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The sixth U.S. Gerstlauer Euro-Fighter resides on Casino Pier in Seaside Heights. The 72-foot-tall neon green and bright blue coaster was built over the beach, replacing the Miller Wild Mouse that was destroyed by Superstorm Sandy in October 2012. COURTESY CASINO PIER/DEBBIE KARU

Four coasters added along N.J. shore

Great Nor'Easter gets major rehab; mag brakes added

AT: B. Derek Shaw
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NEW JERSEY SHORE — New Jersey park visitors are in for a treat this season with four roller coasters having been added to the Garden State's thrill ride inventory. All of the latest installations are along the coast. New Jersey now has 43 roller coasters of all shapes and sizes from which to choose.

Four and a half years ago, Superstorm Sandy claimed the Miller Wild Mouse at Casino

Pier and Breakwater Beach in Seaside Heights by breaking off the end of the pier and dumping the structure into the Atlantic Ocean. The enduring image of that ride marooned in the sea helped provide inspiration for those areas affected along the Jersey Shore to refurbish and rebuild what was taken by Mother Nature. The area is now about 70 percent recovered from the disaster.

In time for Memorial Day weekend, Casino Pier unleashed Hydrus, a Gerstlauer, Euro-Fighter/320. This time it is built above the beach rather than out over the water to help prevent another catastrophe. "Our team at Casino Pier has worked extremely hard since

Hurricane Sandy in 2012 to rebuild and come back from the devastation," said Maria Mastoris, public relations for Casino Pier. "With our brand-new roller coaster Hydrus and Ferris wheel on our newly extended pier, we can finally close the book on Sandy and start fresh."

The area where the new coaster resides required a complicated land swap between Casino Pier and the town of Seaside Heights due to the ride occupying beachfront land with public use restrictions. In exchange for permission from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to use the beach, Casino Pier

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New rides, orca presentation debut at SeaWorld San Diego

Innovative emphasis given to edutainment

AT: Dean Lamanna
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SAN DIEGO, Calif. — After a year of planning and construction, SeaWorld San Diego has taken the wraps off its next-gen sea life experience — and it represents the largest attractions premiere in the park's history.

Gradually rolled out in late May, with an official media bow held on May 31, SeaWorld's biggest addition, Ocean Explorer, is a new area containing rides and animal exhibits. The park's eagerly awaited and carefully retooled killer whale presentation, Orca Encounter, which focuses on

the animals' innate behaviors in a natural setting, coincided with the opening of Ocean Explorer.

A third major attraction introduction officially took place on June 17 with the debut of "Electric Ocean," a special effects-filled nighttime show.

"We are incredibly excited about bringing our amazing visions of the future to our guests today," said Marilyn Hannes, park president. "These extraordinary new attractions not only ratchet up the fun and exciting atmosphere our guests have come to love and expect at SeaWorld, but maintain our company's focus on animals. We are thrilled to entertain and also inspire current

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SeaWorld San Diego's 5,500-seat saltwater stadium now is home to the new Orca Encounter, an educational killer whale presentation featuring a three-story, 140-foot-wide digital infinity screen and a natural backdrop inspired by the Pacific Northwest coastline. COURTESY SEA WORLD SAN DIEGO

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NEWTALK

EDITORIAL: Gary Slade, gslade@amusementtoday.com

Touching lives



Slade

Every day our amusement industry touches lives in a positive way, and often we don't even realize it. When a park guest takes a ride on a roller coaster, shoots the high score on an interactive dark ride or sees a marine animal up close via a pool window, memories that can last a lifetime are created. I know I will never forget riding the Zephyr with my dad during summer vacations to Pontchartrain Beach in New Orleans.

Those park memories are forever.

As a trade newspaper, we don't always think of news reporting as touching lives — but that's exactly what recently happened when AT attended the media event at SeaWorld San Diego for the opening of the park's new Ocean Explorer area and Orca Encounter show.

At the conclusion of the event, I was stopped by a guest near the park's front gate, who asked if I was associated with *Amusement Today*. When I introduced myself as the owner and publisher, the mother started crying, saying it was so nice to meet me. She wanted to thank AT for posting "all those great videos on our VideoTrack segment of amusementtoday.com."

She went on to say that her son has autism and when he has one of his moments she can usually get him settled down by watching one of the videos on the AT website. She said the videos are a blessing to their family.

I asked if her son was with her, and indicated that he was at one of the touch pools. We went over and she introduced me him. I asked him what videos he enjoyed watching. After a moment, he answered: "All of them, but I really like ones with water splashing."

We talked a little longer and he told me of how he had just seen the Orca Encounter show. His favorite part — as one might guess — was when the Orcas would use their tail fins to splash water on the front few rows on the theater audience. He told me that part of the show "tickled his tummy."

I then had a nice SeaWorld employee take our photo with mom's phone, said goodbye and I headed out for my flight home.

Thanks to AT's John Robinson — and the renewed effort by the AT team to keep VideoTrack content updated — we are touching lives outside our industry without even realizing it.

Speaking of touching lives, I must send out a special greeting to the legendary Texas newspaper publisher H.V. O'Brien in Eastland, Texas, who just celebrated his 85th birthday. I don't know of another locally-owned publisher who has written more editorial columns and covered more news than H.V. He was also very understanding in letting this young reporter cover the town news and sports in that great community. Happy Birthday, my dear friend — I wish I could have been there for your big party!

FLINT'S VIEW: Bubba Flint



INDUSTRY OPINION: Dean Lamanna, dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

Rethinking parking fees

Most of us have accepted death and taxes as facts of life. And theme park operators have long, quietly hoped that we would similarly accept the inevitability of parking fees.

But honestly, what park patron doesn't utter an under-the-breath expletive, or at least wince a bit, when confronted by a steep fee at a parking lot or garage?

At best, being forced to reach into your pocket for that extra \$20 well before going through the park gate is irritating, an inconvenience. At worst, it feels like a flagrant money grab — especially when there are no parking alternatives. Either way, it works against the psychology of fun-seeking.

As they lavish millions of dollars on new attractions inside their parks, operators should stay mindful of the immediate pre-arrival experience of their patrons and ensure that their anticipation builds smoothly until they're inside the park. Security screening may be a necessary "hitch" in this anticipation; parking fees are not.

Having discussed this casually and off the record with several theme park managers over the years, I know it's an uncomfortable, bottom line-driven issue. That's not to say that a few haven't

agreed that parking fees should be re-considered.

While park patrons are accustomed to annual bumps in admission and food prices, their willingness to shell out more for these things can be weakened by deeper parking fee gouges. It just doesn't make sense to test the customer's "rip-off" tolerance, or loyalty.

One idea: Do away with self-parking fees and use "Free Parking!" as a promotional hook (as some smaller parks already do). The lost income largely can be recouped through expected admission and season pass increases and by adding a few more cents to food, beverage and souvenir prices.

Another idea: Issue a pass at the parking entrance that can be validated inside the park in exchange for purchases — offering the opportunity for reduced or free parking. Or, if the money must be collected up front, make the parking pass double as a voucher or "credit card" that can be applied to food and merchandise purchases.

After all, in this business, every dollar exchanged that creates the impression of enhancing fun is worth far more than its face value.



Lamanna

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THE INDUSTRY SEEN

A Premier wedding in Florida



Premier Rides' Jim Seay and Sara Ingram tied the knot in Marco Island, Fla., on May 21, in front of several hundred family members, friends and amusement industry colleagues. Jim Pattison of The Jim Pattison Group married the couple at Hideaway Beach during the evening ceremony. Jeanine Turner was maid of honor and Lyle Fishell was best man; bridesmaids were Vanessa David, Chloe Hausfeld, Vida Garcia, Franceen Gonzales, Crystal Wesner and Jantine Fishell, while groomsmen were Kevin Wesner, Andy Peterson, Roger Berry, Jeff White, Pat Turner and Randy Schmidt. Jim is Premier's owner and president; Sara is the company's marketing director. COURTESY JIM AND SARA SEAY

CHARACTER CORNER

Kenny Kangaroo, Kennywood

Kenny Kangaroo has been a mascot at Kennywood Park in West Mifflin, Pa. since the early 1960s. He was conceived when the park acquired a Bartlett Flying Coaster ride called Kangaroo, which still operates at the park. Kenny made brief appearances in parades and festivals throughout the 1960s and 1970s and officially became a Kennywood mascot in 1974. Since then he has appeared in the park daily to delight of guests of all ages and will sometimes make appearances outside the park at parades and festivals. Actress Tamara Tunie, perhaps best known for her role on *Law & Order: SVU*, can trace her roots entertaining people back to Kennywood, where she performed as Kenny Kangaroo as a young adult. CARTOON BUBBA FLINT; HISTORY JEFFREY SEIFERT



2 MINUTE DRILL



AT: Janice Witherow



For Sarah Wysong Miller, time with her kids is never taken for granted. Here, she enjoys a fall Ohio walk with Ethan and Teagan. COURTESY SARAH WYSONG MILLER

Sarah Wysong Miller, Great Wolf Lodge

As general manager of **Great Wolf Lodge** in Sandusky, Ohio, **Sarah Wysong Miller** has the perk of overseeing a water park resort where the temperature is always in the 80s and it never rains... except from the spray of the water rides! Sarah started her career at Great Wolf Lodge as a sales representative 16 years ago and hasn't looked back. Her pleasant, down-to-earth demeanor, calming approach to things and genuine love of family all help in a busy job where providing fun is priority No. 1.

Title: General Manager.

Years at Great Wolf Lodge: 16 years.

Best thing about the industry:
I get to help families have fun every day!

Favorite amusement ride:
Any carousel, because every time I ride one I am reminded of when my daughter was a wide-eyed toddler with pigtails and couldn't choose which horse to ride because they were all so pretty.

If I wasn't working in the amusement industry, I would be: A candy shop owner.

Biggest challenge facing our industry:
I would consider this more of an incredible opportunity facing our industry... how do we utilize new technologies to enhance the guest experience while maintaining a high level of personal connection with our guests?

The thing I like most about amusement/water park season is: Seeing happy families.

I could eat this every day and never tire from it: Popcorn!

My favorite thing about July is:
The weather. We only get about 120 beautiful sunny days here in northern Ohio.

On the Fourth of July, you can find me:
Celebrating with the pack at the lodge.

I am in the best mood when:
I am spending time with our little guests. I love seeing their eyes light up when they see the water park from our lobby windows.

All-time favorite song:
"Here I Am To Worship" by Hillsong.

In one word, summer television is: Unique.

If I could do anything when coming home from work, it would be:
Cuddle with my two kids.

If I could meet anyone in history it would be: Mother Teresa.

What is your definition of fun?
Spending time with family reminiscing and laughing.

If you could have a home with the most beautiful view in the world, where would it be?
In the hills above Cruz Bay in St. John USVI.

My idea of a good surprise is:
An out-of-the-blue call or text from an old friend who just wants to let you know that they were thinking of you.

I feel most comfortable wearing:
My OluKai sandals. I love it when my feet can breathe.

I know I need a vacation, when:
My staff can finish my sentence before I can.

Would you rather give up text or e-mail?
Email.

Best place to hang out on a rainy day...
Northern Lights Arcade at Great Wolf Lodge.

My favorite meal to cook is: Tacos!

Favorite flavor of ice cream:
Strawberry and Vanilla Twist from Twistee Treat in Orlando.



Ride Entertainment Systems handled the sale and installation of Hydrus. Previously the Stevensville, Md., company sold and certified the Skycoaster also on the pier.
COURTESY RIDE ENTERTAINMENT GROUP/ ADAM SANDY

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donated land to the borough for additional parking. They also gave the borough the 1910 Dentzel-Looff Carousel they owned that will now be displayed in a museum on the donated land.

Hydrus sports a neon green and bright blue paint scheme with a 72-foot vertical drop. Each ride costs \$10. Ride Entertainment Systems of Stevensville, Md., handled the sale and installation. Previously they sold and certified the Skycoaster at the pier. Adam Sandy, chief business development officer for Ride Entertainment, talked about unique challenges during the installation phase: "On the fabrication side, Gerstlauer galvanized the base frame in order to have it hold up in the harsh environment. On the installation side, the Ride Entertainment install team worked closely with the

Gerstlauer team. Communication was key as the site was tight due to the restrictions where the crane could be set up."

Sandy was very complimentary of the team the manufacturer provided. "Gerstlauer always sends top-notch guys so there was a natural flow between us, their supervisor and the Casino Pier team. We had the ride erected in just a few weeks."

This is the sixth Euro-Fighter in the U.S.

Hang Ten! is the name of the new roller coaster at the Victorian-flavored Fantasy Island Amusement Park, in Beach Haven, N.J. It is an SBF/VISA Compact Spinning Coaster two-loop model that was sold via Rides 4-U of Somerville, N.J. This model, seating 16 passengers, is three feet taller than previous installations, allowing for elevated scenery. The perceived effect is that the coaster train is crash-

ing through the scenery panels.

Construction started in early May (and as of press time) continues on the site where the Zamperla Dragon powered coaster ran for 20 seasons. Diane Frey, director of marketing for Fantasy Island, explained the coaster selection process: "One of the owners of the park, Gary Phillips, was actively looking for a coaster. Gary saw this one and it had the footprint he was looking for. Gary went to visit with Scott Simpson in Ocean City, N.J. [Playland's Castaway Cove] Scott has the same ride named Whirlwind and was very helpful. Gary rode the coaster and it was love at first ride."

The Hang Ten! name was picked by the park staff, as it fits in with a beach theme. When asked about future expansion plans, Frey said: "The

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**Euro-Fighter
"Hydrus",
Casino Pier
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Infinite thrill!



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owners and the staff at Fantasy Island are always looking for new attractions. This is the first of many great things to come." Hang Ten! is expected to open soon.

Playland's Castaway Cove in Ocean City, N.J. opened, GaleForce – an S&S Worldwide LSM coaster, – Memorial Day weekend. GaleForce, with a 125-foot-tall hill, transports 12 riders at a time, seating four abreast in three rows on the nearly 1,300-foot-long ride. The coaster has a triple launch using magnetic stators and features seven thrill elements throughout the quick 47-second ride. Riders experience a 100-foot maximum vertical drop with four negative G's traveling at a speed of 64 mph. GaleForce occupies a 220-foot by 40-foot footprint. There is a 48-inch height requirement.

Also on property but not open and awaiting state inspection as of press time was Wild Waves, an E&F Miler Industries 53-foot-tall, 1,200-foot-long family roller coaster. The ride wraps around GaleForce. "Our coaster is a conventional family coaster, but it will have plenty of excitement with plenty of air time and some interesting elements in the turns," said Fred Miler, president of the company.

Brian Hartley, vice president of the park was asked why they selected the two types of roller coasters that they did. "This is something that we have been working on for a few years. The Wild Waves (Miler coaster) was a



The SBF/VISA Compact Spinning Coaster figure-8 model was sold via Rides 4-U, Somerville, N.J. Hang Ten! is the nautical-themed name Fantasy Island crew gave the ride at this Victorian-themed park in Beach Haven, N.J. COURTESY FANTASY ISLAND AMUSEMENT PARK

simple decision as far as selecting a manufacturer. We have had a few of the Miler kiddie coasters over the years as well as an original Wild Mouse coaster a few years back. We are very familiar with Fred and his company and always pleased with his designs and the quality of manufacturing. Their rides have proven to be a family favorite up and down the Jersey Shore for many years.

"As far as the GaleForce, this took considerable time in deciding," Hartley continued, "We spoke with several manufacturers in the beginning stages of planning. A few were simply not able to give us what we were looking for in such a small footprint. A few others were simply not in our price range. We narrowed this down to two manufacturers. We then started traveling around the country riding a few different style coasters trying to get a feel for exactly

what we were looking for in car, track and safety designs as well as maintenance procedures. After considerable amounts of time discussing this with our maintenance and management staff, we decided that S&S was the best fit for our park. We had already worked with them in the past with our tower ride (Double Shot) and they had always been easy to reach and work with at a moment's notice.

"As with many beach front parks, space is a premium and Scott Simpson works very hard to provide the maximum amount of attractions in the space that he has," said Miler, referring to Playland's owner. "His idea for this coaster combination is a great one. By running my coaster around the S&S GaleForce, he has a lot of coaster for the space that was used. I think these will complement each other very well."

Hartley explained the naming process: "We held a Facebook contest to select the name of the Miler coaster. We had the name GaleForce picked out for quite some time for the S&S piece. Most of our rides have nautical themes, so this fit perfectly with what we were looking for." He also went on to explain the time frame for when the smaller coaster will open: "Probably mid-July at this point. The State of New Jersey just began reviewing all of the engineering documents and this takes a great deal of time. Once that has been completed and satisfied, they will then send out the field inspector for final inspection."

Miler was pleased with the results. "This was a massive project from an engineering standpoint. Coordinating the ride layouts with close clearances, clear spans for parking,

control buildings, queue tunnels, photo booths etc. all within the footprint of the coasters took a monumental amount of time. We had a few changes of direction but it all made sense and made the project better. This is a great package."

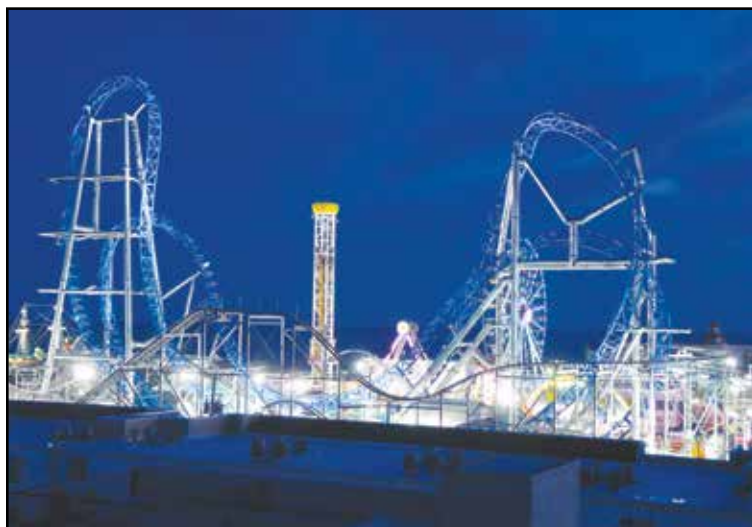
Morey's Piers, Wildwood, N.J., recently opened the newly refurbished Great Nor'Easter roller coaster from Vekoma Rides. This past winter the 1995 vintage coaster on Surfside Pier underwent a \$5 million retracking project. The upgraded 95-foot drop coaster features 2,170 feet of new and improved track, new magnetic brakes (via Intrasyss of Germany), a new Vekoma control system along with an ocean-themed paint job. Only the roller coaster station and lift hill track remained from the 21-year-old installation. A total of 62 sections of track were replaced. The new track was designed to deliver a smoother and faster ride.

"If you've ever ridden the Great Nor'Easter and loved it, or if you've ridden it in the past five years, you will be amazed at how smooth the ride is now," said Jack Morey, second generation partner of Morey's Piers. "It's so smooth now that even your granny is

going to want to ride it!" Morey was referring to first-ever "Granny Opening" on Surfside Pier where a train load of older citizens were invited to ride the improved coaster. Denise Spaulding from Camden, N.J., who was one of the "grannies" on the inaugural ride said, "It was exhilarating, definitely a smooth ride."

Baynum Painting Inc. of Newport, Ky., handled the new paint scheme. Nor'Easter track remains white for this third generation paint scheme, with a series of seven varying shades of blue support structure. The western end of the ride (Boardwalk side) is now light blue and ends on the eastern portion of the structure with midnight blue (Atlantic Ocean side.) Between those ends of the ride, five different shades of blue round out the coaster's appearance. The Great Nor'Easter is currently the only roller coaster in the world with seven different shades of blue.

One complete track section from the original Nor'Easter was donated to the National Roller Coaster Museum (NRCMA) for future display by the Morey family. It is currently at NRCMA's archive facility in Plainview, Texas.



Playland's Castaway Cove in Ocean City, N.J., has added two roller coasters its lineup. GaleForce, an S&S Worldwide, LSM coaster with a triple launch providing four negative Gs, opened Memorial Day weekend. Wild Waves, a 1,200-foot-long, 53-foot-tall, E&F Miler Industries family coaster wraps around the outside of the S&S coaster. The ride will open once it has been cleared by New Jersey state ride inspectors. COURTESY E&F MILER INDUSTRIES/FRED MILER



A total of 62 track sections of The Great Nor'Easter at Morey's Piers in Wildwood, N.J., were rehabbed over the winter. Baynum Painting Inc. of Newport, Ky., provided the new paint scheme for the Vekoma coaster. Jack Morey (left) poses as a grandma during the ride's Granny Opening promotion. COURTESY MOREY'S PIERS

►SEAWORLD

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and future generations of people to take action to help protect wild animals and wild places.”

Added Brian Morrow, vice president of theme park development for SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment: “What we’ve done is gather some of the world’s most distinctive aquariums, ocean exhibits and oceanographic exploration experiences and fused them with the latest advances in technology. The result is what we think is the most unique way to experience the mysterious creatures that dwell in a submerged universe most will never see.”

Amusement Today attended SeaWorld’s press event and generously sampled the park’s fun and informative array of new attractions and experiences.

Subsea adventures

Combining aquarium exhibits, rides and digital technologies in an undersea research base-themed milieu, Ocean Explorer

immerses guests in a world of marine discovery.

The new area’s three-minute, wildlife conservation-themed ride, Submarine Quest, carries passengers on miniature, six-seat subs along a raised indoor/outdoor track. The vehicles glide past brightly colored coral reefs, collecting data as they travel to the depths of the ocean while encountering remarkable and mysterious sea creatures.

The attraction boasts what the park describes as the world’s first use of “smart play” technology — a proprietary system that enables guests to guide the exploratory aspects of their mission.

“We want to bring animal lovers up close and personal to an undersea world that is virtually inaccessible to most people,” said the park’s Marilyn Hannes. “Through the use of advanced digital interfaces and live animal experiences, that world is available for our guests to immerse themselves in.”

After disembarking Submarine Quest, guests can see giant Pacific octopuses, Japanese spider crabs (the world’s largest arthropods) and California moray eels in three uniquely designed aquariums ranging in size from 1,000 to 6,000 gallons. Pop-up viewing bubbles built into the base of the special tanks enable younger visitors to “mingle” with these species.

The Ocean Explorer realm also features Tentacle Twirl, a Wave Swinger designed to look like a giant jellyfish. Three additional family-friendly, marine-themed rides — Aqua Scout, OctaRock and Sea Dragon Drop, a mini-drop tower — round out the section’s fun.

“Ocean Explorer is an amazing addition for guests of all ages,” said Hannes. “The opportunity to see and learn about some of the ocean’s most fascinating creatures, coupled with a mix of distinctive rides and activities, gives our visitors a meaningful experience only SeaWorld can create.”

A cetacean reset

Replacing One Ocean, the type of theatrical, performance-driven killer whale show that originally made the SeaWorld brand famous, Orca Encounter represents an important evolution in both the park’s approach to and the public’s perception of the large, highly intelligent sea mammals. Staged in a documentary-style format featuring a three-story, 140-foot-wide infinity screen backdrop manufactured by Panasonic, the new presentation emphasizes state-of-the-art integration of verbal and visual storytelling.

“We are fortunate to be able



The new Ocean Explorer realm at SeaWorld San Diego contains five family rides, all carrying a marine research theme. They include (clockwise from top left) Submarine Quest, with a ride system by Chance Rides; Tentacle Twirl, a Zierer Wave Swinger; Aqua Scout, a Zamperla Jump Around; and Sea Dragon Drop, a Zamperla Family Tower Drop. COURTESY SEAWORLD SAN DIEGO (TOP RIGHT); AT/GARY SLADE

to share these magnificent creatures,” said SeaWorld’s Brian Morrow, noting that the presentation’s educational component illustrates “[orca] social structures and communication, their physical attributes and hunting skills, and their unique relationship with mankind.”

The park’s 5,500-seat, 5.8 million-gallon saltwater stadium has been outfitted with a natural setting complete with a rugged Pacific Northwest coastline design theme featuring evergreens and waterfalls — advancing the presentation beyond conventional animal videos and static displays. It allows SeaWorld to share its 50-year knowledge of killer whale behavior and care in a decidedly educational and inspirational manner.

“By combining a live orca presentation with an extraordinarily enhanced and augmented digital environment, we immerse our guests in the mysterious world of the killer whale, which most people would never get to experience,” Morrow said.

A team of orca behaviorists, engineers, researchers and writers spent nearly a year creating Orca Encounter. The result is a 22-minute learning experience that inspires as well as educates.

“Guests may see a natural breaching behavior by the whales, and then on our new massive infinity screen they’ll see the same behavior by a killer whale in the wild — enabling them to draw an even deeper connection to the orcas,” said Kristi Burtis, the park’s orca behaviorist. “Our visitors also hear how scientific research on killer whales at SeaWorld is

benefiting wild populations.”

The presentation additionally gives guests a virtual X-ray of the orca, with every characteristic of the creature — from pectoral flipper to tail flukes — revealed in an informative way.

“The latest technology and educational techniques now allow us to also witness the amazing bond between humans and our orcas,” said Burtis. “It’s so important for as many people as possible to understand and appreciate orcas, which is key to the conservation of these extraordinary creatures in the wild.”

Summer night lights

The seasonal capper for SeaWorld’s summer attraction blitz is “Electric Ocean,” billed by the park as the only nighttime experience of its kind in the U.S. On select dates through Sept. 4, the show transforms the look of the entire park into a display inspired by the undulating bioluminescent currents of the ocean’s depths.

Fluorescent coral reefs and swimming schools of fish are among the projected sights, while stilt-walkers, aerialists and other cirque-like performers in LED-adorned suits mimic the movements of sea life. Guests can participate more directly in the festivities with special reactive shark tooth necklaces and bubble wands that change color.

“‘Electric Ocean’ is an example of how we’re integrating emerging technologies to enhance and energize the guest experience,” said Rick Schuiteman, the park’s vice president of entertainment. “Lasers and lights create a fantastical simulated underwater

experience.... It’s a reinvention of what a nighttime experience in a theme park can be.”

Some highlights:

•**Club Current:** In this dance area, DJ Moray spins the hits while guests and denizens of the deep alike show off their latest moves.

•**Living Glow (powered by BioPop):** At this new, fully-interactive exhibit at the Aquaria aquarium, guests can touch real bioluminescent organisms and watch these microscopic algae glow.

•**Atlantis Ignites:** During the show, the park’s water coaster, Journey to Atlantis, offers a 100-foot projection mapping experience that takes guests on an undersea adventure.

•**Manta Recharged:** Guests can ride the ray and feel the rush as the double-launch roller coaster transforms into a new experience with added special effects, colorful lighting and music.

•**Laser Reef:** The party’s grand finale lights up Mission Bay as colorful beams shine down from atop the 20-story Skytower on Explorer’s Reef and dance to “Electric Ocean” beats.

In other SeaWorld San Diego news, plans for the park’s 150-foot-tall, triple-launch steel coaster, Electric Eel — announced previously for a tentative Summer 2018 opening — have cleared the city’s planning commission and await approval from the city council and the California Coastal Commission. The ride represents the second phase of the SeaWorld’s Ocean Explorer area.

—Additional reporting
AT/ Gary Slade

FAST FACTS

Name/Park

Ocean Explorer
SeaWorld San Diego,
San Diego, Calif.

Rides/Info

SUBMARINE QUEST

Type: miniature submarine ride on dry track with digital interactive component

Vehicles: 7 six-person subs

Duration: 3 minutes

Control System: Irvine Ondrey Engineering, Ann Arbor, Mich.

Supplier: Chance Rides, Wichita, Kan.

TENTACLE TWIRL

Type: Wave Swinger

Seats: 40 (24 single, 16 double)

Duration: 90 sec. max.

Supplier: Zierer, Deggendorf, Germany

AQUA SCOUT

Type: Jump Around

Vehicles: 6 four-passenger mini-subs

Duration: 90 sec. max.

Supplier: Zamperla, Vicenza, Italy

OCTAROCK

Type: Happy Swing

Vehicle: double-sided swing (12 guests per ride)

Duration: 90 sec. max.

Supplier: Zamperla, Vicenza, Italy

SEA DRAGON DROP

Type: Family Tower Drop

Vehicle: 6-seat row

Duration: 75 sec. max.

Supplier: Zamperla, Vicenza, Italy

Opening Day

May 31, 2017

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INTERNATIONAL

► Ghostbusters 5D comes to Heide Park — Page 10 / Grøne Lund opens Sky Jump — Page 11

Ferrari Land roars into life at PortAventura

AT: Andrew Mellor
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COSTA DORADO, Spain — Ferrari Land, the third theme park at Spain's PortAventura World Parks and Resort situated an hour's drive south of Barcelona, opened to the public in April.

Designed to recreate the excitement of the Ferrari legend, the park spans over 70,000 square meters (750,000 square feet) and offers 11 attractions for the whole family, with a strong focus on technology and adrenaline. And in addition to the thrilling attractions, visitors can enjoy restaurants, shops and shows that reflect the spirit of Ferrari.

Arturo Mas Sardá, chairman of PortAventura World, said: "Ferrari Land is the most ambitious project in the history of PortAventura World and today our dreams have become a reality, thanks to the partnership with Ferrari, one of the most respected brands in the world, and an investment of over €100 million (\$109.5 million)."



Visitors can shop for souvenirs and exclusive merchandise at the official Ferrari Land Store.

COURTESY PORTAVENTURA WORLD PARKS AND RESORT

At the heart of Ferrari Land, the spectacular Ferrari Experience building presides over the new park, its silhouette in the shape of the legendary Ferrari racing car. Here, the whole family can enjoy an immersive experience into the two worlds of the Italian Brand – GT and Formula 1 – through two groundbreaking attractions.

Racing Legends gives visitors the chance to put their driving skills to the test, driving a Ferrari through the streets of

Rome, around the most famous racing circuits in the world or through imaginary futuristic scenes. The second immersive experience, Flying Dreams from U.K. company Simworx, sends visitors on a journey around the world and through time, allowing them to see the brand's most famous vehicles and drivers up close.

Ferrari Experience also plays host to the Ferrari Gallery, an impressive space where visitors can enjoy an interactive experience and learn about the history of the legendary Ferrari team.

Dominating the skyline of the park is Red Force, the highest and fastest vertical launch coaster in Europe. Supplied by Intamin, the ride offers a unique experience for guests, with an acceleration of 0 to 112 mph in five seconds and a height of 112 meters (367 feet).

Eight semi-professional simulators make up Pole Position Challenge, where visitors can put their driving skills to the test, while other rides include the Maranello Grand Race racetrack, a race in Ital-



Ferrari Land's Pole Position Challenge features eight Formula 1 style simulators. The park features attractions for all ages, including major thrill rides.

COURTESY PORTAVENTURA WORLD PARKS AND RESORT



ian GT race cars along a track of over 500 meters (1,64 feet). Next to the track are the Thrill Towers, from S&S, resembling giant pistons from a Formula 1 car, each offering a different experience for riders, while adjacent to these is an attraction aimed at younger visitors. Junior Championship, from Zamperla, offers children the chance to experience the thrill of skidding in a small scale Formula 1 style vehicle on a traditional "whip" type ride.

The Pit Stop Record allows two teams to compete to change four wheels on a full-size Formula 1 car as quickly as possible, while Kids' Podium offers a play center in which the park's youngest visitors can enjoy various motorsport adventures.

Ferrari Land also provides five restaurants that immerse visitors in an authentic Italian environment. These range from a traditional trattoria Italiana inspired by Ristorante Cavallino at Maranello (Ferrari's HQ), where diners can enjoy the history of the Prancing Horse, to the Pit Lane fast food restaurant with a classic menu inspired by legendary Ferrari drivers, along with Italian ice cream parlours such as Ice Cream Box.

Visitors can also shop for souvenirs and exclusive merchandise at the official Ferrari Land Store and enjoy a photo opportunity next to the entrance to the coaster. The park also offers three shows at different times of the day, as well as street entertainment throughout the venue.



The new Ferrari Land parks represents an investment of over €100 million. The park's Red Force roller coaster is the highest and fastest vertical accelerator coaster in Europe.

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Ghostbusters 5D – The Ultimate Ghost Hunt debuts at Heide Park

AT: Andrew Mellor
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SOLTAU, Germany — Ghostly 5D adventures began at Heide Park Resort in Germany recently when the venue opened its newest attraction in the form of Ghostbusters 5D – The Ultimate Ghost Hunt.

Based on the successful *Ghostbusters* movies the fully themed, interactive experience is aimed at guests of six-years-old and above who are taken on a journey in eight-seater ECTO-X vehicles to fight against flying slime ghosts.

With a duration of just over four minutes, the ride features a total of nine vehicles which travel along a 97-meter (318 foot) track. Each rider is equipped with 3D glasses, a laser pistol and ghost trap, while the vehicles feature numerous special effects, such as gusts of wind, and move in a variety of directions. Riders experience elaborate ghost animations in six different scenes during the ride and “trapped” ghosts are scored for each hunter. Also unique is the ex-

clusive combination of prominent film history with the adventure, with ghosts such as pirate, genie and man-eating plants having been especially created for Heide Park.

Approximately 100 people were involved in the project according to the park, with Merlin Magic Making, part of park owner Merlin Entertainments, and Heide Park employees being joined by a host of industry suppliers to create the attraction, including Triotech, Zierer, Scruffydog, licensor Sony and other companies from the region.

The park has invested €7.2m in the elaborately animated dark ride and divisional director of Heide Park Resort Sabrina de Carvalho commented: “I am happy that with Ghostbusters 5D we are able to offer the third family adventure in a row and the first indoor attraction of Heide Park to our guests. The complex technology was a special challenge for the entire team, so the positive response is all the more welcome.”

On behalf of one of the key supplier companies in-

volved, Triotech, Gabi Salabi, vice-president of business development and sales, said: “Ghostbusters 5D – The Ultimate Ghost Hunt is now our seventh installation in the last 18 months for Merlin Entertainments parks which is a strong testament to our close working relationship. We are establishing a strong track record of designing top notch attractions with global IP.”

In the new shop, numerous merchandise items based on the Ghostbusters are available, while at the Heide Park Abenteuerhotel, up to six people can also check into one of four new Ghostbusters-themed rooms.



Top, the new Ghostbusters ride at Heide Park Resort features nine, eight-seater vehicles. Heide Park's Ghostbusters 5D – The Ultimate Ghost Hunt is fully themed on the famous Ghostbusters movies. Themed Ghostbusters rooms are now available at Heide Park's Abenteuerhotel (Adventure Hotel, below right). COURTESY HEIDE PARK RESORT



'History of Spain' theme park to open in Toledo, Spain in 2019



Puy du Fou offers an extensive variety of spectacular live entertainment throughout the French park each day and the same will be the case at the new Spanish park. COURTESY PUY DU FOU



AT: Andrew Mellor
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TOLEDO, Spain — A theme park centered on the history of Spain is set to open in the province of Toledo (Castilla-La Mancha) in two years' time, creating over 1,000 directly-linked jobs and expected to attract 15,000 visitors a day.

To be created by the French company Puy du Fou, which already operates the hugely successful Puy du Fou entertainment park in France, approximately €200 million (\$225 million) is being invested in the Puy du Fou center, work on which will commence in 2018. The park will be the venue for a nightly, 75-minute live show giving a potted history of the country from its earliest settlers through to the 19th century, in a 25-acre (10-hectare) arena seating up to 4,000 spectators.

The new attraction is being funded and developed by Puy du Fou and founder Philippe de Villiers and chairman Nicolas de Villiers stress that it will not be a case of “France imposing its vision” on Spain's histo-

ry, rather that the park will be “entirely Spain driven” via its manager in the country, Jesús Sáinz.

An historic village – most likely similar to Barcelona's fascinating Poble Espanyol, a short walk through nearly every province in Spain through its typical architecture, although in period costume and set design – will be added to the park before 2020, along with restaurants and day time shows along a similar theme.

Toledo has been chosen for the site of the new park because so many of the events central to

the history of Spain took place in Castilla, then one region and occupying the western half of the mainland. The De Villiers say it will not be the type of theme park with roller coasters where “families are split up for the day,” but will be suitable for and interesting to all ages and both sexes.

And the “reporting” of the country's centuries-long story will be completely accurate, faithful and error-free, given that it will be overseen by Toledo's and Spain's history academies.

Discussions are also underway for a similar park in China, with the aim of opening a Puy du Fou park in the country by 2025.



Themed accommodations are available at Puy du Fou. COURTESY PUY DU FOU

Legoland Deutschland Resort 'kicks off' season with Ninjago-themed area

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GÜNZBURG, Germany — The latest major attraction to open at Legoland Deutschland Resort made its debut at the park for the start of the 2017 season on April 1.

Lego Ninjago The Ride is the centerpiece of a new 7,000-square-meter area, Lego Ninjago World, and provides an interactive, themed 4D experience that uses hand gesture technology to allow guests to throw fire balls and ice fountains at their opponents as they move through



the attraction.

The new area took approximately 13 months to construct and has been built at a cost of €9.2 million (U.S. \$9.9 million), the largest single investment ever made at the park and a major addition to help mark the venue's 15th anniversary on May 17.

In addition to the ride, the new area incorporates a number of outdoor activities, including Kai's Spinner, Jays

Reaction Game, Cole's Climbing Wall, Lego Temple Building Activity and a Lego Duplo play area. Children can meet their heroes from the successful Lego product series, they can become ninjas themselves and can complete some special training. There are several stations where important physical ninja skills such as speed, strength or dexterity can be trained, while an Asian takeaway food stand and shop are also featured.

But the highlight of the area is the Lego Ninjago The Ride attraction, housed in the Lego themed temple. With a

capacity of 1,000 to 1,200 riders per hour in 34, four-seater vehicles, ride time is 3.5 minutes along a 122-meter-long track. The 4D ride — 3D visuals plus fog and light effects — incorporates the Maestro hand gesture technology developed by Canadian company TrioTech and used in similar attractions at other Legoland parks.

During their journey, guests come across virtual enemies in various 3D scenes, hitting flashes of light, fireballs, ice fountains and air bumps and collecting points. The hand-held technology, which is unique in Germany, is used

to capture the movements of each passenger via a sensor and convert them directly into a 3D action. No further aids are required for this, the mere movement of the hands being sufficient. The training quickly becomes more serious when The Great Devourer attacks the temple, meaning teamwork is required as the villain can only be expelled by combined forces. At the end of the ride, guests can see who scored the most points.

An extensive and varied event and show program is also set to entertain guests this season.

Gröna Lund opens Intamin Sky Jump ride

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STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Gröna Lund in the Swedish capital city of Stockholm opened its latest thrill ride at the end of April in the shape of Ikaros, a Sky Jump attraction from Intamin.

Standing at an impressive 95 meters (312 feet) high and tilting riders to an angle of more than 90 degrees before they plummet to the ground, Ikaros is the second Sky Jump attraction to open anywhere in the world, the first having opened in 2014 at Busch Gardens Tampa, in Florida, U.S., under the name of Falcon's Fury.

"Ikaros will definitely be the scariest white knuckle ride for the 134-year-old waterfront amusement park," the park states, adding that it will also, understandably, challenge the courage of most visitors. With over-the-shoulder restraints holding them safely in their seats and legs dangling below high above the city, the 90 degree tilt puts guests into a horizontal position facing the ground, before they experience a G-force of 3.5 as they hurtle downwards at speeds of up to 90 kmh (56 mph).

Ikaros represents an investment by the park of SEK 75 million (approximately \$8.6 million) and features two gondolas, each containing eight seats, providing an hourly capacity of 430 riders. The minimum height requirement to ride is 140 cm (55 inches).

The name of the new Sky Jump is borrowed from Greek mythology, where the master craftsman Daedalus and his son Icarus attempted to escape their



Ikaros tilts riders at 318 feet in the air to an angle of more than 90 degrees, offering them a stunning view before they plummet to the ground. COURTESY GRÖNA LUND

imprisonment from Minos by constructing wings from feathers and wax. As he was flying towards his freedom, Icarus flew too close to the sun; the wax in his wings melted and he fell towards the ground. The top decoration of the drop tower consists of a golden sun, because, in the park's words, "the closer you get to the sun, the closer you get to the fall."

"I have pretty much experienced all that there is in an

amusement park," says Johan Tidstrand, majority owner of Gröna Lund owner Parks and Resorts Scandinavia, "so I can honestly say that this is one of the most terrifying drop towers in the world, but also one of the most exhilarating. The feeling of adrenaline pumping through your system as you fall towards the ground is hard to beat. I would really recommend everyone who has the courage to try Ikaros."

DP Leisure opens fifth 360 Play site

REDDITCH, U.K. — Milton Keynes, U.K., based family entertainment center operator DP Leisure (DPL) has continued the expansion of its 360 Play family play center brand with the opening of its fifth location, this time in a shopping center in Redditch, Worcestershire.

The company already operates successful sites in Milton Keynes, Stevenage, Leicester and Basildon and has continued the roll-out of what is one of the U.K.'s leading family play center brands by opening its first venue within a shopping center location, Redditch's Kingfisher Shopping Center.

As with the existing sites, design and master planning of this latest project was carried out by DPL's sister company, DP Associates (DPA), which also project-managed the build. Housed within a 12,000-square-foot unit among the shopping center's retail outlets, this latest 360 Play venture is a departure from the norm as far as the location is concerned, with all the other 360 Play venues being sited on leisure parks or similar. The site is home to a diverse range of retail stores and food and beverage outlets and the addition of 360 Play brings a whole new appeal to the center as a retail and leisure destination for families.

"We are thrilled to open our fifth 360 Play site and are particularly excited to have created our latest venture in a shopping center location, which is a big move away from the type of site we would normally operate on," said Managing Director Duncan Phillips. "It's something totally new for us, but the retail experience today is changing in many ways, so we see it as a great opportunity for ourselves and the shopping center owner Capital and Regional, to create a new experience for visitors and a genuine retail and leisure destination. We believe our store will complement what is already available and will become a popular element of a visit for families with young children."



360 Play Managing Director Duncan Phillips (left) and Redditch Mayor Councillor Joe Baker cut the ribbon to officially open the latest 360 Play venue in the Kingfisher Shopping Centre. COURTESY DP LEISURE



Center Parcs adds third Sky Tykes ropes course

WHINFELL FOREST, Cumbria — Center Parcs has introduced a new Sky Tykes Mini Trek low ropes course from Innovative Leisure to a third village, Whinfell Forest, in Cumbria.

Specifically designed for children aged two to seven years, Sky Tykes is a way for families to include their youngest members in their short break activities and introduce them to a ropes course experience.

Whinfell Forest's Mini Trek fits into its surroundings with a natural color scheme. Comprised of 10 poles and 14 elements, it can accommodate up to 20 persons.

"We are always looking at introducing new ways to give families the chance to spend great quality time together, face challenges, try new things and have adventures in the forest," said Steve Cooper, group outdoor activities and safety manager, Center Parcs U.K.

Oceanogràfic Aquarium theater experience enhanced with 4D seats

VALENCIA, Spain — Media based dynamic simulation attractions specialist Simworx has completed the installation of over 200 new 4D seats in the Mar Rojo Theatre at the Oceanogràfic Aquarium in Valencia, Spain, to provide a new experience opportunity for guests to Europe's largest aquarium.

A total of 202 seats have been installed in the 500-seat amphitheatre as replacements for some of the existing seats, creating a new, multi-purpose attraction which combines a 4D theater and a main stage show.

The new seats incorporate a variety of in-built effects such as seat vibration, leg ticklers, back prods, water blast and air blast. A range of in-theater effects have also been provided by Simworx to add to the overall experience, these including wind, smoke, bubbles, aroma, snow and special effects lighting.

The 3D screen being used measures 10 meters by 5.62

meters and is a state-of-the-art, motorized, 3D Harkness screen which retracts up and down in front of the large aquarium at the touch of a button. The audio system is a full 7.1 surround sound digital set up, while a media pack has also been installed to enable corporate presentations using the same AV technology as the new 4D cinema.

Commenting on this latest opening, Simworx Managing

Director Terry Monkton said: "This has been an interesting project for Simworx and a good example of how we are able to provide an existing, operational attraction with a totally new dimension to enhance what it offers to guests. The seats we have installed provide an extended experience element to the theatre which helps to further entertain all ages and we are delighted with the end result."



The Oceanogràfic Aquarium's 15-year-old theater was updated with over 200 4D seats and effects which provide an extended experience element to the theater helping further entertain all ages. COURTESY SIMWORX

Europa-Park debuts flying theater attraction Voletarium

AT: Tim Baldwin
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RUST, Germany — Having surpassed the 5.5 million annual attendance mark on a repeated basis, Europa-Park has unveiled Voletarium for the 2017 season to keep those guests returning. It is the park's biggest investment for a single attraction in Europa-Park history and Europe's largest flying theater.

As Europa-Park is known to do, the theming on the new attraction and surrounding plaza is exceptional. Voletarium is a highly ornate addition to the front area of the park, the German section. The transformation of the area also reached adjacent buildings drawing together a 19th-century flair. Enclosed inside are two flying theaters supplied by Brogent.

"The German section is a wonderful main street designed by Ulrich Damrau, who was the creative mind behind the European themed areas," said Michael Mack, managing partner of Europa-Park and CEO of MackMedia. "Together with my dad and my grandfather, he shaped the image of large parts of the park including the German entrance. So it was a privilege for me and my team to work in this tradition and to revive the German street with Voletarium."

In the past, the Mack family

and management has noticed that business slows in the front area of the park during the mid-day as guests work their way into the other areas of the park.

"So far, we can already confirm after the first days of operations, that this has become again a truly popular place all day long. The shops and restaurants are much more visited. Now what was formerly empty around noon and early afternoon hours is now busy with the time tickets, a premiere for Europa-Park, which helps keep traffic consistent."

When *Amusement Today* asked why a flying theater seemed like a good fit as the next attraction, founder Roland Mack said: "Our guests have embraced the European theme for more than 30 years. The attractions, the wonderful themed buildings and the according food and show offerings have been a centerpiece of the success of Europa-Park. This is why we wanted to make our visitors experience this wonderful continent from a new angle — from the air! It's so emotional to fly over some of Europe's most iconic landscapes and buildings, that I sometimes wonder why we have not built it earlier."

The storyline centers around the Eulenstein brothers and the first theories of flight. Drawings, studies and experiments ruled their lives and one day would take

them to the skies. These two pioneering aviators form the focus of taking visitors across Europe.

Determining where to film and what footage to use could obviously be a challenge. Michael Mack said each shoot was planned thoroughly with a simulated flight before the crew got to the location. "This way we exactly determined the speed and the flight track of the helicopter already in the MackMedia studio. Once on site, we obviously tried the same flight several times, but all in all we were pretty prepared beforehand," he said.

Mack added, "Our movie director Holger Tappe, with whom I had already worked together on our 3D films and on our full-feature movie *Happy Family* to be released this summer, sat with me in the beginning to discuss potential locations. We then made a short list which I discussed with my father, uncle and my brother. When deciding the final list, we took into consideration where our guests come from — which is why we have Germany, France and Switzerland with two locations each — and which are the most iconic and emotional locations in Europe."

Strasbourg was one of these places. It was considered to be important to be included in the movie because of the proximity and the emotional meaning to the park's French guests, which



Seen soaring the European skies are Roland Mack, Michael Mack, Thomas Mack and Jurgen Mack. COURTESY EUROPA PARK

account for 25 percent of attendance. It took 15 months to get all approvals, but the park felt it was definitely worth it.

According to park reports, the filming of Venice, one of the prettiest towns in all of Europe, was the first movie production to fly over Markus Square since the James Bond film *Casino Royale* did so 10 years ago.

"To narrow it down to 15 locations was very tough. I think we could do five more movies with all our ideas," smiled Michael Mack.

Ten of those locations are real footage, and five are animation.

Two theaters that seat 70 in each help reach an hourly capac-

ity of 1,400 guests. The flight time per show is four-and-one-half minutes. Wind, scent and water effects throughout the show also enhance the content. The film score was produced using a 60-piece orchestra: F.A.M.E.'S. Macedonian Symphonic Orchestra. It was performed under the direction of German composer Kolja Erdmann. The screen diameter is 21 meters and the size is 425 square meters.

"We are convinced that we will be presenting something absolutely unique to our guests this season," said Roland Mack. "If you miss this flight, you miss a world-wide sensation at Europa-Park."

WATER PARKS & RESORTS

► Six Flags Fiesta Texas and ProSlide debut world's biggest rocket blast coaster — Pages 16 & 17

Cedar Point Shores gives new identity to water park

WhiteWater West and new atmosphere give park a makeover

AT: Tim Baldwin
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SANDUSKY, Ohio — Although Soak City opened as a small grouping of waterslides at Cedar Point Resort in 1988, it has slowly grown over the years. In fact, enough attractions have been added to where the water park exists on both side of Magnum XL-200, the mega coaster now slicing right through the center of the property.

For the 2017 season, Cedar Point has looked at the water park with new eyes. To say the park added some new attractions would not convey the full transformation of Soak City into the newly named Cedar Point Shores.

New attractions supplied by WhiteWater West include four six-story drop capsule slides called Point Plummet, two five-story intertube slides, Lakeslide Landing featuring 12 kid-sized slides, and Lemmy's Lagoon which offers 17 different water features. All other attractions have been renamed to reflect more of the park's setting right at the edge of Lake Erie.

That's the beginning, but not the whole story. In recent years, Cedar Point has given a refresh to various parts of the resort, ranging from a re-imagined front gate to a complete makeover of Hotel Breakers adjacent to Cedar



Clockwise from top left: A new entrance helps stage the beach atmosphere at Cedar Point Shores. The new six-story slide tower from WhiteWater West gives a new complement of thrilling slides to the water park. Lenny, the Lake Erie monster, adds a touch of imagination to one of the new kids areas. The new kids' area features a shallow pool and multiple junior slides. **AT/TIM BALDWIN, JEFFREY SEIFERT**

Point Shores. On tap for 2018 is a 158-room, six-story expansion of Hotel Breakers. As park owners continue to look at the resort and improve their offerings to guests, the

water park is the latest component to receive new love.

"In its previous life, the water park had all different kinds of things going on, but in the renovation, we wanted

to bring it all together and tie it back to our history in 1870 when we started as a beach resort. You see lighter colors... pastels... it all works together," said Tony Clark,

director of communications, Cedar Point. "We have an east and west side of the water park with Magnum

► **See SHORES, page 14**



Left to right: Schooners Bayside Bar is a comfortable retreat for adult patrons. Crystal Rock Café offers a variety of food served cafeteria style. **AT/TIM BALDWIN**



Even the life jacket "rack" is beachside themed, making use of a rowboat. AT/TIM BALDWIN

►SHORES

Continued from page 13

running right through the middle, but both sides are cohesive now with color palettes. Waterslides have been painted with more colorful hues. We have a new bar area where adults can just chill and relax. The whole beach resort aspect, which is how we started, is now tied into 2017 and the future; that's a result of all the planning that went in to bring in our history."

The new atmosphere is accented by a beach-oriented atmosphere. Oversized beach balls set the stage as guests arrive to the new gate, and park buildings and structures more effectively convey the beachside setting.

"The beach balls are fun; it sets the mood," said Clark.

New food and merchandise locations include Crystal Rock Café, a cafeteria style venue serving hand-crafted pizza, fresh wraps, macaroni & cheese bowls and more; Schooner's Bayside Bar, a walk-up bar serving exclusive brews and grilled food items; a new Subway sandwich outlet; and Sandals Souvenirs & Sundries which sells swimwear, towels, candy and more.

"When you look around the park, you see the biggest centerpiece is the Main Street area, so when you walk in the water park you get that welcoming area where people will gather and start their day," said Clark. "Crystal Rock Café is the heart of that. It's cafeteria style to select your food inside and then you come out to shaded seating outside with picnic tables where you get a panoramic view of the entire water park."

More cabanas have been

added. Guests have options between the standard amenities to the more upscale premium cabanas. Amenities for both are listed on the website and resort guests can book them in advance of their visit.

The two new kids' areas are contained into one fenced-in space, so adults can relax with more seating and more shade and watch and know kids aren't wandering off. Both areas have zero-depth entry pools. Lemmy, a Loch Ness Monster type of creature, is one structure that engages imagination and has multiple spray elements.

"Guests have requested we add more seating and shade, and we have done that in spades," said Clark.

The new waterslide complex stands right next to the revamped resort entrance into Cedar Point. The water park is now more visible from the amusement park. In addition, while inside Cedar Point Shores, there is no mistaking where you are as the roller coaster skyline — for which Cedar Point is world-renowned — is always a dramatic backdrop. With this newly designed gate — the third for Cedar Point — the two parks no longer seem so separated, but now work more as partners for the resort.

"Our goal this year is to communicate that this is more than just an amusement park. This is a two-day — or more — vacation destination for families. We introduced a two-day any-day ticket. Enjoy the park, check out Cedar Point Shores and the beach we have, as well as the city of Sandusky and the islands. We just have so much to do now," said Clark. "We really are a whole vacation, and that is the result of this whole cohesiveness."



NEWS SPLASH

AT: Jeffery L. Seifert

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Jellystone Park in Kerrville, Texas, has added a new water play zone as part of an expansion that includes new cabins and a cartoon café. The new water zone includes three 20-foot slides, two kiddie slides, water cannons, multiple water-play features and a 750-gallon tipping bucket. Owned by **Northgate Resorts**, Jellystone Park is situated along the banks of the Guadalupe River and features 210 RV sites as well as 46 furnished cabins and cottages.

A new pool and water facility has finally opened in Centerville, Iowa, after taking nearly 13 years to come to fruition. Almost 15 years ago, the **City of Centerville** determined that its aging pool was in need of replacement. The city, however, faced economic challenges and money set aside for the pool was used for other projects. By 2015, the pool was no longer usable and sat empty. The new facility includes a pool with a zero-entry and low-depth areas. The center section of the pool contains lap lanes and a deep end includes both high-dive and low-dive boards. In addition to the pool, the aquatic facility includes three water-play fountain areas, two water slides, a concession stand, changing rooms and shower areas.

Another **Wibit** floating obstacle course opened on June 3 in South Carolina. **Shark Wake Park** is located in the North Myrtle Beach Sports Complex, 20 miles from Myrtle Beach in Little River, S.C. Opened in June 2016, the wake park offers cable wakeboarding on a man-made freshwater lake. That same lake is now home to a floating aqua park covering more than an acre of water and able to accommodate up to 120 people an hour. The floating obstacle course is divided into four sections — easy, moderate, experienced, and extreme challenge, all interconnected with a common floating area. A single session on the course runs 45 minutes for \$25 per person. Guests may book a second 45-minute session the same day, following a mandatory rest period, for an additional \$10. Several packages offer combination sessions that include use of the wake park. Groups of 10 or more can book sessions at a group discount, and large groups can book private parties and an exclusive session for up to 120 people.

H2OBX water park in Powell's Point, N.C. opened June 21, the first day of summer, following seven months of construction. The \$46 million water park is located along Caratoke highway, about six miles from the popular Outer Banks beaches. The park is hoping to draw in some of the more than 2.7 million visitors who flock to the Outer Banks each season. The new complex features more than 30 slides, an **ADG** Twin Tides double wave pool, an adventure lagoon, private cabanas, a Wright brothers-themed bar, multiple food and beverage outlets and free Wi-Fi. **WhiteWater West** supplied the water slides. ADG provided two wave pools and the adventure lagoon. **Ellis & Associates** served as the risk management and aquatic safety consultants.

Erb Park Pool in Appleton, Wis., was scheduled to open on July 12. As with many city government projects, the new facility re-

places an aging pool that had reached the end of its usefulness. The mayor had originally proposed replacing the pool with a splash pad, but local swim clubs and teams convinced the mayor that the new facility needed to include a 50-meter pool for competition. The new aquatic facility features an eight-lane, 50-meter pool for lap swimming with a deep-end for diving. A second pool has a zero-depth entry and a shallow water play area for toddlers. Although there is no splash pad as originally proposed, the water play area is equipped with spray nozzles, geysers and basketball hoops. The facility also includes multiple waterslides, concessions, picnic shelters and plenty of lounge chairs surrounding both pools. A master plan calls for future expansion to include tennis courts, an updated basketball court, an ice skating trail that leads to an ice rink, new playground equipment and a new bath house.

City Park Pool in Bowling Green, Ohio, opened a new splash pad in June. The park features a unique water feature — Clara's creature, in memory of 3-month-old **Clara Pekarik** who died unexpectedly. Clara was the daughter of **Leah Pekarik** who worked for the **Bowling Green Parks and Recreation Department** as a recreation administrative assistant. She was on the levy committee that pushed for the pool renovation. After the death of her daughter, the staff wanted to do something for Leah and eventually decided to raise funds to pay for a frog-like water park feature to be called Clara's creature. More than \$6,000 was raised.

The new splash pad features multiple water features — three flowers, a frog and a snake, totaling \$24,000. A Bowling Green Community Foundation grant paid for the flowers and the Wood County Park District paid for the snake.

Venture River Water Park in Eddyville, Ky., has opened **Wipe Out**, a massive, five-level playhouse from **Arihant Water Park Equipment**. The Play house features two dumping buckets, six water slides, including a 28-foot typhoon tunnel with a naturally lit color ring light display, as well as a multitude of interactive water features. The playhouse is phase one of a multi-phase expansion that will have the 23-year-old water park adding new features in the coming years.

Ground breaking has taken place on a the new **Surfari Water Park** located in **The Grove Resort & Spa Orlando**. The 7-acre water park will feature two Flow Rider surf attractions, 2-story waterslides, a kids' area and a winding lazy river.

"We are pleased to break ground on the Surfari Water Park," said Project Director, Kevin Mays. "The water park is the centerpiece of amenities at The Grove, giving families the opportunity to play and escape while never leaving the resort. The Grove combines luxury, location, amenities and affordability for those seeking a vacation home in the most visited destination in the United States."

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Fiesta Texas and ProSlide debut world's biggest rocket blast coaster

First in the U.S., new Thunder Rapids brings innovative thrills

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — To say Texas can get hot is not an understatement. In fact, it's pretty common knowledge. Cranking up the excitement on the coolest new way to cool off in the Lone Star State is Thunder Rapids, the new-for-2017 attraction at Six Flags Fiesta Texas.

Situated in White Water Bay, Thunder Rapids is the latest incarnation of ProSlide's rocket blast water coaster. Fiesta Texas wanted the biggest, longest and fastest of this product that ProSlide has ever installed. In contrast to the company's HydroMagnetic Rocket water coasters, the RocketBlast coasters do not use magnetic LIM propulsion. Instead, these new attractions take the water propulsion water coaster concept that has been around for more than two decades and has redeveloped



the idea with an innovative twist. According to ProSlide: "The new patented water propulsion technology delivers uncompromising force."

The sequential water jets enable riders in rafts to speed up steeper hills. It was this technology that boosted the coaster style thrills and faster and steeper hills that drew Six Flags Fiesta Texas to this project. The combination of riders in the raft can weigh up to 550 pounds.

Six Flags Fiesta Texas Park President Jeffrey Siebert told *Amusement Today*: "Water coasters are truly the most thrilling water park rides currently available, and since Six Flags is synonymous with thrills, it made perfect sense for this new innovation to be the cornerstone of our 2017 expansion plans."



Riders hug the turns on Fiesta Texas' new Thunder Rapids (above). Because guests ride the conveyor up, they enjoy a longer ride and there is no need for stairs (right).

COURTESY SIX FLAGS FIESTA TEXAS;
AT/TIM BALDWIN



Thunder Rapids features five uphill sections. Cup-shaped pockets (that ProSlide terms "accelerators") are placed on the sides of the boats to capture the dynamic energy in place. It is this power that can deliver higher capacities than in past

water propulsion systems.

In addition to the uphill blasts, riders will also speed through four iconic saucers that will bank them high on the sides as they navigate high speed turns.

"Thunder Rapids is like a race car on water — wow!"

said Siebert. "You hug the saucer's high-banked turns at full throttle speed. The surprise for me is that the slide just keeps going. You think you are at the end, then you blast up to the top of the

► See COASTER, page 17



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► COASTER

Continued from page 16

slide again and again. The addition of Thunder Rapids elevates the entire White Water Bay experience to the next level."

Thunder Rapids replaces an outdated racing slide complex. Inherited from AstroWorld after that park closed more than a decade ago, the simple slides failed to deliver the thrills Fiesta Texas wanted in their attractions. With that slide's removal, guests will now be greeted first thing by Thunder Rapids racing along as they approach the front gate.

Another attractive attribute of this ride is its lack of stairs. Riders board boats at ground level on a moving station and ride a conveyor up to the tallest point. This lengthens the ride further, making the 942-foot-long ride a significant experience and top-tier attraction.

One of the competitive edges in their market is that Six Flags Fiesta Texas includes their water park with admission.

"Here in South Texas, the popularity of a water park with a great assortment of major, innovative attractions cannot be emphasized enough," said Sydne Purvis, communications manager, Six Flags Fiesta Texas. "Guests, as well as our season pass holders, spend an entire day enjoying the two-tiered water park — it's huge

— and then will return for a second day for our major coasters and other attractions."

Thunder Rapids is yet another first-of-its-kind attraction for the San Antonio theme park. In the past few years, they have debuted the first S&S 4-D Free Spin coaster and this year saw the first Mardi Gras celebration in the theme park chain, as well as Thunder Rapids being the first of its kind in the U.S.

"Our guests really have

no idea what the magnitude of riding Thunder Rapids will be," said Siebert. "We now have the most thrilling collection of water park rides in the state of Texas! And were not stopping at bringing first-of-their-kind attractions to Six Flags Fiesta Texas. In 2018, 2019, 2020 and beyond, you will see a pattern that we are introducing more world's firsts and America's firsts. We are excited to bring more technology and debut it here at Fiesta Texas."



Thunder Rapids features four saucer turns as well as five uphill section. AT/TIM BALDWIN

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FAST FACTS

Name/Park

Thunder Rapids/
White Water Bay at
Six Flags Fiesta Texas,
San Antonio, Texas

Type/Features

RocketBlast water coaster/
features five uphill sections,
four banked saucers,
ride-up lift and
enclosed dive turn

Height/Length

3 stories/942 feet

Rafts

8, 3-person rafts

Jets

390 jets with 675 HP

Manufacturer

Ride: ProSlide Technology



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PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

► Gosetto to bring its first dark ride to U.S. in 2018 — Page 26 / Fairs — Pages 31-36

'Woot! Woot!' gives way to 'Groot! Groot!'

Marvel's 'Guardians' ungated at Disney California Adventure

AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Guardians of the Galaxy — Mission: Breakout!, an ambitious makeover of the former Twilight Zone Tower of Terror ride at Disney California Adventure (DCA), debuted for the media May 25 — two days before officially opening to the public. VIPs from the Walt Disney Co. and the film franchise that inspired the attraction helped celebrate its completion.

The preview gala for the first-ever Disney attraction to feature the *Guardians of the Galaxy* characters Rocket, Star-Lord, Gamora, Drax and Groot was a grand affair, complete with fireworks, special effects and irreverent entertainment of the type for which the movies are known.

"This ride brings an all-new epic adventure to the Disneyland Resort, and [DCA] is the only Disney park in the universe where guests can step into a *Guardians of the Galaxy* story," said Bob Chapek, chairman of Walt Disney Parks and Resorts. "With Rocket in control, you're in for one heck of a ride. It's a fantastic way for guests to experience the [Marvel] Super Heroes universe like never before."

During the press unveiling of The Collector's ornate and otherworldly 183-foot-tall Fortress, which houses the ride, Chapek acknowledged Marvel Studios' Kevin Feige, Marvel Entertainment's Joe Quesada, Walt Disney Imagineering's Bob Weis and Joe Rohde, and their teams as he recognized



Disney California Adventure's Guardians of the Galaxy — Mission: Breakout! ride, with the imposing Collector's Fortress and alien exhibit pre-show, packs the sci-fi/fantasy details and thrills of the movie series that inspired it. COURTESY THE DISNEYLAND RESORT



the partnership behind the attraction. "With the brilliant creative minds in Disney working together, this is just the beginning of what will become an even bigger [Marvel] Super Hero presence," he said.

Walt Disney Imagineering collaborated with James Gunn, director of the *Guardians of the Galaxy* films, as well as Marvel Studios' Feige, Marvel Entertainment's Quesada, Marvel

Themed Entertainment and most of the main talent from the movies on the story of the attraction.

Guardians of the Galaxy — Mission: Breakout! offers an original storyline based on the films, comics and animated television series — complete with chaotic action and wild visuals. And it all rocks to the beat of music inspired by the films' soundtracks, including classic rock and pop tunes such

as Pat Benatar's "Hit Me with Your Best Shot," Steppenwolf's "Born to Be Wild" and Elvis Presley's "Burning Love." With individual ride profiles accompanying each music selection, guests can enjoy different adventures.

Disney Imagineers used virtual reality technology to pre-visualize the Tivan Collection, The Collector's Office and other parts of the experience. The core ride system delivers more high-speed

time than previously.

James Gunn, along with actors Zoe Saldana, Michael Rooker and Pom Klementieff, were among the notables on hand for the gala. Actor Benicio del Toro, who plays The Collector in the films, announced from the event stage amid fireworks: "Ladies and Gentlemen of Terra, the Tivan Collection is officially open!"

The ride debuted just weeks after the cinematic premiere of *Guardians of the Galaxy, Vol. 2*, which had earned mostly positive critical reviews and just shy of \$375 million at the U.S. box office as *Amusement Today* went to press.

"I can't be more pleased to have partnered with Walt Disney Imagineering in bringing the Guardians of the Galaxy characters to this new, immersive form of storytelling," said Gunn. "It's been exciting and a lot of fun to help direct and shape the experience."

Also launched May 27 at DCA was Summer of Heroes, with *Guardians of the Galaxy* characters and Marvel Super Heroes appearing for guest interaction. While some characters will appear year-round, others will be available only until Sept. 10.

Summer has brought attraction news from neighboring Disneyland, too, with the return of the Disneyland Railroad, Rivers of America and the classic version of Space Mountain, which turns 40 this year. The "Fantasmic!" nighttime spectacular also will be making a comeback this season.

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Universal Studios Hollywood's new summer presentation in The Wizarding World of Harry Potter, "The Nighttime Lights at Hogwarts Castle," features projection mapping.
COURTESY UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD

Universal Studios Hollywood adds 'Lights,' plans new frights

AT: Dean Lamanna
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UNIVERSAL CITY, Calif. — Although there's no shortage of magical sights and sounds at The Wizarding World of Harry Potter, Universal Studios Hollywood (USH) is augmenting the sensory delights delivered by its immersive land this season. And the park has some scary new fun up its sleeve for its annual Halloween Horror Nights.

A new after-dark summertime experience called "The Nighttime Lights at Hogwarts Castle," which officially bowed June 23, utilizes projection mapping across the towering Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry in the village of Hogsmeade. The lively and versatile surface-animating technology has been pressed into service at several major theme parks in recent years.

The presentation, repeated several times every evening, features the four houses of Hogwarts — Gryffindor, Ravenclaw, Hufflepuff and Slytherin — and culminates with beams of lights fanning into the night sky.

Accompanying the all-enveloping display of special effects is a surround-sound musical arrangement created by Academy Award-winning



A maze based on the classic horror film *The Shining* will join the lurid lineup at Universal's Halloween Horror Nights.
COURTESY UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD

composer John Williams, based on his original scores for the *Harry Potter* film series. The music was conducted by arranger William Ross and recorded in London with the London Symphony Orchestra.

With preparations for its annual, ever-popular Halloween Horror Nights in full swing, USH is creating a new maze for the event themed after Stanley Kubrick's classic 1980 psychological fright film *The Shining*. (A similar maze also will appear at Universal Orlando Resort's version of the event.)

The park's publicity department said that fans of the movie, which was based on Stephen King's best-selling novel and featured an im-

pressively scary hedge maze set piece of its own, should expect some gruesome paranormal surprises inside the attraction.

While venturing through the eerie Overlook Hotel, guests will be thrust into the old resort's tragic history of murder and madness — bearing witness to caretaker Jack Torrance's spiraling descent into insanity. Visions of ghostly entities will lurk around every turn as guests try to escape the wrath of Torrance while he succumbs to the hotel's supernatural forces.

Halloween Horror Nights returns to USH on weekends beginning Sept. 15.

• universalstudioshollywood.com

Six Flags introduces large flat rides in 2017 installations

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

NORTH AMERICA — In recent years, Six Flags has unveiled some rather large attractions that have become more iconic than typical flat rides. Following that successful formula, the chain of theme parks has followed suit and launched new large thrillers.

With a similar ride being very popular in Texas last season, two new Giant Discovery rides by Zamperla have debuted for 2017. The first to open was at La Ronde in Montreal, Canada.

"The Titan is a fantastic addition to our park and allows us to enhance the thrill factor in that area, complete with exciting rides such as Vampire and Orbite," said Phil Liggett, park president, La Ronde.

"We are proud to introduce such a massive ride for 2017, whose towering structure certainly changes the landscape of our park."

The pendulum-style ride swings a circle of 40 riders up to 147 feet in the air, momentarily suspending them weightless beyond the 90-degree mark.

Ramon Rosario, director of sales, Zamperla, told *Amusement Today*: "We at Zamperla are very proud to be part of the Six Flags organization capital plan. I was very happy to witness the parks' end users enjoy products we manufactured. That's what is all about!"

The second installation for Six Flags had a pop-cul-



Spinsanity at Six Flags St. Louis whirls riders facing outward.
COURTESY SIX FLAGS

ture thematic slant. Opening at a similar time that the film *Wonder Woman* was being released, Six Flags Discovery Kingdom named their Giant Discovery ride *Wonder Woman Lasso of Truth*.

"Wonder Woman Lasso of Truth is the fourth DC branded attraction at Six Flags Discovery Kingdom, joining *Superman Ultimate Flight*, *The Joker* and *The Penguin*," said Public Relations Manager Nancy Chan. "As the world's most iconic female superhero, the ride is already proving popular with our guests, who have given the ride a huge thumbs up."

The same name was given to a second ride, but one that is completely different. Six Flags America opened *Wonder Woman Lasso of Truth*, a 242-foot tall *StarFlyer* June 15. The ride is manufactured by Funtime, which is represented by Ride Entertainment.

"We are thrilled to be working on our tenth *Star-*



Both Six Flags America (left) and Six Flags Discovery Kingdom has used DC branding for their new Wonder Woman Lasso of Truth rides. COURTESY SIX FLAGS

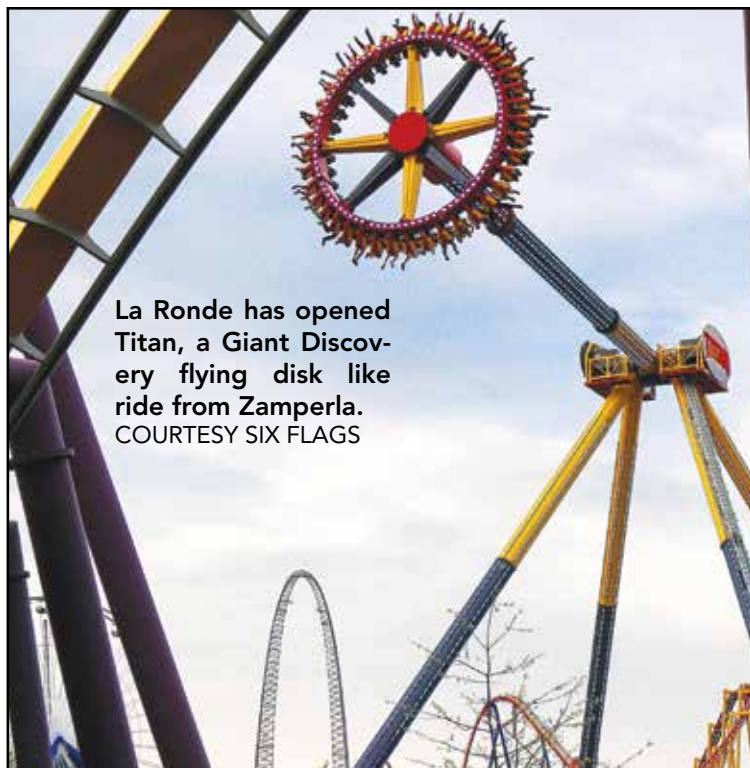
ing. The disc of riders travels back and forth along a 51-foot high half-pipe track.

"We have gotten a lot of great reviews from our guests who have ridden *Spinsanity*," said Elizabeth Gotway, public relations manager, Six Flags St. Louis. "It is a great complement to the other thrill rides in our park and really appeals to a diverse audience of thrill seekers. We don't have anything else like it in the park. We have spinning rides, but this is really unique with motorcycle seats and people facing outward."

Chance Rides unveils Unicoaster 2.0



Chance Rides released details on what it's dubbed "The Next Generation of Interactive Roller Coasters!" The *Unicoaster 2.0* takes rider-controlled, 360-degree rotating seats and places them onto a customized roller coaster track. The new design delivers the thrills of a looping coaster at a fraction of the cost as well as an interactive family coaster in the same space. This interactive roller coaster allows the rider to choose their experience from mild to wild, with the ability to rotate forwards, backwards or remain upright. The ride concept allows for continuous loading/unloading of 7 cars for capacity of up to 600 PPH. COURTESY CHANCE RIDES



La Ronde has opened Titan, a Giant Discovery flying disk like ride from Zamperla.
COURTESY SIX FLAGS

Six Flags Over Georgia — 50 Years of Screams and Dreams

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

AUSTELL, Ga. — For the 2017 season, Six Flags Over Georgia is celebrating 50 years of fun, laughs and memories. But for the amusement industry, the southern theme park can also take pride in its innovative accomplishments.

Following the surprising success of Six Flags Over Texas in 1961, founder Angus Wynne, Jr. soon had the notion to take the proven formula of the original park and start another from scratch. Upon determining a location on the Western outskirts of Atlanta (and an easy drive from Birmingham, Ala.), the location not only provided the real estate for a new park, but also a similar historical niche that would allow the park to be named Six Flags Over Georgia, thus extending the name brand and establishing the first theme park “chain.” The six themed lands were Spain, France, Britain, Confederate States, Georgia and the USA.

Opened on June 16, 1967, Six Flags Over Georgia was at the forefront of the burgeoning theme park boom. With only a handful of kindred in the 60s, parks eventually saw a dynamic growth in the country’s most populated areas. Cities everywhere found the tourist benefits of jumping on the theme park bandwagon. The Atlanta theme park was an initial success, but to maintain solid growth, inno-



At Six Flags Over Georgia 50th season signs are prominent throughout the park along with historic photos of the park from the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Shown here are banners and photos at the entrance fountains as guests enter the front gate. AT/JEFFREY SEIFERT

That spark arrived with the park’s third general manager. Errol McKoy had been sent by Wynne to the 1964 New York World’s Fair. Once brought back into the Six Flags fold following the fair, his ascent eventually landed him in the role as general manager at the ripe age of 26.

“By 1970, the park had matured. We had already put in all the shelf product that was available,” McKoy told *Amusement Today*. “We were put in a position to innovate.”

During his time in New York, McKoy became enamored with the mystique offered along Coney Island with its boardwalk, Parachute Drop and wooden roller coaster — the famous Cyclone. He presented that concept to Wynne, thinking

it would be a great idea for the park. Wynne wouldn’t hear of it.

“Angus told me, ‘You’re a young guy and you’re just starting off, but don’t ever mention anything to me ever again that harkens back to yesteryear or your career will come to a screeching halt,’” laughed McKoy.

In 1971, Wynne was removed from his role, and the young McKoy revisited his previous idea. With a few years of operation behind it, attendance at Six Flags Over Georgia was showing a bit of decline. McKoy knew the park needed something innovative to market. Before long, he put his job on the line, determined to market the tallest, longest, fastest roller coaster in the country. Supremely confident that such a



FAST FACTS

Six Flags Over Georgia

Opening Day: June 16, 1967
\$3.95 adult admission
12 rides and attractions

General Managers

1. Charlie Thompson, 1966-'68
2. Cleveland Smith, 1968-'69
3. Errol McKoy, 1969-'79
4. Spurgeon Richardson, 1979-'92
5. Del Holland, 1992
6. John Bement, 1993-'98
7. Gene Weeks, 1998-2000
8. John Odum, 2000-'03
9. Melinda Ashcraft, 2004-'13
9. Dale Kaetzel, 2013-present

Early Attendance

1967: 1,109,030
1968: 1,599,317
1969: 1,836,359

From its very beginnings, Six Flags Over Georgia's success has been the result of a wealth of talent at the GM level. Top, second year GM Cleveland Smith (right) takes a ride in an Arrow antique car with Great Southwest Corporation's Luther Clark. Middle: A young and energetic Errol McKoy became the park's GM that saw cutting edge rides added during his 10-year run. Above, current GM Dale Kaetzel keeps the park charm and success rolling. AT FILE



One of the most beautiful buildings and rides in the entire Six Flags family is Six Flags Over Georgia's Riverview Carousel. This monster-sized carousel was moved in 1972 from the closed Riverview Park in Chicago where it had operated since 1908. It was placed in this beautiful new building where PTC #17 continues to operate today. COURTESY SFOG

ride would generate excitement, McKoy was able to see his idea reach fruition with Great American Scream Machine opening in 1973. From that point, there was no looking back.

McKoy recalled telling his team, “Let’s brand this thing; let’s give it a special name. Let’s hype this thing for all it’s worth. We wanted bragging rights. We gave first riders a ‘Red Badge of Courage.’ The first year it opened our attendance jumped 350,000 people. That not only saved my job, but that turned heads in the industry.”

In the following years of the 1970s, other pivotal rides were brought to life during McKoy’s tenure. Six Flags spurred Intamin into designing a modern-day parachute ride. With the opening of The Great Gasp in 1976, McKoy got his other Co-

ney-inspired idea brought to life, albeit smoother and more rideable than the New York original. Two years later, Mind Bender arrived as the country was entering its looping craze. While most of those 1970s looping coasters have since been dismantled, Mind Bender still rates among the finest, with fans continuously giving it high marks on *Amusement Today*’s annual Golden Ticket Awards chart.

This influx of innovation in the 1970s increased attendance by a million guests. Six Flags Over Georgia became noteworthy as an industry leader.

During the 1980s, a popular slogan used by the park was “The Land of Screams and Dreams.” New rides carried out this theme. The park’s Tales of

► See SFOG, page 23

►SFOG

Continued from page 22

the Okefenokee got a thematic makeover as Monster Plantation, designed by Gary Goddard Productions. Today known as Monster Mansion, the dark ride is a beloved favorite. The decade also had an emphasis on Intamin rides with the innovative Free-fall, Thunder River, Great Six Flags Air Racer and other rides. The park was among the first that invested in the initial wave of O.D. Hopkins Shoot-the-Chutes rides.

If the 80s weren't known for roller coasters at the park (only one relocated coaster arrived during the decade), the 1990s certainly were. Over that decade, five roller coasters were added to the park with manufacturers Bolliger & Mabillard, Vekoma, Schwarzkopf and Dinn & Summers providing the product. Despite no coaster breaching the 125-foot mark, the lineup soon became a coaster enthusiast's treasure trove.

The new millennium has brought about still more major new product. The skyline of the park has breached the 200-foot mark three times. The Intamin drop tower Acrophobia came first in 2001; B&M's Goliath was next up in 2006; and the Funtime StarFlyer stands tallest with its 242-peak being erected in 2013.

While Six Flags also owns and operates White Water in the northern Atlanta suburbs, a small water park has been added to Six Flags Over Georgia proper. Slides supplied by ProSlide and a WaveTek wave pool offer a few hours of cooling fun during visits in summer months.



Two guest favorites continue to entertain guests today just as they did when they opened new. At left is the stunning Great American Scream Machine, while at right, the Monster Plantation provides families a break from the thrills with a animated boat ride. AT/TIM BALDWIN

Kids received a strong focus last season with two new areas: DC Super Friends and Bugs Bunny Boomtown. The revamped areas of the park saw an influx of rides from Zamperla and Larson International.

Roller coasters still arrived as well. Superman Ultimate Flight, the first B&M flying roller coaster in North America, flew into Georgia in 2002, and Gerstlauer's Dare Devil Dive gave the park its steepest drop in 2012.

While celebrating the 50th anniversary season, Six Flags Over Georgia installed the theme park chain's award-winning dark ride Justice League: Battle for Metropolis. This high-tech, interactive attraction from Sally has found success at many Six Flags parks.

With all the new rides added over five decades, it is still encouraging to see a couple originals in the mix. The park's railroad continues to haul passengers through the scenery and attractions. For this season, a special 50th anniversary spiel tells a little bit of history while traversing the park. One of the old park bumper stickers was recreated giant size along the train's journey on the side of one of the railroad's maintenance buildings. The park's first roller coaster, Dahlenega Mine Train built by Arrow, still twists and winds its way through a wooded setting. In the second season, the park added an additional log flume ride and a second Von Roll sky ride. The first incarnations of these rides have been dismantled, but the 1968 versions are still in operation.

It would be a gross misstep to not mention one of the park's finest gems. In 1972, the River-



view Carousel (PTC No. 17) was relocated from the still-missed Riverview Park in Chicago, where it opened in 1908. Situated at Six Flags Over Georgia's highest point and placed within a beautiful carousel pavilion, complete with rocking chairs around it, the continued operation of this glorious carousel, now more than a century old, cannot be overstated.

Live shows have been a staple at the park since the beginning. Dale Kaetzel, current park president, was pleased to see the primary show venue, the Crystal Pistol, showcasing a 50-year history. The show starts with "Groovin'" (which was the No. 1 song when the park opened) and concludes with "Can't Stop the Feeling."

It is somewhat unfortunate that the six themes the park was loosely based upon when built have since fallen by the wayside. Spain has been completely eliminated, the Confederate States has been tweaked and the Britain section has only a couple buildings with architectural touches, but no British attractions to speak of. Times have changed, and Looney Tunes and DC Comics branding have become the predominant themes.

Over the half century, the park has been a manufacturers' catalog meeting the demand for more and more rides. Arrow, Chance and Intamin were prevalent in the earlier years. Since then, Schwarzkopf, B&M, Gerstlauer, Hopkins, Funtime, Zamperla, Larson International, Vekoma, Sally, Zierer and more have displayed their wares for crowds to enjoy.

"In Georgia we really embraced innovation, obviously. A second thing I think is relevant is that we created kind of a boot camp for general managers," said McKoy. "I counted 23 guys who came out of Georgia to become general managers at theme parks around the world. That whole mindset set the bar on what was to come in amusement parks. It's still going on."

A June reunion brought numerous general managers and park presidents back to the property, as well as previous full-timers. In its history, Six Flags Over Georgia has had nine general managers that have served at the Atlanta theme park.

"As I look back on my most memorable moment with Six Flags, it was most certainly meeting my wife at the park and not even knowing it at the time," said John Odum, seventh of the



Two opposites for thrill rides have churned out the hourly capacity for the park, year after year, and show no signs of slowing the thrill factor down. Top, guests looking for a way to cool off will often choose the O.D. Hopkins-built Splashwater Falls chutes ride, while others choose the smooth track design and layout of the Schwarzkopf-built Mind Bender looping coaster (above). AT FILE/GARY SLADE

nine GMs. "My first job with Six Flags 44 years ago was a costume character, The Domino Sugar Bear. My wife, who also worked at Six Flags Over Georgia, was a ticket taker that fell in love with The Domino Sugar Bear. Four years later when we formally met, once again at Six Flags, we were reminiscing about our history with the park and discovered she was in love with The Domino Sugar Bear. That sealed our fate, and 37 years later we are living happily ever after."

Melinda Ashcraft, the predecessor to Kaetzel, said, "A time I truly treasured was hosting Errol McKoy, former GM and later president of the State Fair of Texas, at the park. He was my mentor in the early days of Six Flags and throughout my career. When he visited after many years, he took pictures, made notes and made me feel very proud of what our team had accomplished over the years. I feel honored to have learned from him and so many others in the Six Flags organization that gave me such an amazing opportunity to be the park president at Six Flags Over Georgia after beginning my career there when I was 16 years old. After a career spanning 45 years, it may sound

cliché, but every day was my favorite time...I loved my job."

Kaetzel told *AT*, "It's really about the interaction with the people. Our maintenance team... and our entire team... many of them grew up here. It is their true passion to work here and forward our goals of safety and quality and hospitality."

Reflecting on his years at the park, Kaetzel added, "I will never forget when we opened Holiday in the Park during my time here. That evening when we turned on the lights and saw the look on people's faces, and how this park was transformed...that was just magical. It has grown every year since we opened it. It just showed that is something this part of the country needed."

Six Flags Over Georgia has decorated the park's front entrance with numerous banners recalling the debut of major attractions. Kaetzel says he enjoys listening to people tell their friends and children that they were here when a certain ride opened. Those banners are seen upon arrival and when guests depart they know they have been a part of something that has had 50 years of special history.

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Golden Ticket Awards 2017 Event Itinerary

Friday, September 8 *Quassy Amusement Park* (AMUSEMENT TODAY will provide bussing to & from the event)

5 p.m. to 9 p.m. – Cocktails at Quassy's Carousel Theatre stage area, Restaurant & Bella and Bessie's Sweet Shoppe

5 p.m. to 7 p.m. – Rides on the award-winning *Wooden Warrior*, *Frantic*, *Reverse Time*, *Tea Cups*, *Grand Carousel*, *Free Fall'N Drop Tower*, *Quassy Express train*, *Skipper's Clippers* and *Up, Up & Away*

5 p.m. to 8 p.m. – Live entertainment

5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. – Appetizers at Bella & Bessie's Sweet Shop & Potato Patch In The Park

6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. – Dinner at Quassy Restaurant and Patio Party area overlooking Lake Quassapaug

8:15 p.m. – 3-D *Fireworks Spectacular* over Lake Quassapaug

9 p.m. – Event closes

Saturday, September 9 *Lake Compounce Amusement Park*

11 a.m. to 4 p.m. – Free to roam & enjoy Lake Compounce

2 p.m. – Campground Tour or Tour of Revenue Areas

3 p.m. – Tour of *Haunted Graveyard* setup or Tour of the Maintenance Area

4 p.m. – Cocktail hour with music and catering

5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. – Dinner

6:30 p.m. – Procession to the *Starlight Theater*

7 p.m. to 9 p.m. – The 2017 *Golden Ticket Awards* ceremony

9 p.m. – Post-Party at the *Croc Pot* overlooking the *Lazy River* (featuring: Music, dessert bar, open bar, and fire pits)

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Gosetto to bring its first dark ride to the U.S. in early 2018

Already has fun house products in the states

AT: Pam Sherborne

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FARMINGDALE, N.Y. — Steven Gentile, one of the owners of the family-owned and operated Adventureland Long Island, is excited.

He's excited about his park, the additions and renovations that have been made and those that are to come. He is particularly excited about a new addition he expects to arrive January, 2018, a new two-story suspended seat dark ride system from Gosetto srl, Treviso, Italy.

"This is a two-story dark house with suspended seats," Gentile said. "We have never had one and it will be a one of a kind for our area."

In fact, said Gina Guglielmi, Intermark Ride Group, who reps for the company in the U.S., "It is the first dark ride by Gosetto in the U.S."

The company delivered one

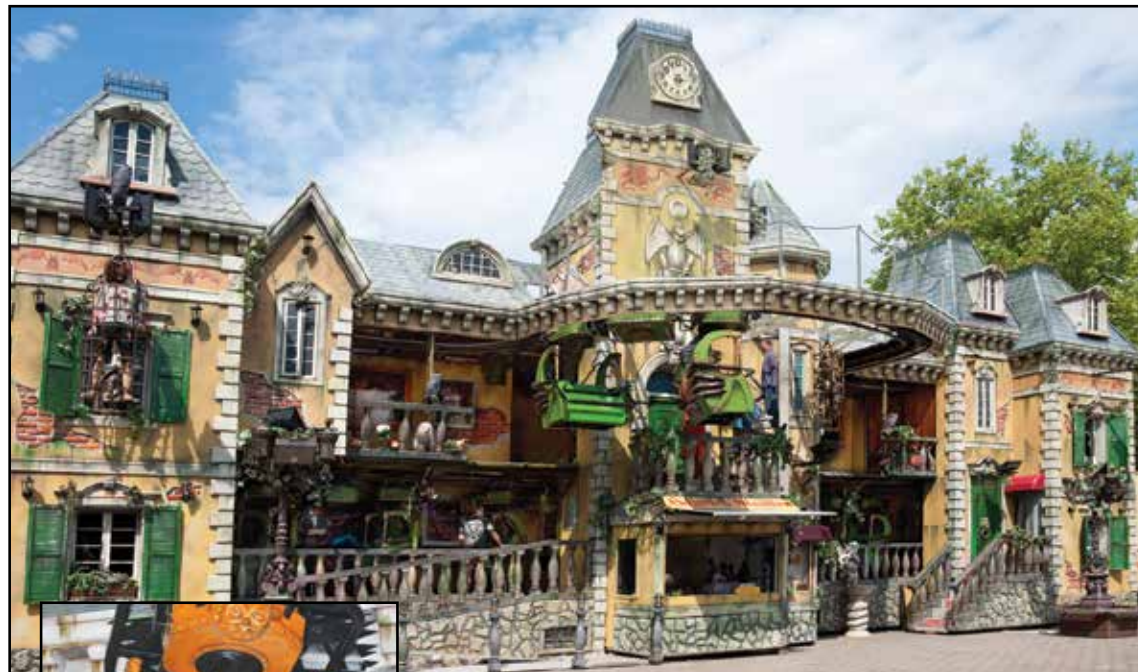
of its trailer model fun houses to a U.S. independent ride operator, Bobby Myers, about two years ago.

And, at AT press time, another was on its way to be delivered to Playland's Castaway Cove, Ocean City, Md.

"What drew us to Gosetto is their quality," Gentile said, about his coming dark ride. "We have had a great experience with them, great communication. We are really excited about getting it."

The dark ride for Adventureland will be a haunted-themed attraction with a variety of tricks, including about 10 animatronics inside and one large animatronic outside. Gosetto will do the animatronics as well as other special effects. The animatronics will have an uninterrupted power supply with computerized remote access control for diagnostics.

"We don't know exactly what animatronics we will have at this time," Gentile said. "We are just getting to that phase of



This Haunted House by Gosetto is similar to the one that is set to be delivered to Adventureland Long Island, Farmingdale, N.Y., at the first of 2018. It will be the first Gosetto dark ride in the U.S. and will feature suspended seats, and animatronics and special effects also by Gosetto. At left, these suspended ride seats are similar to those that will be installed on the new Adventureland ride.

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picking them out. And, that is fun, too."

Adventureland's dark ride will have 12 vehicles that can hold up to two adults and one child each. Ride dimensions are 30 meters wide (about 98 feet) by 13.5 meters deep (44 feet) by 12 meters high (39 feet). There is 162 meters (532 feet) of track.

Adventureland owners will replace the walk-through fun house they currently have with the new Gosetto ride.

"We have it on the market now," Gentile said. "It is a nice fun house but we like the fact that the kiddies will be suspended. It eliminates any possibility that the mischievous ones will try to wiggle out of the restraints and get out cars, which they will try to do at times."

Guglielmi said all of Gosetto dark rides are custom built with the customer choosing elements such as the theme, vehicle style, and whether it is a suspended or a monorail version.

"They also choose the car movement, rotation, banking, pitch, etc., and the special effects on the vehicles such as sound, touch, vibration and air blow," she said.

Castaway's Cove's fun house is a trailer model and should be up and operating by the end of July, said Scott Simpson, park owner.

Simpson said they decided on the trailer model, because: "it allow us to remove the ride in a storm and relocate the unit to a

safer place."

"Also, should we decide to sell the ride in the future, it will have a much larger resale market," he said. "The ride name is the Golden Galleon named after the first property my father bought when he opened his first business in 1951."

The Golden Galleon was built for the shore with a lot of galvanization and stainless steel throughout.

"We have about 20 attractions inside the ride," Simpson said. "We have moving conveyor or belts, vibrating floors, distortion mirrors, floors with rollers, suspended bridge on the third floor, spinning barrel, scissor floor, spinning discs and various other non moving obstacle."

Guglielmi said Gosetto fun house products are the same

structurally, but customers determine the themes, the number and types of tricks and lighting.

"Recent fun house deliveries in Europe include a very customized 'Mr. Bean' themed walk-through with multiple 3D effects on the facade, a Dinosaur Fun House complete with smoking volcano and a Mexico-themed fun house," she said.

When Bobby Myers purchased his New York New York Fun House from Gosetto, he took the basic concept and expanded it into a four-story fun house with double the tricks and capacity.

Simpson is looking forward to his new attraction.

"We have operated their bumper car building for over 20 years and appreciated the quality of their work," he said.



Seen here at the 2016 International Association of Amusement Parks & Attractions Gosetto srl booth are, from left, Smurf; GianPaolo Balliana, Gosetto; Stephen Eger, Adventureland Long Island; Manana Obeso, Adventureland; Paul Gentile, Adventureland; Luca Gosetto, Gosetto; Steven Gentile, Adventureland; and Gina Guglielmi, Intermark Ride Group, who reps for Gosetto. COURTESY GOSETTO

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Cedar Fair parks opens a variety of new rides

Midways beefed up/themed at numerous properties

AT: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

NORTH AMERICA — This year Cedar Fair properties are opening a wide assortment of new rides for thrill seekers, family members and other park attendees. Here is a look at those facility improvements:

Dorney Park Allentown, Pa.

Dorney Park brought back two favorites this season. Along most amusement park midways in the 1980's was a Huss Troika. The ride features three arms with seven gondolas that go in a counterclockwise direction while the center column revolves clockwise as the ride ascends to a 40 degree position. Cedar Fair purchased the ride in Europe and Dorney Park dubbed it Kaleidoscope due to the light package used after dark. The name Troika means "group of three" in Russian, a reference to its three armed design. Capacity is 42 people with a 42 inch height minimum.

Regarding the second ride, General Manager Mike Fehnel commented at the May media event, "We're the only park in America without bumper cars." Previously the park had at least



North Star, a Funtime Starflyer ride, is the only one of its type in the upper Midwest. At 230-foot, it is the second tallest ride in Valleyfair next to the 275-foot Power Tower.

COURTESY VALLEYFAIR

three variations of the perennially popular auto ride. Located in a building where Hang Time (Huss Top Spin) used to stand is a Bertazzon model simply called Dodgem. The 20 cars require a 48 inch height for drivers and a 42 inch height for riders.

Michigan's Adventure Muskegon, Mich.

At Michigan's Adventure, the 6,000 foot Half Pint Paradise water park area was revamped adding seven new children's slides and a Splash Pad, all by Vortex in Pointe-Claire, Quebec, Canada. Dumping water structures and geysers surround the features. The area was reconfigured with The Beach Party family play area so guests can navigate easily between both. The area opened in June.

"Little ones and their families will enjoy this new area designed just for little ones. Half Pint Paradise will be a great addition to the Michigan's Adventure. The redesign of Half Pint Paradise will also allow easier access to Beach Party!" said Laure Bollenbach, director, marketing and sales.

Kings Dominion Doswell, Va.

Kings Dominion added three family rides, a new event space, and upgraded food and beverage locations in the Planet Snoopy area. The Zamperla rides include Kite Eating Tree (Jumpin' Star 20 foot tower ride), Sally's Sea Plane (Crazy Bus) and Peanuts 500 (Speedway, whip style two seater flat ride.) There are now 20 rides in the 14-acre kids area.

Katelyn Sherwood, public relations and communications manager for the park told AT: "Our guest's response to the new rides and upgraded amenities has been extremely positive and we love being able to provide smiles and laughs in a family-friendly environment."

The park has also added a gaming app dubbed, "The Battle for Kings Dominion." The interactive reality game allows park goers to declare their loyalty to one of five coaster alliances and then "battle" against each other to take control of the Kings Dominion realm.

They include Dominator, Flight of Fear, Intimidator 305, Avalanche and Volcano. Each alliance has its own unique character avatar and a custom battle shield. Kings Dominion has added free park-wide Wi-Fi, making it easier to play and connect when visiting the property.

Valleyfair Shakopee, Minn.

At Valleyfair, the North Star, a Starflyer from Funtime Austria, opened as the only one of its type in the upper Midwest.

The ride was named to celebrate the region's affinity to being "up north" and the great outdoors — is a 230-foot-tall tower that spins riders more than 20 stories above the ground. Seated in two-person chain-link swings, riders slowly begin rotating in a circular motion, reaching speeds of up to 40 mph as the swings ascend and descend the tower. North Star ranks as the second tallest ride in the park next to the 275-foot Power Tower occupying the former Enterprise ride site, which was retired last season. The tower swing is near the front of the park.

"The addition of North Star certainly adds to the continued commitment to provide lasting family memories for our guests," says Dave Frazier, vice president and general manager of Valleyfair.

Adam Sandy, chief Business development officer for Ride Entertainment Systems and Funtime's U.S., representative said, "The North Star project was a great one because it went so smoothly. Funtime and Valleyfair worked to fast-track the project and we actually had it erected before IAAPA." He continued, "This really gave the park plenty of time to install one of the largest rides in its history. Valleyfair chose a gorgeous LED light package to complement the red, white and blue paint scheme. The ride has more lights than any other attraction on the property and can be seen from miles away. In addition, the light package is programmable, meaning they can change it for holidays and special events. The Valleyfair team was fantastic to work with; we had a great time on our first project at the property. This is the fourth Funtime project at Cedar Fair properties since 2014 and we look forward to more in the future."

Canada's Wonderland Vaughn, Ontario

Canada's Wonderland added Muskoka Plunge, in their Splash Works water park area. This Splashtacular, (Paola, Kansas) manufactured attraction, is a 60 foot tall waterslide complex with four drop capsule speed slides. Riders start is a launch chamber plummeting into a high-speed free fall through S-curves and 360-degree loops at speeds of approximately 25 mph. The four launch capsules may drop together, sequentially one-at-



Bumper cars are back at Dorney Park after a multi-year absence. The 20 Bertazzon model cars are housed in a new structure on the site where Hang Time (Huss Top Spin) used to occupy. The park also got a Huss Troika, named Kaleidoscope, due to the light package on the ride.

AT/B. DEREK SHAW



County Fair, a new three-acre section at Carowinds, added four classic amusement park rides. They include Zephyr (Zierer Wave Swinger); Electro-Spin (Mondial Top Scan); Rock 'n Roller (Mack Music Express) and Do-Si-Do (Huss Troika) shown here. The area is located between the entrance to the Carolina Harbor water park and the Carolina Goldrusher mine train. COURTESY CAROWINDS

a-time, or "roulette" style. Each slide twists and turns for 300 feet, while taking a different ride path to the bottom.

Muskoka Plunge uses the "DrenalineDrop" ride system — the first of its kind in Canada. This unique design provides a curved back riding surface, with no harsh transitions. This system allows for multiple capsules to be linked together for a multi-user experience with the choice of three different types of rides.

For thrill-seekers who prefer to stay dry, Soaring Timbers is the newest offering by the park. The ride is manufactured by Mondial (Inferno attraction) and is the first of its kind in North America. Angled at 45 degrees, Soaring Timbers swings 38 riders facing each other, in sweeping arcs on two rotating gondolas which flip independently of each other on a center axis. Riders can soar up to 66 feet.

Carowinds Charlotte, N.C.

Carowinds added County Fair, a three plus acre section between the entrance to the Carolina Harbor water park and the Carolina Goldrusher (Arrow Development mine train), featuring four classic amusement park rides. They include Zephyr (Zierer Wave Swinger); Electro-Spin (Mondial Top Scan); Rock 'n Roller (Mack Music Express) and Do-Si-Do (Huss Troika).

"We combined some long-time guests' favorites, four classic fair rides, traditional fair food and music, to bring a one-of-a-kind experience families will want to enjoy over and over again", says vice president and general manager, Pat Jones. "Parents can go back in time and re-live their childhood with their kids and create memories that will last a lifetime."

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New rides open at Dollywood's theme, water parks

FAST FACTS

Name/Park

Drop Line
Pigeon Forge, Tenn.

Location

Timber Canyon section
(across from
Lumber Jacks Pizza)

Manufacturer/Type

Funtime Handels, GmbH/
Mobile Skyfall with
rotating gondola
(Seats and restraints
supplied by Gerstlauer)

**Height/Speed/
Capacity/Negative G's**
230 feet/77 mph/
24 passengers/3.2

**Ride Time/
Hourly Capacity**
2 minutes/700 pph

Of Interest

- First Funtime Handels park model installation in the United States
- Used existing foundation left from Timber Topper

Braking System
Magnetic brakes

Height Minimum
50 inches

Opening Date
May 6, 2017

*New rides part of the
"Year of the Family"
promo at the mer*

AT: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. — Herschend Entertainment, owner of Dollywood and Dollywood's Splash Country water park opened three rides for the 2017 season. All opened in early May.

Rising 20 stories above Dollywood's Timber Canyon, Drop Line provides riders a quick panoramic view of the Great Smoky Mountains before the free fall ride plunges downward 230 feet. The tower is located across from Lumber Jack's Pizza in the Timber Canyon section occupying the site where Timber Topper once stood. The Funtime Handels (Dölsach, Austria) Skyfall attraction is their first park model installation in the United States. Skyfall made its first exhibition appearance at the 2013 Oktoberfest, Munich, Germany. The attraction was brokered through Ride Entertainment Systems, Stevensville, Md.

Funtime was able to repurpose the existing foundation left from a previous tower attraction. Funtime engineered a custom embed and bottom



Dollywood's new Drop Line, a rotating gondola drop tower ride, opened on May 6. It features a height of 230 feet and reaches a top speed of 77 mph. It was supplied by Austria-based Funtime Handels GmbH. Below, the Whistle Punk Steam Chaser from Zamperla entertains younger guests in the shadow of the looming Thunderhead. COURTESY DOLLYWOOD



tower section that extended about 15 feet below grade, tying into Dollywood's existing foundation. By re-using the existing foundation, Dollywood saved a significant amount of money in the process. The project was a quick turn-around, opening 25 days ahead of schedule.

"Drop Line is the perfect new attraction for Dollywood," said the park's General Manager Gene Scherrer. "We have a number of unique rides, but this one is unlike anything else here. Our guests will have a chance to enjoy the beautiful Smoky Mountain scenery as they rise up the tower, but once they get to the top, the anticipation of the drop will certainly create memories they'll remember for quite some time," he added with a laugh.

Pete Owens, director of Media/Public Relations, shared his thoughts on the ride, "There is nothing like the anticipation and pure exhilaration of a really tall drop tower."

"We were thrilled that Dollywood chose to work with Funtime," said Hannes Lackner, Funtime's company's general manager. "To have our first U.S. Skyfall drop ride in such a beautiful park is special for us," he noted.

"Dollywood has been a great showcase for Ride Entertainment and its partners," said Adam Sandy, chief business development officer for Ride Entertainment Systems. "They are great. Their creative team always comes up with unique story concepts. In addition, the Funtime and Ride Entertainment installation teams had a great working relationship with the park, everything was done on time and on budget."

Ride Entertainment was also involved with Mystery Mine, FireChaser Express at Dollywood and when they represented S&S, the swing rides at Silver Dollar City and Dollywood, as well as Powderkeg at the Branson, Mo. venue. "We have been working with Herschend Family Entertainment for over a decade and they continue to amaze us with the creative theming concepts they come up with for our hardware," said Sandy.

In the same section of the park is Whistle Punk Chaser, a Zamperla family gravity coaster 80STD, designed for Dollywood's younger guests. The 15 foot tall coaster is adjacent to Drop Line and the GCI Thunderhead wooden coaster. The coaster holds 12 passengers and can handle up to 360 pas-



sengers per hour. The names, "Whistle Punk" and "Chaser" are job titles for people working on a logging crew.

Rounding out the new attractions is TailSpin Racer near the front of Dollywood's Splash Country. The five-story slide complex features spiraling, high-speed AquaTubes (Whizzer model) manufactured by White Water West. The six-lane, mat racer slide matches riders in a head-to-head race with the fun of a traditional mat racer-style slide with tight turns and daring drops typically found on an enclosed slide.

"TailSpin Racer is our first new attraction since we opened our water coaster, RiverRush," explained Dollywood's Splash Country General Manager Janet Dawson. "This is something our guests have been asking for and we are thrilled that we're delivering a family slide that gives six people the chance to race at the same time."

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Pinfari Galaxy Coaster

Skelly's Amusements Co. plans to rotate rides for Penn's Landing Summerfest, a first for the show

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

FESTIVALS

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. — Michael Skelly, an owner along with Tom O'Connor, of Skelly's Amusement Co., doesn't know how this summer's stint as part of the Delaware River waterfront here will be for business, but he sure was interested in investigating the possibility.

"We were approached by the Delaware River Waterfront Corp. to supply some rides for their boardwalk," said Skelly, the first of June. "We have never done this before, so we decided to give it a try."

Delaware River Waterfront Corp. is responsible for the full stretch of seasonal riverside at-

tractions along Philadelphia's riverfront, called Penn's Landing, including an outdoor roller rink, artist-inspired mini-golf, indoor arcade, eateries and festival events. The summer event is officially called Penn's Landing Summerfest.

Skelly, whose show is based less than 30 miles away from Philadelphia in Williamstown, N.J., was contracted to provide two rides, six games and a lemonade stand starting June 18.

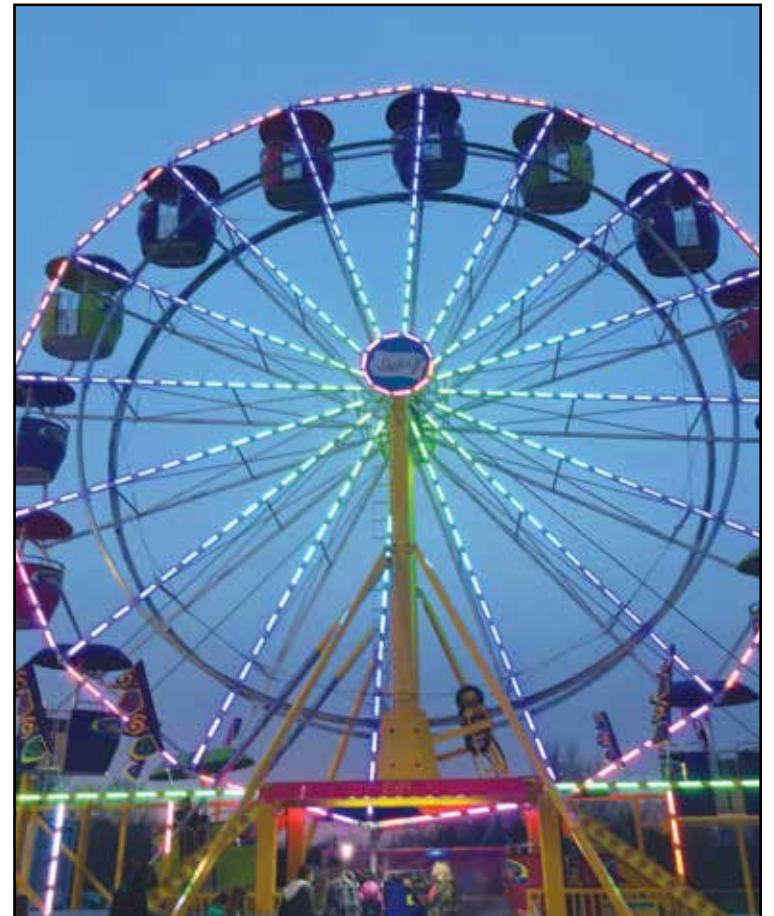
One of the rides is a San Antonio Roller Works carousel owned by Skelly's Amusements Concessions Manager Eric Marchione. The carousel, games, and lemonade are remaining constant throughout the summer season along the boardwalk.

The second ride is a Wadkins 60-foot, 16-gondola Ferris wheel. Skelly said the wheel is new for his show and features an LED system from Denny's Electronics. He took delivery of it at the 2017 International Independent Showmen's Foundation trade show, Gibsonton, Fla., back in February.

But, that ride won't remain constant throughout the year. After a few weeks, Skelly's crew was set to come back and swap the wheel with a Chance Pharaoh's Fury. A few weeks after that, an ARM Typhoon was set to rotate in.

Depending on timing and scheduling, the wheel may return at the end of the summer.

Skelly's Amusements is



Skelly's Amusements Co. is supplying two rides, six games and a lemonade stand this summer at Penn's Landing Summerfest, Delaware River waterfront, Philadelphia. This Wadkins wheel is one of the rides that is running there. It features the newest generation of programmable LED's manufactured by Denny's Electronics.

COURTESY SKELLY'S AMUSEMENTS CO.

staffing and operating all of their own equipment. In the weeks between June 19 and Labor Day, Sept. 4, the show will employ a dozen workers at a time to work at the riverfront's attractions.

Ticketing has been integrated into the ticketing system at Penn's Landing.

The games are cash-to-play.

The rotating rides were selected for their visibility. Skelly said his show is a 40-miler so he doesn't expect that swapping the rides throughout the summer in Philadelphia will interfere with their regular schedule.



Skelly Amusements will rotate this ARM Typhoon into the lineup of rides at Penn's Landing Summerfest, Philadelphia, this summer. COURTESY OF SKELLY'S AMUSEMENTS CO.

California fairs to receive state funds

TURLOCK, Calif. — After years of receiving little funding from the state, fairs throughout California may soon have some extra income thanks to legislation introduced state lawmakers last month.

The proposed legislation would put approximately \$15 million for reinvestment back into the state's 78 fairs.

California's fairs have faced many economic challenges, with the most recent being the loss of continuous fair funding in the 2011-2012 budget year due to the state's budget woes. As a result, fairs were required to be self-sufficient as of Jan. 1, 2012.

According to a story that ran last month in the Turlock (Calif.) Journal, home to the Stanislaus County Fairgrounds, state and local fairs are one of the few public entities that do not receive a portion of the locally-generated sales tax.

The proposed legislation would use about three-fourths of one percent of the total gross receipts reported to the Department of Finance be included in the next annual budget for allocation.

California's fiscal year starts July 1.

—Pam Sherborne

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Getting down to the wire for carnivals to receive H-2B workers

Not enough workers going into fair season

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

WINTER PARK, Fla. — During the first week of June, Powers Great American Midways had not received one worker under the H-2B visa program.

But, that mobile amusement business was not alone. There were many others within the outdoor mobile amusement industry as well as many seasonal industries that rely on the guest workers that come through the H-2B visa program.

And, said Bob Johnson, president, Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA), it has been very frustrating, particularly since language within the temporary government funding plan signed by U.S. President Donald J. Trump May 5 opened the door to get beyond the cap of 66,000 workers by allowing approved workers entrance to the U.S. to fill the seasonal positions.

"But, there has been no movement to get the workers here," Johnson said, "and we really don't know why. We need to get our workers in here. We wanted to be able to have them by the first of July."

The H-2B VISA labor certification program establishes a means for U.S.

CARNIVALS

nonagricultural employers who anticipate a shortage of domestic workers to bring temporary nonimmigrant foreign workers into the U.S. This includes the outdoor amusement industry, amusement parks, hospitality workers, resorts, cruise ships, construction, maintenance, landscaping, and golf courses.

The cap for workers under this program has been 66,000 per fiscal year divided into two parts throughout the year -- 33,000 for workers who begin employment in the first half of the fiscal year (October 1 - March 31) and 33,000 for workers who begin employment in the second half of the fiscal year (April 1 - September 30).

For the last two U.S. government fiscal years, the cap was extended to allow returning workers to come back to the jobs they had held without being included in the 66,000 cap. That extension ended with the end of the last fiscal year, October 1, 2016.

Johnson said he doesn't know the exact number over the 66,000 cap the returning worker extension brought in, but it has been estimated to be an additional 70,000 workers annually over the last several years.

The returning worker exemption was not reinstated, but the language in the government funding plan signed by the President May 5 gave some discretion.



Bob Johnson, Outdoor Amusement Business Assn.

Businesses who want to be approved for H-2B visa workers must submit an array of documents that include the number of temporary workers they need. Employers must show they have sought U.S. workers first.

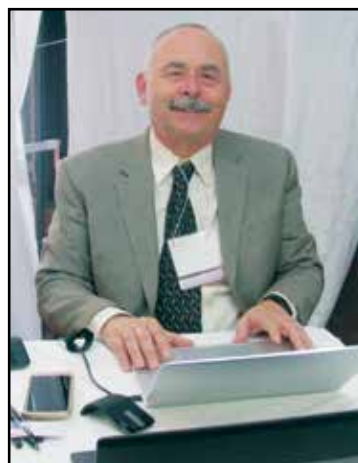
Once completed, the package of documents goes to three U.S. departments -- U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Department of State, and U.S. Department of Homeland Security for approval.

It seems that Homeland Secretary John Kelly and his staff have been given the power of discretion as designated in the funding plan.

And, in the first week of June, everything was at a stand still.

"People are really suffering," Johnson said. "Our industry uses 5,000 to 6,000 workers under this visa program. We have gotten about one-third of them so far."

"It is hard for our industry to find workers willing



James Judkins, JKL Workforce

to do the hard jobs that we have," he said. "Not only that, we are asking them to leave their homes and families throughout our traveling season. American workers really don't want these jobs."

Debbie Powers, Powers Great American Midways, said the number of H-2B workers they hire varies from year to year, but averages about 65 to 70 annually. This year they had expected about 65 workers, but had not received any by the first week in June.

"By the time we received our certification, the cap had already been reached," Powers said.

In fact, the cap for the first 33,000 workers had been reached January 10. Then, on March 13, the remaining 33,000 cap was reached.

Powers said they are lucky in that they have a good American staff, but it is not enough to supplement when the show begins to play their larger fairs, "not near enough."

If the show is not able to supply the equipment they are contracted to bring to a fair because they don't have enough employees to do so,

then that may affect many other jobs. She estimated between 200 and 250 would be impacted.

That number resonates with information released by James Judkins, JKL Workforce Agency, a foreign labor consultant and facilitator firm specializing in the H-2B visa process for complex mobile or itinerant seasonal businesses as well as more traditional seasonal businesses in hospitality, landscaping and pet boarding/grooming.

His release stated that: "...each H-2B foreign worker supports 4.6 U.S. jobs that would not exist..."

Judkins has been in the forefront of the issues surrounding the H-2B visa program and has sent out many emails to industry members stressing the importance of contacting congressmen, senators, and other officials in Washington.

He also is stumped as to why there hasn't been any move especially, "since President Trump signed legislation that provided a logical and reasonable solution addressing the problem that the H-2B visa cap does not have the flexibility to expand in concert with the expansion of the U.S. economy."

When and if the additional H-2B workers are approved by Homeland Secretary Kelly, it could still take up to a week or so for the workers to travel here. Johnson said he really didn't know exactly how long it would take.

"They would have to get on a bus, airplane or whatever and travel up here," Johnson said. "Travel expenditures are all paid for by the U.S. employers."

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MIDWAYLIGHTS

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The **Tennessee State Fair's** Distinguished Service Award, presented annually at a special ceremony during the fair's 10-day run in Nashville, will be named in honor of the late **Charles Hale Moss**, 68, manager of the **Wilson County Fair**, Lebanon.

Members of the **Tennessee State Fair Association** (TSFA) board of directors approved the motion to name the award in honor of Moss at its May meeting, citing his many contributions to the state fair, agriculture and his leadership role in reviving the Wilson County Fair.

John Rose, TSFA board chairman, said the board's decision to name the distinguished service award after Moss was "appropriate and fitting because of Hale's lifelong commitment to agriculture in Tennessee, his volunteer work with the state fair as well as his tireless efforts in leading the development of his home county fair (the Wilson County Fair) into arguably one of the nation's best county fairs."

Moss, who served as president of the Wilson County Fair for every year since 1979 except one, was instrumental in seeing the fair's quality and achievements recognized locally and on a national stage and led the fair to astonishing attendance records that in recent years have soared above the 500,000 mark, attracting visitors from multiple states all of Tennessee's 95 counties.

Moss died April 17, 2017.

The Tennessee State Fair will run Sept. 8-17. This year's theme is "Tennessee Proud."

Minnesota State Fair officials are excited to have one of the tallest portable wheels in North America coming to the 2017 Minnesota State Fair, St. Paul, Aug. 24-Sept. 4.

The wheel, co-owned by **Michael Wood, Wood Entertainment** and **Frank Zaitshik, Wade Shows**, is the 156-foot high Sky Eye Wheel, manufactured by **Lamberink**, that first debuted this year at the **Florida State Fair**, Tampa, Feb. 7-20.

State Fair General Manager **Jerry Hammer** said in a press release that fair officials had been working for two years to get a spectacular like this.

"It will be placed at the center of Machinery Hill on the north side of the fairgrounds, giving everyone a whole new perspective of the fair," Hammer said.

The wheel has 36 enclosed gondolas, each able to hold up to six people. The programmable LED lighting system includes more than half a million lights. The lighting system is from **Denny's Electronics**.

Dale Christianson of Merrill, Wis., is the new executive director of the **Central Wisconsin State Fair**, Marshfield, Wis. The fair's board of directors voted May 22 to hire Christianson to replace outgoing Executive Director **Adam Fischer**, who resigned from that post earlier in May.

Christianson is a past member of the fair board and past board president for the **Wisconsin Association of Fairs**. He was to assume his new job duties in Marshfield on June 1.

The Central Wisconsin State Fair will run Aug. 30-Sept. 4. The midway is provided by **A&P Enterprise Shows**.

A rosy financial picture and a preview of this year's expo were presented to the **Colorado State Fair Board of Authority** in May, with officials pleasantly pleased from the news.

Through 10 months of the current fiscal year,

an unaudited budget document showed the fair operation with a net income, after depreciation, of more than \$580,000. This is a marked difference from the same time last year when the fair was \$13,531 in the red.

This year's expo, set for Aug. 25-Sept. 4 in Pueblo, is coming together well, the board learned. There were already more than 350 vendor spaces filled in May, with about 40 remaining.

This year visitors will be greeted with a 20-by-20 outdoor living exhibition and, possibly, a tiny home mini-village showcase, a first for the fair.

Anticipated to be launched in conjunction with the expo is a Pueblo-based Uber service, with pickups available at two gates.

This year's anticipated free attractions include sea lions, racing pigs, Fables of the West comedy troupe, the Stilt Circus, a new Wild Science display, antique tractors and urban dancer Snap Boogie.

There will be an array of paid musical entertainment as well.

The midway is provided by **Crabtree Amusements**.

Helm & Sons Amusements, Inc. of Colton, Calif., has been selected as the new carnival provider for the **California Mid-State Fair**, Paso Robles. Helm & Sons Amusements was selected after an extensive R.F.P. bidding process.

California Mid-State Fair CEO **Michael Bradley** said Helm & Sons, "has the experience, reputation and commitment to safety and quality that make them one of the best in the industry. We were very pleased with their proposal and all of us are very excited to work with the Helm team for many years."

The carnival offered several new attractions and programs to the fair, including new rides such as the water flume ride Big Splash, manufactured by **Reverchon**; Star Dancer, by **Technical Park**; kiddie ride Turtle Race, **Sellner Manufacturing**, and a Mad Birds-themed obstacle course, manufactured by **Wisdom Rides**. They also offered a Minion-themed Fun House and a Lego-themed Block City, as well as other new attractions for the fair.

In addition to the rides, Helm & Sons Amusements proposed to bring many "creature comfort amenities" to the fair, including two guest services stations, 100 new benches, giant umbrella shade areas, talking ticket boxes, You Are Here signage, and colorful vinyl privacy screening.

The 2017 California Mid-State Fair runs July 19-30.

The **Indiana State Fair Commission** is looking to fill hundreds of openings for this year's **Indiana State Fair**, Indianapolis, set for Aug. 4-20.

Organizers planned a job fair last month in hopes of filling all the positions. Job applicants were open to ages 14 years and up.

This year's Indiana State Fair theme is "The Wonderful World of Food." The featured exhibit will take visitors on a journey around the world and through time, exploring how humans have shaped foods and how food has shaped humans. The exhibit is called "Our Global Kitchen: Food, Nature, Culture" and is organized by the American Museum of Natural History, New York.

North American Midway Entertainment provides the midway with about 55 rides for the Indiana State Fair.

Tragic Australia car accident kills three children of one show family

QUEENSLAND, Australia — On May 30, members of the Pink family, who operate Pink Event Catering (a concession company) and are members of the Showmen's Guild of Australia, were driving home in convoy from a country show in New South Wales. Along a stretch of highway near the border of New South Wales and Queensland, a tragic traffic accident occurred, killing three of Jaze and Glenn Pink's seven children, Jack Pink, 19, Destiny Pink, 15, and Marina Pink, who was to turn 18 years old the next day.

Here is how a local paper described the accident: "The trio was driving in convoy with their father, who was ahead of them in another vehicle, as they made their way from Dubbo to their home near Beenleigh in Queensland.

"Jack was driving a Pan-tech truck full of furniture when he collided head-on with a southbound fuel tanker.

"His sisters died when their following 4WD collided



Here is picture of the three Pink family members that were killed in a traffic accident in New South Wales, Australia. From left are Marina Pink, Jack Pink, and Destiny Pink. This photo is the one being used on the GoFundMe page that has been set up in the family's honor. COURTESY GOFUNDME

ed with the tanker and burst into flames."

The outdoor amusement industry has sent out overwhelming condolences and support. The Facebook page administrator of the Showmen's Guild of Australasia, who was posting the condolences that were coming across, said he had to quit posting them to the page

because there were just too many, "thousands."

Ray Cammack Shows' Ben Pickett sent out a message by email. In it, he stated: "In this business we all understand the risk and danger of the road when we move from fair to fair and can't imagine the grief of losing a child let alone 3 at once."

Charlene Leavitt, who

SHOW TRAGEDY

along with her husband Guy Leavitt own Ray Cammack Shows, said it is so very tragic. Leavitt said Pickett is her son-in-law, married to her daughter Joy.

"Ben and Joy and their six children are on their way to Australia as I type this," Leavitt said, on June 4.

"They (the Pinks) are still so very much on my mind," she said "We continue to pray daily for the Pink family to find peace. Our whole RCS family has been touched. The supervisor of our Wild River ride changed the video screen opening weekend at the San Diego County Fair (Del Mar, Calif.) to honor the Pink Family. He has never met the Pinks."

Glenn and Jaze Pink are fifth generation showmen. The trio's siblings include Coral Pink, Jeanna Pink, George Pink and Patrick Pink.

Justin Watene, Jaze Pink's brother and uncle to the children, has set up a GoFundMe account for

the family so that they will be able to help support the family while they are grieving and not working. As of June 4, there had been over \$192,000 donated.

A link to that page is www.gofundme/pink-family-support.

The service was held June 8 at the kids' high school, the Canterbury College Events Centre, Waterford, Queensland. It was followed by a wake at The Showmen's Club, Yatala, Queensland.

—Pam Sherborne

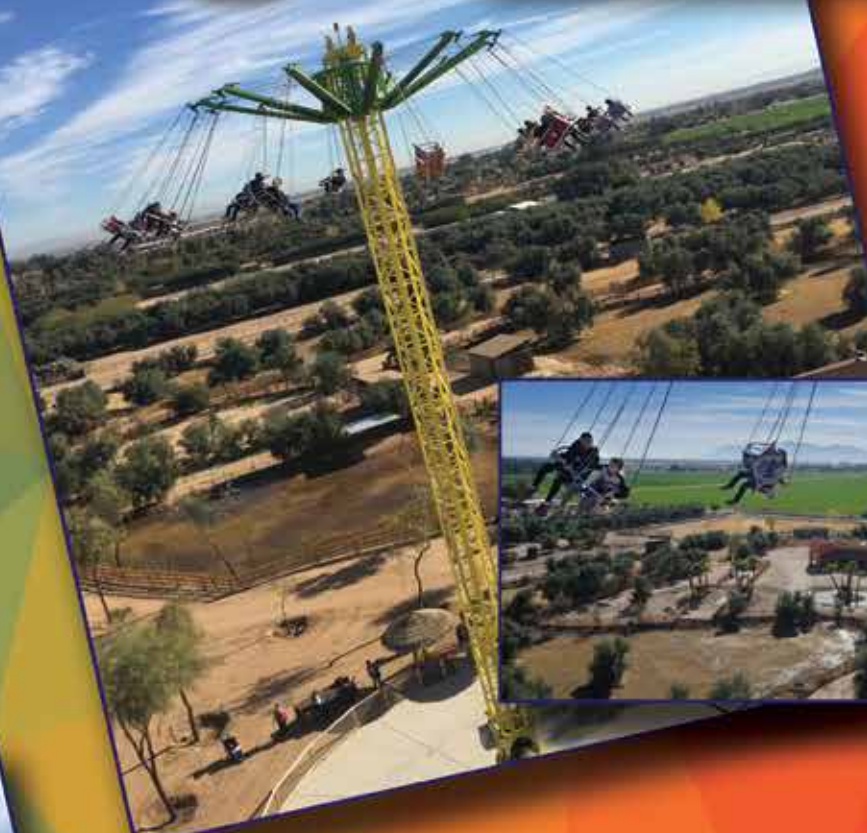
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BUSINESS, SAFETY & CLASSIFIED

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INDUSTRY LOOK: Is barbeque the new holiday festival?

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

For some time, Halloween has been a significant attendance driver at parks everywhere. A recent trend finds parks extending their seasons with festivals over the winter holidays, draping their properties in Christmas lights and décor. Now, something else seems to be brewing — and it could be the next festival trend.

Cedar Point's **Brew and BBQ** ran four weekends beginning May 19 and continued through June 11. While in the park, guests purchase event tickets that allowed them 15 samples, which could be used for food or craft beers. In addition to live music, Cedar Point kicked off the event with cooking demonstrations with *Food Network* star **Damaris Phillips**.

"This is the third year for the festival," said **Tony Clark**, marketing manager of Cedar Point. "Music is featured on our Gossip Gulch stage, while brews are served from tents throughout FrontierTown. Food is served out of select locations in the same area."

Clark told *Amusement Today*, "Brew and BBQ opened to rave reviews the first year when it was hosted inside the new Lakeside Pavilion. We wanted to expand it into a themed experience, so FrontierTown was chosen as the new location. With a Western atmosphere, including themed buildings and shows, it's the perfect outdoor venue to showcase this event. It just feels cool, and guests have come back to see it all again."

California's **Great America** is also on the bandwagon.



Kings Island took their food festival in a new direction with **Food Truck Fridays** (above). Carowinds featured Southern dishes at **Taste of the Carolinas**. Craft beers and barbeque are the new "it" festival. AT/TIM BALDWIN; COURTESY CEDAR POINT



Raul Rehnborg, VP and general manager of CGA said, "We have been working hard to show our guests that Great America is the place to be and play and provide opportunities to see the park in new ways. We have successfully done this with **Haunt** and

WinterFest, but we also challenged ourselves to provide a unique and immersive park experience during the summer season. Our **Taste of Orleans** event which we debuted in 2016 was a great example of this and the response we received from our guests was

incredible."

Looking to build upon that success, the park has introduced **Red, White & Brews**, this year's festival.

"We knew from our experience with Taste of Orleans, that the food component is one of the most important ele-

ments of creating an authentic and immersive event," said Rehnborg. "Our executive chef has been a key contributor by developing signature items that are representative of the theme and feel of the event."

Sister park **Worlds of Fun** ran their own version weekends from April 28 – May 14. It was the third year for **BBQ and Brew**. Like other festivals in the Cedar Fair chain, it featured craft beers from around the region.

Likewise, it was **Carowind's** third outing with **Taste of the Carolinas**. Saturdays and Sundays from April 22 through May 14 brought in cuisine from seven different regions from North and South Carolina. In addition to barbeque, some unusual offerings such as frog legs and pork belly salad were on hand, as well as bourbon chocolate fritters.

"What better way to capture the essence of Carolina culture than with the one thing everyone loves — food," said **Kris Suita**, the park's executive chef. "It's like cooking for our own families. We put our heart and soul into these dishes."

Another Cedar Fair park has thought outside the box with their own creative take on a food festival. Public Relations Manager **Don Helbig**, **Kings Island**, said the park wanted to try something different. During the month of May, five or more food trucks were set up around the park's iconic Eiffel Tower for **Food Truck Fridays**.

"Food Truck Friday's offered our guests a unique cu-

► See **FESTIVALS**, page 38

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Quassy, Lake Compounce to host 2017 Golden Ticket Awards event

BRISTOL, Conn. — “The Networking Event of the Year” is right around the corner! The charming **Lake Compounce** and **Quassy Amusement and Waterpark** in Connecticut are the host parks for *Amusement Today’s* annual **Golden Ticket Awards** this year. Mark your calendar for Friday and Saturday, Sept. 8-9 and plan to visit with old industry friends and enjoy meeting new colleagues during this “don’t miss” two-day bash. The complete itinerary, registration and hotel information are now available at www.goldenticketawards.com.

The Golden Ticket Awards event will officially kick off on Friday, Sept. 8, at Quassy with networking opportunities, a cocktail reception, entertainment and rides and a grand dinner overlooking Lake Quas-



sapaug. On Saturday, Sept. 9, attendees will enjoy play time at Lake Compounce (the oldest continually operating amusement park in America), specialty tours and the awards show itself, which will be held in the historic Starlight Ballroom with dinner and plenty of fantastic entertainment.

To check out the itinerary and hotel information for the Golden Ticket Awards, as well as to register, please log on to www.goldenticketawards.com. This event is reserved for working professionals in the amusement industry. Representatives from parks and at-

tractions, manufacturers, suppliers, consultants and more will come together to network and celebrate another industry season.

The **DoubleTree by Hilton** in Bristol, Conn., will serve as the host hotel for the event. Please refer to www.goldenticketawards.com for specific information and rates or call the DoubleTree by Hilton at (860) 589-7766. Please mention “Golden Ticket Room Block” when calling or use group code GTA when making online reservations at www.doubletreebristol.com.

This is the 20th annual year for the Golden Ticket Awards; they are presented to the “Best of the Best” in the amusement industry and are calculated from an international poll conducted by *Amusement Today*.

• GoldenTicketAwards.com



Silver Dollar City has pleased crowds with its barbecue festival for many seasons. COURTESY SILVER DOLLAR CITY

►FESTIVALS

Continued from page 37

linary experience each week. They were able to try everything from Southern barbecue to gourmet grilled cheese and ribs,” Helbig told AT.

Dollywood kicked off the unofficial welcome to summer Memorial Day weekend with its **Barbeque & Bluegrass** festival. Running May 26 – June 4, live bands in various venues take the spotlight while complementing award-winning barbecue. Of note, no suds here as Dollywood does not sell alcohol.

Silver Dollar City, sister park to Dollywood, featured their own version from May 4 – 29. In 2011, the **Bluegrass & BBQ Festival** was named Bluegrass Event of the Year by the International Bluegrass Music Association, noting it presented more bluegrass bands on multiple stages to more new audiences than any other event in the nation. The 2017 festival featured a new Pitmaster’s Courtyard. Demonstrations from grilling experts and a vast array of sauces complemented the experience.

“BBQ is a longstanding tradition at Silver Dollar City that continues to trend up,” said **Lisa Rau**, public relations director. “Research validates it and sales prove it: Guests love BBQ. We not only present an entire three-week spring

festival, but throughout the season, we serve down-home, overnight smoked specialties. In fact, we even have a ‘Master Smoker’ who is part of our crafts community. We find guests love to try different barbecue styles, methods, flavors and techniques. As a result, we bring in demonstrating chefs, have sauce taste-testing of selections from throughout the country, and serve it in several of our restaurants. It’s always interesting to see how different regions of the country offer varying BBQ presentations – and we show and taste it all!”

Commenting toward the history of the event, dating back to 2005, Silver Dollar City General Manager **Brad Thomas** said, “After a couple of challenging springs, we made the decision that we needed an event that could help drive incremental attendance in late spring, prior to closing of schools. We tested numerous concepts with our current visitors and our potential visitors. Silver Dollar City is known for our food as well as our music events, so we suspected a new music/food event could do well.”

It is clear that festivals freshen the park atmosphere throughout the year. While Halloween and Christmas are nationally celebrated seasons, barbecue festivals seem to have their own shared theme — come hungry!

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MARKETWATCH



COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 06/13/17	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	32.93	33.93	22.45
Merlin Entertainments Group/ Legoland	MERL	LSE	489.50	537.50	316.79
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	70.98	72.56	56.17
Comcast Corp./ NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	41.25	42.18	30.02
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	105.86	116.10	90.31
Dubai Parks & Resorts	DXBE:UH	DFM	0.75	1.77	0.73
EPR Properties	EPR	NYSE	73.85	84.67	65.50
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	9010	TYO	1186.00	1506.00	950.00
Haicahang Holdings Ltd.	HK:2255	SEHK	1.64	1.95	1.53
Leofoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	8.13	9.00	6.95
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	32.35	32.93	21.31
Parques Reunidos Servicios Centrales S.A.	ES:PQR	MCE	16.18	17.41	11.99
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	15.99	20.13	11.77
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	59.55	65.19	47.61
Skyocean International	HK:0593	SEHK	14.80	17.4	8
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	609.00	676.00	417.00
Village Roadshow	VRL	ASX	3.70	5.57	3.22

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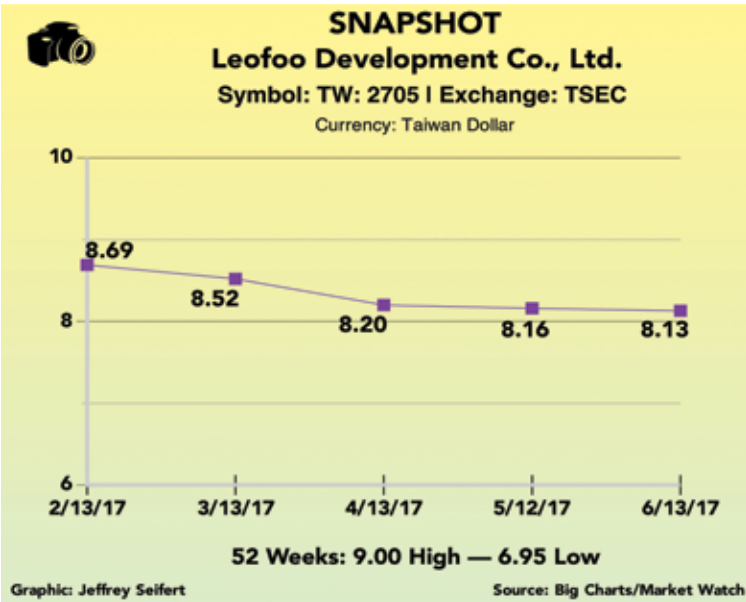
Worldwide Markets: **ASX**, Australian Securities Exchange; **CSE**, Copenhagen Stock Exchange; **LSE**, London Stock Exchange; **NYSE**, New York Stock Exchange; **NASDAQ**, National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations; **SEHK**, Hong Kong Stock Exchange; **SZSE**, Shenzhen Stock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

DIESEL PRICES

Region (U.S.)	As of 06/12/17	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	\$2.569	+\$0.120
Midwest	\$2.454	+\$0.064
Gulf Coast	\$2.368	+\$0.061
Mountain	\$2.644	+\$0.231
West Coast	\$2.681	+\$0.071
California	\$2.906	+\$0.115

CURRENCY

On 06/14/17 \$1 USD =	
0.8925	EURO
0.7872	GBP (British Pound)
110.03	JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.9684	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.3252	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.3268	CAD (Canadian Dollar)



BUSINESS WATCH

SkyTrans partners with Ride Entertainment

STEVENSVILLE, Md. — **SkyTrans Manufacturing**, a leading supplier in aerial tramways, has chosen **Ride Entertainment Group** as their sales partner. The New Hampshire company specializes in aerial ropeway design, manufacturing, and service.

"We are pleased to announce that SkyTrans has formed an exclusive partnership with Ride Entertainment for the sale of our product line of Aerial Ropeways (chairlifts & gondolas) to the amusement industry throughout the world, which includes amusement parks, large FEC's, water parks and zoo's. We selected Ride Entertainment because of their stellar reputation in the industry and their ability to provide all of the services to back up our products such as financing and installation. We look forward to working with them for the future," said **Jerry Pendleton**, president of SkyTrans Mfg., LLC.

Hershey Entertainment names new CEO

HERSHEY, Pa. — The board of directors at **Hershey Entertainment & Resorts Company** (HE&R) has named **John Lawn** as its new chief executive officer (CEO), effective immediately. Lawn succeeds **Bill Simpson**, who is retiring at the end of the year and will hold the title of CEO Emeritus until his retirement.

"Our entire board is pleased to name as CEO someone with John's qualifications, experience and most importantly, dedication to HE&R and its mission to support the Milton Hershey School," said **Eric Henry**, CEO/chief investment officer, **Hershey Trust Company** and HE&R board chair.

This announcement is the culmination of the succession plan established when Simpson announced his retirement in June 2016 and Lawn was named president in October 2016.

Dippin' Dots sales increase 13 percent in 2016

PADUCAH, Ky. — **Dippin' Dots, LLC** posted double-digit growth in 2016, led by the company's focus on account development and retention, strong franchising sales and expanded distribution to entertainment venues and third-party retail outlets. Total sales of the privately held company's core ice cream products increased 13 percent in 2016. Dippin' Dots expects continued strong demand for the current fiscal year, with sales increasing through Q1.

In Brief...

•TORONTO — **Cineplex Inc.** announced on May 18 its cash dividend of \$0.140 per share for the month of May 2017 was payable on June 30, 2017, to shareholders of record on May 31, 2017.

•GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — **Six Flags Entertainment Corporation** (NYSE: SIX) and **Riverside Tourism Investment Group Co. Ltd.**, a tourism and real estate developer and Six Flags partner, announced on May 18 that the children's areas of China's first-ever Six Flags branded parks will be themed after Garfield and the Garfield characters from the world-famous comic strip. **Six Flags Zhejiang** is scheduled to open in 2019, anchoring a 30 billion yuan (USD \$4.6 billion) resort development located on the coast of Hangzhou Bay. **Six Flags Chongqing** is scheduled to open in 2020.

•SANDUSKY, Ohio — **Cedar Fair** (NYSE: FUN), announced on June 7 that its unitholders re-elected **Gina D. France**, **Matt Ouimet** and **Tom Klein** to the board of directors of its general partner, **Cedar Fair Management, Inc.**, for three-year terms expiring in 2020.

"We are pleased to announce the re-election of Gina, Matt and Tom," said **Eric Affeldt**, Cedar Fair's independent chairman. "Their leadership and collective knowledge have been great assets for Cedar Fair as we are on track to achieve our FUNforward 2.0 long-term Adjusted EBITDA goal a year earlier than planned. We look forward to their continued insight and guidance as we remain focused on maximizing unitholder value in both the near- and long-term."

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OBITUARIES

Legendary theme park designer Ira West dies at 78

MALIBU, Calif. — **Ira West**, formerly of **Randall Duell & Associates** passed away on May 21, 2017. He was 78.

A former set designer for **MGM Studios**, West worked with **Randall Duell** designing theme parks built in the 1960s through the 1980s, eventually working his way up to president. Some of West's projects include the design of Frontiertown at **Cedar Point**, **AstroWorld**, **Worlds of Fun**, the two **Marriott's Great America** parks, and **Parc Asterix**.

West also providing concept design for large attractions such as **Magic Mountain's** Great American Revolution and **Hershey-park's** Sooperdooperlooper. West created a scale model of the terrain, determined where everything should be placed, then turned the design over to **Intamin** who then engineered the coasters. West also developed the concept for converting the Turn of the Century roller coasters at both Great America parks to Demon coasters with the addition of two vertical loops and new themeing.

During his retirement years, Ira enjoyed his Malibu home where he was an avid model train collector, especially when it came to the California trolley line cars.

No other information on Ira's life or family were made available to AT.

Funeral services were held on May 25, in the TaNaCH Chapel at Mt. Sinai Hollywood Hills, Calif.



Ira West (far right) seen with close friends Rick and Lillia Bastrup during the 2014 Golden Ticket Awards at SeaWorld San Diego. AT FILE

Ira West remembered...

"I've worked with Ira West designing thematic attractions on many projects over the last 30 years. I always found him to be the most gracious and supportive gentleman of anyone I have known in this business. Having been one of the principal designers of all the original regional theme parks, including all the Six Flags and Marriott parks, Ira had an incredible knowledge of design and operation which he was always happy to share advice about. He was a close friend and we spent many trade shows and park and attraction openings together. I was always proud to introduce him as my friend. Our business owes a lot to his pioneering efforts and I will greatly miss his friendship and good company."

—**Rick Bastrup, R&R Creative Design**

"I would like to say that although Randall Duell was the owner of the company, and did a lot of early design work on the Six Flags parks, it was Ira who did most of the later work that took the parks through the '70's, '80's and '90's. He was it my estimation, a creative genius and was a delight to work with."

—**Errol McKoy, Six Flags Corp. (retired)**

"I was sitting in a bar in Spain late one night with Ira and Bob (Minick) years ago. Bob and Ira were talking about the early years of the parks and the design business. Ira said, 'We learned from the best showmen to become the best showmen we could be.'"

—**Lottie Minick, Bob Minick Associates**

"Many years ago I was fortunate to hear a presentation that Ira made. He had a copy of the year ending issue of *Amusement Business* which featured the 50 largest parks in the United States. He started checking off each park that he and his company, Duell, had designed or played a major role in the development of: there were four or five Six Flags parks, Hersheypark, Opryland USA,

several Kings Entertainment parks, Marriott's Great America, Holiday World, part of Disney World's Epcot, part of Universal Studios and many more. When Ira finished more than half of America's 50 largest parks were part of the list. Then, he noted additional parks around the world. Ira was a foundation of our industry. He was a major part of its direction and its magic. From Hollywood High School which he grew up attending to Paris and the iconic Parc Asterix whose design he oversaw, Ira and Duell were the benchmark for everyone else. He loved the amusement industry. I am deeply honored to have been his friend."

—**Joe Heflin, WhiteWater West (retired)**

"Ira was a gracious and gentle man. I have so many fond memories of visiting parks around the world with him and others from the Applause Award Committee when *Amusement Business* was involved. Ira loved being part of that group and clearly relished telling stories from his career with Randall Duell & Associates. He was quiet, but always had something to say and it was always interesting! He will be missed by many."

—**Karen Oertley, AIMS International**

"I worked with and was a friend of Ira's for over half a century. We met in the mid 60's. The relationship was exceptional in every respect, he was always extremely professional, honest and had a level of integrity second to none. One of the reasons I enjoyed a special relationship was because his mother really liked me and if Ira was traveling with me or we were in the same foreign land together she felt comfortable which needless to say put a big smile on Ira's face plus anyone else who knew me. Ira's dedication to the amusement industry, his passion for his work and track record are truly exceptional. Many will miss him, nobody has more stories and memories to share than I do...50 years."

—**Dan Glosser, Zierer (retired)**

Bob's Space Racers mourns Connors' passing

PALM COAST, Fla. — **Kathleen "Kathy" Connors**, 67, of Palm Coast, Fla., retired long-time customer service representative with **Bob's Space Racers** (BSR), Orlando Beach, Fla., passed away on June 6, 2017.

In information sent out by BSR, Connors' was described as "the face of BSR to many of our customers for over 35 years."

"Kathleen was a great friend to many of our customers and fellow teammates," the release stated. "We know this news will be heartfelt for many who knew her. Kathleen's great personality and dedication was an inspiration to us all."

Connors was born November 10, 1949, in Derby, England, the daughter of Frank and Bridget Clulow. When her family moved to the United States in 1966, they set-



Connors

tled in Weymouth Mass. There, she met her husband, James M. Connors, of Quincy, Mass. They were married May, 1969, in Weymouth.

In 1973, they moved to Florida. She is survived by her husband, and their daughter, Colleen Connors, grandchildren Dalton Connors, Gabrielle Connors and Jarrod Connors, one great granddaughter Mackenzie Connors, all of Palm Coast, Fla.

She also is survived by her brother Frank Clulow (Pamela) of New Hampshire, sisters-in-law Cathleen Cooke (Charles) of Jacksonville, Fla., Marianne Keith of Quincy, Linda Decker of Daytona Beach, Fla., brother-in-law Gerald Connors (Wendy) of Quincy.

She leaves numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and many dear friends.

Donations in her memory may be made to Nemours Children's Hospital Orlando, Fla.

Great American Circus owner Maturo dies at 87

DAWSON SPRINGS, Ky. —

Lawrence Maturo, 87, of Dawson Springs, Kentucky, passed away on June 2, 2017 at the Baptist Health Madisonville, Ky..

Maturo was born on May 12, 1930 in Chicago, Ill. He was a self employed farmer and, he and his wife, Lillian "Lilly," were owners of the

Great American Circus. They were considered pioneers of the Outdoor Amusement industry. In his spare time Maturo also enjoyed traveling, fishing, boating and loved spending time with his friends and family.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Lillian Mitchell Maturo, and his son, Larry Maturo.

Survivors include his sons, Ricky Maturo and wife, Kristene of Dawson Springs, and Greg Maturo and wife, Edwina of Madisonville; daughter, Gayla Peach and husband, Harold of Dawson Springs; granddaughter, Sherrie Love and husband,



Maturo

Paul of Austin, TX; grandson, Shawn Maturo and wife, Amanda of Madisonville; several great-grandchildren; and sister-in-law, Hilda Brake and husband, Fred of Wood Dale, IL.

Condolences may be made to the family at www.harrisfuneralinc.com.

Member of SLA St. Louis Chapter Germain dies at 76

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — **Jewell "Jerry" Sherman Germain**, 76, of St. Louis, Mo., a member of the **Showmen's League of the St. Louis Chapter**, passed away May 29, 2017.

Germain was not only owner of **Jerry Germain Rides**, which he and his wife, **Linda Germain**, started in 1977, he also was devoted to coaching high school football.

He enjoyed being a parent and a grandparent.

Germain's wife preceded him in death on July 28, 2016.

Germain was the father of

Lori (Cliff) Gould, Scott (Tara) Germain and the late Julie Germain. He was the grandpa of Calli Germain and Jared Germain.

He was the brother of Bill (Glenda) Germain, Joyce Germain and the late Marvin and David Germain; and brother-in-law to Eugene Little, James (Estee) Little and the late Charlie Little. He was a loving uncle to Barb Little, Bridget (Steve) Prosis, Carrie (Evan) Shaw, Nick Germain, Chris Germain and the late Jason Germain.

He was the great-uncle of Cameron Germain, Gavin Prosis, Amelia Shaw and late Theodore Shaw.

Memorial Services were held June 25 at the Columbia (Ill.) Turner Hall.

In memory of Germain, contributions may be made to Calli A. Germain, 15 Woody Ct., Columbia Ill. 62236.



Germain



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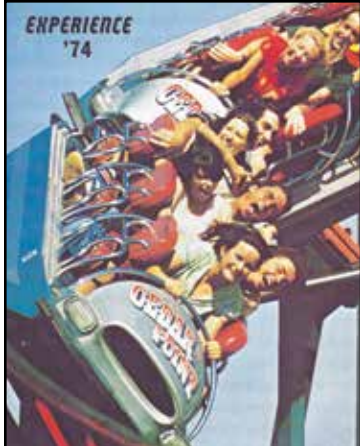
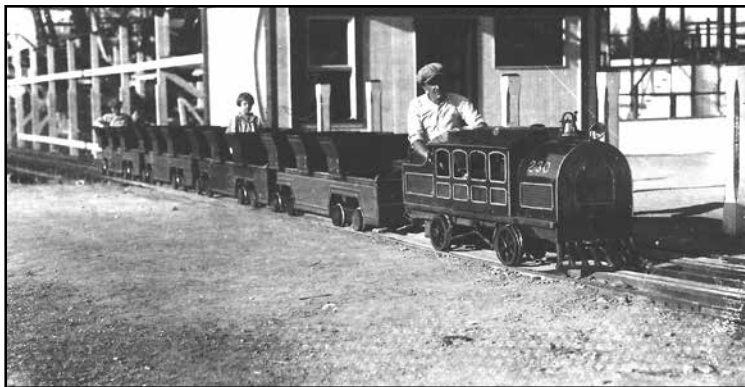
MUSEUM PROGRESS REPORT

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

Pat Hoffman makes donation to growing NRCMA archives

Now enjoying retirement following a lengthy career at Six Flags, Cedar Fair and Fun Spot (Angola, Ind.), Pat Hoffman recently made a donation to the NRCMA archives. At right, (top to bottom): Pat holds one of two donated carousel horses from his personal collection. This one, a 1949 Allan Herschell Junior Merry-Go-Round horse, with original paint, is from Geauga Lake; among the photos donated are several historic photos from Geauga Lake, including this train view and rare look at the Geauga Lake baseball stadium with a game in progress. Below, a collection of park annuals included this one from Cedar Point's 1974 season.

COURTESY NRCMA



THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

Presented by the National Rollercoaster Museum

AT: Richard Munch



JULY

•**1907:** With the 1907 season already full of ride-related accidents at **Coney Island**, the *New York Times* published a Sunday editorial on July 28 titled *Needless Danger*. It suggested that the rides and attractions everyone enjoyed were becoming more dangerous. It read: "Until lately the 'scenic railway' and its many variants have been regarded as perfectly harmless. Now they are beginning to have serious accidents on the 'scenic railways', bringing it into undesirable competition with (public) railways that people must use. There is no sense in risking one's life to ride a few minutes on a dangerous toy road through aisles of painted canvas. People have been badly hurt on the chutes and toboggan slides. This means bad business for the lessees of such contrivances. There is no excuse for mishaps on these machines, and the only reasonable explanation is that the machinery is getting old and needs repairing. (But it is still no doubt) that summer is to satisfy the most reckless."

•**1913:** On July 22, proceedings were instituted by local residents and property owners adjacent to **Woodside Park**, Philadelphia, Pa., to have the park limit operation on two of its popular roller coasters, the *Ben Hur Racer* and *Whirlwind*. The issue in the complaint was noise, with the suit stating that "the comfort of their homes was destroyed by the noise from the coasters and the shouting of their patrons in the park". The local court would grant an extension of time to park management to find a remedy to the objectionable sounds. Both management and the owners of the two concessions subsequently made several changes in the construction of the coasters to reduce the noise to a minimum. Exactly what they did to satisfy the court order was never disclosed.

•**1937:** Twenty-four persons were injured, none seriously, in a collision of two roller coaster trains at **Riverview Amusement Park**, in Chicago, Ill. The accident occurred on the *Pippin Coaster* on the evening of July 20. A train stalled between two small hills and would be hit by the following train. Because it was near the end of the ride, the injuries to about mostly 30 teenagers was considered minor. The *Associated Press* carried the story and it made the front page on over 200 newspapers across the country with the title: "Two Coaster Trains Collide in Chicago." It may have been the first time a coaster related story hit all markets large and small in every state. Ironically the park was spared further damage as the roller coaster was never identified, other than being listed as one of the "high rides." The cause of the accident would later be identified as a hung-up safety wheel.

MARK MOORE MEMORIAL FUNDRAISER

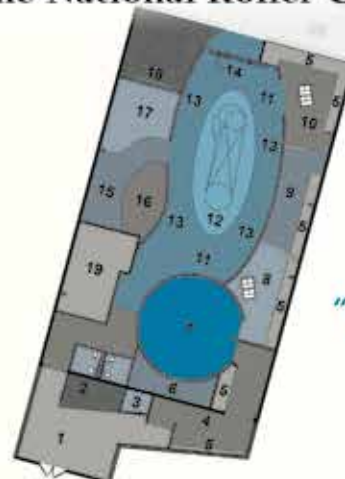
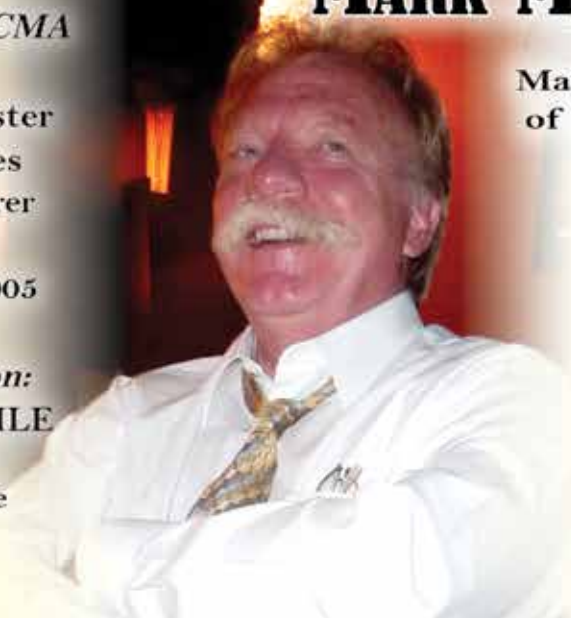
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-Gary Slade, Amusement Today



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AIMS awards more certification; call for safety award nominations

AIMS Certification

The AIMS Certification Committee, chaired by **Rick Achard**, includes **Bryan Creason, Ed Zaker, Patty Sullivan, Tony Claassen, Timo Klaus, George Tso** and **Tim Viox**. In addition to oversight of the Certification program, this committee evaluates and awards AIMS Level III applications.

Reaching AIMS Level III certification is the highest achievement in amusement industry safety training and education. Level III certificate holders are the most accomplished certifications in the industry and require 10 years of experience (120 months) along with 120 hours of continuing education (12 CEU).

Congratulations to the following individuals who recently earned their AIMS Level III Certifications:

AIMS Level III Certified Operations Technician: **Mike Ashcraft, Ray Cammack Shows; Tom Steinmayer, Universal Orlando Resort; Ben Pickett, Ray Cammack Shows and Chris Lopez, Ray Cammack Shows.**

AIMS Level III Certified Maintenance Technician: **Alan Randy Vakeiner, SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment; Mark Leavitt, Ray Cammack Shows; Barry Schaible and Coulter Associates.**

Names of all AIMS International certified individuals can be found on the AIMS website at www.aimsintl.org.

AIMS Safety Seminar update

The **2018 AIMS Safety Seminar** will be held in Galveston, Texas at the **Galveston Island Convention Center** at the **San Luis Resort**, January 7-12, 2018.

Many exciting events and classes are being planned as well as additional safety and security classes and certification. The seminar is a must attend for both operators and manufacturers and suppliers who need to stay abreast on the latest trends and topics surrounding the industry's #1 priority worldwide - SAFETY. For more information on the seminar, hotel accommodations, etc. please visit our website at www.aimsintl.org.

aimsintl.org. Full registration and class selection will open in September.

Final call for nominations for the AIMS Intl. Safety Award

The **AIMS International Safety Award** recognizes an individual or organization that demonstrates leadership, innovation, and foresight in improving safety in the amusement industry. The first annual AIMS International Safety Award was presented to **Harold Hudson** at the 2016 Golden Ticket Awards in Cedar Point. We are now accepting nominations for the 2017 AIMS Safety Award. Nomination forms and more information can

be found at www.aimsintl.org. This prestigious award will be presented during the **Golden Ticket Awards** on September 9, 2017, at **Lake Compounce**, in Bristol, Connecticut.

The AIMS board of directors will hold its annual meeting on September 7, 2017 in Bristol Connecticut one day prior to the Golden Ticket Awards weekend. We encourage and appreciate input on what AIMS can do to support our mission to improve amusement industry safety through leadership in education. Names of all AIMS board of directors can be found on our website.

From all of us at AIMS, enjoy your summer and be safe!

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

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www.iaapa.org

World Waterpark Association Symposium & Trade Show
October 16-19, 2017
(Trade Show: Oct. 17 & 18)
West Palm Beach, Fla.
(913) 599-0300
www.wwashow.org

IAAPA 2017 Attractions Expo
November 14-18, 2017
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Orlando, Fla.
(703) 836-4800
www.iaapa.org

2018 AIMS International 2018 Safety Seminar
January 7-12, 2018
San Luis Resort and Hilton Hotel

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(714) 425-5747
www.aimsintl.org

NAARSO 2018 Safety Fourm
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Hands on ride training to be held at Dixie Landin'/Blue Bayou
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Hands on ride training to be held at Knott's Berry Farm
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cindee@ridetraining.com

Northwestern Showman's Club Safety Seminar
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3407 S.E. 108th Ave.
Portland, Ore. 97266
(503) 761-0989 or (772) 485-5112
Class training at Oaks Amusement Park and Funtastic Rides, Inc. Winter Quarters

AAMA/AMOA Amusement Expo 2018
Feb. 28-March 1, 2018
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Las Vegas, Nev.
(708) 226-1300
www.amusementexpo.org

Email your Safety, Maintenance and Education event to:
gslade@amusementtoday.com

Revised ASTM International standard continues to support parasailing safety

W. CONSHOHOCKEN, Pa. — ASTM International's **F24 Committee on Amusement Rides and Devices** has updated its standard on parasailing in efforts to continually enhance safety in the parasailing industry.

The revision to "Standard Practices for Parasailing" (F3099) provides guidelines and procedures for the operation, maintenance, and inspection of parasail vessels, equipment, and associated activities. This includes crew training and flying passengers aloft in a parasail. The revision increased tensile strength on parasail tow lines, added a wind variance for trade wind locations to compensate for the predictability of certain regions, and approved the of testing of the soft shackle.

"This is an industry standard that has input from parasail operators from all over the globe," says **Matthew Dvorak**, president of **Daytona Beach Parasail**. "We are working on maintenance and repair, and continuing education possibilities in the future." He says that parasail operators from around the world, cruise ships, waterfront municipalities, and resorts will find this standard most useful.

To purchase standards, visit www.astm.org and search by the standard designation, or contact ASTM customer relations at (877) 909-ASTM or by email at: sales@astm.org.

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PAGES 30 & 31

April 2017 | Vol. 21 • Issue 1

www.amusementtoday.com

Old Town enhances its skyline with Fabbri wheel

All Fun Shareline

OLDTOWN, Pa. — A new 10-year-old Fabbri wheel, which opened Jan. 20, is the latest addition to the skyline of Old Town, Pa. The wheel, which is the largest of its kind in the world, is located along the town's main street, and is a popular attraction for visitors.

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

All Fun Shareline

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



THE FABBRI WHEEL FOR OLDTOWN IN KISSIMMEE IS 82 FEET TALL, FEATURES BALLS-SHAPED GONDOLAS AND A SHINING LED LIGHT PACKAGE FROM FUN LED/LASER ENTERTAINMENT.



THE LAMBERINK RL45 PORTABLE WHEEL, WHICH RAN FEB. 9-20, WASN'T OPERATING UNTIL MONDAY, FEB. 13, DUE TO SHIPPING DELAYS. STANDING AT 150 FEET IN THE AIR, THE WHEEL IS TOUTED AS THE LARGEST PORTABLE WHEEL IN THE WORLD.

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