

Amusement TODAY

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YEARS OF NEWS

INSIDE:

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ZOO CELEBRATES
100 YEARS
PAGE 20

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NEWSPAPER

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NEWSTALK

EDITORIAL: Gary Slade, gslade@amusementtoday.com

Christmas wishes



Slade

As we see our industry parks exhale from another very successful Halloween season, it's nice to be able to turn our attention toward the less frightful Christmas season.

While the holiday season event may not draw the large crowd buzz that Halloween sees, it does offer a more family-friendly appealing product for those wanting an option opposite that of Halloween.

And for those select few parks that are able to stage and present a holiday promotion, given the right mix of weather, the holiday season can indeed have a positive impact at the gate and on year-end financials.

AT's annual Christmas coverage can be found on pages 7 - 9 for international parks and pages 16 - 18 for U.S. facilities.

The popularity of the holiday season continues to grow as Cedar Fair has added WinterFest at its California's Great America property while Six Flags added Holiday in the Park at Six Flags St. Louis and Six Flags America. Although not new, it's nice to see FECs like Adventure Golf & Raceway in Westminster, Colo., decked out with 100,000 lights for holiday-themed miniature golf.

We hope all of our park and supplier friends enjoyed a successful 2016, and we wish each and everyone safe travels this holiday season as you visit family and friends.

From the entire staff at *Amusement Today*:

*Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year!*

FLINT'S VIEW: Bubba Flint



INDUSTRY OPINION: Andrew Mellor, amellor@amusementtoday.com

Goodbye to the original water park

The annual visit to Orlando this year for the IAAPA Attractions Expo was tinged with sadness for many, because just up International Drive from the show venue, the countdown had begun to the closure of what is widely considered the original water park: Wet 'n Wild Orlando.

When the "Father of the Water Park" George Millay, opened the park in 1977, he would have known that others would no doubt eventually follow in his footsteps and create other water parks in the U.S. and elsewhere. However, it would have been hard to imagine at that time what a hugely successful and popular sector of the industry his creation established.

Today, water parks are a major part of the attractions industry. The sector has developed into one that incorporates a wide range of high-quality indoor and outdoor venues along with a plethora of manufacturers and suppliers who specialize in providing everything such parks require for successful operations.

Since its early days, the water park industry has spread its wings around the globe. In comparison to the early attractions offered by



Mellor

such venues, we now have rides and attractions in water parks that offer mind-blowing thrills and experiences that, back in the day, would have been unthinkable. I mean, waterslides that take guests uphill and others with complicated interactive features, lighting, music and more.

Technological advances and other developments have helped the industry progress spectacularly, as they have theme and amusement parks, FECs and other venues. With it being almost 40 years on from when Wet 'n Wild Orlando first opened, it will be fascinating to see what the next 40 years bring to the sector.

Nobody likes to see a place that has entertained millions of visitors close. But in this case, there's genuine reason behind the closure as owner Universal Studios is creating a brand-new water park, Volcano Bay, on the prime site. This heavily themed water park is set to open in 2017. In the meantime, it's goodbye to the original water park on Dec. 31. Thanks for the memories.

Amusement TODAY
Your Amusement Industry NEWS Leader

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Address: P.O. Box 5427, Arlington, Texas 76005-5427, USA
Deliveries: 2012 E. Randol Mill Road #203, Arlington, Texas 76011, USA
Phone: (817) 460-7220
Fax: (817) 265-NEWS (6397)
Web Sites: www.AmusementToday.com, www.GoldenTicketAwards.com

Founder, Publisher and Editor
Gary Slade • (817) 460-7220 x3
gslade@amusementtoday.com

Accounting & Classified
Sammy Piccola • (817) 460-7220 x1
spiccola@amusementtoday.com

Advertising
Sue Nichols • (615) 477-5432
snichols@amusementtoday.com

Special Projects & Editorial
Jeffrey Seifert • (817) 460-7220 x2
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

Social Media & Editorial
Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

Editorial
Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

B. Derek Shaw • (717) 650-8330
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

Pam Sherborne • (615) 308-3310
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

Monthly Contributors
Dan Feicht, Bubba Flint, Harold Hudson,
Andrew Mellor, Richard Munch,
Janice Witherow

Print Issue & Extra Extra Desktop Edition Production
John Robinson • (513) 256-1441
AT@whrobinsoninc.com

Website Maintenance
Stacey Childress
stacey@bakersfielddigital.com

Association Memberships
AIMS International, ASTM, IAAPA, IISF, IRT/
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2 MINUTE DRILL



COMPILED: Janice Witherow

Mary Chris Smith, Allied Speciality Insurance, Inc.

Mary Chris Smith was exposed to the amusement and outdoor entertainment industry at a young age while working with her family's traveling carnival, **Luehrs Ideal Rides**. Mary Chris was introduced to the insurance side of the business in 1992 when her career path took her to **Allied Speciality Insurance** (Treasure Island, Fla.), where she has cultivated a brand that has mastered the art of insur-

ing the amusement and outdoor entertainment industry. She has held several leadership positions in the industry and was recently inducted as an officer for the **Showmen's League of America**.

Title.

President.

Number of years in the industry...

My whole life.

Best thing about the industry...

Hands down, the fabulous people! They are the best.

Favorite amusement park ride/ attraction...

The carousel.

If I wasn't working in the amusement industry, I would be...

Living in Italy for a year writing a book.

Biggest challenge facing our industry...

Safety is always foremost on owners', managers' and supervisors' minds. It trickles all the way down. Another challenge is the H2B work program.

The thing I like best about amusement/ water park season is...

Visiting families and friends that operate the parks.

It's December! My favorite holiday movie is...

White Christmas.

On December 25th, you will find me...

In my home surrounded by my family.

When it comes to holiday shopping, do you hit the mall or shop online?

I am a huge online shopper!



Mary Chris Smith with sons Danny (left) and Conner.
COURTESY ALLIED

Favorite meal to cook...

Thanksgiving dinner.

The last thing I do before going to sleep at night is...

Watch the news.

My favorite retreat is...

My home in Colorado.

On television do you prefer comedies or dramas?

Comedies.

The last item I purchased over \$100 was...

A new pair of cowboy boots.

Least favorite month of the year...

January.

My wildest dream is...

Never thought about it!

Growing up, my mentor was...

My father.

Favorite breakfast food...

Bacon!

People are always surprised when I...

Tell them my life story.

At a party, I can't wait until...

I love everything about a good party!

When I say politics, you say...

No comment.

My very first concert ever was...

Bob Seger.

If I could appear on any TV show, it would be...

The Big Bang Theory.

The last time I rode a bike was...

When my late husband David Smith was alive, so at least 14 years.

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

Presented by the National Rollercoaster Museum

COMPILED: Richard Munch

DECEMBER



•**1905:** It was reported in the Dec. 2 issue of *Billboard* Magazine, that the demolition of the **1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition** in St. Louis, Missouri, would total about \$50 million. Also known as the **St. Louis World's Fair**, the 1,200-acre park featured the participation of 62 nations and 43 U.S. states, as well as the Federal government. Comprising more than 1,500 individual buildings connected by 75 miles of roads and walkways, it required three years to construct utilizing nearly the entire population of St. Louis. Originally scheduled for opening in 1903, the scale of the plan was so immense that the debut had to be delayed by a year. And even though the fair was a great success and was profitable, the actual demolition would be a huge expense for the state economy.

•**1913:** An Atlanta, Georgia, councilman offered a resolution to the city council on December 15 in reference to the purchase of the old **Ponce de Leon Amusement Park**, to be turned into a city park. Built on the site of the Ponce de Leon Springs, the park originated in 1872, but developed into a park for children in the 1890s with the addition of small attractions, a dance hall and theater, and picnic grounds. In 1903, construction of the full-fledged amusement park began, serviced by an electric streetcar line. It would become the "Coney Island of Atlanta," with attractions such as a dancing pavilion and skating rink, a boat canal, toboggan slide (Figure Eight), an aerial tramway, two moving pictures galleries, a circle swing and even alligator wrestling. Apparently the city did not take action on the public park, because in 1924, the land was sold to Sears, Roebuck & Co. for their southeastern headquarters, which opened in 1926.

•**1927:** In early December, the final numbers would come in for the property values for **Paradise Park**, Rye, New York, which had been purchased by Westchester County for a new county park on Long Island Sound. **Fred Ponty**, the park's owner, would get \$536,000 for the land and \$137,000 for all his devices, including \$20,000 for the Old Mill. The park's popular Blue Streak, an out-and-back wooden coaster, designed by **Miller & Baker**, appraised at \$62,110 for **Harry C. Baker**, who had built the ride in 1923 as a concession. The ride, which had already been removed after a fire destroyed much of the front of the park, was to be replaced by a new ride, **Fred Church's** curved-packed Airplane coaster. Even before Baker had received a check, the Airplane was substantially complete and ready for its debut in May 1928, at the new park called **Playland**. The full purchase price for Paradise Park would total \$725,000 (about \$10 million today) for the entire property.

•**1963:** The amusement park architect and designer **John C. Ray** passed away on Dec. 29 in LaJolla, Calif., from a heart attack. Born in Worksop, Great Britain, in 1911, his family immigrated to Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, in 1924, where Ray was eventually hired by **Patty Conklin** as a sign painter. By the mid-1940s he would design fronts for many of the arcades and rides for the **Canadian National Exposition**, utilizing geometric forms, and warm and vivid colors – directing the eye to the entrance. Working out of his studio home in Toronto, Ray moved his office to LaJolla in 1953. Working as a consultant to many parks, his most famous projects were for the Toronto **CNE, Palisades Amusement Park** in N.J., and the **1962 World's Fair** midway in Seattle, Wash. He also purchased **Mission Beach Park** outside San Diego, Calif. in 1954 with **James Mitchell** and change the name to **Belmont Park**, as a tribute to the park in Montreal. He was 52 years old at the time of his death and is a member of the **IAAPA Hall of Fame**.

•**1977:** A Dec. 9 fire on the Tornado roller coaster on the Bowery, in **Coney Island** (Brooklyn), destroyed a small section of the ride, including food stands. The owners, who had already rebuilt a large portion of the ride in the fall, intended to rebuild the damaged track areas and reopen in 1978. A second fire of suspicious nature, just four days later, would damage a more significant area of the ride, destroying the maintenance shop, station structure, several hills and the Haunted House attraction. The damage was so severe that water completely filled the tunnel leading to the chain lift. The coaster cars were also damaged and vandalized after the fire. Considered arson, the beloved 1926 **Prior and Church** design would not be rebuilt and instead was leveled by April 1978. With the ride now history, Coney Island would limp along into the next century with only the Cyclone and Thunderbolt coasters operating at either end of the now decimated Bowery.

Amusement TODAY

ANNUAL HOLIDAY COOKING GUIDE



Anja D'Hondt

Alterface/Flower & Feet

Beef Yoshi

Ingredients:

-Steak: more meat, the more people can eat!
-Operational: olive oil, rice and red Merlot wine
-Spices: sea salt, black pepper, fresh coriander, garlic, spring onions, cane sugar, soya sauce (quality)

Cut the meat in large pieces, marinate with olive oil, sea salt, black pepper, spring onions, and garlic. Take a large cooking pan, heat up some olive oil, chuck in the marinated meat and stir. When the meat is ready add the soya sauce and cane sugar, shortly cook, when finished add the fresh coriander. For a spicier dish: add a chopped chili pepper (remove seeds!). Serve with rice and a glass of red Merlot wine or ice-chilled blond beer – enjoy!

Tom Gass

Alterface

Little Deedee's
Chocolate Chip Cookies



Ingredients:

2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour	3/4 cup granulated sugar
1 tsp. Baking soda	3/4 cup dark brown sugar
1 tsp. salt	1 tsp. vanilla extract
1 cup all-vegetable shortening	2 large eggs
	2 cups semi-sweet choc. chips

Preheat oven to 350. Combine flour, baking soda + salt in a bowl and set aside. Mix shortening, granulated, brown sugar and vanilla extract in large bowl until creamy. Add 2 eggs. Gradually beat in flour mixture about 1/2 at a time. Stir in chocolate chips. Using large spoon place well rounded drops of dough onto uncreased cookie sheet. Bake 10-12 minutes or until golden brown. Cool for 2 minutes and move to wire cooling rack.

Matthew Kent

Oceaneering



Sausage Balls

Ingredients:

2 cups - Bisquick (prefer gluten free)
2 cups - Shredded cheese (prefer sharp cheddar)
1 - 1 lb. ground pork or turkey sausage

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
2. In a large bowl, combine sausage, biscuit baking mix and cheese. Form into walnut size balls and place on baking sheets.
3. Bake in preheated oven for 15-20 minutes, until golden brown and sausage is cooked through.

Francine Schnabel

Cavu Designwerks

Gorgonzola Stuffed Figs
with Balsamic Glaze

Ingredients:

8 fresh Black Mission figs,
quartered through stem end,
leaving the root intact
1/2 cup crumbled Gorgonzola
cheese (you can substitute
blue cheese)
8 slices of prosciutto
1 Tbs. olive oil
2 tsps. finely chopped fresh
rosemary leaves
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. black pepper
1 cup balsamic vinegar

Preheat oven to 450 degrees

Place the figs in a medium
size baking pan and stuff



each one with 1 TBSP
Gorgonzola. Wrap each with
a slice of prosciutto and
sprinkle with oil, rosemary,
salt and pepper. Bake until
the figs are gooey on the
inside and charred on the
outside, soft but still firm,
about 15 minutes. Place the
vinegar in a small saucepan
and bring to a boil over high
heat. Continue boiling until
it reduces to about 1/4 cup,
about 10 minutes. Pour hot
glaze over figs and serve
alone or on a bed of arugula.



Frankie Ironside

Sally Corp.

Dark Peppermint Bark

Ingredients:

12 oz. good-quality dark chocolate, chopped
into 1/2-inch pieces
1 1/2 tsps. peppermint extract
1 lb. good-quality white chocolate, chopped into 1/2-inch pieces
3 candy canes or 12 round hard peppermint candies, crushed

Line a 9-by-13-inch baking dish with aluminum foil. Heat 1 inch of water in a saucepan over low heat until steaming. Put about half of the dark chocolate in a heatproof bowl. Set the bowl over the saucepan of steaming water (do not let the bowl touch the water) and stir until the chocolate begins to melt. Remove the bowl from the saucepan. Gradually stir the remainder of the dark chocolate into the bowl. Return the bowl to the saucepan and stir. It may take up to 10 minutes to melt the chocolate. Mix 3/4 tsp. peppermint extract into the chocolate, then quickly pour into the prepared baking dish and spread in an even layer. Set aside at room temperature until almost set, about 10 minutes. Meanwhile, repeat the melting process for the white chocolate. Stir in the remaining 3/4 tsp. peppermint extract; pour over the dark chocolate and spread in an even layer. Sprinkle immediately with the crushed candy canes, pressing them into the white chocolate. Set aside at room temperature until firm, about 1 hour. Lift the bark out of the pan using the foil and break it into pieces. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 2 weeks.

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* "Restaurants & Institutions" magazine



Tim Chen Brogent

Lu Rou Fan (Taiwanese Braised Pork Rice Bowl)

Ingredients:

1 lb. skin-on pork belly, cut into ½" pieces
2 tps. oil
½ oz. rock sugar (or about 2½ tsp granulated sugar)
1 small onion or a couple of shallots, finely chopped
8 shiitake mushrooms, cut into ½" pieces
¼ cup shaoxing wine
3 Tbs. light soy sauce
2 Tbs. dark soy sauce
2 cups water
4 hardboiled eggs, peeled (optional)

For the spices (wrap everything in cheese cloth and tie with kitchen string):

3 star anise • 1 cinnamon stick • 6 cloves • 3 bay leaves
2 teaspoons Sichuan peppercorns • 2 pieces dried tangerine peel
2 slices fresh ginger

1. Bring a medium pot of water to a boil, and blanch the chopped pork belly for 2 minutes. Drain and set aside. 2. Heat the oil in a wok over low heat, and add the sugar. Cook the sugar until it starts to melt and then add the onions. Turn up the heat to medium high and stir-fry the onions for a minute. Add the mushrooms and stir-fry for another couple of minutes. 3. Add the blanched pork, shaoxing wine, light soy sauce, dark soy sauce and water. Stir and bring the mixture to a boil. Once boiling, add the spices (which should be tied in cheese cloth), along with the peeled hardboiled eggs and turn the heat to the lowest setting. Simmer for 1½ hours, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking. 4. At this point the meat should be fall-apart tender. To finish the dish, remove the spice packet and turn up the heat to medium high to thicken the sauce, stirring occasionally. This process should take about 5-minutes. The sauce should be thick enough to coat a spoon, but there should still be plenty of it left. Serve over steamed white rice.

Christian Martin Triotech

Tourtiere

Pastry: You can buy pastry already made or you can do it the traditional way, i.e. from scratch. In today's busy world, I buy it pre-made but I don't tell my grandmother. She would not have approved of using such a short cut!

Filling (ingredients):	1 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 lb. medium ground beef	1 tsp. salt
1 lb. lean ground pork	1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
1 lb. ground veal (or beef, game meat)	2 tsp. of dried parsley
2 large onions, chopped	1/2 tsp. nutmeg
1 cup diced tender celery stalks	3/4 cup large-flake rolled oats
1 1/2 cups water	1 large egg yolk
2 tps. dried savory	1 Tbs. milk

Filling: In a large heavy pot or Dutch oven combine beef, pork, veal (or game), onions, celery, parsley, water, savory, cinnamon, cloves, salt, pepper and nutmeg. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, constantly breaking up meat and stirring until meat has lost its pinkness and is crumbly, about 15 minutes. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, covered, stirring occasionally, until liquid has almost evaporated, about 1 hour. Remove from heat, stir in rolled oats. Let cool. (Make-ahead: Let cool for 30 minutes; refrigerate uncovered until cold. Cover and refrigerate for up to 1 day.)

Take your pastry (pre-bought or made from scratch). Line a deep 9-inch pie plate with pastry, leaving edge untrimmed. Fill with half of meat mixture. Moisten pastry on rim of pie plate with water. Add a second pastry over the filling. (Use water to moisten the pastry) Trim and flute edges to seal. Repeat for the second pie.

To cook: Cut steam vents in center of each pie. In a cup, mix egg yolk with milk and brush over surface of both pies. Bake on bottom oven rack at 400F until pastry is golden and filling piping hot (i.e. about 40 to 45 minutes). Let stand for about 5 minutes before serving.

Quebec Tourtiere is served with pickled beets and red and green ketchup.
Each pie makes 6 to 8 servings.



Mike Ross

Holovis



Thanksgiving Turkey and "Master" Stuffing

Ingredients:

-10 lb. turkey
-1 lb. veal, ground
-½ lb sweet Italian Sausage
-1/3 cup bacon, diced
-2 eggs, lightly beaten
-½ cup grated romano cheese
-1 cup boiled chestnuts, peeled and mashed
-Turkey giblets, boiled and chopped

-1 cup bread croutons
-¼ cup dry vermouth
-salt and pepper to taste
-Pinch of grated nutmeg
-4 Tbs. butter
-3 slices prosciutto (or more)
-½ tsp. rosemary
-1 pinch thyme
-1 tsp. juniper berries
-1 cup dry white wine
-1 Tbs. flour
-1 cup chicken broth

Strip the sausage meat out of the casing, break it up and blend with veal, bacon, eggs, croutons, cheese, chestnuts, giblets, vermouth, salt, pepper and nutmeg. Stuff the turkey with this mixture and close the opening. Heat butter in a large heavy pot or Dutch oven, put the turkey in the pot, put a light coat of butter on the turkey as this will help to brown it. Cover the turkey in Prosciutto, sprinkle the Rosemary, thyme, juniper berries and wine over the turkey. Cover and cook over gentle heat (around 350 f) for 4 hours until done. Baste quite frequently add more wine if the liquid starts to get thin. When done, remove turkey to a hot serving dish. Put remaining liquid and flour into a sauce pan and add enough chicken broth to make the gravy. Simmer until thickened.

*WISHING YOU
Happy HOLIDAYS
& AN EXCITING 2017!*

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INTERNATIONAL

► Cavu Designwerks announces new company, major product sale — See **BUSINESS** Page 30

European parks offer plenty of festive fun this Christmas

CHRISTMAS PREVIEW

AT: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

EUROPE — European parks continue to take advantage of opening over the Christmas and New Year period. Here, we take a look at just a few of those venues that are offering some festive fun in 2016.

Drayton Manor Theme Park, U.K.

The popular Magical Christmas event held annually at Drayton Manor returns once again for 2016 with the park stating it will be “bigger and better than ever.”

Held on selected dates from Nov. 19 to Dec. 31, decorations, festive music and fairy lights around the park set the scene for a winter wonderland as Europe’s



Thomas Land at Drayton Manor in the U.K. is the focus of the park’s Christmas activities. Thomas the Tank Engine (above right) is a guest favorite during the Christmas period. COURTESY DRAYTON MANOR THEME PARK



only Thomas Land receives a Christmas makeover. The area features snow showers up to three times a day and a 30-foot-tall (98-meter) Christmas tree, with a light show, set to festive music which will add to the atmosphere. The Apocalypse drop tower is also turned into a 177-foot (54-meter)

high Christmas tree.

As well as all the action in Thomas Land, visitors can visit the park zoo, home to resident reindeers Comet, Buzz and Star, or enjoy the 4D cinema where The Polar Express film will be shown. They can also ride the Ben 10: Ultimate Mission roller coaster or have a go on the

festive indoor Slide and Glide ice rink.

A visit to Drayton Manor’s Magical Christmas also includes the enchanted Castle of Dreams where children will be greeted by playful elves and taken to meet Father Christmas in his grotto. Each child will receive a free gift and a golden ticket to

return for the new season in 2017. A fireworks display is held at the end of each day. As a way of saying thank you for the fantastic work they do, the park is offering free entry to both serving and non-serving members of the armed forces.

► See **HOLIDAYS**, page 8



Slagharen’s winter opening (above) features a variety of attractions and free entry to the park’s indoor water park Aqua Mexicana. The Miracle of Lights parade (right) is a highlight of the festive period at the park.

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HOLIDAYS

Continued from page 7

And for an extra special getaway, the four-star Drayton Manor Hotel, set within the grounds of the park, has a selection of packages available over the Christmas period.

Themepark & Resort Slagharen, the Netherlands

Visitors to Themepark & Resort Slagharen are able to enjoy Winter Slagharen which incorporates more than 30 attractions and shows.

Among the outdoor attractions will be the 131-foot (40 meter) high Free Fall ride, the Oldtimers car ride, street entertainers and the Miracle of Lights parade with a new finale of water, lasers and fireworks. Guests can also warm themselves next to a camp fire while sampling hot chocolate or mulled wine. The Slagharen On Ice show is one of the indoor attractions available, as is the Wintry 4D film and children's pony rides in a covered arena.

From Nov. 5 to Dec. 23, each ticket to the theme park includes a free admission ticket for Aqua Mexicana, the indoor waterpark. Complete with palm trees, waterfalls and everything else that belongs in a tropical paradise, it turns a cold winter's day into a tropical adventure with a range of waterslides, an aquatic play area and the Netherlands' biggest jacuzzi. Aqua Mexicana is open on selected days in November and December and then daily from Dec. 17 up to and including Jan. 8.



Visitors to Toverland over Christmas will be able to enjoy attractions both inside and outside as the park celebrates its 15th anniversary year in 2016. COURTESY TOVERLAND

CHRISTMAS PREVIEW

Tivoli Copenhagen, Denmark

Tivoli opened its gates for its annual Christmas market on Nov. 19, which continues through Dec. 31.

Christmas in Tivoli is in its 23rd season. The market as well as the Gardens are open to visitors on both Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, with the Nimb Brasserie and the Nimb Terrasse among the restaurants available. On Dec. 31, the entire Gardens will be open so visitors can add a trip on the coaster and other attractions to their New Year celebrations.

For 2016 Tivoli is introducing the Honey Cake Castle, located in the Tivoli Castle. In the cake workshop, visitors can buy a honey cake heart to decorate themselves, while the venue has also created its own mulled wine for the occasion. Danish doughnuts, which locals love to eat at Christmas, are also available at food stalls and restaurants, for example in the Vaffelbageriet run by Benedikte Krætzmer and her husband Knud. The business has been in the family since 1906 and Benedikte bakes around 25,000 Danish doughnuts in the Vaffelbageriet every Christmas.

Stalls all around the site will offer seasonal items such as Christmas decorations, arts and crafts, stocking fillers and other gift ideas, as well as food and drink, while numerous Christmas trees and decorations will adorn Tivoli, too. A new element for this year will be three large trees wrapped in



A new element for this year at Tivoli (above) will be three large trees wrapped in fairy lights. Tivoli Copenhagen's Christmas in Tivoli event (right) is now in its 23rd season.

COURTESY TIVOLI COPENHAGEN

fairy lights.

Between Christmas and New Year, the sky above Tivoli will light up each evening with a fireworks festival, including a special fireworks display on New Year's Eve, while Dec. 1 will mark the premier of The Nutcracker in the Tivoli Concert Hall. In the Pantomime Theatre, Father Christmas will take up residence in his grotto.

Christmas in Tivoli is open daily from 11 a.m.

Toverland, the Netherlands

Celebrating its 15th anniversary year in 2016, during the Christmas holiday period from Dec. 24 to Jan. 8, Toverland will stage its Magical Winter Weeks.

A wide range of activities will be on offer to visitors during this time as the park, which features both indoor and outdoor areas. The park is transformed into an authentic winter scene with appropriately decorated squares, Christmas trees and twinkling lights. Dec. 31 this celebratory year will come to a close with what the park is referring to as a "flamboyant New Year's Eve party."



Numerous live shows (above) will entertain guests to Europa-Park over the Christmas period. The park's popular winter season will transform Germany's largest theme park into a winter wonderland, below. COURTESY EUROPA-PARK



► See HOLIDAYS, page 9

HOLIDAYS

Continued from page 8

Europa-Park, Germany

The Christmas season at Germany's largest theme park spans three different months, beginning on Nov. 26 and continuing until Jan. 8, excluding Dec. 24 and 25, with the park completing the season with a weekend finale Jan. 13 to 15.

Guests will be greeted at the park by the sight of snow-covered Christmas trees, the scent of mulled wine, Christmas decorations, log fires and the sound of carols, along with a host of rides and attractions, an extensive show schedule, special winter attractions and festive food.

The Spanish Arena plays host to the exhibition Magic Ice, a fairy tale world of ice featuring more than 30 detailed sculptures. A large ice skating rink on the lake in the Scandinavian themed area is another festive feature.

For younger guests there will be an indoor discovery tour at the Limerick Castle play area and the 180-foot (55-meter) high Big Wheel Bellevue in the Portuguese area provides visitors with a view over Europa-Park's winter wonderland. A snow tube hill is available in France while the ice bar Glaciar in Spain will offer a chance to relax.

A wide range of shows provide high class entertainment over the festive period. Dancers, artists and clowns feature in the Circus Revue, while the whole family will enjoy A Musical Christmas Market in the Globe Theatre. There is also the ice show Supr'Ice with the Son of Santa and the children's musical

CHRISTMAS PREVIEW

I want... Christmas Chaos. The Winter Starlight Parade will wind its way through the park, and there is also a new acrobatics show at the Mercedes-Benz Hall and the light show Luna Magica. A glittering New Year's Eve party is also scheduled. The Cirque d'Europe dinner show from Nov. 17 to Feb. 11 is another highlight.

A cozy atmosphere, melodic carols, delicious scents of the traditional Christmas market in the historic Balthasar Castle Park, plus a variety of traditional goods, also further add to the festive atmosphere, as does the Christmas market in the German Alley where guests find culinary delights such as sausage and cheese specialties, fine chocolates and spirits from local producers hailing from the length and breadth of Europe.

Over 200 Janosch illustrations by one of Germany's most talented children's book authors and illustrators are on view in the Janosch Exhibition and guests can, of course, also enjoy an extended stay by utilizing one of the park's five four-star hotels or Camp Resort.

Liseberg Park, Sweden

The largest Christmas market in Sweden is one of the key features during Liseberg's Christmas opening, along with a fairy tale ice ballet and a variety of rides. Each year the market attracts approximately 500,000 visitors who enjoy the festive atmosphere in the glow of five million Christmas lights.

This year the park is open



Various markets and selected rides decked out in holiday lighting will help create the festive atmosphere at Liseberg. The popular fairy tale ice ballet, *The Nutcracker*, will be performed at the Liseberg ice rink. COURTESY LISEBERG

for its Christmas period from Nov. 18 to Dec. 30 and the market element will feature three main areas with an old fashioned Christmas market section, a design and craft section and a medieval market.

The fairy tale ice ballet, *The Nutcracker*, will be performed at the ice rink by Sweden's leading ice skaters, while in between performances guests can practice their own ice skating skills. The area around the ice rink is decorated to the theme of *The Nutcracker*. A Christmas theatre with the park's renowned green rabbits, and Julius the white rabbit from the North Pole, is another feature. Santa's workshop will allow youngsters to watch as Santa prepares for the big day. Sleigh rides in a winter landscape with Santa's rein-

deer is also on offer.

The festive atmosphere continues in the Lapland area where cabins and tents offer Sami art, hand crafts and Lapland delicacies. The medieval village stages a medieval market and performances by jesters, along with a treasure hunt for children.

A total of 28 rides and attractions will be open at Liseberg for the Christmas opening period, which runs on various days from Nov. 18 to Dec. 30.

Gardaland, Italy

Gardaland's Magic Winter takes place on specific days during the period from Dec. 8 to Jan. 8, when all the park's major attractions will be available along with festive theming and a number of live shows.

Park mascot Prezzemolo

and friends will set the tone at the park entrance with the show Welcome to Magic Winter, while at the Gardaland Theatre there will be the chance for guests to take a journey around the world to discover how other people celebrate Christmas. At the Teatro delle Marionette (Theatre of Marionettes), Pass Pass the clown will deploy all his fantasy, comedy and poetry with Incantesimo d'Inverno (Winter Spell). Younger guests will also be able to have their faces painted by skilled makeup artists and meet Santa Claus.

An ice rink will be another festive attraction, as will slides for guests to recreate the thrill of sliding through snow on rafts. This will be in the Colorado Boat area where there will be a slide for adults, while another for children will feature the Kung Fu Panda Academy.

The Winter Parade will feature luxurious costumes, Christmas carols and thousands of colourful lights and at the end of each day, the great Christmas Tree, which will stand tall in the middle of the Valley of Kings square, will be lit.

The purchase of a park entry ticket will also allow guests to visit the Gardaland SeaLife aquarium, while for those wishing to stay at the park during the winter opening period, various special offers are available at the Gardaland Adventure Hotel and the Gardaland Hotel.



Gardaland's Magic Winter takes place for a month from Dec. 8 to Jan. 8. All the major attractions will be open at Gardaland over the festive period. COURTESY GARDALAND





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WATER PARKS & RESORTS

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Schlitterbahn Water Park Resort founder, Bob Henry, dies at 89

NEW BRAUNFELS, Texas — On October 31, 2016, **Robert "Bob" Henry**, loving and devoted husband, father and Papa, went peacefully to be with his Lord and Savior. He is survived by his wife of 67 years, Billye Henry, his three children Gary Henry, Jeff Henry and Jana Faber, seven grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren, all of New Braunfels. He is also survived by his sister Nita Hodges of Morgan City, La.

Born to Ray and Irene Henry on April 23, 1927, in Duncan, Okla., Bob met and married Billye Drake in 1947 after knowing immediately that she was "The One." Bob was attending Oklahoma A&M (now Oklahoma State) at the time and a year later earned his Master's Degree in Accounting. After passing the CPA exam, he went to work for Arthur

Andersen in Houston as an accountant. Their three children were born during their years in Houston. Offered a job to run an office in Panama in 1958, Bob loaded up his young family and moved across the world. He returned to the States in 1963, and continued to work in the accounting profession. In 1966, he purchased **Camp Landa**, a small campground in New Braunfels. Over the years he built that business into the **Schlitterbahn Waterparks and Resorts**. He was involved in the business until his passing. Today, three generations of the Henry family work in the business.

"My father, from the very start, hoped to have a family business where he and his children could work together," said **Gary Henry**, president of Schlitterbahn Water-



**Robert Ray "Bob" Henry
1927-2016**

parks and Resorts, and eldest son. "All of us will miss him dearly. We will miss his leadership, his guidance, and his insights. We are blessed that he leaves behind a legacy of hard work, dedication, and commitment to those who both those who work here and to generations of guests who have made memories in

the parks he made possible."

"There are a handful of pioneers whose visionary work helped create and make the water park industry what it is today. **WWA's Rick Root** told *AT*. "Bob Henry was one of those founders who, alongside his family, created so many of the entertainment innovations that thrill millions of guests on a daily basis. Beyond that, Henry's strong commitment to his family and the larger Schlitterbahn family of employees has meant that thousands of people got their start in the industry within the Schlitterbahn brand, including many who are now leading the way for the next generation."

Bob was a hands-on entrepreneur and innovator. His mission was to create a family business where employees and visitors alike

were part of the family. He was involved in many civic organizations, including a stint as president of the Wursth Association in 1977. In 1995, Bob created the Robert Henry Presidential Endowment Fund to award Texas State scholarships to Schlitterbahn staff. In 2003, Bob was inducted into the New Braunfels Chamber Hall of Honor, in recognition of his lifetime of work on behalf of the New Braunfels business community. The World Waterpark Association inducted Bob into its Hall of Fame in 2013, in recognition of his contributions to the industry.

A funeral service was held at Christ Presbyterian Church in New Braunfels. Memorial contributions may be made to the Robert Henry Endowment Fund at Texas State University in San Marcos, Texas.

WWA attendees enjoy educational program and Louisiana hospitality

AT: Jeffrey Seifert
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

NEW ORLEANS, La. — The "Big Easy" was this year's host of the World Waterpark Association's (WWA) 36th annual Symposium & Trade Show. Attendees sampled the round-the-clock nightlife, vibrant music scene and, of course, the famous cuisine of one of the culinary capitals of the U.S. The show took place inside the massive Ernest N. Morial Convention Center situated along the banks of the Mississippi River.

The show welcomed more than 1,500 owners, operators, developers, suppliers and designers from 23 countries, all eager to connect with their fellow industry professionals to share new and better ways to build upon the successes achieved in 2016.

"We knew going into the show that we had an outstanding combination to offer our member community this year," said **Rick Root**, WWA president. "In fact, our top-shelf educational program combined with our fantastic location drove an eight per-

cent increase in park [operator] attendees over last year and a 10 percent increase over the last time we were in New Orleans."

"The recent WWA Annual Trade Show and Symposium held in New Orleans was one of the best ever. Networking options were plentiful, and workshops were professional, educational and on topics of high interest to our industry," said **Rick Fuller**, administrative counsel, Hyland Hills Water World.

"The WWA Show proved to be another great opportunity to meet with colleagues and catch up on all the latest trends taking place in the industry," said **Jessica Mahoney**, marketing manager, Aquatic Development Group. "It's inspiring to see the dedication among our members and the drive to continuously want to improve and innovate with new products and ideas that will make the waterpark experience even better for guests."

Education and honors

The WWA Show is well known for the breadth and depth of its educational events,



WWA attendees heard from more than 100 of the industry's most experienced professionals during educational sessions and workshops held at the WWA Show, Oct. 11-14, 2016.
COURTESY WWA

and this year's program continued the tradition of providing attendees with access to the best speakers sharing their most successful and thought-provoking ideas on the things that matter most: guest safety, operational excellence, quality customer service, top-line employee training and much more. Throughout the show, many rooms were filled to capacity with attendees ready to hear fresh ideas, ask insightful questions and communicate proven tactics.

"My head is spinning with

concepts and ideas I never considered before the WWA conference!" said **Brenda Sylvia**, community services manager, City of San Marcos. "We are now looking at our aquatic facilities through a greatly improved lens thanks to the info I gathered at this year's show."

"As a presenter, I was impressed with the engagement of the participants and the interaction between everyone," said **Marc Gran**, group sales manager, Carolina Harbor Waterpark at Carowinds. "There were many takeaways

and you could feel their excitement about this industry."

"Continuous improvement is the name of the game," said **Evan Barnett**, general manager, Typhoon Texas. "As we are faced with many challenges throughout the season, the WWA show is the ideal place to collaborate, brainstorm and reflect with other top-quality industry leaders. We always leave energized and ready to take on another season."

"We really enjoyed our first visit to the WWA Show this year. We came back to Chile with a lot of knowledge and practical information to apply in our business," said **Maria Arredondo**, new projects manager, Aviva Water Park.

The show

The 2016 WWA Trade Show featured 100,000 square-feet of exhibit space with more than 230 companies — some of which were first-time exhibitors — showcasing new products and services in 360 booths.

► See WWA, page 12

►WWA

Continued from page 11

"Body Glove [Surf9] had a positive first waterpark show in New Orleans," said George Patterson, Surf9, LLC. "We made some strong connections and learned quite a bit. I'm sure we'll be back!"

"The crowd in NOLA was super friendly and very engaged. Everyone we met was helpful and interested in our new product," said Jamie Goetsch, CEO, Sentag North America.

The exhibit hall floor proved to be the perfect place to bring together experts that offer the water leisure industry's most innovative products and the people who put them into play on a daily basis. "One reason that this show is the No. 1 show for parks and vendors to attend each year is you are not swallowed up by the size of the show floor," said Keith Schupp, vice president of North American sales, Vlocker North America. "Here, you get a chance to meet with everyone in the industry during the show or at the first-class after-hour events."

"Walking the show floor offers opportunities to talk to peers about what they are doing and where they are having success," said Ron Hood, senior duty manager, Disney Water Parks, Disney Water Parks.

Amusement Today met with several exhibiting companies at the show. Of course, the top three water park attraction suppliers, Polin Waterparks, ProSlide and WhiteWater West, had a continuous flow of customers visiting their respective trade show spaces. Several other suppliers, including AquaKita, Arihant, Avalanche Waterslides, Fibrart, and SplashTacular, were also kept busy.



Avalanche Waterslides offers a variety of products but gained notoriety with the introduction of the world's first true vertical freefall slide with a true vertical loop. Unfortunately, the contract to install the first loop at Action Park in New Jersey in 2015, fell through at the last minute. Avalanche hinted to *AT* that they have other clients looking into the product and that the industry may see an actual install in the near future.

Fibrart of Mexico has been supplying waterslides for more than 25 years. *AT* spoke with waterslide designer Miguel Gonzales. He said, "We have a number of good leads, we made a proposal to one client in the morning, and now he is back with us working out a time schedule for an install."

Although Technifex has been at the WWA show for a number of years, this was the first time the company brought an actual working model of its water web water maze. Guests and potential buyers had the opportunity to test their skill at navigating through a changing maze of water curtains without getting wet. Product Systems Specialist Brian Lindsey told *AT*, "We have a lot of interested people, a lot of strong leads, a lot of kids coming through and checking it out and it's getting a positive review...overall an awesome experience."

Cinesplash was showing off its 5D SFX Theater, with an actual theater seat in its booth — fortunately without the drenching effects. The motion seats are built to withstand significant amounts water from fountains, water guns,

WWA presents awards

NEW ORLEANS, La. — The following companies were awarded for their creative and impactful exhibits at the show:

Best One-Booth Category

Vivo Aquatics,
Monrovia, Calif.

Best Two-Booth Category

Geckobrand,
Grandville, Mich.

Best Four-Booth Category

SplashTacular,
Paola, Kan.

Best Six-Booth Category

Technifex,
Valencia, Calif.

Best Eight-Booth Category

Aquakita,
Monterrey, Mexico.

Best of Show

WhiteWater West Industries,
Vancouver, B.C., Canada.

simulated rain, even a theater flood. Cinesplash is designed for water park guests in swimsuits to enjoy a very different experience apart from sliding, floating or sunbathing. Theaters can be designed to accommodate as few as 20 guests up to a crowd-gobbling 100-seat theater.

Waterpark guests will eventually need food and drink, and there were plenty of food and beverage-related suppliers on hand at the show. Confections seemed to be the most popular, with the ever-popular Dippin' Dots and Mini Melts leading the way. Both were giving out a steady stream of samples during the show. Other confectioners included f'real foods specializing in milkshakes, frozen cappuccinos and smoothies; funnel sticks by TNT — the name pretty much says it all; and Tropical Sno, taking the typical snow cone to the next level with a variety of delectable and unique flavors such as papaya, cantaloupe, pink grapefruit and honeydew.

Even though the convention center provided coffee and iced tea all day to exhibitors and attendees, Bill's Lemonade was the place to be for something sweet and tangy. Bill's Lemonade offers a low-sugar proprietary mix that includes the juice of one whole lemon in a 32-ounce serving. Owner Valerie Barkley commented, "One thing about this show is that we have a lot of customers here already that we've met through this trade show. After delivering to them all summer long, it's great



More than 230 companies exhibited on the WWA trade show floor. *AT*/JEFFREY SEIFERT



Exhibitors had the opportunity to demonstrate their products to more than 1,500 attendees. *AT*/GARY SLADE

to meet face to face and talk about the situations they've had over the summer and see if we can do anything better. I'm also happy to say that our customers also give us new customers."

Before a park can open and operate, it has to be conceived, designed and built. Consultants were aplenty at the show offering design, feasibility studies, management, operations, marketing, and of course, safety. *AT* met with Ramaker & Associates to discuss The Epic Waterpark project taking place in Grand Prairie, Texas. (Watch for a follow-up story in the January or February edition of *AT*.)

Water Technology Inc. was pleased with the show. Jen Gerber with the business development team told *AT*, "The show has been great, traffic has been good, we're thrilled to be here. We've had a couple of really good leads. We're excited to get back into the office on Monday to follow up."

Taking a project from concept to reality requires a construction firm and several were on hand to offer their services to those looking to build a new park or expand or re-create an existing park. Those famil-

iar with the industry know a water park is lot more than just pools, slides and lazy rivers. Water has to be pumped and filtered and treated and sometimes even heated. Several companies were showing off products that pump, filter and clean. Both water chemical and chemical alternative treatments were displayed to make certain that water quality never becomes an issue.

(For more on water quality and water park safety news, see page 32)

Back to the Sunshine State!

Attendees will feel the sun on their face and the breeze in their hair when they attend the World Waterpark Association Show, October 16-19, 2017, in West Palm Beach, Fla.

"West Palm Beach delivers for our attendees on so many levels," said Root. "The weather is beautiful, our headquarters hotel is affordable, accessible and practically brand new and we have an amazing waterpark partner located nearby. What could be better for 2017?" The WWA Show will be headquartered at the Hilton West Palm Beach hotel, which is located next to the Palm Beach County Convention Center.

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PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

► New for 2017 — Page 19 / San Diego Zoo celebrates 100 years — Pages 20 & 22 / Fairs — Pages 23-27

Legoland Florida to open land of kid-friendly chop-socky fun

New Lego Ninjago World helps launch resort's sixth year

AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

WINTER HAVEN, Fla. — Having recently marked five successful years of operation and growth, Legoland Florida Resort is gearing up for the next five as it readies for the Jan. 12 opening of its next major expansion.

Lego Ninjago World, inspired by the popular series of Lego building sets and the long-running TV show "Lego Ninjago: Masters of Spinjitzu," is a new area of the park. It will invite guests to step into a martial arts-themed kingdom containing hands-on, skill-sharpening activities primarily for kids, plus a high-tech interactive ride that parents should also enjoy.

Joined at a mid-October press event by sibling Ninjago costumed characters Kai and Nya, Adrian Jones, the resort's general manager, spoke about the then-still-under-construction land.

"Lego Ninjago World is an incredible addition to our park," he said. "It offers amazing experiences that wouldn't actually have been possible because of the technology five years ago."

Gathered media then were treated to a hard hat tour and an unusual preview featuring Ninjago World's major attractions recreated with Lego bricks.



Jones



Media attending a mid-October preview of Legoland Florida Resort's new themed land, Lego Ninjago World, were given a hard hat tour of the section and shown a model of it created from Lego bricks. COURTESY LEGOLAND FLORIDA RESORT



The new land's main attraction, Lego Ninjago The Ride, from Triotech, incorporates technology that allows guests to aim at targets and score points using hand gestures. COURTESY LEGOLAND FLORIDA RESORT

Highlights of the new three-acre land include:

• **Lego Ninjago The Ride** — a four-minute, state-of-the-art dark ride wherein guests score points using ninja hand moves to blast animated fire-

balls, lightning and more at waves of 3D villains. Dynamic computer-generated animation and 4D atmospheric effects further energize the attraction, which is a product of Montreal, Canada-based

Triotech.

• **Zane's Temple Build** — a giant Lego-building experience that encourages kids to contribute to a model of a mountaintop Ninjago monastery.

• **Kai's Spinners** — whirling, single-person platforms upon which guests can master the ancient ninja art of Spinjitzu.

• **Cole's Rock Climb** — an outdoor climbing wall to test kids' balance and endurance

• **Jay's Lightning Drill** — lightning-fast light-up targets designed to measure guests' reflexes.

In addition, a retail shop called Wu's Warehouse will offer Lego Ninjago building sets, toys, clothing and souvenirs. There will be daily meet-and-greet opportunities with Kai and Nya, as well


Jones also used the October press conference to reveal the results of an economic impact analysis the resort

had commissioned earlier this year. From the start of its construction in 2010 to its late-2011 opening and through the end of 2015, Legoland generated nearly \$1 billion in total economic activity in Central Florida, according to the study.

As Lego Ninjago World prepares for its debut, construction continues across from the main park at Lake Dexter on the Legoland Beach Retreat, which will more than double the resort's on-site accommodations when its themed bungalows begin accepting guests in mid-2017.

Legoland Florida is situated on the 80-year-old former grounds of Cypress Gardens — itself once a major tourist magnet until its closing in 2009. Continuing to fulfill its commitment to the location, the resort will be restoring the site's famous botanical garden in several phases.

• legoland.com/florida



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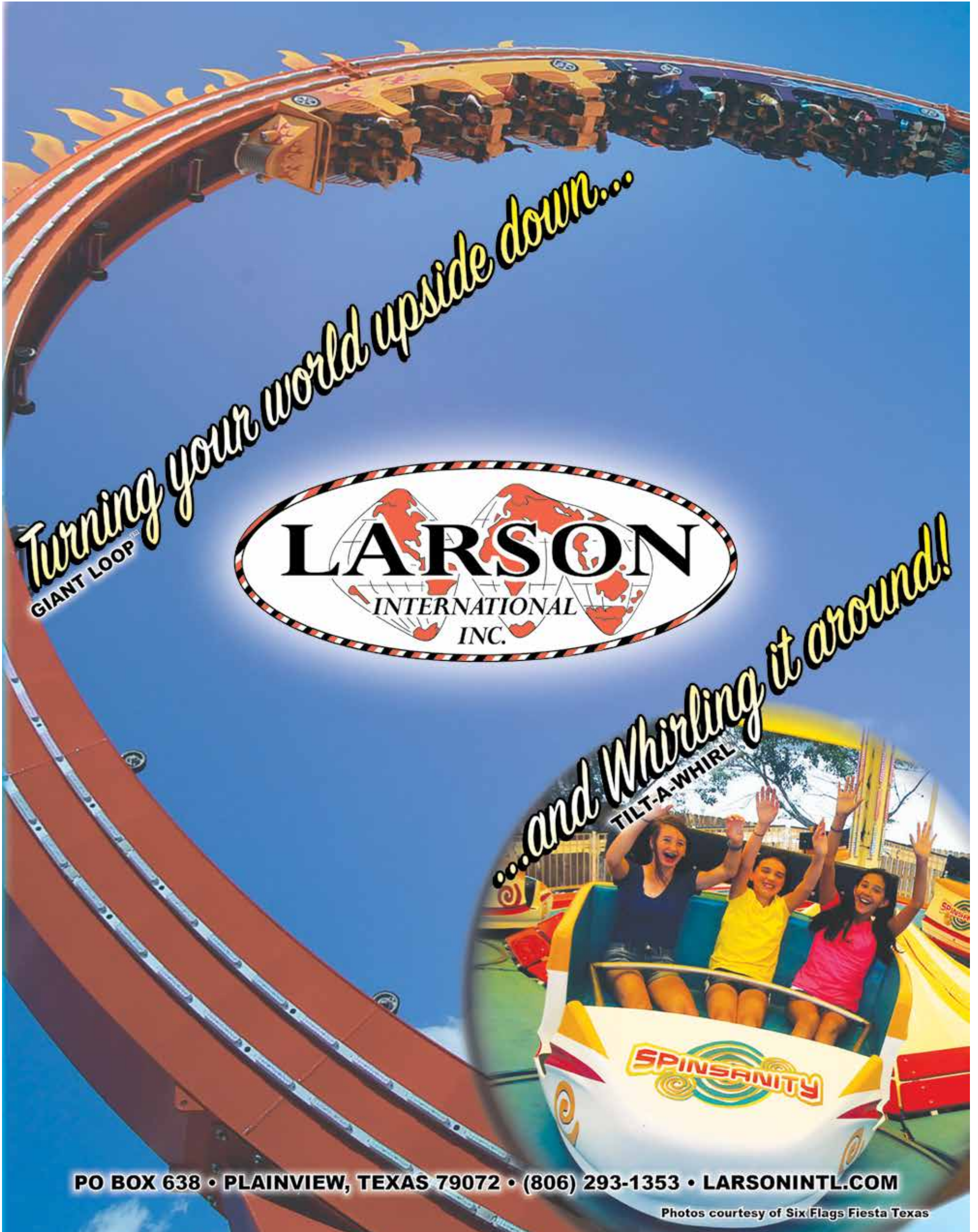
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Photos courtesy of Six Flags Fiesta Texas

Holiday festivities already aglow in many of the nation's parks

AT: Pam Sherborne

psherborne@amusementtoday.com

CHRISTMAS PREVIEW

NORTH AMERICA—Millions of lights, a plethora of live musical shows, large animated trees, Santa Claus and family are just some of the offerings at amusement and theme parks across the U.S.

It seems that Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer is one of the most popular themes for this year with parks adding live shows and characters inspired by the classic 1964 stop-motion animation TV special of the same name.

But, while Rudolph and his friends are big hits, there are many other favorite Yuletide traditions being created and recreated in the nation's parks.

Following are some of those parks and what is being done for this holiday season.

Dollywood, Pigeon Forge, Tenn.

Guests to Dollywood's award-winning Smoky Mountain Christmas this year are experiencing not only the traditional multitude of merriment, but are enjoying several new and updated festivities. The holiday celebrations began Nov. 5 and will run through Jan. 1.

New this year is the Parade of Many Colors, a remastered Christmas in the Smokies, a new show, "It's a Wonderful Life," and four million festive lights along with the joyous holiday atmosphere guests have come to enjoy during this lively festival.

"Christmas is such a special time of year for me because some of my most precious memories are the wonderful times I had with my family during the holidays as a kid,"

Dolly Parton said. "It's the time of year when our traditions, along with our faith and the love of family, combine to create those sweet experiences we always remember. After all of the things I've been able to see and do in my life, it's the times from those Christmases with my family I still hold most dear."

The new parade includes whimsical floats, interactive characters and a heart-warming, cheerful message for Dollywood guests to enjoy.

In addition, Dollywood's entertainment team has brought a Christmas classic to life with the debut of "It's a Wonderful Life."

One of Dollywood's greatest entertainment offerings is remastered in 2016, as Christmas in the Smokies returns to its traditional home at D.P.'s Celebrity Theater.

Returning this season is Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer, the beloved Christmas television show. Guests can meet Rudolph and his friends, including Clarice, Bumble the Abominable Snow Monster and Yukon Cornelius in Rudolph's Holly Jolly Junction, a magical area where festive fun awaits.

Dollywood's entertainment, which in 2016 earned its eighth consecutive *Amusement Today* Golden Ticket Award for Best Shows, features several other beloved shows this season, including An Appalachian Christmas, 'Twas the Night Before Christmas, O' Holy Night, My People and Christmas with The Kingdom Heirs.

Guests also can experience Santa Land, a whimsical work-

shop where the smallest guests can share their wish list with Kris Kringle.

Families can finish their visit with a traditional Christmas meal as several of Dollywood's menus feature holiday-themed items. Among the new offerings this year are a Cornish hen, complete with sweet potato casserole and green beans, and a hot chocolate station. Returning favorites include turkey and dressing, Christmas ham, mashed potatoes and gravy, hot flavored drinks like wassail, and much more.

Moody Gardens, Galveston, Texas

This Texas park officially kicked off its holiday celebration on Nov. 12, but guests actually were able to start their holidays off early by booking a behind-the-scenes tour to watch the Ice Carving Team from Harbin, China, carve out the ice sculptures used for celebration.

In its third year, Ice Land returns with a new signature theme, an Ice Bar and special V.I.P. packages that give visitors behind-the-scenes access with the ice carving team as they create the massive ice sculptures.

Moody Gardens is offering a holiday tradition like never before with more lights, new films and exciting themes all at one venue.

Ticket sales to the behind-the-scenes tour as well as to Ice Land: Ice Sculptures, A Caribbean Christmas and Festival of Lights began the last day of August. The behind-the-scenes tour began Oct. 1 as the carvers began.

Ice Sculptures Caribbean Christmas is a new theme



A new parade and new shows are greeting guests this year to Dollywood's Smoky Mountain Christmas in Pigeon Forge, Tenn. The holiday celebration began on Nov. 5 and will run through Jan. 1. COURTESY DOLLYWOOD

uniquely to Moody Gardens. The Chinese ice carving team uses two million pounds of ice in a massive tent structure set to nine degrees.

The theme takes guests on a breathtaking underwater journey from the shores of Galveston Island through the Gulf of Mexico.

An ice slide takes the form of a towering oil rig and there is an opportunity to venture through the beautiful Flower Garden Banks filled with spectacular schools of colorful tropical fish, eagle rays, turtles, dolphins, Hammerhead sharks and more on the way to their Caribbean island.

To top off an amazing journey, guests can enjoy festive holiday spirits inside of Ice Land at Shiver's Ice Bar.

The Festival of Lights this year includes the one-mile walking trail with more than 100 sound-enhanced light and animated displays themed to their favorite holiday music with the area's only outdoor ice rink.

Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer 4D is being presented through the magic of 4D. Guests experience high-definition 3D projection combined with seat sensors, leg ticklers, wind, snow, scent and water spritzes to engage all the senses.

Other parts of the celebration this year includes Cirque Joyeux Noel Dinner and Show, and train rides.

The holiday fest runs through Jan. 8.

Busch Gardens, Tampa, Fla.

The annual holiday tradition, Christmas Town, returns to Busch Gardens Tampa Bay with more than two million twinkling lights, festive treats, holiday entertainment and unique attractions, including the all-new addition of the beloved Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer.

The popular holiday Christmas Town began on Nov. 23 and will run to Dec. 31 on select dates.

The new Rudolph's Winter Wonderland gives guests the opportunity to meet and take photos with Rudolph, Clarice, Yukon Cornelius and Bumble at the all-new Rudolph's Winter Wonderland located in Celestial Crossing. Guests play holiday games and indulge in Yuletide treats while scenes of the beloved story of Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer come to life.

Another feature is Santa's House with guests being able to visit with the Claus family in their North Pole home.

Nestled between beautifully lit trees and roaring with excitement, some of the best

► See CHRISTMAS, page 17



Moody Gardens in Galveston, Texas, once again brings the holidays to life with its festivities called Ice Land, which began Nov. 12 and running through Jan. 8. Management has brought some new entertainment and features to this year's celebration. COURTESY MOODY GARDENS



Christmas Town at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay, Fla., holiday celebration, began this year on Nov. 23 and will run through Dec. 31. Featured will be many of the park's popular characters, as seen here, as well as the new Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer. COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS TAMPA BAY

►CHRISTMAS

Continued from page 16

views of Christmas Town are being found atop Florida's top thrill rides, including the all-new family spin coaster, Cobra's Curse.

Guests are enjoying the return of fan-favorite shows that ring in the season, including Christmas on Ice, Carol of the Bells light show and the Holiday Hills Brass Band.

Holiday foods and beverages abound.

Busch Gardens Williamsburg, Williamsburg, Va.

This Busch Gardens holiday event, which began Nov. 25 and will run on select days through Jan. 2, also is debuting the new Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer show like its sister park in Tampa, Fla.

"We have made Christmas Town bigger than ever, with more attractions and more time to enjoy them," Busch Gardens President David Cromwell said. "Christmas Town has grown in popularity each year, and we're gratified that so many families have made this a must-do holiday tradition."

And, like its sister park, guests are able to visit with Rudolph and the show's characters.

In addition to the new show and a bigger Christmas Town, guests also are enjoying the more than eight million twinkling lights, two new Kidsiderate areas and a bigger assortment of thrill rides, festive entertainment and food offerings.

Another first for the Williamsburg location is the all-decked-out Sesame Street Forest of Fun. Young fans meet their favorite Sesame Street characters, including Abby Cadabby, Elmo and Cookie Monster, and capture a special holiday photo.

Families can ride Grover's Alpine Express and do some Christmas shopping at Abby Cadabby's Treasure Trove.

This year Christmas Town also expands its ride lineup. For the first time, Busch Gardens is offering two of its major roller coasters, Verbolten and Tempesto, during the event, along with more than 20 other rides throughout the park.

Adventure Golf & Raceway, Westminster, Colo.

This community-owned

and operated facility turned on its holiday lights Nov. 4, with festivities lasting through January 1 on selected dates and times.

In late October, workers were already busy hanging the more than 100,000 lights and features that will transform the four-acre venue into a miniature golf winter wonderland.

Adventure Golf & Raceway is a part of the Hyland Hills Park and Recreation Depart-

► See **CHRISTMAS**, page 18

CHRISTMAS PREVIEW

Busch Gardens Williamsburg (Va.), like its sister park, Busch Gardens Tampa Bay, is debuting the new Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer show for 2016. This park's holiday festivities kicked off Nov. 25 and will run through Jan. 2.
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CHRISTMAS

Continued from page 17

ment facility. There are three, 18-hole miniature golf courses along with go-carts, bumper boats and a rope concourse and maze.

It is the 54 holes of the three miniature golf courses that are adorned and opened for the holiday season.

There also are decorated features throughout the three courses including Woody, the giant talking tree, an erupting volcano and a booming fireball.

Holiday beverages and treats also are available for purchase at the park including hot chocolate s'mores and select adult beverages.

Six Flags

Entertainment Corp.

Six Flags has added two parks to its list that are presenting holiday celebrations for 2016. The new parks are, Six Flags St. Louis, Mo., November 25-January 1, and Six Flags America, Baltimore/Washington, Md., Nov. 19-Jan. 2.

The other Six Flags parks holding holiday festivities for 2016 are: Six Flags Great Escape, Jackson, N.J., November 19-January 2; Six Flags Discovery Kingdom, November 25-January 1; Six Flags Magic Mountain, Los Angeles, Calif., November 19-January 1; Six Flags Fiesta Texas, San Antonio, November 19-January 2; and Six Flags Over Texas, Arlington, November 19-January 2.

In addition, Six Flags also holds a Holiday in the Lodge at the Great Escape Lodge, running November 25-December 27.

Each Holiday in the Park has its own uniqueness yet share many of the same shows

CHRISTMAS PREVIEW

and attractions.

A full listing of Six Flags Holiday in the Park may be found by going to www.sixflags.com.

California's Great America, Santa Clara, Calif.

The Bay Area's newest holiday tradition, WinterFest, debuted at California's Great America Nov. 25 and will run through Dec. 30. Great America has been transformed into a winter wonderland where guests can skate in front of the iconic Carousel Columbia, admire displays of lights and décor, view spectacular live holiday shows, experience 20 rides and attractions, see Santa's workshop and Mrs. Claus' kitchen, and enjoy scrumptious holiday fare at numerous dining locations.

The winter scene is dominated by one of the Bay Area's tallest Christmas trees adorned with thousands of twinkling lights accompanied by giant toy soldiers greeting guests. This amazing new event featuring more than seven million LED lights.

There are nine unique and decorative themed areas to guide attendees through WinterFest.

Live shows include a nightly tree lighting, carolers throughout the park, "It's Christmas, Snoopy!" ice show and more.

SeaWorld San Antonio, San Antonio, Texas

Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer leads the way to Christmas joy while making spirits brighter than ever under the glow of five million holiday



Employees at Adventure Golf & Raceway in Westminster, Colo., began decorating the venue with more than 100,000 lights prior to the kick off of its 2016 holiday celebrations. The community-owned and operated facility began its holiday fest on Nov. 4 and it will run through Jan. 3. COURTESY OF ADVENTURE GOLF

lights at SeaWorld San Antonio's holiday celebration. For 29 select days, Nov. 19 through Jan. 1, SeaWorld San Antonio transforms into a winter wonderland.

SeaWorld is adorned with carolers, holiday treats and beloved traditions like Home For the Holidays with Santa and Mrs. Claus, and Shamu Christmas: Miracles to help make spirits bright.

"No one loves Christmas more than Texans, and we intend to make this the biggest and brightest Christmas the Lone Star State has ever experienced," said Carl Lum, park president. "This year we are lighting up the night sky in a way that's never before been seen by expanding from one million to five million twinkling lights and bringing back our signature lighted flagpole to make this the most festive and family focused holiday destination throughout Texas."

Silver Dollar City, Branson, Mo.

Silver Dollar City has already kicked off its holiday festival, An Old Time Christmas, featuring a spectacular Light Parade, a five-story Christmas tree with a light and sound show, two Broadway-style musical productions, holiday foods and five million lights.

The festival began Nov. 5 and runs through Dec. 30 at the Branson, Mo. theme park.

One of the festival's most popular features is Rudolph's Holly Jolly Christmas Light Pa-

rade, led by the most famous reindeer of all. As Grand Marshal, Rudolph leads the evening parade of nine musical, lighted floats, illuminated with 200,000 ultra-bright LED lights.

The floats are accompanied by 33 colorful costumed characters, including Bumble the Abominable Snow Monster, 14-foot moose characters, 12-foot-tall elves and 10-foot candy canes, plus penguins, elves and a troupe of marching wooden soldiers.

The parade follows the lighting of the five-story Special Effects Christmas Tree on the Square, a towering icon with over 350,000 colorful LED

lights that is the centerpiece of the Christmas on Main Street light and sound shows beginning at dusk each evening.

The tree blazes to the movements of Christmas songs, up to 100 light changes per second, while lights around the square flash along, accompanied by surround-sound.

The festival also features two popular musical productions, It's a Wonderful Life and A Dickens' Christmas Carol.

New this year, the show Tinker Junior's Toy Shop stars a 12-foot-tall talking Christmas tree that talks, sings and interacts with kids, accompanied by huge toy characters.



Six Flags Entertainment Corp. now offers Holiday in the Park in eight of its locations, after adding two new locations this year: Six Flags St. Louis, Mo., and Six Flags America, Baltimore/Washington D.C. Shown here, is a scene from Holiday in the Park at Six Flags Magic Mountain near Los Angeles. COURTESY SIX FLAGS



Great America, Santa Clara, Calif., debuted its holiday celebration this year. Winterfest began Nov. 25 and runs through Dec. 30. It features more than seven million lights, live shows and 20 rides and attractions. COURTESY GREAT AMERICA

Dollywood adds two rides and two special new events

PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. — Coming off a record year, which featured the best new attraction of 2016, Lightning Rod, as well as the successful first anniversary of Dollywood's DreamMore Resort, The Dollywood Company continues to provide more unique experiences at each of its family-friendly properties.

Two new family rides debut next summer at Dollywood, providing thrilling new adventures for guests. The first is Drop Line, a 200-foot-tall free-fall experience that towers over Timber Canyon and provides an incredible view of the park before its exhilarating finish. The drop tower ride, supplied by Funtime and Ride Entertainment, lifts Dollywood guests nearly 20 stories above the Canyon's pool, before plummeting them back to the ground in a thrilling rush. Also new is Whistle Punk Chaser, a junior coaster, from Zamperla, which throws exciting twists and turns at Dollywood's younger loggers, helping prepare them for the day they can join their parents aboard the award-winning Thunderhead wooden coaster.

"As everybody already knows, family is very important to me," Dolly Parton explained. "These days, there doesn't seem

to be enough time for families to be together, whether you're a just a couple like me and Carl or you have 12 kids like my family did growing up. That's why we continue to add all these new rides and shows for families to experience together.

"We have something for everyone, but even more important, we have something for you and your family. We're adding so much this year; I'm calling 2017 'the year of the family!'"

In addition to the new attractions, families have two engaging new events to experience 2017. Just in time for families enjoying spring break, the park will introduce Enra, a Tokyo-based dance company which was featured on "America's Got Talent" in 2015. The group wowed audiences with their high-energy multi-media dance, light and video fusion show. Interactive video and lights combine with the talented performers to create a unique, cutting-edge experience for guests.

In October, Dollywood's Harvest Festival adds the spectacular Great! Pumpkin LumiNights event. This nighttime event immerses families in fabulous fall pumpkin illumination. Additionally, a new



NEW FOR 2017



Dollywood's new-for-2017 ride lineup includes Drop Line, a 200-foot-tall drop tower from Austria's Funtime and Whistle Punk Chaser, a junior coaster from Zamperla.

Also new is TailSpin Racer, a multi-lane mat racer from WhiteWater for Dollywood's Splash Country.

COURTESY DOLLYWOOD

pumpkin trail comes to life after dark with a number of spectacular pumpkin displays glowing with the fire of fall. The festival also includes the Southern Gospel Jubilee which brings in the greatest Southern gospel talent around.

"We are really excited about adding the Great! Pump-

kin LumiNights to our Harvest event," said Gene Scherrer, Dollywood's vice-president and general manager. "We've created a number of impressive displays that will light up the night and allow us to add some new experiences for families to enjoy the fun of fall in a uniquely Dollywood way."

The company also recently announced the addition of TailSpin Racer, a multi-lane, mat racer-style slide (supplied by WhiteWater West) to Dollywood's Splash Country for 2017. The parks' 2017 additions are all part of Parton's \$300 million investment in Dollywood announced in 2013.

Morey's Piers, Vekoma rebuilding The Great Nor'Easter SLC

AT: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

WILDWOOD, N.J. — During the off-season, Morey's Piers is doing a first: undertaking a complete rebuild of its 1995 custom-designed 2,100-foot-long Vekoma suspended looping coaster (SLC) known as FLY! – The Great Nor'Easter. The ride is located on the oldest of the three amusement piers, Surfside Pier, located at 25th Street in North Wildwood. The Morey's weighed the cost of retrofitting the existing ride versus a new coaster. It was felt the rebuild was the best way to proceed. Total rehab price is \$5 million.

Supervising the project is Mike Granigan, director of construction and a 20-year Morey's Piers veteran. He explained the reasons for the rebuild. "This coaster was built in 1995 and over the last 20 years there has been new technology that has evolved, allowing for a smoother ride



NEW FOR 2017

A massive 250-foot-tall crane is on site at Morey's Pier's as disassembly of The Great Nor'Easter's running track is well underway. The Vekoma SLC is being outfitted with new running track from Vekoma along with an updated control system and magnetic brakes. COURTESY MOREY'S PIERS

and a better guest experience." With a computerized pipe-bending technique not available in the mid-1990's, (now an industry standard), the end result will meet those higher expectations of today's parkgoers.

All running track is getting replaced by Vekoma Rides (Vlodrop, Limburg,

Netherlands), with only the station and lift hill track remaining from the 21-year old installation. In addition to the track rebuild, new magnetic brakes (via Intrasy of Germany) and a new Vekoma control system will complete the rehabilitation. "This way we can kill two birds with one stone," said

Granigan.

The ride was two thirds disassembled, with the last six track containers arriving in early November. The disassembly is occurring utilizing numerous methods — sledgehammers, power tools and cutting torches. The controls and electrical pieces arrived in mid-November. The timetable includes reassembly and structural work before Christmas, with pneumatics and construction work in December and January and then testing in March. Vekoma is doing all the erection work with two local contractors handling the welding and electrical aspects. A 250-foot-tall crane from Thackray Crane Rental of Philadelphia, is being used to remove the old track and replace it with newly manufactured sections.

The paint scheme will also be new. The ride started its life in coral pink, then to the current white. The track will stay white for this third

generation paint scheme, with a series of seven varying shades of blue for the support structure. The western end of the ride (Boardwalk side) will be light blue and ending on the eastern portion of the structure with midnight blue (Atlantic Ocean side). Between those ends, five different shades of blue will round out the appearance. Baynum Painting Inc. of Newport, Ky. is doing the work.

Morey's Piers is not completely scrapping the old track. Rather, most of it will be turned into an art sculpture for the boardwalk and/or into a piece to be used at a nearby children's playground. The track being removed is temporarily stored on the old Hunt's Pier. At least two sections of track are being donated to the National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives and will be headed to the archival storage facility in Plainview, Texas.

SAN DIEGO ZOO CELEBRATES 100 YEARS, PART 2

The wild, ultimately rewarding journey of a zoological landmark

AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

SAN DIEGO, Calif. — The San Diego Zoo has had a lot to celebrate during its centennial in 2016. And it all began with a quite-literal roar.

In September 1916, local physician, Harry Wegeforth, was driving back to his office with his brother after performing surgery. As they passed Balboa Park, Wegeforth heard the vocalizations of a lion. The big cat, it turned out, was one of several animals left behind in a ragtag row of cages after the Panama-California Exposition.

Wegeforth, a wildlife enthusiast, said, "Wouldn't it be splendid if San Diego had a zoo?"

From that moment, Wegeforth's idea germinated and grew not only into a 100-acre zoo in Balboa Park, but a not-for-profit organization known today as San Diego Zoo Global — operator of the San Diego Zoo, the San Diego Zoo Safari Park and the San Diego Zoo Institute for Conservation Research.

San Diego Zoo Global is the world's largest zoological membership organization, with more than 250,000 member households and 130,000 child memberships representing a half million people.

"We see this as a place to create empathy for wildlife," said Dwight Scott, the zoo's director. "Nature is shrinking and habitats are vanishing. We're working toward the goal of conserving species and ensuring that animals don't go



extinct on our watch."

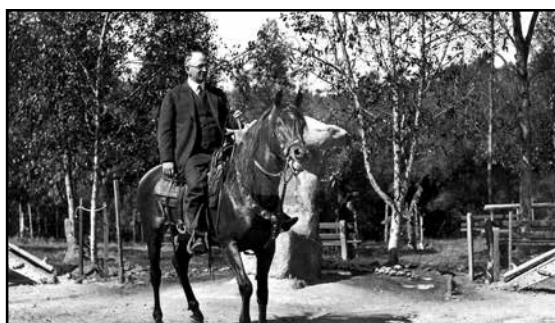
Bold beginnings

It was Harry Wegeforth's empathy — and energy — that sparked the zoo's founding in 1916.

After establishing the Zoological Society of San Diego with several colleagues on Oct. 2 of that year, Wegeforth moved forward despite doubts about his proposed zoo project voiced by the community, which had dubbed it "Wegeforth's Folly." He assumed the care of the caged animals remaining in Balboa Park following the exposition; they included bison, coyotes, deer, elk, lions, monkeys and a few other species.

Among the zoo's first new additions was a one-year-old female brown bear named Caesar. The bear had been living as a mascot aboard a Navy ship but had become mischievous, so the sailors donated her.

In 1917, Wegeforth began what essentially was the first zoo membership drive, encouraging friends, associates and just about everyone he met to become members of the Zoo-



The proposal by Dr. Harry Wegeforth (above left) to create the San Diego Zoo in 1916 stirred skepticism, but his work won the community over. In 1927, Wegeforth's right hand, Belle Benchley — shown with Bengal tiger triplets — was named zoo director, becoming the first woman fill such a role. COURTESY SAN DIEGO ZOO



The zoo gets all decked out for the holidays for its annual Jungle Bells seasonal event. The celebration, which includes special family activities, runs Dec. 9 to Jan. 2 (except Dec. 24). COURTESY SAN DIEGO ZOO

logical Society.

From the start, Wegeforth wanted the San Diego Zoo to be innovative. He had heard about a new style of exhibit being used in Germany — an open-air grotto surrounded by moats — and he brought this concept to San Diego. The zoo's bears were the first to

enjoy this cage-free type of environment in 1920; the lions were next. In 1923 the zoo debuted the Scripps Flight Cage, the world's largest aviary at 95 feet high and 115 feet long, for the display of shore and wading birds. It was funded by the zoo's first benefactor, Ellen Browning Scripps, who also

helped pay for the property's fence.

The zoo garnered international attention by the mid-1920s following its addition of two elephants, Empress and Queenie, as well as koalas and other animals from Australia — the latter a U.S. first. Meanwhile, Wegeforth spearheaded the formation of the National Association of Zoo Executives so that zoo directors could more efficiently collaborate in exchanging and importing animals. Aquariums soon were admitted to the group, and it underwent several name changes before becoming the independent organization known today as the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

In 1927, the zoo generated headlines again when Wegeforth and the board of trustees named Belle Benchley, a former bookkeeper who had become an in-house animal researcher, the zoo's new director — the first woman to hold such a po-



Home to some 3,700 animals from more than 650 species and subspecies — including snow leopards (left) and giant pandas (above) — the San Diego Zoo is world-renowned for its collection and conservation work. Visitors can get up close to some of the animals, such as these giraffes. COURTESY SAN DIEGO ZOO

► See ZOO, page 22



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SAN DIEGO ZOO CELEBRATES 100 YEARS, PART 2

►ZOO

Continued from page 20

sition at a large public zoo.

Benchley expanded the zoo's collection: among other creatures, Galápagos tortoises, seals and sea lions were showcased. Bengal tiger triplets were born onsite in 1929; in 1931, the arrival of two young male gorillas — Mbongo and Ngagi — further solidified the zoo's reputation for animal variety and care.

The zoo managed to survive the Great Depression — barely. In 1932, with San Diego County struggling, the assessor tried to collect thousands in back taxes owed on the zoo property by conducting an auction of its animals and assets while Wegeforth was out of town. Only the zoo didn't own the land; it leased the acreage from the city. The auction was deemed illegal, and the zoo resumed normal operations.

In 1934, Wegeforth rallied San Diego voters to approve a proposition guaranteeing the



The generous size and naturalistic detail of the San Diego Zoo's animal habitats, such as those for its gorillas and polar bears, are hallmarks of the facility. The Conrad Prebys Polar Bear Plunge includes a 130,00-gallon chilled pool that offers visitors a rare underwater view. COURTESY SAN DIEGO ZOO



zoo a small annual appropriation from county property taxes — giving it a reliable budget base on which to build.

The century onward

Before the decade was out, the zoo unveiled another aviary, the Great Eagle Cage

(today known as the Owens Rain Forest Aviary), that was even larger than the Scripps Flight Cage. The Reptile House and the exhibits behind it on Reptile Mesa also were completed.

Encouraged by Wegeforth, Belle Benchley became a public speaker and author, writing several popular books — her first was *My Life in a Man-Made Jungle* — between 1940 and 1945. When Wegeforth died of a heart attack in 1941, she was devastated, writing in her zoo records: "This day marks the greatest change the zoo has ever known, and the saddest."

Six months later, the zoo found itself announcing the bombing of Pearl Harbor over its P.A. system, and soon the U.S. was at war. Visitation fell because San Diego had a military base and people feared the city would be a target. Fortunately, that never happened. But the zoo still suffered from gas and food rationing — and like many Americans, it started its own "victory gardens" to grow food for the animals.

Coming out of the war years, the zoo's annual attendance soared past a half million, with both civilian and military visitors seeking a respite. New mammal exhibits were opened and new avenues of publicity were explored, leading to coverage in publications such as *Look* and *The Saturday Evening Post*.

In the late 1940s, as the zoo was ramping up its veterinary research efforts behind the scenes, the Balboa Park Miniature Railroad opened

outside the zoo's gates (the ride became an official part of the zoo in 2002). Three baby gorillas acquired in 1949 and a live two-headed California kingsnake donated for display a few years later further boosted attendance.

Benchley's retirement in 1953 brought the return of the zoo's first veterinarian and research scientist, Dr. Charles Schroeder, in the role of director. He oversaw a number of zoo milestones, including the production of a television show showcasing the animals, *Zoorama*, that broadcast live from the grounds beginning in 1955, and the opening of the maze-like, scaled-to-kids'-height Children's Zoo on the property.

As part of Schroeder's zoo revitalization, he added a new grotto exhibit for the polar bears in 1960; four years later, he oversaw the opening of the Hummingbird Aviary. In 1966, he cemented the zoo's reputation for global leadership by organizing the first international conference on zoos and conservation.

In 1969, San Diego voters passed a \$6 million bond issue to fund the creation of a 1,800-acre Wild Animal Park affiliated with, and located not far from, the zoo in Escondido, Calif. — a dream of Schroeder's that would be realized upon the park's opening in May 1972.

Schroeder retired from the zoo in 1973 and headed up a committee to work on the Endangered Species Act of 1974. But the combined conservation efforts at the zoo and Wild Animal Park (re-

named San Diego Zoo Safari Park in 2010) by passionate succeeding directors brought successes throughout the end of the 20th century and into the new one — including a cheetah birth, many chicks hatched under the California Condor Recovery Program and the first surviving giant panda cub born in the U.S.

At the same time, the zoo expanded and upgraded facilities; added play areas and activities; and, in 1992, even began offering fine dining with the opening of Albert's Restaurant, named after the zoo's much-loved silverback gorilla. The completion of Monkey Trails and Forest Tales, a three-acre habitat for more than 30 species of animals and a variety of exotic plants, gave the zoo a true centerpiece.

The most recent decade of the San Diego Zoo and San Diego Zoo Global's history has been dynamic. New dimensions have been added with sprawling, naturalistic exhibits such as the Harry and Grace Steele Elephant Odyssey, Conrad Prebys Australian Outback and Panda Trek. Coming in 2017 is the eight-acre, \$68 million Conrad Prebys Africa Rocks, showcasing the continent's diverse habitats and inhabitants.

In addition, San Diego Zoo Global has expanded and launched new conservation field projects through the San Diego Zoo Institute for Conservation Research and its curatorial, veterinary and horticultural departments; at present, there are 140 projects in 80 countries.

Current zoo director Dwight Scott pointed out that the zoo's work inspires children through the San Diego Zoo Kids network, which is comprised of a website and a closed-circuit TV channel reaching almost 80 children's hospitals and Ronald McDonald Houses in 23 states and four countries.

"It's a series of content channels meant to connect children with nature, wherever they may be," he said. "It shares the stories of animal care, welfare and conservation."

Visit the zoo's website for much more on its history, extensive exhibits, tours, attractions, as well as special centennial programs and events.

•sandiegozoo.org

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2016 State Fair Texas ends with record attendance

Coupon sales up \$2.4 million; top \$56 million

AT: Pam Sherborne

psherborne@amusementtoday.com

DALLAS, Texas — The 2016 State Fair of Texas, which ran Sept. 30-Oct. 23, was the most successful fair in its history.

A record 2,402,199 visitors passed through the fair gates. The event generated \$56 million in gross coupon sales for food, beverages and rides, another all-time record. That money figure represents at least a \$2.4 million increase over 2015's record total in gross coupon sales.

"We appreciate the continued support of our fairgoers from both near and far in helping to make this year's fair a success," said Mitchell Glieber, president, State Fair of Texas. "A successful fair allows us to fulfill our mission of celebrating all things Texan by promoting agriculture, education, and community involvement through quality entertainment in a family-friendly environment."

"With 130 years under our Texas-sized belt buckle, we look forward to continuing the fair tradition in Fair Park for many future genera-

FAIR ROUNDUP

tions," Glieber said.

Bringing the traditional lineup of food, festivities and family fun, the 2016 State Fair also threw a few new additions into the mix. Some of those were:

- The Hall of State, which welcomed approximately 225,000 fairgoers to visit the "The Taylor Swift Experience," as well as four other exhibits dedicated to the Lone Star State and its history.

- Mundo Latino presented "Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel – The Exhibition" as its annual exhibit in the Women's Museum. Appearing in America for the first time ever, this one-of-a-kind showcase recreated one of the world's greatest artistic achievements through photographic reproduction displayed in its original size.

- The all-new Lone Star Stampede featured quintessential Western themes like stagecoaches, horses, cowboys and a longhorn cattle drive.

- The Majesty of the Horse featured various breeds of horses and their unique qualities.

As a nod to its agricultural roots and the fair organization's mission statement, fair management chose "Celebrating Texas Agriculture" as its 2016 theme. With this year's theme in mind, fair management implemented more agricultural-related activities around the grounds, in addition to the many exhibits and events that have been around for years.

At the all-new exhibit "I Spy Texas," fairgoers got to experience the different wildlife and natural resources unique to each region of Texas.

City-dwellers caught a glimpse of life on the farm by attending one of the fair's daily Milking Demonstrations, which moved to a new location next to Big Tex's Farmyard.

Among other educational opportunities and agricultural initiatives, fair management created the new Livestock 101 Stage, which offered daily presentations from resident livestock experts.

With an 18 percent increase from last year, the 2016 fair hosted a total of 12,708



The Texas Star was the top ride at the 2016 State Fair of Texas, Dallas, Sept. 30-Oct. 23. The 212-foot-tall wheel was manufactured by S.D.C. and is owned by Mary and Tom Talley. AT/TIM BALDWIN

livestock entries. Overall participation numbers increased by 35 percent, with 7,500 students competing in the fair's livestock and agricultural shows.

The annual Youth Livestock Auction raised more than \$1.4 million in scholarships and prizes for Texas youth.

Another record was set when III Forks Steakhouse and the Big Tex Champion Club purchased the Grand Champion Market Steer for \$131,000 at the Youth Livestock Auction.



The Evolution, manufactured by Fabbri Rides, was a new offering on the midway at this year's State Fair of Texas, Dallas. The ride is owned by Jim Bishop, who was a new ride operator at the 2016 fair. AT/TIM BALDWIN

There were 73 rides and attractions offered on the midway this year, with four of them being new to the fair. Those included:

- Konga, brought in by Mike Demas and manufactured by KMG;

- Evolution, Jim Bishop, Fabbri Rides;

- Space Roller, Jeremy Floyd, Mondial;

- Dragon Wagon, Morrie Hayworth, Wisdom.

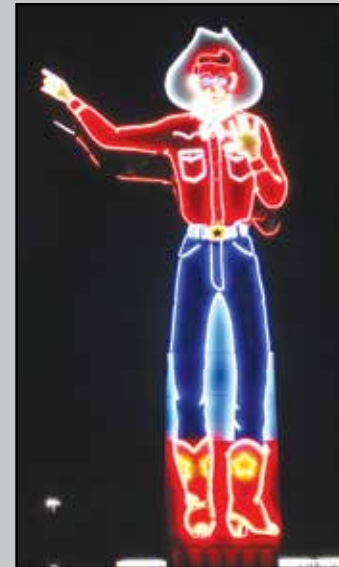
Rusty Fitzgerald, senior vice president, operations, said there were three new ride operators at the fair this year as well. They were Jim Bishop, Jeremy Floyd and Derek and Kitty Long.

After a successful debut in 2015, the Thrifty Thursdays food discount program returned for this year's fair, with almost double the number of concession items offered at a discounted price. Fairgoers flocked to participating food vendors on Thursdays, who offered one of their signature menu items at a reduced price, ranging from mini versions to regular-size items.

Winners of the 2016 Big Tex Choice Awards were Ruth Hauntz who received Best Taste for her fried Jello and Isaac Rouso who received Most Creative for his State Fair Cookie Fries.

The remaining six finalists were: Caribbean Pineapple Korn-a-Copia by Stephen Alade; Deep Fried Bacon Burger Dog Slider on a Stick by Brent and Juan Reaves; Deep Fried Pulled Pork "FUNYUN" Dings

Neon Big Tex glows over Cotton Bowl Plaza



Whether the 55-year-old, 38-foot-tall neon Big Tex sign, a new addition to the State Fair of Texas, Dallas, had anything to do with drawing crowds to this year's event, the neon Big Tex was seen by a record number of fairgoers. The fair drew the largest crowd in the event's history. The neon Big Tex at one time hawked Centennial's liquor, beer and wine. Centennial was located near the fairgrounds and the neon Big Tex could be seen by fairgoers as they made their way to the annual event. But the business closed for highway expansion, and until last year when the sign went up for sale, neon Big Tex was stranded. Fair management purchased the sign and moved it into storage for its 2016 debut. It now stands tall in the Cotton Bowl Plaza, near the entrance to the ride midway.

AT/TIM BALDWIN

by Chris Howard; Fernie's Down Home Chicken Pot Pie Pocket with Mac 'n Cheese Dip by Christi Erpillo; Injectable Great Balls of BBQ by Glen Kusak, and Southern Fried Chicken & Dumplings by Clint Probst.

New sports shows this year included Xpogo, an extreme sports show, and the Lords of Gravity Basketball Slam Dunk Show.

Dates for the 2017 State Fair of Texas are Sept. 29-Oct. 22.

2016 Top Rides State Fair of Texas

1. **Texas Star**, owned by Mary and Tom Talley, manufactured by S.D.C.
2. **Texas Skyway**, owned by the State Fair of Texas, manufactured by Dopplemayr
3. **Crazy Mouse**, S.J. Entertainment (Steve VanderVorse), Reverchon
4. **Love Bugs**, State Fair of Texas, Mack Rides
5. **Top O' Texas Tower**, State Fair of Texas, Intamin
6. **Pirate Ship**, State Fair of Texas, Huss
7. **Windstar Roller Coaster**, S.J. Entertainment (Steve VanderVorse), S.D.C.
8. **Fast Trax Super Slide**, Talley Amusements, Fabbri
9. **Starship 3000**, Kyle Wisdom, Wisdom Manufacturing
10. **Log Ride**, State Fair of Texas, Arrow

North Carolina State Fair survives weather, exceeds 1 million visitors

RALEIGH, N.C. — Despite the devastation of Hurricane Matthew, the North Carolina State Fair here had its share of good weather and great attendance. Fair officials were concerned about the aftermath of Matthew as many communities were still reeling from record flooding when the fair opened on Oct. 13 to a lighter-than-usual crowd.

But the final weekend of the fair, Oct. 22 & 23, pushed attendance just shy of the all-time record.

More than 266,000 people went through the gates on the final Saturday and Sunday, helping make 2016 the second-most attended fair on record. The fair reported 1,028,364 visitors for the 11-day run.

Sunday's attendance of 116,041 set a new mark for the final day and Saturday's 150,747 guests was the second most on record.

The attendance record was set in 2010, when 1,091,887 people attended the fair.

Powers Great American Midways provided more than 100 rides on the mammoth midway, including its new 33-meter wheel.

—Ron Gustafson

Powers Great American Midways features more than 100 rides at this year's North Carolina State Fair in Raleigh. At right, Wade Shows' Hit In 2000 Super Himalaya has been refitted with LEDs and is making an appearance with Powers on the midway.

COURTESY RON GUSTAFSON



The new N.C. State Fair Flyer ride provides an outstanding view of the huge midway at this year's fair in Raleigh, N.C. The chairlift ride, owned and operated by the fair, takes riders on a 1,400-foot trip over Powers Great American Midways attractions. A one-way ticket is \$5 per person with roundtrip costing \$8. COURTESY RON GUSTAFSON

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AT: Pam Sherborne

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FAIR ROUNDUP

NORTH AMERICA — While tried and true attractions, exhibits and rides continue to provide fairs with consistencies, many fairs also provide fairgoers with something new to keep them coming back year after year.

The following is the continued listing of 2016 fair results:

K-Days, Edmonton, Alta., Canada

2016 dates: July 22-31

2016 attendance: 803,087

2015 attendance: 801,240 est.

Reason for attendance increase/decrease: Great weather and an abundance of entertainment including 20 acts over 10 days on two stages.

Carnival: North American Midway Entertainment.

Number of rides: 50.

New ride(s): Charlie Chopper, Majestic Manufacturing.

New exhibit(s): N/A.

Top promotion(s): 10-day Pow Wow with the Alexis Nakota Sioux nation.

2017 dates: July 21-30.

Tulsa State Fair, Tulsa, Okla.

2016 dates: Sept. 29-Oct. 9

2016 attendance: 1,206,000 est.

2015 attendance: 1,200,000 est.

Reason for attendance increase/decrease: Great weather, entertainment.

Carnival: North American Midway Entertainment.

Number of rides: 60.

New ride(s): 12 - Bon-sai, manufactured by Fabbri; Flitzer, Zierer; Mach 3, KMG; Polar Express, Chance; Remix, Tivoli; Skater, Zamperla; Ring of Fire, Larson International; Antique Cars, Gould Manufacturing; Kite Flyer, Zamperla; Monster Truck, Wisdom; Spidermania, Eli Bridge, and Euro Slide.

New exhibit(s): Ma'Ceo Circus, Moto Maniacs, Wild About Monkeys, Little Ray's Reptile Zoo, Flippin and Trough Talk.

Top food(s): Top 3 - Ribeye Sandwich, Turkey Legs and Corn Dogs.

Top promotion(s): Ford Family Fun Night - \$1.00 gate admission with a coupon from a local Ford Dealer

and \$2.00 rides.

2017 dates: Sept. 28-Oct. 8

2016 Big Fresno Fair Fresno, Calif.

2016 dates: Oct. 5 - 16

2016 attendance: 605,870

2015 attendance: 608,269

Reason for attendance increase/decrease: Slight threat of rain on final three days of fair.

Carnival: Butler Amusements.

Number of rides: 59.

New ride(s): Inversion, manufactured by KMG, and Quasar, A.R.M.

New exhibit(s): Extreme Creature Feature, with snakes, turtles, spiders, scorpions and more; GASCAR, Crazy Animal Races, racing goats, sheep, chickens, pigs and other surprise animals, all wearing racing silks; Ag Ventureland received a makeover with more educational activities for the whole family, with a new pack mule exhibit; Camel rides; Discover the Bayou, an exhibit that takes fairgoers on a trip into the swamplands of the Louisiana bayou and what may be found there.

Top food(s): Fabe's Churros & Gelato, Country Fair Cinnamon Rolls, Chicken Charlie's deep fried foods, and Big Bubba's Bad BBQ.

Top promotion(s): Pre-Fair Savings at Save Mart & FoodMaxx, \$2 off of fair admission and up to \$10 unlimited carnival ride wristbands; O'Reilly Auto Parts Discounted Season Pass; \$1 Wednesday on Oct. 5; Fans & Follower Day, plus \$2 carnival rides; Seniors' Day presented by Eye-Q and Humana; Les Schwab Tires \$2 Tuesday; Sun-Maid Kids' Day, plus \$2 carnival rides; and SaveMart and FoodMaxx Food Drive.

2017 dates: Oct. dates TBA

Arkansas State Fair, Little Rock, Ark.

2016 dates: October 14-23

2016 attendance: 450,702

2015 attendance: 473,106

Reason for attendance decrease: Last year was an all-time record year and was tough to compete with, said



The Big Fresno (Calif.) Fair, held this year Oct. 5-16, saw a slight dip in attendance this year compared to 2015 due to a slight threat of rain on the final three days. Butler Amusements provided the midway with 59 rides including two new ones. COURTESY BIG FRESNO FAIR



The 2016 Tulsa (Okla.) State Fair, which ran Sept. 29-Oct. 9, drew 1,206,000 fairgoers this year, up from last year's total. North American Midway Entertainment provided the midway with 60 rides including 12 new ones to the fair. COURTESY TULSA STATE FAIR

Ralph Shoptaw, fair president and general manager.

Carnival: Deggeller Attractions.

Number of rides: N/A.

New ride(s): Flitzer, manufactured by Zierer; Puppy Roll, Gold Star Manufacturing; Extreme; Crazy Dance, A.R.M.; Charlie Chopper, Majestic Manufacturing.

New exhibit(s): The Moogician, Chicago Boyz Acrobatic Team, and Wolves of the World.

Top food: New foods - Maple Bacon Funnel Cake, Fried Tequila Shots, Pretzel-Crusted Brownie on a Stick, Snicker Bar Salad, Fried Grilled Cheese

Sandwich, Fried Chicken and Gravy in a Waffle.

Top Food: Roast Beef Sundae.

Top promotion(s): Dollar Day (\$1 parking, \$1 Gate and \$1 rides all day on Monday).

2017 dates: Oct. 13-22.

South Carolina State Fair, Columbia, S.C.

2016 dates: Oct. 12-23

2016 attendance: 464,878

2015 attendance: 429,947

Reason for attendance increase/decrease: Ideal weather, expanded ride promotion and record football Saturday attendance (the fairgrounds are adjacent to University of South Carolina

football stadium).

Carnival: North American Midway Entertainment.

Number of rides: 72.

New ride(s): Freak Out, manufactured by KMG; Charlie Chopper, Majestic Manufacturing; and Tornado, Wisdom Rides.

New exhibit(s): Kenya Safari Acrobats and the King BMX Stunt Show, along with a long list of stage and roving shows.

Top promotion(s): A pay-one-price promotion to all 12 days of the fair this year. Previously, that promotion had only been offered on weekdays.

• **2017 dates:** Oct. 11-22



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BUSINESS, SAFETY & CLASSIFIED

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Industry Food Service Conference held at State Fair of Texas

40th annual gathering honors event originator

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com



DALLAS/FT. WORTH, Texas — Every October, amusement industry professionals gather to talk Food & Beverage, and attendees agree that the annual conference is worth the trip. For its 40th foray, the confab hit North Texas with time shared between Dallas and Ft. Worth.

When setting up the 2016 conference, organizer **Ken Whiting** of **Whiting's Food Concessions** at **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk** spoke with **Carey Don Risinger** about the potential of visiting the **State Fair of Texas**. Risinger, who originated the conference idea four decades ago while working at **Six Flags Over Texas**, was keen on the idea, but it came with a caveat. The State Fair of Texas runs for 24 straight days with no days off. He could play host for an outing at the park, but others would have to take the lead for the rest of the conference. Whiting accepted.

From Oct. 11-14, more than 60 parks were represented among the 130-plus attendees. The conference balances informality with structure to give many opportunities to hear, discuss, and share best practices and creative ideas.

Beginning in Ft. Worth, a night out at the city's famed **Joe T. Garcia's** set the festivities in motion with a casual night of networking.

The following three days offered attendees a variety of

offerings. *Amusement Today* asked Whiting how the conference was structured.

"Each year, whomever is the volunteer host, organizes the event any way that they want to," said Whiting. "Certainly the starting point comes from what has been typically provided. This year, we did the following:

- Four separate round table discussions on relevant topics.
- Four presentations were made.
- Over the few days, there were several "open sessions", where any questions that someone wanted to ask could occur, with time to get answers from others in the audience.
- Three hour trade show.
- Two site visits to the State Fair of Texas and **Fort Worth Zoo**.

• Nightly dinners that provided a networking opportunity.

We didn't have our first education session until Wednesday morning, and ended at noon on Friday. The trade show was from noon – 3 on Friday. It was a jam packed, busy few days."

Wednesday's site visit at the State Fair of Texas was incredibly popular with attendees. Shuttled to the fairgrounds not far from Dallas' skyline, the schedule started with a



Above, attendees at the 40th Annual Food service Conference gather around the iconic Big Tex during the State Fair of Texas in Dallas. Right, Carey Don Risinger is honored with a plaque from Ken Whiting, left, for his original conference inspiration.

AT/TIM BALDWIN



brief introduction and then a special presentation honored Carey Don Risinger with a special glass plaque.

"Given the opportunity, I simply was compelled to acknowledge Carey Don as the individual who took the first step in getting industry peers together 40 years ago," Whiting told AT later that evening. "This event delivers high value for those that attend, yet not too many even know who started it. Knowing that we would be meeting with Carey

Don, it provided the setting for him to be acknowledged."

Two speakers that evening offered insight, inspiration and shared expertise. **Isaac Rouso** told his story of being an outsider who finally made his way into the State Fair of Texas lineup of vendors, only to become a fair fixture and an award-winning food outlet in a relatively short time. This year, he has recently opened his menu inside two Wal-Mart facilities in outlets called **State Fair Treats**. Offering his award-

winning fried Cuban rolls and numerous other delicious options, Rouso could potentially find himself inside Wal-Marts nationwide alongside such staples such as McDonald's and Subway.

The second speaker, **Lenny Freund** of **Freund Family Foods/North Star Food and Beverage**, spoke of his years within many aspects of the amusement industry and shared his focus of always tak-

► See F&B, page 29

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►F&B

Continued from page 28

ing care of what is at hand, particularly your day-to-day customers in the park right now.

Rousso shared many of his creative specialties at a group reception, and armed with food coupons in hand, attendees set out to explore the fair and taste the many creations on offer.

Wendy Crain of **Belmont Park** said, "We're now doing the food and beverage at Belmont Park. We used to do just the rides, but now we are entering a new era of food. This conference so far has been invaluable. I think what resonated with me was everything they say about food and beverage is true for rides and operations. You have to look at people at giving them the time of their life."

Terry Capener, general manager of **Lagoon**, has attended 35 conferences. He said, "Every time I hear Lenny Freund speak I'm inspired to be a better food operator. He's awesome. He's done so many things in his life. He has made all of us better people."

Amanda Horner, food and beverage operations manager at **Kennywood**, became aware of the conference when Kennywood was host four years ago. "You learn so much and you get to pick people's brains. It's fun."

After a few hours on the grounds, attendees gathered once more to be shuttled back to Ft. Worth. Whiting and Risinger fielded questions from the audience, most centered around the fair's operations. It was noted that many attendees were carting taffy, fair souvenirs, Vegemats, the works...

As the group boarded their shuttles, Risinger told *AT*, "This has been one of the thrills of my life. To have this combination of young people and seasoned people come to do what I'm doing in my last semester of this business. I probably went to the first 10 to 12 [conferences], but I've always kept in touch. The season is done for most of them and it is time to plan."

A second site visit took place that Thursday with a late afternoon private tour of the Ft. Worth Zoo that included both animal exhibits and their F&B operations. "They prepared dinner for us which was fantastic," said Whiting.

Friday's trade show was also deemed a success. The entire conference has major support from **Dippin Dots**, **The ICEE Co.** and **Whirley-Drinkworks**.

Once the conference concluded, those that could remain enjoyed an evening at Ft. Worth's famous **Billy Bob's** that Friday.

"This was our first conference," said Crain. "They said if you don't take away at least three ideas, you aren't talking to enough people. I had three

takeaways my first day. This was well worth my time."

"If there is one thing I go to, it's this one," added Capener.

"One of the great things about this gathering is how efficient it seems to operate," said Whiting. "It's all volunteers with no dues, bylaws, organization or rules. Whatever the host wants to do...they are free to make it their own."

The 2017 host facility next October will be **Silver Dollar City**.



Attendees at the Food Service Conference tried many of the fair's famous offerings. *AT*/TIM BALDWIN



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Cavu Designwerks announces new company, major product sale

VICTORIA, B.C., Canada — Media-based attractions provider **Cavu Designwerks, Inc.**, has announced the launch of a connected corporation and a major sale of one of its own products to a resort in China.

The new Cavu-affiliated company, **DreamCraft Attractions, Ltd.**, will develop revolutionary theme park experiences by integrating engineered ride systems with technologies including, but not limited to, virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) and artificial intelligence (AI).

DreamCraft Attractions was formed via a strategic partnership between Cavu and fellow Victoria-based company **One Bit Labs**. As a premier development studio formed by six senior members of the **Microsoft HoloLens** incubation team, One Bit Labs adds high-level expertise in VR, AR and AI to Cavu's decades-long experience and extensive theme park in-



dustry portfolio.

"Historically, innovation in our industry has focused on increasing the speed, enhancing the media or introducing new IP [intellectual property] to an attraction," said **Peter Schnabel**, CEO of Cavu. "What DreamCraft Attractions will seek to do is disrupt the current marketplace by revolutionizing the way the industry innovates. We are not interested in simply offering the next virtual reality product — we want to redefine immersive experiences completely."



DreamCraft Attractions' first innovation, DreamCraft VR, combines VR technology with a motion base ride system that places guests inside the frame — a feat never before accomplished. Unlike traditional media-based attractions, in which every guest feels the same motion and watches the same movie, DreamCraft Attractions' interactive attraction provides a unique experience for each guest tailored individually to his or her actions.

"Every guest who experiences

DreamCraft VR will see a uniquely rendered and reacting world, which will respond in meaningful ways to their inputs, both through hardware and natural body gestures," said **Chris Robertson**, founder of One Bit Labs. "We are thrilled to be able to offer this new technology to the market."

Meanwhile, following through on its goal to explore opportunities worldwide, Cavu has sold its Flying Theater product to Changsha, China-based company **Changsha Macrolink** for \$18 million.

Macrolink is developing a resort, known as the **Tongguan Kiln International Cultural and Tourism Project**, in Hunan province. Cavu will be the turn-key service provider responsible for designing the core attraction and supplying all related multimedia motion-based equipment.

•cavudw.com

Cedar Fair promotes Richard Zimmerman to president post

SANDUSKY, Ohio — **Cedar Fair Entertainment Company** (NYSE: FUN), recently announced the promotion of **Richard A. Zimmerman** to the position of president and chief operating officer.

"This promotion is an acknowledgement of the significant role Richard has played in the success of Cedar Fair," said **Matt Ouimet**, Cedar Fair's chief executive officer. "He is one of the most talented senior executives I have ever worked with. His deep understanding of the industry, our operations and our business model has enabled him to positively impact every meaningful decision we have made over the past five years. His role as president and chief operating officer will be to bridge strategy into execution — sorting to the things that will have the biggest operational impact and turning good ideas into operational reality."

Zimmerman has 30 years of experience in the leisure and hospitality industry and most recently served as chief operating officer of Cedar Fair. Prior to that he served as executive vice president since 2010, regional vice president since 2007 and as vice president and general manager of **Kings Dominion** since 1998. Prior to entering the amusement park industry, Richard served in various roles with **Paramount Communications, Inc.**

OBITUARIES

Volusia County Fair's, John W. Owens, Jr., dies at 70

ORANGE CITY, Fla. — **John W. Owens, Jr.**, 70 of Deland, Fla., passed away October 24,



Owens

2016 at his residence. He was born in Lombard, Illinois on July 17, 1946 and moved to central Florida in 1988 from North

Carolina. He served in the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam War.

John was the marketing director and acting general manager for the **Volusia County Fair** (2015). He loved the entertainment industry and music, especially playing the saxophone. He was very creative and a visionary. John was an author and very outgoing. He had a positive attitude which

resonated to others and he had the ability to connect with people to help them fulfill their dreams.

Survivors include his wife of 38 years, Sarah; son John Owens, III. (Tamara) of Nebo, NC; daughter Ann Marie Pike (Bilby) of Foster, R.I.; brother Robert Owens of Pittsboro, N.C.; sisters Carol Jane Thurber of Pittsboro, N.C. and Molly Maddock

(Harry) of Tacoma, Wash.; five grandchildren and one great-granddaughter.

A memorial service was held on October 31 at Allen-Summerhill Memorial Chapel in Orange City. Online condolences may be made at www.allensummerhill.com. Memorial donations may be made to Compassion International www.compassion.com.

Eli Bridge Company's Lee Sullivan dies at 91

JACKSONVILLE, Ill. — **Lee A. Sullivan Jr.**, 91, of Jacksonville, Ill., died October 25, 2016, at his home.

He was born July 12, 1925 in Jacksonville, the son of Lee A. Sr. and Nell Griffith Sullivan. He married Barbara Biennemann on March 29, 1949 and later married Betty Miller Kinnett Deem on October 25, 1975 and both have preceded him in death.

Lee was a 1942 graduate of Jacksonville High School and a 1950 graduate of the University of Illinois, College of Engineering where he was named to the Bronze Tablet, the university award for academic achievement. He served with the U.S. Navy from 1945-1946 and from 1951-1952.

A licensed professional engineer, Lee served as president and board chairman of **Eli Bridge Company** where he was involved in its leadership from 1950 until his death. He was nationally known throughout the amusement ride industry and



Lee A. Sullivan, Jr.

an advocate of raising safety standards. He was a member of the **Outdoor Amusement Business Association** which named Lee to their industry Hall of Fame. He was a past president of the **American Recreation Equipment Association** where he was instrumental in the creation of safety seminars. He was also a member of the **Showman's League of America** and **ASTM International**, an organization charged with establishing industry-wide safety standards. ASTM awarded Lee the "Jimmy Floyd Award" for his

outstanding service to amusement industry safety. Lee was also a founding and 19 year member of the Illinois **Carnival-Amusement Safety Board**.

Lee was a life-long member of Central Christian Church in Jacksonville where he formerly served as a deacon and choir member. He was a former member of the board of directors for both Jacksonville Savings and Loan Association (now Jacksonville Savings Bank) and Farmers State Bank and Trust Company in Jacksonville. He was a former board member and treasurer of the Sherwood Eddy YMCA and a member of the Jacksonville Area Chamber of Commerce.

He is survived by five children, William A. Sullivan of Jacksonville, Patricia Sullivan of Jacksonville, Robert Sullivan (wife, Sue) of Bethalto, Susan Sullivan-Tuncan (husband, Erdal) of Omaha, Neb., and Paul Sullivan of Springfield; five grandchildren, Jas Sullivan of Woodriver, Reya Tuncan Christensen (husband, Nicho-

las) of Lincoln, Neb., Erin Tuncan and Sanya Tuncan, both of Omaha, Neb., and Connor Sullivan (wife, Alexis) of Naperville; a niece, Julie Gaines (husband, Tom) of Jacksonville; two nephews, Larry Littler (wife, Kathy) of Jacksonville and David Littler (companion, Linda Hack) of Largo, Fla.; two cousins, Marian Russell McDaniel of Shawnee Mission, Kan. and Henrietta Doss of The Villages, Fla.; and his personal caregiver, Ava Sparrow of Jacksonville, whose care allowed him to continue residing in his home. He was preceded in death by his parents and two siblings, Peggy Littler and Liam "Bud" Sullivan.

A memorial service was held on October 31, 2016, at Central Christian Church in Jacksonville with interment at Diamond Grove Cemetery in Jacksonville. Memorial gifts may be made to the **Central Christian Church Memorial Fund**. Condolences may be sent online at www.buchanancody.com.

MARKETWATCH



COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 11/03/16	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	23.84	33.68	22.31
Merlin Entertainments Group/ Legoland	MERL	LSE	449.80	494.90	316.79
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	58.95	63.40	48.45
Comcast Corp./ NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	61.09	68.36	52.34
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	93.37	120.65	86.25
Dubai Parks & Resorts	DXBE:UH	DFM	1.54	1.77	0.95
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	9010	TYO	1115.00	1568.00	1004.00
Haicahang Holdings Ltd.	2255HK	SEHK	1.61	1.84	1.40
Leofoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	8.52	9.00	6.62
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	25.77	27.04	16.18
Parques Reunidos Servicios Centrales S.A.	ES:PQR	MCE	13.24	15.53	11.99
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	14.06	21.84	11.77
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	55.27	62.69	45.24
Skyocean International	00593HK	SEHK	9.10	11.36	7.95
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	434.50	499.50	350.00
Village Roadshow	VRL	ASX	5.04	7.51	4.46

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

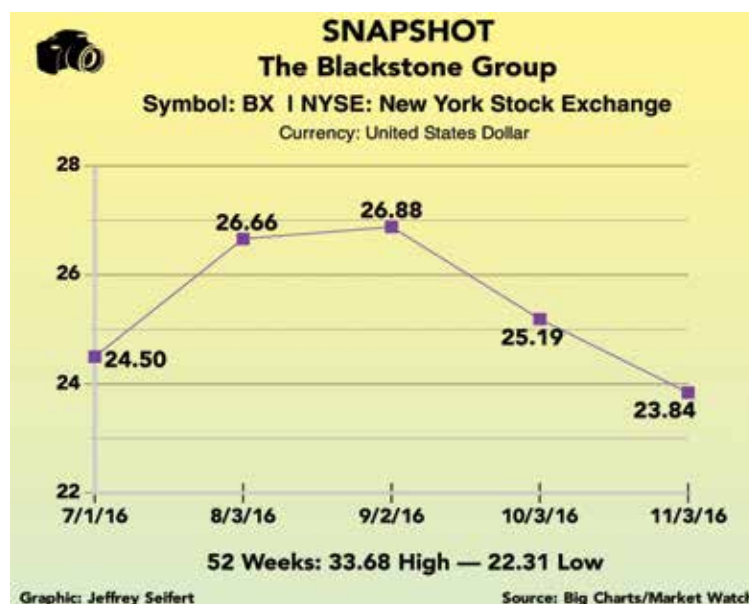
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Region (U.S.)	As of 10/31/16	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	\$2.475	-\$0.017
Midwest	\$2.443	-\$0.073
Gulf Coast	\$2.353	+\$0.063
Mountain	\$2.541	+\$0.044
West Coast	\$2.655	+\$0.106
California	\$2.855	+\$0.038

CURRENCY

On 11/04/16 \$1 USD =

0.9008	EURO
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103.03	JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.9726	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.3036	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.3382	CAD (Canadian Dollar)



BUSINESS WATCH

Fårup celebrates third best year on record

BLOKHUS, Denmark — **Fårup Sommerland** ended its 2016 season Oct. 23 and the final statistics show no less than 600,928 visitors visited the park.

"We can look back on a fantastic season as we close down. We achieved a highly satisfactory 600,928 visitors, the third highest figure ever, despite a wet, cold July, which was compensated by warm weather in the early season. Visitor satisfaction was once again very high, and we managed to move a significant number of 'satisfied' guests into the 'very satisfied' category, which we are of course delighted and proud about," says **Søren Kragelund**, director of Fårup Sommerland.

The 2016 season also saw the opening of Hotel Fårup.

"The hotel had a much better start than we ever dared hope for. We had very high occupation levels, almost sold out in peak season. And only a few weeks after it opened, we had already earned no less than five stars on Trip Advisor, the world's biggest travel review portal," concludes Kragelund.

Europa-Park registers 4.5 million summer visitors

RUST, Germany — The powerful mixture of large scale investment and constant investment strength continues to pay off for Germany's largest theme park as visitor numbers reach new heights of over 4.5 million across the 2016 summer season for the first time, even despite the unstable weather earlier in spring. **Europa-Park** expects continued success throughout the winter season, predicting to match or exceed their current record of 5.5 million visitors over the 2015 anniversary season.

Cedar Fair reports quarter results; distribution

SANDUSKY, Ohio — **Cedar Fair** (NYSE: FUN) reported on Nov. 2 results for its third quarter ended Sept. 25, 2016. The company also announced an increase in its quarterly cash distribution and stated it remains on track to achieve its FUNforward 2.0 growth goal earlier than its original target of 2018. Highlights are:

- Cedar Fair reported record net revenues of \$1.1 billion through the third quarter, a 3 percent increase over last year's record results for the same nine-month period.

- Net revenues through Oct. 30, 2016, were up 4 percent, driven by a 2 percent increase in attendance, a 1 percent increase in in-park guest per capita spending and a 6 percent increase in out-of-park revenues, including resort accommodations.

- Cedar Fair's board of directors declared a 4 percent increase in the company's quarterly cash distribution to \$0.855 per limited partner (LP) unit, payable Dec. 15, 2016. This distribution represents an annualized rate of \$3.42 per LP unit and an attractive 6 percent yield at current market prices.

Six Flags reports first nine month results

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — **Six Flags Entertainment Corporation** (NYSE: SIX), announced on Oct. 26 revenue for the first nine months of 2016 grew \$34 million or 3 percent to \$1.1 billion, driven primarily by admissions, in-park and international licensing revenue. Net income declined by \$36 million or 24 percent, primarily due to an \$86 million pre-tax stock-based compensation charge relating to the probable achievement of Project 600 by 2017, a long-term incentive compensation program established by the company in October 2014.

Adjusted EBITDA for the first nine months of 2016 grew \$12 million or 3 percent to \$431 million, while attendance grew 2 percent to 23.8 million guests. On a constant currency basis, revenue for the first nine months grew \$42 million or 4 percent and adjusted EBITDA grew \$15 million or 4 percent.

Third quarter 2016 revenue declined 3 percent or \$18 million to \$558 million, driven primarily by a 2 percent decline in attendance that was negatively affected by adverse weather during the peak months of the summer. International licensing revenue increased \$4 million or 113 percent over prior year. On a constant currency basis, revenue for the third quarter declined \$15 million or 3 percent.

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NAKED TURTLE

WWA Show exhibitors help promote water park safety

AT: Jeffrey Seifert
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

SAFETY & MAINTENANCE

NEW ORLEANS, La. — Guest safety is a top priority for the amusement industry — but even more so for the water park industry. Because of the participatory nature of water park activities, park owners and management must continually strive to make certain that while their guests are having a great time, they remain safe throughout their stay.

Safety seminars, certifications, and lifeguard courses were presented throughout the recent WWA Show. But safety goes beyond proper training and certifications. A number of products and services were available on the trade show floor to assist with keeping and maintaining a safe environment at pools, aquatic facilities and water parks throughout the world.

Pure water

Water quality continues to be a primary focus for aquatic facilities. As more and more people flock to water-based facilities, proper operation and health management can

sometimes be a challenging issue. Improper water treatment could result in exposure to waterborne pathogens such as cryptosporidium, giardia, shigella, or E. coli which could then affect the health of the guest — particularly young children or those with compromised immune systems.

A number of different products were on hand offering filtration, chemical disinfection, UV light disinfection, and ozone disinfection.

Perhaps one the best-known is **Neptune Benson** — claiming to filter and disinfect more water than any other company in the world. Its popular Defender brand regenerative media filter (RMF) can filter particles as small as one micron, and is a modern alternative to traditional sand or diatomite filters. (For comparison, a single blood cell is about five microns in diameter.) The Defender system is smaller and more efficient than traditional systems, requiring 75 percent less space and using only half the energy.



Guests instinctively know that a red light means wait and green means go, as seen here with this automated dispatch system from Launch Logic. COURTESY LAUNCH LOGIC

It also wastes 90 percent less water by eliminating the need for backwashing. Combining the highly filtered water with a UV disinfection system, can also result in less chemical consumption — up to 30 percent less.

WaterCo of Australia takes a different, but similar approach to water filtration. The WaterCo system uses tiny glass pearls to effectively filter water as small as three microns. This system can also reduce water usage with less backwash. The better

flowthrough rate also requires less energy than traditional filters.

AT spoke with **Troy Bowman**, regional sales manager, who said "[the glass pearl] is a manufactured glass product that is round or bee-bee-like, allowing the media to pack together tighter than jagged glass or sand. With the glass pearl media we can achieve better filtration — down to three microns." Bowman added, "the round media makes backwashing easier, using up to 20 per-

cent less water per backwash than a typical sand filter."

Facilities that are not able or ready to replace a traditional filter can take advantage of the UV or Ozone gas add-on products to help with water disinfection. Several companies were displaying chemical alternatives to typical chlorine disinfection. A number of systems are available to automate the monitoring of a facility's water quality, taking the guesswork out of chemical control and ensuring the water has the right balance to keep it safe without overusing chemical additives. An over concentration of chemicals in the water can also pose a hazard to guests.

Slippery slides and surfaces

Aquatic facilities want guests to slide safely down a slick slide, but slick surfaces elsewhere can present a real safety hazard. New slides offer a bright, shiny, smooth surface, but over time that surface can wear down. A worn surface can cause increased friction between guest and slide, slow-

► See **PRODUCTS**, page 33

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►PRODUCTS

Continued from page 32

ing the descent and potentially allowing a guest to get stuck, possibly leading to a collision. A worn slide can also cause friction burns on skin, or even expose fiberglass strands resulting in injuries. Slides can also shift over time allowing the seams to become more pronounced. Several companies specialize in recoating and re-surfacing.

AT spoke with **Ryan Cooper**, field operation for **Safe Slide Restoration**. He said, "We recommend gel coat... nothing's been around as long. Once it's applied, it offers a completely smooth and waterproof surface that should last around 10 to 20 years."

Surfaces other than slides can be coated with a variety of products to provide a safe, smooth and slip-resistant surface underfoot. **Encore Coatings** offers a unique paint additive that can be used to paint concrete with a surface that reduces the concrete temperature up to 38 percent and provides a comfortable slip-resistant finish. The unique feature is that it can be added to any acrylic exterior paint, so the color choices are endless. This makes it an ideal coating for venues that have very specific color needs.

Tuffcoat Surface Coatings uses recycled rubber crumb as the aggregate for its coatings. Combined with a proprietary mix of urethanes, acrylics and co-polymers the result is durable, impact-resistant, non-slip surface available in a variety of colors. Tuffcoat can be applied with a roller or a spray gun, and does not require a professional installer.

"This is a do-it-yourself

SAFETY & MAINTENANCE

product," said **William Duffie**, company president. "It's water-based, does not use solvents, and is EPA friendly," he added.

Rubaroc claims to have invented rubber safety coatings 33 years ago — and that first pool surface is still in use today. Rubaroc offers a flexible surface that is first poured in place, then hand troweled to create a smooth surface.

Several other companies offer versions of non-skid surfaces and coatings including **Polysoft Surfaces**, **Encore Coatings**, **Life Floor** and **Surface America**.

It's all in the timing

Guests queued up for slides are often anxious to ride, especially as they get close to the front of the line. Dispatching systems can help provide visual and/or audible cues to let a waiting rider or ride attendant know that the slide is clear or the appropriate interval has been met and it is now safe to dispatch the next rider.

Launch Logic can provide a variety of waterslide dispatch systems from simple mounted, or hand-held remote controls, to advanced sensor technology embedded within the slide. Sensors can be incorporated into a slide at manufacturing time or added to an existing slide.

Cogito Automation offers more sophisticated systems that stop and start belts or turn waterflow on and off as needed. These types of systems are used on the higher profile slides that include multiple ride blocks such as a water coaster.

Watch your weight

Guests are always looking

for new and exciting ways to traverse a waterslide, and the providers have no shortage of new ideas. However, at some point the weight of the passengers can become an issue, particularly in the U.S. where guest size and weight is challenging for parks. An overloaded raft has the potential to gain too much speed, overturn or put too much stress on the support structure.

SR Instruments can provide a fast, easy and discrete scale that can check the weight of one to six people and give a simple "go" or "no go" indication.

Factor in the sun

Sunscreen can help prevent painful burns or skin cancer by protecting guests and employees from the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays. Providing sunscreen for employees is a common practice, but more and more facilities are also offering free sunscreen to guests. Those that are not, need to make certain that sunscreen products are readily available for purchase at gift shops.

Bayer Healthcare and Mid-America Sales can supply park owners with the sun protection and after-care products guests need to stay safe from the sun's harmful rays.

Rocky Mountain Sunscreen is one of the largest providers of bulk sunscreen and offers its product in quart and gallon-sized pump dispensers for easy use by employees and/or guests.

Keeping patrons safe at an aquatic facility may seem like a daunting task, but with proper training, certifications, and the right combination of equipment, guest safety can be made manageable.

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A safety look at ride fabrication

Amusement ride safety: the six areas that matter

► PART 2 IN A SERIES

AT: Harold Hudson
Special to Amusement Today

Following up on the last article, we put forth the idea that the factors affecting ride safety could be divided into six main areas. Those areas are:



Hudson

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

Fabrication

Fabrication is the next step in the birthing process of an amusement ride and our next focus. So, how do we discuss this process in a way that doesn't bore you? I'll give it a shot but first of all please note:

Fabrication involves converting the design drawings to fabrication drawings and fabricating/procuring or otherwise obtaining the individual parts and pieces that make up an amusement ride or device and assembling them.

Fabrication drawings differ from design drawings in that they are detail drawings of the component to be fabricated, along with specifications for raw material and the operations to be completed in order to make a finished part. In other words, **fabrication drawings contain step by step details of the process.** Manufacturers are generally not amenable to providing fabrication drawings to buyers but do provide design drawings.

Also, when we talk about fabrication we are including everything needed to build the ride or device, including not only crafting raw material into a finished part but also the procurement and assembly of parts from other specialty suppliers. Suppliers of things like hardware, bearings, electrical components and many other components. There is no amusement ride that is built entirely in one house and typically the main manufacturer has hundreds of outside suppliers.

So what part of the fabri-

SAFETY & MAINTENANCE

cation process contributes to or affects safety? Almost every part! You can imagine that if a critical part is fabricated incorrectly or has a flaw, then this is a potential failure and encroachment on safety. For this reason, most manufacturers have elaborate quality control plans starting with inspection of incoming material/parts, in process inspection and final inspections.

Before we go any further we need to make a special note regarding "technology." Technology alone has greatly enhanced and improved the design and the fabrication process and ultimately, the safety of amusement rides. Using modern tools and systems, the fabrication process is faster, less costly and much more precise. Tools such as computer aided machining, 3D bending, laser machining, high pressure water machining and advanced treating and coating process have made the fabrication process better and the end product safer. **Also, did you know that in many of our lifetimes we have moved from the Industrial Age to the Information Age, also known as the Computer Age?** The switch actually occurred around 1960, so were you there? The Industrial age lasted 300 years, so if this is any indication, we are really just at the beginning of this new age: an age that has affected everything we do, including fabricating amusement rides.

Elements of fabrication

Now let's talk about some of the individual elements of the fabrication, elements that have evolved and improved over the years making today's amusement rides better and safer.

Raw Materials: Raw material selection and specification is a part of the design, i.e., the material for each fabricated part must be as specified by the engineer/designer. As in any complex system, amusement rides use many different materials to arrive at a final product with the performance capabilities needed. Materials such as iron, aluminum, plas-

tics, glass, rubber, copper, steel and many other newer materials such as carbon composites. All of these materials have evolved over recent decades, becoming more specialized, better formulated producing a better product. Everything adding to the safety of amusement rides and devices.

Raw materials used today are usually purpose designed alloys or a mixture of metals and/or elements that produces a material with properties different and more advantageous than its constituents. Alloys are materials formulated for specific properties, e.g., AISI (American Iron and Steel Institute) 4140 alloy steel is widely used in the amusement industry and is a combination of chromium, molybdenum, manganese containing low alloy steel. It has high fatigue strength, abrasion and impact resistance, toughness and torsional strength. Just what we need! Right?

But alloy steel is not the whole picture at all. One of the most recent innovations in this and other industries has been "engineered composite materials" and particularly "carbon fiber reinforced polymers," typically referred to as carbon fiber or just a composite material. Carbon fibers are added to a polymer resin, such as epoxy, forming a material that is very strong and light weight. This quality is very desirable in many industries but most notably in the aircraft industry where weight is a big issue. The fact that Boeing and Airbus are building airplanes using carbon fiber materials has been big news in the last 10 years, e.g., the Boeing 787 Dreamliner. By the same token, amusement rides and particularly ride vehicles can benefit from this space age material. The weight of a ride vehicle dictates the required strength and configuration of the overall structural design of an amusement ride so reducing the weight of the ride vehicle translates to simplifications and savings in many other costly items such as support structure, lifts and speed control devices. All of this makes amusement rides work better, more reliable and safer.

Machining: In order to fabricate the designed com-



Above, an employee at Rocky Mountain Construction makes notations during this plasma cutter job run. Below, the computer program runs this Chance Rides job making the detailed cuts to maximize the product with minimal waste for the supplier. AT/GARY SLADE



ponents that make up the amusement ride or device, machining and welding of the specified raw material is required.

Machining is when raw material is cut into a desired final shape and size. This may be done in several manners depending on the designer/engineer's requirement for material, size and finish. Most common is the controlled material-removal process or subtractive machining which is accomplished by milling, sawing and drilling. There are also processes that add material or additive machining, which may also be used in some cases.

Machining is a part of the manufacture of many metal products, but it can also be used on materials such as wood, plastic, ceramic, and composites. In many cases modern day machining is carried out by computer numerical control (CNC), in which computers are used to control the movement and operation of the mills, lathes, and other cutting machines... yet an-

other result of the Information Age and an improvement is the precision of the parts and safety.

Welding: Welding is a process that joins materials such as metals and thermoplastics by causing fusion. In Peter Rabbit language, the process involves melting the base metal and adding a filler material to form a pool of molten material, the weld pool, that cools to form a joint that can be as strong, or even stronger, than the base material. Not to confuse but to make sure you have the whole picture of the complex nature of today's welding process... there are other welding processes like friction welding and shielded active gas welding, etc., etc., etc. Wow, let's stop here by saying that welding is an important process in steel fabrication.

Welding is a complicated process and many things can go wrong. Welders must be trained, tested and certified to perform their job. Even if the

► See FABRICATION, page 35

►FABRICATION

Continued from page 34

welder is a seasoned expert, inspection by certified welding inspectors is important. Welding is critical because an improper weld creates a discontinuity in the material and a stress riser where a fatigue crack can occur. Making sure there are no fatigue cracks takes up a great deal of your maintenance departments time.

Components: A typical amusement ride contains many components that are designed and fabricated by companies other than the ride vendor. Components such as motors, sensors, switches and in many cases sub-contracted fabrication of parts and complete sub-assemblies. Since we don't have time to talk about all the components that go into an amusement ride, let's discuss one of the most important...

Computers & Controls (The Information Age again): One very important thing we didn't talk about in the Design article is control systems. Every amusement ride has some type of electrical controls system in order to control the ride devices and driving force, typically a motor of some type. Many of today's high capacity rides operate multiple vehicles on the same ride path and therefore have sophisticated computer controls along with multiple redundant sensors to keep these vehicles safely separated. In many cases the computer monitors a block system and is programmed to ensure that vehicles only advance into empty blocks, which is a good thing. Lifts, brakes and other devices form the blocking points and for additional safety, these block points are typically in a safe state, e.g., lifts are off and brakes are closed, until the block ahead is clear and at that time and only that time, they are enabled and may be activated by the computer to allow the next vehicle to enter.

Today's amusement rides don't just use computers but typically use a PLC or even a "Safety PLC." PLC stands for "programmable logic controller" and is simply an industrial computer used for machine control. A Safety PLC is a PLC with redundant computing systems all in one box. PLC's typically contains one micro-processor where a Safety PLC

has more than one microprocessor and sometimes even triple or quadruple microprocessors to create redundant safety logic that monitor the memory and processors with continuous watchdog circuits. There are several manufacturers of such devices including **Allan Bradley** in the U.S. and **Siemens** in Europe. Different manufacturers may use different or proprietary detection methods to verify safe operation, but the concept is the same... a computer that is self-checking and failsafe.

Testing: Factory Acceptance Test (FAT) are typically performed at the factory on completed assemblies and, where possible, on completed rides. These test to make sure the ride performs according to the design criteria are very, very important. You don't want a ride or sub-assemblies of a ride that don't work showing up at your facility, i.e., FAT, FAT, FAT.

Conclusion

So what can you do to make sure the fabrication of your ride is proper?

We depend on ride fabricators to build the perfect ride, just like the engineer/designer designed. Good manufacturers oversee the fabrication using appropriate quality control systems, professional managers and the engineer/designer to make sure the fabrication is proper, whether it's in house or at a sub-contractor. But how do we do our part? What can we do to help make sure the rides we purchase are fabricated properly? We can:

- Be interested and concerned about fabrication.
- Do everything outlined in the Design Article.
- Ask the vendor to certify that all fabrication is being done in an approved facility; approved by a qualified person or organization such as TUV and approved by virtue of past performance.
- Make sure the engineer/designer is involved in overseeing the fabrication.
- Make sure the vendor provides detailed Operation and Maintenance manuals complete with required inspections and testing.
- Ask the vendor to assist in familiarization and training of your staff.

Yes, good engineering design is the starting place for a safe and reliable amusement ride, but *proper fabrication* is the delivery room.



SAFETY & MAINTENANCE

Above, a welder works on a Flying Scooter tower at Larson International. At right, a Mack Rides worker performs the detailed welding of a cross tie to the running rail of this coaster track section.

AT/GARY SLADE;
COURTESY MACK RIDES



30th ANNUAL SAFETY FORUM January 29 – February 3, 2017

It's that time of year to begin planning on attending the 30th Annual Safety Forum for the most up-to-date training and dynamic Hands-on activity experience. This year we are traveling to Maitland, Florida (North Orlando) with a visit to Fun Spot Action Park for our hands-on activity. In addition, we are excited to also be visiting Universal Orlando for an exclusive tour and activity. This one is not to be missed!

OPERATIONS CERTIFICATION

We are please to offer the Primary & Advanced Operations classes again this year for those wishing to further their Operational knowledge. Exams for both Operation levels will be offered on Thursday, February 2, for those meeting the eligibility requirements.

Registration will begin on Sunday, January 29, 2017, with an orientation session. Classes will end after noon on Friday, February 3 and the Inspector Level I & Level II certification exams will take place later that afternoon. Tuition cost is \$445 for current 2017 members of NAARSO, non-member's tuition cost is \$520.

The event will be held at Sheraton Orlando North located at
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In addition to our annual safety seminar, we will offer the Limited Specialty class and the Train the Trainer class on Saturday, January 28 & Sunday, January 29.

Membership Meeting will be held at the Sheraton Orlando North
January 29 2017, at 1:30 p.m.

Full brochure will be posted on the website later this year.

IAAPA's inaugural Operators Forum held at Hersheypark

67 attendees from
29 parks and attractions
present for workshop

AT: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

DERRY TOWNSHIP, Pa. — **Hersheypark** served as the first site for the newly created IAAPA Operator's Forum. This day-long event, held in early October at **Hershey Lodge**, inside the Music Box Theater and throughout the grounds of the 121 acre park, focused on Accessibility and Guest Experiences. This unique opportunity allowed the nearly 70 attendees the opportunity to learn best practice strategies for developing and delivering a successful accessibility program at their facilities.

IAAPA Executive Vice President **Susan Mosedale** explained the development of the forum: "We want to be able to bring training programs to the operator in North America. We've been looking at programs that North American operators want very uniquely. We went to our Facilities Operator's Committee and this was the first topic that they thought would be timely and valuable to a range of operators."

Laura Woodburn, director of Ride Operations for **Hershey Entertainment and Resorts**, who coordinated the program from the park level, gave an overview of the forum: "We have speakers that are experts in their industry fields, with service, with design, with legal to try to educate the industry and the participants here today

SAFETY: OPERATOR'S FORUM

on how to have the very best programming for their attractions and for their facilities. In addition, here at the park, we have an 'in-park experience,' where people can realize what it might be like if they were here with their families with someone with a disability. We really want people to come away from this to understand that what effects one member of the family affects all."

The first portion of the forum took place at Hershey Lodge. **Rachael Stafford**, director **Rocky Mountain ADA Center**, Colorado Springs, Colo., explained her role: "I was part of a panel of experts addressing accessibility in all facets of a theme park, museum, attraction, zoo, aquarium, or family entertainment center. I provided introductory information on Training Your Team, and identifying general areas that should be trained on regarding accessibility and improving guest experiences."

Another of the panelists, **Erik Beard**, gave an update to attendees on recent developments on the legal and regulatory regime of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): "We talked a lot about court cases that have been litigated and have come out recently that have involved things like the level of accommodation for autistic guests, whether they should be permitted or accommodated 'on-demand' ride access to the front of the lines. We also talked about law as it relates to ridership on rides, specifically about developing physical characteristics that ei-

ther can or cannot be allowed on a particular ride, based on the disability and what kind of homework you have to do in order to fit within the law as it exists today, because the ADA is very complicated. We try to take that gray area and make it slightly more black and white as much as we can to help people go back to their facilities and implement a policy that makes sense from both a practical, operational standpoint and defensible from a legal standpoint." Beard is an attorney with **Wiggin and Dana, LLP**, New Haven, Conn.

Rounding out the panelists was **Bob Minnick**, president **RFM Consultants, LLC**, Orlando, Fla. "My role here today was to help everyone understand the trends and the technical requirements for the ADA. It's brand new. It became law in 2010. So everybody's trying to learn how to meet the requirements or exceed them to provide great guest services for all of their patrons," said Minnick.

The afternoon in-park experience at Hersheypark included three attractions: the carousel, Reese's Extreme Cup Challenge (**Sally** interactive dark ride) and the Dry Gulch Railroad. Three additional experiences included **Rattler's Revenge** (**Bob's Space Racer's** Whack-A-Mole-type arcade game), **Simply Chocolate** Ice Cream stand and the Milton Hershey statue fountain area. Attendees broke into "families" who were visiting the park. Each had one or more members with disabilities. This unique exercise provided the experience of visiting an attraction with physical or cognitive challenges. "You have to get the full experience to get the full effect," said Woodburn. Staff from all different divisions of the Hershey Entertainment and Resort Company came out to help, creating what felt like a typical day when Hersheypark is open.

"I'm absolutely thrilled that IAAPA has chosen us to be the host site, thrilled for all the participation we have from the industry and very, very excited for IAAPA because it was a sold out event. It was a success for IAAPA, but it's a success for our guests ultimately,"

said Woodburn.

"We really want to thank Hersheypark for being our host and for actually designing the exercise that we are participating in. They are definitely standard-bearers for people with disabilities," said Mosedale on the overall operation of the inaugural forum.

The gathering was a great opportunity for operators to get on the same page with this industry-wide topic. "Disability issues are a bit amorphous when it comes to the amusement park industry, so to see so many operators come together in one place to talk about it and to try and get on the same page without worrying about who's competing with who and they can just share best practices from experts in the industry, I think it can only benefit everyone. It's a really great program that IAAPA put together," said Beard.

Attendees of the forum included people representing all aspects of their park or attraction: ride, safety and operations managers, guest relations managers, as well as directors of operations, administration and/or safety, general managers, even owner-operators.

"There are a couple of key concepts I hope participants were able to take away from the forum," said Stafford: "Accessibility is something to be considered in all areas of your park or attraction and should always be something in the forefront of thought, from project planning, to training, to capital funding, to policy preparation. Accessibility is never a subject that is 'complete.' Her second point: 'Every park, attraction, museum, etc., has its own circumstances and nuances when it comes to accessibility scenarios, however, no location has to go it alone. There are resources out there, such as Meeting the Challenge or the National ADA Centers, who have experience, knowledge, and history, and can help every park with solutions.'"

Forum attendees left with a better understanding of the guest experience and methods for creating a more accessible attraction as Stafford outlined, "It is important for the IAAPA Operator's Forum attendees to take the information they acquired back to their own locations, share it with relevant staff, and attempt to apply it.

Undoubtedly questions and situations will arise, but that is where those outside resources can help."

Stafford summed up the current climate in regard to this topic: "Amusement parks, entertainment facilities, museums, etc., are at a critical time right now when accessibility is becoming an increasingly hot topic. It is vital to address accessibility for overall guest experience satisfaction and guest retention. I applaud the forum attendees for seeking guidance and resources to help them work on accessibility in their own locations."

Mosedale was asked about future topics in the IAAPA Operators Forum series. She responded, "We wanted to see how this program was first. We think that we could possibly repeat this Operator Forum in, say, maybe the West Coast or another part of the world. We probably are looking at security as our next topic. Our committee will evaluate this program, do a de-brief and then decide on the topic for next time."

Operators Forum hosts 29 facilities

DERRY TOWNSHIP, Pa. — Facilities attending the inaugural IAAPA Operator's Forum included: Casino Pier; Cleveland Metroparks; Columbus Zoological Park Association; DelGrosso's Amusement Park and Laguna Splash; Denver Zoo; Dollywood; Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom; Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site; Elitch Gardens Theme & Water Park; Funland, Rehoboth Beach, Del.; Hersheypark; Holiday World & Splashin' Safari; Kings Dominion; Knoebels Amusement Resort; Morey's Piers; Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium; Santa Cruz Seaside Company; Sesame Place; Silver Dollar City; Six Flags America; Six Flags Great Escape; Smithsonian Institution; Stone Mountain Park; Tennessee Technological University; The Franklin Institute; The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore and The Worship Center, a church in Lancaster, Pa. There was also participation by the corporate offices of Cedar Fair and Herschend Family Entertainment.



One of the three rides at Hersheypark where "families" rode together was the Dry Gulch Railroad. This unique exercise simulated the experience of visiting an attraction with a person with physical or cognitive challenges.

AT/B. DEREK SHAW



NEWS & NOTES

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Karen Oertley • k.oertley@aimsintl.org
Holly Coston, (714) 697-6654, h.coston@aimsintl.org

Happy Holidays and Best Wishes for a SAFE New Year from AIMS!

ORLANDO, Fla. — Make industry safety your No. 1 priority for 2017 and register now for the upcoming **AIMS Safety Seminar!**

The AIMS Safety Seminar is recognized by major parks and attractions as the world's best in safety training and education. Known for its top quality instructors and its diverse curriculum, the Safety Seminar draws approximately 350 students who receive 40 hours of classroom and hands on learning taught by more than 120 industry experts. Certification testing is available in Aquatics, Maintenance, Operations, and Ride Inspection.

Everyone who is responsible for the care and safety of amusement industry guests should attend this annual safety education event.

Please visit www.aimsintl.org for a complete schedule, list of classes and to register.

Important deadlines

Register for the seminar and book your hotel room by Dec. 31 to avoid extra charges. The \$595 seminar registration fee covers all five days of classes and materials, the opening reception, lunch every day, and all morning and afternoon snack breaks. After Dec. 31, registration increases

to \$695. Book your hotel room at the **Doubletree by Hilton** by Dec. 31 to get the special AIMS rate of \$99 per night.

Wanted:

Silent Auction items

The **AIMS Silent Auction** is a highlight of the week during the Safety Seminar.

It gives everyone a chance to bid on all kinds of fun items and helps support AIMS' continuous effort to upgrade the seminar experience with state of the art A/V equipment for classes. Items from previous auctions have included all kinds of amusement industry merchandise such as shirts, bags, hats, etc. Plush and other industry souvenirs to bring home to the kids are always popular. Please contact **Holly Coston** at h.coston@aimsintl.org for information on where to send your items.

Sponsorship

Opportunities

Please help us in our mission to improve amusement industry safety through leadership in education. Your sponsorship helps us continually improve and upgrade our program and train-

ing materials. As a sponsor, you gain exposure to hundreds of students and instructors who directly influence buying decisions at parks, carnivals, FECs, water parks and other industry attractions.

Join these industry leaders who support AIMS as seminar sponsors: KumbaK-The Amusement Engineers; *Amusement Today*; Coulter Associates; IAAPA; Allied Specialty Insurance; Barr Engineering; Chance Rides; OABA; Premier Rides; ProSlide; Rides 4 U; Ride Entertainment Group of Companies; S&S Worldwide; Surge Suppression; Walt Disney Imagineering; WhiteWater; Zamperla; R. S. Alberts Co.; ASTM; Baynum Painting; Eli Bridge Company; Haas & Wilkerson Insurance; Leisure Labs; Maui Partners; Millennium Elastomers; Rockwell Automation; and Tapeswitch Corporation.

Thanks also to JP Hinde; Zebec, Inc.; C.P.I. Amusement; and Maclan Corporation for their support as Friends of AIMS.

More information of sponsorship and benefits can be found on our website at www.aimsintl.org or contact us at info@aimsintl.org.

We look forward to seeing you in Orlando Jan. 8-13, 2017!

—Karen Oertley

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Safety is the #1 Priority in the Amusement Industry!



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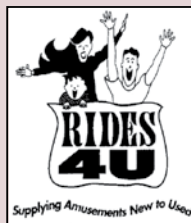
See more about the positions and the company at beechbend.com/employment.

Contact:

Charlotte Gonzalez, General Manager
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Please email resume to beechbendpark@msn.com
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