Red Rover, Red Rover: Send Curiosity Right Over

Date & Time: July 27th, 2023, 7:00-8:00 pm EST
Registration (Free): https://aiaa.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_u8HF5mIS4Kpm9nB2r55KA

The AIAA New England Section is organizing an expert webinar session. Come and listen to Todd Barber on his work at NASA JPL on the Mars rover project.

Curiosity’s mission to the red planet will be covered in detail. Topics to be discussed include a bit on the history of Mars rovers at JPL, the scientific motivation for Curiosity, and the preparations for launch two days after Thanksgiving in 2011. The science suite on board this one-ton mega rover will be presented, as well as the engineering challenges involved in getting Curiosity to the launch pad, traveling 352 million miles to Mars over 8.5 months, and ‘sticking the landing’ following the so-called ‘seven minutes of terror’ on August 5th, 2012. Early mission science results will be presented as well, followed by pop-culture reaction to the rover landing.

Join us to hear from Todd Barber

Todd Barber is a JPL senior propulsion engineer, spending two decades as lead propulsion engineer on the Cassini mission to Saturn, following part-time work on the Mars Exploration Rover (MER) mission, Deep Impact mission, and the Mars Science Laboratory (MSL) mission, which landed the large rover Curiosity on the red planet on August 5th, 2012.

Mr. Barber worked on the Galileo project for over seven years and his primary responsibility was getting Galileo into Jupiter orbit on December 7, 1995. Todd also worked part-time on the Space Infra-Red Telescope Facility (SIRTF) mission and on the Stardust mission, as well as the Mars Sample Return mission and a Mars airplane study. Todd received NASA’s Exceptional Achievement Award in 1996 for his work on Galileo. In 2018, Mr. Barber was also honored to receive NASA’s Exceptional Public Service Medal for heading up Cassini’s propulsion team for nearly two decades.

Mr. Barber is a native of Wichita, Kansas, and attended MIT between 1984 and 1990, obtaining B.S. and M.S. degrees in aerospace engineering, with a humanities concentration in music. He is also a composer of church choral music, with two pieces published to date. His hobbies include singing charitably and professionally, playing the piano, snagging degree confluences (exact integer latitude/longitude intersections), visiting all the U.S. tri-state corners and national parks, playing basketball (though it’s been a while), and amateur astronomy.