

MARS STAR



MARS STAR has gone digital!!

Contact Jayne Brown at 303-905-9822 or via email at jaynebrown@comcast.net with questions.

MARS Holiday Celebration, Wednesday, 3 Dec.
(See page 32)

MARS Associates: A Social Club for Retirees of LM & United Launch Alliance

OFFICERS

President	Ken Marts	303-868-2168
President-Elect	Jim Pennington	301-332-5971
VP Activities	Linda Duby	303-249-1665
VP Business	Gina Curet	281-691-4200
VP Communication	Dan Ellerhorst	303-263-1944
VP Membership	Jayne Brown	303-905-9822
Treasurer	Charlie Haupt	303-798-7113
Secretary	Al Nemes	303-908-0157

DIRECTORS

Director Chair	Roger Rieger	303-912-6217
Director	Kathy Hetzel	303-513-0796
Director	Debbie Carr	303-503-7113
Director	Pete Munoz	720-308-1828
Director	Heidi Urie	303-588-6762
Director	Sandy Mossman	303-730-8378
Director	Janet Adamo	720-626-0498
Director	Laurie O'Shea	303-993-6387
Director	Mitch Arnold	

MARS STAR

Editor	Tom Pighetti	303-979-7933
Editor	Linda Stearns	303-797-3557
Memorials	Roy Duszynski	303-358-4750
Website Team	Dan Ellerhorst	303-263-1944
Volunteers	Judy Nielsen	303-905-3957
Historian POC	Barb Sande	303-887-8511
Special Activities	Kathy Hetzel	303-513-0796
Reporting:		
Cape Canaveral	Dan & Kelly DeFazio	321-604-5290
Colo Springs	Doug Tomerlin	719-594-6392
Vandenberg	Eunice Souder	805-218-7605

CLUB CONTACTS

Bridge	Dave & Kathy Martz	303-229-1331
Car Club	Roger Rieger	303-912-6217
Golf	Sandy Mossman	303-730-8378
Hiking	Beth King	720-217-5033
Pacesetters	Bill Wise	720-636-5823
Photography	Jim Kummer (VP)	303-941-0719

REMINDER:

If you move, please give the membership VP a change of address. Also, if you are a snowbird, let us know when you are leaving and when you plan to return so your MARS STAR can be sent to you. It costs us 70 cents for each STAR package returned.

(Published quarterly by MARS Associates, Retirees of LM Corporation and United Launch Alliance, Denver, CO)

MARS Associates
P. O. Box 1128
Littleton, CO 80160-1128

MARS Website: <https://www.marsretirees.org>

MARS Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/MARSAssociates>

MARS Benefits and Retiree Resources

(Must be a MARS Member to obtain dental and/or vision benefits)

Dental Insurance Plans

MARS Delta Dental of Colorado

Individual Administrative Team – Billing and Enrollment (changes to bank account info, expired credit cards, address changes).

877-516-6512 or Individual@ddpco.com

Customer Experience Team - Claims and Benefit questions.

800-610-0201 or customer_service@ddpco.com

Vision Insurance Plans

VSP 844-641-6718 or www.vspdirect.com

DeltaVision (www.deltadentalco.com/deltavision)

800-877-7195

Assured Partners of Colorado – for additional information on offered dental or vision plans

Jon Elmore 303-228-2206 or Amanda Ostrom 720-510-9521

Hearing Aid Discounts

TruHearing (offered by VSP) 877-396-7194 or
www.truhearing.com/vsp

Amplifon Hearing Health Care 888-486-4405 or
www.amplifonusa.com/lockheed

Pre-Medicare Retiree Information

Destination Wellbeing-Employee Service Center Online.

866-562-2363 or lmc.lifeatworkportal.com

LM Retiree Medicare Exchanges

VIA Benefits (Administrator) 844-596-0460 or
my.viabenefits.com/LockheedMartin

LM Retiree Resources – lockheedmartin.com

These links provide information about LM retiree health plan benefits, pension payroll, and savings plan information:

[LM Service Center](#)

[LM HealthWorks Plan](#) – for retirees under age 65

[VIA Benefits](#) – for post-65 retirees

[My Pension Payments](#)

[Pension Management Update](#) – 06/27/2022

[My Savings Plan](#) (Empower)

[LM Employee Disaster Relief Fund](#)

OR HR benefits mailbox, benefits.hr@lmco.com

Cover:

Left – From the Classroom to the COSMOS-- See LM News pg. 25
(Photo by Lockheed Martin)

Right – Welcome Table for MARS Annual Picnic (Photo by Carol Lovelace.)

From the Editor's Desk

Dan Ellerhorst(dan.ellerhorst@gmail.com) VP Communications

Tom Pighetti (tipighetti@gmail.com)

Linda Stearns (linda80120@comcast.net)

For comments or corrections, contact Tom (issue editor) or Dan.

MARS welcomes your submissions. Submissions must be relevant to **MARS**, informative, and **appropriate for this newsletter**. No **personal dialogues or opinion pieces** will be accepted.

Please submit your article for approval **in advance** to the V. P. of Communications. Articles will be included as time / space allows.



President's Corner

By Ken Marts
(martshouse2@aol.com)

I'm writing this just after enjoying the 2025 Summer Picnic at Clement Park. Everyone enjoyed their barbecue, comradery, GREAT weather, and many door prizes. Sorry to those that didn't win, but there's always next year. Pictures of this event are in the back of this STAR and on our website at www.marsretirees.org. GREAT job by Linda Duby in the planning and Carol Lovelace for capturing the pictures for memories of the event.

We still have a number of events remaining in 2025 thanks to Linda Duby (Dec Holiday Event), Terry Lilly (Nov Happy hour), and Kathy Hetzel's Special Activity team with the October Georgetown Train and November wine tasting. Kathy's team is also exploring early 2026 activities currently in the planning stages, to get your Spring started out right. Details are available on our website.

Events taking place before release of the STAR (thereby being competed by STAR release) include the September Italian Munch n Mingle lunch, LM Plant Tour, and several informational sessions put together by Gina Curet. Notes, slides, and information from Gina's sessions are on our website under the Benefits pulldown tab (look for *Informational Sessions Presentations*).

This will be my last time authoring an article for the STAR as my President's term ends December 31, 2025. I've enjoyed my tenure as MARS Associates President over the last three years, and I am turning the reins over to Jim Pennington who assumes the presidential role January 1, 2026. It's been great working with everyone on the Officers/Directors team as well as all the other support volunteers MARS including the Club Presidents, editorial staff, In Memoriam, Special Activities, Volunteer, web team, etc. It takes a lot of volunteers to keep our organization going and I was pleased to see so many steps forward to make our group fun and active! I'll miss you, but I'll still be around at the various activities in the background enjoying them from a different perspective.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of the MARS STAR and I look forward to seeing many of you at our future events. As always, reach out if you have any comments, questions, or concerns.



Next Up

By Jim Pennington
(jpennington101.jp@gmail.com)

Well, what a momentous year-to-date for MARS. Before we look ahead, I have to say that the board and the officers have been working diligently to make the organization run more effectively and to offer activities to the membership. The special activities group headed by Kathy Hetzel filled our summer events calendar with several new events such as the Munch and Mingles and other events, while Gina Curet has offered several information sessions to help our members better understand the nuances of Medicare, Retirement Estate Planning, and overall financial planning for the future. The various MARS Clubs have also had an exceptional year as well. Special Kudos to Bill Wise on his and the PACESETTERS advisory board on having impactful meetings during the year on some amazing topics.

At our last officer and board meeting, we received commitments from several officers and board members to accept a new term to serve MARS and fill some positions with some new people. We will be voting at the next meeting in November to finalize these positions and Roger Rieger will make the appropriate announcements.

With the year ending, we still have several more events in both October and November planned, and we finish off the year with the annual holiday event. Linda Duby has done an excellent job with the event planning, and it should be a prefect opportunity for our members to kick off the holiday season.

Finally, I look forward to January 2026, when I take on my new role as President of MARS. At this year's picnic, I had a good opportunity to talk to some of you to get your opinions and thoughts on what you like about MARS and some areas of improvement. I will always be open for such conversations, so please share your thoughts with me. Ken Marts has been great in sharing his thoughts and advice on how to run the organization, so I know I will be ready to lead the organization for the next two years. Let us finish this year strong. I hope you come out and enjoy a couple events, and I look forward to serving you in the new year!



Director's Notepad

By Roger Rieger
Chairperson, BoD
(rrieger10731@gmail.com)

What a busy summer! I hope you have been able to participate in at least one, or better yet all the MARS events - Happy Hour, Rockies baseball/picnic, bowling, annual picnic...! All of these activities and events have one thing in common - they require a MARS member(s) to volunteer their time and talent to organize and execute the activity. Are you good at "herding cats"? Have a fun activity or passion that you'd like to share with your fellow MARS members? Then DO IT! Seek out Kathy Hetzel - Activities Coordinator, or any member of the MARS leadership team and let's get you on the calendar!

As always, the Officers and BoD Meetings, held the first Wednesday of every month at the Red Rocks FCU headquarters building in Southpark are open to all MARS members. Meetings start at 9:30 and wrap up around 11am, please join us!



Activities Updates

By Linda Duby
(lindaduby@comcast.net)

On August 25, MARS had its Summer Happy Hour at the Platte River Bar & Grille. It was a successful event with 62 people attending. The Platte River did a great job handling the crowd and having to move it inside due to the weather.

The Annual Picnic on September 10 at Clement Park was very successful. We had 197 reservations. Everyone enjoyed the great barbeque provided by Smokin' Outlaw Kitchen. We had great weather again this year. The only issue is the parking situation and we will address that situation with the park management.

The highlight of the picnic is the door prizes and the winners are listed below. Congratulations to all the winners!

Prize (Donor)	Winner
MARS Shirt (Linda & Larry Stearns)	Jeff Kildow

MARS Shirt (Linda & Larry Stearns)	Dave Hodgson
Launch Ops Jacket (Jim Teslow)	Chuck Curless
Martin Marietta Canaveral Ops T-Shirt (Jim Teslow)	Linda Gusha'
LM Launch Ops Jacket (Jim Teslow)	Richard Hatz
Titan Ops Team Jacket (Jim Teslow)	Rusty Adinolf
Titan IV Embossed picture (Jim Teslow)	Randy Renken
Launch Picture (Jim Teslow)	Matt Lombardi
Titan II T-Shirt (Jim Teslow)	Karen Paulson
Titan Playing Cards (2) (Jim Teslow)	Pat Shannon
Titan Mouse Pads (2) (Jim Teslow)	Cheryl Borgen
Panera \$50 gift card (Assured Partners)	Paul Leyva
Panera \$50 gift card (Assured Partners)	Dave Farin
Gift Bag (Red Rocks Credit Union)	Jan Redfield
Travel Bag (Kaiser Permanente)	Shannon Maginn
St. Catherine Wine (Kathy & Gary Hetzel)	Pat Albert
St. Catherine Wine (Kathy & Gary Hetzel)	Nancy Isaacs
\$50 cash (MARS Associates)	Paul Jones
\$50 cash (MARS Associates)	Darrel Williamson
\$50 cash (MARS Associates)	Don Skinner
\$50 cash (MARS Associates)	Ginger Losey
\$50 cash (MARS Associates)	Don Schade
\$50 cash (MARS Associates)	Paul Norris
\$100 cash (MARS Associates)	Mike Bartlett
\$100 cash (MARS Associates)	Jerry Graves
\$200 cash (MARS Associates)	Diane Hess
\$300 cash (MARS Associates)	Bob Grey

The next MARS event is the Holiday Celebration on Wednesday, December 3 at the Lone Tree Golf Club & Hotel. The flyer is in this edition of the STAR which has all the details and can be used for reservations. Or, you can go to the MARS website (<https://marsretirees.org/>), under Events, to make a reservation and pay electronically. The cost this year is \$45.00 per person for members and spouse/companion. Additional guests will cost \$75.00 per person. We have managed to keep costs down this year and are looking forward to this event at the Lone Tree Golf Club. There is a limit of 150 people, so make your reservation soon.

MARS will again be supporting Toys for Tots at the event. If you wish to contribute, new, unwrapped toys will be

collected at the check-in table. We will also be collecting checks or cash for Toys for Tots. The Marines have been invited to support the event.

Our photographer, Carol Lovelace, is busy putting together a slide show of pictures from the events this year to be shown at the Holiday Celebration. We are all looking forward to this slide show.

There are a few more events in November, so watch for information on those in the monthly Satellite email. The Satellite is sent out the first Friday of every month and lists all upcoming events. All events are also listed on the MARS website with sign-up links.



Business

By Gina Curet

orion43@comcast.net

The leaves have already fallen in my back yard, and the grass is now covered with yellow, red, and orange. It's so beautiful, but I have a lot of raking in front of me! I hope you are enjoying the Fall weather and getting outdoors!

I promised that I would provide the results of the Benefits Survey results last quarter. The two (2) key items were that: (1) you want a more robust dental plan; and (2) you want a more secure method of signing up for benefits with Delta Dental and Delta Vision. Thank you for your input! Delta Dental will offer a 3rd option for dental coverage in 2026 and we are working with Delta Dental/Vision to create a website specific for MARS to ensure added security in 2026! The results of the survey helped me understand what you wanted prior to a new benefits year.

Now we are in the throes of Open Enrollment for 2026 benefits. Below are the key things you should know:

- 12/20 is deadline for new enrollments or changes for Delta Dental, Delta Vision, or VSP.
- No action is required if you are continuing your current plan(s).
- A new Delta Dental \$2,500 annual max plan will be available for 2026 (rates will be available on the website soon).
- We are conducting two (2) first-ever Benefits Open Enrollment Informational Sessions for YOU so that

you can get all your questions answered. Don't miss out!

- Tuesday, October 14th **Online via Teams Meeting – 9 AM MST. Delta Dental, Delta Vision, and Assured Partners for VSP** walked us through the benefit offerings and answered questions.
- Monday, November 10th – 10 AM MST **Open House** at RRCU at 8195 SouthPark Lane, Littleton. **Delta Dental, Delta Vision, Assured Partners for VSP** and **possibly even VIA Benefits** will be there to provide information, answer questions, and help you select the "right" plan for you! ([RSVP to Gina](#) by 11/08).

If you haven't attended any informational sessions in 2025, please consider attending one either online or at RRCU in 2026. If you missed one that you really wanted to attend, look on the MARS website *under Benefits > Informational Sessions* and you will find the charts. In the past 2 months, we held 3 sessions: (1) "Understanding Medicare" presented by Kaiser Permanente; (2) "Strategic Wealth & Estate Planning for Retired Aerospace Professionals" presented by Mercer Advisors; and (3) "Retirement Your Way: 10 Keys to Creating Meaning, Finding Purpose, and Setting Goals for the Newly Retired" presented online by EverSource Wealth. These sessions are a great opportunity to learn something new! Please email suggested topics to me.

Red Rocks Credit Union has been a partner with MARS for decades. They were founded in 1979 by employees of what is now Lockheed Martin and have grown to serve thousands of members and manage over \$330 million in assets. They are offering a special loan discount for LMC employees and retirees!

As a member-owned credit union with more than 45 years of experience, our mission remains simple: Enriching Lives®. We're committed to empowering our community and helping you move forward with clarity, confidence, and purpose.

I'm looking forward to seeing you at our upcoming 2026 Open Enrollment Sessions, the final Happy Hour for 2025 and the Holiday Luncheon! MARS offers many opportunities to get together and stay active!



Communications

By Dan Ellerhorst
(marsretirees.org)

In this issue, I thought I would spend a little time talking about some of the historical data that is available, and will be made available to members via the pulldowns on our MARS Website.

We provide access to a digital version of the **MARS STAR** under the *Communications->MARS STAR* pulldown. Here you can click a link to view a pdf of the latest MARS STAR. There is also a link to view older versions of the STAR on a page called **MARS STAR Archive**.

The MARS STAR Archive page contains a table with links to more than 50 older editions of the STAR, for those curious about what was happening in the club ten or more years ago. Most editions of the STAR prior to 2010 are missing – not available in digital form. It remains to be seen if one of us can get motivated enough to track down and fill in the blanks for these older editions. 😊

Another source of fun memorabilia can be found under the *History->Martin Marietta Archives* pulldown. Here you can find digitized versions of the old Martin Marietta News from 1973 to 1990. Many thanks to Greg Bollendonk for digitizing these artifacts and to Steve Sande for laboriously uploading and linking them. No promises, but I have heard that our source for these is not yet completely mined. I recently checked the August 1976 issue, to see if there was any mention of my arrival at Martin Marietta in July of 1976. Astonishingly, I could not find my name anywhere in that issue! The space was largely consumed talking about some little-known mission called Viking. I did find this gem of reporting – wonder if it is still available?

For Sale: Martian soil — \$1.00

Viking won't land on Mars until July, but soil samples from Mars are already available for \$1 a packet.

The tiny bits of ordinary looking brownish gray dirt come attractively packaged in red, white, and blue card, under a plastic bubble.

The soil from Mars is definitely not phony and is indeed dug, packaged, and processed by Martians from Mars.

The Titusville, Pa. *Herald* reports the samples are available in unlimited quantities through the cooperation of the Mars, Pa. Area Chamber of Commerce.

Finally, following a suggestion from one of the members, we are planning to add another archive under the History Pulldown. This will be for the fantastic Historian's Corner articles that Barb Sande (and our earlier Historians if we can locate them) have provided over the years. In setting up this archive, we may prototype using a new technique that will be both more user friendly and easier for the Website Team to maintain. Keep your eyes peeled for this --- and Happy Browsing.



VP-Membership

By Jayne Brown
(Jaynebrown@comcast.net)

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

As of October 1, 2025 there are 2,016 total MARS Associates members including spouses and significant others. That number represents 1,168 memberships including 500 senior memberships. We have a total of 55 new retirees who have joined MARS for the 2025 CY to date.

Please welcome the following new members who have joined this quarter:

Colorado

Arvada	Ed Duben
Aurora	Jack Parran & Marla Smith
Centennial	Roy Yturralde Christine & Steven Reder Jim & Jill Moss
Fort Collins	Rick Callan
Highlands Ranch	Stephen & Glenda Compton David Hodgson & Diane Hess

Littleton Marie Bosco
Terrie Rogge
Craig & Salwa Flewell

Connecticut

Bridgeport John & Paula O'Neill

NEW MEMBERS

Do you know someone who recently retired from LM or ULA? First year membership in MARS is free for the remainder of 2025 as well as 2026. Direct them to the website for more information or have them contact one of the Officers or Directors.

NEW FOR 2026

We have exciting news for our most senior seniors! Starting in 2026, anyone who turns 90 on or after February 28, 2026 will receive a free membership! We are asking that our over-90 members still fill out a membership form so that we can make sure we have all your current contact information.

2026 MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Look for a 2026 Membership Renewal form in your January STAR. Like the last few years, we also provide the ability to renew your membership online and pay dues with a credit card. The online form will be available in late December.

MARS Associates is charged for forwarded mail!!

Please contact us with any info on changes of address. When USPS provides us with a new address for mail that they have forwarded, the USPS charges MARS Associates. Please remember to include the MARS membership team in your list of people to notify when you have a new mailing address, phone number, or email. We want to make sure all communications are timely.

In Memoriam

By Roy Duszynski
(rkduzynski@msn.com)

Please contact Roy Duszynski at rkduzynski@msn.com, Facebook, or LinkedIn with information about the passing of a member, the spouse of a member, or other MM/LM/ULA retirees so they can be acknowledged in the Memoriam section.

MARS Associates expresses our deepest sympathy in the loss of your loved one and a donation will be made to a charity chosen by the Officers and Board of Directors in their memory.

Members

Hall, H 'Tom' (D: 11-Jul-2025)
Littleton, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/47nspvde>

Peer, LeRoy 'Butch' (D: 22-Jun-2025)
Colorado Springs, CO
No obituary published

Pfeifer, Michael (D: 01-Jul-2025)
Shevlin, MN
No obituary published

Radaz, Francis (D: 02-Dec-2024)
Lompoc, CA
<https://tinyurl.com/5x32xpbfb>

VandeKoppel, Richard 'Rich' (D: 23-Jun-2025)
Littleton, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/j327j2fu>

Non-Members

Abeyta, Frederick 'Fritz' (D: 21-Aug-2025)
Trinidad, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/y33amre5>

Adams, James (D: 29-May-2025)
Littleton, CO
No obituary published

Anderson, Darlene (D: 21-Dec-2024)
Littleton, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/3b7hhvrz>

Ballard, John (D: 10-Feb-2023)
Littleton, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/yc36fym2>

Bennett, Jed (D: 21-Jul-2025)
Littleton, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/59444mc2>

Boucher, Marion (D: 23-Mar-2024)
Montrose, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/3eka2tk7>

Bundgaard, Jeremy (D: 01-Jul-2025)
Colorado Springs, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/2py3xnsh>

Casey, Patricia (D: 05-Mar-2024)
Denver, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/4x5h548k>

Constable, Eldon (D: 01-Jan-2024)

Littleton, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/yz56dtr5>

Cowan, Keith (D: 05-Oct-2024)
 Wheat Ridge, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/4ev42be9>

Crass, Larry (D: 18-Jul-2025)
 Santa maria, CA
<https://tinyurl.com/2mmrvf3d>

Crider, George (D: 08-Jul-2024)
 Caldwell, ID
<https://tinyurl.com/38wuyfx3>

Crosby, Donna (D: 11-Sep-2025)
 Arvada, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/taecye2z>

DeWolfe, Joanna (D: 23-Mar-2024)
 Lakewood, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/yc6ewkfm>

Espinoza, Ben (D: 19-Aug-2025)
 Aurora, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/57ufp6vj>

Filce, Leonard (D: 13-Nov-2024)
 Durango, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/46zse9br>

Gray, Charles 'Chuck' (D: 31-Dec-2023)
 Littleton, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/223wbv6d>

Herk, Robert (D: 25-Mar-2024)
 Wheatland, WY
<https://tinyurl.com/35yvwsw3>

Howe, Christopher (D: 07-Sep-2025)
 Colorado Springs, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/2exmuycb>

Hull, Robert (D: 22-Jan-2020)
 Steamboat Springs, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/ddxxuyp2>

Keys, Robert 'Bob' (D: 25-Jul-2023)
 Colorado Springs, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/mr4ajyme>

Kissling, Stephen (D: 26-Apr-2025)
 Valyermo, CA
<https://tinyurl.com/2bukp465>

Lagrone, Clyde (D: 18-Mar-2024)
 Broomfield, CO

<https://tinyurl.com/29syd7a9>

Landauer, Fredric (D: 11-May-2025)
 Denver, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/4wps5hwm>

Lindsey, Julian (D: 19-Jul-2025)
 Littleton, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/mtpaxux9>

Mahan, Patrick 'Pat' (D: 24-May-2024)
 Wheat Ridge, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/3yzsu7jw>

Maples, Marilyn (D: 07-Jul-2025)
 Littleton, CO
 No obituary published

Massey, Vernon (D: 03-Feb-2025)
 Lakewood, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/z4rhe22d>

McCallister, Carol (D: 30-Dec-2024)
 Denver, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/nhjfruw>

Meley, Laura (D: 30-Mar-2025)
 Denver, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/3r3kfhuZ>

Miller, Kenneth (D: 27-Apr-2024)
 Castle Rock, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/4a9jrp9e>

Moreland, Gary (D: 15-Apr-2025)
 Golden, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/5ct8sdj9>

Nicholson, Robert 'Bob' (D: 03-Jul-2025)
 New Bern, NC
<https://tinyurl.com/54kaszz6>

O'Lear, Bernard (D: 13-Feb-2025)
 Boulder, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/ms6tktmz>

Orme, Larry (D: 20-Jan-2025)
 Lakewood, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/yvb6rd5m>

Pacheco, Gasper 'Gus' (D: 03-Mar-2025)
 Wheat Ridge, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/yrjbj5z6>

Palmer, Allen (D: 25-Jun-2025)
 Colorado Springs, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/2zv3w6kn>

Parkhouse, Ralph (D: 21-Aug-2024)
Littleton, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/ypbznn6x>

Perry, Michael (D: 09-Aug-2024)
Longmont, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/34k5vvnv>

Plomondon, Bruce (D: 31-Jul-2024)
Denver, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/2hx5mzfp>

Poturalski, Daniel (D: 16-Oct-2024)
Littleton, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/22d9kuve>

Poulton, William 'Bill' (D: 17-Aug-2025)
Colorado Springs, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/y8c6nxaa>

Richards, Thomas 'Tom' (D: 01-Sep-2025)
Sergeant Bluff, IA
<https://tinyurl.com/3ex85vrs>

Ryan, Nicholas (D: 27-Jun-2025)
Highlands Ranch, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/2m4vwukp>

Saavedra, Frieda (D: 06-Jan-2024)
Parker, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/euw94uty>

Slobodin, Albert (D: 31-Mar-2024)
Boulder, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/mr3wyfa4>

Slucky, Maria (D: 03-Jul-2025)
Denver, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/3hce2ubw>

Sompayrac, Shannon (D: 30-Jan-2024)
Wheat Ridge, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/mr3nt7nj>

Stalnaker, Elmer 'Jr' (D: 25-Jan-2024)
Littleton, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/4sexr6d8>

Stephenson, Elizabeth 'Liz' (D: 23-Jun-2025)
Littleton, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/3yxtfcdv>

Stokes, Kenneth (D: 01-Jun-2025)
Littleton, CO
No obituary published

Suppes, Richard 'Rich' (D: 01-Jun-2025)
Colorado Springs, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/42nnj78c>

Thompson, Eldred 'Al' (D: 24-Jul-2024)
Denver, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/rskfv2db>

Tyrrell, George (D: 08-Jul-2025)
Lakewood, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/henvrpa>

Venezia, Barbara (D: 05-Apr-2024)
Winter Park, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/4d957hdh>

Wildeman, Herbert (D: 25-Jun-2025)
Wheat Ridge, CO
<https://tinyurl.com/fbh7cahs>

Special Activities

By Kathy Hetzel
hetzelkathy23@gmail.com

Special Events for MARS Members

One of the best perks of being retired is the freedom to do things you might never have had time to do while you were working. While participating in some of the special activities this year, I heard over-and-over that "I haven't been here in years!" or "I never knew this was here!" Our members are having a great time exploring new places and events while meeting new people and making new friends.

We plan to continue finding new places while still repeating old favorites. None of these activities would be possible without the team of people who have stepped forward to organize and lead these activities. Our appreciation goes to Pete Munoz, Carolyn Malaby, Terry Lilly, Laurie O'Shea, Sue Janssen, Carol Lovelace, Judy Neilsen and Kellie Lombardi. My special thanks go out to each-and-every one of them.

We have one last activity before the end of the year, a wine tasting and educational event with a sommelier. Steph Chichester is a certified sommelier who will take you on a journey of wines to help you sort through all the rows of bottles at your local wine shop, and will also help clarify how to pick wines for your holiday meals and other special events. This event will have two sessions on Wednesday, November 19th, with the first session starting at 12:45pm and the second at 3:30pm. Both will last approximately 1 1/2 hours and each session has a firm

limit on the number of participants, so don't delay signing up with the link below.

Wine Tasting With A Sommelier- November 19



In January, we will have one of our new events – a visit to the National Western Stock Show with a tour of the new buildings and, a behind the scenes presentation of how livestock is judged and, what the judge sees that we miss. An option to attend a rodeo will also be offered. Sign-ups will be available soon on the MARS website. If you haven't been to the Stock Show in a while, this is the perfect opportunity for you to visit again.



Lastly, if you have enjoyed any of our special activities in the past, consider joining our group of event leads. We will help you along the way, making sure your experience is a successful one. If you can organize just one activity a year, we'd love to have you with us. Please stop by our display at the November Happy Hour or contact me at hetzelg@msn.com.

Pacesetters Club

By Bill Wise
wisewj@aol.com

I have good news for you 90 years old and over. Your membership next year and forward in MARS IS FREE. The officers voted for this in their last meeting.

The presentation schedule for 2026 is almost finalized. Those that have reviewed it state they are very pleased with the relevance of the topics. As soon as it is finalized, it will be published on the MARS website, in the PACESETTERS club pulldown.

Jim Crocker has committed to a presentation in July. He is writing a book and his presentation will be on the book. His subject is titled "Exploration and Beyond". Jim has a reputation as being a fantastic presenter.

As you folks know that attended last month's PACESETTERS presentation, we have a new large video display. Thank you, MARS, and the Landsdowne management for the funding that made it possible.

Carpe Diem

Bridge Club

By Dave & Kathy Martz
martz20@comcast.net

The Bridge Club is open to all MARS members and their guests. We play social, not tournament bridge, with light conversation during play. We play **at the Buck Community Recreation Center in Littleton on the 3rd Friday of each month, from 10 AM to 2 PM**. The next quarter, we are scheduled to play on 17 October, 21 November, and 19 December 2025.

You'll need to pack a lunch, as we stop midday to eat, and then resume playing. The club provides the cards and all required items for the games. The fee for the Buck Center is \$2.00 for in-South Suburban District and \$3.00 for out-of-District. There is also a small fee to the club (which helps with supplies and the year-end Holiday party).

We have couples, as well as singles, playing. If you're a single, invite a friend to be your partner. Your partner does not need to be a member of MARS to play.

Contact us to be added to the email list. Each month, an email is sent to Bridge Club participants about the play that month. We use responses to the email to reserve a place at the tables or let us know you're unavailable. There's always room for more players, as the room will accommodate up to 6 tables. Check out the MARS website under "Clubs/Bridge Club" for more details.

If you want to join us, or have any questions, please contact any of the following Bridge Club Officers:

Presidents:

Dave & Kathy Martz, 303-229-1331
Vice-President:
Bill Kacena, 303-973-2685

The 3rd Quarter 2025 winners are as follows:

18 July (4 1/2 tables)

N/S 1st – Betty Hirst & Sandy Mossman
N/S 2nd – Mike Davis & Mary Stirling
E/W 1st Tied – Bill & Mavis Kacena
and Dave & Kathy Martz

22 August (3 1/2 tables)

1st – Bill & Mavis Kacena
2nd – Ed & Laurie Bock
3rd – Dave & Kathy Martz
4th – Mike Davis & Mary Stirling

19 September (4 tables)

1st – Bill & Mavis Kacena
2nd – Leo Johnson & Joni Rosenberg
3rd – Curt & Phyllis Brudos
4th Tied – Ed & Laurie Bock
and Mike Davis & Mary Stirling

Car Club

By Roger Rieger
(rrieger10731@gmail.com)
303-912-6217
Dave Ernst
(Dave.Ernst.157@gmail.com)
(303)-588-2747

Road trips, car shows, and more road trips! That describes my summer, oh - as well as washing, waxing, and maintaining my road warriors. Several members of the Club displayed their polished-up rides at the annual picnic, I'm sorry I was unable to make it as I always enjoy taking cars, whether older classics or sports cars. For those in town, the car club continues to get together at the Lonetree Cars and Coffee, held the first Saturday of every month at the Rio parking lot in Park Meadows. This is always a little weather-dependent, especially as we approach the winter season. You don't need to be a club member to come out and show off your ride, just have an interest in cars and like-minded car nuts!

Stay in touch with the Car Club through our MARS Car Club Facebook page, MARS Associates website link, or by contacting either Dave or myself to get added to our email distribution. There is nothing special you need to do to join the MARS Car Club, all it takes is to be a MARS member in good standing, and a desire to have fun! If

you are interested in joining the club, please drop either Dave or myself an email, we'd love to have you!



Golf League

Sandy Mossman
(smoss5592@gmail.com)

While we are still golfing, another MARS golf league season is nearing its completion with just three more weeks to go. As we have in recent years, all our golf league events have been played at Broken Tee Golf Course in Englewood, Co. All-in-all we have had good weather throughout the golf season with - hopefully - some continued beautiful fall weather. Right now, the days start crisp but end warm - ideal for golfing.



We had our annual two-day league championship tournament on August 14th and August 21st at Broken Tee. The combined net score of the two rounds determined the overall winners as follows:

1st place – Terry Graber - net score 138
2nd place – Bob Seder - net score 140
3rd place – Paul Betthauser - net score 141
4th place – Don Marquet - net score 143
5th place – Chip Sagaser - net score 144

Closest to the pin:

Aug 14th
hole #5 – Stephen Winkler
hole #7 – Don Johnson
hole #10 – Jayne Brown
hole #17 – Doug Korb

Aug 22nd
hole #5 – Don Johnson
hole #7 – Paul Betthauser
hole #10 – Don Marquet
hole #17 – Pete Munoz

Medalist Winner – Terry Graber with the lowest gross score of 162

Even though our Championship Round is complete, there is a season long prize which rewards most wins through the season assigning points for first, second, third, etc. placing in the weekly events as well as points for simple playing. Contenders are: Dan Brown, Bob Sedar, Stu

Spath and Eric Havard. Can he hang on to his lead? Also, there is a most improved golfer prize to be awarded.

A picnic/bar-b-que to award Championship prizes and celebrate a successful golf season was held on September 18th at the River Run Pavillon next to the course. The event was partially catered and a fun event for all.

This year - as the last two years - there were no hole-in-ones made thus far in league play. Therefore, our hole-in-one pool continues to grow - well over \$300. League members must pay \$5 into the hole-in-one pool, to win the total sum.

I want to give my thanks and appreciation to our members who volunteered their time as co-chairs for each event to make this season a success. And, a special thanks to Lisa Cox for orchestrating the use of the Golf Genius system for scheduling tee times and posting golf scores. And a huge thanks to the Event Managers: Tom Ripper, Terry Graber, Bob Knickerbocker, Ken McDowell, Andy Munoz, and Kathy Rieger for managing the weekly scheduling and scoring activity. And, let's not forget to thank our money man, Don Johnson, for managing our banking account, Jayne Brown standing as vice-president and Bob Knickerbocker serving as rules chair. And, a big thank-you to Kathy Rieger for coordinating the yearly picnic.

I also want to give a shout out to Ev Palmer who is our senior-most player at 97 years old. He still plays weekly, hits consistently down the middle of the fairway - hey, is that legal? - and is fun to golf with! He's an inspiration to all of us. We would love to have you join us so you can golf with Ev, too.



For those MARS Associate members that are interested in joining our golf league next season, please check into our MARS website: <http://www.marsretirees.org> and click on "Golf" in the clubs listing section. Each year, in the month of March, the MARS golf league has its Kick-off Meeting. The announcement for next year's event will be noted in the January issue of the MARS STAR and upcoming Satellites.

Best Regards,
Sandy

Hiking Club

By Beth King

bethking80111@hotmail.com

It's been a beautiful summer for hiking! The club took a hike through Flying J Ranch on August 12, followed by lunch at Lariat Lodge in Evergreen. Eleven members joined us for the hike and it was a beautiful day. Another hike was on September 30 to Dawson Butte Ranch Open Space in Larkspur. We will provide pictures from that hike in the next MARS STAR.



Left to Right – Kevin and Heidi Urie, Joe Wuest, Jeff and Lynn Schnackel, Rich Reynolds, Val Gregory, Beth King



Fresh Raspberries on our hike!



Clockwise - Joe Wuest, Kevin Urie, Jeff and Lynn Schnackel, Angie Matthies, Neal and Beth King, Heidi Urie, Val Gregory, Debbie Mues, Paula Pinkley, and Rich Reynolds

We continue to need volunteers to organize hikes in 2025. It's very easy to organize and we have a great "how to" guide available. If you wish to join the MARS Hiking Club, contact Beth King at bethking80111@hotmail.com who will add you to the club distribution list. Please provide your email address, home phone and cell phone for the roster. The schedule of hikes is posted on the MARS website (<http://www.marsretirees.org/>).

Photography Club

By Jim Kummer
(jkummer@comcast.net)

The MARS Photo Club meets monthly, January, February, March, April, May, September, October, and November. We do not meet in June, July, and August as many club members take this time for summer travel. In December, we have a holiday luncheon at a local restaurant. Last year, we had our holiday luncheon at Cafe Jordano.

We meet on the second Thursday of each month. The meetings are at 1 pm, virtual via ZOOM. Members can discuss cameras and photographic techniques. At the meeting, we have a presentation, often given by one of the members. Following the presentation, we have a competition of photos submitted by the members. Members take turns acting as judge for the competition. The club's schedule is posted on the club's webpage, on the club section of the MARS website, www.marsretirees.org. Also posted there are the photo results of each month's competition. Interested MARS members are encouraged to visit the club's webpage and consider attending the meetings. The ZOOM attendance can be accomplished via cellphone, tablet, or desktop computer, with or without attached video camera.

For more information, you may contact the club vice-president, Jim Kummer, via email at jkummer@comcast.net.

Colorado Springs LM Retiree Group News

By Doug Tomerlin
(dougincs@aol.com)

The Colorado Springs Lockheed Martin Retiree Group is an organization for retirees from Lockheed Martin and from heritage companies Philco, Philco-Ford, Ford Aerospace, and Loral. A large percent of the members live in the Colorado Springs area and have retired from divisions located in Colorado Springs. However, retirees from other divisions are welcome to join. There are no fees to belong to the group.

Luncheons are typically held twice a year with other activities to allow retirees to stay in contact with each other. The Colorado Springs Lockheed Martin Retiree Group will be planning a luncheon for early 2026 in Colorado Springs.

If you would like more information about the Colorado Springs Lockheed Martin Retiree Group, luncheons and other activities, please contact Doug Tomerlin at dougincs@aol.com.

Cape Canaveral News

By Dan & Kelly DeFazio
(defazio321@yahoo.com)

Luncheons

First things first: For all those located in/near Merritt Island we wanted to send a special Birthday Invitation for Lynn Johnson's Birthday Celebration. Her party is this Thursday the 14th at Solaris Healthcare Facility (where she now lives), located at 500 Crockett Blvd., Merritt Island, at 3:00. Please stop by for a quick hi and well wishes or stay longer for some stories if you can.

August 2025 – It was a great turnout this month at the August Titan Luncheon. We enjoyed having our faithful regulars in attendance: Abe Smith, Dick Olson, Lavern Jones, Larry Johnson, Bob Matschner, Cecil Snipes and Jim Houston. Additionally, we had a bunch of folks join us from the Electrical group consisting of Jim Gill and his wife Debbie, Fred Cromwell, John Johansen, Bob Haskins,

and Dave Austin. It's nice to have some new blood at the luncheon adding a different twist to our stories from the past and hearing new adventures from today.

Abe had just returned from Minnesota where he attended the 100th birthday party for one of his relatives and Dick recently came back from Montana where he took a cousin to dinner who is 93 and she still lives alone and drives. It is amazing to see how many folks living well into their 90's and even to 100 continue to add value to our lives.

While we hear about those passing like Don Jacobs on July 2nd (as reported by Cecil) his life of 96 years made a huge difference. A difference for our Country (and family and friends). Don worked for the Air Force and was one of the engineering groups that included Don Sieb, Stan Freas, and a few others that we're sure you can think of.

Given the local newspaper no longer prints death notices. Please let us know of the passing of Titan Team members so we can put out the word.

Thanks to Dick for carrying the torch for Kelly and I at this last luncheon, we had a conflict and could not attend. We'll be back in September.

September 2025 – Good morning, it was great seeing the usual retiree lunch crowd today plus a new face or two as well. Among the crowd were: Dick Olson, Ken Webb, Jim Simmons, Judy Biancone, Roger Wright, Abe Smith, George and Kathy Avis, Laverne Jones, Dave Austin (aka Big Ugh), Kelly DeFazio, and me.

We were still talking about the 20th Anniversary celebration with new ideas brought forward for the NEXT big anniversary that could even be aboard a cruise in a large group reunion style celebration. We won't be planning that for a while, so we're letting the idea "cook"! Maybe there'll be another survey in our future 😊.

We talked about just how fast each of us have driven our cars in various places. I'm not sure who had the record but I'm glad the statute of limitations has run its course.

In case you were wondering where the best snorkeling in the world is. We decided it is off the Florida Keys; how lucky we are to be so close.

We ended our table talk reminiscing about how many of us at the table had actually "blown" something up while at work. There was mention of an explosion in the Clean Lab, a Meltdown in the Clean Lab, and oh yeah, an explosion of the HVAC at one of the Launch pads. But we aren't telling who did what! You know what they say.... once you have something crazy like that happen, you are the best employee ever because you DEFINITELY make sure nothing horrible like that will happen again.

Take care and mark your calendar for July. Our lunch will be the SECOND Thursday in July the 10th. We moved it out a week to accommodate any 4th of July weekend plans.

October 2025 – Hello Everyone,

After 25 years of retiree lunches at Kay's BBQ the restaurant closed -- so we had our last luncheon at that location this month. Additionally, we wished our server Trish well as she took great care of us for over 10 years. You can see her standing toward the back in the picture below.



We shared stories from Lynn Johnson's 88th birthday last month. Attended by Cathy Klein, Roger Wright, and Kelly DeFazio. (Shhhh don't tell Lynn we revealed her age :-). She and her husband Paul have moved to The Blake in Viera (retirement / care facility). They would enjoy your visit if you are in the area, please stop in.



Most of our conversation centered around our new luncheon location. We decided on the Cozy Corner Cafe in Merritt Island (near the intersection of S.R. 3 and 528) for **October 2nd**. We are toying with the idea of rotating locations every quarter. The rotation would look something like: Titusville Area, Cocoa/Rockledge area, Port/Beach side area and Merritt Island area. Our priority focus is: Good Food, Private room, Easy access/parking, and if possible, Breakfast food available as well.

A reminder will be sent out closer to the first week in October but you can start planning now to join us at the Cozy Corner Cafe at 2425 N Courtenay Pkwy.

Happy Fall!
Dan

Recent Obituaries

Mark Allgood, 66, died October 12th at home with family. He was on the Titan Mechanical team and ended his career on the Orion program as a NASA Quality rep.
:(

A suggestion came out of an Officers Meeting. Based on feedback from some members, the suggestion is to move the Historian writeup to near the end of the newsletter and move the remaining club write-ups forward. That way - all current club topics are contiguous and the (often long) Historian writeup will stand as a separate part of the Newsletter. Although no vote was taken, there was wide agreement from the officers present. .

Historian Corner

By Barb Sande

barbsande@comcast.net

ANNOUNCEMENT: I am looking for short (less than 1000 words) stories written about personal experiences on the Viking program! No oral histories or phone calls, please. The stories should be interesting anecdotes about the design, testing, launches (on Titan IIIE/Centaur) and operations. I also would like stories from spouses if you recall any good anecdotes! These stories will support a multipart series about Viking 1 & 2 later in 2026 for its 50th anniversary. Please submit the stories to me at the email address noted; don't worry about formatting (I'll take care of that). If you have a picture or two that would be even better. Deadline for submittal is July 1, 2026!!

Program Profile

This history profile continues a multi-part series about the manned Gemini program. The current plan is to have the following parts to the series (this has been modified from the first version documented in the first write-up):

1. Creation of Project Gemini, Program Obstacles and Issues, Overview of Major Program Elements - First Quarter 2025 – COMPLETE
2. LC-19, Unmanned Gemini 1 & 2, Crew Selection and Training (overview) - Second Quarter 2025 – COMPLETE
3. Gemini 3 (first manned mission), Gemini IV, Gemini V - Third Quarter 2025 (the missions were formally changed to the use of Roman numerals for the mission designator starting with Gemini IV) – COMPLETE
4. Gemini VI Stand-down, VII, VI-A - IN THIS ISSUE (Fourth Quarter 2025)
5. Agena Investigation, Gemini VIII, IX/IX-A - First Quarter 2026
6. Gemini X, XI, XII - Second Quarter 2026

This plan hopefully accommodates some depth of detail for each mission and keeps me on track for the first write-up commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Viking program in the third or fourth quarter of 2026.

Introduction

In this history profile I provide an overview of the stand down of Gemini VI, the 14-day Gemini VII mission, and Gemini VI-A mission that rendezvoused with Gemini VII. The missions were formally changed by NASA to the use of Roman numerals for the mission designator starting with Gemini IV. In the interests of keeping the article length to less than "The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire," I do not include detailed crew biographies in

these write-ups, but provide links at the end to their Wikipedia biographies. Other resources and references that have been used are also listed at the end of the article.

Gemini VI

In November, 1964, while planning and training for the first manned Gemini mission was still in work, Chief Astronaut Deke Slayton told Wally Schirra that he and Tom Stafford would be the primary crew on the first rendezvous mission, Gemini VI. Schirra and Stafford were busy working as the backup crew for Gemini 3, but the announcement was made official in February, 1965. *Their* backup crew was identified at the same time and was assigned to Gus Grissom and John Young, the primary crew on Gemini 3. Schirra was a veteran of the Mercury/Atlas -8 mission and USAF pilot Tom Stafford came from the illustrious Astronaut Group 2.



Tom Stafford and Wally Schirra, Crew of Gemini VI/VI-A. Photo Credit: NASA

NASA was uncertain about the flight order between this mission and Gemini VII, but decided to go for the rendezvous option first. There were significant problems with the Agena target vehicle being developed for the Gemini program and it seemed logical to try rendezvous first so that the long-duration Gemini VII mission could still be done while recovery actions were taken for any Agena problems (this seems prophetic considering what happened for Gemini VI). The official primary objective for the Gemini VI mission was identified as follows:

1. *To demonstrate rendezvous and docking with the Gemini Agena Target vehicle, using both the spacecraft and Agena capabilities as required.*

Orbital rendezvous techniques were still in their infancy and techniques for this first rendezvous mission were still not finalized going into 1965. Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin joined forces with Dean Grimm from the flight crew support division at the Manned Spacecraft Center to come up with plans. Their concern was the fact that most of the existing rendezvous techniques were closed-loop, relying on the equipment (radar, computer, flight controls) to function almost automatically instead of drilling into the crew ways to recover from equipment malfunctions. McDonnell rigged a device for the simulators in St. Louis that could simulate trajectories, orbital insertions and target rendezvous options. Schirra and Stafford ended up going through more than 50 simulations with this equipment and learned how to respond to various equipment malfunctions.

Gemini VI would also be the last mission to use batteries instead of fuel cells, limiting the time on-orbit to no more than two days. The entire flight plan was focused on the busy rendezvous schedule with the target vehicle, so the experiments were limited to a handful of photography exercises.

The actual milestone dates for the Gemini VI Titan II launch vehicle (GLV-6, S/N 62-12561) are listed below, from the "Project Gemini: A Chronology" resource. The table includes milestones for both iterations of Gemini VI (VI, VI-A) so this won't be repeated in the section on Gemini VI-A:

Milestone	Date
Major welding of propellant tanks in Denver begins	04/1964
Shipment of Tanks to Baltimore	06/15/1964
Vehicle Assembly completed	02/25/1965
Horizontal tests completed	04/03/1965
Erected in Vertical Test Facility	04/15/1965
Subsystem Functional Verification Tests	06/22/1965
Combined Systems Test (CST)	06/25/1965
Vehicle Acceptance Team inspection	07/07/1965
DD-250 complete (customer acceptance)	07/21/1965
Delivered to ETR	08/02/1965
Erected at LC-19	01/31/1965; 12/05/1965
Subsystem and CST complete	09/16/1965
Spacecraft mated to GLV-6	09/18/1965; 12/05/1965
Countdown exercises /Wet Mock Simulated Launch completed	10/07/1965

Final Status Simulated Flight Test	10/19/1965; 12/09/1965
Launch	10/25/1965 (scrub); 12/12/1965 (abort); 12/15/1965 (actual)

GLV-6 was the first vehicle tested in the new west cell of the Vertical Test Facility at Baltimore. The vehicle was delivered and stored until Gemini V was launched. Measures were taken to shorten the launch preparation procedures and these proved quite successful.

The actual milestone dates for the Gemini VI manned Gemini spacecraft (S/C 6) are listed below, from the same resource at the Titan II milestones. The table includes milestones for both iterations of Gemini VI (VI, VI-A) so this won't be repeated in the section on Gemini VI-A:

Milestone	Date
Equipment Installation Complete	05/04/1965
Reentry/Adapter Mate	05/12/1965
Simulated Flight Test	06/25/1965
Altitude Chamber Test	07/21/1965
Shipped to ETR	08/04/1965
Complex 19 Electrical Integrity and G&C Tests	09/09/1965
Mechanical Mate to GLV-6 at LC-19	09/18/1965
Joint Combined Systems Test	09/24/1965
Wet Mock Simulated Launch/Simultaneous Launch Demonstration Test	10/07/1965
Final Systems Test (Range Communications)	10/10/1965
Final Simulated Flight Test	10/19/1965; 12/09/1965
Launch	10/25/1965 (scrub); 12/12/1965 (abort); 12/15/1965 (Actual)
Recovery of Crew and S/C 6	12/16/1965

S/C 6 was hoisted atop a timber tower on arrival at the Cape to perform electronic communications and compatibility tests with the Gemini Agena target vehicle. Modifications were made to the Agena systems prior to this first launch attempt and this compatibility test was then incorporated in the test plan for future Gemini spacecraft and Agena missions.

The actual milestone dates for the Gemini Agena Target Vehicle (GATV) 5002 are noted below:

Milestone	Date
Basic Build Complete	12/17/1964
Modifications and Final Assembly	05/18/1965
Combined Systems Acceptance Test	06/30/1965
Vehicle Acceptance Team inspection	07/23/1965
Shipped to ETR	07/25/1965
Preliminary Systems Test at Hangar E	08/23/1965
Interface Test Plan X	09/01/1965
Systems Tests at Hangar E	09/30/1965
Agena Target and Atlas Launch Vehicle Mate at LC-14	10/01/1965
Systems Test Complete at LC-14	10/20/1965
Launch	10/25/1965

Agena Target Vehicle 5001 was used for testing at Lockheed and at the site from April 30, 1964 until July 26, 1965. It was returned to the contractor and completely disassembled and rebuilt as 5001R, used as the rendezvous target for Gemini XII.

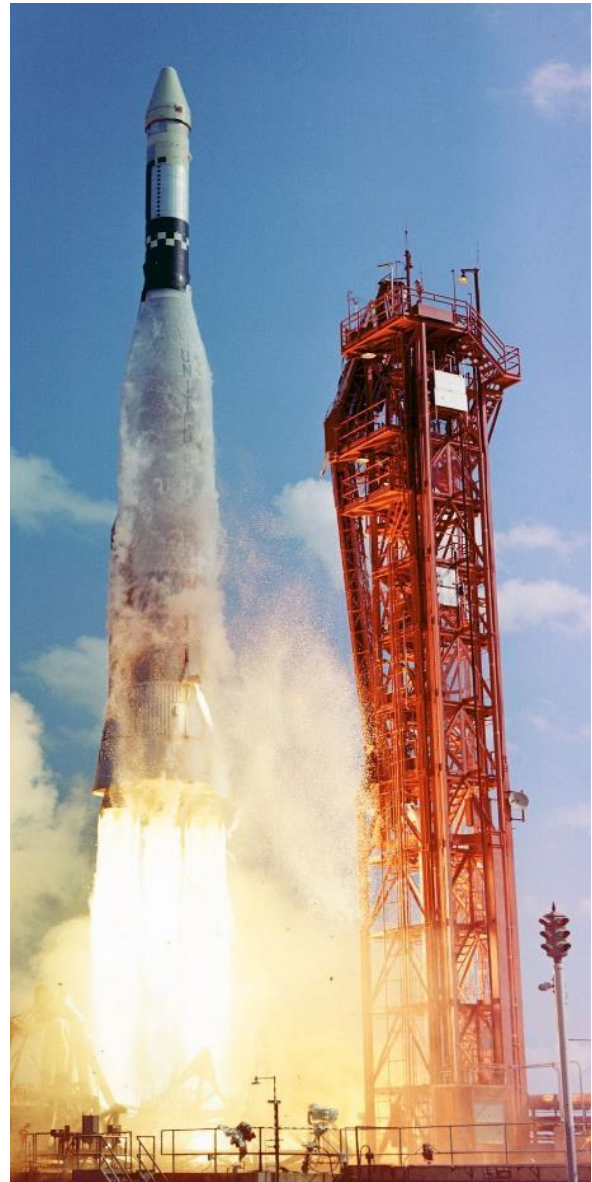
The actual milestone dates for the Atlas Target Launch vehicle (TLV-5301) are noted below; the source documentation has limited information about the processing of this "off-the-shelf" Atlas vehicle:

Milestone	Date
Delivered to ETR	12/04/1965
TLV/GATV mate at LC-14	10/10/1965
Simultaneous Launch Checkout	10/20/1965
Launch	10/25/1965

Launch day for Gemini VI on 10/25/1965 was full of anticipation for the four element contractors and NASA. A team from General Dynamics began the countdown activities for the Atlas vehicle, while countdown activities were also underway for the Titan II/GLV. The Agena was expected to perform as it had always performed, with complete success (more than 140 flights since 1959). NASA Mission Director Williams Schneider coordinated the countdown efforts across the two pads and four elements. Schirra and Stafford entered their Gemini spacecraft when the Atlas-Agena countdown was at T-15 minutes.

At 15:00:00 UTC (10:00 am EST), liftoff of the Atlas-Agena from LC-14 occurred. The Atlas flight was nominal. At T+6:00 minutes the Agena separated from the Atlas and fired its engine. At T+6:20, all Agena telemetry was

lost and Range Safety tracked multiple debris targets coming back to the Atlantic Ocean. Approximately 60 minutes later, the Titan/GLV-6 launch was scrubbed. A disheartened Mission Control crew reeled at this setback and two frustrated astronauts came out of their Gemini spacecraft.



Atlas Target Launch Vehicle Launch, Gemini VI, October 25, 1965. Photo Credit: NASA.

Even before the countdown was officially scrubbed for Gemini VI, Frank Borman and Jim Lovell (primary crew for Gemini VII) were having quick discussions with McDonnell personnel on the possibility of launching Gemini VI-A while Gemini VII was in orbit and performing close rendezvous maneuvers with the two spacecraft. The current operations timelines had been squeezed as much as possible between Titan II/GLV launches, with many agreeing that two months between launches was as tight as it could get. By offering the idea of launching Gemini

VI-A in less than two weeks after Gemini VII, a new challenge was presented to the ground crews from NASA and Martin Marietta.



Stafford (holding helmet) and Schirra walk away from their launch attempt on October 25, 1965. Photo Credit: NASA.

The contractor teams and NASA met in a hurry on creating ideas for this rapid turnaround scenario because the Gemini VII launch was on the manifest for December. Several concepts were kicked around, include a novel (and bizarre) idea to airlift the Gemini VI vehicle off LC-19 after checkouts with a heavy-lift helicopter and placing it vertically nearby on LC-20, then launching Gemini VII and hurriedly bringing Gemini VI (now Gemini VI-A) back to LC-19 for final processing and launch. Aerojet-General was adamant that any checkouts and tests of the engines would require the stack to remain vertical to maintain the integrity of those checkouts. The rapid processing/lift idea was proposed by Joseph Verlander (Martin Marietta chief at Kennedy) and Colonel John Albert of the 6555th Test Wing.

At first, the rapid processing/vertical storage idea was not initially considered but there were discussions about swapping Gemini spacecraft to speed up the process. It was discovered that the Gemini VII spacecraft, because of modifications for the two-week mission, was too heavy for the Titan GLV-6 booster so that idea was discarded. Finally, the idea of rapid processing of a second booster was heard by NASA management (except for the helicopter lift part) and the team brainstormed ways to properly store GLV-6, then bring it to the pad literally within hours of the launch of Gemini VII and process it within nine days (this was, of course, predicated on the hopes that there was not much pad damage).

This idea was brought forward by NASA administrators to President Lyndon Johnson, who made the public announcement on October 28 (just three days after the failure) that the upcoming Gemini VII mission would have a close rendezvous in space with the crew of Gemini VI-

A. On that very day, the Gemini VI capsule and Stage II of the Titan/GLV were de-erected and Stage I was de-erected the next day. GLV-6 was placed in bonded storage at the Satellite Checkout Building, complete with armed guards and properly controlled environments. S/C-6 was stored at the Pyrotechnics Installation Building on Merritt Island with similar controls.

Gemini VII

On July 1, 1965, the backup crew that had been in place for Gemini IV, Frank Borman, and Jim Lovell, were announced as the primary crew for Gemini VII. This would be the first spaceflight for the two rookies, selected in Astronaut Group 2. Their backup crew was Ed White and Mike Collins, making Collins, an Air Force Test pilot, the first crew member from Astronaut Group 3 (selected in 1963) with an assignment.



Jim Lovell and Frank Borman, Crew of Gemini VII. Photo Credit: NASA.

The Gemini VII official primary objectives (before the Gemini VI stand-down) were simple:

1. To demonstrate the capability of the spacecraft and crew on a 14-day mission.
2. To evaluate the effects of the 14-day flight on the crew.

No attempts would be made on this mission to perform any EVAs or rendezvous maneuvers (more on that later for Gemini VI-A) but there would be many experiments. Those experiments and their results are listed later in this section.

Here are the actual milestone dates for the Titan launch vehicle GLV-7 (S/N 62-12562):

Milestone	Date
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Major welding of propellant tanks in Denver begins	05/1964
Shipment of Tanks to Baltimore	02/25/1965
Vehicle Assembly completed	05/20/1965
Horizontal tests completed	06/14/1965
Erected in Vertical Test Facility	06/28/1965
Subsystem Functional Verification Tests	07/28/1965
Combined Systems Test (CST)	08/25/1965
Vehicle Acceptance Team inspection	09/20/1965
DD-250 complete (customer acceptance)	10/15/1965
Delivered to ETR	10/19/1965
Erected at LC-19	10/29/1965
Power applied	10/31/1965
Subsystem and CST complete	11/12/1965
Spacecraft mated to GLV-7	11/22/1965
Final Status Simulated Flight Test	11/27/1965
Launch	12/04/1965

Note that GLV-7 was erected at LC-19 only four days after the stand-down for Gemini VI and its removal from the pad.

Here are the actual milestone dates for S/C-7:

Milestone	Date
Equipment Installation Complete	06/29/1965
Reentry/Adapter Mate	07/26/1965
Systems Assurance Test	08/12/1965
Simulated Flight Test	08/30/1965
Altitude Chamber Test	09/17/1965
Shipped to ETR	10/09/1965

Complex 19 Electrical Integrity and G&C Tests	10/30/1965
Mechanical Mate to GLV-7 at LC-19	11/22/1965
Joint Combined Systems Test	11/15/1965
Final Simulated Flight Test	11/27/1965
Launch	12/04/1965
Recovery of Crew and S/C 7	12/18/1965

With the plan to launch Gemini IV-A while Gemini VII was in orbit, the mission for Gemini VII was tweaked to have the spacecraft enter a circular orbit so that the rendezvous maneuvers could be accomplished with Gemini VII as the passive target for Gemini VI-A. Although the Gemini VI-A spacecraft was the first designed specifically to support EVAs, Frank Borman, as command pilot on Gemini VII, was adamant that no EVAs should take place, either on Gemini VII or Gemini VI-A (Schirra had proposed the crazy idea of swapping crew members in space).

Lovell and Borman did specialized training to determine where every scrap of trash from their meals and other necessary activities would be stored for two weeks (most of this was behind the seats). They also queried the crews of Gemini IV and V about boredom and difficulties sleeping. It was decided that they would work and sleep on the same shifts and their waking hours would correspond to Central time in the US. The question of wearing suits during a 14-day mission was also addressed - the David Clark company (manufacturer of the Gemini space suits) worked to remove as much of the material from the suits as possible and a soft zippered hood replaced the fiberglass helmet. If spacecraft systems were performing properly on the second day, the crew would remove the suits and store them by their seats.

The crew of Gemini VII climbed aboard their spacecraft on December 4, 1965 and awaited liftoff. At precisely 19:30:03 UTC (2:30 pm Cape time), the Stage I engines ignited and they were on their way to orbit. Slight pogo oscillations occurred during ascent, but neither astronaut was affected like the Gemini V crew. Gemini VII flew in formation with the Titan upper stage for fifteen minutes, at which time Borman stopped the pursuit because he felt too much fuel was being consumed and the stage was moving erratically as it vented its own remaining fuel. Gemini VII achieved an initial orbit of 161.8 nautical miles by 164.0 nautical miles.



Launch of Gemini VII, December 4, 1965. Photo Credit: NASA

The crew began their roster of in-flight experiments within 30 minutes of achieving orbit. Here is the list of the experiments and their results, from Appendix D of "On the Shoulders of Titans":

1. Cardiovascular conditioning - Determine effectiveness of pneumatic cuffs on both crew members' legs to prevent blood pooling. Cuffs operated for 311 hours and were turned off 3 hours before reentry. There was significantly less blood pooling for Lovell's results compared to Borman.
2. Inflight exerciser - Used with limited success (similar to Gemini IV, V)
3. Inflight phonocardiogram - Heart sounds had no significant changes from ground tests (similar to Gemini IV, V)
4. Bioassays of body fluids - Intake and output of fluids analyzes pre-flight, during flight and post-flight - no significant stress reactions noted
5. Bone demineralization - Pre-flight and post-flight x-rays of heel bones were compared and were improved over Gemini IV and V due to better nutrition and exercise.
6. Calcium balance study - Intake and output analysis of fluids and solid matter were measured and analyzed pre-flight, during flight and post-flight. Inflight collection was insufficient, but results did show an

- increase in calcium for the commander (Borman) on the eighth day.
7. Inflight sleep analysis - The commander (Borman) had sensors that dislodged after 54 hours, but showed normal sleep after the first night.
8. Human Otolith function - This experiment measured the ability of an astronaut to be properly oriented. The results were nominal (similar to Gemini V).
9. Proton-electron measurement - the results were inconclusive.
10. Tri-axis magnetometer - Z-axis failed before flight; X and Y axes were nominal.
11. Optical communications - Used flight and ground-based transmitters, results yielded little data.
12. Landmark contrast measurement - Used a star occultation photometer; no results because the instrument failed.
13. Synoptic terrain photography - 250 useful images produced.
14. Synoptic weather photography - 240 exposures, many of poor quality.
15. Visual acuity and astronaut visibility - Used small binocular device to measure the ability of astronauts to see objects on the earth's surface. No apparent changes in visual performance noted.
16. Celestial radiometry and space object radiometry - over three hours of data recorded, all satisfactory.
17. Star occultation navigation - No results, instrument failed.
18. Simple navigation - Excellent results, with star-to-horizon, planet-to-moon limb, star-to-star and zero-to-star measurements made.

Besides the experiments, Borman and Lovell spent many hours arguing with Mission Control about whether one of them needed to keep their spacesuit on while the other got relief for a few hours. This was finally decided late in the 14-day flight when both were given permission to remove their spacesuits at the same time. The crew did perform well, however, in the ridiculously close conditions (like sitting in the front seats of a VW Bug), eating, exercising, and sleeping and trying not to get bored. They were eager for their orbital guests to arrive (Gemini VI-A). The final phases of Gemini VII will be discussed later (reentry and splashdown).

Gemini VI-A

Before the crew of Gemini VII was even comfortably into their first orbit, pad damage inspections at LC-19 were underway. The Martin crews found minimal damage and GLV-6 was erected and S/C-6 was mated to the Titan booster in one day! On that same day, the new uplink transmitter was successfully tested with the Gemini VII crew on-orbit.

After 56 hours into the Borman/Lovell mission, ground crews became convinced that the targeted launch day could be pulled in one day. So, on Sunday, December 12, Stafford, and Schirra entered S/C-6 and settled into their couches. The countdown was flawless and at precisely 09:54 am Eastern time the Titan rocket roared to life. The "hold-kill" scenario that was first encountered on Gemini 2 quickly recurred, however, and the two men were on top of a sputtering, highly explosive launch vehicle. At T+1.2 seconds, an electrical plug at the base of the vehicle fell off and an airborne programmer was initiated. Because no upward motion had been detected, valves closed to prevent fuel from entering the engines and they shut down.



Abort of Gemini VI-A (GLV-6) on 12/12/1965.
Photo Credit: NASA.

According to the flight rules, Schirra was supposed to pull the D-ring to activate the ejection system for the spacecraft because the clock was "ticking," indicating that liftoff occurred but the engines were shut down almost immediately, with a worst-case scenario pending of the entire stack falling back onto the pad and exploding. However, neither Schirra or Stafford felt any motion and the veteran test pilot Schirra, with nerves of steel, did not act according to the plan. He calmly informed the Martin Marietta launch conductor, Francis X. Carey, that the fuel pressures were lowering. Carey addressed the crew in an equally calm manner. When the smoke cleared it was apparent that the vehicle was still on the pad and the count up onboard clock was incorrect.

After propellants were safed, the erector was put up and Gunter Wendt and the support crew extracted the doubly-disappointed crew from the spacecraft. The ground crews began the recycle process for another attempt in four days (Gemini VII had six more days in orbit). So far, the only malfunction that was seen was the premature detachment of the programmer plug. Tests revealed that some plugs detached more easily than others, which led to better designs for future boosters and this particular

plug was replaced with a design less prone to detachment before liftoff.

However, during a routine evaluation of engine test data, the propulsion engineers noted that the thrust decay in engine #1 happened *before* the plug fell off (engine #2 was nominal). Phone calls were immediately placed to the Aerojet General facility in Sacramento. The problem was traced to the gas generator in engine #1, but Cape Aerojet crews working through the night of December 12 did not find a defect. The next morning, the haggard crew faced scrutiny over what would happen next, but then an excited engineer came running into the meeting shouting the answer! The gas generator had been removed for cleaning in Baltimore; when the check valve at the oxidizer inlet had been removed, a plastic dust cover was installed on the port. The dust cover was overlooked when the gas generator was reinstalled, resulting in a loose dust cover in the engine. The relatively inaccessible location of the check valve prevented the errant dust cover from being discovered.

The FOD (foreign object/debris) was removed from the engine (when will we ever learn that lesson?), the gas generator was cleaned and reinstalled and events moved forward for a possible launch of Gemini VI-A in four days, which would be two days before Gemini VII was supposed to return to Earth. The inaction of Schirra when faced with having to use the ejection seats was also discussed and both Schirra and Stafford admitted that using that system would have likely resulted in serious injury to both of them as 20+Gs would be experienced upon ejection and a permanent scrub of the mission would result. The veteran command pilot knew his vehicle and was convinced that they were ok. The engine problem itself, had it not been detected through data review and the plug had not disconnected prematurely, would have resulted in a safe abort condition prior to liftoff.

Elliott See, part of the astronaut support crew for the mission, told the crew on Gemini VII that they were proposing a three-day turn-around instead of four to hopefully meet a launch day of December 15. The Titan batteries were removed and replaced and the fuel pre-valves, which opened on the first attempt, were removed with the intent of launching without them in place.

Gemini VII Meets Gemini IV-A

At 08:37:26 am Eastern Standard time on December 15, GLV-6 roared to life and ascended from LC-19. The third time was a charm! All went well through launch and ascent; first stage cutoff occurred at T+160 seconds and second stage cutoff at T+341 seconds. Spacecraft separation occurred at T+361 seconds and the crew entered a 100-by-161-mile (161 by 259 km) orbit. Gemini

VII was orbiting over the Cape area during launch but they did not see the launch; however, a few minutes after Gemini VI-A was in orbit, Borman and Lovell saw the contrail from the launch and glimpsed the spacecraft in the distance. They both donned their suits awaiting the upcoming rendezvous events.



Launch of Gemini VI-A, 12/15/1965 Photo Credit: NASA

The plan called for the rendezvous to take place on the fourth orbit of Gemini VI-A. Their first burn came 94 minutes after launch when they increased their speed by 5 meters (16.5 feet) per second. Due to their lower orbit, they were gaining on Gemini VII and were only 730 miles, (or 1,175 kilometers), behind. The next burn was at two hours and eighteen minutes when Gemini VI-A made a phase adjustment to put them on the same orbital inclination as Gemini VII. They now only trailed by 300 miles (483 km).

The radar on Gemini 6A first made contact with Gemini VII at three hours and fifteen minutes when they were 434 kilometers (270 mi) away. A third burn put them into a 168-by-170-mile (270 by 274 km) orbit. As they slowly gained on Gemini VII, Schirra put Gemini VI-A's computer in charge of the rendezvous. At five hours and four minutes, he saw a bright star that he thought was Sirius, but this was in fact Gemini VII.



Gemini VII seen from Gemini VI-A during the first rendezvous in space. Photo Credit: NASA.

After several more burns, the two spacecraft were only 130 feet (40 meters) apart. The burns had only used 112 pounds of propellant on Gemini VI-A, leaving plenty of fuel for some fly-arounds. During the next 270 minutes, VI-A moved as close as *one foot* away from Gemini VII, while crews talked to each other over the radio. At one stage the spacecraft were stationkeeping so well that neither crew had to make any burns for 20 minutes. Fittingly, in the final stages of the rendezvous and the closest approach, the crew of Gemini VI-A could see Gemini VII against the backdrop of the twin stars Castor and Pollux in the Gemini constellation. Mission Control cheered the first legitimate rendezvous in space by lighting up some cigars and waving flags. The Russians had claimed the first rendezvous with the flights of Vostok III and Vostok IV in 1962, but the spacecraft did not maneuver towards each other and were only a minimum of 5 kilometers apart on different orbital planes.

Here's what Wally Schirra said about the rendezvous:

Somebody said ... that when you come within three miles (5 kilometers) you've rendezvoused. If anyone thinks they have pulled off a rendezvous at three miles have fun! This is when we started our work. I don't think rendezvous is over until you are stopped - completely stopped - with no relative motion between the two vehicles, at a range of approximately 120 feet (40 meters). That's rendezvous! From there on, it's stationkeeping.

Gemini VI-A still had 62% of the fuel in its thruster tanks after the rendezvous maneuvers. Gemini VII also had to

do some maneuvers and stationkeeping burns and the exercise was stopped when they had only 11% left in their tanks. There were also no problems for either crew seeing the other spacecraft during darkness while they completed three revolutions in close proximity. As a sleep cycle approached for both crews, Gemini VI-A maneuvered about 16 kilometers away so the two spacecraft would not collide. Schirra and Stafford were exhausted and hungry and Schirra felt like he was coming down with a cold. Their objectives had been met and Mission Control planned for Gemini VI-A to return a day early, as they were working some fuel cell issues for Gemini VII.

The crew of Gemini VI-A also performed three experiments, besides the major object of rendezvous:

1. Synoptic Terrain photography - 28 usable photographs obtained
2. Synoptic Weather photography - 100 usable photographs obtained
3. Radiation in Spacecraft - Not successful, as the crew was kept busy with the rendezvous and stationkeeping exercises.

Just before reentry on December 16, the crew of Gemini IV-A had a little surprise for their audience with this announcement from Tom Stafford:

... is Gemini VI. We have an object, looks like a satellite going from north to south, up in a polar orbit. He's in a very low trajectory traveling from north to south and has a very high climbing ratio. It looks like it might even be a ... Very low. Looks like he might be going to reenter soon. Stand by one ... You might just let me try to pick up that thing

At that point, the sound of "Jingle Bells" was heard being played on an eight-note Hohner "Little Lady" harmonica and a handful of small bells. The Smithsonian Institution claims these were the first musical instruments played in space and keeps the instruments on display. Schirra, the likely culprit in the Corned Beef sandwich incident with John Young on Gemini 3, did not receive any disciplinary actions for smuggling these instruments on-board the spacecraft. Christmas cheer in space!

Gemini VI-A fired its retro-rockets on December 16 and landed within 18 kilometers (11 miles) of the planned site in the Atlantic Ocean northeast of Turks and Caicos (this was the first controlled reentry for Gemini). This was also the first recovery to be televised live, through a transportable satellite earth station developed by ITT on the deck of the recovery aircraft carrier USS *Wasp*.

Meanwhile, Gemini VII was nearing the end of its 14-day mission. They had spent 11 days in space and had three

more to go. The excitement of the rendezvous was over and they were essentially drifting in space. Borman read "Roughing It" by Mark Twain and Lovell dug into "Drums Along the Mohawk" by Walter D. Edmonds.

In a Discovery Channel documentary many years later, Borman stated that the last three days of the mission were "bad".

Malfunctions occurred: In a repeat of Gemini V, some of the thrusters stopped working. After the flight this was traced to the fact that they had an old type of laminate in the thrust chamber. Also on the 12th day, the fuel cells started to give only a partial amount of full power. The ship's batteries were enough to sustain it for the remainder of the flight. Finally, the last day of the mission arrived and the crew stored everything for reentry. The retro-rockets worked perfectly after 14 days in space. They landed within 6.4 nautical miles (11.9 km) of the targeted landing point southeast of Bermuda on December 18, after nearly 206 orbits of earth. The crewmen were somewhat weakened by their time in space, but both were in good health and were up and about after a good night's sleep on the recovery ship USS *Wasp*. They were also in good spirits: during recovery, they joked to Mission Control about getting married after having spent so long together in space.



Jim Lovell and Frank Borman after the Gemini VII Mission on the Deck of the USS Wasp. Photo Credit: Smithsonian Institution/NASA

The Gemini VI-A spacecraft is currently on display at the Stafford Air and Space Museum in Weatherford, Oklahoma (a great museum that is worth a road trip to Oklahoma). Wally Schirra went on to fly one more mission, on Apollo 7, before retiring from NASA and the USN. He was the subject matter expert on CBS television during the Apollo era and worked in several prosperous business areas before he passed away in 2007. Tom Stafford went on to fly on Gemini again, on Gemini IX-A. He commanded the Apollo 10 mission, served as the Chief

Astronaut at NASA and returned to space one more time on the Apollo-Soyuz Test project. He continued his career in the Air Force, achieving the rank of Lieutenant General and becoming an expert in stealth technology. Stafford passed away in March, 2024.

The Gemini VII spacecraft is currently on display at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C. Frank Borman went on to fly one more mission, as the commander on the Apollo 8 mission. After retiring from NASA and the USAF in 1970, he became an executive and chairman of the board for Eastern Airlines. After resigning from Eastern, he owned a Ford dealership in Las Cruces, New Mexico, and a cattle ranch in Montana. He died of a stroke in Billings, Montana in November, 2023 at the age of 95. Jim Lovell flew on the Gemini XII mission with Buzz Aldrin, was the Command Module Pilot on Apollo 9, and commanded the Apollo 13 mission during its crisis and return to Earth. Lovell had a variety of business interests after retiring from NASA and wrote the best-selling book "Lost Moon," which was turned into the popular film "Apollo 13". Lovell passed away on August 7, 2025 at the age of 97.

My next history profile looks at the issues and corrective actions for the Agena upper stage, the Gemini VIII mission, and the Gemini IX/IX-A mission. Gemini VIII had a very dramatic abort early in the mission and return to Earth and Gemini IX had a tragic beginning.

Resources and Links:

On the Shoulders of Titans: A History of Project Gemini

<https://ntrs.nasa.gov/citations/19780012208>

Project Gemini: A Chronology

<https://www.nasa.gov/history/SP-4002/contents.htm>

Project Gemini (NASA Overview)

<https://www.nasa.gov/gemini/>

Wikipedia Article about Project Gemini

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project_Gemini

Wikipedia Article about Titan II GLV

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Titan_II_GLV

Wikipedia Article about Gemini VI/VI-A

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gemini_6A

Wikipedia Article about Gemini VIII

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gemini_7

SCRIBD, Flight Crew Training Plan Document:

<https://www.scribd.com/document/49445020/Flight-Crew-Training-Plan>

Wikipedia Biography of Walter M. Schirra, Jr.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wally_Schirra

Wikipedia Biography of Thomas P. Stafford

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_P._Stafford

Wikipedia Biography of Frank F. Borman II

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frank_Borman

Wikipedia Biography of James A. Lovell

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim_Lovell

From Barb Sande, MARS STAR and MARS Facebook Page Historian. Contact me at barbsande@comcast.net.

LM (LM) News

From the Classroom to the Cosmos: How Lockheed Martin Powers the Dream of 'Living in Space'

October 06, 2025

On October 4, 1957, the world watched Sputnik 1, the first human-made Earth satellite, ascend to orbit. Since that historic day, generations of scientists, engineers and dreamers have made it a mission to play a role, no matter how small, in shaping the future of aerospace.

Nearly seven decades later, humanity is preparing for its next giant leap: returning to the Moon, building sustainable habitats beyond Earth and eventually stepping foot on Mars. Until now, living and working in space only existed in the realm of science fiction. Today, that mission is a call-to-action for nations and industries to answer.

Lockheed Martin knows that powering the future doesn't begin with the schematic of a spacecraft or rocket. The journey begins in the classrooms, labs and communities where curiosity is sparked through [STEM education](#).

From School to Space

In 2024, Lockheed Martin invested more than \$16 million in STEM programs, reaching thousands of students across the United States.

Investments are made through robust partnerships with middle and high schools, universities, nonprofit programs and Lockheed Martin-led aerospace design challenges. Some programs include FIRST® Robotics or STEM Next Opportunity Fund, which offer hands-on experiences for students. From middle school classrooms to advanced

engineering labs, Lockheed Martin meets students where they are to transform curiosity into capability.



Lockheed Martin's commitment goes far beyond funding too.

Last year, more than 3,700 Lockheed Martin employees volunteered over 208,000 hours in their communities. Among those efforts, many served as mentors and coaches for STEM programs, inspiring students through connections to state-of-the-art spacecraft, satellites and defense systems.

By cultivating talent early and empowering the next generation of problem-solvers, Lockheed Martin is ensuring a bright future for the industry and humanity's journey into space.

First Steps

Deep space exploration is at the heart of what it means to live in space. Just as Lockheed Martin has helped power every Mars mission to date, today's students are being challenged to imagine the technologies that bring us closer to the Red Planet than ever before.

This year, the [Mission Mars Challenge](#) invites teams of two to three students to design projects that support a sustainable presence on Mars, focused on transportation, habitation, power generation and resource development.



The winning team and their educator sponsor will win a trip to Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama.

This challenge is an invitation for students to leverage real-world resources, like Lockheed Martin's [Mars Base Camp](#) concept and [lunar architecture models](#), in planning their solutions. With national leaders keen on advancing Mars research, initiatives like this foster curiosity and capability in young innovators to design the technologies that will trigger humanity's next giant leap.

Just as Sputnik 1 sparked a global wave of innovation, the Mission Mars Challenge will serve as an early step in workforce development for the next generation of space pioneers. Lockheed Martin is committed to education and discovery; today's students won't only imagine the future of space – they will build it.

Lockheed Martin Vectis™: Best in CCA Class Survivability

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md., Sept. 21, 2025 /[PRNewswire](#)/ - Lockheed Martin Skunk Works® (NYSE: LMT) introduces Lockheed Martin Vectis, a Group 5 survivable and lethal collaborative combat aircraft (CCA) to advance unparalleled air dominance for American and allied militaries.

Lockheed Martin Skunk Works' Vectis: highly capable, customizable and affordable agile drone framework.

This system embodies the company's pedigree in fighter aircraft, autonomous systems and open mission architectures. As the future of air power takes shape, Skunk Works is charting a critical path with Lockheed Martin Vectis to unlock new, integrated capabilities at an ultra-competitive speed and price point.

"Lockheed Martin Vectis is the culmination of our expertise in complex systems integration, advanced fighter development and autonomy," said OJ Sanchez, vice president and general manager, Lockheed Martin Skunk Works. "We're not simply building a new platform – we're creating a new paradigm for air power based on a highly capable, customizable and affordable agile drone framework."



Lockheed Martin Vectis

Artist rendering of Lockheed Martin Skunk Works® Vectis, a Group 5 survivable and lethal collaborative combat aircraft (CCA)

What You Need to Know About Lockheed Martin Vectis

Integration:

- Seamlessly integrates with 5th and next-gen aircraft to advance the Family of Systems vision for next-gen air dominance.
- Proven Lockheed Martin performance on common control systems like the MDCX™ ensure compatibility across the command and control spectrum.

Mission Flexibility:

- Capable of executing precision strike, ISR targeting, electronic warfare and offensive and defensive counter air missions.
- Provides multi-domain connectivity, whether standalone or as part of integrated teaming missions with crewed aircraft like the F-35.
- Extended Range: Endurance ranges compatible with Indo-Pacific, European and Central Command theaters.

How We're Making It:

- Stealth: Leverages decades of experience in stealth advancement to deliver best in CCA class survivability.
- Affordable: Applies advanced manufacturing and digital engineering techniques learned from next-gen aircraft development to drive affordability and speed. Vectis will be offered at a CCA price point.
- Open Systems: Built to avoid vendor lock by aligning to Government Reference Architectures.

Lockheed Martin Vectis' development is underway. Parts are ordered and a team is executing. Skunk Works is investing the funds and manpower necessary to build and test survivable systems to meet customers' evolving needs while broadening alignment with new tri-service architectures and global requirements as they are defined. Skunk Works has decades of experience leveraging speed, altitude, shape, advanced materials and more to keep crewed and uncrewed platforms safe in the most challenging environments to solve the warfighter's hardest problems. All of this pioneering work is reflected in Vectis, which delivers class-leading survivability in an agile, multi-role package.

With Lockheed Martin Vectis, Lockheed Martin Skunk Works is acting on a bold vision to deliver high-end survivability and mission systems capability at aggressive cost targets and design, build and fly within two years.

United Launch Alliance (ULA) News

Vulcan Rocket Ushers in New Era of National Security Space Launch



Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, Fla., (Aug. 13, 2025) – A United Launch Alliance (ULA) Vulcan rocket carrying the USSF-106 mission for the United States Space Force's Space Systems Command (SSC) lifted off on Aug. 12 at 8:56 p.m. EDT from Space Launch Complex-41 at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station. This mission marks the first National Security Space Launch aboard the next-generation Vulcan rocket. Photo by United Launch Alliance

"National security begins at liftoff," said Gary Wentz, ULA vice president of Government and Commercial Programs. "Vulcan did exactly what it was built to do: deliver a critical mission with power, precision and confidence. We are proud to play a role in strengthening the nation's space capabilities."

Standing at 202 feet tall and weighing 1.74 million pounds, the Vulcan configuration is enabled by the powerful Centaur V upper stage, which has 2.5 times the energy and 450 times the endurance of its predecessors. Centaur V delivered the USSF-106 spacecraft directly to the Geosynchronous Earth orbit (GEO).

"Vulcan is a catalyst to supporting national defense in the strategic warfighting domain of space," said Tory Bruno, ULA president and CEO. "Vulcan is the world's most capable, high energy orbit rocket meeting the demand for expanding space competencies. Vulcan provides flexibility to our nation's decision makers as we combat our adversaries attempts to disrupt the U.S. in space operations. This launch begins a new era in national space security."

ULA has served as the launch backbone for our past national security space missions having successfully launched nearly all of the 132 critical missions to orbit for

the U.S. Space Force and National Reconnaissance Office since the company's founding in 2006. This legacy, built on Atlas V, Delta II and Delta IV rockets, now continues with Vulcan.

ULA's next launch is the third Atlas mission for Amazon's Project Kuiper, Kuiper 3, which will launch from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, Florida.

IN THE NEWS

Compiled by Pete Harrigan

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CORPORATE NEWS

Lockheed Martin's (LM) [quarterly profit rises](#) on resilient defense demand (Reuters)
LM appoints [new CFO](#) as predecessor exits (Investing.com)
Boeing taps [veteran aerospace CFO Malave](#) to take role (Aviation Week Network)
New Boeing CFO [barred from defense, LM matters](#) for now (Bloomberg News via MSN)
Retirees fight LM's quick appeal push in [annuity suit](#) (Law360)
LM and workers in Colorado, Orlando [reach new contract](#) (The Denver Post)
[Whistleblower](#) says LM favored race over merit (The Times of India)
Protestors call for [removal of LM CEO](#) from Mass General Brigham board (The Boston Globe)
LM [stock falls](#) after Pentagon slashes F-35 request (Investor's Business Daily)
RTX, LM, other [defense stocks rise](#) after Israel hits Iran (The Wall Street Journal)
LM shareholders [elect board, approve proposals](#) (Investing.com)
LM declares [third quarter 2025 dividend](#) of \$3.30 (Investing.com)
Tech giants including Oracle, LM quietly [fund Trump's military parade](#) (New York Post)
Trump wants a record \$1 trillion for defense; the [stocks that could win, and lose](#) (Barron's via MSN)
Video / LM COO: We are probably at the beginning of a [3- to 5-year surge in defense spending](#) (CNBC via MSN)
Trump estimates "Golden Dome" will cost [\\$175 billion over 3 years](#) (Defense News)
Video / LM exec says Trump's ["Golden Dome" will be built domestically](#) (FOX News)
LM [CEO shares path](#) to making Trump's "Golden Dome" missile shield a reality (FOX News)
U.S. Army delays decision on [LM's Golden Dome candidate](#) for more tests (Bloomberg News via MSN)
LM, Boeing [tout Golden Dome credentials](#) at Paris Air Show (Reuters)
Musk's SpaceX is frontrunner to build Trump's [Golden Dome missile shield](#) (Reuters)
LM's CEO responds to Trump's [acquisition overhaul orders](#) (Washington Technology)
Defense firms [closely watching tariffs](#), but split on potential sting (Defense News)
LM speeds up [European defense tie-up talks](#) amid EU push to buy local (The Wall Street Journal)
LM, KAI add [drones, rotorcraft, space](#) to expanded partnership (The Defense Post)
LM to Boeing: How India's Operation Sindoor may [loosen the grip of U.S. defence giants](#) (The Economic Times)
[Anduril is aiming to do to LM](#) what Tesla did to Ford (Barron's)
[Pulling back the curtains](#) on McCarthy's Boeing digs (Politico)
Greek court [rules against LM](#) in Greek pilots deaths (The National Herald)
LM launches ["AI Fight Club"](#) to test algorithms for warfare (Space News)
Established defense contractors lend tech startups a [helping hand](#) (Defense One)
LM uses IBM's quantum processor to [crack "open shell" puzzle](#) in chemistry (Interesting Engineering)
LM [increases investment](#) in solid rocket startup X-Bow Systems (Space News)
LM CEO says govt., tech collaboration could ["eliminate" threat of catastrophic wildfires](#) in U.S. (Daily Energy Insider)
Amentum agrees to [sell unit to LM](#) for \$360 million (Investing.com)
LM [hires former Pentagon AI lead](#) as tech chief (Washington Technology)
LM [hires Trump vet](#) Drummond (O'Dwyer's)

SPACE SYSTEMS NEWS

LM [delivers completed Orion](#) to NASA for Artemis 2 (Space News)
 White House moves to [end NASA's SLS, Orion and Gateway](#) (Aviation Week Network)
 NASA budget would [cancel dozens of science missions](#), lay off thousands (Space News)
 Massive [cuts to NASA science](#) proposed in early White House budget plan (The Washington Post)
 LM has a plan to [bring samples of Mars to Earth](#); it could save NASA billions (Autoevolution)
 DARPA says decreasing launch costs, new analysis led it to [cancel DRACO nuclear propulsion project](#) (Space News)
 Space Force's first next-gen missile warning [launch pushed](#) to 2026 (Defense News)
 LM [loses experimental satellite](#) after Firefly launch mishap (Defense News)
 What LM learned from [lost tech demo](#) (Aviation Week Network)
 Space Force FORGEing ahead with [missile warning ground system](#) (Breaking Defense)
 Space Force [orders two more GPS IIIF satellites](#) for \$509.7 million (Space News)
 SpaceX launches [latest GPS III satellite](#) for U.S. military (Space News)
 Space Force demos [rapid turnaround](#) on latest GPS III launch (Space News)
 U.S. Space Force taps 12 firms for \$237 million [small-satellite procurement](#) (Space News)
 Pentagon to consider [SpaceX alternative](#) for Space Force satellite program (Space News)
 Navy seeks to fast-track [nuclear weapons systems](#) (Defense News)
 Amazon Project Kuiper deployment begins with first [ULA launch](#) (Via Satellite)
 First Kuiper launch down, [79 to go](#) (Aviation Week Network)
[Atlas 5 launches](#) second set of Project Kuiper satellites (Space News)
 SpaceX replaces ULA as the Pentagon's [top launch service provider](#) (Aviation Week Network)
 SpaceX scoops up another national security launch while [ULA faces scrutiny](#) (Military.com)
 SpaceX scores \$81.6 million Space Force contract to [launch weather satellite](#) (Space News)
 NASA, Pentagon [push for SpaceX alternatives](#) amid Trump's feud with Musk (The Washington Post)
 ULA testing OpenAI's [government-compliant chatbot](#) (Space News)
 Podcast / ULA CEO Tory Bruno on [navigating the space race](#) (Aviation Week Network)

AERONAUTICS NEWS

USAF [slashes F-35 buy](#), boosts next-gen fighter in unconventional 2026 budget proposal (Defense One)
[What might the future hold](#) for the F-35? (Air & Space Forces Magazine)
 The F-35, mocked by Musk, finally [shows what it can do](#) (Newsweek)
 13 retired [4-stars urge Congress](#) to fund E-7 and more F-35s (Air & Space Forces Magazine)
 LM [will not protest NGAD](#) award to Boeing, looks to "supercharge" F-35 instead (Air & Space Forces Magazine)
 LM champions [fifth-gen-plus](#) standard after F-47 loss (Aviation Week Network)
 What a "Ferrari" version of the F-35 might look like – and what the Pentagon thinks (Air & Space Forces Magazine)
 Possible LM F-35 upgrades provide [hints of NGAD priorities](#) (Aviation Week Network)
 Plans to finally give [F-35 external fuel tanks](#) emerge in new Air Force budget (The War Zone)
 LM has path to [pilot-optional F-35](#), CEO says (Breaking Defense)
 Trump floats major new [upgrades for F-35 and F-22](#) (Aviation Week Network)
 Trump wants a twin-engined F-35; experts say it's ["not feasible"](#) (Breaking Defense)
[Pentagon silent](#), aviation experts baffled by Trump's fighter comments (Defense News)
 Eyeing risk of radar "delays", LM proposes [new F-35 fuselage design](#) (Breaking Defense)
 Honeywell preparing derivative, clean-sheet designs for [F-35 upgrade](#) (Aviation Week Network)
 F-35 [contracts slip](#) in delays unrelated to radar woes (Air & Space Forces Magazine)
 LM believes it has [finished F-35 TR-3 upgrade](#), executive says (Breaking Defense)
[F-35 Block 4](#) will be "most aggressive upgrade" (National Defense)
 The world's top jet fighter is about to get [more expensive](#); foreign parts may now be subject to tariffs (The Wall Street Journal)
 U.S.-China [rare earths deal](#) may omit LM's F-35 (Investor's Business Daily)
[Maintenance costs will spike](#) as militaries add advanced planes, report says (Defense News)
 LM gets \$180 million to [convert three F-35 jets](#) to test aircraft (Air & Space Forces Magazine)
 Commentary / It's time for the Air Force to [embrace the F-35](#) (Air & Space Forces Magazine)
 Marine aviator describes [historic F-35 combat sortie](#) in mission against Yemen's Houthis (Military.com)
 F-35's [close call over Yemen](#) raises questions about how it's used (Task & Purpose)
 Two elite Marine Corps pilots reveal [what it's like to fly an F-35B](#) fighter jet (Military.com)
 With [new jets](#), Marines need new weapons for future fights (Defense News)
 Carney vows to [retool Canada's weapons sourcing](#) amid Trump threats (Defense News)
 Canada faces dense defense-acquisition docket as [F-35 review looms](#) (Defense News)

Carney says [Canada met with European suppliers](#) amid F-35 review (Bloomberg News)
 Audit projects Canadian F-35 acquisition [costs will nearly double](#) (FlightGlobal)
 F-35 cues ground artillery in "minutes" with [new data gateway](#) at major NATO exercise (Air & Space Forces Magazine)
 UK [confirms F-35A order plans](#) to boost nuclear mission (Aviation Week Network)
 UK F-35 plans clarified, but [no timeline for 138 jets](#) (UK Defence Journal)
 New British nuclear strike jet [can't be refueled by RAF](#) (UK Defence Journal)
 RAAF [connects F-35 simulators](#) to LM network (Australian Defence Magazine)
 Denmark receives [four more F-35s](#); half of fleet now home after delays (Defense News)
 Belgium braces for [first F-35 delivery](#) this fall (Defense News)
 Belgium gets approval for its remaining [F-35s to be assembled in Italy](#) (FlightGlobal)
 Switzerland in talks with U.S. as [cost of F-35A fighter jets rises](#) (The Straits Times)
 German Air Force looks to ease [F-35 dependence concerns](#) (Aviation Week Network)
 LM strikes [F-35 deal in Portugal](#) despite jet purchase doubts (The Defense Post)
 F-35 nations prize spare parts, as [U.S. dismisses kill-switch angst](#) (Defense News)
 Commentary / S-400s or not, [don't give Turkey the F-35](#) (Breaking Defense)
 Video / Watch a pair of [F-35s hover](#) over the USS America (Military Times)
 F-21 a ["stepping stone" for India](#) to acquire F-35 stealth jets, LM CEO says; hints Delhi, Riyadh likely customers (The EurAsian Times)
 Video / Hop inside the [cockpit of an F-35](#) for touch-and-go landings (Military.com)
 New [F-22 upgrade package](#) to keep the jets viable laid out (The War Zone)
 Video / Watch an [F-22 Raptor drop flares](#) over Miami during an air show (Military Times)
 Air Force chief responds to possibility of buying [new "Block 80" F-16s](#) (The War Zone)
 Air Force won't renew [F-16 depot contract](#) with LM (FOX Carolina)
 LM [announces layoffs](#) (FOX Carolina)
 LM sees F-16 conformal fuel tanks, offsets boosting [offer to Philippines](#) (FlightGlobal)
 Philippines defense boss [throws cold water on large F-16 buy](#) from U.S. (Defense News)
 Tech transfer pledge steers Thailand to [pick Sweden's Gripen](#) warplane (Defense News)
 Climb inside LM's [latest F-16 flight simulator](#) (FlightGlobal)
 LM advances [synthetic aviation turbine fuel](#) capacity for F-16, C-130 (The Defense Post)
 LM [expands C-130J wing lifespan](#) by 40% with new test campaign (FlightGlobal)
 Choice of C-130 for new Navy "Doomsday Plane" [questioned in watchdog report](#) (The War Zone)
 LM [C-130 missile-carrying role](#) nears operational status (Aviation Week Network)
[Buying KC-130Js](#) key to Navy's ability to fight in Pacific, Reserve boss says (The War Zone)
 Vietnam kicks off trade talks with U.S. as [plane deal](#) takes shape (The Straits Times)
[Vietnam minister meets LM](#), SpaceX on U.S. visit for tariff talks (Reuters)
 Competitors for [U.S. Navy's new trainer](#) praise requirements change (Aviation Week Network)
 Video / Watch a [C-5 Galaxy open its mouth](#) and spit out three AH-64 Apache helicopters (Military Times)
 Skunk Works starts [flight tests for CMMT-X](#) vehicle (Aviation Week Network)
 NASA's X-59 goes through grounded [flight simulations](#) (Military-Aerospace Electronics)
 NASA chief voices [support for supersonic X-59](#) at Paris Air Show (Aviation Week Network)
 LM, IBM unveil [smart drone swarms](#) to adapt and evolve in live battle zones (Interesting Engineering)
 LM, Red Hat partner on [drone swarm technology](#) (The Defense Post)
 LM partners with Electra to boost [eSTOL EL9 development](#) (Aviation Week Network)
 Was it scrap metal or an alien spacecraft? The Army asked an [elite defense lab](#) to investigate (Wall Street Journal)

MISSILES AND FIRE CONTROL NEWS

LM wins [\\$1.7 billion deal](#) for "eyes of the Apache" (Defense Blog)
 LM to manufacture [sensors for Polish Air Force](#) AH-64E Apache helicopters (The Defense Post)
 Dutch [Apaches to gain JAGM](#) weapons capability (FlightGlobal)
 Army asks LM to build [launchers for artillery rockets](#) with multi-mode guidance in \$742 million deal (Military-Aerospace Electronics)
 Army unveils plans to acquire two different sizes of [autonomous launchers](#) (Breaking Defense)
 LM awarded \$214 million to [upgrade M270 MLRS](#) for U.S., allies (The Defense Post)
 Final batch of [British MLRS launchers funded](#) (UK Defense Journal)
 U.S. Army, LM demonstrate [joint integrated fires](#) (The Defense Post)
 U.S. Army, LM conduct [first PrSM flight from MLRS](#) M270A2 launcher (Army Technology)
 PrSM ballistic missiles loaded with [Coyote drones, Hatchet mini smart bombs](#) eyed by Army (The War Zone)

[Australia joins U.S. Precision Strike Missile program](#) (Asian Military Review)
 U.S. helps Israel [shoot down barrage](#) of Iranian missiles (The Associated Press via Military.com)
[Saudi Arabia activates U.S. THAAD](#) to deter looming Iran missile threat (The Jerusalem Post)
 LM [offers UK missile shield](#) amid growing Russian aerial threats (Army Recognition)
 Mysterious [shipping container rocket launcher](#) spotted at Trump's visit to Fort Bragg (The War Zone)
 Everything we learned about LM's [QuadStar missile](#) aimed at replacing FIM-92 Stingers (The War Zone)
 LM drawing on European partnerships to handle [weapons demand surge](#) (National Defense Magazine)
 Navy leaders look to [expand munitions options](#) as supplies run low (Defense News)
 British Army tests lightweight [Javelin antitank weapon](#) at record range (Defense News)
 Israel in advanced talks with U.S. to buy [JASSM missiles](#) (Globes)
 LM, Rheinmetall renew [missile collaboration](#), eye European "center of excellence" (Breaking Defense)
 LM sees "sense of urgency" supporting [munitions JV talks](#) (Aviation Week Network)
 Poland delivers first [Patriot PAC-3 MSE launch tubes](#) (Kyiv Post)
 Taiwan toughens air defense by forming [fourth Patriot battalion](#) (The Defense Post)
 Taiwan [test-fires U.S.-furnished HIMARS](#) for first time (Stars & Stripes)
 First U.S.-made [HIMARS launchers](#) arrive in Estonia (Stars & Stripes)
 Video / Watch two M142 [HIMARS hurl rockets](#) downrange during training in Estonia (Military Times)
 Marines deploy [drone-killing MADIS system](#) for Balikatan drills (Defense News)
 Updated Sniper pod to [help F-35 share data](#) with other aircraft (FlightGlobal)
 New details on F/A-18 Super Hornet's [troubledIRST pod](#) (The War Zone)
 LM to lay off 64 workers at [Andover clean energy facility](#), citing "program changes" (The Boston Globe)
 LM, Romania's Sinteza [cancel battery production project](#) (SeeNews)

ROTARY AND MISSION SYSTEMS NEWS

LM secures \$3 billion [Aegis missile defense contract](#) (Investing.com)
 LM delivers first [SPY-7 radar antennas](#) to Japan (Breaking Defense)
 Sweden to purchase LM [radar systems](#) for \$104 million (Investing.com)
 Sweden's stealthy Visby corvettes getting [Mk 41-based vertical launch systems](#) for air defense missiles (The War Zone)
 LM pitches [containerized launchers](#) to help close Australia's air and missile defense gaps (The War Zone)
 Missile Defense Agency's [long-range radar tracks ICBM test target](#) for first time (Breaking Defense)
 Poland [cancels acquisition](#) process for 32 Black Hawk helicopters (The Straits Times)
 State Department approves \$1.4 billion [helicopters, F-16 parts sale to UAE](#) (The Hill)
 U.S. Navy MH-60Rs get serious about [counter-UAS mission](#) (FlightGlobal)
 New "Marine One" becomes first helo with [SpaceX Starshield](#) (Aviation Week Network)
[Uncrewed rotorcraft](#), clean-sheet designs vie for contested logistics (Aviation Week Network)
 Sikorsky set to fly [second rotor-blown wing design](#) (Aviation Week Network)
 U.S. Army, GE, Sikorsky complete [T901 hover test](#) (Aviation Week Network)
 Sikorsky and Bristow sign agreement supporting [world's largest S-92 helicopter fleet](#) (Aviation Pros)
 Sikorsky sees [growing role for AI, automation](#) in helicopter operations (FlightGlobal)
 LM "looking for partners" on [NATO next-gen helo bid](#), will build in Europe (Breaking Defense)
 LM outlines "turnkey" bid for U.S. [Army helicopter training](#) contract (FlightGlobal)
 LM to [cut Fort Bliss jobs](#) as Texas layoffs extend (The Dallas Express)
 Video / An exclusive look at the [LM S-97](#) (Aviation Week Network)
 LM plans [layoffs in a Sikorsky division](#) in southern Maryland (Maryland Business Journal)
 Britain to upgrade [military pilot training](#) with \$400 million package (Defense News)
 LM Canada wins [Chilean Navy contract](#) (The Santiago Times)
 Navy finally finds [something the LCS is good at](#): Stopping drug smuggling (Task & Purpose)



MARS Associates

2025 Holiday Celebration Luncheon

The Officers and Directors of MARS Associates invite you, your spouse or companion/guest to the 2025 Holiday Celebration on **WEDNESDAY, December 3, 2025**, at **The Lone Tree Golf Club & Hotel**, 9808 Sunningdale Blvd., Lone Tree, Colorado. For a map to the facility, please click on this link: <http://bit.ly/3VORear>

The entrée options this year are:

- (1) **Prime Rib** served with mashed potatoes, seasonal vegetables and au jus
- (2) **Frenched Chicken** pan seared and baked, served with rice pilaf and seasonal vegetables;
- (3) **Maple Glazed Salmon** served with wild rice and seasonal vegetables.

Lunch will include a side salad, fresh baked rolls and choice of pie from the pie station. Coffee and tea are also included. If you have special dietary needs, please contact Linda Duby at 303-249-1665 with the details. The “cash” bar will open at 11:00 a.m. Lunch will be served at 12:00 noon.

The cost for members and one guest is \$45.00 per person and the cost for additional guests or non-members is \$75.00 per person. These prices include facility fees, service fees, taxes, and gratuities. Please specify your choice of entrée(s) on the reservation form below and mail it with your check (made payable to **MARS Associates**) to the address on the form below by November 18, 2025. Or you can make your reservation online by using the secure link below:

<https://marsretirees.org/2025/10/03/2025-mars-holiday-celebration/>

Reservations must be received by November 18, 2025.

MARS Associates will be collecting donations for **Toys for Tots** again this year. If you wish to make a monetary donation, or wish to donate an **unwrapped** toy, we will be collecting them at the check-in table.

If you make a reservation and later find you cannot attend, please notify Linda Duby at 303-249-1665 or lindaduby@comcast.net; or Charlie Haupt at 303-725-7595 or qerfcoach@gmail.com; by **November 18, 2025** to receive a refund. Admission is by reservation only.

----- DETACH HERE -----

Holiday Celebration - December 3, 2025. Please print clearly.

Mail to: **MARS Associates, PO Box 1128, Littleton, CO 80160-1128**

Member: _____	Beef _____	Chicken _____	Salmon _____
	\$45.00	\$45.00	\$45.00
Spouse/Companion/Guest: _____	Beef _____	Chicken _____	Salmon _____
	\$45.00	\$45.00	\$45.00
Additional Guests: _____	Beef _____	Chicken _____	Salmon _____
	\$75.00	\$75.00	\$75.00

(Add sheet for additional guest names) Member Phone No. _____

Member e-mail address _____

Member/Spouse/Companion/Guest ____ @ \$45.00 per person = \$ _____ Other guests @ \$75.00 per person = \$ _____

Member/Spouse/Companion/Guest ____ @ \$45.00 per person = \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____ Check # _____

Picnic Prize Winners-- Photos by Carol Lovelace



Jeff Keldrow



Jim Pennington and David Hodgson



Chuck Curless



Jim Pennington and Linda Gusha



Ed Pennington and Richard Hatz



Rusty Adinolfi



Randy Renken



Matt Lombardi



Karen Paulson



Patrick Shannon



Cheryl Borgen



Paul Leyva & Jim Pennington



Dave Farin, Jim Pennington



Jan Redfield & Jim Pennington



Jim Pennington, Shannon Maginn, Ken Marts



Pat Albert



Nancy Isaacs



Paul Jones & Jim Pennington



Darrel Williamson



Don Skinner & Jim Pennington



Ginger Losey & Jim Pennington



Don Schade & Jim Pennington



Paul Norris



Jerry Graves & Jim Pennington



Diane Hess & Jim Pennington



Bob Gray & Jim Pennington

Visit the MARS Associates Website
<https://www.marsretirees.org/>
for More Picnic Photos

For this edition of MARS STAR, we once again do not have a volunteer team report.



As Uncle Sam used to say – WE WANT YOU!

Each quarter, we would like to highlight a volunteer and their organization in the MARS STAR. If you are interested in sharing your volunteering experience(s), please send your write-up to Judy Nielsen, MARS Volunteer Activity Coordinator, at jniel129@gmail.com. Not only will this provide recognition for the good work being done, but it will also encourage others and will provide information for those looking for volunteer opportunities. Additionally, we will donate \$50 to that volunteer's charity/organization.

There are also volunteer activities you can become involved in within MARS, so please contact Judy Nielsen, or any officer/director to find out more.

Happy Volunteering!

Schedule Addendum (See last page)

NOTES:

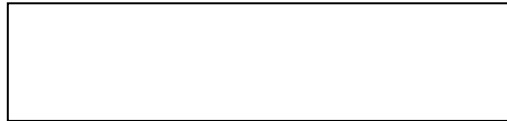
1. Board of Directors has their meetings, as required
2. Officers/Directors meet 1st Wednesday every month at 09:30 am. Zoom meetings may be used at discretion of Officers
3. Special Activities Committee will meet every fourth Thursday or Friday each month.
4. Bridge Club meets 3rd Friday of every month at 10:00 am at Buck Recreation Center.
5. Car Club meets 1st Sat of every month, and as noted on their website.
6. Golf club meets every Thursday from April through Oct of each year.
7. Hiking Club: No planned Hikes at this time
8. Pacesetters Club meets the 2nd or 3rd Wednesday of each month at Landsdowne Arms
9. Photo Club meets 2nd Thursday every month (except Jun, Jul & Aug) at 1:00 pm on Zoom or meet at the Columbine Library (Bowling Green)
10. Marketing Comm. meets monthly and encourages interested members to call in and participate (contact Kathy Hetzel, if interested)
11. 2025 Holiday Celebration Dec 3 (Lone Tree Golf Club & Hotel)
12. 2026 Summer Picnic Sep 9, 2025 at Clement Park 11AM (Second Wednesday in September)

Please review dates and times and notify Jim Pennington (jpennington101.jp@gmail.com), if you have any changes or additions.



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DATE: October 2025

MARS 2025 / 2026 EVENT CALENDAR

EVENT/MONTH	Dates for Events on the MARS Website											
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept
Officers/Directors Meeting at RRCU	1	5	2	7	4	4	1	6	3	1	5	2
Bridge Club	17	21	---	16	20	20	17	15	19	17	21	18
Car Club	4	1	6	3	7	7	4	2	6	4	1	5
Golf Club	Thur	-	-	-	-	-	-	Thur	Thur	Thur	Thur	Thur
Hiking Club	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open
Pacesetters Club	15	12	---	14	18	18	15	20	17	15	12	16
Photo Club	9	13	11	8	12	12	9	14	--	--	--	--
Special Activities Committee												
Website Team	as-needed	as-needed	as-needed	as-needed	as-needed	as-needed	as-needed	as-needed	as-needed	as-needed	as-needed	as-needed
MARS Events												
2025 Holiday Celebration			3									
2025 Happy Hour Events		17			TBD			TBD			TBD	
2026 Spring Event and Annual Meeting						11						
2026 Summer Luncheon									24			
2026 16th Annual Rockies Picnic & Game											TBD	
2026 Annual Summer Picnic												9
MARS Special Activities												
Georgetown Loop Railroad	13											
Wine Sommelier Event-"Picking Wines for your Holiday Meals"		19										
2026 Western Stock Show				22								
Possible Distillery Tour (Only in Planning)							TBD					
Possible Denver Art Museum Visit (Plng)								TBD				
MARS Informational Sessions												
Your Retirement, Your Way (Zoom Call)	7											
MARS STAR Schedule												
Items due for MARS STAR												
STAR Input to Editor	9			8			9			9		
STAR Repro. Deadline	20			19			20			20		
STAR Mailing	29			28			29			29		