Tuesday, June 22, 2004

KSC COUNTDOWN

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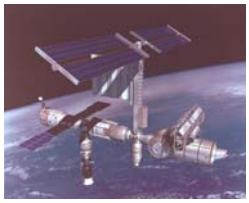
ISS crew prepares for spacewalk 5:50 p.m. Thursday



▲ ISS Update: Father's Day came early for Astronaut Mike Fincke, 225 miles high aboard the International Space Station, as he received the best present on Earth – Fincke's wife, Renita, gave birth June 18 to baby daughter Tarali Paulina Fincke, their second child, in Clear Lake, Texas. Although Fincke is among thousands of American fathers whose service to the country has prevented them from attending the birth of a child, he is the first U.S. astronaut to have celebrated the event from space.

Fincke, the NASA Station Science Officer, and Commander Gennady Padalka are getting ready for a spacewalk planned for Thursday to replace a Remote Power Controller Module (RPCM) that houses a faulty circuit breaker, through which power is routed to one of the Control Moment Gyros (CMGs).

NASA Television coverage of the spacewalk begins at 3:30 p.m. Thursday. Padalka and Fincke are scheduled to leave the Russian Pirs docking compartment at 5:50 p.m. EDT in Russian spacesuits.

▲ ELV Update: The launch of NASA's **Aura** spacecraft, the latest in the Earth Observing System (EOS) series, has been rescheduled to no earlier than July 10 due to two issues. Additional time was needed to assure that suspect computer chips causing difficulty on a different satellite were not of the same lot as those aboard the Aura spacecraft. Also, the engineering review board needed additional time to clear the concern over the second stage fuel tank shutoff valve failure. It was resolved satisfactorily June 18. NASA is awaiting word from the Western Range that the request for a launch date of July 10 has been confirmed.

MESSENGER is undergoing prelaunch testing at the Astrotech Space Operations facilities near KSC. The spacecraft's two solar arrays are undergoing cleaning today in preparation for installation on June 24 -25. One array will be installed each day. After each array is installed, a deployment test is conducted.

◆ Road Repairs — Repairs at the 405 overpass on S.R. 3 began yesterday and will continue through Wednesday between 8:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. SR-3 will be closed to south bound traffic during that time. Traffic will be routed up onto 405 and around back to SR-3 for southbound traffic.

Component concerns delay Aura launch to no earlier than July 10

◆ NASA marks National Lightning Safety Awareness Week, June 20-26 — In the United States an average of 67 people are killed each year by lightning. In 2003, there were 44 deaths. That's more than the annual number of people killed by tornadoes or hurricanes. Many more are struck by lightening but survive with adverse health affects.

NASA's lightning research makes unique contributions to climate studies and severe storm detection and prediction. Its research is striving to improve our understanding of lightning and its role in weather and climate. Scientists are seeking information that may someday help forecasters save lives by improving severe storm warning lead-time by up to 50 percent. They are also interested in decreasing the false alarm rate for non-tornado producing storms.

◆ Did You Know? The KSC Fitness Centers present another session in the "Changing Weighs" Nutrition Lecture Series July 14: *Functional Eating: Functional Foods to Prevent Disease.*

KSC Countdown **is published every Tuesday & Thursday. Deadlines are 10 a.m. Mondays & Wednesdays.**
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