

1982 World's Fair Thus Far The Most Successful U.S. Fair In Years

More than five million people have passed through the gates of The 1982 World's Fair thus far, making it the most successful U.S. Fair, both in popular and financial terms, since the New

York World's Fair of 1939. By comparison, the attendance for the entire run of the '74 Fair in Spokane totaled 5.2 million. The Fair's national popularity has been at-

tributed in large part to word - of - mouth enthusiasm. Exit surveys of visitors' reactions to the Fair show that 85 per cent would recommend the Fair to friends and relatives at

In spite of the turn out in Knoxville, city officials say, the major problems anticipated by the public have not materialized. There have been no traffic jams or back - ups, police report; and parking spaces are plentiful, resulting in reduced rates.

Visitor services to make booking accommodations easier and to reduce waits on exhibit lines have been stepped up by Fair management.

Scattered complaints regarding housing and reservations have been addressed and increased staffing, a new streamlined telephone reservations system and customer service division have eliminated housing problems.

Even with attendance running 35 per cent ahead of projections, there is good availability of quality rooms in and around the city, according to Property Leasing and Hotel - Motel Management, the Fair's

newly retained housing agency.

"We expected our millionth visitor at the end of May, but we hit the first million mark in the first two weeks," S.H. Roberts, Jr., President of the Fair, reports. "Our four millionth visitor arrived late in June, and earlier this month we greeted the five millionth."

"The World's Fair is obviously surpassing our wildest hopes," he claims. "We anticipated from 20 - 40,000 visitors daily during May, but between 50 - 99,000 people passed through the turnstiles daily. June projections were 40 - 60,000 daily, and we've ended up averaging 75,000. The Tour and Travel Department, expecting 250 - 300 buses a day, saw that figure reach 600 and up to 800 buses on some days."

"We've also been proud to see the number of exhibiting nations grow to twenty - seven with the recently announced participation of five eastern Caribbean nations," Roberts states.

The state of St. Christopher and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Montserrat, St. Lucia, and Antigua and Barbuda will exhibit in a 4,700 square foot pavilion opening early in August.

"Because of these fantastic crowds, we've added water fountains, benches, canopies and restrooms," Roberts says. "As the Fair progresses, it is growing and changing to accommodate the turn - out - steps like a second level of the French pavilion, expansion of the

Philippine pavilion, and more space in front of the Korean Pavilion have been taken in this regard. An additional 3.5 million dollars have been allotted since Opening Day for Fair - site improvements."

Visitors have also been on hand to greet such visiting dignitaries as Jordan's Crown Prince Hassan and Philippine First Lady Imelda Marcos, Vice Premier of Australia Douglas Anthony, and of course American leaders,

including President and Mrs. Reagan, Governor Alexander and Senator Baker of Tennessee.

Rooms in hotels, motels and a great variety of supplemental housing are plentiful -- campsites, condominiums, and Bed 'N' Breakfast arrangements in private homes.

Many hotels and motels supplied only a small portion of their total number of rooms to the Housing Bureau inventory.

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VISITS WORLD'S FAIR—Gwendolyn Roberts, with her cousins Marcia and Colette Haywood, members of the Atlanta family officially designated as the five millionth visitors to the 1982 World's Fair in Knoxville, Tennessee. The family, in Knoxville for a reunion, enjoyed a sail past the U.S. Pavilion on a Chinese solar-powered dragon boat. The Knoxville Fair, with attendance running 35 per cent ahead of projections, has proven to be the most popular U.S. World's fair in 40 years. It will remain open through October 31st.

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