



New dates for upcoming ELV launches

Columbia search winding down

▲ **ELV Update:** The **SIRTF** launch has been postponed to April 27 due to the need for more time to complete launch readiness evaluations on the Boeing Delta II rocket. SIRTF is at the pad, mated to the Delta II. The delay of the SIRTF launch has pushed the launch of **GALEX** back, anticipated to be one week after the SIRTF launch. Cabling concerns on the **Mars Exploration Rovers** have pushed back the launch of the first MER to no earlier than June 6. No change is expected for the second MER, scheduled for June 25; however, the second mission cannot launch until 10 days after the first one.

▲ **East Texas Columbia Recovery Search Nears Completion** -- As the Central Texas search for material from the Space Shuttle Columbia moved westward, the East Texas search began nearing completion. Air operations continued last week, and underwater searches were completed. Search teams have completed 98 percent of the underwater searches in Lake Nacogdoches and Toledo Bend Reservoir. Ground teams have completed 78 percent of their primary search area, and airborne crews finished 80 percent of their assigned area. More than 70,000 items, weighing 78,000 pounds, about 36 percent of the Shuttle by weight, have been delivered to KSC for use in the mishap investigation. Officials are finalizing plans to create a Columbia Recovery Office (CRO) at Johnson Space Center, Houston. The CRO will assume responsibility for management of recovery and community liaison activities. The Disaster Field Office in Lufkin, Texas, the central planning and command center for the search, is expected to close in early May.

◆ **American WW II Heroes To Appear at KSC All American Picnic** – Celebrate the Centennial of Flight by meeting history: the Legendary Tuskegee Airmen, which will be just one of the exciting exhibits at this year's picnic. Meet the fighter pilots of P-51 Mustangs who

“never lost a bomber to enemy fighters.” Hear their amazing combat experiences, receive autographs, view personal photos and videos and thank them for keeping *America "the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave."* For more information, please contact Michelle Amos at 7-6681 or send e-mail to Michelle.E.Amos@nasa.gov.

◆ **Florida Space Institute Summer Schedule Available** – The Florida Space Institute Summer 2003 schedule has courses in launch vehicle processing, feedback control systems, thermodynamics, engineering analysis and dynamics, and structural properties of materials. These courses are available either live, on videotape, or via Interactive Television (ITV). For more information, contact Bob Petty at 321-452-9834, ext 201.

◆ **Bring In Your Mercury Thermometers From Home to EEAW April 22-23** – Mercury is a highly toxic, environmentally persistent pollutant. One drop of mercury can contaminate a 20-acre lake and the fish and wildlife who depend on that lake. In spite of its hazards, mercury is contained in numerous household items: some thermometers, electrical switches, thermostats and small batteries. As part of EEAW, United Space Alliance and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection are partnering a program to eliminate mercury from households and landfills. KSC employees who bring in a mercury-containing device or even mercury by itself will receive a mercury-free medical thermometer. The mercury containing device will be properly disposed. Visit the USA/FDEP booth on April 22 or 23 to receive your mercury-free thermometer.

◆ **Did You Know? Earth Day is April 22.**

escorted bomber planes in more than 200 missions and

KSC Countdown is published every Tuesday & Thursday.

Deadlines: 10 a.m. Mondays & Wednesdays. Send information, comments or questions to:

◆ E-mail – Anita.Barrett-1@ksc.nasa.gov ◆ Telephone – 321-867-2815

Find KSC Countdown on the Internet at <http://www-pao.ksc.nasa.gov/kscpao/ksccount/2003.htm>