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Author: Douglas Horne/ARRB Composed: 06.15 AM Today Subject: Space Stuff-A Serious Muse Category: 1.  
Tonight, on the Discovery Channel at 9:00 P.M., the new documentary "Hubble: Secrets from Space," will be aired for only the second time. It is an outstanding documentary because of its stunning color reproductions of the best Hubble photographs yet taken, particularly at the very beginning and end of the show. It's narrated by Martin Sheen, a man with true Kennedy and liberal Democratic credentials, having superbly portrayed "The Man" in the 1983 miniseries, and having proudly been arrested along with Carl Sagan and Anne Druyan at Yucca Flats in Nevada protesting Nuclear underground tests in the 1980s. This is far superior to most Discovery channel mediocrity. The show actually gets several normally dry, boring academic-and-astronaut types to wax eloquently upon the excitement of astronomy and cosmology. As astronaut Story Musgrave (a man who some suspect is probably an "alien" himself) put it, Hubble is a very potent emotional symbol of man's desire to understand the universe around him, and his place in it. This show, unlike most astronomy documentaries, has real emotional impact. This only airs about once a quarter, so you space buffs and real Americans, don't miss it. This one is worth recording.2. On Friday, July 4, at 10:30 A.M., if all goes well, CNN will begin relaying live pictures from Mars, providing the "controlled crash" of the "Pathfinder" spacecraft and its "Soujourner" rover is successful. The spacecraft will not even go into orbit around Mars--it will plow directly into the atmosphere, and the spacecraft will "crash" as planned, bouncing along the Martian surface on its inflatable Kevlar airbags, until it comes to a stop. Then the Pathfinder's air bags will deflate, its solar panels will open up like a flower, and the Soujourner rover will emerge, drive around using its artificial intelligence, send back "live" pictures, and spectroscopically examine rocks. This is the first in a series of "cheap" missions which will be launched over the next ten years to test new technologies and increase our knowledge of the Red Planet preparatory to sending humans. The new technologies tested here are the Kevlar airbag landing system, and the artificial intelligence which will drive the rover. NASA has taken a bit of a PR risk by timing the landing to take place on July 4th; the last time they took such a high-visibility risk with an unmanned probe was when they landed Viking 1 on Mars on July 20, 1976 (the anniversary of the Apollo 11 Moon landing). If it works, you're a hero; if it doesn't, you're a bum. (The Kevlar "landing" system is much heavier than originally planned, since the bags had to be made 4 times thicker than originally planned to avoid rupturing during landing tests; as a result, this system will not be used during any more of the near-future unmanned probes to Mars, because it is too heavy for the smaller, less expensive boosters planned for use during the next ten years.)3. Mars Global Surveyor, launched before Pathfinder, arrives a little bit later, commences many complex aerobraking orbital  
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