

# AMUSEMENT TODAY™

Vol. 16 • Issue 7

OCTOBER 2012

## World Waterpark Association

32nd Annual Symposium & Trade Show in Las Vegas looking stronger than 2011's New Orleans event

**STORY:** Pam Sherborne  
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LAS VEGAS, Nev. — As the waterpark industry members arrive in Las Vegas for the 32nd Annual Symposium & Trade Show, association staff members have put together an event they hope will foster networking as well as give attendees a look at what is new in the industry through the exhibits on the tradeshow floor and feed their intellect through the educational sessions.

The WWA Show is the only show focused exclusively on the water-leisure industry. The event is being held Oct. 2-5 at the Paris Hotel & Conference Center, Las Vegas. The Symposium runs throughout the entire dates. The trade show is open two days of the event, Oct. 3 and 4.

"I can tell you that the exhibitors are up from last year in New Orleans, and we are very close to a sell out," said Patty Miller, WWA director of supplier relations, in mid-September. "We have about 340 booths, 200 companies."

Last year the WWA event was held in New Orleans, the first time the WWA had ever held their annual symposium in that city. According to WWA President Rick Root, last year's event drew about 1,400 industry owners, operators, developers, suppliers and designers. An increase is expect-

ed for this year.

Along with the companies showing their new and tried and true products, the event also offers an array of networking opportunities, workshops and educational sessions.

Continuing a change made last year, workshop and educational sessions were scheduled to give attendees more time to be on the tradeshow floor. Hours of the tradeshow are 12:30-6:30 p.m., Wed., Oct. 3, and 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Thurs., Oct. 4.

With more than 1,000 waterparks in North America alone, networking opportunities are important. This year includes The WWA Annual Golf Tournament, set for 8 a.m.-2 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 2. This tournament will be held at the Painted Desert Golf Club in Las Vegas and will include a luncheon along with the golf.

On Oct. 3, the WWA Annual Reunion Party is set for 7-10 p.m., Paris Hotel poolside, with offers of cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and good times

with colleagues.

The Key Decision-Makers Breakfast and Vegas Bus Tour is set for 8:30-9:45 a.m., Thursday, Oct. 4. This event requires early reservations and an additional \$50 per ticket.

Trends in the waterpark industry are surely to be top on the minds of those attending the symposium this year. They will certainly be talked about in hallways and discussed during the abundant number of workshops and educational sessions offered.

According to Aleatha Ezra, WWA director of park member development, one major trend she is seeing in the industry this year is waterparks partnering with already successful businesses. Examples in the private section are Hurricane Alley, Corpus Christie, Texas, which partnered with Whataburger sports complex, and Pump House Indoor Waterpark that partnered with Jay Peak Resort, a ski resort in Jay, Vermont. Both opened in 2012.

An example in the public section is Sailfish Splash Waterpark, Martin, Texas, which also opened this year. That waterpark is a part of Martin County Parks and Recreation.

"That park made budget in their first 40 days they were open," Ezra said.

Two other trends include the growth of the indoor wa-

▶ See WWA, page 6



The 300-meter long canoe slalom course used at the 2012 Olympic Games (above and at bottom) could be likened to a Rapid River ride – although it's rather more turbulent than the amusement ride versions, thanks in part to an 18-foot elevation change on the course. COURTESY LONDON 2012

## A 'rapid river' created for Olympics canoe slalom event

**STORY:** Andrew Mellor  
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LONDON — Among the numerous venues built for the London 2012 Olympic Games, one that will have sparked a chord with those of us in the park and attractions industry was the Lee Valley White Water Center, located 30 km north of the main Olympic Park on the edge

of the 1,000-acre River Lee Country Park, part of the Lee Valley Regional Park.

Created to accommodate the canoe slalom events, the venue is reminiscent of a rapid river ride, without doubt one of the most popular and successful attractions at parks around the world. Construction of the center began in July

▶ See RIVER, page 4



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

## The modern-day carousel?



Slade

At the turn of the century and into the early 1900s, traditional amusement parks sprang up at the end of the trolley lines and other highway connectors. They saw rapid growth as the parks used water as their selling point. While most parks were located by lakes and oceans, some used swimming pools as a way for guests to cool off on hot summer days.

Always on the lookout for the next big thing, park owners soon found themselves installing beautiful hand-carved carousels in elaborately decorated buildings that would let the sounds of the band organ blast its tunes out onto the walkways. More ride innovations would soon follow, but as park owners shared their success stories, one thing was clear, you had to have a carousel as your anchor.

Today's waterparks are setting the stage with their own version of the carousel — the tipping bucket.

The idea for the tipping bucket was the result of Rick Briggs (then with SCS and building a 40-foot-tall waterplay structure in 1994 for White Water in Atlanta) and his daughter Steffanie who asked dad if he would dump water all at once, like standing under a waterfall. The rest is history.

While countless waterpark suppliers produce these popular pieces throughout the world, the tipping bucket success was first led by SCS and now WhiteWater West, who offers 45 different models. Since 1985, the two firms have supplied more than 4,000 interactive waterplay units with the tipping bucket serving as the anchor piece on most all units since 1994.

Now, in an effort to keep their guests cool and entertained, amusement park owners are installing these popular waterplay units in their facilities. Oklahoma's Frontier City and New Mexico's Cliff's Amusement Park both installed new units this season. Texas' Joyland Amusement Park is on board for next season. Resorts, hotels, cruise ships and municipal facilities are getting on board this interactive trend, much the way owners did with the carousel in the early 1900s.

It seems we've come full circle and returned to the water for fun and entertainment.

—Gary Slade

*Gary Slade is the founder and publisher of Amusement Today. His love for amusement parks began at age six when he first visited Pontchartrain Beach Amusement Park and Six Flags Over Texas. His long newspaper career helped lead to the launch of AT in 1997.*

**CARTOON:** Bubba Flint



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

## Exhibiting history



Rutherford

Earlier this spring I suddenly found myself part of an exceedingly small team of historians, artists and volunteers saddled with the task of creating the inaugural exhibition of the National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives' (NRCMA). We were all aware of the project's potential impact. This was our chance to connect with people and impress upon them the importance of preserving and celebrating the amusement industry's long, colorful history.

My job was to take vast amounts of information and create many of the graphics that would serve as the project's signage and massive background panels. Like everyone else on the team, I was concerned over the time frame; concept to opening day was incredibly tight. It is difficult to describe how much went into this but we somehow pulled it off. "America's Roller Coasters & Amusement Parks" was unveiled this summer at Dollywood to overwhelmingly positive reviews from the general public as well as park historians and enthusiast organizations. Both entertaining and educational, the exhibit featured hundreds of items including rare photos, models, videos and even coaster cars.

It would be a while before I made the trek to Tennessee to see our handiwork, and I was concerned if what I had seen on my computer screen had translated

correctly. Once I stepped into the space, my fears faded away. The presentation was more than I could've hoped for. Dollywood's own print shop had flawlessly produced exactly what we had envisioned. From a historian's perspective, it was a wonderland of sight and sound.

A personal validation of all the hard work on this project took place as I quietly toured the exhibit during AT's Golden Ticket Awards ceremony last month. At the Harry Traver section, I overheard an older gentleman regaling what I assumed was his grandson with a tale from his youth, of how in the 1940s he and his best friend climbed aboard the wicked Crystal beach Cyclone. Gazing up at huge detailed photos and an intricate scale model of that infamous ride, the little boy's eyes widened in wonder as the questions began to tumble out: "You rode that? Was it scary? How did the cars stay on the track? When was it built? Is it still there?" I was impressed.

In the end, we'd done our job. Our exhibit had invoked a beloved memory while at the same time possibly inspired a new generation to embrace the past, to explore the amazing wonders that came before. I expect versions of this scenario played out continually as thousands of Dollywood guests patronized the exhibit this summer.

Acknowledging and striving to preserve our industry history must be a priority. Too much has already been lost. We must remember. And that is exactly what the NRCMA is all about.

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Subscription rates are: 1 year (14 issues) \$75 in the USA; \$100 elsewhere; 2 years (28 issues) \$140/\$180; 3 years (42 issues) \$200/\$250. 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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# 2 MINUTE DRILL



COMPILED: Janice Witherow

## Adrienne White Rhodes, Lake Winnepesaukah

Adrienne White Rhodes has literally grown up at Lake Winnepesaukah. Her grandparents started the venerable park in 1925, and as a toddler, Adrienne was featured on the first brochure in 1933. She has been in the amusement business her entire life in positions ranging from cashier and advertising to secretary of the corporation and president. Adrienne is the mother of two daughters who both work with her and the grandmother of three ... the family tradition of Lake Winnepesaukah will be carried on for generations. Adrienne is easy to spot at the park ... she is the one driving around in a golf cart sporting a fashionable and shady hat!



Park owner, Adrienne White Rhodes can be found making her daily rounds at Lake Winnepesaukah on her golf cart during operating hours. Here, she uses her 'signature hat' to shield her from the sun during a hot summer day in the park. COURTESY DAVID TEMPLETON

**Title**  
President of Lake Winnepesaukah Inc.

**Number of years in the industry**  
79.

**Best thing about the industry**  
The wholesome pleasure it gives people of all ages.

**Favorite amusement ride**  
Our Boat Chute my grandfather built in 1927.

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

**Biggest challenge facing our industry**  
Current economic conditions.

**The thing I like most about amusement/water park season is ...**  
Seeing so many happy people.

**My first car was ...**  
A Chevrolet Bel Air.

**Favorite breakfast food**  
Belgian Waffles.

**My most favorite movie of all time is ...**  
The Sound of Music.

**The magical power I wish I had is ...**  
To control the weather!

**The advice I always like to give is ...**  
Be fair and honest.



Rhodes

**It's October! My favorite fall activity is ...**  
Watching football games.

**Last home improvement**  
New garage door opener.

**My next vacation will be ...**  
One with NO meetings and NO agendas.

**The concert I would love a backstage pass to would be ...**  
Reba McEntire.

**I can't stand being around people who ...**  
Brag and boast.

**When I have free time, I enjoy ...**  
Reading and getting together with old friends.

**Three things that are always in my purse are...**  
Kleenex, lipstick and billfold.

**The magazine cover I would most like to appear on would be ...**  
*Amusement Today* of course!

**I am afraid of ...**  
Snakes.

**The last thing I bought at the grocery store was ...**  
Milk.

**On my last birthday, I ...**  
Enjoyed having lunch with my daughters.

**The meal I most like to cook is ...**  
Shrimp and grits.

**The TV show I find myself watching the most is ...**  
The news.

## THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

Presented by



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•**1906:** In October, construction began of **Luna Park** in Chicago, at 52nd Street & Halsted. The property would contain the typical amusement devices of the time, including the popular **Figure 8** roller coaster. **Luna Park** would close after the 1912 season, because of intense competition from other area parks, including **White City** and **Riverview Park**.

•**1919:** The main building at **White City**, the summer resort on the shore of **Lake Quinsigamond**, in Worcester, Massachusetts was burned to the ground on October 8. The various amusement rides, a hotel and a score of homes were barely saved from destruction by local firefighters, in the \$75,000 blaze.

•**1924:** For its 25th season, **Kennywood Park**, West Mifflin, Pennsylvania, announced plans to replace the old **Speedoplane** coaster with a new coaster, designed by **John A. Miller**. The new \$60,000 **Pippin** would utilize a large gully, with a first drop immediately out of the station. The gully portion of the **Pippin** would be included in the design of the 1968 **Thunderbolt**.

•**1928:** In its first full season, the **Cyclone** at **Palisades Amusement Park** had 208,000 riders. One of **Harry G. Traver's** tri-plets, the ride would go through an extensive renovation starting in October, by **Harry Ackley** of **Traver Engineering**. In addition to being repainted, some of the rougher spots would be smoothed out in the hopes of increasing ridership.

•**1939:** The **New York World's Fair**, in Flushing Meadows, New York closed on October 31. The Fair was visited by 26 million guests, although the final operating day was ruined by rain. Fair executives claimed that the Exposition was in great shape for 1940, although they were \$23 million in debt. The 1940 season would prove to be a mixed experience, as several European countries would close their exhibits, with the war right around the corner.

•**1948:** The Sunday, October 3 fire at **Old Orchard Beach** in Maine, destroyed the **John Miller Thunderbolt** coaster, three concession buildings and two cottages, while damaging the famous **Palace Ballroom**. Also destroyed were the **Old Mill** and an adjacent arcade. Unofficial estimates put the loss at more than \$500,000. The **Thunderbolt** would not be rebuilt, but is well remembered by visitors to Maine's most famous amusement resort.

•**1985:** On October 5, **Dick Knoebel** held the first **Phoenix Phall Phunfest** at **Knoebels Groves** in conjunction with the **Covered Bridge Festival**. The Phunfest celebrated his new **Phoenix** roller coaster which had just opened four months earlier. Now, more than 25 years later, the event, which has grown to include most of the park, attracts enthusiasts from all over the country and even parts of Europe, bringing international recognition to **Knoebels Amusement Resort**.

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## ► RIVER

Continued from page 1

2009 and was completed in December 2010. It opened in the spring of 2011 as the only brand new London 2012 venue that the public was able to use ahead of the Games.

The venue has two courses — a 300 meter (984 foot) Olympic standard competition course with a 5.5 meter (18 foot) descent and a 160 meter (525 foot) intermediate/training course with a 1.6 meter (5.2 foot) descent. The former drops 5.5 meters from start to finish and enough water flows into this course to fill a 50 meter-sized (164 foot) swimming pool in just over three minutes.



The Lee Valley White Water Center was built at a cost of GBP 22 million (USD \$35 million). COURTESY LONDON 2012

The cost of the venue was GBP 22 million (USD \$35 million). As a comparison, the Olympic Stadium cost GBP 428 million (USD \$677.5 million) and the Basketball Arena GBP 40 million (USD \$63.3 million). The architects were Faulkner Browns Architects. The lead contractor was Mor-

ison Construction while structural and services engineers were Cundall. The white water course specialists also involved in the project were Whitewater Parks International, while the landscape designers were Michael van Valkenburgh Associates.

The spectator capacity

at the venue is 12,000 and on completion of the Games the two courses and the facilities building will remain, with the center once again becoming a world-class canoeing and kayaking facility for use by the community and elite athletes, as well as a major leisure attraction for white water raft-

ing, owned and managed by Lee Valley Regional Park Authority. It was due to reopen after the Games in September.

The 2015 Canoe Slalom World Championships will be held at the Lee Valley White Water Centre.

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► **WWA**

Continued from page 1

terpark resort and the growth of municipally-owned waterpark.

On the first day of the event, the association traditionally offers a number of all-day training workshops including lifeguard training on several levels, a lifeguard instructor training, the certified pool-spa operator course, aquatic facility operator workshop, getting started, and a workshop on waterpark design, development and expansion.

New to this line-up of workshops is WWA University: Food & Beverage School, which includes such topics as: setting standards for levels of operations and items that should be monitored presented by Albert Cabuco, Palace Entertainment Jack Burke, Casino Pier & Breakwater Beach Waterpark; How to increase food and beverage sales and revenue presented by Kenny Handler (moderator), Profitable Food Facilities, Johnny Blevins, Splash Kingdom Waterpark, Jack Burke, Casino Pier & Breakwater Beach Wa-



**This year's edition of the annual WWA trade show was a near sell out as AT was going to press with 340 booths reserved representing more than 200 companies. The trade show is set for Oct. 3 and 4 at the Paris Hotel & Conference Center. AT FILE**

terpark, Bryon Bustamante, NRH2O Family Waterpark, and Jimmy Holmes, H Two Marketing; and Preventing fraud presented Gina St. George, CPA, CFE, Moss Adams LLP Amanda Hodgkiss, Moss Adams LLP.

This workshop also includes a question and answer wrap-up followed by a behind-the-scenes tour of Paris/Bally's.

Most of the first-day workshops and sessions require either additional tuition and/or prior registration.

There are also arrays of new educational sessions, which begin the morning of Oct. 3. One special new addition, requiring additional tuition, is Achieving Your Group Sales Goals, presented by Randy Thomas Tiffany Quilici, Marketing Director, Roaring

Springs Waterpark, and Carolyn Brown, Sales Director, Roaring Springs Waterpark.

Other new education sessions are: Mobile Marketing Your Message in the Palm of Their Hand; Anatomy of a Rescue: What You See, What Your Guards See, What Your Guests See; Happy Taxpayers: Increasing The Bottom Line; Stop Trying the Fad Diets of Leadership! Discover Your Authentic Self; Taking Your Food & Beverage Beyond the Usual Hot Eats & Cool Treats; #OMG Social Media — The Latest, Greatest Ways to Engage; Active Shooter Awareness; Maintenance Magic: How to Hire and Train Maintenance Techs for Waterparks; Stand Up — Waterpark Team Building; From Dream to Reality — Master Planning & Expansion, An Operator's Perspective; Emergencies Happen — Now What? Are You Prepared for the Post Incident Response; Disney's Approach to Selection, Training & Engagement; Cashless Waterpark — Where Has All The Money Gone; Marketing Creative — The Good, The Bad & the Downright Ugly; Weather Watching for Waterparks; 15

Ways to the Top! Successful Waterpark Leadership Practices; the ADA and Waterpark Attractions — How to Avoid the Legal Landmines; If You Build It - They Will Come - or Maybe They Won't; and Practical Training Tools for Lifeguards. Additional new sessions are: Improve Attitude, Attentiveness and Action; Latest Technologies in Water Treatment; Keeping Your Head Above Water in Your Hiring Practices; Aqua Adventure — How A Municipal Waterpark Made it to Profitability; Making Innovative Marketing Decisions on a Budget; Increasing Customer Safety Through Public Awareness and Outreach with Drowning Prevention; Preventative Maintenance-Pay Me Now Or You Will Pay Later!; Because Every Kid Has One — Building a Better Birthday Program; Safety Committee — MAHC Lifeguarding Module; Survival in the 21st Century — Challenges to Waterparks & Aquatic Safety; Uncovering the Latest Trends; You'll Love It When Your Marketing Plan Comes Together; and Low Cost, High Tech — Applying Today's Technology In Your Facility.



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## Reporter's Notebook

### Nottingham Castle may get Robin Hood tourist attraction

ENGLAND — According to *This Is Nottingham*, a £20 million gallery devoted to Robin Hood and the history of Nottingham could be built at the city's castle.

The scheme could also see the caves underneath the castle brought back into use, and a new visitors' center and cafe built.

The Castle Working Group, which has been given the job of creating the new attraction, hopes to submit a bid for money from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

If it is successful, work could begin in the next couple of years, with the attraction set to open by 2019, but would still need further funding from both the public and private sector.

## Quoted

**"The Ice Mountain attraction is something totally different to anything else currently on the market and I am sure will be a very successful attraction."**

—SOLI Bumper Cars Sales Director Andrea Munari said on the development and addition of Ice Mountain to the company's product portfolio

# Olympics strike gold but London's business is down during games

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

LONDON — As millions around the world were entertained and enthralled by the superb spectacle that was the London 2012 Olympic Games, it soon became clear that this mammoth event, certainly while it was actually taking place, did not provide the expected increase in revenues for many businesses in England's capital city — including some of its top tourist attractions.

With government warnings for people to stay out of the capital and other places hosting Olympic events, due to (unfounded) fears of potential overcrowding and traffic chaos, and many workers being advised to work from home, the usual increase in numbers during the key summer weeks around and during the Games did not transpire, clearly having an adverse effect on businesses of all types.

Be it hotel owners or theatre ticket sellers, taxi drivers or rickshaw operators, shop owners or restaurateurs, all saw takings significantly down during the Games compared to the same period in previous years, while key London visitor attractions also suffered.

In a statement about how its venues were performing during the Games, Merlin Entertainments, which operates attractions such as the EDF Energy London Eye, Madame Tussauds, the London Dungeon and Sea Life, said that the Olympics had "certainly not generated additional business for London. On the contrary, early government warnings telling people to stay out of the capital and other Olympic locations like Weymouth, where the sailing took place, significantly impacted visitation patterns during what would normally have been the busiest and most important season, adversely affecting businesses across the board including retailers, hospitality, visitor



Early government warnings telling people to stay out of London and other Olympic locations significantly impacted normal visitation patterns during what would typically have been the busiest time of year for attractions.  
COURTESY  
MERLIN ENTERTAINMENTS

attractions and many others.

And the statement continued: "The reality is London and the other locations were more than capable of dealing with extra Olympic business; indeed they are all geared up to welcome visitors!

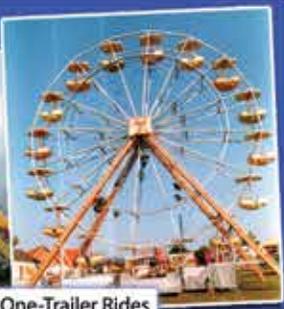
"However on a more positive note, London is a truly unique city and is looking fantastic, something which people have seen around the world in all the Olympic coverage. The hope must be, therefore, that if people have been put off by fears of crowds dur-

ing the Games, the success and excitement that they have generated, and the overall feel good atmosphere in town, will not only persuade those visitors still here for the Games or those looking forward to the Paralympics, to venture further into the city and enjoy the amazing events and range of real-value offers all across the Capital, but will also encourage both domestic and international visits to London after the Games are over. Everyone is working hard to achieve that."



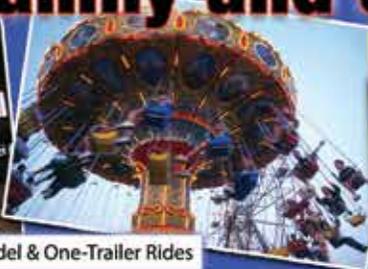
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## Major new water ride marks 25 years of Center Parcs UK

UNITED KINGDOM — With an experience being promoted as replicating that of rafting down parts of South Africa's Zambezi river, Center Parcs UK will celebrate its 25th year with the opening of a spectacular new water ride at its Elveden Forest, Suffolk, site in late November.

To be named Tropical Cyclone at Center Parcs, the first TornadoBlast by Canadian company ProSlide, will be a one-of-a-kind experience that sees two award winning rides joined together for the very first time — the Tornado and the Bowling Alley.

The new GBP 4 million (USD \$6.3 million) family thrill experience will see guests seated in four-seater, clover shaped rafts that will take riders through a series of twists and turns, reaching speeds of up to 24 mph during the 200 meter long adventure. They will experience a full 45 degree drop as well as zero gravity three to four times in



The new Tropical Cyclone at Center Parcs Elveden Forest will provide a unique family thrill experience when it opens in November. The ride combines two of ProSlide's most popular attractions, the Tornado and Bowling Alley. COURTESY CENTER PARCS

the Tornado funnel as they travel at an average speed of 18-20 feet per second.

According to ProSlide, the combination of the rides chosen provides both adventure and extreme elements with the sequence developed to enhance the continuation of motion throughout the ride. The

combination of ride types will take guests through low velocity (Bowling Alley) into high velocity (Tornado) with a very steep 100 percent gradient. Hourly capacity of the Tropical Cyclone will be 720 riders.

In a statement about the new attraction, Center Parcs said that it is "committed to

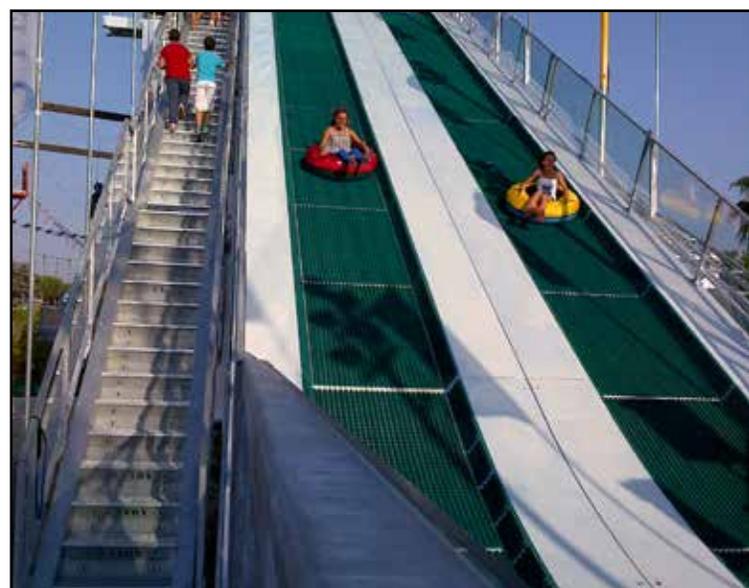
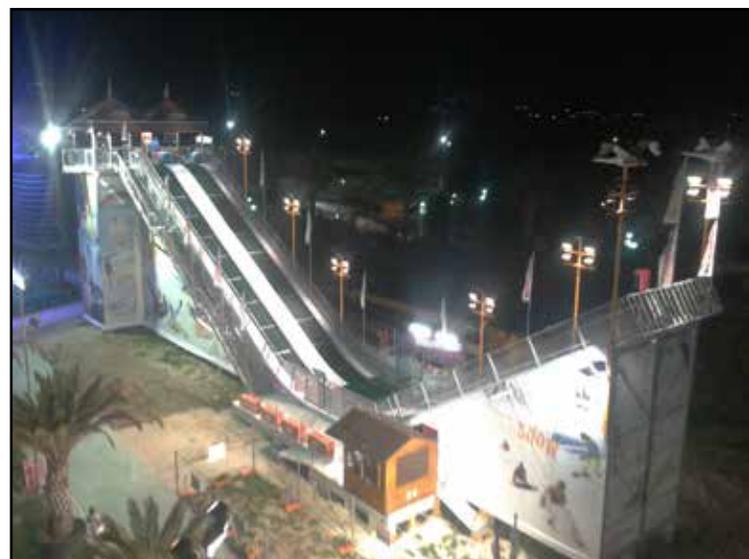


bringing its guests the very best in innovation and ensuring our jewel in the crown, the Subtropical Swimming Paradise, is at the heart of our latest investment and development plans. Our new £4 million ride has been developed after extensive research with our guests and a worldwide search

for the best water experiences.

"The new water ride at Elveden Forest will also be joined by The Lagoon, a new family warm water pool, which is part of a longer term investment program in the Subtropical Swimming Paradise across all four Center Parcs Villages."

## IE Park adds unique new, tubing slide to product line



ITALY — The impressive number of products available from the IE Park Group has been extended with the addition of a new attraction concept along with a new children's attraction.

IE Park International srl recently designed and built a unique new sports-based attraction, Ice Mountain, for Mauro Viviani, one of Italy's most well-known and innovative traveling showmen. The new attraction offers three separate activities on one structure.

Viviani has traditionally been involved in the operation of one of the country's largest traveling roller coasters. Recognizing the need for more adrenaline-filled, extreme activities, he created the idea of Ice Mountain and began looking for an experi-

**IE Park International srl has added two new products to its extensive lineup. Offering three different attractions on one structure, Ice Mountain features tubing, rock climbing and a free fall drop experience.**

COURTESY IE PARK

enced, flexible company prepared to help him develop this new project.

Ice Mountain consists of a 147-foot by 36-foot half pipe-shaped structure covered in artificial snow. It has a maximum height of 147 feet and participants will be able to enjoy a total of three different activities on the attraction — "Summer Tubing," rock climbing and a free fall drop experience.

The IE Park team now developed this new attraction which will travel on four trailers and is scheduled to make its debut at Magic World in Naples this season.

Also recently added to the IE Park srl product line is an interactive children's ride, Fire Fighters, several examples of which have now been delivered. Each car on the ride is equipped with two water cannons, featuring a choice of either automatic or manual functions, with riders aiming the water at various effects/targets within three different centrally positioned scenes as the ride revolves.

The speed of rotation is

very slow in order to provide adequate time for players to hit the targets and to enjoy the different scenes. Fire Fighters can be custom made to specific client requirements while optional extras available include additional cars, platforms and fences.

Commenting on these latest additions to the company's continually expanding product portfolio, IE Park/SOLI Bumper Cars Sales Director Andrea Munari said: "We are very happy to announce the development of the Ice Mountain attraction and to report strong success with one of our most recent children's rides, the Fire Fighters. The Ice Mountain attraction is something totally different to anything else currently on the market and I am sure will be a very successful attraction for Mr. Viviani, who entrusted IE Park with the task of bringing his dream to reality. And I am very proud of what our team of engineers and designers has achieved with this spectacular attraction."

## Fårup Sommerland adding custom Vekoma Suspended Family Coaster in 2013

DENMARK — Fårup Sommerland is bracing for the arrival of a Hurricane in 2013. Though not an actual tropical storm, this Hurricane is sure to cause plenty of excitement thanks to its reported wild characteristics.

Supplied by Vekoma of the the Netherlands, Hurricane is a new custom-designed Suspended Family Coaster that is currently scheduled to open in spring 2013.

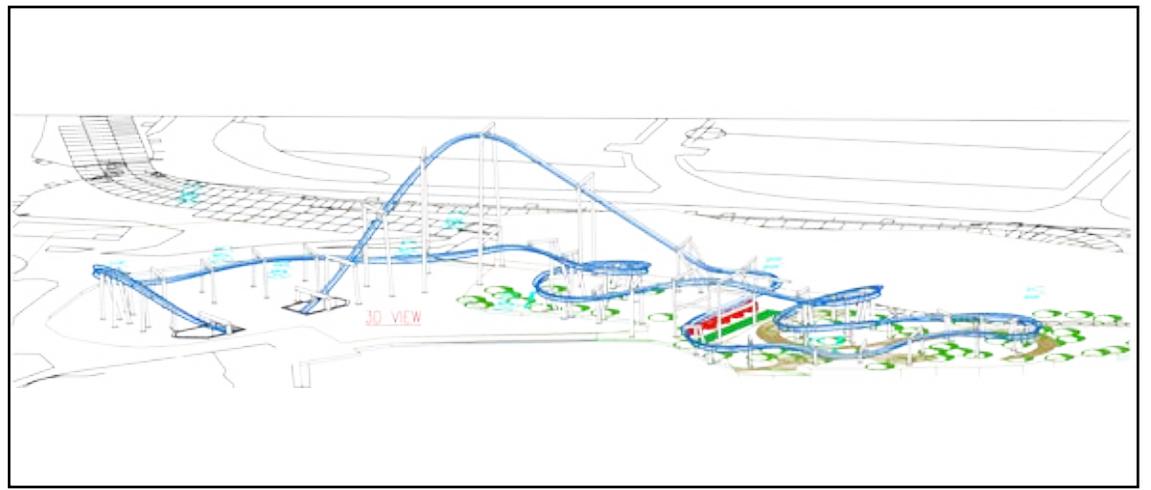
"As the name suggests, the Hurricane is an adrenaline-packed whirlwind of a ride which fires its passengers through an underwater tunnel," said park directors Søren Kragelund and Per Dam. "Hurricane is exactly what roller coaster enthusiasts have long suggested should be the next big attraction for Fårup Sommerland, whereby passengers are suspended with their feet dangling in the air. This design, combined with a seven-story drop through dense fog into an underwater tunnel, gives a feeling of freedom and excitement. These feelings are enhanced by the backdrop of trees, water and

earth giving the impression that one could almost touch their surroundings as they hurtle around the track."

"Even though it is a wild ride, the Hurricane is intended for the whole family, with a minimum height requirement of just 42 inches. Therefore, the entire family can enjoy this exhilarating experience," Kragelund added.

Sporting a price tag of USD \$5.8 million (35 million DKK/Danish Krone), the Hurricane will feature a unique layout comprised of 1,486 feet of track. Though the trains will encounter spirals and several sections of extremely banked track, the ride will not completely invert its passengers.

"The Hurricane is a one-of-a-kind ride that will deliver a unique ride experience that is thrilling for the whole family. The ride suspends riders almost 65 feet in the air and sends them going through tunnels, troughs and between trees, all at a relentless pace. While aimed at thrilling the whole family, Hurricane is sure to fulfill the needs of all



Fårup Sommerland has announced plans to add Hurricane, a Vekoma Suspended Family Coaster, for the 2013 season. The 1,486-foot-long custom-designed layout will include a seven-story first drop that culminates in an underwater tunnel and top speed of more than 46 mph. COURTESY FÅRUP SOMMERLAND

thrill seekers with speeds up to 46 mph and forces up to 3.5G," said Vekoma's Stefan Holtman. "This is the fastest Suspended Family Coaster in the world and also the first Suspended Family Coaster featuring an underwater tunnel. Furthermore, its ergonomic seats and the state of the art manufacturing process will ensure a very smooth and comfortable ride."

With a grand opening slated for the anniversary of

Denmark's constitution, Per Dam is pleased that Fårup Sommerland is continuing its positive development as one of Scandinavia's leading amusement parks. "Building the Hurricane is a big step in Fårup's continued development. We are extremely proud to be able to announce next year's new attraction while in the current season. We are looking forward to starting the building work as soon as the season finishes.

Progress of the Hurricane's construction can be followed on Fårup Sommerland's Web site ([www.faarupsommerland.dk](http://www.faarupsommerland.dk)) and Facebook page, a unique opportunity we hope our guests will take advantage of," concluded Dam.

Fårup's 2013 season kicks off at the end of April with the new Hurricane expected to be finished by June 5, 2013, just in time for the celebration of Denmark's national day.





# PARKS & ATTRACTIONS

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## Two parks ramp up attraction mix along Jersey shore

*Morey's Piers' 2012 highlighted by multi-million dollar waterpark improvements, new ride mix*

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

WILDWOOD, N.J. — One of the hottest summers on record brought the crowds in droves to the south Jersey shore seeking relief in 2012. Fortunately, Morey's Piers had plenty on tap to entertain and keep their guests cool thanks to extensive waterpark improvements and additions as well as a host of new rides and attractions.

### River Adventure

First stop for many visitors was Morey's Raging Waters Waterpark on Mariner's Landing Pier where the existing Lazy River was completely revamped into the all-new River Adventure. The atmosphere of Raging Waters has been dramatically changed thanks to River Adventure, which is now a relaxing 1,000-foot-long tube float that allows guests to drift past (and through) waterfalls, geysers and other aquatic features. Seating alcoves throughout the experience along with a grotto and extensive, expertly crafted rockwork are highlights of this new family expedition.

The creation of River Adventure required a combination of talented artists both in-house and contractors. The Morey's own creative team worked alongside others that were brought in to assist in the completion of the project. The contractors included Steve Jones — Air Tech Systems; Joe Pez — Concrete Links; Steve

▶ See MOREY'S, page 12



Morey's Piers' multi-million dollar renovation and improvement projects this season included (above) revamping Raging Waters lazy river into River Adventure and (below) this six-lane mat racer from ProSlide.

COURTESY MOREY'S PIERS



*Wonderland Pier's 83rd season sees addition of new rides, Giant Wheel LED light show*

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

OCEAN CITY, N.J.— Gillian's Wonderland Pier, an annual must-do for families vacationing in Ocean City, marked its 83rd season in 2012 with the introduction of a brand new section — Thrill Zone — and also outfitted the park's popular Giant Wheel with an innovative LED light show overhaul.

Thrill Zone is a new area of the seaside park that has been sectioned off in the

shadow of the Giant Wheel. While Thrill Zone encompasses several existing classic rides such as the Scrambler, Bumper Cars and the Log Flume, it was further highlighted in 2012 with a trio of new attractions that were all brokered for Gillian's by Len Soled at New Jersey-based Rides 4-U, Inc. (www.rides4u.com).

Thrill Zone at Wonderland Pier includes three new attractions:

- Gravitron — from

▶ See GILLIAN'S, page 12



Gillian's Wonderland Pier celebrated its 83rd season in 2012 with a new section, Thrill Zone. The new area included three new rides — a Gravitron (Wisdom Manufacturing), Disk'o (Zamperla), and Haunted House Dark Ride (Bertazzon). The park's Giant Wheel also received a spectacular LED light makeover from Maxtron.

COURTESY GILLIAN'S WONDERLAND PIER



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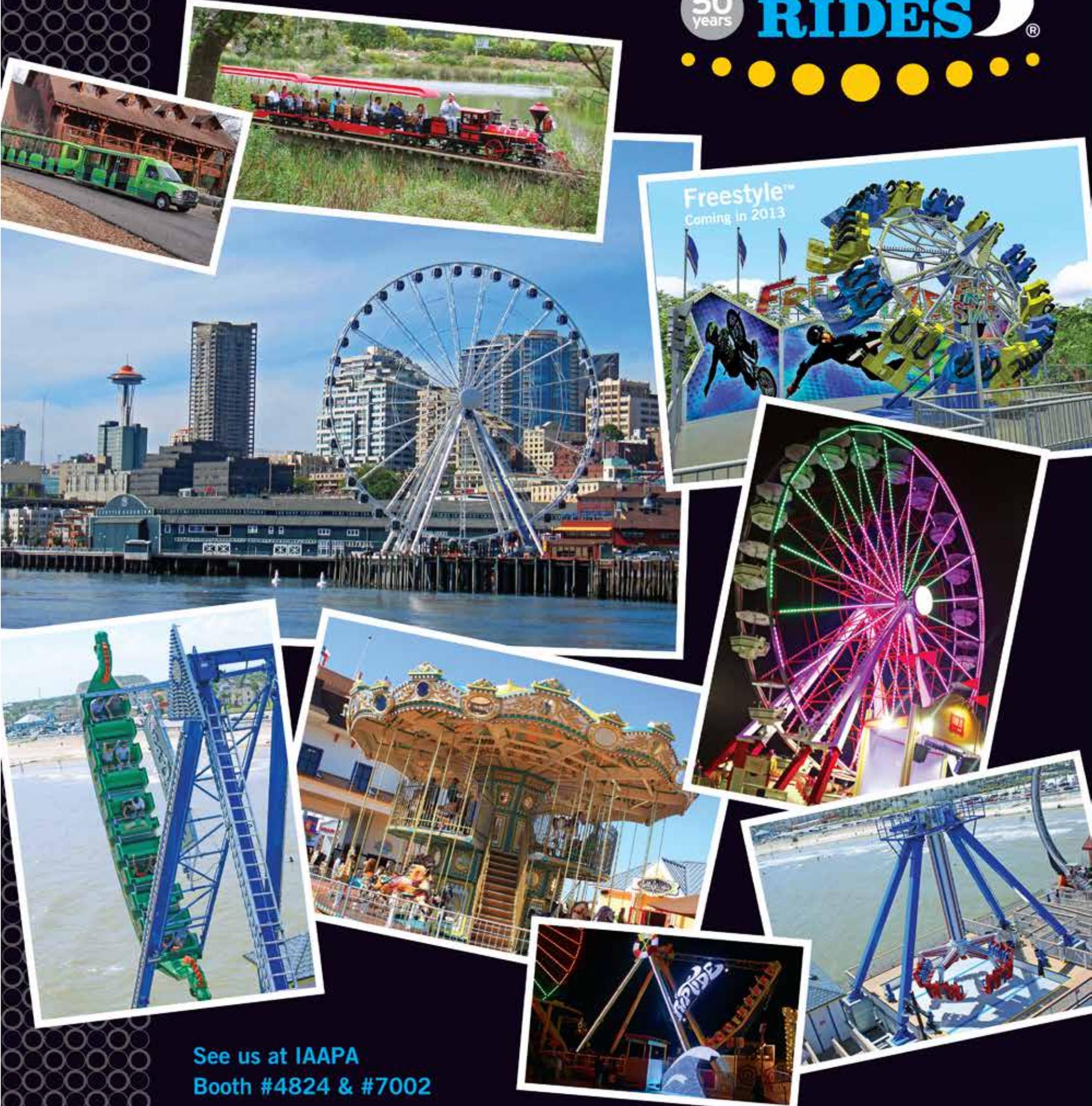


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## ►MOREY'S

Continued from page 10

Connor – Deep Run Aquatics; and Pete Bieling Sr. & Jr. — Bieling Art and Design.

### Wipeout

Morey's other water-park, Ocean Oasis on Surfside Pier, was the site of another bright spot for the 2012 season with the installation of Wipeout, a six-lane head first mat slide supplied by Canada's ProSlide Technology, Inc.

Wipeout has special significance to the Morey family and their guests due to the fact that the new attraction resembles the Giant Slide, the very first ride Morey's Piers ever installed (1969). The Wipeout is proving to be a perfect addition the park's lineup as well as one that creates a sense of nostalgia for guests who remember the Giant Slide, which was removed in 2010.

In addition to the attractions, both waterparks received new dining options: Trader Sam's at Raging Waters offers pretzels, ice cream bars and fresh fruit. Guests can walk up to the window and order a treat or drift up to the service dock in River Adventure for a little in-river refreshment.

Barnacalicious Betsy's at

Ocean Oasis Waterpark and Beach Club, located near the new WipeOut, offers a variety of treats and snacks such as pretzels, ice cream bars and more.

### Big Wheel, Bright Lights

The Giant Wheel on Mariner's Landing got a spectacular makeover thanks to the installation of a new high output, energy efficient LED light package. The Moreys contracted with Eworks Pro of Orlando, Fla. for a state-of-the-art design that significantly surpasses the LED lights previously installed on the Giant Wheel. The upgrade included more than 300 light panels and 300 individual three-by-five lights making up the centerpiece, which all worked in concert to produce an entertaining beachfront light show capable of innumerable colors and complex patterns.

In addition, the Sea Dragon on Mariner's Landing was replaced with a newer model of the same classic Pharaoh's Fury ride manufactured by Chance Rides. The new, custom-designed version, dubbed Rip Tide, is modeled after a Wildwood lifeguard boat. Rip Tide has also been outfitted with an impressive light package that includes lights strips on the

support structure; illuminated ride logo suspended above the boat; and a pair of waves that explode with light each time the boat swings past.

And as usual, the Morey clan didn't forget its younger visitors. On Surfside Pier, two new kiddie attractions manufactured by Zamperla kept children entertained. These included Happy Feet (a six-seat Happy Swing) and Kang 'A' Bounce, a colorful ride that mimics the hopping action of an energetic Aussie marsupial.

Just as the regular season was winding down, AT caught up with Morey's Piers Executive Vice President Jack Morey to see how the family's operation fared this year. "2012 proved to be a good year for the waterparks, and was a tad off for the amusements but overall we are pleased with our new attractions and our guests reaction to the attractions.

"As our park is a part of an overall beach resort we are also very pleased to see continued public sector investment in numerous public infrastructure projects inclusive of the following: Wildwoods welcome sign, new bike ramp, Centennial Park, and many others on the drawing board," added Morey.

With a successful sum-



This new LED light package on the Giant Wheel was supplied by Eworks Pro. Above, a new Chance Rides swinging boat ride was just part of the new ride mix for 2012. COURTESY MOREY'S PIERS

mer now behind them, the Moreys are now gearing up for Morey's FEARS-Terror on the Boardwalk 2012. For nine nights this October, Mariner's

Landing will once again transform into a nightmare venue along with an enhanced Ghost Ship experience and more.

•www.moreyspiers.com

## ►GILLIAN'S

Continued from page 10

Wisdom Manufacturing, the spinning ride sports a dazzling light package along with an Alien Abduction theme.

•Disk'O – supplied by Italian ride manufacturer Zamperla, the ride was relocated from Atlantic City's Steel Pier.

•Haunted House Dark Ride – from Bertazzon, this ride-through attraction utilizes six cars that seat up to three people each and travel through ten scenes.

Wonderland Pier Owner Jay Gillian is aware that contemporary amusement parks in towns like Ocean City require a mix of old and new thrills. "We're starting to see more 14-, 15- and 16-year-olds and fewer babies, it's a trend at amusement parks across the nation. You have to keep it fresh, but at the same time be mindful of the past," he said. "Ocean City people are generational, we entertain generations, and parents who came



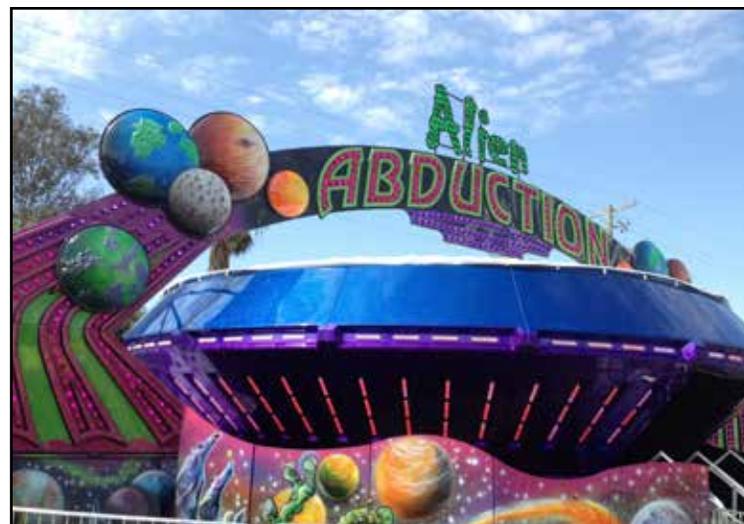
here as kids, or grandparents who brought their kids want to see some of the rides that they remember."

Along with Wonderland Pier's new rides, the park's 140-foot-tall Giant Wheel was enhanced with over 100,000 LED lights that display computer-generated entertainment each evening. The Giant Wheel's light show was provided by Hong Kong-based Maxtron (leds4u.com), the same firm that handled other Ferris Wheel makeovers including those at Canobie Lake Park and Cedar Point.

Maxtron is represented in the U.S. by Rides 4-U.

Gillian's Wonderland Pier celebrated its 83rd season in 2012 with a new section, Thrill Zone. The new area included three new rides – a Gravitron (Wisdom Manufacturing), Disk'O (Zamperla), and Haunted House Dark Ride (Bertazzon). The park's Giant Wheel also received a spectacular LED light makeover from Maxtron.

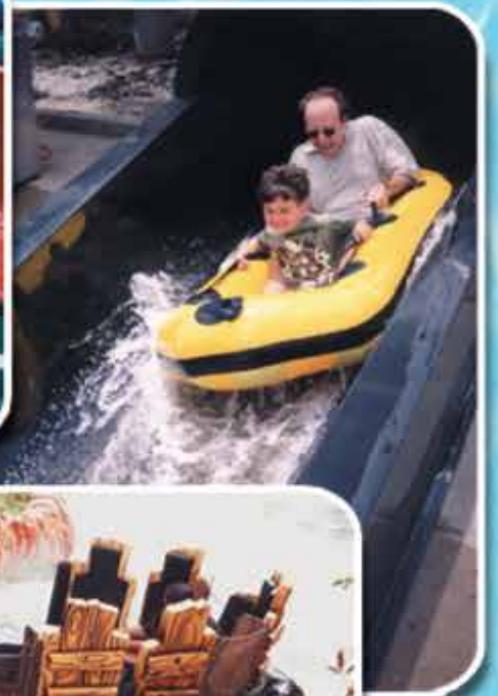
COURTESY GILLIAN'S WONDERLAND PIER





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# Six Flags details rides, slides and shows for 2013

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — Six Flags Entertainment Corporation has announced an exciting array of thrill and family rides, stage shows, and extreme water slides in 2013 across its 19 North American parks.

“Innovation is part of our DNA,” said Jim Reid-Anderson, chairman, president and chief executive officer. “On the heels of a tremendously well-received lineup of rides and attractions in 2012, we are taking our creativity to an even higher level by delivering an unprecedented season of jaw-dropping experiences that only Six Flags can deliver.”

The 2013 highlights include:

•The **Six Flags Great Adventure** theme and safari parks will combine into one property to become the world’s largest theme park. The megapark will introduce a new, one-of-a-kind themed attraction — Safari Off Road Adventure — that transports guests from the theme park on a safari that

features 1,200 animals from six continents. Seventeen, 40-passenger jeep-like vehicles will carry guests through the safari.

•**Hurricane Harbor** waterpark will unveil Big Wave Racer, a massive slide complex from ProSlide that sends riders barreling; head first, down multiple lanes that stretch 1,800 feet on an aerodynamically-designed water toboggan.

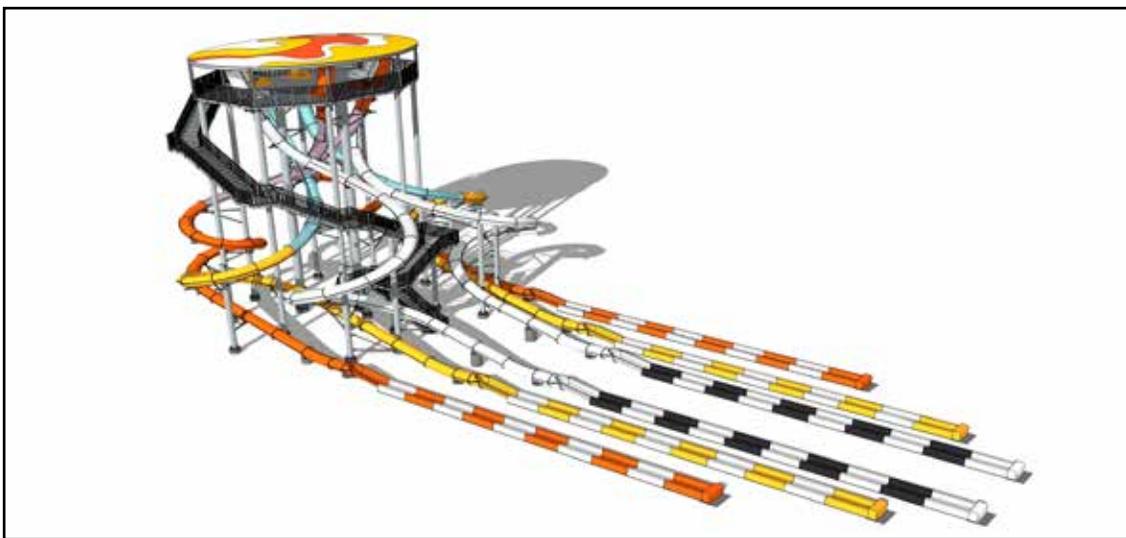
•**Six Flags Magic Mountain** is adding Full Throttle, a fast, steel looping roller coaster featuring the world’s tallest inversion. Supplied by Premier Rides, Full Throttle will accelerate riders from zero to more than 70 miles per hour on two forward launches, and an unprecedented third backward launch.

•**Six Flags Discovery Kingdom** will present Cirque Dreams Splashtastic, an aquatic adventure.

•**Six Flags Over Texas** is unveiling Texas SkyScreamer, a record-breaking 400-foot-tall swing ride supplied by Funtime  
▶ See **SIX FLAGS**, page 16



Above, Larson International will deliver their Flying Scooters ride to the Great Escape, themed as Screamin' Eagles. Below, SplashTacular is supplying Bonzai Pipelines to Hurricane Harbor waterparks at both Six Flags New England and Six Flags America. COURTESY SIX FLAGS



At left from top: Six Flags Great Adventure will see its popular animal safari incorporated into the theme park with jeep-like rides, while Six Flags Discovery Kingdom will debut Cirque Dreams Splashtastic. At right, Flagship park Six Flags Over Texas skyline will change forever with the new 400-foot tall Texas' SkyScreamer from Funtime/REG. Below, The Rattler at Fiesta Texas will undergo a complete makeover from Rocky Mountain Construction to debut next season as Iron Rattler steel coaster. COURTESY SIX FLAGS



PHOTOS COURTESY OF AMUSEMENT TODAY

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## SIX FLAGS

Continued from page 14

of Austria. Funtime is represented in North America by Md.-based Ride Entertainment Group of Companies.

•Six Flags Fiesta Texas will utilize Rocky Mountain Construction's Iron Horse Track to create Iron Rattler, a steel-track/wood structure roller coaster. The ride will feature four over-banked turns and a complete barrel-roll inversion.

•Six Flags Great America welcomes igNIGHT — Grand Finale, the most technologically advanced show in the park's history, uniquely integrating state-of-the-art lighting, sound, singing, dancing, and fireworks.

•Both Hurricane Harbor waterparks at Six Flags New England and Six Flags America will introduce new thrills with revolutionary new water attractions. Bonzai Pipelines, from SplashTacular, will accommodate six riders simultaneously as they twist through individual tubes.

•Six Flags Over Georgia will introduce the park's tallest attraction in its 45-year history—SkyScreamer, a 24-story tower swing ride from Funtime of Austria.

•Six Flags White Water is introducing Typhoon Twister, a giant thrill slide from ProSlide that sends riders barreling down a five-story drop before shooting them out into a 67-foot bowl.

•Six Flags St. Louis is turning things upside down with the addition of a Vekoma Boomerang coaster that is being relocated from Six Flags Over Texas.

•The Great Escape in upstate New York will introduce Screamin' Eagles, a Larson Flying Scooter ride.

•La Ronde will welcome Aqua Twist, a Mack Rides Twist'n'Splash designed to engage passengers and bystanders in a fun and entertaining water battle.

•Six Flags Mexico will introduce Festival del Terror in October. The event will deliver "Thrills by Day and Fright by Night" with special Halloween activities for kids and five haunted mazes.

Additional information on these and other improvements at Six Flags parks will be released later this fall.

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# Maurer Spinning Coaster highlights SCBB's 2013 season

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. — Officials at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk unveiled plans for a new \$5.5 million ride during a presentation for employees and media at the Boardwalk in late August.

The new attraction — a compact spinning roller coaster named Undertow — will join the Boardwalk's impressive ride arsenal next summer. Manufactured by German coaster specialist Maurer Söhne, Undertow will be the only spinning coaster in Northern California.

"A spinning coaster is a very unique ride experience, we know our visitors are going to love it," said Boardwalk community relations director Kris Reyes. "Every ride on Undertow is different, you can definitely expect the unexpected."

Unlike most coasters, which carry an entire train-load of riders, Undertow will feature individual cars each holding four guests seated in pairs and facing opposite directions. The ride experi-



**Undertow, a Maurer Spinning Coaster will spin its way onto the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk for the 2013 season.**  
COURTESY SCBB

ence changes every time, depending on the weight and position of riders in the car. A standard Maurer

SC2000 model, Undertow will feature a magnetic braking system unlike the mechanical brakes in use on the other four Maurer spinning coasters operating in the U.S. (see sidebar). Resting on a base frame measuring 145 feet by 75 feet, the ride will stand 50.8 feet tall with 1,410 feet of track. It will utilize seven four-seat coaches that can handle 850 riders each hour with an average ride time of 70 seconds.

The new coaster will be built atop the Boardwalk's bumper car pavilion, a space that was occupied by the Hurricane coaster (an SDC Windstorm) from 1992 until 2012. The Hurricane's last day of operation was September 3. It has been sold to New Mexico's Western Playland Amusement Park.

Undertow is scheduled to open Summer 2013.

Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk will also be the host park for the 2013 Golden Ticket Awards, presented by *Amusement Today*, Sept. 6 and 7.

## Maurer Sohne Spinning Coasters

GERMANY — Introduced in the late 1990s, Maurer Söhne's spinning Coasters are wildly popular attractions that come in a variety of standard and custom configurations including SC2000, SC2200, SC3000 and Xtended SC models.

Maurer's spinning coasters are characterized by their convoluted layouts peppered with steep drops, extreme banking (up to 82 degrees) and plenty of hair-pin turns taken at speeds approaching 40 mph.

While the newest Maurer spinning coaster whirling into the U.S. will be Undertow at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk in 2013, that ride has a quartet of North American predecessors that have been thrilling riders for several years. These include: Dixie Landin's Xtreme (2007); Lagoon's Spider (2003); Seabreeze Park's Whirlwind (2004); and Waldameer Park's Steel Dragon (2002).



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# Cedar Fair — New for 2013

## GCI wooden coaster rushing into California's Great America

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — California's Great America will open the tallest and fastest wooden roller coaster in Northern California in the spring of 2013.

Dubbed Gold Striker, a name chosen to recognize the pioneering and adventurous spirit of the California gold-seekers who rushed the area in 1849, the new coaster was designed and is being built by Pennsylvania-based Great Coasters International, Inc. (GCI). The Old West-themed ride will feature plenty of high-speed twists, turns, drops, a station fly-by and will stand 108 feet at its highest point. Following a first drop of 103 feet at a 50-degree angle that wraps around the park's Star Tower attraction, riders will careen along 3,197 feet of track at speeds up to 54 mph.

"Gold Striker reflects our commitment to providing our guests with the best thrills and entertainment value in the region," California's Great America Vice-President and General Manager Raul Rehnborg said. "This ride was uniquely designed by melding together the highest performing and most exciting features of the very best

wooden roller coasters in the world. Everyone who enjoys the thrills of riding a roller coaster will want to experience Gold Striker."

Gold Striker is being constructed in the Celebration Plaza area of California's Great America and will be the park's eighth coaster. It utilizes two of GCI's exclusive 12-car Millennium Flyer trains that will accommodate 24 passengers each with a capacity of 850 riders per hour.

Construction of Gold Striker is well underway and is slated to make its debut next spring. Guests eager to experience Gold Striker can visit [cagreatamerica.com](http://cagreatamerica.com) for updates and features, including virtual ride renderings, ride statistics, construction photos and a live construction Web cam.

**Construction of Gold Striker, a GCI wooden coaster, is well underway at California's Great America. When the Old West-themed ride opens next spring, it will rank as the tallest (108 feet) and fastest (54 mph) wooden roller coaster in Northern California.**

COURTESY GREAT AMERICA



## Cedar Point announces new front gate, B&M Wing Coaster



Cedar Point has thrill ride fans eager for summer 2013 with the announcement that the park is building GateKeeper, a record-breaking B&M wing coaster. The 170-foot-tall ride will reach speeds of 67 mph and feature 4,164 feet of track that flies through the middle of two support towers dominating Cedar Point's new main entrance.

COURTESY CEDAR POINT

SANDUSKY, Ohio — Though this summer is over, Cedar Point already has thrill ride fans dreaming of next season with the announcement that the park is building yet another new world-record-breaking coaster in 2013.

Supplied by Swiss steel coaster gurus Bolliger & Mabillard, GateKeeper will be a new wing coaster that will take guests on a ride unlike anything else the park currently offers. Scheduled to debut next May, the new ride will set two new world records for wing coasters: longest track and longest drop.

GateKeeper will forever change the landscape of the Cedar Point peninsula as the track dramatically flies above a revamped main entrance to the park, passing over arriving guests with rolling fly-over maneuvers. Riders will twice narrowly slot through

new front gate portals and slide by buildings. GateKeeper will feature Sunset Gold trains with coaches that extend out sideways from the track, exposing riders to nothing above or below them, simulating the feeling of flight.

"GateKeeper's world-record-breaking statistics, incredible flying maneuvers and special elements make it a unique coaster experience," said Cedar Point General Manager John Hildebrandt. "GateKeeper is a roller coaster only Cedar Point can build and we are proud to add it to our incredible lineup of world-class attractions."

A ride along the 4,164 feet of dark-and-light-blue steel track on GateKeeper will take approximately two minutes and 40 seconds. Once riders crest the top of the 170-foot-tall lift hill, the coaster train

► See CEDAR POINT, page 21



Cedar Point's new GateKeeper from B&M will set records as the largest wing coaster the Switzerland firm has ever built. COURTESY CEDAR POINT

►CEDAR POINT  
Continued from page 20

will rotate 180 degrees to the right, turning riders upside down before plummeting a record 164 feet toward the ground at speeds reaching 67 mph. Then the train will enter a half loop, go through a half twist and curve out in the opposite direction from which it came. A towering 105-foot-tall camelback hill awaits just before riders glide through a 360-degree giant flat spin. The train will then fly through the middle of two support towers that will dominate Cedar Point's new main entrance. The coaster will then make a tight, 180-degree turnaround which pushes riders through an over-banked turn and rockets them back towards the station. A 360-degree in-line roll, camelback drop and spiral round out the elements that GateKeeper will treat its passengers to next summer.

GateKeeper will feature three 32-passenger trains and will be able to accommodate approximately 1,710 riders per hour. Riders will be secured with over-the-shoulder restraints and interlocking seat belts. With the addition of GateKeeper and the redesigned main entrance, Cedar Point will invest approximately \$30 million on improvements for the 2013 season.

Thrillseekers can view more statistics and photos about the new coaster and follow the progress at [www.cedarpoint.com](http://www.cedarpoint.com) all winter long. GateKeeper will be Cedar Point's 16th roller coaster and is scheduled to open with the rest of the park in May 2013.

**Santa's Land closes, auction scheduled**

PUTNEY, Vt. — Following 58 years of continuous operation, Santa's Land is turning out the lights. All the rides and related equipment will be sold at auction on Oct. 14, 2012 beginning at 11 a.m. The proceedings will be handled by Alex Lyon & Son, Sales Managers & Auctioneers, Inc.

Santa's Land is located at 635 Bellows Falls Road, Putney, Vt. 05346. The on-site phone for day of the action is (802) 387-4700.

A partial listing of the park being offered for sale include: 1976 C.P. Huntington train

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engine, four coaches, approximately one half mile of 24 gauge track with switches and equipment; 1981 Theel 28-foot carousel; Hampton Boats; Hampton Cars; Big Pink Slide; snack bar grill; cash registers and more.

For additional information see the ad below, call (315) 633-2944 or visit: [www.lyonauction.com](http://www.lyonauction.com).

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# Cliff's Amusement Park adds giant WhiteWater waterplay unit

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — Cliff's Amusement Park owners Gary and Linda Hays are used to shoehorning rides and buildings into their 10-acre New Mexico park.

For 2012, that shoe horn job got a little bit more complicated as rides were relocated, all in an effort to add a larger waterplay unit from WhiteWater West.

The park purchased the larger unit in an attempt to increase capacity. The old unit was smaller and had reached its capacity limitations. Thus, Cliff's opted to remove and replace with a larger model.

Removed from the park was their original WhiteWater Monkey Island waterplay unit (traded to Lubbock's Joyland Park for a steel roller coaster) and the park's beautifully maintained Rock-O-Plane (now in operation at Fire Mountain Amusements in Tyler, Texas).

Relocated was their Larson Super Shot drop tower, Chance Sea Dragon and their completely refurbished and repainted classic Sellner Tilt-A-Whirl.

New was a massive waterplay unit that kept the same Water Monkey theme as their old version. A new Li'l Squirts pop-up waterplay area from Exerplay was added as well. Other suppliers included JW Taylor, furniture; American Locker, lockers and Core Cashless, ticketing.

The new unit, the largest from WhiteWater, gives a capacity of 1,200 guests in the Water Mania area, 698 in the actual play structure. It takes 15 lifeguards and operators to staff the new unit. All total the attraction measures 102 feet by 82 feet by 42 feet, has 198 interactive features and is highlighted by seven waterslides, as well as a massive tipping bucket for added water thrills.

Along with the new unit, the park added a concession stand and rebuilt a shower area where guests can rinse off after their waterplay. The park hopes to add more slide towers and a lazy river in the future to create a mini-waterpark setting.

"Our guests just love water and the fun that is generated with water," Linda Hays told AT during a summer visit. "The Water Monkey theme



Cliff's new WhiteWater waterplay structure, called Monkeying Around, replaced a smaller unit. The larger play structure was added to handle growing capacity demands. AT/GARY SLADE



Above from left, Cliff's park owners Gary and Linda Hays are pleased with their new waterplay unit. At left, the Monkeying Around waterplay unit as seen from the back, showcasing just a few of the many waterslides found on the structure. Bottom two photos show some of the humorous theming elements WhiteWater installed into the design of the new waterplay unit. AT/GARY SLADE

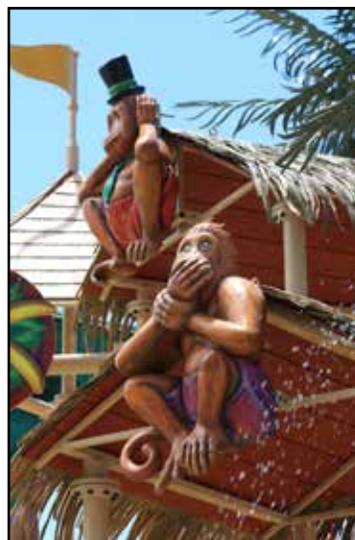
was so cute we wanted to keep in on the new unit. We are very excited with the end product."

Gary Hays was also gleaming with excitement reporting that the park was up 15 percent in both revenue and attendance. With six operating days to go at the time of this report,

Cliff's was reporting an attendance of 258,000 paid guests.

"We could not be happier with the end result," Hays said. "If you don't have one of these waterplay structures for your park, you need to go get one."

—Gary Slade



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Far left, The Johnny Rockets crew performs for their guests. At left, on hand for the opening of the Johnny Rockets at SpeedZone in Dallas were from left: Michele Wischmeyer, Palace Entertainment; Wesley Fain, SpeedZone general manager; Kim Davis, Davis & Davis and John Seeker, Turnstile Inc.

AT/GARY SLADE

## SpeedZone Dallas hopping with new Johnny Rockets

DALLAS, Texas — SpeedZone Dallas has added something new to the raceway — an all new Johnny Rockets. Johnny Rockets is home to “The Original Hamburger” and now guests can enjoy this classic all-American cuisine at the SpeedZone location in Dallas.

With Johnny Rockets addition, guests can fill their appetite for speed and great American food all in the same place. Johnny Rockets at SpeedZone Dallas features an array of hamburgers made with fresh local produce and 100 percent fresh, never frozen all-natural beef. Each hamburger is seasoned to taste and made to order. It wouldn't be the same experience without a hand-dipped shake, and Johnny Rockets' shakes are made with USDA certified premium vanilla ice cream, milk and real whipped cream. The restaurant at SpeedZone has all the Johnny Rockets favorites from juicy hamburgers, flavored fountain drinks, crisp American fries and thick creamy shakes to salads, sandwiches and more. Guests can also dance to the jukebox oldies alongside Johnny Rockets' staff.

Johnny Rockets at SpeedZone Dallas is also one of the first locations with the newly updated restaurant look. It maintains all the iconic Johnny Rockets décor with a few modern twists. The new timeless, yet modern architecture showcases colorful neon signs; pop art-inspired decorative disks that showcase Johnny Rockets' signature hamburgers, american fries and shakes; two-toned red and ivory sleek vinyl upholstery; ceiling cove lights with chrome valances; spoke lighting with up-and-down shades; and recessed down lighting add visual interest and comfort.

Johnny Rockets is located at the front of SpeedZone's main arcade building.

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



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# WATERPARKS & RESORTS

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*SeaWorld establishes brand with second Aquatica park*

## San Antonio launches a completely new waterpark experience

**STORY:** Tim Baldwin

tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — In 2008, SeaWorld Orlando opened up its first Aquatica waterpark. Crowds flocked. It was clear there was a successful formula in place. In 2010, minds turned toward initiating a second Aquatica waterpark in San Antonio, which would then solidify an established brand. The challenge, however, is that SeaWorld San Antonio had already had a waterpark in place — Lost Lagoon — that had opened in 1993 and was included in the park's daily admission. How then, could the park turn what had previously been included in the one price into a second upcharge gate within the perimeter of SeaWorld itself? The answer was to make it a whole new waterpark. And that's what Aquatica is.

SeaWorld San Antonio announced the new Aquatica in May of 2011. Tim Morrow, vice president of Aquatica, was surprised that some of their guests were already familiar with the Orlando park, but he knew there would be an educational process of illustrating what the Aquatica experience would be. "Guests that had been to Aquatica in Orlando were very excited that the park was coming to San Antonio," Morrow reports. "A lot more guests than we thought had experienced the brand. Then we took a lot of media down beforehand from Dallas, Houston, Austin, Oklahoma... we took them down to Aquatica in Orlando and Discovery Cove to get the feel and let them experience the sand beaches and relaxing atmosphere and take some video. It's easy to tell people what it is going to be like, but this is a park you actually need to see and experience."

With two years of operation under their belt, it was easy for San Antonio to learn from the original Orlando property and make adjustments accordingly. "Operationally, we used a lot of ev-



AT / TIM BALDWIN & JEFFREY SEIFERT



**SeaWorld San Antonio opened the tropical themed Aquatica this summer giving guests a resort-like and interactive waterpark experience, inside the marine-life park's gated area.**

eryone's knowledge in the design, down to such things as what kinds of drains to use in the bathrooms," smiles Morrow. One of the major adjustments was allowing riders to look and appreciate the underwater scenes longer. In Orlando, while a good marketing gimmick, the signature waterslide that zips riders through clear tubes through the Commerson dolphin pool admittedly allowed virtually no time to see anything.

Stingray Falls is one of the park's two completely new waterslide additions. As the signature piece to the new



facility, it incorporates the animal interaction experience with the fun of a waterslide. Manufactured by ProSlide, family rafts seating up to four sloop and spiral down the wide trough and land in a viewing river. Slowly floating aside and beneath the manta ray pool of Ke-Re Reef, families can take in the below water vista of the pool, stocked with hundreds of rays and fish along the 40-foot clear wall. In deciding upon the speed at which tubers are able to look at the sea life, Morrow says, "We went into our penguin exhibit on the moving walk-

way...timed it, filmed it, and then went to the manufacturers and said 'this is the pace we want at the bottom of the slide.'" The height requirement for the ride is only 36 inches allowing most of the park guests to enjoying the underwater viewing of the reef. Morrow estimates the time in the viewing tunnel to be about 20-30 seconds. Inside, a photographer captures families as they traverse the river.

The second waterslide addition is Walhalla Wave, also by ProSlide. As the first Tornado Wave installation not only in the U.S., but the entire

western hemisphere, Walhalla Wave has the highest thrill quotient of any of the attractions in the park. At 60 feet, the spiraling serpentine tunnel towers over Aquatica, as well as rises above the entrance drive to SeaWorld beckoning people to come see what's new. Riders seated in cloverleaf tubes enjoy a dramatic drop midway through the ride into the "wave," offering a brief moment of weightlessness before continuing on the second part of the journey.

To say the park added two new waterslides and that's all would be far from the entire picture. SeaWorld set out to create an entirely new waterpark experience and has done so. Enlarging the property, guests entering SeaWorld now have an overlook to much of what Aquatica contains and the entrance to the waterpark is now closer to the front of SeaWorld's entrance. Once beyond the additional gate to Aquatica, a meandering path, that Morrow refers to as a nature walk, descends slowly into the lower elevations of the park. New activity pools, graced with curves and inlets are popular with younger ones and those that just want to lounge at the water's edge.

Slippity Dippity, a new childrens area, adorned with waterfalls and a rocky themed backdrop, caters to the youngest of riders. Morrow explains that 30 percent of SeaWorld's guests, and in turn Aquatica as well, are of ages 10 or under. Cognizant of that demographic, many areas are dedicated to young children. Morrow has enjoyed watching youngsters delight in the Slippity Dippity area coming off the smaller slides (Zippity Zappity, equally as fun to say) and just go in circles riding again and again. Adults watching their kids have numerous options. Chaise lounges line one side, many of which are placed on a shallow ledge within the water itself, a fantastic touch and forward thinking push in

► See AQUATICA, page 26

## ▶AQUATICA

Continued from page 25

guest relaxation. The premium cabanas for rental are in this area, currently at four, which includes a meal, private pool ledge and upgraded furniture. Of note, there are 16 other cabanas for rental throughout the waterpark.

A third area suitable for children in this centralized complex is Walkabout Waters, an interactive playhouse complete with obligatory tipping bucket that never fails to delight.

Even with these three main children's areas focused together, others are still spread throughout the park. Kata's Kookaburra Cove is a shallow pool geared toward the littlest tykes situated in the back of the waterpark. Parents can feel comfortable with only one entrance and exit to this secluded 3,000 square foot area that contains more than ample seating. Cutback Cove is adjacent to the wave pool and features waterfalls, a slide, water elements and floating sea creatures for kids upon which to climb and balance.

The waterpark's previous entrance is now an enlarged beach area. For those that love the real feel of sand, Aquatica now contains 43,000 square-feet of white sand beach areas within the facility with three distinct areas catering to the preferences of the guests. Some may enjoy listening to the surf at the foot of the wave pool, while others may enjoy a more secluded, quieter locale. Beach volleyball is also available if simple sunbathing or relaxing in the shade isn't your cup of tea. Each morning a cleaning crew comes in to make sure all the pools are vacuumed to remove any sand.

What truly sets Aquatica apart as a true SeaWorld experience is the animal interactions now incorporated at the waterpark. The signature piece is the Ke-Re Reef. If not tubing through the viewing tunnel, guests can touch and feel rays at a viewing ledge, or even opt to purchase food to feed them. The icing on the cake is the complete Stingray Encounter. Those guests with reservations will enjoy walking into the ray pool and feeding the fascinating Cownose and Southern Stingrays. From our visit, *Amusement Today* can attest to the wonder of this

▶ See AQUATICA, page 27



Aquatica's bright colors and new Walhalla Wave (top row) and Stingray Falls (second row) lets families share the same ride experience together. Third row, The Stingray Encounter lets guests get in the water to see these sea creatures up close, or if slides are more your speed, Aquatica has those too. Bottom row from left, colorful signage greets guests before they hit the white sand beaches, activity pools or lazy river.

AT/GARY SLADE & TIM BALDWIN

## ►AQUATICA

Continued from page 26

experience. AT continued to marvel as these sea creatures would swim up to those entering their domain, almost with seeming affection. The Stingray Encounter also includes a photo of each guest during the interaction. Elsewhere, exotic birds are on view within the park and animal ambassadors and their trainers will also stroll and welcome guests with selected animals. "We have spot appearances all day long," says Morrow. "We have a baby wallaby coming in right now...we have snakes, lizards, owls, all sorts of exotic birds... It really is what separates us from other waterparks." Late in the summer a flamingo containment was being installed.

A team of seven landscapers works on Aquatica and has given the waterpark not just a fresh look, but a very tropical feel. While SeaWorld focuses on excellence through colorful flowers, the waterpark features palm trees and a lush green landscape to offer that tropical escape. With San Antonio frequently under water restrictions, the park utilizes recycled water whenever possible. For its initial season, the landscaping is impressive. Morrow feels the welcoming "nature walk" will really come into its own as it grows up each season.

Many of the existing buildings have been repainted and re-themed to look completely new. The Kiwi Curl and Woohoo Falls waterslides have been given a fresh look. Park officials report that guests often wonder if a building had previously been there before, and that is when they know they have done their job.

Kiwi traders, a gift shop just outside the entrance of Aquatica serves as a souvenir/sundry shop for those who had not planned to come in originally, but decide to purchase the additional ticket after observation and buy swimwear and the like. On the way out, guests pick up their souvenir photos at this location as well. Inside the park, Adaptations lets guests buy headwear, sundries and souvenirs. Dining options include Mango Market that features salads, wraps, sandwiches and more. Waterstone Grill is an extremely large venue that has numerous items from bacon cheeseburgers to pineapple

upside-down cake. During the summer, the musical group Ke-Re Groove entertained diners at the Waterstone Grill with five performances a day. A mix of songs were carefully selected to appeal to families, teens and kids — such as Justin Bieber, Adele and One Direction — and were performed with lively skill and talent of the four-member band. Morrow points out that this is very appreciated as people queue to order their food items and can enjoy the music.

The upcharge to enter Aquatica is \$20 on any ticket, but season pass holders can upgrade their pass to include both parks for the year for just \$30. Capacity is controlled to about 5,000 at one time. Morrow points out that 5,000 was the figure they had previously used, and now that the facility has doubled in size, it never has a crowded feel. The park's goal is to maintain a resort ambience.

When SeaWorld was doing its focus groups in cit-

ies around Texas, they asked people what their favorite things to do in waterparks were. "People said they liked going into waterparks and doing things with their families," says Morrow. "They really wanted to do things together — floating the river with their kids, swim in the pools with their kids — so we really wanted to do family rides in all the things we did. We wanted families to do all the new things together." It would appear that Aquatica has suc-

ceeded in not only that goal, but also in creating a resort feel. "We didn't want a 'hustle-bustle' steel and fiberglass park that you typically see." Morrow can tell they've created a whole new park when returning guests that were familiar with the previous facility find themselves wondering where they are at and discovering new aspects that have been added. Mission accomplished.

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## NEWS SPLASH

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

**Great Wolf Lodge** based in Madison, Wis. announced in August its inaugural class of recipients for the Great Wolf Resorts Scholarship. A total of \$48,000 was awarded to 11 Great Wolf Lodge Pack Members to put toward their college education for the 2012-2013 school year.

"We want to help our Pack Members learn and grow so they can reach their goals," said **Kim Schaefer**, Chief Executive Officer, Great Wolf Lodge, "We are so proud to give these scholarships to our hard-working Pack Members and help them on their path to higher education."

The idea for the Scholarship Program came out of the company's participation in the CBS prime-time show "Undercover Boss" two years ago. During her time as a guest on the show, Schaefer met with Pack Members across the resort chain and was inspired by how many were working at the resorts while attending college. To help Pack Members continue their higher education goals, the Great Wolf Resorts Scholarship Program was created and kicked off with a fundraising golf outing in September 2011.

TV's longest-running scripted show, "The Simpsons," made an appearance at **Splish Splash Waterpark** on Friday, August 24th to host a themed waterpark takeover.

Guests were able to dive-in and celebrate along with The Simpsons, and be among the first to ride a Springfield donut inner tube that would make even Homer jealous.

After spending the day at the Simpsons Summer Celebration, families can continue the fun at home with The Simpsons on Blu-ray and DVD. Fans can enjoy exclusive footage and special features available only on these releases. The Simpsons Seasons 1-14 are currently available; Season 15 will be released on December 4, 2012.

**CNL Lifestyle Properties** of Orlando, Fla. has purchased the 30-acre **Rapids Water Park** in Palm Beach, Fla. **Rapids Holdings LLC** headed by former Six Flags Executive Kieran Burke will lease the park. Burke operates six other water parks throughout the country. CNL now owns 20 properties — many of them former Six Flags theme and waterparks. The management team at Rapids Water Park will remain in place so guests are unlikely to see any immediate changes, however it is expected that Burke's team will add new attractions for 2013.

**Sailfish Waterpark** in Stuart, Fla. has found success through its partnerships with local business including four hotels. Hotel customers can buy a night's stay bundled with two waterpark tickets. Twenty-one Walgreens stores in north Palm Beach County and St. Lucie County are also marketing and selling tickets. The park, run by the Martin County government had already topped \$1 million in revenue by the end of July, surpassing expectations for its first season. It took in nearly \$200,000 more than the \$884,750 administrators expected the park to earn, and it did so more than a month before the official end of its first season on Sept. 30.

Martin County Commission Chair Ed Ciampi, who spearheaded building the waterpark, celebrated the news of its performance. "Our goal was to be revenue neutral, but it's operating in the black, and the season's not even finished yet," he said. "It was my baby, so I was very happy that it was more successful than we had hoped for."

The **U.S. Occupational and Safety Health Administration** (OSHA) fined **Adventure Island**, Tampa, Fla. \$7,000 claiming the park should have done more

to protect an employee who was killed by lightning last September 2011.

OSHA claims that Adventure Island ignored its own procedures and failed to shut down rides as a thunderstorm approached the waterpark. The 21 year-old lifeguard was evacuating patrons from the Key Rapids ride when he was struck by lightning. He died later at the hospital.

OSHA fined the company for a serious General Duty Clause violation. This clause states, "Each employer shall furnish to each of its employees employment and a place of employment which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to its employees."

**SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment**, which is Adventure Island's parent company, is contesting both the findings and the citation. The park has its own weather radar system in place and monitors severe weather up to five miles from the park. The park was shut down and rides were being evacuated when the incident occurred.

**Adventure Holdings LLC** has signed a lease with **The Beach Waterpark** in Mason, Ohio with an option to purchase the 35-acre waterpark that failed to open for the 2012 season.

Adventure Holdings operates 17 family centers in Florida, Kansas, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Ohio and Texas.

The Beach announced it was closing in March 2012 generating hundreds of complaints from those who had purchased season passes. The new operator will contact those holding 2012 passes with details regarding redeeming that pass for the 2013 season.

The park will be renamed **The Beach at Adventure Landing** and Adventure Holdings plans to make significant investments to the property before re-opening in 2013.

**Round Table Entertainments**, a consortium of British companies has ambitious plans for Newhaven, England, a city in the East Sussex district. The consortium has proposed a clear dome to top the world's largest indoor waterpark as just part of a £350m leisure development area. The consortium chose Newhaven because it has good transportation links, with road and rail connections, to London and towns in the South East.

**Roseland Waterpark** in Canandaigua, N.Y. — in cooperation with the City of Canandaigua — helped out local residents who were looking for a place to swim following the closure of Kershaw beach. Kershaw tagholders were able to purchase passes to the waterpark at a reduced rate.

Kershaw beach was forced to close in mid-July after a black sticky substance was discovered in the area. City officials closed the beach for the remainder of the season. The black, sticky substance was later determined to be crankcase oil dating back to the 1920s and 1930s. Scientists said the oil degraded into a tar-like substance over several decades. Canandaigua City leaders believe the oil was disturbed during recent excavation work at the beach when workers discovered metal drums buried under the beach. The workers were attempting to restore a section of the beach that had eroded.

Roseland Waterpark Manager **Dan Fuller** said in a press release, "Kershaw Park is an important landmark to the city, and we wanted to do everything possible to make sure the Kershaw Park tagholders have a water recreation option for the remainder of the summer."

Cleanup efforts are currently underway and the

city hopes to have the beach open in time for the start of the 2013 season.

The proposed **Great Wolf Lodge** in Garden Grove, Calif., may finally become a reality. The city oversight board approved in August the 600-room resort. The matter will now go to state officials for final approval before development can begin. The city will finance the \$47 million project with \$5 million from a Redevelopment Property Fund and \$42 million in bonds. The city will receive \$4.2 million a year for the next 20 years to pay its debt obligations. In addition, the project is expected to provide \$8 million in tax revenue to the city as well as 6,000 to 7,000 construction jobs, and an equal number of permanent jobs.

The Great Wolf Lodge will be located just one mile from the **Disneyland Resort** and was first proposed back in 2010. The area where the lodge is to be built is not in very good shape and the project would clean up a bad area of the city. However, some residents still opposed the project as they felt it would make Garden Grove less of a residential community.

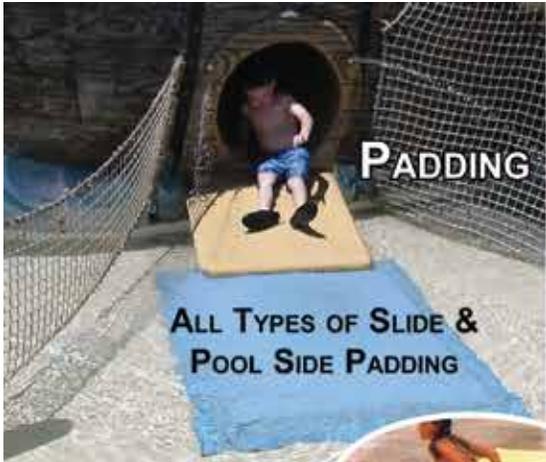
**Snowball Express**, a charity that creates fun for military families who have lost a loved one, organized an event at **Hawaiian Falls** waterpark in Mansfield Texas. About 20 children from the Dallas/Fort Worth area were treated to a special day at the waterpark. Every kid in the group has a story about a very dark place in their lives. Snowball Express, teaming with the Texas Rangers Baseball Foundation for the Hawaiian Falls visits since 2008, uses the events to distract the children and help build relationships.

Hawaiian Falls, which opened in 2008, hosted the event in its first two years of operation, starting with a request from the Rangers foundation, park spokesman David Alvey said.

As expected, the **Orange County Board of Supervisors** (Calif.), has approved a \$30 million 25-year lease with **Wild Rivers Irvine LLC** to rebuild the company's waterpark on a 17-acre parcel of a 100-acre parcel of public land owned by the county. Wild Rivers, which had operated for 27 years, was forced to close last year when the property owners refused to renew the park's lease, intending to build apartments in its place. The new waterpark will be about 20 percent larger than the original, will cost about \$40 million to build and will operate 110 days a year. The plan is to have the new Wild Rivers Waterpark up and running in May 2014.

The Pocono Mountains of Northeastern Pennsylvania has recently become a hotbed for waterparks and could become the next Wisconsin Dells. **Camelback Mountain Ski Resort** has operated its Camelback outdoor waterpark for more than a decade, but in recent years other nearby locations have also gotten into the waterpark business. Nearby **Sno Mountain** opened **Sno Cove** outdoor waterpark on Montage Mountain, **Split Rock Resort** opened its **H20000h** indoor waterpark, and **Great Wolf Lodge** opened one of its famous resorts in Monroe County.

Now as many as five other projects could be in the works. Camelback is planning a 453-room resort hotel with a 120,000-square-foot indoor waterpark. Less than seven miles away **Kalahari** is looking to build its third resort in Pocono Manor. **Blue Mountain Ski Area** is looking into the possibility of building an outdoor waterpark and **Summit Lodge** and **Birchwood Resort** have also been discussing the addition of waterparks. Pocono area officials are cautiously optimistic, however, noting that some project proposals never see the light of day.



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## Expansion gives park banner year in 2012

## Schlitterbahn Kansas City doubles in size

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



KANSAS CITY, Kan. — One can just picture the frustration, not to mention the public relations nightmare. Last season, Schlitterbahn Kansas City was busy with an expansion that would double the size of the park and a marketing campaign of “Six New Attractions” had the public interested. Unfortunately, while every intention was to get the expansion completed, particularly at least by July 4, weather delays in the spring plus working through the final details of a project so innovative and ambitious, the expansion didn’t really happen in 2011. While a few of the slides were ready for the last weeks of the season, it was not what Schlitterbahn Kansas City was hoping for.

Thankfully, that changed with 2012. With everything ready to go, the park literally doubled in size from its original seasons. “Knowing what great attractions were in store for our newest family — the Schlitterbahn Kansas City fans — we were disappointed with and for our guests that we didn’t get it done for 2011,” says Terri Adams, COO for Schlitterbahn Waterparks. “The Kansas City team really provided exceptional ‘extra’ service, specials, ride sessions, and other value added programs to give our fans something extra last summer. Opening 2012 with everything ready to go — excitement and relief! Having King Kaw, the Boogie Bahn, the great new slides, and the amazing amount of time you can spend in the water going from attraction to attraction in Kansas has been very well received by our guests. They are coming again and again, and just want more!”

Keith Fontenot, general manager for Schlitterbahn Kansas City, has felt the love. “The biggest compliment has been the overwhelming expression of how great this place is, with the ability to float from one attraction to another without having to leave your tube,” says Fontenot. “The entire trip around the park takes about an hour, which maxi-

mizes your play value versus having to wait in lines like at other facilities.”

Visitors who had previously visited the Kansas City property have now discovered twice the fun. While the park has incorporated some traditional waterslides, which actually are a needed addition to the facility, the park’s true signature style was brought to fruition through its interconnected rivers. King Kaw Rapids River is an enormously long tubing river attraction, second only in length to the original — The Falls — in New Braunfels, Texas. With more than 3,000 feet of rushing rapids, pools and splash-downs, King Kaw begins with an aquaveyor that lets tubers ride to the top of the river’s elevation change. Alongside the aquaveyor is the park’s second Archimedes screw, which is fascinating to watch as it transports the water uphill. Riders can opt to enjoy the rapids in single or double tubes. Those not wishing to ride the aquaveyor can take adjacent stairs and enter the attraction in the upper pool.

Fontenot notes that interconnected attractions are a whole new waterpark experience for that particular part of the country. “The product that we have is unique to this area. However, being with our Schlitterbahn brand for the time that I have been, this is Schlitterbahn. This product combines a little of the best experiences from the different parks in Texas, and makes for a unique attraction,” he says.

After enjoying the King Kaw Rapids River, guests can float back to the Kristal River and make choices on what to do next. Another aquaveyor will transport guests back to the original eastern half of the park that features a long Torrent tidal river, or they can circle back and enjoy some of the new attractions.

Among the new additions

are three slides relocated from the defunct Wet ‘n Wild in Las Vegas. Two slides are head first mat racers and the other is an enclosed dark tube slide that accommodates two riders together. For a park this size, this new 60-foot tall complex gives Schlitterbahn some visible recognition to nearby I-435.

Since its introduction in 1992 at the New Braunfels facility, the Boogie Bahn has created a boogie board surfing sensation at parks around the world. Kansas City’s installation features a viewing deck above the action complete with bar stools and a counter. “Now we’ve just got to get some experienced Boogie Bahn riders to show everyone how to do it!” says Adams.

The waterflow from the Boogie Bahn ingeniously is captured and forms a sixth attraction in the new section — the Mighty Mo. Flowing under the aquaveyor, the recaptured water creates another tubing rapids river, albeit not as long as the King Kaw. Mighty Mo also allows guests in single and double tubes to enjoy the rushing water. Eventually aligning alongside the King Kaw, both channels merge into the Kristal River. The connection of so many attractions truly is ingenious.

“The interesting thing about our product is being able to combine numerous types of attractions, and making them all work together,” says Fontenot. But it doesn’t come without its own share of tweaks and trials. He adds, “We have attractions on many different operating elevations, and moving the water around to make these all work, as well as storing the water when we are not open has been extremely challenging, as well as fun!”

The expansion has also offered a lot more lounging, amenities and tables for guests spread throughout the park. The resourcefulness of Schlitterbahn has always been an intriguing thing to watch. The use of wood is nothing short of extraordinary as witnessed by the Treehaus lodging units in New Braunfels as well as the hand crafted wood furniture within the chain. From



Schlitterbahn Kansas City guests this season saw two new thrilling water attractions to help them cool off during the summer. Top photo: this three slide tower complex is visible from the nearby highway. Above, the park’s signature King Kaw Rapids gives a 3,000 foot long float on a rapid river. AT/TIM BALDWIN

the beautiful bar near the Boat Haus in Kansas City to many tables and barstools, unique furniture is on display. The park has added six cabanas this season that remain sold out. Fontenot says the park already has plans to add more for 2013. The cabanas repurpose telephone poles, tin roofs from a previous project, as well as wood from the Geauga Lake project acquired in 2008. Fontenot reports, “We have nine lifejacket trees scattered in strategic locations for the guests to grab at their leisure. There are generally about 1,200 lifejackets out and about each day of operation.” Keeping those distributed as well as tubes can be a challenge. He laughs, “The biggest surprise

has been the amount of tubes needed on a given day! There have been numerous days where we have had as many tubes inflated for the guests as there are guests. When you have thousands of tubes ready for their use, space to hold all of those becomes very creative.”

With the expansion comes a look into the future. Newer food outlets, restrooms and children’s play areas are already planned for the near future. It would appear that the huge success of this season has given the park the momentum they were striving for and their audience a more complete Schlitterbahn experience. Fontenot can now

► See KANSAS CITY, page 33

# Splash Adventure Waterpark features new attractions for 2012

BESSEMER, Ala. — As part of Splash Adventure's huge 1.5 million dollar expansion, the waterpark has spent 2012 introducing one new attraction after another. First there was the Zip Line (Spectrum Sports), a speed lover's dream that sends riders zooming down three heart-thumping stories. Next came the world's first MIST-ical Maze (amaze'n Mazes), nearly a mile of unexpected twists and turns, punctuated by soaking wet surprises waiting around every corner.

In July, the park's crown jewel, the Wipeout Adventure Course (WhiteWater West) opened to the public. The first of its kind anywhere in the world, the multi-level water-based obstacle course allows guests to create their own wet and wild experience. Wipeout Adventure Course removes the traditional barriers of water play through the use of an innovative safety harness system. Without the usual rails and fences to get in their way, guests maneuver through a series of towers and bridges, commanding the water elements themselves with a variety of ropes, pulleys and other hand- and foot-activated controls.

Equipped with a specially designed harness system that keeps participants safely upright, the Wipeout Adventure Course removes the traditional barriers of an obstacle course, giving adventurers total control over the experience. The result is an endless assortment of challenges and opportunities that provide a unique thrill every time. The course also features a family deck for those wishing to stay out of the fray but still get in on the fun.

Splash Adventure is home to a multitude of water slides and flumes, including a 27,000-square-foot Kahuna Waves wave pool that's a longtime fan favorite. A quarter mile long Lazy River and the children's activity pool offer slower paced enjoyment. The 20-acre park offers a wide variety of guest services including food and beverage outlets, restaurants, lockers, rental cabanas, games, over 700 guest lounge chairs and parking for more than 2,000 cars. Splash Adventure is also equipped with a private area suitable for hosting corporate and group events.



WhiteWater West's popular AquaCourse opened to rave reviews this summer at Alabama's Splash Adventure. COURTESY SPLASH ADVENTURE

## ►KANSAS CITY

Continued from page 32

breathe easy in this season of redemption. Looking back on 2011 and with the success of 2012, he says, "The construction process is always challenging. With different reasons for making the product coming in a little late, we were challenged with the perception of our guests. We worked really hard to make this product come out the way that it did, and I believe that we have delivered an outstanding experience for our guests, providing more play value, along with unique attractions to this area." Attendance by mid-summer had already climbed more than 55 percent over last season, which had grown 11 percent from the previous season. Significant numbers indeed. He smiles, "This shows that the demand for our great product has been building, and the guests are coming out and enjoying a great time. Along with fantastic [hot!] weather, this has been a great summer!"



Also new at Schlitterbahn Kansas City this season was this Boogie Bahn, for those brave enough to test boogie boarding skills. Above, the park added this Cabana Village. AT/TIM BALDWIN

## BRIEFS

### Texas Great Wolf hosts Cheerleading Assn.

GRAPEVINE, Texas — Nearly 400 cheerleaders from the Universal Cheerleading Association surprised guests at the Great Wolf Lodge in Grapevine, Texas with a Splash Mob on August 8. The event was planned to send good luck to the members of Team USA competing in the 2012 Olympics. Great Wolf Lodge asked members of the UCA cheerleader to participate as the resort often holds weeklong camps for the cheerleaders during the summer. The cheerleaders, all wearing wolf tails and ears, were excited to be able to spread Olympic spirit to the guests of Great Wolf Lodge.

### Schlitterbahn Corpus Christi delayed to 2014

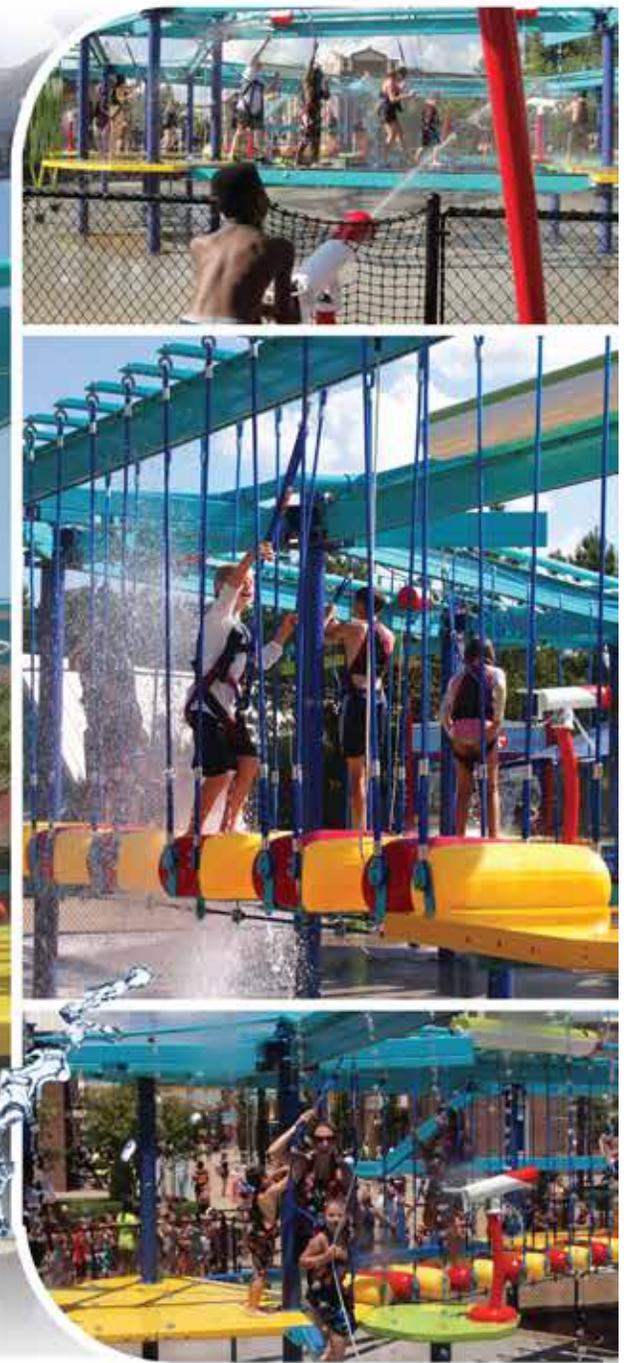
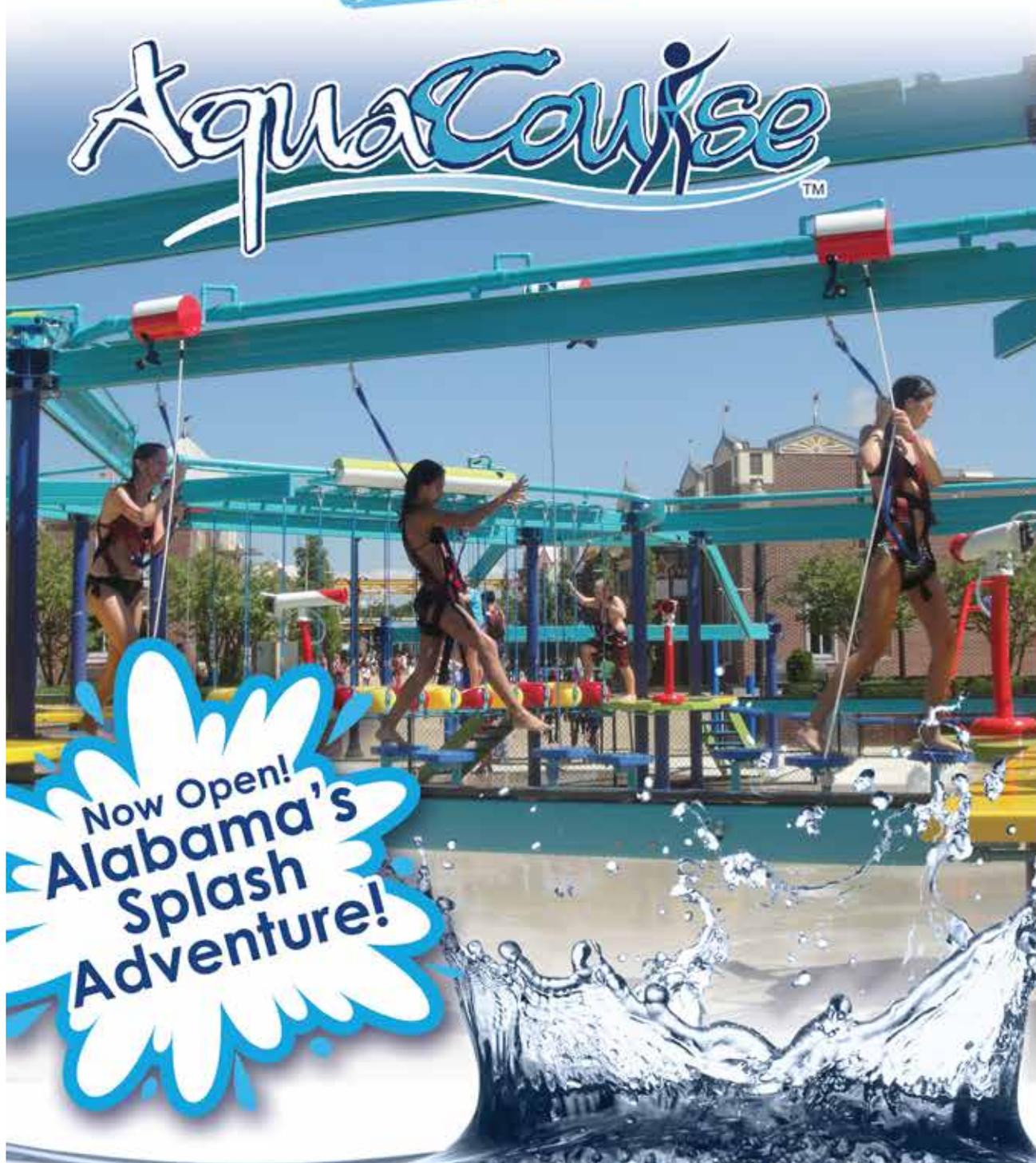
CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas — The Schlitterbahn waterpark proposed for Corpus Christi has been pushed back to March 2014. Jeff Henry, co-owner of the waterpark said they would have needed to break ground in May in order for the project to be completed on time. The waterpark will take 18-20 months to build. Henry pushed back the schedule so the project team will have the time it needs to do a high-quality job and ensure that Corpus Christi gets the biggest and best waterpark.

### OCT Group to open waterpark in Shanghai

CHINA — The OCT Group of China will open a new Playa Maya Water Park in the summer of 2013 at Happy Valley, Shanghai, China. The OCT group has built five Happy Valley theme parks throughout China with a sixth scheduled to open in 2013. Happy Valley Shenzhen was the first to receive a Playa Maya waterpark. The Shanghai park's 400 million yuan (\$63 million) facility is expected to be larger than the first Playa Maya at its sister park in Shenzhen.

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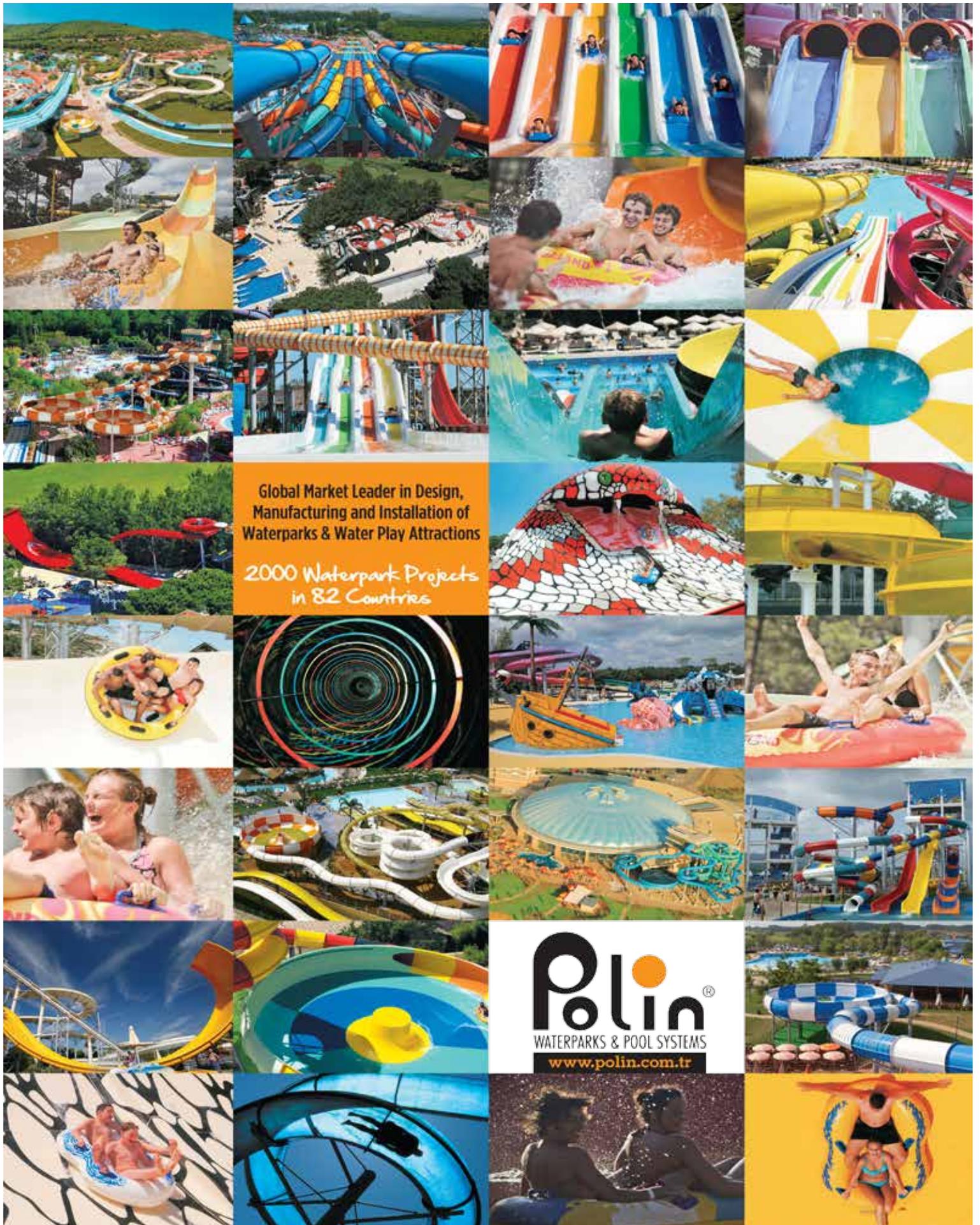
Tai Po Aquatic Center in Hong Kong recently received three slide replacements from Polin. The slides were all translucent with some light color added, allowing both rider and water flow to be seen from outside the slide.

COURTESY POLIN

### Polin supplies trio of translucent slides in Hong King

HONG KONG — Polin replaced three waterslides at the Tai Po Aquatic Center, located in Hong Kong. All three replacements were body slides and they were modified with new translucent Polin body slides in bright colors of blue, yellow and purple. The new slides were all produced with the closed molded RTM (Resin Transfer Molding) technology. With this cutting edge technology Polin is able to offer superior shiny and smooth waterslides with a glassy look.

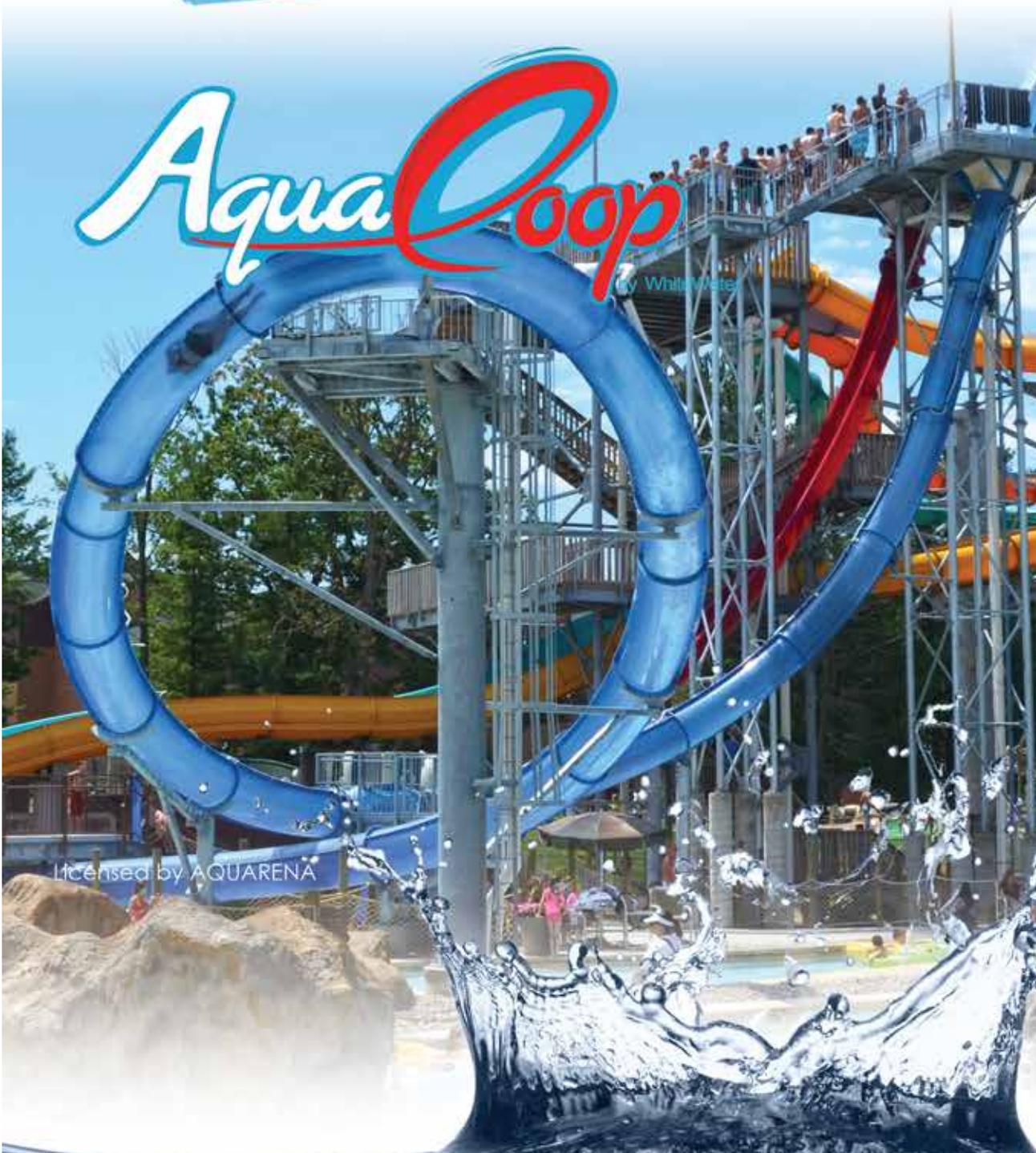
Polin's representative in Hong Kong, Winnie Lau, from Attraction HK Limited said, "Our clients were very satisfied with the quality of the new waterslides. The translucency of the slides are worth seeing."





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The New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions current slate of officers (from the left): President Cory Hutchinson of Funtown/Splashtown USA, Saco, Maine; First Vice President David Sugrue of Ocean Beach Park, New London, Conn.; Second Vice President Charlene Conway of Carousel Family Fun Center, Fairhaven, Mass.; Secretary Ed Hodgdon of Funtown/Splashtown USA.  
COURTESY NEAAPA/RON GUSTAFSON

## Canada's WhiteWater West acquires Hopkins Rides

CANADA — WhiteWater West Industries, Richmond, B.C., Canada, has announced that Hopkins Rides (formerly O.D. Hopkins) has joined the WhiteWater family of companies. Hopkins Rides will continue to operate under the same name and will continue to offer its legendary amusement park attractions: the log flume ride, super flume, Shoot-the-Chute, river raft ride, as well as other water transportation systems.

Teri Ruffley, managing director of WhiteWater's amusement ride section says, "Having Hopkins Rides on board advances our mission to bring to market the most exciting and diverse aquatic amusement park attractions portfolio in the world. We are positioned for and looking forward to a strong year ahead in this segment of the industry."

*Amusement Today* asked Jim Glover, who continues as the director of sales for Hopkins Rides, about the opportunity this brings to the company: "I am so pleased with this announcement! We have been a few weeks putting the deal together with WhiteWater and I am now running on pure excitement knowing that with the support and stewardship of WhiteWater, Hopkins Rides future is very good, indeed. We will work in earnest, continuing to build upon the well-respected name of Hopkins Rides by designing and manufacturing first class water attractions worldwide. Incorporating safety and quality in all we do, bringing to our clients  
▶ See HOPKINS, page 41



For 45 years, the Hopkins name has delivered many rides to the amusement industry including seven rides at Wonderland Park, above, and this Shoot the Chutes ride at Canobie Lake Park, below. AT FILE



## Six Flags New England hosts NEAAPA summer meeting

AGAWAM, Mass. — The New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (NEAAPA) held its annual summer meeting August

8, at Six Flags New England with 85 members in attendance.

The day-long event in-  
▶ See NEAAPA, page 40



A cocktail and social hour on Aug. 8 during the NEAAPA summer meeting at Six Flags New England allowed attendees time to visit and discuss the summer business trends.  
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## ►NEAAPA

Continued from page 39

cluded lunch, dinner and a backstage tour of the sprawling facility, which buffets the Connecticut River.

Early NEAAPA arrivals were also treated to the first ride of the day on the park's newest attraction: "Goliath" roller coaster built by Vekoma of the Netherlands.

A traditional New England clam bake featuring Maine whole lobsters, clam chowder, steamed clams, corn on the cob and strawberry shortcake, was served at the 5 o'clock dinner in the picnic grove.

NEAAPA's board of directors held an afternoon meeting in the cartoon character-themed Hall of Justice in the park.

All of those in attendance had free reign of the rides and waterpark attractions during the day and met for an afternoon social and cocktails at the park's new JB's Smokehouse restaurant and patio.



Members of NEAAPA were treated to rides on the Goliath roller coaster at Six Flags New England. The Vekoma coaster is the latest addition to the Massachusetts park. COURTESY NEAAPA/ RON GUSTAFSON

NEAAPA's next event will be the annual Tom Morrow Social on Nov. 14 during the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Expo in Orlando, Fla.

—Ron Gustafson

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# FAST TRACK

COMPILED: Scott Rutherford,  
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

**Walt Disney World** is now offering free wi-fi service at **Epcot**. Guests are now able to access wi-fi enabled devices by connecting to the "Disney - Guest" network. While the **Magic Kingdom** also offers the service, the company has not released an official timeline to offer free wi-fi at all of its parks and **Down-town Disney**.

For the second year in a row, **Outside the Lines** (OTL), a California-based design and themed construction company, has been named to the coveted *Inc. 500|5000* List of fastest-growing private U.S. companies. *Inc. magazine* ranked OTL No. 1,970 on its annual *Inc. 500|5000*. OTL experienced 136.9 percent in revenue growth from 2008 to 2011, the years the rankings are based on. From 2007 to 2011, OTL realized 1,232 percent growth in revenue.

A giant panda cub was born at the **San Diego Zoo** on July 29. Zookeepers hope that the pandas' beauty will attract and educate crowds by raising awareness of the species' threatened existence. Experts estimate that only 1,600 giant pandas exist and only 11 live in the United States.

**Butterfly Wonderland**, opening in spring 2013 in Scottsdale, Arizona, is a world-class attraction with a highly innovative, indoor rainforest environment featuring the largest butterfly pavilion in North America. Butterfly Wonderland is Phase I of "Odysea in the Desert" - a 522,000-square-foot multi-million dollar entertainment district, which will include attractions, restaurants and retail developments.

**accesso**, a leading provider of eCommerce and mobile ticketing solutions for theme parks and entertainment venues in the U.S., has recently completed the rollout of their revolutionary Shopland 4.0 online ticketing and eCommerce platform across 16 of **Palace Entertainment's** largest amusement parks and waterparks. **accesso's** eCommerce technology optimizes revenue through a highly-flexible, user-friendly design that seamlessly incorporates a wide range of dynamic revenue features including product up-sells and cross-sells as well as flexibility to support a range of unique promotional concepts.

**Cedar Point** hosted a last-ride celebration for its **Disaster Transport** roller coaster on July 29. The park partnered with **Give Kids The World** for the Disaster Transport Final Dispatch: A Mission for the Kids event, which raised more than \$16,000. Nearly 80 roller coaster enthusiasts raised a minimum of \$70 to take part in the festivities, which included the opportunity to be one of the coaster's final riders.

**Legoland Florida** and three of its local Bed & Brick Preferred Accommodations Partners; Holiday Inn and Hampton Inn of Winter Haven and Hampton Inn of Lake Wales, have

teamed up to provide a new shuttle service that will run daily to and from the hotel establishments and the park.

**Maurer Söhne** continued to spread thrills around the world with the debut of two new steel roller coasters at **Happy Valley** in Wuhan, China. The two new coasters include **Hidden Anaconda** (SkyLoop) and **Magical Launch Coaster XL 1000**.

**Harry Potter: The Exhibition**, will return to **Discovery Times Square** this holiday season. Following a successful 2011 run in New York City, Harry Potter: The Exhibition has been significantly updated with artifacts from the series including the final film. The stop in New York City will serve as the exhibition's return to North America after a year-long international tour. Opening date and ticketing information will be released at a later date.

In an effort to attract guests during difficult economic times, Italy's **Gardaland** offered reduced prices on both entry tickets and meals on every Wednesday and Sunday in August. For a full day access, the park charged only €24 and offered lunch or dinner for only €6.

Celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, France's **Futuroscope** welcomed its one millionth visitor. Wilco Peters from Sarzeau walked through the gates on August 26. Apart from receiving a gourmet basket and several gifts, the family was treated to the full VIP treatment, including priority passes to all attractions during the day. The gifts were handed over by **Dominique Hummel**, CEO of Futuroscope and several celebrities.

Colorado Springs entrepreneur **Steve Hittle** — miniature-golf businessman for the past 35 years — plans to open **Legends Miniature Golf & Batting Cages**, his third mini-golf attraction in the city, in March 2013. The new complex will feature eight batting cages and three 18-hole mini-golf courses.

**Hersheypark's Kathy Burrows** publicly refuted reports that the park's **Roller Soaker** suspended coaster is for sale. Originally opened in 2002, the **Setpoint**-designed ride features four-seat cars equipped with water cannons that can fire on guests at the Boardwalk area below.

**Disneyland** guests have become part of the show with their glowing ears Mickey Mouse hats. During the **Fantasmic!** show, the Mickey Mouse hats, which cost \$25 each, get signals from strategically placed emitters, telling them what to do. The ears turn different colors and vary in intensity to the beat of the music, fountains and other effects. At **Disney California Adventure**, the ears continue to sync up to the **World of Color** show and automatically illuminate at places within **Cars Land**. The hats were rolled out for the first time during the DCA/Cars media preview in June.

# Industry mourns loss of David Norton, 63

COLDWATER, Mich. — David A. Norton, 63, of Coldwater, passed away on Saturday, August 18, 2012 at his home.

A funeral service was held on August 24, 2012 at the First Baptist Church in Coldwater with Pastor David Pierce officiating. Interment of ashes will be held at a later date at Oak Grove Cemetery in Coldwater.

David Norton was born January 6, 1949 in Coldwater to Gerald E. & Barbara (Allen) Norton, they both preceded him in death. He married Christine (Weage) Davenport on January 26, 1985 in Coldwater.

He was a lifelong resident of Coldwater. In 1966, at the age of 16, he graduated from Reppert's School of Auctioneering in Decatur, Ind., and then from Coldwater High School in 1967.

David owned and operated Norton Auctioneers in Coldwater for more than 40 years. He was a world famous auctioneer, conducting over 4,000 auctions in 44 states and several foreign countries.

He has held a real estate license since 1967 and was one of the few auctioneers licensed in every state. David was also very generous with benefit auctions, helping to raise more than 3 million dollars for their causes.

Norton was very active in his many trade organizations. He was past president of the Michigan State Auc-



**Norton**

ioneer Assoc., National Past President of the Showmen's League of America and 10 year director of the Outdoor Amusement Business Association. He belonged to American Coaster Enthusiast, National Carousel Association, Int'l Assoc. of Fairs & Exposition, Int'l Assoc. of Amusement Parks, Nat'l Auctioneers Assoc., Circus Fans of America and Tampa Showmen's Club.

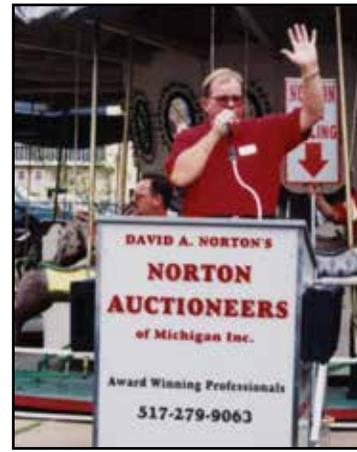
He was an active member of the Coldwater Elks Lodge No. 1023 and a former Elk of the Year, he was very supportive of the Tibbits Opera House and had served as past director of the Tibbits Foundation. David also belonged to the Coldwater Rotary, Lions and Optimist Clubs.

Reflecting on David Norton, OABA's President, Bob Johnson told *Amusement Today*, "The amusement industry said goodbye to one of the greatest auctioneers in the business and a wonderful showmen, David Norton

who is probably auctioning off "old wings" in Heaven as you publish this story. David knew just about everyone in the mobile amusement industry and was there when we needed appraisals done on equipment or when we needed to sell off equipment. I recall one of his greatest feats was raising close to \$60,000 for Give Kids the World, with IAAPA's then chairperson Jane Cooper several years ago in about 15 minutes! He was always there when we needed him and served on our board for 10 years, raising money for the "Good of the Order" as he would say for SLA and OABA.

Dick Knoebel, Knoebels Amusement Resort, has attended many of Norton's Auctions though the years purchasing equipment and other items at many of those auctions. He developed a friendship with David. Knoebel told *AT*: "He attributed as much to the growth of my park as anyone else. I bought a total of eight rides from him over the years and attended as many as 16 of his auctions. He had true character and was a leader of our industry. He was a class act and I will truly miss him."

*Amusement Today* Publisher Gary Slade recalls the time David came to see him in the *AT* booth at IAAPA. "It was shortly after *Amusement Business* had closed. He said you've got to cover the carnival industry now. No one else can step up the way you



**David Norton, Norton Auctioneers, is seen conducting the auction of Neff's Amusement Park in San Angelo, Texas, Sept. 1998.**

AT FILE

can, and it will make your publication complete."

*Amusement Today* launched its Midway coverage a few months later.

Norton is survived by his wife Christine, his daughter Catherine A. (Gary) Lams of Coldwater, his step sons W. Samuel Davenport III, Eric K. (Staci) Davenport all of Coldwater, his sisters Candee (Jeff) Arnold of Fremont, Denise (Wes) Kinsey of Coldwater, Kelly (Cameron) Otto of Coldwater, his grandchildren David, Bridjit, Jillianne, Xander, Alexa, Olivia & Emmett. In addition to his parents, David was also preceded in death by his mother-in-law Janet Weage and his grandparents David Howard and Christina (Hillborg) Allen.

Memorials may be directed to the Tibbits Restoration Fund ([www.dutcherfh.com](http://www.dutcherfh.com)).

## ► HOPKINS

Continued from page 39

value and their guests in turn, a memorable ride experience! Put this all together, combine it with both WhiteWater and Hopkins Rides reputations for integrity in the manner in which we conduct ourselves, I couldn't be more thrilled!"

Geoff Chutter, WhiteWater President & CEO told *AT* the acquisition was a natural one: "The addition of Hopkins Rides to the WhiteWater family is a natural extension of what we do best.... slides, vehicles, supports, controls and add water. This also compli-

ments the Prime Play amusement park product line."

Continuing, Chutter said, "Furthermore, we have recently seen aquatic amusement park rides being added

to waterparks, for example at Yas Island. Imagine a Shoot-the-Chutes going through an AquaPlay RainFortress or an AquaCourse...all that spray completely enveloping the

### About Hopkins Rides

Hopkins Rides has more than 45 years of amusement industry experience. Founder O.D. Hopkins began installing ski lifts in the early 1960s, which included maintenance and installation of sky rides for amusement parks. Since 1980, Hopkins Rides has manufactured water-based rides that have been enjoyed by millions of people throughout the world, from small, family-operated parks to the largest and most popular facilities worldwide.

#### Hopkins Rides

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AquaPlay or AquaCourse. This would turn the splash from simply eye candy an active feature of the ride. The response from the industry has been beyond what we anticipated, which is very encouraging. But this is not simply about products, it is firstly about welcoming some superb folks led by Jim Glover to the team."

Hopkins Rides began in 1971 and has continued to deliver highly popular water-based rides for the amusement park sector. Hopkins Rides is based out of Palm City, Florida and joins WhiteWater as its 19th global office.

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# NEWS & NOTES

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## AIMS International seeking items for annual Silent Auction

AIMS International would like to remind members of the amusement industry to donate silent auction items to benefit the 2013 AIMS Safety Seminar, Jan. 13-18, 2013 in Orlando.

AIMS is always looking for items that can be used to raise funds to keep audio/visual and other equipment used in the classrooms updated.

Last year, the silent auction raised more than \$1,700 with large bid items being supplied by Six Flags Great Adventure, Beams, When Pigs Fly and Maclan Corp.

To donate items, simply send them to:

**AIMS Silent Auction**  
**Holly Coston**  
**1829 N. Richmond**  
**Wichita, Kansas 67203**  
**(714) 425-5747**



## Past locations of the AREA/AIMS Safety Seminars

1995: Wichita, Kan.  
1996: Wichita, Kan.  
1997: Cleveland, Ohio  
1998: Akron, Ohio  
1999: San Antonio, Texas  
2000: Wichita, Kan.  
2001: Houston, Texas  
2002: Dallas, Texas  
2003: Orlando, Fla.  
2004: Dallas, Texas  
2005: Dallas, Texas  
2006: Dallas, Texas  
2007: Dallas, Texas  
2008: Tulsa, Okla.  
2009: Branson, Mo. & Las Vegas, Nev.  
2010: Orlando, Fla.  
2011: Orlando, Fla.  
2012: no seminar  
2013: Orlando, Fla.

## AIMS member spotlight: Chris Shillcutt

*Editor's note: This is a series of articles to appear in AIMS News & Notes that spotlight an AIMS member who has been active in the annual AIMS Safety Seminar. To suggest a future spotlight on an AIMS member contact Steve Laycock at:*

steve.laycock@  
chancerides.com

**Chris Shillcutt**  
Great Wolf Lodge  
Kansas City  
Director of Aquatics

It's not just for iron ride junkies. **Chris Shillcutt**, director of aquatics and safety for Great Wolf Lodge in Kansas City is talking about the AIMS Safety Seminar and he should know as he has attended 10 out of the last 11 AIMS Safety Seminars. If asked how he, a water person, got so wrapped up in the AIMS Safety Seminar he would tell you as he did us when he took time from his busy schedule to answer questions for the AIMS News & Notes page.



**Shillcutt**

### How did you get started in the amusement business?

I have a very strong background in aquatics at the university and park and recreation level. As part of that I attended several aquatic seminars as well as the AIMS Safety Seminar where I networked with and met many people in the amusement aquatic field. All of this opened doors for me at Six Flags White Water and American Adventures in Atlanta, Georgia where I was hired as the director of operations.

### What did you do before you were in the amusement

### business?

My first job was at age 14 when I became an aid to a swim instructor. After college I moved into the Parks and Recreation Departments, first for Little Rock, Arkansas, then later for Siloam Springs, Arkansas and also for the City of Overland Park, Kansas. At one point I was the head coach for the swim and diving team at John Brown University. All of this continued to sharpen my skills and knowledge of the overall aquatic industry.

### What do you do in your free time?

I spend time with my greatest supporter, my wife Collette and with our children. I also like to volunteer and teach at different conferences including AIMS.

### Tell us something about yourself that is not commonly known by your amusement industry peers.

My wife and I have eight children, two boys and six girls ranging in age from one year old up to 22 years old. What may come as no surprise is that I love to canoe and kayak, just can't seem to stay away from that water thing.

### What is so special about the facility for which you work?

There is NO greater moment than when you see a child walk into our waterpark for the first time and see their eyes light up and a giant smile come across their face. I get to see this everyday all year around. This opportunity to make kids smile and create family memories that will last for many years to come and to help create a love for water in a safe environment, I just can't think of anything better.

### How long have you worked at your present facility?

I have been with Great Wolf Resorts for about five

years. I worked at the Kansas City Lodge for two years, then moved to the Pocono Mountains Lodge for two years, and then back to the Kansas City Lodge for the remainder of that time.

### Tell us one thing you have learned from the AIMS Safety Seminar.

I started going to the AIMS Safety Seminar about 11 years ago and, wow, it really opened my eyes to a whole new world. This was the safety side of our industry. With all those seminars and all the classes I've taken I can't tell you just one thing.

There have been so many opportunities to grow and learn, from the legal side of things to the ride inspector certifications. The ONE thing that I have learned is that I should not only continue to go each year and educate myself but to also get as many people involved as possible. This will only continue to strengthen our industry.

### What was your favorite class at the AIMS Safety Seminar and why?

Wow, where to begin? There have been so many good classes over the years that I have taken that it seems unfair to only identify just one, but if I have to, I would say it was an operational class taught by Darlene Reese Sitting. I took this class a few seminars back but it is still fresh on my mind. It was one of those classes that I laughed and learned all the way through it. Even today, some years later, I still remember and use at least 95 percent of what was introduced in that class.

### Why should someone attend a training seminar and particularly the AIMS Safety Seminar?

This seminar has so many opportunities for all to learn. There are specific types of safety classes as in OSHA and then legal aspect

classes. The best thing about this seminar is the variety of classes with very knowledgeable presenters from our industry. You also get the opportunity to network with many from our industry that share so many best practices that you can take back to your facility and use as is or modify a little and have a great practice for your staff. You can develop a network of problem solvers that you can email or call when you have an issue arise. Someone has seen it before and more than likely has a solution or idea that can help you.

### In general, how was your overall experience at the AIMS Safety Seminar and how prepared were your instructors?

I have never attended a single AIMS seminar where I didn't leave extremely pleased with both the knowledge that I gained or where I found the presenters being anything less than professional. They always seem to take the extra time and are willing to share with those in class.

### Tell us one person you have met here during a networking opportunity time that has made an impact on you and why.

I believe that it would be unfair to give you just one when the list would be very long. I can say that some of my best friends in the industry I have met at the AIMS seminars. Many of them have made an impact in my life even without knowing they did. I have been able to adapt many of their best practices and ideas into my own operation which has helped me be more successful in my own career and has led to some of the awards my facilities have received and for that I am truly grateful.

—Steve Laycock

# Legoland Florida introduces STEM focused, interactive programs

WINTER HAVEN, Fla. — Legoland Florida sparks imagination and creativity beyond the walls of the classroom and makes learning fun this year with hands-on and interactive field trips. Just in time for the 2012-2013 academic year, Central Florida's newest theme park rolls out eight dynamic, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) focused educational programs for grades K-6 including new curriculum using WeDo Robotics Lego Education Set especially designed for grades 1-2 and continues to offer free field trips to Polk County second graders.

From learning about how structures are made and what makes them strong in Tall Towers to Amazing Machines where students build their own amazing machine equipped with gears, levers, pulleys and motors, teachers can find just the right program to match what they're learning about in the classroom.

Due to the overwhelming success of last year's second grade program, Legoland Florida is bringing it back to ensure that all second graders in Polk County Public Schools will get the chance to participate in one of the eight programs free of charge.

"Research shows that early exposure to math and science, primarily before third grade, increases the likelihood that a child will continue in that field. By showcasing math and science in a fun and interactive way at Legoland Florida, we aim to ensure a positive view of these sometimes difficult subjects," said Kim Isemann, director of sales and marketing. "We're proud to offer Polk County second graders an opportunity to visit

Legoland Florida and experience our education classes."

With eight educational programs incorporating STEM and the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards, Legoland Florida is dedicated to affordable extracurricular education.

Each of the eight pro-

grams is seasonally priced and starts at \$8 per student and includes a 45-minute educational session and a full-day at the park. Field trip reservations are limited per day and can be booked by appropriate school officials by calling (877) 350-LEGO.

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# MARKETWATCH

## RIDING THE MARKET



Company	Prices		52 Weeks	
	One Month Ago	09/13/12	High	Low
<b>Cedar Fair L.P.</b>	\$32.30	\$33.49	\$34.21	\$16.86
<b>MGM Mirage</b>	\$9.82	\$11.28	\$14.94	\$7.40
<b>Six Flags Ent. Corp.</b>	\$57.37	\$58.06	\$62.37	\$24.72
<b>CBS Corp.</b>	\$35.65	\$36.95	\$37.82	\$17.99
<b>Walt Disney Co.</b>	\$50.49	\$52.60	\$52.75	\$28.19
<b>Apollo Global Mgt. LLC</b>	\$13.75	\$14.16	\$15.48	\$8.85
<b>Blackstone Group</b>	\$13.73	\$14.48	\$17.25	\$10.51
<b>Village Roadshow</b>	\$3.32	\$3.40	\$3.60	\$2.41
<b>NBC Universal</b>	\$21.01	\$22.02	\$22.37	\$14.02

## CURRENCY DIESEL PRICES



Region (U.S.)	As of 09/10/12	Change from year ago
East Coast	\$4.113	\$0.234
Midwest	\$4.079	\$0.238
Gulf Coast	\$4.021	\$0.231
Mountain	\$4.242	\$0.339
West Coast	\$4.358	N/A
California	\$4.477	\$0.410

## TOP 7 MOST TRADED CURRENCIES



On 09/14/12 \$1 USD =

0.7627 EURO
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78.3010 JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.9271 CHF (Swiss Franc)
0.9469 AUD (Australian Dollar)
0.9709 CAD (Canadian Dollar)

## PEOPLE WATCH

### Dollywood President Ken Bell to retire

After more than a quarter century at the helm, industry veteran and park innovator **Ken Bell** is retiring from his role as president of The Dollywood Company, Pigeon forge, Tenn. Under his leadership Dolly Parton's theme park has garnered the theme park industry's highest honor, the Applause Award, and achieved the status as the number one show park in the world. In addition, Bell grew Parton's park to include an award-winning waterpark, Dollywood's Splash Country, and launched a hospitality company. Bell also sits on the boards of directors for Parton's Dixie Stampede and Pirate's Voyage dinner theatre chain.

Parton announced that **Craig Ross**, industry veteran, will assume the role as The Dollywood Company president, effective immediately.

"After nearly two years of working with Craig, I know he's the person who can continue the successes Ken has built for my Dollywood Company over the years," **Dolly Parton** said. "I am looking forward to the future!"

Ross has worked for more than 30 years in the theme park industry with the last year spent as vice-president and general manager of Dollywood under Bell. Ross' first season marked the launch of Wild Eagle, the first wing coaster in the U.S. and the park's largest capital addition to date.

"I am honored to soon have this very special opportunity to carry on the high level of quality and balanced leadership that the Dollywood team has come to expect. I am thrilled to have such a wonderful and talented team to help me grow The Dollywood Company and its world-class brand," Ross said.

### Morey's Piers associate receives award

On August 23, **Tarence L. Smith**, an associate at Morey's Piers and Beachfront Waterparks, Wildwood, N.J., received the President's Call to Service Award. The award recognizes "lifetime" achievement in volunteer outreach of a minimum of two years and 4,000 hours of community service. The award is presented in cooperation with the Corporation for National & Community Service and USA Freedom Corps. The award cites over 14 years of making a difference in the lives of the youth of New Jersey and the nation.

### Waterloo enjoying success in the digital print world

WATERLOO, Iowa — Since 1884 Waterloo Tent & Trap Co., Inc. has been a leader in custom canvas manufacturing for a variety of businesses and industries.

The company's digital experience began in the '90s printing Coca-Cola plaques for Coke sponsored tents. Since then, Waterloo has manufactured digital canvas for the NBA, NASCAR, and its biggest player, the Outdoor Amusement Industry.

"Since the '90s the technology in printers, formatting, ink, and laminates has greatly improved" states Pete Downs, president, Waterloo Tent & Tarp Co. "We were apprehensive in the beginning, not knowing the true life cycle of digitally printed carnival canvases."

Continuing, Downs said, "At Waterloo we create the design, fold it into our dimensional patterns and share that information with several print producers. We use AMI graphics as a primary printing source but also contract with others based on size and individual project specifics. Concept to delivery can be as short as one week, but most



Waterloo's digital prints may be found on everything from portable ride skirting to games tents (above) and concession areas (below).

COURTESY WATERLOO



projects are 6-8 weeks depending on design time. We think digital print has a place in our industry, but we also under-

stand the market place will determine its success."

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**RECAP COMING IN NOVEMBER ISSUE**

## SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund grants support wildlife research, conservation

ORLANDO, Fla. — Animals in need around the world will benefit from more than \$1.1 million in grants awarded this year by the non-profit SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund. Since its inception, the Fund has granted more than \$9 million to protect wildlife and wild places.

The Fund approved grants to 88 wildlife research and conservation projects. These grants will help researchers identify why 90 percent of one penguin species in the wild has declined; help conserve and study wild polar bears and restore populations of wild puffins; and create a sustainable way for aquarium enthusiasts to enjoy colorful tropical fish displays.

Additionally, the SeaWorld and Busch Gardens parks provide direct support to the Fund by placing zoological staff into the field to work alongside researchers on projects supported by the Fund.

Together, the SeaWorld and Busch Gardens parks care for one of the world's largest collection of animals, which includes more than 60,000 animals and 200 endangered species. The parks' rescue teams have helped more than 20,000 orphaned, injured or ill animals.

Just a few of the research and conservation projects supported in 2012 include:

- Responsible Tropical Aquariums — SeaWorld's Rising Tide is an innovative research program that works to provide a sustainable tropical fish population for home aquariums and decrease dependency on collection from coral reefs.

- Declining Penguin Populations — Research is being done by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds to identify the causes of the more than 90 percent population decline of the endangered rockhopper penguin. Efforts include population monitoring, tracking and foraging studies, demographic studies and a re-evaluation of potential factors driving the population decline.

- First Scientific Review of the Rothschild Giraffe — To develop a long-term population monitoring program and conservation strategy for the endangered Rothschild



giraffe, the Fund is supporting the Giraffe Conservation Foundation's research to create the species first-ever scientific review.

- Protecting Polar Bears

— Polar Bears International is studying and documenting polar bear populations and their arctic habitat. The goal is to understand and evaluate the true status and condition

of polar bears, and the impact of human-caused and natural events on their survival.

- Project Puffin — To help restore the Atlantic puffin to the islands off Maine, SeaWorld bird experts annually join researchers, brought together by the National Audubon Society, to observe, record, and study North American seabirds.

"The research supported by the SeaWorld & Busch

Gardens Conservation Fund is vital to resuscitate dwindling animal populations all around the world," said Brad Andrews, president and executive director of the SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund and chief zoological officer for SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment. "Our efforts today will help sustain these species for generations to come."



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# MIDWAY

CARNIVALS

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## Tennessee Fair hoppin'

Fair and carnival officials were pleased with final results of two of the state's largest county fairs

LEBANON and WILLIAMSON, TENN. — Two of the largest of Tennessee's county fairs wrapped up last month and fair and carnival officials were very pleased with final figures.

The Wilson County Fair, Lebanon, Tenn., drew a total attendance of 528,432 during its run Aug. 17-25. And the Williamson County Fair, Franklin, held Aug. 3-11, drew about 200,000 fairgoers. The first seeing a drop of a little over 17,000 from 2011 and the latter reporting an increase of about 25,000.

"Overall, we had wonderful weather," said Helen McPeak, Wilson County Fair coordinator. "But we had rain on our opening day and rain for our final day. We think that is what hurt us."

The Williamson County Fair also experienced weather related alerts. On Saturday, Aug. 11, a severe thunderstorm warning in the area had fair

and carnival officials herding everyone inside the grounds' AgExpo where they stayed about an hour. The storm skirted the area. A few drops fell. Then, everyone returned to the grounds.

"Early numbers (we are still paying out expenses) indicate that we are on track for the largest growth in our eight-year history," said Rogers Anderson, Williamson County Mayor and chairman of the Williamson County Fair Association. "Our Drew Expositions' rides were the largest attended in our fair's history."

"As best as we can count, there were over 200,000 folks from all over middle Tennessee that visited our educational agricultural exhibit, our livestock exhibits, Little 1's Farming, pageants, music shows in our AgExpo Arena."

Drew Expositions, the carnival company which

has played the fair since its resurrection eight years ago, provided the midway with 29 rides.

"This has been a really good date for us," said the carnival's James Graybeal.

Meanwhile, even though the Wilson County Fair did see a drop in overall attendance, the carnival, Amusements of America, reported business on the midway exceeded the 2011 event.

"We had two tremendous Saturdays," said Dominic Vivona of the family-owned and operated carnival.

And, indeed the first Saturday of the fair set an all-time single-day attendance record with 116,532 fairgoers visiting the fair. The final fair, although down from the 2011 final day due to rain this year, drew 90,032.

—Pam Sherborne

### Amusements of America has best season ever at 2012 Wilson Co. Fair

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

LEBANON, Tenn. — Overall attendance numbers may have been down some this year for the Wilson County Fair, Lebanon, but Amusements of America carnival company had one of their best fairs ever this year.

"It was better for us than last year," said Dominic Vivona, who was at this year's fair with his brother Phillip Vivona. The two head up the Monroe Township, N.J based company and provided about 55 rides and attractions for the 2012 Wilson County fair.

"We had two tremendous Saturdays," he continued. "We had a little rain, but everything went really well."

The first little bit of rain that hit the fair did so on the opening evening, Friday, Aug. 17.

Ruby Macaroni, Family Attractions Amusement Co.,

had 16 rides and three foods booked on with Amusements of America for the event.

"Friday was a little scary," Macaroni said. "But, I guess people were looking at the reports and decided just not to come."

And, it did rain, said Helen McPeak, fair coordinator.

"We ended up having a lot of mud around," McPeak said. "We had to go around and fill in with mulch and sand."

It was a good thing they did get prepared because the next day, Saturday, Aug. 18, broke an all-time single day attendance for the fair. The fair drew 116,532 people that day. Phillip and Dominic Vivona both said it was wall to wall people on the midway.

"We didn't get to sleep until four in the morning," said Helena Vivona, Dominic Vivona's wife. "We were up counting tickets, money. Then, we were back up at 7:30 a.m.,

▶ See WILSON, page 48



The Wilson County Fair, above, and Williamson County Fair, below, each reported successful fairs this year.

AT/SUE NICHOLS



AT / PAM SHERBORNE

### 2012 Williamson County Fair beats last year's total

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

FRANKLIN, Tenn. — Drew Expositions brought 29 rides to the Williamson County Fair this year. Eight years ago, this fair's first year, the carnival brought just 18.

The Williamson County Fair, Franklin, Tenn., which ran Aug. 3-11, takes place at the AgExpo Park that is owned by the county, but it is a separately-run 501(c)(3) or non-profit entity. It is run by a committee with the chair being Rodgers Anderson, who also serves as Williamson County mayor.

This fair was established eight years ago and, before that, it had been over 50 years since the county had a fair. Drew Expositions has played the fair since it was established eight years ago.

Drew Expositions' James Graybeal visited with AT on the first Sunday of the fair.

▶ See WILLIAMSON, page 48

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## ►WILSON

Continued from page 47

still counting.”

The first few days of the fair actually had cool evenings, but Dominic Vivona said it did warm up.

The final Saturday of the fair drew 90,032 and that was even with rain, but McPeak feels that is also the reason for the drop in overall attendance from 2011.

“That final day we were about 19,000 down from last year, so we felt that knocked us off our 2011 numbers,” McPeak said.

But, the fair did set another attendance record. That was on Wednesday, Aug. 22, when 30,738 fairgoers visited the grounds. That was a record for a Wednesday.

Vivona said they brought in some new rides this year for the event. New for fairgoers included the A.R.M. Vertigo, a Tivoli Spin Out, and a Hi-Lite Wheel, the latter two rides brought in by Macaroni for Amusements of America.

“We also brought in some new kiddie rides and had somewhat of a different layout,” Vivona said.

McPeak said for the first time this year the fair presented a concert series. Joe Diffie played Aug. 20, for the country music fans. For bluegrass fans, Dailey & Vincent performed on Aug. 22, and for gospel music fans Bates Brothers featuring Ivan Parker, Jeff and Shari Easter, and the Triumphant Quartet performed Aug. 23.

The Wilson County Fair traditionally has various and abundant free stages on the grounds. This first year of the concert series was very successful.

“We also had David Frizzel here on our Fiddler Grove Opry free stage,” she said. “He is very popular here.”

The Fiddler Grove Opry stage added a late show this year to the last Friday and Saturday nights.



**Amusements of America fielded 55 rides at the 2012 Wilson County Fair, Lebanon, Tenn, including the Bertazzon's Rock-N-Roll, top, and the Chance Century Wheel, above, very visual on the midway. The 2012 fair drew 528,432 guests, slightly down from 2011, but Amusements of America reported an increase in their midway business over last year's fair.**

AT / PAM SHERBORNE

There were other new attractions as well including Timmy the Tractor and Rhinestone Roper, along with the fair's tried and true Circle C Racing Pigs, Rooster Crowing Contest, The Puppetone Rockets and the Ag-Venture Experience.

Fair officials announced during the fair that they were making additional improvements to the parking lots in anticipation of crowds for the final weekend of the fair. An additional entrance was constructed to improve traffic flow. Satellite parking was set up with free shuttle service.

Macaroni said her carnival company, Fantasy Amusements, was having a really good season when AT visited her at the Wilson County Fair. Her two units had been sepa-

rated since June. At the time she had rides at the Wilson County Fair, her other unit was in Jamestown, Tenn., at the Fentress County Fair, which ran Aug. 19-25.

Amusements of America also had separate units out. After the Wilson County Fair, Phillip and Dominic Vivona were going to the Delta Fair, Eades, Tenn., just outside Memphis, Tenn., while their other unit was to be at the Columbia County Fair, Chatham, N.Y.

Daily attendance for the 2012 fair were: Saturday, Aug. 17, 29,018; Sunday, 18, 116,532; Sunday, 19, 60,026; Monday, 20, 24,812; Tuesday, 21, 31,631; Wednesday, 22, 30,738; Thursday, 23, 33,101; Friday, 24, 54,982; and Saturday, 25, 90,032.

## ►WILLIAMSON

Continued from page 47

“We ended up having a real good Saturday, but that was after we had shut down for about an hour right as we were preparing for a big night, about 3 p.m.,” Graybeal said.

Local weathermen had been forecasting rain and scattered storms. Then, at just about 3 p.m., there was a severe thunderstorm alert for that area.

“We had to get everyone off the grounds and into the building (the Community Center),” Graybeal said. “We shut down for about an hour. We could see the dark clouds coming in.”

But the storm skirted the fair, which only received some sprinkles.

“But, after what happened at the Indiana State Fair last year, no one takes any chances now,” he said. “I think everyone appreciated our efforts. Plus, it was so hot and that building is air-conditioned. I think they were glad to be indoors for a little while.”

After the alert was gone, folks came back out onto the grounds.

Drew Expositions brought two new rides to the fair this year – the KMG X-Factory and the Circus Train kiddie ride, manufactured by Visa. They brought back their Allan Herschell Seattle Wheel, which was at this fair two years ago and was a hit. In addition, the company's Zierer Wave Swinger had been repainted during the off-season and renamed the Flying Circus.

“We will rotate our multi-trailer rides around to different fairs,” Graybeal said.

It takes three trailers to move the Seattle Wheel.

Richard Marsh, Williamson County Fair's volunteer publicity chairman, said fairgoers in the area love the Seattle Wheel. One lure of the ride is that it was featured in a 1960s movie starring Elvis

Presley.

“We also had Shawn Klush as Elvis here this year entertaining,” Marsh said. “There are still some big Elvis Presley fans out there,” Marsh said.

Drew Expositions also brought their pipe organ with them. This was the first time the pipe organ, made in 1892, was at the Williamson County Fair and it was also a hit with fairgoers.

Drew Exposition is one of few traveling amusement companies to maintain and carry this antique, functioning band organ. The band organ was made by Ruth & Sohn from Waldrich, Germany. It was acquired by Drew Exposition in the 1940s then fully restored in the 1990s. The entire inside of the organ was restored by Mike Kitner from Carlisle, Pa., while Rosa Patton from Durham, N.C. restored the outside facade. Graybeal said the organ is now housed in a new trailer they got from Century Trailers to custom fit the organ.

Overall, Graybeal said that day he felt Drew Expositions would see a good 2012 Williamson County Fair. He was correct in his assumption.

“It was their best Williamson County Fair in their eight-year history,” Marsh said.

Marsh said his challenge as a volunteer publicity chairman is getting the word out about the fair, not just in Williamson County but in the surrounding counties, many of which don't have a county fair.

“This year, we put out about 175,000 flyers at local businesses in this county and adjacent ones,” he said. “One of these days, I hope we can get a local college to help us do a marketing study to find out where our fairgoers are coming from. I ask many people when I am taking them from their cars to the gates in my cart. I always ask them, ‘So where do you live,’ but it is by no means a real study. But,

► See WILLIAMSON, page 49

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## ►WILLIAMSON

Continued from page 48

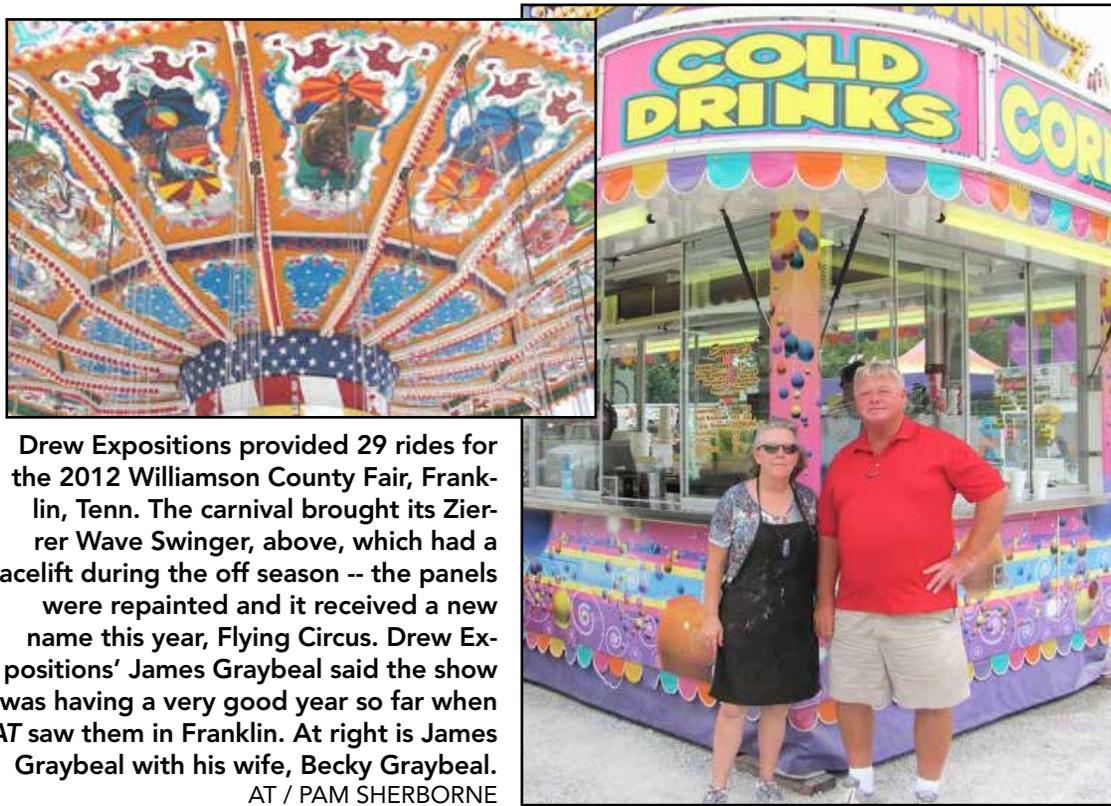
I have found we have people from other states like Alabama and Kentucky.”

New attractions for the fair included the TAF Magic Show, a Pick Tennessee Products exhibit and The Groove Club, a local entertainment group composed of young people that have been traveling nationwide. Spider-man and Captain America Marvel characters were also on hand at various times throughout the fair.

Because the fair is a non-profit business, Marsh said it is the fair association’s mission to give back to the community and the volunteers that help put on the event. Some of those groups include the 4-H club and local high schools that help with various jobs.

“We have a couple of high schools that volunteer, both the parents and the students,” Marsh said. “The students help us park the cars.”

The fair association also contributes to the AgExpo Park by doing improvements. This year the association provided more paving and addi-



Drew Expositions provided 29 rides for the 2012 Williamson County Fair, Franklin, Tenn. The carnival brought its Zierer Wave Swinger, above, which had a facelift during the off season -- the panels were repainted and it received a new name this year, Flying Circus. Drew Expositions’ James Graybeal said the show was having a very good year so far when AT saw them in Franklin. At right is James Graybeal with his wife, Becky Graybeal.

AT / PAM SHERBORNE

tional lighting and sound.

“Every year, whatever we have left over, we will give back to various other groups,” he said.

Graybeal said the Williamson County Fair has been a good spot for Drew Expositions.

“I mean look around you,” he said. “These people

have come to a county fair. It is very family friendly. So many of our dates are just like this. I think it really helps that Drew Expositions is just a great carnival. We have so many compliments on how nice our carnival is everywhere we do. There is just something magical about Drew Expositions.”

And, Graybeal said, at the

first of August, that business had been up for the company so far in 2012 over last year even though they had had several really hot spots. The fair in Franklin was also warm, but Graybeal said when they were playing the Western Kentucky Fair, Hopkinsville, June 29-July 7, temperatures reached 109 degrees.

## Kansas State Fair celebrates 100 years

HUTCHINSON, Kan. — Officials at the Kansas State Fair decided to celebrate that event’s 100th anniversary this year and in 2013.

The first Kansas State Fair was held in 1913. In 2012, fairgoers will be celebrating the 100th anniversary, with the celebratory event continuing at the 2013 fair.

The 2012 fair, set for Sept. 7-16, was just beginning when AT went to press.

The 2012 fair was set to be packed with a variety of entertainment — from free grounds to grandstands acts.

Other entertainment was to include a hypnotist, woodcarvers, a petty zoo, and racing pigs. There was also to be a Toddler Games Driving School.

North American Midway Entertainment was to provide the midway.

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## MIDWAYLIGHTS

COMPILED: Pam Sherborne, psherborne@amusementtoday.com

Organizers of the **Erie County Fair**, Sandusky, Ohio, reported there were 36,000 fairgoers this year during the Aug. 7-12 event. For the first time, every single person who entered the gate was counted, including children participating in the 4-H competitions who entered free.

In previous years, members tabulated attendance figures by tallying only how many people paid the one-day \$7 admission price, or the weekly \$20 all-access pass.

The 2012 paid-attendance figure was about 12,300 people, equating to a 10 percent increase when compared to the 11,300 who paid to enter the county fair in 2011.

The 2012 event marked the first time since 2006 that attendance numbers had shown an increase over the previous year.

Attendance to this year's **Northwest Washington Fair**, Lyndon, Wash., held Aug. 13-18, showed a slight decrease this year over 2011 numbers.

Attendance was 203,949 this year, down about 15,000 for last year.

Fair officials attributed this drop to the very hot weather. There were three days with temperatures over 90 degrees. **Davis Shows Carnival** provided the midway.

Along with new attractions, visitors this year also saw an increase in security and an amped-up security policy. The Lynden Police Department, Whatcom County Sheriff's Office and a private security firm partnered to handle the increase in fair security.

This was in a direct response to an incident last year when rival Hispanic gangs confronted each other several times throughout the final day of the fair, culminating in a 10 p.m. shooting that left four people wounded. The shooter, 15-year-old Daniel Herrera, was sentenced to 15 years in prison for assault while armed with a deadly weapon. He will be deported after he serves his sentence.

According to a local news report, the fair adopted a ban on anyone known to be affiliated with a gang and, for the most part, officials received an overwhelmingly positive response to the security policy.

Additions this year to the **Annapolis Valley Exhibition** infrastructure were big hits for competitors and spectators.

The week-long **Annapolis County Fair**, Lawrence-town, Nova Scotia, Canada, closed with equestrian competitors raving about the new horse barn, complete with 57 box stalls. The fair ran Aug. 13-18.

The municipal and federal governments, public donations and the exhibition shared the \$200,000 price tag. The barn was started in the spring and finished in early July.

Also added this year were new sections of aluminum bleachers around the riding ring.

Besides the equestrian events, spectators took in a variety of musical entertainment, a midway provided by **Maritime Midways**, lawn tractor races, ox pulls, agricultural and retail displays and, of course, the popular food concessions.

County fairs across New York state believe they are economically beneficial tourism draws, and fair officials intend to prove it by tabulating tourism figures from four of the state's county fairs this year and presenting it to state lawmakers.

Most of the 55 county fairs in New York have for years hoped to access I Love NY funding, a fund used for marketing campaign funds throughout the state. For fiscal year 2012-2013, that fund totals \$2.5 mil-

lion.

The fairs haven't traditionally been considered tourism-centered events and don't receive the cash.

According to a story from the *Post-Star*, Greenwich, N.Y., the New York Association of Agricultural Affairs has contracted with several private firms to quantify the economic impact, and tourism draw, of the four fairs.

Those fairs are: Jefferson County, Watertown, July 10-15; Erie County Fair, Hamburg, Aug. 8-19; Washington County Fair, Greenwich, Aug. 20-26, and Dutchess County Fair, Rhinebeck, Aug. 21-26.

Many of the state's fairs, which highlight New York's agricultural industry, are struggling. Each fair receives only about \$6,700 in agricultural reimbursements annually from the state Department of Agriculture and Markets for 4-H programming.

The analysis is expected to be released this fall.

The **Kentucky State Fair** board voted last month to go through a formal process to find another company to run the former amusement park at the state-owned **Kentucky Exposition Center** in Louisville, despite another proposal being presented to the fair board a day earlier by former park operator **Ed Hart**.

A report in *Business First*, stated that the fair board, which manages the expo center, unanimously approved in a regular monthly meeting issuing a request for proposals for an operator to take over the former Kentucky Kingdom theme park, which has been closed for nearly three years.

The story goes on to report that **Ron Carmicle**, chairman of the Kentucky State Fair Board, said the board had sought guidance about Kentucky Kingdom from **Gov. Steve Beshear**. As a result, the governor decided it would be better if the board issue a RFP for a park operator.

Hart's group dropped off an outline of a proposal prior to the governor's decision. The governor said Hart's plan would be considered if it comes through the RFP process.

The governor was quoted in that story saying: "it is important to cast a wide net and determine whether it remains economically feasible for an operator to reopen the amusement park."

The former **Kentucky Kingdom** closed in 2009. Previous park owner **Six Flags Inc.** abandoned its lease there in February 2010 amid bankruptcy proceedings.

Park rides reportedly have not received proper maintenance and care since that time.

The board's decision to issue an RFP came two months after the **Koch** family, owners of the **Holiday World and Splashin' Safari** amusement park in Santa Claus, Ind., abruptly withdrew their plan to redevelop the park. They had planned to reopen it as a venue called **Bluegrass Boardwalk**.

Bluegrass Boardwalk Inc. CEO **Natalie Koch** said in a June 15 news release that "many layers of governmental regulations and stipulations" led to the decision to abandon the project. The Koch family has declined to comment further.

The RFP process was expected to last 45 to 60 days.

Attendance at this year's **Ventura (Calif.) County Fair** dropped about six percent from last year, fair officials reported.

The Aug. 1-12 fair drew 306,374 people to the Ventura fairgrounds. That was down about 20,000 from the 326,841 fairgoers in 2011 — a 6.26 percent decline.

It was the second straight year of lower attendance and about equal to 2009 figures. The 2010

fair drew 328,000 people. In 2006, 308,158 people attended, followed by 309,943 in 2007, 321,338 in 2008 and then a drop in 2009 to 306,696.

The Ventura County Fair is an independent midway.

The **Sonoma County Fair**, Santa Rosa, Calif., which ran July 26-Aug. 13, ended with a slight dip in attendance during its 2012 run and a larger drop in racing revenues, according to figures released.

Paid attendance declined 1.5 percent from last year to 193,000. The racing handle, including satellite wagering, decreased six percent to nearly \$31.4 million.

In contrast, food sales increased 1.75 percent to \$2.7 million and alcohol sales climbed 4.4 percent to \$968,000.

This was the second year for a longer fair schedule, which allows a third week of racing.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the fair's total attendance numbers approached or exceeded 400,000 a year. But during most of those years the state didn't allow off-track wagering on the fair's races. In other words, people had to attend the fair to enjoy the horse racing.

The stronger food and alcohol sales, however, suggest that fairgoers increased the length of their stays at the fair this year.

**Helm & Sons Amusements** provided the midway.

Attendance and revenue rose again this year at the **Solano County Fair**, Vallejo, Calif., fair officials announced last month.

Nearly 43,000 fairgoers attended the 2012 fair, which ran Aug. 1-5, and ticket revenue, carnival receipts and food and beverage sales each rose more than five percent, officials reported.

This year's fair featured the usual crafts, art and Solano-grown livestock and farm products, but also presented performances from a list of local artists.

**Butler Amusements** provided the midway.

Organizers of the 161st annual **Wisconsin State Fair**, located in West Allis, were extremely pleased with this year's event.

The fair, which ran Aug. 2-12, wrapped up with total attendance at 920,962 — about two percent more than last year's numbers and the highest attendance in over a decade.

State Fair CEO **Rick Frenette** says there were several factors that contributed to the success of this year's expo.

"While we did have several days of beautiful weather, attendance is also driven by the quality of the event and the memorable experiences that our visitors have each year," Frenette said. "Our strong attendance shows that fairgoers are passionate about the Wisconsin State Fair, and they show that passion by coming out to enjoy all that the fair has to offer and sharing these experiences with their friends and loved ones."

Event coordinators also reported that a single-day attendance record was broken on Sunday, Aug. 5, when 127,883 people attended the fair.

The fair went with an independent midway this year. There were just more than 50 rides and attractions on the midway, representing about 24 amusement companies.

In addition, this year over 3,400 exhibitors participated in various competitions.

The fair also sold 375,000 cream puffs and 44,000 glasses of lemonade.

## Rain and heat blamed for an attendance dip at the Indiana State Fair

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. — Indiana State Fair officials blamed several hot days and some thunderstorms for keeping attendance at this year's fair a bit short of their goal.

Organizers reported that nearly 854,000 people attended the state fair during its 17-day run. The fair had an 875,000-person goal, while last year's stage collapse-marred fair drew about 872,000 people with one day canceled.

This year the fair experienced four days of 90-degree heat and six days of rain. Fair spokesman Andy Klotz was quoted in the *Indianapolis Star* saying: "it doesn't matter how many great events and deals the fair offers if the weather doesn't cooperate."

Yet, fair officials were still pleased with the final results. More than 70,000 fairgoers visited the fair on three different days. This is only the second time that has happened



since the fair board stretched the number of fair days to 17.

North American Midway Entertainment provided just under 50 rides and attractions.

New this year included the Year of the Dairy Cows exhibit, the Dupont Food Pavilion, and free shuttle services. The Ciao Italy exhibit, also new, offered Italian food, fun and facts. SuperDogs presented amazing tricks for the first time at the fair, as did the humans during the Xtreme Action Sports Shows.

—Pam Sherborne

## 2012 Iowa State Fair surpasses one million mark

DES MOINES, Iowa — The Iowa State Fair, which ran Aug. 9-19, drew 1,097,142 fairgoers during its 2012 run. This is the second best attendance recorded for the event in its 159-year history.

Only 2008 had more people

with 1,109,150 people. In 2011, 1,080,959 people passed through the fairground gates.

A single-day record was set for a Sunday. On Aug. 19, 119,754 people came through the turnstiles, outpacing the previous biggest Sunday by almost 7,500.

Iowa State Fair manager Gary Slater attributed the crowds to a combination of good weather, the Grandstand and free shows and strong ties to agriculture. Two Grandstands shows sold out and a third came close while all four

free stages Sunday night were standing room only.

Belle City Amusements provided the midway with approximately 40 rides and attractions.

IowaStateFair

NOTHING COMPARES

New attractions included the BMX Pros Trick Team and the Bengal Tiger Exhibit. The eco-friendly transformation of the Expo Hall was completed. That included the installation of solar panels to provide some of the energy for the hall's operations.

Financially, Slater expected they would look about the same as 2011 when final figures were in. In 2011 they finished just over a quarter of a million dollars in the black.

—Pam Sherborne

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ARM

# 2012 Illinois State Fair enjoys 13 percent attendance increase

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

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — Attendance at the 2012 Illinois State Fair, held Aug. 9-19, soared 13 percent this year over last year's attendance.

According to figures released from state fair officials, 918,875 people passed through the gates during the fair, which is 103,275 more than a year ago and the most since 2002.

"While the attendance is gratifying and makes the effort that goes into putting on the event worthwhile, it's what can't be quantified — the lasting memories the fair creates, that is most important," said Bob Flider, acting agricultural director. "The families who attended this year likely will never forget their trip to Springfield. It's those memo-



**AT visited the Illinois State Fair, Springfield, as North American Midway Entertainment was setting up, readying for the event. NAME provided 100 rides and attractions for the fair, which saw a 13 percent during the Aug. 9-19, 2012 run compared to the 2011 event.**

AT/SUE NICHOLS

ries that I hope will keep them coming back for years to come."

Officials reported that grandstand attendance was up four percent over 2011, thanks to the strong support from country stars Eric Church and

Miranda Lambert. Church's concert on opening night of the fair drew 12,643 spectators, and Lambert's show on the final Saturday drew 10,103. Collectively, the acts sold 51,732 tickets, the most in 12 years.

The total ticket sales for the nine grandstand concerts were 51,732.

There were 12 free entertainment stages throughout the grounds.

North American Midway Entertainment provided the midway with approximately 100 rides and attractions.

A new record was set for the sale of a grand champion junior steer. It sold for \$52,000, surpassing the previous high of \$51,200. This was just one of five records set during the Sale

of Champions.

Preliminary, unaudited figures indicated revenue from admissions and parking also was up, increasing 33 percent to \$1.5 million due to an increase in admission.

The daily admission price for adults this year was \$7, up \$2 from last year. Admission for children and senior citizens was \$3, up \$1 from last year. Parking on the grounds remained the same at \$7.

Some other highlights and popular activities at the 2012 event include the Butter Cow exhibit, an icon at the fair, and the educational Conservation World, an area that contains over 30 acres of green grass, trees and rolling hills and ponds as well as special activities.

This year there was a high dive show and Ethnic Village offering international foods and entertainment. The Illinois Fire Museum and Services offers interactive fire safety activities. The indoor Illinois Wine Experience offered wine tastings from 20 Illinois wineries.

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## OC Fair officials pleased with 2012 results

COSTA MESA, Calif. — The 2012 OC Fair wrapped up another successful fair July 13-Aug. 12, drawing 1,357,355 fairgoers for the 23 days and nights of "Home Sweet Home" with food, fun and farm animals.

Attendance this year was just about on par with the number reported last year, 1.4 million.

"In my first year as CEO, this Fair has exceeded all expectations," said Jerome Hoban, OC Fair & Event President & CEO, at the conclusion of the fair. "Every year, the OC Fair manages to deliver a high quality event and this one was no exception."

Although an overall attendance record wasn't set in 2012, there were some new records set. Musical performances at the Pacific Amphitheatre set a record-breaking year with the highest-grossing summer concert series yet. Music fans also help set records in The Hangar, which had its highest attended season since opening in 2010.



Food is always a lure at the OC Fair and this year was no different. Chicken Charlie's top "Totally Fried" item was the new Deep-Fried PB&J and sold 9,000 units. And, at his new Pineapple Express, some 10,000 pineapples were used. Bacon A-Fair's Bacon-Wrapped Turkey Legs sold 7,500 turkey legs, while 100,000 pieces of Chocolate-Covered Bacon were also sold. The new Biggy's Meat Market sold approximately 3,900, 17-inch Big Ribs, which amounted to more than 10,000 pounds of bone and grilled meat.

Ray Cammack Shows provided 65 rides and attraction for the midway this year.

—Pam Sherborne

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Curry

# Frank Curry, circus producer and rodeo clown dies at 71

NEW YORK, N.Y. — Once a renowned rodeo clown and bullfighter, innovative circus producer Frank Curry died on July 28 in Bowling Green Kentucky. He was found, according to his family, near the entrance to the city's Hobson Grove Park, a recreational facility in a sylvan setting.

In his rodeo days, Curry was billed as The Manhattan

Matador. During his early circus years, he was vice president of marketing for Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus. However, as creator and producer of the Ronald McDonald Circus, considered his crowning achievement, he was known as a ring master of creativity whose physical stature was enhanced by a ready smile and a white felt Stetson.

Born in New York City in 1940, Frank Curry was the son of Mr. Francis R. Curry, an attorney and his wife, Eileen McCarty Curry, an activist in Roman Catholic charitable organizations. His grandfather was John F. Curry, leader of Tammany Hall in the politically tumultuous years from 1929 until 1934 when New York State Governor Franklin Delano Roos-

evelt became President of the United States.

Like most who were children of the late 1940s-early 1950s, Curry watched the new "magic box" that was television. Children's programming at the time featured Westerns with stars such as Gene Autry, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, Gail Davis as Annie Oakley and Clayton Moore and X Brands as "The Lone Ranger and Tonto." Children also spent time with cheer clowns like Clarabelle on the Howdy Doodly Show, and troupe members appearing on the Sealtest Company's "Big Top" and Claude Kirchner's "Circus World."

As a teenager, he began sneaking into Madison Square Garden, then on 50th Street and 8th Avenue, to see in "real life" the rodeos and circuses he had only seen on the little screen. There he met rodeo clown idols The Cajun Kid and Buck Legrand and legendary German-born elephant trainer Hugo Schmidt whose career advice was "You make good elephant man."

After being an independent rodeo clown and a Ringling Brothers marketing executive, Curry conceived The Ronald McDonald Circus, a live entertainment he would create and produce.

His goal was to produce a successful enterprise that was affordable for families at the same time that it was the best in quality, versatility and vigor. His goal was realized, as exemplified by an engagement in 2003 at the Bridgestone Arena in Nashville, Tennessee. During seven performances in a four-day engagement, the show garnered more than 85,000 attendees, a record number for such an event.

A Mass of the Resurrection was celebrated for Frank Curry at his parish, Saint Ignatius Loyola Church, in Manhattan on Monday, August 13. A memorial service will be scheduled in the fall.

Curry is survived by two sisters, Ann Curry Marcato, an advertising consultant, and Barbara Curry, a writer, as well as two nephews and numerous cousins.



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E-mail: Dan@nortonauctioneers.com

**FOR SALE**

**2008 CAPCO CENTER TRAILER**

Like-new condition, 18'x8', removable hitch, all hydraulic, goes to ground level, extra awning lights.

\$40,300

Call EJ Dean (978) 375-2542

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**FOR SALE**

"60 Horse Chance Grand Carousel- Outside row of Bradley & Kaye horses. 2 loads (4 pup trailers) \$425,000

2008 Tivoli Remix II, T/M. Excellent Condition \$490,000

Call EJ Dean 978-375-2542"

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**USED SMART BALLS**

13 large - \$800.00 ea  
4 small - \$500.00 ea  
Many other redemption games  
Contact Ralph in Indiana  
e-mail: Ralph@vestil.com

**OPPORTUNITY**

**SMOKEY MOUNTAIN AMUSEMENTS INC.** Needs Ride Help In All Departments:  
Ride Superintendent - For Green Unit.  
Electrician - For Green Unit.  
Contact:  
Brian (Beaver) Bitner (919) 272-5627  
Billy Clark (863) 738-1689  
Winter Quarters Now Open!  
(843) 362-0022

**OPPORTUNITY**

**CUSTOMER SERVICE TECHNICIAN**

Candidates must have strong mechanical, electrical, and customer service knowledge to install, troubleshoot and maintain our extensive product line of amusement rides and people movers. Position entails extensive travel, including internationally.

Email resume to jobopenings@chancerides.com; website is www.chancerides.com.

**FOR SALE**

Supplying Amusements New to Used

- Bumper Cars (24 cars) 40x80 (SBF) ...\$125,000
- Twister/Maverick (Moser) .....\$599,000
- Drop Tower T/M (ARM) .....\$249,000
- Super Truck (SBF) .....\$19,900
- Ali Baba T/M (ARM) .....\$249,000
- Scooter 1800 T/M (Majestic) .....\$224,000
- Crazy Bus T/M (Zamperla) .....\$99,000
- Tornado T/M (Wisdom) .....\$99,000
- Drop Tower (Moser) .....\$89,000
- Americana Carousel 28' (Chance) ....\$119,000
- Traffic Jam T/M (SBF) .....\$219,000
- 1989 Orbiter T/M .....\$205,000
- Sea Ray T/M (Mulligan) .....\$249,000
- Bear Affair .....\$44,000
- Baja Buggy T/M (Zamperla) .....\$59,000
- High Flyer (ARM) .....\$189,000
- Deluxe Sizzler T/M (Wisdom) .....\$99,000
- Crazy Surf P/M 60ft. tall 18 people (Sarton) .....\$99,000

Call Len or John  
(908) 526-8009  
FAX: (908) 526-4535

**FOR SALE**

**LOOPING COASTER**

Launch Loop Shuttle Coaster  
Arrow Dynamics all steel with G-Force 4, 56' high x 635' long  
Built in 1977, excellent condition in Indiana. \$120,000  
For photos and details:  
ralph@vestil.com  
22 Other Rides

**KIDDIE RIDES FOR SALE**

Turtles:\$7,500  
Hampton Cars: \$8,000  
Space Train: \$4,000  
Little Dipper Coaster: \$7,000  
Sky Fighter \$7,000

**ADULT**

Paratrooper: \$24,000  
Troika: \$65,000  
Calypso: \$22,000  
Majestic Bumper Cars: \$8,000  
House of Glass Maze \$3,000  
Dual Flume Water Slide \$15,000  
Bayern Curve \$28,000  
Zyclon Coaster \$80,000

ralph@vestil.com  
Angola, Indiana

Zamperla Mini-Mouse Roller Coaster For Sale, 2007  
In Great Shape, One Owner, Always Indoors, Park Model

Specs

Lenght dimension  
17 mt - 56'  
Width dimension  
14.5 mt - 48'  
Height dimension  
2.5mt. - 6'56"  
Total track lenght  
80mt. - 262' 6"  
Number of trains  
1  
Number of cars per train  
8  
Passengers per train  
16 (8 adults and 8 children)  
Theoretical hourly capacity  
400 pph  
Minimum passenger height  
0.90 mt (36") if not accompanied

If you are interested please e-mail  
bcohen@itzusa.com  
or call 214-751-8157



**FOR SALE**  
Paratrooper  
\$24,000  
Indiana Location  
Ralph@vestil.com

OTHER RIDES AVAILABLE



**YouTube**  
Subscribe to our YouTube channel  
youtube.com/amusementtoday

**MID-LEVEL PARK MECHANIC WANTED** - Exp. Mid-level attraction park mechanic in Orlando, FL

Call - Bart Parsons. 407.509.2799.  
www.fun-spot.com

**FOOD & BEVERAGE MANAGER WANTED** - Exp. and proven F&B Manager in Orlando, FL

Send resume to: HR@fun-spot.com  
Resume kept in strict confidence.

**DATEBOOK**

**OCTOBER 1-5 (Trade Show Oct. 3 & 4)**  
32nd Annual WWA Symposium & Trade Show,  
Paris Hotel, Las Vegas, Nev.

**NOVEMBER 12-16 (Trade Show Nov. 13-16)**  
IAAPA Attractions Expo 2012  
Orange County Convention Center  
Orlando, Fla.

**JANUARY 13-18, 2013**  
AIMS International Safety Seminar & Certification  
Doubletree by Hilton Hotel  
Orlando, Fla.

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