



countdown

September 17, 2009

Vol. 14, No. 70

Ares I-X launch pad gets new arms

◆ **Ares I-X Update:** The fixed service structure on Launch Pad 39B has had two new arms installed near the top (see below). They are stabilizing arms for the 327-foot tall Ares I-X rocket.



On Sept. 11, the Ares I-X team reached a significant milestone with the first electrical power-up of the test rocket. Ares I-X and its simulated crew module and launch abort system are assembled on a mobile launcher platform in the VAB's High Bay 3 in preparation for its targeted Oct. 31 flight test.

Testing ran for three days and concluded Sept. 14. "Powering up a new vehicle and having all of the systems 'talking' to each other is always a challenge. The power-up was a tremendous success, with all of the systems functioning nominally," said Bob Ess, Ares I-X mission manager.

◆ **ISS Update:** Soyuz Commander Max Suraev, NASA Flight Engineer Jeff Williams and spaceflight participant Guy Laliberte are scheduled to launch aboard the Soyuz TMA-16 spacecraft from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan at 3:14 a.m. EDT on Sept. 30. Laliberte, a Canadian citizen and founder of Cirque

du Soleil, will fly to the station under an agreement with the Russian Federal Space Agency.

NASA TV coverage begins with a broadcast of prelaunch activities Sept. 17 and continues through the landing of Commander Gennady Padalka and NASA's Michael Barratt who will depart the station. They will return to Earth at approximately 12:29 a.m. Oct. 10 in the Soyuz TMA-14 spacecraft docked to the station. Padalka and Barratt have been aboard the orbiting laboratory since March 2009.

■ **NASA Science** — NASA is set to launch a sensitive infrared telescope to seek out sneaky things in the night sky -- among them, dark asteroids that could pose a threat to Earth. Read about it at: http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2009/15sep_ninjastronomy.htm.

■ **LCROSS To Impact Lunar Crater** — NASA has selected a final destination for its Lunar Crater Observation and Sensing Satellite, or LCROSS, after a journey of nearly 5.6 million miles that included several orbits around Earth and the moon. The mission team announced Wednesday that Cabeus A will be the target crater for the LCROSS dual impacts scheduled for 7:30 a.m. EDT Oct. 9. The crater was selected after an extensive review as the optimal location for LCROSS' evaluation of whether water ice exists at the lunar south pole.

During a media briefing Sept. 11, Daniel Andrews, LCROSS project manager at NASA's Ames Research Center, announced the dedication of the LCROSS mission to the memory of le-

NASA TV to cover Soyuz launch Sept. 30

gendary news anchor, Walter Cronkite, who provided coverage of NASA's missions from the beginning of America's crewed space program to the age of the space shuttle. For more information about the LCROSS mission and images of Cabeus A, visit:

<http://www.nasa.gov/lcross>.



■ **Did You Know?** Fall in North America begins Tuesday at 5:18 p.m. EDT. The autumnal equinox (fall) lasts until the winter solstice on the 21st of December.

In Australia, autumn officially begins March 1 and ends May 31. The vast diversity of the ecological zones of the Australian continent renders the rigid European seasonal calendar an imposed cultural concept and not relevant to Australia's climatic conditions.

■ **Massage Therapy** — A 30-minute relaxation/therapeutic massage is only \$1 per minute, available Monday- Friday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. on center. Call 867-4762 or 543-1047 (cell) for an appointment. On-site chair massage also is available. There are gift certificates and discounted packages, too.

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