

INSIDE:
Remembering
the first lady of
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Alethea Roads
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Indiana Beach Boardwalk Resort on the upswing under Apex Parks Group

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RMC Lightning Rod blazes new terrain at Dollywood

AT: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. — After numerous setbacks, Lightning Rod appears to have opened at Dollywood. Most recently, park officials have described the wooden launch coaster's status as being in "technical ride rehearsal" (an operational mode that lets riders know that they will have an opportunity to ride, however the ride might close to allow adjustment for optimal operation).

Dollywood's planning cycle typically starts about two years before a new ride attraction opens. Jukebox Junction was the location in the park that was selected. *Amusement Today* asked why that particular location: "We were looking for a ride that would fit the 1950s theme of the area, provide a family thrill experience and would bring another superlative to the park," said

Pete Owens, director of communications for the Dollywood Companies. He continued, "In Lightning Rod we achieved two — first wooden launch coaster and fastest wooden coaster."

When asked why this type of roller coaster was selected, Owens said, "Thematically, a wood coaster made the most sense, and the design best utilized the unique terrain we have in the best way. The launch and the collection of elements in this ride design were all factors."

Rocky Mountain Construction was the manufacturer of choice due to its track record of innovative designs. "RMC's patented track technology and the capability it adds to the design elements, were key factors," Owens said. "If you add Alan Schilke's knowledge of our park (he designed Tennessee Tornado for Arrow) and his understanding of what we wanted to provide our customer, RMC was the choice."



The control system portion of the new attraction was handled by Irvine Ondrey Engineering. "We had been in touch with Rocky Mountain Construction since IAAPA the year before on their need of a control system engineering firm. And given the size of the project, and the desire

► See DOLLYWOOD, page 4

Lightning Rod riders are blasted up a 200-foot-tall hill before racing along 3,800 feet of hillside track at speeds of up to 75 mph.
COURTESY DOLLYWOOD;
BOBBY NAGY



NEWSPAPER

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NEWSTALK

MAILBAG

Polin issues open letter to industry friends

This note has one purpose: to deliver our endless thanks to you.

Most days, our team works on creating experiences that we hope make YOU — and your guests — smile. But, over the last few days, it was YOU working to make US smile. And, for that, we are incredibly grateful.

Your outpouring of concern and compassion regarding our safety during the mid-July uprising events in Turkey gave us great hope and optimism for the future — not only for our country but for the world as a whole. As a company, we've always believed strongly in peace, democracy and human rights. We are thankful to report that all members of the Polin team are safe.

As we face the future, your kindhearted messages will remind us of the many wonderful people who share our vision for a future of peace and hopefulness. You give us strength to remain focused on our goal of bringing joy to people's lives and delivering positive, happy experiences. We are so proud to have developed such a large number of strong friendships with good people in countries all over the world. We know that no matter what our different cultures or locales, we are all connected through our hopes, our beliefs for a better, peaceful world and single-minded hearts.

We remain committed to our promise of offering the best products and service to you all — our thousands of past partners, current partners and future partners all over the world — and we will be working even harder to build a better world for everyone with whatever means we have.

Again, thank you for your messages, e-mails and generous gestures of kindness. We are so grateful to have you in our world. Kind regards,

The Polin Team, Kocaeli Dilovasi, Turkey

Mark Moore's ASTM contributions remembered

Gary,

I just read my hard copy of AT and enjoyed reading your editorial on Mark Moore's passing and his industry contributions. I got to know Mark at ASTM meetings and his task group, which was formed to bring about training standards in this industry. I hope his hard work and dedication will continue by someone who is equally as passionate about amusement ride training as Mark was and new ASTM standard on this subject get consensus approval by the members. Thank you,

Robert W. Johnson, President

Outdoor Amusement Business Association, Inc.

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FLINT'S VIEW: Bubba Flint



INDUSTRY OPINION: Andrew Mellor, amellor@amusementtoday.com

Thanks for the bathtub memories

Change is a fact of life and we all face it in many different ways as the years go by. It's something the theme park and attractions industry witnesses constantly, too, as each year parks add new attractions, redevelop whole areas or renew and revitalize different facilities.

A surefire fact in the industry is that rides come and go. Some last for many, many years, indeed in some cases for decades, while others, for whatever reason, have shorter life spans in their original homes before being removed and maybe reinstalled elsewhere. Whatever the reasons behind an attraction's removal, it is often a sad time for many guests who have ridden a ride over the years, perhaps when they were younger with their parents and now as parents themselves with their own kids.

A case in point that recently came to the fore is a ride at Chessington World of Adventures in the U.K. The park announced that the popular Bubbleworks dark water ride, originally called Professor Burp's Bubbleworks, is to close at the end of this season, much to the disappointment



Mellor

of thousands of visitors who have fond memories of enjoying trips in its bobbing bathtubs.

First opened in 1990 and manufactured by Mack Rides, Bubbleworks has since completed over 15 million circuits and welcomed over 32 million people aboard its bathtub-themed boats, impressive figures in anyone's book.

But after 26 years it's probably time to call it a day. Of course, something new and I'm sure equally as enjoyable will replace it in the near future. As with any such ride, and particularly those that have been operating for so long and have become somewhat iconic, it's a shame but it's a fact of life that things eventually need updating and, in this industry for certain, replacing or at least renewing in some way (Bubbleworks was in fact revamped 10 years ago when a new sponsor got involved with the ride).

So on behalf of all those millions of guests who have ridden this fun ride over the years, thanks for the memories and here's looking forward to whatever will replace it.



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2 MINUTE DRILL



COMPILED: Janice Withrow

Timo Klaus, KumbaK – The Amusement Engineers

For **Timo Klaus**, the transition from working in the wind turbine industry to being employed in the amusement industry was a natural progression. In 2000, Timo was one of the founders of the Dutch company **KumbaK**, and he is able to use his vast experience in technical improvements, maintenance and inspection of large and complicated technical equipment to provide specialized support to the amusement industry. He also currently serves as the President of the board of directors for **AIMS International**. Timo's pleasant demeanor, responsiveness and technical expertise make him a tremendous asset to the many industry efforts and projects he is involved with.



Executive VP Timo Klaus being interviewed by Telegraaf TV in the KumbaK trade show booth. COURTESY KUMBAK

Title... Executive Vice President.

Number of years in the industry...

Since January of 2000, so 16 and a half years.

Best thing about the industry...

Working with the friendly, professional and safety-driven people in our industry to bring the best possible experiences to our guests.

Favorite amusement park ride...

A fast, preferably non-looping, coaster (steel or wooden).

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

Then I think I might still be working in the wind turbine industry. I worked in this industry, being responsible for sales and services, in The Netherlands for a big Danish manufacturer from 1994 until the end of 1999.

Biggest challenge facing our industry...

Because of the ever-changing guest expectations and guest behavior, more sophisticated and complicated ride and safety systems are required. Finding the people to create, maintain and operate these systems safely is a huge challenge.

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

All the activity and happy faces.

The best summer movie I saw was...

I liked the new *Jungle Book*; animation was of a superb quality.

Favorite pizza topping...

I'm not a pizza lover, but I think I would stop eating pizza altogether if the tomato sauce was skipped.

The aisle I find myself in most often at the grocery store is...

The vegetables, I think. Although the meat and fish areas are also very interesting. And then don't forget the wine aisles. Probably the most interesting because of the variety of choices.

The book I am reading right now is...

I just re-read *Pillars of the Earth* and started reading the Harry Potter series again immediately after. I just finished number four and am now reading number five, *Order of the Phoenix*. What a beautiful imaginary (?) world!

It's September! As summer winds down, I look forward to...

The autumn. Summer is nice, but I find it too hot most of the days. I prefer 20 to 25 degrees Celsius



Klaus

and Autumn (and Spring) provide those perfect days. In addition, I like the changing of the colors of the trees and the fact that nights are getting colder giving me the opportunity to light the fireplace.

Biggest pet peeve...

People not using their natural senses and ability to talk, but only using their telephones for all communications and experiences.

The sport I enjoy playing the most is...

I only just started, but I really like playing golf.

All-time favorite sitcom...

Difficult choice, but I guess the answer would be "Friends." Although, I also remember having watched "M*A*S*H" many, many times. Would "The Muppets" also classify as a sitcom? If so, that would make the decision even more difficult.

Of the Seven Wonders of the World, the one I would most like to see is...

I visited the Colosseum in Rome, which truly is an impressive building and which I definitely would want to see again. Of the other six, I think the Great Wall of China remains the most impressive human built structure.

Best fast food...

None. I prefer "slow cooking." Nothing fast when it comes to food. Best things for me are stews that take many, many hours to simmer to perfection.

Favorite Prince song...

I don't know that many songs by Prince, but I do like "Purple Rain."

I get most of my daily news from...

Internet. I read my newspaper and business news all from the internet.

If I had one extra hour in the day, I would...

Spend it with my family.

Take your pick: fruit or vegetables?

Vegetables, although pineapple and mango are very tempting to me.

If I could travel anywhere in the world, it would be to...

My job brought me to many places in the world and I would love to return to many of them to actually enjoy and experience together with my wife. However, a must-see for me would be seeing the Northern Lights.

When I want some peace and quiet, I go...

I find my peace and quiet at home. Now that the kids left our home, it actually sometimes is too quiet.

The household I chore I least enjoy is...

I really don't know. I know what I like most: cooking.

My nickname growing up was...

"Bolle" in primary school; I was a little chubby.

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

Presented by the National Rollercoaster Museum

COMPILED: Richard Munch



SEPTEMBER

•**1900:** An article in the *Washington Post* on September 30 highlighted the **U.S. Patent Office**, in Washington D.C., where thousands were lining up to complete paperwork to register their inventions. It suggested that "the Patent Office was the Mecca of many odd geniuses. More extraordinary members of society turn up at the Patent Office in one hour than in all the other public buildings of the city in a month. They hail from all parts of the globe." Some of the inventions noted in 1900 included a cow milking machine, ice chipping devices, hair restorers, a rapid butter cutter, various toys, ink that doesn't dry up, portable egg beaters and of course unique and novel **Scenic Railways**. Since the 1870s, beside the hundreds of roller coaster related patents, thousands of other patents have been submitted that cover amusement devices from **Carousels** to **Ferris Wheels** to portable carnival rides.

•**1927:** Considered the last of Traver's triplets built during the summer of 1927, the **Traver Engineering Company** opened their last coaster of the year on September 10, at **Palisades Amusement Park** in Fort Lee, N.J. Christened the Cyclone, it would be **Harry G. Traver's** fourth installment of the year, and the company's most difficult design challenge. Under the supervision of **James Mitchell**, multiple delays in building the ride continued to move the opening further into summer. At 106 feet tall, with nine curved drops, it operated into October before the season ended, then only sporadically over the next five seasons. It was advertised for sale in 1933 after a small fire. Even though the great ride never operated to its full potential, it is still considered the most intense roller coaster ever operated at the park. Of note: a local couple rode the ride 23 times in a row on opening day.

•**1946:** The *Los Angeles Times* newspaper cover story on September 23 spotlighted the ongoing demolition of the amusement park and pier in Venice, Calif. The article "**Playland** of the Past becoming dust and rumble" suggested that ghosts were stalking the pier as demolition progressed. The article referred to the late **Abbott Kinney** who had built the Venice amusement pier in 1906. It suggested that none of the mystic crystal ball gazers among its concessionaires predicted that 40 years later wrecking crews would be tearing down what had been erected at the cost of millions. Today only three seaside resorts remain on the west coast in Santa Cruz, Santa Monica and San Diego.

•**1959:** Of all **Nikita Khrushchev's** requests during his tour of the U.S., the one that perhaps struck the most common chord was his desire to visit **Disneyland**, in Anaheim, Calif. On September 19 the Russian Premier would discover that his wish would not be granted, based on security concerns. To this day no one knows if **Walt Disney** himself denied the leader visitation, but it was likely something that angered Khrushchev and his entourage as witnessed by some of Hollywood's biggest names during a luncheon at **Twentieth-Century Fox Studios**. Naturally newspapers and news outlets around the world played the denial up with great headlines, like *The New York Times* which quipped: The Never-Never Land that Khrushchev Never Saw.

•**1977:** A major storm ripped through **Fairyland Park** in Kansas City, Mo. on September 15, causing extensive damage to the 54 year old park. The park had been losing its battle with the newly opened **Worlds of Fun** park just north of the city and the **Brancato** family made the decision to close the park. This included its steel framed wooden roller coaster, the Wildcat, which had opened in 1967 under the design/build team of **Aurel Vaszin** and **Edward Leis**. Later, members of the **American Coaster Enthusiasts**, led by **Gary Slade**, successfully influenced management at **Frontier City**, in Oklahoma City, Ok., to move the decaying ride. Utilizing the genius of **John Pierce**, rebuilding began in 1989, and the roller coaster would reopen in 1991, under the familiar name: Wildcat.

►DOLLYWOOD

Continued from page 1

to get the full design team ready early, we were selected for the job,” explained Brian Ondrey, P.E., president of the firm. This was their first project with Rocky Mountain Construction. Ondrey had worked with Dollywood in the past on the Thunderhead project.

Irvine Ondrey Engineering had a significant role in the venture. “Our portion of the Lightning Rod project was providing the designs, equipment, sensors, and programming for controlling all of the motors and brakes on the ride. In addition, our system needed to interface with the launching system to send commands and receive feedback for the launch,” said Ondrey.

The ride was not without its pre-opening challenges as Ondrey relates, “Any time you are dealing with a prototype, there are challenges. For us on this project, we had two main challenges. We were working with a new manufacturer for us, and we had to work out the details on the communication with the launching system. We found out quickly though, the RMC team was easy and a lot of fun to work with. The launching system

communication took a bit of experimentation once we were on site, but we were able to get that set.”

Owens discussed the ups and downs of getting this project finished. “There were some challenges to the project. First, there was a very aggressive timeline for a ‘first-of-its-kind’ coaster. Second, the terrain in which the ride is located was challenging for the foundation and construction teams. Third, the manufacturer applied ground-breaking technology never before used on a wooden coaster. There are inherent challenges to being first, but the result is an amazing ride experience for the guest that is smooth, fast and full of airtime. Now that the ride is open, the reviews by our guests are exemplary.”

Rocky Mountain Construction owner Fred Grubb said, “The opening was pushed back due to getting the launch tuned. This is a new and innovative ride, the first of its kind. When you design and build the first, there can and will be things that need tuning and tweaking.”

The name Lightning Rod fits into the feel of the Jukebox Junction section of the park, “The storyline that is focused on the Hot Rod culture in the 1950s and 60s



Riders on Dollywood's new Lightning Rod experience nearly 20 seconds of airtime during their ride. The \$22 million wooden launch coaster is located in the Juke Box Junction section of the park and is themed to the hot rod craze of the 1950s. COURTESY DOLLYWOOD; BOBBY NAGY

frame a picture in which Lightning Rod is the fastest hot rod in the area — fast as lightning. The area is an homage to Dolly's hometown in late 1950s,” said Owens. The area is complete with the Pines Theatre, Red's Diner and an attraction called Rockin' Roadway (a Morgan electric car ride themed in 1950s style classic cars). The theming has elements that reflect stories from Dolly's childhood and provide a step back in time for park guests. “Lightning Rod adds another piece to that theme with a new service station and auto fac-

tory that serve as the ride's queue buildings,” related Owens.

What's a typical ride cycle like? Owens gave AT these points:

- After Revere's Service Station, oncoming riders enter Lightning Rod for a speed trial. Here, they are seated, put on a racing seat belt, pull the lap restraint down and hold on!

- Riders hear the engine racing and as the train reaches the bottom of the hill, the LSM launch pushes the train up the 200-foot lift hill to the top of a ridge at 45 mph.

- Upon cresting the hill, riders slide into a false drop, crest the next hill and then drop 165 feet. They reach the top speed of 73 mph at the bottom of the drop and immediately cross over the track and move up into an overbanked wave turn where riders float off their seat and then exit the curve, dropping and crossing under the track. Here, they climb into an overbanked left-hand turn and then immediately roll over to a right-hand overbank. The crest of an airtime bump and cross over of the bottom of the lift-hill are next before entering the quadruple down which wraps around the hill.

- A final crossing under the lift hill leads to a non-inverted half-loop which turns upright and slides into the brake run completes the ride.

“This project took a monumental amount of effort from everyone involved and we were thrilled to have been a part of it,” said Ondrey. He continued, “Prototypes in general will require more time and effort to complete, but it was totally worth it hearing cheers and applause from each train coming into the station during the technical rehearsal.”

“Dollywood has been a very good partner to build new innovation,” said Grubb.

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INTERNATIONAL

► Phantasialand opens new themed world, multi-launch coaster, family coaster — Pages 10 & 11

Wildfire spreads its thrills at Sweden's Kolmården

Park turned to Rocky Mountain for unique thriller

AT: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

KOLMÅRDEN, Sweden — June witnessed the opening of a unique new roller coaster when the Swedish park Kolmården, part of the Parks and Resorts group, debuted its latest major attraction, Wildfire.

The spectacular wooden coaster, designed and built by the U.S. company Rocky Mountain Construction (RMC) in conjunction with Vekoma Rides, is the fastest and second-highest wooden coaster in Europe and features a host of elements that are now thrilling and exciting guests as they travel along its 1,300-meter-long (4,265-foot) track in what is surely one of the most spectacular locations possible for a roller coaster.

With views out over the Baltic Sea, Wildfire offers a breathtaking ride 132 meters

(433 feet) above sea level, a top speed of 113 kmh (71 mph) and an almost vertical free fall. Ride time is two minutes and it features three inversions, a maximum height of 57 meters (187 feet) and a 50 meter (164 foot) plunge at an angle of 83 degrees.

"Wildfire is what we call a 'mega coaster.' It's extremely big, fast and nerve-shredding," says Fred Grubb, founder of Rocky Mountain Construction. "It's the only one of its kind anywhere in Europe. The challenge of building in Kolmården's unique natural setting was to adapt the ride to the surrounding terrain. Our new rail design for wooden roller coasters makes it possible to build under these conditions like never before. Wildfire is going to set records in the roller coaster world."

Wildfire is the first roller coaster to be built by RMC outside the U.S. and has been made from Swedish wood. It is also the company's longest ever and the new rail design incorporated into the ride al-



Wildfire has been built into the stunning terrain at Sweden's Kolmården, which adds to the relentless excitement of the coaster's 1,300-meter-long track layout. COURTESY KOLMÅRDEN

lows for various features that had previously only been possible with steel rails, including the aforementioned inversions.

"After a number of meetings with Rocky Mountain Construction, we realized

that the dream of Wildfire could be made a reality. That was a fantastic feeling and together we've created the greatest wooden roller coaster the world has ever seen. The vision was to set the benchmark for the indus-

try and we've done it," said Parks and Resorts owner Johan Tidstrand.

Wildfire is located between Safari and Marine World and represents an investment of SEK 135 million (U.S. \$15.6 million).



Wildfire features a 50 meter drop at 83 degrees and takes riders through three inversions. COURTESY KOLMÅRDEN

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INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS

Shanghai to host 2017 Asian Attractions Expo

SHANGHAI, China — The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) announced Asian Attractions Expo 2017 will take place at the Sands Expo and Convention Center at Marina Bay Sands Singapore June 13-16, 2017. Asian Attractions Expo is the largest conference and trade show for the multibillion-dollar attractions industry in Asia attracting more than 8,000 participants from 65 countries across the globe.

The Parisian Macao opening date set

MACAO — Sands China Ltd. (HKSE: 1928), the majority-held subsidiary of global integrated resort developer Las Vegas Sands Corp. (NYSE: LVS), announced on July 26 that its elegant French-themed property, The Parisian Macao, will open its doors on Sept. 13, 2016.

The launch of the newest addition to the Sands China Ltd portfolio of properties on the Cotai Strip marks yet another major milestone in the company's efforts to support Macao's development as a world center of tourism and leisure. The Parisian Macao brings Sands China's total Macao investment to more than U.S. \$13 billion (MOP 104 billion) to date.

Inspired by the magic and wonder of the famed City of Light, The Parisian Macao prominently features a half-scale authentic recreation of the Eiffel Tower. The property's full array of integrated resort facilities includes 3,000 guestrooms and suites, convention and meeting space, international restaurants, spa, kids' club, health club, pool deck and Aqua World themed water park, 1,200-seat theatre, among other amenities. Its retail mall, Shoppes at Parisian, will offer the latest in fashion and couture in a setting reminiscent of the streets of Paris, with an eclectic mix of street artists and entertainers heightening the authentic experience.



Aqua World water park, located within the new Parisian Macao, opens on Sept. 13. It is a subsidiary of Sands China Ltd.

COURTESY PARISIAN MACAO

MCC Group named to park construction team

JAKARTA, Indonesia — MNC Land, a property developer in Indonesia, has signed an Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) Framework Agreement with one of China's biggest construction conglomerates, the China Metallurgical Corporation (MCC) Group, for the design and build of a world-class integrated theme park resort in Lido, Bogor. MNC Land also received a Letter of Interest from the Chinese Export and Credit Insurance Corporation (SINOSURE), paving the way for project financing from China.

The integrated theme park resort, which also features two hotels and an entertainment precinct, is part of MNC Land's broader plan to develop a groundbreaking new 3,000-hectare lifestyle and entertainment hub destined to become the "Pride of Indonesia." Road works are underway to extend the Bogor-Sukabumi tollroad, providing easy access from Jakarta and offering an unprecedented escape to Indonesia's ultimate live, work and play destination.

Earlier this year, cutting-edge Hollywood-based design firm Opak Creative commenced schematic design works on the 55-hectare park located in the spectacular natural setting of Lido. Envisioned as an extraordinary, immersive world of magic and adventure, the park will feature thrilling rides and shows that bring to life powerful, original stories woven with elements of Indonesia's rich cultural heritage.

Movie Park Germany opens The Walking Dead attraction

AT: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

BOTTROP-KIRCHHELLEN, Germany — A new horror walk-through experience based on the highly successful U.S. television series "The Walking Dead" is now entertaining — and scaring — guests to Movie Park Germany.

The Walking Dead Breakout is the culmination of almost a year's preparation and has guests walking through recreated scenes from the five seasons of the TV series with the Walkers (zombie-like characters) providing the thrills and scares live and up close.

"In total we have over 15 very detailed and original-like rooms which are based on the TV series seasons chronologically," explains Park General Manager Thorsten Backhaus. "We started with the hospital from the first season and continued on to the prison, then on to Terminus, just to name a few examples. There was a very close co-op-

eration with AMC in the USA and the Pay-TV Channel Fox in Germany for the approval and consultation process."

The 700-square-meter (7,535-square-foot) attraction was created for the park by Dutch theming and design specialist Jora Entertainment, the first time the two organizations have collaborated on an attraction. The company has created over 15 horror experiences to date and Project Manager Marjolein Smids commented: "Based on the ideas of Movie Park Germany and AMC, we designed the new attraction. It's the first time that we made a haunted experience together with a brand. For us this is a dream project. We are all big fans of 'The Walking Dead' and to bring the series to life is already one of the highlights of this year!"

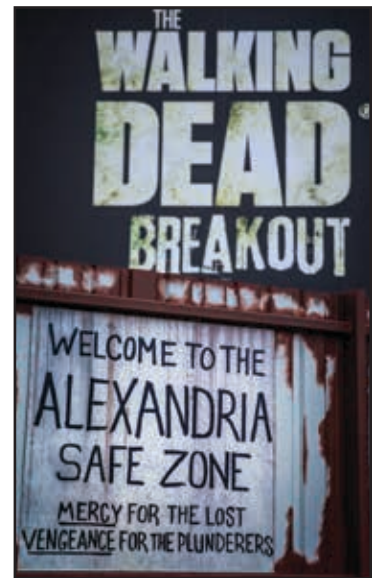
"AMC wanted a perfect replica of the series and that has created enormous challenges. Known walkers are copied one on one from the series and all the details had to match — even the

food cans with wrappers are made exactly as in the series."

Other contractors involved in the project included Props.nl, Nightlife and IMAScore (sound).

"Until now we only had horror themes in October during our Halloween Horror Festival," added Backhaus. "We will be celebrating 18 years of the festival this year, which is the biggest of its kind in Europe. The festival's increasing success has shown us that there is continual interest from guests for this type of content. Now horror fans can come to the park throughout the entire season and not only on specific days in October."

The new attraction is part of Germany's largest film and amusement park's strategy to have a good balance in its portfolio for teenagers as well as families. Starting on June 19, horror fans ages 16 and up can get an extra adrenaline kick in the new attraction. The up-sell price is €5 (\$5.4).



The 700-square-meter attraction was created for the park by Dutch theming and design specialist Jora Entertainment.

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Phantasialand opens new themed world and multi-launch coaster

AT: Jeffrey Seifert
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BRÜHL, Germany — Following more than four years of planning and two years of construction Phantasialand has opened the new themed area Klugheim, and the highly-anticipated multi-launch coaster, Taron. The new area replaces the former Silver City western-themed area of the park. Lost in the transition was the old Silbermine dark ride, a saloon and two eateries.

The mythical village of Klugheim that took its place is based on Norse mythology and sits at the edge of a craggy canyon landscape of basalt rock. Klugheim was the brainchild of theme park designer Eric Daman of Studio Daman, Belgium. Daman has been the creative force behind many of the park's signature attractions including the Colorado Adventure Mine Train, Black Mamba, Wuzetown, Maus au Chocolate and Chiapas.

Basalt, an igneous rock formed from lava flows, is dark gray in appearance and usually forms in spectacular columns. The rock canyon of Klugheim is reminiscent of the natural rock formations found in Norway and Iceland. To create the extraordinary landscape, Phantasialand brought in the creative team headed by rock builder Helder Lopez of Universal Rocks, Portugal. Lopez' handiwork can be seen throughout the park, most recently in the impressive rocky backdrops of Chiapas. A massive steel structure serves as the foundation for the steel mesh that was then covered in a special concrete and shaped and molded to form the rock face. The result is a stone monument that looks like it has been there for thousands of years. But not all of the rock is manmade. Genuine basalt from Mendiger Basalt, a quarry just 68 kilometers from Phantasialand, supplied the rocks that are scattered across the floor of the canyon, looking as if they rolled down from the face of the ravine walls.

In the middle of the canyon, is the multi-launch coaster Taron. Early on in the planning stages Phantasialand knew what it was looking for in a coaster — a fast, launched coaster that could wind its way through the rocky landscape of Klugheim. For that Phantasialand turned to Intamin AG of Schann, Lichtenstein. Intamin has many years of experi-



Phantasialand's newest themed section, the village of Klugheim, offers places to shop and eat as well as two very unique and heavily-themed roller coasters.

AT/TIM BALDWIN

ence building linear accelerated coasters, tracing its roots all the way back to the early Schwarzkopf shuttle loops of the 1970s. Intamin's own Rheinhold Spiel-diener developed the flywheel/clutch drive system that accelerated the trains from 0 to 60 mph in 4.0 seconds. Along the way Intamin developed a number of linear launch mechanisms involving linear induction motors (LIMs), linear synchronous motors (LSMs), and hydraulic turbines. Phantasialand required that the coaster operate during the winter months as the park is open all but three months of the year. That meant the ride had to be able to run with an outside temperature as low as -10 degrees Celsius (14 degrees Fahrenheit). For that, the best option was to use LSMs.

Phantasialand worked closely with Intamin developing not only the remarkable coaster, but also the unique trains. Project Developer Sebastian Jonas explained to *Amusement Today* exactly what the development team at the park desired: They

wanted a seat that was raised off the floor so the riders' feet dangled, giving them a sense of freedom. They wanted the floor to be smooth and at the same level as the station so guests could easily get in and out without having to step down, or up or over anything. And, finally they wanted a lap bar that came down from overhead, was comfortable on the lap, and was clear of the upper body once in position.

Sascha Czibulka of Intamin told *AT*, "Phantasialand had a very clear vision of the train features for Taron, since the overall target was for the smoothest possible ride experience in combination with a maximum of freedom. The park liked our previous launch coaster trains, but wasn't too excited with the restraints. In closest cooperation with Phantasialand we have developed a completely new train with several features never combined in a train/seat before."

The trains feature:

- Ergonomically shaped seats guaranteeing a maximum

of freedom in combination with over-the-shoulder lap bars without shoulder restraints, which will allow bigger passengers to ride.

- A maximum elevated seating position resulting in dangling feet.

- A barrier-free passage between the seats to accelerate the load/unload process.

- A lightweight train design. With the exception of the seat brackets there are no welds, since all the other parts of the train are made from solid/forged components.

Czibulka added, "The reduction in weight has a positive impact on the ride experience, in particular in the case of a launch coaster because it allows to increase the launch intensity. But it also has the advantage for the operator, since it reduces the maintenance efforts. Not that all of those features are completely new, but they definitely have not been combined in one train yet. We are proud of the result and are convinced that we will see this type of train on many new Intamin coasters in the near future."

Klugheim also has its own themed music and there are sound effects for the coaster. One hour of music was produced by IMAscore's lead composer Andreas Kübler and lead sound designer Sebastian Kübler. Speakers are hidden throughout the village to play the sound track. One speaker, that plays just a lady's voice, is only in one building within Klugheim. It is designed to sound as if someone is in an upper balcony singing along with the music. Of course, the lady only joins in when she wants to. Two sound effects are triggered with each of the two launches. The sound can best be described as an amplified

mechanical whirl that definitely catches the attention of onlookers.

The actual coaster layout crosses itself at 58 points for total of 116 intersections. There is a consistent flow of movement snaking through Klugheim canyon. Taron does not feature a lift hill, but instead offers two launches. The second launch is taken without stopping from the first. Top speed on the ride is more than 72 mph, making it the fastest multi-launch coaster in the world. The consistent speed has the trains covering a lot of track in a short amount of time. Thankfully there is a lot of track to be had — 4,330 feet of it, making it the longest multi-launch coaster in the world.

But Taron is not the only attraction in Klugheim, another coaster Raik, also occupies the rocky canyon (see sidebar story page 11). In the shadow of the mighty canyon, the village of Klugheim features shops and restaurants, including Rutemor's Taverne, Kornmüller's Crêpes and Heisser Baldur, all serving up hearty feasts, rustic snacks and tankards of ale.

In keeping with the land's remarkable detail, the village was constructed of rough-hewn lumber and the buildings are adorned with mystic symbols and dragon heads — handcrafted from solid beams of Douglas Fir.

Phantasialand brought together artisans and craftsman, rock builders and ride suppliers from across the globe to create an extraordinary themed world unlike any other. It is a world that is both mythological yet somehow very real, fantastical, yet down to earth, a world that could exist somewhere else — yet doesn't. It can only be found at Phantasialand.



Above, Taron snakes its way through basalt rock landscape then plunges into the heart of the village. Right, once in the station there are no obstructions to impede loading. The coaster features a new innovative train design from Intamin that was requested by the park. AT/TIM BALDWIN, JEFFREY SEIFERT



Phantasialand's Raik serves up family fun in small space

Family boomerang coaster supplied by Vekoma Rides Mfg.

AT: Jeffrey Seifert
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BRÜHL, Germany — When Phantasialand added the new Klugheim themed area to the park, it wanted to make certain there was an attraction that would appeal to the whole family, particularly the smaller roller coaster fans and adventurers who were not yet ready to conquer Taron. To fulfill its need for a family coaster in a limited amount of space Phantasialand turned to Vekoma Rides Manufacturing BV of the Netherlands. Vekoma's family boomerang roller coaster provided the right amount of thrills in a moderate-sized coaster perfect for the new Klugheim area.

First introduced in 2011 as Ben 10 — Ultimate Mission at Drayton Manor Theme Park in Staffordshire, England, the Vekoma family boomerang offers a smooth ride both backward and forward with a minimal footprint. Six of these rides are

now in operation with a seventh under construction in Sweden. Phantasialand's installation was a little bit longer and a little bit taller than all the others, making it the largest of this genre of coaster. Because of its unique layout and longer track length, the end track is also outfitted with drive wheels to give the train a boost up toward the end of the track.

Dubbed Raik, an old Norse word meaning to stroll or wander, the new attraction was squeezed into the basalt rock canyon that also houses the massive Taron coaster. Not only did the track intertwine with Taron, the lift hill and the endpoint of the track both penetrate the river rapids ride, River Quest. To accomplish that feat, sections of existing concrete walls had to be removed to expose the opening between River Quest's elevator lift hill, and the section of building that holds the water channel. Once exposed, the coaster track was carefully placed, then everything was covered in hand-hewn and rough cut lumber to match the rustic Norse buildings of Klugheim.



The lift hill and end point of Raik extend into the building that houses the River Quest ride. AT/TIM BALDWIN

The positioning of the ride gives it spectacular near miss effects with rocks, bridges, walls, the Taron track, and if the timing is right, Taron itself.

The station is outfitted with a large half-circle dial with large roman numerals reminiscent of

elevator floor indicators from a bygone era. But, instead of indicating floors, the dial indicates the location of the train. This same dial motif is repeated on the front of train. When parked in the station, a light smoke is pumped into the train front further adding to the mystery that awaits. As the train is pulled backward out of the station, the dial moves backward and lights in the station change to red. Once released the dial moves forward and the lights change to green. Upon the train's return the dial again turns the reverse direction and the lights are red, changing to green as the train crests the lift hill and reverses direction. Once brought to a stop, the dial points upward to the zero position. Guests in the station queued for the next train witness the entire sequence of events as the train screams through station at 60 kph (37 mph), helping to build anticipation for their ride.

"We have always been passionate about creating an attraction for our younger roller coaster fans. However, we were never won over by any of the

classic junior coasters. Plus, we didn't have the right location in the park for turning our dreams into a reality. Now we have our new themed area Klugheim, which is the ideal spot for our family boomerang, Raik, to live up to its full potential" explains Sebastian Jonas, project developer at Phantasialand. "Raik is the perfect bridge between a fully-fledged family coaster and a classic junior coaster. Riding backward and forward gives double fun and the attraction offers excitement for children, teens and adults creating a great family experience and an unforgettable ride experience. The ride starts with the train being lifted backwards out of the station and up towards the lift hill. "This means that you can't see when the lift hill ends and the ride really gets going. That really heightens the nerves," emphasizes Jonas.

With the pinch wheel lift hill positioned under cover, the ride can operate in all kinds of weather — even freezing temperatures. As with Taron, Raik is expected to stay open even in the winter season.



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Six Flags partners for development of second park in China

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — Six Flags Entertainment Corporation (NYSE: SIX), and Riverside Investment Group Co. Ltd., a leading real estate developer in China and existing partner of Six Flags, announced on July 20 the signing of a letter agreement for the potential development of a second Six Flags-branded theme park in China together with a water park. The two parks will be located in Bishan, a district of Chongqing, with a surrounding population of approximately 120 million people.

“Developing two parks in Chongqing, the most populous municipality



in China, is another step forward in executing our long-term strategy to expand our brand outside of North America and bring Six Flags thrills to millions of new guests,” said John Duffey, president and CEO. “Riverside is an excellent partner and we share a common vision to develop multiple Six Flags-branded parks in China.”

“As the exclusive strategic partner of Six Flags in China, we are excited about the development of

About Riverside Investment Group

BEIJING, China – Riverside Investment Group Co. Ltd. was founded in 1993. With China’s fast-developing cultural and tourism industries and urbanization process, Riverside Group has become a leading real estate developer, focusing on overall health care, tourism, culture, entertainment industries and high-end residential buildings. It is also an investor, constructor and operator of middle and high-end communities, participating in the whole industrial chain from planning and design to construction, business attraction and operation. Riverside Group’s projects are twice the recipient of the U.N. International Garden Community Gold Award, best represented by its world-class R&D, the pursuit of perfection, the respect to culture and the inheritance of civilization, all of which make it the leader in China’s real estate industry.

•lvcgroup.com

two parks in Chongqing of western China, the biggest city in the world,” said Li Zhe, chairman of the Riv-

erside Investment Group. “With the ongoing support of the Chinese government and the strength of the Six

Flags brand, we are confident these projects will provide strong economic growth in China.”

The letter agreement is subject to negotiation of definitive documents.

The first Six Flags-branded theme park in China is anticipated to open in 2019 and will be located in Haiyan, Zhejiang province, near Shanghai. It will feature a number of record-breaking roller coasters, unique thrill experiences, incredible live shows and more. For additional information about the Haiyan park, visit www.sixflags.com/haiyan.

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Barcelona set to host 2016 EAS

AT: Andrew Mellor
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BRUSSELS, Belgium — The Spanish city of Barcelona will play host to this year’s IAAPA-produced 2016 Euro Attractions Show (EAS), with the event once again on course to deliver a record-breaking trade show floor.

EAS takes place at the Fira Gran Via Convention Center in Barcelona from September 20-22 and at the time of writing more than 435 companies from 60 countries were due to exhibit at the event on its largest ever show floor of 12,000 net square meters (129,000 net square feet). The premier conference and trade show for the theme park and attractions industry in Europe attracts strong attendance from manufacturers and suppliers from throughout the region and further afield and has without doubt become a must attend event for operators in this part of the world.

The exhibit floor will offer buyers more than 100 different products and services related to the leisure and attractions industry which will include all kinds of dry rides, water related attractions, design and theming services, ticketing technology, show and production equipment, coin-operated machines, food and beverage offerings, character costumes and much more — in fact pretty much anything an operator may need for the successful operation of an attraction venue.

As well as from European countries, EAS is also now at-



The venue for this year’s EAS is the Fira Gran Via Convention Center in Barcelona.
COURTESY FIRA DE BARCELONA

tracting exhibiting companies and buyers from other regions too, including eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa, due in part to the fact that organizer IAAPA’s European operations has taken on the entire EMEA region and is now known as IAAPA EMEA. Overall attendance figures will therefore no doubt reflect this move and over 9,000 attendees (both exhibitors and visitors) are expected to make the trip to Barcelona.

EAS will also offer attendees a comprehensive educational program covering some of the latest trends and best practices in the leisure and tourism industry. Scheduled presentations will be provided by a diverse group of global leisure

industry leaders and owners from facilities such as Disneyland Paris, Efteling, Europa-Park, PortAventura, Parque Warner Madrid, Siam Park, Leolandia and more. Subjects to be covered will include lodging and resort development, the development of dining experiences, the implementation of intellectual property, event organization, revitalizing existing attractions and developing VIP guests programs.

Away from the show itself, other opportunities for attendees will include a back-stage tour of PortAventura and the upcoming Ferrari Land (due to open in 2017), a visit to Barcelona Aquarium and a post EAS tour over three days to locations such as Parque de Atracciones Madrid, Zoo Aquarium Madrid, Parque Warner Madrid and Isla Magica.



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WATER PARKS & RESORTS

► Premier Parks acquires Wild Water Kingdom — Page 18 / SFHH (NJ) opens Caribbean Cove — Page 18

Beech Bend adds ProSlide complex to water park

AT: Pam Sherborne
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BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — The four new water slides now up and running at Beech Bend Park and Splash Lagoon were described as a game changer for the water area.

"They are awesome slides," said Charlotte Gonzales, whose family owns and operates the park in southern Kentucky. "We have heard nothing but rave reviews. Each one is an awesome addition."

The four slides, custom-made for Beech Bend by ProSlide Technologies, opened July 8. This is the largest water park expansion in the park's history, costing in excess of \$5 million.

The four new water attractions are the Flying Saucer (touted as ProSlide's first installation in North America) PipelineWave, CannonBowl and a hybrid Tornado.

Beech Bend owners named their Flying Saucer the Cyclone Saucer. Riders on two-person tubes speed through dark tunnels and rocket into the wide open expanse of three massive saucer features. The steep angle of the saucers create a drop-and-dive sensation.



New for 2017, Beech Bend's Splash Lagoon water park opened this massive \$5 million slide tower from ProSlide. The tower features the first installation in North America of the Flying Saucer and hybrid Tornado slides. COURTESY BEECH BEND

It is about 500 feet long with an elevation of about 55 feet. According to the ProSlide web site, this slide has an hourly capacity of 600 riders on two-person tubes.

Tidal Wave is the name given to the Pipeline Wave. It positions riders face to face as they surge up a wall and hang weightless before rocketing back down. It has an hourly capacity of 360

with two-person tubes.

The CannonBowl has been named the Polynesian Plunge. It drops riders from the top of the slide tower into a swirling bowl. The high speed slide swirls riders along the outer wall but slows as riders reach the center before dropping through the bowl's exit. It has an hourly capacity of 360 on two-person tubes.

Riptide, the name given to the hybrid slide, combines a funnel and a wave wall to create variety and, hopefully, more thrills.

In addition to the new slides, Gonzales said they decided to replace all the lockers in the water park area. The old lockers required key entry but, for visitor ease, the new ones all are keyless. Best Lockers is the supplier

of the new lockers.

Beech Bend park opened for the 2016 on May 7. Splash Lagoon opened May 21. Both parks began full-time operation Memorial Day weekend.

Aside from the new water components, Splash Lagoon offers attractions including a Lazy River, Surf's Up Wave Pool, Ragin' Rapids water slides, a large leisure pool, and Tiki Island play area.

Gonzales said they had wanted more water slide attractions for a few years now.

"But we had to be careful," she said. "We are a family-owned park. We can't bite off more than we can chew."

Gonzales said they did increase admission by \$4 this year.

"We haven't had a price increase since 2010," she said. "We decided with our extra expenses it was time to do it."

Prices this year are \$31.99 for ages 60 years and above; \$33.99 for persons 54 inches and above; and \$31.99 for children under 54 inches. Season passes cost \$159.95. There are a number of special promotions and discounts throughout the season.

Beech Bend adds family coaster; Kentucky Rumbler gets upgrades



Beech Bend's signature ride, Kentucky Rumbler (left), completed an upgrade that included areas of track work and a complete rehab of the train by Great Coasters International. Above, this Spinning Out coaster was delivered by SBF/Visa Group through its U.S. sales team of Rides 4U. COURTESY BEECH BEND

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — The dry side of Beech Bend Park and Splash Lagoon wasn't neglected by owners this year even though the water park did get the largest portion of updates.

Charlotte Gonzales, whose family owns and operates the Beech Bend facility, said for the 2016 season, they completed an upgrade to the Kentucky Rumbler wooden roller coaster during the winter months and installed a new ride in fall of 2015.

The renovations to the Kentucky Rumbler coaster involved upgrading and updating the cars. In fact, Gonzales said: "We replaced everything from the car platform up."

"That includes the sides, the grill on front, seating," she said.

Great Coasters International, the company that originally constructed the coaster at a cost of \$4.6 million in 2006, did the upgrade.

Gonzales said there also was a significant length of the coaster where there was some retracking.


"We spent about \$125,000 on the coaster upgrades," Gonzales said.

The Kentucky Rumbler is 96 feet high, reaches a speed of 50 mph, with a track length of 2,827 feet, and encompasses three station flybys, 30 crossovers and 12 airtime moments.

The new ride is a Spinning Out coaster, manufactured by SBF/Visa and sold by Rides 4U. Themed like a race car spinning out of control in a back to back seating configuration, the cars spin freely throughout the ride delivering a different experience each time the weight distributions changes.


The new ride was up and running when the 2016 season began May 7.

—Pam Sherborne




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Kings Island's new entry plaza increases ease and throughput for arriving guests, and it includes automated lanes for season pass holders. COURTESY KINGS ISLAND



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Google Earth view of Wild Water Kingdom.
COURTESY GOOGLE EARTH

Premier Parks acquires Wild Water Kingdom; will reopen in May 2017

LAKEWOOD, N.J. — Premier Parks, LLC, an operator of multiple theme and water parks across the U.S., has acquired Wild Water Kingdom. The 100-acre water park and entertainment facility, which has not operated since 2014, is located in Brampton, Ontario, Canada, in the greater Toronto area.

Premier Parks is led by Kieran Burke, former chairman and CEO of Six Flags Incorporated, and operates 12 theme and water parks including two resort properties with lodging, marina, and an adventure park. This portfolio also includes Wet 'n' Wild water parks in Hawaii, Palm Springs, Phoenix and Houston.

"Premier Parks is excited about the opportunity to completely rebuild Wild Water Kingdom into a first class water park that Canadians can be proud to call their own," said Kieran Burke, CEO of Premier Parks.

"Design teams have been hard at work and we look forward to announcing our specific plans for the park in the very near future."

The enormous population base of the Toronto market, lack of stand-alone water parks, and the Canadians' fondness for a resort experience were all contributing factors in the decision to purchase Wild Water Kingdom. Premier Parks also has familiarity with the Canadian market due to the advertising and sales efforts of its theme and water park resort, Darien Lake, just outside Buffalo, N.Y., which attracts hundreds of thousands of Canadian visitors annually.

About Premier Parks

LAKEWOOD, N.J. — Premier Parks operates 12 theme and water parks throughout the United States including Wet 'n' Wild Hawaii (Kapolei); Wet 'n' Wild Palm Springs; Wet 'n' Wild Phoenix; Wet 'n' Wild Splashtown (Houston); Frontier City theme park and White Water Bay (Oklahoma City, Okla.); Darien Lake Theme and Water Park Resort (Darien Center, N.Y.); Rapids Water Park (West Palm Beach, Fla.); Nashville Shores Water Park (Nashville, Tenn.); Tree Top Adventure Park (Nashville, Tenn.); Ocean Breeze Water Park (Virginia Beach); Elitch Gardens Theme and Water Park (Denver, Colo.); and Clementon Park and Splash World (Clementon, N.J.).



Six Flags Hurricane Harbor, located next to Great Adventure theme park in Jackson, N.J., has opened this new interactive water playground. The highlight of the section is a multi-level AquaPlay structure from WhiteWater West. Below, park guests enjoy the water action of the dumping bucket and the spray nozzles, jets and other features.

COURTESY SIX FLAGS GREAT ADVENTURE

Caribbean Cove water playground opens at Six Flags Hurricane Harbor (N.J.)

JACKSON, N.J. — On July 14, just in time for the bulk of the summer heat, Six Flags Hurricane Harbor at Six Flags Great Adventure opened a new interactive water playground.

Caribbean Cove features a shallow beach-entry wading pool with a shimmering white sand beach. Surrounding the pool are 300 new lounge chairs and new shade structures. The cove has a single access path so parents will not have to worry about their child wandering out of the area. The area is decorated with island-inspired theming including palm trees and an oversized parrot.

The highlight of the section is a multi-level AquaPlay structure from WhiteWater West. More than 55 interactive features such as spray

nozzles, jet water guns climbing nets and slides are featured on the tower and in the pool that surrounds it. A quintessential tipping bucket atop the two-story structure provides a periodic dousing to kids, tweens and even adults, playing below.

"Hurricane Harbor brings the vibrant colors, iconic images and white sand beaches of the Caribbean to our new family water playground. Caribbean Cove is a fantastic complement to our world-class lineup of innovative and extreme water slides. It offers fun for junior thrill seekers and their families," said Six Flags Great Adventure President John Fitzgerald.

— Jeffrey Seifert





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Neptune Benson, a Rhode Island-based company that provides water filtration and disinfection for the municipal and recreational water markets, has acquired **VAF Filtration Systems**. Colorado-based **VAF** engineers and manufactures automatic self-cleaning water filters and control valves. The addition of VAF compliments Neptune Benson's existing product offerings and bolsters Neptune Benson's offerings within industrial and municipal markets, allowing the company to offer filtration solutions ranging from 1500 microns down to submicron filtration.

The residents of Burlington, Wis. will have the opportunity to decide the fate of the city's existing pool. Built in 1961, the current pool has effectively reached the end of its usefulness. The **Burlington City Council** has looked at four proposals, one of which simply replaces the existing facility. The remaining three call for turning the area into a water park with a six-lane lap pool, several slides, a lazy river and a water play area, possibly with a water play structure.

City council members are hoping to get the information to the voters and place a referendum on the ballot for the Nov. 8 general election.

"We have a very conservative community here," said 1st District Alderman **John Ekes**. "The community needs to get all the information on this and digest it."

If the referendum is successful, construction would start next September and the new facility could be completed by the spring of 2018.

NRH2O water park in North Richland Hills, has been a part of the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex area for 22 years. The park was looking for an opportunity to give back to the community and teamed up with **Clothes Connection** to host a shoe drive.

NEWS SPLASH



COMPILED: Jeffrey L. Seifert
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

Clothes Connection is operated by the **Birdville Independent School District PTAs**, to supply clothes and shoes to students who are in need. **NRH2O** hosted the shoe drive in conjunction with the dive-in movie *Cinderella*. Guests received a free ticket with the donation of a pair of new or gently used shoes — glass slippers excluded.

Team members expected to receive a couple hundred pairs of shoes, but were astounded when they had collected an overwhelming 2,372 pairs of shoes. It was the largest donation Clothes Connection had ever received in a single day.

Codder Resort and Spa in Hyannis, Mass. has expanded its existing indoor wave pool into more of a water park with the addition of two 160-foot water slides, a lazy river, and a water play area specifically for toddlers and younger children. The previous wave pool area was 10,000 square feet — small for a resort water park — which limited its appeal. The new **Codder's Indoor Water Park** adds another 20,000 square feet, bringing the total area to 30,000 square feet. The water park also added a new cafe serving snacks beverages and a full service bar. It also features a retractable clear roof making it both an indoor and outdoor water park depending on the weather. Entry to the wa-

ter park is included for hotel guests. A limited number of day passes are also available for those not staying at the hotel.

The parks and recreation department of the city of Odessa, Texas, is planning to build a dinosaur-themed splash park. Odessa is in the center of the Permian Basin, a geological area known for its large deposits of rocks and fossils from the Permian era. Plans call for a **Junior League Jurassic Jungle** spray ground more than 180 feet in diameter, with an archway of dinosaur bones, a triceratops playground and palm trees with slides — all of which spew water. There will also be jumping fountains, along with lights and animations. The fountains and lights will be programmable for water shows. The estimated cost for the total project is \$1.9 million. The city's Junior League is providing support for the project, hence the name.

Odessa Parks and Recreation Director **Steve Patton** said, "This is an incredible project unlike anything in the area."

The Odessa City Council praised the idea after a briefing in July. Patton said he hopes to have the project ready for bids in September with a targeted opening date in May.

Quick Dip...

• **Evoqua** announced its **Neptune Benson** brand was selected as part of a \$50 million, 15 month renovation project to the historic, 10-acre civic space in the heart of downtown Cleveland. The fountain, which spans approximately 5,000 sq. feet features 117 undulating jets and 117 LED lights.

• The 13th annual **World Aquatic Health Conference** is scheduled for Oct. 19-21, 2016 at the Sheraton Music City in Nashville, Tenn.



"We wanted to create an amazing attraction to celebrate the park's 10th anniversary. What started out as red pen on a site plan 18 months ago is now the award winning MASSIV which is absolutely pulling in the crowds."

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General Manager
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PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

► Indiana Beach gets facelift from new owner Apex Parks — Page 26 / Fairs — Pages 33-36

New coaster adding 'Timber' to Kings Island's woods

KINGS MILLS, Ohio – Unveiled during a star-covered press event on July 28, construction is underway on a new wooden roller coaster adventure for visitors to Kings Island.

Mystic Timbers is custom-designed and built for the topography of Kings Island by Great Coasters International, Inc. (GCI) of Sunbury, P.

Themed to an area surrounding a lumber company becoming overrun by a mysterious medusa-like overgrowth of vines as nature reclaims its land, Mystic Timbers will be 3,265 feet in length, reach 109 feet in height and weave along steep cliffs, down ravines, cross over water and go through an extreme S-turn, among a forest of trees, at speeds up to 53 mph.

"Mystic Timbers is naturally exciting because of its setting in a densely wooded area," Kings Island's vice-president and general manager Greg Scheid said. "The natural rugged terrain and tunnel ensures a unique and memorable ride experience."

Scheid commented that the addition of Mystic Timbers has been in the works since

2009, when the park's then-new Diamondback coaster came in as the #2 "New Ride" in the world, with Worlds Of Fun's GCI-built Prowler taking the #1 spot. Scheid simply added, "We don't like to lose."

"We needed a low-to-the-ground, speed-hungry coaster that could be enjoyed by many," Scheid detailed.

The mysteries of Mystic Timbers have yet to be fully revealed. The ride climaxes with the trains passing through a haunting shed, but what's in the shed is not being revealed. The park is promoting the hashtag #WhatsInTheShed as guests ponder the wonders it may hold inside.

With the addition of Mystic Timbers, Kings Island's wooden roller coasters will combine to measure 18,804 feet of track, which will be the most at any amusement or theme park in the world.

Scheid made certain to tease that Kings Island was not yet done with the additions for 2017. "This is our first of two major announcements for 2017."

—John W.C. Robinson



Kings Islands new Mystic Timbers will feature 3,285 feet of wooden track, making multiple passes over the existing Whitewater Canyon. The mystery of "What's in the shed?" (right) remains to be answered. COURTESY KINGS ISLAND



Hersheypark adds a trio of S&S towers for 2017

AT: B. Derek Shaw

bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

HERSHEY, Pa. — Hersheypark announced on August 2 that it is adding arguably what will be the first in the world and new to the industry — a trio of drop towers, with varying heights — for next season. S&S Worldwide, Inc. (Logan, Utah) is the vendor providing the new Triple Towers: 80, 131 and 189 feet respectively and will be known as: Hershey's Kisses, Reese's and Hershey Bar. Individual ride capacity is 12 (3 each side), 16 (4 each side) & 20 (in the round), respectively with a combined theoretical ride capacity of 1,400 people per hour. The tallest tower is a combo tower (Space Shot



Hersheypark's new-for-2017 S&S towers will stand 80, 131 and 189 feet tall. COURTESY HERSHEY PARK

or Turbo Drop depending on how it is programmed during a particular day) while the other two will be double shot towers. "The largest tower will allow multiple, different experiences for the guest," relayed Pete Barto, director of sales for North

America and Europe for S&S.

Being billed as "the first choose-your-thrill triple tower in the United States," the new attraction will provide an experience for each member of the family with varying heights, thrill levels and speeds. Located in the

Kissing Hill Tower section of the 110-acre park, each tower will operate independently, launch at varying times and have its own ride staff. Triple Tower will be located where the Red Baron, Frog Hopper and Convoy kiddie rides are currently. Convoy and Frog Hopper will move to the Arrow Dynamics/Huss Condor (Flying Falcon) area, as that attraction will be removed (and stored) for eventual use in the future. This will become only the second ride Hersheypark will have in storage. The other is a 12-gauge Mini Train Co. (Mini Train). The Red Baron will be re-located across from the entrance to the Boardwalk water park.

When AT asked about

when the project was first discussed with his company, Barto said, "It was little over a year ago." Barto thinks this installation may lead to other parks across the country to jump on board. "I think there is an opportunity for that as it is a unique configuration and that is what S&S is very excited about. It is a different twist on an existing, proven ride in the industry. We're very excited about it. We are honored and humbled to have an opportunity to work with Hershey Entertainment and Resorts. This is my hometown park and to have an opportunity to have a ride here and to work with an organization that's very special to S&S. We're honored, humbled, proud and excited."



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Tickets remain for boat cruise benefiting NRCMA

SANDUSKY, Ohio — As a special fundraiser for the National Roller Coaster Museum & Archives (NRCMA), Cedar Point and *Amusement Today* have organized a boat cruise on the Jet Express for Saturday, Sept. 10.

The Jet Express will take riders on a gorgeous 45-minute cruise on Lake Erie, circling the Cedar Point Resort giving unique views of this historic amusement property.

Help support the amusement industry's fastest growing museum collection by purchasing a ticket!

Tickets are \$75.00 per person and will be sold until the boat is sold out. The tour departs from the Cedar Point Marina at 11 am sharp. The boat cruise will last approximately 45 minutes.

Jet Express tickets may be purchased online at:

GoldenTicketAwards.com



2016 Golden Ticket Awards registration well underway

Cedar Point to host awards event September 9 & 10

SANDUSKY, Ohio — *Amusement Today* and Cedar Point invite working professionals in the amusement industry such as park owners, operators and management and ride manufacturers, designers, suppliers and vendors, to join the fun at "The Networking Event of the Year" during the 2016 Golden Ticket Awards on Friday and Saturday, Sept. 9-10.

"This is a great networking opportunity for our industry," says Gary Slade, publisher and editor-in-chief of *Amusement Today*. "It's also the perfect way to celebrate the end of the summer season with friends and colleagues."

The host park, Cedar Point amusement park and resort in Sandusky, Ohio, is busy gearing up for an unforgettable two days. The setting on a picturesque Lake Erie Peninsula will provide a one-of-a-kind backdrop for the event with all the feel of a relaxing beach resort coupled with a dramatic skyline of thrill rides and roller coasters.

"The Golden Ticket Awards have grown into so much more than just an awards show over the years," says Slade. "Along with the team at Cedar Point, I'd like to personally extend an invitation to our industry to check out the GTAs... and be part of a truly remarkable weekend."

To check out the itinerary and hotel information and rates for the Golden Ticket Awards, as well as to register, please log on to **www.GoldenTicketAwards.com**. Cedar Point's beautiful Hotel Breakers will serve as the host hotel for the event.

This is the 19th annual year for the Golden Ticket Awards; they are presented to the "Best of the Best" in the amusement industry and are calculated from an international poll conducted by *Amusement Today*.

Golden Ticket Awards 2016 Event Itinerary



Friday, September 9 (The park is closed to the public.)

10 a.m. to 5 p.m. – Event Registration at Cedar Point's Hotel Breakers.

2 p.m. to 3 p.m. – Specialty Cedar Point Tour – "Cedar Point Legacy & Landmark Tour with a Twist." Attend a guided behind-the-scenes bus tour around the Cedar Point Peninsula showcasing the park's historic landmarks, with a twist! Cocktails and conversation provided.

3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. – Specialty Cedar Point Tour – "Cedar Point Behind-the-Screams Tour." See how the park transforms itself into The Haunt and The Great Pumpkin Fest during its annual HalloWeekends with behind-the-scenes access to the horrifying, frightfully delightful staff, props, costumes, makeup and more.

4:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. – Networking opportunities in the Hotel Breakers historic Rotunda.

5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. – Coasters & Cocktails Reception in the Valravn Plaza. Ride Cedar Point's new B&M Valravn dive coaster, sip on park-inspired micro brews, wine and signature Valravn treats, chat with industry friends and be prepared for some fun surprises.

6:30 p.m. – An exclusive Skeleton Crew performance in Celebration Plaza.

7:30 p.m. – Chef's Table Food Feast at the Lakeside Pavilion.

9 p.m. – End-of-Evening Gathering at the Surf Lounge in the Rotunda, Hotel Breakers, just off the Main Lobby.

Saturday, Sept. 10 (Special Park Early Opening! Park hours: 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.)

9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. – Park Play Day! Enjoy Cedar Point at your leisure. Explore The Roller Coaster Capital of the World in VIP style!

11 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. – Golden Ticket Cruise on the Jet Express. See The Roller Coaster Capital of the World from Lake Erie's perspective on this 45-minute excursion. Limited seats are available, first-come, first-served. Cost is \$75 with proceeds benefiting the National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives.

5:30 p.m. – Golden Ticket Awards Red Carpet LIVE. Pre-Show Cocktail Reception at Lakeside Pavilion. Get ready to walk the red carpet as Cedar Point prepares a Golden Ticket Awards like no other!

6:30 p.m. – Golden Ticket Dinner in Lakeside Dining Room at Lakeside Pavilion next to WindSeeker.

8 p.m. – 19th Annual Golden Ticket Awards presented by *Amusement Today* in the Cedar Point Convention Center

10 p.m. – Post-Party on the Cedar Point Beach and Hotel Breakers Fire Pit Patio.

Sunday, Sept. 11 (Optional Add-on Day – On Your Own!)

11 a.m. – Standard Check-Out at 11 a.m. or extend your stay for another night! Stay and play at The Roller Coaster Capital of the World or add-on an excursion to the laid-back Lake Erie island of Put-in-Bay at special GTA attendee rates.

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Resort gets facelift from new owner Apex Parks Group

Indiana Beach amusement park again the 'walk' of the town

AT: Dean Lamanna

dlamanna@amusementtoday.com



MONTICELLO, Ind. — Long a Hoosier State amusement tradition, Indiana Beach Boardwalk Resort has been enjoying a reintroduction, and a significant resurgence, this season — its 90th. And it's under new ownership that likely would have garnered its founder's approval.

Aliso Viejo, Calif.-based Apex Parks Group, which announced its purchase of Indiana Beach last September, has undertaken the upgrading of the property's services and aesthetics — including its 40-plus rides and attractions.

Indiana Beach fits in with the two-year-old company's goal to acquire and maximize the potential of established family entertainment centers and medium-sized amusement parks across the U.S. Apex carefully maintains and enhances each property's local flavor while retaining much, if not all, of its existing staff.

Indiana Beach holds a particular charm with the company's management team.

"It's a fantastic property," said Gregg Borman, senior vice president of operations for Apex and a 37-year industry veteran. "It's got a lot of iconic features, a great history. When you mention Indiana Beach in the community or anywhere within a 200-mile radius, everybody knows it. People love the park."

Borman and his fellow Apex executives felt that love every time they visited Indiana Beach — during both the run-up to their making an offer on the park and after closing the deal last summer. Along with that regional passion came the special challenge of protecting a nine-decade tradition.

"We knew our guests had expectations," he said. "We were reading about them on the Indiana Beach history Facebook site and elsewhere. They talked about what they disliked about how the park was operated in the recent past."

"So, we had one shot to really get this right. We knew that everything we did to the park this year was going to be to be critically reviewed by our guests. Based on their feedback,

we've done a lot of things right, and we still have room to make improvements."

Polishing a prized gem

First known as Ideal Beach, the park's site on the shore of Lake Shafer offered a sandy expanse for sunbathing along with boating and refreshments when it was established in 1926 by Earl Spackman. The leisure spot grew through the 1940s, adding attractions and a ballroom — and becoming a cherished diversion for area residents.

Earl's son, Tom, who had run the original lakeside refreshment stand and eventually became the park's manager, decided to market the location more widely to surrounding White County and state visitors by adding speed boating and the first permanent rides. In 1950, four years after his father died, Tom renamed the place Indiana Beach.

The park, which expanded to include hundreds of campsites, numerous vacation cottages and other lodging, remained popular for another half a century. Reportedly, it was generating some \$60 million in regional economic impact at its peak in the years before the Spackman family sold it to an operator of RV campgrounds in 2008. The change of ownership began a gradual period of decline at Indiana Beach, during which patrons' complaints went unheard and its economic ripple shrank by half.

Communication is key to Apex's course correction for the park.

"We met with the mayor of Monticello and the county commissioners right after we came in," Borman said. "They wanted us to tell them what we wanted to do with Indiana Beach because the former owner didn't deliver on anything they promised. Between the experience [Apex CEO and former Paramount Parks CEO] Al Weber and I brought to the table and the money we were investing, we convinced them we believed in the park."



Indiana Beach ride favorites like the Cornball Express (above) and Baby Baron (right) have been upgraded and refreshed, thanks to new color schemes developed by R&R Creative Amusement Designs, which most dramatically revived the park's waterslides (below).
COURTESY
APEX PARKS GROUP



In addition to using local contractors and retaining more park staff year-round for maintenance, Apex backed up its commitment to Indiana Beach by enlisting R&R Creative Amusement Designs of Anaheim, Calif., and the expertise of its president, Rick Bastrup.

"Rick has done a lot of work with the major players in our industry and understands traditions," Borman said. "He's an easy guy to sit down with and tell him a vision. We had him come up with ideas for every ride, stand and element, and he's been an outstanding partner in the development of this park."

Once it was agreed that Indiana Beach was a "boardwalk resort" (which Apex has made an official part of its name), Bas-

trup set to work walking the property and analyzing every aesthetic aspect of it.

"It's an eclectic park and the weather had beaten everything up, so I made changes big and small," Bastrup said. "I added about 60 new custom-designed signs, most with multilayered lettering and shadowing, as well as colorful banners at the park entrances and along the walkways. The rides and queues, the buildings, the concrete walks — I came up with fresh color schemes for all of them."

Bastrup even scanned and color-matched actual tiger hues for Tig'rr, a 1984 Schwarzkopf Jet Star and one of six roller coasters in the park. He worked directly with Newport, Ky.-based Baynum Painting, Inc.,

on the colors needed for that ride and the park's waterslides and buildings.

Although Indiana Beach isn't a theme park, the consistent quality of such detailing helps unify and bring "flow" to the property's aesthetics, said Bastrup.

Success in progress

Apex's single-biggest initial expenditure within the park has been the rehab of the 90-foot, circa-1980s Ferris wheel, which was dismantled and shipped to its manufacturer, Chance Rides, in Wichita, Kan. Between the repairs and the addition of a new multi-pattern LED lighting package, "we put almost three quarters of a million dollars into the wheel," said Gregg Borman. "But it really lights up the park and makes the place special again, especially for those who have their boats out on the lake at night."

Properly fencing the park for safety and moving it to a secured-gate admission system hasn't pleased some of those boaters, who had grown accustomed over the years to docking casually along the park's boardwalk to grab eats and then sail off. Borman noted that a solution would be worked out during the off-season.

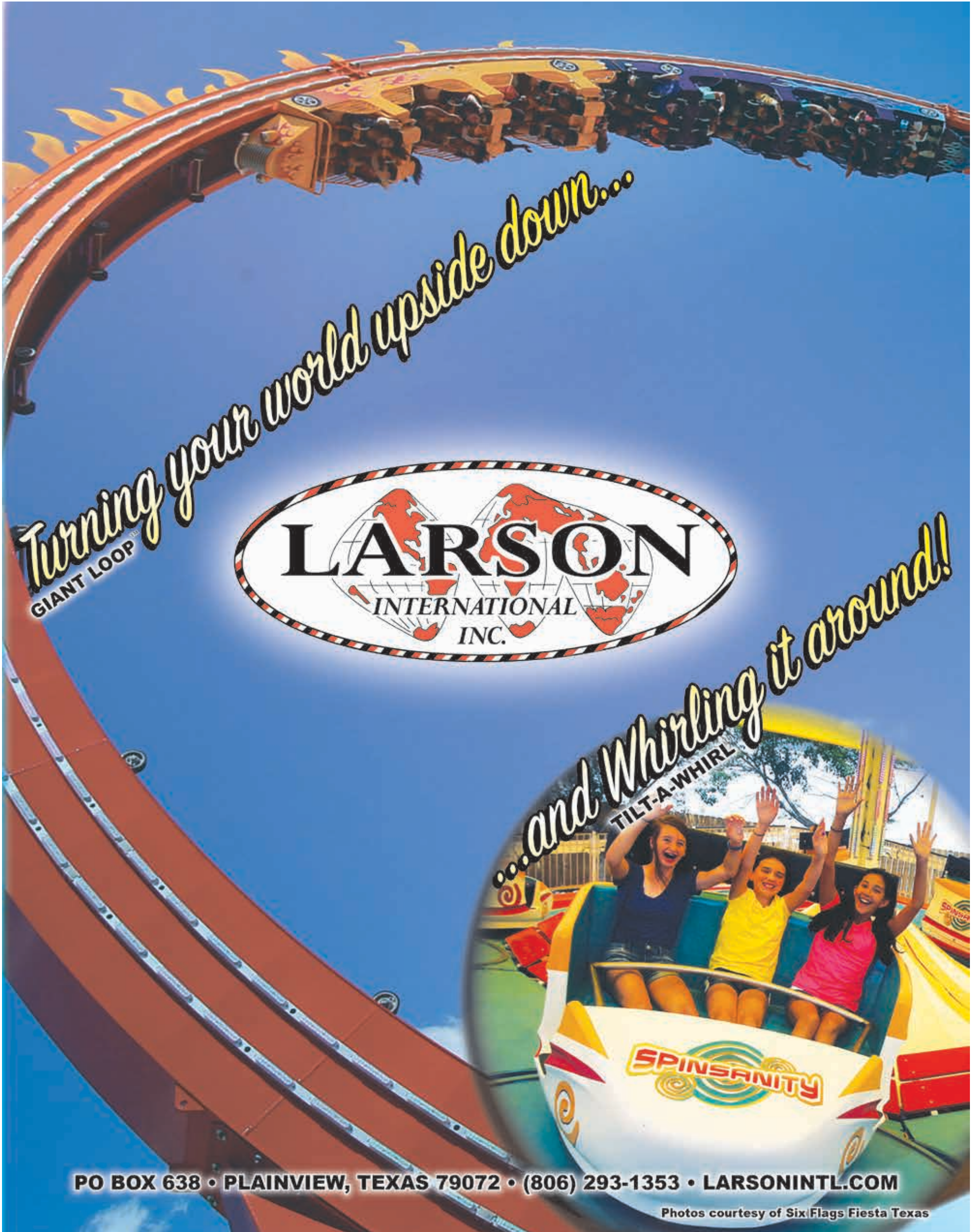
Apex also has taken over most of the Indiana Beach's food service, which had been largely run by concessionaires. "We're in the park business, so we know how to do food," Borman said. "That automatically improved our revenue and profitability picture."

Three original food stands operated independently have been retained: Elephant Ears, Pronto Pup (corn dogs) and the famous Taco Shoppe, which has been featured on The Food Network.

With millions invested in Indiana Beach thus far, Apex is already seeing results. Season pass sales number 10,000 above last year's total, while general admission and group bookings also are up.

"The guests know we're in it to make this park better — and they're very thankful," Borman said. "We want to see Indiana Beach returned to the nostalgic pride that everybody has told us about it."

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Photos courtesy of Six Flags Fiesta Texas

Twilight Zone thrill ride getting a movie makeover

Disney California Adventure to greet Guardians of the Galaxy

AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Come next summer, The Twilight Zone Tower of Terror will give way to the Guardians of the Galaxy at Disney California Adventure (DCA).

A collaboration between the creative minds behind the Marvel Entertainment's comic books / feature films and Walt Disney Imagineering (WDI), the new attraction — called Guardians of the Galaxy: Mission Breakout! — will entail a complete makeover of the 2004-opened Tower of Terror.

The ride will “drop” park guests into the story alongside its ragtag band of wisecracking intergalactic characters.

“The setting is a kind of fortress that’s owned by the mysterious Collector, and it’s packed with

creatures and his latest acquisitions from across the universe,” explained Joe Rhode, WDI’s portfolio creative director. “He has imprisoned the Guardians of the Galaxy and they’re hanging in display cases over a giant abyss. The captor doesn’t know it, but Rocket Raccoon has escaped and is enlisting the aid [of park guests] to help the Guardians in a breakout scheme.”

Riders will be thrust into multiple scenes created by the rise and fall of the attraction’s gantry lift, all to the beat of music inspired by the 2014 film’s popular soundtrack.

The Guardians of the Galaxy announcement was made in late July at San Diego Comic-Con by Kevin Feige, president of Marvel Studios, which, along with the whole of Marvel Entertainment, is now owned by The Walt Disney Company.



The Twilight Zone Tower of Terror, a fixture at Disney California Adventure since 2004, will be rethemed and reintroduced as Guardians of the Galaxy: Mission Breakout! next summer. COURTESY DISNEYLAND RESORT

The attraction will anchor a growing universe of Marvel Super Heroes at DCA.

“Theincrediblytalented

Disney Imagineering team has found a way to harness the spirit which drove Guardians of the Galaxy’s

success to create this immersive experience,” Feige said. “With its debut timed to the release of the film’s sequel, we are eager to present the attraction to the millions who visit [DCA] and place them in the center of the action.”

Disney’s decision to undertake the ride makeover has been met with dismay by some — even spurring at least one online petition.

“This might be the worst marketing idea since new Coke,” said Scot Squires, a self-described Disney fan and marketing consultant based in Midland, Mich. “While Guardians of the Galaxy looks like a great idea on paper, it doesn’t fit with the [park’s California] theming.”

Park guests can enjoy The Twilight Zone Tower of Terror until it closes for the redo in early January.

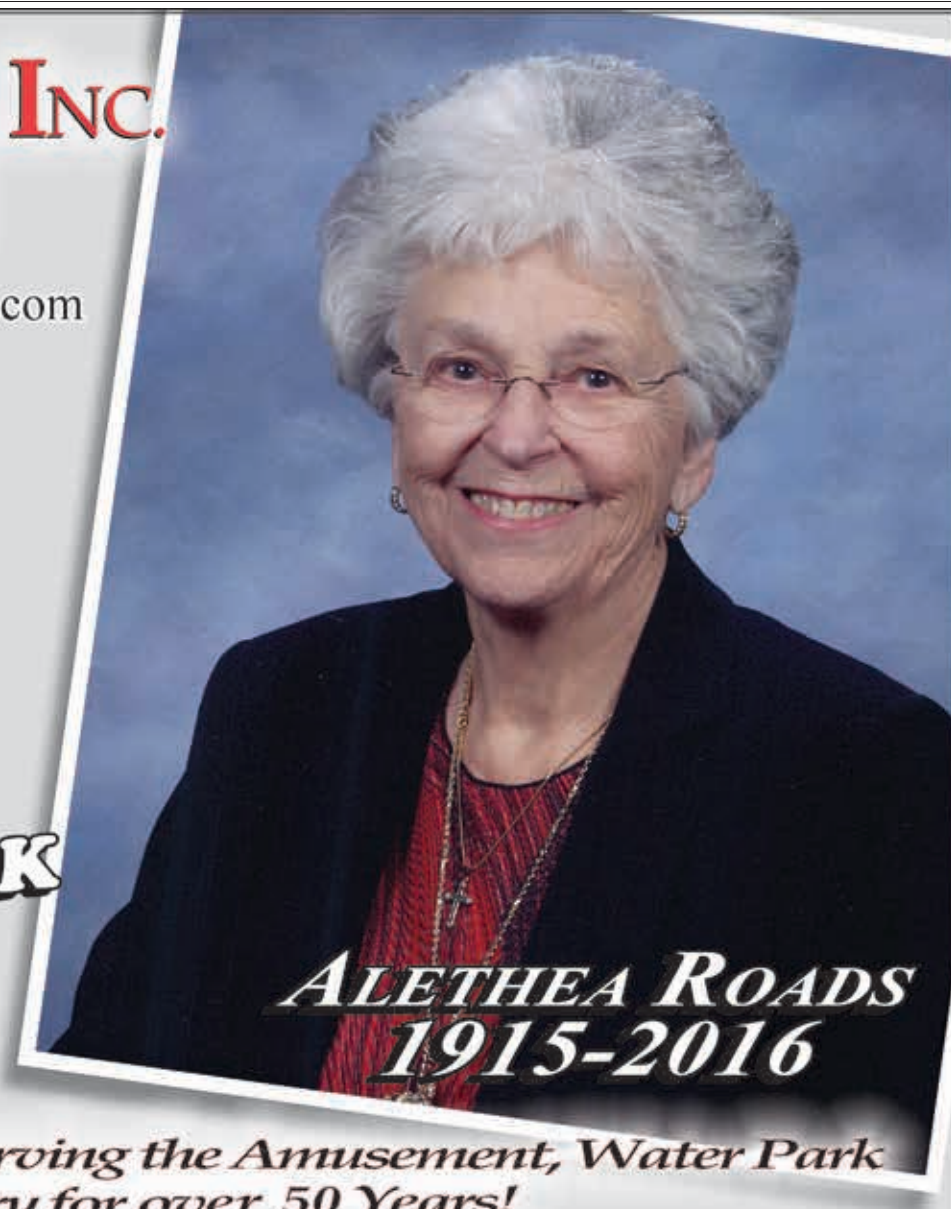
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The Twister spins into Lake Winnie

AT: John W.C. Robinson
at@whrobinsoninc.com

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. — The South's favorite family amusement park upped its thrill ante in 2016 with the addition of the Twister to Lake Winnepesaukah Amusement Park.

"The Twister gives us a new thrill ride with action unlike any other in the park," stated Talley Green of Lake Winnie. The park capitalized this unique action by coining the tagline "Can you stomach it?" in its marketing campaigns.

Rides 4U of Somerville, N.J., helped bring the former



traveling Moser Maverick to the Lake Winnie lineup. Now, its unique spins and twists are delighting Lake Winnie guests.

"This exciting addition had guests flipping for it before we even opened," proclaimed Green. "Prior to opening day

in May, we released a video on our Facebook page of the ride in action which received over 1,500 likes in less than one weekend."

Since its debut, the ride continues to be one of the most popular in the park for both riders and onlookers.

Adjacent to the park's front gate, Twister intimidates and entices incoming guests all at once. Green offered, "We have guests watching it spin in awe, approaching it timidly to ride, and then exiting exclaiming 'This is probably the best ride I've ever ridden!'"



The wild motions of the Twister offer new thrills to guests at Lake Winnepesaukah AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON

Universal Orlando unchains Skull Island: Reign of Kong

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

ORLANDO, Fla. — After weeks of technical rehearsal, Universal's Islands of Adventure officially opened Skull Island: Reign of Kong on July 13. Situated in the Jurassic Park themed area, this new dark ride attraction is an amalgamation of everything Universal enjoys throwing at their guests: 3D technology, motion-based seating and over-the-top theming.

The Universal/Legendary Pictures feature, *Kong: Skull Island*, isn't planned to be released until March of 2017, and it has a star-filled cast. But the industry giant isn't holding back the thrills until then. While that film continues the reboot of the *King Kong* franchise, the monstrous character is synonymous with filmmaking dating back to the monster pictures of the black-and-white era of cinema. Whether opening this attraction serves to generate buzz for the film, or conversely, talk of the film makes the opening of the attraction all the more relevant may be a matter of opinion. Regardless, it is the biggest addition to the park since it launched The Wizarding World of Harry Potter in 2010.

As the story goes here, explorers board 40-foot-long transport vehicles of the Eight Wonder Expedition Company to discover creatures of unknown origin. Upon entering the queue, radio broadcasts blare promotional successes of such excursions. Further along, guests enter the catacombs that take them deeper and deeper into the mysteri-



The highly themed Skull Island: Reign of Kong is the newest mega-attraction that opened this summer at Universal's Islands of Adventure. AT/TIM BALDWIN

ous depths of the realm.

As one gets closer to the boarding station, the theming really kicks into high gear. One room has a soothsayer animatronic that goes from uttering incoherent prattle until unseen voices begin to chant for Kong. Flames rise, the volume increases, and theme park visitors are suddenly rapt, wondering what might happen next.

The queue can be unpredictable from there, as real characters mix with media-based natives to keep would-be explorers guessing as they travel further into the caverns. Thematically, it is among Universal's finest. Upon reaching the station, 72 passengers strap in for each voyage. With multiple vehicles traversing through the attraction, those numbers can keep the queue moving.

Once out of the caves, the massive, 17-ton transport vehicles drive past the camp housing many queuing guests before entering the mountainous façade of the attraction.

To onlookers, it appears each vehicle has a driver, but in reality, each vehicle has an animatronic figure in the driver's seat and the ride uses a highly sophisticated trackless system. Universal is tight-lipped in regard to its manufacturing partners, but it must be said that the staging of the experience is top-notch.

Huge gates open and expedition vehicles courageously enter. Once inside, enormous props and scenes are followed by segmented rooms simulating different areas of the mysterious island. Wearing 3D goggles, riders see vivid projections on both sides of the vehicle giving the impression of looking out the open sides into an unexplainable, dangerous world. With the driver's cabin cleverly positioned in the front of the view, Universal is able to simulate not only fantastical environments, but also speed, and dramatic movement on the side of a cliff.

Three principal scenes use the media-based technol-

ogy to propel the story. To be frank, the action and scenes can be quite intense. Young children are sure to latch onto parents. As the tale progresses, Kong enters the fray, rescuing the transport and its explorers.

The final room brings the 200-horsepower transport close to an exceptionally large — more than three stories tall — animatronic Kong outside the vehicle. His movements are fluid and the overall effect is very impressive, particularly with the loud roar reverberating through the room and visitors feeling his breath. Kong actually stands 18 feet wide at the shoulders and his head is larger than an auto-

mobile. The giant ape's movements capably express human emotion.

Some of the components of the ride could be considered among Universal's best work. This mega-attraction can deliver a thrilling first impression. Once the storyline is revealed and is known to visitors, many guests might prefer reriding the physical rides such as coasters and water attractions in more repeat fashion, but Skull Island: Reign of Kong should be on the must-do list of every Universal visitor. And, with five uniquely different animatronic drivers to retell the ride's story, multiple rides will be on all guests' wishlists.



Above, the massive transport vehicles carry up to 72 riders at a time. Right, Universal's new Kong attraction combines motion simulation, 3D technology, and intricately themed props and sets. COURTESY UNIVERSAL ORLANDO RESORT





2016 Calgary Stampede rainiest ever; guests get one dry day

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

CALGARY, Alta. — The weather reports coming from the Calgary International Airport during July 8-17, the days of the 2016 Calgary Stampede, showed that the only day without any rain was the first day of the event.

Officials, however, were very pleased with the turnout, still being able to hit the one million mark. There were 1,088,039 visitors this year, compared to the 1,168,509 visitors in 2015.

About 18 percent of the guests were first-timers compared to 16 percent in 2015.

Still, it was one of the wettest years on record. Other than that first day, record amounts were measured. Amounts went from a trace on July 10 to about an inch and a half on July 15.

Stampede officials decided to let visitors into the fair for free on the final day of the fair between 10 a.m. and noon. Also offered that day were one-half price standing-room rodeo tickets. On that day, there were 151,695 visitors compared to the same day in 2015 when 106,803 visitors passed through the gates.

At the conclusion of the of the Stampede, CEO Warren Connell said: "Our stampede spirit is alive and doing very well in Calgary."

He said the rain did sort of cooperate with skies holding until after the day's

rodeo and before the Chuckwagon Races on many days.

"But it was a difficult year for the weather," Connell said.

The total number of visitors on the last Friday and Saturday of the fair were down 39 percent and 27 percent, respectively, from 2015.

The Calgary Stampede's all-time attendance record was set in 2014 during its 100th anniversary run with an attendance of 1.4 million.

The Calgary Stampede offers an array of activities and attractions, but has maintained a heavy emphasis on rodeo and cowboys. Stampede marketing boasts it is the "World's Richest Tournament Style Rodeo."

It features six main events that happen daily including: ladies barrel racing, bareback, tie-down roping, steer wrestling, saddle bronc and bull riding.

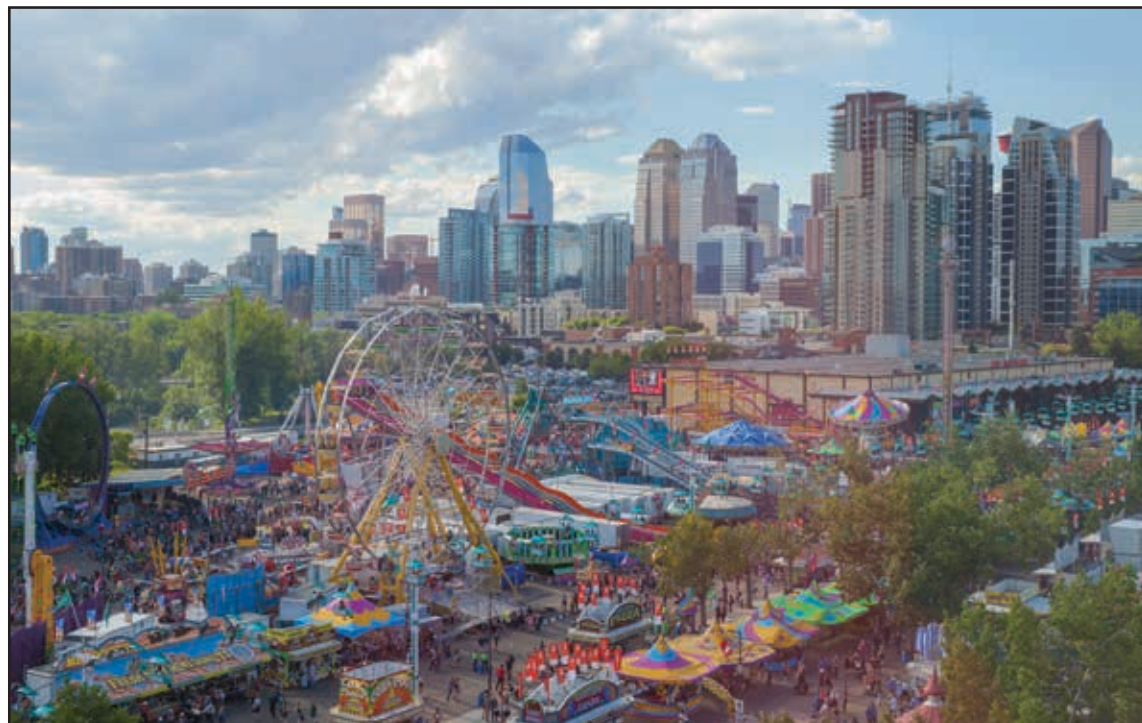
New events this year included:

- The Dog Bowl, which was presented by The Canine Stars, was located on the midway and received great reviews, said Neil Hiltz, media relations coordinator;

- The International Pavilion transformed the Big Four Building to a cultural hotspot with performances, vendors and more;

- The Coca-Cola stage, which featured dozens of popular artists and

- Adventure Park, located at the south end of the park, gave guests a chance to



FAIRS

The 2016 Calgary Stampede, which ran July 8-17, was the wettest Calgary Stampede on record. NAME provided the midway with 58 rides including one new ride, the Spin Out, manufactured by KMG. Right, there were 34 new foods at the 2016 Calgary Stampede, July 8-17. Final 2016 fair attendance was 1,088,039.

COURTESY
CALGARY STAMPEDE

throw an axe, play paint ball or duel on climbing walls.

The midway, provided by North American Midway Entertainment, provided 58 total rides including a new one, the Spin Out, manufactured by KMG.



Temple Fire Company Fair, Easton, Pa., celebrates 53rd year



Left: A.E.B. Amusements, Easton, Pa. has the midway for the annual Temple Fire Company Fair. Now in its 53rd year, the midway features a dozen rides from A.E.B. Newly refurbished this past winter is their Venture Cobra and Hrubetz Round-Up. Right: Diane Welsh (r), owner of Diane's Concessions and daughter Amber run independent game concessions. Based out of Philadelphia, Welsh's operation consists of three game units and two Hi-Strikers. Formerly known as "Duck Pond Diane," in addition to A.E.B., she plays with Skelly's Amusements, Inc. and Bartlebaugh Amusements, Inc.

AT/B. DEREK SHAW



Attendance at 2016 California State Fair falls but successes reported

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

FAIRS

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — California State Fair officials felt that Sacramento's weekend heat wave and recent national tragedies took a toll on attendance despite efforts to advertise more on social media for the July 8-24 event.

Total attendance this year was 673,237, down 14 percent from 2015's record total of 787,833. Paid attendance fell by 11 percent from 577,646 last year to 511,224 this year.

State Fair spokeswoman Sabrina Rodriguez said the 17-day event usually has some of its heaviest turnout in the closing weekend, but triple-digit temperatures hit Sacramento on the fair's final Saturday and Sunday.

She told a local news agency that fair organizers also speculated recent shootings and attacks may have also deterred people from attending a heavily populated event despite actions they took to prevent fairgoers from bringing weapons, such as providing metal detectors at entrances.

"Despite how safe the fair is, we have had a lot of recent tragedies around the country when it comes to large groups of people... some people may be more likely to stay home," Rodriguez was quoted as saying.

There also were late can-

cancellations from Chaka Khan and Salt n' Pepa. Both had been advertised extensively. The late cancellations didn't allow enough time for the replacement acts to promote.

Yet, there were some successes this year. For example, there was a 20 percent increase in funds raised at the Junior Livestock Sale of Champions, a 21 percent increase in the number of competitive entries, and a 7.2 percent increase in advance admission ticket sales.

Attendance for the The Best of California Brewfest drew 2,015 guests, up 31 percent from the previous year's 1,535 guests. The number of entries increased by 11 percent.

Butler Amusements' 70 carnival rides were again strong in generating \$4,696,400 in revenues, down only \$32,307 from 2015's record setting year. The newly installed \$1.1 million Sky Ride carried more than 52,997 guests.

Exit survey data showed that 92 percent of visitors were satisfied with their state fair experience and more than 95 percent felt their state fair was a good value, up from 74 percent in 2015.

Food and beverage sales during the 2016 event grossed \$9.4 million, just 2.6 percent behind 2015's record setting year of \$9.6 million.



Butler Amusements provides the midway at the California State Fair, Sacramento. This year the carnival supplied 70 carnival rides as well as a new permanent attraction, the Sky Ride. The Sky Ride cost Butler Amusements \$1.1 million. It gave rides to 52,997 guests this year. COURTESY CALIFORNIA STATE FAIR



Total attendance at the 2016 California State Fair, Sacramento, July 8-24, fell 14 percent compared to last year's total. But, fair officials reported many successes. Officials attributed the decrease to triple-digit temperatures on the last weekend of the event and recent national tragedies. COURTESY CALIFORNIA STATE FAIR

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CARNIVAL LIGHTS

COMPILED: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

The Illinois Treasurer's office auctioned some unclaimed property at this year's **Illinois State Fair**, Springfield, which ran August 11-21.

Items included some rare and interesting items. Officials said prior to the fair there was a rookie card of late **Chicago Cubs** star **Ernie Banks**, an 1856 flying eagle cent and an **Elvis Presley** concert stub. There also was a Cartier watch and a pair of new 1997 Air Jordan shoes.

This was the first time in a decade that the office held an auction live at the fair. The last live auction was in 2006.

Items are put up for auction after 10 years of attempts to locate owners. The office has had three online auctions so far this year.

The midway is provided by **North American Midway Entertainment**.

Prized pigs and ribbon-worthy crafts could earn youngsters a bit less at the **North Dakota State Fair**, Minot, held annually in July.

State agencies are proposing cuts to staff, equipment, travel and other areas, including fair prize premiums, to comply with 10 percent cuts ordered by North Dakota Gov. **Jack Dalrymple** as they begin to submit their general fund budget requests for the next two years.

With nowhere else to cut, North Dakota State Fair Manager **Renae Korslien** said the State Fair Association had no choice but to slash premiums by more than \$50,000.

"Which is sad, because most of that money goes to the 4-H and FFA kids," Korslien was quoted as saying in the online Inforum news agency out of Fargo, N.D.

There were 49,000 projects entered into the 2015 fair and numbers for the 2016 fair, which ran July 22-30, were not known by AT's deadline.

Attendance at the 2015 event was 305,093, slightly lower than last year's 314,446.

Officials at the **California Mid-State Fair** suggested prior to the 2016 event, which ran July 20-31, that this year's visitors may want to arrive a few minutes early due to enhanced security screening at all entrances.

For many years, fair officials at the Paso Robles event provided security personnel at all entrances who would do a search of handbags and any items that might carry other items inside.

But, this year, they took it a step further by adding a wand system, which officials said are really just metal detectors to determine if there are any metal items that are being carried onto the grounds.

Officials included the new security not because of increased concerns, but felt it put the fair more in line with other regional events.

Davis Enterprises provides the midway at the California Mid-State Fair.

The 2016 **Sonoma County Fair**, Santa Rosa, Calif., which ran July 22-August 7, was important for **Becky Bartling**, hired last December as the fair's new chief executive officer. It marked her official public debut as the head of the fair.

One of the changes Bartling made for this year's event was to offer free entertainment to

fairgoers. Concerts this year were moved from the Chris Beck Arena to the smaller Community Theater Stage. Fairgoers could attend the concerts with a paid fair admission.

There also was increased entertainment targeting the fair's large Latino following.

Other changes this year was the relocation of the Hall of Flowers display. The popular exhibit had been tucked in the corner of the fair's exhibit hall, but Bartling moved it to the center of the hall.

The wine and beer garden was decorated with giant movie tickets and framed movie still photos, to match this year's fair theme, "Lights, Camera, Fair!" celebrating the famous movies shot in Sonoma County over the decades.

A package deal for horse racing fans that included box seats and a buffet meal also was a new offering at the 2016 event.

The carnival midway was provided by **Helm & Sons**.

The 2016 **Washington State Fair**, Puyallup, is expanding its dates this year, running September 2-25 and giving guests four weekends and other additional options to plan their trips. The fair will close on Tuesdays to give staff and vendors time to rest and restock.

Stacy Howard, the fair's new public relations manager, made the fair announcements in July. Howard took over the position after the resignation of 30-year veteran **Karen LaFlamme**.

The Washington State Fair will end the summer with a special End of Summer Bash on Labor Day. The entire fair will be donned with island sounds and island fun complete with tropical drinks, food and a free concert by **Jimmy Buffet**.

There will be an abundance of other Labor Day offerings and promotions. And, of course, special day promotions will be available throughout the entire run of the fair.

Other offerings this year include the Superhero Headquarters exhibit, Discover the Dinosaurs, the Timber Gulch exhibit and new foods such as Branks BBQ and the Original House of Donuts.

Funtastic Shows provides the midway at the Washington State Fair with approximately 70 rides.

This year the **International Association of Fairs and Expos (IAFE)** will hold its annual convention November 27-30, at the **Paris Hotel** and **Bally's Hotel**, Las Vegas, Nev. Educational workshops already confirmed for the 2016 event include:

- Double Jeopardy – The Cost of Doing Business.

- An informative presentation on YQCA, a new and revolutionary quality assurance program for agricultural exhibitors and the safety of the food chain.

- Board & Staff – Who Leads What.
- Show Us the Money, presented in a new and fun way to help fair officials find money needed for facility projects.

The Tech area will be expanded to be a Tech Pavilion and will offer a session on livestreaming, among other technical topics.



BUSINESS, SAFETY & CLASSIFIED

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Association Summer Meetings report

More than 100 attendees at Canobie Lake Park for NEAAPA's 103rd meeting

AT: Ron Gustafson
Special to Amusement Today

SALEM, N.H. — More than 100 members of the **New England Association of Amusement Parks & Attractions (NEAAPA)** were on hand July 26 at **Canobie Lake Park** for the 103rd Anniversary Summer Meeting of the organization.

The day-long event kicked off with exclusive ride time (10-10:45 a.m.) on the classic Yankee Cannonball wood roller coaster. The landmark **Philadelphia Toboggan Co.** ride first oper-

► See NEAAPA, page 39



NEAAPA Board of Directors gather for a meeting during the organization's summer gala at Canobie Lake Park in Salem, N.H. COURTESY NEAAPA/RON GUSTAFSON



Canobie Lake Park offered a variety of tours during NEAAPA's Summer Meeting on July 26. COURTESY NEAAPA/RON GUSTAFSON

Nearly 100 make trip to Knoebels Amusement Resort for two-day PAPA event

AT: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

ELYSBURG, Pa. — Nearly 100 members of the **Pennsylvania Amusement Parks Association (PAPA)** met July 18 and 19 for their annual Summer Meeting at the idyllic **Knoebels Amusement Resort**. Each year the summer meeting travels to a different park while the spring meeting is annually held at the Hershey Lodge (Pa.).

The first day started with a golf tournament at **Knoebels Three Ponds Golf Course** generating over \$1,500 for the **Barbara J. Knoebel** scholarship fund. This fund annually helps student employees of PAPA member parks in the form of scholarships for educational purposes. Twenty PAPA members and guests participated. That evening attendees socialized and ate at the **Pine Barn Inn, Danville**. During opening remarks **Jeff Davis**, president of PAPA said, "We're



Richard Jackson, vice president of North American operations of IAAPA and Roxanne Pope, assistant to the president of IAAPA made a presentation to Dick Knoebel after the opening evening dinner. IAAPA recognized Knoebels for 90 years of excellence in the amusement industry. COURTESY KNOEBELS

competitors, however, there's a lot of sameness and sharing. I don't think this exists quite the same way in other states." The networking and renewing of friendships continued in the outside courtyard well into the wee hours of the next day.

After a tasty breakfast on Tuesday in the Oasis Cafeteria,

behind-the-scenes tours were conducted by **Rick and Brian Knoebel** for interested attendees. They included a tour of the various shops, inside the Haunted Mansion and also inside **Black Diamond** roller coaster.

The PAPA board of directors meeting also took place



Drew Kanaskie, Ride Technician, took a group of 25 attendees through a lights-on tour of the Pretzel ride Haunted Mansion. AT/B. DEREK SHAW

mid-morning. **Jeff Davis**, **Sesame Place** and current PAPA president, presided. **Mike Fehnel**, general manager of **Dorney Park** filled an open seat on the board. The **Pennsylvania Association of Travel & Tourism (PATT)**, of which PAPA was a member, is in the process of being dis-

solved. There was discussion about PAPA joining the **Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association (PRLA)**, as that is now the organization more closely aligned with the amusement industry in Pennsylvania. PRLA also has effec-

► See PAPA, page 38

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New Skyslide at U.S. Bank Tower a fun diversion for all ages

Tallest skyscraper in the West offers view to a thrill

AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — Continuing the global trend of “glass box” attractions that capitalize on the thrill, and fear, of heights — typically above deep river gorges and atop skyscrapers — an enclosed, see-through slide has been affixed to the side of the tallest building west of the Mississippi River.

Skyslide is part of the new OUE Skyspace Los Angeles 360-degree indoor / outdoor observation deck that debuted near the top of the 1,081-foot U.S. Bank Tower in late June. The 45-foot-long slide, which was assembled offsite and helicoptered into its position between two upper floors, is made of glass panels 1.25-inches thick — allowing riders unobstructed, if

fleeting, views.

“We are so proud to have finally opened our doors to guests from around the world to celebrate what is sure to become an iconic California landmark,” said Lucy Rumantir, president and CEO, The Americas, for OUE (short for Overseas Union Enterprise, Ltd., a Singapore-based real estate development company that purchased the tower in 2013).

A \$50 million project, OUE Skyspace Los Angeles welcomed some 10,000 people its first weekend. About 2,400 of those visitors tried out Skyslide on opening day, June 24, alone.

A month later, during a late-afternoon weekday visit from *Amusement Today*, Skyslide patronage was impressively nonstop. Visitors enjoyed watching the reactions of Skyslide’s riders as much as whooshing down the slide itself.

Riders take the plunge on rubberized yoga mats, which protect the glass and

further cushion the landing on a gymnastics-style mattress. The slide goes straight out from the wall of the building for a couple of vertigo-inducing feet before hanging a sharp right into the dive. It’s over in a flash — but not before eliciting a giddy gasp, scream and/or laugh.

Skyslide requires a separate \$8 ticket in addition to the \$25 observation deck admission. Enjoyed in combination with the unmatched L.A. mountain range-to-Santa Monica Bay panorama afforded by the two observation levels, which include a 2,800-square-foot outdoor terrace, a restaurant and a bar, the total admission reflects a one-of-a-kind experience. A time-lapse digital photography wall in the lobby illustrating L.A.’s landmarks and diverse neighborhoods is a kind of anticipation-building bonus.

OUE Skyspace Los Angeles is open late nightly and available for special events.

•skyspace-la.com



Skyslide, located on the 70th floor of the U.S. Bank Tower in downtown Los Angeles, continues to lure a steady flow of visitors following its successful debut on June 24.
AT/DEAN LAMANNA



►PAPA

Continued from page 37

tive lobbying resources. The organization’s bylaws were revised with approval that day. The last revision was in 1997. The original set of PAPA bylaws was in effect from 1936-1997.

Other committee reports included legislative issues; human resources; scholarships; water parks and PAPA website. The association is moving toward paperless spring and summer meeting registrations and also e-mail blasts to members. New business included a presentation about a

feature article being prepared for the 2017 Explore Pennsylvania publication of the **Pennsylvania RV & Camping Association** on RV’s/camping and Pennsylvania amusement parks. Also discussed was the new PAPA Hall of Fame; park security measures (including open carry policies); and the PokemonGo craze as it relates to guest communications. Stacey Ososkie, PR manager for Knoebels said, “I never thought I’d be talking about Pokémon in my grown up adult life!”

There was also interest in perhaps offering a stand-alone roundtable session that has

been a hit on the afternoon of the second day of the spring meeting each year. The thinking is that it might be nice for PAPA member parks to get together for a day-long roundtable in the December or January timeframe.

Richard Jackson, vice president of North American operations of IAAPA was in attendance and made a brief presentation to the board. New this year is help from IAAPA with statewide issues and initiatives. Stephanie See, director, State Advocacy, is the person who is heading up this operation. The member organization also offers food co-op

and tele-medicine programs.

Rounding out the annual gathering was another tasty meal prepared by the Knoebels culinary staff. Entertainment was provided by the The Avalons, the in-park entertainment that week. To add to the performance, Leanna Knoebel Muscato got up and performed Palisades Park (rewritten to Knoebels Groves lyrics) with the quintet. (She has a potentially budding career in a different direction!) Many attendees then stayed to enjoy the rides, shows and attractions Knoebels Amusement Resort has for kids of all ages, young and old.

2017 meeting dates set

The 2017 PAPA Spring Meeting will be held at the **Hershey Lodge** in early March. The 2017 PAPA Summer Meeting will occur at **Waldameer Park** and **WaterWorld**, Erie, Pa. The tentative dates are July 17 and 18.

2016 PACE Safety Seminar

The 2016 PACE (Parks and Carnivals Educational) **Ride Safety Seminar** will occur October 24 to 27 at the Clarion Hotel, Erie, Pa. “Hands-on” training will be available at **Waldameer Park** and **WaterWorld**, Erie, Pa. This portion of the program is held outside, rain or shine. This annual seminar is held in conjunction with the **Pennsylvania Showmen’s Association (PSSA)** 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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►NEAAPA

Continued from page 37

ated at **Lakewood Park** in Waterbury, Conn., in 1930 and was moved to Canobie Lake for the 1936 season.

Morning refreshments were provided by NEAAPA member **High Mountain Enterprises**.

Noon lunch was served in the park's North Grove overlooking the lake where gift bags were presented by **International Ride Training** and **NXT Capture**.

A variety of tours were conducted during the afternoon focusing on operations, games, retail food service entertainment and Canobie Lake's Halloween Screemfest.

NEAAPA's board of directors met at 4 p.m. with President **Ryan DeMaria** of Canobie Lake Park presiding before a large contingent of the organization's members.

A cocktail hour and dinner, both sponsored by NEAAPA members **Premier Rides, Inc.**, of Baltimore, Md., and **Rhode Island Novelty**, of Fall River, Mass., followed the board meeting in the Portofino Restaurant and North Grove respectively.

A group photo taken with a drone camera capped off the event.

The next NEAAPA social events will be held during the Nov. 14-18 **IAAPA Attractions Expo** in Orlando, Fla.

•neaapa.com



NEAAPA Secretary Ed Hodgdon (left) and longtime New England News Editor Ron Gustafson got together for a quick "hello" as the organization kicked off its 103rd Anniversary Summer Meeting at Canobie Lake Park in Salem, N.H. Ed is marketing director at Funtown Splash-town USA in Saco, Maine, while Ron is director of marketing and public relations at Quassy Amusement & Waterpark in Middlebury, Conn. **New England News** is the official newsletter of NEAAPA. COURTESY NEAAPA



Most NEAAPA members exited around dusk following a full day at Canobie Lake Park.

COURTESY NEAAPA/RON GUSTAFSON

FunTime USA rebuilding approved

GULFPORT, Miss. — **FunTime USA** amusement park received approval on its third try from the Gulfport City Council to rebuild the amusement park following its destruction in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Business co-owners **Romy Simpson** and **Rafe O'Neal** said they hope to have the park open by Memorial Day 2017 on a 5.5-acre tract on Gulfport waterfront directly across the street from its former corner location at U.S. 90 and Cowan. A Ferris wheel and other new rides will be added to the ride mix with the favorites: bumper boats and go-karts.

Plans to rebuild the park had been met with opposition from nearby residents who cited noise and traffic as their reasons for concern. The council voted 4-3 to reject the appeals by the neighborhood group, thus clearing the way for the park to return following years of entertaining families prior to Hurricane Katrina.



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MARKETWATCH



COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 08/08/16	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	27.63	38.22	22.31
Merlin Entertainments Group/ Legoland	MERL	LSE	468.60	483.80	316.79
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	60.79	63.40	48.45
Comcast Corp./ NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	67.07	68.36	50.01
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	95.75	120.65	86.25
Dubai Parks & Resorts	DUBAIPAR:UH	DFM	1.76	1.77	0.86
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	9010	TYO	1241.00	1568.00	1043.00
Haicahang Holdings Ltd.	2255HK	SEHK	1.56	1.84	1.21
Leofoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	9.12	11.35	8.22
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	24.64	25.29	16.18
Parques Reunidos Servicios Centrales S.A.	ES:PQR	MCE	12.15	15.53	12.1
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	13.16	21.84	12.58
Shenzhen Overseas Chinese Town Co., Ltd. (OCT)	000069	SZSE	7.01	11.09	5.88
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	53.62	62.69	41.6
Skyocean International	00593HK	SEHK	10.20	12	7.95
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	455.00	499.50	330.40
Village Roadshow	VRL	ASX	5.28	7.68	4.95

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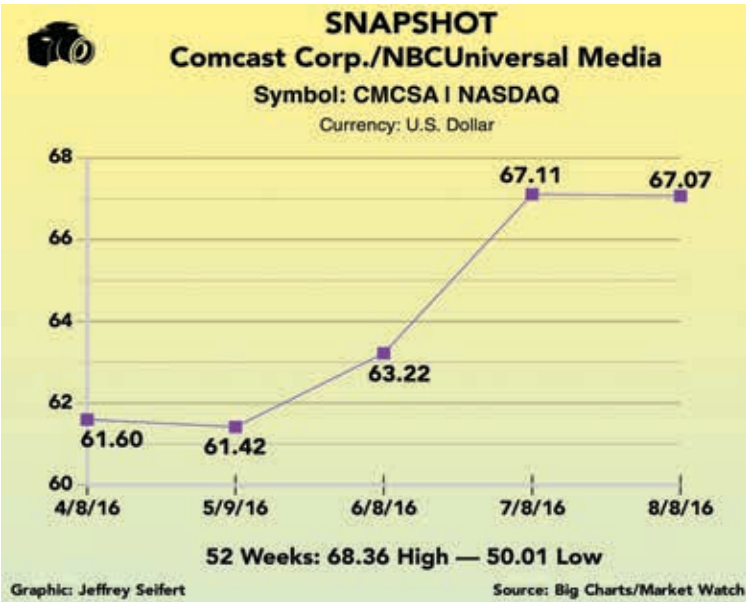
Worldwide Markets: **ASX**, Australian Securities Exchange; **CSE**, Copenhagen Stock Exchange; **LSE**, London Stock Exchange; **NYSE**, New York Stock Exchange; **NASDAQ**, National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations; **SEHK**, Hong Kong Stock Exchange; **SZSE**, Shenzhen Stock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

DIESEL PRICES

Region (U.S.)	As of 08/08/16	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	\$2.321	-\$0.392
Midwest	\$2.275	-\$0.240
Gulf Coast	\$2.184	-\$0.303
Mountain	\$2.396	-\$0.244
West Coast	\$2.454	-\$0.252
California	\$2.707	-\$0.253

CURRENCY

On 08/09/16 \$1 USD =	
0.9019	EURO
0.7655	GBP (British Pound)
102.27	JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.9812	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.3103	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.3164	CAD (Canadian Dollar)



BUSINESS WATCH

SeaWorld Ent. reports 2016 first half results

ORLANDO, Fla. — **SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.** (NYSE: SEAS), reported On Aug. 4 its financial results for the first half and second quarter of 2016. During the first half of 2016, the company generated revenue of \$591.4 million, a decrease of \$14.8 million, or 2 percent, compared to the same period in 2015. The company generated a net loss for the first half of 2016 of \$66.3 million, or a loss of \$0.78 per diluted share, and an Adjusted Net Loss of \$31.5 million, or a loss of \$0.37 per diluted share. Second quarter attendance was down 494,000 guests due to a decline in attendance at the company's Florida park locations along with a shift in the timing of holidays in 2016, which impacted nearly all of its park locations.

Cedar Fair reports record first half results

SANDUSKY, Ohio — **Cedar Fair Entertainment Company** (NYSE: FUN), announced on Aug. 3 record net revenues for the six months that ended June 26. Net revenues were \$446 million for the six months, an increase of \$22 million, or 5 percent, compared with the six-month period ended June 28, 2015. The increase in revenues was the result of a 4 percent increase, or 337,000-visit, increase in attendance to 9.0 million guests, a 1 percent, or \$0.59, increase in average in-park guest per capita spending to \$45.16, and a 7 percent, or \$3 million, increase in out-of-park revenues to \$54 million. Cedar Fair remains confident in its long-term business strategy and its ability to reach its long-term Adjusted EBITDA goal of \$500 million earlier than its original target of 2018.

Six Flags first half revenue up 11 percent

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — **Six Flags Entertainment Corporation** (NYSE: SIX) announced on July 27 another period of strong financial performance with revenue for the first six months of 2016 growing \$51 million or 11 percent to \$522 million, driven primarily by a 7 percent increase in attendance, a 3 percent increase in guest spending per capita and a 104 percent increase in international licensing revenue. On a constant currency basis, revenue for the first six months of 2016 grew \$57 million or 12 percent. Net Income for the same time period increased \$19 million and Adjusted EBITDA grew \$21 million or 19 percent to \$132 million.

Parques Reunidos to manage two Vietnam parks

MADRID, Spain — **Parques Reunidos** (ES: PQR) was awarded the management contract for two new parks in Ha Long City, Vietnam. The 10-year deal was signed with the vietnamese investment group **Sun Group** and marks the entry of the company in the Asian market. The agreement includes advice and management by the leisure group of the new area called **Ha Long Ocean Park**, which will consist of two parks (theme and aquatic) when they open on 214 hectares of land in the first half of 2017.

Comcast reports 2nd quarter results

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. — **Comcast Corporation** (NASDAQ: CMC-SA) on July 27 reported results for the quarter ended June 30, 2016 that included: consolidated revenue increased 2.8 percent; operating income decreased 1 percent; operating cash flow increased 3 percent while net cash provided by operating activities was \$4.3 billion.

In its theme park division, revenue increased 47 percent to \$1.1 billion and operating cash flow increased 40.5 percent to \$469 million in the second quarter of 2016. Pro forma revenue increased 10.6 percent, reflecting higher per capita spending at the parks and the successful opening of Hollywood's *The Wizarding World of Harry Potter* attraction. For the six months ended June 30, 2016, revenue from the theme parks segment increased 51.8 percent to \$2.2 billion and operating cash flow increased 46 percent to \$844 million compared to 2015.

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OBITUARIES**Lloyd "Mokey" Choate passes away July 25**

SEARCY, Ark. — **Lloyd "Mokey" Choate Sr.**, age 73, of Judsonia, Ark., died July 25, 2016 in Searcy, Ark.

Choate owned **Star Amusements**, Judsonia, Ark., which was started in 1942 by his father, Robert "The Kid Burns" Choate, an Athletic Show wrestler prior to starting the show, and mother, Camella Roseanne Winch Choate.

This year was the first year since the show began that it didn't go out on the road.

He was the youngest of four children, all of whom have preceded him in death: Melba Campbell, an independent ride operator; Jennette Saunders, owner of Razorback Amusements along with her husband, Jelly Saunders; and Robert Choate.

He is survived by one son, Lloyd Choate, Jr. (Tonya Choate), Judsonia; two daughters, Luanne Quattlebaum (Alan Quattlebaum), Judsonia, Phyllisha Swindle (Jeremy Swindle), Searcy; six grandchildren, and numerous great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews and cousins.

Visitation was held July 28 at Valley Baptist Church, Searcy, Ark., with funeral services July 29, by Powell Funeral Home of Searcy.

Tara Pugh, 36, passes away July 12

LITHIA, Fla. — **Tara Michelle Heatherly Pugh**, 36, of Lithia, Fla., passed away on July 12, 2016.

She and her husband, Robert (Beau) Pugh owned **Pugh Concessions**, traveling most of the time with **Reithoffer Shows**.

She is survived by husband and sons, Clark and Parker; mother, Carla Rigby; father, Coy Heatherly Jr.; grandmother, Barbara (Jim) Evans; brother, Coy Max Heatherly; step-brothers, Rande (Joelle Rigby) Rigby; Robby (Tish Rigby) Rigby; aunt, Teresa (Al Rimes) Rimes; uncle, Jeff (Jeanie Mathews) Mathews; in-laws, Robert "Bobby" (Debbie Pugh) Pugh; as well as many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Services were held July 20, at Serenity Meadows, River-view, Fla.

**Choate****Wonderland Park's co-founder Alethea Roads dies at 100**

AMARILLO, Texas — **Alethea Isabel Mikesell Roads**, 100, of Amarillo died Tuesday, July 26, 2016. A memorial service was held on August 1, at St. Paul United Methodist Church in Amarillo.

Alethea was born Nov. 8, 1915, in Pittsburgh, Pa., to Robert and Ruth Mikesell. She married **Paul E. Roads** on May 23, 1943 in Neodesha, Kan. On August 12, 1951, Alethea and Paul opened **Kiddieland Park** in Amarillo, renamed **Wonderland Park** in 1967. Kiddieland opened with three rides — a kiddie car ride (built by Paul Roads), kiddie boats, and a little dipper roller coaster. Paul did the maintenance, took care of advertising and worked full time at the Air Base until 1967. Alethea ordered supplies, sold tickets, kept the books, managed personnel, and was in charge of customer relations. Alethea was the only person in the office until her daughter began helping in the 1970s. Alethea's daughter, **Paula**, & son-in-law, **Paul Borchardt** & granddaughter, **Rebecca Parker**, now run the park. Today, Wonderland is the largest

**Alethea Roads**

family-owned and operated amusement park in Texas.

One of Alethea's best ideas was the School Ticket Fundraiser Program that benefits all grade schools and middle schools in Amarillo. The schools sell ride passes to Wonderland and keep 30 percent of their sales.

Alethea took time in the 1950s to be a Cub Scout & Girl Scout leader. She always had time for both her children and all the teenagers who worked for her. In the early years, she would pick up the workers and bring them to work. Alethea was well known for her support of young people that

worked at Wonderland Park. She continually stressed positive work ethics in an unassuming manner. Alethea was known for her hard work and perseverance; and to those who knew her, she was one of the wisest, kindest and most interesting people you will ever meet.

Alethea was a member of **IAAPA**, which awarded Roads the 2003 Lifetime Service Award. In 1972, she and Paul began the **Family Owned and Managed Park Association** (FOAM). She was active in her church, Sunday School, her coffee group, Leukemia Society, and Red Hats. In 2008, she was awarded the Amarillo Women's Lifetime Achievement Award.

It was through the FOAM group that Alethea and her husband met **O.D. Hopkins**, then a builder of chair lifts for ski resorts. Following the installation of the Hopkins Sky Ride (ski lift) at the park in 1977, a relationship was built with Hopkins and company salesman **Jerry Pendleton** that would make Wonderland the prototype proving grounds

for six Hopkins rides, most notably the company's first log flume, and its first roller coaster, the double looping Texas Tornado.

Wonderland's mission of providing an enjoyable experience to its patrons will continue to ensure its popularity and success as a major Amarillo tourist attraction throughout the years to come thanks to 65 years of dedication and hard work of its founders, Alethea & Paul Roads.

Alethea was preceded in death by her husband, Paul; a son, Danny; her parents; and a brother, Paul.

Survivors include her daughter, Paula Borchardt and husband, Paul, of Amarillo; four granddaughters, Rebecca and Randy Parker of Amarillo, Kristen and Ken Hodges of Waco, Dr. Keira and Jason West of Fort Worth, and Paige and Eric Rumph of Hoboken, N.J.; and nine grandchildren.

Memorial donations may be made to St. Paul United Methodist Church, 4317 I-40 West, Amarillo, Texas 79106 or Khiva Shrine 305 SE 5th Ave, Amarillo, Texas 79101.

Alethea Roads remembered...

"I have had the pleasure of knowing Alethea Roads for over 40 years. She has been like a second mother to me for all those years. I met Alethea and her husband Paul in 1974 and my friendship with them, Paula, and P.D., and the entire family has been extraordinary. My family and I were always treated like one of her family. I am admittedly at a loss for words, however I will always remember her smile and laughter forever. May family and I have lost a dear and wonderful friend. May she rest in peace."

—**Jerry Pendleton, Skytrans Mfg.**

"Alethea Roads was like my second mother, as she was for so many others. She always inspired others to be their best and always saw the good in other people. She was always so positive and upbeat. What a wonderful inspiration she has been for so many people, including myself. She will be greatly missed but always remembered."

—**Kristi Dean, Joyland Amusement Park**

"Alethea Roads and her husband Paul are legends in the family-owned and operated amusement parks. What they were able to build in Amarillo is a tribute to their hard work, dedication and business model that built a park that thrives on the local, repeat visits. Their forward thinking and willingness to share their successful business model helped many other small parks survive with the creation of their small park group. The knowledge gained by its elite membership, during their annual meetings, made our industry a far better place. Alethea will be missed by all of us lucky enough to have known her."

—**Dick Chance, Chance Rides Mfg.**

"As many of us in the small parks community know, Mrs. Roads was instrumental in setting up an organization dedicated to family-owned parks back in the early '70s. The annual meeting among those park owners continues to this day and is a vital networking opportunity for all of us. She will be missed by all that knew her as someone dedicated to family, friends and this industry."

—**Eric Anderson, Quassy Amusement & Waterpark**

"Alethea Roads and her husband Paul were living proof that two people, willing and able to work hard, could make their mark in our industry. Alethea was a wonderful lady who was not only wise but understanding. She loved her family, church, community and Wonderland. Alethea will be missed by all those who knew her. She also made the worlds best peanut brittle."

—**Paul T. Nelson, Waldameer Park, Inc.**

"My memories of Alethea Roads are that of a soft spoken lady with great knowledge of our industry. I was lucky enough to meet her and her late husband Paul many years ago during a small parks open floor discussion workshop which I chaired during an IAAPA convention. Mrs. Roads, along with her late husband Paul, helped form an organization of small, family-owned amusement parks. The organization's sole purpose was to help one another through sharing management, operations and marketing knowledge and experiences. That group of small family owned parks is still going strong today! With the passing of Alethea Roads, all small family owned amusement park say goodbye to a great leader."

—**Bill Robinson, William H. Robinson, Inc.**

"It is with great sadness that we learned of Alethea Roads passing. She and her husband were the creators of a wonderful, family-run, amusement park in Amarillo, Texas. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her family in their difficult time."

—**Charles Canfield, Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk**

"Alethea was a fixture among the family-owned amusement parks. Together with her husband Paul, they built one of the few surviving family parks in America. Their success is a testament to their vision, hard work and business model that many today can't duplicate."

—**Dick Knoebel, Knoebels Amusement Resort**

Unique ThrillCorp observation tower approved for San Diego

Centerpiece of \$1.2 billion bayside project

AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

SAN DIEGO, Calif. — The future of this city's bayfront is looking up in some spectacular ways.

In July, the San Diego

Port Authority Commission selected a \$1.2 billion project proposal to transform 70 prime downtown acres along the water. The project is anchored by **SkySpire**, a 480-foot-tall observation tower from **ThrillCorp, Inc.**, of Orlando — a developer of vertical thrill rides and entertainment experiences.

As one of the most visible elements of the redevelopment project, SkySpire, which

incorporates design work by San Diego-based **AVRP/Skyport Studios**, aims to become an iconic tourist attraction for the city.

"We are proud to add our tower to the already stunning San Diego waterfront skyline," said **Bill Kitchen**, chairman of ThrillCorp and inventor of the company's SkySpire product, which he likened to "a kinetic sculpture."

San Diego's SkySpire will feature gondolas that spiral around the tower as they transport guests to a top-level interactive observation experience.

"You get unobstructed 360-degree views as you ascend," Kitchen said. "Guests can disembark at the top to enjoy the beauty of San Diego and learn about the area and its history."

A second upper level will

include a restaurant.

ThrillCorp is a partner in a consortium called **1HWY1**, led by **Protea Waterfront Development** as the managing member. The winning proposal was one of 11 the Port Authority received for the site. The Port Authority and Protea are expected to complete a final review of the proposal by October, with the development process beginning immediately thereafter.

"Our team did a tremendous job assembling and presenting... a compelling vision that includes a curated collection of unique land uses in a well-thought-out design," said **Michael Kitchen**, ThrillCorp's chief development officer. "The Port of San Diego set a high bar of expectation and we are very grateful to have been deemed to meet it."

In addition to the SkySpire, the proposal includes a 178,000-square-foot interactive aquarium, hotels totaling 1,077 rooms, beaches, marinas, offices, retail, dining and other entertainment.

The project approval came at an ideal time for ThrillCorp, which recently began offering shares to the public under a Crowd-fund Regulation A+ offering. Company founder Bill Kitchen previously invented and developed **Skycoaster** giant swings and **iFly** indoor skydiving venues, which have sold millions of tickets and generated more than \$2.5 billion in revenue for their operators

• thrillcorp.com



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Artist's rendering of ThrillCorp's 480-foot-tall SkySpire observation tower proposed for 70 acres in downtown San Diego.
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A.R.M. Inc. issues statement on Super Shot incident

WINTERSVILLE, Ohio — **A.R.M. (USA) Inc.**, the manufacturer of the Super Shot ride involved in the July 25 accident which occurred at the **Frederick County, Virginia Fair** wants to extend its prayers and well wishes to the woman who was injured. In addition, A.R.M. is compelled to address inaccuracies and misinformation reported in the news concerning the event. Contrary to early news reports, there has not been a structural failure of the passenger seat frame, main vehicle frame, or a failure of a cable or hydraulic brake. Based on information from post accident inspectors who have viewed the subject ride, the sole cause of the accident was a failure to properly assemble the ride before use.

A.R.M. is a well respected U.S. ride manufacturer which has been in business for more than 18 years. The company has designed and manufactured hundreds of rides, which have safely thrilled carnival and amusement park guests across the U.S. A.R.M. has manufactured over 60 Super Shot rides, which have had an impressive safety record.

The transportable Super Shot, like all portable amusement rides, must be properly assembled and inspected before operation. The company wants to assure its other Super Shot owners that by following the manufacturer's assembly, inspection and maintenance procedures, their ride is safe for operation.

For further information please contact: **Mike Gill** at: mike@armrides.com.

Vekoma Rides Parts & Services B.V. announces collaboration with roller coaster wheel suppliers

VLODROP, The Netherlands — On August 1, **Vekoma Rides Parts & Services B.V.** announced in a statement that it had selected two roller coaster wheel suppliers to be its preferred vendors.

The statement read:

Vekoma Rides Parts & Services B.V. controls the quality and safety of the design, production and installation processes of all re-designs, upgrades, rehabs and parts of services of their rides. Critical components are made to be traceable from parent material through finished part and meet the highest quality demands according to the relevant standards.

All of our manufactured and purchased parts are of the highest quality and because of that we choose our vendor partners very carefully. After a meticulous screening process we are proud to announce a new collaboration with our partners for supply of our wheels on all Vekoma coasters. Our new wheel vendor partners are **Vulkoprin nv** in Belgium and **Maclan Corporation** in Lakeland, Fla.

Vekoma Rides Parts & Services BV always strive for highest customer satisfaction. With this collaboration we can provide you with the valuable opportunity to contact these wheel suppliers directly. The most paramount benefits for you as

MAINTENANCE



a client are:

- **Safety:** The highest safety standards are ensured due to our close collaboration and because our partners apply to our high standards.

- **Quality:** Direct contact and your feedback will enable our partners to continue and improve the quality standard of wheels.

- **Lead times:** Through direct contact and shipments often lead times can be reduced.

- **Price:** Our partners will be able to give you competitive prices for a high standard quality product.

This collaboration will be effective immediately so all your future questions, quotes or orders of wheels can be placed directly with these suppliers. Of course our team will always remain at your disposal for any questions you may have.

• vekoma.com

FAST FACTS

Vekoma's wheel partners



Vulkoprin nv

Attn: Nancy Verbeke
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Industriepark Zuid
8700 TIELT, Belgium
Phone: 32 (0)51 403 806
Fax: 32 (0)51 401 567
Email: info@vulkoprin.be



Maclan Corporation

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1808 South Combee Rd.
Lakeland, Fla. 33801
Phone: (800) 788-3951
Fax: (863) 667-1245
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Safety education and training saves lives

ORLANDO, Fla. — If your job or that of your employees includes responsibility for the care and safety of amusement industry guests, attending the **AIMS Safety Seminar** is a must. It's the No. 1 Safety education seminar worldwide for those working in the amusement industry, and it will be held January 8-13, 2017 in Orlando, Fla.

Acclaimed for its diverse curriculum (more than 200 different classes) and the quality of instructors (more than 120 industry experts), the AIMS Safety Seminar offers a broad range of safety training and education classes that can be tailored to your needs.

Many new classes are added each year to keep students up to date on current trends in the industry. This year, several classes will feature much needed training and education on security including focus on increased awareness as well as emergency procedures.

Certification testing is offered for Maintenance, Operations, Aquatics, and Ride Inspection.

Early registration for the 2017 AIMS Safety Seminar is \$595 until October 1. Register at www.aimsintl.org.

The Safety Seminar is for suppliers too...

It is essential for industry manufacturers and suppliers to stay abreast of the latest issues and applica-

tions in safety and security. Consider the many benefits in sending members of your team including designers, engineers, and project managers. They'll learn from the industry's finest about the latest trends and factors in amusement industry safety and network with those who have first hand knowledge of their work.

AIMS at industry events

We welcome the opportunity to meet our colleagues at numerous industry events that take place during the fall season. You'll find a strong AIMS presence at the **Euro Attractions Show** in Barcelona, Spain and the **ASTM** meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona, both in October. Make sure to stop by the **AIMS International booth #4327** during the **IAAPA Attrac-**

tions Expo in Orlando, November 15-18. There, we will also be collecting items for our **Silent Auction** which is held during the Safety Seminar. Plan now to bring branded items and memorabilia from your park or attraction 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 for shipping instructions.

Become a 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.

—Karen Oertley

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S&S–Sansei Technologies breaks ground on new Utah facility

AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

NORTH LOGAN, Utah — Evidencing major growth both in its business and in the amusement industry, **S&S–Sansei Technologies** broke ground on a new building July 20.

Executives from Japan-based **Sansei Technologies** and Utah-based **S&S Worldwide** (which became a subsidiary of Sansei in 2012) along, with other S&S employees, attended the ceremony.

Tim Timco, president of S&S Worldwide, told *Amusement Today* that a recent tripling in business led to the company's decision to leave its present North Logan building for a new, custom-built facility four blocks away.

"Our business has really taken off the last two years," Timco said. "We have 26 projects in the works right now, and our capacity is filled through the better part of 2018. Things are very strong — not just for S&S but for the industry as a whole. We're reaping the benefits of that."

The new facility will be 100,000 square feet and includes an adjacent five acres of vacant land, where the company will erect and test prototypes. About 35 percent of the space will be administrative, with the rest devoted to design and manufacturing.

"We're going to almost double in size as far as capacity," said Timco, adding that he expected operations to be moved into the new facility by this time

next year. "The building was designed in size to not only accommodate the growth we're experiencing currently, but also to accommodate future growth."

"Our ownership, Sansei Technologies, has been 100 percent behind it. They've been extremely supportive."

Timco characterized the relationship between S&S and Sansei, which is primarily a projects vendor for **Disney** and **Universal Studios** parks, as

mainly a financial one to this point — one that has helped 22-year-old S&S, which survived several changes in ownership, move forward.

"We have not collaborated on projects together as we would like. That process has begun, and we're finally learning what we can do together."

S&S–Sansei also has seen its product focus shift away from tower rides, which now account for less than half of its projects,

to compact specialty coasters. The in-house evolution started two years ago with its introduction of the 4D Free Spin coaster and continues through this year with the LSM Triple Launch El Loco Coaster. Next year, the company will deliver a Family Inverted Coaster.

"What we've been concentrating on successfully are small-footprint coasters with unique ride elements," Timco said. "For the longest time, the

coaster was all about the fastest, longest and tallest. Our small-footprint coasters are very, very appealing to most parks — they don't have to maneuver things around or use up a lot of land."

"The price point is right in that sweet spot, too. It has created an awful lot of interest."

S&S rides can be found in more than 30 countries, including parks in the U.S., Asia, Europe and the Middle East.

• engineeringexcitement.com



Tim Timco, president of S&S Worldwide, and Koichi Yamaguchi of Sansei Technologies break ground for the new S&S–Sansei Technologies facility in North Logan, Utah. COURTESY S&S–SANSEI



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New Amusement Parks book offers light read on park history

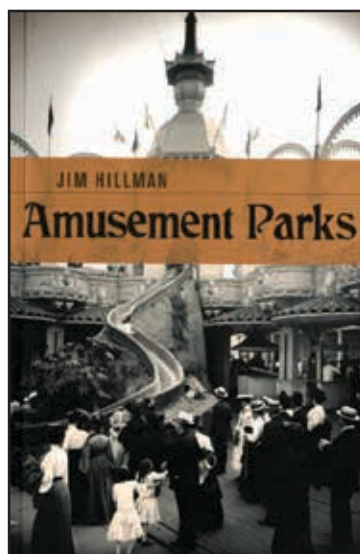
America's amusement industry emerged from simple swimming ponds, family picnic areas and community gathering spots. Although the first major entrepreneurial-driven amusement resort, known as **Jones Woods**, grew from the banks of New York's East River in the 1800s, the Golden Age of American amusement parks began with the mid-1800s development of a Brooklyn peninsula into America's Playland: **Coney Island**. Coney Island also paved the way for other developments, including America's oldest continuously operating amusement park, **Lake Compounce** in Bristol, Conn., and the defunct **Rocky Point Park** in Warrick, R.I.

By 1893 and the opening of the **Chicago World's Columbian Exposition**, Americans were becoming familiar with the marvels of the midway. By the early 1900s, amusement parks dotted the landscape and several larger cities had more than one commercial park. Many of

these parks became the stuff of lasting memories, icons of America: **Playland Park** in San Francisco, **Elitch Gardens** in Denver, **Riverview** in Chicago, **Riverside** in Indianapolis.

Many of America's grand amusement treasures have vanished, and many other parks are struggling for survival. But while many of the parks have disappeared, amusement park memories are alive and are firmly part of nostalgic America. As long as the clatter of the old coaster cars fosters nervous anticipation and the thumping of the carousel band organ remains, there will be a market for these American classics. With thoroughly researched text and historic images, author and park enthusiast **Jim Hillman** captures the sights, smells, and vitality of America's grand amusement park traditions.

Hillman is a director and the events coordinator of the **National Amusement Park Historical Association**. He is the has written several books



and articles related to history and amusement parks. He studied business administration and sociology and has taught at several colleges and universities, including Indiana State University, Vincennes University and the University of Phoenix. According to his Amazon bio, when not writing, he can be found riding roller coasters and eating funnel cakes at America's amusement parks.

Hillman's latest book, simply titled *Amusement*

Parks, is small, 64 pages cover to cover, and a mere 6 inches wide by 8 inches tall. The subject alone could — and has — filled multiple volumes. This book attempts to chronicle the evolution of early amusement parks into the mega-themers of today. Unfortunately that is a lot to accomplish in such a short work.

The work is divided into six chapters, with the first two, *Genesis* and *Beyond Coney Island*, providing a look at how amusement parks came into being. The author talks about the early pleasure gardens of Europe, but oddly there is no mention of the world-famous **Tivoli Gardens**, the park that served as inspiration for many of today's modern theme parks, including Disneyland.

Chapter three is a short four-page chapter about the difficulties amusement parks encountered during the Great Depression and World War II. Chapter five discusses how the theme park evolved.

The next two chapters

discuss traditional theme parks both lost and those that remain. The final chapter takes a look at what is next in the amusement industry but at only four pages, it is more of an essay than a chapter. Although well-written, here, again, there seemed to be much more potential, leaving the reader to wonder why the author didn't expound to fill an entire chapter.

Unfortunately that seems to be the theme of the entire book. The writing is very well done, the included pictures and illustrations provide a nice accompaniment, but it goes by too quickly. It does however, make for an interesting read, perhaps something for that next airplane trip to an amusement park.

The book retails for \$9.95 and is available from Bloomsbury Publishing (bloomsbury.com) and online retailers Amazon.com and BarnesandNoble.com. An electronic version is also available on Nook.

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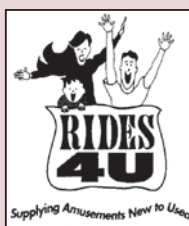
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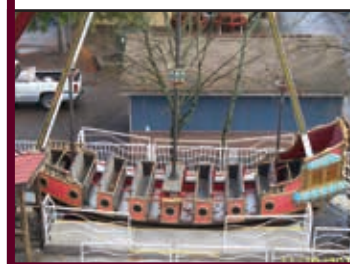
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