



Discovery's payload bay doors closing soon for rollover to VAB

▲ **Shuttle Update:** Technicians continue to process orbiter **Discovery** in preparation for the rollover to the Vehicle Assembly Building (VAB) later this month. In Orbiter Processing Facility bay 3, orbiter system testing is nearly complete.

In preparation for payload bay door closure, processing continues with work on the Boom Manipulator Positioning Mechanism assembly fasteners, installation and verification of the Remote Manipulator System camera, and inspections of the airlock wiring. Thermal Protection System blanket bonding continues on the Rudder Speed Brake.

Last week, the External Tank was mated to its twin Solid Rocket Boosters in the VAB. Prior to orbiter **Discovery** joining the stack, final closeouts on the External Tank will include attaching the new bolt catcher and electrical cable connections, as well as installing an aerodynamic fairing and the bi-pod struts, which are the attach points for the nose of the orbiter to the tank.

On **Atlantis**, water coolant loop No. 2 was deserviced in support of flex hose work. Initial leak checks of the crew module were completed and determined to be good. Rudder Speed Brake work continues with seal installations, and work continues on panel rigging.

On the orbiter's wing leading

edge, all Reinforced Carbon-Carbon panels and components have been installed for flight. Left-hand lower Leading Edge Sub System (LESS) panels 1 through 22 have been installed, and left-hand upper LESS panel installation is in work.

▲ RTF Theme at KSC All

American Picnic: This year's picnic, being held April 9 at KARS Park 1, will have a "Return to Flight (RTF)" theme starting with a parade and RTF Rally. Stop by the RTF tent highlighting the excellent work done by the KSC team and take advantage of one of the Pad A drive-by, round-trip bus tours, leaving periodically from KARS throughout the day.

If you are interested in helping with ANY of the picnic activities, please visit the Web site <http://kscpicnic.ksc.nasa.gov/volunteers.html> as soon as you can to register and get your favorite "choice position," desired activity and time slot! Volunteers who register by March 21 and work a minimum of two hours earn an All American Picnic Volunteer T-shirt.



■ **Blood Drive** — The ELVIS Contractor Team, consisting of Analex, ai Solutions and SAIC, is sponsoring a blood drive at the O&C building 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. March 15. The Central Florida Blood

All American Picnic applauds Return to Flight effort

Mobile will be parked just outside the O&C on the north side. Bring your Club Red membership card and become eligible to receive discount coupons to Darden Restaurants. Give the gift of life and promote this life-saving cause. For more information or to schedule your appointment, send e-mail to

aida.teague@analex.com.

■ **NASA Science — Moonbeams Shine on Einstein, Galileo and Newton.** Thirty-five years after Moon-walking astronauts placed special reflectors on the lunar surface, scientists have used these devices to test Albert Einstein's general theory of relativity to unprecedented accuracy. The findings, which also confirm theories from Galileo and Isaac Newton, may help to explain physical laws of the universe and benefit future space missions. More information about the research is available online at <http://arxiv.org/abs/gr-qc/0411113> or <http://funphysics.jpl.nasa.gov/physics/index.html>.

■ **Did You Know?** Space Gateway Support (SGS) has been named as the winner in the Large Service Category of the prestigious NASA George M. Low Award for quality excellence. SGS is the first recipient since 1991 of one of the annual awards to KSC contractors. Congratulations.