



***Solar-Go-Round***  
**New Exhibit Opens at Chabot Space & Science Center, July 16, 2005**

**—*Exhibit Complements New Digital Shows in the Planetarium*—**

OAKLAND, CA (July 7, 2005) — Featuring a gigantic shimmering image of the Sun on one wall, Chabot Space & Science Center’s newest hands-on exhibit, *Solar-Go-Round*, opens on July 16. The exhibit provides rich science content about each major body in the Solar System; explores the similarities and uniqueness among the Solar System bodies; and introduces the history of how we have gained an understanding of the Solar System. In this tour of our Solar System, visitors can discover what makes the planets go round; design a solar system and launch planets into orbit; find out how rocks from outer space can change a planet's surface and climate; hunt for signs of water on other planets; find out about the weather on Mars and Titan; and learn how telescopes and robotic spacecraft are helping us explore our planetary neighbors.

*Solar-Go-Round* is sponsored by the Chevron Corporation. “Chevron believes children of all ages will find science fun and meaningful when exposed to high quality programs that inspire creativity, learning, and practical relevance,” said Dr. Donald Paul, vice president and chief technology officer at Chevron. “We are proud to support the new *Solar-Go-Round* and hope it serves to motivate the next generation of scientists.”

The exhibit is organized into various themes that explore the inner rocky planets, the outer gaseous planets, planets in motion, the origin of the Solar System, and a focus on the planet Earth. A scale model of the Solar System provides a dramatic centerpiece to the exhibit. A 20-foot diameter Sun banner covers one wall, and the planets are suspended overhead throughout the room. Below each planet, internally illuminated graphics provide information and images of each planet.

A cluster of five interactive exhibits explores the similarities and unique physical characteristics of the planets of the Inner Solar System, while demonstrating the natural phenomena that shape the landscapes of the rocky planets: winds, storms, volcanism, flowing fluids, impact craters. Visitors can create impact craters, dust devils, and volcanic eruptions and investigate how these phenomena affect Earth and the other rocky planets. Another cluster of three interactive exhibits explores the features of the gas giant planets: clouds, turbulence, and swirling storm systems. Visitors can create the swirling patterns seen in the cloud tops of Jupiter and Saturn, and interact with billowing fog.

In the planetary motion cluster, visitors learn about principles of physics—inertia and the force of gravity—and can experiment with how these forces work. Visitors can design a solar system and set it in

motion; play with orbits in a gravity well and spinning disks on an air table; and see what a can of soda weighs on other planets. The section of the exhibit that explores the origins of the Solar System features a display of several types of meteorites, including a touchable iron meteorite. At interactive computer kiosks, visitors can find out about how scientists track Near-Earth Objects that may pose a threat to Earth; how meteorites reach Earth, and how to recognize and classify meteorites. The Earth section of the exhibit features a 6-foot diameter model of our planet and explores Earth's geology and geography.

The exhibit accompanies Chabot's new full-dome digital planetarium shows, *The Secret of the Cardboard Rocket* and *The Search for Life: Are We Alone?* In *Cardboard Rocket*, two young adventurers turn an old cardboard box into a rocket and blast off on an awesome journey to the most amazing places in the Solar System. *Search* is narrated by Harrison Ford and whisks you on an incredible journey in search of the answer to this most intriguing question. This exhilarating voyage from the depths of Earth's oceans to the outer reaches of the cosmos features breathtaking visualizations—many seen for the first time—such as a brilliant panorama of deep space, a walk on Mars and a dramatic visualization of the formation of our own fragile planet.

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Chabot Space and Science Center** is nonprofit interactive science center focusing on astronomy and the inter-relationships of all the sciences. Its observatory, planetarium, exhibits, and natural park setting are a place where a diverse population of students, teachers, and the public can imagine, understand, and learn to shape their future through science. The Center is located at 10000 Skyline Blvd. in Oakland's Joaquin Miller Park. **Summer hours, July 5 – Sept 5:** Tues – Thurs, 10 am–5pm; Friday & Saturday, 10 am–10 pm; Sunday, 11am–5 pm. Closed Mon. General admission, including free parking and a daytime planetarium show, is \$13.00 for adults, \$9.00 youth and seniors. Children under 3 are admitted free. *SonicVision* and *The Sky Tonight* planetarium shows and large format movies in the MegaDome Theater are \$8.00 adult, and \$7.00 Youth & Senior. Telescopes are open for Free Public Viewing Fridays & Saturdays from dusk – 10 pm, weather permitting. Tickets may be purchased at the door, or by calling (510) 336-7373.

**For more information, call (510) 336-7300, or visit [www.chabotspace.org](http://www.chabotspace.org)**

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