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## Golden Ticket Awards registrations due; hotel deadline passes

NEW YORK CITY, N.Y. — Amusement industry professionals planning to attend the 2015 Golden Ticket Awards in New York City, Sept. 11 and 12, are reminded to get their registration and hotel reservations in immediately.

The cutoff date to receive the 2015 Golden Ticket Awards discounted room rate at the Park Lane Hotel at Central Park is August 21, 2015. Event online registration will continue through Sept. 2, 2015.

For hotel booking information or for event registration please go to: [www.GoldenTicketAwards.com](http://www.GoldenTicketAwards.com). For more information on the schedule of events, see pages 26-27.

This is the 18th year for the Golden Ticket Awards, which are presented to the "Best of the Best" in the amusement industry and are calculated from an international poll conducted by *Amusement Today*. Complete results of the 2015 survey will be posted at [www.amusementtoday.com](http://www.amusementtoday.com) following the conclusion of the Saturday, Sept. 12, awards ceremony.

## Unique Utah diving coaster debuts

# Cannibal emerges from Lagoon, hunts thrill-seekers

AT: Dean Lamanna  
[dlamanna@amusementtoday.com](mailto:dlamanna@amusementtoday.com)

FARMINGTON, Utah — The beast may have missed half the summer, but after seven years of development encompassing three years of construction, Lagoon, the historic amusement park in northern Utah, finally uncaged its wildly anticipated diving coaster, Cannibal, in early July.

The park's 10th roller coaster, Cannibal boasts a vertical lift inside a 208-foot-tall tower with a nearly inverted 116-degree major first drop, an underground tunnel and three inversions — including an Immelmann-style loop (capping out at 140

feet) and a diving loop — along 2,735 feet of track. The ride, lasting two and a half minutes, achieves a top speed of 70 mph and pulls as much as 4.2 Gs.

Cannibal is Lagoon's latest in-house coaster design effort since the installation of BomBora, a surfing-themed steel family ride, in 2011. It also represents the park's second collaboration with ART Engineering GmbH of Oberried, Germany.

Following an extended period of tweaking and sandbag testing that carried well past the park's 2015 season opening in late March — a delay that fueled all manner of parkgoer and local media speculation —

Cannibal sprang to life during the July 4th holiday weekend. Immediately, thrill ride superlatives like "outrageous" and "super-scary" were flying and dramatic front seat POV footage appeared online.

For Lagoon enthusiasts who'd grown impatient for the promise that had been sprouting — and then sprawling — in the park's North Midway section for so long, the wait was truly over.

Lagoon president David Freed, still catching his breath from the marathon that was Cannibal's conception and realization, told *Amusement Today* that he's probably the

► See LAGOON, page 4



After plunging down its way-beyond-vertical, 116-degree first drop (lower right, counterclockwise), Cannibal steals riders' collective breath with several soaring loops and eventually "exhales" with a heartline roll. The coaster opened July 2.

COURTESY LAGOON



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# NEWSTALK

**EDITORIAL:** Gary Slade, [gslade@amusementtoday.com](mailto:gslade@amusementtoday.com)

## Back of the house



Slade

Ed Hart, the man behind the successful rebirth of Kentucky Kingdom for the second time, enjoyed something this year that was not possible when he reopened the park in 2014: returning employees.

Ed was quick to point out, during a recent visit by AT, the challenges any new park must face when recruiting and training an entirely new staff.

During the job fairs, interviews, hiring and training, Hart was not happy with one park detail, and it wasn't the newly hired employees. It was the way the park presented its back of the house to employees and the lack of proper space and facilities to properly train/test them.

Guests at Kentucky Kingdom this year enjoyed eight additional rides to choose from: four new and four existing non-operating rides that were refurbished and ready once again for the thrill-seekers.

Park employees also got something new this year — a new 17,200 square foot two-story Operations and Warehouse building, adjacent to the park's 3-D Theater building, now houses Ride Operations, Audit, Cash Control, Food Service, Games & Merchandise, Human Resources, I.T., employee lockers and warehousing. Wide, open, colorful offices and meeting rooms now greet employees as they get their daily assignments and/or gather for meetings or testing. It's a modern office building-like setting for the young professionals being sent out into the park to represent the two-year-old Kentucky Kingdom brand.

Ed didn't stop there. At the back of the park, behind the parks river rapids ride along a service road, he built a new 11,500 square foot Technical Services Building to serve ride repair and maintenance, plumbing, electrical, carpentry and the aquatics teams. Department offices, meeting rooms and more are also located here.

Many times we see older parks that do not invest in their employee work areas to give them the best working environment that today's technology offers. A tip of the local Derby cap to Ed Hart for doing the right thing by taking care of his employees, just the way his employees take care of the park's guests each operating day.

**FLINT'S VIEW:** Bubba Flint



**INDUSTRY OPINION:** Scott Rutherford, [srutherford@amusementtoday.com](mailto:srutherford@amusementtoday.com)

## Remember

During a recent discussion about park and roller coaster history, the conversation turned toward the importance of preserving not only amusement industry artifacts (photos, blueprints, newspaper/magazine stories, physical equipment etc.) but also oral histories. In many cases, these personal accounts are all that remain of a certain subject. This perfectly illustrated the real need to not only preserve what came before us, but also what we have (and are) experiencing as that, too, will become history.

This brought to mind a memorable 1981 visit to Cascade Park in New Castle, Pa. Though once a thriving traditional park in the old style with all the classic trappings, Cascade had fallen out of favor with the public. It was there that we met Paul Vesco, an older gentleman who had started as a vendor in the 1950s and then became the park's guardian and caretaker as it struggled to survive its final two decades. We wandered past too many tired rides and attractions until we found Vesco sitting alone on a bench on the vacant loading platform of the park's resident wooden coaster, the Comet.



Rutherford

With vivid clarity I recall that long-ago afternoon in the Comet's silent station, which was perched on the edge of a forested ravine. The scent of old wood, grease and age permeated the place. But all that only accentuated what happened. When Vesco realized we were coaster enthusiasts he began to speak. We were rapt. We had the honor of listening to tales of what the park had been like when he built the Comet and guests had flitted from ride to ride. His eyes and the reverential tone of his voice conveyed how much the park had meant to him. To see it in such an abandoned state left him bruised.

Vesco passed away a few years later, and with him all that knowledge and experience. If only I had a tape recorder that day to collect his stories. Recollections such as his can offer us a personal glimpse into the past from an individual that actually lived during those wonderful times. With their passing, so much is forever lost unless someone has the foresight to make a record of it. At least my memories of that amazing day remain, and I have every intention of preserving them for future generations.



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# 2 MINUTE DRILL



COMPILED: Janice Withrow

## Anne Irvine, Irvine Ondrey Engineering

At a very young age, **Anne Irvine** knew she wanted to work in the amusement industry. After being influenced and inspired by several professionals in the business, she decided to dedicate her education to learning how the industry works. Today, Anne and her husband Brian are partners of **Irvine Ondrey Engineering**, a company that focuses on creating control systems for new amusement attractions and retrofitting existing ones. Anne's passion, quest for learning and creative spirit shine through the minute you meet her; there is no mistake this is someone who truly loves her career.



Anne Irvine of Irvine Ondrey Engineering

**Title:**  
CEO.

**Number of years in the industry:**  
13.

**Best thing about the industry:**

Seeing the way guests feel after they've conquered their fears on the biggest coasters in the industry. They feel like a million bucks about themselves, and I'm so glad to be part of what makes them feel that way!

**Favorite amusement ride:**

Top Thrill Dragster, front seat, night-time ride. No competition.

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

Absolutely lost. There's another option? No thanks!

**Biggest challenge facing our industry:**

Media sensationalizing of non-news events.

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

It's "real life" for me! Everything else is just a dress rehearsal for summer.

**Favorite hangout:**

With my horse at the stable or waiting in line for Row 8 on Dragster yet again.

**The best thing about living in Michigan is...**

Living in Ann Arbor. It's truly home for me, a place where you can be yourself.

**When I say fall, you say...**

Ugh! My home park, Cedar Point, closes in the fall!

**For me, one piece of clothing that never goes out of style is...**

Do riding boots count?

**The last time I went to a concert was...**

Last week! My favorite band, 311.



Irvine

**In one word, my friends would say I am...**  
Excitable.

**The quietest time of my day is typically...**  
Coming home from horse riding. Too tired to be anything but quiet.

**It's football season! Who's your favorite team?**

Turn off football and turn on the Detroit Red Wings, please.

**My all-time favorite "feel-good" song hands-down is...**

"Everybody Have Fun Tonight" by Wang Chung.

**When making dinner for guests, my specialty is...**

A huge Thanksgiving-style dinner with all the trimmings.

**Most helpful invention in the last decade:**

Non-rigid OTSRs (over the shoulder restraints).

**The last thing I misplaced was...**

My phone. Always the phone. It needs a homing beacon.

**Favorite expression:**

"If you're not going to the hospital, you're getting back on your horse...hospital or ON!" This is not my quote but I say it often. Words to live by.

**My television automatically DVR's...**

Show jumping competitions, because they seem to never be on when I'm around to watch!

**The best dessert I've ever had is...**

Zingerman's (legendary in Ann Arbor) almond pound cake with cherry buttercream filling.

**On a rainy day, I like to...**

Hope it turns into a thunderstorm I can chase. Rainy days are the best!

**Three things I always take on vacation are...**

My own pillow. Lavender sleep spray for the pillow. Many instruments of noise blockage.

**The last web site I looked at was...**

Lileks.com. It's impossible to have a bad day after you've spent a few minutes there. You'll be too busy crying with laughter.

# THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

Presented by the National Rollercoaster Museum

COMPILED: Richard Munch



## SEPTEMBER

•**1895:** In preparation of the opening of the **Cotton States and International Exposition** in Atlanta, Georgia, the *Atlanta Constitution* published an article on September 15 claiming that the **L.A. Thompson** Scenic Railway would be the greatest attraction at the exposition. The article suggested that "every great exposition, both in this and European countries since the days of the **Crystal Palace** in London, there has invariably some feature been presented that was unique and the star attraction of the show." The Scenic Railway, located on the south side of the grounds, would go on to be a true crowd pleaser during the 100 day affair. It was also a major force in helping Thompson market his railways to a growing amusement industry across the globe.

•**1904:** Details of a new resort in northern Manhattan, near the New York **Polo Grounds** were released on September 24. A New York syndicate had been in negotiations for 26 acres of the **William Dyckman** family estate in preparation of building a new amusement park. In the press release, the owners promised scenic wonders, plentiful electric lights and high class shows and animal acts, with a price tag of more than \$1,000,000. **Paradise Park** would open in 1905, in competition with Brooklyn's **Coney Island**, as it was closer to those living in The Bronx, Manhattan and northern New Jersey. One early visitor said at the opening, that "the only thing missing was the splendor of the Atlantic Ocean," which at the time had been Coney Island's main attraction for almost 60 years.

•**1926:** An article in the September 16 edition of the *Scarsdale (N.Y.) Inquirer*, discussed the dismantling and sales of all buildings and equipment from **Paradise Park**, in Rye, N.Y., by the Westchester County Park Commission. The sale was in preparation of leveling the land and preparing for construction of the new model amusement park, which was already in the design phase. The second and older park on the property, **Rye Beach Park**, would operate one more season before it too would be removed to complete the new park — to be called **Playland**. Just 20 months later Playland would open — and thrill county residents and guests with its fresh design and wonderful new thriller, the Aerocoaster.

•**1942:** In early September, **Norman Bartlett** announced that his North Tonawanda, New York company was moving from its present facility to a larger location. While Bartlett had built amusement park equipment in the old location, the new plant location provided a larger area for construction of war related equipment. With 15 employees, he said he was preparing to build tubular steel bracing for machine gun mounts "until the war was won," By the end of the war, Bartlett would again move, this time to the warmth of Miami, Florida, where he continued to invent flat rides for the thrill seeking public.

•**1950:** The **Electric Ferry Company** of New York announced on September 27 that it would cease operation of all ferry service between 125th Street in Manhattan, and all its New Jersey waterfront ferry terminals. With the opening of the George Washington Bridge, two vehicle tunnels and extensive bus transportation, ferry service in the New York metropolitan area was already a dying breed. In operation since the turn of the century, the ferries were once the main transportation from the city to **Palisades Amusement Park**, which sat on a cliff overlooking the Hudson River. Although local companies fought the closure, ferry service ceased operation at midnight on December 16. Of interest, passenger ferry service would return between New York and New Jersey in 1986.



## ►LAGOON

### Continued from page 1

new coaster's biggest fan.

"You know you have a good ride when your guests are cheering and they want to go again," Freed said. "That's when you know you've really got something. And that's what has happened with Cannibal. It's wonderful, just fantastic. I would describe the ride as very smooth, but it's also very intense."

#### Bold beginnings

The birthing of this twisted steel behemoth wasn't quite so smooth. But then, it's hard to imagine a project of Cannibal's ambition and complexity ever being a cakewalk.

Lagoon's confidence in proceeding with Cannibal harks to at least 2007, when its in-house design and engineering team — headed by Dal Freeman, formerly of Arrow Dynamics (and retired this past July) — collaborated successfully with the German ride manufacturer Zierer on Wicked, a \$10 million steel launched coaster. Several years later, when it came time for the park to introduce another major attraction, a coaster was again considered.

"We really couldn't afford another big coaster," said La-

goon's Freed, a second generation member of a family that has operated and/or owned the nearly 130-year-old park since the 1940s. "So Dal and our operations people went around the country trying to find a great family coaster. We really couldn't find what we were looking for; with a lot of smaller family coasters, the technology was dated and they didn't have the safety enhancements we wanted."

Freed was feeling pretty discouraged until Freeman walked into his office and said, "We can do it."

"And that's how it started," Freed recalls. "We created a family coaster in-house with the idea that, if it worked out well, we would do a mega-coaster — because the steps are all the same."

For the family coaster, Bom-Bora, Lagoon's team worked with Georg Behringer, chief executive of ART Engineering GmbH. "It was pretty much totally manufactured here in Utah, except for the vehicles, which were made in Germany," Freed said. We turned it on, it ran and it was beautiful."

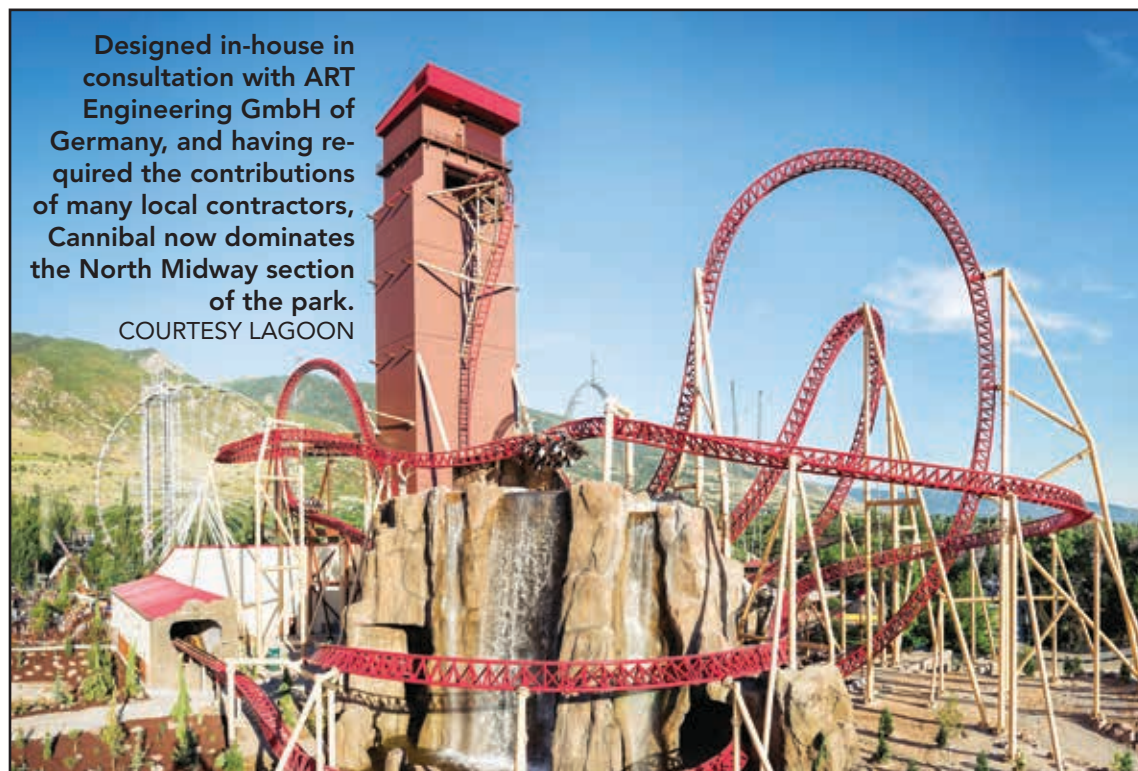
By this time, Lagoon had already staked out the location for Cannibal. And design work began in earnest. "The engineers were more aggressive than I was," admitted Freed. "They were thinking we could get it running by 2014. So that was our first target date. We had identified the suppliers we wanted to use — mostly the ones we used for BomBora." (A couple dozen local contractors eventually contributed.)

Freed pointed out that Cannibal was financially manageable because Lagoon could spread the massive expenditure, originally projected at \$22 million, over several years. But there were a few obstacles.

"We don't have great soil, so we pounded about 600 piles. The ride has a tunnel which goes down about 20 feet, which is challenging when you have a high water table. And then you have to have a brave banker."

In fact, it took Freed 14 months to secure the equipment loan for Cannibal from Wells Fargo — in midsummer 2014, barely under the wire. "It was really a trial, a full-court press almost daily," he said. "Bankers don't always understand this business."

Nor do some municipal departments. While Freed noted that Farmington city leaders were "great to work with" in the



Designed in-house in consultation with ART Engineering GmbH of Germany, and having required the contributions of many local contractors, Cannibal now dominates the North Midway section of the park. COURTESY LAGOON

planning of Cannibal — granting Lagoon zoning permission to build the coaster higher than 150 feet — and abided by the park's wishes to keep the attraction under wraps for about five years, the fire department and other municipal services questioned the enclosed lift tower. Was it a ride or a structure?

Freed acknowledged that a municipality can make that determination.

"The city leaders did, in a council meeting [in early February], decide that the tower was a ride," he said. "Which it is, honestly."

Still, Cannibal has been outfitted with more safety features than most structures. The interior of the imposing lift tower includes both evacuation stairs and a Mast Climber elevator platform running the entire height; emergency secondary electrical power is provided by two diesel generators. The single-car, 12-passenger, lap bar-only vehicles have a triple-locking (one hydraulic, two mechanical) restraint system and are braked magnetically, and 224 magnetic sensors line the tracks.

In an all-around show of support for the attraction, key Farmington city officials, including the building inspector, the fire chief and the police attended Cannibal's preview ride on June 22. Mayor Jim Talbot and all the city council members joined Freed in one vehicle.

"I had the mayor sitting right next to me," said Freed, "and we both wound up screaming like babies!"

#### Details, details...

As striking and extreme as Cannibal's track undula-

tions appear, the attraction's built-from-scratch setting and exotic theming tie everything together in an unusually impressive way. Lagoon spared no expense in installing artificial rockwork (including a waterfall), applying architectural touches and landscaping. The park's director of landscaping, Brent Buhler, has put in many long days gracing Cannibal's lair with thousands of trees and shrubs.

"I'd say we're 30 percent done with the plantings right now," Freed said. "It's ongoing."

Choosing Cannibal's name and theming had to fall within some pre-set parameters, and it called on some of the park president's personal experiences.

"We were very sensitive that we didn't want anybody to pin the coaster's name to a particular place or group of people; it had to be somewhat eclectic," Freed explained. "For the theming, one of the great times of my life was when I went to Cambodia, where I visited [the 12th century temple complex] Angkor Wat, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the jungle temple Angkor Thom. My thought was to just kind of capture the feel of those places."

Cannibal's initial design tasks landed with in-house designer Lori Capener, a three-decade Lagoon veteran, who fashioned a model. The model became the launching point for creative ideas from various contractors — ideas which Freed loved but which not always were compatible with the budget.

Some special, indigenous and budget-friendly Cannibal theming elements came from

none other than eBay, where Lagoon managed to secure three of four concrete lions dating to the early 1900s that once guarded the entrances of the Utah State Capitol in Salt Lake City.

"We had them restored and they are very cool," Freed said of five-foot-tall, 4,000-pound tall statues, which have been placed on pedestals around the attraction. "People love them!"

Along with showing their appreciation for the park's preservation of history, Freed said Lagoon's guests also value efficient ride operations. "One thing I'll say about people in Utah: They don't like to wait in line. Cannibal has great ride capacity, which it will fully achieve next year once it's 100 percent reliable. Right now, the capacity is good — and that's always helpful."

Especially this season. Freed said Lagoon's patronage, as of late July, was running about 24 percent ahead of 2014, which saw nearly 1.4 million admissions. Season pass sales were up about 30 percent over last year.

Even while revealing that Cannibal's construction wrap-up and some unexpected costs pushed the project's total to over \$26 million, Freed's stated that his goal for the investment is modest — having less to do with raising the park's profile or increasing regional market share than with maintaining his family's legacy.

"Our philosophy has always been that we try and improve Lagoon," he said. "We always felt like we were the keeper of the asset. It's personal. We want to pass it on to the next generation."

•[www.lagoonpark.com](http://www.lagoonpark.com)

### FAST FACTS

#### Name/Park

Cannibal  
Lagoon, Farmington, Utah

#### Type

Steel diving coaster

#### Vertical Lift Tower Height

208 feet

#### First Drop Vertical Angle

116 degrees

#### Track Length/Duration

2,735 feet/2.5 minutes

#### Maximum Speed/G Force

70 mph/4.2

#### Unique Elements

Underground tunnel,  
diving loop, inverted loop

#### Ride Vehicles/Capacity

Six single-car vehicles,  
each seating 12 riders  
in three rows of four/  
1,200 pph

#### Cost/Opened

\$26 million plus/  
July 2, 2015

#### Primary

#### Design & Engineering

Dal Freeman, Lagoon;  
Dustin Allen, Lagoon;  
Georg Behringer,  
ART Engineering GmbH,  
Oberried, Germany



**BRIEFS**

**Ninjas ascend into Legoland California Resort; new Lego Ninjago area and ride set for 2016**

CARLSBAD, Calif. — Legoland California Resort recently announced a new expansion for guests in spring 2016 based on the popular property Lego Ninjago brought to life by the Lego Group through a line of construction toys and TV series on Cartoon Network. The new area will include interactive elements and a new ride featuring the key characters from the Ninjago universe.

Lego Ninjago tells the story of four young Ninja heroes — Kai, Jay, Cole and Zane — who train under the watchful eye of Sensei Wu to master an ancient martial art — Spinjitzu. Lego Ninjago is one of the most successful Lego properties. This year, brand new episodes of the popular series, Ninjago: Masters of Spinjitzu aired on Cartoon Network and 22 new building sets loaded with features and functions were released.

**Dollywood's DreamMore Resort opens**

PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. — The Dollywood Company's most anticipated project to date, Dollywood's DreamMore Resort, opened its doors Monday, July 27, creating a new chapter in the famed company's 30-year history.

Fittingly, Dolly Parton's dream of adding a resort to the fun and excitement of her Smoky Mountain theme park offerings comes true during Dollywood's 30th season.

"Seeing DreamMore Resort open really is a dream come true for me," Parton said. "It brings me back to when my whole family would get together on the front porch catching up and swapping stories. I want families to spend the day experiencing the fun of our parks, then come to this beautiful resort to spend time together making even more family memories!"

*Amusement Today* will have full coverage of the DreamMore Resort opening in the October issue.

**Ripley's opens 12-city traveling show tour**

ORLANDO, Fla. — Ripley's Believe It or Not! has returned to Africa for the first time since Robert Ripley — the modern day Marco Polo — traveled the continent in 1933.

Ripley's, in conjunction with Word4Word Marketing in South Africa, opened a year-long, 12-city traveling show on July 31. The new show will visit a dozen shopping malls in several provinces.

Visitors will be able to explore 15 different pods, each with a unique theme and packed with artifacts, interactive exhibits and infographics. All together there are more than 130 exhibits from the Ripley's collection.

The show even has some of the artifacts Robert Ripley acquired on his 1933 trek through Africa from Cairo to Durban, as well as original artwork that he drew when he was there.

**BeaverTails pastries opens at Cedar Point**

MONTREAL, Canada — BeaverTails, makers of iconic whole-wheat BeaverTails pastries, announced on August 4 the opening of its 100th store location at Cedar Point Amusement Park in Sandusky, Ohio.

BeaverTails pastries are a unique and delicious treat, hand-stretched to resemble the tail of a beaver. Float-cooked on high quality canola oil, BeaverTails pastries are served hot and topped with 10 different options, including Classic Cinnamon & Sugar and Triple Trip (chocolate hazelnut spread, Reese's Pieces and peanut butter) – to satisfy indulgences of all tastes.

Based on an old family recipe and first sold from a small kiosk in Ottawa in 1978, the popularity of BeaverTails pastries has grown tremendously. Today, BeaverTails locations are found in eight Canadian provinces. U.S. locations are in Farmington, Utah; Wildwood, New Jersey and Sandusky, Ohio. International locations are in Japan, South Korea and Dubai.

"Cedar Point is home to a wide variety of dining options, and we're very happy that BeaverTails has joined our extensive food lineup," continues Chris Miller, vice president of food & beverage at Cedar Point. "BeaverTails pastries are a delicious and distinctive treat. Based on what we've seen so far, we expect to serve a very large number of BeaverTails pastries to our guests this season."

# Dollywood to build world's fastest wooden coaster for 2016

*Rocky Mountain to build new \$22 million launched wood coaster*

PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. — Dollywood announced on August 7 the addition of Lightning Rod, both the world's fastest wood coaster and the world's first launching wood coaster. Set to roll to the starting line in March 2016, Lightning Rod adds another groundbreaking roller coaster to the park's already impressive portfolio of world-class attractions. The thrilling \$22 million ride also marks the single largest attraction investment in The Dollywood Company's history.

Themed after a tricked out 1950s-era hot rod, Lightning Rod launches riders from zero to 45 mph more than 20 stories up its lift hill to one of the ride's first airtime moments. At the crest of the hill, riders face twin summit airtime hills before tackling the daring first drop. Lightning Rod races down the 165-foot drop and propels guests along its 3,800-feet of track to a top speed of 73 mph, the fastest speed for a wood coaster in the world.

"Lightning Rod reminds me so much of those colorful cars cruisin' up and down Main Street in downtown Sevierville back when I was in high school. I remember all those souped up cars; but what I remember most were those good lookin' boys behind the wheel with those flat top and ducktail haircuts," Dolly Parton said with

**FAST FACTS**

**Park/Name**  
Dollywood,  
Pigeon Forge, Tenn./  
Lightning Rod

**Type**  
Launched Wood Coaster

**Inversions**  
None

**Ride Elements**  
•Zero to 45 mph Launch  
•Trick Hill (Twin Summits)  
•90-Plus Degree Bank  
Breaking Wave Turn  
•90-Plus Degree Outside  
Banked Top Hat  
•Twist and Shout  
•Step Up  
•Quadruple Down  
•High Speed Airtime Hill  
•Non-Inverting Half Loop  
•12 Total Airtime Moments

**Top Speed**  
73 miles per hour

**Lift Height**  
206 feet (80 feet  
above crest of lift hill)

**Drop Height**  
165 feet

**Track Length**  
3,800 feet

**Ride Duration**  
3 minutes, 12 seconds

**Passengers Per Train**  
24

**Manufacturer**  
Rocky Mountain  
Construction, Inc.,  
Hayden, Idaho

a laugh.

"I'm truly excited about this ride because it will let our guests experience something just as fast as those hot rods I remember," she continued. "Even better, it's the fastest wooden roller coaster in the world, so I think we're going

to see a lot of people coming from all over to peel out on the Lightning Rod."

Located in Dollywood's Jukebox Junction, Lightning Rod rockets riders around its massive wooden structure on an adrenaline-charged lap through the trees in the hills and valleys surrounding Dollywood. During the ride, guests experience nearly 20 seconds of airtime. The coaster train is comprised of 12 cars, carrying two passengers each, for a total of 24 people per train.

Dollywood's development team has tapped Rocky Mountain Construction (RMC) as the ride manufacturer. RMC is no stranger to out-of-the-box coaster projects, having designed a number of innovative attractions around the world. Lightning Rod employs several unique features including the lift hill launch, twin summit airtime hills, a 90-plus degree banked breaking wave turn, a 90-plus degree outside banked turn, and a non-inverting half loop.

Lightning Rod puts riders in the driver's seat of Johnny Rev's newest hot rod. After months of tinkering, Johnny invites Dollywood guests to step behind the wheel for the first test drive of his flashy new creation. Like any proper hot rod, massive header pipes and an imposing injector scoop peer out from the train's flamed bodywork.

•[www.Dollywood.com](http://www.Dollywood.com)



Dollywood's new-for-2016 Lightning Rod RMC wooden coaster will feature this Top Hat Overbank (above) and this Quadruple Down drop (right). The \$22 million ride launches riders 0-45 mph and features a 165-foot long drop and 3,800 feet of track. COURTESY DOLLYWOOD







Photo courtesy of BRC Imagination Arts, US

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# INTERNATIONAL

► **S&S to build drop tower for Motiongate Dubai — Page 8 / Shanghai Disneyland details unveiled — Page 10**

## Skånes Djurpark teams with Aardman for new Shaun the Sheep attraction

**AT:** Andrew Mellor  
amellor@amusementtoday.com

HÖÖR, Sweden — U.K.-based Aardman, a world leader in animation, and Skånes Djurpark in Sweden have announced a new partnership which will see the first international Shaun the Sheep family attraction being brought to Sweden.

Based around the park's six key values – play, learn, share, explore, magic and excitement – Aardman and Skånes Djurpark will together create an experience that will take park visitors into Shaun's world, all in 3D. To be called Shaun the Sheep Land, families will see, feel, taste and experience the world of Shaun that so far has only been seen on TV and in movie theatres. Full details of exactly what the attraction will consist of will be revealed at a later date.



The new Shaun the Sheep Land at Skånes Djurpark will be the first ever family attraction to be created around the popular character. COURTESY AARDMAN

Budgeted to cost approximately £5 million (U.S. \$7.8 million), Shaun the Sheep Land will open early in the summer of 2016 and Håkon

Lund, chairman of park owner the Lund Gruppen, commented: "Skånes Djurpark's vision is to become the number one destination for families in Swe-

den. We could not have found a better partner in Shaun the Sheep and Aardman. The team of Aardman is passionate and the world's best in their indus-

try, entertaining children and adults globally. They create stories that are universal and without borders which has been an important factor in partnering with them for this project in a location close to Denmark, Germany, Norway and Eastern Europe."

"Aardman strives to collaborate with like-minded partners who share our core values in providing quality family entertainment experiences," added Sean Clarke, brand development at Aardman. "We are delighted to have the opportunity to work with Skånes Djurpark and the Lund Group to premier Shaun the Sheep's first ever international family attraction in Sweden. It will be a world's first and a great way to give families an opportunity to immerse themselves into the fun and excitement of Shaun the Sheep."

## Hot-Go park to launch Holovis Immersive Theatre

**AT:** Andrew Mellor  
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FUSHUN, China — Hot-Go has announced that it will launch a Holovis Immersive Theatre experience at its theme park in Fushun, China, at the end of this year. The attraction will take audiences of up to 200 on a multi-sensory, all-immersive journey. The project is a complete turnkey solution from Holovis Attractions and will feature the latest in 4D technology providing a fully immersive, 180-degree set-up to wrap the audience and ensure that from every seat position guests are truly at the heart of the story. This ultra-large-scale screen approach will combine with full 4D effects, including motion seat systems, spatial audio, SFX and a uniquely developed, all-immersive 3D film from Holovis Media.

Qiang Wei, head of procurement at Hot-Go, commented: "This attraction will be truly the next generation of 4D theater in this market. Today theme parks have to compete with the high levels of technology and immersion that our guests have available to them in their homes and therefore we have to be able to offer something unique and on a different scale and sensory

► **See Hot-Go, page 11**



The Hot-Go park in Fushun, China, formerly the Fushun Dreamworld project, will open a new Immersive Tunnel from Holovis at the end of 2015. COURTESY HOLOVIS ATTRACTIONS

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# S&S to build drop tower for new Motiongate Dubai

LOGAN, Utah — S&S Worldwide announced on July 13 that the Utah company will build and install a 16-seat Drop Tower for the new Motiongate Dubai theme park, part of the Dubai Parks and Resorts development which is opening in October 2016.

Motiongate Dubai will be the Middle East's first Hollywood-inspired theme park that will bring together three of the largest film studios in the world: Lionsgate, Sony Pictures Studios and DreamWorks Animation to deliver an immersive experience.

S&S Worldwide, the largest U.S. ride manufacturer, has now installed over 450 of their products in 30 countries around the world. Tim Timco, vice president of Sales

and Marketing for S&S said, "We are thrilled to be working on such a unique project. The amusement and entertainment industry is growing rapidly in Dubai, and we are pleased to be associated with this progress. Our Drop Tower ride will provide guests with spectacular views of this massive development and do so in a very thrilling fashion."

Matthew Priddy, chief technical officer for Dubai Parks and Resorts said:

Motiongate Dubai will be four million square feet of movie themed entertainment and we are delighted that S&S will be building what is set to be one of our most thrilling rides in the park — a drop tower. The safety of our guests is of paramount importance

to us and that is why we are choosing to work with the biggest and best ride manufacturers in the business. S&S will ensure our guests will have an exciting experience on this ride."

Timco added, "S&S has many years of experience providing high-quality tower rides. We believe that this Drop Tower will be a highlight of Motiongate Dubai and will continue the tradition of quality and safety for S&S. We look forward to seeing this project come together over the next year."

• [www.engineeringexcitement.com](http://www.engineeringexcitement.com)  
• [www.dubaiparksandresorts.com](http://www.dubaiparksandresorts.com)

## About Dubai Parks and Resorts

Dubai Parks and Resorts PJSC (DFM: DUBAIPARKS), will become the Middle East's largest multithemed leisure and entertainment destination comprising three separate theme parks: Motiongate Dubai, a Hollywood movie inspired theme park concept; Legoland Dubai, the first Legoland theme park in the Middle East; and Bollywood Parks Dubai, a first-of-its-kind entertainment destination that will showcase the authentic Bollywood movie experience. In addition, the Legoland Water Park will also open on the site.

The development will also host the Lapita Hotel, a four star themed hotel which will be managed by the Marriott Group, and Riverland Dubai, a centrally located district of 220,000 square feet of leasable retail, dining and entertainment space connecting the three theme parks, water park and hotel.

Set to open in October 2016, the large-scale AED 10.5 billion project is spread across 25 million square feet of land strategically located on Sheikh Zayed Road close to the Palm Jebel Ali between Dubai and Abu Dhabi. 6.7 million ticketed visits are expected in 2017, the first full year of operation.

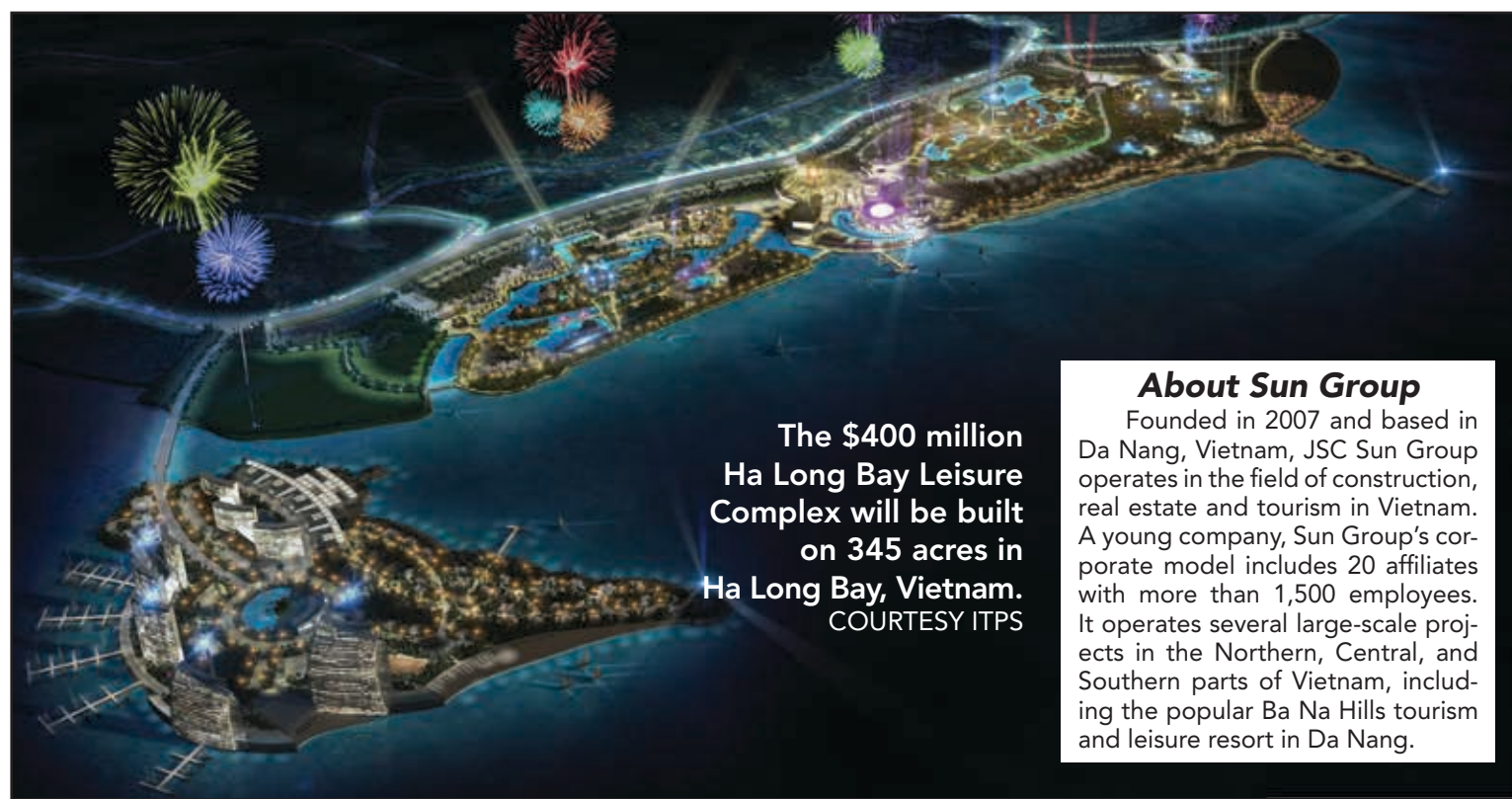
## International Theme Park Services completes design for Vietnam complex

Wyatt Design Group, Hetzel Design collaborate on project

CINCINNATI, Ohio — Dennis Spiegel, president of International Theme Park Services, Inc. (ITPS), announced on July 22 that his company has just completed design services for a world-class, major, multi-use amusement and leisure project in Vietnam.

The Sun Group Corporation, based in Da Nang, Vietnam contracted ITPS to provide a variety of services, including concept design, masterplanning, and schematic design. This also included all project programmatic parameters, a full project concept narrative, and a comprehensive art direction handbook. Services provided also included rides and attractions selection, and assistance with initial ride vendor interaction. This work, led and managed by ITPS, was undertaken in collaboration with Wyatt Design Group and Hetzel Design, both based in California, with each party contributing different factions according to their specialties.

The project will encompass approximately 140 hectares (345 acres) of both oceanfront and mountaintop property, and will also include reclaimed land from the ocean. Its key components will include a theme park, water park, family entertainment center, event pavilions,



The \$400 million Ha Long Bay Leisure Complex will be built on 345 acres in Ha Long Bay, Vietnam. COURTESY ITPS

## About Sun Group

Founded in 2007 and based in Da Nang, Vietnam, JSC Sun Group operates in the field of construction, real estate and tourism in Vietnam. A young company, Sun Group's corporate model includes 20 affiliates with more than 1,500 employees. It operates several large-scale projects in the Northern, Central, and Southern parts of Vietnam, including the popular Ba Na Hills tourism and leisure resort in Da Nang.

Japanese Gardens, aquarium, dolphin show, Giant Wheel atop the family entertainment center, wax museum, and a Vietnamese shopping and dining themed village, as well as a World Showcase international village. Connecting the oceanside attractions and the mountaintop attractions will be a free-spanning, double-deck cable car system, with each car transporting over 200 persons over the sea below. Food and beverage, games, and merchandise outlets will be included throughout the project. At present, the complex is estimated to encompass a budget of over \$400 million USD.

The site location for this multi-use leisure project is the picturesque Ha Long Bay, located on the Gulf of Tonkin in Northern Vietnam, and a site famously used in James Bond movies. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, Ha Long Bay includes some 1,600 islands and islets, and is known for its emerald waters and limestone. The theme park, water park, and other elements of the project are themed to represent the heritage and history of Ha Long Bay and Vietnam, with some hints of Asian influence. Portions of the project are scheduled to open later this year, with remaining phases set to open in 2016 and

beyond.

Dennis Spiegel, ITPS, commented, "Ha Long Bay is one of the most beautiful settings I have ever seen. Our ITPS team worked under probably one of the most aggressive timetables we have ever worked on, in order to complete contracted design services for this major development. What we completed is top-notch and we are proud to have had the chance to work on this project with Sun Group."

Pam Westerman, vice president of ITPS, served as in-house Project Manager for this contract. With her team, she completed seven trips to

Vietnam in about nine months. Westerman said, "The trips were exhausting, and yet once we would finally arrive and dig in to the work, it was also exhilarating to see it all coming together. The Sun Group team is forward-thinking, and a very congenial team. This will really be a world-class project in a gorgeous location."

ITPS continues to provide support as needed to Sun Group as they move through the development process, and is in discussions to provide ongoing services to other projects Sun Group is planning throughout the country.

• [interthemepark.com](http://interthemepark.com)





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# Disney unveils detailed look at Shanghai Disneyland

SHANGHAI, China — On July 14 The Walt Disney Company unveiled key creative elements of Shanghai Disneyland, including its six themed lands filled with world-class attractions and live entertainment spectacles — many of them a first for a Disney park.

Disney Chairman and CEO Bob Iger revealed a scale model of the world-class theme park and displays showcasing key highlights of unique attractions,

entertainment, dining and hotels at a presentation held today at the Shanghai Expo Centre.

"We are building something truly special here in Shanghai that not only showcases the best of Disney's storytelling but also celebrates and incorporates China's incredibly rich heritage to create a one-of-a-kind destination that will delight and entertain the people of China for generations to come," said Iger. "We are taking everything

we've learned from our six decades of exceeding expectations — along with our relentless innovation and famous creativity to create a truly magical place that is both authentically Disney and distinctly Chinese."

A joint venture of Disney and its partner Shanghai Shendi Group, Shanghai Disneyland is designed to appeal to Chinese guests — taking the best of Disney and delivering it in a way that is created especially for this audience. It will extend the 60-year legacy of Disney Parks around the globe.

Since breaking ground in 2011, Disney and Shanghai Shendi Group announced that they were expanding the park by adding additional attractions and entertainment to allow more guests to have a spectacular Disney experience at grand opening in spring of 2016.

Shanghai Disney Resort, part of the Shanghai International Tourism and Resorts Zone, is a complete vacation destination and at opening will include:

- **Shanghai Disneyland**, a theme park with six themed lands: Adventure Isle, Gardens of Imagination, Mickey Avenue, Tomorrowland, Treasure Cove and Fantasyland, with its Enchanted Storybook Castle.

- **Shanghai Disneyland Hotel and Toy Story Hotel**, imaginatively themed and adjacent to the theme park.

- **Disneytown**, an international shopping, dining and entertainment district, adjacent to Shanghai Disneyland and including the Walt Disney Grand Theatre, home to the first-ever Mandarin production of the Broadway hit Disney's *The Lion King*.

- **Wishing Star Park**, a central point of the resort with beautiful gardens, a walking path and a glittering lake.

Shanghai Disney Resort guests will find something for everyone. They will be immersed in popular Disney stories that come to life at the largest castle in a Disney park, at the first pirate-themed land in a Disney park, on the longest Disney Parks parade route and in more enchanting places filled with thrills, creativity and adventure. Throughout the resort, visitors will be treated to the Disney difference: warm hospitality and world-renowned



Disney Chairman and CEO Bob Iger revealed a scale model of Shanghai Disneyland and displays showcasing key highlights of unique attractions, entertainment, dining and hotels at a recent presentation held at the Shanghai Expo Centre. COURTESY THE WALT DISNEY COMPANY

guest service delivered by Disney cast members.

## A Disney park filled with firsts

At the center of Shanghai Disneyland, the iconic Enchanted Storybook Castle will be the tallest, largest and most interactive castle at any Disney theme park. It's also the first castle in a Disney theme park that represents all the Disney princesses. Other firsts at Shanghai Disneyland will include:

- **Adventure Isle**, a mysterious land, with an ancient legend about a native tribe, a giant, reptilian creature, and the mighty Roaring Mountain.

- **Voyage to the Crystal Grotto**, an enchanting, new excursion that celebrates classic Disney tales of magic and imagination as it travels the waters of Fantasyland, going underneath Enchanted Storybook Castle for a finale never before seen inside a castle.

- **Tomorrowland**, a venue with an original design and new attractions to celebrate the hope, optimism and potential of the future, created especially for the people of China.

- **Tron Lightcycle Power Run**, which promises to be one of the most thrilling attractions at a Disney park, with a twisting, turning track, high speeds, rich storytelling and a breathtaking view of Shanghai Disneyland.

- **Garden of the Twelve Friends**, animals of the Chinese zodiac are re-imagined as Disney and Disney Pixar characters.

- **Treasure Cove**, the first pirate-themed land at a Disney park, leveraging innovative technologies in the new Pirates

of the Caribbean — Battle for the Sunken Treasure and a stunt show spectacular featuring Captain Jack Sparrow.

## About Shanghai Disney Resort

Shanghai Disney Resort is a world-class family entertainment destination, imagined and created especially for the people of China. Ideal for multiple-day visits, the resort consists of Shanghai Disneyland, a theme park; two richly themed hotels; Disneytown, an international shopping, dining and entertainment district; and Wishing Star Park, a recreational area with peaceful gardens and a glittering lake. The resort's hotels are the elegant, 420-room Shanghai Disneyland Hotel and the playful, 800-room Toy Story Hotel.

The Walt Disney Company and Shanghai Shendi Group have joined together to invest in Shanghai Disney Resort. As part of the agreement, two owner companies were formed with Shanghai Shendi Group holding 57 percent of the shares and Disney holding the remaining 43 percent of shares. Shanghai Shendi Group Co., Ltd. is a 100 percent state-owned joint venture investment holding company formed by three sponsors — Shanghai Lujiazui Group Co., Ltd., Shanghai Radio, Film and Television Development Co., Ltd., and Jinjiang International Group Holding Company. Shanghai Shendi Group Co., Ltd. is involved in project investment, construction, and operation through two full subsidiaries: Shanghai Shendi Resort Development Co., Ltd. and Shanghai Shendi Construction Co., Ltd.

• [shanghaidisneyresort.com](http://shanghaidisneyresort.com)

## Shanghai Disneyland's six themed lands

*Amusement Today* takes a quick look at the six themed lands of Shanghai Disneyland:

- **Mickey Avenue** is the first main entry at a Disney park inspired by the colorful personalities of Mickey Mouse and his pals. In the neighborhoods of this whimsical avenue, guests will share a hug and get a photo with some all-time favorite Disney characters. Avenue M Arcade, one of the many shops along the avenue, will feature the largest selection of gifts and collectibles inside the theme park.

- **Gardens of Imagination** celebrates the wonders of nature and the joy of imagination. Guests will take a spin on the Fantasia Carousel, soar on the back of Dumbo the Flying Elephant and enjoy the area's iconic Disney entertainment, including Castle stage shows. From several places in this land, guests will enjoy Mickey's Storybook Express, a parade with its own musical soundtrack and colorful performers on the longest parade route in a Disney park.

- **Fantasyland**, inspired by Disney's animated films, will be the largest land and home to the Enchanted Storybook Castle. Guests will experience familiar Disney stories as they ride Voyage to the Crystal Grotto, go in and out of tunnels glowing with dazzling diamonds on Seven Dwarfs Mine Train and take flight over the skies of London on Peter Pan's Flight. They may also explore the Hundred Acre Wood with Winnie the Pooh or follow Alice through a Wonderland maze.

- **Adventure Isle** will immerse guests in a newly discovered lost world, filled with hidden treasures. The mighty Roaring Mountain will tower over guests and they may blaze their own trails at Camp Discovery, travel around the world on Soaring over the Horizon or embark on the thrilling rafting adventure through the heart of Adventure Isle on Roaring Rapids.

- **Treasure Cove** will be the first pirate-themed land in a Disney park, a place to join the adventures of Captain Jack Sparrow and Davy Jones. As guests explore this pirate world, they will enter Pirates of the Caribbean — Battle for the Sunken Treasure, an attraction that transforms a boat ride into a journey with cutting-edge innovations in robotics, animation, set design and multimedia. Guests will board a pirate ship, paddle through the scenic cove on Explorer Canoes and dine at Barbosa's Bounty.

- **Tomorrowland** celebrates the limitless possibilities and optimism of the future in Shanghai. Disney's innovative use of technology has produced a land where guests will go to infinity and beyond on Buzz Lightyear Planet Rescue, a new space ranger adventure, or break the bonds of gravity on Jet Packs. A massive, color-shifting canopy will lure guests to Tron Lightcycle Power Run, a coaster-style attraction where guests board a train of two-wheeled Lightcycles for one of the most thrilling adventures at any Disney park. Nearby Tomorrowland will be two experiences created especially for Shanghai Disneyland — **Star Wars Launch Bay** and **Marvel Universe**.



# Happy Birthday Gardaland!



This fantastic three-tier cake — 8 meters in height and 12 meters in diameter — is in place, tailor-made to celebrate Gardaland's 40 years of entertaining families in Verona, Italy. The park made its debut on July 19, 1975 and has been a success ever since. Now the park is part of the Merlin Entertainments PLC family. COURTESY GARDALAND

## ►Hot-Go

Continued from page 7

level, using the very latest technology.

"Guests want to be transported to virtual worlds where they can really believe in the story presented around them and which make them feel they are part of the experience and within it, instead of passively watching from the outside in. This attraction that we are creating with HoloVis, using their Immersive-Theatre technology, will create our next flagship attraction to complement our existing park design."

The HoloVis team has created the attraction with sustainability and minimal maintenance in mind, with one notable element being the use of five DLP laser projectors from Digital Projection to create the enormous 180-degree

ultra-high-resolution image. These units have no lamps that will need replacing, giving them a much longer lifespan and a more reliable light source, negating lamp costs and re-alignment issues.

Additionally, the specialist 3D ultra-immersive content being created by HoloVis Media will also include a selection of different stories to keep the attraction fresh and increase ride repeatability.

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# Merlin/DreamWorks partner for Shrek's Adventure! London

AT: Andrew Mellor  
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LONDON, England — Set to entertain and delight visitors of all ages, Shrek's Adventure! London opened in July in the U.K. capital as a world first immersive storytelling attraction that plunges children and adults alike into the world of Shrek, Donkey and their DreamWorks friends.

The result of a unique partnership between Merlin and DreamWorks Animation, the attraction takes the form of a 75 minute tour and features a cast of favorite DreamWorks characters as they have never been seen before, with original scripts, sets and animation all created just for this new experience.

The atmospheric attraction brings the fantastical worlds of DreamWorks and the Kingdom of Far Far Away vividly to life before guests' eyes. It combines live action and iconic sets from the *Shrek* films with captivating storytelling, a 4D ride, special effects and new DreamWorks animation. Guests are invited to step into and literally play their



Above, guests begin their tour in the Shrek's Adventure! London attraction with a 4D bus ride, with Donkey at the wheel. Right, the scenes bring many familiar characters to life, such as Sleeping Beauty in the Mirror Maze. COURTESY MERLIN/DREAMWORKS

part in the adventure helping to save the day as the story unfolds with multiple unexpected twists and turns.

On entering the attraction, guests are invited to take a fantastical DreamWorks tour to the Kingdom of Far Far Away, which begins aboard a special 4D flying bus simulator ride from U.K. company Simworx. With Donkey at the wheel, guests soar above the London skyline

with favorite DreamWorks pals whizzing by. But things soon go off course and when the tour bus crashes, guests must embark on a quest to find Shrek and return safely home.

"There really is nothing like this anywhere else in the world and we cannot wait for people to come through the doors," said Paul Moreton, group creative director at Merlin Entertainments, just prior to opening, whose



team at Merlin Magic Making has developed the experience in close collaboration with DreamWorks. "We're telling a totally new story, in a totally new way and guests can really play their part by stepping into the action and taking a starring part."

The attraction incorporates scenes such as the Spooky Forest and Rumpelstiltskin's Carriage, the Poison Apple pub, the Magic Mirror Maze and down

Drury Lane to the Muffin Man's house, among others. It is open seven days a week and is suitable for anyone over the age of six.

Shrek's Adventure! London is the first in an international roll out which will see Merlin open DreamWorks Tours experiences in at least five other locations around the world over the next nine years.





## Simworx, Mondial team up to launch new 360-degree Flying Theater

KINGSWINFORD, West Midlands, England — Following the recent, highly successful introduction of the Immersive Tunnel attraction, U.K.-based Simworx has announced the launch of another major addition to its product range, the 360-degree Rotating Flying Theater.

The specialist supplier of media based dynamic simulation attractions has partnered with Dutch company Mondial to bring an all new range of technologies together for a spectacular new attraction. Providing a real sensation of flying with the passengers' legs dangling freely below them, the Flying Theater is available with 60 seats in three rows of 20 and offers unique movements with up and down, sideways to both sides, forward and backward motion.

Riders watch a movie on a huge dome screen as they "fly" through the experience, which is enhanced by a range of new technologies and optional special effects. Complete show control and an integrated audio visual system are combined with Simworx's world renowned expertise in delivering high quality 3D AV solutions to ensure a thrilling experience suitable for a wide age range.

The Flying Theater is supplied as a full turnkey solution, with all audio visual and effects hardware supplied by Simworx. The attraction is designed, built and produced exclusively for the U.K. company by Mondial, bringing together a combination of knowledge and expertise from both organizations to create what Simworx is confident will be a hugely popular attraction within a wide range of venues.

"We are delighted to announce the launch of the new Flying Theater which has been an exciting project for us to develop," said Simworx Managing Director Terry Monkton. "In conjunction with Mondial, we have created a thrilling attraction that utilizes cutting edge ride technology and the latest AV solutions to provide what will be hugely exciting and enjoyable experiences.

"As operators increasingly seek to install unique attractions that help them differentiate themselves from their competitors and which appeal to all the family, we are confident our Flying Theater will create much interest throughout the worldwide attractions industry."

England-based Simworx has teamed up with Dutch ride supplier Mondial to create this new 360-degree Rotating Flying Theater to parks and attractions worldwide.

The attractions seats 60 total guests in three rows of 20 and offers unique movements that include up and down, side to side, forward and backward motions.  
COURTESY SIMWORX



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# WATER PARKS & RESORTS

► Great Wolf Lodge to build first Colorado Resort property — Page 18

## Cedar Fair guests enjoy expanded water park options

*Canada's Wonderland Splash Works adds Tornado 18, Cabanas*

VAUGHAN, Ontario — New for the 2015 season, Splash Works, the water park inside Canada's Wonderland, introduced Typhoon, a ProSlide Tornado 18 that features hairpin turns and oscillating funnels.

The 20-acre water park also introduced Splash Station, a wet and wild interactive children's play area. Both new additions joined the many water attractions that make Splash Works one of Canada's largest water parks.

All-new VIP Cabanas also arrived and over the summer, guests experienced the ultimate poolside seat next to White Water Bay. The Splash Works featured 10-foot by 10-foot private cabanas, accommodating up to six guests, and



**New for 2015, Canada's Wonderland added two slides, the Typhoon, a ProSlide Tornado 18 to its Splash Works water park.** COURTESY CANADA'S WONDERLAND

included:

- Patio table set with four chairs;
- Two chaise lounge chairs;
- 32 inch flat screen TV with satellite service;
- Cabana Welcome Package — including towels, sun-

screen, and other sundries;

- Mini-fridge, stocked with bottled water and
- Food and Beverage Wait Service — cabana guests may purchase food & beverages to be delivered to their cabana.

—Jeffrey Seifert

*Kings Dominion water park rebranded into Soak City*

DOSWELL, Virginia — In conjunction with the 40th Celebration, Kings Dominion's WaterWorks was transformed into Soak City. An expansion and renovation of Kings Dominion's all-inclusive water park took place prior to the start of the season.

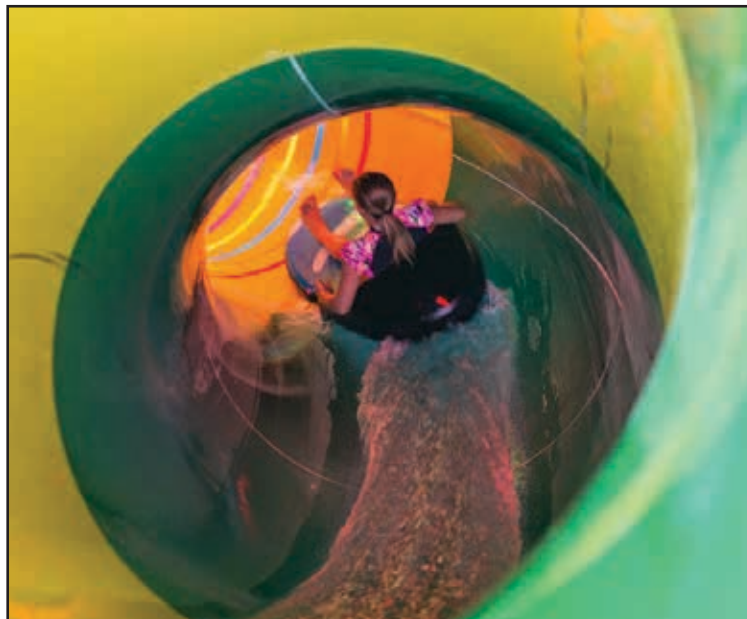
The new Soak City featured many of the park's popular water rides and attractions while incorporating all-new attractions and elements including:

- A 65-foot tall slide tower that featured three thrilling attractions, each one providing a unique riding experience. Paradise Plunge sends thrill-seekers into an almost vertical free fall as the floor dropped out from underneath their feet. On Aqua Blast, rid-

ers were sent twisting and spiraling through an enclosed chute featuring 360-degree turns. Thunder Falls launches riders in a tube down a series of intense drops and turns.

•Splash Island, a new children's area doubled the size of the previous children's options in the water park. The family-friendly splash zone created a magical play environment for children of all ages and abilities. Features included small slides for young children and multiple jets of streaming water that spray up from the ground, as well as overhead. Splash Island allowed family members to play, socialize and enjoy the water park experience together.

•Improved Guest Amenities: Upgraded family changing areas, an additional restroom complex, expanded  
► **See SOAK CITY, page 16**



**At left, one of the competitors stands with the slideboard unit — note the control buttons on the hand holds. Above, a rider slides through the tube, matching the color buttons to the color bands visible in the slide.**

COURTESY WET'n'WILD LAS VEGAS

## Wet'n'Wild Las Vegas debuts Slideboarding attraction

**AT:** Jeffrey L. Seifert  
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

LAS VEGAS, Nevada — On Memorial Day weekend, Wet'n'Wild Las Vegas unveiled the addition of a Slideboarding game to one of its most popular slides, Zipp Zapp Zoom. The ride, the first-of-its-kind in the world, is available to Gold and VIP Season Pass holders all summer long; daily visitors can purchase pay-to-play tickets.

Developed by White-Water West of British Columbia, Slideboarding combines watersliding and the world of gaming by creating an interactive, immersive experience with lights and music, while recording the riders' ability to match color-coded buttons on the slide to the colors displayed in the waterslide tube. The technology employs a smart gaming system that tracks each player's progress/scores as he or she heads down the slide. It then posts the scores on affiliated scoreboards. The system creates tailored experiences for each rider in varying degrees of difficulty based upon prior games.

With 36 levels of difficulty, the controller is designed to give

► **See SLIDEBOARDING, page 16**

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**2015: THEMATIC DESIGN FOR REWIND  
RACERS AND AQUA ROCKET ATTRACTIONS**





## ►SOAK CITY

Continued from page 15

deluxe cabanas featuring WiFi and television, and new restaurant concepts designed by Kings Dominion's Executive Chef.

The Soak City makeover included an updated entrance area and landscaping throughout the 20-acre water park.

"The Soak City expansion shows our investment and commitment to being home to Virginia's premier water park. We are thrilled to offer two parks for the price of one, which is a great added-value to our guests who appreciate a chance to cool off during our hot summer season," said Pat Jones, vice president and general manager of Kings Dominion, prior to the park's opening. "The new water park has thrills and chills for every age, creating memories that last a lifetime," she added.

Soak City opened in the spring of 2015 making this the first expansion at Kings Dominion's water park since 2007.

—Jeffrey Seifert

## ►SLIDEBOARDING

Continued from page 15

the rider the experience of being a real-life avatar navigating the slide. During its inaugural year, the gaming elements will only be available on the Zipp Zapp Zoom tower's green slide. Riders are positioned on a raft with handholds that double as game controllers. During the ride, they click color-coded buttons that match the same colored bulb displayed within the dark, 300-foot-long tunnel while passing over hidden sensors within the slide.

An app simulating the Slideboarding experience was scheduled to launch shortly after the ride opened. The app features a replica of the featured slide, Zipp Zapp Zoom, with the same twists, turns and colored buttons. Park goers will be able to practice their Slideboarding skills on the go and ramp up for their next visit.

Slideboarding also creates opportunities for parks to hold events, tournaments, and to create slideboarding-specific merchandise. Parks can also create events to benefit chari-



In the two views above, the color band can display objects and even logos, or thin bands can be used to test quick reaction time. COURTESY WET'n'WILD LAS VEGAS

ties. Such was the case with kickoff of the new slide on Friday, May 22, 2015, just prior to its public debut. A "Celebrity Slideboarding Competition" offered a \$1,000 prize to

the winner's charity of choice along with a "Splash Bash," donating 100 tickets to the charity, a free lunch for each child, and 100 tickets to a Las Vegas Outlaws football game. The

Second Place winner received a Splash Bash party for 50 kids from his/her designated charity, free lunch, and 50 tickets to a football game. The Third Place winner received a Splash Bash for 25 kids, free lunch, and 25 tickets to a football game.

Wet 'n' Wild tested the slideboarding experience during the World Waterpark Association Expo last October and offered attendees a preview. The temporary retrofit was so successful that Village Roadshow, the company behind Wet 'n' Wild Las Vegas, ordered the first permanent installation for the 2015 season.

"We are thrilled to be the first park in the world to feature this Slideboarding technology and to bring such a fun element to the Las Vegas valley," said Takuya Ohki, general manager of Wet'n'Wild Las Vegas. "Our 2015 season promises to be amazing and one of the best ways to take advantage of everything we have going on is with a season pass; With savings deals available throughout the season, it's never been more affordable to have one for every member of the family."



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# Great Wolf Lodge to build first Colorado resort

MADISON, Wis. — Families in Colorado will soon have something new to howl about. Great Wolf Resorts, Inc., North America's largest family of indoor water park resorts, announced it is expanding its paw print to the Centennial State.

Great Wolf Lodge Colorado Springs will be a first-class destination resort, providing families with more than 380,000 square feet of entertainment offerings and lodging amenities to enjoy, all under one roof. The centerpiece of the resort will be more than 65,000 square feet of indoor water park fun, the largest in the state. With signature Great Wolf Lodge water rides and attractions, including the thrilling five-story funnel slide, Howlin' Tornado; Slap Tail Pond wave pool and Fort Mackenzie — a multi-level interactive tree house with a massive tipping water bucket — the new resort will feature water fun for everyone.

Great Wolf Resorts will spend \$90 million to transform the unfinished Renaissance Hotel project off Interstate 25, north of the city. Construction stopped on the Renaissance Hotel more than five years ago when the late John Q. Hammons, a Missouri hotel developer, ran out of money. The 10-story building has been an eyesore for half a decade.

"We are so excited to bring the Great Wolf Lodge brand to Colorado," said Kim Schaefer, chief executive officer, Great Wolf Resorts, Inc., "As the leader in indoor water park resorts, we provide unique, year-round family getaways each and every day. The addition of Great Wolf Lodge Colorado Springs will feature many of the amenities and activities our guests know and love, as well as several experiences new to our brand."

The 311 guest suites will provide the perfect place for families to relax after a full day of water park play. Each suite will comfortably accommodate at least six people and include an in-room refrigerator, microwave and coffee maker. Families can choose from several suite styles, including the kid-focused Wolf Den and KidCabin suites, complete with bunk beds and theming featuring the Great Wolf Kids characters.

For true weatherproof, year-round fun, Great Wolf Lodge Colorado Springs will feature dozens of entertainment options, all under one roof. Families will delight at the wide variety of activities found throughout the entire resort, perfect for children of all ages.

Attractions and entertainment include:

- An indoor play park with over 33,000 square feet of fun complete with Howlers Peak Ropes Course, a multi-level climbing attraction, and Howl in One indoor miniature golf;
- MagiQuest, the brand's exclusive live-action, interactive game that takes place throughout the lodge;
- Scoops Kid Spa, the perfect place for ice cream-themed manicures and pedicures;
- Ten Paw Alley mini bowling;
- Daily children's activities as part of the resort's Great Wolf Kids program; and
- The Forest Friends Show and evening Story Time by the fireplace — a Great Wolf Lodge tradition that brings everyone together in their pajamas in the Grand Lobby each night.

Great Wolf Lodge Colorado Springs will also feature several dining options and food outlets including the brand's signature Lodge Wood Fired Grill restaurant and bar Hungry as a Wolf handcrafted pizza and pasta.

Event planners can also look to Great Wolf Lodge Colorado Springs for their meeting and event needs. The property will feature more than 20,000 square feet of preconference and flexible conference space, built-in audio/video technology and customizable catering options.

Great Wolf Lodge Colorado Springs will be the company's fourteenth resort. It will be located off I-25, 15 minutes from downtown Colorado Springs and less than an hour from Denver. The resort is expected to open in late 2016.

A second water park and resort, the proposed Colorado Grand Resort and Hotel just two miles away, has been in the works for more than three years. It was to break ground this past January. That was delayed until May, but there has been no word since May that ground breaking has actually taken place.

— Jeffrey Seifert



## NEWS SPLASH

COMPILED: Jeffrey L. Seifert  
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

**Schlitterbahn Upper Padre** in Corpus Christi, Texas, held a special appreciation day for government employees. Workers and family members of those employed by the city of Corpus Christi or Nueces County were given free access to the park on Saturday, August 1, 2015. The park also had live entertainment for the day including mermaids, clowns, live music and a DJ. The appreciation day was held in conjunction with a Travel Channel shoot for a future broadcast. Nearly 3,000 people took advantage of the free day, with some guests queuing two hours before the park opened. Schlitterbahn plans to hold more appreciation days in the future. Announcements will be posted to the park's Facebook page.

Jamaica's newest water park opened in June and is already having positive effects on the **Jewel Runaway Beach and Resort**. The Jewel Lagoon Water Park, the latest addition to the resort, has already brought in more than 45,000 guests in the first three months of operation, and the adjoining resort hotel is now fully booked to January 2016.

Speaking at the official opening, President and CEO of **Sagicor Group Jamaica** **Richard Byles** said, "We are satisfied with it," noting that the park has added to the attraction of the hotel, which is now reaping great benefits from the addition of the water park.

A \$5.5 million upgrade to **Water Mine Family Swimmin' Hole** in Reston, Virginia, has helped to attract families with teens. The Fairfax County facility was built in 1997 replacing an in-ground swimming pool. For years the facility attracted families with little children, but the addition now brings water slides and a water climbing structure to attract families with older siblings.

"Before, it was families with little children," Fairfax County Park Authority spokeswoman **Judy Pederson** said. "Now, families can come here for the whole day and their teenagers aren't going to say, 'gosh, Mom, I want to go home and play on the computer.'"

The county plans to continue expansion next summer with cabanas, shaded seating and an additional water play structure.

A new spray pad at **Splesj Water Park** in Holland, the Netherlands, has won a 2015 dream design award from *Aquatics International Magazine*. Supplied by **Waterplay Solutions** with distribution partner **Watergames & More**, the zero-depth, nature-inspired play space is suitable for visitors of all ages. The splash pad is actually two adjoining spray pads. Large dumping buckets and water cannons appeal to older children and adults, while the second pad caters to families with small children and features gentler sprays, showers and misters.

Splesj Water Park began as a municipal swimming pool 65 years ago. It has since grown to become one of the largest and most impressive parks in Western Europe with multiple pools, slides and attractions and is part of larger resort that includes a luxury campground.

The trustees of **Conneaut Lake Park** in Pennsylvania are hoping to get the park's water park back in to operation for the 2016 season. The attraction, built in the 1990s, has been idle for more than 10 years.

The trustees hope that reopening the water park will help attract more patrons and increase the park's revenue stream as it works its way out of bankruptcy.

The existing water attraction includes a tube slide, water slide, kiddie pool and lazy river. The first step involves cleaning out the lazy river and testing it for leaks.

**Mark Turner**, the trustees' executive director said, "The concrete is in good condition. We believe the lazy river is in excellent condition, and we believe the kiddie pool is in excellent condition. We believe the value that is there succeeds any cost of bringing it back."

Although the concrete may be in good shape, it is unlikely that the pumps and filtration system, now more than 25 years old, can be reused.

Any cost of restoration won't be known until a full evaluation is done, Turner said, "We'd very much like to have it for ready for next year."

With the popularity of dive-in movies on the rise, it is important for water parks to make certain their movie screens are properly anchored. Such was not the case at **Darien Lake**, Darien, New York, when an outdoor movie screen fell into the wave pool just a few hours after it was set up. Fortunately there were no serious injuries among those who were hit by the falling screen. Darien Lake's medical crew were on hand within minutes to treat the three guests who received minor injuries.

The screen was installed above the deep end of the wave pool the morning of July 30, before the park opened. However, at approximately 12:30 p.m. it fell into the pool below. The screen had been installed in the same location by the same contractors involved with previous dive-in movie nights. It was retrieved from the wave pool by maintenance workers and the pool opened an hour later. The screen was installed again with extra precautions to make certain it would stay put. The presentation of *Finding Nemo* proceeded as planned the following evening.

Carlsbad, New Mexico, known for the famous **Carlsbad Caverns**, is looking to add a water park to attract more tourists and provide additional activities to those visiting the caverns.

In July, the Carlsbad City Council approved a \$3 million budget for a water park to be constructed at **Lake Carlsbad Beach Park**. City Councilor **J.R. Doperto** said: "I'm hoping by next year, by Memorial Day, we can have this up and running." More than 200,000 people visit the caverns each year and it is hoped that the addition of a water park will give tourists an incentive to extend their stay in the area.

The water park would also benefit Carlsbad residents. A small water park in White City is more than 20 miles from the city.



# Croatia's Aquacolors features Polin's Magicone

POREC, Croatia — The new Aquacolors water park in Poreč, Croatia features a ride that is the first of its kind in Europe: Polin's Magicone.

Magicone is a high-capacity waterslide, shaped like a gigantic funnel on its side. The slide gives guests a one-of-a-kind riding experience. They begin their journey by descending a steep incline. They are sent whirling around the interior of the cone, undergoing surprising changes in momentum created from the ride's unique parabolic shape. They then end the adrenaline-pumping trip in either a pool or a run-out exit. Aquacolors version ends in a dry-out section.

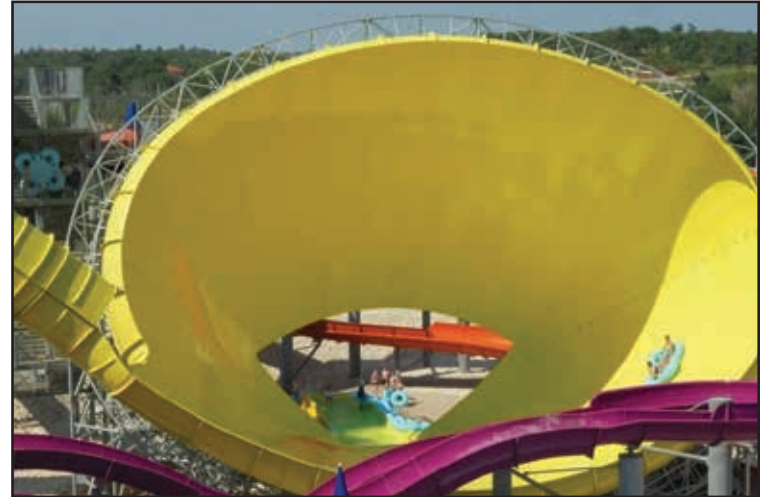
While its slide path is especially unique, Magicone sets itself apart from other slides also due to the advantages offered by its manufacturing process.

Polin uses resin transfer molding (RTM) composites technology to create Magicone, as well as nearly all of its slides. Polin established itself as the expert in this technology for the manufacture of waterslides. The process creates two perfectly shiny sides, which Polin has dubbed Magic Shine, that offer an ultra-attractive appearance plus the benefits of two patented options: Natural Light Effects

technology and Special Pattern Effects technology, as well as translucent color choices. And not only is the attractive appearance an advantage, but so are the stronger, yet lighter-weight, slide components that result, making the components easier to install due to their uniform thickness and smooth edges.

The Aquacolors water park has debuted a first of its kind in Europe, Polin's new Magicone. Magicone is a high-capacity waterslide, shaped like a funnel on its side. The Magicone features Polin's popular resin transfer molding color coating.

COURTESY POLIN



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# PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

► **Sesame Place turns 35 — Page 30 / Kentucky Kingdom opens eight rides — Page 32 / Fairs — Pages 36-39**

## Frontier City has a wet May, but roars back with Larson Giant Loop

*Log flume receives Arrow logs from Skytrans; train station gets new additions*

**AT:** Pam Sherborne  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla. — May weekend rains impacted attendance at Frontier City this year, reducing the number of early season parkgoers after a pretty good April.

Yet, as it happens, those same rains brought into full bloom foliage and flowers planted in the new beds surrounding a new ride and enhanced existing beds that are woven around other additions and renovations at the park for the 2015 season.

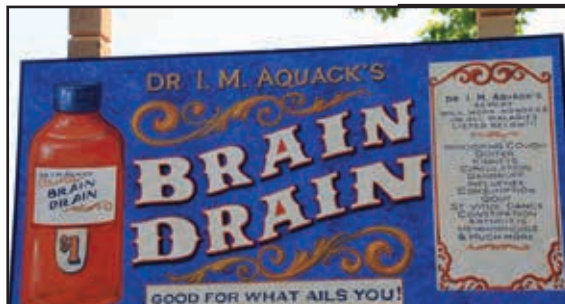
The new ride at the park for this season is a Larson International Giant Loop park officials have named Dr. I. M. Aquack's Brain Drain. The ride opened in late May when the park began its daily operations.

"Larson was good enough to put one more unit into their production for this year," said Frontier City General Manager Stephen Ball. "And, it has been very well received. Our guests like it a lot."

The 74-foot tall ride spins multiple times in both directions and hangs riders upside down several times. With a footprint of about 20-feet-by-72 feet, it fit nicely into a long narrow under used space of Frontier City.

"This area is right at the front of our park, which is very visible," Ball said. "But, the buildings there were older and there was some storage. We have a game area there as well. We took out one game building to install the ride."

And, of course, once the colorful ride was installed, the buildings looked even older so



Top left, April rains brought a wagon train of growth to the newly planted flower beds throughout Frontier City. In May, with the opening of the Brain Drain (Larson Giant Loop) the guests came out to try the newest thriller at the Oklahoma City themed. Above, the ride's theming (Dr. I.M. Aquack's Brain Drain) plays on a western doctor selling elixir, a cure-all remedy. **AT/GARY SLADE**

park officials decided to redo all the facades in the area.

The name Brain Drain comes from another Larson Giant Loop that is located at Elitch Gardens, Denver, Colo. Both parks are managed by Premier Parks, LLC.

"We decided to take advantage of materials that had already been produced to save in

our media production and marketing here," Ball said. "We did add an old western touch by using the theme of an old western doctor selling elixir."

Ball said last year's new ride was a Flying Scooters ride also from Larson.

"This is the second year we have turned to them for our new attraction," he said.

Also new this year for Frontier City are 12 logs on the park's Arrow log flume ride. Ball said their logs were beginning to show their age and they also had become high maintenance.

At the 2014 International Association of Amusement Parks & Attractions convention, Ball was shopping for new logs. He ended up purchasing the

used logs from Jerry Pendleton, Skytrans Manufacturing.

Pendleton has purchased more logs than he needed, so he sold 12 to Frontier City. And, as it turned out, the used logs had only been used for two seasons at the old Elitch Gardens before the park was moved to its current location where the flume

► **See FRONTIER, page 24**

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## ►FRONTIER

Continued from page 23

was not relocated.

"It was great and it saved us a lot of money," Ball said. "We were able to bring them back to life from a park we are associated with."

The logs did need rehabbing, which was done at the park. Ball said they had to replace all the wheels which was the biggest part of the log rehab work.

Also new this year were the enhancements to the park's train station that houses a Chance C.P. Huntington train ride called the Ol' 89er Express. This two-carriage train ride carries passengers around the entire park.

The train station is located near the Brain Drain in one of the older 1958 buildings. There is a walk-through station where passengers board the ride.

"We upgraded the facade and decked the station out with old ticket windows, authentic train routes on the walls, a telegraph machine, old books and old suitcases.

"It just sets the character," Ball said. "I think that is really important."

A renovation of Frontier City's historic Pullman car was completed for the 2015 season. The Pullman car is used for VIP clients and concert talent from the many concert shows held throughout the summer season.

Called The Sweet Adeline, the Pullman car was built in 1902. It was labeled "Texas" and served as a business-class car, later becoming the personal car of the Frisco Company president and chairman Clark Hungerford.

It was labeled "Texas" un-



Top, Frontier City's 2015 season saw other minor improvements including 12 slightly used Arrow logs for the park's Hopkins log flume. The logs were acquired from Skytrans and were operated for only two season at the original Elitch Gardens. Above, the park's train station saw new themeing elements and other improvements. AT/GARY SLADE

til it was retired in 1958. It was purchased by Jack Williams, then owner of Frontier City and relocated to his land where it sat in an Oklahoma field. In 1988, Gary Story, then Frontier City general manager, bought the car from Williams and moved it to the park where it sits today.

In April 2013, a large storm front moved through Oklahoma City carrying with it large hail that had almost catastrophic impacts on the park.

"It totaled 72 line items on

our insurance policy," Ball said. "It ended up being over one million dollars in damages."

The damage was primarily to roofs and lighting packages. The repairs were completed this year and Ball feels they now have a much healthier infrastructure in the park.

"The future looks bright for Frontier City," Ball said.

The park began part-time operations on Aug. 17 and will continue through the month of October.

## Kennywood premieres new 4-D theater experience based on Ice Age film

*Ice Age: No Time for Nuts 4-D makes July 29 debut; film to change for Phantom Fright Nights and Holiday Lights*

WEST MIFFLIN, Pa. — A mammoth new *Ice Age* branded 4-D theatrical Experience, *Ice Age: No Time For Nuts 4-D*, made its debut at Kennywood Amusement Park on July 29.

This eye-popping adventure follows the manic saber-toothed squirrel Scrat on an epic odyssey in time-travel. From the Coliseum of Ancient Rome to the dance floor of Studio 54, Scrat survives everything from Excalibur to the Titanic as he chases after his beloved acorn that's been accidentally lost in time.

This fully immersive, high energy 9-minute show was custom created by Blue Sky Studios and Fox Animation in partnership with SimEx-Iwerks Entertainment. Featuring exclusive brand new footage, *Ice Age: No Time For Nuts 4-D* is presented in high-definition 3-D projection combined with in-theater special effects to further engage the audience. The film will change for the park's fall events, Phantom Fright Nights and Holiday Lights.

"We are thrilled to bring this new *Ice Age* experience to our guests! The high action story-line engages all the senses with amazing scenes that maximize our in-theater special effects," said Kennywood General Manager Jerome Gibas. "The *Ice Age* characters are well known and appeal to our audience – families and adults visiting Kennywood will enjoy this show."





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# 2015 Golden Ticket Awards Agenda

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## Friday, September 11, 2015

12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

### Hotel Arrival and Event Registration\*

Location: Park Lane Hotel, 36 Central Park S., New York City, N.Y. 10019

Pick up Golden Ticket registration and welcome packet including credentials, event schedule, gift bag and more.

\*Late arrivals will be checked in directly at each park location.

6:00 p.m.

### Guests are Escorted to Victorian Gardens at Wollman Rink in Central Park

GTA attendees meet in hotel lobby and begin the short walk to Victorian Gardens for the evening events.

(Guides will be dressed in costumes and will be holding signs to help direct guests.)

6:30 p.m.

### Victorian Gardens Cocktail Party Followed by Dinner Reception and Entertainment

(Roaring 20s themed event with period costumes and jazz band entertainment.)

Guests are encouraged to get inspired and come adorned in 20s themed attire and accessories.

## Saturday, September 12, 2015

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

### Downtown Tour

Narrated by licensed NYC tour guides who know the city inside and out, this hop on/hop off excursion on a double-decker bus takes you through Greenwich Village, Little Italy, Chinatown, Wall Street and the Financial District, Battery Park City, South Street Seaport, the Lower East Side, along with Rockefeller Center, the United Nations building, Carnegie Hall, the Broadway Theater District and more. Along the way, you'll have the chance to explore the streets, visit the shops and enjoy a vast array of authentic cuisines.

Hop on/hop off passes will be provided to each guest upon request — tour length 2 hours (without hopping on and off).

Tours will depart across the street from the Park Lane Hotel.

3:00 p.m.

### Board Private GTA Shuttle Bus to Luna Park, Coney Island 4:00 p.m. Arrival

4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

### Free Exploration and Rides Opportunities

GTA credentials will be provided for access to all rides and activities.

6:00 p.m.

### Pre-Award Cocktail Party on the famous Coney Island Boardwalk

Location: Place to Beach, 1301 Boardwalk W., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11224.

7:00 p.m.

### Guests Walk One Block to Gargiulo's Restaurant

7:30 p.m. - 9:45 p.m.

### 2015 Golden Ticket Award Presentation

Location: Gargiulo's Restaurant, 2911 W. 15th Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11224

Awards will be in conjunction with a formal sit down dinner featuring a "Golden Age of Coney Island" theme.

Entertainment provided by RWS &amp; Associates.

10:00 p.m.

### GTA Attendees Begin Walk Back to Coney Island Boardwalk for Private Viewing of Fireworks Beginning at 10:30 p.m.

Following fireworks, attendees will board private GTA shuttle buses back to the Park Lane Hotel.



# Theme park announces anticipated Harry Potter attraction Hollywood to welcome Hogwarts at Universal Studios in 2016

AT: Dean Lamanna  
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

UNIVERSAL CITY, Calif. — In early June, Universal Studios Hollywood (USH) began counting down to the Spring 2016 debut of The WIZARDING World of Harry Potter — the most anticipated new development at the studio theme park in decades.

Already a proven smash at the Universal Orlando Resort in Florida and at Universal Studios Japan, Hollywood's multifaceted Harry Potter experience will include what has become the entertainment concept's signature ride, Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey, in hyper-realistic 3D-HD.

The attraction, more than five years in the making and customized to fit the park's hillside contours, was inspired by J. K. Row-



Southern California's theme park scene is in for a big shake-up in early 2016, when Universal Studios Hollywood will unveil The WIZARDING World of Harry Potter. Hogwarts Castle (left), the new section's focal point, will tower over Hogsmeade Village and its related rides, restaurants and retail outlets. COURTESY UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD

ling's best-selling novels and the resultant Warner Bros. film series. Guests will be swept into a fully immersive themed land that brings the Harry Potter fiction and films to life in vivid detail,

with the towering Hogwarts Castle serving as its iconic focal point.

"Harry Potter is an exhilarating, multi-generational global phenomenon that has captivated the world's attention across every one of its mediums — from books and movies to theme park adventures," said Larry Kurzweil, president of USH. "With its imminent arrival at The Entertainment Capital of L.A., Universal Studios Hollywood is thrilled to bring our guests this compelling new experience as we embark on this next chapter in our storied history."

"The momentum behind J.K. Rowling's wizarding world is as strong as ever, and we are incredibly excited to bring Hogwarts to Hollywood," said Brad Globe, president of Warner Bros. Consumer Products. "Fans around the world have experienced the magic at The



Wizarding World of Harry Potter in Orlando and Osaka, and we look forward to continued success with our partners at Universal Studios Hollywood as we offer more fans a chance to step into this immersive environment."

Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey will take guests on an excursion into many memorable scenes alongside Harry, Ron and Hermione. Traveling by Floo powder, guests will soar high above Hogwarts, partake in a Quidditch match, narrowly escape a dragon attack and have a close encounter with the Whomping Willow.

An achievement in pioneering theme park technology, the attraction features a robotic ride system fused with elaborate filmed action sequences and visceral special effects. Guests will sport Quidditch-inspired 3D goggles and venture through

journeys experienced by Harry and his friends, spiraling and pivoting 360-degrees along an elevated ride track on a whirlwind adventure.

USH's version of the attraction will be the first in the U.S. to utilize 3D-HD, which is designed to further immerse guests further in an already captivating storyline.

The WIZARDING World of Harry Potter will include the family ride Flight of the Hippogriff, the first outdoor coaster at USH.

The new section also will encourage guests to indulge in Harry Potter's epicurean world, sporting authentic food and beverages served at dining locations with names like Three Broomsticks and Hog's Head Pub. Themed merchandise and collectibles, needless to say, will abound.

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The WIZARDING World of Harry Potter will feature Universal Studios Hollywood's first outdoor roller coaster, the family-friendly Flight of the Hippogriff. Construction of the ride and its host theme area was well underway in August.

COURTESY UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD (INSET); CHRIS MURRAY, RCBD



# Universal's Islands of Adventure awaits Kong's arrival in 2016

## Skull Island: Reign of Kong, becomes next generation of Kong

ORLANDO, Fla. — King Kong will rule next year at Universal Orlando Resort with the groundbreaking attraction, Skull Island: Reign of Kong.

The new attraction will open in the summer of 2016 at Universal's Islands of Adventure — and will be an intense, all-new adventure brought to life in a dramatically themed environment. Skull Island: Reign of Kong will pull guests into a powerfully told story where they become part of the next generation of the Kong legend.

It begins as guests are transported deep into a wild and mysterious world, where their mission is to discover creatures of unknown origin — but where they are soon fighting for their own survival. Their journey will take them through an ancient temple inhabited by hostile natives, a perilous jungle ruled by prehistoric creatures, a foreboding underworld of caves concealing unspeakable



The new Skull Island: Reign of Kong attraction will open in the summer of 2016 at Universal's Islands of Adventure, and will be an intense, all-new adventure brought to life in a dramatically themed environment. Skull Island: Reign of Kong will pull guests into a powerfully told story where they become part of the next generation of the Kong legend.

COURTESY UNIVERSAL ORLANDO RESORT

terrors and face-to-face with the colossal Kong himself.

Universal Creative is working closely with Peter Jackson, famed director of 2005's blockbuster movie, *King Kong*, to immerse guests

in this incredible adventure.

"King Kong is a Hollywood movie legend and a huge part of both our history and our future," said Mike West, executive producer, Universal Creative. "He gives

us the opportunity to tap into everything that makes our film history so special and everything that makes our theme park attractions so spectacular. We can't wait to bring him to life in such an

epic way."

Since first appearing on screen in 1933, *King Kong* has been re-made twice, each time on a tremendous scale, earning seven Oscar and three Golden Globe nominations.



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# Big Bird's playhouse, Sesame Place, turns 35



## Three Zamperla rides anchor fringe seasons

AT: B. Derek Shaw  
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

LANGHORNE, Pa. — Sesame Place continues celebrating its 35th anniversary this season with extra events lined up in July (the actual anniversary month) as well as the remainder of this season. Throughout the park are special signs and decorations to commemorate the occasion, including balloons and garland, a giant inflatable birthday cake, and a line of giant candles all the way down the main midway.



Sesame Place is celebrating its 35th anniversary all this season with the Neighborhood Birthday Party Parade (above left); three Zamperla rides including this Count's Fly By (left) and new character appearances (above).  
COURTESY SESAME PLACE



Jeff Davis, vice president of Operations at Sesame Place was asked what else is new for visitors this year. He replied, "New character photo spots are stationed throughout the park and even the adorable Sesame Street character topiaries are outfitted in their birthday best!" Davis continued, "Guests will also be able to experience the spectacular new Neighborhood Birthday Party Parade. The entire parade is dressed up for the occasion including colorful balloons, sparkly cupcakes and a brand-new, toe-tapping birthday song!"

Anniversary celebrations are an important part of the Sesame Place experience. "We celebrate our birthday every five years and it's always so much fun. For our 35th birthday, we wanted to create a party atmosphere throughout the park. What you will see at Sesame Place this season is the result of some fantastic and creative teamwork by all park

departments," said Davis.

Three rides were added this season on a limited basis. They are all from Zamperla, Inc., Boonton, N.J. Davis explains, "Guests can soar, swing and fly on three new mechanical rides. The Count's Fly By (320 pph), The Castle Swing (360 pph) and The Count Around (480 pph) were added in spring to the area surrounding The Count's Splash Castle and will be back throughout The Count's Halloween Spooktacular and A Very Furry Christmas events." This is a unique opportunity that allows the park to expand their ride collection before and after the main season when the waterpark is in operation.

While the 35th anniversary celebration occurs all season long, July featured additional activities as Davis explains, "A variety of surprise special events and promotions were planned each week during the month of July, to help our guests get into the birthday spirit leading up to the parks actual 35th birthday held on July 30."

On Sesame Place's birthday, they hosted the ultimate Throwback Thursday '80s party, with guests wearing their favorite '80s throwback gear. The park threw a dance party during the day with a DJ spinning tunes from the 1980s.

Also new to Sesame Place this season is a Neighborhood Birthday Party Parade. It features a new birthday float, birthday décor, sparkly cupcakes, and a brand new, birthday song. An interactive birthday stop has visitors dancing and clapping along with their favorite Sesame Street friends as they are asked to "put their party hats on and blow out the candles."

Finally, Elmo's Eatery, the largest in-park restaurant, has been completely renovated. In addition to visual changes, (bright, colorful interior with additional seating), the biggest change includes the convenience of table delivery service.

Sesame Place is owned by SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment. It is located 30 minutes north of Philadelphia and 90 minutes south of New York City.

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# Kentucky Kingdom opens eight more attractions, announces RMC coaster

**AT:** Scott Rutherford  
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Guests visiting Kentucky Kingdom this summer found eight additional attractions in operation as the park enjoyed its second successful season since reopening last year. These include not only a selection of new rides but also several favorites from the park's early years that have been fully refurbished and updated.

In the new-for-2015 category, Kentucky Kingdom installed three pieces from Zamperla. These include: Cyclos (Discovery Revolution), Up, Up and Away (Samba Tower), and FlutterFly (Magic Bikes). Also new this season is SkyCatcher, a 130-foot-tall Vertigo tower swing from A.R.M.

Several attractions from the park's past that got plenty of TLC for this season are: Enterprise (Huss), Raging Rapids River (Intamin); 5D Cinema — Movies You Ride (playing scenes from *The Wizard of Oz*) and T3 (Vekoma suspended looping coaster featuring all new trains from KumbaK).

## Storm Chaser for 2016

In 2016, Kentucky Kingdom will become one of the latest themers to join the elite group of parks able to boast a roller coaster supplied by Rocky Mountain Construction. Next spring, Storm Chaser will debut as the park's fifth coaster.

"With the objective of offering its guests something truly unique, the park commissioned Rocky Mountain Construction to design and build its fifth and newest coaster. According to John Mulcahy, the park's director of Marketing and Communication, "Rocky Mountain Construction (RMC) is on the leading edge of coaster design and engineering, admired by both coaster enthusiasts and industry professionals.

"What makes Storm Chaser so special is that it will have RMC's unique and patented iBox track, which will rest on wood, creating the feel of a wooden coaster, but will be supported by a steel superstructure. This yields a ride that's smooth as glass, yet also very fast and intense. The iBox track also allows for the



**Kentucky Kingdom opened eight attractions this season including: top row from left, the Zamperla Cyclos and Zamperla Flutter Fly. At right from left, the 130 foot tall ARM Vertigo, named Sky-Catcher dominates the back of the park and new in 2016 is the makeover of the parks Twisted Twins into Storm Chaser from Rocky Mountain Const.**  
AT/GARY SLADE;  
RENDERING COURTESY  
KENTUCKY KINGDOM



addition of exciting elements not normally associated with traditional wooden coasters."

"Some might refer to Storm Chaser as a hybrid coaster, but it's actually an entirely new category of coaster. There are only five other parks in the world to have a coaster with the revolutionary iBox track and they are the marquee attractions at some of the largest parks in the world.

"These iBox coasters have gotten rave reviews and we're very proud to be joining their ranks. Storm Chaser will give our guests a coaster experience like no other in the region."

Mulcahy continued, "Storm Chaser, standing 100 feet tall at its highest point, will be the first coaster in America to feature a barrel roll drop from a 10-story lift hill, not to mention a near-perpendicular 78-degree angle of descent. But that's just the beginning. That first roll is followed by a stall dive, a tip-out corner, airtime hills, a twisted airtime drop, and even a corkscrew, features that simply can't be offered on traditional wooden coasters."

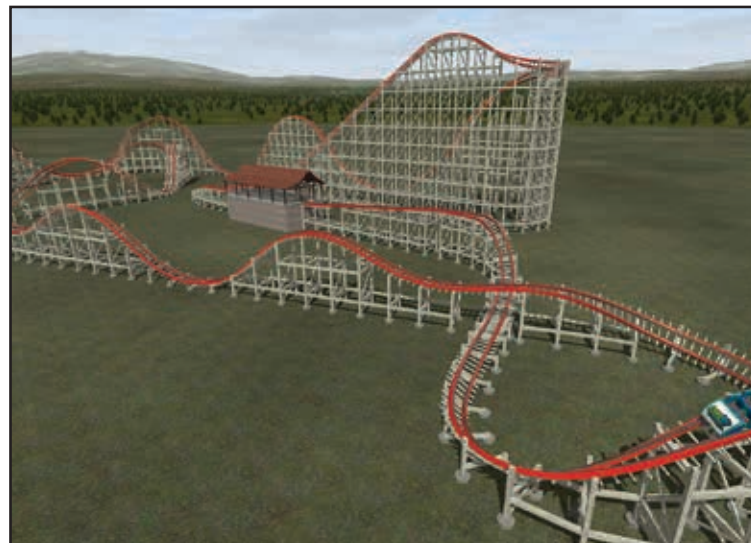
Mulcahy confirmed that Storm Chaser will replace the coaster formerly known

as Twisted Twins, which was built by Custom Coasters International and operated 1998 to 2007.

Commenting on the re-imagining of the dormant CCI coaster, Ed Hart, president and CEO of Kentucky Kingdom said: "Since we're all about creating exceptional thrills at Kentucky Kingdom, Storm Chaser fits the bill. Storm Chaser would normally cost as much as \$15 million all-in, but we're saving money by using some of the existing superstructure from Twisted Twins. However, because of the new configuration, taller lift hill, and many other innovative features, we are essentially redesigning and building a new coaster." Hart went on to ask, "When's the last time you dropped ten stories while doing a barrel roll?"

Fred Grubb, co-founder and president of RMC, added, "We are thrilled to have been selected for this project and to help introduce our special brand of coaster design to Kentucky. Storm Chaser will be one of the most exciting coasters we've ever built!"

Work on this project has already begun and Storm Chaser will be ready for its first riders when the park opens in the spring of 2016.



## KumbaK brings new life to Vekoma SLC at Kentucky Kingdom

**AT:** Scott Rutherford  
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — When it originally opened in 1995, T2 (Terror to the Second Power) had the honor of being the first Vekoma suspended looping coaster (SLC) in North America. The prototype debuted as El Condor at Walibi Holland in the Netherlands in 1994.

The coaster operated from 1995 through 2009 and then

sat dormant for the next five years. The coaster was rehabilitated and reopened to the public on July 3, 2015 with a train and new braking system updates supplied by KumbaK, a company based in The Netherlands that was founded in 2001 by nine former employees of Vekoma. Though KumbaK does offer its own products, it also specializes in the

► See T3, page 34



The Netherlands-based KumbaK engineering team has supplied these new hanger assemblies that feature softer seats, a lap restraint and a seat-belt shoulder restraint giving a much more comfortable ride on Kentucky Kingdom's Vekoma SLC, now called T3. AT/GARY SLADE





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**KumbaK** supplied new seat hangers and magnetic brakes for T3. We would like to thank Kentucky Kingdom for this opportunity and their support, and wish the park continued success.

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Kentucky Kingdom



After sitting dormant for five years, Kentucky Kingdom reopened its 1995-built Vekoma suspended looping coaster on July 3, 2015. Now known as T3, the ride features more comfortable seats and passenger restraints that were supplied by KumbaK. KumbaK also outfitted T3 with a modern magnetic braking system that reduces noise and maintenance requirements. COURTESY KENTUCKY KINGDOM

### ►T3

#### Continued from page 32

rehabilitation and modernization of existing rides from other manufacturers. KumbaK worked last season to install magnetic braking on the park's Vekoma Roller Skater junior coaster.

AT spoke with KumbaK Executive Vice President Timo Klaus about the upgrades to Kentucky Kingdom's T3 coaster. "We did not build new trains but provided new hanger assemblies, including seats and restraint systems. The seats are using several smaller cushions, creating a more comfortable seating position for the guests and allowing the park to reduce maintenance costs as they only have to replace the cushions that actually wear.

"The restraint system consists of a "beside-the-shoulder" lap bar, an "over-the-shoulder" seatbelt harness and a locked-and-monitored crotch strap. A lap bar was chosen to replace the original over-the-shoulder harness to prevent headbanging. To maintain the original distance between the guests (to stay within the original free clearance) the lap bar is connected to the hanger assembly from

the outside, using a "tube-in-tube" construction. The lap bar is locked in place using two hydraulic locking cylinders (redundancy) and finally a crotch strap that is monitored is used as an additional locking system. The over-the-shoulder seatbelt harness is mainly included to restrain the guests in the longitudinal direction."

In addition to the train modifications, KumbaK outfitted T3 with a modern magnetic braking system. "KumbaK also installed eddy current (magnetic) brakes in the braking sections, to make these areas smoother. Other benefits of magnetic braking are reduced noise and maintenance and more reliable braking action," Klaus explained. "In addition, we supplied a system to control the operation of the magnetic brakes (speed measurement system) and to operate and control the restraint systems. Because of the lap bar preventing the head-banging and the new magnetic brakes installed in the ride, the attraction is perceived to be much smoother."

Klaus confirmed that KumbaK will supply a second overhauled train for T3 during the 2016 season.





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## New SLA secretary/executive director Henning transitions smoothly into new role

**AT:** Pam Sherborne  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

CHICAGO, Ill. — Cindy Henning, the new secretary/executive director of the Showmen's League of America (SLA), began her new job June 15.

She feels her transition into the position has been smooth as she had been working for the association and with Joe Burum, who formerly held the position.

Here, Henning speaks with *AT* about her new position and the SLA.

**How many months total have you worked for the SLA?**

I was hired in 2013 under Chris Atkins' presidency and was lucky enough to be a part of the 100th year celebration. I got to know a lot of our members when I first attended the SLA Trade Show and Banquet in Las Vegas. I really enjoyed the camaraderie among the membership and really missed that when I left in February of 2014 for person-

al reasons.

After I left, I did keep in touch with some members as well as Joe Burum. When Joe discovered I was looking for a job, he suggested I return to the SLA and I eagerly accepted. Joe and I worked really well together previously and I was happy to return to such a great environment.

After Joe announced his resignation, I threw my hat into the ring for the position. I felt I was uniquely suited for the position and would be a smooth transition since I was so familiar with the inner workings of the SLA.

**Your position is one that serves the membership. What are the goals of the membership and/or board that apply to your position? What are your personal goals for the association?**

Paul Kasin is president this year. His motto is "get involved" and encourages our membership and board to really take an active role in our meetings and to par-



Cindy Henning, the new Secretary/Executive Director of the Showmen's League of America (SLA), is seen here with current SLA President Paul Kasin. COURTESY SLA

ticipate in our events this year.

We had a great start to the year with an excellent turnout at the member meeting in Gibtown (Gibson, Fla., during the annual International Independent Showman's Association trade show).

Also, our St. Patrick's Day Party and participation in the Chicago parade, as well as a Chicago Cubs

outing, were a great success. We really want to encourage our members to attend the meetings and events, and voice their concerns or ideas.

As the oldest fraternal organization in the industry, we want to ensure our membership continues through generations.

Because my background is not from this industry, my personal goal is to really get out there and meet our membership, donors, and sponsors as well as those who may be interested in joining the SLA. Like most organizations, especially non-profits, increasing and retaining our membership base is crucial to our survival.

I want to make sure we are doing everything we can to stay relevant and make sure that we add value to our members and sponsors.

**Will we, in the industry, see changes in the SLA going forward, in marketing to promote membership, etc.?**

We always try to improve our communication with the industry. Since returning in January, I make

sure that our newsletters are sent monthly, which keeps our members involved with the activities of the club.

I am currently working to improve our social media presence via Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. We also are looking at different ways we can reach out to the younger generation and get them involved with the SLA.

**Traditionally, the OABA is the business arm of the industry and SLA is more of a charitable arm? Does the SLA have any plans to change this?**

The SLA is very proud of its charitable roots and plans to continue to provide scholarships for those in the amusement business as well as financial aid to those in need in our industry. Our Christmas party in the Chicago area benefits about 1,500 mentally and physically challenged children and is a wonderful opportunity to get involved with our organization.

We are lucky to have many amazing donors that contribute to such wonderful causes and an active board who is very passionate about the SLA and the benefits and contributions it makes to our industry.

**Are there any plans that might bring the OABA and the SLA closer, as far as an organization?**

The OABA and SLA will continue to have a great relationship while maintaining their separate, yet equally important roles in our industry.

**What do you think you bring to the SLA?**

As an "outsider," I think I have a fresh perspective on who we are and where we are possibly headed. My background was in the financial industry where almost everything we did was quantified in some way.

It's that kind of thinking that really gives you a solid foundation to examine your goals and what you need to do to achieve them.

Therefore, I like to take a look at numbers and then make a plan to achieve goals. I think that there is no point in doing something if you can't measure it somehow so that you are able to improve upon it.

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## CARNIVAL LIGHTS

COMPILED: Pam Sherborne

[psherborne@amusementtoday.com](mailto:psherborne@amusementtoday.com)

**Gilbert Arenas**, an American professional basketball player originally from California, visited the **Orange County Fair**, Costa Mesa, Calif., which ran July 17-Aug. 16 this year. He visited during the fair's second weekend and won 15 prizes on the midway.

Arenas posted his wins on Instagram and wrote in a caption that he was "banned from all the basketball hoops #orangecountyfair," but that's not actually true, according to carnival officials of **Ray Cammack Shows** and OC Fair officials.

While Arenas did win the maximum number of prizes — players can take home just one prize per day at each game — he isn't banned, according to the event officials.

"I'd say he looks pretty happy in the picture," **Chris Lopez**, vice president for RCS, told a local news agency. "Makes me wonder how he got all that home? Mr. Arenas is welcome back to the O.C. Fair any time, and that includes the basketball games."

While a final count hadn't been completed at AT press time, **DuPage County Fair**, Wheaton, Ill., organizers say they attracted solid crowds over the five-day event, July 22-26.

Despite the need to fix hundreds of building code violations in the months before the fair opened, organizers say improvements to the fairgrounds were largely well-received.

"We had a dynamite fair," **Jim McGuire**, manager of the **DuPage County Fair Association**, was quoted as saying in a local newspaper. "It was very successful. The weather was great and everybody that came out had a good time."

McGuire said exact attendance and revenue figures weren't readily available because organizers were busy cleaning up the 42-acre site. But, he was optimistic that crowds matched or exceeded last year's fair, which drew 111,000 visitors.

McGuire said new air conditioning in the main exposition hall kept crowds comfortable and out of the heat.

Six months before the start of the fair, Wheaton inspectors found more than 600 code violations on the fairgrounds. Most were minor, but 51 were considered serious enough to prevent building occupancy or use of equipment. The county sought the inspection after a task force studying the future of the property raised potential problems.

McGuire said he hopes the improvements impress county leaders who will decide what to do with the site after a lease with the fair association expires in 2020.

The **Nebraska State Fair**, Grand Island, officially kicked off Aug. 28 and one of the newest features of this year's event is the new partnership between fair officials, emergency management, the **Hastings Weather Service** and more.

New emergency signs that are yellow with black lettering were added this year. But that wasn't all. The rain experienced at the 2014 fair turned the parking lot into "mud soup." This year fair officials are prepared in case this happens again.

**Joseph McDermott**, the fair's executive director, told a local news agency that the fair

will be prepared by having on hand sand, rock and mulch to spread throughout the grounds to alleviate water issues.

To predict severe weather, a partnership with the Hastings Weather Service has added a command center to the fairgrounds that can alert fair officials if the grounds need to be evacuated. Plus, a grounds wide speaker systems was installed.

Nearly \$4 million in improvements are set to be made to the **Missouri State Fairgrounds**, Sedalia, which ran Aug. 13-23.

Missouri Gov. **Jay Nixon** visited the grounds at the end of July and announced the upgrades that were approved by the most current session of the State Legislature.

Planned improvements include more than \$1.3 million worth of repairs to the State Fair Womens' Building, such as renovating bathrooms and replacing the roof. The Missouri State Fair Coliseum is set for about \$1.5 million in repairs to the roof and other maintenance. Both facilities were built more than a century ago.

Another roughly \$1 million will go to upgrades to the utilities system in the West Campgrounds. No timetable for the completion of renovations was set.

**Wade Shows** provided the midway to the Missouri State Fair this year. For this year's 113th running, the carnival brought in more than 40 rides.

The **International Association of Fairs and Expos (IAFE)** T3 Specialty Seminar (formerly known as the Spring Seminar) will be held Sept. 23-25 in Enfield, Conn. T3 (Trade, Treats, and Traditions) will focus on concessions, commercial exhibits, and competitive exhibits. Attendees will learn about the latest food trends, commercial exhibit management, and popular contests while being surrounded by New England in full autumn color.

The seminar will include a tour of **The Big E**, Springfield, Mass., Sept. 18-Oct. 4, as the exposition is occurring.

With California in the firm grip of drought, officials at **California Mid-State Fair**, Paso Robles, had some grass switched out for decomposed granite and asked students to conserve while rinsing their animals in the livestock barns for this year's fair that ran July 22-Aug. 2.

Plant-growing competitions also took a water-saving turn, with more non-thirsty succulents entered than in previous years.

While the emphasis is on water conservation, the fair didn't turned off the tap as some other fairs have around the state.

"Some fairs are going dry entirely, but I would worry about ... not washing animals and not keeping them clean and the sanitary issues that come with that for the kids," **Vivian Robertson**, CEO of the **Mid-State Fair and Paso Robles Event Center**, was quoted as saying in a local news story.

Instead, Robertson said Junior Livestock participants were asked for the first time to follow "minimal rinse" rules that encourage minimal water use and only allow hoses with shut-off nozzles.

**Davis Enterprises** provided the midway for the 2015 event.



# California State Fair sets new records

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Record numbers of guests attended the 2015 California State Fair, which ran July 22-Aug. 2. Total attendance grew to 787,833 this year compared to the 750,445 in 2014. This represented more than 37,000 additional visitors, a five percent increase.

"We wish to thank the public for its overwhelming support of the California State Fair," said Rick Pickering, CEO of the California Exposition & State Fair.

The average daily total attendance was the highest since 2007 at 45,992 and the average daily paid attendance was the highest in 10 years. Paid attendance was up 4.1 percent from 556,440 to 579,338.

The state fair has run for 17 days since 2013. From 2007-2009 and from 2011-2012, the fair ran for 18 days. In 2010 the fair ran for 19 days.

The fair celebrated its best opening Saturday and Sunday in nine years (total attendance) and its best opening week in 10 years (total attendance). The middle Saturday of the fair (July 18) was the single highest paid attendance in more than 10 years at 66,469, and had the largest food and beverage sales in the history of the California State Fair with nearly \$1.1 million in a single day.

The 2015 State Fair was packed full of more than 3,000 exhibits and events that featured technology and agriculture and celebrated the best of the Golden State.

Butler Amusements carnival sales were up 13.5 percent from \$4,095,097 in 2014 to \$4,651,109 in 2015 an increase of \$556,013. The final Saturday of the Fair proved to be the largest grossing day for the carnival in the history of the California State Fair.

As the largest food festival in Northern California, food and beverage sales broke records in 2014 with sales at \$8.3 million and that trend continued in 2015 with gross sales increasing 14 percent with more than \$9.5 million in sales in 17 days, a substantial contribu-

## STATE FAIRS

tion to the Sacramento economy and further proof that this region loves its food.

The majority of food vendors saw increases in sales including fan favorites such as Cardinali's Pizza, which was up 53 percent; Pepe's Mariscos, which was up 11 percent, and Country Fair Cinnamon Rolls, which was up 14 percent in sales.

Wine Slushie sales were

up 20 percent and sales of California's award-winning wine in the Save Mart Supermarkets Wine Country were up seven percent. A revamped Craft Brew Pub saw an 87 percent increase in sales compared to 2014.

The single highest grossing food stand was Terry's Barbecue which had sales of \$413,177. In total, nearly \$1 million was spent at the barbecue stands at the fair.

—Pam Sherborne



The 2015 California State Fair, Sacramento, broke an array of records including total attendance during its July 22-Aug. 2 run. The fair drew 787,833 fairgoers this year, a five percent increase over 2014. COURTESY CALIFORNIA STATE FAIR



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# BUSINESS, SAFETY, & CLASSIFIED

▶ MarketWatch — Page 46 / Obituary — Page 47 / AIMS News — Pages 48 / CLASSIFIEDS — Page 51

## Simworx completes acquisition of RoboCoaster

*U.K.'s Business Growth Fund provided capital; facility to expand*

KINGSWINFORD, U.K. — Simworx, one of the amusement industry's leading suppliers of turnkey advanced media-based theme park attractions, has completed the acquisition of RoboCoaster, the game-changing innovator behind some of the world's most successful theme park rides.

Simworx has worked with RoboCoaster during the course of the last two years under a highly successful Teaming Agreement and this new development was seen as a natural progression for the two companies.

Founded by Terry Monkton and Andrew Roberts, Simworx has built up an impressive product portfolio of media based attractions that includes 4D Effects Cinemas, the Stargazer and Cobra dynamic motion simulation rides, the Immersive Tunnel and more recently in a collaboration with Dutch based Mondial, one of the leading amusement ride manufacturers, the 360 degree Flying Theatre.

Simworx created the *Angry Birds* 4D cinema at Thorpe Park for Merlin Entertainments and has again been chosen by Merlin to develop and deliver one of the key elements of the new Shrek's Adventure attraction, which opened in London in July. The ride is based on Simworx's proprietary Immersive Tunnel, where guests board a London Bus-themed motion simulator and are surrounded by a 360 degree, 3D

cinema screen and immersed in lighting, sound, smells and weather effects.

Simworx's first Immersive Tunnel ride, The Lost Temple, was delivered to Movie Park Germany in May 2014. Since then the business has secured further Immersive Tunnel orders and has been in talks with theme parks in the U.K., U.S., Asia and the Middle East, where there is a trend towards media-based attractions that are cost effective, flexible and offer visitors an indoor option.

Warwickshire-based RoboCoaster is led by Gino De-Gol, an internationally recognized developer of Intellectual Property for use in passenger carrying robotic technology and trackless dark rides. The acquisition will combine RoboCoaster's pioneering robotics capability with Simworx's Motion Simulation and Audio Visual experience. The two businesses will now concentrate on the development and manufacture of a new generation of ride technologies and robot based show solutions to add to the existing RoboCoaster RCX Robotic attractions and AGV Dark Rides that the two companies currently offer. Gino will remain as a director of the business and play a major role in the combined companies going forward.

In funding the acquisition, Simworx approached BGF (Business Growth Fund), the U.K.'s most active provider of growth capital to mid-sized businesses. BGF



Above, a view of the RoboCoaster vehicle in a theater experience. Below, Simworx Managing Director Terry Monkton (left) and RoboCoaster Managing Director Gino de Gol are ready to meet the growth challenges ahead. COURTESY SIMWORX, ROBOCOASTER



provides long-term equity investment for companies with strong growth potential. It is an independent company with capital of up to £2.5 billion and is backed by five of the U.K.'s main banking groups: Barclays, HSBC, Lloyds, RBS and Standarda Chartered. BGF is managed autonomously with an independent management team ([www.bgf.co.uk](http://www.bgf.co.uk)).

In addition to the acquisition of RoboCoaster, Simworx will also use the funding to

double the size of its production plant in Kingswinford and increase its demonstration facilities. The business will also add to its existing 30 employees by recruiting a further 20 new members of staff in the next 12 months, including designers, engineers and administrative staff.

To further enhance the management team, Mike Lloyd will also join as non-executive chairman following an introduction made by BGF. Mike has more than

40 years' experience in engineering, manufacturing and supply chain roles in the electrical machinery and power sectors. His senior leadership roles have included group manufacturing director and president of Rolls Royce Gas Turbines Operations and technical director of GEC Large Machines.

Simworx designs, assembles and delivers all of its turnkey solutions, with 75 percent of its suppliers for component parts located within 25 miles of the company's headquarters. RoboCoaster will continue to licence existing technologies as well as develop further intellectual property and will begin manufacturing at its new facility in the West Midlands, using the best of British engineering and production capability.

Terry Monkton, managing director for Simworx said: "I am delighted to formalize our working relationship with RoboCoaster. As well as having access to some amazing technology, they have been an absolute pleasure to work with over the last 24 months. I am also pleased to be working with BGF as our investment partners. After speaking to BGF for the past 15 months, they also share our enthusiasm in the continued development of new technology and a desire for such technology to be manufactured here in Great Britain. Demand for media-based attractions that offer visitors a new type of experience and can also provide entertainment regardless of weather conditions is growing exponentially – and we are well placed to meet that demand."

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# Association Summer Meetings

## Hersheypark hosts annual PAPA meet

AT: B. Derek Shaw  
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

HERSHEY, Pa. — Nearly 100 members of the Pennsylvania Amusement Parks Association (PAPA) met July 20 and 21 for their annual summer fun meeting at Hersheypark. Each year the summer meeting travels to a different park while the spring meeting is held at the Hershey Lodge.

The first day started with a golf tournament raising over \$1,500 for the Barbara J. Knoebel scholarship fund that annually helps student employees of PAPA member parks in the form of scholarships for educational purposes. Behind the scenes tours were available for interested attendees: Laff Trakk, Food and Beverage, Security/First Aid, Maintenance, Wardrobe, Games, Hersheypark Zoo, Retail and Human Resources. That evening attendees socialized and dined in the Tidal Force catering area.

After a delicious breakfast on Tuesday, another round of tours (covering the same departments as the previous day) were available to interested participants.

The PAPA board of directors meeting also took place mid-morning. Subjects covered included: a review of the Pennsylvania Tourism Summit; By-Laws review; Water Park and Human Resources committee reports.

Prior to the start of the business meeting, Angela Liddle, president and CEO of the Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance made a presentation on child abuse including mandated reporters versus permissive reporters. With new laws implemented in the state on December 31, 2014; Liddle feels we are moving closer to zero tolerance with children. Many parks are already incorporating training with Lost and Found, First Aid and Security personnel, however more staff should be included. PAPA feels it is important to have member parks better prepared to identify and report potential child abuse cases.

► See PAPA, page 42



Jeff Davis, Operations with Sesame Place and Leanna Muscato, Games Department and part owner of Knoebel's Amusement Resort were on hand at the annual meeting. Davis is 2015-2016 PAPA president. Leanna is current vice president of the association and will become the 2016-2017 PAPA president. AT/B. DEREK SHAW



At PAPA from left: Richard Jackson, vice president North American Operations, IAAPA; Maegan Wallace, Amusement Sales & Marketing, Maclan Corporation; Tim Timco, vice president of Sales and Marketing, S&S Worldwide. AT/B. DEREK SHAW



At PAPA, back row: Evan Knoebel; Mary Knoebel; Trevor Knoebel, all Knoebels Amusement Resort; Alicia Smith, Attorney At Law, Marshall Dennehey Warner Coleman & Goggin and Doug Smith. Front row: Alex Knoebel and 13 month old Finley Smith. AT/B. DEREK SHAW

PAPA attendees get a behind the scenes tour in the maintenance area of Laff Trakk. Scott Silar, Aquatics manager at Hershey Entertainment & Resorts (on right) led the tour. AT/B. DEREK SHAW



## Story Land hosts NEAAPA's gathering

GLEN, N.H. — More than 60 members of the New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (NEAAPA) met on July 28 at Story Land for the organization's annual summer meeting.

The day-long event included morning refreshments and lunch followed by a property tour, conducted by Story Land General Manager Eric Dziedzic.

NEAAPA members enjoyed the park throughout the morning and early afternoon, taking in such attractions as the Roar-O-Saurus wooden roller coaster and water rides in the 90-degree temperatures.

The board directors met late afternoon with President Ryan DeMaria, Canobie Lake Park, Salem, N.H., presiding. A number of reports were given by committee chairs and industry-related issues were discussed. Most property operators in attendance reported having good seasons heading into August.

A 5 p.m. reception was held at the park's World Pavilion followed by dinner.

Meeting sponsors were: Themendous, Allied Specialty Insurance, Midway Stainless Fabricators, Premier Rides, White Mountain Attractions Association, Carousel Family Fun Centers, CLM Entertainment Group and Dippin' Dots.

Members will gather during the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Expo in November in Orlando, Fla. Events will include an annual luncheon and Tom Morrow Social dinner, honoring the late past president of the organization, also known as "Mr. NEAAPA" for his contributions to the association. Morrow was operations manager for many years at Canobie Lake Park.

NEAAPA's Annual Meeting will be slated in March of next year with details to be announced.

—Ron Gustafson



NEAAPA Secretary Ed Hodgdon (left) chats with Story Land General Manager Eric Dziedzic during the reception. COURTESY RON GUSTAFSON, NEAAPA



Cinderella greeted NEAAPA members during their summer meeting at Story Land, including organization President Ryan DeMaria. COURTESY RON GUSTAFSON, NEAAPA



# High-tech parking garage and more now open at Disney Springs

**AT:** Scott Rutherford  
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ORLANDO, Fla. — There are big changes coming to Downtown Disney as the popular entertainment district steadily transforms into the new and expanded Disney Springs. When completed in 2016, Disney Springs will sport the overall theme of a small, charming Florida town of the early 1900s. This major metamorphosis will not happen overnight. Rather, it's occurring in calculated and well-planned phases. The current 75 dining, entertainment and shopping venues will swell to more than 150 while parking capacity will increase by one third when Disney Springs is completed.

Currently, a new high-tech parking garage along with several upscale dining and shopping offerings are among the project's first major attributes to come online.

## 21st century car park

The first of two new five-level 4,000-space Disney Springs parking garages is now open. But this is hardly your run-of-the-mill concrete behemoth designed to pack in as many vehicles as possible. This is a quantum leap forward in automobile parking technology. Versions of the system are common in Europe



**The first of two large five-level parking garages (4,000 parking spaces each) are now open for business as Downtown Disney continues its transformation into Disney Springs. The garage utilizes modern technology to inform drivers how many parking spaces are available on each level as well as lighted ceiling-mounted sensors that indicate if a particular space is vacant or occupied. AT/SCOTT RUTHERFORD**

as well as at a number of U.S. airports including Baltimore-Washington International and Dallas-Fort Worth International, and it's fully automated.

Unlike at the Disney theme parks where cast members direct guests where to leave their vehicles, the new garage accomplishes this quickly and efficiently with a high-tech but simple solution. As drivers approach the garage's entrance, a large vertical marquee informs them in real time how many spaces are available on each level.

Once they reach their chosen level, other displays reiterate that level's number of vacant spaces as well as how many are open in each row. Finally, easy-to-see ceiling-mounted sensors above each space indicate with a glowing green light if the space is available. The sensor light is red if the space is occupied. This allows drivers to immediately select a row and park their vehicle.

While virtually every other area theme park facility charges a fee, the new Disney Springs garage is fully compli-

mentary though valet parking is offered for a fee. Additionally, sleek banks of elevators and escalators along with covered pedestrian bridges and ramps allow guests to quickly navigate the structure and begin their adventure.

## Savvy dining and shopping

The Landing is the first of four new Disney Springs "neighborhoods" to open for business. This area is home to unique shopping locations and memorable dining experiences such as The Boathouse (gourmet steaks, chops, seafood and raw bar); Morimoto Asia (Japanese Master Chef Masaharu Morimoto's pan-Asian cuisine); and STK (modern steakhouse mixed with the ambiance of a sleek lounge).

Contemporary new shopping opportunities abound in the form Apex by Sunglass Hut, The Art of Shaving, Chapel Hats, Havaianas, Sanuk, Sound Lion and Erin McKenna Bakery NYC.

Despite all the construction activity, Downtown Disney remains open for business. The second parking garage along with the remainder of what will be Disney Springs is expected to be complete in 2016. AT will stay abreast of the project's developments as they become operational.

## ►PAPA

**Continued from page 41**

Discussion took place about collaboration with PRLA (Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association) regarding school start date legislation. It was suggested rather than approaching school districts with references to pre or post Labor Day start-ups, perhaps September 1st might be less confusing wording.

The recent passage of House Bill 794 (Local Room Tax Reform) on June 29th was discussed. That bill allows 54 of the 67 counties to increase the room tax from 3 percent, up to 5 percent, determined by the County Commissioners in the affected counties. (This bill enables, not mandates, any of the 54 counties to increase the percentage, if they so desire.) The PAPA board is working with the Pennsylvania Association of Travel & Tourism (PATT), the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) and PRLA to use some of the potential tax revenue for marketing and promotion in their area.

Rounding out the annual gathering was another tasty meal prepared by the Hersheypark culinary staff. Many attendees then stayed to enjoy the rides, shows and attractions Hersheypark has for little and big kids of all ages.

The 2016 PAPA Spring Meeting will be held at the Hershey Lodge in early March. The 2016 Summer Meeting will occur at Knoebels Amusement Resort, Elysburg, Pa. The dates have not yet been set.

## PACE Safety Seminar

The 2015 PACE (Parks and Carnivals Educational) ride safety seminar will occur October 26 to 29 at the Holiday Inn, Morgantown, Pa. Hands-on training will be available with portable equipment. This is held in conjunction with the Pennsylvania State Showmen's Association and offers both 24 and 32 hour certification training sessions. The educational portion of the seminar is led by instructors from NAARSO. Inspector testing is also offered for Pennsylvania Certified Inspectors and/or NAARSO levels. Gary Chubb at Hersheypark is the contact.

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## NBC Sports Grill & Brew to join roster at Universal Orlando's CityWalk

ORLANDO, Fla. — The world's first-ever NBC Sports Grill & Brew is coming to Universal CityWalk — bringing an entirely new level of sports-dining experience. Opening this fall, the all-new restaurant is designed to reflect the excellence and excitement of NBC Sports' award-winning coverage.

The new restaurant will combine a sophisticated and stylish setting with wall-to-wall sports coverage, a specially created menu that includes all your favorites and more — and an amazing beer selection.

A massive HD stadium screen more than 100-feet wide will tower over guests as they enter the restaurant. Searchlights will span the sky. And then, as guests enter, the real MVP experience will begin. Food will be prepared on open kettle grills set where everyone can watch the action. And every fan will have the best seat in the house thanks to nearly 100 HD TV screens that will be playing a constant stream of live sports content and in-depth sports coverage.

And no sports dining experience is complete without the perfect beer. NBC Sports Grill & Brew features more than 100 unique selections, ranging from craft beers to regional brews to an exclusive draft you can only find at the restaurant.

NBC Sports Grill & Brew continues the epic growth at Universal CityWalk. The entertainment complex recently underwent a historic expansion that included the opening of eight new venues in just one year. The two-tiered, 30-acre complex features a collection of themed restaurants, shops and nightclubs, including The Cowfish, VIVO Italian Kitchen, Emeril's Restaurant Orlando, Jimmy Buffett's Margaritaville, Antojitos Authentic Mexican Food and Rising Star.

NBC Sports Grill & Brew will be located right before the entrance of Universal Studios Florida, next to Element.



The world's first-ever NBC Sports Grill & Brew (above) is coming to Universal CityWalk this fall, bringing an entirely new level of sports-dining experience. Right, The Cowfish features a cutting-edge fusion of burger and sushi that offers the best of both worlds.

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# New study: SeaWorld's killer whales live as long as those in wild

ORLANDO, Fla. — A new peer-reviewed study published in the *Journal of Mammalogy* by the Oxford University Press adds important insights to the debate over how long killer whales in human care live. The study found no difference in life expectancy between killer whales born at SeaWorld and a well-studied population of wild killer whales.

The study, "Comparisons of life-history parameters between free-ranging and captive killer whale (*Orcinus orca*) populations for application toward species management," compares current published data for survival and reproductive activity of known-age Pacific Northwest killer whales since 1975 with the life history of killer whales in SeaWorld's care. The average life expectancy for SeaWorld's killer whales is 41.6 years; average life expectancies for Southern and Northern Resident killer whales are 29.0 and 42.3 years respectively.

Additionally, the study shows that average calf survival rate from approximately 6 months of age (i.e., age at first sighting) to age 2 in the Southern Resident killer whale population (79.9 percent) is significantly less than SeaWorld's average calf survival rate from 40 days to age 2 (96.6 percent).

"Although emotion will always be a part of the debate as to whether killer whales, or any other species, should be maintained in human care, it is absolutely necessary to have validated facts when an argument for or against is being made on scientific grounds," said study author Kevin Willis, vice president for Biological Programs for the Minnesota Zoo. "Based on the available data, it is now clear that it cannot be truthfully argued that killer whales should not be maintained in captivity because they have a shortened life expectancy relative to their wild counterparts."

The objective of this study was to characterize and compare reproductive parameters and survivorship patterns of free-ranging killer whales in the Pacific Northwest and killer whales living at SeaWorld using methodologies previously published for zoological and free-ranging populations. The Northern and Southern Resident killer whale popula-

tions of the Pacific Northwest are the most studied and documented wild killer whales in the world. These new comparisons provide a novel metric from which comparisons with other populations can be made. They also shed new light on age estimates for the species as a whole.

"This article represents the first peer-reviewed publication that directly compares reproductive and survivorship

## To access the full study:

<http://j mammal.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2015/07/09/j mammal.gyv113.article-info>

•  
[www.seaworldentertainment.com](http://www.seaworldentertainment.com)

patterns between captive and wild killer whales," said study author Todd Robeck, DVM, Ph.D., vice president of Theriogenology for SeaWorld Parks

& Entertainment.

"The results demonstrate unequivocally that killer whales in captivity have similar life expectancies to those in the wild and provide invaluable knowledge concerning normal reproductive patterns of this species. This information is imperative for developing management plans and directing future research efforts that are designed to protect wild killer whale populations."

The ability to study killer whales in controlled research settings in accredited zoological institutions like SeaWorld has provided most of the fundamental information known about the species' physiology including adaptations to diving; auditory detection, echolocation, and learning; reproductive physiology; growth and development; metabolic and energy requirements; and immune system function.



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# MARKETWATCH



COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 07/30/15	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	39.30	44.43	26.56
Merlin Entertainments Group/ Legoland	MERL	LSE	414.00	420.10	3.277
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	52.94	60.64	42.75
Comcast Corp./ NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	62.39	64.99	49.33
	CMCSK	NASDAQ	62.17	64.69	49.26
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	120.03	120.35	78.54
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	9010	TYO	1251.00	1298.00	975.00
Haicahang Holdings Ltd.	2255HK	SEHK	1.45	2.13	1.02
Leofoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	10.90	13.10	10.30
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	19.65	27.36	16.84
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	17.43	28.43	15.11
Shenzhen Overseas Chinese Town Co., Ltd. (OCT)	000069	SZSE	9.02	14.78	5.12
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	46.14	51.09	31.77
Skyocean International	00593HK	SEHK	12.30	12.46	3.96
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	3948.00	4000.00	2941.00
Village Roadshow	VRL	ASX	6.31	7.91	5.08

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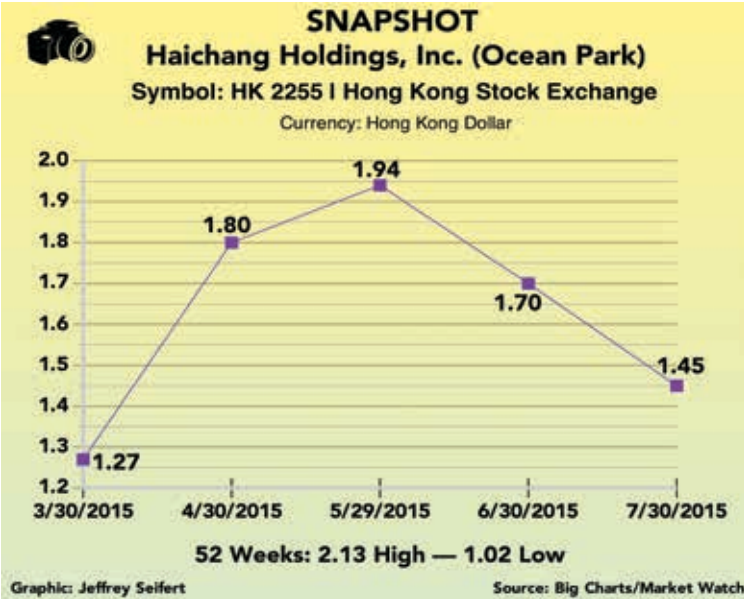
**Worldwide Markets:** **ASX**, Australian Securities Exchange; **CSE**, Copenhagen Stock Exchange; **LSE**, London Stock Exchange; **NYSE**, New York Stock Exchange; **NASDAQ**, National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations; **SEHK**, Hong Kong Stock Exchange; **SZSE**, Shenzhen Stock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

## DIESEL PRICES

Region (U.S.)	As of 07/27/15	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	\$2.809	- \$1.101
Midwest	\$2.619	- \$1.182
Gulf Coast	\$2.611	- \$1.156
Mountain	\$2.735	- \$1.153
West Coast	\$2.814	- \$1.114
California	\$3.072	- \$1.018

## CURRENCY

On 07/30/15 \$1 USD =	
0.9051	EURO
0.6401	GBP (British Pound)
123.64	JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.9627	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.3659	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.2931	CAD (Canadian Dollar)



## BUSINESS WATCH

### Six Flags reports 2nd quarter results

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — **Six Flags Entertainment Corporation** (NYSE: SIX), announced on July 22 it's financial performance in the second quarter of 2015 as revenue grew \$10 million, or 3 percent to \$386 million, and Adjusted EBITDA grew \$4 million, or 3 percent to \$149 million. Comparisons to prior year were adversely impacted by foreign exchange rate translations from the company's parks in Mexico and Canada and on a constant currency basis, revenue grew \$14 million or 4 percent, and Adjusted EBITDA grew \$5 million or 4 percent.

For the first six months of 2015, revenue grew \$21 million, or 5 percent to \$471 million, and Adjusted EBITDA grew \$9 million, or 9 percent to \$111 million. On a constant currency basis, revenue for the first six months of 2015 grew \$27 million, or 6 percent and Adjusted EBITDA grew \$11 million or 11 percent.

Attendance in the second quarter increased 9 percent to 8.9 million guests, and year-to-date attendance grew 9 percent to 10.4 million guests. Attendance gains were driven by a strong response to new attractions and by increased visitation of season pass holders and members.

### SeaWorld CEO Joel Manby issues statement

ORLANDO, Fla. — **SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.** (NYSE: SEAS), issued the following statement on July 15 from CEO **Joel Manby** in response to recent news reports that PETA had an organization member working at a SeaWorld property.

"The allegations made July 14 against a SeaWorld employee are very concerning. These allegations, if true, are not consistent with the values of the SeaWorld organization and will not be tolerated. The SeaWorld board of directors and I have initiated an investigation into this matter which will be led by independent outside counsel, **Ron Olson of Munger, Tolles & Olson**, whose firm will have full access to our organization and people. In addition, we have placed the employee in question on paid administrative leave pending the findings of the investigation. We will take all appropriate actions based on the results of the investigation to ensure that the integrity and values of the SeaWorld organization are upheld."

### DreamMore Resort announces membership club

PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. — **Dollywood's DreamMore Resort**, the new 300-room hotel centerpiece of **Dollywood** scheduled to open as *AT* was going to press, is introducing a new membership program to offer exclusive benefits and privileges at the resort, as well as savings certificates for **Dollywood** and **Dollywood's Splash Country**.

Founders Club Premier memberships will be sold at an introductory price of \$129 per year and include a free night certificate for the resort, complimentary guest room upgrades for member stays in the resort, a free admission for Dollywood or Dollywood's Splash Country and exclusive offers for the spa and dining facilities.

Membership sales for Founders Club Premier may be purchased by calling 1-800-DOLLYWOOD or by visiting premier.dollywoodsdreammore.com.

### CORRECTION

On page 7 of the August issue, *Amusement Today* incorrectly listed the location of Tayto Park. The park is located in Co. Meath, Ireland. *AT* regrets the error.

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**PEOPLE WATCH****Bill Ossim joins Zierer as North American Rep.**

DEGGENDORF, Germany — Germany-based amusement ride supplier Zierer has announced the hiring of **Bill Ossim** as the company's new North American Representative.

"As the North American Representative for Zierer, I am excited about our abilities to provide our customers with some of the most well engineered and designed rides in the industry," Ossim said. "Zierer has a portfolio of rides that fit nearly every need a park may have from our family rides such as the Wave Swinger to our Tower Coaster (which opened at Knoebels Amusement Resort in May 2015). Representing Zierer has been a perfect fit for me and I enjoy working for a company that is able to operate with the attention to detail of a small company, but has the capacity, business structure and portfolio to produce everything from family rides to thrilling large coasters."

Ossim most recently came from the construction business having worked on numerous tourism and sports projects. Prior to that he worked at Star Trek: the Experience and at Kings Island.

Bill Ossim can be reached at (575) 574-2593 or by email at: b.ossim@zierer.com.

**Ossim****James Forrester, Jr. joins Hershey Ent. Group**

HERSHEY, Pa. — **James (Jim) W. Forrester, Jr.** has assumed the position of assistant general manager, Revenue Operations for Hershey Entertainment Group (which includes Hersheypark), a division of Hershey Entertainment & Resorts (HE&R).

In his new role, Forrester oversees the operations in the following areas of the Hershey Entertainment Group: Food & Beverage, Retail Outlets & Merchandising, Games, Guest Services, and Ticketing. Forrester reports to Kevin Stumpf, General Manager, Attractions and Entertainment for HE&R.

Previously employed by Walt Disney Parks and Resorts and ABC News, Forrester held positions within the Operations, Finance and Productions Teams. Most recently he served as Senior Manager of Operations for Epcot Vacation Planning and Resource Management.

Forrester also served in the United States Navy as both a Submarine Officer and an Intelligence Analyst, spending three years on USS Phoenix (SSN-702) and two years with the Office of Naval Intelligence. He currently serves as a Captain in the Navy Reserves in a unit supporting NATO Allied Command Transformation training centers.

A native of Georgetown, South Carolina, Forrester, his wife, and two daughters reside in Hummelstown.

**Forrester****OBITUARY****Rainbow Valley Rides founder, Ronald A. Kedrowicz, dies at 79**

WOODRUFF, Wis. — **Ronald A. Kedrowicz**, age 79, of Almond, Wis., passed away on Saturday July 25, 2015, at Seasons of Life Hospice Center in Woodruff, Wis.

He was born Dec. 29, 1935 in the Town of Sharon, Wis. He is the son of the late Joseph & Florence (Kielpinski) Kedrowicz.

Kedrowicz entered the U.S. Navy on March 22, 1956 at Great Lakes, Ill. He served on the USS Valley Forge and was honorably discharged on Jan. 27, 1958 at Norfolk, Va.

His marriage to Lorraine Yenter took place on Nov. 8, 1958 at St. Adalbert Catholic Church in Rosholt.

Kedrowicz was employed by Consolidated Papers in Paper Board Products for several years.

In 1973, Kedrowicz and his wife started their carnival business, Rainbow Valley Rides, Inc., transferring the business to their sons at their retirement in 2010.

Survivors include his wife Lorraine, two daughters: Renee (Jeff) Budsberg of Shanty Town and Doreen (Randy) Krusick of Amherst. Also, two sons: Ronald "Chip" (Teri) Kedrowicz of Custer and Joseph (Christa) Kedrowicz of Stevens Point. Other survivors include 10 grandchildren and two great grandchildren, and one brother: Rhody (Kathy) Kedrowicz of Wisconsin Rapids.

A memorial in his name will be established at a later date.

Funeral Mass in his memory was held Aug. 5 at St. Maximilian Kolby Catholic Church in Almond, Wis. For online condolences please visit [www.pisarskifuneralhome.com](http://www.pisarskifuneralhome.com).

**Kedrowicz****FASTTRACK**

**COMPILED: Scott Rutherford**  
[srutherford@amusementtoday.com](mailto:srutherford@amusementtoday.com)

As the **Disneyland Resort's Diamond Celebration** continues, guests visiting the **Downtown Disney District** will be entertained nightly by a special lineup of guest music groups on the Westside Stage near ESPN Zone and Earl of Sandwich. Through the first week of September, each night of the week will be devoted to a different musical style including: Caribbean, Latin Country, Rockabilly, Polynesian Swing and Top 40 Music Jam.

**Accesso Technology Group plc** has signed an exclusive long term agreement with **Merlin Entertainments Group Ltd** to deploy Accesso Passport, its fully hosted on-site ticketing and eCommerce solutions, across the operator's global portfolio. The seven year initial contract term for the installation of the hosted Accesso Passport ticketing solutions will begin with the a three year roll out to more than 100 Merlin attractions around the world including **Legoland Parks, Madame Tussauds, Sea Life** and **The Eye Brand**.

**Six Flags New England** recently announced that Wicked Cyclone has been named Best New Amusement Park Attraction and Bizarro has been named Best Roller Coaster by the 10 Best Readers' Choice travel award contest sponsored by **USA Today**.

**Conneaut Lake Park's** Tumble Bug celebrated its 90th birthday in a ceremony last month at the amusement park complete with birthday cake for those in attendance. Tumble Bug, or the Bug as it's affectionately known, is one of only two such rides still operating in the world. The other one is The Turtle located at **Kennywood Park**.

After a year of testing and planning, **Universal Orlando**, which includes **Islands of Adventure** and **Universal Studios Orlando**, has launched its Social Media Engagement Center. "There are currently thousands of mentions of Universal Orlando across the social web," the park wrote on its blog. "In the past year, we have been testing our Social Engagement Center model and have interacted with many of your tweets and private messages, and we have already seen some really great reactions."

**TripAdvisor** has once again presented its Travelers' Choice Awards for theme parks. Travelers from across the world have voted. According to the poll, **Europa-Park** is not only the most popular theme park in Germany, but also number one in Europe. The world's biggest seasonal theme park, with more than 100 shows and attractions, as well as 13 European-themed areas and five park-owned four-star themed hotels, has welcomed over 100 million visitors over its 40-year history.

**Yahoo! Travel** announced its "The Best Amusement Park in Every State" with **Pacific Park** on the Santa Monica Pier taking top honors in California. The two-acre amusement park offers 12 rides, 14 midway games, an oceanfront food plaza and beachside retail shops.

**TripAdvisor** just announced the America's

top water parks, with **Holiday World & Splash-in' Safari** very close to the top of that list. The 40-acre water park, among the largest in the world, was named the No. 3 park in the nation and No. 10 in the world, following only **Disney Parks** in the U.S. rankings. In 2014, the park's rankings were No. 4 in the nation and No. 13 in the world. According to TripAdvisor.com, the Travelers' Choice Awards honor the top one-percent of attractions and lodging worldwide.

**Carowinds** capped off this summer with its Bands, Brews and BBQs event. This inaugural festival combined three things Carolinians all love: Live bands, tasty beer and BBQ. Guests could sample BBQs and craft beers from all over while relaxing to live music at the Harmony Hall Patio Stage.

All three **SeaWorld** parks in Orlando have won a 2015 **TripAdvisor** Travelers' Choice award for amusement parks in the United States. The 2015 TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice awards are based on the quantity and quality of reviews and ratings for amusement parks worldwide over a 12-month period. Discovery Cove won 2nd place, Aquatica, SeaWorld's Waterpark won 4th and SeaWorld Orlando was ranked 10th.

**Walt Disney World** has announced another theme-park management switch. **Disney's Hollywood Studios** vice president **Dan Cockerell** will trade places with **Magic Kingdom** vice president **Phil Holmes**. Cockerell has overseen Hollywood Studios since 2011. Before that he was vice president in charge of **Epcot**. Holmes has been vice president of the Magic Kingdom since 2001.

The **Themed Entertainment Association** and **AECOM** have released their annual report tracking the attendance of the world's top-performing theme parks. Notable among 2014's significant gains was South Korea's **Lotte World**, the 14th best-attended theme park in the world, having hosted over 7.6 million visitors, up 2.8 percent from the previous 12-month period. According to park officials, the gains are a direct result of the popular new Let's Dream! nighttime spectacular, which debuted midway through last year (July 1, 2014.) The popular, end-of-day light parade, designed and produced by North Hollywood entertainment design firm **The Goddard Group**, is credited not only for triggering the bump in attendance, but more impressively for a 35 percent boost in visitor length-of-stay.

**L.A. ProPoint** worked with **Hettema Group** to install two critical guest experience features of the new **One World Trade Center** in New York. The first element involves eight moving panels in the See Forever Theater. A media presentation is projected onto the panels, which retract in a cascading sequence into the ceiling, revealing the actual view of Manhattan from the 102nd floor of OWTC. The second installation features two Sky Portal camera mounts, which are permanently attached at the 106th floor level. The camera mount structures are engineered to withstand extreme temperature changes, inclement weather, and high winds.





## NEWS & NOTES

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**Holly Coston**, (714) 697-6654, [h.coston@aimsintl.org](mailto:h.coston@aimsintl.org)

# Seminar Scholarships available, AIMS board meeting set

**Karen Oertley**  
AIMS Executive Director  
(714) 425-5747  
[k.oertley@aimsintl.org](mailto:k.oertley@aimsintl.org)



**Oertley**

It's time to make plans to attend the most comprehensive safety education seminar in the world. The annual **AIMS Safety Seminar** will be held January 10-15, 2016 in Orlando, Florida. This seminar is a must-attend for everyone working in Maintenance, Operations, Ride Inspection and Aquatics throughout the amusement industry at parks, carnivals, zoos, water Parks, and other attractions. Registered students are able to choose in advance from more than 400 classes to design a personal course curriculum based on their interests and the needs of their employers. More than 300 students are expected to attend the seminar taught by approximately 100 industry professionals. In addition to receiving 40 hours (4 CEU) of educational training, students can test for AIMS Cer-

tification in Maintenance, Operations, Ride Inspection and Aquatics. Level I testing is also offered in Spanish. For more information on classes and registration visit our website: [www.aimsintl.org](http://www.aimsintl.org).

### Apply now for a scholarship

Thanks to the generosity of **OABA** and **IAAPA**, scholarships are available to qualified individuals. The Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA) offers four individual scholarships, one in recognition of **June Hardin**, to OABA members who are first-time Safety Seminar attendees. OABA members can contact [oaba@oaba.org](mailto:oaba@oaba.org) for more information and scholarship applications. The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) provides five individual scholarships to the AIMS Safety Seminar in recognition of **Alan Ramsey**. Application forms and complete information on the Alan Ramsey scholarships is available at [www.aimsintl.org](http://www.aimsintl.org).

All AIMS Safety Seminar scholar-

ships cover the \$595 tuition fee, including class materials, an opening reception, all lunches and breaks, a completion certificate, and Continuing Education Units (CEU). Additional fees for testing and certification and travel expenses are not included.

### AIMS at industry events

We welcome the opportunity to meet our members and constituents at numerous gatherings which take place during the fall season. We invite you to stop by the **AIMS International booth #924** at the **World Waterparks Show** in Palm Springs, Calif., October 21 and 22. You'll also find a strong AIMS presence at other industry gatherings including the **Euro Attractions Show** in Sweden and the **ASTM** meeting in San Diego, both in October. Make sure to stop by the **AIMS International booth # 5435** during the **IAAPA Attractions Expo** in Orlando, November 17-20. We will also be collecting items at the IAAPA trade show for our **Silent Auction** held during the Safety Seminar. Bring branded items and memorabilia from your park or at-

traction to the IAAPA show and drop them off at our booth. Items can also be sent to AIMS in advance. Contact us at [info@aimsintl.org](mailto:info@aimsintl.org) for shipping instructions.

### Become a 2016 AIMS Safety Seminar sponsor

AIMS International is a non-profit association dedicated to improve industry safety through leadership in education. Sponsorship of this important annual Safety Seminar helps provide improvements to our classroom and educational equipment. You can play a part in enhancing our student experience while gaining exposure for your product or services. Sponsor benefits include prominent logo placement on signage and electronic monitors throughout the seminar, the opportunity to distribute literature in the registration area, and recognition on our website and other channels throughout the year. We are happy to work with you to tailor a sponsorship program specific to your needs. For more information on sponsorship, contact Karen Oertley at [k.oertley@aimsintl.org](mailto:k.oertley@aimsintl.org).

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# Citigraph finds a niche with collectors of industry memorabilia

RALEIGH, N.C. — Those in the industry, particularly in retail and sales, have seen trends come and go when it comes to the merchandising of souvenirs. Some items have weathered the test of time, while others are lost to the garage sales and collectors' cabinets. Spoons, thimbles, plates and ashtrays have been retired from the gift shops. T-shirts, magnets and coffee mugs continue to find many buyers. A few items still exist in limited amounts. Among them are postcards and the park souvenir map.

From the 1970s up into the mid-1990s, park maps were a handy, lightweight must have from one's visit. If it wasn't to help the family get around during their day at the park, it was also an easy way to relive the park experience once they returned home. The rise of the pocket guide at the end of the last century seemed to mark the end of an era for the theme park map. While the newer, smaller guide was admittedly easy to cram into a pocket, there was no comparison to



the magic of the colorful illustrations that spread the park out before one's eyes on a much grander scale with the full blown map. Surprisingly, parks just handed out the pocket guides for free, while the maps were always a revenue souvenir item.

*Amusement Today* talked to Mike Rigsbee with Citigraph at the IAAPA Attractions Expo last November. Rigsbee reported that several collectors have found the company via a Collector's Corner on the company's website. In a follow up interview, AT inquired if there were any unique reactions from people who have found the opportunity to purchase these keepsakes from the past. "Yes!" remarks Rigsbee. "This year there was someone who was a huge AstroWorld fan. He ordered all the AstroWorld maps. And then over a two month period he came back and ordered them all again — twice! — after the initial order. He was just



Amusement park and theme park maps, especially those from defunct parks, are must-have items for amusement industry collectors. AT/TIM BALDWIN

crazy about it."

When asked how collectors have found the classic maps available from Citigraph, Rigsbee says it has been mostly through the website. Some have emailed. He says the company looks to update the Collector's Corner on the website, as well.

Today, Citigraph is still doing maps, although somewhat scaled back now. "We're actually doing go-kart tracks and zip line

parks. Smaller places that 20 years ago would never have considered it are now doing it; that's where the big shift has been. Now there is the major parks down to smaller players. For those places, it's a really big deal. They're enthusiastic about it.

"We actually started off doing towns and universities," he adds. I believe Six Flags Over Georgia was our first park, and we sort of morphed into the theme parks from the universities.

It's really how we got into it."

When asked if particular parks offer challenges when designing a map, Rigsbee said, "The larger the park is and the more areas it has, the more challenging it is to do. You have to reduce things down to make it fit into that square or rectangular area. Even parks that aren't really rectangular you have to find the way to make it fit within the printed page. Some parks are easier than others. Those with bigger areas with the most rides are the most challenging."

Although very limited, collectors can often purchase a flat, unfolded map from the company's storage archive. Folded samples were fairly stocked, so the souvenir hunter can find numerous keepsakes from the 80s and 90s still available today. Interested collectors can find information at Citigraph.com. Citigraph has often been praised by the experienced collector for having the finest quality illustrations for theme park maps.

—Tim Baldwin

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