

NASA Fun Facts

- 1** The first American to perform a spacewalk was Edward White during the Gemini 4 mission in 1965. Spacewalks were also performed during the Gemini 9, 10, and 11 missions. During these missions, spacewalking astronauts generally found it difficult to maneuver outside their spacecraft without tiring and overheating.
- 2** In preparation for the Gemini 12 mission, Buzz Aldrin helped develop successful procedures for spacewalking with the introduction of underwater training in a large pool. Jim Lovell was the Commander of the Gemini 12 mission; Buzz Aldrin was the mission's pilot. Underwater training has become a staple of astronaut spacewalking training ever since.
- 3** To help Buzz Aldrin work outside Gemini 12 more comfortably, handholds were added to the spacecraft design to allow him to move more easily and exert less effort.
- 4** The Gemini 12 mission patch's orange and black colors are a nod to the original flight date, which was closer to Halloween. The Roman numeral XII is located at the 12 o'clock position on the face of a clock, with the Gemini spacecraft pointing to it like the hour hand of a clock. This represents the position of this mission as the last flight of the Gemini program. With the Apollo project following, the Moon, Apollo's main goal, is symbolized by the crescent on the left.
- 5** The initial thought behind the Apollo 13 mission patch was essentially Jim Lovell's. His idea was to feature Apollo, the Greek god of the Sun. The crew gave the idea to New York City Artist Lumen Winter, and Mr. Winter developed the three-horse design symbolizing Apollo; the patch also included the Earth and the Moon. Prior to developing the Apollo 13 mission patch, Lumen Winter created a large mural of horses crossing the sky with the Earth below. It was displayed at the St. Regis Hotel; the mural was later purchased by Tom Hanks, who portrayed Captain Lovell in the movie *Apollo 13*. The mural was displayed in Jim Lovell's son's restaurant, *Lovell's*, for several years.
- 6** Lovell, a small crater on the far side of the Moon, is named for Jim Lovell. Craters are also named for Frank Borman (Borman crater) and William Anders (Anders crater). Lovell and his crewmates were the first humans to see these craters on the Moon's far side in 1968.
- 7** The current record for distance from Earth that humans have traveled is held by the crew of Apollo 13 as they rounded the far side of the Moon, 248,665 miles. This was achieved on April 14, 1970 at 7:21 pm CST at an altitude of 158 miles above the surface of the Moon.