



countdown

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Shuttle crew begins work outside space station



◆ **Mission Update:** Astronauts Heidemarie Stefanyshyn-Piper and Steve Bowen completed the first of four spacewalks working on several tasks, including removing a depleted nitrogen tank from a stowage platform on the outside of the complex. They also moved a flex hose rotary coupler from the shuttle to the station stowage platform, as well as removed some insulation blankets from the common berthing mechanism on the Kibo laboratory.

Focusing on one of the station's Solar Alpha Rotary Joints, they cleaned and lubricated part of the joint and removed two of the joint's 12 trundle-bearing assemblies. This work will continue on the rest of the scheduled spacewalks.

◆ **ELV Update:** Orbital Sciences' processing of the Orbiting Carbon Observatory's Taurus XL launch vehicle is under way on Vandenberg AFB. The UHF communications antenna was installed this week. Telemetry testing is scheduled for next week. Thermal protection system insulation and electrical work also is under way on the "Stage 0" motor.

Holiday Coffee Dec. 5 — Mark your calendars for the annual KSC Holiday Coffee! Center Director Bob Cabana invites all civil service and contractor employees to enjoy refreshments and to exchange greetings of the season with friends and co-workers at the O&C Mission Briefing Room, 8:30-10 a.m., or in the OSB II/5th Floor Conference Room, 1:30-3 p.m. On Dec. 4, refreshments will be provided to sec-



ond and third shift employees and management in the OSB I/Lobby from 10 p.m. to midnight, compliments of NASA Senior Management.

■ **PM Challenge 2009 "Connect and Discover"** — Mark your calendars for NASA PM Challenge 2009, Feb. 24-25 in Daytona Beach. The NASA Office of General Counsel has determined that the PM Challenge is an internal NASA training meeting and not subject to the conference reporting requirement or conference attendance restrictions associated with the 2008 NASA Authorization Bill. Please see the PM Challenge Web site (below) for more information.

The PM Challenge is focused on training, lessons learned, knowledge sharing, and new ideas in the areas of program/project management, systems engineering, risk management and related disciplines. Find out more at: <http://pmchallenge.gsfc.nasa.gov/>.

The PM Challenge is organized by the NASA Academy of Program, Project & Engineering Leadership within the Office of Chief Engineer and the Office of Safety and Mission Assurance.



■ **Salvation Army Christmas Stockings** — If you would like to participate in the Salvation Army's 'Stuff a Stocking Project,' please contact one of the individuals listed below, pick up a stocking or two and have fun filling the stocking(s). Make sure you clearly mark the age and either **boy** or **girl** on the outside of the stocking. If we run out of stockings, please fill a shoe box and mark it the same way.

Processing on OCO's Taurus XL rocket is under way at VAFB

Points of Contact:

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The deadline to return the stockings to any of the individuals listed above is Dec. 11. This project is being sponsored by Space Coast Chapter, Federally Employed Women. If you have any questions, please contact Vickie Hall at 867-9100 or e-mail vickie.c.hall@nasa.gov. Thank you on behalf of the children who receive your gifts.

Countdown is published every Tuesday & Thursday for NASA KSC employees. Deadlines are 9 a.m. Mondays & Wednesdays. E-mail news to anita.l.barrett@nasa.gov. For questions or information, e-mail or call 867-2815. You can also find PDF editions of *Countdown* on the Web at: http://www.nasa.gov/centers/kennedy/news/countdown/countdown_toc.html.