This Week at NASA ...

NASA commercial partner, SpaceX, is a step closer on its planned journey to the International Space Station.

After its rollout to Space Launch Complex 40 at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida, the SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket was lifted into place for a static engine fire test simulating launch. The exercise ended with all nine engines firing at full power for two seconds.

The successful test clears the way for Falcon 9's upcoming demonstration flight to the ISS as part of NASA's plan for private companies to take over cargo delivery to the orbiting complex.

“We finished the thirty year incredible era of shuttle, but very excited about the upcoming launch of SpaceX. What that will do will be to show to the world that America is still the leader in space exploration. It'll provide for us American access to
low Earth orbit, for cargo initially, then as we go through the rest of our competition,

American access for crewmembers.”

Expedition 31 Soyuz Commander Gennady Padalka, NASA Flight Engineer Joe Acaba and Flight Engineer Sergei Revin participated in traditional ceremonies at the Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center in Star City, Russia, outside of Moscow. The trio later departed for the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan to complete training for their launch to the International Space Station aboard the Soyuz spacecraft later this month. Acaba, Padalka and Revin are scheduled to conduct a series of prelaunch activities over the next two weeks as they prepare for liftoff to the orbital outpost.

NASA Deputy Administrator, Lori Garver visited the NASA Shared Services Center at Stennis Space Center. The NSSC provides support to NASA in the areas of Human Resources, Financial Management, Procurement, Information Technology, and Business Support Services. Garver was
briefed by Senior Leadership on the latest NSSC initiatives, including the now fully-operational Enterprise Service Desk that supports employees Agency-wide.

She also spoke with NSSC employees at an All Hands event.

“I really enjoyed getting to know not only the management but the whole team that works here to support us at NASA. The work that we are doing could not be done without the NSSC and I am just thrilled to be here for the awards program and I got to take a couple of calls and I am really happy that you guys have done such a great job at supporting NASA.”

For more info about the NSSC and its services, check out www.nssc.nasa.gov.

NASA Chief Technologist Mason Peck visited the Ames Research Center, where he was briefed on projects in biology, nanotechnology, and telerobotics. Peck also visited Stottler Henke, a small software company in the Bay Area that’s
received more than 50 NASA Small Business Innovative Research awards. CEO Dick Stottler

briefed Peck about the unique artificial intelligence software systems the company's developed

for NASA and other government agencies and private manufacturers while creating new jobs

here in the U.S.

The 2nd Annual USA Science and Engineering Festival, held at the Washington, DC Convention Center featured more than 35 NASA-sponsored exhibits aimed at inspiring students to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and math. The country's only national science fair, the USA Science & Engineering Festival was founded to celebrate scientists and engineers, much like film and music stars, and professional athletes.

Aspiring rocketeers showed off their gravity-defying skills at the NASA Student Launch Projects flight challenge. The annual event, organized by the Marshall Space Flight Center and sponsored by ATK Aerospace Group, provides teams of middle school through college students the
opportunity to design, build and test large-scale rockets. The teams vie to see whose rocket

gets closest to the 1-mile high altitude mark and safely returns its onboard science payload
to Earth.

“We’re getting real world experience here about what people can do after they graduate

for aerospace engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical and science in general. And it’s been

a tremendous help and realization to see what actual companies are doing in the real world

after school.”

“We need engineers, we as a country need engineers and we as ATK need engineers we

as an aerospace industry need engineers. This is probably the best way I can think of to

encourage them to join us.”

High school teams from across the country presented their solutions to a variety of

21st century problems during the Conrad Foundation’s fifth annual Innovation Summit held at the
Ames Research Center. The event included 15 finalist teams competing in the categories of aerospace exploration, clean energy and health and nutrition. Each category’s winning teams received cash prizes of $5,000 to continue development of their projects.

NASA Astronaut Dottie Metcalf-Lindenburger will lead an international team of four aquanauts on the 16th NASA Extreme Environment Mission Operations or NEEMO expedition next month off the coast of Key Largo, Florida. The 12-day mission at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean will simulate a visit to an asteroid and test innovative solutions to challenges astronauts expect to face.

Joining Metcalf-Lindenburger inside the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Aquarius Reef Base underwater habitat will be fellow astronauts Kimiya Yui of the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency and Timothy Peake of the European Space Agency. Rounding out the crew.
is Steve Squyres, the Cornell University astronomy professor and principal investigator of the

Mars Rovers, Spirit and Opportunity. Squyres was on the previous NEEMO crew.

The Agency's Website, nasa.gov, has won Webby awards in two categories as the best

ingovernment. The site received its fourth consecutive People's Voice Award, its fifth

overall, and for the first time, captured the annual competition's judges' Award.

www.nasa.gov is one of the most visited government urls, with consistently high customer-satisfaction ratings comparable to popular commercial sites.

Its busiest day ever was July 8, 2011, when NASA TV coverage of the launch of STS-135, the final space shuttle mission, was watched by more than 560,000 people at nasa.gov.

A Webby Award is the foremost honor recognizing the world's best Websites.

At the Johnson Space Center, The Westbrook Intermediate School Band, winners of the 2011 Texas State Band Contest, performed a special concert
for JSC employees in the Teague Auditorium. The featured selection was a special piece commissioned by the band directors to commemorate the Space Shuttle Program entitled, “STS Mission: Ecceda Terra.”

“Mission STS, which is the scientific distinction in the title and Ecceda Terra, which is the poetic. Now Ecceda Terra as derived from both the Italian and Latin languages to mean ‘to exceed the Earth’ – so very fitting. Ecceda coming from the Latin ‘Eccedo’, which means ‘to exceed’ and terra meaning ‘Earth’.”

A photo of the band in front of the Full Fuselage Shuttle Trainer at JSC was included in their concert program.

“My name is Daphne Dador and I’m a Legislative Affairs Specialist at NASA Headquarters.

My office’s mission is to handle all communications and relationships related to legislative issues between the agency and congress, and so I do things like help out with preparing for...
congressional hearings, handling requests from members of congress and their staff as well as monitoring relevant legislation.

I grew up in California. I was in the San Francisco Bay Area, you know NASA Ames has always been a presence for me. When I was little, my Grandparents would take myself and my brothers out to Moffett Field.

I've always been attracted to coming to a place with a larger cause and a bigger idea,

so Washington, D.C. to me was a place to do that. I had an undergraduate degree in politics, which is something that a lot of people in Washington, D.C. have and so I decided that I needed to specialize in an area. So, I decided to go to graduate school and I found the Space Policy Institute at George Washington University. And that's where I learned that there was this field called Space Policy and that I could be involved with it even though I wasn't a scientist or an engineer.
At this agency, I think it represents the best about being an American. It’s having an enterprising nature, it’s advancing humanity and knowledge and you know, it’s that American spirit. On the outside I’ve always been proud of our space program, but now that I’m part of the agency I feel that it’s even more important for me when I go home or when I go out to talk about what we do and why it’s so important to the nation.”

The U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame has three new members. During an induction ceremony held at the Kennedy Space Center, Franklin Chang Diaz, Kevin Chilton and Charles Precourt joined an elite group of American space heroes. Chang Diaz flew on seven space shuttle flights and logged more than 16-hundred hours in space, Chilton was the pilot on STS-49, the first flight of space shuttle Endeavour and was the commander of STS-76 and Precourt flew on four space shuttle missions, as a mission specialist, a pilot and a commander. This
is the eleventh group of space shuttle astronauts named to the Hall of Fame. Earlier inductees represent the Mercury, Gemini, Apollo, Skylab and Apollo-Soyuz programs. There are now 82 space explorers enshrined in the Astronaut Hall of Fame.

Fifty-one years ago on May 5, 1961, Mercury astronaut Alan Shepard launched aboard his Freedom 7 spacecraft from Cape Canaveral’s Launch Complex 5, making him the first American in space. His historic flight came three weeks after Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first human to do so.

Shepard’s suborbital flight reached an altitude of 116-miles and lasted about 15 minutes. After traveling just over 300-miles, Shepard and Freedom 7 splashed down safely in the Atlantic Ocean.

Twenty years ago on May 7, 1992, Space Shuttle Endeavour launched from the Kennedy Space Center on its maiden voyage - STS-49. The nine-day mission included the first three-person
spacewalk, during which Mission Specialists Pierre Thuot, Richard Hieb and Tom Akers retrieved and attached the crippled Intelsat VI satellite to a new upper stage, then re-launched it to its intended geosynchronous orbit. Providing assistance inside Endeavour was Commander Dan Brandenstein, Mission Specialists Kathy Thornton and Bruce Melnick, and Pilot Kevin Chilton, a 2012 inductee of the Astronaut Hall of Fame. And that’s This Week @ NASA! For more on these and other stories, or to follow us on Facebook, Twitter and other social media, log on to the webby award winning www.nasa.gov.