

# A Dozen DeLand Merchants Collaborate for the 2014 Stetson Mansion 'Christmas Spectacular!' Nov. 15 through Jan. 15

DELAND, Fla., Dec. 1, 2014 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – A dozen local DeLand elves have contributed to the holiday celebration of “Florida’s Most Popular Attraction” this year. Trip Advisor gave the Stetson Mansion the singular designation in May. Florida’s first luxury estate and most historic home has become an over-the-top experience for the lovers of Christmas tours for the last 4 years, between Nov. 15 – Jan. 15, 2015.

Thomas Edison was a friend of Stetson. “Of course Stetson had the first Christmas tree lights,” says owner JT Thompson. “I can show you where they were plugged in!” The 1886 Mansion has taken a queue from the Victorians who started most of our modern Christmas traditions, but it has stepped it up a notch.

This year there will be a frozen room that looks like fresh snow has fallen inside the Mansion. “Four Seasons Christmas Trees flocked everything they could get their hands on to create the effect,” said owner Michael Solari.

After a guest travels through the frozen forest, they arrive at Mrs. Clause’s workroom. Almost everything you see has been made out of fabric, hand quilted by the customers and employees of the Quilt Shop of DeLand. Artistic embellishments have been provided by Somewhere in Time Antiques, Art Studio 308, Habitat for Humanity and The Old Sewing Machine Man.

“The generosity for everyone to loan the Mansion fabulous props just shows you how a community can work together,” said photographer Edson Pacheco.

“Is there any place else in Florida that pulls together like DeLand?” That is the question on the table. What makes this Christmas display so special is that it is unabashedly about Christmas. Live products enhance that homey feeling. Magnolia Company has provided fresh Magnolia garland and Jason Schley has installed authentic Bonsai’s for the Japanese Christmas surprise in the kitchen.

“Michael lived in Japan when he was 15 and I wanted to bring back some fond memories for him,” said JT Thompson. “Are we giving too much away? Not really, it is impossible to grasp what goes on here unless you see it for yourself.”

Since this is the Stetson Mansion no tour would be complete without a Stetson room. A tree with Stetson hats, buckles and boots near an autographed guitar by Johnny Cash courtesy of the Brickhouse and Byte restaurants complete the scene. Then on to the Schoolhouse dotted with festive wreaths by local

designer Linda Pelletier. Her wreaths are for sale and are a popular score for the smart set.

If you are not satiated from all the decorations in the Stetson Mansion you can sample the state's best Key Lime Pie at Kermit's Key West Key Lime Pie Shoppe, taste yummy Stetson Bourbon Balls at Sweet Things or feast on ribs at Brickhouse. You can get your fill one way or the other in DeLand!

Tours are offered 3-4 times daily from Nov. 15, 2014 to Jan. 15, 2015. \$25+tax. Free parking. Reservations Are Required for all tours at this private estate.

Info and free online booking at <http://www.StetsonMansion.com/>.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stetsonmansiontours>.

VIDEO (FOX 35 TV Orlando):

<http://www.myfoxorlando.com/video?autoStart=true&topVideoCatNo=default&clipId=9559991>.

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