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Alcatraz East Crime Museum Invites Graffiti Artists to Compete

Alcatraz East Crime Museum's is hosting their 1st Annual Graffiti Art Contest

PIGEON FORGE, Tennessee (April 5, 2018) – It's considered to be a crime and it has been said that graffiti is everyone's problem. It can be an eyesore that typically brings property values down and is expensive (typically to the tax payers) to clean up. In fact, the Environmental Protection Agency estimates that the national cost associated with graffiti is at least \$8 billion per year. To combat this costly problem, many cities such as Denver, New York City, Washington, D.C. have introduced organized graffiti art projects, and in some instances commissioned murals to revitalize areas and provide official reignition to artists. In Knoxville, TN, what is known as "Graffiti Alley" has been a great example of partnership between businesses, artists, and the public who now enjoy fantastic pieces of public art. Now, in a fun effort to raise awareness about positive solutions to what is legally vandalism, Alcatraz East Crime Museum will be hosting their 1st Annual Graffiti Art Contest, and they are inviting artists to participate and the public to come watch them in action.

"Graffiti is a serious issue that cities around the country deal with on a daily basis," states Janine Vaccarello, chief operating officer for Alcatraz East. "We want people to understand how costly vandalism is and raise awareness on programs that provide creative solutions."

The graffiti contest will be held at the Alcatraz East Crime Museum, located at 2757 Parkway, Pigeon Forge, on Saturday, June 2, 2018. The winning artists will have their work displayed inside the museum, helping to educate patrons on the topic. The contest

guidelines restrict the artistic themes to be suitable for a general public audience in line with the museum's law enforcement and crime history topics.

Those artists who would like to participate must submit samples to prequalify for the event date. Winners of the graffiti art contest will have their panels displayed in the museum, and cash prizes. The prizes are \$750 for first place, \$350 for second place, and \$200 for third place. Artists must be at least 18, the artwork must be a crime-related subject, and it's only open to individuals, not teams. Artists can pre-qualify online at: <https://www.alcatrazeast.com/graffiti-contest/>. In addition to a representative from the museum, the judges for the contest will include Sevier County Sheriff Ron "Hoss" Seals, Pigeon Forge Chief of Police Richard Catlett, and staff member and artist Kelly Sullivan from Arrowmont School for Arts and Crafts in Gatlinburg.

"We are excited about this event and look forward to showcasing the winning artwork," added Vaccarello. "We hope these pieces will spark conversations and influence young minds towards legal avenues which prevents future vandalism- then we have done our job!"

The museum also recently added new artifacts and interactive exhibits that give guests the ability to test their pirate skills at tying knots, share their own 9/11 experiences, and express thank-you messages to law enforcement who have impacted their lives. One of the most popular artifacts on display at the museum is the O.J. Simpson white Bronco from the infamous police chase that unfolded on television before millions of viewers.

The museum continues to add to their collection and has a star-studded panel of experts who make up the Advisory Board, including those in law enforcement, collectors, a medical examiner, crime scene investigators, and others. The board includes Jim Willett, a retired prison warden, Anthony Rivera, a combat veteran and Navy SEAL chief, and Judge Belvin Perry, Jr., who is best known for the Casey Anthony trial. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit: www.alcatrazeast.com.

About Alcatraz East

Alcatraz East is the most arresting crime museum in the United States. Guests of all ages can encounter a unique journey into the history of American crime, crime solving, and our justice system. Through interactive exhibits and original artifacts, Alcatraz East is an entertaining and educational experience for all ages - so much fun it's a crime! This family attraction is located at the entrance of The Island, located at 2757 Parkway, Pigeon Forge, TN. General admission tickets are \$14.95 for children, \$24.95 for adults. Group ticket sales are available. The museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., with the last ticket sold 60 minutes before closing. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit: www.alcatrazeast.com.

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Sources:

EPA. Establishing graffiti emissions as a nonpoint source sector.
https://www3.epa.gov/ttnchie1/conference/ei19/session7/leskys_pres.pdf