An upcoming Commercial Crew Flight Test ...

Training underway for the space station’s next crew ...

And, a new development in our search for life beyond Earth ... a few of the stories to tell

you about - This Week at NASA!

SpaceX is preparing for its upcoming Demo-1 flight test to the International Space Station.

The SpaceX Crew Dragon spacecraft is set to launch on a Falcon 9 rocket from our Kennedy Space Center in the first uncrewed flight of our Commercial Crew Program, in which SpaceX and Boeing will launch American astronauts to the station from American soil.

Our Nick Hague and Christina Koch are preparing for their flight to the space station.

Along with crewmate Alexey Ovchinin of Roscosmos, they conducted final qualification training in Star City, Russia.

The trio is targeted for launch on March 14, from Kazakhstan.
For Hague and Ovchinin, it will be an opportunity to complete the flight to the station that was aborted during launch in October 2018.

“We're stronger together and having an additional crew member, Christina is as good in the left seat as I am, and so I feel very fortunate to have her as part of the crew and look forward to flying to space with her.”

We know DNA stores and transmits genetic information in all living organisms on Earth. But we don't know for sure that it would be the basis for possible life elsewhere in the universe.

For the first time, a team of researchers supported in part by NASA’s Astrobiology program, has synthesized a molecule that can store and transmit information like DNA does. This new molecule does not represent a new life form, but does suggest that an alternative building block for possible life could exist on other worlds.
This new development could help in our search for life beyond Earth.

Our New Horizons spacecraft has sent back the mission’s most detailed images of the Kuiper Belt object nicknamed Ultima Thule.

Obtained just minutes before the spacecraft’s approach to the object on New Year’s Day, the images offer an unprecedented opportunity to investigate the surface, origin and evolution of Ultima Thule – believed to be the most primitive object ever encountered by a spacecraft.

You can now get daily weather reports from the surface of Mars – courtesy of our InSight lander.

 Sensors aboard the lander recently began recording temperature, wind and air pressure information and sending it back to Earth.

InSight is scheduled to continue this round-the-clock operation for at least the next two years.

By the way – current low temperatures at InSight’s location have typically been around
minus 140 degrees Fahrenheit.

A new NASA publication titled, “Earth” features an array of stunning images of our home planet as can only be seen from space.

There are 69 images in four categories – atmosphere, water, land, and ice and snow.

Each image is accompanied by a short explanation discussing the science behind the image.

For more details go to nasa.gov/earth.

That’s what’s up this week @NASA ...

For more on these and other stories follow us on the web at nasa.gov/twan