
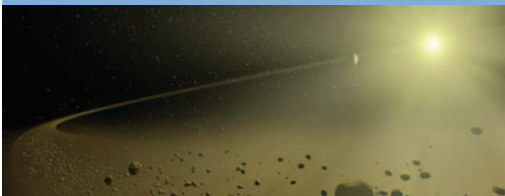

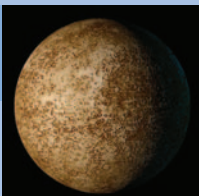






STAR PLANNER
TRACKING SPACE FOR YOUR VIEWING

MARCH 2005

1	A classified spy satellite for the U.S. National Reconnaissance Office is scheduled to launch from Vandenberg Air Force Station in California. If it's so secret, why is it listed?	17	The U.S. Air Force is set to launch GPS 2R M-1, the first new, modernized global positioning satellite for the military's Navstar network. Hope they wear green, it's also St. Patrick's Day.
2			 <i>First quarter Moon at 2:23 p.m. EST</i>
3	Last quarter Moon at 12:37 p.m. EST	18	<i>Photo Credit: NASA</i>
4		19	
5		20	It's the spring [vernal] equinox. Celebrate nature's symmetry of equal intervals of day and night.
6	Prospace <i>March Storm</i> meets in Washington D.C. March 6-9 Mars-Moon closest approach visible at 1 a.m. EST	21	
7	Get ready for a planetary powwow as the conference <i>From Disks to Planets: New Observations, Models and Theories</i> starts today in Pasadena, California. Event ends March 15.	22	
8		23	
9	<i>Photo Credit: NASA</i>	24	The <i>Virginid</i> meteor shower peaks tonight, so keep an eye open.
10	New Moon at 2:13 a.m. EST	25	Full Moon at 4:01 p.m. EST. 
11		26	
12	Look out for Mercury tonight. The small, innermost planet hits its point of greatest elongation tonight, a prime time for skywatchers to spy it after the Sun sets.	27	Weather watcher: The GOESN satellite set to ride a Boeing Delta 4 rocket into orbit to monitor U.S. weather for NASA and NOAA.
13		28	
14	<i>Photo Credit: NASA</i>	29	
15		30	
16		31	

STAR PLANNER

APRIL 2005

1	Aliens contact Earth—order a large pizza <i>with anchovies...oh, wait</i> —April's Fools! <i>Last Quarter Moon at 7:54 p.m. EST</i>	17	"Houston, we have a problem." NASA's Apollo 13 astronauts returned to Earth safely this day in 1970 after an onboard explosion cancelled their lunar landing mission.
2		18	 <p><i>Photo Credits: NASA</i></p>
3	<i>Spring forward into Summer as Eastern Daylight Time begins.</i>	19	
4	21st National Space Symposium—Colorado Springs. Event runs thru April 7. While there the <i>Eta Aquarid</i> meteor shower passes overhead thru May 28. <i>Mars-Moon closest approach visible at 6 p.m. EDT</i>	20	
5		21	The 30th Annual AAAS Forum on Science and Technology Policy begins today in Washington, D.C.—ends April 22. Attendees are urged to drive out to Virginia's rolling hills to check out the annual <i>Lyric</i> meteor shower. The shower is expected to peak at 10 meteors an hour.
6			
7		22	
8	Hybrid solar eclipse today. The annular begins SE of New Zealand, hits totality south of Tahiti, ends in Costa Rica. Don't stare without protective glasses, you'll go blind! <i>New Moon at 4:45 p.m. EDT.</i>	23	
9		24	<i>Full Moon at 6:09 a.m. EDT. Most of western hemisphere gets to see a penumbral lunar eclipse—peaks at 5:58 a.m. EDT. Hubble Space Telescope is 15 years old today. Happy Birthday you big telescope, you!</i>
10		25	
11		26	
12	Celebrate Yuri's Night! On this day in 1961, Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin rocketed into Earth's orbit as history's first spaceman.	27	On this day in 2001, millionaire Dennis Tito becomes the first paying space tourist, riding a Russian Soyuz rocket to the International Space Station during an eight-day space trip.
13		28	
14		29	
15	Space station or bust! The new crew of the International Space Station—Expedition 11—is expected to rocket into orbit from Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.	30	<i>2005 U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony</i> at the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex. Astronauts Bruce McCandless, Joe Allen and Gordon Fullerton join the ranks as the fourth group of space shuttle astronauts to be inducted.
16	<i>First Quarter Moon at 10:41 a.m. EDT.</i>		

MONTHLY THOUGHT: "I DO NOT FEEL OBLIGED TO BELIEVE THAT THE SAME GOD WHO HAS ENDOWED US WITH SENSE, REASON, AND INTELLECT HAS INTENDED US TO FORGO THEIR USE." GALILEO (1564 - 1642)

STAR PLANNER

MAY 2005

1		17	<i>Legislative Conference:</i> Come early for ISDC and share your support of space with Congress! More info at: www.nss.org
2	Alien world hunter symposium: <i>A Decade of Extrasolar Planets Around Normal Stars</i> begins today in Baltimore, Maryland. Ends May 5. <i>Photo Credit: NASA</i>	18	
3		19	<i>ISDC 2005:</i> Come to Washington D.C. for the best NSS conference in years! For full information and to register go to: http://isdc.nss.org/2005
4	Comet Tempel 1 makes its closest pass by Earth today, but at a distance of 66 million miles it's no close shave.	20	
5	The Eta Aquarid meteor shower peaks tonight. Those poor falling space rocks.	21	
6		22	
7		23	<i>Full Moon tonight at 4:49 p.m. EDT.</i>
8	<i>New Moon begins at 4:49 a.m. EDT.</i>	24	
9		25	
10		26	A pair of cloud-watching satellites, CALIPSO and Cloudsat, is expected to launch atop a Boeing Delta rocket today from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.
11		27	
12	NASA returns to flight? The current launch window—as of this printing—for the shuttle Discovery and its ISS-bound mission STS-114 opens today. Runs through June 3.	28	
13		29	<i>The 206th American Astronomical Society meeting begins today in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Ends June 2.</i>
14	NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory to hold annual Open House, which can be fun if you're anywhere near Pasadena, California. Ends May 15.	30	
15	<i>The Annual Canadian Astronomical Society meeting starts today in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. Ends May 17.</i>	31	Happy Birthday ESA! The European Space Agency (ESA) is 30 years old today. <i>Also, the ever-busy Moon occults Mars tonight.</i>
16	Future's flight: <i>The 13th International Space Planes and Hypersonic System Technology Conference</i> starts today in Capua, Italy. Ends May 20.		

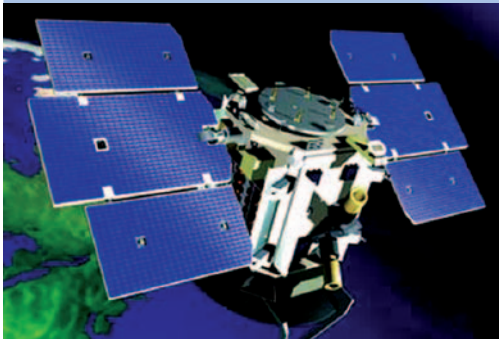


Photo Credit: NASA and G. Bacon

MONTHLY THOUGHT: "CELESTIAL WISDOM CALMS THE MIND."

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709 - 1784)