

Scientists to surveil Santa's sleigh Christmas Eve

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Efforts will help ensure Magical Elf's safe passage across the globe

LOS ALAMOS, NEW MEXICO, Dec. 21, 2012—Los Alamos trackers will use state-of-the-art technology to mark the course taken this year by Santa Claus and his eight tiny reindeer during the Jolly Elf's annual mission to spread joy to all the children of the world. Visit <http://santa.lanl.gov> beginning at 6 a.m. December 24 to see St. Nick's whirlwind journey.

December 21st marks the Winter Solstice in the Northern hemisphere and also the eve of the completion of the 13th b'ak'tun on the Mayan calendar. Despite some rumors to the contrary that are being spread by very naughty children, Santa Claus takes to the skies above the North Pole again this year on Christmas Eve, bringing joy to all those who believe in the spirit of Christmas.

“We expect Santa and his team to arrive in Northern New Mexico about midnight on Christmas Eve,” said Los Alamos space scientist Diane Roussel-Dupré of the Lab’s Space Data Systems group.

While Santa’s tradition of delivering toys and goodies across the world has endured for countless generations, Los Alamos has helped track Father Christmas for nearly two decades. Working in concert with the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and other agencies, Los Alamos has helped ensure Santa’s safe passage across the globe.

Laboratory space scientists use a combination of technologies to monitor Santa’s progress as he speeds through the skies. Los Alamos satellite data, visible at <http://santa.lanl.gov>, can be used by NORAD and the U.S. Air Force in their tracking efforts as well. Visit NORAD’s Santa Tracker at <http://www.noradsanta.org/>.

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