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## **Smithsonian Night program Aug. 18 to focus on Training to Walk in Space**

PIERRE, S.D. – The Museum of the South Dakota State Historical Society at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre is hosting a Smithsonian Night program Tuesday, Aug. 18. The featured video program at 7 p.m. CDT is entitled, “Training Underwater for Walking in Space” from the National Air & Space Museum.

Training astronauts underwater in gigantic swimming pools has become absolutely critical to EVA (extra-vehicular activity), or walking in space. No other technique for simulating zero-gravity is available for extended periods of time. In this program, senior curator Michael Neufeld uses illustrations to discuss how “neutral buoyancy” training was effectively invented by a small company outside Baltimore in the mid-1960s, then adopted by NASA to solve its EVA problems during the Gemini program. Astronauts at the Neutral Buoyancy Lab at the Johnson Space Center are also featured in the program discussing their experiences with neutral buoyancy training.

“We are excited to present this fascinating program as part of our Smithsonian Night series,” said Jay Smith, museum director for the State Historical Society. “Astronaut training is a topic of interest for kids and families alike, so I hope that many visitors will take advantage of the offer to come out on Tuesday night and visit the museum as well as to attend the program from the National Air & Space Museum.”

On Smithsonian Night, the museum and Heritage Store at the Cultural Heritage Center will be open from 9 a.m.-8 p.m., giving visitors additional time in the early evening to visit the facility. There will be no fee to view the program, but standard admission fees will apply for visitors wanting to go into the museum galleries.

The South Dakota State Historical Society became a Smithsonian Affiliate in January 2013 and is the only affiliate in South Dakota.

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### ***About the South Dakota State Historical Society***

*The South Dakota State Historical Society is a division of the Department of Education. The State Historical Society, an Affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, is headquartered at the South Dakota Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. The center houses the society’s world-class museum, the archives, and the historic preservation, publishing and administrative/development offices. Call (605) 773-3458 or visit [www.history.sd.gov](http://www.history.sd.gov) for more information. The society also has an archaeology office in Rapid City; call (605) 394-1936 for more information.*

### ***About Smithsonian Affiliations***

*Established in 1996, Smithsonian Affiliations is a national outreach program that develops long-term collaborative partnerships with museums, educational and cultural organizations to enrich communities with Smithsonian resources. The long-term goal of Smithsonian Affiliations is to facilitate a two-way relationship among Affiliate organizations and the Smithsonian Institution to increase discovery and inspire lifelong learning in communities across America. More information about the Smithsonian Affiliations program and Affiliate activity is available at <https://affiliations.si.edu>.*