



What's happening with ARISS? International Space Station project: 2008 update #17

Final notification regarding St Thomas' contact with the ISS and our astronaut Colonel Mike Fincke is expected late this week. Prayers and fingers crossed our proposed date for the week commencing 3rd November is confirmed so the final week's preparations can be ramped up. Parents who'd like to volunteer to help out with activities on the night are asked to contact Morry, phone 3901 4634 or email morryclark@optusnet.com.au. The jobs list includes helping set up the hall and outdoor areas and catering. Don't be shy - if you are able to help we'd love to hear from you.

Other ARISS project news:

All going well our antenna array will be assembled this week. A cherry picker will be used to get the equipment above the hall/church. We are currently receiving slow scan TV images from the ISS – these will be posted on the ARISS web site shortly.

Training sessions were held again in the library this morning for the students and reserve team who will talk to Col Fincke. These practice runs start at 8am and will run for the next two Wednesdays in the lead-up to the ISS event. Only these students are asked to attend. The ARISS project team and our amateur radio support crew have also been practicing the technical work involved with calling the ISS. With an ultimate goal to secure audio reception for the school's contact, the tweaking continues and has meant some interrupted night's sleep for those involved. The ARISS Project link to the school website is due to go live shortly.

Who is our astronaut? We have been advised that Colonel Mike Fincke has been assigned as St Thomas' astronaut. Col Fincke will command the Expedition 18 mission and left for the ISS earlier this week in a Soyoz rocket. He previously served as a flight engineer and NASA Space Station science officer on Expedition 9 in 2004. During his first stay at the ISS he performed four spacewalks. He is also a colonel in the U.S. Air Force. More information about Col Fincke is available at www.jsc.nasa.gov/Bios/htmlbios/fincke.html

Space Trivia Competition Competition – open to all students Prep - Year 7. – Keep those entries coming in for the Space Trivia Competition. Congratulations to Georgia Year 4J, winner of this week's competition for knowing that millionaire Richard Garriot paid \$30 million for an out of this world holiday to the ISS. Georgia will be presented with her prize at assembly this week.

This weeks question:

Prep to Year 3

How far is it to space from the ground?

Years 4 to 7

Name three planets that are visible in tonight's sky (at approximately 6pm)?

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 morry@tekinnovations.com.au. Messages can also be left at the school office in an envelope marked Attn: international Space Station Project team.