Here’s some of the stories trending This Week at NASA!

NASA and its international partners are making changes to the International Space Station’s schedule of arriving and departing spacecraft, following the Russian Federal Space Agency’s preliminary findings on its recent loss of the Progress 59 cargo craft.

Exact dates will be announced in the coming weeks, with a Roscosmos update about the Progress 59 investigation expected May 22.

The schedule adjustments mean NASA’s Terry Virts and Expedition 43 crewmates, Samantha Cristoforetti of ESA and Russian cosmonaut Anton Shkaplerov – now will return to Earth in June instead of May – with NASA astronaut Scott Kelly and Russian cosmonauts Mikhail Kornienko and Gennady Padalka -- remaining on the station to begin Expedition 44.

NASA’s Kjell Lindgren, who is conducting pre-flight training in Russia with the other
members of Expedition 44, now will launch
to the station in July.

A draft Request for Proposal issued by NASA's
Launch Services Program is seeking new commercial

Venture Class Launch Services (VCLS) to send
small satellites and experiments to space

using a smaller than currently available class
of rockets.

Launch opportunities for small satellites
-- often called CubeSats or nanosatellites

are mostly limited to ride-sharing arrangements
on NASA and other launches.

NASA anticipates a growing need for dedicated
launch capability for these smaller payloads,

which could be used on future missions for
such things as improved weather prediction,

broader Internet coverage and Earth observation.

This closest-yet view of Ceres, captured by
NASA's Dawn spacecraft on May 3 and 4 is helping

scientists better resolve the mysterious bright
spots on the dwarf planet.

The sequence of images, taken from a distance
of 8,400 miles, reveal that the brightest
spots within a crater in the northern hemisphere are composed of many smaller spots.

The exact nature of the spots remains unknown, but scientists estimate the spots are caused by the reflection of sunlight by highly reflective material on the surface, possibly ice.

NASA laboratory experiments suggests the dark material coating some geological features of Jupiter's moon Europa is likely sea salt from a subsurface ocean, discolored by exposure to radiation.

The presence of sea salts on Europa's surface would imply the ocean interacts with its rocky seafloor -- an important consideration for establishing whether the icy moon could support life.

A new NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory led study finds the last remaining section of Antarctica's Larsen B Ice Shelf, which partially collapsed in 2002, is quickly weakening and likely to disintegrate completely before the end of the decade.
Scientists found the shelf's remnant, which is about 625 square miles and at least 10,000 years old, is flowing faster, becoming increasingly fragmented and developing large cracks.

Ice shelves are the gatekeepers for glaciers flowing from Antarctica toward the ocean.

Without them, glacial ice enters the ocean faster and accelerates the pace of global sea level rise.

A major hurricane has not made landfall in the United States in a record nine years. That's a rarity a new NASA study says likely only happens once every 177 years.

The study didn't delve into the possible meteorological causes of this hurricane drought, but researchers did say it could be just happenstance.

And that's what's up this week @NASA …

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