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Get to know Colorado's carousels this summer - Ride 5

Looking for something to do with the family this summer? Something that doesn't empty the gas tank three times over or burn a huge hole in your wallet?

Colorado's carousels are calling your name.

The state's carousels are inviting families to take a spin – or five – this summer. All are participating in **Ride 5**, a program sponsored by the Colorado Carousel Society, a nonprofit group of carousel enthusiasts.

Ride 5, to be launched at 11 a.m. May 30 at Elitch Gardens' 1928 PTC carousel in Denver, encourages children and adults to ride five carousels, at least three of them antique, during the summer, to be eligible for an array of prizes in a drawing at the close of the season. Colorado Carousel Society members will be on hand to distribute **Ride 5** punch cards and former president Betty Hull, Elitch Gardens historian and author of "Elitch Gardens: Spinning a Century of Dreams," will explain **Ride 5** and give a brief history of carousels with special emphasis on Colorado's carousels.

Ride 5 punch cards will also be available at most carousels, on the organization's web site, www.coloradocarouselsociety.org, and other sites. Carousel riders should ask the operators of the carousels they ride to punch the cards. **Ride 5** participants will pay normal admission prices to ride the carousels. The carousel promotion continues through Labor Day, Sept. 7. Those who complete five valid rides may send their punched **Ride 5** cards to the Colorado Carousel Society, P.O. Box 21483, Denver, Colo., 80221, by Sept. 15 to be entered into a drawing for prizes.

“At one time, thousands of hand-carved carousels operated in our country,” says artist Will Morton, carousel conservationist, restorer and carver, and a founder of the Colorado Carousel Society. “Most have been lost to fires or other disasters, or their figures have been sold to collectors. Fewer than 160 of the historic ones remain, and Colorado is fortunate to have six of them.

“Besides its antique carousels, Colorado has two contemporary hand-carved carousels, one of which is being erected this year, and three contemporary fiberglass reproductions.”

Colorado carousels and their locations include:

- **Antique :** 1905 PTC, Kit Carson County Carousel, Burlington; 1908 Parker/mix, Lakeside Amusement Park, Denver; 1911 Parker/Stein & Goldstein, Pueblo City Park, Pueblo; 1920 Herschell Spillman, North Pole, Cascade; 1925 Allen Herschell, Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, Colorado Springs; 1928 PTC, Elitch Gardens Theme Park, Denver.
- **Hand-carved contemporary:** 2000 Carousel Works, Denver Zoo; 2009 Scott Harrison, Carousel of Happiness (on 1911 Loeff frame) Nederland, under construction, available for weekend tours by reservation.
- **Reproduction fiberglass:** Fish ‘n Farm, Heritage Square, Golden; Royal Gorge Bridge, Canon City; Colorado Mills Mall, Lakewood.

Prizes for the drawing are being donated by carousels, amusement parks, area businesses, organizations, and individuals. One lucky winner will receive a “First Ride Golden Ticket” for the inaugural spin of the Carousel of Happiness. Among other prizes are luggage, Avalanche tickets, a massage, T-shirts, admission to amusement facilities and carousels, Jump City tickets and a Tattered Cover book token.

The Colorado Carousel Society, organized in 1983, encourages the preservation, restoration and maintenance of Colorado’s operating carousels, brings together people interested in the history and art of the carousel, and disseminates information about carousels. Those interested in membership will find information on the web site.