

## **The Mars Report May 24, 2018**

### **InSight**

NASA's InSight lander launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base on May 5, 2018. InSight is the first interplanetary mission to launch from the West Coast. The spacecraft will reach Mars on November 26, 2018 and begin its study of the Red Planet's interior.

### **MarCO**

Two CubeSats, called Mars Cube One or MarCO, rode along with InSight. The first image from one of the CubeSats shows its unfolded high-gain antenna and the Earth and its Moon. They have already gone farther than any CubeSats have gone before. If they make it to Mars, they'll attempt to transmit data from InSight as it lands.

### **Mars 2020 Helicopter**

NASA's Mars 2020 mission will carry a stowaway - a small, autonomous helicopter. Designing a helicopter for Mars' thin atmosphere was a significant engineering challenge, but recent testing in a vacuum chamber showed the impossible had become possible. It weighs just under 4 pounds (1.8 kilograms) and has counter-rotating blades that move 10 times the rate of helicopters on Earth.

### **Curiosity Rover**

NASA's Curiosity rover drilled through Mars' surface to produce the first rock sample in over a year. Engineers have been working to restore the rover's drill since December 2016. Using a new percussive drilling technique Curiosity bored a hole about 2 inches deep. Now engineers will work on getting the samples from the drill bit to the two laboratories inside the rover.

For more information on all our Mars missions:

<https://mars.nasa.gov>