



Mars landing team 'awestruck' by photo of rover

BY MARCIA DUNN

The Associated Press
CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — The world got its first close-up look at a Mars landing on Friday, as NASA released a stunning picture of its newest rover being lowered onto the dusty red surface.

The photo was released less than 24 hours after the Perseverance rover successfully touched down near an ancient river delta, where it will search for signs of ancient life and set aside the most promising rock samples for return to Earth in a decade.

NASA equipped the spacecraft with a record 25 cameras and two microphones, many of which were turned on during Thursday's descent.

The rover is shown in extraordinary detail just 6½ feet off the ground, being lowered by cables attached to an overhead sky crane, the red dust kicked up by rocket engines. NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, promises more photos in the next few days and possibly also an audio recording of the descent.

"This is something that we've never seen before," flight system engineer Aaron Stehura



The Perseverance rover lowers toward the surface of Mars during its powered descent.

LEFT: This photo provided by NASA shows the first color image sent by the Perseverance Mars rover after its landing on Thursday.

Photos: NASA/JPL-Caltech via AP

noted at a news conference. "It was stunning, and the team was awestruck. There's just a feeling of victory that we were able to capture these and share it with the world."

Chief engineer Adam Steltzner called the picture "iconic," putting it right up there with photos of Apollo 11's Buzz

Aldrin on the moon, Saturn as seen by Voyager 1, and the Hubble Space Telescope's "pillars of creation" shot.

A number of thumbnail images have been beamed down so far, too many to count, said Pauline Hwang, strategic mission manager for surface operations. "The team went wild" at seeing

these first pictures, she said.

The picture is so clear and detailed that deputy project scientist Katie Stack Morgan at first thought she was looking at a photo from an animation. "Then I did a double take and said: 'That's the actual rover!'"

The vehicle is healthy, according to officials, after land-

ing on a flat, safe surface in Jezero Crater with just 1 degree of tilt and relatively small rocks nearby. For now, the systems still are being checked. It will be at least a week before the rover starts driving.

The river delta — a wash 3 billion to 4 billion years ago — is just over 1 mile away. Scien-

tists consider it the most likely place to find rocks with evidence of past microscopic life.

Another photo of Perseverance's front right wheel, near rocks full of holes, already has scientists salivating. They're eager to learn whether these rocks are volcanic or sedimentary.

Biden declares 'America is back' in welcome words to allies

BY AAMER MADHANI

The Associated Press
WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden used his first address before a global audience Friday to declare that "America is back, the transatlantic alliance is back," after four years of a Trump administration that flaunted its foreign policy through an "America First" lens.

Speaking to the annual Munich Security Conference virtually, Biden ticked through a daunting to-do list

— salvaging the Iran nuclear deal, meeting economic and security challenges posed by China and Russia and repairing the damage caused by the coronavirus pandemic — that he said would require close cooperation between the U.S. and its Western allies.

Without mentioning Donald Trump's name once in his speech, Biden mixed talk of a reinvigorated democratic alliance with a rebuke of his predecessor's approach, a message warmly received by Western allies.

"Welcome back, America."

— Charles Michel, the European Council President, effectively summed up the mood of the Munich conference.

"I know the past few years have strained and tested the transatlantic relationship," Biden said. "The United States is determined to reengage with Europe, to consult with you, to earn back our position of trusted leadership."

The president also participated Friday in a virtual meeting of the Group of Seven industrialized nations, where leaders managed to work Biden's campaign theme into their closing joint statement, vowing to "work together to beat COVID-19 and build back better."

"Welcome back, America," said European Council President Charles Michel, effectively summing up the mood of the Munich conference.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel

noted that some differences between the U.S. and Europe remain "complicated." Still, Merkel, who had a strained relationship with Trump, didn't hide her preference for an American foreign policy informed by Biden's world view.

"Things are looking a great deal better for multilateralism this year than two years ago, and that has a lot to do with Joe Biden having become the president of the United States of America," Merkel said.

CENTRAL OREGON WORSHIP DIRECTORY

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					<p>Unitarian Universalists</p> <p>UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS OF CENTRAL OREGON "Diverse Beliefs, One Fellowship" We are a Welcoming Congregation</p> <p>February 21, 2021 "Dear Letter Writing, "</p> <p>Personal letter writing used to be a common form of communication and contemplation. Seems like the mail is full of advertisements and bills more often than heartfelt communication. This service is a love letter to letters appreciating that lost art for connection. Please bring a paper and a pen!</p> <p>To join us on Sunday via Zoom, click on the image at www.uufco.org 9:30 a.m. chat, 9:45 a.m. service</p> <p>ASL interpretation provided Email dre@uufco.org for info about children and youth classes. Bend, Oregon 541-385-3908</p>
					<p>St Thomas Roman Catholic Church 1720 NW 19th Street Redmond, Oregon 97756 541-923-3390</p> <p>Father Todd Unger, Pastor</p> <p>Mass Schedule: Weekdays 8:00 am (Except Wednesdays) Wednesday 6:00 pm</p> <p>Saturday Vigil 5:00 pm First Saturday 8:00 am (English)</p> <p>Sunday 8:00 am, 10:00 am (English) 12:00 noon (Spanish)</p> <p>Confessions on Wednesdays From 5:00 to 5:45 pm and on Saturdays From 3:00 to 4:30 pm</p>

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