FORECAST OF UPCOMING ANNIVERSARIES -- FEBRUARY 2020

90 Years Ago – 1930
February 18: Pluto discovered by Clyde W. Tombaugh of the Lowell Observatory, Flagstaff Arizona.

75 Years Ago - 1945
February 20: White Sands Proving Grounds established in New Mexico. During February - X-1 construction contracts placed with Bell Aircraft Corp, by the Army Air Force.

During February: Arthur C. Clarke wrote a letter to the editor published in Wireless World on geostationary communication satellites.

55 Years Ago - 1965
February 3: OSO 2 (Orbiting Solar Observatory) launched aboard a Delta launch vehicle, Cape Canaveral, Fla.

February 16: Saturn (SA-9) orbited Pegasus-1, first micrometeoroid satellite, 9:37 a.m., EST, Cape Canaveral, Fla.

February 17: Ranger 8 launched on Atlas-Agena B launch vehicle, 12:07 pm., EST, Cape Canaveral, Fla.

50 Years Ago - 1970
February 3: SERT 2 (Space Electric Rocket Test) launched on a Thor-Agena from Vandenberg AFB.

February 11: Japan becomes the fourth space power after it launches the satellite Ohsumi into orbit from Uchinoura Space Center, Japan. Ohsumi was launched on a Japanese Lambda 4-S booster at 04:25:00 UTC.

45 Years Ago - 1975
February 6: SMS 2 (Synchronous Meteorological Satellite) launched on a Delta at 5:04 p.m., EST, Cape Canaveral, Fla.

40 Years Ago – 1980
February 9: NavStar 5 or GPS 1-5 launched at 3:08 p.m., EST, on an Atlas F from Vandenberg AFB. Part of Global Positioning System (GPS). The GPS was developed by the US Department of Defense to provide all-weather round-the-clock navigation capabilities for military ground, sea, and air forces.

February 14: Solar Maximum Mission (SMM) launched 10:57 a.m., EST, on a Delta from Cape Canaveral, Fla. First satellite to study the Sun in detail.

30 Years Ago - 1990
February 9: Galileo probe to Jupiter given Venus flyby for gravity-assist boost.

25 Years Ago – 1995
February 3: STS-63 (Space Shuttle Discovery) launched from KSC at 12:22 a.m. EST. MIR space station rendezvous flyby. Crew: James D. Wetherbee, Eileen M. Collins, C. Michael Foale, Janice E. Voss, Bernard A. Harris, Jr., and cosmonaut Vladimir Titov (Russia). Landed at KSC at 6:51 a.m. EST on February 11. Mission Duration: 8 days, 6 hours, 29 minutes, 35 seconds.

20 Years Ago – 2000
February 11: STS-99 (Space Shuttle Endeavour) launched from KSC at 12:43 p.m. EST. Shuttle Radar Topography Mission (SRTM). Crew: Kevin R. Kregel, Dominic L. Pudwill Gorie, Janet L. Kavandi, Janice E. Voss, Mamoru Mohri (Japan), and Gerhard P. J. Thiele (Germany). Landed at KSC at 6:23 p.m. EST on February 22. Mission Duration: 11 days, 5 hours, and 39 minutes.

February 14: NEAR Asteroid Eros Orbit Insertion -- The Near Earth Asteroid Rendezvous - Shoemaker (NEAR Shoemaker), renamed in honor of Gene Shoemaker, was designed to study the near Earth asteroid Eros from close orbit over a period of a year.

10 Years Ago – 2010
February 3: STS-130 (Space Shuttle Endeavour) launched from KSC at 4:14 a.m. EST. Delivered a third connecting module - the Tranquility node - to the ISS and a seven-windowed cupola to be used as a control room for robotics. Crew: George Zamka, Terry Virts, Kathryn Hire, Nicholas Patrick, Robert Behnken and Stephen Robinson. Landed at KSC at 10:20 p.m. EST on Feb. 21, Mission Duration: 13 days, 18 hours, 6 minutes.

February 11: SDO, the Solar Dynamics Observatory, launched from Cape Canaveral on an Atlas 5 at 15:23 UTC. SDO observes the Sun from a 28.5° inclination geosynchronous orbit allowing continuous contact with a ground station at White Sands, NM. Data from the SDO instruments will support the development of improved space weather forecast models.

February 17: President Barack Obama, accompanied by members of Congress and middle school pupils, talked from the Roosevelt Room of the White House to astronauts on the International Space Station (ISS).

5 Years Ago – 2015
February 15: The Deep Space Climate Observatory, or DSCOVR, stationed at Lagrange point 1 (or L1), approximately one million miles from Earth, observes and provides advanced warning of particles and magnetic fields emitted by the sun (known as the solar wind) which can affect power grids, communications systems, and satellites close to Earth. Launched at 23:03:00 UTC by a Falcon 9 from Cape Canaveral, United States.