



Noah's Ark unleashes Raja in Wisconsin Dells



After racing through a figure-8 course, riders face the fangs of Raja together. COURTESY NOAH'S ARK

AT: Tim Baldwin
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WISCONSIN DELLS, Wis. — **Noah's Ark**, billed as America's Largest Water Park, has never shied away from pushing the envelope. The renowned water park has introduced a number of groundbreaking attractions during its 40 years of operation.

"Noah's Ark has a very rich history of putting in some of the tallest and fastest and firsts when it comes to rides," said **Matt Hehl**, director of marketing, Noah's Ark. "Raja is no exception to that tradition. It is only the second King Cobra ride in the United States and [Raja] is the tall-

est and longest of any in the world. We had the space that fit it perfectly."

"The loading platform is almost 70 feet off the ground," said **Mark Whitfield**, general manager. "The thrill of standing up on the tower and seeing most of Wisconsin Dells is stunning. It's an iconic ride for us, but also an icon attraction for Wisconsin Dells."

"As people are on Wisconsin Dells Parkway, the main drive, the face of the cobra is looking back at them," said Hehl.

"Wisconsin Dells leads the state of Wisconsin in tourism. To use a sports

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Sesame Place adds kid-friendly wooden roller coaster thrills

Oscar's Wacky Taxi offers 'family fare' via The Gravity Group

AT: B. Derek Shaw
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LANGHORNE, Pa. — **Sesame Place**, the 14-acre children's theme park outside Philadelphia where Elmo, Grover, Zoe, Rosita, Cookie Monster, Bert and Ernie, and other familiar characters reside, now also is home to a "vehicle" driven by Oscar the Grouch.

And despite his disposition, it's likely even Oscar derives some joy from Oscar's Wacky Taxi, a new family roller coaster. With wooden track on a green steel frame, the 40-foot-tall, 1,200-long hybrid coaster from **The Gravity Group, LLC**, of Cincinnati, Ohio, is built atop a former parking area and represents the single largest capital investment in the park's history. It officially opened May 26.

The attraction establishes an immediate welcoming tone in the queue area, which is noticeably missing the crowd-wrangling corral setup one would otherwise expect to see.

"The whole area is supposed to look like a community park," said **Jeff Davis**, park vice president of operations. "There are no traditional queue rails and lines; it's a winding path with trees and lampposts



Sesame Place, located outside Philadelphia, has welcomed a second family roller coaster to the park for its 39th season. AT/B. DEREK SHAW

— the way Oscar would want it. It's unique and creates a nice entry presentation to the ride."

Chad Miller, designer engineer with The Gravity Group, noted that in addition to enhancing the comfort of waiting guests, the goal of the queue is to increase anticipation as it weaves under the

loading station.

"Waiting in line, you are going to be in the middle of the action," Miller said. "On your left, the train is engaging on the lift hill and going up. You'll see all the people that are starting on the ride. And then to your

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Amusement Today, Silver Dollar City invite industry to Golden Ticket Awards

Attendees encouraged to register for event and reserve hotel now

It's been called the "Networking Event of the Year," the Academy Awards of the amusement industry... and just a plain-old good time among industry friends. It's the **Golden Ticket Awards!**

Amusement Today and this year's host park, **Silver Dollar City** in Branson, Mo., extend an invitation and warm welcome to working professionals in the amusement industry — including park owners, operators, managers, ride manufacturers, designers, suppliers and vendors, to join the fun and festivities at the 2018 Golden Ticket Awards on Friday and Saturday, Sept. 7-8.

Attendees are encouraged to register for the event at goldenticketawards.com and to make reservations for hotel accommodations at one of the two host hotels: the **Hilton Branson Convention Center** or the **Hilton Promenade at Branson Landing Hotel**. Special discounted rates are available at each property by identifying yourself as a Golden Ticket Awards guest. The deadline for hotel reservations is Friday, Aug. 24, or until the block of rooms is sold out. Please visit goldenticketawards.com for detailed information and rates. In past years, the host hotels have sold out quickly, so attendees are asked to make arrangements early.

The staffs of *Amusement Today* and Silver Dollar City are busy planning an unforgettable two days of activities such as behind-the-scenes tours of the park's ultra-pop-



Attendees of the 2018 Golden Ticket Awards will get up-close and personal with the Silver Dollar City's new Time Traveler (above) and Outlaw Run (bottom right). The ceremonies will be held aboard the *Showboat Branson Belle* (top right). COURTESY SILVER DOLLAR CITY

ular Christmas event, a don't-miss culinary class and a craft experience. All tours require advance registration and expect to fill up quickly. Receptions, time to explore on your own, networking opportunities and the awards show will round out the agenda.

The *Showboat Branson Belle* will serve as the location for the awards show. Attendees will be treated to a cruise on **Table Rock Lake** — with dinner, entertainment and the presentation of the prestigious awards all taking place on the water.

This is the 21st annual Golden Ticket Awards, which



are presented to the "Best of the Best" in the amusement industry and are calculated from an international poll conducted by *Amusement Today*.

—Janice Witherow




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www.GoldenTicketAwards.com

2018 Event Itinerary

Friday, September 7

- 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. – Registration at hotel, enjoy Branson!
- 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. – ERT on Outlaw Run and Barn Swing
- 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. – ERT on Time Traveler and Thunderation
- 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. – Silver Dollar City welcome reception
- 9 p.m. – Return to Hilton Hotel

Saturday, September 8

- 8:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. – Registration
- 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. – Silver Dollar City open
(GTA badge valid for park admission and exit line privileges)
- 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. – Silver Dollar City Christmas Tour
- 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. – Silver Dollar City Crafts Tour
- 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. – Silver Dollar City Culinary Class
- 6:15 p.m. – Buses depart hotel for Branson Belle
- 6:45 p.m. – Boarding and pre-reception on the Branson Belle
- 7:30 p.m. – Dinner on the Branson Belle
- 8 p.m. – Amusement Today's 2018 Golden Ticket Awards Ceremony
- 10:30 p.m. – Reception and fireworks on the Branson Belle's top deck

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AT NOTEBOOK: Gary Slade, gslade@amusementtoday.com

Celebrating a park legend



Slade

Hats off to the staff at Castle Park in Riverside, Calif., for properly honoring the memory of a true industry legend on June 13 with the Bud Hurlbut 100th Birthday Celebration. Thanks also to the park's Cindy Espinoza for letting this publisher take part as Master of Ceremonies for an event that included a ride on the Hurlbut Riverside Express train and appearances by several industry and local dignitaries, including animatronics wizard Garner Holt and Riverside Mayor Rusty Bailey.

When Bud built 25-acre Castle Park in 1976, there was no finer family entertainment center in the U.S. Like Walt Disney down the road in Anaheim, he paid attention to all the details. From the decorative handrails on the walkways to the design of the miniature golf course holes to the games arrayed in the arcade, Bud looked at everything through the eyes of his guests. And everything within public view had to be 100 percent right.

Bud Hurlbut was an innovator, a storyteller and an honest man — one our industry sorely misses. Now if we could just help him attain the most important posthumous honor: nomination to the IAAPA Hall of Fame.

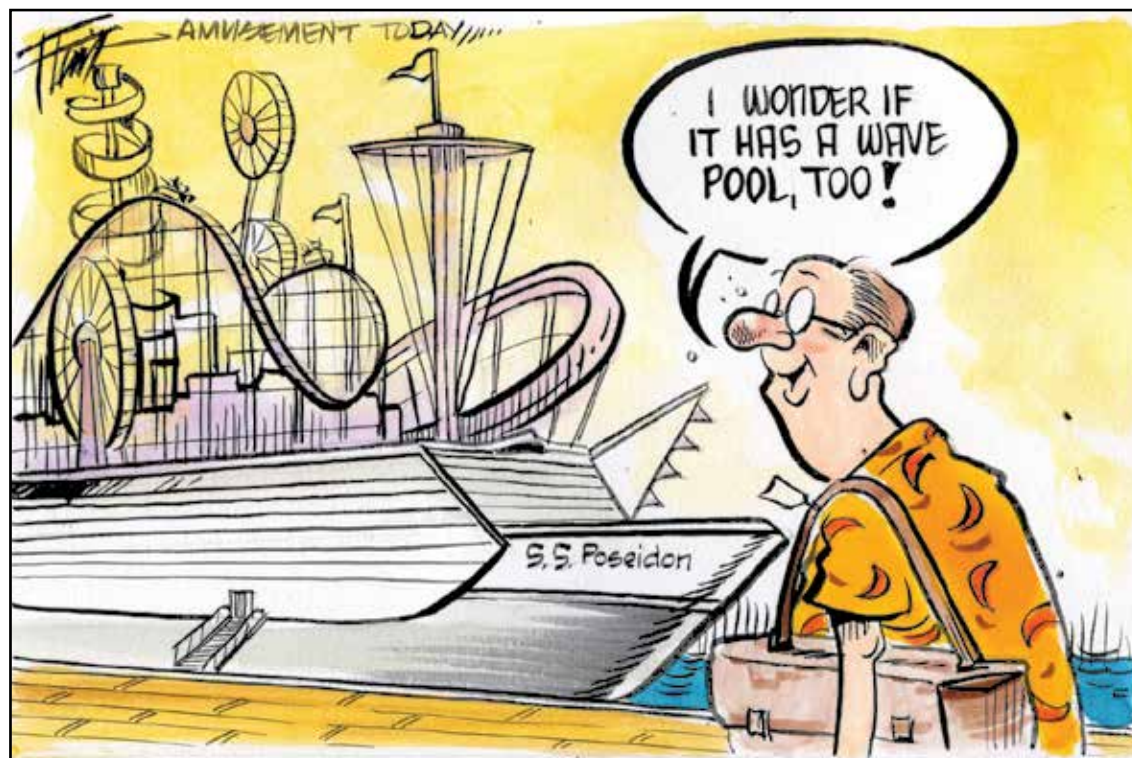
The board of directors of the National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives (NRCMA) reminds the industry that financial donations are still underway for the construction of the Mark Moore Memorial Wing at the museum site in Plainview, Texas. If your company or park has not yet contributed, the museum still needs your help.

To make a financial donation, please visit NRCMA at rollercoastermuseum.org. Or, if you wish to be contacted by the museum, send an email to info@rollercoastermuseum.org.

To date, NRCMA has raised \$372,000 of an estimated \$600,000 goal that will fund the climate-controlled building for the largest and rarest items in the museum's collection. The board thanks Vekoma Rides Mfg. for its recent financial donation and ongoing museum support. Vehicle donations as well as paper and photo collections continue to pour in. Be sure to follow our "Museum Progress Report" each month (see page 37).

A reminder to everyone of our new email address for submitting news, photos and items for print and digital publication consideration: editorial@amusementtoday.com.

FLINT'S VIEW: Bubba Flint



INDUSTRY OPINION: Dean Lamanna, dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

A bad new movie about the 'good' old days

By the time you read this, the new amusement park-set feature comedy *Action Point*, released and quickly swept from theaters by weak notices and ticket sales during the first week of June, may already be slumming in Pay Per View Land.

It's just as well. Like many of the critics, I found the flick mostly laugh-free and cringeworthy on every level. A throw-back to the popular, anarchic late-1970s / early-1980s summer comedies toplined by Bill Murray and Chevy Chase, it stars Johnny Knoxville (of *Jackass* TV prank show infamy) as the owner of a ramshackle, gleefully unsafe amusement park who resorts to ever more lawless operational tactics to stay afloat.

As a fictional period piece delivered in flashback style, *Action Point* seemed out of touch. Perhaps the film could have worked as a direct docudrama about the place to which it is a veiled love note — the original Action Park in Vernon, N.J., which amassed numerous injury reports and nicknames such as "Traction Park" during its 1978-96 operational years.



Lamanna

The movie seemed to ask: Have amusement parks lost their sense of fun because of regulation and litigation? My answer: Hardly. Knowledge, industry standards and exciting new forms of technology mean that "safety" and "amusement" are not mutually exclusive terms. We're achieving thrills responsibly that far exceed anything we could have imagined during the "good" old days.

We've even found ways to pay homage to our less-fettered past. For example, a now rarely seen attraction often cited as symbolic of how things used to be, the Swing 'n' Gym (or Flying Cages), has found a modern reworking — sans rider exertion — in the new Over the Top ride at Pennsylvania's Knoebels Amusement Resort (see story, page 18).

Whatever pangs of nostalgia our loosely regulated fun park days of yore may evoke, we are today, for the most part, more mature and much wiser as an industry. And while looking back can be valuable, even amusing, moving forward is the only way to go. And grow.

Opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher.



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2 MINUTE DRILL



AT: Janice Witherow

Jack Bateman, Magic Springs and Crystal Falls



Magic Springs and Crystal Falls General Manager Jack Bateman has spent over 35 years in the amusement industry. AT/GARY SLADE

Jack Bateman's career in the amusement industry has spanned more than 35 years and has led to various roles at **Six Flags, Great Wolf Resorts** and **Premier Parks**. He is now in the position of general manager at **Magic Springs and Crystal Falls Theme Park and Water Park** in Arkansas, where he enjoys applying his vast experience and expertise to contribute to the park's overall success. Jack has a reputation for being a high-energy guy who is results-oriented and as someone who takes a lot of pride in his work.

Title: General Manager.

Number of years in the industry: 35 years between Six Flags, Great Wolf Resorts and Premier Parks.

Best thing about the industry: The employees and staff I have met over the years at various locations.

Favorite amusement park ride: Texas Cyclone at AstroWorld or any wooden roller coaster.

If I wasn't working in the amusement industry, I would be ... A consultant to the entertainment business.

Biggest challenge facing our industry: Continuous effort on employee training for safety and guest experience. If an organization has these two key ingredients the profits will flow to the bottom line.

The thing I like most about the amusement park season: It is summer and winter is over!

Favorite flavor of ice cream: Baskin-Robbins German Chocolate Cake.

The first thing I do in the morning is ... Make my bed for a sense of accomplishing at least one thing that day, and read a few scriptures from my bible Hue Eichelberger gave me several years ago. A great way to start the day.

If I could trade places with anyone for a day, it would be ... Jimmy Buffett!

Least favorite household chore: Cleaning my condo in Hot Springs.

Wine or beer? A cold Coors Light

Do you collect anything? Baseball cards and logoed golf balls.

My favorite summer sport is ... Golf, especially in the heat of the day. No one in their right mind is out there but it does help the pace of play!

The celebrity I would most want to have dinner with is ... Not sure on that one. The conversation might lead to politics ...

What's always in the fridge? Nearly everything!

Favorite board game: Monopoly.

At the movies ... popcorn or candy? Popcorn.

Best stress buster: Going for a walk in the park and running various scenarios in my mind on the situation that is causing the stress.

Favorite food chain: Pappasitos Tex Mex.

The perfect Sunday is ... Being with family.

Favorite clothing: Cool-looking golf shirts.

At karaoke night, I would sing ... 99 bottles of beers on the wall!

A movie that made me laugh until I cried: *Blazing Saddles*.

I would love for the next big invention to be ... A way to recycle air conditioner condensation water to store for watering landscaping or even use in swimming pools.



A large fire at Europa-Park on May 26 destroyed the Pirates in Batavia ride and impacted several other attractions. No injuries were reported. COURTESY TWITTER

Europa-Park hit by damaging fire

RUST, Germany — Just after 6 p.m. on May 26, a fire broke out at **Europa-Park**, Germany's largest theme park. News spread globally through social media channels, prompting the public and industry alike to speculate on the consequences and damage.

The park reported that the initial investigation indicates the fire started near the Fjord-Rafting rapids attraction, which backs up to a backstage area of the Pirates in Batavia attraction. While the technical evaluation has not been concluded, park officials believe the cause to be related to a technical defect.

The fire quickly spread and completely engulfed the Pirates of Batavia attraction. Fortunately, no guests or employees were harmed. The park credits 250 fire brigade staff, the Europa-Park fire department, security team, emergency medical technicians and regional police for their professionalism in bringing the fire under control. Seven firefighters were treated at a hospital for smoke inhalation

and minor injuries but were soon released.

The park opened the following morning with parts of the Scandinavia and Dutch areas blocked off. Of the three rides affected, the Pirates in Batavia ride is a total loss, but Koffiekopies (a teacup ride) opened later in the day, and the Fjord-Rafting rapids ride was expected to open again soon.

"We can confirm that the Pirates are coming back!" the **Mack Family** told *Amusement Today*. "[We have] thought intensively and with care about the complex concept for the new large family attraction in the Dutch themed area. We can't give concrete plans yet, but it is clear that it will be an indoor themed attraction again."

The Mack Family has expressed gratitude for the support that fans and industry friends have shown Europa-Park since the incident.

—Tim Baldwin

Remembering showmen lost to tragedy a century ago



On May 17, the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Showmen's League of America (SLA) held a memorial service at Showmen's Rest, located in Woodlawn Cemetery, Forest Park, Ill. The event commemorated the 100th anniversary of the auxiliary, which was formed in the wake of the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus train wreck. The June 22, 1918, tragedy killed 86, including showpeople who were on their way to a performance in Hammond, Ind. Shown with the monument are (from left) Jeff Blomsness, North American Midway Entertainment; Bill Johnson of Fantasy Amusements; Guy Leavitt of Ray Cammack Shows, current SLA president; Jimmy Drew of Drew Expositions and Cindy Henning, SLA executive secretary. SLA thanks the many individuals and sponsors who made this historic occasion possible. COURTESY SHOWMEN'S LEAGUE OF AMERICA

►RAJA

Continued from page 1

analogy of when you get a franchise player, we feel we have installed a franchise ride at the park. The visual effects of this ride are second to none," Whitfield told *Amusement Today*.

The park opted to remove the bumper boats to make room for the new addition. According to park officials, the bumper boats were original to the park in 1979. While they served the park well and people enjoyed the attraction, the guest expectation of new rides and experiences that people can ride together were strong factors that weighed into the decision to retire the bumper boats.

The new attraction is 335 in length. Guests can ride together in double tubes, but single riders are also permitted. Riders begin in side-by-



Raja is the tallest and longest King Cobra waterslide ever installed. Noah's Ark has a noted tradition of installing firsts and iconic rides. Polin prides itself on the intricate detailing of the waterslide's theming. COURTESY NOAH'S ARK

side racing chutes that take passengers on a journey of a figure-8 arrangement before plummeting into the King Cobra itself.

"The final drop into the jaws of the Cobra's mouth is about 40 feet," said Hehl. "Guests are going to be getting close to 30 mph in speed.

It's just a great ride for everyone."

"The King Cobra water-slide is extraordinary not only in the entertainment it offers, but also in its overall looks," said **Sohret Pakis**, marketing manager, **Polin Waterparks**. "It is gorgeous, exhilarating and



entertaining, all at the same time. The King Cobra's most unique attribute is its creative theming. Bold red, black and white scales provide an imposing veneer over the exterior and interior of the slide's massive appearance."

"Theming was a big driver in the decision [to add Raja] as well. That really played a role into bringing the ride here. It's a really modern look," said Hehl.

The impressive exterior of the slide has intricately detailed scales that convey the intimidating appearance of the attraction. The large face at the top of the cobra finale has large fangs that protrude down toward riders and drip water at the same time. A major component of the thrill is sliding upward right into the stare of the serpent.

With 40 years of history, Hehl commented that the majority of attractions at the

park use wood as supports, but the new Raja is the park's first all-steel structure.

Other ground-breaking rides in the park's history include Black Anaconda, which was America's longest water coaster when introduced; Scorpion's Tail was America's first looping waterslide and helped usher in the wave of drop capsule slides; and Time Warp, America's largest Behemoth bowl ride. In all, Noah's Ark has more than 50 rides and attractions.

To date, Polin has installed 30 King Cobra slides throughout the world. "King Cobra has truly been a game-changer. It showcased an industry breakthrough in waterslide design as the ride was the first to have theming built directly into the attraction," said Pakis. "The ride has won numerous awards. We are so honored that Noah's Ark has one now."

•noahsarkwaterpark.com



Following a series of twists and turns, the waterslide leads into a steep 40-foot drop. COURTESY NOAH'S ARK

Idlewild Park's vintage Rollo Coaster rolls out new PTC train



Idlewild Park recently ordered a new train for its 1938 junior coaster, Rollo Coaster. The individual-seat cars feature dual safety restraints and "wings" to maintain rider clearance on the course. COURTESY IDLEWILD

LIGONIER, Pa. — **Idlewild Park & Soak Zone** recently commissioned a new train for **Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters, Inc. (PTC)** for Rollo Coaster, its junior wooden roller coaster. The upgrade is part of a multi-phase modernization of the vintage ride, which was built in 1938.

The new train ditches the old bench-style seating for individual-seat cars with dual safety restraints, and it is accompanied by revised rider height and weight requirements. Riders must now be a minimum of 42 inches tall; those under 48 inches must ride with an adult. In addition, there is a weight restriction of 265 pounds total weight per row — necessary in view of the added weight placed on the coaster structure by the train itself.

Riders are weighed before boarding on a simple red-light / green-light scale. Actual weights of guests are not shown.

The bright-orange train also sports side-panel extensions, or wings. "Because the new train was considered a major modification, the rider clearance envelope had to be addressed before the ride [could be permitted] to operate again," explained **Jeff Croushore**, Idlewild's director of marketing. "While people may have differing views on the appearance

of the wings, they were necessary to meet the current clearance standards."

Great Coasters International of Sunbury, Pa., was involved with the track modifications, which were similar to annual maintenance work performed in off-season periods. Work was also done to accommodate the new train, which offers much more flexibility negotiating turns.

There is only one train currently; however, the park has not ruled out a second one as the coaster modernization process continues.

"Idlewild will be consulting with industry experts to further evaluate the structure," said Croushore, adding that the park would explore options that may permit a higher weight allowance and eventual removal of the wings.

Tom Rebbie, president of PTC, told *Amusement Today* that Rollo Coaster's test runs went well. "We made a few quick changes," he said. "[Idlewild] didn't mind us coming by and checking things again."

"It was great to work with Tom and his team," Croushore said. "They went above and beyond every expectation. It never feels like business with PTC; it's like working with an old friend."

—B. Derek Shaw

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► TAXI

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right there's the brake run, so you'll see all the people that have just finished the ride.

"To be able to see the beginning of the ride and the lift and the end of the ride and the brake run from that same vantage point is kind of different for us. Talk about being immersed in a ride!"

Equipped with two bright-yellow, 12-passenger trains with the ride's namesake character adorning the lead car's "hood," Oscar's Wacky Taxi hits the road with a swift, 20-second ascent to the top of the lift. A tight left turn leads to the first drop, which plunges into a pair of rabbit hops taken at up to 33 mph before ducking into a tunneled helix. This is quickly followed by four additional speed bumps and a banked right turn directly underneath the lift. A couple more banked turns precede the glide into the brake run.

"It's a super-smooth, fun ride," Davis said.

For The Gravity Group, the coaster presented some parameters that were different from similar projects, such as those



Oscar's Wacky Taxi offers milder big coaster-style airtime and thrills in a hybrid design of wood and steel. The minimum height limit is 40 inches for riders with a supervising companion, meaning some taller three-year-olds may board.

AT/B. DEREK SHAW

the company completed for **Quassy Amusement Park** in Middlebury, Conn., and **Story Land** in Glen, N.H. At the request of Sesame Place and its corporate owner, **SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment**, for example, the minimum height limit is 40 inches for riders with a supervising companion.

"Tall three-year-olds and four-year-olds can ride this ride," said Miller, adding that the minimum height requirement for single riders is 46 inches. "We've made some modifications to our trains to allow that to hap-



pen. For a three-year-old, it is quite a ride!"

But even older riders will enjoy the coaster, he emphasized. "That's kind of our signature when it comes to these small rides. We always want

to make sure it's fun for everybody and not just the little kids. Teenagers and all the parents of these kids are going to have a blast on it. It's just that kind of ride."

The Gravity Group coordinated with other contractors on the project in various areas, including signage, landscaping and the siding on the storage building. "We were involved with a lot more aspects than just [the] coaster installation on this one," Miller said with a laugh.

Oscar's Wacky Taxi is the second coaster for Sesame

Place. The first, Super Grover's Vapor Trail, a **Vekoma** junior coaster, was built in 1998 and is positioned across a plaza from the new ride. "Vapor Trail was, in fact, our first mechanical ride," Davis said. "That's what started the whole mechanical ride kind of kick at Sesame Place."

Other upgrades for the park's 39th season include a new dining facility and a new family care center. Quiet rooms, designed as break areas for autistic children and their parents, also have been added.

• sesameplace.com

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Oscar's Wacky Taxi - Sesame Place, Langhorne, PA



Mine Blower - Fun Spot America, Kissimmee, Florida



Timber! - Walibi Rhône Alpes, France



Cú Chulainn - Tayto Park, Ireland



PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

► Twisted Cyclone touches down at Six Flags Over Georgia — page 14 / Midway Scene — page 20

Icon turns spotlight back on thrills at Blackpool Pleasure Beach

\$20 million double-launch Mack Rides coaster a U.K. first

AT: Dean Lamanna

dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

BLACKPOOL, U.K. — Following several years of focusing on family attractions, Blackpool Pleasure Beach has added a new thriller to its arsenal of classic and cutting-edge rides.

Icon — Dare to Ride, described as the U.K.'s first double-launch roller coaster, officially opened to the public May 25. The \$20 million steel coaster — the park's largest single-attraction investment to date — propels passengers at speeds of up to 50 mph both at the start and midway through the two-and-a-half-minute experience.

Reaching heights of more than 88 feet along its over-banked, inverting, kilometer-plus-long course, Icon darts through or around the structures of Big One, Steeplechase, Big Dipper, Pleasure Beach Express and Grand Prix. It interacts no less than 15 times with the other attractions as it swoops and rockets through misted tunnels.

Park publicity likens the ride's G-force levels to those felt by a **Formula 1** race car driver, with acceleration four times that delivered by a **Lamborghini** Gallardo automobile.

Icon offers "a smooth but exhilarating ride like no other roller coaster in the world," said **Amanda Thompson**, Blackpool's managing director. "We have been on an incredible journey building this roller coaster. Seeing [it] entwining with some of our most popular rides, it really has been epic."

"The launch of Icon is an extremely exciting day for our industry, both in the U.K. and beyond," added **Nick**



In addition to achieving high speeds while negotiating wild turns and inversions, Icon intertwines with the structures of other Blackpool coasters. Representatives of the park and Mack Rides were among those who rode during a media event in late May. COURTESY BLACKPOOL PLEASURE BEACH



Thompson, deputy managing director. "We couldn't be more pleased to see and experience it here in the U.K. and to showcase another world first at Blackpool Pleasure Beach."

Manufactured by **Mack Rides** at its factory in Waldkirch, Germany, Icon proved an engineering feat. Initial site preparation began in December 2016. Subsequently, a team of 50 spent about five months moving its hundreds of tons of gray steel track and support structure carefully into place amid the

park's existing rides.

Icon's three 16-seat trains have a sleek, serpentine, silver-and-copper-colored metallic design. The ride's enigmatic logo incorporates a Japanese symbol representing speed.

The coaster is the fourth Mack Rides production at Blackpool and reflects the ongoing history of collaboration between the Thompson and Mack theme park families. (In addition to their ride-manufacturing business, the latter clan, of course, owns and operates

Europa-Park in Rust, Germany.)

As part of its marketing push for the ride, Blackpool has released a soundtrack containing five Icon-inspired music tracks — including the themes heard by guests in the ride's queue line and exit — titled *Icon: Dare to Ride* via **iTunes** and **Google Play Store**.

The soundtrack was created by **The Notable Stranger**. It captures the coaster's different stages of action along with its general excitement.

"A ride's soundtrack is

extremely important to enhancing the overall experience, and we spent many hours working with The Notable Stranger to develop music which really reflects the personality of the ride," said Amanda Thompson. "We decided to make it available for everyone to enjoy."

The goal, she added, is to keep the coaster's fans coming back for more.

"Icon promises to set hearts racing," Thompson said. "It's truly an incredible ride."

•blackpoolpleasurebeach.com



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Magic Springs adds major ride, creates promotional campaign

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

HOT SPRINGS, Ark. — Jack Bateman, general manager of Magic Springs Theme and Water Park, calls this 40-year-old fun spot about 50 miles southwest of Little Rock “a hidden gem.” And this season, especially, it’s one with shiny amusement facets.

Magic Springs is the only location in Arkansas that offers both a theme park and a water park (the latter is known as Crystal Falls). Situated adjacent to the scenic Ouachita National Forest, it has a total of 30 rides, waterslides and attractions.

New this season is Brain Drain, a 136-foot drop tower from Larson International. The addition represents a big step toward Bateman’s goal to tap the greater potential of Magic Springs, which he set out to do last July when he came onboard to oversee the facility for operator Premier Parks, LLC.

“We wanted to put in a ride that would stand out,” Bateman told *Amusement Today*. “It opened April 7 with the opening of the park, and we have gotten a great response from all ages.”

Brain Drain was installed on a site that provides an aerial panorama of the park and its natural surroundings. “Riders on three out of the four sides [of the tower] have a great view over the national forest,” Bateman said. “We have



Bateman



Brain Drain, a new drop tower from Larson International, provides a scenic aerial view of Magic Springs and the surrounding Ouachita National Forest.

AT/GARY SLADE

many people telling us how they love the view.”

As of January, Bateman has further improved visibility for Magic Springs by hiring a Little Rock-based advertising and public relations firm, Mangan Holcomb Partners, to help get the word out.

“They are very good... a very important part of the mix,” he said. “They have come up with a lot of fun things. They even created the logo for the Brain Drain while we were sitting around a table in a meeting.”

The company also introduced the idea of having a 1980s music festival that Bateman said “worked out great.” On June 9, the park scheduled performances by Queensrÿche with Warrant and Great White.

The park’s Summer Concert Series and other



special events take place in its state-of-the-art Timberwood Amphitheater.

The music acts, held on Saturdays, are included in park admission and have become an important part of the park’s summer season. Bateman noted that the park has two separate types of visitors on concert days, with regular parkgoers arriving in the morning and those who plan to stay for the music acts arriving later in the afternoon.

“Saturdays are our biggest days,” he said.

In the recent off-season, the park’s Old No. 2 Logging Company log flume and some of its waterslides received fresh paint, and all of the benches were repainted in a variety of colors. In addition, the Arkansas Twister wooden roller coaster underwent some track work.

“These are things we do as regular annual maintenance,” Bateman said, indicating that much of the magic promised by the park’s name still originates in-house.

•magicsprings.com



Magic Springs has given various park elements a fresh splash of color, including benches throughout. AT/GARY SLADE



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Gerstlauer's Tantrum arrives at Darien Lake in upstate New York

AT: B. Derek Shaw

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DARIEN CENTER, N.Y. — By the time its 2018 season arrived, it had been 10 long years since **Darien Lake Theme Park Resort** had introduced a new roller coaster

That particular drought ended over Memorial Day weekend with the operational introduction of Tantrum, a vertical-lift Euro-Fighter model from German manufacturer **Gerstlauer**. The ride had its official grand opening on June 1.

The \$5 million project is the second installation of its type (following the opening of Adrenaline Peak at **Oaks Park** in Portland, Ore.) brokered by Stevensville, Md.-based **Ride Entertainment** this spring. Darien Lake began preparing for the new attraction late last summer, when it was discussing its annual capital improvement plans.

"This model fit the footprint of the area we were looking to update, and we knew it could breathe some new life into that area of the park," said **Mary Loliger**, Darien Lake's public relations manager. "It also offered a unique feature —



Tantrum, a Gerstlauer Euro-Fighter 380 model, is the first new roller coaster to open at Darien Lake in more than a decade and the seventh coaster in the park's attractions lineup. It was brokered and installed by Ride Entertainment. COURTESY DARIEN LAKE

the beyond-vertical drop and a train that featured four seats across, which made it a good complement to the arsenal of coasters on property. We also got some great feedback from the other properties that have this model."

Adam Sandy, chief business development officer for Ride Entertainment, agreed that the coaster was ideally suited to the park's needs.

"It was a combination of the marketability of the attraction paired with the value," Sandy said. "When compared to competitors, the Euro-Fighter

is a great value for a 100-foot tall coaster. In addition, the vertical lift and beyond-vertical drop lend themselves to billboard, print and internet advertising. All you have to do is show riders going over the top of the lift hill and their faces provide a fantastic dramatic moment."

Tantrum also had an efficient construction timeline that made it doable during the off-season. According to Loliger, applications were sent to the local planning and governing boards for approval beginning in October, with final project go-ahead arriving in November.

The new attraction was then announced to the public.

Removal of the ride Tantrum has replaced — Thunder Rapids, a 1981 **Arrow Dynamics** log flume — took place last fall. Ground preparation continued into early this year, with concrete work beginning in February and steel arriving and being erected in April and early May. Completion of the station house, queue area and landscaping followed.

The winter and spring months did present some con-

► See **TANTRUM**, page 13

FAST FACTS

Ride/Park

Tantrum, Darien Lake
Darien Center, N.Y.

Type

Euro-Fighter 380

Height/Speed/Length

98 feet/52 mph/1246 feet

Cycle time/Hourly Capacity

1 min., 26 seconds/700 pph

Special Features

98-foot vertical lift,
97-degree first drop,
pretzel inversion,
airtime hop, immelmann turn,
tilted loop

Ride Vehicle

Three, eight passenger trains

Footprint

230 foot x 66 foot

Height Minimum

48 inches

Maximum G-force

4.5 g's

Ride Manufacturer

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► TANTRUM

Continued from page 12

struction challenges. "It was a wet, cold spring across the U.S.," Sandy said. "That, coupled with some shipping delays, put us a little behind where we wanted to be. But you can't change the weather or the shipping lanes, so you just do your best to make up for lost time. Once we had all of the containers onsite, we had the majority of the ride up in days."

Tantrum is located in the front of the park, just past the entrance. The ride's positioning provides a great, anticipation-building view of its lift hill and layout from the parking lot. Mind Eraser (**Vekoma SLC**) is adjacent to the new coaster, along with Potato Works, a newly renovated food stand.

"We chose that area because it fit very well in the space," Loliger said. "It helps breathe new life into that area and balances the park experience by

spreading out the roller coasters."

The name of the new ride was determined through employee input. Explained Loliger: "In the fall, some of our full-time employees were asked to submit suggestions, which were put into a survey for everyone to vote on. After a few rounds of narrowing things down, our name selection committee confirmed the winner — Tantrum!"

The name truly describes the experience. Riders embark on the 98-foot vertical lift at a 90-degree angle. After reaching the apex, the train plummets into a 97-degree drop and pretzel inversion. Tantrum then snakes through the structure — flying over a bunny hop, negotiating an Immelmann turn and then finishing with a tilted loop at speeds of up to 52 mph.

Loliger praised the efforts of all those involved with the new ride. "It was great working with Gerstlauer and Ride Entertainment. **Bill Wright** with **Ride Manufacturing, Inc.**,



Upon entering the main gate, visitors to Darien Lake will immediately see the new 98-foot-tall coaster. It is located on the site formerly occupied by the Thunder Rapids log flume and adjacent to the Mind Eraser roller coaster.

COURTESY DARIEN LAKE

did a fantastic job managing Tantrum's installation. We are thankful for his efficiency and excellent planning to get the ride up and running. We are very happy with Tantrum as an addition to our park."

Ride Entertainment had an equally positive experience on the project. "Darien Lake has been great to work with," Sandy

said. "There has not been a significant coaster installed at this park in some time, and I think everyone is excited about the new ride. Tantrum will be unique for the region and we think that Darien Lake's employees and visitors are going to be blown away by the experience."

"We are elated to bring the newest thrill ride, Tantrum,



to our great park," said **Chris Thorpe**, park general manager. "With so many unique features, the coaster will be a must-ride for the summer. And with an extended season, guests will get to ride Tantrum, plus our six other coasters and our other rides, into the fall as well."

•darienlake.com

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Rocky Mountain Construction maintains trend with Six Flags

Six Flags Over Georgia debuts Twisted Cyclone hybrid coaster

AT: Tim Baldwin

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AUSTELL, Ga. — **Six Flags Over Georgia** unveiled its newest attraction Memorial Day Weekend. Twisted Cyclone is the latest conversion of an aging wooden coaster into a reinvigorated, dynamic new sensation that the theme park chain has found great success in marketing. Idaho-based **Rocky Mountain Construction** (RMC) is the company Six Flags has used for such transformation projects.

In 2011, sister park **Six Flags Over Texas** opened New Texas Giant to enthusiastic acclaim, taking *Amusement Today's* Golden Ticket for Best New Ride. This success story was followed by Iron Rattler at **Six Flags Fiesta Texas** (2013), Medusa Steel Coaster at **Six Flags Mexico**, Twisted Colossus at **Six Flags Magic Mountain** (2015), Wicked Cyclone at **Six Flags New England** (2015) and Joker at **Six Flags Discover Kingdom** (2016). Cedar Fair has entered into this transformation formula at two parks this year — **Kings Dominion** and **Cedar Point**. This could easily be argued to be the biggest roller coaster trend of the new millennium.

Six Flags Over Georgia opened Georgia Cyclone, a Dinn-Summers wooden coaster, in 1990. Patterned after the famed Cyclone in New York, it was a top-rated wooden coaster for some time. With ridership decreasing and maintenance costs rising, Six Flags'

decision to remarket the ride as something new was a logical move.

"The Cyclone coasters of the '20s were the first rides with elements that appeared outrageous and impossible to navigate to the people of that era," said **Alan Schilke** of **Ride Centerline**, the engineer responsible for the new ride's layout. "All RMC coasters strive to replicate that feeling, and the reverse cobra roll and breaking wave turn (elements) of Twisted Cyclone are sure to deliver."

Using the bulk of the previous ride's structure, the new steel track has wild and exhilarating maneuvers. Interestingly, Schilke seems to be having fun making the approach to the lift almost humorous in his most recent designs. A wacky, wiggly stretch takes riders to the lift where they then find a dramatically steeper first drop (75 degrees) and three inversions mixed in with the new action-packed coaster. The height of the ride has increased slightly to 100 feet. The speed continues to race passengers as 50 mph. Of note, the length of track has decreased from 2,970 feet when it was built at Georgia Cyclone to 2,400 feet.

"This is a project that I especially liked. Georgia Cyclone was my first project with toppler track. Now Twisted Cyclone comes full circle with I-box treatment," said **Jake Kilcup**, COO for Rocky Mountain Construction. "It's really packing a punch now. That kick to the left off the lift hill is a fun feature and going



The reimagined first drop is now taken at a steeper 75 degrees. COURTESY JOSH HERRINGTON

through the tight site is really exciting."

The inversions make a statement early in the ride as the coaster's first turnaround following the initial drop twists guests through back-to-back barrel rolls while curving high in the air.

"Combining two barrel rolls in the same turn is pretty impressive — you have the airtime going up and the airtime going down," said Kilcup.

Reviews from fans have been enthusiastic. The airtime, maneuvers and inversions appear to be deliver-

ing all the thrills guests are wanting, along with a noticeably smooth ride which was one of the issues Six Flags Over Georgia was wanting to overcome with the previous, rougher ride. According to the park, there are 10 moments of airtime that produce weightlessness for riders.

Two trains provided by Rocky Mountain are custom-designed to look like 1960s sports convertibles.

With the transformation into a steel-tracked coaster, the wooden structure has been painted gray to more closely match additional steel sup-

ports. The blue steel rails pay homage to Georgia Cyclone's palette of blues of when it opened 28 years ago.

"As always, Six Flags was great to work with," said **Fred Grubb**, CEO, Rocky Mountain Construction. "The project went very smooth and our track team installed the track in record time. We are excited to have another one of our rides at a Six Flags park."

Park President **Dale Kaetzel** is especially pleased with the guest reaction. "It is delivering exactly as we envisioned," he said during the ride's media day preview.

First Huss Explorer attraction destined for Cancun, Mexico

BREMEN, Germany — **Huss Park Attractions, GmbH**, has announced that the first installation of its new Explorer film-based attraction will open in Mexico on Cancun's Riviera Maya next year. It is part of the new **Amikoo Resort Destination Theme Park** currently under construction.

Explorer will take visitors on a simulated deep-sea exploration of the ocean waters around Mexico in a unique motion-based theater. The sensation of being submerged is created by an enclosed, gondola-shaped platform and a 360-degree screen combining high-definition, large-format film projection and surround sound. An extra-dimensional saltwater scent will enhance the experience.

The theater's descending / ascending movement is authentic, as the encapsulated platform is lowered into the circular projection space on a central steel shaft utilizing Huss Sky Tower technology. The adven-



Deep-sea exploration is the theme of the Huss Explorer motion-based theater, set to open with Cancun's new Amikoo Resort Destination Theme Park in 2019. COURTESY HUSS PARK ATTRACTIONS, GMBH

ture incorporates scenes of a vast underwater world featuring coral reefs teeming with marine life.

The attraction's queuing area will engage guests with conservation-angled messages about ocean

ecology and biodiversity. Guests will then enter the 70-seat gondola-shaped theater, themed as a submarine, for the dive into the deep.

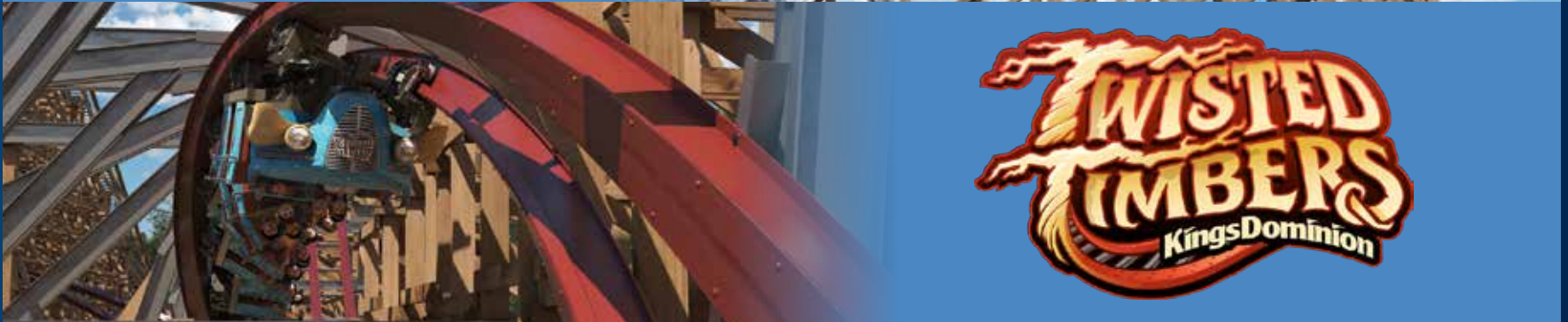
"We are thrilled to be able to announce our first Explorer project and are especially happy that it will be installed in such a significant new development," said **Mirko J. Schulze**, CEO of Huss. "The attraction will provide guests of the Amikoo resort with a truly immersive and breathtaking experience which will take them into another world. I'm confident it will be a highly successful element of this new destination."

Suitable for all ages, Explorer will be accessible to guests with disabilities and wheelchair users. The basic technology and motion systems are flexible enough to accommodate new media content — whether based in adventure, science, fantasy or sports — to create a new attraction experience.

—Dean Lamanna



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Cedar Fair parks don't go into the 2018 season quietly

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

SANDUSKY, Ohio — Cedar Fair Entertainment Co. appreciates fine entertainment, something very apparent when the company announces its annual lineup of new attractions.

This season's highlights range from shiny new coasters to thrill rides to kiddie rides, as well as expanded water play, a floral clock and new restaurants.

The following is a look at what Cedar Fair parks are offering this season. This roundup doesn't include those parks that opened the 2018 season with brand new coasters which *Amusement Today* has already covered. Those parks are: **Cedar Point**, Sandusky, Ohio (Steel Vengeance, June 2018 issue); **Kings Dominion**, Mason, Ohio, (Twisted Timbers, May); **Knott's Berry Farms**, Buena Park, Calif., and **California Great America**, Santa Clara (RailBlazer, June).

Canada's Wonderland

This park, located in Vaughan, Ont., is offering two new rides this year, as well as an expanded and renamed water area.

The two rides are the Lumberjack, manufactured by Zamperla, a swinging pendulum ride with a 360-degree swing, and Flying Canoes, by Preston and Barbieri, an interactive family ride that allows riders to control their journey of flight in two-person canoes.

Grace Peacock, director of communications, said the park's 20-acre water park was expanded and renamed **Lakeside Lagoon**, from the former **Splash Works**. It now features a children's wading pool with a zero-degree entry, spray features, new seating area for parents, shade umbrellas and a Timber-framed pavilion.

"Other park improvements include an upgrade in our outdoor catering area, The Court-



Valleyfair in Shakopee, Minn., has rolled out at 70-foot-tall Larson International loop (left), while Worlds of Fun in Kansas City, Mo., commissioned Great Coasters International to add a 70-degree banked turn to the park's Timber Wolf coaster. COURTESY VALLEYFAIR, WORLDS OF FUN

yard, where we've replaced existing structures with seven open-air, timber-framed pavilions built by Canadian company TimberKits," Peacock said.

Valleyfair

Delirious, a Larson International Loop ride, was introduced at this Shakopee, Minn., park for the 2018 season. The ride is 70 feet high and coils riders upside-down on a seven story, 360-degree freestanding structure. It carries 24 riders and is capable of completing 10 complete revolutions in less than a minute. The ride is located in the Route 76 area and it fits right in with its purple color scheme, lighting, and music.

"Delirious is a great addition to the retro family road trip feel of Route 76," said Brad Marcy, general manager, Valleyfair.

The new ride joins other improvements in the Route 76 area including new shade structures, improved lighting, and enhanced seating and gathering locations.

Worlds of Fun, Oceans of Fun

Worlds of Fun opened the 2018 season with the Nordic Chaser, a new ride manufactured by Mack. The park, in

Kansas City, Mo., located the new family ride in its Scandinavian section of the park.

In addition to the new ride, park management hired Great Coasters International to spearhead improvements to the Timber Wolf wooden roller coaster. A new 70-degree banked turn was added and nearly 325 feet of the track was replaced.

"Improvements to our grounds and adding guest enhancements also were a big focus for us during the offseason," said Chris Foshee, public relations and director of communications.

Among those improvements were the construction of a new water fountain and the re-introduction of the floral clock. About 15 square-miles of black top and asphalt were replaced with concrete.

Free WiFi was added park-wide and a new mobile app was created.

Carowinds

When this Charlotte, N.C., park opened for 2018, it sported a newly renovated kids' area. Formerly known as Planet Snoopy, the new area, called **Camp Snoopy**, features new rides, a climb and play area, and upgraded amenities sur-



rounded by a natural-looking midway reminiscent of the Carolina wilderness.

The new rides are: Camp Bus, Trailblazers, Kite Eating Tree, Pig Pen's Mud Buggies, and Woodstock Whirlybirds, all manufactured by Zamperla.

The new climb and play area has been named Beagle Scout Acres and is 8,000 square-feet in size. The Snoopy Boutique and Snack Shack were renovated and renamed to Camp Store and Camp Cook Out, respectively.

Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom

The large improvement project at this Allentown, Pa., park was the overhaul of the train vehicles for The Thunderhawk roller coaster by Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters Inc. (PTC). Both of the Thunderhawk's maroon and gold trains went to the PTC shop during the winter and showed back up in the spring updated and looking brand new.

Thunderhawk was originally called Coaster when it opened in 1924. It was designed by Herbert P. Schmeck.

Park management also made improvements to the food and beverage infrastructure as

well as other enhancements to improve guest experience.

Kings Island

Along with annual maintenance projects and grounds upgrades, this park, located in Mason, Ohio, opened a new restaurant for this season.

Located in the Coney Mall area of the park, the new Coney Bar B Que's architecture and theming pay tribute to the early days of Kings Island and Coney Mall. On the menu are smoked ribs, pulled pork, rotisserie chicken and Queen City Sausage with a selection of fresh side dishes.

James Major, a two-time winner of the Food Network's Chopped reality TV cooking contest and contender on Alton Brown's Cutthroat Kitchen, is the new executive chef.

Michigan's Adventure

After a major overall of the park's water area in 2017, this park, located in Muskegon, Mich., didn't get a major new ride this year. Annual maintenance and upgrading was done during the off season and a focus was placed on creating new food items to be able to offer menus with a more regional flavor.



The children's area at Carowinds in Charlotte, N.C., underwent a name change from Planet Snoopy to Camp Snoopy and five new rides were added. They include the Woodstock Whirlybirds (left) and Kite Eating Tree (center), both by Zamperla. The Lumberjack (right) from Zamperla, is one of the two new rides at Canada's Wonderland, Vaughan, Ont. COURTESY CAROWINDS, CANADA'S WONDERLAND



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Family-friendly take on classic Swing 'n' Gym opens at Knoebels

ELYSBURG, Pa.— A new-fangled version of an old amusement park and carnival cage ride has finally gotten into the swing at **Knoebels Amusement Resort**.

Over the Top, a Wave Rider model from Italian manufacturer **SBF-Visa Group**, officially debuted with the start of the park's season in late April. The ride originally was scheduled to open last year; however, a late delivery and issues with its operating software caused the delay.

The 21-foot-tall ride, which secures up to 12 passengers at a time in a stand-up position, revolves vertically both clockwise and counter-clockwise — providing nine revolutions in each direction during a two-and-a-half-minute experience. Both the park and the manufacturer spent a good deal of time trying to make sure the speed of the ride was constant as it makes each revolution.

In terms of movement, Over the Top has been likened to the intensely rider-powered, sometimes-

bruising Swing 'n' Gym or Flying Cages attractions that were most popular in the 1960s-70s. Knoebels itself operated one from 1964-86 in the area where the Pay One Price building now stands. The new ride, which requires no rider exertion, is located along Phoenix Lane, between Fandango and the Antique Cars.

SBF-Visa Group's sale of Over the Top was brokered by **Len Soled** of Somerville, N.J.-based **Rides-4-U**.

In other Knoebels news, the park sustained minor damage from some powerful storms that passed through in mid-May. About 20 trees, including one that toppled across a pedestrian bridge, were lost, and the fencing around a couple of rides was knocked down. The resort's **Lake Glory Campground** was without power for two days.

A park official said there were no injuries, and that the rides and buildings on the property suffered no damage.

—B. Derek Shaw



Stirring nostalgia for the old Swing 'n' Gym / Flying Cages attraction, Over the Top, a Wave Rider from SBF-Visa Group, provides gravity-defying fun without the physical exertion. COURTESY KNOEBELS AMUSEMENT RESORT

Park Post-its



AT: Pam Sherborne
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Fun Spot America, part of a family-owned business dating back to 1969, has opened a new ride at its Orlando, Fla., location. Called **HeadRush 360** and manufactured by **SBF-Visa Group**, the new ride is part of an overall expansion at the Orlando location. **HeadRush 360** is 40 feet tall and seats 12 riders.

With additional parks in Kissimmee, Fla., and Fayetteville, Ga., Fun Spot America in the midst of celebrating 20 years in operation at its flagship location in Orlando, which opened in 1997. Each of the locations is offering specials and discounts throughout the season.

Jurassic Park — The Ride at Universal Studios Hollywood will close its doors for good on Sept. 3 after 22 years. The water thrill ride featuring gigantic animatronic dinosaurs has had a great run, according to park officials. It opened in 1996, three years after Steven Spielberg's blockbuster film. The cutting-edge attraction showcased new principles of hydraulic physics, mechanics and robotics from a partnership of scientists, paleontologists and aerospace engineers.

Upon its closing, excavation immediately will begin on **Jurassic World Ride**, a new thrill ride based on Universal's latest installments of the enduring dinosaur movie franchise. Most details about the attraction are being kept under wraps, but a release stated that it will feature "never-before-seen dinosaurs, enhanced storytelling, lush scenic design, an entirely new color scheme and uncompromised state-of-the-art technology." The ride debuts next year.

Dinosaur lovers also may like to take in a new brand-new dinosaur attraction, a theme park called **Field Station: Dinosaurs**, located in Derby, Kan. The park features 44 life-size animatronic dinosaurs on 14 acres landscaped to resemble the environment in the which the dinosaurs roamed.

This park, which opened May 26, is set up as a scientific expedition. Guests walk around the dinosaurs and participate in games and various interactive activities along the way. A cast of local actors perform dinosaur-themed shows, sing dinosaur songs and, in some cases, operate dinosaur puppets throughout the day.

The dinosaurs featured in the park are ones whose bones have been discovered in the U.S. Midwest — specifically from Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, New Mexico and Missouri.

The park also offers **Challenge Dome**, a ropes course, and **Jurassic Golf**, a mini-golf course.

Developers have announced plans to build Europe's tallest observation wheel on

Newcastle Quayside in the U.K. The plans, announced by **World Wheel Company**, call for a wheel standing 140 meters high (459 feet) and dubbed **The Whey Aye** in celebration of its location. It will offer 30-minute rides and is expected to accommodate more than 800,000 visitors in its first year.

Plans also include a pedestrian walkway experience featuring bars, restaurants and a visitor attraction called the **Giants of the North Experience**. The latter is set to feature cutting-edge virtual / mixed reality and interactive technology as it hails the achievements of the region's famous individuals from a broad range of industries.

In addition, there are plans for a family entertainment center (FEC) and a multipurpose play and sports complex. The entire development will take 18 to 24 months to build once planning has been approved. A detailed planning application relating to the wheel and visitor attractions is due to be submitted to Newcastle City Council later this year by World Wheel Company.

World Wheel Company has built and operated giant observation wheels around the world, including installations in Suzhou, China, and Tbilisi, Georgia, and it operates more than 20 FECs internationally.

Busch Gardens Williamsburg celebrated the 40th anniversary of its iconic Loch Ness Monster roller coaster last month. The coaster, which has thrilled more than 58 million riders over the years, was honored during five days in early June with a variety of in-park deals, such as discounts on single-day admissions. Park staff also created specials such as Loch Ness Monster pretzels, doughnuts, **Dippin' Dots** and souvenir cups.

Morey's Piers in Wildwood, N.J., has added an attraction to Mariners Pier for the summer season: **Wild Whizzer**, a family spinning coaster manufactured by SBF-Visa Group. The ride was customized with cars themed as hover boards, twirling riders through the air of a figure-eight track layout. Children 36-48 inches tall may ride accompanied by an adult; those 48 inches tall and taller may ride alone.

The sale of Wild Whizzer to Morey's Piers was brokered by **Len Soled** of Somerville, N.J.-based **Rides-4-U**.

Serving both new and existing amusement businesses in design, theming and attractions, **Art Attack** of Dundee, Fla., has announced a new lighting technology called **Signtech**. Company officials are extolling the new development, which allows for the construction of cost-effective signage that is as bright as neon and has the energy efficiency as LEDs. There technology's applications are unlimited and it can even be utilized underwater.

Gravity Extreme Zone, an indoor adventure park in Chandler, Ariz., opened May 22. It offers guests a 40,000-square-foot entertainment center boasting one of the largest indoor ropes courses in the country. Among its other recreational elements are a variety of trampoline attractions, a 30-foot indoor climbing wall that can support up to 12 climbers at once, and an activity called **Stairway to Heaven** that tests participants' balance as they climb a spiral staircase comprised of poles.



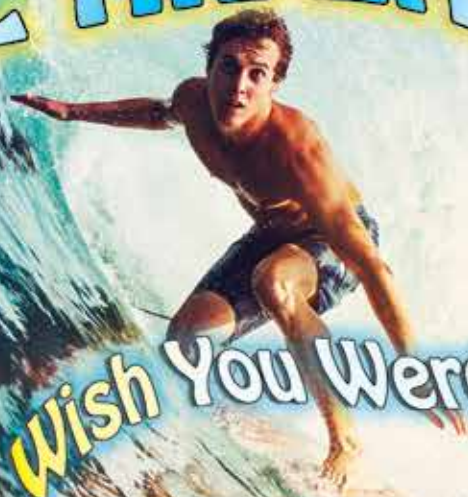
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Townsquare sells NAME to North American Fairs

AT: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

GREENWICH, Conn. — Townsquare Media, Inc. recently completed the sale of North American Midway Entertainment, LLC (NAME), one of the largest mobile amusement companies in North America, to North American Fairs, LLC, an entity owned by Danny Huston.

The purchase terms were \$23.5 million plus a 15 percent residual interest in any future proceeds of a sale of NAME within the next 10 years.

The transaction was finalized at a huge loss to Townsquare, a festival producer and owner of numerous local radio stations and websites, which purchased NAME in 2015 for \$75.5 million. In 2017, Townsquare announced that it was initiating a strategic review of its entertainment seg-

ment, which included NAME.

Huston, who previously owned Farmland, Ind.-headquartered NAME, is "thrilled" to have re-purchased it.

"Townsquare Media, Inc., was a great partnership for the past several years and is now reinforcing its 'Local First' strategy, so it was an opportune time for me to buy NAME back," Huston said. "As the leading provider of outdoor amusements in North America, there is nothing I'm more proud of than to own this company again. Our management team will remain intact and our fairs will continue to enjoy our excellent service and exceptional rides, games and food concessions that we have always provided."

Jeff Blomsness, who was a partner with Huston when NAME was formed in 2004, will not join this venture. "I

am thrilled for Danny to buy NAME back," he said. "I am getting closer to retirement, but I will remain involved for the foreseeable future. I know Danny will take NAME to the next level and continue to do what we do best — provide the best, and safest, midways to our fairs each year."

NAME entertains approximately 16 million people annually and supplies midways for 12 of the top 50 fairs in North America, including Eastern States Exposition, Canadian National Exposition, Calgary Stampede, Indiana State Fair, Illinois State Fair, K-Days Edmonton, Mississippi State Fair, Miami-Dade County Fair and Expo, Kentucky State Fair, South Carolina State Fair, Tulsa State Fair and Arkansas State Fair. There are more than 200 rides in its inventory.

•namidway.com



MIDWAYSCENE

AT: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

The Midland County Fair Board is developing a new master plan for its grounds in Midland, Mich. The previous master plan, developed in 1982, has met all objectives. Hosting 110 events annually, the fair sits on 118 acres holding numerous buildings offering a total 100,000 square feet. Top ideas include the creation of a new equestrian facility under one roof and expanding the space in front of the 3,800-seat grandstand for concerts and other events. The fair takes place Aug. 12-18 with North American Midway Entertainment (NAME) providing the rides.

In mid-May a severe storm packing a suspected tornado wreaked havoc throughout the U.S. Northeast. At the Hudson Valley Fair at Dutchess Stadium in Wappingers Falls, N.Y., a Chance Skydiver belonging to Powers & Thomas Midway Entertainment was toppled by gusts of up to 78 mph and sustained damage. Numerous ticket booths and fencing also were knocked down. Fortunately, no one from the show or general public was injured as the midway was closed. The fair, which had launched May 4, did not open the final weekend (May 19-20) because of the damage.

Over 200 Pinewood Elementary students in Timonium, Md., participated in the Fourth Annual Growing Together event at the nearby Maryland State Fairgrounds, part of the fair's Seed, Soil and Students Program. In addition to sheep shearing and horse barrel racing, numerous presentation stations during the late May event gave the youngsters information on corn, hay and straw and how to make pollinator seed balls. The students also transplanted flowers and herbs into recycled plastic milk jugs, helping build a green wall planter rack on the fair's Farm & Garden Building and naturally

beautifying the grounds.

The Jacksonville Spring Fair is a new 10-day Florida event that debuted in late March. Southwood Entertainment Group partnered with Amusements of America, provided 30 rides. Four of the 10 days were impacted by rain, but organizers are optimistic about doing it again in 2019. Southwood, launched last July, provides event management, production and site operations; it was also involved with the El Paso Spring Fair and the Ft. Worth Spring Fair in Texas and the Mid-South Fair in Memphis, Tenn.

While music festivals fill dates throughout the summer, finding rides at them can still be a surprise. At the Boston Calling Music Festival during Memorial Day weekend there was a 98-foot wheel brought in by Reithoffer Shows. Organizers say attendees could see New Hampshire from the top of it. The wheel was located between the three stages on the grounds. Some 22,000 attended the event, which was held at the Harvard Athletic Complex in Allston, Mass.

Pennsylvania's Washington County Agricultural Fair has an old-fashioned way to bring in attendees: a trolley. Recently, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation provided a \$742,000 grant via federal funding to the fair for an upgrade that will include a bigger platform at the trolley stop entrance. During the fair, trolleys from the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum offer shuttle service from outlying parking lots along with a nostalgic ride on a form of transport that once prevailed in the western part of the state. This year's event is Aug. 11-18 with Lisko Family Midway Amusements supplying the rides.



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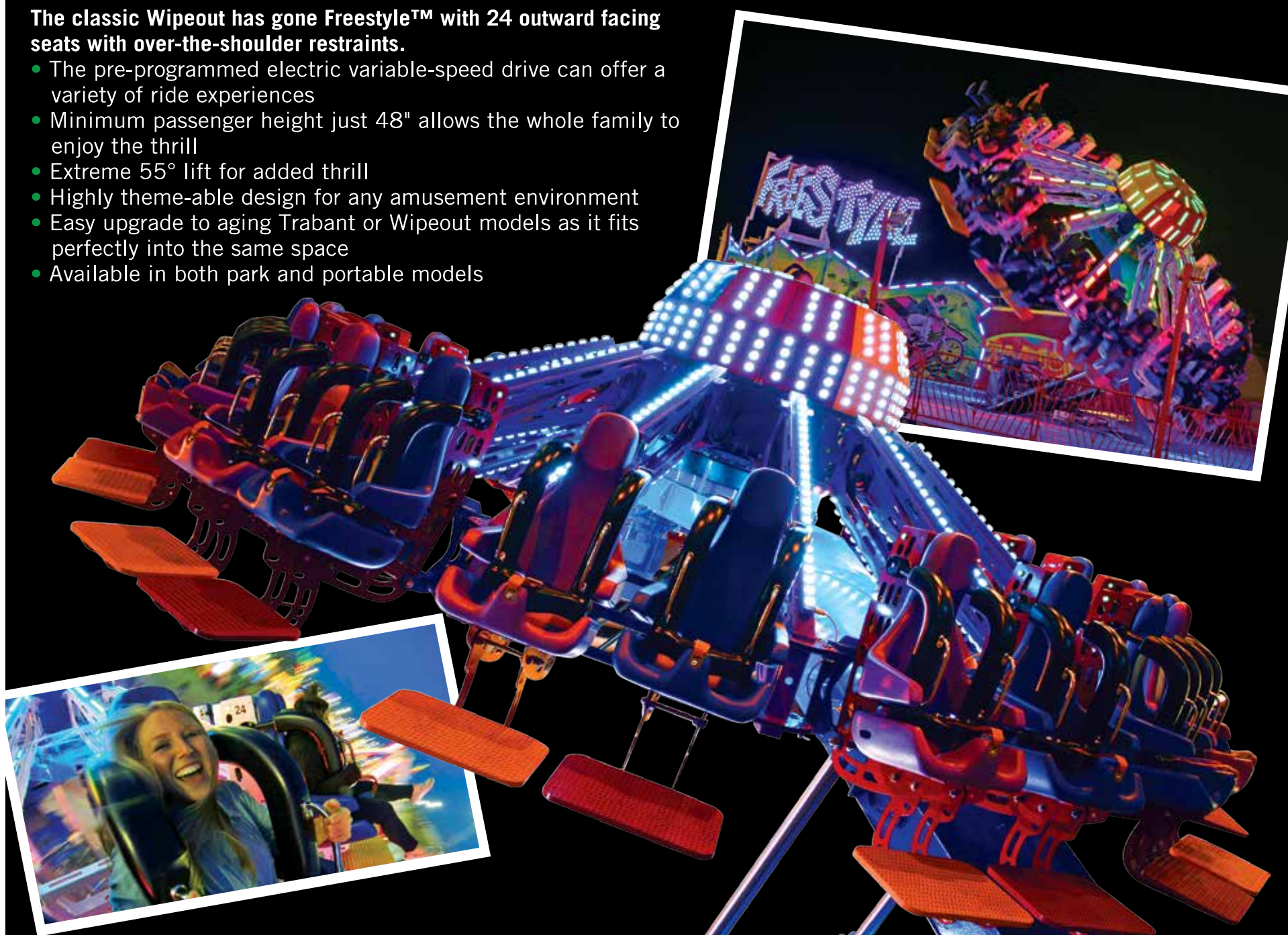
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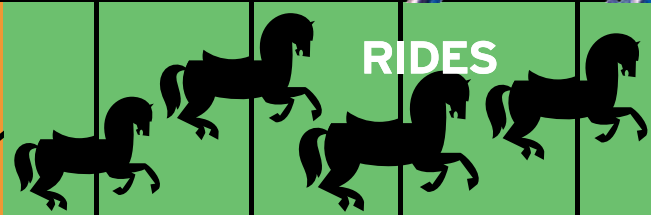
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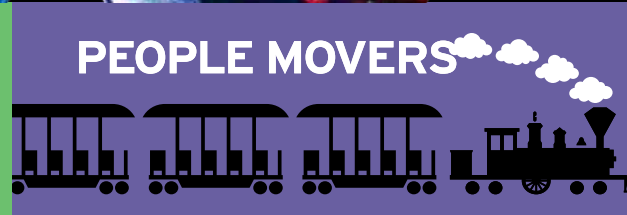
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WATER PARKS & RECREATION

► The Park at OWA opens splash pad — page 24 / Norwegian debuts fun-packed cruise ship — page 26

The Boardwalk at Hersheypark adds mat racer, water coaster

ProSlide supplies two attractions, one using existing station house

AT: B. Derek Shaw

bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

HERSHEY, Pa. — Over Memorial Day weekend, **Hersheypark** introduced two new water attractions — **Whitecap Racer**, the longest six-lane waterslide of its kind in the world, and **Breakers Edge Water Coaster**, with linear induction motor (LIM) technology.



Hersheypark's two new water attractions are intertwined. The Whitecap Racer station can be seen (top right), with the first portion of the Breaker's Edge Water Coaster shortly after the first drop.

COURTESY HERSHEY PARK

Boosting the attractions total to 16 at The Boardwalk, an 11-acre water fun area that is included in the amusement park's admission, the two additions are located between Shoreline Sprayground and the Intercoastal Waterway lazy river. One utilizes an existing station house that remained after the park removed Roller Soaker, a 2002 **Setpoint USA** suspended roller coaster with interactive water elements, in 2014.

"We knew we wanted to use the station house for something," said **Laura Woodburn**, director of attractions and guest experience for Hersheypark. "We weren't quite sure what that something would be until about two years ago, when we

were really finalizing the concepts for the two new attractions and how they were going to weave in and amongst each other."

Whitecap Racer, an Octopusracer model from **ProSlide Technology** of Ottawa, Canada, is the first such waterslide to feature a double tunnel. It descends from a height of 70 feet and delivers two 360-degree horizontal loops along a 486-foot-long, 22-second course.

At a series of kiosks at the slide's entrance, riders enter their initials (and e-mail address, if they wish to receive a free photo of their race along with their time). A wristband is generated with RFID (radio-frequency identification) tech-

nology, which each rider activates when ready to board.

Another first for this waterslide is the addition of gamification. "When you tap your wristband at the reader at the top of the mat racer, you get a series of flashes," Woodburn explained. "There are three oranges, and then one green arrow — that tells you to start, and that starts the timer. Once the guest gets to the bottom of the run-out, the timer stops."

Along with a photo taken at the end of race, the winner among the six lanes has his or her initials displayed on a large, 10-by-24-foot leaderboard. Results of the previous race, as well as the fastest racers of the day and the season,

also are displayed — encouraging friendly competition.

Sharing the same queue area with **Whitecap Racer**, **Breakers Edge Water Coaster** is a **ProSlide Hydromagnetic Rocket** — a LIM-powered bobsled-style model that has won multiple amusement industry awards.

The 942-foot-long installation features seven conveyors and five saucer elements, all adding up to about one minute of splashy thrills. Traveling at up to 20 feet per second, the ride can accommodate as many as 600 guests per hour.

Between the two new attractions, about 40,000 gallons of water have been added to the water fun area.

The harsher-than-usual

winter weather in Central Pennsylvania this year made construction a challenge, according to Woodburn. "We had a lot of snow and very cold temperatures, which is difficult when you are putting in lots of fiberglass," she said.

However, Woodburn noted that the park's latest collaboration with **ProSlide**, which now has eight water attractions onsite, was "wonderful. We're really excited for the product they have and the good relationship we have with them, as well."

Both of the new attractions are swimsuit-only use and have a 42-inch height requirement. On **Breakers Edge**, passengers who are not at least 48 inches tall must ride with a responsible companion.

Together with **Shoreline Sprayground** and **Wave Rider**, **Whitecap Racer** and **Breakers Edge Water Coaster** have longer operating hours than the rest of the water fun area, remaining open until Hersheypark itself closes.

"The Boardwalk is a very busy and exciting area for us," Woodburn said. "We're so thrilled to be able to offer even more wet fun!"

•hersheypark.com



It's a race to the finish for those on **Whitecap racer**. The 10-by-24-foot leaderboard for **Whitecap racer** (right) is on the front of **Breaker's Edge Water Coaster** station. It tracks current race outcome as well the immediate past one, fastest times that day and fastest times all season. AT/B. DEREK SHAW

The Park at OWA opens Wacky Waters splash pad

FOLEY, Ala. — Summer has officially begun and there is now a new, exciting way to cool down in the southern Alabama Gulf Coast region. **The Park at OWA** recently unveiled its newest, family friendly addition: the **Wacky Waters** interactive splash pad. As part of OWA's 520-acre resort development, The Park at OWA is a gated amusement park featuring 22 thrilling attractions. Its latest attraction comes just in time for the summer sunshine on the Alabama Gulf Coast.

Wacky Waters — a 9,500-foot splash pad — opened over Memorial Day weekend. The splash pad's water-themed amenities include a 20-foot-tall dump bucket, a towering "coconut tree" that showers guests with 54 gallons of water per minute, a six-foot-tall water dome, and more than 15 different attractions and sprayers to keep guests soaked for hours. For those familiar with The Park at OWA, Wacky Waters sits on the southwest side of the 14-acre park close to the children's attractions.

"Our guests spoke about recommended improvements to the amusement park and we listened," stated **Kristin Hellmich**, OWA director of marketing. "The Wacky Waters splash pad is one of several new amenities created to help our guests beat the summer heat. If you haven't visited The Park at OWA lately, come on out! You will definitely see a lot of new improvements we recently installed to further enhance the guest experience."

Wacky Waters offers parkgoers a chance to cool off from the summer heat, complete with a cabana-style area for parents to relax. Guests can bring their own towels and sundries, which can be stored in onsite lockers. Supplies, such as towels, sunscreen and swim diapers, can also be purchased at a nearby shop that services the splash pad. Being centrally located in The Park at OWA, guests can enjoy splashing around for a while before drying off just in time to hop over to one of the park's 21 other attractions including the Rollin' Thunder roller coaster that slices through the center of the park.

The splash pad is not the only new addition to The Park at OWA this summer season. A variety of outdoor structures and amenities have been added to enhance the guest experience such as an air-conditioned quick-serve dining area, shaded resting areas throughout the park, misters, fans and even sunshades above several of the rides.

The Park at OWA, the gated section of the resort, opened its doors last July and is welcoming its first full summer season with new attractions, daily family activities, live performances six days a week, and more exciting announcements to come. Downtown OWA, the shopping and dining part of the resort that is always free to access, has just added new retailers such as **Cinnabon**, **Auntie Anne's**, and **Parker & Co.** — a ladies clothing boutique.

The OWA Resort is built adjacent to the **Foley Sports Complex** and **Tanger Outlets** shopping center and was designed to offer alternative recreation opportunities for the more than 6.5 million tourists who visit the area annually. Foley is also less than 12 miles from the beautiful white sandy beaches of Gulf Shores, Ala. — another popular tourist destination.



Families will appreciate the opportunity to cool down at the new Wacky Waters splash pad.

COURTESY THE PARK AT OWA



NEWS SPLASH

AT: Jeffrey L. Seifert

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On May 26, **Quassy Amusement & Waterpark** held an official grand opening for its new Category 5 Rapids — Extreme Waterslides. The three gigantic water raft rides from **ProSlide** are the largest single investment in the park's history and bring the number of waterslides in Quassy's Splash Away Bay waterpark to 15. Quassy Beach also opened for the Memorial Day weekend crowd.

While Quassy has always had swimming activities with a beach on Lake Quassapaug, the park's first foray into water park attractions began in 2003 with the introduction of Saturation Station, an interactive WaterColors water play structure from **SCS Interactive**. The first waterslide installation was in 2006, and since then Quassy has invested heavily in water park attractions with major expansions in 2013, then again in 2016.

SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, undoubtedly one of the most environmentally conscious theme park operators in the world, recently completed a solar panel project at **Aquatica San Diego**. The sun will generate enough power through the 3,780 solar panels to provide 80 to 90 percent of the park's annual energy use. The elevated solar panels, from **Onyx Renewable Partners LP**, will provide 400 shaded parking spots for guests and employees. The renewable energy from the sun will reduce CO2 emissions by over 10,000 metric tons over the life of the system (approximately 20 years), equal to removing 124 passenger vehicles off the road. This is important to SeaWorld Parks, as increasing carbon emissions have been linked to ocean acidification and declining coral reefs.

"We are proud to build upon our history of environmental stewardship," said **John Reilly**, chief operating officer. "This project is just one of several in the coming years to reduce our company's environmental footprint, helping fulfill our mission and purpose."

When **Dollywood's Splash Country** in Pigeon Forge, Tenn., opened in May, it featured several new amenities designed to provide increased guest comfort and accessibility. New lounge chairs were added throughout the park and guests can rent Luxury Loungers in addition to Retreats and Canopies for guaranteed shade and comfort in between splashing and playing. The water park also has made improvements to wait times including self-serve ticket kiosks and opportunities to save 90 percent of the ride wait time with new TimeSaver H2O options.

Building on the response to the water park's calming area and accessibility tubes, Dollywood's Splash Country also added aquatic wheel chairs and adult changing tables for families to utilize. Additions like aquatic wheelchairs can make a big difference for families who have never been able to enjoy water attractions before.

Daytona Lagoon, Daytona Beach, Fla., will feature two new slides this summer — a 54-foot-high mat racer slide and a pendulum tube waterslide. The new mat racer water-

slide, from **Arihant Water Park Attractions**, will replace the once popular Kraken's Conquest ride, which was severely damaged by Hurricane Irma last fall. The new four-lane attraction, featuring partial tunnels with translucent rings, will be a first for mat racer waterslides in Central Florida.

"The natural light from the Florida sun will beam onto the enclosed slide tunnels for light effects of translucent colored rings with special pattern effects that leave the rider with the impression they are going through a high-speed time warp tunnel. Upon exiting the enclosed slide tunnels, the riders will enter an open straightway for an exciting race to the finish," says **Jim DeBerry**, senior manager, North America, for Arihant Water Park Attractions.

The new pendulum tube ride launches from the same tower as the mat racer. The new pendulum slide is similar in shape to a half-pipe and is suitable for riders who are 42 inches or taller.

On May 23, 2018, Texas Sen. **Donna Campbell** and Rep. **Kyle Biedermann** in conjunction with the **Texas Historical Commission** presented **Schlitterbahn Waterparks & Resorts** as a Texas Treasure Business Award winner. The Texas Treasure Business Award program pays tribute to businesses that have provided employment opportunities and support to the state's economy for 50 years or more.

Created in 2005 and coordinated through the Historical Commission, the Texas Treasure Business Award program recognizes well-established Texas businesses and their exceptional historical contributions to the state's economic growth and prosperity.

Schlitterbahn Waterparks & Resorts is the award-winning, Henry family-owned and operated chain of water parks and resorts in five cities in Texas and Kansas. Respected as a leader in the industry, Schlitterbahn has been an innovator in everything from water-slide technology to hospitality.

Kalahari Resorts broke ground in May on its latest resort and convention center in Round Rock, Texas. Round Rock, the international home of **Dell Technologies**, has become a mega-suburb just north of Austin with a population base exceeding 120,000.

The 350-acre **Kalahari Resort and Convention Center** will be located across from the **Dell Diamond** triple-A Minor League Baseball stadium and **Old Settlers Park**, a 570-acre recreational facility. The Kalahari resort will include a 975-room hotel and features ranging from waterslides and restaurants to a 200,000-square-foot convention center. As with all Kalahari facilities, the African-themed resort will include a world-class spa, several dining options and, of course, a huge indoor and outdoor water park. This will be Kalahari's fourth resort, and according to Kalahari, the Round Rock resort will have the company's largest indoor water park to date. The resort is projected to open by Fall 2020.



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Norwegian delivers recreational 'Bliss' on new cruise ship

AT: Jeffrey Seifert
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

SOUTHAMPTON, England — After Norwegian Cruise Line took delivery of its 16th ship, the *Norwegian Bliss*, in Germany in mid-April, the new vessel departed Southampton on April 21 for a transatlantic journey to the U.S., arriving in New York City on May 3.

The *Bliss* eventually made its way south and through the newly expanded Panama Canal to the port of Seattle for its official christening. At 168,028 gross tons, it is Norwegian's largest vessel and the 10th largest pleasure ship currently in operation worldwide.

With two expansive observation areas offering passengers uninterrupted views, the *Bliss* was designed specifically for the Alaskan cruise market. Its two-story, 20,000-square-foot Haven Observation Lounge features massive windows spanning the vessel's entire forward section and provide 180-degree panoramic views.

A two-level go-kart course occupies the top aft of the ship. Up to 10 electric go-karts can race each other day and night at up to 30 mph along 1,000 feet of track. The electric cars operate silently so as not to disturb other passengers, but speakers near the driver's headrest deliver authentic racetrack sounds. Two-person cars



allow young children to ride with a parent.

A similar track made its debut on the China-based *Norwegian Joy*; this iteration, about 40 percent bigger, is a first for the North American cruise market and the largest at sea.

Another attraction that first appeared on the *Joy* — an open-air laser tag course — also has been installed on the *Bliss*. The space-themed game accommodates single players competing with each other in private sessions or group-vs.-group open sessions.

Rounding out the amusements



The Norwegian Bliss offers numerous recreational activities, including a go-kart track and a water park with waterslides partly suspended over the ocean. COURTESY NORWEGIAN CRUISE LINE

is an on-deck water park. The ship's Aqua Park offers several thrilling slides, including Ocean Loops, which drops riders into two loops with transparent sections extending over the side of the ship; and Aqua Racer, which allows riders to race friends side by side on tubes for more than 360 feet.

In keeping with the Alaskan cruise theme, the vessel's hull is adorned with mural-like art that incorporates the image of a humpback whale and her calf. The work, titled "Cruising with the Whales," was designed by the renowned marine life artist and

conservationist Wyland.

In addition to top-flight entertainment, the ship has a number of specialty restaurants and Norwegian's first Starbucks café — a nod to Seattle, the summertime home port of the *Bliss*. (The ship also cruises the Caribbean.)

"This is one of our most highly anticipated ships to date... the newest and most innovative of our young and modern fleet," said Andy Stuart, Norwegian's president and CEO. "[We] cannot wait for guests to experience all she has to offer."

•bliss.ncl.com

Innovative Leisure tightens grip on U.K. climbing wall sales

AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

LEICESTER, England — Adventure attractions supplier Innovative Leisure, Ltd., has completed several transactions with amusement locations around the U.K.

"Climbing attractions have become a popular addition in a number of sectors, including resorts and holiday parks," said Phil Pickersgill, company managing director. "With staycations and mini-breaks booming and becoming a popular option for many families, there has been a demand for entertainment that differs from the more familiar mix."

"This year, we have seen resorts invest in adventure attractions, with several opting for something that has the height to create a focal point at their venue."

Park Holidays UK, the largest park operator in the south of England, has invested in Innovative Leisure's 7.3-meter-tall stationary climb-

ing wall unit and 7.3-meter-tall mobile climbing wall unit at two of its 29 parks: Seawick at Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, and New Beach at Dymchurch, Kent.

The additions enhance the operator's regular entertainment offerings by providing guests with an exciting and challenging activity — whether participating or watching.

"The value the walls have brought to our entertainment program has been immense," said John Flack, head of entertainment for Park Holidays UK. "Bringing climbing walls to our holiday parks has brought new energy and excitement. Three generations of families are now enjoying the new climbing walls."

Another destination, Richardson's Hemsby Beach Holiday Park in Norfolk, has added several Innovative Leisure products to its site, including a Sky Tykes junior low ropes course. This activity allows youngsters between two and seven-years-old to enjoy their first ropes course

experience.

A unique feature of Sky Tykes is a walk-through area that allows a parent or guardian to walk alongside the child while he or she negotiates the course's challenging rope elements.

At Hemsby Beach, the Sky Tykes installation is complemented by an indoor traversing wall and an outdoor 7.3-meter-tall stationary climbing wall — creating diverse adventure options, rain or shine.

Innovative Leisure has almost two decades of experience supplying climbing wall attractions to a wide range of venues in the U.K. and throughout Europe.

•innovativeleisure.co.uk

Innovative Leisure's adventure attractions, including its climbing walls, are proving popular at amusement venues around the U.K.
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BUSINESS & NEWSMAKERS

► **Women of Influence: Patty Sullivan of Eli Bridge Co. — page 32 / Industry movers — page 34**

Six Flags acquires lease rights to five EPR-owned U.S. parks

AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — **Six Flags Entertainment Corp.** has entered into a purchase agreement with affiliates of **Premier Parks, LLC**, to acquire the lease rights to operate five U.S. parks owned by Kansas City, Mo.-based **EPR Properties**.

Completion of the transaction was expected by the end of June.

The parks in the deal previously were operated by Premier Parks. These latest acquisitions by Six Flags will expand the company's portfolio of North American parks to 25.

"[This] represents another milestone in our strategic... initiative to seek out park acquisitions that expand our addressable market," said **Jim Reid-Anderson**, chairman, CEO and president of Six Flags. "These are all fantastic properties that complement our existing portfolio and provide tremendous added value and cross-visitation opportunities for our extensive mem-



bership and season pass base."

The parks joining the Six Flags stable:

- **Wet n' Wild Splashtown** — the largest water park in Houston, Texas, with more than 48 acres and a wide selection of waterslides and attractions as well as two children's areas.

- **Wet n' Wild Phoenix** — the largest water park in Arizona, featuring 35 acres of high-speed slides and two pools, plus a Wet n' Wild Jr. section with kid-friendly versions of some of the park's more thrilling attractions.

- **Darien Lake** — a 1,000-acre resort property near Buffalo, N.Y., that includes a theme park, water park, campground, hotel and a 21,000-seat amphitheater;

- **Frontier City** — steeped



Frontier City in Oklahoma City is one of five EPR Properties-owned parks for which Six Flags has entered into a deal to lease and operate. COURTESY FRONTIER CITY

in tradition, this 60-year-old Oklahoma City park features a Wild West theme and offers a diverse lineup of rides, attractions and shows.

- **White Water Bay** — located near Frontier City, this water park is a tropical-themed oasis with more than 25 acres of waterslides, interactive water play areas and pools.

Currently the world's largest regional theme park operator, Six Flags also was set to become the largest water park operator in North

America at the conclusion of the deal. The company said the population reach of the five additional properties equates to an additional 20 million potential guests within a 100-mile radius of a Six Flags theme park.

"We are thrilled to welcome these outstanding properties and employees into our family of parks and look forward to sharing the thrill of Six Flags with guests of all ages in these key markets," Reid-Anderson said.

• sixflags.com

Four more Six Flags-branded parks being planned for China

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — **Six Flags Entertainment Corp.** and its development partner in China, Beijing-based **Riverside Investment Group Co., Ltd.** (RIG), are extolling their continued growth in that country's market with the planned addition of four new Six Flags branded parks.

The projects will raise the number of Six Flags parks in China to 11.

The latest parks will be located in Nanjing, capital of Jiangsu province and the second largest city in the East China region. **Six Flags Nanjing** will offer guests a full range of world-class experiences with a theme park, a water park, an adventure park and **Six Flags Kids World**, featuring scaled-down versions of attractions in the other parks.

The first phase of the multimillion-dollar entertainment complex is expected to open in 2021.

Allied Specialty marks 35 years of insuring amusement industry

TREASURE ISLAND, Fla. — **Allied Specialty Insurance, Inc.**, an **XL Group, Ltd.**, company, is celebrating 35 years of insuring the U.S. outdoor entertainment industry.

The company's 3,000 clients include carnivals, concessionaires, amusement parks, water parks, fairs, festivals, fireworks events and family entertainment centers.

"Allied was created and continues to be operated by children of the carnival industry,"



said **Mary Chris Smith**, chairman and president of Allied. "We all grew up in this industry, and we have a genuine understanding of the risks that enter-

tainment operators face every day. Our personal involvement, industry knowledge and lifetime business relationships are major contributors to our success now and to come."

Founded by **Paul "Duke" Smith** and his son, **David Smith**, in 1983, Allied brings a unique background and intimate experience in the carnival industry to help current operators address their risk management and insurance needs. The company, purchased by XL

Group in 2016, provides a full suite of insurance products to clients.

"Through its deep industry roots, the Allied family knows, loves and is committed to [this] industry," Smith said, noting the company's uniqueness and steadfastness. "We have seen other changes in the industry over the last three decades. Now, as part of the XL Group of companies, we can tap into a more diverse portfolio of underwriting talent, insurance

products and resources that will benefit our clients as their operations change and adapt to new technologies and new or emerging business risks."

Through its subsidiaries and under the **XL Catlin** brand, XL Group is a global insurance and reinsurance company providing property, casualty and specialty products to industrial, commercial and professional firms, insurance companies and other enterprises.

—Dean Lamanna

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Cavu Designwerks, Force Engineering partner in China market

VICTORIA, B.C., Canada — **Cavu Designwerks, Inc.**, has announced a partnership with Leicestershire, England-based **Force Engineering, Ltd.**, to sell linear induction motors (LIMs) in China. The arrangement positions Cavu as the sole distributor of LIMs in the country.

LIMs move ride vehicles using only magnetic forces instead of friction systems with large, noisy motors. By eliminating the friction on the drive system, the noise for moving the vehicle is eliminated. This characteristic makes LIMs ideal for dark rides and roller coasters located indoors, such as inside shopping malls.

"The Chinese market for roller coasters is growing at a tremendous pace, creating an unprecedented demand for LIM-powered propulsion systems," said longtime industry innovator **Peter Schnabel**, Cavu's CEO. "I've been fortunate to work with Force Engineering and the owners,



Cavu Designwerks and Force Engineering are partnering on linear induction motor-based projects in China, such as this indoor roller coaster concept for a shopping mall. COURTESY CAVU DESIGNWERKS, INC.

Alan and Neil Foster, for over 25 years. The business relationship has grown into a trustworthy friendship. [This] allows us to bring a quality product to the market at an exceptional value / price proposition."

As the founder and former owner of **Premier Rides**,

Inc., Schnabel first introduced LIMs to the theme park industry in the mid-1990s — using the technology to power the **Flight of Fear** roller coasters at **Kings Island** in Mason, Ohio, and **Kings Dominion** in Doswell, Va.

Cavu and Force are introducing a new generation of



power-saving, intelligent LIMs with a new attraction that will debut in China in 2019.

Established in England in 1979, Force Engineering is a global company dedicated to the development, design and production of LIMs and other electro-magnetic and permanent magnet solutions. With

offices in the U.S., China and South Korea in addition to its Canadian headquarters, Cavu Designwerks provides attractions for a variety of entertainment applications. The company specializes in original design, engineering and cutting-edge fabrication.

—Dean Lamanna

Fun Spot America celebrates 20 years

ORLANDO, Fla. — Family-owned **Fun Spot America** threw a company-wide party on June 9 celebrating 20 years in operation at its first Florida park.

On that date only, Fun Spot offered guests \$20 single all-day passes at all three of its locations — Orlando, Kissimmee and Atlanta, Ga. — to mark the anniversary. But its operators are promoting the party mood all summer long.

"We are excited to announce our 20th year in operation in Orlando and celebrate with so many wonderful guests and families that enjoy our attractions," said **John Arie, Jr.**, CEO of Fun Spot America. "We are a staple of this community and hope that many will come out to celebrate this milestone with us."

Thus far during its anniversary year, Fun Park America has opened a new spinning pendulum thrill ride, **HeadRush 360**, from **SBF-Visa Group**, at its Orlando location and have made numerous others improvements across its parks. The Orlando and Kissimmee locations also boast Florida's only wooden roller coasters, with the **Mine Blower** coaster in Kissimmee being the only coaster of its type in the state that turns upside down



Fun Spot America threw a party for guests in Orlando on June 9 marking its 20th year of operation at that location. The celebratory mood is being promoted at all three of the company's parks through the summer. COURTESY FUN SPOT AMERICA

The Kissimmee location also has the tallest **SkyCoaster** on earth, with Orlando offering the world's second-tallest such adventure ride. Visit the website below for more information and updates on forthcoming attractions at the Fun Spot parks.

•fun-spot.com

Florida's new 'fun central'



On May 17, the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA), which is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year, broke ground on its new 22,000-square-foot global headquarters in Orlando. The project represents a \$14 million investment for IAAPA, which has 73 employees worldwide — 47 of whom will be based at the Central Florida location. The building will include dedicated member space with meeting rooms, special event capabilities and a lounge, as well as a library housing the organization's archives. Construction is slated for completion next summer. COURTESY IAAPA



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Universal, Feld Entertainment partner on LBE

Interactive 'Trolls' film-themed experience to open in Big Apple

AT: Dean Lamanna

dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

NEW YORK, N.Y. — **Universal Brand Development** and Palmetto, Fla.-based **Feld Entertainment** are collaborating on **DreamWorks Trolls — The Experience**, an interactive adventure that brings to life the colorful and musical world of the hit 2016 DreamWorks' animated film *Trolls*.

Working closely with the filmmakers, the two entertainment entities will open the inaugural location-based experience (LBE) this fall at 218 W. 57th St., between Broadway and 7th Ave., in a space owned by high-end retail property developer **GGP, Inc.** It then will tour cities across the U.S.

The 12,000-square-foot DreamWorks Trolls LBE is a family-friendly, 90-minute walkthrough adventure featuring tactile experiences and shareable social media moments. Among its highlights is Poppy's Party Room, which takes visitors on a musical journey with their favorite Troll friends via augmented reality and 3D technology. There also is a visit to the Hair-We-Go Salon and Barbershop, featuring magical mirrors, and a walk amid the flora and fauna of Troll Village.

Participants are able to view and collect their photos from throughout their visit and create a keepsake scrapbook.

"Building on our growing partnership with Universal Brand Development, we are always exploring new platforms for live family entertainment," said **Juliette Feld**, COO of Feld Entertainment. "This ground-breaking foray into immersive family experiences is being created at **Feld Entertainment Studios**, where the latest interactive technology will bring the irreverent humor and vibrant world of *Trolls* to life in a way fans have never seen, heard or felt before."

Carol Nygren, senior vice president of worldwide entertainment for Universal Brand Development, is equally enthused about the deepening partnership, which will develop and create other large-scale and mobile pop-up immersive experiences.

"As we continue to create



extensions for our IP through live, immersive experiences around the world, we are excited about our expand-

ed collaboration with Feld Entertainment," Nygren said. "When DreamWorks' *Trolls* premiered in theaters it captivated audiences worldwide, and, now, DreamWorks Trolls— The Experience will deliver more of what fans love, transporting guests into a vibrant world that is bursting with color, music and happiness."

Feld Entertainment is a leading global producer of live touring family entertainment experiences, with presentations including **Monster Jam**, **Monster Energy Supercross**, **Disney On Ice**, **Sesame Street Live!**, **Marvel Universe Live!** and, coming in Fall 2019, **Jurassic World Live**.

DreamWorks Trolls — The Experience is sup-

ported through a continuous stream of new content on **DreamWorksTV**, a top-rated kids' entertainment brand on YouTube with viewership averaging between one million and two million daily views. More information and updates on ticket availability for the LBE are available at the attraction's website.

• trollstheexperience.com

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Women INFLUENCE

Patty Sullivan

CEO, President & Chairman
Eli Bridge Co.
Jacksonville, Ill.

A view from the top...

W.E. Sullivan's fascination with the Ferris wheel at the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago, Ill., sparked an evolution at Eli Bridge Co., his bridge construction business. Sullivan's introduction of his own Ferris wheel in 1900 would make his company a major amusement industry player through the 20th century, producing wheels in various sizes and styles and, in 1955, creating the soon-to-be-popular Scrambler ride.

Today, Eli Bridge, based in Jacksonville, Ill., is still growing and innovating with several attractions while it continues to turn out its rotating portable and fixed-site classics. As company CEO, president and chairman of the board, Patty Sullivan, W.E.'s great granddaughter, has a steady hand on the wheel.

Accomplishments and affiliations...

- Master of Business Administration, Western Illinois University, Macomb
- Showmen's League of America Hall of Honor, 2017
- Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA) Hall of Fame Award, 2018
- OABA Outstanding Service Award (Northwestern Showmen's Club Safety Seminars)
- ASTM International Jimmy Floyd Award
- National Association of Amusement Ride Safety Officials
- AIMS International
- Jacksonville Symphony Chorale (sang in John Rutter's *Requiem*, Carnegie Hall, New York City, 2008)

Turning wheels into success

JACKSONVILLE, Ill. — Patty Sullivan laughed when she used the adage, "We've had to reinvent the wheel." But in this case, it is quite literal. And by her own admission, it hasn't always been a laughing matter.

Eli Bridge Co., which had been in business for nearly 100 years and enjoyed great success manufacturing rides including the Eli Wheel and the Scrambler, was in bankruptcy by 1996. Sullivan took over as president and CEO of the family business; her father, Lee Sullivan, and brother, Bill Sullivan, had been leading the company to that point.

"Dad called me for help 10 days before a reorganization plan was due," she recalled. "I asked him what the lender wanted, and he said, 'I don't know. We aren't talking to them.' I said, 'Dad, they own you. You have to talk to them.'"

At the time, Sullivan was working for Midwest Control Products Corp., headquartered about 75 miles north of the family business in Bushnell. But she managed to write the reorganization plan and accompany her father to the loan meeting.

"After I presented the plan and answered questions candidly," she said, "the lender and our attorney went out into the hall. When they returned, they had accepted it. There were some custom things they wanted to include. One of those was that dad had to hire me back to run the company or they would just close the doors."

Sullivan left the meeting, telling her father she needed to think. She was in a job she loved and her previous experience working for Eli Bridge had not turned out well.

"Dad and I talked for quite a while," she said. "I finally told him that I would do it as long as I had full control, and I wanted enough stock to back me up."

The next day, an envelope with stock certificates showed up at her door.

By January 2003, Eli Bridge was out of bankruptcy. The company paid off the last of its bankruptcy debt in 2013.

During that decade, Sullivan knew the company had to keep evolving to remain competitive. For their signature Ferris wheel, they went from using the old cable drive wheels to

rim-drive cable, which offered more operator control.

"Now, we actually have electronic drives where we use a touch screen to move the wheel from one seat to another," she said. "You know, many young people today don't use face clocks. So, when instructions say to start at one o'clock and then go to seven o'clock, it can be hard for them to grasp. Now, when they are loading, they just push 'next' on the screen and the wheel turns."

Eli Bridge also started manufacturing wheels for Scheels Sporting Goods for indoor use. The company has nine in place currently and is working on the 10th; another is under contract.

Eli Bridge has produced the Next Generation Mobile Scrambler, which is easier for operators to transport and erect. As far as the larger wheels for which the company is known, Sullivan said they just sold a trailer-mounted model last year.

"We don't have as many new orders for the larger wheels because they just don't wear out," she said.

"But we sell parts. We can still provide parts to wheels that were made in 1903, 1907, pre-1920s and so on."

In 2007, Sullivan created a company called A-1 Metal Fabricating, which does custom fabrication, mostly locally.

"We paint. We weld. We sand-blast. We repair," she said. "We are in the middle of farm country up here. If someone brings something in and asks if we can fix it, we usually can. A lot of this has spread by word of mouth, but we try to keep them working."

Customer service is important, she noted, and getting parts and repairs done quickly is paramount.

Where does Sullivan see Eli Bridge in the next decade?

"I see us with more new rides out, a brand-new product," she said. "We have a couple on middle burners. Besides that, we need to compete for the dollar. We are looking at a lot of options to try to remain competitive and still build the types of rides Eli Bridge has built — robustly built, and with longevity."

—Pam Sherborne



*Congratulations, Patty on being recognized as a "Woman of Influence!"
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DelGrosso family receives national Sons of Italy award



The DelGrosso family was presented with the 2018 Sons of Italy Foundation's National Education & Leadership Award on May 24 in Washington, D.C. — the first time the honor has been bestowed upon an entire family. The DelGrossos own DelGrosso Foods, the oldest major family-owned producer of pasta sauce in the U.S., as well as DelGrosso's Amusement Park and Laguna Splash water park in Tipton, Pa. They were given the award for their commitment to preserving Italian heritage and supporting numerous Italian American organizations and events throughout the country. Shown during the presentation (from left) are Alexis Murray, fourth-generation DelGrosso family member; Michael DelGrosso, vice president of global sales and marketing, DelGrosso Foods; Minister Catherine Flumiani of the Italian Embassy; and Joe DiTrapani, president, Sons of Italy Foundation. Also shown with DiTrapani and Michael DelGrosso are actor and Master of Ceremonies Joe Mantegna (center), flanked by Dr. Michael Sofia and Lawrence Peduzzi.

COURTESY DELGROSSO FAMILY

International Ride Training adds team member, business partner

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — **International Ride Training, LLC (IRT)**, a leading provider of comprehensive ride operations safety services training and ride operator certification, is expanding its team and reach.

Erik H. Beard has joined the company as a managing member / consultant and general counsel. In addition to supporting IRT's **International Ride Operator Certification (IROC)** and auditing programs and directing the company's legal needs, Beard, a 25-year industry veteran and an attorney in private practice for the past 13 years, brings a wealth of knowledge in risk management and compliance issues.

Beard has advised clients in the attractions industry on policy development, ASTM compliance, state legislative and regulatory issues, and **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** compliance. He is a nationally-recognized expert in the applicability of ADA to the attractions industry and is the creator of **ADA FAQ** — a first-of-its-kind training program aimed specifi-



Erik H. Beard

cally at front-line employees. Having represented clients in a number of cases arising from aviation accidents and well-publicized incidents in the attractions industry, he is experienced in crisis preparation, incident investigation and post-incident response.

"Erik has taught at our IROC safety school for the last four years and always receives accolades for his first-hand knowledge of ride operations and his legal expertise that are unique to our industry," said **Patty Beazley**, IRT managing member. "We are excited that Erik is now bringing those skills to serve IRT's clients."

Beard joins IRT from **Wiggin and Dana, LLP**, where

he was counsel in the firm's litigation department with a practice focused on product liability and aviation litigation, amusement / leisure counseling and litigation, and general business litigation. Prior to his law career, he spent nearly a decade working with **Cedar Fair Entertainment Co.** and **Universal Orlando Resort** in ride operations management.

IRT also announced a new partnership with **Hospitality Intelligence USA, LLC**, an international hospitality and attractions industry consultancy headed by **Anna Danau**, to offer the IROC program and IRT auditing services to clients in the Asia-Pacific region.

Based in Vietnam, Danau has been working with the Asian attractions industry for several years, helping operators to boost ride safety and guest service standards, improve training methods and execute world-class service. She will play an integral role in strengthening and expanding IRT's international presence while maintaining its unique training approach and client commitment.

—Dean Lamanna

PEOPLE

Bill Allen has joined St. Louis, Mo.-based debit card technology leader **Interacard** as sales manager for North America. A local native and a **U.S. Air Force** veteran, Allen has more than 30 years of sales experience in the automotive after-market industry, software and service management. He has extensive knowledge of sales and operations, business development and customer service, and he previously led regional teams for companies including **SPX Corp.**, **Alldata** and **Genuine Parts Co.**



Allen

Cincinnati, Ohio-based **Gold Medal Products Co.**, a leader in food equipment and supplies for the concession industry, has hired **Joe Macaluso** as vice president of sales for the U.S. and Canada. Macaluso, who has more than 30 years of experience, will be responsible for new business development, key relationship management and sales leadership. He spent most of earlier his career with **Weaver Popcorn Company**, most recently as senior vice president of sales of the concession division in the U.S. and Canada.



Macaluso

Former **Topgolf** CEO **Ken May** has been tapped by Dallas-based **Urban Air Adventure Park** as executive chairman. He will lead the family entertainment center brand's U.S. operations and strategic growth. May, who has led major companies including **FedEx Kinko's** and **Krispy Kreme** during a career spanning more than three decades, guided Topgolf through 24 venue openings and a quadrupling of its workforce. Currently, there are 209 Urban Air Adventure Park locations open or under construction nationwide.



May

Ralph S. Alberts Co., Inc. (RSA), of Montoursville, Pa. — recognized within the industry for its ride padding products for more than half a century — has made strategic additions to its leadership team. **Donita R. Rudy** joined the company in January as COO, with executive oversight of all operations, following a year of serving as a financial and operations consultant. Rudy maintains key positions within state agencies and manufacturing associations. **Andy Vogelsong**, an RSA team member since 2011, has been promoted to customer sales and service representative, with primary responsibility for upholding the level of service customers have come to expect from the company. Vogelsong served previously in various production and administrative roles in the company's foam department.



Rudy



Rudy

MediaMation, Inc. (MMI), of Torrance, Calif., a global supplier of motion-based and multi-dimensional cinema technology, currently enjoys strategic partnerships with China-based **Luxin-Rio (LR)**, **Volfonti S.A.S.** (3D systems) and **Arts Alliance Media** (digital cinema software) to provide better-integrated exhibition experiences. The company announced two executive changes intended to reinforce its industry position: **Howard Kiedaisch**, international senior vice president for LR, has been named CEO, while MMI co-founder **Dan Jamele** has become chief innovation and technology officer.

Celebrating an industry legal eagle



Noted attorney **Tom Sheehan** (back left) of Cary, Ill.-based **The Sheehan Firm, P.C.**, notched his 63rd birthday May 26. Celebrating with him were (from left) his son, Tom; father, Robert; daughter, Stephanie; Julie Miller and Tom's brother, Patrick. COURTESY RYON YEMM, THE SHEEHAN FIRM

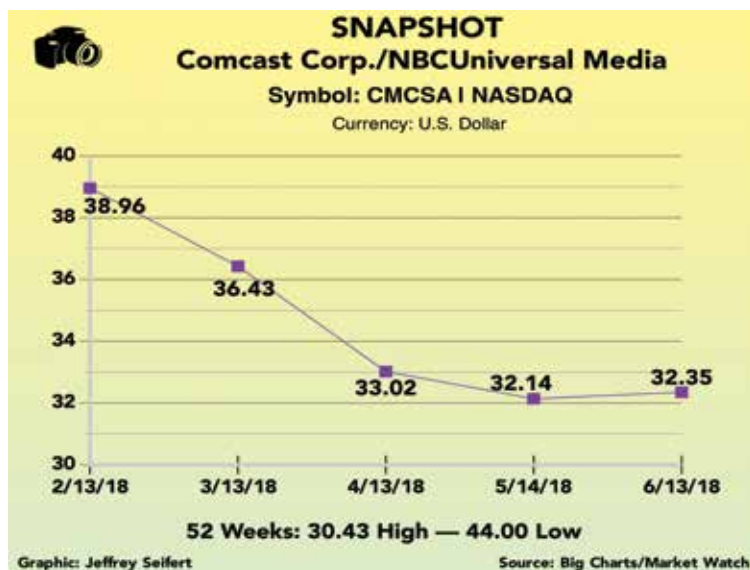
MARKET WATCH

COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 06/14/18	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	33.53	37.52	29.57
Merlin Entertainments Group / Legoland	MERL	LSE	382.80	495.80	317.10
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	66.39	72.37	59.66
Comcast Corp./NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	33.82	44.00	30.43
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	108.75	113.19	96.2
Dubai Parks & Resorts	DXBE:UH	DFM	0.40	0.87	0.34
EPR Properties	EPR	NYSE	63.62	75.55	51.87
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	9010	TYO	3430.00	3445.00	2232.00
Haichang Holdings Ltd.	HK:2255	SEHK	2.10	2.30	1.55
Leofoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	6.70	8.51	6.58
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	31.43	38.41	29.53
Parques Reunidos Servicios Centrales S.A.	ES:PQR	MCE	14.32	17.45	11.69
Sansei Technologies, Inc.	JP:6357	TYO	1735.00	1864.00	827.00
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	20.61	21.35	10.42
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	72.36	72.58	51.25
DreamEast Group Ltd.	HK:0593	SEHK	12.68	15.88	8.46
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	656.00	688.00	545.00
Village Roadshow	AU:VRL	ASX	2.40	4.21	2.05

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

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

—SOURCES: Bloomberg.com; Wall Street Journal

**DIESEL PRICES**

Region (U.S.)	As of 06/11/18	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	\$3.264	+\$0.695
Midwest	\$3.199	+\$0.745
Gulf Coast	\$3.037	+\$0.669
Mountain	\$3.344	+\$0.700
West Coast	\$3.489	+\$0.808
California	\$3.990	+\$1.084

CURRENCY

On 06/14/18 \$1 USD =	
0.8499	EURO
0.7484	GBP (British Pound)
110.49	JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.9865	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.3197	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.3005	CAD (Canadian Dollar)

BUSINESS WATCH**Cedar Fair unitholders reelect three to board**

SANDUSKY, Ohio — **Cedar Fair Entertainment Co.** (NYSE: FUN), announced on June 7 that its unitholders reelected **Daniel J. Hanrahan**, **Lauri M. Shanahan** and **Debra Smithart-Oglesby** to the board of directors of its general partner, **Cedar Fair Management, Inc.**, for three-year terms expiring in 2021.

The limited partners also confirmed the appointment of **Deloitte & Touch, LLP** as the company's independent registered public accounting firm and approved an advisory vote on the compensation of the company's named executive officers.

"We are pleased to announce the reelection of Dan, Lauri and Debra," said **Richard Zimmerman**, Cedar Fair's president and CEO. "Their leadership, diverse insights and collective knowledge have been a great asset for Cedar Fair. We look forward to their continued insights and guidance as we remain focused on driving value for our unitholders in both the short- and long-term."

Disneyland Resort offers minimum wage increase

ANAHEIM, Calif. — **Disneyland Resort** has offered one of the most significant wage increases in its history — a 36 percent increase over three years to minimum rates for hourly cast members represented by the Master Services Council. This would put Master Services cast members at \$15 per hour by 2020, two years ahead of California's minimum wage. The offer was made in April as part of the resort's ongoing contract negotiations with the Master Services Council, which represents the company's two largest labor contracts, and includes approximately 9,500 hourly cast members.

"Disneyland Resort has created 10,000 new jobs in the last decade — and that's just the beginning," said **Josh D'Amato**, president, Disneyland Resort. "Today's investment in our cast — along with world-class training and development opportunities for both full- and part-time cast members — confirms that working at the Disneyland Resort is not only a good opportunity today, but a pathway to growth opportunities and career advancement tomorrow."

Upon ratification, this wage proposal for Master Services cast members will increase the minimum rate by 20 percent, immediately moving from the current minimum rate of \$11 to a new minimum rate of \$13.25. The offer would continue to increase minimum rates to \$14.25 in 2019 and \$15 in 2020.

OCCC begins project mgr. expansion search

ORLANDO, Fla. — The *Orlando Business Journal* recently reported that expansion to the **Orange County Convention Center (OCCC)**, reported to cost \$500 million, has begun the early steps to begin construction. The OCCC is the annual home to the **IAAPA Attractions Expo** each November.

The county owns and operates the OCCC. Orange County is currently undertaking the development of 856,000 square feet of buildout improvements to Phase V of the OCCC, also known as the North/South Building. The preliminary program for the potential improvements will be distributed between the east and west sides of the North/South building. The eastern side of the facility will consist of a 200,000-square-foot, column-free multipurpose venue with associated supporting lobby, concourses, restrooms and service corridors. The western side of the building will consist of a grand concourse improvement to include 60,000 square feet of meeting room program, a flexible 80,000-square-foot ballroom, restrooms and service corridors. Each area is designed with an appropriate amount of circulation, service, back of house and utility spaces. The project also includes public improvements in and around the project site, including an enhanced streetscape and utilities relocation. Construction is expected to begin in February 2020.

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Cineplex expands revamped Playdium concept in Canada

AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

TORONTO, Canada — **Cineplex**, one of Canada's leading entertainment and media companies, is continuing to expand its revamped **Playdium** entertainment center concept with a new location in Brampton, Ont.

Converting and reimagining the space currently occupied by the **Cineplex Odeon Orion Gate Cinemas**, the 45,000-square-foot complex is aimed at teens and families seeking an affordable entertainment alterna-



tive for everyday play, casual dining and to celebrate special occasions.

The Brampton location will feature a selection of classic and new-to-market video and redemption games, as well as virtual reality experiences, bowling, ropes courses and laser tag. Movie fans will be able to watch films at Playdium, as Cineplex plans to incorporate one of the existing auditoriums into the renovated and reconfigured space.

Construction will begin in September, with a mid-2019 opening planned.

"We announced the reinvented Playdium concept and our first location in Whitby last October, and we couldn't be more excited today to share the news about our Brampton location," said **Ellis Jacob**, president and CEO of Cineplex. "It will be a place where young adults and families can play together and also enjoy and share a freshly made meal that is fun to eat."

Approximately two-thirds of the complex will be dedicated to games and

attractions for all skill levels and the other third will offer a range of fresh food and beverage options.

The facility also will have private rooms for birthday parties and special gatherings. Parents can kick back and relax in lounges with views of the games floor.

The original Playdium opened its doors over 20 years ago. Cineplex currently owns and operates a Playdium facility in Mississauga, Ontario; the new locations in Whitby and Brampton will be more focused on modern, technology-enhanced amenities.

As with Cineplex's other

entertainment center concept, **The Rec Room**, currently with four locations, the new Playdium complexes will leverage the company's existing entertainment, amusement gaming, food service, content creation, digital media and operational capabilities, as well as its relationship with **Scene**, Canada's largest entertainment rewards program.

Cineplex plans to open about 10-15 Playdium locations, plus an additional 10-15 The Rec Room locations, in mid-sized communities across the country over the coming years.

•cineplex.com



Strike + Reel, a new entertainment center concept offering a mix of bowling, movies and other attractions, is headed for Dallas. COURTESY ENTERTAINMENT PROPERTIES GROUP, INC.

Entertainment center concept to debut in North Texas in 2019

DALLAS, Texas — **Entertainment Properties Group, Inc. (EPG)**, has announced that it is bringing **Strike + Reel**, a new entertainment concept, to North Texas. The venue, to be located at George Bush Tollway and Holford Road, will open in 2019.

The 90,000-square-foot facility is named for its combination bowling and cinema. In addition to high-tech lanes, it will feature dine-in movie auditoriums with large-format screens, luxury recliners and full bar service. It also will offer interactive video games and a number of other attractions, as well as a chef-inspired

restaurant.

"Our mission is to create fun and memorable experiences for our guests by providing engaging dining and entertainment destinations," said **Mark Moore**, CEO of EPG. "We have been working on this concept for quite some time, and we are excited to announce the first location here in our North Texas home."

Founded in 2005, EPG operates family entertainment and dining destinations under several brands, including **It's Family**, **Food & Fun** and **Pinstack**.

—Dean Lamanna

Amusements in the outfield



Quad Cities River Bandits owner Dave Heller (right), shown with his good friend, Iowa Sen. Roby Smith, has grown his seasonal business beyond baseball with the addition of family amusements — including a Chance Rides Giant Wheel — in the left-field concourse at Modern Woodmen Park stadium. The Davenport, Iowa, Minor League Baseball club is a Class-A affiliate of the Houston Astros, World Series Champions. Along with the amusements, the club has added the Budweiser Champions Club, a multiuse area for parties, weddings, corporate events and more. Ride ticket sales are donated to local charities.

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MUSEUM PROGRESS REPORT

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

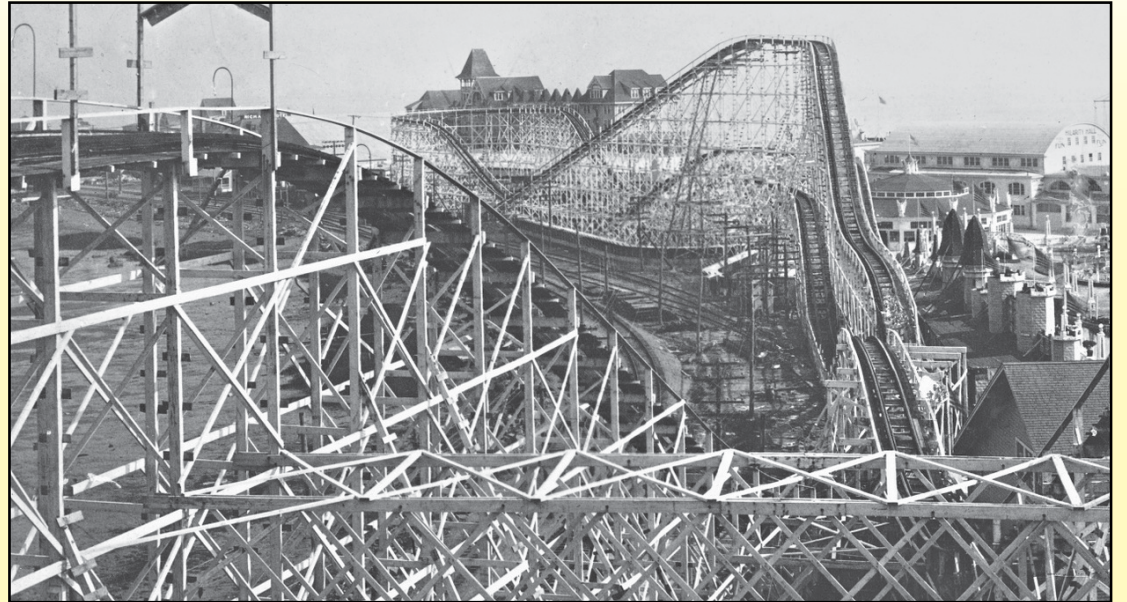
Lake Compounce donates Wildcat roller coaster train



NRCMA was presented a complete train from the Lake Compounce Wildcat, in Bristol, Conn. during the Golden Ticket Awards in September 2017. The gracious donation was presented by Jerry Brick, the park's general manager, and made possible by parent company Palace Entertainment. Shown with a lead car are (from left): Walt Bowser, Gary Slade, Pete Owens, Carole Sanderson, Chris Gray, Jerry Brick, Adam Sandy and Richard Munch.

NRCMA FILE PHOTO

FROM THE ARCHIVES COLLECTION



1917:

Now part of the **National Roller Coaster Museum** archives collection, the **John Caruthers** collection contains wonderful images and more than 60 years of research in newspaper, book and letter files. As a follow up to our June entry, we present another view of the Giant Coaster at **Paragon Park**, Nantasket Beach, Mass. from the recently acquired Caruthers files. Celebrating its 100th season at its second home at **Six Flags America**, this view shows the original side-friction mammoth in its entirety, photographed from the far turn. —Richard W. Munch

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SAFETY, MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

► Virtual reality makes Efteling dark ride accessible to disabled guests — page 41

Multi-attraction FEC marks a full year of operation

Bigfoot Fun Park weathers daily year-round operations

AT: Tim Baldwin

tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

BRANSON, Mo. — Like many cities in the middle part of the country, Branson can experience particularly warm days in the summer and vividly cold temperatures during the winter. Despite the ups and downs of a tourist-centric destination, **Bigfoot Fun Park** has completed a full year of operation and doesn't look to slow down. The park opened in the spring of 2017.

Emma Hamilton, co-owner and general manager, is excited about what the facility has to offer visitors. From conception to opening, the development of Bigfoot Fun Park (originally Bigfoot on the Strip) took about two and a half years.

"We tried to bring things that fit into Branson really well, but were also unique to the area," Hamilton told *Amusement Today*. "Our most visual anchor is our 200-foot tower. It is the tallest [structure] in Branson. Its official name is the Bigfoot Action Tower, and it has two exciting thrill rides on it — the Super Sling and Gravity Bomb. The absence of the shoulder restraint [on the drop tower] makes it unique compared to others in the country. You get beautiful views of Branson, and it is a true freefall."

Both rides on the tower were supplied by **Soaring Eagle** out of Logan, Utah. On the Super Sling, riders sit back to back and are shot in the air flipping end over end. It was the first to debut in the U.S.

"I experimented with the idea 15 years ago," said



Super Sling (top left) flings and flips riders seated back-to-back. Both attractions are manufactured by **Soaring Eagle**. **Gravity Bomb** (top right) drops riders 200 feet with no over-the-shoulder harness. The **Monkey Jump** is part of the **Yeti Fun Zone** (bottom left). **Alterface** supplied the **8Di Action Cinema** (bottom right), which features multiple film experiences.

COURTESY BIGFOOT

Stan Checketts, inventor and owner of **Soaring Eagle**. "We always wanted something where you were exposed with your arms and legs hanging out. We came up with the saddle with people seated back to back. I was really excited about it. It's really smooth."

"The tower is super efficient and super reliable," said Hamilton. "As the focal point of the property, we have it decked out with 35,000 LED lights and sound. Every night we have free light shows."

Bigfoot on the Strip features themed activities surrounding the mythic charac-

ter. Both an 18-hole miniature golf course and maze/activity climb sport an outdoors and wooded feel.

"We worked with a local landscaper who really brought it to life," said Hamilton. "He brought in a lot of Ozark native plants. We have a 250-foot long tunnel to transition to the back part of our golf course. We have hand-painted black light murals inside that go from the woodlands to the frozen tundra of the yeti. The back part of the course has a lot of whites and more of a Tibetan scene."

The FEC used **Cost**

of Wisconsin for the golf course, which is handicapped-accessible.

The Yeti Fun Zone features climbing towers, tree houses, a maze and a Monkey Jump finale into a big inflated cushion. **Amazen Mazes** was a supplier of the maze panels. The structures were built independently under the park's creative vision. Hamilton is confident that all age groups find challenging areas and playful activities.

"We're kind of an interesting hybrid," said Hamilton. "We have elements of an FEC and we have elements that

would be more traditionally seen in the theme park setting. In reference to the Monkey Jump, I think we are the only [place] that has one. We're the only place in the country that has the same mix that we do. We spent a lot of time conceptually what elements fit together."

If weather becomes problematic in terms of outdoor activities, the facility has a 4,000-square-foot arcade stocked with the latest games and an indoor shooting attraction from **Alterface**. Dubbed

► See **BIGFOOT**, page 40

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►BIGFOOT

Continued from page 39

the 8Di Action Cinema, the themed theater seats 13 players on moving “bikes.” The guests have a choice of multiple themed storylines — from cowboys to zombies to a custom-created Bigfoot story — they can enjoy while taking aim and going for top score. There is wind, sound, 3D and more. The arcade opened with all-new games, and Hamilton reported that they have already traded out for some newer ones for their second year of operation.

The park does not have set closing hours. Hamilton says the facility stays open “until the fun is done.” She does acknowledge that the shoulder season does have earlier closings, but if customers are on property, they ensure they have a good time.



General Manager Emma Hamilton sits in one of the whimsical-themed decorations. AT/TIM BALDWIN

Summer months see typical closings around 2 a.m. “We’ve sold a round of golf as late as 1:30 a.m.,” she joked.

With winter months changing the tourist season, Bigfoot Fun Park uses the off-season as prep time to keep

staffing, although the FEC is open daily. Staffing stays busy cleaning, working on redemption prizes and organization tasks while foot traffic is lighter. Branson continues to see a stream of visitors during the fall with the change of color and boasts a busy Christmas season. Even when kids aren’t the core market as in the summer, the facility still finds visitors over a wide age range. The property can continue ride operations until temperatures drop below freezing. Bigfoot on the Strip plans to keep year-round daily operations. “Just being realistic about what you have to offer the people you will be serving during the shoulder season should be your expectation,” said Hamilton.

New for the 2018 season, a new attraction, Bigfoot Discovery Expedition, utilizes five 4x4 Safari trucks for 90-minute excursions off property. Each vehicle transports 28 passengers to Bigfoot Farms in search of Bigfoot. Guests are loaded at the main park and taken 15 minutes north of town to a 430-acre farmland. “The cool thing is that within minutes of leaving the property you feel like you are in the middle of nowhere,” said Hamilton. “You spend about an hour driving through the Ozark scenery; it’s beautiful.”

Once onsite, guests interact with Scottish Highland Cattle. The hairy, long-horned cattle are docile and can be fed from the trucks. It is where Bigfoot “sightings” are most apt to happen.

The facility offers various packages. Hamilton believes the average length of stay to Bigfoot Fun Park is three and a half to four hours.

•bigfootfunpark.com

AIMS International Safety Award nominations deadline is July 9

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The AIMS International Safety Award is presented annually to an individual or organization demonstrating leadership, innovation and foresight in improving safety in the amusement industry.



With safety as the industry’s number-one concern for guests and employees worldwide, efforts in improving safety are shown in many forms, including the design and implementation of new products and technology, the development of safety education programs and training, and by exemplary leadership in influencing others to promote innovation and best practices in the area of safety.

Nominations for the 2018 AIMS Safety Award can be submitted by individuals working within the amusement industry. The winner will be selected by a vote of AIMS International’s board of directors, and the award will be presented during *Amusement Today’s* presentation of the Golden Ticket Awards at Silver Dollar City in Branson, Mo., on Saturday, Sept. 8.

The deadline for nominations is Friday, July 6. Information on the AIMS Safety Award and official nomination forms can be found on the AIMS website at aimsintl.org/aa-safetyaward.asp. Requests

for forms also can be sent to AIMS at info@aimsintl.org.

The AIMS International Safety Award was created in 2016 and is presented annually during the Golden Ticket Awards. The inaugural award was presented to **Harold Hudson**, a former longtime engineering executive with **Six Flags Entertainment Corp.** and a founding member of **ASTM F24 Standards Committee**, at the 2016 Golden Ticket Awards ceremony at **Cedar Point**, in Sandusky, Ohio. In 2017, the award was presented to **Har Kupers** of **Vekoma Rides** during the ceremony at **Lake Compounce** in Bristol, Conn.

AIMS International is a non-profit 501(c)(6) association dedicated to improving amusement industry safety through leadership in education. AIMS International provides training classes and certification programs for ride inspectors, operations, aquatics and maintenance personnel through the annual **AIMS Safety Seminar** and at other venues throughout the year. The 2019 AIMS Safety Seminar will be held in Galveston, Texas, Jan. 13-18, 2019.

AIMS also serves to inform its members on legislative and other issues relating to the amusement industry. For more information about the award and about AIMS, and for other AIMS-related news, please visit the website below and see page 45 of this issue.

•aimsintl.org

Jim Seay (left) and Karen Oertley (right) present the 2017 AIMS International Safety Award to Har Kupers during the 2017 Golden Ticket Awards.

AT/DAN FEICHT



Vermont passes new ride inspection regulation law referencing ASTM

MONPELIER, Vt. — On May 29, Vermont Gov. **Phil Scott** signed bill H.780 into law. Among other industry-related regulations, it requires annual inspection of both fixed and mobile rides operating in the state.

The new law references ASTM standards, making Vermont the sixth New England state to adopt them.

For more information about the regulations, which are scheduled to take effect July 1, 2019, please review the bill’s full text at the website below.

•legislature.vermont.gov

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Efteling utilizes VR to make dark ride accessible to disabled

Mix of technologies preserves valuable shared experience

AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

K A A T S H E U V E L , Netherlands — Efteling theme park, located in the south of Holland, has launched a virtual reality (VR) version of one of its most popular attractions, a fantasy dark ride called Droomvlucht. The experience is designed specifically for disabled guests.

For technical reasons, Droomvlucht was the only large attraction at Efteling that could not be enjoyed safely by guests with physical limitations. The virtual incarnation of the ride, which is set in an enchanted forest filled with magical flora, fauna and inhabitants, places them comfortably within the experience adjacent to the actual attraction through the use of VR and other technologies.

The replication also

works to preserve the valuable shared-experience nature of a traditional theme park attraction. Virtual Droomvlucht connects disabled visitors with their friends on the ride through headphones and microphones so that they may see, feel and communicate the same sensations.

The combination of VR, multisensory effects and wireless audio technologies, and the experience it delivers to disabled guests, represents a breakthrough solution that is unique in the industry.

"Until now, VR has often been used for individual experiences," said **Fons Jurgens**, park president and CEO. "With the use of other techniques such as audio equipment, we have created a group experience that completely stands in line with Efteling and the theme park's values."

Visitor reaction has been very favorable.

Annemarie Verbunt, a regular Efteling guest, has a disability that made it impossible for her to experience



Specially trained park employees outfit guests for Virtual Droomvlucht, a VR version of the popular dark ride that allows disabled visitors to share the experience with their family and friends who have boarded the attraction wearing wireless audio equipment.

COURTESY EFTELING

Droomvlucht. Her response to the VR version of the attraction was enthusiastic.

"I've been looking forward to the day that I could experience Droomvlucht for 25 years," Verbunt said. "Virtual Droomvlucht really is a complete sensory experience, thanks to the smell and wind effects and also the contact with my friends who are on the gondola."

"I am so happy to be able to experience this. What a beautiful attraction!"

•efteling.com



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U.S. increases H-2B temporary visa availability by 15,000

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In late May, U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security **Kirstjen M. Nielsen** announced that an additional 15,000 H-2B temporary nonagricultural worker visas will be available for Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18) to assist American businesses.

Secretary Nielsen determined there are not sufficient, qualified, U.S. workers available to perform temporary non-agriculture labor to satisfy the needs of businesses in FY18. This allocation is in addition to the 66,000 visas already issued this year.

Secretary Nielsen made the decision after consulting with Secretary of Labor **Alexander Acosta**, members of Congress and business owners.

"The limitations on H-2B visas were originally meant to protect American workers, but when we enter a situation where the program unintentionally harms American

businesses it needs to be reformed," Secretary Nielsen said. "I call on Congress to pass much needed reforms of the program and to expressly set the number of H-2B visas in statute."

The H-2B temporary non-agricultural worker program was designed to serve U.S. businesses unable to find a sufficient number of qualified U.S. workers to perform non-agricultural work of a temporary nature. Congress set the annual H-2B visa cap at 66,000. A maximum of 33,000 H-2B visas are available during the first half of the fiscal year, and the remainder, including any unused H-2B visas from the first half of that fiscal year, is available starting April 1 through Sept. 30.

On Feb. 27, U.S. **Citizenship and Immigration Services** determined that it had received sufficient H-2B petitions to meet the full FY 2018 statutory cap of 66,000.

In the FY 2018 Omnibus, Congress delegated its authority to the Secretary to increase the number of temporary nonagricultural worker visas available to U.S. employers through Sept. 30. In the intervening time since enactment of the FY 2018 Omnibus, the Secretary consulted with the Secretary of Labor on the issue and developed this rule.

Eligible petitioners for H-2B visas can file Form I-129, Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker. Eligible petitioners must submit a supplemental attestation on Form ETA 9142-B-CAA-2 with their petition.

Details on eligibility and filing requirements were to be available on the **Increase in H-2B Nonimmigrant Visas for FY 2018** webpage, which is to be published at the link below when the final temporary rule is posted for public inspection.

•uscis.gov

E.U. General Data Protection Regulation goes into effect

EUROPEAN UNION — The new E.U. **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** was activated on May 25. The regulation is intended to standardize and strengthen data protection rights for citizens of the 28 countries that comprise the European Union.

GDPR applies to all companies, regardless of size, that process personal data with the help of computers and smartphones. It also applies to unions and associations, as they use membership lists, contribution accounts and mailing lists to process personal data.

Some key regulation points:

- You must erase a person's stored data immediately if he or she so wishes, unless it is against legal retention requirements.

- You must share with the person whose data you have stored where and for what purpose you are saving the data and indicate the date on which you use the data. It is therefore advisable to prepare data documentation.

- The data must be up to date and correct in terms of content and factual accuracy. The person whose data you have stored has a right to have their data updated immediately if outdated.

- You may only collect and process as much data as you actually need, and only store it for the period in which you need the data: For example, if a member leaves your association, you must delete his or her data.

- You may only process the data for the purpose for which you collected it. As an



association, you may, for example, process the contact data of the members to inform them about the news of the association, send them bills or invite them to general meetings. The processing of this data is then earmarked. For further purposes, you may process personal data only with the (written) consent of the person concerned.

Companies and associations must be able to demonstrate compliance with all data protection principles at the request of the GDPR supervisory authority. In addition, any person from whom the company or association processes data may request access to the stored data.

There are other technical and organizational measures that must be undertaken or considered, and particularly for website administrators and the language in their privacy policies, GDPR's impact may extend well beyond the E.U.'s borders. For more information, visit the website below.

•europa.eu

IAFE holds 50th annual Management Conference in Minnesota; 122 attend

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. — The International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE) held its 50th annual IAFE Management Conference at the Hilton Minneapolis April 7-10.

Hosted by the Minnesota State Fair, the event was attended by 122 fair leaders from across the industry. The theme: "Impressions That Last."

Keynote speaker Shawn Rhodes of Shoshin Consulting delivered a presentation titled "Changing the Guard: Preparing for Successful Leadership Transition." Rhodes, a war correspondent commissioned by the U.S. government to study high-performing teams, shared what he learned about how the most successful organizations prepare for transitioning their senior leaders and getting incoming leaders up to speed.

Dr. Logan Spector, based at the University of Minnesota and founder of the school's Driven to Discover Research Facility on the state fairgrounds, shared his work as an epidemiologist. Using the 2017 edition of the fair as a research platform, Spector conducted 36 different health-related and other studies involving some 18,000 fair attendees of all ages.

A top-line overview of what it takes to host the Super Bowl was presented by Maureen Bausch, CEO of the Super Bowl LII Host Committee. Breakout sessions were conducted by host committee staffers on topics such as social media, security and volunteers.



The conference also provided networking and focused topic discussions along with the awarding of Certified Fair Executive (CFE) status to eight individuals.

The CFE status recipients were Kelly Collins of the State Fair of West Virginia, Lewisburg; Matthew Daly of

the South Florida Fair, West Palm Beach; Elena Hovagimian of the Eastern States Exposition (The Big E), West Springfield, Mass.; Lauri King of the Big Fresno Fair, Calif.; Lori Marshall of the Grand National Livestock Exposition, Horse Show and Rodeo, Daly City, Calif.; Miranda Muir of the Kissimmee Valley Livestock Show and Osceola County Fair, Fla.; Aaron Owen of the Ozark Empire Fair, Springfield, Mo.; and Daryl Real of the State Fair of Texas, Dallas.

—B. Derek Shaw

JW Winco offers zinc die-cast flat adjustable tension levers



New Berlin, Wisc.-based JW Winco, Inc., a leading supplier of standard industrial machine components, now offers GN 126 and GN 126.1 zinc die-cast flat adjustable tension levers (shown) in steel and stainless steel, with a tapped or plain-bore insert or threaded stud. The RoHS (Restriction of Hazardous Substances Directive)-compliant flat adjustable levers are characterized by their low height. Designed for whenever swiveling in a confined space is required or the lever is to be clamped in a particular position, the insert or threaded stud is moveably attached to the handle with serrations. Pulling the lever disengages the serrations, allowing it to be swiveled to the desired clamping position; on "releasing" the handle, the serrations re-engage automatically via a spring.

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LaserTag360 addresses needs of laser tag operations

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. — After receiving so many of the same questions over and over again from their clients, management of **Creative Works**, a company that designs laser tag arenas as well as other attractions, decided to create and present an educational event as an aid to a successful and efficient laser tag attraction.

Called **LaserTag360** and first presented in 2011, Creative Works has presented this event three times every year since. The events are traditionally held in February, May and August, all in Indianapolis, where Creative Works is based. The next LaserTag360 is set for Aug. 6-8.

"For the last year and a half, we have sold out of the between 45 and 50 available spaces for each event,"



said **Danny Gruening**, vice president of marketing. "The event has evolved quite a bit over the years. Our team provides the bulk of what attendees learn, but we also include professionals from other facets of the industry such as food and beverage, group sales and marketing."

Gruening attributed the increased attendance to the company's savviness in marketing the event as well as to a general increase of interest in laser tag.



Creative Works, Indianapolis, Ind., which designs laser tag arenas among other attractions, began presenting LaserTag360 in 2011 as an educational tool for laser tag facility operators. The company presents three a year in Indianapolis with the next one coming up Aug. 6-8. The educational event includes classroom instruction and hands-on sessions. COURTESY CREATIVE WORKS

Some of the specific topics discussed during the event, which lasts two and a half days, include real estate negotiations; site design; business plan keys; funding qualifications; attraction mix; marketing methods and mediums; guest management; maintenance checklists; social marketing insights; operational guidelines; leadership skills; staff training and website keys and development.

Laser tag arenas were the first products built by Creative Works. They are still constructing them today. But over the years, the company has added more to their line of attractions, such as indoor black light miniature golf, escape rooms and virtual reality attractions.

"Our company does all the

theming and building of the interior of the attraction," Gruening said. "While the exterior walls of the attraction are being constructed and electrical is being put in, we are in our factory fabricating all the inside of the arena that fit into that black box."

Gruening said they do recommend to all their clients that they attend LaserTag360.

"We have found that people get more out of this two and a half days than they do from months of research," he said. "The completion of our program gives attendees 16 credit hours toward any **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions** certification."

LaserTag360 attendances are split about 50/50 between

existing laser tag operators and new operators. The vast majority of attendees are associated with family entertainment centers, whether the venue is a trampoline facility, a bowling alley or any other type of combination center.

A trend Gruening and Creative Works management has been seeing is the increase among their clients looking for the wow effect.

"The level of theming has increased significantly over the last five to seven years, such as how many props, the size of murals, just everything," Gruening said. "Millennials have really upped this as they are a group that value experience."

•thewoweffect.com
•lasertag360.com

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Early registration opens in July!

The 2019 AIMS Safety Seminar will be held Jan. 13-18 in Galveston, Texas, at the **Galveston Island Convention Center** at the **San Luis Resort**. AIMS has secured a special discounted hotel rate for attendees, \$115 per night at the adjacent **Galveston Hilton**. As those who attended the 2018 seminar know, the setting is perfect for the AIMS Safety Seminar, with all classes being held in one central area, a great hotel in the beautiful San Luis Resort, plenty of nearby places to eat and shop, plus the added attraction of **Galveston's Pleasure Pier** and **Schlitterbahn Waterpark** nearby.

The seminar is a must attend for both operators and manufacturers and suppliers who need to stay abreast on the latest trends and topics surrounding the industry's #1 priority worldwide — SAFETY.

Scholarships are available!

Thanks to the generosity of two great industry associations, scholarships to the AIMS Safety Seminar are available to qualified individuals.

IAAPA (International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions) provides five scholarships to the AIMS Safety Seminar in memory of **Alan Ramsay** who was an avid industry supporter and safety advocate. Applications can be found on the AIMS website at www.aimsintl.org.

OABA (Outdoor Amusement Business Association) offers four scholarships to the AIMS Safety Seminar for OABA members who are first-time Safety Seminar attendees. One of these scholarships is dedicated in memory of **June Hardin**, owner of **Wapello Fabrications**, who strived for quality, safety and ASTM standards throughout her career. OABA members can contact oaba@oaba.org for more information and AIMS scholarship applications.

All AIMS Safety Seminar scholarships cover the \$595 tuition fee, which includes class materials, an opening reception, all lunches and breaks, and 40 hours of continuing education credit. Additional fees for testing and certification and travel expenses are not included.

AIMS International news

In accord with AIMS mission to improve amusement industry safety through leadership in education, AIMS recently partnered with **ACOLAP** (Asociación Colombiana de Atracciones y Parques de Diversiones) to offer a 16-hour AIMS on the Road program on the Fundamentals of Safety, Operations, Maintenance, and Inspection. Under the direction of AIMS's **Franceen Gonzales** and **Tim Viox** with assistance from **Rick Achard**, and local instructor **Andrés Vanegas** of **Carruseles** working on behalf of ACOLAP, the two-

day seminar was held in Bogota, Colombia, on May 21-22 prior to ACOLAP's annual event. In addition to Franceen and Tim, local instructors included Andres Vanegas of Carruseles, **Oscar Rodriguez** from Mundo Aventura, **Sebastian Jaramillo** and individuals from Salitre Magico. The seminar was a great success with registration at capacity.

Upcoming events

The AIMS International Annual Board Meeting will be held on Sept. 6, prior to the **2018 Golden Ticket Awards**, presented by *Amusement Today*, at **Silver Dollar City**. We encourage and appreciate input on what AIMS can do to support our mission to improve amusement industry safety through leadership in education. Names of all AIMS board of directors can be found on our website.

The AIMS International Safety Award will be presented during the Golden Ticket Awards on Sept. 8, aboard the *Showboat Branson Belle*. The award will be presented to an individual or organization that demonstrates leadership, innovation and foresight in improving safety in the amusement industry.

From all of us at AIMS, enjoy your summer and stay SAFE!

Space for this AIMS page is provided courtesy of *Amusement Today* as a corporate partner of AIMS Intl. Content is provided by AT & AIMS.

SAVE THESE DATES!

AIMS SAFETY SEMINAR

& Certification Program

January 13-18, 2019

in Galveston, Texas

Galveston Convention Center

Accommodations at Hilton Galveston & San Luis Resort

Early registration begins in July!



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Morey's Piers hosts rope-rescue training

WILDWOOD, N.J. — On May 9-10, members of the **Morey's Piers** maintenance team, along with the **Cape May County RUST Team** (Regional Urban Search Team) and trainers from **Safety & Survival Training, LLC**, conducted rope-rescue simulations from elevated rides on **Mariner's Pier** at Schellenger Ave. and the Boardwalk.

Among the rides used in the training was the **Sea Serpent**, a 1984 **Vekoma** boomerang coaster.

Maggie Warner, spokeswoman for Morey's Piers, told *Amusement Today* that it is "very beneficial" for the seaside amusement park company to be involved in such training.

"Safety is our number-one priority at Morey's Piers, and we want to be proactive when it comes to safety," Warner said. "It is important to have a great working relationship with the first responders in our community, because in the event of an emergency at our park, we will be relying on them for assistance. We want to know that they've had the proper training and are well prepared."

The hands-on, 16-hour training — led by Chief **Daniel Spiegel** of the **Wildwood Fire Dept.** (RUST team leader) and **Geoff Rogers**, COO of Morey's Piers — provided



Members of the Morey's Piers maintenance team, the Cape May County Regional Urban Search Team and trainers from Safety & Survival Training, LLC, gathered at the Sea Serpent roller coaster on Mariners Pier in Wildwood, N.J., on May 9 for rope-rescue simulations. A dummy was lowered from the ride's structure as part of the exercise.

COURTESY MOREY'S PIERS

skill enhancement and experience to an established team of rescue technicians in an environment reflecting the reality of potential emergencies. Those attending the training had the opportunity to work together, ask questions and



practice real-life rescue techniques in real time.

The two-day training was just one of many such events in which associates of Morey's Piers participate throughout the year.

—Dean Lamanna

Bissell products keep FEC floors clean, dry, safe



Bissell BigGreen Commercial products are designed for heavy-duty cleanup jobs in family entertainment centers, arcades, theme parks, parking lots and other public places. At Amusement Expo International 2018 in Las Vegas earlier this year, Tony Perry, a Bissell sales representative, demonstrated the strength of the company's battery-operated indoor-outdoor Power Sweeper, which can pick up larger and wet debris including cans and plastic bottles. Also noteworthy is Bissell's fan-equipped, cordless Hurricane floor dryer, which doubles as a safety cone while drying an area up to 15 feet in diameter. For more information, visit bissellcommercial.com. AT/DEAN LAMANNA, GARY SLADE

CALENDAR

2018

PAPA Summer Meeting, July 17-18
Dutch Wonderland, Lancaster, Pa.
www.paamusementparks.com

NEAAPA 105th Anniversary Summer Meeting, July 24
Funtown Splashtown USA, Saco, Maine
www.neaapa.com or email: secretary@neaapa.com

Euro Attractions Expo, Sept. 23-27
Conference: Sept. 23-27 • Trade Show: Sept. 25-27
Amsterdam, Netherlands • www.iaapa.org

International Association of Trampoline Parks 6th Annual Conference & Trade Show
Marriott Harbor Beach Resort & Spa
Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. • www.indoortrampolineparks.org

IAAPA Operators Fourm 2018, Oct. 2-4
Six Flags The Great Escape & Splashwater Kingdom
Lake George, N.Y.
Contact: Liderby Gladden, Manager Global Education IAAPA
www.iaapa.org or email: lgadden@iaapa.org

World Waterpark Assn.
Oct. 23-26 • Trade Show: Oct. 24 & 25
Las Vegas, Nev. • (913) 599-0300 • www.waterparks.org

Parks and Carnivals Education (PACE) Amusement Ride Safety Seminar
Oct. 29-Nov. 1, York, Pa.
(Classroom training at Wyndham Garden York;
hands-on training at Majestic Midways
Winter Quarters, Dover, Pa.)
www.paceseminar.com

Pennsylvania Amusement Ride Safety Seminar
Nov. 6-8, Red Lion Hotel, Harrisburg, Pa.
Joe Filoramo, (717) 215-4316 • Phil Slaggert, (561) 758-3266
www.paridesafety.com

IAAPA Attractions Expo, Nov. 12-16
Conference: Nov. 12-16 • Trade Show: Nov. 13-16
Orlando, Fla. • (703) 836-4800 • www.iaapa.org

IAFE Annual Convention
Nov. 25-28 • San Antonio, Texas
(417) 862-5771 • iafeconvention.com

2019

AIMS International 2019 Safety Seminar
Jan. 13-18, 2019
San Luis Resort and Hilton Hotel
(Classes at Galveston Convention Center)
Galveston, Texas • (714) 425-5747 • www.aimsintl.org

NAARSO 2019 Safety Fourm
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Kings Plantation Hilton, Myrtle Beach
Hands-on ride training at Broadway at the Beach
(813) 661-2779 • email: naarsoinfo@aol.com
www.naarso.com

IISF Trade Show
Feb. 5-8, 2019 • Riverview, Fla. • (813) 677-9377
www.gibtownshowmensclub.com

IRT/iROC Operations Safety Training School
Feb. 5-8, 2019 • Foley, Ala., The Park at OWA
(615) 545-8109 • cindee@ridetraining.com
Hands-on ride operations training at The Park at OWA

AAMA/AMOA Amusement Expo 2019
Conference: March 26, 2019 • Trade Show: March 27 & 28
Las Vegas Convention Center, (Hall TBA)
Las Vegas, Nev. • (708) 226-1300
www.amusementexpo.org

Have a Calendar listing you want to share?
Email it to: editorial@amusementtoday.com

THIS JUST IN**Rethink Leisure to plan Nickelodeon park in China**

BURBANK, Calif. — Design agency **Rethink Leisure & Entertainment, LLC**, an international subsidiary of Dubai-based **Al Ahli Holding Group**, has been awarded the design and master planning contract for China-based **Elite Global Group, Ltd.'s** Nickelodeon theme park, a major part of the **Foshan Cultural and Ecological Coastal Park**.

Rethink will provide a full suite of design services for the \$1.85 billion project, including master planning, park design, attraction development and IP selection in coordination with Elite Global Group and Nickelodeon. Rethink also will work closely with its partners on an extensive and immersive Nickelodeon experience featuring popular television characters such as **SpongeBob SquarePants**, **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles**, **Dora the Explorer** and more.

The 250-acre Nickelodeon-themed project will be a central feature of the 750-acre Foshan Cultural and Ecological Coastal Park, a master-planned environment encompassing cultural, tourism, sports and science / technology components. Ground-breaking took place last January; completion of the greater development is anticipated between 2020 and 2021.

• rethinkle.com

L.A.'s Magic Castles, China's Novaex Group partner

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — **Magic Castles, Inc. (MCI)**, and China-based **Novaex Group** have partnered to create a technically cutting-edge magic experience for Chinese audiences, blending the mystery of the iconic Hollywood institution **The Magic Castle** with the rich tradition of magic in China.

MCI has granted Novaex the exclusive license to use the IP of The Magic Castle in themed entertainment projects, such as indoor and outdoor entertainment centers, hotels and restaurants in the territory of Greater China (including mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan).

The deal marks the first time ever MCI has licensed its brand internationally, with the first Magic Castle-themed project being developed for Novaex's offline internet community brand "The Circle," which integrates a five-star hotel resort, recreation, catering, natural scenery, luxury shopping and immersive entertainment deploying a full range of smart technology (including VR, augmented reality, mixed reality, 3D and hologram projection).

• magiccastle.com

Soar with the future of flight at Space Center Houston

Using motion-sensing technology to manipulate their avatars, visitors at Space Center Houston in Texas can transform their bodies into virtual birds. The informative, on-the-fly fun is part of new summer exhibit called "Above and Beyond," running through Sept. 9. Presented by Boeing and made possible locally by Coca-Cola, the exhibit explores the advances in aviation and aerospace from the first powered flights to the latest innovations on Earth and in space. Learn more about Space Center Houston and its 400-plus edutainment-angled things to experience at spacecenter.org.

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- Ability to create and maintain accurate records of work performed.
- Ability to work nights, weekends and holiday periods.
- Ability to pass drug screening.

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- Identify and order required parts/materials in a timely manner to complete maintenance tasks.
- Monitor and direct ride maintenance activities (installation, repair, and inspection).
- Ensure compliance with applicable codes, standards, requirements and best practices.
- Manage staff in a professional, respectful and effective manner. Evaluate staff and issue correctives as necessary.
- Recruit, interview, hire, and train staff per company policies
- Maintain accurate, organized, and up-to date maintenance records.
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