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Four Ferris wheels to be on display

2017 IISF Trade Show expecting attendance jump

AT: Pam Sherborne

psherborne@amusementtoday.com

GIBSONTON, Fla. — Banners are up, spaces are marked, and travel plans have been made.

It is that time of year again. That is, the time for the annual International Independent Showmen's Foundation (IISF) Trade Show and Extravaganza, set for Feb. 7-11, at the International Independent Showmen's Association (IISA) club grounds in Gibsonton. The IISF is the foundation arm of the IISA.

This event brings together professionals such as owners, operators, supervisors and managers of carnivals, amusement rental companies, amusement and theme parks, family centers with their colleagues including manufacturers and suppliers of amusement rides, food, games, plush, electrical and lighting, vinyl signage, and food and housing trailers.

In mid-January, IISA show organizers were getting excited at how things were shaping up for the upcoming event.

"We have more exhibitor spaces taken inside and outside than last year," said IISA's Teresa Rimes, the second week in January. "I was patting myself on my back just this afternoon. I have one booth left inside to sell. This



doesn't mean we couldn't make more room, but that is what we have right now."

Rimes said there are more ride manufacturers bringing in more rides this year as well.

"We are going to have four Ferris wheels in the lot this year," she said.

The wheels are being brought in by Luna Park, Ital International, Watkins and Used Rides Europe BV.

A new ride exhibitor from last year, Kolmax Plus, from Czechoslovakia, brought three rides to the 2016 show. This year, that same company is bringing nine rides.

"Chance Rides is coming back," Rimes said. "I am so excited about that. They haven't been here in years. They have indoor space and plan to bring in parts of their new ride."

JoAnn Arnold, current IISA president, said starting at the first of the year is a very busy time for the IISA as well as for the IISA president.

"Things kick into gear for us because we aren't on the road at this time," she said, last month. "We had our



Banners are hung and plans are made for the 2017 IISF, set for Feb. 7-11 in Gibsonton, Fla. Expectations are high as more exhibitors and new exhibitors are expected to be on hand. AT/B. DEREK SHAW

circus last weekend and it turned out very well. We had our kick-off party last night for Bike Fest (held Jan. 13-15). We are seeing a lot more vendors this year for that than last, so that is good.

"And, it looks like there are new vendors for the trade show this year," she said.

Rimes said the IISA had a booth at last November's International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions Expo and gained five new exhibitors from that effort.

"I usually do go to that show for a couple of days," Rimes said. "For this past year, we decided to just go ahead and rent space. I got to see a lot of people I knew and got to meet a lot of peo-

ple. I was very busy. It was successful so we will do that again for 2017."

Other events that are leading up to the 49th trade show this year include an Appreciation Party, a Tournament of Champions, Showmen's Shrine Car Show, Family Tradition Charity Drawing and several club meetings.

The Super Bowl Party is Feb. 5.

The trade show hours this year are 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 7, through Saturday, Feb. 11.

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The landscape of the outdoor exhibits will certainly look a little different this year at the IISF Extravaganza and Trade Show, Feb. 7-11, Gibsonton, Fla. Show organizers expect four Ferris wheels this year on the club grounds instead of just one. AT FILE

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NEWSTALK

NEWS BRIEF

IAAPA board of directors elects David Rosenberg second vice chairman

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — The board of directors of the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) recently elected David Rosenberg second vice chairman. Rosenberg is a vice president of Monterey Bay Aquarium. He will serve as second and first vice chairman of IAAPA before taking the helm of the global attractions industry trade association as its chairman of the board in 2019. The board made the selection in accordance with IAAPA's governance guidelines following the recent passing of Al Weber, Jr. Ph.D., who had been elected to the position in September.



Rosenberg

"With David as our chairman in 2019, IAAPA will enter its second century with a leader who embodies the membership diversity that now exists in the organization," said Will Morey, chairman of the IAAPA governance committee and president and CEO of Morey's Piers in Wildwood, N.J. "David brings to the role 26 years of experience in the travel and tourism industry and has been a key member of IAAPA's leadership team over the last 10 years including serving as a volunteer chair of several IAAPA committees and as a member of IAAPA's board of directors. He has been a tireless advocate for membership development supporting the initiation of many new programs and member benefits. Given the experience he has gained over the years working in multiple segments of our industry, including amusement parks, hotels, and zoos and aquariums and his strategic insights into creating exceptional guest experiences, we are confident David is ideally suited to chart and lead the association's course into the future."

"I'm humbled to be selected to help lead our global association during this exciting time for the worldwide attractions industry," said Rosenberg. "In the next few years, IAAPA will establish its new headquarters office in Orlando as we begin to plan for the next 100 years of the association. I look forward to playing a leadership role in shaping that future."

FLINT'S VIEW: Bubba Flint



INDUSTRY OPINION: Andrew Mellor, amellor@amusementtoday.com

Exciting times in Dubai

The parks industry continues to enjoy much success at the present time with developments of one form or another — be it the addition of individual rides, themed areas, complete new parks or a new technological innovation — taking place around the world on a scale any industry sector would be proud of.

The current strength of the market was reflected once again at last November's IAAPA Attractions Expo in Orlando where record numbers of attendees witnessed all kinds of new products and services, exhibiting companies reported healthy order books and new attractions and attraction destinations were revealed.

The show came just prior to the official opening of the final elements of the fantastic project that is Dubai Parks and Resorts, which itself is also a wonderful reflection of the industry's present state. It is an unprecedented development, with the opening of three major theme parks at (almost) the same time accompanied by a water park, entertainment, retail and dining experience area and a hotel, all built in the last few years.

The Middle East has long been known for its



Mellor

numerous FECs and (relatively compact) indoor parks, with pretty much every shopping mall built — and there are many of them — also incorporating an indoor entertainment area with this type of offering. Dubai, of course, is a key player in the sector and, as we have seen with previous property developments, does not hold back when it comes to creating unique places for people to live and be entertained.

And the Dubai Parks and Resorts development isn't finished yet either. Plans are already in the pipeline for a fourth park, this time a Six Flags location, while the idea of a fifth theme park has also now been mooted. With these will no doubt come more facilities in the shape of additional accommodation and other leisure, retail and dining options.

Dubai is already a popular tourist destination and it has big ambitions to increase its visitor numbers even more in the coming years. It will obviously be crucial to do so for the long term sustainability of all these new parks and attractions and the world — and our industry in particular — will be watching how it all continues to develop and progress with a keen eye.



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2 MINUTE DRILL



COMPILED: Janice Witherow

Brian Witherow, Cedar Fair Entertainment Company

Brian Witherow never expected to have a career in the amusement industry. He was working for an accounting firm in Cleveland right out of college, and **Cedar Fair** was his favorite client. The amusement park company eventually offered Brian a job in 1995 as corporate director of investor relations, and he hasn't looked back since. Today, he holds the position of executive vice president and chief financial officer of what is now one of the largest amusement park companies in the world. When not working, Brian enjoys cheering on Cleveland sports teams, spending time with family and friends, music and watching/coaching his two children play sports and perform and find their passion. *Note: this is a cool 2-Minute Drill for me to do since Brian happens to be my husband!*

Title:

Executive VP and CFO of Cedar Fair Entertainment Company.

Number of years with Cedar Fair:

Twenty-two years ... and it's been quite a great ride!

Best thing about the industry...

The fact that we're in the business of entertaining people and creating a lifetime of memories for our guests.

Favorite amusement ride...

When it comes to a thrill ride you can't beat Fury 325 at Carowinds, but lately for me it's all about the dark rides and trying to beat my high score on Voyage to the Iron Reef at Knott's Berry Farm.

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

Hopefully hanging out on a beach with my wife and kids.

Biggest challenge facing our industry...

In an evolving market place with ever-changing tastes and priorities, finding ways to stay relevant with consumers is critical.

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

The energy and excitement that comes with opening day each season.

When it comes to pizza, I usually order...

A supreme....all the fixings!

The sport I enjoy playing the most is...

Basketball....it's a great workout.

Strangest celebrity couple?

I'm not big on following celebrities, but any couple involving the Kardashians has to be strange.

My favorite Sunday morning activity is...

Relaxing and reading the Sunday paper after going to church with my family.



Brian enjoys some family time on the beach in Hilton Head, S.C. — an annual vacation spot for the Witherows.
AT/ JANICE WITHEROW

When I look out my office window, I see...

The Hotel Breakers and a lot of coaster track, including Gemini and Magnum XL-200.

My childhood ambition was to...

Play on a major league baseball team, but that just wasn't in the cards. Getting to help run one of the world's largest amusement park companies isn't a bad consolation prize though!

The best sporting event I have ever been to would have to be...

I am a huge sports fan and have been fortunate enough to attend many awesome games. However, Game 6 of the 2016 NBA Finals was the best... a (Cleveland) Cavs victory on their way to their first NBA title! As a lifelong Cleveland sports fan, I was beginning to think I would never see this happen. It was pure magic, and I am still celebrating.

When I meet someone for the first time, the first thing I notice is...

Whether or not they make eye contact.

When I daydream, I find myself thinking of...

Vacationing on a beach somewhere.

For lunch: do you grab something on the go or sit down and eat?

These days it's usually something quick and on the go, but lunch meetings are when some of the best business conversations take place.

When driving in my car, I typically listen to...

Music, music and more music....it's how I unwind. As a product of the 80's, I'm particularly fond of the "Hair Nation" and "80's on 8" channels on Sirius/XM.

Are you a beer or wine kind of guy?

I enjoy a good bottle of wine, but my go-to drink of choice is a nice craft beer.

When in the grocery store, do you have a list or just grab what you need?

Even when I have a list, I can't help but impulse buy....as my family likes to remind me.

The place I get most of my news from is...

I'm either catching up on the news online via Yahoo! News and the *Wall Street Journal* or I'm watching Fox News.

Favorite night out...

Dinner and a movie with my wife.



Witherow

J1 Summer Work Travel proposed rule released

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On January 12, 2017, the U.S. State Department released a proposed rule that would amend existing regulations to provide new program requirements for the J1 Visa Summer Work Travel category of the Exchange Visitor Program.

IAAPA is currently reviewing this proposed rule and will submit comments. The comment period is 45 days, and comments must be submitted by Feb. 27, 2017. If an IAAPA member would like to file their own comments, or send to be incorporated in IAAPA's comment, please do so no later than Feb. 21, 2017.

To submit comments to IAAPA for inclusion in the industry's statement, please email gr@IAAPA.org.

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► IISF

Continued from page 1

Rimes said a surprise is in store for those still on the trade show floor starting at 4 p.m. every day of the show.

Of course, the trade show is not all that is offered at the annual event. Every year show organizers bring in new presenters to address

different issues of concern to the industry.

From ride maintenance and inspection of rides, both in production and out of production, to marketing strategies using social media and websites to updates on the H-2B visa program, which addresses seasonal migrant workers, there are many concerns and issues for the those

in the outdoor amusement industry.

JoAnn Arnold, who normally travels with Amusements of America, said 2016 was one of the first in many years she wasn't on the road.

"So, I really can't address personally how business was, but what I did hear, was that weather hurt many, whether it was too hot, too

cold and too wet," she said. "I hope they all have a better year this year."

She and Dennis Travioli are working together creating a LED lighting company called Carnival Lighting.

Seminar and informational classes include a daily ServSafe Certification class. Rimes said last year, Dominic Cianciola held the class

for three days. This year it will be held 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Tuesday-Friday, for those that are interested.

The ServSafe classes address such issues as food-borne illnesses, how to train employees in food sanitation, and basic food safety practices. Certification testing is held later in the year.

IISF 2017 Trade Show & Extravaganza session and event schedule

Monday, Feb. 6

12 noon-5 p.m.: 7th Annual Big Hearted Jerry's Memorial Golf Tournament

Tuesday, Feb. 7

11 a.m.-5 p.m.: TRADE SHOW FLOOR OPEN

1-2 p.m.: Ride Talk: Maintenance and Inspection of Out of Production Rides

Sponsored: by LJM & Associates, Inc

Speakers: Dan Dudley, Guy Sherbourne, Danny Abner

2-3 p.m.: Ride Talk: Discussion on Maintenance and Inspection Issues, Specially Focusing on Super Shot
Speaker: Eric Bates

3-4 p.m.: Uphill Marketing Group: Get More Business, "Whether you have a website or not, learn marketing steps to gain more visibility, credibility and profitability"
Speaker: Gayle Hill

Wednesday, Feb. 8

11 a.m.-5 p.m.: TRADE SHOW FLOOR OPEN

12-3 p.m.: Strategies for Survival, the Future of the H-2B Program in the World of President Trump, Attorney General Sessions, and Los Derechos De Migrantes
Presented by JKJ Workforce and the Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA)

3-5 p.m.: H-2B Update and PAC Fundraiser

Sponsored by: OABA

Speakers: Wayne Pierce, Attorney and Greg Hartley, Lobbyist

5-11 p.m.: Museum and Jamboree Fundraiser

Thursday, Feb. 9

11 a.m.-5 p.m.: TRADE SHOW FLOOR OPEN

11 a.m.-5 p.m.: Free Admission Day, current members of the SLA, NICA, OABA, and all other Showmen's Associations will be admitted free

1:30-3:30 p.m.: Industrial Truck/Forklift Training

4-5 p.m.: Showmen's League of America Social Gathering

6-11 p.m.: Banquet and Ball, JoAnn Arnold's Banquet and Ball, themed "Family Traditions"

6-11 p.m.: Museum Fundraiser

Friday, Feb. 10

11 a.m.-5 p.m.: TRADE SHOW FLOOR OPEN

11 a.m.-2 p.m.: World Wide President's Fry

2-3 p.m.: Review of Ride Incidents in the Industry

Sponsored by: LJM & Associates, Inc

Speaker: Rob Gavel, Ron Gavel Associates

Saturday, Feb. 11

10:30 a.m.: Showmen's Shrine Annual Meeting

11 a.m.-5 p.m.: TRADE SHOW FLOOR OPEN

12-1 p.m.: Showmen's Shrine Memorial Service

Sunday, Feb. 12

11 a.m.-10 p.m.: Showman's Day at the Florida State Fair, More information will be available during the show

Tuesday, Feb. 14

IISA annual meeting where JoAnn Arnold will turn over the presidential gavel to Wesley Burnett



Here is a shot of the 2016 IISF Extravaganza and Trade Show club grounds. Organizers are excited about the added number of rides that will be on the grounds this year during the Feb. 7-11 run. AT/B. DEREK SHAW

OABA, SLA, FFF, and Florida State Fair to host a bevy of Gibtown activities

GIBSONTOWN, Fla. — Along with the scheduled events surrounding the International Independent Showmen's Foundation (IISF) Trade Show and Extravaganza, the Showmen's League of America (SLA) and the Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA) also are presenting several events.

Beginning on Wednesday, Feb. 8, the OABA will hold a reception for its Hall of Fame and Industry Pioneer Inductees, from 2-3 p.m., at the IISA Carnival Museum.

The OABA board breakfast has been set for 8-9:30 a.m., Thursday, Feb. 9, followed by the OABA board meeting, from 9:30 a.m.-12 noon. After the board meeting, the OABA-Duke Smith Memorial Education Fund Board and Scholarship Committee Meetings are set. All of these events will take place at the Sheraton East Hotel, Tampa, Fla.

The OABA Annual Meeting and Chairman's Reception is set to begin at 6 p.m., Friday, Feb. 10 and is expected to last until 9:30 p.m., at the Sheraton East Hotel, Tampa, Fla. During that event, there will be a business meeting and election of directors, Hall of Fame Inductions and Industry Pioneer Induction, and the 2017 Chairman's Reception honoring incoming Chairman E.J. Dean, Fiesta Shows. He is taking over the gavel from Tom Gaylin, Rosedale At-

tractions and Shows.

The SLA has planned its social gathering from 4-5 p.m., on Thursday, Feb. 9. The SLA board meeting has been set for 1-3 p.m., Friday, Feb. 10. Both of these events will be held at the IISA club grounds meeting room.

There are a couple other special events being held this year during the IISA activities. The Florida Federation of Fairs (FFF) will hold the second annual "Fair Partners Shootout," from 1-5 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 9, at the Fishhawk Sporting Clays, Lithia, Fla., located just under 30 miles southwest of Tampa.

Lunch and registration for the shootout will begin at 1 p.m. with the shootout starting at 2 p.m. Awards and cocktails will start at 4 p.m.

Showman's Appreciation Day at the Florida State Fair, Tampa, is set for Sunday, Feb. 12. It is being sponsored by Wade Shows, the carnival provider for the fair. This is the first year this has been held. Passes to the Florida State Fair may be picked up at the IISA office in advance. A reception is set for 11 a.m., at the Wade Shows compound at the fair.

The Florida State Fair runs Feb. 9-20 this year. Wade Shows is expected to field more than 100 rides and attractions this year.

—Pam Sherborne

IISF 47th annual Gibtown Extravaganza

February 7-11, 2017

Exhibitor Listing

50% Off Plush #1007	Eworks Pro. #426-427	Peek-A-Boo Toys. #326-331
5Centride.com #602	Fiesta. #914-916	Powersource Transportation, Inc. #922
A.R.M. (US) Outside Space	Firestone Financial #1128 - 1130	Precise Satellite & Rv Electronics #911
Action Lighting #510-511	Flitz International Ltd. #928	R. Humes Enterprises #311
All American Sleeper Cab Mfg. #924	Food Concession Signs. #919-921	R.P. & Associates Inc.. #1008
Allied Specialty Insurance Inc.. #403 / 503	Fred's Tents & Canopies #727-728 / 827-828	Rapsure Concession Trailers Outside Space
American Changer Corporation #Slab 'B'	Fun & Fun Toys, Inc. #621 - 623	Recreation By Design Outside Space
American Specialty Ins. & Risk Services #927	Fun Attractions Usa Corp.. Outside Space	Red Bone Products, Inc. #1101
Amusement Today #702	Galaxy Amusement Sales Outside Space	Red Bone Products, Inc. Outside Space
Amusement Wraps #820-821	Gautier Fabrication Inc.. Outside Space	Rhode Island Nov #404-409/504-509/603-609
Audio Innovators, Inc.. #725-726	Gloworks Imports, Inc. #1003 - 1005	Ride Parts Inc. #714-716
Augusta Rv Llc. Outside Space	Goffa International Corp. #719-721	Rides-4-U, Inc.. Outside Space
B J Toy Company, Inc.. #418-421 / 518-519	Gold Medal Products Co. #422-424 / 522-524	Rocken Graphics #1112 - 1116
B. Barton & Sons - Ice Men. #301	Gosetto S.r.l. #701	Safe Strap Company, Inc. #907
Backyard Canvas And Signs, Inc. #1015-1016	Gull Wing Industries, Inc. Outside Space	Schantz Manufacturing Inc.. Outside Space
Battech Ent. Llc Outside Space	Haas & Wilkerson Insurance #618-620	Show Me Fabrication, Inc.. Outside Space
Bay Tek Games #926	Hayes Specialties Corp. #308-310	Showmen Supplies Inc.. Outside Space
Belshaw Adamatic Bakery Group #1010	Hoelting Foodservice #1014	Space Craft Mfg., Inc. Bunkhouses
Berk Concession Supply #410 - 412	Igpm Group / Kalkomat Usa Inc.. #1012-1013	Specialty Insurance Ltd #313
Best Toy Mfg. Ltd.. #1018-1020	Indiana Ticket Company #722 - 723	Spectrum Sports Int'l. Outside Space
Big T Sports & Toys. #809 - 816	Isera Powered By Evolution Ins Brokers #910	Spotlight Graphics #514
Bissell Commercial #913	Ital International, Llc #305-306	Sterling Jewelers. #1001-1002
Bob's Space Racers, Inc.. Outside Space	Ital International, Llc Outside Space	Tent And Table.com Outside Space
Bug-Eyed Entertainment. #912	JKJ Workforce Agency #830 / 930	The Showmen's League Of America. #908
Bungeesupply.com Llc #520-521	K & K Insurance Group, Inc. #724	Tig Artistics Outside Space
Caravan Softoys #315-316 / 318-325	KMG International.. Outside Space	TNT Confectionery, Llc #1011
Carnival Depot #822-823	Knight Equipment Company #Slab 'B'	<i>Tourist Attr. & Park Magazine</i> . . . #Breezeway Space
<i>Carnival Magazine</i> #Breezeway Space	Kolmax - Plus, S.r.o.. Outside Space	Toy Factory, Llc #1022-1030
Carnivalwarehouse.com #Breezeway Space	Lifetime Products Group Inc. Outside Space	Trailex, Inc.. Outside Space
Carolina Atm Services Llc #905-906	LJM & Associates Inc. #304	Triangle Poster & Printing Co.. #630 / 730
Cavallaro Concessions Outside Space	Luna-Park Sp. Z O.O. Outside Space	Uniglide Company Outside Space
CCA/Custom Change Aprons.. #525-527	Majestic Soda Company #627	Used Rides Europe BV Outside Space
Chance Rides Inc. #428 / 528	Matt's Web Design #Breezeway Space	Used Rides.com #1109 - 1111
Chester Built Trailers Ltd. Outside Space	McGowan Insurance #425	Virginia Toy & Novelty. #825-826
Chestnut Identity Apparel Inc. #610 - 616 / 512	Moneytree ATM #413	Virtual Ticket Solution #1006
Classic Embroidery Designs #718	Murphy Amusements Outside Space	Visa / SBF (Italy). Outside Space
Classic Toy Co., Inc.. #703 - 713	National Prize And Toy #1118 - 1127	Wapello Fabrications Co. #628
CMD Enterprises Llc #624-626	National Ticket Company #601	Waterloo Tent & Tarp Co., Inc. . . . #803-804/903-904
Coin, Currency & Document Systems Inc. #925	Next Generation Power Eng Inc. Outside Space	Waymatic, Inc.. Outside Space
Computerized Accounting Technics. #513	OA Finance, Llc. #414	Wisdom Rides Inc.. Outside Space
Cool Glow Novelties / Fun Central.. #824	On Site Signs Ohio #805-807	Worldride Service & Supply Inc. Outside Space
Dalton Kid Rides Rebuilders Inc.. Outside Space	Outdoor Amusement Business Association #909	Zamperla Inc.. Outside Space
Daniel O'connor & Sons Inc.. #312	Over The Road Permitting Software. #1021	Zutter Design. #923
Dobco Enterprises Ltd #818/918	Owen Trailers Inc. Outside Space	
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INTERNATIONAL

► Second IMG Worlds theme park set — Page 7 / Simworx, JoraVision team up on project — Page 8

Gardaland creates VR experience on iconic Vekoma coaster

AT: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

CASTELNUOVO DEL GARDA, Italy – A new immersive virtual reality (VR) experience is being created at Gardaland Resort in Italy which will see one of the park's iconic roller coasters transformed for the 2017 season.

Well-known for its double loop, double tailspin and super-fast final helix, the Vekoma-built Magic Mountain coaster is currently undergoing works which will see it provide a brand new VR experience for guests, the theme for which will be the spirit world of native Americans. Currently a large Dreamcatcher, the evocative symbol of native American culture, is the portal to reach the spirits' world. Positioned alongside the path of the attraction and visible to everyone, the imposing sculpture suggests the adventure will be

set at a time when native Americans considered the Dreamcatcher a sacred object.

The area around the ride will feature references to totems, objects, symbols and icons typical of this part of the world. Settings and theming have been designed to involve guests in the adventure even before they step inside the coaster, while the surrounding green area will be transformed into a typical setting of the Rocky Mountains in the western U.S.

Guests will wear individual headsets to experience the new virtual adventure through an ancient shamanistic ritual which, like in the legend, will magically transport them into the world of spirits.

Once through the Dreamcatcher, passengers will leave the real world to face the unknown and to be immersed in a parallel reality.

The innovative project will



transform the experience on the coaster and will see a total investment of €5 million (\$5.3 million) for the technological development, set design and theming of the attraction.

The technical partner for the project is Figment Productions, a leader in VR technology and audio-visual interactive experiences. For Gardaland, the company has developed an advanced system that provides each ride sequence with virtual reality synchronized to the changes in motion. Each passenger position has a special processor which responds dynamically to the motion. The viewers employ VR displays that offer next-generation visual effects, while the headphones guarantee totally im-



Gardaland's Vekoma-built Magic Mountain coaster will provide a brand new VR experience for guests in 2017. COURTESY GARDALAND RESORT

mersive audio.

"The high quality, fully immersive graphics and sound make Gardaland's latest addition for 2017 one of the most sophisticated virtual reality roller coaster experiences anywhere in

the world," said Simon Reveley, CEO of Figment Productions Ltd. and President of Figment Productions LLC. "A virtual reality experience of this quality level cannot be found anywhere else in Italy."

Six Flags announces new water park for Haiyan, China

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — Six Flags Entertainment Corporation and Riverside Investment Group Co. Ltd., a tourism and real estate developer, announced an agreement to build a new water park adjacent to the first-ever Six Flags-branded theme park in Haiyan China. Construction is officially underway for Six Flags Zhejiang, the anchor of a 30 billion yuan (US\$4.6 billion) resort development located on the coast of Hangzhou Bay in the province of Zhejiang.

The move is part of Six Flags' international growth strategy in which it works with developers to design and build Six Flags theme parks outside of North

America. Six Flags does not pay the development or construction costs, but receives consulting fees and royalty payments for the highly recognized brand. Six Flags previously announced plans for branded parks in the United Arab Emirates and Vietnam.

"The Six Flags brand is synonymous with innovation and record-breaking thrills for all ages," said Tang Jun, Riverside CEO.

Additionally, Six Flags and Riverside are pleased to announce Mark Kane as the new general manager and park president of Six Flags Zhejiang. Kane, who previously served as park president for Six Flags Great Adventure and Six Flags New



England, will oversee the day-to-day operations of the China property.

"We are delighted to welcome Mr. Kane to China as we break ground on this world-class park and prepare to delight our guests with experiences and memories that only Six Flags can create," added Jun.

Kane is a highly-respected industry veteran with more than 35 years of experience in the theme park

and hospitality industry. His many years at Six Flags have included leadership positions at the corporate headquarters and multiple parks. He most recently served as vice president of the specialty restaurant and theme park division of Houston-based Landry's Inc. where he was responsible for the design, development, and daily operations for the Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier, which opened in the seaside tourist area of Galveston, Texas, in May of 2012.

"Mark is a proven leader and a trailblazer," said John Odum, president, Six Flags International Development Company. "His expansive knowledge of the theme

park industry and experience overseeing a massive development project from start to finish is a major plus. Mark's background, coupled with Riverside Investment Group's reputation as a premier real estate and tourism developer, will solidify Six Flags Zhejiang and Six Flags Hurricane Harbor as best-in-class global entertainment destinations."

Six Flags Zhejiang will be home to thrilling roller coasters, rides and attractions. The park will feature elaborately themed sections celebrating time-honored Chinese traditions, live shows and seasonal events along with a

► See CHINA, page 8

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IMG Worlds announces second theme park for Dubai

AT: Andrew Mellor
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DUBAI, UAE — IMG Worlds, the Dubai-based owner and operator of the world's largest indoor theme park, IMG Worlds of Adventure, has announced the launch of its latest project, IMG Worlds of Legends.

The announcement comes on the back of the opening of IMG Worlds of Adventure in August last year and will see the second park being constructed adjacent to the existing venue. With nine unique zones spread across over 2m sq.ft, IMG Worlds of Legends will feature some of the most popular brands in the world, making it one of the biggest global licensing deals of its kind.

IMG Worlds of Legends will offer a fully immersive experience, with each zone themed as a different imaginary world and the venue featuring 104,000 square feet of food and beverage space and 102,000 square feet of retail space. The park will feature futuristic interactive roll-

er coasters, state-of-the-art rides, water-based attractions and live entertainment. With its temperature-controlled environment and retractable roof, guests will be offered the choice of enjoying the rides safely protected from the desert heat in summer or basking in the sun in winter as IMG Worlds of Legends will be open 365 days a year.

Attractions will also include characters from a host of global brands, with six global entertainment brands choosing Dubai and IMG Worlds as the home of their first ever theme park partnership. Among these will be Nickelodeon favorites Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Dora the Explorer and SpongeBob SquarePants; Ubisoft's Assassin's Creed, Raving Rabbids and Just Dance; Saban's Power Rangers; Pokémon; and Mattel's Barbie, Hot Wheels, Bob the Builder, Thomas & Friends and Mega Bloks.

In the Animé Zone guests will find Toei Animation: Dragon Ball Z and One Piece along with TV Tokyo: Na-



IMG Worlds of Legends will offer a fully immersive experience, with each of its nine zones themed as a different imaginary world. COURTESY IMG WORLDS

ruto, while in the Cartoon Network (a partner in IMG Worlds of Adventure) zone characters to feature will be We Bare Bears and others yet to be revealed. IMG Worlds' proprietary brands to be included will be Legends of

Arabia and Lost Valley – Dinosaur Adventure.

Lennard Otto, CEO of IMG Worlds, commented: "IMG Worlds continues to attract truly international brands to Dubai and we are now one of the principal play-

ers in the global theme park industry. We have executed on our brand portfolio strategy, bringing together the biggest names in the industry under one umbrella to create the ultimate leisure and entertainment destination."

Picsolve brings world's largest photo installation to Dubai Parks

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LONDON, England – Picsolve, the digital image capture specialist for the leisure and entertainment industry, is implementing one of the world's largest photography installations to date, with a full range of image capture solutions across Dubai Parks and Resorts (DPR), the Middle East's largest integrated theme park destination.

The venue incorporates three major theme parks, a waterpark, a multi-themed dining and restaurant destination and a hotel. In order to provide guests with a simple way of validating and accessing their photography packages, Picsolve is integrating its DigiPass technology with the DPR ticketing system provided by VGS (snAPP). This first-time collaboration will create true omni-channel purchase and redemption opportunities for DPR, by allowing the destination to sell photography across multiple guest touch points, including fast queues, food and beverage and park entry.

Picsolve CEO Alan Wright



Guests will be able to take home a photo souvenir of themselves in one of the different themed locations within Riverland Dubai (above). Photo gifts and branded photo books will be available at Bollywood Parks Dubai, Motiongate Dubai (right) and Legoland Dubai. COURTESY DUBAI PARKS AND RESORTS



commented: "As the UAE is the fastest growing region in the theme park industry, it was important that our partnership with Dubai Parks and Resorts took into consideration the thriving consumer demand for

easy to use digital solutions within parks. By deploying the latest innovations in technology and being part of Dubai Parks and Resorts' ticketing eco-system, we are guaranteeing complete guest satisfaction

with a fully connected, omni-channel photo and retail experience."

In the coming months, guests will also be able to visit Picsolve's GS Photo Studio and take home a photo sou-

venir of themselves situated in one of the different themed locations within Riverland Dubai. Situated in the heart of DPR, the Riverland experience has been specifically designed for guests to enjoy during the evenings or while moving between the different parks.

Photo gifts and branded photo books will be introduced and available at Bollywood Parks Dubai, Motiongate Dubai and Legoland Dubai, while roaming photographers will be on the ground to capture guests' moments of their day.

Raed Kajoor Al Nuaimi, CEO of DXB Entertainments PJSC, the owner of DPR, said: "As the region's largest integrated theme park and entertainment destination, the deployment of the latest new technology innovations has been crucial to our company vision. With Picsolve, we were able to collaborate with the best-in-class digital photography partner and ensure all our guests can use the latest tech solutions to remember and cherish their special times spent at Dubai Parks and Resorts."

►CHINA

Continued from page 6

wide variety of culinary offerings and retail locations. Six Flags Hurricane Harbor will feature thrilling water slides, a massive wave pool, a relaxing Lazy River and an intricately designed children's water play area.

Six Flags Zhejiang and the adjacent Six Flags Hurricane Harbor are expected to open in 2019.

— Jeffrey Seifert



Simworx, Jora Vision team up for new attraction

Original story concept immerses guests in a world of pirates

AT: Andrew Mellor
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KINGSWINFORD, U.K. — Simworx, the specialist supplier of media-based dynamic simulation attractions, has teamed up with Dutch design and theming specialist Jora Vision to create a brand new attraction concept based on its popular Immersive Tunnel.

Utilizing a pirate theme, The Curse of Blackstorm Bay is a fully immersive experience which combines Simworx's expertise in dynamic simulation attractions and Jora Vision's theming and creative concept design skills to create a next generation version of the former's Immersive Tunnel. With an original storyline based on the world of pirates and full of humor, action and suspense, The Curse of Blackstorm Bay immerses guests in an exciting adventure from the pre-show and queue line areas all the way through to the main show element.

To begin the experience, guests enter an English navy fortress in the Caribbean set in approximately 1650, named Blackstorm Bay, and learn that the navy is looking for new recruits. They are asked to join naval commander Captain Bootneck and his parrot Wiggles for patrol duty in a small fleet of ships. The trip does not go as planned and the crew is attacked by pirates and encounter a sea witch which finally transforms into a Kraken.

An action-packed fight follows, causing the ship to spin, break in two, fly through the air and finally sink into the deep, while another naval ship is almost devoured by the creature! Captain Bootneck manages to steer the ship from peril and, with the help of his new recruits, returns to the safety of the fortress.

The full turnkey attraction features a dark ride scene with projection and physical theming as part of the show, while instead of the ride vehicle being the more familiar jeep or tram, in Blackstorm Bay it's a pirate galleon. A real water basin around the galleon helps to simulate a



Utilizing a pirate theme, The Curse of Blackstorm Bay is a fully immersive experience which combines Simworx' expertise in dynamic simulation attractions and Jora Vision's theming and creative concept design skills to create a next generation version of the former's Immersive Tunnel.

COURTESY SIMWORX

journey on the sea and 30 or 60 seat versions are available.

"The Curse of Blackstorm Bay is a stunning new concept for our Immersive Tunnel and takes the attraction and experience provided to a whole new level," said Simworx sales director Edward Pawley. "The ride

immerses guests as soon as they enter the pre-show area and continues to do so all the way through the queue line areas and into the main show element. It's a fun, exciting and highly entertaining experience for most ages and a great addition to what Simworx has to offer."





WATER PARKS & RESORTS

►Hawaiian Falls Pflugerville to rebrand into Typhoon Texas Water Park — Page 10

Bora Park brings tropical water park to winter wonderland

ADG provides facility design and consulting

AT: Jeffrey Seifert
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SAINT-GABRIEL-DE-VALCARTIER, Quebec, Canada — Village Vacances Valcartier (Valcartier Vacation Village) opened its new Bora Park indoor water park to guests on December 4, 2016.

Bora Park, designed by Aquatic Development Group, is the first of its kind in Quebec. This \$65 million, 102,000 square-foot expansion complements the resort's year-round entertainment offerings. The expansion includes a four-star hotel with 153 suites.

The Valcartier resort has been operating an outdoor water park since 1980. That park has expanded to become one of the premier water parks in the region with numerous attractions and elaborately themed areas. Bora Park was introduced to the popular resort to increase guests' length of stay during the winter season by providing additional activities and to stay ahead of the competition.

The expansion at the Valcartier Vacation Village adds a much-needed full-service, four-star hotel that includes a relaxing spa with indoor/outdoor pools. Other resort attractions include a campground with a variety of options from basic tent camping to fully equipped cabins, rafting, canoeing and river tours, a treetops adventure course with zip lines from April to September. From December to March, the resort becomes a winter playground with more than 35 snow tube slides, ice skating, snow trails, cross country skiing and the outrageous Tornado spinning tube slide.

The resort is also famous for its Hôtel de Glace (Ice Hotel), which has been thrilling and chilling guests since 2001. The hotel features huge snow vaults, crystalline ice sculptures and 44 rooms and

suites. The Hôtel de Glace operates from January to March. Valcartier resort is located 20 miles northwest of Quebec City.

Bora Park at the Valcartier carries a Polynesian theme throughout, with plenty of palm trees, tikis, textured concrete and specially designed lighting to help set the tropical mood, despite the frigid temperatures just outside the walls. ADG not only designed the indoor water park but also supplied several equipment systems such as the double FlowRider, a 4,000 square-foot wave pool and an adventure wave river utilizing ADG's WaveTek wave generation technology. The park can accommodate up to 1,000 people. The water park is open to everyone, but tickets must be purchased in advance and priority is given to guests staying at the hotel. In addition to the wave pool and lazy river, there are 14 slides — five of which are 50 feet tall. WhiteWater West of British Columbia, Canada, supplied a colorful combination of both body and tube slides. Two of the body slides feature WhiteWater's AquaDrop trap door launch capsules plunging into tunnel slides with translucent segments. A family zone with a separate pool and activities is designed for families with younger children.

Valcartier called upon ADG to design the province's first indoor water park. "Our expertise in waterpark and winter playground management has allowed us to improve our entertainment experience: our vacationers now have the chance to visit a waterpark in any season. This type of attraction has never been seen before in Quebec" stated Guy Drouin, president and general manager.

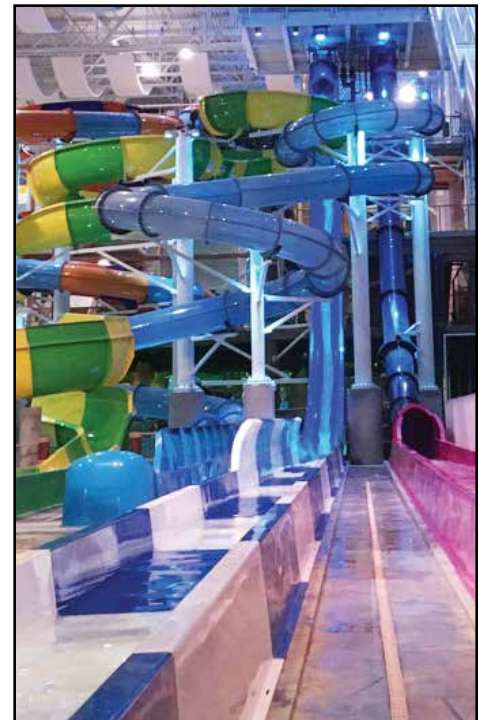
With multiple attractions and warm indoor temperatures, Bora Park has high expectations for its first winter season. The grand opening generated rave reviews from guests and Valcartier management experienced a large turn-out during the holiday season.



The family zone (above) provides a separate area for the park's younger guests.

A multitude of colorful slides for all age groups, tikis, palm trees and special lighting give the new indoor Bora Park a tropical feel and offer a warm change of pace from the chilly winter activities offered outside by the Valcartier Vacation Village.

COURTESY
ADG/VILLAGE
VACANCES VALCARTIER



Hawaiian Falls Pflugerville to rebrand into Typhoon Texas Water Park

PFLUGERVILLE, Texas — The Pflugerville Community Development Corporation (PCDC) and the City of Pflugerville reached an agreement with the principals of Typhoon Texas in Katy, Texas, to operate the former Hawaiian Falls Water Park for the next two years. The lease and operating agreement includes options to renew in 10-year increments. Hawaiian Falls, which opened in 2014 has faced layoffs, lawsuits and has failed to make bank payments, owing nearly \$400,000. Parent company Harvest Family Entertainment (HFE) once operated seven Hawaiian Falls parks in Texas. Last year the city of White Settlement terminated its land lease with HFE amid similar complaints of nonpayment.

In July of last year the U.S. Department of Labor penalized Hawaiian Falls for violating child labor laws and ordered the company to pay fines of \$86,000. According to the Department of Labor, workers under the age of 16 were found operating gas-powered pressure washers, open-flame grills, automatic rotisseries, pizza ovens and walk-in freezers. In addition, dozens of those employees were found working outside permitted work hours. According to Hawaiian Falls public relations, the case was settled in May 2015 following an audit by the Department of Labor. Hawaiian Falls has since changed its policies and no longer hires 15-year-old employees.

Hawaiian Falls Pflugerville opened in 2014 after the PCDC took out \$25 million in loans to build the park. The city owns the park and land, while Hawaiian Falls operated the facility and agreed to pay the principle and interest owed to the bank. According to records, the Pflugerville park lost more than \$784,000 in its first year of operation.

HFE has had financial difficulties in the past resulting in the sale of the first two parks in Garland and The Colony to CNL Properties. CNL leases the two parks back to HFE to operate as Hawaiian Falls Parks. In May 2016, Atlanta-based private equity firm Source Capital LLC, which had been an investor in HFE, acquired a majority share of the company. HFE founder and CEO David Busch remained as CEO.

Typhoon Texas, which opened in Katy, Texas, last year was developed by three local businessmen, Keith Dalton, Terry Hlavinka and Ray DeLaughter — all alumni of Texas A&M.

According to the agreement, Typhoon Texas will invest at least \$4.5 million in the park over a two-year period for park improvements including repairs, maintenance, new attractions and technology for operations. The PCDC has agreed to a lease payment of \$1.15 million a year. The PCDC will contribute approximately \$434,315.88 annually, funded by sales tax revenue to assist in fulfilling payments to Capital One which holds the notes issued for construction of the park. After the PCDC's loan for the park is fulfilled, the lease payment will be reduced to \$100 annually, estimated to occur in 2038. Typhoon Texas will spend a maximum of \$250,000 on repairs and maintenance needed to obtain a new Certificate of Occupancy for the park. A new Certificate of Occupancy inspection is required with the transfer of the lease and any repairs over \$250,000 will be paid by the PCDC. In addition to the lease payments, Typhoon Texas will pay the PCDC \$1 for every ticket over 300,000 sold in any season, with season passes counting as one ticket. Typhoon Texas will conduct routine year-round maintenance on the park in accordance with State of Texas and local requirements. The city of Pflugerville and PCDC will work with the Texas Department of Transportation to negotiate a public access to the water park off FM 68.

Typhoon Texas has agreed to honor 2017 season passes that were purchased at the park when it was still Hawaiian Falls and is continuing to sell season passes at the same rate. The park will not honor Hawaiian Falls passes from other parks. Typhoon Texas is offering a \$30 Two-Step upgrade to its passes that will allow passholders unlimited access to both locations.

Other operational details are still being decided such as whether or not outside food or coolers may be brought into the park. Hawaiian Falls allowed coolers or bags to be brought in for a fee. Typhoon Texas does not allow coolers or outside food with the exception of one bottle of water per person. The park is expected to open for the season in May.

—Jeffrey Seifert



NEWS SPLASH

COMPILED: Jeffery L. Seifert
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A brand-new aquatic facility in Alice, Texas, has closed after just four months of operation. The Alice City Council suspended operations at the facility claiming it had become too expensive to operate. **Denise Koenning Blanchard**, a member of the city's Natatorium and Water Park Committee said "We were caught completely off guard by the decision. When you have something that's been fully operational for only four months, it's difficult to get a true cost analysis." An ad hoc committee claims that the financial reports from the city which show a loss, are in error. The facility generated \$279,853 in revenue during the four months it was in operation, against \$238,013 in expenses.

The facility, which broke ground in 2012, was supposed to cost \$12 million. Four years later, when the center finally opened in June 2016, the cost had soared to \$22 million. The City of Alice drained its reserves and went into debt to cover the costs. During that time the city's income tax dropped significantly, collecting only \$5.2 million in 2016, compared to \$17.1 million in 2012. The city is mostly dependent on energy companies profiting from oil and gas production the Eagle Ford Shale Group. Crude oil prices and production have both dropped significantly over the last few years.

The city council has not released any additional information concerning plans for the \$22 million facility, stating that the city is under financial constraints because of the oil and gas industry.

A water park planned for Butte, Mont., to replace the demolished **Stodden Pool** is now past the design phase. As reported last month in this column, the \$8.8 million water park is part of a larger project that includes refurbishment of Stodden Park and the **Spirit of Columbia Gardens Carousel**. In response to suggestions from the public, some modifications were made to the original plans to make the water park more appealing without exceeding cost limits. Some design changes, like the use of red brick facades and arches were brought about to mimic the architectural details in Uptown Butte.

The pool features will now include two carousel horses for kids to climb and a large bucket for dropping water that will be encircled by roller coaster tracks and a car that look similar to those at Columbia Gardens.

With the plans now approved, and construction expected to start soon, the planned opening of the park in 2018 has been moved up from mid-summer to April.

In December, Mayor **George Flaggs** of Vicksburg, Miss., announced plans for **Blues Beach**, a new water park located just off I-20 next to Vicksburg Outlets. Flaggs has been hard at work to increase tourism to his city and has already convinced the state to contribute \$500,000 in tourism bonds to the project. The rest will be privately funded. Vicksburg is located at the confluence of the Yazoo River and

Mississippi River about 40 miles west of Jackson, the state capital. Attractions include gaming venues, historic homes and museums, civil war cemeteries and military parks, and the USS Cairo Museum.

Specific details about the water park have yet to be released, but the mayor is planning to have it open by spring 2018.

"What this does is it allows you to make Vicksburg a true tourism destination," said Flaggs. "By being able to come in here, go and visit our military park, visit our gaming casinos, visit the City of Vicksburg, all of this history in Vicksburg, and then stay at least two days to see it all and enjoy themselves."

Water Park of America in Bloomington, Minn. may soon go to the wolves. **Great Wolf Resorts** of Wisconsin is currently in the process of purchasing the water park and the adjoining Radisson Hotel with plans to rebrand the facility as a Great Wolf Lodge.

Great Wolf Resorts plans to renovate the 433,000 square-foot facility and add amenities common to Great Wolf such as a ropes course, rock wall, bowling alley and meeting rooms. The individual rooms will be renovated, with a couple of rooms getting a complete themed makeover. The water park renovation will be mostly limited to repairs and refinishing. The exterior and interior will be made to look like a Great Wolf Lodge, but the footprint of the eight-floor complex will remain mostly unchanged.

Water Park of America opened in 2008 and although its name is similar to the nearby Mall of America, the two operations were never affiliated.

Great Wolf currently operates 15 lodges in the U.S. and Canada. The facility in Bloomington will be the first in the state of Minnesota. The newest Great Wolf Lodge in Colorado Springs, opened last December, 10 days ahead of schedule.

BMX riders who broke into **Splish Splash Water Park** on Long Island in Calverton, N.Y., and rode bikes on the attractions have been arrested. Five males, ages 19-34 were charged with criminal trespass after posting a 15-minute long video of the illegal escapade. The video shows them climbing a barbed-wire fence to break into the park around 6 a.m. Once inside, the video shows the delinquents riding bikes on the park's bowl ride, tornado, speed chute and mammoth river. Officials say the men did thousands of dollars in damage at the park. "There was damage to the attractions. We don't know the extent of that damage yet, but they will all need to be re-inspected," said Park Manager **Mike Bengston**. "We just had some slides that we re-coated this year which was very expensive for us."

22-year old **Billy Perry** of West Islip is well known in BMX circles for pulling these types of stunts. He states on the video that he hopes they don't get arrested, but his YouTube page shows that run-ins with the law are not uncommon.

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PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

► **Fun Spot Kissimmee to add Gravity Group coaster — Page 18 / Fairs — Pages 20-30**

Spring 2017 opening targeted for Owa

Zamperla supplies all rides to new Alabama amusement park

AT: Tim Baldwin
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FOLEY, Ala. — Just nine miles from the white sand shoreline of the Gulf of Mexico, a new tourist destination is well underway. The population of Foley, Ala., is around 15,000. However, the city is poised to see major potential growth as a new amusement park and entertainment development has begun construction.

Owa, an Indian term that means “big water,” is the name of the new park. A 14-acre lake will be a centerpiece to the new 520-acre property.

“It was a glorified retention pond, but we have made it into a lake,” Tim Martin, president of Creek Indian Economic Development Association, told *Amusement Today* at the recent IAAPA Attractions Expo. “Phase One is about 90 acres and it will include a 150-room Town Place Suites hotel, the theme park and approximately 155,000 square feet of retail, dining and entertainment. An island in the middle will have a 300-seat amphitheater for weddings, outdoor concerts and those types of things.”

The amusement park is expected to be the first component to come online. In the spring of 2016, Zamperla solidified their position that would commit to providing all rides in time for the park’s opening.

“The best scenario is that we will be open Memorial Day with the theme park,” said Martin.

Zamperla is providing all 21 rides in the first phase of



These artist renderings depict the new Owa — an Indian term meaning “big water” — park and its entrance. All rides are being supplied by Zamperla.

COURTESY OWA

the park, which will surround the lake. The range of rides attempts to cater to all ages, from small children to thrill-seekers.

“It’s an exciting time for us,” said Michael Coleman of Zamperla. “This is the fifth time we are supplying an entire amusement park from scratch. To work with such fantastic partners after years of negotiating and presenting, and for them to see we are able to do this...it’s great.”

► **See OWA, page 14**



	<p>Moser Rides, SideWinder 360°</p>	<p>Gosetto, Dark Rides/Fun House</p>	<p>Fabbri Group, Spinning Mouse</p>
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Zamperla unveiled the park plan with the entire line-up of rides on video monitors at the recent IAAPA Attractions Expo. AT/TIM BALDWIN

OWA

Continued from page 13

The challenge is to coordinate the shipping. Everyone seems happy where we are in the process."

The ride package will include three roller coasters: a junior roller coaster, a spinning coaster and a very large looping coaster resembling the Thunderbolt at Coney Island. At the Owa facility, it will be called Rollin' Thunder.

Other major rides will include a Midi-Discovery, Disk'O Coaster and Endeavor. An assortment of children's, family and observation rides will round out the mix.

Future plans call for a water park, additional hotels, a condominium complex and a resort level RV park. When complete, total investment in the development will top \$500 million. According to Martin, Owa is a 20-year development.

The Poarch Indian Tribe reported that when completed, the Owa development will generate close to 3,500 jobs (both direct and indirect) and will boost tourist spending in South Alabama by seven percent. That increase in spending is expected to increase Baldwin County's economic output by close to \$250 million.

The Poarch Creek Tribal Government is a major contributor to the economy of Alabama, employing more than 3,500 residents. Its enterprises include multiple casinos, and while those resorts have al-



The Zamperla AeroZoom is seen above being installed at Owa. Below, one of the coaster vehicles for Rollin' Thunder roller coaster was on display at the recent trade show. COURTESY OWA; AT/TIM BALDWIN



ways been focused on being family-friendly, Owa will be its first significant venture outside the gaming industry, diversifying their operations.

The Owa development is adjacent to a \$40 million sports complex that features 16 state-

of-the-art outdoor fields. A 90,000-square-foot indoor facility is planned for a summer 2017 opening. The amusement park and surrounding development is expected to pair perfectly with sports tourism and family vacationers.



Connecticut

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A Southern California tradition returns

Opening of SkyPark at Santa's Village a 'gift' to community, fans

AT: Dean Lamanna

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SKYFOREST, Calif. — Before 1998, Santa's Village, a mini-theme park nestled in the evergreens bordering scenic Highway 18 in the San Bernardino Mountains east of Los Angeles, was a tradition as well as a tourist attraction. It was a gathering place for residents of the surrounding hilltop communities and a major employer of their youth.

But by the time it closed for good that year, the out-of-the-way fun spot near Lake Arrowhead was suffering from major Southern California theme park competition, along with aging rides and infrastructure and the seasonal limitations of its Christmas theme. Opened in 1955, the park featured a snow-capped abode for Santa Claus at the center of a village permanently decorated for the holidays.

Linda Ramsay, who grew up and raised two children in the area, shared with *Amusement Today* some recollections of being a kid in the park its opening year.

"I remember petting the reindeer and riding the Bumblebee [monorail] ride," she said. "And of course, visiting Santa's House. This was before Disneyland; this was the place to come. The park is just phenomenally situated, with all the old-growth trees. It's just like what maybe the North Pole might be."

For Ramsay's son-in-law,



Bill Johnson, a real estate investor who got his first job operating a ride in the park at age 13, Santa's Village has become a nearly three-year resurrection project

After the park's penultimate owner, Putnam Henck, ceased operations, he auctioned off most of the modest ride collection to pay off debts; a subsequent owner, Thomas Plott, undertook work on the site's 18 whimsical log cottages and support buildings, putting new roofs on them. But he died before finishing. The property's roughly 230 acres, including the 15-acre park and surrounding undeveloped land, wound up in limbo.

Johnson bought the parcel in the spring of 2014. The place, by that time, was a mess — having become a timber storage area for trees killed by a severe regional bark beetle infestation. A major cleanup, he quickly learned, would be only half the battle.

While building codes and environmental regulations were few or nonexistent in the 1950s, the current owner was faced with spending millions to bring everything up to current standards before securing a



The six-decade-old log buildings and infrastructure of SkyPark at Santa's Village have been upgraded and outfitted with the latest LED and wireless technology. Owner Bill Johnson (above), with wife Michelle, who has given the park a fresh veneer of holiday cheer, are lifelong locals.
AT/DEAN LAMANNA

temporary use permit late last fall.

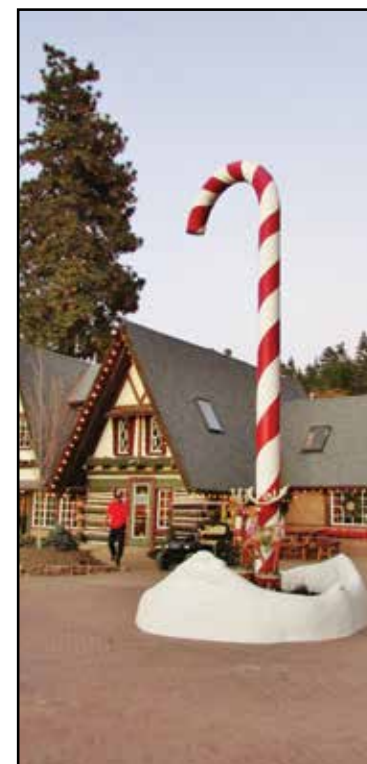
"You run into unbelievable obstacles," Johnson told *AT* during a pre-grand opening tour of the park in early November. (It officially debuted Dec. 2.) He proudly pointed out the new, gently graded, well-lit concrete walkways connecting the buildings that now are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. "It's just incredible, especially in California, to try to rebuild something like this. It would've been easier to do it from scratch."

By comparison, he noted: "Walt Disney built Disneyland in a year; when you think about that, it's astounding."

A significant chunk of Johnson's outlay has gone into preparation for expanding the location's year-round appeal. Coming soon, once permitting and environmental reviews are fully completed, are hiking and biking paths, fly-fishing ponds, a zipline and a "world-class" campground across Highway 18 overlooking the Inland Empire's city lights. In the theme park proper, there's been a de-emphasis on motorized, hydraulically powered attractions.

Johnson's comprehensive mixed-use planning and vision are reflected in the property's new name: SkyPark at Santa's Village.

"The idea was to turn it into an adventure park, with self-powered stuff for visitors of all ages," he said, noting the addition of a climbing wall and the transformation of the old antique mini-cars track into a pedal-powered course (the latter with special theming by former Hollywood creative talent John Clark Matthews, the lead character animator on the feature films *Stuart Little 2* and *The Polar Express*. "The beauty of the model is that it takes a seasonal park and stretches it into something really attractive in July and August. When it's hot down the hill, where there's 17 million people, we're in an alpine setting and it's cool. They can come up here for the day."



In keeping with that approach, a signature attraction of the original Santa's Village, the suspended Bumblebee Monorail, installed in 1961, is being repurposed in-house into a more thrilling ride for teens and adults.

"The track is in great shape," Johnson said. "We've taken the three-phase power off of it, and we're going to add a one-person mountain bike-like vehicle with electronic shifting that also uses some auto and aircraft parts. It will be a high-speed ride that swings through the turns." (Plans for a two-person tandem vehicle also are in the works.)

That Johnson was frequently stopped by grateful friends and well-wishers during *AT*'s visit suggested he's on the right track.

"This is a major economic push for the community," he said. "For that, I'm thrilled to get this thing up and running. And that's why we've pushed as hard as we have to do everything the old Santa's Village did and more."

The nostalgic and emotional heft of the effort is fully felt by Johnson.

"It brings you to tears," he said. "It's a super-emotional roller coaster to go through this process with something first built and opened a few months before Disneyland. I mean, Disney employees came here to see the model. This is a legacy."

•skyparksantasvillage.com



The Frozen Falls Climbing Tower (left) is one of the park's new self-powered attractions. Designer John Clark Matthews (above) creates the theming for Arrow's Adventure, a pedal-powered fantasy tour named after Santa's dog, a white timber wolf.

AT/DEAN LAMANNA (LEFT); COURTESY JOHN CLARK MATTHEWS

Premier Rides will supply new attraction

New coaster to 'electrify' SeaWorld San Diego's 2018 season

SAN DIEGO, Calif. — Even while undertaking the most ambitious expansion and enhancement project in its history in 2017, SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment's flagship property is looking ahead to 2018 — revealing plans for a high-profile, multiple-launch steel roller coaster.

Called Electric Eel, the twisting, looping attraction will be an addition to SeaWorld's recently announced Ocean Explorer realm, a new three-acre section containing several rides and aquariums. The area, along with a new educational experience named Orca Encounter and Electric Ocean, a summer nighttime extravaganza, are set to debut later this year.

The coaster, from Premier Rides of Baltimore, Md., was announced a week before SeaWorld San Diego was scheduled to end its performing killer whale shows permanently. It advances the company's promised focal shift away from animal acts, and it is part of a push to reverse a reported two-year slump in attendance.

"Electric Eel will bring a whole new level of excitement to SeaWorld in 2018," said Marilyn Hannes, park president. "[It] will give riders the rare opportunity to feel what it's like to move like an eel as they twist and flip along nearly 900 feet of undulating track."

The coaster, incorporating thematic sound and LED lighting effects, will propel riders forward and backward as they speed through the station platform — accelerating to more than 60 mph in seconds. The train will then shoot skyward nearly 150 feet, negotiating an inverted heartline roll and a twisting loop before diving back to the station.

Electric Eel, which still needs a green light from the California Coastal Commission, will be sited in one of four areas of the park that allow for exceptions to the city's 30-foot coastal zone height limit, per SeaWorld's approved master plan.

While ramping up the thrill quotient, SeaWorld continues to

► See SEAWORLD, page 18



SeaWorld San Diego is already looking beyond its major Ocean Explorer ride/experience section expansion this year to 2018, when it will open Electric Eel, a multiple-launch steel roller coaster. Reaching nearly 150 feet high and achieving a speed of 60-plus mph, it will be the park's tallest and fastest coaster.
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SeaWorld San Diego concludes orca shows

SAN DIEGO, Calif. — Spectators packed the 5,500-seat stadium at SeaWorld to see the last splashy leap of a decades-long tradition on Sunday, Jan. 8.

The date marked the final performance of One Ocean, starring Shamu, at the marine theme park. Guests reportedly lined up for the final show hours beforehand.

It was a sad farewell for many, including families who had attended the park's orca acts for generations.

That said, the public's attitude toward the captive breeding and behavioral training of orcas and other large, intelligent social mammals has shifted over the years.

Negative public opinion over the captivity of killer whales reached critical mass following the release of the 2013 documentary *Blackfish*. After some bitter corporate resistance to pressure from animal rights activists and new, restrictive legislation in California, a rapid corporate evolution at SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment led it to announce the phase-out of orca breeding and shows — with the San Diego park ending its performances first and the chain's Texas and Florida parks concluding theirs by 2019.

SeaWorld San Diego will introduce Orca Encounter, a naturalistic educational display of its orcas, this summer.

—Dean Lamanna

SEAWORLD

Continued from page 17

evolve its next generation of immersive and engaging marine life experiences.

Complementing Electric Eel within the Ocean Explorer realm will be a live eel habitat, featuring one of the world's most extensive collections of moray eels in a naturalistic deep-ocean environment. The interactive experience will allow guests to discover the unique living habits of eels, including their predation skills, growth rates and sensory abilities.

"The future is bright at SeaWorld and we remain committed to long-term investment in the park," said Hannes. "We want our guests from around the world to not only have a great time, but be inspired to care about the ocean and the animals that live there."

—Dean Lamanna

Fun Spot Kissimmee to add new compact woodie

The Gravity Group contracted for the unique design

AT: Tim Baldwin

tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

KISSIMMEE, Fla. — As 2016 was winding down, it's were being dotted and t's crossed between Fun Spot America and The Gravity Group. As AT goes to press, the new project has yet to be named, but the compact wooden coaster will be incorporating an upside-down inversion.

AT inquired as to why this was not an announcement from the floor at the IAAPA Attractions Expo. "It was not quite a done deal at IAAPA," said Chad Miller, engineer and co-owner of The Gravity Group. "We were in the process of trying to complete the contract during [the Expo]. We thought we would be close enough that by the end of the week we thought we'd be able to announce it. But working with Fun Spot, we decided we weren't going to try to squeeze it in by the end of the show."

Fun Spot America has two locations in Central Florida: one just off of International Drive in Orlando and one in Kissimmee. Owned by the Arie family, the Kissimmee location is upping its profile for the upcoming summer season and beyond.

Miller said the project actually went back several years. Even though talks started up again last June, he told AT: "We had a couple of proposals for the other park, and then prior to that we had some proposals for the Kissimmee park years ago, so we kind of had something in place, but it didn't go anywhere years ago." At that time The Gravity Group had not done inversions yet. Miller said, "That was the first thing they wanted us to do was to take that previous design and add an inversion."

The new wooden coaster designed by The Gravity Group will have many signature features. What will differentiate this new project from the family's previous wooden coaster in Orlando is the inclusion of a barrel roll inversion following the first drop.

"This will be the only wooden roller coaster in the southeast United States that



Central Florida's newest wooden coaster will roar at Fun Spot America in Kissimmee. This installation will include an inversion and be built by The Gravity Group. As of press time, the ride had not been named. COURTESY FUN SPOT AMERICA

will feature a 360-degree barrel roll. This is huge news not just for us but the city of Kissimmee," said John Arie Jr., Fun Spot America's CEO.

As the \$6 million project gets heavily underway, the construction will add 50 new jobs to the local economy the park reported. Once the ride opens in the summer of 2017, 20 new full-time positions will be added.

"We know there is huge potential in the Kissimmee market at our second location," said Arie. "With visitation at that park being very similar to our Orlando location, even though Orlando is almost twice its size, adding a roller coaster that is so unique and thrilling will enhance our guests' experience. We expect it to have the same or better impact that our White Lightning coaster has had at the Orlando park."

In addition to the dramatic inversion on the ride, other signature features will help the coaster stand out among its brethren. A double down, 11 different moments of air time and banked curves up to 115 degrees are intertwined in the ride's compact layout.

"The Gravity Group is able to do more with a ride in less space because of their Timberliner trains and the ability for their cars to make tight turns and maneuver through inversions," said Arie. "The Gravity Group engineers have been easy to work with and have always been receptive to our ideas. Even with the compact site, the ride has gone through multiple iterations, and they presented a lot of different op-

tions for the ride. Their team has been very responsive and understanding on our short schedule for getting the ride open."

The coaster will stand at 82 feet in height with a first drop of just over 80 feet. Track length is 2,256 feet and top speeds should exceed 48 mph. The ride will sport two six-car trains.

The ride takes up a space of 100 feet by 400 feet. Arie said, "We had two flat go kart tracks and our S&S Hot Seat ride in that area. We are relocating the Hot Seat to another location in the park and the flat tracks will go away. We still have our two, multilevel patented go kart tracks which have really been our trademark rides for the last 10 years."

"People are really going to notice how crammed in the ride is into the site," said Miller. "It's not like a twister, like at Gröna Lund where it is placed in among a bunch of other rides and structures, it's just a small piece of land that they wanted to put the ride on, but it is quite a bit of coaster in that size of site. Being on the ride, you're going to be going through structure a lot. From an off-ride standpoint, just looking at it, it's going to be a really dense structure and wound up track. I think the compactness of it all will impress people."

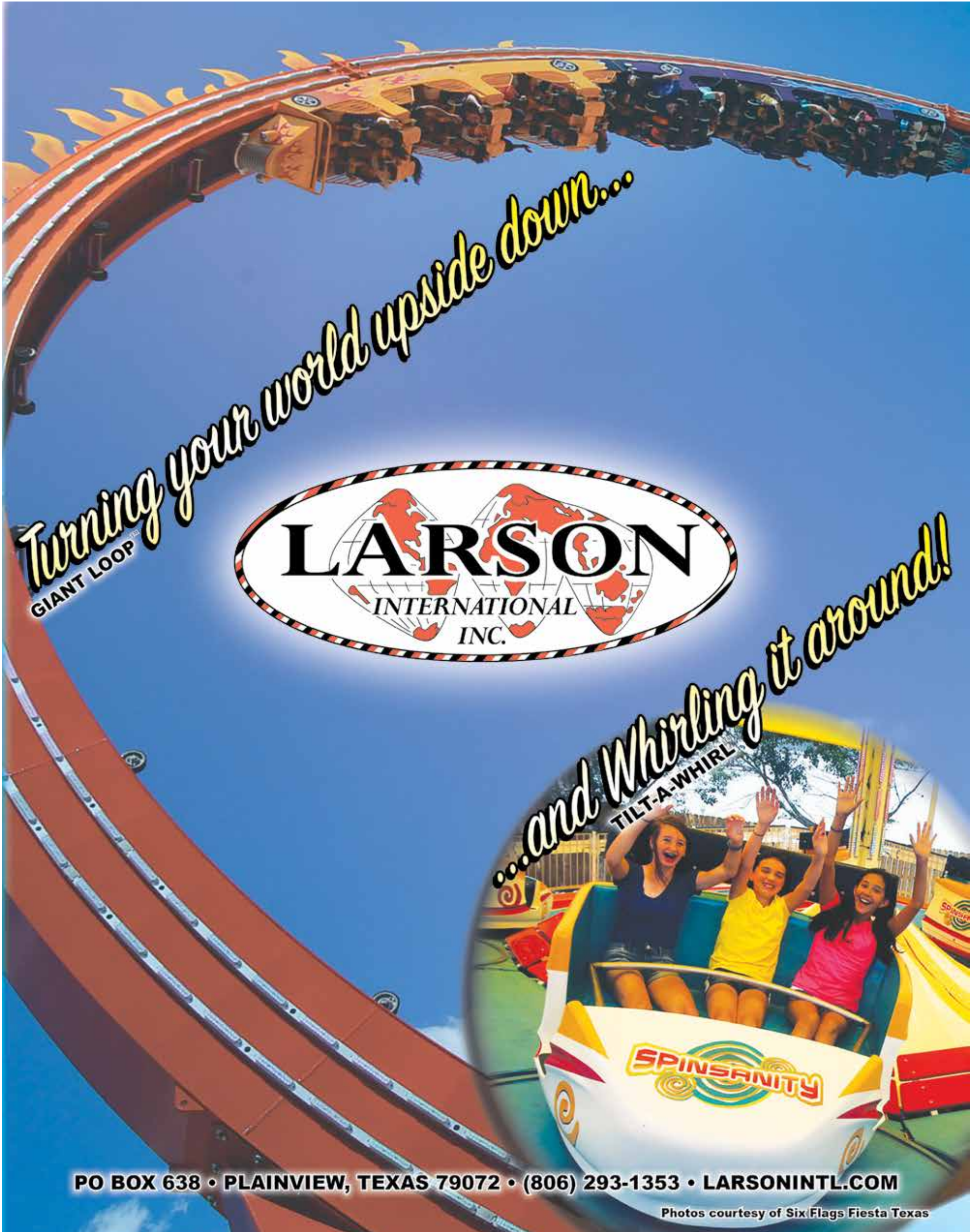
Often rides with unusual terrain offer design challenges. When asked if this flat piece of property makes things more straight forward, Miller replied, "No, it's not without challenges. It's flat, but not a big flat spot. Also, trying to

incorporate an inversion into a tight spot was a little tricky, too. In the past, we've had the luxury of being able to get out [of the inversion] where we wanted to be. Here, we didn't have the space. This will be the first inversion we've ever done with such limitation on the shape of the track. But we've always said 'No no, give us the site that has the challenges.' We think it always makes for the best rides."

AT inquired about the plans for lighting. Arie responded, "We love the LED lighting package we have on the White Lightning at the Orlando park. So, with this coaster being over 80 feet tall, this is a must-do for visibility from Highway 192. We are still researching different companies and options for a lighting package. We want the lighting package to be a "wow" factor as you drive down the road."

The park is currently finalizing the name and thematic slant. They have reached out to their guests via social media. "With the overwhelming response we received online, that opened our eyes to so many different options that we didn't think about," said Arie.

The opening of the ride is being targeted for early summer. "I am so proud of this coaster and beyond excited to get it open to our guests," said Arie. "I just know it is going to be a home run for our domestic and international guests. I honestly believe this is going to pull people in from all over the U.S. just to ride this one-of-a-kind thrilling coaster. As I say on all of our commercials, this is going to be HUGE!"



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30 shows remain between now and May 21

Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus to close

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

ELLENTON, Fla. — Changing times, above all other reasons, was the catalyst for the closure of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus by Feld Entertainment.

In a press conference held on Monday, Jan. 16, with Kenneth Feld, chairman and CEO, Feld Entertainment, and his daughter, Juliet Feld, COO of the company, fielding questions, Kenneth Feld said: "Times have changed, probably this past decade more than any other time. Attention spans have changed. The traditional family unit has changed. Everything has had an impact."

Where at one time the circus had to be all things to all people, as far as entertainment, now people are used to their entertainment being compartmentalized.

"When I was growing up, there were three television stations," he said. "Who would have thought there would be one station for just about everything."

Juliet Feld said declining ticket sales for the circus wasn't new. They had been seeing that happen for the last 10 years.

"Because the circus is so

close to our hearts and because we are a privately held company, we tried to retain the trends," she said. "But, after we took the elephants away, the drop was steeper than we anticipated. It just became an unsustainable business."

In May, 2016, the Feld family removed the Asian elephants from their traveling circus performances. The elephants that were traveling with the Ringling Bros. circus units were relocated to the Ringling Bros. Center for Elephant Conservation in Florida.

Also during the press conference, it was told that there will be over 400 people impacted by this decision. The circus had two units on the road, "Circus Xtreme" and "Out of this World."

Plans are to work with each individual helping them in whatever way they can in the transition. And, that included working with them with housing, interview preparation, and application preparations.

They also are currently looking for suitable homes for their animals that include lions, tigers, horses and llamas.

"Our commitment to our animals is for a life time," Juliet Feld said.

Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus has re-



A scene from Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey's Circus Xtreme. Both units of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus will close after May performances.

COURTESY FELD ENTERTAINMENT

ceived criticism for almost 40 years by animal activist groups, some that quickly picked up on the closing of the circus as a victory.

"This isn't a victory for animal rights activists," Kenneth Feld said during the press conference.

He said his family is sad for having to make such a difficult decision.

Feld Entertainment has

been the owner of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus for the last 50 years after the purchase of the circus by Irvin Feld, Kenneth Feld's father. But, its history spans much longer than that.

It all began in the mid 1870s, when Dan Castello and William Cameron Coup persuaded P.T. Barnum to lend his name and financial backing to a circus they had already cre-

ated in Delavan, Wis.

It was called P.T. Barnum's Great Traveling Museum, Menagerie, Caravan and Hippodrome. The moniker of Greatest Show on Earth was added later.

Independently and at about the same time, James Anthony Bailey teamed up with James E. Cooper to create Cooper and Bailey Circus.

Cooper and Bailey became P.T. Barnum's chief competitor, but after it became apparent that the two businesses were expanding in similar directions, they agreed to combine the two.

In 1891, P.T. Barnum died and Bailey then purchased the circus from Barnum's widow.

The circus continued to grow and in 1897 Bailey took it on an European tour and stayed there until 1902.

Meanwhile, in 1884, five Ringling brothers started a small circus in Baraboo, Wis. It traveled primarily in the midwest and northwest with the larger Barnum and Bailey circus traveling the eastern seaboard. But, in the years of the European tour, the Ringling circus grew rapidly. Management took the opportunity to move the circus to the east coast.

Barnum returned in 1905 and ended up taking his show west of the Rocky Moun-

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► See CIRCUS, page 22



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►CIRCUS

Continued from page 20

tains. In 1906 Barnum died.

Ringling brothers purchased the Barnum and Bailey circus in 1907. The two cir-

Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey's "Out of this World's" big cat trainer, Alexander Lacy, performs for audiences across the U.S., wowing circus guests. COURTESY FELD ENTERTAINMENT

cuses traveled separately until 1919. The Ringling Brothers World's Greatest Shows and Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth debuted as one circus on March 29, 1919.

Thus began the growth of "the Greatest Show on Earth." It did see some ups and downs, especially during the Great Depression but perseverance served it well. It had even managed to purchase the American Circus Corp., owner of five circuses, in the late 1920s.

In 1933, circus management made Frank Buck, an American hunter, animal collector, and author, an offer to ride into the show astride an elephant. He toured with Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey for one year.

But, on July 6, 1944, one of its greatest blows hit, the Hartford, Conn., fire. At least 167 people were killed when a fire broke out under the big top.

In 1956, the circus owners moved the circus from a tent show to indoor venues. Irvin Feld was one of several promoters hired to work with the show.

In late 1967, Irvin Feld, Israel Feld and Judge Roy Mark Hofheinz of Texas with backing from Richard C. Blum bought the company for \$8 million.

Feld immediately began making changes, updating the circus operation. He got rid of the freak show and made it more family oriented. In 1968, he established the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus Clown College (it was suspended in 1998).

Over the next decades under Feld's leadership, the circus grew and transitioned with the times. Millions flocked to the circus, leaving with small banners, elephant cups and other novelties.

Parents who had been taken to the circus as children took their own children. But, as the years progressed and toppled into the 21st century, cultural changes became too much to keep the circus alive.



Feld Entertainment announced in December that Kristen Michelle Wilson would be the first female ringmaster. She tours with Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey's "Circus Xtreme."

COURTESY FELD ENTERTAINMENT

Kenneth Feld said that the history of the circus will be preserved. The first concern will be helping those people and animals being directly impacted.

"But the history will be preserved. It will be a place where the people can see it and enjoy it."

The two touring circuses this season will perform 30 shows between now and May. Major stops include Atlanta, Washington, Philadelphia, Boston and Brooklyn. The final shows will be in Providence, R.I., on May 7 and in Uniondale, N.Y., at the Nassau County Coliseum on May 21.

Feld Entertainment is a leader in producing and presenting live touring family entertainment experiences. It's productions have appeared in more than 75 countries and on six continents to date and include Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey, Monster Jam, Monster Energy Supercross, AMSOIL Arenacross, Disney On Ice Presented by Stonyfield YoKids Organic Yogurt, Disney Live! Presented by Stonyfield YoKids Organic Yogurt and Marvel Universe Live!

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BRIEFS**Wisconsin State Fair hoping for upgrade to Cream Puff Pavilion**

WEST ALLIS, Wisc. — The Cream Puff Pavilion at the Wisconsin State Fair Park, West Allis, could get a major upgrade in the coming years as Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker announced his upcoming budget would include a request for a \$6 million expansion and renovation. Funding for the renovation would come entirely from private gifts. The project should be completed in time for the 2019 State Fair.

The Original Cream Puff continues to be the top fair food and is expected to be a hit again this year during the fair's Aug. 3-13 schedule.

Ohio State Fair struggling to book entertainment acts

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Increased competition from local music venues and festivals has made it difficult for the Ohio State Fair, Columbus, to fill its entertainment roster for its 2017 fair set for Aug. 26-Sept. 6.

The agency that runs the Ohio State Fair says options including Nationwide Arena, the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium and large-scale music have resulted in these challenges.

The Ohio Expo Center's non-fair events are facing the same.

The expo commission operates the fairgrounds and runs the annual fair. The non-fair events, like an annual home and garden show, are important to its finances to keep prices down for fair visitors.

The Celeste Center, the fairgrounds' main concert venue during the event, is getting a \$9.4 million renovation, the first since opening in 1991.

Harvest the Memories is 2017 theme for Evergreen State Fair

MONROE, Wash. — The Evergreen State Fair, Snohomish County's largest event, is held in the 12 days leading up to Labor Day. Located in Monroe, Wash., this year's dates are Aug. 24-Sept. 4. Last month the theme was announced, "Harvest the Memories."

The fair theme is a tradition almost as old as the fair itself, and the theme is used throughout the fair.

Seen at the 2016 IAAPA Attractions Expo

OABA Reception always filled to capacity

ORLANDO, Fla. — The OABA Reception held annually during the IAAPA Attractions Expo is a great place for the portable amusement industry members to connect with not only each other but to suppliers and manufacturers to that industry.

Here are some of those professionals seen during the 2016 Expo. The reception was held Wednesday, Nov. 16, at the Orange County Convention Center.

▶ **AT PHOTOS**
PAM SHERBORNE



Some of those on hand at the OABA reception include standing, from left, Guy Leavitt, owner, Ray Cammack Shows; John Hanschen, Thomas Carnival; Jody Leavitt Lopez, RCS; Chris Lopez, RCS; seated, from left, Lorelei Schoendienst, Luehrs' Ideal Rides; Charlene Leavitt, wife of Guy Leavitt; and Kim Leavitt Palmieri. Jody Leavitt Lopez and Kim Leavitt Palmieri are the daughters of Guy and Charlene Leavitt.



Networking during the OABA reception during the 2016 IAAPA Expo are, from left, Jennifer Hutchins, Bob Space Racers; Joyce Hutchins, Worldwide Service Supply; Bobby Miles, Bob Space Racers; and Mike Demas, independent ride operator.



From left, are E.J. Dean, Dean & Flynn Fiesta Shows and incoming OABA chair; Michael Wood, Wood Entertainment, an independent ride operator and a past OABA chair; and Tom Gaylin, Rosedale Attractions & Shows Inc., and current OABA chair.



Enjoying some socializing together are, from left, Alan Howell, Bob Space Racers; Bobby Miles, Bob Spacers; and Mike Featherston, Gold Star Amusements.



Jill Butler Moyer, left, and her sister, Kris Butler Brajevich, of Butler Amusements, enjoy socializing at the OABA IAAPA reception.



Taking a few moments out to discuss how the year has been, are, from left, Bob Johnson, president, OABA; Gary Slater, CEO/manager, Iowa State Fair, Des Moines; and Greg Stewart, president and general manager, Central Washington State Fair, Yakima, Wash.



From left, Michelle Card, NICA executive director; Paulette Keene, Paulette's Food Service and NICA president; and Jennifer Giordano, NICA treasurer.



The Queen Mary's Chill event included a Zierer Wave Swinger from Helm & Sons Amusements of Colton, Calif., previously owned by Michael Jackson. COURTESY THE QUEEN MARY



Seasonal fun at historic ship attraction

Winter carnival at The Queen Mary enjoys fifth successful year

AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

LONG BEACH, Calif. — The historic, permanently docked ship-turned-tourist attraction known as the Queen Mary played host to Chill, a cool-weather festival, from Nov. 23 to Jan. 8.

For its fifth annual presentation, the pop-up mini-theme park took place not only on the 80-year-old ship but spread across the adjacent parking area and into a portion of the 130-foot-tall dome that once housed the Spruce Goose, the World War II-era wooden airplane built by Howard Hughes.

New and returning attractions included a 6,000-square-foot ice skating rink, paintball, a six-lane ice tubing slide, a bouncing maze, a Wave Swinger once installed at Michael Jackson's Neverland Ranch and a few other family-oriented rides, plus live entertainment and (for adults) several themed bar spots.

A life-size gingerbread house offered cookie and stocking decorating for children and parents alike. In addition to the appearance of Santa and Mrs. Claus, who held court in a specially created North Pole Village, carolers and entertainers strolled the decorated grounds.

This season, Chill visitors also happily followed Alice down the rabbit hole with the event's main attraction, Alice in Winterland — a 14,000-square-foot walkthrough located inside the dome and themed to the classic Lewis Carroll story. The interactive experience was enhanced with costumed



characters and radio frequency identification (RFID) technology embedded in optional rabbit ears or top hats, making each visit unique.

"We were very excited to introduce this completely child-friendly main exhibit, especially one with digital technology," said Steve Sheldon, the Queen Mary's director of entertainment events. "It's inspiring to see thousands of families of all ages, from little kids to their grandparents, explore the attraction in awe."

The fairy-tale environment, made quite magical with dozens of colorful, whimsically shaped lanterns and fanciful sets, was created by Pasadena, Calif.-based attractions designer Mycotoo. Sheldon told *Amusement Today* that he was impressed with the company's work.

"Every year we change the overarching theme of the event — and the Alice in Winterland exhibit was an entirely new concept," he said. "While we featured lanterns in the past at Chill on a limited basis, this was our first time creating larger-than-life displays out of them and really sharing that unique artwork with our guests. The lanterns kind of transport you into a different mind space."

"The comment I got a lot from various people from different walks of life was, 'I feel



Chill's main attraction, the magic lantern-filled Alice in Winterland (above and right), located inside the Spruce Goose dome, was created by Mycotoo of Pasadena, Calif.

COURTESY THE QUEEN MARY

like a kid again."

The extra-imaginative effort appears to have paid off for the festival, which was originally conceived to fill a need in Southern California — and specifically in Long Beach — for a truly wintry year-end holiday diversion. Although the Queen Mary

► See CHILL, page 25





Ice-based activities such as tubing and skating are among the most popular Chill festival offerings.

COURTESY
THE QUEEN MARY

►CHILL

Continued from page 24

does not release admission numbers, Sheldon said the ship's Chill and Dark Harbor (Halloween) events "consistently draw attendance well into the six figures," with some fluctuations caused by weather and other factors.

Having access to over half the indoor floor space in the cavernous, 75,000-square-foot dome has been "a blessing," he acknowledged. But this year, as of March 1, the dome will be entirely occupied by Carnival Cruise Lines, which operates out of the Port of Long Beach.

"We'll be rethinking and moving things around for future events," said Sheldon, who includes Dark Harbor and, taking place Feb. 18-19, ScotsFestival among his favorite annual Queen Mary presentations (the ship was built in Clydebank, Scotland, he noted). "ScotsFestival is one of our longest-running events: we have two days of activities, like our Scottish Highland Games and dancing competitions, along with whiskey and beer tastings and live entertainment. Whether you're interested in Scottish culture or not, it's a lot of fun and just totally different."

Much like the RMS Queen Mary herself.

"She's the only ship of her kind left in existence," Sheldon said. "Producing an event here comes with its own challenges, but those things are also what make it so unique. We have a really good time with this venue."

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Centre County Grange Encampment and Fair continues to grow

The last tent fair of its kind in the country

AT: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

CENTRE HALL, Pa. — If the government told you that for two weeks each year you had to live in a tent, most people would be outraged. However at the Centre County Grange Encampment and Fair, a thousand people rent a 14-by-14 foot Army regulation wall tent each year, for two weeks, paying \$240 dollars for the privilege and loving it. The waiting list was shut down seven years ago. There are 300 people on that list.

While encampment fairs are still prevalent in Europe, specifically the United Kingdom, the Centre County version holds the title in the United States. “We are the last encampment. There are some fairs that allow campers and some tenters (as well as cabin rentals). But as far as being an encampment, this is it. We’re one of a kind. We like to say that we are the most unique fair in the country, because we are the only encampment,” said Darlene Confer, general manager. Over the years, the fair has been progressive in promoting the latest advancements at the time — including Rural Free Delivery and also an early venue using electricity.



Confer

From a one-day picnic to a two-week experience

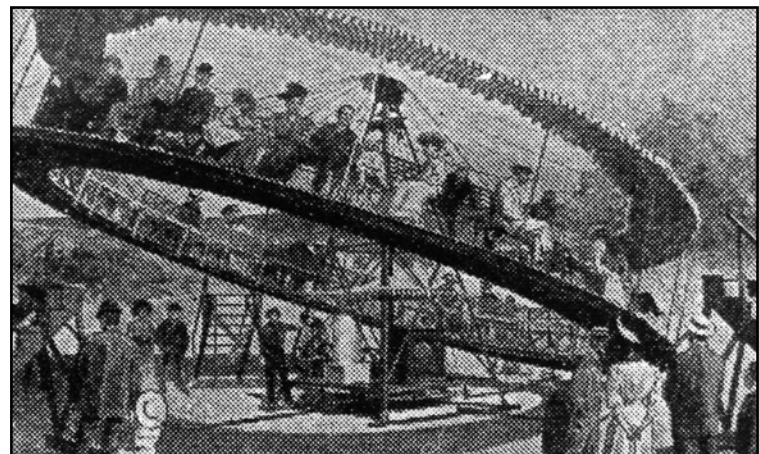
Confer provided the background on this 142nd annual event that started as a one day picnic in 1874 to promote the grange movement. “Eventually people wanted to stay overnight, so they started bringing tents so they wouldn’t have to travel back on the old dirt roads. Our first tents were borrowed from the Pennsylvania National Guard, from the Civil War. We’ve grown from a couple of tents to 1,000 tents here that people stay in.”

Confer explained the dimensions of each rented encampment space. “They are 14-by-14 feet. They’re (the campers) allowed to have a 4-by-14-foot front porch and then a 6-by-14-foot kitchen.” What all do campers bring for their home away from home? “People bring everything. They bring their gaming systems; they erect kitchen sinks in them. Lots of beds, bunk beds, everything but air conditioners!” said Confer. In addition there are 1,500 RV sites that are reserved each year with several hundred folks on that waiting list. Also roughly 200 additional overflow lot spots are available for one night or the entire fair, provided they are self-contained.

The encampment area contains a series of streets much like a housing development, only filled with tents on an asphalt floor. Those making their home there for two weeks attempt to bring all the comforts of home. Many decorate their



Bartlebaugh Amusements, Inc., (above and below) Madisonburg, Pa. operates the southern ride midway including this spindle ride, a Merry Mixer, is owned by Bartlebaugh Amusements, and built by Garbrick Manufacturing. Note there are no ground pieces. The ride operator is in the middle of the ride. Bottom, the northern midway features rides from Garbrick Amusements, Centre Hall, Pa.
AT/B. DEREK SHAW



The Wave was the first amusement ride to appear at the Centre Hall Grange and Encampment Fair. It was introduced in 1915, spun riders up and down and side to side with a top type motion. It was owned by Joseph Thal of Bellefonte, Pa.

COURTESY CENTRE HALL GRANGE AND ENCAMPMENT FAIR

space with unique motifs. In fact the Encampment and Fair hold a tent decorating contest each year. A local radio station offers one and two night stays in a “tricked-out” tent where prize winners can get a taste of an upgraded camping experience. The “glamping tent” as organizers refer to it, is complete with a bed, couch, chairs, dresser and more.

Encampment people arrive a few days before the nine-day fair begins and stay a few days after — 14 in all. This arrangement provides a built-in guarantee of attendees who patronize the ride midways, concessions, exhibit halls, shows and other attractions, all day, every day the fair is in operation. The resident population in 2016 was between 15,000 and 20,000, comprised of 2,500 families.

Two midway operators at one fair

Another unique feature to this 200-acre fair held each mid-August in the middle of Pennsylvania is that there

are two separate ride midways run by two competing carnival operators. “Well, it works okay. On occasion we’ve had some issues. They both want to be here. Garbrick has some rides that are a little older. Bartlebaugh’s have rides that are a little newer. They sort of complement each other,” said Confer.

The first ride appeared in 1915. Called The Wave, the ride was locally owned. It consisted of a circular platform with outward facing seats. The ride turned in a circle and also up and down. During the early 1930s to 1954, Reithoffer’s of Duryea, Pa. was the ride midway operator. For the past 61 years,

Garbrick Amusements, Inc. of Centre Hall has been the ride provider. That first year included nine kiddie rides, along with a carousel and Ferris Wheel purchased from Hecla Park, Mingoville, Pa. Tickets were 12 for one dollar. Garbrick Manufacturing another division of the company makes amusement rides including the Merry Mixer, Astro-Top and Flying Saucer to name a few.

During the past 10 years, the Centre County Grange Encampment and Fair has been augmented with Bartlebaugh Amusements, Inc. attractions on a separate ride midway located on the

► See CAMP, page 27

One of the streets in the encampment area that houses 1,000 14-by-14 foot Army wall tents that are rented by the fairgoers. Far right, this close-up view of one of the tents showcases the use of a 4-by-14 foot porch canopy.

The 2017 edition takes place August 18 – 26.

AT/B. DEREK SHAW



►CAMP

Continued from page 26


southern side of the fairgrounds. The Madisonburg, Pa. (State College area) operator offers rides that are different than the ones on the northern midway.

All types of activities for all kinds of interests

Health walks, health fairs, Zumba classes and even a 5K run are part of the fair experience. Education is a big component of the fair with celebrity chefs and programs like "Organic from Farm to Table." The Grange Encampment and Fair operates their own library. "We have a state accredited librarian. She does programming, all day, every day. We offer so much at our fair," Confer said. All Grandstand shows are free as well as the other two stages. "You pay a price to get in. Everything that's here is included, except for the rides." First and foremost the Encampment and Fair is all about agriculture and its vital role in our society. That is conveyed through thousands of exhibits, livestock competitions and horse shows.


A few of the more unique activities have included an impromptu sewing contest called Project Grange Fair and the Grange Fair Amazing Race scavenger hunt. Confer explains, "We incorporate a lot of new and interesting things so we can keep everybody interested from the very young to the elderly. Everyone should come and see the Centre County Grange Fair. It is so very unique. You can tell people about it, but until you actually come and experience it, you have no idea what it is really like."

The 2017 edition takes place August 18 – 26.




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CARNIVAL LIGHTS

COMPILED: Pam Sherborne

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Steve Hales, former **Solano County Fairgrounds**, Vallejo, Calif., assistant general manager of operations and maintenance since 2008, became that fairgrounds' general manager Jan. 14.

The long-time Solano County Fairgrounds employee served as the Solano fair's operations manager from 2003 to 2008. He replaced **Stephen Pierce**, who announced last November that he was leaving.

"During my tenure at the fairgrounds, I've witnessed the highs and lows that all businesses can face, but in the last two years we've laid the groundwork to expand our operations," Hales said, in a press release announcing his appointment.

Hales said his primary objective is "to build upon the foundation," established by Pierce.

Hales has served as chief operating officer for **The Horse Park** at Woodside, and managed multiple equestrian facilities and events.

The 2017 **Solano County Fair** will run Aug. 2-6. The midway is provided by **Butler Amusements**.

The new president and CEO of the **Los Angeles County Fair Association** assumed his new responsibilities last month hopefully putting an end to the executive pay controversy that began in spring of 2016.

Miguel Santana, who came from the City of Los Angeles where he served as the administrative officer, was named as the new head of the Pomona, Calif., fair last November. He was to take over Jan. 16 and will start planning the 2017 fair to run Sept. 1-24.

Santana replaced **Jim Henwood**, who retired in March 2016, amid controversy over executive pay at the association. Henwood, who had been there two decades, had earned about \$900,000.

Santana said his annual base salary will be \$485,000 with the potential to earn an additional 10 percent through bonuses. In addition, he will receive a one-time \$25,000 signing bonus.

The Nebraska Lottery recently distributed \$989,876 to the **Nebraska State Fair Support and Improvement Fund**, derived from a share of scratch and lotto ticket sales for the previous three months.

The latest transfer was made the week of Dec. 30. The Nebraska State Fair Support and Improvement Fund has received \$40,095,285 since the Nebraska Lottery began operation on Sept. 11, 1993.

The 2017 **Nebraska State Fair**, Grand Island, Neb., will be held Aug. 25-Sept. 4.

Officials with the **Del Mar Fairgrounds** have reached an agreement with a group representing local Native American tribes over a change to the theme for the 2017 **San Diego County Fair**, Del Mar, Calif. An earlier version of the theme had been deemed as "extremely offensive" by at least one local tribe.

The new theme will be "Where the West is Fun," and will highlight the history of the West and San Diego County in the mid-to-late 1800s.

The agreement came near the end of December during a meeting with the **Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association**, a

consortium of 19 tribes.

According to fair officials, the original theme, "How the West Was Fun," may have given the suggestion that the winning of the American West from Native Americans had been fun. That suggestion offended local Native Americans.

Each year, fair officials develop a theme and logo and related marketing materials. Recent themes have included "Mad About the Fair," relating to Alice in Wonderland, and "The Fab Fair," celebrating the Beatles and other British invasion bands.

The 2017 fair will run June 2-July 4.

Dates for the 2017 **Tennessee State Fair** have been approved by the fair's board of directors. **John Rose**, chairman of the nonprofit organization responsible for the event's production, announced that the fair will run Sept. 8-17.

The **Tennessee State Fair Association** manages, produces and operates the Fair each year. **North American Midway Entertainment** provides the midway.

An Indiana Department of Homeland Security spokesman told the *IndyStar* that permanent rule-making to replace the emergency regulations has already started, but he acknowledged that process can take up to two years.

Indianapolis developer **Craig Von Deylen**, a member of the State Fire Prevention and Building Safety Commission, told the newspaper he was disappointed that **Gov. Mike Pence's** administration "let the rule lapse." He said the commission could have noticed the rule's impending expiration and acted, had it been provided with adequate staff to do its job.

Seven people were killed and nearly 100 were injured when high winds toppled stage rigging and sent the roof of the stage onto fans awaiting the start of a concert by the country duo Sugarland at the fairgrounds in Indianapolis on Aug. 13, 2011.

The expired emergency rules are "still being used as a guideline to assist with outdoor equipment safety" and Homeland officials have been encouraged "by the level of voluntary compliance with these guidelines," a spokesperson was quoted as saying.

With about \$200,000 yet to go to finish paying for the \$4.7 million Nordby Exhibit Hall for 4-H, Youth and Community, the **South Dakota State Fair Foundation** board is looking at hosting special fund raising events in the coming months.

South Dakota state legislators approved up to \$4.7 million in spending authority for the building, the new home of 4-H in the state. The exhibit hall, located at the former site of Clover Hall on the state fairgrounds, is now entirely finished after contractors recently returned to take care of minor problems.

While \$4.5 million has been pledged by individuals, businesses and organizations from across the state, \$4.3 million has been collected. Donors were given a three-year period. Businesses and organizations are working on options to help the fair pay off the remaining of the building.



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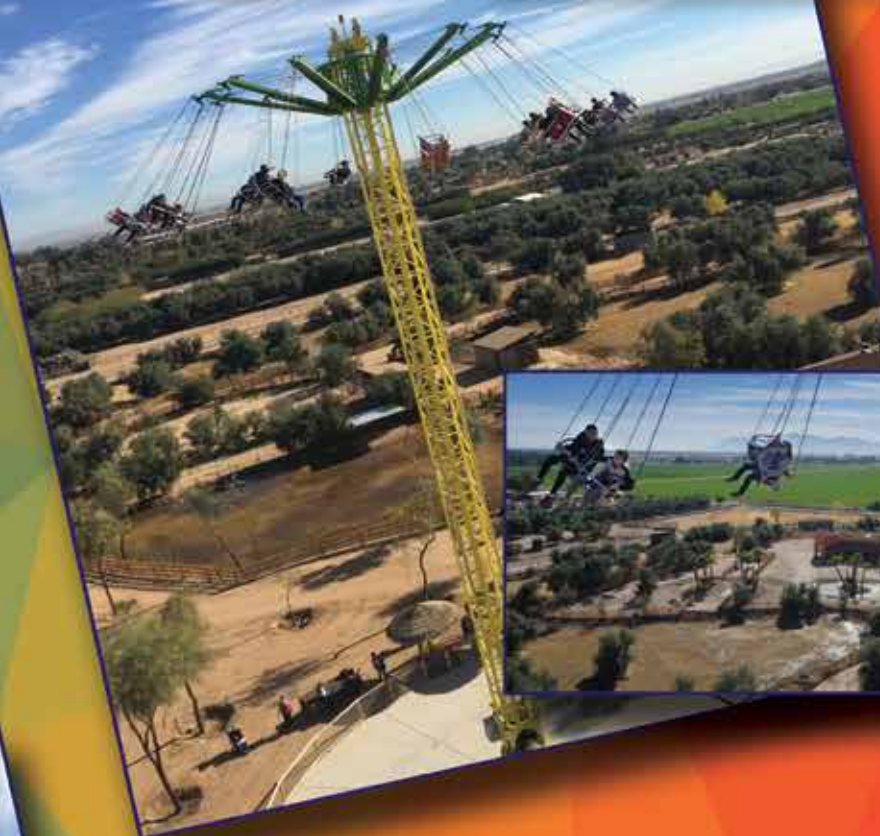
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BUSINESS, SAFETY & CLASSIFIED

► Obituaries — Page 33 / MarketWatch — Page 34 / SAFETY — 36 / CLASSIFIEDS — Pages 38, 39

CNL Lifestyle Properties sells off amusement parks, ski resorts

AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com



ORLANDO, Fla. — CNL Lifestyle Properties, Inc., a real estate investment trust (REIT) that once had more than \$2.5 billion in total assets, has agreed to sell its recreational properties — including amusement parks and ski resorts — to EPR Properties (NYSE: EPR), an REIT based in Kansas City, Mo.

The deal, valued at \$830 million, includes 15 amusement and water parks as well as, reportedly, five family entertainment centers (FECs) — representing all 20 of the amusement-oriented properties listed on CNL's website as of last fall.

EPR's existing investment portfolio, which exceeds \$5 billion, encompasses water parks, major movie theater chains, ski resorts and entertainment complexes, as well as non-recreational assets.

"CNL Lifestyle Properties

is proud to have built a unique portfolio of diversified properties, many of which are long-established and iconic of the American lifestyle, that created long-term value for shareholders," said **Stephen Mauldin**, CNL's CEO, in a statement. "We have deep respect for the approach EPR takes to managing its properties and believe this transaction is the best fit for the remaining properties in our portfolio as we complete our exit strategy to provide liquidity to shareholders."

Added **Gregory Silvers**, EPR's president and CEO: "We are extremely pleased to announce this transaction,

► See **PROPERTIES**, page 33

CNL park assets to EPR Properties in sale agreement

Park & Location	Year Founded	Park Type	Acres	No. of Rides
Operated by Premier Parks:				
Darien Lake , Darien Center, N.Y.	1981	AP/WP	978	50
Frontier City , Oklahoma City, Okla.	1958	AP	113	34
Magic Springs* , Hot Springs, Ark.	1978	AP/WP	70	30
Myrtle Waves* , Myrtle Beach, S.C.	1985	WP	20	17
Rapids Water Park , Riviera Beach, Fla.	1979	WP	30	45
Waterworld* , Concord, Calif.	1995	WP	23	26
Wet 'n Wild , Kapolei, Hawaii	1999	WP	29	25
Wet 'n Wild , Palm Springs, Calif.	1986	WP	16	16
Wet n Wild Phoenix , Glendale, Ariz.	2009	WP	52	20
Wet 'n Wild Splashtown , Spring, Texas	1981	WP	83	40
White Water Bay , Oklahoma City, Okla.	1980	WP	21	17
Wild Waves* , Seattle, Wash.	1977	AP & WP	67	55
*Indicates parks are not currently operated by Premier Parks, but will be leased to Premier following the completion of CNL transaction				
•				
Operated by Pacific Park:				
Pacific Park , Santa Monica, Calif.	1996	AP	2	18
•				
Operated by Harvest Entertainment:				
Hawaiian Falls , The Colony, Texas	2003	WP	12	15
Hawaiian Falls , Garland, Texas	2003	WP	12	15
AP: Amusement Park; WP: Water Park SOURCE: EPR PROPERTIES				

Space Center Houston sets new record with 1 million visitors

HOUSTON, Texas — More than one million visitors streamed through the doors of **Space Center Houston** in 2016, marking it as the best-ever year for the nonprofit attraction. The record-setting milestone came in late December, just as the center was poised to begin its 25th anniversary year.

"A million thanks to all our visitors for joining us this year," said the center's president and CEO, **William T. Harris**. "People are more excited than ever to come here and learn about the past, present and future of space exploration. We strive to provide an

exceptional learning experience for visitors of all ages."

The milestone came at the end of an incredible year for the nonprofit, which included nine record-breaking months of attendance. The previous record year, 2015, had five consecutive record-breaking months. With 82 percent of the visitors coming from outside the Houston area, the center is the top destination for international visitors in Houston.

Last year, the center welcomed Harris as its new CEO, earned a 2016 Top Workplace Award from the *Houston Chronicle* and received its third



consecutive TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence Award. The Independence Plaza exhibit complex won two of the

attraction industry's highest honors — the Impact Award and Best New Product for Displays and Sets — at the

International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Expo Brass Ring Awards Ceremony.

To commemorate its 25th anniversary next Oct. 16, the center begins a jubilee celebration throughout this year. The festivities opened in January with the new permanent exhibit Mission Mars, which takes visitors through a Mars portal full of interactive activities. In the future-looking exhibit, visitors will explore a virtual Martian landscape and imagine being one of the first explorers on the planet.

•spacecenter.org

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Technology leaders establish Global Virtual Reality Association

AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

MENLO PARK, Calif. — In response to the ever-widening application of virtual reality (VR) technology in the amusement and entertainment industries, among other areas, a tech sector consortium announced in December the creation of the **Global Virtual Reality Association (GVRA)**,

a nonprofit organization.

The announcement was made jointly by **Acer Starbreeze Corp.**, **Google**, **Vive**, **Facebook's Oculus**, **Samsung Electronics** and **Sony Interactive Entertainment** — all of which are international head-set manufacturers working to advance the technology and promote its growth worldwide.

"As the VR industry is



taking off, it is crucial that we increase dialogue among stakeholders to ensure we are building a solid foundation to drive innovation for the years

to come," said **Jerry Kao**, CEO of Acer Starbreeze Corp. "GVRA brings together industry leaders and fosters collaboration. [We look] forward

to taking part in this exciting journey."

Rikard Steiber, SVP of Vive, emphasized: "It is important that we as an industry are working together to establish best practices and common resources for our industry that will drive toward [its] \$120 billion projection by 2020."

While GVRA will serve as a resource for consumers, policymakers and industries interested in VR, the group's goal is to promote the technology's responsible development and adoption. In addition to developing and sharing best practices, association members will conduct research and convene the international VR community as the technology progresses.

Indeed, outside of its recreational applications, VR has the potential to be the next great computing platform and improve categories ranging from education to health care — contributing significantly to the global economy.

"The rapid growth of the virtual reality industry presents many challenges as well as opportunities," said **Tae-Yong Kim**, VP of mobile communications business for Samsung Electronics. "It is important that we... create a solid foundation from which we can build meaningful progress. [We are] pleased to join GVRA and to work with other industry leaders."

Expressing the need to build the industry safely, **Jordan McCollum**, general counsel for Oculus at Facebook, added: "I'm looking forward to working with other hardware makers to proactively address the challenges we must solve to make VR a success over the long term."

•gvra.com

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► PROPERTIES

Continued from page 31

which is the culmination of a two-year process of disciplined underwriting, due diligence and negotiations.”

The multi-layer deal — which, with 15 ski resorts included, is said to be largest sale of ski properties in the U.S. — is expected to close early in the second quarter of this year after approval by CNL shareholders.

The sale will give EPR regionally familiar amusement parks across the U.S., among them **Darien Lake**, Darien Center, N.Y.; **Frontier City**, Oklahoma City, Okla.; and **Pacific Park**, Santa Monica, Calif.; plus **Wet ‘n’ Wild** water parks in Hawaii, Phoenix, Ariz. and Palm Springs, Calif. It is an ambitious expansion for EPR, which, according to its website, made initial investments in the three **Schlitterbahn** water parks in Texas and Kansas. The 2015-opened **Aquatopia Indoor Waterpark**

at Camelback Resort in Tannersville, Pa., is EPR’s most recent water park property.

The 15 CNL park properties are located in 10 states and encompass 423 rides and attractions across 1,528 acres. According to information in documentation available at EPR’s website, those CNL properties not already managed by Summit, N.J.-based **Premier Parks, LLC**, will be leased to Premier after the transaction closes.

Darien Lake in western New York State is one of the CNL properties Premier Parks manages. **Kieran Burke**, Premier’s CEO, told *The Buffalo News* last November that it will be “business as usual” at the park after EPR finalizes the purchase.

“As the park operator, we are extremely excited about this sale and the positive impact we believe it will have on Darien Lake and our entire company in the future,” Burke said.

•eprkc.com

LAS VEGAS BRIEFS

World's largest Marvel retail store opens

The immersive and educational attraction, **Marvel Avengers Station** at **Treasure Island** Las Vegas launched a 7,500-square-foot retail experience on Dec. 17, giving fans superhero-size access to a full range of apparel, toys, collectibles, housewares and more in what is Marvel’s largest retail outlet in the world. Highlights include a green screen photo experience and the Become Iron Man interactive experience.

Las Vegas Convention Center expansion a go

The **Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Association** (LVCVA) has moved forward with plans for their **Las Vegas Convention Center District** (LVCCD) project. The LVCCD will expand and renovate the current **Las Vegas Convention Center** property. Phase I of the project, which included the demolition and transformation of the **Riviera Hotel and Casino**, has now been completed. The Riviera site has been repaved and unveiled as the Diamond Lot, a parking and outdoor exhibition space.

Neon Museum to expand

The **Las Vegas City Council** voted unanimously to approve a \$425,000 grant from the commission for the Las Vegas Centennial to expand the **Neon Museum** — a nonprofit organization dedicated to collecting, preserving, studying and exhibiting iconic Las Vegas signs. The grant will be used to purchase .27 acres of land adjacent to the current museum property. The grant is part of the commission’s program in support of generating community projects that promote and preserve Las Vegas history

At a glance...

•On Dec. 2, **Las Vegas** welcomed its first nonstop flight from China when **Hainan Airlines** first flight from **Beijing** to Las Vegas touched down.

•**Las Vegas** continues to impress the travel industry and has been named Best U.S. City in *Travel Weekly’s* 14th annual Readers Choice Awards. Encompassing 78 categories, the awards honor the best of the best in travel.

OBITUARIES

Jake Inners, Majestic Midways, dies at 70

YORK, Pa. — **Wayne E. “Jake” Inners**, owner and CEO of **Inners Amusement Company, DBA Majestic Midways**, passed away Dec. 10. He was 70.



Inners

Inners was the youngest of seven boys and two girls who grew up in a family with entertainment roots stretching back to 1909. His father, **Francis Grover Cleveland Inners**, was a trapeze artist before forming **Inners Amusement Company** in 1946.

Inners joined the family business in 1963 with his purchase of a Theel carousel. In 1974, he formed **Majestic Midways** apart from the amusement business he at that time shared with his brother, Edward, when he purchased all assets of **Reynolds Rides & Amusements** in Chesapeake City, Md.

“My father was a pioneer and innovator in our industry,” said Jake’s son, Scott, who is president and safety director of **Majestic Midways**. “He was loved and respected by all who knew him.”

Causes favored by Jake Inners included City of Light Children’s School and What Matters Ministries. Noted Scott: “I am proud to say he created a culture within our family and company: giving to those who couldn’t give back, which is the very heart of Christ.”

Colleagues admired Inners for his commitment to managing a solid, respectable business.

“He had a good appreciation for electrical things,” said **Joe Filoromo**, supervisor of the **Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture’s Amusement Ride Safety Division**. “Jake ran a clean, safe, nice operation. I will miss his ethics.”

Inners was a life mem-

ber of the **Pennsylvania State Showmen’s Association** (PSSA) and previously served as president of the organization; additionally, he was named by PSSA as 1989 Showman of the Year. He most recently served as chairman of the **Outdoor Amusement Business Association** committee.

“He was one of the best supporters PSSA ever had, plain and simple,” said **Beverly Gruber**, PSSA secretary.

In the early 1980s, Inners and **Steve Swika, Jr.**, of **S&S Amusements** were original members of the committee that crafted the Pennsylvania Amusement Ride Safety Act, which went into effect in 1984. Inners still served on the committee until recently.

A celebration of Jake’s life was held at Grace Fellowship in York on Dec. 19. The third generation of the Inners family will continue the amusement operation uninterrupted.

—B. Derek Shaw

William H. Morey, cofounded Morey's Surfside Pier, dies in Wildwood at 87

WILDWOOD, N.J. — **William H. Morey**, 87, a renowned builder during the Jersey Shore Doo Wop motel boom of the 1950s-60s, owner/operator of the old Ringo bingo hall on the Wildwood boardwalks, and a cofounder of **Morey’s Surfside Pier**, where millions of Delaware Valley youth for decades enjoyed their summers, passed away on Jan. 11.

Bill was born at Margaret Mace Hospital in North Wildwood, N.J., on April 19, 1929, and raised in West Wildwood, N.J. by his parents, Lewis and Clara Morey. The Morey family birth order was five sons: Lewis, Raymond, Wilbert, William, and Charles, and two daughters: Yvonne and Esther. He resided in the Wildwoods his entire life, graduated from



William H. Morey

Wildwood High School in 1948, and married Dolores Peterson Morey in 1951.

He was an avid golfer, a member of the Wildwood Golf and Country Club, and scored a hole in one at the age of 80. Family members humorously called him “Commander Whitehead,” and friends and colleagues

coined the nickname for him, “Silver Fox.”

He is survived by his wife: Dolores, two sons: William and Thomas, twin daughters: Jane and Joan, and William’s spouse: Carolyn. He also has seven grandchildren: William “Bud,” Eric, and Brett Morey, John and Sara Freeman, Drew and Jenna Ankney, six great-grandchildren: William “Buddy,” Ellasyn, Delaney, Waylon, Joel, and Marshall Morey.

A funeral service was held at St. Ann’s Roman Catholic Church in Wildwood on Saturday, Jan. 21. Memorial donations may be made to Pulmonary Care Services, Cape Regional Medical Center, Cape May Court House, N.J., 08210.

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MARKETWATCH



COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 01/13/17	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	30.09	31.16	22.31
Merlin Entertainments Group/ Legoland	MERL	LSE	479.00	494.90	316.79
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	63.35	64.90	49.27
Comcast Corp./ NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	72.77	72.94	52.34
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	108.06	109.49	86.25
Dubai Parks & Resorts	DXBE:UH	DFM	1.28	1.77	0.95
EPR Properties	EPR	NYSE	73.22	84.67	53.00
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	9010	TYO	1128.00	1568.00	979.00
Haicahang Holdings Ltd.	HK:2255	SEHK	1.78	1.95	1.40
Leofoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	8.04	9.00	6.62
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	28.62	30.62	16.18
Parques Reunidos Servicios Centrales S.A.	ES:PQR	MCE	14.95	16.17	11.99
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	18.71	21.84	11.77
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	60.60	62.69	45.24
Skyocean International	HK:0593	SEHK	16.08	16.88	7.95
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	472.00	499.50	350.00
Village Roadshow	VRL	ASX	4.73	7.06	4.21

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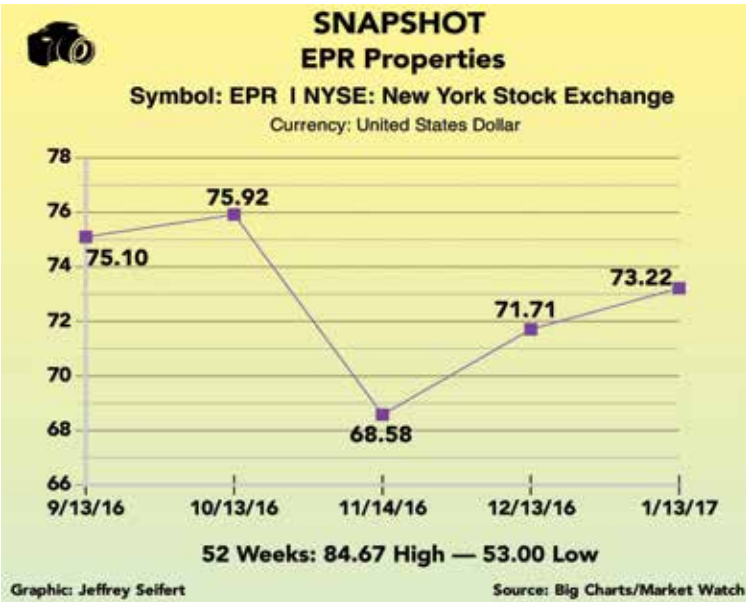
Worldwide Markets: ASX, Australian Securities Exchange; CSE, Copenhagen Stock Exchange; LSE, London Stock Exchange; NYSE, New York Stock Exchange; NASDAQ, National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations; SEHK, Hong Kong Stock Exchange; SZSE, Shenzhen Stock Exchange; TSEC, Taiwan Stock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

DIESEL PRICES

Region (U.S.)	As of 01/09/17	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	\$2.648	+\$0.419
Midwest	\$2.547	+\$0.451
Gulf Coast	\$2.448	+\$0.368
Mountain	\$2.541	+\$0.407
West Coast	\$2.774	+\$0.516
California	\$2.953	+\$0.391

CURRENCY

On 01/13/17 \$1 USD =	
0.9409	EURO
0.8212	GBP (British Pound)
114.78	JPY (Japanese Yen)
1.0093	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.3354	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.3143	CAD (Canadian Dollar)



BUSINESS WATCH

Inntopia acquires DestiMetrics

STOWE, Vt. — Inntopia, the travel industry’s leading eCommerce and central reservation provider announced on Jan. 5 the acquisition of Destimetrics, a leading comprehensive market intelligence provider for the destination leisure travel industry.

The acquisition of Destimetrics follows Inntopia’s merger with Ryan Solutions in November, and adds one more key component to Inntopia’s offerings: a full suite of market intelligence reports and analytics for the travel, amusement and hospitality industries.

Picsolve teams with Kennedy Space Center

LONDON — Picsolve continues its business growth in the U.S. with a partnership agreement with Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex as their digital platform and photo capture partner.

This new partnership will bring enhanced and dynamic photo experiences that will capture guests throughout the visitor complex with roaming photographers, photo capture locations, and Picsolve’s Brass Ring award-winning Green Screen Experience (GSX) which will place guests into their own space journey. Budding astronauts can pick up their exclusive astronaut license, a personalized photographic memento which is custom made and only available at Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex.

Cineplex announces two new Rec Rooms

TORONTO — Cineplex announced on Jan. 5 plans to open new locations of The Rec Room in Edmonton, Alberta, and London, Ontario. Canada’s newest hot-spot for “Eats and Entertainment,” The Rec Room brings together incredible dining experiences with exciting live entertainment and amusement gaming experiences, all under one roof. The two locations announced will open in Edmonton’s iconic West Edmonton Mall in 2017 and London’s CF Masonville Place in 2018.

“We’ve already announced plans to open locations of The Rec Room in Toronto and Calgary, and we’re excited to officially add London to that list,” said Ellis Jacob, president and CEO at Cineplex.

Dippin’ Dots, Doc Popcorn hold franchisee meet

PADUCAH, Ky. – Dippin’ Dots and its sister brand Doc Popcorn, held their first ever co-branded annual franchisee conference at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas. The conference convened Dippin’ Dots and Doc Popcorn franchisees from around the country to network, share best practices and celebrate the year’s successes.

“Co-branding locations is our primary strategy for growth in high foot traffic spaces such as malls. We continue to see increased interest in our co-branded locations and expect this trend to continue in 2017,” said Scott Fischer, president and CEO of Dippin’ Dots, LLC.

There are 16 co-branded locations currently operating in the U.S. As a result of the “sweet and savory” success of these locations, Dippin’ Dots and Doc Popcorn expect to open 10 to 15 new co-branded locations in the coming year.

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PEOPLE WATCH**Irving S. Scher, Guidance Engineering and Applied Research joins ASTM board**

W. CONSHOHOCKEN, Pa. — **Irving S. Scher**, Ph.D., P.E., a principal and biomechanical engineer at **Guidance Engineering and Applied Research**, will serve a three-year term on the **ASTM International** board of directors. Scher is based in Seattle, Washington.

Guidance Engineering and Applied Research is an engineering and scientific consulting company that performs in-depth research and analysis for its clients.

Scher holds degrees in mechanical engineering: a Ph.D. and an M.S. from the University of California (Berkeley) and a B.S. from the University of Pennsylvania.

An ASTM International member since 1999, Scher is currently chairman of Committee on Snow Skiing (F27) and of the Subcommittee on Research and Statistics. He was also membership secretary of the committee from 2011 to 2014. In addition, Scher is a member of Committees on Sports Equipment, Playing Surfaces, and Facilities (F08); Pedestrian/Walkway Safety and Footwear (F13); and Amusement Rides and Devices (F24).

Gold Medal appoints VP of Marketing

CINCINNATI, Ohio — **Gold Medal Products Co.**, the leading manufacturer of concession food equipment and supplies, announced the appointment of **Stephanie Goodin** to the position of vice president of Marketing.

Goodin has been with the company since 2007 and served in the role of director of Marketing.

CEO and Chairman **Dan Kroeger** stated, "Gold Medal's brand is at the forefront because of Stephanie's contributions. Her tireless work ethic and loyalty are unparalleled. I congratulate her on this next step in her career and look forward to all she will accomplish."

**Goodin****SeaWorld announces Florida leadership changes**

ORLANDO, Fla. — **SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment** announced leadership changes for the company's parks in Orlando and Tampa. **Jim Dean**, president of **Busch Gardens Tampa Bay** and **Adventure Island**, has been named park president of the company's Orlando parks, **SeaWorld**, **Aquatica** and **Discovery Cove**. **Stewart Clark**, vice president of **Discovery Cove**, has been named park president of Busch Gardens Tampa Bay and Adventure Island. The changes will be effective January 16, 2017.

"Jim is an outstanding theme park leader who has led excellence, performance and growth in Tampa. I am pleased to now have him at the helm of our flagship operations in Orlando," said **Joel Manby**, president and CEO of **SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.** "The Busch Gardens Tampa Bay parks will gain a proven and innovative leader, as Stewart's operations and zoological expertise has contributed to more than a decade of acclaimed guest experience at Discovery Cove."

Donnie Mills, current park president of the Orlando parks has announced his retirement after 42 years of dedicated service with the company.

"Donnie has made a lasting contribution to our parks and our people by serving as park president in three of our six markets, leading the operations team and instilling a culture committed to the highest levels of operational execution across this great company," Manby said.

WhiteWater announces hiring of Nathan Jones

RICHMOND, B.C., Canada — **WhiteWater** recently announced the hiring of **Nathan Jones**, as global head of Attractions Business Development.

Nathan is an established industry veteran, having worked in executive management positions for some of the world's top manufacturers. He has spent the last three years with **Vekoma Rides Manufacturing** as their VP of sales and marketing, North America, where he helped to re-establish their presence in the region. In addition, he was part of the management team that guided the partnership with **Brogent Technologies** and oversaw sales operations for the Americas. Prior to that, Nathan spent eight years with WhiteWater as sales director, primarily focused on key accounts in the Americas.

**Jones****SCBB hires new Director of Human Resources**

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. — **Sabra Reyes** has been hired as the new director of Human Resources for the **Santa Cruz Seaside Company**. Reyes will be responsible for directing all areas of Human Resources including employment, compensation, benefits, training, and employee relations for more than 1,500 seasonal and 200 year-round employees. The family-operated Santa Cruz Seaside Company is one of the largest employers in Santa Cruz County on California's Central Coast, with the historic **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk** receiving more than 3 million visitors a year.

Reyes was previously HR director for New Leaf Community Markets and the California region of New Seasons Market, and earlier was Human Resources manager for SunOpta Global Organic Ingredients.

She replaces **Kathy Deagen**, who retired from the Santa Cruz Seaside Company after 26 years.

**Reyes**

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Amusement ride safety: ride operations

AT: Harold Hudson
Special to Amusement Today

In November, we put forth the idea that the factors affecting ride safety could be divided into six (6) areas. Those areas were:

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

We also confirmed that it is our moral responsibility to address safety in each of these areas with all we have at our disposal and to the best of our ability.

This time we address "Ride Operations" and the ride operator. So how do ride operators affect safety? Let's look at some of the ways: daily ride checks, daily safety equipment checks, routine check rides, crowd control, rider eligibility checks, deliver rider instructions, provide rider assistance, check and adjust restraints, monitor ride operation and take care of area housekeeping. [Note: rider eligibility is sometimes referred to as rider restrictions.]

When these functions are performed well, they not only make your park work but are very important to guest and employee safety.

Operations is the fourth area covered in this series, but, interestingly, it is the first area we have covered that requires that a job be done properly and safely not once, but every day. In short, ride operations require continuous attention to details of the process and dedication of the employees. If ride operators don't do their job well every day, safety can be adversely affected.

The safest form of recreation

If you look at statistics, you find that the amusement industry is one of the safest forms of recreation. A position we are all very proud of but not one that allows us to relax. The industry goal of "zero injuries" remains the focus, every day.

A quick look at the statistics provided by the IAAPA 2015



Hudson

PART 4 IN A SERIES: OPERATIONS

Ride Incident Survey Report find:

- Attendance at 400 U.S. amusement parks totaled approximately 335 million in 2015.
- It is estimated that the total number of rides taken in 2015 was approximately 1.6 billion (5 rides/guest).

[Note: 400 U.S. parks encompasses virtually every location with amusement rides.]

So, ride operators in U.S. parks had approximately 3.2 billion encounters with a guest in 2015, one when a guest boards a ride and one when a guest exits that ride. This is a "wow, hard to believe" statistic, but it's true... 3.2 billion encounters, in one year, and likely more. That is 3.2 billion times a ride operator had the opportunity to look at a guest in the eye and the guest had the opportunity to look at the operator in the eye. Thus, leading to the fact that ride operations represents an important part of your park's safety army. You could say, they are the face of your park because of the number of guest encounters. This is true at parks and facilities around the world.

So, clearly, ride operators are very important to guest safety and guest satisfaction. Guests come for the rides, and ride operators present the rides and enforce safety rules. They are responsible for guests having a safe and fun experience and, ultimately, for guests leaving happy, with strong thoughts of returning.

We are part of an industry that relies heavily on direct guest interaction with employees.

A guest leaving happy means that they will spread positive "word of mouth," by far the best advertisement available to a facility. However, guest satisfaction and having guests leave happy relies heavily on direct guest interaction with the facility ride operators and employees. Therefore, a park cannot afford to fill the ride operator jobs with poorly-trained employees. After all, even a great new thrill ride or stunning new show can be overshadowed by a rude, unhelpful or inattentive employee.

Ride operators must be



In recent years, amusement ride safety has received additional support for the attraction operator with the addition of video monitors.

Above is the control panel for the New York New York fun house attraction owned by Bobby Myers. At right, a panel operator is ready to dispatch the Canyon Blaster coaster at the Circus Circus Adventuredome.

AT FILE/GARY SLADE



well trained in all aspects of the ride they operate for your guest. Employee selection and training is one of the keys to having safe ride operations and positive word of mouth.

Employee selection

Keith Rabois, a startup consultant, once said "the team you build is the company you build" and this is true for your company, your park and your ride operations department. The ride operations team manages the quality of the guest encounter with the attractions and therefore forms a major part of the guest experience. Selecting the right person for a position in ride operations requires that the candidate not only have the required skills, but they also have to have a burning desire to provide "excellent service" every day. You and your park's human resources department should develop interview and testing techniques that identify and insure selection of employees that want to make guests happy.

Training

As required by ASTM standards, it is incumbent on owner/operators of amusement rides to work with manufacturers and others to develop a range of documents, proce-

dures and checklists to establishing an operational program or process for each amusement ride.

In the November 2016 issue article "Safety is a team effort, and you can enhance your team," we covered the multitude of training opportunities available to parks and facilities. Review that article and if warranted, enhance your team with some of the assets listed therein.

Regardless of how your facility approaches training, a comprehensive program and routine monitoring of the ride operation area is important to creating a safe operation. Training should include a progressive immersion technique and approach training in a logical fashion to include: park orientation, ride orientation, specific ride characteristics, safe practices, ride attendant training, ride operator training, shadow supervision and managing a crew.

Bottom line

1. When an employee is well trained and understands their job, they are more confident and do a better job.

2. Training is important because doing a good job is a lot more satisfying for the employee than doing a mediocre or bad job.

Safe behavior – monitor and reward safe behavior

The primary expectation you should have for your ride operators is that they perform their duties as prescribed and in a safe manner. Safe behavior each and every minute of each and every day is critical. Safe behavior includes:

- Being attentive
 - Making eye contact
 - Using clear verbal communications
 - Managing the ride guest areas
 - Being always alert and aware
 - Listening carefully
 - Visually scanning for unsafe practices
 - Maintaining proper staff levels
 - Using approved hand signals
 - Using proper signal verification
 - Making certain riders are eligible
 - Loading and securing guests
 - Dispatching at proper intervals
 - Observing the operation
 - Observing proper start up and shutdown procedures
 - Observing lockout/tag-out procedures
 - Completing required documents
- In other words, safe behavior means taking the job seriously!

Resources

In the November 2016 safety article we listed a multitude of training resources available through industry organizations and experts. Whether in-house or an outside resource, make sure part of the goal is filling a need, perfecting safety efforts, perfecting the process, adding expertise and creating a "guest first" atmosphere.

In conclusion

Exciting rides, shows and food go a long way toward capturing your fair share of that 355 million guest pool but positive word of mouth and prior interactions with your employees, particularly your ride operators may be the real key to securing new and return guests. In ride operations, safe behavior and positive guest interaction is what you want and is a precursor to a positive guest experience.



MUSEUM PROGRESS REPORT

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

Universal, Wet 'n Wild Orlando make donations to NRCMA

Donated items to honor park, George Millay

ORLANDO, Fla. — Several board members of the **National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives (NRCMA)**, working in cooperation with team members at **Wet 'n Wild Orlando**, were on hand at the park on Jan. 6, to accept the donation of numerous signs and other items from the 39-year old landmark which closed on Dec. 31, 2016.

The two highlights for the museum are the backlit red-and-blue Wet 'n Wild name sign that hung over the park's main entry gate, and a 3D circular sign from the legendary Black Hole water slides. Also donated was the control panel to the park's Bomb Bay drop slide, which was an original creation from park founder **George Millay**.

The donated items honoring the park and Millay will be housed in the new **Mark Moore Memorial Building** expansion planned at the museum's Plainview facility.

NRCMA is working with the park to secure even more historic artifacts for future museum displays.



Above, Universal/Wet 'n Wild Orlando management were on hand to make the donations of water park signage to the National Roller Coaster Museum. Seen here, left to right, are: Rich Costales, Brett Clark and Brian Colley. Below, the Wet 'n Wild signs were transported to Orlando-based Skyline Attractions where they will be crated for shipment to Plainview, Texas. Shown here, left to right, are: Gary Slade, Chris Gray, Jeff Pike and Richard Munch. COURTESY NRCMA



THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

Presented by the National Rollercoaster Museum

COMPILED: Richard Munch



FEBRUARY

•**1948:** A new amusement park for Council Bluffs, Iowa, was announced in early February. The \$250,000 project was built across from Omaha, Neb., at the base of the ramp to the bridge over the Missouri River. The project was headed by **Abe** and **Louis Slusky**, who had been involved in the former **Krug Park** operation in Omaha, and operated **Playland Park** in Houston, Texas. The new park would carry the same name, **Playland**. A city building permit for a new \$35,000 roller coaster was submitted on Feb. 20, with Abe Slusky announcing that park construction would begin as soon as the weather improved. The park opened that May, with the 60-foot-tall roller coaster serving as the entrance to the parking lot. The coaster was removed during the construction of Interstate 480 in 1964, with the park limping along until finally ceasing operation in 1969.

•**1948:** **Bethlehem Steel** had purchased **Bay Shore Amusement Park** in Edgemere, Md., in 1947. Former owner **George Mahoney** reinvested his capital by rebuilding a park on a nearby island, serviced by a small timber bridge. Calling the new operation the **New Bay Shore Park**, he created a smaller version of the well loved park. While a medium size wood coaster would be added, designed by **Oscar Bittler**, the two existing wood coasters on the original property were advertised for sale in the Feb. 21 edition of *Billboard* magazine. Today the properties are part of a regional recreation site, **North Point State Park**.

•**1948:** The **State Fair of Texas**, in Dallas, Texas, announced plans for almost \$2 million in site improvements on Feb. 7. The fair received a long overdue makeover, with new rides and new buildings. With an eye-catching entrance, a new 1.5-acre fun zone for children, called Kiddie Town, included a new wooden kiddie coaster, steam train, boat ride, merry-go-round, Ferris wheel and other attractions aimed at younger patrons. The small coaster, with a 14 foot maximum height, complemented the larger Comet, installed a year earlier. Both rides were the work of **Charles Paige**. Other improvements included new lighting on the main midway, more decorative midway effects and new seating at the Cotton Bowl. A new structure, the Automobile, Aviation and Recreation building, opened in time for the fair, with a price tag of \$800,000.

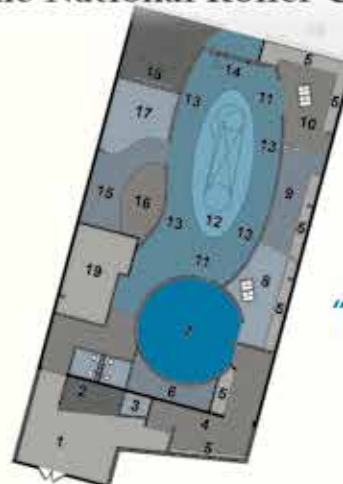
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"This memorial fundraiser is a perfect time
to donate and create a lasting legacy for
Mark and to preserve our history
for generations to come."

-Gary Slade, Amusement Today

New book released: Six Flags Over Texas — The First Fifty Years

REVIEW: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

BOOK REVIEW

ARLINGTON, Texas — **Six Flags Over Texas** opened in Arlington, Texas, in 1961. For more than half a century, the park has been draped in history and was arguably the first successful formula for the regional theme park. While a financial budget of a park like **Disneyland** was out of reach of most cities, soon metropolitan areas around the country were following the pattern set forth by Six Flags.

It is surprising that such a trend-setting park has had very little written about it. *Six Flags Over Texas — The First Fifty Years* fills that void. Author **Davis McCown** visited the park as a young child and was hired on in his teens as a ride operator (where he met the girlfriend who would become his wife). A graduate of the University of Texas at Arlington, McCown attended Law School at the University of Texas.

Following that, his interest in Six Flags continued to thrive and he began documenting the park via photos, souvenirs and park materials. In 1999, he helped form the Six Flags Association of Former Employees and has created a website dedicated to the history of Six Flags Over Texas: **parktimes.com**.

In the Foreword, McCown states: "This book is an effort to preserve the memory of the various attractions that provided hours of enjoyment and entertainment to those millions of guests." The book does this with intricate detail.

The 17 chapters cover a broad range of subjects such as the conception of the park, the rides and attractions, ownership and other attractions that surfaced during the growth of Arlington.

Key figures such as **C.V. Wood**, who was involved with **Disneyland**, **Frontierland U.S.A.** and went on to

form **Marco Engineering**; and **Angus G. Wynne, Jr.**, president of **Great Southwest Corporation** and founder of Six Flags Over Texas are profiled in the park's origins.

Longtime fans of Six Flags will relish having the original park vividly described from its opening in 1961. What McCown documents down to each souvenir stand continues throughout the book noting year-to-year changes throughout the decades. It's impressive in its thoroughness. In its original year, the six main sections of the park referenced the historic republics that governed over the State of Texas: Spain, Mexico, France, Texas, U.S.A. and the Confederacy.

Over time, Six Flags as a company has been acquired by numerous owners. The **Penn Central Railroad** bankruptcy is discussed, as well as owners **Bally**, **Wesray Capital**, **Time Warner** and **Premier Parks**. Residents of North Texas, park fans, or industry historians can appreciate



how the book serves as a timeline showcasing how the emphasis of the park transitioned from capitalizing on the history of Texas to licensed characters from pop culture over the course of a half century.

Of note, this book has been exceptionally thorough in its recount of history, but any incidents, such as the park's first fatality on a rapids ride accident in 1999, are nowhere to be found. The

book is a positive record of Six Flags Over Texas' accomplishments and its role in the amusement industry.

This review would also not be complete without a mention that it was unfortunate that McCown did not have the access to some editorial supervision. However, what the book might lack in polish, it is probably the finest, if not most thoroughly researched body of work on Six Flags Over Texas.

The book's 286 pages include more than 200 photos, many from conceptual art and early years. It includes a chronological index of the rides, as well as a listing of the Six Flags system of parks.

Six Flags Over Texas — The First Fifty Years should be a fascinating read to park fans, Six Flags buffs, industry professionals and anyone who has called the Dallas/Ft. Worth metroplex home. The book is published by Lavaca Publications & Media, LLC, and is available at Amazon.com.

Atlantic City again site of NJAA East Coast Gift & Variety Show

NAARSO training occurs concurrently

AT: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — The **Golden Nugget Atlantic City** is again the venue for the **East Coast Gift and Variety Show**, hosted by the **New Jersey Amusement Association** (NJAA). The dates are Feb. 22 and 23 in the Grand Ballroom of the venue. Exhibitor set-up occurs on Feb. 21. The show hours on Wednesday are 11:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. while show hours on Thursday are 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Admission is free to attendees.

The annual event, now in its 22nd season and the seventh time at the Golden Nugget, is a great buying opportunity for parks and the portable industry in the metro New York and Philadelphia areas and beyond. Attendees typically travel from all over the mid-Atlantic region, as far south as the Carolinas and north from New England.

The trade show is designed for owners, partners, manag-

ers, and buyers; however it is free and open to anyone in the amusement industry. The participating vendors represent plush, insurance, concessions, food service, arcade games, even tickets, basically anything pertaining to operating an amusement business.

"The NJAA is looking forward to returning to the Golden Nugget in Atlantic City for another successful 2017 trade show as well as a record breaking number of attendees coming in from various north eastern states to attend the annual NAARSO training," said **Kimberle Samarelli**, NJAA executive director. She also noted that they are always looking for new vendors for the show.

Many of the approximately 100 people who have been certified by the state of New Jersey and who need to renew their certification can do so at the event. The 9th annual East Coast/Mid-Atlantic Regionalized NAARSO (National Association of Amusement Ride Safety Officials) Outreach Safety School takes place February 21 – 23.

Before the show opens each day, hour-long seminars are available to attendees. On Feb. 22 the State of New Jersey Department of Community Affairs will present their annual update on ride regulations. On Feb. 23 the Legalized Games of Chance Control Commission, part of the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs, will provide regulatory updates.

Back again on Wednesday evening (Feb. 23) is the NJAA Scholarship Fund Cocktail Party that is held on the trade show floor. The popular event raises needed funds that are awarded to deserving students. This will be the 27th year the association has been offering the scholarship fund.

Samarelli felt the 2016 amusement season in New Jersey was a good one. When asked where she sees things headed she responded, "We only look up in this industry."

More info on the East Coast Gift and Variety Show, NAARSO training and hotel reservations can be found on the NJAA website.

•njaamusements.com

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Dixie Landin' Theme Park is located in Baton Rouge, La., and is accompanied by Blue Bayou Water Park. Dixie Landin' has more than 28 rides and attractions including coasters, kiddie rides, and typical family rides and attractions. Blue Bayou features over 20 water attractions including numerous water slides, a lazy river, and a wave pool.



SEEKING

- **ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER/DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS** - This is a full-time position with opportunity for advancement. Candidate must have at least 5 years experience with operations in both water and amusement parks or more than 5 years in one with knowledge and ability to manage both.
- **RIDE OPERATIONS DIRECTOR** - This is a full-time position with opportunity for advancement. Candidate must have at least 3 years experience as a supervisor/manager and knowledge of safe operation of rides.
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EMPLOYMENT



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Will help maintain and repair rides and related equipment. Millwright-type experience preferred. Ability to follow written and oral directions. Ability to work heights and follow safety guidelines. Experience with lighting systems, 3-phase electrical knowledge and ability to trouble shoot electrical controls.

Pay will depend on experience.

Send resume via email to: david@joylandpark.com. EOE

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Seeking Assistant Director of Maintenance, Water Park Manager, & Maintenance Technicians

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

Contact: Charlotte Gonzalez, General Manager or Dallas Jones, President at 270-781-7634.

Please email resume to beechbendpark@msn.com with subject line "Employment."

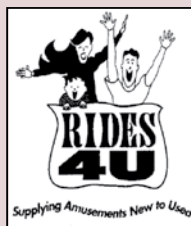
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Joyland Amusement Park
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