

#### FLORIDA AT THE WORLD'S FAIR

The Florida Pavilion at the New York World's Fair is a big success. It is the finest promotional tool Florida has had in a score of years. It is making money, and we are giving no thought to closing it before the end of the two year running time of the entire fair.

The Florida World's Fair Authority did agree to pay off construction costs at too rapid a pace, but they have been meeting all of their obligations and will continue to do so or secure through a re-negotiation an understood deferment of them.

The Pavilion, located precisely where it was in the highly successful 1939 World's Fair, has been drawing the largest crowds in the Lake Amusement Area of the fair and has been averaging thirty to forty thousand people a day.

The success is all the more startling since the main gate of the Fair is at the farthest point from the Pavilion. The main gate draws 66% of the total traffic into the Fair. Gates Five and Six, into the Lake Amusement Area, draw only 18% of Fair visitors. This small percentage and the difficult access to the area from the Fair proper has contributed to the recent troubles of the Louisiana Exhibit, the closing of the musical revue at the Texas Pavilion, and the closing of the Wonderworld Show which occupied the amphitheater adjacent to the Florida Pavilion.

The woes of other exhibitors in the Lake Amusement area have left a greater burden of Florida to draw Fairgoers.

Then too, the New York World's Fair Corporation threw a few surprises our way. They cancelled plans to construct a moving sidewalk to bring visitors from the Fair proper to the Lake Amusement area. Originally, a tremendous nightly fireworks display had been planned from the Lake Amusement Area. This was shifted by the World's Fair Authority to the center of the fair.

The Florida Pavilion is situated on Meadow Lake. We had planned to use the lake to stage several water-borne exhibits, and the exhibition of Florida water sports, but the lake is not now permitted to be used for that purpose.

In spite of all this, the Florida Exhibit has steadily increased in popularity. A recent survey by the Market Research Corporation of America, taken at the Fair Corporation's request, showed Florida to be the second most popular exhibit in the Federal and States area. Only New York, the host state, with its fourteen million dollar exhibit, ranked ahead of Florida.

Others given rating below Florida were, in order, New York City, Hollywood-USA, Hawaii, Illinois, New England, United States Pavilion, Missouri and Maryland. The survey was based on interviews with Fair visitors.

Many reasons are given for the Florida Pavilion's leadership in the amusement area. There is the fabulous live porpoise show, generally considered to be the hit of the Fair. It has been averaging close to 3,500 paid admissions daily.

Revenue that we derive from the Porpoise Show more than meets the operating expenses. It is producing about \$5,000 a day now, and the box office continues to improve.

In addition to that we have established the Everglades Exhibit to produce some extra revenue without in any way affecting the free Exhibit Hall. Out of these potentials we hope to receive enough money to meet all obligations.

The new Everglades Show, which played to 12,500 people in its first week of operation late last month has a spiraling attendance and this part of the exhibit looms as the "sleeper" of the Fair. It provides continuous entertainment throughout the day. Admission is a nominal 25¢ and treats the visitor to the exciting Moss Allen Reptile Act from Silver Springs, alligator wrestling, authentic Seminole Indians, and an act from Naples featuring a piano playing duck!

The Exhibit Hall at the Florida Pavilion is free. One of the chief attractions is the cultural art exhibit in the center of the circular building.

Paintings include several internationally famous old masters, and a few of the modern variety. Included are the works of Ruben, Paolo Veronese, Frans Hals, Alesandro Magnasco, Winslow Homer, Paul Cezanne, Rencir, and others. The art, owned by private collectors living in Florida and by museums in the state, is valued at over two million dollars. It was selected for the Florida Pavilion by a committee headed by Kenneth Donahue, director of the Ringling Museum of Art at Sarasota.

Tourism, the state's leading industry, is stressed in many free exhibits in the exhibition hall.

Visitors may also tour a model Florida home.

The entire area is authentically landscaped with sub-tropical plants. Live Flamingos wade about an artificial swamp.

It has been estimated that over 70 million people will see the Citrus Tower during the more than two years the structure will be standing.

Other contributing factors to the Pavilion's success are the excellent press coverage it is receiving and the friendliness of its attractive hostesses.

There is every reason to believe that even greater crowds will attend the Exhibit since the Fair has begun to live up to its attendance forecasts. For example, on July 27, attendance was 246,212 and the total for the ninety seven days of the Fair was 18,197,684. At this halfway point the attendance is near one half of the total of 40 million expected to visit the Fair in 1964. August and September are expected to be the most successful months from an attendance standpoint.

Floridians can be proud that the Pavilion not only displays the fun qualities of Florida -- but it exemplifies her culture, her charming communities, her wide variety of industry.

The tremendous orange crowned pylon at the Florida Pavilion serves as a landmark to fairgoers. Word is traveling fast that this little bit of Florida is a must at the New York World's Fair.