

China names Mars rover for traditional fire god

# Old SpaceX capsule delivers new crew to space station

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., April 24, (AP) - A recycled SpaceX capsule carrying four astronauts arrived at the International Space Station on Saturday, the third high-flying taxi ride in less than a year for Elon Musk's company.

The Dragon capsule docked autonomously with the orbiting outpost more than 260 miles (420 kilometers) above the Indian Ocean, a day after launching from NASA's Kennedy Space Center.

The new arrivals - representing the US, France and Japan - will spend six months at the space station. They'll replace four astronauts who will return to Earth in their own Dragon capsule Wednesday.

It was the first time two SpaceX crew Dragons were parked there at the same time - practically side by side.

"We are so excited to have you aboard," radioed the space station's commander, Shannon Walker.

Although this was SpaceX's third crew flight for NASA, it was the first to use a vehicle that's flown before, an essential part of Musk's push to the moon and Mars. The Dragon capsule was used for SpaceX's first crew launch last May, while the Falcon rocket soaring Friday hoisted crew two in November.

NASA astronauts Shane Kimbrough and Megan McArthur - the commander and pilot of the returning Dragon - monitored their capsule's flat screen computers as the space station loomed ever larger. They could have taken control if necessary, but the autonomous system did its job, much like a self-driving car.

Also checking into the space station: France's Thomas Pesquet and Japan's Akihiko Hoshide. Both have lived there before, as has Kimbrough. It was the first station visit for McArthur.

McArthur flew to the space station in the same seat and the same capsule - named Endeavour - as her husband, Bob Behnken, did on SpaceX's debut crew mission.

For the next four days, the space station will be home to 11 astronauts, just shy of the record of 13 set during NASA's space shuttle era. The current population includes six Americans, two Russians, two Japanese and one French. It will shrink by four on Wednesday when three Americans and one Japanese depart for home and a splashdown in the Gulf of Mexico.

**Recycled**

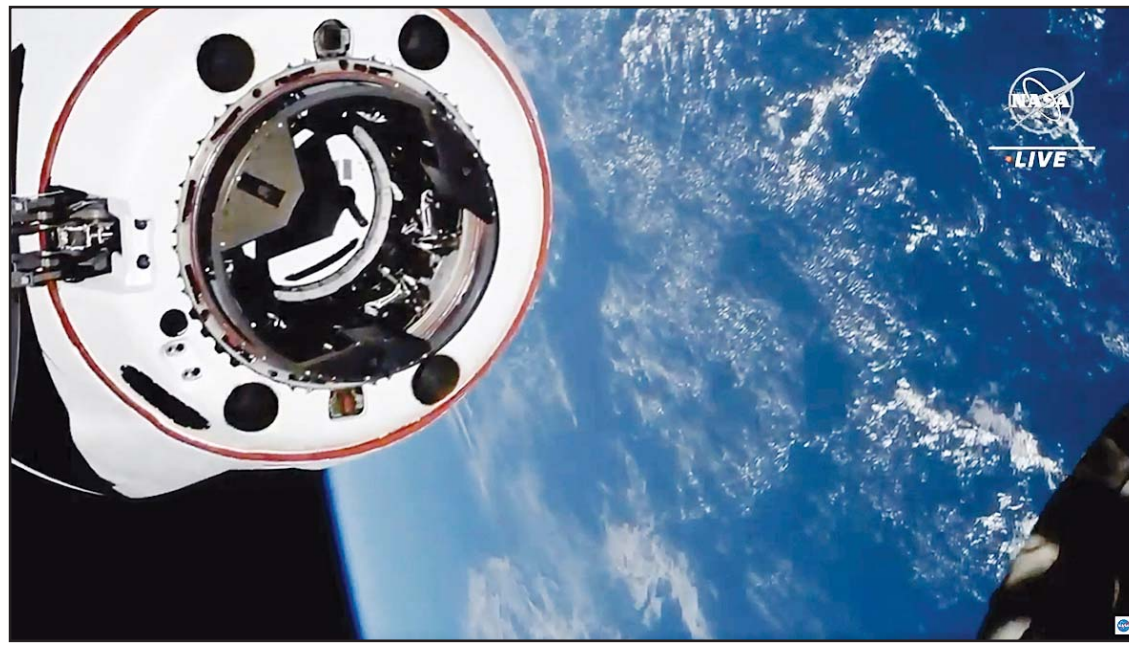
Flying in a recycled capsule Friday provided a bit of déjà vu for NASA astronaut Megan McArthur. She launched in the same seat in the same capsule as her husband, Bob Behnken, did during SpaceX's first crew flight. This time, it was Behnken and their 7-year-old son waving goodbye. McArthur blew kisses and offered virtual hugs.

Also flying SpaceX on Friday: Japan's Akihiko Hoshide and France's Thomas Pesquet, the first European to launch in a commercial crew capsule.

It was a stunning scene: The launch plume glowed against the dark sky, reflecting the sunlight at high altitude.

Despite the early hour, spectators lined surrounding roads to watch the Falcon take flight an hour before sunrise. Liftoff was delayed a day to take advantage of better weather along the East Coast in case of a launch abort and emergency splashdown.

"You're seeing a piece of history happening here," said Lance Bryan, visiting from Burnsville, Minnesota. "It's, in this case, good history versus



This image made from NASA TV shows the SpaceX Crew Dragon spacecraft, with the Earth behind, approaching the International Space Station, Saturday, April 24. The recycled SpaceX capsule carrying four astronauts has arrived at the International Space Station, a day after launching from Florida. (AP)

some other things that can happen that have been in our backyard practically."

Hours after liftoff, SpaceX was notified of a piece of space junk that might come dangerously close to the capsule. So flight controllers ordered the astronauts to put on their spacesuits and lower their visors just in case. There was no danger, and the unidentified debris turned out to be farther than initially thought.

A masked Musk met briefly with the astronauts at NASA's Kennedy Space Center before they boarded white gull-

winged Teslas from his electric car company. The astronauts' spouses and children huddled around the cars for one last "love you" before the caravan pulled away and headed to the pad in the predawn darkness.

"From now on, I'll see you on a screen!" tweeted Pesquet's partner, Anne Motte.

Visibly weary, Musk later said he doesn't sleep the night before a crew launch and this one was no exception.

"It gets a little bit easier, but still pretty intense, I have to say," said

Musk, who started his space company in 2002.

NASA limited the number of launch guests because of COVID-19, but passengers for SpaceX's first privately purchased flight made the cut. Tech billionaire Jared Isaacman, who's bought a three-day flight, watched the Falcon soar with the three people who will accompany him. Their capsule is still at the space station and due back on Earth with four astronauts next Wednesday. It will be refurbished in time for a September liftoff. Another

crew flight for NASA will follow in October.

For Friday's automated flight, SpaceX replaced some valves and thermal shielding, and installed new parachutes on the capsule, named Endeavour after NASA's retired space shuttle. Otherwise, the spacecraft is the same vehicle that flew before.

**Also:**

**BEIJING:** China's first Mars rover will be named Zhurong after a traditional fire god, the government announced Saturday.

The rover is aboard the Tianwen-1 probe that arrived in Mars orbit on Feb. 24 and is due to land in May to look for evidence of life.

It is part of Chinese space plans that include launching a crewed orbital station and landing a human on the moon. China in 2019 became the first country to land a space probe on the little-explored far side of the moon and in December returned lunar rocks to Earth for the first time since the 1970s.

The rover's title fits with the Chinese name for Mars - "Huo Xing," or fire star, the China National Space Administration said.

The name "signifies igniting the flame of China's planetary exploration," a deputy CNSA administrator, Wu Yanhua, was cited by the official Xinhua News Agency as saying.

The top candidate for the landing site is Utopia Planitia, a rock-strewn plain where the US lander Viking 2 touched down in 1976.

CNSA says Tianwen-1's goals including analyzing and mapping the Martian surface and geology, looking for water ice and studying the climate and surface environment.

Goodwill campaign organized in collaboration with the Tarahom Volunteer Team for second year in a row

## stc spreads joy through continuous humanitarian initiatives during Ramadan



Danah AlJasem



The campaign highlighted 4 cases in the community while providing the heroes with the support they needed to overcome the challenges they face today

**Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced that its specialized business arm solutions by stc has partnered with eMushrif, an Omani based company that specializes in IoT and AI technology catered to the transportation industry through its Kuwaiti branch, to provide its corporate customers with customized transportation management systems, in addition to smart and safety solutions designed for HR systems.**

The humanitarian initiative, led by Ahmed Al Nowaibet, a member of stc's public relations team, included two different segments. The first segment focused on highlighting four cases pertaining to members in the community regarding their hardships and aspirations. Upon evaluating their cases and listening to their stories, stc aims to support them in fulfilling their needs and bring joy to their hearts during the holy month of blessings.

**Humanitarian Initiatives**

Within this context, Zainab Al-Khaldi, a young skilled

**AlJasem: #today\_we\_can campaign follows the core values stc believes that also focus on attaining sustainable results**

writer born with one leg, showcased her inspiring story as she overcame obstacles and faced her challenges head on in pursuit of her dream. Al-Khaldi managed to use her talents as a writer to tell the story of how she struggled with her challenges at the young age of only 12 years old. In support of the inspirational writer, stc stated that it would take on the costs of publishing and printing Al-Khaldi's latest book, "Mohakaty", in collaboration with Tarahom Volunteer Team and renowned writer Yousef Alhajri. All proceeds from the sale of Al-Khaldi's book will be placed towards obtaining the best treatment for her condition.

The second case reviewed by stc involved Om Mahmoud, a mother who is struggling during times of hardship and uncertainty. In support of Om Mahmoud, stc provided groceries and supplied food for the month of Ramadan, as well as, donated new electrical appliances and toys for her children. The Company hopes to have provided Om Mahmoud with a helping hand as she overcomes the challenges she is facing in her life.

stc reached out to Abu Ayoub in the third case reviewed by the Company, an individual that has recently converted to Islam. In celebration of this act during the holy month, stc gifted Abu Ayoub a monthly supply of food for the month of Ramadan along with a new smartphone. The Company wishes the new convert a prosperous and blessed life as it presented him with this generous gesture in collaboration with the Islam Presentation Committee, especially with the support

of the Committee's Public Relations Manager, Ammar Alkandari, who shed light on the Committee's past initiatives and history since establishment.

The fourth case reviewed by stc involved an individual named Mohsen who is employed as a security personnel for a building in Kuwait. stc reached out to Mohsen, presenting him with a month supply of food for the holy month and a new smartphone as a gesture of gratitude and appreciation for the challenges he managed to overcome during these unprecedented times. His positive attitude and work ethic resemble the values that are reciprocated with blessing and acts of generosity during the holy month.

**Iftar Meals**

Aside from the cases reviewed throughout stc's humanitarian initiative, stc continues to spread joy and give back to the community by distributing iftar meals to sanitary workers and those who are in need throughout Kuwait. The Company also distributes iftar meals daily to the Al-Adan Hospital ambulance center throughout the holy month.

**Appreciating Front-liners**

To show its continuous support towards front-liners risking their lives during the ongoing pandemic, stc distributed Ramadan gift baskets to the heroes in the Ministry of Interior and all those working in the Kuwait International Fair vaccination center located in Mishref.



stc extended its continuous support to front-liners while implementing its annual iftar campaign during the holy month of Ramadan

