



Attractions industry faces challenges, continues to entertain

Pandemic shutdown spurs business of fun to retrench, innovate

INTERNATIONAL — Although the COVID-19 pandemic has dealt a severe blow to businesses and economies worldwide, and recovery, when it can reasonably begin, will be slow, some bright spots and forward thinking have emerged from the global attractions industry while operations are suspended.

To be certain, companies have been struggling to cope as the novel coronavirus — the heart-wrenching human toll of which appeared to be reaching a plateau in the U.S. in mid-April after paralyzing much of Asia and Europe — scuttled new ride debuts and park reopening dates and triggered massive layoffs.

The damage will be substantial. According to a report by the London-based **World Tourism Forum Institute**, the international tourism market's average annual revenue of USD \$1.7 trillion could suffer a worst-case estimated loss of \$1.5 trillion in 2020. In California alone, travel-spending losses could hit \$54.5 billion, according to the Sacramento-headquartered tourism bureau **Visit California**.

Such forecasts have only strengthened the attractions industry's resolve.

"The human spirit and our ingenuity, creativity and compassion for others is alive and well," said **Hal McEvoy**, president and CEO of the **International Association**



Walt Disney World Resort illuminated the hotel tower of Disney's Contemporary Resort with a heart (above left) to remind the world that better days are ahead. Gatorland theme park and wildlife preserve's Facebook Live program "School of Croc," hosted by Savannah Boan, is a hit with housebound families and has amassed more than a million views (above right). AT/DAVID FAKE; COURTESY GATORLAND



of **Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA)**, in an early-April organization email. "We see this every day as IAAPA members around the world come together."

McEvoy noted that IAAPA not only is advocating with governments to help preserve and protect the industry, it is collaborating with members regionally through webinars, e-learning courses and a COVID-19 resources page (visit iaapa.org) to discuss crisis management, operational changes, and keeping guests and employees safe. "We are planning. We are preparing," he wrote.

The major theme park companies have been grappling with the uncertain and unprecedented situation. In mid-March, when **The Walt Disney Co.** and **NBCUniversal** announced the closure of their Southern California and Central Florida resort facilities, paving the way for others to do the same, they

offered hopeful restart dates. Since then, with a national emergency declared in the U.S. and stay-at-home orders in effect in most states, operators have amended their statements to convey that parks will remain shuttered indefinitely.

"This is a unique and extraordinary period for our company, our industry and the world," said **Marc Swanson**, the new interim CEO of Orlando-headquartered **SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.** "We [are] focused on managing this business through this difficult time... and welcoming our valued Ambassadors and guests back as soon as possible."

"The safety and well-being of our guests and associates are always our top priorities," said **Richard Zimmerman**, president and CEO of Sandusky, Ohio-based **Cedar Fair Entertainment Co.**

Like other theme park companies, **Dollywood Parks**

and **Resorts** in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, signaled its commitment to directives and recommendations from local government officials, medical experts and the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**. In addition to posting CDC guidelines in common areas, the company has already enhanced sanitation — installing 300 more hand-sanitizing stations throughout its resort properties, adjusting food and beverage service safety procedures, and increasing disinfection standards training.

The Disney park websites also highlighted increased sanitation and hygiene protocols. These included the addition of easy-access hand-sanitizing facilities and frequent cleaning and wash-down of outdoor locations.

Compassionate response

The attractions industry's pause created a bounty for food banks and charitable

organizations.

Disney filled trucks with surplus food contributions at its parks stateside and in Europe. **Walt Disney World Resort (WDW)** shared its inventory of fresh salads, greens and cooked hot items with **Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida**, while **Disneyland Resort** sent its surplus to the same organization's Orange County chapter in Southern California.

"These donations would not be possible without the dedication of cast members behind the scenes who collect, sort and distribute every item to ensure it's delivered with the highest level of freshness," said **Tajiana Ancora-Brown**, WDW's director of external affairs.

Elsewhere in Central Florida, **Busch Gardens Tampa Bay** delivered approximately 5,500 pounds of food to **Feeding Tampa Bay**, a food rescue and

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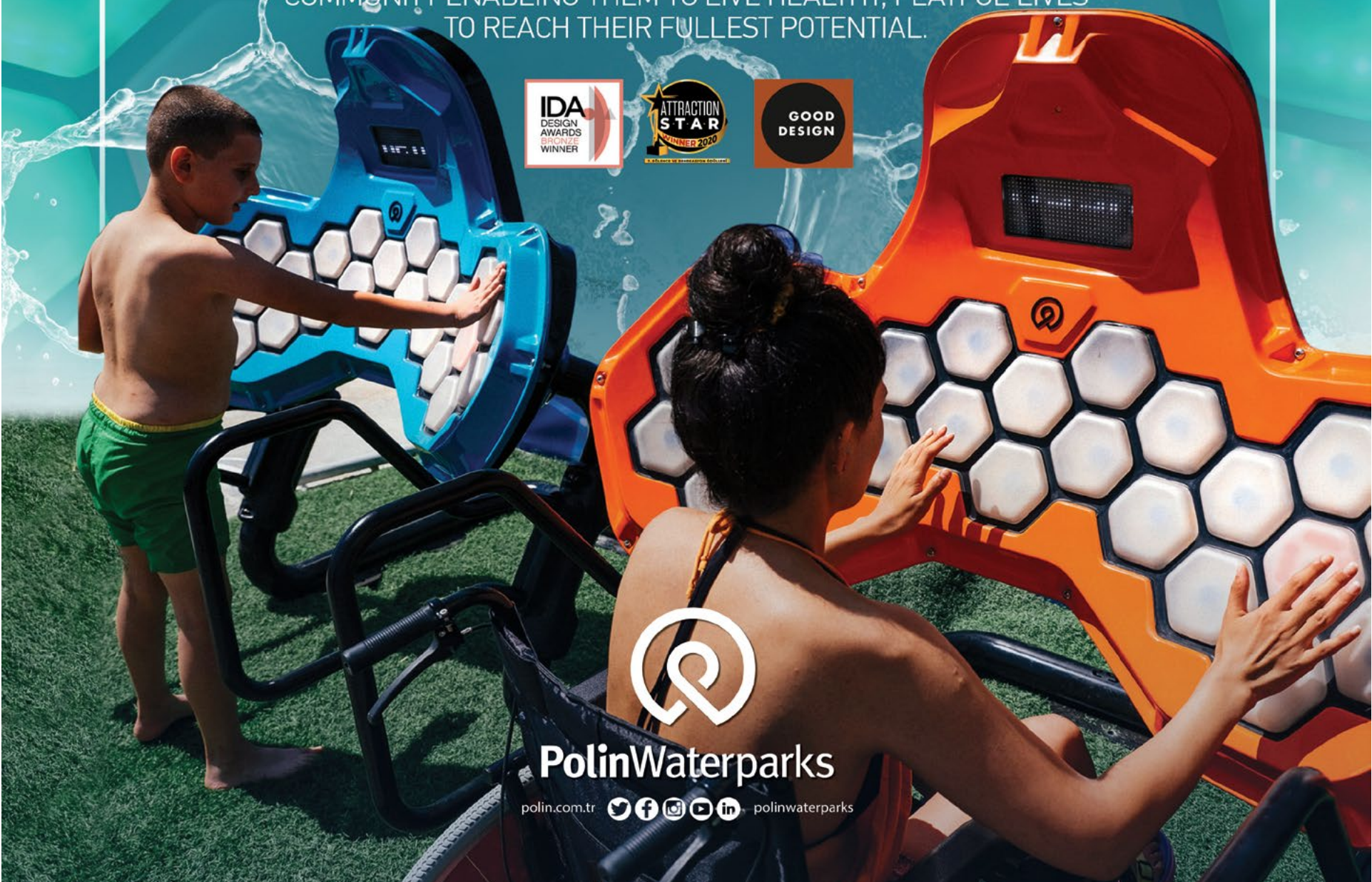
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2020 Golden Ticket Awards event canceled, rescheduled to 2021

Current voting on hold; awaiting reopening of amusement industry

ARLINGTON, Texas — *Amusement Today* Publisher **Gary Slade** has announced that due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Golden Ticket Awards event — originally scheduled for **Morgan's Wonderland** and **SeaWorld San Antonio** (Texas) on September 11 & 12, 2020 — has been rescheduled for the same locations in 2021.

"Certainly we didn't want to have to move this event to 2021, but it became the right thing to do given the current status of our amusement industry remaining closed due to the worldwide pandemic," said Slade.

"After visiting with our host parks, it was clear that when their employees do get the green light to return to their respective parks, the top focus will be on making sure their guests have the usual fun-filled day they expect and enjoy it in a safe and clean environment. I did not want planning for this event to distract from that goal. My personal thanks go to Morgan's Wonderland and SeaWorld San Antonio for their understanding and support in this decision. We look forward to hosting everyone in 2021."

Slade also said, "We also wanted to be respectful of our event sponsors. The annual Golden Ticket Awards event has grown from a small group of people to a great networking event that has remained free for our attendees. This is made possible by our sponsors, but they, too, have been hit with enormous financial challenges from the virus, as job orders have changed, some of the experienced labor force has been cut and unknowns remain as to how long the time frame will be before their much-needed work orders return to our many dedicated industry suppliers. In my mind, this was not the right time to continue to ask them for financial support of our Golden Ticket Awards event.

"I would like to personally thank our 2020 GTA event sponsors for their understanding during this challenging time in our industry, and we look forward to working with each again in 2021.

Our 2020 confirmed sponsors are: **Chance Rides**, **Great Coasters International**, **Leisure Labs LLC**, **Uremet Corporation**, **WhiteWater West** and **Zamperla USA**.

"As much as I know our industry would love each others' company at the end of the operational year by sharing a toast with each other, I think this just makes our plans for the 2021 event that much more



special," added Slade.

The tentative dates for the 2021 Golden Ticket Awards are September 10 & 11. *AT* continues to work with both host

parks and our host hotel, **Hilton San Antonio Hill Country**, on the new dates.

2020 Golden Ticket Awards survey

If the amusement industry is able to salvage the bulk of its summer season, *AT* will conduct its annual Golden Ticket Awards survey as planned but with an extended voting window and deadline. Voting will

be counted and results will be announced this fall during a special online video broadcast. Winning Golden Ticket Awards will be mailed to their respective winners.

Additional details will be announced in future editions of *AT* and in our daily email newsletter, **Extra! Extra! Your Desktop Edition**, as needed.

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AMUSEMENT VIEWS

AT NOTEBOOK: Gary Slade, gslade@amusementtoday.com

Parks and pandemics



Slade

The current coronavirus pandemic has everyone in the amusement industry asking, "How much longer?" Before we look forward, let's look at history and this insight provided by industry historian Richard Munch:

"There have been other global and national pandemics over the course of amusement park history, and this doesn't even include outbreaks of cholera, whooping cough and measles. Even before water parks, the polio epidemic of the 1950s kept thousands away from amusement park swimming pools.

The Spanish Flu of 1918-1919, which infected a third of the world's population, was probably the most damaging, killing millions. At the same time, most parks were not fully aware of the effect of the spreading virus and remained open. Of course, this was coming on the heels of the Great War that rolled through three continents.

This pandemic is truly unprecedented. It has essentially closed down the amusement industry worldwide, as well as most supply chains and manufacturers. This has never happened in the last 140 years of the industry's history, which includes major global wars and the Great Depression."

And there is the key: Never have we seen the entire worldwide amusement industry sidelined on the transfer track at the same time, with no real idea when the key gets switched back to the "on" position.

This reopening of our industry will provide challenges for which we're still working on answers. Some answers will come after parks reopen. What will be guest expectations during their park visit?

Hopefully, associations like ASTM (in collaboration with our numerous safety and industry associations) will begin to work on a list of "suggested guidelines" that will provide a health and safety/cleaning checklist to facilities of all sizes prior to their reopening.

Our industry suppliers are hurting as well, with some having already laid off a skilled labor force that can't be easily replaced. The sooner both spare part and new ride orders get placed, the better chance our small-to-medium-sized suppliers have to succeed. Our suppliers are the lifeline to our parks and cannot be forgotten during this downtime.

Until a vaccine is developed and available to the masses, it's clear the thrills our facilities provide will come with much more cleaning and social-distance spacing while patrons wait to have some much-deserved fun.

FLINT'S VIEW: Bubba Flint



INDUSTRY VOICE: Martin Higginson, Cofounder and CEO, Immotion Group

How VR is changing the zoo/aquarium experience

Combining conservation, education and entertainment is one of the most critical challenges zoos and aquariums face when designing their visitor attractions. Inspiring a love for conservation, ensuring the welfare of collections and providing entertainment to encourage return visits may all seem like competing goals, but through virtual reality (VR) they can come together to create a powerful tool.

At these facilities, dedicated wildlife teams ensure their collections replicate natural habitats in the closest possible way. At times, however, this can inhibit the high levels of interactivity key to inspiring guests.

This is where VR is a valuable tool. The technology connects people to the natural world and provides an opportunity to give guests a more intimate and breathtaking experience of creatures that could never be kept in a collection, all while educating people on conservation in an immersive way.

As a result of the success of its *Swimming with Humpbacks* VR motion platform experience, Immotion Group (immotion.co.uk) has released *Shark Dive*, a fully immersive tiger shark experi-



Higginson

ence. This encounter reshapes the understanding of the way humans interact with these creatures. We learn, for example, that far from being a mindless killer, the tiger shark's instinct is not to kill but to clear the waters of dead and dying prey — thereby serving a vital role in maintaining the balance of the ecosystem.

The importance of experiences like these is that they allow zoos and aquariums, including Sea Life London Aquarium, Dubai Aquarium & Underwater Zoo, Shedd Aquarium in Chicago, and Mote Marine Laboratory & Aquarium in Sarasota, Florida, to fuse conservation, education and entertainment without being intrusive on natural habitats.

"Part of our mission is to incorporate education and conservation with technology," said Greg Charbeneau, vice president and general manager of OdySea Aquarium in Scottsdale, Arizona, which features Immotion VR among its attractions. "Incorporating VR into our guest experience is really taking our mission and putting it all together."

VR allows aquariums to expand the stories they want to tell and build worlds that guests will want to experience time and time again.

Opinions expressed on this page are those of the columnist(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher.

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National Roller Coaster Museum & Archives



Observations from a social distance

Throughout this global pandemic, members of the amusement industry share with **Amusement Today** what's in their hearts.

"We were walking through the parks the other day, and a family standing looking at our Mine Blower said to us, 'We can't wait for y'all to open back up; this is our favorite roller coaster in the world.' The mother then started telling us how great our team was and how they feel like family when they come to one of our properties. That was motivation for everyone standing there knowing we have so many fans who really enjoy our parks, and we really enjoy them. From that day moving forward, all we talk about is how much can we get done for our guests to walk into our parks when this is over, and be wowed by the difference in how it looks. We truly have the best team and fans in the world, and I am forever grateful for that!"

—**John Arie, Jr.**,
Chief Executive Officer
Fun Spot America Theme Parks

"We've been eagerly anticipating the celebration of our 10th birthday in April. Now, in view of the national health emergency, we're heartened by the old saying: 'Good things come to those who wait.' Our team will celebrate with our guests just as soon as it's safe to do so, yet we're still thrilled with the knowledge that we've touched the lives of many thousands of guests with special needs over what we're calling 'A Decade of Difference.'"

—**Gordon Hartman**,
Founder
Morgan's Wonderland

"Even though this global pandemic has been a shock to all of us, I can't imagine a better group of people to band together in a spirit of unity, creativity and ingenuity to bring our industry back to prosperity."

—**Tim Timco**,
President and CEO
S&S Worldwide

"Our guests and team members are providing us with the kind of hope everyone could use right now. Our guests are requesting new reservations and assuring us they'll be here whenever we're able to open, and our team is telling us they're anxious to come back to work. We couldn't be more appreciative of their support and hope they know we're just as eager to welcome them back as soon as safely possible."

—**Stacy Ososkie**,
Public Relations Director
Knoebels Amusement Resort

"My sister-in-law gave us their trampoline and some play equipment for the kids, which we built up right next to the slide and sandpit. If the lockdown continues another month, I may consider getting a pony to finally open the gates to my own amusement park!"

—**Jakob Wahl**
Vice President EMEA
IAAPA

"The empty streets of The City are adorned with banners and buntings celebrating our 60th anniversary. This is NOT the spring we

had planned. But guess what. Someday, we will celebrate, and that celebration will now be bigger and bolder than we had originally planned!

"These words keep giving me strength: I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. [Psalms 121:1-2] Just think, people have read and prayed over those words as they faced years (maybe even decades) of war, famine, floods, disease after disease, economic downturns as well as incredibly joyous and jubilant days."

—**Brad Thomas**,
Park President
Silver Dollar City

"We are seeing positive movement with our customers in China with regards to spare parts orders and scheduled park openings. We believe this is a sign of things to come in Europe and North America."

"It is a very impactful and positive thing to see the majority of our suppliers are open and doing business, which allows us to do the same. Recovery will be a full team/industry effort. As we rely on and trust each other to move forward, we will share in the collective success of industry revitalization."

—**Josh Hays**,
Executive Director of Sales and Marketing
S&S Worldwide

"I have seen our developments department being efficiently proactive and productive while remotely working from home during these days. Creativity is in full gear despite a not-so-inspiring atmosphere — a nice surprise. There is truly a bucket of amazing ideas with strong appeal awaiting to become product hits. I am envisioning them all rolling, flipping, wetting and looping soon."

—**Sascha Czibulka**,
Executive Vice President
Intamin

"Our parks and employees have mobilized in their respective communities by taking food from our Urban Cafés and preparing meals for those in need. Our Urbie character is making appearances (six feet apart, of course), and I'm personally calling as many kiddos as possible who had canceled birthday parties to wish them a happy birthday."

—**Michael Browning**,
Chief Executive Office
Urban Air Adventure Parks

"Brian and I are so proud of our kids, Matthew and Allison. They organized Unite the Night, a luminaries event for the city of Huron, all on their own. I'm so impressed with their resilience and dedication."

—**Janice Witherow**,
Columnist
Amusement Today

Have a comment on current events to share? Throughout this crisis, Amusement Today is looking for communication from the heart — whether encouraging, inspiring or worthy of a chuckle — to let the industry connect in these unprecedented times. Contact Tim Baldwin: tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com.

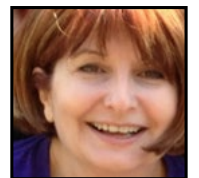
THE INDUSTRY SEEN

Europe's empty Efteling



KAATSHEUVEL, Netherlands — One of Europe's most popular theme parks and the number-one day attraction most missed by the Dutch during the coronavirus pandemic, Efteling has released new drone footage and photos to show what the park currently looks like now that it is empty. The initiative allows families, fans and potential future visitors to tour Efteling virtually and experience the World of Wonders from their own home. "Ordinarily, we welcome many visitors from all over Europe during Easter, but unfortunately this is not possible this year. It is very special to walk through the empty park now," says park CEO Fons Jurgens. Visitors can go to efteling.com/en/press to view the drone video. COURTESY EFTELING

Reflections ON FUN



AT: Lottie Minick

Tangling with a 'Texas Cyclone'

In 1983, my husband, **Bob Minick**, decided to start his own amusement park design firm and reached out to venerable wooden coaster designer **William L. Cobb**, a dear friend and creative force behind, among other classic rides, the Great American Scream Machine at **Six Flags Over Georgia** and Texas Cyclone at **Six Flags Astroworld**. Mr. Cobb operated out of a former supermarket building in Dallas, where he and his engineer, **John Pierce**, gave us space.

Our office was adjacent to Mr. Cobb's. Noticing my rookie typing skills, he would walk by and say things like, "Try using all 10 fingers." I imagined his picture illustrated "curmudgeon" in the dictionary.

Mr. Cobb's office had a kitchen, so I brought in cartons of **Blue Bell** ice cream to chase away my usual afternoon doldrums and insisted he indulge with me. When I jokingly told him I needed an ice cream allowance, his disapproval could be heard in the next county. But later, he dropped a cigar box filled with cash on my desk. "That should take care of your ice cream addiction," he said.

Eventually, Mr. Cobb hollered about gaining weight from the ice cream. So I replaced it with sherbet. After one spoonful, he bellowed his displeasure. Back to Blue Bell I went, yet his rants persisted — sometimes sending Bob, John and our designer, **Rich Poling**, under their drawing tables.

Still, Mr. Cobb was hard not to love. Even if working in his world was a bona fide roller coaster.

Lottie Minick is a 46-year attractions industry veteran and co-owner of Dallas-based Minick Associates, a design firm founded by her late husband, Bob. Her monthly column features behind-the-scenes anecdotes of her own and from those who have worked in the business. Got a fun industry story? Email lottie@minickassociates.com.

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distribution organization. **Six Flags Over Georgia** in Austell provided 114 boxes of fruit, vegetables and dairy to **The Center for Children & Young Adults**, a private, nonprofit shelter based in nearby Marietta.

Six Flags expressed a commitment to serving the needs of its community. "We are grateful for the partnership with The Center and look forward to providing those living [there] with this nutritious food in a time of uncertainty," said **Dale Kaetzel**, park president.

With patrons in the most populous areas of the U.S. ordered to stay home and practice social distancing, theme parks — mindful of brand maintenance — delivered fun and education via the web and social media.

Along with **Kings Dominion** in Doswell, Virginia, and **Sesame Place** in Langhorne, Pennsylvania, **Idlewild & SoakZone** in Ligonier, Pennsylvania, supplied downloadable coloring and activity pages. "We wanted to offer families a bit of a break from the craziness that is our new 'normal,'" explained **Jeff Croushore**, Idlewild's director of marketing, to *Amusement Today*.

The Busch Gardens and SeaWorld parks provided free online educational resources dedicated to wild animals and nature, as did Orlando's **Gatorland** through its Facebook Live program, "School of Croc," which had racked up a million views by the second week of April. **Disney's Animal Kingdom** posted photos of the Central Florida park's latest animal babies, including a zebra and a porcupine.

On the human end of the park entertainment spectrum, Disney presented a first-of-its-kind online performance by the **Dapper Dans**, the iconic barber-shop quartet from Disneyland's Main Street U.S.A., who sang one of their all-time favorite tunes, "When You Wish Upon A Star."

Creative engagement was on tap, too, thanks to Disney's "Imagineering in a Box," a 32-part online program (see story, page 56). The **Legoland Resort** properties in Central Florida and Southern California challenged their social media followers with Lego-brick projects.

Suppliers vary pace, adapt

Despite the shutdown, many manufacturers and suppliers kept busy completing existing projects, filling parts orders or producing entirely new products targeting needs created by the pandemic.

Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters, Inc. had a train ready to ship to Six Flags Over Georgia as soon as it was permitted to resume work. Company president **Tom Rebbie** told *AT*: "We have others ready to assemble and get out to parks, too."

Larson Intl. in Plainview, Texas, was conducting normal operations. According to **Hunter Novotny**, mechanical engineer, the company's ride and parts department was stocked and ready for incoming orders. It was also following CDC workplace guidelines for its employees and the safe handling of materials and shipments.

"We're doing our best to keep everyone healthy with cleaning stations for tools and hands throughout the shop," said Novotny, adding that the company was also sanitizing incoming and outgoing boxes.

Client services continued at Baltimore-based **Premier Rides**, which was using new technologies to allow in-office employees to collaborate with remote workers. The company told *AT* that parts were available, noting that it recently made multiple shipments to parks in Asia.

"We have associates at ground zero in Wuhan [China], and they are back at work and feeling positive about the future," said **Jim Seay**, president. "Parks are reopening in Japan and China, including the front areas of the Disney parks. There is a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel!"

Ride Entertainment, with bases in Maryland and New York, was taking the situation "one day at a time," said **Adam Sandy**, president of business development. The company's installation and maintenance team, which was working in the Mid-Atlantic region as the crisis unfolded, was following coronavirus-related safety and isolation guidelines. In addition, it had a work-from-home policy for full-time employees.

Like **Sunkid** of Austria, **Vekoma Rides Mfg.** of the Netherlands and other international suppliers, Ride Entertainment was still taking parts orders while utilizing the pause to develop new ideas and plan for the future. "Our partners — **Gerstlauer**, **Funtime**, **Lagotronics Projects**, etc. — are shipping parts as needed," Sandy said. "With parks in South Korea and other countries starting to reopen, we're seeing orders for **Skycoaster** parts come in."

Ricardo Etges, Vekoma's global business development manager, said the company's Chinese production facility was restarting after a two-month closure and Vekoma's customer ser-



Kings Dominion is one of many parks that are keeping younger patrons entertained both online and off with downloadable coloring and activity pages.

COURTESY KINGS DOMINION

vice remained available via phone and video conferencing. "Our goal still is to meet urgent delivery times. Even during this difficult time, our clients are working on new projects and ideas with us for the next seasons."

Len Soled of Somerville, New Jersey-based **Rides 4 U**, which represents **S&S Worldwide**, **SBF/Visa Group** and **KMG**, has been shipping spare parts and delivering new rides to customers, including **Paul Maurer Shows** of Huntington Beach, California, and **Adventureland** in Farmingdale, New York. He was optimistic about the industry. "Even during the Depression, people were spending money on amusement park rides," he said. "They still need to bring entertainment to their life to bring balance."

In the water park equipment sector, Vancouver-based **WhiteWater** reported that several of its construction projects in China have restarted. Workers at the Shanghai office were taking extra precautions to avoid coronavirus transmission, including checking the temperature of visitors.

Aquatic Development Group of Cohoes, New York, was shipping equipment and parts and continuing to work on contracted projects wherever possible. It was also offering a bit of therapeutic outreach to its customers with a meditation audio file of wave sounds posted on its website.

"During this stressful time, we wanted to focus on staying connected to our clients," said **Julie St. Louis**, marketing and communications specialist. "The sound of waves crashing on a beach is peaceful and relaxing — something everyone can use right now."

Several companies, such as **Extreme Engineering** in Athens, Texas (see story, page 52), and **Daniels Wood Land, Inc.**, in Paso Robles, California, took their reputation for innovation to the next level — shifting to

production of personal protective equipment (PPE) desperately needed by first responders and medical personnel in the front-line battle against COVID-19.

According to **Ron Daniels**, president of Daniels Wood Land, the company's decision to use its 37,000-square-foot facility to create protective gowns instead of custom tree houses, shooting galleries and playgrounds was twofold: to keep employees working and help those placing themselves in harm's way to save others. With an estimated capacity to make 120,000 of the specialized garments daily, the company also had samples of face masks and face shields it was exploring.

"We all have a stake in this game here," Daniels said. "All of us could end up knowing someone who could pass away from this virus."

(Re)assuring insurance

Industry-specific insurance and finance companies were at the ready.

"We and our insurance partners are working on solutions to reflect the lack of business operations and exposure by our clients," said **Rick D'Aprile**, vice president of **Amusement Entertainment Risk Insurance Associates**, which covers mobile and fixed-site facilities. "Renewal dates, locations and season are all issues to be looked at, as well as what coverages are still needed and which can be suspended or postponed. We realize we are all in this together and one solution will not fit all."

"We see a lot of facilities and shows that are, sadly, having to shut their doors and will not open during this period of challenge," said **Drew Tewksbury**, director of sales and marketing at **McGowan Allied Specialty Insurance**. "Our insurance partners are actively working through the issues and providing solutions to ease the economic burden on our clientele."

Advised **Dave Harman** of **AJG Risk Management Services**: "Clients and brokers need to be proactive, get in front of the ball and let the underwriters know what's happening with their business. If the clients, parks and carnivals are proactive, the underwriters will work with them to solve whatever problems that can be solved."

Some brokers could see changes coming to the industry as a result of the pandemic, such as increased sanitation and reduced crowding.

"There'll be some best practices from the standpoint of wiping things down, having more hand sanitizer and handwashing stations," said **ESY Financial's Larry Yaffe**, past chair and trustee of the **Outdoor Amusement Business Assn. (OABA)**, noting that OABA was already at work on a CDC guidelines-driven list. "Although a lot of our businesses have done a really good job of that, I just don't think it was advertised because its importance wasn't at the forefront."

Ryan Wilkerson, president and CEO of **Haas & Wilkerson Insurance**, echoed the need to bolster consumer confidence in parks and fairs: "More visibly doing things like disinfecting and cleaning will show our consumers that we're taking their safety seriously not just from a ride safety standpoint, but from a health safety standpoint."

Firestone Financial, a subsidiary of **Berkshire Bank**, a Massachusetts-based nationwide business lender serving the amusement and entertainment industry was offering a three-month deferral on existing loans for customers requesting pandemic-related assistance.

Rich Gockelman, carnival and amusement park commercial account executive for Firestone, explained to *AT* that a majority of the company's clients operate seasonally and are on seasonal payment plans, and they have not and/or will not be able to build up capital before their payments are due. At the same time, many have already incurred expenses. "They've stepped up and stocked up for their opening events of the season, which are maybe the smaller ones, but they're important ones," he said. "These earlier spots and events kind of prime the pump and are a critical part of their finances."

"This year, many had all their employees and materials lined up, transported themselves to the spot and then had these abrupt shutdowns."

Gockelman predicted fun-seekers will be cautious with their

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► COVID**Continued from page 6**

money when the crisis eases, perhaps reviving the “staycation” concept. “That means going out for maybe a couple-hour drive and spending a whole day with the family at a regional park, fair or carnival,” he said.

All in the family

For now, it is a waiting game for family-owned amusement parks as the impact of the coronavirus reverberates.

Two Pennsylvania operations — **Knoebels Amusement Resort** in Elysburg and **Waldameer & Water World** in Erie — were among those rolling with it as best they could, adding hand sanitizer dispensers and stepping up cleaning routines as they awaited a green light to open.

Having already delayed its season start to a (hopeful) date in early May, Knoebels was focused on keeping in touch with employees and patrons. “We’ve been providing regular updates via our Team Knoebels Facebook group and relying on our managers to ensure those who don’t have Facebook are receiving our company communications,” said **Brian Knoebel**, resort co-owner.

With job fairs and in-person interviews not possible, he added that the company was considering options for conducting virtual rehiring meetings and interviews via FaceTime, Skype and other video platforms.

While Waldameer’s amusement area was not slated to open to the general public until May, its year-round indoor event business lost four dates. The park has postponed its annual summer job fair and is accepting applications online instead.

“It’s up to the county to decide what we can do,” said **Paul Nelson**, Waldameer’s owner and CEO, noting that Erie County generates 7% of its gross annual income from various amusement operations. “They have to pay some attention to us.”

Advance sales at **Quassy Amusement & Waterpark** in Middlebury, Connecticut, also were affected. “We’re currently in our off-season, and the only impact internally has been on our sales team,” said **Eric Anderson**, park president. “We had to reduce their hours due to schools and businesses being closed.”

At the same time, Quassy increased its patron contact efforts — making the most of its electronic newsletters by distributing coloring and activity pages for families to enjoy at home.

Ken Taylor, vice president of **Jenkinson’s Boardwalk &**

Aquarium in Point Pleasant Beach, New Jersey, voluntarily closed his arcade and game operations before the state ordered nonessential businesses to do so. “We thought it was the right thing to do to try to flatten the curve [in viral infection rates],” he said.

Taylor envisioned gloved ride operators and other changes upon reopening. Hand-sanitizing stations, he said, “are going to be fixtures at every ticket booth, arcade counter, kiosk.”

Fun Spot America, with locations in Orlando and Kissimmee, Florida, as well as Atlanta, remained open through much of March after most attractions opted to close. The parks were closed March 23 under additional state and federal guidance.

According to CEO **John Arie, Jr.**, the properties had been operating pretty much “as normal” and crowds were “good,” if lighter than usual for the spring break period. In response to the outbreak, hand sanitizer dispensers were installed throughout and employees frequently disinfected handrails and doorknobs.

Joyland Amusement Park in Lubbock, Texas, took similar steps to keep guests safe. But after launching its season March 7 with “a good start,” per owner **David Dean**, the city restrictions forced the park closed in the middle of the month. “We’ve had to cut spending on most everything,” he acknowledged. The part-time staff of 80 was laid off and full-time employees were reduced to 20-30 hours weekly.

Cliff’s Amusement Park in Albuquerque, New Mexico, was in the midst of seasonal hiring at the time of the shutdown. “We have reached out to all new hires and rehires explaining the current situation, and will stay in touch,” said **Justin Hayes**, general manager of Cliff’s. “We are exploring doing interviews via FaceTime.”

In Northern California, **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk** was enjoying a record start for the year before the crisis hit. “When California later issued a shelter-in-place order, staff that could were asked to continue working from home,” said **Marq Lipton**, vice president of marketing and sales. “A very small number of critical operational staff, including a Coronavirus Task Force, reported to the park. We called off part-time/seasonal employees.”

A fair season that isn’t

The cancellation or postponement of top regional and national events and fairs such as the **Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo** and, in Southern

Additional coverage available in *Amusement Today’s* special COVID-19 issue!



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California, the **San Diego County Fair** and **Coachella Music and Arts Festival** have shattered traditions along with the plans of vendors and fans.

“We are an industry that lives the motto, ‘The show must go on,’” said **Greg Chiecko**, president and CEO of OABA. “Given the current state of affairs, the show is not going on, and it is completely out of our control.”

The situation, observed **Alicia Shoults**, marketing and public relations director of the **Ohio State Fair** in Columbus, has sparked a supportive rallying cry nonetheless. “The fair industry has always been one where people come together, share ideas and work as a team,” she said. “This crisis is another example of that.”

Fairs, like many parks, have found silver linings in making humanitarian gestures. Many have offered the use of their fairgrounds and facilities for a variety of COVID-19 responses, including field hospitals and drive-through testing stations.

The **Miami-Dade Youth Fair** in South Florida allowed a 250-bed medical facility with a mobile X-ray machine to be erected inside a tent on its grounds. Another temporary hospital with 250 beds was set up at the **Oregon State Fair and Exposition Center** in Salem.

The 83-acre **York State Fair** in southeastern Pennsylvania hosted eight lanes of drive-through coronavirus testing on its grounds. And the **Tommy Thompson Youth Center at Wisconsin State Fair Park** in West Allis became a donation facility for health care provider PPE of all kinds, such as N95 face masks.

Midway providers experienced their share of pain, as well.

“Transportation costs, refunds for those who purchased pre-sale tickets, obligations to employees, maintenance schedules for equipment, insurance inspections — those financial obligations must be met,” pointed out **Chris Lopez**, vice president of family owned-and-operated **RCS, Inc.**, of Laveen, Arizona.

“All of our fairs are down

until June,” said **Ron Burback, Sr.**, co-owner of Portland, Oregon-based **Funtastic Traveling Shows**, which laid off the crew so they could apply for unemployment. “What happens after that date, we’ll have to play by ear.”

“We’re seeing the same challenges as any other business,” said **Lynda Franc**, corporate marketing director of Farmland, Indiana-headquartered **North American Midway Entertainment**. “The one difference is how fairs and events are all turning to each other to motivate one another, stay strong and just support each other.”

Providing fun anew

The family entertainment center (FEC) sector and its suppliers were looking after their employees and brainstorming ways to adapt their operations.

Ohio-based **Scene75** elected to close all five of its venues a week before the mandated shutdown. “Doing so was required for us to fully adhere to one of Scene75’s core values of putting people first,” said founder **Jonah Sandler**. “While economically painful, [it] was in the best interest of our family of team members and guests. We agreed to pay all staff members in full for the following two weeks despite asking them to stay home.”

Other operators also sought ways to help staff maintain an income.

“We convened with leaders of brands who are currently seeing a surge in demand to help park employees find work,” said **Michael Browning**, CEO of Bedford, Texas-headquartered **Urban Air Adventure Parks**, which has more than 200 facilities open or under construction in the U.S. “We connected our nationwide staff of more than 12,000 with **Amazon** and **RTC Recruitment** for part-time employment.”

He added that qualified staff members were able to find employment in as little as seven days, with the option to return to Urban Air later. The company’s top executives chose to forgo their own salaries during the shutdown.

Suppliers were also pitching in to help keep their FEC clients stay solvent.

Creative Works of Mooresville, Indiana, which specializes in laser tag and VR arenas, among other attractions, was deferring payments for support and warranty plans. “We truly love this industry, and we appreciate everything our clients do to create memories for their communities,” said **Armando Lanuti**, president. “Hopefully, this can help ease

the burden for operators.”

Staff members of global laser tag supplier **Laserforce** were working from home, where possible, “to continue providing the level of service required to support our operators,” said the company’s **Jason Wallace**.

While **Scene75**, **Urban Air** and other FEC operators were maximizing customer engagement through social media in this period of “pandemic parenting,” as Browning described it, another FEC supplier, Dallas-based business solutions company **Embed**, launched a series of educational blogs and videos for sharing with key partners.

Having recently debuted a mobile wallet cashless payment system that utilizes Apple Pay and Google Wallet, Embed is well positioned in a world now seeking to minimize contact with surfaces. “We are working on the next wave of technology innovation with our partners **Apple** and **Google** so that contactless payments become truly contactless across our entire solutions,” said **Sara Paz**, chief marketing officer.

Where contact cannot be avoided, some companies are exploring more reliable disinfection. Virtual reality entertainment company **Hologate** of Munich, for one, was working on an Ultraviolet C medical-grade cleaning solution lab-tested to kill 99.99% of bacteria, viruses and fungi.

Urban Air is using the shutdown to “go over everything with a fine-tooth comb,” said Browning of the company’s cleaning procedures. “It’s an extensive process that involves misting and fogging with antimicrobial and antibacterial products. It leaves a protective coating on all surfaces.”

Aside from using the best cleaning practices, Scene75’s Sandler was looking “to identify what operating measures we would need to implement if asked to limit capacity in our buildings upon reopening.”

Although no part of the attractions industry will be proceeding as usual, there was a vital, cross-sector undercurrent of confidence that it will recover and emerge stronger. In the meantime, there is the more important business of caring for one another.

“We need to focus on good health and praying for those who are affected,” said entertainer, philanthropist and theme park owner **Dolly Parton**, who has been promoting healing — and relieving weary parents — by reading bedtime stories for kids online each week. “We know brighter days are ahead.”

—Reported by the *Staff of Amusement Today*

PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

► Deno's Wonder Wheel celebrates 100 years — page 14 / Fairs open prior to COVID-19 closure — page 24

Santa Monica Pier's Pacific Park plans steel coaster makeover

In-house design team, Chance Rides to redo 24-year-old attraction

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SANTA MONICA, Calif. — Located at the western terminus of old U.S. Route 66, the **Santa Monica Pier**, jutting hundreds of feet into the Pacific Ocean, has served as a dramatically scenic conclusion to epic journeys and a much-needed decompression spot for stressed city dwellers.

Plans recently unveiled by **Pacific Park**, a two-acre amusement area that opened on the iconic, nearly 111-year-old pier in 1996, will tidily combine those two functions.

The park is retheming its steel roller coaster, **West Coaster**, as **Route 66 West Coaster**. The \$1 million-plus makeover aims to enhance the experience of the 24-year-old family ride as well as celebrate the historic highway.

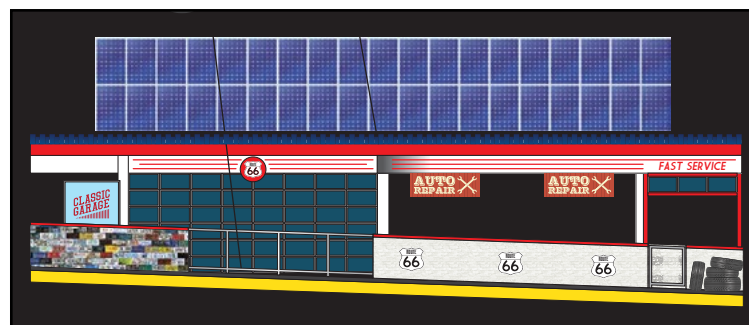
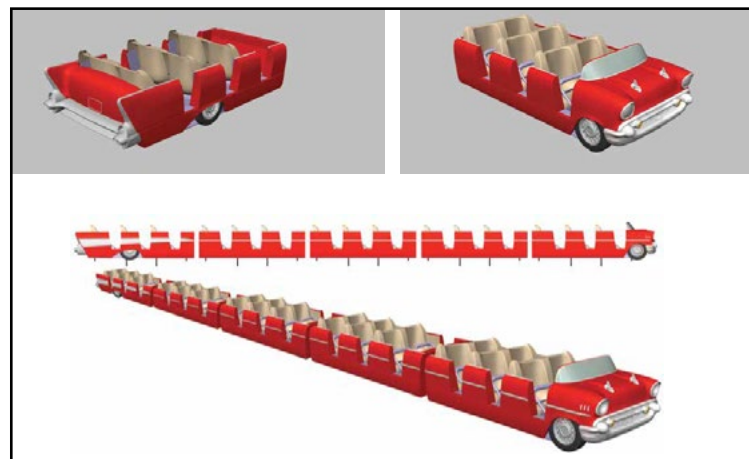


Pacific Park's family-friendly **West Coaster**, opened in 1996 (inset at left), is getting a **Route 66-inspired makeover** that includes a new vintage automobile-themed train, a redesigned loading station and an enhanced guest experience with vintage props and exhibits. COURTESY PACIFIC PARK, SANTA MONICA PUBLIC LIBRARY IMAGE ARCHIVES

"Route 66 presented travelers with an open road from Chicago to Los Angeles that offered unique mom-and-pop dining spots, first-of-its-kind motor lodging and one-of-a-kind roadside attractions — all facets represented in the new **Route 66 West Coaster**," said **Nathan Smithson**, Pacific Park's director of marketing and business development.

The ride's loading station will be reimagined with automotive décor, including vintage gas pumps, license plates, maps of Route 66 and other memorabilia. A new guest experience alongside the coaster's 1,300-foot-long track will feature vintage-themed billboards that highlight the unique roadside attractions, landscapes and towns linked by the highway, which was alternately nicknamed the Mother Road and Main Street of America.

A new coaster train has been conceptualized from the wheels up, with cars sporting design elements of the classic American automobiles that traveled the 2,448-mile-long original route — completed in 1938. It will incorporate the **Chicago Theatre** sign, the **Gateway Arch** of St. Louis, an oil well derrick, a saguaro cactus and the Santa Monica Pier entrance arch, among other land-



marks seen by millions on the cross-country drive.

The revamped attraction is being designed by Pacific Park's design and operations team and built by **Chance Rides** of Wichita, Kansas. The 55-foot-tall, 35-mph coaster, with a 20-foot first drop followed by a 540-degree helix, was originally built by **D.H. Morgan Mfg.**, which was

acquired by **Chance** in 2001.

Although no opening date has been set for **Route 66 West Coaster** — the park and other Los Angeles-area attractions remain shut down during the pandemic-related stay-at-home mandate — the project was expected to take six months to complete. Visit the park online for updates.

• pacpark.com

Honoring health care heroes



In tribute to the medical personnel working tirelessly on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic, **Caesars Entertainment** has launched special light shows at two of its Las Vegas landmarks — the **High Roller** observation wheel at **The Linq Promenade** (above) and the **Eiffel Tower** replica at **Paris Las Vegas**. The nightly presentations in hues of red, white and blue are also intended as beacons of hope. COURTESY CAESARS ENTERTAINMENT

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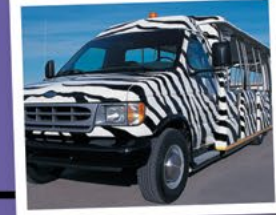
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Cinderella's Castle salutes World Health Day, undergoes makeover

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — On April 7, Cinderella's Castle, the central icon of **Magic Kingdom** at **Walt Disney World Resort**, was illuminated in bright blue to honor the medical community's tireless contributions to fighting COVID-19. The special illumination of the castle coincided with World Health Day. Though all U.S. Disney parks have remained closed indefinitely since March 16, several essential park employees, including security guards were on hand for the lighting.

Earlier this year, the Magic Kingdom celebrated the 70th anniversary of the release of **Disney Animation Studios'** 12th full-length animated feature film, *Cinderella*, by announcing a "royal makeover" of the princess' namesake castle at the Florida resort's flagship park. When completed, the enhancements to the castle's exterior façade will include a pink and gray color scheme complimented by royal blue turret roofs with gold accents. The enhancements to the castle began in February and were expected to continue through summer, but with the shutdown and subsequent halt of construction, the work has been delayed and it is not known when the project will be completed.

—David Fake

Artist concept of the completed royal makeover of Cinderella Castle.
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Above, Walt Disney World Resort security cast members hold "thank you" signs for medical workers while standing in front of Cinderella Castle. The castle was illuminated with a hopeful blue light on April 7, in honor of World Health Day.
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Funtime offers a new variation on classic thriller: Booster Unhinged



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VIENNA, Austria — With more than two decades of frightening passengers and delighting onlookers along midways with its Booster attraction, **Funtime** is making headway into the larger theme park market with this thrill ride. The company's StarFlyer has already been a huge seller and is seen in parks around the world. This year, the Booster attraction will be installed in two theme parks in the U.S. **The Great Escape** and **Six Flags St. Louis** will be introducing the towering, rotating thrills of the classic Booster to its audiences and the park skyline.

Three dimensions of thrills immerse riders on Booster Unhinged: the seats flip and rotate at the end of the arm, while the main boom rotates 164 feet in the air. COURTESY RIDE ENTERTAINMENT

But now comes a twist. Funtime has introduced **Booster Unhinged**. The first was introduced at **Prater Park** in 2019. The concept is now ready to expand and become bigger yet.

Booster Unhinged takes the proven extreme concept of the original **Booster** and revs up the adrenaline with another level of chaos. Riders experience three separate motions all at once: the rotation of the main boom, powered rotation of the seating rigs, and the free-flipping gravitational motion of each individual seat.

"After over 20 years of success with our original **Booster** rides, Funtime felt the time had come to re-imagine the concept and deliver yet another dimension of thrills that our clients and fans expect from our company," said **Hannes Lackner**, Funtime Group's general manager. "Booster Unhinged exceeded all expectations as eager guests lined up to experience this world's first expe-

rience. Our entire team was excited to introduce the new concept at the famous **Prater Park**, which has become one of our favorite locations to debut prototypes given its proximity to our factory in **Dölsach**."

One of the strengths of the ride is the unobstructed visuals of its spectacular views from great heights. **Booster Unhinged** arcs through the sky at a height of 164 feet (50 meters) and has a top speed of 62mph (100 km/h).

Funtime is represented in the U.S. by **Ride Entertainment**.

"Booster Unhinged takes the proven extreme ride experience of the classic **Booster** and ratchets the thrills up another notch!" said **Mark Rosenzweig**, managing director, business development, Ride Entertainment. "With the controlled rotation of the seating rigs coupled with a gravitational side-to-side flipping motion of each individual seat — both occurring while the main ride boom is also rotating — this monumental attraction leaves riders wondering which way is up."

The **Prater Park** installation has a capacity of eight riders per cycle with four riders on each end of the boom. However, Funtime reports that for properties needing greater capacity on the ride, 16- and 32-seat versions are also available.

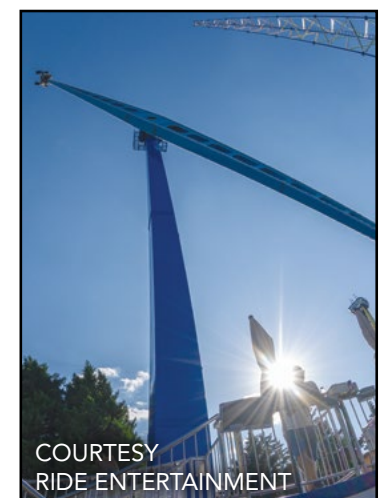
"The different seating options allow clients to install the ride as a standalone upcharge or include it in a pay-one-price option," noted Rosenzweig.


"Funtime continues to increase the capacity on amazing extreme rides so they can work in traditional theme park environments. The debut of **Booster Unhinged** at **Prater** and the new rides at **Six Flags** properties show that there is still an appetite for unique thrills like this," said Lackner.

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Deno's Wonder Wheel set to celebrate as it turns century mark

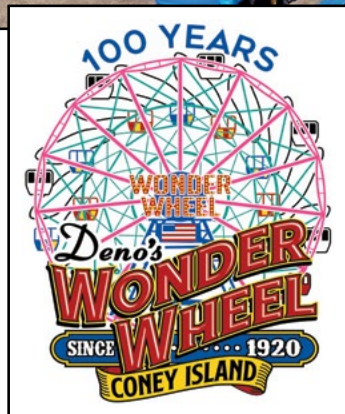
AT: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

CONEY ISLAND, N.Y. — What do **Jennifer Lopez, Beyonce, Will Smith, Woody Allen, Josh Brolin, Spike Lee, Bruce Willis and Larry King** all share in common? They — among countless other celebrities and 35 million people — have all taken at least one excursion on the iconic, one-of-a-kind Wonder Wheel. It has also been the backdrop for numerous engagements and weddings throughout the rides' ten-decade history.

Constructed by the **Eccentric Ferris Wheel Company** starting in 1918 and finished two years later, it was built using 100% **Bethlehem Steel** material that was forged right in Coney Island. Standing 150 feet tall — the equivalent of a 15-story building — and weighing 200 tons, the legendary wheel was once called "Dip-the-Dip" by its inventor, **Charles Hermann**. His concept was to combine the thrill of a scenic railway, Ferris wheel and Chute-the-Chutes all in one. To work around union issues during construction, 18 on the erection crew were given shares of the ride, thus insuring quality throughout the building process.

In 1983, **Denos Vourderis** bought the Wonder Wheel from **Fred Garms**, whose father, **Herman**, was its first owner-operator. Denos proposed to his future wife, **Lula**, atop the wheel 36 years prior to the purchase, contributing to the rides' allure to him. It was renamed Deno's Wonder Wheel after purchase and became the centerpiece of **Deno's Wonder Wheel Park**.

Sixteen of the 24 cars slide inward toward the hub on snaking tracks and roll outward as the wheel rotates. The



Known worldwide, Deno's Wonder Wheel was designated an official New York City landmark by the City's Landmarks Preservation Commission in 1989. COURTESY JIM MCDONNELL/DENO'S WONDER WHEEL PARK

native and pop singer who enjoyed success in the mid-1980s. In addition, various bands, mariachis, stilt walkers and other entertainers will be strolling in and around the park grounds. "We are hoping to have a huge birthday cake as well. Hopefully this virus will be behind us by then," said Vourderis. (**Steve Vourderis**, brother of Dennis, is the other co-owner.)

More live entertainment will continue on Sunday, followed by Memorial Day activities.

"We will have **Broadway Cares** coming with members of the cast of the Broadway play *Wicked* to perform some of the songs from the show. We are especially excited for this event. It will be open to the public, who will have the opportunity to experience a portion of a Broadway show for free," said Vourderis.

When asked why it is important to celebrate the wheel's significant birthday, Vourderis said, "100 years for anything to survive, especially an amusement device, that has seen everything from world wars, depression, recessions, superstorms, hurricanes, fires, redevelopment, you name it... even a virus! [COVID-19] The Wonder Wheel has stood the test of time and not only survived, it has thrived. It has become a significant piece of New York City history and attracts tourists from all over the world. It would be a travesty



NOT to celebrate and recognize this milestone!"

While filming her latest movie *Marry Me*, Jennifer Lopez asked if it was safe to ride, to which Vourderis quipped, "We haven't had a problem yet today!" She then went on the wheel. It should be noted the Wonder Wheel has maintained a perfect safety record for its entire history.

Countless politicians, especially former borough President **Marty Markowitz**, who always said "it's the only ride I will go on," have enjoyed rides on the Wonder Wheel.

The only stoppage in the history of the ride was during the New York City blackout, July 13-14, 1977 — when most of the five boroughs lost electrical power. Riders were brought down safely as the owners hand cranked the wheel, a safety feature built-in from the beginning.

The Wonder Wheel has

been depicted in numerous movies including *The Warriors* and TV series, including *Mr. Robot*. At least one movie is named after the attraction: the 2017 released *Wonder Wheel* film, set at Coney Island in the 1950s. The wheel was the inspiration for full-size replicas, first in the now-defunct **Yokohama Dreamland**, Japan, and then in 2001 at **Disney's California Adventure**, Anaheim. Initially known as the Sun Wheel and then Mickey's Fun Wheel, it is currently called Pixar Pal-A-Round.

Vourderis is glad his family has played a role in maintaining this world-famous ride. "Our family is honored to have the privilege to own and operate Deno's Wonder Wheel for four generations. Deno's Wonder Wheel is truly a remarkable ride that we hope will continue to turn for another 100 years. Cheers everyone!"

•Denowonderwheel.com



Lula and Denos Vourderis purchased the Wonder Wheel in 1983. Denos proposed to Lula at the ride 27 years earlier. COURTESY DENO'S WONDER WHEEL PARK



Standing 150 feet tall and weighing 200 tons, more than 35 million riders have experienced the unique Deno's Wonder Wheel. COURTESY DENO'S WONDER WHEEL PARK

One of America's oldest roller coasters reaches milestone

Kennywood's Jack Rabbit coaster commemorates 100 years of fun

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WEST MIFFLIN, Pa. — For park operators, celebrating a roller coaster's milestones is a fun marketing angle, not to mention a clever way to sell anniversary merchandise for the occasion. But when that milestone is 100 years, that's a very elite club of historic attractions. Such a group consists of simply a mere handful of roller coasters.

Opened in June of 1920, Kennywood's Jack Rabbit has thrilled crowds for a century. Placed over one of the hilly ravines within the park, the wooden roller coaster makes great use of the topography with all four of its big drops. The ride's most famous feature is its outrageous double dip. The third drop — ironically, the coaster's biggest — is the most thrilling as the famous double dip sends riders off the seat with its superb moment of negative Gs. It has endeared multiple generations to this crowd-pleasing coaster, even after decades and decades of operation.

Jack Rabbit was designed by **John A. Miller** and built by **Charlie Mach**. This historic woodie is one of the rare remaining examples of Miller's work. Fewer than 10 are still in operation (out of 150, according to **Roller Coaster DataBase**).

Another one of its notable characteristics is that the lift hill appears during the middle of the ride, placed centrally



between the four drops. Even with a relatively simple layout of four curves and four drops, the ride still offers 2,132 feet of track, substantial enough to be a full ride experience, even by today's standards.

The park has designed two logos for the occasion.

"This will also be our 2020 Souvenir Cup theme, but I'm not totally sure which version," said **Nick Paradise**, public relations manager, Kennywood. "We debuted the 100th anniversary logo with a throwback style more reminiscent of the classic Jack Rabbit which will now be on the coaster trains, and a large sign within the loading station portraying the logo as well. A simplified one will be on the trains and collectible pins we'll have available for season

passholders on a first-come, first-serve basis. The more detailed logo will be primarily for merchandise." Many plans and events were in the works, but the ongoing COVID-19 crisis has made certain things tentative.

The first piece of our 100th anniversary plans for Jack Rabbit is our "100 Years, 100 Memories" campaign, where we're asking guests to share their favorite memories of the Jack Rabbit (and Kennywood) along with a photo from a past visit," said Paradise. "We'll award 100 Season Passes for the best submissions, based on the story and photo shared. As of right now we have about 700 submissions, with some really good ones from what I've seen. Any current Season Passholders would get a complimentary extension for 2021."

"Our in-season plans are a little more fluid right now, but we intend to have at least a couple events throughout the year with some extra flour-



ishes, such as turning back the clock in terms of the park music, era-appropriate uniforms for Rabbit ride operators and strolling musicians/entertainment with a Roaring '20s theme," Paradise told *Amusement Today*. "We're also thinking about how we can tie in some other big anniversaries from 1920: the start of Prohibition, the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote, and the first radio broadcast by our hometown status KDKA AM 1020! Items like exclusive ride time (ERT) for guests and possibly a 100-ride marathon are also on our radar."

In June of 2010, **American Coaster Enthusiasts** designated Jack Rabbit as an ACE Roller Coaster Landmark, a designation reserved for rides of historic significance.

"When I was growing up in the 1950s in West Virginia, Kennywood's Jack Rabbit was legendary," said ACE President **Robert Ulrich**. "When I rode it for the first time, the bunny hop both thrilled and frightened me so much I couldn't wait to do it again. There's no way to express it without riding. When my son Sam rode for the first time (at age nine), his reaction was the same as mine — terrified glee."

"Jack Rabbit is an enthusiast treasure because from beginning to end, it never stops surprising you," said **Elizabeth Ringas**, ACE communications director. "Every time I ride, I am transported to my childhood as I giggle through the ride to hide my fear and savor the airtime moments that leave me wondering how I stayed in the car."

One of the most cherished characteristics of the ride is its

wonderfully preserved trains. Designed by **Edward Vettel Sr.**, the cars feature a classic styling and a stationary lap bar. It was also the first coaster at the park — and among the first in the world — to feature upstop wheels that locked the trains to the track for improved safety.

Adding to this historic ambience is the neon lighting surrounding Jack Rabbit's station. Its very presence conveys to visitors that they are transported to a time long past that is still here to offer old-school fun.

Rides that last 100 years are something particularly special. They have to be to have endured so long. For those who grew up in the Pittsburgh area, a ride on Jack Rabbit has to be a shared common experience, no matter one's age.

"Even after many rides, the laughter — and screams — remind you of how the simple thrills can be the best and most frightening," said Ringas.

Paradise has been drawn in by the many submissions for "100 Years, 100 Memories." Several have shown the ability to reach the heart. This one he found particularly touching: *The very first time I rode the Jack Rabbit was a year after my dad passed away. I remember great relief to have a day away from how sad I had been feeling and the exhilaration of the "Jack Rabbit Jump"! I was not a big roller coaster kid, but I thought I would try something new, almost wanting to have some control over life and my choices at that point. I remember laughing again, so loudly and deeply, for the first time in what felt like an eternity to me.*

•kennywood.com/jackrabbit100



Jack Rabbit's most famous characteristic is the legendary double dip (above left). Seen during its younger years, this 1930s image (above right) shows the coaster's final drop.

AT/TIM BALDWIN; COURTESY DAVE HAHNER COLLECTION

Animals receive special care while parks experience shutdown

AT: David Fake
Special to Amusement Today

ORLANDO, Fla. — While parks, zoos, and attractions around the globe are shuttered to guests due to COVID-19 social distancing requirements, the animals that call those places home still require attention and special care. Fortunately, the caretakers who provide husbandry to these animals are not only already delivering high-level care, they are also taking measures to do so in exceptional ways.

President of Zoological Operations **Jon Peterson** said, "SeaWorld's operation for our zoological teams, even with our doors shut, really don't change. We have to give the utmost quality care to our animals and hold the same standards we hold every day of the year. Our teams are working very, very hard around the clock to ensure that each and every one of our animals gets everything they absolutely need."

SeaWorld's Animal Rescue Teams also remain committed to their mission of providing aid to sick, injured and orphaned wild animals in need throughout the park closures. "SeaWorld will continue to care for rescued animals as the need arises.



SeaWorld welcomed a new baby Atlantic Bottlenose dolphin on March 25 (above left). The first of two bald eagle eggs hatched on Easter at Dollywood's Eagle Mountain Sanctuary (above right). COURTESY SEAWORLD ORLANDO

SeaWorld's rescue teams operate on a case-by-case basis with all our regulatory groups. As long as everybody says we're safe to travel, our teams will be able to be out there. We will continue to do that as long as there is a need," said Peterson. During the closure alone, SeaWorld has helped tens of animals, including the rescue of an orphaned baby manatee and the release of two manatees and three endangered Kemp's ridley sea turtles off the Florida coast after being successfully rehabilitated. Peterson expressed his pride in the teams on behalf of SeaWorld by saying, "We are

very proud of our zoological teams, our veterinarian teams and everybody that's on our essential crew team that are allowing us to ensure that the safety of our animals is our number one priority."

At the base of the Smokey Mountains in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, the first of two bald eagle eggs hatched on Easter at **Dollywood's** Eagle Mountain Sanctuary, a 30,000-square-foot aviary. The sanctuary is home to the country's largest presentation of non-releasable bald eagles. The eaglets, once mature, will be released into the wild. However, adult eagles that have been brought to the

sanctuary after rehabilitation from injury, cannot be released due to a variety of injuries or conditions that require human intervention and prevent them from being able to survive on their own. These birds of prey are under the care of the **American Eagle Foundation**, which is authorized to possess the birds for education, exhibition, rehabilitation and breeding under permits from state and federal wildlife agencies.

The Dollywood eaglet is not the only new addition during the park closures and delayed season openings. Zoological staff at several parks have their hands full with an appar-

ent animal baby boom. Some of these new additions include a baby Atlantic bottlenose dolphin at SeaWorld Orlando and at **Disney's Animal Kingdom**, a baby prehensile-tailed porcupine, called a porcupette, and a Hartman's mountain zebra foal.

Dr. Mark Penning, vice president, Animals, Science and Environment, **Disney Parks** also shared his praise for those working diligently to provide the best care possible to these animals in these times of change and uncertainty. "I'm immensely proud of the casts that put their hearts into taking care of these animals every day," he said in video post to the Disney Parks Blog.

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FAMILY LAUNCH COASTER

Upper Clements Park closes, property purchased by Annapolis County

AT: Tim Baldwin
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UPPER CLEMENTS, Nova Scotia — Following on the heels of previously announced closures of traditional parks in the U.S., Canada has added one more to the North American casualty list.

The Municipality of the County of Annapolis, Nova Scotia, has acquired **Upper Clements Park** for \$600,000 so the property can be redeveloped as a private school.

The council held a special meeting on March 17 to approve the purchase of the local amusement park, which is located five kilometers (approximately three miles) west of Annapolis Royal. A video was posted online by the council. Warden **Timothy Habinski** said, "It is going to be a game changer for Annapolis County. It was a bit of a longer road than we anticipated initially, but we are delighted that we are finally here."

The \$62 million boarding school is expected to bring new employment and significant spending to the region. Municipal officials believe that the school will attract students from not only North America, but Europe and Asia as well.

While that may be good news for the area, it does come with an unfortunate loss.

Upper Clements Park opened in 1989. After three decades of operation, 2019 was its final season. This, however, was unknown to patrons and citizens at the time. When the park opened, crowds were encouragingly strong. Over time, the throngs of people declined. Reports from those closely associated with the park indicated the past two years have been particularly tough financially.



Among the attractions at the park was Roller Coaster. The wooden coaster opened as Tree Topper with the park in 1989 and operated as such for 20 seasons. It, along with Anaconda at **Walygator Parc** (Maizières-Metz, France), was one of the last projects built by coaster designer **Bill Cobb**. Both coasters opened in 1989, the year before Cobb passed away.

As wooden coasters go, this was Cobb's shortest project. At approximately 1,400 feet in length, the ride's most notable feature was that it used the park's sloped terrain. Following two smaller dips, the coaster's third and fourth drops are the largest on the ride.

The 10-hectare (approximately 25 acres) site also offered a unique flume ride relocated from Expo 86 in Vancouver and assorted flat rides, including one of the few remaining Rock-O-Planes in operation in a park.

Roller Coaster, one of Bill Cobb's final projects, was the signature ride at Upper Clements Park (above). The property, now sold, will become the site of a private boarding school.

AT/TIM BALDWIN

Attractions were spread out over the scenic property, which featured a lake in the center and views of the Annapolis Basin. The setting is considered a "prestigious" location for **Gordonstoun**, a private boarding school in Scotland that was looking to open a location in North America. If all goes as planned, the school could open in the fall of 2021. If so, the removal of rides would most likely come quickly.

There are several buildings already in place, if the university chooses to repurpose them into cafeterias, bookstores, libraries, classrooms and more.

In addition to rides and



physical play activities, a 1905 steam locomotive was on display at the park. Historic signage told the story of its Canadian travels and various ownerships. It is unknown if the private school would wish to retain the notable artifact or if it will be sold.

Among the attractions visitors could enjoy was a train ride that toured the park grounds. It

was supplied by **Severn Lamb**.

Habinski pointed out that despite the best efforts of the Upper Clements Park Society, the amusement park was struggling financially. "The park's board has been diligent in their efforts to keep the park open and safe," he said. "The society must be commended for its service to our community."



A Rock-O-Plane (above left) was positioned on higher ground within the park. The park's log flume was relocated from its original home at the Vancouver 1986 Worlds Fair (middle). One of the notable features of the park was a historic locomotive with Canadian roots (above right). Its future is unknown. AT/TIM BALDWIN; JEFFREY SEIFERT



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American Dream on the opening of Skyline Scream



Staff and management at **Ocean Park**, Hong Kong, which has been temporarily closed to the public since late January as a precaution against the spread of COVID-19, has made the most of their time. For one thing, the park has undergone a series of deep-cleaning measures during the closure period. Secondly, the park's veterinary and animal care teams have conducted additional physical examinations on top of routine checkups for all animal ambassadors at the park to ensure their well-being.

Some examples of these enhanced practices include an animal care team performing a list of husbandry checks with the birds on a daily basis. The birds are able to stretch themselves and flap their wings in the morning.

The park's caretaker is observing the capybaras' condition during the daily husbandry checks and is collecting blood samples regularly to assess their health status.

Birds are prone to respiratory infections. Based on recommendations from the vet, the park's penguin keepers are providing additional vitamins or nutritional supplements to the penguins during their daily feeding sessions. The team also is observing the breath of the penguins and is monitoring their heart rates.

Meanwhile, during the closure period the park has strictly maintained its cleaning and disinfection work. All attractions, animal exhibits and behind-the-scenes facilities are thoroughly cleaned to ensure a healthy and secure environment for both humans and animals.

Ocean Park will continue to uphold stringent protective measures to gear up for its reopening.

Shikoku Aquarium, a new sprawling facility in the western Japan town of Tazu, Kagawa, opened on April 1, after its launch was postponed due to the spread of the novel coronavirus.

About 40 people lined up for the opening of the

facility. The aquarium, touted as the biggest of its kind in Shikoku, displays some 400 varieties of marine creatures themed to the island's ecosystem.

The opening ceremony was canceled to avoid a concentration of people amid ongoing concerns about the spread of the novel coronavirus. Visitors received temperature checks and disinfected their hands before entering.

Inside the facility, visitors followed a set route and workers wearing masks called for them to maintain a distance between each other. Some small spaces were placed off-limits, and dolphin shows were also canceled.

As public attractions are creating and putting activity videos online due to coronavirus-related closures, some of the venues in Atlanta, Georgia, have banded together to put on virtual programming every Friday morning.

"Field Trip Fridays," a new, free and ongoing remote series involving 11 Atlanta institutions, started at 10 a.m., Friday, April 3. From that Friday morning

onward, these places will put on curated presentations relating to their specific field or niche.

The involved venues are **Atlanta Botanical Garden, Atlanta History Center, Breman Museum, Children's Museum of Atlanta, College Football Hall of Fame, Fernbank Museum, 3D Theater and Forest, Georgia Aquarium, High Museum of Art, Michael C. Carlos Museum of Emory University, National Center for Civil and Human Rights** and **Zoo Atlanta**.

Those involved have a continuing exchange of ideas and information, and they are using the website created specifically for this program as a "launch pad" for sharing information while continuing to maintain their mission of education.

There also is a bonus feature. The series is highlighting different parts of Atlanta. While its downtown is the location of a good amount of attractions, including the Georgia Aquarium, other neighborhoods are being shown.

The **Canterbury Tales** in the heart of Kent, United Kingdom, announced last month that it is closing permanently. At the time the announcement came, it was unclear as to whether the decision relates to the lack of visitor numbers and downturn in tourism since the outbreak of the coronavirus in Kent.

It is thought the closure of the neighboring Nason's department store in August 2018 also led to a decline in visitor numbers.

The **Canterbury Tales** is an interactive tour through Chaucer's tales in which visitors walk the darkened streets between London and Kent meeting both waxworks and costumed characters along the way. In recent years, park management has implemented a number of popular after-dark and school holiday events where children have enjoyed everything from medieval potion making to sword fighting and storytelling.



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TreeWalk Village thematic playground is the latest in a continuing series of new attractions that are transforming Jungle Island theme park into an eco-adventure destination for families. COURTESY JUNGLE ISLAND

Jungle Island adds attractions, transforms

MIAMI, Fla. — In February, **Jungle Island** announced the opening of a family-friendly TreeWalk Village and thematic playground, which are the latest in a series of attractions and entertainment offerings coming soon to Miami's eco-adventure theme park and events destination.

Jungle Island's additions are designed to connect the 18-acre park's tropical surroundings and wildlife with journeys reminiscent of a jungle adventure. There are five 19-foot-tall giant treehouses that guests can explore. The thematic playground serves as an extension of the TreeWalk Village

and provides kids with a spiderweb climb, climbing ropes, rock climbing, a balance beam, a slide and wooden bridges.

"We want our guests to enjoy a real-life jungle adventure experience in the heart of Miami," said **Curtis Crider**, Jungle Island's president and managing director. "The evolution that has transpired to date is remarkable. Our beloved animals will be integrated into the overall park experience."

As part of its commitment to sustainability and green educational initiatives, Jungle Island will install solar flowers to power the VR Zone, helping

to minimize its carbon footprint.

Since acquiring Jungle Island in April 2017, **ESJ Capital Partners** has revamped the park by adding diverse plant life throughout the park and amplifying the adventure experience.

"Our mission is to enhance the unique character of Jungle Island and what people love so much about the park," said **Elie Mimoun**, a partner at ESJ Capital Partners. "We look forward to delivering on our promise to introduce eco-adventure experiences that will make Miami proud and draws visitors from around the globe."

•jungleisland.com

West Park Leisure Center adds ropes course

NOTTINGHAM, U.K. — Adventure attractions specialist **Innovate Leisure** announced the opening of its latest Sky Trail high ropes course at **West Park Leisure Center** in Long Eaton, Nottingham, U.K. The new addition to the venue made its debut just before Christmas 2019.

The venue is managed and operated by **Parkwood Leisure** under its Leisure Center brand, the company having recently taken over the operation as part of an agreement for it to run Erewash Borough Council's leisure services. The installation of the high ropes course at West Park Leisure Center is part of a significant investment into the venue's facilities, in partnership with the council.

The Sky Trail course is a seven-pole, double-level Discovery model with rolling log and walk the plank features. It is also the first course in the U.K. to incorporate the new Roller Rail element from **RCI Adventure Products**, a new feature which requires participants to sit in their harness and use hanging ropes to pull themselves to the other side of the structure.

"This is a great new attraction for the whole family and compliments facilities at West Park LC," said **Justin Palfrey**, Parkwood Leisure's assistant regional director for North and Midlands.



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FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT CENTRAL

AT: John W.C. Robinson

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The Waypoint Family Entertainment Center in Buellton, California, has been making headway, and is expected to receive the green light on construction as soon as mid-summer, according to owner Carol Lesher-Peterson's agent, Michael Holliday, principal architect of DMHA Architecture + Interior Design of Santa Barbara.

The 10.26-acre entertainment venue will feature 18 bowling lanes, a bar, restaurant, video arcade, offices and community meeting facilities.

The project has been in the works for well over five years, and Lesher-Peterson's daughter, Valerie Lesher, said breaking ground can't come soon enough.

"We've never stopped working on it," she said of the last three years the family has paid property taxes on the site. "We're doing the best we can. Now we just wait. But it's definitely still happening."

Despite the slowdown due to COVID-19, Holliday said his architectural firm is working remotely and moving forward with project plans.

Social distancing mandates forced Redemption Plus's customer locations to close across the nation, greatly impacting the company's revenue. Like many businesses in the amusement industry, Redemption Plus laid off the bulk of its workforce as a result.

To keep the business afloat and provide a job for laid-off workers to come back to, the company added the direct-to-consumer option Boredom Buster Box.

The Boredom Buster Box gives families and individuals access to the company's warehouse of toys that would otherwise be idle. Redemption Plus is also already fulfilling orders for companies who want to send their remote workers something playful and fun.

"We had to adapt quickly and I'm very proud of my team for coming together during such a difficult time," Chief Operations Officer Mike Tipton said. "The Kansas City business community has been extremely willing to part-

ner with us in ways that weren't necessarily clear before but are now necessary. I think that says a lot about the resilience of this city."

Dave and Buster's has put a stop to all new store construction and blocked director payments for the remainder of 2020 in reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dividend payments have been suspended and discussions are being pursued to reduce expenses, extend payment terms and obtain other payment concessions.

All of the 15,000 hourly workers at Dave & Buster's have been placed on temporary furlough while stores are shut, with management and corporate staff down by 90% and the senior leadership team halved.

"In recent weeks, the COVID-19 pandemic has created challenges unlike anything our company, industry or the U.S. economy has previously experienced, resulting in the temporary closure of all of our stores," CEO Brian Jenkins said. "We are now working to enhance liquidity and preserve store restart capabilities so that we can safely reopen as soon as local conditions allow."

Phoenix Construction is in the process of completing an Urban Air Adventure Park in Hudson Oaks, Texas. The 35,738-square-foot building will house the new year-round indoor amusement adventure park.

Although construction progress has been steady on Urban Air despite the COVID-19 pandemic, it hasn't been without setbacks. COVID-19 has posed its fair share of problems.

"We have been trying to practice social distancing, staying at least six feet from each other while on the jobsite," said Phoenix Construction's Director of Safety, Joel Harwell. "While that's not easy nor always possible, it is always our objective. Gloves, sanitizers and masks have become as practical and necessary as hard hats and steel toed boots."

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A trio of fairs, events were shuttered mid-course due to COVID-19

AT: B. Derek Shaw
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HOUSTON and MERCEDES, Texas; NAPLES, Fla. — Just as the fair and rodeo season was getting underway, the Coronavirus pandemic took its shot on North American venues. Three major events in the United States closed part-way through their 2020 run. (At the time this story was filed, 40 member fairs/rodeos were reported to not take place this year in the United States (37 through May 31 and three so far in June), according to the **International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE)**.

It was during the mid-March timeframe that the **Houston (Texas) Livestock Show and Rodeo, Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show & Rodeo, Mercedes, Texas** and the **Collier Fair, Naples, Florida**, all had their plugs pulled mid-stream to protect attendees, staff and vendors. All told, the three fairs/rodeos were only open 15 days out of a normal 42 day combined total.

"In the interest of public health, the City of Houston and the **Houston Health Department** ordered the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo to close on March 11," said **Joel Cowley**, Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo president and CEO. This was after eight days of a normally 20-day run. "The rodeo respectfully and dutifully complied with the City's order, which was presented during a noon press conference, and the rodeo was closed to the public by 4 p.m."

There were many individuals who assisted during the closure, including 35,000 volunteers, many of whom were on-site to assist with the shutdown. **Ray Cammack Shows (RCS)**, the carnival midway provider, as well as on-site staff, partners and vendors were all involved in the process. Cowley was asked how the public and other stakeholders took the news. "Having to close early was extremely difficult for everyone, as guests, volunteers, exhibitors, sponsors, rodeo athletes and



Taken from aboard Titan (Fabri booster ride) is an overview of some of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo's 80 rides (above left). Reed Exposition Midways was the midway contractor for the Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show & Rodeo (above right). Top rides at the Collier Fair (right) this year included the Galaxi roller coaster, Super Himalaya and Stinger. COURTESY STEFAN HINZ; RIO GRANDE VALLEY LIVESTOCK SHOW & RODEO/ADVENTIR, INC.; KATHERINE VILORIA-MENEDEZ



entertainers look forward to the 20 days of the rodeo each year. With the 2019 rodeo providing an economic impact of \$227 million and an economic activity of \$391 million, we understand that this was hard on many."

There were 851,822 people through the turnstiles during the abbreviated run. RCS had 80 total rides, 40 of which were kiddie along with 55 games. As has been the case in the past, some of the rides came in through other operators. The new ride for the spot this year was New York New York dark ride (**Gosetto**). The more popular rides included La Grande XL (**Bussink**) 50-meter observation wheel, Skyride (**Seatrek**) and Crazy Coaster (**Zamperla**).

The rodeo hosted its first-ever sensory friendly experience March 5 in select midway areas to promote a positive experience for all rodeo guests with sensory sensitivities or challenges. There were minimal lights and sounds permitted. More than 40 rides were included. Also new this year was digital half-price carnival packs, which included the same half-price carnival packs (including ride/game tickets and coupons) without the paper. Guests used their smartphones to access their ride/game tickets and coupons through the RodeoHouston app and the Rodeo Carnival app.

The event takes place again next year, March 2 – 21, 2021.

At the same time, 294 miles southwest, the Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show & Rodeo was

experiencing the same situation; however they only were able to get in three days. "It took 24 hours from the time county officials notified us of the order," said **Mando Correa**, general manager. The closure was all internally done by staff with no outside assistance. "I would say there were mixed emotions amongst the public, with, I feel, a majority of them wanting to continue with operations, while many were of strong feeling of the necessity to close down," said Correa when asked about public sentiment.

A total of 57,974 attended in the three days it ran. Asked about staffing during this time, Correa said, "We are keeping 100% of staff employed and on payroll during the present enforcement of a 'shelter-in-place' mandate."

Reed Exposition Midways was the midway contractor. They brought in half of the 49 rides (18 of which were kiddie). The rest came from **Heart of America** and **Lowery Carnival Company**. There were no new rides to the spot as numerous new ones were brought in last season to the event, which is popular with the spring break crowd. Reed has had this spot the past 21 years.

A couple of the more popular rides included the Century Wheel (**Chance**) and the Zyclone coaster (**Pinfari**). "We got 25% of the people we normally get. We got hit by the virus and there was nothing we could do about it," said **Jimmy Reed**, carnival owner. However, when asked about fair staff, he

said, "The people running it were very upbeat."

Correa gave his assessment of the COVID-19 impact on his event. "This once-in-a-lifetime (I pray it is!) crisis has really taken a toll on our organization in terms of going through with and completing a successful, lucrative event. As we all know, so much time, effort, and money goes into the preparation and planning for such an event and to have it cut short has been nothing short of disastrous. We are proceeding forward with planning for 2021 with the hopes of recovering and returning to some type of normalcy."

The 2021 dates are March 11-21.

Meanwhile on the eastern seaboard, four days was also all that the Collier Fair could get in. On the marquee outside the fairgrounds, the message reads: "It is in times like this that you learn to live again and in times like this you learn to love again."

"We made a decision on the first Friday of the fair. We ran through the weekend and closed on Monday. The County Commissioners strongly encouraged the closing," said **Rhonda Ward**, fair manager. How did the public react? "For the most part all were understanding."

Reithoffer Shows had the midway account bringing in 56 total rides with 20 being kiddie. New this year was the Giant Euro Slide (**SBF/Visa Group** performance slide.) The top rides included the Galaxi roller coaster (**Pinfari**), Super Himalaya

(**Wisdom Rides**) and Stinger (**Technical Park**). This is the only traveling model in the U.S.

"The fact that we were able to stay open through the weekend [was a blessing,] said **Rick Reithoffer**, owner. "**Don Jolly** [Fair President] had the gumption to keep us open. The county suggested, but did not demand, we shut down. We were right at the cusp of COVID-19. We were able to make a couple of dollars." Reithoffer was quick to have extra cleaning supplies on hand for ride handle bars and restraints as well as hand washing stations on the midway. The Collier Fair did not open Monday, March 23 or for the rest of the 10-day total run.

All permanent employees are still working as the organization discovers ways to grapple with this situation. "We are trying to find things that we can do on the fairgrounds to bring the community together — or if there is a way that we can help those in the community. We have started taking little craft and goodie kits to some of our livestock/competitive exhibit families to keep the kids and family busy. We started posting daily activities from agriculture related to cooking for our livestock families."

The next edition will occur March 18-28, 2021.



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Carnivals; concessionaires get creative during recent pandemic

AT: B. Derek Shaw

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EASTERN and MID-WEST United States — As COVID-19 ravishes on, it is taking a toll on the hearts, minds and pocket-books of all, including those in the portable amusement industry side of things. To survive and at least pay a few of the mounting bills, numerous small and mid-size operators have gone to putting one or more of their food concession trailers along the road of their winter quarters, in shopping centers or other visible and accessible locations.

An early operation started mid-March with **Houghton Enterprises**, Cochranville, Pennsylvania. "The first location at our winter quarters has been there since March 15, and every week since then we have been adding locations in nearby towns," said **Jimmy Houghton**, co-owner of the carnival. "As of now, we have four locations in the towns surrounding us. We are going to be adding our ice cream trailer to the mix next week with a more permanent location and will be open every day."

Houghton talked about the response from patrons. "Customers have been very patient and gracious. They love the fact that we are giving them something they can't get every day and are proud to help support us and local small business. We are, as a family, so humble to the generosity of our local neighbors and also our carnival/fair friends and family that have drove far and near to help support. This also shows the power of social media with only a post."

"We decided to open our food trailers right at our house. We figured we weren't losing either way, since we didn't have to pay anyone," said **Christina Benner**, co-owner of **Penn Valley Shows**, Middleburg, Pennsylvania. When *AT* spoke to them they had only been open one weekend, however, Penn Valley plans on con-



Houghton Enterprises opened one food joint March 15, along PA State Route 41 in Cochranville, Pa., where their winter headquarters is located. Now they have four locations with an ice cream trailer open every day (above left). **Kerry and Christina Benner**, principals of **Penn Valley Shows** figured they had nothing to lose, either way, if they ran the joints right at their home in Middleburg, Pa. (above right). COURTESY HOUGHTON ENTERPRISES, PENN VALLEY SHOWS

tinuing every weekend until this is over due to the initial weekend reception. "The response has been overwhelmingly great. People are so thankful we are doing this, that it gives them a piece of normalcy and memories of better summertime fun. People are also coming to support us because they are worried whether we will be okay without our events running," said Benner.

The show has offered to loan equipment to first responders and health care providers, but no one has taken them up on their offer. They have, however, set up a food trailer at their local 911 center and offering free items to all responders and workers in the center. "It's just amazing to see everyone come together as a town and support one another in this time of need. If anything [good] comes out of this, I hope it's that we continue in the old hometown values mindset," said Benner.

Rounding out the trio in the Commonwealth is **Snyder's Amusements**, Greencastle, Pennsylvania who started in mid-April. "Our season was due to open April 23. So far, we are officially cancelled into early May and there is no definitive way to know when that

will stop. Initially my concerns were limited, but we will not have our usual income until the unforeseeable future. As a result, I insisted we set up a funnel cake trailer in our home town; that quickly evolved into putting our Schantz grab joint to work adding funnel cakes and Oreos to the menu. We

reduced our prices slightly due to the fact we are set up in our own driveway and have few of the expenses that our typical travelling operation would have," said **Adam Brotzman**, general manager with Snyder's.

They plan to add a Friday evening operation as well and see the value in social media in

getting out the word. "We are set up right in front of my shop, three miles from town. I put a *single* post on Facebook and linked it to a 'What's going on in Greencastle PA' page Friday evening, and boom, we had nearly 600 shares by Sunday, and who knows how many shares from [those] shares. The response was incredible. We have a drive-through, stay-in-your-car operation. Most people have shown up with huge orders, nothing like you would see at an ordinary carnival, but with some people waiting in line for nearly two hours, they were the happiest and most appreciative people you could imagine. It really made us happy to get such support and [we] are really excited to do it again. I had, what I thought, a reasonable expectation. Brandi [Brotzman's wife] had a minimal expectation. Neither of us could have imagined the turnout that we experienced."

There were some initial hesitations. Brotzman explained, "Our biggest hold back initially is we

► See CARNIVALS, page 27



Pope Concessions and Rides has been taking one of its 30 food concession trailers to various shopping centers in west Tennessee, in towns where they normally play the fair or festival. COURTESY POPE CONCESSIONS AND RIDES



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AT: B. Derek Shaw
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The Board of Directors of the **California Mid-State Fair**, Paso Robles voted in mid-March to separate from CEO **Michael H. Bradley**. Business Assistant **Colleen Bojorquez** has been named interim CEO effective immediately. The Board did not provide any stated reason for the change in leadership.

The **United States Army Corps of Engineers** recently built an "alternative care facility" on the **Wisconsin State Fair Park** grounds for coronavirus patients. They outfitted an existing building. As of press time, hospitals have enough capacity to handle those with COVID-19. However, Milwaukee Mayor **Tom Barrett** said in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* the building is the equivalent of an insurance policy.

"Just as many people buy an insurance policy for their home hoping never to have to use it, that's what we're doing here," said Barrett. The grounds are an optimal location because of easy access, ample parking and is a central location.

Lori Cox stepped down as executive director of the **Nebraska State Fair**, citing health reasons. She will act as a senior consultant, effective immediately. **Jaime Parr**, the state fair facility director, is serving as interim executive director.

The fair board held a special meeting prior to the change. Due to concerns over Cox's health, the board and Cox, mutually agreed via a resolution for her to transfer to a senior consulting position. She was named the fair's executive director in January 2018 and took a medical leave of absence starting March 13.

The resolution as reported in the *Omaha World-Herald* said that as executive director, Cox "discovered and reported serious instances of potential waste, fraud and abuse in financial management and accounting of the Nebraska State Fair, and the board finds her experience and knowledge helpful and desires that she continue to assist in her consultant position in any investigation as may be requested by the Nebraska State Fair Board and/or relevant investigative authorities, and provide consulting services helpful to putting on the 2020 fair."

The **International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE)** and the **National**

Independent Concessionaires Association (NICA) recently united to provide IAFE member fairs with the IAFE/NICA "Read and Win" program. The program benefits local elementary-school children by excelling their reading skills and is a great way for fairs to engage and unite their community. For reading library books, children in grades one through eight are rewarded with a ribbon bookmark provided by the IAFE and NICA, and each fair can enhance the experience by providing vouchers for complimentary fair admission, midway rides, a soft drink, and/or similar items provided by participating fairs, midways, and/or concessionaires.

New Jersey-based carnival operator **Amusements of America** returns to the **Clinton County Fair**, Morrisonville, New Jersey, this summer following a multi-year hiatus, due to routing out of the area. "We always enjoyed going there," Amusements of America President **Morris Vivona** said in a statement. "We had a good relationship with the fair. It's like coming home. "I'm looking forward to it."

Belle City Amusements recently extended their contract at the **Florida Strawberry Festival**, Plant City through 2030. From the carnivals' Facebook page: "Our heartfelt appreciation to our wonderful partners at the Florida Strawberry Festival! Looking forward to the next 10 years!"

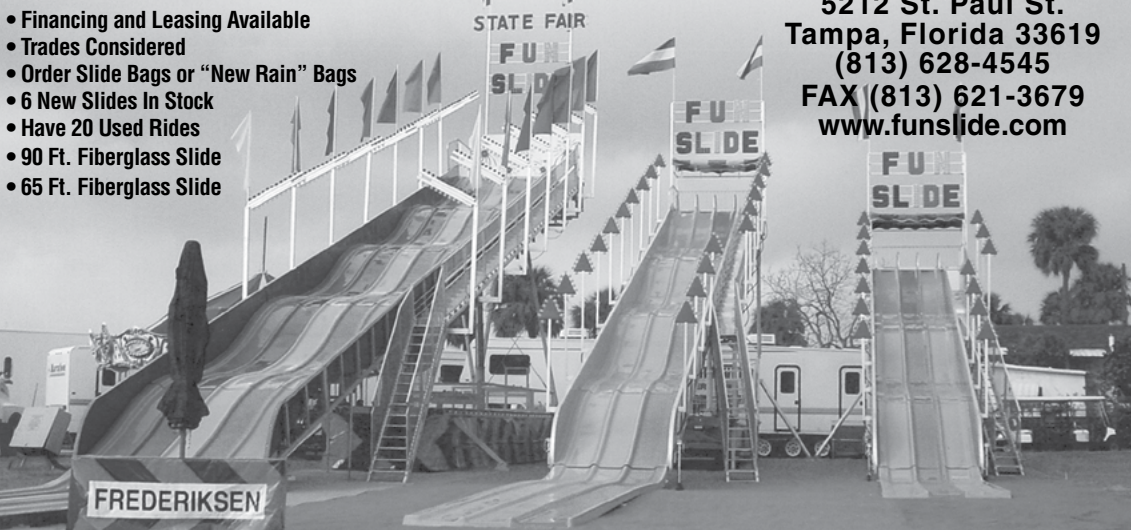
The **Lake County Fair**, Lakeport, California, board of directors selected **Sheli Wright** as the new chief executive officer of the fair (also known as the 49th District Agricultural Association.) Wright succeeds **Courtny Conkle**, who left last September to take over as **Wyoming State Fair** manager. Wright started in mid-March.

The fair board said Wright is excited about leading the fair and believes the fair is the heart of the rural community. She is a long-term community member who grew up showing animals, participating in events and cheering in the grandstands of the Lake County Fair.

"I am confident Ms. Wright will be an excellent addition to the Lake County Fair," said Fair Board President **Tom Turner** as reported in the *Lake County News*, "She is sharp, community-minded, and organized with a desire to preserve the fairgrounds."

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►CARNIVALS

Continued from page 25

have a five and one year old, both girls, and then it is just the two of us. To our great fortune, our sister-in-law was excited to help out with child care and my youngest brother was anxious to jump in and help out. We have some wonderful neighbors and they get some real joy out of seeing us do these off-the-wall things. They were enormously helpful too. It truly takes a village."

Moving westward, **Triple Treat Shows**, Cincinnati, Ohio, has donated the use of a ticket box to **Mercy Health Fairfield Hospital**, Fairfield, Ohio. "The ticket box is located outside the hospital so [staff] can safely talk to patients' loved ones and potential patients. This also provides the workers a safer environment out of the weather and behind glass to talk to these people. This service is being provided from us for no cost at this time," said **Courtney Clements**, daughter and concession manager of Triple Treat. It has been situated outside the emergency entrance since the beginning of April.



Lauther's Fine Foods has a smorgasbord of food along US 301 in Riverview, Fla. in the lot of a closed down produce market (above left). Triple Treat Shows is loaning a ticket box to Mercy Health Fairfield Hospital, Fairfield, Ohio (above right). This provides the workers a safe environment out of the weather, behind glass while patients' loved ones and potential patients can get information. COURTESY LAUTHER'S FINE FOODS, TRIPLE TREAT SHOWS



Clements has some friends and other family members opening up food stands in private lots for the public to easily stop by to purchase food. "There are two food trailers at the **Kissel Brothers Shows** shop off of [Ohio Route] 128 in Cleves/Miamitown, Ohio, which is a very busy road, and access to the shop is very easy for customers to get in and out of and is also very big and can accommodate for semi drivers. The other food trailer is located off of Harrison

Road at the **Blue Bell Bar** parking lot. This is also a busy road and has a big parking lot that can accommodate semi drivers as well. The response from customers is great. They all seem grateful for everything."

Clements noted that the food trailers have been inspected and licensed to operate. They are taking extra steps to make sure the public is safe, including marking lines on the ground in six foot increments for social distancing, as well as providing

hand sanitizer for customers to clean their hands.

Traveling south, **Pope Concessions and Rides**, Greenfield, Tennessee, has one food trailer on the road moving through various shopping centers in west Tennessee. "[We are] picking towns that we normally have fairs or festivals in, that the food does well at," said **James Roy Pope**, owner. Customer response has been, as Pope puts it, "overwhelmingly nice and grateful that we are there." The

company has offered the use of food trailers to the school system if they need them to serve food out of. The carnival is doing their part to be charitably minded. "We take our tips each week and give them to fundraisers or charities that need them," said Pope.

There is a silver lining to all of this as Pope explains. "In a time that seems as though everything is closing in on us, it has helped my family to get out, see our friends and customers actually smiling and happy."

Gibtown filled with fundraisers, events

AT: B. Derek Shaw
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RIVERVIEW, Fla. — During Florida Week, February 3-8 (when most of the carnival industry attends activities in the greater Tampa area), the **International Independent Showmen's Association (IISA)** hosted events supplementing the Super Trade Show and Extravaganza. Some were fundraisers while others were meetings and other activities.

Events included the Big-Hearted Jerry's Memorial Golf Tournament, the Shriners annual meeting, the carnival museum dinner and jamboree, casino night, the cemetery association memorial service and the IISA annual banquet and ball.

Three people were induct-

ed into the IISF Hall of Fame during the banquet. They were **Sue Clark**, **Smokey Mountain Amusements**; **David "Doc" Rivera**, **International Independent Showmen's Museum** and **Caspar Wynn**, traveling with **Forever Young Shows** with grabs and games.

The club also maintains a float that is seen in parades and events throughout the year. During Florida Week, the

showmen participated with its 80-foot-long (with tow bar) float in the **Krewe of the Knights of Sant' Yago** parade in Ybor City. Other parades the whimsical float will make appearances include St. Patrick's Day parade, also held in Ybor City, **Florida Strawberry Festival**, Plant City, and **Tampa Pride 2020** parade.

Sue Clark with Smokey Mountain Amusements (right with Wilbur Cooke) was selected as a 2020 inductee into the IISL Hall of Fame. Behind Showmen members is its 80-foot-long float seen in numerous parades (below). COURTESY IISF



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WATER PARKS & RECREATION

▶ News Splash — page 32 / New date options for World's Largest Swimming Lesson — page 32

Soaky Mountain Waterpark will be ready when community reopens

AT: Pam Sherborne
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SEVIERVILLE, Tenn. — The new 50-acre, \$90 million **Soaky Mountain Waterpark** should be ready to open with a bang whenever coronavirus mandates are lifted and guests are able to enjoy playing in parks again.

Aquatic Development Group (ADG) was selected by **Wilderness Resorts** to design and oversee construction of the park and the 11 attractions. When the announcement was made last August, the slated completion date was set for this month.

"The Soaky Mountain water park is a unique and exciting project for us at ADG," said **Jeff Dunn**, ADG president. "The site of the water park was situated on a hill with an incredibly steep elevation grade. It took creative design and innovation to determine how to construct a water park on such a steep grade. After a lot of blasting and moving tons of soil, we flattened the site and are constructing a water park with some of the industry's best waterslides and attractions. It will make a mark in the industry and has been exciting for the ADG team to deliver this project from concept to completion."

At the first of April, the water park was 70 percent complete, according to a construction blog on the Soaky Mountain Waterpark website.

Wilderness Resorts is



Soaky Mountain Waterpark, the new \$90 million, 50-acre water park in Sevierville, Tennessee, will be ready to welcome guests for the 2020 season whenever owners are able to open. Owners Wilderness Resorts selected Aquatic Development Group (ADG) to design and build the park. Ground was broken last August. COURTESY OF ADG

building the water park across the street and up the hill from the Sevierville Convention Center and Wilderness at the Smokies Resort. "Soaky Mountain Waterpark is going to be an amazing destination for families with children of all ages to enjoy," said **Joe Eck**, COO, Wilderness Resorts, during the ground breaking. "It will feature some of the most popular, thrilling and unique water attractions available, and it will all be outdoors in a beautiful mountain-modern park setting."

Among the attractions are a large 35,000-square-foot wave pool capable of generating waves up to six feet high and a winding wave river spanning an area of 24,000 square feet, both powered by ADG's WaveTek technology.

In addition to these anchor attractions, the water park will be home to a heavily themed kid's play-and-spray feature, a kid's activity pool with slides, an adventure pool with a **Wibit** water obstacle course, a flat-water cabana pool and a double **FlowRider**

surf ride.

ProSlide Technologies is providing four slide complexes. Included will be a water coaster; a family ride tower with two five-person raft rides; a tubing tower with five flumes which all feature unique and thrilling one- or two-person tubing experiences; two high-intensity body slides; and a four-lane, head-first mat racing challenge.

As of the first of April, the Snake Den tube rides, as well as the Rocky Top Raceways

racing slides were complete, according to the Soaky Mountain's construction blog.

The finishing touches were being put on the water coaster dubbed the **Avalaunch Watercoaster** and the remaining slides, the **Rainbow Revenge** and **Blue Mountain Mayhem**.

The water park is expected to employ 500 full and part-time workers. Hopes are that it will draw 400,000 in annual attendance. It also is projected to bring 100,000 new visitors to experience Sevier County while increasing nightly stays in the area.

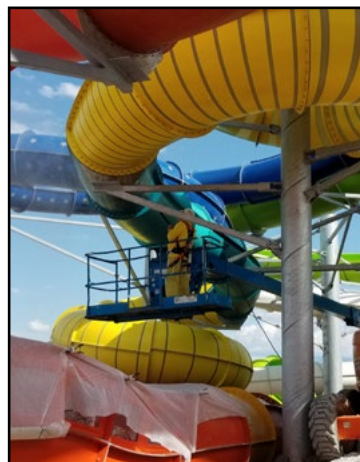
Dave Andrews will be the general manager of Soaky Mountain Waterpark.

Once operating regularly, the Soaky Mountain Waterpark will be open to the public daily mid-May through August with additional select days through mid-September. Hours are yet to be determined.

Pricing for the water park admission has not been set as well. However, Wilderness at the Smokies guests will likely receive preferred pricing on admission.

Wilderness Resorts currently owns and operates **Wilderness at the Smokies** in Sevierville, Tennessee, and **Wilderness Resort, Glacier Canyon Lodge**, and **Wilderness on the Lake, Wild Rock Golf Course, Sundara Spa and Glacier Canyon Conference Center** in Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin.

*soakymountainwaterpark.com



There will be 11 water attractions at the new Soaking Mountain Waterpark, including a 35,000-square-foot wave pool and a winding wave river, both powered by ADG's WaveTek technology. There will be a kids play and activity area, a **Wibit** water obstacle course, a flat-water cabana pool and a double **FlowRider** surf ride. **ProSlide Technologies** is providing four large slide towers. COURTESY OF ADG

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Officials for **Hot Beach** water park in Olímpia, Sao Paulo, Brazil, say they are taking advantage of the park's extended closure during the COVID-19 crisis to complete extensive maintenance and revitalization projects. The work includes repainting of the Ebaaa River lazy river, repainting of the kids' areas, repairing and pouring additional sidewalks and updating the facility's gardens.

"We took advantage of this break for a general review of what needed maintenance and revitalization and we are doing it all at once. Without an audience, we can do it broadly. We also mapped out that paving in some places would provide more comfort to visitors [so we are adding new walkways]. As a good part of these works, such as sidewalks, requires time to dry, we can do it now [without disruption]," explains **Marcos Bittencourt**, marketing manager at Grupo Ferrasa, a company that maintains the Hot Beach Olímpia tourist complex.

Construction is winding down on an expansion at the **Kingsport Aquatic Center**, Kingsport, Tennessee, with work expected to be completed by the beginning of May. The project includes a new outdoor pool, adjacent office space and a nearby pavilion. The \$2 million project began last summer and is the first major expansion of the aquatic center since it opened seven years ago. It includes a new outdoor pool and office suite at the front of the building and a shaded pavilion with restrooms adjacent to the existing outdoor entrance.

The pool has been designed to cater to both adults and teens, with a 180-person capacity and a 3½ to 4½ foot depth. The heated pool will include three 25-yard lanes for outdoor lap swimming, a circular social area with hydrotherapy jets, a seated



NEWSPLASH

AT: Jeffrey L. Seifert
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bench area for outdoor water aerobics classes, and an area for water basketball and volleyball.

Around the pool, there will be room for additional seating of up to 60 lounge chairs. The pavilion will provide shaded seating for a dozen tables and will include three family changing restrooms. The building suite will add three offices — one for the facility director, two for other staff members, as well as some workroom space.

Renovation of the **Splash Valley Aquatic Center** in Kanakee, Illinois, is well underway, with the hopes that residents will be able to enjoy the facility this summer. The center was shuttered in 2015 when the lazy river started leaking thousands of gallons of water each day due to faulty construction. The contractor responsible for the original construction is no longer in business. In July 2018, the Kankakee Valley Park District's board sold \$2 million of government obligation bonds to renovate the park. That funds are being used to rehab out-of-order plumbing, mechanical and chemical systems, removing the lazy river attraction, as well as refurbishing the three-slide waterslide features. The concession's building, locker room and volleyball court areas are also being upgraded.

The project to restore the abandoned **Lake Dolores Waterpark** in Newberry Springs, California, was given approval on March 24, by the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors. As reported

in January's NewSplash, the park's current owner, **G7GF Enterprises, LLC**, submitted plans to redevelop the 268-acre property over the next five years. Supervisors approved a general plan amendment and a conditional use permit for the project, which will include rehabbing the 41-acre former water park; restoring the 22-acre lake and two-acre pond for boating, swimming and camping; along with commercial and retail outlets.

Initially built in the 1950s as a campground near a small lake, Lake Dolores was later turned into a water park with waterslides, a lazy river, bumper boats, jet ski water racetrack and a swimming pool. It closed in 2004 and has remained abandoned for the last 16 years occasionally being used as a desolate setting for commercials and videos.

The **Sylvan Lake Spray Park** in Alberta, Canada, has completed its fundraising and is moving on to the next portion of the process of building the park. Originally the goal was to raise CA\$1 million, but that was reduced to \$600,000 when it was decided the spray park could be built at the new Pogadl Park on land that was donated to the city by the Pogadl family. The spray park committee has been raising funds for the last five years. In March 2020, it received a \$271,976 grant from the Government of Alberta. The grant, which came from the province's Community Enhancement Program, capped off the committee's fundraising for the park.

"The Government of Alberta's grant and the donation from the town was probably 80 percent of our fundraising," said **Laura Lauder**, president of the committee. Lauder hopes to break ground on the park this spring to have the spray park included in the town's phase one project for Pogadl Park.

Quassy Amusement Park's Splash Away Bay offers a tip of the bucket



MIDDLEBURY, Conn. — The giant tipping bucket on Saturation Station at Splash Away Bay waterpark will be sporting a new color, thanks to Quassy Amusement & Waterpark's maintenance staff. Holding more than 300 gallons of water when it dumps on the crowd below, the blue bucket is now fire engine red. Though the park has not determined an opening date at press time, it plans to make an announcement when local government officials provide information that indicates when operations might resume. COURTESY QUASSY AMUSEMENT PARK

New date options announced for the 2020 World's Largest Swimming Lesson

OVERLAND PARK, Kan. — In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, organizers for the 2020 World's Largest Swimming Lesson (WLSL) have announced two new date options for this year's event. Host Locations are encouraged to participate on Thursday, July 16th or they can host an event any day in June, July or August. The new date options offer more time and flexibility for facilities to take advantage of the WLSL program in their local communities and continue to send the vital Swimming Lessons Save Lives message.

"Safety is always the first priority for our aquatics community, and the WLSL program has been an important education and promotion tool for thousands of pools, waterparks and learn-to-swim providers," said **Rick Root**, president, **World Waterpark Association**. "Whether they join us on July 16th or another date in June, July or August, we want to work with as many locations as possible to ensure children and adults are exposed to water safety and learn to swim messages this season."

The World's Largest Swimming Lesson serves as a platform for the aquatics industry to use one voice to send a message about the crucial importance of teaching kids to swim and the role of adult supervision to prevent drowning.

Per the **World Health Organization**, drowning is the third leading cause of unintentional injury-related death, accounting for 7 percent of all injury-related deaths worldwide. In the U.S., drowning remains the leading cause of injury-related death for children ages 1 to 4, and the second leading cause for children under 14.



However, there is reason to hope. Since the WLSL launched in 2010, the Swimming Lessons Save Lives message has been shared with more than two billion people in the U.S. alone. Facilities of all kinds are encouraged to join TEAM WLSL in their mission to prevent childhood drowning through education and building awareness.

WLSL is being presented by the World Waterpark Association with support from **American Red Cross**, **Amusement Today**, **Aquatics International**, **Instituto de Natacao Infantil**, **Lifeguards Without Borders**, **National Aquatic Safety Company**, **National Drowning Prevention Alliance**, **National Recreation and Park Association**, **Consumer Product Safety Commission's Pool Safety**, **Safe Kids Worldwide**, **Stop Drowning Now**, **Starfish Aquatics Institute**, **Swim Australia**, **USA Swimming Foundation**, **United States Swim School Association**, **Water Safety Products** and many other organizations.

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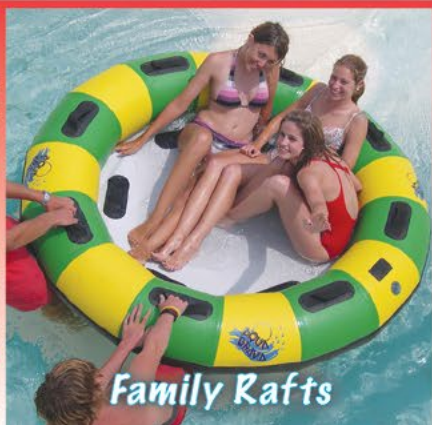
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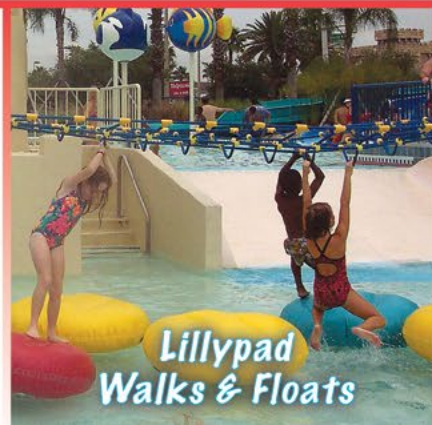
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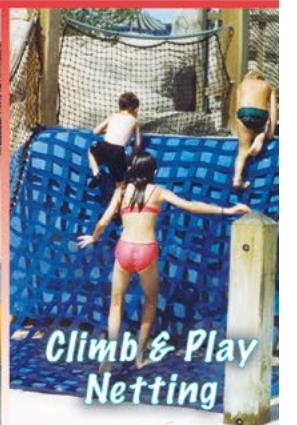
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J-1 Visa program is in jeopardy due to COVID-19 pandemic

AT: Pam Sherborne

psherborne@amusementtoday.com

SACO, Maine — In a normal springtime, summer destination cities with entertainment attractions would have already seen an influx of foreign students beginning an adventure of a lifetime. Under the **U.S. State Department's J-1 Summer Work Travel (SWT) Visa** program, they would fulfill their requirements of the program by working for three months, then be able to travel for another month.

But these are anything but normal times.

The 2020 future for this program, which brings foreign student workers to many amusement parks, theme parks, water parks and other attractions for an operating season is just as uncertain as an opening date is for those same businesses.

This particular SWT program is just one of the visa programs funded through the **Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs (ECA)** that offers cultural and educational exchange opportunities. Approximately 300,000 foreign workers from 200 different countries take advantage of these opportunities annually. The workers arrive at different times of the year depending on the nature of either their jobs or educational opportunities they have secured.

According to a map on the ECA website, the SWT program shows a large saturation of foreign students working along the east coast during the U.S. summers. They are hired in a variety of positions within the amusement industry. Those hired in the program have to be proficient in English to successfully interact in an English-speaking environment, be in a post-second school, have successfully completed at least one semester or equivalent in that school and have been placed in a job prior to entry un-



FunTown Splashtown USA, Saco, Maine, (left) has about 500 employees working during the operating season. Of those 500, 100 are foreign students in the U.S. on the J-1 Visa program. Raging Waters at Morey's Piers (right), Wildwood, New Jersey, is another attraction along the eastern seaboard that hires seasonal employees through the J-1 Visa program. COURTESY FUNTOWN SPLASHTOWN USA, MOREY'S PIERS



less from a visa waiver country.

The uncertainty about this program going forward has caused some angst among park owners and operators. The U.S. State Department halted all ECA programs on March 11 for 60 days. That deadline, now of May 11, was looming heavily in mid-April.

According to a local report, the state of New Jersey welcomed 10,000 student workers under the J-1 Visa program last year. Ocean City, Maryland, welcomed 4,000. And that is just two areas. No one knew whether that halt would be extended.

According to **Ed Hodgdon**, marketing manager **FunTown Splashtown USA**, Saco, Maine, and secretary of the **New England Amusement Park and Attractions Association (NEAAPA)**, the way the program works is that the student works through a U.S. agency who has partnerships with the parks. That agency acts as a conduit between the parks and potential student workers.

"Since the student workers can't go through the application process for a visa until they have a job position, some start the process in the fall of the previous year," Hodgdon said.

Employers are responsible for making sure student work-

ers have adequate housing and transportation to and from work, even though the students pay their own way from the money they make while working.

Hodgdon said his park has about 500 employees total during the operating season. Of that 500, 100 are students under this visa program, 20 percent of their workforce.

"My general manager (**Cory Hutchinson**) is not very optimistic that we will get any of the J-1 workers this year," he said.

With the parks shuttered and air travel iffy, it makes sense. But park management worries. What if the parks are able to open but the program is canceled for the season?

That means, for places like FunTown Splashtown USA, management there would have to come up with 20 percent more employees locally.

"And it is not that we haven't tried to recruit U.S. workers," Hodgdon said. "We just haven't been able to. Of course, that may be different this year."

When the U.S. State Department halted the ECA-funded programs in March, some foreign workers already here, had their visas extended to provide them the opportunities to com-

plete either their educational or training programs when the economy reopened, or continue to finalize travel plans to return home. Some workers in the ski industry found themselves not being able to travel back home.

The announcement of the halt of the program included a statement that said, "All dates are subject to review and extension... The Department urges sponsors to either cancel the programs altogether or defer the start dates to a date past the current recommended 60-day suspension period and issue new Forms DS-2019."

Melanie Pursel, president and CEO of **Greater Ocean City (Maryland) Chamber of Commerce**, told a local news agency that cancellation of the program would critically impact Ocean City. She said there are normally about 12,000 seasonal employees in Ocean City working in the leisure and entertainment industry. The 4,000 foreign student workforce makes up roughly one-fourth of those employees.

In April, she was still keeping her fingers crossed that the program would begin after the 60 days, May 12.

But she also said that the student workers would be expected to follow the same travel

restrictions and requirement imposed by the federal government when they arrive. She said Ocean City would be following all federal and **Center for Disease Control (CDC)** guidelines.

There also is the chance that even if the 60-day suspension is lifted as planned, some of those seasonal workers may choose not to travel. Air travel may certainly still be restricted as well.

Pursel said in an interview that: "Sponsorship organizations maintain close contact with the host employers they work with and would know in advance prior to the exchange visitor's arrival if the business is not open yet."

During a phone call meeting of NEAAPA members in early April, some park management representatives stated that they worried about staying in good standing with the ECA programs with the uncertainty of the season.

Hodgdon said remaining in good standing with the J-1 program is important to parks.

"The cultural component is great," he said. "It gives the workers a chance to immerse in our culture. But it goes both ways. It gives us a chance to be with others from another culture."

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Women INFLUENCE

A view from the top...

Gina Guglielmi is the president of **Intermark Ride Group (IRG)**, an international ride sales company representing **Fabbri Group, Gosetto, Martin & Vleminkx, Moser Rides, Ride Engineers Switzerland** and **Wattman Trains**. The company also brokers used ride equipment worldwide.

Accomplishments and affiliations...

- Member, International Association of Amusement Parks and Associations
- Member, International Independent Showmen's Association
- Member, New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions
- Member, Outdoor Amusement Business Association
- Pennsylvania Association of Parks and Attractions
- Member, Showmen's League of America

Passion has driven Guglielmi

NASHVILLE, TN — Gina Guglielmi had her first taste working in the amusement industry at the age of 14 years. She spent two weeks babysitting the three-year-old daughter of freak show owners, the Tiger Lady and Tattooed Man, at the Canfield (Ohio) fair located just under 10 miles from her hometown of Youngstown, Ohio. Being so close to the fair, she and her friends would get jobs at the fair for summer spending money.

She spent two weeks walking around the fairgrounds with the little girl. She watched as the amusement rides were set up. She watched them in operation, and she watched as they were being taken down. She saw food and games concessions operating.

She had no idea that this short-term job would somehow map out her destiny. She said she has often thought about that. Since then, she has visited fairs and amusement parks all over the world, being just as comfortable with foreign venues as those in the U.S.

She wonders if that first job led to her fascination of the business side of the industry.

Call it fate. Guglielmi calls it lucky.

She also has attributed her upbringing in Youngstown as adding to her comfort with foreign languages, customs and traditions. As an early steel town, Youngstown was a melting pot for foreign cultures.

"Most of my friends' parents were first generation Italian, German, Polish, Czech, Russian. English was the second language in the homes," she said.

Her mother was born in Bulgaria. Her father was born in the U.S.

In Guglielmi's early years, she didn't stray far from Youngstown. In fact, after high school graduation, she went on to attend Youngstown State University earning a Bachelor of Arts degree.

But, by the late 1970s, Guglielmi

was ready to leave. She relocated to Nashville, Tennessee, in hopes of working in the music and/or entertainment industry. What she found was a job opening at Billboard Publications for one of its trade magazines, *Amusement Business*.

"I got the job and my life changed completely," Guglielmi said. "I was so fortunate to be educated about the industry by two of the best in the business, Ray Pilszak, sales director, and Tom Powell, editor, and so many others with the magazine.

"I learned the who, what, when, where and why of the park, carnival and entertainment industries and the operational, safety and staffing challenges these predominately family-owned businesses faced," she said. "It was excellent training ground for a future in ride sales."

In the late 1980s, Guglielmi left *Amusement Business*, and by 1989, she and her former husband had started Itai International, a ride brokerage company and manufacturers' sales rep company. They worked with ride manufacturers such as Chance Rides, Sartori, MelPark and several other European suppliers.

"My tenure with Itai provided me with a deeper understanding of ride operations, maintenance, safety, engineering, spare parts and logistics," Guglielmi said. "It also gave me the opportunity to build relationships."

After her divorce and the split from Itai International, Guglielmi created Intermark Ride Group. That was in 2005. It was a whole new world, being on her own and recreating another sales business.

"I spent more money than I made in travel, marketing, etc., those first few years to build a name, build customer trust and develop a ride catalogue," she said.

One of her first big ride sales came

Gina Guglielmi

President
Intermark Ride Group
Nashville, Tenn.



from Frank Briggs, Modern Midway. It was a KMG Fireball out of Celebration City in Missouri.

She keeps a photo of that ride near her desk to remember the trust of a colleague, Briggs, as well as her perseverance, to never give up on a dream.

Now, in her 15th year of operation, Guglielmi said she, with IRG, has had the privilege of working with many great organizations including Wonderla Pvt out of India, Beta Carerra World, Brazil, SeaWorld Parks USA, Herschend Family Entertainment, Silver Dollar City, Fun Spot America, Adventureland Long Island and Alabama Splash Adventure.

Industry relationships may have been one of her most significant rewards. She has seen so many in the industry willing to share ideas and challenges to help their colleagues.

"I know being mentored by several people in the business helped me tremendously," she said. "I try to pay this forward with the young people in the industry now.

"I love what I do," she said. "I've

been blessed with the opportunity to work in an industry I love with people as committed as I am. I've been lucky to have people like Leslie Shaver, also a former *Amusement Business* family member, on my team while building the company."

When asked if she ever thought about doing anything else, she admitted there was one thing, writing for *Michelin Travel* magazines.

"That's it," she said, with a laugh.

In light of the current, unprecedented challenges of a global pandemic, Guglielmi spoke to this issue. She realized, most likely, there will be a new normal when it is over.

"But, we, as an industry will get through this with passion, commitment, respect, kindness and courage," she said. "I believe in us. We will survive this. We will be strong and profitable again."

And she is looking forward to the day where she will share a beer and stories with colleagues about surviving the 2020 pandemic crisis.

—Pam Sherborne

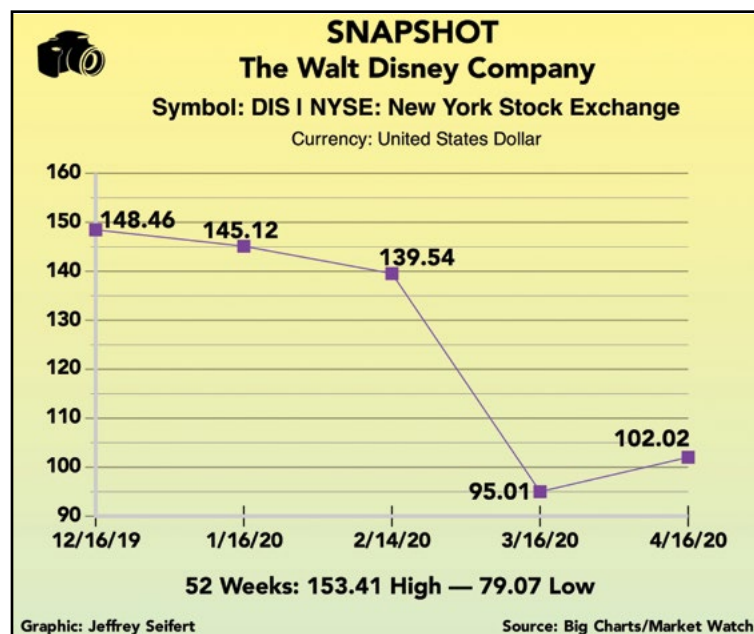
MARKET WATCH

COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 04/15/20	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	45.50	64.97	33.00
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	23.10	64.86	13.00
Comcast Corp./NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	37.16	47.74	31.70
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	103.37	153.41	79.07
Dubai Parks & Resorts	DXBE:UH	DFM	0.13	0.26	0.09
EPR Properties	EPR	NYSE	22.37	80.75	12.55
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	9010	TYO	2710.00	4830.00	2080.00
Haichang Holdings Ltd.	HK:2255	SEHK	0.57	1.78	0.49
Lefoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	10.40	17.00	9.08
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	14.42	34.64	5.90
Royal Caribbean Cruises, Ltd.	RCL	NYSE	36.98	135.31	19.25
Sansei Technologies, Inc.	JP:6357	TYO	609.00	1572.00	490.00
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	10.40	36.96	6.75
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	15.78	59.52	8.75
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	638.00	788.00	550.00
Village Roadshow	AU:VRL	ASX	1.95	4.10	0.77

STOCK PRICES ABOVE ARE GENERALLY QUOTED IN THE FOREIGN CURRENCY IN WHICH THE COMPANY IS LOCATED

Worldwide Markets: ASX, Australian Securities Exchange; CSE, Copenhagen Stock Exchange; LSE, London Stock Exchange; NYSE, New York Stock Exchange; NASDAQ, National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations; SEHK, Hong Kong Stock Exchange; SZSE, Shenzhen Stock Exchange; TSEC, Taiwan Stock Exchange, Corp.; TYO/TSE, Tokyo Stock Exchange

—SOURCES: Bloomberg.com; Wall Street Journal



DIESEL PRICES

Region (U.S.)	As of 04/13/20	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	\$2.599	-\$0.554
Midwest	\$2.353	-\$0.657
Gulf Coast	\$2.289	-\$0.610
Mountain	\$2.497	-\$0.585
West Coast	\$2.695	-\$0.557
California	\$3.302	-\$0.665

CURRENCY

On 04/15/20 \$1 USD =

0.9127	EURO
0.7947	GBP (British Pound)
107.39	JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.9626	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.5584	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.3891	CAD (Canadian Dollar)

BUSINESS WATCH

Six Flags increases revolving credit facility

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — In early April, **Six Flags Entertainment Corp.** (NYSE: SIX) announced that certain of the company's revolving credit lenders agreed to provide an incremental \$131 million of revolving credit to its senior secured revolving credit facility, increasing the facility from \$350 million to \$481 million. The move provides additional liquidity and financial flexibility in the uncertain business climate created by the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting stock value declines seen by all theme park operators. Six Flags suspended operations of its North American parks March 13 and expects to keep them closed until at least mid-May. The company has since reduced its operational outlay by, among other actions, eliminating nearly all seasonal labor costs, reducing salary and hours for executives and salaried employees by 25 percent, and intending to eliminate \$30-40 million of additional non-labor operating costs — including guest experience improvements announced in the fourth quarter of 2019. Six Flags expects total revenue in the first quarter of 2020 to be \$25-\$30 million lower than in 2019, with \$9 million of the decline associated with the company's international agreements.

Apex Parks Group undertakes restructuring

IRVINE, Calif. — **Apex Parks Group, LLC**, is pursuing a financial restructuring to reduce the company's current debt and, ultimately, enhance operations. As part of this process, Apex expects to enter into a stalking horse purchase agreement — defined as a bid for a bankrupt firm or its assets that is arranged in advance of an auction to act as an effective reserve bid — with the company's prepetition secured lenders to sell substantially all of the company's assets. The company has filed for Chapter 11 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code in the District of Delaware to facilitate the sale. The lenders will also provide financing to support Apex during the restructuring. The Chapter 11 process will not affect the future operations of Apex's 10 family entertainment centers and two water parks in California, Florida and New Jersey, which are closed temporarily in accordance with mandates related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mixed fiscal 2019 for Hong Kong Disneyland

HONG KONG — Despite political unrest in the Chinese city that negatively impacted **Hong Kong Disneyland Resort's** 2019 fiscal year, the theme park resort enjoyed solid results during the first nine months of the period. It reported an 11% percent increase in revenues and a fourfold increase in profit compared to the previous fiscal year, while attendance rose by about 5%. However, the fourth quarter, with a 4% decline in visitors during the peak summer months, dragged down the fiscal year totals, resulting in a net loss of HKD 105 million (US\$13.5 million). The resort, located on Lantau Island, has remained closed since January 26 because of the COVID-19 pandemic and is offering only limited services at its three hotels. Salaries of some senior managers have been cut by up to 30% and full-time employees have been asked to take several days of unpaid leave.

In Brief...

- As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Montreal-based **Cirque du Soleil Entertainment Group** has closed its 44 productions worldwide. Temporary staff reductions impacting 4,679 employees, representing 95% of the company's workforce, were made in the latter half of March.

- MGM Resorts Intl.** (NYSE: MGM) is moving to support those impacted economically by the pandemic. Initiatives advanced by the Las Vegas-headquartered casino hotel and entertainment company include a \$1 million crisis and disaster relief pledge into an employee emergency grant fund. MGM has also donated food equal to 400,000 meals from its properties across the U.S.

- Stern Pinball, Inc.**, has temporarily reduced production volume at its Elk Grove, Illinois, manufacturing facility and implemented pandemic-related employee protective measures recommended by the **Centers of Disease Control** and other authorities. It is continuing to provide customer service and produce and ship pinball machines, parts and accessories.

- Chicago's historic **Navy Pier**, originally opened in 1916, has partnered with Philadelphia-based **Spectra**, a leading venue management and hospitality provider. Spectra will manage the pier's East End event facilities — including the Aon Grand Ballroom, Festival Hall, Lakeview Terrace and other event spaces.

ON THE MOVE

Carlstadt, New Jersey-headquartered arcade and amusement equipment distributor **Betson Enterprises**, a division of **H. Betti Industries, Inc.**, has made three promotions on its sales team. Each is a regional sales manager position.

Joe Herbert, based in the company's Florida office, will help manage in the Southeast division under the direction of **David Capilouto**, the area's regional sales director. **Brandon Horton**, working out of Betson's Texas office, will assist in managing the Southwest division alongside **Brian Serck**, the area's regional sales director.

Steve Lamoreaux will work with Regional Sales Director **Mike McWilliams** in managing Betson's Mountain States and Pacific Northwest divisions. He is based out of the company's Utah office.

"Joe, Brandon, and Steve have all excelled since joining Betson," said **Jonathan Betti**, senior vice president of sales and business development. "These new roles allow them all to build upon their sales track records while also positively impacting the team in other areas."

Intercard, a leading provider of debit card technology solutions based in St. Louis, Missouri, has welcomed **Vadim Pambuk** to its development team as global project manager of application development. In this role, Pambuk helps ensure that all projects are completed and delivered to customers on time and with the utmost customer service. Prior to joining Intercard, he worked for more than 10 years in program management for companies including **AT&T**, **T-Mobile** and **Sprint**. Pambuk graduated from **The Open University of Israel** with a B.S. in public administration and is fluent in Hebrew, Russian and Ukrainian.

Integrated immersive experiences provider **Cavu Designwerks, Inc.**, of Victoria, British Columbia, has appointed **Nathan Jones** to the newly created role of COO. An industry veteran with more than 22 years of experience, most recently in the role of president, park attractions, at **WhiteWater**, Jones brings to Cavu a focus on operational efficiencies. He has also held senior positions at **Vekoma Rides Mfg., B.V.**, and **Brogent Technologies**. Jones serves on the international board of directors for the **Themed Entertainment Assn.** and is vice president of the organization's executive committee.

Tivoli in Copenhagen, Denmark, has announced two executive-level appointments.

Susanne Mørch Koch will be in place as the historic amusement destination's new CEO by Sept. 1, succeeding **Lars Liebst**. Koch was previously CEO of **Danske Spil**, Denmark's national lottery. She also worked in top management at **DSB**, the largest train operator in Scandinavia,

and served as a consultant for **McKinsey & Co.**, a major business management firm. Additionally, she is a board member of **Coop Denmark**, the country's largest supermarket chain, and **Scandic Hotels Group**.

Kasper Schumacher is Tivoli's new senior vice president, returning to the company after several years in Sweden as CEO of **Skåne Djurpark**. Earlier, during the years 2003-11, he was part of Tivoli's senior management team. In his new role, Schumacher is responsible for development and overall operations.

Fort Worth-headquartered **TrainerTainment**, offering training in leadership and business culture building for amusement and hospitality operators, has added two sales specialists to its team.

Krista Estes comes to the company after eight years with **Walmart** as a talent manager and trainer in its Academy Operations training center. A third-generation amusement industry veteran, she started her career as a teenager working in her family's **Cowtown Bowling Palace** in Fort Worth. Her father, **Jay Trietley**, with four decades in the bowling industry, taught her the essentials of customer service.

Sonya Terry joins TrainerTainment after more than 16 years in the laser tag industry as a Texas-based trainer and manager for **Leisure Entertainment Corp.** of Ontario, Canada. (The company's **Laser Quest** is one of the first manufacturers and operators of laser tag arenas.) Terry has extensive experience in training and motivating young, first-time workers in the amusement industry. Prior to Laser Quest, she spent more than 10 years in fashion retail, including the **Boot Town** Western wear chain.

SeaWorld taps interim CEO, shuffles leaders

ORLANDO — **SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.**, announced three leadership appointments in early April. All positions were effective immediately.

Marc Swanson, previously the company's CFO and treasurer and a nearly two-decade SeaWorld veteran, has been appointed interim CEO, replacing **Serge Rivera**, who resigned from both the top position and his board membership. **Elizabeth Castro Gulacsy**, chief accounting officer, will continue in her existing role while serving as interim CFO and treasurer. **Walter Bogumil**, formerly chief strategy officer, has been appointed to the role of COO.

SeaWorld's board of directors unanimously approved the appointments and expects the interim roles will last at least through the resumption of park operations, which were suspended in mid-March because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the company's executive officers have agreed to reduce their base salary by 20% until the parks substantially resume normal operations.



Koch



Schumacher



Estes



Terry



Herbert



Horton



Lamoreaux



Pambuk



Jones

OBITUARIES

Patricia Rolle Bennett, amusement operator

LAVALLETTE, N.J. — Patricia Rolle Bennett, a longtime Jersey Shore amusement operator, passed away April 2. She was 69.

Born in Lakewood, New Jersey, Bennett grew up on Pelican Island and resided on West Point Island in Lavallette. After graduating from high school in 1968, she became the third generation of the Rolle family to operate a boardwalk business — owning Strand Skilo on the Seaside Park boardwalk. Her husband, Robert Bennett, owned and operated several boardwalk businesses over the years, including Casino Pier in Seaside Heights. Bennett served on the New Jersey Amusement Assn. board of directors for more than 30 years. She was a past president of the organization as well as a lifetime member. She also served on the Applause Committee of the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions.

Bennett is survived by her husband, Robert; her sister and brother-in-law, Michele and Gary Bodeep; a niece, Kimberle Samarelli; and a nephew, Frederick J. Rolle, IV, among other family members. She was predeceased by her parents, Frederick J., Jr., and Barbara Rolle, and her brother, Frederick "Fritz" J. Rolle, III.

Larry Breitenstein, sales, Chance Rides, Inc.

WICHITA, Kansas — Larry Breitenstein, a longtime employee of Chance Rides, Inc., and most recently the company's director of entertainment and tram sales, died March 15 after a long health battle. He was 58.

Breitenstein joined the Chance sales team in 1999. Initially fulfilling the role of new business development manager, he was responsible for establishing new markets for the company's products. In 2001, he became national sales manager for the entertainment segment, working with malls, zoos and tram operators across the country.

Earlier in his career, Breitenstein was director of sales and marketing for an industrial manufacturer with distribution centers nationwide.

Chance described Breitenstein as "a vital team member" and encouraged his colleagues and industry friends to share their condolences and memories at his memorial page, located on everhere.com.

Sol Kerzner, developer, Atlantis, The Bahamas

CAPE TOWN, South Africa — Sol Kerzner, a hotel tycoon and the developer of Atlantis, the landmark themed resort on Paradise Island, The Bahamas, passed away from cancer March 21. He was 84.

In 1994, Kerzner purchased property on Paradise Island and invested more than \$1 billion in renovations and new construction to develop what is now known as Atlantis. The huge project created more than 7,500 jobs and made him the commonwealth's largest private employer.

Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis described Kerzner as "a creative force" who arrived when the island destination needed a boost. "The size, the scope, the financial commitment and the nature of his investments were such statements of confidence in our country that they shone a new light on The Bahamas, which endures," he said.

Kerzner is survived by four children.

Jens Nygaard Knudsen, Lego figure designer

HVIDE SANDE, Denmark — Jens Nygaard Knudsen, designer of the Lego minifigure, died Feb. 19, reportedly from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (also known as ALS and Lou Gehrig's disease). He was 78.

Knudsen joined Lego in 1968 and later became the Billund, Denmark, company's chief designer. In 1978, after a period of development, he introduced the minifigure, which added a humanlike element properly scaled to Lego's popular plastic building-brick toy line. The minifigures have since grown to include some 8,000 characters and have been featured in Lego-themed movies and parks. An estimated 7.8 billion of the toys have been sold. Knudsen also designed Lego's Castle and Space toy sets, among others. He retired in 2000.

The Lego Group described Knudsen as "a true visionary whose ideas brought joy and inspiration to millions of builders around the world." He is survived by his wife, Marianne.



Bennett



Breitenstein



Kerzner



Knudsen

2020 WHAT'S NEW GUIDE | NORTH AMERICA

Compiled by Jeffrey Seifert

This is a list of announced and confirmed projects for 2020 as of press time. Some manufacturers may have more projects for this year that have yet to be announced. Given the current global situation, some of these projects may be delayed.

CANADA

Alberta

Calaway Park, Calgary....Bumble Blast — Gosetto Family Spinning Coaster
Holiday Inn Lethbridge, Lethbridge....Polin Waterparks Aquatube

Nova Scotia

Atlantic Splash Adventure, Hammonds Plains....L&T Systems Compact Coaster

Ontario

Canada's Wonderland, Vaughan....Beagle Brigade Airfield — Zamperla Flying Tigers

Quebec

La Ronde, Montréal....Vipère — Intamin Zac Spin (relocated from Six Flags Magic Mountain)

MEXICO

México

Six Flags America, Mexico City....CraZanity — Zamperla Giga Discovery

JAMAICA

Mystic Mountain Jamaica, Ocho Rios....Fly fi Ragga Muffin — Suspended mountain coaster

UNITED STATES

Alabama

Alabama Adventure, Bessemer....Rampage — PTCI refurbishment of coaster train

Track Family Fun Park, Gulf Shores.... Zamperla Rio Grande Train; Spinning Coaster — SBF-Visa two-loop Spinning Coaster

Arizona

Arizona Biltmore Resort, Phoenix....Reimagined pool with WhiteWater AquaTube, Flatline Loop + Champagne Bowl Fusion

Six Flags Hurricane Harbor, Phoenix....Paradise Island — interactive activity pool

California

California's Great America, Santa Clara....South Bay Shores — transformation and expansion of Boomerang Bay with Pacific Surge drop slides; painting of Drop Tower — Baynum Painting

Disney California Adventure, Anaheim....Avengers Campus — Marvel-themed section with Web Slingers — interactive dark ride; Worldwide Engineering Brigade and Pym Test Kitchen

Disneyland, Anaheim....Star Wars: Rise of the Resistance — elaborate walkthrough/dark ride attraction

Great Wolf Lodge San Francisco, Manteca....New hotel water park resort with 100,000-square-foot indoor water park, 51,000-square-foot FEC; ProSlide Dueling PipeLine, FlyingSaucer 45, Tornado 45, BehemothBowl 40, TurboTwister, SuperLoop; Kids Twister, ProRacer and RideHouse

Knott's Berry Farm, Buena Park....Knott's Bear-y Tales: Return to the Farm — retheming of Voyage to Iron Reef dark ride

Legoland California, Carlsbad....Lego Movie World — new themed land with Lego Movie: Masters of Flight flying theater, Unikitty's Disco Drop, Emmet's Super Suite meet and greet, rethemed carousel, splash pad and retail

North Natomas Community Center & Aquatics Complex, Sacramento....50m competition pool; 25m warmup pool; water park with WhiteWater AquaPlay 300, AquaTube, Pool Sider

Raging Waters Los Angeles, Los Angeles....Bombs Away — WhiteWater AquaDrop, Flatline Loop

Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, Santa Cruz....painting of Undertow — Baynum Painting; Battech slide

SeaWorld San Diego, San Diego....Emperor — B&M Diving Coaster

Six Flags Discovery Kingdom, Vallejo....Sidewinder Safari — Zamperla Twister Coaster

Six Flags Magic Mountain, Valencia....West Coaster Racers — Premier Rides LSM-launched racing coaster

The Ravine Waterpark, Paso Robles....ProSlide Twister

Universal Studios Hollywood, Universal City....The Secret Life of Pets: Off

the Leash! — simulator ride

Colorado

Lakeside Amusement Park, Denver....Pinfari Zyklon 64 (relocated from Fun Plex, Omaha)

Connecticut

Lake Compounce Crocodile Cove, Bristol....Venus Vortex — WhiteWater open flume Manta

Quassy Amusement Park, Middlebury....Tidal Wave — SBF-Visa swinging ship

Florida

Adventure Island, Tampa....Solar Vortex — WhiteWater AquaLucent Tailspin waterslide

Aquatica Orlando, Orlando....RipTide Race — ProSlide dueling, racing PipeLine

Busch Gardens Tampa Bay, Tampa....Iron Gwazi — RMC conversion of Gwazi wooden coaster

Disney's Hollywood Studios, Lake Buena Vista....Star Wars: Rise of the Resistance — elaborate walkthrough/dark ride attraction (opened late December 2019); Mickey and Minnie's Runaway Railroad — cartoon-themed train ride

Epcot, Lake Buena Vista....Remy's Ratatouille Adventure — trackless dark ride; HarmonioUS — nighttime pyrotechnic, laser and water fountain show; Beauty and the Beast Sing Along, Canada Far and Wide, Awesome Planet — Walt Disney Imagineering film attractions

Jungle Island, Miami....WhiteWater FlowRider Double

SeaWorld Orlando, Orlando....Ice Breaker — Premier Rides Sky Rocket

Universal Studios Florida, Orlando....The Bourne Stuntacular — stunt show

Westgate Lakes Resort & Spa, Orlando....WhiteWater AquaSpray, AquaPlay 1050, Pool Sider, AquaTube

Georgia

Lake Winnepesaukee, Rossville....Cannonball — PTCI refurbishment of coaster train

Six Flags Over Georgia, Austell....Catwoman Whip — Zamperla Endeavour 24; Poison Ivy Toxic Twister — Eli Bridge Scrambler (reintroduced); The Great American Scream Machine — new PTCI coaster trains

Six Flags Whitewater, Atlanta....Python Plunge — ProSlide FlyingSaucer 30

Hawaii

Wet'n'Wild Hawaii, Kapolei....recoating of slides — Baynum Painting

Idaho

Roaring Springs Water Park, Meridian....Snake River Run — ProSlide FlyingSaucer30

Illinois

Six Flags Great America, Gurnee....Tsunami Surge — WhiteWater Master Blaster

Six Flags Hurricane Harbor, Rockford....Tidal Wave — WhiteWater Tailspin

Indiana

Holiday World & Splashin' Safari, Santa Claus....Cheetah Chase — ProSlide racing, dueling RocketBlast water coaster with FlyingSaucer sections; The Voyage — PTCI refurbishment of coaster trains

Lake Rudolph Camgrond & RV Resort, Santa Claus....RainDeer WaterWorks — WhiteWater AquaPlay 750

Iowa

Huck's Harbor Water Park at Pzazz Resort, Burlington....WhiteWater Giant Aquatube

Maryland

Jolly Roger at the Pier, Ocean City....20-meter SBF Drop & Twist (Rides 4 U)

Six Flags America, Upper Marlboro....Harley Quinn Spinsanity — Zamperla Giant Discovery; Roar — PTCI refurbishment of coaster train; The Wild One — PTCI refurbishment of coaster train

Massachusetts

Edaville Family Theme Park, Carver....Kersplash — E&F Miler Industries water coaster

Six Flags News England, Agawam....Supergirl Sky Flyer — Zamperla Endeavour

Michigan

Cedar Valley's Wild Frontier Fun Park, Comins....SDC Galaxi (relocated from Hydro Adventures, Missouri)

C.J. Barrymore's, Clinton Township....SBF-Visa Spinning Coaster (Rides 4 U)

Craig's Cruisers Family Fun Center, Mears....SBF-Visa Big Air Coaster

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Michigan's Adventure, Muskegon....Camp Snoopy — new themed area with Zamperla Jump Around, Speedway, Crazy Bus, Samba Tower

Minnesota

New Hope Civic Center Park, New Hope....50m pool, current chanel, WhiteWater Aquaforms 150

Missouri

Oceans of Fun, Kansas City....Riptide Racer — WhiteWater multi-lane mat racer

Silver Dollar City, Branson....Mystic River Falls — Ride Engineers Switzerland and Barr Engineering river rapids ride; new smokehouse

Six Flags St. Louis, Eureka....Catwoman Whip — Funtime Booster

New Jersey

American Dream Waterpark, East Rutherford....New water park with 20 ProSlide attractions including longest HydroMagnetic Rocket, tallest indoor FreeFall

Diggerland U.S.A., West Berlin....Water Main aquatic park — two-acre water park addition with Wibit challenge course and two multi-zone activity pools; WhiteWater Aquatube and Poolsider

Gillians Wonderland Pier, Ocean City....Huss Frisbee

The Funplex, Mt. Laurel....17-meter SBF Drop & Twist (Rides 4 U)

Nickelodeon Universe Theme Park, East Rutherford....Sandy's Blasting Bronco — Intamin LSM-launched multi-element indoor coaster

Playland's Castaway Cove, Ocean City....Zamperla Mini Jet

Six Flags Great Adventure, Jackson....Jersey Devil Coaster — RMC single-rail Raptor Track coaster

Storybook Land, Egg Harbor Township....Cinderella Coaster — SBF-Visa three-loop Compact Spinning Coaster

New York

Adventureland, Long Island....20-meter SBF Tower with sports theme (Rides 4 U)

Deno's Wonder Wheel Amusement Park, New York City....Skyflyer — SBF-Visa Micro Coaster

Enchanted Forest Water Safari, Old Forge....ProSlide KrakenRacer, SkyBox slides

Luna Park, Brooklyn....Zamperla Big WaveZ tower and water ride; Zamperla J2SK junior coaster; Zamperla Midi Tea Cup; Zamperla Super Flume; RCI adventure course

Splashtown at Six Flags Darien Lake, Darien Center....Wahoo Wave — ProSlide TornadoWave 60

The Great Escape, Lake George....Outlaw — Funtime Booster

Whiteface, North Elba....Mountain Coaster

North Carolina

Carowinds, Charlotte....Boogie Board Racer — WhiteWater mat racer

Wet'n'Wild Emerald Pointe, Greensboro....Bombs Away — WhiteWater AquaDrop, Flatline Loop

Wilderness Run Alpine Coaster, Banner Elk....Wilderness Run Alpine Coaster — Wiegand Alpine Coaster

Ohio

Cedar Point, Sandusky....Snake River Expedition — boat ride; Blue Streak — PTCI refurbishment of coaster train

Coney Island Park, Cincinnati....Challenge Zone — Aquaglide pool obstacle course

Kings Island, Mason....Orion — B&M Giga Coaster

Reynoldsburg Community Center YMCA, Reynoldsburg....WhiteWater Aquatube

Oklahoma

Six Flags Hurricane Harbor, Oklahoma City....Wahoo Racer — WhiteWater Whizzard Racer

Pennsylvania

Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom, Allentown....Seaside Splashworks — WhiteWater custom RainFortress 5; Thunderhawk — PTCI refurbishment of coaster train

Hersheypark, Hershey....Candyonium — B&M Hyper Coaster; painting of Fahrenheit — Baynum painting

Kennywood, West Mifflin....Old Mill — restoration of classic Old Mill ride; Racer — PTCI refurbishment of coaster train

Knoebels Amusement Resort, Elysburg....Wisdom 8-sweep Tornado

Sesame Place, Langhorne....Big Bird's Big Bus — Zamperla Crazy Bus; Slimey's Square — kid's shaded soft-play area;



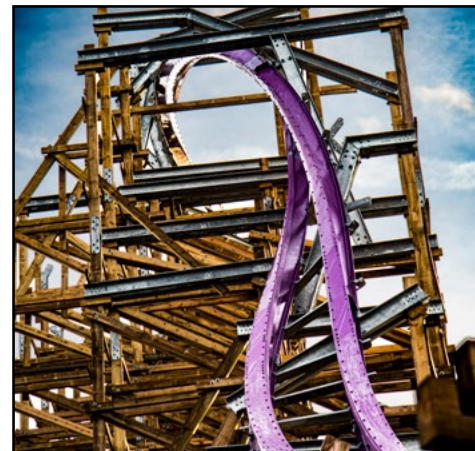
Riptide Racer, Oceans of Fun. COURTESY WORLDS OF FUN



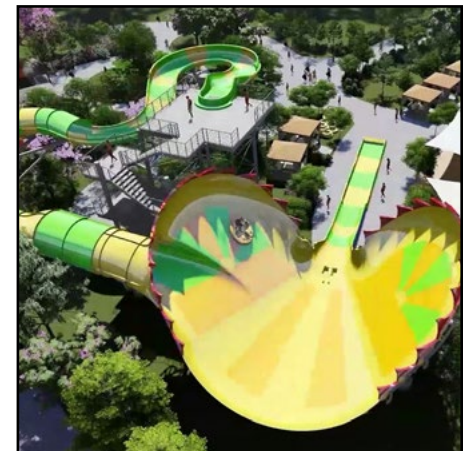
Masters of Flight, Legoland California. COURTESY LEGOLAND CALIFORNIA



Orion, Kings Island. COURTESY KINGS ISLAND



Iron Gwazi, Busch Gardens Tampa. COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS TAMPA



Venus Vortex, Lake Compounce. COURTESY LAKE COMPOUNCE

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Cheetah Chase, Holiday World & Splashin' Safari. COURTESY HOLIDAY WORLD



Candyonium, Hersheypark. COURTESY HERSHEY PARK



Catwoman Whip, Six Flags St. Louis. COURTESY SIX FLAGS ST. LOUIS



Aquaman, Six Flags Over Texas. COURTESY SIX FLAGS OVER TEXAS



Dare Devil Dive, Six Flags Fiesta Texas. COURTESY SIX FLAGS FIESTA TEXAS

Splash Lagoon Indoor Water Park, Erie....Dual FlowRider
Waldameer, Erie....Rally Racer — six-lane ProSlide RallyRacer; SBF-Visa two-loop Compact Spinning Coaster

South Carolina

National Amusements, Myrtle Beach....20-meter SBF Drop & Twist (Rides 4 U)

Tennessee

Anakeesta, Gatlinburg....Observation Tower; smokehouse and brewery
Nashville Shores, Nashville....Mega Mayhem — ProSlide Tornado24+TornadoWave 60+MegaMayhem; recoating of slides — Baynum Painting

Rowdy Bear Ridge Adventure Park, Pigeon Forge....Wiegand powered coaster

Soaky Mountain Waterpark, Sevierville....New water park with 18 ProSlide attractions including RocketBlast+FlyingSaucer+TornadoWave+Avalaunch Water Coaster; ADG Wave Pool, double Flow Rider

Texas

Aquatica San Antonio, San Antonio....Tonga Twister — WhiteWater AquaLucent Aquatube waterslide

Bahama Beach, Dallas....WhiteWater Boomerango; lagoon pool, children's splash pad

Camp Cohen, El Paso....Brand new city-owned water park with WhiteWater AquaSpray, AquaPlay 150

Chapateo, El Paso....Brand new city-owned water park

Kalahari Resorts & Conventions, Round Rock....New hotel water park resort with 250,000-square-foot indoor water park

Kemah Boardwalk, Kemah....Boardwalk Bullet — PTCI refurbishment of coaster train

Lost Kingdom, El Paso....Brand new city-owned water park with WhiteWater AquaSpray, AquaPlay 150, Pool Sider, AquaTube

Oasis, El Paso....Brand new city-owned water park

SeaWorld San Antonio, San Antonio....Texas Stingray — GCII wooden coaster

Six Flags Fiesta Texas, San Antonio....Dare Devil Dive — Zamperla Super Air Space

Six Flags Hurricane Harbor, Arlington....Bonzai Pipeline — WhiteWater SpeedSlide, AquaTube and PoolSider

Six Flags Over Texas, Arlington....Aquaman: Power Wave — Mack Rides PowerSplash

Wonderland Park, Amarillo....Spin-O-Saurus — SBF-Visa Compact Spinning Coaster; Antique Car Ride

Virginia

Busch Gardens Williamsburg, Williamsburg....Pantheon — Intamin Blitz Coaster

Kings Dominion Soak City, Doswell....Coconut Shores water park expansion — ADG Mini Harbour; WhiteWater custom AquaPlay

Massanutten Resort, McGaheysville....Outdoor water park expansion with WhiteWater Boomerango, Constrictor, Open Flume

Ocean Breeze, Virginia Beach....Operation Splashdown — ProSlide Mammoth



Mystery River Falls, Silver Dollar City. COURTESY SILVER DOLLAR CITY

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Compiled by Jeffrey Seifert

This is a list of announced and confirmed projects for 2020 as of press time. Some manufacturers may have more projects for this year that have yet to be announced. Given the current global situation, some of these projects may be delayed.

Armenia

Yerevan Park, Nor Kilikia....Vekoma Junior Coaster

Australia

Aussie World, Sunshine Coast....powered coaster

Dreamworld, Coomera....Mack Rides launch coaster; recoating of slides — Baynum Painting

Metro Sports Facility (Indoor), Crestmead....Polin Looping Rocket Sphere

Sea World, Surfers Paradise....Leviathan — Martin & Vlemminckx/Gravity Group wooden coaster

Austria

Deisel, Edelschrott....Steirarodl — Wiegand Alpine Coaster

Family Park, Maerchenpark Weg....The Waterworks at Bauernhof — water play structure and water play area

Wiener Prater, Vienna....Roller ball — Ride Engineers Switzerland Roller Ball coaster

Belgium

Bellewaerde, Ypres....Wakala — Gerstlauer family coaster with vertical rollback

Plopsa Co, Coe....Zamperla WindstarZ

Brazil

Acqualinda, Andradina....New water park with multiple slides and attractions from aQuakita

Mirabilandia, Paulista....Vekoma Giant Inverted Boomerang; Intamin multi-inversion coaster (relocated from Terra Encantada)

Parque Dos Elefantes, Cotia....SBF-Visa Cyclon Coaster

Rio Quente Resorts - Hot Park, Rio Quente....ProSlide Triple Tornado 24, FlyingSaucer 45

Bulgaria

Aqua Paradise Water Park, Nessebar....Polin Space Shuttle+2-piece Navigatour+Black Hole combination, Uploping Rocket

Cambodia

Angkor Water Park, Phnom Penh....New water park with Polin Windigo, Kamikaze, Uploping Rocket and themed S1 waterplay structure; WhiteWater 25m Wave Pool, Abyss, Boomerango, Constrictor, FlowRider Double, Lazy River, Super Bowl

China

Chengdu Wanda City, Dujiangyan....Intamin Blitz Coaster; Big Apple/Wacky Worm-style coaster; family coaster

Chongqing Wanda Theme Park, Shapinga....Intamin Impulse Coaster; Thrill coaster

Congqing Wanda Water Park, Chongqing....WhiteWater Open Flume, Manta, Constrictor, AquaSphere, Flatline Loop, AquaLoop, Multi-Lane Whizzard

Daqingshan Wildlife Park, Dangtu....Family roller coaster

Dragon Valley Theme Park, Nanjing....Vekoma Shockwave Coaster; Vekoma Family Boomerang

Dragon Valley Water Park, Nanjing....WhiteWater AquaLoop + Flatline Loop Fusion, AquaLoop, AquaDrop, Slideboarding, Mini Rattler, Mini Open Flume, Mini Multi-Lane, Ramp Slide, Mini Body Slide, Mini Boomerango, Mini AquaSphere, Pool Sider, Champagne Bowl, AquaTube, Whizzard, Boomerango, Open & Enclosed

Enjoy Land, Xinmu....Golden Horse mine coaster; Golden Horse family coaster; water coaster

Evergrande, Huaxi....WhiteWater Shoot the Chute with elevated river; special effects coaster

Fantasy Valley Water Park, Xiangyang....ProSlide Double TornadoWave, Tornado 60

Fantawild (Anyang), Wenfeng....Vekoma junior coaster; Beijing Shibaolai; Big Apple/Wacky Worm

Fantawild (Jiangxi), Ganzhou....Vekoma Top Gun Launch Coaster

Fantawild (Mianyang), Jiangyou....Vekoma junior coaster; Beijing Shibaolai suspended loop coaster; water coaster; Big Apple/Wacky Worm-style coaster

Fantawild (Taiyuan), Yangqu....Vekoma Family Boomerang; Vekoma Hyper Space Warp Launch

Fantawild (Taizhou), Luqiao....Vekoma Energy Storm

Fantawild (Zhengzhou), Zhongmu....Vekoma Family Boomerang; Vekoma Space Warp

Fantawild Ningbo/Oriental Heritage Ningbo (second gate), Cixi....Vekoma Family Boomerang; Vekoma Top Gun Launch Coaster

Fuhua Amusement Park, Kuiwen....Beijing Shibaolai Magic Roller Coaster; Beijing Shibaolai dueling coaster; Beijing Shibaolai Flying Coaster

Great Xingdong Tourist World, Puding....Eleventh Roller Coaster — Hebei Zhongye multi-element coaster; Mine Roller Coaster — Golden Horse Mine Coaster

Happy Valley (Nanjing), Qixia....B&M Wing Coaster; Vekoma family suspended; Intamin launched; Golden Horse mine train; Vekoma Family Boomerang

Hot Go Dreamworld, Wanghua....B&M Wing Coaster; B&M Hyper Coaster; Preston & Barbieri Mobius Coaster;

Nanhu Park, Shenyang....Family powered coaster

Ocean Flower Island, Danzhou City....WhiteWater FlowRider Double, 25m Wave Pool, 30m Surf Wave Pool

Ocean Paradise, Lingshui....Intamin multi-element coaster; Intamin spinning car coaster

Ocean Park, Hong Kong....WhiteWater Giant AquaTube, Freefall, Flatline Loop, Boomerango, AquaTwist, AquaDrop

OCT Happy Coast Plus Water Park, Shunde....Polin themed water play structure, Uploping Rocket, Surf Safari

Oriental Neverland - Coldplay Kingdom, Keqiao....Mine Adventure — family coaster; Twin Dragon — Beijing Shibaolai sit down and suspended dueling coaster

Qinggang Lake Happy World, Huangshigang....family roller coaster

Silk Road Paradise, Toutunhe....Golden Horse Suspended coaster; Golden Horse Moto Coaster

Star Magic Harbor, Quanshan....Hebei Zhongye Matallurgical Equipment indoor coaster

Sun Tzu Cultural Park, Guangrao....Launch Coaster — S&S Sansei air-launched coaster

Suzhou Paradise Forest World, Huqiu....Golden Horse Broken Rail (tilt) Coaster; launched coaster

Visionland, Yufeng....Beijing Jiuhua motor coaster

Visionland (Changde), Dingcheng....Golden Horse suspended coaster; Golden Horse Super Spinning Coaster; Beijing Shibaolai Magic Roller Coaster

Wanda Guilin Waterpark, Guilin....WhiteWater Abyss, AquaTube, Open Flume, Multi-Lane Mat Racer

Window of the World, Kaifu....S&S compressed air launch coaster

World Fairytale Land, Danzhou....Vekoma Firestorm; S&S 4-D Free Spin; Golden Horse family coaster; mine train-style coaster

Xuzhou Paradise, Quanshan....Thrill coaster; Golden Horse Suspended Roller Coaster; Golden Horse Spinning Coaster; Mack Rides Blue Fire

Zigong Fantawild Dinosaur Kingdom, Da'an....Vekoma Family Boomerang; Vekoma Energy Storm

Columbia

Parque Comfama, Tutacan....Fabbri RP 14 PM

Curacao

Livingstone Jan Theil Resort, Jan Theil Oost....Polin King Cobra

Czechia

Aqualand Moravia, Pasohlávky....High Five — WhiteWater Constrictor + Master Blaster Fusion; children's water world with multiple pools

Denmark

Bakken, Klampenborg....Supernova — KMG Freak Out

Fårup Sommerland, Blokhus....Saven — Vekoma Family Boomerang

Legoland Billund, Billund....Lego Movie World — Brogent Flying Theater; Unikitty's Disco Drop — Zierer Freefall; Apocalypseburg Sky Battle — Technical Park Aerobat

Tivoli Friheden, Aarhus....Himmelrum — Technical Park Loop Fighter 16

England

Alton Towers, Staffordshire....Gangsta Granny: The Ride — 4D interactive dark ride

Chessington World of Adventures, Chessington....The Rainforest — new themed land with Jungle Rangers — jeep ride ; River Rafts — mini log

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flume; Treetop Hoppers — freefall ride
Clacton Pier, Clacton-on-sea....Pinfari Zyklon Looping 42 (relocated from Codona's Amusement Park)
Fantasy Island, Ingoldmels....Zierer Star Shape (relocated from Skyline Park)
Flamingo Land, Malton....Intamin Amusement Rides multi-inversion coaster (relocated from Hopi Hari)
Funland Amusement Park, Hayling Island....Flying Elephants and Dragon Boats
Great Yarmouth Pleasure Beach, Great Yarmouth....SBF-Visa flying machine
Gulliver's Valley Resort, Rotherham....New theme park with multiple rides including Rocky Ridge Raceway — Zamperla Mini Mouse; spinning cars coaster; drop ride; children's drop ride; dry-wet slides; carousel; swing ride; spinning barrels; swinging ship; Ferris wheel; Rockin' Tug; elephant ride; river rapids ride; train
Gulliver's Warrington, Warrington....spinning cars coaster
Legoland Windsor, Windsor....Duplo Dino Coaster — Mack Ride kiddie oval coaster
Paultons Park, Romsey....Tornado Springs — new midwest resort town themed area with eight new rides including Storm Chaser — Mack Rides Spinning Coaster; kiddie driving school, two dop towers; suspended swing; water raft ride; tractor ride; train ride
Rocky Ridge Railway, Gulliver's Valley Resort....Rotherham — Zamperla Mini Mouse
Southport Pleasureland, Southport....Pinfari Mini Mega Coaster

Finland
PowerLand, Kauhava....Gerstlauer Infinity coaster

France
Animaparc Occitanie, Le Burgaud....Twister Colorado — SBF-Visa Compact Spinning Coaster; Wild Tower: Hellish Falls — SBF-Visa Drop and Twist tower
Dennlys Parc, Dennebroeucq....Xotic — lost-island-themed Soquet monorail
Didi'Land, Morsbronn-les-Bains....Duck Family — duck-themed train ride
Family Park, Monts....Gold Rush — Zierer Four Man Bob (relocated from Loudoun Castle); Family Coaster — SBF-Visa MX48 coaster
Fraispertuis City, Jeanménil....Post Office — Zamperla Speedway; Little Moussaillons — Zamperla Jump Around; Les Corb'Hauts — Zamperla Magic Bikes
Futuroscope, Chasseneuil-du-Poitou....Objectif Mars — Intamin tire propelled launch coaster with rotating cars; Studio 16 3-D film
Jacquou Parc, Le Bugue....Technical Park Aerobat Rush
Jardin des Bêtes, Montrozier....Gosetto Figure Eight Spinning Coaster
Kingoland, Plumelin....Gold Rush — Pinfari Mini Mega Coaster
La Fleury, Wavrechain-sous-Faulx....Bayou Express — Zierer Tivoli (relocated from Tivoli Gardens)
La Récré des 3 Curés, Milizac....Vertika — Gerstlauer Euro-Fighter
Le Pal, Dompierre Sur Besbre....Zamperla Convoy; children's water ride
Magic Park Land, Ensuÿs-la-Redonne....Shark Coaster — SBF-Visa twin helix coaster
Mer de Sable, Ermenonville....Silver Mountain — family coaster
Nigloland, Dolancourt....Noisette Express — Art Engineering family coaster
Papéa Parc, Yvré-l'Évêque....Balloon carousel



Cuca de Llum, Tibidabo. COURTESY TIBIDABO

Parc Astérix, Plailly....Les Quais de Lutèce — new 150-room hotel with themed restaurant
Parc Bagatelle, Merlimont....Technical Park Sidecar
Parc de la Vallée, Nouvelle-Aquitaine....Magic Pomme — Pinfari Big Apple
Parc des Combes, Creusot....The Round of Squirrels — spinning teacup ride
Puy du Fou, Les Epesses....Le Grand Siècle — Louis XIV-themed hotel, 500-seat dining room; Les Noces de Feu — new show
Walibi Rhône-Alpes, Les Avenières....Festival City Food Court — makover of the historic Vaudou District with new food offerings; Zamperla NebulaZ
Walt Disney Studios Park, Marne la Vallée....Disney's Hotel New York — The Art of Marvel — reimagined hotel; Studio D — dance party interactive show for children; Cars Route 66 — reimagined Studio Tram Tour themed to Cars movie

Germany

Bayern Park, Reisbach....Funtime 109-meter rotating freefall
Erlebnisfelsen Pottenstein, Pottenstein....Wiegand Sport Coaster
Erlebnispark Schloss Thurn, Heroldsbach....Mettalbau Emmeln swinging ship
Erlebnispark Tripsdrill, Cleebronn....Hals-über-Kopf — Vekoma Suspended Thrill Coaster; Volldampf — Vekoma Family Boomerang
Erlebniswelt Seilbahnen Thale, Thale....Ride Engineers Switzerland Roller Ball coaster; kiddie coaster
Europa-Park, Rust....Piraten in Batavia - dark ride boat
Fort Fun Abenteuerland, Wasserfal....Rio Grande — extensive renovation of existing river rapids ride
Freizeit-Land Geiselwind, Geiselwind....Bounty — SBF-Visa swinging ship; Tuki's Crazy Farm — new themed area with indoor playground and outdoor rides
Hansa Park, Sierksdorf....Awilda's Adventure Ride — Soquet log flume; Awilda's Lookout — freefall tower; Cinema Fantastico 4D
Heide-Park, Soltau....Peppa's Balloon Ride — observation ride
Historischer Freizeitpark Ittertall, Solingen....Reopening of park after having closed in 2018
Holiday Park, Hassloch....DinoSplash — retheming of existing river rapids ride
Karls Erlebnis-Dorf - Elstal, Wustermark....Marmeladen Land — New jam-country themed area with indoor jelly-jar teacup ride and flying carpet
Karls Erlebnis-Dorf Koserow, Koserow....Erdbeer Raupenbahn — SBF-Visa MX48 coaster
Karls Erlebnis-Dorf Zirkow, Zirkow....Erdbeer Raupenbahn — SBF-Visa MX48 coaster
Legoland Deutschland Resort, Günzburg....Lloyd's Spinjitzu Spinner — Sunkid Loopster
Phantasialand, Brühl....F.L.Y — Vekoma Flying Coaster
Rasti-Land, Salzhemmendorf....SBF-Visa Rocket Roll
Ravensburger Spieleland, Meckenbeuren....Kakerlakak-Riesen-Schaukel — SBF-Visa Rocket Roll; Kakerlakak-Labyrinth — maze
Rulantica, Rust....Yullbe — virtual reality experience
Schwaben Park, Kaisersbach....Hummel Brummel — Wiegand Wie-Flyer
Serengeti Park, Hodenhagen....Batukai-Racer — Technical Park Gold Mine Coaster
Skyline Park, Bad Wörishofen....Allgäuflieger — Funtime 50-meter Star Flyer
Taunus Wunderland, Schlangenbad....Kuhddel Muuhddel — SBF-Visa two-loop Compact Spinning Coaster
Wild- und Freizeitpark Klotten, Klotten....Kunibert's Abenteuer — Lagotronics interactive dark ride

Greece

Attica Zoo, Athens....Polin Mini Magicone, King Cobra, Water Play Structure C12

Indonesia

Malang Night Paradise, Jawa Timur....Studio Cruiser — trackless dark ride

Ireland

Andersonstown Leisure Centre, Belfast....New venus with 25m pool; learner pool; water park with WhiteWater AquaPlay 1050, AquaPlay 50, Master Blaster, Flatline Loop, AquaTube, Ramp Slide, AquaSpray

Israel

Hotel Magic Sunrise Club, Eilat....Polin Looping Rocket, Turbolance

Italy

Gardaland, Castelnuovo del Garda....Wonder Woman the 4D Experience — 4D cinema with special effects; 44 Cats Rock Show — Live show themed to popular kids' series; AquaFantasia — dancing fountains and light show;

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Gardaland Awards — live musical theater

Legoland Water Park at Gardaland Resort, Castelnuovo del Garda....New Lego-themed water park with WhiteWater AquaTube, Mini Body Slide, Rattler, RainFortress 5; river adventure; splashpad; swimming pool; model boat race

Leolandia, Capriate San Gervasio....PJ Masks City — new themed area; Owl Glider — Zamperla Aero ride; Spray Park; Playground; PJ Masks meet and greet

Magicland, Valmonte....Cosmo Academy — new planetarium show

Movieland, Lago di Garda....Space Mission Orbit — space shot tower; Space Ranger — bumper cars; Space Mission Mars — space flight simulator

Japan

Suzuka Circuit, Suzuka....GP Racers — Hiei Sangyo dual-track motorcycle coaster

Tokyo Disneyland, Tokyo....Enchanted Tale of Beauty and the Beast — trackless dark ride

Universal Studios, Osaka....Super Intendo World — new themed land with omni-mover dark ride; interactive dark ride

Kazakhstan

Aquapark Laguna, Aktua....Polin Looping Rocket, pirate-themed Water Play Structure

Malaysia

Gamuda Gardens, Selangor....Polin jungle-themed water play Structure

Splash World Theme Park, Melaka....Polin King Cobra, Uplooping Rocket, Flying Boats+Black Hole+Navigatour+Sphere combination

Netherlands

Duinrell Holiday Park, Wassenaar....New park entrance; Rick's Fun Factory — indoor playground expansion; Luxury Lodge tents

Efteling, Kaatsheuvel....Max + Moritz — Mack Rides dueling powered coaster; Fabula — Aardman Animation 4-D theater

Hege Gerzen, Ouemirdum....Sunkid Heege Butterfly coaster

Northern Ireland

Colin Glen Forest Park, Belfast....Brandauer Mountain Coaster

Norway

Hunderfossen Eventrypark, Fåberg....New pool and water games area

Pakistan

Mojmela Aqua Funland, Islamabad....Super Train — Zamperla powered coaster

Sunway Lagoon Waterpark, Sindh....Polin Uplooping Rocket, Mini Magicone

Philippines

Anjo World, Minglanilla....Pharaoh — Golden Horse Super Spinning Coaster

Aqean Bay Boracay Waterpark, Aklan....WhiteWater RainFortress 5, Open & Enclosed, Mini Multi-Lane, FlowRider Double, 25m Wave Pool, Extreme River, AquaSpray, Mini Pool Sider, Mini Rattler, Ramp Slide, Mini Boomerango, Super Bowl, AquaTube, Family Rattler, AquaLoop, Flatline Loop, Whizzard, Boomerango, Abyss 55

Enchanted Kingdom, Santa Rosa....Mack Rides Spinning Coaster

Poland

Aquapark Reda, Reda....Aquaspinner — Wiegand Waterrides Slidewheel

Energylandia, Zator....Aqualantis — new themed area with Abyssus — Vekoma Shockwave; Vekoma Mine Train; Vekoma Family Boomerang; Grotto Expedition — boat ride; Disco Coaster — Zamperla Disk'O; Aquajump — high diving show

Legendia, Chorzów....Dolina Jagi — river rapids ride

Majaland Kownaty, Torzyn....Mack Rides Splash Battle; Zamperla Disk'O

Mandoria, Rzgów....New park with Gerstlauer Bob coaster

Suntago Water World, Warsaw....Polin Space Shuttle, Navigatour, Magic Hole, Rocket Freefall

Portugal

Aqualand Algarve, Alcantarilha....Polin King Cobra

Qatar

Doha Oasis, Doha....Vekoma Family Coaster

Salwa Dahab Mountains, Salwa....Polin King Cobra

Wonder Dome, Doha....Dagonfire — Premier Rides LSM launch indoor coaster with twisted vertical rollback

Russia

Belgorod Aqua Fun, Belgorod....Polin Sphere, Magic Hole, Looping Rocket

Detskiy Park, Anapa....Euro-Star — installation of the former travelling coaster Euro-Star (opened late 2019)

Dream Island, Moscow....New indoor theme park with nine themed areas; Race of the Future — Fabbri Spinning Mouse; tunnel Flight — Intamin indoor launched coaster; Zamperla Disk'O, Magic Bikes; Huss Suspended Top Spin, Frisbee

Gagarin Park, Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk....Cyclone — Zyklon or Galaxi-style coaster

Golden City, Venyovsky....Intamin Accelerator Coaster; Twin helix powered coaster;

Lermontovo Outdoor Water Park, Lermontovo....Polin Looping Rocket, Sphere

South Korea

Busan LCT Water Park, Busan....Polin Navigatour (transparent and placed on skyscraper)

Spain

Bañuls Atracciones, Seville....Fabbri Ferris wheel 27

Isla Magica, Seville....¡A los cañones! — Zamperla Watermania

PortAventura, Salou....25th anniversary celebrations; character additions Shrek and Oscar the Grouch; 25th anniversary shows

Tibidabo, Barcelona....Cuca de Llum (Glow Worm) — Leitner Ropeways modernization and theming of the Tibidabo Funicular

Sweden

Furuviik, Gvle....Draken — Zierer Force One

Liseberg, Gothenburg....Underlandet — Gosetto and P&P Projects dark ride themed to the park's rabbit mascots

Skara Sommarland, Skara....Snake — Funtime Chaos Pendle

Switzerland

Ticiland, Stein am Rhein....New indoor park with Zierer indoor family coaster, multiple rides from Zierer

Tajikistan

Kuli Dusanbe, Dusanbe....Polin Magicone

Trinidad and Tobago

Five Islands Waterpark, Chaguaramas....ProSlide RideHouse 250, Kidz Zone aquatic play structure

Tunisia

Acqua Palace, Hammam Sousse....Polin Looping Rocket, Tsunami

Turkey

Club Mega Saray Hotel, Antalya....Polin Mini Magicone

Land of Legend Theme Park, Antalya....Mack Rides interactive boat ride

Vogie Hotel Supreme Bodrum, Mugla....Polin Mantis, Storm Racer, Looping Rocket, King Cobra, Water Play Structure (Candyland)

Ukraine

Blockbuster Mall, Kiev....Family coaster

Bukovel, Polyanytsya....Speed Fun — Wiegand Alpine Coaster

United Arab Emirates

Ferrari World Abu Dhabi, Abu Dhabi....Mission Ferrari — Dynamic Attractions SFX Coaster; Formula Rossa Junior — Zamperla Junior Coaster

Uzbekistan

Afsona Land, Namangan....Golden Horse Family Roller Coaster; Golden Horse Suspended Roller Coaster

Vietnam

Muongthanh Park, Dien Lam....Golden Horse Spinning Coaster; Golden Horse Suspended Roller Coaster

Vinpearl Land, Phú Quoc....Eagle Warriors — Vekoma family coaster; Vekoma Firestorm; Vekoma Boomerang; Extreme Engineering Cloud Coaster; WhiteWater West Super Flume; Polin King Cobra, Uplooping Rocket, Looping Rocket



NebulaZ, Walibi Rhône-Alpes.
COURTESY ZAMPERLA



Underlandet, Liseberg.
COURTESY LISEBERG

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Gosetto Fun House, Ray Cammack Shows. COURTESY STEFAN HINZ



KMG Freak Out. COURTESY RIDES 4 U



Rides 4 U and Wisdom announced a brand-new ride at Gibtown. The concept was created by Rides 4 U's Mark Blumhagen and will be manufactured by the Colorado-based Wisdom. Whirlpool will feature a center turntable that rotates with free-wheeling cars that will be picked up and then dropped down similar to a pinball machine. COURTESY RIDES 4 U

Compiled by B. Derek Shaw and Jeffrey Seifert

This is a list of announced and confirmed projects for 2020 as of press time. Some manufacturers may have more projects for this year that have yet to be announced. Given the current global situation, some of these projects may be delayed.




UNITED STATES TRAVELING SHOWS

- American Banner Amusements** — Luna Park 50-meter Ferris Wheel
Arnold's Amusements — Kolmax Bumper cars, Kolmax Mystery Ride (Breakdance)
Bartlebaugh Amusements — Kolmax Elephant Ride
Bates Brothers Amusements — Visa Sky Flyer Kiddie Roller Coaster via Rides 4 U
Blue Sky Amusements —KMG Freak Out, via Rides 4 U
Butler Amusements — Wisdom Hawaiian Express (themed Himalaya — first of its kind)
Castle Amusements — Wisdom Tornado
Crabtree Amusements — Battech Zero Gravity, Battech Downdraft
Davis Shows NW — Wadkins Expo Wheel, Wisdom Hawaiian Express (themed Himalaya)
Deggeller Attractions — Flachs 16M Wheel (via Kharmitek), Soweel Wave Swinger (via Robert Pugh), Gosetto Fun House
Frazier Shows — Luna Park 50-meter Ferris Wheel
Gopher State Exhibitions — Luna Park 50-meter Ferris Wheel
Helm & Sons — Wisdom Sizzler
J&T Amusements — Luna Park 50-meter Ferris Wheel
Lisko Family Midway Amusements, Inc. — Luna Park 50M Ferris Wheel
Lynam Amusements — Luna Park 50-meter Ferris Wheel
Majestic Midways — ARM Rockstar
Marena Amusements — Jung Max Dragon Roller Coaster, Kolmax Tea Cups
Mid-America Shows — Kolmax Flying Elephant
Modern Midways (Briggs) — Kolmax Flying Elephant, Kolmax 25M Wheel
NAME — Visa Mini Breakdance, via Rides 4 U (Taxi driver themed); Ronald Bussink & Professional Rides AG 150-foot Super Wheel, 36 gondolas
Northeast Amusements (Stefano) — Kolmax Flying Elephant
Otterbacher Shows — Kolmax Honey Meadow (themed Teacups)
Paul Maurer Shows — KMG Freak Out, via Rides 4 U
PBJ Happee Day — Whirlpool (new ride, combo tilt and bumper car-type ride) via Rides 4 U and Wisdom (first of its kind)
Powers & Thomas Midway Entertainment — Kolmax Flying Elephant, Kolmax Tea Cups, Kolmax Dragon Coaster
Powers Great American Midways — Spider Wheel 28-meter; Wisdom Alien Abduction, ARM Sky Hawk, Kolmax, Dragons Nest family coaster
Ray Cammack Shows, RCS — Gosetto Fun House, Kolmax Mystery Ride (Breakdance)
Rockwell Amusements — Kolmax 25M Wheel
Skerbeck Entertainment — Wisdom Himalaya, Wisdom Music Express
Stewart's Amusements — Visa Mini Breakdance, via Rides 4 U
West Coast Amusements — Battech Hog Rally

EUROPE TRAVELING SHOWS

- Showman Denis, Netherlands** — Fabbri In Control
Showman Hanspeter Maier, Switzerland — 33-meter Lamberink observation wheel
Showman Langlais, France — Fabbri Booster 30, trailer model
Showman Pfausser, France — Fabbri Spider
Showman Ruitenber, Netherlands — Fabbri Smashing Jump 12, trailer model
Showman Sittler, Prater, Vienna, Austria — Fabbri Booster 40 PF, trailer model
Showman Willy Ordelman, Netherlands — Airborne, KMG Propeller



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Great Coasters International, Inc., celebrates 25 years in 2020

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

SUNBURY, Pa. — Over the past quarter century, **Great Coasters International, Inc.** (GCII) has created 29 wooden roller coasters. In all instances, these were highly marketable attractions. But in many cases, they stand as a park's most signature ride.

In December of 1994, GCII officially began, and in that winter of 1995, work began in earnest on the company's first project. One constant from its two founding partners to its staff today is passion. It's not just hard work, but the love of what the company does.

GCII President **Clair Hain Jr.** founded the company with coaster designer **Mike Boodley**. Boodley was a coaster enthusiast from a young age, and his zeal would lead him to the right people in the industry. His formative years had him doing work at **Philadelphia Toboggan Company** where he absorbed everything like a sponge, particularly from legendary designer **John Allen** when he would visit PTC in his retirement.

Hain and Boodley met in their work with **Custom Coasters Inc.** (CCI) in the early 1990s. Boodley was brought on to do coaster designs, but Hain was the company's construction foreman supervisor, a more permanent position with CCI. The two were introduced at an IAAPA trade show.

"I knew Clair was a hell of a guy right then and there. He had a great personality, knew how to do stuff, just a hands-on guy," Boodley said.

CCI's first project in 1992 was at **Dutch Wonderland** in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Boodley came to know Hain better on the construction site. "He was a workhorse. We immediately hit it off," said Boodley. Although small, Dutch Wonderland's coaster had differences than past work. "Clair was immediately interested."

CCI's second project was **Outlaw** at **Adventureland** in Iowa. **Outlaw's** design started using compound curves. Boodley, long a fan of **Harry Traver's** historic coaster designs, liked the use of curving drops. That didn't necessarily gel with CCI's mode of thinking. "Clair got it. Without



Inset, a car is lowered onto GCII's first project, Wildcat at Hersheypark. At the same park, Lightning Racer (above) is a masterpiece with both racing and dueling elements. At right, Hain (left) and Boodley (center) are seen early in their partnership along with engineer Bill Kelly at an IAAPA trade show.

COURTESY NRCMA ARCHIVES/
AB PHOTOS, GCII ARCHIVES;
AT/TIM BALDWIN



him, the ride may never have been finished," Boodley told *Amusement Today*. The two began collaborating.

Fate, however, intervened. Looking to work with someone more consistent with the type of construction they wanted, CCI brought in another designer. Hain, meanwhile, suffered a tragic fall on the company's 1994 project. With Hain critically injured, CCI assumed he wouldn't be returning and let him go. Boodley, however, with a sincere friendship established, flew out and stayed at Hain's side during recovery. Hain had no intention of giving up, and the two began discussing going into business together following Hain's physical therapy.

Prior to incorporating that December, the two attended the IAAPA trade show and had casual conversations with management at Hersheypark, not knowing at the time the theme park was looking to add a major new attraction to anchor the Midway America section under development. Having met the duo, Hersheypark

soon asked GCII to submit a proposal for a nostalgic coaster. The curving drops had the style and feel the park was looking for, and GCII landed its first project.

"It looked timeless," recalled Boodley. "It was a series of events — persistence, not wanting to give up, a series of lucky breaks and the right people."

Taking a risk, Hersheypark had faith in the new company.

"I wasn't scared. I was excited," said Hain. "I felt confident with my background, and I felt confident with Mike because of his."

Hersheypark negotiated a unique contract. Staggered payments and continual ownership of completed work minimized the risk from both sides.

"Our contract [was] a beautiful thing," Boodley told AT. "It was all about cooperation and obligation to one another. Nothing like that contract exists in the world we live in now. It was tremendous."

Opened in 1996, **Wildcat** — named after Hersheypark's

original roller coaster from 1923 — was a home run. It was big — 106 feet tall — crossed over and under itself 13 times and had a style and feel that enthusiasts immediately embraced.

Attendance surged.

"The profit we made [off **Wildcat**] kept us operating until we got our next project," said Hain.

With a big success to the company's name, the pair did a lot of traveling to get the next job. Along the way, they did some consulting jobs and some track work.

New projects did come. The graceful fluidity of Boodley's designs created an image that parks were drawn to. In time, GCII made some notable "fashion statements" with its coasters. The curving drops were followed by racing and dueling coaster installations. The station fly-by and fly-through elements became a signature move. And when train manufacturers didn't show interest in single bench trailered cars to negotiate the tight turns of the design, the company introduced its own style, the **Millennium Flyers**,

in 1999.

"In the beginning, I lived on site — project manager, foreman ... — I worked out in the field with the guys," said Hain.

Hersheypark returned in 2000 to do the massive **Lighting Racer**. Work with **Six Flags, Cedar Fair, Herschend** and others populated GCII coasters across the American landscape. Along the way, Boodley experienced health issues. He was needing to step away in 2000, but he continued to support the company through 2004 with plans, profiles and banking.

"It was a tough decision, but I knew I was probably going to die if I kept going," said Boodley.

To make it through the transition, GCII was fortunate enough to have brought on new people that shared the same zeal as the company's two founders.

"I was a kid who always wanted to make roller coasters," said **Jeff Pike**, who was brought on after he had interned with **Morgan Manufacturing**. As a kid, he had researched manufacturers in the libraries and wrote endless letters. Pike met designer **Curtis Summers** as a teen who encouraged him to ask questions and get an engineering degree and to take any work in the industry. Following his internship, he met Boodley. The two instantly clicked.

Pike's initial work was on foundation drawings for the 1999 projects **Gwazi** and **Roar**.

"I loved the looks of the designs Mike was putting together," said Pike. "When he did **Outlaw** at Adventureland, it was such a cool-looking coaster. It was so different. I remembered those curving drops from Harry Traver's coasters thinking they were so great, and here was someone who was



Wodan (above left) is GCII's tallest project in Europe. Thunderhead at Dollywood (above middle) was a Golden Ticket winner. Boodley and Hain take the front seat on Kentucky Rumbler (above right), one of Pike's first designs, who is seated in row two. AT/JEFFREY SEIFERT; B. DEREK SHAW; COURTESY JOEL STYER

► **GCII**
Continued from page 48

actually doing it. Everything about a CCI coaster was utilitarian. It was a functional machine. But there was something about the way Mike was designing these rides that had an elegance to it that no one else was doing."

Pike soon took over for Boodley and became vice president of sales and design for GCII.

GCII's first overseas job was at **Power Park** in Finland. It, along with Kentucky Rumbler at **Beech Bend**, became Pike's first true designs.

"I love the way Mike's structures look. The first ride I ever designed was Thunderbird in Finland. I put a lot of effort into the look of that ride," said Pike. "It was originally designed for a pier in Long Island, New York, that never ended up happening. The pier coasters [of the past] had something about them. The stark contrast between the flat, angular pier structure and the grace-

ful curves built on top of it... I wanted that Power Park ride to capture that feel."

"Jeff has far eclipsed any rides I've ever done," Boodley said of his protégé.

Chris Gray came aboard first because of his expertise in model building. He was given the title assembly and procurement director, taking over the role of streamlining how things were done in the office. His main job was to oversee the production of the trains and order parts for trains and rides, but Pike credits Gray for being the heart and conscience of the company while he and Hain could focus on selling and designing rides.

Gray feels the development of the Millennium Flyer trains was instrumental in getting GCII to where they are now.

"When they were designed years ago, they were the only ones that could do the crazy articulation — the twisting and turning," Gray told AT. "The lower cost of maintenance was a factor to the success; there wasn't a



Roar at Six Flags Discovery Kingdom (then Marine World) introduced the Millennium Flyer trains in 1999 (above left). El Toro at Freizeitpark Plohn (above right) put the German theme park on the map with a big iconic ride. AT/TIM BALDWIN; JEFFREY SEIFERT

whole lot that needed replacing each year. It was one of those things where you take it apart, check the welds and then rebuild it."

GCII has made a global impact with installations in the Netherlands, Germany, Finland, Belgium, Poland, England and China. Pike was instrumental with "boots on the ground" as the company

worked through the international process.

Along the way, Great Coasters International picked up some Golden Ticket Awards with its projects. Thunderhead at **Dollywood** debuted in the top ten in 2004 and snagged the Golden Ticket for Best Wooden Roller Coaster the following two years. Prowler (**Worlds of**

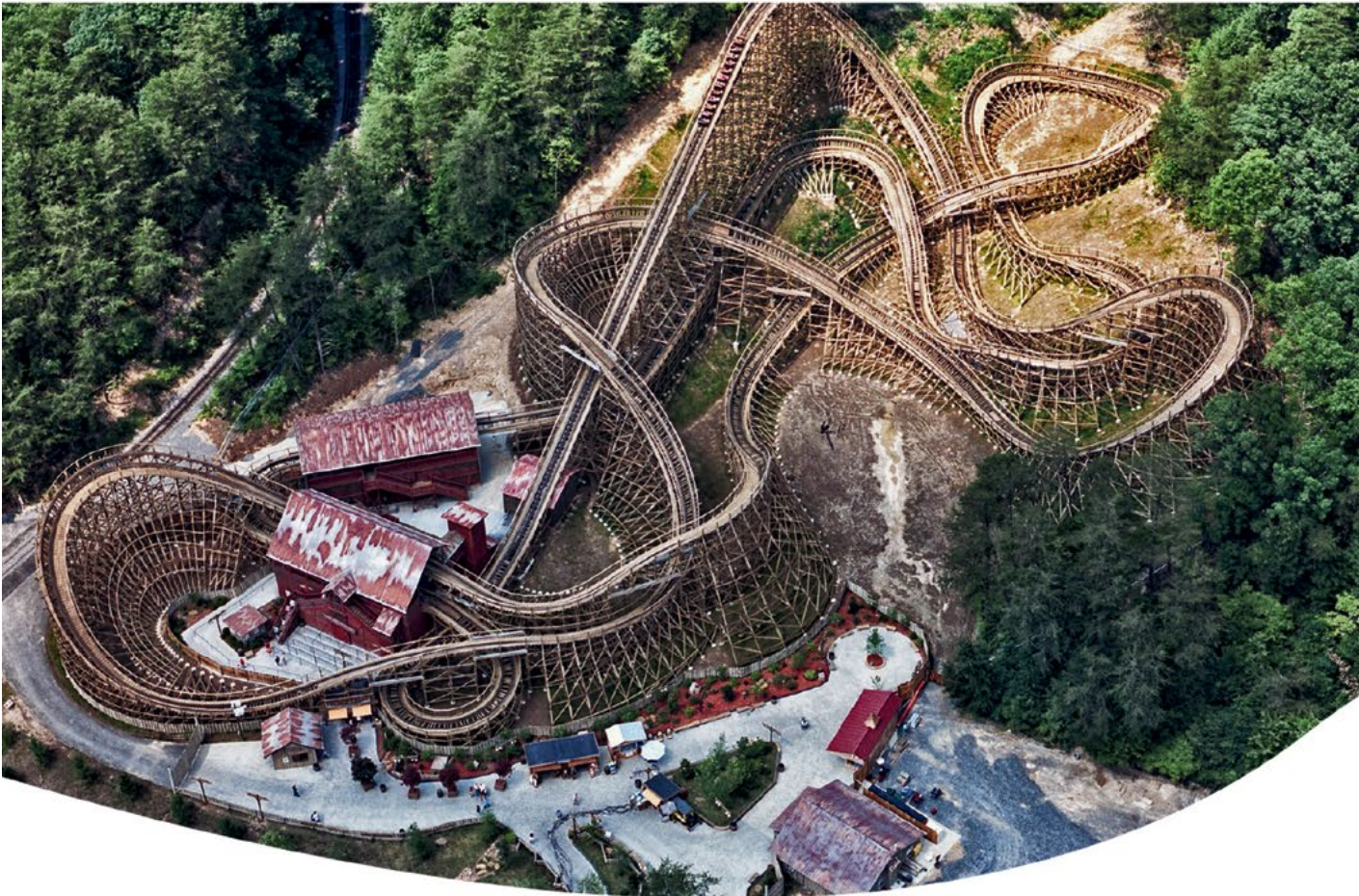
Fun) took Best New Ride in 2009 and Mystic Timbers (**Kings Island**) did the same in 2017. The latter has joined the likes of Gold Striker at **California's Great America**, along with Hersheypark's Lightning Racer and Dollywood's Thunderhead for long stints in the top ten.

Within the new millennium, GCII has made great strides in the development of the wooden coaster. The durability of the Brazilian ipe wood has contributed to a smooth ride and reduced maintenance. The mid-sized family coaster produced for **Fun Spot America** in Orlando has found great favor as it has been duplicated twice overseas. At the recent IAAPA Expo, Hain unveiled steel track for the high stress pull out areas on his wooden coasters if the customer wants to explore those advantages. Also, new Infinity Flyer trains have been developed that allow riders to travel through inversions.

When asked how the industry has changed over a



The GCII crew pose on the company's most recent project, SeaWorld San Antonio's Texas Stingray, which opened in February. AT/GARY SLADE

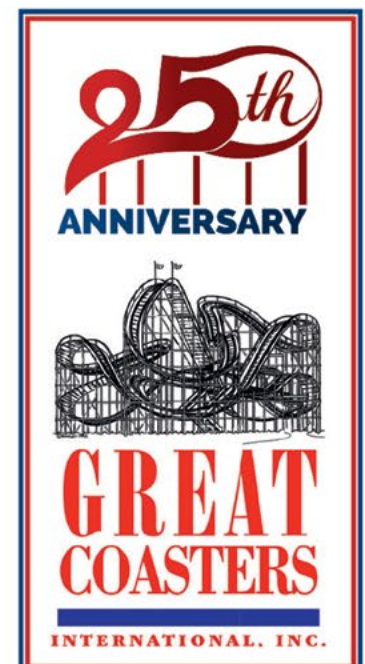


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Georges and de Draak at Efteling is one of three dual-track coasters produced by GCII. AT/JEFFREY SEIFERT

►GCII Continued from page 49

quarter century, Hain noted he learned his lesson in how contracts are written, as designs are constantly changed in the project process.

Even when the company is not involved with completing new projects, they are heavily used by parks to come in and refurbish existing rides. **Knott's Berry Farm's** GhostRider made a significant leap into the Golden Ticket top ten following a total GCII revamp in recent years.

"I love it; I love it 100 percent! We did the same thing at Lake Compounce. That makes you feel good inside. We know we can fix the problems once the park wants to go that route," said Hain, who is also proud of his company's work on Coney Island's Cyclone at **Luna Park**.

"I think it is that shared goal of preservation of wooden rides," said **Hunter Lawrence**, engineer and project manager, GCII.

In 25 years, has there

been a favorite time in Hain's memories?

"My most favorite moment would have been the Wildcat," he said. "I was being criticized by my competitors. They said, 'You can't do it. And if you do do it, we're going to put you out of business.'"

"One of my favorite spots on any coaster we ever built was on Thunderhead from the bottom of the first drop to the top of the second turn. You changed direction three times in fractions of a second," said Gray. "As time went on, I was pushing for us to do more of that — the twisting first drops that switched back and forth. I was a big proponent of **Valleyfair's** Renegade getting the S-turn on the way down the first drop."

While Pike and Gray have started a separate company, **Skyline Attractions**, to design various types of rides, they still continue to partner in design work for GCII.

"There's a place for technological things that do whiz-bang stuff, and there's a place for something that has classical art to it. A wooden coaster is a piece of art," said Pike.

"I think some of the bigger parks sometimes think about how they are going to market [a new attraction] instead of the product offering. They try to match a product to a marketing hook."

"I think the new inventions that we have now — with the steel track and steel structure and the ipe — we're going to see a pretty good future once the coronavirus goes away and the economy gets better in [other countries]. I think there will be a lot of business outside of America with new parks putting in woodies," said Hain. "Parks look at the maintenance needed on a wooden coaster which is why we have come up with new features to prevent unscheduled maintenance — things that we can do can solve those problems."

"I don't feel the record breakers of the early 1990s were the right role for woodies," said Boodley. "I hope wooden coasters get back to their role of a wide demographic of a fun and thrilling ride. Wooden coasters are the purist form of fun."

As mentioned, passion is

a driving force with GCII. So is style.

"Clair was kind of lucky he had people like us who really loved what we were doing. You kind of get married to it. We were so proud of it. There's not a single Great Coasters project that I was involved with that I'm not proud of," said Gray. "Everything evolves. You stay up with the times. I feel Texas Stingray is one of the best wooden roller coasters out there. Period. I think you will continue to see that evolution of a wooden coaster."

"I feel fortunate to be working for a company that is building some of the best wooden coasters," said Lawrence. "Personally, my passion has been specifically wooden rides, so it is really satisfying to be on site and see what you've done a lot of work on reach completion."

"You can still see it today; Clair lives for the business," said Boodley.

"There's not a soul in the world who can tell Clair he can't do something, because then he will go do it," said Pike.



During IAAPA Expo 2019, GCII debuted steel track for the high stress pull out areas on its wooden coasters (left) and Infinity Flyer trains (right), a new Class 5 vehicle that can safely take riders upside down. AT/DAVID FAKE; JOHN W.C. ROBINSON

RWS opens a new London headquarters

New York, N.Y. — **RWS Entertainment Group**, a full-service production company that creates award-winning custom entertainment, live events and branded experiences, announced in March the opening of its new European headquarters in Monument, London.

Founded by CEO **Ryan Stana** in 2003, the New York City-based RWS Entertainment Group produces immersive experiences and live shows across platforms within the hospitality, leisure and attractions, municipality, theatrical and corporate sectors.

With its new headquarters in London, RWS management hopes to improve the ease and precision in working with existing European partners and clients. It also is hoped that new clients will be enticed.

"We have been operating out of our New York City headquarters for 17 years," Stana said. "During that time we have formed invaluable connections with some of North America's top creatives, performers, brands and taste-makers. As we open our second office in London, our goal is to continue to build current brand partnerships and create new relationships with Europe's top industry stakeholders."

RWS's current portfolio includes **Holland America Line, Azamara, Virgin Voyages, Iberostar, Hard Rock Resorts International, Europa-Park and Resorts, Hershey's Chocolate World, Nickelodeon, Guinness World Records, Madame Tussauds, Mattel, Westfield**

and *O, The Oprah Magazine* to name a few.

Future operations include expanding theatrical production as well as bringing its theatrical, commercial and film casting arm, **Binder Casting**, to London. Binder Casting handles global casting for *The Lion King* and *Beauty and the Beast* at **Shanghai Disney Resorts**, the **Radio City Rockettes**, commercial casting for **Audi**, among other projects.

RWS currently entertains nearly 300 million people a year around the globe and produces over 400 experiences yearly.

—Pam Sherborne

SAFETY, MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

► Six Flags Fiesta Texas adds robot lawn mower — page 55 / AIMS International launches e-learning — page 54

Entertainment companies shift focus to providing protective gear

AT: Tim Baldwin

tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

INTERNATIONAL — Mere months ago, terms such as “flattening the curve,” “social distancing” and “PPE” weren’t commonplace in the public lexicon. Today, their meaning is immediate.

PPE stands for personal protective equipment. As the COVID-19 outbreak escalated, it soon became apparent that those on the front lines in the medical field were facing a severe shortage of masks, gowns, face shields and other equipment required to forge through the crisis as successfully as possible. With these medical heroes placing their lives on the line, numerous companies have stepped forward to provide the needed PPE.

“Deep down inside, I thought it was the right thing to do,” said **Phil Wilson**, executive vice president of sales and marketing, **Extreme Engineering**. “Number one, how do we help support medical staff, first responders and everyone out there in the workforce outside? How do we offer comfort, support and protection?”

Extreme Engineering has since diligently manufactured face shields for those on the front lines who are facing a shortage of protective equipment.

“We immediately said it was the thing to do. We have a factory. We still have work in the industry we’re doing, but we certainly have the capacity to do something like this,” Wilson told *Amusement Today*. “We quickly teamed with a partner we work with on sub-components. We got two prototypes into people’s hands and then immediately got a thousand orders. We were up to 3,000 in a week and a half.”

Wilson reported that the company’s efforts were not to make a profit, and that the endeavor was



Extreme Engineering has manufactured face shields (above left) for those on the front lines who face a shortage of protective equipment. **Dr. Dan Hadas** of **Assaf Harofeh Medical Center** (above middle) holds some of the 200 faceshields **Massivit 3D**’s 3D printers are producing per day. With assistance showing no borders, **Germany’s Europa-Park** made a donation of 25,000 ponchos to one of the main coronavirus epicenters in France. COURTESY EXTREME ENGINEERING, MASSIVIT 3D, EUROPA-PARK

running at almost a break-even point. Any profits beyond the cost of materials and overhead goes directly to **UNICEF**.

“For some of our staff, it’s really a personal thing with them — that they are contributing on some level and they really are making a difference,” Wilson said. “We’ve had doctors and nurses on calls with us that are just so thankful and appreciative. It feels really good.”

Getting the raw materials was not a challenge for Extreme Engineering. Its ready access PVC and vinyl, along with having a huge die-cutter, made for a natural fit for the company. Wilson noted the commonality of the materials used in the amusement industry were also found in the safety industry.

“The challenge for us was stepping into a foreign market — the medical and safety market,” he told AT. “Making sure you understand the ratings that you claim and the purpose that it serves — we have ASTM on the amusement side, and they have OSHA and CDC recommendations and all these things you take into consideration. The face shields were something we knew we could make and something people want.”

The goal is to continue production until the demand is no longer there. Currently, Extreme Engineering estimates it can produce about 1,000 a day. Under discussion is whether the company should keep some in stock once the demand ends. It was noted that so much of the protective equipment being requested was coming from overseas, and Wilson feels a calling that the U.S. also needs to be on the front lines for any crisis in the future.

“This is a time we should be able to rely on American manufacturers,” he said. “I think that’s a reality check after this is over. American resources should matter.”

When asked why UNICEF was chosen for the recipient of the donation, Wilson responded, “We did some research on the top 10 best nonprofits out there fighting diseases and disaster relief. UNICEF is among the top three. We really supported how they were handling COVID-19. There are so many wonderful nonprofits doing amazing work. We just decided to go with them and help their mission right now.”

DOF Robotics, a Turkish-based company that has taken a

Brass Ring Award for its work on amusement industry attractions, has switched gears during the COVID-19 crisis. Although the company shut down its production and installation of robotic attractions, its volunteers made the inspiring move to produce protection masks for hospital employees by using 3D printers in place — in their own homes. Mere days after beginning their work, hundreds of orders were being received from around the country. **DOF Robotics** believes it can increase the production output tenfold (from 300 to 3,000) by partnering with other companies in the area that operate 3D printers.

Animax, a Nashville-based animatronics company, has produced themed characters throughout the industry, including the major players. When the crisis dominated the news, the company reacted.

“We just said, wow, with all the collection of awesome resources we have from sewing to mold making to machine part making, there’s got to be something we can really contribute,” **Chuck Fawcett**, president and CEO, told Nashville **CBS** news station **WTVF**.

Because the company has

a costuming department, along with a staff of dedicated workers, countless masks could be sewn on property with a goal of making them as close to medical grade as possible. Face shields are also being produced with the company’s technology. The company is also looking to see if their technical resources can produce ventilators if the need arises in the region.

“We’re taking that same passion and energy and changing people’s lives in different ways,” said Fawcett.

Israel-based **Massivit 3D**, a company known for producing three-dimensional props or sets for theaters and theme parks, is using its large-format 3D printing technology to also produce face shields. **Massivit** estimates it can produce 200 face shields a day. In addition, the company is also producing a foot device that enables medical teams to easily open and close most doors hands free.

Parks are also stepping up to the plate to assist where possible. **Six Flags America** in Maryland recognized how area hospitals were being impacted with a shortage of medical

► See PPE, page 54



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SAFETY MARKET PLACE

► PPE

Continued from page 52

supplies. In response, the park donated 1,440 plastic ponchos to **Doctors Community Hospital** in Prince Georges County.

"While our park is temporarily closed, we are grateful to be able to fill this critical need for the community and help those on the front lines of this health crisis," said Park President **Rick Howarth**.

Likewise, **Dollywood** has donated 200 ponchos to **Sevier County Emergency Management Agency, Pigeon Forge Fire Department** and the **Sevier County Ambulance Service**. In addition, Dollywood's wardrobe and costume shop teams began producing reusable face masks to give to patients, nurses and doctors at **East Tennessee Children's Hospital**. In one day, the wardrobe team produced 350 masks, while the costume shop team created 250 adult masks and 250 children's masks over the course of two days. Members of both teams have asked to continue making the masks from home, so company officials will provide supplies currently on hand to allow the teams to produce additional masks.

"We are blessed to have talented hosts working in our wardrobe and costume shops," said **Eugene Naughton**, vice president of Dollywood park operations. "East Tennessee Children's Hospital reached out to us to see if we could help, and as soon as we received the call, our teams started working. We knew this was the right thing to do, and our hosts have done an amazing job producing these masks. We're just glad to do our part."

Such donations are not confined to the U.S. either. Germany's **Europa-Park** has made an enormous donation of 25,000 ponchos across country borders to one of the main coronavirus epicenters in France.



Six Flags America donated 1,440 ponchos to Doctors Community Hospital in Prince Georges County in Maryland.

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Robot mower at Six Flags Fiesta Texas maximizes safety, efficiency

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — In looking for the best use of its resources, **Six Flags Fiesta Texas** has found a new ally — a robot lawn mower. A large grassy area of the park that stretches between and underneath the Wonder Woman Golden Lasso Coaster and Superman Krypton Coaster is now maintained not by staffing, but a programmed automatic mower manufactured by **Stihl**.

“There are several areas around the park, specifically around high visibility attractions, where mowing is difficult because of restricted areas or cumbersome to get to by getting over fencing. Many people have automated vacuums around their homes, and when I saw that there was a version of that that cuts the grass, I started talking with my maintenance team to explore commercial grade robotic lawn mowers to maintain the higher show quality of some of these areas that are harder to get to,” said **Jeffrey Siebert**, park president.



Fiesta Texas has added a robot mower (inset) to its staff. It can get into challenging areas at any time of the day. The grass around large attractions, roller coasters and railroad tracks can all be freshly cut with precise programming.
COURTESY SIX FLAGS FIESTA TEXAS

After an on-site visit, the supplier was able to set up the programming and install “dog-houses,” as Siebert calls them, in which the mowers park themselves each day and recharge overnight. Once installed, the benefits were countless.

“It saved so much time of our team members who would

have had to have lugged equipment in these areas that are close to rides, which places restrictions on the time of day they could work,” said Siebert. “This freed them up to do more meaningful landscaping tasks such as signature flower beds, fine trimming and hedges. They can work on making the park look prettier.”

The safety component was clear by keeping workers out of ride zones, particularly close to high-risk proximity areas such as supports and track. The mower can get into tighter areas below track as well. Ride testing can take place without any humans in the ride envelope.

“It also helps keep down

the rodent population,” added Siebert. “We don’t have tall grasses throughout the park. Snakes and rodents don’t enjoy the environment of short grass.”

Siebert points out this has been particularly beneficial with the limited team members at the park during the lockdown COVID-19 procedures. Grass continues to be cut, rain or shine. “It keeps the park maintained, even when we are not there,” he said.

“They are programmed to work certain hours,” Siebert noted, saying they are typically not visible to guests during operating hours. “They know exactly where they stopped and can begin where they left off.”

If the unit encounters an unlikely circumstance in which it becomes stuck or is unable to reach its doghouse to recharge in time, it sends out a text message to team members so that they can respond and quickly resolve the issue.

Six Flags Fiesta Texas implemented this innovative concept last summer and has since shared the information with the sister parks in the chain.

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ASTM International works on bungee jumping standard

W. CONSHOHOCKEN, Pa. — Bungee jumping industry stakeholders are being encouraged to join an effort to create a standard that will support the growing number of bungee jumping operations worldwide. The proposed standard (WK62522) is being developed by ASTM International's subcommittee on adventure attractions (F24.61), part of the committee on amusement rides and devices (F24).

The standard aims to establish criteria for the design, manufacture, installation, operation, maintenance, auditing, and modification of bungee jumping operations.

According to ASTM International member Mike Teske, technical director at

Celtic Engineering, Inc., the increasing number of bungee jumping operations around the world has heightened the need for standardization.

The sub-chair, **Jared Krupa**, said the subcommittee "is dedicated to developing safety standards for the newest adventure attractions in the industry."

The subcommittee has already developed standards for inflatable amusement devices, aerial adventure courses, trampoline courts and hayride attractions. In addition to bungee jumping, the group is also working on proposed standards for obstacle course events (WK54714), bodyflight/indoor skydiving (WK70227), and rail-guided mountain attractions (WK70516).

Disney stimulates creativity during shelter-in-place with "Imagineering in a Box"



GLENDALE, Calif. — **Walt Disney Imagineering** has partnered with the **Khan Academy** to offer "Imagineering in a Box." The free online offering is designed to "pull back the curtain" on the creative process at Walt Disney Imagineering to show participants how artists, designers and engineers work together to create theme park magic. The program not only takes participants behind the scenes with Disney Imagineers, but participants also design a theme park of their very own while completing project-based exercises to design a theme park of their very own. Disney describes "Imagineering in a Box" as "a series offering 32 videos in which Imagineers share how they use a wide range of skills — from story development and conceptual design, to math, physics and engineering — to create immersive experiences. The online curriculum aims to ignite curiosity, inspire creativity, and encourage innovation in the minds of students and teachers alike, while creating fun and engaging opportunities to explore new concepts."

"We are so excited to share with learners of all ages the unique ways that science, technology, engineering and math can be combined with creativity and design to create larger-than-life entertainment for millions all around the world," said **Josh Gorin**, creative development executive, Walt Disney Imagineering.

The program can be found at khanacademy.org/humanities/hass-storytelling/imagineering-in-a-box.

Participants are encouraged to share how they are using the program by using the hashtags #Disney, #BetterTogether and #ImagineeringinaBox on Instagram, and also tag @WaltDisneyImagineering to share their projects with Disney Imagineers and have the opportunity to possibly have their projects featured in the program's online community.

—David Fake



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AIMS International launches AIMS connectED e-learning platform

Its here! After months of planning, filming, editing and more editing, **AIMS International** has launched its new e-learning platform, AIMS connectED, which can be accessed on the AIMS International website, aimsintl.org.

Having started development of the new learning management system (LMS) in the fall of 2019, AIMS staff could not have predicted the global situation we are currently facing in which distance-learning has become the primary method by which education and training are now being delivered. AIMS is proud and honored to be able to assist amusement industry professionals — specifically AIMS-certified operations, aquatics and maintenance technicians, and AIMS-certified ride inspectors — in earning the continuing education units (CEUs) necessary to renew these certifications while working from home and practicing government mandated social-distancing.

AIMS connectED delivers a unique educational opportunity through which learners will be able to experience the actual courses that were offered at the **2020 AIMS International Safety Seminar** in Galveston, Texas, in January. The courses were hand-picked by the AIMS curriculum committee to showcase top-rated amusement industry leaders presenting material on a wide variety of opera-



COURTESY
AIMS INTERNATIONAL

tions, maintenance and ride inspection topics. In fact, several AIMS board members were invited to participate in the video-recorded modules. **Tony Claassen** (AIMS Board President) from **Silver Dollar City**, **David Bromilow** (AIMS Vice President) from **Mobaro**, **Timo Klaus** (AIMS Treasurer) from **KumbaK**, as well other AIMS board members, **Linda Freeman** from **Rockwell Automation**, **Tim Viox** from **Leisure Labs**, **Andreas Tanzer** from **ProSlide** and **Rick Achard** from **Coulter Associates**, all con-

tributed their expertise to this project. These courses are now available to anyone in need of CEUs for renewal of their AIMS certifications.

All AIMS International courses are designed to adhere to the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standard for continuing education through assistance from their education partner, **Ellis and Associates (E&A)**, which is accredited by the **International Association of Continuing Education and Training (IACET)**. AIMS has partnered with E&A to build a state-of-the-art LMS through which the courses are delivered. E&A has been offering on-line aquatics, health and safety courses on via Pectora, their proprietary LMS, for several years and has customized this tried-and-true platform for AIMS courses.

In the coming months, AIMS International will be adding even more content to its already extensive library, in a variety of formats, through the new AIMS connectED learning management system. Stay tuned for more announcements on new ways AIMS International will be fulfilling its mission of improving safety in the amusement industry through leadership in education.

For more information on the AIMS e-learning platform, please visit aimsintl.org or email inquiries to info@aimsintl.org.

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MAILBAG

Amusement Today team,

WOW! The digital COVID edition of *Amusement Today* is truly beautiful. I skimmed the online version and was so quickly sucked in I downloaded the full PDF and read every page. What a great, special piece you all have created for the industry. And I think you reached your goals wonderfully – it's positive, forward-looking and truly brings the industry together in a special, memorable way.

I know you all volunteered your time to make this happen and I think it will be really well-received. Thank you for giving IAAPA the opportunity to share our message with your readers. We love working with you.

Virtual hugs from Florida,
Susan L. Storey, APR
 Director, Global Communications
 IAAPA

Dear *Amusement Today*,

I have been reading your COVID-19 special edition. It is very good. I think everyone should read it. A lot of people have been able to do some positive and innovative things. I have also seen some shameful responses to the situation as well, so your articles are great to restore faith in the business and inspire carnivals to do the same.

Thank you,
Joseph Filoromo
 Supervisor, Amusement Ride Safety Division
 Bureau of Ride and Measurement Standards
 Pa. Department of Agriculture



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 Industry reacts to COVID-19 pandemic

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 www.amusementtoday.com

Amusement industry helps light the way for hope

We're familiar with things that go UPSIDE DOWN. We also know that if you follow the rules, you arrive safely in the station. Louisville, let's stick together.

As the nation — and the world — battles the COVID-19 pandemic, the amusement and attractions industry is doing its best to keep people's spirits up, remind them that better days are ahead and to be the light at the end of the tunnel. Demonstrations of hope by the attractions industry are being seen and enjoyed worldwide. Kentucky Kingdom took out billboards throughout Louisville reminding the community that they were in this together with them (above left). Playland's Castaway Cove showed everyone they can always look forward to the future by keeping its Ferris wheel illuminated (above right). Walt Disney World Resort and Universal Orlando Resort illuminated several of the resorts' hotel towers with hearts (Universal's Adventure pictured right). Carnival Cruise ships were seen off the coast of Florida with the message "We will be back" lit up across them (below right). Entertaining guests in their homes, Disneyland's Dapper Dan (below left) performed live via the internet, taking requests and harmonizing from their living rooms.

COURTESY KENTUCKY KINGDOM, PLAYLAND'S CASTAWAY COVE, WALT DISNEY WORLD RESORT; ART: DAVIS FAYE

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