Sun-Earth Day Highlights:

STEREO ALERT!

This is Troy Cline with a Sun-Earth Day alert:

Troy: In the beginning, there was Stonehenge. The Great Pyramids. The Sun Dagger. The beginning of observing the sun that is. Such fantastic rock formations built by early civilizations were used to mark the movement of the sun through the sky – and such tools for watching the sun have, of course, evolved over time.

In the 600s, Galileo changed our view of the sun by looking at it through a telescope. Surprise! He noticed black spots on its surface, known as sunspots. That was humankind's first clue that there was activity and constant change on the face of the sun.

Fast-forward to the modern space age. We now have satellites that observe the sun in different wavelengths, or that can measure the amount of particles that stream off its surface, or map out the intense magnetic fields the sun produces.

And next week, on February 6 – about the time of kickoff of the Superbowl, actually – a new age of solar observation will begin. Two satellites, known collectively as the STEREO satellites, will move into position on opposite sides of the sun. For the first time in human history, we will be able to observe both sides of the sun simultaneously. We'll be able to track Galileo's sunspots as they move all the way around the sun or watch the way giant solar flares form. Stay tuned -- we'll tell you more about how STEREO is going to help us track solar weather later on in February.

If you have something to say, just join us in Facebook or send an email to sunearthday@gmail.com . If selected we'll share it on one of our upcoming podcasts!

For all other details about the Sun-Earth Day program including information about our past SED themes be sure to visit our website at sunearthday.nasa.gov.
While there, don't forget to register in order to receive Sun-Earth Day updates!

You can learn more about the STEREO mission and NASA by simply visiting www.nasa.gov .