

Launch leaves clean pad; SRBs return to CCAFS

◆ **Launch Update:** Following the successful launch of Discovery on Dec. 9, technicians performed a walkdown of Launch Pad 39B to assess damage of the pad structures and mobile launcher platform, and to look for any foreign object debris from the shuttle. The walkdown revealed no significant damage or problems, and the pad was in excellent condition.

The two solid rocket booster recovery ships that are deployed prior to each launch returned Tuesday to Hangar AF at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station with their cargo in tow. Workers have begun offloading the boosters and disassembling them to begin the refurbishment process.

◆ **ISS Update:** The International Space Station is now two tons heavier, with the installation Tuesday of its newest truss segment during the flight's first spacewalk. The total duration of the spacewalk was six hours, 36 minutes.

Mission Specialists Bob Curbeam and Christer Fuglesang ventured outside the station to attach the P5 segment of the station's truss and replace a failed camera needed to support future assembly tasks. They also were able to fit in some extra tasks that will save future spacewalkers time, including plugging the new segment into the existing truss, removing the locks that held it steady during launch and opening a latch that will allow the P6 segment to be attached when it is moved from its current, temporary

location to its permanent place at the end of the port truss.

With the new port truss section in place, the crew is ready to move on to the second phase of the mission: re-wiring the station.

■ **NASA Science** — The best meteor shower of the year peaks **today**. Read the full story at http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2006/12dec_geminids.htm?list29875.



■ **Need Holiday Shopping Ideas?** Stop by your closest NASA Exchange store and enjoy a

20 percent discount on all **regular-priced space memorabilia and wearables**. Sale runs through Dec. 22. Plus, enjoy an additional everyday bonus savings of 6 percent tax exemption on all merchandise throughout the store.

Store locations and hours, Monday through Friday:

- HQ – 7 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- OSB – 7 a.m. - 5:15 p.m.
- O&C-SSPF – 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.



■ **Office Decorations** — To help ensure that everyone has a safe holiday season, here are some guidelines about decorating your office space:

- No furnishings, decorations or

other objects shall be placed so as to obstruct an exit, the visibility of exits, access to exits, or egress from exits.

- No furnishings, decorations or other objects shall be placed so as to obstruct fire extinguishers or fire alarm pull boxes, or interfere with the normal activation of a sprinkler system.
- No explosive or flammable furnishings or decorations shall be used.
- All electrical devices shall have a UL or FM listing and shall be plugged directly into wall outlets.
- Live Christmas trees are not authorized.

■ **From the Cold of Space to the Cold of Antarctica** — Astronaut Don Pettit has just landed in the meteorite-rich ice fields of Antarctica, where he plans to launch a series of edgy and entertaining science experiments to be shared with the general public. Call them "Saturday Morning Science--on Ice." You can read more about it at

http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2006/11dec_donpettit.htm?list29875.

■ **Did You Know?** December is AIDS Awareness Month, and Florida has the highest number of reported AIDS cases of all the states and U.S. territories. For more information, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/basic.htm#data>.