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YURI PAVLOVICH GIDZENKO:

“COSMONAUTS AND ASTRONAUTS HAVE TO CREATE THEIR OWN VIEW ABOUT THEIR FUTURE LIFE AS A COSMONAUT OR ASTRONAUT”

Yuri Pavlovich Gidzenko and Marc Ciupitu about space for CURIERUL ROMÂNESC

STAR CITY, Russia:

Cosmonaut Colonel Yuri Pavlovich Gidzenko is a veteran of three space flights and a Hero of the Russian Federation, the highest honorary title that can be bestowed on a citizen by the Russian Federation. He started his carrier as a pilot in the Air Force and was selected as a cosmonaut in 1987. His first trip to space was as the commander of the EUROMIR-95 mission to the Russian Space Station Mir, a long-duration flight that took place from September 3, 1995 through February 29, 1996.

His second flight to space was also a long-duration flight and took place from October 31, 2000 through March 21, 2001, when he was the Soyuz commander and flight engineer of the ISS-1 mission to the International Space Station. His third trip to space took place from April 25, 2002 through May 5, 2002, when he was the commander of the Soyuz 4 Taxi flight to the International Space Station. He has spent a total of 330 days in space.

Colonel Gidzenko retired from the cosmonaut corps in July 2001 and has since been assigned to the Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center in Star City, Russia, as chief of department 3 which includes the Hydrolab (used for training space-walks underwater), Aerolab (used to simulate weightlessness during parabolic flights), parachute jumping, and survival training.

I have known Colonel Gidzenko since 2000 and know him to be very kind, friendly, down-to-Earth and very, very, competent. He is the genuine article. So, for the benefit of the Curierul Românesc readers, I recently sat down with Colonel Gidzenko to get a glimpse into his life and thoughts:



Cosmonaut Colonel Yuri Pavlovich Gidzenko:

"The research doesn't at this time give full return. We can't develop much that can be utilized on Earth now. But still, it is very important.

Because it is our first steps in space."

Foto: © RSA.

Marc Ciupitu: Please tell our readers about yourself and your family.

Yuri Gidzenko: I was born in the Ukraine in 1962. My mother, brother and one of my sisters live in

Nikolayev, Ukraine. My other sister lives in Great Britain where she works tending horses, her childhood dream. My father past away two years ago. Now I live in Star City with my wife and two sons. My sons are 21 and 18 years old. They are students at the Moscow University. The older studies geography and geology and the younger studies economic management.

M.C.: What do you like to read?

Y.G.: A lot of things. Novels. Detective stories. Historical books. Right now I'm reading a book about signs and symbols in Russian history. I also read news papers, and of course lots of technical documents.

M.C.: What music do you like to listen to?

Y.G.: I like pop music and Russian chanson. Alexander Rosenbaum, Oleg Mityaev to name a few. Plus light symphonic music.

M.C.: Besides your work in the space program, do you have time for other activities? Do you have any hobbies?

Y.G.: Yes. Sports, like skiing and swimming. Football, I mean soccer. And spending time with my sons.

M.C.: Did you become a cosmonaut by chance or was it a childhood dream?

Y.G.: My childhood dream was to be a pilot. Becoming a cosmonaut was like chance for me.

It was suggested to me to try passing the medical exams and I agreed although the chance was small - only 1 out of 100 pilots would succeed. But I liked it.

My mother told me that I was named after Yuri Gagarin because I was born in 1962 and Yuri Gagarin flew in 1961. Now there are a lot of Yuris in our cosmonaut team. Yuri Gidzenko,