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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Playland-Not-at-the-Beach Breaks Ground on its Parking Lot Project

EL CERRITO, CA – Next week Playland-Not-at-the-Beach breaks ground on its parking lot project.

Allen Meyers of El Cerrito Construction has been selected as the general contractor on the project.

When Playland’s Master of Fun Richard Tuck was meeting with prospective contractors, he wanted someone who would be affordable but hopefully also have “a special connection to our nonprofit family fun museum. When Allen Meyers came to visit, he walked through the front door, pointed to our Dodger car, and said, “I used the ride one of these!” It turns out that Meyers visited Whitney’s Playland in San Francisco over 100 times as a child, and his parents went on their first date to Sutro’s Baths. “The moment that Allen mentioned that fact, I immediately showed him our tribute to the Sutro’s Baths.”

Playland-Not-at-the-Beach has been under construction for five years, mostly built by volunteers. Bay area artists have flocked to the project to create exhibits representing old amusement parks. The parking lot project was mandated by the City of El Cerrito as a condition of opening the nonprofit

museum. “We have raised almost \$30,000 through donations, so we have enough to pay for the first phase of the project -- the installation of a ramp for people in wheelchairs and new stairs from the Boardwalk area of the museum to the parking lot.”

The City also requires that Playland-Not-at-the-beach resurface the parking lot, put in cement curbs, light poles, shrubs, trees and a drip irrigation system. “Our estimates for the entire job exceeded \$175,000, and we practically gave up on the whole project. Then the Richmond Kiwanis Club and the Northern California Chevrolet Classic Car Club gave us generous donations, and private donors helped out to get started. Our hope now is that people will donate materials and volunteer their time to help with the rest of the project. Student groups from U.C. Berkeley’s Circle K Club and Alpha Phi Omega have already been volunteering on Saturdays planting flower beds on the side of the building. “We are hopeful that a nursery or people who love flowers will donate plants and trees for the beds that will border the parking lot. A drip irrigation system is also required to meet the City’s requirements. Of course a corporate sponsor would help out immensely too.”

“If all our wishes come true, as soon as the ramp to the back door is installed, some magical donor will show up with a truck loaded with fresh asphalt to resurface the parking lot. And right behind him will be a cement truck ready to pour the curbs for each parking space. Then a group of local citizens who love working in gardens will help us plant flowers, shrubs and trees. An electrician to install the two light poles wouldn’t be bad either!” Tuck muses.

When is the proposed opening date for this free family fun museum? “We hoped to open a year ago,” Tuck shares, “but we weren’t able to raise enough of funds even to get started on the parking lot project. Now our goal is to hopefully complete the parking lot and get the signoff by the City by

October of this year. “We spent over \$200,000 a year ago doing improvements to the interior of the building to house the museum, so the parking lot had to wait. But once we start to show some forward progress, I hope people will donate materials and help with labor. Then we will have an easier time raising the final funds to get the whole 7000 square foot parking lot done.

Materials needed to finish the 7000 square foot parking lot project:

Plants and shrubs

Trees

Drip irrigation system

Asphalt

Cement

Paint to stripe the parking lot

Fencing material to build an enclosure for dumpsters and recycling bins

Once Playland-Not-at-the-Beach is open, admission will be free and tours will be offered several times a week. Guests will have a guide leading them through the 25 attractions, but there will also be plenty of time to play the antique games, watch historical films and enjoy the exhibits celebrating America’s bygone amusements. Artists have been contributing exhibits for over five years. Practically every square inch of space on walls and even ceilings is decorated to represent the festive colors and décor of old fashioned traditional amusement parks.

For more information please contact Richard Tuck at (510) 232-4264 x25.

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