

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING GOOFOY

WHILE CONTEMPLATING THE CONCEALMENT of the Fairy Godmother's latest tattoo, the director of character costumes was interrupted by a ruckus outside her window.

She stared out the window in horror. At least 50 characters marched around a small bonfire, tearing off their clothes and chucking them into the flames while chanting, "Pants for all or no pants at all!"

"Bill," she yelled, "get in here right now!" Her assistant timidly entered the room. The situation was now obviously out of control.

"What in heaven's name is going on out there? Why . . . the characters are stripping on the lawn," she shrieked as she noticed Tarzan untying his loincloth.

"Um, well, ma'am, the characters are supporting Donald Duck's cause. He wants to wear pants. He's demanding we give him a new costume."

"This is insane!" The director kneaded her forehead. "Why would a duck wear pants?"

"Actually, he made a list," said Bill.

"What's on it?" sighed the director.

"Reason 1: I'm tired of a sunburned bum in the summer and a frostbitten tail in the winter.

"Reason 2: Nowhere to put keys and money. Other characters laugh at my man-purse.

"Reason 3: Splinters. I'd like to see you attempt to pull chunks of wood out of that region.

"Reason 4: The next wise guy to say 'Hey, look at that full moon!' will be beaten with a brass Mickey figurine.

"Reason 5: You try explaining multiple times a day to 4- and 5-year-olds why I just wear a shirt but they have to be fully clothed."

"Stop! I don't want to hear any more," groaned the director.

"And that's not all. Donald's demand inspired others. The characters wondered why they wear the same costume every day. They've all created their own demands."

"What?" mumbled the director in disbelief as she witnessed a shirtless Winnie the Pooh standing on a honey jar helping Ariel unhook her shell top.

"And . . .," continued Bill, "none of them will wear any clothes until we comply."

"I might as well turn in my resignation now," said the director in a shaky voice, "and save the board the trouble of firing me. What do the others want?" she asked weakly.

"Minnie Mouse wants a silk pantsuit. She feels her outfit is outdated and demeaning to females. Bambi demands a full makeover. He refuses to continue to go by a name that's primarily associated with female strippers and porn stars. He wishes to be called Phil and wants a more punk-oriented style, including a green Mohawk."

"We don't have the manpower to create new costumes for every character," squeaked the director.

Bill continued with the list of demands. "Peter Pan says he's sick of his tights riding up and that stupid feather continuously falling

out of his cap. Chip 'n' Dale demand black bow ties and tight leather pants."

"This isn't possible. They can't get new costumes; no one will recognize them if they change styles! Their clothing is part of their trademark." The director began hyperventilating.

"Captain Hook wishes to replace his hook with a prosthetic hand."

And so it goes. . . .

What really makes writing about Walt Disney World fun is that the Disney people take everything so seriously. Day to day, they debate momentous decisions with far-ranging consequences: Will Goofy look swishy in a silver cape? Have we gone too far with the Little Mermaid's cleavage? At a time when the nation is concerned about the drug problem, should we have a dwarf named "Dopey"?

Unofficially, we think having a sense of humor is important. This guidebook has one, and it's probably necessary that you do, too—not to use this book, but to have fun at Walt Disney World. Walt Disney World is among tourist destinations what New York is among cities: big, complex, and intimidating. A certain amount of levity is required simply to survive. Think of the *Unofficial Guide* as a private trainer to help get your sense of humor in shape. It will help you understand the importance of being Goofy.

HONEY, I BLEW UP THE BOOK!

THE FIRST EDITION OF *The Unofficial Guide to Walt Disney World* was less than 200 pages, a mere shadow of its present size. Since that edition, Disney World has grown tremendously, adding the Disney-MGM Studios theme park, Disney's Animal Kingdom theme park, the Downtown Disney and the Disney BoardWalk shopping and entertainment venues, swimming parks Typhoon Lagoon and Blizzard Beach, new attractions in all the parks, about 27,000 new hotel rooms, and Disney's Wide World of Sports. The *Unofficial Guide* has grown to match this expansion (and, truth be told, the author has put on a little weight himself).

We have no idea where it will all end. In 30 years we may be selling an alphabetized, 26-volume edition, handsomely packaged in its own imitation-oak bookcase. In the meantime, we offer a qualified apology for the bulk of this edition. We know it may be too heavy to be carried comfortably without the assistance of a handcart or Sherpa, but we defend the inclusion of all the information presented. Not every diner uses ketchup, A-1 Sauce, and Tabasco, but it's nice to have all three on the table.

Concerning *Unofficial Guide* content, a mom from Vallejo, California, requested that we include a map of Orlando Airport. Other reader ideas for new content included these suggestions:

I think your guide should have a list of attractions that provide (1) seats, (2) air-conditioning, and (3) at least 15 minutes off your feet.

I feel your Unofficial Guide should include a claustrophobia rating for each attraction.