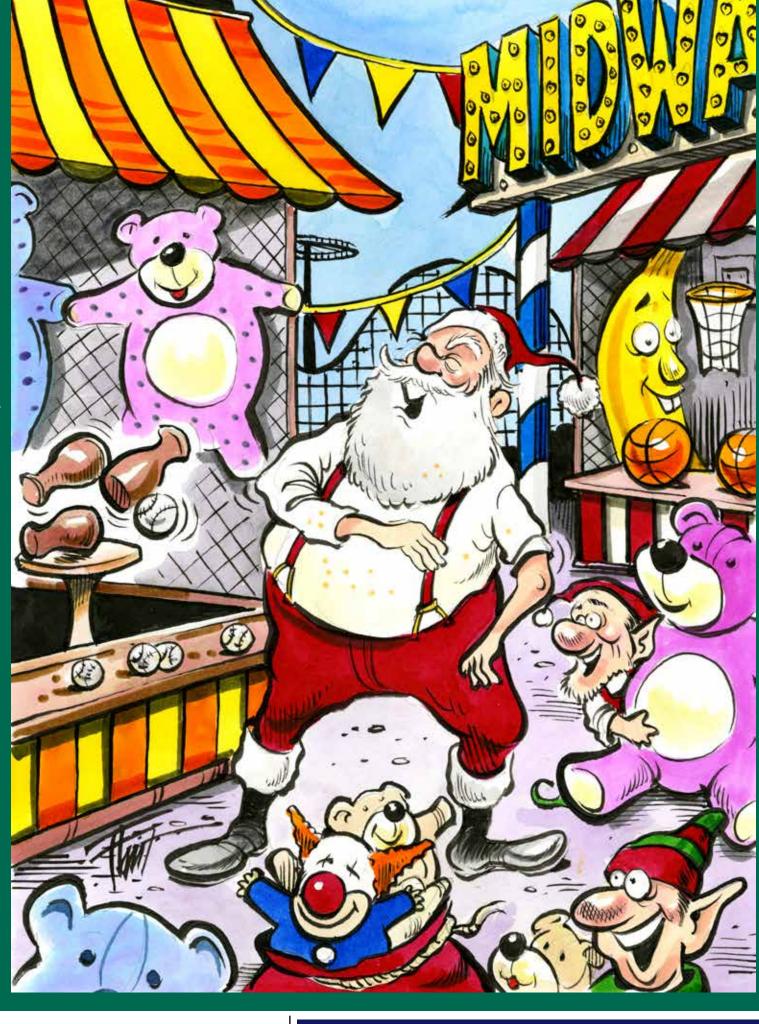
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# **NEWSTALK**

OPINIONS CARTOON LETTERS AT CONTACTS

**EDITORIAL:** Gary Slade, gslade@amusementtoday.com

#### **Tidbits**



Slade

This issue of Amusement Today marks the 17th edition of our Annual Holiday Cooking Guide. For this year we thought it would be nice to theme the guide to our annual Golden Ticket Awards.

On page 4, recipes can be found from our **Best Food** winners, a tie between **Knoebels Amusement Resort** and

**Dollywood**. Also included is our 2013 Host Park, **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk** and **SeaWorld San Diego** who will host in 2014.

While on the subject of Golden Tickets, AT has now posted three photo galleries from our 2013 GTA event at SCBB, on **www.GoldenTicketAwards.com**. Look under the tab "2013 Event," and be sure to check out the bowling event photos!

Thanks again to both **Andrew Mellor** and **Pam Sherborne** for their work on giving us a small sampling of what some parks are doing for this upcoming Christmas season. See pages 6-7 and 11-13. Just as *AT* was going to press we learned that **Cliff's Amusement Park** in Albuquerque, N.M. is kicking off their first-ever holiday event called Cliff's Magical Christmas.

When **Superstorm Sandy** hit the New Jersey shore and other parts of the East coast in Oct. 2012, it caused *AT* to shuffle our December issue editorial plans in order to get the late-breaking news in. Two of the items pulled to make room for Sandy editorial was our annual Page 1 Christmas cartoon as well as our page 2 cartoon. After pulling both cartoons out of the unused file, we thought both were still worthy of running in this issue. We hope you enjoy both, better late than never!

From the entire staff of Amusement Today, we wish everyone a happy and safe holiday season. We hope you find time to not only relax a little, but to enjoy the company and stories family members have to tell. It seems life is passing us by at "warp speed" these days, so take time this upcoming holiday break to slown down and enjoy at a little slower pace.

Our good friend **Tom Rebbie** at **PTC** always writes, "Have Fun, Be Safe." With that, we add industry photojournalist **Dan Feicht's** love of "Eat more pie!" Ahh. I smell that slice of pie calling me now...

—Gary Slade

**CARTOON:** Bubba Flint



**EDITORIAL:** Scott Rutherford, srutherford@amusementtoday.com

#### Farewell 2013



Rutherford

Some in the amusement industry might consider the number 13 — and by association, the year 2013 — to be unlucky. After all, when this year dawned nearly 12 months ago, many parks in the northeastern U.S. were dealing with the destruction left

by Superstorm Sandy. Over a year later, some properties still find themselves in recovery mode. And, of course, there was the devastating September fire that roared through the remains of FunTown Pier on the Jersey shore. Not only did it destroy businesses but flames devoured sections of the iconic boardwalk that had just been rebuilt.

Then there was a string of ride-related incidents on the traveling show circuit including a recent one at the North Carolina State Fair that left riders and an operator injured. But it was two high-profile ride accidents that grabbed the majority of the negative headlines: Cedar Point's boat flipping on the Shoot

the Rapids and a rider ejection on the New Texas Giant at Six Flags Over Texas. Both drew plenty of media attention, especially the latter incident, which also raised concerns about how to deal some riders' physical dimensions.

Yes, there were negative incidents but there were far more bright spots in 2013 than not. Personally, I finished another book – Images of America's *Carowinds* for that southern themer's 40th anniversary. It was written at a breakneck pace last December and January but I'm happy with the result. But one of the most amazing things for me was being there to witness and be part of the grand opening of Knoebels' Flying Turns. After so much work and effort, it was a real treat to see many of my friends and the Knoebel family recognized for their indomitable spirit and will to make this historic recreation a viable and exciting ride.

Yes, the 2013 season was one of ups and downs. But isn't that exactly what we expect in this wonderful and crazy business? Here's to saying farewell to 2013. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to one and all.

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**COMPILED:** Janice Witherow

#### Stefan Doomanis, Dynamic Advantage

Stefan Doomanis grew up in the customer research and retention industry, tagging along with his father on jobs as a child. He started his first business in high school and joined his family's corporation of Dynamic Advantage in 1994. Today, as president, Stefan is the visionary behind each unique customer-centric "mystery shopping" experience integral to the company's success. He has extensive experience in multi-national and multilocation customer retention programming, competitive intelligence and customer experience consulting. He

Stefan and his son Pete, clown around in matching Batman shirts while enjoying some quality father-son time. Spending time with his family is one of Stefan's favorite things to do when not working on his mystery-shopping enterprise. **COURTESY STEFAN DOOMANIS FAMILY** 

sits on the board of the Mystery Shopping Providers Association, as well as several charitable boards. When not hard at work, Stefan enjoys vintage sports cars, family and friends.

Title President.

Number of years in the industry

# Best thing about the

The attitude of those involved. I have always appreciated that everyone is out to see that a good time is had by all.

#### Favorite amusement ride

I will always take a spin on some bumper cars.

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

Baking bread at my sandwich shop.

#### Biggest challenge facing our industry Continuing to meet and exceed the expectations of the guests.

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

Having fun with my family.

#### All-time favorite meal

I like to keep it simple, a great hot dog and a bag of chips does wonders for me.

The first thing I do in the morning is ... Check my email. I need to unplug.

It's December! My favorite holiday song is ... "Christmas Wrapping" by The Waitresses.

The best new television show this year seems to be ...

New? I am still stuck on "Survivor."

I always need help with ... Organization.



#### If you could have three movies in your collection, what would they be?

"Harold and Maude"; "It Happened One Night"; and "Monty Python & The Holy Grail."

#### What do you notice first when meeting someone?

If they make eye contact.

If you could invite one famous (living) person to dinner, who would it be? David Bowie

You are at the mall. Where do we find you? Hot Dog on a Stick or Williams-Sonoma.

## One place I have always wanted to travel to

Greece.

**Doomanis** 

#### During my "down time", I like to ...

Drive, actually repair, my old MG. After all, it is an MG.

#### Ten years ago, I was ... Still in my 30s!

If you could have a conversation with any animal, which one would it be? California Condor.

My favorite time of day is ... I am a night owl.

#### Pick one: rock 'n'roll or country I'm a little bit rock 'n' roll.

If I didn't live in California, I would live ... In The Haunted Mansion!

What season best describes your personality? Spring.

Favorite pair of shoes My Sanuks.

#### THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

•1905: In mid-December F. W. Henniger and T. M. Harton announced the formation of a new park outside Pittsburah. The 30-acre West View Park in West View, Pennsylvania, opened in May 1906, at a cost of \$250,000. The highlight was

Presented by

www.RollerCoasterMuseum.org

a large Figure Eight (the park's popular Dips would open in 1909). Theodore M. Harton passed away in 1919, and while his family owned the park for the entire 71 year run, they would eventually sell the property for commercial development in 1980.

•1905: As advertised in the nation's newspapers in early December, there was great interest in amusement park toys. Beside the typical submarines and warships, Loopthe Loops and Scenic Railways were the principal novelties in the toy market for the Christmas season. Many stores filled their display windows with these wonderful items, made of tin, where children of all ages dreamed of possessing. Today these extremely rare toys have become highly sought after collector items, selling for hundreds of dollars.

•1914: In mid-December, Louis Berni, of Golden City, announced plans to build a new Philadelphia Toboggan Company wooden roller coaster for the 1915 season. The Brooklyn, New York amusement center located in Canarsie, which for several years competed with both Rockaway and Coney Island, was essentially land-locked. To get around this, Berni, who was a musician by trade, purchased the park's 1907 Scenic Railway and removed it to make room for the new ride, erecting what he called a larger and better ride with a 40-foot drop.

•1945: The creation of a \$1 million park project in California was thwarted by the local planning board which rejected the project's plan submittal. On December 21, the Santa Monica City Planning Commission denied a zoning change that would have opened the doors to a large project being pushed by both Chicago and local interests. To be located at the foot of Wilshire Blvd., the major park was never built because of local protest, including several film notables who did not want the park in their backyard.

—Compiled by Richard Munch, NRCMA Historian





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## 17th ANNUAL HOLIDAY COOKING GUIDE



# BEST FOOD



#### Knoebels Amusement Resort Flysburg, Pa.

#### Chicken & Waffles

Makes 50 waffles:

16 eggs - beaten

3 quarts whole milk

16 cups flour 3/4 cup sugar

1 T salt

1 cup Baking Powder

1 pound butter - melted

Beat eggs, alternately add milk and flour. Combine other ingredients adding butter last. Cool batter prior to pouring into waffle iron.

To make into Chicken & Waffles add desired chicken and ice cream to fill the To make Chicken Gravy:

Makes 50

Servings

2 gallons Chicken Broth

1/2 T Pepper

2 T Chicken stock

3 cups flour

1-2 cups water

Yellow food colorina

Begin by bringing chicken broth, pepper & chicken stock to a boil. While coming to a boil, mix flour and water to a creamy consistency in a separate bowl. Add this mixture, stirring very quickly into the broth. When finished add a drop of food coloring.

Dollywood Pigeon Forge, Tenn.

#### Orange Marmalade Roasted Turkey Breast

1 skin on raw turkey breast- 4 to 5 lb.

3 tbl softened butter

3 tbl olive oil

1 tbl kosher salt

1 tbl cracked black pepper

2 cloves minced garlic

½ cup orange marmalade

2 tbl orange juice

2 tsp. honey

Rinse Turkey breast under cold water and let dry for a few minutes. Rub with olive oil and season with salt, pepper and garlic. In separate bowl mix together the orange marmalade, orange juice and honey until combined. Reserve ½ the marmalade mix and set aside. Rub butter and ½ of the marmalade mix



under the skin of the turkey breast. Pre heat oven to 325 degrees. In a roasting pan with a screen on the bottom place the turkey breast and roast for 2 to 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours until internal temperature reaches 160 degrees. At this point remove from oven and brush rest of marmalade glaze over turkey and place back in oven for 15 min. Remove and rest turkey tented with foil for approximately 30 minutes. Internal temperature should reach 170 degrees Slice and arrange on serving platter.

Enjoy!

Chef Steve Carideo



# Host **PARKS**



### Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk Santa Cruz, Calif.

#### Sondra's Holiday Sangria

1 bottle of Wine (nice bold fruity Red Blend, Zin or Cab)

diced apple & pear

1 blood orange, peeled, cut into segments

1 lime & 1 lemon cut into slivered circles 8 oz. Amaretto Liqueur

1/4 tsp. cinnamon Lemon lime soda

Blood orange, lime, & lemon cut into slivered circles



#### Directions:

Mix the wine, fruit, liqueur, and cinnamon, and keep refrigerated for two

Pour 1/2 cup of your wine mixture over ice and fill with 1/3 cup of lemon lime soda. Mix well.

Garnish with a fresh blood orange, lemon, and then lime slivered circle (a rainbow of sleek garnish) and serve.

Enjoy and drink responsibly!

### Sea World San Diego San Diego, Calif.

#### **Turkey Ravioli**

One of the best things about SeaWorld's Christmas Celebration is the array of food options available to guests. Chef Axel Dirolf, executive chef for both SeaWorld San Diego and Aquatica San Diego, knows how important a delicious meal is during the holidays. Here's his recipe for his famous holiday turkey ravioli for you to try at home.

The ingredients you'll need are: Ground turkey, cooked Mascarpone cheese Parmesan cheese Spinach, chopped Cran-raisins Pasta sheet (fresh or cooked) Your favorite tomato sauce Pepper

**Dried Sage** 



chopped spinach, cran-raisins and parmesan cheese into a large bowl. Next, add salt, pepper and dried sage

Then, fold the mixture into fresh or cooked pasta sheet. Coat the bottom of a casserole pan with your favorite tomato sauce. Place the folded ravioli on top of the sauce; cover with some more sauce and cheese to your liking! Finally, bake it in the oven. You're all set happy holidays!





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# INTERNATIONAL

PARKS ATTRACTIONS RESORTS SUPPLIERS

# Parks offer Christmas events with International flare

STORY: Andrew Mellor amellor@amusementtodav.com

#### PortAventura Salon, Spain

From November 23 to January 6 the Spanish resort Port Aventura will be transformed into a winter wonderland for young and old alike with a host of new features and spectacular lighting, Christmas trees and festive decorations, along with 17 daily shows created especially for the time of year.

The biggest change for 2013 at the resort is a huge Christmas market in the Mediterrània area. Inspired by the traditional markets in some of the biggest capitals of central

#### **CHRISTMAS SPOTLIGHT 2013**

Europe, 31 wooden stalls offer visitors a plethora of Christmas treats, while visitors will also be able to watch an ice sculptor at work.

Another new element for the Christmas opening is snow tubing on a snow slide that follows the route of the park's Wall of China, designed for children but fun for adults too. Those who want to take to the ice, a new ice skating rink is available in the México area.

During the festive period opening, PortAventura has also launched a new movie in 4D — Christmas Adventure, a story in which fairies, Christ-

mas characters and the audience are in charge of making a sweet dessert for a child. They then follow the sweets across Santa's factory in a unique journey.

A packed program of festive family entertainment includes musicals featuring acrobatic displays and spectacular outdoor ice skating, alongside performances of live music filling all corners of the park with popular Yuletide tunes. The China area's Gran Teatro will be the stage for the musical Regalo de Navidad (Christmas Present) show, while another show on offer is El Bosque Encantado (The Enchanted Forest), where goblins, wizards and fairies roam at will. In China there is also Pushankina Daria, a sand artist performing in the show Christmas Sand Animation, and youngsters can meet some of their favorite characters in SésamoAventura.

The most unmissable event, however, will be the visit of the Royal Emissaries. Fresh from the East, these envoys of the Three Kings will visit the park collecting Christmas letters from children in PortAventura before providing the finishing touch to the Christmas Parade in front of Mediterrània's lake. And on January 5, the Three Kings themselves will arrive to lead the traditional Kings' Parade, delivering gifts to all the children who visit the park on what is promoted as the most magical night of the year.

The finishing touch to Port Aventura's winter wonderland will be found at its four hotels, fully decorated for the occasion and hosting charac-



Belgium park Plopsaland will be transformed for the festive season and will offer a variety of family entertainment . COURTESY PLOPSALAND

ters like Woody, Betty Boop and the cast of Sesame Street.

#### Plopsaland Andikerlee-De-Panne, Belgium

Winter Plopsaland in Belgium takes place December 7 to January 5 with a variety of festive entertainment for guests to enjoy.

Hundreds of Christmas trees, thousands of lights, animation and an ice rink set the scene while a Gnome show with park character Plop will provide entertainment for the youngsters — as will a visit to see Santa Claus, of course, and a chance to enjoy many of the park's attractions that will be open.

On December 26-30 the Ketnet and Fireworks Show takes place. Ketnet is a children's TV channel in Flanders (Belgium) which will provide shows at the park during the Christmas holiday in the Plopsa Theatre.

Additionally, the Samson & Gert Show will also take place in the Plopsa Theatre three times a day in the few days immediately before and after Christmas. This year the show moves from a theater in Antwerp, where it has been held for more than 20 years, to Plopsaland De Panne.

#### Europa-Park Rust, Germany

Germany's largest theme park will be transformed once again into a magical winter wonderland from November 23 to January 6 (closed on December 24 and 25). With snow on the ground, festive smells in the air and thousands of lights, guests are sure to be delighted with the atmosphere and entertainment on offer which will include many of

▶ See EVENTS, page 7





The Sesame Street characters show (above) is sure to be a hit with young visitors to Port Aventura. Left, the park will provide guests with a host of festive entertainment over the Christmas period. COURTESY PORT AVENTURA







At left, a Christmas market will be one of the highlights at Europa-Park, while at right, the German theme park will be transformed into a winter wonderland for the Christmas period. COURTESY EUROPA-PARK

# **EVENTS**Continued from page 6

the park's rides and attractions and a first-class show program.

Among the highlights will be no less than 12 live shows, five roller coasters, more than 50 other attractions — including a 55 meter high Big Wheel offering superb views of the park — a giant light parade, ice rink, the Bar Glaciar, a 4D movie featuring park mascot Euromaus and friends, Luna Magic presented by Gazprom and a Winter Wonderland for children.

A Christmas market will also be a major feature of Europa-Park's winter opening in



Visitors to Dreamworld in Australia this Christmas will be able to see a variety of DreamWorks characters in the Shrektacular show. COURTESY DREAMWORLD

which guests will be able to saunter through stalls offering old fashioned craftsmanship as well as savouring the scents of fir trees, baked apples and toasted almonds, all combining to create the perfect Christmas atmosphere. And with 2.5 million lights and over 2,500 Christmas trees, the scene will be complete.

A circus in the original circus tent will offer yet more entertainment for the whole family, while for those wishing to stay overnight, Europa-Park's five themed hotels provide the ideal resting place after all the activity of the park.

#### Dreamworld Coomera, Australia

A host of well-known characters from DreamWorks will be appearing at Dreamworld for a Holiday Shrektacular show over the Christmas period.

Both Dreamworld and sister park WhiteWater World will be open every day of the Christmas holiday season, except Christmas Day, and the new 20-minute show will see Shrek learning how to celebrate the holiday season. Featuring song and dance and a host of other characters, it will take place on the specially designed Main Street stage, with guests being able to see daily shows and have their photo taken with favorite characters.

Dreamworld's newest and scariest attraction, Zombie Evilution, will also have evolved into stage two in time for the Christmas holidays the Battle for Kevil Hill. Transformed into a laser combat challenge staged across two buildings with two stories, Zombie Evilution takes on more excitement and thrills even for the most seasoned laser combat fans.

A new tiger show, Cub College with Baru and Ravi, is also available to Dreamworld guests with cubs Baur and Ravi, Tiger Island's youngest residents, now ready to start playing with the big cats. However, they need some training first, which guests can watch in a brand new live show starting on Boxing Day.

Dreamworld is also offering a range of corporate party opportunities this Christmas. Private parties can be had at a choice of venues within the park while Christmas with the

Tigers is a cocktail style event with themed food stations, beverages and live entertainment. A Very Dreamworld Christmas offers a festive buffet on Main Street, plus time on rides and attractions and live entertainment, while a Dreamworld Challenge caters to those looking for some festive team building activities.

#### Ocean Park Hong Kong, China

Special festive activities at Hong Kong's Ocean Park this year take place from December 14 to January 1, with Christmastime Beneath the Waves!

Among the entertainment on offer will be three new

productions that explore underwater life and a range of yuletide celebrations, including marine-themed Christmas decorations, a tree lighting ceremony, soulful carolers and an Ocean Santa.

At the park's Waterfront Plaza, guests will be able to see a world-class acrobatics extravaganza set to dramatic scenery, while the Ocean Theatre will feature an all-new adventure featuring the dolphins and sea lions of Ocean Park. Younger visitors will be able to enjoy the new interactive dance show taking place at Whiskers Harbour and an ocean-themed lighting ceremony will take place every evening at the Christmas Tree.



# Toverland sets attendance record after major expansion

**STORY:** Tim Baldwin tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

SEVENUM, the Netherlands — As mentioned in our previous issue, Toverland, the relatively young theme park in the Netherlands added an astonishing eight new attractions for the 2013 season. As the year winds down, *Amusement Today* takes a closer look at the list of attractions and talks with park personnel about its recent success.

When asked why the park decided to add eight attractions all within one season. Teun Borst, Toverland Communications, says, "Toverland is very compact. That may be an advantage for our visitors, because they can find a lot of attractions within a short distance walk. On the other hand people also like to walk around and discover. In short: we needed more dwell time." Boorst continues, "If you visit a theme park you expect to stay a whole day in the park, but if you can find all the rides close to each other you don't need a whole day. So we decided to add a complete new area of four hectare next to the existing eight hectares."

What is striking is that the new area is not just simply an assortment of rides dropped in. Landscaping, theming and interactive areas of beauty all serve their role in creating an entirely new atmosphere. Twisted vines and branches make up railings to make it all feel magical.

"A part of this new area is filled with nice walkways, bridges and waterfalls to create the dwell time," says Borst, "but, of course, we also wanted to add rides. We added two major rides — a Mack spinning coaster and a Hafema river rapids ride, along with a fountain show and several smaller rides. The total package is meant to offer the whole family a wonderful time in the park."

Toverland is fortunate to have its own designer, Peter van Holsteijn. It was he who made all the drawings of the theming, the houses and the funny little creatures who live in the Magic valley, called the Dwervels. For the landscaping, the park worked with Mark Heusschen, a landscaping architect. The artificial rocks and houses were made by TAA. The Dwervels were made





The station for Dwervelwind (left) continues the imaginative theme with a thatched roof and beautiful landscaping outside. Inside, the station features a vine-covered ceiling highlighted with cascading, color-changing LED lights.

AT/TIM BALDWIN & JEFFREY SEIFERT

in the Philipines by Theme Builders and their movements are done by Lagotronics. The new expansion even has its own musical score. Imascore produced over two hours of magical music for different zones of the area.

The attractions added this season are:

• Dwervelwind: This spinning coaster offers a different journey each time as the vehicles are free spinning. The station is adorned with vines, plant life, mood lighting and a whimsical magical ambience.

Manufacturer:
Mack Rides GmbH
Height: 21 meters
Length: 462 meters
Speed: 75 km/hr
Trains: 2 of four cars,
seating 16 passengers
Capacity: 925 pph
Ride time: 92 seconds

•Djengu River: A new rapids ride gives the park a second family wet ride in addition to the flume, which is partially indoors. During the journey, observant riders will notice animatronic Dwervels along the course, punctuating the adventure with imagination. Tunnels, waterfalls and landscaping make this addition quite impressive.

Manufacturer: Hafema
Height: 5.5 meters
Length: 460 meters
Speed: 16.2 km/hour
Boats: 10 boats seating up to
nine passengers per boat
Capacity: 918 pph
Ride time: Four minutes

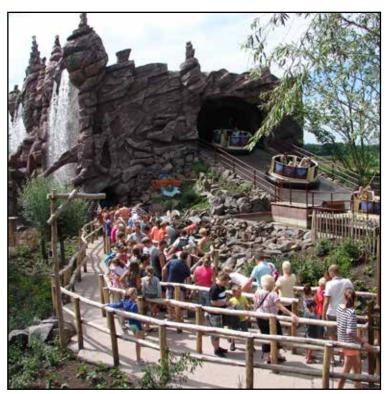
•Tolly Molly: A circular ride with arms and gondolas suspended above a pool of

water. This ride is aimed at the younger audience in the family.

Manfuctuer:
Metallbau Emmeln
Diameter: 12 meters
Gondolas: 8 gondolas
seating up to 3 persons
Capacity: 450 pph
Ride time: 90 seconds

•Coco Bolo: These rope pull towers are seen more prevalently around Europe, but have made a few appearances in U.S. parks. Once

▶ See TOVERLAND, page 9





The Djengu River follows an elevated rockcovered course enhanced with Dwervel dwellings. AT/TIM BALDWIN



#### **▶**TOVERLAND

Continued from page 8

seated, riders pull themselves up via rope while assisted mechanically, so even younger children can accomplish the task. Once releasing the rope, the seats glide back to ground level.

> Manufacturer: Heege Height: 10 meters Seats: 4 seats with two passengers per seat Capacity: 320 pph

• Airtrampoline: What looks to be a giant bubble actually serves as a laugh-inducing bouncing adventure. As adults know, kids love to jump and this trampolinestyle attraction caters to numerous kids at one time.

Manufacturer: Sidijk Diameter: 10 meters

•Kids Survival: During AT's visit, it was commented that this attraction would doubtfully be installed in America. While rope type courses have become a common addition, Toverland has made theirs much more adventurous with splash ponds below, along with fountains

and varying surfaces. Giggles are guaranteed.

Manufacturer: Velopa Omniplay Total length of the course: 36 meters

•Klimkasteel: This interactive playhouse offers lots of climbing and walkways.

Manufaturer: Eibe Height: 13 meters Ground area: 300 square meters

•Katara, Fountain of Magic: While not a ride, this attraction may be the most interactive of all. Fountains not only beautify the area, but jumping streams leap over walkways and bridges testing everyone's sense of timing, young and old. At scheduled intervals, the fountain comes alive with a show of choreographed motions set to a soaring soundtrack.

Manufacturer: GHESA
Fuentes en Watergames
& More
Number of water jets: 136
Height of water projection:

15 meters

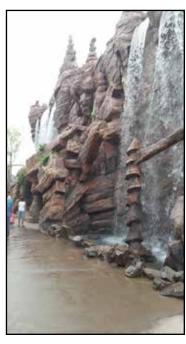
Clearly, this is a dramatic enlargement of the park. But it

doesn't stop there. New walk-ways allow guests to stroll by gigantic waterfalls and become spectators to the rides and theming as they walk through rocky caves and scenic tunnels. Also in the addition is a thematically beautiful covered food court type restaurant. Around its perimeter, glass orbs tied in netting spark imaginations as people step up to the eatery.

When asked if a particular attraction seemed to create a lot of guest feedback, Borst answers, "Not really; it was more the whole new area that did the magic. We received a lot of compliments from visitors as well as from colleagues from other parks. They really like the whole atmosphere we have created with the theming, the plants, flowers, rocks and music."

If one can measure success, Borst pridefully comments, "On the Dutch website Zoover, people can comment on their day trips. This year we ended up with 8.6 points (out of 10), just 0.1 point behind Efteling. The German Freizeit Tester Team gave us the award for best park addition 2013 in Europe."





Every ride carries the rustic Dwervel theme and the entire Magic Valley features spectacular rockwork and water cascades. AT/TIM BALDWIN & JEFFREY SEIFERT

In determining if the additions have delivered results, the answer is clear. "The season went very well. It looks like we are going to end the year with more than 600,000 visitors," says Borst. "We had around 500,000 vistors last year. I think that's quite an impressive growth."

Indeed.

When asked about future plans Borst reports, "Not yet.

There are several ideas for future investment, but it will take some years before we will realize all this. Toverland already owns some land with a lake behind the park. This area is meant for future investments. Besides new rides there are plans to build a hotel resort as well. But for now, we invite everybody to discover our newest area, the Magische Vallei"







# **PARKS & ATTRACTIONS**

RIDES

# Parks roll out holiday cheer for Christmas 2013

**STORY:** Pam Sherborne

psherborne@amusementtoday.com

the country. Across amusement and theme parks roll out the red carpet for guests attending holiday cel-

Holiday offerings include real snow, close encounters with live animals, holiday train rides, sing-a-longs, dazzling lights shows, and live musical performances.

Here is a look at what some of those parks are offering for the 2013 festivities.

#### **CHRISTMAS SPOTLIGHT 2013**

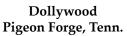
#### SeaWorld Orlando Orlando, Fla.

SeaWorld park officials have created offerings for all ages during this year's Sea-World's Christmas Celebration, being held on select dates through December 31. The holiday celebrations have been in full swing since November 23.

Some of those offerings include: a journey to the North Pole on The Polar Express Experience; a trip to the South Pole to visit the park's newest attraction, Antarctica: Empire of the Penguin!; Elmo's Christmas Wish musical; Shamu's Christmas Miracles; and Winter Wonderland on Ice, an ice skating extravaganza.

In addition to the seasonal shows and attractions, the Sea Of Trees is a popular destination. It features more than 100 massive trees, each sparkling, lighted and choreographed to classic holiday tunes.

The Christmas Market features artisans and culinary delights. Santa's Fireside Feast offers guests up close and personal interaction with Santa and Mrs. Claus.



Patrons to the 2013 Dollywood's Smoky Mountain Christmas will not only be greeted by four million dazzling lights and Dollywood's holiday entertainment and food, but they will also be able to experience a brand new production, Dollywood's A Christmas Carol.

The holiday celebration opened November 9 and will run through January 4.

This groundbreaking production uses holographic technology to bring Dolly Parton to the stage as the Ghost of Christmas Past. This special twist on Charles Dickens' classic tale marks the first time holograms have been featured in a theatrical setting, allowing Parton to perform, albeit as a hologram, in each perfor-

Parton's Ghost of Christmas Past, Jacob Marley and the Ghosts of Christmases Present and Future are all lifeDollywood, Pigeon Forge, Tenn., is presenting a brand new musical production this year, Dollywood's A Christmas Carol. The new production is using holograms for the actors. Here

are three of the four holograms, Dolly Parton, Jacob Marley and the Ghost of Christmas Present, on the production set. Parton wrote the songs for the musical. Dollywood's holiday celebrations began Nov. 9. COURTESY DOLLYWOOD

sized holograms.

"When they told me they were going to make a hologram out of me, I thought they were crazy," Parton said, before the opening of the production. "But when I saw how real it looked on stage, I couldn't believe it. I'm not sure this world can handle two Dolly Partons, but I'm excited folks will be able to see 'the other Dolly' reminding families that it's not what you have but who you have, just like ole Scrooge figures out in the end."

Eight new songs written by Parton for the 45-minute musical underscore the new show. Because the story is set in the U.K., Parton gave the music a classic U.K. feeling by infusing each song with classic Scots-Irish rhythms as well as musical and lyrical structures borrowed from traditional English folk songs.

Several other shows have returned this year to the holiday celebrations. They include Christmas in the Smokies, An Appalachian Christmas, 'Twas

the Night Before Christmas, O' Holy Night, Christmas with The Kingdom Heirs and Carol of the Trees.

Guests also can experience the nightly Parade of Lights, a festive procession of largerthan-life toys and characters, an array of rides, as well as Santa's Workshop, where the smallest guests can share their wish list with Kris Kringle.

Dollywood's popular Smoky Mountain Miniature Railroad is also back after a well-received debut in 2012.

Families can finish their visit with a traditional Christmas meal as Dollywood's menus feature several holiday-themed items.

#### Santa Cruz **Beach Boardwalk** Santa Cruz, Calif.

A seasonal tradition returns to Santa Cruz with the Santa Cruz Holiday Lights Train. Vintage excursion cars, adorned with thousands of colorful lights, roll through

▶ See HOLIDAYS, page 12



SeaWorld Orlando officials have created offerings for all ages during this year's Sea World's Christmas Celebration, being held on select dates through Dec. 31. The holiday celebrations have been in full swing since November 23. The festivities feature a live nativity scene production (above) and Shamu's Christmas Miracles (below).

**COURTESY SEAWORLD ORLANDO** 



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#### **HOLIDAYS**

#### Continued from page 11

city streets past homes of Santa Cruz. Revelers may join in a sing-along or sip hot-spiced cider, listen to musical entertainment, and enjoy a visit from Santa. The trip takes 60 minutes.

The merriment continues at Santa's Kingdom at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk. Ticket holders have a choice of one activity: "Holiday" miniature golf, laser tag, or arcade games. The activity ticket is included with the Holiday Lights Train ticket price.

Santa Cruz Holiday Lights Trains depart and return in front of Neptune's Kingdom on the Boardwalk of Santa Cruz.

The holiday celebration at Santa Cruz began this year on November 29 and lasts through December 23 on select dates.

#### Silver Dollar City Branson, Mo.

Silver Dollar City's An Old Time Christmas transforms the 1880s-style park into an evening wonderland, featuring the Christmas on Main Street light and sound show, 1,000 decorated Christmas trees, a Holiday Light Parade, two Broadway-style productions, festive holiday foods and over five million lights, along with rides.

In temperatures down to 42 degrees, guests can soar into the night while viewing the park's lights from above.

The holiday celebration began November 2 and runs through December 30 on select dates.

A five-story special effects Christmas tree is the park centerpiece. The towering icon comes to life at dusk each evening when the Christmas on Main Street shows begins. During the shows, the tree blazes in synchronization to the musical movements of Christmas songs with up to 100 light changes per second. This, while lights on buildings, in hanging canopies over Main Street and on Christmas trees around the Square flash along with it, accompanied by surround-sound, create a very popular holiday experience.

There are 100 demonstrating craftsmen on hand offering unique handmade holiday items, from blown glass ornaments, angels and snowmen to pottery dessert platters and



The seasonal tradition Santa Cruz Holiday Lights has returned to Santa Cruz for another year. The train, which departs and returns from Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, takes passengers on a 60-minute tour of Santa Cruz. Adorned with thousands of lights, the vintage excursion cars offer singing, entertainment, a visit from Santa and hot spiced cider. COURTESY SANTA CRUZ BEACH BOARDWALK

Scotch pine scented candles.

Guests wanting to sing Christmas carols can do so as they ride the Silver Dollar Steam Train and for nighttime thrills, most of the rides and the park's six roller coasters are open after dark with great views of the lights from above.

#### Busch Gardens Williamsburg, Va.

Officials at Busch Gardens Williamsburg invite guests of the 2013 Christmas Town event to sip on the signature peppermint fudge hot chocolate while strolling through Christmas Town's latest addition, Holiday Hills, a nostalgic vision of mid-20th-century Christmas traditions complete with tin toys and miles of garland.

Christmas Town, Busch Gardens holiday celebrations, began November 22 and will run through December 31.

Attractions abound in the park. Some of those are: the park's 50-foot tall, light-animated Christmas tree; Mistletoe Marketplace, an outdoor marketplace offering handmade items made by local artisans; Polar Pathway, which turns the park's Escape from Pompeii area into a waterfall of lights; Ice Palace: A Penguin Paradise, which offers lights, snow, and an up-close encounter with live penguins; Santa's Fireside Feast, an intimate experience for families visiting with Santa and Mrs. Claus and includes a buffet dinner; and Santa's Workshop, which offers the young ones an opportunity to sit on Santa's lap

and pose for photos.

There are about 20 rides operating and re-themed for the holidays.

Guests also may enjoy several live performances including "Deck the Halls," "Gloria!," "Miracles," and "O Tannenbaum."

#### Hersheypark Hershey, Pa.

The magic of the holidays comes to life at Hersheypark Christmas Candylane. With two million twinkling lights, rides for all ages, festive decorations, and Hershey's Product Characters decked out in their holiday best, there is something for all to enjoy.

Among special features are: the Christmas show, A Rockin' Music Box Christmas; a visit by Santa's reindeer; quaint village shops; an array of holiday foods; special holiday gifts given to ZooAmerica animals; and an opportunity for children to decorate their own holiday treats.

In addition, there are over 30 rides operating during the festivities that began November 29 and runs through December 27.

## Legoland California Carlsbad, Calif.

During Holiday Snow Days and Winter Nights, Legoland's Fun Town transforms into a winter wonderland where families throw snowballs at Lego-themed targets and build snowmen using Lego accessories. The park uses 50 tons of real snow

▶ See HOLIDAYS, page 13

#### **HOLIDAYS**

#### Continued from page 12

during the holiday celebration, which began November 29 and will run through December 31.

New this year, children can enjoy their first snow-tubing experience gliding down seven-foot tall snow-covered tube runs.

Park guests can also sing along with holiday entertainment including live musicals including Lego Friends Live, Jingle Jammers, the Big Test Holiday show and the Holiday Character Dance Party!

Holiday Snow Days continue with the lighting of the world's largest Lego Christmas tree.

The 30-foot tall Christmas tree is created out of more than 245,000 forest green Duplo bricks and is adorned with more than 400 Lego ornaments.

A surprise celebrity guest will pull the switch that lights the tree during the annual tree lighting ceremony on December 2.

Fireworks spark each night Dec. 26-30.

Other festivities include

holiday treats such as Bavarian Bratwursts, buttery mash potatoes, sweet potato fries, churros, warm spiced apple cider, and holiday cookies. All delicious treats are available for purchase throughout the celebration.

#### Six Flags Ent. Corp. Grand Prairie, Texas

Several Six Flags parks bring holiday festivities to their guests. Six Flags Over Texas, Arlington; Six Flags Fiesta Texas, San Antonio; and Six Flags Discover King, Vallejo, Calif., all hold Holiday in the Park. It started this year on November 29 and will run through January 5.

Holiday celebrations include dazzling lights and decorations, holiday themed shows, caroling, gifts and traditional and non-traditional seasonal foods and beverages.

Six Flags Great Escape Lodge and Indoor Water Park, Lake George, N.Y., holds a Holiday in the Lodge celebration with thousands of glimmering lights, a 25-foot tall Christmas tree, caroling, holiday themed shows and activities and visits from Santa and Mrs. Claus, as well water fun in the indoor waterpark. This celebration began November 29 and will run through December 29.

#### Stone Mountain Park Atlanta, Ga.

Stone Mountain Park offers patrons visiting during the holidays the glow of more than two million lights, festive music and visits from holiday characters, including the famous red-nosed reindeer.

The festivities began November 9 and will continue through January 1.

New for 2013 is Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer joining the popular park characters to greet visitors and create many photo opportunities.

Live shows abound including: Forever Christmas, with Christmas songs of the past and present; Holly Jolly Cabaret; Toyrific!; and A Crossroads Christmas Carol.

The Polar Express 4-D Experience, a state-of-the-art movie tradition, is back as always and rides will be operating during the daytime.

The park offers a variety of holiday foods.



Above, fireworks each night Dec. 26-30, and this 30-foot tall Christmas tree made from 245,000 forest green Duplo bricks are just part of the festivities at Legoland California Resort, Carlsbad, Calif. Below, at Stone Mountain Park, Atlanta, this view of the Crossroads area of the park offers patrons the glow of more than two million lights.

COURTESY LEGOLAND and STONE MOUNTAIN PARK





## Maurer spinning coaster opens at Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk





The Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk opened Undertow, a new spinning coaster supplied by Maurer Söhne. Perched atop the Boardwalk's bumper car pavilion, **Undertow features 1,410** feet of track and a peak height of 50 feet farther above the building's roof. **COURTESY SCBB** 

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. The Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk announced in October that its new Undertow spinning roller coaster had passed inspections and would be running weekends on a limited schedule for the remainder of the 2013 season. An official opening will be scheduled for Spring 2014.

"We surprised our guests with a sneak preview [in October] and the response was fantastic, " said Boardwalk spokesman Kris Reyes. "People are very excited to discover that every ride on Undertow is different. We think this is a great new ride for our park."

Undertow utilizes individual cars each holding four riders seated back-toback in pairs. The ride experience changes every time, depending on the weight and position of riders in the car. The ride features 1,410 feet of track and maximum height of 50 feet. The spinning cars reach a top speed of 40 mph as they negotiate the compact course.

Manufactured by German coaster specialist Maurer Söhne, Undertow is the only spinning coaster in Northern California. Undertow took over the location previously occupied by the SDC-built Hurricane steel coaster, which was moved to Western Play-

"As is the case with most new amusement park rides, there may be some unexpected ride delays during operating hours for the first few weekends," added Reyes.

The ride was delayed in opening due to the ride having to adapt to several California safety codes which exceed even the strictest of

#### **FAST FACTS**

Name/Park

Undertow/ Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, Santa Cruz, Calif.

#### **Type**

Compact steel spinning coaster

Height/Length/Speed 50 feet/1,410/feet/40 mph

#### **Ride Vehicles**

Seven individual cars seating two riders each in pairs back-to-back

#### Supplier

Maurer Söhne Munich, Germany

#### Cost/Opened

\$5.5 million/October 2013

codes required by Germany's TUV and ASTM in the

## Sesame Place planning largest financial investment in 2014

LANGHORNE, Pa. - Sesame Place will open its furriest land ever in May 2014 - Cookie's Monster Land. As part of the park's largest financial investment to date, Cookie Monster will serve as host to all of his monster friends in this colorful and imaginative new land featuring five rides, a three-story net climb and a soft play area for the park's youngest visitors.

The new Cookie's Monster Land will include:

- •Two new rides supplied by Italian manufacturer Zamperla: Cookie's High C's Adventure and Oscar's Rotten Rusty Rockets.
- •Two existing Zamperla rides currently in the park are being re-themed: Flying Cookie Jars and Monster Mix-Up.
- •One ride coming from sister park Busch Gardens Tampa Bay: The Honker Dinger Derby. Originally manufactured by Tivoli, the park is working with Premier Rides on the installation process.
- Two original soft play designs/created in conjunction with VOA: Monster Clubhouse and Mini Monster Clubhouse.

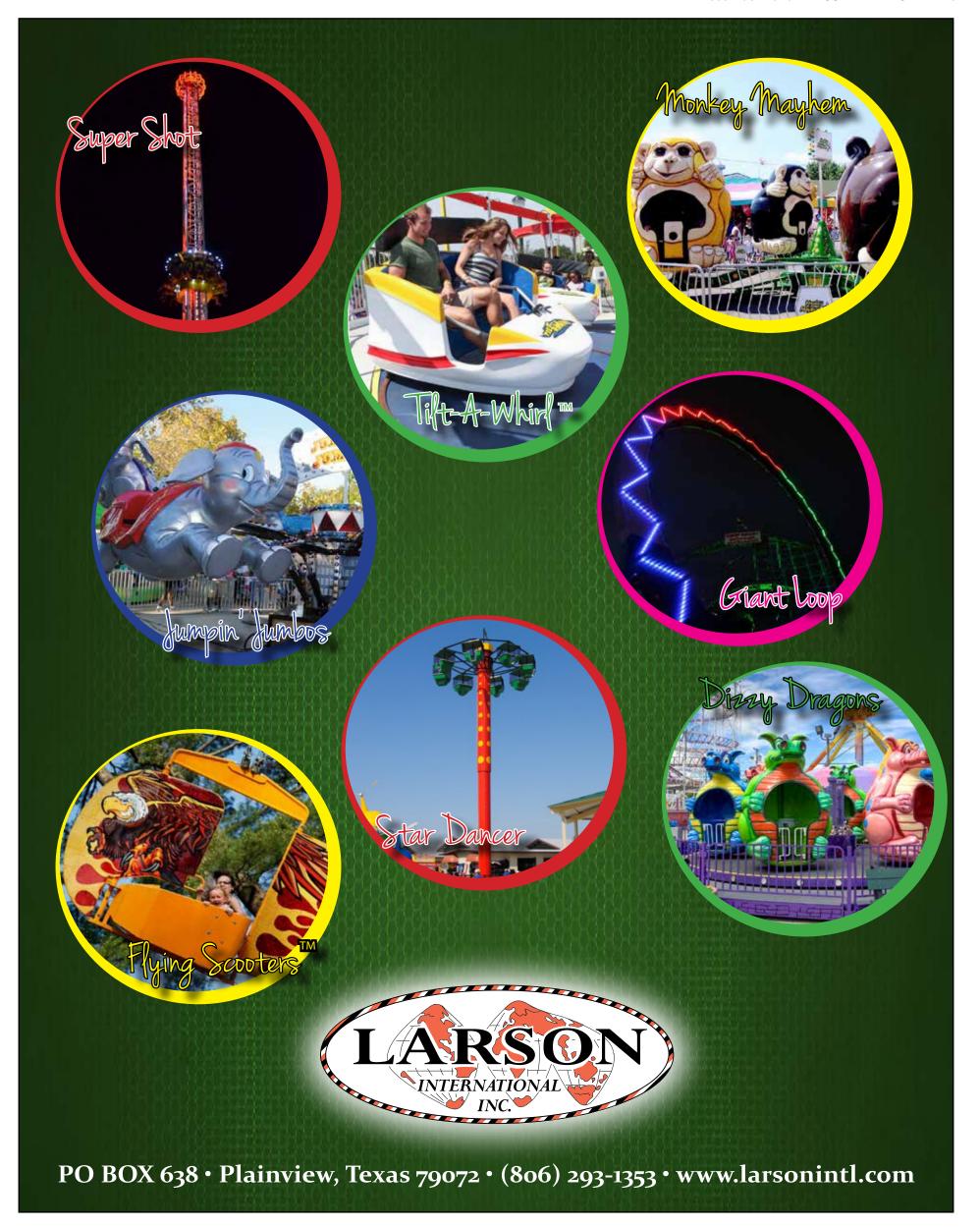
In addition to the new rides and attractions, children can take home their cherished memories with Cookie Monster, Elmo, and all of their monster friends in the refreshed 1-2-3 Smile with Me! photo location. Also, families can satisfy their appetites at Cookie's Sometimes Anytime Food Market, which will be serving an expanded menu of grab-and-go meal options.

Grand opening celebration for the expansion is slated for May 2014.



Sesame Place will open the new Cookie's Monster Land in 2014. Touted as the park's largest financial investment to date, this major expansion will feature five rides tailored for children and two new soft play areas. Additionally, the park will offer the refreshed 1-2-3 Smile with Me! photo location and Sometimes Anytime Food Market. COURTESY SESAME PLACE







# The Bat takes flight again at Kings Island

KINGS ISLAND, Ohio -Thirty-three years ago, Kings Island's guests were captivated by The Bat, a prototype suspended roller coaster designed and built by industry pioneer Arrow Development Company. First introduced in 1981, this wonderfully entertaining ride flew sporadically for three seasons until finally being retired in 1983. Since then, guests fortunate enough to have ridden The Bat continue to lament its departure.

In homage to that great ride, Kings Island plans to resurrect its enigmatic spirit in



2014 with the re-branding of the park's Flight Deck coaster into The Bat. A product of Arrow Dynamics (Arrow Development's successor), Flight Deck (aka Top Gun from KI's Paramount days) is a secondgeneration suspended coaster that has thrilled riders since 1993. Sporting an action-



Kings Islands will pay homage to one of the great rides of its past by re-branding its Flight Deck (seen here as Top Gun) suspended roller coaster into The Bat in 2014. The Bat was a first-generation suspended coaster produced by industry pioneer Arrow Development. Similar to the color scheme of its namesake, the 'new' Bat will feature orange track with two shades of charcoal for the support columns and structure along with trains painted black.

COURTESY KINGS ISLAND

packed 2,352-foot-long layout spread over undulating terrain, the popular coaster celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2013, giving its 20-millionth ride in June.

Kings Island officials are well aware of the The Bat's near-mythical status. "There was a lot of passion and enthusiasm around this name change by our guests," said Kings Island's Vice President and General Manager Greg Scheid. "They told us this is a name they wanted us to bring back. We listened and we're excited our guests will again be able to fly The Bat at Kings Island in 2014.

"The name also fits the

characteristics of the ride. Similar to a bat in flight, riders soar through the air, swooping, circling and diving unexpectedly as they enjoy this ride."

When it opens next spring, The Bat will feature a new color scheme similar to that which graced its namesake - orange track with two shades of charcoal for the support columns and structure. Appropriately, the seven-car trains will be painted black.

The Bat is one of 14 roller coasters at Kings Island. It will share its wooded valley with the new record-breaking Banshee, a B&M inverted coaster set to debut in 2014.

#### track and vehicle patents, Vekoma built three other units, which it calls the Swinging ARROW INSTALLATIONS The Bat

Kings Island 1981-83 XLR-8

**FAST FACTS** 

Arrow Development/Arrow Dynamics built 10 suspended roll-

er coasters. Unlike the Inverted

coaster, which utilize a ridged

chassis, the true Suspended

Coaster features vehicles that

swing out on the turns and offer a significantly more thrilling

ride experience. Using Arrow

Between 1981 and 1993,

Six Flags AstroWorld 1984-2005

**Big Bad Wolf** Busch Gardens Williamsburg

> Iron Dragon Cedar Point 1987-present

1984-2009

Ninja

Six Flags Magic Mountain 1988-present

Vampire\*

Chessington World of Adventures 1990-present

Vortex

Canada's Wonderland 1991-present

Hayabusa

Tokyo Summerland 1992-2005

**Eagle Fortress** 

Everland 1992-2009 (standing but not operating

Top Gun/Flight Deck/ The Bat

Kings Island 1993-present

#### **VEKOMA INSTALLATIONS Dream Catcher**<sup>3</sup>

Bobbejaanland 1987-present

Centrifuge World Expo Park 1988-88 Moved to Dream World as Sky Coaster\*

1994-present

**Grampus Jet** Mitsui Greenland 1987-present

\* These units have been retrofitted with Vekoma's floorless trains, similar to those used on the Dutch company's Suspended Family Coasters. –AT research Scott Rutherford





Operating sporadically (1981-83), The Bat was Arrow Development's first commercial attempt to create a suspended coaster system. Featuring two lifts, this legendary attraction offered a wild, sometimes terrifying ride experience due to its outrageous aerial acrobatics, particularly the intense spiraling and wicked directional changes. It was eventually replaced with the Arrow-designed Vortex multi-looping coaster, which still occupies The Bat's original boarding sta-

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# Noah's Adventurer replica ark to anchor FEC

Adventure Golf Services creates concept with flood zone, sounds, animated scenes and two interactive mini-golf courses

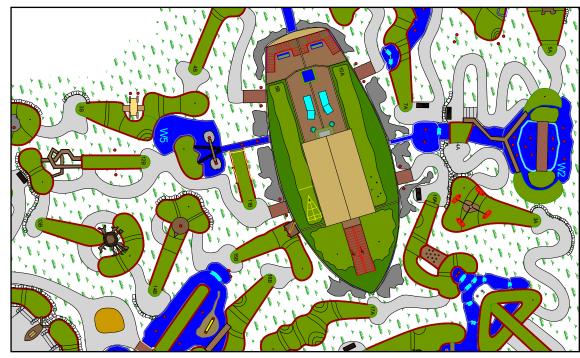
TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. — Adventure Golf Services returns to owning and operating themed Family Entertainment Centers with the launch of Noah's Adventure P-Ark. The entertainment complex includes an elevated go-kart track and large game room.

"Noah's Adventurer, a 100-foot-long by 40-foot-wide three-deck cruise ship anchors Noah's P-Ark and is the brainchild of my father Arne Lundmark, CEO and chief designer," said Scott Lundmark. "The ship is part of two interactive, ADA compliant miniature golf courses, and features 12 golf holes themed around various cruise ship activities.

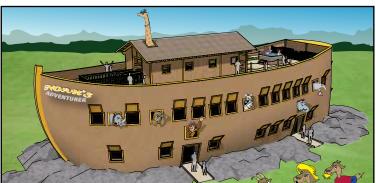
"Scheduled for launch in 2014, Noah's P-Ark Traverse City is the first location selected for what will be a chain of FECs based on the Noah's P-Ark theme, all of which will provide a full range of indoor and outdoor entertainment customized to each market," said Scott.

To launch and develop the international chain of FECs, the Lundmarks have joined with past IAAPA Chairman Bob Masterson, the former president of Ripley Entertainment, who will assist with operations, development and site selection. Scott Lundmark views Noah's as an ideal anchor for large residential or tourist market entertainment centers, or as free standing miniature golf courses. "We also believe this is the ideal vehicle for zoos to generate interest in specific animals, sell more souvenirs, increase per capita spending and length of stay," added Lundmark

For more information, visit: www.adventuregolfand fun. com.



Adventure Golf Services returns to owning and operating themed Family Entertainment Centers with the launch of Noah's Adventure P-Ark. The FEC includes an elevated go-kart track and large game room. The complex is anchored by Noah's Adventurer, a three-deck ark. COURTESY ADVENTURE GOLF









# **WATERPARKS & RESORTS**

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RECREATION

# WWA show attendees enjoy warmth of West Palm Beach

WEST PALM BEACH, interested in as a waterpark Fla. — The tropical-like temperatures of West Palm Beach, Florida, turned out to be an ideal location for waterpark professionals to meet during the WWA Symposium & Trade Show held Sept. 30 to Oct. 3. The 33rd annual event welcomed approximately 1,500 owners, operators, developers, suppliers and designers; a strong turnout following a season that presented significant weather-related challenges for many parks across the United States and Europe.

"This was a tough year for a lot of parks — probably one of the most difficult in the past decade, but our members know bad seasons come and go and the WWA show is a one-of-a-kind opportunity to come together as an industry to solve problems, craft solutions and get inspired," said WWA President Rick Root. "Our first-time venue of West Palm Beach provided a great backdrop for the fresh collection of sessions, inspiring keynotes and an exhibit hall filled with innovative products."

This year, attendees came from parks large and small, public and private, indoor and outdoor, from all over the world driving growth of close to 10 percent in international attendance. Active leisure markets were represented from 25 countries.

"The overall conference was top notch," said Mark N. Abdo, aquatics supervisor for the City of Largo, Florida. "Sessions were as diverse as the people and countries represented creating a wonderful networking experience."

"I really love the WWA show. It zeros in on what I am owner," said Fred Kenney, president, Roseville Golfland. "The seminars are excellent. I always feel like we are hearing from the best of the best."

"The WWA Show always gives us the opportunity to stay on top of the latest industry trends, make key industry contacts and solidify relationships with customers; and they proved it again in West Palm Beach," said Evelyn Hernandez, regional sales director, Rain Drop.



#### WWA exhibit hall sees increase in number of exhibitors

The 2013 WWA Trade Show featured 100,000 square feet of exhibit space with 349

booths, an increase in the number of exhibitors from last year's show in Las Vegas. New this year, exhibitors were offered the chance to promote their services and book appointments via the WWA's show microsite, WWASHOW. org, which featured a Who's Exhibiting page, showcasing each company's logo, profile and contact information.

The following companies were awarded for their creative and impactful exhibits at the show:

- •Best One-Booth Category: Joe Bonk Jewels, Ormond Beach, Fla.;
- •Best Two-Booth Category: Lonza Microbial Control, Alpharetta, Ga.;
- •Best Four-Booth Category: Emerald FX, Norwalk,
- •Best Eight-Booth Category: ProSlide Technology, Inc., Ottawa, Ontario, and
- •Best of Show: WhiteWater West Industries Ltd., Richmond, British Columbia.
  - ▶ See WWA, page 20

## WWA announces 2013 Wave Review winners

Key (winner listed in order, based

- on annual attendance)
- a) Up to 100,000 annual attendance
- b) 100,000 to 250,000 annual attendance
- c) 250,000 & up annual attendance

#### **Billboard**

- a) Family Aquatic Center at Chandler Park, Detroit, Mich.
- b) Mountain Creek Waterpark, Vernon, N.J.
- c) Hyland Hills Water World, Federal Heights, Colo.

#### **Brochure**

- a) Splash Universe Water Park Resort, Dundee, Mich.
- b) Myrtle Waves Water Park, Myrtle Beach, S.C.
- c) Zoombezi Bay, Powell, Ohio

#### **Direct Mail**

- a) Zoom Flume Water Park, East Durham, N.Y.
- b) The Pump House at Jay Peak, Jay, Vt.
- c) Aquatica San Antonio, San Antonio, Texas

#### **Email Campaign**

- a) The Beach Waterpark, Mason, Ohio
- b) Fallsview Waterpark, Ontario, Canada
- c) Aquatica San Antonio, San Antonio, Texas

#### **Poster**

- a) Andy Alligator's Water Park, Norman, Okla.
- b) Golfland Sunsplash, Mesa, Ariz.
- c) Kalahari Resorts, Wisconsin Dells, Wis.

#### **Print Media**

a) Soaring Eagle Waterpark & Hotel, Mt. Pleasant, Mich.

- b) Mountain Creek Waterpark, Vernon, N.J.
- c) Beach Park Hotels E Turismo S/A, Aquiraz, Brazil

- a) The Beach Waterpark, Mason, Ohio
- b) Adventure Landing, Jacksonville Beach, Fla.
- c) Great Wolf Lodge, Madison, Wis.

#### **Radio Commercial**

- a) Andy Alligator's Water Park, Norman, Okla. (tie)
- a) The Beach Waterpark, Mason, Ohio (tie)
- b) Breakwater Beach Waterpark, Seaside Heights, N.J.
- b) Beach Park Hotels E Turismo S/A, Aquiraz, Brazil

#### **Social Media Campaign**

- a) The Beach Waterpark, Mason, Ohio
- b) Wave Die Wörgler Wasserwelt, Worgl, Austria
- c) Yas Waterworld Abu Dhabi, Abu Dhabi, U.A.E.

#### **TV Commerical**

- a) Soaring Eagle Waterpark & Hotel, Mt. Pleasant, Mich.
- b) The Pump House at Jay Peak, Jay, Vt.
- c) Kalahari Resorts, Wisconsin Dells, Wis.

#### Website

- a) Andy Alligator's Water Park, Norman, Okla.
- b) Wild River Country, North Little Rock, Ark.
- c) Great Wolf Lodge, Madison, Wis.

#### YouTube Campaign

- a) Andy Alligator's Water Park, Norman, Okla.
- b) Adventure Landing, Jacksonville Beach, Fla.
- c) Beach Park Hotels E Turismo S/A, Aquiraz, Brazil





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#### **WWA**

Continued from page 19

## WWA's education program exceeds expectations

The WWA has a long history of providing the best in water leisure training and education. Owners, operators and developers looking for ways to build business, make improvements in their operations and develop their teams walked away from the WWA Show with an abundance of new ideas on everything from safety to revenue generation, maintenance, marketing and more.

This 2013 WWA program offered a strong mix of topics addressing longer term planning strategies as well as issues effecting day-to-day operations such as risk management, hiring, training, and legislative issues. Sessions included a panel on the soon-to-be-released Model Aquatic Health Code, the new WWA University: Waterpark Maintenance School and the updated WWA University: Food &

Beverage School; both workshops featured speakers from key parks like Disney, Wet 'n Wild Orlando, SplashDown Beach, Aquatica, and Raging Waters among others,

"Once again our slate of speakers really delivered an outstanding mix of fresh ideas and time-tested best practices," said Chris Landgrave, chairman of the WWA Education Committee. "It was clear how much our attendees were engaged with the topics by listening to their active participation in the classroom."

Best speaker awards went to Lake White, Starfish Aquatics Institute and Judith Leblein Josephs, Judith Leblein Josephs Enterprises LLC.

#### WWA board presents Industry Awards and the Hall of Fame inductees

The Board Awards and Hall of Fame inductee recognition are always a highlight of the show. Each year the board recognizes member contributions in a variety of areas significant to the industry's success such as: dedication to guest and employee safety; excellence in leadership; innovation and creativity in designing new themes and attractions; and the development of standards that raise the bar for the industry overall.

"We believe that people in our industry need more recognition for all the amazing things that they do to bring joy to the lives of their guests and clients in the safest manner possible on a daily basis," said Jim Basala, chairman of the WWA's board of directors.

The WWA inducted six individuals into the WWA Hall of Fame, which honors the water leisure industry's most important visionary pioneers and innovators. This year's honorees were:

- •Gary Bennett, Princeton Development, Inc.;
- Phil Dexter, Big Surf Waterpark;
- •Bob and Billye Henry, Schlitterbahn Waterparks;
- •Randy Mendioroz, Aquatic Design Group, Inc. and
- •Ricardo Castillo Sinibaldi, IRTRA.

The WWA Board of Directors Awards recognized the exceptional accomplishments of 21 recipients in 2013 including:

•Al Turner Memorial Commitment to Excellence Award: The Aragona Family, Zoom Flume Water Park, East Durham, N.Y.; Santokh Singh Chawla, Polo Rak Amusement LLC, Ras Al Khaimah, U.A.E.; Kristie Moses, Sage Hospitality CoCo Key Resort, Orlando,

• Executive Board Award: Matt Boyd, Whale's Tale Waterpark, Lincoln, N.H.; Sasha Mateer, Deep River Waterpark, Crown Point, Ind.; Chris Swartz, NRH20 Family Water Park, North Richland Hills, Texas.

•Kelly Ogle Memorial Safety Award: Tony Hacker, Golfland Entertainment Centers, Mesa, Ariz.; Mike Howard, Coney Island, Cincinnati, Ohio.

•Leading Edge Award:
Alpamare & ProSlide Technology Inc. for their work on Splash & Spa Tamaro; Kinston/Lenoir County Parks & Recreation and Avalanche Waterslides, Inc., Family Fun Corporation and Water Technology, Inc. for their work on Lions Water Adventure; Nagashima Resort & WhiteWater West Industries Ltd. for the



Above, WWA show attendees took advantage of the many seminars, including this educational seminar, during the annual meeting. Below, the trade show floor provided an opportunity for park owners and operators to visit one on one with key waterpark suppliers.

COURTESY WWA



Boomerang Twist at Nagashima Resort

• Emerging Leaders Employee of the Year Award: Melanie Alline, NRH20 Family Water Park, North Richland Hills, Texas; Mercedes Brunner, Adventure Landing, Jacksonville Beach, Fla.; Matthew Stevens, SplashDown Beach Water Park, Fishkill, N.Y.; Huntington Wozniak, The Wave Waterpark, Vista, Calif.

•And, new for 2013, Cailee Hepler, Breakers Water Park, Marana, Ariz. was given the Emerging Leaders, Heroes Among Us Award; awarded to a part-time or seasonal employee working at a seasonal or year-round facility who played an integral role in an event, inside or outside the park, that impacted guests or the local community in a significant way.

#### **Wave Review Awards**

Recipients of WWA's popular Wave Review marketing competition were also recognized during the Keynote Session. Winners' work represented successful marketing campaigns from small public-sector facilities to large

corporately owned waterparks. New this year, WWA instituted an award category for YouTube campaigns.

"So many of our members are using YouTube and social media outlets in brilliant ways," said Aleatha Ezra, director of park member development. "It's always fun to see so many different creative approaches to building relationships with waterpark customers"

See all the Wave Review winners in sidebar box, page 19

#### WWA returns to Las Vegas

The association announced that it will welcome attendees back to Las Vegas, the "entertainment capital of the world," in 2014.

"Vegas offers a unique combination of excitement, entertainment and glitz and our attendees are always excited when we get to go back," said Root. The WWA show will be headquartered at the Paris Las Vegas, which features its own convention center and is centrally located to some of the hottest spots on the Strip.







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## Public-private 'micro-waterparks' prove popular

## Service, civic alliances drive Hawaiian Falls founder David Busch

**STORY:** Dean Lamanna

dlamanna@amusementtodav.com

LAS COLINAS. Texas Most amusement innovators view success as a measure of patents, park attendance and profits. For David Busch, founder and president of Hawaiian Falls waterparks, first and foremost is seeing how much his properties can strengthen family bonds, build employee character and effect positive change in the commu-

The industry veteran has

#### **FAST FACTS**

Company

Hawaiian Falls Entertainment operates Hawaiian Falls Water Parks and Adventure Parks 3100 Premier Drive, Suite 200 Las Colinas, Texas 75056 (972) 382-7885 Email: info@hfalls. com Website: www.hfalls.com

> **Key Management** David Busch, Founder & CEO Pamela Wesley VP of Finance **Evan Barnett** Regional VP Steve Mayer

Central Texas Regional Dir. **Don Nava** 

People Development Dir./Life Fitness

**Steve Bushing** VP of New Construction **Clint Hill** North Texas Regional Dir.

Mike Prince VP of Construction

Skip Wallace Dir. of Sales

**Full Time/Seasonal Employees** 45/1,500

#### **Parks**

(year opened; all Texas locations) Garland (2003) 11 acres, 20 attractions The Colony (2004) 12 acres, 22 attractions Mansfield (2008) 12 acres, 25 attractions Roanoke (2011) 10 acres, 18 attractions Waco (2012) 14 acres, 20 attractions Pflugerville (2014)

White Settlement (2014) 16 acres, 30 attractions —Source: Hawaiian Falls

23 acres, 40 attractions



applied both a faith-based operations approach and publicprivate financing to his Texasbased amusement enterprises since 2003. With waterparks in Garland, The Colony, Mansfield, Roanoke and Waco, plus two water / year-round action park projects representing a \$38 million investment expected to open near Fort Worth and Austin next spring and another \$40 million venture planned for Elk Grove, Calif., the Hawaiian Falls business model has proven a solid one.

Busch, 63, has been in the industry long and lucratively enough to have retired several times by now. In 1973, as a recent journalism graduate, the Wheaton, Mo., native landed in Kansas City at Worlds of Fun, which was owned by his former employer, Lamar Hunt, who also owned the Kansas City Chiefs football team. Busch established and ran the park's marketing department during the next 13 years.

In 1986, Busch and his brother, having launched a new company called Family Recreation Enterprises with a financial partner, sold everything and relocated their families to Sacramento, Calif., where they had purchased a bankrupt waterpark. They parlayed their success with that property into the acquisition of two Phoenix waterparks, Waterworld and Big Surf — both later sold and, in Northern California, built a family entertainment center and another waterpark. The company divested of its remaining properties and dissolved in 1996 when its Kansas City-based financial partner decided to exit.

Busch kicked around Sacramento for a couple years, mostly being a dad to his three young children and doing nonprofit work. Then, a friend asked him to help build and manage a waterpark on Oahu, Hawaii, that became Hawaiian Waters (today, it's Wet 'n' Wild Hawaii). By the early

2000s, Busch found himself rehooked by the business of fun.

Today, the entrepreneur splits his time between his home in El Dorado Hills, Calif., and tending to his parks, employees and several hundred thousand patrons in North Texas. "Who knew that I would ever be in this business?" said Busch, recalling his youthful fascination with carnivals and the now-defunct Fairyland Park in Kansas City. "Here, it turns out, it's been my life."

Amusement Today spoke with Busch about his journey.

Your participation in the Hawaiian Waters project on Oahu re-ignited your passion for the industry. What did you want to do differently?

Waterpark projects are hard to get approved and financed, and they have an impact on neighborhoods. But I always wondered what could make them easier.

So I thought, "What if we cut the same concept down to seven acres?" You'd still have all the attractions, but rather than a 20- or 30-acre facility, you'd have more of a seven- to 10-acre facility. It would bring down your break-even levels and perhaps allow you to partner with cities that have a need for it. The micro-waterpark concept came out of that.

With our first project in Garland, the city's aquatic facilities were lacking and it was looking for some ways to offer cooler summer activities. That was in August 2002, and by that November, we had negotiated a 50-year lease and gotten construction underway. We opened Memorial Day of 2003 and since then we've done four more.

#### How has the public-private micro-waterpark model been mutually beneficial?

The timing is always important. In the mid-1990s and even before, cities were flush with cash and were able to build their own aquatic centers. And they could withstand a few hundred thousand dollars in annual operating losses. These facilities really don't act as an economic generator or catalyst — they're for the local community and don't employ a lot of people.



Hawaiian Falls Founder and President David Busch (far right) with wife Julie and son Brian. Creating a positive impact on families and communities is the overriding mission of Busch's park operations. COURTESY HAWAIIAN FALLS

In recent years, cities have struggled to keep such facilities funded, and we found that there was a need. They were saying, "If we're going to spend this kind of money on an aquatic center, let's get some bang out of it and have it pay for itself." So that's really where we find ourselves these days. The communities are contacting us and saying, "We've got this flat, rectangular aquatic center. Would you guys be interested in either taking it over or partnering with us to make it into more of

a waterpark?"

You briefly considered bringing on a financial partner last summer. What led you to this, and then what led you away from it?

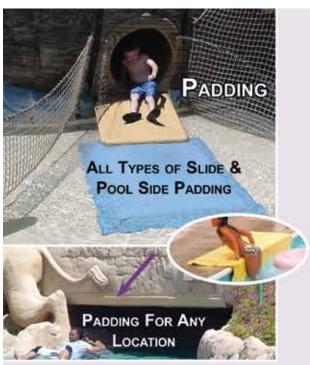
The last few years, we've geared up our infrastructure to handle significant growth doubling from five parks to 10 parks. Bringing in a partner would help us recover some costs. A partner would find the public-private arrangement attractive, too, because there would be less capital invest-

▶ See BUSCH, page 24



Hawaiian Falls' leadership recently held a corporate retreat at Moody Gardens in Galveston, Texas, including (front row, left to right) Clint Hill, regional director — North Texas; Evan Barnett, regional vice president; Pamela Wesley, vice president of finance; David Busch, CEO; and Don Nava, director of people development and Life Fitness.

**COURTESY DAVID ALVEY** 









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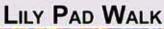
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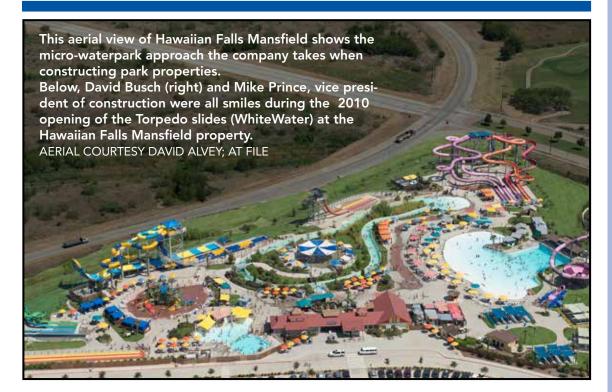
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#### **BUSCH**

#### Continued from page 22

ment needed.

We found a couple of really wonderful (potential) partners... but it occurred to us that, even with initial synergy, partnerships eventually break up. We love our model and what we stand for, and the fact we're dedicated to families. We put families ahead of money every day — our family of employees as well as the families that are our guests. Many times, that's just not the motivation for a business partner.

At the end of the day, we weren't comfortable with it. This isn't a business for us, it's a mission.

## How is this reflected in your company culture?

It's about serving others. We really train the servant leadership concept, and my job is to serve and to make the job of our general managers and staff the best it can be — and to help them reach their potential. We regularly award and recognize people who maintain this attitude.

A great example is our program called Top 1. It stands for 'the other person first." All of our staff, including me, wears a plain orange wristband. And it is up to every one of us during the day to do a simple act of kindness — whether it's for a guest, an employee, a spouse or a child. When that happens, you turn the wristband over and it says, "Hawaiian Falls Top 1." It's one of those peer things where everybody says, "Hey, did you get your wristband turned over? What did you do?"

This idea of kindness and consideration just melts my heart. And it's an initiative we continue to refine. Two days a week, we have voluntary in-service for our employees where we have speakers on character, integrity, honesty — those immutable values that allow humanity to keep moving forward.

## How does your faith influence your management style?

I gave my life to Christ. Christian values form the belief system with which we operate the parks.

One of the (potential) investment groups we talked to was based in New York and, and it was clear they weren't used to the kind of conversation we were having. They said, "Wait a minute — are you a cult?" (laughs) They were looking out for their investors and were a little worried.

It's really basic human values that we try to represent. We want to make every guest feel warm and comfortable in our parks while providing them the opportunity to escape their everyday life.

## What else shapes your decision-making?

We have about 100 customers in our secret shopper / mom's council. It's a mix of season pass holders and people from all demographics who have complained or had some kind of concern about our parks. They tell us about the good, the bad and ugly of our operations, and we're happy for that feedback.

Where do you feel the company needs improvement?

We know our market is



children age three to 14 and their moms. But we've found that only about 50 percent of the kids within five miles of our parks have attended. We've got to do something about that.

The world has changed so much in terms of how to reach, inform and motivate people. So we're racing rapidly toward the social and digital (marketing) model.

# What do you love most about working in this industry?

Seeing our employees grow, and seeing the families as they come through the parks — their excitement and the memories that have been made. It's very satisfying to know that you can help bring families together.

Growing people, impacting communities — that's why I'm on this earth. So far, nothing has made me think otherwise



**Splashdown Quaywest** waterpark in Paignton, England, had a record number of visitors for the 2013 summer season. More than 60,000 guests walked through the gates — a 42 percent increase over the previous year's season. **Jackie Richmond**, group marketing manager for Splashdown waterparks, said, "This has been a bumper year for us. We are, of course, affected by the weather, and this year in a very positive way, but we have also benefited from the continuing 'staycation' trend and also the massive improvement in the marketing of the English Riviera as a holiday destination by the English Riviera Tourism Company, since we've been operating down here. We're very pleased."

**Jon Lees**, operations manager at Splashdown Quaywest, added: "There has been a real drive this year to focus on the visitor experience. This year we've launched a dance party night and a seasonal evening restaurant offer. We want to give families a unique, enjoyable and memorable experience when visiting us."

A state-of-the-art indoor waterpark has opened in war-torn **Kabul, Afghanistan**. Four local Afghan businessmen pooled their cash and built the 24,760-square-foot facility at a cost equivalent to U.S. \$5 million. The price of admission is about 500 Afghanis (U.S.\$9) and although the average wage is U.S. \$50 a week, a thriving middle class can afford such diversions. Although offering a new form of escape with towering slides, whirlpool, sauna, huge wave pool and restaurants, guests are still reminded that the park is in Afghanistan. An armed guard at the door performs a full body search, and the clientele is almost all male. Most women still wear a head to toe burqa and segregation of the sexes and limits of the public activities permissible for women remain the norm.

The new **Splash Zone** at the Military Road caravan park at the West Beach tourist complex in Adelaide, South Australia, is a big hit. The \$500,000 (U.S. \$475,000) is the first waterplay area within a caravan (RV) park in Australia, and the 350 square meters is open only to those staying in the park. The Splash Zone play area, with its heated water, provides children with alternative to the park's swimming pool, and the nearby ocean beach. It's much safer for the children and parents can sit back in lounge chairs surrounding the Splash Zone and enjoy some reading and relaxation time.

The City Council of Garden Grove, California, has approved a subsidy of at least \$69 million in public funds and land to Great Wolf Lodge for the construction of a new facility just 10 minutes from **Disneyland**. The complete project, totaling \$300 million includes a 600-room resort along with 18,000 square feet of retail space and Great Wolf's largest indoor waterpark in the United States. The developer, Coloradobased McWhinney Enterprises, will receive \$5 million when construction begins, along with a parcel of land valued at \$22 million. Once the project is complete, the city will then pay the developer another \$42 million. The target date for completion is June 30, 2015 — which coincides with the 60th anniversary of Disneyland. The hotel is expected to generate \$8 million annually in bed taxes for the city, based on an average room rate of \$350 and 70 percent occupancy throughout the year. If accurate, Garden Grove will break even on its investment in 8.5 years.

**Piratesville**, the splash pad at Byerly Park in Hartsville, South Carolina, turned a profit of more than \$18,000 during its first season, generating total revenue of \$65,000. City officials had anticipated the park would break even with operating expenses and revenues both in the \$47,500 range, particularly since the July 4 opening was more than six weeks later than originally scheduled.

**Phil Gardner**, director of parks and leisure services for the city said he was pleased that the numbers exceeded expectations. "The number of people that came out was phenomenal," Gardner said. "We had people come from out of town; we had people come from out of state."

The splash pad was built at a cost of just over \$615,000 Gardner said. The city used \$428,000 in unreserved funds from the city's hospitality tax.

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MyMagic+

# Disney's new MyMagic+ testing at Walt Disney World Resort

During a visit to Walt Disney World Resort in early October, AT had the opportunity to be part of the ongoing test phase for Disney's MyMagic+, an innovative new program designed to enhance the Disney guest experience like never before.

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

ORLANDO, Fla. - In development for more than five years, the multi-million dollar MyMagic+ is one of Disney's most comprehensive and revolutionary concepts to date. The intent of MyMagic+ is to individualize the entire guest experience by allowing visitors to make the most of their visit. This ranges from booking resort hotel reservations and purchasing tickets to planning dining details and reserving specific times for attractions and other entertainment, in many cases weeks or even months in advance.

AT spoke with Marilyn Waters, Walt Disney World Communications, External about the current status of the MyMagic+ program. "We are in our 'test and adjust' phase, to ensure every aspect is ready for guests," explained Waters.
"Ultimately this will enable us to take personalization and customization to a whole new level and create even more moments that surprise and delight our guests. By testing the many elements of MyMagic+ with our Cast Members and guests at Walt Disney World, we can make adjustments and improvements based on real-time feedback. Like any new offering, MyMagic+ will evolve over time."

And the evolution is well underway. Along with all re-

sort hotel doors already being outfitted with the RFID locks, one of the other most obvious aspects of the program is the gradual replacement of traditional turnstiles at theme park entrances. A swipe of an index finger and a tap of an RFIDenabled Key to the World, Annual Pass or MagicBand, instantly grants one access to the venue.

#### Breaking it down

There are essentially three components to MyMagic+: the My Disney Experience app, the MagicBand and FastPass+.

#### My Disney Experience app

The new website and free mobile app, My Disney Experience, provides a one-stop shop for all things Walt Disney World throughout every phase of a guest's vacation. It enables one to:

- •Obtain information on all Walt Disney World Resort has to offer, from resort hotels and attractions to dining and merchandise.
- •Design the overall experience, planning as much or as little as they wish.
- •Make dining and other reservations.
- •Connect with family and friends to coordinate plans and share photos.
- •Navigate Walt Disney World Resort using the new, enhanced maps.

#### MagicBand

The MagicBand itself is a deceptively simple, lightweight bracelet made of a smooth, hypo-allergenic material that comes in one size and is adjustable for reportedly 95 percent of guests (a section can be peeled away for a small child's wrist). The

"magic" is made possible by RFDI microchips embedded in the band that are read by long and short-range receivers located throughout Walt Disney World.

Available in five colors (red, green, blue, pink and gray), the MagicBands can be customized with the individual names and delivered to a guest's home before arriving at the resort. The fully waterproof MagicBand is an all-in-one device that effortlessly connects all the vacation choices guests make online with My Disney Experience. The MagicBands allow guests to do away with cash, tickets and keys, and permit them to:

•Unlock the door to their

Disney Resort hotel room.

- Enter Walt Disney World theme parks and water parks.
- Purchase food and mer-
- Provide FastPass+ access to the experiences selected and serves as the connection to Disney's PhotoPass.

MagicBands will be available to all guests in coming months when MyMagic+ is fully rolled out.

#### Disney FastPass+

FastPass+ is the next evolution of Disney's original FastPass virtual queuing system, which was first introduced in late 1999. Disney FastPass+ service will allow guests to:

- •Select FastPass+ attractions and entertainment experiences through My Disney Experience before they leave home as well as make changes on the flv.
- •Reserve fireworks and parade viewing areas, shows, Disney Character Greetings and more, in addition to favorite attractions.
- •Choose FastPicks a set of FastPass+ selections that serve as a starting point and give guests the option to customize their selections.

Like its predecessor, Disney FastPass+ service is complimentary and will be included with each theme park

▶ See DISNEY, page 26







#### **DISNEY**

#### Continued from page 25

#### Security

Some people have voiced concerns about how Disney will use the information it collects from visitors. According to Waters, that is the beauty of MyMagic+; it can be tailored to each guest's individual wants and needs, or guests may choose not to be part of the program at all. "You give us as much or as little information as you want to. We have some guests who simply want to show up, buy a ticket and go about their day. While there are others who like to plan everything down the nth degree. We're not tracking your every move through the park as with a GPS," said Waters. "But are we going to know that you rode Space Mountain at 3 p.m. because you had a FastPass? Yes, because that will let us

know what attractions get the busiest at what times. We can then adjust our operations to make it better for everyone."

Extensive measures are in place to protect the privacy of guests and the security of the personal information

they choose to share. Guests' information is not stored on the MagicBand itself. The MagicBands and RF-enabled Key to the World cards contain only a randomly assigned code that securely links to an encrypted database and associates the guest's MagicBand or ticket with the experiences they've selected.

If a MagicBand is lost or stolen, there are a number of ways to limit how it can be used by anyone other than the guest to which it was assigned. For example, to enter the theme parks, biometric scanners compare an image of a guest's fingerprint to the information stored on the MagicBand. And for purchases, the MagicBand can only be used with a private four-digit PIN selected during the device's initial setup.

Jay Rasulo, Walt Disney Company chief financial officer, commenting on how the secure information collected for MyMagic+ will allow Disney to sell "services that we can now offer on a personalized basis, because we know who you are, where you are and — if you tell us why are you are coming to visit Walt Disney World for this vacation —whether you're a first-time visitor, a 50th-time visitor, it is your child's fifth birthday, it is a graduation, it's an anniversary. The more you share with us as a guest, the more we are able to tailor services."

Disney has set no definite date for complete implementation of MyMagic+ at Walt Disney World. But over the next months, testing and tweaking will continue.

#### MyMagic+ will spread

While Walt Disney World will be the first Disney property to receive MyMagic+, the program will eventually be offered at every Disney park around the world. But there



The MagicBands, which feature embedded RFDI microchip technology, come in five colors. If reserved in advance, they can be customized with individual names and delivered to a guest's home prior to departure. AT/DAVID TEMPLETON

are many things to consider before that can happen. Disneyland, for example, is often thought of as a day park while Walt Disney World is a true vacation destination where guests stay up to a week or longer. So, while one facet of MyMagic+ may work well at Walt Disney World, it's not the same fit for Disneyland, or any other park for that matter. Much like MyMagic+ itself, individualization and customization is key. Over time, each property is expected to have its own unique version of the

Walt Disney once said: "Disneyland will never be completed. It will continue to grow as long as there is imagination left in the world." That bold and far-reaching statement continues to hold true in all aspects of the Disney empire. My Magic+ is but another way that Disney's remarkable brand of imagination continues to grow and evolve.



Approximately 16,000 walkers helped raise nearly \$2 million for Children's Hospital of Orange County at the 23rd annual CHOC Walk in the Park at the Disneyland Resort. A total of \$300,000 was donated by the Disneyland Resort, which includes matching funds raised by the Disney VoluntEARS team and pre-event fundraising efforts, including a cast auction. The auction featured items such as an original Autopia vehicle that raised \$10,600. CHOC Walk in the Park has been held at the Disneyland Resort for the past 12 years. The Resort's relationship with CHOC Children's began more than 50 years ago when Walt Disney helped champion the need for a children's hospital in Orange County.

The **Minnesota State Fair** in Falcon Heights, Minn. has unveiled multimillion-dollar plans to reshape its western edge, officially renaming Heritage Square the West End Market. The \$15 million overhaul will feature an amphitheater, bazaar-style artisan and merchant locations, a transit hub, new food outlets and restrooms. It is expected to be ready for the 2014 Fair. "This project has been brewing a long time," said State Fair General Manager **Jerry Hammer**. "But it will still include a lot of favorite old elements."

Legoland Dubai is set to open in 2016, according to Merlin Entertainments. In a prospectus recently released, the U.K.-based company said it planned to open Legoland Dubai in 2016 under a deal in which it would be funded by third parties, which includes Meraas Holding. The group has also entered into an agreement with, amongst others, Meraas Malls and Hospitality LLC to develop and operate Legoland Dubai under this operating model, with launch planned for 2016.

Premier Campbell Newman has launched the \$15 million Theme Park Capital of Australia campaign, reinforcing the Gold Coast's position as Queensland's leading tourist destination by focusing on its world-class theme parks. In support of this announcement, Dreamworld CEO Craig Davidson said, "As Ardent Leisure Theme Parks Division, Dreamworld, WhiteWater World and SkyPoint are proud to be contributors to this campaign. We look forward to collaborating on this exciting media and promotional plan, and supporting what this initiative will do for the Gold Coast."

Opening this month, in Sandy River, Georgia, **Stars and Strikes** is a 51,000-square-foot bowling complex at the North River shopping center. The venue will include eight upscale private lanes, 20 traditional state of the art bowling lanes, a two-story laser tag arena, a lazer maze, game room a chef-driven restaurant, a full circular bar and entertainment stage.

After completing its fourth year in Grand Island, the **Nebraska State Fair** continues to grow, with plans to significantly expand its presence at Fonner Park during the next 10 to 15 years, Executive Director **Joseph McDermott** said. He also reports that fair attendance this year was down about 2,000 people from

the previous year because of above-average temperatures. However, the Sunday before Labor Day — with more than 71,000 attending — set a record for attendance since the fair came to Grand Island.

New York's historic Ellis Island, through which more than 12 million immigrants passed between 1892 and 1954, has re-opened its doors to the public following extensive repairs to the halls and buildings of the Ellis Island Immigration Museum. Tourists on a ferry to the Statue of Liberty, which reopened to visitors this summer, can also now disembark on Ellis Island, which forms part of the Statue of Liberty National Monument. Areas currently open to visitors include the first and second floors of the Great Hall, where new arrivals were once inspected for diseases, as well as the main floor and gift shop. Lift access to the second floor is expected to be restored by early next year.

Members of the WNY State Assembly delegation recently announced that they have secured an additional \$400,000 in capital funding for the **Buffalo Zoo's** planned **Arctic Edge** polar bear exhibit. Construction of Arctic Edge is expected to cost \$18 million dollars and it is seen as being essential to keeping two polar bear cubs (Kali & Luna) in Buffalo. The Buffalo Zoo has successfully raised \$16.6 million dollars for the project, and even though it is still \$1.4 million short of its goal.

A RM2 billion (U.S. \$ 640 million) allocation for soft loans under Bank Pembangunan Malaysia (Malaysia Development Bank) through the Special Tourism Infrastructure Fund is a right move to fuel more growth activities in Malaysia'a booming tourism industry. Pekan Artisan Sdn Bhd Chief Operating Officer Saifful Azhar Sabaruddin said incentives given under the fund could be used to add more tourism activities in quality hotels and resorts and for theme parks development.

Parque Warner Madrid has received during the summer season 12.2 percent more visitors than in the same period last year, according to Europa Press. The Spanish are the vast majority, up to 98 percent of visitors to the park while the remaining two percent are Portuguese who have come to the facility through the important advocacy work that has been done in Portugal. The park will remain open until the end of December with the 2014 season beginning in March.

The **Disneyland Hotel** recently underwent a major renovation that brought new magic and significant upgrades to the AAA Four Diamond property. A new restaurant, bar, pools, waterplay area and themed suites add immersive experiences, making the landmark property one more reason for families to enjoy a multiday vacation at the **Disneyland Resort**. From the 973 remodeled rooms to the retheming of the towers, featuring an energy-efficient glass exterior, the re-imagined hotel creates a nostalgic family destination that pays tribute to the early days of **Disneyland**.

# 2013 Golden Ticket wins celebrated by park staffs



Several Planet Snoopy associates at Kings Island pose with the newly created 2013 Golden Ticket sign that is displayed in front of the main Planet Snoopy entry. Kings Island has won Best Kids' Area for 13 consecutive years.

COURTESY GREG SCHEID/KINGS ISLAND



Universal's Islands of Adventure's mega-themed Dudley Do Right's Ripsaw Falls has won the Golden Ticket Award 11 times for Best Water Ride. Here, Dudley ride members salute their latest win with their 2013 Golden Ticket Award.

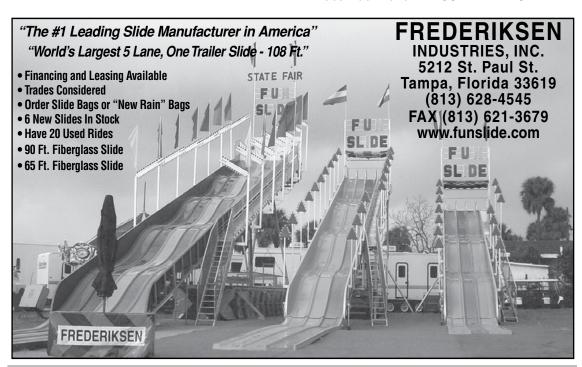
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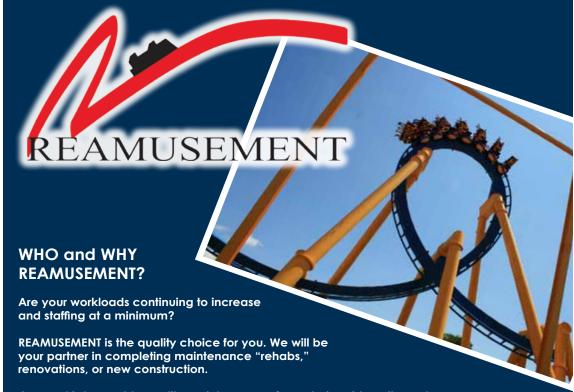


Two Cedar Point groups celebrate their 2013 Golden Ticket Award for Millennium Force (MF), Best Steel Coaster. Above, Cedar Point's MF maintenance staff and (left) the MF ride crew. The coaster has won for four consecutive years.

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## **MARKETWATCH**

#### RIDING THE **MARKET**



\*Six Flags stock split on June 27, 2013

	Prices	Prices	52 Weeks	
Company	One Month Ago	11/01/13	High	Low
Cedar Fair L.P.	\$43.98	\$45.49	\$46.00	\$30.90
MGM Mirage	\$20.74	\$19.30	\$20.98	\$9.15
Six Flags Ent. Corp.*	\$34.53	\$36.84	\$40.31	\$27.51
CBS Corp.	\$56.07	\$59.94	\$60.27	\$33.04
Walt Disney Co.	\$64.83	\$69.01	\$69.20	\$46.53
<b>Apollo Global Mgt. LLC</b>	\$29.00	\$32.88	\$34.88	\$13.83
Blackstone Group	\$24.98	\$26.99	\$28.73	\$13.31
Village Roadshow	\$6.44	\$7.23	\$7.30	\$3.65
NBC Universal	\$24.17	\$26.54	\$26.63	\$19.87
SeaWorld Entertainment	Inc. \$30.30	\$29.73	\$39.65	\$27.48



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California \$4.117 -\$0.151 On 11/01/13 \$1 USD = 0.7314 EURO 0.6236 GBP (British Pound) 98.34 JPY (Japanese Yen) 0.9023 CHF (Swiss Franc) 1.0540 AUD (Australian Dollar) 1.0458 CAD (Canadian Dollar)

As of 10/28/13

East Coast \$3.889

Midwest \$3,837

Gulf Coast \$3,783

Mountain \$3.865

West Coast \$3.941

**Change from** 

-\$0.147

-\$0.147

-\$0.162

-\$0.330

-\$0.151

#### **PEOPLE WATCH**

#### Bilogan named GM of The Waters of Minocqua

The Waters of Minocqua in Minocqua, Wisc., recently announced the appointment of Lisa Bilogan as the new general manager. In her role, Bilogan is responsible for the successful operation of the 106-room northwoods themed resort.

"We are pleased to welcome Lisa as our new general manager of The Waters," said Mark Quinn, vice president of operations for S&L Hospitality. "Her wealth of hospitality experience and community involvement will be a great asset to the property."

Bilogan brings more than 20 years of hospitality experience to her new role.

The Waters of Minocqua is operated by S&L Hospitality, a hospitality and waterpark resort management company based in Madison, Wisconsin.

#### Veracity Hospitality names Rao as CFO

Veracity Hospitality, a newly formed independently held hotel and resort management company in Gurnee, Ill., announces the appointment of Mukund (Mac) Rao as chief financial officer. As CFO, Rao is responsible for all aspects of corporate accounting, finance, and budget planning, as well as information technology and purchasing for Veracity Hospitality managed properties.



Rao

"Mac's financial experience within the hospitality industry is extensive," said Dale McFarland, president and chief operating officer of Veracity Hospitality. "His exceptional leadership, proven track record and the professional and personal integrity with which he works and lives by made him the ideal candidate for this role."

Rao has spent the last 26 of his 35-year career in hospitality finance and accounting

"There is an integral piece missing in the way many hotels and entertainment venues are operated," said McFarland. "I've seen it throughout my career, and I decided to do something about it. Veracity Hospitality will close that gap by delivering unique, customizable management solutions through hands-on senior leadership and operations."

## Taking a ride on the historic Giant Dipper



Caught on camera riding the 1924-built Giant Dipper roller coaster at Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk during the 2013 Golden Ticket Awards are Chris Baynum, Baynum Painting (left) and park owner Charles Canfield. Baynum Painting has been hired by the park to repaint the entire structure of the historic ride. Work began immediately following the close of the Golden Ticket Awards weekend. COURTESY PICSOLVE/SCBB



**VIEW PHOTO GALLERIES FROM THE 2013 GOLDEN TICKET AWARDS AT** GoldenTicketAwards.com





#### **Gateway Ticketing** honored with award

BOYERTOWN, Pa. Gateway Ticketing Systems, Inc. has been named one of the 2013 Best Places to Work in Pennsylvania for the second year in a row. To be considered for participation, companies must be a for-profit or not-for-profit business with a facility in Pennsylvania with at least 25 employees.

The award was designed to identify, recognize and honor the best places of employment in Pennsylvania that are benefiting the state's economy and its workforce. The Best Places to Work in Pennsylvania awards program was created in 2000 and is a public/private partnership between Team Pennsylvania Foundation, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, the Pennsylvania State Council of the Society for Human Resource Management, and the Central Penn Business Iournal.

Gateway President and CEO, Michael Andre, is honored to be recognized with the award: "Our leadership team is focused on promoting a corporate culture that promotes employee well-being in a high-performance environment that both we and our employees enjoy being a part of. We find value in fostering a progressive workplace that is conducive to supporting our world-class clients around the globe who use our ticketing, point of sale, and revenue generating solutions."

Gateway Ticketing Systems will be recognized at an awards banquet on December 5, 2013, at the Lancaster County Convention Center in Lancaster, Pa. Rankings will be revealed at the ceremony.





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# Austrian company unveils new theater system

Ride Entertainment to represent company

LIENZ, Austria — Architect Valtiner & Partner GmbH unveiled their E-Motionboard system at the 2013 IAAPA Attractions Expo in Orlando. Guests ride the E-Motionboard System standing up, which offers a completely new way to integrate park-goers into the film experience.

Martin Valtiner, an architect by trade, has been working on the concept of a standing theater for several years. His experience as a pilot guided the sensations he wanted park goers to be able to experience. "We debuted the prototype at the world-famous Prater in Vienna. Since then, we have redesigned the system, eliminated the hydraulic base, updated the concept and made it friendly for theme parks to operate and maintain. We felt it was time that the concept could be shared with the industry at large," he said.

"This summer we constructed a full-scale ride in our factory and have had the opportunity to bring several industry veterans to experience it. Their insight has helped us tweak the ride system to offer the best experience possible."

Tucked away in the town of Lienz, Austria, the team at Valtiner & Partner have been hard at work creating a theater system that is designed to meet the unique needs of the amusement industry. Herbert Gall, the company's project manager, said, "Our goal has always been to create a system that meshed with the needs of amusement and theme parks. Buyers have been telling us that they need theaters that can fit in existing, underutilized buildings, that they want freedom when choosing a film content creator, and the theater had to offer a completely new experience. People in the amusement industry let us know that we need to offer customization while utilizing standard equipment, and we used all of this input when designing every component of the ride system. Now, this system, combined with the many special effects options we offer, is ready to show guests an new dimension of fun."

The guest experience is where the E-Motionboard stands out from its peers. Instead of sitting in a seat, riders stand in front of the Motion Grid, and that instantly engages and immerses them in the action. Valtiner said, "Riders are not just watching images on the screen, guests feel like they are flying. It is like nothing else the industry is currently offering and we are very proud of it."

Stevensville, Md.-based Ride Entertainment Group is Valtiner & Partner's key sales group. REG's Sales Director Adam Sandy said, "We are thrilled to include the E-Motionboard as part of our portfolio. Today other companies are touting every dimension

in existence — 3D, 4D, even 7D. Valtiner and Partner took an entirely different approach. The E-Motionboard relies on a great experience to draw guests into the film, and that is why I feel it will be so successful."

Martin Valtiner has supervised over 300 architectural projects throughout Austria. Valtiner & Partner (valtiner-

partner.at) is known as one of the leading architectural firms in Tirol. One of the company's most notable achievements was designing and building a new set of buildings for Vienna's famed Prater amusement park.

For more information on the theater visit: www.RideEntertainment.com.



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2008 Fredericksen Fun Slide (portable model) \$75,000



1991 Wisdom Rides Gravitron (portable model) \$100,000



2005 Technical park Super Miami (park model) \$399,000





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In the new theater concept developed by Austrian-based Valtiner & Partner GmbH, guests ride the E-Motionboard System standing up, while interacting with the film experience. Ride Entertainment Group is the firm's sales partner.

COURTESY REG



# Strataca salt mine opens new underground experience

HUTCHINSON, Kan. — A new, exclusive experience opened in early November at Strataca in Hutchinson, Kan.

Salt Safari is a three hour journey located 650 feet below ground level and takes hikers through miles of tunnels through the rugged and unimproved areas of a salt mine.

Participants (18 years and older) will discover natural formations of geological history only a select few have seen — until now.

"Hiking underground in the raw mine is awesome and exciting, and now, we can finally share this opportunity with other adventure-loving adults," said Linda Schmitt and Gayle Ferrell of Strataca. "Salt Safari is the ultimate, authentic salt mine expedition and we know participants will love it as much as we do. Hikers should be ready for an amazing experience that can't be found anywhere else!"

Salt Safari will be offered on Fridays from 1 p.m. to 4:40 p.m. Advanced reservations for the 3 to 3 1/2 hour hike will be required and is separate from Strataca's general admission prices. The Salt Safari cost per person is \$60.

Strataca is listed as one of the Eight Wonders of Kansas as they offer tours of an active salt mine

For more information, visit www.underkansas.org or follow Strataca on Twitter at: @ UnderKansas.

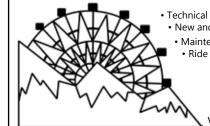


Salt mine tunnel hikers are seen in the underground experience at the Strataca Salt Safari in Hutchinson, Kan. COURTESY STRATACA



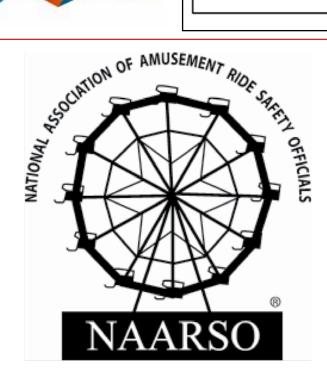
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## 27th ANNUAL SAFETY FORUM January 26 – 31, 2014

It's that time of year to begin planning on attending the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Safety Forum for the most up-to-date training and Hands-on activity experience. This year we will be traveling to Charlotte, NC with a visit to Carowinds.

#### **OPERATIONS LEVEL I CERTIFICATION**

We are please to offer our new certification, Operations Level I. In addition to the new certification our curriculum this year will include Operational classes to support the requirements for taking the exam.

Registration will begin on Sunday, January 26, 2014, with an orientation session. Classes will end after noon on Friday, January 31 and the Level I & Level II certification exams will take place later that afternoon. Tuition cost is \$445 for current 2014 members of NAARSO, non-member's tuition cost is \$495.

The event will be held at the Sheraton Charlotte Airport located at 3315 Scott Futrell Dr, Charlotte, NC 28208.

Room rates are \$85 single/double with discounted breakfast pricing
This year you can book your room reservation on line by using the link information below:
https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/res?id=1303066192&key=CD253

Membership Meeting will be held at the Shearton Charlotte Airport January 26 2014 at 1:30 p.m.

More information can be found on the website, <u>www.naarso.com</u> Under the Seminars button

## HAuNTcon and the Halloween & Party Expo heads to Houston for 2014

HOUSTON, Texas — The 2014 Haunted Attraction National Tradeshow and Conference (HAuNTcon) will be held in Houston, January 25-28 at the George R. Brown Convention Center, in conjunction with the 2014 Halloween & Party Expo.

"The Halloween & Party Expo is the international event for Halloween, Costume and Party vendors," said Leonard Pickel, HAuNTcon coordina-



tor and Haunt industry vetern. "It was a natural move to co-locate our conference and tradeshow to Houston so we could offer our attendees the opportunity to see new products and services featured only at this massive Expo." "The Halloween & Party Expo is pleased that HAuNT-con chose to join us in Houston over the dates of the 2014 Halloween & Party Expo," said Jonathan Erwin with the Halloween & Party Expo. "Being in the same location will allow

or respective attendees to take advantage of both events."

The two shows will take place concurrently, but in separated areas within the George R. Brown Convention Center and HAuNTcon attendees are invited to check out the Halloween & Party Expo as well as its educational sessions, trade show, special areas, and popular events such as the Halloween Costume Style Show.

"Each event offers a unique perspective on Halloween and being in the same center will enable us to maintain the integrity and character of each of our respective events, while enhancing the overall experience of our attendees," added Erwin.

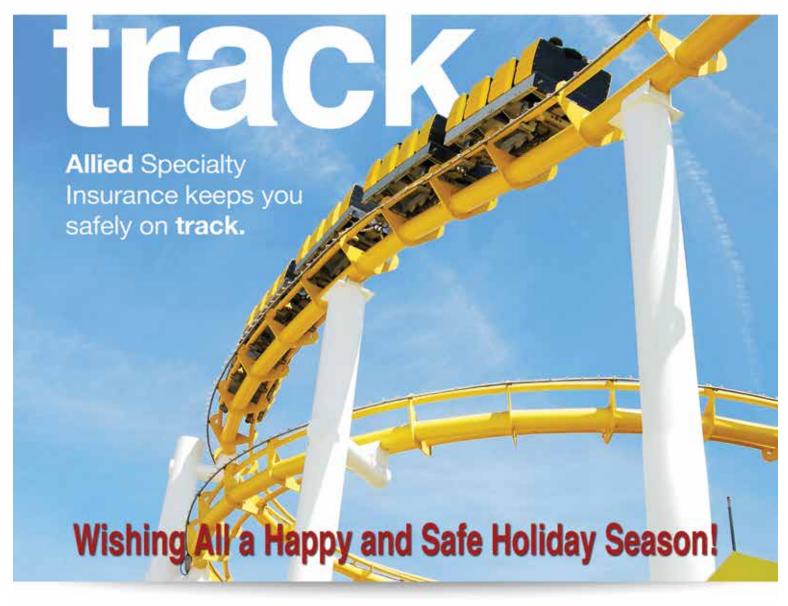
Halloween & Party Expo attendees interested in participating in HAuNTcon activities will have a variety of options to choose from over the multiple-day conference that includes off season tours of local haunted houses, haunted garage sale, and networking socials that include the annual Costume Ball, as well as the tradeshow floor. Topics in HAuNTcon's unequaled education program span the spectrum from haunted house marketing and business plans, through cheap scares and haunted house design, actor training and character development, prop building and set

"We are really excited about the new opportunities that will be available to both event's attendees," said Erwin. "Bringing our industries, our buyers and our sellers together in one great location is a fantastic step for everyone and we look forward to being in Houston together."

Specially priced combo booth packages are available for vendors interested in exhibiting at both the Halloween & Party Expo and HAuNT-con. Registration setup for the HAuNTcon tradeshow and its educational sessions are in process. Stay tuned to www. hauntcon.com for details, and check out the Halloween & Party Expo at www.halloweenpartyexpo.com.



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\$37 million spent on food and rides

# 2013 State Fair of Texas second largest in fair's history

**STORY:** Pam Sherborne

psherborne@amusementtoday.com

DALLAS, Texas — The rains came from time to time at this year's State Fair of Texas, which ran Sept. 27-Oct. 20, but when the skies cleared, the grounds overflowed with visitors, bringing in the second largest attendance in the history of the fair.

By the close of business on Oct. 20, officials predicted that fairgoers spent approximately \$37 million on food and amusement rides. This amount, which represents revenue from coupon sales (fair currency for food and rides) came just about \$300,000 to within the fair's 2010's all-time high of \$37.3 million.

"We had a very, very good fair," said Sue Gooding, fair spokesperson. "We did lose Columbus Day, which is usually a very good day,

to rain. We had 16 schools set to come here that day. We did extend their tickets through the next weekend and we ended up having two of the largest consecutive days on that weekend."

The only disappointing thing that happened, Gooding said, was that because the Federal Government closed, the U.S. Marine band that has been showing up at the fair to perform for the last 50 years couldn't make it. Gooding said they did fill that spot with some very good cultural groups, but "they (Marines) were really missed."

Among the more notable events at this year's fairs were the return of Big Tex and having the 500-foot tall Top O' Texas observation tower open for the fair for the first time. Fair President Errol McKoy announced prior to

▶ See TEXAS, page 34



The 2013 State Fair of Texas, Sept. 27-Oct. 20, was a success this year even though it was plagued with some rain. The 500-foot-tall Top O' Texas Tower, above, actually made its first public run up into the sky during the Summer Adventures at State Fair Park. The tower was built by Intamin AG. There were over 70 rides on the fair's independent midway including this KMG-manufactured Rock It, below, owned/operated by Mike Demas. AT/SAMMY PICCOLA

# New taller Big Tex makes debut

was unveiled on the first day of the 2013 State Fair of Texas.

DALLAS, Texas — When it was the end of its longest the new and improved Big Tex ride, literally speaking, for the iconic now 53-foot tall cowboy.

That is because just weeks



Now when Big Tex welcomes fairgoers into the State Fair of Texas, his face will actually move with the words instead of the marionette type mouth feature on the old Big Tex. The head structure of the face is covered with a type of silicone that allows for movement. Fair spokesperson Sue Gooding said muscle movements can now be seen all the way into the neck. AT/SAMMY PICCOLA

before the fair opened on September 27, Big Tex was driven from San Antonio where he was getting his new body.

A year ago, Big Tex was celebrating 60 years of welcoming guests to the fair when an electrical short in his right boot set the structure on fire destroying it in front of fairgoers, as well as viewers on national news networks.

Afterwards, fair officials promised that Big Tex would be back for the 2013 fair and he was indeed back home. It took SRO Associates, out of Boerne, Texas, and Texas Scenic, San Antonio, plus fair officials and the community to accomplish that feat.

And, he didn't come without some changes, which initially did dismay some of the fairgoers.

"Many people really thought that Big Tex should come back the way he left," said Sue Gooding, fair spokes-

▶ See BIG TEX, page 34





#### **TEXAS**

#### Continued from page 33

the fair that the 2013 edition would be his last at the helm. He plans to retire April 2014, after 25 years with the fair.

A brand new Big Tex made its comeback on opening day of the fair. The iconic cowboy that welcomes fairgoers was destroyed by fire during the 2012 fair due to an electrical short in his right boot. It took all year as well as \$500,000 to have him on hand this year. (See Big Tex article — Page 33)

The new observation tower made its operating debut during Summer Adventures at the State Fair this past summer. The observation tower, built by Intamin AG, rotates as it takes passengers up into the sky and affords a view of not only the fair but the skyline of Dallas as well.

In another piece of fair news from the past year, the Texas Star 212-foot tall, SDC-manufactured wheel, which has been operating on the grounds since 1985, went under new ownership this past year, but stayed in the family. Mary Talley, Talley Amusements, purchased the wheel from her mother, Barbara Brown, and uncle, Mike Sandefur. Tally's father, Buster Brown, was the original owner.

The Texas Star wheel ranked number one in the fair's top 10 rides list on the independent midway. The Texas Skyway, the fair's skyride, took number two and the Top O' Texas tower came in third.

The midway featured over 70 rides and attractions. Rusty Fitzgerald, fair vice president of operations, said the midway was laid out a little different this year.

"We opened up the thrill area and wrapped it around the building," he said. "That just really opened everything up and gave us more room on the midway."

Other highlights reported at the fair included the annual Youth Livestock Auction of Champions, where animals raised by young Texans sold for \$1,190,088.32.

The Chinese Lantern Festival hosted tens of thousands to its exhibit, which featured brilliant displays in and around Fair Park's lagoon.

The Dallas Historical Society welcomed almost 125,000 visitors to the "Life & Times of Big Tex" exhibit at the Hall of State, celebrating all things Big Tex.

Generous donations made by fair patrons to the North Texas Food Bank translated to 162,303 meals. A grand total of 194,763 pounds of canned foods were collected.

Continuing with the topic of food, the fair's fried food war rages on. During the Labor Day food competition, judges awarded the trophy

#### 2013 State Fair of Texas top 10 rides

- 1. **Texas Star Wheel,** SDC, operated by Tom & Mary Talley
- 2. **Texas Skyway**, Dopplemayr, operated by Mike Demas
- 3. **Top O' Texas Tower**, Intamin, operated by Mike Demas
- 4. **Crazy Mouse**, Reverchon, operated by Steve Vandervorst
- 5. Love Bugs, Mack, operated by Mory Haworth
- 6. Fast Trax Super Slide, Fabbri, operated by Tom & Mary Talley
- 7. Windstorm, SDC, operated by Steve Vandervorst
- 8. Magnum, Mondial, operated by Mike Wood
- 9. Rock It, KMG, operated by Mike Demas
- 10. **Scooter**, Majestic, operated by Patrick Sheridan

for most creative new food to Justin and Rudy Martinez for their Deep Fried Thanksgiving Dinner and best taste was reserved for Deep-Fried Cuban Roll. By fair's end, more than 50,000 patrons consumed the Thanksgiving feast usually reserved for the late November holiday, and 72,000 Fried Cuban Rolls had been served

The black top was hopping during free outdoor concerts at the All-New Silverado Main

Stage with Casting Crowns, Duelo, and Kelly Rowland as the top attractions. Main Stage concerts have been booked and produced by Glenn Smith Presents, Inc., for 25 consecutive years.

More than 42,000 auto enthusiasts zoomed to Chevrolet's Ride & Drive attraction, driving some of the hottest wheels in the 2014 lineup.

Next year's state fair dates are September 26 to October 19, 2014.

#### **BIG TEX**

#### Continued from page 33

person. "But, really, the look of Big Tex had evolved over the years."

There was really no way to actually bring him back exactly the way he was.

"And, since we were spending a half million dollars," she said, "We wanted to use all the technological advances that were available to us.

"I think, by the end of the fair, he was very well received," Gooding said.

Big Tex is now taller.

"We wanted him more humanly proportioned," Gooding said. "So, when we put him together, he was actually three feet taller."

He weighs more. He went from being a steel skeleton structure weighing a mere 6,000 pounds to being what amounts to a working crane now weighing a healthier 25,000 pounds.

"In fact, they put axels on him and he pretty much drove himself from San Antonio," Gooding said.

In one of the legs there is a ladder to allow maintenance on the structure. There are various platforms along the ladder.

He no longer needs guywires to keep him standing. His feet fit on vaults that are down in the ground and are locked into place.



The new Big Tex was unveiled on the first day of the 2013 State Fair of Texas, which ran Sept. 27-Oct. 20. SRO Associates, Boerne, Texas, was in charge of his new design and Texas Scenic built the structure. The new Big Tex cost \$500,000 to rebuild. AT/SAMMY PICCOLA

The face structure is covered with a silicone to allow for actual facial expressions.

"When he talks, you can see the muscles in his neck move," Gooding said. "It really is very cool."

His hat looks to have a seam down the middle, but that seam is actually a hatch that opens to allow workers inside the head.

Big Tex was equipped with the same three movements he always had and they were shown off during the 2013 fair: the waving hand, the head moving from side to side and the speaking. But, Gooding said he actually has eight more movements they kept under wraps for the 2013 fair.

"His eyes blink. His torso moves. His shoulders move from side to side. One arm can move and point," she said. "After the fair, before we took him down, we went in and tested his other moves. We wanted to make sure his shirt would be okay with the movements and things such as this."

And, she added, everything went smoothly. At this point, there is no schedule for when or how the remaining movements will be unveiled.

There will be adjustments made, however, before next year's fair. For one thing, they felt his waistline needed to be moved up.

"We really didn't know how he would actually look until we put him up for the first time," Gooding said.

That happened after midnight two weeks before the fair. Officials were trying to keep him under wraps so in the middle of the night, they hoisted Big Tex up. It took until 4 a.m. before they were finished. But, he was tested and taken right back down.

Gooding was surprised that Big Tex's return didn't

leak into the news. There was one reporter that showed up that night and wanted to photograph the new Big Tex.

"We just told him the park wasn't opened and he went away," she said. "He could have called in some helicopters, but he didn't. No one here took any photos. We were surprised, but really thankful."

And, Big Tex didn't cause any excitement traveling from San Antonio. There was a big tarp over him, but the load was large. The drivers had stopped at a rest area and one person asked them what they were carrying. That person was told a structure for the fair.

"They even had a flat tire on the interstate coming into Dallas," she said. "No one had any idea what was on that truck."

Bringing Big Tex back has been a process for everyone involved. Gooding called it a labor of love, from those at the fair to the community that helped with fundraising to the company that designed the structure to the company that built the structure.

"Many of the people that built the structure in San Antonio had never been to this fair," Gooding said. "They had never seen Big Tex."

But, by the time they had finished, they had fallen for him and even attended the unveiling on the first day of the fair, along with their families.

—Pam Sherborne



### Georgia National Fair sees good attendance; Georgia State Fair moves to fall

PERRY, Ga. — The Georgia Agricultural Exposition Authority and staff were very pleased with the running of the 24th Georgia National Fair, Perry, held Oct. 3-13. Final attendance this year was 449,885.

A major new feature at the fair is the Georgia Grown Building. This is a joint project of the Georgia National Fair and the Georgia Department of Agriculture. During the 11

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days of the fair, the building features space dedicated solely to Georgia Grown products, manufacturers, and agricultural businesses. Rental and sponsorship fees helped aid in benefiting Agricultural Youth Scholarships.

Reithoffer Shows provided the midway for the fair.

Along with midway rides and games, the Georgia National Fair also featured food, commercial vendors, major concerts, street entertainers, family entertainment, circus, and nightly fireworks.

The Georgia National Fair will return to Perry October 2-12, 2014.

In other Georga fair news: Universal Fairs, based in Tennessee and now the owner of the Georgia State Fair, has decided to permanently move that event from Macon to the Atlanta Motor Speedway's 887-acre site. The fall fair is

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currently running with dates Oct. 25-Nov. 3.

Capitalizing on Halloween festivities, owners of the event were able to begin an annual costume contest as well as hold a themed Halloween magic show.

The Georgia State Fair had been suffering from declining attendance over the years. The grounds were in need of improvement but with lower annual funds, it became more difficult to do annual improvements.

This was happening even before the Georgia National Fair in Perry came on the scene in 1990. But, with the obvious better grounds in Perry, the handwriting has been on the walls for the state fair.

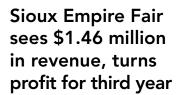
Both fairs were being held in the fall. Eventually, as attendance continued to decline, the fair in Macon moved to the spring.

The Macon Exchange Club, which had operated the fair since 1942 and donated millions of dollars to local charities, tried to hang in there, even moving the fair from the fall to the spring.

But in 2011, the club sold the fair to Universal Fairs. That company decided to hold the spring fair in 2012, but also a fall fair at the Atlanta Motor Speedway.

The same was scheduled for this year, however; only the fall fair will be held in 2014. Universal Fairs wants to focus on the one fair and hopes are to increase its attendance and exposure.

Dixieland Carnival Company provided the midway for the spring fair and returned to the fall event with almost 45 rides.



SIOUX, S.D. — After three strong years, the Sioux Empire Fair, Aug. 2-11, seems to have recovered from years of embezzlement by its former business manager.

This year's fair turned a \$321,000 profit on \$1.46 million in revenues, putting the event in the black for the third straight year. Attendance was up six percent to 307,398, Sioux Empire Fair Association CEO Scott Wick told local government representatives last month.

This was the second year of a longer fair spanning two weekends. Last year's event drew 289,502 and finished \$116,951 in the black. Both attendance and revenue in 2012 were affected by inclement weather that saw the cancellation of a grandstand concert, a loss of as much as \$60,000 in potential revenue.



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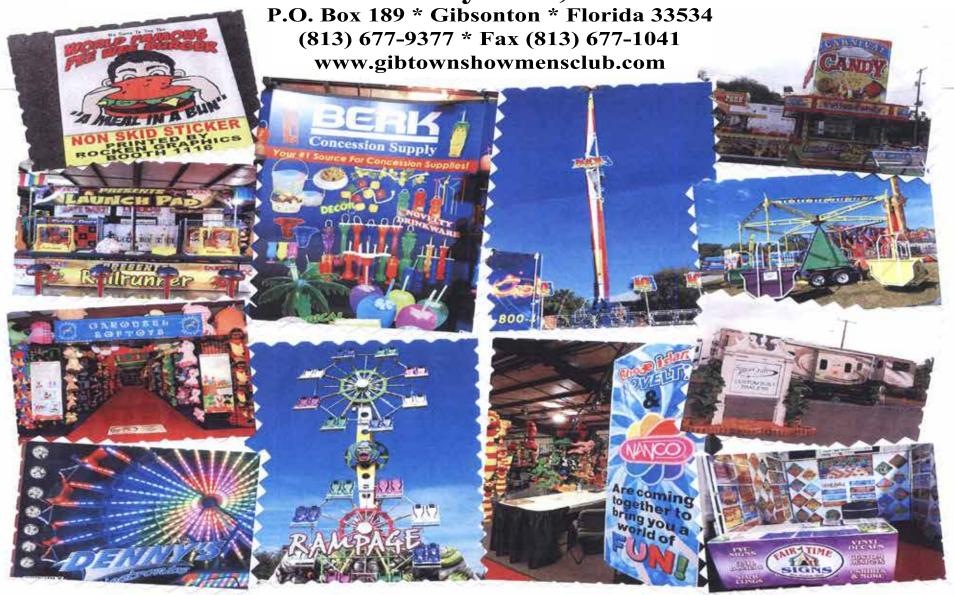
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