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

Vice President Mike Pence visited our Marshall Space Flight Center on Sept. 25 to thank employees working on NASA’s human spaceflight programs.

He also spoke to the three NASA astronauts currently serving onboard the International Space Station.

"Literally and figuratively we all look up to you and we are grateful for your courage and your determination and your contribution that you make to American leadership in space."

During a tour, the Vice President also saw progress being made on our Space Launch System rocket, that will send astronauts in our Orion spacecraft on missions around the Moon and ultimately to Mars.
NASA used satellite data to create this “damage proxy map” of locations in the San Juan, Puerto Rico area that are likely damaged as a result of Hurricane Maria. The map was delivered to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and other agencies to assist in disaster relief efforts.

Meanwhile, a suitcase-sized radar instrument capable of detecting human heartbeats under rubble, was used by disaster relief workers following the recent 7.1-magnitude earthquake in Mexico City.

The technology and the device, called FINDER, which stands for Finding Individuals for Disaster and Emergency Response, was developed as a collaboration between NASA and the Department of Homeland Security.
On Sept. 28, NASA’s Associate Administrator for Science, Thomas Zurbuchen discussed the impact of the August 21, 2017 total solar eclipse across America, during a Congressional Hearing of the House Science Committee’s Subcommittees on Research & Technology, and on Space.

Our coverage of the solar eclipse was the agency’s most watched and most followed event – with an estimated 50 million viewers watching the rare event live on NASA TV, on the nasa.gov website, and on various social media platforms.

Hours after our OSIRIS REx spacecraft sped past Earth to complete its Earth Gravity Assist maneuver on Sept. 22, the spacecraft’s MapCam captured this color composite image of the planet, at a range of approximately 106,000 miles. The dark streaks at the top of the image are...
caused by short exposure times of less than three milliseconds.

Short exposure times are required to image objects as bright as Earth - but are not anticipated for an object as dark as Bennu - the asteroid OSIRIS REx will study, starting in late 2018.

NASA researchers used high resolution maps from the New Horizons spacecraft’s 2015 flyby of Pluto, to identify large formations of frozen methane on Pluto’s surface that have jagged spires and are as tall as skyscrapers.

This “bladed terrain”, which occurs only at high altitudes and in the region around the equator of Pluto, is thought to be created by an erosion process as the methane ice sublimes into gas.

And that’s what’s up this week @NASA …
For more on these and other stories follow us on the web at www.nasa.gov