



Spirit Rover hits the "sweet spot" on its Mars landing

▲ Spirit's landing perfect for exploration:

NASA's Mars rover Spirit landed Jan. 4 just where scientists hoped it would go: inside Gusev Crater, in a vast flat-land perfect for roving. And, as a bonus, Mars dust is not a problem. The region around Spirit's landing site appears to be criss-crossed by the trails of dust devils, which have carried away dust and left gravel behind. Dust-free rocks are easier for the rover's geology instruments to penetrate and analyze. To the delight of researchers, Spirit's first pictures of its surroundings resemble dried up lake beds on Earth. The terrain is flat and peppered with small rocks. No one knows if the resemblance is more than superficial. Spirit will use its geology tools to find out. At the moment, the rover remains perched on its lander platform, and the next nine days or more will be spent preparing for rolling off onto the martian surface. With no large rocks blocking the way, the rover is in good position for egress.

▲ Start the New Year with a dedication to improved health!

A Weight Loss Program at the KSC Fitness Centers begins next month. Contact date to join program is Feb. 2, 2004, and the program starts Monday, Feb. 16 and ends Monday, Aug. 2. Up to 30 KSC/CCAFS employees who qualify for the program can be accommodated. This voluntary program is geared for those individuals who are committed to making a lifestyle change towards a healthier way of life. The Fitness Center staff invites any individuals to contact them who are committed to a six-month weight-loss program involving:

- Answering a medical clearance questionnaire and blood pressure check; may need a physician evaluation to start.
- A starting and ending blood evaluation consisting of triglycerides, glucose, cholesterol with LDL and HDL panels.

KSC Fitness Centers invite employees to join weight loss program

- A personalized exercise program designed to be safe and effective in maximizing fat-loss.
 - Periodic group sessions with a licensed Employee Assistance Program (EAP) counselor who will address the emotional eating aspect.
 - Periodic group sessions with a registered dietitian who will speak at KSC on various topics of nutrition tailored to the needs of the group.
- Please e-mail or call Julie Rindfleisch at the O&C Fitness Center at 867-7829 to sign up.

◆ **January beginning bird watching tours** – Take a driving tour of Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge accompanied by a trained U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service volunteer to learn how to identify the many birds that frequent the refuge. The 3-hour tours leave three times a week from the Visitor Center at 9 a.m. No reservations are required. Suggested items to bring include binoculars, camera, field guides, insect repellent, water and a snack. Loaner binoculars are available. Tour dates are Sundays: Jan. 4, 11, 18 and 25; Thursdays: Jan. 8, 15, 22 and 29; Saturdays: Jan. 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31. Please meet at the Refuge Visitor Center at 9 a.m. and sign in at the desk. The Visitor Center is located 5 miles east of U.S.1 in Titusville on S.R. 402. Please call 321-861-0668/0667 for additional information.

◆ **Did You Know?** It takes approximately 394 pounds of coal to keep a single 100-watt incandescent light bulb burning for 12 hours each day for one year? Burning the coal to produce the energy to light the bulb creates 936 pounds of acid rain – causing 1000 pounds of carbon dioxide and 7.8 pounds of sulfur dioxide. In addition, 90 percent of the energy consumed by an incandescent bulb is given off as heat rather than light! Please conserve, save money, save the environment.