

THE PALAZZO LAS VEGAS CELEBRATES HOLIDAY SEASON WITH ARCTIC INSPIRED WINTER DECOR

Larger-than-life 16-foot polar bear poinsettia sculpture raises awareness about conservation of polar bears and Arctic habitat

December 1, 2009 (Las Vegas): While guests of The Palazzo Las Vegas will enjoy the usual sunny weather for the holiday season, from December 9 through the New Year they'll also encounter the winter décor display anchored by a special Arctic visitor: a 16-foot tall polar bear mother and 6-foot tall polar bear baby, made entirely of a specially-developed white poinsettia named "Polar Bear."

The "Polar Bear" Poinsettia is developed exclusively by Ecke Ranch. The strong white coloration of the "Polar Bear" Poinsettia with its bracts of deep green veining is the perfect *topiary fur* for the polar bear display. The custom, hand-sculpted and hand-painted heads and paws, constructed by Design Solutions, bring the bears to life. The mother and baby bear, consisting of approximately 10,000 poinsettias planted in sphagnum moss, weighs in at approximately 5,000 lbs. The bears snuggle on a custom-sculpted 'arctic ice float' that hovers over a water feature located at The Palazzo Atrium.

In addition to the larger-than-life polar bears, The Palazzo embraces the holiday season with Arctic inspired décor elements that combine to create the breathtaking winter wonderland display. The gardens are filled with a variety of unique poinsettias and 25-foot silver tip pine trees; an 80-foot whimsical vine transitions to holiday with oversized pine cones, holiday berries, poinsettias and twinkling holiday lights; over 225,000 cranberries donated by Ocean Spray float above a water feature creating a sea of cranberries and snow will elegantly fall from above the décor adding to the Arctic theme.

The white "Polar Bear" Poinsettias have an important message to promote awareness of polar bears and the loss of their Arctic habitat due to climate change. Ecke Ranch is donating a portion of the proceeds from each poinsettia cutting sold to Polar Bears International (PBI), a nonprofit organization dedicated to the worldwide conservation of polar bears through research and education. This event will serve as the official launching pad for Ecke's "Pay-it-Forward for Polar Bears" campaign which benefits PBI.

"Ecke Ranch endeavors to help save polar bears and our environment, not just with our special poinsettia, but with a commitment to sustainable business practices. Growing poinsettias can require a lot of heat and energy... but instead, Ecke Ranch encourages "energy-efficient poinsettias" by using cold temperature production. It saves energy and can actually produce longer lasting and more intensely colored poinsettias," said Paul Ecke III, CEO and owner of the Ecke Ranch.

"In a part of the world that never sees snow, it can be challenging to explain why the most important initiative that we can undertake at this time is saving polar bear habitat in the Arctic. Polar bears need sea ice for their survival, and so does the rest of the planet. The Arctic is a key regulator of the global climate system, and loss of

Arctic sea ice will impact people and wildlife around the world. So when we save the polar bears, we save so many other species from butterflies to frogs,” said Robert Buchanan, president of Polar Bears International.

“Currently the world’s CO₂ level is at 385 parts per million (ppm) and growing at an average of two ppm per year. Scientists believe that the tipping point in the Arctic is around 400 ppm. Once this level is reached, the domino effect may not allow the summer ice to return for tens of thousands of years. This of course will not only affect wildlife but the ocean currents and humans in the end. *This is not an irreversible situation.* Individuals *can* and *must* make a difference. It can be as easy as packing a reusable bag when you shop, buy carbon off sets for your flights and purchasing products with limited and/or recycled packaging,” continued Buchanan.

On December 9, The Palazzo will host the unveiling of the Arctic-inspired winter décor display to kick-off the holiday season and raise awareness about conservation of polar bears. The event will take place at 5 p.m. in The Palazzo Waterfall Atrium and the general public is welcome to join in the celebration. Details forthcoming.

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ABOUT ECKE RANCH

Ecke Ranch is the world’s largest breeder of poinsettia plants. Our mission is to provide the beauty and color of flowering plants through quality, innovative horticultural products. For more information please visit www.ecke.com.

ABOUT POLAR BEARS INTERNATIONAL

Polar Bears International is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the worldwide conservation of the polar bear and its Arctic habitat through research and education. For more information please visit www.polarbearsinternational.org.

ABOUT THE PALAZZO LAS VEGAS

With over 3,000 expansive suites, luxury shopping and world-class dining and entertainment, the \$1.9 billion, 50-story Palazzo Las Vegas, AAA® Five Diamond and Mobil Four-Star Award winner, literally takes luxury to new heights. Highlighted by a flagship, 85,000-square-foot Barneys New York, The Shoppes at The Palazzo features more than 60 luxury boutiques. In addition, 20 remarkable stores and luxury brands made their Las Vegas debuts at The Palazzo, including Chloé, Tory Burch, Christian Louboutin, Diane von Furstenberg, Van Cleef & Arpels, Catherine Malandrino, Anya Hindmarch, and Michael Kors. Additionally, The Palazzo offers a variety of cuisines from a collection of award-winning chefs such as CarneVino by Mario Batali, CUT by Wolfgang Puck, Table 10 by Emeril Lagasse and Restaurant Charlie by Charlie Trotter. Other one-of-a-kind offerings include, Tony Award winning Broadway musical, JERSEY BOYS, the chic dining and nightlife LAVO, the world’s largest Canyon Ranch SpaClub, and the ultimate sports bar, sportsbook and restaurant on the Strip: Lagasse’s Stadium. For more information, please visit The Palazzo website at www.palazzolasvegas.com.

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TIPS TO REDUCE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Polar Bear International's alliances and programs are providing the knowledge and hope that we can save polar bears and their habitat. Our biggest challenge is how to accomplish carbon reductions within five years. The top twelve finalists in PBI's Project Polar Bear reduced the annual carbon footprint by over 17-million pounds! If twelve kids can do this, imagine what we can accomplish if 20% of the population changes its habits!

1. Utilize reusable bags for your shopping needs, like the collapsible bag from PBI available at The Venetian, or online at www.polarbearsinternational.org.
2. If you're traveling for the holidays, many airlines now offer a carbon offset purchase option when selecting your flights; also consider using airlines which recycle food and cabin waste.
3. Skip the gift wrap; use newspaper, a reusable bag, scarf or hat instead. If you receive wrapped gifts, save the paper and bows for next year.
4. Use natural decorations that can be composted, like holly, evergreen, cranberries, popcorn and fruit.
5. Give environmentally friendly gifts that don't increase waste; consider making a donation on behalf of loved ones to a charity.
6. Use energy-efficient holiday lights, and limit use to two hours per day or when you have company.
7. Use rechargeable batteries in your electronics and gifts.
8. Purchase recycled or charity cards; or skip the paper and send an e-card.
9. Reduce your holiday 'food miles' by shopping at a locally owned grocery store or farmer's market, and choose restaurants that buy local.
10. Give the gift of a tree. Not a Christmas tree, but a real tree. Did you know planting a one-inch sugar maple tree in your yard or community park will reduce atmospheric carbon by 17 pounds a year!

What Christmas Means for the Environment

- Christmas tree lights left on for ten hours a day over twelve days will produce enough carbon dioxide to inflate 12 party balloons.
- Without recycling, up to one billion Christmas cards and as much as 83 square kilometers of wrapping paper could end up in North American landfills.
- It's estimated that the pollution from the manufacturing, transportation, use and disposal of Christmas gifts is greater than that caused by automobiles each year.
- Some of the hottest debate about holiday impacts on the environment is over Christmas trees. Both artificial and real trees come with pros and cons. Creative alternatives to a Christmas tree are probably the most environmentally-friendly option. If you do insist on having a tree, real seems like the better option, but be sure to buy from a local supplier who uses sustainable practices to minimize impact on the environment. And be sure to compost your old tree.