

July 2014 | Vol. 18 • Issue 4

www.amusementtoday.com

Kentucky Kingdom returns with successful re-opening

STORY: Tim Baldwin
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LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Following a preview weekend, Kentucky Kingdom reopened its gates, and residents of Louisville could once again enjoy amusement park thrills in their hometown. Dormant since 2010, rumors circulated for years with various proposals surfacing to reopen the park. Finally, a new life for the park officially began on May 24, 2014. Returning fans, or those who were simply curious, found much among the line-up to offer brand new family fun.

The past

There aren't many parks that have quite the storied past claimed by Kentucky Kingdom. Its actual origins began in 1987, as a small group of investors wished to develop leased property on the Kentucky State Fairgrounds into more of a regional amusement park. A small assortment of rides occupied 10 acres, but the venture only lasted a year before falling into financial ruin.



Hart

Investor Ed Hart stepped in and redeveloped the park for a 1990 opening. Newer, bigger rides materialized and the park was on track for a steady journey of financial and attendance growth throughout the 1990s. During Hart's tenure, many cutting edge rides were installed including the first Vekoma sus-



Top row, l to r: Overbanked turns and airtime hills thrill riders on the new Lightning Run roller coaster from Chance Rides. Guests control their own ride the Larson-built Professor John's Flying Machines. Bottom row, l to r: Zamperla's new Rock-A-Bye swings ride takes the old porch swing to a whole new level. Guests can choose from three different water slide experiences on the Wikiwiki slide complex from ProSlide. AT/GARY SLADE & TIM BALDWIN



pended looping coaster in the U.S., Intamin's first next-generation drop tower, the world's tallest stand-up coaster and a rare Waikiki Wave ride from Vekoma called The Quake. Among initial offerings was the 1990 debut of Thunder Run, a rollicking and

well-received wooden coaster from Dinn & Summers, who were ushering in a new dawn of woodies at the time. The addition of a waterpark — Hurricane Bay — was eventually established, broadening the customer experience during a day at the park.

Kentucky Kingdom was relishing great success in the 1990s. So much so, that Premier Parks sought out Hart to buy the park and make it part of its expanding chain of entertainment venues. At the time, Premier was gobbling up numerous parks and

at the end of the 1997 season the rights to operate Kentucky Kingdom were sold to Premier for \$64 million. The following April, Premier Parks purchased the entire Six Flags chain and in June of that same year the bluegrass themed
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NEWTALK

EDITORIAL: Gary Slade, gslade@amusementtoday.com

Patent comes full circle



Slade

With the popularity of the trap door capsules on today's water slides skyrocketing, it makes one feel a bit old to know that such an idea has now come full circle.

Yes indeed, the concept of dropping someone through a trap door and into the water slide hidden underneath is not new.

The idea dates back to 1990 when George Millay invented and patented the first Bomb Bay at his Wet 'n Wild Orlando water park. The same slide concept would later be introduced at the second Wet 'n Wild park in Arlington, Texas for the 1991 season.

Millay came up the concept though his connection to the military. The Bomb Bay was designed to operate like the area in the fuselage of a military plane from which bombs are dropped. And in this case, the dropped ammunition is truly "alive."

Millay worked with his long-time design and development guy, Bill Getz, to mount the launch capsule on top of both park's existing Der Stuka 75-foot tall drop slides. Riders stand in the capsule and the entry door is closed by the operator. From the control panel, the capsule is then rolled out over the slide's freefall drop area. A few seconds later the trap door is released and the slider then truly knows what "bombs away" feels like.

Although the Bomb Bay was bit clunky, and very mechanical, the slide experience was an instant hit, and was another symbol of a Millay creation being way ahead of its time in those early years of the water park industry.

When Millay's original patent expired a few years ago, it opened the market for suppliers to improve that proven concept with newer modern versions. This year alone North American suppliers delivered trap door slides to the market in record numbers: ProSlide with 25 units and WhiteWater West with 11 units.

Millay said in a 1991 Wet 'n Wild Arlington press release: "The premise of a bomb being dropped from an airplane came to us as the logical answer. Unlike any other attraction we have, the start is taken completely out of the passengers' control and put into the hands of the ride operator and gravity. This results in several very tense, anxious moments during which the passenger literally sweats it out, suspended high above the ground, waiting for the plunge to occur."

Those words from Millay are still fitting today, for all the parks that continue to add the trap door capsule drop slides, with the rider sweating it out — wondering just when the door will open.

We've come full circle, as Millay's creative concepts continue to thrill water park guests today.

CARTOON: Bubba Flint



EDITORIAL: Andrew Mellor, amellor@amusementtoday.com

Overnight stays on the rise



Mellor

One aspect of park operation that many park owners frequently mention when talking about future plans and expansion is accommodation facilities.

Be it hotels, log cabins, chalets, camp grounds or something else, I get the impression

that offering a place to stay overnight is something pretty much every park owner would like to be able to do, so that guests stay on site longer and therefore, hopefully, spend more money.

I've done a good number of interviews with park owners/operators over the past few years and increasingly interviewees have espoused the benefits of offering accommodation, and if your attraction is large enough, then it is clearly a good route to take. Not only do guests pay for the privilege of staying for a night or two but in many cases they will use the onsite restaurants and shops, so it's something of a win/win situation.

Talking to Merlin Entertainments CEO Nick Varney recently, he explained that building

hotels at all the company's Legoland resorts, for example, as well as at other parks in the group, was a key strategy for the business and it is one that is clearly paying dividends. Indeed, at Merlin's Chessington World of Adventures in the U.K., a second hotel is now being added following the success of the first which opened just a couple of years ago. That speaks for itself.

Hotels, of course, open up a range of other opportunities too, not least the fact that they can be operated all year round and therefore provide parks with a useful source of income in what for many would normally be the closed season. The market for social and corporate events can also be tapped when a park has the right facilities to offer this sector, so it can be a lucrative side to an attraction's business.

We are clearly going to see more and more parks adding accommodation options, and not just because the venues themselves require longer visits for guests to enjoy all the facilities on offer. The short break market in general is growing each year, so parks are in an ideal position to take advantage of this. And I'm sure they will.

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Subscription rates (U.S. & International) are: 1 year (14 issues) \$50; 2 years (28 issues) \$100; 3 years (42 issues) \$150. Send check or money order (U.S. funds only, drawn on a U.S. bank) to Amusement Today, P.O. Box 5427, Arlington, Texas 76005-5427. Your cancelled check is your receipt. Please allow up to six weeks for your subscription request to be processed and the first issue mailed.

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POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to Amusement Today, P.O. Box 5427, Arlington, Texas 76005-5427.

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2 MINUTE DRILL



COMPILED: Janice Witherow

Bonnie Rabjohn — Six Flags Magic Mountain and Hurricane Harbor

Hard work, loyalty and patience have sure paid off for Bonnie Rabjohn. As someone who began her amusement industry career nearly 30 years ago in a food stand at Six Flags Magic Mountain, Bonnie now finds herself right at home serving as Park President of this same California park. Her strong communications and marketing background are ideal for leading Six Flags Magic Mountain into the future. Bonnie is an active industry and community volunteer participating on many committees, especially for IAAPA and the Boys and Girls Clubs. Her outgoing spirit and can-do attitude are obvious characteristics that certainly have contributed to her success.

Title

Park President.

Number of years in the industry

29, but who is counting! I started at SFMM as a seasonal food service hostess flipping hamburgers!

Best thing about the industry

It's such a fun industry. I love walking the Park/s and seeing all the smiling faces as our guests spend time with family and friends ... making memories.



Rabjohn

Favorite amusement ride

I have a huge affinity for roller coasters, and I have to say my new favorite is Full Throttle (at SFMM). It's an amazing ride where the marketing hype of "world's tallest loop" truly paid off.

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

A chef with my own restaurant ... maybe part of a Bed and Breakfast in Wine Country. I just love to cook and entertain.

Biggest challenge facing our industry

Probably the price of "WOW" and innovation – keeping our industry and our product relevant.

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

Opening Day of a new coaster or new attraction. It likely stems from my PR roots, but there's no greater feeling than getting positive guest reactions to all the hard work and tremendous team effort that it takes to go from conception to reality.

Pick one: a picnic in the park or a power business lunch...

Definitely picnic in the park! In fact we actually have picnics with our entire staff where we spend time together and they can ask anything about the business. It's a great chance to interact with our employees one-on-one.

My favorite place to take a nap is...

On a beautiful California beach listening to the surf.

When it comes to wine, do you prefer red or white?

Red! California Reds, of course.

The last time I wore blue jeans was...

What do you mean last time ... I'm wearing jeans right now! I love jeans ... it's what I really miss about the "shoulder season" ... Casual Fridays.

My biggest worry is...

Without a doubt, it's about ensuring our guests and employees are happy and safe.



Favorite candy bar...

I'm not a huge sweets eater, but my favorite is Turtles. And none better than our very own handmade Turtles from our Coaster Candy Kitchen.

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

Hmmm ... depends on time of year. But most of the time, I'm cooking dinner or enjoying a summer walk through the park.

You have just met Oprah... what do you say?

I admire her work ethic. She totally shaped who she is today and has made a difference in many people's lives. She should be commended for taking risks, empowering women, and bringing out the best in people.

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

An early morning run or hike along the hills overlooking the ocean.

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

This is the hardest question of the bunch. In Los Angeles, I'm a huge Pizzeria Mozza fan. But probably my all-time favorite dining experience to date was an over-the-top Chef's Table extravaganza on the Island of Anguilla ... perfectly paired amazing food and wine.

The magazine I flip through most often is...

Who has time to flip through magazines anymore? It would have to be Bon Appetit.

The longest flight I have ever taken was...

12 hours to Europe. But further destinations are calling my name!

The one television show I never miss is...

While my girls were at home: "American Idol." Now that they are in college, it is "Iron Chef" or anything on Food Network. "Breaking Bad" was also a standout, but I watched it all on DVD ... all 5 seasons in about a month.

In one word, my office is ...

Inviting.

I have always wanted to visit...

Paris ... our next European adventure.

Least favorite household chore

Dishes. So the rule is whoever cooks, the other cleans.

You live in California ... do you head for the beach or mountains?

Fortunately I don't have to choose. In Southern California it's the best of both worlds ... hiking on a trail in the mountains that overlooks the beautiful Pacific ocean. It's just breath-taking scenery.

Ten years from now, I hope to be...

Still making a difference to the people around me, still helping to develop the future leaders of our company and still adding value to our industry.

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

Presented by the National Rollercoaster Museum

COMPILED: Richard Munch



•**1913:** On July 6, a freak accident at **Palisades Amusement Park**, Fort Lee, New Jersey, killed two and injured nearly 30 riders. During a packed Sunday, the joys of a cool summer evening on the **Big Scenic** (Railway) quickly turned to horror. A train stalled in one of the lower hills, only to be rear-ended minutes later by the following train. Investigators speculated that a power loss may have caused a safety signal failure.

•**1922:** In mid-July, **Arthur Jarvis**, the engineer who had produced some of the largest roller coasters at the time and who would become manager of Coney Island's popular **Luna Park**, in Brooklyn, New York, announced plans to build the largest **Scenic Railway** ever constructed, on a site in Coney Island. Already in the planning stages, he was keen on moving the remains of the closed roller coaster in **Brighton Beach** (about 2 miles east of Luna Park) which he had built in 1910. What did eventually open in May 1924 was not as big as planned and was built along a thin strip of land on the west side of the Luna property. It acquired the unique name **Mile Sky Chaser**, a play on the original moniker, **Chase Thru the Clouds**.

•**1935:** One of the country's great parks, **Palisades Amusement Park**, had been the scene of many fires over the course of its 75-year history. On July 1, a rapidly shifting fire, fanned by breezes off the Hudson River, cut a path through the New Jersey park late in the afternoon. It left in its wake the charred ruins of 15 concessions along the midway, and for a time, threatened the entire amusement park. Fortunately no lives were lost, but about one-eighth of the park was destroyed.

•**1974: Warner LeRoy**, the son of **Mervyn LeRoy** (producer of the film *Wizard of Oz*), realized part of his dream project when **Great Adventure Theme Park**, in Jackson, New Jersey, opened on July 1. Financed mainly by the Hardwicke Companies, Inc., LeRoy did much of the concept planning himself, creating a themed park with tremendous dynamics and fantasy architecture. The site, established ideally between Philadelphia and New York, contained both the Enchanted Forest amusement area and a drive through safari park. The park was crowded the first season, with visitors clamoring to see the new enterprise, although not all of LeRoy's concepts ever made it past the drawing boards. Only a few years later, the park was sold to the **Six Flags Corporation**. Today, during its 40th anniversary, **Six Flags Great Adventure** still contains several of the original buildings and attractions, including the wonderful **Yum Yum Palace**, **Carousel** and **Runaway Mine Train**.

•**1999:** With the success of relocating a wooden roller coaster from San Antonio, Texas to **Knoebel's Amusement Resort** in Elysburg, Pennsylvania still fresh in their minds, the Knoebel family would try again in 1999 to add another ride to their growing collection of scream machines. Led by **Richard 'Dick' Knoebel**, the Knoebels team visited the original **Elitch Gardens** (1890-1994) in Denver to ascertain the condition of the former **Mr. Twister**, which had been dormant for four years. Based on its condition and space limitations, Knoebels felt it was not feasible to move the structure, and a new ride based on the original design would be adapted to the smaller footprint. The new version, with two lifts, was designed by the park's **John Fetterman**, built under the supervision of **Leonard Adams Jr.** The ride, including the terrific and powerful double helix, opened on July 24 and is a favorite with guests today.

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► KENTUCKY

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was rebranded as Six Flags Kentucky Kingdom, the first of several Premier properties that were eventually “flagged.” The park would remain as such until the close of the 2009 season. Several factors, including an unfortunate injury in 2007, caused a change in attendance. Amid difficulties negotiating with the Kentucky State Fair Board in February of 2010, Six Flags terminated its agreement and entered legal discussions to separate themselves from the property. Although multiple proposals to reopen the park were presented to the Fair Board, it took almost three years before one was accepted.

The New Kentucky Kingdom and Hurricane Bay

Enter Ed Hart once again. Once the lengthy, and sometimes difficult, negotiations with the Kentucky State Fair Board were complete and Hart was fully committed to the Kentucky Kingdom project, he reassembled, with astonishing ease, much of the team that helped him redevelop the park back in 1990. Everything was in place in the spring of 2013 to begin work on reopening the park in May of 2014.

Needless to say, the community was thrilled. The park enjoyed great season pass sales. With 110,000 sold, more than 80,000 were purchased prior to



the park opening.

Bill Hargrave, assistant general manager, tells Amusement Today, “The most rewarding part of my job is people stopping us all the time and thanking us for opening the park. They are telling us what a great job we did.” He does share that early on there were teething pains. “We have a lot of people in the park; probably more than we expected,” Hargrave adds. While a good problem to have, it has

caused an adjustment of queue lines when needed here and there.

Admittedly, the park had a challenge on its hands. Six Flags had removed some key rides, and others were either shuttered or in need of significant maintenance. As it turns out, the park has achieved a good balance of returning favorites and a broad selection of new attractions. Kentucky Kingdom re-opened with 54 rides/water attractions ranging from small children’s rides to its newest thriller — Lightning Run, a new steel roller coaster by Chance Rides Manufacturing (see sidebar).

The most dramatic changes come within the waterpark. On the location vacated by the re-

moval of the stand-up coaster, an impressive expansion of Hurricane Bay is wowing guests. So impressive, any waterpark would be pleased to have just a single component of it. Numerous major attractions are introduced, along with new amenities and eateries. Three slide complexes from ProSlide include the Wikiwiki Wai tower featuring a twisting enclosed slide, a cannon bowl and a tantrum tornado slide. All three can be enjoyed in either double or single rider tubes. The tallest complex is second in height at the park only to the giant Ferris wheel. Wave Runner is a six-story triple dip speed slide that is sure to offer weightlessness, and Deep

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FAST FACTS

Park/Name

Kentucky Kingdom
Louisville, Kentucky/
Lightning Run

What

Non looping GT-X coaster

Features

11 points of negative G air time; maximum G-Force of 4.5 g’s; 120-degrees of maximum banking on track

Track

44 inch wide gauge track to allow vehicles to sit lower to ride’s centerline

Height/Length/Speed

100 feet/2,500 feet long/
55 mph

Trains/Capacity

2 trains of 5 car (20 total passengers)/ 800 pph

Interesting Facts

Ride not only makes use of the former Schwarzkopf Shuttle Loop Loading Station, but also reuses several of the former coasters ride footings including one that was used to support the vertical loop

Opening

May 17, 2014 preview;
May 24, 2014 official opening

Supplier

Chance Rides
Wichita, Kansas

Supporting Suppliers

Profile and vehicle design:
Ride Centerline (Alan Schilke);
Structural Engineering,
Glynn Geotec (Mark Glenn);
Vehicle Padding,
Ralph S. Alberts;
Magnetic Braking,
Velocity Magnetix, Inc.;
Vehicle Wheels,
Uremet, Corp.;
Safety System;
Irvine Ondrey Engineering
Source: Chance Rides

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — While refurbishing existing coasters was well underway, it made sense to offer something new and dynamic as Kentucky Kingdom prepared to welcome new and returning guests. The park turned to Chance Rides for their newest thriller.

As a complement to the wooden coaster, Thunder Run, the new steel twister is named Lightning Run, giving the park both ‘Thunder and Lighting’ as Ed Hart, park president proclaimed. And a twister it is. To best describe the ride’s layout, one merely needs to picture an inflated balloon that has just been let go. With compact, banked turns incorporated into steep drops and airtime-inducing speed hills, a ride on Lightning Run demonstrates just what an out-of-control experience can be created in limited space and on a budget. The first drop is frighteningly steep at 80 degrees taken from a lift hill height of 100 feet. It provides a 4G pullout at the bottom and 1.5 negative Gs over the second hill. One of the more signature moves is a close-to-the-ground maneuver that zips riders through a right-left-right directional change configuration at high speed. It’s hysterical and is followed by a triple dose of airtime finale before hitting the magnetic brakes.

Lesly Binker, director of operations, tells AT about the guest reaction. “The surprise and the thrill — I think people looking at the footprint of the ride are not quite prepared for it. People are saying when



Chance Ride’s Lightning Run packs big-time thrills into a small, compact layout. The new track system and vehicles provide a silky-smooth, speedy ride. AT/GARY SLADE

they get off, ‘Wow. I wasn’t expecting the ride to be that intense.’ And it is — intense,” emphasizes Binker. With its smaller footprint, the ride packs a thrilling punch within 2,500 feet of track.

Expanding on previous knowledge from the Morgan era, Chance widened the gauge of the track from 38 inches to 44 inches. This

allows the cars to sit wider and lower, according to Dick Chance. He is quite pleased with the totally redesigned vehicles, and was even furthermore pleased that with all the parties involved with the many components, the coaster was completed and ready to roll two weeks early.

Alan Schilke of Ride Centerline is credited for design-

ing an incredible amount of airtime into Lightning Run — 11 times. Outrageous negative Gs are becoming Schilke’s claim to fame, and this new installation is one more on the list of crowd-pleasing favorites.

Brian Ondrey, president of Irvine Ondrey Engineering, tells AT, “Lightning Run’s control system features what’s quickly becoming an industry standard: computer monitoring of lapbar position and of individual seat lapbar control. It also utilizes an Allen-Bradley GuardLogix Integrated Safety System, which is an innovative system that ensures a failsafe PLC.”

The ride was being previewed by a group of American Coaster Enthusiasts a week prior to the park’s official opening. When *Amusement Today* asked Dick Chance where ACEers would prefer to ride, he responds, “The back car has the most airtime.” That needn’t be a big concern as the early reviews were nothing short of sheer raves from the enthusiast community, noting every seat delivered the goods.

The queue does offer a test seat, as most coasters do. Larger guests should heed its placement as the fit is snug. The restraint system is designed to accommodate passengers placed in a “Z” position allowing the train design to negotiate inversions if desired. Chance hinted that the next one manufactured would have a barrel roll heading into the brake run.

—Tim Baldwin

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HYPER GT-X



Photos courtesy of Amusement Today

"Chance Rides hit it out of the park on this one!"
- Mike Thompson, Augusta, ME (800+ coasters)

"I've been on over 700 coasters and I go all over the world and this is one of the best!"
- Joel Rogers, Denver, CO (700+ coasters)

"It's a giggle-coaster pulling all kind of surprises with amazing air time and just fun."
- Ann Fealy, Watertown, MA (1000+ coasters)

"It's definitely in my top 5 coasters!"
- Jim Winslett, Houston, TX (599 coasters)

"It is my number 1 coaster!"
- Rus Ozana, Dracut, MA (678 coasters)



the Art of Movement
COASTERS RIDES PEOPLE MOVERS

► KENTUCKY

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Water Dive is an intimidating trap-door, drop-capsule water-slide that sends riders plummeting 12 stories, the tallest of such type slides in all of North America. The final tower — Plummet Summit — is a 52-foot, four passenger family raft ride, most of which is enclosed. This tower includes a conveyor for the large rafts.

Other aspects of the Hurricane Bay expansion include Adventure River, a second tubing river for the waterpark. Aquatic Development Group installed a family wave lagoon, also a second for the park. Loren Wingfeld, aquatics manager, finds the new family wave pool particularly a hit with him. "It is not the flashiest thing, but it has really drawn in a lot of families. The Big Kahuna (the park's original larger wave pool) has such large waves, it is more adventurous. The smaller waves really draw in families and they pull right up and settle down." Cabanas, a lounging beach, new restrooms and snack eateries round out most of the expansion. However, pushing the cool factor is the Hurricane Bay Beach Club, a bar and food outlet specializing in

sliders. Bar stools, cocktail tables and rooftop shading make for a relaxing location to take in the surrounding views. Stations that make free sunscreen available are also welcome additions.

"Two of our cabanas are exclusively committed to corporations," says John Mulcahy, director of marketing and communications. "In this market, that is perceived as having a 'sky box.' It's more of a perk for the employees."

Various manufacturers have provided additional rides. Larson International has delivered a drop tower and Flying Scooters ride, Majestic provided the bumper cars, and Zamperla has new children's rides on offer. The park is also the first to debut *Rio* as a 5D adventure with a 3D film with various effects. In all, 20 of the 54 rides/attractions are new for 2014.

A new view

With a well-rounded complement of attractions to offer guests of any age, Kentucky Kingdom has entered a newer strategic phase of its business model — marketing to Mom. Mulcahy states, "Make Mom happy. We will continue to be successful if we please Mom and make it one of the most affordable parks in the region." Long



Hurricane Bay's massive wave pool is visible from the park's 150-foot observation wheel. The Thunder Run wooden coaster is visible in the background. AT/TIM BALDWIN

time visitors will remember Hart's original tagline: Kentucky Kingdom — The Thrill Park.

One approach to this new direction is value. Park officials want to make sure families find the park affordable fun. In addition to admission discounts via local partners, the park has priced its food offerings at reasonable levels. Season pass holders get deeper discounts on meals, which include \$1 soft drinks.

Food and Beverage Manager Aaron Banks is one of the newer team members. "The expectation was to have great food," he says when being brought on board. "The challenge was to create incredible menus with great pricing. I feel we've pretty much done that." His favorite is what he claims is the flagship item —

Kingdom Nachos. Here the tortilla chips are loaded with smoked brisket or pulled barbecue pork with a basil tomato salsa, complemented with cheese, jalapenos and sour cream. Food is provided fresh daily from local vendors, and main menu items are all prepared in-house. The brisket is smoked right on the premises.

The future

Confident in the great gains they've made and appreciative of the outpouring of support from the community, management still is cognizant of the steps yet to take. The park map is straightforward, recognizing that the refurbishment of the suspended looping coaster and river rapids ride are underway and both will debut in 2015. The

Twisted Twins Custom Coasters Inc. dueling wooden coaster (1998) will be restored in 2016. While the park looks ready now, more landscaping in progress is evident.

Season passes were introduced at \$59.95 last fall. "We were the first park to make the purchase available completely online. Everything was on the computer. You could even upload your own photo," says Mulcahy. "If you did that, we could actually mail out activated passes before the park even opened. Many families had them in time for Christmas under the tree."

Acknowledging the technology of today allows much more advantages than when the team first redeveloped the property almost 25 years ago, specific codes can be given to each business partner or visiting group that allows discount tickets to be printed right at home utilizing computers, and there is no longer a need for physical tickets to be provided to each group.

When speaking to *AT*, Mulcahy laughs, "When Ed gathered us the first time in 1990, the lure was 'This is a *once-in-a-lifetime* opportunity to redevelop the park.'" With the success seen so far, Kentucky Kingdom might find lightning can indeed strike twice.







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► Fons Jurgens named new chairman and CEO for Dutch attraction Efteling — See Page 10

New landmark attraction now open at Denmark's Legoland

ABC Rides provides indoor freefall rides; Mini-Friends figures, mirror maze included

STORY: Andrew Mellor
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BILLUND, Denmark — Legoland Billund Resort has added to its range of family attractions for the 2014 season with the addition of a new haunted walk-through and ride experience.

Ghost: The Haunted House takes guests through a haunted building as they explore different rooms featuring monsters and ghosts before boarding one of the Crazy Professor's two floating machines — freefall rides — which plummet them towards the ground from a height of 8 meters (26.2 feet).

The two-story haunted house covers an area of 800 square meters (8,611 square feet) and features an interactive Lego experience with 149 specially designed Lego models hidden in unexpected places, combined with the thrilling freefall rides, which were provided by the Swiss company ABC Rides.

The park's latest addition incorporates nine Lego scenes with interactive features and as well as the various models inside also features 28 different, 80 centimeters (2.6 foot) tall Lego Mini-Friends figures. And along with the drop towers, the building also features a 50 square meters (538 square foot) mirror maze. The height requirement for the attraction is 110 centimeters

meters (42 inches) and over.

Ghost: The Haunted House is the latest feature in the historical part of Legoland — Legoredo Town — where guests can also admire the legendary Indian Chief Sitting Bull and the faces of four presidents on Mount Rushmore. With its impressive 15 meter (49 foot) roof ridge, it will also become a landmark that is visible from outside the park.

"Since construction work began in August 2013, a large number of builders, technicians and others have worked hard to create this unique house," said Christian Woller, CEO of Legoland Billund. "We were therefore happy to finally welcome guests inside. We are very proud of the result, and judging by the smiles and thrills of the many children, Ghost will definitely become a smash-hit attraction."

Ghost: The Haunted House was officially opened by Denmark's Minister for Social Affairs, Manu Sarreen, assisted by children from the Children's Aid Foundation, who along with those from other similar children's organizations and other young people were present to take up the park's traditional invitation to enjoy the park on the day prior to the season's official opening day.



Above, Legoland Billund Resort's latest major attraction, Ghost: The Haunted House, provides a new haunted and drop ride experience for guests to enjoy. Below, the new attraction joins the Chief Sitting Bull (right) and the Mount Rushmore four U.S. president in the Legoredo Town area. COURTESY LEGOLAND BILLUND RESORT





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Fons Jurgens named new chairman and CEO for Dutch attraction Efteling

STORY: Andrew Mellor
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KAATSHEUVEL, The Netherlands — The world famous Efteling in The Netherlands has appointed Fons Jurgens as its new CEO and chairman of the board of directors.

Under Jurgens' leadership Efteling aims to become an international destination with 5 million visitors by the year 2020, through the implementation of a phased program of growth. During the first phase, Efteling will invest in a new attraction and the expansion of the Efteling Village Bosrijk holiday park over the next few years.

Efteling has established itself as one of Europe's largest and most popular theme park destinations and is seeking to independently maintain its position among Europe's leading theme parks in

the future.

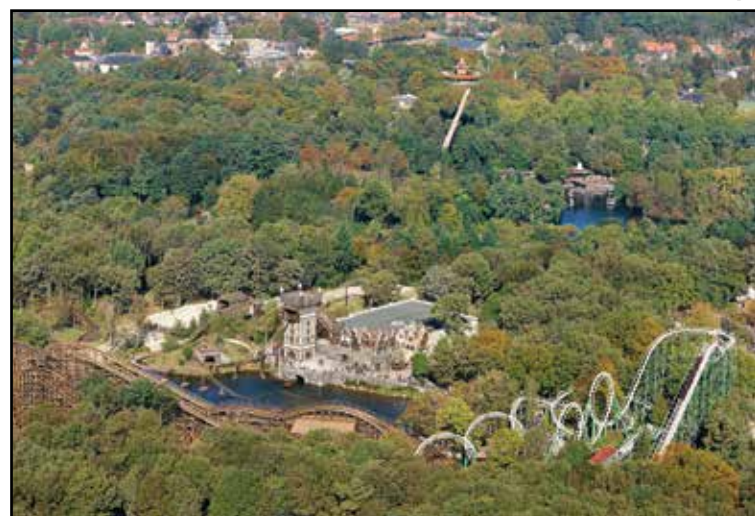
"A steady increase in visitor numbers is therefore essential," according to Jurgens. "This calls for continued phased investment in our park. An important spearhead of this approach is raising the quality of existing attractions, shows, shops and catering outlets. In addition, during the summer of 2015 we will open a dive coaster — a spectacular roller coaster that will thrill visitors with a 37.5 meter (123 foot) freefall. This provides an extra challenge for teenage visitors, in particular, while increasing our range of attractions."

In order to attract more guests from abroad to spend several days at the park, Efteling will also expand its accommodation offering over the coming years. Efteling Village Bosrijk, which opened in December 2009, will be further developed with the addi-



Fons Jurgens (left) is the new CEO and chairman of the board at Efteling in The Netherlands, shown above. COURTESY EFTELING

tion of an extra 400 beds, and new cottages and apartments will be completed and ready to take their first visitors by the summer of 2015. The supervisory board of Efteling has approved an investment of €36 million (U.S. \$49,010 million) in the first phase of this latest program of growth.



In addition to the appointment of Jurgens, other changes to the board of directors and supervisory board were also recently ratified. Among these, Coen Bertens, formerly adjunct director of operations, has been appointed as a member of the board of directors and operational

director, while, after 24 years as President of Efteling's supervisory board, Berry Beldmans stepped down upon completion of his final term of office. He has been succeeded by Henk Kivits, who has been supporting the board of directors for some time in his role as delegated commissioner.

PortAventura opens world's longest interactive boat ride

Mack Rides provides ride system; concept and storyline by PGAV Destinations

BARCELONA, Spain, — PortAventura's newest attraction, Angkor: Adventure in the Lost Kingdom, sets the world record for the longest interactive boat ride.

While Germany's Mack Rides provided the ride system and hardware for Angkor, PGAV Destinations, based in St. Louis, Mo., originated the concept and basis of design for the new attraction including thematic storyline and content, site planning and layout.

"We are thrilled to offer this brand new adventure for our family visitors to PortAventura," said Sergio Feder, president and CEO of PortAventura. "Angkor is absolutely the most immersive interactive boat ride on the planet and establishes a new, expandable themed zone for PortAventura!"

Angkor revolutionizes the traditional interactive boat ride by creating a winding, mysterious path through a lost jungle. "The hidden path of an interactive boat ride is a new



concept we introduced with Angkor," said Josh Rodriguez, attraction designer with PGAV Destinations. "We still show just enough of the ride from the main walking path to intrigue and excite guests, but the rest remains a surprise un-

til you're on the boat and deep within the hidden jungle."

Guests embark on their three-phase adventure from an Angkor Wat-inspired temple. The path guides them through a lush jungle, where they meet numerous creatures



The 984-foot-long Angkor: Adventure in the Lost Kingdom at Spain's Port-Aventura is billed as the world's longest interactive boat ride. It was supplied by Germany's Mack Rides with concept and storyline by PGAV Destinations. COURTESY PGAV DESTINATIONS

along the river's shores. They then encounter a native village in the second act, inspired by river villages throughout Thailand, where they're challenged to blast a variety of characters and targets with water. In the third and final act of the 984-foot-long adventure, the course doubles back in close proximity, and guests are flooded in a water battle with the other boats.

"It's really exciting to see just how well Angkor turned out," said John Kemper, PGAV Destinations VP and

project lead. "We really think it'll be loved as one of the most unique experiences that the park has to offer. It's been a pure joy to work on this attraction with Port-Aventura."

Valerio Mazzoli Studios completed the final theming package, and PortAventura's Design and Engineering Department managed the project execution. Angkor is the latest result of a master plan created for PortAventura by PGAV Destinations, whom also designed the original park and Hotel Gold River.

EAS set for another record-breaking event in Amsterdam

STORY: Andrew Mellor
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AMSTERDAM, The Netherlands — The 2014 season in the European attractions industry has seen the opening of a record-breaking number of new parks, rides and shows across Europe and of the more than 300 amusement and theme parks in the region, many have introduced new attractions this year.

The attractions industry in Europe has an average investment of more than €500 million (U.S. \$680.7 million) on new rides alone (CAPEX) and following a good year in 2013, most parks were able to record an increase in both attendance and revenue. Park operators are looking forward to another strong year in 2014 and as they continue to introduce new attractions to drive visitation, without doubt one of the best places to source these is the annual Euro Attractions Show (EAS), which this year moves



to the RAI Exhibition and Convention Center in Amsterdam, September 23-25. And this year's event is set to be another record-breaking show.

At the time of writing, more than 10,000 net square meters (108,000 square feet) of exhibit space had been booked making it the largest event in EAS history, with to date over 360 manufacturers and suppliers are scheduled to exhibit. In total, over 8,500 visitors are expected to attend from 80 countries.

"Last year in Paris, 393 companies exhibited, and with exhibit contracts still coming



The EAS 2014 trade show will take place in Amsterdam in the Netherlands and is set to be the largest such event ever with more than 360 manufacturers and suppliers scheduled to exhibit. An estimated 8,500 attendees are expected during the three-day event. COURTESY IAAPA EUROPE

in, this year we hope to feature more than 400 exhibitors who will showcase the latest products and services for the industry," said Karen Staley, vice-president of IAAPA Eu-

rope.

EAS will take place in two halls at the RAI venue in order to accommodate the demand for exhibit space, and while visitors will be able to view

products and services in over 100 different categories, they will also be able to take advantage of another comprehensive educational program which will run alongside the trade show.

Seminars and workshops within the program will focus on the most recent development in the industry and European industry leaders will give presentations on a wide range of topics covering innovative technologies, storytelling, safety, in-park spend, events, human resources, waterparks, FECs and indoor play facilities.

Networking events such as the Opening Reception, the Leadership Breakfast and behind-the-scenes tours to attractions in the Netherlands will also be on offer as EAS continues on its annual growth path and offers yet another must-attend event for those in the European attractions industry.





WATER PARKS & RESORTS

► Splashtown Houston gets major makeover — Page 14 / Six Flags adds slides to several parks — 16

Branson's White Water adds biggest thrill — KaPau Plummet

STORY: Tim Baldwin
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BRANSON, Missouri — White Water, one of the nation's first waterparks, opening in 1980, has upped the thrill factor for their 35th season.

"It's the biggest thrill ever at White Water," shouts Lisa Rau of public relations. Anyone with an eye on the industry can see that the trap door water slide is the hottest ticket in water parks nowadays. In fact, in just the past half-decade, multiple manufacturers have marketed this in-demand product. KaPau Plummet was manufactured by WhiteWater West of British Columbia, Canada.

"Kapau" is a U.S. surfer slang term meaning the next big wave or the next big thing. At \$1.7 million, it is one of the larger investments the park has put in place. Riders board the attraction by stepping into two capsules at the launching platform. Clear Plexiglas lets riders see out, but also lets those next in line see what is about to happen, as they can see the proceedings from the top step. In addition, when



riders step inside the Aqua-Launch capsule, the trap door is also clear, allowing people to see the upcoming plummet.

"It's all about anticipation," says Cory Roebuck, director of operations for White Water. "I wish you could have



Whitewater's new slide complex (left) starts with an Aqua Launch drop capsule. Those waiting to ride can watch the thrillseeker before they take the plunge. The shiny, translucent tubes allow spectators to see the action.
AT/TIM BALDWIN

'seen' my heartbeat the first time I rode." He laughs, "It was like 600 beats a minute. The plunge will literally take

your breath away."

For the first 15-20 feet, riders drop at a 70-degree angle at a near freefall. This sends thrill-seekers rocketing through a horizontal spiral. With its translucent color, the slides allow spectators to see friends and family zoom through the three-foot diameter tubes until the final splash-down.

KaPau Plummet stands on area partly occupied by one of the world's first fiberglass slides. One of the park's original 1980 attractions, the Bermuda Triangle was retired and the new addition takes its place. A section of that previous slide was donated to the National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives.

When asked about working with Whitewater West, Roebuck states, "I think WhiteWater West is a great business partner. They provided a great product that fit our needs that we hope resonates with our guests."

Standing at 40 feet, the new attraction sends riders traveling at a speed of 26 feet per second. The pair of dueling tube slides have lengths

► **See KAPAU, page 13**

Developer seeking to build \$145 million waterpark resort and conference center in Georgia

JASPER, Georgia — Port Royal Holdings, LLC, a New York development firm whose principals include music and entertainment executive Mathew Knowles, held their first public meeting to unveil plans to develop Port Royal Resort, Jasper, Georgia. Over 400 guests, including government officials, local residents, civic leaders and business owners learned that Port Royal Resort will be the first North American, fully-themed, year-round, waterpark resort and conference center replicating the historic city of Port Royal, Jamaica — bringing the colorful Caribbean tropics to Georgia year round.

"Our business plan plots the course toward establishing Port Royal as the premier family and business leisure and convention destination

in the Southeast as well as a local community hub and regional entertainment venue," said Mathew Knowles, chief entertainment officer.

Jasper Mayor John Weaver acknowledged the potential of Port Royal. "This project turns the switch back on to restart development in Pickens County," said Weaver.

The new state-of-the-art waterpark resort and conference center will feature a 400-room, full service hotel with a day spa, two restaurants, indoor/outdoor lounges, sports bar and retail space, indoor and outdoor waterparks, family entertainment center, conference center, 16,000-seat amphitheater, artificial lake and lush gardens. The resort will be located on a 176-acre parcel of land along High-

► **See RESORT, page 13**



The \$145 million, state-of-the-art Port Royal water park resort and conference center will feature a 400-room hotel located on a 176-acre plot of land atop beautiful rolling hills in Jasper, Georgia. Located within an hour's drive of Atlanta, developers hope to establish the resort as the premier leisure and convention destination in the Southeast.

COURTESY PORT ROYAL HOLDINGS, LLC

►KAPAU

Continued from page 12

of 243 and 246 feet. Capacity is expected to be around 360 passengers per hour. During AT's visit, dispatch intervals were efficiently launched. Lounge seating at the base of the ride is provided for those not quite up to the challenge just yet.

At just four stories tall, KaPau Plummet might not have the towering statistics of other such installations, but one industry insider com-

mented that the thrill was all in the trap door. Everything that comes afterward is just extraneous. If that holds true, then KaPau Plummet has everything it needs to satisfy a guest's thirst for the next big wave.

In addition to the new ride, White Water is offering guests more Dive-In movies on a giant screen above the wave pool, as well as fireworks during Saturdays nights called Night Water, which take place later in the summer with extended operating hours.

►RESORT

Continued from page 12

way 515 atop beautiful rolling hills in the city of Jasper, Pickens County, Georgia, about an hour's drive from the city of Atlanta.

In addition to the waterparks, the resort will offer a number of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities and activities for families, as well as fully appointed executive meeting rooms and business facilities for corporate guests. The conference center's flexible meeting rooms and banquet halls will accommodate business meetings and social gatherings of all sizes.

Damion Barrett, chief of development, added, "Port Royal, Jasper will set a new leisure industry standard and redefine the concept of a waterpark resort by providing a unique leisure and business guest experience."

Operating green

"We firmly believe that being a good steward of the earth is not only good for business, it's also good for the community and our country," said Timothy Smith, Port Royal project director. "Accordingly, our architectural firm is focused on using technologies designed to save energy and preserve resources. Moreover, construction and day-to-day operations are being designed for the lowest possible carbon footprint."

Port Royal's sustainability plan includes: local purchasing whenever possible; extensive day lighting; factory engineered components to reduce waste; a combination of permeable pavers, concrete and asphalt, bio swales and retention ponds for natural storm water drainage; low

flow, energy efficient and solar powered fixtures; and no or low VOC carpeting, paints, adhesives, caulk and cleansers.

By the numbers

The new resort is estimated to cost \$145 million, and within the first year create approximately 1,247 construction jobs, 395 permanent, full-time jobs, 600 permanent part-time jobs, generate approximately \$11.9 million in additional county and state tax revenue, and an estimated \$54 million of additional economic activity within the county, according to an independent economic impact study performed by Hotel & Leisure Advisers, LLC, a leading leisure industry consulting firm.

The development will be financed by a combination of developer and investor equity, debt and existing federal and state economic development programs the project is eligible for.

"This project would not have been possible without the city of Jasper and Pickens county's hands on assistance, which was instrumental in developing the site," said Barrett.

To fully articulate their vision, the developers have assembled a world class, globally recognized development team of leading local, national and international professionals that include: Architectural Design Consultants, Inc., Horizon Construction Group, Weber Group Inc., Aquatic Development Group, S&L Hospitality, Hotel & Leisure Advisers, LLC, Ross Consulting Engineers, P.C., and Acts of Creation, Inc.

The project is scheduled to break ground in 2014 and open in 2016.



NEWSPLASH

COMPILED: Jeffrey L. Seifert, jseifert@amusementtoday.com

Great Wolf Lodge, the largest operator of indoor waterpark resorts opened its 12th location on June 5. **Great Wolf Lodge New England** in Fitchburg, Mass., features 406 themed suites, multiple dining options, amenities for the entire family, and of course, the centerpiece indoor water park. Signature Great Wolf Lodge experiences include Scoops Kid Spa and the interactive, live-action game, **MagiQuest** along with the giant Howlin' Timbers Play Park, indoor mini golf, Ten Paw Alley bowling, and an assortment of kiddie amusement rides. Each night, guests can gather in the lobby for the interactive Forest Friend Show and Story Time.

Unique to the New England resort is the 30-foot tall **Howlers Peak Ropes Course** — Great Wolf's first and only indoor ropes course experience. The adventure begins when guests put on harnesses and then venture out across several rope pathways. Complete with varying heights and challenges at each station, Howlers Peak will be one of the key attractions at Great Wolf Lodge New England. Younger children will also howl with delight as they can walk alongside their parent on a smaller course designed just for them.

The one-year-old **Wet'n'Wild Las Vegas** has decided to expand its Dive'n'Movies offering by starting earlier and adding more dates. "Our Dive'n'Movies proved to be a family favorite last year so we're starting these special events earlier this season and have added more dates," said **Takuya Ohki**, general manager of Wet'n'Wild Las Vegas. "They're a great way for the whole family to spend time together. We'll be showing a wide range of movies from animated classics to favorite action features that are perfect for all ages."

Dive'n'Movies will be every Friday from June to Aug. 22 at the Red Rock Bay Wave Pool which is transformed into a unique outdoor cinema. Guests will be able to view blockbuster films while relaxing on inflatable tubes, available to rent, or on lounge chairs enjoying popcorn and other snacks.

Pittsburgh's **Sandcastle Water Park** is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. Opened in 1989 on the site of an old railroad service yard, the venerable park will have a 25-day celebration to commemorate the event. Park specials, contests, special events such as the Family Fun Fridays and the 4th of July celebration will kick off on July 1. Also new this year is a selection of items for snack lovers. New offerings include Fresh Cut Chips, Wrapsters, Pretzel Dogs, and Mini Doughnuts.

In addition to the anniversary celebration, Sandcastle will again host Cartoon Network's national Move it Movement Tour. Move It Movement offers kids and families across the country an opportunity to try new activities and sports while introducing them to strategies for a healthier, more active lifestyle.

Wildwater park in Clovis, Calif. just outside of Fresno, is marking its 40th anniversary by increasing its entertainment lineup. "It's not as big as a 25th or 50th anniversary, but we still are treating this year as a real big

deal," General Manager **Bob Martin** says. "It's a big deal because depending on who you talk to, Wild Water is one of the top five oldest water parks in the nation." A summer of fireworks, reptiles, concerts and appearances by star of several Disney TV shows will mark the 40th anniversary. Along with 17 days of the popular Fireworks on the Lake, Friday Family Nights and the July 4th Show with music, lasers and fireworks, there will be the Danny Connor's Reptile Adventure Show performed three times daily from July 14 through Aug. 3. The show includes crocodiles, pythons, lizards and many more exotic creatures from the reptile world.

Miss Alabama contestants visited **Alabama Splash Adventure** on Sunday, June 1 to will meet with park guests and enjoy some fun in the sun at Alabama's number one destination for family fun. Guests were invited to take pictures and meet the contestants vying for the prestigious honor of representing Alabama.

Although the world's tallest water slide, **Verrückt**, at **Schlitterbahn Kansas City** missed its original May press day, the ride is now fully functional with a planned opening the weekend of June 28. As to be expected with such an extreme attraction, a little more tweaking than anticipated was necessary to ensure that guests have a thrilling — but safe — experience.

Schlitterbahn, in concert with Travel Channel, will be debuting the ride to coincide with the premiere of the one-hour behind-the-scenes special on the building of Verrückt. Travel Channel has been filming this special for over a year; and it will air on its popular series "Xtreme Waterparks" on Sunday, June 29th. The opening also coincides with an event planned by a local region of American Coaster Enthusiasts (ACE). Considering the water slide is taller than most roller coasters, who better to help inaugurate the ride than a group of thrill-seeking coaster aficionados.

The board of directors of the **World Waterpark Association** (WWA) is seeking assistance to recognize and thank great industry leaders by asking colleagues to nominate worthy candidates for the 2014 Hall of Fame and Board Awards slate. The deadline to submit nominations is June 25, 2014. These awards recognize lifetime achievement by an industry professional, and excellence in leadership and safety. WWA members may nominate fellow colleagues or submit a self-nomination. The important thing is to give the board the chance to consider great candidates that deserve recognition for their hard work. And, remember, recognition for a colleague is really recognition for the whole team and facility!

The following awards that are now open for nominations: **Hall of Fame**, **Al Turner Commitment to Excellence** award, **Executive Board** award, and the **Kelly Ogle Memorial Safety** award. Members interested in providing a nomination should sign into the waterparks.org website.

Splashtown Houston enjoys major transformation in 2014

Name change, slide additions, facility upgrades just part of multi-million dollar makeover

STORY: Pam Sherborne
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SPRING, Texas — Wet 'n' Wild Splashtown's General Manager Jody Kneupper wasn't knocking Hanna-Barbera Land when he spoke last month about the waterpark's 2014 multi-million transformation.

"This park was built in 1984 as Hanna-Barbera Land," Kneupper said. "We still had a lot of those little elements around."



It was just time to re-think, rebrand, and redo the 80-acre park. And, said Kneupper, when the park's parent company, Premier Park LLC, acquired the rights to use the name Wet 'n' Wild, it also seemed fitting to rename it as well.

Park officials aren't releasing the project costs, but the list of improvements, enhancements and additions is proof that it was a "multi-million" project, which is all they are saying.

A short list of improvements shows:

- Three new major attractions: The Big Kahuna by ProSlide, Flow Rider by Aquatic Development Group, and a new kid's area, which incorporates elements by Aquatic Development Group and WhiteWater West Industries;

- Improved food and beverage offerings, along with a complete enhancement of the air-conditioned dining area with updated kitchen;

- Increased number of women's restrooms and updated men's restrooms;

- Increased number of parking spaces with a circular drive in anticipation of future tram transportation;

- Repaving of the parking lot;

- Expanded picnic area outside, increased shaded areas inside; and tube con-



veyor lift for both Tornado and the new family raft ride, Big Kahuna.

"We conducted a survey of our patrons last fall," said Rosie Shepard, director of sales and marketing. "In many cases those suggestions were incorporated into our plans."

Kneupper said the idea of the conveyor came from some of those survey suggestions.

"We had people ask for it, so we were able to construct the Big Kahuna adjacent to the Tornado, then build a conveyor that could serve both rides," he said.

When the gates swung open for the 2014 season on April 27, there was still some construction going on. But, by the time the park opened for daily operations after Memorial Day, all construction was finished.

"We are still doing some landscaping and such, but it has been exciting seeing people come into the park for the first time this season," Kneupper said last month. "I have seen people that have been here for a long time get confused on where things are because we also changed the path lanes."

Upon arriving at the park, guests are being greeted by a new expanded entrance leading into a new entrance plaza that has an open design and a colorful, Caribbean-style atmosphere.

"We positioned the Flow Rider in the center of this plaza next to a new restaurant, bar area," Kneupper said.

There are viewing decks, continuous music, a surf shop and a performance stage as the double Flow

Wet 'n' Wild Splashtown has just undergone a multi-million transformation. The renovations included an expanded and updated food and beverage operations, with more tables (right), more light and updated menu. Above, the new Flow Rider, by Aquatic Development Group, was placed into the redesigned park entry plaza — with seating for Flow Rider contests and demonstrations.

COURTESY

WET 'N' WILD SPLASHTOWN



Rider rolls out waves at 35 mph, moving 30,000 gallons of water.

The park will host a first-time event Aug. 4 when the Professional Flowboarding Tour competition comes to town.

The Big Kahuna is a mega-tube serpentine raft ride that blasts visitors into a dark, enclosed tunnel filled with a series of unpredictable twists and turns, breathtaking drops, and back-to-back curves. The five-person raft then shoots through the tunnel opening, splashes through the wildly fun s-shaped waterway, while catching some major hang time along high bank walls before hitting splashdown into the catch pool.

The kids area now includes eight exciting water slides, including a double body slide and triple track racer; an extreme gushing spray tower; a continuously drenching waterfall as well as jumping spray fountains that little visitors can frolic through.

"A major transformation to one of Houston's best summer attraction gems will not only deliver a whole new

dimension of wet thrills, but important details that our visitors have asked for, including more shaded lounge areas and expanded food offerings. We've done that and a whole lot more," Shepard said.

The food building also got an update. Kneupper said the entire area was remodeled. Park management hired consultants to help them with the layout. In addition, the survey conducted last fall showed that patrons wanted healthier food offerings and they got that. By the same token, desserts were also added.

Joe Sanchez remained as food manager at the park and a new position, revenue director, was filled by a new employee Brian Dodson.

Shepard said they have used all mediums imaginable to get the word out about the transformed park, using radio, television, social media, newspapers, and community newspapers. They have already seen an increase in the number of season passes sold for this year.

And, once they started doing some touch-up painting, Kneupper said the new-

ness of the new paint just made the old paint look older. So, they have now just about re-painted the entire park. A local company, Painting Professionals has been on site painting since January.

"The substantial investment in this exceptional property represents our commitment to enhancing the overall entertainment value and experience for all our visitors," said Kieran Burke, president of Premier Parks, in a press release about the improvements.

Wet 'n' Wild Splashtown is located less than 30 minutes from downtown Houston and now includes 36 rides and attractions. Special events are planned throughout the season, primarily in June and August. Those include movie nights, Texas, Hispanic and Latin America festivals.

The park is open daily until Aug. 24, then goes to weekend operations until Sept. 14.

The two most often ticket prices purchased for 2014 are: \$39.99 for general admission and \$30.99 guests under 48 inches.

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Six Flags expands three waterparks with capsules and mats

STORY: Jeffrey L. Seifert
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GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — Six Flags Entertainment expanded its waterpark properties in California and Texas with the addition of new water slides, and added a brand new water park to Six Flags Over Georgia.

Hurricane Harbor, adjacent to Six Flags Magic Mountain in Valencia, California, recycled a name used at other Six Flags locations, when adding Bonzai Pipelines — two ProSlide SuperLoops equipped with the SkyBox drop capsule launch system. After reaching the top of the five-story tower, guests approach one of two side-by-side thrill slides, then step into the enclosed vertical capsule where the floor drops out beneath them, sending riders free-falling nearly 40 miles-per-hour down the slide. The two slides offer two different experiences, and guests can choose to plummet down a straight drop or into a sidewinder twist.

A similar attraction was installed at the Six Flags Fiesta Texas in-park waterpark, White Water Bay, located in San Antonio. But, of course, everything is bigger in Texas. Not only does the attraction sport a unique moniker, it is being touted as the world's most extreme waterslide. Fiesta Texas is claiming their new four-slide Bahama Blaster complex features the world's steepest waterslide drop at 80 degrees and the manufacturer has backed up that claim. Two of the four slides feature straight drops, while the other two offer a sidewinder twist — all from the top of a six-story tower. Thrill seekers will achieve speeds of 40 mph without the aid of a vehicle. "It's 70 feet tall to the top of the launching capsule; the drop is at 80 degrees. In many ways it's like sliding down the first drop of the Iron Rattler," said Jeffrey Siebert, director of marketing for Six Flags Fiesta Texas. "Six Flags is synonymous with thrills, so it was important for us to add something unique to this region, and what's more exciting than the world's steepest waterslide?"

Unique to this installation is a clear section of the tube immediately following the drop. That clear section is directly in front of the queue, giving those waiting to board a chance to see priceless expressions as guests before them begin their plummet. Like its California sibling, the new slide complex was provided by ProSlide. However, Bahama Blaster isn't the only addition to the waterpark. A new section created alongside Bahama Blaster also includes a zero-entry pool with a swim-up bar.

►SEE RELATED STORY — PAGE 27

It is the first swim-up bar to be installed at any of the Six Flags branded waterparks that will offer adult beverages, including the new Bahama Blaster drink. New decking, additional lounging areas and two kids slides finish out the expanded area.

"This is the first water park expansion in seven years," adds Seibert, "rounding out something for our thrill seekers is a new relaxing lagoon area for mom and dad, plus two new little slides for smaller guests." Closer to the main entrance, guests will find private cabanas for rent and judging by their popularity, more cabanas are likely to be added in the future.

Also in Texas, across the I-30 Interstate Highway to the original Six Flags theme in Arlington, Six Flags Hurricane Harbor, the largest water park in North Texas, is off to the races with the opening of Wahoo Racer. This exciting six-lane water slide complex from WhiteWater West, stands nearly 60 feet tall. Here riders slide headfirst on a mat, first through an enclosed spiraling tube, then meet up to race side-by-side to the finish.

The new slide complex occupies the former space of the Bubba Tub. The Bubba Tub's existing loading platform was reused as was some of the larger steel support towers. All new stair platforms were installed.

"This one-of-a-kind slide complex symbolizes our ongoing commitment to remain the leader in providing innovative family fun," said Steve Martindale, Six Flags Hurricane Harbor park president. "Hurricane Harbor has been a staple in North Texas for more than 30 years offering a growing number of unparalleled water park thrills for guests of all ages."

The park also used the offseason to update the park with new staircases on other slides towers, and new paint from Baynum Painting could be seen shining brightly in the Texas sun on numerous waterslides.

As AT was going to press, Six Flags Over Georgia just introduced a brand-new multi-million dollar in-park Hurricane Harbor waterpark. Occupying the real estate that formerly held the Southern Star Amphitheater, the new water park will feature several water attractions from ProSlide as well as a 38,000 square-foot wave pool. The new waterpark ties into the popular Skull Rock-themed water park structure added several years ago. Look for full-coverage of Georgia's Hurricane Harbor in our October issue.



Six Flags Hurricane Harbor in Arlington, Texas added Wahoo Racer, a six-lane mat racer slide from WhiteWater West. AT/GARY SLADE



ProSlide supplied floor drop capsule slides to Six Flags Magic Mountain's Hurricane Harbor (above), dubbed Bonzai Pipelines and to Six Flags Fiesta Texas' White Water Bay as the Bahama Blaster. That slide features the world's steepest water slide drop at 80 degrees.

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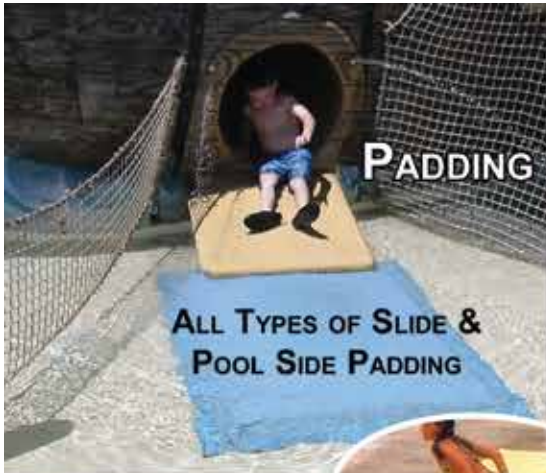
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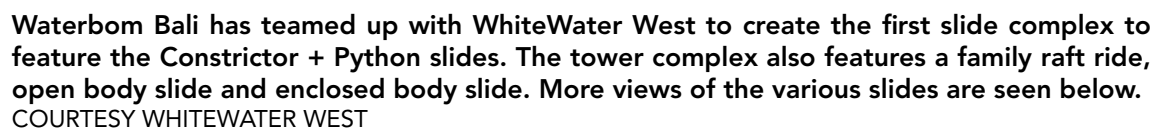
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BALI, Indonesia — Breaking boundaries on April 29th, Waterbom Bali raised the bar with some of the fastest, longest and most exciting waterslides in the world. The world's first combination Constrictor + Python is a fusion of thrilling and adrenaline pumping twists, turns and sensations. With this latest expansion, Waterbom Bali now has a total of 20 waterslides, with 80 percent of them supplied by WhiteWater West.

"We are happy with WhiteWater since they always cross the boundaries of innovation. They have exceeded my expectations, and when expectations are exceeded it puts a smile on my face and more importantly the face of the customers, which is the primary motive of the business," Santo Gulino, president and director of Waterbom Bali.

Vince Tytler, the WhiteWater project manager for the expansion comments, "We are very happy to have worked with Waterbom Bali and their team to deliver the first WhiteWater combination waterslide in Indonesia and the longest, most exciting Family Raft Ride in WhiteWater history. Working with the entire team throughout this journey has been a joy."

This latest expansion by WhiteWater featured a Combination Constrictor+Python, family raft ride, open body slide and enclosed body slide.



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Spain waterpark receives first Polin Twin Turbolance

LAS PALMAS, Spain — After a successful first season, Aqualand Maspalomas kicked off its second season with one of the biggest waterslides in Europe — a Racer Twin Turbolance from Polin Waterparks & Pool Systems.

The water park in Las Palmas, a beach-resort city on the southernmost tip of Gran Canaria in the Canary Islands, a Spanish archipelago, is part of the Aqualand water park chain, the largest in Europe. Owned by Aspro Group, the park is among 20 located across the continent in France, Portugal, Finland, Switzerland and Spain.

The Racer Twin Turbolance is the world's first circular, racing tube slide. The innovative design of the high-capacity attraction consists of two tunnels configured side by side. Two guests per tube make the slide one of the highest capacity rides in the park. Riders follow a circular path, racing each other along a series of twists and turns before reaching an enclosure that suddenly plummets riders down a nearly vertical drop. The double-tubes

then diverge into two separate Turbolance slides and propel the riders vertically uphill. Thrillseekers then experience a reverse path as their race continues backward over a hill, into a valley and ending in a dry runout.

The Racer Twin Turbolance offers strong visual appeal to both riders and spectators. With Natural Light Effects (NLE) technology applied, guests swoosh at high speeds along two double turns in enclosed tunnels, enjoying the light effects during the first part of the multi-lane slide's ride path. As water sluices through the ride, it interacts with sunlight that shines through translucent stripes at the top of the slide's tunnels. These natural effects take different forms depending on the strength and angle of sunlight throughout the day to create a truly dynamic experience for guests. The water slide is manufactured with Resin Transfer Molding technology which is the latest technology in waterslide manufacturing and offers a smooth and shiny finish on both sides.

— Jeffrey Seifert



Spain's Aqualand Maspalomas kicked off its second season with a Racer Twin Turbolance slide complex from Polin Waterparks & Pool Systems. The new high capacity attraction consists of two tunnel areas configured side by side that open up into the big forward drop before experiencing the reversing return run and speed bump into the final runout landing. COURTESY POLIN



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PARKS & CARNIVALS

► Knott's Calico Mine reopens following refurbishment — Page 30 & 31 / Carnival news — Pages 33-36

Hersheypark adds Zamperla family-friendly attractions

STORY: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

HERSHEY, Pa. — For the 2014 season, central Pennsylvania themer Hersheypark, added three Zamperla rides to their ride arsenal. The Italian ride manufacturer provided a children's coaster, tea cup ride and swing. The family dragon coaster model, (dubbed Cocoa Cruiser), located in the Music Box Way area, is a compact oval containing a mid-course helix. Cocoa Cruiser features a six car train with a 12 person capacity.

The Happy Swing model (called Sweet Sing at Hersheypark), accommodates 12 passengers at a time, including two adults. It is a relatively new product offering that was first installed at Luna Park, Coney Island, N.Y. in 2010.

Rounding out the ride package is a tea cup ride. The six cups hold two children and

two adults in each cup. Riders can determine how much spin they want with a central manual steering wheel in each cup.

Gary Chubb, senior director of maintenance said, "This is going to be a family year. The new rides have been well accepted." He continued, "Zamperla has done a very good job overall. They have been courting us for a number of years." Regarding the new junior roller coaster, Chubb commented, "We always knew we wanted a small, family-type coaster." The new installation brings Hershey-park's coaster count back to 12, since Roller Soaker (Setpoint) was removed after the 2012 season.

"They took a small area and shoe-horned in three wonderful rides," said Ramon Rosario, director of sales for Zamperla Inc. - USA. He continued, "The installation was

► See **HERSHEY**, page 26



Hersheypark added to its family ride selection this season with three new Zamperla rides. Shown here is the Cocoa Cruiser family coaster (above) and the Sweet Sing (inset). The third new ride was a Tea Cup ride.

AT/B. DEREK SHAW

New area with five rides opens at Sesame Place

STORY: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

LANGHORNE, Pa. — Following on the success of Elmo's World area, Sesame Place debuted Cookie's Monster Land in early June to throngs of happy fans, three foot and under, and their parents.

The re-developed section of the southeastern Pennsylvania park now has five flat rides, a three-story net climb, soft play area and a new "grab and go" eatery.

Long known for their water attractions, the 13-acre Sea-World Parks & Entertainment owned property wanted to beef up their iron ride count.

Vekoma's custom junior coaster, Vapor Trail, which opened in 1998, was the first ride. The new additions in 2014 bring the ride count to 13 which is the same amount of water attractions on property.

Cookie's Monster Land is home to five rides and two play areas fit for guests of all ages. Four of the rides are from Zamperla Inc. - USA. Two of them are brand new

► See **SEASAME**, page 26

Captain Cookie's High C's Adventure (a Zamperla Regata) is seen in left side of photo of the new Cookie's Monster Land area at Sesame Place.

AT/B. DEREK SHAW



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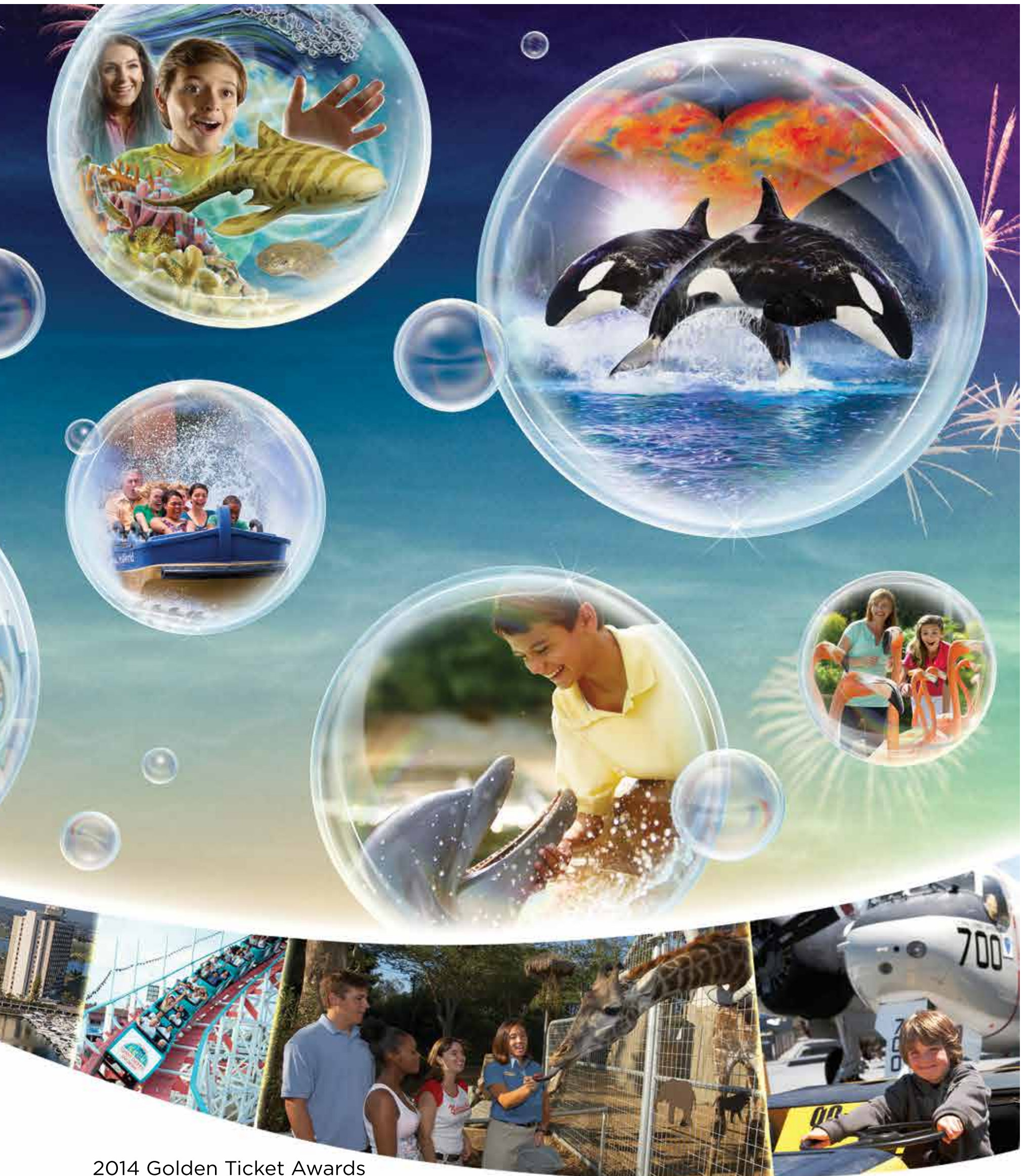
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►SESAME

Continued from page 23

and two re-themed. They include: Captain Cookie's High C's Adventure (Regatta ride) is a spinner – ocean themed. Oscar's Rotten Rockets (Flying Tigers) is an oval shaped course with eight planes that accommodate up to four kids each. The re-themed rides include The Flying Cookie Jars (Samba Tower) balloon ride that spins 40 feet in the air and The Monster Mix-Up, a traditional tea cup ride.

Relocated from Busch Gardens Tampa Bay is Honker Dinger Derby (Tivoli Enterprises Company in 1979 and was rehabilitated by Premier Rides last year). It ran for 34 seasons, until the end of 2013 to make room for Falcon's Fury drop tower.

Ramon Rosario, director of sales for Zamperla Inc. – USA, told *Amusement Today*, about the Sesame Place project, "We have a very successful relationship with them. We worked well with their design team to create these special rides. I feel like we are a partner with them."

The area was a response from customer input. "Guests are not afraid to tell us what they want. They wanted more dry rides," said Mike Taylor, director of park operations. When asked about the results, Taylor said. "It's been great.



Seen at Sesame Place in 2014 is Oscar's Rotten Rockets (Zamperla Fling Tigers) is seen in foreground with The Flying Cookie Jars (Zamperla Samba Tower) seen in the background.

AT/B. DEREK SHAW

People love the area."

Cookie's Monster Land also contains Monster Clubhouse, a three story net climbing area and a soft play area dubbed, Mini Monster Clubhouse, for park goers who are five and younger.

Rounding out the mix is an upgrade from a food cart to a grab and go food establishment. Cookie's Sometimes/Anytime Food Market features sandwiches, fruit, vegetable trays and juice boxes.

►HERSHEY

Continued from page 23

done nicely. We are happy to be a part of it."

When asked why Hersheypark does not have a centralized children's area, Chubb said, "We pride ourselves on not having a central children's area. This allows something for everyone to do in a certain area of the park."


The new rides boost Hersheypark's total ride count to nearly 70. This breaks down to 40 family rides, 27 children's rides and 12 roller coasters.

The other addition to the park this year is a Chickie & Pete's walk-up eatery. A long-time Philadelphia/South Jersey tradition, they are known for their crabfries. "The Sweetest Place on Earth just got a little crabby with the addition of Crabfries," quipped Pete Ciarrocchi, chairman and CEO of Chickie & Pete's. The eatery can be found in the Midway America section of the park.

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Six Flags rolls out plenty of summer thrills



STORY: Scott Rutherford
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

As warm weather settles in and summertime ramps up, Six Flags Theme Parks across North America have plenty in store to keep guests entertained. What follows is a quick sampling of some of the highlights.

Six Flags America

Six Flags America has introduced a new Mardi Gras-themed section for the 2014 season. Highlighting the festive area are two new major attractions: Ragin Cajun and the French Quarter Flyers.

As the park's ninth roller coaster, Ragin Cajun is a spinning coaster that features 1,378 feet of track arranged in a compact Wild Mouse-style layout. The Zamperla Twister Coaster operated under the same name and theme at sister park Six Flags Great America from 2004 through 2013.

"Ragin Cajun, with its spinning car, is the first of its kind at Six Flags America and offers guests a completely new type of thrill," said Rick Howarth, park president. "Riders get a good taste of the excitement of Mardi Gras as they zip, spin, twist and turn on this fantastic new ride."

The coaster shares its new home with the family-friendly French Quarter Flyers, a Flying Scooter supplied by Larson International. The new

ride features eight two-seat cars, each equipped with a moveable front rudder that allows guests to climb, dive and soar at speeds up to 40 miles-per-hour.

The entire Mardi Gras area is a party inspired by the energy of New Orleans with existing rides re-themed and the addition of new retail, games, and fun refreshments at Hurricanes, serving adult beverages and light fare.

The Great Escape

Kicking off its 60th anniversary season, The Great Escape unveiled its newest ride, Extreme Supernova.

A Zamperla Midi Discovery, the new attraction accommodates 16 riders in outward facing seats. Once the floor disappears from below their feet, Extreme Supernova swings back and forth while guests are spun in circles delivering powerful positive G-Forces and swinging up to 50 feet above the midway.

Extreme Supernova sits next to the world famous Comet roller coaster, celebrating 20 years at The Great Escape this season. The two attractions create a brand new cosmic thrill zone for guests in 2014.

"Extreme Supernova delivers an intense experience for thrill seekers of all ages," said Eric Gilbert, park president, Six Flags Great Escape Resort Properties. "It is the

► RELATED STORY PAGE 16

ideal addition to The Great Escape in 2014 as it perfectly complements the nearby Comet and all of our great rides and attractions."

Six Flags Magic Mountain

New in 2014 and for a limited time, the popular inverted coaster, Batman The Ride and the celebrated wooden coaster, Colossus, have both run backward. Younger visitors and their families are being treated to a revitalized children's area, Bugs Bunny World.

The section is anchored by the launch of a new kid-friendly coaster, Speedy Gonzales Hot Rod Racers (*Zamperla Family Gravity Coaster 80STD*). The new coaster, which stands 13 feet high and features 262 feet of track, brings the total number of coasters in the children's area to four, more than any other U.S. theme park. A new show in the area's Carrot Club Theater is also on offer.

"We are excited to introduce Speedy Gonzales Hot Rod Racers to our coaster collection at Six Flags Magic Mountain," said Bonnie Rabjohn, Six Flags Magic Mountain and Hurricane Harbor park president. "This time it's a fun adventure for our littlest guests. The mini-coasters in Bugs Bunny World are the

► See **SIX FLAGS**, page 28



Highlighting the new Mardi Gras-themed area at Six Flags America are two new major attractions: (top) Ragin Cajun, a Zamperla Twister Coaster and (above) the French Quarter Flyers, a Larson International Flying Scooter. In both photos below, both Six Flags Discovery Kingdom & Six Flags St. Louis have guests waging water wars this summer on their new Tsunami Soakers, interactive spinning water attractions supplied by Germany's Mack Rides. COURTESY SIX FLAGS



Six Flags New England's skyline has been redefined this season by the addition of The New England SkyScreamer, a 400-foot-tall Funtime Star Flyer that is being marketed as 'the tallest ride of its kind in the world.' Guests revolve at 35 mph and are treated to panoramic views of the surrounding areas including the Connecticut River and New England horizon. COURTESY RIDE ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

►SIX FLAGS

Continued from page 27

perfect training ground for aspiring thrill seekers at the 'Thrill Capital of the World.' No doubt we will be creating lots of magical memories for them this year."

Six Flags New England

The Six Flags New England skyline has been redefined this season by the addition of The New England SkyScreamer, a 400-foot-tall tower swing ride (Funtime Star Flyer) that is being marketed as the "tallest ride of its kind in the world."

Raising guests over 40 stories in the air, the new thriller treats them to a 35 mph adventure and provides striking panoramic views of the entire park and surrounding areas including the Connecticut River and New England horizon.

"We take great pride in opening the ultimate, biggest and most innovative attractions for our guests," said John Winkler, Six Flags New England's park president. "The addition of the New England SkyScreamer only enhances

our commitment to delivering world-class thrills and attractions to Six Flags New England that we bring every year."

Six Flags Discovery Kingdom and Six Flags St. Louis

Both Six Flags Discovery Kingdom & Six Flags St. Louis have guests waging water wars this summer on their new Tsunami Soakers, interactive spinning water attractions supplied by Germany's Mack Rides.

On Tsunami Soaker, up to six guests board one of the nine round boats sitting on a circular floor atop a pool of water. As the ride begins, the floor lowers into the water until it disappears below, allowing the boats to float. Once underway, the boats begin to rotate. Each seat on the boat features a water gun, which allows everyone to engage in playful water battles. Riders have the opportunity to blast other boats as well as bystanders on dry land.

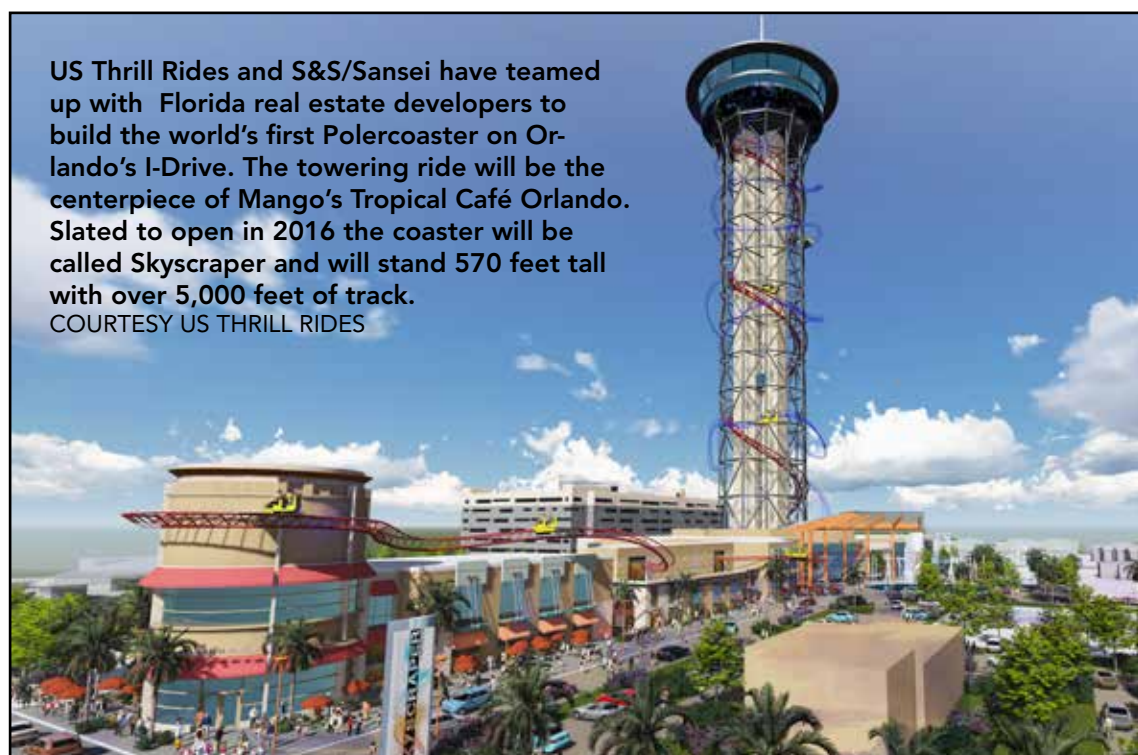
Amusement Today will have additional Six Flags ride coverage in the August issue as more rides make their summer season debut.

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US Thrill Rides, S&S to build record-breaking Polercoaster on Orlando's I-Drive

ORLANDO, Fla. — David and Joshua Wallack, the owners of Mango's Tropical Café Orlando and Mango's Tropical Café South Beach, have announced plans to develop what they are calling "the world's tallest roller coaster" at their new Skyplex indoor entertainment complex being built at International Drive and Sand Lake Road.

Sporting the appropriate name of Skyscraper, the ride is actually a Polercoaster, an innovative new attraction originally announced in 2011 as a joint venture between US Thrill Rides and S&S - Sansei Technologies. Utilizing track and ride vehicles similar to those used on S&S El Loco coasters, the Skyscraper will feature a spiral lift up and around the Skyplex tower structure. Once the coaster vehicles reach the highest point (570 feet), gravity takes over and riders will be treated to a compact collection of quick drops, turns and inversions along the 5,600-foot-long course.

The \$200 million Skyplex, comprising approximately 495,000 square feet located on 12 acres will be located near the soon-to-open 425-foot-tall Orlando Eye Ferris Wheel. "We're extremely excited about creating a record-breaking, must-try attraction on International Drive," said Joshua Wallack, Mango's Tropical Café chief operating officer, who also will open a Mango's Orlando next year across International Drive from Skyplex. "Nowhere in the world will you have two iconic structures like The Skyscraper and the Orlando Eye. This will be an incredible opportunity for International Drive."

Wallack and his father David are partners in the mixed-use development that includes opportunities for additional attractions, entertainment, interactive venues, restaurants and retail to include a two-story prime retail space on International Drive. The Skyplex indoor entertainment complex, including the observatory and restaurant and lounge at the top of the Skyscraper, was designed by global architectural firm HHCP, based in Orlando, and will be constructed by Euforria, a construction management division of Winter Park Construction, based in Winter Park, Fla.

"Imagine a night of incredible dining, lounging and dancing atop a glass elevator ride 55 stories into the air," said David Wallack. "It's a true meeting of engineering, technology and art that is making this dream happen for us. We plan to bring Ocean Drive to I-Drive with a new dining and nightlife district that locals and Orlando visitors won't want to miss."

The Skyplex complex was conceived in late 2012 soon after Joshua Wallack began investigating parking garage locations for the Mango's Orlando restaurant project.

What began as a search for multi-acre valet parking site for the Mango's project mushroomed into a whirlwind of negotiations for additional land after Wallack was contacted by US Thrill Rides as to their interest in building the world's first Polercoaster ride. The Wallacks rolled up five contiguous sites comprising 12 acres of land with 300 front feet on International Drive near Sand Lake Road and were soon collaborating with US Thrill Rides to license and develop the Polercoaster, which they now dub the Skyscraper Skyplex. It will include a 1,500-car parking garage with a valet parking option.

Mango's Tropical Café in Orlando, opening in 2015, will be a world-class restaurant and nightlife entertainment destination in the heart of the International Drive district and just one mile from the Orange County Convention Center. The restaurant, with 55,000 square feet of entertainment space, live bands, shows and dancing, plus gourmet dining and event packages, will have a parking garage next door to it.

The Wallack family has built a reputation as entrepreneurs and philanthropists in Miami with the Mango's Tropical Café South Beach restaurant. The Wallacks have pioneered the innovative Community Partnership Program in Miami Beach benefitting Mount Sinai Hospital in Miami Beach, which has yielded more than half a million dollars in the past two years. The Wallacks plan similar philanthropic activities in Central Florida.

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Knott's revitalizes Calico Mine Ride, Camp Snoopy attractions

STORY: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

BUENA PARK, Calif. — Knott's Berry Farm hasn't yielded produce in many decades. But its field of delighted screams continues to bear fruit.

Following the refurbishment last summer of its classic Timber Mountain Log Ride and expansion of its Boardwalk Pier section, both popular draws, the park undertook an extensive, state-of-the-art makeover of another iconic attraction, the 54-year-old Calico Mine Ride, and a cosmetic

upgrade / expansion of its 31-year-old Camp Snoopy area for kids and families.

The two latest projects represent a substantial, ongoing reinvestment in Knott's, which is nearing the century mark of its beyond-humble beginnings as a farm and roadside stand along State Route 39.

"We're always looking at revitalizing Knott's and striking a balance between the old and the new," said Raffi Kaprelyan, park vice president and general manager.

"The Calico Mine Ride and Camp Snoopy have delighted guests for decades and are classics that families come back time and again to experience together. The revitalization of these areas once again demonstrates our commitment to Knott's heritage and will preserve these experiences for a new generation of guests to enjoy."

Invited media and local dignitaries were among those who were treated to a June 12 preview of the improved and new attractions. The Calico Mine Ride and Camp Snoopy enhancements were unveiled to the general public June 14, accompanied by the expected upticks in both attendance and social media buzz.

Re-mining a park legacy

As the first major ride at Knott's Berry Farm, the Calico Mine Ride set a new standard for immersive, swift-moving dark rides after it opened in the park's Ghost Town section in the fall of 1960.

The imposing attraction, designed by industry pioneer Bud Hurlbut under the eye of park founder Walter Knott and modeled on the actual ghost town of Calico in the Mojave Desert, carries riders aboard ore cars on a dank, spooky adventure through the dim tunnels of a simulated gold mine. The eight-minute journey winds past underground lakes, waterfalls and steaming geysers inside caverns filled with dangling mineral formations.

At several points inside the seven-story manmade mountain, the trains — pulled by 19th century-themed replica



Kaprelyan



**CALICO
MINE CO.**

Knott's Berry Farm reopened its renovated, 54-year-old legacy attraction, the Calico Mine Ride, to the public June 14.

New animatronic characters include a miner (right) just inside the entrance tunnel who warns riders of impending danger.

AT/DEAN LAMANNA (TOP);
COURTESY KNOTT'S BERRY FARM



FAST FACTS

Name/Park

Calico Mine Ride/
Knott's Berry Farm,
Buena Park, Calif.

Type

Gravity dark ride

Original Opening/Cost

November 22, 1960/
\$1 million (refurbishment
cost not announced)

Reopening

June 14, 2014

Mountain Height

Seven stories (three levels)

Track Length/Longest Ascent

1,080 feet/160 feet
(25-degree angle)

Duration/Capacity

8 min./1,500 pph

**Number of Trains/Cars per
Train/Passengers per Train**
6/5/50

Number of Animatronic Characters

46 humans, 100 animals

Artificial Rock Features

8,000-plus stalactites and
stalagmites

Water Features

5 waterfalls, 2 interior
ponds (20,000 gallons total)

Ride Refurbishment/ New Animation Supplier

Knott's Berry Farm/
Garner Hold Productions,
San Bernardino, Calif.

Designer/Manufacturer

Bud Hurlbut,
Bud Hurlbut Attractions,
Buena Park, Calif.

steam locomotives — skirt the rim of a 65-foot-deep, 90-foot-wide, three-level scene filled with dozens of animatronic employees of the Calico Mining Co. at work. Few dark rides in history have ever approached this degree of expansive, full-scale spectacle; today, it would be virtually cost-prohibitive for the average theme park.

After the successful, award-winning makeover of its Timber Mountain Log Ride, Knott's was looking to strike gold again by continuing its creative collaboration with San Bernardino, Calif.-based Garner Holt Productions (GHP) on the Calico project. The restoration began in earnest last January.

"It was

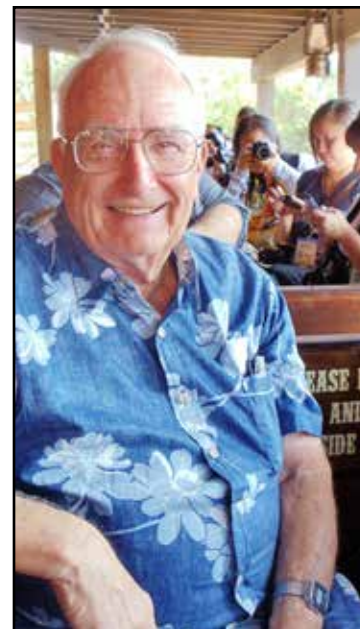


Holt

our company's top priority to preserve and enhance the original story of a working gold mine deep in the heart of the Old West," said Garner Holt,

GHP founder and president. "The Calico Mine Ride is now filled with lifelike sounds and motion, while maintaining the

► See KNOTT'S, page 31



Bud Hurlbut's toolbox produced magic at Knott's Berry Farm for decades. One of Hurlbut's former employees, John Waite (left), takes his first trip on the revamped Calico Mine Ride.

AT/DEAN LAMANNA

►KNOTT'S

Continued from page 30

uniquely authentic feel of the attraction as designed by Walter Knott and Bud Hurlbut."

As it did with Hurlbut's log ride, GHP, working with the park's design team, has elevated the mine ride's mid-century design while preserving the original mining experience. New denizens of the mountain include an old miner just inside the first tunnel who welcomes guests and warns them of danger on the rails ahead.

Added excitement also can be found along the newly re-tracked chainlift, where trains pass a nervous miner carrying an animatronic canary in a cage for safety. Among the other mechanized animals on display are a donkey, vultures, a dog, countless bats and blind fish in the eerie Lake Room.

Think Disney-meets-the subterranean scare movie *The Descent*.

The renovation includes dozens of new state-of-the-art

animatronic figures, refreshed paint and landscaping, additional special effects, remastered music, and an all-new LED lighting system that delivers dazzling hues, plus crisp, pre-recorded digital storytelling audio on each train.

"The spiel is based on the original 1960 script, and it has all-new points of interest and stories in the voices of three character narrators so that each trip through the mine will be unique," said Holt. "The updated script includes references to a number of real historic mining practices and personalities. The onboard narrator also interacts with animatronics and special effects in some scenes."

The ride's rustic wooden loading platform has been refreshed and now includes a "peek-in" similar to those found throughout Ghost Town — offering guests windows into the rich mining history of the 1850s on their way toward boarding the mine train car. A new guest and employee elevator has been installed to improve access to the attraction, especially for guests seeking ADA accommodations.

The Calico Mine Ride was a huge hit on its initial opening and earned back Hurlbut's \$1 million investment in less than two years. The groundbreaking attraction held a special place in the heart of Walter Knott, who had worked in mines around the turn of the century in the Calico mining region of San Bernardino County before calling Buena Park home.

Despite the massive operation depicted inside the Calico Mine, since the attraction's earliest debut, no character has ever discovered gold in the mountain. As part of the renovation, one lucky miner has been allowed to strike it rich — with gold in-hand.

Walter probably would have loved it.

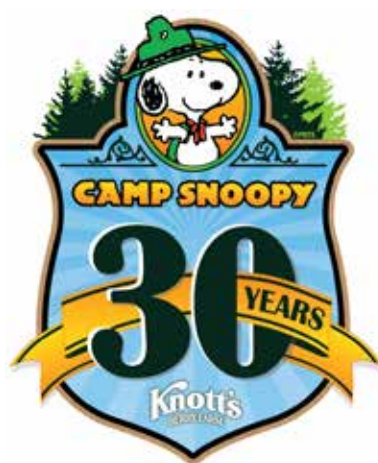
A Camp Snoopy revamp

The late cartoonist Charles M. Schulz surely would've approved the makeover of Campy Snoopy, the Knott's Berry Park home of his beloved Peanuts Gang, which he helped launch at the park in the summer of 1983.

The Knott family, working with Schulz, envisioned Camp Snoopy to be a carefree place where nature, adventure and imagination come to life. In honor of the six-acre section's recent 30th anniversary,



Now in its 31st year, the six-acre Camp Snoopy at Knott's has been made over into a relaxing High Sierra "escape" that's also a setting for the Peanut Gang's adventures. Among the improvements are extensive landscaping and water features, rustic fencing, greater cartoon character integration and three new family rides from Zamperla, including Pig Pen's Mud Buggies (below right). COURTESY KNOTT'S BERRY FARM



its High Sierra mountain camp theming has been enhanced throughout — with new rustic fencing and ride theming, new paving and additional landscaping — and three new family rides have been added.

The rides, all products of Parsippany, N.J.-based Zamperla that replace older attractions, are Charlie Brown's Kite Flyer, a junior wave swinger that invites "campers" to fly a kite with Charlie Brown; Pig Pen's Mud Buggies, which lets tykes climb aboard their very own all-terrain vehicle for an adventurous ride in the High Sierra; and Linus Launcher, a kite flyer ride that recreates the classic Peanut's moment when Snoopy grabs Linus's blanket and launches him on a wild ride.

In addition, visitors will find a refurbished Grizzly Creek Lodge, a new meet-and-greet area for the Peanuts characters and a relaxing gazebo park.

As part of its Camp Snoopy celebration, Knott's — partnering with Garner Holt Productions once again — also is augmenting the scenic enjoyment provided by the Grand Sierra Railroad. The classic train now chugs past six new wilderness scenes featuring more than a



dozen Peanuts characters on a camping trip in the High Sierra. The journey features pre-recorded narration by none other than Linus Van Pelt.

Since its original opening, millions of kids and their parents have visited the official theme park base of Schulz's celebrated beagle and the rest of the Peanuts gang. Schulz's son, Craig, who is president of Santa Rosa, Calif.-based Charles M. Schulz Creative Associates, said Camp Snoopy fulfills his father's vision for the section.

"My dad had a love of children, and he saw this as a place where they could hang out, be safe and enjoy his [cartoon] world," Schulz, himself a father of two, told *Amusement Today*. "Kids who read the comic strip would love to live in Charlie Brown's world, and Camp Snoopy is a physical place they can go to and feel like they're actually in his neighborhood. For parents, it's nice to be able to go to a place in the park, sit down with the kids and enjoy themselves."

(For the record, Pig Pen is

Craig Schulz's favorite Peanuts character.)

Walter and Cordelia Knott's grandson, Darryl, who grew up playing and working at Knott's Berry Farm, was impressed with the refurbishment of both Camp Snoopy and the Calico Mine Ride — and was very pleased with Cedar Fair's general handling of his family's amusement entity.

"Cedar Fair has been terrific," Knott told *AT*. "They have taken the park to a whole new level. In addition to the legacy, they understand the value of good landscaping and keeping things fresh."

"When I finally got her to come back here to visit and walk around the park, my mom [Marion Knott] said, 'You know, they've been really good stewards of this asset.' Now, that's a real compliment coming from somebody who had a true vested interest in the park. And I feel the same way. I don't think we could have done a better job of finding a home for our history and our legacy."

•www.knotts.com

FAST FACTS

Name/Park

Camp Snoopy/
Knott's Berry Farm,
Buena Park, Calif.

Section Type

Peanuts/High Sierra-
themed area for children,
families

Original Opening/ Reopening

July 1, 1983/
June 14, 2014

Size/Number of Rides

Six acres/14

New Rides in 2014

Pig Pen's Mud Buggies
circular kiddie ride with
24-person capacity
(6 ATV-themed cars/
4 riders per car)

Charlie Brown's Kite Flyer
junior wave swinger
32-person capacity
(16 swings, each seating
two riders, 11-foot
maximum swing height)

Linus Launcher
kite flyer
(16-person capacity,
8 prone sleds, each seating
two riders, 12-foot
maximum sled height)

Manufacturer of New Rides

Zamperla, Inc.,
Parsippany, N.J.



Schulz



Knott

New Chance Wheel lights up D.C. skyline

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Washington, D.C.'s skyline just got a little brighter with the addition of the Capital Wheel, a new giant Ferris wheel that opened to the public on May 23.

Supplied by Chance Rides, The Capital Wheel is the newest addition to Maryland's National Harbor, a 300-acre multi-use waterfront development on the Potomac River just south of Washington, D.C. near the Woodrow Wilson Bridge.

Standing 180-feet above the Potomac River, the 165-foot-diameter The Capital Wheel features 42 climate-controlled gondolas that accommodate up to eight passengers each. The gondolas feature glass exteriors that offer riders panoramic views of the National Mall, White House, U.S. Capitol, Arlington Cemetery and other area landmarks.

Additionally, The Capital Wheel is equipped with one VIP gondola dubbed 'National Harbor One.' It sports glass floors, wine chillers, a retracting monitor/DVD player and leather bucket seats.

At full capacity The Capital Wheel can handle 336 guests and provide them with a memorable ride experience lasting 12-15 minutes.

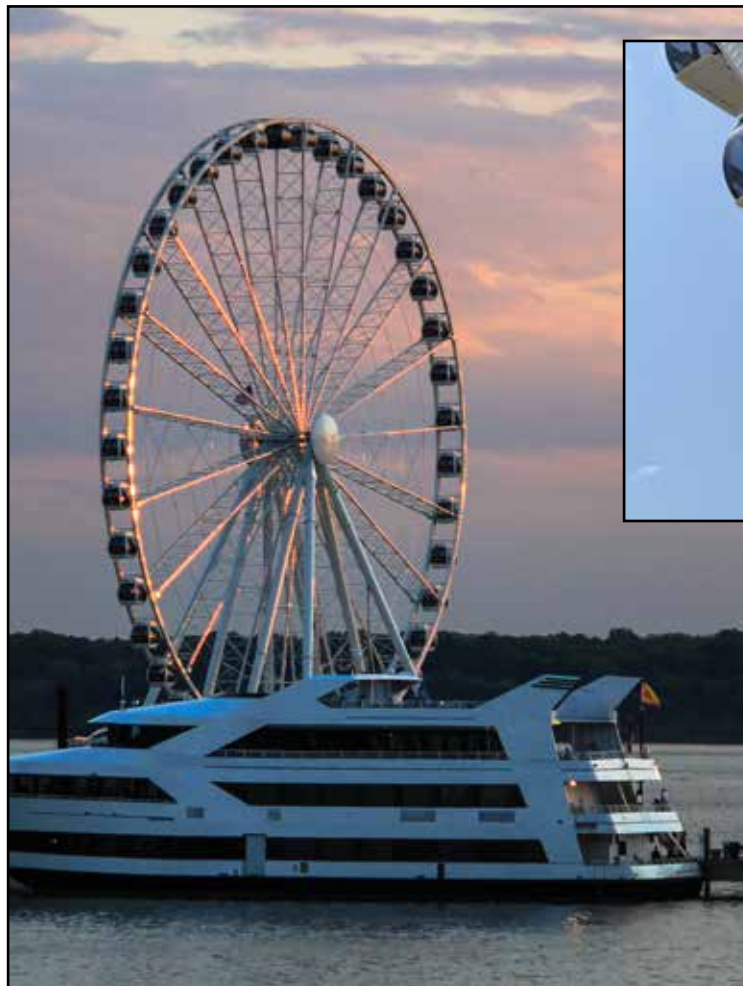
The operating hours for the wheel have been extended from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. for the

summer season, which runs through August.

Once the sun sets, The Capital Wheel really shines thanks to an illumination package consisting of 1.6 million LED lights that are fully programmable with a spectrum of 16.7 million colors.

"The Capital Wheel at National Harbor [is] a welcomed addition to the numerous attractions that have made National Harbor a regional destination," said Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III. "Like the National Harbor ice rink and carousel, The Capital Wheel will draw even more visitors. These types of attractions are why Prince George's County is the 'Place to Be.' I thank the Peterson Companies for their commitment to bringing innovative and fun attractions to the County for our residents, businesses and visitors. I look forward to more announcements like this in years to come."

"The Capital Wheel will be a new icon for the National Capital region, a family-friendly yet sophisticated magnet for area residents, U.S. and global tourists alike," added Peterson Companies Principal and Chairman Milt Peterson. "Already, Maryland is attracting more tourists in part to National Harbor's emergence as a premier resort destination. The Capital



Supplied by Chance Rides, The Capital Wheel is the newest addition to National Harbor, a 300-acre multi-use waterfront development on the Potomac River south of Washington, D.C. The Capital Wheel stands 180 feet above the river.

COURTESY CHANCE RIDES

Wheel will be a tremendous complement to the existing shopping, dining and lodging options at National Harbor and further drive visitation to

Prince George's County and the state of Maryland."

Pricing for tickets to ride The Capital Wheel are \$15 per adult and \$11.25 for children

ages 3 to 11. Discount adult tickets for seniors and military with ID are \$13.50. Tickets for the National Harbor One gondola are \$50 per person.

FAST FACTS

Name/Park

The Capital Wheel at National Harbor, National Harbor, Md.

Type/Supplier

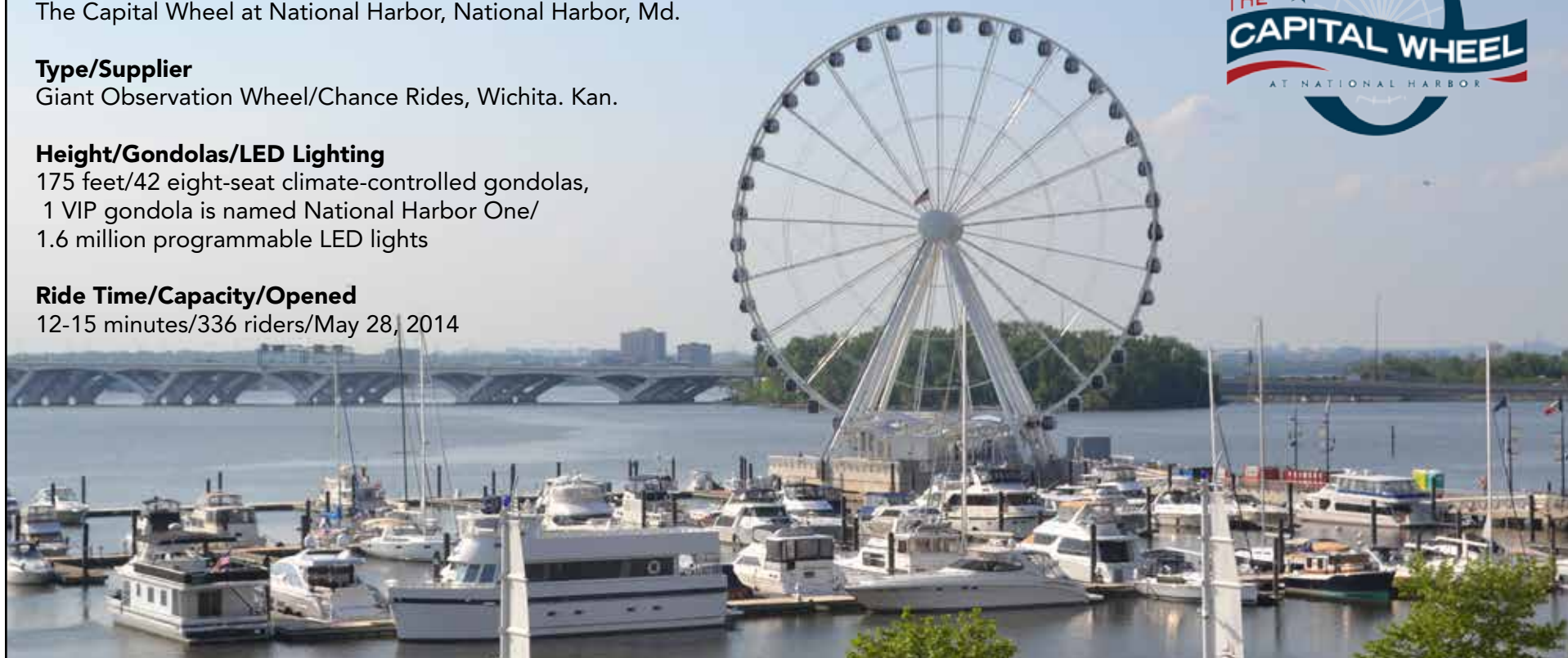
Giant Observation Wheel/Chance Rides, Wichita, Kan.

Height/Gondolas/LED Lighting

175 feet/42 eight-seat climate-controlled gondolas,
1 VIP gondola is named National Harbor One/
1.6 million programmable LED lights

Ride Time/Capacity/Opened

12-15 minutes/336 riders/May 28, 2014



New and old food fare abound at the Meadowlands

STORY: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — Fairgoers will get a slice of uniquely American cuisine at the State Fair Meadowlands, East Rutherford, N.J., with vendors offering everything from more traditional offerings such as burgers, hot dogs, funnel cakes and fries to more daring fare such as deep-fried larvettes.

Yes, that is larva.

Fair officials released information on fair foods in early June. The fair, which will run June 30-July 6, will have food offerings from more than 50 food vendors.

"The fair has something for everyone — from Jersey pizza and classic chicken wings to Mr. Sticky's famous Pennsylvania sticky buns," said Al Dorso, president of

State Fair Meadowlands. "Fairgoers will find a feast for their eyes and mouths with the incredible assortment of delicious food vendors we will be hosting. In fact, with so many great choices, the hardest part will be picking what to try first."

Those fairgoers with a sweet tooth will love Brian the Deep-Fry Guy who promises to deep fry anything including cookies, candy bars, grilled cheese sandwiches, Pop Tarts, and even his buckeye creation of peanut butter dough wrapped in chocolate and deep-fried.

Daring foodies might want to try Brian's deep-fried cream cheese with larvettes.

Fairgoers also will have the opportunity to try out some real Louisiana jambalaya, Maryland pit beef sand-

► See **FOOD**, page 34



The Deep-Fry Guy offers just about anything fried at his food concession at the State Fair Meadowlands, East Rutherford, N.J., which started June 20 and will conclude July 8, including this (above) deep-fried grilled cheese sandwich. The Deep-Fry Guy is also known as Brian Shenkman.
COURTESY STATE FAIR MEADOWLANDS



A.R.M.'s new Frenzy debuted at the St. Clare Festival, Lyndhurst, Ohio, May 29-June 2. AT/SUE NICHOLS

Bates Brothers debut A.R.M.'s new Frenzy

STORY: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

LYNDHURST, Ohio — Bates Brothers Amusements have taken A.R.M. Rides' new Frenzy prototype on the road this year and so far the response has been very good.

Bates Brothers Amusements, owned by A.R.M., played their first date with the new ride at the IX Center Indoor Amusement Park, Cleveland, which ran March 22-April 14.

The first road date was a still date in Columbus, Ohio, May 25 and 26. The second was the St. Clare Festival in Lyndhurst, Ohio, which ran May 29-June 2.

"The new ride is doing very well and getting a positive response," said Brad Dallman, who runs Bates Brothers' Orange Unit with wife Michelle Bates Dallman. "It is really a nice ride with a nice LED package."

A.R.M. installed the LED package, which was purchased from Maxtron.

"For being brand new, we have been very, very pleased," Dallman said.

The ride stands over 60 feet tall with an 80-foot swing, drawing about 4Gs to the bottom. It holds 12 passengers per ride and has over-the-shoulder harnesses. The back arm slopes forward at the top to keep riders from extending their feet and arms and touching the center

of the ride.

The Frenzy will travel with the Orange Unit all season long. That is the unit with the larger number of rides.

Bates Brothers Amusements has two units, the other being the Yellow Unit that is run by Amy Bates, with unit manager Kevin Mitchell.

"We have a total of 48 rides," said Dallman. We run between 22 and 27 rides on the Orange Unit and between 18 and 24 rides on the Yellow Unit."

The carnival also purchased an S&S Frog Hopper for this season and that, too, is on the Orange Unit midway.

"We have an A.R.M. Quasar and are retheming it to a music express," he said. "That is not on the road right now, but should be before the end of the season."

That also will be on the Orange Unit.

In addition, the carnival purchased six, 45-foot bunkhouses from Gary Otterbacher.

"We sold three of our bunkhouses to Amusements of America," he said.

Dallman, who is on the board of directors of the Outdoor Amusement Business Association, said business has been going pretty well this season so far, as long as the weather holds. Dates are in Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and West Virginia. The last date of the season this year is Oct. 7.

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►FOOD
Continued from page 33

wiches, gator kebabs, sweet potato fries topped with marshmallow and brown sugar, turkey legs, grilled corn on the cob and much more.

Fairgoers seeking a savory experience can grab some gator or shark kebabs at

Chester's Gators and Taters.

And for a daringly delicious and interesting experience, tender "pig butt on a stick" or even the brand-new foot-and-a-half long Dogzilla bacon corn dog.

Other food items include the domestic fusion of Fun-tastic Food, where Maryland meets North Carolina, featuring Carolina-style pulled pork

or shaved Maryland pit beef on a Kaiser roll, finished off with sweet potato fries covered with marshmallow fluff, and sprinkled with seasoned salt and brown sugar.

For those wanting a hint of Europe, gyros, souvlaki, kielbasa and Stromboli will be on offer.

The fair will also host a traditional ice creamery, The

Ice Cream Mill, featuring its famous peanut butter and jelly sundae, which includes vanilla ice cream, homemade peanut butter and grape jelly sauce, topped with whipped cream and a Nutter Butter cookie.

To cool down, fairgoers can try out fruit smoothies, frappes, root beer floats, old fashioned soda and home-

made lemonade.

Along with the array of food vendors, State Fair Meadowlands was expected to offer over 150 rides and attractions on over 35 acres of fairgrounds. Of the 150 rides and attractions, over 70 are rides brought in by Amusements of America.

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Here are two offerings from Cameron Murray's ECM Enterprises that are being offered at the State Fair Meadowlands, East Rutherford, N.J. — Gator Kabobs (below) and a Pig Butt on a Stick (above), the latter also known as "delicious tender pork."

COURTESY STATE FAIR MEADOWLANDS



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CARNIVALLIGHTS

COMPILED: Pam Sherborne, psherborne@amusementtoday.com

Cal Expo, Sacramento, Calif., announced two new team members last month. **Jennifer Castleberry**, of Rocklin, Calif., has been appointed by Governor **Edmund G. Brown** as the marketing and public relations manager of the **California Exposition & State Fair**.

Castleberry's background includes being general manager at Modamedia Communications from 2012 to 2014 and senior director of marketing, events and entertainment for the Sacramento River Cats Baseball Club from 2010 to 2012.

Lara N. Popyack, of Rancho Cordova, Calif., has been hired as the media director for this summer's California State Fair July 11 - 27. Lara worked as a freelance producer and director in film and television from 2012 to 2014 and as a producer at local News 10 (ABC) from 2009 to 2011.

Castleberry and Popyack are seen as key additions to the Cal Expo team, as the fair strives toward new levels of success, both as a celebration of the state's rich past and a showcase for the state's prosperous future.

A new lease was signed last month, ensuring the **Tennessee State Fair**, Nashville, will remain at the fairgrounds for at least five more years, according to a Nashville local news story.

In the more recent past of the Tennessee State Fair, fair officials were only allowed to have a year-long lease, which gave organizers only 60 days to plan the fair.

Organizers said this longer lease will allow the fair to expand in many more ways.

"Having a longer contract allows us to invite vendors back for years to come, so vendors are more enthusiastic about being at the Tennessee State Fair. There's more stability there," said **Kinsey Emery**, a volunteer at the fair.

The Tennessee State Fair has been scheduled to run from Sept. 5-14.

Southeast Texans effectively ignored the tornado watch and dark skies that loomed overhead at **Ford Park** on the final day of the **South Texas State Fair**, Beaumont, helping push attendance past last year's numbers, according to officials of the Young Men's Business League (YMBL), presenter of the event.

More than 175,000 people attended this year, up from 165,000 in 2013.

As the fair season got underway in the State of Iowa, many county fair organizers had been busy for months preparing for upcoming events.

Jerry Hopperstad, vice president of the **Iowa County Fair** board, one of the first fairs of the season in Iowa, said last month that his event, the **Worth County Fair**, Northwood, Iowa, had seen a steady increase in attendance. The fair ran June 18-22, **Smith Amusements** providing the midway.

He contributes this to volunteers, increasing amounts of show livestock, and beautiful fair grounds, but not every county is seeing such success.

"There are some that are struggling, yes," said Hopperstad and gave a few reasons why.

"If they aren't getting the 4-H push and getting them interested in whether it be pictures, animals, whatever the category might be. That's 90 percent of this fair," he said.

The state of Iowa has an initiative where counties can apply for \$10,000 to improve their fair buildings, which helps.

The **Ford County Fair**, Melvin, Ill., June 22-28, featured several new events this year but perhaps the biggest change was the new carnival.

Swyear Amusements, a well-known name on the fair circuit in central Illinois, played the event for the first time this year.

Other Illinois fairs played by Swyear include the **Fisher (Ill.) Fair**, July 8-12; **Iroquois County Fair**, Watseka, July 16-21; and the **Cissna Park (Ill.) Old Settlers Reunion**, Aug. 16-18.

In addition, Swyear Amusements played the **Macon Fairgrounds Festival**, Decatur, Ill, June 12-15. This was the first time in the event's 159 years that it didn't use the name of the **Macon County Fair**.

Stripped of its ability to host some of the classic agricultural events thanks to outstanding debts and unpaid premiums from the 2013 fair, the Decatur-held festival focused on music, racing, a carnival and other forms of family entertainment with a mind-set firmly focused on turning a profit and helping the organization back into solvency.

The carnival opened June 10, with music and comedy acts as nightly headliners June 12-15.

While awaiting whether there were reports of a tornado touchdown June 4, **Union County Fair** officials began the task of cleaning up the fairgrounds from the storm that swept through.

The fairgrounds were one of the harder hit parts of town of Sturgis, Michigan severely damaging a pavilion and several RVs. The storm hit just two weeks from the start of the event, which ran June 16-21.

"We could see the lightning flashing," says **Terry Scott**, a volunteer from Indiana. He was staying at the fairgrounds while building the new First Christian Church in Sturgis. He didn't know what had happened until another volunteer went back to camp.

"Parts of the two by fours busted through the side of the camper, there was a piece on conduit stuck up higher into the camper," he says.

Those pieces that damaged several campers, came from the decades old Hancock Pavilion. Fair officials say the storms severely damaged the pavilion, which will likely have to be torn down. The June 4 storms were so powerful that the winds picked up the posts supporting the pavilion and moved them three to four feet off their base.

Does your traveling show or food unit have carnival, midway, festival or state fair news of interest? Let us know about it! Email your news to Pam Sherborne at: psherborne@amusementtoday.com.



Freddie Miller, **Miller Spectacular Shows** said this is the only **Fabbri Eclipse** in North America and one of three in the world. He has owned it for about eight years and he said it draws as much attention on the midway as it ever has.

AT/SUE NICHOLS

Miller Spectacular Shows going and growing strong

VERSAILLES, Ky. — Freddie Miller, **Miller Spectacular Shows**, spent most of May and June going back and forth across Kentucky.

When he spoke with *Amusement Today* in the second week of June, he was in Versailles, Ky., laying out for the **Woodford County Fair** and **Horse Show**, which was set this year June 13-21. His unit, one of the two of **Miller Spectacular Shows**, was playing the **McCreary County Fair**, Whitley, Ky., June 8-14. But, because there was virtually no in between time for his unit, he was already on the road and had already taken about 13 rides there.

Meanwhile, the unit his dad, **Johnny Miller**, along with his mom, **Sue Miller**, runs was playing the **Murray-Calloway County Fair**, Murray, Ky. June 9-14. That unit was to play the **Union County Fair**, Sturgis, Ky., from June 16-21.

"I have been driving a lot of miles," Miller said. "I just left Murray, Ky., to come to Versailles even though my unit is in Whitley. I was helping my dad get set up. He had 23 hours to get from a date in St. Louis to Murray."

Miller Spectacular Shows picked up eight new fairs in Kentucky for 2014 after operators of **Myers International Midways** decided not to go on the road this year.

"That makes nine dates for us in Kentucky right now, and eight of those are new," Miller said. "We were thankful to get the dates. It was in a part of our season that needed some work anyway and we

basically just reworked our dates and dropped some of our still dates."

Now, they are all hustling, including his wife, **Patsy Miller**, but keeping a positive outlook.

They have had one mishap this season with one of their trucks involved in an accident. That truck was carrying a **Zamperla** balloon kiddie ride.

"Normally, I am in a rush to replace any ride that I might lose during the season, but because I had already scheduled the arrival of other new rides, I will probably wait on that for a while," he said.

Miller took delivery of a **Wisdom Aladin** ride on Friday, June 6. That ride was purchased from **Len Soled**, **Rides 4-U**. The show also took delivery of a new **A.R.M. Mega Bounce** on June 10. Miller said he had also just purchased a **Zamperla Surf's Up** from **Mighty Thomas Carnivals** and they just brought back a newly completely refurbished **A.R.M. Thor** ride, which they had originally bought new from **A.R.M.** in 2000.

"We like to have some different rides on our midway," Miller said. "For example, we have a **Fabbri Eclipse**. It is the only one in North America and one of three in the world. We also have a **Majestic X-Scream**. We have had both rides about eight years and they still draw as much attention as they did back then."

The carnival moves a little over 60 rides among its two units during the season.

New Big E logo shown during release of economic impact study

WEST SPRINGFIELD, Mass. — Eastern States Exposition attracts more than 2.5 million people to its 120 year-round events including 1.4 million visitors to The Big E, the fifth largest fair in North America.

ESE officials announced that the economic impact is \$479,000 in a press conference held in May prior to its annual meeting with trustees.

While doing so, officials also showed off a new logo as the event moves to position itself more firmly into the community.

Eastern States Exposition not only provides a one-of-a-kind entertainment experience for its visitors, it also promotes the agriculture and culture of New England.

In a study, conducted



by Regional Economic Models, Inc., (REMI) of Amherst, Mass., the overall economic impact of \$479,000,000 includes a Gross Regional Prod-

uct (analogous to the national Gross Domestic Product) of over \$299 million annually.

Eastern States Exposition (ESE) President, Eugene J. Cassidy, said, "The mix of a variety of events year-round and the entertainment, agriculture, and culture of New England at The Big E, make our venue an attractive destination that, in turn, trans-

lates to important economic dollars for our region."

The study focuses on Eastern States Exposition, and its 120 year-round shows and events.

Among the other findings in the report, the Exposition:

- Accounts for 3,000 jobs in Hampden County;
- Generates \$91.9 million in personal income;
- Adds \$1.4 million to the Massachusetts sales tax revenues;
- Generates \$427,000 in hotel tax revenue;
- Generates \$3 million in income tax revenue;
- Represents \$3.3 million in food and beverage tax revenue;
- Represents 4.9 percent of all Hampden County performing arts and spectator sports spending;
- Generates 11.5 percent of the annual sales in the accommodations and food services and drinking places sector.

More than 2,200 people choose to live in Hampden County because of the Exposition's presence and the attractive employment opportunities.

The REMI analysis includes the Exposition's impact on the rest of New England and New York. Regional employment totaled 2,000 jobs generating \$134 million in personal income.

Another 1,400 people live in the rest of New England and New York for the same reason.

In 2013, the Exposition paid \$1.3 million to the town of West Springfield, including \$354,971 in real estate taxes and \$200,431, or one percent of the Eastern States Exposition's 2012 gross revenues to The Big E/West Springfield Trust Fund, established in 1994 to benefit the town's education, youth and elderly programs as well as community projects.

To date, contributions including the 2014 donation of \$211,704, bring the fund total to \$3,094,069.

The Exposition receives no state or federal tax revenue to support its operations.

The Big E takes place Sept. 12-28 and features top name entertainment, international exhibits, agricultural contests and exciting daily events, including Mardi Gras Parades.

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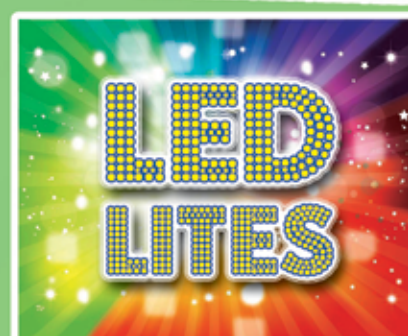
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BUSINESS & CLASSIFIEDS

▶ AIMS News — Page 43 / Book review — Page 44 / MarketWatch — Page 45 / CLASSIFIED — Page 47

New building at front gate keeps with early 1900s trolley line theme

Quassy completes new groups sales facilities; restroom renovations

STORY: Ron Gustafson
Special to Amusement Today

MIDDLEBURY, Conn. — Andrew Peklo III has made his “grand entrance.”

The Woodbury, Conn., architect is responsible for designing the new buildings that greet thousands of guests as they arrive at Quassy Amusement & Waterpark, a lakeside property that has entertained generations for more than a century.

Known as a trolley park, Quassy is rich in history as it was founded in 1908, the same year an electrified rail line was completed from the nearby City of Waterbury. Lake Quassapaug station was located adjacent to the 20-acre park and roundtrip fare in 1909 was 15 cents, according to newspaper clippings.

The trolley line and station are long gone, but the family-owned business has managed to preserve much of its heritage while evolving into a full-

fledged amusement park and — most recently — a water park.

While Quassy was celebrating its centennial in 2008, the park was also embarking on a long-term investment plan to add new rides and attractions as well as restore existing structures, some of which date back nearly a century.

“Eric (park President Eric Anderson) came to me with a sketch of something — kind of with an amusement park look,” Peklo, a Connecticut native, said of a meeting that took place that year.

The project the park was presenting was a concept for a new main ticket booth to be located near the parking lot. For decades, ride tickets were sold from a small building near the Grand Carousel in the heart of the property.

“Knowing some of the history of Quassy, my first thought was to add the flavor of a railroad station to the new build-



Andrew Peklo III stands in front of the two new buildings he designed for Quassy Amusement & Waterpark in Middlebury, Conn. The main ticket booth at the right is reminiscent of the trolley stop station that serviced the park a century ago. COURTESY QUASSY

ing,” the 63-year-old artist and architect recalled. “I sketched up something and everyone loved it.”

Old photo sparks ideas

During the design process, Peklo ran across an old photo of the original trolley station,

something he called “an interesting surprise.”

While some of his initial concepts related to that bygone era, the photo enabled him to further refine his drawings and present a final plan that was approved by the business owners.

“Andy really grasped the

theme of our heritage as one of the few remaining trolley parks in the nation,” Anderson said of the design work. “His perspective allowed us to change direction [somewhat] and have a structure that was appealing and at the same time spoke about Quassy’s history.”

Construction of the building began in the fall of 2008 and the ticket book opened on schedule the following spring.

“It made perfect sense for us to move the ticket booth up front, giving it visibility and easy access to walk-in guests and bus groups,” Quassy’s George Frantzis II said. “It was extremely well-received by all of our customers and alleviated confusion as to where our tickets were sold.”

Though modern in build, the ornate structure offers the feel of taking a bit of a step back in time.

“We tried to capture that

▶ See QUASSY, page 40

Cedar Point adds 54 cabins to Lighthouse Point

Cedar Point Resort in Sandusky, Ohio has more than just new rides to attract guests for the 2014 season. Opened in May was the addition of 54 cabins to Lighthouse Point at the resort’s RV and campsite area. Each cabin can accommodate up to 10 guests, features two bathrooms, four flat panel televisions, a dorm-sized refrigerator, microwave, coffee maker, outdoor charcoal grill and picnic table. Cedar Point is open daily and guests can book an overnight stay at Lighthouse Point now at cedarpoint.com/resorts.
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►QUASSY

Continued from page 39

era (early 1900s)," Peklo asserted. "We didn't want it to appear like stage scenery, but reflect the substance which existed in that era."

Those visiting Quassy can make an easy comparison between the old and new. A laser engraved plaque highlighting the former Lake Quassapaug trolley station that served guests a century ago is displayed at the ticket booth.

In August of 2010 the park broke ground on a highly-anticipated wooden roller coaster, which opened the following April. The fall of 2012 brought with it another major undertaking as Quassy was doubling the size of its water park for the next season.

"The Wooden Warrior (coaster) really put us on the map," Frantzis said of the new marquee ride. "We immediately started drawing guests from further distances and saw an immediate spike in attendance."

As owners, Anderson and Frantzis oversee the daily operations of the park, which has been owned by the family since 1937.



Architect Andrew Peklo III reads the plaque at the new ticket booth he designed for Quassy Amusement & Waterpark in Middlebury, Conn. The former trolley station that once serviced the park is reflected in the new building. "We tried to capture that era (early 1900s)," the architect said.
COURTESY QUASSY

Taxing the infrastructure

The enlargement of the water park was completed on schedule with the addition of three large water slides and a children's splash pad.

"Our season pass and walk-in ticket sales shot up as soon as the water park opened," Frantzis said of the expansion. "We had carefully mapped out

our strategy in regard to marketing the water park and it reaped remarkable dividends."

But the increase in traffic put additional stress on existing infrastructure at the property and the operators quickly recognized the dilemma.

"Our restaurant had its busiest season ever," Anderson said of 2013. "And with more guests in the park than ever before, it

About The designer

Andrew Peklo III: industrial designer, architect. Lifelong resident of Connecticut, living in Woodbury the past 34 years. Wife, Abby, and son, Zeke, 11. Member, American Institute of Architects.

"My objective is to create timeless architecture and furniture. I believe humans and nature are the embodiment of universal beauty and to that end, I strive for my work to be a reflection of their essence."- Andrew Peklo III

•www.peklodesignandjoinery.com/
•www.quassy.com

became very apparent that our restroom and group sales facilities needed our attention."

Peklo was called into service again to create a new season pass and group sales building as well as design a huge addition to Quassy Restaurant. The lakefront restaurant was built in 1940 and originally opened as a tea room. Also, the restroom building at the top of the park was due for a facelift inside and out.

The restaurant renovation and addition were challenging, according to the architect.

"I had to try to make sense of what I was adding on to — between the old and the new — and create a roofline that would work," he revealed.

The restaurant now has double the food preparation room to accommodate daily and large group functions. Additional storage space and an office were also incorporated into the expansion.

As for the new group sales office, he refers to it as the "baby

sister" of the main ticket booth as it is very similar in design.

"The restroom renovation was an interesting exercise in carrying over the park theme to it," he added.

Many of the doors on the new buildings and renovations were built by Peklo in his one-man Woodbury workshop, only minutes from the park.

"During the renovation of the (Quassy) bath house last year, we took out a great deal of redwood and saved it for future projects," he recalled. "That wood is now on the outside of the doors on the restaurant addition."

Yet the biggest challenge in completing the latest Quassy projects was New England's wicked weather.

"We worked through a horrible winter," Peklo exclaimed. "Everyone pulled together and it's amazing how much work you can get done when there is a deadline."

"What Andy has done here over the past several years has had dramatic impact on the first impression our guests get as they drive in," Anderson said of the entry area. "There is a fresh, welcoming — yet nostalgic — look to all three buildings up there. With the Wooden Warrior lining the entrance drive on the left and the water park serving as a backdrop behind our new ticket booth, Quassy indeed has a new face."

"It was wonderful to work on these projects with Quassy. I was given enough freedom of expression there and it made my work very interesting," Peklo added. "It was all designed with the budget in mind, we carried it out and the park got a great project for the money."

Editor's note: Ron Gustafson is public relations manager at Quassy Amusement Park and amusement industry historian. He is a regular contributor to Amusement Today.

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Funtown Splashtown USA used for technical rescue training

SACO, Maine — Rescue teams from Saco, Biddeford and Kennebunk, Maine held their first public technical rescue training drill at Funtown Splashtown USA on May 9.

After years of planning, Biddeford, Saco and Kennebunk's fire departments joined forces to create a technical rescue team, named the Tri-Comm Tech Rescue Team (TCTRT), which held their third official training exercise at Funtown Splashtown USA. This was their first public training at the park.

"Since this is the first public training of the team, we wanted to focus on the highest training potential while pre-planning actual hazards, Funtown provides more than one real-life hazard, easy access and easy site control," said Derick Ouellette, team leader and nine-year veteran of the Biddeford Fire Department.

Funtown Splashtown USA was chosen because the park has some of the highest structures within the three communities. "We are happy to be working with our local fire departments on this very important training, we just hope that we never need to call on them to use it," said Cory Hutchinson, vice president and general manager for the park.

IAAPA adds major new networking event to 2014 IAAPA Attractions Expo

Two scheduled events features both Disney and Universal attractions

ORLANDO, Fla. — In keeping with IAAPA Attractions Expo 2014's theme of "Big Starts Here," IAAPA officials have expanded the list of networking opportunities with the announcement of two IAAPA after-hours events during the annual IAAPA Attractions Expo, scheduled for Nov. 17-21 at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Fla.

IAAPA Connects Monday, November 17 New Fantasyland at Disney's Magic Kingdom

This unique networking event is designed exclusively for IAAPA Attractions Expo 2014 participants to reconnect with industry friends and form new business relationships before they step on the trade show floor Tuesday morning. Attendees will enjoy a number of attractions at New Fantasyland including: the Seven Dwarfs Mine Train roller coaster, Dumbo the Flying Elephant, and more. The evening will also feature Disney's nighttime spectacular: Celebrate the Magic. IAAPA Attractions Expo 2014 registration is required to purchase a ticket for this event, which will take place from 7:30-10:30 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 17. Tickets are U.S. \$149; IAAPA members can purchase tickets for U.S. \$104.

IAAPA Celebrates Thursday, November 20 Night details TBA

Universal Orlando Resort

The IAAPA Celebrates event will take place Thursday, Nov. 20 from 7:30-11 p.m. at Universal Orlando Resort. IAAPA Attractions Expo 2014 participants will enjoy exclusive access to select locations within Universal Studios Florida and Universal's Islands of Adventure with unlimited access to some rides and attractions. Additional event details will be available this summer. Tickets are U.S. \$149; IAAPA members can purchase tickets for U.S. \$104.

Event combo ticket available for IAAPA members

An IAAPA Connects and IAAPA Celebrates Combo Ticket is being offered exclu-

sively to IAAPA members for U.S. \$175. Combo tickets are limited and will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis.

All prices are in addition to IAAPA Attractions Expo registration. More information and event details are available at:

www.IAAPA.org/IAAPAAttractionsExpo



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Park launches Berry Market brand of jams and jellies

Knott's 'preserves' fruit spread tradition with new food line

STORY: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

BUENA PARK, Calif. — Well before it featured roller coasters and served fried chicken dinners, Knott's Berry Farm was known for the one thing that ultimately gave its name a certain fun and flavorful cachet: berries.

In 1920, from a roadside stand on their farm along State Route 39 (now known as Beach Boulevard), Walter and Cordelia Knott began selling homemade berry pies and preserves made with a hybrid berry they grew and named the boysenberry. Cordelia's kitchen creations were such a hit that her husband saw opportunity in the increasing numbers of visitors. As the years rolled on, he added shops, attractions and, of course, Mrs. Knott's Chicken Dinner Restaurant to create an irresistible regional destination. And an amusement industry legend was born.

Nearly a century later, current Knott's Berry Farm

owner Cedar Fair Entertainment Company is going back to the property's roots — resurrecting Cordelia's secret recipes with a new line of jam, jelly and marmalade products under the label Berry Market. The brand, available online and onsite at the park's General Merchandise Store in Ghost Town and just outside the main gate at the Marketplace, was launched quietly last November.

According to Raffi Kaprelyan, vice president and general manager of Knott's Berry Farm, Berry Market represents both a nod to the park's history and a response to the commercially produced Knott's Berry Farm store brand, to which The J.M. Smucker Company presently holds the rights. The Knott family sold its preserves division to food giant ConAgra in 1996 — just a year before it sold the park to Cedar Fair. ConAgra, in turn sold the Knott's specialty food brand to Smucker's in 2008.

"As years went by, the [Smucker's] product level, and



Knott's Berry Farm introduced its new Berry Market line of jams and jellies last fall. It will expand from 11 to 16 flavors this summer. COURTESY KNOTT'S BERRY FARM

the production of the different flavors, was diminishing," said Kaprelyan, who continued to stock the commercial brand exclusively at the aforementioned park locations until the Berry Market line was unveiled last fall. "Boysenberry jam has been a big of part what Knott's Berry Farm is all about. We wanted to make sure we were able to keep the tradition going, and that something very popular with our guests was maintained."

Bob Webster, the park's merchandise director, set

about exploring what could be done internally to bring the jams and jellies "home." Webster located a California vendor willing to make the product in small batches and fill the jars the old-fashioned way: by hand. He also worked directly with the vendor to get the packaging right and to ensure adherence to the original recipes.

"Smucker's changed the recipe," Webster noted. "It has high fructose corn syrup in it. What we're making here is a pure product — a simple

combination of natural ingredients that includes cane sugar, whole fruit and water — with no preservatives added. There's a lot of love put into every jar."

By the end of this summer, the Berry Market line will expand from 11 to 16 flavors — including seedless raspberry, seedless blackberry, triple berry and apple mint. Gift packs, already available onsite and online, will be marketed with more vigor during holiday periods.

•<http://marketplace.knotts.com>

Silver Dollar City has unexpected hit with Outlaw Run ice cream

STORY: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

BRANSON, Missouri — Partnering with local companies, particularly food items and fast food outlets, is a common marketing strategy for theme parks. A little business savvy tends to benefit both parties involved. Discounts on soda cans and coupons in eateries entice wise guests to seek out the savings when planning their trip. But Silver Dollar City has stumbled into a unique situation where what was expected to be a limited time item has turned into a runaway hit.

Partnering with Hiland Dairy Foods, a company that has delivered high quality dairy products to customers in the Midwest (particularly Missouri, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma and Arkansas), Silver Dollar first marketed their new-for-2013 roller coaster on school-sized half pint milk cartons. On a daily basis for several months leading up to Outlaw Run's opening last spring, students were enticed to experience the upcom-

ing thriller with promotional graphics on the side of each carton.

With this successful promotion underway, Silver Dollar City approached Hiland with an idea, which both parties would have assumed would have been a limited time offering. Silver Dollar City makes their own ice cream on property. Guests entering the ice cream shop can see the process taking place right before them with old-fashioned charm. But the park wanted to work with Hiland for one specific flavor that they would dub "Outlaw Run."

Food Manager Sam Hedrick created four distinct recipes for the dairy company to try. Hiland sampled them all, and loved all of them. Leaving the decision up to the park, with little hesitation, the clear winner for the feature flavor consisted of chocolate chunks and swirls of sea salted caramel in rich vanilla ice cream. When the park inquired what they needed to do to tweak the recipe, Hiland simply said "nothing." They agreed the recipe was top notch just as



Staff fill requests for Outlaw Run ice cream in the park's old-fashioned shoppe. All flavors except Outlaw Run are made at the park the old fashioned way. AT / TIM BALDWIN

created. And a new flavor was born.

Feature flavors are typically sold for a limited time and then rotated out. However, Outlaw Run wasn't so quickly dismissed. This specific flavor developed for Silver Dollar City wasn't just sold on property, but also in the supermarkets in the surrounding communities. As General Manager Brad Thomas explains, "It was supposed to have a two to three month limited run, but consumers were liking it so much it last-

ed on into the fall." He adds with a smile, "Because it was so popular last year, in the spring, Hiland put it back out again. So it has another run for the 2014 season as well."

More than 50,000 half gallons were sold in supermarkets last year. "It became their number one special edition flavor they've ever done," Thomas beams. "Moms shop in the ice cream freezers of supermarkets. We love having the Silver Dollar City logo in those freezers to remind mom about us!"

The popularity of the flavor has often caused the ice cream to sell out in stores. At the park's sister water park, one White Water supervisor commented that her particular supermarket at one point had a waiting list for the ice cream.

Outlaw Run is an innovative wooden roller coaster built by Rocky Mountain Construction into the terrain of Silver Dollar City. It opened to rave reviews in 2013 and took *Amusement Today's* Golden Ticket Award for Best New Ride.

The park continues to make all their own ice cream flavors except for Outlaw Run. Hiland still produces that specific flavor for Silver Dollar City, as well as providing the dairy ingredients for the park's own recipes.

Management is quick to give praise to Hedrick for the quality work he does with food. When *Amusement Today* asked if they would save Hedrick's other three great ice cream recipes for new attractions, with a wink and a smile, Thomas says, "Absolutely."



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AIMS board of directors readies for annual fall meeting

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ORLANDO, Fla. — As summer heats up we have turned our attention and planning toward the annual AIMS board of directors meeting scheduled in September. This meeting will be held in conjunction with the **2014 Golden Ticket Awards**, presented by *Amusement Today*, scheduled Sept. 5-7 in San Diego, Calif. This is the perfect time of year for the meeting and the GTA event is a great place to relax and see old friends, and to celebrate accomplishments in our industry. The primary focus of the meeting will include the **AIMS Safety Seminar**,

taking place in Orlando, Fla. in January 2015, and the many ways we can expand the AIMS mission across the amusement industry internationally.

It is the goal of AIMS that students attending the seminar annually are given the best education the industry has to offer. To meet these objectives we are going to be exploring ways to improve the quality of the instruction in the classrooms and look to expand the curriculum offered.

AIMS continues to expand our presence internationally. The more members we can reach overseas the more diverse and safer the industry becomes. We continue to develop our infrastructure and foster alliances that will one day allow us to one day hold an AIMS Safety Seminar abroad and bring industry

safety training to our international members.

As you may imagine, technology will continue to be a huge tool in educating the masses. The challenges with an association of our size are not the hardware, the software, but the human element of creating the product. As an association that runs on passion, staffing always seems to be a challenge. Volunteers are a way of life, our friends, and the energy behind AIMS. Even those at AIMS that collect a weekly check are very much volunteers, the size of their checks serve as proof. The board will continue to review, and tweak the AIMS business model in an effort to maximize the quality of our product line and staff.

Finally, we will be discussing the many ways we can we can improve the **AIMS on the Road** program,

as well as update our **AIMS Online** interface. These programs are critical to our quest for comprehensive flexible educational elements that can be custom tailored and administered outside of our traditional safety seminar.

If you have a topic that you would like brought before the board, please forward your request to aims.office@gmail.com to be added to the agenda.

So as the summer heats up, keep a water bottle close and realize that we know, now is not the time to catch our breath, but a time to re-evaluate, and do it better. AIMS board members and staff will be in the parks this summer, and collecting ideas for the next seminar, but we need your input. AIMS is your association — make an investment, send us your ideas.

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New book by Tim O'Brien chronicles life of Ward Hall

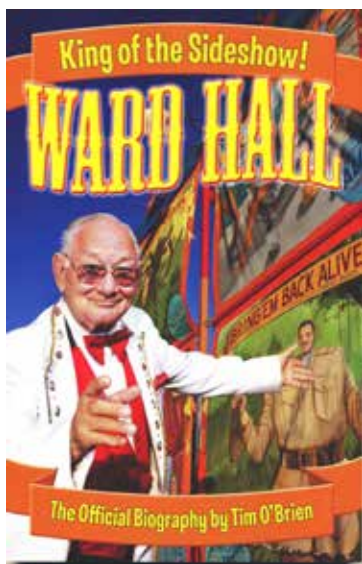
STORY: Jeffrey L. Seifert
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

Amusement industry book author Tim O'Brien has just released the first-ever biography of the man who has helped shape the American Circus Sideshow into what it has become today. *Ward Hall — King of the Sideshow!* chronicles the life of Ward Hall, beginning with his first visit to the circus at the age of eight.

When he turned 14 he took on a part-time gig with the local circus and the following year he dropped out of school to join the Dailey Bros. Circus. His father didn't stop him, telling Ward he would get the circus out of his system and "be back in two weeks."

Now 70 years later, Ward has become the King of the Sideshow and is still in the business. He plans to retire at age 100, so he can see the world.

Author Tim O'Brien first met Ward Hall in the late 1980s working as an editor for *Amusement Business*.



Throughout the years of writing about his sideshow operations, he pestered him to let him write a biography. In 2013, at the age of 83, Hall finally consented.

O'Brien's years of experience covering the amusement industry and authoring numerous books have given him the skills needed to produce a fascinating biography on a subject with which few are familiar. His research took more than 15 months and in-

cluded multiple interviews and perusing through everything that had previously been written on Hall.

One year after running away, at age 16, Hall was eating fire, juggling and serving as a sideshow magician. A year after that he was managing a sideshow act, and by age 21, he owned his own sideshow.

Among other oddities Hall has worked with monkey girls, half-people, fat men, sword swallowers, fire eaters, giants, colossal snakes, huge rats and diminutive horses.

In the vast world of showbiz impresarios, none have proven themselves to be more successful, enduring or more popular than Ward Hall.

The 250-page book, published by Casa Flamingo Literary Arts LLC, retails for \$24.99 softcover or \$35.99 hardcover. It is available online at Amazon.com, direct from the author at Casaflamingo.com, or it can be special ordered through most book stores in the U.S.



In his newly released book, *Ward Hall — King of the Sideshow!*, amusement industry book author Tim O'Brien takes a look at the life of the man who helped shape the American Circus Sideshow into what it has become today. Above, O'Brien poses with Hall. Right, Hall is seen with Pete Terhune at the Meadowlands Fair. Little Pete was a fire-eating 3-foot, 7-inch dwarf who worked with Ward for more than 55 years. COURTESY PUBLISHER



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MARKETWATCH



COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 6/10/14	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
Apollo Global Management (Great Wolf Resorts)	APO	NYSE	27.00	36.51	20.86
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	33.64	35.38	19.15
Merlin Entertainments Group/ Legoland	MERL	LSE	366.30	371.14	3.20
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	54.30	55.76	38.28
Comcast Corp./ NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	52.88	55.28	38.75
	CMCSK	NASDAQ	52.42	53.10	37.34
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	84.75	85.86	60.41
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	9010	TYO	1045.00	1289.00	716.00
Haicahang Holdings Ltd.	2255HK	SEHK	1.49	2.27	1.38
Leofoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	11.40	14.45	11.15
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	24.52	28.75	12.87
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	31.18	39.19	27.48
Shenzhen Overseas Chinese Town Co., Ltd. (OCT)	000069	SZSE	4.96	6.49	4.30
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	41.67	42.94	31.86
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	3103.00	3197.00	2880.00
Village Roadshow	VRL	ASX	7.42	8.44	5.00

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

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

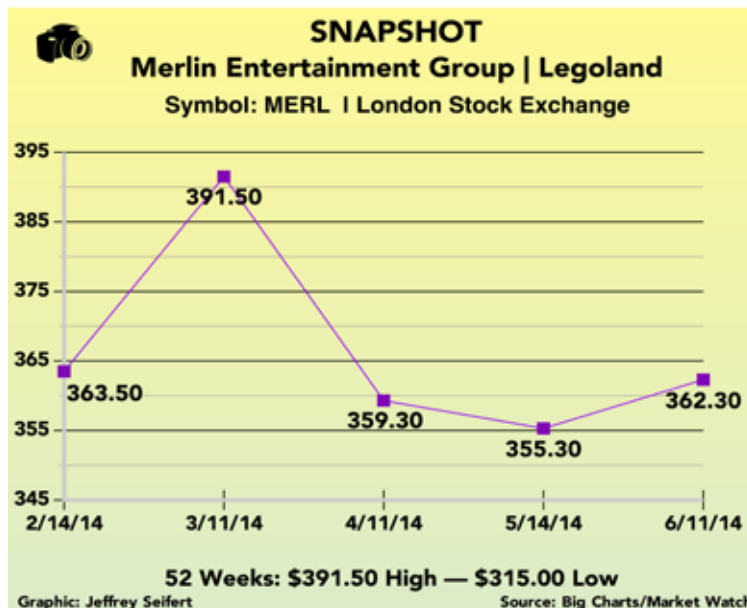
DIESEL PRICES

Region (U.S.)	As of 06/09/14	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	\$3.983	\$0.144
Midwest	\$3.845	-\$0.032
Gulf Coast	\$3.769	\$0.021
Mountain	\$3.909	\$0.044
West Coast	\$3.899	\$0.029
California	\$4.074	\$0.066

CURRENCY

On 06/10/14 \$1 USD =

0.7340	EURO
0.5950	GBP (British Pound)
102.51	JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.8949	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.0694	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.0921	CAD (Canadian Dollar)



BUSINESS WATCH

Firestone Financial moves to new location

NEEDHAM, Ma. — **Firestone Financial Corp.** announced two of its growth initiatives, a move to a new office location and an increased credit facility.

Firestone Financial has 49 employees and \$188 million of assets under management. The company recently relocated its headquarters to 117 Kendrick Street in Needham, Massachusetts. The new office space will allow Firestone Financial to double its size to accommodate the growth of the company.

Firestone Financial also signed a \$225 million, multi-year revolving credit facility at the end of last year; this is an increase from the prior facility of \$125 million. The bank group is led by RBS Citizens, N.A. and the lenders include Wells Fargo Bank National Association, Bank of America, N.A., People's United Bank, Rockland Trust Company, TD Bank, N.A., Brookline Bank, Berkshire Bank and Webster Bank.

Firestone Financial, President and CEO **David Cohen** said, "Over the past few years we have grown very rapidly and our new office and credit facility will provide us with the tools we need to accommodate our continued growth. We are extremely optimistic about the future of our business and the industries we serve."

Cedar Fair Unitholders re-elect three to board

Cedar Fair, based in Sandusky, Ohio, announced that its unitholders re-elected **Gina D. France**, **Matthew A. Ouimet** and **Tom Klein** to the board of directors of its general partner, Cedar Fair Management, Inc., for three-year terms expiring in 2017.

The limited partners also confirmed the appointment of **Deloitte & Touche LLP** as the company's independent registered public accounting firm and approved an advisory vote on the compensation of the company's named executive officers.

IAAPA extends Orlando Expo agreement

Officials from the **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA)**, **Visit Orlando**, and the **Orange County Convention Center (OCCC)** announced a six-year extension of their agreement to host **IAAPA Attractions Expo** in Orlando through 2025.

The new contract represents an extension of IAAPA's previous agreement to host the Expo in Orlando from 2010 through 2019.

Quick Hits...

• **Give Kids The World** held their annual Black and White Gala on May at the Hyatt Regency Orlando. With a Kentucky Derby theme of "Run for the Roses" the event hosted more than 1,200 community leaders, valued partners, celebrities and other supporters, who gathered for an evening of elegance, fine dining and word-class entertainment, all in support of GKTW. The event raised \$620,000 for GKTW.

• The **IAAPA Hall of Fame** is seeking nomination entries for the 2014 inductee class. Entries are due by August 1, 2014. For more information, and selection criteria, contact **Jan McCool** at (703) 299-5747 or at: halloffameaward@iaapa.org.

• **Holiday World & Splashin' Safari** in Santa Claus, Ind. hosted the park's ninth annual **Walk to Cure Diabetes** on May 17, raising more than \$350,000 for the **Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation**.

Holiday World donated 1,700 tickets to JDRF for the event; those tickets were "earned" by individuals, families, and teams who raised donations for the Walk.

Holiday World has helped raise close to \$3 million for JDRF since the park's late president, **Will Koch**, who was diabetic, started the event in 2006. Koch's widow, **Lori**, and their younger daughter, **Leah**, were on hand this morning to thank the walkers.

CORRECTION

In the June 2014 issue of *Amusement Today*, a story about **Castaway Cove Water Park**, Wichita Falls, Texas, **Kent Lemasters**, president and CEO of **AquaticAmusement Management Group (AMG)** was quoted about the revenue loss the park would have this year from hauling water.

To clarify, what Lemasters actually said was that the park would still produce a profit for the city, but those profits would be \$70,000 less than expected due the additional cost of hauling well water during the drought.

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PEOPLE WATCH

Tyler Thornberg joins Thinkwell Group

Thinkwell Group, a design and production agency headquartered in Burbank, Calif., recently announced the appointment of **Tyler Thornberg** to director of Business Development. Thornberg will focus on growing the agency's experiential marketing clientele while maintaining a strong foothold in the exhibit, attraction and theme park industries.

"Tyler is a proven leader in the event production marketplace," said Thinkwell Senior Vice President of Global Business Development, **Kelly Ryner**. "Coupling that production experience with his entrepreneurial spirit and strategic thinking makes him a perfect fit for Thinkwell."

Thornberg has more than 14 years of experience in the event production and film/television industries; where he has held roles as producer and production manager.



Thornberg

IAAPA Europe adds Pable Moragrega

The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) announced that **Pablo Moragrega** will join its IAAPA Europe office located in Brussels, Belgium, later this month as senior manager of European operations.

Moragrega will be responsible for recruitment and retention of IAAPA members in Europe and will also develop and implement educational offerings, including conference sessions at the Euro Attractions Show, regional events, and webinars. He will manage all IAAPA communication materials for European members, including newsletters, IAAPA News Flash Extra: Europe Edition, direct mail campaigns, and more.

Moragrega comes to IAAPA with an extensive 16-year career in the attractions industry. Most recently, he was general manager of Serena Villas, Waterpark & Ski Resort in Helsinki, Finland.

WhiteWater restructures global offices

WhiteWater West Industries announced the restructuring of its European and Asian offices that will continue to bring dedicated and local support to these regions.

Sean Hinton will relocate to Asia where he will assume responsibility of WhiteWater's Asia Pacific Region, based in the Shanghai office. This transition will leverage Sean's wealth of international industry experience and drive the development of a long-term strategic approach to China and the developing Pacific Rim Region.

Replacing Sean in Europe is **Grant Poje** who has been the executive vice president Business Development for Asia based out of Richmond, Canada for the last two years. Grant will maintain his title for the EMEAR region (Europe, Middle East, Africa, and Russia) based in WhiteWater's Barcelona office. In the coming months, Operations Management and Project Management will be added to WhiteWater's European office, further maximizing our dedication to the market.

Around our industry...

• During a recent conversation with **Dollywood's** king of PR, **Pete Owens** tells a story about a recent shopping trip to a nearby Wal-Mart. It seems he wasn't the only one from the Dollywood Resort family walking the aisles when he looked up to see **Dolly Parton**, with her sisters, all having a little fun while doing a little shopping!

MAILBAG

To Amusement Today:

I subscribe to your daily emails, and I do enjoy them a lot. In recent months, it seems like there have been more articles per day than there used to be, and this has caused Gmail to clip the message and require us to open a new page to see the entire email. I've noticed though that the emails tend to only take up a third of my computer screen's width, which makes this seem a little inefficient. Would it be possible to increase the width that the article summaries take up in order to keep the entire message visible in Gmail?

Thanks,

Travis Rothbloom

From AT's Extra! Extra! Your Desktop Edition (XXDE) Editor John Robinson: Since email viewers and monitors vary, and there aren't as many "sizing freedoms" with email as there is with web pages, the size limitation remains for the time being. I'm currently running dual 24" monitors set at a fairly high resolution, so the newsletter only takes up about one-fourth or so of my available space. In the same vein, it fills the screen on my iPad almost perfectly and takes up over half of my laptop screen.

The increase in daily articles is tied directly into the North American parks opening up for the season (and opening up their new attractions). Much more to talk about when things are operating!

Glad you enjoy the daily issues! Please know that as standards improve/change, we will do our best to continue to keep XXDE viewable to as many subscribers as possible.



FAST TRACK

COMPILED: Scott Rutherford,
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

The famed **Astroland Rocket Ship**, one of the first and only surviving early amusement park simulators, has returned home to **Coney Island** after five years in storage. It debuted in 1962 at Astroland Park as one of the first of the "imaginary" space voyage simulators constructed during the Space Race. Originally built as the Star Flyer, the Astroland Rocket later sat atop the boardwalk restaurant **Gregory and Paul's**. After Astroland closed in 2008, **Carol** and **Jerry Albert**, owners of Astroland Park, donated the Rocket to the city, which promised to make it a centerpiece of the new, revitalized amusement and entertainment district.

Orlando's **Fun Spot America** recently celebrated its 16th birthday with \$16 wristbands. In addition to giveaways and entertainment, auditions for *The Amazing Race* were held at the park. Fun Spot America also enhanced its diverse food options with a new menu item in the Sky Diner: Classic Italian and meatball subs.

Busch Gardens Tampa's new thrill ride **Falcon's Fury** includes first-of-its kind design elements, systems and parts. Due to a delay in the fabrication of key component parts, neither the manufacturer nor Busch Gardens were able to complete the lengthy testing processes needed to open the ride to the public by the Memorial Day weekend. The ride has been safely operated in the initial stages of the testing process, and all other elements of the park's newest re-imagined land **Pantopia** are now open to guests. Busch Gardens will provide updates on the ride opening as events warrant.

The **Texas State Aquarium** (TSA) has received a TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence award. The accolade, which honors hospitality excellence, is given only to establishments that consistently achieve outstanding traveller reviews on TripAdvisor, and is extended to qualifying businesses worldwide.

Aramark, the award-winning food and hospitality partner for national and state parks and other leading leisure and cultural attractions, is ready to welcome guests and visitors with new and innovative hospitality and interpretive programs, for everyone's enjoyment. From national parks to national zoos to museums, Aramark destinations play host to more than 40 million visitors each year across the United States. Among the enhancements awaiting visitors this summer, a new fleet of luxurious lake yachts at Lake Powell, renovations at Sol Duc Hot Springs Resort and Asilomar Conference Grounds, a newly re-branded tourist destination just outside Denali National Park, and more.

Production crews from the upcoming film *Jurassic World* recently set up shop at shuttered **Six Flags New Orleans**. The park has been closed since Hurricane Katrina devastated the area in 2005. An open casting call went out for extras wanting to appear in the latest entry in the Jurassic Park franchise. The film opens June 12, 2015.

Six Flags Magic Mountain's iconic wooden racing roller coaster **Colossus** will close Aug. 16 after a 36-year run. Banners placed around the park warn coaster enthusiasts of their "last chance to ride the king of wooden roller coasters." Six Flags Magic Mountain will announce plans for the upcoming transformation of Colossus at a later date.

"This Built America," a new multimedia platform from **AOL** exploring the companies and people re-imagining American manufacturing, recently came to Wichita, Kansas where a recent episode spotlighted **Chance Rides**, the country's largest builder of amusement park rides. For Chance, being featured on This Built America is recognition and proof that producing goods and services in America is still important and of value. It's also an opportunity for Chance to gain some recognition in its own hometown. "Building our rides in America was something that was always important to my dad and today it's something that remains important to me. We are proud of the consistent, top-notch quality of our products that are made right here in Wichita," said Dick Chance, who bought the company from his father in 1985.

The **Mall of Qatar**, which is scheduled to open in the fourth quarter of 2015, has announced it will bring a unique FEC concept to the Middle East for the very first time. The center will feature the world-renowned **Angry Birds Activity Park** for families with young children, a futuristic **Juniverse** family edutainment experience set aboard a space station, and the high octane thrills of **Virtuocity** for teens and adults.

One of two new beluga whales at **SeaWorld San Diego** is now available to guests. **Atla**, a four-year-old female, came from **SeaWorld San Antonio** and went on display in the **Wild Arctic** exhibit in San Diego. **Klondike**, an 11-year-old male from **SeaWorld Orlando**, should go on display soon.

Merlin Entertainments has announced the opening of **Madame Tussauds Beijing** which welcomed over 3,500 visitors on its first day. Merlin's 102nd attraction (the fourth in China) and the 16th Madame Tussauds is located on the historic "blood line" that runs through the heart of Beijing next door to Tianmen Square and the Forbidden City.

Tinker Bell has found a new home at **Walt Disney World** with the opening of its latest version of **Tinker Bell's Magical Nook**, now located through the Town Square Theater off Main Street, U.S.A. in the Magic Kingdom. This is the same place where one can meet the talking **Mickey Mouse** and the former home to the Disney Princesses before they got their new locale in **Fantasyland**. The updated meet-and-greet is now in what Disney is calling the Garden Theater, and will allow guests to meet the most famous of fairies.

Email NewsFlash items to Scott Rutherford at: srutherford@amusementtoday.com.



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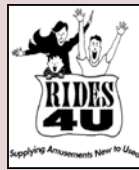
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OBITUARY

William Hays "Bill" White dies at 67

Texas Highway Patrol, rodeo clown, Silver Dollar City, two Six Flags Texas parks highlighted long career

CEDAR HILL, Texas — **William "Bill" Hays White**, 67, of Cedar Hill passed away Monday, May 26, 2014, surrounded by family and close friends.

Bill was born Aug. 24, 1946, in Bryan-College Station. Known as "Bull" to his six doting granddaughters, Bill graduated from A&M Consolidated High School in 1964 and from Texas A&M University in 1968.

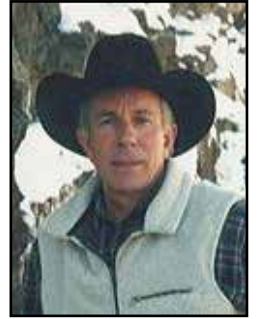
Larger than life, Bill lived more in his 67 years than most people could in three lifetimes. He always said he had done the three things all little boys dreamed of doing someday: He was a policeman, rodeo cowboy and rodeo clown, and "ran away with the circus" (worked for theme parks).

"Wild Willie," as he was affectionately called in his rodeo days, was an undercover narcotics agent for the Texas Highway Patrol for many years and then worked for Silver Dollar City in Branson, Mo., and retired from Six Flags Over Texas and Hurricane Harbor in Arlington in 2007.

Reflecting on his years with the two Arlington parks [Six Flags Over Texas and Hurricane Harbor], park President Steve Martindale told AT: "Bill White was a huge influence on all who had the good fortune to know him. He was a consummate operator, strategist, mentor and friend. It was a privilege and a blessing for the Six Flags team to have had Bill as part of our family for 18 years. He will truly be missed."

Bill was preceded in death by his son, John Wesley White; and parents, Spike and Darnell White (Kanakuk Kamps) of Branson, Mo. His survivors include his loving wife Linda of 23 years. He always said she was the first girl he ever kissed (eighth grade) and she would be the last. Bill is also survived by his sons, Cody White and wife, Lori, of Brentwood, Tenn., and Scooter Stone and wife, Terri, of Pearland; daughter, Lisa Stone of Wichita Falls; granddaughters, Ashlynn, Kate, Lauren, Megan, Amber and Morgan; brothers, Bob White and wife, Mev, of Bryan and Joe White and wife, Debbie Jo, of Branson, Mo.; and numerous nieces and nephews.

A celebration of Bill's life was held on May 31 at his barn. The family has requested that memorial donation be made to the Texas Department of Public Safety Troopers Foundation.



**Bill White
1946-2014**

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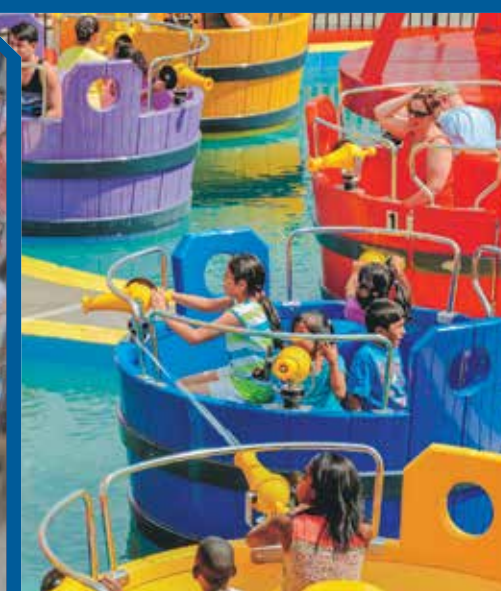
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