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## Europa-Park celebrates four decades of success with new attractions

AT: Tim Baldwin  
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

RUST, Germany — Call it a birthday, call it an anniversary, but Europa-Park has made it a celebration.

On March 28, Roland Mack, the Mack family, the mayor (burgermeister) of Rust and special guests opened the park with a ribbon-cutting amid a flurry of showering confetti, balloons, and songs of celebration. The ceremony included a welcome from co-founder Roland Mack that reflected not only on how the park had changed over four decades, but the European community as well. Relationships across borders back in 1975 were a far cry from what they are today. It is that invigorated sense of European connectivity that has helped Germany's largest theme park find astounding success. The mayor presented the park with a special gift for its 40th: a framed site permit drawing from when the park opened in 1975. Appearing in flash mob style, costumed entertainers, as well as staff from the various departments within the park and the resort got the crowd clapping and energized for the opening. The official ribbon cutting sent the crowds running forward. Germany's largest theme park was open for the 2015 season.

Amusement Today was on hand to experience the excitement.



The Dream Dome showcases the beauty of Europe in a relaxing high-definition film experience for Europa-Park guests. COURTESY EUROPA-PARK

ment.

### New attractions

For what was supposed to be a "light" year in terms of investments, following the enormous expenditures of 2014, the park still had lots of new things to offer, as well as enhancements for guest satisfaction. Quite surprisingly, the

"light" year blossomed into dozens of construction projects. Jakob Wahl, director of communications, reports, "We had days with more than 2,000 contract workers on site during the off-season to prepare all the new additions."

New attractions for  
► See EUROPA, page 4

## Carowinds unveils B&M Fury 325



► See Story – page 26

NEWSPAPER

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# NEWSTALK

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

## Tidbits



Slade

While in Las Vegas recently to attend Amusement Expo 2015 and the International Pizza Expo, I had some free evening time to catch up with a few of the major new attractions that have opened in Sin City.

First up was the VooDoo Zip Line atop the Rio on W. Flamingo Road. It spans the resort's two hotel towers and, with the launch pad 510 feet above the ground, the view is unbelievable and the thrill factor is revved to the max. This Soaring Eagle ride, which seats two passengers side by side with a very secure but minimal restraint system, is one that creator Stan Checketts is most proud of, and he should be: it's a Vegas must-do.

Also on the don't-miss list are the high-capacity zip lines of SlotZilla, an attraction that has bumped up the amusement factor at the Fremont Street Experience big time. Four lines guide harnessed riders in the traditional vertical zip line position from a height of 74 feet along an 850-foot course. This scenic trip above the historic street is a mere warm-up, though, to the four "flight lines" at the 114-foot level, which send riders Superman-style much faster along a 1,700-foot course just beneath the flashy Fremont Street canopy. It's truly exhilarating, and I recommend night rides for all the zip line locations.

I was impressed by the attention paid to the safety of zip line riders and employees alike. These attractions have well-trained attendants and sophisticated computer systems multiple-checking every aspect of the harnessing and braking, just like roller coasters and other thrill rides do.

Congratulations to VooDoo Zip Line and the Fremont Street Experience for delivering such well-executed and memorable outside-the-box fun.

Quick reminder that all amusement industry professionals are invited to attend this year's 2015 Golden Ticket Awards in the Big Apple on Sept. 11 & 12. Our host parks are Victorian Gardens in Central Park and Luna Park at the birthplace of American amusements — Coney Island! Look for complete details coming soon at: [GoldenTicketAwards.com](http://GoldenTicketAwards.com). Plan on attending and plan on plenty of quality networking time in what is sure to be our biggest event ever! See you soon!

**FLINT'S VIEW:** Bubba Flint



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

## Escapism

Working on issues of *Amusement Today* often requires me to travel to various locations, which I always enjoy. This month, though, it was geographically challenging. Since moving to Key West for a two-year assignment with my "other" job (FedEx), I've not been as close to the parks on the mainland as I'm accustomed. And escaping to and from this tiny island can be an arduous process. But it was worth it.

Along with covering Carowinds' new Fury 325 (trust me, it's a stellar new roller coaster), one of my other tasks was to check out the major improvements taking place at Give Kids the World in Kissimmee, Florida. Several years ago, I tackled a similar story there, and I recall how deeply it affected me on an emotional level. I witnessed first-hand how selfless volunteers work to bring a bit of happiness into the lives of children for whom life has dealt a less-than-desireable hand.

During this most recent visit to Give Kids the World Village, I was quite impressed by the



Rutherford

expansion taking place there. Corporate sponsorship in the form of theme park tickets, accommodations and other amenities is what makes it all come together.

Granted, the amusement industry is all about escapism. It exists solely to provide people with a chance to forget their daily cares for a little while, to perhaps face their fears and live life on

the edge. During my visit, I saw that GKTW also offers escapism but on a far more intimate level. As I toured the Village, I realized that living on the edge means something totally different for the children there. This place allows them to forget the illnesses that brought them there, to let go and simply embrace being a kid again who want nothing more than to have fun. Witnessing them escape their pain and suffering is a beautiful thing.

GKTW Founder Henri Landwirth escaped his past and should be proud of what his dream has become. His legacy will live on in the form wishes made real.



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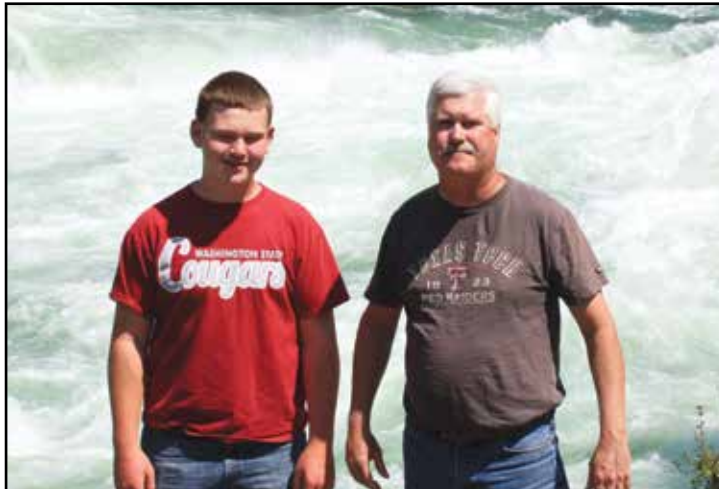
# 2 MINUTE DRILL



COMPILED: Janice Witherow

## Jeff Novotny, Larson International

For Jeff Novotny, working in the amusement industry isn't a job, it is a passion. As president and owner of Larson International, Inc., manufacturer of such rides as drop towers, interactive flying rides and the classic Tilt-A-Whirl, Jeff is also a great ambassador for the business serving as a board member and treasurer for the National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives and past president of AIMS International. His down-to-earth personality and welcoming ways make Jeff an instant friend the minute you meet him. Jeff's love of family, sports, the great outdoors and fishing gives him plenty to do when not on the "job."



Jeff Novotny, right, with son Matthew, enjoy the sites of a waterfall in the mountains of Montana.

### Title.

President/Owner.

### Number of years in the industry.

26.

### Best thing about the industry...

The people. The amusement industry is an amazing network of great people.

### Favorite amusement ride...

Our Flying Scooters, just simple fun.

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

Lost.

### Biggest challenge facing our industry...

From the supplier side I would have to say the patch work system, which regulates the industry.

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

Taking a breather from commissioning all the rides at one time in the spring.

### Three things I always have in my wallet are...

A little cash, business cards and a fishing license.

### It's baseball season! The team I root for is...

The Texas Rangers.

### My favorite place to take a nap is...

I am not much of a nap person!

### The last time I wore blue jeans was...

Today, hopefully.

### Favorite candy bar...

Hershey's peanut butter eggs which are only available around Easter. Yum.



Novotny

### It is 8 p.m. Where would we typically find you?

Checking emails for the last time that evening and watching sports on TV.

### When visitors come to Plainview, Texas, the first place I take them is...

Our factory to showcase where the rides are being built.

### My favorite Happy Hour drink is...

Cold beer.

### My biggest worry is...

I really don't worry too much about things you can't control.

### When it comes to mowing my yard, I...

Actually I have it pretty easy as our yard is all natural and requires no mowing.

### For me, the ideal Sunday morning consists of...

Attending church with my family and getting ready to watch the NFL games.

### My all-time favorite restaurant would have to be...

Pappadeaux seafood kitchens.

### The best book I have ever read is...

George Millay's *Wave Maker* as he was a dear friend.

### The longest road trip I have ever taken was...

More than 6,000 miles with our boys on a 3-week-long sales trip covering the Eastern half of the country.

### When I say summertime, you say...

Boating.

### My next vacation will be to...

Alaska, fishing for salmon and halibut.

### In 20 years, I hope to be...

Retired and stress free.

### When I look out my front door I see...

Tree-covered mountains.

### Least favorite household chore...

Cleaning up after the dogs.

# THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

Presented by the National Rollercoaster Museum

COMPILED: Richard Munch



## MAY

•**1907: Golden City Park**, in Canarsie (Brooklyn), New York officially opened for its maiden season on May 30 to an estimated crowd of 25,000 people. The eight-acre resort was the brainchild of partners **William Warner** and **Harry G. Traver**, and would eventually grow to 36 acres under several different owners. Built on Jamaica Bay, in an area known primarily for its excellent fishing and fish dinners, it was within sight of another local park, **Bergen Beach**. The opening was delayed a week, and even after the gates were opened, workmen were still finishing the buildings. Designed to compete with Coney Island, the big holiday crowd who arrived mainly by trolley, saw the area outside the park transformed with hotels, restaurants and other attractions. The park opened with two coasters – the Coliseum Coaster and Over the Rockies, and operated until 1934, when the effects of the depression forced its closure. By 1939, the remains of the park were removed by the city for the construction of the Belt Parkway.

•**1916: Nicholas Schenck**, the Russian immigrant who with his brother founded **Palisades Amusement Park**, in Fort Lee, New Jersey, took over the controls of the park's Big Dip Scenic Railway the evening of May 14, much to the surprise of park employees. The 35-year-old millionaire (having made his initial fortune at Fort George in Manhattan years earlier) operated the popular coaster, although no second rides were permitted due to the long lines that opening weekend. Witnesses said Schenck seemed to have a great time on the electric coaster for nearly three hours, although he said he was just filling in to help the exhausted coaster crew. The Schencks would eventually sell the park property in 1934, while Nicholas would go on to become president of **Loew's Theaters** in 1927, then head of **MGM Studios** in California.

•**1928: Playland**, in Rye, New York, officially made its debut on May 26. The creation of the new park, under the former **L.A. Thompson** executive **Frank Darling**, started two years earlier, with the purchase of two existing operations – **Rye Beach Park** and **Paradise Park**. Both parks were demolished after the 1927 season and the new park, designed by the New York architectural firm of **Walker and Gillette** would grab the attention of the industry just before it entered the Great Depression. Many politicians, celebrities and locals would visit this beautifully located and well planned park over the years, enjoying the beach, casino, restaurants and more than 15 rides. Of note was the opening of a wooden kiddie coaster, which was something very unique for its time. Behind it stood the powerful Aeroplane Coaster (later Airplane Coaster), designed by **Frederick Church**, which is still considered one of the greatest wood coaster designs ever built. Until its regrettable removal in 1957, it would be complimented by the Dragon Coaster, which still operates today as one of Church's last operating coasters.

•**1986: Dollywood** premiered on May 3, in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee to the delight of **Dolly Parton** fans worldwide. Formerly **Silver Dollar City** (which was already its third incarnation), the 400-acre property was redesigned to include various Parton inspired rides and shops, including the Dolly Parton Story Museum and a replica of her family's home where she grew up. While the **Herschend** family acquired the property in late 1976, it would be a decade before they partnered with Parton on the new concept. The first year, more than 1.3 million visitors streamed through the gates, even though the park had only one roller coaster type ride, the indoor Blazing Fury. The park would rely heavily on entertainment and its popular steam train, but would eventually purchase a retired **Arrow** mine ride from **Six Flags over Mid-America** for the 1989 season. With a great combination of food, entertainment and thrill rides, Dollywood today remains one of America's great theme parks.



## ►EUROPA

Continued from page 1

visitors to experience include the Dream Dome. The world's largest mobile dome screen is a scientific marvel with its vacuum-held screen, negative pressure, 11 high definition projectors, and original content produced for the park by Mack Media. During a staff preview prior to opening weekend, employees were brought in and enjoyed the lounge "bag" seating, melodic preshow music and swirling images. Roland Mack joked with his team, saying (roughly translated) "Welcome to the Therapy Relaxation Center. We can all meet here in the afternoons on stressful days." The content of the presentation is titled "Beautiful Europe" and focuses on great scenery filmed from around the continent, with an occasional whimsical nod to Europa-park thrown in. The eight minute feature is gorgeously done.

Also from Mack Media and under the direction of Michael Mack is the park's new 4D cinema movie. It too is a vivid, colorful crowd pleaser. Translated, the "Time Carousel" takes park characters back in time where they meet ancestors in various countries of Europe, along with a villainous black crow. Additional effects enhance the 3D experience, including water, wind, smells and vibrating seats. It is the second 3D feature created for the theater by Mack Media, and the film utilizes the park's characters, humor and visual effects in marvelous balance.

A major investment into the park's daily parade is also new for this year. Where previously, the floats broadcast the sound, for this season and those beyond, a new technical sound system has been introduced along the parade route. Now the music follows the parade through its route throughout the park via the speaker system. Todd Wheeler of Wheeler Projects, Inc. was brought in to lead the parade team and get it ready for opening day. "I thought of myself as a conductor of a large orchestra," says Wheeler. "Technically, the parade had all the pieces available, but no one knew how to integrate it with the creative vision of the parade. My first recommendation was to create a control room so the concept of parade



Above, the Mack family and parade entertainers welcome audiences to Europa-Park's 40th anniversary season, which began on March 28. Left, both the kitchen and dining room had been completely redone for the Don Quichotte restaurant.

COURTESY EUROPA-PARK;  
RESTAURANT/TIM BALDWIN

zones could be controlled each day." The parade features new floats, new costumes, and choreography by Jani Walsh-Weber. Both Wheeler and Walsh-Weber are based out of Florida. The team also praised Aldric Muller, who is in charge of technical systems for Europa-Park and his implementation of the upgrades. Senior Consultant Chip Cleary oversaw the direction of the 40th anniversary parade project.

Hendrik Schwarser was the composer for the music on the new parade. It was recorded with a large orchestra in Berlin. AT asked Schwarser what he wanted the audience to feel when hearing the music. He replied, "The parade music is quite different than a soundtrack. It has to have a perfect rhythm to it, you have to dance to it, there has to have some magic in it. I tried to bring more colors with orchestration with it." Schwarser also composed the music for "Spook Me: The Europa-Park Musical" for this season. Incidentally, Europa-Park offers more than 23 hours of different show product each operating day, most of which is new for 2015.

### Ride enhancements

Several of the park's rides got an overhaul or upgrade this season. The largest thematic makeover involved the Whale Adventures Splash Battle attraction introduced in 2010. This came as a re-

sult of management's desire to see the ride reach more of its potential. While getting drenched on a warm summer afternoon can be fun, much of the year the ride sees decreased ridership when cooler weather — particularly with a nine-month operating season — intimidates riders to board. Now re-imagined as Whale Adventure Northern Lights, the ride is virtually transformed into a dry ride. Designer Pascal Schouten explained the new storyline involves two additional dark ride components with interactive elements. Apparently water rats have overrun the boating facility and passengers aboard boats now shoot water at targets instead of each other. "Naughty, playful fun for the kids," laughs Schouten. While the ride layout remains unchanged, the new indoor portions and significant theming additions make it a new ride experience. The last scene now involves riders witnessing the northern lights.

Other rides receiving some TLC: the Euro-Tower, which now features a new Jules Verne-esque thematic look and the station loading area is filled with historic images and props; the Columbus Dingy has been renovated both in the queue and on-ride with new animatronics, theming and technical upgrades; and the Wave Swinger has now been surrounded by a

fountain package that rises and falls throughout the ride cycle.

### Guest comfort

Moving sidewalks now bring arriving guests from the parking lot up to the front entrance. The Seehaus Restaurant, which saw major improvements last year, is now enjoying a beer garden terrace, both uncovered and shaded.

Those guests enjoying one of the park's five resort hotels now have a larger, expanded resort gate. Both Colosseo and Castillo Alcazar hotels are completing their upgrade to air-conditioning and Alcazar is receiving renovation of the bathrooms. The resort is also enjoying a new cooperation with the golf club.

### Infrastructure

One of the park's restaurants, Don Quichotte, had a complete overhaul of the kitchen and parts of the dining room, making for a more efficient and more modern food preparation process for staff and an updated eating experience for diners. Guests can even choose their own meats on display behind glass. This restaurant not only serves park visitors during the operating day, but its placement brilliantly serves resort guests for breakfast and late night dining from the opposite side, connecting to El Andaluz and Castillo Alcazar hotels.

Back stage facilities for Ride Maintenance have been

completed and even the horses starring in the Arena Show have acquired new digs.

Infrastructure improvements also include a staff parking lot and a new central store serving the catering department.

### Looking into the future

This 40th anniversary season will feature numerous festivals. Of note, on July 11, thrill-seekers will be able to ride the coasters until midnight. The next day, on the park's official birthday, Europa-Park will — after 40 years — officially give a name to Euro-Maus and his girlfriend. One might suggest "Lucky," as good fortune has certainly fallen upon his home. But then again, hard work has more to do with it than luck.

With the resort now reaching more than 5 million visitors a year, it would appear Europa-Park's success has skyrocketed exponentially. Visions of the future go well beyond the five year plan. Already on the minds of the many involved team members and eager residents is the announced indoor water park. A second gate will dramatically expand the resort, particularly with a complete year round audience, but even more than that is in the works.

What *Amusement Today* saw first hand is that Europa-Park has not lost its way. Through the course of time, many American theme parks have forgotten — or carelessly discarded — the themes on which the park was built. While there is no fault in latching onto a licensed brand, the industry has seen many of these arrangements come and go. These licensed partnerships rarely tell the story of what the park is truly about.

The Mack family, however, is as energized as ever. And through it all, they've never lost sight of the story the park was designed to tell: the many cultures and the deep character of the European countries. It's easy to see why celebrating 40 years of doing things right and the attention to detail is rewarding to all involved at the park. Europa-Park staff have small flags on their nametag indicating the languages they speak. Roland Mack points out to AT that only 50 percent of the park's attendance is actually from Germany. That fact alone speaks to how well-engineered fun can bring so many cultures together.



# Roland Mack reflects on 40 years of making memories

**AT:** Tim Baldwin  
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RUST, Germany — *Roland Mack is the son of entrepreneur Franz Mack, and together, the two founded Europa-Park in 1975. Having studied mechanical engineering, Mack has found success not only with the park, but also leading the way at Mack Rides, continuing to improve and escalate the success of both the park and ride manufacturing company. In his youth, the family business of amusement park rides was immediately in his blood, and after traveling to America, he created the idea for his own park in Germany. Along with his brother Jürgen and sons Thomas and Michael, Roland continues to be heavily involved in the park's operation, keeping it all in the family. Included in his many successes and valuable opportunities was holding the role of Chairman of IAAPA, the first German to ever do so.*

*On opening day of the park's 40th anniversary, Amusement Today sat down with Mack and delved into the reflections of the last 40 years.*

**With your 40th anniversary now underway, what memories do you have of the opening day back in 1975?**

Yes (laughing). The train stopped. The minister of economics and myself were on the train to do the first round with all the people. After 10 or 20 meters we didn't have enough power and the brakes stopped.

**Europa-Park has reached a major milestone of 5 million visitors a year. When the park opened, I imagine reaching one million seemed huge. Did you ever think you could hit this mark?**

No. No. We thought we could always reach one million. There were always people saying this park would not be successful — it was the wrong location, there were no crowds around, the borders were closed — and everyone thought we were going to build like a fair. Mainly at the time Mack Rides built for the carnivals. Everyone thought (the park) was going to be a steady carnival. When we reached 650,000 right away, we really thought we were going to hit one million. But we were never talking about two or three or four... At that

time, it wasn't really about the number of visitors, but to give a very good quality product to our visitors. And to make money out of the visitors you get.

**What do you feel are the significant factors in Europa-Park's successful growth?**

There have been a lot of things that helped us. First, I think the decision to call the park Europa-Park. It was a very small association at the time — six countries at the time. Nobody at that time would think we would have 27 countries, no borders and would have one currency. No one would have thought the border between France and Germany would be taken down. When we started, they closed the borders at night. We had been enemies in life between two world wars. Now about 25 percent of our visitors come from France and that makes me so happy. We have created a place where international guests are meeting here in friendship. That is a big happiness; it's a beautiful thing. You need no language. It is the fun that connects the people.

**What was it like growing up in an "amusement park" family?**

I think it is the biggest fun feeling you can get. If I hadn't been born into this situation, I should have invented the idea. As a boy, all of the rides had been set up and had been tested in front of my sleeping room. I would be able to get all of my friends to test the rides. My parents lived on the production site. When we moved to the new area, we always had a house close to the company. When we came to the park, I lived in the middle of the park. Right now I am just at the corner of the park. My life is the park and has been a piece of the whole industry. Maybe in the beginning I thought when asked "What is your hobby?" that I didn't really know what to tell them. But I liked rides. My hobby was rides and amusement parks. It is the most beautiful job you can get and you have to be thankful for that.

**Thomas and Michael have seemed to embrace it as well. Had either of them decided to do something different for a career, would that have made you sad?**



**Roland Mack**

(pauses) I never thought about it. They started to grow up in the park and play in the park when it was closed. It was their home. A friend of mine said if you want your children to take responsibility in your company then they should grow up on site. And that's what happened.

**When your father was still with you, what were his favorite things to do while in the park?**

My father was more or less a constructor. He was not really an operational guy. He did not have a lot to deal with marketing or food; he was an inventor. I think he was happy that I took over all those different professions. He was never really involved in daily operation. He would come in during the afternoons after his job at the company, and also the weekends; but most of the time he was at the drawing board to invent new rides. That made him happy.

**The park has so many fantastic successes with its rides and attractions. Was there ever a time when you thought something was a "flop"?**

There was a time for simulators. We ran one for six to eight years and we took it out. We felt it wasn't the way to go. That was an expensive experiment. We had one flat ride with mechanical problems that we took out. With prototypes, you work through problems. Such as our bobsled ride. When we developed it, we had to remove part of the trough in the first stage to make sure the train would go all the way through. We had to change the layout and that was a tough time. For us, sometimes when we develop rides we have to look at capacity to make sure it is right.

**When you were chair-**

**man of IAAPA, how did that year help you personally? Did it change any of your views?**

I was already heavily involved with a lot of parks worldwide, mainly due to Mack Rides. I was always convinced that the organization is in one global industry. With the internet, there is news going around the world in a second, it is important to work much closer together...to find the trends, to talk about safety, what new attractions could help our industry. I learned a lot about different cultures and different thinking. Looking over the borders, looking into other countries and cultures and working together on one thing makes the industry safer. We are a product that has over one billion visitors worldwide; safety is the main issue. If there is an accident in one park, it is around in seconds. Safety can only happen if there is an organization that talks about it, and does seminars, working on safety regulations — and this is IAAPA. This was a focus in me. As a boy, I saw the development of the American associations. As a European thinking guy, I was so convinced about the international idea of IAAPA; that was a great time.

**Is there a long reaching goal you would like to accomplish before retiring from your career?**

If you work in a family business, I think the most important goal is to hand over the gavel and to make it keep going successfully. That's a big job. You have to know when your kids are ready to take on the responsibility. A shorter goal is to keep the park going, doing new rides.

And a big, big step, and I hope to be with it, is to have a second park and another hotel. I'd really be happy if my kids would overtake this, pushing the business. I would like to step back and let them feel the success. That makes a real entrepreneur.

**Over the decades you have surely taught your sons many lessons about the theme park business. Is there one thing vitally important you wanted to impress upon them?**

I think from the very beginning coming from my father is that we achieve to really be a family park. That means not only roller coasters — the highest and fastest — but also have family attractions. You can see how Arthur works without loops. My father always said the best ride in the world is when the family rides together, gets off and says "Where is the (ride) entrance?" and want to get back on again. You have to have coasters, sure. To have a nice experience and a good quality experience that is the most important thing, but over all age ranges. It's the atmosphere, to forget your daily life.

**What makes you happy?**

If all the businesses we are in are making money. I think the service side of our organization is as important as the ride side. If I see young people working for us committing their futures to our organization... because if they are happy, they are much more able to make our clientele happy. If everyone could say "I am proud of Europa-Park," that is the greatest thing I could imagine.

—Tim Baldwin

**Europa-Park's Blue Fire, from Mack Rides, remains one of the more popular rides at the German theme park.**  
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2015 NORTH AMERICA PARK PREVIEW

**CANADA**  
**British Columbia**  
**Canada Place**, Vancouver...Fly Over Canada — Vekoma I-Ride Panoramic Flight Simulator  
**Playland**, Vancouver...The Beast — KMG XXL rotating pendulum swing ride  
**Ontario**  
**Canada's Wonderland**, Vaughan...Funtime 60-meter Slingshot; Water park expansion, ProSlide Tornado 18  
**Neb's Funworld**, Oshawa...Sparetime Express — E&F Miler family coaster relocated from Jeepers, Maryland  
**Quebec**  
**La Ronde**, Montreal...Maison Rouge - Labyrinth of Fear — walk-through funhouse/haunted attraction  
**Mont St. Sauveur**, St. Sauveur...ProSlide Pipeline  
**Saskatchewan**  
**Raymore Aquatic Center**, Raymore...ProSlide Kidz ProRacer  
**MEXICO**  
**Mexico F.D.**  
**Six Flags Mexico**, Mexico City...SkyScreamer — Funtime 243-foot StarFlyer  
**Morelos**  
**Villas Teques**, Tlatenchi...WhiteWater Constrictor, AquaSphere, AquaLoop, Body Slide, Krylo slide, Ramp Slide, Space Bowl, Manta (F3), Inner-tube slide, AquaCourse AC 60, Waves 18m, AquaPlay AP1050, AquaSpray (6 pcs)  
**Nuevo León**  
**Bosque Mágico**, Guadalupe...Zombie Ride — Premier Rides Sky Rocket II shuttle coaster; Policias y Ratones — Reverchon spinning mouse  
**Veracruz**  
**Veracruz**, Heroica Veracruz...WhiteWater Constrictor, SuperBowl, Boomerango, 4 lane Whizzard, AquaLoop, AquaDrop, Master Blaster, AquaPlay AP1750, Wave Pool, Extreme River  
**Alabama**  
**Alabama Splash Adventure**, Bessemer...New PTC train for Rampage roller coaster  
**Arizona**  
**Wildlife World Zoo**, Lichfield Park...15-acre expansion including Larson Flying Scooters; A.R.M. Vertigo; Chance Rides family coaster and C.P. Huntington locomotive with two coaches  
**Arkansas**  
**Magic Springs & Crystal Falls**, Hot Springs...ProSlide WaterWheel tower, Kidz Bowl, Kidz ProRacer; new paint on log flume by Baynum Painting  
**California**  
**Adventure City**, Anaheim...Rewind Racers — Gerstlauer steel shuttle coaster, theming by R&R Creative Amusement Design  
**Bakersfield Water Park**, Bakersfield...WhiteWater AquaSpray (34 pcs), AquaPlay RainFortress, Wave Pool 6m, Boomerango, SuperBowl, 4 lane Whizzard, Constrictor, Family Raft Ride, Inner-tube slides  
**Boomers**, Fresno...R&R Creative Amusement Designs park rehab and theming  
**Boomers**, Irvine...R&R Creative Amusement Designs park rehab and theming  
**Castle Amusement Park**, Riverside...Larson Star Dancer relocated from Silver Springs  
**Knott's Berry Farm**, Buena Park...Voyage to the Iron Reef — Triotech interactive dark ride  
**Raging Waters**, San Dimas...Aqua Rocket — ProSlide HydroMagnetic water coaster with theming by R&R Creative Amusement Designs  
**Scandia Family Fun Center**, Sacramento...Crazy Dane Coaster — E&F Miler wild mouse relocated from Casino Pier, N.J.  
**SeaWorld San Diego**, San Diego...new paint on Journey to Atlantis by Baynum Painting  
**Six Flags Discovery Kingdom**, Vallejo...Dare Devil Chaos — Larson 22m Giant Loop  
**Six Flags Magic Mountain**, Valencia...Twisted Colossus — Rocky Mountain Construction redesign of existing wooden coaster, wood structure painted by Baynum Painting  
**Sunsplash Waterpark**, Roseville...R&R Creative Amusement Designs park rehab and theming  
**Colorado**  
**Elitch Gardens**, Denver...ProSlide Hybrid Behemoth Bowl/TornadoWave  
**Connecticut**  
**Quassy Amusement Park**, Middlebury...Frantic — Visa International Twist 'N' Swing 360; SBF/Visa Mini Dance Party 360 and Mini Bumper Cars  
**Florida**  
**Adventure Island**, Tampa...Colossal Curl — ProSlide 24-foot funnel+40-foot wave  
**Big Kahuna**, Destin...ProSlide 4-lane KrakenRacer  
**LegoLand Florida Resort**, Winter Haven...LegoLand Hotel — new hotel at park entrance; Heartlake City — new themed land with Zamperla Disk-O, Lego models, shows and shops.  
**Miracle Strip Pier Park**, Panama City Beach...Starliner — GCII wooden coaster  
**Orlando Eye**, Orlando...Orlando Eye — Intamin 400-foot observation wheel  
**Race City PCB**, Panama City Beach...Hurricane — S.D.C. Hurricane coaster relocated from Adventureland, N.Y.  
**Wild Adventures**, Valdosta...Jungle Rumble — Zierer Flying Carpet relcoated from Celebration City

**Georgia**  
**Six Flags Over Georgia**, Austell...Joker Chaos — Larson 22m Giant Loop; Batman the Ride backward — special Batman train that will run backward on Batman roller coaster  
**Six Flags White Water**, Marietta...ProSlide FreeFall with SkyBox  
**Wild Adventures**, Valdosta...Jungle Rumble — Zierer Flying Carpet relocated from Celebration City  
**Hawaii**  
**Sealife Park**, Oahu...R&R Creative Amusement Designs park rehab and theming  
**Wet'n'Wild**, Kapolei...ProSlide CannonBowl 30  
**Idaho**  
**Silverwood**, Athol...Fly Away — Zamperla Air Balloon  
**Illinois**  
**Santa's Village AZoosment Park**, Dundee...Fajume Wacky Worm relocated from Old Town, Fla.  
**Six Flags Great America**, Gurnee...new paint on Batman the Ride by Baynum Painting  
**Indiana**  
**Holiday World**, Santa Claus...Thunderbird — B&M launched wing coaster  
**Indiana Beach**, Monticello...Dragon Wagon — Wisdom Rides junior coaster from Fiesta Shows  
**Kentucky**  
**Beech Bend**, Bowling Green...Zamperla Air Race; Bertazzon Swing Carousel; Friday Night Lights — open late Friday night with LED lights on rides  
**Kentucky Kingdom**, Louisville...T3 — reopening of original T2 Vekoma SLC with new trains from Kumbak; A.R.M. Vertigo, reopening of Intamin river raft ride, refurbished Huss Enterprise, Zamperla Discovery, Balloon Tower and Magic Bikes  
**Louisiana**  
**New Orleans City Park**, New Orleans...Live Oak Lady Bug — Zierer Force Once replacing previous coaster damaged by Hurricane Katrina  
**Maryland**  
**Adventure Park USA**, New Market...Wild West Express — Zamperla Windstorm relocated from Old Town, Fla.  
**Six Flags America**, Largo...Bourbon Street Fireball — Larson 22m Giant Loop  
**Trimper's Rides**, Ocean City...SBF/Visa Spinning Coaster  
**Massachusetts**  
**Edaville USA**, Carver...Kersplash — E&F Miler water coaster relocated from Washington State Fair  
**Six Flags New England**, Agawam...Wicked Cyclone — Rocky Mountain Construction redesign of existing wooden coaster, wood structure and Pandemonium coaster painted by Baynum Painting  
**Minnesota**  
**Acuity Insurance Headquarters**, Sheboygan...Chance Rides Century Wheel (indoor)  
**Como Town**, St. Paul...SBF/Visa Cyclon Coaster  
**Nickelodeon Universe**, Bloomington...Chance Rides Revolution 20  
**Soak City Waterpark at Valleyfair**, Shakopee...WhiteWater 2 x Freefall, 2 x Flatline Loops with AquaLaunch, 2 x AquaDrop  
**Mississippi**  
**Grand Paradise Waterpark**, Collins...ProSlide SuperLoop and MultiBump  
**Missouri**  
**Dickerson Park Zoo**, Springfield...Chance Rides C.P. Huntington locomotive  
**Kansas City Zoo**, Kansas City...Chance Rides Tramstar with three trailing units  
**Silver Dollar City**, Branson...new Fireman's Landing are with multiple attractions including S&S Double Shot relocated from Celebration City; Five Zamperla rides  
**Six Flags St. Louis**, Eureka...Justice League, Battle for Metropolis 4D — Sally dark ride with multi-motion Oceaneering ride vehicles and Alterface interactive target system  
**Nevada**  
**Wet'n'Wild**, Las Vegas...Slideboarding — Conversion of Zip Zap Zoom slide to WhiteWater interactive water slide gaming experience  
**New Jersey**  
**Steel Pier**, Atlantic City...Technical Park 55-meter Giant Wheel  
**Bowcraft Playland**, Scotch Plains...SBF/Visa Midi Dance Party 360  
**Casino Pier & Breakwater Beach**, Seaside Heights...Shore Shot — S&S ~ Sansei Double Shot; Ride Entertainment Group Skycoaster; wave pool and two water slides  
**Funplex**, Mount Laurel...SBF/Visa Airborne Shot  
**Keansburg Amusement Park**, Keansburg...Looping Star — Pinfari ZL42 relocated from Beech Bend  
**Six Flags Great Adventure**, Jackson...El Diablo — Larson 22m Giant Loop  
**Morey's Piers**, Wildwood...King Kong — Biplane-themed Larson Flying Scooters  
**New Mexico**  
**New Mexico Zoo**, Albuquerque...Chance Rides 36-foot wildlife carousel  
**Western Playland**, Sunland Park...A.R.M. Rock Star  
**New York**  
**Adventureland**, Farmingdale...Turbulence — Mack Rides spinning coaster  
**Darien Lake**, Darien Center...Brain Drain — Larson 22m Giant Loop; ProSlide 2x TurboTwister with SkyBox  
**Splashdown Beach Waterpark**, Fishkill...ProSlide Mammoth



**2015 NORTH AMERICA PARK PREVIEW**

**Martin's Fantasy Island**, Grand Island...SBF/Visa 9-meter Drop'n Twist tower; Bertazzoni Musik Express Rock-N-Roll

**Splashwater Kingdom at the Great Escape**, Queensbury...Buccaneer Beach — renovated children's area; pool deck expansion and increased shaded seating

**North Carolina**

**Carowinds**, Charlotte...Fury 325 — B&M 325-foot mega coaster; Funtime SlingShot

**Pullen Park**, Raleigh...Chance Rides C.P. Huntington locomotive

**Ohio**

**Cedar Point**, Sandusky...Rogarou — B&M floorless coaster remodeled from Mantis, existing stand-up coaster, new paint by Baynum Painting

**Coney Island**, Cincinnati...SBF Visa Kiddie Bumper Cars and Midi Dance Party 360

**Kings Island**, Mason...Woodstock Gliders — Larson Flying Scooters; Snoopy's Space Buggies — Zamperla bounce around

**Oklahoma**

**Frontier City**, Oklahoma City...Brain Drain — Larson 22m Giant Loop

**Pennsylvania**

**Camelback Lodge & Indoor Waterpark**, Pocono Township...Aquatopia Waterpark addition with WhiteWater Fusion AquaSphere + Manta, AquaTube, constrictor, Flatline Loop, AquaDrop, Custom AquaPlay RainFortress, Rattler (F3), Python (F6), Master Blaster

**DelGrosso's**, Tipton...A.R.M. Rock Star

**Dorney Park**, Allentown...Cedar Creek Fliers — Larson Flying Scooters

**Hersheypark**, Hershey...Laff Trakk — Maurer Rides indoor spinning coaster

**Kalahari**, Pocono Manor...New water waterpark resort with ProSlide TornadoWave, Hybrid: Tornado 24/Tornado 24/ Tornado 24, ProBowl 30, TurboTwister, Pipeline, Pipeline Blast; Kidz package with 4-lane ProRacer, Bowl 14, 2x MiniRiver, 4x Twister; RideHouse wth additional Kidz attractions.

**Knoebels Amusement Park & Resort**, Elysburg...Impulse — Zierer multi-element coaster

**Wildwater Kingdom at Dorney Park**, Allentown...WhiteWater Constrictor, 3 x Flatline loop with AquaLaunch, 2 x Inner-Tube Slides

**South Carolina**

**Frankie's Fun Park**, Raleigh...Moser Rides 10-meter 10-seat revolving ride

**South Dakota**

**Storybook Land**, Aberdeen...Zamperla Family Gravity coaster

**Watiki Waterpark**, Rapid City...WhiteWater AquaLoop, AquaDrop, 3 lane Whizzard, FlowRider Double, Wave Pool, Fish slide, Kid's Slides

**Tennessee**

**Dollywood**, Pigeon Forge...DreamMore Resort — new 300-room lodge with, spa and indoor/outdoor pool; three Chance Rides Sunliners with 12 Sunline II trailing units

**Nashville Shores**, Hermitage...ProSlide Mammoth

**Texas**

**Fire Mountain Amusement Park**, Tyler...Zamperla Jumpin'Star, Allan Herschell Little Dipper roller coaster

**Schlitterbahn Upper Padre**, Corpus Christi...New water park with Torrent River, Lazy river system with swim up bars and multiple beaches, Master Blasters, Boogie Bahn, Children's water play area and Hopkins Shoot the Chute relocated from Alabama Adventure (portion of park soft-opened in 2014)

**Splash Kingdom**, Amarillo...updating of former Amarillo Splash Water park with new Fibrart bowl slide, children's area, upgraded food operations

**SeaWorld**, San Antonio...Pacific Point Preserve — interactive Sea Lion habitat, Clyde & Seamore's Sea Lion High (show); Harbor Market — food court restaurant

**Six Flags Fiesta Texas**, San Antonio...Batman: The Ride — S&S~Sansei Free Spin coaster; new paint on Superman Krypton Coaster by Baynum Painting

**Six Flags Hurricane Harbor**, Arlington...Baynum Painting - Hydra Maniac, Banzai Boggan

**Six Flags Over Texas**, Arlington...Justice League, Battle for Metropolis 4D — Sally dark ride with multi-motion Oceaneering ride vehicles and Alterface interactive target system; new paint on Aquaman by Baynum Painting

**Trader's Village**, San Antonio...Larson/A.R.M Super Shot drop tower

**ZDT'S Amusement Park**, Seguin...Switchback — Gravity Group wooden shuttle coaster

**Utah**

**Lagoon**, Farmington...Cannibal — in-house 208-foot multi-element roller coaster

**Virginia**

**Busch Gardens Williamsburg**, Williamsburg...Tempesto — Premier Rides Sky Rocket II shuttle coaster

**Motor World**, Virginia Beach...A.R.M. Vertigo

**Soak City at Kings Dominion**, Doswell...Transformation of existing Water Works water park into Soak City including new attractions

**Washington**

**Wild Waves**, Federal Way...WhiteWater Constrictor, Inner-tube Slides, 2 x Flatline Loop, AquaDrop, 4 lane Mat Racer

**Wisconsin**

**Noah's Ark Waterpark**, Wisconsin Dells...R&R Creative Amusement Designs park rehab and theming

**Bay Beach**, Green Bay...Chance Rides C.P. Huntington train; Zamperla Tot Jumping Spring, Jumping Star and Rockin' Tug

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**Europa-Park celebrates four decades of success with new attractions**

AT: Tim Balchun  
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RUST, Germany — Call it a birthday, call it an anniversary, but Europa-Park has made it a celebration.

On March 28, Roland Mack, the Mack family, the popular amusement park, with a ribbon-cutting party, a flurry of fireworks, confetti, balloons, and song, celebrated the company's 40th anniversary. The ceremony included a welcome from co-founder Roland Mack that reflected not only on how the park had changed over four decades, but the European community as well. Relations ships across borders back in 1975 were a far cry from what they are today. It is that history and the European vigor that has helped Germany's largest theme park maintain its success. The first anniversary of the park's 40th birthday was celebrated with a special gift for its guests: a framed site permit drawing from when the park opened in 1975. Appearing in flash mob style, costumed structures, as well as staff from the various departments within the park and the resort got the crowd clapping and cheering for the opening. The official ribbon cutting with the crowds running, running, running, 2014, the park still had lots of new things to offer, as well as enthusiasm for guest satisfaction. Quite surprisingly, the

most New attractions For what was supposed to be a "light" year in terms of investments, following the enormous expenditure of 2014, the park still had lots of new things to offer, as well as enthusiasm for guest satisfaction. Quite surprisingly, the

higher year blossomed into dozens of construction projects. Jakob Wahl, director of communications, reports, "We had days with more than 2,000 contract workers on site during the off season to prepare all the new additions."

New attractions for

• See EUROPA, page 4

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**Silver Dollar City debuts \$8 million Fireman's Landing section**

S&S, WhiteWater, Zamperla supply 10 new family rides and attractions

AT: Scott Rutherford  
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BRANSON, Mo. — Silver Dollar City has a treat in store for guests this season as the popular Missouri theme park unveils an imaginative, all-new section dubbed Fireman's Landing.

Officially opened to the public on March 14, 2015, the \$8 million Fireman's Landing section debuts with four interactive play zones for younger kids. These new additions bring the number of rides and attractions to over 40 and increases ride capacity to over 21,000 per hour.

To supply the equipment for Fireman's Landing, Silver Dollar City turned to three of the industry's most respected manufacturers — S&S WhiteWater West and Zamperla. Centered around the headquarters of Fire Station No. 3, the new ride includes:

- Firefall, an eight-story fire tower-themed Double-Shot ride (S&S/Funco).
- Fire Spotter, which features whirling balloons for spotting fire dangers (Zamperla).
- Fire Wagon Fantasy, a bouncing ride for bucket brigade volunteers (Zamperla).
- Lark's Dirty Dicks, a galloping ride on Dalmatians racing around a fire hydrant (Zamperla).

Fireman's Landing, above, Silver Dollar City's new \$8 million area, offers six family rides along with four interactive play zones for younger kids. The section opens March 14, 2015 after extensive planning. Fire designed ride that younger kids can enjoy. COURTESY: SILVER DOLLAR CITY

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• See FIREMEN'S, page 4

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2015 INTERNATIONAL PARK PREVIEW

**Australia**  
**Aquanation**, Ringwood...ProSlide SuperLoop with SkyBox, TurboTwister  
**Wet'n'Wild Gold Coast**, Oxenford...ProSlide Kidz package — Bowl 14, MiniRiver, Pipeline, ProRacer, Tornado 24, Twister  
**Whitewater World at Dreamworld**, Coomera...ProSlide Tornado 18  
**Wyndham Leisure and Events Center**, Melbourne...ProSlide Hybrid Behemoth Bowl/ Tornado 24, TurboTwister

**Austria**  
**Familypark Neusiedlersee**, St. Margarethen...Gerstlauer kiddy coaster  
**Fantasiaana Straßwalchen**, Straßwalchen...Wildwasserbahn Mami Wata — Hafema white water rapids ride with onboard sound; Dino Adventure Train — train ride with animatronic dinosaurs  
**Weiner Prater**, Vienna...Maskerade — Gerstlauer indoor/outdoor coaster with elevator lift

**Brazil**  
**Beach Park**, Fortaleza...ProSlide tornado 60  
**Wet'n'Wild Sao Paulo**, Sao Paulo...ProSlide Tornado 60

**Belarus**  
**Chelyuskintsev Park**, Minsk...Jumbo Jet — Schwarzkopf Jumbo Jet relocated from Dreamland, Belarus

**Belgium**  
**Bobbejaanland**, Lichtaart...The Forbidden Caves — combination walk-through/dark ride/ motion simulator  
**Plopsaland De Panne**, Adinkerke-De Panne...15th anniversary celebration with expansion of PlopsaAqua indoor water park, ProSlide SuperLoop with SkyBox

**Bulgaria**  
**AquaMania**, Albena...ProSlide FreeFall slide and Hybrid Tornado 24/Tornado 24

**Chile**  
**Fantislandia**, Santiago...Vekoma mine train relocated from Ratanga Junction, South Africa

**China**  
**Altai Amusement Park**, Hohhot...Beijing Shibaolai sky loop coaster  
**Children's Park**, Louhu...Space Car — small family coaster; jungle mouse  
**Chimelong Ocean Kingdom**, Xiangzhou...Penguins on Parade — custom musical show  
**Dream Star Park**, Pingyin...Loop and double corkscrew coaster  
**Eontime World**, Xiangfang...Maurer Rides spinning coaster; S&S ~ Sansei Double Shot Tower  
**Fantawild Adventure**, Jiayuguan...Mine train coaster; inverted coaster  
**Fantawild Dreamland**, Shifeng...Gravity Group/Martin & Vleminckx wooden coaster; Vekoma suspended family coaster  
**Fantawild Dreamland**, Tong'an...Terror Twister — Maurer Rides SkyLoop  
**Fantawild Dreamland**, Zhongmu...Gravity Group/Martin & Vleminckx wooden coaster  
**Fantawild Theme Park**, Nanjiao...Golden Horse mine train coaster; Golden Horse suspended roller coaster  
**Floraland Continent Park**, Wenjiang...Boomerang Coaster — Beijing Shiboalai boomerang  
**Forest Lake Park**, Qinnan...Double loop, double corkscrew coaster  
**Galaxy Resort and Casino**, Macau...ProSlide 3x Twister  
**Ginkgo Lake Amusement Park**, Jiangning...Beijing Shiboalai jet coaster and suspended looping coaster  
**Great Mall of China**, Sanhe...Premier Rides Sky Rocket II; Vekoma custom dive pretzel coaster; Vekoma motorbike coaster  
**Hainan Wenchang Space Theme Park**, Wenchang...spinning cars coaster  
**Hangzhou Intangible Cultural Heritage Park**, Cixi...two steel coasters and one wooden coaster  
**Hefei Wanda Cultural Tourism City**, Baohe...S&S ~ Sansei Space Shot Tower; Flip Coaster — tilt-style coaster  
**Hello Kitty The Park**, Anji...New park opened in April with Intamin Coaster Wheel and Water Coaster; ABC Rides Maypole and River Splash; Zierer multiple rides including Wave Swinger, Kontiki, Jet Skis, Flying Flowers  
**Hot Go Park**, Fushun...S&S ~ Sansei Double Tower  
**Jinan Intangible Cultural Heritage Park**, Huaiyin...Jungle Dragon — Gravity Group/Martin & Vleminckx wooden coaster; Polar Express — Vekoma Boomerang; steel roller coaster  
**Lewa Happy World**, Xi'an...Mack Rides launched coaster with two inversions; Beijing Shiboalai looping coaster, famly coaster, Boomerang; Golden Horse suspended, moto coaster, mine train; worm-style coaster  
**Mirror Lake**, Shaoxing...ProSlide Tornado 12, CannonBowl 40, TurboPipeline, 3x Pipeline, Octopus Racer, FreeFall, SuperLoop with SkyBox, Tornado 60, Tornado Wave, Turbo Mammoth, Mammoth, Kidz Complex with Bowl, MiniRiver, ProRacer, Twister  
**Nanhai Bay**, Foshan...ProSlide HydroMagnetic Rocket, Tornado 60, Tornado Wave, 2x CannonBowl, 2x FreeFall, SuperLoop with SkyBox  
**Pine Forest Flying Mouse**, Ma'anshan...Jungle Mouse coaster  
**Romon U-Park**, Yinzhou...Legendary Dragon — Maurer Rides X-Car launch coaster; Travel through Europe — Intamin looping coaster  
**Shanghai Disney**, Pudong...Seven Dwarf's Mine Train; Tron Lightcyles Power Run  
**Sun Tzu Cultural Park**, Guangrao...S&S ~ Sansei Double Tower  
**Taolin Happy World**, Yangquan...spinning mouse coaster  
**Tieling La Viva Waterpark**, Tieling...ProSlide Hybrid tornado 60/Tornado24, Tornado 18, CannonBowl 40 with explosion, SuperLoop with SkyBox, TurboTwister, Mammoth River  
**Wanda City Theme Park**, Xinjian...Viper — GCI woden coaster; Beijing Shiboalai inverted coaster; Intamin extreme coaster  
**Weihe Park**, Weibin...Colorful Six Ring Roller Coaster — Zhipao double loop, triple corkscrew coaster  
**Wuhu Intangible Cultural Heritage Park**, Jiujiang...Gravity Group/Martin & Vleminckx wooden coaster; Vekoma Boomerang; steel coaster with two lift hills (mine train?)  
**Xindao Happy World**, Renhe...Hebei Zhingye four-ring coaster; big apple/wacky worm-style coaster  
**Xishiangbanna Theme Park**, Xishiangbanna...B & M flying coaster; Zamperla MotoCoaster; Intamin water coaster; S&S ~ Sansei Space Shot Tower  
**Yinji Kaifeng Waterpark**, Henan...WhiteWater/Hopkins Shoot the Chute; WhiteWater Fusion Boomerango + Manta, AquaSphere + Constrictor, SuperBowl, Rattler, Inner-tube

Slides, 2 x AquaLoop + Flatline Loop, 3 x AquaLoops, 2 x AquaDrop, Speed Slides, Kid's Slides, Abyss (F6), Python (F6), Constrictor, Family Raft Ride, 6 lane AquaTwist Mat Racer, Freefall+, SuperBowl, Inner-tube Slides, Master Blaster, AquaPlay Giant RainFortress, AquaPlay RainFortress, AquaPlay AP350, AquaSpray, Surf Wave Pool, Indoor Family Wave Pool, Outdoor Family Wave Pool, Extreme River, Lazy River, FlowRider Double

**Colombia**  
**Piscilago**, Villanueva...ProSlide Tornado Wave

**Denmark**  
**Djurs Sommerland**, Nimtofte...Bondegårdsland — new themed area with Vilde Hønseljagt — Zierer Force Two coaster; rides from Zamperla, Mettaltbau Emmeln, Wood Design and Zierer  
**Fårup Sommerland**, Jylland...Aquarena GmbH AquaLoop and Kamakazi waterslides  
**Lalandia Indoor Waterpark**, Billund...WhiteWater 3 x Body Slides, Custom AquaPlay

**England**  
**Alton Towers**, Alton...Octonauts Rollercoaster Adventure — Zamperla family coaster  
**Big Sheep**, Bideford...Zierer Tivoli relocated from MetroLand, U.K.  
**Blackpool Pleasure Beach**, Blackpool...Red Arrows — Gerstlauer SkyFly  
**Bury St. Edmunds Leisure Centre**, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk...WhiteWater 2 x Body  
**Crealy Devon's Great Adventure Park**, Exeter...Twister Rollercoaster — SBF spinning coaster  
**Dreamland**, Margate...Reopening of park with rebuilt Scenic Railway; Wacky Worm-style coaster; multiple restored vintage and classic rides  
**Paulton's Park**, Romsey...Vekoma suspended family coaster  
**Needles Park**, Isle of Wight...Gosetto Carousel 1900

**Finland**  
**PowerLand**, Kauhava...Gerstlauer multi-element coaster

**France**  
**Bagatelle**, Merlimont...Kid'z Coaster — Big Apple/Wacky Worm-syle coaster; Famous Jack — Reverchon spinning mouse relocated from within park  
**Dennlys Park**, Dennebroeucq...Voltigo — figure-eight spinning cars coaster  
**Magic Park Land**, Ensûès-la-Redonne...Speedy — Pinfari RC 50 from traveling showman  
**Dennlys Parc**, Dennebroeucq...Gosetto Dream Farm ride and family SBF/Visa Spinning Coaster

**Germany**  
**Erlebniswelt Seilbahnen Thale**, Thale...Boderitt — Wiegand Wie-Hex suspended coaster  
**Europa-Park**, Rust...40th anniversary celebration with Time Carousel — 4-D cinema movie; Dream Dome — world's largest dome screen with custom movie; 40th anniversary parade; enhancements to existing rides including Euro-Tower and Splash Battle  
**Freizeit-Land Geiselwind**, Geiselwind...Cobra — Interpark Wild Wind coaster from traveling showman  
**Freizeitpark Plohn**, Legenfeld...Miniwah — Mack Rides Blauer Enzian powered train  
**Hansa Park**, Sierksdorf...Schwur des Kärrnan — Gerstlauer 239-foot multi-element coaster with indoor sections  
**Holiday Park**, Hassloch...Gerstlauer SkyFly  
**Legoland Deutschland**, Günzburg...Lego City Police Station — interactive walkthrough labyrinth; Atlantis by SeaLife — aquarium with glass tunnel walkthrough  
**Wunderland Kalkar**, North Rhine-Westphalia...Huss Condor relocated from Holiday Park

**India**  
**Lonavala Park for Malpani Group**, Mumbai...WhiteWater Speed slide, Freefall, AquaTube, Rattler, Boomerango, SuperBowl, 4 lane Mat Racer, Master Blaster, AquaPlay RainFortress, Dual Waves

**Indonesia**  
**Grand Wisata Go! Wet Water Park**, Indonesia...WhiteWater Wave Pool, Wave River, AquaPlay RainFortress, Kid's Slides, Kid's Boomerango, Kid's AquaSphere, Python (F3), SuperBowl, Constrictor, Rattler (F3), Family Raft Ride, Inner-Tube  
**Ocean Park Water Adventure**, Tangerang...Snake Coaster — Zierer Force One  
**Jungleland**, Bogor...Snake Coaster — Zierer Force One

**Iraq**  
**Al Zawra'a Dream Park**, Baghdad...Vekoma SLC

**Family Fun**, Duhok...Vekoma Boomerang relocated from Tivoli Karolinelund, Denmark

**Ireland**  
**Tayto Park**, Ashbourne...Cú Chulainn — Gravity Group wooden roller coaster

**Israel**  
**Babylon Games**, Kiryat Ono...Wattman Train  
**Vendico Amusements**, Nahariyya...Wattman Train

**Italy**  
**Cavallino Matto**, Castagneto Carducci...Freestyle — TOGO Stand-Up coaster relocated from Canada's Wonderland  
**Gardaland**, Castelnuevo del Garda...Oblivion - The Black Hole — B&M dive coaster  
**Leolandia**, Milan...Peppa Pig World — new section featuring Peppa's House interactive walkthrough attraction  
**Movieland Park**, Lago di Garda...Diabolik — Vekoma Invertigo shuttle coaster relocated from Six Flags America

**Jamaica**  
**Jewel Runaway Bay Beach & Golf Resort**, St. Ann...New water park with SplashTacular waterslides, lazy river and natural ocean-front beach (opened December 2014)

**Japan**  
**Hasunuma**, Japan...WhiteWater Fusion 3 Constrictor + Rattler + Boomerango  
**Nagashima Spa Land**, Nagashima...Acrobat — B&M flying coaster (Manta clone); New PTC train for White Cyclone  
**Suzuka Circuit**, Suzuka...Air Racers - Gerstlauer SkyFly

**Korea**  
**Lotte World phase II**, Busan...WhiteWater Family Boomerango, Family Raft Ride, AquaLoop x 4, dueling Master Blaster

**Malaysia**  
**Sunway Lagoon Expansion**, Petaling Jaya...WhiteWater AquaLoop, Flatline Loop, Family Raft Ride, Boomerango, Inner-Tube Slides, AquaSpray, AquaPlay RainFortress



2015 INTERNATIONAL PARK PREVIEW

**Morocco**  
**Parc Sindibad**, Cassablanca...Serpent — Gerstlauer Euro-Fighter

**The Netherlands**  
**Efteling**, Kaatshuevel...Baron 1898 — B&M dive coaster  
**Slagharen Theme Park**, Slagharen...Aqua Mexicana — new indoor/outdoor water park  
**Yumble Roermond**, Roermond...Vekoma adventure theater simulator; Vekoma interactive dark ride  
**Zoo Emmen**, Emmen...Mack Rides free flow boat ride  
**Speelpark Oud**, Valkeveen...Wattman Train

**Norway**  
**Hardangertun Hytter og Familiepark**, Kinsarvik...Wattman Train  
**Lund's Tivoli**, Ålgård...KMG High Swing

**Phillippines**  
**Sky Ranch**, Tagaytay...Zamperla powered coaster-like ride

**Poland**  
**Energylandia**, Zator...Egipt — Vekoma junior coaster; Vekoma SLC; Vekoma suspended family coaster  
**Slaskie Wesołe Miasteczko**, Chorzów...Zyklon or Galaxi-type coaster relocated from Sommerland Syd, Denmark

**Russia**  
**Divo Ostrof (Wonder Island)**, Saint Petersburg...Mack Rides LSM launch coaster with four inversions (blue fire clone)  
**Kvarsis**, Novosibirsk...WhiteWater Constrictor, AquaSphere, AquaLoop, Body Slide, Krylo slide, Ramp Slide, Space Bowl, Manta (F3), Inner-tube slide, AquaCourse AC 60, Waves 18m, AquaPlay AP1050, AquaSpray (6 pcs)  
**Sochi Park**, Sochi...Gosetto bumper car building; Huss Giant Frisbee

**Singapore**  
**Universal Studios Singapore**, Sentosa...Puss In Boots' Giant Journey — Zamperla family coaster  
**Smiley World at Vivo City**, ...Wattman Train

**South Korea**  
**Everland Samsung**, Yongin Gun...WhiteWater/Hopkins Super Flume; ProSlide Hybrid HydroMagnetic Mammoth/Tornado 60  
**Habio Park**, Seoul...ProSlide CannonBowl 30, Twister

**Spain**  
**PortAventura Resort**, Salou...Cirque du Soleil summer touring base  
**Siam Park**, Tenerife...ProSlide Hyrbrid Rocket Blast/Flying Saucer

**Sweden**  
**Gröna Lund**, Stockholm...House of Nightmares — walk-through haunted house  
**Kolmården**, Norrköping...Godiståget — Zierer Force 190 coaster  
**Liseberg**, Gothenberg...Mechanica — Zierer Star Shape

**Tosselilla Sommarland**, Tosselilla...—ProSlide 4-lane ProRacer

**Switzerland**  
**Aqua Parc Geneva**, Geneva...WhiteWater Fusion constrictor + Rattler

**Taiwan**  
**Hualien Farglory Ocean Park**, Taroka...Chance Rides Freestyle  
**Shang Shun Plaza**, Miao Li ...WhiteWater/Prime Play Clip n Climb, Adventure Trail, Sky Rail Ropes Course, Sky Tykes, Ballocity

**Thailand**  
**Vana Nava Hua Hin Water Jungle**, Nong Kae...New 7.18-acre water park with multiple WhiteWater West attractions including MasterBlaster, AquaLoop, Family Raft slide and Rain Fortress (opened December 2014)

**Trinidad & Tobago**  
**Macoya Waterpark**, Chaguanas...ProSlide RideHouse 250 with 2x Twister, Kidz package with Twister, ProRacer, Miniriver, Tornado 12, Bowl

**Turkey**  
**Ankapark**, Ankara...Intamin 10-inversion coaster, Jet Ski coaster, Rapids Ride, Flying Island, HyperSplash  
**Crystal Aura**, Kemer, Turkey...New water park, Polin Waterparks giant Magic Sphere, Aquatube, Black Hole, Big Hole, Black Hole/Flying Boats combination  
**FunLab Cevahir**, Istanbul...Zombi — Triotech interactive dark ride  
**Landora Temali Park**, Istanbul...Tryceratopous — I.E. Park family coaster; Vekoma junior coaster  
**Marina Park**, Istanbul...Intamin launched  
**Gerim Park**, Ankara...Gosetto three-floor dark ride; Moser Rides 55-meter Giant Wheel and 75-meter revolving tower

**Ukraine**  
**EVPA Waterpark**, Evpatoria...WhiteWater AquaPlay RainFortress, 4 lane Mat Racer, Constrictor, SuperBowl, Speed Slide, Inner-Tube Slide  
**Lavina Mall**, Kiev...Vekoma suspended family coaster  
**Respublika**, Kiev...Vekoma indoor coaster; Maurer Rides indoor spinning coaster

**United Arab Emirates**  
**Ferrari World Abu Dhabi**, Abu Dhabi...Mission Ferrari — Dynamic Attractions indoor/outdoor LSM-launch roller coaster  
**IMG World of Adventure**, Dubai...Velociraptor Mega Launch Coaster — Mack Rides launch coaster; Mack Rides spinning coaster

**Uzbekistan**  
**Mega Planet**, Tashkent...Wattman Train

**Vietnam**  
**Asian Park**, Đà Nang...Premier Rides suspended family coaster and Ferris wheel lift coaster, Vekoma Mine Train, Vekoma Junior Coaster, all relocated from Freestyle Music Park  
**Vinpearl**, Phu Quoc...Vekoma family boomerang



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# INTERNATIONAL

► S&S inks China Double Shot — Page 12 / Gardaland unveils its new B&M dive coaster — Page 12

## Movie Park adds new shows, events and characters for 2015

AT: Andrew Mellor  
amellor@amusementtoday.com

BOTTROP, Kirchhellen, Germany — Movie Park Germany began its 2015 season at the end of March and will introduce a range of new entertainment for the year.

Utilizing its familiar slogan of "Hollywood in Germany," the film-based park will introduce the Minions from the well-known movie *Despicable Me* as its newest characters, coinciding with the release of a new film featuring the Minions in Germany this year.

"We are thrilled that the Minions are with us," says park CEO Thorsten Backhaus. "The guests will be able to have photo opportunities with them or see them in the park in our daily parade."

In addition to the Minions



the park will also offer a new Stunt Crew, led by stunt specialist Evangelos Grecos who has worked on many well-known films, including the James Bond movie *Skyfall* and others such as Marvel's *The Avengers: The Age of Ultron*.

The new Stunt Crew show Impossible Possible consists of approximately 10 participants, including those from the U.S., England and Spain. They will not only take over the existing Crazy Cops — the Action Stunt Show, but will also pro-



Movie Park Germany CEO Thorsten Backhaus is pleased to welcome new park residents, the Minions, for the 2015 season. COURTESY MOVIE PARK GERMANY

vide a new interactive Western Stunt Show with an Old West theme. Additionally, more new entertainment will be provided with the show Break the Rules on the central New York Plaza Stage.

Movie Park will also be

holding a variety of events throughout the 2015 season. A large BBQ event was due to take place in early May, attended by a number of well-known celebrities, while the Nickelodeon Kids Choice Awards, broadcast from Los Angeles at

the park, will be among other events during the season. The fourth handbag throwing world championships will also be held in the park during the season, described as "a crazy event" featuring teams from several different countries.

As well as these new elements, in an effort to provide improved guests services, a number of new initiatives will be introduced, beginning right at the start of the season with the availability of free Wi-Fi throughout the park. New, entertaining information videos have also been produced for guests to view while waiting in queue lines, along with new educational benefits for school groups and a Movie Park Germany app which offers a range of information to help visitors make the best out of their day in the park.

## Dinosaurs 'come alive' at U.K.'s West Midlands Safari Park

AT: Andrew Mellor  
amellor@amusementtoday.com

BEWDLEY, England — The U.K.'s largest animatronic Dinosaur attraction made its debut at West Midlands Safari Park (WMSP) in March.

Land of the Living Dinosaurs is an immersive walking trail featuring 38 life-size dinosaurs, each with moving eyes, mouth and neck, and offers a journey that spans four ages of dinosaur reign — Permian, Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous. The exhibit is heavily themed and landscaped and is planted with copious amounts of flora, including tree ferns, gunnera, reeds and monkey-puzzle trees.

Sound effects indicative of the "lost world" add further to the atmosphere, while static fossil displays, a volcanic vent, three pools and a geyser all combine to intensify the whole experience.

The entrance to the Jurassic safari is flanked by the skeletal form of a T-Rex and is located in the park's Discovery Trail. Examples of some of the most formidable creatures to have roamed the planet include the Dilophosaurus, the fearsome Gorgonops and two of the largest at 8 meters (26 feet) tall, the Apatosaurus measuring 25 meters (82 feet) long and the Argentinosaurus at 30 meters (98.5 feet) long.

A life size adult Tyran-



Left to right: the entrance to Land of the Living Dinosaurs sets the scene perfectly for an exciting and intriguing experience. This Dilophosaurus is one of 38 life-size dinosaurs in the latest exhibit to open at the U.K.'s West Midland Safari Park. COURTESY SAFARI PARK

nosaurus Rex, elevated on 4 meters rockwork, casts a dramatic shadow over the surrounding area, while the impressive Sarcosuchus, meaning "flesh crocodile," represents one of the largest crocodile-like creatures that is thought to have ever

lived. All the dinosaurs in the exhibit are built from compound rubber and house a moving steel armature, which adds realistic movement to each display.

Daniel Griffiths, WMSP marketing manager, said: "Work initially started on

the £2.5 million (\$3.8 million) project in 2012. It led the park's design team on trips around the world to investigate exactly how the exhibit could be achieved, before various manufacturers were engaged to develop the dinosaurs."



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## PowerPark begins construction on Gerstlauer launch coaster



Finland's Power Park has started construction on a launch coaster from Germany's Gerstlauer Amusement Rides GmbH. Named Junker, the ride will send passengers from 0-100 kmh in just 1.9 seconds making it a faster acceleration than a Formula One car. After the initial launch, riders will rise up a 40 meter climb, before being sent through a series of loops, and turns and even an underwater tunnel below a pond while experiencing 860 meters of track and up to 4.5 g's. When it opens next summer, Junker will be the park's sixth roller coaster. COURTESY POWER PARK

## S&S~Sansei announces new Double Shot ride for China

LOGAN, Utah — S&S~Sansei announced in March that a Double Shot tower ride is on tap to open in late 2015 at the Eon Time theme park in Hohhot, China.

S&S officials said they are pleased to have the opportunity to place a Double Shot ride in the exciting and innovative Eon Time project. The developer, Eon Time Real Estate Corporation, has created a mixed-use development that fuses various aspects of natural elements with the surrounding context of the city, which will give the project a distinct identity.

"At S&S, we are very honored to have been selected to participate in the unique Eon Time project," said Tim Timco, vice president of Sales and Marketing for S&S~Sansei. "Eon Time is focused on creating developments that allow people and the environment to exist in harmony, for which the environmentally friendly air-launched Double Shot tower ride was a natural fit. We're looking forward to the opening of this new ride in the coming months."

The Double Shot, already in production at S&S, will launch 12 passengers nearly 80 feet (24 meters) through two cycles of positive 3-G and negative 1-G ride experiences. The cycle repeats with two 30 mph launch sequences in every ride. According to Timco, "The Double Shot earned its name from the extra shot (or thrilling acceleration) that riders experience during the ride cycle."

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

## Gardaland takes guests to a new dimension with B&M dive coaster

AT: Andrew Mellor  
amellor@amusementtoday.com

CASTELNUOVO DEL GARDA, Italy — The first dive coaster to open in Italy, and the longest such ride in Europe, made its debut at Gardaland at the end of March.

Supplied by Swiss company Bolliger and Mabillard, Oblivion — The Black Hole represents an investment of over €20 million (\$21.6 million) and provides a thrilling and spectacular new addition to the park. With a track length of 566 meters (1,857 feet), the coaster takes riders to a height of 42.5 meters (139 feet) where they have a three second wait at the top of the main drop section before the big descent straight down, with 4g of acceleration for 47.5 meters (139 feet) at an inclination of 87 degrees.

The maximum speed, reached in the themed tunnel section of the track, excavated to a depth of 7.5 meters (24.5 feet), at the base of the main drop, is almost 100 kmh (62 mph), after which the remainder of the ride takes guests through four inversions as they speed close to the ground, pillars and various other obstacles. Upon exiting the tunnel riders are taken through an Immelmann, a backward tailspin with a 180 degree rota-

tion, followed by a camelback at high speed with a vacuum sense feeling, a spiral and finally an in-line roll. The whole experience lasts 100 seconds and three trains are used, each made up of three rows of six seats. Minimum rider height is 140 cm (52 inches).

The white structure of the new attraction covers a total area of 13,000 square meters (139,931 square feet) and stands in a new area of the park dedicated to space. Gardaland's latest major ride is heavily themed and the storyline has riders travelling through a mysterious space-time passage (the tunnel section) on the way to a new dimension, with the themed experience beginning in the interactive queue line, which itself is a key part of the attraction.

Having entered the queue line section guests are under the impression that they are being scanned and a monitor displays a modified image of the passengers. LED lighting provides a metal detector sensation as further checks are made on visitors to ensure they are suitable to ride, while a 50-meters (164 foot) long tunnel, more LED lighting, smoke effects, touch screens and a vibrating stage to test balance skills all add further to



Above, the white steel structure of Gardaland's latest major attraction Oblivion — The Black Hole is a new focal point within the park.

Right, riders on the new B&M coaster at Gardaland are seated in trains featuring a total of 18 seats, in three rows of six.

COURTESY GARDALAND

the experience. A 'destination room' gives an idea of where passengers might be headed, and a final passageway leads to the loading station.

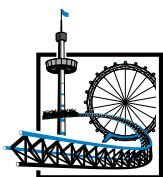






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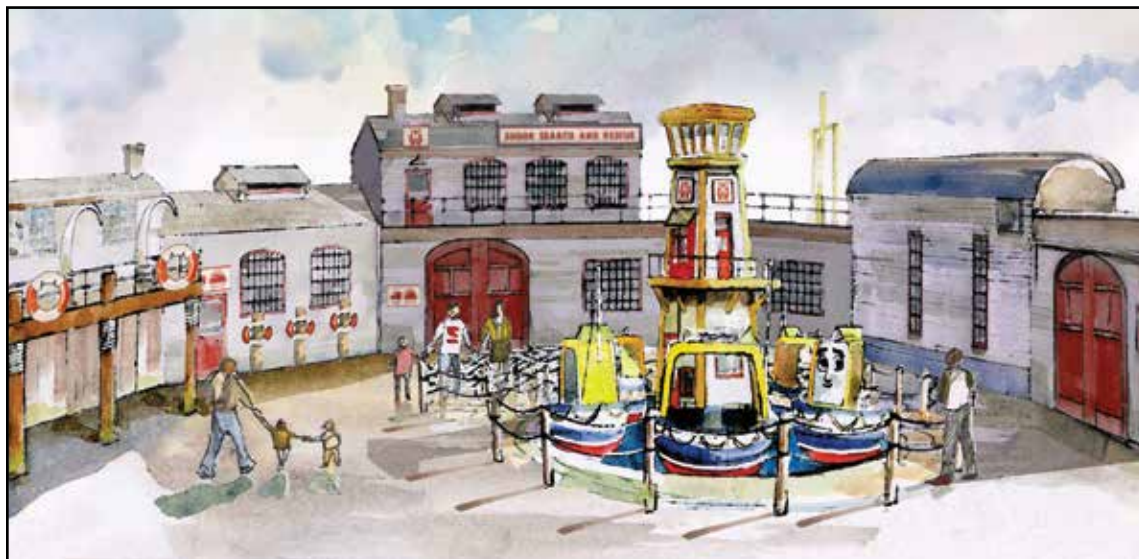
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# Drayton Manor expands Thomas Land by 40 percent



Drayton Manor Theme Park is focusing on its younger visitors in 2015 with an expansion of its popular Thomas Land increasing the size by 40 percent. Along with the new two-story Sodor Airport and its five themed rooms available for private events, the expansion is highlighted by three new rides, all from Italian manufacturer Zamperla. These include Captain's Sea Adventure (above); Toby's Tram Express (below left) and Flynn's Fire Rescue (below right). The new features opened over the recent Easter weekend. COURTESY D & J POPE CREATIVE DESIGN



TAMWORTH, Staffordshire, U.K. — Drayton Manor Theme Park is focusing on its younger visitors in 2015 with an expansion that has Europe's only Thomas Land increased in size by 40 percent.

With three new rides, all from Italian manufacturer Zamperla, plus a new Sodor Airport terminal, Thomas Land will have even more to create a magical day out for Thomas fans in 2015. Opened over Easter, the new rides include Flynn's Fire Rescue, Captain's Sea Adventure and Toby's Tram Express.

The new Thomas Land captures all the adventures of Thomas & Friends and the island of Sodor, with a central feature of the new two-story

Sodor Airport. In a traditional terminal style it has a top level balcony for VIP travelers with views of Thomas Land. The area has five themed rooms that will be available for private hire for events, parties or large family groups looking to make their day out extra special.

The ground level will feature a café for guests to relax and enjoy a selection of hot and cold drinks and snacks before they depart for their Thomas Land adventure. Jeremy Jet's Flying Academy will also be landing in its new location outside Sodor Airport.

The first of the new Thomas & Friends character rides is the fast and fearless Flynn the Fire Engine, equipped with on-board hoses so riders can help to put any fires out.

There is also Captain's Sea Adventure which introduces six rotating Captain lifeboats, all complete with their own cannons to squirt water. Toby the steam tram who wobbles, spins and turns also arrives in the shape of the new Toby's Tram Express.

Merrick the sleepy gantry crane will also be joining Blue Mountain Engines Sir Handle, Skarloey, Rhe-neas and Peter Sam all the way from Skarloey Railway where visitors simply climb aboard and enjoy the ride.

In addition to the new rides and café there will also be a fountain of the ever-popular Fat Controller and three Victorian fairground games, from games specialist HB Leisure, plus a bandstand for live performances.

Colin Bryan, CEO of Drayton Manor Theme Park, commented: "2015 marks the 65th anniversary of Drayton Manor and throughout our long history we've always prided ourselves on offering a fun day out for the whole family.

"That was the reasoning behind the launch of Thomas Land in 2008. Since then the area has gone from strength to strength and has provided an immersive experience for fans both young and old. We are delighted to be extending it this year with all these fantastic new rides and facilities for our visitors to enjoy."

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# WATER PARKS & RESORTS

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## Great Wolf Resorts, Inc. to be acquired by an affiliate of Centerbridge Partners, L.P.

MADISON, Wis., — Great Wolf Resorts, Inc. has entered into a definitive agreement and plan of merger with an affiliate of Centerbridge Partners, L.P. whereby Centerbridge, a leading private investment firm, will acquire Great Wolf, North America's largest family of indoor water park resorts. Great Wolf is currently controlled by funds affiliated with Apollo Global Management, LLC, listed on the New York Stock Exchange as APO.

Kimberly K. Schaefer, the chief executive officer of Great Wolf, commented as follows: "This is an exciting next chapter for Great Wolf Resorts. During our partnership with Apollo we saw tremendous growth for our company, including opening our 12th Great Wolf Lodge in Fitchburg, Massachusetts and having our 13th under construction in Garden Grove, California. Now as we join Centerbridge's portfolio, we look forward to continuing to provide families with amazing experiences at each of our lodges."

William D. Rahm, senior managing director of Centerbridge, said, "Great Wolf is a leading hospitality business and we are excited to support the company in its next phase of growth. Kim Schaefer and her team have done an exceptional job delivering a uniquely memorable experience to thousands of families every year and we are thrilled to have the chance to partner with them to build on that tradition. We are also fully committed to expanding the company into new markets so more families can enjoy a Great Wolf vacation."

"We have had a tremen-

### Centerbridge Partners, L.P.

NEW YORK, N.Y. — **Centerbridge Partners, L.P.**, is a private investment firm with offices in New York, N.Y. and London, England. It is a private investment firm with approximately \$25 billion in capital under management. The firm focuses on private equity and credit investments and is dedicated to partnering with world-class management teams across targeted industry sectors to help companies achieve their operating and financial objectives.

Established in 2005, Centerbridge was co-founded by **Jeffrey Aronson** and **Mark Gallogly**. Galogly was a 16-year veteran of the **Blackstone Group**, where he served as senior managing director, the head of private equity and a member of the firm's management committee and the private equity group's investment committee before his departure.

Aronson was a partner at **Angelo, Gordon & Co.** and served as the head of distressed debt and leveraged loans business. Previous experience includes serving as senior corporate counsel at **LF Rothschild** and as a securities attorney with the law firm of **Stroock & Stroock & Lavan**.

dous partnership with Kim Schaefer, her senior management team, and all 5,000-plus Great Wolf employees to build upon the strong family oriented brand they have established as the leading owner

and operator of indoor water park resorts. We look forward to continuing to experience the next phase of the company's growth as guests of Great Wolf lodges," said Aaron J. Stone, a senior partner of Apollo Global Management and member of the Great Wolf board of directors.

The Merger Agreement was unanimously approved by the board of directors of Great Wolf. The transaction is expected to close in the 2nd quarter of 2015, subject to customary closing conditions.

Great Wolf Lodge is North America's largest family of indoor water park resorts and the brand leader in the water park resort industry. Great Wolf Lodge is a first-class, full service, year-round destination resort. Extending far beyond water parks, Great Wolf provides families with quality accommodations, exceptional service, as well as popular proprietary amenities all under one roof — creating family traditions, one family at a time.

The first Great Wolf Lodge resort opened in 1997 in Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin; Great Wolf now operates 11 resorts throughout the U.S. with a new Great Wolf Lodge under construction in Garden Grove, California and another Great Wolf Lodge location in Niagara Falls, Ontario. These resorts generally feature 300–600 rooms and a large indoor entertainment area measuring 40,000–100,000 square feet. The all-suite properties offer a variety of room styles, arcade/game rooms, fitness rooms, themed restaurants, spas, supervised children's activities and other amenities.



Crystal Aura Resort & Spa in Turkey recently opened this Polin slide tower, which features this Sphere slide, shown as the middle slide. Below, riders enjoy the final big drop on another Polin slide. COURTESY POLIN



## Crystal Aura Beach Resort opens Polin Shere, slides

KEMER, Turkey — Guests at the Crystal Aura Beach Resort & Spa in Kemer, Turkey, have always had lots of reasons to praise the park. Its all-inclusive, five-star offerings include delectable cuisine, luxury spa treatments and lavish accommodations. But now guests have a whole new reason to rave about the resort: a variety of new water park attractions that recently were installed by Polin Waterparks.

Owned by the Kilit Group,

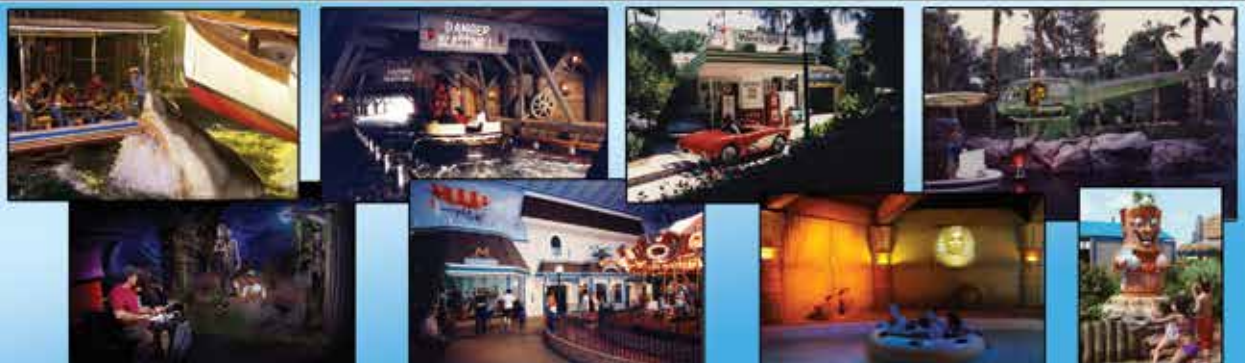
the park's owners worked with Polin — which had also designed and installed water parks at sister properties Crystal Sunset and Crystal Waterworld — to identify the perfect attractions to feature at their resort. Guests already had access to Kemer Marina and Nomad Theme Park in the nearby seaside town located in the Antalya Province on the Turkish Riviera. Those temptations meant that

► See RESORT, page 20

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## NEWS SPLASH

COMPILED: Jeffrey L. Seifert, [jseifert@amusementtoday.com](mailto:jseifert@amusementtoday.com)

A teen party at **Sun Splash Family Water Park** in Cape Coral, Florida got out of hand resulting in the cancellation of five subsequent parties that had been planned.

On March 28 radio station SUGA sponsored a night swim at the park, but apparently did not take into account the number of teens that planned to show up. Sun Splash reached capacity by 7:30 p.m. but hordes of teens kept flooding the park. When management tried to control the front gate, teens resorted to jumping over fences to gain access to the park.

TV news stations reported teens urinating in public and performing lewd acts in the pools. The radio station that organized the party denied those accusations. Neighbors also complained about the excessive noise.

City officials met to discuss plans for the next party scheduled for April 25, and the possibility of classifying it as special event with more security and stricter controls, but then cancelled the event altogether. SUGA had planned to host five more parties this year at Sun Splash.

In the meantime the city has recognized the need for special entertainment options for the city's youth and is planning its own city-sponsored teen events.

Construction crews at the new **Freedom Springs** water park in Greenwood, Indiana, are putting in lots of overtime to get the park ready for its grand opening on Memorial Day weekend. Rainy weather put the project about a month behind schedule.

The \$7 million water park is not likely to draw enough visitors to turn a profit, but city officials have agreed to provide the expected \$200,000 annual operating supplement as the water park is considered an investment in the city's quality of life. **Christian Maslowski**, president of the Greater Greenwood Chamber of Commerce said, "We're finding a way to be the community our residents deserve, our businesses expect and our community leaders envision it to be." The city has been without a public pool since the original city-owned pool closed in 2012.

In addition to a lap pool and zero-depth entry pool, the park will feature a lazy river, multiple slides, cabanas and a sand play area.

The **County Board of Williams County, N.D.** approved, in April, a zoning variance to pave the way for a \$500 million, 200-acre Williston Crossing development that will include retail space, apartments, townhouses, condominiums, four hotels and an indoor water park.

Despite its remote location 25 miles east of the Montana border and just 60 miles south of the Canadian border, the U.S. Census Bureau has ranked the area as one of the country's fastest growing regions four years in a row.

Unbeknownst to many, Williams County is one of the largest crude oil producers in the U.S. The oil and gas industry has brought about tremendous growth in both the city's population and infrastructure. The proposed development will bring much-needed recreational and shopping opportunities to the citizens of Williston, the county seat.

Although specific details of the water park have yet to be released, the developers have visited other indoor facilities to determine the size and scope of their project. **Terry Olin** of Stropiq, the developer behind the project noted, "If it's too small, kids will be too bored to come back. If it's too big, it's not economically

justified. What we're shooting for is more than a glorified hotel swimming pool, but something less than 100,000 square feet of state-of-the-art features."

Scotland's expansion to its water play park at the famous **Falkirk Wheel** opened in April to bring even more visitors to one of Scotland's top tourist attractions. New features include two pools with working lock gates, water cannons and model boats. Hydrozorbz and water dodgems are expected to join the lineup later this year. Taking the Zorb ball one step further, Hydrozorbz are transparent inflatable balls that one person can climb inside, then run or walk — hamster-wheel-like — across the surface of the water.

More than just a water-play area, phase one of the park was designed to educate guests about waterways. Phase two brings a few more fun activities to the area.

The Falkirk Wheel, an engineering marvel that opened in 2002, is a rotating boat lift that raises or lowers boats 79 feet from the Forth and Clyde Canal to the Union Canal. Waterway authorities sought to create a dramatic landmark to replace the 11 aging locks that closed in 1962 rendering the canals unusable. A visitors center with round-trip boat excursions hosts more than 400,000 people annually.

Critics were quick to jump on the bandwagon to voice their opposition to the proposed Manteca, California, **Great Wolf Resort** and its need for 300,000 gallons of water. But as is typical of the "cause du jour" that people are quick to mindlessly latch onto without doing any research, the truth is a far cry from the hype. Great Wolf was quick to point out that once filled, the water park recycles 98 percent of its water. City Manager **Karen McLaughlin** mentioned that Great Wolf even recycles the water used for laundry and the detergent is completely biodegradable. Water is also collected from the giant evaporators that are used to control the humidity and temperature inside the indoor water park.

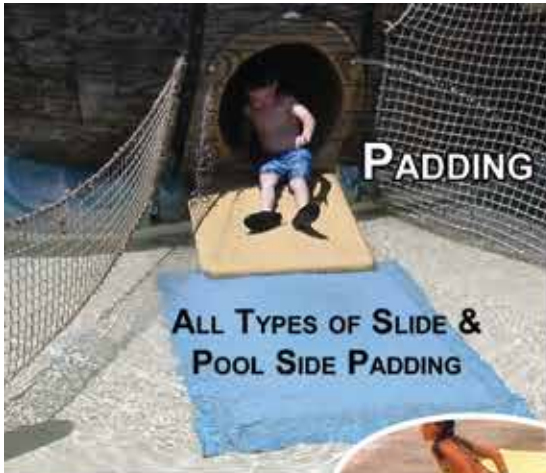
As with most modern-day water parks, the water is filtered and purified with an ultraviolet light system that destroys 99.99 percent of harmful microorganisms reducing the need for chemicals.

Although 300,000 gallons of water sounds like a tremendous amount, in reality it is just one-tenth of one percent of the water that the city of Manteca's residents and business use in a typical month.

After the one-time filling, a single Great Wolf Lodge can have a significant economic impact on a city. Studies show that because of its reputation for providing a positive guest experience, the resort can draw families from large distances who are willing to shell out close to \$300 per night. Many are repeat customers staying multiple days. Manteca's close proximity to the San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose market area gives it a large population base of 7.44 million people from which to draw customers. The resort, which operates 365 days a year, will provide approximately 570 jobs — more than 400 will be full time. Estimates have the resort generating \$6.5 million in payroll, property, sales and occupancy taxes.

The Manteca City Council is expected to make a decision on the proposed lodge this summer. If approved, the lodge could open as early as 2017.





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## ►RESORT

### Continued from page 17

Crystal Aura's owners wanted aquatic offerings that would entice guests to stay on property for the duration of their visits. Thus, the owners chose some of Polin's most appealing rides, focusing most particularly on wanting one of Polin's wildly popular Sphere slides.

#### A dizzying attraction

Polin's Sphere waterslide

is a streamlined version of its giant Magic Sphere. The two-person slide begins with a steep drop, and the high-speed journey moves travelers in a dizzying ride around the interior of one sphere before taking them through a tunnel slide to the next sphere.

Like with most of Polin's offerings, the Spheres are manufactured using resin transfer molding (RTM) composites technology. The Spheres' attraction also features Polin's patent-

ed Natural Light Effects (NLE) technology. This special lighting effect requires no electricity. Instead, harmonious, colorful designs occur when the sun's rays shine through the slide's fiberglass sides and interact with the flow of water through the tubes. The designs continually change and adapt depending on the angle and strength of the sunlight.

#### More rides for more fun

Crystal Aura also chose several other Polin attractions

to feature in its new water park. These new offerings are:

- Aquatube: This exhilarating, rapid ride features visual and auditory effects that will give guests a ride to remember.

- Black Hole: Touted as Polin's most popular ride, it offers an incredible and unique ride experience with a variety of special effects, including NLE, that no other manufacturer offers.

- Big Hole: Polin's popular Black Hole on steroids creates a substantial size slide that allows



Polin's slides, seen here at the Crystal Aura Resort & Spa in Kemer, Turkey, feature the company's resin transfer molding and Natural Light Effects for added slide durability and rider thrills. COURTESY POLIN

families to ride together in its larger tubes.

- Black Hole/Flying Boats Combination: Polin connects two of its popular thrill slides using splash boats and making it available in two different configurations. One is a downhill ride, and the other is uphill, where riders are pushed aloft on water jets, much like a roller coaster. Guests experience a journey full of surprises, traveling up and down and — when they think the ride is nearly complete — are thrilled by a last-minute surprise drop.

#### A family with respected roots

The Kilit Group, owned by the Kilit family of nearby Antalya, originally made a name for itself back in 1955. That's when founder Turan Kilit began supplying glassware to hotels and resorts. Today, the firm is managed by Turan's three sons Suleyman, Tuncay and Taner.

Crystal Aura is located on a private section of Aura Beach, 48 kilometers (30 miles) from the Antalya Airport and 38 kilometers (23.5 miles) from Antalya's city center. It features 416 air-conditioned rooms with fully stocked minibars, LCD televisions, private balconies and complimentary wireless Internet access. Spa offerings include massages, body treatments and facials. Guests can choose from four on-site restaurants or from the 24-hour room-service menu.

Erdogan Turan, general manager, said the new water slides at the resort provide a complete experience for guests. "Nearby attractions might tempt them to leave our property, but once they begin riding the slides, they can't get enough," he says. "They can spend all day at the resort and never tire of the offerings we provide to them."



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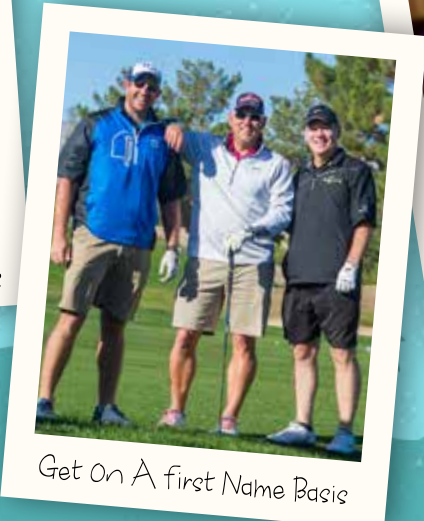
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# PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

► Diggerland USA unveils new 4x4 UTV attraction — Page 30 / Fairs & Attractions News — Pages 32-37

## Turbulence about to hit N.Y.'s Adventureland Park

*Mack Rides spinner set to open soon*

AT: B. Derek Shaw  
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

FARMINGDALE, N.Y. — The anticipation is building as Turbulence, the new roller coaster at Adventureland Park on Long Island is nearly ready to open. The 53 year old family fun park spent nearly three years deciding what attraction would replace their SDC Hurricane coaster (1991-2014). Mack Rides GmbH & Co KG (Waldkirch, Baden Wuerttemberg, Germany) won out. This is Mack's second custom spinning coaster installation in the United States.

The \$5 million dollar (USD) ride features two trains with three cars each, using a yellow and green color scheme. Riders are arranged two across sitting back to back for a total of 12 riders per train. The lift hill stands at 55 feet with a total track length of 1,210 feet providing a 40 mile per hour ride in just



under 45 seconds. Each car spins independently, making for a unique ride experience, each and every time. Hourly capacity is expected to be 700 people. Height restriction is 48 inches which allows younger kids to ride. Turbulence is included with the \$27.99 pay-one-price ride plan option. Admission is always free to Adventureland. Opening is planned for mid-May, with Memorial Day as the absolute latest.

**Turbulence, the new spinning coaster from Germany's Mack Rides, is nearing a May opening at Adventureland Park in Farmingdale, N.Y. It features 1,210 feet of track.**  
COURTESY ADVENTURELAND

"For a park of our size, it's a big deal," relates an exuberant Steve Gentile, park manager of Adventureland, who sounds more like an expectant father. He continued, "This

► See **TURBULENCE**, page 24



## Beech Bend park to offer five new rides for 2015



**Air Race, a Zamperla ride, is up and ready to go for the opening day at Beech Bend Park, Louisville, Ky., May 2. Beech Bend Park purchased five new rides for the 2015 season.**  
COURTESY BEECH BEND

AT: Pam Sherborne  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — Beech Bend Park, the family-owned and operated park located in the south central region of Kentucky, purchased five new rides for the 2015 season that is to begin May 2.

According to the park's Charlotte Gonzalez, two of the new rides are updated replacements for their older counterparts and three are new attractions.

"We traded in our older Wisdom Sizzler and Tornado for brand new replacements," Gonzalez said. "We also purchased an Air Race (Zamperla), a Monster Truck ride from Wisdom and a Carousel Swing from Bertazzon."

Gonzalez said the two replacement rides

are in place. The Air Race was purchased right off the trade show floor during last November's International Association of Amusement Park and Attractions Expo. It also is in place and ready to go.

The Monster Truck ride was still being installed the first week of April, but Gonzalez said there would be no problem getting it done for opening day.

"We are converting one of our older shelters to house the Monster Truck ride," she said. "We had been using it for overflow food seating, but we are excited about using the shelter for the ride."

The only ride that won't be ready on opening day is the Bertazzon swing. Gonzalez said

► See **BEECH BEND**, page 24



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## ►TURBULENCE

Continued from page 23

ride is dwarfing over our mid-way. Making this size ride is the first time for us. Long Island is waiting for this. I think we're gonna hit a home run!"

To test the waters, a group of family members traveled to California to ride the other U.S. Mack spinning coaster, the Sierra Sidewinder at Knott's Berry Farm, (Buena Park, Calif.) The ride test group ages ranged from 6 to 22. Rides were first taken at 10 a.m. and then again at 5 p.m. Steve says both ride experiences were totally different. When all was said and done, the Mack coaster received "Rave reviews from all." When asked why they chose Mack, Gentile said, "We wanted to stay with the family aspect. We've been dealing with Mack a long time. We are very comfortable with them. They have been in business a long time too." (Adventureland also has a Mack Musik Express and a few kiddie rides.)

After the deal was confirmed, a group from Adventureland travelled to Mack Rides corporate offices in Germany to take another ride on their product, while seeing their particular coaster being built in the factory. Mack did all the ride engineering and design, while two local engi-



neers designed and installed the station and ride foundation. They were SRF Architect and SIMS Steel, both Long Island, N.Y. contractors.

Bob Dean, with Leisure Labs LLC, Sarasota, Fla. (the North American sales office for Mack Rides), was also pleased with the Adventureland coaster. He said, "This project is very dear to Mack Rides because of the nature and location of Adventureland and their amazing staff. The Gentile family and their Adventureland team have been fantastic to work with. This site lends itself to creatively compressing the Mack Spinning Coaster into a very small footprint. The ride is very twisted within itself with lots of thrilling transitions and elements, and it features very nice track length and ride time. We are very lucky to have been chosen by Adventureland, and this coaster looks to be the perfect addition for their family oriented audience."

With a rider height of just 48 inches, "We are grabbing another two years," said Gentile referring to the crowd that the ride is designed for. He continued, "Moms and dads

with kids can all ride together. A child can leave saying, 'I rode two roller coasters!'"

The ride name, Turbulence, was selected by way of a naming contest. Guests were asked to vote for one of five preselected names and provide their own suggestion, if they wanted to. The winner was selected randomly from the pool of voters who selected the winning name.

Caitlin DiSclafani, also with Adventureland, explained how the process worked, "Over three thousand people participated in the contest with nearly half voting for Turbulence." She continued, "We came up with the preselected names to match some of the park's themes: Mantis, since our kiddie coaster is called the Lady Bug, Boomerang, a reference to the spinning coaster, Rotator, since the property Adventureland was built on was a Broccoli, Escarole and Chicken farm, Turbulence, to keep with the weather theme of the Hurricane, and Jester, just a fun name the staff liked. We announced the name just before the new year via e-mail blasts and social media."

Recently Gentile was talking with his son, lamenting that the Hurricane roller coaster was there for 23 years. "It looks like Turbulence will be there 30 - 40 years. It's your problem with what to do next when that time comes."

## ►BEECH BEND

Continued from page 23

the site is ready, but the piece hadn't been received.

"We were expecting it to be here by mid-April," she said. "But it has been delayed. We are being told now that it will be mid-May before we get."

Gonzalez is sorry they won't have it up and running for opening, but she is looking forward to the ride's arrival. They have named it the Bluegrass Breeze.

"It is a gorgeous piece," she said.

Gonzalez also is looking forward to the new season. The park will continue its special promotions such as giving anyone that is in the military or has been in the military free admission. The military person's family receives a \$5 discount on tickets.

June specials include Mommy Mondays, where moms get one-half off admission with a paying child; Buy-one-get-one free Tuesdays; Grandparents' Wednesday, where a grandparent gets one-half off admission with a paying grandchild; Free Dippin' Dot Thursdays; and Father Fridays, the mom's counterpart.

There is no June Saturday special, but on Sunday, every guest that brings in a church bulletin gets one-half off admission.

For July, the park has planned a Friday night activity called Friday Night Lights. For



Beech Bend Park's director of maintenance Bill Burr was busy with getting the park's new Monster Truck ride ready for the opening day of the season for the Bowling Green, Ky., family owned and operated amusement attraction. The new ride, one of five for 2015, will open May 2, the first day of the season. It is being installed under an overflow picnic shelter. COURTESY BEECH BEND

the first time ever, the park will be open past dark on those Friday nights in July.

"We started thinking that we have so many rides with beautiful LED light packages on them, but no one ever sees them because the park always closes before dark," she said. "We have decided to try this. We are offering a \$12 admission fee between 5:30-9 p.m."

Beech Bend's water park won't be open, however, during the nighttime activities.



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# Carowinds 2015 begins with new gate, massive B&M Fury 325

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CHARLOTTE, N.C. — While it has always been unique and one-of-a-kind, Carowinds is now emerging into the theme park major league thanks to a three-year, more-than-\$50 million improvement and expansion plan. As previously announced, parent company Cedar Fair is investing heavily in the southern themer in an effort to transform it into one of the region's premier vacation destinations. And they've begun in grand style with the first phase of this endeavor being unveiled this spring.

## New arrival experience

Guests immediately notice the first of these improvements as they drive onto the property and approach a bank of new toll booths. With multiple-staffed lanes, re-designed traffic flow and 900 new spaces, getting into the parking area is now a breeze.

But that's just a warm-up for what awaits them as the entire North Gate entrance area has been completely redeveloped to offer a vastly improved guest arrival experience. The former plantation house from the park's first seasons has been replaced with an 8.2-acre open-air plaza that is home to the main entrance, ticketing, guests services and a host of other conveniences.

## Feel the sting of Fury 325

The centerpiece of the new entrance plaza is Fury 325. Carowinds has been catapulted into the thrill ride stratosphere thanks to the introduction of this phenomenal mega coaster, which fully surrounds the new



## ▶NEXT MONTH: Q&A with Carowinds's VP & GM Mike Fehnel

plaza. The placement of the coaster effectively sets the tone for the day for arriving visitors. And it's all about the anticipation of fun.

Fury 325 towers a whopping 325 feet above the ground, easily claiming the record as the world's tallest mega coaster. It was produced by the esteemed Bolliger & Mabillard of Monthey, Switzerland, the same firm responsible for three of Carowinds' other thrillers: Vortex, Afterburn and Intimidator. Cedar Fair wisely placed Fury 325's station adjacent to the Hurler wooden coaster in the former Wayne's World, effectively breathing new life and energy into this once-sedate area of the park.

While Intimidator — the park's hypercoaster built in 2010 — is all about tall drops and floating airtime, Fury 325's strengths lie in blistering speed and a number of highly entertaining and unorthodox maneuvers such as over-banked turns, low-profile speed hills and rapid-fire directional/elevation changes. Along with its breathtaking 32 story, 81-degree first drop that generates velocities of 95 mph, Fury 325's most original trick is its turnaround, which coaster fans have dubbed the "treble clef." This clever element finds the train swirling up from ground level into a 91-degree bank that keeps riders tilted on their sides as they begin a screaming dive beneath the new pedestrian bridge leading into the park. This 6,602-foot-long monster concludes with a spirited dash for home that is peppered with several airtime-inducing rabbit hops and a banked spiral before the train hits the home brakes with energy to spare.

At night, Fury 325's lift hill

Carowinds has begun a three-year, more-than-\$50 million expansion plan. The park's new 8.2-acre entrance plaza is dominated by Fury 325, a record-breaking mega coaster from B&M. The spectacular new ride treats guests to a 32-story, 81-degree first drop, a 6,602-foot-long layout with speeds of 95 mph. AT/SCOTT RUTHERFORD; COURTESY CAROWINDS



## FAST FACTS

### Name/Park

Fury 325  
Carowinds,  
Charlotte, N.C.

### Type

Non-looping Steel  
Mega Coaster

### Height/Length/Speed

325 feet, 6,602 feet/95mph

### Ride Vehicles

Three eight-seat trains,  
each seating 32 riders,  
four-abreast

### Capacity/Opened

1,470 pph/March 28, 2015

### Supplier

Bolliger & Mabillard  
Monthey, Switzerland

along with many of its supports and track glow a vibrant lime green, making it highly visible from virtually anywhere in the park as well as to motorists on nearby Interstate 77.

"We are making history here at Carowinds, and creating another reason people can be proud to live in the Carolinas. The opening of Fury 325 gives Carowinds two of the 10 tallest roller coasters in North America," says Mike Fehnel, Carowinds vice president and general manager. "We want to be the destination for families near and far, and the debut of Fury 325 coupled with the other exciting experiences for the 2015 season puts us in the driver's seat."

## SlingShot

Along with Fury 325, Carowinds also installed another thrilling experience, SlingShot. Supplied by Funtime of Austria, the SlingShot is located just adjacent to the entrance of the Vortex standup coaster. The ride utilizes a pair of cables to catapult a two-person capsule 300-feet into the air, nearly as high as the Statue of Liberty, at speeds up to 60 mph.

While Carowinds may be known as the "Thrill Capital of the Southeast," it's also gaining a reputation as the perfect place to satisfy hearty appetites. "Taste of the Carolinas" is an

event that perfectly exemplifies this. Guests will be able to experience the best of what the Carolinas have to offer in this signature new food festival on Saturdays & Sundays through May 17.

Carowinds founder E. Pat Hall would be quite proud of what his dream has become. Cedar Fair realized that it could improve upon and yet still remain faithful to Hall's original concept of bringing the Carolinas together with a unique blend of southern charm and thrilling attractions. The next phase of this expansion can only elevate Carowinds to the another level. The future looks bright indeed.





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# Diggerland USA unveils new 4x4 UTV attraction



New Jersey's Diggerland USA recently kicked off its second season with the unveiling of a modified JCB WorkMax UTV truck fleet. The WorkMax is a compact, 4x4 Utility Terrain Vehicle with a 784cc three-cylinder diesel engine designed for the many terrains and jobs in the construction, farm and military industries. At Diggerland, children and parents alike, drive the black-and-yellow two-seaters along a designated course. COURTESY DIGGERLAND

WEST BERLIN, N.J. — Diggerland USA, North America's only construction theme park, has made public the details of its latest attraction. The recent unveiling of a modified JCB WorkMax UTV truck fleet is the 24th attraction to make its way into the ride line up at Diggerland USA.

The WorkMax is a compact, 4x4 Utility Terrain Vehicle with a 784 cc three-cylinder diesel engine designed for the many terrains and jobs in the construction, farm and military industries. At Diggerland, children and parents alike, drive the black-and-yellow two-seaters along a designated course.

"We are always looking at new rides that further the Diggerland experience. The WorkMax is a perfect fit for



our park and the first of a few new concepts we hope to debut over the 2015 season," said Ilya Girlya, CEO and owner of Diggerland USA and Sahara Sam's Oasis Indoor and Outdoor Water Park. "Our guests love to drive, ride and operate the equipment they see at construction sites — the WorkMax provides another way for them to do that; behind the wheel of

a machine most of the public would never get the chance to operate."

Diggerland USA officially re-opened for its second year of operation Sunday, March 15. The construction-themed adventure park covers 14 acres and offers visitors the opportunity to operate full size excavators, dumper trucks, and backhoes among a range of other heavy machinery in a safe, family-friendly environment.

The park currently offers 24 on-site attractions, most of which are comprised of modified JCB heavy construction equipment that have been engineered to allow parents and children to safely dig, drive and ride familiar, real-sized construction equipment.



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# Houston Livestock Show & RCS pull out another great event

**AT: Pam Sherborne**  
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HOUSTON, Texas — Weather may not have been the most favorable for this year's edition of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, but there were still more than enough enthusiastic fans attending during its 20-day run, March 1-20.

A rodeo/concert paid attendance record was set this year with 1,377,477 attending thanks to an entertainment line-up including such names as Miranda Lambert, Alan Jackson, Tim McGraw, Zac Brown Band, Brad Paisely and Dierks Bentley coupled with top rodeo performances.

Total attendance for all activities on the grounds came in at 2,483,193, putting it in at number two in the record book.

"Thanks to the undeniable passion of our more than 31,000 volunteers, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo is able to provide unique experiences to outstanding crowds, rain or shine," said Joel Cowley, Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo president and CEO.

"Our more than 100 different committees selflessly work with our dedicated staff to make this show an impressive event," he said.

One early indicator of a great turn-out was the number of people attending the World's Championship Bar-B-Que Contest, which runs prior to the show. This year it ran Feb. 26-28.

There were 232,380 people at the event, with opening day, Thursday, Feb. 26, drawing a record 45,375 for any opening day of the barbecue event.

According to Sarah Poole, the show's manager, advertising and media, the additions of the 4-H and FFA Food Challenge and the Longhorn Trophy Steer Showdown were received well. Also, the revamp of the Rabbit and Honeybee exhibits in AgVenture were big hits.

The parade through downtown streets that traditionally opens the show drew thousands.

Ray Cammack Shows provided just under 80 rides for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo's midway.

## MIDWAY FACTS

### 2015 Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo

Ray Cammack Shows provides 80 ride midway with more than 2.4 million rides given

Nearly half a million riders rode the La Grande Wheel, manufactured by Carousel Holland

225,000 riders bumped cars in the bumper cars

6.7 million games played

70 semi-truck loads of teddy bears, Minions and basketballs were won

The three most popular rides were the Windstorm Roller Coaster, manufactured by S.D.C., the Sky Ride by Seatrek and the Rave Wave by S.D.C.

The carnival brought in a variety of new rides for the show this year. They included: Wacky Worm, by Fajume; the Galaxy by Pinfari; OMG, Technical Park; Monkey Maze, by



**The 2015 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, held March 1-20, ended up setting a paid rodeo/concert attendance drawing 1,377,477 visitors. Total attendance for all grounds activities was 2,483,193, ranking this year's event in the number two slot. Ray Cammack Shows provided the midway with just under 80 rides.**

COURTESY HOUSTON LIVESTOCK SHOW AND RODEO

Owens; and the Big Top Swing, by Preston and Barbieri.

Ray Cammack Shows also contracted with Luehrs' Ideal Rides for two rides, which were also new to the show. Those rides were the Avalanche and the Centrifuge, both manufactured by Wisdom.

In addition, the carnival was sporting several new food trailers. They had a new Big Tex trailer, which serves barbecue and was manufactured by Hitch-Hiker Manufacturing. They had three new Schantz Manufacturing food trailers, serving foods such as funnel cakes and chicken-on-a-stick.

The 2015 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Gold Buckle Foodie Awards competition was held March 5. Entries ranged from fried foods and breakfast dishes to most creative and foods-on-a-stick.

Kimberly Revis, owner of Custom Confections, took home first place for Classic Fried Food with her fried brownie ball. Other winners included Best Breakfast Food: Texas Skillet, the Breakfast Cowboy Burrito; Best Value

Food: Stubby's Cinnamon Rolls, "The Original;" Best Food-on-a-Stick: Holmes Smokehouse, bacon wrapped sausage-on-a-stick; Best Fried Food: Custom Confections, fried brownie ball; and Classic Fair Food: Holmes Smokehouse, gourmet one half pound Texas burger.

Other awards included Most Creative Food: Belgian Waffles, fried Sriracha balls; Best New Flavor: Holmes Smokehouse, baked potato with meat; and Best Dessert: Stubby's Cinnamon Rolls, "The Works."

Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and entertainer merchandise sales reached more than \$3.6 million this year.

There were more than 175,000 items with the show's logo that went home with fans, including 10,000 lapel pins, 20,000 caps and 30,000 T-shirts.

International Days have become a popular time at the show. This year it ran March 3-10. During that time, the show has between three and 10 volunteers staffing the International Room to help welcome guests and inform visitors.

This year there were 2,603 guests from 88 countries outside of the U.S. that visited the event.

In the social media realm, there were 201,941 posts on the Internet regarding the show. Show messaging reached more than 183 million people worldwide. Fans shared and retweeted original content to more than 120 million people worldwide.

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# 2015 San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo sets eight single day attendance records

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — The 2015 San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo, which ran Feb. 12-March 1, had a great run this year.

Records were set even though the final attendance figure wasn't among them. The event drew 1,647,968 visitors during the 2015 edition, which represents a slight decrease to the record-breaking attendance of 1,740,154 visitors last year.

Eight days of the 2015 run set records for single day attendances. Also, 17 out of 21 concert performances sold out setting a new record in cumulative ticket sales.

Wade Shows provided the midway with 50 rides including two new ones, the Enterprise, manufactured by Huss, and Power Surge by Zamperla.

The total purse for the PRCA Rodeo was \$1,675,000, making the San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo the largest and highest paying regular season PRCA rodeo, according to San Antonio event officials.

For the tenth consecutive year, the San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo was voted the PRCA Large Indoor Rodeo of the Year.

The Junior Livestock Auction set a new record, with final bids totaling over \$6.1 million. In addition, almost all winning bids in each individual category also set records.

The San Antonio Junior Livestock Show, tagged as the largest junior livestock show in the world, had an increase

of over 1,000 entries in 2015.

The second annual Youth Rodeo featured select Rodeo style events for 365 Texas 4-H and FFA members and awarded \$70,000 in scholarships to the winners.

The San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo will be held February 11 – 28, 2016.

—Pam Sherborne

The 2015 San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo had a great run this year drawing 1,647,986 visitors thanks to eight single-day attendance records. Wade Shows provided 50 rides for the midway including this Drag Strip Mega Slide by Wisdom. COURTESY GREG WESTFALL



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## FAST FACTS

**2015 San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo**  
San Antonio, Texas

More than \$1.7 million in scholarships awarded

17 U.S. states and 5 countries represented by Horse Show participants

The International Committee hosted guests from 99 different countries

AT&T Center hosted 85 outdoor show performances on four different stages

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# Fair Park redevelopment proposals stir big debate in Dallas

AT: Pam Sherborne

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DALLAS, Texas — Creating and designing redevelopment and revitalization plans for Dallas' Fair Park, home to the State Fair of Texas, is not a novel idea.

The 277-acre prime site offers so much possibility for the City of Dallas and other developers that the temptation to look at it every once in a while is apparently too great.

Currently, there seem to be two separate plans proposing the future of Fair Park.

One comes under the guidance of Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings, who put together a Fair Park Task Force in 2013. He challenged it to come up with "dramatic ideas" to revitalize the 277-acre park.

According to a report that ran in the *Dallas Morning News* August 2014, that task force began circulating its report during that month.

The top recommendation the task force has proposed is for the City of Dallas to hand over the park's operations,



If a redevelopment and revitalization plan, recently presented to the Dallas (Texas) City Council is approved, the Dallas Fair Park and home to the nation's number one fair, the State Fair of Texas would be no more. The \$478 million plan would eliminate the midway area by creating a 110-acre green space in the area now reserved for the midway. The plan has brought forth much debate. Above left, the 277-acre Dallas Fair Park as seen today. Above right, the proposed green space plan. COURTESY GOOGLE EARTH; STATE FAIR OF TEXAS

management and marketing to a private, non-profit entity.

According to that same *Dallas Morning News* report, the two other major proposals were to: "boost Fair Park's access and connectivity and to create a community green space on the park's south side."

However, the focus of the current task force is on the park's governance, which has

been blamed for Fair Park's slow growth and its revitalization issues. Because of that focus, some of Rawlings' task force proposals could come to fruition, albeit it still may be years down the road.

As it stands now, the City of Dallas owns and operates Fair Park. The State Fair of Texas takes over the park during its annual run, but the Dallas

Park and Recreation Board sets the park's policy and direction, taking the lead on day-to-day operations.

But, there are other groups and city offices that have a role in Fair Park operations as well. These include the city's Office of Cultural Affairs; the city's Landmark Commission; the nonprofit Friends of Fair Park; WRR (101.1 FM), the city-

owned classical music station, and the African American Museum.

Rawlings' Fair Park Task Force proposes that a new non-profit entity should be created to run the park. That group would contract with the city and have its own executive director and staff.

In addition, the "task force" **See FAIR PARK, page 35**

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## CARNIVAL LIGHTS

COMPILED: Pam Sherborne, psherborne@amusementtoday.com

The **Kansas State Fair's Ye Old Mill** turns 100 this year, so, in celebration, fair officials announced last month that the Kansas State Fair museum exhibit will be themed "The Year of the Ride."

The museum is open during the fair, which is set for Sept. 11-20 in Hutchinson.

In the fall of 1914, the board of state fair managers adopted a motion to lease land for a carousel and figure-eight amusement ride to **John Keenen** and **J.S. Mahan**, according to Thomas Percy's book, *A History of the Kansas State Fair*.

Keenen owned several vaudeville theaters but had branched out into amusement rides in the early 1900s. He constructed similar rides at other fairs in Oklahoma City, Little Rock, Shreveport, Minneapolis and Des Moines before approaching the Kansas State Fair, and all shared the name of Old Mill or some variation. Rides in Minneapolis and Des Moines remain open today.

The board officially approved the use of the name Ye Old Mill in March 1915, according to Percy. Designed by Keenen's son, **John Keenen, Jr.**, this particular old mill opened for the first time in 1915 and offered a boat ride through 1,000 feet of enclosed water channels. A large mill wheel moved the water and the boats down the darkened channel, although, when it first opened, it was more of a tunnel of love than the scary ride it is today.

An article in a 1915 edition of *The News* said Keenan also planned to build a permanent carousel and roller-coaster.

The fair purchased the Mill ride around 1929 when three men running the operations at several state fairs all died within a few months of each other.

**A.L. Sponsler**, fair secretary at the time, purchased the Mill from the estate for \$500 and then sold it for the same amount to the fair.

More than 32,000 people rode the ride in 1928 at a cost of 10 cents a person, according to the story.

Today's ride, operated by **Charlie Griffin**, is a family-friendly scare ride.

The museum, located in the Lair White House, opened in 2014. Museum items will include a Ye Old Mill original boat, vintage photos, history of the carousel horse and much more.

The **Laramie County Commission**, Cheyenne, Wyo., last month signed off on a grant application that, if approved, would fund a study of the feasibility of moving the county fair to the Archer Complex east of Cheyenne.

Commissioners voted to approve the application to the Wyoming Business Council's Business Ready Community Planning Grant program for \$25,000, with a match of \$8,333 coming from the Laramie County Fair board.

Fair manager **Jeff Ketcham** said fair officials have been considering relocating the event's main exhibition from Frontier Park to the Archer Complex 11 miles east of town since September of 2013.

Fair officials have already relocated a few smaller events to Archer, and last April, the fair board unveiled a wide-ranging vision for

the location, which includes a 116,000-square-foot multi-use arena on the south end of the Archer Complex.

The plan also calls for a midway, a park area and an outdoor amphitheater for concerts, plays and movie screenings, as well as a camping and RV parking area. The estimated cost of the project is \$9 million.

The **Santa Rosa County Fair**, Milton, Fla., served its first beer during its 2015 run April 3-11.

The fair partnered with the Santa Rosa County Veterans Foundation to serve Miller Lite on the grounds on Friday and Saturday at the fair. April's fair was the first time in its 24-year history that beer has been sold.

The fair also contracted with a new carnival, **James Gang Amusements**, to provide the midway.

Planning for the **Du Quoin (Ill.) State Fair** is in full swing and on track compared to previous years, even in the absence of a director, according to a spokeswoman with the Illinois Department of Agriculture.

According to a news report that ran in a local newspaper, *The Southern*, in late March, the state released the lineup for the Illinois State Fair in Springfield without a word on the entertainment acts coming to Du Quoin.

There have been some concerns in Southern Illinois about the future of the fair since director **Shannon Woodworth** was dismissed in January by Gov. **Bruce Rauner**. Though not uncommon for an incoming governor to replace staff of his predecessor, a replacement fair director has yet to be named.

Those worries seem to have been compounded by a partial release of entertainment acts booked for the Springfield fair.

Illinois Department of Agriculture spokeswoman **Kristi Jones** told *The Southern* last month that work continues to ensure that the Du Quoin event is successful this year. She said the state is not behind in announcing acts.

Last year, the Du Quoin State Fair Grandstand lineup was released in early July. The Du Quoin State Fair is slated to open this year on Aug. 28. **The Illinois State Fair** opens Aug. 7.

Though Woodworth is no longer at the helm, the fair still employs four full-time staff members.

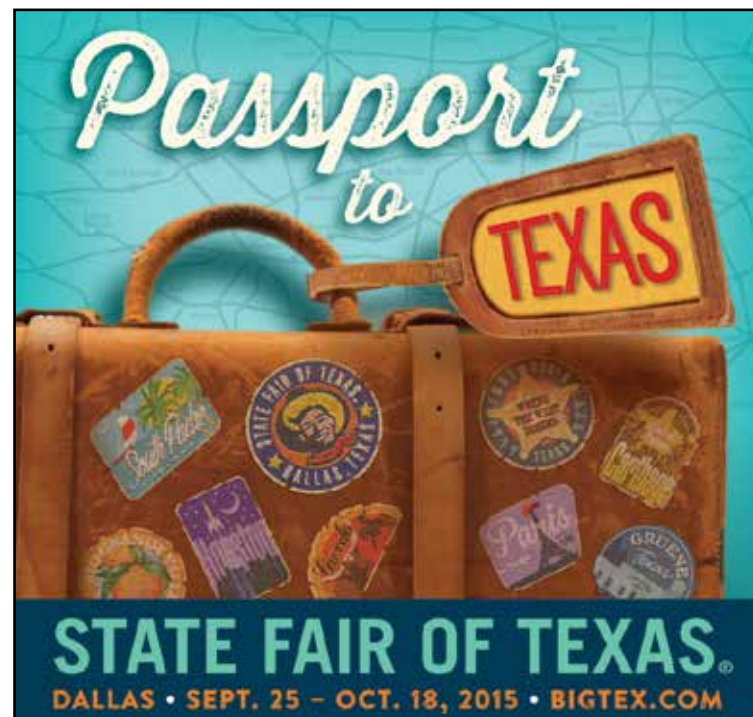
Du Quoin Mayor **Rex Duncan** was quoted in the news report that he is optimistic that the Du Quoin fair will continue on as always.

With two opposed, the Essex County Board of Supervisors gave final approval last month to the sale of craft beer and wine at the **Essex County Fair**, Westport, N.Y., set for Aug. 12-16.

The measure passed 13 to two.

The Agricultural Society had asked for the sales to be approved. Fair officials said the sales are necessary to try to raise its bottom line for the fair and to promote local craft breweries and winemakers.

Those opposing the measure felt that promoting local products wasn't enough of a reason to approve. And, that the sale of alcoholic beverages at the fair could cause problems.



The 2015 State Fair of Texas will feature a theme of **Passport to Texas** for its 129th year. COURTESY STATE FAIR OF TEXAS

## FAIR PARK

Continued from page 34

is recommending that the city increase its annual Fair Park budget from \$10 million to \$15 million," according to the *Dallas Morning News*.

The panel proposes that the city use future bond programs to address the park's \$478 million in capital needs.

Most parties involved in the current Fair Park discussions seem to agree that centralizing the governing body is a legitimate concern and that includes both city and Fair Park representatives.

State Fair of Texas President Mitchell Glieber released a statement in March addressing some of the proposed changes. In that statement, Glieber said: "We strongly believe the best solution is to allow the Fair Park Task Force recommendations every opportunity to succeed while preserving the historic park."

The second aforementioned development plan was created by a private entity that includes Boston-based urban designer Antonio Di Mambro and former Trammell Crow chief executive and founder of the Foundation for Community Empowerment J. Don Williams.

Di Mambro and Williams have ties to Dallas and are familiar with urban design and project development.

This Di Mambro plan, which is the way it is now being referred, divvies up Fair Park into four sections: a 110-acre green space, a proposed marketplace; a 50-acre "multi-

plex" that would open up the Cotton Bowl and eliminate the midway; and establish a parcel for the fair that would push it into the northeast corner of Fair Park, an 84-acre area dominated by parking lots.

In Glieber's March statement, he said about this plan: "This proposal would effectively end the 129-year tradition of the State Fair of Texas in Dallas."

Glieber's points out what the city would lose if it lost the State Fair of Texas, which continues to top the list of the 50 largest North American fairs.

Last year, attendance was estimated at 2.85 million, plus. Glieber's said the fair has an estimated economic impact of \$608 million on North Texas. In addition, it annually creates jobs for more than 6,000 people.

Glieber also stated that in allowing the task force's recommendations every opportunity to succeed "is far more desirable than taking a public National Historic Landmark and turning it into a development."

All parties are engaging public input, but as yet no direct decision has been made about any of this. And, there is no deadline for anything to happen.

Mayor Rawlings has praised part of the Di Mambro plan, but he added that he isn't ready to sign off on anything until the task force comes up with a plan on who will run Fair Park.

The *Dallas Morning News* quoted the mayor as saying: "The cart's a little before the horse on this."



# Firestone Financial celebrates 50 years in the amusement industry

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

Fifty years ago, Michael Miller and Robert Fanger learned of an opportunity to buy the controlling interest in a loan financing company. It was a small company, but the two saw the potential.

They invested in the company, Firestone Financial, and, right away, hired its first employee, Ed Yaffe, to run the day to day operations of the business. Yaffe had a background in selling vending machines.

From that small start in 1965, Firestone Financial has turned into a nationwide lender focusing on the financing needs of businesses in the amusement, carnival, fitness and laundry markets.

Miller is still an active member of the board of directors. Yaffe's son, Larry Yaffe, is the senior vice president of sales and marketing. The company has more than 50 employees, has financed billions of dollars with thousands of customers, and has a team dedicated to the financing needs of amusement parks and carnivals.

But, it was different in those early days. Four years af-

ter the company was founded, Miller and Fanger joined ranks with their one employee. Later that year, they hired their second, Sam Rizzari. In the 1970s, the company started to increase its presence in the coin-op market and by the 1980s was well poised to ride the video arcade boom.

"We were the first who really devoted our energy and expertise to financing the coin-op industry," Miller said.

Then, the company expanded into the outdoor amusement market in the early 1990s.

"We understand the market," said Tony Costanza, assistant vice president, carnivals and amusement parks. "And when other lenders tightened up credit requirements, we went the other way."

"We have the benefit of knowing the market and the customers," Costanza said. "This allows us to be more flexible and do things that other lenders cannot."

The commitment to provide more than just a loan and to develop long standing relationships with its customers has translated into repeat customer business of 68 percent.



Shown here are but a few of those with Firestone Financial, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

COURTESY FIRESTONE FINANCIAL



**Tony Costanza,**  
assistant vice president



**Sam Keller,**  
sales representative

In 2006, Firestone hired Samantha Keller, who has established herself as a vital piece of the sales team and has focused her talents on the carnival industry.

"Our customers stay with us not just for years but, in many cases, generations," said Larry Yaffe. "We don't just provide loans, we look to partner to help the customer grow. Their success is ours as well."

*Editor's note: Ed Yaffe and Sam Rizzari have since passed away. Fanger is no longer active in the business.*



Firestone Financial is celebrating 50 years in business this year. The company is a nationwide lender financing the needs of businesses in the amusement, carnival, fitness, and laundry markets. Seen here at the 2014 Amusement Expo are Firestone's Carol Francis, director of marketing, and Larry Yaffe, senior vice president of sales and marketing.

AT/GARY SLADE

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# BUSINESS & CLASSIFIED

► MarketWatch — Page 40 / Safety News — Pages 52-54 / CLASSIFIED — Page 43

Industry dynamo reeled in from Herschend

## Moving swiftly, boldly, SeaWorld names Joel Manby new CEO

AT: Dean Lamanna  
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

ORLANDO, Fla. — After a three-month search, SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc. (NYSE: SEAS), announced March 19 that it had tapped former Herschend Family Entertainment president and CEO Joel Manby as its new president and CEO. Manby's duties shifted from Herschend's Norcross, Ga., headquarters to SeaWorld's Orlando corporate offices effective April 7.

Manby replaces SeaWorld Entertainment Chairman David F. D'Alessandro, who began serving as interim CEO on January 15 after Jim Atchison stepped down. Atchison remains with the company as board vice chairman.

Manby also is serving on SeaWorld's board of directors, which D'Alessandro continues to chair.

"We are extremely pleased to welcome Joel Manby to SeaWorld Entertainment," D'Alessandro said. "Joel has nearly 20 years' experience and a proven track record with business models very similar to ours — multiple brands and multiple properties in the entertainment and theme park industries. Even in the most challenging business environments, Joel has consistently enhanced the performance of the companies he has led for customers, investors and employees alike. He has the



**Joel Manby, formerly of Herschend Family Entertainment, moved to his new post as president and CEO of SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc., in early April.**

COURTESY SEAWORLD ENTERTAINMENT

experience and qualifications to lead our company into the future."

The dynamic Manby, 55, may be just what the doctor ordered for SeaWorld, which has seen its revenue and stock value slide along with park attendance over the last two years. Analysts have pointed to the 2013 documentary *Blackfish*, which heavily criticized the company's treatment of its captive killer whales, and negative publicity generated by the film and by animal rights activists as the primary cause of the company's financial and public relations ills.

At Herschend Family Entertainment, the largest family-owned theme park and entertainment com-

pany in the U.S., Manby consistently drove profitable growth — expanding the company from six to 26 properties while more than doubling annual EBITDA and net cash flow. Herschend, which includes well-performing parks such as Dollywood in Pigeon Forge, Tenn., and Silver Dollar City in Branson, Mo., reports annual attendance of more than 14 million across its properties.

Manby appeared to be primed for his new Florida-based role.

"I am honored to be selected as SeaWorld Entertainment's new CEO," he said in a press release. "This company has tremendous brands, and for more than 50 years, families have come to our parks to learn about animals, have fun and be entertained. We are known for our exceptional operations and world-class animal care. My job is to build on that foundation while consistently improving and innovating in a competitive environment. I look forward to working with our more than 23,000 team members through the challenges ahead."

Before joining Herschend, Manby spent 20 years in the auto industry. From 1996-2000, he served as CEO of Saab Automobile USA, where he increased the company's sales by more than 60 percent and improved its J.D. Power Quali-

## SEAWORLD PARKS & ENTERTAINMENT



ty Rating from 30th to fifth in the industry. Prior to joining Saab, Manby held various positions at GM and was a member of the start-up team for Saturn Corporation, where he was instrumental in launching an innovative marketing and distribution strategy.

In a candid interview with *Amusement Today* published in May 2013, Manby spoke of his unusual transition between the automotive and amusement industries.

"In both, you feel the customer's breath and hear their complaints daily," he said. "But [the amusement] industry is more complex because it involves several businesses. We have food, which is very complicated, and varied entertainment. Then we've got merchandising and attractions. It's very difficult to be good at them all."

"The point is, I had to learn to lead differently. In the auto industry... I was more autocratic and felt I always had the answer. When I came to Herschend, I surrounded myself with better people and asked really good questions. I learned to be a better leader... because I didn't know the industry

and didn't pretend I did."

Manby was the valedictorian of Albion College, where he was a Rhodes scholarship finalist, and he earned an MBA from Harvard Business School. He serves on the boards of several companies and organizations, including Pop-eyes Louisiana Kitchen, Inc., and the National Advisory Board of the Salvation Army.

Earlier this year, SeaWorld Entertainment continued moving to optimize its business with new appointments lower down the executive ladder — naming Daniel B. Brown chief parks operations officer and Donald W. Mills Orlando park president (both are four-decade company veterans). Terry Prather, former Orlando park president, was moved to SeaWorld's corporate team in the role of senior vice president of operations.

The company also has recently launched a targeted, long-term marketing campaign focusing on consumers who fall between enthusiastic SeaWorld supporters and those who disagree with keeping animals in captivity.

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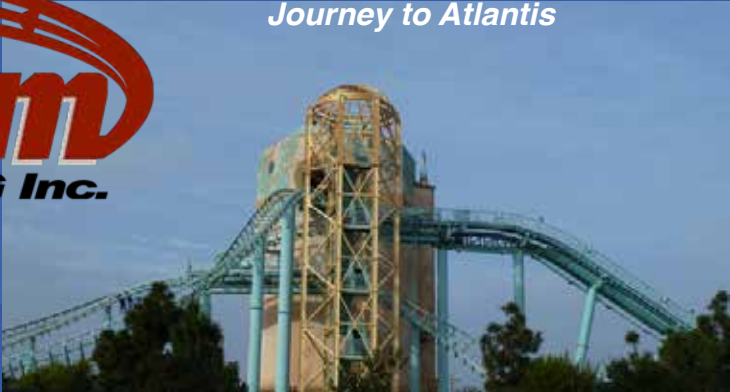
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MARKETWATCH



COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 04/14/15	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
Apollo Global Management (Great Wolf Resorts)	APO	NYSE	21.69	30.58	20.02
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	40.04	40.88	26.56
Merlin Entertainments Group/ Legoland	MERL	LSE	456.00	459.50	3.277
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	55.83	58.94	42.75
Comcast Corp./ NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	58.97	60.70	47.74
	CMCSK	NASDAQ	58.59	60.19	47.29
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	106.66	108.94	76.31
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	9010	TYO	1169.00	1298.00	972.00
Haicahang Holdings Ltd.	2255HK	SEHK	1.80	1.95	1.02
Leofoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	11.85	13.70	10.30
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	21.76	27.64	17.25
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	20.53	31.46	15.11
Shenzhen Overseas Chinese Town Co., Ltd. (OCT)	000069	SZSE	10.40	10.85	4.50
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	47.83	49.29	31.77
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	3702.00	3799.00	2941.00
Village Roadshow	VRL	ASX	5.66	8.44	5.08

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

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

—SOURCES: Bloomberg.com; Wall Street Journal

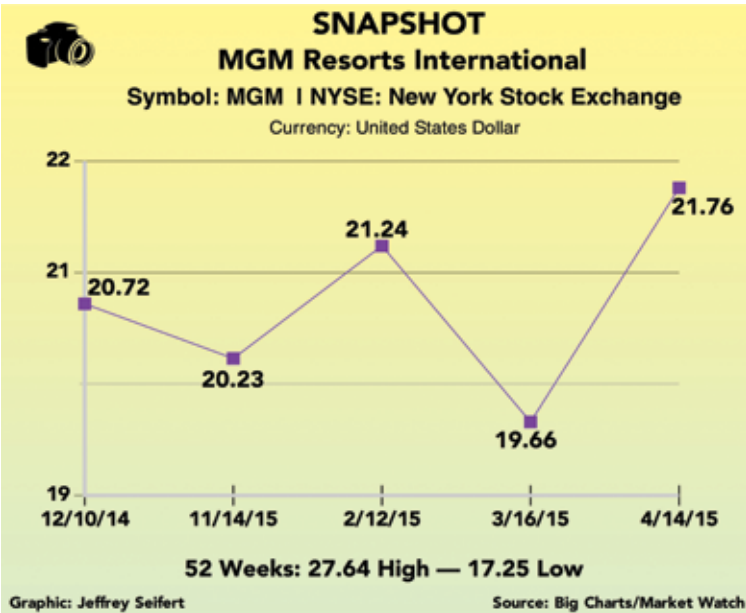
DIESEL PRICES

Region (U.S.)	As of 04/13/15	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	\$2.916	- \$1.198
Midwest	\$2.633	- \$1.299
Gulf Coast	\$2.620	- \$1.170
Mountain	\$2.703	- \$1.239
West Coast	\$2.720	- \$1.173
California	\$3.071	- \$0.985

CURRENCY

On 04/14/15 \$1 USD =

0.9450	EURO
0.6833	GBP (British Pound)
120.33	JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.9797	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.3152	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.2602	CAD (Canadian Dollar)



BUSINESS WATCH

**GE prepared to exit most of its lending operations**

NORWALK, Conn. — In the conglomerate's most significant strategic move in years, numerous financial news sources have reported that **General Electric** has resolved to part ways with large scale lending at **GE Capital**, the giant finance business that long accounted for around half the company's profits but whose risks have rattled investors and weighed on its stock.

GE is expected to hang on to its aircraft leasing operations, as well as financing for the energy and health care industries. But the bulk of the \$500 billion behemoth is expected to eventually go, as the company concludes the benefits aren't worth bearing the regulatory burdens and investor discontent. INFO: [www.gecapital.com](http://www.gecapital.com).

**Siriusware product becomes accesso Siriusware**

LONDON — **accesso**, a technology solutions provider to the global attractions and leisure industry, announced on April 8 the rebranding of its **Siriusware** salespoint solutions to **accesso Siriusware**.

The rebrand for accesso Siriusware includes a new product logo and brand identity as part of the rebrand, as well as incorporating the accesso Siriusware solution into the accesso web site: [www.accesso.com](http://www.accesso.com).

Since its acquisition by accesso in December 2013, Siriusware has continued to successfully diversify beyond its traditional ski industry base to by offering its ticketing, guest management and point-of-sale technology to cultural attractions and other leisure industry clients.

**Six Flags Great Adventure goes solar**

JACKSON, N.J. — **Six Flags Great Adventure** plans to take a giant step toward reducing its carbon footprint by partnering with **KDC Solar LLC**. Together they have introduced the state's largest solar net metering project. KDC Solar will construct, own and operate the solar power system on Six Flags' property.

"As part of our ongoing commitment to conservation and eco-friendly initiatives, we intend to generate clean energy," said Park President **John Fitzgerald**. "Solar power will significantly reduce our reliance on harmful fossil fuels."

KDC Solar estimates that construction will take 16 to 18 months, and that the solar facility will be operational in the second half of 2016.

"We are continually searching for new ways to operate more efficiently and enhance our role as good stewards of the environment," Fitzgerald said.

**Morgan's Wonderland celebrates 5th birthday**

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — **Morgan's Wonderland**, the world's first ultra-accessible theme park designed with special-needs individuals in mind, celebrated its 5th birthday with a festive party on April 10.

**Gordon Hartman**, CEO of **The Gordon Hartman Family Foundation** and the visionary — along with wife **Maggie Gordon** — who created the totally wheelchair-accessible park, emceed a lineup of entertainment that featured country-music singer **Holly Tucker** of NBC-TV's *The Voice*, recently crowned Miss San Antonio 2015 **Emma Faye Rudkin** and comedian **Dominic Fournier**.

Since its opening the park has welcomed more than 500,000 guests from all 50 states and 54 countries.

**At a Glance...**

- BURBANK, Calif. — The **Walt Disney Company** (NYSE: DIS) will discuss fiscal second quarter 2015 financial results via a live audio webcast beginning at 5:00 p.m. EDT / 2:00 p.m. PDT on Tuesday, May 5, 2015. Results will be released at approximately 4:15 p.m. EDT / 1:15 p.m. PDT. To listen to the webcast, point your browser to [www.disney.com/investors](http://www.disney.com/investors). The webcast presentation will be archived.
- SANDUSKY, Ohio — **accesso** recently announced that it has signed a three-year extension to its existing agreement with **Cedar Fair Entertainment Company**, to continue providing ticketing and eCommerce solutions for the operator's venues across North America. The extended agreement means Cedar Fair will continue to leverage the accesso Passport ticketing suite for online and mobile sales of tickets, passes and other items.

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## Gerstlauer coaster is set to raise family park's profile

# Adventure City's Allan Ansdell fast-forwards with Rewind Racers

AT: Dean Lamanna  
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

STANTON, Calif. — Having celebrated its 20th anniversary last August, Adventure City, a small amusement park situated a few miles south of Knott's Berry Farm on busy Beach Boulevard, has long managed to hold its own between its much-larger neighbor in Buena Park and the Disneyland Resort in adjacent Anaheim.



The approximately three-acre fun spot, which bills itself as "The Little Theme Park that's Big on Family Fun!" and is part of a 14-acre former chicken ranch that also is home to the midcentury local retail landmark Hobby City, has found a niche as an affordable, easily navigated alternative to Southern California's big theme parks. And now the humble property that is geared to kids age two to 12 is ready to unveil an attraction that will land it on the national amusement map.

Rewind Racers, a compact steel roller coaster from Gerstlauer Amusement Rides GmbH of Germany (by way of Ride Entertainment Group), is the first family shuttle coaster of its kind in North America. At a cost of about \$2.5 million — or more than half the original \$4 million cost of building the park — it replaces Tree Top Racers, a vintage Miler wild mouse coaster that was the park's star attraction until it was closed in 2012.

Rewind Racers features a single train of seven cars, each holding two passengers, that moves both forward and backward through the course. The train is lifted backward from the loading platform, and then it speeds back down back through the loading area and along a twisting, loop-free circuit. A second lift lined with tire drives at the end of the run propels the train through the course in

reverse.

With a height requirement of just 39 inches, the coaster comfortably seats both small children and their parents.

"For many of our visitors, an Adventure City coaster is their first roller coaster ride," said Allan Ansdell, Jr., park president and co-owner of the property with his family. "We're excited that this summer, Rewind Racers will be many children's first coaster ride... in reverse!"

Expected to open in May, the coaster was undergoing final inspections as *Amusement Today* went to press. Ansdell, who personally handles many of the administrative functions at Adventure City, spared a few moments to discuss the attraction and why he brought it to the park.

**Rewind Racers is Adventure City's first new ride since 2005. How did you decide on it?**

Kids love going on roller coasters. So we figured that, if we put in a quality ride and they love it as much or more than Tree Top Racers, it's going to be a bonus for us.

After we retired the Miler coaster, we wanted to go for something unique. We researched spinning coasters, but there are a lot of rides that spin. I found Gerstlauer's family shuttle coaster while researching coasters around the world online. It was interesting; we liked the idea of a coaster going in reverse. But because it was manufactured overseas, I also thought it might be out of our budget range. It turned out to be more reasonable than I had thought.

Tree Top Racers was 41 feet wide and fit in the narrow space that we have along Beach Boulevard. So we knew it was going to be a very tight fit for a new coaster. With most companies, the price got astronomical if you asked them to customize the ride for the site. But Gerstlauer worked with us, and after about six months of



Ansdell

back and forth, we made the design work. That was great, because not only did we have to deal with a setback from the highway, we had setbacks and clearances from other rides. For example our train that runs through the park had to go under portions of the new coaster.

I envy parks that have wide-open spaces where they can order the ride and just plop it down. *(laughs)*

**It must have been tough to say goodbye to the old Tree Top Racers.**

It was a great ride for us, and we really enjoyed it. It was built in the '50s and required a lot of maintenance. When we closed the coaster, it was still fully functional, but we knew its time had come. It was a traveling ride when we bought it; we made it a permanent ride. So there would have been a lot of challenges disassembling and relocating the coaster.

The steel was scrapped. We still have some of the cars and donated a couple to the National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives.

**You've retained "Racers" as part of the new coaster's theming, which is nice.**

We bounced around a couple of ideas but really liked a race car theme, because it's not something we have at the park currently. We said, "We're a little city — we have attractions representing a train depot and an airport, and police and fire departments. So we'll make this the Adventure City Raceway." We just thought there would be a lot of fun things we could do with race cars and racing elements.

Rick Bastrup and Richard Ferrin at R&R Creative Amusement Designs in Anaheim were really helpful in all this. I like working with them because they did the renderings and building designs when we built the park, and they know what we're going for demographically. Also, they're able to keep their overhead down and are really good about working within a budget.

Rewind Racers definitely has a different flavor for us; it's more of a theme park-type



After several years of careful planning and construction, Allan Ansdell, Jr., president and co-owner of Adventure City, is on track to open the park's new signature ride, Rewind Racers. COURTESY ADVENTURE CITY

attraction. But it's because of the success of Tree Top Racers that we wanted to continue with having a showpiece ride on Beach Boulevard. And we're not worried about it paying for itself in whatever number of years; we know our business and we're in it for the long haul.

**It didn't seem that way back in 2005, when reports surfaced that Adventure City and Hobby City were being sold to a real estate developer. What happened with that deal?**

My parents own a lot of the land these businesses sit on, and I own some of it. During that time, the housing boom was going bananas, and we got a contingent offer on the property. We weren't even really looking to sell! But my parents are older and it was great opportunity. It was somewhat sad for me, though, because, Adventure City is my project — this is where I want to be.

I understood my parents' side, too. So I said, "Okay. If it goes through, fine. If not, then we'll just keep going with the park." The buyer paid some deposit money down — and then the housing market crashed and they walked away.

I wasn't crying over it, because I got to keep running my business. Seriously, where was I going to go if the park closed? I have such a great thing going, because I've got all the pizza and churros and pretzels I can eat for free. *(laughs)* I come in and do what I love to do. I'm set.

**Have you been able to**

**keep your admission pricing fairly level?**

We raise our admission, on average, about a dollar every couple years. We have 10,000 families on our email client list that have signed up through the park; it's very inexpensive to email those people once a month to tell them what's going on, or to offer them a coupon. We're able to maintain whatever profit margin we have, and then the extra goes toward any increased costs — such as higher wages or insurance — that come along.

Our ticket price is fairly reasonable for the value, because for \$16.95 we basically have a pay-one-price facility. That's been our niche. Families are going to go to the bigger parks, which are a great value for what they provide, but you can't afford to go to them on a regular basis. We're a great way for families to be able to afford to give their kids some fun.

**Not to mention reduce the theme park fatigue factor...**

When you have four, five, six year olds and you take them to Disneyland, if you're running around all day, by four or five o'clock the kids are conking out. But you've got to keep going, because you've paid the money and you've got to get your money's worth. That's why parents like our park: they spend three or four hours, max, at Adventure City and just let the kids run free. And that's enough for everybody.

•adventurecity.com



## Amusements, food/retail now under one owner

## Belmont Park operator secures San Diego Coaster Co., city lease

AT: Dean Lamanna

dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

SAN DIEGO, Calif. — More than two years after rescuing Belmont Park from a bankrupt leaseholder and investing millions of dollars in property-wide improvements, Pacifica Enterprises has moved successfully to consolidate operations — and secure the future — of the historic, 90-year-old fun spot in Mission Beach.

In early April, Pacifica, a Rancho Santa Fe, Calif.-based real estate investment concern, was granted a long-term lease extension on the operation of Belmont Park and its classic wooden coaster, the Giant Dipper — the fifth oldest operating wooden coaster in the country — by the San Diego City Council. The city owns the seven acres on which the park and its attractions sit.

The decision stretches the current lease, which was due to expire in 2038, by as many as 31 years.

This follows Pacifica's acquisition last fall of the San Diego Coaster Company, which has operated and maintained the Giant Dipper for a quarter century. That move complemented Pacifica's earlier part-



nership with local hospitality company Eat.Drink.Sleep., which has overhauled Belmont Park's beachfront restaurants, procured new tenants and upgraded facilities, including arcades and restrooms.

The park improvements have impressed not only the city, but Belmont Park General Manager Wendy Crain, the longtime caretaker of the Giant Dipper, and the San Diego Coaster Company's majority stakeholders, Charles Canfield and Dana Morgan. The coaster had just seven years left on its own land lease with the city when Pacifica approached the coaster's owners with a buyout offer in 2013.

"They went to Dana and Charles and said, 'Hey, we want to do all these great things and put a gazillion dollars into the park. What do you want to



Crain



Thanks to a transaction last fall, the Giant Dipper and its Mission Beach home, Belmont Park, now have the same owner. The existing staff of the San Diego Coaster Company will continue to manage the historic landmark and surrounding rides. COURTESY EAT.DRINK.SLEEP.

do?" Crain told *Amusement Today*. "I think Charles and Dana wanted to renew the coaster's lease for a longer term. But I think they also started looking at themselves and thinking, 'Well, why would we want to do that?' The youngest member [of the partnership], Dana, was 76 at that point."

The idea of one entity overseeing both the amusement and restaurant / retail

operations at Belmont made sense to both Canfield, who also owns Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, and Morgan. However, as Crain pointed out, "they had some contingencies. They wanted us, the current management staff, which has been taking care of the coaster for 25 years, to stay on."

Negotiations between Pacifica and the San Diego Coaster Company, with input from

the city, lasted more than a year and a half before a deal was hammered out. The private sale was finalized November 6.

"We all agreed that this was the best solution," Dana Morgan told AT. "When we first began operating at Belmont Park, there was only a carousel and the Giant Dipper — with the balance of the park being retail shops and

► See BELMONT, page 43

## Pacific Park opens new custom-designed Route 66 gift shop



Pacific Park on the Santa Monica Pier has opened this new custom-designed Airstream Route 66 gift store. The shiny, polished aluminum Airstream is fitted for merchandise that features Route 66 memorabilia.

COURTESY PACIFIC PARK

SANTA MONICA, Calif. — Pacific Park has a retro hit with its new custom-designed Airstream Route 66 gift store located in a 1,200-square-foot open-air corner space on the Santa Monica Pier.

The shiny, polished aluminum, 16-foot custom Airstream is fitted for merchandise display shelves, unique lighting and distinctive spaces to feature Route 66 memorabilia. The interior is enhanced by an automotive décor with three old-time gas pumps, a license plates map of Route 66 states and specialty wood deck flooring.

More than 200 novelty to collector items are available including unique Route 66 T-shirts, handbags and shot glasses to clocks, artwork and coffee table books.

"We've been looking for something completely distinctive and synonymous to the Santa Monica Pier, which is also the western terminus of historic Route 66 and embodies the public's overwhelming nostalgia for America's original highway," said Jeff Klocke, vice president, Pacific Park. "Pacific Park celebrates the Route 66 legacy with a custom Airstream that truly reflects America's love for motor travel and the great outdoors — both of which can be found right here on the Santa Monica Pier."

Five free-wheeling multi-level custom

display tables are parked in various spaces around the Route 66 gift store including one that features the front end of a motorcycle that accentuates the open-air shopping concept.

The custom Airstream Route 66 gift store pays homage to its historic Route 66 legacy with highly recognizable metal die cut symbols on its gift shop door. The icons best represent the cities located on the more than 2,200 mile highway including the Chicago Theatre Sign, the St. Louis Gateway Arch, an Oil Well Derrick, a Saguaro Cactus and the Santa Monica Pier Arch, among others.

Route 66 was completed in 1938 and presented travelers with an open road from Chicago to Los Angeles that offered unique mom and pop dining spots, first-of-its-kind motor lodging and one-of-a-kind roadside attractions.

The first Airstream was built in 1931 in Culver City, Calif., and, together with the introduction of historic Route 66, Americans' love affair with traveling and road trips began.

Pacific Park's custom AirStream was designed and built by Timeless Travel in Denver, Colo. and took more than six months to complete.

—Scott Rutherford





## FASTTRACK

COMPILED: Scott Rutherford  
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

A dynamic 24-hour party will kick off the summer and launch the **Disneyland Resort Diamond Celebration**, May 22-23, as guests enjoy the premieres of three, new nighttime spectacles: the glittering Paint the Night parade and the ground-breaking Disneyland Forever fireworks show at **Disneyland** park, plus the new presentation, World of Color – Celebrate! The Wonderful World of Walt Disney, at **Disney California Adventure** park. The all-day/all-night celebration will begin at 6 a.m. Friday, May 22, and will conclude 24 hours later. The revelry will include dancing and special character encounters at locations in Disneyland and Disney California Adventure parks.

**Sea Life Orlando Aquarium** has welcomed the first group of colorful fish and marine animals to its 25,000-square-foot aquarium attraction. Opening May 4, the immersive, one-of-a-kind experience will eventually be home to more than 5,000 sea animals. After each group arrives, the fish and marine life are acclimated to the aquarium waters before moving into one of 32 display habitats. The first grouping features a variety of smaller sea animals, including Everglades Pygmy Sunfish, Butterflyfish and Triggerfish, Moray Eels and several sea snakes such as the Yellow Ratsnake and Rough Green Snake. Guests will have the chance to come nose-to-nose with many different sea creatures through a variety of display habitats, cold water rock pools, bubble aquariums, floor-to-ceiling aquariums, and walk through 360-degree and 180-degree clear acrylic tunnels.

Along with the introduction of El Diablo (**Larson Intl. Giant Loop**), **Six Flags Great Adventure's** 42nd summer season will be highlighted with a new roller coaster experience as it flips the trains on one of its most innovative roller coasters backwards for a limited time. Batman: The Ride undergoes a gravity-defying role reversal from July 4th weekend to Labor Day weekend. Since opening in 1993, Batman: The Ride has given more than 27 million thrilling rides and reigns as one of the most popular roller coasters in the world.

"The ride's intensity is ratcheted way up," said **John Fitzgerald**, Six Flags Great Adventure president. "Thrill seekers will not want to miss this limited-time opportunity to put their inner 'super hero' to the test."

This winter, **Six Flags Great Adventure's** annual holiday extravaganza **Holiday in the Park** will debut November 21 and run weekends and select days through January 3, 2016. Millions of glittering lights, holiday entertainment, delicious seasonal treats, Santa's village, animals and many popular rides will transform the summer thrill destination into a winter wonderland, and will be included with all season passes and active memberships. Holiday in the Park will provide an escape from the hustle and bustle of the shopping rush, and a way for guests to create their own magical, memorable holiday moments. A visual feast will await just inside the gates as six areas of the park un-

dergo a massive makeover that showcases the world's best holiday traditions. Each area will be an emotional journey, and bring the warmth of the season to guests in an entirely new way.

**Dolly Parton** recently launched DollyParton.com, the comprehensive go-to website for all information regarding her historic career, life and many family-focused businesses. Parton's new website not only features her business entities, including all the **Dollywood** properties, but also Parton's historic musical career, award-winning movies and her work to promote literacy in children. DollyParton.com provides visitors with an all-inclusive look at Parton's life and legacy and is the first time the many facets of Parton's life have come together to centralize her brand and that of her businesses.

"We wanted to create a place where all of those things could come together to be archived and celebrated," said Parton. "and DollyParton.com gives us a space to do just that."

With education at the core of its foundation, the **State Fair of Texas** aims to provide quality educational opportunities for students within the community, both locally and statewide. In line with this mission, the fair currently donates 1.7 million free admission tickets each year to students and teachers at North Texas schools. In support of its student ticketing program, the fair is expanding its educational initiatives to the classroom with a new innovative curriculum, created in partnership with Big Thought. The online curriculum combines the unique culture of the fair with Texas history and agriculture, incorporating it into a TEKS-aligned program that focuses on STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and math) for grades four through eight.

**Kong** (a **Larson Intl. Flying Scooter**) is coming this summer to **Morey's Piers & Beachfront Water Parks**, the classic seaside attraction located on the boardwalk of the Wildwoods, N.J. Once an iconic boardwalk landmark in early 1970s, the new gorilla-themed Flying Scooter will open to the public Memorial Day weekend serving as the new centerpiece of Surfside Pier. Located atop an elevated platform, Kong will sport an "I love Wildwood" t-shirt and clutch one of Wildwood's well-known tram cars while hanging from the 60 feet tall lighthouse at the ride's center. Eight two-seat cars (painted like vintage world war planes) will duck, dive and navigate around the infamous gorilla, bringing riders 26 feet in air. After sunset, Kong will light up with a rotating light on top of the lighthouse and enhanced LED lighting outlining each ride vehicle. Underneath the ride is Kong & Co., a new 3,000 square foot retail space offering charging stations and comfy chairs, as well as chocolate covered frozen bananas and merchandise for purchase.

"Kong is among one of the most well-known of all landmarks to grace Morey's Piers over the last five decades and it was time to bring this classic back to life," said Jack Morey, second generation partner of Morey's Piers.

## ►BELMONT

Continued from page 42

restaurants. There was little interaction between the San Diego Coaster Company and the park's owners. Over the years, we added more rides and the balance of the property began to operate more as an amusement park than a shopping center. With these changes, it became more difficult to operate Belmont with two separate owners."

Morgan and Canfield met with Pacifica several times to discuss how best to develop the park. During that period, according to Morgan, Pacifica visited Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk and actually offered to sell its interest in Belmont Park to the San Diego Coaster Company. Ultimately, it made more sense to all parties that Pacifica buy the company and retain Crain and her staff to continue managing the rides.

"It's a win-win," said Crain, noting that the Giant Dipper's lease has been

merged into the park's newly extended lease with the city. "We can do a ton more stuff now that the property is owned by one [company]. We've already got really exciting plans for the coaster; it's going to get a new paint job and better chaser lights."

Morgan, though a bit wistful, was pleased with the deal.

"We are very proud of our involvement of 25 years," he said. "The first time Charles and I saw Belmont Park, with the coaster structure partially burned and in very poor shape after many years of not operating, our initial reaction was to not get involved. But we saw so much potential... that we decided to take the risk and restore the coaster. To bring the park from no rides running to what it is today was both challenging and satisfying."

"We are excited for the future of Belmont Park under Pacifica's ownership and believe it is finally becoming the world-class attraction it should be."

•belmontpark.com

## Nickelodeon Suites Resort unveils new Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles laser maze

ORLANDO, Fla. — Nickelodeon Suites Resort has opened an all-new laser maze, the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Laser Lockdown. The first-of-its-kind experience for the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle brand was created exclusively with SimEx-Iwerks Entertainment and Nickelodeon. This new offering expands on the typical laser maze model by combining state-of-the-art technology with the highly recognizable Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Laser Lockdown delivers an adventure featuring high-visibility lasers and UV lighting, as well as key graphic components, character dialogue and themed music to immerse guests into the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle universe. The attraction also incorporates a few surprise special effects that further enhances the storyline and overall experience.

The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Laser Lockdown recruits guests for a mission to thwart the Kraang's diabolical plan for world domination. With Mikey trapped in a super-secret Kraang Laboratory, it is up to maze participants to disable the security system, all while using their ninja stealth skills to navigate a web of high-tech lasers. The attraction is configured to entertain one or two participants at a time, providing a slightly different experience for guests each time they take on the challenge.

"The Nickelodeon Suites Resort is excited to be the first to showcase the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Laser Lockdown laser maze, which will be a tremendous draw for our hotel," said Louis Robbins, managing director, Nickelodeon Suites Resort. "We can't wait for our guests to experience this new attraction and enter their 'mission score' on the leaderboard to see where they rank against their friends and family."

"We are proud to continue our partnership with Nickelodeon by utilizing such a well-regarded brand to deliver a one-of-a-kind experience that enhances the overall stay for hotel guests," added Mark Cornell, senior vice president, Attractions Development, SimEx-Iwerks.

This new attraction marks the second collaboration between SimEx-Iwerks and Nickelodeon Suites Resort. The hotel is also home to a SimEx-Iwerks 4-D Theater.



## New attractions mark movie theme park milestone

# 'Fast & Furious' fuels Universal Studios Hollywood's 50th year

AT: Dean Lamanna

dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

UNIVERSAL CITY, Calif. — Universal Studios Hollywood (USH) is grabbing the spotlight in Greater Los Angeles as it continues to celebrate its 50th anniversary year, which began last July when the park's iconic, world-famous Studio Tour tram ride notched the half-century mark.

This summer brings the debut of a new thrill ride, *Fast & Furious — Supercharged*, and an immersive environment called Springfield surrounding *The Simpsons Ride*. The introduction of a Nighttime Studio Tour, a USH first (see sidebar), and the completion of a pair of new parking structures later this year rounds out the latest phase in a series of park additions and improvements.

These attractions are merely the run-up to larger plans for USH and the adjoining Universal CityWalk — part of an ongoing expansion and transformation of the 391-acre hillside property that was approved by the Los Angeles City Council two years ago, and which publicists at NBCUniversal, the division of owner Comcast Corp. that oversees the Universal parks, are calling "pioneering" and



"epic." The \$1.6 billion undertaking will radically alter the familiar footprint of USH as it sets its sights on the next five decades.

"For 50 years, Universal Studios Hollywood has given guests unprecedented access to the world's most alluring business by inviting them to peek behind the velvet curtain and become part of the exciting movie-making process," said Larry Kurzweil, president of USH. "We are reimagining over 75 percent of our destination as we build upon our incredible success and expand our vision for the future, and we look forward to entertaining and inspiring guests for generations to come with what will ultimately be an entirely new theme park experience."

For example, the "Glamour Trams" of yesteryear that gave way to today's Studio Tour are undergoing a top-to-bottom makeover. By 2016, USH will roll out a fleet of new, contemporary trams outfitted with comfort-enhancing cushioned seats and superior



**Fast & Furious — Supercharged**, a 3D-HD film and hydraulic motion-based thrill ride, will be the new climax of the Studio Tour at Universal Studios Hollywood. The attraction, inspired by Universal Pictures' globally successful film franchise, debuts June 25.

COURTESY UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD

digital monitors.

Even bigger news: The Wizarding World of Harry Potter, an expansive (and expensively mounted) themed attraction that has proven a massive success at the Universal Orlando Resort in Florida, is under construction at USH and also will debut next year.

Meanwhile, there's plenty for visitors to get excited about in the park's immediate future.

### Full speed ahead

Beginning June 25, *Fast & Furious — Supercharged*, a 3D-HD film and hydraulic motion-based thrill ride, will be the new grand finale of the Studio Tour. The attraction was inspired by Universal Pictures' enormously popular film franchise. (The latest installment, *Furious 7*, was expected to have chased down more than \$1 billion in global box office receipts — a record for the studio — by the end of

April).

*Supercharged* will propel guests into the high-stakes underground world of fast cars and daring escapades — traveling at perceived speeds of up to 120 mph through the streets of Los Angeles. Situated within a newly built, 65,000 square foot building on the USH backlot, the ride, which has been conceived as a brand-new installment of the franchise, reunites series stars Vin Diesel (Dominic "Dom" Toretto), Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson (Luke Hobbs), Michelle Rodriguez (Letty Ortiz), Tyrese Gibson (Roman Pearce) and Luke Evans (Owen Shaw), who are tasked with saving one of their own from an international crime cartel.

The attraction fuses sophisticated, hyper-realistic special effects with a state-of-the-art 3D audio system and 3D-HD imagery — projected onto the world's longest 360-degree screen, spanning nearly 400 feet. Thirty-four state-of-the-art digital projectors will be configured to envelop guests in unprecedented cinematic realism.

Reprising their screen roles for *Supercharged* was a trip for some of the actors. "It's really a sensory-driven experience, and I can't wait to see what happens," said Michelle Rodriguez. Dwayne Johnson was even more enthusiastic: "I get a chance to become Luke

## Cameras, Action... LIGHTS!

UNIVERSAL CITY, Calif. — The storied Studio Tour at Universal Studios Hollywood (USH), which marked 50 years of operation on July 15, 2014, in a celebration that is ongoing at the movie theme park, is putting its trams through some after-dusk paces this year with the first-time introduction of a Nighttime Studio Tour.

The evening offering, which will run every weekend this summer from July 4 through Labor Day, is designed to enlighten guests on the art of moonlight movie-making and TV production.

Over 20 locations along USH's Studio Tour route will showcase lighting and special effects techniques employed by the studio at night. Theatrical lighting will cast a glow on iconic backlot sets as Studio

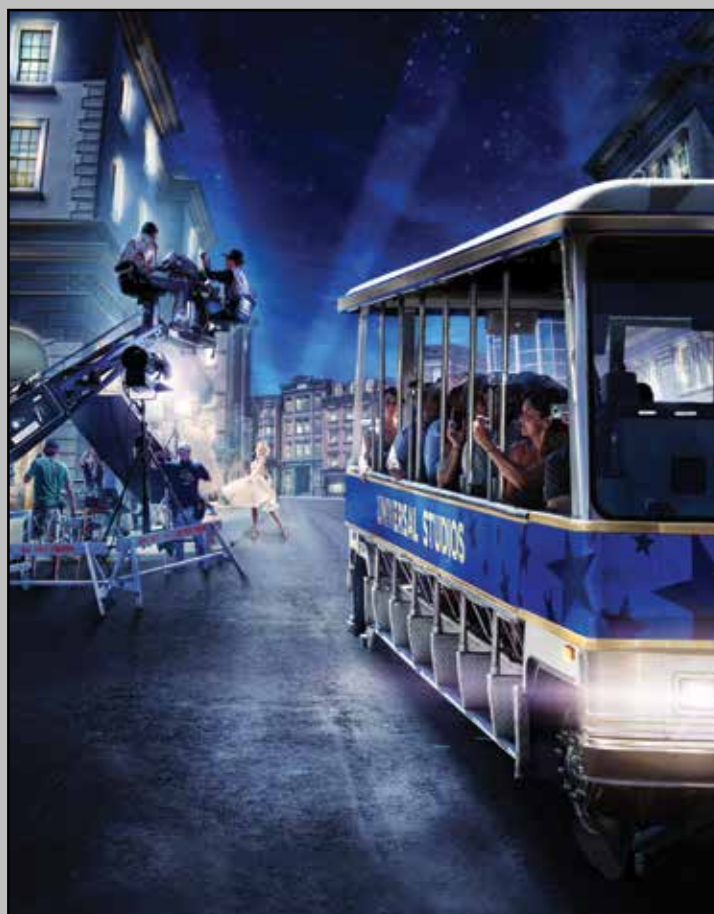
Tour guides illuminate the secrets of the Hollywood trade, including how filmmakers create the effect of daylight amid the black of night.

Celebrated movie stars who found fame on Universal's backlot, including Marilyn Monroe, Norman Bates and Frankenstein, will make cameo appearances on the tram route, and the park is promising other "surprises" for Nighttime Studio Tour guests.

—Dean Lamanna

**For the first time in the backlot tram ride's 50-year history, the Nighttime Studio Tour will carry park guests on an after-dark exploration of film and TV production.**

COURTESY UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD



► See HOLLYWOOD, page 45



## ►HOLLYWOOD

Continued from page 44

Hobbs and kick ass...all in 3D!"

Fast & Furious — Supercharged will take guests on a wild ride that begins the moment they board the Studio Tour. Exclusive interstitial content featuring the cast mem-

bers will be shown on the tram monitors, highlighting interactions as they engage guests en route to the ride's climatic scenes. Along the tram route, sightings of numerous prop cars from the *Fast & Furious* movies — including character Dom Toretto's iconic Dodge Charger — will enhance the

story.

USH first stirred national interest in the attraction with an innovative television advertisement during NBC's *Super Bowl Pre-Game Show* last February.

"What better place is there than the Super Bowl to launch a campaign where millions of viewers huddle for non-stop, edge-of-your-seat suspense?" said the park's Larry Kurzweil. "In just 30 thrilling seconds, our compelling spot resonated with the exhilaration this immersive thrill ride will deliver when it opens this summer."

### Animated environs

Part of the layout at USH will be rethemed when Springfield, hometown of America's favorite television family, *The Simpsons*, breathes new life into the area surrounding The Simpsons Ride. The makeover intends to capture the spirit of the animated town and engage visitors in the colorful world that was the setting for the family's antics during the television series' record-setting 26 seasons.

Guests visiting Springfield will have the pleasant sensa-

**"We look forward to entertaining and inspiring guests for generations to come with what will ultimately be an entirely new theme park experience."**

—Larry Kurzweil, President,  
Universal Studios Hollywood



Now under construction for a planned 2016 opening at Universal Studios Hollywood, and eagerly awaited by Harry Potter book and movie fans on the West Coast, The Wizarding World of Harry Potter is expected to duplicate the huge success of the identically themed attraction at the Universal Orlando Resort in Florida. COURTESY UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD

tion of being hurled through their TV sets and into the accurately depicted town, complete with signature eateries such as Krusty Burger, Cletus' Chicken Shack, Luigi's Pizza and Phineas Q. Butterfat's Ice Cream Parlor, along with Homer's favorite hangouts: Lard Lad Donuts, Moe's Tavern and Duff Brewery.

From its humble beginnings five decades ago, USH has emerged as one of the most progressive and exciting theme park experiences anywhere. Yet it has remained true to its roots — immersing guests in the awe-inspiring world of movie-making magic.

Keeping the park at the forefront of innovation, imagination and inspiration is its collaboration with some of the

most influential filmmakers and creative minds in entertainment, including Steven Spielberg, Matt Groening, James L. Brooks, Peter Jackson, Michael Bay and Chris Meledandri.

Kurzweil sees the property's vigorous development as both a blossoming of the park and, more than ever, a boon to Los Angeles.

"This is a pivotal time in the history of Universal Studios Hollywood," he said. "This broad investment... will further strengthen [the park] as an economic leader, significantly contributing to long-term employment opportunities and tourism throughout L.A."

•universalstudios  
hollywood.com





## Santa's Village founders Normand and Cecile Dubois go into Hall Of Fame

# More than 120 attend NEAAPA's 102nd Annual Meeting

AT: Ron Gustafson  
Special to Amusement Today

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — More than 120 members were in attendance at the New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (NEAAPA) 102nd Anniversary Annual Meeting at the Providence Biltmore Hotel here March 23-25. It marked the largest turnout in a decade at the gala.

Tuesday's dinner meeting featured keynote speaker Ed Hart, chief executive officer of Kentucky Kingdom, Louisville, Ky., addressing the audience on how he has been able to pump new life into three amusement parks.

The late Normand and Cecile Dubois, founders of Santa's Village, Jefferson, N.H., were inducted into the NEAAPA Hall of Fame that evening. The Christmas-themed park, which opened in 1953, continues to successfully operate today with a variety of rides, attractions

and special events.

### Other awards

Outgoing NEAAPA President Dave Sugrue presented the President's Award to David Oberlander, finance committee chair.

Others honored were: George Zonas, ride superintendent, Quassy Amusement & Waterpark, Middlebury, Conn., received the Alan. E. Ramsay Safety Award; Carousel Family Fun Centers, Fairhaven, Mass., Paragon Award for Marketing Excellence; Dana Caggiano, Canobie Lake Park, Salem, N.H., Pinnacle Award for Guest Service.

Incoming NEAAPA officers were also introduced. They are: President Ryan DeMaria, Canobie Lake Park, Salem, N.H.; First Vice President Dorothy Lewis, Fun Station Entertainment Group, Danbury, Conn.; Second Vice President Eric Anderson, Quassy Amusement & Waterpark, Middlebury, Conn.;



**Normand and Cecile Dubois, founders of Santa's village in Jefferson, N.H. were elected into NEAAPA's Hall of Fame.**  
COURTESY NEAAPA

Treasurer Charlene Conway, Carousel Family Fun Centers, Fairhaven, Mass.; Secretary Ed Hodgdon, Funtown Splashtown USA, Saco, Maine

Justine Brewer, Southwick's Zoo, Mendon, Mass., chairs the awards committee and celebrated her birthday during the evening.

### Other activities

The three-day event also included a tour of Rhode Island Novelty in nearby Fall River, Mass., with 30 members on hand. Derek Lovato and his team provided a behind-the-scenes look at the massive facility.

Monday's President's Dinner was held at the Union Station Brewery in Providence with 50 in attendance.

Tuesday's schedule included a panel discussion on hiring and customer service when it comes to the newest generation of potential employees. That was followed by a panel on legislative issues with a representative from the Massachusetts Legislature and a Massachusetts regulatory ombudsman.

The afternoon featured a Vendor Showcase where 15 of NEAAPA's supplier members had a captive audience and let their fellow members know about the products and services they offer.

A Crisis Communications session hosted by Colleen Mangone, director of media relations for the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA), capped off the day. She reviewed IAAPA's new template, which illustrates appropriate communications measures to take in the event of a crisis.

NEAAPA's 102nd Anniversary Summer Meeting will take place July 21 at Story Land, Glen, N.H.

### About NEAAPA

The New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions is recognized as one of the oldest regional organizations representing the industry in the nation. NEAAPA has more than 120 members including parks, FECs, attractions, zoos, traveling units, fairs, festival, manufacturers and suppliers.

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

## Buyers press 'play' button at Amusement Expo in Las Vegas

Exhibitors rate event highly on networking, sales

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

LAS VEGAS, Nev. — With plenty of flashing lights, music and fun, the 2015 edition of Amusement Expo — the annual conference and trade show of the coin-op and revenue-generating amusement, music and family entertainment center (FEC) industry — played out here at the Westgate Resort & Casino and the Las Vegas Convention Center March 24-26.

Co-sponsored by the American Amusement Machine Association and the Amusement & Music Operators Association, this year's expo offered a comprehensive series of industry education seminars and a convention floor lined with well over 100 exhibitors.

Vendors specializing in coin-op machines, electronics, go-kart equipment, laser games, photo booths, plush

**Amusement Expo 2015**  
Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV

/ novelties, redemption equipment / merchandise, sports games, tattoos, token dispensers, video games and more participated. Attendees clearly enjoyed themselves as they tried out a wide array of arcade and amusement park games incorporating the very latest technology.

Exhibitors approached by *Amusement Today* at the event were enthusiastic about their business prospects during the event's run.

John Coburn of Somerville, N.J.-based **Rides 4-U, Inc.** — exclusive North American distributor for European ride manufacturer SBF-Visa Group and one of the few participating ride sales companies at Amusement Expo — was on hand to showcase the company's popular Spinning Coaster, among other products.

"We meet people from

the western part of the country that you normally don't meet — that's mainly why I come," Coburn said. "And we get some good leads that can possibly lead to sales."

Jack Cook, president of **Bob's Space Racers** of Daytona Beach, Fla. — an exhibitor at various evolutionary versions of the show for a quarter century — agreed. "We have IAAPA on the East Coast, and we have this on the West Coast," he said. "We have a different clientele out here. It's a good show for the arcades, and it's a good time of the year for it."

Cook, who was directing attendees' attention to his company's colorful new Gear It Up progressive ticket payout arcade game, noted that the event was a particularly good fit for his products. "We sell arcade games, amusement park games, trailers, custom games... we have a pretty vast lineup for our customers. This event represents another portion of our business."

Some exhibitors viewed Amusement Expo as an op-



**Amusement Expo, co-sponsored by the American Amusement Machine Association and the Amusement & Music Operators Association, returned with its 2015 edition to the Las Vegas Convention Center in March.** AT/GARY SLADE

portunity for cheerleading and research, as well as for building clientele.

"What we find great about it is that we see the new products and we get feedback from our customers on the products that we're financing," said Carol Francis, director of marketing for Needham, Mass.-based **Firestone Financial**. "This event gives us a lot of great ideas, and it's always great to see our customers and meet with them face to

face." Firestone, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year (see related story page 36) and enjoys an 80 percent repeat customer rate, also garners its share of new business at Amusement Expo. "We get new amusement industry clients here every year," Francis said. "The biggest challenge for them is making sure they're providing incredible expe-

► See EXPO, page 47



## ►EXPO

Continued from page 46

periences for their customers, and investing to make their businesses thrive and succeed. We're here to help them make those investments."

Chris Campbell, owner-auctioneer of **Captain's Auction Warehouse** in Anaheim, Calif., was so pleased with the Amusement Expo that, having exhibited at the show for two years, he's committed to setting up at it for the next five.

"This event has an exceptional staff and a good atmosphere," said Campbell,

whose company specializes in selling used amusement equipment. "Last year, I picked up two clients who have been keeping me busy. So it has been very successful for me."

Amusement Expo 2015 was co-located with the National Bulk Vendors Association Show and the 2015 Laser Tag Convention. The panoply of aromatic culinary samples offered by the adjacently-sited International Pizza Expo amped the synergy and attendance sharing between the concurrent convention center events.

•[amusementexpo.org](http://amusementexpo.org)

# SeaWorld San Antonio unveils new Pacific Point Preserve

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — SeaWorld San Antonio announced Clyde & Seamore's Sea Lion High as the name of its newest sea lion show. Opening May 22, this show will be part of the new Pacific Point Preserve, which will also feature a restaurant (now open) and renovated habitats for the animals.

Clyde & Seamore's Sea Lion High, stars the comedic sea lion duo, Clyde and Seamore. This hilarious tale is filled with amazing animal behaviors and splashy audience fun. Clyde and Seamore find themselves in slippery pursuit of their high school diplomas and judging from the slapstick, high-energy pranks and hijinks, there's no doubt Clyde and Seamore will emerge as heads of their class following Sea Lion High's motto, "Education through Exploration and ... Imagination." When joined by mischievous otters, a Pacific walrus and a cast of goofy human characters swimming along in the fun, it certainly won't be a normal class. The same show made its debut at SeaWorld Orlando on April 16.

Pacific Point Preserve also features a newly opened restaurant called Harbor Market which gives guests the option to choose among four different styles of food, including Asian cuisine, hamburger sliders, freshly-prepared sandwiches and a home-style menu. SeaWorld also has introduced a pre-order system that will allow for quicker order delivery. The restaurant is themed as a west coast harbor, which is where California sea lions are naturally found.

The centerpiece of this new realm will be the animals' habitat. Guests will have the opportunity to visit and feed sea lions and harbor seals inside the newly remodeled area, and reservations can be made for sea lion interaction programs, an in-water experience offering the closest connection the park offers with these amazing animals. In addition, Pacific Point Preserve will feature all-new educational elements designed



SeaWorld's all-new show Clyde and Seamore's Sea Lion opening on May 22 takes place in an aquatic-themed high school with the dynamic duo of Clyde and Seamore being nominated to win scholarships to Ocean University. Below, the park's newly opened Harbor Market restaurant gives guests the option to choose among four different styles of food: Asian cuisine, hamburger sliders, freshly-prepared sandwiches and home-style favorites. Harbor Market is located in Pacific Point Preserve, the park's newly renovated home for California sea lions.

COURTESY SEAWORLD SAN ANTONIO



John Watlington, account executive for National Ticket Company had the company's selection of tickets and wristbands on display at the Amusement Expo 2015 show. AT/GARY SLADE



Mark Blumhagen (left) and John Coburn, Rides 4-U were on hand at the Amusement Expo 2015 show to meet with their West Coast clients and potential FEC customers. AT/GARY SLADE



Showcasing their newest game Gear It Up, at Amusement Expo 2015, were Bob's Space Racers President Jack Cook (left) and Director of Business Development and Strategy Ron Malinowski. AT/GARY SLADE



to inform guests about animals and how to protect them in their natural habitat.

"SeaWorld is deeply committed to providing our animals and guests with the most enriching and engaging environments. With the new additions coming to this

area, what we're doing is not only going to provide a more enriching environment for our animals, but also take our guests' experience to a whole new level," said Dan Decker, president of SeaWorld San Antonio.

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



## New LSM speed boat concept unveiled

# Errol McKoy and Intamin team up for new water attraction

AT: Tim Baldwin  
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

DALLAS, Texas — Errol McKoy is no stranger to new ideas. As an industry veteran, he led the charge to introduce wooden coasters and parachute rides reminiscent of Coney Island to the Six Flags chain. In those instances he was first met with resistance, but his persistence to the faith in his direction paid off. Over time, McKoy has found himself in parks and fairs, but always in the action.



McKoy

As creator of a new concept for the industry, McKoy sought the help of Intamin. Together, this partnership has developed a new project unlike the industry has truly ever seen. It is McKoy's hope that it is the beginning of something big. Part of that excitement stems from not only the attraction itself, but also the potential origins of new styles of parks that do not yet exist.

Front and center is what is now simply dubbed the LSM speed boat attraction. Similar in respect to Intamin's launched coasters, this new concept takes the launched idea to water. Two 24 passenger boats will be simultaneously launched across the sur-

face of the water. Speeds will reach 62 mph. Intamin has completed the engineering, and the partners are ready to find the initial buyer to unveil it to the world.

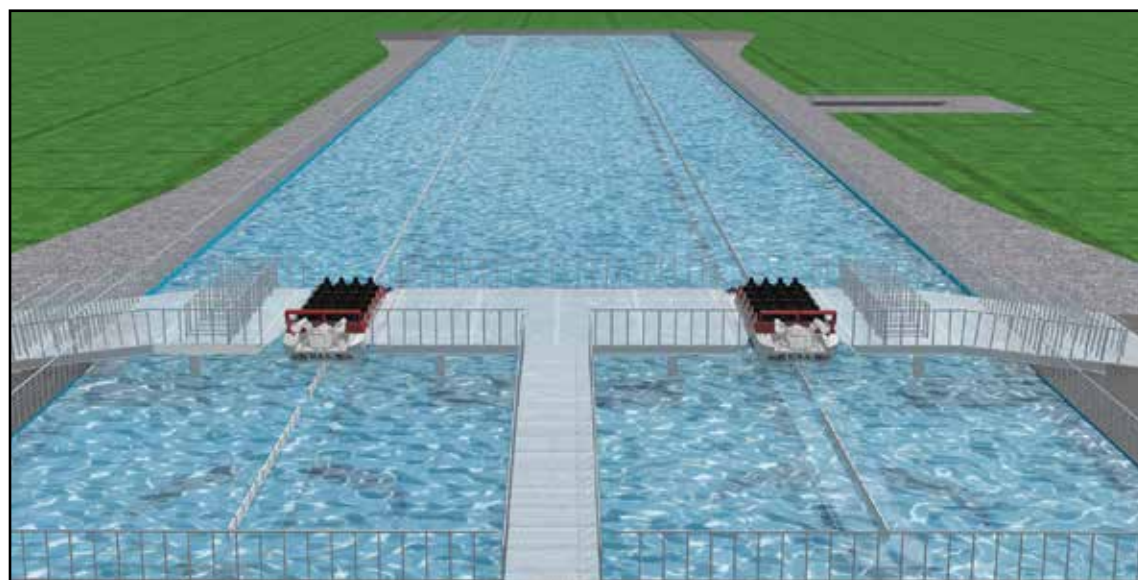
Vittorio Fabbri, associated with Intamin and president of International Amusements, represents projects in North America. Fabbri says, "Errol had a concept; we had to turn it into reality." He reports that the team at Intamin had to explore several options and look at different solutions. "We decided upon the LSM launch as the best solution. We had the challenges of a normal water ride coupled with the acceleration."

From a spectator's standpoint, this new attraction has high visual impact. Prior to launch, passengers will hear the rumbling of the engines. Piped into speakers in each seat, the sound is orchestrated to get the adrenaline pumping. At launch, seven-foot flames will erupt from the huge chrome exhaust pipes and starting from takeoff, a spray of water and 50-foot rooster tails of water shoot into the air. Air jets will spray water out of the sides and back. Certainly, it is an undeniable "wow" factor. Interlaced Productions, based in Atlanta, will partner for the visual special effects. The company has done numerous shows for theme parks across the industry. "At night it will be absolutely spectacular," beams McKoy.

"It's really a show," adds Fabbri. "When they hear the rumbling, their butts are moving," he laughs, referring to the vibrating seats that help orchestrate the whole experience.

With side by side boats, the racing aspect is a key component. In a fun twist, riders have an influence on the race. The Christmas tree lights known in the racing world count down to the action and then riders work in unison to initiate the launch using paddle shifters. The better team on the two boats will have mere nanoseconds to take advantage of this launch, but it adds the personal and team competition aspect to the attraction.

If this were the vision



Intamin has announced plans for a new racing LSM speed boat ride for the amusement industry and LBE's. The ride showcases a decorative boat, (left), a 20 foot rooster tail of water during travel (below left) while reaching speeds of 62 mph. COURTESY INTAMIN

in proper position on skids as the launch takes riders 0-60 in four seconds.

Another feature is that a walkover bridge can cross the course allowing eager participants to take on the spray of water as boats race underneath. This has proven popular on splashwater rides in theme parks. As the boats rotate on the turntables at each end, motors throw water creating another "wet zone" for the kids.

The challenge now is to find the right fit on such a substantial high-profile attraction. "We are approaching clients who we feel would be interested in such an attraction," says Fabbri. "Errol is doing a great job with this. He uses his experience to reach potential buyers outside the theme parks."

What really excites McKoy is the ease of sponsorships for such an attraction. He feels the high profile nature of the LSM speedboat leans toward social media. A sponsor's name can not only be on signage and the boats, but also on a time leader board, if an operator so desired to install such an addition. "It's very marketable and very sponsorable," smiles McKoy. "It's a ride for the future. With the visibility of the ride the sponsorship opportunities are limitless."

### FAST FACTS

#### Speed Boat Attraction

#### Space Requirements

Ground: 755 feet long

by 190 feet wide

Pool: 656 feet long

by 98 feet wide

Pool water depth: 3 feet+

•

#### Capacity

2 boats seating 24 total

passengers per boat

(6 rows of 4 riders);

1,200 to 1,700 pph

•

#### Speed

62 mph from LSM launch

•

#### Concept

Errol McKoy

•

#### Supplier

Intamin Amusement Rides

alone, it would be a substantial new concept, but McKoy sees the attraction more than just that. He envisions a new style of park; a boat park in a matter of speaking. "We think the LSM speed boat ride will be what the wave pool was to the water park," says McKoy. "Off to the left and right will be boats of all kinds — paddle boats, bumper boats, See-Doos. There would be kneeboard ski-tow and luxury boats for rent, as well as ski boats for rent. It's every known contraption that floats would be a part of this boat park." He says operation could be a pay-one-price or an a la carte environment, depending upon the operator. "It would be the first total park on water," he adds.

Space requirements allude to the significance of the in-

vestment. With a length of 755 feet (230 meters) and a width of 190 feet (58 meters), the pool depth need only be one meter deep. If used in a lake setting of a city or community, McKoy sees the launch pool actually existing in the water itself. "The ride itself would be in its own pool filtered water environment," notes McKoy.

The pool is to have turntables at each end. Operators can have the freedom to load at both ends or let riders have two launches for the ride experience. With loading at each end, theoretical hourly capacity is 1,700. If riders travel the length of the pool both directions then the capacity is estimated to be 1,200 persons per hour.

Each boat is on four "air pillows," as McKoy refers to them. Upstops keep the boats





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# Give Kids the World gearing up for 30th anniversary

2015 brings new Towne Hall, Zamperla Magic Bike with Banyan Park villas construction up next

AT: Scott Rutherford  
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

KISSIMMEE, Fla. — It's an undisputed fact that Central Florida is the acknowledged theme park capital of the world. The powerhouse trio of Walt Disney World Resort, Universal Orlando Resort and SeaWorld Orlando — along with Busch Gardens Tampa and an ever-expanding plethora of water parks and other area leisure options — manage to entertain more 50 million visitors every year.

But there's another purveyor of equally magical and often life-changing experiences not so very far from the main action. Located in Kissimmee, Florida, on a tranquil, tree-shaded tract of real estate is Give Kids the World Village, a one-of-a-kind place that has the ability to offer a somewhat more intimate experience than the bustling theme parks. And it's a place that inspires hope and makes wishes come true on a daily basis.

Celebrating its 29th anniversary this year, Give Kids the World (GKTW) is a nonprofit organization with the honorable mission of providing accommodations and access to central Florida's most popular attractions to children with life-threatening illnesses and their families. The Village itself, which opened in 1989, is a self-contained home base retreat for GKTW guests where everything is provided for them during a week-long holiday where they are able to forget about their individual infirmities for a while and simply focus on having fun together as family.

## Tragedy inspires hope

GKTW Founder Henri



Landwirth was able to relate to the ill children he helped on a level few can imagine chiefly because he saw a part of himself in their eyes. As a child, Henri became personally familiar with the horrible feeling of not knowing if he would live to see another tomorrow. When he was 13, his family was removed from their home in Antwerp, Belgium and condemned to a series of concentration camps, including Poland's notorious Auschwitz, that were ruled by the Nazis during the darkest days of World War II. Though his parents were brutally murdered in the camps, Henri and his twin sister Margot miraculously survived unimaginable cruelty and were reunited after the war.

Looking for a better life and hoping to escape the horrors of his past, Henri immigrated to America where he became a U.S. citizen and was eventually educated in the hotel industry. One might think that a having his childhood stripped away and replaced by torturous death and terror on a daily basis would produce a survivor forever bitter and resentful. But Henri transformed his hatred for the Nazis and the Holocaust into forgiveness and he embarked on a journey to instead spread hope and goodwill.

Never wanting to see the pain and suffering of children like he did in the German concentration camps, Henri



As Give Kids the World prepares to celebrate its 30th anniversary in 2016, its namesake Village in Kissimmee, Fla. is wrapping up construction on the new Towne Hall. Once complete later this season, the Towne Hall will serve as a gathering place for wish families and will include a food court, meeting space and staff offices. COURTESY GKTW

began offering free accommodations at a hotel he operated in Orlando during the 1980s to families with terminally ill children who wanted to visit Walt Disney World. An unfortunate incident in which a sick child died while waiting for hotel space to open up in Orlando directly inspired Henri to never let that happen again. He met with officials of the Make-A-Wish Foundation and asked what they needed most to help children who wanted to visit Orlando area attractions. The response was simply: "a place where these kids and their families could stay during their Florida visit." And so the seed was planted in Henri's mind and from that came Give Kids the World and the Village. He started with a single villa that could accommodate two separate families and he never looked back.

## Leadership and inspiration

"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."

That wonderful quote from writer and Holocaust victim Anne Frank is what Give Kids The World President Pamela Landwirth uses to encourage and inspire the staff, nearly 15,000 active volunteers and countless individual and corporate donors that make a difference in the lives of families with a child battling a life-threatening illness. Pam has been involved with Give Kids The World since 1992 and was appointed president in 1995. In this role she is responsible for the operations of the Village and all strategic advancement initiatives for the organization.

Speaking with AT, Landwirth comments on what the

Village has become and what the future holds. "Even Henri Landwirth might have had a hard time envisioning the size and scope of Give Kids The World when he created it in 1986. Since that time, we have served over 135,000 children with life-threatening illnesses and their families, from all 50 states and 75 countries. Our growth has produced 144 family villa accommodations, Castle of Miracles, Ice Cream Palace, Julie's Safari Theatre, Amberville and this month, the 53,000-square-foot Towne Hall," said Landwirth. "The Towne Hall will serve as a gathering place for our wish families and will include a food court, meeting space and staff offices. It is a much anticipated new building and one which we have needed for quite some time, particularly given that it rains in Florida almost every day in the Summer and our families have not had a place to seek shelter during our evening entertainment programming."

## Renovation and expansion

Today, Give Kids the World Village is a sprawling whimsical resort offering 144 Villa accommodations and a varied assortment of entertainment attractions and fun all specifically tailored for children with special needs. But those who helm the Village today are not about to rest on their laurels. Instead, renovation and expansion of the facility is an ongoing process.

► See GKTW, page 51



Italian manufacturer Zamperla worked closely with GKTW to create the Village's newest amusement ride, Lori's Magical Flight. A custom-designed Magic Bike, Lori's Magical Flight is named in honor of a former wish child and volunteer. The ride is equipped with two special gondolas that accommodate guests in wheelchairs. AT/SCOTT RUTHERFORD



# Prairie Financial, Inc. is now OA Finance, LLC

Through an issue press release on April 2, it was revealed that Prairie Financial, Inc. is now OA Finance, LLC, continuing a 15-year track record serving the complete financing needs of the outdoor amusement industry.

Prairie Financial, Inc., was founded in 2000 to serve the outdoor amusement industry. In 2011, it became the outdoor amusement division of a Midwest bank "It was a very synergistic relationship," says Paul Muller, the company's co-founder. "Despite the downturn in the overall economy at that time, our business was strong. Our bank partner provided an excellent source of funding. It was a great match."

Prairie Financial, Inc. was co-founded by Paul Muller and his wife, Pam. Son Wade Muller joined the company in 2007. Mark Walker was added in 2011, having at one time been on the banking side of the equation, serving Prairie Financial as a representative of a regional bank.

Fast forward to the fall of 2014, when the bank made the decision to cease offering new financing for the outdoor amusement industry. At that point the four members of the company made the decision to continue on their own, and OA Finance, LLC was born.

"We have very close, long term relationships with our customers," says Paul Muller, whose roots in outdoor amusement date back to a company for which he worked in 1993. "We're committed, and we're in it for the long haul," he says.

The four associates look forward to continuing their relationships with their ex-



isting customers, and expanding their business deeper into the industry.

"At heart, this is a family business, very much like our customers in the industry," says Paul. "And we know that with Wade and Mark, OA Finance will carry forward well into the future, even when the time comes for Pam and me to retire."

The important thing for people to know is that while the name on the door has changed, the faces and the service remain the same. "As OA Finance, we've already helped our customers with packages ranging from ten-thousand to over a million dollars," comments Wade Muller. "We have bank lines and funding partners in place who are committed to us, and committed to the outdoor amusement industry."

•oafinance.net

## ►GKTW

Continued from page 50

ing venture.

AT was given a grand tour of the Village in early March by GKTW's Mark Hoewing (Public Relations manager) and Kaylee Rodriguez (Advancement manager) as major construction on the Towne Hall was wrapping up.

"As soon as Towne Hall is complete, we will begin building approximately 24 more villas in what we will call Banyan Park," Landwirth added. "These wonderful new buildings will be vertical rather than horizontal, more like townhouse accommodations, and will be creatively decorated to excite and please our precious children. With all of these additions, including our new ride provided by our wonderful friends at Zamperla, our 30th anniversary celebration will be incredibly special."

Landwirth and her team worked with Italian manufacturer Zamperla to create the Village's newest amusement ride, Lori's Magical Flight. Custom-designed by Zamperla for the Village this colorful, whirling contraption located near the main entrance allows parents to ride with their children. A special feature of Lori's Magical Flight is the fact that it is equipped with two special gondolas that allow guests still seated in their wheelchairs to board and enjoy the flight.

"We named our ride Lori's



**Give Kids the World Village is filled with countless treasures. Along with numerous props re-appropriated from closed attractions such as Jaws, Universal Studios also donated the triceratops from the opening scenes of the original Jurassic Park. The "sleeping" giant can now be viewed during a trip on the park's railroad attraction. AT/SCOTT RUTHERFORD**

Magical Flight in honor of a former wish child and Amazing Angel (volunteer) who held such a special place in all of our hearts before she passed away last year," said Landwirth. "Her legacy at the Village continues and she would be proud to know that this special ride has two carriages where even those in wheelchairs can participate."

### Hope heals

The GKTW magic happens when a child, surrounded by their family, gets swept up in the experience, when for one shining extended moment, they are allowed to forget about their particular ailments and just be a kid. A palpable energy infuses them, gives

them the strength and the will to blossom and return to a time when nothing mattered more than having fun.

It is said that hope is the cornerstone of healing. Often, all the medicines on the planet can't work if the spirit has lost hope. GKTW Village, along with its professional staff and army of selfless volunteers, all work in concert to restore and promote that sense of hope and possibility. When they send a child back into the world, they've often given them a renewed will to fight and possibly even overcome their respective illnesses. While they might not always be successful, it's admirable that they attempt. And for that they should be commended.

THE PEOPLE YOU TRUST HAVE A **NEW** NAME.



**OA Finance, LLC**

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# Help your team become a safety hero by joining AIMS

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



**Oertley**

**It's the most  
wonderful time of  
the year!**

Amusement parks, attractions, and their suppliers in many parts of the globe are working around the clock to prepare for high season in the park industry. Extensive media coverage on new rides and attractions, lists of top-rated coasters, and other thrills is at its peak and is creating waves of excitement for families and guests eager to enjoy both new and favorite experiences. The energy surrounding the beginning of the season provides an adrenaline rush for everyone, including those of us who share the passion by working in this great business.

Here's to a prosperous and SAFE year for all!

### The real heroes in safety

As the media focuses on the fun and excitement to be had at parks and attractions this year, we'd like call attention to the thousands of individuals who work in maintenance, operations and other areas of safety at parks and attractions. They are also working round the clock to plan and prepare for the safety and enjoyment of guests and other employees, and will continue to work diligently throughout the year to ensure a safe experience. A great day for these individuals is one in which there is no news and no media coverage. Their accomplishments result in an accident that doesn't happen because someone paid attention. We all owe them a great debt of gratitude and appreciation!

This group includes hundreds

and hundreds of Level I, II and III AIMS Certification holders who have taken the time to study and learn in order to become AIMS Certified in Ride Inspection, Maintenance, Operations and Aquatics. A complete list of all AIMS Certified Individuals can be found on our website at: [www.aimsintl.org](http://www.aimsintl.org).

### Mark your calendar

More than 40 years ago a group of industry manufacturers and suppliers banded together to create the AIMS Safety Seminar in order to ensure safe and knowledgeable operation of their products. The annual AIMS Safety Seminar has grown to its current offering of more than 400 classes taught by close to 100 industry experts, and AIMS International is now recognized by major parks and attractions as the worldwide leader for safety training and education.

The 2016 AIMS Safety Seminar will be held January 10-15 at the Doubletree by Hilton at SeaWorld Orlando, Florida. Our Education Committee is busy working on adding new and exciting classes. Stay tuned for more announcements later this year regarding the seminar. For more information on the seminar or to add your name to our mailing list please write us at [info@aimsintl.org](mailto:info@aimsintl.org).

### Membership in AIMS

The price of an AIMS membership is not great but the significance of supporting our mission to provide safety training and education is priceless. Please consider joining AIMS International to show your support for this important nonprofit organization. Information on membership can be found on our website at [www.aimsintl.org](http://www.aimsintl.org) or by writing us at [info@aimsintl.org](mailto:info@aimsintl.org).

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## Quassy ride superintendent receives NEAAPA Safety Award

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — George Zonas, ride superintendent at Quassy Amusement & Waterpark, Middlebury, Conn., was the recipient of the Alan E. Ramsay Safety Award during the recent New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (NEAAPA) Annual Meeting at the Providence Biltmore Hotel here.

Zonas, who has been at the helm of Quassy's rides department for more than a decade, also heads up the Quassy Safety Committee.

"We're certainly delighted that George was honored for his efforts here at Quassy," said George Frantzis II, a park owner. "He is an integral part of overseeing the safe operation of the rides not only for our guests, but also the employees."

Ramsay was a lead trainer and certified risk evaluator known worldwide in the amusement industry before his untimely death at age 41 in 2011. He developed train-

### SAFETY

ing manuals for amusement rides in various regions of the country and around the globe. He served as secretary/treasurer of NEAAPA and was also the organization's president in 2004-05.

NEAAPA established the award following his death and it is presented annually to an individual who has demonstrated "an unparalleled commitment to safety in the amusement parks and attractions industry."

Quassy's John Frantzis accepted the award on behalf of Zonas during the gala dinner event attended by more than 110 NEAAPA members.

Zonas is in charge of all ride training, ride documentation and oversees all ride operation employees. In addition, he also establishes and enforces all ride inspection documentation and heads up the safety committee, which is responsible for safe practices park wide.



Quassy's George Zonas was the recipient of the Alan E. Ramsay Safety Award, presented at the annual meeting of the New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions. COURTESY QUASSY

A Waterbury, Conn., native, Zonas was an international customer service representative and traffic manager for 28 years at Black

& Decker's Pop Fasteners Division in Shelton, Conn. He retired from the company in 1999.

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

## ASTM revising standards on air inflatable rides

WEST CONSHOHOCKEN, Pa. — ASTM International Committee F24 on Amusement Rides and Devices is revising an important standard on inflatable amusement rides. The responsible subcommittee (F24.61 on Adventure Attractions) invites all interested parties to contribute to the revision of standard F2374.

Three task groups have been formed to develop requirements and test methods for key areas: Bob Field, president of N-Flatables/Cutting Edge, leads the design and manufacturing group; Kevin Wieging of UltraSound Special Events Inc. and Kevin Baldree of Austin Moonwalks co-chair the group on operations and patron education; and Jake Vick of Zero Shock leads the group that is developing testing and inflatable impact requirements.

For information on the next meeting, contact Katerina Koperna, F24's manager at ASTM at (877) 909-ASTM.

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## New six hour Crowd Control seminar added to program

# Pennsylvania Ride Safety Seminar draws 400 attendees

AT: B. Derek Shaw  
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

## SAFETY

GRANTVILLE, Pa. — Held twice each year, the Pennsylvania Ride Safety Seminar trains, tests and certifies hundreds of amusement ride operators statewide. During February 24 – 26, nearly 400 people from various types of amusement operations received safety training conducted by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Bureau of Ride and Measurements Standards. Course areas included: Inflatable Rides, Extreme Sports, Water Attractions, Haunted Attractions, Go Karts/Bumper Boats and more.

Seminar participants choose the presentations that are the most beneficial for their career path, job description, abilities, and employer benefit. Testing is provided for Class 1 and 2 Ride Inspectors and Independent and Specialized Inspectors. The testing is independent of the Department of Agriculture; however it is sanctioned by them. "This is the only program that has training and certification (by another entity) with government oversight," said Joe Filoromo, supervisor, Amusement

ment Ride Safety Division, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

Filoromo feels the Pennsylvania system is unique. "Our system has much more frequent inspections and is the same training as a state inspector elsewhere. The program puts an amusement ride safety inspector at every amusement site in the Commonwealth." That means, "There are thousands of eyes out there," said Filoromo. With more equipment than any other state (via fairs, carnivals, water parks, amusement parks and independent operations), Filoromo says, "Pennsylvania has a good loss ratio."

"Entertainment Venues Crowd Control Seminar", is a new six hour seminar that was held the last day of training, run by A.J. Slaggert. Violence and rowdiness at public events has seen a giant increase recently with flash mobs, trash mobs, bash mobs and wilding becoming more and more prevalent. Entertainment venue managers need to be aware of the possibility that social media may play a role in a fast moving incident impacting their events. Slaggert feels, "this summer is going to be a very difficult one," referring to the recent unrest across the country. He feels Ferguson, Mo. (and other recent incidents) is the wick and the unrest this year could harken back to levels experienced from the late 1960's.

Slaggert began his presentation talking about the airplane that crash landed in the Hudson River a few years ago and the rapid response by local ferry boats. He cited Captain Carl Lucas of the Athenia, a high-speed catamaran ferry on their handling of the situation. "You train so much you don't think it over. I didn't have to give orders to the crew."

A written emergency plan is just the beginning as it has to be put into motion, with the following four criteria included: preparedness, prevention, response and recovery. The plan should specify, by job title, who will do what and when. Slaggert feels that



Principals in the Pennsylvania Ride Safety program are, l to r: A.J. Slaggert, instructor, Slaggert Risk Management; Phil Slaggert, president of Slaggert Risk Management; Randall Arndt, Quality Assurance inspector, Pa. Department of Agriculture; John Jardine, Quality Assurance inspector, Pa. Department of Agriculture; Joe Filoromo, supervisor, Amusement Ride Safety Division, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and John Humberger, Quality Assurance inspector, Pa. Department of Agriculture. AT/B. DEREK SHAW

going two deep in leadership (three is even better) for plan development is important. "Use, 'what if' when perfecting your emergency plan," said Slaggert.

Next, put the plan in play. "Have your crew solve a problem once a day, week or month," said Slaggert. The key is to get into the habit of regular preparedness. Slaggert even goes so far to say that emergency numbers should even be put on the back of employee ID tags. Sergeant Rick Trout, with the West Manchester Township Police who is on the security detail of the 10 day York, Pa. Fair commented about advance planning. "It's all about getting the right people to the table all year round."

The Pennsylvania State Police made a presentation on their Criminal Intelligence Center, (PACIC). This "fusion" center" created in July, 2003, is a collaborative effort by numerous agencies to provide resources, information and expertise to maximize the ability to detect, prevent, investigate and respond to criminal and terrorism activity.

The organization operates with a threat analysis group, drug analysis unit, violent criminal groups, organized and general crimes areas as well. PACIC always works with local municipalities, townships and counties for a unified front. The center representatives also talked about the reporting of suspicious activity to aide them in their job. They then went on to describe

all the different types of activity that this encompasses.

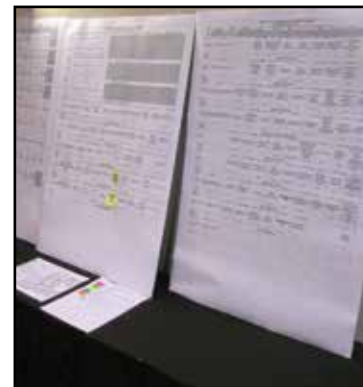
The PACIC speakers went on to talk about threats to events that tax security teams including: large crowds, weather, unpredictable behavior, unanticipated situations and even disease. Facility vulnerabilities were also discussed and many security tips were shared. Even changing music to alter the situation will modify the energy of an event.

Slaggert then presented "History of Disasters and Lessons Learned" stating there are three types of events: Notice (2011 Costa Concordia), No Notice (2011 Indiana State Fair roof collapse) and Spontaneous (1979 Riverfront Coliseum Who concert trampling).

A flash mob is when a group of people suddenly assemble in a public place and perform an unusual, seemingly pointless act for a brief time. Usually it is for a good cause, without damage or inconvenience and is fermented in social media.

Wilding occurs when people come out solely for the purpose of hurting or damaging your event. Those crowd leaders are usually in the back – they don't want to be injured. The crowd surge can be a diversion for something else. The presenter went on to say if you flush out a crowd, make sure you have a place to send them.

Bob Ito, Risk Management director for Sky Zone Indoor Trampoline Parks, talked about the changes they made



A composite listing of all the training seminars available during the semi-annual three day session.

AT/B. DEREK SHAW

with their safety program. They have "eyes in the sky" (video cameras) to record everything. All ticket takers and monitors are trained in universal sign language that is used when rules are being presented and when violators are being reprimanded. This has been extremely helpful when needed in court cases. As Ito puts it, "In the business we are in, it's foolish not to film everything." Protection for everyone is the key.

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture has inspected and registered amusement rides under the Amusement Ride Safety Act since 1984 and regularly participates in education and outreach seminars that include classes and hands-on demonstrations. The next Pennsylvania Ride Safety Seminar is scheduled for November 3 — 5 at the Holiday Inn Harrisburg (Hershey Area) I-81, Grantville, Pa.

•paridesafety.com

### PACE seminar set for Oct. 26-29, 2015

The Pa. Ride Safety Seminars are not to be confused with the annual PACE (Parks and Carnival Education) Seminar, jointly sponsored by the Pennsylvania State Showmen's Association (PSSA) and the Pennsylvania Amusement Parks Association (PAPA). That seminar, presented by National Association of Amusement Ride Safety Officials (NAARSO), is scheduled for October 26 — 29, 2015 (location: eastern part of Pennsylvania, venue: TBD) includes a hands on training session at one of Pennsylvania's amusement parks or at the seminar hotel with portable equipment brought in by local showmen. PACE offers inspector training for Pennsylvania Certified Inspectors and/or NAARSO levels.

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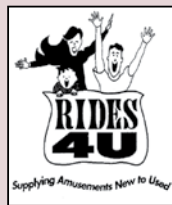
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