

Curiosity Rover Gives Mars the Brush-Off

Hi, I am Justin Lin,

Mobility Downlink for the Mars Science Laboratory Mission, and this is your Curiosity rover report.

Over the winter holidays, Curiosity was parked at a location dubbed “Grandma’s House” at Yellowknife Bay.

At this location, Curiosity took a series of the images to create panoramas of the surrounding area.

In addition, the team downloaded as much data as possible from Curiosity to free up the onboard data storage space to give her a fresh start to the New Year.

Once the New Year approached, Curiosity was ready to spin her wheels and stretch her arm. She started off with a small 3-meter drive to an interesting feature called Snake River.

Over time, dust accumulated on all the rocks and it hides features, such as fissures, inclusions or pits that are of interest. At this location, the team selected a rock for the first time use of the dust removal tool. The tool has a set of spinning metallic brushes and this allows for the features to be exposed for unobstructed APXS or ChemCam observations.

While these activities are taking place, the team is searching for a suitable rock to test out the rotary-percussive drill. This is a very exciting activity because it will be the first time that we will be drilling into a rock, acquire sample from deep within the rock, and also sort and transport it to the science instruments on board Curiosity.

This has been your Curiosity rover report.
Please check back for more updates.