

1987 in the United States

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Events from the year **1987 in the United States**.

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Incumbents

Federal Government

- President: Ronald Reagan (R-California)
- Vice President: George H. W. Bush (R-Texas)
- Chief Justice: William Rehnquist (Wisconsin)
- Speaker of the House of Representatives: Tip O'Neill (D-Massachusetts) (until January 3), Jim Wright (D-Texas) (starting January 6)
- Senate Majority Leader: Bob Dole (R-Kansas) (until January 3), Robert Byrd (D-West Virginia) (starting January 3)
- Congress: 99th (until January 3), 100th (starting January 3)

Governors and Lieutenant Governors

Governors

- Governor of Alabama: George Wallace (Democratic) (until January 19), H. Guy Hunt (Republican) (starting January 19)
- Governor of Alaska: Steve Cowper (Democratic)
- Governor of Arizona: Bruce Babbitt (Democratic) (until January 5), Evan Mecham (Republican) (starting January 5)
- Governor of Arkansas: Bill Clinton (Democratic)
- Governor of California: George Deukmejian (Republican)
- Governor of Colorado: Richard Lamm (Democratic) (until January 13), Roy Romer (Democratic) (starting January 13)
- Governor of Connecticut: William A O'Neill (Democratic)
- Governor of Delaware: Michael Castle (Republican)
- Governor of Florida:
 - until January 3: Bob Graham (Democratic)
 - January 3-January 6: Wayne Mixson (Democratic)
 - starting January 6: Bob Martinez (Republican)
- Governor of Georgia: Joe Frank Harris (Democratic)
- Governor of Hawaii: John D. Waihee III (Democratic)
- Governor of Idaho: John V. Evans (Democratic) (until January 5), Cecil D. Andrus (Democratic) (starting January 5)
- Governor of Illinois: James R. Thompson (Republican)
- Governor of Indiana: Robert D. Orr (Republican)
- Governor of Iowa: Terry E. Branstad (Republican)
- Governor of Kansas: John W. Carlin (Democratic) (until January 12), Mike Hayden (Republican) (starting January 12)
- Governor of Kentucky: Martha Layne Collins (Democratic) (until December 8), Wallace G. Wilkinson (Democratic) (starting December 8)
- Governor of Louisiana: Edwin W. Edwards (Democratic)
- Governor of Maine: Joseph E. Brennan (Democratic) (until January 7), John R. McKernan, Jr. (Republican) (starting January 7)
- Governor of Maryland: Harry R. Hughes (Democratic) (until January 20), William Donald Schaefer (Democratic) (starting January 20)
- Governor of Massachusetts: Michael Dukakis (Democratic)
- Governor of Michigan: James Blanchard (Democratic)
- Governor of Minnesota: Rudy Perpich (Democratic)
- Governor of Mississippi: William Allain (Democratic)
- Governor of Missouri: John Ashcroft (Republican)
- Governor of Montana: Ted Schwinden (Democratic)
- Governor of Nebraska: Bob Kerrey (Democratic) (until January 9), Kay A. Orr (Republican) (starting January 9)
- Governor of Nevada: Richard Bryan (Democratic)
- Governor of New Hampshire: John H. Sununu (Republican)
- Governor of New Jersey: Thomas Kean (Republican)
- Governor of New Mexico: Toney Anaya (Democratic) (until January 1), Garrey Carruthers (Republican) (starting January 1)
- Governor of New York: Mario Cuomo (Democratic)
- Governor of North Carolina: James G. Martin (Republican)
- Governor of North Dakota: George A. Sinner (Democratic)
- Governor of Ohio: Dick Celeste (Democratic)
- Governor of Oklahoma: George Nigh (Democratic) (until January 12), Henry Bellmon (Republican) (starting January 12)

- Governor of Oregon: Victor G. Atiyeh (Republican) (until January 12), Neil Goldschmidt (Democratic) (starting January 12)
- Governor of Pennsylvania: Dick Thornburgh (Republican) (until January 20), Robert P. Casey (Democratic) (starting January 20)
- Governor of Rhode Island: Edward D. DiPrete (Republican)
- Governor of South Carolina: Richard Riley (Democratic) (until January 14), Carroll A. Campbell, Jr. (Republican) (starting January 14)
- Governor of South Dakota: William J. Janklow (Republican) (until January 6), George S. Mickelson (Republican) (starting January 6)
- Governor of Tennessee: Lamar Alexander (Republican) (until January 17), Ned McWherter (Democratic) (starting January 17)
- Governor of Texas: Mark White (Democratic) (until January 20), Bill Clements (Republican) (starting January 20)
- Governor of Utah: Norman H. Bangerter (Republican)
- Governor of Vermont: Madeleine M. Kunin (Democratic)
- Governor of Virginia: Gerald L. Baliles (Democratic)
- Governor of Washington: Booth Gardner (Democratic)
- Governor of West Virginia: Arch A. Moore, Jr. (Republican)
- Governor of Wisconsin: Tony Earl (Democratic) (until January 5), Tommy Thompson (Republican) (starting January 5)
- Governor of Wyoming: Edgar J. Herschler (Democratic) (until January 7), Mike Sullivan (Democratic) (starting January 7)

Lieutenant Governors

- Lieutenant Governor of Alabama: Bill Baxley (Democratic) (until January 19), Jim Folsom, Jr. (Democratic) (starting January 19)
- Lieutenant Governor of Alaska: Stephen McAlpine (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Arkansas: Winston Bryant (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of California: Leo T. McCarthy (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Colorado: Nancy E. Dick (Democratic) (until January 13), Mike Callihan (Democratic) (starting January 13)
- Lieutenant Governor of Connecticut: Joseph J. Fauliso (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Delaware: Shien Biau Woo (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Florida:
 - until January 3: Wayne Mixson (Democratic)
 - January 3-January 6: vacant
 - starting January 6: Bobby Brantley (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Georgia: Zell Miller (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Hawaii: Ben Cayetano (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Idaho: David H. Leroy (Republican) (until January 5), Butch Otter (Republican) (starting January 5)
- Lieutenant Governor of Illinois: George H. Ryan (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Indiana: John Mutz (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Iowa: Robert T. Anderson (Democratic) (until January), Jo Ann Zimmerman (Democratic) (starting January)
- Lieutenant Governor of Kansas: Thomas R. Docking (Democratic) (until January 12), Jack D. Walker (Republican) (starting January 12)
- Lieutenant Governor of Kentucky: Steve Beshear (Democratic) (until December 8), Brereton Jones (Democratic) (starting December 8)
- Lieutenant Governor of Louisiana: Robert "Bobby" Freeman (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Maryland: J. Joseph Curran (Democratic) (until January 21), Melvin A. Steinberg (Democratic) (starting January 21)

- Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts: vacant (until month and day unknown), Evelyn Murphy (Democratic) (starting month and day unknown)
- Lieutenant Governor of Michigan: Martha W. Griffiths (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Minnesota: Marlene Johnson (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Mississippi: Brad Dye (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Missouri: Harriett Woods (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Montana: George Turman (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Nebraska: Donald F. McGinley (Democratic) (until January 9), William E. Nichol (Republican) (starting January 9)
- Lieutenant Governor of Nevada: Bob Cashell (Democratic) (until January 5), Bob Miller (Democratic) (starting January 5)
- Lieutenant Governor of New Mexico: Mike Runnels (Democratic) (until January 1), Jack L. Stahl (Republican) (starting January 1)
- Lieutenant Governor of New York: Stan Lundine (Democratic) (starting January 1)
- Lieutenant Governor of North Carolina: Robert B. Jordan, III (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of North Dakota: Ruth Meiers (Democratic) (until March 19), Lloyd Omdahl (Democratic) (starting March 19)
- Lieutenant Governor of Ohio: vacant (until January 12), Paul R. Leonard (Democratic) (starting January 12)
- Lieutenant Governor of Oklahoma: Spencer Bernard (Democratic) (until January 12), Robert S. Kerr III (Democratic) (starting January 12)
- Lieutenant Governor of Pennsylvania: William Scranton, III (Republican) (until January 20), Mark Singel (Democratic) (starting January 20)
- Lieutenant Governor of Rhode Island: Richard A. Licht (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of South Carolina: Michael R. Daniel (Democratic) (until January 14), Nick Theodore (Democratic) (starting January 14)
- Lieutenant Governor of South Dakota: Lowell C. Hansen II (Republican) (until January 6), Walter Dale Miller (Republican) (starting January 6)
- Lieutenant Governor of Tennessee: John S. Wilder (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Texas: William P. Hobby, Jr. (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Utah: W. Val Oveson (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Vermont: Peter Plympton Smith (Republican) (until month and day unknown), Howard Dean (Democratic) (starting month and day unknown)
- Lieutenant Governor of Virginia: Douglas Wilder (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Washington: John Cherberg (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin: James T. Flynn (Democratic) (until January 5), Scott McCallum (Republican) (starting January 5)

Events

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February

- February 9 – Brownsville, Texas is deluged with 7 inches (177.80 mm) of rain in just two hours, and flooding in some parts of the city is worse than that caused by Hurricane Beulah in 1967.
- February 11 – The United States military detonates an atomic weapon at the Nevada Test Site.
- February 26 – Iran-Contra affair: The Tower Commission rebukes U.S. President Ronald Reagan for not controlling his National Security Council staff.

March

- March 2 – American Motors Corporation is acquired by the Chrysler Corporation
- March 4
 - U.S. President Ronald Reagan addresses the American people on the Iran-Contra Affair, acknowledging that his overtures to Iran had 'deteriorated' into an arms-for-hostages deal.
 - Jonathan Pollard is sentenced to life in prison on one count of espionage.
- March 18 – Woodstock of physics: The marathon session of the American Physical Society's meeting features 51 presentations concerning the science of high-temperature superconductors.
- March 19 – In Charlotte, North Carolina, televangelist Jim Bakker, head of PTL Ministries, resigns after admitting an affair with church secretary Jessica Hahn.
- March 29 – World Wrestling Entertainment presented WrestleMania III in the Pontiac Silverdome in Detroit, Michigan. This event was attended by over 90,000 and set an all-time indoor attendance record that stands to this day.

April

- April 7 – Harold Washington is re-elected Mayor of Chicago.
- April 27 – The United States Department of Justice declares incumbent Austrian president Kurt Waldheim an "undesirable alien".
- April 30 – NASCAR driver Bill Elliott sets all time fastest lap at Talladega Superspeedway. 212.8 miles per hour (342.5 km/h)

May

- May 8 – U.S. Senator Gary Hart drops out of the running for the Democratic presidential nomination, amid allegations of an extramarital affair with Donna Rice.
- May 17 – U.S.S. Stark was hit by two Iraqi owned Exocet AM39 air-to-surface missiles killing 37 sailors.
- May 21 – Andrew Wyeth, with his "Helga Pictures," became the first living American painter to have a one-man show of his work in the West Building of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC.

June

- June 12 – During a visit to Berlin, Germany, U.S. President Ronald Reagan challenges Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev to tear down the Berlin Wall.
- June 19
 - Teddy Seymour is officially designated the first black man to sail around the world, when he completes his solo sailing circumnavigation in Frederiksted, St. Croix, of the United States Virgin Islands.
 - *Edwards v. Aguillard*: The Supreme Court of the United States rules that a Louisiana law requiring that creation science be taught in public schools whenever evolution is taught is unconstitutional.
- June 28 – An accidental explosion at Hohenfels Training Area in West Germany kills 3 U.S. troopers.



July

- July 1 – U.S. President Ronald Reagan nominates former Solicitor General Robert Bork to the Supreme Court. The nomination is later rejected by the Senate, the first and only nominee rejection to date.
- July 17 – The Dow Jones Industrial Average closes above the 2,500 mark for the first time, at 2,510.04.

August

- August 16 – Northwest Airlines Flight 255 (a McDonnell Douglas MD-82) crashes on takeoff from Detroit Metropolitan Airport in Romulus, Michigan just West of Detroit killing all but 1 (4-year old Cecelia Cichan) of the 156 people on board (among them Nick Vanos, a center for the Phoenix Suns).
- August 19 – ABC News' chief Middle East correspondent Charles Glass escapes his Hezbollah kidnappers in Beirut, Lebanon, after 62 days in captivity.
- August 31 – Michael Jackson releases his third solo album *Bad*.



VH-3D landing on White House south lawn, July 1987

September

- September 11 – Pope John Paul II visits Columbia, South Carolina and the University of South Carolina.
- September 15–16 – Pope John Paul II visits Los Angeles where he visits Dodger Stadium for an interfaith meeting with leaders of other religions, performs a telecommunications conference for local youths, and meets with entertainment leaders at the Universal Amphitheatre.
- September 17
 - At a small rally in New York City's Harlem district, televangelist Pat Robertson announces his candidacy for the 1988 Republican presidential nomination.
 - The day after leaving Los Angeles, Pope John Paul II visits San Francisco, where he meets with several AIDS sufferers.
- September 25 – *Varroa destructor*, an invasive parasite, is found for the first time in the U.S.^[1]

October

- October – The Unemployment Rate drops below 6% for the first time since 1979
- October 10 – The Reverend Jesse Jackson launches his second campaign for U.S. President.
- October 11 – The first National Coming Out Day is held in celebration of the second National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights.
- October 14–16 – The United States is caught up in a drama that unfolds on television as a young child, Jessica McClure, falls down a well in Midland, Texas, and is later rescued.
- October 19
 - Black Monday: Stock market levels fall sharply on Wall Street and around the world.
 - U.S. warships destroy two Iranian oil platforms in the Persian Gulf
- October 23 – On a vote of 58–42, the United States Senate rejects President Ronald Reagan's nomination of Robert Bork to the Supreme Court.



Pam Maneeratana displays her Halloween pumpkins, Tallahassee, Florida, 1987.

- October 25 – 1987 World Series: The Minnesota Twins win despite having the worst regular season win–loss ratio for a winner, a record they hold until 2006.
- October 26 – The Dow Jones Industrial Average goes down 156.83 points; at the time it is the second largest decrease ever (trailing Black Monday).

November

- November 6 – Florida rapist Tommy Lee Andrews is the first person to be convicted as a result of DNA fingerprinting: he is sentenced to 22 years in prison.
- November 18 – Iran-Contra affair: U.S. Senate and House panels release reports charging President Ronald Reagan with 'ultimate responsibility' for the affair.
- November 23 – Frank Carlucci is sworn in as the new Secretary of Defense, succeeding Caspar Weinberger.

December

- December – The Unemployment Rate drops to 5.7%, the lowest since July 1979
- December 1 – NASA announces the names of four companies who were awarded contracts to help build Space Station Freedom: Boeing Aerospace, General Electric's Astro-Space Division, McDonnell Douglas, and the Rocketdyne Division of Rockwell.
- December 2 – *Hustler Magazine v. Falwell* is argued before the U.S. Supreme Court.
- December 7 – Pacific Southwest Airlines Flight 1771 crashes near Paso Robles, California, killing all 43 on board, after a disgruntled passenger shoots his ex-supervisor on the flight, then shoots both pilots and himself.
- December 8 – The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty is signed in Washington, D.C. by U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.
- December 9 – Microsoft releases Windows 2.0.
- December 10 – A squirrel closes down the Nasdaq Stock Exchange when it burrows through a telephone line.^[2]
- December 22- December 28 – Ronald Gene Simmons goes on a 6-day killing spree in Russellville, Arkansas, killing his wife, children, and grandchildren as they arrived to celebrate the holidays at his home. On the 28th he went on a shooting spree, killing an additional woman and wounding 5 others before surrendering to police. The final death toll was 16. He was tried and eventually executed.
- December 29 – Prozac makes its debut in the United States.

Ongoing

- Cold War (1945–1991)
- Iran–Contra affair (1985–1987)

Births

- January 5 – Kristin Cavallari, actress
- January 6 – Arin Hanson, Internet personality, comedian, voice actor, songwriter, rapper, animator, and cartoonist
- January 29 – Alex Avila, baseball player
- February 14 – Joe Pichler, actor missing since 2006
- February 17
 - Danny Farquhar, American baseball player

- Tiquan Underwood, American football player
- April 10 – Jesse McCartney, actor, singer
- April 16 – Neil Haskell, actor and dancer
- May 11
 - Justin King, American football player
 - Louis Murphy, American football player
- June 2 – Caitlin Mallory, American-Estonian ice dancer
- July 28 – John Stevens, singer
- August 24 – Jon Scheyer, basketball player
- August 25 – Blake Lively, actress
- September 7 – Evan Rachel Wood, actress, singer
- September 19 – Danielle Panabaker, actress
- September 28 – Hilary Duff, actress, singer
- October 2 – Matthew Daddario, actor
- October 18 – Zac Efron, actor
- November 3 – Elizabeth Smart, kidnapped victim, activist and contributor for ABC News
- November 5 – Kevin Jonas, actor, singer, songwriter
- December 3 – Michael Angarano, actor
- December 4 – Orlando Brown, actor, rapper
- December 7 – Aaron Carter, actor, singer
- December 11 – Clifton Geathers, American football player
- December 16 – Michael Lohan Jr., actor

Deaths

- February 22 – Andy Warhol, leading figure in the visual art movement pop art, (born 1928)
- October 12 – Alf Landon, 1936 Republican presidential nominee (born 1887)
- December 1 – James Baldwin, author and civil rights activist (born 1924)

See also

- 1987 in American television
- List of American films of 1987

References

- Varroa Jacobsonii/Destructor (<http://website.lineone.net/~dave.cushman/varroa.html>)
- Gilpin, Kenneth N.Squirrel Shuts Down Nasdaq System (<https://www.nytimes.com/1987/12/10/business/stray-squirrel-shuts-down-nasdaq-system.html?pagewanted=1>Stray), December 10, 1987, New York Times

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