

APL Mission Events and Anniversaries

MESSENGER's Third Flyby of Mercury
Sept. 29, 2009

MESSENGER Public Event, The Newseum, Washington, D.C.

Date and location are tentative; for final information check
<http://messenger.jhuapl.edu>.

Division of Planetary Sciences Conference,
Fajardo, Puerto Rico, Oct. 4–9, 2009

American Geophysical Union Fall Meeting,
San Francisco, Calif., Dec. 14–18, 2009

Visit the APL booth in the exhibit halls during these conferences
for more information on our missions and programs.

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<http://www.civilianspacestore.com/>

Colloquium Series for the 50th Anniversary
of the Space Department, Laurel, Md.
Oct.–Nov. 2009

APL's colloquium series will focus on some of the missions, people
and world events that shaped our nation and the APL Space
Department. The colloquiums are held on Friday afternoons at the
APL campus. The complete schedule will be posted online:
<http://www.jhuapl.edu/colloquium/>

50th Anniversary of the Space Department
Dec. 24, 2009

Space Archaeology

Ever wondered what it is? Pick up a copy of "Handbook of Space
Engineering, Archaeology, and Heritage" (Advances in Engineering
Series), edited by APL's Ann Darrin and Beth L. O'Leary.
<http://tiny.cc/dpcZh>

Solar Probe Shield, continued from page 7



Acoustic tests for Radiation Belt Storm Probes provided an opportunity to test Solar Probe materials with an acoustic blast.

shaken them on vibration tables, and blasted them with acoustic waves to replicate the rumble of a rocket ride. "We're looking closely at how they break, bend and compress, and we make changes based on what we see," she says.

The design team is working toward a 2015 launch in order to save NASA funds and to maximize the overlapping timelines with the European Space Agency's Solar Orbiter mission (see related article on page 6).

Launch might be less than 6 years away, but Congdon says the heat-shield team is staying cool under schedule pressure. "When you say out loud that you're flying to the Sun, it sounds crazy," Congdon says. "But we can do it. We have the technology, and it's all about putting it together."

On the Web: See a video of the thermal protection system tests on the Solar Probe Plus website, at <http://solarprobe.jhuapl.edu>. 

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