



INSIDE:
Amusement
Today
celebrates
20th anniversary
PAGES 30 & 31

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Old Town enhances its skyline with Fabbri wheel

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

KISSIMMEE, Fla. — A new 82-foot-tall Fabbri wheel, which opened Jan. 26, is the icing on the cake for the improved, updated and expanded Old Town USA complex.

Old Town, a retail complex and amusement attraction located along Kissimmee's tourism corridor that originally opened in 1986, was purchased in 2014 by Los Angeles-based Travel Corp. Since then, the new owners have been working on improving the area to the tune of about \$10 million. The new wheel is valued at \$1 million.

"The wheel has been very well received," said Joe Cadmus of Ridewerks, the company that erected it.

Although Old Town purchased the new wheel and owns it, the Arie family, which owns Fun Spot of America amusement parks, is operating it. Fun Spot in Kissimmee is located adjacent to Old Town's southern tip. The family owns another Fun Spot in Orlando.

When Travel Corp. purchased Old Town USA, one of the first moves made by the new owners was to remove the few rides that existed in that southern area of the complex. Then, they took down the fence between Old Town USA and Fun Spot so guests could pass between the two facilities.

Last spring, Old Town USA and Fun Spot owners announced an agreement whereby Fun Spot would move four



The Fabbri-built wheel for Old Town in Kissimmee is 82 feet tall, features balloon-shaped gondolas and a stunning LED light show package from Fun LED/Losi Elettronica.

AT/GARY SLADE;
COURTESY RIDEWERKS



of its rides into that southern area of Old Town USA and continue to operate them. That

► See OLD TOWN, page 5

Lamberink's portable Sky Eye Wheel becomes a new star at Florida State Fair

AT: Pam Sherborne
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TAMPA, Fla. — Independent ride operator Michael Wood of Wood Entertainment had high hopes for the readiness of the Lamberink RL45 portable wheel at the Florida State fair, which ran Feb. 9-20. "We would have liked to open on time," he said.

Unfortunately, that didn't happen. But was during the four days the fair was open and the wheel wasn't, the process of assembling the Sky Eye Wheel became its own attraction.

"We would look around and have people just watching as we put it up," Wood said. "The people working on it said they felt like stars. Some people would ask us questions about the construction of it and said they would be back when it was operating. In fact, we recognized many of them."

But, not being able to do what they said they were going to, i.e., have the 150-foot wheel, touted as the largest portable wheel in North America at that time, up by the opening of the fair on Feb. 9 wasn't preferable. The loss of revenue hurt as well.

Wood and Frank Zaitshik, of Wade Shows, provider of the Florida State Fair midway, entered into a partnership last year to purchase and operate the wheel, which cost about two million Euros. Delivery dates did change a little early on, but the final date was set for Jan. 31.

► See SKY EYE, page 6



Florida State Fair fairgoers who rode on the new Lamberink RL45 portable wheel, now named Sky Eye Wheel, could see 15 miles in all directions from the top. The wheel debuted at the Florida fair, which ran Feb. 9-20, but wasn't operating until Monday, Feb. 13, due to shipping delays. Standing at 150 feet in the air, the wheel is touted as the tallest portable wheel operating in North America. It is owned jointly by independent ride operator Michael Wood of Wood Entertainment and Frank Zaitshik of Wade Shows. The latter is the midway provider of the Florida State Fair.

COURTESY KATIE LOWE

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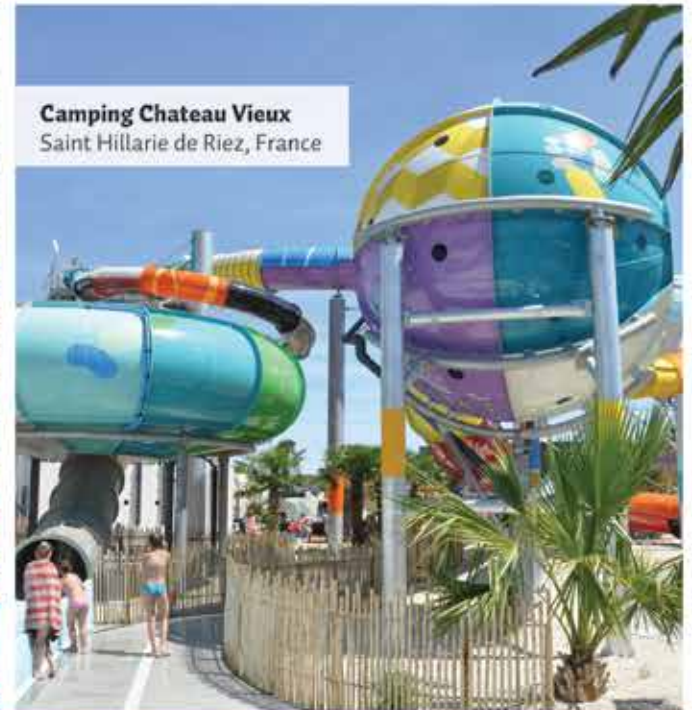
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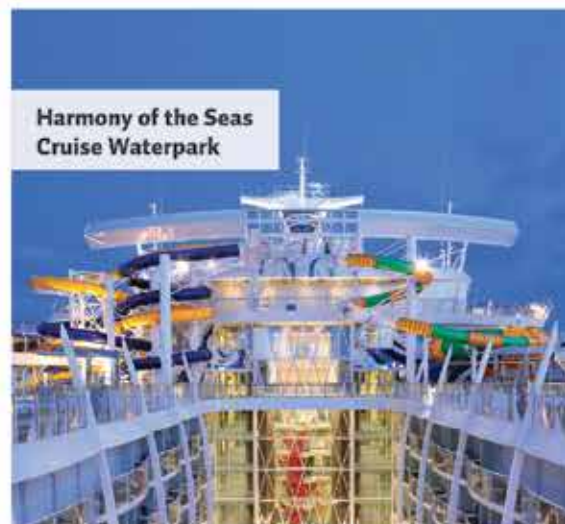
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NEWTALK

EDITORIAL: Gary Slade, gslade@amusementtoday.com

Tidbits



Slade

This month's April issue marks *Amusement Today's* official 20th anniversary issue. We don't know where the time went, but it certainly seems to go by as fast as launch coasters do today. AT's Tim Baldwin takes a look at our 20 years of publishing on page 30. We have a number of fast facts presented there, but wanted to share one separately. AT has published a total of 11,378 pages in its first 20 volumes. If you took the length of each page, and laid them end-to-end, you would have enough newsprint to lay between the rails of our 2016 Golden Ticket Awards' Best Steel Coaster: Carowinds' Fury 325 (6,602 feet long) and Best Wooden Coaster: Lake Compounce's Boulder Dash (4,725 feet long) and still have 1,000 feet of newsprint to spare for a family coaster.

Thank you to all of the parks and suppliers that have supported AT through the first 20 years. Our success is a result of your support, help and friendship. Most of all, thank you to the unsung heroes of AT, our dedicated staff, for their hard work in making sure our monthly issues present the current news and trends, are factually accurate and presented in the most professional, easy-to-read design format.

Congratulations to Leanna Muscato, who has become the first female president of the Pennsylvania Amusement Parks Association (PAPA), which dates back to 1935. Leanna is a third-generation Knoebel family member and becomes the latest from the family to serve as the association's president, following Dick Knoebel and Buddy Knoebel. See PAPA recap story, page 27.

We want to remind everyone that next month's issue will be our annual What's New Guide, compiled by Jeffrey Seifert, with listings of new rides and installations at parks and attractions, carnivals and on cruise ships. We invite all amusement facilities, carnivals, suppliers and cruise lines to send us your new ride and attraction info. We MUST have the attraction name, location and supplier name. Attraction entries are due by April 5. Please send your entry to: jseifert@amusementtoday.com.

FLINT'S VIEW: Bubba Flint



EDITORIAL: Andrew Mellor, amellor@amusementtoday.com

Staying power!

In the many years I've been involved in the amusement and theme park industry, it's been fascinating to watch parks around the world develop and to see what different owners and operators do to entice guests back year after year.

Obviously rides and attractions are at the forefront of their minds as they look to add something new every year or two, while new facilities such as F&B venues, merchandise outlets and other secondary spend offerings are also regularly introduced or redeveloped to, hopefully, improve the bottom line each season.

As parks have grown in size, of course, many have reached attendance levels that have justified investment not only in major attractions, and so forth, but also in accommodation facilities of one form or another. Be it a simple campground area, chalets, log cabins or a full service hotel, the past 10 to 15 years have seen a huge increase in parks providing accommodation and we continue to see such developments within the industry each year.

Further examples abound in 2017 too, with many parks in various parts of the world introducing their first such offering or adding to existing



Mellor

hotel or other accommodation. At Alton Towers in the U.K., for instance, a new CBeebies themed hotel is set to open. New hotels are also being built at Legoland parks in Florida, California and Germany. In January, the California resort broke ground on North America's first Legoland Castle Hotel which is set to open in spring 2018, while its German counterpart is developing the Pirate Island Hotel. At Puy du Fou in France, the park will open its fifth hotel this year, while Efteling in the Netherlands is due to open a new holiday village at the end of May.

These are just a few of what I am sure will be many new accommodation offerings this year at parks worldwide, as well as nowadays being an important income stream for operators. They also, of course, encourage guests to extend their stay, which in turn means they are on site longer and therefore spend more.

With so many parks now of a size where a single day visit doesn't really do them justice, it's something of a no-brainer that accommodation developments are so popular.

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INDUSTRY SEEN

Pac-Man goes big at Main Event Entertainment



In time for National Pac-Man Day on April 3, Plano, Texas-based Main Event Entertainment has installed the World's Largest Pac-Man Game at all 32 of its entertainment centers in the U.S. Featuring a 13-foot-high game screen and LED billboard technology, the arcade exclusive, from Namco has new elements that enhance the original game experience. Earnings climb higher, thanks to a “co-op” mode that allows two players at once. The equipment also contains Namco's popular Galaga game. COURTESY MAIN EVENT ENTERTAINMENT

CHARACTER CORNER

Marvel McFey, Astroworld

In 1972, AstroWorld (Houston, Texas) introduced a new park mascot, Marvel McFey. The flamboyantly costumed character even had his own theater — the appropriately named Marvel McFey Theater where he and several of his friends performed a rousing musical revue. McFey was well-known outside of the park, having made appearances at Astros games in the nearby Astrodome. McFey entertained at AstroWorld for more than a decade, making his final appearance in 1984. When Six Flags acquired the Marriott Great America properties and the parks’ rights to the Looney Tunes characters, McFey was out and Bugs Bunny was in. CARTOON/BUBBA FLINT HISTORY/JEFFREY SEIFERT



2 MINUTE DRILL



AT: Janice Witherow



Brett Clark stands by the Wet 'n Wild Orlando Park Map sign that was donated, along with other park signage, to the National Roller Coaster Museum & Archives. AT/GARY SLADE

Brett Clark, Universal Orlando Resort

Brett Clark began his career with Universal Orlando as a lifeguard at Wet 'n Wild in 1996. After holding numerous roles throughout the park, he was promoted to the position of operations manager and eventually transitioned to Universal Studios Florida (USF) in 2014 where he oversaw multiple attractions, including The Wizarding World of Harry Potter — Diagon Alley, E.T. Adventure and several others around the park. Most recently, Brett has stepped into the role of manager, park services, in which he is responsible for the park services operations for USF. He is involved in many industry organizations and serves on several boards. Brett is known as a natural leader with a strong ability to foster relationships and has a keen eye for detail.

Title: Manager, Park Services.

Years with Universal Orlando Resort: 20.

Best thing about the industry: Working in the most amazing atmospheres and having the ability to deliver unforgettable memories every day!

Favorite amusement ride? Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts.

If I wasn't working in the amusement industry, I would be... A race director for running events such as the New York City Marathon.

Biggest challenge facing our industry... Supply and demand of experienced leaders in the theme park industry. More college programs need to offer theme park tracks to set up our young leaders, such as the Rosen College in Orlando.

The thing I like most about amusement/water park season is... The joy and excitement on guests' faces as they enter the front gate.

Favorite appetizer: Lobster bisque.

When I say politics, you say... Don't care!

The last time I danced was... For the Attraction Operation Awards, where we danced in front of 1,300 Attractions Team Members at Universal Orlando.

Spring is officially here. My favorite springtime activity is... Being on the soccer field coaching my kids' soccer teams.

It's 7 a.m. Where would we typically find you? Running or taking the kids to school.

If I could go back in time, I would visit this era... 1970s.

I always try to avoid... Traffic.

When telemarketers call me at home, I... Silence the phone.

The one thing I always have in my kitchen cupboard is... A bag of Cheetos... when my kids leave me some!

Favorite national sports team... Florida Gators.

If I had an extra day in my week, I would... Sit on the beach.

The last item I purchased under \$1 was... A Matchbox car.

My coolest vacation ever was... Sitting on the beach in Sanibel Island.

My favorite home-cooked meal is... Crab cakes.

The person I would most like to sit next to on an airplane is... My wife, Kelly.

I have always wanted to... Surf in Hawaii.

Pick one: skiing in the mountains or swimming in the ocean... Swimming in the ocean.

►OLD TOWN

Continued from page 1

is when the two companies also announced the agreement for Fun Spot owners to operate the wheel.

This new Old Town Wheel is replacing a previous wheel that sustained damage from inclement weather and removed from the property in 2013.

The new Old Town Wheel has 18 covered balloon-shaped gondolas. One of the gondolas is ADA accessible.

It has been donned with a lighting package that features 5,600 LEDs. The LEDs were supplied by Fun LED, a brand that is manufactured by Italian-based Losi Elettronica.

Ridewerks was contracted to erect the wheel. Gina Guglielmi, Intermark Ride Group, brokered the original wheel purchase.

The new wheel is located near the entrance of Old Town USA, adjacent to a new gate. Rides cost \$6 for adults and \$3 for children 42 inches high.

Rides brought in from Fun Spot are the Tilt-A-Whirl, manufactured by Larson International; a Frank Hrubetz & Co. Paratrooper; a Crazy Couch by Skyline Attractions and a mini

FAST FACTS	
Old Town USA Wheel	Kissimmee, Fla.
Height:	82 feet
Number of gondolas:	18
Foundation footprint	60 feet by 31 feet
Ride cost/restrictions	\$6 adults, \$3 children/42 inches high
LED lighting	5,600 LEDs installed by Fun LED , a brand manufactured by Losi Elettronica , Italy
Owner/Operator	Old Town/FunSpot USA
Manufacturer/Installation	Fabbri Group, Calto, Italy/Ridewerks, Florida

carousel.

Other improvements to Old Town USA include: new entry sign facing main highway, updated infrastructure; buildings repainted; restrooms remodeled and resurfacing of the existing parking lot and the addition of over 600 new spaces in an adjacent lot.

Ridewerks expands with exclusive agreements

GIBSONTOWN, Fla. — Representatives of Ridewerks, a company known for dismantling, servicing and reconstructing amusement rides, announced in February that the company is now the exclusive North American representative of Italian ride manufacturers Fabbri Group and Preston & Barbieri.

Ridewerks also has a contract to sell the Fun LED brand lighting, a brand manufactured by Losi Elettronica, another Italian company.

Jim Glover has joined Joe Cadmus and Ridewerks to help on the sales side of the business, while Camus will handle the operations side.

Both Cadmus and Glover have about 25 years of experience in the amusement industry and worked together earlier in their careers.

Cadmus founded Ridewerks as a technical service company in 2010. Glover was most recently with Hopkins Rides and Whitewater West.

Glover said Ridewerks actually expanded with the new representations at the first of the year but they have been working out the kinks before making the formal announcement.

Fabbri Group has just installed a new wheel at Old Town, an amusement park and outdoor shopping mall in Kissimmee, Fla. That wheel is equipped with the Fun LED lighting system.

"I plan to start going out and visiting the country soon," Glover said, in regards to sales of the rides.

In addition, Ridewerks also has a ride



Jim Glover (left) and Joe Cadmus, Ridewerks pose for the camera by their sign at International Independent Showmen's Foundation Trade Show and Extravaganza, held Feb. 7-11, Gibsonton, Fla. Ridewerks is now the exclusive North American representative for Fabbri Group. AT/GARY SLADE

leasing program where a zoo or small attractions installation may want to offer a carousel or train ride to visitors but don't have the funding for purchasing. Leases could extend to five or even 10 years.

Ridewerks representatives took the opportunity at the 2017 International Independent Showmen's Foundation Trade Show and Extravaganza, held Feb. 7-11, to discuss the company expansions. They exhibited a bumper car donned with Fun LED lights at the show as well as a Fabbri gondola similar to the ones used on the new Fabbri wheel at Old Town, Kissimmee, Fla.

—Pam Sherborne

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Old Town, Kissimmee, Fla.
★ Lighting package by **LOSI ELETTRONICA**



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►SKY EYE

Continued from page 1

That didn't happen.

It came in four crates, with the last two arriving in the U.S. two days late and then hit with some customs issues. The last load was delivered to the fairgrounds on Monday, Feb. 6, just days before fair opening day.

"And, the last crate delivered on Monday was the one we needed first," Wood said. "There was not even any way to start erecting it until then."

As soon as they got it, they began erecting the 360,000-pound ride.

As they laid it out and put it together, there were some pieces that didn't fit exactly as they were supposed.

"We had to deal with that," Wood said. "We took our time with those issues. We were going to put people on it. It had to be safe."

In addition, the lighting package had to be installed. That included about 524,000 LED lights. Denny's Electronics had that job and had to do it on site. Dennis Bartosik, owner of Denny's Electronics, wasn't able to show up for the announcement by the Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA) that he had been honored with



From the moment the Sky Eye Wheel made its debut at the Florida State Fair, it was touted as the largest transportable wheel at 150 feet in height. The wheel is co-owned by Wood Entertainment and Wade Shows.

COURTESY FLORIDA STATE FAIR

the Pioneer Award.

That announcement came during the International Independent Showmen's Foundation Trade Show and Extravaganza on Wed., Feb. 8. He was able to attend OABA's Friday evening banquet, however.

Wood said the wheel was complete on Sunday, Feb. 12.

The first ride for fairgoers happened at 2:30 p.m., Monday, Feb. 13, after a thorough safety inspection by Florida state officials.

There was no extra cost for Florida fairgoers to ride the Sky Eye Wheel. It took seven regular ride tickets and was included in pay-one-price wristbands.

"That is probably one of the few places we will do that," Wood said, later.

The response to the new wheel was great. Wood said the final Saturday and Sunday of the fair, Feb. 18 and 19, they were keeping up with the numbers per hour for a capacity report. During the operating hours on those two days, they had about 1,000 riders per hour. It got as high as 1,100 per hour.

The wheel has 36 gondolas that can seat up to six people each.

The next firm contract they have for the Sky Eye Wheel is the Wisconsin State Fair, West Allis, Aug. 3-13.

"We would like to try to do something over Memorial Day weekend and maybe try to fill in the gaps after that," Wood said.

Because of the ride size, they have to look at possible locations carefully. It is 60 feet in depth and 80 feet wide, but it makes 150-foot circles. It can

sit on any kind of surface that can take a load of 40 pounds per square-inch.

"Basically, if you can drive a loaded transport onto the surface, you should be able to set it up," he said.

There is still some work to do before committing. First of all, Wood said, they have to finish dismantling it.

"We just have a bunch to go through right now as far as assembly and transport," he said.

They want to have the ride loaded in a way that assembly is efficient. For example, it took five trucks to transport the gondolas to the grounds. They want to bring that down to two trucks, but to do that, they will have to build a fixture on which to hang them. They want to package the gondolas along with the pieces they need to assemble them.

"We would like to do that on the fairgrounds in Tampa," Wood said.

Then, they plan to load the remainder of the ride on flatbeds to move them to Gibsonton, Fla., where they will use a facility that is owned by longtime amusement industry veteran Bobby Myers. There, they will make the rest of the transport adjustments.

"We will have to weigh every single piece," Wood said.

FAST FACTS

Sky Eye Wheel
Florida State Fair
Tampa, Fla.

Height

45 meters (150 feet)

Weight

360,000 pounds

Number of gondolas

36 with six riders each

Trailer Transports

Work is in progress to get the entire wheel load down to 11 trailers

Footprint

60 by 80 feet

Co-Owners

Michael Wood,
Wood Entertainment
and Frank Zaitshik,
Wade Shows

Manufacturer

Lamberink
The Netherlands

"We need to get it to between 40,000 and 45,000 pounds per truck. We just need to think it all out and methodically go through it."

Wood said they want to transport it with either 10 or 11 trucks.

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► Efteling to add spectacular Symbolica ride for 2017— Page 9

Movie Park Germany's new coaster set to *Star Trek*

AT: Andrew Mellor

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BOTTROP-KIRCHHELLEN, Germany — The opening of a new roller coaster at Movie Park Germany this spring will see the introduction of the only *Star Trek*-themed coaster to a theme park anywhere in the world.

Set to open for the beginning of the park's 2017 season, the triple launch ride, from German manufacturer Mack Rides, will focus on the *Star Trek: The Next Generation* series and will go by the name of *Star Trek: Operation Enterprise*. Located at the main entrance of the park, the new coaster will be the second highest structure at Movie Park and, according to general manager Thorsten Backhaus, has changed the venue's skyline.

"The twisted halfpipe and the 30 meter high top hat will give guests the adrenalin rush of their lives. *Star Trek: Operation Enterprise* is a triple launch coaster, which means that instead of slowly climbing the first incline the coaster is launched at high speed three times. It's the first time we've ever incorporated this kind of launch concept in one of our coaster rides."

The coaster will provide guests with a warp speed experience thanks to a spectacular track, a twisted halfpipe with a 40 meter elevation that is the only one of its kind in Europe and a 10.5 ton transfer track system. It will feature three inversions in total, a zero-G roll and an overbanked curve among other features in a track 2,362 feet in length. Top speed will be almost 90 kmh (56 mph).

Movie Park Germany has



collaborated closely with licensor CBS Consumer Products in the U.S. to develop the new coaster, along with a brand new Federation Plaza themed area. Surrounding a former film museum, the futuristic *Star Trek* set brings the Starfleet Academy world to life. Federation Plaza also has a brand new shop selling a range of associated items.

"Guests access the Academy from the plaza through the doors of a 1,000 square meter (10,764 square feet) hall with different themed rooms where they enter the all-generation *Star Trek* universe to become Starfleet cadets," said Backhaus as he explained the story behind *Star Trek: Operation Enterprise*. "Our guests are then sent on a mission as Starfleet cadets to save the entire crew of the U.S.S. Enterprise before the Borg can assimilate them."

Movie Park's latest major ride addition, *Star Trek: Operation Enterprise* (above), will appeal to teens and young adults as well as families. The Mack-supplied coaster is in final phases of construction (right) and is situated at the entrance to the park (below right).

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Efteling to add spectacular Symbolica ride this year

AT: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

KAATSHEUVEL, the Netherlands — The Dutch theme park Efteling is nearing completion of its latest accommodation offering while also progressing well with work on the spectacular new Symbolica, Palace of Fantasy attraction. Both new developments are part of this year's celebrations of the park's 65th anniversary.

Symbolica will be located in the center of the park at the end of the Pardoes Promenade. Due to open in the summer, building work on Efteling's latest major addition began in early 2016. It will be the largest covered family attraction in the park and is being created at a cost of €35 million (\$37 million).

With a theme of imagination, visitors will be invited to have an audience with the king of the realm of Symbolica, King Pardulfus and rediscover their imagination on an adventure through secret corridors and magical rooms, as well as on a trackless dark ride (reportedly from ETF Ride Systems) featuring six seater vehicles. Once on



Symbolica will be the largest covered family attraction at Efteling and is being created at a cost of €35 million (\$37 million). COURTESY EFTELING

the ride, guests will be able to choose one of three different routes, each of which will offer a different adventure with interactive elements through the Palace of Fantasy. Designed with an eye to the smallest of detail and full of fantasy, special effects and specially composed music throughout, Symbolica will be aimed at an international audience and all ages.

In addition to Symbolica, Efteling is also in the process of completing another accommodation offering in the shape of the new holiday village Loonsche Land.

Set to open on May 31, the exact date of Efteling's 65th anniversary, the village will provide accommodation above, on and below ground on a site of almost eight hectares. With 1,000 beds, guests will be able to walk to the park each morning from their holiday home, hotel or themed room. All 65 holiday homes, 20 themed rooms and 75 hotel rooms within the village will be furnished with natural materials, in keeping with the natural environment in which it is situated.



The new holiday village Loonsche Land will open on May 31, the exact date of Efteling's 65th anniversary. Both detached (above) and semi-detached (below) holiday homes will be available to Efteling guest as part of the new Loonsche Land accommodation. COURTESY EFTELING



Puy du Fou marks 40th year with new hotel, show and restaurants

AT: Andrew Mellor
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LES EPESES, France — The French theme park Puy du Fou is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2017 and, to help mark the occasion, has announced the addition of a new hotel, a spectacular new show and two new restaurants.

France's second largest theme park, with an attendance in 2016 of 2.2 million guests. Puy du Fou offers guests an array of exceptional live shows and entertainment as its key draw — 60 daytime and evening shows in total. Additionally, there is a variety of other facilities, including four period villages and 27 restaurants, for the whole family, all created within themed settings and woodland and garden areas.

The new hotel, La Citadelle, will be the park's fifth hotel and will offer a medieval experience to take guests back to the middle ages. Located in the Cité Nocturne area on the edge of the park, its interiors will be adorned with rich fabrics complemented by thick traditional woods, while it will also provide an additional 448



The new hotel, La Citadelle, will be Puy du Fou's fifth hotel and will offer guests a medieval experience. It will offer a medieval-themed experience taking guests back to the Middle Ages. COURTESY PUY DU FOU

beds in 74 classic rooms and 26 spacious comfort rooms.

The comfort rooms will differ from the standard rooms in a number of ways and are aimed at couples, whereas the classic rooms are aimed at families. As such the comfort rooms will feature a king size bed and come with room service, while the classic rooms will contain a double bed and bunk beds. La Citadelle will also be home to one of the new restaurants, L'Ecuyer Tranchant.

Puy du Fou has also announced the creation of an


entirely new show, Le Grand Carillon, a musical spectacle based on traditional melodies. In the center of a traditional 18th century village stands an imposing 16-meter-high (52.5 foot) bell tower. During each performance, this intricately designed tower will gradually uncover around 100 bells that are housed within it. Over the course of 10 minutes, four actors leap into the air to the rhythm of famous and popular French melodies, which have been skillfully re-orchestrated by Puy du Fou.



Puy du Fou's newest show is Le Grand Carillon, a musical spectacle based upon traditional melodies. In the center of a traditional 18th century village stands an imposing 16-meter-high (52.5 foot) bell tower. During each performance, this intricately designed tower will gradually uncover some 100 bells while four actors leap in the air to the instruments' rhythm. COURTESY PUY DU FOU

Accompanying the new La Citadelle hotel, l'Ecuyer Tranchant restaurant will welcome guests into an authentic medieval castle's kitchen where the staff, dressed in the costumes of kitchen clerks, will provide a buffet inspired by medieval tables. Elsewhere

in the park, at the exit of the Theatre of Giants, the new La Mijoterie du Roy Henry will host diners in sumptuous Renaissance décor, following in the footsteps of Henry IV and his native Béarn, with further buffet-style options for both lunch and dinner.

A large, professional headshot of Keith A. Dalton, a middle-aged man with short brown hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

"Building a brand new waterpark from scratch is a huge undertaking. We knew if we were going to do it right it had to be big and it had to open on time. We needed a partner with the horsepower to get it done and WhiteWater was the right decision. A project of this scale took an incredible amount of teamwork and WhiteWater was with us every step of the way."

Keith A. Dalton
Co-President
Typhoon Texas

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WATER PARKS & RESORTS

► World's Largest Swimming Lesson set for June 22 — Page 12

China's Bali Water World expands with new attractions

Wiegand Maelzer of Germany supplies stainless steel and fiberglass slides

AT: Jeffrey Seifert
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FUSHUN, China — Bali Water World premiered its new indoor expansion in January just in time for the celebration of the Chinese New Year. Originally opened in 2011, the water park has enjoyed much success as part of the HotGo Park resort that includes the water park, a ride park, hotels, spa, sports world, aquarium, shopping and dining venues.

Wiegand Maelzer provided four exciting new attractions including Freefall, the tallest freefall stainless steel body slide in Asia, standing at more than 52 feet. The tube slide, Rain Forest, is a multi-media stainless steel slide that winds its way through the rain forest along a 450-foot path and features LED lighting and sound effects. Adventure Pakrisan is made from Fiberglass Reinforced Plastic (FRP) and features six clear acrylic sections that surprise both the rider and onlookers as guests whiz by overhead. River Rafting is a wide stainless steel body slide with five rapid downhill sections that provide moments of airtime with each successive drop.

Along with the five new slides, Wiegand supplied a children's slide and a water play structure with a submarine boat.

A large outdoor expansion is expected to open in May of this year. That new section will be built into the side of a manmade hillside and will include multiple slides, a wave pool, private cabanas, and lounging areas. Wiegand Maelzer is providing 25 slides and a wave machine for the expanded outdoor section.

Wiegand stainless steel slides offer unmatched durability and longevity. The



Above, the elaborate outdoor expansion will feature 25 slides themed in and around a volcano when completed in May. At right, is the yellow submarine for kids to play in as well as the stainless steel play structure complete with tipping bucket. In the far left of the photo the 52-foot-tall Freefall slide can be seen. Below right, this extra-wide waterslide can accommodate multiple guests sliding at the same time.

COURTESY
WIEGAND MAELZER

very first Wiegand slide, manufactured in 1981, is still in use today. The stainless steel slide is fabricated from a 2 mm steel sheet. The seams are welded once, then polished to an ultra-smooth surface. The slides do not require any annual servicing and are corrosion and wear free. Although the initial investment is higher with stainless steel slides, the investment is quickly recouped by the fact that no annual service is required. Wiegand is unable to provide the life expectancy of its stainless steel slides — the oldest is now entering its 37th season, and none of the installations have worn out yet.



World's Largest Swimming Lesson set for June 22

OVERLAND PARK, Kan. — The 2017 World's Largest Swimming Lesson (WLSL) has been set for June 22. This will be the eighth year for the global event and Team WLSL will be setting its sights on a new goal — reaching more than one billion with the message Swimming Lessons Save Lives by 2019.

Local WLSL events take place at hundreds of locations in more than 20 different countries on five continents over the course of 24 hours. The purpose of the event? Provide kids and parents exposure to life-saving water safety skills and build awareness about the vital importance of teaching children to swim to prevent drowning.

The World Waterpark Association founded the WLSL event in 2010, and works with dozens of life-saving and drowning prevention organizations to support Team WLSL and its mission to spread the message Swimming Lessons Save Lives because:

- The problem is real: Per the CDC, drowning remains the leading cause of unintended, injury related death for U.S. children ages 1-4, and the second leading cause for children under 14; drowning is an even greater threat in other countries around the world.

- Many lack basic swimming skills: In 2014, a survey completed by the American Red Cross found that more than half of all Americans



(54 percent) either can't swim or don't have all of the basic swimming skills.

- Parental supervision is key: According to Safe Kids Worldwide 2016 report, despite the fact that lack of supervision played a role in the majority of drowning deaths, less than half of parents (49 percent) indicate they remain within arms' reach of their child in the water

The WWA and Team WLSL encourages aquatic facilities and trainers to help parents connect the dots between learning to swim and staying safer in and around the water. Join Team WLSL for this global, life-saving event by registering as an official 2017 WLSL Host Location.

About The World's Largest Swimming Lesson

The World's Largest Swimming Lesson was created as a platform to help the aquatics industry work together to build awareness about the fundamental importance of teaching children to swim to prevent drowning. Since its inception, more than 195,000 children and adults have participated in WLSL lessons generating more than half a billion media impressions about the vital importance of learning to swim.

•wsls.org



NEWS SPLASH

AT: Jeffery L. Seifert

jseifert@amusementtoday.com

The City of **Braselton, Ga.** will open a new splash park this summer thanks to the generosity of a local businessman. Jack Frost, who owns a local memorial funeral home donated \$100,000 to the city to fund the project. The city chose a local company, **KorKat** to build the attraction, which is expected to take about 15 weeks to complete.

- **Aquatico Inbursa Water Park** in Veracruz, Mexico, celebrated its grand opening in February even though the park had opened last year. The park has been operating in preview mode since late last summer. On February 16, the park was officially inaugurated by the **Leopoldo Dominguez**, the secretary of tourism. "I am sure that the Inbursa Water Park will be a trigger for local and national tourism, because it is a world-class amusement park with innovative attractions and a family atmosphere," said Dominguez.

- **WhiteWater West** of Canada supplied many of the park's attractions including a Master Blaster, AquaLoop, Boomerango, Constrictor, Wizzard Mat Racer, SuperBowl and Aqua-Play water play structure.

- **Great Wolf Resorts** of Wisconsin, has acquired another existing property for conversion. Following last month's announcement that Great Wolf was converting the **Waterpark of America** in Bloomington Minn., the company has announced plans to acquire **KeyLime Cove** in Gurnee, Ill. The facility is expected to close by this spring for an extended renovation that will include adding 20,000 square feet to the existing 65,000 square-foot indoor water park facility.

The current 414-room resort will be re-developed and reopened in 2018 with a rustic North Woods theme typical of Great Wolf Resort properties. The company also plans to add amenities that visitors expect from a Great Wolf Lodge such as expanded food and beverage options, miniature bowling, a climbing wall and/or ropes course, themed, kid-friendly guest rooms and lobby entertainment. Other possibilities include a kids spa, fitness center, arcade and MagiQuest.

"We see a lot of opportunity in the Chicago market," **Bryson Heezen**, Great Wolf development director, said at a meeting with Gurnee officials. "This is where the \$65 million investment is going to be spent — it's going to be creating this tradition that brings families back to Gurnee every year or multiple times a year."

Renovations to the property are expected to take about a year to complete.

The Village of Gurnee is located north of Chicago, near the Wisconsin border, between the major metropolitan markets of Chicago and Milwaukee. The village is home to **Six Flags Great America** and the **Gurnee Mills** indoor shopping mall.

- **Høje-Taastrup**, a western suburb of Copenhagen, Denmark, may be home to a massive indoor water park if the ambitious plans recently

announced come to fruition. **Nordic Water Universe** is expected to become the fifth-largest water park in the world as part of a 207-acre development encompassing an amusement ride area, hotel, and recreational nature park. The **Wyndham Hotel Group** has already signed onto the project and construction could begin as early as this year.

Plans call for the project to be built in five phases with a completion date of 2028. The first phase, which will include the water park, vacation homes, amusement rides, shops, cafes, restaurants, conference facilities and the Wyndham Hotel is slated to open in 2020.

- Construction has begun on a new recreation center in Langley Township, B.C., Canada. The **Aldergrove Credit Union Community Centre** will include an outdoor aquatic center with a six-lane competition swimming pool, diving pool and hot tub as well as waterslides, tidal pool, lazy river and children's waterplay structure. The outdoor water park will be open in the summer months, but the new competition pool will stay open all year with a canopy cover in the winter months. The pool will be heated by diverting heat produced by the chiller equipment that is used to make ice for the skating rink inside the recreation center.

The CA\$30 million facility is replacing the aging Aldergrove Community Arena, as well as the Aldergrove Outdoor Pool. The project was funded in part by a CA\$9.88 million grant from Infrastructure Canada. The Township of Langley will cover for the remaining costs. The rec center project has been in the works for more than a year, but was put on hold waiting for the grant. Once the grant money was confirmed, ground breaking took place at a ceremony on February 6, 2017. The rec center is expected to open in June of 2018.

- A property management firm involving distant relatives of **Walt Disney** — father and son **Barry** and **Josh Disney** — is looking to develop a hotel, shopping center complex in Nashville, Tenn. that would include a rooftop water park. If built, the 40-story, **World One Hotel**, would be downtown Nashville's largest hotel with 829 rooms. Plans also include a 2,500-seat theater, science center, shopping center, as well as the water park.

"We have tremendous love for Nashville and are hoping to make it a home for us," Disney said.

The site chosen for the hotel is currently owned by **Frank May**, who at one time had planned to build a **Hard Rock Hotel** on that parcel of land. May purchased the land in 2015, but has yet to develop it.

Nashville has attracted a number of hotel investors hoping to capitalize on increased occupancy in the Nashville market, however with so many projects underway, some developers have faced challenges getting financing from lenders.

In January of this year, **Ryman Hospitality** announced plans to invest \$90 million in a water park for its **Gaylord Opryland Hotel**.

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PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

► Lagotronics to supply Lake Compounce dark ride upgrade — Page 20 / Fairs — Pages 22-25

Guardians of the Galaxy attraction bows in May

Disney California Adventure primed for a super-heroic season

AT: Dean Lamanna

dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

ANAHEIM, Calif. — With the next installment of the hit Marvel/Walt Disney Studios movie franchise *Guardians of the Galaxy* landing in North American theaters May 5, a new attraction at Disney California Adventure (DCA) that carries its sci-fi/action theme — and expands its storyline — has been given an opening date: May 27.

Housed in the looming elevator ride structure formerly known as The Twilight Zone Tower of Terror, which has been undergoing an extensive makeover since last winter, *Guardians of the Galaxy—Mission: Breakout!* continues the story of a ragtag band of intergalactic rebels who must join forces to defeat a universe-conquering warrior. New renderings of the attraction's interior suggest that guests will be fully immersed in the story both preceding and during the ride.

The opening of *Guardians of the Galaxy* kicks off a season of new experiences called Summer of Heroes in DCA's Hollywood Land section. From May 27 through Sept. 10, guests will be able to meet and interact with some of their favorite Marvel Super Heroes.

"It's going to be a thrilling summer at the Disneyland Resort," said David Duffy, director of creative entertainment. "You can choose an awesome encounter with Star-Lord, Black Widow, Spider-Man, Hawkeye or Captain America; step up to meet Groot for the first time; and find out if



you have what it takes to join the Avengers."

In addition to costumed character encounters and themed food and merchandise, several new year-round and limited-time experiences and offerings will launch at DCA's Hollywood Land this summer. These include *Guardians of the Galaxy: Awesome Dance Off*, during which Star-Lord will fire up his old-school boom box for a rock-and-roll bash; and *Avengers Training Initiative*, for which Black Widow and

The debut of Disney California Adventure's *Guardians of the Galaxy* ride, featuring an extensive pre-boarding exhibit (see renderings), will launch a summer of Marvel Super Heroes-themed experiences at the park.

COURTESY
DISNEYLAND RESORT

Hawkeye assemble young "recruits" (guests) for a series of tests to determine if they have what it takes to join the Avengers.

Also this summer, neigh-



boring Disneyland will see the return of the Disneyland Railroad and Rivers of America attractions as well as the "Fantasmic!" nighttime spectacular. (Dates to be

announced.) The last chance for guests to enjoy the classic Main Street Electrical Parade during its limited-time return to the park is June 18.

•disneylandresort.com

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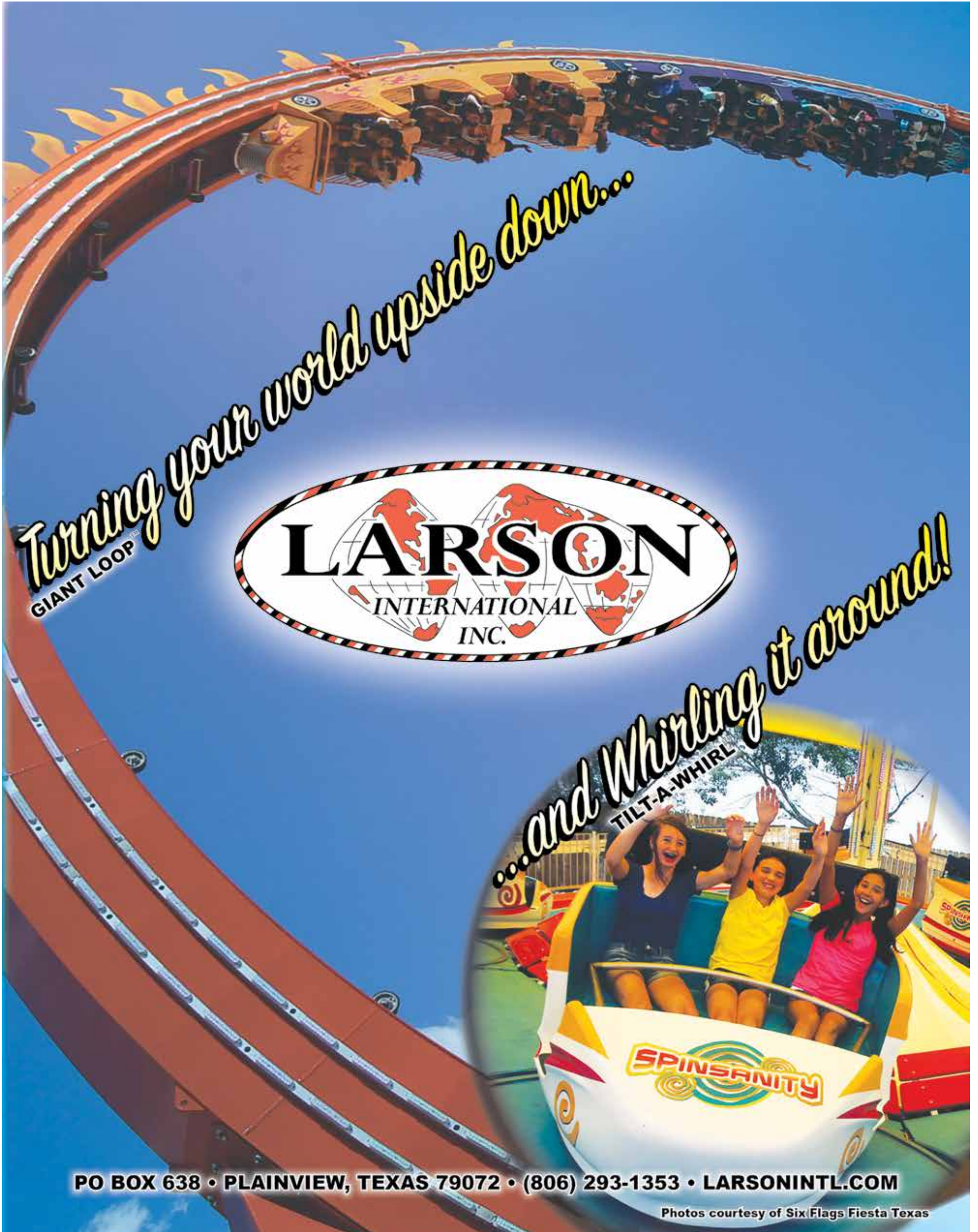
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Knoebels Amusement Resort adding unique Over the Top ride for 2017

Supplied by SBF/Visa
Group and Rides 4-U

ELYSBURG, Pa. — Although winter has just wrapped up, Knoebels Amusement Resort is getting ready for the warmer months to come. Knoebels announced that an addition for its 2017 season is a ride dubbed "Over the Top."

America's largest free-admission amusement park announced that the addition is new, but longtime visitors might recognize some characteristics of a former ride. According to Dick Knoebel, the ride, which has been given the name Over the Top by Knoebels, stood out to the Knoebel family at the IAAPA Attractions Expo in November.

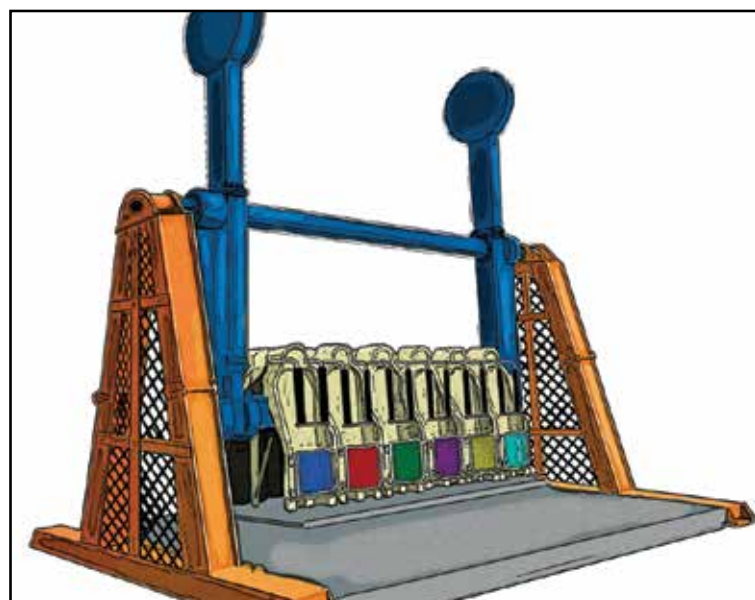
"One of the reasons it caught our attention is that it gives riders a sensation similar to that of the old Flying Cages," said Knoebel. "In addition, we received the stamp of approval from younger family members who never experienced the Cages and still spoke highly of the thrill."

Knoebel is referring to the Flying Cages, or Cages, that were common 50 years ago and operated at Knoebels from 1964 until the park's Handstamp Building was constructed in 1986. A rider was challenged to shift his or her weight back and forth inside the cage, while standing, in an attempt to make the cage go over the top. Visitors can find one of the original Cages in the Knoebels History Museum, and during its Hallo-Fun event, when a Cage reemerges as a decoration.

Fortunately, riders will not be tasked with propelling the new ride. The over-the-top motion will be part of the rider experience, as will the fact that riders will be standing. The ride will have a Cages-like theme at Knoebels, and will move both clockwise and counterclockwise.

According to Knoebels spokeswoman, Stacy Ososkie, Over the Top will be located in the area of Wipeout, Fandang, and Cub Cars rides, and the Monkey Madness game.

"There was a lot of interest on our Facebook teaser posts questioning whether or not we're removing anything to



Knoebels announced that a new ride named Over the Top is scheduled for a late spring/early summer opening at the park. The ride will reach more than 21 feet in height when in operation, providing riders with an over-the-top sensation while standing; motion is both clockwise and counterclockwise. To date, the SBF/Visa Group-supplied ride is the only one of its kind set for operation in Pennsylvania this year. Above is an artist's rendering of the attraction.

COURTESY KNOEBELS



Knoebels' new-for-2017 ride caught the Knoebel family's attention partly because it reminded them of the Flying Cages or Cages, ride that operated at the park from 1964 until 1986. With this being the case, Over the Top will have a Cages-like theme at Knoebels. Pictured here is a historical photo of the Cages during operation at Knoebels.

COURTESY KNOEBELS

make way for the new ride," said Ososkie. "Visitors might notice some repositioning, but we're happy to have enough space to keep everything and will hopefully bring even more interest to all of the other fun to be had in that area."

Visitors need to be at least 48 inches in height to ride Over the Top. The ride will reach more than twenty-one feet in height when in operation, and can operate with 12 riders at a time. It is scheduled for a late spring/early summer opening. To date, it is the only one

of its kind set for operation in Pennsylvania this year.

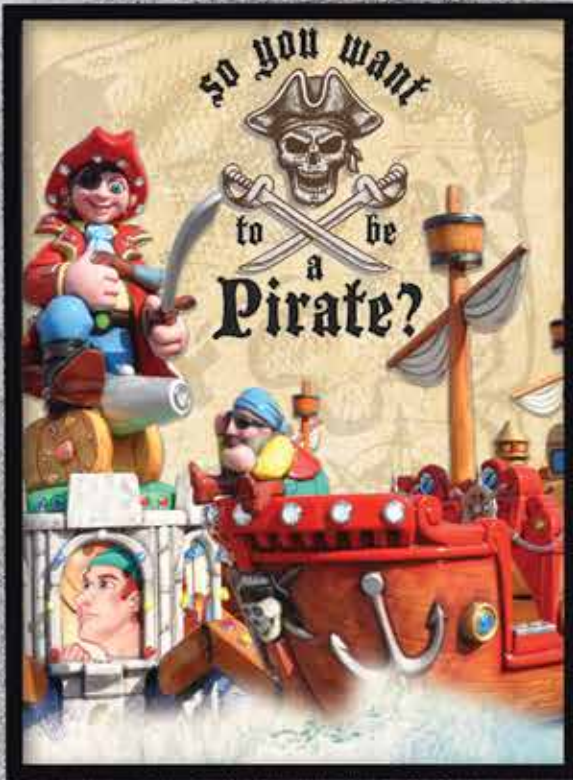
The ride deal was completed by Len Soled's Rides 4-U and is being supplied by SBF-Visa Group.

In other Knoebel's news:

- New track, in the tunnel area of the popular Phoenix roller coaster has been completed.

- A new public restroom facility is being built at the park's main entry, across from the Impulse steel coaster. It replaces the current restroom facility.

we have the attractions to get them off their couch this season...



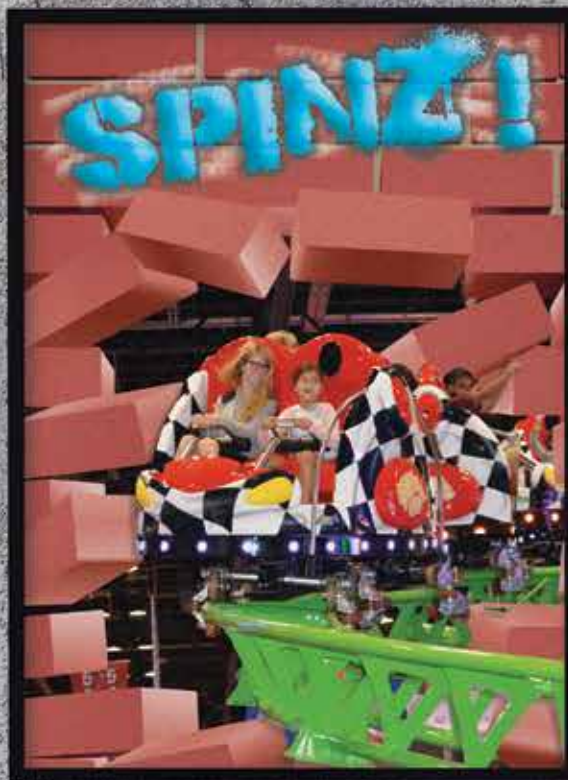
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Space Center Houston launches Apollo 11 display later this year



Space Center Houston (Texas) is the first of four stops of a new exhibit featuring the Apollo 11 command module, which will leave the Smithsonian on a national tour for the first time since 1971. It will be the only location where guests can see the space capsules for both the first and last lunar landings. The awe-inspiring "Destination Moon: The Apollo 11 Mission" exhibit, on display Oct. 14, 2017, through March 18, 2018, at Space Center Houston, is part of the nonprofit's 25th anniversary jubilee. The center is the first and only Smithsonian Affiliate in greater Houston. Above, The Apollo 11 command module Columbia was picked up on July 24, 1969, by the USS Hornet, prime recovery ship for the historic lunar landing mission. The Apollo 11 command module — the only portion of the historic spacecraft to safely return humans to Earth — will leave the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum for the first time in 46 years for the national tour.

COURTESY SPACE CENTER HOUSTON

Lagotronics Projects to supply dark ride upgrade to Lake Compounce

BRISTOL, Conn. — Lagotronics Projects recently announced its latest project and first in the United States. For the 2017 season the Dutch company will update the Ghost Hunt dark ride at Lake Compounce in Bristol, Connecticut, with new shooters, targets and gaming system.

"We are thrilled to grow our presence in the North American market and excited to work with the team at Lake Compounce," said Mark Beumers, CEO of Lagotronics Projects. "They have a fantastic park and we are proud to be a part of the many improvement projects at the property next year."

The goal of the new equipment is to both increase uptime and guest enjoyment of the attraction. The new interactive system uses LEDs, which are safer and much more reliable than older-style guns. In addition, the removal of moving parts from the gun's interior makes the Lagotronics Projects systems unique to those offered by other suppliers. The guns offer increased accuracy and audio feedback when fired, in order to increase the enjoyment of those brave enough to collect ghouls for points.

"Everyone is excited about the Lagotronics Projects system coming stateside," said Adam Sandy, chief business development officer at Ride Entertainment, who



represents the Dutch company in North America. "They have fantastic technology and game play; we know it will be a hit with riders at Lake Compounce."

The project comes at an exciting time for the Dutch company. This year Lagotronics debuted its GameChanger interactive attraction at Shimao's Skyscrapers City, an interactive dark ride at Wanda Mall Nanchang, a dark ride upgrade at Chessington's World of Adventures and showcased the Hand Symbol Control and Swipe Control at the attractions industry's largest expositions.

"We are excited about what the future will bring. Lagotronics Projects has been on the cutting edge of the attractions industry for some time and we are looking forward to sharing more of our exciting innovations with the world," said Beumers.



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New tech overlays for roller coasters, drop tower

Six Flags and Samsung step up VR ride collaboration at parks

AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — Having introduced virtual reality (VR) on a number of roller coasters across the U.S. in 2016, Six Flags Entertainment Corp. and Samsung Electronics America, Inc., are furthering their joint VR-enhanced ride endeavor this year with new experiences at several parks using Samsung Gear VR powered by Oculus.

The New Revolution Galactic Attack, a scenario that finds riders battling to save the planet from an impending alien drone invasion, debuted on coasters in late February at both California Six Flags parks: Magic Mountain in Valencia (on The New Revolution) and Discovery Kingdom in Vallejo (on Kong). It also has been rolled out at Six Flags Over Texas in Arlington (Shock Wave) and at Six Flags Mexico in Mexico City (Medusa).

The next-generation technology offers for the first time what Samsung calls a “mixed reality” experience. Another first: complex gameplay where-



in riders make key decisions during the course of the ride that can affect their scoring at the end.

“Six Flags is proud to be partnering with Samsung to develop the newest, most innovative thrill ride experience in the theme park industry,” said Brett Petit, senior vice president of marketing and sales for Six Flags. “This mixed reality technology is truly groundbreaking and like nothing our guests have ever experienced.”

Added Marc Matthieu, chief marketing officer for Ridgefield Park, N.J.-based Samsung: “We are always aiming to create immersive, never-been-done before experiences with our Samsung VR ecosystem as the focal point, so these new experiences at Six Flags are completely complementary to that key objective. We are thrilled to continue to work with Six Flags and bring VR to

the mainstream.”

An immersive universe

The new Galactic Attack overlay certainly is dynamic.

When riders choose the VR option for their coaster experience and don the needed headsets, they are introduced to the device’s pass-through camera functionality. This aspect of wearing the headset makes riders aware of their surroundings by allowing them to see their actual environment — including the person seated next to them — along with the VR content.

As they get settled into the ride, a heads-up display on the pass-through camera view shows data such as current status of weaponry, time codes, fuel cells and a countdown clock. Rising along the lift hill, a swirling wormhole comes into view. As riders crest the lift, the mixed reality view changes to a

completely immersive VR environment and a fighter spaceship cockpit materializes — enveloping riders in a tunnel of light.

While the train gains speed, riders are launched into the middle of a space battle, coming under attack from flying drones firing lasers and missiles. After swinging through tight channels, narrowly dodging drones and artillery fire, riders finally are brought into one of three drone bays, each of which offer a different ending.

‘Doom’ with a view

The success of the VR application in “refreshing” some older coasters has encouraged Six Flags to explore how to make the technology work on other rides. The first such alternate attraction overlay, Drop of Doom VR, was introduced on Acrophobia at Six Flags Over Georgia (SFOG) in Austell on March 11.

The first permanent drop tower VR ride in the U.S. — arriving in time for the park’s 50th anniversary season — Drop of Doom VR offers a sci-fi / horror scenario in which riders are piloting a futuristic gunship under attack by mutant spiders.

The experience begins with a high-speed, 100-story virtual vertical ascent while teetering off the edge of a helicopter, with riders’ field of vision filled with a 360-degree rotating view of massive city skyscrapers under siege by enormous spiders. A high-intensity gun battle against a giant arachnid ensues, causing the creature to unleash baby spiders that virtually crawl all over each rider.

A thrilling 100-story fiery plunge between towering skyscrapers provides a temporary escape before the final showdown, in which a spider the size of a van — jaws gnashing — rears up in full attack mode.

“We continue to explore new opportunities utilizing Samsung Gear VR technology, and this drop tower concept is a great example of the ability to change content for different rides,” said Dale Kaetzel, president of SFOG. “We look forward to having our guests experience Drop of Doom as we kick off the beginning of a very special year.”

Drop of Doom VR is included free with park admission for a limited time.

•sixflags.com

VRoundup

With Six Flags and the amusement industry in general now investing heavily in virtual reality (VR) applications, here are some recent business developments involving this rapidly evolving technology:

•Itasca, Ill.-based **Family Entertainment Group**, a designer, developer and operator of family amusement gaming facilities, has partnered with indoor water park resort company **Kalahari Resorts** to create Arena — The Ultimate Virtual Reality Experience, powered by **Zero Latency**. The attraction opened this winter at Kalahari locations in Wisconsin Dells, Wis., and in Pennsylvania’s Pocono Mountains — representing only the second and third warehouse-scale, multiplayer VR game arenas in the U.S.

•**Spaces, Inc.**, the Playa Vista, Calif.-based VR company launched last year and led by former heads of VR for **DreamWorks Animation**, has raised an additional \$6.5 million. This funding round, which follows a previously announced \$30 million joint venture with Chinese theme park operator **Songcheng Performance Development Co., Ltd.**, was led by Songcheng with additional investment by **Comcast Ventures** and others. Spaces has a vision to help usher in a new era VR-enabled theme parks and attractions.

•Austin, Texas-based **Virtuix**, which specializes in active VR and developed the **Omni** motion platform, has launched a partnership with **Fun VR Tech**, a new division of **Universal Space** (UNIS) that distributes VR experiences to the commercial entertainment market. It expands Virtuix’s successful collaboration with UNIS in China, where it has installed its Omni Arena gaming attraction in dozens of locations. Fun VR Tech now is selling Omni Arena in North America and South America, with plans to expand to additional global markets.

—Compiled by Dean Lamanna



Raising the bar for VR rides, Six Flags and Samsung have introduced the technology with a mutant spider scenario on Acrophobia at Six Flags Over Georgia (clockwise from above left) and unveiled a “mixed reality” alien attack presentation on The New Revolution at Six Flags Magic Mountain. COURTESY SIX FLAGS



2017 Florida State Fair sees two revenue records set

The 2017 Florida State Fair, Tampa, held Feb. 9-20, set new records in gate and midway revenues and drew an attendance of 440,718 (unaudited), which represented a 11.4 percent increase over 2016. The midway, provided by Wade Shows, fielded 126 rides including the new portable Lamberink RL45 wheel. COURTESY FLORIDA STATE FAIR



Focus on family tipped the scales

AT: Pam Sherborne
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TAMPA, Fla. — The Florida State Fair, held Feb. 9-20, was certainly heralded by officials as a complete success.

Although attendance was not at a record level, the 2017 unaudited figure was 440,718, an 11.4 percent increase over 2016.

Setting new records this year were both the gate revenue and the midway revenue. Unaudited numbers showed the all-time gate revenue as \$3,433,381, representing a 13.8 percent increase over 2016. The unaudited midway revenue came in at \$4,782,830, a 12.5 percent increase over 2016.

SEE RELATED STORY PAGE 1

"Advance sales experienced a 21.1 increase over last year's numbers," said Laurie Hayes, manager, marketing and communications, Florida State Fair. "I think one thing that helped increase our attendance was our emphasis on family entertainment. We added promotions such as a grandparents day and a non-profit appreciation day."

The other aspect of the fair luring fairgoers this year was the midway with 126 rides this year. Wade Shows is the midway provider. And, Hayes said, they don't take lightly how the new portable Lamberink RL45 Sky Eye Wheel brought thrill seekers to the fair this year.

"The new wheel sure gave us a new iconic picture," Hayes said, of the 150 foot tall wheel.

The Sky Eye Wheel, owned in partnership between Frank Zaitshik, Wade Shows, and Michael Wood, Wood Entertainment, was being touted as the largest portable wheel in North America during the fair.

The Florida State Fair was the first date for the ride and because of unexpected delays, it wasn't completed until Sunday, Feb. 12, and didn't begin operating until the next day after inspections.

But, the building of the ride became an attraction.

STATE FAIRS

"It was really very cool," Hayes said. "And, I think most people got it."

The fair also offered another new ride, the Super Slide, the slide that was created by Rides 4-U as the main attraction for the festivities surrounding the 2015 National Football League Super Bowl in New York City. The fair purchased the ride and it is now a permanent attraction on the grounds.

The new slide replaced a slide that had been on the grounds since the 1970s, but was damaged in a storm in 2015.

"We also continue to spruce up our grounds and add more shaded areas," Hayes said. "Plus, Wade Shows added new guest and shade areas to the midway. The guest area offered sun screen, diaper changing stations and phone charging stations. Our guests really appreciated that."

This was the first event for Florida State Fair Authority (FSFA) Executive Director Cheryl Flood at the helm.

"I am so excited we were able to share the fair with so many fellow Floridians," said Flood, after the event. "We placed a renewed focus on family entertainment, booking Shopkins and other kids' entertainment. We had a huge success the last weekend with a Peppa Pig Meet and Greet."

In addition to those children's characters, the 2017 fair featured one of the largest varieties of entertainment they have had. It included: Sea Lion Splash; Sweet: A Tasty Journey — a museum quality exhibit exploring candy in pop culture; K-9s in Flight; Circus Hollywood under the big top; the Welde's Big Bear Show; the Winter National Championship Lawnmower races; the Florida State Fair Championship Tractor Pull; Budweiser Clydesdales; Mildred W. and Doyle E. Carlton, Jr. Cracker Country; concerts and top quality agricultural exhibits.

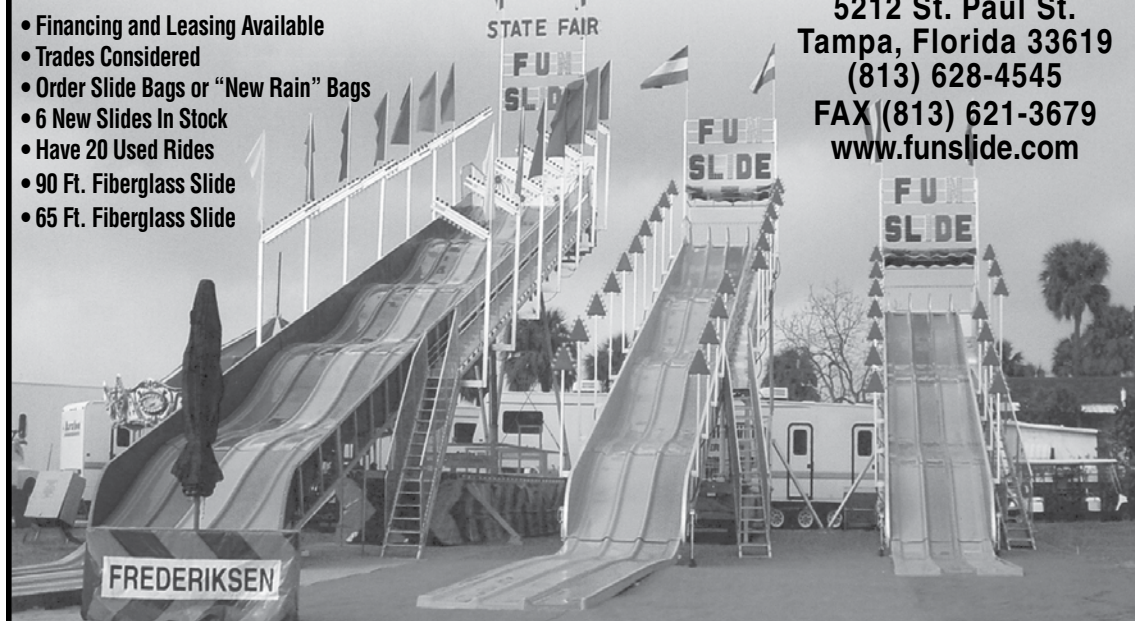
Agriculture remains at the heart of the fair, according to fair officials.

Fair management already is at work planning the 2018 fair, set for Feb. 8-19.

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Lisa Gagnon

Gagnon named head of Houston Livestock Show marketing

HOUSTON, Texas—Former vice president of marketing for the Houston Super Bowl Host Committee, Lisa Gagnon, was named an executive director of marketing, public relations and presentations at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

For the past two years, Gagnon has guided the marketing efforts for one of the largest sporting events in the world, Super Bowl LI. In her role as vice president of marketing, Gagnon oversaw all brand and marketing activities for the Houston Super Bowl Host Committee, including Super Bowl LIVE.

Prior to the host committee, Gagnon served as the director of brand for waste disposal and environmental services company Waste Management. During her seven-year tenure with Waste Management, she managed all aspects of the company's corporate brand, advertising and sports sponsorship efforts.

She also worked at Johnson & Johnson where she worked on the Tylenol brand on new product development and sports sponsorships.

South Carolina State Fair to have new general manager at start of 2018

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Gary Goodman, who has served for 33 years as the general manager of the South Carolina State Fair announced his retirement in February.

At the same time, the South Carolina fair board announced that Nancy L. Smith, currently the assistant general

FAIR BRIEFS

manager, will replace him. She will take over Jan. 1, 2018.

Smith has served as the fair assistant general manager since 2008, but has worked at the fair for more than 30 years. She began in the home and craft department in 1983 and was eventually named superintendent in that department.

She assumed a full time position in 2000 as director of entertainment and exhibits and continued in that position

until being named assistant general manager in 2008.

Goodman said he feels he is leaving the fair in good hands.

As the state's largest event, the South Carolina State Fair is a self-supported, nonprofit organization. It employs 21 people full time and hires an additional 300 seasonal employees during the fair each October.

This year's 148th anniversary fair will run Oct. 11-22 in Columbia. N.A.M.E. will provide the midway.

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Journey to Mars opened doors for ARM's VR drop tower

15,000 riders enjoy ride during Houston Super Bowl Host Committee's festival

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

HOUSTON, Texas — ARM's 90-foot-tall portable drop tower took a little more than 15,000 riders on a Journey to Mars from Jan. 27-Feb. 5, resulting in a lot of exposure for the manufacturer's already popular ride.

The drop tower was contracted by the Houston Super Bowl Host Committee to become the centerpiece for the LIVE Fan Festival, a free event leading up to this year's National Football League Super Bowl LI, held at NRG Stadium on Feb. 5. The festival was held at Houston's Discovery Green Park.

With virtual reality that included authentic space footage supplied by NASA, riders of Journey to Mars blasted off into space, experienced some of the great space frontier, and then were dropped on the 50-yard line in the NRG Stadium just in time for the big game.

"The ride went over extremely well," said ARM's Mike Gill.

Besides the 15,000 riders during the event, there was an additional 17,000 people who didn't actually ride the tower but who were able to experience the VR footage in a separate area. That means a little over 32,000 had the VR experience. Lines ran



Fireworks weren't all that blasted off on ARM's themed drop tower, Journey to Mars, which was the centerpiece at this year's NFL Super Bowl LI Fan Festival LIVE, produced by the Houston Super Bowl Host Committee, held for 10 days leading up to and through the day of the big game on Feb. 5.
COURTESY ARM

from one-half hour to one and one-half hour just to view the VR. The line to actually ride the drop

tower was never any shorter than a two-and-a-half hours.

"Some had to wait three-and-one-half hours in line," Gill said.

Those numbers of riders and watchers were spread across 10 days, but Gill said all those days weren't even full days.

"They were pretty much half days during the week but full days on the weekend," he said. "But, we got some great exposure. Television stations were there and radio was there. We had a couple of astronauts to come out and ride it. We had a team of engineers out here from the Johnson Space Center. Dr. (Ellen) Ochoa also came out here."

Ochoa, who is a veteran of four space flights, is the director of the Johnson Space Center.

"This has given us a whole new outlook as to what can be done with the drop tower," Gill said. "It has opened many doors."

Those doors include knocking on amusement and theme park gates with a package featuring specific VR theming.

Gill said there are some things in the works, but he wasn't at liberty to discuss them at this time.

The drop tower used at the Houston event is back at the ARM factory and will be sold.

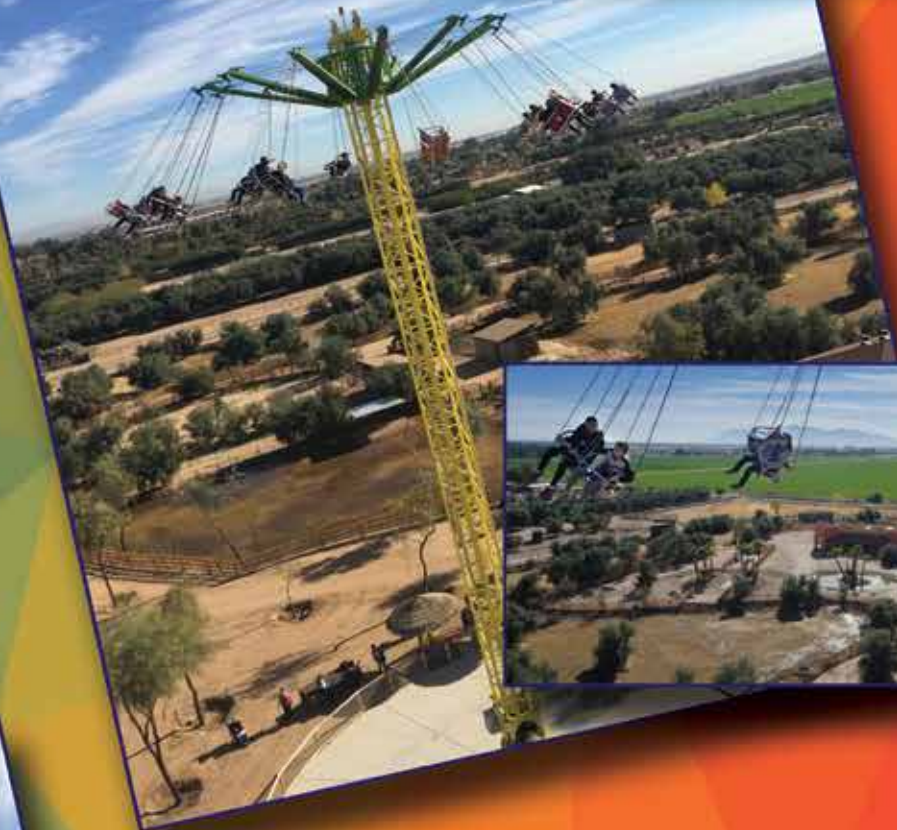
Ideas, a media and experience design company based in Orlando, Fla., is the company that reached out to ARM about providing the ride. HD Interactive, a Tampa-based software development company, provided the virtual reality.



Journey to Mars, ARM's themed drop tower, received a tremendous amount of exposure during its 10-day run at this year's NFL Super Bowl LI Fan Festival put on by the Houston Super Bowl Host Committee. Mike Hopkins (left) was just one of the astronauts who came out from Johnson Space Center to ride the ride; a team of engineers from the center also tried it out (right). Using VR and authentic space footage from NASA, riders on the 90-foot-tall tower also blasted off into space. "The drop tower was an extreme success," said ARM's Mike Gill, "and certainly put a new spin on the different ways the drop tower could be used."
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BUSINESS, SAFETY & CLASSIFIED

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Extreme Engineering names Ride Entertainment as official distributor

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — A landmark partnership to distribute **Extreme Engineering's** award winning Cloud Coaster has been formed with one of the world's leading attractions industry products distributors, **Ride Entertainment**. As the official distributor of the Cloud Coaster, Ride Entertainment will increase visibility and availability of the world's first cart-less roller coaster.

As the world's largest adventure product supplier for the amusement and resort industries, Extreme Engineering desired a distribution agent for the Cloud Coaster with a longstanding history and worldwide reach. As one of the largest distributors in attractions to the amusement industry with a world renowned reputation, Ride Entertainment was an ideal match for distributing their unique and groundbreaking

product. Extreme Engineering and Ride Entertainment both share an active history with the **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA)**, which further connected the two companies together to form this new and exciting relationship.

Ride Entertainment is a leader in providing thrilling products to the attractions industry, having earned international recognition for innovation and commitment to quality entertainment, and will be the exclusive Cloud Coaster distributor in the Middle East, including distribution towards large amusement parks and water parks such as **Six Flags**, **Universal** and **Disney** worldwide.

Adam Sandy, chief business development officer for Ride Entertainment stated, "We are thrilled to unite with one of the world's largest ad-



Ride Entertainment has been named as the official distributor for Extreme Engineering's popular Cloud Coaster.
COURTESY
RIDE ENTERTAINMENT

venture and amusement pioneers to promote growth in distribution of their innovative Cloud Coaster. We look forward to serving countless

satisfied customers and thrill seekers through this respected and rewarding partnership."

Developed and designed by the entertainment experts at Extreme Engineering, the Cloud Coaster is an innovative part zipline and part flying roller coaster. The world's first cart-less roller coaster gets its riders' adrenaline pumping using a unique custom lift system to raise riders slowly, simulating the traditional anxious feeling at the start of a large roller coaster, then taking off and giving the triple sensation of flying, zip-lining and rocketing up and down.

The Cloud Coaster also holds the esteemed title of being the only zipline coaster on the market using lifts, which allows tandem riders to be pulled up a track on motors to zip up hills for a truly unique ride. The Cloud Coaster won back-to-back

IAAPA awards for best product display in 2015 and 2016 and was recently honored by *USA Today* as a Top Attraction. The 2017 track design features a new tandem cart system so participants can enjoy the ride together, as well as exciting lifts and upgraded MBS braking technology.

Jeff Wilson, CEO of Extreme Engineering stated, "We are honored to see our one-of-a-kind and treasured product distributed by an internationally recognized amusement and adventure powerhouse. Given their stellar reputation as an industry leader, it is as inventive as it is logical to partner with Ride Entertainment to distribute our groundbreaking and award-winning Cloud Coaster. We look forward to seeing our cherished product soar to new heights through this exciting new relationship."



Standing 114 feet in height, The Giant, delivers a unique and inspiring experience to its visitors. The first Giant is planned to open later this year with the goal of building a minimum of 20 over the next decade. COURTESY THE GIANT CO.

The Giant Company partners with ITPS

DUBLIN, Ireland — **Paddy Dunning**, chief executive officer of **The Giant Company Ltd.**, based in Dublin, Ireland, announced a partnership with **International Theme Park Services, Inc. (ITPS)**, a leisure consulting company based in Cincinnati, Ohio. The two firms will collaborate to introduce and market The Giant attraction to the leisure industry, including theme parks, amusement parks, water parks, family entertainment centers, museums, retail and dining centers, and more.

The Giant was informally unveiled at a press conference in Orlando on November 17, 2016 at the **IAAPA Attractions Expo**. The official launch is planned for later in 2017. The Giant attraction, at 35 meters (114 feet) in height delivers a unique and inspiring experience to its visitors. The Giant stands atop a

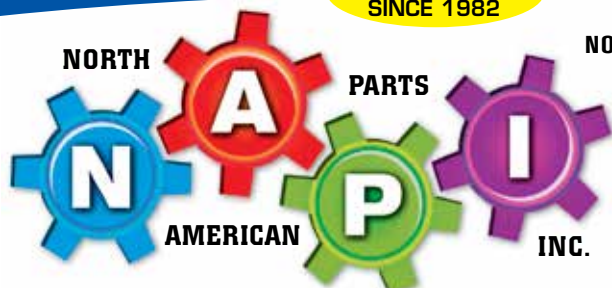
929-square-meter (10,000-square-foot) building and visitors who enter the attraction will experience a cutting-edge interactive exploration of "giants" from folklore and mythology and present-day icons.

Dennis Spiegel, president of International Theme Park Services said, "The Giant offers the perfect opportunity for a city to pay homage to its hometown legends, including sports heroes and famous musicians, or for a theme park to showcase its iconic characters like Superman or celebrities."

Eric Fraad, director of development for The Giant, said, "We are excited to work with Dennis and ITPS. Their longstanding and excellent reputation as a leader in the leisure and attractions business makes them the perfect partner to assist us in unveiling our unique Giant attraction."

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NJAA show draws nearly 500; NAARSO training held

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — The annual **NJAA East Coast Gift and Variety Show** was again held at the **Golden Nugget Resort and Casino** near the famed Boardwalk and just off the Atlantic City Marina. This was the eighth time at that venue. The show is held mid-February in conjunction with the East Coast/Mid-Atlantic regionalized **NAARSO** (National Association of Amusement Ride Safety Officials) Outreach Safety School. There were 130 attendees for the training. This is the ninth time the NAARSO training has been offered.

Thirty vendors occupying 100 booths showcasing ice cream novelties, plush and licensed toys, arcade games, staff shirts and uniforms, and novelty items, along with other amusement industry-related products were on display. More than 500 amusement industry staff, owners and operators attended the show housed in the 16,900-square-foot Grand Ballroom. The show, established in the mid-1970s, provides close-to-home buying and business-to-business opportunities for New Jersey

amusement operators.

Kimberle Samarelli, executive director of the New Jersey Amusement Association described the overall show vibe: "The feeling on the show floor was positive and upbeat because the weather at the Jersey shore over the prior Presidents Day weekend was fabulous and record-breaking."

Samarelli was asked if there were any new products or services that exhibited this year. "We had a waffle vendor come in from California called **Le Waf** and the product was extremely well received."

While the majority of attendees are from New Jersey, the show attracts other amusement industry folks from neighboring New York, Pennsylvania and Delaware, as well as Massachusetts and other northeastern states.

In front of the 10 a.m. trade show start on Wednesday, a ride regulations briefing and panel discussion to discuss the RCMT (Recognized Certified Maintenance Technician Program) and other

issues took place. The preshow session on Thursday by the Legalized Games of Chance Control Commission was held. The speakers made a presentation on the Certification and Policy Update.

The Wednesday evening Scholarship Fund Cocktail Party was again held on the trade show floor. This third annual mixer proved to be a big success. "We raised over \$5,000 to help fund our scholarships we give out annually. The number varies depending on applicants, but we always give away at least three," said Samarelli.

Samarelli was posed the question regarding any changes for the 2018 show. "As of right now we have such a well-oiled machine and our vendors are so happy to be at the Golden Nugget in Atlantic City that we have no venue change, but we always look for new vendors and giveaways."

The 2018 East Coast Gift and Variety Show occurs February 20 and 21 with NAARSO training February 20-22, 2018.

—B. Derek Shaw

Leanna Muscato elected first female president of PAPA

AT: B. Derek Shaw
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HERSHEY, Pa. — Nearly 100 members and guests of the **Pennsylvania Amusement Parks Association (PAPA)** met the last two days in February for its annual spring meeting at **Hershey Lodge and Convention Center**. Fourteen of the 21 member Pennsylvania parks/attractions participated, along with 20 member suppliers/manufacturers. Guests included staff from the **Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association (PRLA)**; the **Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Rides and Measurement Standards** and the **Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development**. New member organizations this year include **Extreme Engineering**; **Kalahari Waterpark**; **Magic Moments USA, Ltd.**; **NXT Capture**; **Ridewerks** and the **Turkey Hill Experience**.

The day started with a PAPA board of directors meeting followed by a reception and banquet that evening. The invocation before the meal was provided by **Buddy Knoebel**, **Knoebels Amusement Resort** and also a past PAPA president. The evening proceedings were led by **Jeff Davis**, Operations Manager of **Sesame Place** and 2015-16 PAPA president.

The organization again held a 50/50 Raffle for its scholarship fund. As a result, \$700 was raised for the **Barbara J. Knoebel Scholarship**

Fund. The winner donated his portion back to the fund. Each year four \$1,000 scholarships are awarded to students who work at any of the participating member parks/attractions.

The second day included the annual breakfast membership meeting with association business highlighted. Areas reported on included: legislative progress, Amusement Ride Safety Advisory Board, the fall **PACE** (Parks and Carnivals Education) **Ride Safety Seminar**, water park issues, PAPA website and scholarship reports. The last item of business included the installation of the 2017-18 slate of officers. **Leanna Muscato**, third generation Knoebel family member, was elected president. She is the first woman in the history of the organization to serve in that role.

Looking back, outgoing President Davis took his role very seriously: "I was respectful of the position because the organization has been around since the 1930s. You look at the list of names of the past presidents and there are some big names on there. You see that and you realize you are responsible for the reputation of this organization."

Davis highlighted two accomplishments he is most proud of during his two year term. "One is our website. (paamusementparks.com). We continue to develop that website so that it is a source of information not only for our members but for those that are looking to visit our state and



Getting together in the Forebay Lounge at Hershey Lodge for conversation and fun (l to r): Leanna Muscato, incoming PAPA president Knoebels Amusement Resort; Earl Heller, Rides-4-U Inc.; Jess Nugent, director of operations, Sesame Place; Jeff Davis, immediate past president PAPA, vice president of operations for Sesame Place and Mike Coleman, sales representative, Zamperla, Inc. AT/B. DEREK SHAW

choose a member park to visit or attraction to visit. We'll continue to develop that website. We have a good solid base and we're moving forward."

The second accomplishment includes advocacy efforts. "Last year when the governor presented his budget proposal, there was a line item in there for the inclusion of amusement park tickets as a sales tax. That's always been excluded because we have other enabling taxes like the amusement tax that are separate. We were able to work with other organizations and have PAPA's voice heard and make sure our legislators understood our opposition to that and why. Obviously we are worried about the effect it was going to have on tourism which is a big income source

for the state, but also to make sure they have the information that we are already paying our fair share of taxes. We were able to effectively communicate that out and that was withdrawn from the budget," said Davis.

Incoming president Leanna Muscato was also the first woman to serve on the board ten years ago. "I'm a bit overwhelmed. I have strong support with the organization. I'm very close with a lot of people on the board and they all said they are only a phone call or e-mail away." Other third generation owners, **Dick [Knoebel]** and **Buddy [Knoebel]** have served in that capacity in the past.

One of Muscato's goals for the organization is to secure more members, including

suppliers. She has been busy recruiting a few at the recent **NJAA East Coast Gift & Variety Show** in Atlantic City, as well as at the dinner opening night of the PAPA spring meeting. "I think we should go out and get some of our food distributors — the fact is the diversity of this group is not just amusement parks anymore," she explained.

Upon conclusion of the PAPA spring meeting, over 45 attendees participated in the ever-popular roundtable discussions in the conference room of the Service Center at **Hersheypark**. This is the sixth year the session has been held coordinated by **Gary Chubb**, senior director of maintenance at the park.

"It went very well," said Chubb. "It is pretty much an open discussion, within limitations, of course. Nobody is giving away any trade secrets. We talked about things that are pertinent to the industry."

This was the 83rd spring meeting of the Pennsylvania Amusement Parks Association. The organization was formed in 1935 with **R.L. Plarr** from **Dorney Park** serving as the first president. The 2017 PAPA Summer Meeting will be held at **Waldameer Park & Water World**, Erie, Pa. July 17 and 18. The **PACE Ride Safety Seminar** is scheduled for October 30 – November 2 in Bloomsburg University, Penn. with a "hands-on day" at **Knoebels Amusement Resort**, Elysburg, Penn. on October 31.

OBITUARIES

Michigan's Adventure's Mary Lynn Jourden, 71

MUSKEGON, Mich. — **Mary Lynn Jourden**, the co-founder of **Michigan's Adventure** amusement park passed away at her home on February 18, 2017. She was 71. In 1968, she and her husband, **Roger Jourden**, purchased a petting zoo in Muskegon, Michigan, known as **Deer Park**. The Jourdens expanded the park, adding rides and renaming it to **Deer Park Funland** in 1972.

Mary Lynn did everything at the park from preparing food in the concession stands to running the park's finances. She kept a phone line in her home kitchen, and would often book company picnics from her home, while preparing much of the food for those groups that she booked.

"My father was the owner of the park but my mom was the silent person who gave and did so much for the park," said **Camille Jourden-Mark**, daughter and current vice president and general manager of Michigan's Adventure. "He couldn't have done it without her."

Michigan's Adventure was very much a family run park. Each of the Jourden's children grew up there, at first living in a small house that was inside the park. Daughters **Camille** and **Lisa Jourden** started working there by selling deer-food-filled ice cream cones to visitors. The family would take trips to other amusement parks and industry trade shows to gather ideas



Mary Lynn Jourden

for their own park. Camille eventually becoming vice president and general manager. Son **Roger Jourden II** built **Duck Creek RV Resort** across the street from the park.

By the 1980s, the park had become a modern amusement park with less emphasis on the petting zoo. It was renamed **Michigan's Adventure** in 1988, and the couple's daughter, Camille Jourden-Mark assumed the role of general manager. Mary Lynn continued to work behind the scenes at the park until 2001, when Michigan's Adventure was sold to **Cedar Fair**.

Mary Lynn was also a founding member of Prince of Peace Catholic Church in North Muskegon. She is survived by her three children, Carol "Lisa" (David) Arnouts, Camille (J. Steve Mark) Jourden-Mark and Roger (Casey) Jourden II, sister Julie Mark Schmidtke, former husband Roger Jourden and nine grandchildren.

DXB Entertainments, Merlin Group announce new Legoland Dubai Hotel

To become the first Legoland Hotel in the Middle East

DUBAI, U.A.E. — **DXB Entertainments PJSC** (DFM: DXBE) the Dubai-based leisure and entertainment company, and **Merlin Entertainments Group** (LSE: MERL), a London-based theme park and attraction operators, are bringing the first **Legoland Hotel** to the Middle East. The ultimate family-fun hotel will open at **Dubai Parks and Resorts**, the Middle East's largest integrated theme park destination. The hotel will be located adjacent to the existing **Legoland Dubai** theme park.

The first Legoland Hotel in the Middle East and the seventh to open worldwide will completely immerse guests in the creative world of Lego as it's designed to bring children's imaginations to life. Every room will have Lego models and theming for guests to continue their Legoland Park adventure into the evening. From the disco elevator to the Castle Play Area, Legoland designers have integrated Lego storylines for every guest to create a memorable adventure.

The Legoland Dubai Hotel is a 60/40 joint venture between DXB Entertainments PJSC and Merlin Entertainments, and will be operated by Merlin Entertainments once opened. Designed to create unforgettable

family moments, the 250-room hotel will have themed rooms to suit all Lego lovers. It will be built on approximately 300,000 square feet of land earmarked for Legoland expansion as part of the Dubai Parks and Resorts destination.

Raed Kajoor Al Nuaimi, DXB Entertainments' chief executive officer said: "The addition of a Lego themed hotel at Dubai Parks and Resorts will bring the total hospitality offering at the destination to over 750 rooms. With more than 100 rides and attractions spread across three theme parks, one water park and **Six Flags Dubai** opening in 2019, we expect families to spend several days at the destination to enjoy all the amazing experiences we offer. We are very pleased to partner with Merlin Entertainments to deliver a fun-filled and convenient place for families to stay as well as long-term value to our shareholders."

Chief New Openings Officer at Merlin Entertainments **John Jakobsen**, commented: "Themed accommodation is an increasingly important part of the holiday and short-break visit, and we're delighted to continue our partnership with DXB with the development of this hotel, the first of its kind in the Middle East region, which will allow families and children to continue their amazing Legoland experience after the Park closes."

Agreements inked for additional Six Flags-branded park sites in China

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — **Six Flags Entertainment Corporation** (NYSE: SIX), and **Riverside Investment Group Co. Ltd.**, announced on Feb. 21 the signing of definitive agreements to build more Six Flags-branded parks. The latest parks will be located in Bishan, a district of Chongqing, and are expected to open in 2020.

"The development of two additional Six Flags-branded parks (theme park and water park) in Bishan, speaks to our commitment to create memorable experiences for families worldwide," said **John Odum**, president of **Six Flags International Development Company**. "We are excited to build on this vision in part-

nership with Riverside Investment Group."

"Six Flags is the world leader in thrilling entertainment for families and teens," said **Tang Jun**, Riverside CEO. "We look forward to bringing the best and most innovative roller coasters, rides and attractions to visitors throughout China."

The first Six Flags-branded theme park and water park in China are anticipated to open in 2019 and will be located in Haiyan, Zhejiang province, near Shanghai. The parks will feature record-breaking roller coasters, live shows, thrilling water attractions and more.

•sixflags.com/haiyan

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MARKETWATCH



COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 03/06/17	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	29.52	31.69	22.45
Merlin Entertainments Group/ Legoland	MERL	LSE	492.20	507.50	316.79
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	67.46	69.81	55.89
Comcast Corp./ NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	37.44	38.43	29.03
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	110.67	111.99	90.31
Dubai Parks & Resorts	DXBE:UH	DFM	1.01	1.77	0.99
EPR Properties	EPR	NYSE	74.80	84.67	61.87
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	9010	TYO	1019.00	1568.00	979.00
Haicahang Holdings Ltd.	HK:2255	SEHK	1.70	1.95	1.52
Leofoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	8.60	9.00	6.62
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	26.55	30.62	19.55
Parques Reunidos Servicios Centrales S.A.	ES:PQR	MCE	15.77	17.41	11.99
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	18.38	21.84	11.77
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	59.84	62.69	47.61
Skyocean International	HK:0593	SEHK	16.92	17	7.95
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	528.00	543.00	375.80
Village Roadshow	VRL	ASX	3.45	5.57	3.22

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

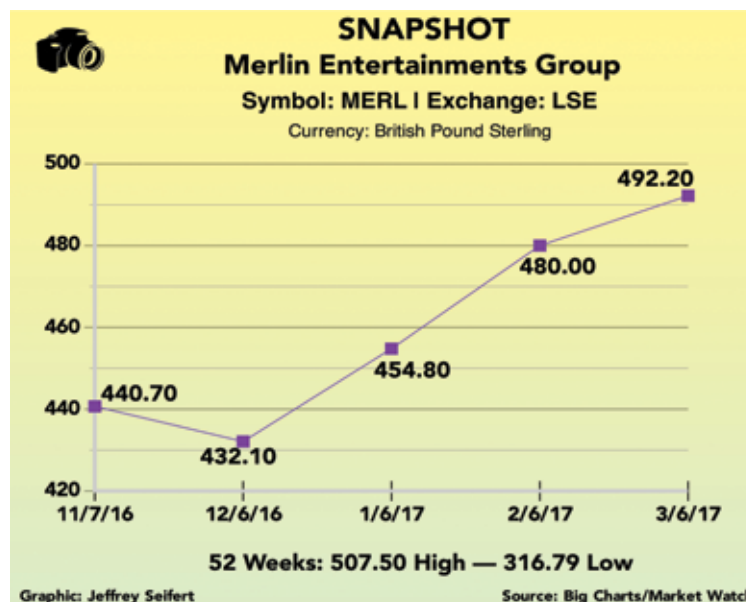
DIESEL PRICES

Region (U.S.)	As of 03/06/17	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	\$2.633	+\$0.556
Midwest	\$2.502	+\$0.519
Gulf Coast	\$2.429	+\$0.522
Mountain	\$2.625	+\$0.698
West Coast	\$2.779	+\$0.682
California	\$2.956	+\$0.640

CURRENCY

On 03/07/17 \$1 USD =

0.9432	EURO
0.8149	GBP (British Pound)
113.84	JPY (Japanese Yen)
1.0094	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.3179	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.3393	CAD (Canadian Dollar)



BUSINESS WATCH

Six Flags, Isee sign multi-year food service pact

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — **Six Flags Entertainment Corporation** (NYSE: SIX), has announced a seven-year food service and sponsorship marketing partnership with Ontario, Calif.-based frozen beverage provider **The Isee Company**. Six Flags will expand its frozen beverage program in each of its theme parks, creating signature beverage destinations featuring Isee's new Mix It Up stations as well as seasonal drink flavors during summer and holiday celebration periods. Six Flags also will debut a souvenir drink bottle with specially priced refills for season pass holders. Isee will receive exposure throughout the Six Flags Media Networks.

Several amusement companies provide results

•LONDON — **Merlin Entertainments plc**, (LSE: MERL) reported on March 2 its results for the year ended Dec. 31, 2016. Revenue was £1,428 million and EBITDA was £433 million. In the U.S., the company reported generating revenue of £404 million up from £336 million in 2015.

•ORLANDO — **SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.** (NYSE: SEAS) reported on Feb. 28 its financial results for the fourth quarter and full year 2016 results. Total revenues for the fourth quarter 2016 were \$267.6 million, compared to \$267.9 million in the fourth quarter of 2015. Net loss was \$11.9 million, or a loss of \$0.14 per diluted share, compared to a net loss of \$11.0 million, or a loss of \$0.13 per diluted share, in the fourth quarter of 2015. Total revenues were \$1.34 billion in 2016, compared to \$1.37 billion in 2015. Net loss was \$12.5 million, or a loss of \$0.15 per diluted share, compared to net income of \$49.1 million, or \$0.57 per diluted share, in 2015. Total attendance for 2016 declined by approximately 471,000 guests, or 2.1%, primarily due to a decline at the company's Florida and Northeast park locations, partially offset by an increase in attendance at its Texas park locations. Attendance at the company's California park locations was relatively flat in 2016 when compared to 2015.

•GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — **Six Flags Entertainment Corporation** (NYSE: SIX), announced on Feb. 22 that 2016 represented its seventh consecutive year of record financial performance as revenue grew \$55 million or 4 percent to \$1.3 billion. The full-year revenue growth resulted primarily from a 5 percent increase in the number of guests visiting Six Flags parks and the success of the company's pricing strategy and international licensing program. Attendance at Six Flags properties in 2016 grew by 1.6 million to 30.1 million, a record high for the current portfolio of parks, driven by the continued success of selling season passes and memberships, whose holders accounted for 60 percent of total visitation. On a constant currency basis, which excludes the foreign exchange translation impact from the company's parks in Mexico and Canada, revenue grew \$69 million or 6 percent. Net income for the year decreased by \$36 million or 24 percent primarily driven by an increase in non-cash compensation expense associated with the probable achievement of the company's Project 600 performance award, a long-term growth goal established in 2014.

•SANDUSKY, Ohio — On Feb. 15 **Cedar Fair Entertainment Company** (NYSE: FUN), reported record financial results for the year ended December 31, 2016. The company reported record full-year net revenues of \$1.29 billion, up 4% from 2015; net income of \$178 million, or \$3.14 per diluted limited partner (LP) unit, up \$65 million from a year ago. 2016 Adjusted EBITDA was a record \$481 million, up 5% from last year.

Attendance at Cedar Fair's parks was a record 25.1 million guests, a 3% increase from 2015; average in-park guest per capita spending increased 2%, to a record \$46.90.

Higher occupancy rates and average daily room rates at the company's resort properties contributed to the record out-of-park revenues of \$146 million, a 6% increase from a year ago.

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Amusement Today celebrates 20th anniversary

ARLINGTON, Texas — This issue marks the 20th anniversary of *Amusement Today*. Much has changed in the following two decades. In fact, at that time, the first iPhone was still a decade away from reaching the market. Many of today's common conveniences weren't even ideas in 1997.

Publisher and Editor-in-chief **Gary Slade** found encouragement from industry friends. Originally leaping into the new venture with former business colleagues from the *Breckenridge American* newspaper **Virgil Moore III** and **Rick Tidrow**, who assisted with the accounting and circulation, thus allowing Slade to focus on the advertising and editorial side of the upstart publication. Slade had found support and inspiration from close friend **Bruce Neal**, legendary public relations director at **Six Flags Over Texas**. Slade credits Neal (also a long-time media member) for naming the publication *Amusement Today*. Further encouraging support from **Schlitterbahn's Sherrie Brammell** and **Wonderland Park's Paul Roads** convinced Slade he was on the right path.

"I recall like it was yesterday sitting with Gary in the lobby of a hotel in New Orleans during the **IAAPA** trade show," said **Janice Witherow**, former PR manager at **Cedar Point**. "He was so excited about the idea he had for starting *Amusement Today*. We sat for hours brainstorming, and he laid out the paper right then and there in his mind. Who would have thought 20 years later *AT* would be what it is today? Gary has such dedication, grit, a big heart and love for our industry... it's obvious in each issue. It's fun to think what *Amusement Today* might look like 20 years from now!"

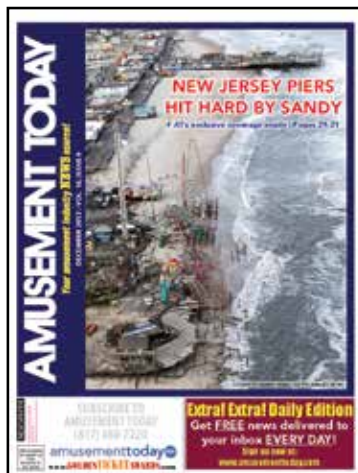
Other industry publications at the time focused on the people within the industry, but *AT's* approach was to balance people in the industry with coverage of product. With so many operators unable to travel to see the rides offered at the time, covering industry installations seemed vital, especially in the age when the internet was just beginning and Youtube had yet to be invented. With numerous



Slade



The first issue of *Amusement Today* (above) debuted in April 1997. Reporter **Dean Lamanna's** Dec. 2012 cover story (below) documented Hurricane Sandy's devastating industry impact. AT FILE



sections (International, Amusement Parks, Water Parks and Business) appearing in the initial issue, it was also joined by a listing of amusement industry stock market listings, something that had not been done before.

At the November trade show, **IAAPA** awarded *Amusement Today* with an **Impact Award** for Best New Product/Services.

Over time, Classifieds, Midway and **AIMS News & Notes** appeared. Columns featuring the **National Roller Coaster Museum & Archives**, now maintained by board member/historian **Richard Munch**, and 2-Minute Drill spotlighting industry professionals coordinated by Witherow have become monthly staples in the issues.

"When Gary approached me to help coordinate the **Golden Ticket Awards** and come up with a Q & A series that would feature someone in the industry each month, I had just resigned from the position of public relations manager at Cedar Point — a job I truly loved — to stay home with my newborn son," said Witherow. "I hesitated at first, but knew it was a great opportunity to keep my fingers in

the business. The 2-Minute Drill column has allowed me to interview some of the most interesting people — and have a lot of fun along the way. I am so grateful to be part of the *AT* team. We work hard, laugh a lot and are all celebrating the 20th anniversary of *Amusement Today*."

To date, Witherow has spotlighted 144 2-Minute Drills on industry professionals, having produced the first column in the November Pre-**IAAPA** issue, 2005.

Certainly, the **Golden Ticket Awards** have become synonymously tied with *AT*. First published in the fall of 1998, the awards eventually transformed into the **Networking Event of the Year**. In 1999, *Amusement Today* took First Place in **IAAPA's** Services category for the introduction of the **Golden Ticket Awards** to the industry.

"We offered to host the **Golden Ticket Awards** after a few years of it simply being a news release," said **Paula Werne**, director of communications at **Holiday World**. "I remember scheming with Janice Witherow about this (as only two PR types can) that it would be a great way to enhance the awards' brand. It's amazing to see what Gary and team have done over the years to grow the awards into a multi-day networking event."

Skyline Attractions' Chris Gray added, "I have now been going to the **Golden Tickets** for more than 10 years. During that time, it has become one of the best networking events outside of the **IAAPA** trade show. We also like to use the event as a fun getaway for our **Skyline** team. It helps to refresh and invigorate everyone with a fun weekend that also connects us all to the industry's core leaders."

With 14 issues printed each year, the most by any trade publication in the amusement industry, *AT* has covered the numerous trade shows, the devastation of Hurricane Sandy and the industry's descent into and emergence from the recent recession. Accented with cartoons, special sections and obituaries, the publication has strived to offer something for every industry professional.

A recent focus is an emphasis on safety and maintenance education. "Nobody is addressing safety like *AT* has," said Slade. "It's such an important side of the industry that can't be shared enough and I'm proud

of our entire team for jumping on board to promote this important topic. I'm also pleased to see the outpouring of support — in promoting safety — from the entire industry."

Reflecting on 20 years of publication, Slade smiled, "I can only be thankful for the continued support from our advertis-

ers, parks sharing their news, our subscribers and friends within the industry. Most of all I must thank all of the *AT* staff for their dedication, hard work and professionalism that makes *AT*, the news leader that it has become. I look forward to all of us continuing the ride."

—Tim Baldwin

FAST FACTS

COMPANY FORMATION

Amusement Today, Inc., founded January 1997 by: Gary Slade, Virgil Moore III and Rick Tidrow (Slade acquired full ownership in Jan. 2001)

PUBLISHING MILESTONES

1997

APRIL: First Issue, 24 pages divided into four sections: International, Amusement Parks, Water Parks and Business with debut of *Riding the Market*, park stock market chart
MAY: Debut of *The List* (chart), *O.D. Hopkins Shoot-the-Chutes*
AUG.: Debut of *Classified Advertising* page
NOV.: Debut of *Advertorial* Section on *Custom Coasters Intl.*
DEC.: Debut of *Opinion* page and monthly cartoon

1998

APRIL: Debut of the *What's New Guide*
JUNE: Debut of first *Bonus Section*, *VisionLand*
AUG.: Debut of **Golden Ticket Awards** with 14 categories
DEC.: Debut of industry *Holiday Recipes*

2000

NOV.: Debut of Pre-**IAAPA** issue featuring **IAAPA Attractions Expo** news and *Exhibitor Listing*, by booth number

2001

AUG.: **Holiday World & Splashin' Safari** hosts first **Golden Ticket Awards** ceremony, new industry event is born

2004

NOV.: *AT* debuts the **AIMS News & Notes** page, launching *AT's* safety, maintenance editorial coverage

2005

APRIL: Debut of *Midway* section, rounding out *AT's* editorial coverage to all areas of the amusement industry

2009

APRIL: First full-color issue throughout entire publication

2012

DEC: *AT* kick's off 12-months (32 total pages) of *Superstorm Sandy* coverage, supporting **NJAA's** effort to "Restore, Rebuild and Reopen" following the damage to the amusement piers.

2017

JAN: *AT* debuts the **National Roller Coaster Museum & Archives Progress Report** page to help inform the amusement industry of the donations and progress being made on the museum effort
APRIL: *AT* begins publishing entire issue on 50 lb. coated stock providing a cleaner, brighter look not found on newsprint

AWARDS

1997

AT wins the **Impact Award** for Best New Product/Services
AT also earns an **Honorable Mention** at the Expo

1999

AT takes **First Place** in **IAAPA's** Services Category for the introduction of the **Golden Ticket Awards** to the industry

2000

AT receives an **Honorable Mention** in **IAAPA's** Services Category for its *Bonus Section* coverage on two new parks openings: **Jazzland**, New Orleans, La. and **Magic Springs**, Hot Springs, Ark.

2002

AT Publisher **Gary Slade** wins **IAAPA's** Public Affairs Award

NUMBERS

14 issues published each year, most per year in industry
74 pages related to Safety, Maintenance produced in 2016
144 industry profiles (2 Minute Drill) by Janice Witherow
452 total number of **Golden Ticket Awards** presented to date
740 largest total page count in a single year (Vol. 16)
11,378 total number of pages produced in first 20 years

Over 370 years of combined amusement industry experience!
Almost 300 print issues! Exceeding 2,300 email newsletters!
14 print issues per year! Over 8,000 social media followers!

AMUSEMENT TODAY

GOLDEN TICKET BONUS ISSUE

Vol. 14, Issue 6.2

Vol. 21 • Issue 1

April 2017

Amusement TODAY

1997-2017 ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

INSIDE:
Amusement Today celebrates 20th anniversary
PAGES 30 & 31

Old Town enhances its skyline with Fabbri wheel

Lamberink's portable Sky Eye Wheel becomes a new star at Florida State Fair

Experienced Staff

- Gary Slade**
Publisher
★39 years in the Amusement Industry
- Dan Feicht**
Photographer
★39 years in the Amusement Industry
- B. Derek Shaw**
Editorial
★36 years in the Amusement Industry
- Dean Lamanna**
Editorial, Social Media
★32 years in the Amusement Industry
- John W.C. Robinson**
Print & Online Production
★23 years in the Amusement Industry
- Tim Baldwin**
Editorial
★19 years in the Amusement Industry
- Jeffrey Seifert**
Editorial
★10 years in the Amusement Industry
- Richard Munch**
Monthly Columnist
★39 years in the Amusement Industry
- Sue Nichols**
Advertising
★36 years in the Amusement Industry
- Pam Sherborne**
Editorial
★32 years in the Amusement Industry
- Janice Withrow**
Monthly Columnist
★30 years in the Amusement Industry
- Bubba Flint**
Cartoonist
★20 years in the Amusement Industry
- Sammy Piccola**
Office Manager, Accounting
★18 years in the Amusement Industry

Amusement TODAY Your Amusement Industry NEWS Leader

Thank you as we celebrate our 20th anniversary!

Amusement ride safety: Riders and Supervising Companion

AT: Harold Hudson
Special to Amusement Today

Try as we might, when it comes to safety, we can't do everything by ourselves... We need the active cooperation of guests and riders to make the park and rides as safe as possible.



Hudson

FINAL PART IN A SERIES: RIDERS

the risks are. We don't know what could happen.

Let's discuss some of the things we should do on our side of the safety partnership and some of the things the rider should do on their side of the safety partnership.

Rider instructions

In each of the areas discussed in previous installments, we as operators had control or major influence over the factors affecting ride safety. Those areas were:

- Design/Engineering
- Fabrication
- Installation
- Operations
- Maintenance
- Riders

Now, the last area that affects ride safety is Riders and in this area, working in partnership with the guests or riders is essential.

We do have a moral obligation to address ride safety in all areas, with all we have at our disposal and to the best of our ability. This includes safety issues where riders are our partners. We need to do our best to solicit the riders help in keeping the rides and park safe for them and our employees.

Why a partnership?

Why? Because we work hard, train hard and plan hard to make the ride as safe as we can; but in the end, we put the guest/rider on board and hope that they obey the rules and don't do anything foolish. Obeying the rules and using common sense is their side of the partnership. We educate, instruct and plead with the rider, but if they do not hold up their side of the partnership, safety can be compromised. It's not that when the rider is not a good partner safety risk sky rockets, but it's that all of a sudden, we don't know what all

Recorded spiels are a good way to present a consistent message in queue lines and loading areas. The trick is to find a way to make them not so monotonous. Some suggestions to do this include: create several different messages all conveying the same critical information, use different voices, e.g., male/female and different people. Anything to eliminate the continuous drone that everyone tunes out.

Signage

Every park typically does a good job of ride signage, advising riders and supervising companions of requirements to ride and the necessary conduct while on the ride. Supervising Companion may be a new term for some, but it is the term that should be used for anyone accompanying another person on a ride. Specifically, ASTM standards define this person as:

ASTM F2291, Par. 3.1.26 supervising companion — a person on



Amusement ride device signage can come in all sizes and formats, from this dual language sign (above) for the Future Flight Journey to Mars at the recently held Super Bowl Fan Experience in Houston to this sign on the Six Flags Over Texas Shock Wave featuring six graphic icons to match the rider restriction language. COURTESY ARM; AT/TIM BALDWIN

a ride or device who is qualified by a reasonable age or other means to understand rider instructions, assist a patron or child under 48 in. in height in complying with rider instructions, and who meets all other criteria for riding.

In the non-mandatory Appendixes, ASTM further states:

ASTM F2291, Par. 6.4.2.2 When a supervising companion is employed to accompany children under 48 in. in height on rides that accommodate both children under 48 in. in height and adults, the supervising companion must either:

1: Comply with a service proven practice of the operating facility which relates to qualifying supervising companions, or

2: Meet all the criteria for riding alone and be approximately 14 years of age or older. (See X6.2). A ride analysis may lead to alternate requirements.

It is strongly suggested that all facilities start using the "Supervising Companion" term.

Regarding signage, the two biggest issues commonly seen are too many signs and what I call "alphabet soup signs." Too many

signs create signage overload and the tendency becomes to not even look at the sign.

Alphabet soup signs are signs that have so much information on them that it is foreboding and confusing. As a consequence, many people don't read the sign at all. ASTM standards require that operators provide rider eligibility requirements and instructions that are readable. Specifically, ASTM states:

ASTM F770, Par. 4.6 Signs presented by the owner/operator for instruction to the public shall be prominently placed, bold in design, with wording short, simple, and to the point.

Let's say that again... signage should be simple, clear and to the point. I hate to reference a specific park but go look at one of the "gold standard" parks. They typically have clear and simple signs.... and not too many of them!

ASTM also makes it incumbent on the manufacturer to determine and recommend information that should appear on signs:

ASTM F2291, Par. 6.7 Signage — The manufacturer shall determine and may make recommendations for



appropriate advisory signs or warning signs based on the attributes of the amusement ride or device. These recommendations should be clear and concise, but are not intended to be the final wording of the signs that may be generated and displayed at the ride or device.

This allows the manufacturer to specify important rider eligibility information or information that the rider should be aware of but leaves it up to the operator to design the sign and make a final decision as to how the manufacturers recommendations are incorporated.

Enforce the rules

Whatever the rules or restrictions are, enforcement is vitally important. Enforcement of park and ride rules should be thorough and complete because it does little good to instruct guest/riders and not enforce those instructions. Human beings being what they are, they quickly learn what they can and cannot get away with. It's like the old saying "give them an inch and they take a mile." Enforce the rules and don't let the guest/riders run the park. That is our job.

Enforcing the rules should be done in a guest friendly manner,

► See RIDERS, page 33



Ride vehicle restraints come in many forms but generally do not pose any problems for the ride attendant's ability to check the device to make sure it is properly secured. From left, the new between the leg t-bar on the Fury 325 at Carowinds provides a more open feel for the riders while this u-shaped bar that wraps around the legs, provides Snow White roller coaster riders at Disney a more traditional feel. Far right, new safety system technology is now alerting control panel operators and ride attendants what gondolas are secure on this new Ferris wheel at Old Town in Florida. AT/GARY SLADE

SAFETY, MAINTENANCE & EDUCATION**►RIDERS****Continued from page 32**

almost a humble manner ... until it is necessary to get tough. But please don't start out tough. Work your way from humble to forceful to tough to demanding. Hopefully operators don't reach demanding. Guest in every park have to know who is in charge and it is best to establish that understanding early on.

The legal issues

In every case, wording and placement of signs is critical to communicating to your partner, the rider. The quality and placement of advisory and warning signs are also critical from a legal standpoint. In many lawsuits, the issue boils down to the accusation that you failed to "sufficiently warn" the guest? I recommend you work with:

- ANSI Z535 safety alerting standards

- ADA signage requirements
- Your attorney

The first two will help operators and sign makers better address font type and sizes. The third, your attorney, should approve all signage so that he or she can defend you, if needed.

Not a partner?

Sometimes a guest or rider may knowingly or unknowingly not be your partner in safety. We should always keep in mind that human beings are human beings. There are two types of human beings you should look for — those who have never been to a park or ridden a ride and those who have been there many times. The latter is your best customer but may also be your biggest problem.

The point is that some guests are very familiar with your rides, and in some cases, they think it's okay to explore, see what happens if... In other words, there are riders that are bored with the ride because they have been on it a hundred times and they may look for added thrill by doing something different, something foolish. Operators should be on the lookout for these people and, if caught, although they are your best customers, they should be banished from the park. Seriously, this is "enforcing the rules." This is refusing to have someone in your park that is not a partner in safety.

There are many things you need to do to make sure your partner, the rider, is working as a partner. Just to list a few:

- Clear signage
- Clear verbal instructions
- Critical instructions written and available in most common languages
- Consistent enforcement of rules

**Restraints systems
need partners**

Not listed above but really

a "partnership effort" is restraint systems. This is the area where many riders cease to be a partner.

A restraint may be well designed, but it won't function as designed if it's not properly closed and locked. An operator's side of the partnership is to make sure the restraint is properly used. The rider's side of the partnership is to not try to defeat the system. If they attempt to get out of the restraint, the partnership has gone awry. Yes, even the best restraints may be defeated by the right rider,

if he or she tires hard enough. Today's ride manufacturers do an amazing job of designing restraints and rider containment features that keep the rider safe. If riders simply listen to instructions, respect the design and use common sense they will be safe, they will be your partner. On the other hand, a double-jointed rider may be able to squirm out of any restraint system ever built but they will likely have to work at it. In this case, the rider is not your partner.

Our job is to make sure the rider is educated, the restraint is operating properly, closed properly, locked properly and physically checked by the operator. After that our job is to watch for anyone who might be riding improperly and be trying to defeat the restraint. Anyone who deliberately disobeys instructions or attempts to defeat a safety system is not your partner.

The bottom line

The bottom line is the same

as the top line, "we can't do everything by ourselves..."

When it comes to the rider, we need a partnership. A partnership with the rider. Our side of the partnership is providing clear instructions, monitoring guests' and riders' actions closely and enforcing the rules. The rider's side of the partnership is absorbing the instructions, obeying the rules and using common sense.

Let's strive for an actual partnership, promote safety, look for safe behavior and be safe.



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SAFETY, MAINTENANCE & EDUCATION

Safety a major focal point with attendees during Gibtown show

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

GIBSONTOWN, Fla. — Tom Drake and Dale McIntosh, owners, Computerized Accounting Technics (C.A.T.), Orlando, Fla., have provided carnival owners and concessionaires with accounting software since 1985.

And, they have exhibited at the International Independent Showmen's Foundation (IISF) Trade Show and Extravaganza every year since then.

"We have over 100 clients," Drake said. "Most of the people that come by our booth already are our customers, but we are here every year."

C.A.T.'s software programs offer the outdoor amusement industry an array of features that not only records, accounts and maintains inventory, payroll and ticket sales, it also includes a maintenance manager that records and tracks repairs and maintenance for rides, trucks and other equipment. It creates safety inspection procedures and work sheets and has maintenance scheduling.

So, as AT began speaking with companies that exhibited safety products at this year's event, held Feb. 7-11, C.A.T. couldn't be overlooked.

Drake and McIntosh started in the amusement industry with a photo trailer and traveled on Johnny's United Shows, a carnival now out of business. The two saw a need and saw computers could as-



Lars Koch, Eworks Pro, saw a lot of both former and current clients at the IISF show this year. He said he was glad to put some faces to the names. AT/PAM SHERBORNE

sist company owners in keeping track of all of its business, from what is making money to what isn't, to maintaining inventory files.

They write the programs and customize them to fit needs.

Safe-Strap Company, Fort Myers, Fla., is another company that filled a need in the safety of the outdoor amusement industry. In 1983, Safe-Strap introduced its first safety strap assembly for rides, replacing ropes, chains and cleats. Using webbing-based restraints as well as new technology, the company continues to re-define the ride seat belt.

Along with the strap itself, the company also offers buckles, end plates, harnesses and attachers.

Action Lighting, Bozeman, Mont., also exhibited at the IISF show this year. One of the company's newest products is rope neon lighting, but that is just one of the company's huge inven-

tory and type of lighting. The company's manufacturing division continues to offer "tailor made" chase or steady lighted channel systems for building exteriors/interiors, window outlines, marquees, and amusement rides.

Eworks Pro, based in Winter Park, Fla., has provided LEDs and LED packages since 2000. Lars Koch, who attended the 2017 IISF event, said the project that really "put the company on the map" was the lighting package on the **Vekoma** wheel at **Morey's Pier**, Wildwood, N.J. 11 years ago.

"Will (Morey) wanted something new and I suggested the LED lights," Koch said. "But, then he asked for a package. So, after a lot of research, I was able to develop a package with the controller and software. Will just wanted all or nothing. Once we learned to do that, that was a huge boost to our business."

Koch said the company is the primary LED vendor for **Chance Rides**.

Fred's Tents & Canopies, Waterford, N.Y., exhibited six tents outside and had an inside booth as well this year at the IISF show. At the inside booth, the company exhibited and sold table and slide bags. The tents shown outside ranged in size from 10 by 10 feet to 10 by 20 feet. Tents have become a common site as facility security checkpoints.

The company's **Heather Frank** said Fred's Tents & Canopies has exhibited at IISF's trade show for 27 years. "This year has been a good show," said Frank, during the event. "We have taken a lot of



Harold Gillam, owner, Tig Artistics, stands in front of some of his newest products, entrance canopies, at the IISF show in February. AT/PAM SHERBORNE

orders."

Tig Artistics LLC, Old Monroe, Mo., a company known for its fencing used around rides, etc., on the midway, exhibited one of its new products at this year's IISF event, said **Michelle Baker**. That was a canopy-sized entry unit, which comes in two different sizes.

Tig Artistics also manufactures portable lemonade and concession stands.

Ridebooks was at the IISF Trade Show discussing that company's method of enabling clients to be able to search its data base for ride manuals, bulletins, government notices and more. A paid app, Ridebooks has information on over 400 manufacturers, over 1,500 rides and

over 5,000 bulletins, as well as other ride documentation.

Pete Downs, Waterloo Tent & Tarp, Waterloo, Iowa, said his company has been very busy. In fact, they have been so busy, they have to plan customer ship dates much further out than they expect or even prefer for a customer-oriented business.

"We have been shipping 70 to 100 units a month," Downs said, adding unless they receive very large orders and it could be more than that.

Waterloo's new **Snack Shack** is a product that can be used as a facade for a trailer or can be used on its own. But, the idea is to increase

► See GIBTOWN, page 35



Tom Drake, left, and Dale McIntosh, founded Computerized Accounting Technics in 1985 to offer a computer software for carnival owners and concessionaires in the outdoor amusement industry. AT/PAM SHERBORNE



Natalie Ott was on-hand for Ridebooks at the IISF trade show this year. The company provides an app to clients enabling them to search the company's data base for ride manuals, bulletins, government notices and more. The data base contains over 400 manufacturers, over 1,500 rides and over 5,000 bulletins, as well as other ride documentation.

AT/GARY SLADE

SAFETY, MAINTENANCE & EDUCATION

►GIBTOWN

Continued from page 34

food output for vendors. It is created to have one customer line for ordering and paying, and then another line for food pickup.

Dale Hershberger, Audio Innovators, Riverview, Fla., exhibited his products this year that include audio messaging units to promote safety and revenue generating. A sampling of his products include: **Motorola** and **Kenwood** two-way radios; audio accessory for all brands of two-way radios; and message repeaters used for amusement ride safety, public transportation go-kart tracks, water parks, and more.

James Judkins, JKL Workforce, Harlingen, Texas, was extremely busy at this year's IISF show. He conducted sessions regarding the H-2B seasonal foreign labor visa program, which ran for hours. He has worked in this area for many years, processing these visas for the complex mobile or itinerant seasonal businesses, as well



From left, Cody Downs, Pete Downs, Lisa Newman, and Eric Hamann, **Waterloo Tent and Tarp**, stand in front of one of the company's newest products, the Shack Stand, at the IISF event. AT/PAM SHERBORNE

as more traditional seasonal businesses in hospitality, landscaping and pet boarding and grooming.

This is a difficult year for his business as well as the businesses he serves be-

cause of delays caused by the changeover in the U.S. administrations. But, the actual process is still the same. He is able to navigate employers through the USDOL ETA, USCIS, DOS and DHS processes.



Audio Innovators' Dale Hershberger takes a break during the IISF Trade Show and Extravaganza. AT/PAM SHERBORNE

James Judkins, JKL Workforce agency, was so busy this year at the IISF show discussing the H-2B seasonal foreign labor program. He not only led formal sessions at the event, but spent much time fielding emails and phone calls in his booth.

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SAFETY, MAINTENANCE & EDUCATION

Pa. Ride Safety Seminar trained over 335 inspectors

Training is offered twice a year

AT: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

HARRISBURG, Pa. — The **Pennsylvania Ride Safety Seminar** trained and tested amusement ride inspectors in Pennsylvania and New Jersey February 28 – March 2. Conducted by the **Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Bureau of Ride and Measurements Standards**, the training is for Class 1 and 2 Ride Inspectors and General Qualified Inspectors and Specialized Inspectors and those needing recertification. Course areas included: Inflatable Rides, Extreme Sports, Water Attractions, Haunted Attractions, Roller Coasters, Go Karts, Bumper Boats and more.



Al Slaggert with **Mobile Midway Safety Institute** (MMSI) was asked the difference between the classes in the spring versus fall. "It's the audience. In the fall we don't have the haunted house people we get now. This training session isn't just for amusement rides. This is for amusement venues, water parks, haunted houses, ziplines (and) family fun centers."

Seminar participants choose the specialty courses



Four of the 80 instructors of the spring ride safety seminar include: seated, Charma Wilderson, general manager of **Safe Strap Company, LLC**; Standing (l to r): Lenny Adams, principal, **Adams Amusements**; Al (A.J.) Slaggert, father of seminar training coordinator Phil and Steve Konig, CEO of **Assembly Specialty Products, Inc.** AT/B. DEREK SHAW

that are the most beneficial for their career path, job description, abilities, and employer benefit. This spring, there were a total of 197 course options, with some new ones added as well. "Absolutely, we try to be as current as we can," said Slaggert. Sometimes a popular class gets modified such as the active shooter one presented by the Pennsylvania State Police. "While it is not new, there are some twists that were brought into that presentation. This is an evolving thing." The training and testing is independent of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture; however it is sanctioned by them. This is the 12th year and 24th time Slaggert's son, **Phil Slaggert** has overseen the training in Pennsylvania. Phil

is the owner of **Mobile Midway Safety Institute**.

The instructors for the three day training are all volunteers with a wide spectrum of specialties that impact the amusement industry, from all around the country. "We have over 80 instructors for this course. Remember every hour, there are eight different classes being taught at this seminar. Every year we try to bring in new people," explained Slaggert.

Courses are broad-based while some classes target very specific subjects. Instructors with a high quality of knowledge and professionalism are obtained so good interaction with participants can occur. The idea is for attendees to leave with a good fundamen-



Above, Mike Mingle of **NEO Amusements, Inc.** Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, instructs a class on general repair of inflatables. Below, some of the students gather around the large-scale chart of the three-day ride safety seminar. AT/B. DEREK SHAW



tal understanding of their specific operations. This all contributes to learning and improving as an industry.

Slaggert went on to acknowledge a few outside influences creating training challenges. "Everything in the safety field right now is in a state of flux. Weather is a big phenomenon. Three years ago we barely touched on weather, but we've had tents come down. We have had inflatables blow away. We've had to address these issues. We have to know how to predict weather. We are doing a lot of weather programs," said Slaggert. "Also, we have to be concerned with traffic controls suddenly. A year ago we didn't have to worry about vehicles. We have to have to worry about putting up some type of a barrier to protect our clients. We have to be alert to the fact that there is always something new coming along."

The Pennsylvania certifi-

cation is recognized in many states across the country including New Jersey. Those inspectors are training for that states' **Recognized Certified Maintenance Technician**, (RCMT). There are many inspectors who don't work in Pennsylvania; however they register in Pennsylvania to have the certification on their ride from inspectors trained in the Keystone State.

The **Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture** has inspected and registered amusement rides under the **Amusement Ride Safety Act** since 1984 and regularly participates in education and outreach seminars that include classes and hands-on demonstrations. The next **Pennsylvania Ride Safety Seminar** is scheduled for November 7-9 at the **Red Lion Hotel and Conference Center**, Harrisburg, just off I-283 on Lindle Road.

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MUSEUM PROGRESS REPORT

This space is provided courtesy of Amusement Today, a corporate partner of the National Roller Coaster Museum & Archives.

Tom Major donates Six Flags memorabilia to museum archives

Tom Major, a 33-year career veteran with Six Flags Corporation recently donated some of his Six Flags memorabilia to the National Roller Coaster Museum for archiving. A small sampling shown here are clockwise from top: wall map of Six Flags Over Mid-America from park opening in 1971; Tom Major (left) and good friend Harold Hudson; on a Six Flags business trip in Germany, l to r, are: Tom Major, Reinhold Spieldiener, Larry Cochran and Peter Schnabel and this photo of the coaster legend Anton Schwarzkopf taken from the same early 1980s trip.

COURTESY TOM MAJOR;
AT/GARY SLADE



THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

Presented by the National Rollercoaster Museum

AT: Richard Munch

APRIL

•**1908:** To mark the 10th anniversary of **Olentangy Park**, in Columbus, Ohio, management offered the state's first looping coaster, the Loop the Loop, opening on April 26. Designed and built by inventor **Lina Beecher** (1841-1915), the single-track, single-car device enjoyed great success its first season. While most riders were considered daredevils, many only tried the experience once. After several accidents, where riders were hurt, the ride began to lose popularity. Its reputation eventually reduced ridership, and sometime after the 1912 season it was removed. While critics considered it a failure, it was a great improvement over earlier looping devices.

•**1917:** As reported in *Billboard* magazine, the work on **Lake View Park**, Omaha, Nebraska's newest amusement park, was being rushed to completion for opening in early June. The report, released on April 14, said that the **Munchhoff Brothers**, former operators of nearby **Krug Park**, had purchased the land. In regard to its most essential ride: "One of the chief features now under construction is the large Jack Rabbit underfriction coaster, which is one of the very latest rides being built. This coaster is said to be a great deal more exciting and thrilling than the old style, due to the fact that the cars are run in trains with three cars each." **John Miller**, who was also behind the mile long Giant Coaster at **Paragon Park** in Massachusetts, designed the new ride while employed by the **Philadelphia Toboggan Company**. Miller also built an Old Mill in time for the opening.

•**1931:** A new roller coaster at **Mid City Park**, Menands (Albany), N.Y. opened on April 26. The new Wildcat contained an assortment of banked and swoop curves, and at 85 feet high was one of the largest coasters built during the Depression. It replaced **John Miller's** earlier Deep Dip design from 1920 (the site of this coaster became an artificial lake). Designed by **Herbert Schneck** of the Philadelphia Toboggan Company, the ride operated until 1934, when it closed as a result of the lack of visitors mostly attributed to difficult financial times. Ironically it would stand for nearly a quarter century before being demolished in 1959 for a shopping center.



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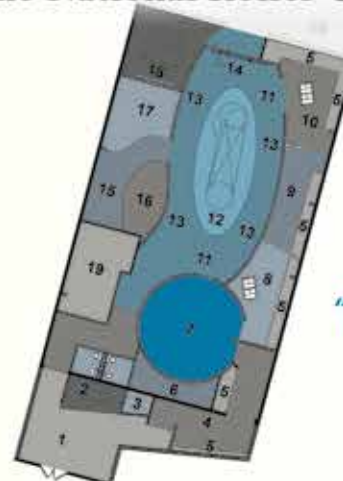
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Mark and to preserve our history
for generations to come."

-Gary Slade, Amusement Today

'Children's Fairyland' chronicles 10-acre theme park in Oakland, Calif.

OAKLAND, Calif. — Although not as prevalent as they used to be, small theme parks dedicated to children dot the American landscape. Unlike the big themers with high profile rides, these smaller parks may not be known outside the region they serve.

One such park is **Children's Fairyland** in Oakland, Calif. The subject of a new addition to the *Images of America Collection: Children's Fairyland*.

Conceived by a group of local businessmen who dreamed of a storybook park where children could create, imagine, play and learn, the park opened in 1950.

The book's introduction explains how **Arthur** and **Alma Navlet**, owners of Oakland's largest nursery, visited **Belle Island Zoo** in Detroit, Mich. The children's play area featured fanciful storybook settings that inspired the Navlets to create something similar for the children of Oakwood.

Arthur Navlet presented his idea to the Lake Merritt Breakfast Club, a social organi-

BOOK REVIEW

zation of which he was a member. At that time, the club was for local businessmen (women were later admitted) dedicated to creating a better Oakland. Members met once a week at 7 a.m. for breakfast.

The breakfast club embraced the idea and persuaded the Oakland Parks Commission to get involved.

Chapter one starts with the selection of a 10-acre site within Lakeside Park, along the shores of Lake Merritt. The chapter shows the principals involved with getting the park from drawing board to reality, along with construction and opening day photos.

The second chapter features a selection of photos from the archives showing the original park along with photos of the park today to show how many of the original attractions remain unchanged.

Chapter three includes photos of the park's flora and fauna. Since its inception, the park has included live animals,

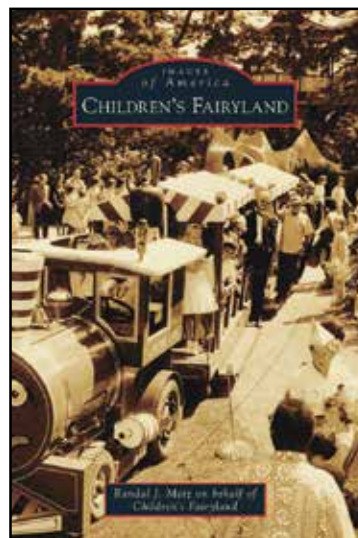
much like the Belle Island Zoo that served as its inspiration. Children have an opportunity to interact with different animals including horses, donkeys, goats, chickens and sheep.

As nursery owners, the Navlets included beautiful gardens in the original park and that tradition continues today with a number of rare plants and an on-site greenhouse.

After the opening of the park, it continued to grow with new attractions as illustrated by the photos in chapter four.

Live entertainment has been an important part of the park offerings including the Storybook Puppet Theater, which claims to be the longest-running puppet theater in the United States. Chapter five shows the various forms of entertainment offered by the park which include clown acts, street performers, and children's theater.

Chapter six deals with the park coming of age, including the addition of modest rides such as a boat ride, small Fer-



ris wheel, two carousels and trolley. The park deliberately avoids thrill rides of any kind, relying instead on the various sets, animal attractions and gardens to entertain.

The seventh chapter includes photos of the events that take place throughout the year. Fairyland has special celebrations for Mothers' Day, Fathers' Day, Chinese New Year, Public Safety Day, May Day and Cinco de Mayo, and summertime "overnighters" allowing guests to set up tents inside the park

to spend an enchanted evening.

The final chapter looks to the future of the park. After more than 60 year of service, some of the original attractions need to be rebuilt or upgraded. Fortunately the park was granted nonprofit 501 (c) (3) status in the 1990s, and the local community continues to support the park with fundraisers and memberships.

Children's Fairyland was written by **Randal J. Metz** who has worked at the park for 47 years. Metz currently serves as director of the park's Open Storybook Puppet Theater. He also runs the Puppet Company in the San Francisco Bay area and performs puppetry throughout the state. He has published three books on Fairyland and puppetry.

Children's Fairyland is published by the Arcadia Press and is available at local and online book retailers or directly from Arcadia at arcadiapublishing.com. The book retails for \$21.99

—Jeffrey L. Seifert



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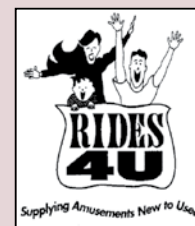
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