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Kentucky Museum holds Christmas celebration

By JACKSON FRENCH jfrench@bgdailynews.com 19 hrs ago



John Welcher makes balloon animals outside after a fire alarm cleared the Kentucky Museum.

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The sounding of a fire alarm was not enough to derail a Christmas celebration at the Kentucky Museum.

Saturday at the 12th annual Christmas in Kentucky, guests moved throughout the Kentucky Museum, taking in the exhibits, meeting Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus, making ornaments and taking in a magic show.

Around noon, the guests had to clear out of the building as the fire alarm blared. As the evacuation unfolded, many stayed close to the front door so the building could shelter them from the rain.

As they waited for the Bowling Green Fire Department to arrive and search for any signs of a fire, the Western Kentucky University TrebleMakers, a female a capella group, sang Christmas carols, effectively keeping the event going along with balloon artist John Welcher, who continued making balloon animals for the kids.

After everyone went back into the museum when the BGF D determined there was no danger, Christy Spurlock, the museum's education curator, said the museum was operating under the assumption that a child pulled the fire alarm.

"It's a common occurrence," she said. "We don't know but we're assuming because it's happened before. Little hands like to grab things."

Reached by phone later, assistant fire chief Doug Morris agreed that it appeared a child had pulled the fire alarm, noting that BGF D found no signs of a fire in the museum.

The Kentucky Museum has held Christmas in Kentucky every year since 2006, because the museum's director at the time wanted to offer a holiday event, Spurlock said.

"We sort of see this as like a gift to the community," she said.

Spurlock said she was worried that the rescheduling of the Bowling Green-Warren County Christmas Parade from Saturday to Sunday because of rain in the forecast would keep people away from the museum, but was happy with the turnout.

“I’m pleased,” she said. “I was worried with the parade being moved, people would stay home, but that doesn’t seem to have happened.”

Spurlock said she thinks the main reason for the event’s continued success is parents searching for ideas to keep their children busy.

“I think people are looking for things to do in Bowling Green with kids,” she said, adding that, though her own daughter is 22, she remembers what it’s like to constantly be on the lookout for activities children can enjoy.

“I remember being a parent and you always have your eye out for something to do with children,” she said.

In the Felts Log Cabin, where guests could get hot apple cider, Brian Becker said he comes to Christmas in Kentucky with his wife, Leyda Becker, and children Ladrian, 10, and Kalina, 8.

It’s an annual tradition for us,” he said. “I don’t know how many years we’ve been coming, but we make a point to come every year.”

Normally, they come to the event after the Christmas parade but still wanted to come out this year because of the museum’s atmosphere.

“It gets away from the consumeristic aspect of the tradition that’s everywhere else,” he said.

Robin Davis came to the museum for Christmas in Kentucky with her husband, son and grandchildren.

“I was on Facebook and it came up as an event and I read about it and it seemed like a good place to bring the kids,” she said.

Davis said she's enjoyed the event, as well as the regular exhibits in the museum, which were open to the public for free.

The evacuation only created a short break, lasting roughly 15 minutes, but the caroling that took place outside kept the celebration going, she said.

"Everyone seemed pretty kind," she said. "They were in the Christmas spirit."

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