

2/4/2008



International Space Station project: 2008 update #9

Space news: And the wait goes on..... we hope to have some news after the holidays about the date of the linkup with the International Space Station. Until then, preparations are continuing to plan for St Thomas' date with an astronaut.

Following last week's call for assistance from the project team, we now have a cameraman and photographer who have volunteered their time and effort to help record this very exciting event. Our camera man is Santiago and Santo will be official event photographer. Thanks to both of you for your support. More requests for mums and dads to get involved are expected in the coming weeks.

Upcoming events:

- 17 & 18 April - Starry Night Planetarium visit to school to help teach our students more about the moon, the planets and the night sky. Check out <http://www.starrynight.com.au/> .
- 17 April - Astronomy night for students and parents.

School holiday fun:

If you have any spare time during the holidays, here's some interesting and child friendly websites to visit for anyone wanting to learn more about space and the International Space Station:

NASA for students: www.nasa.gov/audience/forstudents/k-4/index.html

Space Station Kids: <http://iss.jaxa.jp/kids/en/station/03.html>

Space Station Project competitions:

1. **Questions for the astronauts** - Congratulations and well done to all students from the school who submitted an entry to be in the running to talk to an astronaut on the International Space Station. This competition closed last Friday, March 28. More than 200 entries were received from students in Years 3 to 7. An amazing and very interesting range of questions was submitted across all year levels, showing just how smart AND inquisitive St Thomas students are. **How the winning 10 questions are selected:** With so many great questions our judges had a very difficult job ahead of them. The full list of questions was compiled and submitted for anonymous review by a panel made up of two teachers from the school and two independent judges not associated with the school. (i.e. Judges only knew the year level of the child submitting the question and could not identify the child by whom it had been submitted). Entries were considered according to age/year level and to reflect a cross-section of interest about technical information related to the International Space Station and its work in space exploration, as well as to draw on the personal experience of the astronaut nominated by NASA to talk to our school. All entries were ranked according to place within their appropriate year level and each question allocated the tally given by all four judges. After some very tough deliberations, a final shortlist of 15 questions ranked highest by the panel and 5 backup questions were submitted late Tuesday night for final review and selection which will be made by NASA. The names of the lucky students to take part in the

radio linkup will be announced as soon as this information is received back by the project team.

2. *Space Trivia zooms over to make way for a Space Art Show – open to all students from Prep to Year 7.*

There is no Space Trivia Question this week but all students (Prep to Year 7) still have a chance to be in the running to win a great prize as well as keep busy during the holidays by taking part in the Space Art Show. To enter, all you have to do is create an “Out of This World” drawing or painting. Space tip: you might like to include a design of your own rocket or the space station, or include a star-studded scene of planets, moons, stars or a distant galaxy.....even robots or aliens. It can be as simple or full of art as you like. There are two prizes again 1) for Prep to Year 3 and 2) for Years 4 - 7. All artwork should be posted in the entry box near the children’s entrance to the office by the first Tuesday back after the holidays. Entries will be judged by a panel of teachers. All art work will be displayed in the hall in time for the first assembly of Term 2. Have fun and good luck!

This week’s Space Trivia competition winners:

Congratulations to (removed for privacy reasons) in (Year XXX) for knowing that the International Space Station travels at 27 000kmh . Your prize is a space origami pack. As the winner of the Bonus Prize (Prep to Year 2), (removed for privacy reasons) (Yr XX) wins an alien toy pack. XXX correctly named Earth as one planet in our solar system.

What is the St Thomas Space Station Project? Last year St Thomas successfully applied to NASA to host a direct radio link between the school and an astronaut on the International Space Station. This contact is part of a project called “ARISS” which is supported by amateur radio operators and NASA’s education division. Updates on the project will continue to be provided in Thomataalk in the lead up to this exciting event. For further information contact Morry Clark Ph: 3901 4634 or email morryclark@optusnet.com.au. Messages can also be left at the school office in an envelope marked Attn: international Space Station Project team.