February 1st: Day 32 of the gregorian calendar.

The Columbia crew killed in 2003.

History: In 1999, 19th flyby of the probe Galileo near Europa. In 2003, the Space Shuttle Columbia desintegrates during its entrance in the atmopheres killing the seven astronauts aboard: Rick D. Husband, William C. McCool, Michael P. Anderson, Ilan Ramon, Kalpana Chawla, David M. Brown e Laurel Clark.
Observations: The Moon and Saturn will rise late tonight. At 04h (UT) the Moon occults the asteroid Echo and this occultation is visible from most of Europe

February 2nd: Day 33 of the gregorian calendar.

Ranger 4

History:. In 1964, the america probe Ranger 4 arrived to the Moon.

Observations: At nightfall and early evening, people at mid-northern latitudes see the famous Belt of Orion. In Orion constellation lies one of the most famous stars of the sky, ruddy-hued Betelgeuse. Betelgeuse is a red supergiant, and one of the largest and most luminous stars known. For comparison, if it was at the center of our solar system its surface might extend out to between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter, wholly engulfing Mercury, Venus, the Earth and Mars. Kids like Betelgeuse, because its name sounds so much like “beetle juice.” Try to see it in your home's sky.

February 3rd: Day 34 of the gregorian calendar.

History: In 1984, Space Shuttle program: STS-41-B Mission is launched to International Space Station
Observations: Last night we suggested Betelgeuse. Orion’s two brightest stars – Betelgeuse and Rigel – lodge at an equal distance above and below Orion’s Belt. So tonight try to look at Rigel that is 775 light-years away. At the same distance as the Sun it would be 40 000 times brighter.

February 4th: Day 35 of the gregorian calendar.

Clyde Tombaugh

History:. In 1906, birth of Clyde Tombaugh, famous for the dicovery of Pluto, in 1930. He also discovered many asteroids.
In 1932 the asteroid 1239 Queteleta was discovered by Eugène Joseph Delporte.
In 1934 the asteroid 2824 Francke was discovered by Karl Wilhelm Reinmuth.

Observations: Try to make pictures of Mars with your telescope.

February 5th: Day 36 of the gregorian calendar.

History:. In 1971, Apollo 14 landed on the Moon, in the Fra Mauro formation.

Observations: The Moon reaches Last Quarter at 23h48 (UT). Tonight Mars and M44, the Beehive cluster(also known as the Praesepe) will be in the same field when seen with binoculars. Occultation of Nausikaa at 06h(UT) not visible from Europe.

February 6th: Day 37 of the gregorian calendar.

Launche of the Titan míssil.

History: In 1959, the first balistic missil Titan was launched from Cape Canaveral.

Observations: Tonight try to find the Double Cluster in Perseus, near Cassiopeia. Occultation of Victoria at 01h(UT) parcially visible from Eastern Europe.

February 7th: Day 38 of the gregorian calendar.

STS-98 Launch.

History:. In 1979, Pluto "moved" to an orbital position closer to the Sun than Neptune for the first time after its discovery.
In 1984, the astronauts Bruce McCandless II and Robert L. Stewart make the first space walk using the Manned Manouver Unit during the mission STS-41-B of the Space Shuttle program, no qual os .
In 1991, Salyut 7 desitegrates in the atmosphere above Argentina.
In 2001, mission STS-98, of the Space Shuttle Atlantis is launched, transporting the "Destiny" module of the International Space Station (ISS). The launch at sunset is considered by many as one of the most beautiful launches that was ever made.

Observations:. Use this night to find Cassipeia with the help of Stellarium or a planisphere.At this time of year – and at this time of night – this constellation has the shape of the letter M, and you might imagine the Queen reclining on her starry throne. But, at other times of year or night, Cassiopeia's Chair dips below the celestial pole. And then this constellation appears to us on Earth more in the shape of a W. Occultation of Athamantis at 03h(UT) not visible from Europe. Occultation of Antares at 19h(UT) not visible from Europe.

February 8th: Day 39 of the gregorian calendar.

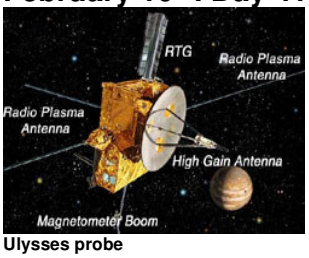
History:. In 1974, after 84 days in Space, the crew of the first american Space Station, Skylab, returns to Earth.
In 1994, initial flight of the CZ-3A (China).
Observations: Occultation of Egeria at 10h(UT) visible from Western Europe.

February 9th: Day 40 of the gregorian calendar.

History: In 1986, comet Halley returned for its periodic visit after a 76 year absence.

Observations: After Moonless sunsets in February and March one has the best opportunities of year to see zodiacal light in the evening sky. The light appears when all traces of twilight have left the sky. It looks like a hazy pyramid of light in the west after true darkness falls.

February 10th: Day 41 of the gregorian calendar.



Ulysses probe

History: In 1992, the Ulysses probe uses Jupiter's gravity to slingshot to explore the Sun's poles.

Observations: Occultation of Themis at 15h (UT) is not visible from Europe.

February 11th: Day 42 of the gregorian calendar.

History: In 1997, Space Shuttle Discovery was launched with the mission to repair Hubble Space Telescope .

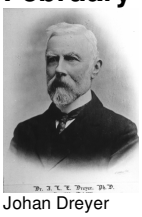
Observations: Occultation of Flora at 15h (UT) is not visible from Europe.

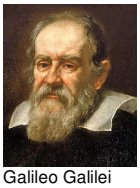
February 12th: Day 43 of the gregorian calendar.

History:. In 2001, the probe NEAR Shoemaker became the first human spacecraft to land on an asteroid, the 433 Eros.

Observations: Since its Friday night why won't stay up a little longer and, if its your case, observe Saturn for the first time this year?

February 13th: Day 44 of the gregorian calendar.


Johan Dreyer

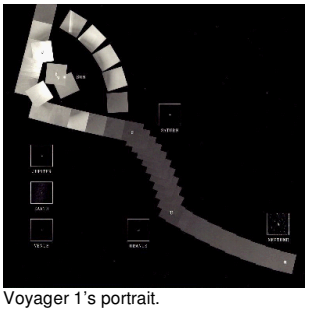

Galileo Galilei

History:. Johan Ludwig Emil Dreyer, the man that compiled the New General Catalogue of Nebulae and Clusters of Stars (NGC), was born on this date in 1852.
In 1633, Galileo Galilei arrived to Rome to be judged by the Inquisition.
In 2004, the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics claims the discovery of the biggest diamant of the known Universe, the white dwarf BPM 37093.

Observations: Here is a great night to try to look at our suggested "Advanced Observation" object NGC 2287 (M41) as an homage to Johan Dreyer.
Moon at Apogee at a distance of 406542 km from Earth at 02h(UT).

February 14th: Day 45 of the gregorian calendar.

Happy Valentine's Day.

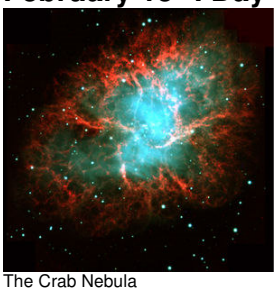

Voyager 1's portrait.

History: In 1747, astronomer James Bradley presented his evidence of Earth's wobble, called nutation.
In 1898, Fritz Zwick, was born. He was the first astronomer to identify supernovas as a different classe of objects and to suggest the possibility of neutron stars' existence.
In 1990, Voyager 1's camaras pointed to the Sun and took a series of images of the stars and its planets making the first "portrait" of our Solar System from outside.

In 2000, the probe NEAR becomes the first to orbit an asteroid, the 433 Eros.
Observations: The Moon is at New Moon at 02h51 (UT). Neptune in

conjunction with the Sun at 17h(UT).

February 15th: Day 46 of the gregorian calendar.


The Crab Nebula

History:. In 1564, Galileu Galilei, was born. He was the first to use the telescope to observe space.
In 1828, Júles Verne was born.During his life he wrote 54 science fiction related books.
In 1999, the IKONOS 2 Athena 2was launched.

Observations: Try to observe the Crab Nebula. Finding M1 isn't very difficult: it can be seen with as little as 7X magnification. Locate Zeta Tauri (about halfway between Orion's "head" and the southernmost bright star in Auriga) and aim about 1 degree northwest (Right Ascension: 05h 34min 32s; Declination: -22º 00' 42").

January 16th: Day 47 of the gregorian calendar.

Goddard close to his rocket.

History:. In 1926, the rocket launched by Robert H. Goddard becomes the first working on liquid fuel; Goddard becomes convinced that rockets will eventually land human beings on the Moon.
In 1966 the Gemini 8 was launched.
In 1999, the team of the Lunar Prospector at the NASA Ames Research Center anounces discoveries that confirm that the Moon's mass is in its majority provenient of material ejected from Earth during a past impact with an object about the size of Mars.

Observations: The movie "Face Off" with Nicholas Cage and John Travolta had a great inspiration in Astronomy. In the two bad brothers where Pollux Troy and Castor Troy. Do you have any idea wher those names came from? Try to find out tonighyt where the stars that inspired those names are.

February 17th: Day 48 of the gregorian calendar.

History:. In 1958 the first probe working on solar energy, the Vanguard 1, was launched.

Observations: Occultation of Thisbe at 15h(UT) is not visible from Europe.**January 18th: Day 18 of the gregorian calendar.**

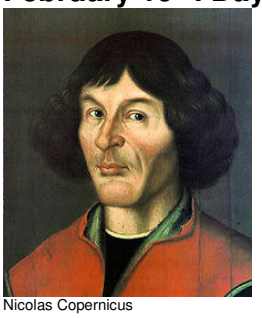
February 18th: Day 49 of the gregorian calendar.

Space Shuttle Enterprise

History:. In 1930, while analysing photographic plates made in January, Clyde Tombaugh discovers Pluto. At the time it was dubbed the ninth planet until 2006, when it was included in the dwarf planet category.
In 1977, the Space Shuttle Enterprise is lauched from the back of a Boeing 747.
In 2001, astronomers saw first light of one of the most ancient structures in the Universe: quasar RD J030117+002025 in the Whale constelation; the qiaser lies at 13 thousand million light-years from us, which means it is seens at a time when the Universe had only 8% of its present age.
In 2003, cometa C/2002 V1 (NEAT) at perihelium, is seen by SOHO.

Observations: You have been looking around the Orion constellation. Have you found the star Capella yet?

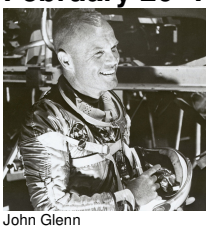
February 19th: Day 50 of the gregorian calendar.


Nicolas Copernicus

History:. In 1473, the founder of the heliocentric system, Nicolas Copernic was born.
In 1924, Edwin Hubble writes to Harlow Shapley: "You might be interested to know that I have found a cepheid variable in the Andromeda Nebula" (now known as Andromeda Galaxy).
In 1986, the Soviet Union launches Space Station Mir.
In 2002, the Mars Odyssey probe started to map the surface of Mars.

Observations: Venus is now starting to get away from the Sun's in our visual field. If you want to make picture of Venus' phases it would be about time to start.

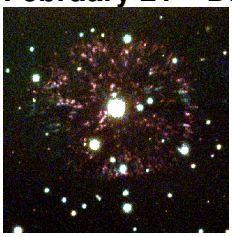
February 20th: Day 51 of the gregorian calendar.


John Glenn

History:. In 1962, the astronaut John Glenn, on Friendship 7, orbits Earth 3 times as part of the Mercury Program.

In 1965, Ranger 8 probe crashes on the Moon after making pictures of places for the landing of the Apollo missions.
Observations: Aldebaran and Betelgeuse seem a bit different from the rest of the stars in their surrounding, though they are not exactly the same colour. Why?

February 21st: Day 52 of the gregorian calendar.

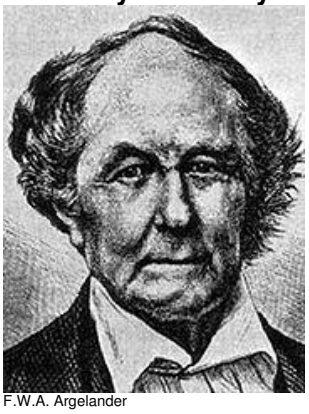


History:

In 1901 the first Nova of the 20th century was seen.The amateur astronomer T. D. Anderson was its first observer of the Nova.

In 1972, the russian probe Luna 20 lands on the Moon..

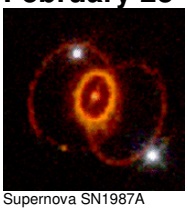
February 22nd: Day 53 of the gregorian calendar.


F.W.A. Argelander

History:. In 1632 Galileo's o "*Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo*" was published .
In 1799, F.W.A. Argelander was born.
Organizer of star catalogues, he studied variable stars and created the first astronomical international organization named the *Astronomische Gesellschaft*.
In 1995, the cosmonaut Valeryiv Polyakov returns to Earth after breaking the record on Mir space station : 438 days.
Em 1995, o asteróide 1995CR passa a 7.2 milhões de quilómetros da Terra.
In 1996, the mission STS-76 of the Space Shuttle Atlantis was launched.

Observations: The Moon is at First Quarter at 00h42 (UT). Occultation of Hermione at 16h(UT) is not visible from Europe except for northern Finland and Norway.

February 23rd: Day 54 of the gregorian calendar.


Supernova SN1987A

History:. In 1950, discovery of the asteroid (29075) 1950 DA.
In 1987, the supernova of the Large Maggelanic Cloud becomes visible in naked eyeas a result of the explosion of the blue supergiant Sanduleak 69. Known as SN1987A, it was the "closest" supernova in the last three centuries.

In 1999, conjunction of Jupiter with Venus.
Observations: Occultation of Nemesis at 09h(UT) is not visible from Europe.

February 24th: Day 55 of the gregorian calendar.

History:.In 1968 the first pulsar, discovery is anounced on *Nature* by Jocelyn Bell Burnell.Hewish and Ryle co-directors of the project received Physics Nobel Prize in 1974, for explaineing the observations with a model of a rotating neutron star.
In 1969 the american probe Mariner 6 was launched.
Em 1979, lançamento da sonda Solwind P78-1.
In 1996 the Polar probe was launched to study Earth's poles.**January 25th: Day 25 of the gregorian calendar.**

February 25th: Day 56 of the gregorian calendar.

Observations:. Tonight is a good night to see the Moon and Mars together

February 26th: Day 57 of the gregorian calendar.

Saturn IB rocket

History:.
In 1966, the first rocket Saturn IB, the AS-201, of the Apollo program was launched

Observations:
Occultation of Angelina at 08h(UT) is not visible from Europe. Occultation of Hygiea at 23h(UT) is not visible from Europe.

February 27th: Day 58 of the gregorian calendar.

Bernard Lyot

History:
In 1897, Bernard Lyot, inventor of the coronograph was born.

Observations:
The Moon is at perigee at a distance of 357832 km from Earth at 22h(UT).

February 28th: Day 59 of the gregorian calendar.

New Horizons.

History: In 2007, the probe New Horizons, passes by Jupiter on its way to Pluto.

Observations: Jupiter is in conjunstion with the Sun at 12h (UT). Full Moon at 16h38 (UT). Occultation of Echo at 06h(UT) is not visible from Europe.

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