

Ball Aerospace Instrument to Give New View of Pluto

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Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp. is now awaiting the launch of the instrument that will give scientists their first, close views of Pluto. As part of a mission called New Horizons, the Ball-built Ralph instrument, with its visible imager and infrared spectrometer will create maps of Pluto and its three moons to help scientists understand the planets and the environment at the edge of our solar system.

Ralph is scheduled to launch January 17, 2006 on the New Horizons spacecraft built by the Applied Physics Laboratory aboard an Atlas V expendable launch vehicle from Cape Canaveral, Fla.

In a nod to the television show, "The Honeymooners," Ralph will be paired with Alice, an ultraviolet spectrometer, built by Southwest Research Institute. Ralph's suite of detectors is fed by a highly sensitive magnifying telescope with a resolution 10 times better than the human eye. Small but mighty, Ralph weighs only 23 pounds and uses about the same wattage as a standard night light.

"We are excited about the science that will be returned from the New Horizons mission," says David L. Taylor, president and CEO of Ball Aerospace. "Imaging Pluto has presented significant technical challenges the team has addressed with the powerful digital imaging capabilities built into Ralph."

Ralph was designed to study the surface geology of Pluto and obtain maps of the surface features and temperature of the planet. Ralph also was designed to provide images to the spacecraft as part of the navigation system critical to achieving a precise flyby of Pluto and Charon. The small instrument will take images twice daily as New Horizons approaches, flies past and looks back at Pluto. Ralph has seven charge-coupled devices and an infrared array detector. They will provide color and black-and-white maps of the surface with a resolution of 250 meters (820 feet) per pixel, as well as map the presence of nitrogen, methane, carbon monoxide, water and other materials across the surfaces of Pluto and its moons.

Ralph is a joint project between Southwest Research Institute (SwRI), Ball Aerospace and NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. SwRI's Dr. S. Alan Stern is the principal investigator for the New Horizons mission. The Applied Physics Laboratory at Johns Hopkins University is managing the mission for NASA and built the New Horizons spacecraft.

After its launch, New Horizons is expected to provide a closer look at Jupiter in February 2007. After traveling more than 3 billion miles, the mission is expected to reach the distant Pluto and Charon in July 2015.

Ball Aerospace celebrates its 50th year in business in 2006. The company began building pointing controls for military rockets in 1956, and later won a contract to build one of NASA's first spacecraft, the Orbiting Solar Observatory. Over the years, the company has been responsible for numerous technological and scientific 'firsts.' Ball Aerospace now develops spacecraft, payloads, systems and components for important national missions.

Ball Corporation is a supplier of metal and plastic packaging products, primarily for the beverage and food industries. The company also owns Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp., which develops sensors, spacecraft, systems and components for government and commercial markets. Ball Corporation employs more than 13,500 people and reported 2004 sales of \$5.4 billion.

Forward-Looking Statements

This news release contains "forward-looking" statements concerning future events and financial performance. Words such as "expects," "anticipates," "estimates," and variations of same and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. Such statements are subject to risks and uncertainties which could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied. The company undertakes no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. Key risks and uncertainties are summarized in filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, including in Exhibit 99.2 in our Form 10-K. These filings are available at our Web site and at www.sec.gov. Factors that might affect our packaging segments include fluctuation in consumer and customer demand and preferences; availability and cost of raw materials, including recent significant increases in resin, steel, aluminum and energy costs, and the ability to pass such increases on to customers; competitive packaging availability, pricing and substitution; changes in climate and weather; fruit, vegetable and fishing yields; industry productive capacity and competitive activity; failure to achieve anticipated productivity improvements or production cost reductions, including those associated with our beverage can end project; the German mandatory deposit or other restrictive packaging laws; changes in major customer or supplier contracts or loss of a major customer or supplier; changes in foreign exchange rates, tax rates and activities of foreign subsidiaries; and the effect of LIFO accounting. Factors that might affect our aerospace segment include: funding, authorization, availability and returns of government contracts; and delays, extensions and technical uncertainties affecting segment contracts. Factors that might affect the company as a whole include those listed plus: acquisitions, joint ventures or divestitures; regulatory action or laws including tax, environmental and workplace safety; governmental investigations; technological developments and innovations; goodwill impairment; antitrust, patent and other litigation; strikes; labor cost changes; rates of return projected and earned on assets of the company's defined benefit retirement plans; reduced cash flow; interest rates affecting our debt; and changes to unaudited results due to statutory audits or other effects.

SOURCE: Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp.

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