



FIRST LAUNCH OF 2024: Electron's first stage ready for recovery operations to retrieve it following a successful return to Earth from space.

Business Wire picture

First launch of year about monitoring space junk

ROCKET Lab USA Inc. launched its first Electron mission for 2024 last Wednesday — a space-junk-focused mission for Spire Global Inc. and NorthStar Earth & Space.

The “Four Of A Kind” mission for Spire’s customer NorthStar launched at 7.34pm and was Rocket Lab’s first launch for the year.

The Electron rocket deployed four space situational awareness satellites to a 530km circular Earth orbit.

The satellites, built and operated by Spire, will monitor near-Earth objects from space to provide timely and precise information for space-object detection, tracking, orbit

determination, collision avoidance, navigation and proximity alerts.

The mission was Rocket Lab’s 43rd Electron launch with 176 satellites now deployed.

The mission’s first stage after launch made its way back to Earth to further develop Electron into a reusable rocket.

Electron’s booster returned to Earth under a parachute and splashed down in the Pacific Ocean at approximately 17 minutes post-lift-off.

Rocket Lab’s recovery operations were set to retrieve the stage to return it to the Rocket Lab

production complex for a post-launch review and analysis before proceeding to one of the programme’s final tasks: reusing a previously-launched first stage on a future mission.

■ Other Rocket Lab missions in 2024 include upcoming launches for NASA; hypersonic technology tests on suborbital HASTE missions from Rocket Lab Launch Complex 2 in Virginia, USA; the beginning or continuation of block launches for satellite operators BlackSky, Synspec, and Kineis; and several other launches for commercial and defence-sector mission partners.

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The Top 10 #664

1. Is a chiffonier a scarf, a chest of drawers, or a cake decorator?
2. What is the name of the series of numbers that starts: 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13?
3. Six of the world’s 10 longest bridges, the longest 164km, are in which country?
4. What are Sangiovese, Montepulciano, Barbera and Nero D’Avola?
5. Which general interest magazine, launched in 1922, became the world’s best-selling monthly publication?
6. What does the ‘Mac’ in MacDonald or MacGregor mean?
7. Which Beatles’ song includes the lyric: “See how they run like pigs from a gun”?
8. What fruit does Australia produce far more of than any other?
9. Do women golfers have more, less, or the same number of majors as men?
10. In the TV series NCIS, what does NCIS stand for?

SUDOKU

Fill the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

6			4	5				
8							7	
7	1			9	2			
				6		9		5
	7						3	
1		5		4				
				6	3		2	7
	9							1
			1	7				8

673

SOLUTION

8	6	3	7	5	1	2	9	4
1	9	8	4	8	7	2	6	3
2	2	4	6	3	9	1	8	5
9	7	8	4	6	5	3	1	2
5	1	6	3	9	7	8	2	4
9	4	5	2	6	8	3	7	1
6	7	2	9	1	3	4	5	8
3	8	1	5	7	4	2	6	9

Waitangi Day in Wairoa

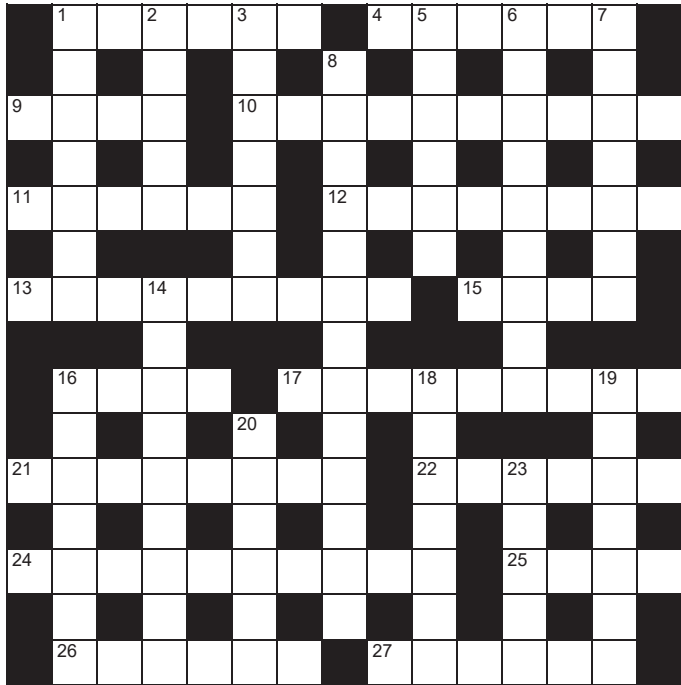
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PLENTY TO CHOOSE FROM: Tamariki eye some toys to treat themselves at the popular Waitangi Day event in Wairoa.



REMEMBERING TINA: Whānau of Tina Te Amo raise funds for Gisborne’s Relay For Life.



Across

1. Cut in half (6)
4. Lucky charm, talisman (6)
9. Delight (4)
10. Improve, make better (10)
11. Person owing money (6)
12. Follower (8)
13. Soldier of fortune (9)
15. Sacred (4)
16. Pole (4)
17. Debauchery (9)
21. Figure of speech (8)
22. Help (6)
24. Certainly (10)
25. Spoken (4)
26. Bulk liquid carrier (6)
27. Middle (6)

Down

1. Accept as true (7)
2. Fragrance (5)
3. Humiliation (7)
5. Among (6)
6. Meat eater (9)
7. Completely (7)
8. Compassionate (6-7)
14. Halt (9)
16. Stop from happening (7)
18. Examine in detail (7)
19. Waterfall (7)
20. Prosper (6)
23. Portly (5)

Last Week’s Solution. Across: 1. Wiretap, 5. Postbag, 9. Ratio, 10. Isolation, 11. Illogical, 12. Guess, 13. Drape, 15. Pointless, 18. Treachery, 19. Recto, 21. Amber, 23. Premature, 25. Seafaring, 26. Octet, 27. Tangent, 28. Elderly. Down: 1. Worried, 2. Retaliate, 3. Thong, 4. Principle, 5. Prowl, 6. Slaughter, 7. Bribe, 8. Genesis, 14. Excoriate, 16. Ivy League, 17. Encounter, 18. Transit, 20. Overtly, 22. Brain, 23. Point, 24. Aloud.