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Judie Brown

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# The World's Fair of New York

by Judie Brown

*Among those articles submitted in response to the invitation to write about the World's Fair in our summer issue, Judie Brown's was chosen on the basis of personal style and scope of exhibits described. She is the wife of George R. Brown, Jr., a Senior Assistant Accountant in our Jacksonville Office. Mrs. Brown (below) is on the advertising staff of a local television station and occasionally appears on camera for a women's program.*

A first glimpse of the World's Fair is awesome! As you are over the expressway suddenly there it is—a vista of bubbles, towers, and improbable forms that appear to be spun of cotton candy. It is marvelous, breathtaking, enchanting, and above all, ENORMOUS.

Traffic and parking are beautifully organized. You are through the gate and on the grounds in a remarkably short time. By any approach the Fair is challenging. There is so much there, so much to see and, yes, even so much that may be learned.

We sallied forth to the General Motors Pavilion first. It looks like years beyond tomorrow and is crammed with exhibits that snap up your interest. A futurama ride takes you into a world of wonder, where complex exhibits project man's achievements to include a city under the sea, a base on the moon, and civilization in the wildest jungles.

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Chrysler has built a happy, slightly wacky six acres of whimsy that kids can't resist. There are growling polka-dot dragons to battle, engines that talk, and a score of peepholes for pictures. Ford permits even women drivers to whirl new cars through their crystal "skyways" into a fun fantasy of grinning Disney cavemen and appealing dinosaurs. The first scenes here are too short though, and the ride ends too abruptly, but the experimental cars are real show-stoppers.

The International Area is perhaps most interesting for adults. Here you should have patience, curiosity and a hearty appetite. Most pavilions look like the country. They project a *feel* of the land they represent. Inside are displays gracefully (and, alas, at times grossly) composed to show crafts, habits, designs, and industry. Industry is occasionally emphasized a bit too much at the expense of a country's natural scenic attractiveness.

Sweden has an excellent electric power demonstration. Switzerland dis-

plays cheese, chocolate, and wrist-watches . . . mine suddenly looked terribly out-timed! An ice cream cone here is a must.

Denmark provides a charming miniature Tivoli Gardens for children. Inside the Pavilion are tasteful displays of the crisp, distinctive Danish designs in ceramics, silver, jewelry, and furniture. Most are for sale.

In the International Plaza you can snake in and out of shops from a dozen countries and purchase authentic items at reasonable prices. There are ivory, jade, delicate china, meerschaum pipes, ceremonial masks and bits of a Japanese tree *guaranteed* to grow in your home. This shopping adventure can be superbly crowned by a *Belgian Waffle*, a terrific conglomeration of waffle, whipped cream, and mounds of fresh sliced strawberries. Scrumptious!

There are three exhibits in the International Area that should be required: Spain, the Vatican, and the Belgian Village.

The Spanish Pavilion is one to be observed and savoured at leisure. The art work, crafts, and costumes are exquisitely presented. The heat of the climate and temperament seems present everywhere along with a definite

statement of a rich and abundant cultural heritage. You have a feeling of being in Spain if only briefly.

The ancient is mixed with the modern. You may see a high fashion model from the House of Pucci posed beside the ancient sword of El Cid. Dynamic contemporary art is adjacent to masterpieces of El Greco and Goya. Spain has projected a most impressive image of herself in this pavilion and it has been done subtly and artistically.

*The Pieta* draws thousands of people each hour to the Vatican Pavilion. There on moving walkways spectators see this creation of Michelangelo in a midnight setting that inspires silent reverence. The statue is smaller than you may have imagined and appears to be very cold, but magnificent in its perfection. A replica of St. Peter's crypt, a

study of the Sistine Chapel, and hundreds of items from Christian peoples around the world are colorfully integrated and displayed.

In the Belgian Village you find yourself with a sunny, smug feeling of having traveled to a fairyland on a pittance fare. Winding cobblestone streets invite exploration into thatched roofed markets vending crystal, lace, and lavish jewelry. In a square complete with bell tower and terraced courthouse a wait is rewarded by a performance of the unique Gille Dancers. These are clowns bedecked in huge ostrich feather hats and bright costumes. They do a shuffle-like dance to handbells and drums that dates to the 15th Century. Children love the parade and are entranced by the wooden shoes the dancers wear.

Around the Pool of Industry are clustered pavilions sponsored by America's giant companies. The lines waiting to see them are giants, too! I found two exhibits exceptionally good. One was General Electric and the second, Johnson's Wax.

At the GE carousel theatre, a charming story of electricity (in appliances) is acted by electronic men and women with strangely human quirks (the wife interrupts constantly!). You follow them from the perils of an indoor pump and drippy icebox, by way of television on 5-inch screens, to the luxury of air conditioning, automatic cooking, and dishwashers. It is a warm and funny pres-

entation—thoroughly entertaining.

Johnson's Wax presents a relatively simple show called "To Be Alive." This is a film projected on 3 different screens that mesh and interweave their images to tell a story through the eyes of a child. The premise is that all men—be they black or beige, or gold or white—are basically the same. They live and laugh and respond equally to life, sunshine, spring rain and even leapfrog. Also aimed at the pint-sized audience is Pepsi-Cola's delightful "It's a Small World" featuring animated figures of children and animals around the world.

Most of the exhibits reward your patience with abundant fun, a new experience (like TV phones in the Bell Exhibit), or maybe just offer a refresher course in some basics we all need to be reminded of.

There are definite things to do for fond memory's sake. See the Pool of Industry exploding in fireworks at dusk. Ride the gently swaying Swiss Sky Ride at night and see Flushing Meadows in its glory, or mount the New York State Observation Tower at mid-afternoon for a breathtaking view.

There is much to criticize about the Fair, and many have . . . but our hours spent in this shaded, park-like extravaganza were happy, satisfying, and irreplaceable.