

Moon, Mars bright lights in the big sky

December 24 2007

The moon and Mars -- not the stars -- emitted enough wattage Monday to providing night travelers by sleigh and by foot a lighted way to their destinations.

Scientists said the nearly full moon will make its highest track across the sky until 2023, while Mars will be at its biggest, brightest and closest to Earth until 2016, the Palm Beach (Fla.) Post reported Monday.

"On Christmas Eve, (Mars) will officially be in opposition, which means that it will be directly opposite the Earth from the sun and thus will be in the sky all night long from sunset to sunrise," said Jack Horkheimer, host of the PBS show "Star Gazer" and director of the Miami Space Transit Planetarium.

The planet and the moon be almost directly overhead from 11 p.m. Monday to 1 a.m. Tuesday, he told the newspaper.

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