



countdown

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Atlantis in VAB for prelaunch processing



◆ Shuttle Update:

Space shuttle Atlantis rolled out of OPF-1 to the VAB Monday morning. First motion was at 11:30 a.m. Atlantis will be lifted into High Bay 3 and mated with its SRBs and external fuel tank already secured on the mobile launcher platform. Atlantis is scheduled to roll out to Launch Pad 39A on March 31 for the STS-125 Hubble servicing mission.

◆ **ISS Update:** The 10 crew members aboard space shuttle Discovery and the International Space Station will hold a news conference at 1:06 p.m. EDT **today**. NASA TV will provide live coverage of the 40-minute news conference.

■ **Save the Date for BEST Barbecue** — The 2009 BEST Barbecue will be held 3-6 p.m. on **June 12** at KARS Park I. More information will be published in *Countdown* as it becomes available.

■ **Call For Nominations for the 16th Annual NASA Software of the Year Competition** — Abstracts are requested for those wishing to be considered for the Software of the Year competition. Every NASA center and facility is cordially invited to participate in this competition.

Included in the abstract should be a detailed description of the software; its current Technology Readiness Level (TRL); NASA's intellectual property interest; and how the software has made a significant scientific or technical contribution to the NASA mission.

This prestigious award is designed to

give recognition to developers of exceptional software created for or by NASA and owned by NASA. Winner of the competition will receive the NASA Software Medal, Inventions and Contributions Board certificate(s), and monetary compensation. KSC will pick one selection to represent the center in the competition. All abstracts should be sent to Carol Anne Dunn/KT-A2 at 867-6381 by March 31.

For information on the previous two competitions, eligibility requirements and the NASA Headquarters selection process, check out the NASA Inventions and Contributions Board Web site at: http://www.nasa.gov/offices/oc/ice/ICB_Schedule_2007-2008.html.

■ **NASA Science** — On March 19, astronauts onboard the International Space Station checked themselves for microbes before stepping outside on a spacewalk. It was a first-ever test of planetary protection technology that, one day, could keep humans from contaminating the sands of Mars. You can read the full story at: http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2009/20mar_locadexploration.htm?list1101250.

■ **NASA Honors Apollo and Shuttle Astronaut Thomas K. Mattingly** — NASA will honor astronaut Thomas K. "Ken" Mattingly II with the presentation of an Ambassador of Exploration Award for his contributions to the U.S. space program. During a ceremony Thursday, Mattingly will accept the award at the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering at Auburn University in Alabama, from

NASA TV to air joint shuttle, ISS crews news conference

which he received his bachelor's degree in aeronautical engineering, and present it for display at the university.

NASA is giving the Ambassador of Exploration Award to the first generation of explorers in the Mercury, Gemini and Apollo space programs for realizing America's goal of going to the moon. Mattingly was the command module pilot for the Apollo 16 mission and the designated command module pilot for the Apollo 13 flight (he was removed from flight status 72 hours before the scheduled launch because of exposure to the German measles). Mattingly also was the shuttle commander on missions STS-4 and STS 51-C.

The award is a moon rock encased in Lucite, mounted for public display. The rock is part of the 842 pounds of lunar samples collected during six Apollo expeditions from 1969 to 1972.

■ **Jewelry Sale** — The NASA Exchange presents the \$5 jewelry sale in the HQ Cafeteria, today and tomorrow 7 a.m. - 2 p.m. and in the MFF Cafeteria, Thursday and Friday 7 a.m. - 4 p.m. Acceptable forms of payment are cash, Visa or MasterCard only.

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.