The Lure of Mars

People and Mars - past, present, and future

Purpose: We will learn about how the ancients viewed Mars, what telescopes have revealed about the Red Planet, how flybys and rovers have taught us more about Mars, and explore whether there is a future for people on Mars.

Course #	19SLM
Format:	Seminar
Moderator:	Martha Hanner
Co-moderator:	Dorothy Rosenthal
Date and Time:	Wednesday, 10:00-Noon 10 weeks, starting February 27
Location:	Applewood in Amherst, The Tavern (new location)

Description: From ancient times until the present, people have been fascinated by Mars – first visible to the naked eye as the "red planet," then seen by telescopes and, more recently, by spacecraft orbiting Mars and vehicles roving the surface. We will explore these different views of Mars and address two big questions: (1) Does life exist or has it ever existed on Mars? and (2) Are human missions to Mars in our future?

Role of participants: Participants will select a topic from a list supplied by the moderators, make a presentation, and lead a discussion of their topic. Examples of possible topics are: “Mars in the Night Sky,” “The War of the Worlds,” “Close Up Views of Mars,” and “Is There Water on Mars?”

Resources: There is no required text for this seminar, but for participants who would like a well-written and up-to-date source, we recommend the National Geographic Society’s book entitled *Mars: Secrets of the Red Planet* by Patricia Daniels (2018), available from bookstores and online.

About the Moderators: Martha Hanner is an astronomer and planetary scientist who worked on various NASA missions to the planets while at California Institute of Technology/Jet Propulsion Laboratory. After retiring to Amherst she taught an honors course on planetary exploration at UMass.

Dottie Rosenthal is a biologist whose first interest in science was astronomy. She has been a member of 5CLIR for 20 years and moderated or co-moderated over two dozen seminars.

Maximum number of participants: 18

Auditors accepted: yes, up to 2