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Astronomy Resources

Thomas Hockey
University of Northern Iowa

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Astronomy Resources

A visual survey of all nine major planets is a standard way of beginning a series of lessons in solar-system astronomy. One of the pitfalls of such a slide program is that the different worlds of the Solar System tend to blur together in students' minds. To separate my topics, I have prepared a set of title slides. The street sign motif underscores the theme of "touring" the Solar System.

These signs were photographed in Las Cruces, New Mexico, home of planet-discoverer Clyde Tombaugh. (Ironically, Tombaugh's planet had yet to appear on a street at the time of my last visit; subdivision planners may have balked at trying to convince prospective home buyers to consider an address on Pluto Street.) Seven major-planet names appear, each with its own synonym for a thoroughfare: Mercury Lane, Venus Street, Mars Avenue, Jupiter Road, Saturn Circle, Uranus Avenue and Neptune Drive. Does anyone know of a community using a similar road-naming scheme, perhaps with the Earth and Moon included?

I have prepared a limited number of copies of this slide set for interested Iowa Science Teachers Journal subscribers. Each set contains seven mounted, 35mm, color transparencies. While quantities last, they are available free-of-charge with no restrictions placed on their use. Send a letter on school stationery together with a self-addressed, stamped envelope (at least business size) to the address below. Two first-class postage stamps are required. I will be happy to send one set per request until the sets are exhausted. Please allow several weeks for response.

Dr. Thomas Hockey
Department of Earth Science
University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0506