



The public is invited to a special presentation at PARI Friday, Feb. 12, concerning Mars. This artist's concept depicts a NASA Mars Exploration Rover on the surface of Mars. Current NASA missions to Mars will be part of the evening presentation, as will observation sessions using PARI telescopes. (Photo courtesy of NASA.)

Mars Program Rescheduled At PARI

The public is invited to a special presentation Friday, Feb. 12, at the Pisgah Astronomical Research Institute (PARI) concerning the Earth's intriguing planetary neighbor, Mars. The program was originally scheduled for Jan. 8 but was postponed because of inclement weather. The evening's activities will include a tour of the PARI campus and celestial observations using PARI's optical or radio telescopes.

The program is part of PARI's monthly Evening at PARI series and will feature presentations by PARI astronomers.

"The program we have planned is essentially the same as the one we had to postpone in January," said PARI Education Director Christi Whitworth, "so we encourage everyone who had registered last month to contact us again and sign up for this month's program.

"We're exploring Mars because Mars was in opposition in late January and the orbits of Earth and Mars are at their closest point of the year. Our program will feature information about Mars and an update on the current NASA missions on Mars that are sending data and photographs to Earth. Weather permitting, we will also view Mars through PARI telescopes."

The Evening at PARI program will begin at 7 p.m.

with a site tour, followed by the presentation and observing session. Each participant will also have the opportunity to have a photo taken with a PARI telescope and will receive a subscription to the PARI newsletter and a 10 percent discount on PARI merchandise.

Reservations are required and will be accepted until 3 p.m. the day of the event. Evening at PARI programs cost \$20 per adult; \$15 for seniors/military and \$10 for children under 14. For additional information or to schedule a reservation, contact PARI Education Director Christi Whitworth at (828) 862-5554 or send an email to cwhitworth@pari.edu. Reservations can also be made online at www.pari.edu. Program details and directions to the site can be found at the PARI Web site, www.pari.edu.

About PARI

The Pisgah Astronomical Research Institute (PARI) is a not-for-profit 501 (c)(3) foundation established in 1998. Located in the Pisgah Forest, the PARI campus is a dark sky location for astronomy and was selected in 1962 by NASA as the site for one of the first U.S. satellite tracking facilities. Today, the 200-acre campus houses radio and optical telescopes, earth science instruments, 30 buildings, a fulltime staff and all the infrastructure nec-

essary to support STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education and research. PARI offers educational programs at all levels, from K-12 through post-graduate research. The institute is a member of the NC Grassroots Museum

Collaborative, a partner in NC OPT-ED and is affiliated with the 16-campus University of North Carolina system through PARSEC, a UNC Center hosted at PARI. For more information about PARI and its programs, visit www.pari.edu.