

Florida's Most Popular Attraction opens the 'Stetson Mansion Christmas Spectacular' on November 15

DELAND, Fla., Oct. 17, 2014 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – The holiday season is coming up soon and if you are in need of a sure-fire way to get in the holiday spirit, plan to experience “The Stetson Mansion Christmas Spectacular.” Over-the-top designer decorations from around the world dress up Florida's largest, grandest and most historic home ever built before the 20th century. The 1886 private estate is open to the public for 8 weeks starting November 15, 2014.

Last spring, Parade Magazine and Business Week reported that Trip Advisor, the world's largest travel site, named the Stetson Mansion “Florida's most popular attraction.” It even beat Disney to win Florida's number one spot.

John B. Stetson, the maker of America's most iconic symbol, the cowboy hat, built Florida's first luxury estate in Deland, Fla., where he wintered for 20 years. The 10,000 square foot High Victorian mansion is one of America's top 300 homes and one of the first to have electricity installed by Edison, a friend of Stetson. Current owners JT Thompson and Michael Solari stumbled upon the unknown architectural treasure in 2005 and completely renovated the entire estate. Listed on the National Register, the mansion has 10,000 panes of antique glass and some of the world's most intricate three-dimensional parquet wood floors.

Decorating for the holidays has grown into collaboration. This year will showcase award-winning Orlando designers Lee James of Lee James Floral Designs and Debbie Robertson of Atmospheres Floral Decor; as well as Barb Masri of Swahrey Designed Events. Designers will enhance owner JT Thompson's flights of fancy with their own design aesthetic at what has become an unusual and lavish annual event.

“This house has a soul of beautiful mysteries. I feel overwhelmingly honored to be one of the few given the opportunity to draw back the curtains and give others a view into the heart of this home,” says Barb Masri.

This year's tour will include 20 Christmas trees, a room decorated with labor-intensive quilt items, a frozen room and a cowboy Christmas room featuring a diamond studded Stetson Diamante, the Stetson Company's most expensive hat. Five charities will benefit from a drawing for thirteen quilted tree skirts, courtesy of the Quilting Guild of the Villages, Fla.

“I cannot believe I get to share Christmas in my home with thousands of people from around the world. Isn't life amazing?” says owner JT Thompson, featured on an episode of the TV show “Growing Bolder.” His enthusiasm is contagious.

Three daily guided tours are available for \$25. Tour times: 10:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., and the 5 p.m. illumination tour.

Reservations are required with no charge at: <http://www.StetsonMansion.com/>.

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*PHOTO Caption: Stetson Mansion DeLand, Fla.

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