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Second Quarter

# PSF NEWS

Planetary Studies Foundation

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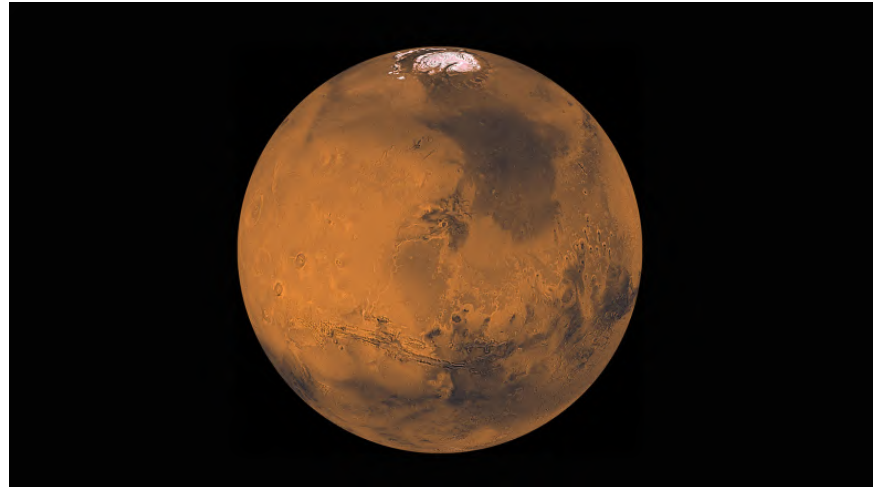
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## GET READY FOR MARS

This June and July, Earth is catching up with Mars in an encounter that will culminate in the closest approach between the two planets in the last 15 years.

In our nighttime sky, Mars will appear brightest from July 27-30 with its closest approach to Earth on July 31<sup>st</sup>. That is the point in Mars' orbit when it comes closest to Earth. At that position, Mars will be at a distance of 35.8 million miles (57.6 million kilometers).

Fifteen years ago, on August 28, 2003 the Planetary Studies Foundation hosted a Mars informational program and observing session at the Karl G. Henize Astronomical Observatory at Harper College in Palatine, Illinois. The featured speaker was noted Mars expert Dr. William Hartmann who fascinated the audience with his exciting presentation and latest photos of the surface features of Mars.

Outside in the parking area near the observatory, over 1,500 people gazed up into the sky and marveled at the brilliant red point of light that was Mars. Not the full moon-sized orb that was proclaimed over the internet! Astronomers estimated that Earth and Mars were just 55,758,118 kilometers (34,649,589 miles) apart. That was the closest the two planets had come to each other in almost 60,000 years. It was incredible.

That record will stand until August 28, 2287 at which point the planets will be an estimated 55,688,405 km (34,603,170.6 miles) from each other. That's more than 46,000 miles closer than in 2003. **We encourage PSF members to mark your calendars for August 28, 2287 for the 284<sup>th</sup> Mars Reunion Celebration and join us at the Karl**

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The second quarter of this year seems to have passed by so quickly that I find it hard to believe that we are rapidly approaching Mid-Summer's Day. Both the 1876 Banwarth House and Earth & Space Science museums have seen an increase in attendance as compared to last year's numbers. The most dramatic rise in numbers comes from our out-of-state visitors. One reason for this lies in the fact that various national travel groups encourage their members to visit us based on positive reviews posted on our websites. A second reason can be attributed to good old "word of mouth" from previous visitors. This accounts for many of our visitors from the Tri-State region of Illinois-Iowa-Wisconsin. Several of our Wisconsin guests have mentioned that they heard about us from listening to Kim and Frank Carmichael's *Happenings* Q & A radio programs on Kenosha's WLIP 1050 AM. The staff at both museums appreciate seeing the excitement expressed by our visitors. We often hear comments like "Where else can we actually touch a meteorite?". At the Banwarth House, we hear how exciting it is to step back into 19th century lifestyle and trying on period clothing. I am also very pleased to report that the PSF will be conducting four very exciting Children's Summer Science Programs this June and July. All considered, we are looking forward to a very rewarding summer season.



As I mentioned in the Winter issue of *PSF News*, 2018 will be the year that brings us to the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of your Planetary Studies Foundation (PSF). I have been giving our past history a great deal of thought, and I am very proud of all we have accomplished over these last thirty years. From our meteorite research to Antarctic exploration, we have achieved international recognition, but we have never forgotten our initial goal of supporting science education at all levels. We have accomplished this by helping build the Karl G. Henize Astronomical Observatory at Harper College in Palatine, Illinois and the Doug Firebaugh Astronomical Observatory in Freeport, Illinois. Then there is the StarLab portable planetarium. Since 1992 over 35,000 people have sat inside StarLab's dome and enjoyed seeing stars and hearing Diane Szipiera's entertaining stories of constellation mythology. All considered, PSF has truly made a significant contribution to science education and it will continue to do so well into the future.

A significant component of the PSF has always been our close relationship with NASA astronauts. Given our emphasis on planetary science and meteorite studies, it seemed logical that we would focus on lunar exploration and the United States Apollo Program. Even before there was an "official" PSF, its founders helped Harper College build an astronomical observatory. This began by co-sponsoring a November 1988 fundraising event featuring Apollo 17 astronaut and geologist Dr. Harrison H. Schmitt. It was after this event that Dr. Schmitt agreed to become PSF's first "celebrity" Associate Board member. His acceptance also gave PSF a certain degree of legitimacy to our young organization. By 1991, PSF had made the building of a planetarium/science facility at Harper College its primary goal. To kick-off this project a Gala featuring Apollo 12 astronaut Alan Bean was planned for November 1991 to raise funds. It was a tremendous success and led to a more than twenty-five year friendship with Alan. Personally, I was very sad to hear of his May passing and he will be missed.

As we approach the third quarter of this year we will be celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Apollo 7 and Apollo 8 missions. In October 1968, Apollo 7 spent 14 days in earth-orbit and proved that the Apollo Command Module was flight-worthy. PSF member and astronaut, Walt Cunningham, was part of that crew and based on their success, Apollo 8 would be sent to the Moon. It launched on December 21, 1968 carrying PSF members James Lovell and Bill Anders on their way to their historic Christmas Eve television broadcast live from orbit around the Moon. Apollo 8 gave humanity the historic "Earthrise" photo of Earth rising above the stark lunar landscape. Since 1991, there have been several astronauts who have contributed in many different ways to PSF's success. To highlight two in particular are Charlie Duke and Owen Garriott. In 2009, at PSF's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, Charlie Duke presented us with a small Illinois state flag that was carried to the Moon on the Apollo 16 mission. In 1997, it was Owen Garriott that first suggested and then later participated in PSF's first Antarctic expedition to search for meteorites in 1998. That success led to a second expedition in 2000 with Jim Lovell joining in, and a third in 2002 with Owen's son, Richard Garriott, finding several meteorites. PSF is truly grateful for its close relationship with the many astronauts who have participated in our events and given their support over the last thirty years. Time is taking its toll on the lives of our heroic astronauts, and PSF will remain dedicated to preserving the memory of their achievements and promoting future space exploration. Have a great summer!

***Paul P. Szipiera***

# DONORS' SPOTLIGHT

## GENERAL OPERATIONS –THROUGH JUNE 15<sup>th</sup>

General Operations

Amazon Smile Foundation

Marilyn Quas

Summer Children's Science Programs

Carleton B. Moore

Diane & Paul Sipiera

Doug Firebaugh Astronomical Observatory

Thomas Dunmore

# MEMBERS' CORNER

## **Contributing Membership—Renewing**

David and Jennifer Kahn

Michael Zolensky

## **Supporting Membership—Renewing**

Candice Kohl

Bill & Mary Sue Coates

## **Family Membership—Renewing**

Leo and Karen Baran

Randy Rice & Rebecca Shriver

Dan & Pam Tindell

## **Individual Membership—Renewing**

Tom Dunmore

Nancy Heggam

Steve Hoyer

George Johnson

Kathryn Kowalski

Marilyn Quas

Jan Susner

# 2018 ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

Your vote matters! Included with your copy of the newsletter is a ballot to cast your vote for this year's election of Directors. If you are unable to attend this year's Annual Members Meeting on Saturday, August 25<sup>th</sup>. You can send in your vote electronically (preferred) or via standard mail.

**JOSEPH AUER** — Joe serves as Chairman of the Board of the Foundation. He brings a unique blend of senior level experience in industry, government, academia and not-for-profit organizations to the Foundation. Joe is one of the PSF's longest members and has always taken a great interest in its mission to advance science education.

**PATRICIA TIERNEY** — Pat serves as Vice President of the Elizabeth Historical Society and the Elizabeth Area Chamber of Commerce in Elizabeth, IL. The majority of her career was spent working for United Airlines as a router for 28 years. With her close proximity to the PSF headquarters and museums, Pat is an extremely active member and enjoys her level of involvement.

**HERBERT WINDOLF** — Herb serves as Director-at-Large and is Vice President Emeritus to the PSF. He has been affiliated in various positions with small German machine tool manufacturer since 1964 in positions ranging from Technical Operations Manager, to Vice President of the American sister company, today still being importer of their products to North America. In addition to supporting the PSF in a multitude of ways, he has really enjoyed the interesting people he has met through the organization.

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# ADOPT-A-METEORITE PROGRAM

Many years ago the Planetary Studies Foundation instituted an Adopt-A-Meteorite program in order to support its ongoing meteorite research. Through this program an individual, family, or business can become the sponsor of a specific meteorite from our collection or dedicate one to a special person. Once a particular meteorite is adopted it will be displayed in an appropriate PSF meteorite exhibit along with a descriptive placard identifying its sponsor:

## IN HONOR AND MEMORY OF LOREN MEDLEY

A cut and polished slice of the Sikhote-Alin Iron Meteorite  
has been placed on display at the PSF  
Earth & Space Science Museum  
in Elizabeth, Illinois

This meteorite was adopted by a close and personal friend of Loren Medley, who asks to remain anonymous, and describes him as a brilliant, handsome, and hilarious person. Loren obtained a degree in biology from New Mexico State University and loved the nighttime New Mexico skies. His career then took a different path as he chose to teach English in China where he did so for about 8 years. He became fluent in Mandarin and was liked and respected by his students. Sadly, he passed away on June 20, 2017 at the age of 37. The sponsor of this adoption chose a meteorite as the best way to remember Loren based on a mutual fireball sighting back in 2001. As many people do, "they wished upon a falling star" for happiness and continued friendship. Like the brief moment that a "shooting star" appears in the sky, the sponsor describes Loren's life as just like a fireball's appearance, "bright and way too short". For additional information, please contact Diane Sipierya at [dsipierya@planets.org](mailto:dsipierya@planets.org) or 815.858.2014.

# 2018 ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING



Saturday, August 25, 2018



1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

## 1:00 Lunch Buffet Menu

- Choice of Pork or Beef
- Includes Salad and Dinner Roll
- Choice of Potato
- Vegetables
- Coffee/Soda

**\$25.00 per person/gratuity included**

**Cash bar will be available**

**(Cancellation is non-refundable)**

## 2:00 Annual Members Meeting

Presentation: PSF State of the Union & Awards Ceremony  
Election of Board of Directors

## Join Fellow Members, Make a Difference

We really hope you can join us on August 25<sup>th</sup>! Please RSVP to Diane Sipiera at [dsipiera@planets.org](mailto:dsipiera@planets.org) or [amcplanets@gmail.com](mailto:amcplanets@gmail.com) no later than Thursday, August 16<sup>th</sup>.

PSF Member Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Choice of:    \_\_\_Pork    \_\_\_Beef    (Please contact us if you have dietary restrictions)

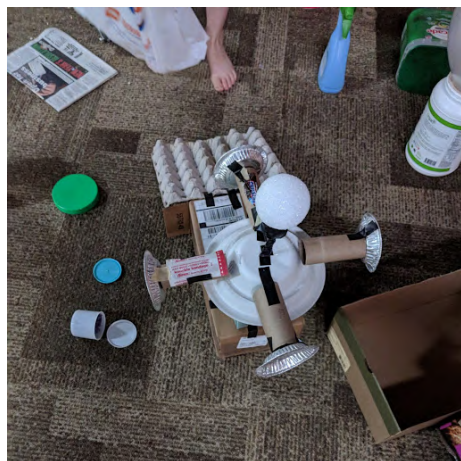
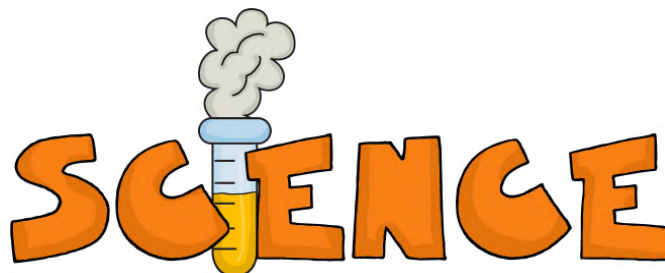
Total # Attending:    \_\_\_    Total Amount Owed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I/We cannot attend, but please accept this donation. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to the Planetary Studies Foundation and mail to:

Planetary Studies Foundation  
10 Winterwood Lane, Unit B  
Galena, IL 61036  
(815) 858-3362

# PHOTOS: SPRING HAS SPRUNG



## GET READY FOR MARS CONTINUED FROM COVER

**G. Henze Astronomical Observatory at Harper College in Palatine, Illinois.** Hopefully by then there will be a Mars Colony celebrating the same event from that planet.

In the meantime, be sure and go out and view Mars as it appears to get brighter and brighter in our nighttime over the next two months. Viewing sessions will be held at our Doug Firebaugh Astronomical Observatory, the Woodbine Bend Golf Course, and on August 11<sup>th</sup> at Horseshoe Mound in Galena, Illinois.

Come join us and enjoy Mars together. Happy viewing!

# REMEMBERING ALAN BEAN

Alan Bean, a Navy test pilot, astronaut, artist and PSF member, passed away on May 26. He was 86 years old. In a NASA statement, it was confirmed that the former astronaut had died in Houston, Texas after a short illness.

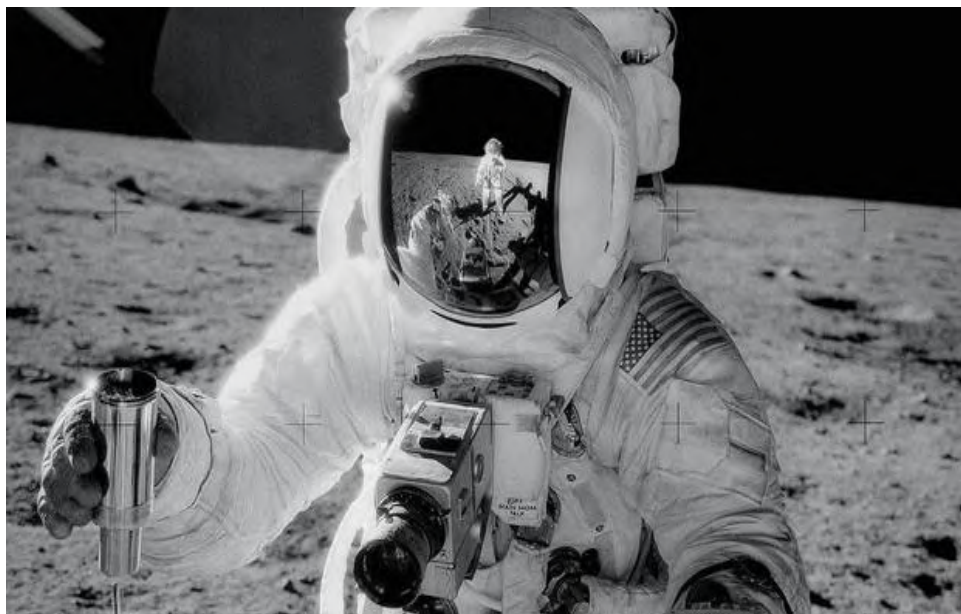
“Alan was the strongest and kindest man I ever knew,” his wife, Leslie, said in the statement. “He was the love of my life and I miss him dearly.”

Many PSF members will remember when Alan spoke at our organization’s fundraising events in the suburbs of Chicago over a decade ago. He shared stories about his experience being the fourth man to walk on the moon and showed his fun-loving side through stories about his beloved dogs.

One great story he shared with members was how he left something on the moon. He told the audience that he deliberately threw his silver astronaut lapel pin into a crater! In his great Texan drawl, Alan said, “when I look at the moon at night, [I] think about that pin up there, just as shiny as it ever was, and someday, maybe somebody will go pick it up.”

For readers that may be less familiar with Alan’s accomplishments, he was the lunar module pilot of Apollo 12, which made the second moon landing, in 1969. Alan spent 31 hours on the moon, collecting samples and deploying several experiments with mission commander Charles "Pete" Conrad Jr. They also checked up on Surveyor 3, which had landed two years earlier.

After Apollo, he commanded the second Skylab mission in 1973 — orbiting the Earth for 59 days. Alan was the commander of this Skylab 2



*Alan Bean on the surface of the moon on Nov. 14, 1969.  
Photo courtesy of NASA*

mission with two other PSF members, Jack Lousma and Owen Garriott.

Aldrin, Dave Scott, Charlie Duke and Harrison “Jack” Schmitt. ♦

In addition to being a skilled astronaut, Alan also demonstrated a special talent as an artist. He enjoyed painting space themed works of art which made them truly unique in that they were painted by someone who actually walked on the moon!

Not only were his paintings beautiful, they were precise. In his home studio, he had mocked-up model moonscapes along with small models of astronauts. With his engineering background, every detail had to be perfect. For example, in his paintings you could see shoe prints from the moon boots, core sampling tools and his geology hammer. No detail was forgotten. His paintings have been on display at the Smithsonian National Air & Space Museum.

The PSF will forever remember Alan Bean and his accomplishments in space travel. With his death, only four moonwalkers are still alive — Buzz



# MEMBERSHIP FORM

Regular Membership      \_\_\_ \$ 20.00 1 year    or \_\_\_ \$ 35.00 for 2 years  
 Family Membership      \_\_\_ \$ 35.00 1 year    or \_\_\_ \$ 60.00 for 2 years  
 Sponsoring Membership   \_\_\_ \$ 50.00 1 year    or \_\_\_ \$ 90.00 for 2 years  
 Contributing Membership \_\_\_ \$ 100.00 1 year   or \_\_\_ \$180.00 for 2 years  
 Student Membership      \_\_\_ \$ 10.00 1 year  
 Life Membership          \_\_\_ \$ 500.00  
 Please accept this donation \_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_  
 State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to  
*Planetary Studies Foundation*

Please mail the membership form  
 along with a check to:

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 10 Winterwood Lane, Unit B  
 Galena, IL 61036

**Robert A. Dittmar**  
*Financial Representative*  
 robert.dittmar@countryfinancial.com



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