

## Vision For Future



Chuck

In late September 2012 I wrote some elected officials and candidates for office, including President Barack Obama and Governor Mitt Romney, seeking their personal contribution to the [Transit of Venus Time Keg](#). I asked them for their vision of the future, where they expect America to be in a century, and the roles science and the observation of nature (e.g., the transit of Venus) serve in our national interests.

Awaiting their responses, I invite all candidates of political office--people who aspire to lead--to submit their long-range vision, as outlined below:

Dear Candidate for Leadership,

I write to invite you to support education outreach in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) by sharing your vision of the future.



According to NASA figures, the nation's space agency experienced "the largest NASA event ever" during the June 5 transit of Venus (Source: NASA GSFC, June 2012). For the last time in our lives, the planet Venus was readily visible during the day as it passed directly in front of the sun.

While both political parties profess to support STEM education, no political candidates led the nation in 2012 by personally witnessing the celestial spectacle that captivated the rest of the world. Similar lackluster leadership occurred with the 2004 transit of Venus, which Google deemed the #1 Popular Event in the world for an entire month (Google Zeitgeist, June 2004). Is it any wonder some people think today's politicians are out of touch with constituents? I ask if you will challenge such prevailing cynicism and look ahead not just four years but, rather, 104 years, literally.

The Transit of Venus Time Keg ([www.transitofvenus.org/misc/360-transit-of-venus-time-keg](http://www.transitofvenus.org/misc/360-transit-of-venus-time-keg)) is a time capsule to be opened by and to motivate future generations as they prepare for the December 2117 transit of Venus. Will you please write a letter of your vision of America for the people of that era? In your view, where are we now, and where do you expect us to be in a century when the next pair of Venus transits occur? What role does science and the observation of nature (e.g., the transit of Venus) serve?

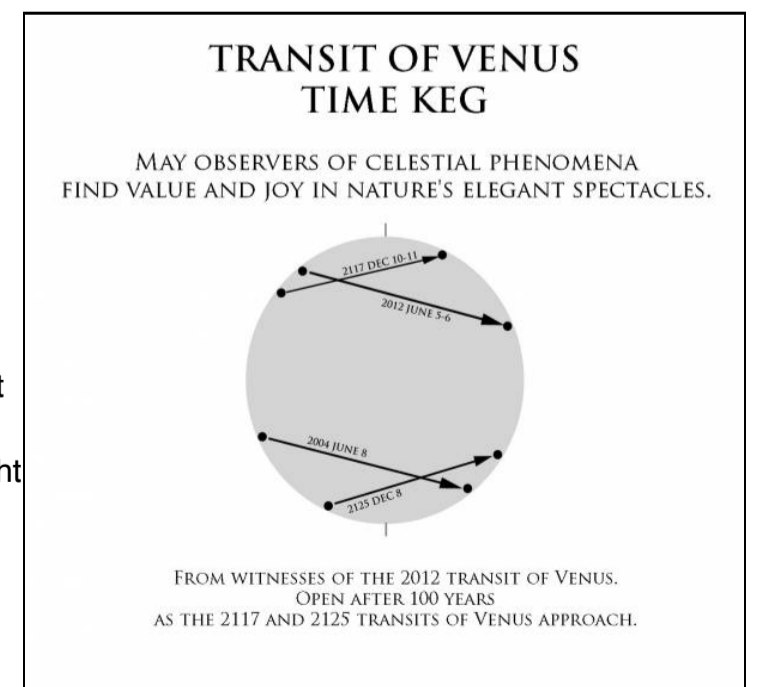
Much of the national and global outreach for the transit of Venus originated in the Midwest, where we celebrated with an educational focus (e.g., <http://transitofvenus.org/trove>). Hence, the Time Keg will be sealed at the Great Lakes Planetarium Association (GLPA) Annual Conference, October 23-26, 2012, in Pittsburgh, PA.

Please write your personal statement preferably with permanent marker (e.g., Ultra Thin Point Sharpie®) on acid-free paper and mail it to the address below by October 19, 2012. If necessary to make the deadline, you may email a digital version, though longevity of printer ink is less assured. Include instructions as to whether I may publicly air your letter in 2012 or whether you want it to remain sealed and unread until the time capsule is opened. Your call. I prefer the latter if it means your written contribution to the Transit of Venus Time Keg would have more candor and less political correctness. That is, I'd rather have the people of 2117 judge the content of your letter than the people of 2012, the latter of whom might read it through the skewed filter of election year bias.

Thank you for your timely consideration,

Chuck Bueter  
Granger, IN

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