



September, 2009

## Imagine *Planet Trek*

*Planet Trek* is a proposed permanent scale model of the Sun and its retinue, designed for Pasadena by world-class artists Jud Fine, Barbara McCarren, and Ned Kahn, working as a team. Accurate, handsome, and robust to endure the 21st Century, it honors Pasadena's celebrated history in science, in education, and in the arts. Read on, and find out how we're hoping to make *Planet Trek* a reality.

My name is Dave Doody. I hope to run into you here at *Stars Over Paseo*. My day job is flight operations on the *Cassini-Huygens Program* at JPL, and by night I teach *Basics of Interplanetary Flight*, one of many public programs at Art Center College of Design. I also volunteer some time with *The Planetary Society*. They're an internationally active non-profit organization founded here in Pasadena by Carl Sagan, Lou Friedman, and Bruce Murray. *Planet Trek* is one of their many space related projects (see [planetary.org](http://planetary.org) for more). You might agree it's an exciting, and very positive, endeavor. More than entertainment, *Planet Trek* brings to the workaday mind-set an important idea: together, we all depend on an exceedingly rare and fragile sphere orbiting a star amid the depths of interstellar space. Such a perspective will have to guide many important decisions as this new century unfolds.

Welcome to *Planet Trek*. Ten interrelated and equally compelling sculpture sites are planned to span Pasadena at scale distances, making for a wonderful tour via bicycle, on foot, by school bus, or in the family car. *Planet Trek's* design has matured over several years. It is now ready to set in place. Imagine...

Out shopping, you spy a compelling object. Walk closer, and find a massive, solid glass sphere thirty-two inches in diameter. Its stainless pedestal parallels our planet's tilt. You touch the sphere. It moves, but only counter-clockwise. Bronze continents appear as they were a hundred million years ago, after the breakup of Pangea. As if to invoke still more questions, and answers, from visitors of all ages, there's a red core visible deep inside. At ground level, a brass arrow beckons you around to a concrete pedestal. Atop this information station sits a sturdy metal plate bearing a little dome, a third of an inch in diameter, its metal polished bright by countless exploring fingers. This is the real Earth's scale size and distance from the *Planet Trek* Sun a hundred yards away, where a thirty-six-inch sphere hovers high above Paseo Colorado's Central Circle. Every site has a scale-size model, and a large imaginative sculpture to draw attention to it.

Extraordinary opportunities are at hand. *Planet Trek* has gained approval city-wide, and is part of Pasadena's *Public Art Master Plan*. The design was produced and selected through worldwide juried competition, and Paseo Colorado's management has graciously offered space for some inner *Planet Trek* sites. \$200,000 is the total we're seeking to install both Sun and Earth, anchoring the project firmly in reality. Next, we'll proceed with the eight remaining sites. Pluto is included! It's an introduction to the many ice-worlds beyond Neptune.

Visit <http://PlanetTrek.planetary.org> (note, there's no www) to watch *Planet Trek's* progress. And if you know a company or an individual who might wish to help The Planetary Society seize this wonderful opportunity, please get in touch.

Thanks for your interest.

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Planet Trek's list of endorsers includes: Bill Bogaard, Mayor of Pasadena; Adam B. Schiff, Member of U.S. Congress, 27<sup>th</sup> District, California; Dr. Charles Elachi, Director, JPL; Dr. Jean-Lou Chameau, President, Caltech; Dr. Frank L. Ellsworth, Interim president, Art Center College of Design, President, The Ellsworth Collection; Jay Belloli, Gallery Director, Armory Center Pasadena; Ann Druyan Writer & collaborator with the late Carl Sagan; Bill Nye, The Science Guy; Ray Bradbury, writer and poet; Larry Mantle, host of KPCC's AirTalk; Larry Wilson, Public Editor, Pasadena Star News... (view the whole list on the website). Printed on Recycled Paper.