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During EAS 2018, more than 565 exhibitors will line the trade show floor, which will be 12 percent larger than last year's record-breaking area. COURTESY IAAPA

Euro Attractions Show 2018 makes return to Amsterdam

More floor, innovations for Sept. 25-27 expo at RAI Exhibition Centre

AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

AMSTERDAM — As it continues to celebrate its 100th anniversary this year, the **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA)**, is expecting a big turnout at its presentation of **Euro Attractions Show 2018 (EAS)** at the **Amsterdam RAI Exhibition and Convention Centre**. The trade show runs Sept. 25-27, with additional activities, meetings and seminars scheduled before, during and after the main event dates.

Making its third stop in Amsterdam, EAS 2018 will have the largest show floor in the event's history, complete with more than 565 exhibitors in four exhibit halls. More than 12,000 leisure tourism, and

entertainment professionals from 100-plus countries are expected to attend.

"These companies have so many new products and innovations to showcase that the show floor is actually 12 percent larger than last year's record-breaker in Berlin," said **Jakob Wahl**, vice president of **IAAPA Europe, Middle East, Africa Operations**. "Upon the show's opening, we're confident that we'll have nearly 15,000 net square meters of exhibit space."

EAS is the premier trade show and conference in Europe for owners, operators and suppliers of all kinds of leisure. Attendees representing amusement parks, water parks, zoos and aquariums, museums and science centers, retail malls, festivals, resorts and more come together to learn what's new in the global attractions industry.

► See EAS, page 7

Palace Playland spends almost \$5 million for 2018 additions

Sea Viper coaster first in U.S. from Preston & Barbieri

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

OLD ORCHARD BEACH, Maine — A Sea Viper rose up along the eastern seaboard in this southern Maine town at the first of this summer, and it has been a good thing.

That Sea Viper is a 70-foot-high, steel, non-looping coaster by the Italian manufacturer **Preston & Barbieri**. It also is the first of its kind in the United States. And, the coaster, with a project cost of about \$4 million, has proven to be exactly what **Palace Playland** amusement park owners had hoped.

"People that have been coming here for years love it," said **Paul Golder**, whose dad, **Joel Golder**, first purchased the park in 1996. "They seem to like it better than our older Galaxi coaster. We have heard it called the Galaxi on steroids. We call it a family-plus coaster."

However, the Sea Viper is not the only new addition to the park this year. Park management also installed a new **SBF/Visa** spinning coaster, called the Wipeout, and a new **Bob's Space Racers** water game, Top Glo.

But, most impressive this year is the largest, Sea Viper, a Preston & Barbieri Anconda model coaster. Its top speed is 42 mph and it delivers a G-force of up to 3Gs. The track length is 1,509 feet and the ride lasts about two minutes.

Sea Viper has an LED lighting package from **Losi**, another Italian company. Included in the lighting package are running lights that run up the lift hill.

To make room for the new coaster as well as the other new attractions, park officials had to remove the existing **SDC Galaxi** coaster, which had been operating at Palace Playland for 20 years. They also purchased a small plot of land that was behind that coaster, which had become available.

► See PALACE, page 8



The management of Palace Playland in Old Orchard Beach, Me., has been very pleased with the park's new purchases for the 2018, including the new steel, non-looping coaster by Preston & Barbieri. Named the Sea Viper, it opened at the park June 9. AT/RON GUSTAFSON

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

Grecotel Olympia Riviera Resort Waterpark
Kyllini, Greece



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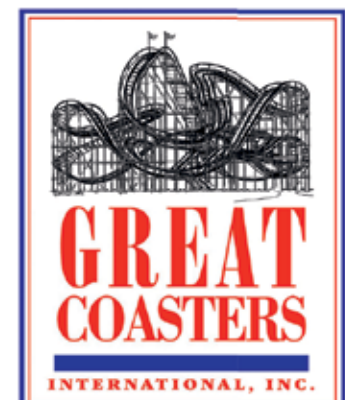
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AMUSEMENT VIEWS

AT NOTEBOOK: Dean Lamanna, dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

Tragedy raises questions



Lamanna

In the aftermath of the Ride the Ducks amphibious vehicle tragedy on Table Rock Lake in Branson, Missouri, on July 19, many questions have been asked by the mainstream media about how a disaster of such magnitude could happen.

These are questions the attractions industry should be asking, as well.

Of the 31 passengers on the Ride the Ducks land / water tour, 17 — including nine from one family — perished when their vehicle sank rapidly during a severe storm. Wind and wave conditions on the lake were such that rescue efforts by other boaters, nearby witnesses and emergency personnel were difficult.

Jim Pattison, Jr., president of Vancouver, British Columbia-based Ripley Entertainment, Inc., owner / operator of Ride the Ducks Branson, appeared understandably anguished in some of his public statements immediately following the accident. In the weeks since, related headlines have turned from shock and sorrow to the lawsuits filed by the survivors, the victims' families and others involved.

But the "How?" and "Why?" still burn. As *Amusement Today* went to press, various investigating entities — including the National Transportation Safety Board and the U.S. Coast Guard — were seeking answers to some specific queries, including:

- Why was the vehicle continuing with the lake portion of the tour when weather conditions may have appeared threatening? (A severe thunderstorm warning had been issued for Branson about half an hour before the boat sank, according to reports.)

- Were the passengers wearing life jackets? If not, why not? (Stone County Sheriff Doug Rader said life jackets were on the boat.)

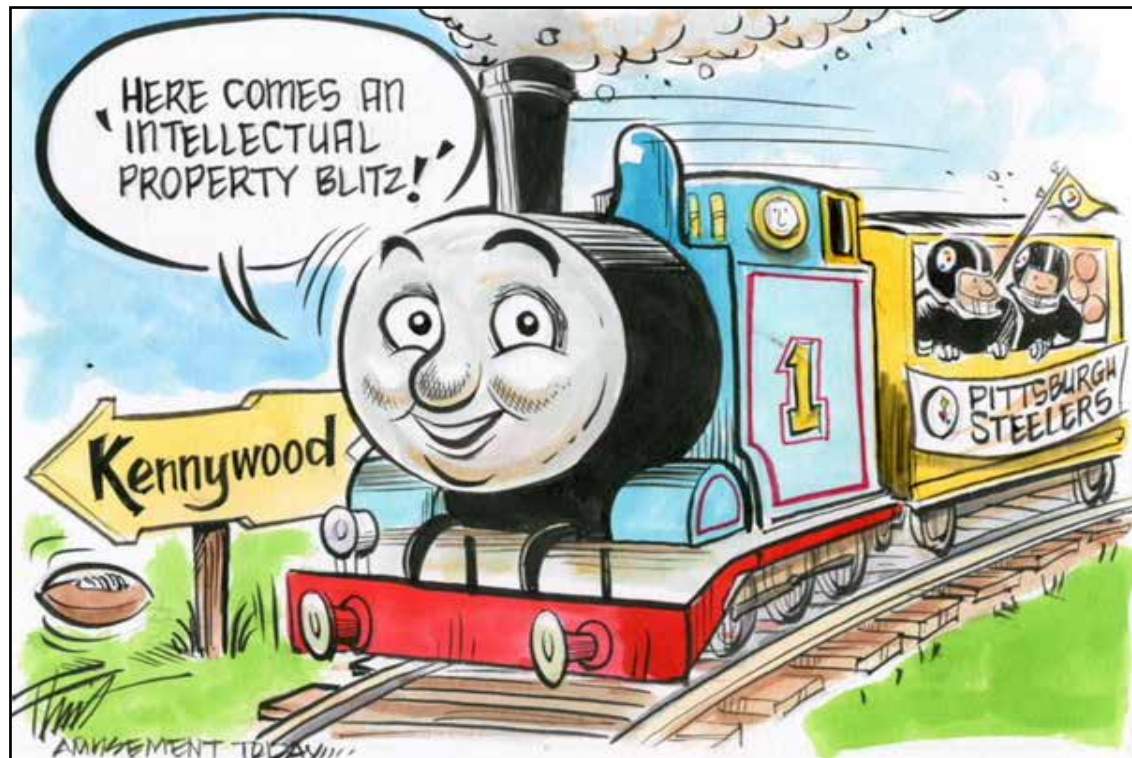
- Did the vehicle operators act / react in appropriate ways before and during the crisis? (Pattinson said the boat had a captain and a driver with a commercial license.)

- Did design flaws in the vehicle contribute to the accident? (The boats originally were developed for U.S. military use during World War II.)

In a thoughtfully worded statement on its website, Ride the Ducks Branson, which has halted operations while the investigations proceed, has stepped up by offering financial assistance to those families directly impacted by the tragedy in addition to condolences.

For the attractions industry, there won't be much comfort until answers emerge that will help strengthen its efforts to keep patrons safe.

FLINT'S VIEW: Bubba Flint



INDUSTRY OPINION: B. Derek Shaw, bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

The 'business of fun' is the people

I had different aims than most while visiting amusement parks in the early 1980s, when I first became immersed in this industry. After passing through the gate, my friends made a beeline for the rides — and I searched for the office. I wanted to meet and get to know some of the people running the "business of fun."

Living in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, where all parks were locally owned and operated at that time, made the task easier. I grew up in Pittsburgh, so Kennywood was a given; later, residing in Scranton, I met the folks from Rocky Glen Park, Hanson's and Knoebels. When I moved south in the state, I visited with key people from Williams Grove, Willow Mill and Hersheypark.

Meeting administrative personnel filled with industry knowledge, expertise and commitment was a tremendous education. Even today, when I visit a new park or portable ride operation, I make it a point to introduce myself to the folks who guide the company.

While park and midway guests typically do not have opportunities to interact with upper



Shaw

management, they do come in contact with the many people who contribute to the amusement facility's success.

Surely, thrill rides, action-packed waterslides, tasty food and top entertainment are important; equally so are the good impression-generating "Ambassadors of Fun." The courteous parking attendant, helpful guest services staff, friendly ticket sellers / takers, well-trained ride operators, cheerful game attendants, pleasant food servers, effective sweeper / maintenance crew, caring first-aid team, eagle-eyed security force, talented entertainers — they are the "troops on the ground."

And let's not forget the costumed characters who put happy faces on, and evoke laughter from, children. Something as small as a wink or a smile can go a long way in making a good amusement venue great, and a great one outstanding. Every staff member contributes.

The bottom line: parks and midways that provide positive customer experiences succeed.

More than lights, sweet treats and whirling machinery, the business of fun is really the business of people.

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



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2 MINUTE DRILL



AT: Janice Witherow

Steve Boney, Maurer Rides

Working in business and sales development for **Setpoint**, **Tiny Towne** and **Maurer Rides**, with which he has had a long association, **Steve Boney** has the passion, respect, international experience and sense of adventure that has made him successful in the amusement industry. The companies and people with whom he works "have great imaginations," said Steve, who got his start at age 16 working for parks in Orlando, Fla. "There are incredible people with deep experience in the industry who understand safety, design and the technology."

Title: Business/Sales Development

Number of years in the industry: 27

Best thing about the industry:
My customers — "They are crazy!"

Favorite amusement park ride: Any turn-of-the-century classic. I'm very nostalgic!

If I wasn't working in the amusement industry, I would be... Very sad! With all my time at the airport, I'd probably get a job with **TSA** easily!

Biggest challenge facing our industry:
Changing of the guard. So often I hear, "People with the right skills / experience are retiring, and now there does not seem to be enough people with experience to replace them."

The thing I like most about amusement / water park season is... Watching the next generation of kids be as excited about visiting a theme or amusement park as I was at their age.

My first car: A Jeep CJ-7.

A recent life-changing moment for me was... When I discovered I needed glasses to read. I know it happens to just about everyone, but that was new!

Favorite midnight snack: As a competitive swimmer, I have always gone to bed early because swimming practice was really early in the morning. Normally, I'm asleep by midnight. If I'm ever up at midnight, I'm surely out with my customers. Then it must be pizza! Is that a nighttime health food?

My perfect day is spent... With friends, and preferably outside hiking in the mountains.

Three items on my bedside table are... A nice candle, my phone... and my new glasses.

The worst movie I ever sat through would have to be... A Bollywood movie on a flight to Australia, which I only watched because I'd already viewed everything else **Delta** had on the schedule. I kept thinking to myself, "Man, those guys have some serious hairspray."

On my last birthday... I was in a ski cabin in Trysil, Norway, with a bottle of good champagne and 20 Norwegian friends whom I have known for 20-plus years.



For **Steve Boney**, shown taking a spin on the 1962-built wooden **Wild Mouse** at Luna Park in Sydney, Australia, working in the amusement industry is a satisfying and irresistible ride. COURTESY STEVE BONEY

Ten years ago, I was... According to my expense reports, I was in Dallas, Texas, having lunch with my longtime industry friend **Bob Minick** [founder of amusement park design services firm **Minick Associates**]. Sadly, Bob passed away in 2016, so I'm happy I knew him and was able to take several opportunities to have lunch together.

I can't stand being around people who...
Are really pushy. Let's all arrive together, and get there happy.

Favorite Dr. Seuss book:
How the Grinch Stole Christmas!

If I could live in any home on a television series, it would be... Magnum, P.I.'s home in Hawaii. Ocean, mountains, amazing weather, the **Ferrari** and a helicopter.

The longest I have ever gone without sleep is... Six hours of total sleep in four days in Norway with friends, which I will never do again... until next time.

My last road trip was... July 1st to Munich, Germany, for a weekend triathlon relay race. The cold beer afterwards made the trip perfect!

Least favorite word: When someone tells you a project is "easy."

I am afraid of... Having bad breath and nobody telling me. I don't think it's an issue, but how would I really know?

All-time best ad slogan:
"Quality, Service, Price... Pick Two!"

Coollest game show host: **Drew Carey**, *Whose Line Is It Anyway?*

Favorite meal to cook:
Grilled cheese sandwiches

OBITUARIES

George Angermeyer, H. Betti Industries

CARLSTADT, N.J. — George Angermeyer, a longtime service manager for location-based entertainment supplier H. Betti Industries, Inc. (Betson Enterprises), passed away on July 26 after a long illness. He was 57.

Angermeyer was born in South Amboy, N.J., and was raised in Hazlet. In 1989, he moved to Union Beach, where he settled to raise a family.

"From the beginning, we recognized George's superior service skills, and he rose steadily to manage all of Betson's and Raw Thrills' service operations," said Bob Geschine, president of H. Betti Industries, noting Angermeyer's 30-plus years of service. "He was a kind individual who was always there if anyone needed him."

Angermeyer is survived by his wife, Jill, and his son, Justin Michael Angermeyer.



Angermeyer

Jonathan Barker, founder, SK Films

TORONTO — Jonathan Barker, a producer of large-format films and the founder and CEO of SK Films, died of cancer on July 5 at age 66.

A former actor, singer, entertainment lawyer and corporate film executive turned independent producer with more than three decades of film and television experience, Barker was a leader in 3D film production and distribution, specializing in IMAX / large-format films combining human drama and natural history. Among his projects were *Bugs!*, *Into the Deep* and *T. Rex: Back to the Cretaceous*.

After working for Imax Corp. and several other companies, Barker, a founding director of the Giant Screen Cinema Association, founded SK Films with Imax co-founder Bob Kerr. He was joined in the business by his wife, Wendy MacKeigan, who now assumes the role of CEO.

Barker also is survived by his children: Scott, Tyler, Georgia, Alex and Caleb.



Barker

Terry Jay Schmidt, TJ Schmidt and Co.

STANDISH, Mich. — Terry Jay "TJ" Schmidt passed away July 21 after a bout with cancer. He was 60.

Schmidt was a second-generation carnival owner who, along with his family, owned and operated the TJ Schmidt and Co. carnival. Founded in 2008, the company has more than 20 rides playing throughout Michigan.

In carnival industry tradition, Arnold Amusements, Inc., of Traverse City was among the operators who turned the lead horse on their carousels around in honor of Schmidt. "Terry was a kindhearted, generous person, a great showman, and he will be missed dearly," the company said.

Schmidt is survived by his wife, Sandra; two sons, two granddaughters (another was due in August); two sisters; one brother; and father and mother-in-law.



Schmidt

Albert W. Wagner, Wagner's Carnival

ARANSAS PASS, Texas — Albert Wayne Wagner, 69, founder and owner of Wagner's Carnival, passed away at his home on Aug. 3.

According to his family, Wagner's profession was a great fit because he loved to bring joy to those around him. In addition to running his business, he loved to fish, golf, and play cards and board games.

Wagner is survived by his wife of 43 years, Denise; children Jason, Haley and Albert II; brother Ralph; sisters Marguerite and Patsy; seven grandchildren; and two great grandchildren.



Wagner

ERRATA

In the August issue of *Amusement Today*, regarding our Woman of Influence interview with Adrienne Rhodes, president of Lake Winnepesaukah, Adrienne's correct full name is Adrienne White Rhodes. In addition, the building of the park's Boat Chute ride should have been attributed to Rhodes's grandfather, Carl Dixon.

In the July issue, a story concerning the vintage Rollo Coaster at Idlewild Park & Soak Zone in Ligonier, Pa., described the ride as a junior roller coaster. The park prefers the term "family coaster."

AT regrets the errors.

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►EAS

Continued from page 1

According to Wahl, 12,268 participants attended last year's EAS in Berlin. "We want to surpass this number this year," he said.

In addition to technology and products related to ticketing systems, food and beverage, amusement rides and games, EAS is the place for owners and operators to begin developing ideas for future attractions at their facilities.

"We clearly see technological developments in the area of virtual reality, and there will be very interesting exhibitors with impressive VR and other installations on the show floor," Wahl said. "In general, EAS is becoming a more diverse show. It used to be very amusement park-focused when it started, but we now welcome suppliers and attendees from various constituencies."

EAS 2018 also offers a diverse and extensive educational program. There will be 100-plus learning hours featuring more than 100 speakers, more or less following seven trend-related industry tracks: guest experience, digi-



tal, revenue, global challenges, local challenges, marketing and design. Sessions will be highlighted by presentations from many of Europe's leading operators on topics such as safety / security, innovative technologies, entertainment, food and beverage, games and merchandise, facility operations, human resources and government relations.

Attendees can also take part in several events and behind-the-scenes tours at regional Amsterdam attractions. "Together with IAAPA EMEA Education Manager **Tom Vandenbroucke**, the Education Sub-Committee does a great job putting together a program corresponding to industry trends and developments," said Wahl, noting that the conference program welcomed more than



This year's EAS will see another increase in VR technology, according to IAAPA, as well as innovations across the range of amusement equipment and services. COURTESY IAAPA

2,000 participants last year. "Technology is equally a key part of the sessions as well as other trends, such as retailtainment, innovations in food and beverage, and sustainability.

"We are continuously thinking of new ideas. For example, this year we're launching a Halloween Forum — a day session and backstage tour of **Walibi Holland**, which has one of the most successful Halloween festivals in Europe." Industry professionals will have several unique occasions to network and connect with colleagues from around the region and world. Each event can help industry professionals

make new connections, share best practices and expand their industry network.

The EAS 2018 Opening Reception will take place on the evening of Tuesday, Sept. 25, at the **Strandzuid** event location, adjacent to the trade show halls. The **Themed Entertainment Association** will hold its annual EAS mixer at **The Loft** in the **A'DAM Tower** on the evening of Wednesday, Sept. 26; it will include the experience of **This is Holland**, a flying theater attraction.

With this third visit by EAS, Amsterdam becomes the "record host city" for the event, said Wahl. He acknowledged that the strong culture

of holiday parks, leisure attractions and hospitality in the Netherlands makes Amsterdam the ideal destination for EAS.

"The Dutch leisure industry is among the most innovative and important markets in all of Europe, and we clearly notice this in terms of exhibitors and attendees," Wahl said. "In addition, Amsterdam is simply an amazing city with so many sights and attractions to discover!"

Noting that EAS is in its 14th year, Wahl told *Amusement Today* that the event's growth over that time reflects increasingly dynamic developments in the European amusement market. He pointed out expansions at **Disneyland Paris**, **Compagnie des Alpes**, **Blackpool Pleasure Beach**, **Toverland** and **Europa-Park** as examples.

"This is an exciting time," Wahl said. "I believe the continued growth and success of EAS reflects the overall strength and health of the attractions industry in Europe."

For more information on the full range of offerings at EAS 2018 and a complete schedule, please visit IAAPA's website.

•iaapa.org/eas

►PALACE

Continued from page 1

Golder said they put the Galaxi coaster on the market but, unfortunately, no one purchased it. It had to be scrapped.

"People loved that coaster," Golder said. "It was just time for something different. We wanted something with one train instead of multiple cars. We wanted something with a higher capacity but we needed something with a small footprint. We wanted something as fun or even more fun than the Galaxi."

Sea Viper has one train instead of multiple cars. It holds up to 24 passengers, tripling the Galaxi capacity of eight. The ride is also equipped with magnetic braking. The footprint is 210 feet

long and 90 feet wide. The install was done by Joe Cadmus, Ridewerks, Inc., with assistance from the manufacturer.

"We ended up pushing the new coaster back some," Golder said. "The front of the Sea Viper is where the back of the Galaxy stood."

Then, park officials installed the SBF/Visa Wipeout family spinning coaster and located in front and to the side of the Viper. The Wipeout sits right on the main street. It has a raised platform and a ramp for better accessibility. It also has a top scenery archway that the cars run through. There is scenery on both sides of the archway.

"This coaster also is doing very well this season," he said, adding purchasing and install-



The Sea Viper steel coaster at Palace Playland has one train with a seating capacity of 24 riders. The ride is equipped with magnetic braking and fills a footprint 210 feet long by 90 feet wide. AT/RON GUSTAFSON

ing the Wipeout cost between \$400,000-\$500,000.

Len Soled of Rides 4-U, who brokered the ride deal with SBF/Visa, said the Wipeout is a standard figure eight spinning coaster elevated model. Dimensions are 72 feet by 35 feet by 14 feet (an elevated model is about three feet taller).

"The archway with the scenery looks really nice," Soled said.

With the addition of the Sea Viper and Wipeout this year, park officials feel they have broadened the coaster experience for guests. Riders on the Galaxi coaster were required to be 42 inches high to ride with an adult. The Sea Viper height requirement is 48 inches with an adult.

"But the Wipeout has a height requirement of 36 inches to ride with an adult," Golder said. "We added six inches. Now, those 36 inches high and higher can ride a coaster."

The new Bob's Space Racers game and a photo booth for the Viper are located in that same area.

The Sea Viper opened June 9, Golder said. The park held an auction for the first rides on the coaster. The majority of money raised through the auction was donated to the local Ronald McDonald House Charities.

The 2018 season was marketed through social media, radio, television and newspapers. The park draws visitors locally as well as from areas of Massachu-

FAST FACTS	
Sea Viper	
Palace Playland	
Old Orchard Beach, Maine	
Supplier	Preston & Barbieri
Height	70 feet
Speed	42 mph
Capacity	1 train holding 24 passengers
Track length	1,509 feet
Footprint	210 feet long by 90 feet wide
Opened	June 9

setts, New Hampshire, and Connecticut. There is also a large visitation from Montreal and Quebec City and other areas of Quebec.

"Some of our Canadian visitors have been coming here for generations," Golder said.

•palaceplayland.com



The Sea Viper roller coaster at Palace Playland replaced the park's 20-year-old SDC Galaxi coaster.

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PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

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CanCan Coaster brings new life to French area

Europa-Park finds new excellence in refreshing attractions

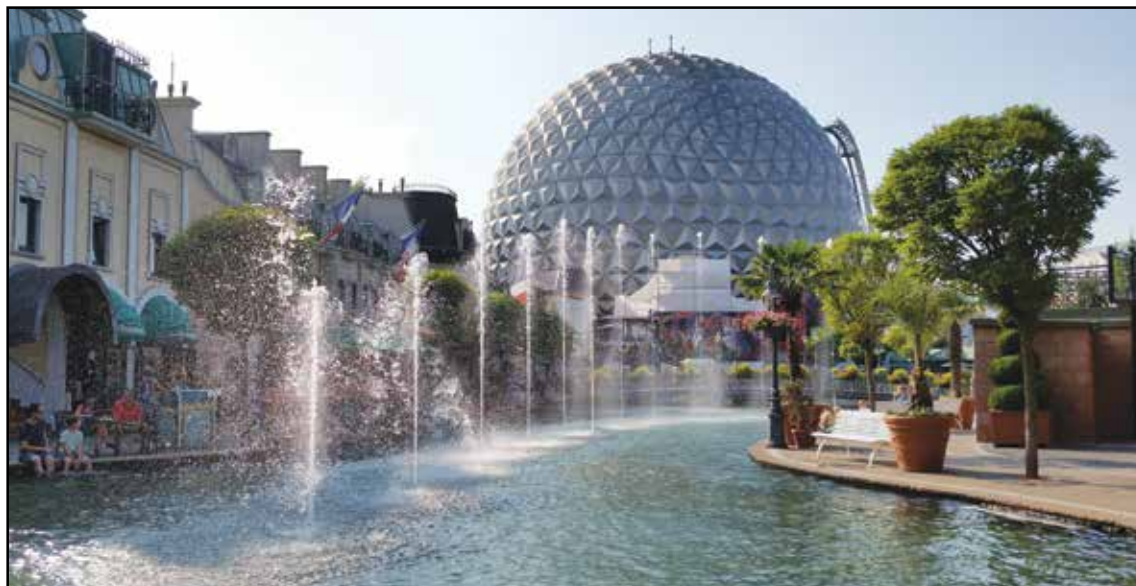
AT: Tim Baldwin

tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

RUST, Germany — The old saying, “What’s old is new again” certainly applies to Germany’s most popular theme park. Staggered throughout the 2018 season, **Europa-Park** has unveiled reimagined attractions that are finding success with all age levels.

Earlier in the season, a children’s ride, formerly called Old 99, was rethemed to Jim Knopf – Journey Through Morrow Land. Based on a German children’s novel, the story of Jim Knopf eventually reached film, a few scenes of which are seen in the ride’s queue. Former locomotive vehicles now sport smokestacks that emit smoke on random occasions during the ride. While utilizing the same ride track, the journey now travels through two mountains and features various scenes from the adventure in Morrow Land, a tiny island.

The park’s popular his-



A new fountain show set to music has been established in the France section of the park.
AT/TIM BALDWIN

torama exhibit has been refitted with a preview center for Rulantica, the resort’s new indoor water park currently under construction. Models of both the water park, themed lands and accompanying new resort accommodations, Hotel Kronosår, are on display. The circular rotating theater introduces audiences to the storyline of the

upcoming attraction.

In late August, Madame Freudenreich – Curiosities debuted in the France section, the focal point to most of the capital investment this season. This creative overlay takes a former dark ride attraction featuring dinosaurs in a completely new direction. What was previously a dinosaur setting of prehistoric times, now capitalizes on a beloved French children’s tale. As the story goes, Madame Freudenreich owns a curiosity shop. As guests enter a completely new queue, they catch the shopkeeper sleeping. As they meander through the shop, they find many curiosities that lead them to believe that there is more going on here than meets the eye. Guests quickly determine that Madame Freudenreich is raising dinosaurs in her backyard.

Using the same track system and vehicles, visitors

now find a completely rethemed dark ride. Gone are dinosaurs that intimidate. Instead, whimsical creatures that now wear scarves and long for cake inhabit the setting.

The dark ride resides under the major capital investment: Eurosat Can Can Coaster. Originally, Eurosat was a space-themed indoor

roller coaster that took place in a sphere. Built in the 1980s, the coaster was popular, but a little more aggressive than management would have liked. Knowing that the modern technology available from **Mack Rides** would provide a smoother ride, management longed for a re-do for many years. To do that, however, would involve taking down portions of the dome. Last winter, the decision was made to do just that. In the process, a new theme was developed. The subject was **Moulin Rouge**.

Chris Lange, creative director for Europa-Park, told *Amusement Today* that a steam-punk/Jules Verne theme was too easy. “At Europa-Park, we have the freedom to be a little more sexy,” he said with a smile.

With an entirely new façade now gracing the attraction, the queue boasts numerous scenes to set the stage. Entering under the

► See EUROPA, page 12



Dinosaurs have transitioned from the primeval world into Madame Freudenreich's backyard. COURTESY EUROPA-PARK



The new station replicates a Moulin Rouge garden under the stars. COURTESY EUROPA-PARK

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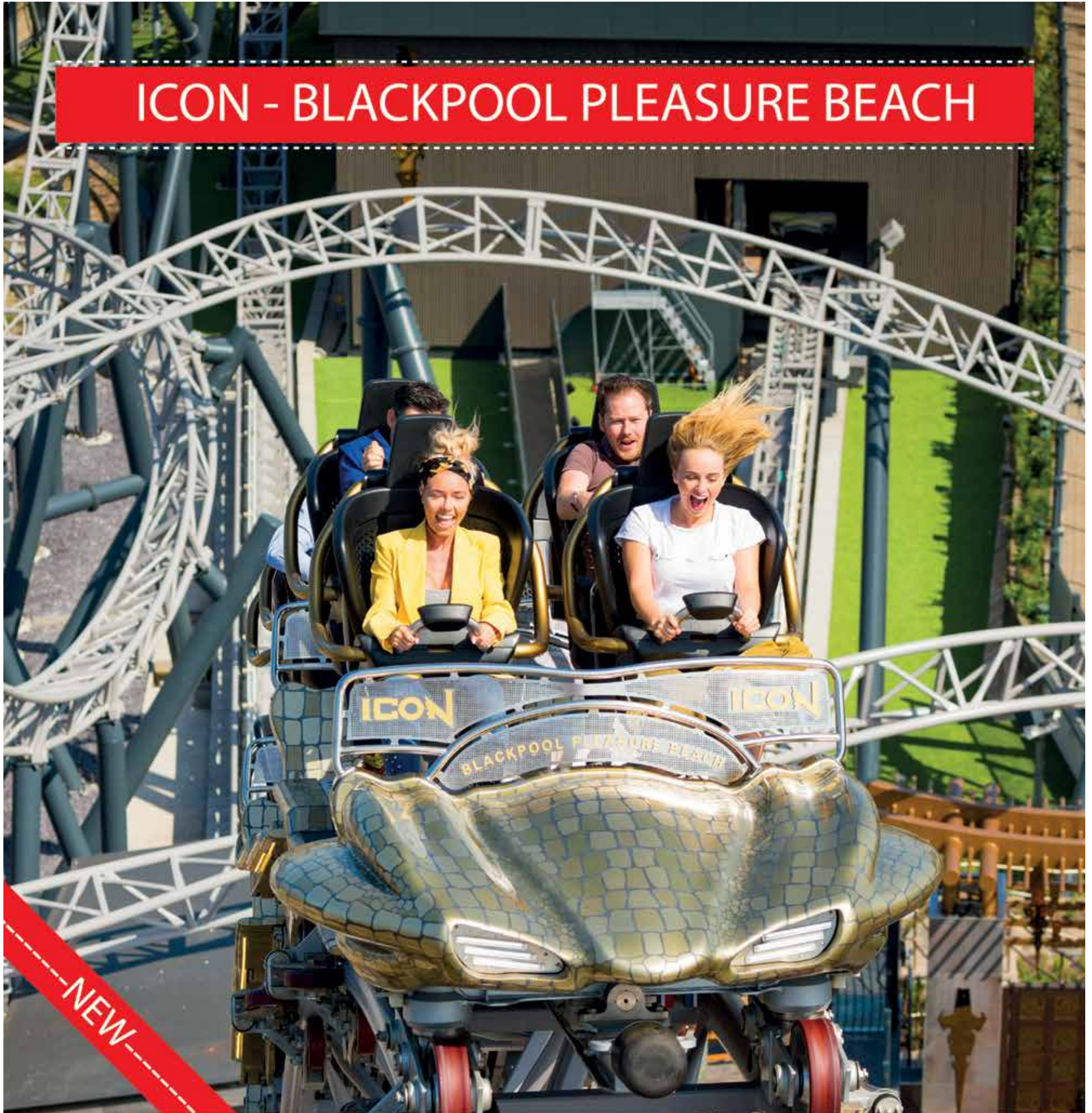


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►EUROPA

Continued from page 10

famed red windmill, park guests will see authentic costumes and artifacts from the famed Paris landmark. A next exhibition room takes visitors past the torch from the Statue of Liberty designed by French artist **Frédéric Bartholdi** and standing at seven meters. Soon, they are strolling through an upstairs bohemian artist's apartment, who has become infatuated with the dancers at the adjacent theater, and sketches lie about. As the queue takes riders backstage of the famous venue, giggling dancing girls can be heard in the dressing rooms. Soon, they arrive at the coaster's station, which is themed to an outdoor garden at Moulin Rouge, here experienced at night with stars twinkling above. In all, the themed settings can hold a 70-minute queue.

"We worked with the Moulin Rouge people, so they were able to share with us some of their 'real' materials," Lange said, speaking to the authenticity of the theming. "It's the real deal."

Exposed to absinthe (via video mapping) upon departure, the ride is a "tripping" experience above the city of Paris. New colorful trains rise above the city's architecture and iconic Eiffel Tower as it spirals up the interior lift. Smooth red track now stretches within the dome. An onboard sound system on each train enhances the experience as several scenes are illuminated as the train rushes near. Scenes riders fly past include Notre Dam, the lanterns of the River Seine, Sacré-Cœur, and the Eiffel Tower.

Maximilian Roser of Mack Rides is confident that not only will the brand



The nosecone of the Can Can Coaster, seen here in the factory, illustrates the elaborate styling of the new trains. AT/TIM BALDWIN



A new boat-themed structure makes for a quaint setting for sidewalk cafes in France. AT/TIM BALDWIN

new track offer a smoother ride, but so will the new trains. "The bogeys before had milled pieces that were welded together. With welds you have a really high effort to maintain and test it all through the life cycle. Now we have (large) milled pieces that are bolted together so we can maintain it faster and there is cost reduction as well. It's much safer because we can test each season and then take it back and bolt it together," he said.

In a move of operational brilliance, a separate ride station, located from a complete-

ly different queue at the back of the dome features a virtual reality ride option themed to the movie *Valerian and the City of a Thousand Planets*. Knowing that the use of VR requires more time, riders can receive preparations while those enjoying the main storyline can continue to be dispatched. A turntable permits the VR passengers to engage into the track layout when ready, making sure the coaster operates with peak capacity.

Previously, the area where this new station was built was a simple outdated playground area.

New life has been brought to the French area with more than just rides. As mentioned, the new façade captures the Parisian architecture, while the reflecting pool in front of the dome now has a new seating area for street cafes featuring the appearance of a boat in the water. The removal of one bridge in this area now allows for a fountain show set to music.

All the elements to this makeover has brought a reinvigorated life to the area, a formula Europa-Park does quite well.



The Jim Knopf children's ride features upgraded vehicles and additional scenes throughout the ride. AT/TIM BALDWIN



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Kennywood banks on Thomas the Train, Pittsburgh Steelers

Palace Entertainment invests heavily in IP at storied amusement park

AT: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

WEST MIFFLIN, Pa. — These are fast, intellectual property (IP)-driven times at **Kennywood** amusement park.

The historic traditional park, owned by Southern California-based **Palace Entertainment** since 2007, staged the mid-season debut of Thomas Town, its largest-ever single-year addition. The theming of the \$8.5 million children's section is based on the award-winning British animated TV show *Thomas & Friends*, which has gained international popularity in both broadcast and merchandising.

Just days prior to the cheery locomotive's July roll-out, the park announced an even larger investment for 2019 with Steel Curtain, a record-breaking, nine-inversion roller coaster that will anchor a three-acre area inspired by the **Pittsburgh Steelers**, the city's **National Football League** team.

Remarkably, for a traditional park founded in 1899, there's no slowing down in sight.

All aboard!

Thomas Town, an extension of Kiddieland, features several new rides along with a retheming of the 1945-built Olde Kennywood Rail Road, now the Journey with Thomas train ride and originating from the newly named Knapford Station. The nearly one-acre site includes a live stage show, a themed indoor play zone, a birthday room



and a retail store.

Headliners for the Steel City Adventures Live Show at Tidmouth Sheds are Thomas the Train's friends — namely Sir Topham Hatt and the train engines Percy, James, Emily and Gordon. Hatt, when not participating in the show, is controller of the railway on the Island of Sodor.

Planning for Thomas Town began last year, with site prep getting underway after Kennywood's Holiday Lights event ended Dec. 30. The floral clock, fountain and basketball game that occupied the area were removed to make room for the new theming and attractions. (The clock has been relocated elsewhere in the 80-acre park.)

The section features four rides from **Zamperla** named after *Thomas & Friends* characters. Cranky's Drop Tower (Sky Tower) carries 12 passengers 45 feet in the air; the ride, positioned inside the train track, yields an excellent view of the existing **Traver Engineering** Auto Race ride. The others are Harold's Helicopter Tour (Mini Jet), Flynn's Fire Training (Fire Brigade) and Diesel Drivers (Convoy). A special Thomas



Town map, available to park visitors upon request, was created by **Rick Bastrup** of Anaheim, Calif.-based **R&R Creative Amusement Designs, Inc.**

"It's a great joy to welcome Thomas and his friends into the Kennywood family," said **Jerome Gibas**, Kennywood's general manager.

Added **Julie Freeland**, senior director of global live events and attractions for **Mattel**, a partner in the project: "With 120 years of history, Kennywood is one of the most beloved amusement parks in the country, and we are excited to bring our latest *Thomas & Friends* attraction to Pittsburgh for families to enjoy for many years to come."

Kennywood's Thomas Town is the second-largest in the U.S., behind the 11.5-acre Thomas Land that opened at **Edaville Family Theme Park**



An immersive, NFL team-themed area called **Steelers Country**, with a record-breaking, nine-inversion steel roller coaster from S&S Worldwide at its center, will open at Kennywood in 2019. COURTESY KENNYWOOD



in Carver, Mass., in 2015. In celebration of the character's arrival in West Mifflin, guests have been given a limited-time opportunity to watch an animated adventure, *Thomas & Friends: Bubbling Boilers*, in the Kennywood 4D Theater.

Thomas Town will provide additional activities for children and families during the park's Happy Hauntings and Holiday Lights events. Meanwhile, initial reaction to the area has been very positive.

"The feedback has been

outstanding," said **Nick Paradise**, director of public relations and social media for Kennywood. "Guests have been very impressed with the theming and attention to detail, along with the fun factor present in the rides and attractions within Thomas Town. We saw guests visiting from as far as Texas and Oklahoma in just the first few days, and we're expecting that trend to continue, along with repeat local visitors."

► See KENNYWOOD, page 15



Thomas Town, based on the popular, British-produced children's TV show, that mixes storytelling with traditional park fun at Kennywood. Zamperla supplied four rides for the section. The park's PR guru, Nick Paradise (center), welcomed media and guests to the newly opened area. COURTESY KENNYWOOD

►KENNYWOOD

Continued from page 14

An industry touchdown

In its other major IP move, Kennywood will introduce Steelers Country, inspired by the Pittsburgh Steelers, in 2019. It is said to represent the first such amusement industry /professional sports partnership in the U.S.

"Being the first park to collaborate with a professional sports franchise on not only a themed area, but also a pulse-pounding, high-flying roller coaster, is a great honor that fits in with Kennywood's longstanding tradition of innovation," said the park's Gibas. "For that franchise to be our hometown Steelers, the most successful team in America's most popular sport, it's a sure touchdown!"

The section is being built on the location formerly occupied by the Log Jammer flume and several picnic pavilions. Its "goal" is to create an experience focused on football fans — putting them in the middle of the action.

The area's coaster centerpiece, called Steel Curtain, has been designed and manufactured by **S&S Worldwide** of North Logan, Utah. Topping out at 220 feet—making it the tallest coaster in Pennsylvania — and boasting a record 197-foot-tall loop, the two-minute thriller will hit speeds up to 75 mph along its 4,000-foot-long course. The inversions include a corkscrew, a dive drop, a cobra roll, a zero-G stall and a banana roll.

The latter element, making its first appearance in North America, essentially is a cobra roll with a double inversion, sending the train uphill through a half loop and then untwisting into a sideways curve over the coaster's lift hill. The train then re-banks into a second half-loop drop.

"We are honored to partner with this great historic park and the Pittsburgh Steelers on this coaster," said **Pete Berto**, director of sales for S&S. "We all know how passionate Steelers fans are, and it is our mission to make sure Steel Curtain lives up to its legendary namesake."

The Steelers' hard-hitting heroics will be show-

cased by Steelers Country in various ways. Guests entering the area through a stadium-like entry tunnel will see how they measure up in practice drills, perfect their own touchdown dances, and check out game scores and highlights on a giant video screen. Merchandise, skill games and food locations — including a tailgating experience — will round out the sports-themed fun.

"We are very excited about the partnership with Kennywood," said **Ryan**

Huzjak, vice president of sales and marketing for the Steelers. "Being able to connect the Pittsburgh Steelers with a family attraction like Kennywood is a natural fit for both organizations, and we are thrilled about the tradition and longstanding history the Steelers and Kennywood provide to families in and around the city of Pittsburgh."

The NFL generally is looking for new ways to remain in the public consciousness and generate revenue during the spring and summer off-sea-

son. When Steelers Country at Kennywood opens, it could give fans visiting the team's training camp in Latrobe, Pa., an added regional Steelers attraction as football season ramps up.

The park, having completed and introduced Thomas Town, is already looking forward to the competitive excitement promised by its 2019 season.

"While Kennywood is often viewed as a traditional amusement park built on nostalgia, innovation has

always been a major part of our success dating back to the Jack Rabbit being one of the first roller coasters with underfriction wheels when it opened in 1920," said Nick Paradise. "We're thrilled by the opportunities presented to us by opening Steelers Country and partnering with the most successful franchise in America's most popular sport — and the positive impacts it will have in positioning Kennywood for another 120 years of success."

•kennywood.com





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Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi an indoor theme park standout

Dynamic design, details all come to vivid life as \$1B theme park debuts

AT: Dean Lamanna
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ABU DHABI, UAE — Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi, the latest major addition to amusement-packed Yas Island, opened its doors to the public July 25.

The \$1 billion indoor theme park, developed by Abu Dhabi government-linked organization Miral Asset Management in partnership with Burbank, Calif.-based Warner Bros. Entertainment, covers 1.65 million square feet. It features 29 family-friendly, state-of-the-art rides and interactive attractions, plus live entertainment, across six immersive lands.

The world's first-ever Warner Bros.-branded park was inaugurated July 23 by government officials and dignitaries of Abu Dhabi and the UAE, with guests including representatives of Los Angeles-based Thinkwell Group, which provided a decade of creative direction on the project from conception to completion.

A ceremony conducted



Warner Bros. Plaza features a 360-degree multimedia show and a ceiling with changing colors and details that mimic the sky. Warner Bros. CEO Kevin Tsujihara and Miral Management Assets Chairman H.E. Mohamed Khalifa Al Mubarak inaugurated the indoor park.
COURTESY WARNER BROS. WORLD ABU DHABI

in the attraction's Art Deco-style Warner Bros. Plaza was highlighted by the first presentation of the "Warner Bros. Cinema Spectacular," a captivating 360-degree show that brings characters from the studio's movie library to life through film clips and projection mapping. Guests were also treated to a series of festive celebrations throughout cavernous space.

Aside from increasing the theme park offerings on Yas Island, the debut of Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi is expected to strengthen the emirate's reputation as a leading leisure

and entertainment hub — and further raise the UAE's profile on the international map. Miral is banking on the park to help drive its gradually increasing annual visitor number to 30 million by the end of this year.

"This is a milestone moment for us as we continue to cement Abu Dhabi's positioning as one of the world's leading family and tourism destinations," said H.E. Mohamed Khalifa Al Mubarak, chairman of Miral. "I am confident that the addition of this theme park to our already rich portfolio will further enhance Yas Island's offerings."

"We're delighted that our partnership with Warner Bros. has resulted in us delivering our promise of creating an attraction that will amaze and entertain both the young and young at heart."

Brimming with fun and surprises, the theme park transports guests into six lands, including DC's Metropolis and Gotham City, as well as Cartoon Junction, Bedrock, Dynamite Gulch and the aforementioned Warner Bros. Plaza. It is populated with fan-favorite DC Super Heroes such as Batman, Superman and Wonder Woman alongside beloved Warner Bros. Animation characters from Looney Tunes and Hanna-Barbera, including Bugs Bunny, The Flintstones, Scooby-Doo, and Tom and Jerry.

In Dynamite Gulch, guests can experience Wile E. Coyote and the Road Runner's dizzying chases firsthand. Along the way, in and around Gotham City,

DC Super-Villains such as The Joker, Harley Quinn and The Riddler provide edgier distractions.

The combination of artistry and technology utilized to create the fully realized fictional environments and the rides within them — all lighting and audio is seamlessly controlled, Hollywood soundstage-style — allows the IP to emerge almost organically.

Authentically themed dining experiences are part of the mix — from grab-and-go eateries to full-service sit-down restaurants and cafes, as well as shops stocked

with merchandise inspired by Warner Bros. characters. (The attraction is operated under license from Warner Bros. Consumer Products.)

"Warner Bros. has an almost-100-year legacy of producing and distributing high-quality entertainment to global audiences, and this world-class attraction continues that tradition in grand style," said Kevin Tsujihara, the company's chairman and CEO. "Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi literally brings our characters to life and provides fans a truly unique immersive entertainment experience. We couldn't have better partners than our colleagues at Miral."

Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi joins Yas Island's other theme parks, which include Ferrari World Abu Dhabi and Yas Waterworld Abu Dhabi. The island also offers a variety of accommodations, plus marinas, golfing and the Yas Mall — the emirate's largest shopping center, with 400 stores. Plans for a Warner Bros.-branded hotel also have been announced as part of the second phase of the Warner Bros. World theme park project.

•wbworld.com



Cartoon Junction is one of the park's six themed lands. The area's carousel centerpiece features characters from Hanna-Barbera cartoons, while familiar Looney Tunes characters such as Tweety (below) eagerly greet guests.
COURTESY WARNER BROS. WORLD ABU DHABI



DC Super Heroes (and some Super-Villains) populate Metropolis. Iconic characters of that comic book / cartoon universe have been impressively sculpted and displayed for posterity in the Hall of Justice.
COURTESY WARNER BROS. WORLD ABU DHABI

Park Post-its



AT: Pam Sherborne
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Knott's Berry Farm, Buena Park, Calif., is gearing up for its 46th annual Knott's Scary Farm event, set to be open on select evenings Sept. 20-Oct. 31. It will feature 14 mazes and haunted attractions, including a new scare zone.

This year the entire park has become the attraction and will boast a number of upgrades, including themed landscaping and decor and enhanced ride lighting, such as HangTime's Halloween design. There will be select roller coasters in the dark, Ghost Town Streets, Carnevil and The Hollow scare zones.

In Fiesta Village, there will be a new dance party with Awaken the Dead.

The *San Diego Union-Tribune*, reported in July that **SeaWorld San Diego** officials were already working on a new coaster to debut in 2019. The San Diego park hasn't made any formal announcements about the upcoming attraction, but some details were presented to the California Coastal Commission, which needs to review the project. It has been revealed that the coaster will be about 22 feet high and occupy 1.2 acres.

Also revealed is that the new attraction will be a horizontal coaster experience that will traverse a figure-eight track.

SeaWorld San Diego opened a new coaster, Electric Eel, at the beginning of the 2018 season.

Several people spending the day at **Kenyanwood**, Pittsburgh, Pa., on Aug. 1 became nauseous and frightened after the park's pirate ship ride amusement ride malfunctioned, causing riders to be stuck on the ride for 10 minutes as crew members tried to stop it.

Park officials reported to a local news station that the brakes failed on the attraction causing riders to be stranded and remain swinging on the ride. Park crew workers had to engage a second brake system so the ride could stop swinging and the riders could safely get off.

A park spokesperson told the local news station the 35-year-old attraction has had a good safety record.

A new attraction at the park also had some technical difficulties on July 31. The children's ride, called the Thomas the Tank Engine ride, derailed at the Pittsburgh amusement park. Just a few days prior to the incident, the park celebrated the grand opening of Thomas Town, which features attraction rides and characters from the popular children's television series, Thomas the Tank Engine. No injuries were reported.

Falcon's Creative Group, an Orlando-based creative services firm specializing in the design and production of themed experi-

ences, launched a new podcast series titled "Experience Imagination" on July 26. Each episode features a new topic on the themed entertainment industry, discussed and analyzed by a panel of creative professionals.

Topics range from theme park design and interactive technology in themed spaces to building an attraction on time and on budget. Panelists on "Experience Imagination" episodes include the firm's own diverse employees as well as various industry heavy-hitters. "As more audiences crave strategic insight into our world, our team recognizes how we might add value to the conversation," said **Cecil Magpuri**, company president and COO.

Lake Winnie amusement park has partnered with Chattanooga, Tenn.-area **McDonald's** restaurants for the past eight years to benefit the **Chattanooga Ronald McDonald House**. For every McDonald's coupon received on Wednesdays and Sundays during the park's season and WinnepeSPOOKah in October, \$1 is donated. As of late July, \$118,837 has been collected.

The city council in Jackson, Miss., home to the **Jackson Zoo** approved last month \$200,000 to cover the zoo's "depleted" budget.

The *Clarion Ledger* reported that the funds were to cover basic expenses such as payroll and animal care for August and September, until the next fiscal year begins Oct. 1.

In July, zoo employees saw steep pay cuts and its executive director said the attraction was in "a dire situation" amid falling attendance and revenue. One idea being explored is closing the zoo to the public for several months.

The newspaper has reported that zoo attendance keeps dropping, from more than 185,000 guests in 2003 to just over 100,000 in 2017.

The **Children's Museum of Indianapolis**, Ind., has upped its game with a new sports-related attraction aimed at getting kids and adults moving.

The **Riley Children's Health Sports Legends Experience** opened next door to the museum March 17. The \$38.5 million indoor and outdoor venue spans nearly eight acres, offering a variety of outdoor and indoor activities built around athletics.

Highlights include: a 20-yard football field where people can practice their moves among **Indianapolis Colts** tackle dummies; 16 basketball hoops suited to all sizes and a 60-foot-tall Fantasy Tree House of Sports, inspired by Walt Disney World's Tree of Life.

Kings Island, Mason, Ohio, brought back its popular Ultimate Stunt Show last month, with three shows daily from July 30-Aug. 19.

The show, presented by **Airheads Xtreme**, includes stunts such as the Double Motorcycle High Wire, where four performers (two atop a motorcycle and two hanging onto the trapeze) ride from the Kings Island sign on International Street over the Royal Fountain and to the Eiffel Tower.

The Wheel of Destiny stunt involves a daredevil taking on a large revolving counter-balanced wheel and the High Wire Tight Roper Walker stunt has a troupe of tight rope walkers defying gravity.



Spyscape features a range of curated and immersive espionage history exhibits in a contemporary space. COURTESY SPYSCAPE

NYC's Spyscape acquires exotic James Bond wheels

NEW YORK — **Spyscape**, an edutainment company and attraction that showcases the world of secret intelligence, has purchased the James Bond film character's storied 1965 **Aston Martin DB5** for £2 million (\$2.6 million).

Actor **Pierce Brosnan**, who portrayed the iconic spy in the movie series for a decade beginning in 1994, drove the exotic vehicle during the filming of *GoldenEye* (1995). The vehicle most notably was featured in a three-minute race in the hills above Monaco against villain Xenia Onatopp, played by **Famke Janssen**.

When last sold in 2001 for £157,750 (about \$200,000), the automobile entered the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the highest price ever paid for Bond memorabilia at the time.

Now, Bond fans worldwide can sign up online at spyscape.com/db5 to receive details of an online promotion that will offer them a chance to experience driving in the car — either with a professional driver or behind the steering wheel themselves.

"Spying is an important part of our culture in both fact and fiction, and we are thrilled to acquire this iconic part of our cultural universe," said **Ian Oldaker**, COO of Spyscape. "We are excited to let spy fans experience this car in person and put themselves in 007's driving seat."

Opened last year at 928 Eighth Ave., two blocks from the **Museum of Modern Art**, Spyscape features a contemporary museum of spy stories and artifacts, including an original German Enigma machine (early to mid-20th century electro-mechanical device designed to protect commercial, diplomatic and military communication), as well as immersive, hands-on experiences from code-making / breaking to special ops laser tunnels, a 360-degree surveillance mission and high-tech lie-detection booths.

A highlight is the creation of your own individual spy profile, using methodology developed by a former British intelligence training expert, that reveals which of 10 real-world spy roles (e.g., hacking, special ops) would suit you best.

—Dean Lamanna



The Aston Martin DB5 driven by actor Pierce Brosnan as James Bond in the 1995 film has been acquired by Spyscape. COURTESY SPYSCAPE

'Fast & Furious' franchise fuels new Universal Orlando ride

AT: Tim Baldwin
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ORLANDO, Fla. — This summer, Central Florida theme park visitors and *Fast & Furious* film series fans have been getting in on some high-octane, Hollywood-inspired action at **Universal Orlando Resort**.

Fast & Furious — Supercharged, located within **Universal Studios Florida** (USF), puts everyone up close to the famed cars and inside a wild chase.

After entering the queue, guests step inside an abandoned-looking warehouse under a "Family Forever" marquee and are immersed in the world of the movies' characters. The secret headquarters and garage are filled with exciting music, detailed props and a generous display of 15 cars recognizable from the films.

"While it's impossible to choose a single favorite, I love Letty's Turbo Truck," said **Stephanie Green**, project director for **Universal Creative**, referring the vehicle driven by a character played by **Michelle Rodriguez**. "It was specially created for this attraction by **Dennis McCarthy**, who created all the cars for the movie franchise."

After guests stroll the garage, they are introduced to the attraction's storyline in



The *Fast & Furious — Supercharged* attraction building looks like an old warehouse, but holds an impressive display of automotive "film stars" and a twist-filled storyline leading to a thrill-ride climax.

COURTESY UNIVERSAL ORLANDO RESORT (ABOVE); AT/TIM BALDWIN

the break room and then sent directly into the War Room. Via live actors interacting with videos featuring performers from the films, plans are revealed for transporting the guests to an after-race party using large "party buses" that seat up to 48 passengers each. But the scene quickly becomes one of tense drama involving a bad guy named Owen Shaw.

During the ride, large movie screens and special effects, including fog, fire and water, enhance the explosive chase action that envelops the moving bus.

USF's *Fast & Furious* experience was preceded by one that became part of the Studio Tour at its Los Angeles sister property, **Universal Studios Hollywood**, in 2015. It was an easy deci-

sion to enlarge the concept for the Florida location. "Fast & Furious was an instant fan favorite of our iconic Hollywood tram tour... not surprising, since the movie franchise is one of the most successful in film history, grossing over \$5 billion worldwide," Green said. "We saw an opportunity not only to bring this franchise to Universal Orlando Resort, but to expand the attraction."

USF's stand-alone version utilizes high-tech, high-capacity ride vehicles similar to those Universal Orlando deployed for Skull Island — Reign of Kong at its neighboring theme park, **Universal's Islands of Adventure**.

"Our autonomous ride vehicles were another fabulous delivery for our guests,"



Green told *Amusement Today*. "With their sleek lines, immaculate detail, and on-board light show, they transport our guests through the attraction in style. We utilized cutting-edge projection technology, providing realistic media at 120 [frames per second] without 3D glasses. But above all, it provides an expansion to the story through the addition of characters new to our parks."

The Orlando attraction's additions, she noted, include

Chris "Ludacris" Bridges as Tej and **Jordana Brewster** as Mia. "My favorite part of *Fast & Furious — Supercharged* is the focus on family," Green said. "When I walk by Dom's Daytona Charger [owned by the character played by **Vin Diesel**] in the covered garage and glance up to see our Family Forever logo, I think of all of the friends and family that will enjoy this attraction for years to come."

•universalorlando.com

A stunningly 'Cinematic' feature rises from Universal's lagoon



ORLANDO, Fla. — With a major film studio's customary flash (and quite a bit of splash), Universal Orlando Resort officially launched a new summer nighttime lagoon show in mid-July.

The presentation, "Cinematic Celebration," has been giving guests a dramatic new way to cap their day at Universal Studios Florida. It blends panoramic and multilayered water screens with pyrotechnics, lasers, projection mapping and 120-plus danc-

ing fountains to transform the lagoon and surrounding buildings into a vivid tribute to Universal's theme park and film characters.

The show incorporates moments from the *Harry Potter* films conjured by way of spells, plus terrifying roars from *Jurassic World* dinosaurs, racing action from the *Fast & Furious* flicks, mischief by the Minions from *Despicable Me* and in the heart of the Universal Studios lagoon.

"Cinematic Celebration" has been running select nights. The resort's other evening spectacular, "The Nighttime Lights at Hogwarts Castle," has been utilizing similar visual technology — with Hogwarts Castle as the staging centerpiece — inside Universal's Islands of Adventure theme park.

—Dean Lamanna

"Cinematic Celebration," a summer nighttime spectacular at Universal Studios Florida, combines cutting-edge projection and laser effects with water screens, fountains and multicolored pyrotechnics. COURTESY UNIVERSAL ORLANDO RESORT

Hersheypark, Sally Corp. whipping up candy-themed dark ride

HERSHEY, Pa. — An unusual new interactive dark ride is coming to Hersheypark next summer,

Reese's Cupfusion will merge the public's love of chocolate and peanut butter with state-of-the-art, multilevel gaming technology — and engage the sense of smell, as well. Jacksonville, Fla.-based Sally Corp. is supplying the ride, while Raven Sun Creative of Middle Grove, N.Y., is handling the design elements.

"We pride ourselves on creating unique and memorable family experiences that can only be enjoyed at Hersheypark," said Kevin Stumpf, vice president of sports and attractions at Hershey Entertainment & Resorts. "This new attraction will do just that."

During the point-scoring experience, the rider becomes a Reese's Agent Trainee at Reese's Central, a futuristic factory that runs on Reese's Spirit. At the heart of Reese's Central is the legendary Crystal Cup, which



collects and amplifies the love of chocolate and peanut butter to create Cupfusion Energy, which powers the factory.

It is each guest's mission to protect the Crystal Cup and ensure that the factory keeps running under the guidance of Commander Cup. Other characters, such as Mint the Merciless and The League of Misfit Candy, are always around the corner trying to steal the Crystal Cup for their own "evil" purposes. Guests can unlock additional features and try to beat their score with every ride to become a Reese's Legend in the Hall of Fame.

The approximately four-minute ride will have an estimated hourly throughput of 540 riders. Located



Reese's Cupfusion, a new interactive dark ride, will offer a combination of family-friendly gameplay and candy-themed fun. Sally Corp. is supplying the ride, which is slated to open next summer. COURTESY HERSEYPARK



in Founder's Way, it will occupy the space currently housing the Reese's Xtreme Cup Challenge ride. "Base elements of the trains and tracks [from the existing ride]

will be used, but the trains and tracks themselves will be customized," said Laura Woodburn, park director of attractions and the guest

experience.

Reese's Cupfusion will have a minimum height requirement of 36 inches.


—B. Derek Shaw

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Cultus Lake does some heavy lifting to make best use of space

ARM/Larson drop tower gets a boost to fit into small park

AT: Pam Sherborne
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CULTUS LAKE, British Columbia — It is not always easy for a small amusement park to remain up to date and competitive with larger parks, especially for one that is only an acre and a half in size. But **Cultus Lake Adventure Park** has found a way: building up.

"Generally, finding space has been the biggest struggle," said **Russ Steunenberg**, park general manager and the son of park owner **Chris Steunenberg**, who purchased the business in 2013 (the family also owns **Cultus Lake Water Park** across the street). "We are in a very tight, confined space, so we have been forced to elevate [attractions] where we could."

The park's limitations have led to some unique solutions.

One of the most creative has involved the addition of a 140-foot-tall drop tower ride,



Cloud Buster, Cultus Lake Adventure Park's new ARM / Larson drop tower ride, lifts guests above the treetops amid spectacular Canadian scenery. COURTESY CULTUS LAKE ADVENTURE PARK

Cloud Buster, a co-manufacturing effort of **ARM** and **Larson International** that debuted in June. Recognizing the valuable open space above their miniature golf course, the Steunbergs became determined to make use of it.

The park designed the tower's anchoring base to look like a mineshaft, allowing it to fit thematically into the course while raising the ride 20 feet above it.

"Players actually play through the mineshaft," Steunenberg said. "They go under the ride as they go in and out of the tunnel."

Mike Gill of **ARM** told *Amusement Today* that, while he had never placed a ride on a similar foundation, the innovative placement presented no special challenges for his team.

"They really did a great job in theming," Gill said. "The mineshaft underneath

really looks like a tunnel. Plus, there is an elevated boardwalk that passes through certain areas of the park. The drop tower is level to the boardwalk, where the ride is loaded and unloaded."

The tower foundation's aesthetic work was done by a local company, **Imagination Corp.**, which in 2002 originally opened and operated the miniature golf attraction that grew into Cultus Lake Adventure Park.

"I think that company didn't want to be so much hands-on in the operation of attractions," observed Steunenberg, noting that his family frequently hires **Imagination Corp.** to return to the park for projects. "I think they just wanted to keep to the creativity part."

And there is nothing cookie-cutter about the company's work.

"They don't use castings or molds; all of their concrete creations are hand-carved," he said. "This project was a big one, and they sometimes had as

many as 20 people in here carving on [it]."

"All their structures are very durable. Aside from repainting every five or six years, their original structures [at the park] are still in great shape. No cracks or anything."

Steunenberg said the miniature golf course had been modified or renovated four times in order to make room for new attractions.

While patrons playing the course have a unique view of Cloud Buster from below, those riding the park's **Runaway Mine Train Roller Coaster** also can enjoy a dramatic perspective on the tower as it rises within one of the coaster's turnarounds.

Another new arrival this season, a teacup ride from **Zamperla**, has bumped the park's attractions total to 18.

"We are not expecting to add any more expansions in the next year or two," Steunenberg said. "We are pretty much boxed in right now."

•cultus.com



With its base cleverly incorporated into the miniature golf course as a mineshaft-themed feature, the elevated drop tower ride rises dramatically within a turnaround of the park's Runaway Mine Train Roller Coaster. COURTESY CULTUS LAKE ADVENTURE PARK



Warner Bros. proposes \$100M aerial tram to Hollywood sign

LOS ANGELES — If a major Hollywood studio's proposal can clear significant environmental, engineering and regulatory hurdles, tourists drawn to the world's filmmaking capital will have a new and way to view the iconic Hollywood sign up close.

Warner Bros. Entertainment, now owned by **AT&T**, has floated plans for an aerial tramway that would carry visitors to the mountain-top landmark. Estimated to cost \$100 million, the transport, currently named the Hollywood Skyway, would launch from an existing parking structure adjacent to the company's studio lot in Burbank.

The massive sign, built in 1923 and visible for miles around the Los Angeles Basin, is one of the city's most famous — and notorious — tourist magnets. Its positioning just above a residential neighborhood has grown increasingly problematic as people trying to reach

the sign have caused parking problems, traffic snarls and other potentially dangerous disruptions.

The tram ride would last about six minutes and travel for more than a mile up the north side of Mt. Lee, the upper south side of which is home to the sign. The proposal includes an educational visitors center with interactive exhibits near the summit, as well as walking paths to optimal viewing areas.

Similar proposals have been advanced previously by other parties but have fizzled because of cost, environment concerns and / or public opposition.

Warner Bros. has been positioning to draw more of the city's studio attraction business, which is dominated by neighboring **Universal Studios**. Approvals and construction of the tramway likely would require about five years.

—Dean Lamanna



Easier, safer access to the fabled Hollywood sign could become a reality with a gondola-based proposal by Warner Bros., which wants to launch the attraction from its Burbank studio lot.

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Central Park Fun-Land completes expansion with spinning coaster

AT: Tim Baldwin
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FREDERICKSBURG, Va. — Having opened in 1997 in a busy shopping district known as Central Park, the indoor/outdoor family entertainment center known as **Central Park Fun-Land** has just completed a major two-year expansion. Spin Out Bumper Cars (RDC) were added last summer along with a refurbishment and additional lanes of Mini Bowling (AMF). In 2018, the FEC added Clip 'n Climb in February, Hologate Virtual Reality gaming arrived in March and the park's biggest ride, the Twist N Shout Coaster, manufactured by SBF/Visa, debuted in June. It was sold through Rides-4-U.

The renovation included new carpet, paint, CenterEdge POS systems, Embed card systems and bathrooms. Along with the other rides and attractions, the spinning coaster completed this recent expansion.

"In the first two months now, Twist N Shout almost doubled the second most popular ride or attraction in the park. It had a much higher price tag than our other rides, but so far it seems to be doing very well," said **Clint Novak**, general manager. "I am a huge fan of the industry, so I travel to a lot of parks and FECs. I have been on the spinning coaster several times at different locations. We also had a chance to see the coaster at the IAAPA Expo. We actually upgraded the light package on the coaster after seeing the new light package at [the trade show]."

To bring in the new coaster, Novak realized that the



Twist N Shout Coaster by SBF/Visa has become the park's most popular attraction in a very short time. AT/TIM BALDWIN; COURTESY SBF-VISA GROUP



new Clip 'n Climb, an area of seven climbing towers, had to be moved forward four feet. Tubs of Fun had previously been indoors, but it was relocated on a spot outdoors that had been vacated by the sale of an **Eyerly** Rock-o-Plane. In all, the facility operates on seven acres, with the 40,000-square-foot indoor portion holding more than 100 arcade redemption games, rides, laser tag, the VR reality experience and Mini Bowling, as well as birthday party rooms.

Outdoor rides include three go-kart tracks (karts supplied by **Amusement Products**), Fun Slide, **Sellner** Tilt-a-Whirl, **Eli Bridge** Scrambler and **Hrubitz** Round Up. Those rides are joined by Mini Golf and Batting Cages.

"We have two different types of season passes that we started in July of 2017. The program has been very popular," said Novak.

Central Park Fun-Land also found success with a creative solution with staffing.

"We are a year-round FEC that sells unlimited wristbands daily but cannot staff all rides and attractions like a large amusement park," Novak added. "We found a way to have our guests let us know what ride they are at with a Text to Ride number."

Other events at the park have included a free movie night on select Fridays that feature meet-and-greet characters. A **White Castle** food event has also been hosted twice. According to Novak, the burger chain is interested in going to more parks.



Clip 'n Climb offers seven different towers for adventurers to climb, one of which is two-sided and offers holes for viewing the other side and fellow competitors. AT/TIM BALDWIN

The Simpsons 4D, Kwik-E-Mart for Broadway at the Beach

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. — Suitably enough, it's show-time for **Broadway at the Beach**.

A new dimension of family fun began inundating the seaside entertainment and retail complex on Aug. 17 with the opening of Kwik-E-Mart, a familiar location from the fictional town of Springfield in the landmark animated television series *The Simpsons*. The working specialty convenience store is the first element of a larger, first-of-its-kind attraction called **The Simpsons 4D**, which will incorporate the Aztec Theater, housing a 4D experience — set to open later this year.

The TV show-inspired convenience store is a fully themed environment stocked with purchasable products of the kind the Simpsons family would buy, including Buzz Cola, Heat-Lamp Hot Dogs, and Lard Lad Donuts. Visitors can even quench their thirst by choosing from a tasty selection of Squishee flavors.

In addition to those Springfield staples, the Kwik-E-Mart offers a variety of food and beverage options, as well as merchandise tie-ins.

The Aztec Theater will be a ticketed attraction encompassing a fully themed lobby and immersive cinema experience. Patrons can join Homer, Marge, Bart, Lisa, and the youngest Simpson, Maggie, in a new 4D adventure.

Included with all tickets will be a Hollywood premiere-style souvenir photo for fans to share their own red carpet moment. After the 4D experience, patrons can explore the Kwik-E-Mart.

The Simpsons in 4D was created in partnership with **SimEx-Iwerks Entertainment**, themed entertainment company **FoxNext Destinations** and **Gracie Films**, producer of the TV series.

"We are thrilled to bring *The Simpsons* to Myrtle Beach in a way that this incredible brand deserves," said **Michael Needham**, founder and CEO of SimEx-Iwerks. "Launching this experience will be the culmination of years of passionate effort to bring [these characters] to life beyond the screen. We are creating a series of memorable moments, enriched with tremendous detail, throughout the attraction so that guests feel they are part of the [program's] universe."

The Simpsons is the longest-running primetime scripted TV series. Now in its 30th season, with more than 600 episodes completed, the award-winning show and its characters have become household names.

—Dean Lamanna



With its first phase, a working Kwik-E-Mart convenience store, now open, The Simpsons in 4D attraction at Broadway at the Beach is the first of many planned across the country over the next five years. COURTESY BROADWAY AT THE BEACH

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Arnolds Park opens new Chance carousel; improvements continue

AT: Pam Sherborne

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ARNOLDS PARK, Iowa — Arnolds Park Amusement Park could be one of this country's most community-loved amusement parks. Certainly, it is one of only a handful of amusement parks owned and operated by a non-profit organization thus relying on fundraising and donations to keep the park going.

The brand new 36-foot-diameter **Chance Rides** carousel that opened June 29 of this year stands directly inside the front gates of the park. It is just one of those things donations can bring.

"It was gifted by two donors," said **Jeff Vierkant**, CEO. "Both of them have a life-long passion to our park and they wanted to give something back to our community."



The new Arnolds Park Carousel has 30 figures and two chariots to offer. It is housed in a gazebo that can be closed to help protect it from inclement winter weather. Chance Rides representatives worked with the carousel donors for quite some time. The donors choose the figures on the ride. COURTESY ARNOLDS PARK

Both donors, whom have remained anonymous, had their minds set. They wanted to donate a grand carousel.

"Both of them thought having a signature carousel in the park would be good for the park," Vierkant said.

The Arnolds Park Carousel now stands at the front entrance of the park and it has been enormously received since opening.

"Our guests have been very impressed with the variety and workmanship of the animals," he said. "And, really, the entire ride."

Jay Aguilar, Chance Rides, said it is, in fact, the number, size and variety of the figures that makes this carousel unique.

He said the Arnolds Park Carousel has 30 animals and two chariots. There are large standing tigers, horses, giraffes and eagles in flight. There are African elephants, medium tigers, lions, Dentzel white rabbits, brown bears, pigs, roosters and donkeys.

A decorative ceiling adorned with white LED lights keeps the carousel bright and visible into the evening hours. It is housed in a gazebo that can be closed in the winter to protect the ride from the inclement weather.

Vierkant came on board as the CEO at the first of April 2018. Much of the carousel

planning had already taken place.

"But, as I understand it, people from Chance and the two donors sat at a table so the donors could choose the animals," he said.

The new carousel, although impressive, was not the only update and improvement made to the park for the 2018 season.

Last year, Historic Arnolds Park Inc., the name of the non-profit agency operating the park, began a "Restore the Park" fund-raising campaign. Those efforts have produced funding for a new ticket office and bathrooms and improvements to the parking lot, Majestic Pavilion, Maritime Museum and administrative offices.

Vierkant said they also have brought back into operation the park's historical wooden slide. That 60-foot toboggan-style slide was the first attraction installed in the park. That happened in 1889, just before Arnolds Park became Arnolds Park Amusement Park.

Located along Lake Okoboji in northwestern Iowa, Arnolds Park's enjoyed many

years of success and growth as did the entire area. But, it did have moments in more recent history where the community feared they would lose the park.

Of note, the park had to close for one year in 1988 due to the lack of operating funds. It was purchased by a group of investors and reopened in 1989.

Then, in 1999, a developer came in and purchased the park. That developer wanted to raze the park and construct a mixed-use development. A fund-raising campaign by the community as well as the non-profit company that was managing it at the time stepped in and raised \$7.25 million to purchase the park in just six weeks.

In 2005, a "Sustain Our Park" campaign raised enough money to rid the park of its long-term debt.

In 2013, renovations began on the track of the 1930-built Legend wooden coaster. The coaster was originally designed by John Miller. The retracking was done by **Great Coasters International**. The project was completed in 2014.

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Canada's Wonderland to roll out record-breaking dive coaster

Bolliger & Mabillard ride, new holiday event headed to park in 2019

VAUGHAN, Ontario — When **Canada's Wonderland** opens for the 2019 season, its skyline will be transformed by **Yukon Striker** — billed as the longest, fastest and tallest dive roller coaster in the world.

Situated in the 300-acre park's newly themed Frontier Canada area, **Yukon Striker** will be Canada's first dive coaster and the park's 17th coaster, placing Canada's Wonderland among the world's top three amusement parks with the most roller coasters.

Yukon Striker promises a breathtaking journey along its 3,625 feet of track. The coaster features a hold-and-dive element that will find riders hanging onto the edge



Yukon Striker, with a 245-foot vertical drop and four inversions, and the all-new holiday experience **WinterFest** will add up to the largest capital investment ever made by the theme park when both arrive next year. COURTESY CANADA'S WONDERLAND

of their seats on one of three wide, floorless trains, awaiting the 245-foot, 90-degree first drop. Once released, the coaster dives from zero to 130 km/h (80 mph) straight into an underwater tunnel before soaring up and around, propelling riders through four inversions and gravity-defying weightlessness.

Designed by **Bolliger & Mabillard** of Monthey, Switzerland, **Yukon Striker** is poised to set new records for fastest, longest and tallest dive coaster.

Also new at the park in 2019 will be **WinterFest**, an all-new holiday experience — with branding identical to family events launched suc-

cessfully at other parks owned by **Cedar Fair Entertainment Co.** — taking place in late November and December. During the celebration, the park will be transformed into a winter wonderland, complete with uniquely themed areas, dozens of Christmas trees, millions of lights, ice-skating, live entertainment, savory treats,

crafts and hands-on activities.

"This is the largest capital investment we've made in our park since opening," said **Norm Pirtovshek**, general manager. "Canada's Wonderland is excited to offer world-class thrills and a truly unique experience for our guests next year."

—Dean Lamanna

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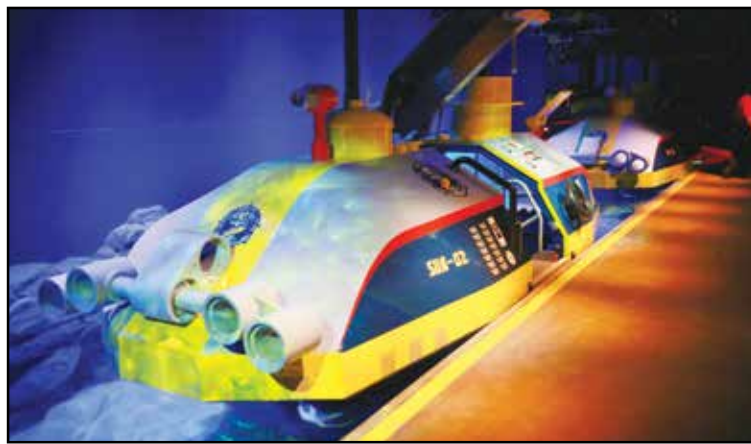
Legoland California submarine ride dives into interactive fun

Lego City: Deep Sea Adventure delivers on promise of name

AT: Dean Lamanna
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CARLSBAD, Calif. — Legoland California Resort ushered in a new era of decidedly immersive fun on its grounds with the July 2 launch Lego City: Deep Sea Adventure, a submarine-themed journey with something for all ages.

The interactive ride features actual submarine vehicles suspended from an overhead track system that propels them slowly and quietly, half-submerged, around a 300,000-gallon tank. Passengers are seated in front of roomy windows



Lego City: Deep Sea Adventure is a submarine ride affording underwater views of more than 2,000 sea animals, including small sharks. The colorful queue building features a five-foot-tall shark crafted from 80,000-plus Lego bricks. COURTESY LEGOLAND CALIFORNIA RESORT

below the waterline, where they can observe more than 2,000 sea animals, including several species of sharks, rays and other tropical fish — along with Lego models themed

around a storyline involving sunken treasure.

The fun, discovery-filled attraction is serious business for resort owner **Merlin Entertainments**. Lego City: Deep Sea Adventure is the single-largest investment the England-based company has made in any ride in its international chain of Legoland parks, including the Dubai, Japan and Windsor, England, locations, which have their own versions of the adventure.

"We've really passed the industry benchmark with this ride," said **Peter Ronchetti**, general manager of Legoland California Resort. "I'm so excited to see the looks on guests' faces when they experience Deep Sea Adventure.... [They] honestly don't know what to expect, as there is nothing to compare it to in North America!"

For Legoland's senior project manager, **Thomas Storer**, being around submarines is nothing new: he was a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy, stationed in nearby San Diego, earlier in his career. "The biggest difference between the submarines I've been on and the ones families will experience here... is

they'll be able to see the beautiful fish on the other side of the portholes!"

The hourly throughput of the continuously moving submarines is more than 1,000 passengers, which helps keep the queue moving. In addition to the ride system and eight 12-person vehicles, which were supplied by **Mack Rides** of Waldkirch, Germany, the attraction utilizes touchscreen gaming technology by Netherlands-based **Lagotronics Projects**.

Touch pads at each window inside the submarine allow guests to help the Lego Minifigure dive team identify sunken Lego gems, pearls, gold coins and more during the four-minute journey. In the process, they can achieve one of three Explorer levels during each ride: Junior, Senior or Master.

Before guests board the 22,000-pound submarines, they are given a briefing on the mission that awaits them by a three-foot-tall Lego diver with a projection-animated face, who provides instructions. As they exit the ride, they enter a retail space, where they can build their own virtual fish from Lego parts and



"release" it into a virtual ocean. (If they prefer to build their own Lego fish at home, all of the needed elements are available for purchase.)

Four years in the planning and building, the attraction is located in an area previously occupied by a miniature golf course. Elements of the ride are tied directly to the resort's Sea Life Aquarium and its toy line.

More than 30 children and their families from the Los Angeles and San Diego chapters of **Ronald McDonald House Charities** were treated to an exclusive day at Legoland to embark on the maiden Lego City: Deep Sea Adventure voyage. The children were among the first to experience the ride following the park's ceremonial check presentation of an \$80,000 donation to the chapters.

•legoland.com



Touchscreen gaming technology by Lagotronics Projects (shown mounted above windows) provides the attraction's interactive component, allowing guests to join a search-and-identify mission involving sunken Lego treasures.

COURTESY LEGOLAND CALIFORNIA RESORT



Guests enter the continuously moving, 12-passenger submarines and sit at the viewing windows. Along with swimming fish, Lego characters and treasures can be seen in the aquascape.

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California State Fair maintains 'cool' despite extreme weather

Heat saps attendance by 11 percent; over half a million visitors revel

AT: B. Derek Shaw

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SACRAMENTO, Calif. — For more than half its run, temperatures on the grounds of the **California State Fair** soared to 98 degrees and above — contributing to an 11 percent drop at the turnstiles compared with last year.

Not helpful to the July 13-29 event was a small fire under the monorail track caused by an electrical short, which occurred while the ride was in maintenance mode and resulted in its closure for much of a busy Saturday.

Still, the fair managed to create 17 lively days with a total of 572,250 visitors. And this year's theme, "Don't Miss a Moment," gave rise to a variety of experiences.

"The California State Fair has enormous roots, and it serves as a beacon of the achievements of Californians and our multicultural threads," said **Rick Pickering**, fair CEO. "We measure success by the many positive experiences of our fairgoers and our competitors."

The event rolled out a number of firsts, such as a 10-day youth mariachi competition. The fair also partnered with the **Sacramento Municipal Utility District** and **Elk Grove Food Bank** on Mondays during the fair. Fairgoers donated nearly 29,000 pounds of food to help feed hungry families aided by the food bank, with the fair providing free admission to donors.

Silent Disco, another fair first, was a popular attraction inside the California Expo Center. More than 26,000 fairgoers donned headphones and danced to songs of their choice, creating memories and taking selfies in the process.

Unconventional home-builders showcased their cre-



The California State Fair helped visitors beat the heat with lots of fun, a variety of beverages and 71 breezy rides supplied by **Butler Amusements**. In a first-time fair promotion, an expecting couple's baby gender "reveal" was announced via the center-hub marquee on the 100-foot-tall **Chance Giant Gondola Wheel** (it was a girl!); the couple and 50 family members and friends got a free spin on the ride. COURTESY CALIFORNIA STATE FAIR

ations in an area called **Tiny Homes**. In the California Building, fairgoers enjoyed **Life's Big Ag-Venture**, a life-size board game with participants as the playing pieces — simulating one's travels through career aspirations in agriculture while providing hands-on activities related to agricultural learning experiences.

An exhibit by **National Geographic** illustrated how California helps to feed the world.

Butler Amusements, Inc., provided 71 rides, booking in one ride, **Magnum (Mondial)**, owned by **Wood Entertainment**. A new ride this year was **Turbo (Speed, from KMG)**. The top-grossing rides were the **White Water Log Flume Ride (Reverchon)**, **Giant Wheel Gondola**

(**Chance**) and **Magnum**.

"Butler Amusements was very happy to be up overall and pleased that customers came out in great numbers during the final weekend of the fair," said **Andrea Stillwell**, marketing director for Butler, which had its three largest ride days ever during the fair's last two Saturdays and final Sunday. "Special thanks to the California State Fair staff, board and marketing team for their innovative, carnival-specific feature promotions."

On the food-and-drink side of the fun, fairgoers spent over \$8.5 million. There were six new vendors, including **Planet Crepes**, **Good Roots Café** (acai berry bowls and fresh-pressed juices), **William Henry's Hammertime** (pasta), **Sweet Cheeks** (desserts, deep-

fried cannoli), **Bacon Habit**, **Montana Q** (bison ribs) and **Grizzly Mac Attack** (macaroni and cheese, pulled pork, coleslaw and BBQ sauce).

Presenting live music, the **Speakeasy Whiskey Lounge** offered visitors a chance to receive a free special drink with their use of a secret word.

Major entertainment was in no short supply. Among the diverse name acts were **War**, **Berlin**, **Trace Adkins**, **Kool & the Gang**, **Night Ranger**, **Greg Kihn Band** and **The Spinners**.

Community outreach included **Rescue Dog Dive Day** with **Splash Dogs**, with 39 participating rescue dogs; prize money was donated to a local animal shelter, and two dogs were adopted. Out at the Fair, an LGBTQ+ event, took place during the fair's final day;

it featured races and a "Diva Drop" bungee jump, among other activities.

The extreme heat was made a bit more manageable with 20 "Cool Spots" around the grounds. The locations included air-conditioned buildings, fans with misters, stations with full-body misters and shaded areas where mobile devices could be charged.

"This was one of the calmest and most peaceful fairs we've had in 10 years," said **Margaret Mohr**, deputy general manager of business development and marketing for the event. "Based on our on-grounds and online surveys, our newest exhibit, 'Silent Disco,' was the big hit, and 96 percent of fairgoers felt the grounds were clean and safe."

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MIDWAYSCENE

AT: B. Derek Shaw

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The **Calgary Stampede** in Alberta, Canada, has retired the Indian Village name for an area that features more than 25 tepee displays, traditional storytelling and Native American culture. Next year, the area will be known as Elbow River Camp. The announcement came on the final day of this year's Western-themed, 10-day rodeo, exhibition and festival, held in mid-July. **North American Midway Entertainment** provided the midway.

David Beck is the new president and CEO of **Kentucky Venues**, the organization that oversees the **Kentucky State Fair**. Beck, who began his new role July 1, has 41 years with the **Kentucky Farm Bureau**, most recently serving as executive vice president. Kentucky Venues operates the Kentucky Exposition Center, the Kentucky International Convention Center and produces the Kentucky State Fair, **National Farm Machinery Show** and **North American International Livestock Exposition** — all part of a 540-acre complex in Louisville.

A black bear recently tried to scale the fence of the **Washington State Fairgrounds** in Puyallup, perhaps anticipating the abundant food scraps from the 20-day event. When local police spotted the bear, it hid in a tree until **Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife** officials arrived to tranquilize and relocate the animal. The bear was a bit early — this year's fair starts Aug. 31 and runs through Sept. 23. **Funtastic Shows** is supplying the midway rides.

For over 20 years, the **Maryland State Fair** has allocated space for the **Comptroller of Maryland's** Unclaimed Property Booth. Computer hookups are provided to allow fairgoers to enter their names and find out if they are the owners of unclaimed funds being held by the state. In 2017, over 300 fairgoers discovered nearly \$307,645 in unclaimed funds, with \$14,204 in unclaimed funds owed to one individual alone. "In Maryland, there is no statute of limitations, which means there is no time limit under which the property may be claimed," said **Peter Franchot**, state comptroller. Because of the program's success, the Comptroller's Office has reached out to many county fairs in Maryland. The state fair, which runs through Labor Day (Sept. 3), is the first leg of a three-stop Mid-Atlantic schedule for **Deggeller Attractions**. The operation travels 35 miles north to the **York Fair** in York, Pa., Sept. 7-16, and then heads south to Doswell, Va., for the **State Fair of Virginia**, Sept. 28-Oct. 7.

A national firefighter competition will be held at the State Fair of Virginia at Meadow Event Park in Doswell on Sept. 28-29, during the first two days of the 10-day fair. The Firefighter Combat Challenge is a competition promoting and showcasing the talents,

skills and athleticism of America's firefighters. The challenge includes climbing a tower in full gear and dragging and hoisting fire hoses. A Kid's Firefighter Challenge also will take place.

Lemons are in tight supply, thanks to a California heat wave. According to **Fare Foods, Inc.**, some distributors are recommending customers switch to limes when possible until the shortage is over. California-based **Limoneira** was sourcing fruit from California, Chile, Argentina and Mexico as of the start of August. Shortages were expected to continue until mid-September for smaller sizes and until October for larger sizes.

The **Ohio State Fair**, which wrapped in Columbus in early August, is weighing a potential new midway provider. Earlier this year, the **Ohio Expositions Commission**, which puts on the event, sent 16 RFPs to various carnival operators for 2019 and beyond. The commission boiled it down to three finalists, including current operator, **Amusements of America**, owners of the **KMG Fire Ball** ride that reportedly broke apart from internal corrosion on opening day of the 2017 Ohio State Fair, killing one person and severely injuring several others. The other two operators in the running are **Reithoffer Shows, Inc.**, and **Talley Amusements, Inc.** The last time the process took place was 2006.

Starting with this year's Aug. 24-Sept. 3 run in Grand Island, the **Nebraska State Fair** has discontinued the selection of an annual theme. Instead, it has introduced a new slogan: "Let Your Fair Flag Fly." "Our research has shown every year that the number-one reason folks come to the fair is for the overall experience," said **Jace Robinson**, marketing director. "Our new marketing campaign recognizes some of those niches, or flags, like food and livestock, and encourages folks to experience the fair in their own way and let their fair flag fly." The new tagline strives to encompass the entire fair experience. **Wade Shows** provided this year's midway.

Since 2007, **Liz and Jerry Paetow** have been on a mission to visit every county fair in Minnesota. It all started when the Montrose, Minn., couple was driving to a relative's house. Jerry, 67, noticed a billboard advertising the **Aitkin County Fair**, so he and Liz, 59 attended. They visited their 94th fair, the **Southwest St. Louis County Fair** in Floodwood, in late August. While there are only 87 counties in the state, some counties have multiple fairs. St. Louis County, for example, has three — in Chisholm, Proctor and Floodwood. The only county with no fair is Cook. The **Carlton County Fair** in Barnum is the only one in the state that still offers horse racing.

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North America's prime 2018 fair season off to promising start

Heat, rain fail to ruin fun events scheduled in U.S. and Canada

AT: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

Mother Nature's unpredictability in the form of extreme heat and precipitation threatened to scuttle certain activities and events and stall the turnstiles at some regional and community fairs across North America. But fun-seeking determination prevailed among attendees.

The following recap spotlights three fairs and their 2018 summer outings.



Alameda County Fair
Pleasanton, Calif.

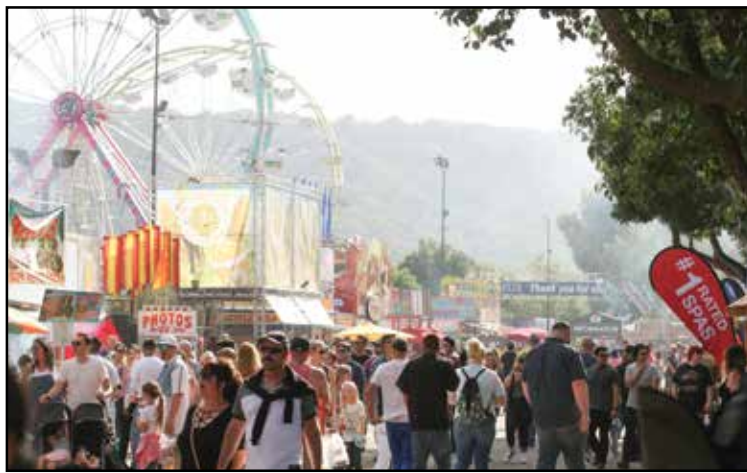
June 15-July 8

Unfurling the theme "Hello Summer," this event's 106th edition boasted big-name concerts; a festival celebrating wine, beer and craft cocktails; and live horse racing among its highlights.

"It was, indeed, the perfect way to welcome summer," said **Jerome Hoban**, the fair's CEO. "With the debut of the new Sky Ride, great concerts and action sports shows, 15 full days of horse racing and the return of the Opening Day Cattle Drive, every day offered something fun and special."

Thousands of spectators turned out for the Opening Day Cattle Drive, spotlighting cowboys and cowgirls, a big herd of steers, a few Texas Longhorns and a number of entertainers. Western Weekend followed, featuring a rancher's rodeo, horse show and prizes. The Action Sports Arena had different shows every weekend, including Extreme Rodeo, Monster Trucks and Demolition Derby.

The midway by **Butler Amusements, Inc.**, of Fairfield, Calif., took center stage with the addition of a Sky Ride from **Skytrac, Inc.** The carnival provider brought in 51 rides, including a new featured attrac-



Butler Amusements delivered 51 rides to the Alameda County Fair, the seventh-largest fair in California. Extreme heat and a shorter run impacted attendance numbers this year.
COURTESY ALAMEDA COUNTY FAIR

tion, Turbo (KMG Speed).

Top-grossing rides were the White Water Log Flume (**Reverchon**), Zillerator Coaster (**Pinfari**) and Giant Wheel Gondola (**Chance**).

"The Alameda County Fair is a great fair," said **Lance Moyer**, Butler's executive vice president and COO. "We were down slightly this year primarily because of an earlier closing time on the Fourth of July. We also experienced multiple days of excessive heat, and the fair was 18 days long this year instead of 20 as in 2017."

Attendance was 423,418 this year, down from 463,783 last year.

Music rang out across the fairgrounds for the event's duration. Concerts included **38 Special, LeAnn Rimes, War, Smash Mouth, En Vogue, Blue Oyster Cult, Sean Kingston, Clay Walker, Sir Mix-a-Lot, Morris Day & the Time, Con Funk Shun** and **The Tubes**.

The fair's Red, White & Brew Craft Beer Fest; Sip, Savor & Wager Wine Festival; and new Craft Cocktail Festival all drew capacity crowds for the tasting. Fun foods were in no short supply, with Fruity Pebbles Shrimp on a Stick, Strawberry Shortcake Milkshake and Smokehouse Tots (tater tots with pulled pork, cole slaw, and sour cream) tickling palates.

Horse racing featured an extended 15-day schedule that started June 15 and continued through the final weekend. Among the favorite daily attractions were the Alaskan Pig Races, Freestyle Motocross, K-9 Kings Frisbee Dogs, Chinese Acrobats,

Hypnotist **Tina Marie**, Great American Petting Zoo and Brad's Reptile World.

The Alameda County Fair is operated by the **Fair Association**, a non-profit organization, and the fairgrounds are home to the oldest one-mile race track in America. It is the seventh-largest fair in California.



Calgary Stampede
Calgary, Alberta, Canada
July 6-15

Billed as the "Greatest Outdoor Show on Earth," the 10-day **Calgary Stampede** lived up to its moniker this year. The event, blending the best of Western Canadian culture and contemporary entertainment, drew 1,271,241 visitors — way up over its 2017 tally of 1,214,972.

"The weather this year was amazing, beautiful sunny days and only one slightly rainy day," said **Jennifer Booth**, the fair's public relations manager. "Generally speaking, the attitude going into and during Stampede was very positive and optimistic. In fact, our attendance results show the second-highest attendance in Stampede history."

North American Midway Entertainment (NAME) provided 58 rides. The top three were the Crazy Mouse (**Zamperla**), Flume (**Reverchon**) and Giant Wheel (**Chance**), with the Polar Express (**Mack**) a close fourth. In celebration

of the **Chance Zipper's** 50th anniversary, NAME had its version of the ride factory-refurbished and outfitted with new open-front seating sporting over-the-shoulder restraints.

"We had an exceptional Calgary Stampede," said **Scooter Korex**, NAME's vice president of client experience and president of the **Canadian Association of Fairs and Exhibitions**. "The Alberta economy is improving. It's exceptional what the Calgary Stampede does for this industry — they are groundbreakers in how they have built it into the culture."

Olympic snowboarder **Mark McMorris** served as parade marshal. Other highlights included a multipoint zipline through the park, afternoon rodeos and an evening show featuring the thundering **GMC Rangeland Derby** (Chuckwagon races).

This year's event also celebrated the 50th anniversary of Calgary's iconic "The Grandstand Show," presenting live singing, dancing and guest performers, plus fireworks. Nearly all of the acts have Canadian roots, some from Calgary. They included late 1960s-70s artist **Andy Kim**, comedian **Drew Lynch** from TV's *America's Got Talent*, illusionist **Darcy Oake** and **Rachael Avery**, who hosted the 120-member Young Canadians show (of which she once was a member).

Other stages throughout the grounds featured **Sheryl Crow, Broken Social Scene, The Rural Alberta Advantage, The Washboard Union, River Town Saints,**

Dueling Piano Kings, Steven Page and **Brad Paisley**. There were more than 100 different acts in all.

The event was no slouch on the fun foods front. Among the treats offered this year were Pop Rocks Mini Doughnuts, The Big Pickle Tornado, Giant Squid on a Stick, Kit Kat Fries, Buffalo Chicken Pierogis, Frozen Chocolate Watermelon Pops and Banana Corndogs.



Delaware State Fair
Harrington, Del.
July 19-28

While other fairs experienced record heat, the **Delaware State Fair** endured six days of record rainfall. Compared to last year, when traditional summer heat was mixed with a few unseasonably cool nights, the 2018 event faced a bigger meteorological challenge.

According to **William DiMondi, Esq.**, the fair's general manager, rainfall totals of more than six inches during the run's 10 days "forced the carnival not to open on Saturday, July 21, the fair to close its commercial operations early that same day and turned all of our reliable parking lots into treacherous mud."

Still, crowds that strategically planned their fair-

► See FAIRS, page 33



The 10-day Calgary Stampede, emphasizing Western Canadian culture and contemporary entertainment, attracted 1.3 million visitors. North American Midway Entertainment supplied 58 rides.

COURTESY NORTH AMERICAN MIDWAY ENTERTAINMENT

►FAIRS

Continued from page 32

grounds visits between downpours increased attendance by two percent over 2017 — from 287,632 to 291,316. On Saturday, July 28, the fair admitted a record 48,653 patrons, its largest single-day number in 99 years. The carnival, supplied by **Wade Shows**, also recorded its best single-day receipts on the date.

Wade provided 56 rides, including a Big Wheel (Chance), RC-48 steel roller coaster (Pinfari) and a 135-foot-tall Drop Tower (Fabbri).

Owner **Frank Zaitshik** was pleased with the turnout despite the wet weather. "We did very well," he said. "The first couple of days we were up significantly. When we got to [the first] Saturday, it was a total wash-out; we didn't open. During the week we were lagging behind last year. But I was amazed by the last two days, as we caught up and were substantially ahead — 15 percent more than last year."

The event's final Saturday set an all-time record for Wade. "To have the pressure of threatening weather breathing down your back, and then how successful we ended up — I wish I could bottle it up and have it all the time," Zaitshik said.

The fair's entertainment lineup was strong, with acts including **Toby Keith, Brett Eldredge, Chris Young, Jeff Dunham, Lauren Daigle, the Outlaws, Marshall Tucker Band, Charlie Daniels Band** and **Travis Tritt**, plus a Craft Beer Festival, a Monster Truck & FMX Show and a sold-out Demolition Derby.

The event played host to a record 69 corporate sponsors this year. "Continued support from sponsors allows the fair to provide our patrons with great entertainment and summertime memories," said **Danny Aguilar**, the fair's assistant general manager and director of marketing.

Fair officials continued to ensure a strong balance of diversions and agriculturally minded entertainment and exhibits. The **Delaware FFA** organization, together with the fair, unveiled a new Ag Education area

called the FFA Ag-Venture and based on fundamental agricultural principles. The area was developed to help introduce the world of livestock and agriculture to visitors, most of whom were not raised on a farm nor have visited one.

This year's new attractions included a merging of the Plaza and the Free Entertainment Tent to create the brand-new Hertrich Plaza. The area featured an upgraded entertainment stage with new sound

and lights. Grounds entertainment included Circus Hollywood, racing pigs, a Camel Show, a menagerie of exotic animals and the popular Jurassic Dinosaur Adventure area.

"In all," summed up Aguilar, "patrons were treated to over 1,100 hours of programmed entertainment, which was provided at no additional cost beyond gate admission — not to mention all of the [exhibit and livestock] competition and judging."



The Delaware State Fair endured six days of record rainfall but ended strong, with visitors helping carnival supplier **Wade Shows** set an all-time record on the final Saturday. COURTESY DELAWARE STATE FAIR

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WATER PARKS & RECREATION

► News Splash — page 36 / Aquapark Tatrallandia expands with new waterslides from Polin — page 38

Vanish Point provided by ProSlide

Tampa's Adventure Island adds its most daring slide

AT: Tim Baldwin

tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

TAMPA, Fla. — The first major addition since Colossal Curl in 2015, Vanish Point dares visitors to **Adventure Island** to face their fears.

Inspired by the point on a wave where water and gravity form a perfect partnership, the crest of this 70-foot tower offers three new slides for guests to conquer. Stepping into one of two skyboxes, guest after guest feel the floor disappear beneath them. A third slide, at 455 feet, offers a high-speed finale without the trap door. Unofficially, the park has tongue-in-cheek nicknamed this one the “bail out slide.”

However, riders who climb the tower are all about the freefall experience.

Brian Kilpatrick, vice president of Adventure Island, said, “Guest reaction is over the top — epic, exciting, Wow! We always boast here that we have a wide variety of attractions for the family, but this is in the thrill seeker category and, by far, our most extreme ride.”

Kilpatrick said the non-freefall slide is among his favorites. “They are all over 425 feet long. I like the bail out slide myself. You don’t have the drop element, but the slide track goes up and over the conveyor and the twists and turns ... it’s a very repeatable slide itself,” he said.

As guests question their courage, the park has cleverly placed monitors at the ride’s entrance that show each rider entering the sky box chamber only to disappear from the screen.



Vanish Point (top right), Adventure Island’s first major addition since 2015, shares a 70-foot tower with Colossal Curl. Monitors at ground level (above) let spectators watch people drop into freefall. Billboard maps (bottom right) spotlight attractions and amenities nearby. AT/TIM BALDWIN

Once each rider has decided to take the challenge, he or she is blessed with shaded queuing with limited wait time on the staircases themselves.

This added shade was also implemented on another attraction in the park for this season. This is not only a comfort courtesy to the guests, but also helps orchestrate the park’s Quick Queue program.

Vanish Point’s three slides, supplied by **ProSlide Technologies**, each have distinct characteristics in their design which will lead to returning guests wanting to try them all to determine their favorite.

In 2015, Adventure Island opened Colossal Curl, a large family raft ride. Vanish Point utilizes the same slide tower.

“When we built that attraction, we built the tower knowing we would be coming back for an exciting ride in the center of the park,” said

Kilpatrick. The park now has ten slide attractions in addition to the wave pool, lazy river, activity pool and two children’s areas.

Interestingly, Adventure Island had offered park maps in the past. “We now have map billboards. We had paper maps before. Most of them ended up in the water. Guests wanted them for reference and these billboard maps really help. We have five entrances and exits to our rivers. People often will get out and not know where they are. We had an employee suggestion to add them to the river and we are going to do that next season,” said Kilpatrick. Currently billboard maps not only show location but spotlight attractions and dining options close by, a helpful idea for any guest. “Guests don’t have to worry about carrying anything, and we don’t have to worry about them clogging our pools.”



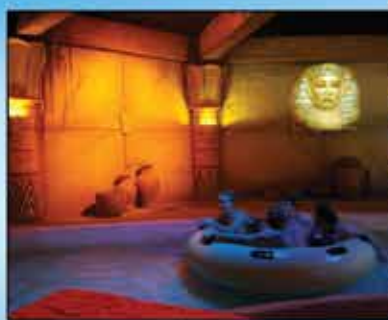
As Adventure Island grows, Kilpatrick finds that the Tampa area is not necessarily in competition with the Orlando properties, but another option to the millions of visitors each year to Central Florida. Vanish Point just further puts them on the map,

particularly being adjacent to **Busch Gardens**. Adventure Island opened in 1980. Ticketing packages in conjunction with the **SeaWorld Orlando** properties also are successful. “As we expand we are starting to reach the other markets,” he said.

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Roarr! Dinosaur Adventure adds unique ropes course

Innovative Leisure's twin parallel ziplines deliver for U.K. park

NORWICH, England — **Roarr! Dinosaur Adventure**, a family attraction in the county of Norfolk, added a high ropes course from **Innovative Leisure, Ltd.**, to its activities lineup in late May.

The product, a double-level Sky Trail Voyager, has a linear layout that incorporates 28 different elements — including one that its maker described as the world's first twin parallel Sky Rail ziplines. The company also said that the ziplines, at 34 meters, are the longest of their type in Europe.

Recently rebranded and revamped, Roarr! approached Innovative Leisure with a design concept for a unique adventure course with enough capacity to allow it to be included in the park's admission price.

The company's typical Sky Trail Voyager high ropes course can accommodate large numbers of participants with a quick turnaround. The Roarr! version of the course, named Predator High Ropes, was designed with four linear paths of elements on the first and second levels, enabling it to handle up to 200 guests per hour.

The installation also had to fit aesthetically with the area of the park in which it is located, which is based on

an Edwardian secret garden and dinosaurs. Coordinating with Innovative Leisure, the Roarr! project team spent many months developing the area, adding, aside from the theming, a high ropes facility building, queue lines and landscaping.

"The finished product looks outstanding," said **Charles Adam Goymour**, park general manager. "Innovative Leisure has a great team who supported us professionally from training through to after-sales service. They had a good understanding of the key objectives of our requirements."

Noted **Phil Pickersgill**, managing director of Innovative Leisure: "Part of the brief for the course design was to create an attraction that would appeal to an older guest / child, to make something quite impressive and thrilling, and also to make it accessible for parents to enjoy with their children."

The course's parallel Sky Rail ziplines are fully automated, with traffic light systems to assist crew members with the flow of customers. The patented technology allows for increased throughput with minimal staff.

Goymour observed that Predator High Ropes "is already adding many great benefits to the business, as well as providing guests with additional satisfaction on their day out."

—Dean Lamanna



Predator High Ropes, a customized Sky Trail Voyager installation from Innovative Leisure, incorporates 28 elements, including twin parallel Sky Rail ziplines.
COURTESY INNOVATIVE LEISURE, LTD.



NEWS SPLASH

AT: Jeffrey L. Seifert

jseifert@amusementtoday.com

Thorpe Lakes Aqua Park, Chertsey, England, has tripled the size of its floating obstacle course for the 2018 season. Designed by **Aquaglide**, White Salmon, Wash., the course covers more than 16,000 square feet with 20 different obstacles of varying degrees. Designed to appeal to children over five years of age to adults, there are challenges to meet the needs of young children and obstacles that even adults may find difficult to accomplish. Some of the highlights of the course offer efforts in team building. **Kaos**, a large inflated semi dome can accommodate a group of friends. A coordinated jump by several is bound to send one of them airborne into the water. Thorpe Lakes Aqua Park has taken a novel approach to handling groups looking for different experiences. Throughout the day there are family sessions for children under 13 years of age and under 18 years of age. Adults can join only if they are accompanying children. There are also four adult-only sessions from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sessions last 55 minutes following a five-minute safety briefing. The course can accommodate 80 guests per session.

There is a dry viewing platform where friends and family members can relax and watch or take photos. Access to the site is free for spectators and use of the public beach is also free. Other activities at the park include wakeboarding, waterskiing, ringo rides, banana boats and standup paddleboard (SUP) yoga.

The park is scheduled to stay open through September 30, but may decide to extend the season if weather conditions allow. Wetsuits are available for a nominal fee as the weather gets cooler.

A development company has purchased land in Wixom, Mich., with plans to build a \$300 million indoor/outdoor water park resort. The Wixom-based **Damas Group LLC** purchased 82 acres of empty land close to the company's headquarters. Damas owns 22 commercial buildings in the metro Detroit area including the Beck Business Center complex in Wixom. This is the company's first venture into the leisure sector.

The elaborate plans call for two luxury hotels with entertainment and conference centers, a 100,000-square-foot water park that can hold 3,000 to 5,000 people, restaurants, shopping, an arcade center with go-karts, laser tag and gaming, as well as some light industrial zoned areas.

Financing for the estimated \$300 million project is still underway and could include venture capitalists, investors and financial institutions.

Owner Dino Damavoleto hopes to break ground next year with a possible opening as early as 2020.

The **South Valley Pool Splash Pad** in Albuquerque, N.M., held its grand opening on July 19. Titled "splash pad" by the city, the facility is actually a sizeable water play structure with interactive elements, water slides and a tipping bucket. The splash pad brings

additional play elements to the existing South Valley Pool. The pool, built in 1965, also was renovated to bring it up to modern-day standards. Funding was provided by a \$400,000 grant from the county with additional funding provided by issuing bonds.

City Council member **Marco McClendon** has presented plans for a \$13 million water park to the West Memphis City Council, Tenn. The proposed aquatic center and water park would include waterslides, a lazy river, wave rider, splash pool, a relaxation pool for seniors and a second pool that can be used for competition.

"We've been needing something that's quality for our children, and if we can place this on the interstate in that area, I think we can attract more people. It creates revenue, creates jobs, economic development and will do a lot for our community," said McClendon.

Funds would be provided by a six-year half-cent sales increase.

The never-finished **Rippin' Rapids Water Park & Resort** in Rapid City, S.D., is going on the auction block. The resort includes a 54,000-square-foot building. The resort was to include indoor and outdoor water parks, ziplines and a 100-suite hotel. It was modeled after the resorts in Wisconsin Dells, but was to be themed to the Black Hills of South Dakota. The attraction has been under construction for nearly five years by **Capitol Management of Rapid City**. One of the principal owners, **Bob Akers**, passed away in December. The property was seized by creditors and is now owned by Nebraska-based **Great Western Bank**.

The live auction will be offered three different ways depending on takers. Potential buyers may bid on the entire resort including the land and building; salvage rights to the building and its contents; or bidders may purchase the land without the building.

The building contains numerous pieces of waterslides which were never assembled or erected. The building also includes an assortment of commercial equipment including pumps, water heaters, air handlers, windows, doors, fans, light fixtures and structural steel — most of it in nearly new condition.

The 2,758-passenger **Carnival Triumph** will enter dry dock next spring for a massive makeover that will include a new Waterworks water park with two massive waterslides. The \$200 million makeover is so extreme the ship will emerge with a new name: **Carnival Sunrise**.

"It's really a transformation of the ship so we feel it merits the renaming," said **Gus Antorcha**, chief operations officer for **Carnival Corporation**.

The two-month refurbishment will take place from March 1 to April 29, 2019, at the **Navantia Shipyards** in Cadiz, Spain.

In addition to the water park expansion, the makeover will include 115 new cabins, the revamping of all existing cabins, a redesign of the two Captain's Suites and the introduction of several new dining options.



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Aquapark Tatralandia expands with new waterslides from Polin



The adventure begins on Aquapark Tatralandia's new yellow-striped Mega 4 Family waterslide. Also visible is the new blue-hued Mega Delphin waterslide. Polin Waterparks supplied both rides. COURTESY POLIN WATERPARKS

AT: Jeffrey Seifert
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

RÁZTOKY, Slovakia — This past June, **Aquapark Tatralandia**, part of **Tatralandia Holiday Resort**, opened two new giant waterslides from **Polin Waterparks** of Istanbul, Turkey.

MegaDelphin is Europe's first Family Turbolance and

the largest waterslide of its type that Polin has supplied. The second new waterslide at Tatralandia, Mega 4 Family, is a family raft slide. Both slides start from the top of a single new 56-foot-tall tower and utilize circular, four-person rafts, which are returned to the loading platform via a lift system.

Mega Delphin, at more than 500 feet in length, starts out as what looks like a typical family raft ride with gentle drops and curves — until suddenly the chute makes a steep dive all the way to the ground. From there, momentum carries the raft up the side of a near-vertical wall. Once the momentum slows, the raft slides back down the wall and over a speed bump before entering a long run-out into a splash pool.

Almost 600 feet long, the Mega 4 Family waterslide also starts out gently. Riders are then surprised mid-course with an enclosed 540-degree helix that features Polin's special multicolored lighting effects. After picking up speed and feeling the G-forces of the helix, riders are thrust back into the daylight and sent through several banked turns before the final drop into the splash pool.

As the waterslides' names imply, both are designed for families, and small children are permitted to ride with an adult.

"Tatralandia has always introduced innovations and set trends in the sphere of water park amusement in Central Europe," said **Ján Gemzický**, representative of Polin Waterparks in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. "By building new waterslides with big rafts for four passengers, it has moved the attractiveness standard a bit higher again and got ahead of the competition."

Aquapark Tatralandia is the largest water park in Slovakia and one of the largest in Central Europe. It features year-round operation with indoor and outdoor thermal pools fed by a natural mineral spring. Tatralandia Holiday Resort also features a variety of lodging options as well as a bowling center, cinemas and a small zoo.

• tatralandia.sk

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BUSINESS & NEWSMAKERS

► Parc Saint Paul welcomes wooden coaster — page 46 / Dollywood adds \$37M in rides, fun — page 47

New hotel tower and upscale RV sites added for 2018 season

Cedar Point boasts new resort accommodations to lengthen stays

AT: Tim Baldwin

tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

SANDUSKY, Ohio — In recent years, Cedar Point has invested time and money in emphasizing the beach aspect of the famed peninsula jutting into Lake Erie. That beach-front over time eventually grew into one of the world's biggest amusement parks.

For 2018, the historic Hotel Breakers (which underwent a beautiful and massive renovation in 2016) opened a brand new 158-room tower.

Tyler Adams, director, resort sales and marketing, Cedar Point, said, "We're really focused on Cedar Point as a destination. All the new rooms that have lake views also have balconies. We just want to give people who stay with us more options."

"Our focus at Cedar Point (and all our parks for that matter) is to become more than just a place to ride rides," said Brian Witherow, chief financial officer, Cedar Fair. "Today, consumers are prioritizing experiences over possessions, and we're ideally positioned to capitalize on



An expansion of Hotel Breakers has added 158 new rooms to the historic resort. Rooms in the new Hotel Breakers tower accommodate up to five guests, as a pull-out chair eliminates the need for a rollaway bed. AT/TIM BALDWIN

that. Our ongoing efforts to enhance Cedar Point's resort properties, including a one-of-a-kind asset like the Cedar Point beach, are aimed at enhancing our offerings and creating experiences guests can't get anywhere else."

"All the rooms in the new tower accommodate five people. We've put pullout chairs in the rooms, so guests no longer have to deal with a rollaway," said Adams.

The resort opened 25 new patio RV sites at the beginning of summer. The newer premium options boast more space than the existing sites. The stamped concrete patios

come with a dining table and six chairs, four Adirondack chairs, a built-in fire pit and charcoal grill. The sites now number 123.

"The RV market in general is very strong. Sales are strong, and it continues to grow," Adams told *Amusement Today*.

The beach atmosphere also received a considerable upgrade. Cedar Point Nights in July were filled with live music and lots to do for the resort guests. Even during the day, the park's house band offered music, and beach games and activities were enjoyed by sunbathers and beach goers.

The Sandbar, a new beach



bar was constructed along the beach, and guests can enjoy beverages on the patio with views of both the beach and Lake Erie just mere steps from Hotel Breakers.

"It is great during the day and even better at night," said Adams. "It's an awesome addition to the beach."

For the first time, guests can now walk to the front gate from the resort hotel. Cedar Point has expanded the boardwalk walkway from Hotel Breakers along the beach all the way to the front gate. Adams credits the relaxed atmosphere of Cedar Point Shores, the reimagined water park from last

season, has now been carried out to the boardwalk and beach helping to make the resort feel continuous and cohesive.

The resort has also increased its character appearances not only at Hotel Breakers but also Lighthouse Point, along with storytime in the hotel lobby.

With everything new about Hotel Breakers, the cottages and cabins at Lighthouse Point, the RV sites, the Express Hotel (which was expanded in 2017) and Castaway Bay, Cedar Point is positioned to meet the needs and budgets of the majority of their vacationing guests.



New Premium RV sites provide patio seating for six, additional lounge chairs, a fire pit and a grill. New beach atmosphere (right) comes courtesy of games, live music and the new Sand Bar cocktail patio. COURTESY CEDAR POINT (LEFT AND CENTER); AT/TIM BALDWIN

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PAPA Summer Fun meeting descends on Dutch Wonderland

New website, name adjustment among event's agenda items

AT: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

LANCASTER, Pa. — Nearly 80 members and guests of the **Pennsylvania Amusement Parks Association (PAPA)** met at **Dutch Wonderland** July 16-17 for the organization's annual Summer Fun meeting.

Among the items advanced were a new website and a name change for the group.

The meeting swung into action with the **Barbara J. Knoebel Golf Tournament** at **Overlook Golf Course** in Lititz. Each year, the event raises funds for scholarships for student employees of PAPA member parks and attractions.

On the first evening, attendees dined and socialized at **Your Place Restaurant & Pub**, within walking distance of the **Country Inn of Lancaster**, the official hotel. The next morning at Dutch Wonderland, concurrent with the PAPA board of directors meeting at **Merlin's Restaurant**, a behind-the-scenes tour of the park's new **S&S Worldwide** family suspended



At left, all smiles at the PAPA Summer Fun meeting opening reception (from left): **Leanna Muscato**, PAPA president; **Sandy Clark**, previous co-owner of Dutch Wonderland; and **Dick Knoebel** of **Knoebels Amusement Resort**. Nearly 80 people, including representatives of member parks, attractions and manufacturers, attended the event. At right, intercontinental conversation, PAPA-style (from left): **Jim and Sara Seay** of **Premier Rides** with **Sansei Technologies** principals **Makoto Nakagawa**, chairman; **Noboru Rachi**, president and CEO; and **Kazuaki Ebe**, director. The **Sansei** executives, among the participants representing **S&S Worldwide**, flew in from the company's **Osaka, Japan**, headquarters. COURTESY GTP CORP./TONY SINKOSKY

coaster, **Merlin's Mayhem**, was conducted by **James Bowe**, the park's director of maintenance, and **Pete Barto** of **S&S**.

Several principals of **Sansei Technologies, Inc.**, parent company of **S&S**, traveled from Japan to participate.

Special focus was placed on changing the PAPA website look and content. **Al Presher**, founder of **Rochester, N.Y.-based Stratejus, Inc.**, provided an in-depth presentation on the general framework for the new site, which is designed to enable

all member parks and attractions to populate their page information using **WordPress**. "This one is very interactive," he said. "Each of the parks will be able to update it — even daily, if they wish. We will have a map that will show all the attractions."

Gary Chubb, senior maintenance director at **Hersheypark** and PAPA ride safety seminar coordinator, was the latest PAPA Hall of Fame inductee. He joins 11 other individuals who have received the honor.

"A lot got accomplished," said **Leanna Muscato** of **Knoebels Amusement Resort**, current PAPA president. "We always have committee reports, and we heard from some of our representatives regarding our bylaws and a small change we are going to make to them. This year we voted to give seven scholarships." (Previously, there were four.)

A big item in the works over the past year: changing the organization's name to **Pennsylvania Amusement**

Parks & Attractions. "It was voted upon in February, and now we are actually acting upon it in the legal sense," Muscato said, noting that the change allows the PAPA acronym to remain the same. "We hope to entice more people to join our organization."

PAPA was formed in 1935 to promote the industry and influence legislation. Its 2019 spring meeting will be held at the **Hershey Lodge** in **Hershey, Pa.**, Feb. 25-26.

•paamusementparks.com

NEAAPA holds summer meeting at Funtown Splashtown USA

SACO, Maine — The **New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (NEAAPA)** convened its 105th anniversary summer meeting July 24 at **Funtown Splashtown USA**, with 100 members attending.

The event included a prior-evening kickoff gathering at nearby **Palace Playland** in **Old Orchard Beach**, which showcased the park's new **Sea Viper** steel roller coaster from Italian manufacturer **Preston & Barbieri** (see story, page 1). Attendees were given wristbands to ride the coaster and check out more than two dozen other attractions.

The daylong meeting started with a continental breakfast at Funtown's registration area, followed by a noon lunch inside the park.

NEAAPA members had time to enjoy the rides and water attractions as well as behind-the-scenes park tours devoted to ride operations and food. The organization's board of directors then held an afternoon meeting, which was followed by a surf and turf dinner.

Sponsors of the meeting were member businesses **Premier Rides**, **Baltimore, Md.**; **Carousel Family**

Fun Center, **Fairhaven, Mass.**; **S&S Worldwide**, **Logan, Utah**; **Rhode Island Novelty**, **Fall River, Mass.**; and **Neptune-Benson, Inc.**, **Coventry, R.I.**

NEAAPA's next gathering will be the **Tom Morrow Social & International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Dinner** in **November** in **Orlando**.

—Ron Gustafson

Fun and business went hand-in-hand during NEAAPA's summer meeting (clockwise from top left): Members took an exclusive ride on Funtown Splashtown's **Excalibur** roller coaster, which turned 20 this year; **Cory Hutchinson**, park vice president and general manager, discussed the coaster's history. During NEAAPA's morning registration, **Ed Hodgdon**, Funtown's marketing manager (left) welcomed **Violet Cormier**, park president, and **John Hallenbeck**, vice president of **North American operations** for the **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions**.

Dinner under a festive canopy concluded the event.

COURTESY RON GUSTAFSON





VRROUNDUP

AT: Dean Lamanna

dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

Having delivered VR fun to nearly four million visitors at attractions around the world such as **Alton Towers**, **Thorpe Park** and **SeaWorld Orlando**, **Figment Productions**, based just outside London, with an office in Orlando, has developed what it considers to be the ultimate next-gen immersive experience. Code-named *Project Helix*, the company revealed that it features multiuser, tactile, free-roaming VR coupled with interactive props and environments, and that it breaks from the current free-roaming trend in shoot-'em-ups. Figment will license the system to customers in the leisure industry as well own and operate their own sites; they expect the first locations to open early next year.

VR Adventures has moved to new location within The Linq promenade (3545 S. Las Vegas Blvd.) in Las Vegas. To navigate its three-dimensional virtual worlds, the attraction requires gamers to use hand movement, walk, sidestep or jump to explore or fly through the nine offered experiences — including one called *VRoller Coaster*. In addition, one of the four available virtual reality motion simulators delivers whitewater rafting thrills (without the soaking).

In an effort to bring premium VR to underserved communities, **Chris Chin**, executive director of education for VR content at **HTC**, said the company is donating more than 110 HTC Vive systems to California and Nevada libraries through its new Vive Libraries Program. Thus far, HTC has donated at least 100 Vive headsets in California. "As more virtual reality stations take root across our library system, we are seeing positive learning impacts and visitors that are genuinely excited about technology and education," said California State Librarian **Greg Lucas**. HTC, through its content platform Viveport, is supplying more than 35 educational experiences covering — among other areas — creativity, design, history, travel, wellness, and arts and culture.

SpectreVision and **Ubisoft Montreal** released a trailer for their new gaming collaboration *Transference* in June at E3 2018 in Los Angeles. A narrative experience that merges movies with games, the psychological thriller plunges players into an experiment of the brilliant yet troubled scientist Raymond Hayes: a corrupted digital simulation of his family formed using the collective brain data of his wife Katherine, son Benjamin and himself. Shifting back and forth between the individual perspectives of each family member, players piece together the mystery as they search for clues, solve puzzles and discover the corrupted consciousness of a family. The game will be release on VR and traditional platforms this fall.

In early July, South Korean telecommunications company **KT Corp.** and **GS Retail** jointly launched their second **VRight** VR theme park, located near the main gate of **Konkuk University** in eastern Seoul. The new park features some 30 new games, rides and immersive experiences in partnership with leading Korean game developers, including **Smilegate** and **Appnori**. Their first **VRight**, in Sinchon near **Yonsei University**, in western Seoul, opened in March; that two-floor park had attracted more than 18,000 visitors by midsummer. KT Corp. is set to open more **VRight** parks this year under its direct management. The company also plans to franchise its VR business next year after developing a business model to sell its VR content and platforms to individual operators in both South Korea and overseas.

Stockholm, Sweden-based **SVRVIVE Studios** is entering the VR arcade market with a new platform called *SynthesisVR*. Launching on the platform are two escape room experiences: the mystery-adventure puzzler *SVRVIVE: The Deus Helix* and the critically acclaimed "creepy cute" stealth shooter *Kartong — Death by Cardboard!* Both titles will be featured on the platform for download, with pay-per-minute rates adjusted per country. "We're still looking for more awesome ways to reach out to arcades around the world and cooperate with several more markets," said **Joy Bratt Martinez**, marketing and community manager for *SVRVIVE*.

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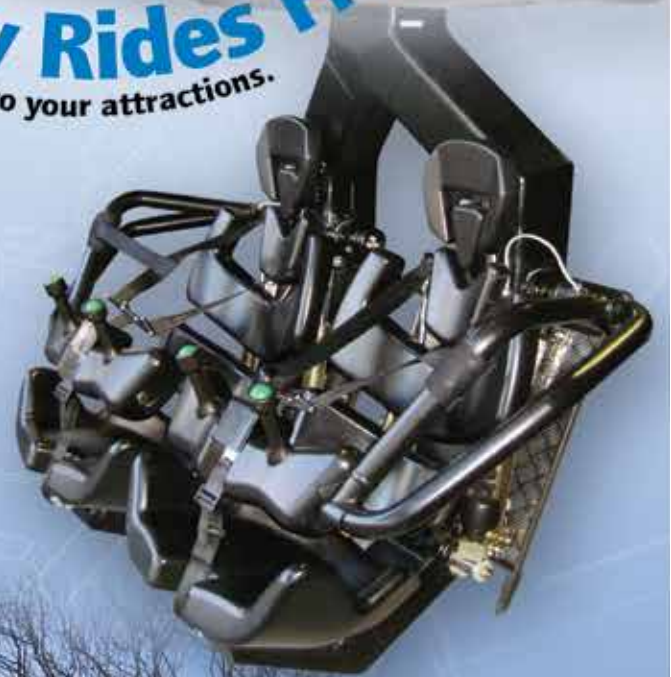
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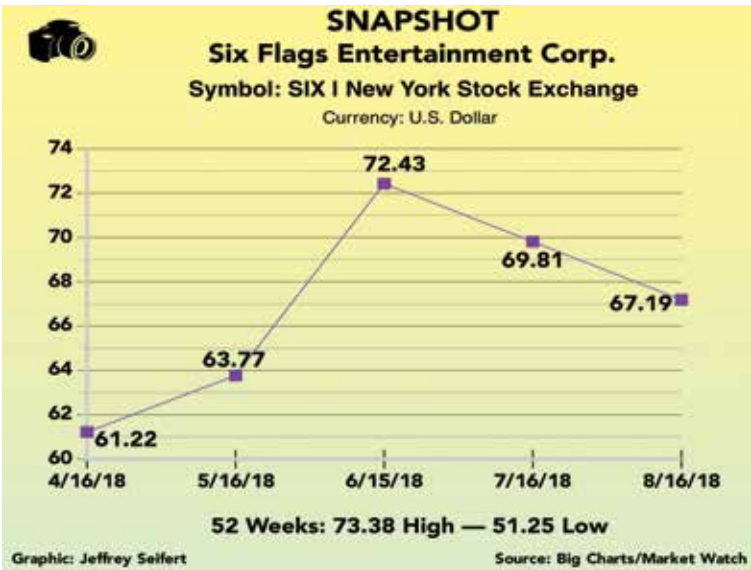
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MARKET WATCH

COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 08/16/18	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	35.85	37.52	29.57
Merlin Entertainments Group / Legoland	MERL	LSE	368.00	469.40	317.10
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	53.37	70.82	50.1
Comcast Corp./NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	35.66	44.00	30.43
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	112.48	117.90	96.2
Dubai Parks & Resorts	DXBE:UH	DFM	0.34	0.83	0.32
EPR Properties	EPR	NYSE	69.73	72.32	51.87
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	9010	TYO	3060.00	3560.00	2292.00
Haichang Holdings Ltd.	HK:2255	SEHK	1.69	2.30	1.55
Leofoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	6.19	8.26	6.09
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	28.28	38.41	26.85
Parques Reunidos Servicios Centrales S.A.	ES:PQR	MCE	12.40	16.46	11.68
Sansei Technologies, Inc.	JP:6357	TYO	1479.00	1864.00	827.00
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	25.62	26.26	10.42
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	67.19	73.38	51.25
DreamEast Group Ltd.	HK:0593	SEHK	10.84	15.88	8.46
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	700.00	704.00	545.00
Village Roadshow	AU:VRL	ASX	2.22	4.15	1.73

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

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



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Region (U.S.)	As of 08/13/18	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	\$3.219	+\$0.595
Midwest	\$3.139	+\$0.569
Gulf Coast	\$2.990	+\$0.580
Mountain	\$3.358	+\$0.658
West Coast	\$3.425	+\$0.637
California	\$3.942	+\$0.993

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0.7865	GBP (British Pound)
110.82	JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.9943	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.3764	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.3141	CAD (Canadian Dollar)

BUSINESS WATCH

Disney gets closer to Fox deal, reports earnings

NEW YORK — On July 27, shareholders of **The Walt Disney Co.** and **Twenty-First Century Fox, Inc.**, approved Disney's acquisition of major Fox assets, including its film and television studios, home to franchises such as *Avatar* and *The Simpsons*. The deal is worth \$71 billion and its completion still depended on international approvals. Disney also reported earnings for its third fiscal quarter ended June 30. Diluted earnings per share (EPS) for the quarter increased 29% to \$1.95 from \$1.51 in the prior-year quarter; excluding certain items affecting comparability, EPS for the quarter increased 18% to \$1.87 from \$1.58 in the prior-year quarter. Revenues in the parks and resorts division increased 6% to \$5.2 billion for the quarter. In other company news, the **Disneyland Resort** reached an agreement with its largest labor unions for a minimum wage increase of 40% within two years, with about 9,700 employees represented by the Master Services Council receiving \$15/hour by 2019.

Attendance, stock up at SeaWorld Entertainment

ORLANDO, Fla. — Better-than-expected second-quarter earnings posted by **SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.**, sent its stock soaring toward a four-year high in early August. While attendance at its parks continued to rise through the quarter — increasing nearly 5% to 6.4 million — the company reported revenue of \$391.9 million, up from \$373.8 million last year. "The results were driven by our new strategic pricing strategies, new marketing and communications initiatives, and the positive reception of our new rides, attractions and events," said **John Reilly**, SeaWorld's interim CEO. "In addition, we continued to experience a double-digit increase in season pass sales revenue and an increase in total revenue per capita driven by a 6.5% increase in in-park per capita spending."

Second-quarter revenue rises at Universal parks

PHILADELPHIA — Media giant **Comcast** reported that the theme park segment of its **NBCUniversal** division grew in the second quarter despite the negative impact of an earlier Easter holiday, which shifted some spring break travel into the first quarter. Theme park revenue increased 3.6% to \$1.4 billion and EBITDA increased 3.4% to \$569 million. For the first half of the year, theme park revenue rose 8.6 percent to \$2.6 billion and adjusted earnings jumped 12.3 percent to \$1.1 billion. The positive results were attributed to new attractions, including Night Parade in Japan, *Kung Fu Panda* in Hollywood, and the opening of new rides such as *Fast & Furious* — Supercharged in Orlando. With rumors of a possible additional theme park at **Universal Orlando Resort** circulating for a while, the prospect was described as "attractive" by **Stephen Burke**, CEO of NBCUniversal, in a late-July Comcast earnings call. "In terms of a new gate in Florida, we are looking at it," Burke said.

Earnings at Six Flags fly high through midyear

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — Revenue for the second quarter at **Six Flags Entertainment Corp.** increased \$23 million, or 5%, from the second quarter of 2017 to \$445 million. The revenue growth resulted primarily from a 3% increase in attendance to 9.8 million guests, a 2% increase in guest spending per capita and a 9% increase in sponsorship, international licensing and accommodations revenue. Adjusting for the nearly 200,000 guest visits that occurred during the first quarter versus the second quarter due to the earlier timing of the Easter holiday, second-quarter 2018 attendance grew 5%.

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ON THE MOVE

Orlando-based **Dynamic Attractions, Ltd.**, has made three senior operational appointments designed to support the company's strategy to innovate, manufacture and deliver ride systems and immersive attractions.

Cindy Emerick Whitson has been promoted to senior vice president, business development, expanding her leadership position in defining the company's global business development strategy. Whitson, a material science engineer with 26 years of experience in the attractions industry, has been instrumental in virtually all of the company's contract awards. She will continue to introduce the company's award-winning lineup of ride systems.

**Whitson**

Jerry Pierson, has been named executive vice president, operations, U.S. For the past 28 years, Pierson has been at **ITEC Entertainment**, where he advanced to the role of vice president and director of program management. He has overseen the development and installation of location-based entertainment projects in North America, Europe and Asia.

**Pierson**

Stephen Turner has been named vice president, operations, Canada. Turner has been in the automotive business for more than 25 years, with extensive experience ranging from product engineering, through program management and manufacturing, to supplier and business development. He was instrumental in the launch and production of over \$300 million in business at seven plants on three continents.

**Turner**

Alice Mathu, a team member of the **International Association of Parks and Attractions (IAAPA)** since 2006, has been promoted to vice president, exhibitions, conferences and sales. Based in Orlando, Mathu will oversee sales and operations for the organization's global expos and other IAAPA conferences, meetings and events. In addition, she will lead IAAPA's global sales team, including exhibit, advertising and sponsorship sales.

**Mathu**

Merlin Entertainments, based in Poole, England, has appointed **Justin Platt** to the newly created position of chief strategy officer, reporting to CEO **Nick Varney**. With over 25 years of experience across a range of international organizations, Platt previously held a number of senior marketing roles with **GSK**, **Kellogg's** and **AstraZeneca** before joining Merlin in 2011.

**Platt**

Moving into Platt's former role as managing director of resort theme parks at Merlin is **Fiona Eastwood**. Most recently the company's global marketing director for midway, Eastwood earlier held a number of senior positions at **BBC Worldwide**, including managing director of the consumer products division and director of brands, global markets.

**Eastwood**

Merlin also has appointed **Jennifer Edwards** marketing manager of San Francisco-based brands,

Madame Tussauds San Francisco and **The San Francisco Dungeon**.

Edwards has nearly 10 years of sales and marketing experience in tourism and entertainment; at Merlin, her positions have ranged from management to trade sales and marketing for **Midway Attractions North America** and the **Legoland, Sea Life** and **Madame Tussauds** brands. Prior to her new role, Edwards was marketing manager for the Orlando **Madame Tussauds** and **Sea Life** locations.

**Edwards**

H. Betti Industries, Inc., headquartered in Carlstadt, N.J., has strengthened its leadership team with two executive-level promotions.

Glenn Quaiver has been elevated to chief operating officer. Quaiver will oversee operations for all three company business divisions: **Betson Enterprises**, **Imperial International** and **Betson Imperial Parts**. Additionally, he will be accountable for all operational functions, including inventory management, purchasing, warehousing, human resources, and will be involved in all strategic planning.

**Quaiver**

Stepping into Quaiver's previous role as senior vice president of operations is **Bill Seibert**. A 32-year company veteran, Seibert will be responsible for leading continuous operational improvement projects across all facilities and divisions. He will support new capital projects and innovations focused on driving revenue growth and cost reduction as well as provide operational leadership in analyzing and appraising day-to-day operations.

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The Gravity Group redefines 'turnaround' for coaster in France

AT: B. Derek Shaw

bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

SAINT-PAUL, France — Known for delivering roller coasters that run fast, **The Gravity Group, LLC**, undertook a different kind of technical task for **Parc Saint Paul**: building a ride on a very fast schedule.

The Cincinnati-based company rose to the challenge, completing a 50-foot-tall, wooden-tracked coaster, aptly named **Wood Express**, in less than five months.

"Our engineering team started its work on the ride a few months earlier so that material would start arriving on site as soon as the first foundations were installed," said **Korey Kiepert**, an engineer with The Gravity Group, explaining that the ride's galvanized steel structure was sent to the park prefabricated. "We had to factor the shipping time into our schedule because the project was located overseas."

Wood Express is positioned in the back of the park on a long, narrow site that, at first, the manufacturer thought was flat.

"Once we started stak-



Wood Express was partially prefabricated by The Gravity Group for speedy installation at Parc Saint Paul in Saint-Paul, France. The 50-foot-tall ride features wooden track on a structure of galvanized steel.

COURTESY THE GRAVITY GROUP

ing out the ride, it became apparent that there would be more concrete elevations than we had originally planned," Kiepert said. "We took this as an opportunity and were able to lower some points of the ride, using the changing elevation of the ground to our advantage. The ride has a curve under the brake run where we drop right onto the ground. Crossing under the brake run gives a great 'head chopper' effect, and this is possible because we were able to put the ledgers supporting

the track right on the ground through this curve."

The 37-acre park already had six family-oriented coasters. Wood Express is its first wooden-tracked one.

"Our objective with the new roller coaster was bigger and different from the others," said **Etienne Montecchio**, operations manager for Parc Saint Paul. "The choice of a wooden coaster was the most evident for us."

Park representatives first met with The Gravity Group at **Euro Attractions Show 2013**

in Paris. "We were very surprised by their work in the U.S. on **Roar-O-Saurus** [**Story Land**, Glen, N.H.] and **Wooden Warrior** [**Quassy Amusement Park**, Middlebury, Conn.]," Montecchio said. "We started to think something similar was possible for Parc Saint Paul. It took time for [park owner] **Gilles Campion** to be ready to make the decision, which represents a big investment for a company of our size."

Montecchio feels the new ride is a perfect fit for Parc Saint Paul, which opened in

1984 and welcomes 370,000 guests each season.

"Wood Express represents a new step in our park's development," he said. "We're really happy to have found an opportunity with The Gravity Group and very happy with the final result."

"It's clearly our park's biggest ride, and we are very proud of it. We're so happy to see young children from around five, six years old enjoying their first 'big ride' with their parents."

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Dollywood readying new \$37M family attractions area for 2019

AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. — The woods of **Dollywood** will be getting a bit wilder in 2019 when the theme park unveils an entirely new land.

Currently under construction at a cost of \$37 million, the area, called Wildwood Grove, will feature 11 family-oriented attractions. It represents the largest single capital investment in the destination's 32-year history.

The project was announced by entertainer-entrepreneur **Dolly Parton** and park representatives during a performance-laced stage presentation on Aug. 3. It is part of a commitment by **The Dollywood Co.**, made in 2013, to invest \$300 million in the Pigeon Forge-area attractions market over a 10-year period.

Parton described Wildwood Grove as an extension of the childhood imagination she developed growing up in the region's Great Smoky Mountains.

"I'd pretend that the frogs and butterflies were my friends," she said. "I'd imagine what it'd be like to fly with

a dragonfly or follow a bear family through the woods.... I believe everyone has a song in their heart that needs to be set free. Wildwood Grove will be a place where families can learn together about what their heart song truly is."

Craig Ross, president of The Dollywood Co., echoed Parton's sentiments.

"[Wildwood Grove] continues our commitment to provide guests a variety of unique experiences and attractions that every visitor can enjoy," he said. "We've also incorporated many of their requests for certain amenities... more charging stations, a climate-controlled indoor space for play, larger respite locations, additional play areas which are more inclusive for everyone, and more entertainment opportunities."

Among other attractions, Wildwood Grove will have six rides:

- **The Dragonflyer** — This suspended roller coaster lets guests soar with a dragonfly as it dips and darts through the landscape (**Vekoma**).

- **Black Bear Trail** — Guests hitch along with "friendly bears" for a ride through the animals' natural habitat (**Mettalbau**).



The largest single capital investment in Dollywood's history, Wildwood Grove will offer 11 rides and experiences inspired by Dolly Parton's childhood imagination. COURTESY DOLLYWOOD

- **Sycamore Swing** — Passengers board a "leaf boat" that swings back and forth just like a leaf falling from a giant sycamore tree (**Zamperla**).

- **Treetop Tower** — This ride gives guests, seated in giant acorns, a lofty view of Wildwood Grove as it spins and soars nearly 40 feet in the air (**Zamperla**).

- **The Mad Mockingbird** — Tennessee's state bird, the mockingbird, gives visitors a lift as it flies in a high-speed circle around a tall "tree." Riders control their experience by moving



a sail (**Larson**).

- **Frogs and Fireflies** — This flat ride features frogs hopping up and down as they chase each other around the lily pad trying to catch fireflies (**Zamperla**).

Wildwood Grove's fea-

tured dining establishment, **Till & Harvest**, will offer Southwest fresh favorites, including burritos and salads from the park's award-winning food service team.

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A view from the top...

Patty Beazley is a partner in two companies: When Pigs Fly, LLC, and International Ride Training, LLC. When Pigs Fly, incorporated in 2002, provides service and safety programming to clients in the attractions and hospitality industries worldwide. International Ride Training, incorporated in 2013, presents a three-day instructor training course called International Ride Operator Certification that provides train-the-trainer instruction focusing on consistency in operator performance.

Beazley co-founded the enterprises with Cindee Huddy; this past summer, in a move that reflects their companies' growth, they brought on a third partner, Erik Beard, an attorney and 25-year amusement industry veteran.

Accomplishments and affiliations...

- **Member, International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA)**
- **Member, American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM)**
- **Member, American Industry of Manufacturers and Suppliers International (AIMS)**
- **Education Chair / Seminar Director, AIMS, 2006-2014**
- **Member, New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (NEAAPA)**
- **Author, various publications**

Helping people to be their best

NASHVILLE, Tenn.— Patty Beazley feels she is living the life she was meant to live. As a partner in two companies she co-founded, When Pigs Fly, LLC, and International Ride Training, LLC (IRT), she is able to fulfill her desire to both teach and remain in the amusement industry, where she has been for 41 years.

Beazley began her career in 1977 at age 16, when she secured seasonal employment at Opryland USA, the now-shuttered theme park in Nashville. Her stint there wound up lasting until 1998.

Opryland carried her through high school and college. She even worked there seasonally after graduating from the University of Tennessee in 1983 with a bachelor's degree in psychology, and later while working toward her master's degree in counseling psychology, which she earned in 1985.

She continued at the park seasonally while teaching psychology classes and working as a guidance counselor in secondary and post-secondary Nashville schools.

"I grew up in Opryland's parking lot," Beazley said. "If you were out at the park during that time, I might have been the one taking your money to park or giving you a ride on the tram to the gates. I loved it."

Opryland's management finally pulled her out of the lot and into the park, where she became a supervisor in

rides. It was the highest position a seasonal employee could obtain.

"I had to learn my rides, though," she said. "One day I would be running the train and the next day I might be on the roller coaster. The day after that I might be running a kiddie ride. It was great fun."

Beazley was not the type to sit back while operations workers or maintenance workers walked off to do some type of ride repair or adjustment. She followed them and asked questions, and they repaid her interest.

"The mentorship there was great," she said. "There were always people to show me how to do things and do them right. They wanted me to succeed, which made me want to be the best I could be."

Beazley successfully applied for permanent work with Opryland in 1989. By the time the park closed for good at the end of 1997, she had made her way to the top as director of operations, supervising between 500 and 600 employees. She was one of only two females in that department; the other was her manager.

Beazley took a little sabbatical after the park closed. "I'm pretty sure that first summer I was in the pool drinking a beer on July 4th," she said. "I hadn't been off for a July 4th in a very long time."

Later that summer, a friend told her that the new Nashville Shores water park was short on staff. She followed up on

Patty Beazley

Partner

When Pigs Fly, LLC

International Ride Training, LLC
Nashville, Tenn.



the lead and landed a position there in guest relations.

"One day, someone said they needed a person at the top of the slide," Beazley recalled. "I said I'd go to the top of the slide and give them directions and work on my tan a little."

While working the top of the slide, she was noticed by management. After a couple of interviews, Beazley became the general manager of Nashville Shores.

"I learned so much," she said. "I was over maintenance, housekeeping and food and beverage. I had to learn aquatics."

In 2001, she reconnected with Cindee Huddy, who had interned under Beazley at Opryland. By this time, Huddy was a private consultant in the industry, and she had been hired by Libertyland in Memphis to conduct customer service classes for mostly inner-city kids who were going to work in the park.

Because of the large number of students, Huddy decided that she needed some help and turned to Beazley. The two worked well together as they conducted three days of successful classes.

On the return home to Nashville, they began forming their first company, When Pigs Fly, incorporated in 2002. Serving the attractions and hospitality industries, the company conducts audits to measure employee performance, and it has formulated manuals and policies in these areas.

During the early years of When Pigs Fly, the duo found a lack of consistency from state to state and park to park in the training of young employees in basic life skills, such as the importance of being at work on time. In 2013, this recognition led the them to establish their second company, IRT, under which they conduct an instructor training school, International Ride Operator Certification.

"I have always just wanted to help people be the best they can be," Beazley said. "I am always trying to get young people to bring the crane to the top, whether they are working in the amusement industry or whether they leave."

"No matter where you are or what you are doing, you have to pick up your boots and put them on."

—Pam Sherborne

Hilton Garden Inn part of \$60M sports complex

Something new near Six Flags Great Adventure: hotel rooms

JACKSON, N.J. — There's long been a dearth of accommodations in the immediate vicinity of **Six Flags Great Adventure**, the Garden State's sprawling theme park and animal safari, now in its 44th year of operation.

That could change by 2020, when a new sports / entertainment complex called **Adventure Crossing** is aiming to open on a 150-acre site next

to the park.

Plans for the all-season complex call for an approximately three-acre, nearly 90-foot-tall inflatable dome containing several sports fields and game courts, plus a laser tag arena. The developer, **Adventure Crossing Entertainment**, claims to have all approvals needed to proceed with the almost \$60 million project, which includes an

extended-stay **Hilton Garden Inn**.

Other features of the complex are a 10,000-square-foot banquet hall and a 12,000-square-foot mezzanine suitable for workout classes and other activities overlooking the playing area. The

developer is hoping to attract sports camps affiliated with the **National Football League** and **National Basketball Association**, as well as a variety of athletic tournaments, to the facility.

The site, which reportedly includes land acquired

from Six Flags (the theme park company is not involved in the project), is large enough to accommodate additional development, such as restaurants and retail.

The groundbreaking took place in late June.

—Dean Lamanna

Adventure Crossing, a complex with facilities for sports, laser tag and other forms of recreation, plus an extended-stay hotel, is being developed adjacent to Six Flags Great Adventure.

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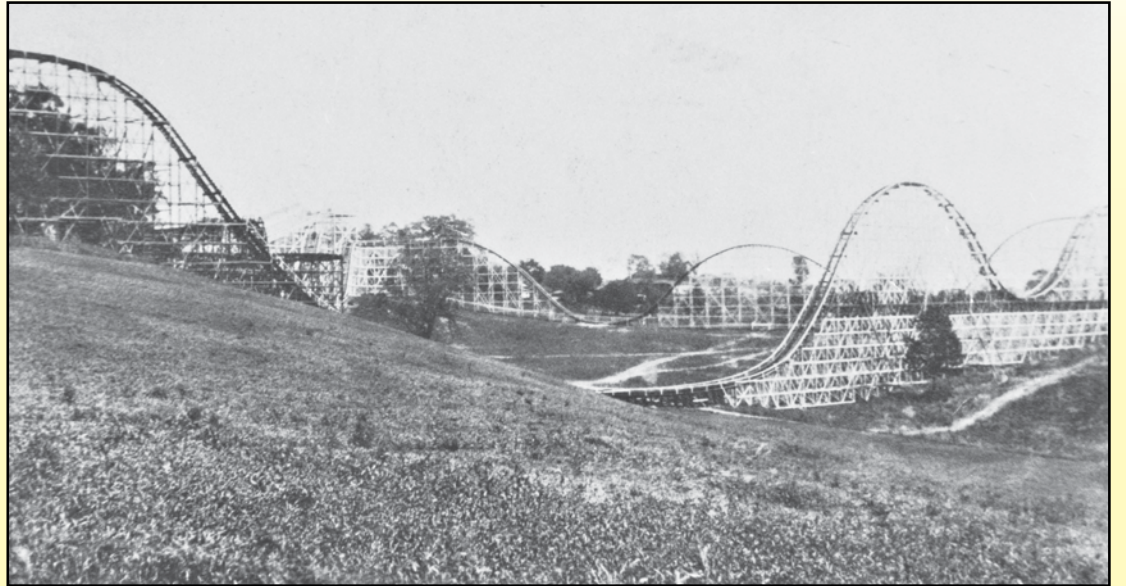
This space provided courtesy of Amusement Today, a corporate partner of the National Roller Coaster Museum & Archives



A rare view inside Marco Polo Park, just north of Daytona Beach, Fla., from the museum's newly acquired Leisure and Recreation Concepts (LARC) collection. The park, which covered the legendary Far East travels of the Italian trader and explorer, opened in December 1970. The image depicts the construction of the Von Roll Skyway attraction in early 1973 with the new Bamboo Chute (an Arrow Log Flume) in the background, under the management of LARC. Regrettably Marco Polo Park, even under new ownership in 1975, succumbed to competition from the newly opened Walt Disney World, and close by 1976. Today, the Plantation Bay Golf and Country Club occupies the property.

—LARC Collection

FROM THE ARCHIVES COLLECTION



1927:

From B. Derek Shaw, courtesy of the John Caruthers collection, we find this image of the Cyclone at Central Park in Rittersville (Allentown), Pa. Opened in May 1927, it was at the time one of the largest roller coasters ever built in the U.S. The ride reportedly contained a 120-foot drop, and its single track served as a perimeter enclosure to a large triangular lawn used for outdoor events. Fire damaged the coaster in 1935; it reopened the next season as the Skyclone. It operated until 1951, when the park closed, mainly attributed to competition from nearby Dorney Park.

—Richard W. Munch

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Silver Dollar City among TripAdvisor's 'Top 25 Amusement Parks in World'

BRANSON, Mo. — **Silver Dollar City**, host of *Amusement Today's* 2018 **Golden Ticket Awards** Sept. 7-8, has received an international honor of its own from online travel authority **TripAdvisor**.

The 1880s-style theme park ranks among the world's top 25 amusement parks, according to the website — landing in the 16th position. The rankings were based on reviews posted by actual parkgoers on TripAdvisor during the last 12 months.

Silver Dollar City ranks even higher, in the 11th position, among parks in America.

"Being among the best in the world is one grand honor," said **Brad Thomas**, president of **Silver Dollar City Attractions**. "However, drilling down and really looking

at the list, Silver Dollar City is the number-one 'gated amusement park' in the United States outside of California and Florida. That is a 'Wow!'"

Another accolade recently enjoyed by Silver Dollar City was *USA Today's* Best Theme Park Holiday Event. It is on a shortlist of parks globally to have received the **Applause Award** for Excellence in

Theming, an international honor presented by **Liseberg**, the famous theme park in Gothenburg, Sweden.

"In this industry, there are many world-class parks with rides and amusements," said Thomas. "To be ranked so high based on TripAdvisor reviews by visitors is, frankly, a stunning honor. It's humbling."

•silverdollarcity.com

Silver Dollar City, home of **Time Traveler**, a record-breaking new spinning roller coaster, has earned global recognition from online travel authority **TripAdvisor**.

COURTESY
SILVER DOLLAR CITY



NJAA to hold golf benefit for Give Kids the World Village

SEASIDE HEIGHTS, N.J. — Members of the **New Jersey Amusement Association** (NJAA) are practicing their swing for a yearly golfing and charity event.

The **NJAA 21st Annual Fritz Rolle Legacy Golf Outing** is set to tee off Sept. 18 at **Sea Oaks Golf Club** in Little Egg Harbor, N.J.

The late **Frederick J. "Fritz" Rolle III**, an amusement businessman who served on NJAA's board of directors for more than 30 years and as the organization's president in 1992-93, put together the first NJAA golfing event in 1997 to benefit the nonprofit **Give Kids the World** (GKTW). The outing became an annual event that he co-chaired for 16 years.

To date, NJAA has raised more than \$90,000 for GKTW through the event, thanks to Rolle's passion for helping children and their families so they could experience joyful moments making memories. GKTW operates **Give Kids the World Village** — a wish-fulfilling, 70-acre retreat in Kissimmee, Fla., for children with life-threatening illnesses and their families.

Prizes will be awarded for the contest on the greens. A \$200-per-person entry fee includes lunch, a cocktail hour and the dinner/awards presentation. For complete information, visit njamusements.com.

2018 Event Itinerary

Friday, September 7

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

Saturday, September 8

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



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SAFETY, MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

► Ohio's Columbus Zoo gets 'sound check' — page 56 / Upgrades for Six Flags Fiesta Texas — page 59

Legoland Florida expands services for guests with disabilities

AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

WINTER HAVEN, Fla. — Since its opening in 2011, **Legoland Florida Resort** has worked to ensure that its facilities are as inclusive as possible for guests with a wide range of physical and cognitive disabilities, as well as food allergies and dietary restrictions.

More recently, the park has launched a variety of services and initiatives to assist guests with autism spectrum disorders and their caregivers. These efforts are ongoing, and they have been expanded to include the following:



- Specially equipped spaces in the theme park's Annual Pass, First Aid and Baby Care facilities that serve as designated "quiet rooms," where guests on the autism spectrum and their families can take a break.

- Complimentary services such as noise-canceling headphones, weighted blankets, squishy toys and Lego building tables.

- "Social stories," created by the Legoland Training & Development team, that offer an illustrated, step-by-step walk through every theme park ride and show so that guests won't be surprised by periods of darkness, loud noises, bright lights or other elements that can be frightening or overwhelming. (These are available for review at Guest Services.)

All newly hired resort

employees receive specialized training to equip them with skills enabling effective interaction with guests on the autism spectrum, as well as their families or caregivers.

For guests with food allergies or dietary restrictions, the park offers several information sources:

- Guests already onsite can consult Guest Services and / or pick up free park maps available throughout the resort. On the back of the map, under "Time to Eat," there is a comprehensive guide to what is served at each dining location. (Maps are available in English, Spanish and Portuguese.)

- All dining locations, including restaurants and outdoor carts, have binders with ingredients of every menu item. Food location managers and chefs are happy to discuss any special dietary needs with guests during their visit — just ask.

- Legoland Florida's website contains a dietary guide, in printable PDF form, that lists dining locations serving items that are free of gluten, dairy, soy, eggs and peanuts. It also indicates availability of vegetarian and vegan items.

- The resort's Food & Beverage team welcomes questions from guests submitted to llf-food@legoland.com, ideally at least a week before they arrive.

For guests with mobility challenges, or those using wheelchairs, the park offers a no-cost Hero Pass that allows a Legoland guest and one helper expedited access to popular park attractions through the Hero Pass entrance. The rest of the



Legoland Florida Resort offers services for guests with autism spectrum disorders, including expedited-access ride passes, noise-canceling headphones and "quiet rooms." In recognition of World Autism Day on April 2 each year, the park illuminates its Grand Carousel in blue.
COURTESY LEGOLAND FLORIDA RESORT

guest's party will receive a reservation to return together at the designated time. The Hero Pass is offered at the discretion of Legoland staff as a courtesy.

A no-cost Blue Hero Pass is offered specifically for guests on the autism spectrum and allows the guest's entire group expedited access to popular attractions.

Both Hero Pass types are available from Guest Services under the blue awning near the theme park's exit.

To make the most of a visit and get answers to questions pre-arrival, guests are encouraged to visit the "Planning Your Visit" / "Special Situations" section of the resort's website.



It provides a wealth of trip-planning information, including, in printable PDF form, the comprehensive Guide for Guests with Disabilities. The guide lists ride-by-ride safety requirements, including those for Legoland Water Park, and outlines the accessibility fea-

tures of the resort's accommodations for overnight stays.

While visiting the website's "Special Situations" page, look for the link to the ADA form, which can be used to communicate with Guest Services before arriving.

• legoland.com/florida

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Exhibiting at EAS 2018 in Amsterdam

TÜV SÜD provides safety services for amusement rides, parks

MUNICH, Germany — TÜV SÜD, a leading technical service provider of testing and product certification, inspection, auditing and system certification, as well as training solutions, works to improve safety for amusement parks, water parks and amusement rides.



The company will showcase its services at **Euro Attractions Show 2018 (EAS)** in Amsterdam Sept. 25-27. It will focus on retrofit measures for existing amusement rides according to EN 13814 (**European Standards**), covering the safety of water and amusement parks and the corresponding safety check.

TÜV SÜD will inform visitors about its “Retrofit EN 13814” program, which offers park operators support in the retrofitting of existing amusement rides to meet the standard’s requirements. The company performs about 2,000 inspections internationally each year, providing services to amusement ride manufacturers and operators

along the entire production chain — from consultancy during purchasing or project design to review of technical documentation, quality assurance during production, initial approval and periodic inspection of the ride.

“Our services contribute significantly to the safety of water and amusement parks worldwide,” said **Stefan Kasper**, head of TÜV SÜD’s amusement rides department. “This benefits manufacturers and managers, but above all the visitors of the parks.”

Through its new “Safety Check for Adventure Pools and Water Parks” program, TÜV SÜD supports facil-



At EAS, TÜV SÜD will inform visitors about its “Retrofit EN 13814” program, which offers park operators support in the retrofitting of existing amusement rides to meet the safety standard’s requirements. COURTESY TÜV SÜD

ity managers in meeting increasingly strict safety requirements. For this purpose, TÜV SÜD has worked with **Corporate Momentum, GmbH**, of Dreieich, Germany, to develop a list of criteria ranging from the testing of individual waterslides according to EN 1069 to the testing of entire water parks

according to EN 15288, and other relevant directives. The program’s modular structure enables the process to provide solutions to a wide variety of demands made by operators of pools and parks of all sizes.

Beyond solutions, TÜV SÜD is dedicated to providing tangible economic value

by optimizing operations and managing risks for customers while enabling them to access global markets.

TÜV SÜD, founded in 1866, is represented by about 24,000 employees across more than 1,000 locations. Visit the company’s website for more information.

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Columbus Zoo tames 'wild' audio network

Audinate technology organizes, secures attraction's systems

AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

POWELL, Ohio — With a 580-acre campus, the **Columbus Zoo and Aquarium** is more than just home to 10,000 animal species. Also featuring a water park, a golf course and various dining options, it welcomes nearly 2.5 million visitors annually.

With the attraction's expansion over the years, different audio systems by different designers and contractors were deployed to support a variety of background music and public-address systems. This resulted in an inefficient and ineffective system with over 900 unintegrated audio points, very low security, minimal control capabilities and no centralized network management.

With so many devices, cross-points and administrators involved in controlling the audio, the zoo needed a system to manage its hardware in an efficient and secure manner.

The zoo turned to **Audinate**, a leading provider of audio solutions for the audiovisual (AV) industry — utilizing Dante AV networking technology to unify and enable the more than 300 speakers, 50 amplifiers, 50 wireless microphones and 20 digital processors from multiple vendors already installed throughout the property.

The Dante system operates over a single, standard Internet Protocol (IP) network. Using nothing more than an Ethernet cable, it replaces traditional analogue audio cables by transmitting synchronized audio signals



across large distances to multiple locations simultaneously.

Despite the significant gains the zoo realized by moving to a Dante AV network, some challenges remained. Its next step was to deploy Audinate's Dante Domain Manager network management software, which organizes and categorizes audio streams by room, building and site. This allowed the zoo not only to unify its systems, but to control the audio streams and manage who has access to the network.

"We have a strong community that we strive to support," said **Gregg Oosterbaan**, the Columbus Zoo's vice president of technology strategy. "Whether that's through public address systems, special events or large corporate outings, keeping our technology and audio systems on the forefront of performance is important."

"The beauty of Dante Domain Manager is that we have a core standard set of systems now that are all controlled and communicate over our existing network infrastructure. And because it's all IP-connected, we can continue to add new systems to our Dante system in a clean and simple way."

Dante Domain Manager also brings user authentication, audit capabilities and role-based security to audio networks. It integrates seamlessly into any Dante-enabled prod-

uct to provide the interoperability, flexibility and scalability to design and manage an enterprise-scaled AV system.

The zoo uses Dante Domain Manager's suite of information technology (IT)-focused tools to keep its network secure and free of external — and even internal — threats and changes. With its previous, unsecured system, it became too easy for unwanted changes to be made, and accidents occurred. Dante Domain Manager combats these unwanted changes and puts all control in the hands of the network administrator — a key tool for the zoo, which has three employees working with the software.

"Security is extremely important in today's world," Oosterbaan said. "Regardless of the event or location, with Dante Domain Manager, we can control the streams and control who has access."

Josh Rush, senior vice president of marketing and products for Audinate, which is headquartered in Australia and has regional offices in Portland, Ore., as well as in the U.K. and Hong Kong, said the Dante setup delivers "an excellent customer experience — and also the efficiency and peace of mind that the Columbus Zoo's management requires." The layering of Dante Domain Manager over the network, he added, provides even higher levels of IT-grade administration, security and system control.

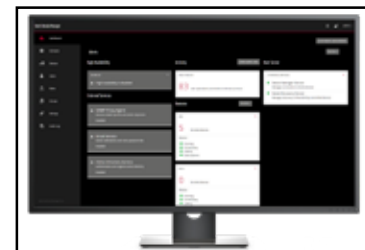
"This is a showcase deployment we're very proud of," Rush said. "It demonstrates how a dynamic networked audio system can deliver an immersive, flexible audio experience for the amusement industry."

• audinate.com



Unifying and securing a patchwork of audio systems across its 580-acre campus was a challenge for the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium. It found the solution in Audinate's Dante AV networking technology and Dante Domain Manager software.

COURTESY GRAHM S. JONES/COLUMBUS ZOO AND AQUARIUM; AUDINATE





NEWS & NOTES

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Save lives with safety education and training

With the world watching through the lens of social media and extensive mainstream media coverage, amusement industry safety, employee training and education is the best way to ensure attractions are equipped to avoid and prevent accidents. The AIMS Safety Seminar is a **once a year opportunity** to learn from industry experts in a weeklong educational setting. What sets AIMS apart from other programs is the **unique** opportunity students have to customize their experience by choosing from approximately 200 different classes.

Everyone responsible for the care and safety of amusement industry guests will benefit by attending the Safety Seminar in **Galveston, Texas**, Jan. 13-18, 2019. Many classes include hands-on training at Galveston's Pleasure Pier. A multi-dimensional incident active shooter simulation will be incorporated and an FEC track of classes has been added to this year's offerings.

The Safety Seminar is for Suppliers too...
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suppliers in the amusement industry attend the AIMS Safety Seminar to learn about the latest issues and practices in safety and security. They know they'll benefit by learning from the industry's top experts and gain valuable information and feedback from people who maintain and operate their products and services on a daily basis.

Early **registration** for the 2019 AIMS Safety Seminar at \$595 is now open and full class selection will be available in October. Register at www.aimsintl.org where you can also book your **hotel** room at the Galveston Hilton at the special AIMS rate of \$115 per night. Certification testing is offered in Maintenance, Operations, Aquatics, and Ride Inspection.

AIMS at industry events

We welcome the opportunity to meet colleagues at numerous industry events that take place during the fall season. You'll find a strong AIMS presence at the **Euro Attractions Show** in Amsterdam and the **ASTM** meeting in San

Diego, California, both in October. Make sure to stop by the **AIMS International booth #4527** during the **IAAPA Attractions Expo** in Orlando, Nov. 13-16.

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Knoebels gets personal with ad push

ELYSBURG, Pa. — This season, **Knoebels Amusement Resort** has been running an integrated brand campaign designed to increase attendance and position the park as “the family-friendliest place on the planet!”

“We know that Knoebels is a family tradition for our avid fans, not just a fun place to get away for the day or weekend,” said **Mary Frances Helwig**, park director of marketing and advertising. “We wanted a campaign that communicated our nostalgic value to newcomers and fans alike.”

To achieve the campaign’s goals, Knoebels enlisted the help of **Anderson Group**, an award-winning marketing agency based in Sinking Spring, Pa., and **Make Films** of Lancaster to produce TV spots, radio spots, a full-page print ad and social media videos targeting families, day trippers and weekenders. Each campaign component tapped into the nostalgia of the Knoebels experience, as well as the memories and emotional bonds family members can make at the resort.

“To shoot video for this campaign, we brought real families to Knoebels instead of actors,” said **Jeff Phillips**, creative director for Anderson Group. “The chance to capture real families making memories at Knoebels really resonated with us.”



Knoebels Amusement Resort’s 2018 ad campaign, created by Anderson Group and Make Films, has included print and video imagery featuring real families to convey its message of indelible memory-making. COURTESY ANDERSON GROUP



In addition to spreading the word about Knoebels to those unfamiliar with it, the campaign has assured park loyalists that the resort is committed to maintaining the unique qualities guests have

grown to love.

The park, said Helwig, was confident that the new campaign has convinced “newcomers to make Knoebels a new family tradition, and fans to keep coming back.”

—Dean Lamanna

ASTM International standards revised

W. CONSHOHOCKEN, Pa. — In mid-July, **ASTM International** announced two revisions to an amusement ride standard which could help support safety efforts in the amusement ride community. Members of the ASTM International committee on amusement rides and devices, identified as F24, developed new requirements related to non-destructive testing inspections. The group also changed the standard from a guide to a practice.

The revised practice for auditing amusement rides and devices, to be published as F2974-18, now includes language on requirements around inspector qualifications needed prior to doing non-destructive testing, including training and qualification records, written practices / procedures and equipment calibration



records.

“We wanted to provide more instructions for auditors to follow when examining the requirements of inspectors doing the non-destructive testing,” explained **Jeff Borba**, owner of Las Vegas-based **Precisioneering** and chair of the three “evolution task groups” created by the committee last October to identify areas of need for new or revised standards. Their efforts were influenced by new incident data, emerging technologies and more.

The standard was also

revised from a guide to a practice to match other existing committee standards. A guide provides information or a series of options but does not recommend a specific course of action, whereas a practice provides instruction for performing specific operations.

“This was the only committee standard that was a guide, and by changing it to a practice, we think the standard now carries more weight,” Borba said.

The revisions will be the first published. According to Borba, several more updates are underway that could address corrosion, welding requirements and visual acuity for inspectors.

Visit ASTM International’s website for more information and an amusement ride safety fact sheet.

•astm.org

Carousel finds third location, dark ride gets new theme

New-for-2018 enhancements continue all year at Six Flags Fiesta Texas

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — The sound of band organ music has returned to **Six Flags Fiesta Texas**. In a revamp of the park's Spassburg section, the German-themed carousel has returned home. When Fiesta Texas opened in 1992, Spassburg featured the carousel near a mosaic-tiled fountain. An expansion several years later relocated the ride to the Rockville area of the park. With the addition of Wonder Woman Golden Lasso Coaster (see *Amusement Today*, June 2018), a gift shop at the ride's exit once again necessitated a move for the carousel. This time appears to be the right spot.

One of less than ten carousels built by **Morgan Manufacturing**, the German-themed carousel sported 12 scenes from Texas when created for the park. Located next to the park's Sangerfest Hall, it is



A popular Fourth of July moment (above left) has made its way into a new summer street show: "Rockville Block Party." This Morgan carousel (above right) now finds its third home, once again returning to the Spassburg section of the park. Before and after views (right) of the area's lampposts.

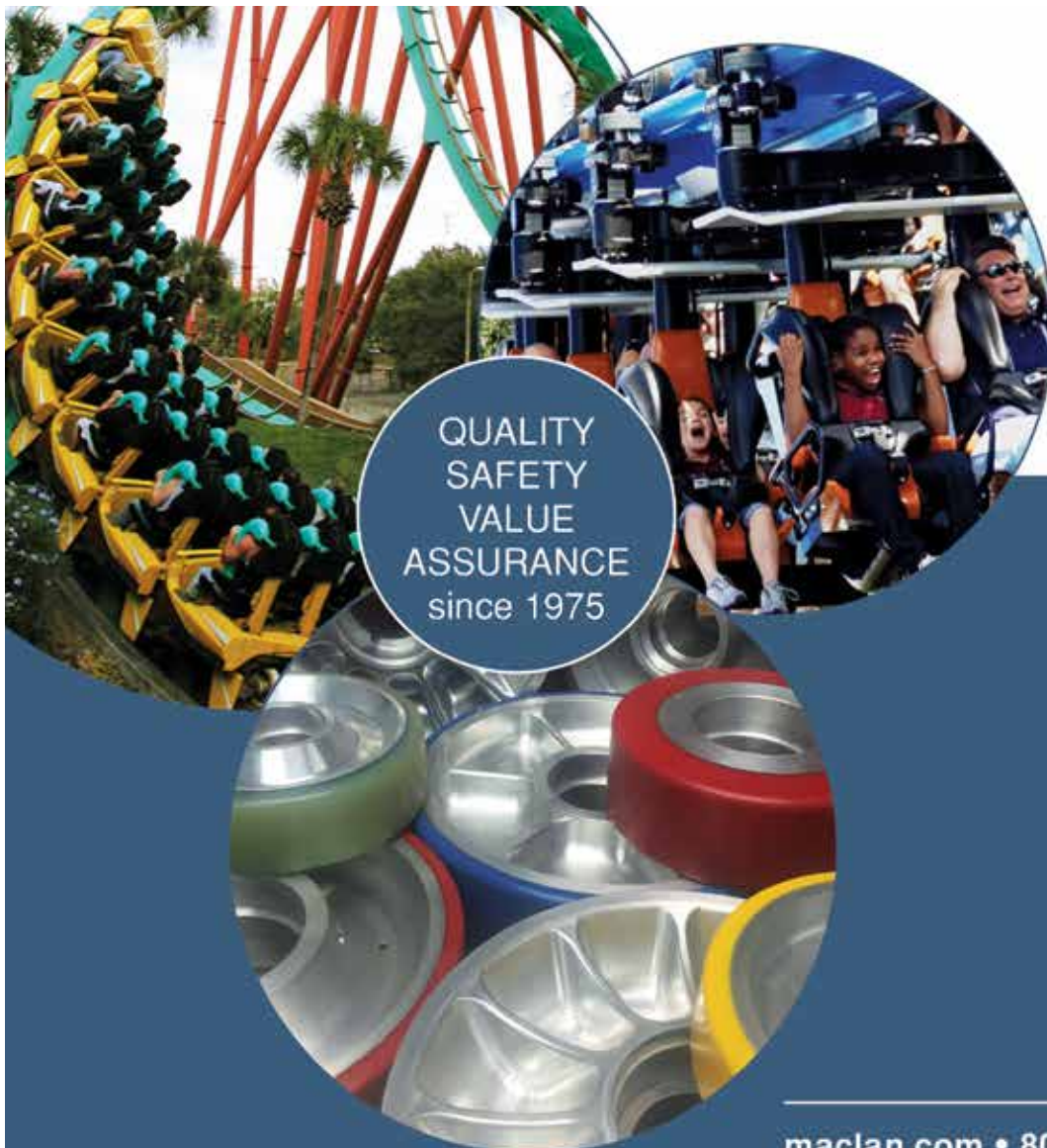
AT/TIM BALDWIN

now positioned in what was formally an underused beer garden. In the past, that area never attracted guests, even on the busiest days. Now those shade structures have been completely repainted and used as the ride's entrance and queue house.

The project served as a catalyst for enhancements to the area.

Draped banners and fresh paint have accented the buildings. Lamp posts have now received a fresh, multi-

► See **SIX FLAGS**, page 60



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►SIX FLAGS

Continued from page 59

colored treatment that has left park management pondering as to why they had never done the special touch in the past. A clock from the original years was discovered, refurbished and once again graces the midway.

The carousel has been fully restored with new LED

lighting, freshly painted structure, and new top canvas. Every menagerie animal has been repainted and detailed. It is just one example of Fiesta Texas using its resources to add new things throughout the season.

Following a successful July 4th Fest, the park observed that the "foam party" was exceptionally popular. Capitalizing on that

success, one performance of the new Rockville show was reworked to be an outdoor street experience engaging visitors to dance along with performers and join in under a shower of foam.

As *Amusement Today* goes to press, Fiesta Texas is preparing a Labor Day debut of the park's dark ride. Pirates of the Deep Sea is a reworking of the Sally dark ride

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The recently discovered clock has been restored and returned to the midway. AT/TIM BALDWIN

installed at the park in 2002. Formerly themed to Scooby-Doo, the attraction was the lone remainder of using the licensed cartoon brand, and Six Flags made the business decision to not continue the licensing agreement. Knowing that a dark ride was a vital part of the park, management pushed to not just shut the doors on the attraction, but to re-invent it as something new. Park research led to the choice of a pirates theme.

Pirates of the Deep Sea was developed and

designed in-house by Six Flags Fiesta Texas. Some sets were contracted out to theatrical companies, such as one scene where riders will "sail" between two warring ships between cannon fire. The previous ride vehicles now feature a ship overlay to make for a perfect fit for the new attraction. Management has added more bump doors to help keep scenes separate and are excited about the substantial upgrade to the sound system which they feel will dramatically enhance the ride experience.

Oaks Amusement Park faces high temperatures head on

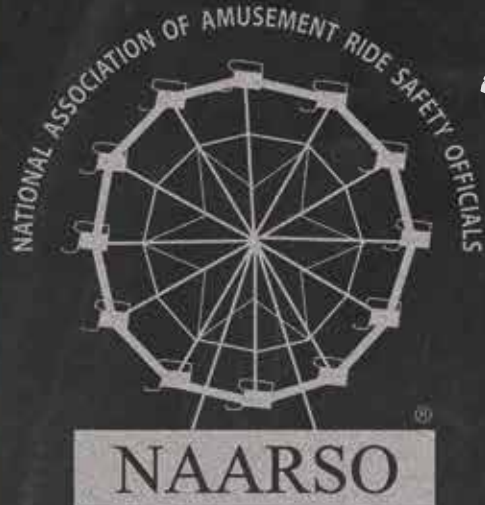
PORTLAND, Ore. — Oregon did not escape the record high temperatures that were seen around the U.S., and world, this summer. When heat waves settled in, one popular outdoor business in the state, **Oaks Amusement Park**, took steps to mitigate their impact on patrons.

To help cool off the metal seating on some of its rides, the park added cushioning or surface covers where they did not affect general safety. Operators cooled off other ride seats by wiping them down with rags.

Mary Beth Coffey, manager of Oaks, told television station KATU-2 that guest safety is paramount.

"When people come to an outdoor facility like this, one of the things they worry about is heat for their kids," she said. "The seats can get hot ... and the ride operators will watch, and if it's too hot, we will close them down."

Water misters and shade-producing trees are other cooling elements at Oaks. In addition, the park's first-aid station is equipped to handle heat-exhausted guests and its roller rink can serve as a cooling station for those seeking relief.



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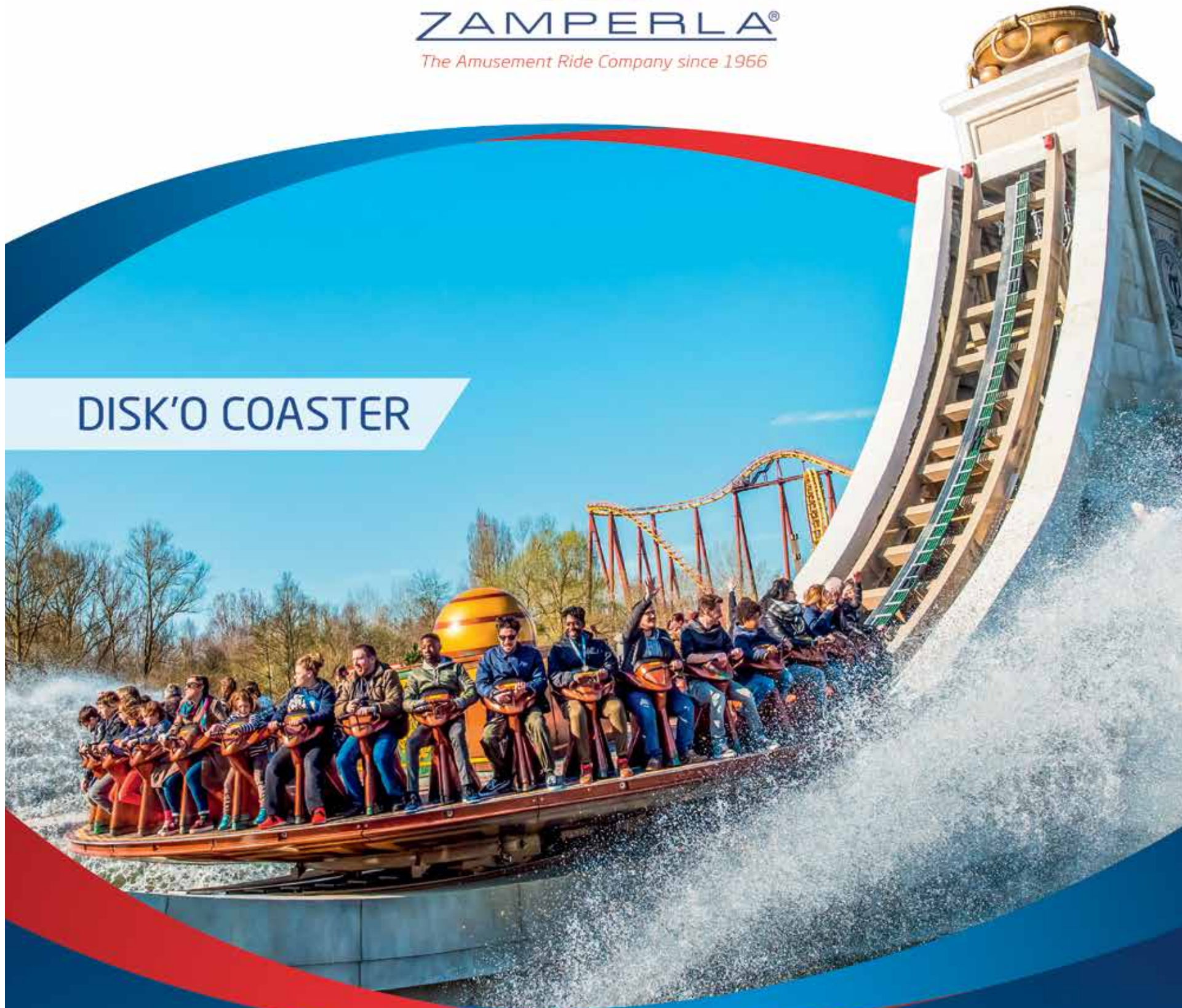
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