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Final Piece of Land for Full-size Ark Purchased: Ark Encounter moves forward; \$5 million in donations, other updates

PETERSBURG, Ky., Feb. 15, 2012— Passing another significant milestone, the [Ark Encounter](#), LLC, closed today on the last and largest piece of land for its planned development on an 800-acre site in Williamstown, Ky., off Interstate 75 (south of Cincinnati). Under the direction of [Answers in Genesis](#) (AiG), a full-scale Noah's Ark will be constructed as the featured attraction at the Ark Encounter. Research indicates the Ark Encounter will draw well over a million people in its first year.

In addition, the completion of complex engineering and architectural work on the Ark structure has allowed for significantly greater guest capacity inside the Ark than originally anticipated. This finding has eliminated the need to build additional biblical attractions simultaneously to accommodate the projected crowds.

Accordingly, the Ark Encounter will be built in multiple phases over many years, with the Ark and other supporting elements opening during phase one. This approach will reduce the initial construction period and funding requirements. It will also allow the utility infrastructure to be able to grow with the Ark Encounter's expansions at a reasonable pace. Phased-in construction is also a safe way to proceed in a difficult economy. Even then, over \$5 million in donations have already been received for the building of the Ark itself. In addition to that milestone, many more millions of dollars in memberships and private funding have been raised or committed for the construction of the other attractions surrounding the Ark, the centerpiece of the project.

[Michael Zovath](#), Senior Vice President of Answers in Genesis and the Ark Encounter, declared he was "elated to cross two milestones this week in the Ark's progress." Zovath, who was in charge of building AiG's successful, high-tech Creation Museum, noted that "due to the rolling hills and ravines of this scenic property, about 800 acres are needed in order to get at least 160 useable acres—plus create a necessary buffer around the Ark Encounter attraction. It has taken considerable, but necessary, time to close on all the different parcels, and there have been environmental studies that took time to perform on parts of the land, but all the needed acreage has been purchased."

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Additional updates on the Ark Encounter include:

- The worldwide media coverage of the full-size Noah's Ark has exceeded expectations, including a news item on ABC-TV's "World News with Diane Sawyer." With some exceptions, the mainstream media have generally been fair and accurate.
- With the Creation Museum successfully drawing over 300,000 visitors a year, AiG is already master-planning the museum complex in Petersburg, Ky., (40 miles from the Ark site) to handle even larger crowds when the Ark opens. A 1,000-seat auditorium has been finished, as has a new observatory with high-power telescopes.
- AiG continues to be encouraged to see that even in a difficult economy, thousands of supportive people have already made donations to the full-size Ark (including through the "Pegs, Planks, and Beams" sponsorship program) or have purchased boarding passes (lifetime Ark memberships). Now that the land has been secured, AiG—as more revenue is received—has the next milestone in its sights for the ambitious project: groundbreaking.

Donations to AiG for the Ark structure itself are just one aspect of the entire Ark Encounter funding. The major part of the funding is coming through private funding from the Ark Encounter, LLC, a Missouri limited liability company, which will own the attraction. Through a wholly owned subsidiary, AiG is the managing member of the LLC and is raising a portion of the funding (i.e., to build the Ark component).

"The Ark Encounter, LLC, and AiG continue to trust the Creator of the Universe to supply the needed funds for this project, just as He did with our successful Creation Museum (even with some bumps along the way in its construction)," said co-founder and CCO Mark Looy. "The museum's attendance has exceeded projections since it opened in May 2007, and it has been a major economic asset to the region. Moreover, with an Ark coming to the region, it is anticipated the Creation Museum's best days for attendance are ahead of it."

Answers in Genesis is a biblical apologetics ministry which conducts about 300 teaching meetings each year, publishes the growing family magazine "Answers" (winner of the 2011 best Christian magazine award from the Evangelical Press Association), and produces the "Answers" radio program heard on more than 500 stations in the U.S. The AnswersInGenesis.org website is this year's "Best Ministry Website" as picked by the 1,200-member National Religious Broadcasters (about 1 million web visits a month). AiG's Creation Museum, which opened in 2007 to much international press coverage, has welcomed over 1.5 million visitors in four and one-half years.

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