

The Patriot Ledger

Glitter, paint and pumpkins fill Paragon Carousel with young Halloween artists

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HULL — As carnival music and the delighted shrieks of children filled the air, along with the occasional squirt of paint or sprinkle of glitter, trouble was brewing at the Paragon Carousel on Monday.

“We actually ran out of pumpkins and it’s only one o’clock,” said Amy Boehm, event coordinator for the organization the runs the carousel. “We’ve never sold out of pumpkins before.”

The historic carousel on Hull’s Nantasket Beach was swamped with families Monday as children decorated pumpkins with glitter, paint and stickers instead of knives and spoons. The annual event, which was being held on Columbus Day for the first time, drew so many children that organizers were caught off guard and had to run out to buy more pumpkins after just two hours.

For a \$10 donation to the Friends of the Paragon Carousel, which oversees the carousel and its restoration, attendees could get a large pumpkin, decorating supplies and a ride on the carousel. An added bonus for many adults was the fact that the carousel's staff did the bulk of the clean-up.

"I thought it would be fun for the kids," said Diedra Lonergan, a Milton resident who visited the carousel with her mother, who lives in Hull, and her two children, Augie, 6, and Anna, 4.

Both children excitedly showed off their pumpkin creations. Anna opted for more paint on hers than her brother did, while Augie went for the foam stickers.

"It has six eyeballs!" Augie said.

Denise Wencis of Hull brought her two grandchildren, Jacob and Jordan, to decorate pumpkins.

Jacob, 4, and Jordan, 6, live in Northboro but have visited the area around Nantasket Beach with their grandmother before, being especially fond of the arcade along the beach.

"This is family here," said Wencis. "It's all grandparents here with their grandkids — it's great."

Upon leaving, Wencis realized she was covered in glitter, with sparkles even on her cup of coffee, but she laughed and said, "It's well worth it."

"I was here when it was Paragon Park," said Janice Kenny of Plymouth, who was visiting her niece, who has a summer home in Hull, along with her great-niece, great-nephew and granddaughter.

The carousel, which was built 90 years ago in 1928, was originally part of Paragon Park, an amusement park that closed in the mid-1980s.

"We just ran into this. We were coming for the carousel, and they had the pumpkin decorating," Kenny said. "It's great."

A steady stream of families went in and out of the building throughout the afternoon, with children and adults alike hopping onto the carousel for a ride. Due to the event's popularity, Boehm said the carousel will hold the event on

each Columbus Day going forward.

For anyone looking to visit the carousel during October, it is open Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. until the end of the month. To celebrate Halloween, the carousel will be hosting its annual “Spooktacular” on Sunday, Oct. 28.