girl serving coffee, all of them can be difficult. One -- or more -- will be hard to take in the next couple of days, and it only gets worse at the start of next week, too. Moon's almost dark. Clue? As soon as you see the frown, just smile. Messes with that frown's game plan. Boss -- or other authority figure -- being prissy and snippy? Fight back with perky. How to take a bad situation from bad to worse? Be nice. Smile, be perky. Do every onerous task with broad grin. Be happy as you go along. This highlights the problem of the worker with the bad attitude, and to some extent, it confronts that bad attitude while not confronting it all. Be nice. Gets a lot further than anything else. Me? I like it, too, because nothing upsets the snippy people, nothing goads them more than perky. Happy and perky, that's me. You, too.

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Gemini: "Band of Heathens" has a song, "Odysseus." That one song takes, stupid iTunes calls it rock, anyway, that song sounds like some sad country band, sawing there way through a rambling tale. It's actually a songwriter's version of Homer's epic "The Odyssey." The soft brush drum set and accent kind of tilt the material in the country -- or western -- arena. Classical mythology, texts that are venerated and taught in higher learning. Imagine one of those turned into a country song. Yeah, that old "Odysseus could kick some ass." I believe I caught that lyric correctly. I might have it wrong. But it's a cool song. And it's great idea. Take two items that don't have any relation to each other. Greek pre-history. A soft, twangy young country band. Put those two items in a blender, see what pours out. It's Gemini mind-set. It's a Gemini thing, too. Not many people can see the corollary and connection between two disparate items. This isn't about you going out and writing a country hit based on classical mythology, either. This about how you can recombine elements that have proven successful, reconfigure the material, in a new way. Points that don't seem to have any connecting lines? Draw lines where there weren't. Connect a couple of things, and call it a Gemini victory. You're due, you know.

Cancer: I was talking to waitress, a rather attractive lass, Cancer, worked in a coffee shop. She was bemoaning her fate. She was pregnant with her second child. Second child on birth control. I mean, it was the second child she conceived while she was on active birth control. "We always figured on babies, but these came along too soon," she explained. Her and her husband planned on two children. They just didn't plan on the babies less than a year apart. And they didn't plan on the babies when the mom was so young. Although, in hindsight, I'm sure, years later, she'll think it was a good idea to get the babies out of the way. Besides, parenting brings a level maturity, whether it's wanted or not. The next baby showing up, in an untimely fashion? Her discovery? She's a typical Cancer person. There's going to be a fateful discovery, soon. No, I didn't mean pregnancy. That's not what I mean, I mean, an uplifting and joyous discovery. A remarkable event. Good news. And maybe a little morning sickness, too. The long-term prognostication for whatever is revealed? That's good. The short-term? Therein is the problem Mars and the Sun start this week with some unsettling news for Cancer. You'll get over it, and eventually, you'll glow.

Leo: I got a deal worked out with a girlfriend. When I need a car, I can usually borrow hers. Means I drop her off at work, pick her up at work, get my car stuff done while she toils away at a real job. I tend to do this, maybe, once a month, as I'm big proponent of not owning a (working) car. And this arrangement has worked fine for years. Until a week like this week. I pointedly skipped borrowing the car because I could just se this coming up and then, the more I thought about the more I realized that this is the same for Leo. Right now. All those times, she gets off at 5 PM, all those times I've showed up at 4:45, and waited until 5:15 PM? Half hour of my time, she gets a full tank of gas. Astrology readings are not included. Now, what didn't happen, but it cold, this next week? I show up at 5:05 instead of 5, or my usual 4:45. She's unhappy, and has many things to say, most of them bad about me and my irresponsible behavior. Traffic notwithstanding. One Leo is asking, "So I shouldn't drive a friend's car this week?" No, that's not the issue, it's about all the times you're good, and just once, you mike a tiny mistake, like, five minutes late, and no one remembers all the times you've been on time. I'm ducking, see, this week. And you're a Leo, so you should duck to. Just don't do it, doesn't matter, they all have a way of forgetting all the good things you've done.

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Virgo: One of the lakes I go to fish? Some days, it's not always worth the effort. Although, it is worth the effort, since there's a peace and solitude. Unless there are too many other people bank fishing. I was pulling out one afternoon since I had regular business to transact, and as I made tour around the park's grounds, the recreation area on the lake's shoreline, I noticed a guy. Middle-age or undetermined age. It was a cold morning, relatively speaking, some clouds in the morning until the sun warmed it all up. I heard him drive up a few hours earlier, a noisy compact car of some kind. Drew my attention momentarily. He was parked, and he had single pole, firmly in his hand, while he was sitting in a collapsible chair. He was holding that pole upright, a line obviously slung out into the channel. Most of us fish three or four poles at a time. This guy was just one, and how him, the pole and the chair all fit in that car was a bit of mystery to me. He must've had it worked out. As I cruised past, I couldn't help but note that the guy was, indeed, happy. Maybe not ecstatic, but there was determined grin under the bill of his hat. It's not about the big pleasures in life, it's about the little ones. It's not about how many fish you can catch, it's about enjoying what you're doing. Okay, maybe it is about the fish, too, but really, are you enjoying your pursuit?

Libra: It's been a very long time since I've been any kind of a restaurant manager. Or manager in any capacity. As I settled in to peruse a menu at a favorite taco haven, I was watching as a little girl (age between 2 and 10), with her apparent parents, that little kid accidentally knocked over a plastic tumbler of ice tea. Shock and horror, and the parents spun it around to look like the waiter's fault. Which it wasn't, but the parents were working that thing. If I was the manager, I would've given the whole family a complimentary meal, just to appease them. However, I'm not the manager, and I'm not in charge, and I'm also not a Libra, which, I suspect that the manager was. He had a keen eye for bottom line and yet, he also had a way of chastising the waiter -- in front of the family -- and making everyone involved feel a little bit better. The family will come back, the little girl's shirt will dry out, and the waiter will still get a nice tip. I called it wrong, but like I suggested, I'm not a Libra, and it was a Libra that smoothed everything over.

Scorpio: Heavy eye-liner make-up Underneath the perky uniform, there was obviously black attire. A dark mane was falling over her eyes, obscuring the blue contacts. I had to ask, she was a Scorpio. Fatal attraction, yes, I do have that for the Scorpio, especially the female form. And? I know better, too. I'm just not man enough for any Scorpio woman. Way it is. Get used to it. Doesn't stop me from making lame attempts at flirting. But when I know it's a Scorpio, the best way to tease one is to appear to hold something in reserve. Works better than being too forward. Act a little cautious, claim to be holding something back, to prevent the Scorpio from getting some sort of perceived upper hand. Actions like this have been known, even employed, to drive a typical Scorpio crazy. Irritate one, anyway. What's going on these days, there's a lot of good stuff, but you'll also find yourself, like that Scorpio waitress the other evening, with a pesky customer (or client) who seems intent on trying to gain the advantage over the Scorpio. The Scorpio, who by his or her very nature, is both watery and yet fixed (resolute) at the same time, that self-same Scorpio knows that there is not advantage to be had. Doesn't stop one of us, though, from trying to imply that we have an advantage, real or perceived, over that Scorpio. When you deal with someone who thinks they know more, play along. Lead them right into their own trap.

Sagittarius: I've got a buddy who is "comprehensively consequence impaired." I'm not saying he's immature, I'm not saying that he can't think past the next few days, I'm just saying that if an opportunity appears, he'll take it. Usually, he'll go for the immediate gratification. No thought is even given as to what might happen later. If he does this, the consequences of action result in this. He can't think about it. I'm not sure if it's a mental disorder, lack of maturity, upbringing, or is it just a Jupiter thing in his natal chart? I'm inclined to blame the stars. Moon, really, as there is a lunar placement that indicates this could be the source of our dismay. Or his inability to properly think through an action. "What happens if I push this button?" He would ask. "Don't!" Someone yells. He pushes the button. Dire events follow. Regular as clockwork. There's a lesson to be learned from buddy who can't think any action through, his inability to plan for the future is no longer a Sagittarius problem. We can think about consequences. We are not comprehensively consequence impaired. And we also know, if the sign says wet paint, we don't have to stop and figure out just how wet that paint is. Right?

Capricorn: I'm a nice guy, and I was in line in a store where they have those staggered cashier stands for big crowds. Only, there wasn't much of a crowd, and there were only two cashiers. One had a line, so I just stepped over the next one, the line was shorter. An attractive young lady was in line at the busier cashier, the longer line. The cashier made noises about it being lunch time, flipped the light off, signaled a manager, and the girl, with just a few items, grimaced. She was headed to stand in line behind me, but me, being nice and all, I just motioned her to stand in front of me. Nice view, too. So she got a free cut in line. She only had two items, and their total was about \$18.87. She gradually unfurled three five-dollar bills. Then she plucked two singles from her pocket. Then she had to dig in her purse for another dollar bill. The reason I remember this? She then had to count out all the change, exact change. One quarter, some dimes, nickels, and finally, pennies. All seven. See what I get for being nice? Was the view worth it? Judgement call. Patience frayed? That's a Capricorn thing. Mars buzzing along in Cancer makes it hard for Capricorn to do the right thing, then abide by that action. If I had been a Capricorn, I would've wound up just paying for her merchandise, just to move her along. Which, if you think about it, might've been her plan. But I doubt it. Watch, though, as you'll have someone with 11 items in their basket, when you're in the 10 item or less lane. Or worse, you let some girl cut in front of you in line, only to have her take an excruciating amount of time to complete her transaction.

Aquarius: I've got a friend, she hates her bank. Hates it with some kind of unholy passion. Hates the her bank so much, what she does, every check she writes, she uses a lime green pen, or light pink ink, or even red ink, anything but standard black or blue ink. She was told, erroneously or not, that the ink that is off-color has to be processed by hand. Her way of fighting the system. Her way of making a statement. Her way of annoying me because, when she pays me with a check, I have to make sure I've got a pen on hand that she can use. Not black or blue ink.

Pisces: "One Night only!" The blackboard shouted, "The Exploding Sex Kittens!" Now that's a band name that I like. It's a polka band, all-girl, obviously, playing at a German beer garden kind of a place. All-girl band. With various instruments, I'm imagining a xylophone and squeezebox, not sure what else, tuba? It's sort of scary what some people will come up with.

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"So doth the greater glory dim the less;

A substitute shines brightly as a king

Until a king be by."

Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice (V.i.104-6)

Aries: I was idly chatting with a buddy of mine. He's got a, I think, a pit bull without the bobbed ears. Friendly dog, far as I can tell. Not being a dog person, I don't really know. Nor do I want to know. However, my buddy, his name is not "bubba," he warned me when I sat down, "Watch out for uninvited licking." I wasn't sure what the joke was, some sort of inside humor I wasn't privy to. I sipped on a single shot of espresso, expertly rendered by a Pisces. (Sign that precedes mighty Aries.) Something warm and wet hit my toes, then my ankles. I glanced down. The mean-looking dog was affectionately licking my feet. My buddy looked over, "I warned you." I wondered if the dog was sizing me up for a meal, or seeing if I tasted good enough to eat. I don't. I'm tough and stringy, not really a good meal, although, I might make a good chew toy. But that's not the point. It was the warning, fair warning, and then what ensued. I was warned, like a shot across the bow of ship, that there was a dog-tongue looking for spot to share dog saliva. Birthday's are a good time, but I'm warning you, too, that there's a tendency to misunderstand the intent, intention and direction that some stray comment from a stray stranger. "Uninvited licking" could mean a lot of things. In this case, though, and coming up in the next week, in Aries, take the words of caution with a strict, literal sense. Don't over-think or over-analyze.

Taurus: Some days, I just hate working with this astrology stuff. It's all about "due diligence," and then waiting for the rewards. The problem being, as far as I can see, the rewards are further away than I care to figure. For Taurus. So, it's all about long-term goals and even longer-term planning. Not that I'll be much help with that. Remove yourself from the moment. Remove yourself from the place where you are, at least, mentally. This is easy for me to do, I'll be on the north shore of a local lake, standing there, tending to lines that I have in the water. I will be casting into a strong breeze from the south, and then, once the lines are set, I have some time to just wait. Watch and wait. I doubt you're going to be fishing in the same place I'm fishing. I doubt we're going after the exact same prey. But I don't doubt that you're going to be like me, surveying a few

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lines in the water, keeping a wary eye for the telltale tip of a pole, and otherwise, just watching. That's what I mean by remove yourself from the moment. With those poles, nothing will happen for hours. Just watch, wait. But ones the lines are set, you know, it's only a matter of time. Set your fishing lines, get them baited and out there. Then pay attention.

Gemini: "Good is an adjective, well is an adverb," the guy in the store was saying. He looked at me, my scruffy best. I didn't fit. Cowboy store (Western outfitter store, boots, yoke shirts, hats, the whole shootin' match.) I was in shorts, sandals and loud shirt. The grammar cop was trying to impress upon his staff the importance of differentiating between "well" and "good." That's all well and good, I think. Good is an adjective, although, it could be an adverbial form, goodly. Good describes a person, place or thing. Well, the adverb, it describes how something is done. Correctly speaking, "It was a good job," but "you did the job well." This really has very little to do with grammar, per se, it has a lot more to do with running into what you run into, where you least expect it. "Riddle me this," the guy said, looking me up and down, "what's a comma splice?" Easy, when two independent clauses are joined with only a comma. I know that one well. I had a war of words about that with an editor. She wanted the comma splice. I wanted a semi-colon. Editor, grammatically wrong, won. Think about that, my fine little Gemini friend. Who has the last say, right or wrong?

Cancer: I can't even suppose that you've ever watched yankees (defined as from north of Texas, or even in some cases, from North Texas) sample traditional Mexican cuisine. The smallest of the green peppers are hot. Some of the food has enough pepper in it to sear and blister lips. "That which burns the lips frees the mind," is our motto. Then there's the salt on the rim of the margarita glass, and nothing's quite as amusing as watching tourist try to work around that. It's not such an odd combination, not to me. But this is my world and the tourist are like, in third-world country. A place where customs and manners are different. Frequently, too, the language is different. Mars is both an energizer and an irritant. Which is it going to be? Believe it or not, you have the power to control your Martian urges. I would go ahead look like tourist with the hot peppers. Better to try a big gulp of hot sauce and then drain a glass or water -- we expect that from you. Better to go ahead and confront the issue rather than shying away from it. Mars pushes it all to the front, realize you might feel a little awkward -- that doesn't mean you can't enjoy yourself with a little excess. Try the margaritas, too, just not with a Virgo.

Leo: Ask for references. I've been Leo-friendly and Leo-centric for over a decade now. Not that it's bad, either, just the way it is. I've been doling out advice -- based on astrology -- for that length of time. Doesn't stop, just keeps on coming. I try not to repeat myself with same sage morsel, but even that gets to be a difficult task. I was in a typical BBQ joint, probably gnawing on a bone, and my casual glance picked up a a sign tacked over a doorway. I was thinking about that sign, its message, and the way things look, at this very minute, in Leo. For Leo. For The Leo. How it is. How it will be. And what can I suggest that will make your life easier, better, and provide a way around this week's troubler spot? All I could think of was what is said in that BBQ place, that sign. Not the sign, because The Sign is Leo (I know, enough with the pandering). It's a simple message, so imagine, if you will, there I was, pork rib in hand, looking at the sign over the doorway.

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It's supposed to look like an antique sign, but the source of the quote can actually be traced back to a Scorpio from Oklahoma. Not that it matters. It's old farmer's advice: Life is easier when you plow around the stump. I'm not saying you're stumped. But think about going around the problem instead of stubbornly trying to go through the problem.

Virgo: Saturn's going to be a while, but it's hitting a lot of folks with some serious wake-up calls. It's all about timing. Luck and good fortune are nice, but let's be really honest, Virgo-honest kind of honesty. Down in your core, you know, luck and the whims of fate are really just pieces of fiction. Bad things generally happen to good people. Way it is. And you're on the downside of the wheel of fortune, as the wheel dips lower and lower, and as Saturn comes closer and closer, and as such, you're just not sure you believe in good luck and good fortune. None of that matters much. The way this is going to work, it's a lot like a mythical rain dance. I'm not sure that there ever was a belief system that really had a rain dance, but let's say there was. The outcome of that rain dance, doesn't matter how much one implores the great spirit to send water down from the heavens, if there isn't a meteorological set of conditions, I doubt the odd pagan gods will appease. Timing has a lot to do with the outcome of a rain dance. It's about timing what you desire, and making that work for you. For the time being, though, looks like a long, hot and dry summer.

Libra: "Wow, I never thought of looking at it that way." Practice that expression, Practice saying it with an open mind. Embrace that idea, for that matter. You're on the receiving end of a special kind of time, a chance to learn something new. A new way to see an old situation. Old material, greatly changed, but the same lesson, over again. Only it's not the same lesson, it's different. Perspective, a unique perspective, that's what's required. And an open mind. I know, I know, there will be more than Libra who will complain, make exhortations, and loudly declaim I've got it all wrong. That's okay, too. I'll take the abuse for this next couple of days. But then, when the shouting is over, when the verbal repartee is done with, I also expect an apology. It's a matter of taking a new look at an old problem. Or an old look at a new problem. Or, it's a matter of realizing, even though I think the world of you, that maybe you don't know all the answers and you can be willing to learn from someone new. "Wow, I never thought of it that way." See what I mean?

Scorpio: I was alongside a clear-running creek, sort an urban anomaly, and I noticed a snake in the water. He was making good time, Mr. Water Snake, swimming downstream. One, I was high on the bank, away from the snake, and two, most of the snakes like that one are really quite harmless. I could get into describing the markings, paying special attention to the shape of the snake's head, and I could explain how this was a harmless constrictor, not more than a two feet long. However, in these parts, snakes get a bad rap. If I started to describe that critter as a water snake, the first reaction is "Water Moccasin!" And from that point on, it's varying degrees of self defense, up to and not limited to heavy artillery. Pretty good for a harmless little critter I was watching as he was just swimming along. Not so much of a big deal, not to me. I thought about Scorpio, too, because I was trying to find a way to express the energy you guys have. I'm the only one who saw that snake; I'm the only one who understands Scorpio. It's a powerful image, strong creature, a survivor, and so is Scorpio. Able to strike fear in many people. So is Scorpio. Harmless. Well, I'm not sure that Scorpio is harmless, but like that lone water

snake, between the two of us, I'll keep it a secret. Alone, you're fine. Matter of speaking, really, kind of a good place to be.

Sagittarius: Want to see some one jump into action? I was on a shuttle flight, and just after a bumpy take-off, I had an idea, and I reached for the air-sick bag. Those things are great for taking notes on. There wasn't one in front of me, so I asked the folks next to me for theirs. Moved fast. Worked well. "Look, if you're going to be sick? I don't think you should sit here." I whipped out a pen and started to make notes. All I wanted it for, all good. Sagittarius can improvise rather well. It's matter of being in the right place at the correct time, and asking the right question. Questions. As Mars moves along in Cancer, there's going to be a similar situation and what might seem to be an awkward question. For a Sagittarius? Not really. Ask away.

Capricorn: The wisdom of bumper stickers -- to wit: "If you are close enough to read this -- I can slam on my brakes and sue you." It was on the back bumper of large pick-up truck. I grabbed a camera snagged a quick shot so I wouldn't forget the image. The image is gone, now, but the sentiment applies in Capricorn. Especially in Cap. Mars is opposite you. You are close enough to reach out and kiss that bumper in front of you. You are close enough to get in trouble. "But I thought Jupiter, was, like, good. Or something." I'd go with the "or something" in this case. Mars makes haste. Mars gives you a little edge. And Jupiter can make you feel like you're invincible. Hence the problem. Mars and cars, or, in tis case the wisdom of the bumper sticker. Think about this, as you go careening through your Capricorn daily routine. Be careful that you're not following too closely, crowding, tailgating, or otherwise putting a little too much stress on a situation. Some days, you know, that little note in the bumper in front of me, that was a good reminder. Real or, perhaps in a metaphorical way. Don't be following too closely.

Aquarius: I was standing at the edge of lake, and I had a fairly new fishing pole. It was only a few weeks old. I had some strong, new fishing line on it, a heavy weight, and I had an even heavier lead weight on the end, along with some striper bait. I did an appropriate wind-up to sail that bait out about halfway to the middle of the lake, and then, just as I let loose, the pole shattered in my hand. Loud noise. Broken pieces of pole. Behind me, there was a partially hidden steel cable, and my hook was embedded in that cable. The wind-up was only about a third of the way through the delivery, but the end of the pole, all 8 (plus) feet, had developed quite the momentum. If the end of the pole had snapped. Or if the pole was just broken in two pieces, I would've carried it back to the store and got a replacement pole. Regrettably, as I looked at the shattered pieces -- plural -- I realized that there was no way I could lie and suggest this was manufacturing problem. Or a pole problem. Or a problem with anything other than operator negligence. Pony up when the time comes. For me, that pole cost less than \$30. Not the cheapest fishing pole I've got, but not an expensive one, which, if had been, I might have reacted differently. Although, think about it, the pole was shattered from my delivery, or attempted delivery, and that damage would be obvious to most real fisher-people. All I'm suggesting, and I don't think this will much more than a \$20 mistake, but it's easier to just pony up, admit fault, and don't worry about.

Pisces: Did you know that air-sick bags have a patent notice on them? Have we gone so far that every little item has to be protected by a patent? Is this a life spiraling out of control?

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 4.10.2008

"My good will is great, though the gift small."

Shakespeare's Pericles, the Prince of Tyre (III.iv.20)

Aries: Spring has sprung and love is in the air. Maybe it's not love, maybe it's just something that looks like love. Maybe it's just lustful thoughts. Venus is careening through your sign. Mars is in a (compatible) water sign, and Mercury just touches the last part of Aries this week. Next week, it's all different, but this week is all about the wonderful world of Aries romance. Or something like Aries romance. Perhaps it's just a reasonable facsimile, but who cares? Well, yes, I do care, and yes, I do want the very best for you, but in the meantime, why not take advantage of what's floating along? Use this. Use it well. The reason I suggest it might not be true love, just reasonable facsimile thereof? It's not so much the planets as it's the way the other signs are taking this information. The way they bounce off of you. It's not about how you're feeling, that's all but assured to be good as a result of Venus and Mars, it's how other people react to you. Then how you react to how they react and this devolves into a reductive mess. So, keep the happy Aries face on. Show the good side. Might not be true love, might just be a romantic tickle, but you never can tell where it could lead. But tread softly, too, as we're not all on the same upswing that you're riding on.

Taurus: It's all in the pitch, as this happened a second time. A lady, a Taurus, was sending me information. She was pretending that she was saving me money on shipping an item to her. In fact, what her Taurus self was doing was costing her my good will. Her pitch wasn't a good pitch, it was about how to save her money. It wasn't about how to make me extra cash. All I did was say, "No." I could've been more politic when dealing with a Taurus, but that wasn't the point. I wasn't about being correct. I was looking out for me. Which, given where your planets are, isn't such a bad idea, looking out for yourself. What is most important, though, is how you look out for yourself. Don't be abrasive. Don't grate on the individual. Try and be nice. Try to figure out a pitch that works, I mean, the idea was right, the Taurus delivery was all wrong. "You'll save money," what she wrote. What she meant? "I'll save big." As you pitch your idea, your concept, your Taurus dream, consider how it sounds on the other end. Consider, is this adding value, in order to make it attractive? That's how to sell, and more important, win big.

Gemini: I was in coffee shop. In the counter's display, there were muffins, cookies, parts of pies, and a row of bottles filled with various "fresh squeezed" juices. I looked at a muffin, "What in that one?" I asked. The Gemini behind the counter looked up from the double espresso he was making me, "Echinacea, some ginger, I think, want one?" Austin's

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a weird town, but a cookie with medicinal herbs as some of the ingredients? I do recall some limited brand of cola that had similar ingredients. Just tasted like the Mexican Coke to me, though, strong and sweet with that "corn syrup" flavor. Not high fructose, processed stuff. As it turns out, though there was a little miscommunication with the Gemini. He was talking about the fresh squeezed juice, the "Mr. Good Flow" (or something) brand. I was talking about the muffin with poppy seeds. There are, as benefits a Gemini, two ideas here. One, watch the communications. Mercury has yet to arrive, might be problematic, like, some guy asking you questions while you work. Then, too, for the West Coast/Third Cost set? Think about making a muffin with medicinal herbs in it. There could be a market for just such a food stuff. I know, if that had been in the muffin, I'd have to have one.

Cancer: I had an old school office chair, a while back. It collapsed from the repeated strain of me sitting in it almost daily and working. So I've been on the lookout for a similar kind of office chair. One that's all wood, I can stick a pillow on it, and it has to be old, like, older than me. Another option would be a retro-style "dictation" chair. Kind of minimalist seating arrangement, as there's a small lumbar adjustable back pad, but no arms, usually mounted on a heavy steel base with at least three or four heavy-duty rollers. I found one, the other day, in a second-hand shop. I sat down, leaned back, and I kept going back and back and fell over. The greatest damage done was my pride, but even at that, I wasn't too shaken up. The shopkeeper wasn't overly solicitous of my health. More like a grunt, and the perfunctory, "You break, you buy," comment. I may not be the most graceful, but I do know how to fall correctly to minimize damage. So "astrologer in a second-hand shop" isn't quite like the cliché "bull in a china shop." Might be close, though. And I was thinking about this event because you're stuck with Mr. Mars and he's a tough one, and while I don't think you're going to hurt anything? I would watch it. You might find the perfect-looking chair, and like me, it might not really work.

Leo: I was in a car dealership, waiting on a friend. A Leo. Since the sales people could sense no blood on me, they circled away. I noticed a sign on one machine in a huge bank of vending machines. "Free coffee?" I had to ask then I had to try it. Not bad. "Dude, no, really, across the street at the (other) dealership, they had free popcorn and sandwiches, subs anyway." I'm not sure that the free popcorn is much of an enticement. The free coffee, that kept me happy -- for a few minutes, at least. It was fairly fresh, probably from an instant pod type of automatic brewer, slings out one fresh cup at a time. I want an instant pod coffee maker thing to sling out one, fresh, tasty cup of coffee, black, white, with whip, without whip, one-two-three sugars, or fake sugar, whatever it is that you like. I want that to be tasty and to your Leo liking. And free. Like that sign, "Free Coffee." This ends with the coffee. Across the street? The free stuff there? That's not nearly as nice. And the idea of something completely and totally free? Somewhere, in here, some place, someone is generating enough excess cash, profit (net or gross), to justify that free stuff. Nothing in life is really free. There's a price with every transaction. The price with every transaction, that's the clue. Nothing is free. Wake up a little, and when you're offered something totally free? What did you do to earn it? Where's the catch, the hook? My friend was getting a new truck serviced, why I was there. That's how they paid for my coffee.

Virgo: "After I caught my ex cheating? Of course I got revenge, I had his car reposed." It was casual conversation, and I listened because it sounded like a client. Only it wasn't. I must admit, the lurid details were even better. The ex cheated, and the truck really was in the Virgo's name, so she reported it stolen, since they broke up. I realize this is all a little convoluted, but it's about the ire of woman scorned, and the steps she took to rectify the situation. Because that's what this all about. Getting what is just and right, and getting it served up properly. It's really simple. There's legal justice, and there's poetic justice, and then, there are occasions when those two lines intersect. Follow the process here, first she was wronged, then she waited patiently to follow a course of action that didn't cost her money, didn't cost her credit rating (truck was in her name), and her actions -- good Virgo actions -- produced the desired results.

Libra: I was walking behind a couple, I was gathering a few items, and I was in a supermarket. The guy ahead of me was pushing a cart, the woman, apparently with him, was conversing. What I heard, she asked, "What's for dinner?" His reply? "Whatever you're fixing me." I grimaced. I haven't heard such blatant sexism in a long time. I quickly, furtively scanned the aisles around me. Hidden camera? Comedy routine? All I can surmise is that it must be an inside joke. He kept pushing the cart, and she didn't strike him down. I think he nudged her once with the cart, but again, there was not serious side effect. I was left wondering. If I had said that? I'd be wearing that cart in an uncomfortable position, I'm sure. I grabbed a bag of lettuce, ready-to-eat format, a pint of ice cream, single serving size, and I was headed to the ten items or less line. I couldn't stop thinking about that guy's comment, though. Is there still a place in the world where women stay home and cook dinner? Obedient, respectful, domesticated? Begs the question, though, what was the guy doing in the supermarket, pushing the shopping cart? Is this, perhaps, some kind of role-playing game? I was left with a myriad of unanswered questions. I don't think there is an answer to some of the questions, either. Not without jumping inside that particular couple's relationship, and as an outsider observer, I wasn't left with much to go on. Which is the problem in Libra, now. Not a lot of evidence, although, it sure does bring a myriad of questions. Therein is what this is all about. You can be like that couple -- if they were a couple -- with the jokes and comedy. You can be like me, on the outside, trying to figure out, "Did he really mean that?" I suspect, you're more like me.

Scorpio: I'm easily amused, but that's not really a new fact. I found a fellow fishing guide, and his bit of wisdom was simple, "They don't jump in the boat, you got to find them." Referring, of course, to big fish. I would consider amending that comment, "If they don't jump in the boat, then you have to go and find them." Although, and please don't send me the viral video, I'm unsure that fish really do jump in the boat. I've had a few occasions when it seems like they jump in the boat. Like fishing, with me, with that other fishing guide, though, there's a bit of wisdom in the simple expression, and that's the point that needs to be hammered home with our Scorpio friends. Some days you're the hunter, some days, you're the prey. As this week wraps up, and it presents a good chance to fish. Hunt. A good chance for a Scorpio to get out and get what is desired. Given the phase of the moon, this weekend is an excellent weekend, according to my time and tide charts, to fish. By extension, then, it would be a good time to hunt. Either way, doesn't much matter what the prey is, although, I would tend towards red fish and bass, but whatever you're going for? This is a good time to actively pursue it.

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Sagittarius: I'm of a mind, especially these days, to watch certain actions. Like horseback riding. I'm inclined towards a western saddle, and I prefer an older horse. There's a corollary drawn between the horses and girlfriends, over 20, gentle and easy to handle, experienced, and take direction with a gentle nudge. The younger ones? Have to ride them hard, and some of them, they won't take to a saddle and bridle too well. I'm just saying, younger, more spirited horses are sometimes not worth the trouble. I'm tired of trying to break in new ones. Following that wisdom, as the holiday weekend approaches, it's time to take it easy. Follow the path of least resistance for our Sagittarius self. Instead of going for the younger, more spirited, the ride with too much energy? While the withers and mane might look appealing? It might look like great fun? Do we really want to roll in the dirt, after having been pitched out of the saddle? I'm of a mind, especially these days, and what with the inclining phase of the moon, to take it a little more easy. Older, more gentle, that's a far better solution. Them young ones, they look like fun, but I'm beginning to think that's a younger man's (person's) sport.

Capricorn: I was headed towards downtown, and I saw a strange sight: Roman Centurions. Movie? No, it's the annual passion play in downtown San Antonio, by the old church. Catholic church, I'm thinking. Annually, there's a parade, a festival, a street party, and then, there's a guy who imitates the stations of the cross -- or whatever -- as he carries a cross a down the street. The Centurions really wouldn't be proper in and amongst downtown buildings, although, as churches go, that's a pretty old church and town square, where the guys march, at least, old by American standards. Easter is pretty weird, too, falling after a full moon. With this week's new moon, there's a certain amount of heckling, ribbing, and what should be good-natured jesting. Only it's not. There's an edge to the sarcasm, there's a hint, an overtone, maybe it's an undertone, but the comments are dense with frightened, unsure energy. Maybe a little combative, too. There's that steady, or even unsteady, rhythm that suggests something is going on, something is amiss, something isn't quite right. While I can't fix what's not right, not on an individual basis, I can warn you about the unsettling energy. Then, too, I can warn you about Mars being in the sign opposite you. This, between the phase of the moon, the relative position of the Sun, and Mars, it's like heating you up. Only, there isn't a proper outlet for that Capricorn restlessness. If you heckle the guy with the cross, in as much as he's a good target? You'll regret it later. Careful with the barbed witticisms.

Aquarius: Mom and dad, young couple, it looked like to me, were herding three or four small kids. Morning, the other week, in a coffee shop. Parental units looked like they needed the coffee. The kids looked like they had already had too much caffeine and sugar. The smaller male child was pushing on a slightly taller female sibling. "Mom. Mom! Make Sister stop pushing me!" And then he gave his sister another good shove. She bumped into her mother's leg. There was a look of annoyance, but no comment from the young female. The mom absently stroked the head of the little girl. With four, or more, kids, I'm sure it's way too difficult to play favorites, and I'm sure the little boy was acting just like a little boy. I'm sure I've used the very same technique, at one time or another. I think that's true irony, on the part of the little male child. And I'm sure that the Aquarius has felt like that little girl, getting shoved by smaller, less dangerous person who seems to be making a lot of noise, saying nothing. I doubt a four to six year-old kid can appreciate the irony, but I'm sure an Aquarius can appreciate it. And that's what this about. Which one are you? My Aquarius money is on the little girl, annoyed but taciturn, however, I can see

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you playing any of the roles. I'd pick and choose carefully, too. That girl? She's the one I would want to be.

Pisces: I had two things happen at once, and this could've been a disaster. I was corresponding with client about her Pisces daughter. Daughter is old enough, and well-formed enough, and informed, too, but that's not germane. At the same time, a Louisiana slash Madri Gras joke showed up in my inbound mail. I was tempted to just forward that joke as an adjunct to the email correspondence. I stopped before I hit the "send" button. Put a little perspective on this, undo some of my spin, what would that look like? An off-color, perhaps suggestive comment, about a daughter rather than something directed towards the mom? Not a good idea. There is a time and place for lewd and bawdy humor. There is a time and place body humor, too. This wasn't the time, nor, for that matter, the place for such a comment, such a joke. A joke, such as it was. Mars is getting ready to trine Uranus, that's why you and me, we thought the joke was funny. All the planets that are now past you, in Aries? That's why the joke might, it could, that one would've, blown up in our face. And not in a fun, or pretty way. All it takes it two seconds before you hit the "forward" button. Make sure, in context, that the joke is funny. Consider the situation, before you take action, to make sure that the context doesn't place a disagreeable spin on the item. The comment, the question. The action, you were about to take. Look at it from the recipient's point of view. It can save you a lot of trouble.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 4.17.2008

"The silence of pure innocence

Persuades when speaking fails."

Shakespeare's The Winter's Tale (II.ii54-5)

Aries: My hair is thinning on top. No surprise here, as I've been like this since I was a but a mere lad. Always had a receding hairline, and once I quite trying to hide from it, the easier maintenance became. I was out, last week, week before, sometime, and I was fishing. Due to perturbations in my schedule, I wasn't my usual dark, tan self. And, that afternoon, I left the hat in the truck. Bad move. Results? Sun-burned bald spot. Whose fault is this? Mine. No one to blame but myself. It's not, like, a bad burn. It's just that thinning patch of hair in the front. Eventually, as the summer arrives and the warm weather becomes hot, I'll get some color back in my scalp. It's just that first "burn and peel" that caught up with me tax time. I don't know what I was thinking, there was a hat, right there, and I could've easily grabbed it. Would've saved me the trouble, this time. Now, the way I gracefully accept my receding hairline? That's like Aries. The way I forgot my hat? That's like Mars (in the tropical zodiac sign of Cancer). I'm not saying you have to wear hat right now. I am suggesting that there's one, simple, easy, preventative measure you can take, and I'm suggesting you take it, otherwise, you get a bad sunburn -- or something -- on bald spot -- or someplace mildly embarrassing.

Taurus: Happy Birthday! Taurus Time! Yes! (Excitedly pumping fist in the air!) Most comments around now should be punctuated with multiple exclamation points. That lends a degree of typographical excitement to what's shaping up to be an exciting week. There's the added emphasis that multiple exclamation points push across, and that's really what this is all about. What! This!! Is!!! All!!! About!!!! Except that my excitement and the ambience that I'm trying generate doesn't seem to pervade the Taurus slice of the heavens. Well, it should. The airline I use the most, more like commuter rather than as a real airline, they had a sale. I had just bought a cheap seat for my next flight, and canceling that purchase, then rolling the credit over to the next purchase, all in all, would've saved me about \$20. Total. Just a small percentage savings. Then, too, there's the time spent on the website, charging the new flight, getting credited for the old flight, and is this much effort really worth the \$20? Here is something I can't get excited about. I like saving money, If I had waited, if I had gambled that the price would go down, I might be able to save some money. It's just making arrangements, on

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the far side, that's sometimes not worth the \$20 in excitement. So it's birthday time in Taurus. Get excited.

Gemini: As I changed locations, I've found that I get treated differently. In Austin, there was one question I was faced with, and I even get queried, to this day, "You that guitar player?" No, no I'm not. But elsewhere in Texas, I don't get the question as much. I did have, the other afternoon, a similar comment, "You know who you look like, don't you?" Famous right-wing nut job guitar player. Not that I mind, as we're both Sagittarius. But this isn't about Sagittarius. Nor is this about guitar players. This is about Gemini, and with the full moon, and the gradual shift from Aries to Taurus for the Sun. Gradual shift, starts next week. You're going to go places, wander into a store, and they will think you're someone who you're not. Not that it's bad, I just don't see famous people shopping in big (discount) sporting goods stores. Could be me, and I might have this all wrong, maybe famous people do shop there. But this isn't about shopping in discount brand sporting goods stores. It's about the perceptions of other people, what they see in you, how they see you, what's going on that judge you by. Be aware, me, when I'm wearing a ball cap, I realize, with my long locks, I look like a guitar player. I carry myself with the same air (apparently). So I give off that vibe. What vibes are your Gemini selves giving off? The answer, you will find, in the next week when people start asking you, "Are you that guitar player?" Or something like that.

Cancer: I was hanging out, and you can imagine, guys with large bellies hanging over their belts, that sort of hanging out. One of the guys, a little younger, he was trying to explain about his girlfriend, his plans for marriage, and he was also rubbing in our mistakes. "Marriage is like golf, the lower the score, the better," he explained. Two of us slapped our heads, almost simultaneously. So that's the great secret? Here, I've had it all backwards, expecting the higher score to win. I never did understand golf. Lower score wins, not higher score. He then launched into a tale about a guy he knew, married four times before age 40, not a good bet, be my guess. It's that whole "lower score wins" thing.

Leo: This was hilarious. Monday, the Monday after Easter, I stopped by a superstore to pick up a few items. Mostly grocery, but I was also going to cruise the Easter goodies. Like, buy plastic easter eggs for next year? Maybe an Easter-color bait bucket, should be on sale, right? Great idea. Didn't work. I watched, there was a purple bucket for easter eggs, with little bunnies or chicks or something seasonal on it. Before Easter, the bucket was priced at 99 cents. End cap full of them. So I figured, after easter, and I can always use a spare bait bucket, those ought to be priced even less. This is the curious part. The very same make and model of bucket was in the clearance section, the special "Easter Mark Down" area, just a little to left of the entrance. Only, there was, like, a feeding frenzy. One overwrought stocker wasn't even getting a chance to empty his cart of product, as a swarm of heavy-set women would, never mind, just not a pretty sight. Until I came upon the price of that easter bucket. It was \$1.29. The markdown price was thirty cents higher than the regular retail price. I watched, in horror, as a lady grabbed three of the pails, "We'll save them for next year," she was saying. "Why not make it four?" I thought, "makes the math easier for me." I don't begrudge a superstore, a leading retailer from making money -- I just know that I need to watch the sale price a little more closely. And I suspect there's an element of plain psychology at work in the special sale price, as well. As far the Leo corner is concerned? Watch it. Watch it a little more closely that you

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would normally watch it. I'm not saying you're going to be duped by a sales end cap, but some supposed good deal? Might not be a such good deal. Just do a little checking.

Virgo: I've got a reference book I've carried around for years, a book about the roadside geology of Texas. It's where I live, so the book naturally fits with me. I'm not too interested in specifics, other than what I might be able to see if I were to stop at a roadside cut, and what strata of rocks would be visible. I was flipping through the book, as I stumbled across a section of the country side that I know intimately. Turn outs, like I didn't ever realize this, the area I was looking it has a sub-strata of Permian overlaid with Cretaceous. The basin the ponds (lakes) I like to fish at? Out there? Cretaceous. Like that means a lot to me. I don't really know what it means. I thought it was cool, at the time to be have better understanding about when some of the surrounding countryside was molten or sea bottom, or molten sea bottom. Stop. This is the kind of intellectual detail that's fun, but not always useful. With Saturn riding up on your butt, and the early degrees of Virgo getting hit hard, the time spent in a geology book, is that really a productive use of your hours? What Saturn's about, and what I'm about, as long as you've got this in front of you, the time spent leafing through a book about rocks and stuff? Although it's interesting, it really doesn't serve any value. Consider what does add value whereas what's just a complete waste of time. To me, it adds value to gather up scholarly abstracts. But to some people, it looks like trivia.

Libra: The way the song went, the singer (or the songwriter) "Might hop a freight train," and that's a wonderful sentiment. To get back to the girl, or to get back to Texas, or to get whatever the song was about. I tend to walk along railroad right-of-ways because they are long, often underused, pathways to my destinations. I happened upon a freight train that was stopped. Traffic on the line, something at one end or another? I'm not sure. There was aloud "clank" and the rail cars started to move slowly, sort of gentle lurch to start. Gradually, those cars will gain momentum and pick up speed, and eventually, they'll be rolling at 30 MPH, or later, 60 MPH, or maybe faster than that. Hopping on the freight train, that would've been easy. Especially for me, when the train was a dead stop. The part to be concerned with, though, isn't getting on the train, it's getting off the train. I looked at the right-of-way, chunky gravel, not exactly a soft landing spot. The week starts out easy, like that freight at a dead stop. Use your Libra mind, though, think about it some, are you sure you want to hop aboard now? It's the disembarking part that makes for the rough landing, next week.

Scorpio: I was cruising along a surface street, South Side San Antonio Style. Just, maybe a block, south of the interstate, there was a street named "Big Foot." I guffawed, made noises, maybe even snorted in glee. At first, I was sure, I got out, a took a couple of pictures of the street sign, thinking it was all a joke, and I got back on the road. I was headed out towards some fishing that morning, if you must know, hence my haste and yet, still, a sense of wonder and amusement. I chuckled over the name, "Big Foot," as moniker for various mythological critters. From the Far East to Far East Texas, the term "Big Foot" invokes those images of hairy man, running away, sleeping in hollow logs, and so forth. Half-man, half-ape, no real evidence. Doesn't stop the myth. But this isn't about the stories of that "Big Foot," or the "Yeti," it was about a street in old San Antonio. I'm not sure, but the more I thought about it, the more I realized that the name was probably, more than likely, derived from "Big Foot Wallace," and original Texas Ranger. Who got his

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name from his size. Big guy. Back in those days, brawn won the fight, not cunning. So as we motored on down the street, I gradual lost the illusion that someone was having a good joke with the name of that street. Probably named long before the Sasquatch inserted itself in our popular mythology. Old Big Foot Wallace, the real source for that name. A good Scorpio shouldn't jump to hasty conclusions like I do.

Sagittarius: "And since I'm stuck here in the office, and you're coming to see me anyway, you can bring me a Grande White Mocha Half-Caf, one Splenda, with whip." It was phrased, like, to be a question, but it was really a nicely put command. In this situation, it worked. It was a Saturday morning mission of commerce for me, but I made it look like a mission of mercy for the Sagittarius stuck behind the desk, and I thought about how she phrased her demand. There was an authoritative tone, yet, it sounded like a question, only, the "will you please" was missing, and there wasn't really a question mark at the end of the sentence. Sagittarius women have that ability to command without making it look like a command. Sagittarius guys, like me? We're just, well, we're just not as smooth. Her command that was question, only it was really a direct verbal order? That's the way phrase it this week. It's about the pitch and how can that kind of a pitch be refused?

Capricorn: I was sitting, in a lawn chair, by the edge of a south Texas lake. I had two poles, with lines in the water. I'm not sure, might've been cut-bait, might've been chicken livers, might've been shrimp. Probably shrimp. Using a heavy sinker, I'd gotten the lines way out there, and I was taking it easy. Watchful, yet relaxed, waiting for that telltale movement. My belt jiggled, and it was the cell phone. I glanced at the inbound number, a steady, dependable client. Someone I maintain an easy friendship with, and I like doing readings for. So I figured I could set an appointment time while I was there, or answer a simple question. Both the Sun's shift Aries Taurus and the phase of the Moon (full) are good for fishing, in my estimation. With that client, I was fishing for dollars, really. But I did have two lines in the water. I answered the call, we chatted, and then, as she was getting to a point that described a harrowing moment, the tip of a pole began to move. "Gotta go, fish on..." And I promptly missed a fish. Fish got the bait and I got nothing. This wouldn't be be problematic, except the same afternoon, my belt jiggled again, I looked, another client call. I watched the poles. I answered. The one pole bent over, I grabbed at it, juggling the phone, and the fish got clean away. Twice in one afternoon could be disconcerting. Well, it did irritate me. I thought about myself (Sagittarius) and Capricorn (you), and Jupiter (Sagittarius planet now in Capricorn), and then I thought, just as an idea, how about not answering the phone if you're fishing? One task at a time.

Aquarius: I probably have a picture of this up on the site someplace, but I'm not sure. There are trees, mostly Live Oak, that grow along the edge of the South Texas Plains where the beach sort of dead-ends into the prairie. The one I'm thinking about, they are not more than a couple of hundred yards inland from the Inter-Coastal-Waterway, yet, the constant off-shore breeze has shaped the growth of the trees. They have an umbrella, perhaps a canopy, shape to the growth of the branches, and the trunks, which normally grow straight, are hunkered over, trying to get away from the ever-present wind. It's not really a genetic adaptation, it's more along the lines of a growing adaptation. Shaped by their constant pressure, the trees are leaned over in a graceful, yet oddly eerie manner. There's some bending associated with Aquarius. Call it a Mars' influence, call it what you want to call it, but there's a suggestion that you could be shaped by environmental

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forces. It's matter of adopting and adapting, and leaning what forces can be fought. Sometimes, there are issues that you don't need to battle against. Like that coastal breeze.

Pisces: Low clouds, moisture laden air drifted up from the coast the other week. Looked like rain, Didn't really rain, but looked like it. And as I left that morning, on foot as usual, I looked at the heavens, the skies above, and I guessed it would be cloudy for the better part of the morning -- and afternoon. As I would be out of the office for most of the day, I decided against taking some sunglasses with me. Last pair of cheap sunglasses. Didn't want to lose them, not yet. About halfway through the early afternoon, the sun burned through the low cloud layer of Gulf moisture, and it was a very bright, warm afternoon. And me without protective lens. Anyone who enjoyed the balmy and bright afternoon, they would be owing me a debt of gratitude. If I had taken my sunglasses with me, then it wouldn't have been so nice. I'm sure there's an inverse law of climate control that affects such matters, and I'm none too concerned with the details. In my mind, I'm sure that my lack of sunglasses controlled the weather and the clouds. The clouds, anyway. You have similar kind of control. A good luck token, a gesture, maybe just some cheap sunglasses that you leave behind. Whatever that measure is, you've got to make sure that you've still got it. Or, in my example, that you don't have it. There's a factor, be it symbolic, luck, superstition, or the odd deities, something. Make sure you've got it. Unless, like me, you want sun and then make sure you don't have it.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 4.24.2008

"With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come."

Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice (I.i.86)

Aries: At the end of this week, more like at the middle of next week, Venus bumps her way out of Aries. I'm being fair-minded now, and I'm warning you about this planet action, now. When it happens, the extra layer of charm and wit you've enjoyed lately? Might not work as well as it worked in the past. I am not suggesting that you are not charming and witty, no, that's not what I said. At all. What I was implying, and I'll spell it out for you, charm and wit have a place in daily interactions. You got by, for the last couple of weeks, like, since before your birthday, you were able to succeed where other signs failed because you had that extra layer of charm and wit. It worked. It worked well, it was flawless. Your delivery was wonderful. You were amusing, and even the time you made a mistake? You made it look like you were supposed to do that -- like you'd wired that in as part of your delivery. So the good luck you were relying on? Gone. That doesn't mean there's not a lucky break, or that characteristic Aries diligence won't pay off, it's just that extra, kind of cushy does of charm, well, Venus is moving. So is her charm. It's just a friendly note, can't bank on her good looks past this weekend.

Taurus: A Taurus buddy guffawed, "Gone in what? 180 seconds?" He was watching as a loud yet horrendously under-powered car cruised by. He mocked them, as only an acerbic Taurus lad can. The saccharine sarcasm was dripping, the metaphors were none too veiled, and he was on roll. Unlike the car that belched once, misfired and then rolled forward. Several more comments and observations followed, like that trailing cloud of smoke. Taurus has it going on now. Now. Not later, now. The problem is, like that car that belched and misfired, there's a good chance that the wonderful Taurus wit misses the mark. Or, me being an astute observer of the Taurus wit, it hit with me. I laughed. I was greatly amused. I was the only one. So I'm appreciative, but not everyone is? That might be the point, too. See, there's a huge wave of change headed this way, and the fine Taurus wit is poised to be on the crest of that wave, just to thoroughly mix the metaphors. Get ready, Tone up the wit, crank up the tone, and get ready. In another few days, I won't be the only casual observer applauding your fine Taurus self.

Gemini: "I hate it when my purse doesn't match my shoes!" Yeah, I hate when my purse and shoes don't match either. It wasn't a comment that was really directed at me, but it was a sentiment that I was trying to grasp. Gemini girl, explaining about some sort of girl-thing that I don't quite understand. A lover once pointed out that shoes and purse are kind of like fishing pole and fishing reel. That's a metaphor I can grasp. They have to

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match up, look like they go together so that they work as a cohesive unit. Pole and reel. I'm not sure about purse and shoes. There's a matter going on the Gemini mind, and it's like that one girl explaining to my dumbfounded self about how the purse and shoes are supposed to match. I wonder about that, too, if I have Ostrich or Elephant boots, does that mean I need an Ostrich or Elephant purse? I was wondering if a purse would even go with any of my outfits, such as they are. Although, I do recall once being accused of carrying a "man-bag," which was, in effect, a purse. Although, in my case, it only held certain essential items I needed for generating income. Look: this isn't about purse and shoes, fishing poles and fishing reels. It's about that feeling that something doesn't quite line up just right. The color is wrong, the weight isn't correct, the balance is off. I can't correct that balance, or lack of balance, in the next few days. However, you can strive for it in Gemini-land. I won't promise that you'll find the right purse to match the outfit, or the correct fishing reel, but it doesn't hurt to strive for that balance point.

Cancer: I was in a, it was one of the huge sporting goods stores. Along one display case there are hundreds, maybe thousands of fishing reels. Salt water, open face, closed face, I guess, spinning, trolling, surf casting, fly-fishing, bass fishing, sea fishing, lake fishing, and that's just what I looked at. I was talking to client on my cell phone, and my eye caught something. The client knew where I was, it wasn't a surprise, or, like, a paid reading. I made note to go back and looks at one reel I'd seen, possibly on sale, and possibly, just what I was looking for. Or maybe not. I didn't know. Being male, I don't multi-task as well as others. After clicked off the phone, I went back to find that reel I thought I'd seen. I thought I'd spotted a hundred dollar fishing reel for about fifty bucks. I approached the long display, reel after reel, about six deep, all mounted L-shaped fishing reel retail display holders, like a fishing pole, only, just the handle. I couldn't find the one I was looking for, what I thought I had seen while I was chatting. I did heft a few of the display handles, with reels attached. I was looking for a certain size and price. An elderly gentlemen, another customer in the store, he looked at me, grinned, and told me, "Watch out, looks like they're trying to sell you a short pole." I was briefly amused. I grinned back. I'm not sure I ever really saw that price deal I was looking for. I was chatting at the time, And when I went back to find it, I couldn't. I did have fun, and did get to be the butt of a joke, which, I must admit, I enjoyed. And maybe, just maybe, the interruptions, the kidding, the distractions? Maybe those saved me from making a -- relatively -- expensive mistake. It's not like I need another fishing reel right now. Let's flip this all around for you, Cancer dear, sometimes, the ribbing and the phone? Sometimes, those can save you from making ill-timed choices. Like now. Missed opportunities might pay off big in this next week.

Leo: I watched, the other morning, as a waiter went to work with 12-pack of coke. I know he's a waiter by his uniform. I know he works in one of the downtown hotels. The rest is conjecture, but I'll bet they started charging him for the coke he drank while on the job. That 12-pack was probably good for a few shifts, at least, making a judgement call about his age. Probably cost less than one 'fine dining tip,' too. I'm guessing that he's coming out way ahead with his deal, other than the hassle of having to haul a 12-pack of cans to work. Last time I paid for a drink in place like that? I think the coke cost me about three dollars. Not much less than that waiter's 12-pack of cans. I don't recall if my price included a gratuity, either. Sometimes, though, due to the way the home office handles billing and such> There are some times, when, so it seems, it's just easier to bring your

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own damn coke to work. Maybe it falls into one of those allegiances to particular brand of coke, or perhaps, it's a monetary thing. Maybe store-bought is cheaper than full-retail the employer charges. I'm just saying, in the next couple of days, I'm hoping to see a Leo or two, toting their versions of a case of coke to work. Might not be coke, per se, might be some other items, like lunch, or coffee, or a coffee maker, or something. I just expect our Leo friends to be doing to the "fine, I'll do it myself" thing. Soon. Which is fine, too, as you will do it yourself. Better, even. But that's no surprise.

Virgo: Landing in the big DFW Airport, I'm sure it's possible to see, just a little north and west, the big DFW Bass Pro Shop. Someplace in the area, too, there's a Cabela's. South of Austin, there's a Cabela's. West of San Antonio, there's Bass Pro Shop. One claims to be the world's leading retailer of outdoor equipment. The other claims to be the largest retailer of outdoor stuff. I'm not sure which is which. Not that it matters. As a consumer, I've got choices. Quality, brands, and prices seem to vary greatly. It's weird. One store will have a surfeit of a particular item, and that same product won't even be on the "we've got some coming soon" list at another store. I never could figure out the ways of the retail merchants. In similar vein, one discount sporting goods store will have a lot of coastal gear, south of San Antonio, whereas another branch of the same chain, on the north side, won't even carry coastal gear. The big, huge, mammoth-sized retailers, they are pretty evenly spaced so as not to be in each others' space. Yet, there's still a kind of war at work between the two, a rivalry that me, as a consumer, should benefit from. There's also a couple of these stores in the Houston area. I think I stopped there once. So I've got choices. Virgo? You've got choices, too. It's going to take a little time, but you've got to shop and compare. I'm of the mind, I'm usually the "impulse buy" guy. That doesn't work, not now. Shop. Takes a little work, you might have to drive to Houston to check out the prices, but it's worth it.

Libra: Maybe a half-dozen years ago, I'm not sure, there was perfect alignment in my astrology chart. Maybe the then girlfriend was nice, maybe it was fresh romance, maybe it was just spring time in Texas. I recall the exact location, a field south of the river in Austin, almost next to the freeway. A place I used to walk past with alarming frequency. It's a portion of Austin's Hike and Bike Trail. I leaned down with a cheap, digital camera and snapped a couple of shots of a field of Bluebonnets. Inadvertently, I got a couple of stunning close-up shots of Bluebonnets, the State's flower. I did so by holding the camera mere inches from a flower. This wasn't that well-planned of a photo-shoot. It was a almost a mistake. I pocketed the camera and walked another five or ten miles that afternoon. The pictures turned out superb -- it was not skill on my part -- more like luck. I'm not promising that you will get an award winning picture of native wildflowers. This year, they are kind of sparse. And that was a cheap camera, I don't even have it anymore. The image, however, lives on. It's a matter of being in the right place, at the right time, and trying something different. Just a little nudge, a little push, a little shove, and you'll get an alignment like I had those years back. To this day, those are still my favorite Bluebonnet images. What makes them even better? The inadvertent nature of the picture-taking. Whim, fancy, idle speculation? You might not see the results for a while. But there will be results.

Scorpio: Listen closely. You've got a couple of (astrological) points that are going to spur you to action. Only, in a good Scorpio way, sometimes you can't be bothered. I was riding

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in the front cab of pick-up truck, and I cracked the passenger-side window, rolled it down for a little fresh air. The breeze at 55 MPH ruffled my hair. What's left of my hair, anyway. I'd taken off my cap, too, so I was left with hair in a slight state of disarray. Not that it bothers me too much. I looked out the window as the two-lane highway split into a four-lane highway, which, I could only assume, meant a town was approaching. Which is a strange way to phrase it, as the town was in one position, and we were actually approaching its location. A lot of meandering thought in here. Happens to be a Scorpio kind of a thing, too. Sun, Venus, Mercury, all in the sign opposite you, like that wind ruffling my hairs. Messing with my head. Wondering about items that might not really be important. As a Scorpio, with this little influence, I'd urge you to turn your attention back to watching the road ahead instead of wondering about apparent language contradictions. Then too, there was another thought, almost an afterthought. There's one spot on this split highway, state road, where it is southbound, going into a little town. Sunday nights? Almost always, there's a cop there. Sheriff, highway patrol, local constable? I don't know. I know that a Law Enforcement Official is usually represented. Be aware of this. He catches folks who are day dreaming at night when those dreamers fail to realize the speed limit dropped at the edge of town.

Sagittarius: There are days when we all have to rely on the kindness of strangers. There are days when the assistance of others is most important. There are times when we have to admit that our Sagittarius selves are not islands unto ourselves and we most (graciously) accept help with a problem. That's a quite buildup to let you know that someone is going to come along and offer assistance. Accept it. Don't turn it down. The Lone Ranger, I can do it by myself, I don't need nay help, that kind of an attitude? Lose it. This is time when the assistance, the kindness of strangers, this is time when that type of help is plays a pivotal role. The first time I typed "pivotal roll," and I wonder if that wasn't an intentional slip. Roll with what comes up. Cant count on the kindness of strangers, but there's always a chance that something does work out.

Capricorn: I was looking over a website with fishing images on it. Fishermen and their tales of monsters, whales, and other possible hyperbole and untruths. One picture was this guy, a coastal fisherman, he was standing in front of his truck. It had an American flag on one side, and not far from the (patriotic) flag sticker, there was a Grateful Dead "Steal Your Face" sticker. Kind of an interesting mixture in that message. One I can understand, but I'm not sure that a lot of the typical flag-waving people would grasp. In my own mind, the Grateful Dead really were an American Band, born out of a time of excess, and the beginning of the changing of the guard for America. I'm not sure that the myth matches up to what I understand about the band, I don't qualify as a Dead Head. I've only got a couple of cuts, although, there's one studio album that I find particularly beautiful, that doesn't qualify me as an expert. So the two stickers, one patriotic, one from a rock and roll generation, those two items, next to each to each other, does it match? To a non-Capricorn person, no, this doesn't work. To a good Capricorn, the astute observer and occasional chronicle of the bizarre? This does make a weird kind of sense. Mars, still frying along opposite you? When there are troubling images, or deeds, that would bother normal people? Step in, step up, or just observe, but make the point that it really isn't that weird.

Aquarius: "Holographic colors and 3-D eyes! Just like real life!" I've always wondered, if this is for the fish, or is this targeted for the fisherman? I'm sure that the holographic graphics and 3D eyes works for some people, I've found that the fish really can't see that well. Most of the water is kind of murky, so I'm unsure of how realistic the presentation is supposed to be. Can a fish see those realistic looking eyes, and do those eyes look like the lure is alive? And can the fish tell me what does, and doesn't work? That last question is slightly, maybe more so, rhetorical, The fish do tell me, albeit, they don't talk to me. The fish show by biting. The more energetic a bite, the better the bait. I've always suspected that it wasn't the look, more than likely, it was the feel and the smell. So the holographic colors? The 3D eyes? When yo see that? Is that targeted for the fish? Or the (Aquarius) fisherman?

Pisces: One of the most important -- to me -- elements of fishing is that I have to remain in a learning mode at all times. In that respect, at least to me, it's much like astrology because each one has its individual quirks and tweaks. Then, too, I have to be able to adjust, adapt and there's a certain amount of willingness that goes with it. Each encounter is a new experience. It's never, not quite, anyway, the same old thing day and day out. Pisces, my friend, you have lost touch with that "every day is a new experience" aspect. I'm not saying it's bad, but you've let the drudgery factor accumulate, and that means it's not any fun anymore. Lose the loser attitude.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 5.1.2008

"Where is our usual manger of mirth?

What revels are in hand? Is there n play,

To ease the anguish of a torturing hour?

Shakespeare's A Midsummer-Night's Dream (V.i.39-41)

Aries: Old Mason Road? Old Dallas road? Old Austin Highway? These are all signs I've seen recently and they advertise a historical link. Or the way the highway used to run when compared with the way the routes are laid out now. It's a common naming convention here. I'm not sure if it is so common elsewhere, but I'm sure, look around, there's bound to be some similar namesake. This is about seeing, recognizing and dealing with a past issue. Something pops up and you need to admit that it is there. Like that street sign, highway sign, or the marker for the old road. The older routes tended to hug the contours of the terrain a little more closely, and the former roads tend to look for the most auspicious point to cross a waterway. The more modern routes just plow right through hills and span large chasms with equal ease. All a matter of form. The "old" (something) road isn't always the most direct route, but it does tend to be the more scenic way, and, for that matter, especially with old wagon roads, the "old" road is more friendly in its approach to the terrain. Sometimes, "modern" isn't better. You can speed by in the interstate highway; however, you might miss the most important element in the message. Or the issue. Something that needed clearing up.

Taurus: I tend to make friends, or, at the very least, become acquainted with all the folks who are responsible for my coffee habits. So this was a Taurus girl, birthday times are happening, and she was frothing the milk for what was my usual: two shots of espresso with a tiny dollop of foam on top. Call it what you want. Macchiato is the term I hear most frequently. I was watching casually appraising my surroundings and saying something nice about Taurus, I'm sure. Very sensual sign, you know, and suddenly, the little Taurus says a few rather well-chosen words. Or maybe not so well-chosen, but choice expletives. Call it how you like it. "Look," she continued, "you made me forget what I was doing and I over-frothed the milk. Don't distract me." She smiled. I felt a pang of guilt. But in a few moments, I had a paper cup with my preferred beverage, and I was wandering along the river. As I toyed with the Taurus chart, I thought about that exchange of words, the cursing, and the distraction that I was posing. Be careful, especially when you're handling hot stuff, pay attention. Distractions? There are plenty. The way to keep your head in the game, the way to stay on top of what matters, the whole point to the this week's message: don't get distracted.

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Gemini: There are two strains of black bass, *Micropterus salmoides salmoides* and *Micropterus salmoides floridanus*. I'd like to think about it as Northern Bass and Southern Bass. Northern and Florida, and guess which one is usually bigger? The southern variant. As I understand it, and I might have this wrong, telling the difference between the northern and southern strains requires DNA analysis. Which might be easy on TV, but I'm not so sure it's something that I can do in bass boat. Not that I'm too worried about what kind of fish I'm catching, either, just a curiosity. Black Bass are prized for their sporting characteristics, a willingness to fight, a crafty nature, and healthy constitution. I've seen more than one black bass with a number of scars from getting hooked and fighting.

Cancer: It was a sticker on small (foreign name) brand of car, an ultra-sub-compact. The sticker said, "100% COWBOY." I, personally, have a problem with that. The sticker, the car, all of it. Unless, of course this was meant as an ironic expression. I don't have a problem with either small cars or cowboys, neither one, separately. It's just that, taken together, it offends my delicate, innate sense about what should and shouldn't be. Cowboy vehicles are trucks. Trucks with beds that haul hay and saddles, other tools, too. One truck bed had the coolest rod-holder -- just back that truck bed up the beach, and you're set for surf fishing. Again, these are trucks. Small cars, particularly for long distance driving, although not the most comfortable, they do get excellent mileage. But the image is one of smooth and urban individuals, not cowboys. Mars is about to leave Cancer, and that's still brining up interesting points. I'm not afraid to talk about the display of messages, like bumper stickers, in print. Don't corner me in person though, as my tune might change. I doubt you'll be offended by a bumper sticker that seems way out of place on the vehicle it's on, but there will similar kind of Cancer ire raised over an issue. Is it really that big of deal, or are you, like me, making something out to be more than it really is?

Leo: We rolled over a small highway bridge, the sign read, "Frog Pond Creek." A little later, we passed another small highway bridge, not much more than a culvert with water flowing through it, "Dry Creek." The weather varies in portions of the hill country, west of here. Some spots can get rain and be soaked while other places are dry as a bone. The Frog Pond Creek was dry, which means, I'd guess, there were some dry frogs. The Dry Creek was flowing, which means, I guess, the frogs moved over there. Depending on what kind of impound the Frog Pond had, though, it could still be wet, although, it was pretty obvious that there wasn't any water flowing into at that moment. Which is kind of what it feel like in with my most excellent Leo friend. No water flowing into the pond. That doesn't mean that there is no water, it all depends on what you put away for a rainy day. Except, in my example, it isn't about rain, it's about not raining. So I guess it would be more along the lines of what you put away for the drought. Did you stock up the stock tank? Did you fill the pond? Did you build a small damn, or some other kind of impound to save for the day when the rain was falling two counties over, just not in your Leo backyard? I don't think this drought will last long, and I don't think the frogs will move away, but if you didn't save, might be a little tough for the next couple of days.

Virgo: for years, at a particular spot on the Texas Gulf Coast, there was a mock-up of the original "Christopher Columbus" ship. Tiny, almost like a toy, with its all wood-construction, and three little square-rigged sailing masts. Not much of a boat. I mean, in

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terms of the island ferry, even, or the larger off-shore fishing boats, no, the little (full-size) replica wasn't very awe-inspiring. Only, in a weird way, it was inspirational. Consider that a crew of men left on that same size of ship, and they navigated the Atlantic, maybe through a storm or two, and finally stopped in the Caribbean. More impressive, now. The old fashioned sailing vessels weren't really that large. Not very big at all, yet, they did have a huge impact. I wouldn't know about this except that I've seen that replica moored up down there, time and again, year in and year out. Sort of cross between a floating museum, and floating curiosity. The idea I'd like to float past you, too, is about dealing with insurmountable odds. Doing the impossible, Tackling tasks that no one thinks can be done. Which is why I was thinking about that intrepid explorer, maybe more foolish to some, but still, as he set out in the boats. Little boats. Not very big, and they did cross the ocean. See? It can be done, and I'm counting on what seems like an impossible task to be done by Virgo. This week? Start the journey (again).

Libra: There are two cycles I pay attention to, one is Mars in another Cardinal sign and the second is the phase of the Moon. Combining these two planet phases, I just have to wonder, is this about work? I kept thinking this was a career option. Maybe not a big career move, but a substantial gain, a chance, an opportunity, there's an opening, and you should exploit it. Take this is a hint, this week, and early next week, position yourself, your Libra self, to grab at the brass ring as it goes by. Strictly speaking, in that analogy, the brass ring is stationary and the merry-go-round is the moving element, but like that analogy, it feels like the ring you're reaching for? It feels like it's moving. Do you have a chance to get it? Yes. There is a big prize, if you only make an attempt. Early next week, no, for real, take a chance and gamble with grabbing the brass ring.

Scorpio: When the Sun moves through Taurus, like now, and Venus moves through Taurus, like now, there's a suggestion that you tend to be a little over the top. Over the top with purchasing power, over the top with acquisitions, self-indulgent with pampering, and maybe, you let yourself slide a little too far. No one ever seems to give a good Scorpio a break. Personally, I would. But not right now. See, you're inclined to be a little easy, a little too little self-restraint. I'm not saying that you don't deserve the rewards and the fruits of your labors, but I'm suggesting, just as a test theory, we put off those rewards for a little while. Maybe a week, maybe just a little longer, sort of depends on where the planets are in your chart. But as a general guideline, not really a rule, just as a guideline, just because it feels good? That doesn't mean that this is a good time to do it. It's the lack of normal Scorpio good sense that seems to be the problem. And it's not much of a problem, not really, I'm just suggesting a little bit more than you would normally employ. That means, just a little bit of watching it -- it's about consumption. We both agree that you deserve it, I'm just saying, well, maybe I'm not saying, but a little denial goes a long way.

Sagittarius: I go through periods in my life where I chew a lot of gum. Sort of a cyclical action, and I've gotten to where I prefer a sugarless, no additives, bubble-gum flavored chew. Just sort of a habit that indulge from time to time. I make an effort, when I spit the used gum out, to make sure that it doesn't land in a crosswalk, or on the sidewalk, or on pedestrian way of any shape, manner or form. I got payback, gum-karma as it were, the other day. I was walking home from the post office, and I stepped on something that wouldn't come off. Blue bubble gum of some variation or other. I'm not sure what. I left

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the sandals outside, let the gum harden, and I walked it off the next day. Didn't bother me too much. I just figured, sooner or later, I spit some gum out someplace, it landed where someone else trod on it, and I was getting my karmic retribution. One must accept the rules of the road, as it were. Gum karma made me think about our Sagittarius selves. Before this weekend is up, I'm suggesting that we will face just such a sticky proposition. The solution, that sort of depends, though, given the Sagittarius flair for drama, it could turn into a big, hairy deal. Or, you know, we can just leave our shoes at the front door for the time being. Might be a better, albeit less dramatic, of a solution.

Capricorn: This is a great day, great week, anyway, or, at least, it's pretty good. There's a strong hint, almost like a flavor, that's wafting along on the breeze. When the wind is out of the south, or maybe, when it's out of the north, I can get a hint of a Mexican Panaderia, hard at work. There's the smell of baked goodies, usually redolent with cinnamon and strong vanilla, along with the usual refined white sugar. All of that from a single fragrance, a delicate aroma that I can just barely catch a whiff of. It's not strong, yet it is. The planetary hint, it's not strong, yet it is. Like that scent of the Mexican -- or Hispanic -- or Latino -- or whatever you want to call it, there's a gentle yet pungent push in one direction. Take heed of that direction. You can argue with the muse, but it's been my experience, the muse usually wins. I draw inspiration from native environments, and on a spring day, right after Fiesta, I can still smell the fried and baked goodness from one of the nearby bakeries. It's a Capricorn influence, too, good yet reminiscent of work.

Aquarius: It's the first of May. I live in South Texas, maybe the northern extreme of South Texas, but I still have to think of this is South Texas, now. Walking around downtown San Antonio, one afternoon, I caught sight of a brightly colored skirt, a traditional Mexican pattern, and more to the point, the uniform of the waitresses at Mi Tierra. Downtown, seems right that waitress would be out, wandering around, after the noon rush. So the uniform wasn't out of place. It could look like just colorful attire, too, but then, when she turned to follow the same sidewalk I was on, it was obvious with the branded logo on the front of the apron. I'm not sure where she was going, maybe just looking for a bus. I do know, that if she followed me, I would've given her pause since I was reacting like an Aquarius at the time. My route was circular, at best, and maybe a little convoluted, too. I crossed one street, back and forth, several times. For a little while, I was worried that I was being observed and followed by the waitress in the bright dress, which is green, red and white. And if that was the case, I'd look stupid. But I'm not stupid, it's just that there were a number of interesting tidbits, along my route, and each item needed to be examined. One side had a taco stand, another had a placard for a fruit cups, then a hot dog vendor, then a place with frozen things. I'm not sure what they were. As an Aquarius, you understand the circuitous route. As an outside observer, though, we might look a little crazy. Not that it matters, but as these few days unfold, consider that you do have errands that are best if you do them alone.

Pisces: A friend was checking on a friend, to buy that person a T-Shirt. My buddy rang off the phone, "Can you believe that? She wants a small." Which led to an engaging discussion about how women pick sizes and that, due to her ample size, we seriously doubted that she could squeeze into a small. Unless she was going for a really tight fit to show off her assets, and seeing as how this was a buddy's sister, we didn't really want to discuss such items. I'm no prude, but I thought, at the very least a medium would've been

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far more appropriate. But I wasn't consulted. There is a time and place to make scintillating observations. There is a time and place where silence is worth about a hundred dollars a minute. I opted for silence. I did note that, off the record, that the Pisces in question really shouldn't be wearing a small, but I amended that statement by saying I wasn't about to suggest it, either. Not my place, and frankly, if it helps preserve harmony, I won't bring it up. Ever. Take a note from my little interchange and exchange of verbal interplay: sometimes, when silence is worth about a hundred dollars a minute, then it's a good time to shut up. Saved me a lot of trouble, I mean, can you imagine what sort of angst would've been unleashed if I had mentioned the shirt size being a medium?

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 5.8.2008

"Yonder shines Aurora's harbinger;

At whose approach, ghosts, wandering here and there,

Troop home to churchyards."

Shakespeare's A Midsummer-Night's Dream (III.ii.402-4)

Aries: "Hey," I'm not saying it was person of extreme northern ancestry speaking, but it does sound like a Yankee, "is there pork in this smoked ham?" He pointed at the menu item in a BBQ place. I don't know how she pulled it off, being an Aries and all, but the little waitress, with complete deadpan delivery, "Yes sir, there is pork in our ham." Maybe she was fishing for a better tip, although, from what I've heard, Yankee type are notoriously tight. Me and my dining companion, we didn't giggle overtly. I just took out a piece of paper and made note, of the question, and then, the perfectly dry Aries response. As Mars shifts signs, like he is, as he goes from Leo to Virgo, it's time to try that arid verbal delivery. Either that, or pretend that you miss the comment. Make believe you don't get it. It's a bit of stretch, but remember, to the person asking the question, it's perfectly all right. It's a fair question. It's a reasonable remark. So the trick to dealing with this coming week, as Mr. Mars shifts his gears, is to air that arid verbal response. Dry delivery. You can do it. Just answer the question, no matter how inane it might seem.

Taurus: I know, it's your birthday time, and I know, you want to have party, and I know, you deserve only the best. What I was watching, though, in the night sky, as Mars floats overhead, just after dark? Yes, Mr. Mars needs a little of your attention, heed what Mars suggests. It's about stepping back from that high-profile position, It's about being a little less visible. It's about not attracting attention to yourself. I don't agree with all the astrology texts, and I tend to synthesize a little, too. That's why this week's advice is based primarily upon the action of Mars. But think about it, too, do you really want everyone -- especially at work -- knowing exactly how old you are? Not so much. The way it works out, the boss, the employer, the client, whomever holds sway over your day job? Chances are, as next week arrives, that person is getting difficult. Don't give them any extra ammunition. Don't suggest, since it is a momentous day, that you get the day off. Just let it all slide. You'll be happier, later.

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Gemini: Did you know pigs were hairy? I didn't know that, either, and it wasn't until I digging through the ice box that I discovered this little-known fact. See, the kind of food that's good? Shaved ham. I don't recall buying shaved ham, or shaving ham before, but somehow, that caught my attention. So it's shaved ham for lunch today. And the little-known fact that pigs are hairy. Mercury is in Gemini, even now. Mercury is ahead of the game plan, like most Gemini. There's still a problem, though, and there's a missing link, a missing point, a missing something. I know what's really missing is that the sun is still behind, and it's not Gemini birthday time yet. When this is going on, you can come up with some wonderful ideas, just like me, like the bit about hairy pigs. Or maybe not. But shaved ham is better than regular pork, of that I'm sure.

Cancer: Me, working at one of those metaphysical expo things? I was working next to another reader, runes, or cards, or something, I don't know, and she had to get up and excuse herself for a moment. She put up a sign, "(Reader's name) will be right back." She returned, but she didn't take down the sign right away. We chatted, people walked up, I went to work. She didn't get any business while her sign was up. After I pointed it out to her, she giggled, then realized everyone thought she wasn't here. Or there. Or wherever. Wasn't in her body, maybe. There's one, simple, easy change you can make this week, now, even. Take down the "Be Right Back" sign. Gemini has a sign up, a symbol, some sort of place holder or indicator that you're out of your mind, out-of-body, or just way from the keyboard. You've already returned, the difficulty, this week, is that you forgot to take down the sign.

Leo: I was in a motel in West Texas. Early on Sunday morning, preparing to eat breakfast and meet the masses. I stepped into the shower, adjusted the water temperature to my liking, and lathered up. Always want to be clean before I meet and greet. This one place, it used to be a Holiday Inn, but it was no longer under that banner. In good repair, but still, it was a little shabby, just like me, a little frayed around the edges. I suppose, I'm guessing, it was in the room next to mine, I'm thinking that another guest flushed the toilet, ran the water or started a shower, too. Suddenly, the water in my shower ran hot. Not quite scalding, but very warm. Warmer than I'd like it. I stepped out of the shower, but I didn't reach to adjust the flow. In a matter of seconds, the water cooled off again, back to what I wanted. Made me think about MArS and his impact on Leo. There's going to be a little hot water. How to deal with it? Follow what I did. I didn't adjust anything, I just let the extra hot water run its course. Simple, easy, and just the adjustment you need to make as Mars starts to heat up the Leo water.

Virgo: I was reading up on a certain kind of fishing, the source was an East Coast, New England area fishing journal. Take a hint: terminology, facts and names might be confused by me. What I read about was a "hi-lo" rig. I think that's what it is called. Imagine, like, about three feet of fishing line (leader) with two hooks, and then a weight at one end. In my case, I was using an oblong one-ounce "bank" sinker. What this does, it gets the bait at two levels, one spot is just off the bottom, if that's where the fish are, and the second, is like, maybe, a foot up from that first hook. Does it work? Yes. I haven't seen many catfish guys use this, or, for that matter, other local fishermen using such an arrangement, but then, maybe I haven't been looking too closely. Mine was an experiment, a trial, just to see if it works. It did. Well, after fashion, anyway. Mars is hitting Leo. Time to shake up the established order, if only for a little bit. Do something

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different. Do it weird. Borrow from someplace distant. See if there's a change-up in gear or new set-up that might work. Might work differently. The idea is that it's time to change the pace, and borrowing techniques from foreign lands is always a plan. Give it a Virgo spin, see what happens.

Libra: Granted, every relationship has issues. It all depends on how you deal with these issues, that determines one's humanity. I figure, as long as the Sun is in Taurus, the relationship "stuff" is coming up. This isn't always bad, either. Can be good. An friend from the days of yore pops up; an email or letter shows up, unbidden. It might not be such a bad deal. It could be a pleasant kind of interaction. But there is an issue that needs to be resolved, in one manner or another. I ran into a Libra friend, the other day. Changes, most of them for the better, were occurring. It's a matter of stepping out of the way, and letting the good stuff flow around -- and to a certain extent, envelope your Libra self. Some days are fraught with struggle and angst-ridden defeat. Other weeks, like now, see, there's less trouble on the personal front. Sure, there's an issue to work on, but it can be resolved. Use that touchstone to establish a common area, work from there.

Scorpio: Festival food. It's at once, scary and appetizing. Scary because of the questionable health practices of the food, its preparers, its source, and the general sanitation of the festival. Appetizing because Mars is headed towards Leo. My personal favorite was "fried meat on a stick." This is South Texas. The fried meat on a stick, supposedly a beef product, was tasty in the way it was prepared. I don't know what animal it was to begin with, or if it was even animal at all, just some sort of textured vegetable protein; although, there was a little piece of grizzle, sort of hard to fake that. But good. It was really good. And, being in South Texas, there was a jalapeño on the end of the spear. Meat on stick crowned with a lightly roasted pepper, just enough fire to make it all interesting. But how daring are you? "Oh man, festival foods, funnel cakes, mystery meats, yeah, I love it!" Gorge yourself and then feel ill afterwards? That's the idea. And that's what this week holds, some adventure, maybe some kind of mystery meat, all depends, and then, perhaps, too much cotton candy? One too many funnel cakes? Indian Fry Bread? Powdered sugar coating greasy dough? Which one is it? Eat until you're ill, and say that was fun? Me? I love the various kinds of road food. It's not really that much different from some places I've dined before. The last of Mars in Cancer is the fun part, the eating the food. When Mars hits Leo? Might have an upset stomach. "But how do you know it was good unless it makes you sick?"

Sagittarius: I'm presently living close to a railroad crossing. No big deal, I got used to the train running through at odd hours. There's also a curious effect of the railroad crossing arms dropping down, sometimes for no apparent reason, and getting stuck in a line cars behind those down crossing arms. It's really easy to circumvent the obstacle. There's a problem, too, and although I haven't witnessed this myself, I can easily guess. See, and not that I would do this myself, but it's easy -- when, clearly, there is no train on the tracks -- to go around the arms. Just a quick "S" turn maneuver, and you're gone from the obstacle. But there's a couple of problems with this kind of way around an obstacle, one is fatal mistake, like, following someone through this, around the gates, only to discover that there really was a train coming. Bad move. Then, too, the actual act of circumventing the crossing guard is illegal. Sometimes, the arms drop down for no apparent reason. Maybe just a maintenance check. Maybe, there's a high-speed train

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approaching. Maybe, as a Sagittarius, we should respect the crossing guard's arms, even if we can't see a thing. Sure, it's fun to bend the law and bend around the crossing guard, but is it really safe? Maybe not this week.

Capricorn: I was at a coffee drive thru place. Early, early one morning, on my way to a fishing hole. I ordered a large, triple-shot, non-fat cappuccino. Triple non-fat cap. The speaker box squawked about muffins or something, and I recited back, my order, then I quoted a price, "\$3.92." Close, but it was really \$4.05. Ouch. I dug around for the extra nickel, determined not get \$0.95 in change, and determined to leave a single dollar for a tip. Part of this is about tithing, and I consider anyone who works in a low-pay position, if they are friendly, banter well, or, at least, tell me what sign they are? Those people are worthy of a generous tip. I needed caffeine that morning, and it was a drive-thru window, and coffee -- go juice -- is coffee. The price seemed a little ridiculous, since I'd ordered the same thing -- exactly -- across town, a just a few days before. Price over there was \$3.92, and I don't know why there was a difference. Maybe I'll never know. You know the chain, you know the product, and at 6 in the morning, you know why I was there. It's all about the fishing. So if it's all about the fishing, why was I worried about the price of coffee? I wasn't, really, but it does indicate a problem with uniform price structures, and how that can change, from location to location. What you're expecting is equal cost factor, across the road, across town, or even in a different state. Might be a problem, and with Jupiter doing what he's doing? Prices go up, go down, go sideways. There's some kind of internal logic that makes no sense to us. You can spend a lot of time trying to figure it out, or, you can just be prepared. Be prepared for an increase, a decrease, an adjustment, but that one thing that is supposed to be the same? It's not.

Aquarius: I was watching a TV show about fishing. When I'm traveling, late at night, I can usually find one fishing show. This one was about salt water experiences, and it included the host interviewing a salt Aquarist. I never knew there was such a title. When I first heard it, I thought the person was introducing herself with her sign, "Aquarius," and it wasn't until the title bar ran, then I noticed the spelling. A professional aquarium keeper, I think, I mean, I'll suppose that's what the job was. Which would be perfect for an Aquarius, rather than Marine Biologist. I know it might seem like a stretch, going from a fishing guide to a marine naturalist, but on that show, it worked. In many of the places where I fish, I observe structured game laws, no fish smaller than a certain size maybe retained, and no fish larger than certain size maybe kept. As such, us fishing guys have to listen to what the ocean botanists have to say about the fish. The scientists aren't really that far from what we do, either, we just add the sport of hook, line & pole to the observation. Occasionally, blackened, grilled or fried, too. It's all about working together, instead of working separately. As people tend to fragment, watch. There's a chance, an opportunity to drag several disparate groups together. Turns out, like that sea zoologist, fishermen and naturalists have a lot in common.

Pisces: "Oh no. No, no you're not." It was one of my neighbors, a vaguely Hispanic gentlemen, and he was looking at me as I was walking out the door. I had, maybe, five or six fishing poles, all broken down and bound together, and over one shoulder, I had a tackle bag plus a small cooler. I tend to freeze a water bottle or two, and pack that around a can of coke and more bottled water when I'm going to fish. It was weekday, and he was headed out, too. To work. He was plainly upset that I was going to a favorite fishing hole

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when the rest of the known world was working. Bright, spring-like morning. Perhaps there was dew on the little, delicate blades of grass, shimmering in the coolness of the early morning. Maybe there was an almost shiver due to the freshness of the day. Or maybe, it was, like, going to get hot later that day, I was going to be by the side of a river, line on the water, and it was all going to be bad. But I doubt that, as a bad day while fishing is better than a good day at work. Although that guy, he calls himself a Mexican, so I'm not stepping on any ethnic toes, he isn't a Pisces, he caught the perfect Pisces comment, the perfect tone, the perfect sentiment for the way you're going to feel. You take one look at another person, heading in a different direction, and you're going to find yourself using that same, "Oh no. No, no you're not." The tone is one that is obviously a mocking tone. Merriment, even. Perhaps a little envy. That's all okay. Doesn't matter, you're day, you're time, will happen soon enough. Maybe not in the next few days, but at least, we will all know how you feel about it.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 5.15.2008

"Good company, good wine, good welcome

Can make good people."

Shakespeare's The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth (I.iv.8-9)

Aries: With the start of Gemini, next week, there's going to be an increase in situations. Conditional "if/then" statements. See, the problem is seeing. The deal is, that there should be an "if/then" tag to every step of the Aries Way. It sounds a little like this, "If I do this, then the results are this." It has rejoinder phrase, "And if I do that, then it becomes that." It's sometimes a matter of figuring out what is best, what is worst and what will work best. Or what works second best. Or what will do, just to get us all by for the time being. The problem, this is like me, standing at the edge of a body of water, looking at the water, surmising and supposing what will work. Trying to make an educated guess at what I should start with first. If I try this, then it should mean fish on the line. And when that first try doesn't work? Time to back up and look for something else. Try a different approach. But remember, with this Gemini energy going on, there's a point, counter-point, an "if/then" way that your guiding light works out.

Taurus: Venus, as an evening star, lingers in Taurus even after the Sun moves on into Gemini. That would be a good thing. Saturn is picking up speed again in Virgo, that would be good thing. Saturn will add an exclamation point to the beginning of next week, that's not so hot. But Saturn's influence, and that exclamation point, that comes after Taurus, and it happens in another sign. It's like that, a simple typographical mark at the end of a sentence. The sentence itself doesn't carry the impact! Not without that mark. The sentence itself doesn't carry the impact. See what the difference is? And see how that's from a simple little line, with small dot at the bottom? What this is about, and the lick to this week, what really hits, is next week, and it slams the door shut on Taurus. It's like a exclamation point, and what's even better, this happens in the next sign over. Close to Taurus, but not in Taurus, when the Sun hits Gemini, that Sun "squares" -- 90 degree angle -- to Mr. Saturn. Tension. Problems. And not your fault, nor, for that matter, not your problem. But, as a good Taurus, I'd like to remind you that this is going next week, and whatever statement you make now, will have that extra punctuation added, next week.

Gemini: I was in a typical BBQ place, one of the hottest topics in Texas. There was a tourist, in line, in front of me. I can't even make this stuff up. "Is your meat barbecued or smoked?" Yes, well. See. I'm not sure I can remember the correct answer. I'm guessing

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that this was after a lunch rush so the guy at the cutting block just looked up and asked if it was lean brisket they wanted. The other choice in brisket is a cut so tender that teeth are not required. Be a good tag line for a BBQ place, too, "You don't need no teeth for our meat." I don't recall what happened because I was busy being amused. Tourists are endless source of amusement. A wise man once suggested that there were no stupid questions. I beg to differ on that point. Sometimes, there really are some stupid questions. Although, from what I understand, in other parts of the country, the term BBQ can refer to boiled meat. Which really doesn't make any sense to me. Might be my upbringing (Hi Mom!) With the beginning of Gemini kicking on Monday, Tuesday, beginning of the coming week? Watch that Gemini mouth of yours. I'd be careful you don't ask any too stupid of a question. Maybe there are no stupid questions, but no reason to make it obvious that you've been temporarily stricken dumb -- by oepneing your mouth. Birthdays are meant to be enjoyed, look to next week as a time for others to begin being nice. You can come up with answers, just watch the questions.

Cancer: I was mixing in the crowd at a public event. I didn't stand out in away, other than a bright shirt and tan lines from sandals. Not that it's unusual, either. In the thronging thousands, I noticed a Hispanic gentleman, probably in his twenties, with a T-shirt that certainly caught my attention. By the middle of May, it's really too hot to wear a black t-shirt in the daylight. But this was an evening crowd, so it might be okay. Especially if you're a young, studly guy. Which, I'm guessing, he was. The shirt read, "Once you go Latin," and I had to innocuously wander around to see what it said , on the back, expecting, "You never go back," or something similar. Front: Once you go Latin. Back: you never know what happens. Tickled me. I can't say, as I haven't engaged in any inter-species dating in a while. Like catch and release, with the fairer sex, I'm of the "look and don't touch" variety. But I liked that guy's shirt. I liked what he was advertising, and I liked the way he was going about it. I can't say if it worked, not that night, not any night. It's about embracing your fine Cancer qualities, and then, it's about advertising those qualities. However you want to advertise.

Leo: Ballpark nachos: don't try this at home. Which is what I did, had a stale, half-empty bag of corn chips, so I layered that out onto a plate, added peppers, then spread some finely-grated "Mexican Blend" cheese -- that means it was Monterey, Jack and Cheddar, mixed together. Why that's a Mexican blend? I don't know. Canned peppers, the hotter, the better, toss it all in the microwave, just like the ball park? My first batch was bad. Really bad. I carefully layered the chips, the peppers and that cheese. Didn't taste right. Not to be daunted by the simplest of culinary ideals, I tried a second time, I was hungry. I emptied what was left of the chips on the plate. I put about cup of loosely drained peppers, just in a blob, right in the middle of the chips. Finally, I unwrapped a couple of sheets of "single-serving pre-packaged cheese-like product." I sort of broke them up, just a little, and then added them to the top of the heap of chips and peppers. Nuked it until the plate glowed. It was perfect ball park nachos, at home. The trick is abandon. I used too much care the first time, tried too hard. Leo, don't try so hard, don't make this a more difficult task than it really is. It's not that hard, not that difficult. Don't compound the problems with extra effort. It's not needed.

Virgo: I was watching, as I was little off to one side, as a barista poured me a double, while using a cup on an inverted cup to catch the espresso. It's a matter of improvisation.

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It's matter of doing what is necessary to get the job done. I was standing, a little off to one side, and sort of behind the line, so I could observe that the Virgo making the espresso, the big machine with levers and buttons and steams whooshing out of it, yeah, working on one of those, she had come up with novel approach. I don't know, if it was really her idea. I didn't inquire. I was just doing good to get her birthday and earn the typical virgo look. So I might seem a bit strange, inquiring about birthdays. In this case, it was rather useful information since I corollated it with a working improvisation. With the "cup on cup" action, she had a work around that allowed the espresso to drain directly into the cup she was preparing, thereby halving her workload. That doesn't protect her against prying customers with strange questions like, "What's your birthday?" But it does help ease the burden in virgo. I can't get you a better job than the coffee shop. But I can suggest you can cut the drudgery in half.

Libra: With most oysters, raw oysters on the half shell, I enjoy the standard-issue "cocktail" sauce. I think it's primarily ketchup with some horseradish mixed in. But with rare and tasty specialty oysters, raw again, I tend to favor what the local folks do. I was in the Pacific Northwest, and the restaurant offered a vinegar-based sauce alongside the usual ketchup. I availed myself of the specialty stuff because the oysters were a local delicacy. I've found that local restaurants tend to know what sauce goes best with local food items. I'm not saying that I'm any kind of a shellfish expert, either, and what I recall -- I could be wrong -- Maine oysters could be prepared like this, as well. But this isn't really about the oyster cocktail sauces. It's about how to blend, and be willing to try whatever is local and whatever the local tradition is? I'd like to suggest, as tourists, maybe we should give their versions a shot. In Libra, with what's going on, the onset of Gemini, Mercury and so forth? Be willing to give the local food groups a try. Or maybe, listen for a recommendation and be surprised at how the new way tastes better. Or is just an easier way to accomplish that Libra goal.

Scorpio: I was fishing in this one lake, and the water was really muddy. To a real fisher person, it was stained with low visibility. Muddy. Lots of run off, heavy particulate matter, sediment that wasn't sediment yet. I've found, under this kind of condition, a relatively ugly piece of bait works rather effectively. It's the Kramer Craw Monster. It's a craw-dad shape football jig with flippers, an extra noise rattler, and some extra legs. Looks ugly. Doesn't really resemble much of anything in nature. Which might, or might not be, the point. The goal is to fool the fish. This sort of setup works well. The muddy water means the fish need movement, exaggerated movement, and the fish would like a little noise to follow, as well. Which is how I came up with my creation. It's really about the ugliest of three different baits lashed together. But the point is, for Scorpio, sometimes? You know, that ugly stuff is what gets the fish. ?And that's our goal, the fishing guide and the Scorpio.

Sagittarius: At the new "town hall," putatively the town's central government building, Austin has purple lights in the fountain. I was wandering around someplace, one evening, and I noticed the lights. How nice, I was thinking, properly spectral and a good Sagittarius color. Maybe it was an homage to the psychedelic heritage. Or, better yet, some sort of coded message. Or maybe it was designer's idea. While I didn't think that the purple was as effective as, say, red, in reducing night blindness, it did have a similar kind of feel.

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Capricorn: I looked down at the laptop computer I use. The front bay for the CD, just the narrowest slip of a piece of plastic over the slot? The front of it was all covered in ink. Not a drop anyplace except for the front of the CD loading slot's door. Such as it is. Looked like red ink, too. I was using a Sharpie to label CDs that I was burning, usually recordings of a reading, and the ink was getting -- apparently -- not quite dry in some cases. Or on some CDs. I think it's a personal touch, but then, I've been accused of being slightly over-protective about my laptop computers. Since I use them frequently, I feel like the protection, or overt protection, is warranted. So seeing the ink was a little strange, at first. But it only shows up in one place, and it's not, like, wear and tear. It's not like

Aquarius: I was standing in a Wal-Mart check out line, I had some fishing weights, for coastal fishing, a stack of burnable CDs, costs less here, and some Power Bait brand power bait I wanted to try next week. I looked up, as I was in the ten items or less. I'm sure an argument could be made that the stack of 100 CD blanks was more than ten, but it was a single package. Counted as one. The girl, and I say that because she was rather young, the checker, had heart tattoo over her heart. Not all of the tattoo was visible, but residing where most males would see the uppermost portion, there was, what looked a like, a medical drawing, colorized, on her flesh. A heart over her heart. I've heard about wearing your heart on your sleeve, which is something I tend to do myself. But heart on your chest? Since it was such an intricate design, I couldn't help but notice. I paid for my goods, and I made a plotie comment about the ink, how it was excellent. She smiled in a demure fashion, unsure that I got it. Which, I might not have gotten. There might be a hidden message; an occult meaning that I don't understand.

Pisces: I was watching a guy struggle with pulling his cowboy boots off for the airport security check. He was struggling It's warm, now. Almost hot. I love travel at this time because I wear sandals. I slip wright though the security check points with no problem. Other than I'm a slightly suspicious person, but in reality, let's face it, despite my own imagination, I'm not really a person of interest. I'm also very aware that I will have to slide through a security checkpoint, and I know it's much easier if I wear sandals. It prevents hang-up like struggling with boots. Which I have done, and will do, in the winter months. I try to make sure that I've got on clean socks. Helps a little. Watching that guy struggle with something he knew was going to happen, though, like the security check point and subsequent metal detector? All I'm suggesting, this week, be a little more prepared, like me. Casual is fine, and sometimes, in the case of getting on a flight -- for me it was business -- going someplace is going to have a security metal detector. I know you know, I'm just reminding you that it is a delay, and you can make this as easy as possible for yourself. Try my approach, wear sandals. You know about the obstacle coming up, be prepared.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 5.22.2008

"Tis an ill cook that cannot lick his own fingers."

Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet [IV.ii.8]

Mercury commences a backwards swing as it turn in apparent retrograde motion. In Gemini. Twice the fun, twice the problems.

Aries: In South Texas, where there is a lot of Mesquite, I noticed that the dominant kind of chaps are shorter than customary. In movies, on TV, in the popular media and mindset, chaps are bushy things that go to the ground, protecting and covering the legs, thighs and sides. In South Texas, working wranglers, i.e., real cowboys, wear a short kind of apparel. Chaps, the outside covering, again, from popular media, chaps are supposed to be leather. What I've seen working cowboys wearing, though, is more like heavy canvas, and the design is a shorter one, covering thighs and knees, but stopping well short of the expected length. Turns out this is a popular, or maybe it's a fad, but this is a popular design for horse-riding field-workers who have to spend a lot of time, in the saddle. In the saddle, as in riding a horse, as opposed to some kind of a metaphor. There was a name for that kind of chaps, but it escapes me now. This is all about what is perceived as the proper order of things, and what that proper order really is. Not that an Aries would have trouble with discerning one from the other, but there is a problem here. From watching a couple of (real) cowboys move around in the aforementioned shorter chaps, I was guessing that the design is marginally cooler, certainly easier to move about in, and maybe it's an improvement. Good for everyone but Hollywood (and its related ilk). The shorter chaps aren't particularly photogenic, but comfort or looks, what's most important?

Taurus: Starts on high note, and then just as quick as the weekend arrives, it all sort of slides down, sideways. It's Mars, it's the phase of the moon, it's Mercury's relative position, it's the sun in Gemini, no wait, that last one, that's good. But the other pointers that I use in making an astrology prediction, those don't look so hot. None of his is dire, or or bad. I headed out to one area lake the other afternoon. Morning, I started in the morning. I took gear, tackle, drinks, a chair, everything I needed to catch and record many big fish. Eventually, I had everything in the water, and I spent hours by the bank of the lake, and I never got a bite. Maybe some nibbles. At least once or twice, it looked like the bait was chewed up, but no fish on the end of the line. To some, this would appear to be a losing proposition. To me, it was research and development, trying to pick a pattern, everything that I enjoy about fishing except for the catching part.

Gemini: I pulled the Shakespeare quote from Romeo and Juliet, "tis an ill cook that cannot lick his own fingers," and I got to thinking about food. Literary food stuffs, food in

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book and magazines. Usually, and I've known a food specialist before, the photos of food are heavily staged. But in print, there's always a recipe or two. I've blogged a couple of recipes. I know those work. Good for comfort food. Especially the "secret family recipe" for ice cream. Not exactly healthy, but that's another matter. But then, think about the literary foodstuff, not cookbooks, but real books. Is that for real a recipe? Or is just a recipe for disaster? One example comes to mind, a Gemini author, matter of fact, and his book is called "Big Red Tequila." The title is recipe in the book for a drink, Big Red and Tequila. Makes my head hurt to think about mixing the two.

Cancer: Water conservation, and I got to thinking about this because there was the opposite of a drought for a while. A surfeit of water, an excess of aquatic material. Gone were the signs to "wait until the dishwasher is full before running it," and "don't do just one sheet," as well as similar slogans for the waste water conservation districts. I remember one from California, Northern Cal, "If it's yellow, be mellow." Meant don't flush every time. Don't waste water.

Leo: This week's lyrical question? "Am I right or Amarillo?" I'm just ashamed of myself for blatantly stealing a lick from a pop country song. Still, if the shoe fits, then it must be Lubbock, or leave it. Back to the original point, and don't get distracted, the deal is, "Am I right or Amarillo?" is a musical question I heard on the radio. I turned it up, sort of followed the song, got bored and listened to something with a little more meat in the music. But the pernicious lyric stuck in my head. I'm sure there's a name for that. Most people are aware of Amarillo. Some people seem to think that Amarillo represents Texas, too, having dashed across the northern part of the state on the interstate. That's just the thinnest slice of the plains of Texas. Doesn't do justice to the rest. Although, if you are cutting through there, stop at the Cadillac Ranch, just west of town. Marvel at how whacked out the Texans are. All of this goes a long way in explaining that the land of the weird is still there. Mercury is destined to mess with your head. So, like the lyrical refrain, you have to guess what the right answer is.

Virgo: A Mesquite Tree is a deciduous tree with its aromatic hard wood, perfect for grilling, The Mesquite Tree dots my landscape, the desert environs of the southwestern states. I'm used to it. The Mesquite, no, you can look this up, the longest recorded taproot on one of those trees was almost 200 feet. Deep. But the Mesquite can also adapt, it can suck water moisture up, it can get well water far below the surface, and it can change as need be, to make sure it gets its water, making use of smaller, more delicate roots that vacuum up the surface moisture in the desert. From a deep tap root to delicate appendages that can siphon up the smallest hint of water, the meager Mesquite has an adaptable nature. In part, I'm sure this is dictated by environment. Thorns, the ability to survive for seasons at a time without water, the ability to tap into the lower water table, or, in that same quest for life-giving moisture, the ability to grab whatever might be available on the surface? Therein is a lesson for the Virgo camp. Thorny outside, multiple sources of (life-giving) water, and that ever-present ability to adapt as need be. This will result in good stuff.

Libra: I was watching a music video -- Asleep at the Wheel -- on the computer. Reminded me of something, I'm not sure what. Other than the Wheel has been around as long as I have, maybe longer, and the Wheel never made it big. But then, they were never small,

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either. Some place under the radar, a national act that's not quite national. A local act that's too big to be called local. Then, too, the Wheel plays "Western Swing," which died a long time ago, but yet never died out. It's an odd collection. Ray Benson, the lead singer, guitar player, heir apparent to the King of Western Swing title, he's a Pisces, if I recall and I might have him mixed up with another guitar player. What I was thinking about was how Asleep at the Wheel never made it into the big time. Yet they're not a small, unknown regional group, either. It's that fine line between fame and fortune, just under the radar, schlepping from town to town, not quite famous, but certainly not unheard of. Libra, you're in a similar position. Not famous yet, you do look good to us. Like we know you from someplace. My favorite line, "Aren't you that guitar player?" I suspect, as your week unfolds, you're going to feel like Asleep at the Wheel. Famous, yet unrecognized. Enjoy the limelight with its obscurity.

Scorpio: Mercury is about timing, and timing is what this week's message is all about. My Scorpio friends are best known for their zingers. One-liners. Comments that most effectively cut to the bone. One line admonitions that succinctly sum up several points and hammer home an issue. Or, in some cases, drive another nail into the coffin's lid. Or slam the door shut, in the face of some offending party. It's that Scorpio wit, it's that Scorpio tail, it's that special ability to hit hard with quiet comments. Yeah, and I do love it so. Strong and poignant, hits right where it's needed. Usually. You depend on your ability to think fast, on your feet. You can rely on your innate wit for fast retort, usually in the guise of a one-liner. And with Mercury, Neptune, and all that Gemini stuff? Your timing is off. You'll think about the perfect response, about ten minutes too late. Can't count on your usual quick wit to get you out of this. Some days, it's best to be mute rather than open your mouth and say something wrong.

Sagittarius: How did this happen? Mutant lizards from outer space? The results of an atom bomb blast? What exactly is the message? It's all about one of the most recognizable franchises in the movie business: Godzilla. I'm thinking that the first movie was a low-budget Japanese film. As I understand it, there's been something like 50 or so of the films made, varying production values. Varying degrees of carnage and destruction, end-of-the-world, and so on. I'm not much up on the Godzilla movie, really. The internet is a nice neighborhood for digging up facts and fictions about a fictional movie. This doesn't have a lot to do with us, in Sagittarius, but it does. The movie franchise, that's what I was thinking about. One, low-budget spin-off of an idea became a world-wide phenomena. Pretty good. There was similar kind planet arrangement when Godzilla (first movie) was born to what's happening now. With Mercury heading into apparent retrograde motion, opposite us, we have to be careful about what we create. Could be a little idea, like a mutant lizard that just grows and grows.

Capricorn: Retconn. Alternatively, "Retcon." Retroactive continuity, or the ability to make a new plot twist understandable in light of new information about the character's history. This is often employed in comic books with long story lines, but it also occurs, so I'm told, in daily soaps. The problem being, with Mercury and all, we can't write "retcon" material into our daily lives. We can't go back in history and correct an oversight, or drop in a new super-power, and now is time when we could use it the most. Especially in Capricorn. One author I know killed off a supporting character only to have to resurrect that character in another novel, later. "It wasn't me, dude." I think that was the quote

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about the dead body. While that author got away with it, and they do get away this in comic books, movies, TV shows, as well as fine literature, I'm just saying that I don't see this happening in Capricorn. "I have to go to the funeral this week," as an excuse. The problem being, that same relative died last month, too. New excuses. Or work on getting the history straight -- the first time.

Aquarius: It was a closing comment from a friend, perhaps it was just signature file, but the comment was, "Don't be a stranger!" I thought about it as I was fishing, and I kept thinking it should be read, "Don't be stranger!" Stranger than what? Hard for me to be much stranger than I am. My little redneck friends think I'm just one step away from a socialist-communist tree-hugging liberal. My tree-hugging liberal friends think I'm just one step away from the redneck-right, neo-fascist gun-toting righteous right with closet Republican tendencies. Neither situation is true, but like my Aquarius friend, and my misreading her note, I keep trying to be stranger. It's not much of an effort, really. I just act like myself, and that's the secret. Mars moves opposite you, and that's a challenge. How to deal with this, that's up to you, but I would tend to accentuate the "strange" part of the Aquarius mind (pattern, brain waves, thinking, feeling). Placing an emphasis on this sometimes abstract and weird part of the Aquarius thinking will help ease the way through this moon cycle. Mars, too. Mars is opposite, be stranger than usual. It's okay.

Pisces: Perhaps one of the best lines of all time, from the movie The Blue Brothers, "I ran out of gas. I, I had a flat tire. I didn't have enough money for cab fare. My tux didn't come back from the cleaners. An old friend came in from out of town. Someone stole my car. There was an earthquake. A terrible flood. Locusts. IT WASN'T MY FAULT, I SWEAR TO GOD." This is the fundamental difference between reality and the celluloid world, or the digital world. I've tried that line before. It didn't work. I've tried it several times, never seems to have the same effect as it did in the movie. One, single line that got the character out of trouble, talked a homicidal woman (scorned) out of using the automatic weapon in her hand. What Pisces wouldn't like a golden line like that? How much would you give me if I could deliver such a line? I'll be up front, though, I've tried and the one from the movie doesn't work. Does it matter? Yes and no. Doesn't matter to you, although, I wasn't facing a scorned woman with a weapon, but it does matter that excuses, especially good excuses, like "It wasn't my fault," those don't work. Mercury. Gemini. Whatever you want to blame go right ahead and blame it. But watch the lines, the excuses. I showed up with flowers. "What did you do wrong?" Nothing.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 5.29.2008

"Sweet flowers are slow and weeds make haste."

Shakespeare's The Tragedy of King Richard the Third [II.iv.17]

Upcoming events, check the schedule.

Aries: The easiest way to advance your own agenda is to simply push forward, under your own power. You're going to find, especially at the worst time possible, or in the worst way possible, that people and associations you depended on, those will fail. This can be a big damn deal, or this can be a minor annoyance. In the long run, in the bigger picture, the people don't fail, they just fail to live up to your unrealistic expectations -- at the moment. No, your expectations aren't really unrealistic, not if you stop and examine the picture. If you stop and think about it, no, there really isn't a problem, but in the short term, the little window between now and next week? Sure as can be, you're going to find yourself let down. Might be some kind of unspoken action you counted on, and that might not come through. Again, this isn't anyone's "fault" other than, maybe, your own. What were you asking of that person? Association that wasn't in black and white, not spelled out in a contract? That's the problem, "I always thought I could count on you to help me move a dead body," you might say. In reality, if it was a dead body scenario, that friend would come through. It's the relative nature of this and the planets, and the secret is to do it yourself this week.

Taurus: Most of the long docks down at the coast, most of the inter-coastal water way motels have these long docks for fishing. On the dock, there will be a place for cleaning what you caught, usually a freshwater tap and metal surface for cleaning fish. Or, in my case, bait. I was pinching shrimp heads off and throwing them back into the water. More than a few gulls noticed what I was doing and gathered there. I quickly became very entertained by the gulls themselves, the mocking laughter of their cry, the airborne agility, and best of all, the little squabbles a single shrimp head could cause. I tend to buy live bait, and if I don't use it in time, some of it is then dead bait. Which I package up and save as surf bait. Or part of a recipe for catfish bait. Not that it matters. I had, maybe, a pound of freshly dead shrimp to go through and put away. I've discovered that the shrimp bodies preserve pretty well and retain their flavor as bait but the shrimp heads just fall off in the process. Hence my action and feeding gulls while making bait. The idea that there's something, might be routine, might be smelly, but something that can turn into a fascinating task, if you'll let it? Like making bait and feeding gulls? Got options, my fine Taurus friend, exercise those options.

Gemini: We passed church, west of here, just a little ways west. The marquee read, "Jesus es el camino." And this whole time, I always thought Jesus was a Ford guy, a Ranchero,

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maybe an older model, but still. Which launched into an interesting discussion based upon car styles from a previous era. Truck style, and car styles, and proto-SUV types of things. Still didn't answer the question about what Jesus would drive, and I tend to think the old boy would probably drive one of those Toyota's that are made in Texas. Just south of San Antonio, really. But that do I know? Besides, if you look at the sign and the question, and the real message, you'd realize that Mercury is retrograde and none of that has anything to do with the idea, the concept that Mercury is backwards in your sign, the Sun is lining up with Mercury before too long, and the Moon mixes it up, too. This is the mother of Mercury Retrogrades. You can let yourself get derailed worrying about that kind of car is in message, or you can cause that worry in other people. I tend to think along the lines of the older Ford model.

Cancer: Front of the boat, back of the boat, there are -- basically -- only two seats in a bass boat. And it's all fun and games until someone starts catching fish. Front or back, doesn't much matter. It's all bad jokes and giggles until one of the guys in one of the seats starts to catch fish. Like three or four. Then the air turns serious. This could also be trouble. Suddenly, a good day on the water gets ugly. It can happen, as the competition heats up. Likewise, the spring-like weather has turned towards a full-summer roast. So in a similar manner, the Cancer life is heating up. I was thinking about those two guys in the boat, not this ever happened to me, but once one of them starts getting into some serious fish, it can turn ugly. Depends on how this is approached, with what attitude. Look: sign right in front of you? Gemini. In that sign, there will be a Sun, Venus, and Mercury (Retrograde). Stop. Consider this planetary motion, the significance. Are you going to let the life in the good ship Cancer turn ugly because someone else, the other seat, seems to be catching all the fish? Do what you can to help. You'll find it goes a lot easier that way.

Leo: It's late May. I noticed a "hot summer in the city" aroma, when I was out for an afternoon stroll. Really, I went to the post office and the bank, and a coffee shop, not in that order. Just normal business. Somewhere along the way, I caught a scent, an aroma, a smell that evoked some long-forgotten memory. I couldn't place the memory, but I could pinpoint the smell: wet concrete. Not wet concrete as in freshly poured concrete, nor, for that matter, new concrete, but the old stuff. Like a sidewalk or curb, been there a while, the corner I'm thinking of has a 1972 or maybe a 1927 date inscribed in it. The water is from garden hose, or a spigot, or maybe a puddle from summer shower. A moment or two before I detected the smell, a car drove through the puddle and splashed some of the water onto the concrete curb. It's an aromatic trigger, the smallest of things, that indicates summer is here. And Mercury is backwards, too. Plus Mars, he's frying along just fine in Leo. There's a hint of the summer, full of promise and fun in the sun, coming up. You're ready to go now. Just be careful.

Virgo: I was thinking about Saturn, picking up speed, and Saturn's steamroller effect. Only, I don't even know if there are steam rollers anymore. I suspect most of the earth-moving and flattening equipment like that, I'm guessing that those machines are all driven diesel fuel, so the nomenclature "steamroller" is misleading. Not factual. With zero research on my part, I'm making a reasonable jump in an intuitive way, about the nature of the language. I'd guess the big road-flattening machines were, at one time steam powered, but I'm also guessing that they aren't, and haven't been, for a good half-century -- or more. That doesn't stop Saturn from gaining a little leverage on your Virgo self, and

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for that matter, this whole Mercury/Sun/Venus (all in Gemini) from gaining a degree of momentum and rolling right over your Virgo self. These planets are merely clearing away some material that needs to be moved. Flattened, paved over, or just buried, once for all. The obstacle is that your Virgo self might try and interfere with this process. Just let it roll right over you. Much easier that way. Besides, as that big machine starts rolling towards you -- this week -- getting in its way will certainly cause harm to yourself.

Libra: I was sitting along the shoreline, at on a dock really, as the shrimp boats were pulling in one morning. I watched as one great white heron swooped in and landed on the top of the wheelhouse on the shrimp boat. I'm guessing, that the heron knew the captain, and I'm also guessing that there was a relationship of sorts therein. The way the heron made itself at home on the wheelhouse, and the way the gulls trailed along behind the ship, that in and of itself would suggest a degree of familiarity. I've seen this before, with a great blue heron and shrimper, the two got along. Me? In Austin, I've fed the Great Blue Herons with my meager catch. But I doubt that those birds go out of their way to seek me out. Unlike that Great White, which did seem to select a certain boat, and I'm sure the bird was fed. I don't know if that's good or not, but someplace, I suppose there's a kind of balance although it doesn't go with traditional terms where the long-legged herons prey on small fish in shallow waters. It's nice to have someone to look out for you. As this Mercury pattern establishes itself, figure out where that shrimp boat is. A free ride and food?

Scorpio: Communication is sometimes about communicating with other people. So mostly, that's what this about. Maybe not so much at this moment, but usually, that's what communicating, from a wise Scorpio to the rest of us, that's the usual train of thought, the established pattern. Herein, too, is the problem. It would seem, in a Scrpio-centric world, that no one is getting it. So that's part of what this is all about. Understand that we don't understand you. Way it goes. Try explaining it differently? How about louder? Neither works, not really. But all is not lost. Just because Mercury (and et cetera) is backwards (and et cetera), that doesn't mean all communication is in the toilet. There's a point, where you're trying to illustrate an idea, and the intended audience just doesn't get it. However, this is where we're very similar, Scorpio and me, and we both like the way the point is made. That no one gets it? That's not the problem. The solution is to watch, read, understand what you're writing down. Like a professional wrestler, trying to pin an opponent, as your Scorpio self wrestles the words down to pin them in a hold, you'll find that an idea becomes clear. While that won't win an argument, or advance your cause any, it does make one issue clear to yourself. So what if the rest of us just don't get it? We can amend that statement, too, "So what if the rest of us just don't get it yet?"

Sagittarius: I don't know if Venus opposite Sagittarius will mitigate the effects of Mercury in (apparent) retrograde motion opposite Sagittarius. It very well could sort of overrule the problems. But I doubt it. Mercury in backwards motion with its concomitant problems is on the opposite side of where our fine Sagittarius selves are. Therein is the problem and therein is the solution, too. Admitting that there is a problem is the first step towards a solution. I think that's how it goes, I'm not sure. Look: I can't make Mercury any less retrograde than it already is. This affects me, too, so don't complain. It's all about what we can do to make sure that some of the interactions we have to have,

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on a daily basis, we can insure that those are smooth as possible. That's a cute outfit. No, I don't think I've seen that shirt before. I like the message on your T-shirt. These are just a couple of stock phrases that will help in the next week. Realize that the new moon hits, and until the Moon is firmly in Cancer, there's going to be the usually unusual Mercury difficulties. Duck and weave a little, it'll help some.

Capricorn: I have a favorite Catfish fishing pole. I rarely use the pole for catfish fishing though. It is a good pole -- a strong pole, it's an excellent surf fishing pole. Which doesn't always make sense to me, but I'm no longer going to worry about the details. I have a regular surf pole, too, but this one catfish pole seems to work the best. Backbone and strength to fling heavy surf weights way out there, yet sensitive enough that I can pick up smaller nibbles, too. Good equipment. I don't recall why I bought it, not originally, but I doubt it's ever really been used for its intended, stated purpose. Which is sort of what this is about, too. I discovered that a number of fishing guides recommend this very brand and name of pole as a surf rod. Seems it's pretty popular as a misapplication of a piece of equipment. As a manufacture, I'd wonder why they didn't switch the label to reach a broader a spectrum of buyers. But I'm not a marketing guru, just do horoscopes. Which is what this about. While it's not intended as a surf rod, it works admirably as such. So watch what the label says, and then, decide for yourself. Labels can be misleading, especially with Mercury where he is in your chart.

Aquarius: I was reading a buddy's web log. His note a couple of weeks ago was something along the lines how he wanted to take the girlfriend up in the mountains to a B&B, someplace remote, turn off the cell phones, and just snuggle while listening to some music. He then listed several heavy thrash musical groups. I giggled at that. Out loud, even. It's what I would expect from a just such an Aquarius. Music to snuggle by, in the Aquarius mind, that might not be like anything else. Or what other people with different signs, what they might find as snuggle music, might not be the same. Loud guitars, clashing drum beats, maybe super-heavy bass line, no, not exactly what I would look for as a relaxing evening with a girlfriend. But I'm not an Aquarius, and I don't always understand. Which might be the point. Or, the point might be something else, too. Perhaps there's a moment of rest and relaxation inherent with that kind of music. Or maybe the post itself was a half-truth, wherein there will be no thrash music for a quiet night at a B&B. Or maybe, relaxation includes a loud night rather than a quiet night. Sort of depends. Then, too, I read this on a website, and maybe that make it all fictional. I tend to believe this one guy, though, as he writes like he really is. My best guess is the snuggle music for Aquarius isn't the same a the snuggle music for other people. Not that it matters, with the planets, especially Mercury, where it all is? I wouldn't count on most folks understanding the Aquarius point-of-view. Kind of ironic, isn't it?

Pisces: I was wondering along a usual pathway, usual for me, anyway, and I noticed a guy sitting by the edge of the lake. Had a hat, sunglasses, correct summer-like attire, and he was just sitting there. All he needed was a fishing pole, and he would've been a good picture, only, there was no pole. Something was missing from my version of the picture. Lake, late spring afternoon, thermometer was headed towards the "really hot" reading. I was probably sweating. I was probably going to stake out a piece of the shoreline from which I could fish. Lot of probable action on my part, and that means, there was probably a lot of supposition. I don't know what the real story was, for that guy sitting by the edge

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of the lake. I guess I could've loaned him a pole, or at last ascertained for sure that he was Pisces. But I didn't. I left him well enough alone. Some days, that's the course of action I chose. I'd like recommend that you follow a similar course of action. Did that guy used to have a pole in his hand, only a really big fish dragged the pole into the water? Did he just forget? Was he contemplating love and loss? End of the world? Or maybe, hey just forgot to bring a fishing pole. Perhaps there was a jug-line I couldn't see. It's case where a whole lot of nothing can add up. Now, are you the Pisces person, sitting there, by the edge of the water undisturbed and contemplating some issue? Or are you the Pisces person with a brain like a wheel in a hamster cage, endlessly spinning? Chose wisely, consider the planets.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 6.5.2008

"Indeed, I am in the waist two yards about; but I am now about no waste; I am about thrift."

Shakespeare's The Merry Wives of Windsor (I.iii.26)

Nota Bene: Act IV, scene I in the Merry Wives of Windsor a teacher with a student named William who is doing Latin grammar -- possibly a autobiographical link.

Aries: As long as Mercury (retrograde) is in Gemini, I'd like to look at twin influences for Aries. One would be Mr. Mars, in Leo and the other would Mr. Jupiter, in Capricorn. Mars infuses energy, and while its angle to the Aries sign is considered good, it's a little difficult to tell for sure. Then, there's the somewhat pejorative angle from Jupiter, nominally at odds. The energizer planet is good and the lucky star isn't so good. Which one wins? That's the question I'd pose for you, Aries, which one are you going to let win? I'd opt to listen to erratic yet useful Jupiter energy and I'd use Mars for punctuation. Jupiter makes a weird point at a strange time, and I'd just let Mars add the correct diacritical marks. The punctuation. Maybe an exclamation point! Or a question mark? Something like that. Use what's there for the best, don't let these two get off on the wrong way.

Taurus: Mars is in a fixed sign. Neptune is in in fixed sign. Taurus is a fixed sign, but it's not the sign that either Mars or Neptune is in. Which means that those two other planets are in the process of setting up a possibly disturbing and unsettling energy, in the coming weeks. What you do with this energy? That's up to you. I'd suggest, even now, you pay attention to what's going on with the areas that forming tension. To me, this isn't really tension as much as it's like a miniature weather system. Tiny clouds come out of the bathroom when I'm done with a shower. I'd expect to see, following that, a tiny thunderhead cloud pattern to form in the bedroom. Doesn't really happen, but I could imagine that happening, as a result of the warm, moist bathroom air meeting the cold, winter-like bedroom air. Rain, now that's a blessing. Of sorts. So it's not like this is all bad, but I've seen moisture in the air ruin more than one date's hair style. To me, the thundercloud and possible storm in the bedroom and the way a summer shower can ruin a girl's hair? None of this is bothersome -- to me. But to a Taurus? This can be problematic. I'm not saying this occurs this week, but be on the lookout, as it is going to set a tone. That's what is important, that tone it sets. That's the big issue fast approaching.

Gemini: It's another weird week in Gemini-land. Seems that more than the usual amount of Mercury is backwards stuff has gone on. I worked around the edge of the lake with a cast net in my hand. I was trying to catch just a couple of the little minnows that were

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feeding on the surface. Shad, brim, minnows, shiners, I think I've heard the bait fish called a lot of names. I'm not even sure what kind they were, just a few I was trying to net. I would fling the cast net out, and then I would draw up its line, closing in whatever I was hoping to net. Only, I wasn't getting a thing. I threw the net out about three or four times before I caught anything. Which is part of the problem right now. Mercury, Venus, Sun, all in Gemini. It's like me, with a cast net in hand. Coming back empty? Again, that's like me. Mercury can thwart the best of intentions. Mercury can leave you empty-handed. Mercury can, and will, cause a lot of turmoil. The true measure of what kind of person you are? I walked over to the ranger's office and store, and I bought some frozen (bait) shrimp. Cost me about two dollars. If my cast net for bait isn't working? About two dollars can get me back on the water with a line in the water. If one doesn't work? Don't be afraid to buy a little frozen bait -- or whatever else is needed to get you back in your Gemini groove.

Cancer: The sign was hand-lettered, "Please keep all hands and buckets out of the tanks so the shrimp will live." Cancer girl runs a bait stand, down on the coast. It was her stand, obviously. I'm guessing, her or her current, or ex, boyfriend's lettering, could be that, too. I like the home-spun appeal. I like the questionable grammar and diction that effectively conveys a message. That's sort of the point, that hand-lettered sign. Not really correct grammar. Not so much on the spelling, neither. Not that it matters, the point is effectively made. Given that the Sun, Mercury and Venus are way stacked up in Gemini, the sign that precedes you, you'll understand. I suspect you'll have sign, or similar point that needs to be made, and I'm sure you'll have it lettered all wrong, or miss the punctuation, or misspell a word, or whatever. Doesn't matter. Like that girl who sells bait by the seashore? The point is effective. Get the needed warning out there where everyone can plainly read it. Sort of hard to miss. The idea is, in the various live bait places, a tank with heavily aerated sea water keeps the bait alive. Usually shrimp. Could be Croaker, Crab, Eel or even Piggy Perch. But the idea is to keep it all alive until the bait gets delivered. That means no touch from human hands. Delicate life form. But the real point isn't about keeping your hands out of the bait tank, it's about how to get that message across. I'd suggest a hand-lettered sign, maybe on the back of some old cardboard. Be surprised how effective it can be.

Leo: I was reading some food review, and one of the edited comments amused me greatly, "Staff appears to be in perpetual psychic pain." considering the place being reviewed, not a spot known for culinary finesse, the comment should've been left in. I'm sure some lawyer, someplace, could make a case for or against that kind of comment, though. However, that's what this feels like, between Mercury and Mars, sort stuck in place you don't want to be. Or maybe you do. I've dined on various forms of fast foods. At 4 or 5 in the morning, on my way to a fishing date, whatever is open is good. Even cardboard (recycled) and plastic cheese product, on top of something that might, or might not, have been an egg at one time, yeah, even that stuff is good. Sometimes, it's really good. Smiling faces like me might be causing the staff's psychic pain. I can be abnormally cheery if I know there's coffee coming. And fishing, too. Always about the fishing. So I might just be the source of the psychic pain. Or other pain. Leo, look, see, you're working the tail end of the graveyard shift, and here's a guy in mismatched clothes, looks precious close to a homeless guy, smiling and demanding food. Do your humble imitation and serve it with a

double dose of the "I'm in psychic pain" look. But be quick about it, as that's the easiest way to get us out of your face.

Virgo: I was wearing a hat from a motel/resort. Nice hat. Name, though, seems slightly evocative of either a hotel-resort or a plush-rehab facility. Not sure which, really. So when I was wearing the hat, it gathered a few comments. Apparently, the town I was in, the hat bore the same name as a drug abuse/alcoholism center. What's a resort in one place is rehab elsewhere. I would guess that it's part of the name of the place, and I suppose, with no other clues than the name, it could be easy to make the assumption that I was wearing a celebrity rehab hat rather than a marginally famous fishing resort. I was thinking about the minor confusion about whether I should be fishing or in rehab. Maybe I could be in a rehabilitation clinic, but personally, I'd rather be fishing. I enjoy my vices, and I'm sure, they enjoy me, too. What this about is enjoying your vices, but not letting yourself get too carried away with the vices. Hence the need for rehab. Just between two influences, it's getting a little weird. And that Saturn thing, that influence might make the rehab look like a good idea. In most cases, though, this is a problem that your Virgo self can tackle without the need of professional help. There are a few of you who do need help, and if you don't get help at Astrofish.net, please do get help.

Libra: Between Austin and San Antonio, just, like right at the edge of the Interstate, there's a place -- Aquarena Springs -- used to be a tourist place. Attraction, used to be a tourist trap, like the Roach Motel, tourists check in but they don't check out? No, Aquarena Springs was a prototype Water Park. It offered Ralph the Diving Pig, pictures on the website someplace. It's now wetlands branch of the Texas State (something). It displays the fragile marshlands and the delicate balance in the Hill Country's creek-based eco-systems. It's the second largest spring in the state. Or something like that. Don't hold me to the facts, as I don't think I've ever been to the park itself. Not in real life. I had a dream I went there. And in that dream, I imagined that I showed up with a fishing pole, and that I was warmly welcomed. Which proves it was a dream, since the place is a protected habitat area. Yet, in my dream I was welcomed. Proof that the mind can play tricks on the conscious thought process, especially when asleep. I'd be careful, as you make your Libra way through the week: differentiate between waking and sleeping perceptions. This is hampered by Mercury, enhanced by Mars. Deal with it appropriately, which, I might include, doesn't include a fishing pole.

Scorpio: I'm a little old-fashioned about certain issues. I bought a CD the other week. Music I thought I would like, the whole CD. I only heard one song, but I was guessing that the whole CD would be okay. It wasn't. That one song was easily worth a \$0.99 or \$1.25 download. Or maybe even free, if I could be bothered to find it for free. Chasing links on quasi-legal networks is sometimes too time-consuming. I like the way iTunes suggest similar artists, although, not all the suggestions are that good. But this isn't about paying for music or searching for free stuff online someplace. This is about Scorpio and the problems facing my fine little Scorpio friends. Looking back, I can see that I should've just paid for that one song on iTunes. Just easier. But I didn't. I opted for the more archaic manner of walking into a music store and purchasing the whole album. Whole CD. Liner notes and all. Although, that's not really much canvas for good cover artwork. But that's not the question for Scorpio either. It's about double guessing and guessing wrong, and then making a financial mistake. In my example, it was simple, just the price

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of CD compared to the price of that single song. What I would suggest? If there's a less expensive option right now? Go that way. Less is more, sometimes.

Sagittarius: "The Bible tells us to love our neighbors, and also to love our enemies; probably because generally they are the same people." --G. K. Chesterton. I didn't bother to look that one up, I can't give the quote a proper attribution. But as we make our way, our excellent Sagittarius way, through this time of problems, I'd like to consider that quote. Real or imagined, it's a poignant guideline, amusing, but there's a point to consider, too, just a shred of truth hidden under the chuckle? I'm wondering if that isn't the way to deal with the current planetary influence, all that material, stacked up in Gemini, opposing us?

Capricorn: I can't ever seem to make up my mind as to which is better, DSL or cable modem. Sometimes I just suck it up and piggy-back on a neighbor's wireless rig, if the network is left hanging open. We do what we can. What happened, and it's a perfect example of this Mercurial Mercury stuff, some worker cut the cable. Whatever pipeline runs the the little inter-web tubes under the ground? Something cut one of those. Enough of an outcry, and the repair crew was right on it. So, once again, for several hours, I was bereft of communications in its usual form, the inter-web thing. What I did: I wrote a letter. How archaic. I set down at the computer, turned the printer on, wrote out a nasty note, and then I addressed an envelope, stuck a stamp on it, and I walked over to the mailbox and mailed the missive. How weird is that.

Aquarius: I was with a neighbor, and the TV was going in the background. It caught my attention. It was Jerry somebody. Apparently, some kind of daytime TV talk show. I'm guessing it comes on the afternoons. Still. There was violence, accusations, unsubstantiated rumors, more chatter, violent outburst, and threats. Pretty exciting stuff for daytime talk shows. I've missed this? I guess so. It was a flashback to a different time, a different place, a strange world. A time and place that I didn't really understand. Not that it was a bad trip down memory lane, or nothing like that, it was just different. Just a flash of sorts. As I wandered off, on towards home, I was thinking about what glimpse I'd had of that show, on TV. Who needs material like that when they've lived in a trailer park? All seems kind of tame, in comparison. Not that it matters, either. Consider the canned form of entertainment and then compare that to your real life experience. Oftentimes, you're going to find that real life (in Aquarius) is far more exciting than any reality TV that might, or might not be, scripted. However, I think the real point is that real life, or our facsimile thereof, in Aquarius, is not scripted these days. Might be funny, there might be an outburst, but no one will be sticking to the script. I'm just warning you, that's all. Expect all your characters not to play by any guidelines you think you've established.

Pisces: The last time I warned a Pisces about a physical health issue, it blew up in my face. Not the Pisces, that wasn't what blew up; although, as I recall, that particular Pisces was upset with my prognostication. What was worse, that Pisces endured a certain amount of physical discomfort. Was it a result of my prediction? Did that particular Pisces make it come true because it was something read here? My warning was intended as a light-hearted warning, not as a dire prediction which would most certainly come through. So this isn't like, "you're going to have major surgery" kind of a warning, it's

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more along the lines of "you might stub your toe" type of missive. Let's keep this lighthearted and, for that matter, let's keep this metaphorical. I'm speaking in rhymes, too. I have to emphasize the allegorical nature of the message, it's more along the lines of being careful and watching out for silly, clumsy mistakes. When an item is marked, "Handle with care?" Handle with care. When the coffee cup says, "Contents are HOT?" That means the first sip shod be tentative, testing, probationary. Just taking it all a little slower at this point makes it much easier.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 6.12.2008

"All places that the eye of heaven visits

Are to a wise man ports and happy havens."

Shakespeare's Richard III (I.iii.279-280)

Aries: I had a teacher, a writing professor, and his explanation? It's all about the letting the sentence itself convey what the punctuation was supposed to imply. That's like using certain marks, a question mark, for example, sparingly. Be kind of hard for me, but I'm used to limited space. Then too, there's the computer shorthand that starts to invade even my daily usage. I answered a client's question in an email, and then I had a quick question. Instead of writing out the question itself, I just sent an email that had a single question mark in its body. In other words, I cheated just like I'd tell you not to. This is clearly a case of me preaching but using an example where I do just what I preach not to do. That's kind of bad thing, huh. However, there's really some solid advice here. Listen to my old professor, let the weight of the grammar carry the emphasis. Don't add unnecessary markings. No extra markers, no, little diddles, none of those silly emotion marks like the smiley faces, nope, none of that. If you must punctuate with more than an simple period? Don't use three!!! Looks bad.

Taurus: An Austin "putt-putt" place was closed down. Tall weeds, overgrown lanes, the windmill not turning any more. On the marquee? "Closed for Re-pars." Be nice if we could all just close for a little repair. Some folks would suggestion that's what a vacation is for, but far too many of a vacations turn into a work experience. Or it was a working trip, to begin with. Which is what is going on in Taurus, too. The thought of getting a groove, re-grooved, that's a wonderful idea. The concept of closing down for some much needed rest and repair, that's a good concept. The way this works, though, that's not likely.

Gemini: I was sitting in a doctor's office, probably waiting on a friend or something, and I picked up a magazine. One of the teaser titles, a headline of sorts, "Best place for \$5K NOW." I flipped to the article, it was a magazine about retiring rich, and if you're in the dentist's office, you know someone will be retiring rich, like the doctor himself. Herself, in my case. So the best place for five grand? Right now? Invest in home repairs, which would increase the value of your home, invest in continuing education which would help you make more money, pay off high interest debts -- especially high numbers on credit cards -- and the rest of the article was full a no-nonsense approach about how to dispose of an extra five K. I think they missed one point, the bit about the hiring a professional, and a reading from me would certainly be helpful if you had an extra \$5K. And don't

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charge near that amount so there would be plenty left over. What would you do if you had an extra \$5K? Invest wisely? Blow it on something fun? Do a little of both? Mercury is still backwards, and what that headline and teaser suggested -- along with its graphics -- was there was a hot stock tip. In the real world, there isn't. Spend a little time in a more common sense way. I'm just saying, what with Mercury and all....

Cancer: I saddled up and got ready to tackle a phone tree. It was a customer service problem, and it wasn't a big deal, but it was. To me, it was a big problem. To the company, not so much, I'm sure. The first clue in dealing with automated phone systems, the first step to repeatedly stab "zero" on your phone. Doesn't always work, but it's a fairly common method for getting a live person who can speak English and can therefore, take steps to resolve the issue. I have a method for dealing with phone systems, too, I have to be in the right frame of mind. Headset, fresh cup of coffee, checked most of the loud websites I usually check, and then, I'm ready. Got the details out of the way, after all, can't be distracted when I'm trying to be a nuisance. That's the way to face what is still going on, even as we're looking at this week, getting yourself in the right frame of mind for doing what needs to be done, even though, like me, you don't want to do it. Someone has to. Get the parts and pieces together, gather up the odd items you think you might want or need. I always need a fresh cup of coffee. Not really, but I think that I need this, and I'm sure there is some kind of chemical bond that I get with just such an item. Then, I make sure the headset and handset are ready to go. Been sitting on the charger all night. All a matter of having the right places and the correct items in hand. Me fighting with the phone tree, trying to get to a live person who can fix the problem?

Leo: Here's one I don't get. It was early Sunday morning. Most of the place I stop for coffee were closed. Starbucks was open. I tend to eschew that kind of place, but then, with Sunday morning coming down, like the song says, I needed something. What was totally weird, though, was a young couple, all bright-eyed and frisky in their Sunday best. Better yet, she turned around and the young lass had a wedding veil. He was in somber suit, she was wearing, as it turned out, a wedding dress of some sort. Prominent cleavage, form-fitting dress. Not a lot of imagination as to why the guy was happy. They, the young couple, was taking wedding pictures. At a Starbucks. That just renders me -- well, renders me something. I'm figuring the only place to take wedding pictures is at the Elvis Chapel in Las Vegas. Maybe that's me and my bitter attitudes, too. Or bitter coffee. Could be a number of items, I'm sure. However, what leaves me with a failure to understand, the other side of that question, it could have great meaning, like, that couple, maybe they met at Starbucks, maybe they worked there, maybe he proposed there, see? A number of possibilities. Now, which side of this equation are you on? The cute version, like they met there, or dated there, or bonded over coffee? Or like me, on the outside, wondering why such crass location was chosen. Which one are you going to be?

Virgo: There's a friend, a professional cohort, just a chap that I've hung out with over the years. We talk fishing and women, usually. He's a spiritualist, works many of the same shows I've worked. He's also black, not that it matters. I was describing, in conversation, an experience I had wherein I was the only (person of anglo heritage) in particular store, a grocery store, south side of town. South Side San Antonio. Me, the only white guy. I was describing this in a humorous manner, to my buddy, and I said, "You don't know how that

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feels." He corrected me. He does know how it feels. He's a lot older than me, and he tells stories about a time when there really were segregated water fountains and bathrooms. He also tells such tales with a merry twinkle in his eye. He is a consummate preacher. Here's a guy, one of my fishing buddies, and he's battled insurmountable odds, and, of course, come out ahead of the game. On top of the game. Ahead in the sport we call life. There's a clue, too, in the manner he deals with adversity and overwhelming challenges, he laughs. Then he quietly goes to work. I'd like to suggest that the same applies, this week to my fine Virgo friends. A little humor, no grudges, and pushing ever forward. You're going to feel like one of us, and I hope, it's in a humorous light, too.

Libra: Language fascinate me. It marks the boundary between the raw gray matter of the brain muscle and the edges of conscious thought. I'm pretty sure I think in English. I could, at one time, think in other languages, but I haven't done that lately. Language is like an operating system, and the way we speak is like a set of instructions. And it's the way we get around in our brain. And language, right now, is confused. I've visited enough border towns, lived in the poor side of town, and otherwise been exposed to local culture in such a way that I'm used to the border town talk. Even this far from the edge, there's still the hint, the flavor, so to speak. Watching the language is important. Now, more so than before, it's matter of watching the local language that you use. Shorthand terms, slang, other languages that creep in, and sometimes, using one term when you really mean something else. Perhaps, you mean something quite the opposite. Careful with such comments as it's easy to be misunderstood. Yeah, right.

Scorpio: I was wandering along the street, minding my own business, and I think I was even wearing earbuds for an iPod. I didn't want to be bothered by people. I was happily motoring along -- on foot -- down the sidewalk when a big, black Suburban pulls up. Left front tire kisses the curb. A family starts to disgorge from the vehicle, almost oblivious to my presence. The main male is, I think it's navy, could be air force, or some army, but he's got on a black uniform. No easily discernible rank, otherwise, I would have noted it, and then there's the fetching female with him. Thin, blond, blue eyes, as she was pulling on long, black gloves, then quickly adjusting her formal (but short) dress, and finally, applying a touch-up to her war paint, in her reflection in the big pane of glass. She glanced back over her shoulder, "Vamanos!" She yelled with a certain authority. Two little kids crawled out of the back seats. I passed. I was left with my mind awash with possibilities. Looked like a formal affair. She looked very anglo. The kids, the alpha male, I was unsure, but certainly wearing an armed services "formal dress" uniform. With her clear command voice, though, there was no question who was in charge. What threw me, just slightly, was the correct Spanish inflection. Which made me think that I was being too narrow-minded. Which made me think about a Scorpio situation. It's about using what information is available, and what part is pure speculation, and what part is clearly observed.

Sagittarius: I was engaged in conversation one afternoon, kind of idle talk. Gossip was kicked around. One guy's name came up, and a mutual acquaintance rolled her eyes. I suggested that the cowboy in question was "riding for a fall." Being next to cowboy country, and being among native Texans, the metaphor wasn't lost. But my ripe allegorical statement got spun a little, too. "Not so much, 'riding for a fall,' but about halfway between the saddle and ground, now." Seems like a there was downward slope

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and the one person was already halfway down that slope, before any of us could ever get a hand in the game. This was all casual observation from a less than disinterested point-of-view. Not like we were strangers, or, that the guy headed out of the saddle and towards the arena's dirt floor, not like none of us hadn't ever been thrown by that same bull. It's just painful when a friend is headed that way, and there's nothing that we can do to stop it. Now, I'm a Sagittarius, too, but with the planets' array, I'm saying that I can prevent you from getting hurt -- don't. Don't do it, don't partake, don't engage. The phase of the moon, and then, the evil little Mercury, all that conspires to thwart our best intentions. Or worse, it looks like we're already out of the saddle and halfway towards impact.

Capricorn: Plot device, in a movie I saw. Book I read. Something with a plot, probably wasn't TV since TV rarely uses plot. Anyway, I had to depart consensual reality for this one trick the author used: a computer virus that could kill a human. Better yet, the computer who kills? It's the computer sent by a bad guy to a computer scientist. I know geeks. Geeks have toys. Geeks have the best toys, usually. More computing power than, well, than something pretty big. I'd say NASA, but that's not an apt metaphor. So anyway, in the book, or movie, but it wasn't TV, the good guy is killed, early on, by the bad guy's computer virus. Right, like that will ever happen. Plot devices are fun. Sometimes, there's got to be a willing suspension of disbelief. Sometimes, there's a little leap. As Capricorn, a little leap is required. Like that book. Or movie. I doubt it was TV. But anyway, you've got take a plunge on sheer faith -- the plot hangs on your belief. Or your willingness to suspend disbelief.

Aquarius: An article ran in a local trash magazine about the top 100 tacos in Texas. I believe it was entitled, "100 tacos to eat before you die." Then, another local magazine ran an article about the best margaritas in the city, "15 margaritas to drink before you die." I'm wondering, is this a formula? In the magazine that editors read, "Try this for attention grabbing headlines, 'X number of Y that you must do before you expire.' See if that one works great!" Personally, I find the part about X number of Y "before you die" to be a bit fatalistic. Then, too, there's the problem with the exhaustive list. The list never fails to be incomplete by my standards. There are place that are missed, overlooked and or frankly, undiscovered because that's the way I like them. Out of the way, hole in the wall, dive, greasy spoon, surly help, or better yet, all of those qualities. Which means the reviewing magazine, local or not, will miss the salient points. They never find the really good spots. While I know where those places are, I tend to add a cloak of secrecy about the exact location. Suffice it to say, the best taco stands are usually in a barrio. It's about so-called experts and judging their expertise against hard-earned Aquarius knowledge. Some days, it takes the Aquarius empirical mind to know the difference.

Pisces: "I went to the shooting range," a Pisces girl was telling me, "and I didn't have enough ammo." One of those sales gimmicks, a little retail magic, you're at the shooting range, and you need just another box or two of shells. Cost? Twice as much as they do elsewhere. I realize that handguns and Pisces don't appear to go hand-in-hand, but I know more Pisces girls (females) who are licensed and carry, and who are practiced, which is why I was thinking about this example. It's matter of not taking enough supplies, for a given task. I'd suggest, the goal is to make sure you've got enough ammunition, real or imagined, for what's coming up. Could just be a an afternoon of

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practice rounds at the range, but still, you don't want to pay retail prices for something you're used to getting at a steeper discount. Or worse, you want to make sure that you don't run out of ammo halfway through the session.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 6.19.2008

"How use doth breed a habit of man!"

Shakespeare's The Two Gentlemen of Verona [V.iv.3]

Mars opposes Neptune.

Aries: The Ramones did a song, "I wanna be sedated!" I'm unsure of the punctuation, but I think the title should be thusly marked. A couple of years ago, a local band -- sort of that Austin/Central Texas 'country' sound, they recorded the same song on their CD. The band's name is "Two Tons of Steel," the album and its hit single is "Vegas." But that's not what this is about. There's a lyrical country version of the song by local luminaries, and there's the original hard-punk version. Take your pick. You get a choice. You can have either one. The lyrics? The song remains the same. The sentiments remain the same, too, and this would be a nice time to be sedated. Are you going to get sedated? I doubt it. Do you wish you could be? Probably. Mars, in Leo, and Mercury, no longer backwards? The question is, how to deal with energy in an appropriate fashion. Pick one version of the song. I don't want to influence you, but there's a hint, lyrical or hardcore?

Taurus: There's a famous Mexican restaurant near me. Legendary hot sauce, legendary culinary fare. Tacos, especially the fish tacos? Grilled white fish with cilantro, Mexican cole slaw, avocados, and some piquant hot sauce? Rolled in homemade corn tortillas, hot off the comal? Really tasty material, and relatively speaking, fresh food and all, healthy, as well as delicious. So the other evening, as is my style, while having the aforementioned healthy tacos, I perused the dessert menu. "Cajeta," praline, vanilla ice cream, sort of thing. Looked like it would be really, really good. It wasn't. It was a big let down. Oh no, don't get me wrong, it was exactly like the menu described it, the ingredients were all there, artful arranged on a large dinner plate, but somehow, the promise and the delivery -- someplace in between -- the whole dessert fell apart. Looked like the picture on the menu, and the dessert had all the parts, it just wasn't as tasty as the rest of the meal, or, for that matter, did the dessert really taste as good as it looked and sounded from the menu. Which kind of is the point, about picking something from catalog, or getting your hopes up, or exceeding your expectations? It's matter of marketing versus delivery. The pictures of that dessert made it worth ordering, once. The actual flavor, or lack thereof? Made it not worth ordering a second time. Careful about what is promised as opposed to what arrives at the supper table.

Gemini: I can't wave a magic wand and make everything instantly better. At some point in my life, I'm sure I believed that it could be done, and at another point, in my own life, I'm sure I've been credited with just such powers. Alas, this is mere myth, the part about making everything in the Gemini life better with a mere wave of magic wand. Ain't going

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to happen. Mercury is corrected in its errant path and therefore, little happenstances are going to start to occur that will restore your faith in either humanity, me, or the natural order of things. Or some combination of all of those items in the list. Won't happen in the blink of an eye. Won't happen overnight, and it might just take a little while to get all of this sorted out. I can't make anything happen fast enough for your Gemini self. I was at the coast, buying bait from lady I've purchased shrimp on numerous occasions. She's of Asian decent, I'm not sure of the details,. I can make out about every third word she says. She was quite talkative the other morning. I could string the comments together and make out the basics of her conversation. Like me, like Gemini now, it's about every third word.

Cancer: Little dog, big fight. I kept thinking about this one, see, when I walk in the afternoon, especially if it's late afternoon, really, early evening to some, I pass through this one neighborhood, and there's this little dog. He doesn't rush out to see me, as I'm not that interesting, However, I've seen this little dog, maybe he's a rat terrier or some kind miniature mix, I've watched as he's chased and barked at dogs approximately ten times his size. What was funny to me, the other evening, that little dog was chasing a big dog. The big dog, must've outweighed that little one by a factor of ten or more, The little one was a few pounds, maybe five, and the big one was a lab mix, maybe 50 or 70 pounds. And the big one was scared of the little one. That little guy was just yipping away, nipping at the big dog's heels. That's the problem, see, that was a dog, and in dog logic, it makes sense. The little dog wasn't much more than a bite, not even a full meal to that big guy. Why he was scared, might've been its upbringing, or the master who gets mad when you bite little dogs, or maybe, that little dog just didn't understand his size. It's not about the size of the dog, now is it?

Leo: Mars is about to exit Leo. Mars will not gracefully leave you alone, now will he? I've hammered on and on about Mars, and to a lesser extent, about Mercury, for the last few weeks. Feels like a month. To some, it will feel like a month of Sundays. That's a quaint southern expression, means a long time. But now that we've cleared the air, now that we've got our little Mercury troubles behind us, I want to examine a longer-lasting effect. Has to do with Mars. There's one last lesson from Mr.Mars, before he leaves, and that lesson will be re-learned by Leo, this week. Next 5 to 10 days, I'm pretty sure. Instead of "re-learning" though, why don't we call this one final test from the planets? Mars weighs in to see just how well you've adapted to the new situation. Issue was brought up. Issue was agonized over by Leo. Issue was resolved. Or the issue will be resolved here shortly. Now stop. Quite agonizing. Dwelling in the past is a luxury you can ill-afford at this time. So stop it. Issue is there. Issue is dealt with. Move on. Now.

Virgo: Lonely Planet, Not For Tourist, Underground, Off The Beaten Path, all of these are titles to tourist literature. Guides for the clueless on where to eat, what to see, and how to be an off the beaten path kind of a tourist. There's a number of such titles dedicated to just Texas. The problem is, all of these people use the same source for material. The rough guides aren't really that rough. Not anymore. The best places that truly are off the beaten path are usually local knowledge. Means one has to get out of the car, get the nose out of guide book, and ask local populations. I tend to take one tip and sort of run with it, but that's my nature. Your Virgo nature is a little different, less of run with one local tip and more like, "Collect a consensus." My method works well for me. I've wound up in the

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wrong place at the wrong time, and had it work out to my advantage. I'd also suggest that this doesn't work for your Virgo self, not with Mars frying in Leo, and Saturn shaking your bones. No need to just follow one hot lead. Gather a sampling of opinions. You'll find what you're looking for, after a little bit of digging.

Libra: Shakespeare wrote, "How use doth breed a habit of man!" (The Two Gentlemen of Verona V.iv.3) This is the idea, now is a good time to establish that habit. From the amateur psychology I've been exposed to, as I understand it, the concept, an action repeated daily for 30 days becomes a habit. Good or bad? Rewarded or not, it can breed a habit. So why not take a good look at what just happened, decide that it's time to set a new standard. Ingrain that standard in daily existence. Do it every day for 30 days. Could be something simple like a walk around the block, or whatever passes for a similar kind of arrangement for yourself. I'm suggesting, though, that you think about it before you jump off and just try something new. Daily. 30 days. That's a big commitment. Think about that new habit, maybe just give this idea a test spin for a few days, see if you like it. I think you will.

Scorpio: My Scorpio therapist, if I really had a therapist, she would say, at this point, "Don't we just want to let this go and move forward?" Sounds just like a therapist, doesn't it? Well, my fine little Scorpio friends, if you are a therapist, then you know you'll be using that very line in the next couple of days. Maybe from the likes of me, too, but I kind of doubt that that. However, there's still the idea, that concept, and here we are, back again, with the hint that you can practice what you preach. Put words into actions. Do the deed. Walk the walk -- don't just talk the talk. So, let's put the Mercury Mayhem behind us and let's move forward. Mercury brought up issues of insecurity, fear, uncertainty, doubt. Now there's a chance to put all of that behind you. Blame me, blame the planets, you can, even in a moment of deep introspection, blame your Scorpio self, but who or what is getting the blame? Let's just let that issue go. It's time to move forward, not backwards. And no dwelling in the past.

Sagittarius: It started to rain, then stopped. I was driving a rent car, and I blipped the windshield wipers. Dust, dead bugs and accumulated road dust smeared in front of me. Not enough rain to wash the mud from the window. That's a case where I would've been better off if I'd just left it all alone. Made me think of Sagittarius. Made me think of the mess we're in. Made me think about that windscreen I can't see out of now. Made me wonder about driving when I can't see. Never bothered me before, I can drive with the braille method. Rent cars are good for that. And it really doesn't work. Astrology, horoscopes, they are all about helping us navigate the murky waters. These days, though, it's like that rain that really didn't wash away the dirt. Not even enough rain to rinse off that rent car. It's not like I'm going to wash it or anything. Too much trouble. Yet, how are we going to navigate the next week? Like me, in that rent car? Yeah, a little by the bump and feel method, since Mercury is still left us with a windscreen that is more dirt than glass.

Capricorn: Cute sign the other day, "Pizzeria - Taqueria - Burgeria." It was painted on the side of place, and I'd like to not give away all my sources. Judging solely on the sign, though, I'd guess the place was good, as long "good" means plentiful and hot. I suggested there was -- just a guess here -- a strong Mexican influence. With names like that? Sure,

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good bet. In a landscape that's full of good little taco joints, maybe finding a really good one is more difficult. Or making an average place stand out a little brighter? Good marketing. Which that sign was. Good marketing. It made the place stand out just a little bit more. Not so much that I'd stop there, but the sign did pique my curiosity. Which is what this all about, doing something just slightly out of the ordinary, or maybe bending the rules a little to match what you've got going on. In this case the rules were strict spelling rules, maybe just bend those rules a little for some poetic license. Or with your Capricorn poetic license. Something like that. Bend, maybe not break, the rules. See if that doesn't raise you up a little higher than the others. Just trying to help the Capricorn landscape.

Aquarius: I retrieved a phone message, and it was a lady at an insurance agency, so returned the call. "You're that psychic, aren't you," she started a sales pitch. I hung up. Someone not familiar with me may, sometimes, call me a psychic. Personally, I detest the term, as I prefer astrology consultant, or just a consultant. On the voice mail the outgoing message I've got identifies me as "Kramer, author of the website astrofish.net" and I would expect, a sales person, in order to gain my good graces, that person would have the intuitive ability to at least check the website and find out what I do. Just a hint, a little background sales idea. I'm not telling them how to run their businesses, but I do a quick search to find out information. I'd figure that they could do the same thing. Apparently not. The call ended with me hanging up. Not in disgust, not slamming the phone down, just not interested in whatever the sales pitch was. I kind of knew, when the phone was answered from by a receptionist at an agency, I sort of figured it was a cold call sales pitch. And I'm not interested. However, I didn't get rude, I didn't get uppity, I don't revert to any type of energy that I could, righteous indignation and all, nope, none of that. I just ended the call. Ended most of my aggravation. When the annoying sales call comes, when there's a problem, sometimes, there's an easy answer. Click. All idid. Wasn't a big deal.

Pisces: I looked at the guy in the coffee shop. He was new. There was air of familiarity about him, like I know I'd seen him before, I just couldn't figure out where. I asked his birthday, he's Sagittarius. Which doesn't have lot to do with this horoscope. Or does it? We chatted, and he's not really just coffee shop employee, he's also a sound engineer. I knew I'd seen him before, probably running the sound board at a concert. Show, anyway. That's what this is about, not the unfamiliar, but the familiar. I was busy, at first, scanning his sleeve-length tattoos, looking for a clue. Art like that usually has astrology glyphs worked in, and I can appear to be amazing, "You're a (insert sign here)..." I couldn't get a clue from that Sagittarius, though, so I had to ask. I was also looking for whatever it was that made him seem familiar, besides the artwork and coffee shop deal. It's about looking for clues, asking questions and seeking what are the points wherein there is a commonality. Between him and me, or, better yet, between your Pisces self and the rest of us. There are common points. I still count figure out what show I saw the guy at, but I'm sure I did.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 6.26.2008

"It is the purpose that makes strong the vow."

Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida (V.iii.28)

The weekend before the July 4th Weekend.

Aries: At the end of this week, or rather, at the beginning of next week, like Monday, Tuesday, you get some breathing space. There's also the double thing going on. Two items line up at the same time, one would be the New Moon, early next week, and the second would be the relative position of some of the planets. Dwarf planet, asteroid, call him what you want. Still, there's a moment, a small window, a period of time starting after this weekend, when you get some breathing room. One way or another. How much space you get and what you do with it? That's up to you. Might be elbow room, might be a wide open space as big as West Texas. Could be like the Big Sky country. Might be a New York minute, too. Which, from what I gather, isn't really very long, or, by my standards, very much. But what works from one Aries to another, while the definitions of "space" might vary, I'll promise that it happens. That much is good. How much, where, and what? I don't know, that varies from person to person, but the skies above conspire to allow a little more room in the Aries world. A little more freedom of movement isn't too bad. Enjoy the respite.

Taurus: This is so cool. In about ten days, maybe a little more, there's trigger point in another sign. Works like a charm, for Taurus. If you want the background, maybe you do, maybe you don't, but anyway, ten, maybe fourteen days from now, Mars lines up Saturn, both in Virgo. Virgo is an earth sign, means, like Taurus, it is associated with the element of dirt. Those two action planets, Saturn and Mars, aligned, is the pressure point. Good pressure for your Taurus self. Not so good for the Virgo, but we don't care about them at this moment. I'm pushing you to think about your future, right now. Not the immediate future, but something you can do around the long holiday weekend. A little planning, now, can make for really good fireworks, or whatever you want, then. It's a matter of using this pressure point, this trigger, getting set for it, and being prepared, which means, you've got to do stuff now, plot, plan and follow a course of action, so when that moment arrives: your Taurus self is ready. You're ready, right?

Gemini: "Man, I know there's a way to unsend a message. There's just got to be. I'm sure I saw that here, someplace." Buddy of mine, on one of those "social networking site" and he was busy trying to unflame one of his typical fireball notes. It was some woman, he was seeing, then not seeing, then seeing again, and now, apparently, not seeing. And the message? It would have effectively hammered shut the door. It's one thing to gently shut the door on someone you've dated. It's an entirely different episode to flame out in a

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spectacular fashion with the email and text message equivalent of a dogfight. Or cat fight. Or dogs and cats, fighting against each other.

Cancer: I was walking downtown, early evening. The bigger building were like canyons with the deep summer shadows. I wasn't too far from a rather fashionable place, locally famous for almost celebrity status. A fancy (European) sports car was parked on the sidewalk. The car hops, the valets, were busy moving cars around. I liked that shot of the car, on the sidewalk, it was just temporary parking spot, really, and I'm sure there's a city ordinance, if not a state law, or federal regulation, about parking on the sidewalk. I'm no lawyer, nor will I likely ever be, not at this point. But the law about parking on the sidewalk isn't what this is all about. It's about the Sun Sign Cancer and some of the interesting influences. It's like that car, you're momentarily in the spotlight. For the time being, you're parked in a place that might, or might not be, illegal. Doesn't much matter, either way, you're getting some weird attention and you'll notice, you didn't park there, just the valet. Or car-hop. Somehow you wind up in place that could draw a lot of attention. I wouldn't be too worried -- birthday time. Why not sit back, and why not enjoy some of the extra attention. Besides, if you don't like the way I drive? Stay off the sidewalks.

Leo: I know the proprietor of local business. He had a chance to expand lately. He's growing small store into a slightly larger store, and this isn't without some growing pains. You're a Leo, you understand growing pains. In the midst of the sawdust and construction, with everything tossed upside down, I stopped by. I was about to lend some words of advice, but my Leo friend held up a hand, "Stop. If you're going to offer advice, I'll just hand you a saw and a hammer. Then a stack of bills -- to pay." I was merely going to offer words or encouragement, but I wasn't going to offer interior design ideas, or Feng Shui admonishments, or anything of the sort. Not my place, and, as a small business person, I know that everyone knows how to run my business better than me. If it was so easy, why aren't the folks with the copious free advice, doing it themselves? There are two parts to this, are you offering advice where it might not be welcome? Or worse, are you getting unwanted advice? If so, think about picking up the saw and the hammer, and offer to put your money where your mouth is. Or, for that matter, think about ponying up some dollars of your own, to prove your point. Either way, I think you understand.

Virgo: Buddy of mine, no, his name is not really "Bubba," this fellow fancies himself to be quite the little BBQ jockey. He was explaining some of the finer points of craft. As we get ready for the big weekend, maybe some of these points, passed on to my Virgo friends, can help. Makeshift BBQ grills are easy to fashion out of a shopping cart. I spend so much time in a virtual world, other than a few of my homeless friends, I don't see real shopping carts that much. But my little Virgo buddy, the BBQ god as he likes to think of himself, he was explaining that they are still common and some of them are really good for grill parts. However, he did admonish a word of advice on this topic, and he delivered this admonishment with a straight face, so I'm not sure he was joking. Use the metal carts, not the hybrid plastic or fiberglass or whatever the "seemingly" plastic carts -- no, don't use those. According to him, they melt and/or catch on fire. Not something I'd like to experiment with. So as March readies his approach, think about my buddy trying, let's just say a red (plastic) shopping cart as part of a BBQ grill. Think about how it didn't work, although, if I know that guy, he would eat the smoked meat, anyway. How is

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experiment didn't work and little bit of forethought will save your Virgo self from embarrassment and a bad holiday weekend. Test before you fire it up. That's what this extra weekend is for.

Libra: I've used the example of mosquitoes, not recently, but at one time. So I can't use them as an example of the irritant and way the week feels. But I don't think I've used the example of the "No See Um's," and that would work. Usually spelled and pronounced "noSEE-ums," I think they are really a juvenile form of the gnat family. I'm not sure. They don't bite, they just land and fly and most important, annoy. Harmless. Blameless, too, but that's another situation altogether. The smallest of the insect life form, I'm guessing, at least the smallest that I can repeatedly detect, that's what these are. Not a big problem, not really, don't breed and spread disease, don't leave welts or bite marks, like some girlfriends do, and the biggest problem? I think I was once hit by a passing jogger who was trying to wave to a cloud of "noseeums" out of his way. Just a glancing blow, too, nothing painful, didn't leave a mark, not like some girlfriends. The way the Sun, the Moon, Venus and June all work in the Libra chart? It's like a cloud of those littlest insects. Not painful, not really, just a minor irritant. As long as you don't get hit by a passing jogger.

Scorpio: One of my buddies was telling me about a certain fishing spot, and he was talking about long-lost memory. Fish tales. All good fisherman have a slew of them. "We had," he explained, "about five or six black-tip sharks, we'd caught, too big to put in the cooler, so they were just in the bottom of the boat." Turns out he made near-fatal mistake with the sharks, too. He took them home to clean. Sharks are good eating, true, and some men are brave enough to clean fish in the backyard. Shark, it would seem, is a different story. "Soon as I gutted the first one, I realized my mistake." What made the shark fishing so successful, the food and subsequent bait used? That was a half-digested mess, in the backyard. With what is happening in Scorpio, I'm sure you're going to make the same mistake of gutting that first shark in the backyard. Unlike my buddy, though, I would think that you could get away with just making that mistake once. He continued to open sharks and make a big stink. You're Scorpio, you can learn much faster. As you get along this week, think about that first shark. Do you continue making a bigger mess? Or can you, like I suggest, stop? Unlike my friend's tale. Sure would prevent a smelly mess in your own backyard.

Sagittarius: Buddy of mine runs a coffee shop. He's the proprietor. Sagittarius. Basically, he runs the store. Along with his soul-mate. I've watched as the store, the little coffee shop has mutated, grown, contracted and grown again. It's a tricky balance point. He didn't really want to be open at 6 in the morning, not being a morning person, although, he is the neighborhood caffeine dealer. Then, the more lucrative business is a little later in the evening. Again, didn't want to interfere with his own hours, too. Closed on Sunday, and less about any religious affiliation, and more about six days a week is enough. Sunday was the least productive day. The hours, they've shifted, almost with time and tide. I suppose a stop-action film would be a good choice. Opening to closing, as the local characters drift in and drift out. It's hitting that magic number, the right balance between the right hours to be open, and spending too much time at the store, paying overhead on a project that doesn't work. Anyone who's ever been around a small store like that knows that it is more labor of love rather than a big profit deal. Second, there's

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that balance point, when to open, when to close, what works, what doesn't work. Mars is heading into Virgo.

Capricorn: I don't get it, really. Sandwiched between loquacious Gemini and vociferous Leo, the mental gymnastics of the Gemini and the roar of the Leo, there's this quiet and easy-going Cancer. Just how did that wind up opposite from your Capricorn self? Way it works. While the Cancer is all about feeling something, this or that, whatever mood strikes them, the Capricorn, in this next week or two, you're going to be all about analyzing what it is that you're feeling. There's a reason for this, too, as the relative placement of Saturn in the heavens is making you a little more sharp witted. More than usual. And that also means your analytical ability is sharper than ever. Which is a good thing. Right? Right. Let's move on. Got brain, got thinking horsepower, and you're revved up. No place to go? I doubt that. But as this weekend gets closer pick and choose destinations for your mind. Pick places that entertain and educate. Maybe it's less of formal education, but some kind of point needs to be carried home. That brain power, put it some good. Mars, in about ten days, maybe a little more, Mars will put you to the test. I'm sure you'll pass -- provided -- you go with that good destination, now.

Aquarius: Mental exercise, poise and physics. How good are you? Me: 200 pounds, moving at a rate of, let's say, 4 MPH. I weigh less than that, but I was aiming to keep the math simple. Hot afternoon, sweating some in the summer sun. I'm at a crosswalk, downtown, "walk" light just blinked on. New truck: 4,000 pounds, moving at an estimated 20 MPH. While, according to the Texas Driver's Handbook -- the law -- I have the right-of-way, the question is, how far will I bounce? Valid question because, even though I'm in the right, legally, that doesn't over rule the simple physics. Do the math. You can work it out, but you'll see, the numbers don't add up quite right. Truck wins, over the law in the book, every time. Face-to-face with a similar arrangement, consider, even though you're -- legally, morally, karmically -- correct? I'm back to the simple physics. The driver of the truck is really breaking the law by his "failure to yield right-of-way." Which doesn't make you, or me, any less flat from the impact. My advice? Do the math.

Pisces: Mercury backwards sort of scatters our Pisces attention span. Therein is the problem. But what's happening, in this next few days, is that there's a cosmic hint. There's a shuffle going on, maybe a little bit of a skiffle beat, and you can see, coming up, that there's less scattered attention span. Focus. You're going to need to focus to see clearly. Still have a little bit of a fog surrounding our Pisces selves as of now. But coming up, in a few days, like, actually, really, next week, Mars bumps into Virgo. Yeah, that Virgo. The one opposite you on the chart wheel. Yet, this Mars matter? What it's going to do is lend laser-like focus to your Pisces way of seeing things. That previously alluded scattered feeling, leftover from Mercury? Sharpens. It's like playing with a camera's focus, and twist the lens, and suddenly, a distant object swims into view, into focus and the smallest details are clear.

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For the week starting: 7.3.2008

"High sparks of honour in thee have I seen."

Shakespeare's The Tragedy of King Richard the Second [V.vi.34]

Aries: Cruising along the interstate, in El Paso, my friend was driving and I was talking. I noticed a New Mexico-tagged car, winding precipitously in front of us. I recounted that that the international colors (symbols) for danger are red and orange. Like the older NM tags. Like the truck that was in front of us. My friend slowed, the NM truck dove across three lanes of traffic to barely make the next exit. I would've suggested that it was an exit that it was too late to make, but no one asked me. My friend, driving, hit the steering wheel and cussed a blue streak. Can't say that it wasn't called for, but then, there was warning from me, another warning from the tags, and finally, the carefully observed weaving. As an Aries, you can cuss a blue streak, you can blame the drivers from out-of-state, you can look at lot of other problems, but the easiest course of Aries action? Slow down. When a person, or person operating, a vehicle in front of you? When someone is up front, and looks like there might be trouble? Stay out of the way. It's simple. Don't make this complicated. The other side of the example? Texas tag in NM? Watch out, they really don't know how to drive, either.

Taurus: It was day-time talk-show advice. The guest was talking about the differences between men and women, especially about thermostat settings. "Woman like it warm, men like it cold, guys, to see her naked? Turn it up." Great advice, only, in my experience, it's also wrong. Like the opposite of what I'm used to seeing. Guys can stand the heat whereas women prefer the AC set to a cooler setting. I'm not saying this is a general rule, but it does seem to fit with my observed behaviors. I'm also one off. I could be all wrong, and, after all, that guest was a known speaker on a talk-show circuit whereas I'm just one guy who writes these little horoscopes. But the way I see it, with Mars hot in Virgo, and you being a Taurus and all, it would be a good time for adjusting your thermostat. Which way? Save on the utility bill? That's a good idea. The warmer you make it, the less clothing you have to wear. Which goes against my personal advice, but as far as the planets are concerned? I'd say turn it up.

Gemini: "That was Zen, this is Tao." It was a yin-yang sticker. Which, has nothing to do with any of this, except that I tend to associate, in my mind's eye, I see a yin-yang symbol, black and white, two tadpoles, in a circle, together, as the ultimate Gemini expression. Perfect way to explain it. Mercury is ramped back up to full speed and by the end of the holiday time, he's almost into Cancer. Mars and Saturn start get on top of each other, but then again, that's just a reminder and a tickle from your past. How far past? Probably just from the last few weeks. Any other sign? Could be a tickle from the last few years, who knows? The trick with the planets, how to move Gemini ahead under a less than

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wonderful time for you? Remember that bumper sticker, that quote, "That was Zen, this is Tao." You don't have to have a firm grasp of the intricate nature of the Zen mind, or how someone (like me) would aspire to live with the tenets of Taoism, just a quick, Gemini-like cursory check, that works, too. The symbol, that yin-yang, reminds us of balance, black and white, good and bad, cowboy and indian, the north and the south, the east and the west. Just strike out for a balance point. I didn't say you'd get there, I just suggested to head for that point where there might be balance.

Cancer: Imagine, like, plotting the lines out on your life, and looking at the intersections of those lines. Where one event happened that changed your life for forever. I can see, in my own life, the hands of fate, my own whimsey, or the stars, dictating and directing. And then, there are days when I think it all is just matter of random chance. Looking at my life, plotted out by a series of lines, intersecting, colliding, spinning off in a new direction, I wonder what level of sheer random happenstance has some direction. Seems quite a bit. It's your birthday time, and until the moon fills out a little, you might be given to some existential angst, like me. However, is it all really that random? Do events occur "for some reason?" Is there a guiding principle in your life? Guiding principle or not, this is a good time to pretend that there is, despite your empirical approach. It's not about belief systems, though, it's about launching yourself in a new direction. Imagine that you're like one of the oh-so-common fireworks going off. Bright trail of fire, pushing a payload in one direction. It arrives at its specified altitude. The timer goes off. The fuse burns down. A giant fireball, spark and colors and noise, erupts. You're heading towards a point when a lot of items will be very clear. Crystal clear. You'll be able to see what it all means. This clarity, though, doesn't come right away. Fate, the good lord, the stars. Questions, questions until the moon moves a little closer to full. And happy birthday.

Leo: A friend of mine -- I was in far West Texas -- was recounting a tale about the mountains, the jagged, broken peaks that push up from the desert floor. "Dad said, 'Those mountains don't have any trees,' to which I finally replied, 'After thirty years, they still don't have any trees,' and then I suggested that trees would block the view." At sunset, on the western flank of the mountains, or, in this one example, on the west side of the small mountain range, from our vantage point, down in the valley, right as the shadow goes creeping across the floor, just as dusk descends, there's a stark and harsh beauty to the mountains. The sunset just makes the obvious that much more obvious. The way the color catches the mountains, and from our perch in the middle of the valley, it's dusk, and yet, my friend still talks about the quote from her father. The sunset's light on the mountains is fleeting, at best. Before I could unlimber a camera, even a phone, the purple and umber were gone from the mountain's flank. It's really about being happy where you are. There's a quiet solitude, maybe a little away from the usual crowd of adoring Leo fans, maybe away from all of that. There's a gentleness and your Leo self just needs a little time away from "it," and I'm not sure what it is, but a little time away, that will help.

Virgo: Funny song cycled up on the radio, the other afternoon. "The more I'm around some people, the more I like my dog." Not being a dog person myself, I can't say that I'd agree, but the more I know about people, the more I want to be a cat. Cat sleeps, eats, gets petted when it wants to be petted, but not otherwise, and that's about it. I'd like that kind of existence. Food, affection, rest, relax, do it all over again, the next day. Dog expend too much energy, but I don't guess it would be possible to write a country song

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about a cat. Something in there doesn't work quite right. So, under the Saturn and Mars influence, you can try and write a country song about a cat, but I don't think that's what this is really all about. It's about learning little things about people, and like the lyrical suggestion goes, the more your Virgo self learn about people, the more you might like your dog. Dependable companionship is important. Stalwart, dependable companions, yes, it's all a good thing. Dogs being better than a lot of the people you run into these days? That, too. In fact, that's part of the big picture. Me? As far as your Virgo self is concerned? Stick with the dog.

Libra: There's a problem with listening to too much country music, after a while, the lyrics get to where you wonder. Like, yo wonder if it's you they are signing about. It was a lone country -- male, obviously -- singer, and he was on the radio complaining, in his song. It went a little like this, "Do I drink because she nags me, or does she nag me because I drink?" Valid question, almost makes you wonder if the singer was Libra, now doesn't it? I was

Scorpio: I clicked on a website, that led me to another site, which finally dumped me off on third site, and they were advertising the most amazing product. It was, in essence, a tiny aluminum container with lord-only-knows what in it. It was a special radiation shield that would protect my DNA from outer space rays. I was wondering if they had a tin-foil hat version, and for almost twice the price of the first model, there was just such an item. It included some ability to travel through time and space. I've got a similar locket. Cost about two bucks at an outdoor-supply store. I use the locket for medication, like OTC stuff I like to carry, for emergency. One tube was priced about 100 times what the cost of the empty container, and I can't say, for sure, that it had real stuff in it. I thought the website was a hoax until I checked a little. For every Scorpio, there's another sign that will believe in this stuff. But this isn't about patent medicine, or false gods, or just how gullible the public can be, no this is about Scorpio. Holiday! Party! Have a good time! And don't believe any of the guys selling fake watches -- unless you want to believe it. You'll find that your Scorpio faith can instill power where Scorpio power needs to be.

Sagittarius: We hit a weird as can be trigger point, and it has a lot to do with our Sagittarius selves. Mercury passes in opposition to Pluto. Wouldn't be a big deal, but this is the last little reminder about what has been going on with Sagittarius for the last dozen years. Sort of a check point. Trigger point, check point, a check-up, maybe? It's one last blast from the past, to see if we passed the test. Doing well? That's good, keep on track. Missed something? Before it's too late, backtrack and correct the mistake. Errant problem? Again, back up and fix what needs to be fixed. I know, it's a big holiday weekend for some, and that's all fine and good. Nobody likes to party as much as us Sagittarius types. But while we've got this alignment with Mercury and Pluto? One last time? Think about correcting something, once and for all. Could make the weekend a lot more enjoyable, knowing that you can party in safety, now that it's fixed.

Capricorn: I remember being rather kind to this one customer service rep. Pretty lady, a little understated in her elegance, and perhaps, a little misunderstood, too. I do believe my sincere interest in her was misunderstood as a romantic advance. Not that I wouldn't be romantically interested in her, it's just a bit awkward, given the situation. Retail, me, the professional clown, no, just wouldn't work. Besides, I was just being polite, and I was

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trying to be a bit humorous, too. Dry wit. All got turned around, or that was the feeling I was left with, that I was hitting on this poor lass, and she was ready, willing and able to reciprocate. Only, it was just a misunderstanding. It happens, right? Why would I be relating my tale about woe and miscommunication to a nice Capricorn, on the eve of a holiday? See: Jupiter, backwards in Cap., Sun and Venus opposite that Jupiter, it's all about sharing that you feel good. But chose a good avenue where your shared joy won't get misread. Like mine.

Aquarius: Lot of water in the sky, that was my first reaction to your chart. It really wasn't, like, rain, it was a preponderance of planets in Cancer. Makes for a soggy 4th of July. Then, too, there's some dirt up in the sky as well, with Mars and Saturn in Virgo. Reminds me of one of those "twister" afternoons, in north Texas. The sky clouds up, the temperature drops, the wind kicks up, then the wind kicks it up even higher, and it seems like most of the topsoil is stirred into the atmosphere. That, plus a little bit of moisture, but not too much, not really rain, in as much as it's just a really heavy condensation, what with the dew point and the ambient temperature approaching each other, and this is a mess. Me? You? We should just sit back and let our Aquarius selves be amused. This might be our atmosphere, but we're not stirring this up, nor, for that matter, are we directly impacted by the whole mess. The biggest problem in twister weather is picking place where we're out of the line of fire. Means we want a place where the occasional 200 MPH burst of wind, water, and debris, where that won't spear us. There's nothing to be afraid of, not in the immediate future, and the whole point is to realize that, as an Air Sign (best fixed air sign there is), Aquarius can remain aloof and apart from this. As long as we pick a safe vantage point. Like a storm cellar.

Pisces: Right after the July 4th holiday time, there's going to be a stray, possibly errant, firecracker. Might be, like, a bottle rocket. Fizz, flash, swoosh, boom. Shower of spark. Bright color, noise. Only, this is long after the holiday is over, and it might feel like a flashback to an incoming round. Perhaps mortar fire. Might feel like it was a short stick of dynamite shoved up your backside, too, and might not be all that comfortable. More than anything else, this the direct result of Mr. Mars. I know at least one Pisces will argue that point with me, and say it's not Mars but name a name. Or several names. Maybe a few cuss words, too, associated with the names. Descriptive, if not exactly colorful (or polite) language. Mars lines up Saturn, and both of them line opposite from your gentle Pisces self. Those two planets, individually opposite you, that's not too tough for you, you can usually shrug is off. But combined effect is going to leave you a little at loose ends. Or feel like that bottle rocket was just let loose where you didn't particularly want it. Mars is about both War (as in, god of) and Healing (as in, like, surgery). But in order to harness tis energy in an effective manner, you have to realize that the stray fireworks are still going off. And you have to ignore the spurious comments. The little explosions can be ignored. I don't think there's any big guns, this week.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 7.10.2008

"How the floor of heaven

Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:

There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st

But in his motion like an angel sings."

Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice [V.i.67-70]

Aries: Cruising down the interstate, or, in my frame of reference, up the interstate, as I was headed north, I kept noticing spurious and stray material on the roadway. We were headed north that afternoon, and I handed a piece a paper to my date, "Here, please write down 'dirty laundry' so I remember the note." What it was, a lot of clothing had either been ejected, dropped, or fallen off a vehicle. Imagine, if you will, various articles of clothing, in varying degrees, stuck along the median, along the concrete barriers, or sort of flapping in the road itself, like road kill. I kept that note, and I kept that image. Mars, Saturn, they are going to make it so some of your dirty laundry might end up like that, sort of fell off the truck. I'm not saying that you're going to be airing your dirty linens. Or that you private attire will be scattered for all to see, no that's not really the message. It's jsut that, when you're not paying attention? Maybe a suitcase tumbles off the back of the truck, unbeknownst to you. What can you do to prevent this? Go back and check to make sure the latch is latched, the door is shit, and the load is lashed down good and tight. Otherwise, I might be coming along, wondering how these items of clothing wound up next to the barrier.

Taurus: It was cruel. It was just plain mean-spirited, if you ask me. I was dining with friends, and the place was almost empty, except for a couple at a two-top, by the window. The waiter, host, and dessert chef, all the same guy, seated us by the dessert counter. It was long, cool-feeling refrigeration unit, and its reflection, our faces. Like kids with their noses pressed to the glass, looking in a toy store. The desserts were amazing concoctions, whipped and swirled, and piled high with fresh fruits, cheeses, pastry layers, and chocolate. Milk chocolate, dark chocolate, cream caramel whipped between layers of chocolate, chocolate with vanilla icing, chocolate with chocolate icing, layers and layers of goodies. Cookies, creme brulee, kiwi pie, lime cocoanut pie, pan dulce, all there. I was able to maintain some semblance of decorum, at least, at first. I ordered a small entree and little dinner salad. I was mocked, but then, when the final course came,

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it was a rich pick. There were three of us, and we wound up with five desserts. Some for there, some to go." Lead me not into temptation, I can find it myself," isn't that how it goes? Some things can be resisted, others? Can't be missed. Like seating us next to the dessert counter. Taurus: fight the good fight, but if the sweets (or whatever temptation) wins? Face it: you were outnumbered and out-gunned.

Gemini: I was listening to a Gemini complain, he was the first guy in on Saturday morning, time to open the shop and make coffee for customers in need. Like me. I owed, like two dollars and four cents. I handed him three singles. Because I'm cheap and ornery, what I do, if they hand me back the ninety-six cents, I'll pocket the change and stuff a dollar in the jar. But if they toy with me, I'll shortchange the tip. I'm irascible like that. So the guy handed me back my dollar, told me not to worry about the four cents, the night crew hadn't left him any change. I asked who the night crew was, and he said it was him. While he's not the owner, I think this one manager cares more about the business than the owner himself. He's a Gemini, he's dedicated. Or maybe he like the paycheck, or the tips, or the customers like me with our bad jokes and poor tipping habits. After I got my double espresso, hey, it was rare Saturday with no fish and no work, I noticed that the manager was up-ending the tip jar, scrounging for change. It's a little bit of double duty in Gemini, not unlike that one guy. Close the store one night, open it the next morning. Long hours. In Gemini, the hours are long. The pay, it isn't so low, but it's not all about the money. Or maybe it is. I assumed he was digging for change in the tip jar.

Cancer: It was a gas-convenience store, halfway between Austin and San Antonio, perhaps one of the most deadly stretches of interstate -- in the world. The guy behind the counter was kind of bored. I filled up the car I was driving, paid for the gas, bought a lottery ticket and looked down at what the kid was working on. He had a notebook open, and he was story-boarding -- plotting out characters and actions. For a film, maybe just for a comic book, but a plot and outline, in visual form. Life should always be so easy, to have a plot and outline, maybe with characters with little bubbles over their heads? Telling us what to do, where to go, what to say. Life isn't that easy. Life doesn't come so scripted. The Cancer life, in as much as I would like to make it easy for you, I can't. What you get to do, as time goes marching forward, you're like that clerk in the gas station, you get to write your own story line. You get to choose what the character are supposed to say. You get to pick the words, how they are spoken and by whom. The only little catch, what looks good on paper? On the story board? If life were a comic strip, it would work out fine. I'm less sure that it will work out like you want, but it is birthday time, and it should work out better. If not, you can just adjust that script.

Leo: I took a shower at this girl's place. Woman. Female, whatever. Girl to me. In the shower, there was, I can't make this up, "honey oatmeal soap." I took a whiff, smelled really good. Like, smelled good enough to eat. I was wondering, and I had to ask, "Yes, honey-oatmeal, it's really good for your skin." Like, you could tell me? I think that's some kind of girlie marketing gimmick, and I should admit, it seemed to work. Besides that, I did feel rather refreshed, and I must admit, I smelled better, too. The telltale aromatic blend excited my taste buds. Made me slightly more hungry. The slightly intoxicating effect of honey, I suspect, is what made it work. Looked and felt like an all-natural soap, but I'm of a suspicious mind: it might not be. Might just be the correct balance of chemicals that smells like an all-natural soap. Do I really care if it was all-natural, all-

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chemical, or some combination? Not really, as it was a one-shot deal. From what I know about Leo, though, I would suspect that the soap was carefully marketed to select individuals as an all-natural, chemical-free soap. My little adventure with soap, is it important? Yes. As the week unfolds into the long, hot summer days, think about that marketing. Read the label. Me? I was just impressed with one shower. But I'm not a picky Leo person who needs to be pampered. You are. Is that soap really good for you? Or is that (insert item, trifle, healthcare product) what you really need? Give it the Leo whiff test, first. By that standard, though, even that soap was good.

Virgo: It was a traditional Latin American pastry selection. The layers of the pastry themselves were so light, so tender, so flaky, they didn't interfere with the flavor of the caramel filling. That's what was so important, the tender flakes of pastry, the crunchy (yet not crunchy) layers in between. Mars is like that filling, the caramel, sweet and sticky and altogether too rich filling. Saturn is the flakes of pastry in between. A really good chef knows how to balance the "so sweet it hurts" material with the right amount of pastry, layered in between. Can't have one without the other, that's the point. That's also the way this week, how it works, striving for the correct balance. Mars, all about energy, get up and go. Saturn, all about get up and stop, think it over, assume it is too much to deal with and give up. That one pastry chef, the woman who built that pastry and caramel concoction the other evening? She's a Virgo. Struggled for years to find the perfect balance. She's got it. She's doing well with this Mars and Saturn influence. Can you do the same? Imitate some of her action, try to strike that balance point. It can be had, if you work at it.

Libra: Jupiter jogs you, just a little. Is this good or not? That's really up to you to make the call. I want it to be a good push, but once again, that's up to you. There really is more pushing and shoving you along than just Jupiter, but that's just the easiest planet to hang to the blame on. With Mr. Jupiter, it's a matter of realizing that some of this energy doesn't happen along in a friendly manner. Doesn't hit at an even pace, doesn't gently nudge you in one direction. There will lots of stuff, yanking and pulling on you. All at once Over here, over there, this, that, no wait, this and that, at the same time. This could be worse, and we could be bored, here in Libra. We wouldn't want that, no would we? So when the push and shove starts in this weekend, just turn it to its good side. See the best. It really can be a quite a lot of fun, as long as you don't let it wear you out.

Scorpio: Life really should be pretty good by now. It's not that it's great, it's just that, except for one slice of the sky, the rest of the Scorpio-type of folks should be enjoying the dog days of summer. One, rather thin slice of the Scorpio contingent is a little lost, a little adrift in a confusing situation that just fails to make any sense whatsoever. But other than that narrowest of Scorpio margin, the rest of you are doing well. The loss and confusion? I can't help with that. In fact, this is one of those times when consulting with a fakir, a reader of the night sky such as I, and/or any other kind of a medium (I'm large these days), any kind of consultation other than your own Scorpio good counsel? It's a waste of time, money and energy. We can't shed anymore light onto a situation than you can figure out for yourself. Usually, I would tend to suggest getting a reading from me, but this week? Skip it. No one knows better than your own, Scorpio self.

Sagittarius: I was paying for a typical Mexican meal (breakfast tacos), Tex-Mex to some, at a local place. Satisfied, satiated, and all summarily happy, I idly waited at the counter while the cashier rang me up. There was a large display bowl of pralines. Store-bought, store wrapped, little cellophane wrapper was imprinted with a bakery's name. On the inverse side, there was a long list of ingredients, butter, grease, lard, sugars, unnatural sweets, and so on. Store bought candy. I skipped it. Later the same day, in another TexMex place, I was paying for a supper, and I picked up one of the pralines there. Not "store-bought," just wrapped in a sheets of kitchen plastic, fastened on the back with a sticker -- which listed the kitchen's name, and the ingredients. Butter, brown sugar, egg and Mexican Vanilla (extract). Simple list. I bought two of the pralines. All-natural ingredients, means it's better, and not from a factory bakery, even better. And it was better. The advantage of the home-made kind of candy is that there's no ingredients that are bad for you. Me. Nothing that will cause problems with radiated food, or unnatural sugars that just turn into body mass. The point is to read the ingredients. I tend to favor places that are not part of a chain, not mass-marketed, and not as bad -- in this example -- the candy wasn't full of chemicals and preservatives, growth hormones and every other manner of bad things. Read the label. Look for something that is simple and pure. That's where our Sagittarius selves are happiest. This week.

Capricorn: There was an image on the side of a truck, I thought the advertising was comical, and yet, pointed in a way I could use. I took a half-dozen shots of the side of that truck, bent on using that image as a basis for a visual arts project. I was going to cut and copy the letters to rearrange them in a form I could use -- spell out ASTROFISH.NET -- and use the tag line. All of this was foremost in my mind while I was walking. I got home, plugged the camera in, I downloaded the images, answered the phone, and I forgot about the project. I remembered it a couple of days later, and as I fired up PhotoShop to work on it, thought about the details, the design, and the image I would be presenting,. Way too much work for the expected reward. I'm at a point where, when I take the digital image, I can manipulate the pixels until there's nothing left of the original, or I can just skip that kind of magic, and let the original image remain. The amount of work involved doesn't justify the output. Or the output requires too much work. It's some formula like that. Too much work for the rewards. Stop and think about it. You've got a project, an image, or maybe it's different kind of project, but you have to stop and ask yourself, "Self, my Capricorn self, does the effort required really match up to the output?"

Aquarius: "Tres leches" is a traditional Latin American dessert. Wonderful stuff, and I've seen it artfully prepared a number of different ways. It's basically a spongy cake, usually prepared without butter, then soaked with cream, condensed milk, and sweetened condensed milk. Or heavy cream, milk and condensed milk. Or some weird combination -- but it's a light, white cake, with milk, usually three kinds. Tasty and yet, not really that filling. Then, there's always one who has to buck the trend, one who has to go over the top. A widely recognized yet remarkably humble Austin eatery offered that Aquarius edge: the Quatro Leches dessert. How do yo stand out from the rest of the crowd? How do you move yourself one step above the milling masses? What can you do to make yourself noticed? Add one more leche to stew, I suppose. Or the cake. Having done so, if the product is really good, and at that one place, it is really good, then let its weight carry the day. But name it something that will garner some notice. In some circles, that might not be understood, but in a marketplace overrun with (really good) Tres Leches, add one

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more. Quatro Leches. Since your Aquarius self is already a quality product, doesn't much matter. Just quietly tuck that new name on, and see how you get the attention. Got Milk? Add more milk? Milk it for all its worth?

Pisces: I was in a high-end department store. In Austin, at one mall, I've found the easiest way to get to the Apple store is to use the Nordstrom's entrance, cut through, and it's a shortcut that works for me. Less likely to lose the car. Because I was, obviously, with a female, and because Nordstrom's has a shoe section -- there was necessary stop there for shopping. For a "strappie thing with a heel about this high, sort of sparkly, sort of not, kind of casual and dressy." To shoe girls, that means something. To me? Nothing, but I'm obviously a philistine in this area. I happened across one set of women's shoes, and this cracked me up. Little slipper-looking things. With mirrors. On the toes. Including a large, beveled, oval-shaped mirror on the toe. Facing up. I suggested that model shoe, and it was suggested that those shoes would -- with the mirror on the toe -- be the closet I was getting what was under the dress. Ever. Kind of nasty put down. Sort of a "slam the door in your face" way of dealing with me and the situation, perhaps it was my puerile humor. Then again, maybe this is more of a Pisces thing. While I was not the Pisces in this situation, imagine that you make a light-hearted comment and imagine that you get shot down. Or worse, you wind up with those shoes, spying.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

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For the week starting: 7.17.2008

"Gives not the hawthorn bush a sweeter shade

To shepherds, looking on their silly sheep,

Than doth a rich embroider'd canopy

To kings, that fear their subjects treachery?"

Shakespeare's The Third Part of King Henry the Sixth (II.v.44-7)

Aries: It was an amusing scenario, too bad I didn't get a screen shot of the situation. I was poking at something on the inter-web thing, and one of the places was running ads. Across the top of the page, two inline "keyword" ads appeared. One was for "date discreet - married personals" and the other was "Is he cheating - find out now!" I seriously doubt that the computer program has a wry enough sense of humor and managed to place those two ads next to each other. I doubt that it was intentional. I doubt it was an artificial -- or natural -- intelligence that managed to pop those ads at the same time. I think it was sort of random, and I think I happened to get the lucky screen image. But I thought about that, about how those two ads would run next to each other, and how that would mean something in this day and age. What does it mean, specifically, to Aries? Means that you've got to watch out, stay away from nefarious practices, and keep everything up and honest. Not that you don't, but I'm just saying, this isn't the time for straying eyes. As you're being watched, scrutinized and otherwise probed. The inverse side of that little data chunk? You should come up clean, provided, you are clean.

Taurus: I was working in south Texas, maybe West Texas, I don't recall, border town, maybe? I was using my very limited and quite broken Spanish to communicate an idea. I was merely making an attempt at being conversational, not really trying that hard, as my accent was all wrong. The inflection, pronunciation, all of it was off. To certain extent, I'm sure, this could be me, staging a scene, or, at the very least framing a scenario in which it becomes obvious that I shouldn't be speaking spanish. Or the border patois. I spoke like that, in part for comic effect, and in part, to indicate that I had some grasp of the local vernacular. Snide comments in spanish, intended to go over my head, sometimes those didn't escape me. I was doing this in playful manner, too. I'm not able to communicate other than in most rudimentary fashion, in anything but English, though. One of my friends, off to the side, rolled her yes, spit out some rapid-fire commentary, and then, she added, sotto voce, "English, he can only speak English." Point made, humorously, safely, and without offending anyone present. I'd suggest that it's a good message for my fine little Taurus friends. Make a point, make the point you need to

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make, but couch with some humor. Maybe mangle the language, too, so the point is made but you don't have to carry on in a language that you -- like me -- barely understand.

Gemini: A cute little Gemini asked about how to seduce her current love interest, which led to a question about that sign, which led to a question about compatibility, which got around to menu planning. Fairly typical for a Gemini, to move that fast through a conversation. I just sat back and let myself be amused. Why I'm so fond of Gemini. She was onto planning the vegetables for the evening's meal and asparagus was suggested. I tossed out that tidbit that it's a vegetable that's purported to be an aphrodisiac. "Sweet!" The Gemini said. She was working on a butter lemon sauce for the "al dente" asparagus. This was all on paper, too. I don't know if she ever made it to the store, I don't know if there ever was anything that happened, and for that matter, I don't know if she ever got her guy. Not that any of it matters, not really. A hot summer afternoon, and the faintest sheen of perspiration across her upper lip, the dark glasses concealing whatever was going on inside her head. Being a Gemini, I'm sure it was interesting. I don't have a horse in this race, so the outcome doesn't matter to me. I also understand that what was planned was an elaborate meal, and what might be delivered? Could fall a little short. It's a Gemini thing.

Cancer: One particular aspect I really like about San Antonio is that, as a town, it really isn't politically correct. I'm sure, in the hallowed halls of the seats of government, they are 100% politically correct. With as much federal government, I'm sure that the various branches, down to their roots, they are all in accordance with the strictest strictures and the up-to-the-minute rules. It's just, as a whole, the town isn't so uptight about little mundane details. Heading into town on the freeway, winding my way past the obstruction of the construction zone, I spied a sign. Tickled me. The name of a supposed pool hall: Nice Rack. Nothing like a little double entendre to go against the forces of political correctness. The sign shows a green background with a dozen pool balls being restrained by a pool rack. Nothing untoward, and it might only be my mind that thinks there's another possible meaning to the name. It's not the only incident like this, but it's a fine example of how we're avoiding living in a too political correct environment. Just enough sass and edge to make it clear that there is an edge we shouldn't step over. Then again, what so wrong about occasionally stepping over the line of good taste? Which is really what this is all about, stepping over the line of good taste. Sometimes, in our too politically correct society, offending someone, or a group of some ones, that isn't so bad. It helps. I'm not saying you're going to offend someone this next few days, but if you do? Maybe, just maybe, it's, like, a good idea.

Leo: As I was poking through the horoscopes, I realized I was on a little bit of a roll, seemed that I was setting out to offend every sign. If that was really true, I would have offended everyone, and I would've done so in a much more refined yet striking manner. I wasn't, and I never wanted to piss off everyone. As a mighty Leo, I'm sure you're aware of how I feel, though. Happens some days, when you're right and the rest of the world is wrong. Sounds a bit like you're getting all worked up over nothing. This isn't really about you, it's about me, as I was the one doing all the irritating. I'm the one who made everyone irritable, I'm the one who caused the problem, and I'm the one who needs the Leo to back me. It's the start of the the best birthday times of all. Add Venus to your extended astrology mix. You're cool, you're hip, you're happening. You are the center.

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Recline, my darling Leo, and enjoy the spotlight attention that you so richly deserve. And when you run into the folks like me, the people who keep pissing other people off? Reach out and help us, as best you can. Thanks, man.

Virgo: When I first started to spend extended time in San Antonio, I was impressed as a small circle of friends seemed inordinately well-connected. Friends of friends of people in high places, political connections, legal connections, doctors, lawyers, local, state and even federal friends in high places. Pretty cool, so I thought. It wasn't until I spent more and more time in the quaint environment that I began to realize that San Antonio, unlike Austin, was a small town. Or small town feel. Or that "everyone knows your business" kind of a town. Then too, there's the extended family network, and just about everyone is related to someone who knows someone (important). While I do feel better connected than most, I got a hot tip which I passed on to someone else, and I was going to publish my hot political rumor but as I found out, it's a small town. News, especially unverified rumors? Travels fast. Very fast. Already made the rounds and whomever was involved? The politicians were already on it, spin and counter-spin. From a rumor on the street to Washington, overnight. I was amazed. Small world, especially the south side of San Antonio. See, everyone is connected to everyone else, by blood, kin, marriage or friend-of-a-friend. As we deal with Mr. Mars and the lingering effects of Saturn in Virgo, let us consider this information. I'd suggest caution about what you say and to whom.

Libra: Get you through this weekend and there's breathing space. Maybe I've over-used that expression, but I like it. It implies, not so much as says, just sort of implies, that there's a chance to take a deep breath, breath in, exhale the bad, and not be fraught with worry. At least, not near as much. Small issue, really, in Libra land, and that small issue gets resolved before all of this week is over. Might not happen until early next week, but there's space, room to move, and a little bit of happiness that lands on your Libra head. This doesn't make everything all wonderful, but there's a shot at some ease and grace, both of which are very welcome as far your Libra self is concerned. The little warning that goes with this, don't lose your cool -- despite the oppressive summer heat -- before this weekend arrives. The problem will probably clear up before the next scope rolls over. Next week.

Scorpio: I kept looking at the end of the week, the ending chart for this scope. It showed the beginning of Leo. While I'm enormously fond of Leo, I'm less sure that you share my passion for the mightiest of the Fire Signs (Leo). The more I carry on about Leo, the more your Scorpio self gets a little jealous, me -- and other people -- always toadying up to the "all mighty Leo." Groveling, genuflecting, and otherwise making fools of ourselves, yeah, no good Scorpio would do that unless. Unless I explained why. I'm sure you've heard the expression, "It is better to ask forgiveness than seek permission"? Wait, that's a Scorpio motto, what I was thinking about was the "You catch more flies with honey instead of vinegar." That's the one, expression I use when explaining my Leo behavior. Behavior towards Leo. My begging and groveling in front of a Leo. Sometimes, it's just for show, but you know what? It works. Sometimes a Leo can see through my patently false and unctuous behavior, and more than one Leo has said, "I know it's not true, but I feel better when you act that way." Why go on and on about this and Leo? It's an easy, simple, direct way for life in Scorpio to be easier. Happens this week, on into the weekend, and then, next week, Leo starts in earnest. Practice a little before this week hits, then be

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prepared. Roll out the Scorpio red carpet, be overly solicitous of our health and well-being. Act nice.

Sagittarius: Stop and take a deep breath. Stop and assess. Stop and assimilate. Stop and judge -- no, do not judge others -- stop and judge your Sagittarius self. Item: Saturn. Item: Virgo. Item: the Square. It's (a square) considered a pejorative angle for Sagittarius, as Saturn is squaring us, and in some astrology ways of seeing this, it's a bad thing. I'm less inclined to think of it as bad or evil, and more inclined to think of it in terms testing. Only, I'm all through with the tests that I've had, and I'm not interested in any more tests. Not from the Universe, the medical people, the law, the lawyers, the police, nope, not interested in any testing. The only item that I have that I'm willing to surrender is a fishing license. And I know I'll get that back from the fish & game officer, once it's been determined that I am indeed, current. The kicker is, I paid attention. I paid the fee, too, but that's not what this is about. I paid attention. I listened. I noted what changes needed to be made and I acted in concordance with the whims of the gods, or whomever, and I should be all but done with my little tests. Regrettably, there's going to be one more. Whether our Sagittarius selves like it or not, here it comes. This is only a test, though, and it's just a little astrology check-up. You did do the right thing, didn't you?

Capricorn: There's a single "gotcha" that's going to hit, middle of the weekend, maybe before, maybe, like Monday or so, but during the allotted time frame of this scope. That little hit, how hard, how deep the cut, how much this gets you? All determined by your own reaction to an outside action, or an action acted upon by someone else. For most of my friends, when this happens, I just ask them how grown up they can act. I didn't say they had to be grown up, or be mature, just act in mature fashion for a little while. "How interesting," is a good response to whatever this is. Or, better yet, "How weird." Sort of a noncommittal answer while you have time to formulate a better course of action. You need time to think the situation, the "gotcha," the whatever it is that happens that upsets you momentarily, whatever that is? Cool it. Stop. Assess. Assess a second time. This is probably a situation where second-guessing is okay. Might even be better. Or even a third guess. All that second-guessing takes time. First comment? "How weird is that?" It's a straight up commentary devoid of plus or minus. Perfect. Buys you a little time. If you can just give yourself, sometimes only a fraction of a minute, you can save yourself from a costly mistake, and maybe, you can come out looking like the hero. Heroine. One of those. Think.

Aquarius: There's a woman, I know, old friend from way back, and she took a sudden disliking to me. Kind of amusing, to me, in a weird way. Suddenly, I was evil. Evil incarnate. Born under a bad sign, and not a nice person. None of which is true, really, as no one is ever born under a bad sign, Scorpio comments notwithstanding, but there was that onerous hiss, like a feral alley cat, whenever she got around me. I was thinking about her, wondering where she was these days, wondering if I was still the evil one, wondering about a lot things, and I looked through the Aquarius chart. I felt a certain kinship there, since I'm sure you're wondering why (some person) is treating you the same way I was treated. Evil? Hardly. Weird and offbeat? Sure. But truly heinous? I just don't see you that way. Which doesn't stop another person's perception -- and the color may change. The simplest course of action is to do nothing. And by nothing I mean nothing. Arguing that you're not really evil is going to compound the situation. Which is

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part of what the other person wants. So, instead of arguing, trying to point out that you're not a bad person, not evil incarnate, wonder about that other person. My simple suggestion, though, is not to waste too much Aquarius bandwidth on the question.

Pisces: As much as I would like to duck out on this one, I can't. Pisces has some tremulous changes kicking loose. What was once a tight and secure situation, it's less that way now. The problems can be found in thirds, or by an order of three. One of those, one way, and the solutions aren't too easy to come by. The problem is change, and the easiest way to deal with the changes is to simply acquiesce to purported changes. Change just for the sake of change isn't any good, but change with a stated goal in mind, picking and choosing a new course because it's the way you want to go, that's a better idea. I'm not saying that you have to change a thing, it's just the Pisces chart wheel, the thing I use to make course corrections and suggestions with, that wheel has change pointing from all corners. Well, it's a wheel, there aren't corners, but from a half-dozen spots within the spooks of the wheel, if not from several places that just look like change is preeminent. You can buck this trend in change, if you so desire. And you will be left empty-handed and wanting. I can't make any of this change any more graceful. I can endorse it and suggest that it's coming, so you'd be best served if you prepared and then, when the change comes, go ahead and work the new plan, the new orders, the new ways of approaching the old problems, give the new stuff a spin. I wouldn't be the least bit surprised to find the new material actually suits you better.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 7.24.2008

"To persist

In doing wrong extenuates not wrong

But makes it much more heavy."

Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida [II.ii194-6]

Aries: I was pulling into a place where I like to fish, two poles were in the back of the truck, sticking out. On the seat next to me was a laptop. I was actually going to work, record a little footage for the web video. As I handed my gate fee to the park employee, a regular, like I'm known there, I told her I wasn't really going to fish. That evoked a merry chuckle, and a roll of the eyes. The park rangers have seen me there, at least once a week, sometimes more often, and I'm usually at a spot alongside the western shoreline. I like it fine, the southerly breeze cools me off, some of the park has covered picnic tables, in the hot sun Texas summer, that translates to shade. I doubt you're pulling into a local park that has a lake where you fish. I doubt that very much. However, I don't doubt that you're working hard these days, and you show up with fishing poles -- or something -- sticking out of the back of your truck. And I don't doubt that you're going to use my line, "I'm really here for work." Best of all, you get that same park ranger that I did, "Yeah, right." But you are here to work, and I'll promise that if you do work it will pay off, and sooner than you expect.

Taurus: I was watching while a girlfriend got dressed one morning. The way the clothes, just nice slacks and a top, but the way the material all threaded together, it was amazing. To me, it was amazing, Such a complicated process -- the little belt thing that casually holds it all together is intricately threaded through and around, and it's not easy being a girl. Looks complicated. Looks like a lot of hard work just to be casual. I'm doing good, on any given day, just to make sure my shirt is buttoned up correctly. I don't think I could even fathom some of the intricacies of the casual look for women. Good thing I am who I am, then. It's a matter of realizing one's strengths, then and embracing those strengths. I'm a guy, I couldn't even begin to have the dressy-casual look of some. I'm just happy to find a shirt that isn't too dirty, and it's a wonderful day when the shirt and shorts match. Not likely, except I stick to basic colors. But this isn't about gender, nor is it about fashion, it's about playing to one's strengths, or, in my case, avoiding one's weaknesses. As a Taurus, you know what's a strong point and what's a weak point. As the Sun courses

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through Leo, concentrate on playing to your own, very Taurus-like, strengths. You'll be much happier. Besides, contrary to popular opinion, I don't really look good in casual summer frock.

Gemini: I've got a sweet Gemini client, blonde hair, blue eyes, expected proportions, and she's pondering her wayward life these days. Means I get that Gemini call, most near daily. And not unlike a Gemini, it's just one quick question. When I'm doing astrology, I tend to look back at certain events, like what happened a year ago, two years ago, seven years back, as way to plot what's coming up. This was a big part of the question for that one Gemini, and then, I saw this as a trend. Several Gemini, I mean several different bodies of Gemini, not the same Gemini personalities in just one body, but as a grouping, there's a tendency. I'm trying to shock you out of that tendency. Shake off the trend, as it were. The tendency is to luxuriate in the past. It's okay to look at where you've been in order to plot a course for the future. That's where I can help. But spending too much time talking about the past, or dwelling on the past, that's a luxury you can ill-afford at this junction of the time-space continuum in Gemini land. Move it or lose it. It's not about hair color, or eye color, it's about too much time dwelling on some aspect that can't be changed, like the past.

Cancer: Sitting here, a few days before the middle of July, I'm thinking about what's up for the end. This next scope heralds the beginning of Leo, and marks the end of Cancer. This same week is also marked by a "last quarter moon" and the position isn't one that's too happy. Well, not too happy for some people. As the original Moon Child, it's matter of understanding what's going on, the beginning of Leo, but the end of something else. And I'm not sure how that will play out. In your own life, though, there's a single matter that really (desperately) needs your attention. Look, I'm not one who can preach about this myself. Buddy offered to go fishing, and instead of working, we were fishing. Which, I mean, in some ways of looking at it, it was work. Serious work. Regrettably, it didn't generate any income. And I'm not suggesting that it's really a career issue, either, but I'd say the sign and portents are strong in that direction. But unlike me, when someone offers to go fishing instead of working? All I'm suggesting is that you tend to that one, last item that needed doing before you take to go fish. Or whatever the pleasant distraction might be? I suggest you avoid avoiding the problem. Deal with that one item, then you can go and play. But I might not be the right person to preach about this -- I'd ditch work and go fish. In a heartbeat.

Leo: One word: Gelato. I was sitting outside a coffee shop, and I'd managed to talk the cute (Pisces) barista into letting me have one scoop of vanilla gelato. Good stuff. Mixes well with superior coffee. A couple was walking by, a gent, maybe a few years older than me, and fetching lady, about his age, but in excellent shape. They looked appraisingly at me, at the gelato I was spooning into my mouth, and the couple kept on walking. When they were about three paces away, I heard "ice cream," and I replied with one word. "Gelato." "What the hell," the woman said, "we're on vacation," and with that, they went in and had themselves a couple of espresso floats. Timing is important, and your Leo timing is every bit as good as mine was, that hot afternoon in July. One word sales pitch. One word. Simple, direct, to the point. More than a whisper, less than a loud voice. You've got Venus power, use it.

Virgo: "You pull a chuck wagon to a convenience store, you're going to get a crowd; I promise." I was at one of the "first-second-last" "Saturday-Monday-Thursday" events. Some small town, west of here, depends on tourist traffic, trades in western-flavored material. So there was a real chuck wagon, or as real as I can expect a slightly updated variation to be. And beside it, there was the owner or operator, I'm not sure which, and he was doing a sales pitch. Or maybe he was just touting his wares, I only caught part of the conversation. It just amazed me that there were still real chuck wagons around, and that there were still cowboys who would operate such wagons, and finally, that there were still places where just such a item would actually draw a crowd. However, thinking about it it makes sense, that a chuck wagon serving real chuck wagon fare, parked just about any place, that such a vehicle would attract attention. The more I thought about it, though, and the more I thought about all the traditional aspects of that chuck wagon, the less I was interested in chuck that was prepared so close to the operating horsepower -- the horses themselves. It added an aromatic quality I was less enamored of. As long as Mr. Mars and Mr. Saturn are sitting on you, think through the idea -- all the way through. Chuck wagon, cool. Chuck wagon with horses? Horse by-product? The careful of novelty items when the novelty wears off.

Libra: I ran across an interesting term, "Endangered Real Estate" As it turns out, Endangered Real Estate it's like endangered species, only, the buildings themselves. Perhaps they are buildings of social importance, or perhaps, historical, or maybe, from my point-of-view, an architectural point. Locally, the century-old courthouses are regularly saved and preserved, and some of those buildings are just plain ugly. Doesn't matter, endangered and ugly? Still saved. What bothers me, in the encroaching creep of inter-urbanization, older office building, but not really that old, are regularly torn down while something new is sent up. I never did quite get it, why not just reuse some of the available building in a new format? Reuse, revitalize, recycle, in effect, reflect? Obviously, they didn't check with me. I'd have pointed out classic examples of spaces that have been recycled to a more productive use. I'm not going on and on about endangered real estate because I've got a hand in some deal. That's not what this is about. It's about thinking about alternative uses to an exiting item, a solution no one's thought of, just yet. Instead of tearing it down to build a new -- or tearing it down to build anew -- think about how it can be reused. Like endangered real estate.

Scorpio: We were talking about cars that guys use to attract women. "Buddy of mine, he had a Nine-Eleven (Porsche), but after he got married, she made him sell it." That former Porsche owner is probably Mr. Four-door sedan, I'm sure. It happens. Relationships exert a special force, like gravity, only different. Before and after pictures are rather telling. As are decisions about vehicles. Consider before -- and after -- images in Scorpio. Think about some of the issues at hand. You know, that cool sports car, there's no place to put a baby seat. Kind of hard to haul groceries in a two-door sports model. There are problems with the ideas. In the spirit of compromise, there's always a little change that must occur. Subtle changes, minute changes, a little bit of give and take. Consider this, consider that former Porsche owner, I mean, how would your Scorpio self feel if the baby spit up on the leather seats? Suddenly, the little changes, the concessions aren't so drastic. The Scorpio astrology weather is suggesting a change is imminent. You are allowed to fight with the changes, if you so choose. However, sooner or later, you'll realize, in your Scorpio brian, that the suggested switch? It makes good sense. Like getting rid of that sports car.

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Sagittarius: What I've long admired about our Sagittarius selves is our zest. Given just about any kind of an action, and we just jump right into it. "Ride it like you stole it." It's a cowboy expression, and I liked it because it captured that Sagittarius flavor. Well, what's our usual style, anyway. Seems like our daunting and derring-do is little overdone these days. Besides, that "ride it like you stole it" might give off the wrong connotation. I'm not so sure that someone wouldn't take a shot at one of our Sagittarius selves because they saw us riding it like we stole and therefore, they assumed that we, indeed, did steal it, since we were riding it like was stolen. Just us being our usual selves. Yet, that joy and frivolity, that devil-may-care attitude, that needs boast as this weekend gets kicked off. There's a push and pull, a yin-yang, a come hither and go away kind of energy. Mars and Saturn to a lesser extent, or greater extent, that stuff is in Virgo, creating tension while the Sun is in Leo, creating boundless good energy. Which is going to be? That's why I was invoking that phrase, "Ride it like you stole it." If we can tap into the normal, ebullient joy? We can get back on track and do well. Despite the dour Virgo influence.

Capricorn: Oh man, "Normal is a setting on the dryer." I wouldn't know, I read that someplace. I like the idea of there being a "normal" setting on the dryer, but most of the coin-operated machines that I feed? There is no such thing. I don't think the laundry room in the old trailer park even had a "fluff" setting, and certainly nothing was ever normal. Permanent press, I'm sure, and some kind of wrinkle free setting, that too. But normal? Not in my world. Wouldn't you like to be able to select a switch, just rotate the setting around to a point that registered normal? And then, have everything turn out to be normal? Wouldn't that be the best? As close as you're going to get a normal setting, that comes up in the next five, maybe ten days -- there isn't one. But there's a growin sense, especially as we get closer to ten days, that there's a positive and useful change underfoot. Just remember, you have to let it run all the way through the spin cycle, first.

Aquarius: I like skin art. I don't have any myself, but I admire it as often as I see it. There was this one guy, his tattoo included, "Nothing to Prove." With that much extensive artwork, it was a full set of "sleeves," I think the message was a little ironic. Big letters, worked into the design across one forearm, and I had to wonder, with "Nothing to Prove," if that wasn't proving something to begin with. Or does this get a little reductive, and maybe it was a joke? Joke's on me, then, because I don't think I quite get it. I should've asked the guy what his birthday was, and I'm sure I would've found out that he was an Aquarius. And there's an iconic or ironic, or iconic and ironic, or ironic, iconic and iconoclastic message to the tat. As an Aquarius, as of this week, you have nothing to prove. Stick to that story, and stick to that idea. With nothing to prove, it's a lot easier than trying to make something out of nothing, which is a providence of Sagittarius astrologers, and don't make a big issue out of it. I'm not even sure what the big deal is, but whatever it is? Like the tattoo says, you have nothing to prove.

Pisces: The waitress implied she would have to "Kill someone to get you a fork, you know." After she whisked away the salad, with the hard-to-come-by fork, I signaled that another set of silverware would be nice. "Second set of silverware, oh great I'm a serial killer now," she grimaced. The restaurant was full, the waitress was merry, and the food was passable good. Good salad, after I didn't have to use my fingers to eat it, and the bread, I think it really was fresh. The point being important, though, is that I couldn't just reach to the next table and grab another set of silverware. She showed back up, "One

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more down." A few moments later, she reappeared with dinner. We went back to our meal, much amused by the thoughts that the diminutive and cute little waitress was killing them in the kitchen. Pisces a March Pisces waitress. Which accounts for the humor and the dry delivery. I don't think anyone can roll their eyes as well as a Pisces. Especially the early March Pisces. Which is not to discount the late February crowd, just my observations. That Pisces waitress, though, she was a good example to follow. Make light of what can escalate into a serious problem. Keep it light. Keep the banter up, because, these next few days? It's going to be like that. Somebody need to give us a lift, and a little deadpan humor from a Pisces will help. Help you, too. That girl got an extra good tip. Money won't cure everything, but a nice tip? Helps, like the jokes, "you're killing me."

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 7.31.2008

"O! It is excellent

To have a giant's strength, but it is tyrannous

To use it like a giant."

Shakespeare's Measure for Measure (II.ii.133-5)

Special nod to the giants and how they use their strength these days. Good play, too, that Measure for Measure.

Aries: I'd watch in Aries land, as Mars and the Moon briefly align with each other. That, in and of itself, that isn't a big deal happens two or three times while Mars is in Virgo. But this one, coming up at the end of the weekend, on towards the beginning of the next week? It's a signal for your Aries self to redouble the efforts at work. The deal is, if you do twice as much work at work? There is three times the reward. I'm not always good with fuzzy math, but I can easily see that the numbers on this are better than I previously thought. It was, like, an extra hour of overtime, but the commission paid was like, an extra three hours of pay. So it pays to stay. It can be something really simple, too. It could be just assisting one of the overlords at the office, could be as simple as showing that person how to manipulate data on a computer's screen. It might be a balky consumer, too, a bad customer, who, under your ministrations turns into a golden opportunity. While everyone else is carrying on about holidays and such, pay attention to that little bit of extra work with a sound fiscal reward.

Taurus: While the Sun is in Leo, there's a kind of quiet determination that should be reflected in the Taurus countenance. It's about a degree of quiet reservation, that deep well of determination inside you. It's about not reacting to external stimuli. Careful and methodical action can be rewarded.. Well rewarded. It's a matter of the careful plotting, the exact execution, and the precision that you are willing to bring to this matter. Then, too, there's the silence. I'm not saying that you're a silent type, but if you'll allow me a chance, here, let me just say it, "Shut up." "A closed mouth gathers no flies," that's what one fortune cookie suggested. And I'm suggesting, as long as the Sun, and the Moon, are in Leo, there's a good time to keep your mouth firmly sealed. I'm not going to suggest that this is a long term situation,. Like quiet for a lifetime, or a timeout that lasts for years, but just a little bit of silence, on your part, will yield beneficial results. Quiet determination gets you there. Complaining about it, that gets you there, too, just not as quickly.

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Gemini: I ran into the strangest of weird problems, to me, anyway, I was trying to pay off the balance of a credit card. I was doing the last of the balance transfer kind of things, just moving one pile of debt over to another place, with a lower interest rate. Just about got it all paid down to a manageable level, which was the goal and after I got the sums moved around some, I had more fun just moving the debt around. Buys time, you know? Anyway, I was trying to pay off one last credit card. Not far to go, and I thought I had the correct balance to pay. Turns out I was trying to overpay the credit card. Minimum payment? No problem. Overpaying? That's a big problem, apparently. When I've sent a check in -- via regular postal mail, this isn't a problem if I overpay by a few bucks. I get the credit from the card company. But with the wire transfer, or balance adjustment, or whatever I was doing, the card company kept refusing the payment. Usurious interest rates are better for their business models, I'm sure. They'd like to keep me at the higher right, I'm sure. With the reams of paperwork that come with credit cards, I'm sure they've got this kind of scenario covered. Their fine print makes mine look tame. Still, it was a frustrating problem until I finally worked out that I couldn't overpay the card. Took some figuring, and I almost had to wade through some of the legal jargon in order to find out that I couldn't pay them too much. My bad. This solution to my problem, the answer to the Gemini question, it's all very simple. It's going to take a little longer, maybe have to wade through a few yards of documentation, maybe it's another kind of problem, but eventually, you will succeed. It's just that the answer doesn't come quickly, easily, or fast enough for your Gemini brain. But it does happen -- you do succeed. Might take two or three stabs to kill the east, though. I'm just saying.

Cancer: I slid into a booth at a diner-like place. I looked over at the window, three dead flies, bloated, feet-up in the air, dead as could be. I could describe what I saw across the street, but that would give away a location. It was a quiet Sunday morning, the usual crowds weren't stirring yet. Almost quiet, in a dead-of-summer way, heat not yet radiating up from the sidewalk. Breakfast arrived, I'm guessing something with tortilla chips, eggs, maybe chorizo, probably some flour tortillas (hand-made), but I'm guessing now. That one morning, the three dead flies in the window? Pork chop was the Sunday special. Excellent fare, pork chop was big as a steak, and tasty, too. One of the reasons the food is so good is because the dead flies are in the window. This isn't, like, a hard and fast rule, but as indications go, I've eaten in enough places where the food is better and the indication is that the staff doesn't spend too much time worrying about what the outside looks like. Maybe that's the real key. When I twisted up your chart and dialed it in, I was looking at the phase of the moon. Just because there are a couple of dead flies in the window? Could mean the place has good food.

Leo: It was a quick tip on the back of card, I'm guessing, a survival card at the big sportsman's store. The instructions? "5 Survival skills: Think STOP - Sit Think Observe Plan." I don't know, if the boat is sinking? Might not be the best time to start planning, sometimes a little action is preferable. But as the best Fixed Fire Sign, a Leo shouldn't be in a sinking boat these days. Which is why I was attracted to that little bit of advice. However, maybe I'm doing this wrong, but I only counted four action items, and really, there's not a lot of action involved in those. So I'm unsure of how there's five rules, when I can only see four. Also, consider that the moon is going to be dark in your sign./ A good time to make new plans. So working backwards from the end of the four instructions, Plan? That one works. The others are necessary steps to get from here to there, and back

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again. Which might be what this is really about. Not a lot of action, but a little careful thought will save you the trouble.

Virgo: I was the third part of a two-way conversation, couple of buddies, talking about, of course, girlfriends. "Got any good advice?" one asked, pointedly not asking me. I charge for my advice. "Yeah, she's crazy, I mean, she's really psycho. Run." My other buddy responded. Both looked at me. I didn't say anything. Sometimes, silence is the best answer. And if the person you're attracted to is crazy? Then the best answer is to run. When I was younger and more enthusiastic, I would love the challenge of the crazy one. This is also non-gender specific, applies equally, if not more so, right across the lines. So the crazy one, it's fun for a little while. We all agree. But after a few episodes? Maybe it's not so much fun anymore. Might seriously impact your own Virgo health. So it's a wise Virgo who will stay away from the obvious crazy ones. That's the first tip. Then, there's also the idea, when my buddies were chatting, there's the little fact that I didn't jump in and offer advice. My silence was louder than anything I could've said. Sometimes, it's better to be quiet. Besides, by now, everyone should know to stay away from the crazy ones.

Libra: I was in downtown San Antonio. Looks much like home, these days. And I was observing the ebb and flow of humanity. There was a picturesque image, what looked like for all the world, a real cowboy, leaning against a lamp post. Faded, dusty jeans tucked into knee-high boots with intricate stitching on the uppers. Yoke-cut, faux pearl snap shirt. Skoal ring on the back of the jeans, large brim straw hat, slightly beat around the edges. Real deal, near as I could tell. He was stationary, one booted foot up on the pole, and he was leaned back. Tooled belt, too, with a large buckle, looking like a trophy buckle. But who knows? Got a good image of real cowboy paused in the middle of a busy downtown street? Imagine he was oblivious to the irony and din of traffic. I finally, as I got closer and passed him, found out what he was doing, he was texting on a phone. Which made the real irony even more poignant. However, here's a person who is obviously at home in wide open spaces bereft of most human companionship, or so it would appear. The thumb busy working the buttons of the phone to send a message? Completely ignoring the traffic and pedestrians all around? Maybe there's a hint that your Libra self could use, ignore the traffic, or whatever the costume suggests. Get about what you need to do.

Scorpio: I was talking with a rather elderly friend. "The older I get, the bitchier I get, and I told that to my neighbor, and you know what he said? 'I noticed that, too, but I was afraid to point it out.'" Me? I would never point that out, and my elderly friend never seems bitchy to me. Could be point-of-view, could be the idea that I know what I'm dealing with here, and that I tend to be engaged and polite when dealing with my elders. It's exactly the same way I would tend to treat a Scorpio, polite, engaged, attentive, and with lowered expectations. I don't expect to be in charge, I don't expect to get my point across, and I don't expect to argue. But I'm a rarity. I treat Scorpio with utmost kindness and respect. I'm not saying that everyone will be more difficult to deal with, but there will be a lot of them. My friend and me, we get along just fine. I'm also the exception, not the general rule. And I'm not saying it's all bad, but very careful, lots of people want to piss you off. And pissed off Scorpio is not a good thing.

Sagittarius: Living in South Texas, as I do, not far from the coast, seafood is integral in my diet. There's a place, sort of close, a local chain, really, and for happy hour, there's a wedge of lettuce slathered in house dressing, and dozen raw oysters. Or a half pound of shrimp in the shell. Or all three. The deal is, here, it's almost as inexpensive as being at the coast. Gulf Coast oysters, not really very good in the summer months, but not too bad. Happy hour price, means a dozen is, relatively speaking, cheap. Good for nutritional purposes. Consider as well, that the Gulf Coast oysters have all those extra ingredients, like various traces of heavy metals. Might account for musical tastes. So this is a cheap solution to a real getaway. I'm not saying that you should hop on over to the Water Street Oyster Bar, or the Shrimp Shack, or Rudy's Seafood, but there's a point where healthy, cheap, nutritious and inexpensive all coincide. Find out. Do it. You can thank me later. Cheap escapes are sometimes one of the most wonderful and besides, as a classless Sagittarius? We get along just fine in just about any surroundings.

Capricorn: I was walking along a railroad right-of-way. Perhaps I've been exposed to too much country music, what with trains, and so forth. The rail line cuts a straighter pathway, and that route is much less populated, again, endearing features. I was sweltering in the South Texas sun, sweating like a roasted critter, one hot July afternoon. I noticed that there was a long, thin line of very fine white gravel, straight as the train tracks themselves. I got to thinking about rail car after rail car I'd seen, moving, I think northward, carrying what appeared to be gravel. Then I got to thinking about all this, see, the mine must load up chunks of dirt, piled all the way to the top. Then, as the train meanders its hundreds -- or thousands -- of miles, some of that material is blown out, washed away, or, like the gravel I was following, coming out a hole in the bottom of the carrier. Long, straight, white line. Unbroken. Does this amount of shrinkage, does it matter? Is that figured into the freight manifest, knowing full well that a portion of the cargo won't ever make it to the destination? As the buyer on the receiving end, I'd like to just pay for what I got. As the seller, I'd want to be paid for the amount that left my mine. Which one is it? As a Capricorn, you want what's right. The question begged, though, is trying to reduce a whole week of influences to a binary question, and are you the consumer, or the dealer, do want to be paid for what you shipped or for what arrived at your end?

Aquarius: I was in line at a certain brand of coffee shop, known, as much as anything, for its universal penetration. And high prices, Plus not always the best coffee. But at certain hours, or in certain locations, one takes what one can. So I was in a Starbucks, and I was in line behind a shapely lass of expected proportions. I tend to eavesdrop, too, since I get to hear things like, "Grande Americano with just a splash of non-fat." The counter help, doing her duty, suggested a breakfast pastry. "Would you like a donut?" The answer? "Yes, I would like one, but no, I can't afford one." I don't think it was the price, either, not the fiscal price. It was more like the expected physical price. But I don't let these things bother me. I doubt that one donut is going to hurt. The problem being, what starts as a one donut a day habit can quickly escalate into a box of Crispy Cream donuts each morning. When those donuts are hot out of the grease. It's really good. Great, now I'm hungry, too. Which wasn't the point, either, that simple act of saying "no, but thanks for asking," was handled in a tactful, pleasant manner. Nobody got their feelings hurt. Employee, just doing what was in the manual, I'm sure. Although the longing glances at the donuts in the pastry case, that might've been a leading clue. The customer, let's

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pretend she was a an Aquarius, she was just what she knew was right, fight the temptation, and do what is right for yourself. That's a special message this week, be right to yourself, but maybe, that means refusing instead of indulging.

Pisces: On the south side of the interstate -- the freeway -- as it approaches downtown San Antonio, there's building with four flag poles. From each pole, there's a large piece of cloth, and each flag is symbolic. There's a US Flag, then the Lone Star, and then there's a "stars and bars" (either the rebel flag or the Confederate flag, depends on naming conventions), and finally, there's a maroon flag for the University of Texas A&M. Having lived in Austin too long, home to the arch rival of the maroon flag, I can't say that I'm overly fond of the maroon team. I'd like to think that I am firmly middle ground, having never attended either university, but like I suggested, too much time in Austin, and I'm affected. When I'm sitting shotgun, and we drive past it, I'm afraid there's a faint smile followed by an evener fainter sneer. The smile is the US Flag and the Lone Star, flapping in the breeze. When I see a Confederate flag, I think "Pride not prejudice," but that might be me. The Aggie (Texas A&M) flag? Got to admire that kind of loyalty. And to be fair, it's a world class university, leading in all sort of Agricultural, Mechanical (and bio-science) fields. Top vet school, if I'm not mistaken. But this isn't about universities, or really, not even about flags, it's about perceptions. What image evokes what kind of reaction? The "stars and bars" can easily evoke a strong -- to some -- negative connotation. AS You March into your week, think about what the symbol is, and what you're trying to get across. Then, too, consider what that image you're presenting? Think about how it might be perceived.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 8.7.2008

"Not all the water the water in the rough sea

Can wash the balm from an anointed king."

Shakespeare's The Tragedy of King Richard the Second (III.ii.56-7)

Aries: I was traveling some place, ostensibly for work, and a baggage handler noted a sticker on my battered suitcase. "Home of Roy Orbison" was all that was left of the sticker. I should suggest that as a trivia question, "Where is the home of Roy Orbison?" Anyway, the guy said, "I'm down with that, I've got family in Beaumont." Roy Orbison was from Wink, Texas. Imagine a map of Texas, and Wink is next to the SE corner of NM. Draw a horizontal line all the way across the state, and Beaumont is near the SW corner of LA. Lots of ground in between. Other than both townships are in the same state, there's not much of a tenuous connection, even at best. Part of the problem was half the sticker was scraped off, and then, there's the geography question. I don't think the guy was an Aries, though. With Venus and Saturn aligned, and with Mars in that mix? Careful about reaching for common ground when there's an absence of fact.

Taurus: Long, hot summers, what it's all about. Add a touch of rain, a hint of moisture, and there will be mosquitos. Flocks of them. Herds of them. Hordes of mosquitos, swarming, biting, sucking blood. And the biting, it really bites. I've learned a secret for dealing with the little vermin, too, it's the peppers. The hot, spicy food is good, but better yet, just the peppers. Peppers with breakfast, lunch and dinner? Pretty soon the bugs leave you alone. I believe it's the active ingredients in Cayenne that are the most effective elements, but it's certainly the principal components of any spicy combination, that's what works. Might be urban mythology, might be modern folklore, but it does seem to work. Hot, peppery food groups will protect you best. The Sun is in Leo, but the bulk of the planet influences are in earth signs, which means a simple kind of "folk" remedy will work. Like peppers to combat airborne insects.

Gemini: A great number of my little Gemini friends tend to move at a higher rate of speed and figure things out, like, long before it happens. Which is why this is an odd time. There's a lot of planets affecting Gemini, all stacked up in Virgo. Like planetary confusion, rush hour for the celestial traffic, and possible trouble for Gemini as the week slides by. The sun is still moving at a predictable pace, still in Leo, and therein is part of the caution. A typical Gemini response would be to admit the problem, find the fault, address the issue and move on, but there's a sticking point. It's all fine and good that your Gemini self can detect, reflect and fix the problem, but the rest of us are going to be lagging behind your Gemini self.

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Cancer: The question is, how to punctuate this sentence: "A woman without her man is nothing." Personally, I'm in the feminist camp on this one, "A woman, without her, man is nothing." But that's just me. There's the other option, slide that comma around, and it could mean something else. I'm not going there, not me. I'm certainly no feminist, just an equal rights sort of person. Guy, really. And while I'm admittedly sexist, that doesn't mean I can't appreciate the proper way to punctuate the phrase, like I've demonstrated. This isn't really about gender roles, or relationships, or the sad state of the inequality based on sexual preferences, though, this is about a simple phrase. It's like a little test. How it should be filled varies from person to person. Like me, and let's pretend I was a Cancer person, it's all about how this should be filled out. Appropriate responses can tell a lot about a person. That's what this is about.

Leo: Happy Birthday baby! I've got a client who works in the Federal Courthouse, downtown. The big federal building. Each season, a local university provides a fresh crop of interns, young minds eager to grasp the intricate and delicate nature of the way the government is conducted. True story: there was a new intern, young, and he was working on a computer in the back of the office. "I'm almost out of ink jet paper, what should I do?" My client, not missing a beat, "Just use the Xerox paper." So the new intern, pulls a sheet of paper out of his printer, walks over to the big copier machine, and copies the blank page a half-dozen times. While this sounds like a joke, it was repeated to me, verbatim, from a federal employee; therefore, it must be true. Names withheld out respect for the inanity of it all. I just thought I'd mention this story, in passing, on your birthday, and remind you, "Without eternal Leo vigilance, it could happen here."

Virgo: I get to glimpse into the lives of a great number of people. In the Virgo corner, I am afforded an opportunity to glimpse into the lives of great people. Then, too, there'd the other side of that scenario. Instead of addressing an issue? Instead of rolling up her sleeves and going to work? One Virgo told me what she liked best? "Watching people clean on HGTV instead of cleaning myself." Begs a question or two, I'm sure. Mars, Venus, Mercury and Saturn. All here in Virgo at this week's moment. Each planet imparts a different sense, a different role, a different energy. But what will it be? I'd like to suggest, just as a suggestion, that the idea of watching someone clean on TV? While that can be an exciting kind of visual for a Virgo? Tantamount to foreplay, even? Yeah, while it's an endearing image to play with, for the next few days, all I'm saying, with those planets? Yeah, doing instead of watching is a better idea.

Libra: Single moms are always popular with me. I was off to meet with a client, and I was running a little early so I detoured by a certain downtown (tourist) hotel. I casually watched as a mom and her ten-year old kids piled into a mini-van. Wasn't odd, nor was it odd that the bumper stickers suggested a strong Christian conviction, allied with a certain mega-church. Nope, all in good form. The kid was reluctant and excited, as only (I'm guessing) ten-year olds can be. I watched long enough to make age and sun-sign associations for the kid then I turned my attention to the mom. Big wedding ring, slim build, carefully coiffured, casually arrayed in jeans and a T-Shirt that. I need to insert a noise, the sound of a record being abruptly stopped. That screech. She had on a slightly faded, slightly dated Red Hot Chili Pepper's World Tour T-shirt. Didn't, in my mind, go with anything else. Planets are stacking up, and there's a sense, you're going to be like me, still trying to figure out, was the shirt a hand-me-down, a gift, or a souvenir? She go

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to the show? Was she a closet punk rocker? Or was I worried about something that I couldn't understand?

Scorpio: Jumping to conclusions is a dangerous sport. I'm not saying that you're acting in a rash or ill-thought out manner, but I'd exercise some of that good Scorpio caution, as need be, for the immediate future. Next couple of days, just as the moon begins to get full, just as it gets towards the witching hour, and it's really about being under the cover of darkness. See, that's what this all about. Just when you think you can move a stealthy manner, in a way that isn't detected by non-Scorpio people, there's some undue observation, undeserved attention that you get. I'm not saying it's all bad. After all, as a Scorpio, your behavior is always above reproach. It is, isn't it? Above reproach? No skeletons dangling in your closet? Just checking. The problem is the odd setup between the harmonies of the planets. Where it falls. How it falls. What falls out. Which leads us back to the first part of the problem, jumping to conclusions.

Sagittarius: I watched as this conversation unfolded, right before my eyes. Ears, really, as I was listening to it. "What's for dinner, honey?" He asked. "They'll be here around 8," she answered. "No, what are we having for dinner?" he repeated himself, and she answered, "Yes, I filled the car." Older couple and they shuffled off out of earshot. I don't know what happened next. I think they had some kind of an understanding about misunderstanding. That's a cute couple who's been together for some time, and they've worked out the details of saying one thing when one of them means something else. If the guy was a Sagittarius, there would be problems this week. He'd get irritable because he discovered that she wasn't listening. The Sagittarius would get upset because he was misunderstood. There would harsh words. The good point is, apparently, she couldn't hear the harsh words which might be a Sagittarius uttering. All problematical. And some of this can be easily avoided. Loathe as I am to suggest it, if you're not talking to someone who is half deaf? Maybe shut our Sagittarius mouth long enough for us to listen to what's being said. Avoids confusion.

Capricorn: I confused Guacamole with English Peas. It was a natural mistake, simple enough, could've happened to anyone. Mashed green peas, to me, look like a guacamole. I don't even know where I was when it happened, I just have it in my notes, and then, I can clearly recall, me making a fool of myself, "Cool, guacamole, just need some chips." There are certain cultural differences that I celebrate. There are five distinct dialects just inside of Texas. The tamale line, basically every point south of Interstate Ten, is renowned for its variations of Tex-Mex, Mexican, or other regional cuisines. So I like the cultural differences. I suppose I must've been overseas, and I'll guess I was served mashed English Peas, and I'm sure I said something that made me look like a uneducated provincial (rube). It happens, and I usually don't have to travel as far. While I played this out, and while I got a genuine giggle from a couple of onlookers, it doesn't always happen that way. Look: you're tempted to pull a stunt like this. I'm not saying it won't work, but consider the odds of the joke being understood.

Aquarius: Embrace your inner (something). There, I just gave you the keys to the kingdom, just like black is the new black? You can start churning out T-shirts, coffee mugs, mouse pads, limited edition posters, and any other number of gimmick driven paraphernalia and product. Stuff to sell. No one has ever gone broke underestimating the

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American public. So there's an idea, and all you have to do is work up the details on the plan. Embrace your inner demon, embrace your inner adult, embrace your inner hooligan, the imagination runs wild with the possibilities. That's the suggestion, and, as usual, I'm asking for a mere 1%. No licensing deal is complete with a legal notice, too. But the plan is to get you to kick around an idea or two, maybe some up with the next big deal, and then capitalize on it. Get a place to print up a few t-shirts and see how the idea attracts attention, see what happens. Embrace your inner artist, then embrace your inner capitalist. There's a suggestion that one of these ideas really will take flight. I have confidence in your inner Aquarius. Embrace that and see what happens.

Pisces: I was in a casino. Not a place that I frequent, but I have Sagittarius Luck, and I do play some. Lose more often than not, so maybe this was a while ago, but I was thinking about this singular experience in a casino, with all the lights flashing, the bells ringing, the buzzers buzzing, and to be truthful, I think it's all background noise. More than just neon, there's the illumination of the games, and the way the inside of a casino never feels like it's any other time than high noon. Way it feels to me, anyway. There's a sense of hope that I feel like is peddled there, a sense that this next game, this next pull that next roll of the dice will be the big win. What are we going to do then? But never mind that now, you're on a little bit of a streak, up and down at the same time. Torn, as it were between a rock and a roll. With all the little planets on the opposite side of the wheel, now isn't a good time to gamble. But that's not the real hint, not what I was thinking about, it was more along the lines of a guy, looking at me, in that casino, "Hey, you know somewhere quiet around here?" Probably not. Which is the point. In a place that is marked by, known for, and expected to be noisy? Looking for a quiet spot? Pisces, with the ruckus in Virgo? Expecting a quiet spot? Not going to happen.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

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For the week starting: 8.14.2008

"How many things by season season'd are

To their right praise and true perfection!"

Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice [V.i.118-9]

Aries: Don't give into the illusion, especially when you know it's an illusion. There's a sense that you want to be fooled, you know, play the straight guy, play the unwitting fool, believe in the magic when you know it's all a trick? Another expression, another way I like see this kind of energy in Aries? "Oh look! Bright shiny object! I want it!" Lovely notion. Doesn't work. Great idea, just doesn't ramp up and run like it's advertised to do. I'm not saying that everything won't live up to you expectations, but I am giving you fair warning. Just because it's new and improved, is it really better? Just because it's all bright and shiny, does that mean it is something you must touch? Sure is tempting, isn't it? Are you sure?

Taurus: Ask yourself, "When was the moment?" There's a time, a place, a point wherein the the smallest of decisions makes all the difference. I stopped and bought a lottery ticket, one afternoon, and nearly a week later, I was at the lottery office, claiming my hundreds of dollars. So the moment that changes an issue, a situation, a valid turning point in life, the littlest, tiniest, most insignificant windows, there's one of those. Could be this afternoon, or maybe Saturday morning, I'm not sure. I could be sure by looking at individual Taurus astrology charts, but I am sure that there's that particular moment, fast approaching. The trick is the seize the moment, realize that this is the time for your Taurus self to act. The point of the point, the tip, the moment, you'll know when your stars align this week, the deal is, you have to grab it. Have to take action, make a move. Could be a big deal, like agreeing to relocate for employment. But I tend to think it's a much smaller action. It's just that the Taurus action is required. Might not even be a big deal. But it is.

Gemini: There's a local restaurant, looks over the Guadalupe, Comal, Blanco or Frio River. The multitude of streams -- this is the heart of the land with eleven hundred springs -- I can't keep the names straight. Or maybe, like the limestone that's the source for the springs, my memory might be a little porous. However mutable the memory is, doesn't stop this week's observation, a guy with a prominent Mohawk, riding along in one of the streams, in a tube, along with 100s of friends. It's just that the purple and brazen blue coloring, still spiked, that all stood out. Tubers are generally an intoxicated and ill-mannered lot, which makes dining at the restaurant overlooking the river that much more amusing. Folks riding in the river in the summertime, they tend to be water-alcohol-sun soaked. So a real Mohawk Hairstyle, that caught my attention. And a real

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one surviving a trip downstream? Even more so. Something sticks out this week. Pay attention. There's an image, scenario, a basic incongruity in your Life of Gemini. Embrace. Most important, don't be too shocked. It's not that weird.

Cancer: I was watching parents and children, doing whatever it is that parents and children do. I think it was out side of some shopping venue, but I can't recall exactly. I just remember, might've been a restaurant, that there was a kid, age between two and four years old, and the kid was barefoot in the summer heat. The parental figure just looked down, with muffled exasperation, "Where are your shoes?" The barefoot kid? "I don't have any!" Okay, any parent has been through this. Patience, societal mandates, real or imagined, it all plays into the problem of the barefoot child. Then too, there's the concern that the shoes were tossed, and, I'm guessing, they were a new item, recently. Arguing with a small child is like wrestling with a pig in muck. You only get dirty and sooner -- or later -- you figure out that the pig likes it. The kid was enjoying the interaction and the retracing of steps to find where the shoes were. Ask any parent, well, except mine, as I was sterling child, but a preponderance of parents have similar tales of trials and tribulations with offspring. The spawn of their loins. There's a certain amount of quiet resolve, a degree of acceptance and on some level, parental units must be amused by their children. That same well and reserve of patience and (figurative) breast milk is what is required, next couple of days. It's not really difficult, just, just, just I'm not sure. Me and that kid? We were amused.

Leo: I was with a comely lass, expected proportions, and she was shoe shopping. It's a sport I don't understand, but then, she's been with me in a sporting goods store, so it's about even. "Shoes, like fishing poles, never too many," she once explained, "and the reel? Shoes and purse, you know, go together." Makes sense, in terms I can understand. Shoes are like fishing poles, certain conditions require certain equipment. Explains why I was in the female shoe department with a date. Friend, anyway. She looked at a red pump with toe cleavage and a four-inch stiletto heel. The salesman, he looked at me, made some kind of male-bonding eye contact, and then, to her, he proffered the shoe and its box, "Try it on. For him," he said, with a nod towards me. What I wanted to say? "Dude. No way. Sandals or barefoot," but all I could do was blush. She arched her eyebrows slightly, her mouth curling into a suppressed giggle. As a Leo, you'll understand, birthdays and all.

Virgo: "I'm always afraid to sleep on an airplane," a Virgo was telling me. I don't get it. If there's a problem, it's not like a passenger on a commercial jet can do anything about it. If there's a need for an uprising of the passengers, I'm sure everybody would be awakened, so that's out, too. No, it doesn't make sense to me. But I'm one of those guys who can get on and fall fast asleep before the plane's ever left the terminal. Could be my bias, too. I'm freely admitting that it doesn't bother me, and the Virgo doing the complaining, it could be an underlying issue that I'm not prepared to deal with. Or something. Afraid that they'll miss out on something? Traumatized as a child? Or, what I'd like to think, worked over by Mars. And Venus and Saturn, all at the same time. The less time you spend analyzing, and more time spent doing, that's going to help. Realize, too, that this influence is still eaving you with a feeling that you're not gaining ground on the problem, but you are, you just won't be able to measure that forward progress yet.

But you might sleep easier by the end of the week. You might even be able to catch a quick nap on an airplane.

Libra: Mars enters Libra, over this weekend. It's sort of a nice thing, in a Libra way, since it Mr. Mars makes a little squawk before entering your sign. Sort of like he gets heated up and then slows down, worked up and then, in Libra, he mellows out some. He like the way Libra fits him. The problem is that Libra might not like the way Mars fits. Mars is all about activity and there will be an increase in activity. Pretty simple. From standing still, to moving, presumably in a forward motion, in the blink of a weekend. What important, as the weekend approaches, and before Mars arrives to heat up matters? Pick a direction. Goal, direction, method of delivery, pick that. Figure out what and where, make sure your aim is true, get the idea? The only real warning that comes with this, what I'd be mindful of? Consider that the route and delivery might change before you get to the Mars action. Don't pin high expectations on just one route, one way, one specified outcome. Mars does a little action before he gets to Libra and it could be like those computer driving direction, might want to check before blindly putting faith in you Mars orientation.

Scorpio: Don't give in to temptation, and especially, don't give in to the temptation to gloat. If you track that backwards, which not uncommon with my work, you can see that it means you've got a chance to gloat, and you're going to be tempted to take it. I'd suggest, I wouldn't tell, but I'd urge you to consider how it looks, that gloating when you should be shutting up. Bragging about a big win moments before you lose it on the last lap. Just when you can feel and taste victory, just when you're sure you have a momentous challenge suitably vanquished, just at the moment you're sure you on top? Just when nothing can wrong? Yeah. Can't say I didn't warn you. And to be fair, I'm sure, after this weekend is over? You get a chance to pull off the big win, just like I described. You're still going to win, but giving in to that all-too-human desire the gloat, brag, and rub your opponents face in your besting of the problem? Not yet. Wait until next week. Win now, brag about it later.

Sagittarius: Just really seems busier than it is. Easiest way to describe the Sagittarius life at this moment, just busier seeming than it really is. I can still fit you in, in the next week, though, if you write in now. That's part of what this week's about, planning, preparing, and adequate management of resources. Which leads us to looking busier than we really are. I get kind of frantic, and little overwhelmed with the inbound volume of work, and it's all a matter of settling down long enough to organize the needful, mindful problems in a reasonable order. Which can done. It's a matter of not getting excessively worked up about any single task. It will all work out. In good time -- on time. Like it is supposed to. It gets like this, see, I start to freak out because I didn't get the scopes back on Tuesday afternoon from the print shop, so I can't position them to run on Wednesday, although, technically, the scopes aren't live until Thursday, and see, they should have them back to me by Monday, and now what will I do on Sunday? The frantic mental game isn't one I can win. Realize that, by Thursday, I'll be better again, only, now I've got to start worrying about next week.

Capricorn: I'm not politically correct. I'm not going to be politically correct. I have no intention of pandering to whatever special interest group wants my attention, and gently

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stepping around issues so as not to earn the ire of a particular group, sub-group, or even one individual. I was coming back from an afternoon of fishing, hot summer's day, and I suggested we stop at a Wal-Mart to pick up some cold beverages, and I needed to replace a piece of equipment that was left in the lake, and there was one or two grocery items I wanted. On the south side, there is no afternoon shade, leave the windows down, hike a half-mile to the air-conditioned comfort of the superstore, and then, it's still another quarter-mile to the back corner where the fishing aisle is. Round trip is going to over a mile, easy, which means, even in our exultant but exhausted state, my buddy was starting to complain. Bitter complaints about the miles walked. First, to the back corner for fishing gear, with hunting specials coming up. Then over to groceries, on the other side, then back to look at something, and it was a workout, in and of itself. I think my buddy was complaining just to complain, though, more artful and less heartfelt than it really was. Capricorn, but who's counting? Are you going to be the laggard, dragging and whining the whole way? Or like me, mocking you, gently? Which will it be?

Aquarius: Ever notice that airline pilot uniforms haven't changed in a lifetime? I tend to shuffle around on commuter airlines only because it's less expensive and quicker for me. Easier, if you will. Most of the little planes have a standard policy, kind of hard to miss, that the pilots have to stand at the entrance/exit and say hello/good-bye. That's when I started to notice that the uniforms have been unchanged in style since, near as I could tell? Almost 80 years. That's a long time for a style to stick around. Flight attendants, those outfits have changed dramatically. From stylish to revealing and back to practical. I'm not an expert on clothing styles, but for one service industry to stick to just one style for so long, made me wonder. Always with the dark slacks, white shirts and a tie, usually, and maybe some epaulettes with a symbolic rank, sure, not much has changed. Some items are worth changing, and sometimes, like these days, especially for the Aquarius, there are points that really don't need to be addressed. Like the airline pilots, does anyone really care that they -- as a whole group -- might be fashion challenged? And does that really matter, as long as they drive the plane right? Does the cause merit Aquarius attention?

Pisces: One of my buddies was lounging, flipping through a catalog, "We got to get a bunch of this stuff and give it to the homeless people around here, think much fun it would be!" He's a little twisted, not really a Pisces, but that doesn't matter, the idea had merit in that what he wanted to do was donate a bunch of Elizabethan/Goth garb to the local population and see what they would do to spice up the action. Purely from an entertainment point of view. It's all largely idle conversation to fill the afternoon at a coffee shop, but it beats beer and cigarettes for entertainment. That might be part of what this is about, and then, too, there's the idea of dressing the myriad of mentally and swelling challenged people, in a specific period-type of attire, and watching what that does. Better yet, or the best idea so far? Instead of doing it? Just kick some ideas around.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 8.21.2008

"We came into the world like brother and brother;

And now let's go hand in hand, not one before another."

Shakespeare's The Comedy of Errors [V.i.436]

Aries: Good horoscopes sometimes read just like fortune cookies. Or sometimes, even bad scopes read that way. Not that I would ever stoop so low as to recycle a horoscope, or worse, the fortune cookie fortune, but there was one that rang true with me, just the other day, I tweaked with the moon alignment, and I came up with a similar point for Aries. "You will soon be aware of your growing awareness." Vague, plausible, insightful, and yet not destined to stir up any trouble. Which is the point. Be vague, plausible, and make sure your destiny doesn't stir up any trouble. Mars enters Libra -- opposite your fine Aries self. Mars stirs stuff up. All I'm suggesting is that you hew to that fortune cookie, bland, believable, and boring.

Taurus: I can promise you everything but the moon. I can't promise the moon. But I do have advice, about what to do about "everything but the moon," and I've researched this. Astrology, and by extension, its definition of correlating human behavior to astronomical measurements, I've delved into that, quite a bit. I patiently observed, again and again, what happens. I've found that the waning moments -- more like days -- of the ail-end of the moon's cycle, like this week, it's a good time to fish. As good a time as any. Better, really, than most. Now, the rest of the planets are shuffling, Sun moves into Virgo, MARS moves into Libra, there's still a pile of planets in Virgo, all of that is good. The moon cycle sucks, though, unless, well, have you thought about fishing this weekend? Whatever you're fishing for, a little patient effort might be well rewarded.

Gemini: Right before the new scopes roll over, like next week, which might seem like a terribly far time away from now, but right before the new ones roll up? That's the time. The moon will be a tiny crescent, waning into almost oblivion, visible through part of the afternoon sky, and for a Gemini? The time is ripe to strike. I wasn't thinking of a big hit, I was thinking more about a lazy hit, although, I've encountered few lazy Gemini. Other signs? Sure, but not a Gemini. With one exception. But that's a different tale. What's hot at the moment, like in the coming week before the next scopes roll up? What's hot, what's the idea? Get one "thing" into action. Move one piece, jostle one player awake. Less of a get out and motivate the whole crew, more along the lines of nudge someone with your bare toe, just sort of gentle kick to move something around. That's the idea. It's less about a full-on fishing trip and more like, well, I'll just a drop a line in the water here, see if anything bites. Don't be surprised if you score before the next scopes roll up. Weird.

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Cancer: "Did you know that, like, insurance, to get it, they do a credit check? What does my outstanding bills have to do with my driving?" I don't know. I'm sure there's a link in the scientific and actuarial tables, all updated and modernized by recent standings. Research, never can tell what those crazy scientists will come up with next, huh. I was listening to a client complain about some perceived corporate slight. Another invasion of the mythic Cancer privacy. Some weeks are like that. I'm not an advocate for either side of the question. The credit check, the insurance, the poking around in my private life, I'm not taking a stand in here, not now. I do have strong beliefs but I tend to keep some of my moral and philosophical musings to myself, or air such matters in another forum, oftentimes, of my own devising. But that's not what this is about, it's about the right way to express the cancer ire. Me? I'm a safe one to bitch to, as I'm not going to be a too judgmental, not as long as I'm on the clock. The caveat for the time being? What happens if it's not me, but someone else?

Leo: By the time the weekend arrives, the best Fixed Fire Sign (forever) birthdays are over. This year's regal birthday season draws to a close. Not all bad, just a little time when the finest fire? The attention starts to swing to other signs. "The Lesser Eleven," in the Leo Language. Not bad, either, as it's a time to figure a new direction for yourself. Or perhaps pick up an old thread and work at something you've wanted to work at, reinvent the Leo desire and direction. Or take a cat nap. It's a little on the strange side, these days, as there's nothing big that's pushing you around. That's good news, in a general way but the matter is, once the Sun exits the point in the sky that's officially marked for Leo? Then call it quits on the parties. I'm not saying it's bad, just that it's not the time to be out there, playing any more. A little quiet and possibly, a little reflection, that might be good for you.

Virgo: Happy birthday, many happy returns, your year ahead looks good. Let's have some cake. Fine, a little beverage, personally, I'd prefer a coffee instead of punch. I was thinking that, as a Virgo, and what with the portents of the planets, I was figuring that "go-juice," a caffeinated beverage, as an example, is a preferably libation for your birthday time. As opposed to, like, the Virgo with the four (double) Margaritas -- if you see me in person, I'll tell the tale, but it takes a few minutes, and oh, never mind. Stick to the caffeine, or the caffeinated-styled beverages. As the weekend cruises along, and as we get into the Virgo mind-party-frame-work? There's going to be that need for someone to act in a responsible manner. I know, birthdays are supposed to be celebrations, but what's going to happen? You're going to be called upon to act like the adult in come situation. This goes over better if you err on the side of being a little sober, a little more apt to deal with exigencies as they arise, better adapted to making rational decisions in an irrational time. Me and you? We can toast our coffee mugs.

Libra: Mars barrels into Libra, and this is going to result in? Full frontal astrology. Or better yet? Full contact astrology. Mars is all about activity, and the rest of the planets lag behind so this about activity -- seemingly -- bereft of direction. No Libra wants to wander aimlessly, hopelessly, all alone, in the dark, uphill, in the snow, both ways, without any assistance. That's what I'm here for, a good fishing guide to the your Libra stars. Mars pushes you. Pick one direction. Let Mr. Mars, you can almost feel his hand in the small of your back, urging, goading you in one direction. Take a few tentative steps in that direction. Pause, consider another direction. Consider the same destination, only,

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think about a different route to get there. Feel the Mars inspiration, feel the hand in the small of your back, trying to push one way. Think about my idea, my suggestion that you try an alternative route. Sometimes, you know, the shortest distance between two points is not the straight line. Don't hesitate to a longer, yet oddly enough, the more expedient route.

Scorpio: Mark Twain once observed, "The right word may be effective, but no word was ever as effective as a rightly timed pause." That's supposed to give your Scorpio self a big hint. Pause. Moon's sliding down into oblivion, the cosmic taskmaster (Saturn) is in Virgo, and the Sun is just leaving Leo. Mars is just entering the Tropical Zodiac Sign of Libra, a symbolic move in that it puts Mars in your Solar 12th House. Pause. Sometimes, a pause is louder than any amount of kicking, screaming and other attention-getting devices. I'm not saying that you're loud and obstreperous, noisome, and so forth, no, that's not what I'm suggesting. But I am going to point out that a rightly timed pause will speak volumes whereas opening your mouth will only confirm their worst fears. I can save you you the trouble, all I'm suggesting is that Mark Twain's advice be noted.

Sagittarius: I got a card the other afternoon, fished it out of the mail box. Money was enclosed. "You know them charitable organizations looking for donations, put these dumb greeting cards in their envelopes hopping to guilt you into donating -- never know what do to with them," and I think the dollars -- cash money -- that the person sent was a sign. A symbol. A token gesture, well-received and much appreciated, too, but it was the simplest of gestures. No, I'm not suggesting you rush and drop a \$20 bill in a card and mail to me. Nice thought, I'd love it, but I'm not pandering and panhandling now. That's not what this is about. This is different. It's about a symbol. Personally, if you do choose to give a "not for profit," lately, that seems to be the business model here, but no, I'm not asking for money. It's about a what that cash donation meant. What it was symbolic of, what it did to lift my (Sagittarius) spirits, and how that kept me going. Symbols, perhaps with an ironic twist? That just makes it even better. Enjoy the subtle symbolism as you unwrap something this next few days.

Capricorn: There's a Tex-Mex restaurant, right around the corner from me. Great food. Excellent cuisine. I'm not sure what the source of the meat or the flavorings is, exactly, but whatever it is, it is good. The single problem, a minor irritant, in the big scheme of life, but this one place, they charge for a basket of chips and some pretty underwhelming hot sauce. Which is weird, the usual hot sauce on the table is green, of the Jalapeno variety, and it is quite searing -- and equally important, tasty. Homemade. So the whole issue with chips and hot sauce is a non-issue at that one place Only, in my mind, since every other Tex-Mex, Mexican or tacqueria gives the chips away? It is an issue. Id create a scene, but I'm one of the few (pure) Anglo people I the place. I don't think a scene would do me much good, other than a few laughs. I'm left with a quiet sense that I'm being cheated. Not really, but sort of, in a weird way that doesn't make sense to anyone but me. Hence the problem. In Capricorn, it's the same, a perceived inequity. An issue that isn't really an issue, but it is. How much is this going to bother you?

Aquarius: A friend of mine, really, person with whom I've had a professional affiliation, when she was younger? She used to work in a bait store. Live bait. She discovered that she sold more bait wearing a bikini. That is, when she was wearing the bikini, she sold

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more bait, not bait wearing a bikini, although, for some of my friends, I'm sure that would be an enticement. No, it was the figure of a young and shapely lass, selling bait on a hot August afternoon, while she was wearing a bikini, which, in all honesty, might've been bait unto itself. But never mind that part now. It's about trial and error, and what does work. What doesn't work, and I'd like to suggest, in weird and roundabout way, that you should try wearing a bikini when selling live bait. Hot summer's afternoon, roadside just about anywhere, and this might not be politically correct anymore. Wh cares? It was a largely unregulated industry at the time, and might still be that way, to a certain extent. That was at a local lake, but it could be anywhere. Whatever you can do to tilt the odds in your favor? Do just that. Even if it involves dressing the bait in a bikini.

Pisces: The local place, around the corner from, one of several, the other morning, it was actually a weekend, they had a blackboard special, "Migas con ham." Way it read. Sort amused me, two languages running into each other and there is always the amusing kind of communication that results from the intersection of English and native Spanish. What's even more intrinsically amusing is the root source of "migas," which is an egg dish that didn't originate in Mexico, so it's not really a Mexican item, but more a home grown variation on a theme. Makes that sign even more ironic. Or amusing in a weird way. Or just weird. This isn't really about food, or the collision of cultures where I live, it's about perceptions, and what you do with those perceptions. There's a time to make a stand. This isn't a time to do that, not for my little Pisces friends. Amused and entertained? Sure. Make a pointed point about grammar, location, appropriateness, and so forth? Maybe not a good time to make a stand. I'm just saying, as they say.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 8.28.2008

"Forget this new-fall'n dignity

And fall into our rustic revelry

Play, music!"

Shakespeare's As You Like It (V.iv.125-7)

Aries: I was in line at a store, maybe a fast-food restaurant, I'm not sure. A fatherly figure, a young dad be my assumption, was overheard, "If you do it again I'm going to make you go sit in the car, all by yourself." And that's what I'm going to tell my Aries. If you're not good, you're going to feel the full wrath of my, the full wrath, well, of something. The full fury of wrath? Right, like I sound like a mean one, don't I? I can tell you're scared, right? You are, aren't you? Yes sir, that's me. Mr. Intimidation. I get a sense that this lost on most Aries, but the sense is you're dealing with an authority, like that kids and its dad. And the authority figure has the power to make you sit this one out, if you don't settle down Mars, followed by Venus and Mercury are leaning heavily on you. Just this once, when faced with a threat from a larger, taller authority, maybe heed that suggestion.

Taurus: I forget where I was going, or even the setting. I think it was a plane, but might've been a bus or a train. The attendant, a middle-aged male in a uniforms of sorts, he told me to relax in the fine Corinthian Leather seat, made from fine Corinth Leather from a slaughterhouse in Corinth, Texas. He drawled a might, as he spoke. I figure, poor guy, he's made that joke so many times, time and again, like three or four times in a single day, he must get tired of it. Not fun anymore. Running jokes like that, they are funny, for me, the first time I hear it. After the second or third time, though, it gets thin, then it's all nothing but annoying. Has to be a lot worse for the guy delivering the lines, too. Corinth, Texas is just outside of Ft. Worth. What I didn't know was the term, "Soft Corinthian Leather," was first used as a marketing term, when, in fact, the leather was a from a plant in Jersey. Which is a long way from Corinth, Greece and even further from Corinth, TX. Which brings this week's trivia session to a close. I'm kind of thinking, though, about that term, used, lost and reused, later? Corinthian Leather? Back, about thirty years ago -- roughly one cycle of Saturn -- an ad writer came up with a term that has lived on. Rue the day? Enjoy the late limelight? Either way, the message is clear about terms that used, then somehow become a part of the greater subconscious. Careful with the Taurus words, they could be repeated in, like, 30 years.

Gemini: I've found one the greatest crimes against humanity, in a general sense, is the action of inaction. Failure to act when all that is required is a simple action? Failure to do

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the right thing? Failure to lift a finger, much a less a whole hand, to help? When it the act of helping, sometimes is less than the trouble to avoid lending assistance? Stepping around a problem -- especially in the coming week -- causes more trouble than trying to avoid trouble in the first place. It's simple, really, it was easier for me to hold the door open for an older lady entering the same establishment as me, less trouble than dashing in and trying to cut her off. The way it worked, my simple act of kindness gained not only the elderly lady's approval, but as it turns out, she was meeting her daughter. Do the math, right age, that daughter, right looks, too. Added advantage, in the long range view, to know what she would look like in the future, the daughter. While my simple act of kindness was not predicated on prurient interests, that does serve to prove a point about how a simple act of kindness can be more beneficial than not acting nicely.

Cancer: I've been waiting, and I've yet to see -- better yet -- hear this: A Mariachi version of the classic, "Freebird!" Laugh if you will, I keep thinking some local musicians with a sick sense of humor will tackle Freebird with an accordion, strings and bass, and the clear vocals, the mariachi groups are arguably famous for. I just love the idea. Next time I'm in a Tex-Mex place, when the strolling musicians, either in true Mariachi outfits, or just a strolling band of older gentlemen in Guyabera shirts, either way, I'll offer five bucks for Freebird! I don't have my hopes up, though, although, the image is certainly worth the price. Now that I've thoroughly distracted you with the thought of Mariachi Band cranking up Freebird, consider some other distractions.

Leo: Leo dearest: You enter, and there's a table, and on this table, there's a bowl with fruit. Apples, oranges, peaches and bananas. I want you to pick one type of fruit, your favorite out of that group, and hold that image in your mind. Then, let's find out what this means. If you picked apples, it means you like apples; if you picked oranges, it means you like oranges; if you picked peaches, it means you like peaches; and if you picked bananas, it means you like bananas. Such a simple and obvious answer to a question. It's like a girlfriend, asking me a question about something, and I'm sure it's one of those trick questions. Leo, like me, you're sure this is a trick question, depends on the flavor and shape, and any other host of modifiers and related lore, about the fruit you pick. What it amounts to, though, is that it is a simple question, with an even simpler punch line. No tricks. It is what it is, no more, no less.

Virgo: In Mississippi, "Ministers of the gospel are excused from jury duty." That's the way I heard it, and that's the way the judge told me it was worded, and we both chuckled. I suppose, a high priest or rabbi, those wouldn't be excused, just "ministers of the gospel." Funny, no? It does reflect an archaic set of values that were born out of time when such legal guidelines were necessary. I'm sure a "minster of gospel" would have a difficult time finding someone guilty if it mean the death penalty, hence a moral obligation to find not guilty even in the face of overwhelming evidence. Which, I suppose, gets back to the original point of the of the comment and alleged law. I don't know I haven't researched the legal constraints of jury qualifications in that state. I upset people when I show up, "You're a what?" End of my jury eligibility. Jury duty is necessary, and it's an honor to serve. If the call comes, I suggest, unless you're really a "minster of the gospel," that you show up. And outside of that one state? Even minsters aren't excused. Probably not going to duck out on this, Virgo dear. Got some civic duty, just up ahead. And happy birthday.

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Libra: By the end of these scopes, Mars, Venus and Mercury will all be in Libra. Most important is Mars, Mars is a touchy planet. It's all how you handle this energy, that's what's so important. This never happened to me, so I'm making up a story -- purely fictional -- not reality at all -- but this little tale will illustrate Mars in all its flavors. Imagine that you're cruising down the freeway, and imagine that some jerk pulls in front of you, you slam on the brakes, coffee gets spilled, and you say many bad words. Then you give that brainless moron a certain salute. A one finger salute that effectively conveys irritation and poor choices on the recipient's part. Then, let's say, a few miles down the road, you've been waving at this person for a while, and you get off on the appointed exit ramp and that person precedes you and then this leads to a verbal altercation and the police wind up having to break up a fight. Maybe you get to spend a few hours in the city lock-up for an assault charge. That's Mars. Now, the obvious solution? Don't flip the guy off in the first place. Since that's going to be ignored advice? How about you don't follow him, continuing to honk and salute? That's Mars.

Scorpio: Route 66 is supposedly the "mother" road, as its history and the story of the US are intrinsically linked. The old Highway 66, and I've lived, at one time, almost at the very edge of the original route. Just odd, that. So Route 66 is the legendary and fabled "mother road." cuts across the northern edge of the Texas Panhandle. Around Amarillo, though, another road crosses it. The number is 87. The song is "87 Southbound," and it's tearfully, angry song about love gone awry and fits with the country music pantheon. What piqued my curiosity, though, was 87, south (or north) bound. From up past Amarillo, down to Lubbock, then San Angelo, San Antonio, then, eventually, to Port Lavaca, that's a mother road for Texas. 87 follows a diagonal line, from a not too major a population center, through hamlets and tiny towns, to a huge place and then back to miniscule villages to finally dead end at the beach. That's a mother road, cutting through some of the prettiest and most desolate country in the world. Prettiest, and desolate and in some cases, pretty desolate. As I was looking through your chart, I was thinking about the West Texas desolation, the rolling shoulders of the Hill Country, and, of course, fishing along the coast. And Scorpio, who seems to be forgotten at this moment. I figure, you're like, at the tip, or the top, or whatever you choose to call it, up in Texline, where 87 crosses into Texas. Remote, lonely country. Press on, because eventually: Scorpio winds up right next to the water. Where you wanted to be.

Sagittarius: I was an ex-pat Texan living in the southwestern state of Arizona, barely more than a territory. Lived out there for seven whole years, completing a university degree. Seven springs in the high desert. I saw the spring rains make that desert bloom exactly once. I thought about that, seven years out there, and one spring rain made the desert bloom. Just once in seven years. Long time. Not a lot of water, nor a lot of rain. The red rocks are pretty enough, and the big cactus that is imagined, it's really like that, for sure. But I didn't get to see it bloom but once. To be sure, it was an awe-inspiring visual image, the whole valley, rimmed with red cliffs and purple peaks, deep green carpet with scattered flowers? Very nice. It's a long, hot summer, still sort of summer, still kind of hot, and still, not a lot of rain. In the Sagittarius vistas and along the Sagittarius by-ways, there's going to be a rare bloom event. Like rain in the desert, that one time I saw it on Arizona. I've seen variation on this many times over, here in my native Texas. The late summer crops are just hitting, and there's still another round of

winter hay. Like that single summer in Arizona, though, there's a simple point that hits soon enough. It's a bright spot. Makes us realize how happy we should be about the green.

Capricorn: Would you like a quick glimpse into your future? Want to know what's happening in a about 6, maybe 8 to ten ten weeks? In Capricorn? With Capricorn? Around and to Capricorn? That's what this weekend and the next couple of days, even after that, that's what this is all about. It's like a little, quick preview, sort of like a trailer for a movie? Like those previews, the ads on YouTube and Google Video, at the movies, and even on TV? That's what this is about? There are rare snippets of your future, small clues, hints, juicy parts, and the best part? The 'almost but not quite' ultimate scene? You can see it now. That's what this is all about, too, just quick shots at what the next 8 to ten weeks will hold. There's a problem, too, and I know I've bemoaned this point in the past, but it's even more apparent now. Ever notice that the trailer for a movie is sometimes better than the movie itself? That's what I would worry about, if you have to have something to worry about, that the movie trailer, the quick clips that are supposed to define your coming months? Want to make sure you're not getting all the best parts now. Like those movie trailers.

Aquarius: Take a step back before you plunge head-long into a new project. I know, it's supposed to be a good time to start something fresh, but I'm wondering about that, just a little. I guess it depends on how far back you step. Are you jumping back three, six, even a dozen paces to get a good (panoramic) view of the situation? Or are you just leaning back a little, like us old people, trying to find that focus range for weak eyes, but too proud to wear reading glasses? Sort of a tough call, is it far enough back to get a real, clear and full coverage image of what is happening? Or are you just trying it out to see if you can get a quick focus on some fine print? See? The trick is to step back a dozen paces. Saturn and the Sun align, briefly, and that means it's time to use that to get a more full image of what it is that you're working on. Working with. Working for. Get a better, over-all image. Doing so makes it a lot easier to map out want direction you want to take next. Me? I used a Google Map (image) of a favorite fishing hole, and in one picture, I could see there was an underwater drop-off. Didn't show up otherwise. See? Aquarius overview, grand scale.

Pisces: The fast-approaching Sun and Saturn alignment is like a little weight on the gentle and delicate Pisces soul. Poor dear. There, there. Well, that's about all the sympathy I can muster at this moment, although, let's be honest, I was trying. Pretty hard for the Pisces. And this isn't all about feeling oppressed, down and out. But that sure feels like the way it feels at this moment, and I can't change that. You do have my sympathy, to a certain extent, but alas, I'm about the only person who will genuinely feel sorry for you these days. Watch the eyes, listen to the tone of voice, and you'll hear that patently false tone, "Oh, we're so sorry," and it's more like the person is just reading a cue card, and not doing a good job of reading the cue card at that. With Saturn on the opposite side of the wheel, there's a heaviness, in your soul, in your bones, in the every day interaction with people, and that's what feels like it is dragging you down. Now, if a person, or a place, or most likely, an inanimate object that has emotional attachment is present, and maybe, you've thought about this, it's time to let go of the weight? I'd consider the Sun/Saturn alignment, fast approaching, that's a good time to let it go.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 9.4.2008

"Great floods have flown

From simple sources; and great seas have dried

When miracles have by the greatest been denied."

Shakespeare's All's Well That Ends Well (II.i.144-6)

Aries: It's kind of cool, right after sundown, you can see Mars/Venus/Mercury, all lined up close, like. So I think it's cool and the sight doesn't last long because shortly after the sun sets, the planets set, too. I only wish, as fast as the sun sinks into the western horizon, I could sink your troubles with the planets. I can't fix that. I can warn you to not freak out, not get riled up without cause, and not to panic unduly. I have at least one Aries who will contact me and point out that their problem warrants undue panic, consternation, blame-storming, and more. I'm tired enough already, and you have to ask yourself, does the cause of the consternation really warrant that much theatrical output? The planets are symbolic of excessive pressure being applied to your psyche. How you react? That's up to you. Instead of reacting, though, how about taking calculated steps in a methodical manner to get around, through, or otherwise deal with the obstacle? Just a thought.

Taurus: I was thinking about the relative position of Jupiter and Saturn, loose earth trine, and how Taurus fills out that triangle -- while I was in the shower. Maybe you're different, me not being a Taurus or anything, but I do like Taurus, but that's not important here, what I was thinking about? I squeezed two squirts of shampoo onto my palm. Lather, rinse, then, because the conditioner is running low, I only used part of one squirt from that. If the bottle was closer to full, I'd be more liberal with it. When the bottle is new, I'm indiscriminate. As it goes down, I use less and less. Same with, like toothpaste. New tube? Coat the toothbrush. As it gets used up, I get to where I just use a dollop, then whatever tiny amount I can squeeze out of the tube. What does this have to do with Saturn, Jupiter, and all the rest of the planets? It's about emotional decisions versus logical decisions. I'm a good example, I don't think twice, when that toothpaste tube is new and full, I just squeeze out a two-inch strip, doubled back on itself. As supplies on hand dwindle, I get more watchful. By the end of the supplies, I'm positively miserly. Tight to a fault, even. These are strictly emotional colorings to decisions that I make, on a daily basis, how much of what to use. It's like, maybe in food terms, when there's a whole carton milk, just use all you want but as it nears empty, we start to conserve. See: there's an emotional coloring, a purely irrational system that you've been employing, like me with the shampoo or toothpaste, and now is the time look at correcting this process of yours. Or not, but at least acknowledge it.

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Gemini: I sat down three, now four, times to write this scope. I got up to get more coffee. I looked at the trash, mental note, need to take it out. I sat back down. I got up to go to the bathroom, then came and sat back down. Then I did get up for coffee, one more time, and I thought, might as well, and I took the trash out. Then I sat back down after throwing the garbage in the dumpster. Then, one more time, I got back up to put a plastic bag in the garbage can. That's a lot of avoiding writing a horoscope. What I was trying to figure out was a perfect metaphor for Gemini, all about how to avoid avoiding stuff. Focus. Stick to the issue at hand. Do what is right in front of you. Don't do like I did, up and down a half-dozen times, trying to get motivated to suggest you avoid doing what you need to do.

Cancer: I didn't think I would be "surfing shade" in mid-September, but here it is, the nominally the beginning of a fall season, and I'm still sweating like -- descriptive phrases have been removed for the sake propriety. But I was, just the other afternoon. "Surfing Shade" is when, as I walk along the mean streets of this town, I tend to stick to shaded, tree-lined streets and I angle from one sidewalk to another, endeavoring to keep myself covered with shade as much of the way as possible. In the afternoon, late afternoon, especially, this is easy with tall, downtown buildings casting deep shadows. Sort like an urban canyon-land. Maybe not so much, but it works for me. However, it's still summer-like, almost at "oven-roast" conditions still, and I'm still surfing the shade in the afternoon, trying to keep my cool. Which, call it what you want, that's what a good Cancer should be doing. Avoid the harsh sunlight. Avoid the harsh stage lights too, these days. Matter of fact, borrow my angled way of walking and make an effort to stay out of the way of obstacles, problems, or publicity. Sometimes, the general public finds you but sometimes, you can sort of follow my path, and avoid them, just like I was avoiding direct sunlight.

Leo: It was a good sign in a Tex-Mex place: we don't accept any bills larger than a \$20. I'm not sure if it's the fraud factor, or, more likely, they don't want to keep too much cash on hand, readily accessible to robbers. Tough neighborhood, one of the places I'll go for lunch, but probably not for dinner. Again, that could be me, too, just trying to err on the side of caution. That sign, it's not something I typically see in a restaurant, but it is symbolic. Hand-lettered, probably been a problem at one time or another, hence its presence. I didn't have a \$100 bill on me, so I couldn't test the sign to see if that was really true. Although, from me, they probably wouldn't have taken it. Way it goes, some days. Now me? I do accept hundred dollar bills. But this isn't about what I will or want accept, it's more about how to divine the inner workings of magical restaurant, perhaps it's a dive, and what can be used to tell the truly superior places from the places that are just okay. Something like that hand-lettered sign? Good indication. Why is this important? Sometimes, the less expensive avenue is better.

Virgo: "I'm the difficult one," the little Virgo announced to me. Yes, yes you are the difficult one. And there's a tremendous amount of pressure cooking in Virgo land. Birthdays, have a good time, enjoy yourself. Saturn, a terrible and heavy (cosmic) weight, dragging you down. Makes you the difficult one for sure. Can't decide whether to fish or cut bait, to drag out the oldest trope I've got. But I wouldn't be worth my name if I didn't have a direct, simple and easy answer to the age-old conundrum, "Fish or cut bait?" I have an answer. This week? Cut bait. Simple. I can get into a long and detailed

analysis, or I can just call it simple and straightforward: cut bait. Ain't no fishing inveled, not yet. Got to prepare. Which is what my answer is all about.

Libra: There was this one Libra, I knew a while back, and while she was good about putting herself together, out in public? The times she looked the best -- to me -- was in the morning. First thing. Hair all messed up on one side. The over-sized T-shirt hiked up a little. The sleep-head shuffle. The gentle smile, then the "Don't look at me," comment. It's a matter of perceptions, points-of-views, and how we all got to this discombobulated state in the first place. Me? I live like a monk, so this a soi-disant expression from a long time ago. My youth. The idea, though, is that looking unsettled, with clothing and arms akimbo, that's not all bad. Hair disheveled? Again, not a problem, considering the context. As the planets visit upon your gentle Libra head, as these planets foist some harsh energies, consider what the sight looks like to us. It's really not all bad at all. May not be the image you had in your mind, but it's good one -- to the rest of us.

Scorpio: I've gotten to the point where I ask, in a gentle manner, a lot of questions. So I was in particular chain of coffee shops, and I was asking the person taking my money, "What's the best one you've made so far?" She quizzical for a moment, then she had an idea, "Pumpkin Spice Peppermint Blueberry Cream Frappuccino," she paused, long pause, "with whip." I was left speechless at that one. "Tasted sort of like cough syrup, you know?" Some days, I ask questions that maybe I don't really want answers for, and that begs another question, was she really reporting a drink ordered and made, or was she just winding me up a bit? I asked her birthday when I regained my composure, and she told me to guess, "10/31." "Wow, how did you know, I'm 11/2." Still a Scorpio, still the piercing look, and still, I don't know, was that a real drink or not? Me? I got a double shot of espresso on the rocks, my summer favorite. Cold and bitter. I'm also sucker for Scorpio tricks. I still don't know if it was a real beverage or a joke. As a good Scorpio, maybe, unless you're that one I know at the coffee shop, maybe keep the rest of us guessing. Was that a real drink or were you testing me?

Sagittarius: I made comment about Sagittarius, one in particular, and I was suggesting that she watch it, as I didn't want her "Float off course," in the context of the conversation, it made perfect sense. One of her friends showed up, Gemini, not that it matters, and with typical Gemini wit, "Float off course? Kramer's already on the raft, pushing away from the dock!" Cute pair -- which means, I was left without a lot to say to the comment on my comment. I tend to not try to top the Gemini, but this isn't about Gemini, this is about Sagittarius, and while I might be on the raft, pushing away from the dock, or I might be adrift someplace, falling way off course, that doesn't mean that every SAgittarius has to follow my aimless directions. Stay on course. Don't float off a little. When poking around, say, in a fishing boat, it's good to noodle around some. But with Saturn and the Sun frisky in Virgo, make a sincere effort to stay on course, not floating along like me.

Capricorn: The full moon is about ten days away. By the time it arrives, you're going to be back in gear, back up to speed and you will have some fresh ideas, ready to harvest. Is it that bad right now? Not really. I know, a few of you are complaining about how tough it is, but really, it's not that bad. I do have a Capricorn friend, and she does like to botch and moan, but someday, like this week, I wonder if the complaining is more for show and

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less for actually reporting on infirmities, ills, chills, similar valid complaints. Jupiter turns around this week, but it might take a few days to get kicked back into Capricorn gear. Saturn and the Sun align briefly and then there's the mess in Libra-land. All of this serves as the point where movement originates. This is the beginning, not the end. Think about it like that. If you must complain, as befits your style, make sure it's entertaining. I mean, really. Ya'll just don't have that much to bitch about that can't be fixed in the coming week to ten days.

Aquarius: In one camp, I have a growing sense of anticipation, like anticipating something good. In another (Aquarius) camp, I've got a gnawing sense of doubt and frustration. Which group are you going to fall in with? Which side of this line do you want to be on? Which group is more appealing? Valid questions concerning your outlook, and after all. That's what this is all about. It's really all about you. You get to pick and choose which side you want to play. You can make a choice, render up a decision, and you get to pick. Happy or sad. Pick careful, as the outcome is not guaranteed, but the prospects are good, if you choose wisely. Which would you rather be? Happy or sad? Mars/Venus/Mercury, those three form a rolling air conjunction, if you have to know, and I'm sure you want to know. That means, you get to pick. /i have one Aquarius buddy, and I'm sure he's going to say, "No good will come of this." In his example? First, he's right, no good will come for him, but second? He's sometimes happier being miserable. Whatever makes you happy, just choose.

Pisces: I've wondered what I should be called, a "journeyman roving idle swimming fishing guide astrologer with a penchant for Elizabethan literature?" Or raving, I could be called raving lunatic. There's just sense that if we tie together enough descriptive phrases, we can arrive at a definition to fit, say, someone like me. Or like your Pisces self. In an increasingly fragmented society with labels on everything -- and everybody -- I'm wondering what demographic you're going to use to define yourself. This week this moment. Might change later, but just how many labels are you going to require to get every important facet covered? Pisces are nothing if not adaptable, and that's part of the problem trying to tie you up with just one word, one phrase, that doesn't work. Get an idea, get plan together, though, as the message in your stars is all about working out that label, that word, that collection of phrases that defines you, as an individual.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 9.11.2008

"Now is the time of night

That the graves, all gaping wide,

Every one lets forth his sprite,

In the chruch-way paths to glide."

Shakespeare's a Midsummer-Night's Dream (V.ii.10-13)

Aries: We were in some mighty "skinny water," fishing. Boat was anchored, albeit, more for show than as a real need to keep us from drifting, and I was cutting bait. My buddy hooked a nice-sized Black Drum, and this fish -- smart fish -- had (obviously) been hooked before. As he got the fish closer to the boat, that fish dashed under the anchor line. My buddy wrestled him out. The fish did it again, back under the anchor line, and finally, on the third pass, the fish came unzipped. That had been some mighty tasty cut bait, too, as I was chopping up dead fish. Like sushi, only, without the rice. My buddy was about to get all upset. I just calmly pointed out that sometimes, the fish have to win. He lowered the fish pole in his hand, he was less philosophical than I, but he was getting to where he could see my point. More of my fresh cut-bait, and there was another hook-up. All but forgotten. Except by me, and only as an example of the three planets in Libra, and what they can do to you. How you can get all worked up over an issue and how you can easily forget a recent loss, and how, someone like me, can remind you. Or gently chide you about the loss. It's reminder, though, that sometimes, a loss is really win.

Taurus: While, with Aries (see above) I was actively cutting bait, that points to a question. And possibly an answer, when the expression, "Fish or cut bait" is bantered around. In the Taurus slice of the heavens? Cut bait. Fishing isn't so hot, although, right after the full moon, there's about a two-day window that's kind of good, but as a rule? This is a time that is all about cutting bait. Not about fishing. Fishing implies speculative action whereas cutting bait is less about speculation and more about preparing for action. That's the simple message, get the Taurus (something) in order because you are soon going to be doing (something). I left the spot blank since I'm not sure what's going to fill in the blanks. That's unknown as to how it plays out in everyone's chart. So back to the example, "Fish or cut bait?" Clear answer, for Taurus: cut bait.

Gemini: I ran into a client in the mall. I was at an Apple store, not like I hang out in malls, cruising around, looking for babes. Not me. Not my style. As I walked out, I encountered a client, who is also a fan. Hi Gemini! She wanted my opinion on something that was, as near as I could tell, not really astrological. More like a "guy" opinion. Of which? I've got

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plenty. So it was into a big department store and over to the shoe section to look at some strappy things. Her and the sales guy got into an animated discussion, then he showed her a red pump with a stiletto heel. "Here, just try it on, you know," sales guy nodded at me, "for him." I should try poker. I kept a straight face. If I could wiggle my eyebrows, I would've. I think she did try them on, but she's not a person in heels much, if at all. Practical Gemini, practical footwear. It was a moment of fun for us. Not serious. And it was fun to see the salesman read the situation completely wrong. Not an item, not going to be, just a casual observer. In his shoes, though, I would probably say the same thing. Don't rush into assumptions. The relative position of Mars/Venus/Mercury in Libra versus Neptune in Aquarius makes you able to intuit a lot of facts correctly. Or wrongly. Like that salesman.

Cancer: I was reeling in a fishing line that felt like it had a little something on the end. As I pulled the weight and hook closer, I could see that telltale blue of a crab. A plain, sky-blue crab had a single claw wrapped around some old, dead bait. I pulled it into the boat, the crab. It was funny, to me, to see this guy -- its carapace was about a half-foot across -- once that crab dropped to the bottom of the boat, it raised its wee pincers and clacked them at me, in a menacing manner. I poked at the crab with my foot, in a sport sandal. "You won't tease the crab if he gets you toe," my buddy admonished me. I wasn't too scared. That crab was a science project for a few moments. The way it was shaking its pincers at me, opening and closing them, little beady eyes on stalks, blinking in the sun's glare at the bottom of the boat. We got back to fishing and that crab became bait soon enough. Those menacing pincers, the tiny little claws clacking at me? Bait. Caught a Drum on it. It's like this: you can be the fisherman or the bait, but I'll warn you, no one ever feels sorry for the bait. Menacing or amused? Cancer? It's your call on how to act and react.

Leo: I was looking at a catalog. In it, there was an image of female wrist, palm up, with what looked like a small alligator clip on the end of a small rod. It was advertised, I had to read the material, as a device to assist in the putting on of bracelets that usually required a second hand. An alligator clip on the end of the telescoping pole? It shows my age and orientation, since I took one glimpse at that picture and immediately thought, "Roach Clip." Which, if it was sold as such, might be illegal. And it also might show something about my background, nefarious as it might be. Which is why I tend to live like a monk these days, but that's a different issue. The roach clip was an idea, and maybe some marketer got it worked out, or maybe, somebody's mother was using a roach clip to fasten her bracelets with. I don't know. I'm never sure which idea comes first. This isn't about too much time in Austin, either. For the Leo, it's about how you can adapt and get something done, all by yourself. There are days when if it's meant to be, it's up to me. And this what this about. Like using a roach clip to fasten a piece of jewelry, all by yourself. Yes, we all agree you should have minions, but they're in short supply this week.

Virgo: "There's a place in San Antonio with the best homemade salsa and handmade tortillas. I was trying to remember the name of the place," was my introduction. My Virgo friend rolled her eyes in apparent exasperation. Which place? That description could fit just about every Mexican, Tex-Mex, Tacqueria or even a local burger place in the area. Think there's even an Italian place that could fit that description. Which is why

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I used that as a lead-in. General enough to be safe, yet, it also shows that I was attempting to connect on a local level. It's also a cheap shot. Just about every place has homemade salsa and tortillas. It's like a little test, are you really local or not? True natives get the test, and they will answer appropriately. Suppose you get tested, too. How are you going to answer? This is one of those questions that begs, I mean it just begs for an exasperated Virgo answer, "Which one?"

Libra: "I partied with girls from Ft. Worth." Line from a song. Or stage banter from a local musician. I know the girls from Ft. Worth. Probably not the same as the musician, but the inherent feeling is the same. Wild women. Or used to be. I'm over that now. Ft. Worth is just another whistle stop on this train of life, another layover in the airport of life, just another pause in the play. Still, there's something about it. Ft. Worth is distant enough to be exotic, foreign enough to strange and yet familiar. I'd toss one more element on top that equation, Ft. Worth, locally, represents the change from civilized Dallas to the wild and wooly West. Cross the line and between the two and that's the exact moment where the "West" begins. Those are real bad girls, or real good girls -- or strong-willed and independent women. Call it how you like. They are fun. Libra needs a little fun injected into their life. And Libra can quit taking some statements so serious. Quit worrying about little details. Like, that one singer, he was hoping the girls from Ft. Worth would chase him down again. Probably not going to happen. Be a little more like them "girls from Ft. Worth," however your Libra self like to define the term.

Scorpio: Straight up, strict, structuralist astrology? I got nothing for Scorpio. Full Moon, fifth solar house, no, got nothing. Little tweaks to the basic nothing, though? There's a lot of little matters that could use some Scorpio attention. Little matters that do not involve taste. Like building a house, or better yet, a Scorpio mansion. A Scorpio castle. Not a castle in the air, not a sandcastle that crumbles with the next tide, no, that's not it. Building a real structure, a Scorpio special something. This is a good time, well nigh on excellent time, to be pulling together that foundation. The material that you will conceive, collect, collate, and correlate into the bigger (Scorpio) picture. Consider this a Scorpio construction project, and this week, it's all about laying a solid foundation. Gathering material. Leveling the ground. Getting the tiny parts and pieces pulled together. It's not about making aesthetic decisions about what color to paint the bathroom. Straight up, none-beautifying points.

Sagittarius: My favorite little Sagittarius brothers-in-arms, really, more sisters than brothers, but who's counting? Anyway, my little brothers and sisters, all of the Sagittarius clan? The Sagittarius Army? We're facing some daunting odds here. Not really, but it sure feels that way. I'm guessing, I'm not sure, but I'm willing to jump out on a limb here, and that limb has to do with career advancement. Yeah. Stop thinking about yourself all the time and consider your position, the Sagittarius Army position, in the grander order of life. We're just a piece of the cosmic wheel, not any better (although I'd like to think so) than the rest of the signs. Which is where the influences fall -- consider ourselves as pieces in the greater puzzle.

Capricorn: I got a weird e-mail from a client, just some pictures of foreign travel, along with a short note. The note explained that there was a picture of this client on top of an elephant, and that the elephant had kicked my buddy off, four times. In a row. Landing

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my buddy in the water. Must've been terrible experience. Could required years of therapy for Elephant Aversion Syndrome. Or something. Or, we can just look at the planets. Mars/Venus/Mercury in Libra, makes a tough angle to Capricorn. It's like that elephant, probably not a Capricorn-friendly animal, and how to deal with its problem? Like my buddy did. Apparently, the fifth time? Managed to get a good ride out of that critter. Get back up on whatever just kicked you off. Might take a try or two, but it will be good. Four times. Fifth was a charm.

Aquarius: The place offered "croquet chicken." All I could figure was it was chicken that was killed with a croquet mallet. Nothing else made any sense to me. Judging by the comments, though, that wasn't the case. I'm not in favor of killing chickens with croquet mallets, in fact, I prefer free range chickens, and I much prefer all-natural, free-range chicken eggs. Which, if you've ever chased chickens around the yard, you'd understand why I thought whacking them with a croquet mallet might be a better idea. I was also thinking about this in terms of all the little air material lighting up your chart. Then I thought about a certain Aquarius, riding, I don't know, maybe an ostrich -- or emu -- and herding chickens in the yard, like a cowboy, only with chickens. What does this have to do with air? Everything. From the thinnest of comments, I've managed to spin up a whole image, even a collection, of images of saddling up big birds and playing polo with smaller birds. Al because I didn't understand what a term meant. While my illusions might be amusing, and pretty much harmless, I'd be a little more circumspect with your own, Aquarius illusions and delusions. Unless, of course, you're going to be riding herd on free range chicken.

Pisces: I was wearing one of my bolo ties. The artist who designed the sculpture -- I've got several -- one is a longhorn and the one I was wearing? It's a wolf. Could be a dog, could be a wolf, could be a coyote, which, at the time I got it, was what I wanted it to be. Not what it is, though. I was doing a reading and the person I was reading for -- Pisces -- looked curiously at the bolo. "That your totem animal?" No, not really. Why I liked the coyote as a totem animal, but no, that's not mine. The coyote is a survivor, nominally a carnivore, but carrion, animal, vegetable, or even mineral will do. And white man's trash is some of the tastiest pickings for a coyote. That's one adaptable critter. Which, given where the planets are? That's the right mode for a Pisces. I'm not saying that you're going to spend the rest of your life looking like a mangy, run-down, bottom-feeding carnivore that will take advantage of whatever food stuff happens to fall in its path. Wrong idea. But being adaptable, lithe and quick on your feet? That's a good totem for the moment. Remember, as a Pisces? Next week you can choose a different animal.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 9.18.2008

"My love's/More rich than my tongue."

Shakespeare's King Lear [I.i.62-3]

Aries: In South Texas, it's not cooled off. There was one morning when some coastal clouds threatened rain, and the southerly breezes made it feel almost like fall. Sort of. Not really, but almost. Close, but not quite. It's also been a little cooler. Not so much as to really count or notice, but the cooler weather -- cooler weather is a relative term -- makes it feel like there will be a break to the oppressive summer heat. I can well imagine that this is what it feels like in Aries, too. Waiting to catch a break, any kind of a break, and that's really what this message is about. It's about taking what signs you can see, and doing your best to see them as positive influence. Is it really a few degrees cooler? Was there really a hint of rain? Was that moisture in the clouds really going to run into rain? Or was it all a hoax, a cosmic joke by the weather, just to make us feel secure? Hurricane, threat or problem? It's all a guessing game, but how you react to the stimuli, that's the point. The coming Fall Equinox marks a turning point in the calendar and a similar turning point for Aries.

Taurus: I get the impression that that there's a self-help book for everyone. I only wished I could write it. Or write one that's a big-seller. Then I could do the book-tour, get paid lots of money and help a greater number of people. But I'm not able to come up with help for my own life, so I don't know that I can come up with anything for other people, as well. I was thinking about the self-help book metaphor because there was this one book, and I thought it was pretty sad, nothing but recycled self-help material, nothing new, and not even artfully presented. But that one book helped a friend of mine. He was walking around, touting this as the greatest realization he'd ever made. I flipped through the book, sampled some of the style, got nauseated, and I skipped it. But it helped my buddy. Changed his thinking. Changed his way of seeing everything. It changed his life. That sorry, no-count, oor-excuse for a self-help book? This isn't about any specific book. I always figure it helps to start with a blueprint about life, what a natal astrology chart is about, but that's my bias, clear and simple. And it was my bias that called my buddy's life-saving self-help book crap. What's going to work, though, for gentle Taurus friends, these days? Skip common wisdom and what the masses say. Just because I don't like a book for ethical and aesthetic reasons? Doesn't mean it's not good for your Taurus self.

Gemini: I was watching a friend of mine give her cat a pill. Wasn't easy. Having performed in a similar capacity from time to time, myself, I understood. Which is also why I was observing and not participating. I'm not suggesting that there's a bitter pill for Gemini to swallow. I'm thinking more about my old cat and how she would eat around the pill that was carefully concealed in her favorite food. Which only meant that I had to

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shove the pill down her throat which only meant that I had to question why I never had her claws pulled out. All of this was going through my mind as I watched my friend stroke, pet, "scritch," then grab and pop a pill down the cat's gullet. One smooth move. I don't think I could do the pet and coddle then, once the pet's confidence is gained, hog-tie, pry open the mouth with its fangs, and administer the medicine. Don't see that happening, not me. I was thinking about cats and medicine, though, as a way to get through Gemini. Bitter pill? Maybe one you have to administer? Consider my friend's motions, unperturbed, unexcited, just swift and sure. If you can gain their confidence? And then shove it in? Goes much easier.

Cancer: I've just got one simple way to explain how this feels, see, ever think of the right smart-ass, ironic, in-your-face, comeback or retort? After the person has walked away? Like about two minutes later? Just after they've humiliated you? Then you think of the perfect response? Yes, that's what this is all about. Between the Moon and Mercury, you're stuck. You do think of the best way to answer that comment or action, that disparaging remark that needs a smart-aleck answer? Only, because of whatever planet you want to pin this on, that answer doesn't pop into your head until it's too late. They've walked away, left, out of ear-shot, whatever. Save it. There will come a time when you can use it. Maybe, just maybe, you're being saved from taking a bad situation and making it worse by making your ill-timed retort. Perhaps it's better if they don't hear it. Doesn't stop that frustrating sense of inequity, but justice will be served. Eventually.

Leo: 'Oh dear lord, I can't remember today, am I the good one or the evil one?' It was a client, trying to make the most of bad situation. I'd have to agree, and I thought it was rather amusing. But then, I'm easily amused on some days. It was one of those situations that there was no right answer. No really wrong answer either, but I'm sure, who ever was on the receiving end of the Leo behavior was going to call it all evil. Even though it wasn't really evil at all. I thought it was good. And that's this week's conundrum for the fine Leo crowd. Good one or bad one? I'll guess it depends on where you're at within the moment, but I tend to think it's all good. Although, the recipient might not agree with us. That's also not what matters. While last week was all about not having enough minions, this week is all about how you motivate your minions. I tend to think of the Leo crowd as the good one, all the time, except when being the bad one is better.

Virgo: I was running low on postal stamps. One of the superstores, one of those places where they sell coffee and sundry groceries by the pallet? They had a deal. It had a roll of 100, stamps were one or two pennies off. That means, to buy a roll of 100 stamps, I'd save one dollar. I didn't really need anything else, so I had to think about it. Borrow a car. Fill the car with gas. Drive maybe a dozen miles round trip. To save either one or two dollars? Does this make sense? I'm at the post office several times a week, pick up the mail and sort through the offers, like, I might be a winner, or that company who keeps insisting that I've won a new Mercedes-Benz. Some restrictions apply, I'm sure.

Libra: I was sitting outside a coffee shop. A young couple walked by, made inquiries about food and libation and then opted for a place a little further down the street. They weren't interested in beer or wine, nor the gods' elixir: coffee. Nope, they wanted tequila. Margaritas. Good ones. "The kids are with his parents for the afternoon," the wife (or girlfriend) was explaining. "So where are the margaritas best?" He finished her thought.

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She nodded. Another guy nodded and started explaining the choices in the neighborhood. I'm not saying that tequila is the best way to go. I'm not sure, I'm not much of a drinking man these days. But perhaps an adult hour, or an adult indulgence, or perhaps, just parking the kids with the parents, an ultimate revenge for both parties, all three, really, maybe something like that is called for. The couple, their first choice was closed, it being a Monday, but that didn't mean the Tequila expedition was sunk. Far from it, the attempt at pleasure just got a little more exciting. If at first it doesn't work out? Consider there are many options. Perhaps some random sampling of whatever you like is called for.

Scorpio: "Man, she was just mean as rattlesnakes." Buddy of mine, I was sitting in the front seat of a truck, he was driving, and while I forget, I think we were headed out to fish. The way I recall that one comment. I wrote it down, not like I haven't heard it before, just in the context, it was funny. And deadly accurate. Problem being, if you're not too careful, you're going encounter just such a person, mean as rattlesnakes, coming up. You're primed for such an encounter. The problem being, the point is, that the people who are just mean as rattlesnakes? They can be just as much of an inconvenience as a rattlesnake. Pit Vipers in the New World tend to be poisonous, but not fatally so. Huge inconvenience, though. Rattlesnakes themselves have a reputation of being angry, too. They strike just out vengeance and attitude. Just plain mean. Deadly? Not so much, and not a lot these days. But a miserable pain. And mean, at times. Same way some of us deal with rattlesnakes is the way you deal with the next few days, step gently, listen for a telltale buzz, and try not to get bit. I'm not sure I should mention that a handgun is handy, as well.

Sagittarius: I'm a fan of some fusion cuisine. The other evening, we happened, for the second time, into a place that an Ahi Tuna Sampler that was a good example of this successful blending of cultures: raw ahi tuna with guacamole on a tortilla chip. With a touch cilantro and wasabi. So it was a cross between sushi and chips with dip. Hotness? Factored in with the wasabi. Good way to mix and combine elements that seem like fun. Tastes good, too. So it's all about fusing together elements that might live harmoniously side-by-side. Sometimes, this is a great experiment that ends with a new and improved dish. Other times? Not so much. One girl I know, not Sagittarius, works at a local coffee shop. She was mixing a "Blueberry Pumpkin-Spice Mocha Frappuccino, cold, blended, with whip." Some efforts, suffice it to say, might be less successful. But there has to be a willingness to try. "You know, it wasn't bad, it tasted, like, cough syrup, only, without the drowsiness." Have to be willing to try. Might fail, might not. Might want that icy concoction after treating wasabi like it was guacamole.

Capricorn: "I'm sure, no good will come of this," moans a Cap buddy. But you get such rare events like what's going on over the next couple of days, it's a chance, an opportunity. I want something to fall out of the sky, land in your Capricorn lap, and then, you have something to work with, and from there, another break. Another step forward. Perhaps, another piece to the puzzle of your very existence? "I'm sure, no good will come of this," moans a Cap buddy. I'm in the opposite mood. I think something wonderful shall happen. Yes, I know about Mercury heading into apparent retrograde motion. I know that's not supposed to be good, especially when it happens in another Cardinal Sign, but wait there's still a break. Saturn and Jupiter have this on again/off again thing going on. It's

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good. It's a chance, an opening that you can exploit. "I'm sure, no good will come of this," moans a Cap buddy. I'm getting tired of the refrain and by now? Maybe you should look for something good, too.

Aquarius: I call it the "phone grip." It's a way some people will grasp a phone, while they are in a public place, so that the numbers on the screen aren't visible. I've watched it before, and it's the body English, or hand-signal for someone say, "I'd like a little privacy here." I'll respect that. But I'm also a curious one, and if the person is shielding something from my eyes, I want to know what it is. Nosy little beggar, huh. It could be the 4-digit code you have to use to access the email. It could be a text message painfully typed out on a phone's number pad, or, it could be a deep, dark secret. Using a phone in public should have a degree of decorum. Expecting privacy in a public place? Therein is the problem. Hence the phone grip. Do you have a phone grip?

Pisces: Can't say "fish or cut bait," already used that one. However, I'd like to suggest this is a time to fish. Red Drum is a favorite along the Texas Coast. Locally known as Redfish, though, I seldom, if ever, see the "red" color. It's a delightful fish to catch, reel in, and the big ones, when they get on a run, it's a wonderful feeling as the fish is fighting back. The line unspools from the reel, the fish takes 50 or 70 feet of fishing line with it, and then it's a fight, a carefully orchestrated struggle between man and nature. I'll be honest, the fish sometimes wins. As the Red Drum come in to spawn, or feed, or whatever their life cycle and biological clock tells them to do, I try to work in one weekend for fishing. It's fun, it's fair, and often times, the fish win. But I'll be fishing. Not cutting bait. As the week unspools, there's a high keening noise, part of it is wind, part of it is taut fishing line, and all of that noise is here, in Pisces. Good or bad? You get to decide.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 9.25.2008

"Thus sometimes hath the brightest day a cloud;

And after summer evermore succeeds

Barren winter, with wrathful nipping cold;

So cares and joys abound, as seasons fleet."

Shakespeare's The Second Part of King Henry the Sixth [II.iv.3-6]

Mercury is firmly in its apparent retrograde pattern conjoined with Mars and a New Moon this week. But what's it all mean?

Aries: Mars, opposite you, isn't that bad. Mercury Retrograde, opposite you, isn't that bad. New Moon in Libra, opposite you, isn't that bad. Put all three together? Each item in borderline annoying. All three together? It's a minor, in a major way, annoyance. What it means? It's symbolic of a time to back up, stop, then back up, and assess the direction. Stop moving, I think is the first step. Then assess. Stop and consider what you want, Stop and consider what is working, what isn't working, and which direction is best. The whole point to Mars, in this fray, Mars is a big deal for Aries, see, the whole point to Mars in this problem set? Mars is all about activity. All I'm suggesting is that you pause for a moment and consider the next action. Instead of following me, and blindly rushing of in one direction that seems like a good idea at the time? Maybe, think about Mr. Mars, and that other stuff, and then think about pausing long enough to think through the problem, and maybe, if you pause long enough, you won't be (stupidly) following everything I say. Or some other ill-informed leader. Stop, think, then plot. Then maybe, you can go back to your original idea. But think, first. The planets are stacked against you. Not the odds, just the planets.

Taurus: When Venus is in your (solar) 7th House, that means everything is good in the relationship arena, loved ones, hated ones, fellow employees, employers, all of it is good. When Venus is opposite your Sun Sign, that means you're irascible and unhappy about loved ones, hated ones, fellow employees, employers, and various other sundry characters you encounter. Which is it going to be? I'd look to the employment problem as the problem area. And I'd realize, in my Taurus mind, that Mercury is backwards, can't fix that, so I'd slow it down by a degree or two. Sometimes, "feel the love," is a term that is delivered in an ironic manner. Consider, too, that even though you deliver a statement, like the aforementioned, "Feel the love," even though you use your Taurus "high ironic" tone, some folks miss it. They take your comment at face value. Can't fix that, either. Remember, it might not be you, it just be the audience.

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Gemini: One Gemini e-mailed about two weeks ago. She just wanted me to know that Mercury was going to be retrograde. Claimed she was feeling it already. Claimed that Mercury's relative position was raising heck in her life. Creating a ruckus, as it were. She dropped me an e-mail, then followed that with a text message then she left a voice-mail call, too. Just wanted to be sure she was getting through. She was. Loud and clear. Didn't miss a note there. Couldn't miss it. As if I didn't know that Mercury was lining up to back down in Libra, a Cardinal Air Sign. I get a sense of an anticipated event, then a false start to that much-anticipated event. Sort of a pre-launch flop. I'm not saying that this is doomed to fail miserably, but I would tend to consider that events during the next two weeks? It's like a trial run, an experiment to see if it will work. We've got a hypothesis, now let's test that. If it does work? Success. Can't say I didn't suggest you go ahead and try. And if it fails? That's okay, there was something that needed some twiddling and tweaking in order to sort it all out and make everything work right. Again, this isn't a problem. But yes, your main planet, Mercury, is backwards and than can create confusion. If you let it.

Cancer: I was reviewing some material for publication, and I happened upon a pattern. Make bad predictions, I mean, predict death and destruction, dire consequences and so forth? That will hit with one or two of the most vocal people, and those folks will trumpet the claims, pointing out how accurate the predictions were. It's all about cycles. Watch some of the cycles, too, as this is time to consider just where you are within those cycles. Beginning? End? Middle? End of the beginning? Beginning of the end? It's certainly going to be one of those, especially this week. What you do with this data? That's the clue to happiness in times of raging Mercury Retrograde. Happiness is possible, and understand, that this is just part of a cycle. Nothing more, nothing less. Where are you in that cycle? It would appear that we are nearing the end, but Mercury is a tricky little devil, and what it appears to be now? That position could change. Therein is the problem. Is this really the end? Or just a new beginning? Or just another false start? I'm sure you'll get a grip on what it's not, and maybe that's the best we can do.

Leo: I was pasting together postcards. Upcoming shows. It's about the only kind of direct mail advertising I can do, and I manage to pull together a mailing list about once or twice a year, usually in the spring then again the fall. So I was working on the fall mailing list. Upcoming shows, just postcards printed up here. No big deal. It's not like this is particularly unwieldy list, but I try to make all the supplies come out right. Little postcards, mailing labels and stamps. Stamps cost the most. I suppose, though, what really costs the most is my time. In comparison, trying to manage the mailing list, the labels, the postcards and balance the postage? That's nothing. Here's the trick I used, might help my excellent Leo friends. I didn't have quite enough postage. Mailing labels, like 30 to a sheet? Couple of sheets. Then figure out four postcards to a sheet, and arrive at an even number. That was worked out. But I had a little over hundred postcards and less than a whole roll of stamps. Something has to balance out. In my "bigger picture" way of seeing this, it's less of a problem, as I can just buy a couple of more postcard stamps. The rest, then all comes out evenly. Which was the point. Take up the slack, someplace, somehow, or leave yourself some wiggle room. Better to have too few than an over-abundance.

Virgo: I was getting into, I think it's called a sub-compact, a small car. I was tossing some fishing poles in with me. I was tired, worn out, and otherwise happy but exhausted. Not the best frame of mind to make judgement calls. I neglected to disassemble one of the poles, and when I gave that pole a good shove to fit it into the tiny car? Cracked the tip of the pole. No loss. Only an older pole that's seen better days, and it wasn't that expensive to begin with, for this very reason, the hazards of "travel with Kramer," and all, so I wasn't heartbroken. I do have a rod-repair kit that has glue and an assortment of fishing rod tips, so I could fix that pole. From a six and half footer, to more like a six and one inch pole, and from a fast tip, to a tip with more backbone, I could've done that. Wouldn't be the first time. But that pole, it's been around. Been many places, and I finally decided, due to the car's roof and door, that it was time to retire that pole. I set it outside, by the dumpster. Public property. Pole was gone before the trash hauler came around. Recycled, I'm sure, making some less fortunate person equally happy. There's a time to call it a done deal, too, and that's what this is about. That pole, it had seen duty as a lakeside pole, an ocean pole, and then, as a car pole, one that rode around with me, getting kicked and squashed, and finally, it was recycled. Time to call it quits. What this is about, is it time to set that item by the dumpster, so that item can be recycled?

Libra: For fun and games, on some occasions, I'll wear a fishing lure as an earring. I've got several. Many of them. I started to market my own line of "lures as earrings," but I stopped because it was too much work. I'm doing good just to keep me happy. I had on one of my creations, the other afternoon. Started to annoy me. See: the lure has a tiny ball bearing in it. Or small shot pellets, something is rattling around inside the lure. As a lure, this works great. As an earring, though, that rattling noise can get positively annoying after a few minutes. Not to mention hours. The lure? It's a miniature version of Zara Spook, so you can check out the ball-bearing interiors. And it does make a great earring. But the problem is that noise. With Mars in Libra and Mercury backwards in Libra? It's like that earring, what was a great idea? Sometimes, like did I think it all the way through? Apparently not. Is it totally awful? No, and for a fashion statement, it's kind of good. For a little while. The problem is, like this scope that lasts a whole week? So does that annoying rattle, right next to my ear.

Scorpio: I've got a small bookshelf over my desk. On it are a handful of reference texts. A dictionary, a couple of astrology reference books, a history book and tables of the locations of the planets for the last century (and half of the next century). There's also a small book from Roman writer (in translation), a book of poetry from local singer, one epic of Western Literature (unread), and a "No Fear: Twelfth Night" textbook. Don't recall why I have that one. Must've been something in it. I was looking at the commonplace material, looking no further than my own backyard, so to speak, only, I was just looking up from over the desk. There's something terribly telling about my work, looking at the books I keep on hand, just for reference. I've got two books on grammar, but at least one of them? I haven't used it at all. Doubt I ever will. Is it that obvious? This is about what you use to define yourself. What books are on the Scorpio reference shelf -- at this moment And are you willing to change some of those books? I'm not saying that you have to change, but one of the books I've got, seems a little out of place with me, that "No Fear 12th Night" book. However, it's there for a reason. Something hidden on your reference shelf you want to tell us about? Mercury might ferret out your secrets, if you're not careful.

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Sagittarius: I was in a large discount store, on the south side of town. If I had to make a judgement call, I'd say the area was primarily working class people. Not that it matters. I got used to being called "that guitar guy" in one area. But on the south side? It's a little different. I'm mostly left alone, no one wants to bother anyone else, and I might be a little crazy. Can't tell with guys with long hair. Deep on the south side, no one's asked if I play guitar. One guy, he said one thing to me, "Yeah, you sort of have that Ted Nugent thing happening," and then the guy grinned lopsidedly at me. Maybe I do have that Ted Nugent thing going on. While we're both Sagittarius, both have long hair, the rest of the similarities END there. Philosophically, ideologically, well, to some extent, and politically, we're different. But this isn't about rock stars and astrologers, it's about Sagittarius. We're not getting as much, or the same, kind of attention that we're used to receiving. You know what? That's not really bad, not given where the rest of the planets are. I think it's kind of nice not stand out for once.

Capricorn: "This just proves that you hate Capricorns. I know it." Right. I personally misaligned the planets just to promote your own Capricorn misery. I seriously doubt that. I'm sure that this little period of relative unease won't last too long. It's not really all about you, it's about your perceptions. And for the record, I did try and warn you about this stuff before it happened. Did your happy little Capricorn butt listen to me? I guess not. So here we are, astro-whiz and Capricorn, neither who is very happy with the other. There's a way out of this, believe or not, just consider the location of Mercury and figure what that symbolizes. Mercury, in an Air Sign? Problems that are made of air? That's right. The world of non-reality. If nothing else, as a good Cap, you're good with the real world. The problem comes from manufactured difficulties, and you don't have to step and argue about it.

Aquarius: One of my favorite images, one afternoon on walk around town, I happened across a gate that was partway open. It had a sign on it, read, "No Access." I always like that image, the gate ajar, wherein someone had obviously accessed it even though the sign, pretty clearly in English, spelled it out: "no access." The position of the gate itself, swinging open, and the sign, telling us not to try it? A normal Aquarius, if that mythical creature (normal and Aquarius, sure, it could happen), if that normal Aquarius happened upon the same gate with the same sign, "No Access," you know what that typical Aquarius will do? Access it, just to see if it could be done. It can. All that lies behind that gate is an alley that goes to the back end of restaurant, and the alleyway itself is like a grease trap. Not pretty. Now how would I know all that? Let's just pretend that I'm Aquarius, and let's pretend, well, I did take the picture, no pretending there, but let's just say we wanted to see what we couldn't have access to. Nudge it open with a toe? Maybe so. Get the heady aroma of the grease trap? Okay, and now we know why the sign is there. Never hurts to pay attention to the signs, when it's obvious like that. We don't have to test everything, not during Mercury Retrograde times.

Pisces: I've done a lot of freelance work. Over the years, I've performed in various capacities for various groups, stand up astrology, sit down astrology, web page astrology, fishing guide astrology, done a little bit of it all. Freelance is the life, that's what a lot of people think. Therein is the problem, because, my Pisces friend, you're stuck, like me, trying to collect past due debts. Other people owe you money. Time to get it. Time to collect. Time to get what's due. And, because of the relative position of Mercury and some

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other stuff? Time to not count on anyway ponying up the cash that they owe you. It's that simple. Some pay, some don't. What I tend to do, after years of being freelance like this, I just demand the cash upfront or, at the very worst, at the time the services are rendered. End of the show. End of the reading. Can't be counting on people to pay up. The check is in the mail? Isn't that a euphemism for something stronger and not so pleasant? Quickest way around this problem? Collect the money up front. Or, if they promise to pay later, tell them you'll do the work later.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 10.2.2008

"For his bounty,

There was no winter in 't, an autumn 'twas

That grew the more by reaping."

Shakespeare's Antony & Cleopatra (V.ii.108-10)

Aries: I keep a couple of containers of a certain bottled beverage on hand. I tend to buy in lots or, and this is usually a find, like when there's a sale? I'll get a case or two. The oldest case goes in front, and the freshest one is set back. Usually. Some sort of order, just like stocking a store. Sell -- or use -- the oldest stuff first. Except, I was thinking, see, I was shuffling stuff in the kitchen around, and I grabbed another bottle to put in the ice box. Only, what I was thinking, maybe I didn't shuffle the bottles around when I brought them in, and I was grabbing the freshest, which I really shouldn't use first. Or was my stock rotated? I wasn't sure. Mercury, backwards, opposite you. Has it been rotated or not? I'd like to suggest that it really doesn't matter, not in the long run, but you can sure get yourself in trouble trying to second guess yourself like that. I finally caved in. Whichever way it was? I was sticking to that. Except, well, maybe I should just grab the one from the back. Or is the front one the oldest?

Taurus: Mercury is in apparent retrograde motion in the Taurus (natural) Sixth House. That lends a degree of precision and focus on your career arena of life. Good, bad? I see it as a little of both. There's a degree, a point, a place where something gets reviewed, and while it was originally a fault finding mission, someone else was hunting down Taurus mistakes, what happens? Taurus is more than covered. Maybe covered isn't the right word, but it's close. I tend to gather receipts and mark them. While I'll just call an item "grocery" and hence, not tax-deductible, a closer examination of the receipts will show that I bought batteries that are used in various work-related devices. Only used in work-related devices. Envelopes, too. Or paper, to print charts. Even though my receipts are marked "grocery," that doesn't mean that closer examination would point out that there is a valid (deductible) expense that could be itemized. I've had more than one pissing match with auditors. I tend to be correct because I try to document every item in triplicate. Annoys them when I walked out with them owing me money. It can be done. This is accomplished by ignoring certain details. Ignoring just such details, where the

Gemini: I think it's the ultimate in clever marketing. In the El Paso (international) Airport, there's a flower vending machine. It sells fresh bouquets of roses and other flowers. Prices are astronomical. Where the machine is located? Right past the security

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barrier, on the right-hand side. Perfect. El Paso has a large military installation. Flowers for girlfriends arriving, flowers for soldiers coming home, flowers for just about every occasion. Right there. Expensive. Probably cost half as much just to stop at a florist on the way to the airport. However, if I was getting off a plane, like I frequently do, and if a certain female was supposed to pick me up outside, then I would do well to have a dozen roses, or similar arrangement, on hand. Makes for a smoother arrival. After the plane has landed. You're reading this: you're ahead of the Mercury curve. I'm telling you about that machine to remind you to get flowers, or whatever other action is required, before you arrive and make a hasty -- and costly -- mistake.

Cancer: I've got a buddy, he's got two cars. Trucks, really. One is a daily driver, old beater of a Ford. The bed is all scratched up. His other is more of a fancy show truck. Jacked up, chrome pipes, and fancy rims. Big plus: a really satisfying noise, a sort of a burble at idle. "Custom exhaust," he bragged to me. I was thinking of those pipes, the noise, and the oddly (testosterone invested) reassuring grumble, and the note, "Custom Exhaust." For Cancer? It's like that, only "custom exhaustion." While it's satisfying, at least to me, that sound is oddly refreshing, there's something tired in the old Cancer voice. Custom exhaustion. It's like it's been tailor fitted to the Cancer lifestyle. Too much to do, too high of expectations, and too little material to get from point A (where you're at) to point B (the destination). What to do about it? Slow down. Instead of taking the fancy route, instead of crawling up into the cab of that show truck, think about just taking the daily driver, the one without the custom exhaustion.

Leo: "It is better to looked over than overlooked." Who said that? I should run it as a trivia question but it takes about half of second for fast typist to copy the question and hit the search feature and arrive at an answer. Or an attribution. I'm giving it up for another famous Leo: Mae West. Perfect. Can't say she didn't fit the role as a Leo. Always at the center of attention. And quick with the wit. Smart and looked at. Like a good Leo should be. Quoted and drawn, a perpetual symbol, well passed her "use by" date. She's still rocking, even though she's shuffled off the mortal coil. I can't help with the sense of being overlooked, but I can warn about the sense of being scrutinized. Nothing's worse than that visual once-over. What's worse than a visual once over? A quick glance and the dismissive look. It's like a lowering of the eyes. Sort of a visual equivalent of "nothing to see here." Which is offensive to a Leo, and particularly The Leo. So here's the deal: Mercury is going to get something dismissed. And given that the planets are generally messing up? Maybe this is good thing to be ignored.

Virgo: I've grown accustomed to seeing this, out the right-hand side of the airplane, as it traverses a section of West Texas, it's a place where huge wind turbines are clearly visible. And not much further along? Same plain? Oil wells and gas collection pipelines are arranged around the giant windmills. So there's a massive amount of wind electricity being generated, right beside the oil wells that are still pumping -- or bleeding off -- gas and crude oil. Lots of work, in one place. The idea is that there is lots of work going on -- in one place, Matter of fact, add to the windmills, oil pumps and pipelines, add a cell (digital) phone tower? That's getting three uses out of the same piece of real estate. There's a message to my little Virgo friends, about doubling -- or even tripling -- the uses. Eventually, at least that's the theory, we'll run out of oil. Might start using a satellite instead of cell towers, but the wind, that could last a long time. However, for the

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foreseeable future, like the next couple of days? You're like that poor, overworked piece of land, being used for three different use. However, if you stop and think, what's that worth? In the long run? I don't mean this week, or next week, but, long term? Those mineral rights are worth something. Might feel a little used up but in the long run? Those virgo rights are worth something.

Libra: Ever want to just run away? It's your birthday, and nothing seems more attractive than just getting away from it all. I've got an easy life. In the middle of hectic work schedule, I can just take a day off and head down to the coast. While it's not a real vacation, it's only an hour (or three) to get there and back, and the fishing, in October, can be spectacular. The hurricane season is over, at least for the Texas Gulf region, and we're still putting the pieces back together. However, there's still some good Bull Reds to be found, and that's good for an afternoon's adventure. This isn't a complete escape, but for a few hours, I'll leave the phone in the truck, and I'll be disconnected from "reality." I get to catch a break. I have to make it, but that's what this is about. Come on it's your birthday time. If no one else is going to give it up for you? Then who is? It's up to you. Let's sneak off to the coast for a few days. Or someplace equally exotic and far-flung? Consider it as a birthday gift to your Libra sanity.

Scorpio: "Hamlet's not a play, it's a Mel Gibson movie." I can't make this stuff up. No, it's play with its authorship attributed to one William Shakespeare. But trying to belabor that point to a Mel Gibson fan, or movie person with limited play experience? Hey, whatever works to get them in the door, I suppose, is the right answer. As a movie, it's not a bad movie, although, certainly not really a good Hamlet. As Mel Gibson, it's whatever you want, although, I'd expect a little more action and little less talk. I suppose, though, it did put a classical mark on the actor's card. And it wasn't a bad film, in fact, one of the Ophelia scenes was done particularly well. Good camera work. Whatever. This isn't about film versus play acting, and one of the best Hamlet's I've ever seen was on stage, and never mind, I'm just being a snob. This is one of those times that you don't want to follow in my footsteps, so to speak, Don't belabor the point about whether it was a movie or play by Shakespeare, or movie about a play by Shakespeare and just stop. Quit trying to confuse me. Or confuse the other people. If someone has something set in their we (non-Scorpio) brains? Let it alone. Doesn't matter how ignorant it might seem, now is not the time to make that point.

Sagittarius: I was on a plane, going somewhere for work. A lady who was not unattractive sat down beside me. I stretched my legs, rocked my head from side to side, sighed, and slumped down in the seat. Another hour on a thin metal tube hurtling through the sky. She looked at me, "Hi. I don't mind if you pass out and fall asleep on my shoulder, but not drooling. I will slap you awake if you start to drool." Nice to meet you, too, dear, and by the way, what's your birthday before I start falling asleep? I have a Sagittarius nature, and we tend to be gregarious, sometimes, to a fault. But I had no intention of falling asleep. Or falling on her shoulder. It's just our friendly and outgoing mannerisms can be construed in such a way, and never mind. However, with Mercury where it is, backwards? Mars and Venus in Scorpio? Get the picture? You could have a fetching young lass making a comment just like, although, I doubt it would be on the same flight.

Capricorn: I'm still working on this, but there's got to be a practical application of what's going on within your realm. In the world of Capricorn, there's got to be a good deal happening. It's matter of selecting the proper offer to take advantage of. I got a credit card offer in the mail, promised this huge (to me) credit limit. With a small asterisk by the amount. I filled out the application and it came back, a little different. It wasn't nearly as rich an offer as I thought. The introductory rate, and the credit limit? Not that good. The fine print? Worse yet. Usurious rates on a small, nay, even miniscule credit amount. I suppose it was try out, or a buy out, or something, but when I got the "good deal," and when I read the instructions, the details, I realized it wasn't nearly as good as they would have it seem to be. Now, how I made good on this? When that offer arrived and I realized my error? Where I was at fault? For answering something like that in the first place? I just sent it all back and I declined their offer. In the long run, in the grander scheme of life, the universe and everything? I'm out ahead by turning down an apparent offer. Check it out. See what the real details are, and see if you don't do better by refusing.

Aquarius: Ever meet one of those people who just likes to argue? I'm not talking about a lawyer, it's more personality type. One who likes to argue about anything? Sometimes, it's valid disagreement, but on other occasions, it's less about the subject of the discussion, and more about the point of disagreeing. In and of itself, this isn't always disagreeable. Folks like that can always be counted on for coming up holes in theories. However, there's the adverse side, and those are folks who, no matter what your fine Aquarius self does, those people aren't happy unless they're complaining. Hence the trouble. Understand that you're probably going to run into one of these arguers before too long, like in the immediate future, and realize, too, that they aren't happy unless you're actively disagreeing with their points, valid or otherwise. My quick, temporary solution is to nod and make affirmative noises. At the very worst, you can always say, "I see you have a valid point, there."

Pisces: There was a guy with his kid in tow, and his mother. Might have been a mother-in-law, but I'm guessing it was, from the interactions, body language and so forth, his mom. The kid's grandmother. It was in a chocolate shop, near here. Tourists and good chocolate, all with that special Texas flavor. I like the "armadillo droppings" myself. Pecan and caramel. The child wanted to sample a special candy that was, like, \$2 a pop. "That's a dollar per bite," the dad moaned. His mother, the grandmother, she chimed in, right on time, "and worth every penny." Apparently the candy was good. I'm not suggesting that sugary goodness from a place near me is what will cure all that ills Pisces. But there's a question, which one do you want to be? You can make a call about how this week turns out, either worried about the price or enjoying the fruits. Your call, Pisces. Hint: really good chocolate does cure many ailments, real and imagined.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 10.9.2008

"The skies are painted with unnumber'd sparks,
They are all fire and every one doth shine,
But there's but one in all that doth hold his place."

Shakespeare's Julius Caesar [III.i.71-3]

Mercury becomes "un-retrograde" during the next couple of days.

Aries: I had an old t-shirt that I was particularly attached to. 50/50 cotton/poly blend, originally black with a screen-print opera logo on it. I liked that shirt. Despite it being an unlucky shirt, I liked to wear it because I would call it my "heavy metal" shirt. Wagner. Opera. Heavy Metal, get the joke? Therein was part of the problem, very few, if any, of my friends ever got the joke. The other part of the problem was that it was, straight up, an unlucky shirt. Wear it to the post office? Nothing but bills that afternoon. Wear it to work, like, under a dress shirt? Not my usual amount of business. And so on. Wore in a casino and did nothing but leave money behind, all being told I think that was part of the plan. I finally let that shirt go. Tossed it into the "take to (name of charity)" box. Let it go. Let go of the bad luck associated with the shirt, too. I'm not overly superstitious, but I do notice patterns and correlate that to matters of luck and stars. Unlucky shirt is gone. I'll miss it, but I won't miss the bad luck. Mercury, Sun, opposite you, lining up nicely -- time to let go some comforting bad luck.

Taurus: Previously, New Mexico State University, NMSU in Las Cruces, NM, over the line from El Paso, previously, they had the hottest pepper ever recorded. It was a blend of something from India, grown in the pepper patch of SE NM. Hotter than a jalapeño, hotter than a Scotch Bonnet, hotter than a Habanero, supposedly, hotter than anything else that was grown. I think a perky pepper like that would be great to cook with. I doubt that I'm ever going to try and prove my virility by eating one of those peppers. It's all about limits. Last batch of chili I made, I put in a whole carton of chopped jalapeños, three Habanero, and that was it. Had a whole shank of venison, lean and sliced right, so it was good. The peppers cook out a little. The fresh-sliced peppers are deadly, especially the Scotch Bonnet, so I'm careful. If those new peppers are really "ten-X times hotter" than the Habanero? I can skip it. It's all about knowing what the limits are. And aren't. What borders good tastes and sick masochism, disguised as a hot pepper?

Gemini: The Full Moon on Monday? Looks like it's your 11th House. I might have that wrong, too. Depends on what time of day you born as to actual placement of the Full Moon. But its affects? That I'm sure of. Pushing, gnawing, just like a little race pony,

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stuck in the chute, waiting for the gate to slam open so you can bolt the hell out of here. There. Wherever you are and where you're at that you don't want to be, confined and constrained, and come Monday, you're ready to shoot out in a new direction. Hold on there, little Gemini friend, there's something you can watch out for. It's being too active in one direction, or worse, taking off before you know where you're headed. I was using the idea of a race horse, a race pony, and the chute opening. If you'll pause, there's a shortcut here. Everybody else is going a long way to get to the end of the track. You know, if you just turned around, no really, look over your shoulder, you can see that's where we're all headed. And it's right behind you, not a hundred paces. Think about going the opposite direction and see if that doesn't get you there faster. At least look before you bolt out of the gate.

Cancer: Got a choice, like always, and you can choose. Choose to stay on track? Choose to veer off in a new direction that might not be nearly as easy as it looked at first? That new direction, while it appears to be a softer, more gentle route, is it really? Just seemed like a little detour. There's two basic routes I take to get to the coast. One is a little longer, straight down Interstate 37. 127 miles from San Antonio to Corpus Christi. From CC? Right goes to South Padre and left goes up the coastline towards Galveston. I've wandered the back roads through the area, and it's really very pleasant. But not always the most direct route. Shorter? Yes. Direct? Quicker? No. Decide. Choose. Cancer, you've got a chance to take a shortcut. But is it really a shortcut? One foggy October morning, going down to the coast for a quick trip? Is the shortest route the fastest? All I'm suggesting, in times like these, you might want to stick to the safest route that you know about. All about choices, you know.

Leo: Just because Mercury is heading out of its pernicious little pattern, that doesn't mean you're out of the problem zone. I understand that's not what you want to read, but I've got to be fair about this, there's a lingering part of the Mercury influence, and it's like a bad smell. It's not so bad that you want to move, or get a fan, but the aromatic remains, to me, smells like a dead and partially decayed carcass of something, those remains? And the air around you? Best way to avoid this, other than hold your nose, squint, fan your hand briefly, notice that everyone else notices the problem? Time to gently move yourself away from the area that's afflicted. While it could be something as harmless as a gas leak? It could be, potentially, as dangerous as a gas leak. No need to hang around. And how to otherwise escape this Mercury unpleasantness? Just scoot over, just a few feet, to the left. Or right, or back. Or forward. Just a few feet, though, you might notice the air is cleaner.

Virgo: Reel in on your ideals. I'm not saying that you don't have a very valid position. I'm not saying that you are not right. No, that's not it. It's how you express your ideals. These are near and dear points. Look: I have pretty strong beliefs. However, when I'm traveling, for example, when I'm outside of Texas, I don't bother to gloat about how Texas is bigger and better than (insert state's name here). We produce/refine more product, bigger places, larger stuff, weirder stuff, whatever. But when I'm outside of Texas? I don't belabor those points. Follow my lead on this, don't be preaching about your ideals, even though, you and I, we both know you're right in your position. It's about not preaching, not making a stand, and the easiest way to consider this is that Mercury is backwards.

That's not really the influence, but for right now, just consider that you'll be misunderstood. Maybe making a stand isn't the way to go. Even though you are right.

Libra: Couple of factors are at work here, but this isn't a good time to try and work it out. If there's a problem? Best solution is my favorite, "Can we deal with this later?" It's a cheap way out, or it could be expensive. There's a cartoon up at one sporting goods store, shows a guy's wife with a full shopping cart, the guy is talking to a buddy, "I think this is going to be a very expensive fishing trip." What was the clue? However, consider that it's better way to work out problems, like, by avoiding mentioning the problem itself. Talk around it. Talk in circles. Circumloquation? I wonder if that's even a word. Choked the spell catcher. Anyway, the while we all have to deal with the leftover Mercury debris, and while there's still a birthday or two in Libra (Hi Baby), there's still a small amount of unattached problem-energy. Instead of trying to work something out and having the best efforts go horribly wrong? Why not just sort of motor around the problem for the time being? Makes for a much happier birthday, and you deserve that much.

Scorpio: Mars and Venus are still in Scorpio for the time being. Will be moving on, before too long. Venus will be out shortly after this scope runs out, but Mars is in the for long haul. And that's what it's going to be. Fortunately, as a Scorpio, you've got the gift of an ability to foresee long range problems. And you can also work on solutions. I'm not sure which problem is going to play out individually, but I do know that you'll be able to see a viable way to work around the problem. As long Venus is with you, rest of this week? Keep pushing forward. Keep working on the way you're going to get around the problem that you can see coming up. In fact, with the last Venus' kind influence? Consider how to package up your solution to the problem, think about how to make it come across as a winning situation for everyone. It's really an illusion, the only one who wins is Scorpio, but please, allow us our illusions.

Sagittarius: "A man can be short and dumpy and getting bald but if he has fire, women will like him." (Mae West - Leo) That's the secret. That's twice now I've used her, Ms. West. But it was worth it. She was imminently quotable, and that's some mighty fine advice. It has a lot to do with that Sagittarius Magic (tm). Saggy fire, according to Ms. West? Maybe so, but we've got our fire, much to the ire of others. Not that it matters, and not that this is going to get in the way. It's matter of rekindling the zeal that's normally present in a Sagittarius demeanor, and then, keeping that flame lit long enough to accomplish a single goal. It's not a big thing, could be something simple. And it's not about appearances, as pointed out by Ms. West, it's about that special spark. We have it. Use it. If it's been extinguished? Rekindle it. Spark. That's all it takes, a single spark, and it's started all over again. Even us short, balding, middle-aged guys, we can "work it."

Capricorn: A friend of a friend knew someone who recently had a vasectomy. So when whomever was queried -- I was told it was the doctor -- but this far removed? Might've been a nurse. Or anyone. The question was what was the best way to treat the vasectomy. The answer? "Try frozen peas." Begs the question, or so it seemed, won't they run all over the floor? If I hadn't heard this while I was traveling with a buddy and his wife, I might not believe the story. True story, though. I just repeat the parts that I heard. However, like old steak used to be the preferred cooling treatment, apparently, frozen peas -- still in the bag -- might work.

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Aquarius: "On the road" is a euphemism for me. Usually. The term implies travel, which I've done a lot of in my line of work. I like the travel part. But usually it's planes and trains, with the odd bus, once in awhile. Depends on what I can hitch my star to, at any given moment. Which was odd, then to find myself traveling in the front seat of large truck. I'm not opposed to trucks, just not a usual form of transportation. Headed somewhere, I think, for work. I noticed, at one point in the trip, a big guy in a bog truck, next to us, about even with us. Big guy, big hat (cowboy hat), big truck. The guy was calmly eating a cupcake Easily discernible through the layers of tinted glass, the hat then the cupcake. The kind of cupcake with the frosty filling.

Pisces: It's really binary, but trying to reduce a Pisces situation to a binary situation usually doesn't work. I was giving directions, which is an amusing thought, being directionally challenged as I am, but a tourist (appearing) person stopped and asked where something was. I pointed in one direction, suggested that it was "that way," and left it that. A few steps later, there was a corner where the tourist, I know, I just walked back from there, and I paused long enough to encourage that the tourist follow that direction. All but a "Turn here" sign. Nodding, pointing, all but pushing the tourist along. Trying to be helpful. Tourist paused again, wanting to see a map that would surely confuse the situation because the canyons of downtown? Hard to figure out true north versus what appears to be north, and this all really just about a binary decision in Pisces. Single situation. Take a left. Follow advice. Go the way the sign points. Oh, for the love of god, for just one time, follow the damn directions. You can easily and gratefully thank me later. It's easy. Just take a single step in the correct directions, as indicated by the sign, the guide, the map.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 10.16.2008

"A jewel in a ten-times-barr'd-up chest

Is a bold spirit in a loyal beast."

Shakespeare's The Tragedy of King Richard the Second (I.i.185-6)

Aries: If the Fall Equinox (Northern Hemisphere) was a subtle turning point, or maybe, not such a subtle point, then this week is about whatever it was supposed to be about. The turning point. The transition. The place where you decide what's right in the Life of an Aries, and for that matter, what's not right. Some of this is fixable. I'd just like you to understand that. We can fix some of the problems. Nothing is irreparable. However, as an Aries, you've got to decide what's worth fixing, and then, sometimes, there are items that you think, "If I had unlimited time and plenty of material to work with, I could fix this." See, that's where a judgement call is required. At what point do you decide the effort to rescue and repair outweighs the value of the item. Or, as I'm inclined to believe, the situation. When do you call it quits?

Taurus: For years, I've worked at convention/trade show arenas. Hotel and motel meeting rooms. All varies. All different yet eerily similar. Mostly, I've worked at long tables, about 6 or 8 feet in length and 18 inches wide. Two of the tables together would make a single dinner or library table. So I'm used to working at this skinny little tables, barely enough room for a computer, some astrology charts, and my business cards. Or tarot cards, which are business cards to me. It's hard for me to kick out my long legs and not have them poke out on the far side of the skinny tables. Means I can't really relax fully. Not that it's bad, it just is. I stretched, one time, and my leg ran into my client's leg. She thought I was making a pass, or something, me, being overly familiar. Which I wasn't, not intentional, not unintentionally, not in any way, shape or form. It's all about work, and after I've been sitting for a few hours, doing readings, I'd like to stretch. While I live in a small space, I do have ways to stretch periodically. So the confines of a half-library table is rather limiting for me. See how a single stretching motion can get horribly misinterpreted? That's the warning, observation and solution to the Taurus week. Maybe don't stretch like that in the first place? Or whatever the genuinely innocent motion is? Watch it. Those tables are skinny.

Gemini: One of my buddies, he's got, like, the Guardian Angel thing going on. Especially with his driving. He, Gemini, what did you think? He'll be all over the road, talking to me, talking on the phone, fiddling with the CD player, and driving. All he needs is cigarette in one hand to really complete the image, but he doesn't smoke, hasn't ever. Weird like that. Gemini weird. I was thinking about my buddy and his errant driving, no tickets, no fender benders, nothing, and I was looking at the planets. Libra Sun, MARS in Scorpio,

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Moon goes to its final quarter phase, what's it mean? That's where the driving thing comes in. In his rule book, his internal Gemini rules, he doesn't have to follow the lines on the road. The laws of the streets don't apply to him. And he drives in a manner that bears this out. The white lines, yellow lines, the lines we all have to follow? He thinks of them as guidelines, and he'll swerve back into his lane, if there's oncoming traffic. Unless you think you're lucky enough to bet on that guardian angel, then I'd suggest you stick a little bit closer to the traffic guidelines, these next few days. Might not even be traffic rules, but some rules? Behooves you to follow a little closer than you're used to following. That's how we all arrive safe and sound.

Cancer: There's this weird thing, and I don't have a better word for it. It's like a something comes over a person. In my situation, it's usually a female. I can't speak for other people because I'm not them. So take this on its allegorical level, but imagine that a woman in my company starts to cycle through some "feelings," whatever those might be. "Hold me, no, don't touch me. I want you to communicate, but don't talk, and don't touch me, okay?" Ain't my first rodeo. Seen this before. There is nothing that I can do that will be really right. However, to staunch the potential flow of blood (mine) and the probable flow if tears (heres), there are steps I can take. Sit down. Shut up. Listen. Reach for tissues and chocolate. Or coffee. Or wine. Maybe whiskey, although, in my long years, certain intoxicants tend to exacerbate rather than ameliorate the perceived problems(s). But there is a substance that has curative and palliative effect. Slowly, no sudden moves, reach for that. There's a lot of emotional material that's cycling through Cancer's quadrant of the sky. Is it good? Bad? Neither, in my understanding, just the emotional elevator going up and down. To an outside observer of the Cancer psyche though, it can be difficult to figure out which way is up. Keep that in mind when you tell us what to do.

Leo: I've got one playlist that's got a weird collection of Xmas songs. Lynyrd Skynyrd, Lone Star, Trans-Siberian Orchestra, Bill Idol, Willie Nelson, and so forth. Singing xmas songs. I have a personal belief that Xmas before Thanksgiving is a heinous crime. Just a personal belief, but that's the way I feel. I was digging around on an iPod, looking for some music and I hit that playlist. I was gently rocking out to Trans-Siberian Orchestra, I think, then I realized, it's not yet Halloween, much less Thanksgiving, and this is just way too early to be playing this kind of a game. Music -- can't be listening to this music yet. I violated, in the worst way possible, my own internal rules. The worst way. I can whip myself, I can berate myself, or, I can just just shrug, it was an accident, didn't mean to do it. Besides, one retail giant isn't wrapped up with Halloween before launching T-day and Xmas crap so it's, really, not my fault. Right? While this does violate my own, internal rules, it really doesn't offend anyone else, other than people with good taste. Good sense and good taste. Xmas carols in October? That's so tacky. I'm still in shorts and sandals most of the week. You're going to do like me, and you're going to step outside your internal parameters, whatever that imaginary line is, and you will recoil in horror. Afterwards. If you do this quietly? No one is around? No one will know. Secret's safe with me. Provided, of course, you keep it secret. "I'm dreaming of a white Xmas..."

Virgo: Last week, maybe it was the week before? Bluebird skies. Not a cloud in the sky. Visibility that seemed to stretch all the way to the moon. A few days later? Socked in with clouds, those low, dull, aching clouds that are foreboding. Clouds that looks that are

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slate grey -- the color of a TV turned to a dead channel, without the white noise. What's worse, here in South Texas, the those clouds? Looks like it might be cold and miserable outside, and instead it's that point where it's really not cold. Not at all. Not hot, either, mind you, but cool. But certainly not cold. Just looks cold. The problem, then, is me. I get dressed for cold weather, I mean, it's almost Halloween, should be cooler, correct? Only, outside, it's still hot. Worse, it's hot and muggy. And cloudy, too. I gave up trying to guess at the weather. I'd like to suggest that Virgo, too, quit trying to guess at the weather. Might not be the actual weather outside, cold be the astrological weather, but what it looks like, cold, gray, foreboding, and what it really is? Cool, damp, muggy? They are worlds apart. Hence the problem. Nothing beats empirical observation instead of looking out the window. And those low, gray clouds? Usually means god bass fishing weather. I'm just saying.

Libra: I was at the doctor's office, getting ready to get poked and prodded. The nurse (medical assistant) hooking me up to the machine took a look at what I was wearing, my demeanor, and tried, in the spirit of light conversation. Asked if I worked outdoors. "No, I travel a lot, though." "You're a truck driver?" She asked. I was greatly amused by that question. I get a lot of guesses, a lot of questions, and sometimes I don't tip my hand too soon. I was gently reminded that I'm a writer, and as such, I don't have an easy taxonomy for many. It's less about appearances, and more being on the receiving end of this pointed conversation. As people make rash, hurried decisions about your Libra self, based upon appearances, don't let your delicate Libra psyche get bruised. These are gentle reminders about where you are, where you've been, and what's up ahead. So what if someone thinks you look like a truck driver? Does it really matter, or was it that "casual dress" you were looking for, in the first place?

Scorpio: Pause, hold it, wait, pause just a little longer, now hold that, wait, just a little longer. That's this week. This weekend. First couple of days of next week. Mars is frying along in Scorpio, sort of a nice combination, adds a little lift, a little activity, and some much needed energy. The whole point to utilizing astrology, though, is to help plan and look at forward tending trends. This way of looking at the immediate future, sort of like next week's news today? I'm asking my little Scorpio friends to cool it. Your birthdays are coming up soon, but I the next couple of days? Just let someone else shine in the light. Step to the side, let somebody else assume to the role of agent, engineer, provocateur, amateur, zealot, and so forth forth. Let someone else hog all the attention. Maybe let that Libra get the last of the birthday recognition, first. Scorpio, darling, your time is coming, Just not quite yet. Pause.

Sagittarius: There comes a time in everyone's life when a guilty pleasure is called for. I'm not talking about sweet food, or liquor, or sweet food and liquor, no, this about hidden secrets. I watched a "G-Rated" film the other afternoon. Caught a weekday matinee, as it fit in my schedule just fine. Hiked over to the big multi-plex cinema. Didn't buy anything but a ticket. I was tempted to sneak in some candy, but I'm staying away from sugar as much as I can -- sugar isn't good for the Sagittarius ethereal body. But this isn't about real sugar, or the most common euphemism for sugar, this is about a saccharine sweet movie. I won't mention a company's name, but think about mouse ears. Comic mouse ears. I think there was me, another lonely adult and maybe one lady with small child. It is times like this that grandchildren are devoutly wished for. As cover. If only I'd had kids

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then grandkids, I'd have an excuse to be in that theater, watching that movie. It's all about indulging a guilty, feel-good pleasure that doesn't rot your teeth, or exhaust your adrenal glands, or have anything else wrong with it. I'm not saying that every Sagittarius should do this, this weekend, next week, but if enough of us do? We can help. Start by finding that guilty pleasure, like that kid's movie, and consider it a safe place to begin.

Capricorn: It's relatively, especially for me, easy to be cheesy. But I'm a goof ball by nature, and this isn't a stretch for a character like me. However, as a Capricorn, it is a stretch. Or, not as much as some people, but there's a serious side that needs to lighten up some. Only, I'd watch the corn ball stuff. I'd watch the cheese factor. I'd watch the jokes that might be too dry for mere mortals (non-Capricorn) folks to understand or see the humor because the reach is too far. It's a leap that I can make, but I'm a trained professional. My little Capricorn friends? Got to watch that stuff. There are jokes, insides, asides, various delivery techniques, and sometimes, it just doesn't work. Stick to either broad humor, or straining-up slapstick. Stick with a form -- or medium -- that is easily understood. I get the little jokes that most people miss. But then, I live in a darkly humorous world. Like Capricorn. Just for the this next few days? Might want to constrain your weird jokes. (It's not like I have a lot of room to move on this one.)

Aquarius: To make it work, once the Full Moon is over with? To make your Aquarius life a little easier? Stay in the groove. Sounds kind of bland, maybe a little bunk, but you've got to stick with me on this one. The "groove" can mean a number of different things to a diverse group like Aquarius. To me, though, I was thinking about fishing. It was along afternoon, not long ago, and I was in the back of the boat. As I went cast out a line, I noticed that the fishing line on that reel wasn't winding correctly. I was tired, in the middle of the afternoon, from start before sunrise, and I wasn't in a mood to deal with equipment issues. Line unspooled like it was supposed to, and I picked up another pole. I gave the bait a toss, my arm was a little wild, and the bait, hook, line & sinker, none of that landed where I wanted it. I finally realized I was fatigued, so I sat down for a moment's rest, then marshaled and corralled my thoughts, brought my focus back to fishing -- jumped back into the present. I reeled in the one that didn't land where I wanted it. I paid closer attention to my physical actions, and I got that line back out, where I wanted it. That morning, the actions were second nature, requiring no concentration for a flawless fling. But by late afternoon, I was exhausted. That when focus was increasingly important. It's late afternoon, this next week, you have to concentrate to get the parts to work correctly. They will, if you focus.

Pisces: This is going to be some fun, coming up. That can be a totally ironic statement, or it can be a totally factual statement, or it can be a somewhat facetious expression. It's all about what you choose, the first thing in the morning, when you wake. It's all about how you care to tackle that which lays in front of you. It's all about the choices that you make. Some of these are big decisions, momentous even. Others? It could be a simpler kind of choice. Cream or 2% in the coffee? Dry coffee creamer? Black? Sugar or sweetener, or bitter? Personally, I like my coffee black with no sweetener. But that's just my personal preference. Sometimes, in the afternoon, I'll like a little touch of foamed milk, just enough to let espresso curl up around the dollop. Soften the flavor with impinging on the true essence of the beverage. Which is a choice that I make. You get to make some

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decisions. Starts with what kind of a day you want to have. Starts with how you face some of the daily adversity. Starts with your attitude. As I've suggested, I tend to see this as "fun," perhaps as challenging, but Pisces amusement is all but guaranteed. The way you deal with what happens, your attitude, that decides whether it's an ironic statement, the "fun" part, or if that is factual.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 10.23.2008

"My age is a lusty winter,

Frosty but kindly."

Shakespeare's As You Like It (II.iii.55-6)

Aries: As I get a little older, I've grown to realize one of my most precious resources is time. I don't have a lot of time to squander. More important than money, more important than computers, books, or even more important than music, time is the single resource I have to manage effectively. I was figuring, you know, as an Aries, that you could follow me on this idea, about managing your time effectively. The first tool I used, and it served me well for years, was a simple "Month-at-a-glance" type of calendar. Since then, the tools for effectively managing my time have changed from simple paper calendar -- operated with a pencil -- to various and increasingly complex devices from original PDAs to computers to both smart phone and computers. Still, the point to the exercise is to make that I leave enough blank places in my schedule where I can do what is necessary to feed my soul. Reading, writing, generally avoiding real work, all of that is part of what's required. As the first of the holiday crush hits? Time. It's what you can manage.

Taurus: There's a textbook I keep on hand; I picked up my copy at the used book store. A little beaten, cover's worn, and I use it as a handy reference for information on my travels. I saw a new copy of the book, in the store, the other afternoon. Discount copy. Discount store. New edition, but I looked at the cover, same text, just a new picture and an updated author's picture. Guy's a lot older in the new picture. Other than that? The text is the same. I was tempted, I'll admit, and I hefted the new edition, but the copyright notice indicated that it was the same material that I've already got in a well-worn copy sitting on my desk. Question is, should I get a new copy? The words themselves haven't changed, and in the new copy, even the pagination is the same. Each page corresponds to a the same page as before. Nothing's changed! I hefted the new copy of the text, looked at the steeply discounted price, it was still more than I paid for the used copy, and while the store's tracking software, I'm sure, would register it as a sale, and it would incrementally help that author, if he's got a new hardback version -- my older version is softcover -- he's already doing okay. Besides, the older, soft version works just fine with me. These are the questions a good Taurus needs to ask before embarking on that new project. Is the old good enough?

Gemini: This surely makes me look good but it doesn't do one bit of good for you. Therein is the problem, and I don't have a facile answer for the Gemini question. At some point, though, you've got to decide when enough is enough. What's the Gemini breaking point? When have you had your fill? When is enough really enough? There's a time to make a

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stand for whatever you believe in, and that time is rapidly approaching. Or maybe it's passed by and you didn't deem the issue worth making a stand for. About. Whatever. Maybe it's not that big of a deal? When I first wrote that, I thought of it as a statement, but the question mark sort inserted itself before I could edit, and I thought, it looked nice. Even better? Even better. Are you making a bigger issue out of a tinier issue, or is your point really valid? Tough questions. I think, though, if you look at it, it might not be the big, hairy deal you've painted it to be. But that could be me.

Cancer: Curb your enthusiasm. It's quite all right to be cautiously optimistic, but don't let it show. It's that simple. Let's paint a Crab-like Cancer face on top of the inwardly smiling individual. Maybe not dire or dour so much as a poker face. Bland. Nondescript. Unrevealing. Some folks would call this a "poker face," but not me. That's such an overused expression, I'd stay away from the term. Besides, the connotation of "poker face" implies that there's a game of chance. Luck, betting and beating the odds, and no. Not at all. This bland exterior on a happy interior is about recent and upcoming events. Act taciturn and unmoved. I'm not saying that you're involved in a high-stakes game that should go your way, I think of this more as a long-shot sure-thing. Something where you've already figured the odds are in your favor, only, the trick? Don't let anyone else in on your secret, hence the unmoved face. Curb the outward display of happiness, that's all.

Leo: As the most regal and grandest fire sign that there is, a Leo (The Leo) does not suffer change gracefully. Especially if this is change wherein an outside force is acting upon your Leo self, and you don't feel like this is a change that you would like to make. I'm not saying that you have to change, but over the course of the week, there's going to be an indication that a change would be helpful. A change in the Leo demeanor, a shift in point-of-view, a modified cruise route. This isn't that big of a deal. When me and buddy hit one lake, we always accelerate away from the dock, barrel along the lake's southern flank, and hit a certain inlet first. Do it every time. Same as always. However, last week? We launched and just drifted. Pictures might be up on the web site. But it was a successful venture, never hit the usual places. It wasn't so much of a change as just not doing nearly as much. Didn't burn a lot of fuel racing around. Just drifted -- not even that far from the launch ramp. So when I talk about a small change, a course correction for Leo, it doesn't have to be a big deal.

Virgo: Saturn is known as a staid and conservative planet. Saturn's influence in the Virgo section of the sky, it's easy, "Predict bad things -- can't go wrong." I'm paraphrasing an ancient astrology reference. But I'm also not inclined to always hew to the letter of the message. I wonder if the upcoming Saturn and Uranus transit doesn't have a lot to do with new and improved Virgo implementation. There's always one, and I can hear that Virgo in the back, "So what are we implementing? Does this mean more hard work for me? See? He really doesn't like Virgo at all." The last two questions are an attack on me, rather than facing what the problem is, and as a rhetorical device, a useful way to get around the original question. Yes, it's more work for Virgo. Yes, it's a new idea that needs to be launched, like, really soon, and yes, it's going to get off to a stuttering start. As far as the rest of the Virgo questions? Ah, c'mon, I've dated more Virgos than any other sign. Please. Still have the Virgo love here. But that doesn't mean that you're going to be able to get out of having to pull an extra shift or two -- just to get this all into gear.

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Libra: Studies -- scientific studies, done by scientists -- studies have proven that the astrofish.net horoscopes are accurate approximately 83% of the time. Then, there's a statistic that suggests 46% of all statistics are made up on the spot. However, whether it's fact or fiction? There's a weird feeling floating along in Libra. Not really good, but then, not really bad, either. A little off to one side, but then that's also sort of the to-me, a little to the left or the right, but not quite centered. As much as I'd like for you to be balanced and all together, I can't promise that's going to happen. It is good to realize that you're just a little to the left -- or right -- of where you want to be. I'd like to suggest, too, that you use my sure-fire, crack-team of scientists, the ones who do the scientific studies, and you can quote them. Nothing is better than having a self-appointed expert back your case. Individually, I'm unsure of what the Libra case is, but collectively, nothing beats having an expert witness stand up for you. Or, you can do like me, and I can usually find two sources that will infallibly back me: Shakespeare and the inter-web. It's out there, on a web page, evidence to support your cause-Libra. And, I'm sure, I can come up with a Shakespeare quote to match it, too.

Scorpio: Buddy of mine is a welder. If it's metal, or just metallic, or even Metallica, he can join it together with fused metal. Oxy, TIG, Mig, I'm not even sure what all the systems are. I was thinking about his welding because his work is both strong, and in a relative way, pretty. The seams are joined properly, the welds are even, the surface results look good. And hold. Strong and pretty. All with the proper application of heat. Understand that sometimes it's done with electricity, arc welding, but it's all about the same. Still hot stuff. I got off thinking about him because Mars is like a butane torch. Hot enough to braise, but probably not hot enough to melt. Not quite. Burn? Sure, if it's mishandled. Like any of the tools on my buddy's truck, handled in an inappropriate manner? Can burn. Maim, even. Mars is like a torch, I was thinking of a simple butane torch. Mars is frying along in Scorpio. So what are you going to do? You can join things together -- in such a manner as to last forever, or you can burn stuff. Which is more appealing?

Sagittarius: About ten days, maybe most near two weeks away? We've got the weirdest little heavenly hint. Has to do with a lot of Sagittarius material. I could sing, "These are a few of our favorite things," but I think the antecedent might be lost. Will be lost. Oh, never mind. I'm not a singer, not by any measure. Pick about three favorite things. Items, actions, well, we are Sagittarius, probably more an action item than a thing, but pick about three. Three of our favorite things? Got an image in your Sagittarius mind's eye? Three of those things, now, discard two of those three. It's about figuring, now, what some priorities are for then, two weeks hence. We got a weird as can be time, a place in time and space where there's a much more narrow focus required. Instead of working with that when it happens? As the bottom falls out, or the sky falls, or whatever? It's matter of already having our priorities in place. Pick one of those three favorite things. Then plan on concentrating on just that one. It's easy, if you get a head start now.

Capricorn: Growing complexities in your life can be a problem. Solution? Simplify. For the next seven to ten days? Couldn't think of better time to excise superfluous extraneous material that just doesn't belong. And there are many ways to get rid of excess. Personally, I prefer a monk-like existence. I like to keep it simple. Minimum of equipment, minimum of baggage, minimum of operating gear. Fewer moving parts means fewer things break. Instead of buying, consuming, and "getting" try to unload some, This

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is against conventional astrological lore, but then, you're an exceptional and unconventional individual, try unloading instead of loading up.

Aquarius: This exercise has been faithfully recorded in more than one medium on the website. It's not a big deal. It's an accident that occurs frequently for fisherman. Fisher-people, really. All of us (Aquarius) can relate. It's the matter of getting hooked by our own hooks. Happens. Way it goes. If it's a lure, say, a nice topwater lure with a pair of big treble hooks? And one of those little barbed fingers works its way into our precious Aquarius flesh? Easiest course of action, instead of ripping it out, and taking a large piece of Aquarius flesh with it, on that barb? Consider following my advice, it's easier to punch it through. Cut the hook off, so only the barbed end is in the Aquarius flesh. Then gently push the curved bit of metal right on through, not catching on the barb, and not taking a pound of flesh. Much easier that way. I've performed this surgical procedure a number of times. On myself, on other fishermen. It's just easier not fight the hook's barb. Likewise, when this week presents a hooked situation, try something a little unusual in the solution. Like removing a hook with a barb? Same deal. Cut and push, not retrieve.

Pisces: There's a really nice topwater lure sitting on the top of a stack of books, and those books are on top of my desk. Little dusty in here, need to correct that. The lure is still in its original packaging. The hooks are safe from harm's way, or out of harm's way, or something. Can't catch on shirts or fingers, those being the two principle points of contact for the hooks, and that's what I'm warning about. Getting stabbed with one's own fishing lure isn't a big deal. Happens to me a lot. Sharp hooks are far more effective than dull ones. Likewise, new equipment tends to perform better. And new equipment that I might use next spring? That's months and months away. What should I do? Should I take this out of the package, drop it in the top of the correct tackle box, then hope that it doesn't get tangled up between now and next spring? I'm ready for some kicking topwater action, but that's not happening until we get through next spring's spawn. For a Pisces, this has nothing to do with bass spawning, or red drum, or even fish. This is about the planets, and how the planets are dropping packages, like that lure still in the box, and what you can choose to do? How about leave the lure, with its sharp treble hooks, in the package? It's a topwater that was on sale now, and will be very valuable later. But right now? Instead of making this complicated? Why not just leave it where it is? Think of those hooks. Sharp hooks.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 10.30.2008

"Who with saffron wings upon my flowers

Diffuses honey-drops, refreshing showers."

Shakespeare's The Tempest {IV.i.90-4}

There was a solitary and very out-of-place bee, honey bee, working a late fall foliage. Made me think of that. It's not yet winter in South Texas. Halloween takes a special significance as the center point to the coming weekend. In most traditions, Halloween is the time when the veil between the worlds, this one full of reality and the other worlds, full of myth and mystery, this is the time when the veil is the thinnest.

Aries: "I'm going to be a cowboy," and "I'm going to be Wonder Girl," and I want to be a Fairy Princess (it could happen -- I could do that). But let's face it. I don't really want to be a fairy anything unless it was a fairy fishing guide who happened to know where all the fish were, but that's not what any of this all about. It's all about what you really want to be. My personal favorite, the one I like to see? The younger women dressed in the "lady of the night/librarian" outfit. But that's personal with me, and it's kind of hard to put it all together, not to mention, getting the librarian stuff off, that's the worst. Again. That's not what this is really all about, or is it? There's a suggestion that waited to late to plan, and now you're stuck with a situation that there really isn't any easy way out of. Thinking back to the last librarian, though, I remember how long it took get her undressed. Linking that to Aries? All I'm saying, I don't care what your objective is, but whatever it is? It's going to take a lot longer than you think. You can get to whatever that objective is, just plan on it taking longer. Why I'll be dressed as a cowboy, can't miss with that.

Taurus: There's always one, and this year? Why not you? Always one who has the most outlandish and revealing, yet oddly tasteful and in the same breath, covers everything that needs to be covered, and still, for some reason? Seems incredibly sexy. Alluring. In the same "breadth." Little joke. Never mind. The point is to go ahead and go all out on the costume. There's a terrible sense that "the end is near" and as long as that kind of fatalistic attitude is floating freely? Might as well have some fun with it. The end isn't near. You and I know that. But as long as the "end of the worlders" are out and about, raising hell, and making quite a ruckus? No need to indulge any further than you want. I know one Taurus friend, and she'll stockpile water, canned food, ammunition and some designer camo outfits. However, I doubt anarchy is about to break out, but I really don't think that the emotional pulse is about to stop beating. It's how you choose to deal with comes along. I'd go ahead and rotate the stockpiled food and water, not that it matters for a Taurus, and I'd also make sure I have enough candy and goodies on hand for the

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halloween. Then, like I suggested at first, a good costume that is both revealing and yet modest, too.

Gemini: Instead of questioning and worrying about what you should be, or for whom you should vote, I've got a better idea. Do nothing. There's a tremendous amount of media pressure, holiday pressure, brain pressure, and finally, a huge amount of astrology pressure on the Gemini slice of the heavens. The biggest pressure, though, I would guess, comes from Saturn and Uranus. So I realize I should write a good Halloween scope for you, but I was wondering, instead of planning to do something, how about nothing? Instead of getting worked up, then worked over, then worked out? That's a huge amount of stress that can be easily avoided. Do nothing. At least one Gemini will call me up, perish the thought of using email, and that one Gemini will go on and on about how wrong I've got it, since there's so much to do, in Gemini terms and on Gemini time, and there's not enough of Gemini left to go around to fix it all, on Gemini terms, in Gemini time. That's the hint from: do nothing. Wait this one out. The trick with Uranus in this mixture? It's going to come, this sudden, clear, never-changing Gemini idea. During the next couple of days. Might even be a Halloween gig you see. The path will be clearly marked, the choices abundantly obvious. Start by doing nothing.

Cancer: I was looking over a query letter I just mailed out. The letter's gone, mailed it last week. When I opened up my word processing document, I was going to use that letter as a template, I discovered an error. "Dear Name," was my introduction. That sucks. I'm pretty sure that person won't be responding to my query. "Name" is too generic. Wasn't a mail-merge or spam, not directly, but indirectly, and especially with my lack of attention to detail? I won't be hearing back. That's waste of one envelope, one sheet of paper, about 15 minutes of my time, and one first class stamp. If I had to factor a cost, it was the equivalent of one half-hour reading from me. Same amount of time, same cost basis, really. So I'll write that one off. However, there was a valuable lesson in that note. When I looked at it again, I could either berate myself, flagellate until I was raw and bleeding, or just laugh. I opted to to laugh at myself, realize I'd made a pretty funny mistake, although, at least one recipient won't think so, and I'm going to remember to check that one slot in the next round of form letters I mail. None of this gives you a clue about Halloween, but it should serve as a reminder about "due diligence" and more important, about "proof reading." There's a time when a little arrogance is good. This isn't one of those times, but if you do slip up like me? Laugh it off.

Leo: It's all about Scorpio. That and other things, and what this amounts to? Sorry, Leo darling, it's not about you. It's about other people. But then, if you look at what is going on, maybe, for a change, this is okay that it's not about you. The basic influence is fixed: Scorpio Sun Add to that, the Saturn and Uranus conflagration, and there's a heady mix of stable yet unstable energy floating around. Some surprises, like, you could win the "best costume" contest and yes, you read that right here. But that's a small consolation in the larger view of the Leo Life. That's why I'm urging, begging, pleading, and most of all, warning you -- in the next couple of days, let the other person be the center of attention. The way it works out, hey this hits me, too, but for different reasons, let some other fool do the "hey, look at me!" yell. Then let that other person slam, into the ground, face first. Patience, reserve, a great well of understanding, and just a little bit of uncharacteristic

understatement will help ease your way through the coming days. Patience, other than an anomalous costume prize? Not much is happening. Maybe that's better.

Virgo: There's a yard, not far from the post office I frequent, and I walk past this yard, almost daily. Well, some days. Frequently, maybe a few times a week. There's a sign, "Posted: beware of dogs!" And there is, indeed, a nice mongrel who's getting a little gray on the muzzle, and he's not really that ferocious. Comes out. Barks at me once or twice, and more often than not, just sort sits and watches me. Wags his tail a time or two, he's sort of Black Lab and sort of a mutt. Not sure. Seems pretty smart and he reminds me of dog I once had. The mail man and the garbage man we deathly afraid of that dog, yet, it was nothing but the friendliest critter in the world. All bark. That one dog, I've watched as the mail man has delivered, let himself in, past the dog that barks at me, and just pets the dog once on the head, then gets on about delivering mail. I'm sure if I had to, I could easily befriend the dog. We're almost pals now, as he sees me, and he doesn't bother to bark, other than once or twice, more for form than anything else, I'm sure. As the planets unwind and unload, especially Saturn and Uranus, are you like that dog? Could be ferocious? But you're really not? Her just watches me, another weird person with not enough fur to keep him warm in the coming winter, a I walk on by. Friend or foe? Trick or treat?

Libra: The sun goes down a little earlier, the sun comes up a little later, and time zone thing changes. Then there's the non-Libra whiners. My little Libra friends are like the local weather patterns. I've seen this more than once. I was walking across the parking lot, and one half the lot was wet from a fall shower whereas, and there was a clear line of demarcation, the other half of the lot was dry. Dry as a bone. I thought about this the more I looked at your chart, and the more I poked at the planets in general, the more I kept getting this image that there was stuff falling all around the Libra quadrant, but nothing (bad) was hitting in the Libra slice. The chart I sue looks like a pie, maybe a pecan pie.

Scorpio: Happy birthday to you! Happy birthday to you! Repeat refrain. I think, though, a better option would be, "Repeat? Refrain." Sun, Moon, Mars, and before the next scope? Mercury, too! All in Scorpio! Or were. Will be. Anyway, instead of me going on and on about a Halloween costume idea you're not going to try -- since it came from me -- let's move onto a real prognostication: Repeat? Refrain. I'd suggest you keep from going over material that you've already covered. I'm not slow, but after so many years of rock and roll, I can be a little deaf. Unless the news is really good gossip. Not that I would ever stoop to juicy tidbits about what other people are doing, but there is an eternal fascination with other other folks' behaviors. Just so much more interesting. So, we can all sing you "Happy Birthday," but I think just one line wold be good enough. Doesn't need to be repeated over and over. Like the gossip, the news, and whatever else you're tempted to keep repeating? Might want to refrain from that. Just a birthday suggestion, not a command.

Sagittarius: I warned you last week to get ready for this little turning point, and like a good Sagittarius? You avoided my logical thinking and probably went o out for a beer or something. Coffee. I don't know, something. Hence the trouble. It's the eve before Valentine's Day and you don't have a thing to wear. Need to come up with a costume and

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pretty quick, too. Therein is part of the trouble. There's another pesky item that's floating, sort of like a little free-floating anxiety. Worried about something that is up and coming, and I can't place my finger on the worry, or rather, I can't properly identify the source of the troublesome thoughts.

Capricorn: Some days, it's the great big deals, the hundreds of thousands of dollar deals. The big picture, the big ticket items. The important stuff is big, huge and mostly, really expensive. But there's a point, a place that we get to, where it's not the big deals at all, it's the little deals. I've got a single keepsake from a old lover, and it's simple. Small, tiny, barely a desk ornament, yet, to me, it means the world. Times that were good. Times that were really good. Not so much the price of the item as what that tiny items represents. I could be silly and sentimental, or I could be a little more realistic, I know what the lover had to go through in order to acquire that little keepsake for me. It was a big deal. Or not, but it was a significant experience for me. But the woman in question, and the keepsake, and then, the meaning behind it all. The message? It's about the little things in Capricorn. Not the big deals that everyone thinks is a big deal, it's the little things. Some days, the dollar amount doesn't matter.

Aquarius: Let's pretend, for a minute. Let's pretend that you went trick or treating on Halloween. And let's pretend that, as an Aquarius, you got a bunch of good (teeth rotting) candy. Then, as you're digging through your candy bag, you find a bag of candy broke open. As you gather up the candy bits from the bottom of the bag, you happen across something that feels different. Smooth, hard, perhaps angular, perhaps circular, doesn't matter. You pull it out, and it looks like a precious stone. Like, perhaps one the matrons servicing you with candy? Maybe a stone came off a ring? Or maybe it was a secret admirer, wanted to make a point? Who knows, right? Just that you've now got, in your possession, a precious, or semi-precious, stone that might -- or might not -- be worth a lot of money. Return it? Find the true owner? Maybe you are the true owner and it found you? Lots of questions as Mars squares off against Neptune. Not a lot of answers. I'd save it tough, as the intrinsic value might be worth more than the monetary value.

Pisces: There are certainties in life. Sun comes up, Sun goes down, Moon comes up. Repeat, adjust for seasonal variations. There's a natural rhythm. I can hear it in the traffic patterns as cars pass in front of the this place, or as the train echoes down the street. I love being alongside a long freight train when it passes, the steel rails and wheels have a aural pattern that's distinctive and not often recognized as natural, manmade music. There's rhythm, music, patterns in just about every aspect of life. Usually. Except now. That's the problem. That usual patter, that normal ebb and flow, the way you're used to hearing and seeing, and even, to some extent, feeling the rhythm of the (streets, cars, trains, planes, buses, pedestrians), that get interrupted. What you're counting on and what happens? I'm just suggesting that there is an upset to your normal, preferred way of this material working out. Doesn't mean it's bad, oh heavens no, not bad, just a change. Might not feel like you caused the change, either. Might not even feel like you're in control, but be patient, that normal patter will return.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 11.6.2008

"Deep night, dark night, the silent of the night,
The time of night when Troy was set on fire;
The time when screech-owls cry, and band-dogs howl,
And spirits walk, and ghosts break up their graves,
That time best fits the works we have in hand."

Shakespeare's The Second Part of King Henry the Sixth (I.iv.11-15)

Aries: I know this one Aries girl, and with the fall out from Halloween now nothing more than a faded memory, I should warn you. I was thinking of that one mom, like I said, she's Aries, and I was considering her station in life, and what's going, and as the single parent of a pair of strapping young lads, yes, she'll do fine. Boys will be okay, too. That's not even a question. The problem? It's mom stealing candy from her own children. On one level, it's not even stealing, it's just doing a parental parenting behavior. Liberating all the overdose of sugars and artificial flavors, not to mention the potential harmful dye and colorings, yes, just doing parent's job of relieving the child of that burden of excessive bad taste. It's just that the mom, an Aries, she starts to eat that candy she's stolen from her own children. In and of itself, this isn't so bad. However, think about the harmful effects of all that sugar, all that artificial (and natural) flavoring, the colors, packaging, everything, consider the effects that it has on your system. All that sugar, while comforting, and even amusing, that can't be good for you.

Taurus: There's a local singer/songwriter/Taurus. He's good, for an old bar room brawler, honky-tonk junkie type. Part country, a little rock and roll, and possibly some soul, but I wouldn't count on the soul part. His live shows are fun. Period. He rocks the house. Or, more and more, the amphitheater, as his venues are getting bigger and bigger. The live show is careful crafted and choreographed, although, it appears to be spontaneous. There are a few of the older songs, some live stage banter, the joke, some more hits, the band introductions, another familiar song, a classic cover tune, then new material. But the new stuff is careful packaged between old and reliable hits. It's a good way to do it. Strategically placed. Can't be upsetting the crowd with too much unfamiliar material. Think about how the new songs are layered and folded into the old material? The songs everyone knows by heart? Bookends for new stuff. See what takes, see what stays the same. It's a good act; guaranteed fun for the whole family. I was thinking about the last time I saw this show, how there were a few new tunes that showed up the latest CD. The layering of old and new. Keep the faithful happy with the familiar. As the the planets and

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so forth ease long in Scorpio, remember to keep us all happy with a layers of old as well as the new.

Gemini: I was offended, when, last August, that's more than ten weeks passed, I saw the inklings of Xmas crap starting to migrate towards the displays of retail markets. I was highly offended. It's only worse, now. Thanksgiving has yet to arrive, and the big Xmas push is on, hoping to stem the tide in the economic world. It just sickens me to see devout high holy days crassly maligned and used for nothing more than ill-gotten gain. Picking on those poor, unsuspecting shoppers, consumers with no mind of their, behaving blindly, drooling, longing, and finally acquiring more useless stuff. This minutes hot fad. There's not going to be one item that you can get now, and be ready for the big fad in six weeks' time. Sorry, no guarantees there. There is, though, something you can do, and it's more like vow with yourself, maybe between you and me, not to buy anything you don't really need, not now. Groceries, sure, office supplies, like more ink, that's cool, too. But no new stuff. It's a little pause, and I'm not asking for a long time, but just curtail the retail for a typical Gemini long time. Might not even be the duration of the scope, not that it matters, it's just for a few minutes, don't give into the urges. Don't act like a little trained puppet animal, stupidly following all the dictates of some invisible master. Cut the puppet strings, pull the ventriloquist hand out of your backside. Just stop. Think, you're a Gemini, think about not acting or reacting, and pause for a second. Is it something you need, want, just desire, or is it just something, like so much Xmas hype, that you think that you might want, but you're not sure? Don't get swept away in the moment.

Cancer: "I poked a badger with a stick." That's what she said. I asked what the results were. It wasn't pleasant, that's for sure. The critter isn't called a "badger" for nothing. It's not the kind of creature you want to poke with a stick. Mean, more or less nocturnal, if I have my taxonomy correct. Biology, other than the basics, was kind of lost on me. So I'm not too sure about my badger data. Still, I don't think it's something you want to poke with a stick. So, let's save my Cancer friends some difficulty these days, maybe, instead of poking at it with a stick? Maybe try not doing much of anything towards a heavy, furry creature that doesn't look like it wants to play. Might not be the best idea. The problem is thart the comment, "I poked a badger with a stick" might be completely ironic in that the little Cancer girl might not have poked anything with a stick. Still, all I'm saying? Try not exacerbating the state of badgers and their relationships with Cancers by poking them with a stick. While there's all tis mess going on? Not doing something is just as valuable as trying to do to much. You get to make the decisions, but I'm suggesting that you put that stick down.

Leo: "Oh man, that's just gotta hurt," a buddy was explaining. I -- involuntarily -- winced at the description, Sounded like it would've hurt. A lot. Would've hurt a whole lot. The description of the event, oh, never mind, I don't want to embarrass anyone, but it sounded like the mistake was costly, but more than just costly, sounded painful. Not in a fun way, painful. The description, see, there was this mutual friend, and he was, oh, never mind. Too painful to repeat. Maybe a little dumb, too. Did I mention it wold wind up costing hundreds, if not thousands of dollars? All for a little mistake? And then the painful part, he got his, never mind, Bothers me just to think about it. You see someone like this, and the first thing you think, "Man, that's got to hurt, don't it?" I'm sure it does. Why would Leo be worried about that? I'm sure you're like me, you don't want to be the

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individual in pain. I can help prevent the Leo from suffering indignity and pain, mostly just pain, and then, there's the people who will come along say, "Man, that's got to hurt." Let's skip all this pain and problem, not to mention the embarrassment, what's worse, you know, if they got a video of it? And posted it on the inter-web thing? How bad would that be? Simplest way to keep this from happening? Don't.

Virgo: A lot of rural communities depend on Volunteer Fire Departments to handle "first response" calls. Volunteer Fire Departments, in many of the outlying local communities, depend on donations, grants, and bake sales to fund the cost of maintaining and operating the necessary emergency equipment. One place, not far from here, got a reputation as a strange one, the volunteer fire department runs a fireworks stand twice a year. Once in June to July 4th and then again, from December 1 through NYE. The volunteer fire department was throwing open the stand again, and they (the volunteers) were getting in stock, painting, and getting ready for next month. Some people might think this is a conflict of interest. I tend to look a little different, I think it's more like assuring job security. If those firemen aren't selling the firecrackers, someone else will be making the money, and at least with the volunteers, it's going to a good cause. The bonus is fireworks are a leading cause of brush fires, hence the job security. Think, can't say I haven't warned you about this, but think about the job security issue.

Libra: Full Moon is approaching, and that's going to lend a good flavor to the weekend. More or less. With Saturn and Uranus opposed to each other, there's a sense that the old guard needs to make way for the new kid on the block, and I'm not sure it's going to work that well. The simplest way to avoid problems for a Libra? Avoid problems. Catch phrases, like, "Let me get back to you on that," and "I'm not qualified to make a comment on that particular subject at this moment," are good phrases to keep handy. Rather than get buried, this a time when tactical avoidance pays off big. Avoiding a fight is the first step towards winning. Avoiding the problem, you can see it looming up ahead, that's the first way around. I was riding with a friend, it was a little eco-friendly ultra-low-emissions vehicle, and in the November rush hour traffic, we saw both saw that the freeway was stopped up, from rolling to ground to a halt. My friend took the fast approaching exit, a deft maneuver, across two lanes of slowing traffic, just in time to speed up and then slow down, and finally, slide along the feeder road while the freeway itself was stop and go. Mostly stop, less go. We were headed to the next exit, I think it was TexMex place. We passed a long line of stalled traffic on the freeway. It was a simple, last-minute move, but that early exit prevented an hour or more of frustration, waiting to get to the next exit. It's a good example of "problem avoidance," although, I'd watch the exit from the wrong lane trick. That was just a lucky break.

Scorpio: The West Coast (I'm thinking San Francisco and Seattle) has fog. Fog, fog items, fog cutters, legendary fog, and so on. So when I mention fog, few people realize that it's particularly common element along the Eastern Flank, sort of the right shoulder, to the Texas Hill Country. West of here, all fabled and storied Hill Country highlands. East and South? Coastal Prairie, Brush Country, stretches to the beach. Between the two? Or as a cause of the two? Or whatever the correct geographical term is? Warm coastal breezes meet cooler country air, and there's fog. Seen it on the lakes, seen it in the low lying areas, seen it at sunrise, or just before, and it's not uncommon. Not at all. Cool weather meets warm waters, results in fog. Eventually, the morning fog burns off. I've been

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headed out in a fishing boat, before sunrise, or right after sunrise, and the fog is so thick, there's very limited visibility. That's what this feels like, lots of fog. The fog in Texas, though, along the flank of the Hill Country? This fog burns off. Usually gone by 8 AM. There is a fog that creeps into the Scorpio chart at night. And like the local flavor of fog, a strong cup of coffee, a little extra tie being cautious, and I expect the Scorpio vision to be at 100% effective capacity by, let's say, ten in the morning. Careful in the fog, even though, like the local version, it doesn't last too long.

Sagittarius: Moral high ground is a lovely place to be. Affords us Sagittarius types a great view from our vantage point, that moral high ground. But there's a cautionary tale that goes with standing in place, while we can survey -- and judge -- all that we see: details. If "God is in the details" then maybe we'd better pay attention to some of the details. Our moral high ground is a lovely place to get a grand overview, a chance to survey all that lies before us. That's good. But there is an inherent problem with minute, finite, and even the tiniest of hidden clauses, something which we might not be able to see from our moral high point. While, in general, we are correct, what I'd watch for? As the Moon gets more and more towards Full? I'd watch that we don't start preaching when we should be listening, instead. I'm not saying for sure that this will happen, but there's a tendency for us to get a little too full of something, maybe just hot air, maybe organic bovine by-product, and we should just watch that a little more closely. The cause? While we're looking down from on high? We miss obvious clues that are hard to see at a distance.

Capricorn: I've got one client, she wouldn't buy a lottery ticket when the Moon was in a fixed sign. This scope starts out with the Moon in Aquarius (fixed, air) and ends with a Full Moon in Taurus (fixed, earth). So this would be a time, according to that one person's mythology, not to consider even buying a lottery ticket. And as I talk about lottery tickets, I tend to look at these at metaphorical little slips of paper that might hold untold riches. Cash value is certainly a lot less than the stated value. I can hear the Capricorn worry machine picking up speed on that, "See? Even if I win, it's not really that much, not nearly enough as I thought it should be." It's all free money and I tend to regard the lottery as allegorical. I doubt that you're really going to win a huge chunk of change from the lottery. Doesn't happen to mere mortals, and besides, you haven't even bought a lottery ticket. That's not what this is about, though. This is about putting yourself in a position that this sort of event can occur. Now do consider that the Sun is also in Scorpio (fixed, water), so that lends a strong, stubborn kind of energy to the situation. I'm not saying that you should buy a lottery ticket, but that kind of luck, where something seems to almost fall from the sky? Bet it happens this week/ And if it's really good? I would like 1%, just for the sake of form, you know, I predicted it for you.

Aquarius: Post office I use is about a half mile from here. Maybe a little more, but who's counting? I'm there, more often than not, weekdays, some time in the afternoon, weather and schedule permitting. I tend to wander in around noon, and there is usually a line at the counter, sometimes stretching out the door. I rarely have any interaction with counter people, other than to pay for the PO Box, and sometimes mail a weird package. I had to ship a small box the other afternoon. I walked in, then, before I even checked my mail box, I glanced up and there was no one in line at the counter. Empty. It was shortly after noon, and I would expect, I tend to observe, that there's a long noontime crowd. Office workers, a local warehouse, some city employees and at least one local university,

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they all call at noon. What flummoxed me, in a good way, was the lack of customers. Calm before the storm. Quiet before the loud noise. I walked up, smile, and asked where everyone was. "Oh they'll be here, you can be sure," the guy at the counter assured me, "yeah, they'll be here yet." I don't suppose that it's really that lucky of a break, but I was ready to spend hours in line, and I didn't have to. When you stumble into a situation where you seem to get a little break, where you least expect it, in a manner that is out of the ordinary? Enjoy it. Can't promise exactly when, but soon, very soon.

Pisces: I started working on the Pisces charts, and all I came up with were more questions than answers. Which is kind of a problem, as that's the way it is. More questions than answers. I erased everything I'd written, and then I looked at the astrology charts again. See, Mr. Uranus is moving backwards whereas Mr. Saturn is moving forwards. There's a dynamic between the two planets, as well, since Uranus energy and Saturn energy don't exactly get along. Saturn is old school whereas Uranus is newfangled. In the long term, I see the new, inventive, interesting theories taking hold. However, that's not without a fight, and Saturn can put up one mean fight. Old style fighting, Possibly a little dirty. Maybe a kick that lands below the belt. Thing's worse than a punch that hits someplace that isn't scrupulous. Uncalled for. "That wasn't nice." Exactly. So when someone comes up and starts to wind up for that punch? Block. Turn sideways. Spin, bob and weave. New and better will ultimately prevail, just might take a little spinning and weaving in order to get there from here.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 11.20.2008

"Abide the change of time,

Quake in the present winter's state and wish

That warmer days would come."

Shakespeare's Cymbeline [II.iv.7-9]

Aries: There's the sad state of tackle boxes. While I was thinking of this in relation to my own gear, it could apply to Aries and Aries thinking. I've got one friend, has one little sad tackle box, in it, not much more than one or two hooks, a single bobber, two lures, and a small spool of mono line. The line is really light test, suitable for a leader in highly speculative positions, but that's about it. There's dirt, maybe a fall leaf or two in the bottom of the little tackle box, it's not even a proper cantilevered drawers set up, just a little removable tray. Sort of a sad statement about fishing tackle. I don't know why I was thinking of my buddy's gear, other than, it's a sad way to live. But he doesn't fish that often; maybe gear isn't a priority in his life. Although, I can't imagine why it wouldn't be. As the many holidays start to draw closer, it's time to think about how you manage your resources. Is it time to sort through the old Aries tackle and toss out material you're not using? Time to cut loose with stuff you don't want (and unload stuff you don't need)? Stock up on other items? Maybe, in the interest of filling it up later, buy a larger tackle box so you can fill it with proper equipment? Or is that spending money needlessly? It's all about how you manage your resources.

Taurus: Careful when you play with fire, I don't want you to get burned. Simple advice. I teased the planets and especially a Taurus chart to develop a simple piece of advice to see you through to Thanksgiving. It's all about being careful about what you do with the fire that you create. I'm not saying it's bad, I'm not saying you shouldn't, I'm just advising a little caution. I was tasked with moving some rocks. Not really a big deal, friend-of-friend kind of deal, should take about half an hour. I'm not much on landscape, so I figured it would be some good exercise. Out-of-doors, exercise, sounded good to me. Everyone benefits, a couple of us showed up at the appointed time, and we did the job. I came prepared, though, I was ready. I brought a pair of cheap leather work gloves. When I say cheap, I think the gloves cost a dollar. Maybe two dollars, but I doubt it. In the half hour of handling the rough rocks, my delicate hands were neither sullied with grime from the task, nor, were my hands roughened from the handling of the rocks. I wasn't

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playing with fire, but I was prepared to handle what I had to handle in a cautious manner. So when I make a reference to not getting burned? In my case, my example? Easiest way to handle with caution was the buy a cheap set of work gloves. Save my skin. Literally.

Gemini: It's sort of a joke, sort of not, that a good Gemini is classically Attention Deficit Disorder material. All the time. All the way. Every minute of every day. Short attention span, or, as I prefer to see it, multitask oriented. Masterful jugglers, be another way to see it. While I'm not a clinical person, I still doubt my analysis will stand up under serious scrutiny. But this isn't about serious scrutiny, besides, who has time for that? Not Gemini! Not Now! No Way! With Mars and Mercury, both moving into Sagittarius, that's going to take the early part of the Gemini sign and add fuel to the Apparent Attention Deficit Disorder that you might, or might not, suffer from. But it sure will seem like you're suffering from it. Holiday madness compounded by the relative position of the sun, the movement of Mars and Mercury, and compounded by the Moon's movement, and you're all over the place, all the time. A little mad, a little sad, a little distracted, and what were we talking about? Focus. That's a problem at this moment. Since it's a problem? Why worry about it, go ahead and try to get all 43 things done at once. If anyone can, it's a Gemini. I'm just suggesting that a pause in there, to collect your scattered wits, that pause might refresh. Oh, never mind. Rush along, nothing to see here.

Cancer: This next couple of days is all about getting ready. I've got at least three friends, Cancer women, who will be spending the next couple of days preparing food. Mass quantities of various concoctions will be prepared. Turkey, ham, fruit things, vegetable things, sweet things, not-so-sweet things, and the list goes on and on. I'm thinking of these three individuals because I'm hoping to receive a small amount of their excess. Leftovers, left behind, a little extra on the side, or maybe, I can just help clean up and lick the bowl clean? There's a lot of stuff that's possible, for me, as a non-Cancer observer. Just because three of my friends are preparing to feed whole families, and just because three of my friends are wholesale preparing for the holiday, that doesn't mean that every Cancer should be baking goodies this weekend. However, I'd just suggest, as a possibility, that something like cooking, if not cooking itself, would be the activity. It's all about preparation. A little preparation is going to go a long way in easing the next few days, the next few weeks, the next few months, even the next few years, a little advance work, ground rules, guidelines, ethical and moral considerations, or just something as simple as a recipe to follow? A little preparedness goes a long way.

Leo: Waning Moon, Waning Pluto. Waning Scorpio. That's three. Once the Sun shifts into Sagittarius, there's a small hint that life in Leo will be a degree better. The trick is to not get too caught up in the hectic pace. Holidays infuse a certain frantic sense of kinetic energy, almost like an unstoppable perpetual motion machine. Instead of trying to staunch the flow of holiday cheer, but without engaging in it yourself? There's a conundrum, and, at the same time, a goal. How can a decent Leo like yourself float along in the holiday stream without getting caught up? I kind of imagine that this would be like tubing, a popular southwestern sport, in the warmer months. Which makes it a little hard to envision how tubing and the holiday mess before T-Day is similar. The trick is to float close to the tube with the cooler, keep your head above water so you can check out

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the girls in their swimsuits and short shorts, and catch some rays while not getting too sunburned or waterlogged. Think about last summer, think about tubing opportunities, and think about how you're just like that, now. Riding in a tube, only, it's floating in the morass of holiday crap that erupts. Just ride this one out. Doesn't affect you, not directly. Just imagine, it's like a ride on that inner tube. Floating, blissfully along, not a care in the Leo world.

Virgo: Next week, Tuesday & Wednesday. The days right before Thanksgiving? While everyone else is worried about turkey, dressing, giblets and gravy? Get out and fish. I don't care what the weather's like, just get out some. One day, or the other, both would be good for fishing. I've got at least one fishing buddy who doubts this whole "astrology" thing, but he does follow the moon phase for fishing. Which is why I was suggesting, for Virgo, the day before Thanksgiving as a good day to fish. I'm not so sure that it's the absolute best day, but there's method to my suggestion: get out. Get away. Let go. Just get away from the TV, the radio, the cell phone, pager, browser, email, snail postal, get away from it all? A few hours? You'll be ever so much happier, and any of the problems that arose during your absence? Any of those problems can be dealt with after you arrive back from fishing. You might have a stronger of fish, destined for the freezer, you might have nothing more than pictures and images, but a quick escape like that? It bring peace of mind, and that's what you need the most. A clear brain, right before the holidays? As the old advertising tag line used to suggest? Priceless.

Libra: If we just ease on into this? That might work out better. Instead of falling into the same trap that everyone else seems to go for? Stop and think about easing into the next week. The weeks, the holidays, the crush is on. I'm all about not getting too worked up for the holidays. I'm all about not letting this kind of madness take over. I'm all about letting someone else do all the hard work. For several years running, I've managed to spend a portion of my holiday -- Thanksgiving -- way from the crush of the holiday. The madness, take one giant Libra step back from the insanity. Take one (small) step towards imposing some kind of rational choices -- and limits -- on the upcoming holiday season. Like this, I know this one Libra, and her family depends on her for a plethora of desserts. Weeks of cooking ensue, apple pie, pean pie, Chex-Mex mix, handmade tamales, Xmas tamales, dessert tamales, pink cake, pink cookies, sugar cookies, oatmeal cookies, family heirloom Honey cookies, and the list goes on and on. Cake. Pie. Cookies by the truckload. Instead of doing this all at once? Instead of doing it all? It's easy to farm out some of the food to other people. Or, at the very least? Just pick up a cake on the way, from the grocery store. That's what I mean by ease on into this holiday crush.

Scorpio: Tail-end Scorpio birthdays then relax. Two days, then relax. Once Sagittarius gets started? Once we get the Scorpio stuff finished? There's a sense of relief that floods you. I can't predict the actual weather, but I can predict the astrological weather. What that shows is that there's a long-awaited cooling front that's going to hit. It was like a cold front that pushed through a little while back. The weather guy called it a cold front, then he looked at the map and temperatures, and he said it was a "not as warm as it's been front." Which, to some, might be a form of relief. The little fish in the lakes? Weather change like this? Means those little fish get hungry. Hungry fish, one last feeding frenzy before the true onset of winter? Works for me. Works for my fine Scorpio friends, too. That's what it's all about, that last feeding frenzy, or, better yet, taking advantage of that

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last feeding frenzy, and then, there's the "not as cold as it's been" front. Enjoy that shift, as well. Not big shifts, little changes that might mark larger changes looming on your (event) horizon.

Sagittarius: I've got another birthday coming up. That's no big deal. One of the (many) schools I've attended sent me a birthday card. Nice thought. Computer generated, mailing label and postage all just standard, it wasn't such a big deal. Made me think, tough, that would be a cool marketing rick, which, in fact, was what that card was about. It's called farming, and they were hitting up alumnae for dollars. While I, regrettably, can't send any spare change this year, it was clever. Made me think that it would be a good idea to have my address book and my astrology chart program linked. I could tell when a client, past or present, would be about to win the lottery, and I could easily predict that. Faster, easier, more to the point. A little marketing tip. Only, I've got maintain scruples, and that would sort of violate my client confidentiality thing I follow. And besides that, it would be just rude to be hitting up people on their birthdays. Or when something dire was occurring. To be honest, it's less about scruples and more about inherent Sagittarius laziness. We might as well just call it what it is. I'm really too lazy to dig through the address book and send out cards to various folks on important astrological dates. I like the idea, probably not going to happen. It's all about limitations. Know what yours are. Sure helps us call it the way it is, instead of the way other people would like us to see it.

Capricorn: Last week, mentioned a little about quitting three things, end of this week, beginning of next week? It's a good to make it stick, just one, though. Drastic lifestyle changes, like, "I'm giving up all coffee for forever," sweeping, monumental changes are difficult. I was once, the doctor asked what my daily diet consisted of. "Got a 12-cup coffee maker, run through at least one pot in the morning. Mexican food for lunch and then, a 88 oz. Diet Coke for dinner, why?" Doctor suggested sweeping lifestyle changes. Which I did. Sort of. I did stop coffee for a few days, but I was miserable. Likewise, when you get a suggestion for a sweeping change? Go easy. Maybe slow down instead of cold-turkey stopping. Maybe reduce some factors instead of eliminating them all, maybe, just look for a little moderation. The biggest trouble is that Venus is joining you, along with Jupiter, and that just pushes the pleasure principal to the front. The foremost. The biggest. I'm not saying that you shouldn't enjoy yourself, as this can be a remarkably fun time. I'm just saying, like me, maybe just cutting back a little would help. Give up coffee cold? What, are you crazy?

Aquarius: All we need right now is a little padding. I've used tough, old office chairs as my primary sitting arrangement for longer than I care to recall. I've had fancy padded chairs, but those don't last in the rigorous environment where I tend to work. My "office" which oftentimes nothing more than a desk in a the pare bedroom, or living room of a trailer, as it was for years, but I spend an inordinate amount of time at the desk, sitting. One of the best way to help preserve my sanity and internal peace is, the best thing to do? Add padding. Tough old office chairs, get one at a discount place, chair lasts for a few days, weeks, months, one last a few years, but after a while, they all breakdown. Still, the one addition to the tough office chairs? Padding. When I work, where I work, I don't want to be too comfortable. Not the way it works best. Can't have anyone getting cozy here. It's not about being cozy, though, this is about what an Aquarius needs to make it through

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the next week. It's simple: padding. This isn't an elaborate arrangement like the combat gear worn by Football Professionals, that's not the kind of padding I'm talking about. Nor is it the kind of padding folks used to do to their taxes, no not that. It's a simple cushion, costs about two dollars, and that's what you need to survive the next week. Just a little padding under the fundament.

Pisces: "Dammit, I'm not happy, and I'm not going to be happy, and that's just the way it is!" I can then imagine such a violent proclamation punctuated with a wee little Pisces girl-child stomping her wee little Pisces girl-child feet. Not really something that is going to bother the rest of us. But a Pisces scorned, that's not a good thing. I'm not ignoring you. I'm sure you feel like you're being ignored, but you're not. It's just that the holiday madness has set in, and the rest of us, the none-Pisces people you know? We're all rushing around. It's not like we're ignoring you. I have to retract that statement, it is like we're ignoring you. We're not but, in reality, sure seems like we are. Part of that is the T-day thing. Part of that is the last weekend before the holidays start in earnest. And part of it is that you're important to us, the non-Pisces people, we love you, but we've got more distractions than we can effectively deal with. Someone is getting cut out of the mix. You can get your feelings hurt, your pride, your precious ego, or you can understand that there are a lot projectiles hurtling through the air, and maybe you're Pisces self doesn't want to be noticed because that could make you a suitable target. Sometimes being missed isn't a bad deal.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the seven days starting: 11.13.2008

"Winter tames a man, woman, and beast."

Shakespeare's the Taming of the Shrew [IV.i.10]

Aries: I got a friend of mine, he's an old man. Elderly gentleman. Whatever you would like to call him, although, I know, he prefers, "crotchety old man." No, seriously, that's how he likes to be typified these days. He drives a like a little old man, too. Slow. In the fast lane, Holding up traffic. As is his right, by golly. And for once, I'm standing with him, but in part, I know that he really did serve in a war, and I know that he's tried to help make this country a great country by doing his civil best. And these ays, if he chooses to drive in the fast lane, barely going the speed limit? That's his choice, and I figure he's earned that right. He won't be driving much longer, and that's another point to consider. There's a long incline, west of town, on the freeway. He, we (really), was motoring along at a relatively good clip, for him, at about 60 MPH. The speed limit is at least 70, might be 80, and the default fast lane speed is nothing short of 80 or 90. So what he was doing was endangering himself. However, he's earned his right. Go around. Watch out for him. My Aries friend, you, too, have earned your right to go slow in the fast lane. You can if you want. However, just as a suggestion, maybe try and move with the flow of traffic, and if that's too quick for your tastes? Move over to the right-hand side?

Taurus: I was in a certain brand of coffee shop the other afternoon. You know the place, and I deign to mention the name since it goes against my sentiments. I prefer the little, independent, non-aligned coffee shops. But in a pinch, when I'm in a foreign place, when I can't find a local spot, I can always trust that chain. Dependably bad, but still, they can make a proper cup of coffee. However, it's getting close to the holiday season, and I just don't think it's right for certain fall holiday flavors to be available just yet. Egg Nog Latte should not appear until after T-Day. Which is really what this was all about, for Taurus. It's about over-anticipating holiday events. It's one thing to be prepared, it's completely uncalled for to be rolling out all the Xmas stuff before Thanksgiving. Now, like me and my moaning about holiday flavors of coffee, there's an upcoming holiday problem that your Taurus self is worried about. Worry, panic, mayhem and confusion. All sets in. And this is long before the holiday ever arrives. All worked up over something you don't, you can't, over an issue that has yet to materialize. Instead of fruitlessly spinning your wheels, like me and my complaints about Xmas flavors before T-day? See how silly I look? Think about how you're wasting good Taurus energy, worrying about a problem that might not even be a problem. Well, except, in my example, I'm sure you'll agree that the flavors have to wait until, at the very least, it cools off some.

Gemini: Mars is going to slip into Sagittarius in the coming few days. This will not go smoothly for Gemini. While it won't go smoothly, I didn't say that it wasn't any good for

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my favorite (mutable) Air Sign. Mars is energy, action, and there's day of reckoning coming along. The only problem with that, after I looked back at what I wrote, I realized that about every day is a day of reckoning for a Gemini. Sometimes, every moment is like that. It's a big deal, whatever it is that is in front of the Gemini at this moment. One method of dealing with the Mars, as he pokes along in Sagittarius, the simplest expression of that Martian force? He's going to activate you. Your Gemini self will be even more Gemini. Is this good or bad? I tend to see the good, and that means your mind will be racing, probably more laps than ever before. Mars is also about physical activity. If there was a way to think and work out at the same time? That will help. We all get inspiration in different places. The thought of treadmill in a gym is abhorrent to me, all that walking and not getting anywhere? But I've got a Gemini friend, and he'll be at the Gemini, watching a favorite soap on TV, listening to an iPod, and reading the Wall Street Journal. That's just the way he rolls, and I'm sure he'll call, afterwards, with a great idea to run past me. Working out, Gemini style. It will help the Mars thing.

Cancer: We can make this easy or we can make this difficult, all depends. All depends on you, my little Crab-Moon-child friend. All depends on you. Imagine that you're on the observation deck of one of those huge, urban towers. The Space Needle in Seattle, the Stratosphere in Las Vegas, the Tower of the Americas in San Antonio, just imagine, I'm sure there are others, one in your neighborhood, even. On the deck, there's a set of monolithic proportioned binoculars. Consider, costs a quarter, usually, consider looking through the view finder, then the big binoculars themselves, and see what you can see. In the distance, what looks like far away is really close. Now, the way this works, as Mars swings into Sagittarius, and getting ready for some other astrologically measured movements, imagine that you swing those big binoculars around, so the focus of the viewfinder is you. Cancer. Front and center, under a kind of cosmic microscope. Or something like that.

Leo: I wouldn't want to pass judgement, especially not a Leo, but one of you has her (his) head in a very uncomfortable position. All I can suggest is that Plexiglas, installed in the navel, like, just cut a hole where your navel is? And then fill it in with a little circular piece of hard, clear plastic? Makes it a lot easier to see where you're supposed to be going. But this applies to only one Leo in particular. If that doesn't fit? Then the rest of this is gentle, good, and not worrisome at all. The Moon is shifting around from full to last quarter, means there's a certain tension in day-to-day dealings. But that won't really affect you too much, other than interpersonal communications with the "lesser 11" (non-Leo). And Mr. Mars slides into Sagittarius, again, good for Leo. So, this is basically it's all good, unless, of course, you're that one Leo who refuses to see what is really going on. Plexiglas might help that one.

Virgo: Fish aside, I really don't have much of a shoe fetish. I'm pretty simple, in that matter, it's either cowboy boots (handmade in Texas) or variations on theme, sport sandals (handmade in Texas). The fish reference is to Pisces, and that sign is associated with feet. "Astrofish.net" is where that thought comes from, and it's only loosely connected to this. I was thinking about those boots, see, it's time to send my boots off to get resoled. My problem is that the process, I prefer to have the factory do it, the whole process means I'll be without my favorite pair of boots for the next 6 or 8 weeks. Can take even longer, sort of depends. I've learned to not send the boots off when Mercury is

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retrograde, as it took 12 weeks that time, but it was my own fault. Why is this an issue? It's been a little chilly at night. Cold weather is in the offing, maybe. Maybe not. But if I send my boots out to be worked on? I'll probably be wearing my nice sandals while it's freezing and raining. Just the way it goes. It's not comfortable. Saturn is all about cosmic timing. And with Saturn where he is? I'd think twice about sending the boots out to be worked on, might put a cramp in your normally good Virgo style. The way I see it? I can wear boots when it's warm out, although it's a tad uncomfortable. But I can't really comfortably wear sandals when it's cold out.

Libra: I ran into a Libra friend, when I was out, walking around in the afternoon, I was close to the big shopping center downtown? And this one Libra, is was like she'd been busted by me, or something. "Oh, Hi! Kramer! Hi!" Then she tried to walk in a way that hid the big bags she was toting, she was trying to pretend that she didn't have anything with her. I'm not that bright, but I could detect, I think, there was the faintest hint of blush under the makeup. As in the her skin was reddening, ever so slightly. I'm not sure what the issue was. I don't recall any pledge of "non-commercial holiday" or similar statement. Nothing that I recalled. Wasn't a store where anyone would buy anything for me, again, not an issue. I didn't even have a horse in the race, so I don't know why the apparent guilt.

Scorpio: Birthdays and plan simple relief. Scorpio bullet points. Simple, declarative statements. Nothing fancy. No highlighted text. No special fonts. No excessive display of art. Minimalist. "Brevity is the soul of wit," Polonius once admonished his son (Hamlet Act II +/-). Then Polonius continued to talk until the Queen herself told him to shut up and get to the point. While I would tend to think of you as the Queen, a regal person in charge, given the influences? I'm afraid that you have much to say, all of it valuable advice, and like Shakespeare's Polonius, all that good advice buried in heap of words. Which gets back to my original Scorpio suggestion, "Eschew obfuscation." Keep it short and simple.

Sagittarius: "Look," a girlfriend was addressing me, "not everything at your 'dollar store' is good." She was trying to figure out how to light one of those long lighters, usually a fireplace or BBQ grill lighter. Got one on a shopping excursion with me. I don't think I got anything on that trip, and explaining how the lighter worked was kind of a chore. Some of the cheap places in life are merely places to sample what the local color is, a place to understand and observe the lower common denominator. So the lighter was cheap, and it was also plagued with a safety problem, it was too safe. I could get it to work, but that's me. I'm a guy. Takes two hands, one on the safety catch, one on the switch. But it works, after a fashion. Still Scorpio time, and Venus has passed us up, so we're stuck with two things: other peoples' ire, and two-handed operations. While the lighter was designed to work with just one hand? Practically, and it was cheap, it takes two. Doesn't mean the girl was any less irritated, and that's just the way it goes. Probably not a good time to point out I didn't buy one of the lighters -- I knew better. Don't want any Mars-action. Not yet. Although, Mars does arrive this week, too.

Capricorn: Buddy of mine had a change in his life. He quit smoking cigarettes, quit drinking liquor (and beer), and he quit looking at (sexually explicit photography) on the Inter-web. After a 6 weeks like this, he went to see his doctor again, and the quack said

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my buddy hadn't effectively reduced his blood pressure, and, according to the tests, my buddy shouldn't even be alive, he was standing with one virtual foot in his own real grave. Lifestyle changes don't always happen overnight, and that's the problem. There's a lifestyle change, like the doctor ordered for my friend? There's a lifestyle change like that headed towards Capricorn. Now, let me make a real suggestion, look at the list, the three things that need to be changed. Pick one. You can give the liquor this week, but hang onto the other vices. Or give the cigarettes, but keep on drinking hard liquor, or give up the liquor and cigarettes, but keep the websites happy. Something. Pick one, not all three. And, for that matter? This isn't really a week to give it up, but let's think about tackling one of the three problem areas.

Aquarius: You're going to get clarity this week, but at what price? The illusion is getting ripped asunder. The convenient little lie that you've been operating under? To some folks this would appear to be self-deception, and to others? Mere denial. Or, to me and my Aquarius friends? It was, at the time, plausible deniability. As Mars shifts signs, it's a portent. Mars rolls on over into Sagittarius, and that portends good for Aquarius. Problem being, that one illusion, perhaps this could even be a mass illusion, that we've all suffered under? That one friendly, warm, acceptable un-reality, that's getting ripped apart. Shredded. Torn up. Disposed. With proper philosophical training, a decent understanding of quantum mechanics, or just a loose following of my writing, you'll understand that this might not be a bad step. Let go of that illusion, the deception, the last piece of denial that you've been holding onto. Let go, or, it might get rather rudely ripped from grasp.

Pisces: I get the weirdest relief from surmounting stairs. In Austin, it was the "pedestrian bridge" or the sidewalks high atop the Interstate Bridge. In San Antonio these days, more and more, it's just the stairs that run up and down to the Riverwalk. What happens, as I climb up these stairs, in either place, I can feel the backs of my legs stretching, and that's a good feeling, the muscles, tight from miles of flat walking, the step up, it's like a stretching exercise. Pleasant sensation. I suppose I should stretch more before I work out, but that's probably not going to happen. I was thinking about how good it felt, stretching on the stairs as I climbed up from the banks of the river, and I thought about Pisces. There's one, last, final hurdle to climb up and over. One goal, one destination, a single problem, just a simple challenge, it's just a single obstacle. And then, like me, as I feel the backs of my legs stretch in and groan in relief, I wonder, like for Pisces, too, is this really a problem we're climbing over?

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 12.4.2008

"There is no darkness but ignorance."

Shakespeare's 12th Night, or, What You Will [IV.ii.21]

Aries: "Hot chicks and cold beer." Something something something. "Country Music and Cool Hard Rock," dum-dum-dum, strum, refrain. Something something something. This song writing isn't working out too well. But to be honest, I know my own chart, and I'm not really working at a strength when I'm trying to act all musical and stuff. I'm not going to make it as a songwriter, but then, as I've noted, that was never a goal. I have to stick to what I do know how to do, and that's less musical and far more practical, even if I do get a long winded at times. Go with what works. While I like the idea of being a songwriter, certainly a lot less work, I'm not sure I can fulfill all the parts that the job requires. It's that musical part. I can get the poetry to work okay, but part of the job require I fill in the music. At least fake a tune. I'm not any good at that. Not gong to happen; therefore, I'd suggest that I skip trying to write songs. Just like I'm skipping the part of what I know I can't do? Think about that, for Aries, what are limits that you know exist? Is there anything to gain by proving you can't do something again?

Taurus: I'd just slow it all down. No, don't argue. Just easier, think about this for a second. Just stop rushing in one direction. Or rather, stop rushing all over the place. Just stop rushing. All I'm trying to get you to do is pause long enough for you to catch your breath. It's just a simple matter, really, just a point where you've got to pause long enough for everyone else to catch up with you. Or slow down enough so some of us can at least gain a little bit of distance that you've separated.

Gemini: On the Interstate, a huge juggernaut that runs from (old) Mexico to Canada, there's a section that has three northbound lanes, with four little green arrows, each indicating that the lanes are open and flowing. I liked that one image, since there were three lanes. Highway construction. Three lanes, but arrows indicating that four lanes are open? Can be a little confusing, except, of course, to a Gemini, who will assume that four lanes being open means it's all good, and all speed forward with typical Gemini haste. Which is where the problems occur. All Gemini haste, typical Gemini speed, that's like trying to funnel four lanes of fast traffic, into three lanes. While the strictest mathematical interpretation just means it's reduction of One-quarter or 25%, there's another way to realize that, though the lanes have been marked like that for the last month or two, there's still only three lanes. Never mind the signage says one thing, the lanes are still bottlenecked. You're going to hit this thin section of the freeway. This week. Just plan in going slower.

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Cancer: Mythology deals with more truth than non-fiction. In part, myths deal with larger issues, and in part, myths allow us a way to express energies that can't be expressed in strict, literal terms. Myth, mystery and metaphor are useful like that. However, the myth is that Pluto married Persephone and by the terms of the arranged marriage, Persephone had to spend six months underground with her husband. We call it Winter, and she pops back up in the spring. It's getting late in the season, and it's time for Pluto to make an appearance. He's going to cause a lot of consternation over the coming years. Bad or good? Up to you. Choices. I tend to see his entrance as harbinger of what it's going to be like for the long haul, a little taste of the upcoming flavor. To me, I've been through Pluto experiences before, I tend to see this as a potentially fertile time. Pluto is good for hot experiences. As the winter heats up? You heard about it here first.

Leo: Holidays bring out the best and -- more important -- the worst in people. Perhaps the most drama is found in the otherwise apparently functional families, under holiday pressure. Here's a hint: step away from the drama. Especially if this is Leo hot-button issue. You're really in a good position at this point. Not great, not absolutely wonderful, but good. Solid. Stable. No pressure. Or not too much pressure, and certainly not more pressure than you can stand. But with all that mutable energy in Sagittarius, there's going to be a couple of Leo shots in the next few days. Big shots, little shots, medium shots? Whatever. Normally, this would be "no big deal," and I wonder if I can trademark that expression, since I've used it so often? Never mind. But I doubt I can trademark that expression, and I doubt you'll duck the hot-button shells that are lobbed your way. The Leo Way. What is most important is perspective, realizing that those hot shots, the little -- or big -- deals? That this is going to pass. The pressure is holiday pressure. Don't confuse this with astrological pressure. When you look at it like that? The family? The advertising? The unavoidable little picks and points that are hitting you? You don't have to let this exacerbate your situation.

Virgo: I don't know how people have time to watch daytime TV. I've got one buddy, works the graveyard shift, and, in theory, he can find time to watch TV in the daytime. Sometime in the afternoon, again, this is largely theoretical, there's some time to watch awful TV. I was stuck in the waiting room at a car dealership, and I was exposed to daytime TV. The term "exposed," not so much it's denotative meaning, but its implied connotation? What was paraded across the screen scared me. It's like a train wreck, I didn't want to look, but I was drawn to the that small TV screen, over and over again. It was a "judge" show, wherein a judge renders a decision about a problem, Never mind it's all scripted, and the cases might not even be real, no matter what they say. And I might be wrong, but I could detect a sensational drama and showmanship, the fine hand of a hack director and a script writer, working at building tension, which attracts viewers, which sells advertising. I think it's the train wreck scenario that makes this format work. It was terrible, there was this one case, love gone awry, and another one, with broken promises. I tried not to watch. I was glad that it was quick service on my friend's car. That stuff is bad. Daytime TV like probably rots your teeth, cause liver damage, and might be a cause of global warming. I'm sure it's that bad. The daytime TV reminded me that Saturn is in Virgo. How you treat Saturn, I'd hope that you learn from my mistake. It was that first few minutes of that show. I couldn't be torn away, not once it started. I watched, and you're going to watch. But you can't say I didn't warn you.

Libra: There is change drifting in air, now isn't there? You can catch a whiff, a hint of a scent, just trace amount of a tell-tale olfactory clue, the barest, minimalist, tiniest, just a smidgen of a hint, and I'm sure you get the picture. The smell is like this one spot on the trail, sidewalk alongside the river? Place with a bridge over the river and then, there's some bush that blooms only in the fall and winter? And that bush's flowering scent, it's faint, but detectable, over the usual aroma of dead leaves and the winter decay, such as there is a winter's decay in South Texas, and that's what this week is like. You can see that there is a break. You can tell that there is a change happening. You can see that something will be different. You can get a clue, a hint presents itself, there's hope. This change I like that plant, I'm not sure what it is, that keep flowering even though the weather has turned cold, warmed up and turned cold again. Then we had a hot day, not untypical around here. So I'm unsure of what it is that survives all those changes and keeps putting out a sweet scent. I'd call it Libra, though, because yes, the temperature is going to vacillate a lot. Doesn't mean that there's not a happy spot on the far side of this, though.

Scorpio: I had to pause before I could properly attend to the Scorpio Scope. It's moment to refresh our long Scorpio memories about past deeds, ground that has been covered, and what we've got up ahead. Think about the last dozen years, maybe more. Think about what you're looking at, coming up. Think about the material in between. Pause and reflect. Okay, done with the "pause and reflect" suggestion? Good. There is much transpiring these days. None of it is on your little Scorpio head. Life is good. The biggest problem facing my little Scorpio friends is an intense need to meddle. Here's the big hint: don't. If someone says "You don't need to do anything," then that translates to your Scorpio self as, "I don't need to do anything." It's like the wet paint sign, you don't have to touch the wet paint to figure out that the paint might leave a mark, or, your touch might mar the finish. Don't touch means just that. I'll promise, if you leave it alone right now? You can thank me next week. Pause and reflect, or better yet, don't do a thing. Anything, don't do anything. Let all this holiday madness go swirling right past you. No need to get yourself involved.

Sagittarius: Pink Cake is a local delicacy. It's basically white sheet cake with a pink frosting on top. Not terribly difficult to understand. There was one place, after sampling a lot of not outstanding sheet cake, this one bakery had delightful "pink cake," but it was due to twin influences. The sheet cake was really a higher quality angel food, more moist than usual "pink cake," and the frosting was really strawberry flavored. Not really strawberry, other than an artificial flavor, but it was stronger than the usual pink icing, which was nothing more than spun sugar. Mars is in the middle of Sagittarius, and this is a good year, anyway, for those of us with birthdays this week. Pink Cake is my favorite kind of cake. But Pink Cake is rich in sugar. Sugar begets an energy "high." This is a problem. The energy, what with Mars, Mercury, Moon and all that? It's like eating a whole sheet of pink cake. That energy is really fun, in a frenetic way, until the sugar crash. Happens, like, this weekend. Careful about how you spend your holiday, restraint might be in order to properly harness that Mars energy.

Capricorn: Last week, talked about quitting three things, end of this week, good to make it stick, just one, though. I'm going to lose weight, quit smoking, and stop drinking (alcohol). Noble sentiments. Sounds like a good wish list for New Year's. And also sounds

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like a monumental task for a Capricorn. However, pick just one of those three items. One vice that you really think it would be a good idea to let go of? Just one, not all three. Vices like that, hard-earned habits? Maybe letting go of it all at once isn't such a good idea? Maybe, though, as Pluto enters in earnest? Might be a good time to consider the most debilitating of the vices, the hardest habit to kick? Yeah, let's not give that one up yet. There are three big changes I've suggested you look at. Out of those big changes, though, I still think that you should only work on one right now. No even the toughest one, just one.

Aquarius: Robert Earl Keen, Jr. (Capricorn, if you must know), he does a an Xmas song that has got to be one of the best holiday songs ever. I'm unsure of the entomology or etymology of the song's original source. I suspect, this has not been verified, that it was a song created as filler for a live show, then filler for a live album, then the song spun off into its own world. It's a book, and seeing it live, it, well, it's just a lot of fun. Not terribly politically correct, but then, I wouldn't expect that. It's not derisive, just not always in the best taste. The song also annoys certain people. Which, in my mind, makes it that much better of a tune. Thanksgiving is either going on as you read this, or it's now a distant memory. There are certain family traditions that need to be dragged out, examined, and then, in my case, I'll be singing along to the that song. It's time for the Xmas music. Anything before today was too early, but it's official. The holiday season has started. Do something to mark that inception. Personally, the open refrain from that song is as good a place as any, at least to start.

Pisces: The holiday is always a little on the weird side. Not bad, not good, just off. It's like the timing isn't right, or, as I've observed, the oven temperature settings don't always match up. I was with one set of girls, women, really, and they had the family recipe that worked at their respective homes just fine. It was dessert deal. Except, when they all got to a new place, as guests, the oven at the new place? Must've been calibrated differently. Or something. Not quite the same. Close, but not quite. The pie turned a little toasty, around the edges. The flaky crust was more like "carbon-infused" around the edges. It illustrates part of the problem. The other half of that problem? The matron in charge, whose kitchen we were all in? "I didn't tell you? Yeah, that oven seems to run a little hot, like, adjust it by about 15 degrees down to get it right." Information that would've been a lot more valuable, earlier. I'm sure you'll agree, and that's part of the issue these days. Can't fix that oven, which runs too hot, and can't fix the way the information catches up too late. But you can learn to enjoy crispy "bbq" pie crusts. Or, like me, eat around the burned parts.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 12.11.2008

"Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks;

Be bright and jovial among your guests to-night."

Shakespeare's Scottish Play [III.ii.33-4]

Aries: These days, astrology is a mash-up of psychology and astronomy. Here's how this plays, in the Northern Hemisphere, we're hitting the shortest days of the year. Less sunlight, less daylight, less "day." More night, more darkness. More "dark night of the soul," too. So the idea is to use this dark time to get a jump on the new year. Perfect for now. While everyone else is getting worked up about whatever, the holiday madness, take a second or two to separate yourself from the present and jump ahead in time. New year. New start. Clean slate. What, exactly, do you want to start on that new board? Pick and choose carefully, but also think about looking back for a moment, long enough to assess what direction you want to pick for this next year. This is a little in advance, but isn't that the idea? Get a quick glimpse of where you want to go, and get headed in that direction, now?

Taurus: Yeah, there's always the "Xmas in Texas" thing going on. Just catch a little of that spirit. Because I've been trying to modify my diet, I've opted for the "healthy" (all-natural, no trans-fat, low sodium, no cholesterol) chips. Precludes the idea of red and green tortilla chips, which tend to be a little on the less healthy side. So there were no red and green chips in my cupboard. However, as a nod to the holidays? I broke out the Guacamole (green) and the Hot Salsa (red). That was about Xmas-y as I was willing to go. But as a symbolic gesture to the holiday spirit, it certainly worked. I'm not saying that you have to rush out and get green guacamole and red salsa, but as the holidays get rolling on by? Do something. Get something going. Get some kind of color coordinated pattern working. While I'm mostly a scrooge, a tiny wink towards the holiday pattern makes it much easier. This weekend kicks in hard and fast with a full moon, then there's the rest of the following week. If you'd paid attention, there should be nothing left but parties, fun stuff, and holiday cheer, however you choose to emphasize that cheer. Personally, I think the salsa and the guacamole is good enough.

Gemini: I'd gone shopping with a friend a minute, a Gemini. If you have to know, a nice and rather attractive Gemini. But then, I'm fond of Gemini and I'll tell you, most of them are better looking than most. Anyway, despite this one woman's brilliance in certain areas, shopping sort of eluded her. She wasn't getting the holiday spirit. She had a list on the back of an envelope, and she was casually ticking off items as we rounded the stores in the mall. A gift certificate here, book there, here, hold this, and then, it was time to hit a restaurant or two, more gift certificates. Those little plastic cards and sheets of paper

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make ideal gifts -- targets -- for Gemini. Plenty of choices. The problem occurred as we were exiting the mall. Big department store. Big glass doors, Marked with a "pull" handle. Marked with a "pull" sign. She slammed right into that door, trying to push her way through. She was jiggling a phone, some packages, and me. I saw it coming, as I was trailing her, so I just pulled up short. If you're not careful, you're going to follow my friend right on into an embarrassing situation. You miss an obvious clue, like a handle marked "pull," while you push. I can save you the problem, if you're just a little more cognizant. Watch. Look. Read. Don't hurry headlong into an opposing force. Simple, no?

Cancer: I swore off Starbucks years ago. Not because, as a corporate entity, they are evil. No, that wouldn't be right because, as big business corporations go, their ethics and stewardship are reasonably good. No, I just find, personally, that their coffee disagrees with me. The milk (and soy) based products, two or more shots of espresso, steamed milk and more, that stuff is good. And it was Starbucks that ironed out the Egg Nog situation. Egg Nog Latte is an Xmas time favorite of mine. Or it was, until I read the ingredients in Egg Nog. Sugar, sweet cream, high fructose corn syrup, milk, condensed milk, milk by-products, raw eggs, egg yolks, corn syrup, and the list goes on. Sort of like a who's who of everything bad for the human body, in varying degrees. Each tablespoon of Egg Nog has enough calories to feed a third-world family. What I'll do, at the beginning of the xmas season, just to get in the mood, I'll allow myself one of these infernal concoctions, but I've got to limit it. Can't be having more than one. Well, maybe two. But that's it. It's less about a health concern, though, and more worried about saturated sugars. Fats, good, bad, and otherwise. All about what we should do, what tastes good, and what we like to do, for no other reason that it's supposed to be the holiday spirit. However, like me, there's got to be a limit. Otherwise, there we are, in the corner, in some kind of diary diabetic sugar infused manic mode. Make sure this doesn't happen to you.

Leo: Where to look? I'm not really worth a lot to The Leo unless I've got a bit of good advice. I'll answer the question, "Where to look?" At the sporting goods store. No, that's not a specific example, doesn't mean just rush right out to the local branch of a sporting goods store. But the idea, see, I was looking for cheap, tawdry, tacky Xmas earrings. I searched high and low, and I couldn't find exactly what I was looking for. Cheap. Maybe a little on the tack side, with a certain kind of sassy attitude. Sparkly and yet, not too trashy. Unrefined, though, had to be an element to that, as well. Non-denominational Xmas earrings. Preferably, under three dollars. Really, under a dollar would be better, but we take what we can get these days. I was picking up some fishing lures, on sale, steep end-of-the-year sale price, and I noticed, in the end cap, for this one store, just what I was looking for. Just shy of being totally crass, but xmas-y enough pass the Kramer test. So, Leo, When you're looking for something else? That's when you find what you're really seeking. Don't be afraid to look for xmas jewelry at the sporting goods store. Or for sporting goods at the grocery store. Just flip it around. Venus, link is Venus in Aquarius.

Virgo: Saturn's an old bear and you're tired of my continual references to him. How about looking at the same old problems a new way? There's weird reference point that occurs before Xmas gets here, and you can look at the old problems in a new light. I'm not saying that this will completely ameliorate the recent spate of Virgo-centric difficulties. But, and that's a big but, the new light will give you a way to see the old problems as challenges that can be met and bested. You can win. Period. You can see that there is way

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through this little difficult patch. However, I'd be remiss if I didn't warn you this isn't like, a short-term solution, while "quick and easy" is attractive? Not the way go. The new way of looking at an old devil will help you see through the problems. I figure, by the time you read this, you're working on a solution. There will really be, like, two possible solutions. One is short, quick and easy. Anything that goes that easy? There's bound to be a catch, and I'm just warning you that the easiest route might not be the easiest -- just looks that way. So with the second look you're going to take at everything? Look for the less difficult, more correct answer that doesn't have lasting repercussions.

Libra: I've dealt, with what I hope came across as satire, with some Libra issues. And those issues are back. To best describe what's going on? Imagine that I have Libra date, and we go back to her place. Then imagine that she has an arrangement of various Xmas related crap strewn about in a casual yet studied manner. Arranged to look haphazard? Get a clear image? Then imagine, we were gong someplace that night -- this all hypothetical -- only we stop. First she has to arrange all this material again. And then, she has to arrange a it a second time because, see there was still one bocx of that Xams stuff left behind. It's not bad, it's not a problem, but to a non-Libra person, this action can be confusing. I thought we were going out? I guess we've decided to stay in and rearrange the manger scene. It's a Libra thing, and to the outside observer we don't get it. Doesn't matter, though, if you want to stop and arrange the material one more time, that's fine.

Scorpio: There's one Scorpio, complains bitterly about everything I write. "Never good, never good enough, always bad for Scorpio," and so on go the complaints. Unfounded, check the records, I frequently write nice things about Scorpio. And here it is, the as soon as the moon gets passed full, most of the people are going to be a little more short-tempered than usual. Which isn't so unusual, not when you consider the time of year and all that. But that's not Scorpio. Except for that one. But every other Scorpio should be feeling a degree of rest, respite, and respect. Almost like a little lull. Let's suppose, like a good Scorpio that you are, you made a list of everything you wanted to buy as gifts for other folks at Xmas time. And let's suppose you did this. You were done with most of your shopping before Xmas ever got here. Let's suppose, too, in my Scorpio fairy tale, that you've got nothing left to do but decorate your house (Chez Scorpio) a little, maybe attend a few Xmas parties, and generally, just enjoy the good cheer. I'd say that was a good plan. To thwart this plan, at some point, you're going to have to go out and shop for one last item. As such, I know it's not going to the Scorpio plan, the Scorpio perfect plan, but it's not bad. Just realize that Scorpio is one-twelfth of the population and the other eleven-twelfths? Yeah, they're not so happy. Of course, there's always one Scorpio who will complain, but other than that one....

Sagittarius: I was poking through some actor stuff, biographies and backgrounds. What I kept coming back to, favorite actors and actresses? There was always, usually buried in the press kit, a bit about the person in question doing a lot of stand-up comedy, like years and years, or, dancing, mime, something physical. I'm not saying that all the best actors have this characteristic, but it was common in the group I was researching. "Research" might be a strong term, I was just looking at a couple of linked websites, the filler put online to pad out the actors, and their characters, backgrounds. The better performers, be it stage or screen, the better ones I looked, seemed like the resume always included

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something like "stage fighting" or "martial arts" as hobbies. Or one, "professional dancer," and don't think he was that kind of a dancer. There's a certain strength that comes from the physical activity side. Which is a problem, because, in my line of work, all I have to do is move my mouth and my fingers. Stop and think, activity, it's important. If the better actors all have some kind of physical outlet and ongoing training, what can we do in Sagittarius to add to our normal regime of just moving fingers and mouth?

Capricorn: Luck's a weird thing, and it is still with you. Not much longer, and I've spent the last few scopes suggesting a change of your own doing. I'm still on that idea, but by now, you should be seeing some results from that attempted change. Instead of wholesale change, too, I've tried to narrow the field to just one item. One behavior, one bad habit, one trait, just one little change. If you've faithfully followed my suggestions? Then we're about to see some changes. Change is good, but sometimes, you're less than openly willing to embrace this new stuff. New behavior, new sights, new sounds, just one little change -- of your own choosing -- and look what doors open up. The warning, right now, this week, is that Mars, and for that matter, the sun, are still in the sign that precedes you. Although you can see a change, and I can see a change in you? That doesn't mean that it's time to let everyone know. Maybe not yet. Close, but not quite. Let's keep this our secret. Just for now.

Aquarius: I can always count on my little Aquarius friends to do it differently. It's all about a basic, mostly to me, but it looks like a simple binary decision. Left or right, up or down, in or out, simple, and clearly defined. What most people would do? Obviously, most folks would go with the simplest route, the easiest way, the most direct answer. The Capricorns? Of course they will always take the most arduous route, but that's their choice. However, as the Aquarius? While you can complicate a few matters, and you've had a tendency, in the recent past, to take a simple solution and make it more and more, for lack of better words, convoluted? I was watching as a lady wrapped a small xmas gift for me, she was a clerk in a store, an (elderly) Aquarius. She measured the brightly colored gift wrap paper, cut, folded it around the box, and then folded the paper again. Then she would use double-sided tape. Makes for excellent presentation. And it's a trick I'd never seen before. Only time I ever thought folks used double-sided tape was to affix the address card. Which is what I mean about counting on Aquarius to do it differently. More convoluted? Looks that way. But the results? Probably worth it.

Pisces: I'm all about having a good time, enjoying yourself and otherwise making merry. There's one problem: stuff. Too much stuff. Delbert sang about it. And I'm suggesting that it's the problem -- and during this holiday season? The solution, too. How does that work? Simple: give less stuff. No more token gestures in the form of little consumable and disposable piece of something. No more dust collectors. Two things do stick out, one would be books, as books are always good, as long as they are personally recommended books, and the other is gift cards. Gift cards for meals or music? Says a whole lot more than anything else. It's less about giving stuff, and more about giving something that is a memory. Think about that as the holidays get closer. More landfill? Or an experience, perhaps it's an experience that can be shared?

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 12.18.2008

"For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night,

Whiter than new snow on a raven's back."

Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet [III.ii.20-1]

Aries: There's one magazine I used to read, standing in line at the grocery store. I tend to pick the longest line because I can catch on tabloid news, for free. Then there's the entertainment value of that one magazine, "What men really want/do/think/feel and how to please/tease/ambush/trap/marry them." What's weird, some of that is signed by male writers, but I have to doubt the material. Or the pen name. Not that I'm biased, or anything, but I'm a guy. And some of that material, as presented is factually inaccurate. A girl could get hurt trying some of that, as suggested. Some is plain common sense, and some is plain nonsense. If a woman ever tried some of the suggestion I read one time? Not happening. I'm out the door and never to be seen again. I'm just warning about free advice, or advice that seems a little manufactured. The high holy days are upon us. Keep good counsel, but sometimes? Maybe just stick to what you know. That self-help material that comes from the cover of magazine in the checkout line at the grocery store? Are you sure that's reputable source?

Taurus: There's always one last lesson you have to learn before we can wrap up this year. There's always one little mistake, perhaps it started out as a simple misunderstanding, but there's just that one little point left over, has to be covered. Not a big deal, a little deal. Or maybe it is a little lesson with a great big lesson stuck inside that little one, and the big one is trying to free itself. The next question, since this is directed at Taurus, are you going to heed the signs? The symbols, the portents, the stars and such, all point towards a simple lesson. Are you learning? Is the message contained therein clear? Is it really a little deal or a big deal? How big? How big are you going to let this get? Is it an "I told you so" situation? Or is this more along the lines of, "Oh no, not again"? Three influences, well, two, anyway, the aforementioned Saturn in Virgo and Sun/Jupiter/Mercury in Capricorn, and add to that mix, Venus in Aquarius, we get trines and squares. Most of them are good. Still, there's a hint, a strong suggestion from the planets, one piece of leftover business. One small message, maybe a big one, one whatever message that needs to be delivered. Now is the time to finish up the yearly stuff.

Gemini: At some point, at some particular intersection of Time and Space, even consider this like a third axis to make it truly three dimensional, but at some point, where it all comes together? That's where the weird music starts. Or stops. As a Gemini mind, in a Gemini body, you've got to make a stand. There is an ethical, moral, societal stance, and

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you need to stand firm. Good or ill? Again, up to you. I got one Gemini friend, and the way I see it, her, really, she's absolutely certain about one issue. Right now, anyway. How certain will she stay? Gemini, like three or four planets, so she won't stay certain. But she is absolutely resolute at this moment, right now, about this one issue. Irrevocably. Without a question. Beyond a shadow of doubt. AS you encounter this point of no return, my little Gemini friend, remember that it could change, and it could change soon. However, as you stand at that one point where it all comes together? Stop and think, is this where you really want to make a stand?

Cancer: I'm not really a history guy. I've studied a few periods of history and I've read enough historical fiction to know what is correct, and what is just make-believe. Sometimes, like, especially on TV? Historical verisimilitude is stronger than historical fact. What's more fun is seeing a car in the background of Western, or the contrails of a jet overhead. But that's just me, nitpicking a little, and I'm not very good at that. And, I'm not, truth be told, for historical accuracy, a Cancer Sun Sign. However, if I was a Cancer Sun Sign, or if I was more ruled by the influences that are hitting Cancer now, I'd be interested in historical accuracy. I'd be wanting more information, greater depth of detail, and most important, the factual material surrounding whatever it was. The facts, just the facts. Cut through the merry-making that's going on, and try to ascertain just what the real facts are. Doesn't mean you can't have a good time, but realize that sometimes, the stories are modified to make it seem more real than it is. Don't confuse facts, fictions and feelings.

Leo: I've been in this business for years. I've learned a few things. I've learned that time will heal most wounds, and I've learned that time wounds all heels. Just subtle reminder for my Leo friends about what's up. It's the end of the calendar year for me, for my friends, and that means Capricorn started, and it started with a not-too-subtle bang. Also means, for the time being, eschew conventional wisdom (you're reading MY horoscopes, you must skip the normal stuff), and turn your Leo head towards a nasty little work riddle. I'm calling it a riddle instead of a problem, because if it was Leo "problem," then we'd all hear about it, and we'd all be enlisted to rescue the Leo. The Leo. Sorry. Anyway, it's not really a problem so much as a riddle, and you're stuck trying to figure it out while everyone else -- so it seems -- is busy trying to have some holiday fun. Your task, work on the answer to the riddle, is a tough one, but approach like a riddle or a puzzle, not a problem, and see if you can cook up a solution that will astound us all.

Virgo: I was waiting on a friend. Could be anyplace where this sort of event happened, but I was in a train station. I glanced at the clock when I came in, indicated it was 8:25. I picked up a magazine, flipped through it, answered an email on my phone, clock stuck at 8:25. Second hand ticking. It was about ten or fifteen minutes before I realized what was going on. At first, I thought I was very impatient. Maybe I was moving at the speed of light, or Gemini speed. Looked like the clock was ticking. Looked like the sweep second hand was sweeping. Only, after about fifteen minutes, I realized it wasn't moving forward. The clock's battery, by my estimation, had run down. The second hand was ticking, again and again, at the same spot. Not advancing. So I was tricked because I was going off a casual glance, the first time. Honest mistake. As the holidays march irrevocably to their conclusions, think about how I was almost late because I didn't bother to examine the evidence closely the first time. The clock was ticking, just moving

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forward. The train? Arrived half an hour late, but according to the clock, it was right on time.

Libra: There's a hairstyle, been popular for several years, it's, I think, called "streaking." Normally dark hair is sporadically bleached blonde. When done right, it looks like the hair has just been sun-bleached. On a person with the olive skin, this is a very fetching look. When it's done well. When it's done badly? It looks, well, not good. I can imagine that one done at home, that's what I was looking at the other afternoon. The dark brown hair was streaked, but it each streak of bleach was even, uniform. Maybe it was intended that way. I wondered if it was done at home, or done by an inexperienced hair colorist. Or maybe a Virgo did it, having to make sure each streak was even, uniform, and identical in breadth and depth to its neighbor. Just looked funny to me. I've seen it more than once, but this was a good example of something done badly. Hair color and by extension, hair style is highly subjective, but this is important, particularly to a Libra. Think about that do-it-yourself style, where everyone of the streaks is even, looks like a blond/brunette zebra stripe. Think about asking for help with the holiday decorating, whether it's you, or someone else.

Scorpio: I snuck out to go fishing the other afternoon. Seemed like a month of Sundays since I'd last wet a line, and there was a bit of mild weather, just seemed like the thing to do. Wasn't out for more than a couple of hours, and I didn't get anything of note. More nibblers than catchers, and not that great. But I was fishing, and that counts for something, doesn't it? I know, days before Xmas, and I was fishing. Works for me. Sort of like a little bit of an early Xmas present, to myself. I needed some fresh air, and little time alone. As a Scorpio, I'm sure you understand that, a little time alone, and little bit of an early Xmas present, to yourself. Now, when I started out to describe what I did, how I went fishing for an afternoon, as a Scorpio, you reacted with a knee-jerk, "Nuh-huh." Think about how you reacted to my admission, and then, think, how would someone react to you saying that you're doing the same thing? Here's the hint: it's okay to go fishing (or whatever you like), just don't tell anyone you took a mental health day, or time for yourself, or that you gave yourself an early Xmas present. We'll just keep this as a secret between us.

Sagittarius: I was sitting in a friend's apartment, and I was working away on something, on a laptop. I thought about a fact I wanted to check, more than likely for a scope, and I figured I'd swipe a little bandwidth from the neighbor. I flipped through the wireless stuff. I found four or five networks that were there. All of them were locked. Or rather, each one of them had a password-protected log-in. Of course, at home, my own network is password-protected, but that doesn't mean I think everyone should. Besides, this was a friend's place, and she lives in a pretty upscale neighborhood. I think I've looked before, and I thought there were at least two networks that were open. It was a little frustrating. Everyone was practicing "safe-computing," or "safe networking," or better yet, "safe hex." The minor frustration reminded me of what was truly free, and what wasn't exactly free. I was honest, like a good Sagittarius that I am, and I said I was going to steal some bandwidth. Only, my idea was thwarted. Consider this as the holiday draws nearer. Something we've been taking for granted? Something simple like a little bit of the neighbor's bandwidth? Some window gets shut. I could use my friend's computer, it was wired, but that just seemed so archaic.

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Capricorn: I was at a girlfriend's place and she was wrapping presents. Less of a girl and more of friend these days. Our association goes way back, and we've been around each other for a long time. She asked me to fetch her something, ribbons, I think, out of one of her closets. I came back, out of her closet, with the sticky tape and one of my shirts. That shirt has been missing for months, maybe a year or more. Instead of saying anything, I just tossed it next to my pack, and when I left the next morning, I just grabbed the shirt and stuffed it in my overnight backpack. Anyone who knows me would wonder why there wasn't a melodramatic scene. For one, it was a favorite shirt, just a plain, faded black and white plaid yoke-cut shirt with faux pearl snaps. Liked it a lot. Cheap, not that price was the big deal, just a good shirt. How it got in her closet? We'll never know, except, I'm sure, it didn't just walk in there of its own accord. I can spend some time analyzing the apparent path that shirt took to get from my possession to her closet, but that's almost fruitless at this time. What was once lost is found. Leave it at that. Recriminations and blame are a luxury no Capricorn can afford (now) -- just be glad you got your shirt back -- can't say you lost the shirt off your back.

Aquarius: I got a special -- astrological -- present that will arrive in the new year. In the time in between, like oh, say, for the next week to ten days? Just hold off on the big celebrations. The outlandish, outward display of joy, amusement, happiness, sadness, angst, trouble, pleasure and other holiday-related emotions? Just chill. There was a cold-snap, and it dropped the temperature quite a bit. In a hurry. One day, it's all warm and nice out, and then, suddenly, it's all winter-like again. This is local, but that's as good an example of what's going on with Aquarius. One minute, it's all happy and shorts with sandals and colorful shirts, and the next morning? It's like, all winter. Which isn't so bad unless you're like me, and we're accustomed to it being one way, and this temperature drop, it's like a really unsettling situation. Face-to-face with adversarial conditions? Best way to face this? Look: there is good stuff, in the new year, as soon as it arrives. Until then? Stuck. Weather got hot, or cold, or wet, or dry, or whatever you didn't want it to do. It's not really a conspiracy to make Aquarius unhappy, it's just a chance to get a single, maybe a few, leftover details out of the way before the new stuff, the good stuff, starts.

Pisces: There's always one that tries to slip through the grid. One present, one task, one goal, one little item left on your "to-do" list that makes it through. Thought you had it all wrapped up, and one makes it through to the last minute. It's how you choose to react to "emergency" situations. Situation. Well, really, situations. See, some other person, probably not a Pisces, and there's one little item that needs your Pisces attention. Can't be helped. There are two ways to deal with this kind of last-minute problem. One is calm and collected. The problem with calm and collected? The person, the thing, the situation itself? It doesn't feel like you're responding the right way. Not enough empathy. If you act all cool, calm and collected? There's no sense of urgency. Times like this can use a little drama. I've found that a little manufactured drama, more empathy than the situation -- or problem -- seems to warrant in your own Pisces head? Try it. Instead of being cool, try a little (manufactured) hysteria. You will be surprised at how well that works to calm the other people concerned with the situation, problem or little last-minute challenge.

Fishing Guide to the Stars

By Kramer Wetzel

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For the week starting: 12.25.2008

"Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes

Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,

The bird of dawning singeth all night long."

Shakespeare's Hamlet, Price of Denmark (I.i.178-80)

The year ahead: 2009? Mars starts an RX pattern in Leo, around Dec. 20, 2009 (until March 2010). Venus RX from Mar. 5 until Apr. 15, Mercury Retrogrades Jan. 11 to 21 (Aquarius-Capricorn), May 7 to 22 (One degree Gemini- Taurus), Sep. 7 to the 28th (Libra-Virgo), Dec. 21 to Jan 14 (Capricorn), Jupiter basically spends the entire year in Aquarius, and Saturn is (still) in Virgo.

Aries: "It's a language barrier," the young Aries was reporting, "I told it to the cook just like you did, but the kitchen? They don't speak English." Which, while might appear that way to the little blonde Aries, I seriously doubt that it's really a language problem. She was young, cute, and very, very blonde. And most of the staff was Latino. Dark, hopefully mysterious, and Spanish-speaking descent. Heritage, anyway, this is Texas. I think the guys in the kitchen were just having fun at that poor girl's lack of experience. While I doubt they only speak Spanish I'm sure their border patois is good enough to make it appear that way.

Taurus: "I told him the first door on the right, he went to the first door on the left, my brother was in there, cleaning a shotgun." Any wonder why the woman can't get a date anymore? Poor dear. To some, of course a brother cleaning a shotgun is a perfectly normal and acceptable piece of a business, however, for a prospective date? I'm sure it could be a little unnerving. According to the story, that guy left, and was never heard from again. All from mixing up left and right. I wouldn't be surprised if someone around you made a similar, to me, comic mistake. Left instead of right. Bedroom instead of bathroom. Brother instead of toilet. I'm sure my own sister would have a similar tale, but I'm nit sure she can be trusted for absolute truth. The Merry Xmas caution is about confusing left and right, either when giving directions, or receiving directions, but more than likely, when giving directions.

Gemini: "Mashed tamales, I was asking where they kept that at the grocery store, and the lady looked at me, 'you mash them yourself' and pointed to the whole tamales." I can just imagine an indignant woman, and I can fill in the rest with "I don't think so!" That's the merry part of the Xmas equation. The rest of the holiday cheer is how yo deal with a

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little upset. It's not major, not really a big thing, but mashed tamales are part of the holiday recipe, and they don't sell those things in grocery stores. Not usually.

Cancer: I was doing a reading on a young Cancer's astrology chart. After I got about halfway through, she quipped, "Better get used to Roman Noodles. Huh." Which was kind of a fallacy, what she intended, I think, was Ramen Noodles. And that wasn't the way it was going, not for Cancer, not in the coming year. However, for the next few days, as we all get closer to the fateful New Year's Eve? Yeah, get used to a slightly more constricted intake of comestibles. Not always bad, just a little less after Xmas day. It's a matter of slowing down. Not stopping, not quitting, just slowing down a little. Not moving as fast, or, at least, not consuming as fast. That's part of the point. Might be the whole point, too, just not consuming as much, as quickly. Not a sudden stop, but a gradual slowdown. And it's not about money, it's about food. Or food-like stuff.

Leo: The days, it's the old mythology, but the days are getting longer. The sun is reborn, although, in the northern hemisphere, except for a few places in South Texas, it's really cold. Winter, right, going to be like this, for a few months yet. I can't wave a wand and make everything better in Leo land. But I can tell you to let it go. The old is done with. Once the Sun slipped into Capricorn, the solstice, it means that life in Leo land is warming up. From here, it's a long walk to Leo time. But this is the beginning and from hence forth, no whining allowed, it's all better. It's a gradual shift, and one you might not notice right away. But by degrees, in small pieces, in little places, you'll start to notice that it's getting better. Part of this is the conflict left over from the recent political upheaval, and part of it due to the way you feel like you've taken on the Leo nose. Chill. Which isn't hard, it is winter.

Virgo: All about the wind-up, isn't it? The suspense? How you get ready for whatever it is that you're delivering? The set up to the delivery, the parts that go with making it a complete package, right? I was testing a fishing pole in a sporting good store, and I just lifted the pole up and felt how the end whipped back forth, just testing, not really thinking about the pole. I have certain requirements, and at the time, I was looking for an "inshore" pole (green water). Good poles are very expensive, and I couldn't really afford one. As I hefted the pole, I turned to my date, the woman with me at the time, "How much do you love me, honey?" She looked at the price tag on the pole next to the one I was testing, "Not \$500 worth, sorry." The problem, it's a bigger problem than just the price tag of the pole, there's also a reel that has to go with that pole. Looks like the price is climbing. It's all about the set-up and delivery. There really isn't a punch line to this, either, so that's my fault since I'm not a Virgo. But that pole I was thinking about? I'm too busy for the next month to even think about fishing. Well, not too busy to think about it, but I won't be fishing much because of pressing business matters. That's like a Virgo, huh.

Libra: With everything in the Life of Libra seeing to come a little unglued, what can you do? Stick it back together, one little piece at a time. Then, too, consider that there are some items that are coming unglued, and it's not worth the effort to glue them back together again. There was one stocking, at its place, and that one stocking kept getting more and more stuff pushed into it. The stocking were hung, not exactly with care, but they were hung on these little hooks that aren't that strong. So that one (Libra) stocking

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kept coming unzipped from its designated position. Eventually, by consensus, the (Libra) stocking was left to sit on the floor, close to where it should be hanging, but not exactly hanging there. Close enough, right? Or, as the trite expression goes, "Close enough for government work," although, that might not really be the case. Close counts, and in the approximate location -- or close proximity -- that all it takes.

Scorpio: "I'm a Scorpio," read the e-mail, "and so is my EX. So when I read about good things, I always wonder, does that mean he's got good things, too?" Well, yes, it does imply that, now doesn't it? That's the hazard of dating someone who is the same sign as you. Personally, I like the Scorpio-Scorpio combination as there's usually enough friction to make it really interesting for the outsiders. Unfortunately, for us outsiders, we'll never know if it is everything that we suppose that it is, in that Scorpion nest. Scorpions do tend to be a little secretive. There's always the amusing part of this, that secretive side, the Scorpio will be dragging out presents for Xmas, days after Xmas itself has passed. "Yeah, I had this stuck in the closet, on the top shelf, forgot all about it, but here, meant this for Xmas for you...." Scorpio trait. Scorpio tendency. Either scrape out the hiding places ahead of schedule, or consider that it's just the way it goes.

Sagittarius: "My idea of longer term relationship was 48 hours," I was explaining, and the other Sagittarius girl quipped, "Right after the tranquilizer wore off?" Chuckle. There's that Sagittarius sense of humor. Kind of blunt and off-color. And our Sagittarius humor goes under-appreciated these days. My biggest Sagittarius suggestion is to follow the city, county, state and federal employees this week. From Xmas to NYE? Recoup, regenerate, and otherwise do stuff, maybe at home, maybe at a different location, but not anywhere near traditional work places. Most of those folks have the time off, anyway, and if you don't have it off, not completely, at least partially, you can still do a lot of "not really working" stuff, even if you are at work. Satiated -- or depressed -- from the holidays, there's still a time to cool off, chill out, and otherwise spend a certain amount of time just messing around. I can still hear the comment, though, "after the tranquilizer wears off."

Capricorn: I was reading a report that promised it was drawn from "reliable sources," and it was "proven factual," even though, I'm pretty sure, it wasn't. The author's style was more along the lines someone writing about Bigfoot or the (personal favorite) Chupacabra. Less about reality, more about the area that might -- or might not be -- mythology. However, a good mythos is sometime more important than straight up fact. That story, it was widely read even though it was pretty clearly heavy on the myth and light on actual fact. The sensationalistic telling of the tale, that was a bonus feature, as far as I was concerned. But that's where the trick lies for Capricorn, see, you can tell a tale, in such a way, as it appears to be a tall tale, yet, unlike the story I was reading, you stick to just the facts. It's less about what the story is about, and it's ,pre about how you can say it comes "straight from reliable sources." That's usually a good sign.

Aquarius: "West Texas," to me, would include portions of western pieces of the state, but that wouldn't include far west Texas, like, the last little arm that's way west. Although, and this upsets many of my friends in South-Eastern New Mexico, spiritually, Texas extends throughout the eastern portion of New Mexico, right to the Rio Grande. There's a portion of New Mexico, the state's SE corner, and parts of it are referred to as "Little

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Texas," which is amusing on several levels. We can't do anything small in Texas, and as much as the New Mexicans hate Texans, naming a portion of their area after Texas isn't helping the situation. I was thinking about this state taxonomy, geography and naming conventions because the rest of this year, from Xmas to NYE, it's like those attempts of arriving at terms, which can completely ignore common sense. Naming conventions that seem arbitrary, at best. There's a great deal that seems arbitrary to your Aquarius mind. I'd call it a function of the Sun and the Moon, and the relative positions. But that's just me. You can call it what you want, and as an Aquarius, you'll be with me on wondering why "West" Texas is east of part of Texas. Argue and wonder, all you want. Doesn't stop them from making decisions that seem a little weird to us.

Pisces: I was at a friend's place, and I know that this Pisces has been dabbling with Feng Shui. The art of placing, arranging, and decorating in such a fashion as to insure the best possible (whatever). The toilet is in an inauspicious location. There's a new piece of art, a stained glass window, over the toilet. It's familiar -- to me -- image of two fish, head to tail. Located over the toilet bowl? I was sure that it had something to do with improving the "chi" of her place. I made a comment to that effect, and she looked at me quizzically. "Huh?" Imagine a little question mark over the Pisces cartoon head. So it was just a happy coincidence that the fish were the right symbol for Pisces, and the right symbol to improve the "flow" of the home, and the correct way to ameliorate the toilet's location vis-a-vis with the Feng Shui chart of the house. No big deal, not to me, I understand coincidence. I happily bought the idea that she didn't know what she was doing. Turns out, subsequent questions on my part, the placement was purposeful. Two Fish are Pisces, and the location, color and so forth? It was intended as a harm, or whatever, to help. Does it help to try every New Age, old-school superstition? Sometimes it does. But as we wrap up the year? Play dumb.

