

# Meeting Minutes – Mars Society

**July 25<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM Challenger Center, Alexandria, VA**

## 1. Joe Webster: Draft of Briefing Book

- Preliminary Draft was handed around for review.
- The Draft is currently being reviewed by the National Group and the Local DC Board for presentation at the National Convention in August (<http://www.marssociety.org/convention/2000/>).
- Joe received information from the Johnson Space Center regarding Reference Mission 5.0, which is a potential Mars mission:
  - October, 2000 release date of Mission details
  - Includes inflatable surface landers

## 2. Joe Webster: Congressional Letters

- Joe handed out copies of letters to be signed and sent to members of Congress. A copy of this letter has been distributed to the members of the DC Chapter E-Groups bulletin board listing. A copy of the letter will also be posted on the DC Chapter's web site, <http://chapters.marssociety.org/usa/dc>.
- Keep in mind that Congressional Staff does look at letters, especially if they are hand-written and not a form letter. Send one to each Senator and one to your Representative.
- If you do not know your Representative or Senators for your location, here are a couple of web sites: <http://www.house.gov> for Representatives, and <http://www.senate.gov> for Senators.

## 3. Tom Hill/Ron Hess: Life on Mars Debate

- Dr. Gilbert V. Levin, President and CEO of Biospherics Incorporated and Principal Investigator for the Viking Labeled Release Life Detection Experiment. (See <http://www.biospherics.com/Mars/gvl.htm>.) The DC Chapter of the Mars Society mentioned that he would be speaking at the August 29<sup>th</sup> meeting. There was a lot of controversies over this because there are those who strongly oppose Dr. Levin's views. Currently, we are searching for someone to represent the opposing viewpoint. If someone was found, two options were presented to those who attended the meeting:
  - First Option would be a One Meeting approach. Materials from both sides would be distributed to everyone prior to the meeting so that everyone understood the topics well enough to make a decision. Then the two views would go to a debate. If we chose this option, then it would be possible that this debate would happen two to three months from now to ensure that the general chapter would have a solid understanding of the issues to make a rational decision. Press coverage would focus on this one meeting.
  - Section Option would be a Three Meeting approach. Dr. Levin would speak first to present his views, then whoever represented the opposing view would speak the following month, and then the debate on the third month. It was discussed further that the focus on the three sessions would be on the final debate, where the majority of press coverage would occur.

- It was decided that the Three Meeting approach would work best, if we were to find someone to represent the opposing viewpoint. The location would probably be at the auditorium of the Challenger Center. As of this posting, our search for an appropriate individual to represent the opposing view is still underway. We will inform the general membership as soon as we find someone.

#### 4. Tom Hill: Presentation Board Update

- The frame of the board has been made; panels are to be added and fabric to cover the panels.
- The frame is made of PVC piping with wood supports and hinged so that it can fold over itself into a compact form.
- Suggestions were made by those attending the meeting as to how to attach panels and to attach the fabric covering.

#### 5. Tom Hill: Mars Habitat – Putting the Pieces Together

- Tom made a presentation of the schematic design of a space habitat that would occupy Mars. This habitat can occupy up to 6 people, and is intended to be left on the planet to be used in the future.
- A copy of the presentation is available on the DC Chapter's web site.
- Discussion from the attendees regarding the habitat followed.

#### 6. Donnie Lowther, National Space Society: Night at the Movies

- Friday, August 4<sup>th</sup> the National Space Society will have a table at the opening of *Space Cowboys* (<http://www.spacecowboys.net> ). The movie stars Clint Eastwood, Donald Sutherland, Tommie Lee Jones, and many others.
- They will be distributing literature, space-oriented lithographs, and have models of spaceships available.
- Looking for volunteers to help promote the National Space Society and the Mars Society. The location of the theater and the time is yet to be determined; however it looks probable that the Hoyts Cineplex at Potomac Yards will be used. Contact Donnie Lowther, [ok11@erols.com](mailto:ok11@erols.com) for more information.
- If all goes well, then they will do the same for *Red Planet*, (<http://movies.warnerbros.com/redplanet/index.html>) scheduled to be released in the fall of this year.

#### 7. David Cawood: Tethers video by Dr. Robert Forward

- Dr. Forward made a presentation discussing the uses of tether systems to transport materials between the earth and the moon, and also between the earth and mars.
- The papers used to explain these principals can be found at <http://www.tethers.com> .

End Meeting.

#### **Next meeting:**

**August 29<sup>th</sup> 7:00 PM Challenger Center, 1250 N. Pitt Street, Alexandria, VA.**