



KSC Countdown

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Shuttle arm returns, to undergo testing before installation



◆ Shuttle

Update: Final powered-up systems testing and area closeouts continue in

preparation for **Discovery's** move to the Vehicle Assembly Building no earlier than May 12. Final closeouts on the shuttle's main engines continue with thermal protection system foaming operations around the engines. Engine configuration for rollover was performed March 30, which was followed by platform removal and final inspections.

Work continues on the thermal protection system and thermal barriers for the nose landing gear. The landing gear functional test is set for this week. The lower section of the remote manipulator system, or shuttle arm, returned to Kennedy March 31 following repairs by the vendor in Canada. Shuttle technicians inadvertently damaged the arm slightly on March 4. The arm will be retested prior to installation.

◆ **ISS Update:** A new crew pulled into port at the International Space Station late March 31 to start a six-month mission. Expedition 13 Commander Pavel Vinogradov, NASA Flight Engineer and Science Officer Jeff Williams, and Brazilian Space Agency astronaut Marcos Pontes arrived aboard the Soyuz TMA-8 spacecraft. On Monday night

Expedition 12 Commander Bill McArthur and Williams "camped out" in the Quest airlock. They slept in the airlock, isolated from Flight Engineer Valery Tokarev, Vinogradov and Pontes, to test a new procedure that may reduce the preparation time for spacewalks. The new procedure will have spacewalkers stay in the airlock overnight at a lower air pressure to help purge nitrogen from their bodies to prevent decompression sickness. McArthur and Williams began their airlock stay at about 6:20 p.m. EDT and were to finish at 3:30 a.m. EDT today.

■ Have Lunch With KSC's Center Director And Deputy Director



Bring your lunch and get to know Center Director Jim Kennedy and Deputy

Director Bill Parsons through open, casual conversation set in an informal environment. The next "KSC, Can We Talk" forum is scheduled from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. April 28. (The date is subject to change due to Kennedy's schedule.)

This relaxed dialogue attempts to enhance the workplace culture, and create open communications while providing our senior leaders the opportunity to get to know some of NASA's finest. Participants, limited to 12 NASA employees, must be

Station crew tests new spacewalk procedure

nonsupervisory, non-SES GS-14 or below. To apply for this opportunity, simply e-mail your name, mail code and telephone number to:

Can We Talk@kscems.ksc.nasa.gov by April 21. Previously selected employees who could not attend must reapply; also, attendee participation has been limited to once a year. If you have any questions, please contact Gisele Altman at 867-4000 or *Gisele.Altman-1@nasa.gov*.

■ **The April 22 KSC Picnic Desperately Needs You** — Sign up TODAY to be a KSC Picnic Parking Volunteer. Only two hours of your time are needed!! Sign up individually or gather up a group of co-workers or friends and make this a FUN event! Undecided? Read the "View Volunteer Job Descriptions" link found on the volunteer site (<http://kscpicnic.ksc.nasa.gov/volunteers.html>) and then click on the "Go to the Registration Form" link to sign up! Questions? Contact committee chairwoman Linda Maust at 867-2455 or *Linda.A.Maust@nasa.gov*.

■ **Did You Know?** Images from the NASA art collection will be on display at the Brevard Community College Planetarium on Clearlake Road in Cocoa. The exhibit opening will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. April 7 and the Planetarium is offering special pricing for viewing. The gallery viewing is free and light refreshments will be served. For further information, contact Catherine Alexander at 867-7540.

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