

Shuttle Astronauts Join Prestigious U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame® in May

KENNEDY SPACE CENTER, Fla. (April 14, 2009) – It happens once a year at Kennedy Space Center...where more than 20 astronauts gather to honor their own. The eighth group of space shuttle astronauts has been named to the [U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame](#). Veteran space shuttle astronauts George "Pinky" Nelson, William Shepherd and Jim Wetherbee will join an elite group of American space heroes as they are inducted into the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame. They will join the ranks of legendary space pioneers like Neil Armstrong, John Glenn, Alan Shepard, Sally Ride and John Young. The public ceremony at [Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex](#) will be held Saturday, May 2 at 3:00 p.m.

Each inductee brings their own chapter to the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame. The addition of Nelson, one of only six space shuttle astronauts to fly the Manned Maneuvering Unit untethered in space; Shepherd, commander of the first crew to live aboard the International Space Station; and Wetherbee, commander of the longest docked shuttle-Mir mission, will bring the number of space explorers enshrined in the Hall of Fame to 73. More than 20 astronauts have accepted invitations to attend and honor the latest inductees including Scott Carpenter, Buzz Aldrin, Jim Lovell, Bob Crippen, Al Worden and Walt Cunningham.

As part of the weekend celebration, Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex will feature a special [Induction bus tour ticket package](#). Tours will be lead by Hall of Fame astronauts such as Walt Cunningham, Apollo 7 lunar module pilot; Robert "Hoot" Gibson, five-time space shuttle astronaut; Fred Gregory, the first African American space shuttle commander; and Rick Hauck, three-time space shuttle astronaut and commander of the Return to Flight mission following the Challenger accident. The package also includes reserved seating at the Induction ceremony and a commemorative poster of the [2009 Inductees](#).

Apollo 13 astronaut Jim Lovell will sign copies of his book, "Apollo 13," the 30th anniversary edition, on Saturday, May 2 at 1:00 p.m. Other autograph sessions, book signings and public presentations with Hall of Fame astronauts will also be held on May 2 and 3. A full schedule of events can be found [here](#).

The U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony is included with admission to Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex. Induction weekend ticket packages are available for \$70 plus tax for adults and \$50 plus tax for children and include the following:

- Two-day admission to Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex and the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame
- Special guided bus tour with a Hall of Fame astronaut
- Reserved seating at the Induction Ceremony at 3:00 p.m.
- Commemorative poster of the 2009 Inductees

U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame Induction weekend tickets are available by telephone at 321-449-4400 or online at [www.KennedySpaceCenter.com](#). Local accommodations are also available.

The 2009 inductees were selected by a committee of current Hall of Fame astronauts, former NASA officials and flight directors, historians, journalists and other space authorities. The process is administered by the [Astronaut Scholarship Foundation](#), a non-profit organization established in 1984 to support students seeking degrees in science and technology. To be eligible, an astronaut must have made his or her first flight at least 17 years before the induction year and must be retired at least five years from NASA's astronaut corps. Candidates must be a U.S. citizen, NASA-trained, commander, pilot or mission specialist and must have orbited the Earth at least once. Committee members receiving ballots evaluate not only an individual's flight accomplishments but also how he or she contributed to the success and future success of the U.S. Space Program in post-flight assignments.

About Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex

Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex opens at 9 a.m. Closing times vary by season. The Visitor Complex is open daily except December 25 and certain launch days. Admission includes the new *Shuttle Launch Experience*, Kennedy Space Center Tour, 3D IMAX® space films, Astronaut Encounter, all exhibits, and the *U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame®*, featuring historic spacecraft, simulator rides and the world's largest collection of personal astronaut memorabilia. The U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame is located at State Road 405 at Vector Space Road in Titusville. Admission is \$38 + tax for adults and \$28 + tax for children ages 3-11. The Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex Commander's Club Annual Pass is \$50 + tax for adults and \$40 + tax for children ages 3-11. For more information, call 321-449-4444 or visit [www.KennedySpaceCenter.com](#). Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex is operated by DNC Parks & Resorts at KSC, Inc., a division of Delaware North Companies, one of the world's leading hospitality and food service providers.

About the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation

The Astronaut Scholarship Foundation participated in creating a venue where space travelers could be remembered – the *U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame*, which opened in 1990. Since 2002, Delaware North Companies Parks & Resorts at KSC, Inc., operators of Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex for NASA, has operated the *U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame*. Today, the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation serves as a consultant for the Hall of Fame, which includes supervising the selection of astronauts for

enshrinement into the Hall. The Foundation's mission is to aid the United States in retaining its world leadership in science and technology by providing scholarships to exceptional college students pursuing these degrees. To date, the foundation has awarded more than \$2.5 million to deserving students. For more information log on to www.AstronautScholarship.org or call 321-455-7012.

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