

FORECAST OF UPCOMING ANNIVERSARIES -- MARCH 2013

55 Years Ago - 1958

March 5: Explorer 2 launched by Jupiter C, 1:28 p.m., EST, Cape Canaveral, Fla.

March 17: Vanguard 1 launched by Vanguard rocket, 7:15 a.m., EST, Cape Canaveral, Fla.

March 23: First underwater launch of Polaris, San Clemente, CA.

March 26: Explorer 3 launched by Jupiter C, 12:39 p.m., EST, Cape Canaveral, Fla.

50 Years Ago - 1963

March 21: USSR lost contact with Mars 1 at 66 million miles from earth.

March 28: Saturn/Apollo 4 launched by Saturn 1, 3:12 p.m., EST, Cape Canaveral, Fla. Suborbital flight.

45 Years Ago - 1968

March 2: Zond 4 launched by Proton K, 1829 UTC, Baikonur, USSR.

March 4: OGO 5 launched by Atlas Agena, 8:06 a.m., EST, Cape Canaveral, Fla.

March 5: Solar Explorer B (Explorer 37 or SOLRAD 9) launched by Scout, 1:29 p.m., EST, Wallops Flight Facility (WFF).

March 27: Yuri Gagarin, first human in space, died in MIG-15 crash northwest of Moscow.

35 Years Ago – 1978

March 2: Soyuz 28 launched aboard Soyuz rocket from Baikonur. Ferry flight to Salyut-6 space station. Crew: Alexei A. Gubarev and Vladimir Remek (Czech) who was the first non-Soviet, non-U.S. space explorer. Therefore, this was the first international crew.

March 5: Landsat 3 launched by Delta, 12:54 p.m., EST, Vandenberg AFB. Oscar 8 piggy-back payload.

March 31: Intelsat IV A F-6 launched by Atlas Centaur, 6:36 p.m., EST, Cape Canaveral, Fla.

30 Years Ago – 1983

March 23: President Reagan's "Star Wars" speech and the beginnings of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) program. The president called for a major US research effort into space-based defensive weapons systems.

March 28: NOAA 8 launched by Atlas E, 7:52 a.m., PST, Vandenberg AFB.

25 Years Ago – 1988

March 25: San Marco D/L launched 10:50 p.m., local time, San Marco Range, Kenya. Reentered over central Africa, Dec. 6, 1988.

20 Years Ago – 1993

March 29: SEDS-1 launched on a Delta II GPS-1 mission. It was the first successful 20 km space tether experiment.

15 Years Ago – 1998

March 12: First unpiloted test flight of the X-38, a spacecraft design planned for use as a future International Space Station emergency crew return “lifeboat,” is completed.

March 23: SPOT 4 (Système Probatoire d'Observation de la Terre) was a French Space Agency (CNES) remote sensing/reconnaissance spacecraft launched from the Kourou space center aboard an Ariane 40 rocket from Kourou, French Guiana at 1:46 UTC.

March 27: Hubble Space Telescope captured the first images of a planet outside our solar system.

10 Years Ago – 2003

March 28: IGS 1A (Information Gathering Satellite 1A) and IGS 1B are two Japanese reconnaissance satellites that were launched by an H-2A rocket from Tanegashima Space Center at 1:27 UTC.

5 Years Ago – 2008

March 9: Jules Verne, also known as ATV 1, is ESA's first automatic transfer vehicle that was launched by an Ariane 5 rocket from Kourou at 04:03 UT. The 11 tonne, 10.3 m x 4.5 m craft can transport 9 tonnes of cargo and dock automatically (like the Russian Progress) with the International Space Station (ISS).

March 11: STS-123 (Space Shuttle *Endeavour*) Launched 2:28 a.m. EDT, KSC., Crew: Dominic L. Gorie; Gregory H. Johnson; Robert L. Behnken; Michael J. Foreman; Takao Doi (Japan); Richard M. Linnehan; Garrett E. Reisman, (up); and Leopold Eyharts (ESA- France)(down). Transported a Japanese research laboratory (Kibo) and a Canadian robotic arm (Dextre) to the International Space Station (ISS). It docked with the ISS at 03:49 UT on 13 March. Landed: March 26, 2008, 8:39 p.m. EDT, KSC. Mission Duration: 15 days, 18 hours.

March 27: SAR-Lupe 4, a German military Synthetic Aperture Radar satellite, launched by a Kosmos 3-M rocket from Plesetsk at 15:15 UT. The 770 kg craft is the fourth of a five-craft fleet, each providing images at one-meter resolution, that will be shared with the French military.