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For Immediate Release

New Arkansas Music Pavilion to Open on a Good Note with Birdair

Nothing can stop the music at the new Walmart Arkansas Music Pavilion (AMP).

Thanks to Birdair's PTFE fiberglass membrane pavilion, whether rain or shine, thousands of music fans will raise their hands and their voices, singing along with their favorite musical act for years to come.

Walton Arts Center (WAC) purchased the AMP in February 2011 with the goal of expanding the venue to serve a broader and more diverse audience. The AMP operated at the Washington County Fairgrounds after moving from the NWA Mall in 2012. However, after seeing a 200 percent increase in ticket sales in 2012, it became clear that a permanent site was needed to sustain a profitable business model and meet the growing need for arts and entertainment in the region. What's more, the lack of a roof meant cancellations due to weather, disappointed fans and frustrated musicians.

In 2013, the Walton Arts Center council approved plans to build a mid-sized, permanent outdoor amphitheater to attract headlining artists and bigger audiences to Northwest Arkansas. As part of a multi-campus expansion to grow arts and entertainment in the region, the new venue will serve as a major stop for big touring concerts in the Mid-South.

The new site, located in Pinnacle Hills in Rogers, AR., has everything the WAC was looking for in a permanent location, including proximity to I-540, multiple access points, ample parking and a supporting infrastructure. It also includes a generous land donation from Hunt Ventures, Inc. This improvement, as well as the 5,590 square-foot stage, upgraded technical capacities, an artist lounge and production offices, will attract bigger acts to the venue. The new AMP will also draw in larger crowds with its seating capacity of more than 6,000 people, ample parking, upgraded concessions, and air-conditioned restrooms.

An Orchestrated Effort

Architecture firm CORE, Tatum-Smith Engineers, and Crossland Construction worked to complete this project. But, they needed something special to make AMP beautiful, unique, and weather-resistant, so they turned to Birdair, the expert on custom tensile structures, to design and construct the tent-like covering for the stage. The three-cone and four-inverted-cone-shaped structure is made of fabric PTFE fiberglass membrane, with a steel supporting structure.

PTFE, or polytetrafluoroethylene, is known by the brand name Teflon® and coats a woven fiberglass to form a membrane that is extremely durable and weather resistant. PTFE fiberglass

membranes can be installed in climates ranging from the frigid arctic to the scorching desert heat with a product life in some cases exceeding 30 years, so it's perfect for the hot and humid Arkansas summers.

Raising the Roof

The AMP's three-cone shaped structure creates an open, inviting space that comes to life in the evenings with glowing lights and cheering fans. PTFE membrane can be used to construct roofs, façades, free-standing buildings, skylights, or accent enclosures. Completely different from other building materials both aesthetically and functionally, it is the combination of uncommon physical and geometric characteristics that make tensile membrane structures iconic.

"PTFE fiberglass membrane is a versatile product that we use to make beautiful yet functional structures," said Michael Grant, Project Manager, Birdair North America. "Plus, it's energy efficient and saves money in the long run. It's a great product all the way around, and it was perfect for the Arkansas Music Pavilion."

Fabric roof forms are curved between supporting elements in a manner reflective of the flow of tension forces within the membrane. With the exception of air-supported structures, these curvatures are anticlastic in nature. The curving forms of fabric roofs have dramatic appeal. Another attractive feature of tensioned fabric structures is their enormous range of spanning capability. The inherent visual drama and the long span ability of fabric are particularly appropriate for entertainment facilities such as the AMP. They transform an average music venue into a stunning work of architecture that reflects the energy-filled atmosphere of the concerts.

Harmonious with the Environment and Budgets

Fabric structures are not only visually appealing but also environmentally sensitive and economically competitive. PTFE fiberglass is Energy Star and Cool Roof Rating Council certified. PTFE fiberglass membranes reflect as much as 73 percent of the sun's energy, and certain grades of PTFE fiberglass can absorb 14 percent of the sun's energy while allowing 13 percent of natural daylight and seven percent of re-radiated energy (solar heat) to transmit through.

The lightweight membrane also provides a cost-effective solution requiring less structural steel to support the roof or façade, enabling long spans of column-free space. In addition, membrane offers building owners reduced construction costs and maintenance costs compared to traditional building materials.

About Birdair

Birdair, Inc. is the leading specialty contractor of custom tensile structures throughout the world. In addition to pre-construction services such as design assistance, budgeting, construction methodologies and project scheduling, Birdair provides design-build solutions in all aspects of project design, fabrication, installation and maintenance. The company offers a selection of architectural fabric membranes, including PTFE fiberglass, ETFE film, PVC and Tensotherm™, an insulated tensioned membrane system. Birdair, based in Buffalo, NY, is a member of the Taiyo Kogyo Group, with operations serving North and South America and other international locations. For more information about Birdair, like us on Facebook, call 1-800-622-2246 or visit www.birdair.com.

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