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Alcatraz East Crime Museum Shines Light on Bomb Squad with New Exhibit

PIGEON FORGE, Tennessee (June 1, 2021) – On June 11, 2021, Alcatraz East Crime Museum will open a new bomb suit exhibit, shining a light on the important work of the bomb squad. The exhibit will display a bomb suit that has been used in the field, as well as provide information about this area in law enforcement. The permanent exhibit adds to the museum’s gallery on Crime Fighting & Equipment.

“The bomb squad is a very exciting part of the crime field, so this is going to be a great exhibit to add to our collection,” states Summer Blalock, sales and marketing manager for Alcatraz East. “People will be surprised what they learn about the bomb squad and what they wear when doing such dangerous work that helps keep the community safer.”

The new exhibit will feature a complete bomb suit from the Kingsport Police Department, information about the important work the team does, and the history of the suit. The Kingsport Police Department bomb squad was established in 1993, and the suit on exhibit was in their inventory from 1995 to 2020. This suit was once used when pipe bombs were discovered inside trash cans in front of two downtown Kingsport locations: the Kingsport Justice Center and the United States Post Office. They later discovered that the pipe bombs were put there to distract from a suspected bank robbery across town.

Bomb technicians must initially complete an eight-week training program offered by Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama. Since 1971, the program has provided bomb squad training and certification to over 20,000 first responders and bomb technicians from local, state, and federal positions, preparing each of them for a wide range of threats.

“The Kingsport Police Department is extremely pleased to partner with the Alcatraz East Crime Museum in Pigeon Forge. The protective suit that we have donated for display was actually worn extensively in the field by Explosive Ordinance Technicians assigned to our Bomb Squad,” explains Dale Phipps, Kingsport chief of police. “It is our hope that this donation will help bring positive recognition to the law enforcement profession and to the dedicated men and women who honorably serve and protect their fellow citizens each and every day in East Tennessee and across the nation.”

The museum is also hosting an annual graffiti contest. Artists are invited to submit samples of their original graffiti artwork online to be entered into the contest, which will be held on November 6, 2021. The selected winners of the art contest will receive \$750 for first place, \$350 for second place, and \$200 for third place. The winning artists will also have a chance to have their artwork displayed in the museum, in addition to the cash prize. The entries will be judged by local law enforcement and art professionals. For more information or to enter the contest, visit the site at: <https://www.alcatrazeast.com/graffiti-contest/>.

Alcatraz East Crime Museum 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. Or visit the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation page at <https://www.alcatrazeast.com/temporary-exhibits/tennessee-bureau-of-investigation-2/>.

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 and \$26.95 for adults. Group ticket sales are available. Guests are encouraged to check the website prior to visiting for reduced hours as a result of COVID-19. The last ticket is sold 60 minutes before closing. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit: www.alcatrazeast.com.

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