



Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton waves as she arrives on stage Thursday, during the fourth and final night of the Democratic National Convention at Wells Fargo Center in Philadelphia.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Atlas V, secret satellite blast off

JAMES DEAN
FLORIDA TODAY

A new U.S. spy satellite is flying high above the planet after a Thursday morning blastoff from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

The National Reconnaissance Office satellite rumbled from Launch Complex 41 at 8:37 a.m. atop a United Launch Alliance Atlas V rocket, flying through blinding early sunlight into clear skies on a southeastern track over the Atlantic Ocean.

Powered by 1.5 million pounds of thrust from its Russian main engine and two solid rocket boosters, the 20-story rocket shot downrange on its way to an orbit more than 22,000 miles over the equator.

ULA blacked out its launch broadcast five minutes into the flight — after the rocket's nose cone split away from the satellite — to help preserve the mission's secrecy.

About two hours later, the company declared the launch a success — the 64th by an Atlas V in as many missions.

The NRO also confirmed a positive conclusion to the launch it had promoted with a mission patch featuring a green cartoon lizard character named Spike.

"Spike is alive and well," the agency said on Twitter.

Amateur satellite trackers who closely follow NRO missions believe Thursday's, labeled NROL-61, launched a new model of the relay satellites known as the Satellite Data System, or SDS, and by the code name Quasar. The satellites relay intelligence including images collected by spacecraft flying in lower orbits.

The speculation drew upon study of past NRO flights and clues from the rocket's trajectory and configuration.

The Atlas V, for example, was the first flown by the NRO with two strap-on solid boosters. It also used a slightly longer payload fairing than usual.

That suggested the rocket was carrying a larger, heavier relay satellite than

See Launch, Page 6A



CRAIG BAILEY/FLORIDA TODAY

A United Launch Alliance Atlas V rocket lifts off from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

'MOMENT OF RECKONING'

Promising Americans a steady hand, Hillary Clinton cast herself Thursday night as a unifier for divided times, steeled for a volatile world by decades in politics that have left some Americans skeptical of her character.

"I will be a president for Democrats, Republicans, independents, for the struggling, the striving and the successful. For those who vote for me and those who don't," Clinton said as she accepted the Democratic nomination, becoming the first woman to lead a major U.S. political party.

She drew a sharp contrast with her general election rival Donald Trump, calling the Republican supremely unqualified for the White House.

"Imagine him in the Oval Office facing a real crisis," she said. "A man you can bait with a tweet is not a man we can trust with nuclear weapons," she said.

Clinton took the stage to roaring applause from flag-waving delegates.

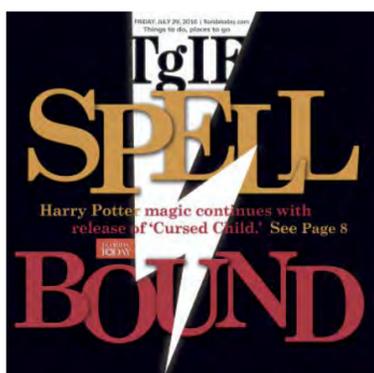
But her real audience was the millions of voters who may welcome her experience but question her character.



102 DAYS TO GO
With both candidates past conventions, the race starts, **1B**

United but not finished
Florida Democrats feel together with much work to do, **10A**

INSIDE



Book sellers brace for rush of Muggles and would-be wizards

Borinqueneers honored for bravery

R. NORMAN MOODY
FLORIDA TODAY

VIERA — A full crowd in the Brevard County Commission chamber stood and applauded, with some waving small Puerto Rican flags, as three veterans of the U.S. Army's 65th Infantry Regiment were honored Thursday with the nation's highest civilian award.

William Vila Velez, Juan Romero Silva and James Allan — who served with the heroic 65th Infantry Regiment, an all Puerto Rican unit that proved its courage and intrepid abilities at war and became

known as the Borinqueneers — were presented with replicas of the Congressional Gold Medal in a ceremony at the Brevard County Government Center in Viera.

"I take this medal in memory of our beloved platoon sergeant," Villa said as he received the medal from U.S. Rep. Bill Posey. "He was the first casualty we had in the Korean War. He went down like a hero. He made us men; we were 19- and 20-year-old kids. We were a family."

The three who were presented the Congressional Gold Medal on Thursday had

See Veterans, Page 2A



TIM SHORTT/FLORIDA TODAY

Chaplain James Allan, 100, was proud and grateful to have served with such a fine regiment. The Congressional Gold Medal presentation ceremony was held to honor three members of the highly decorated Puerto Rican 65th Infantry Regiment.



Still hot, still very dry
H: 94 L: 75
Details » 14A

Autos1-10D Lottery2A Opinion9A Tech Today4A
Comics12A Horoscopes13A Obituaries11A Sports on TV2C

© 2016 FLORIDA TODAY | Vol. 51, No. 135 | To subscribe: 321-242-3868 | For home delivery pricing see page 2A

