



National Aeronautics and Space Administration  
Goddard Space Flight Center

Wallops Flight Facility, Wallops Island, Virginia

# Inside Wallops

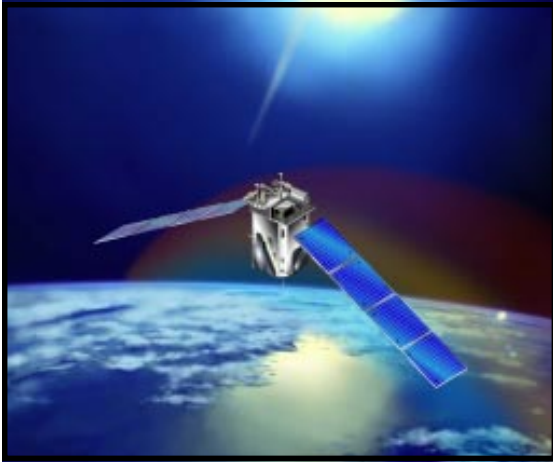
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## ***TIMED Spacecraft Relays First Signal to Controllers***

A new NASA spacecraft that will study the effects of the sun and human-induced activities on the least explored and understood region of Earth's atmosphere soared into a clear early morning California sky on December 7.



*Artist's Concept*

"TIMED's measurements will help scientists understand how the region's composition is affected by contaminants that are released into Earth's atmosphere and by solar energy entering this region."

The TIMED mission is sponsored by NASA's Office of Space Science and is managed by the Solar Terrestrial Probes Program Office at Goddard. APL designed, built and will operate the TIMED spacecraft and lead the science effort for NASA.

More information about the TIMED mission is available on the following web sites: <http://stp.gsfc.nasa.gov/missions/timed/timed.htm> or [www.timed.jhuapl.edu](http://www.timed.jhuapl.edu)

The TIMED (Thermosphere Ionosphere Mesosphere Energetics and Dynamics) spacecraft lifted off from the Western Range of Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., aboard a Delta II rocket at 10:07 a.m. EST. Spacecraft separation from the Delta II rocket's second stage motor occurred at 12:13 p.m. EST, inserting TIMED into a 388-mile (625-kilometer) circular orbit around the Earth.

At 1:10 p.m. EST, controllers at the TIMED Mission Operations Center of The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (APL) in Laurel, Md., made contact with TIMED as it passed over a ground station in Kiruna, Sweden, confirming that solar arrays deployed, providing power to the spacecraft.

"Three hours is a long time to hold your breath," said TIMED Project Manager Bruce Campbell at Goddard, "and we're pleased with the way things look right now."

Solar array deployment occurred immediately following spacecraft separation. During the next 30 days or so, controllers will turn the four instruments on and check them out prior to starting science observations. TIMED should be ready to begin its global study of the MLTI region in mid-January 2002.

"TIMED will provide a very important benchmark for future studies of both natural and human-induced changes to the Earth's atmosphere, said Sam Yee, TIMED project scientist at APL.

## ***Wallops Shorts.....***

### ***Sounding Rocket Launch***

A NASA Terrier-Black Brant sounding rocket was successfully launched from White Sands Missile Range, N.M. on December 6. The solar system exploration payload was to optimize the WISP instrument to perform targeted comet polarimetry of the comet LINEAR. A secondary objective was to complete the second validation flight of the University of Wisconsin's prototype aspect camera/star tracker. Dr. Walter Harris of the University of Wisconsin was the experimenter.

### ***On the Road***

Henry Cathey, PSL, took part in a Career Day at Chincoteague Elementary School on November 28.

Karon Eichelberger, QSS; Berit Bland and Gayle Troutman, SYMTE, participated in a Career Day at Northampton Middle School on December 6.

Dave Wilcox, NASA Shuttle Small Payloads Projects Office, did a presentation on the solar system for 4<sup>th</sup> grade students at Broadwater Academy on December 7.

### ***Federal Employees Excused from Duty on December 24***

The President has issued an Executive order excusing Federal employees from duty on Monday, December 24, 2001, except those who, in the judgment of the head of the agency, cannot be excused for reasons of national security, defense, or other essential public business. For pay and leave purposes, December 24, 2001, will be treated as falling within the scope of statutes and Executive orders governing holidays for Federal employees.

View the Executive order at: <http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/2001/2001-13.htm>

### ***Safety Alerts***

The Center receives information from the Government/Industry Data Exchange Program concerning product recalls. Recall alerts are listed at the following web address: [http://ssro.gsfc.nasa.gov/Safety\\_Alerts/safealert.html](http://ssro.gsfc.nasa.gov/Safety_Alerts/safealert.html)

### ***Recent Recalls***

Profile-Design LLC Recall of Bicycle "Aero Bars"

Alco Industries Inc. Recall of Water Fountains with Candle Holders

Darice Inc. Recall of Candle Holders

Stride Rite Children's Group Inc. Recall of Girl's Shoes

## ***Wallops Annual Awards Ceremony and Holiday Party***



Center Deputy Director W. F. Townsend will be the speaker at the annual Awards Ceremony to be held at 2:30 p.m. on December 14 in Building D-10. Townsend will discuss "The Future of Wallops and the Agency".

Wallops civil service employees who have completed 25 or more years of service as well as civil service and contractor employees who received NASA Honor, Goddard Annual and Quarterly Honor Awards, Space Act, Federal Energy and Prestigious Achievement Awards during 2001 will be recognized. The recipients of the Space Flight Awareness Launch Honoree Event also will be recognized.

The Wallops Employee Morale Association will hold the annual Holiday Party in Building F-3 immediately following the Awards Ceremony.

Employees not involved in essential operations are encouraged to attend. Time should be charged to your regular job order number.



Photo by Berit Bland

Gayle Troutman, (left), Symtech, watches as Karon Eichelberger, QSS, shows Northampton Middle School students computer hardware during the school's Career Day event.

### ***Holiday Schedule for the Cafeteria***

The Wallops Cafeteria will be closed: December 24, 25, and 31 and January 1

The Cafeteria will be open for lunch only on December 26, 27, and 28 and resume normal operation on January 2

Lunch will consist of light fare from the salad, soup and sandwich bar.

*Sympathy is extended to the family of John Edward Weaver, Sr. who died December 6 at Peninsula Regional Medical Center. Weaver retired from NASA Wallops Flight Facility as a computer technician.*

### ***Driest Fall on Record*** by Ted Wilz, Senior Meteorologist

With only three days with measurable rain totaling a meager .05 inches for the month, we are well on our way to establishing the driest fall on record at Wallops. With only .47 inch of rainfall occurring during October, we also could set a new record for the driest three-month period since 1963 when we began keeping climatological records. The .05 inches of rain in November fell woefully short of the 2.81 inch average precipitation for the month. Hopefully, late December will reverse the trend, and we'll receive some much-needed rainfall in the region.

Along with the dry conditions, we've also had a break on our heating bills this fall with the mild temperature trend continuing. Temperatures averaged three degrees above normal and were actually higher than average on an astounding 23 days in November! A new daily record high was established when the mercury reached 74 degrees on November 16, the warmest of four days when temperatures climbed into the 70's. Temperatures did dip below the freezing mark three times during this balmy month. A record low also was tied when temperatures reached the monthly low of 29 degrees on the morning of November 12.


So what's up, weather-wise for January? Usually, January brings the onset of the coldest, dreariest weather for the Eastern Shore. Lest we get lulled

to sleep by the tranquil weather pattern experienced this fall, take a look back to January, 1996. A major snowstorm dropped 4-10 inches of snow on the region, following a similarly mild and dry fall season. During January, we usually experience daily high temperatures of around 44 degrees and nighttime lows averaging 27.5 degrees. Average rainfall for the month is 3.30 inches, with measurable rainfall usually occurring on 10 days. The chance of snow becomes much more of a reality with an average of nearly three inches occurring on two "snow days."

The end of November also brought an end to the hurricane season. We saw 14 named storms this year, which is slightly above average and the prediction of the National Hurricane Center. Fortunately, none did any significant damage to the U.S. coastal areas.

It's now time to shift our focus to the winter weather and potentially hazardous driving conditions that can often develop quite suddenly at this time of year. Prepare for changing conditions and drive carefully.

*The Wallops Weather Office would like to wish everyone a joyous and safe Christmas and holiday season.*



### ***Now is the time to further your education!***

Old Dominion University (ODU) is offering upper-level courses that are designed for students already holding an associate's degree or the equivalent. Courses are being offered, only minutes from your work site, at the Cropper Center located just outside NASA's Main Gate and at the Eastern Shore Community College in Room B-77.

Classes in the following areas will be offered for the spring 2002 semester. Check with your supervisor and training office to see if a particular class qualifies for tuition payment by the government or your company.

Accounting, Civil Engineering Technology, Community Health Professions, Communications, Counseling, Criminal Justice, Computer, Science, Economics, Electrical Engineering, English, Finance, Geography, History, Health Sciences, Information Technology, Mathematics, Mechanical Engineering Technology, Management, Marketing, Nursing, Occupational and Technical Education, Public Administration, Philosophy, Psychology, Taxation

For more information, call Jack Bonniwell, ODU Site Director, on (757) 824-0763 or (757) 787-5590 or visit: [www.odu.edu](http://www.odu.edu)

### ***Retirement Estimates On-line***

Federal employees can now calculate an estimate of their Civil Service Retirement System, CSRS Offset and Federal Employment Retirement System retirement benefits as well as future TSP savings and Social Security benefits.

The retirement calculator, located at [www.seniors.gov/fedcalc.html](http://www.seniors.gov/fedcalc.html), is designed for all federal employees.

### ***Federal Pay Raise***

President Bush has signed a 4.6% January pay raise into law. The raise will be divided up between an across the board increase and locality based increases. How it will be specifically divided up will be announced at a later date. The \$17.1 billion Treasury-Postal spending bill also includes a 3.4% raise for members of Congress which will raise the cap on Senior Executive Service salaries.

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