



countdown

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Meetings this week to decide Discovery's flight readiness



◆ Shuttle Update:

The Space Shuttle Program will hold a meeting Wednesday to review new data and assess ongoing work on the gaseous hydrogen flow control valves on space shuttle Discovery. Managers then will determine whether to move forward with a Flight Readiness Review Friday.

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If space shuttle Discovery's launch on the STS-119 mission officially is scheduled for March 12, the crew will arrive at KSC at 3 p.m. EDT Monday. The arrival will be carried live on NASA TV.

◆ **ELV Update:** Kepler was moved to Launch Complex 17 on Feb. 19 and placed in a staging facility. The Kepler spacecraft was mated to its second stage on Feb. 21. The payload fairing was installed around the Kepler spacecraft Feb. 26. At Pad 17-B, the spacecraft was mated to the Delta II rocket. A spacecraft countdown launch rehearsal will be conducted today before Friday's launch at 10:49 p.m.

NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter, or LRO, arrived at the Astrotech facility on Feb. 13. The spacecraft was uncrated and transferred to a hazardous processing facility the same day, where covers were removed and technicians performed a black-light inspection. The spacecraft's solar arrays were attached and deployed, and a spacecraft activation test was conducted on Feb. 15. Several operations tests and simulations were conducted on both spacecraft last week. NASA now is targeting May 20 for launch instead of April 24 after another

Atlas V government launch, which is scheduled for liftoff in March, experienced technical problems and was delayed. It will use the same launch pad that LRO/LCROSS will use.

■ **Philatelic Cancellations** — As a service to KSC employees, the KSC Post Office will hold philatelic envelopes for cancellation on the day of the shuttle launch. Cachet envelopes bearing the mission emblem of the upcoming launch may be purchased at the NASA Exchange Stores.

Stamped, addressed envelopes may be deposited in the designated drop box in Headquarters/Room 1546. Stamped envelopes can be mailed in messenger envelopes via the interoffice mail system to the KSC Post Office with instructions to hold for cancellation on launch day or landing day and return to sender or mail to addressee.

Do not place loose launch envelopes in the outgoing U.S. Mail without instructions; they may be canceled and mailed the same day received. For further information, please call the KSC Post Office, 867-3752.

■ **Get Saturday's All-American Picnic Tickets Now** — Tickets sold through Wednesday will be \$7 for adults (choice of meat or veggie ticket) and \$4 for children ages 3-12. A very limited number of tickets will be available the day of the picnic (Saturday) at a cost of \$10 for adults (choice of meat or veggie ticket) and \$6 for children. Children under are free but still require a ticket. Tickets are available at KSC at sites:

- KARS Country Store

Kepler rehearsal today prepares for Friday night launch

- HQ/Room 1201 – NASA Exchange Employee Services Office
- O&C Sundry Store
- OSB Sundry Store
- SSPF Sundry Store
- NSLD2, Cube 604 - Debbie Doyle, 799-7002
- Pad A Operations Support Building/Room 1118 - Dallas McCarter, 867-0359

■ **NASA Update** — NASA has awarded an interim letter contract to Oceaneering International Inc. of Houston to begin work on the design, development and production of a new spacesuit system for the Constellation Program. The system will protect astronauts during voyages to the International Space Station and exploration of the moon's surface.

The spacesuit and support systems will provide protection against the launch and landing environment and spacecraft cabin leaks. The system offers the ability to conduct contingency spacewalks. For short trips to the moon, the suit design will support a week's worth of moon walks. The system also must be designed to support multiple spacewalks during any six-month lunar outpost expeditions.

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/newscountdown/countdown_toc.html.