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Electric C.P. Huntington Train from Chance Rides a green game changer for Landry's Downtown Aquarium

AT: Pam Sherborne psherborne@amusementtoday.com

HOUSTON, Texas — A new C.P. Huntington Train that was unveiled April 21 at **Landry's Downtown Aquarium** is powering its way into the history books

The landmark 400th train built by **Chance Rides** is the very first to "go green" — with an engine that runs on lithium-ion batteries. The train also represents the application of a new technology that allows for micro-cycling, which not only is a first for Chance but for Clearwater, Fla.-based **Lithionics Battery**, maker of the batteries used in the attraction.

The green technology's use in the C.P. Huntington Train — and its operational and promotional benefits — has Landry's officials very excited. The electric train is quieter and produces less emissions.

"It completely changes our whole operation," said **Steve Howe**, aquarium general manager. "The train ride is a guided tour and it has made the experience much more pleasant."

The public response, he added, has been gratifying.

"We have had so many positive comments. People love that we are going green."

The new Electric C.P. Huntington Train replaces a gasoline-powered model that was installed when the aquarium opened in 2003. From an operational / budgeting perspective, Howe acknowledged that the aquarium will see savings in maintenance and gasoline costs.

The train travels on a half-mile track at five mph, providing a five-minute ride. There is a four-percent incline that takes the train into a tunnel through the shark tank and a four percent decline when exiting the tunnel.

When entering the station, the locomotive stops at the same place on the tracks every cycle. The "parking spot" is actually a



The 400th C.P. Huntington Train built by Chance Rides replaces the gasoline-powered engine with an electric one that runs on lithium-ion batteries. The train's color reflects its newfound environmental friendliness.

COURTESY LANDRY'S DOWNTOWN AQUARIUM

charging station where the train recharges for about three to four minutes.

"This recharging at every cycle can keep the train running all day," said **Dick Chance** of Chance Rides, adding that the train recharges to 100 percent battery capacity overnight.

According to Chance, the speed of this electric train model can be increased to about 10 mph, depending on its location and application.

Roger Berry, an amusement industry veteran and the sales representative for

▶ See LANDRY'S, page 6

SeaWorld's Electric Eel gives San Diego a jolt



Electric Eel slithers through its climactic loop high above the park. AT/DEAN LAMANNA

AT: Dean Lamanna dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

SAN DIEGO, Calif. — **SeaWorld San Diego** has long enjoyed a high profile on the shores of Mission Bay.

Since May 10, the park has added "high voltage."

Springing into action two days ahead of its originally scheduled debut, Electric Eel has become the newest star on the theme park's skyline. The 15-story-high, triple-launch steel roller coaster

▶ See SEAWORLD, page 10

Merlin's Mayhem opens at Dutch Wonderland

AT: B. Derek Shaw bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

LANCASTER, Pa. — A new attraction at **Dutch Wonderland**, an amusement park that describes itself as "A Kingdom for Kids," is providing fun for the whole family.

Known for offering pint-size thrills appealing to younger children since its opening in 1963, the 48-acre park now is aiming higher — both in visitor age and ride profile — with the debut of Merlin's Mayhem, a suspended roller coaster from **S&S Worldwide, Inc.**, of Logan, Utah.

The custom-designed coaster occupies a relatively small area near the center of the **Palace Entertainment**-owned property, where its layout weaves between



the Sky Ride and Wonderland Special train ride. The location previously was the site of the Sunoco Turnpike car ride, which has been moved to another section of the park.

The mid-course helix of Merlin's Mayhem, the first of two along the ride's course, creates an impression as soon as guests step through the park's gates.

In the medieval castle-

▶ See MAYHEM, page 8

IEWSPAPER

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AMUSEMENT VIEWS

EDITORIAL: Tim Baldwin, tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

A legacy of touching lives



The amusement industry has its legends. Many of these people are notable for creating firsts or pushing boundaries or successfully driving business in new directions. The accolades put them front

Baldwin

Others aren't so public.

The world has lost an individual who rarely stepped into the spotlight. Henri Landwirth was a man so full of character and compassion that it would be hard to find another human being with an equal amount of heart. Landwirth passed away on April 16 (see obituary, page 5).

To read his 1996 biography, Gift of Life, one couldn't blame him if he had become bitter, disenchanted with the cruelty of the world. Born into a Jewish family, Landwirth and his twin sister were arrested in their teens and became prisoners of World War II. The description of the horrors inflicted upon him at Auschwitz are challenging to read but tell the full story of the man.

Barely escaping these tortures with his life, Landwirth felt he had received a gift, a miracle. In time he dedicated his energies and efforts to making the world a better place.

After coming to the U.S., Landwirth found success as a hotelier. When he observed that families with terminally ill children were not able to take memorable vacations together, a spark ignited. Offering free hotel stays to such families became commonplace with Landwirth, but his dream only grew bigger — becoming established in 1989 as the Kissimmee, Fla.-based organization Give Kids the World.

Today, the non-profit Give Kids the World Village resort contains 168 villas on 84 acres. Families with terminally ill children can enjoy a vacation together free of charge — a godsend to those with mounting medical bills.

Becoming a "legend" is a lofty, though not always intentional, goal for anyone. Landwirth is certainly one of this category's more atypical individuals. When you heard the name, you vaguely knew what he had accomplished but most likely never learned the full story. His legacy was built with heart and compassion, and by touching lives.

A visit to Give Kids the World Village is nothing short of inspiring. And so, in every way, was Landwirth.

FLINT'S VIEW: Bubba Flint



INDUSTRY OPINION: Tim Baldwin, tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

Inspiring employees

During a recent visit with two ride manufacturers — Soaring Eagle and S&S Worldwide — in Logan, Utah, I was impressed to see how the companies value their employees.

At Soaring Eagle, proprietor Stan Checketts has a sign on the wall in the conference room. $l\bar{t}$ says, in bold letters, "YES IF."

In conversation with Checketts, he explained that often people have good ideas, and naysayers are quick to say "No" or "We can't do that" — diffusing those ideas. Checketts encourages people to think beyond excuses and reasons to

This philosophy would be welcome in any workplace. I, for one, would love to see similar signs go up in parks around the globe to encourage creativity and good ideas in the industry.

Less than a mile away from Soaring Eagle, S&S Worldwide recently opened a new facility after years of development. A primary aim of its planning was to create an efficient space that fosters staff collaboration.

Workspaces, and even break areas and com-

mon areas, were specifically designed for employee comfort and inspiration through brighter colors, plenty of windows and additional natural light. Management was committed to making employees feel like they were at a special place where they contributed to making things happen.

It was inspiring to witness.

I was reminded of Amusement Today's 2013 Golden Ticket Awards. Host park Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk toured attendees through its seasonal staff facilities. The bright colors and open areas made for a welcoming and comfortable — even "fun" — place to work.

It was evident that Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk wanted each one of its seasonal employees to know he or she mattered. I remember several other industry professionals alongside me on the tour saying they were impressed.

There are easy takeaways from the examples set by Soaring Eagle, S&S and Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk. We can ask ourselves, What are we doing to make staff say, "Wow. I'm glad I work here." Are we making them feel valued?

Might I say, "Yes, if..."

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



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2MINUTE DRILL



AT: Janice Witherow

Richard Zimmerman, Cedar Fair Entertainment Company

For someone who has been in the amusement industry for more than 30 years, **Richard Zimmerman** still gets just as excited about the little things as he does the big things. Richard assumed the position of president and CEO of **Cedar Fair Entertainment Company** in January and has been off and running in his new role. He is known for his dedication and passion, and as someone his team rallies around. In his "downtime" he enjoys spending time with his family, traveling and watching college basketball.

Title: President and CEO

Number of years in the industry: 31

Best thing about the industry

Without a doubt, the people we work closely with on a daily basis...outstanding individuals across the board in all corners of the industry — dedicated, passionate, and enthusiastic.

Favorite amusement ride: Roller coasters

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

Teaching at a university somewhere.

Biggest challenge facing our industry

Time poverty. Families today are overscheduled and stressed. We are the antidote to overscheduling for families of all ages.

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

Every year is different, a new season with unique challenges and opportunities.

The last time I ate fast food was ... Last week, and it was Chick-Fil-A.

My all-time best vacation was ...

Scotland with my wife Carolyn and our three adult children. Breathtaking scenery, surprisingly delicious food and lots of refreshing beverages at the pub!

Favorite summertime drink:

A cold Corona with a lime!

On a typical Sunday morning, you can find me ... Drinking coffee on my deck and reading the Sunday papers.

The one thing I always seem to put off is ... Cleaning out my garage.

My "must-see" television show is ... Georgetown Hoyas basketball games. But mostly almost any college basketball game.

I would best describe my office as ... Sparsely furnished but comfortable.



Richard Zimmerman assumed the role of president & CEO of Cedar Fair in January. COURTESY CEDAR FAIR

If I was to join the circus, I would handsdown be a ... Ringmaster.

If I could be any athlete, I would be ...

A professional golfer. You get to travel to beautiful places and hit a golf ball all day long.

The most adventurous thing I have done lately is ...

Hiked the Caminito del Rey in Spain.

Ultimate movie soundtrack:

The Godfather

Do you: stick to your plans or "wing it"? Success stems from better planning but

in our business we need to call audibles frequently as each season unfolds.

The funniest person I know is ...

Brian Witherow, our CFO. He is witty and always keeps things loose.

The celebrity I would most like to have dinner with is ...

Patrick Ewing...Being a Georgetown alumni, it was an easy choice.

Favorite cartoon character as a kid ... Scooby Doo.

Best holiday tradition

Christmas vacations with my family. We are always someplace different — on the ski slopes, a beach or a cruise ship — over the holidays.

The hobby I would like to spend more time doing is ... Hiking in the mountains.

Pick one: cake, pie or ice cream Cherry Pie, nothing else is even close.

OBITUARIES

Philanthropist Henri Landwirth, founder of Give Kids the World, passes at 91

ORLANDO, Fla. — Henri Landwirth, founder of Give Kids the World Village, a wonderland for critically ill children in Kissimmee, Fla., passed away April 16 in Ponte Vedra, Fla., from natural causes. He was 91.

Born in Antwerp, Belgium, in 1927 to Fanny and Max Landwirth, Landwirth had a rags-to-riches life story. He survived five years in concentration camps during World War II, reunited with his twin sister after the war, and then immigrated to the U.S. — with only \$20 in



Landwirth

his pocket, a fifth-grade education and speaking little English.

From that beginning, Landwirth went on to become a successful hotelier in Orlando, Fla. His passion and mission for giving back emerged through numerous non-profit organizations he created during his lifetime. In addition to founding Give Kids the World in 1989, he also founded the Mercury 7 Foundation, Dignity U Wear and the Fanny Landwirth Foundation.

At Give Kids the World Village, critically ill kids and their families enjoy week-long, all-expenses-paid fantasy vacations. Landwirth's former wife, Pamela, is president and CEO of the organization.

Landwirth was recognized with many honors. He was named one of the 12 Most Caring Individuals in America by the Caring Institute in 1988 and the *Orlando Sentinel's* Floridian of the Year in 1994. He also won the Ellis Island Medal of Honor Award in 2003 and the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Humanitarian Award in 2004.

Landwirth's sister, Margot Glazer, preceded him in death. He is survived by his three children, Gary Landwirth, Greg Landwirth and Lisa Landwirth Ullmann; four grandchildren and a great grandson.

A private family funeral service was held at Temple Israel Cemetery near Orlando. A celebration of his life was held April 28 at the Give Kids the World Village.

Joe Zumsteg dies at 67; was longtime Rhode Island Novelty sales representative

WEST SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — Joe Zumsteg, 67, passed away April 19 at his home in Western Springs, Ill., after a long battle with brain cancer.

A longtime sales representative for Rhode Island Novelty and Classic Toy, Zumsteg was known for his passion for the carnival and amusement industries. His first exposure to the business of fun occurred while his father worked for Acme Premium Supply Toy Company. Zumsteg joined his dad at the company while attending high school.



Zumsteg

From there, Zumsteg worked at Brechner Company and later at U.S. Toy Company. He eventually found his way to Rhode Island Novelty and Classic Toy, where he remained.

The Showmen's League of America (SLA) has established a memorial scholarship in his name. The SLA Memorial Scholarship is a \$4,000 minimum fund or a \$1,000 a year commitment for four years.

More information on the scholarship can be obtained by contacting the SLA's Chicago office at 1023 W. Fulton Market, Chicago, Ill, 60607, (312) 733-9533.

MAILBAG

To the Editor:

I wanted to let you know I am really excited to see future issues of *Amusement Today* with the new layout. As I was reading my May edition, I couldn't help but think how the new layout flowed nicely with the rearrangement, placement of pictures and advertisements.

I also think it's great that a section of the newspaper now discusses "Safety, Maintenance & Operations."

All the best,

Mike Funyak, Assistant Director of Operations DelGrosso's Park / Laguna Splash Tipton, Pa.

LANDRY'S

Continued from page 1

Lithionics Battery, said the Electric C.P. Huntington Train is "turn-of-the-corner technology for Chance."

Berry has been involved with early research and data collection since about 2010. That experience was key when he met engineer Stephen Tartaglia, who had spent

up truck.

FAST FACTS

Ride/Location

Electric C.P. Huntington Train / Landry's Downtown Aquarium, Houston, Texas

Manufacturer

Chance Rides

Opened

April 21, 2018

One locomotive. three coaches, each coach capacity 14 adults or 21 children

Track/Ride Length/Speed 1/2 mile/5 minutes/5 mph

Power

Three 24-volt lithium-ion batteries in a series from Lithonics Battery

time researching lithium-ion batteries in university settings and with other companies, working to make them safe.

Their connection occurred under mundane circumstances some years ago, when Tartaglia showed up to buy Berry's pick-

"[Roger] told me his truck was no longer for sale and then asked me why I needed it," Tartaglia recalled. "I told him I wanted to haul lithiumion batteries." They compared notes and formed a partnership.

Subsequently, Lithionics Battery was founded, and the two were able to draw the interest of Universal Studios and The Walt Disney Co. "They have the capabilities of doing their own research," Tartaglia said. "Our batteries now power parade floats and the Rivers of Light [nighttime experience] at Disney's Animal Kingdom."

Batteries produced by Lithionics have received certification to display the UL Mark and have passed the requirements of the UN Transportation of Dangerous Goods Manual of Test and Criteria, Sixth Revised Edition.

The idea for the Electric C.P. Huntington Train arose when John Chance, Dick's son,



Attending the unveiling of the Electric C.P. Huntington Train at Landry's Downtown Aquarium in Houston were (from left) Roger Berry of Lithionics; Steve Howe, director, Landry's Downtown Aquarium Houston; and Dick Chance, Chance **Rides.** COURTESY CHANCE RIDES

expressed a desire to make a green version of the classic model. Dick Chance knew who to call — thus setting in motion the creation of a lithium-ion battery-powered locomotive.

"Chance is a pioneer of the micro-cycling and opportunity said charging," Tartaglia, noting that there are three 24volt lithium-ion batteries in a series powering the train. Each battery is about the size of carry-on luggage and weighs 75 pounds. "Together, they're producing 11.5 kilowatts of energy. The chargers are 15 kilowatts of energy, so at every cycle, the batteries are getting

hit with 15 kilowatts. They are getting all their energy back each ride cycle."

Testing of the train was conducted at Chance Rides' headquarters in Wichita, Kan., last summer.

"Dick built tracks and we ran that train all summer, trying to break it," Berry said. "When it broke, we would learn from it, fix it and tweak it. We have collected an abundance of data and still are."

Berry said the train at Landry's has a cellular link that allows him to log in and "look at what it is doing anytime."

Chance Rides introduced



the Electric C.P. Huntington Train at IAAPA Attractions Expo 2017 in Orlando last November. It was there that the company was approached by Landry's.

"We worked out a deal with them so we that could use their [aquarium] site as a testing site," Chance said. "If this works out, they have other trains that may be replaced."

Chance said interest also has been expressed by zoos, and official visits to see the Houston installation have been taking place.

chancerides.com



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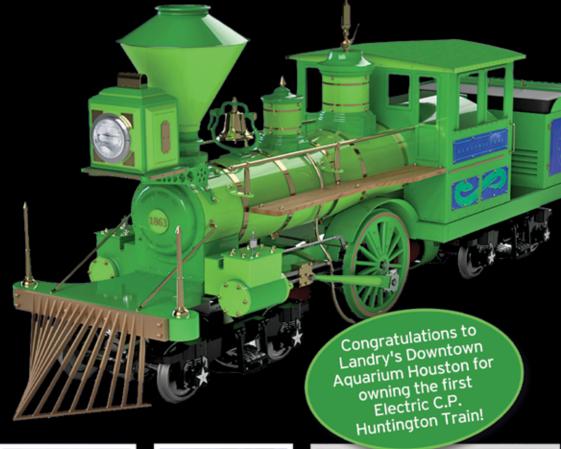
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- Lower Operating Costs



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MAYHEM

Continued from page 1

styled queue for the coaster's loading station, a unique storyline unfolds involving two main characters: Merlin and Mayhem. It reveals that while wandering through the park, Merlin finds an egg; when the egg hatches, a very mischievous dragon named Mayhem pops out and winds up on the loose.

"The whole purpose of the ride is to help Merlin find [the dragon]," said **Hannah Shepard**, park marketing manager.

And there's plenty of breezy, soaring fun during the "search."

After ascending a 60-foot lift hill, Merlin's Mayhem darts to the right before swooping above the Sky Ride. This is followed by a helix turn over the park's fish pond.

Next are a series of S-curves, which send the train into an upward helix. The train then drops under the railroad tracks into a misted tunnel and swings around a 180-degree turn before entering the brake run.



While construction and testing of the ride were not completed in time for a 2017 introduction, Merlin's Mayhem was ready to go at the start of this season.

"Even though we did hope to open earlier last year, there were a lot of thematic elements and pieces of this ride that all had to come together to make it into the great final product we think it is," said **Jeffrey Eisenberg**, Dutch Wonderland's director of marketing. "During the process, we were finding that those pieces were taking a bit longer than we anticipated. But



After a dart to the right near the top of the lift, Merlin's Mayhem riders begin their quick descent (above). The train goes over the top of the Sky Ride (above, far right) during the 60-second ride. Merlin's Mayhem's lift hill rises nearly 60 feet. AT/B. DEREK SHAW

we think it was worth the wait."

Before the ride officially opened to the public this year, the park "made good" by holding a special preview event for all 2017 season pass holders — allowing them to experience the new coaster first.

S&S Pete Barto, Worldwide's director of sales for North America and Europe, said Merlin's Mayhem makes sense for Dutch Wonderland. "It's perfect for their audience in terms of the thrill level, excitement and height restriction. We looked at a lot of different rides when we looked to roll out this coaster as part of our portfolio. We wanted it to be a little more aggressive. It's not a junior coaster, it's a family coaster something that everyone can enjoy. Kids today are not afraid to ride rides."

While a family suspended coaster was part of the company's catalogue before Dutch Wonderland became a client, S&S customized the layout for the park's needs. The ride's configuration for the available

space would wind up giving it a personality all its own.

"[We] were looking not only at where the coaster wanted to go, but also where it was able to go," recalled Barto of his site walk with **Rick Stammel**, vice president of theme parks for Palace Entertainment. "There are a lot of near misses with a number of rides in the park. That makes it even more fast and dynamic and exciting to ride."

Merlin's Mayhem has a 39-inch height requirement, allowing more people to enjoy the ride, including the park's younger visitor demographic. "Even children that are four, five years old, depending on how tall they are, can ride with their parents," Shepard said.

Eisenberg had praise for S&S. "They are such a fun team to work with, and really through the entire process they were fantastic," he said. "We know this is a new ride for them — a new project type. It's as new for us as it was for them, in a sense. They've been here onsite so many times, from the

te ce

through now."

S&S itself welcomed and valued the input Dutch Wonderland's staff provided regarding coaster vehicle design.

inception of the ride and even

"They brought some really good insight from the operations, maintenance and cognitive child interaction standpoints," Barto said. "One of the things with the vehicle you'll notice is that the seats are closer together. That was a suggestion made by the park. They knew we were going to be working with 39-inch high guests, and they wanted to have that child a little closer to the parent during that ride. They were very involved from vehicle and layout design to operations

and maintenance. They really understand their guests, and they've been absolutely fantastic to work with."

The public's reaction to Merlin's Mayhem has been quite enthusiastic.

"Everybody says, 'Wow that was faster than I thought, but the ride just felt good, it felt smooth,'" Eisenberg noted.

"It's a lot of fun and it's got a lot of pep," said Barto of the ride experience. "It is truly a ride for the whole family, a perfect addition to this park. I invite everyone to come out and ride it.

"We're excited to have Merlin's Mayhem in our portfolio. It's a great park and a great ride."

dutchwonderland.com







The queue theming (left) continues the storyline established for Merlin's Mayhem. Visitors have a spectacular view of the roller coaster (center) shortly after entering the park; the mid-course portion of the ride soars over a fish pond. Pete Barto of S&S Worldwide addressed the crowd at the entrance to the ride queue during media day festivities. AT/B. DEREK SHAW



CONGRATULATIONS



A Kingdom for Kids!

on the opening of





Design from

- a group company of Sansei Technologie

SEAWORLD Continued from page 1

from Premier Rides, Inc., of Baltimore, Md. - sporting deceptively tranquil and coastal setting-compatible hues of aquamarine and blue — is the tallest and fastest coaster south of Orange County.

Based on the reaction of media and invited enthusiasts at the ride's preview event, it's also going to be a regional must-do experience.

Marilyn Hannes, SeaWorld San Diego park president, told Amusement Today that "the opening of Electric Eel was truly phenomenal. Watching the excitement of our guests was something I will never forget."

Hannes, herself a major coaster fan, also acknowledged that the ride is a crucial, and perhaps long overdue, addition to the park's ride lineup.



"It is important that we maintain a variety of attractions that appeal to a wide audience," she said. "We want to have the right balance of animal encounters, exhibits and rides that not only provide our guests with meaningful experiences, but ones that are also fun. Electric Eel brings a whole new level of excitement to SeaWorld."

Electric Eel propels riders forward and backward through the coaster's loading station — accelerating to a maximum speed of 62 mph with almost shocking swiftness. The three-vehicle train then rockets skyward nearly 150 feet, negotiating a heartline roll before diving straight down into a twisting loop. A





Watch or ride, Electric Eel is a dynamic experience — and a new landmark for SeaWorld San Diego. After its third launch, the train rockets straight up to a height of nearly 150 feet (above left). The ride provides a dramatic backdrop for park's year-old Ocean Explorer attraction and exhibit area. AT/DEAN LAMANNA (TOP PHOTOS); COURTESY SEAWORLD SAN DIEGO

smooth return to the station quickly follows.

In just 55 seconds, the coaster completes the typical enthusiast's thrill-ride checklist: airtime, hang time, vertical drops, inversions, surprise factor and speed.

Tim Roberts, production supervisor for SeaWorld San Diego, was the park's "designated riding partner" during the preview event. He had completed more than 30 circuits on Electric Eel by the time AT caught up with him.

"When you do the back launch through the station, there's a great turn and you get to look down at the ground," he said. "The front row is fantastic, especially when you come over the hump at the top at 150 feet high. And coming out of the heartline roll and into the barrel roll for the almost-90-degree drop, there's no track [visible momentarily] in front of you — you just go straight down. The back seat offers more of a whipping effect at that last particular spot."

Roberts said SeaWorld personnel were invited to test-ride the coaster during its pre-opening break-in period. He was among the many who participated.

"The really cool thing is that park ambassadors get paid to test rides here," Roberts said. "It's a pretty fantastic program that allows you to work it into your regular shift if you have some time to kill during your day. We need bodies in these seats for test riding for a certain number of hours. It's really fun."

Thanks to Electric Eel's hitch-free building and testing phases, SeaWorld was able to open the ride a couple days earlier than planned.

"We started construction in earnest back in September, and it could've taken anywhere from nine to 11 months," said David Koontz, the park's director of communications. "One of the things that really fell in our favor was just outstanding weather. We didn't have any delays created by rain, which would not be unusual here in the winter. It really allowed us to get ahead of schedule."

While SeaWorld's overall mission is to connect people with animals and add an educational layer to the theme park experience, Koontz

acknowledged that Electric Eel represents an effort to expand the property's amusement options. It also completes the second phase of SeaWorld's Ocean Explorer attraction and exhibit area, which opened last year

"We understand we have a wide demographic, and that our guests have different interests and tastes," he said. "Electric Eel is an opportunity to provide a kind of balanced experience portfolio across the park. It fits a really nice niche for younger people, teens, who are looking for more of a thrill experience — not by itself, but in conjunction with the totality of the park and all the other offerings that we

Complementing coaster are a live eel habitat, which features a collection of California moray eels, and an interactive educational experience called Mission: Deep Discovery, which allows a team of one to four players to embark on a virtual deep-sea adventure. The two exhibits flank Electric Eel's entrance

"Even with Electric Eel, we're still trying to ensure that there are conservation and educational components," Koontz said. "The goal is to help especially the younger visitors get a better understanding of ocean exploration and the deep ocean."

The debut of the ride, which was preceded on May 5 by the park's well-reviewed roll-out of the weekends-only Sesame Street Parade, certainly covers more demographic bases at SeaWorld.

"I'm just really glad that



we've been able to get a thrill ride like Electric Eel," Roberts said. "This is a ride our guests have never seen before; you can hear their screams from every area of the park."

"It's a kick in the pants," Koontz added. "There is no lull in the action. It's a minute long, but there is something happening every second of the ride."

• seaworldsandiego.com

FAST FACTS

Ride/Park

Electric Eel SeaWorld San Diego

Type

Triple launch steel coaster

Manufacturer

Premier Rides, Inc.

Height/Length/Speed 150 feet/853 feet/62 mph

Number of Trains

Number of Vehicles 3 (6 riders per vehicle; 18 riders per train)

Special Elements

Looping twists, forward and backward propulsion, inverted heartline roll

Height Requirement

54 inches

Opened May 10, 2018



Electric Eel packs a lot of action into its compact layout. The heartline roll at the top of the structure (above left) delivers some startling hang time 15 stories above the ground, while several diving drops offer moments of airtime. COURTESY SEAWORLD SAN DIEGO



CONGRATULATIONS SEAWORLD SAN DIEGO ON THE SUCCESSFUL OPENING OF ELECTRIC EEL!

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PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

▶ Steel Vengeance continues Cedar Point's legacy — Page 12 / FAIRS — Pages 30-33

All roads lead to Sesame Street at SeaWorld Orlando in 2019

Big Bird, Bert, Ernie and more to shine at new Florida address

AT: Dean Lamanna dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

ORLANDO, Fla. — The classic and ever-popular Sesame Workshop / PBS show Sesame Street is making major inroads at SeaWorld Orlando. Literally.

The marine theme park currently is building an entirely new area inspired by the program and its Muppet characters. Called Sesame Street at SeaWorld Orlando, the themed land will offer visitors the opportunity to walk along the famous fictional thoroughfare for the first time.

The ambitious intersection of fun, laughter and learning debuts in 2019.





"We are excited to transport our guests into the colorful and creative world of *Sesame Street* through immersive theming, character interactions and interactive play," said **Jim Dean**, park president. "Sesame Street at SeaWorld Orlando is an

amazing addition to our park, providing more unique and memorable experiences for the entire family."

The themed land will feature rides, wet and dry play areas and character experiences designed to entertain the entire family. Guests will be able to explore the iconic neighborhood as they walk through Abby Cadabby's garden, visit Mr. Hooper's store, stop by Big Bird's nest, sit on the famous 123 stoop and meet their favorite *Sesame Street* friends — including Elmo, Cookie Monster and Big Bird.

A major highlight is SeaWorld Orlando's firstever parade event. Elmo and his furry friends, along with parade dancers, will invite guests to join the merry march on Sesame Street daily.

"In partnering with Sesame Workshop, we are creating a land for guests to make an authentic connection that can only be found in hugging a furry friend or reading a book with Big Bird," said Amanda Trauger, experience design manager for SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment. (The company's holdings include Sesame Place, a family-friendly theme park in Langhorne, Pa.)

Sesame Street at SeaWorld Orlando will be located on the south end of the park, where Happy Harbor currently stands.

•seaworldorlando.com

Marvel Super Heroes areas destined for Disney parks globally

BURBANK, Calif. — More than ever before, comic book heroes are mastering the theme park universe. And by the end of 2020, **Walt Disney Parks and Resorts Worldwide, Inc.**, plans to roll out new lands based on the Marvel Super Heroes at three of its parks around the globe.

Themed areas containing rides and experiences devoted to the characters are headed for Disneyland Paris, Hong Kong Disneyland and the Disneyland Resort in Anaheim, Calif. Disney is developing the attractions in partnership with Marvel Studios and Marvel Themed Entertainment (both subsidiaries of the Walt Disney Co.).

In Anaheim, at Disney California Adventure Park,

the existing Guardians of the Galaxy — Mission: Breakout! ride will be the centerpiece of a new Marvel land. Spider-Man and the Avengers are joining the location with experiences that will expand into the space formerly occupied by A Bug's Land, portions of which began closing in March. (The area reportedly will be completely shut down by the end of summer.)

At Disneyland Paris, Walt Disney Studios Park will be home to a Marvel land containing an adventure teaming guests with Iron Man and the Avengers. In the meantime, the park's Marvel Summer of Super Heroes starts on June 10 and runs through Sept. 30 — offering a kind of warm-up to the new land with a live-

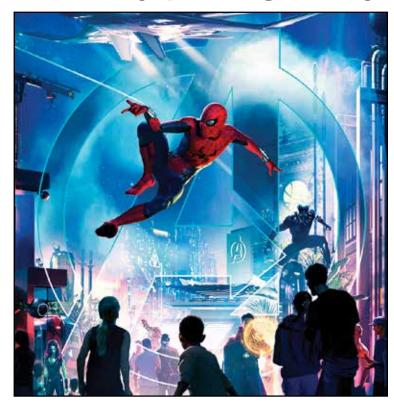
action, special effects-filled stage production.

And finally, joining Hong Kong Disneyland's very popular Iron Man Experience, which opened last year, a new attraction teaming guests with Ant-Man and The Wasp will help anchor a planned section devoted to all things Marvel.

—Dean Lamanna

Spider-Man, Iron Man and the Avengers are among the characters that will populate new Marvel Super Heroes lands headed to Disney theme parks in Paris, Hong Kong and Anaheim, Calif., by the end of 2020.

WALT DISNEY CO./ MARVEL STUDIOS



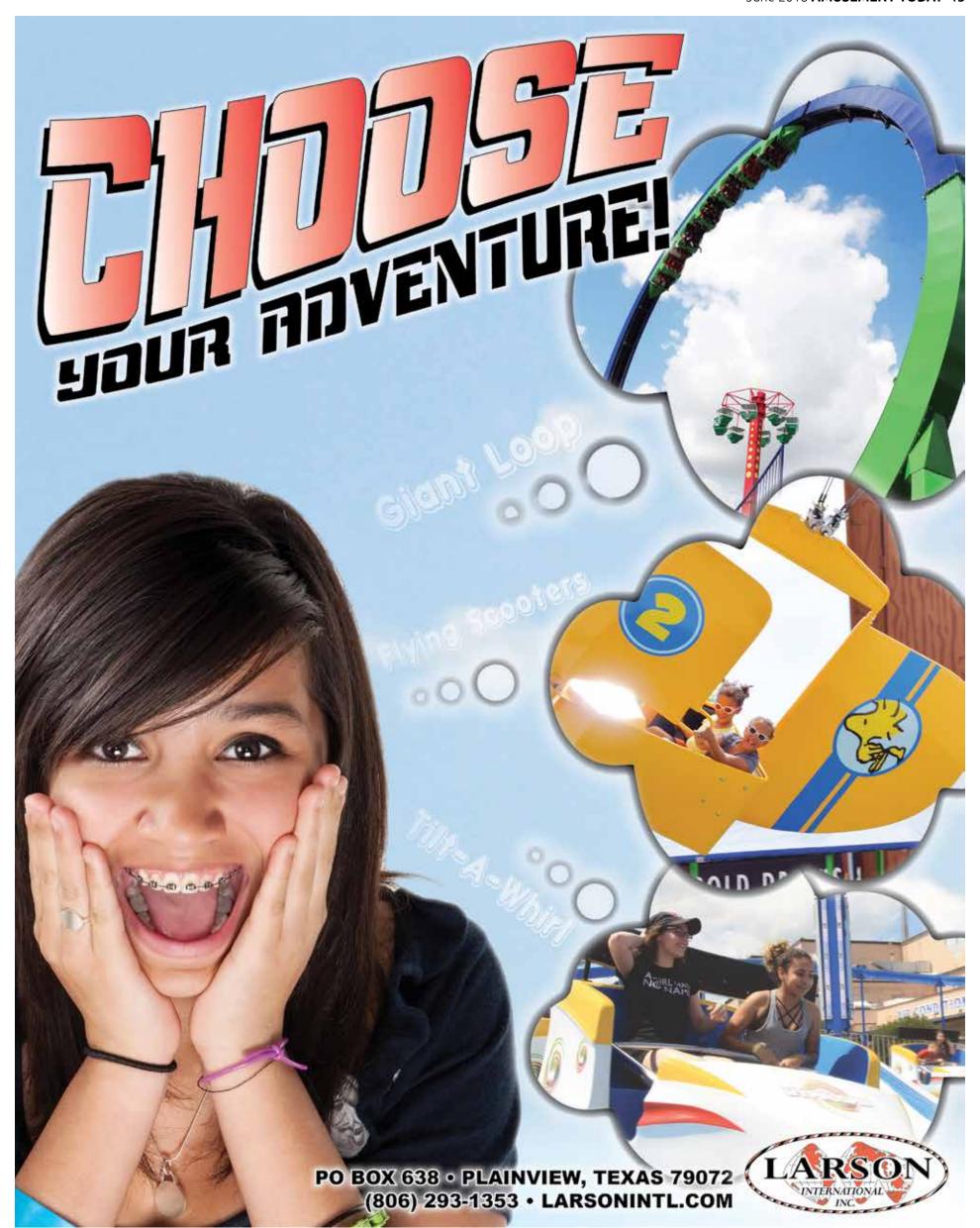








Gosetto Dark Ride Moser Giant Wheel 55 Mt



Knott's raises thrill-ride stakes with Cali's first dive coaster

From Gerstlauer and Ride Entertainment, attraction delivers quality 'HangTime'

AT: Dean Lamanna dlamanna@amusementtodav.com

BUENA PARK, Calif. — No one will ever describe the full, downward-tilting stop made by the train atop the 15-story vertical lift of HangTime, the new steel roller coaster at Knott's Berry Farm, as the pause that refreshes.

The pause that panics,

"HangTime's disappearing track creates a memorable illusion of the unknown as riders feel like they are hanging over a

cliff, staring at the ground in nervous anticipation," said Ion Storbeck. park vice president and general manager. "People who



Storbeck

crave that adrenaline rush will want to ride this coaster again and again."

But there's much more than this one vertigo-inducing moment. It's followed by a 96-degree drop — said to be the steepest of any coaster in California — into 2,189 feet of pretzel-like track containing five inversions, including a negative-g stall loop, abrupt bursts of airtime and, yes, some sublime moments of upside-down hang time.





HangTime lives up to its name in several ways — most notably at the crest of its 150-foot-tall lift hill, where the coaster train pauses for several agonizing seconds before plunging down a 96-degree drop into the first of five inversions COURTESY KNOTT'S BERRY FARM

its signage to the design of its vehicle seating, the whole package is presented with a regionally apt surfing theme that also reflects the atmosphere of the park's Boardwalk section. There, HangTime fills the combined former footprint of Boomerang, a Vekoma reverse shuttle coaster, and RipTide, a Huss flat ride (both were removed in the last 18 months).

The only dive coaster in the Golden State, HangTime, which officially opened May 18, is an Infinity model from Gerstlauer Amusement Rides, GmbH, and the German manufacturer's sales partner, Ride Entertainment of Stevensville, Md.

"It's very well-scaled to the From the ride's name to park," said Adam Sandy, chief

business development officer for Ride Entertainment, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year (as well as two decades of working with Gerstlauer). "Knott's has a lot of great coasters, but here we tried to come up with a layout that was exciting but wasn't so intense that it wouldn't hit the park's huge season pass-holder and family audiences."

At max operation — three trains, with 16 passengers each — he added, the ride should achieve a throughput of about 1,000 riders per hour.

For Sandy, who is no stranger to thrill rides, HangTime's vertical lift and the dangling halt at its apex are where it's at.

"Most people around the

country have not been on a vertical lift," he said. "It takes a lot of riders by surprise when they go out of the loading station and start going straight up — and feel what that's like. The hold at the top for a few seconds, especially in the front seat, where you get to see the entire coaster layout in front of you, is a really nice touch."

When Cedar Fair approached Ride Entertainment for the attraction addition at Knott's, both parties knew that space at the compact theme park would be a challenge.

"It was our guidance for coming up with the layout of HangTime," Sandy said. "We asked ourselves, 'What can we do in this space that is thrilling

for a wide range of people, but also offers some great marketing opportunities — and some unique attributes — in the Los

Angeles market?"" Gerstlauer had the right answer, according to Rob Decker, senior vice president of planning and design for Cedar Fair.

"Knott's is truly one of my favorite parks, and over the past few years we've put a lot of work into it — bringing back classic rides, revitalizing areas of the park," he said. "But we

▶ See HANGTIME, page 15

'Lights! Coaster! Action!': KCL Engineering makes rides shine

WEST DES MOINES, lowa - For KCL Engineering, the award-winning company behind the mesmerizing, dynamic and fully programmable nighttime track / structure lighting on the new dive coaster HangTime at Knott's Berry Farm, illuminating amusements is all in a day's work.

'Since almost every ride is unique, we like to model the rides and confirm the lighting layout," said Tom Kendrick, KCL lighting designer, explaining that his crew works largely through computer visualization using various software programs. "But we also do real-life testing in our office using the same lights that are installed, and we will purchase the sample color chips of the colors used on the ride to dial-in our color choices to those specific

"Different [structural] finish colors reflect colored light differently, and the wrong combination can leave you with some pretty ugly looking colors that don't do these amazing sculptures justice."

KCL burst onto the scene in 2016 with its lighting package for the Monster at Adventureland in Altoona, Pa., and more recently completed work on Adrenaline Peak at Oaks Park in Portland, Ore. Both coasters were manufactured by Gerstlauer



KCL's lighting package for HangTime offers a rainbow of programmable color combinations, as well as a variety of motion effects. **COURTESY KCL ENGINEERING**

(Infinity and Euro-Fighter models, respectively).

Aside from dealing with California codes and regulations, which are stricter than in other areas of the U.S., KCL faced some new challenges with HangTime — particularly with how to design and time lighting effects that work with the dramatic, and leisurely, pause the train makes at the top of the lift hill. But KCL resolved them with its own versatile control system.

"The control package has software that is similar to what a lighting designer would use to control lights for a stage production or concert," said Andy Versluys, KCL electrical engineer. "It has the ability to receive signals from the ride computer and stack multiple effects simultaneously. There's also a programmable touch pad to manually start and stop effects for testing or special events."

HangTime's lighting system includes 116 40-watt LED fixtures mounted to the track and 46 200-wattt ground- and pole-mounted fixtures. KCL team members traveled to Knott's a total of five times during the coaster's construction and after its completion to check on the system's progress and complete its programming.

Kendrick described the park's in-house construction and entertainment production crews as "knowledgeable and passionate," adding: "They provided us with some really descriptive ideas of how they wanted certain seasonal effects to look. Knott's was a great client to work with."

–Dean Lamanna

HANGTIME Continued from page 14

hadn't put a big thrill ride into the park in a long time. So it was time. And to get a thrilling, dvnamic steel roller coaster in here, the Boardwalk area made the most sense."

Cedar Fair was impressed with Gerstlauer's installation of the Monster, another Infinity coaster model, at Adventureland in Altoona, Pa., in 2016, and the elaborate LED lighting package by KCL Engineering (see sidebar

story, page14) that went with it.
"We were thinking that Southern California surf culture is really to be celebrated - there's the beach, the boardwalk — and this would become an homage to that," Decker said. "The Infinity coaster [captured] a lot of that. It was really kind of a snap to fit."

Cedar Fair and Gerstlauer worked easily and enthusiastically together on the rest of the company's new coaster wish list. Said Decker: "We didn't have





The Southern California surfing theme is carried all the way through HangTime, including its surfboard-inspired seating, and it is an ideal fit for the park's Boardwalk section. The coaster itself shoots some wildly impressive curls. COURTESY KNOTT'S BERRY FARM

to push Gerstlauer very far to get us to five inversions and the height up to 150 feet, and then to get a really terrific first drop. They were ready to do the heavy lifting and go to that scale for us. With the tight footprint, we packed in as much as we could."

Helping Knott's get the most out of both that relatively small space and its investment is HangTime's impressive nighttime light show, with programmable LED lights tracing each train's movement on the tracks and displaying enough color and visual pizazz to get people dancing throughout the Boardwalk section.

"We have hundreds of ideas for using that lighting package for all our other seasons of fun," said Eric Nix, entertainment producer for Knott's, noting that it be a particular boon for hosting special and private events. "With its creative capabilities, we're like kids in a candy store."

For the park's Jon Storbeck, HangTime continues Knott's legacy in rollercoaster innovation, which has included the very first corkscrew inversion rollercoaster (Corkscrew) and the first flywheel launch coaster (Montezooma's Revenge).

"Introducing a coaster like HangTime firmly positions Knott's Berry Farm as a mustsee attraction among Southern California theme parks," he said. "We look forward to welcoming our guests to this new experience.

•knotts.com

FAST FACTS

Ride/Park

Hangtime / Knott's Berry Farm Buena Park, Calif.

Type

Infinity dive coaster

Manufacturer

Gerstlauer Amusement Rides, GmbH

Height/Length/Speed

150 feet/2,189 feet/57mph

Number of Trains

3 (16 riders per train)

Special Elements

Vertical lift hill, 96-degree first drop (after pause at top), 5 inversions, negative-g stall loop, multicolor LED track chase lighting

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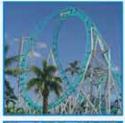
"HangTime" Knott's Berry Farm, USA



















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Beech Bend Park replaces, adds several rides for 2018; paints Tiki Island

AT: Pam Sherborne psherborne@amusementtoday.com

BOWLING GREEN, KY. — Beech Bend Amusement Park's ride park opened for the summer season May 10. Although no major renovations were done during the off season, there were some upgrades and additions.

The park, which is family owned and operated, replaced its Tornado ride, which was damaged last year when a tree fell on it. **Charlotte Gonzalez**, general manager, said they were able to cover most of the cost of the **Wisdom** product from insurance.

"But, we were so, so lucky," she said. "The top half of a tree just fell on the top of the ride. It was operating at the time, but where it fell, there were empty seats and it was more just on the top of the ride.

"There was no storm, rain or anything happening at the time," she said. "It was a beautiful, bright sunny Sunday. We had only had that Tornado for about a year and a half."

Gonzalez said they also replaced their **Mike Howard** children's Super Slide.

"We also added a new Groovy Bus, made by **S.B.F.**," she said. "That took the place of our Western Train ride."

The other thing done during the off season took place at Beech Bend's **Splash Lagoon Water Park**. Park officials decided to paint the structures that make up Tiki Island, a



The Tiki Island interactive play area structure within Splash Lagoon Water Park both before (right) and after (above) repainting by Baynum Painting.

COURTESY BAYNUM PAINTING, INC.

children's interactive play area with seven different slides and a large tipping bucket at the top. Gonzalez said they had **Baynum Painting** do the work.

"They did all the steel parts as well as painted and gel coated the slides," Gonzalez said. "It looks great; like brand new."

Gonzalez was happy to get the 2018 season underway. After getting the park open on May 10, she said the next thing was to get the water park open. That happened on May 19. They were hosting local school groups in mid-May.

For 2018, Friday Night Lights will continue. That was started last year as a way for guests to enjoy all the lights at the park, from 5-9:30 p.m. Splash Lagoon stays open from 5-7:30 p.m. on those



nights. Admission to Friday Night Lights is \$15.

Admission prices for this season were to remain the same as last year. In fact, Gonzalez said it has been several seasons since they have had to raise prices. Adults tickets are \$35.99 and tickets for seniors and children are \$31.99. Children two years of age and younger are free.

The park offers military discounts as well as a variety of discount promotions throughout the season.

Park officials boast free parking, free sunscreen and free tubes.

Attendance for the 2017 season was more than 200,000, which was up from 2016.



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Summer-long Pixar Fest thoroughly animates Disneyland Resort

Property-wide party a warm-up for June debut of Pixar Pier

AT: Dean Lamanna dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

ANAHEIM, Calif. — True to the globally popular **Pixar Animation Studios** films that inspired it, Pixar Fest, a new summer-long event at the **Disneyland Resort**, is — as its official theme describes — a "celebration of friendship and beyond."

"Beyond" in this case is synonymous with imagination. From music, food and décor to marching daytime and night-time entertainment, plus a new fireworks spectacular, Pixar Fest embodies joyously creative "fan"-aticism. And it should: the studio's movies have amassed 32 Academy Awards and grossed more than \$11 billion at the worldwide box office to date



The first event of its type at the Anaheim destination is doubling as a warm-up for the official June 23 premiere of Pixar Pier, the made-over attractions area at **Disney California Adventure** (DCA) formerly known as Paradise Pier.

Launched in mid-April and running through Sept. 3, Pixar Fest presents the studio's beloved stories in new ways at both **Disneyland** and DCA as well as in the **Downtown Disney District**. Characters and experiences from movies such as *Toy Story, Monsters, Inc., Finding Nemo* and *Up* are featured.

In an onsite chat with Amusement Today, Alexa



Two of Pixar Fest's marquee offerings, the pyrotechnics-filled show "Together Forever — A Pixar Nighttime Spectacular" at Disneyland and the returning parade Paint the Night at Disney California Adventure, incorporate state-of-the-art lighting effects. Even the resort's monorail (at right) has joined the Pixar merriment. COURTESY DISNEYLAND RESORT

Garcia, a Disneyland Resort ambassador, described Pixar Fest as a "full-resort event, which includes themed food items available throughout the parks and our hotels. Our horticulture team did an amazing job around the property, too — there are even nods to the Pixar characters in the planters in Downtown Disney."

She added: "Our 30,000 cast members are extra excited. It's really fun."

For the Pixar faithful, that's an understatement.

The new Disneyland fireworks show, "Together Forever — A Pixar Nighttime Spectacular," takes guests on a journey that begins with the meeting of unlikely Pixar pals and follows their adventures as they overcome obstacles and forge friendships. The immersive presentation comes to life through projection mapping on iconic park locations: Sleeping Beauty Castle, the water screens of the Rivers of America, the facade of It's a Small World and the buildings of Main Street,

U.S.A

The grand tradition of Tinker Bell flying over Sleeping Beauty Castle gets a crowdpleasing Pixar twist, with a special flyover by none other than *Toy Story*'s Buzz Lightyear.

In addition to the pyrotechnics, two elaborate parades are rolling out daily for guests.

For the first time, Pixar Play Parade makes its way through Disneyland itself. It begins just as all Pixar films do — with an appearance by the iconic Pixar Lamp and yellow Ball from the original Pixar short, "Luxo Jr."

Joining the march are characters from *Up*: Wilderness Explorer Russell appears astride the flightless bird Kevin, while Carl Fredricksen and Dug follow behind amid foliage and snipe chicks — with Carl's tethered house floating above. Characters from *Inside Out* also participate, with Joy and Sadness perched atop memory orbs as they take flight aboard Riley's rocket wagon and Bing Bong cheers them on.

After a 15-month hiatus,



Paint the Night has returned to the Disneyland Resort — this time bringing catchy tunes and an eye-popping rainbow of more than one million LED lights to DCA.

The parade features fully illuminated characters from *Cars, Monsters, Inc., Toy Story* and *The Incredibles*. The animated stars of the latter film franchise are given the opportunity to showcase their unique powers along the parade route, thanks to innovative visual technology, new music elements and high-tech pop art effects inspired by the midcentury-modern style of the movies' setting.

"When we closed Paint the Night at Disneyland last year, we knew it still had lots of life in it, and that it was state of the art," said **Tracy Halas**, resort show director and choreographer, explaining to *AT* the decision to resurrect the at DCA. "Apart from our floats, our costumes incorporate LED lights, and at the same time they are

movable pieces that our performers can dance in. We're really pushing the boundaries with [battery-operated, costume-based] lighting systems."

Also at DCA, a collection of Pixar short films is unspooling at the Sunset Showcase Theater. The park's Paradise Gardens area serves as home to The Pixarmonic Orchestra, a zany seven-piece band that performs songs from Pixar films with cowbells, kazoos, duck calls, sirens and slide whistles.

Beginning June 8, the Pixar Pals Dance Party at Disneyland's Tomorrowland Terrace will invite guests of all ages to mingle and cut a rug with their favorite Pixar pals, including Russell, Dug, Woody, Jessie, the Green Army Men and more

A seemingly endless selection of themed merchandise rounds out the resort's celebratory Pixar package. As Buzz Lightyear himself once famously said: "To infinity and beyond!"

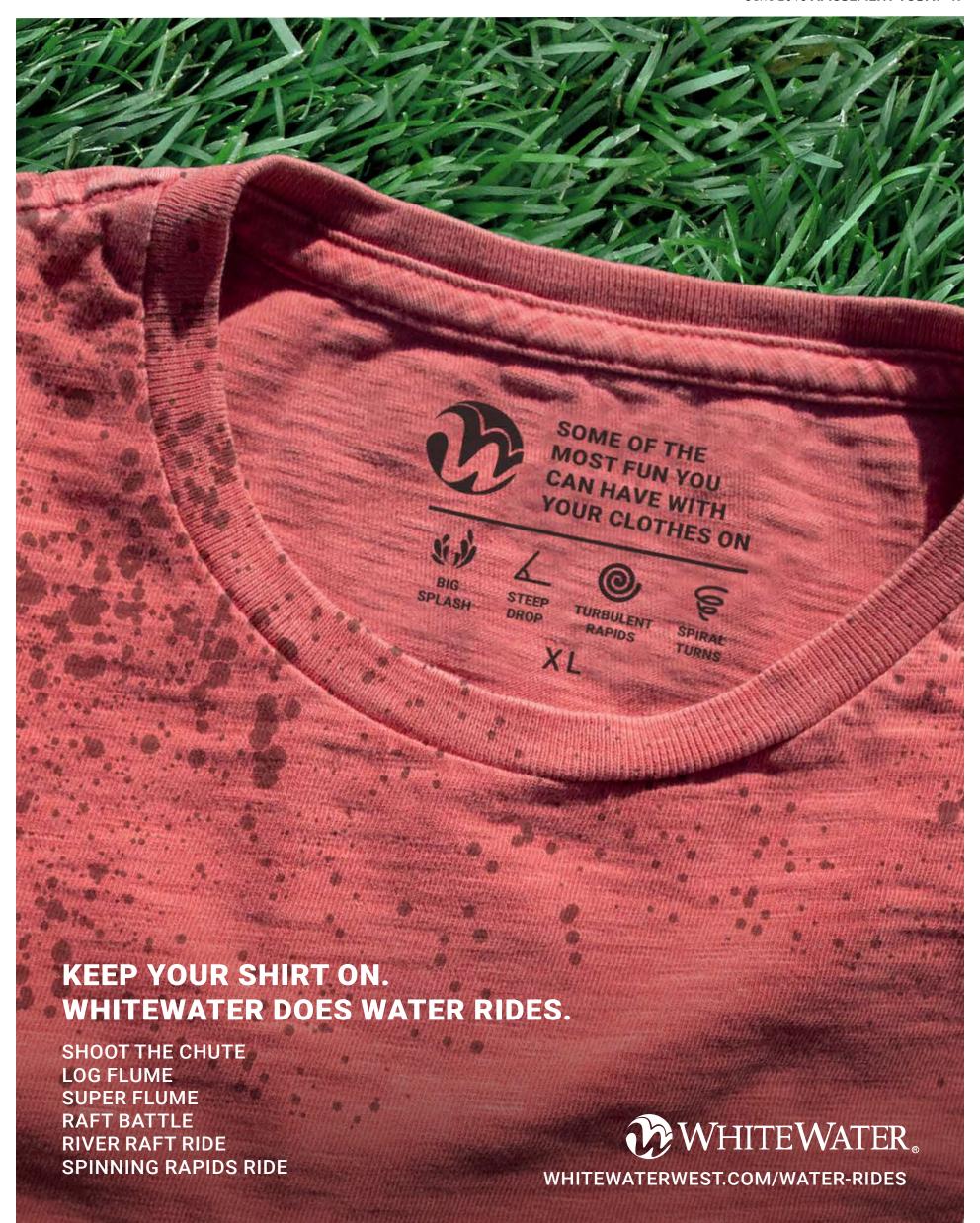
disneyland.com







Pixar Fest's theming is pervasive at the Disneyland Resort, with character-inspired food treats and décor touches found throughout both parks and in Downtown Disney District. AT/DEAN LAMANNA



Rocky Mountain Construction delivers record-setter

Cedar Point continues roller coaster legacy with Steel Vengeance

AT: Tim Baldwin tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

SANDUSKY, Ohio — Many parks have their own claim to fame. Some might be associated with certain foods, a style of theming or a signature ride. When people hear the words "Cedar Point," the thing that instantly leaps to mind is "roller coasters." The park has long had one of the world's largest collections, but it isn't just the quantity, it is the astonishing number of record holders that has helped the park build its reputation.

The racing coaster Gemini flirted briefly with records in 1978, but the real legacy started with Magnum XL-200 in 1989. It was the first coaster to surpass 200 feet in height, and the impact on the park was undeniably huge. It sparked a formula of record-setting coasters that has continued for the past three decades. Each coaster of its type had to be the tallest, longest and fastest.

As Magnum had raised the bar, the park's next legendary king of the midway came with Millennium Force in 2000. Breaking the 300-foot barrier at 305 feet, the ride went on to be voted Best Steel Coaster in *Amusement Today*'s Golden Ticket Awards 10 times.

With the May 5 debut of Steel Vengeance, the park's newest legacy ride has arrived. Converting the wooden track Mean Streak coaster — a record-setting ride in 1991 — to a steel track attraction, the park turned to **Rocky Mountain Construction**. Having observed this trend in the industry, management of Cedar Point took the concept to a new level.

"Hybrid" has become an industry term, one not fully understood by the public or embraced by coaster fans, but



The characters of Chess, Blackjack and Digger are seen on the midway. AT/TIM BALDWIN



The first drop on Steel Vengeance (above) plunges at 90 degrees. Steel Vengeance's sign (top right) signifies both wood and steel. Model builder Matt Schmotzer works on a large-scale model (bottom right) of Steel Vengeance in the park's Town Hall Museum. AT/TIM BALDWIN

the steel track has done the trick.

"The look of a wooden coaster and the smoothness of steel is unique," said Tony Clark, director of communications, Cedar Point. "The sign and logo and name communicate exactly what it is. The ride has come back with a vengeance as something new."

"The sign really makes a statement as you cross the railroad tracks," added **Jason McClure**, general manager, Cedar Point. "It really personifies the ride."

"It's an incredible winwin investment for both the park and guests. Taking a roller coaster that was low on ridership and turning it into what many guests are already calling the best Cedar Point coaster yet represents the absolute best outcome for a low-ridership attraction," said Anne Irvine, CEO of Irvine Ondrey Engineering. "Much of the original framework of the ride was able to be utilized, along with existing infrastructure, requiring only modifications instead of a ground-up construction project. Despite what some might perceive as a situation fraught with limitations by using existing structure, Steel Vengeance is the pinnacle example of how much creativity, excitement, and intensity is possible when striving to 'upcycle' an older roller coaster.'

Guests can easily tell that Steel Vengeance is something different than what they remembered from the past. The new added height took the ride to 205 feet. Four inversions have been incorporated, and contrary to most entries

into this "hybrid" trend, Steel Vengeance has actually increased its length to an amazing 5,740 feet. Top speed is 74 mph.

"There are so many awesome moments on the ride, but I think the best part is the second half when you go through the structure. There are a lot of surprises in there. It's really dynamic," McClure told *AT*.

"The real advantage to more height is more energy and the ability to have longer track length," said **Alan Schilke** of **Ride Centerline**, who did the layout design. "Larger, faster elements are great, but the overall number of airtime hills and time off the seat are what separates this ride from all others."

Three of the inversions are smooth, fluid barrel rolls, but the so-termed "snake dive" has become a notable moment.

"You go into what looks like is going to be a 360-degree (barrel) roll, but you don't go all the way. It holds you upside down for a couple seconds and then flips back. It's so butter smooth," said Clark.

"I really like the idea of stalling but going down to the earth. It's like a fighter jet experience," said **Jake Kilcup**, chief operating officer of RMC.

Unlike most off-season projects, Steel Vengeance was a two-year project.

"It really was a long process because of the nature of the ride and the scope of it," said McClure. "Once we decided to do the conversion with RMC, we knew we wanted to make it taller. We wanted it be over 200 feet. That was going to give us

an extended time period. And it western and di

an extended time period. And it was different because we were doing it all right in front of the guests' eyes. There was no hiding what we were doing."

"It was our first time working with [Cedar Fair] and we wanted it to be a successful and fun experience," said Kilcup. "We needed the 18 months to do this right."

The three trains sport some modifications than those previously used by RMC. The load on the wheels allows the supplier to build taller rides without pushing the envelope on the trains, according to Kilcup.

In past years, each new addition to Cedar Point has been accompanied by a new, freshened reworking of that area of the park. With the new attraction being in the Frontier Town section of the park, Cedar Point graced the area with artistic accents. The music, lanterns, new colors, a new stage and the thematic overlay to the shops has pleased management with the revived look.

"We took advantage of the theming in Frontier Town," said McClure. "We're not known for theming, but Frontier Town has been that way. We wanted to do more entertainment in the midways and we redid all of our shops — a lot of cool props, wagons, general store fixtures. And the restaurants too; we changed all the menus to make it more

western and different than the other eateries in the park."

The area also helped tell the story of the new ride, said Clark. "Maverick used to be the king in Frontier Town. The story here is that the three characters — Chess, Blackjack and Digger — they are somehow tied to Maverick and at one point or another they were chased out of Frontier Town," he said. Maverick is an Intamin launched coaster added to the park in 2007, and the three characters in the new storyline are the names on the three trains for Steel Vengeance. A new tale has now become intertwined between the attractions. The three characters can be seen strolling the streets as well.

Details are seen on the ride as well. As thrill seekers climb the lift of Steel Vengeance, typical evacuation and maintenance lights have been replaced by lanterns. Even the operators get their own special touches as the operating panel has special graphics placed into the controls.

"It's an easy-to-do reminder that we are in the business of fun," said Irvine. "That fun doesn't have to be limited to guest experience! For operators and maintenance to 'get behind the wheels' of a control panel that speaks to the attitude of the ride, you're helping to foster pride and excitement in the staff."

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Rocky Mountain Construction supplies first Raptor Track rides

Six Flags Fiesta Texas, California's Great America open single-rail coasters

AT: Tim Baldwin tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

SAN ANTONIO, Texas and SANTA CLARA, Calif. — "It's been in development for three years, so it is finally coming to fruition," **Jake Kilcup** of **Rocky Mountain Construction** told *Amusement Today*. "We knew it was going to be a simple build and that was the goal of the design."

RMC introduced the company's innovative Raptor Track at the 2015 IAAPA Attractions Expo. Now, close to three years later, this new genre — the single rail coaster — has officially debuted.

Six Flags Fiesta Texas was able to grab the first of RMC's newest product. Named Wonder Woman Golden Lasso Coaster, the new ride is the first roller coaster to be named after the famed DC Comics superheroine. Following two weekends of previews for season pass holders and members, the brightly colored coaster officially opened on May 12.

"We are very excited to debut the world's first single I-beam rail coaster," said Fiesta Texas Park President Jeffrey Siebert. "This is an incredible ride that delivers big thrills from start to finish. With the launch of the Wonder Woman coaster, Fiesta Texas has created an impressive trilogy of DC superhero attractions that also includes Batman: The Ride 4D Free Fly Coaster and Superman Krypton Coaster. Six Flags Fiesta Texas continues to raise the bar with groundbreaking new rides and attractions every year."

What makes this style of coaster unique is the combination of single-file seating paired with a thin monorail type of track just over 15 inch-







Dramatic curves accentuate the high speed on the new Wonder Woman Golden Lasso Coaster. AT/TIM BALDWIN

es in width.

"The single wide vehicle and skinny little track amplify the feeling of height and speed," said Alan Schilke of Ride Centerline, who was responsible for the track engineering. "The beauty of the ride is how tight it can turn, producing the most elements you can jam in per foot of track."

As riders are positioned one in front of the other, there is a feeling of openness as the single rail is so thin and nothing is visible on either side.

The coaster features a 90-degree first drop, the steepest at the park. From there, the layout features three inversions and dramatically banked turns. Spectators are noticeably marveled by the speed and maneuvers. Riders are undeniably wowed.

"There is a special kind of excitement when you work on an innovative project," said **Brian Ondrey**, president, **Irvine Ondrey Engineering**, who oversaw the control systems. "Nobody truly knows what the experience will be like. It's like a surprise gift: you can see the size and shape,

but you always have that anticipation of what it really is until you unwrap it — or in this case, ride it!"

Just weeks after the Texas version opened, a mirror image opened at **California's Great America**. Dubbed RailBlazer, the new attraction is the first new coaster to be added to the park in five years. *AT* asked General Manager **Raul Rehnborg** what went into the selection.

"Following the approval of the master plan in 2017, we knew the next phase of Great America's buildout needed to be kicked off in a big way. As we evaluated potential partners, it was clear that Rocky Mountain Construction's Raptor roller coaster was the perfect fit, given their success with other rides and the innovative style of roller coaster they were proposing. RailBlazer was the first attraction to be selected after the master plan approval, so we are excited to give our guests the opportunity to experience this groundbreaking attraction," Rehnborg said.

While the two coasters are similar in layout, the theming

of the two are distinctly different. The San Antonio version is accentuated by Greek "Themyscira" architectural detailing with columns and arches with a large statue of the famed female in front of the ride entrance. The spirit of RailBlazer reflects the outdoor aspects of the Bay Area and Central Coast with a nod to an off-road adventure. Wooden decking, a waterway and rocky ravine give the coaster its own feel within the park. RailBlazer's first drop plunges through a rocky arch to add excitement for the rider.

"When you're building a prototype, you know that unknown challenges will arise. No matter what is committed to paper, rules will change as the project progresses," said Ondrey. "Having more than one Raptor in a season at different times, though, we were able to pass along knowledge from Fiesta Texas to the project at California's Great America."

"Being the first Cedar Fair park to introduce a Raptor roller coaster is very exciting. For California's Great America, the RailBlazer project means presenting an entirely new type of ride experience to the region and provides an exciting first step in the buildout of the park, which will greatly enhance the guest experience," added Rehnborg.

Both coasters run with three trains. Six Flags has included a moving station to maximize capacity and the queue area groups riders to be ready as the vehicles move forward without stopping.

"We are excited about the moving station feature at the ride in Texas," said Ondrey. "It's a great opportunity to show off what directions we can take with controls. Hopefully, a feature like this will give the industry more ideas for future innovations."

The compact nature of the rides made for a good fit within their respective parks. Wonder Woman Golden Lasso Coaster resides where a former shoot-the-chutes ride ran for 25 years. The new attraction soars over a new water reservoir below and is the park's tenth roller coaster. RailBlazer is the ninth coaster for Great America.

The wild transitions taken at a top speed of 53 mph make the new installations at both parks among the most intense coasters in the ride lineup.

"It's a very different, intimate experience — unlike anything you have ever been on before," said **Brian Pastor**, senior PLC programmer for IOE. "Its small size should not be underestimated as it provides an incredibly intense thrill!"



The first drop is taken at 90 degrees, the steepest in the park. AT/TIM BALDWIN



RailBlazer's first drop plunges into a rocky ravine, with the whole ride experience offering an off-road feel. Raul Rehnborg, vice president and general manager of California's Great America (right), stands adjacent to one of RailBlazer three trains. COURTESY CALIFORNIA'S GREAT AMERICA

RMC OPENING 2018



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S&S air launch coaster headed to China

LOGAN, Utah — **S&S** Worldwide, Inc., will be building and installing an air launch coaster for **Changsa** Window of the World, a theme park Changsa, Hunan, China.



S&S WORLDWIDE

The deal represents the **Engineering Excitement**

latest of several projects S&S has undertaken in the country. Remarked **Gerald Ryan**, executive director of sales: "S&S is excited to be installing our fifth air launch coaster in China."

The new ride will have a maximum height of 40 meters and a track length of 830 meters. Following a 100 kph launch, the train will negotiate more than 10 elements — including, for the first time in an air launch coaster, inversions.

The coaster is expected to open in early 2019.

Changsha Window of the World is the largest theme park in central China. Open year round, it is in a region considered an important locus of travel, film, television, culture and entertainment.

The park was established in 1997 and contains about four dozen scaled-down replicas of the most famous tourist attractions in the world.

S&S, a leading ride manufacturer in the U.S., has installed over 450 of its products in 30 countries around the globe.

•s-s.com





Mall of America in Bloomington, Minn., has announced the addition of PAW Patrol, a new immersive experience set to open at **Nickelodeon Universe** in late summer.

Based on Nickelodeon's top-rated animated preschool series *PAW Patrol*, produced by **Spin Master Entertainment**, the 4,000-square-foot attraction will light up children's imaginations as they recreate their favorite PAW Patrol missions inside the world of Adventure Bay. It will join the more than 27 rides and attractions located inside the sevenacre theme park and the 520-plus shops and attractions at Mall of America.

Universal Studios Hollywood has set June 15 as the official grand opening of its all-new DreamWorks Theatre featuring Kung Fu Panda: The Emperor's Quest. Created by DreamWorks Animation and Universal Creative, the attraction will take guests on a journey that fuses storytelling with state-of-the-art visual and environmental effects.

The attraction will incorporate what the press materials described as "first-ever integration of interior projection mapping designed to engulf guests in 180 degrees of immersive adventure."

Developed by the team at Universal Creative, this technique features a series of immersive and visually dynamic scenic designs. Coupled with seven **Christie** 4K Boxer cinema projectors and surround sound audio, multisensory elements such as water and wind will help guests feel more like participants that spectators.

Shanghai Disney Resort in China welcomed its first official guests to Disney-Pixar Toy Story Land April 26, the first major expansion at the resort since its grand opening in 2016.

Based on the **Disney-Pixar** film series, Shanghai Disneyland's seventh themed land is full of oversized toys, new adventures and three new attractions: Slinky Dog Spin, Rex's Racer, and Woody's Roundup. It also includes a themed character greeting area called the Meeting Post.

Kentucky Kingdom in Louisville began full-time operation over Memorial Day weekend, setting the stage for a host of new attractions and experiences. The park has added two new rides, Scream Extreme, manufactured by Zamperla, and the Rock 'n' Roller, by Wisdom. In addition, the Thunder Run wooden roller coaster underwent extensive retracking and now delivers a faster, smoother ride without sacrificing any of its characteristic air time. Amuse, out of Coeur

d'Alene, Ind., did the Thunder Run updates.

Guests at Kentucky Kingdom will see more benches and shade structures as well as expanded dining areas and drink stations. There also is a new show, "Avian Adventure."

Diana and Dustin Stirling, operators of **LocoLanding** in Penticton, B.C., Canada, recently received an extension on their lease to operate the park from the city until 2028. The Stirlings are planning to invest about \$2 million in the park and wanted the security of a longer-term lease before making that commitment.

LocoLanding was started in 2001 by Diana Sterling's parents as a mini-golf course; they began adding more attractions the next year. After the Stirlings took over in 2011, they continued to add new attractions every year.

"We have 80 youths that we employ, all local students," Diana Stirling said. "We are the first job for 90 per cent of our employees That is a role we take seriously, training these future leaders."

Among the projects they are planning is a renovation of the mini golf course with a funfantasy storyline based on a tale of Penticton's historical underwater gold mine.

The 65th annual opening day of **Kiddieland at Lincoln Park** in Pittsburg, Kan., comes with a new and improved addition this season.

The main feature of the city park has always been the train. It also was the first and oldest ride for more than six decades. But, after 65 years, officials decided it was past time for improvements to the train. During the last 15 years, a retired local man kept the machine running with fabrication, welding and custom parts.

The city asked **Vietti Auto Body Shop** to fix them up and, with the help of **Watco**, paint new designs that are inspired by the city's historic railroad — the Kansas City Southern. The improvements included new sides to the train that were installed, sandblasted and now sport a brand-new paint job.

Holiday World, Santa Claus, Ind., opened for the season on May 3 with \$3.5 million in additions and improvements.

In addition to track improvements, The Voyage wooden roller coaster has a new control system. The Scarecrow Scrambler, a classic flat ride added to the park in 1975, has been restored. Guests also will find an electric car charging station; new food items such as loaded waffle fries, sausage on a stick, turkey bowls, pulled pork Sandwiches; 12 Icee flavors; new Daily Deals; and new entertainment, including a stunt show, a musical magic show and a strolling brass band.

Splashin' Safari opened for the season on May 10. New additions there include the **Proslide Technology**-supplied Tembo Falls, a waterslide complex with eight junior slides, including twisters, a helix, a mini-bowl and two racing slides; and Tembo Tides, a junior wave pool plus spray features for younger children; and mini-cabanas called Riverside Retreats.

A new elephant-themed water-play area for younger children will open in June. This fall, a large themed maze will be added to the activities during the park's Happy Halloween Weekends.

Imax Corp. on deal-making spree in India

MUMBAI, India — Thanks to partnerships it has formed with two exhibition chains in recent months, Imax Corp. has the big picture even more squarely in its sights in India.

The large-format film technology company has added 15 new IMAX-brand theaters to its network in the country since February, with at least another 25 contracted to open. Continuing the boom are new deals it has struck with Inox Leisure Ltd., a multiplex chain based in India, and Cinépolis India, a subsidiary of Cinépolis, the world's fourth-largest cinema exhibition company.

Imax's latest agreement with Inox calls for five new IMAX theaters. The screens will be added to new complexes - two of which are located in the city of Delhi and one each in Mumbai, Navi Mumbai and Gurugram.

"We are very encouraged by the rapid pace of our expansion in India, where we've nearly doubled our contracted network in the last year," said Imax CEO Richard L. Gelfond, noting

that the company's 2017 ticket sales in the country increased 78 percent over the previous year. "We're seeing an evolution in the world's third-largest box office market towards more premium, event-driven cinema.

"Imax is ideally positioned to work together with world-class theater chain Inox, which shares our commitment to quality and innovation."

Inox currently has an IMAX theater in Mumbai and another in Bangalore; both opened in 2017.

In its deal with Cinépolis India, Imax will outfit four theaters in new complexes in the following cities: Bangalore, Kolkata, Navi Mumbai and Thiruvananthapuram. Cinépolis India already has two successful IMAX theaters located in Pune and Mumbai.

Headquartered in New York, Toronto and Los Angeles, with additional offices in London, Dublin, Tokyo and Shanghai, Imax has 1,370 theater systems operating in 75 countries.

—Dean Lamanna

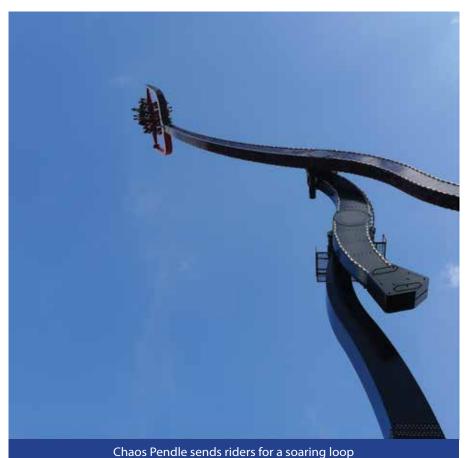


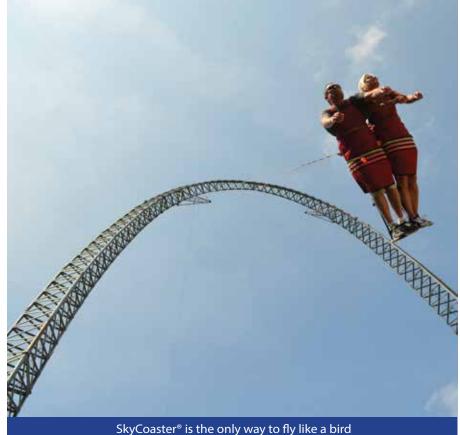
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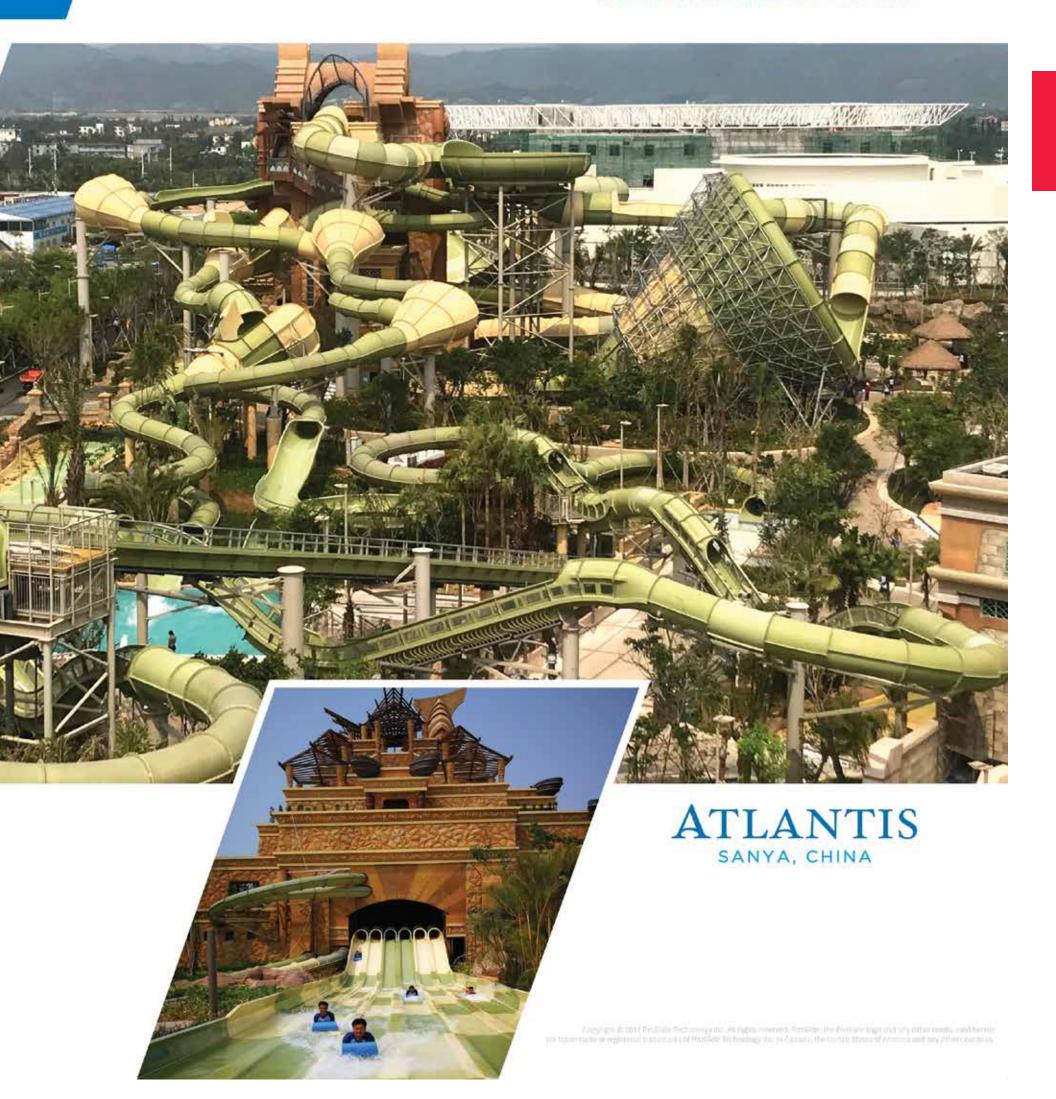
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Maryland State Fair honors chairman's 40 years of service

Scholarship program renamed in tribute to F. Grove Miller

AT: B. Derek Shaw bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

TIMONIUM, Md. — The Maryland State Fair & Agricultural Society, Inc., recently honored one of its own in a private ceremony on the grounds of the organization's suburban Baltimore property.

F. Grove Miller, who has served as chairman and president since 1978, received commendations at an event attended by family, friends, fellow board members and staff. Miller now will serve in the role of chairman emeritus of the fair's board and executive committee.

During the ceremony, held in late April, the fair also announced that its scholarship program would carry Miller's name







F. Grove Miller, shown with his wife, Arlene, with whom he will celebrate 70 years of marriage this year, served four decades as chairman and president of the Maryland State Fair. Vintage photos show Miller accompanying state dignitaries on a fairgrounds tour (IDC) in 1978 and, in 1981, and having just introduced the fair's new official flag. COURTESY MARYLAND STATE FAIR/STEPHEN MCDANIEL

"We are honoring Grove for decades of selfless service to the Maryland State Fair & Agricultural Society, and also for his role as farmer, advocate, statesman, role model and friend," said Andy Cashman, fair CEO. "Through various efforts over the past four decades, Grove has promoted and enhanced agriculture education for thousands of youth

who have participated in the Maryland State Fair. And he has enlightened hundreds of thousands of fairgoers of all ages on the importance of agriculture, **4-H/FFA** [Future Farmers of America] and thoroughbred horse racing to Maryland and the world."

The organization awards nine \$2,000 student scholarships annually. In addition to reward-

ing students for their accomplishments and helping them with their educational pursuits, the scholarships are designed to promote the importance of agriculture and participation in the Maryland State Fair.

"It is only fitting that our scholarship program be named after [Miller]," Cashman said.

In other news from the fair, **Gerry Brewster**, a longtime

board member, was promoted to chairman while **Donna Myers** was elected president. Myers is the first woman to serve in the role since the board's incorporation in 1878.

The 137th Maryland State Fair runs Aug. 23-Sept. 3. **Deggeller Attractions, Inc.**, out of Stuart, Fla., is the midway provider.

• marylandstatefair.com

First North American fling for portable Huss Frisbee

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. — **Strates Shows** recently debuted a **Huss** Frisbee ride at the **Horry County Fair**. The first portable version of the ride in North America, it is owned by an independent operator traveling with Strates.

The Frisbee, with an impressive capacity of 40, revolves and swings to a height of 67 feet while pulling a center rotation of 3 gs. Transported on four trailers, the ride requires two days for setup and 12-16 hours for teardown.

Only three other portable Frisbees have been produced. They are located in Germany, Asia and the Arabian Peninsula.

-B. Derek Shaw



A rare portable Huss Frisbee is making the rounds in North America via an independent operator traveling with Strates Shows. COURTESY STRATES SHOWS

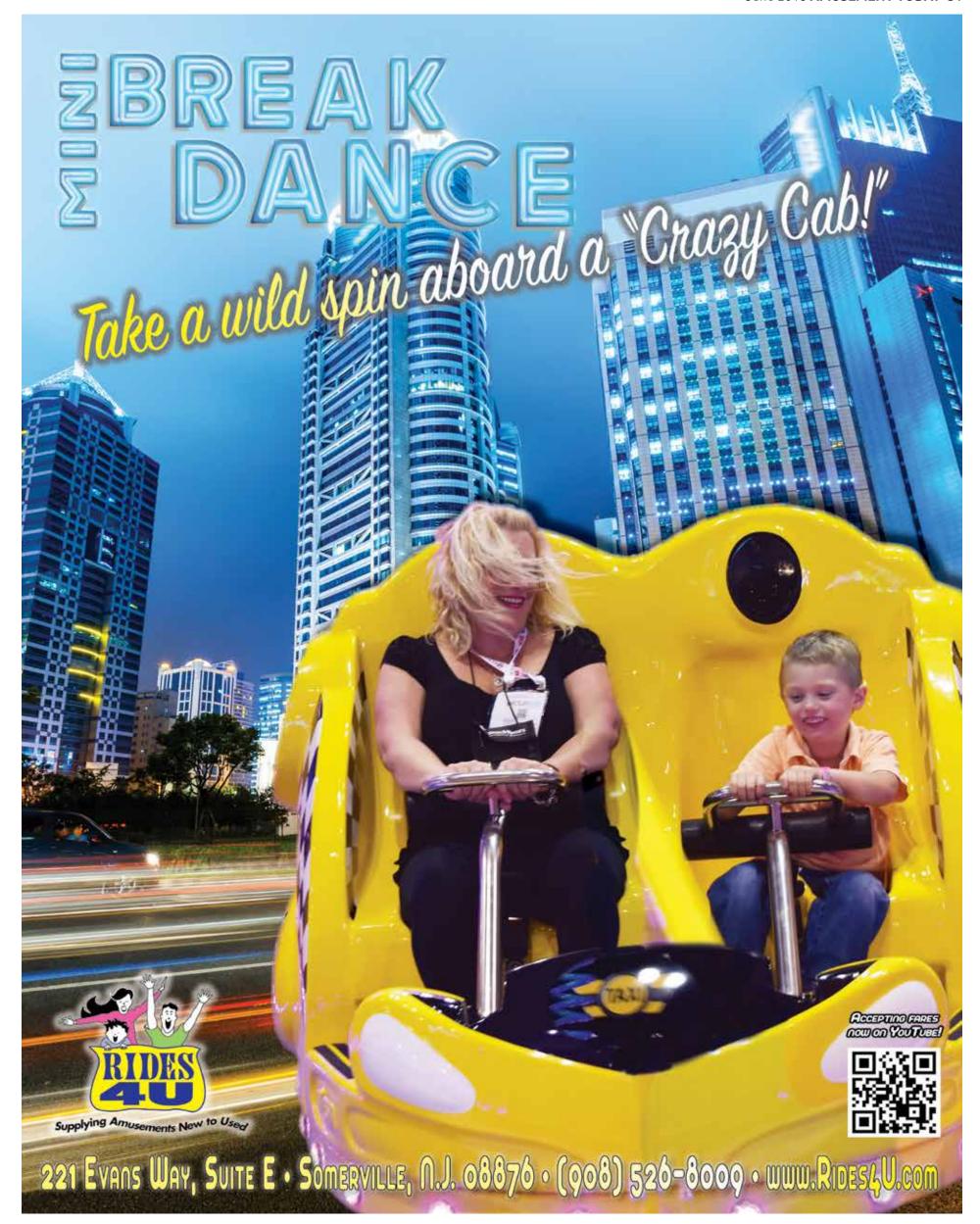
Outdoor recreation, amusement park-style





Parks in the U.S. Mid-Atlantic region that offer campgrounds and RV-friendly amenities attend the annual York RV Show in York, Pa. This year's gathering, held in early March, featured 33 campgrounds, 12 RV dealers and 20 camping-related vendors. Sharon Hoffman, flower crew manager at Knoebels Amusement Resort in Elysburg, Pa. (left), was on hand to promote the resort's two campgrounds, while Becky Sprout, manager of Dutch Wonderland's Old Stream campground, represented her Lancaster, Pa., destination. Nearly 6,000 people attended the three-day event. AT/B. DEREK SHAW













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MIDWAYSCENE

AT: B. Derek Shaw bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

The **Georgia National Fair & Agricenter** in Perry, Ga., is expanding its Georgia Grown building. Starting this year, it will be known as the Baby Barn — providing fairgoers the opportunity to witness live animal births throughout the event's Oct. 4-14 run.

Organizers are hoping for 11 dairy cow births at the center, or one birth for each day of the fair. Five hog births also are expected. The fair will have veterinarians on hand to discuss the process as each birth is happening and monitor the newborns afterward.

Organizers got the idea for the Baby Barn from the Miracle of Birth Center at the **Minnesota State Fair**. Pennsylvania's **York Fair**, the **Oklahoma State Fair** and the **New York State Fair** are among other fairs that feature animal birthing centers.

Georgia National has used **Reithoffer Attractions** as its midway partner since launching in 1990.

Scott Stoller, general manager of the Silver Dollar Fair in Chico, Calif., has been named general manager of the Colorado State Fair, effective July 1. Stoller replaces Sarah Cummings, who left late last year. Former Colorado State Fair General Manager Chris Wiseman has been serving in an interim capacity.

Cascade Sound & Stage Lighting, Inc. of Salem, Ore., recently added outdoor sound system products manufactured by Paris, France-based L-Acoustics to its lineup. The move enhances the company's technical support of regional concerts and touring performers. Cascade provides sound to numerous fairs and carnivals in the Pacific Northwest, including the Clark County Fair in Ridgefield, Wash., the Washington County Fair in Hillsboro, Ore., and the Oregon State Fair in Salem.

The International Independent Showmen's Museum in Gibsonton, Fla., continues to grow — and in upward fashion. Recently, a statue of Johann Petrussen ("The Viking Giant") that is eight feet and eight inches in height arrived at the facility, which has showcased artifacts from the American carnival and outdoor show business industries since 2013. Petrussen, a native of Iceland, joined Ringling Bros and Barnum & Bailey Circus in 1948.

A 45-year-old employee of Lithia, Fla.-based **Primetime Amusements, LLC**, died in late April after reportedly falling from the Ring of Fire ride at **Kiwanis Fair** in Alexander City, Ala. The incident occurred while the worker was said to have been inspecting a wheel assembly on the attraction and reportedly lost his grip, falling and sustaining head trauma. The incident happened prior to the midway's opening for the evening.

Virginia's **Orange County Fair** is changing its dates this year. Typically held in July, the four-day event has been moved up to June 20-23. The schedule change was prompted in part by concerns over midsummer heat and a storm that negatively impacted the operation last year. Previously marketed strictly as an agricultural event, the fair is adding a carnival operation, Walnut Cove, N.C.-based **Brinkley Entertainment, Inc.**, which will be providing up to 10 rides. Organizers are banking on the ride midway to generate additional revenue.

As a result of altercations involving eight juveniles at the **Britton Middle School Carnival** in Morgan, Calif., officials closed the midway two days early. The annual event has been used as a fundraiser for the school to help finance assemblies, field trips and dances as well as sports programs, athletic equipment and technology.

Butler Amusements, a local family-owned-and-operated business, was the carnival provider. The three sons of carnival owners Lance and Jill Moyer have attended the school, including one who is currently a student. To help off-set the school's loss of revenue from the shuttered carnival, a GoFundMe page has been set up: gofund-me.com/5y3v7f-britton-carnival-loss.

Bryan Blair, general manager of the Elkhart County 4-H Fair in Elkhart, Ind., has been named CEO of the York Fair and York Expo Center in York, Pa. Blair is assuming the post held by Michael Froehlich, who is retiring at the end of this year. In the interim, Blair will serve as COO effective Sept. 1. Prior to his four years in Elkhart, Blair spent the previous six with the Kentucky Exposition Center in Louisville, where he served as expositions administrator — managing sponsorships for the National Farm Machinery Show, Kentucky State Fair and the North American International Livestock Exposition.





QWATER PARKS & RECREATION

▶ Aquatica at SeaWorld San Antonio debuts waterslide complex from WhiteWater West — Page 36

Yas Waterworld to debut UAE's first Cinesplash 5D

AT: Jeffrey Seifert iseifert@amusementtoday.com

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates — Yas Waterworld is introducing a first-of-itskind attraction to its part of the Middle East. Called Cinesplash 5D and set to open this month, the concept takes 3D motion-based cinema to a whole new level with the addition of water — lots of it.

When Yas Waterworld opened in 2013, the water park's theme was based on an original and endearing story that celebrates Emirati culture and heritage. Visitors follow and participate in The Legend of the Lost Pearl featuring Dana, an Emirati girl who sets out on an important quest to help her village.

The Cinesplash attraction will enable the park to tell the unique story in a particularly vivid and memorable way.

According to the tale, divers from the village of Qaryat Al Jewana find what they believe to be the mother of all pearls — a giant one endowed with magical properties that bring wealth and prosperity to the village. When the pearl is swept away by a fierce storm, the village slowly loses its wealth and life for its people becomes difficult.

Dana, the young heroine, is supported and guided by animals, including a dolphin, a falcon and a camel, during her travels. She is also followed by bandits and a snake who want the pearl for themselves. The

story ends with her teardrops of innocence falling into an oasis that gives rise to the majestic pearl, which towers over the village — returning good fortune to its residents.

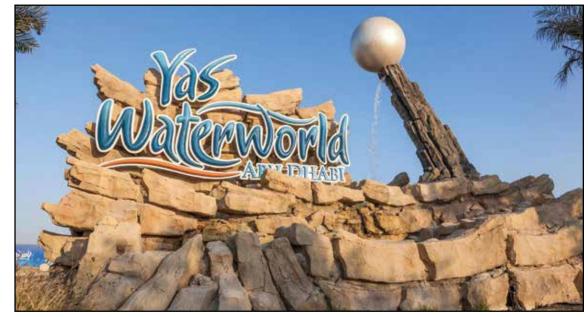
Guests will follow the characters they have come to know and love at Yas Waterworld over the past five seasons as The Legend of the Lost Pearl is presented through the immersive Cinesplash experience. The 3D film will allow audiences to follow Dana's fun and courageous quest across the sands of Abu Dhabi to recover her village's rightful beacon of prosperity, the mother pearl.

In keeping with a water park experience, the show's effects will include water sprays, water explosions, rain, waterfalls, water guns and fountains. Lighted bubbles in the theater walls and ceiling will be accompanied by extradimensional fog, leg-tickling and wind effects, plus three degrees of seat motion.

Guest "immersion" in the adventure takes a literal turn at the climax of the experience, when water floods the theater to a depth 15 inches.

The Cinesplash 5D theater and film is a project of Austria-based Attraction! GmbH, which creates media-based experience products for theme parks, science centers, family entertainment centers and other industry sectors.

"This is undoubtedly one of the most exciting new additions to our lineup of experi-



The mother pearl, visible throughout the park, is central to Yas Waterworld's theming. Below, divers retrieve the mother pearl from the ocean and return it to the village. COURTESY PHILIP LANGE, SHUTTERSTOCK; CINESPLASH

ences and we are very proud to be the first water park to introduce this attraction to our guests in the region," said Bianca Sammut, park general manager. "Providing visitors with fun aquatic adventures with local personality is at the heart of what we do at Yas Waterworld, and we are grateful for our team's hard work and relentless dedication in bringing this experience to life. We look forward to celebrating the legacy of our home through this dynamic experience."

Aside from Cinesplash, the legend-based theme of Yas Waterwold is carried through its architecture, with the giant pearl mounted atop a stone pillar located in the center to of the park. The characters, shops, restaurants and attrac-



tions all draw inspiration from the story.

An interactive game called SplashQuest invites children of all ages to participate in a treasure hunt through the park on their own quest to recover the lost pearl, all the

while learning about the incredibly rich, 7,000-year history of pearl diving in the Middle East. Oyster beds in the Persian Gulf were the premier sites for pearl diving, once the most lucrative profession in the region.

Featuring more than 40 rides, slides and attractions, including Bandit Bomber, a Vekoma suspended splash party coaster, Yas Waterworld also offers an underwater diving show and diversity of seasonal events.

The park has been recognized as one of the world's best water parks, garnering accolades and more than 30 awards from numerous international publications, travel organizations and associations, including the World Waterpark Association and IAAPA.

yaswaterworld.com





Dana, the young heroine of the legend behind the water park, interacts with some of her animal friends. COURTESY CINESPLASH









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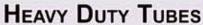








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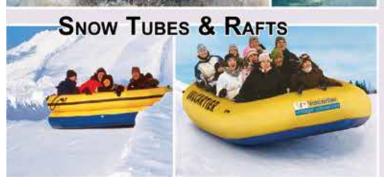














LILY PAD WALK



- COMPLETE LILY PAD WALK SETUP
 - · FOAM Lily Floats
 - · Overhead Netting
- Entry Pool Side Padding









SeaWorld San Antonio's Taumata Racer brings competitive fun

WhiteWater West supplies Aquatica waterslide complex

AT: Tim Baldwin tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — Having opened in 2012 with a diverse mix of waterslide attractions, animal encounters, water play areas and resort theming, Aquatica at SeaWorld San Antonio has installed its first major addition: Taumata Racer, a six-lane waterslide complex.

Like a similar attraction at **Aquatica Orlando**, the new ride was supplied by **WhiteWater West**.

Nestled between two other waterslide towers — Walhalla Wave and Tassie's Twisters / Hoo Roo Run — the 2018 addition utilizes an entirely new tower structure but did not require additional concrete pathways.

Taumata Racer, named for a famous hill in New Zealand, opened for spring break this past March. Riders in six lanes zoom downhill headfirst on foam bodysurfing mats. The



Standing proudly with Aquatica San Antonio's latest addition is Byron Surrett, park vice president; Josie Villela, associate communications manager; Lise Collins, director of operations; and Carl Lum, park president. Racing adds to the competitive fun (right) on Taumata Racer. AT/TIM BALDWIN

racing nature of the side-byside lanes makes it a competitive ride.

The waterslide sends riders first through an entry tunnel that makes a swooping, 180-degree turn, then straightens out to make two additional drops over the 375-foot slide length and 55-foot height difference.

Having found success at other Aquatica facilities,

Taumata Racer was a proven choice for the San Antonio facility.

"It's a family ride, so it has a 42-inch height requirement," said **Byron Surrett**, vice president, Aquatica San Antonio and Discovery Point. "That's key. Some of the other rides are 48 inches. This is a great ride the family can get on and play together and race each other down."



Lise Collins, the park's director of operations, found the staffing to be in line with efficient operations. "We only need one person dispatching at the top and then another person at the runout," she said.

"Also, a person is used to control the line at the bottom and to enforce attire requirements to make sure they don't get to the top and then have to be

▶ See AQUATICA, page 38









Taumata Racer features six lanes, with riders descending from an overall height of 55 feet. AT/TIM BALDWIN

► AQUATICA Continued from page 36

turned down. From a guest service standpoint, we want to take care of that at the bottom."

"Not only is it a great family experience, it provides another element for families to do while being in a resort-like atmosphere," Aquatica President **Carl Lum** told *Amusement Today*. "I think it is what Aquatica does so well.

"Folks come to SeaWorld for vacation, and Aquatica is another day of activity. They're spending two or three days here."

SeaWorld San Antonio created the second gate in 2012, although the park had previously included a water park in the SeaWorld admission. The transformation into Aquatica added major attractions and magnified the resort aspect, as well as incorporated animal encounters into the water park experience. Discovery Point, an animal interaction area where guests can swim and play with dolphins and other sea life, was added in 2016.

Taumata Racer becomes the sixth large waterslide experience at the park, in addition to a wave pool, lazy river and multiple children's areas and leisure pools.

"We were very happy to work with WhiteWater again," Surrett said. "They were a great contractor in terms of being on time and handling issues we had. We are very happy with it.

"One of the other things we really like about this ride is if you go around the park, most of our attractions are a type of tube ride. This is a body slide and it goes pretty fast. The line isn't too long because we can dispatch six at a time. That gives us a thrill type ride, but families can do it. We're looking forward to the summer days when we're really busy and can test what that throughput is. The numbers have been good so far."

As with everything at Aquatica, there is a distinct architectural look. "We try to stick with the theme," Surrett said. "The tops of the towers have sort of a butterfly look."

"If you have good design in your theming, you can have good value from a cost perspective and still have a good experience for the guest," Lum said. "You can do both."

•aquatica.com/san-antonio



NEWSSPLASH AT: Jeffrey L. Seifert

AI: Jeffrey L. Seifert jseifert@amusementtoday.com

Wibit Sports, the Germany-based company that is revolutionizing waterplay with its inflatable obstacle courses, is introducing its toughest challenge yet. Ninja Warrior UK is the star new attraction at Liquid Leisure Aqua Park in Datchet, England. The course, full of challenging obstacles, will allow brave and strong contestants to make it to the end and be the last man standing. The two-person challenge is a brand new feature, offering participants the chance to tackle aqua park obstacles while also racing against each other and the clock.

Liquid Leisure was already home to one of the world's largest Wibit aqua park obstacle courses. The complex offers wakeboarding and waterskiing on a state-of-the art cable lake, paddle boating, open water swimming and the massive Wibit floating obstacle course.

The Ninja Warrior UK Aqua Park is already open to the public and often sells out for the day. Packages are available to pair the Ninja Warrior course with the standard obstacle course, and/or waterski and wakeboard experiences.

Not to be outdone, The Adventure Dock Co., near the Albert Dock, Liverpool, England, is offering its version of a Ninja-style water course. The Adventure Dock utilizes floating obstacles from Seattle-based Union Aquaparks. This course consists of more than 50 elements, ranging from tame to tall and intimidating, providing varying challenges of physical and mental ability. One element, the Narrows, stands 10 feet tall and is 20 feet long. Its cliff-like challenge is designed to separate the meek from the mighty. As with most obstacle courses, visitors purchase a ticket for a limitedtime session. The Adventure Dock sells one hour sessions for £20 per person (US\$27). The ticket includes free use of a wetsuit, buoyancy aid and a helmet.

Epic Waters, the municipally-owned indoor water park in Grand Prairie, Texas, welcomed its 100,000th visitor less than 100 days after opening. The 80,000-square-foot facility has been gathering accolades from travel media throughout the U.S. The Travel Channel listed the park as one of the "8 most incredible indoor water parks," joining the ranks of toptier waterpark destinations across the U.S. Epic Waters was also selected by Texas Hill Country for inclusion on the tourism magazine's "5 Indoor Waterparks for the Most Fun in Texas" list, which singles out the top indoor waterpark destinations across the state. Located in the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington metro area, Epic Waters is said to be the largest indoor waterpark under a single retractable roof in North America. Noteworthy features include a curved retractable roof, three "first-in-the industry" slides, one of the longest-indoor lazy rivers in Texas, and a 4,000-square-foot arcade.

Atlantic Playland, Halifax, Nova Scotia, is getting a much-needed facelift. The park was sold last December, and the new owners are making significant changes to the park,

including rebranding it as **Atlantic Splash Adventure**. Six new waterslides are under constructions and the existing waterslides are being refurbished. Other renovations include upgrades to the park's buildings, landscaping, the food outlet and changing rooms. Atlantic Playland dates back to the 1970s, but had been looking rundown the last several years. The new owners saw potential in the property and wanted to keep it as an important part of the community.

El Paso, Texas, is in the midst of an ambitious aquatics plan that has added spray parks to the city along with an Olympic-sized swimming pool and a new indoor competitive pool. The city is also planning to add five water parks and a second Olympic-sized outdoor pool along with another indoor competitive pool by 2020. The five regional water parks will have amenities such as lazy rivers, climbing walls, lap pools and zero-depth water entry for all ages and skill levels. The parks are expected to cost approximately \$7.5 million each, representing a total investment of about \$37.5 million. Some of the parks will see renovations of existing properties including transforming pools that were more than 50 years old and were closed due to structural problems. The projects are being funded by \$473.2 million of quality of life bonds that voters approved in 2012.

Six Flags Hurricane Harbor, Arlington, Texas, debuted its new Splashwater Beach the first weekend in May. Designed for toddlers and pre-teens, the 40 interactive water features have a broad appeal and can be fun for thrill-seekers in training of all ages. The revamped 20,000-square-foot area, themed to a tropical oasis, also includes a large lounge area for parents to relax and watch over their children as they find new ways to get drenched. Six different water action zones, supplied by Splash Pads USA, are filled with a variety of geysers, sprays, water curtains and water cannons.

"This new tropical oasis will provide hours of water fun and strengthens our ongoing commitment to offer exciting, new experiences that can be shared with family and friends," said **Steve Martindale**, president, Six Flags Hurricane Harbor.

Lazy Splash Ranch, Kilgore, Texas, opened to the public at the end of April. The splashpad has been two years in the making and was partially funded by charitable donations from local residents and businesses. In 2016, Kilgore Mayor Ronnie Spradlin issued a \$200,000 challenge grant that resulted in more than a year of fundraising, volunteerism and dozens of in-kind work and gifts from the community. According to the mayor, the response from the community was significant, with concrete companies donating a portion of the concrete, and contractors offering to volunteer their services. Admission to the Lazy Splash Ranch is free; the splashpad is open weekdays from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Schlitterbahn Riverpark & Resort Corpus Christi sold at auction

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CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas Schlitterbahn Riverpark & Resort Corpus Christi has been sold to its largest creditor. Diamond Beach Holdings, an affiliate company of International Bank of Commerce (IBC), Laredo, Texas, purchased the property at a courthouse auction for \$20 million on May 1. There were no counter bids. IBC assumed ownership of the resort property which included a nine-hole golf course, the Veranda Restaurant, a 92-room hotel with meeting space and multiple bars, as well as the water park.

The 541 acres surrounding the park, which were to be developed into a San Antoniotype river walk, were foreclosed upon in 2017. **Axys Capital Credit** purchased that property through three separate transactions totaling \$18 million. Axys was on hand at this latest auction to observe the proceedings.

Keen-Summit Capital Partners, a New York City brokerage firm handled the bankruptcy sale. According to the details provided by the firm, the winning purchaser took title of the property with no "liens, claims, encumbrances" consistent with Section 363 of the bankruptcy code.

In 2015 IBC provided financing for development of the property to Upper Padre Partners, LP. A separate \$5 million infrastructure grant from the city was given to Upper Padre Partners. The city's type A grants can be awarded to companies that pledge to retain jobs, create jobs or construct buildings. Those grants are paid by a 0.125-cent city sales tax set aside for economic development. The city also provided a multi-year tax abatement to help with the project development and early stages of operation.

The water park opened in the summer of 2016, but filed for bankruptcy last May. When the limited partnership failed to make payments and defaulted on the \$28 million loan, IBC filed a lien against the property. Since IBC was owed more than the \$20 million auction price, the bank made a credit bid against the property's debt rather than putting up cash.

Although the ownership has changed, the resort will continue to operate as Schlitterbahn Riverpark and Resort under a licensing agreement with Schlitterbahn Waterparks & Resorts of New Braunfels Texas.

Jennifer Hoff, an officer with Diamond Beach Holdings, said in a news release: "We are pleased to be able to work with Schlitterbahn to keep the water park operating for the benefit of our customers and the community."

Corpus Christi Mayor Joe McComb stated that he was reassured by the bank's purchase of the property. He is hopeful that once operations resume and money is generated, the property can address the esti-

mated \$70,000 in outstanding utility payments. A few days later, Schlitterbahn made a payment to the city of \$56,267.25 covering the entire past due balance of its water bill.

The new owners agreed to delay the park opening for the season from April 28 until May 26, in time for the Memorial Day weekend. This gave Schlitterbahn the opportunity to follow its extensive annual inspection process, which included an independent third party inspec-

tion by an engineer.

There were no changes for those who had purchased tickets or season passes, or have booked reservations at the resort after May 26. Groups and individuals who had purchased tickets in advance for the days between April 28 and May 26 were able to go to another Schlitterbahn property or schedule dates for the Corpus Christi resort later in the season.

Shortly after the purchase, Diamond Beach Holdings announced the closure of the golf course to allow Schlitterbahn to concentrate on the core elements of the facility — mainly the water park. However, the City of Corpus Christi advised the new owners that the tax incentives granted in 2012 included an agreement that the golf course remain open. When advised about possible violations of the agreement, Diamond Beach Holdings said the golf course would reopen in order to comply with the agreement.





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Legoland Castle Hotel in Calif. throws open doors for guests

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CARLSBAD, Calif. — In royal ceremonial fashion, trumpeters announced the grand opening of Legoland Castle Hotel at Legoland California Resort on April 27.

Hundreds of media and special guests watched and applauded as knights on horses, a young girl squire and a young boy knight joined in a confetti-filled celebration of the new lodge — the entrance key for which was delivered via a swooping hawk to Merlin the Wizard.

The three-story, 250-room hotel — the second to open at the Greater San Diego destination in five years — immerses guests in a creative Lego world, with every room fully themed to create a castle fantasy. Guests can choose from three different room themes: Royal Princess, Knights and



Legoland Castle Hotel had its grand opening April 27. The 250-room lodge offers themed accommodations outfitted with more than 2,100 whimsical Lego models. COURTESY LEGOLAND CALIFORNIA RESORT

Dragons, and Magic Wizard.

Upon entering Legoland Castle Hotel, guests first step into the Grand Hall, where they are met by a Lego wizard before taking a magical levitating lift (elevator) to their adventure.

"Seeing guests walk into the Grand Hall for the first time is an awesome sight," said Frank Idris, hotel general manager. "Our guests have asked for an even more immersive experience [than the resort's first Lego-themed hotel], and that's exactly what we're giving them with Legoland Castle Hotel. Not only does every room tell a

story, every wall, floor and Lego model is designed to make guests feel like they're in an actual castle."

"We're excited to open a second hotel, having learned from the first how powerful the brand is," said **Peter Ronchetti**, resort general manager. "Not only will this hotel bring more people to the beautiful city of Carlsbad, which benefits local business, but we're adding more than 200 jobs — further boosting the economy in the region."

A royal Lego statue marks the entrance to Legoland Castle Hotel. It is just one of the lodge's 2,100-plus Lego models created from more than three million bricks.

In the Dragon's Den, the hotel's full-service, sit-down restaurant, guests can watch chefs preparing their food and enjoy entertainers within a Lego model-accented dining atmosphere. Breakfast is

included with each guest's stay and includes made-toorder items along with a buffet.

The Royal Courtyard offers children and families multiple play areas, a giant movie screen, a resort-style pool with interactive water features, a hot tub and a tented stage for live plays and shows.

In other Legoland California news, Sea Life Aquarium has opened two new exhibits: "Sea at Night," showcasing the ocean's bioluminescence, and "Shark Mission!," an interactive educational display utilizing three giant touch screens to educate kids about sharks and rays.

This month, Lego *Star Wars* Days — with costume contests, Miniland scavenger hunts, brick-building challenges and more — return to the park for two weekends: June 2-3 and 9-10.

•legoland.com

Premier Parks named operator of Santa Monica's Pacific Park

SANTA MONICA, Calif. — **Premier Parks, LLC**, has become the new operator of **Pacific Park** on the historic **Santa Monica Pier**.

The iconic, two-acre seaside amusement park, which features 12 rides, 14 midway games, an ocean-front food plaza and beachside retail, joins Premier's portfolio of 15 theme and water parks across the U.S. and Canada. The properties, many of which bear the **Wet 'n' Wild** name, enjoy a combined annual attendance of approximately six million.

"Pacific Park is a terrific addition to our diverse portfolio of theme and water park properties," said **Kieran Burke**, chairman, president and CEO of Premier Parks. "Its location on the Santa Monica Pier, its worldwide recognition and [its reputation as a] top locals' destination provides us with a unique opportunity."



Burke

Pacific Park's present management team, led by **Jeff Klocke**, vice president and general manager, will

continue the attraction's daily operations under the new ownership.

Mary Ann Powell, who joined Pacific Park as CEO in 1997 and acquired the park's operating company in 2012, achieved continuous year-over-year revenue growth at the location. She also streamlined operations — creating an industry-leading customer service program, opening 25 rides and attractions, refurbishing the midway games area and branding the oceanfront food plaza.

"I am grateful to the amazing team at Pacific Park and the local community for their support in making it a family favorite," Powell said. "I'm so proud to be a part of the overwhelming success that it is today."

While Premier Parks, LLC now operates Pacific Park, the ground lease and physical assets are owned by **EPR Properties** of Kansas City, Mo. EPR is a specialty real estate investment trust (REIT) that invests in properties in select market segments which require unique industry knowledge. Its total investments, primarily covering the entertainment, recreation and



Santa Monica's oft-filmed Pacific Park has joined the operations portfolio of Premier Parks, LLC. COURTESY PACIFIC PARK/FABIAN LEWKOWICZ

education segments, exceed \$6.6 billion.

Premier Parks' Burke formerly served as chairman and CEO of **Six Flags Entertainment Corp.**

—Dean Lamanna



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Industry consultant International Theme Park Services turns 35

CINCINNATI, Ohio — International Theme Park Services, Inc. (ITPS), a leading independent, full-service amusement and leisure industry consulting company, marked its 35th anniversary in March.

Founded in 1983 by **Dennis Spiegel**, current president of ITPS, the company has two vice presidents, **Pam Westerman** and **Shawn Haas**, who have been on the team for 30 and 23 years, respectively. ITPS has traveled to countries on all five continents to help clients achieve their dream of opening a successful leisure attraction.

The company's motto, "Where Fun is a Serious Business," rings true today even more than it did when ITPS was formed. "No matter where we go, whether here in the U.S., or in China, Vietnam, Russia, Spain, Brazil or Ukraine, the common denominator is that people want to have fun,"

Speigel said. "In the end, that is what it is all about."

Speigel started his career at age 13 as a ticket taker at Cincinnati's **Coney Island** amusement park, where he worked his way up to the position of assistant general manager. He became part of a leadership contingent for **Taft Broadcasting Co.** that planned, developed and opened **Kings Island** theme park just north of Cincinnati.

Speigel was an integral part of the Kings Island management team, which also built and operated **Kings Dominion** in Doswell, Va. Having advanced to vice president of international operations for Taft, he observed a need for a consulting company that could provide assistance to people worldwide who wanted to plan and build theme parks and leisure attractions.

ITPS has since been involved with over 500

projects in 50 countries.

"Every project is important," said Pat Westerman. "A mega-destination and a standalone attraction may have different impacts financially, but their importance to the backbone of our industry is equal. That's why we have worked with mega projects like **Lotte World** in Seoul, South Korea, and **Enchanted Kingdom** in the Philippines, and also with regional projects like the **Newport Aquarium** in Kentucky and the **Toledo Zoo**."

With advanced technologies and continued development in Asia, Eastern Europe and around the world, Speigel expects ITPS to remain busy for years to come.

"At the end of the day, what we do is put smiles on people's faces," he said. "It doesn't get better than that."

—Dean Lamanna

S&S Worldwide moving ahead with relaunch of Steeplechase

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LOGAN, Utah — With some striking ride vehicles on display, **S&S Worldwide** hosted one of the most well-attended press announcements at **IAAPA Attractions Expo 2017** in Orlando last November.

The company, having acquired the rights to **Arrow** and its catalogue, had been looking to reintroduce some classic rides from the past. After some consideration, the Steeplechase was chosen as the project on which to move forward.

S&S worked with the U.K.'s **Blackpool Pleasure Beach** and got the park's feedback on relaunching the ride. The park enthusiastically encouraged S&S to do so because of the ride's popularity at the seaside park.

The obstacle to overcome was the height requirement: 50 inches, precluding ridership by kids

"We've been able to lower the ride height to a 42-inch minimum," said **Preston Perkes**, director of administration, S&S. "We've taken the center of gravity and brought you closer to the





The Steeplechase's dips, dives and curves take place on a single rail. Racing (right) gives the ride an added measure of interactive exhilaration. COURTESY S&S WORLDWIDE

track. That allows us to do some things a little more dynamically with the track design and vehicle design."

To bring safety up to modern standards, the engineers worked at restraining riders with more than just the strap in the past and have implemented a lap bar without losing the feel of riding a horse. Riders will still straddle the saddle for that aura of authenticity but can now do so securely. The restraint fits people of various heights and sizes, so that is no longer a barrier.

Horses are the obvious theme, but S&S is making several theming options available, including dinosaurs.

Arrow produced only

two such rides. The original at **Knott's Berry Farm** sported a motorcycle theme and was eventually modified into soap box derby vehicles for higher throughput. Blackpool has continued to maintain the Steeplechase motif since the ride was built in 1977.

Historians can trace the origins of the ride to the beginning of the 20th century. As early as 1908, **Steeplechase Park** in Brooklyn, N.Y., had multiple lanes of riders on horses traversing the single rail.

As the new S&S version is in development, the manufacturer can give clients numerous options. In addition to multiple lanes, a more compact model requiring less ground space uses transfer sections of track—allowing riders on two tracks switch lanes and bypass the station as the next set of riders are taking their positions. By switching lanes, passengers can ride both sides before their ride comes to an end.

S&S has a prototype track set up at the company's new headquarters. During the grand opening of the facility, some industry professionals, including staff members from *Amusement Today*, asked to hop aboard. The consensus was that the ride was exceptionally smooth, and that it offers a great family-friendly experience with the right amount of thrills.

"We give our team excellent marks for engineering a track, vehicle and braking system which produced predicted results," said **Gerald Ryan**, executive director of sales administration for S&S. "We've tested riders from small kids to grandparents, and they have fully enjoyed the experience of the ride."

Since the IAAPA debut, S&S executives have said interest has come from parks of all sizes, including family entertainment centers, midsize parks and larger park chains.

The coaster can feature various drive system options, including chain, cable and magnetics.

"The simplicity of the vehicle made it quick to assemble and easy to inspect and maintain," Ryan said. "The project gave us some excellent development ideas which will increase the S&S product lineup."

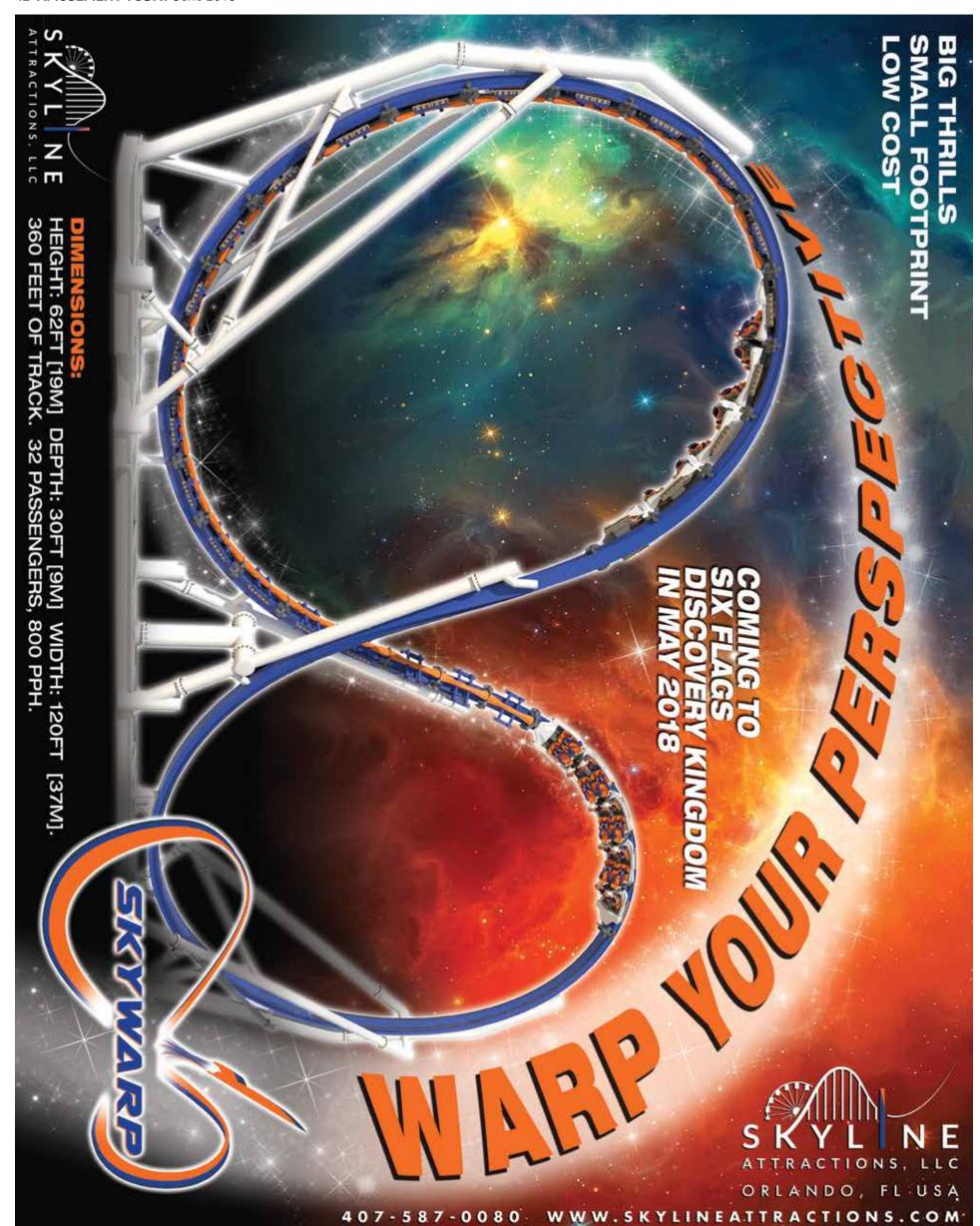
•s-s.com



The Steeplechase is a reintroduction of a classic attraction from Arrow's past. AT/TIM BALDWIN



Amusement Today's Tim Baldwin and Gary Slade take the Steeplechase prototype for a spin.
COURTESY QUINN CHECKETTS



Women INFLUENCE

Anya Tyler

Design Engineer, Skyline Attractions, LLC Orlando, Fla.

A view from the top...

Anya Tyler is a design engineer for Skyline Attractions LLC, based in Orlando, Fla. The company debuted its first product at the November 2014 International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Expo. That ride, Strike-U-Up, was the first under the heading of GamesURide.

Even though it was 2014 when the first Skyline Attractions ride debuted, those who founded and work at the company had many years of cumulative experience in the industry.

Accomplishments and affiliations...

- •Graduated with a Bachelor of Science in engineering with a mechanical specialty.
- Participates in events associated with IAAPA as well as Themed Entertainment Association (TEA).

Youthful dream, bright future

ORLANDO, Fla. — Anya Tyler knew even before she was tall enough to ride a roller coaster that she wanted to design and build one.

Her family used to take summer trips to Kings Island, Ohio. She had to stand by and watch her older brothers, Daniel and Chris Lehner, ride many of the rides she couldn't. But, as soon as she was tall enough, they took her aboard The Beast.

That was it, she said.

"That was the ride and the moment that was a huge influence on me," Tyler said. "It defined the moment and gave me inspiration to actually do this. I have a picture of that coaster on my wall right now.

"I was always really good at math and science," she said. "And, I could do puzzles. People used to get mad at me because I would find the pieces so quickly."

She also received a lot of family encouragement. However, her biggest supporter, her brother Daniel, passed away when she was 17 years old.

"That sort of changed things for me," she said. "He was really my main cheerleader. It made me re-evaluate my life."

The re-evaluation didn't take her away from her dream of being in the amusement industry; it just changed her perspective.

"I am not the type to really want to draw the squiggly lines of a coaster," she said. "I want to be in this fun industry and make people smile. I don't think people have as much fun as they should."

As she continued with her dreams, she attended a small engineering school, the Colorado School of Mines, Golden, Colo. By her junior year, she became heavily involved in her major. When she was 21 years old, she attended her first IAAPA convention and trade show.

"I had been doing some research online about companies and associations," she said. "I also had met Evan Souliere when he was with Great Coasters International. That company was holding a coaster workshop and I attended."

He encouraged her to visit the IAAPA event. She did, and her mother, Dana Beardson, went with her.

"Some people remember me being the student who brought my mother to the tradeshow," Tyler said

But that was okay with her. She was able to network with people in the industry. She had no idea just how big it was until that year. She received a lot of friendly responses and maybe a few not so friendly. But she got through it.

She graduated from the engineering school a year later in 2011, when she was 22 years old. She applied for and got a job working for Don McCrary at Dream Park International, a company which planned

and designed theme parks, water parks and entertainment centers.

"He really needed the help at the time so he gave me a chance," she said. "I ended up going to Singapore twice in that first year to supervise the construction of a water park. It was quite interesting being a blond hair and blue-eyed girl over there.

"It was definitely a thing," she said. "I got the looks, and I got questioned sometimes about what I was doing on the site.

"It is not as unusual here for a woman to be on a construction site, but it is in some other countries," she said.

After Dream Park, Tyler went to work at Great Coasters International. Her work there included overseeing projects.

Chris Gray, Jeff Pike and Evan Souliere were at Great Coasters at the time. When the three became partners and started Skyline Attractions, Tyler became a part of their team.

At Skyline she is a design engineer in charge of the mechanical team.

"Since we are a small company, we all pretty much do a little bit of everything," she said.

Tyler doesn't know what the next 10 years might bring.

"But, I do hope I am still in this industry and I hope I am still working at Skyline," she said.

In her seven years in the industry, Tyler has seen, "a huge demand for things to be new and different. I also see a huge gap in age in people in the industry. There are those that have been in the industry for 40 years or so and then there are young people coming out of college wanting to get in."

Whatever her future holds, Anya Tyler will make sure it brings smiles to many faces.

—Pam Sherborne





In mid-May, Amusement Today was invited to try out Alien: Descent, a new free-roaming VR attraction located in The Outlets at Orange mall, south of Anaheim. Occupying a storefront adjacent to GameStop and an AMC Theatres multiplex, the experience - featuring atmospheric, fully acted pre-show preparation and VR play set within the Alien movie universe finds participants joining an elite military squad sent to investigate a distress signal from an outer space mining outpost. The experience features wireless, backpack-free technology developed by Pure Imagination Studios, which worked in partnership with FoxNext and FoxNext Destinations on this ambitious setup. (Although some presentation details, such as a scoring mechanism for Xenomorph kills, were yet to be added or still being refined, this columnist — an admitted Alien franchise fan — found the scenario ideally matched to the VR environment and exited at once shaken, satisfied and impressed.)

Kennywood amusement park in West Mifflin, Pa., which launched its 120th season in late April, has dived into the realm of VR coastering. After test runs last fall during Phantom Fright Nights, the VR add-on for the park's linear synchronous motor-launched steel coaster Sky Rocket is ready for prime time. Riders can choose between the basic ride experience or the VR-enhanced one, which matches the coaster's sensations with action in a fictional world. Four riders per 12-seat train can upgrade to the experience utilizing the Samsung Gear VR headset.

StarVR Corp. announced in March a deployment of its location-based VR entertainment solution at Emaar Entertainment's elaborately staged, two-level, 75,000-square-foot VR Park at The Dubai Mall. Working in tandem with Starbreeze Studios, the park's leading content partner, StarVR is providing end-to-end VR solutions with customized hardware, onsite installation, operator training and after service for the majority of Starbreeze's attractions. StarVR's technology includes a premium head-mounted display built for enterprise and professional entertainment use with 5K resolution and a 210-degree field of view.

AR headset manufacturer Magic Leap has raised another \$461 million in funding, largely from The Public Investment Fund, Saudi Arabia's sovereign investment arm. The company has raised a total of at least \$2.3 billion from various sources. Its much-awaited, five-years-indevelopment AR headset, Magic Leap One, still is expected to be available to the public this year — although the company has not offered a specific release date.

Bandai Namco has lowered the age restriction for its VR Zone Arcade in Shinjuku, Tokyo, Japan, from 13 to seven for many of its VR games. The nine available games include Dragon Ball VR, Evangelion VR and the roomscale Ghost in the Shell: Arise Stealth Hounds. Not among them is the popular Mario Kart VR (which remains at 13 and up), and kids between seven and 13 still require a guardian's permission to play.

Seattle area-based VRstudios, a leading provider of large-scale, free-roaming, multiplayer VR solutions for location-based entertainment (LBE), has unveiled VRcade PowerPlay, its flagship, next-gen competitive team eSport for LBE VR arenas. It can be dynamically configured with millions of distinct combinations of multiplayer game modes, arm cannon presets and battlefield configurations. VRcade PowerPlay is designed to be played by two to eight eAthletes and is managed by the VRcade Attraction Management Platform. It runs on the VRcade Arena system, which requires no additional physical infrastructure or props.

In other VRstudios news, the company has added VRcade Atom to its wireless, multiplayer product line. A cost-effective and efficient turnkey solution with a small footprint, it includes everything an LBE venue of any size needs to add room-scale, free-roaming, multiplayer VR attractions. Built on the VRcade Attraction Management Platform, the Atom is being billed as the first LBE VR turnkey solution integrating head-mounted display technology, wireless transmission and positional tracking from industry leaders including Hewlett-Packard, HTC and TPCAST. The Atom can be installed as an individual system or in combination with other Atoms, VRcade Zones or VRcade Arena systems.

Allowing as many as half a dozen players to interact in a cartoon virtual world, the new kid-friendly (age seven and up) social VR experience SlimeZone — from the creative teaming of Nickelodeon and Imax Corp. — has opened at IMAX VR Centres worldwide. After players choose their respective avatars, they can blast virtual slime, play simple games such as ping pong and basketball, create Tilt Brush-style works of art using the 3D paintbrush, and watch Nickelodeon cartoons such as SpongeBob Squarepants.

The LBE / VR wizards at The Void and their partners at ILMxLAB have brought Star Wars: Secrets of the Empire to the Grand Canal Shoppes at The Venetian and The Palazzo casino hotels in Las Vegas. State-of-the-art VR technology transports guests deep into the Star Wars universe — where, under the orders of the rebellion, teams of four guests must work together to infiltrate an Imperial base disguised as stormtroopers. The goal is to navigate through the base to steal critical intelligence, with help from familiar Star Wars characters along the way.

Poland-based VR experience creator **Matrix** Technology is opening a new attraction at Mall of America in Bloomington, Minn., this summer. To be located on the west end of the mall's first level, near Nickelodeon Universe, Matrix 5D Technology will feature two adventures: Mysterious Underground, a 5D theater experience wherein thrill-seekers, wearing 5D glasses, will ride on a trolley in an abandoned mine, dodging rocks and debris and escaping from everything lurking beneath the earth's surface; and Shark Attack, which combines a motion platform effect with a narrated aquarium experience that explores sea life — and builds to a surprising "fin"-ish.

PEOPLE

Zamperla Group, a global leader in the design and manufacture of amusement rides, has announced the departure of Valerio Ferrari, who served as CEO of the company's Boonton, N.J.-based Central Amusement International, LLC, the operating entity of amusement facilities including New York City's Victorian Gardens in Central Park and Luna Park at Coney Island.



Ferrari had been with Zamperla for 27 years. Alberto Zamperla, CEO and president of Zamperla, will oversee the development of the Italian company's stateside branch.

Award-winning amusement industry veteran Mike Fijas has joined Central Florida-based Innovative Attraction Management, Consulting and Risk Prevention, LLC, as director of operations. With a wealth of experience in both the domestic and international markets, Fijas, who got his start in the business in 1986 as a ride operator for Darien Lake Theme Park & Camping Resort in upstate New York, has managed parks in the



U.S., Thailand and the UAE. He also has served on several industry committees — including as chairman of the World Waterpark **Association**'s Safety Committee.

BDR Design Group of Cincinnati, Ohio, specialists in international leisure and entertainment design since 1983, has welcomed back industry design veteran Jeff Lichtenberg after a 25-year hiatus. Lichtenberg is serving as senior project designer / director in his return role at the company.

Wess Long has been named president of StarGuard Elite a comprehensive lifeguard training and aquatic risk prevention

organization based in Windermere, Fla., with international clients including water parks and recreation facilities. For over 20 years, Long has worked in numerous capacities throughout the aquatics industry, driving safety standards and consistently innovating to evolve aquatic operations. Long has led at different levels for top water parks including those at Walt Disney top water parks including those at Walt Disney

World and Palace Entertainment's California Raging Waters loca-



tions in Sacramento and San Jose.

Longtime SeaWorld San Diego operations employee, education tour guide and show host Tim Roberts has been promoted

to production supervisor at the park. With theatrical and musical performance experience in locations as diverse as Macau, New York City and Disney California Adventure in Anaheim, Roberts pitched the concept for Electric Ocean to SeaWorld park leadership in 2016; subsequently, the presentation opened at SeaWorld's San Diego and Orlando properties and last year



won IAAPA's Brass Ring Award for Most Creative Property-wide

Event. (It debuts at SeaWorld San Antonio this summer.) As the new games, arcades and attractions manager for Santa

Cruz Beach Boardwalk, Tony Sanders oversees a bustling year-round operation encompassing more than 300 video and redemption games, 35 midway games, an 18-hole mini-golf course, a laser tag arena, and popular attractions such as Fright Walk and Laser Maze. His extensive experience in amusements includes positions with Merlin Entertainments, Frontier City, Alabama



Adventure, SeaWorld Orlando, Dollywood and Six Flags Atlanta.

Baynum Painting, Inc., of Newport, Ky., has welcomed Melissa Timco as director of the company's amusement park industry division. She will oversee all services the company provides to parks and other amusement industry clients. With a proven track record of maintaining strong industry relationships, Timco has been actively involved in several major trade associations (including IAAPA, NAARSO and AIMS) and



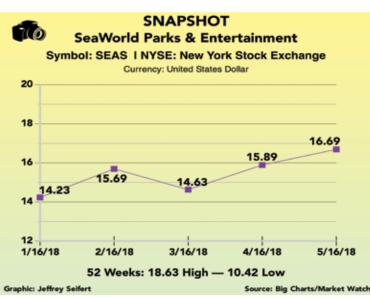
has more than 10 years of professional experience gained through prior positions with Premier Rides, Inc., and Ralph S. Alberts Co., Inc.

MARKET WATCH

COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 05/16/18	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
The Blackstone Group	вх	NYSE	31.29	37.52	29.32
Merlin Entertainments Group / Legoland	MERL	LSE	368.10	537.50	317.10
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	65.40	72.48	59.66
Comcast Corp./NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	32.55	44.00	30.43
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	105.04	113.19	96.2
Dubai Parks & Resorts	DXBE:UH	DFM	0.37	0.87	0.37
EPR Properties	EPR	NYSE	58.39	75.55	51.87
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	9010	TYO	3185.00	3400.00	2232.00
Haichang Holdings Ltd.	HK:2255	SEHK	2.10	2.30	1.55
Leofoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	6.66	8.51	6.58
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	31.92	38.41	29.53
Parques Reunidos Servicios Centrales S.A.	ES:PQR	MCE	13.98	17.45	11.69
Sansei Technologies, Inc.	JP:6357	TYO	1321.00	1539.00	827.00
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	16.69	18.63	10.42
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	63.77	70.44	51.25
DreamEast Group Ltd.	HK:0593	SEHK	11.18	15.88	8.46
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	648.00	688.00	540.00
Village Roadshow	AU:VRL	ASX	2.20	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 Excange, Corp.; TYO/TSE, Tokyo Stock Exchange
—SOURCES: Bloomberg.com; Wall Street Journal



DIESEL PRICES Region As of Char

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Region (U.S.)	As of 05/14/18	Change from 1 year ago	
East Coast	\$3.236	+\$0.641	
Midwest	\$3.175	+\$0.696	
Gulf Coast	\$3.012	+\$0.630	
Mountain	\$3.316	+\$0.690	
West Coast	\$3.482	+\$0.754	
California	\$3.929	+\$1.027	

CURRENCY

On 05/17/18 \$1 USD =

0.8464 EURO

0.7409 GBP (British Pound)110.23 JPY (Japanese Yen)

1.0003 CHF (Swiss Franc)

1.3342 AUD (Australian Dollar)

1.2830 CAD (Canadian Dollar)

BUSINESS WATCH

SeaWorld reports strong 2018 first quarter

ORLANDO, Fla. — **SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.** (NYSE: SEAS), reported on May 8 its financial results for the first quarter of 2018. First quarter 2018 highlights are:

- •Total revenue increased by \$30.8 million or 16.5% to \$217.2 million from the first quarter of 2017.
- •Attendance increased by 0.4 million or 14.9% to 3.2 million guests from the first guarter of 2017.
- •Net loss was \$62.8 million, compared to a net loss of \$61.1 million in the first quarter of 2017. Net loss includes approximately \$21.5 million of pre-tax expenses associated with separation-related costs and a legal settlement accrual in the first quarter of 2018.
- •Adjusted EBITDA was a loss of \$0.1 million, an improvement of \$30.2 million over the first quarter of 2017 and the highest first quarter Adjusted EBITDA the company has reported since 2013.

Cedar Fair reports 2018 first quarter results

SANDUSKY, Ohio — **Cedar Fair Entertainment Company** (NYSE: FUN), announced on May 2 results for the first quarter ending March 25, 2018. For the first quarter ended March 25, 2018, Cedar Fair's net revenues increased to \$55 million, compared with \$48 million in the first quarter ended March 26, 2017. The solid increase in revenues for the current-year first quarter was driven by increases in both attendance and average in-park guest per capita spending. The operating loss for the quarter was \$76 million, comparable with the operating loss reported in the first quarter of 2017. The increased revenues noted above, were partially offset by a \$6 million increase in operating costs and expenses, which totaled \$124 million for the first quarter of 2018.

- •The company announced that it had finalized a deal to build a 129-room **SpringHill Suites** hotel adjacent to **Carowinds**, which should come on line in late 2019.
- •The company also announced today the declaration of a cash distribution of \$0.89 per LP unit. The distribution will be paid on June 15, 2018, to unitholders of record as of June 4, 2018.

JR Automation acquires Setpoint companies

HOLLAND, Mich. — **JR Automation**, a leading provider of intelligent automated manufacturing and distribution technology solutions headquartered in Holland, Michigan, announced on April 11 that it has acquired **Setpoint Systems** and **Setpoint, Inc.** The Setpoint companies are based in Ogden, Utah, and create automation solutions for the ecommerce, amusement and other industries.

"We look forward to working closely with the Setpoint businesses, leveraging their tremendous capabilities to further build out our world-class global industrial automation solutions platform," JR Automation Chairman and CEO **Mike DuBose** says. "As part of JR Automation, Setpoint Systems and Setpoint Inc. will become even more effective, bringing together their history of excellence and innovation with JR Automation's global footprint and capabilities. This is an exciting step for JR Automation, the Setpoint businesses, our customers, partners and teams."

"With the backing of JR Automation, Setpoint will be able to meet the needs of our customers even more effectively and increase our team's ability to lead the industry in developing innovative solutions," said **Mark Coy**, president & CEO of Setpoint Systems.

In a joint statement, **Joe Van Den Berghe** and **Joe Cornwall**, coprincipals of Setpoint Inc., expressed enthusiasm for the acquisition. "Today is an exciting day for our team at Setpoint. Our customers, employees and vendors will be the long-term beneficiaries of this combination. We have found the JR Automation values, culture and capabilities to be closely aligned with those of Setpoint and we look forward to being part of the newly broadened JR Automation team."







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DEAL 2018 trade show unleashes deluge of VR tech on Dubai

AT: Dean Lamanna dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — As with other industry trade shows during the last 12 months, **Dubai Entertainment**, **Amusement & Leisure Exhibition** 2018 (DEAL) — the largest gathering of its type in the Middle East — saw a wave of virtual reality (VR) and active entertainment offerings wash across its exhibition floor.

According to show organizer International Expo-Consults, LLC, these two product areas garnered the most visitor interest during the April 9-11 event at the Dubai World Trade Centre. Overall, this year's DEAL attracted nearly 315 exhibitors from more than 40 countries.

VR in a range of applications for all ages created the most buzz.

"Virtual reality and augmented reality are rapidly gaining in popularity around the world, with the immersive technologies ... providing unique and exhilarating experiences," said **Damien Latham**, CEO of exhibitor **Emaar Entertainment**, which

msi G



Virtual reality technology in a variety of applications, including motion simulator-enhanced ones, was one of the big stars at **DEAL 2018** in April. COURTESY INTERNATIONAL EXPO-CONSULTS, LLC

owns and manages the 7,000-square meter VR Park at The Dubai Mall. "Our park has been specifically designed to cater to the whole family, with rides and experiences that seek to blur the lines between perception and reality in a game-changing attraction."

Kyona, a first-time DEAL exhibitor, highlighted the world premiere of Koliseum Soccer VR, which translates foosball into a surprise-packed gaming experience. A complete universe surrounds the virtual stadium, wherein a crowd cheers as play-

ers run, dribble and perform near-acrobatic moves. The gameplay requires no special skills — making it an ideal general-appeal attraction for malls, VR arcades and other high-traffic venues.

On the active entertainment front, vendors promoting everything from trampoline parks and climbing walls to rope courses and ziplines were visible throughout the exhibition hall. **Zlatimira Bancheva**, head of sales for Bulgaria-based **Walltopia**, pointed out the category's attributes in the form of physi-

cal / mental challenges and sense of achievement.

"The first key difference from static entertainment [is] the adrenaline rush," said Bancheva, whose company has 1,500-plus climbing wall and other active entertainment projects in more than 50 countries. "In combination with a completely safe environment, it creates an incredibly strong relationship between the visitor and the venue. With endless design opportunities, great [return on investment] and optimal space utilization, there is still a vast variety of

active entertainment attractions yet to be built."

Added Sharif Rahman, CEO of International Expo-Consults: "People are becoming more concerned with leading a healthy lifestyle, and extreme and alternative sport activities are more attractive than ever. Entertainment is no longer just about going to the movie theater — it's about doing something engaging and exciting."

DEAL returns to the Dubai World Trade Centre March 24-26, 2019.

• dealmiddleeastshow.com

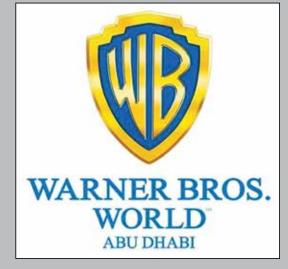
Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi sets July opening on Yas Island

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates — One of the largest indoor theme parks in the world now has an opening date: July 25.

Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi, developed by regional attractions leader Miral in partnership with Warner Bros. Consumer Products and located on amusement-laden Yas Island, features six immersive lands: DC's Metropolis and Gotham City, as well as Cartoon Junction, Bedrock, Dynamite Gulch and Warner Bros. Plaza.

"The park is another great addition to Yas Island's immersive experiences and award-winning attractions," said His Excellency **Mohamed Khalifa Al Mubarak**, chairman of Miral. "It gives us great pride to have partnered with Warner Bros. Consumer Products to launch the world's largest Warner Bros.-branded indoor theme park right here in Abu Dhabi.

The 1.65 million-square-foot park brings together iconic Warner Bros. characters and stories under one roof. It features 29 state-of-the-art rides plus interactive family-friendly attractions and live entertainment, as well as themed dining



and shopping outlets.

"Delivering experiences and products that continue our brands' storytelling and excite and engage fans is our primary goal," said **Pam Lifford**, president, Warner Bros. Consumer Products. "We have worked tirelessly with our partners at Miral to faithfully bring iconic franchises such as DC Entertainment, Looney Tunes and Hanna-Barbera to life."

Tickets are available at wbworld.com.

—Dean Lamanna

Saudi Arabia announces new entertainment partners

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — Within days of an announcement that Six Flags Entertainment Corp., in collaboration with Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund, was planning to develop a Six Flags-branded park in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia's General Entertainment Authority (GEA) announced new partnerships with several major entertainment brands.

The news was delivered during a conference in Beverly Hills in early April. GEA is responsible for developing and regulating entertainment in Saudi Arabia.

The meeting explored Saudi Arabia's focus on creating a more vibrant society as part of **Vision 2030**, an initiative that includes significant investment in themed attractions, sports and culture.

Partnering companies include:

•Cirque du Soleil — Performing in Saudi Arabia for the first time, the live entertainment brand will design a one-time production for live television broadcast for Saudi National Day, Sept. 23, at the **King Fahd Stadium** in Riyadh.

• Feld Entertainment

— The touring family entertainment leader has entered into a long-term arrangement for producing international events in Saudi Arabia, including "Disney on Ice," "Disney Live," "Marvel Stadium Show" and "Monster Jam."

•National Geographic Encounter — The experiential brand's "Ocean Odyssey" walk-through adventure, which explores the ocean from the South Pacific to the California coast, will open several new locations in Saudi Arabia (the first in Riyadh next year).

•The Marvel Experience
— The touring 360-degree,
3D stereoscopic theater and
motion ride experience, featuring Marvel characters, will
arrive in Jeddah and Riyadh
this summer.

—Dean Lamanna



MUSEUM PROGRESS REPORT

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

Belmont Park Entertainment donates Giant Dipper model



The NRCMA recently acquired a large-scale model of the Giant Dipper at Belmont Park, in Mission Beach, Calif. The model dates back to 1984, and was used during both fundraising and planning meetings in efforts to preserve the ride. It sat for several years in the San Diego Railroad Museum and was later moved to the ticket office/gift shop of the present park. New owners, Belmont Park Entertainment, have graciously donated the beautiful work to the NRCMA where it will eventually be placed on display in the museum's new addition. NRCMA/BELMONT PARK ENTERTAINMENT COLLECTION

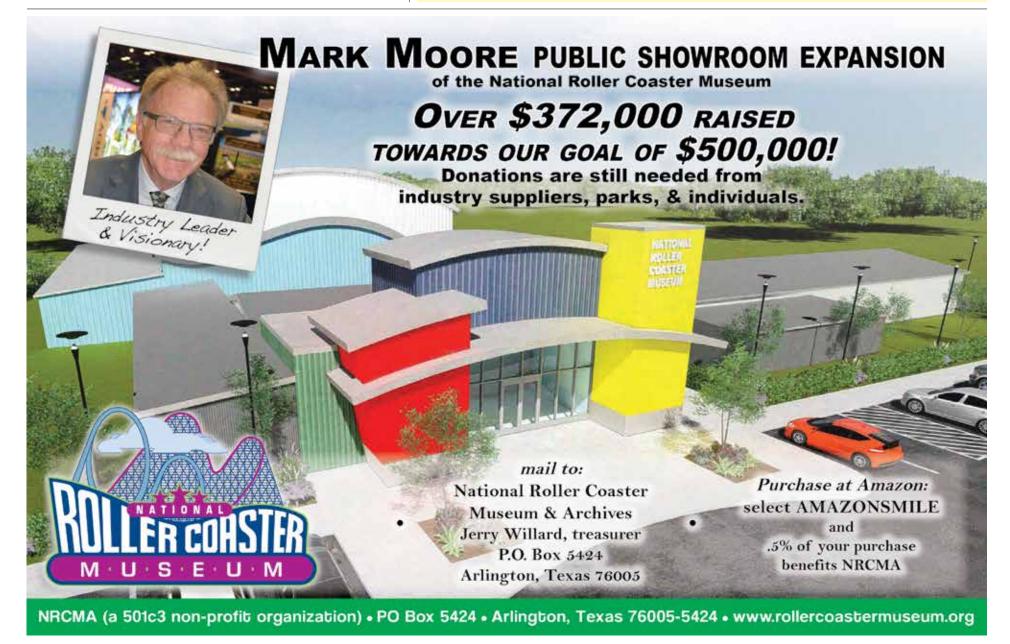
FROM THE ARCHIVES COLLECTION



1917:

The steamer Nantasket pulls away from a wharf with the magnificent Giant Coaster in the background, at **Paragon Park** in Nantasket Beach, Massachusetts. One of coaster designer **John Miller's** finest works for the **Philadelphia Toboggan Company**,

it opened on May 26, 1917. Nearly 100 feet in height, the immense double out-and-back coaster was over 4,000 feet in length and for a decade was recognized as the tallest roller coaster in the world. After the park closed in 1984, it was purchased at auction and relocated to rural Maryland where it operates today at **Six Flags America**. The ride celebrates its 100th anniversary this year, having thrilled millions of riders in two different states. —*Richard W. Munch*







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▶ Pa. Ride Safety Advisory Board convenes — page 52 / AIMS News & Notes — page 53

Lagoon updates near-century old wooden Roller Coaster

AT: Tim Baldwin tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

FARMINGTON, Utah — It has been known by many names, but Lagoon's oldest ride is its vintage wooden roller coaster. Built in 1921, the ride has been called Giant Coaster, Silver Roller Coaster, Dipper and other titles over the past century. Today, the park keeps it simple. Although one of 10 coasters in the park, this wooden classic is known unassumingly as Roller Coaster.

Designed by the legendary John Miller in the 1920s—less than 10 of his coasters are still in existence—the ride stands 62 feet tall and travels 2,500 feet on its journey each circuit. It was designated as an ACE Roller Coaster Landmark in 2005 by American Coaster Enthusiasts.

For the 2018 season, the management at Lagoon has decided to revamp the attraction. Installed are new magnetic brakes, drive tires, and





Lagoon's carpentry and maintenance team that worked on Roller Coaster posed for a photo. Magnetic brakes (right) now bring the trains to a smooth stop upon returning to the station. COURTESY LAGOON; AT/TIM BALDWIN

motor system. Also purchased are two new Millennium Flyer trains by **Great Coasters International Inc**.

"Going to the IAAPA show, we looked at the trains from Great Coasters and did a cross comparison. We decided that maybe it was time to make a change," said **Jimmy Sunlight**, director of opera-

tions, Lagoon. "We liked the safety features on there and the attractiveness. And it was a new train. If we had just replaced what we had, it would have been the same, and we wanted a different ride experience. We liked the technology GCII is using on their wheels."

That change prompted others. The team returned and decided if things were changing, then they felt it was time to jump in feet first. Returning guests will find the station house totally reworked. Riders now board and exit on the opposite sides as had been established decades before.

"Logistically, it opens up that area. By moving the main operator control to the other side, it actually makes room for our new control system," said Sunlight.

"There is a historic display of the ride itself on the outside of the walls in front of the control system," said **Adam Leishman**, advertising director for Lagoon and park historian. "We have found some John Miller patent information as well as our original plans for the roller coaster. We found photos from the '20s through the '80s and '90s."

The ride reopened this spring with the new enhancements and revamped look.

"There are a couple of differences between the standard Millennium Flyers and those delivered to Lagoon," said Tim Viox of Leisure Labs, that represents GCII. "Some were driven by necessity — changes to the design of the wheels to accommodate dimensional differences exclusive to Roller Coaster — and some were driven by client preference such as the

> See LAGOON, page 51



Roller Coaster has been a staple at Lagoon since 1921. It has survived wars, a fire and changes of ownership in its near-century existence. COURTESY LAGOON

New trains, track and brakes offer a different experience for riders who had enjoyed Roller Coaster before.

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Stronghold introduces MM1018 for roller coaster repair with no realignment

CINCINNATI, Ohio — Stronghold Coatings Systems has recently introduced MM1018, a polymeric metal material that provides 100 percent force fit gap compensation for the repair of all types of roller coasters and amusement rides without the need for realignment.

When applied to the ride

components of roller coasters, trains, trams, and other amusement rides, MM1018 allows the equipment to be repaired and re-positioned without having to re-align, saving time and money.

This high-performance repair product provides 100 percent volume restoration inside the gap between bearing and construction without machining

of back plate and face plate. It combines high compressive and shear strength, excellent vibration damping, and long-term corrosion protection in extreme service conditions (vibration, temperature extremes, etc.), and is resistant to weathering and aging as well as gasoline, oils, coolants, acids, lye and more.

It is easily applied onsite, even at height, using casting or injection. This allows significant repair cost savings versus conventional disassembly/rebuild methods.

Stronghold Coating Systems is the exclusive North American supplier of **Diamant** products, a leader in structural repair for critical applications. MM1018 was developed by Diamant and is manufactured in the USA by veteran-owned Stronghold in their centrally located Cincinnati, Ohio facilities which includes an extensive testing lab.

Stronghold Coating Systems 3495 Mustafa Drive Cincinnati, Ohio, 45241 (937) 704-4020 www.StrongholdOne.com

CHTT Certified Hot Tub Technician online course now available

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — The Association of Pool & Spa Professionals (APSP) announced on May 1 the availability of its new and improved CHTT Certified Hot Tub Technician online self-paced course.

Designed for those that service and repair portable hot tubs, the CHTT program covers the essentials of servicing portable and permanently installed hot tubs and spas, and equipment repair and replacement. Students can earn their CHTT certification, by taking an online self-paced or live onsite course at a regional event. There are no experience requirements; new employees are welcome.

Students can purchase the course at APSP.LearnUpon. com. The full course is \$549 for members and \$699 for nonmembers or specific modules at \$49 for members and \$99 for nonmembers. Those that successfully complete the course will earn 24 continuing education credits.



LAGOON

Continued from page 49

head rests and restrain monitoring."

Viox added, "During the evaluation process, Lagoon visited **Knott's Berry Farm** to observe GCII's renovation of GhostRider. This allowed them to witness firsthand the kind of impact small improvements to the track combined with new trains can make."

Lagoon has used the wood composite Trex material for the top two layers on the track bed whenever retracking. "We redid the upper east side [of the coaster] this year. We found that Trex material holds up. We replace a section each year — all inhouse," said Sunlight. "When Trex discontinued the size we needed, we then started using a material called Lumberock, so the top layers of Roller Coaster feature a combination of these two."

"As part of the overall scope, GCII provided input on some enhancements to the overall track and structure. However, changes to the ride profile were minimal," said Viox.

As the ride continues to

go through annual refurbishment, it now stands partially white and partially natural wood. *Amusement Today* asked if plans were to eventually paint it white again or leave it all natural.

"I think when it was white, it was before the advent of good pressure-treated lumber. When Maintenance walked the track each day, it was sometimes difficult to see dry rot if it was painted. They would occasionally need to take an ice pick to stick the wood. If it is not painted, we have a better chance of seeing what needs attention," said Leishman.

As the structure has been rebuilt, metal plates connect the boards for support and steel has been used for ledgers. New, wider steel rails are put in place when track is redone, which now spans the full width of the track edgeto-edge.

"We have a great carpenter crew," said Sunlight. "They do research with what other parks have done and what we can do to make it work here."

"Working with the team at Lagoon was a pleasure," said Viox. "The level of technical





Lagoon purchased new Millennium Flyer trains (left) from Great Coasters International. Many different styles of trains have run the rails of Lagoon's wooden coaster for almost a century. AT/TIM BALDWIN; COURTESY LAGOON

and operational expertise that park possesses is amazing."

New drive motor tires are also in place.

"We work with a company — Actemium out of Germany — who does the control system as well as install the drive tires and magnetic braking," said Sunlight. "The magnetic braking is brand new, so it's going to be a whole new experience as people come back to the station and it kind of glides in. We started working with Actemium 11 years ago when we put in Wicked. They've done a lot of rides with us."

In the revamp of the ride, aesthetics are not forgotten during the process. The station contains an arched roof, and new LED lighting accents the structure. "We've embraced that mid-century look of the arches," said Leishman. "We had a fire in 1953. When they rebuilt the station in '54, the ribs inside that arches were lined with neon. We are bringing back that look with an LED neon flex tubing. It looks very much like neon without the maintenance."

With all the enhancements, AT asked if there

was the temptation to once again give the ride a different name. "We're going to hold on to Roller Coaster for now," laughed Leishman and Sunlight. Leishman did note that the ride's previous names would be listed in the historic display at the station.

Roller Coaster will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2021. "It's the illusion you are riding an antique, but it is as technologically advanced as anything. It's an old coaster, but there's nothing older than seven years on it," Leishman



Pa. Ride Safety Advisory Board convenes quarterly meeting

AT: B. Derek Shaw bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Amusement industry representatives, along with community volunteers selected at large, convened at the head-quarters of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture in mid-April for the quarterly Pennsylvania Ride Safety Advisory Board meeting.

The board serves as a recommending body for new ride

approvals that come before it. At each meeting, members discuss and either accept, conditionally accept, table or reject new rides submitted for approval.

The agriculture department's **Bureau of Ride & Measurement Standards** uses the resulting input to determine its course of action in the approval process for a particular ride or attraction.

"The advisory board gives

input from all different parts of the business, including carnivals, amusement parks, fairs, the public and professional engineers," said Joe Filoramo, supervisor of the agriculture department's Amusement Ride Safety Division. "Each person has something unique to contribute and gives us a very well-rounded review of everything,"

The advisory board is unusual in that few if any other

similar groups exist that offer input on state-level amusement ride regulation.

The spring meeting featured nine approvals sought by the following companies: ClimbZone Productions, LLC; S&S Worldwide; Sodi USA; Spectrum Sports Intl.; Trampoline Unlimited, Inc. and Zamperla.

The subject attractions included three climbing walls at **Sky Zone**, Levittown; a

Phillies--themed climbing wall at Citizen's Bank Park, Philadelphia; a Sky Tower and Fire Brigade at Kennywood Park; Merlin's Mayhem, an S&S roller coaster at Dutch Wonderland, Lancaster; a new trampoline venue called Vertical Jump Park, LLC, Erie; and Sodi RTX Go Kart vehicles for use at Steel City Indoor Karting, Monroeville.

"We are streamlining the [approval] process to make it a little easier for everyone involved," Filoramo said. "A common problem is that manufacturers don't always provide all the information before they build equipment — leaving owners at a hardship as they delay openings due to the approval process."

Two parks made presentations under new business, including Idlewild Park & Soak Zone in Ligonier for the new Philadelphia Toboggan Coaster train it installed on Rollo Coaster. The park opted to replace the existing rolling stock rather than modifying it. Idlewild also made necessary repairs on the entire coaster structure and fixed a transition where a previous accident took place.

"They've done everything to the ride we recommended and more," Filoramo said of the park's efforts. "The coaster has been brought up to today's standards."

Staff from Knoebels Resort Amusement Elysburg also were on hand to discuss their off-season work on Twister, a wooden roller coaster. The 90-foot-tall turn at the top of the lift has been secured by guy wires and concrete anchors — a standard practice in the past. During the off-season, the park installed a 60-foot internal batter support system using lumber instead of cables. While no changes have been made to the superstructure or trains, the latter modification may require applicability to different ride standards than when it was built in 1999.

At the start of the meeting, Fred Strathmeyer, deputy secretary of agriculture, talked about the spotted lanternfly— an inch-long insect native to Southeast Asia with black, red and white coloring. It is a threat to agriculture in the state and, as a result, 13 counties in southeastern Pennsylvania are under quarantine measures.

Strathmeyer asked meeting attendees to report any sightings of the pest.

•agriculture.pa.gov





NEWS & NOTES

www.aimsintl.org

Amusement Industry Manufacturers and Suppliers International, Ltd. P.O. Box 92366 • Nashville, Tenn. 37209 Phone: (714) 425-5747 • Fax: (714) 276-9666 Karen Oertley • k.oertley@aimsintl.org Holly Coston, (714) 697-6654, h.coston@aimsintl.org

Entry deadline nears for 2018 AIMS International Safety Award

It's time to recognize the industry's leaders in safety!

The AIMS International Safety Award is presented annually to the individual or organization that demonstrates leadership, innovation, and foresight in improving safety in the amusement industry. With safety as the industry's No. 1 concern for amusement industry guests and employees worldwide, efforts in improving safety are shown in many forms: the design and implementation of new products and technology, the development of safety education programs and training, and by exemplary leadership in influencing others.

The 2018 AIMS International Safety Award will be presented September 8 during *Amusement Today's* annual **Golden Ticket Awards** hosted by **Silver Dollar City** in Branson, Mo.

Who will follow the 2016 inaugural recipient, **Harold Hudson** followed by **Har Kupers** in 2017? Send your nomination today! The deadline for nominations is Friday, July 6, 2018.

Nomination forms and more information can be found at www.aimsintl.org.

A big thanks to the people behind the scenes

As the amusement industry enters peak season, the media plays up the bells and whistles that make our industry so great: all the exciting new rides and attractions.

It's also important to recognize the thousands of individuals who work in maintenance, operations, ride inspection and other areas of safety at parks and attractions. They work round the clock to plan and prepare for the safety and enjoyment of guests and other employees. A great day for these individuals is one in which there is no news and no media coverage. Their accomplishments result in an accident that doesn't happen because someone paid attention. We all owe them a great debt of gratitude and appreciation!

Many of these individuals have demonstrated their skills and knowledge as AIMS Certification holders and AIMS Safety Seminar students. The AIMS Certification Program is internationally recognized for accreditation of knowledge and experience in Ride Inspection, Maintenance Technician, Operations Technician, and Aquatics Operations.

A complete list of all AIMS Certified Individuals can be found on our website at www. aimsintl.org.

The mission of AIMS International is to improve amusement industry safety through leadership in education

The annual AIMS Safety Seminar is recognized by major parks and attractions as the worldwide leader for safety training and education. Each year more than 450 students participate in active classroom and hands on learning resulting in 40 hours of continuing education credits and AIMS certification testing. With more than 200 class hours taught by industry experts, students are encouraged to select a class schedule that best suits their needs and the requirements of their employers. In addition to onsite learning, continuing education and certification testing, students return home with valuable safety information to share with colleagues and co-workers. The next AIMS Safety Seminar will be held January 13-18, 2019 in Galveston, Texas. For more information, visit www.aimsintl.org.

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LJM continues inspections



Mike Nicol, LJM & Associates, Inc., is seen here performing the QSI (Qualified Safety Inspector) Annual Inspection on a waterslide at the Raging Waters water park in the Los Angeles area. During the QSI, the inspector will look for wear/spider cracks in the fiberglass and gel-coating; check all the stairways, structural items, towers, columns and footings and check all the operational systems of the slide. COURTESY LEWIS MERZ/LJM & ASSOCIATES, INC.

Matt Heller releases All Clear! book

ALL CLEAR

Matt Heller

AT: Jeffrey Seifert jseifert@amusementtoday.com

A boss will tell you what to do. A leader will show you how and why to do it. Anyone can be a boss, but it takes a dedicated and properly trained person to become a leader. Providing the skills and the knowledge to become a good leader is what author Matt Heller hopes to accomplish with his new book All Clear! A Practical Guide for First Time Leaders and the People Who Support Them.

Like many in the amusement industry, Heller

started out with a simple summer job at an amusement park while attending college. That was nearly 30 years ago, and Heller discovered he had a passion for the industry that eventually led him to becoming a leadership trainer, executive coach and human resources consultant for the attractions industry.

Heller effectively utilizes his knowledge and past experience, to provide a practical, useful guidebook for leaders.

The book should prove helpful for all supervisors, whether it's a new person tackling the job for their first time,

or an old hat who has been doing things the same way forever.

The book is divided into three sections and 16 chapters. The first section, titled "In the Station," devotes four chapters to providing information for those who are about to transition into a leadership role.

In the first chapter, Heller shares a story about a newly promoted supervisor who asked who he was supposed to call when someone calls him on the radio. After being advised that as the supervisor, there is no one else, he needed to solve the problem, the realization that the buck stopped with him slowly washed over his face. It was then that Heller realized this person had likely not been properly trained nor was he prepared for his new role.

Heller also tackles the question of whether or not leaders are born or made. His take — it can be either. Certain people through their upbringing, nurturing and learned experiences, might be considered natural born leaders. But there are plenty of others who simply need to learn the skills and acquire the knowledge to be made a leader.

The second part of the book "On the Lift Hill — Tools and Resources for Those Moving Up" is geared

for individuals who are in a leadership position and looking to improve their skills.

The chapters in this section discuss developing the traits that every good leader should have: morality, integrity, and knowledge of one's self; along with balancing temper and emotions and providing positive and negative feedback. Using these skills, a good leader can build trust, respect and relationships.

Listening is another important skill of a good leader. Heller mentions a quote from the late **Al Weber Jr.** of **Apex Parks Group**, who said, "In order to

keep the best people in your organization, you have to involve them. You don't have to agree, but you do have to involve them."

Employees need to be heard. If they feel that their input is not wanted or not valued then loyalty will suffer. A good leader will know when and how to encourage team members to speak up and provide input, but also let them know when it is not appropriate to question something.

Questions and answers also play a pivotal role. Employees are apt do a

better a job if they understand why they are doing something a certain way, instead of just being told this is the way you are to do it. At the same time, if an employee has a suggestion for improving a method, rather than falling into the "It's always been done this way" trap, then those suggestions need to be heard.

The final section of the book "Arms Up! Management Tools for Developing New Leaders," discusses the methods for recognizing and developing new leaders. The leadership an organization has in place today, isn't going to be there forever, and a constant flow of new leaders needs to be developed.

Throughout the book Heller refers to his own personal experiences to provide examples. Not all of them are good, and without mentioning names, Heller will often tell the tale of learning what not to do from inflexible managers and bad bosses, who really didn't have what it takes.

All clear is the signal given by a ride operator when a ride is ready to dispatch. This book is intended to prepare leaders to give the all clear before taking on their new roles.

All Clear! retails for \$17.95 and is available from online booksellers such as Amazon.com or directly from Heller's website, performanceoptimist.com.



Asian Attractions Expo, June 6-8
Conference: June 5-8 • Trade Show: June 6-8
Hong Kong, China • www.iaapa.org

PAPA Summer Meeting, July 16-17 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.co

Euro Attractions Expo, Sept. 23-27 Conference: Sept. 23-27 • Trade Show: Sept. 25-27 Amsterdam, Netherlands • www.iaapa.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: lgladden@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 location TBA Hands-on training at Majestic Midways Winter Quarters, Dover, Pa.) www.paceseminar.com/index.html

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.aimsinlt.org

NAARSO 2019 Safety Fourm

Dates TBA • Myrtle Beach, S.C.
Hotel to be announced
Hands on ride training at Broadway at the Beach
(813) 661-2779 • www.naarso.com

IISF Trade Show

February 5-8, 2019 Riverview, Fla. • (813) 677-9377 www.gibtownshowmensclub.com

AAMA/AMOA Amusement Expo 2019

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

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

THIS JUST IN

Legoland Florida Resort to add new themed area

WINTER HAVEN, Fla. — **Legoland Florida Resort** has revealed what will become its largest investment since the theme park opened in 2011.

A new attractions area called The Lego Movie World will premiere next spring.

The announcement follows the success of the blockbuster film *The Lego Movie*, its upcoming sequel and the popularity of the film's characters within the children's theme park.

Working closely with **Warner Bros. Entertainment** and **Lego System A/S**, the resort plans to realize The Lego Movie World in a manner that places guests right in the middle of Bricksburg, the city where Emmet lives in *The Lego Movie*.

The new section represents the destination's continuing commitment to providing state-of-the-art experiences specifically designed to create awesome memories for kids ages two to 12.

"The sights and sounds will be fully immersive, bringing *The Lego Movie* franchise to life in a way that only a Legoland Park could," said **Rex Jackson**, resort general manager. "We know kids come from all over the world to meet the stars of *The Lego Movie* and we can't wait to see their faces light up as they interact within the imaginative world of Bricksburg."

The Lego Movie World will feature three new rides, character meet and greets, and a giant themed playscape. The existing interactive boat ride, The Quest for Chi, will be completely transformed and will offer guests a new experience when it reopens as a key attraction in the new area in 2019. The current boat ride attraction closes May 29.

ProParks now operating Hawaiian Falls water parks

ORLANDO, Fla. — **ProParks Management Co.** is the new operator for the five **Hawaiian Falls Waterparks** in North Texas.

ProParks is a privately held attractions company that acquires, develops and manages waterparks, family entertainment centers and similar assets. The company is led by a team of experienced attractions and water park professionals focused on growing and improving the overall park experience.

"The addition of the Hawaiian Falls waterparks confirms our commitment to building a portfolio of attractions where families can beat the heat and make memories together," said **Curt Caffey**, president of **ProParks Water Holdings**. "We are looking forward to further connecting these parks to the communities they were built to serve, starting with the [current] operating season."

Hawaiian Falls offers more than 100 water attractions located in The Colony, Roanoke, Garland, Mansfield and Waco, Texas. ProParks also owns and operates other attractions / entertainment assets Arizona, California, North Carolina and elsewhere in Texas.

Bob's Space Racers, Emiliana Luna Park ink deal



Emiliana Luna Park, an Italian manufacturer known for more than half a century for its high-quality amusement rides and games, has tapped Bob's Space Racers for distribution of its popular Fried Frogs game in the U.S., Mexico and Canada. The deal includes parts and service as well as sales. Jack Cook, president of Bob's Space Racers, is shown finalizing the arrangement with Susanna Demaria, sales manager for Emiliana Luna Park, at the 2018 Dubai Entertainment, Amusement & Leisure Exhibition, held in the UAE April 9-11.

COURTESY BOB'S SPACE RACERS

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OPPORTUNITY



Ride Maintenance Management

Kentucky Kingdom and Hurricane Bay, a regional theme park in Louisville, Kentucky with 38 rides (including 5 roller coasters) and 19 water park attractions, is seeking a Director for our Technical Services Department.

Qualifications include:

- •Ability to troubleshoot and repair various mechanical systems, including pneumatic and hydraulic systems as well as gearboxes, power transmission components, conveyor systems, and pumps.
- •Knowledge of industry standards and procedures.
- •At least 10 years of experience as a maintenance tech. in the amusement industry.
- •Ability to create and maintain accurate records of work performed.
- •Ability to work nights, weekends and holiday periods.
- •Ability to pass drug screening.

Responsibilities include:

- •Supervisor a staff of 30, including ride maintenance personnel, electricians, plumbers, and carpenters.
- •Identify and order required parts/materials in a timely manner to complete maintenance tasks.
- ${}^{\bullet}\text{Monitor}$ and direct ride maintenance activities (installation, repair, and inspection).
- $^{\bullet}\mbox{Ensure}$ 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.
 Analyze department budget versus actual performance and adjust
- Analyze department budget versus actual performance and adjust accordingly.
- •Implement safety, security, and loss prevention policies to promote ride safety and maximize ride availability.

Benefits include:

- •Excellent pay (commensurate with industry experience).
- •Paid health, dental, and vision insurance.
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- Extended holiday break.

Qualified candidates send resume to: Kingdomhr@kentuckykingdom.com

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