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PIKE PLACE MARKET'S FAMOUS GUM WALL RECEIVES COMPLETE CLEANING

Photo Contest Celebrates Seattle's and the World's Love Affair with the Visitor Created Wall

SEATTLE – (November 3, 2015) – For the first time in 20 years, [Pike Place Market](http://pikeplacemarket.org) will give the Gum Wall a major scrub, beginning Tuesday, November 10, 2015.

“Just like you, all that sugar can really mess up the surface of your bricks, er, teeth,” said the Gum Wall on the Pike Place Market Facebook page. “I have to admit, after 20 years, I’m feeling a little icky, sticky and in desperate need of a good scrubbing to make me sparkle again.”

The steam cleaning of the wall and adjacent walls in Post Alley will begin at 8 a.m. and is anticipated to last until Thursday, November 12 or November 13 due to its multi-ton volume. The Market is hosting a photo contest celebrating the Gum Wall, which has more than 80,000 tagged posts on Instagram.

“We recognize the Gum Wall is one of the most photographed locations at Pike Place Market,” said Emily Crawford, Director of Communications and Marketing for Pike Place Market Preservation and Development Authority (PDA). “The photo contest provides an opportunity for fans around the world to share their Gum Wall memories.”

For those who wish to stick one last piece of gum on the wall before it is cleaned, the Gum Wall Snap! contest runs from Tuesday, November 3, 2015 to Monday, November 9, 2015. Voting ends on Thursday, November 12, 2015; the winner and runner up will be announced on Friday, November 13, 2015.

The Gum Wall has become a popular attraction, visited by millions of locals and tourists from around the world who visit Pike Place Market each year.

“The Wall was started 20 years ago by audience members waiting in line for our late night Theatresports improv show. Since then, it has been cleaned and recreated three times,” said Kent Whipple, Marketing and Development Director for Unexpected Productions, the improv theater troupe that operates the Market Theater in Post Alley. “The Wall is like the art that takes place behind it, constantly changing from the sharing of its participants. And, like a good improv story, has a beginning, middle and end. The Wall is ready to start a new story. We are excited to see the new incarnation.”

Over the years, gum left by visitors has migrated beyond the original wall, growing to eight feet high and over 54 feet wide. With an estimated 150 pieces of gum per brick and likely more than one million gum wads, the Gum Wall is periodically cleaned by the PDA to protect the integrity of the bricks making up the historic walls of Post Alley.

“We expect the Gum Wall will live on—it’s a Seattle tradition and a crowd-sourced piece of public art that people really enjoy,” Crawford said. “But it’s time to start with a clean canvass.”

Gum Wall Snap! Photo Contest Details

Date: Now until 11:59 p.m. on Monday, November 9, 2015.

Details: Bring the family, friends or bestie to lower Post Alley to snap a photo of the Gum Wall in all of its glory, or, upload a photo from your photo library to enter the contest. There are no limits on the amount of entries per person. Voting ends Thursday, November 12, 2015. The photos with the most votes will be announced on Friday, November 13, 2015.

Gum Walls fans can upload photos and vote for their favorite entries on the Pike Place Market Facebook page:

https://www.facebook.com/PublicMarketCenter/?sk=app_565204660299841 or the contest web page <https://gumwallsnap.pgtb.me/J1ISmZ>.

Prizes: The winner receives the opportunity to engrave their name or personal message on a galvanized steel Market Charm, to be installed on the new MarketFront. For more information on the Market Charms and the MarketFront go to: www.pikeup.org. The winner also receives two passes to Unexpected Productions Improv Theater.

The runner up will receive two passes to Unexpected Production's improv show held in the Market Theater, the longtime host to the Gum Wall, and a free pound of coffee from Ghost Alley Espresso, located in Post Alley.

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