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**Museum of Nature & Science
natureandscience.org**

**MUSEUM OF NATURE & SCIENCE BREAKS GROUND
ON \$185-MILLION MUSEUM AT VICTORY PARK**

***Museum uses specially created Rube Goldberg-inspired contraption –
featuring T-Rex, geodes and planets – to break ground***

DALLAS (November 18, 2009) – After years of planning and gathering donations ranging from a couple of dollars to millions, the Museum of Nature & Science today celebrated “the ultimate dig” by breaking ground on the \$185-million museum to be constructed at Victory Park.

Approximately 500 supporters gathered at the construction site – with bulldozers ready to go – to watch as Perot family members, donors and Museum leaders turned cranks, flipped switches, pushed buttons and shoveled dirt, triggering a Rube Goldberg-inspired contraption into action. The device incorporated scientific elements of the museum (from T-Rex to geodes to planets), and ended with construction workers breaking “symbolic” ground.

While the building’s schematic designs by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Thom Mayne were on display, today’s news conference focused on the visitor experience, while also paying tribute to the hundreds who’ve donated \$127 million to date toward the expansion campaign goal of \$185 million.

“Today’s groundbreaking on the Perot Museum of Nature & Science is the next major milestone toward opening the doors to a world-class facility, one designed for visitors to experience, interact and explore, get inspired and learn about science and the world around them,” said Frank-Paul King, chairman of the Board of the Museum of Nature & Science.

In the spirit of “learning by doing,” guests were provided a bag of items that illustrated scientific principles. Members of the Museum’s education staff explained the lessons behind each item, as guests enthusiastically put pinwheels into motion (kinetic energy and wind), balanced a tiny bird on their fingertips (center of gravity), lit up the room by wearing flashing LED glasses (diodes and energy), operated a noisy “sparking” wheel (friction), and blew bubbles (surface tension and light waves).

Attending today’s ceremony were elected officials, members of the Dallas City Council, and past and present Museum leadership. Mayor Leppert, who is in China on a City of Dallas mission trip, delivered a videotaped message. Volunteers included Dallas ISD students from George Bannerman Dealey Montessori Vanguard and International Academy and the School of Science and Engineering at Yvonne A. Ewell Townview Center.

Also introduced were architect **Thom Mayne**, who was just named to President Obama’s Committee on the Arts & Humanities, and teams from the Museum’s three exhibit designers – **Paul Bernhard Exhibit Design & Consulting, Austin**; **Science Museum of Minnesota**; and **Ralph Appelbaum Associates**. Key project team members attending were representatives from Balfour Beatty, general contractor; **Talley & Associates**, landscape architect; and **Good Fulton & Farrell**, consulting architect.

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The event was financially supported by **K&L Gates LLP** and **Talley & Associates**.

Visitor Experience

Located on a 4.7-acre site at the northwest corner of Woodall Rodgers Freeway and Field Street next to downtown Dallas, the 180,000-square-foot structure will be 170 feet tall, equivalent to approximately 14 stories high. The facility's interior will include five floors of public space housing 10 permanent exhibition galleries, including a children's museum and outdoor playspace/courtyard; an expansive glass-enclosed lobby and adjacent outdoor terrace with a downtown view; state-of-the-art exhibition gallery designed to host world-class traveling exhibitions; an education wing equipped with six learning labs; a large-format, multi-media digital cinema with seating for 300; flexible-space auditorium; public café; retail store; visible exhibit workshops; and offices. Lastly, the building itself will be used as a "living" example of engineering, sustainability and technology at work.

Nicole G. Small, the Museum's president and CEO, added that the goal for this "people's museum" is to become a place that entices everyone – from young mothers with pre-schoolers to lifelong learners and scholars – to return again and again because there is always something new to see, do and learn.

The exhibits will focus on earth's life systems; physics and physiology through physical activity; ecologies past and present; being alive and human; and gems and minerals, to name a few. Exhibits will feature video; 3-D computer animation; thrilling, lifelike simulation; hands-on activities; interactive kiosks and dioramas; quizzes; tabletop landscapes; animated music videos; high-resolution, computer-generated flyovers; and more. Visitors can experience the museum in a variety of ways.

Families will be able to spend an entire afternoon outdoors – without buying a ticket – enjoying a picnic and exploring the forest and water features. Nearby workers or students may lunch in the café or relax on a park bench. Nighttime visitors may stop by for a movie, grab some dinner, or attend a lecture or reception in the lobby. The lobby area is free and open to the public; only interior exhibit areas and the theater will require paid admission.

Although there will be an enormous amount of content at the museum, visitors can choose to take their time or quickly enjoy the galleries. A classroom of students can take a whirl-wind tour of the entire building or spend an entire day in one gallery focusing on a single topic.

Museum's mission is to "inspire minds through nature and science"

Small says the Museum's mission – to inspire minds through nature and science – is reflected throughout the museum.

"Because the United States is expected to face a significant shortage of qualified science, math and technology professionals in the coming years, our ultimate goal is to create a museum that inspires children to become the next generation of scientists, physicians, engineers, mathematicians and technology pioneers," said Small.

She adds that the galleries illustrate hundreds of careers children (and adults) can pursue – from geologists, environmentalists and aerospace engineers, to sports medicine physicians and video game creators.

"Science museums *are* very important. Many Nobel Prize winners will tell you their interest began when they first fell in love with a part of the human body, dinosaurs, space or electricity (for instance) while visiting a science museum," said Small.

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Gratitude to donors

“Today’s groundbreaking is possible because of the overwhelming generosity of hundreds of donors,” said Forrest Hogle, who is spearheading the fundraising effort as Chairman of the Museum’s Leadership Committee. “Their reasons may vary, but all agree that a great city must have a great science museum.”

In May 2008, the children of Margot and H. Ross Perot made a \$50 million gift in honor of their parents.

Others giving include at the \$10 million level, **Hunt Petroleum Corporation, The Hogle Foundation & Family, T. Boone Pickens and the Rees-Jones Foundation.** Gifts of \$5 million have been made by the **Honorable and Mrs. William P. Clements, Jr. and Mr. and Mrs. Edward W. Rose, III.** **David, Emily and Catherine Corrigan** contributed \$ 2.5 million and making \$1 million gifts are **Mr. and Mrs. Louis A. Beecherl, Jr.; The Eugene McDermott Foundation; ExxonMobil Corporation; Nancy B. Hamon; The Hersh Foundation; Kathryn Hiatt Jordan; Harry W. Bass, Jr. Foundation; The Rosewood Foundation;** and the **Texas Instruments Foundation.**

To donate or learn more about the Museum of Nature & Science, please call 214-428-5555 or visit the website at natureandscience.org

About the Museum of Nature & Science

The Museum of Nature & Science – the result of a unique merger in 2006 between the Dallas Museum of Natural History, The Science Place and the Dallas Children’s Museum – is a non-profit educational organization located in Dallas’s Fair Park. In support of its mission to inspire minds through nature and science, the museum delivers exciting, engaging and innovative visitor experiences through its education, exhibition, and research and collections programming for children, students, teachers, families and life-long learners. The facility also includes the TI Founders IMAX® Theater and a cutting-edge digital planetarium. The Museum of Nature & Science is supported in part by funds from the City of Dallas Office of Cultural Affairs, the Texas Commission on the Arts and HP. The Museum of Nature & Science also is building a new \$185-million museum on a 4.7-acre site in Victory Park to complement the Fair Park facilities. To learn more about the Museum of Nature & Science, please visit natureandscience.org.

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