

Glazer Children's Museum

By Karen McBride

From its humble beginnings in the Floriland Mall in 1986 to its high tech glossy waterfront home, the Children's Museum has always been a place for families to enjoy time together and explore the world through a child's eyes.

Hands-on attractions and role playing have been a key focus in planning the intriguing exhibits. The museum was named for the Glazer Family Foundation that gave a \$5 million gift to help fund the new museum. The Glazer Children's Museum with its vaulted ceilings and amazing view of the river, opened its doors to the public on September 25, 2010.

When you enter the 53,000 square foot facility, you will be greeted by the professional, friendly staff. The focus of the museum is on the very young (under 10 years old).

The children will be immediately drawn to the water table on the first floor. They can pretend to be tug boat captains and load and unload their cargo using a pulley system. Water shooters teach them that with varying degrees of pressure, the water shoots farther, and they are just fun to shoot! The remainder of the first floor consists of the Imagination Gift Shop and Tiny Bites Café, where you can find a healthy, kid-friendly assortment of salads, fruits, sandwiches, and pizza.

Move on to the second floor and you will find an airplane resembling one that Tony Jannus flew during the first commercial flight from St. Petersburg to Tampa in 1914. Children can take the controls and watch the video screen as they pilot their plane. Some of the more popular exhibits are the hospital and veterinarian center. In the hospital, you can put together a puzzle of the human muscular



Debbie Parker and her granddaughter, Larain, enjoying a day at the museum

system or hold a "stethoscope" up to an electronic board to listen to the sounds of a heart, a throat and a stomach. The veterinarian center is equipped with an x-ray machine with x-rays of various animals, adding to the authentic

feel. Kennels are lined up along the side to hold the (stuffed animal) patients, as they await their turn with the future veterinarian.

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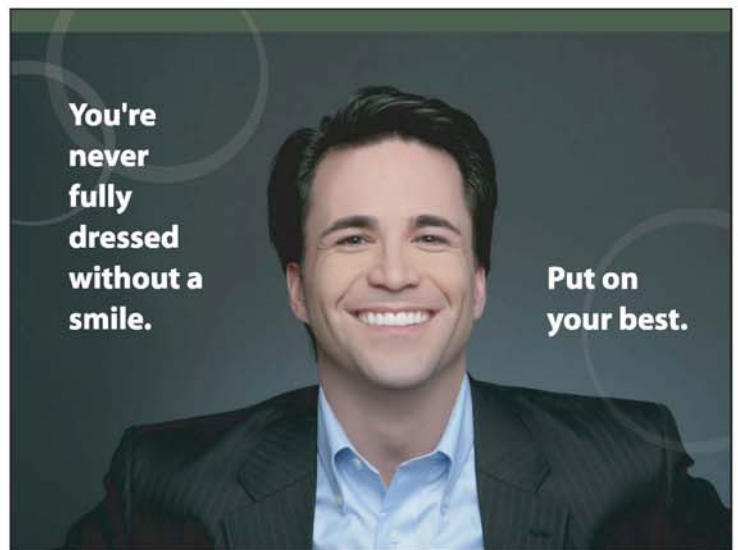
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“hands-on exploration”, this is a must. The museum knows this is a concern for parents and it is one of their top priorities.

On the day of our visit, the arts and crafts room was well equipped with supplies for the children. Debbie Parker and her granddaughter, Larain, enjoyed making the striped hats in honor of “Cat in the Hat” day. “I’m impressed with the variety of activities offered in the amount of space. There’s a lot to do here,” says Parker. “It’s great that they offer a free day each month. You don’t find many places doing that nowadays.”

The cost is \$15 for adults, \$9.50 for children, free for children under 1, and \$12.50 for seniors and those in the military. On the first day of each month, the Glazer Children’s Museum offers free admission, sponsored by Target. This is a perfect opportunity to visit the museum and see all that it has to offer. To enjoy unlimited admission to the museum, become a member. Family membership plans start at \$90 for a family of five.

During the week and on Saturdays, there are special activities, such as storytime in Tugboat Tots, arts and crafts activities in Artlab, cooking in the My House Your House kitchen, and Animal Aerobics in the Sports Corner. Be sure to check the website (www.glazermuseum.org) for the scheduled times for these events.

The museum has had special

exhibits and visitors, such as Mickey’s Magic Show with his pal Goofy, and coming soon will be Toy Story Live.

Mark your calendar for April 23 for the egg hunt in the museum. Other events include the African American Health exhibit (tentative date is April 9) and a special guest, the Guinness World Record holder for the longest flight of a paper airplane, will be at the museum (tentative date is April 30). Be sure to check the website for confirmed dates of these events.

Plan your next birthday party at the museum. The cost is \$275 for non-members and \$225 for members. The party package includes 1.5 hours in the party room, invitations, paper products, lemonade and water, and unlimited playtime at the museum. The price includes up to 20 guests. Each additional guest is \$15.

When you visit the museum, you can park in the Poe Garage. Be sure to park on the 4th or 5th floor so that you can take the sky bridge across to the museum. Take your parking ticket with you and you can pay at any of the parking machines located on different floors in the garage using cash, debit or credit cards.

Glazer Children’s Museum is located at 110 W. Gasparilla Plaza, Tampa, FL 33602. The telephone number is 813-443-FUN1(3861). For more information, check the website at www.glazermuseum.org or send an email to info@glazermuseum.org.



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