

# Amusement TODAY CELEBRATING 25 YEARS!

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Digital Edition

## Stunt Pilot adds wild aerobatics to the Silverwood's coaster lineup

AT: Tim Baldwin  
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

ATHOL, Idaho — One of the country's newest roller coasters flew into Idaho over Memorial Day weekend. **Silverwood Theme Park**, which opened in 1988, takes a page from its roots in opening its newest thriller. From 1973 to 1988, the property had a functioning airstrip. It's only fitting that the park's newest attraction is called Stunt Pilot.

"We really pumped it up the three weeks going into opening," said **Jordan Carter**, director of marketing, Silverwood. "The buzz really took off when we posted the first test cycle. We've seen a real uptick in ticket sales."

Stunt Pilot is the third version of a single-rail coaster, called Raptor track. The manu-

facturer of the coaster is **Rocky Mountain Construction (RMC)**. This situation is rather rare as the coaster supplier's facility is just down the road. In fact, RMC got its start working with the park.

"It's so cool to have it in our own backyard," said **Jake Kilcup**, COO, RMC. "With the local news covering the opening, the whole marketing campaign is ultra-visible locally. Our friends and family can't help but take notice."

The single-rail concept is a relatively new innovation in modern coaster design. Riders straddle the track in single file. Two earlier installation of the Raptor style of coaster opened in 2018 at **Six Flags Fiesta Texas** and **California's Great America**. Minor modi-



► See PILOT, page 6 During its "flight," Stunt Pilot dives through three rings. COURTESY SILVERWOOD THEME PARK

## Hurricane Harbor anchored by WhiteWater West's Tsunami Surge

Tsunami Surge is the first addition to be added at Six Flags Hurricane Harbor Chicago in a decade.  
COURTESY SIX FLAGS



AT: Tim Baldwin  
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

GURNEE, Ill. — After a delay from 2020, **Six Flags Hurricane Harbor Chicago** was finally able to debut its newest attraction, Tsunami Surge. But that isn't the only change. The water park, formerly with its entrance inside **Six Flags Great America**, now operates as a stand-alone second park.

"For the first time, guests are able to purchase a single day ticket just for the water park," said **Caitlin Kepple**, communications and marketing manager, Six Flags Great America and Hurricane Harbor. "In the past, guests would have had to have a ticket to Six Flags Great America

and then purchase an upgrade to Hurricane Harbor."

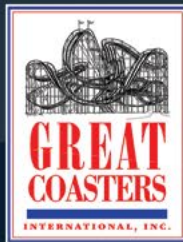
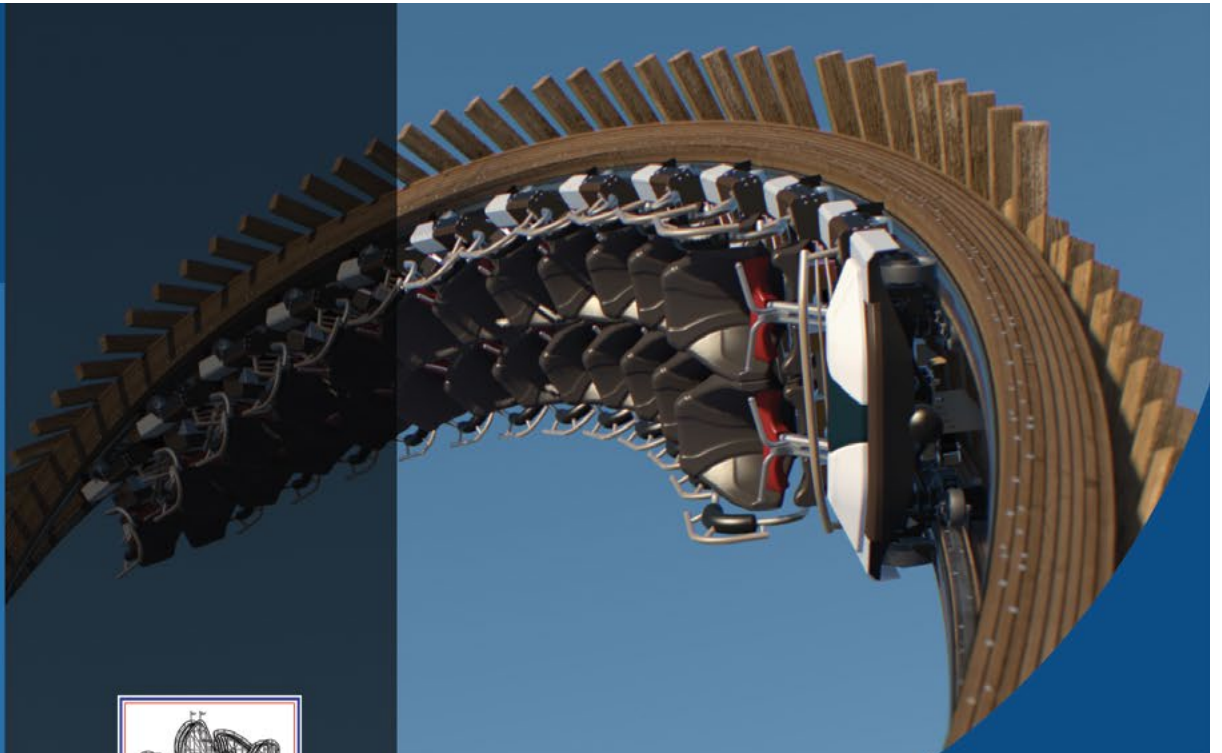
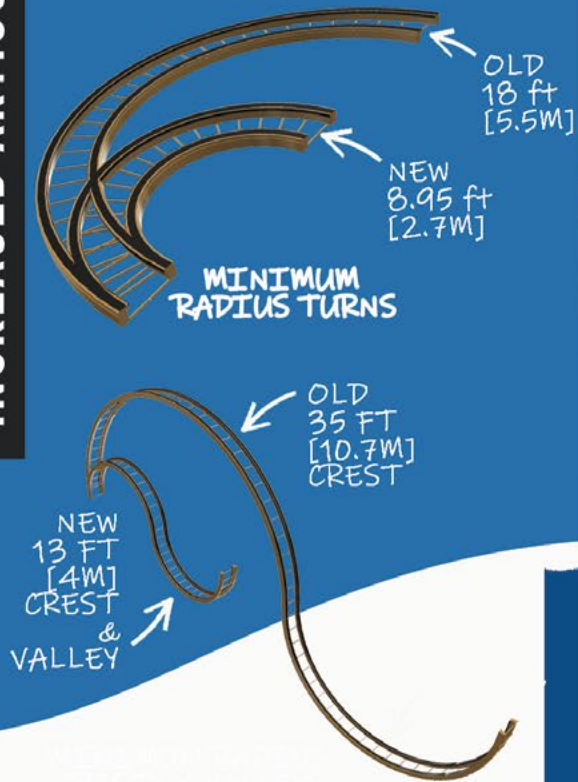
"We want to provide our guests with the best value and experience for their money. Our guests often tell us that they would like the convenience and flexibility to only enjoy Hurricane Harbor Chicago, one of the world's best waterparks, during their visit, and now there is that option with a single-day ticket," noted **Hank Salemi**, park president.

Hurricane Harbor opened in 2005 and was a major boost to park attendance. The 13-acre park was included with a day's ticket. Since then, the park has grown — and so has its popularity.

► See TSUNAMI, page 8

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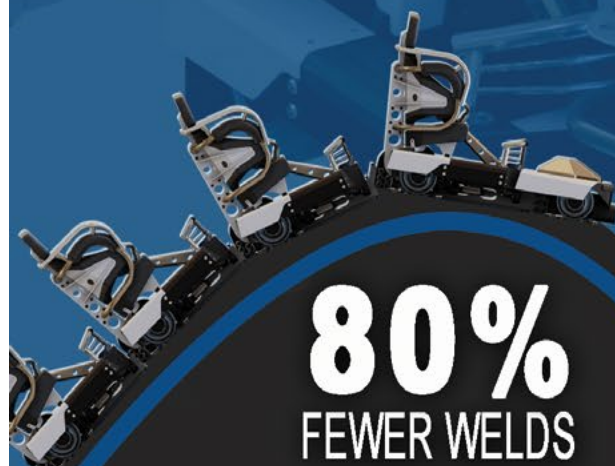
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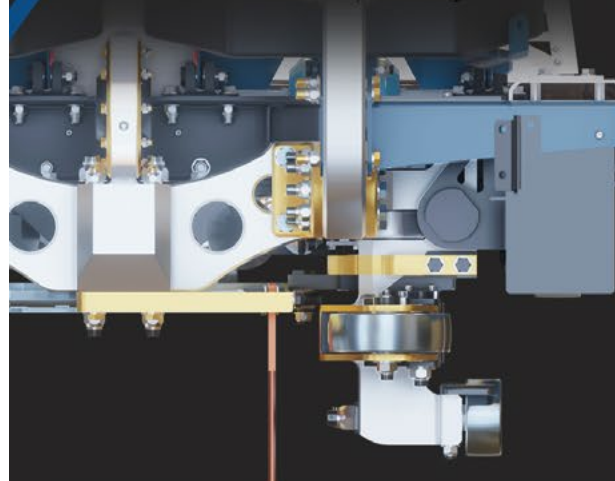
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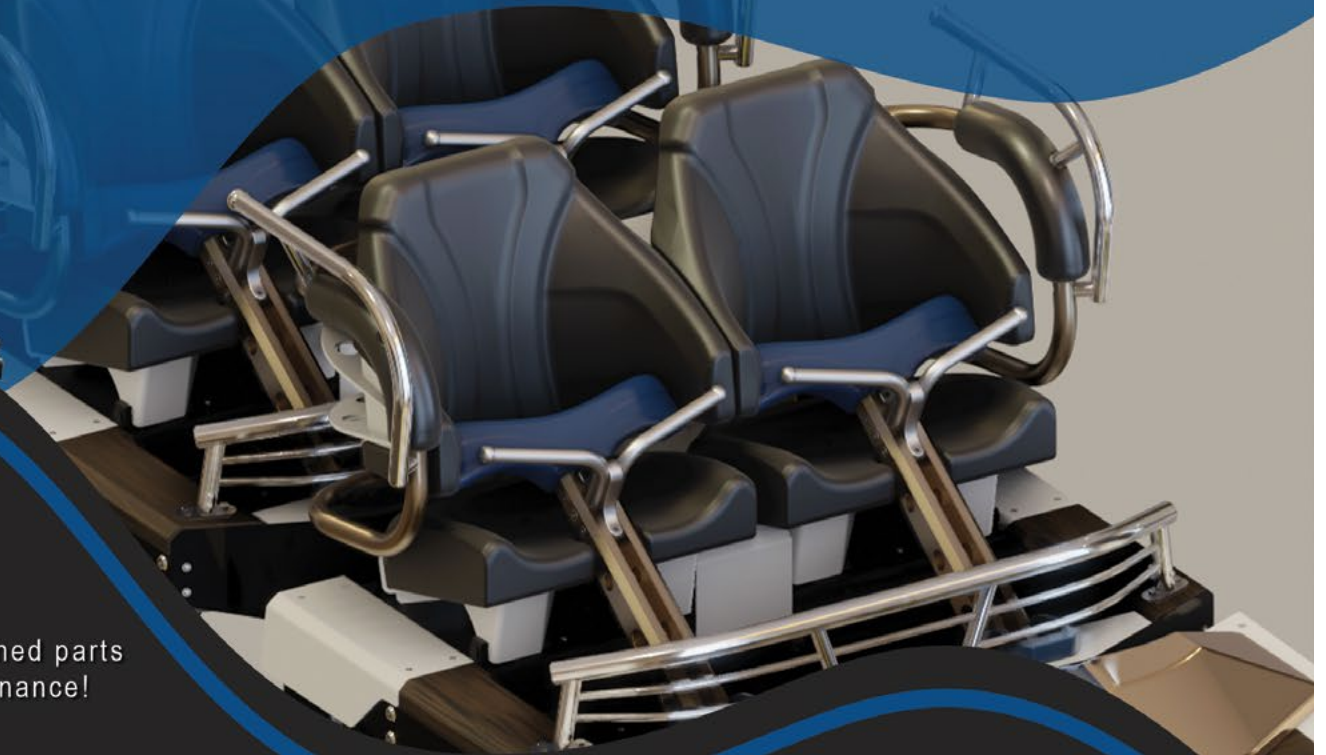
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# AMUSEMENT VIEWS

**AT NOTEBOOK:** John W.C. Robinson, [jrobinson@amusementtoday.com](mailto:jrobinson@amusementtoday.com)

## Feed me, Seymour!



**Robinson**

When it comes to the amusement industry, I'm blessed with a wide-open perspective. I grew up with a father who was active in marketing and operations for multiple amusement parks. My career in the industry started in advertising small family amusement parks. My current position as editor of *Amusement Today* sees me looking at the industry through the objective lens of a reporter. In addition, I continue to visit attractions as an avid fan and enthusiast, as well as a family man with kids. All of this allows me to keep an open mind and try to see multiple perspectives when I look at things within our industry.

In recent weeks, I've been fortunate enough to visit a few amusement parks and facilities for both my own enjoyment and as a member of AT's staff. During those visits, a reoccurring issue caught my attention. Moreover, my coverage of daily headlines via **EXTRA! EXTRA! Your Desktop Edition** indicates that what I observed is not limited to just the handful of facilities I've visited personally but seems to be an industry-wide trend. The issue at hand is incredibly long food lines and waits for park guests.

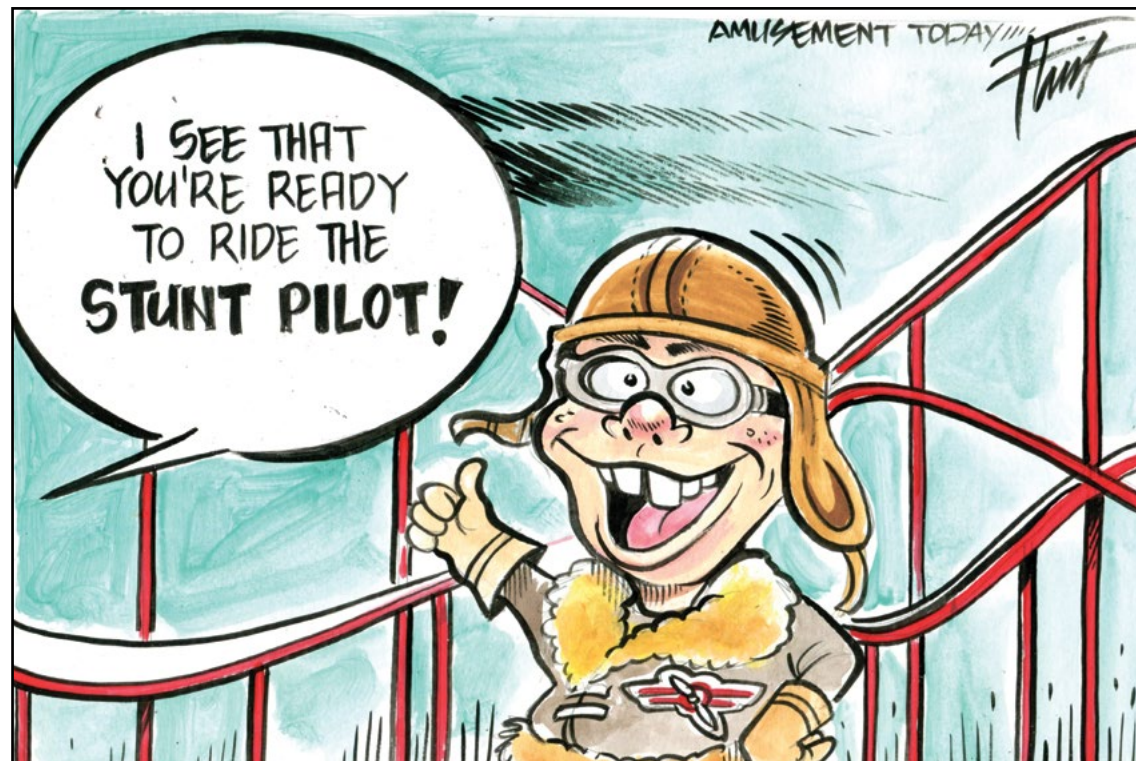
The amusement industry is facing a staffing crisis; this has been well documented. While adjusted hours, increased wages and rotating ride openings have captured most of the headlines, it's the kitchen and eatery staff within parks that have been hit especially hard. In addition, that impact is the one truly having an almost daily impact on the actual guest experience.

Personally, I've found myself in parks with half the food options shut down — even on generally busy days — and long lines at the options that were open. From my own experience, I've waited 90, 60 and 45 minutes in line for counter service food in parks. While there are understandable staffing reasons behind this, it's unacceptable from a guest experience perspective.

Hungry guests are restless, angry, hot and nauseated. Often, they are also parents who are dealing with kids battling these same issues, and children aren't quiet about it. Guests in this condition are more likely to find other issues within the park, become aggressive or actually just leave the facility entirely. None of which is good for any amusement or theme park.

As an industry, we must find a way to solve this problem immediately. Whether it's taking a step back and returning food service to cheap and quick hot dog carts or bringing in extra help by setting up concessionaire agreements with independent and mobile food trucks, it's imperative that our guests can access food and beverages quickly to ensure the best — not to mention safest and most profitable — visit that is possible.

**FLINT'S VIEW:** Bubba Flint



**INDUSTRY VOICE:** Chloe Hausfeld, Director of Marketing & Business Development, JRA

## It's about family

"We all have different names, different lives and different stories to tell. But, family, isn't always about where you come from. Sometimes, it's about where you're going. We might not recognize each other walking down the street, but driving down it. And even though we don't look alike, deep down, we all share the same spirit of adventure. There's only one family and one community quite like ours.' Jeep...there's only one."

As a loyal Jeep customer, I am an avid follower of their campaigns. Their #JeepFamily campaign, launched in March of 2020, perfectly outlined our industry for me. The amusement industry is one big family, and I'm proud to be a part of it.

This specific campaign came at a time where families were starting to be tested to limits that should never be tested. Not having the ability to spend time with one another, along with the unknown of when that day would come, was the hardest thing that most of us have ever experienced. As stated by a former student of the Milton Hershey School, "family consists of the people who support and love you, and the people you can confide in and trust." Blood relations isn't the overlying



**Hausfeld**

theme of family, it's the people you choose to be part of your "family" that defines you.

Work has always meant family to me in the literal sense. I work with my dad, and have known a majority of the JRA team for most of my life. As the years have gone by, our family has been stretched to the best of limits because of the industry family that we have created. We already don't have the

luxury of seeing one another enough throughout the year, and having those few precious moments taken from us made me truly appreciate just how lucky we are to have one another.

One of the things I will remember most from this last year is how we have all supported one another. It didn't matter if we are competitors, friends or frenemies, the amusement industry came together at a time when we needed each other the most and did what we could to help each. Each constituency contributed to propping another up. I am confident because of the community we have.

Let us always remember how we came together during this unprecedented time.

As Walt Disney once said, "Life is beautiful. It's about giving. It's about family."

*Opinions expressed on this page are those of the columnist(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher.*

**AmusementTODAY**  
Your Amusement Industry NEWS Leader

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**Address:** P.O. Box 5427, Arlington, Texas 76005-5427, USA

**Deliveries:** 2004 E. Randol Mill Road #502, Arlington, Texas 76011, USA

**Phone:** (817) 460-7220

**Fax:** (817) 265-NEWS (6397)

**Websites:** [www.AmusementToday.com](http://www.AmusementToday.com), [www.GoldenTicketAwards.com](http://www.GoldenTicketAwards.com)

Call **(817) 460-7220** for advertising, circulation or editorial inquiries

**Founder & Publisher**

Gary Slade • (817) 460-7220  
[gslade@amusementtoday.com](mailto:gslade@amusementtoday.com)

**Accounting & Classified**

Sammy Piccola • (817) 460-7220  
[spiccola@amusementtoday.com](mailto:spiccola@amusementtoday.com)

**Assistant Office Manager, Circulation**

Savannah Breen • (817) 460-7220  
[sbreen@amusementtoday.com](mailto:sbreen@amusementtoday.com)

**Advertising**

Sue Nichols • (615) 477-5432  
[snichols@amusementtoday.com](mailto:snichols@amusementtoday.com)

**Editor & Production Manager**

John Robinson • (513) 256-1441  
[jrobinson@amusementtoday.com](mailto:jrobinson@amusementtoday.com)

**Editorial**

Tim Baldwin • (972) 697-9745  
[tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com](mailto:tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com)

Jeffrey Seifert • (817) 460-7220  
[jseifert@amusementtoday.com](mailto:jseifert@amusementtoday.com)

B. Derek Shaw • (717) 843-3050  
[bdshaw@amusementtoday.com](mailto:bdshaw@amusementtoday.com)

Pam Sherborne • (615) 308-3310  
[psherborne@amusementtoday.com](mailto:psherborne@amusementtoday.com)

**Monthly Contributors**

David Fake, Bubba Flint, Lottie Minick, Richard Munch, Janice Witherow

**Association Memberships**

ACE, AIMS International, ASTM, IAAPA, IISF, IRT/iROC, NAARSO, NEAAPA, NJAA, OABA, PAPA, PACE, SLA, TTIA, WWA

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# 2 MINUTE DRILL



AT: Janice Witherow

## Jeroen Nijpels, JNELC

**Jeroen Nijpels, ICAE**, has been active in the amusement park industry since 1996 and is the owner and managing director of **JNELC**, a consulting company that specializes in supplying high-end attractions and services from various suppliers in the industry and providing consulting and project management solutions. He is also very active as a volunteer for **IAAPA**, currently as the Chairman of the **EMEA** Manufacturer & Supplier Subcommittee and a member of the EMEA Advisory Committee, the Global M&S Committee and the Service Awards Committee. One of his key achievements at IAAPA is the formation of the Young Professionals group.

**Title:** Managing Director and Owner.

**Number of years in the industry:** 25.

**Best thing about the industry:**

Each day is different, and it has one common thread: we always work to entertain people!

**Favorite amusement park ride:**

Mechanica (a Star Shape from **Zierer**) in Liseberg. The combination of thrill, a relaxed viewing moment midway through the ride and the unexpected smoothness of the motions make this just the perfect attraction. And the way the Liseberg team has themed the ride, is just amazing.

**If I weren't working in the industry, I would be ...** A movie producer. I knew when I was 10 years old that I wanted to "entertain people." Either on stage, on screen, at a live event or in an attraction. There simply is nothing better.

**Biggest challenge facing the industry:**

Staffing.

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

Seeing people enjoy the fruits of your work.

**Favorite kind of snack:** Cinnabon pecanbon — no trip to the U.S. is complete without it.

**The best thing about summertime is ...**

Not having to clean my sloped driveway from snow and ice.

**My ideal day off is spent ...**

Discovering something new ... either a new place or something in the field of personal development.

**Do you eat out or cook at home most often?** At home.

**My mother always told me ...**

To be open-minded and respectful.

**Favorite drink in the morning:**

Coffee, Nespresso if you have it!

**If I could watch only one TV show, it would be ...** The news.



Jeroen Nijpels is the owner and managing director of JNELC and has remained an active volunteer throughout the amusement and attractions industry. COURTESY JNELC

**Biggest recent splurge:** Engagement ring for my girlfriend (and you will know if she said yes if you keep on reading until the end).

**What part of the day do you feel most creative?** Whenever I have a moment to take a bit of distance, so usually that is the weekend.

**The song I can't ever seem to get out of my mind is...** Fortunately, I don't have that issue.

**Favorite sports team:**

The Dutch national football team (a lot of people call that soccer, I believe).

**My childhood ambition was to ...**

Become an actor.

**The celebrity I would most like to meet is ...**

... Dutch TV and theatre-production legend, Joop van den Ende (Founder of Endemol).

**I find myself doing this way too often:**

Eating sweets.

**My favorite place to hang out is ...**

My office. It must be if you consider how much time I spend there.

**The one thing that always makes me laugh is ...** Some of the answers people give here in this column.

**Three things that are always in my refrigerator are ...** Water, fruits and a bottle of Louis Roederer (champagne).

**The last time I was at the beach was ...**

Early June, while visiting The Netherlands with my (now) fiancée (because she said yes when I showed her that ring)!

## THE INDUSTRY SEEN

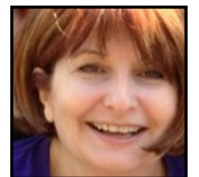
### Smoky Mountain wedding



PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. — After a 25-year long relationship, *Amusement Today* staffers Jeffrey Seifert (inset left) and Tim Baldwin (inset right) exchanged matrimonial vows on May 9, 2021. The small ceremony was held at Dollywood's DreamMore Resort and presided over by Dollywood's Vice President of Marketing and Public Relations, Pete Owens (inset middle).

COURTESY ALAN SHICK AND MARK ROSENZWEIG

## Reflections ON FUN



AT: Lottie Minick

### Off-season days

**Steve Pyburn** manages the great "History of Six Flags Over Texas" Facebook page, which I highly recommend.

Pyburn worked at Six Flags from 1974 to 1979 and became assistant foreman on the La Salle's Riverboat Ride. Anyone with any knowledge of Six Flags back in the day knows the Riverboat Ride was the central location for "stories that must not be told" in the history books of Six Flags Over Texas. What follows is one of Pyburn's stories.

Off-season saw many outside card and other games. One day, Pyburn along with **John Bement, Bobby Grubs, Austin Jeter** and **Carey Don Risinger** were playing cards when a golf cart in the distance flew by with a big goat in the front seat, so big they couldn't tell if the goat was driving.

Bement jumped up knocking the card table over and ran faster than The Flash after the cart. Jeter looked at the cards on the table and on the ground, looked at the cards in his hand, sighed and said, "I guess Bement doesn't want to play cards anymore."

*Lottie Minick is a 46-year attractions industry veteran and co-owner of Dallas-based Minick Associates, a design firm founded by her late husband, Bob. Her monthly column features behind-the-scenes anecdotes of her own and from those who have worked in the business.*

*Got a fun industry story? Email it to Lottie Minick at [minickassociates@gmail.com](mailto:minickassociates@gmail.com).*



Stunt Pilot's first drop is a daring 90 degrees (above left). The Rocky Mountain Construction coaster features three inversions. COURTESY SILVERWOOD THEME PARK

## ►PILOT Continued from page 1

fications were made for this installation to feature a 10-car train.

"The new train design follows the concept of our 24-passenger swing axle trains," Kilcup told *Amusement Today*. "They ride really smoothly, and the park is going to appreciate the thought put into maintaining the coaches. There's always room for improvement, but these things are pretty sweet."

The layout of the design is similar to the first two installations, but in addition to the elongated train, the park has added their own touches to make it stand out. In tribute to airplane stunts, the train dives through three rings, as well as swoops through a barn on one of its low-to-the-ground dives.

"There are subtle differences on the track to accommodate those two extra seats," said Carter. "I can tell you seat nine blows away

seat eight. I can't wait to get into the back car. That whip action is incredible. And we did make some changes to make our ride different. The added theming elements make it unique. At night, the rings will light up, and we are going to be adding sound effects. The attention to detail in this ride will set it apart from the others."

"The ride looks amazing; the park packed so much into such a small space!" added Kilcup. "The theming really adds to the ride — the fly-through rings, barn, etc. I love the restored airplane on the way into the queue. Silverwood did such an amazing job with the design and execution of this ride and the entire space. It looks great."

"Silverwood is locally known for its air shows. I remember as a kid, Dad and I lived on Silverwood property," said **Amy Garcia**, vice president of marketing, RMC, in reference to company founder **Fred Grubb**. "Every

night at 7 p.m., I could sit on the porch and watch the amazing air show. I think Silverwood chose the perfect name to pay heritage to their history as well to the ride. The ride is so smooth and quick — it really does feel like you are riding in an airplane performing all kinds of stunts."

Top height is 105 feet, and the first drop is taken at an incredibly steep 90 degrees.

The queue to the ride is right through the center of the coaster. "Everybody waiting for the ride is seeing a show. It goes right over them and comes next to them. We are going to add speakers to where when the train comes by, we're going to play the sounds of a biplane flying right next them," said Carter.

Top speed is 52 mph, and the design features three inversions.

Stunt Pilot is the fifth adult coaster to operate in the park. Among its collection is the very first **Arrow Corkscrew**



Stunt Pilot pays tribute to the old air shows performed at Silverwood. COURTESY SILVERWOOD THEME PARK

coaster, originally owned by Knott's Berry Farm.

"We haven't had a brand new [from the ground up] coaster since Tremors in 1999," said Carter. "We had a pretty good year 'considering' with what the pandemic was, but to invite people back with a brand new coaster is a really big deal."

When *AT* asked if any improvements have been made to the Raptor genre since the first installations in 2018, Kilcup said, "We've made some tweaks here and there — little improvements for the parks, simpler maintenance, etc. The ride experience is amazing, this thing packs a punch!"

The placement of Stunt Pilot is in the center of the park. Management felt it was somewhat of a dead area where people got from one part of the park to the other. Now people either jump on board or stop to be spectators. Park representatives feel it has added something striking to the skyline.

The decision of the ride's location was viewed as an opportunity to immerse guests into the ride theming. A gift shop will also sell souvenirs that reflect the old air shows and vintage memorabilia.

"RMC has always played a big part in Silverwood from the water park to putting together Aftershock and Fred back in the day building Timber Terror and Tremors, so having a coaster company down the road ... it is only fitting to finally have one at Silverwood," said Carter.

"It's so great to work on a project in our backyard," said Kilcup. "The construction, the marketing campaign, opening day; it's all happening right here for all of our family and friends to see, it's such a unique situation. I'm looking forward to taking my oldest on his first RMC this summer!"

"It has really come full circle now ... where Fred got his start in the business now has an RMC creation," added Garcia. "It was super convenient build wise as if we needed a part, it was only 15 minutes away. We delivered the track ourselves using our one-ton truck and trailer. We had an RMC party for all our employees and vendors on May 27. Many of our employees had never ridden an RMC. It was fun to see them so excited about finally getting to ride and how much pride they had showing their families their incredible work."



On a Stunt Pilot's Raptor-style track, riders are seated single file. COURTESY SILVERWOOD THEME PARK

# STUNT PILOT HAS NOW TAKEN FLIGHT!

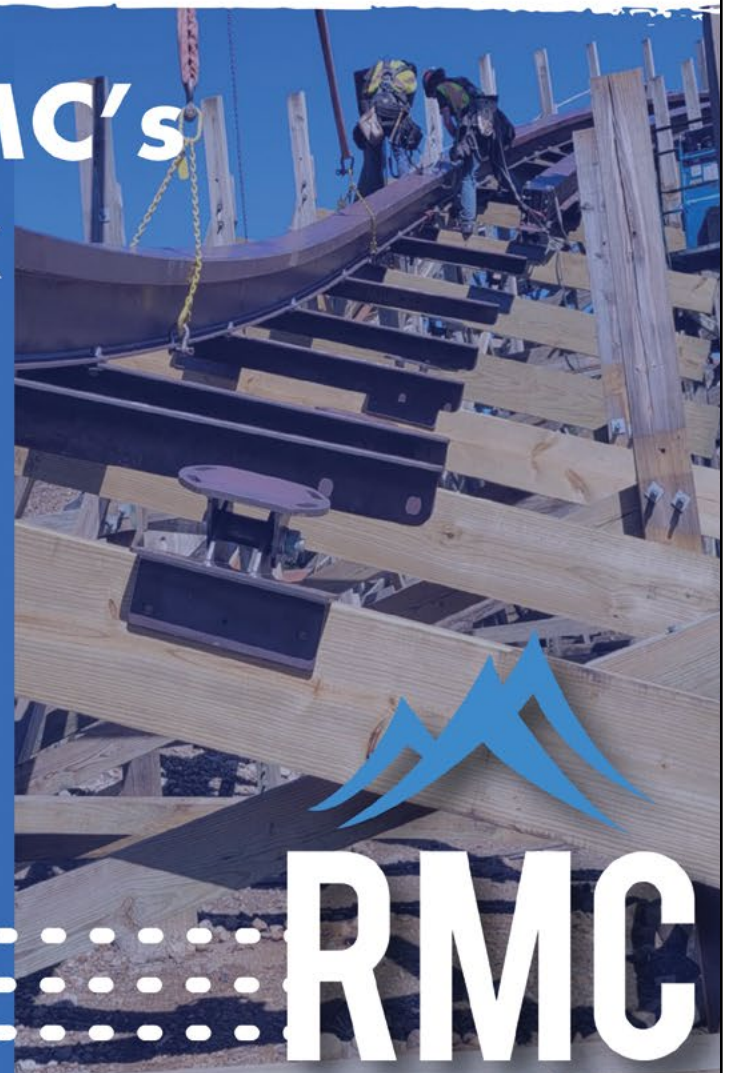


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# RMC

## ► TSUNAMI

Continued from page 1

“For those that are Six Flags Great America season pass holder or members, their lives are not changing,” said Kepple.

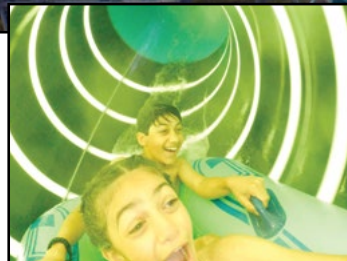
For members and passholders, there will be no upcharge to visit the second gate, nor will there be an upcharge for sister park **Hurricane Harbor Rockford** either.

This change comes with a shiny new addition. Tsunami Surge welcomes guests with bragging rights as the world’s tallest water coaster. It was supplied by **WhiteWater West**.

“Tsunami Surge is the 25th attraction [in Hurricane Harbor]. There was so much anticipation,” Kepple told *Amusement Today*. “This was the first new attraction in Hurricane Harbor in a decade. We’re excited to introduce this to our guests. It’s the perfect complement to Hurricane Harbor being a stand-alone water park.”

Six Flags came to WhiteWater with the ambition of creating the world’s tallest water coaster and a standout new attraction for the popular Hurricane Harbor Chicago. That team approached **Andrew Mowatt**, WhiteWater’s executive vice president, Global Key Accounts, and discussed the possibility of adding a Master Blaster to the park. After only a few weeks of discussions, Mowatt, joined by **Emily Colombo**, VP, Strategic Partnerships, traveled to Chicago to visit the park and identify a few possible locations for the attraction.

“Tsunami Surge is in a class all by itself, defying gravity to blast riders through 950 feet of exhilarating hills, drops, and turns from a world record-breaking height of 86 feet,” said Salemi.



**The record-setting Tsunami Surge was provided by WhiteWater West. Lighting effects take place in the ride to add to the experience (inset). COURTESY SIX FLAGS**

traditional water slide, this water coaster will actually take riders uphill.”

“We worked closely with WhiteWater on every step of the project from conception to design to construction on this unique attraction.”

After walking the site, it became apparent that the layout of the water park presented the perfect opportunity to create something special which would tie together with the theme park. “Six Flags had installed a brand-new roller coaster called Maxx Force in 2019,” said Mowatt. “We knew we could do something to the same scale and worked with them to create a water slide with similar bragging rights. Now Six Flags has the world’s tallest water coaster, Tsunami Surge, standing at 86 feet high, alongside North America’s fastest launching roller coaster!”

“It’s unlike anything we’ve offered our guests. It’s so exciting to have the world’s tallest water coaster here at Hurricane Harbor Chicago,” said Kepple. “Unlike your

Riders 48 inches or taller can ride either single or double. Along the course, guests experience five drops, three uphill sections and five hairpin turns. Tsunami Surge is the only water slide in Hurricane Harbor Chicago to propel riders uphill. Utilizing low velocity but high flow rate water jets, the attraction begins with a heart-pumping mega drop into the slide’s first of five major descents, plummeting riders 32 feet before the water jets thrust them back uphill with top speeds of up to 28 miles per hour. When combined with the slide’s visual effects of AquaLucent rings and lasers, the overall ride experience is a mix of sensations spanning the ride’s 950-foot length.

As visitors approach the entrance to either park, Tsunami Surge’s towering height adds an iconic presence.

“When considering the placement of new capital, we always consider how to maximize the space available to

showcase the thrills and physical attributes of an attraction,” said Salemi. “Tsunami Surge is in the perfect spot to showcase its stature as the world’s tallest water coaster near the new Hurricane Harbor Chicago entrance gate.”

Aside from its prime location near the water park’s new portal and its proximity to the Maxx Force coaster, it was the timing of this installation that added to its story. Like some of the other projects that began in 2020, one of the challenging aspects of this installation was that it started during the COVID-19 pandemic and was forced into a hiatus when Illinois went into a lockdown. Luckily, WhiteWater’s global installation team was on-site working away and were able to get the fiberglass up in the air before lockdown went into effect.

Tsunami Surge’s eye-catching lime green and turquoise fiberglass stands out in the water park with its pop of colors, while mimicking the undulating crests and valleys of the nearby wooden roller coaster. Towering over the

rest of the slides, the attraction draws guests from the gate who are eager to learn more about the slide with uphill sections — a somewhat rare site for water parks.

“The attraction is on brand for Six Flags, which is known for amazing thrills and fast rides,” said Colombo. “At eight stories high, this Master Blaster is right in line with what the park does: creating great family rides with the biggest drops.”

“The colors are bright and fun and have that Caribbean vibe,” added Kepple.

The visual impact of Tsunami Surge extends from its exterior into the interior. On the inside of the water slide lies AquaLucent rings, and lasers have been artfully placed to complement the Master Blaster’s features. Adding unexpected bursts of light, the addition of AquaLucent effects creates visual movement within the slide as riders race their way through the flume, resulting in a heightened sense of speed as guests are left guessing about what drops, twists and turns are ahead.

Entrance into Hurricane Harbor is now more convenient for arriving guests, and the new attraction welcomes them near the front gate.

“Something that came through to us from feedback from our guests was that they really wanted the opportunity to visit the water park on the hot summer days,” Kepple said. “Midwesterners love their summers, and this is a new way to experience Six Flags Hurricane Harbor. It’s a way for them to have the thrills that are within the water park without having to visit the theme park, and they can do that on another day.”



With a new entrance gate, visitors no longer have to walk through Six Flags Great America to enter the water park (above left). Tsunami Surge can be taken with single or double riders (above middle). The towering height of the waterslide challenges the neighboring coaster, Maxx Force (above right).

COURTESY SIX FLAGS; AT/ TIM BALDWIN



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# PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

▶ Zamperla unveils Double Heart Lightning — page 14 / Crystal Lagoons Island Resort breaks ground — page 22

## Legoland New York Resort opens to smiles, positive reviews

AT: Pam Sherborne  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

GOSHEN, N.Y. — **Legoland New York Resort** has officially opened to guests for pre-views, kicking off an exciting 2021 for the northeastern part of the United States, which hasn't seen a major theme park opening in over 40 years.

"We opened with six of our seven lands on May 29," said **Matt Besterman**, public relations manager for the New York location. "Our phased opening will see the seventh land, **Lego Pirates**, and the hotel opening sometime this summer."

No dates had been set for those openings by mid-June, but Besterman said he expects to be able to announce them soon.

Visitors, however, still have plenty to see, do, eat and drink at the new 150-acre facility, which sits within 500 acres in the Hudson Valley area about 60 miles north of New York City.

The six themed areas that opened at the end of May include two brand new to the Lego brand, **Bricktopia** and **Brick Street**. Legoland targets ages two years to 12 years old. The other themed areas are



Above, the Dragon coaster, by Zierer, located in the Lego Castle area of Legoland New York Resort is a popular attraction at the park. Brick Street is where guests are finding this Bertazzon-built carousel (inset). Instead of hopping on a carousel horse, guests are hopping on Lego models such as motorcycles, tigers and Duplo chickens.

COURTESY LEGOLAND NEW YORK



Lego Ninjago World, Lego City, Lego Castle and Miniland.

The brand new Lego Factory Adventure Ride is located in Bricktopia.

"This ride tells a great

story," Besterman said. "It takes riders on a journey and shows them how lego bricks are made."

In the narrative-led experience, guests join Professor Brick on an adventure through the Lego Factory, meeting many whimsical characters along the way. Guests watch as a dragon melts the plastic and onward to how the bricks are created.

Halfway through the ride experience, the ride vehicles spin guests until they end up face-to-face with a screen. First, guests see their ride vehicles transformed into Lego elements and then they see themselves appear as Lego Minifigures. The on-screen recreation is customized based on a guest's attributes to present a unique experience. Motion tracking even allows the Minifigure to move

as the guest does.

**ETF Ride Systems** created the vehicles and track of the ride. **Holovis** created the facial recognition as well as the tracking and computer vision technology, which allows riders to see themselves appear as Lego Minifigures.

Legoland officials tout this ride as the world's first use of on-ride tracking technology.

Aside from the Lego Factory Adventure ride, Bricktopia offers such attractions as the Lego Creative Workshop, an area where guests may create objects and test them, and ride on DJ's Dizzy Disco Spin, manufactured by **Sansei**.

Brick Street offers a look at all the different creations that may be built by Lego Bricks. It is the main thoroughfare where you enter into the park. It looks

as if it's being built by Lego Minifigures. The buildings have Legos that are coming to life on them. This also is where the Big Shop, a 10,000-square-foot retail center, is located.

Also on Brick Street is a Bertazzon-built carousel where guests may hop on motorcycles, tigers and Duplo chickens.

Lego Ninjago includes a training camp where kids can learn the ancient art of Spinjitzu. When they complete training, they can test their skills on Ninjago: The Ride, manufactured by **Triotech/Roccas/ART Engineering**. On this ride, guests are battling the Great Devourer with their hands.

Lego Ninjago World also features Jay's Gravity Force Trainer (**Mack Rides**).

Lego City is the home of the Minifigures, including A Rescue Academy that is training guests to be Lego City firefighters, by **Metalbau Emmeln**, and a Lego Driving School, by **SB International**, where visitors may earn their official Legoland driver's license.

The Palace Cinema also is located in Lego City.

Lego Castle features Merlin's Flying Machines, by **Zamperla**, the Tower Climb Tournament, **Sunkid**, and two coasters, the **Dragon** and the **Dragon's Apprentice**. The Dragon was manufactured by **Zierer** and the Dragon's Apprentice by **Zamperla**.

Miniland is a collection of interactive Lego figures in the shape of notable structures from cities around the country. It includes 10 destinations from coast to coast, making guests feel they are traveling the country, all made from Lego Bricks.

"This land is featuring some of New York City's landmarks," Besterman said. "In total, all over the park, there are

▶ See NEW YORK, page 11



Lego Pirates is the only area that didn't open with the opening of the park. It will open this summer. One of the attractions there will be this Splash Battle ride, manufactured by **Mack Rides**. COURTESY LEGOLAND NEW YORK

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Brick Street is a new area name for the Lego brand. Above left is a glimpse of Brick Street along with one of the Lego brick models, the Big Red Awesome Dino named Brad. Miniland (above right) is the place to find a collection of interactive Lego models at the new Legoland New York Resort. It includes 10 destinations with scenes such as this from New York City all made by the company's master builders. COURTESY LEGOLAND NEW YORK

► **NEW YORK**  
Continued from page 10

15,000 lego models using 30 million lego bricks."

Some of those New York City landmarks include the Empire State Building, which is over 20 feet tall. It took about 700 hours for Legoland's master builders to build this one building.

Once opened, Lego Pirates will feature a galleon ride where the kids can experience the feeling of a storm. Called Anchor's Away, by Zamperla, the ride spins and moves side

to side. The Rogue Riders, Zierer, and Splash Battle, Mack, also will be located here.

The 250-room Legoland Hotel is specially designed for families, with imaginative Lego features and themed play areas all throughout the hotel. It is located just steps away from the park.

Besterman said the park opened with a limited capacity, because not all areas were open. It also was to encourage social distancing because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Reservations are required.

"Even when we are fully

open, we will probably keep the reservation system," Besterman said. "We feel it can provide a better quality experience for our guests because we are able to better manage capacity."

Of course, it goes without saying that there are ample food and beverage locations throughout the park.

"We have included some specialties from the New York area," Besterman said. "We have something for everyone."

Besterman said Legoland officials felt the location of Goshen, New York, would be a great location for the park.

Not only is there access to millions of people close by, but also, there are many in the area that have never experienced a Legoland.

"We have a dedicated bus from the New York City Port Authority to Legoland," Besterman said. "They are providing limited service right now, but that will ramp up."

Besterman said after being on-hand since 2018, it was a great feeling to see the park open and see the smiling faces.

Legoland is owned by Merlin Entertainment Group. [legoland.com](http://legoland.com)

**LEGOLAND N.Y. RIDE LIST**

- LEGO Factory Adventure, ETF/Holovis
- 
- Dragon, Rogue Riders Zierer
- 
- Dragon's Apprentice, Anchors Away!, Merlin's Flying Machines Zamperla
- 
- LEGO NINJAGO The Ride Triotech/Roccas/ART Engineering
- 
- DJ's Dizzy Disco Spin Sansei
- 
- Fire Academy, Metalbau Emmeln
- 
- Jay's Gravity Force Trainer, Splash Battle Mack Rides
- 
- Driving School/Jr Driving School SB International
- 
- Tower Climb Tournament Sunkid
- 
- Brick Party Bertazzon
- 
- DUPLO Train LEGOLAND Billund team

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# Dragon Slayer from S&S delivers 4D thrills to Adventureland

AT: Tim Baldwin  
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

ALTOONA, Iowa — Opening in time for Memorial Day weekend, Adventureland unveiled Dragon Slayer, the park's latest roller coaster.

"We had a great opening weekend. We had weather in the 70s all three days, people were happy and opening Dragon Slayer a little earlier than anticipated was the cherry on top," said Molly Vincent, Adventureland spokesperson.

Construction on the new coaster went smoothly. Manufactured by S&S Worldwide, a 4D FreeSpin coaster operates with large vehicles that traverse track that is built stacked vertically. Magnetic fins initiate flips on the riders' seats to where the passengers somersault comfortably around the body's heart.

"We had planned for a June opening, but when we got everything commissioned and tested a little early, we thought the holiday weekend would be a great opportunity to get it open," said Vincent. "We told everybody earlier in the week, and we had people waiting right by the front gate on the day we opened it up."

The park did a season pass promotion where a drawing welcomed the first riders.

Interestingly, the park chose the name Dragon Slayer as the name of the ride playing on the thematic namesake of the coaster it was replacing.

The park now offers six coasters, three of which have been added in the last six years. When *Amusement Today* remarked that those numbers would be impressive for even the large theme parks, Vincent joked, "Well a little self-deprecation first — it had been 23 years prior to that. We've just been looking



The double loops of the Dragon end where Dragon Slayer begins. COURTESY ADVENTURELAND

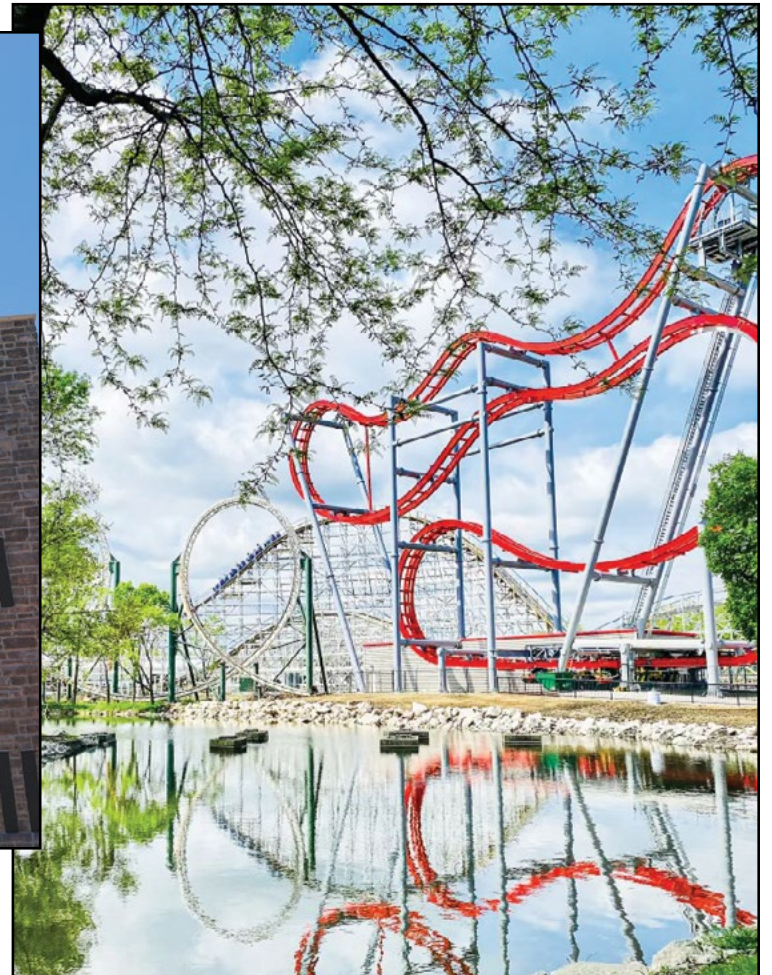
at things we wanted to do and things we needed. The Monster [Gerstlauer Infinity Coaster] was a big one we wanted to do first. When we had a space available in the 2019 season with the retirement of an older ride, we looked at what would go in that space. Phoenix [Maurer spinning coaster] fit that space. With the pandemic happening in 2020, we were a little slow in opening. Going into that, we had known we were going to retire the Dragon [1990 Hopkins double loop coaster], so we thought, let's get a jump on this. We started demolition of the Dragon last March. Those three coasters right in a row are a big investment, but we're a family business. We're all in. This is our life."

When asked why the 4D FreeSpin has been a hot seller,

S&S Executive Vice President and COO Jason Mons said, "I think there are a lot of elements why the 4D FreeSpin is attractive to a variety of parks — from the larger corporate Six Flags to the regional Adventureland. It has a unique and exciting ride experience. It has great curb appeal as you watch the ride operate from the sidelines. It casts a very dominant profile and adds to the park skyline. In addition to that, it is a very straightforward installation. Parks don't have to worry about huge installation budgets."

Interestingly, the lift hill and two loops of the Dragon are still standing. Part of that track is positioned over water. The track of the Dragon leads to (and ends at) Dragon Slayer.

"We took out the double



helix at the end. Dragon Slayer, being a 4D FreeSpin footprint, is more of a vertical coaster. We left the loops there as sort of an homage to the namesake."

When asked how long the park would keep part of the former ride standing, Vincent laughed, "I don't know. I guess it depends on what we find to put in that spot. If you see it in person, it looks kind of cool, and it is an homage to the Dragon."

Adventureland has taken advantage of the ability to customize the 4D FreeSpin models by making one side tamer than the other. Guests can choose to be a "squire" or bolster their courage to be a "knight." The knight side offers more flips, the squire is less extreme.

"I've always encouraged people to consider doing that," said Mons. "Whether it is day-to-day operations or special events, the ability to finetune the number of flips you get is completely at the discretion of the park. Good for them, that's fantastic. It allows them to customize and offer two different rides in one location."

"I wasn't sure what to expect as far as sensations. You know what going upside down feels like, but this is more of a wavy type of track, more like a ribbon," said Vincent. "It's very smooth, but even in the same seat, if you have a different weight distribution in the car, it's a different ride. That's the scary part, you really don't know what kind of ride you're

going to get."

The unexpected restrictions on opening and favorable off-season weather conditions let the construction go smoothly.

"Like so many of our other rides, our ability to collaborate with the parks gets them what they need and when they need it," said Mons.

The 4D Free Spin was originally introduced to the public in 2015 in San Antonio. Since that time, more than a dozen models have been erected around the world.

"Adventureland is the first installation of a shorter track length, what we call the 800. It's the same height of our standard model, but it has a slightly shorter track length," said Mons. "The profile is the same, we've just taken out a few of the bumps. The ride experience is the same as the longer track. Because of that we can reduce the number of vehicles. For a smaller park, you don't have to worry about the same budget."

Dragon Slayer operates with two vehicles. Riders are positioned face to face while in the station on each side of the track. Each vehicle seats eight. The height requirement to ride is 48 inches.

"We're pretty excited about it," said Vincent. "We hope everyone in Iowa and the Midwest is too. It's nice to see family businesses put in a lot to their company, and we hope everyone in Iowa and the surrounding states think it's a great deal too."



Dragon Slayer adds an iconic presence to the park's skyline. COURTESY ADVENTURELAND

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# Zamperla unveils new coaster model: Double Heart Lightning

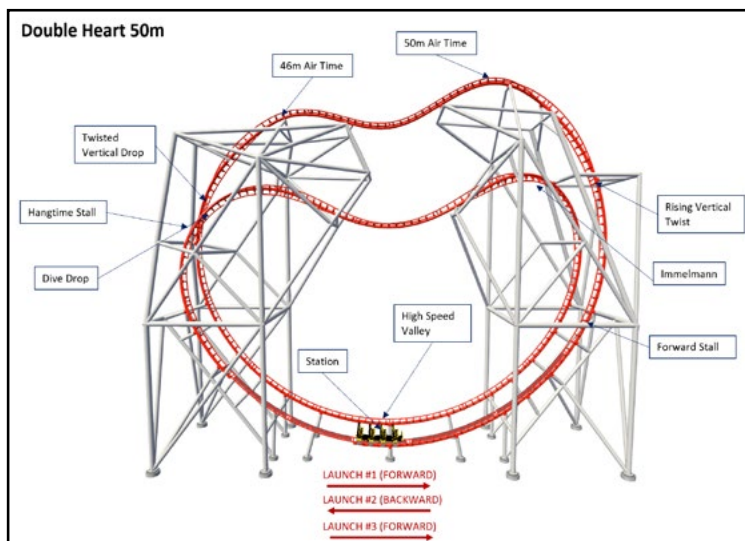
**AT:** Tim Baldwin  
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

VICENZA, Italy — Zamperla is one of the most well-known manufacturers in the amusement industry. The portfolio of rides the company offers is impressively broad. Among the up-and-coming products for Zamperla is its roller coaster lineup. Just recently, a new compact thriller has been announced.

Dubbed Double Heart Lightning, this multi-launch coaster checks a lot of boxes.

There are two sizes to this model. One stands 50 meters (164 feet), the other 70 meters (230 feet). The track length of the 50-meter model is 1,062 feet; the larger has 1,650 feet of track. Of note, riders are traveling over certain sections multiple times. The speeds of the two models are a fast 68 and 80 mph.

“We love the triple-launch concept; we think it is a lot of fun,” said Adam Sandy, roller coaster sales and marketing director. “We also looked at the marketplace and saw a demand in two areas. At 50 meters, we see other manufacturers making a product of similar size, but we



The rendering at above left spotlights the various elements and features of Double Heart Lightning. A turntable on either model increases the hourly throughput (above right). COURTESY ZAMPERLA

worked to make a model with more track and to be taller for this type of attraction. We think there is a big demand for coasters in that size and price range. We also know clients are out there who want record breakers. At 70 meters, it is technically a hyper coaster because you’ve surpassed 200 feet. That’s a different dimension of marketability and scale. So even if you want to do something really tall, it is still a compact footprint and much less of an overall

budget cost compared to a traditional chain lift coaster.”

Typically, a coaster standing more than 200 feet would stretch through a park. Sandy feels that the industry still seeks large attractions in contained spaces.

“It works in so many ways. When you have legacy properties — theme parks that have been around since the ‘70s — we think of them as sprawling properties. A lot of those have matured so much that we really have to work to get coasters into

them sometimes,” he said. “Park goers might not realize the challenge of getting a coaster into a certain site. In new builds like **American Dream** or pier parks — all are different types of properties — saving space and challenges of footprints are things I come across in the majority of projects we talk about.”

The footprint of the 50-meter model is 70 by 15 meters (229 by 49 feet). The giant model requires 120 by 19 meters (393 by 62 feet). Riders must meet a

48-inch requirement.

Zamperla isn’t the first company at the table with a multi-launch coaster, but the management is confident in its signature elements to make Double Heart Lightning stand apart. One thought process was an introduction of airtime in addition to inversions.

“The signature moment is when you go over the top, and you go over an airtime hill that

► See ZAMPERLA, page 16



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## ZAMPERLA

Continued from page 14

then twists and reverses direction into a vertical drop," said Sandy.

The towering attraction features the Lightning train vehicles that were introduced at the 2019 IAAPA Expo.

"These new trains can do lifts and launches, and we really said we need to create a great vehicle that we can adapt to many different thrills. With that, we have a seating restraint that is very comfortable," Sandy told *Amusement Today*. "Another selling point is the spacing. We have a lot of space between each row. When talking about capacity and dispatch times, we think we can achieve very good capacity [numbers] and not just on paper that really doesn't translate."

A turntable option allows the operator to continue loading a second train while one is out on the course. Two trains on the 70-meter version can accommodate 955 passengers an hour. A single train can provide 690 rides an hour on the 50-meter version and just shy of 600 on the large model.

Zamperla has placed a lot of time in developing the ride experience.

"The smoothness is two parts. One is the vehicle. We rethought everything — the seat contour, the restraint, which is a lap restraint — and we're offering a much more open experience," said Sandy. "Park goers are telling parks they want the experience to be more free — less enclosures, less fiberglass. That was our design direction on the vehicle. Another big change, which is a part of our long-term strategy, is to do a better job of engineering our fabrication pipeline. We've done a good job adding

team members to the engineering side, but when we had track going out to subcontractors, we found it wasn't always as good as we wanted it to be. We have brought that track fabrication in house. I think there is a little bit of art in addition to the science in designing coaster track."

Even with a compact model, Sandy doesn't feel the desire to theme an attraction is an overwhelming challenge with this genre. "With the Lightning vehicle and Zamperla's background with fiberglass, I think we can come up with some cool concepts on the train itself and tell stories that way," he said. Zamperla's background with lighting systems can also add flair and thematic elements to the ride. Tunnels and storytelling elements on the lower sections give parks more options for a storyline visual.

The vehicle seats four rows of four riders.

"Four was really important for us when we sat back and asked ourselves what we could improve upon from our thrill platform in the past. When the three-across seating was introduced at Coney, we knew [that property] had a lot of single riders. It gave us the opportunity to step back and see how we want the thrill platform to function in the future, and we looked at the possibilities of two and four. Because real capacity are key drivers, we thought having four across made sense," Sandy said. "When building two-across or four-across, there really aren't a lot of cost differences in metrics there, so we liked the visuals that come with the four across, and the end seats kind of stick out over the track. Overall it was a design decision that we felt worked really well."

• [zamperla.com](http://zamperla.com)



Zamperla revealed its comfortable new Lightning train at the 2019 IAAPA Expo (above). The openness and spacious rows are features Zamperla engineers are proud of (right). AT/TIM BALDWIN; COURTESY ZAMPERLA



## Park Post-its



AT: Pam Sherborne  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

An upcoming land sale in Williams, Arizona, could open the way for a newly planned community and theme park that would almost double the built area of that city.

**Brent Moser** with **Lee & Associates Commercial Real Estate Services** out of Phoenix said he has been working on the project for close to two years. Moser announced at the first of June that the deal is now nearly complete.

The 500-acre area named Gonzales Ranch is currently owned by **Max Biegert**, who restarted and previously owned the **Grand Canyon Railway** in the late 1980s.

Moser said the sale of the property is expected to occur sometime in the latter half of this year. The property will then come under the control of Kansas-based **Kansas Development** and a local developer that has yet to be disclosed.

Moser couldn't speak to the final sale price for the property at this point, but did say it was close to \$20 million.

Once the deal is through, Moser said, he would expect construction on a planned community to begin in the first few months of 2022.

About 87 acres worth of the property has been placed aside for a planned theme park and visitor amenities.

That part of the project is being led by **Acorn Entertainment Group**, which includes several former employees of **Disney**, **Pixar** and **Legoland**, **Acorn President Greg Schumsky** told the local Arizona Daily Sun. The park will be an old west and steampunk town called Jackalope Junction, populated by a wide range of characters, each of whom have encountered and overcome a personal tragedy.

The park is still asking visitors to continue wearing their masks and social distance.

**Fun Spot Kissimmee**, located in Kissimmee, Florida, is getting a new Frog Hopper by S & S Worldwide brokered by **Rides 4-U**.

Park owners are excited about the addition as it will be a perfect fit for the very young visitors.

**Enchanted Forest** amusement park in Salem, Oregon, officially reopened for the 2021 season the weekend of June 5 and 6, welcoming guests again for the first time in eight months.

The park planned to open at 15% capacity, or about 400 guests, for the first two weekends. By June 17, park officials hope to keep it open seven days a week.

Park officials plan to enforce policies aimed at preventing the spread of the coronavirus, including timed-entry tickets, an eight-guest limit per group, and the closure of some rides and attractions. Water fountains will not be available and food options will be limited, the park said. A full list of what is open and closed in the park is posted online at [enchantedforest.com](http://enchantedforest.com).

Visitors flocked to **Santa Cruz Beach**

**Boardwalk**, Santa Cruz, California, over Memorial Day weekend, exciting park officials and guests alike.

During that time, the boardwalk was currently at a capacity of 35 percent, due to current COVID-19 safety restrictions. The number was maintained by limiting the number of advanced ride tickets sold and monitoring a headcount on the boardwalk.

For many visiting, it was just a sliver of the way things once were before pandemic and the first signs of great things to come.

**Dollywood** in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, has added a nightly drone light show to guest experiences. The performances are taking place each evening during the park's Summer Celebration. It started June 25 and is running through July 31.

Dollywood's Sweet Summer Nights is a multi-sensory drone light show that creates a symphony of light in the sky above the Pigeon Forge park.

The show uses nearly 400 drones to animate the spectacular Dollywood-exclusive story, as the performance is integrated into a musically choreographed fireworks show. Each drone serves as a pixel of light that illuminates the night sky with the ability to create dynamic shapes and animations. Each drone is less than one foot in diameter, weighs less than a pound and can produce more than four billion color combinations.

**Intel Drone Light Shows** is presenting the spectacular.

Despite attempts to revive it, **Ghost Town** in Maggie Valley, North Carolina, has remained shuttered for years. But new development partners, whose names have not been released, believe they have the right formula to bring the Maggie Valley amusement park back to life.

According to a local ABC affiliate news agency, a member of the development team said the Ghost Town plans will preserve the nostalgia of the place but bring in modern amenities, as well. Plans are to add modern rides and attractions, lodge-type hotels at the base and top of the mountain, cottages and retail stores.

Project timelines have not been released.

**Joyland Amusement Park** in Lubbock, Texas, was forced to close after a storm Monday, May 25, caused flooding in the Hub City, including Mackenzie Park.

"You can't control Mother Nature," **David Dean**, president and park owner, said to a local news agency. "An inch of rain will equal almost a foot of flood water in the Mackenzie Park area and inside Joyland."

Three feet of water flooded Joyland, along with the mud. Dean said there was water in the games buildings, food service buildings and rides.

The park reopened June 5.

Summer is in full session at **Bay Beach Amusement Park**, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

The amusement park opened its 2021 season on May 1 and had one of the busiest weekends it has ever had over Memorial Day weekend, according to **Britney Burkart-Labar**, facilities supervisor at the amusement park.

"We've gotten school groups out here, so it kind of feels like a normal summer again," Burkart-Labar said.

She doesn't expect the park to quiet down this summer as long as the weather is good.

Bay Beach only has 15 full-time staff members, but has more subs than usual to keep the park operating this summer.



# Intamin's Kondaa roars into Walibi Belgium, increases park size

AT: Tim Baldwin  
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

WAVRE, Belgium — When **Walibi Belgium** opened its ninth coaster on May 9, it was the debut of the park's tallest (164 feet) and most signature coaster yet. Not only is the coaster big, it increased the size of the park as well.

"In 2018, we opened Exotic World with a family coaster, Tiki Waka. This new zone is inspired by the South Seas; it's very colorful and welcomes a family audience," said General Manager **Jean-Christophe Parent**. "The new area we opened this May is an extension of Exotic World. We have expanded the exotic theming to something darker, unspoiled, forgotten, more grandiose and impressive — just like the overpowering Kondaa. Two bridges connect the two parts, the colorful and darker side of Exotic World. Once visitors cross the bridges, they become adventurers exploring a world that was forgotten for thousands of years, and where nature has reclaimed its rights over millennial old premises. Of course,



**Kondaa stands 164 feet, the tallest coaster in the park. The sinister look to the trains adds to the intimidation of the thrills (above).** COURTESY WALIBI BELGIUM

a mythological monster haunts the area."

That monster, of course, is Kondaa. Of the park's arsenal of roller coasters, Kondaa is the first partnership with **Intamin Amusement Rides**.

"A really great ride is (almost) always the result of a combined effort of the involved teams and a fruitful collaboration. So the credit definitely belongs to both, the **Compagnie des Alpes** (CDA) design team and the Intamin coaster design team," said **Sascha Czibulka**, vice president, Intamin. "The

initial idea of CDA was to introduce Europe's most prominent airtime Mega Coaster. Intamin suggested the key elements like the side-banked airtime hill, looking like a 90-degree curve from the top; the 80-degree side twisting and 80 degrees steepness of the first drop, which is a modern version of its predecessor, Expedition Ge Force, Europe's first and well-known Mega Coaster; and the noninverting cobra roll — a real world's first. Once the first layout was done, it was opti-



mized together with CDA with special focus on the choreography and the extensive airtime of different kinds."

"The first contact with Intamin took place shortly

before the IAAPA Expo in Berlin in 2017 and intensified afterwards," said Parent. "We wanted the best expertise, so

▶ See **KONDAA**, page 18



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## RWS Entertainment Group launches Leased Experiences

NEW YORK, N.Y. — RWS Entertainment Group (RWS) announced the addition of Leased Experiences offerings, further developing the production company's full-service range of branded experiences. By expanding to offer scalable leased experiences, RWS can provide affordable solutions for any budget. Iconic brands come to life through character interaction, colorful scenery and interactive activations driving foot traffic and guest satisfaction in even the smallest space.



"Many times, licensing fees are cost prohibitive for smaller attractions and museums," said RWS Founder and CEO **Ryan Stana**. "Our new Leased Experiences allow virtually any venue to add the power of an iconic brand to their marketing campaigns and guest experience. RWS handles everything from design and installation to staffing and guest interaction."

RWS raises the traditional exhibit model by including human interaction, staffed and trained by RWS. Flexible designs that fit any space encourage play, collaboration and fun. Leased Experiences can be integrated with retail and food and beverage offerings to maximize investment and create a 360-degree, marketable attraction that quickly drives ROI.

"Other companies design and install exhibits then leave the customer to take care of marketing integration, staffing and guest interaction," added Stana. "With RWS Leased Experiences, we are a partner every step of the way, including managing day-to-day experience operations."

RWS Leased Experiences brand activation partners and experiences include: Peanuts at Play, Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer, Dino Don and Bricklive.

• [experiencerws.com/leased-experiences](http://experiencerws.com/leased-experiences)

## ►KONDAA Continued from page 17

we shortlisted three suppliers. All presented very interesting projects, but Intamin caught our attention because the concept they proposed was the most innovative and exciting one. Walibi Belgium is known for its constant drive for innovation. We presented the project at the IAAPA Expo in Orlando in 2018."

The coaster has a top speed surpassing 70 mph and a track length of 3,937 feet.

"Kondaa is the result of Intamin's ability to create great coaster layouts, our new train design resulting in a maximum of comfort and freedom for the riders and the highest track manufacturing quality — which all together allowed to incorporate many different features and elements and all this at considerably high speeds," said Czibulka. "Kondaa is not only the fastest and tallest roller coaster in the Benelux, it also has the most airtime moments of any steel coaster in the world — 15 to be exact."

"We already have an extensive portfolio of rides: inverted, suspended, launch, free fall ... offering different kind of sensa-

tions," Parent told *Amusement Today*. "However, we wanted to include more airtime into this portfolio. Hence, the decision for this Mega Coaster, which is a real airtime machine! Fifteen moments of airtime on a Mega Coaster; we have a world record here."

Of the park's impressive coaster lineup, four of them have been added in the last six years — and that includes a time of global pandemic.

"The pandemic hit us hard. Compared to 2019, we have lost 50% of turnover and 50% of visitors' attendance," said Parent. "This year, we also could not reopen as planned on April 3. This means we were closed during Belgian Easter holidays, an important season starter for our park. As for the project, we had to stop construction work for three weeks, but in the end, the project team masterfully managed it."

Part of the magic of the installation is the theming.

"Kondaa is the park's most ambitious project since the opening in 1975," noted Parent. "We thus had to take the theming and immersive experience of the surrounding area up a notch. We are very satisfied of the accomplished work; the

area is completely finalized in terms of scenery. For example, we planted 16,000 exotic plants and trees, with over 80 different varieties and 14 very rare exotic species."

The trains feature a sinister theme as well.

"The theming was the input from the park, executed by us," Czibulka told *AT*. "The trains are based on Intamin's latest train design, which was most successfully introduced on Taron, our LSM Launch Coaster at Phantasialand in Germany, but now adopted for lift propelled coasters. And the most important feature for the guest experience is the really high comfort owed to the restraint design and the shape of the seat."

The new area also offers immersive theming, and different activities include Kondaa (a children's attraction), a gift shop and a beautifully themed restaurant.

"Visitors are crazy about Kondaa and can't get enough of it. We've had park fans that have been present to test the ride every weekend since its opening," said Parent. "The overall reactions are excellent; Kondaa is meeting and even exceeding our guests' expectations."

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# Knott's Berry Farm reaches its century mark with the 2021 season

AT: Pam Sherborne  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

BUENA PARK, Calif. — As **Knott's Berry Farm** enters its 100th anniversary celebration, park officials haven't forgotten the park's simple origins that began in 1920 when **Walter and Cordelia Knott**, along with their young children, moved to this then sleepy community to grow berries on their 20-acre farm.

It was from those 20 acres of berries that the Knotts opened a roadside stand. Then a restaurant and, later, a wild west show — entertaining guests standing in line to eat at the restaurant — followed. Those simple beginnings is what led to what Knott's Berry Farm today.

The 160-acre theme park now welcomes millions of guests each year to enjoy the over 40 rides and attractions in the four themed areas of the park. And after 2020 closures, park officials are pulling out the stops for the 100th anniversary celebrations.

"New and unforgettable experiences await in honor of the park's 100 years of history and family fun for all," said **Diana Bahena**, senior representative, public relations, marketing.

During the 100th anni-



**Cordelia and Walter Knott, founders of Knott's Berry Farm, Buena Park, California, would probably have a hard time recognizing their 20-acre berry farm today. What started with a roadside stand, restaurant and the few attractions they eventually built to entertain guests standing in line, is today 160 acres with four-themed areas and more than 40 rides and attractions. At right is a scene from Knott's Berry Farm's Ghost Town in the 1940s.** COURTESY KNOTT'S BERRY FARM



versary celebration, guests are experiencing the brand-new Knott's Beary Tales: Return to the Fair, a 4-D interactive dark ride that pays tribute to the classic attraction from 35 years ago. This new adven-

ture takes guests on a journey through reimagined show scenes from the original dark ride, including the Boysenberry Pie Factory, Frog Forest,

▶ See **KNOTT'S**, page 21

## Highlights of 100 years of Knott's Berry Farm

- **1920** — The Knott family arrives in Buena Park, begins farming 20 acres of land
- **1928** — First permanent building erected to house Cordelia Knott's tea room and berry market. The farm is christened Knott's Berry Place
- **1937** — Tea room is turned into a restaurant, serves 1,774 Thanksgiving dinners.
- **1940** — First attraction added to entertain guests in line for the restaurant. Called the Covered Wagon, it was a cyclorama depicting the family's journey West.
- **1951** — The Calico Saloon opens
- **1952** — Walter buys a narrow-gauge railroad, the Denver and Rio Grande, and moves it in its entirety to the farm.
- **1954** — The Bird Cage Theatre opens.
- **1960** — The Calico Mine Ride opens.
- **1968** — Park is enclosed and a general admission fee of \$1 is charged for the first time.
- **1969** — The Calico Logging Co. opens (later renamed Timber Mountain Log Ride)
- **1971** — The 2,100-seat John Wayne Theatre (now the Charles M. Schulz Theatre) opens.
- **1973** — Debut of Knott's Scary Farm event for Halloween.
- **1974** — Cordelia Knott dies at the age of 84.
- **1975** — Corkscrew and Knott's Beary Tales open.
- **1978** — Second roller coaster opens, Montezooma's Revenge.
- **1981** — Walter Knott dies and Terry E. Van Gorder takes the helm.
- **1983** — Camp Snoopy opens.
- **1985** — First Knott's Merry Farm holiday event presented.
- **1988** — Park receives *Amusement Business*/Liseberg Applause Award. Bigfoot Rapids also opens.
- **1990** — Corkscrew is replaced by Boomerang roller coaster.
- **1995** — Jaguar roller coaster opens.
- **1997** — Windjammer Surf Racers coaster opens. Cedar Fair Entertainment Company of Sandusky, Ohio acquires Knott's Berry Farm.
- **1998** — Ghost Rider wooden coaster and the Supreme Scream open.
- **2002** — Xcelerator launched coaster opens.
- **2004** — Four new attractions open: RipTide, Lucy's Tugboat, Screamin' Swing and the Silver Bullet.
- **2007** — Knott's debuts Sierra Sidewinder.
- **2008** — Pony Express thrill ride opens.
- **2011** — The 301-foot-tall Windseeker opens.
- **2013** — Park opens new attractions including three family-style rides: Coast Rider, Surfside Glider and Pacific Scrambler.
- **2014** — Three new attractions open in Camp Snoopy: Charlie Brown's Kite Flyer, Pig Pen's Mud Buggies, and Linus Launcher. The Calico Mine Ride comes back after major renovation.
- **2015** — Voyage to the Iron Reef, a 4D interactive ride opens.
- **2016** — Ghost Rider returns from restoration.
- **2018** — Park debuts Sol Spin thrill ride.
- **2019** — Calico River Rapids debuts, replacing Bigfoot Rapids.
- **2020** — Park hosts variety of specialty events while rides and attractions remain closed.

**►KNOTT'S**  
Continued from page 20

Fortune Teller Camp, Thunder Cave, and Weird Woods, culminating in a celebration at the County Fair.

Guests will also have the opportunity to meet Knott's all-new lovable costumed characters and enjoy special evening entertainment as Knott's Summer Nights returns with live music, DJs and one-of-a-kind food and drink specialties.

"In addition, the theme park is planning a nightly ceremony featuring multiple attractions lighting up the evening and culminating in a special moment with the redesigned illuminated K-tower," Bahena said.

Guests also will find festive new park decorations, including special photo settings that pay homage to favorite attractions from the past and commemorative merchandise cel-



Walter and Cordelia Knott moved to Buena Park, California in 1920 to farm a 20-acre piece of land. They grew berries and opened a berry roadside stand, the beginning of Knott's Berry Farm (above left). The popularity of Knott's Berry Farm, Buena Park, California, doesn't stop with the rides and attractions. The food, like Boyensberry Churros (above middle), keeps visitors coming back. Camp Snoopy at Knott's Berry Farm opened in 1983. At right, Camp Snoopy characters stand in front of the park's Silver Bullet roller coaster. COURTESY KNOTT'S BERRY FARM



ebrating the park's vast history and those more simple times

Knott's food offerings have always been a draw. During the 2020 shut-downs due to the COVID-19 pandemic, park officials used that popular aspect to continue to draw guests by present-

ing food events.

Guests to the 2021 season are continuing to partake in these popular offerings.

Bahena said the 2021 season has been going great so far.

"We're very excited to have welcomed everyone of-

ficially back to the park," Bahena said. "We continue to follow and enforce the state and local health guidelines to ensure the safety of our guests and staff members. We have received great feedback from our guests who have returned and have experienced

the park along with our new 100th Anniversary Family Reunion celebration.

"Overall it's been amazing watching our guests smile as they enter the park and feel a sense of normalcy once more," she said.

•knotts.com

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# Crystal Lagoons Island Resort breaks ground in Glendale, Arizona

Resort to feature first ever Mattel-themed Adventure Park

GLENDALÉ, Ariz. — Crystal Lagoons Island Resort officially broke ground on June 10 in Glendale, Arizona, on property across the street from State Farm Stadium, home to the NFL's Arizona Cardinals.

The resort will be home to a massive Crystal Lagoon, retail shops, restaurants, hotel and the first-ever, Mattel-themed adventure park. The resort is scheduled to be completed in fall 2022, in time for the city's hosting of Super Bowl LVII in February 2023.

Glen Bilbo, managing director for Epic Resort Destinations pulled the resort concept together with Mark Cornell, president of attractions & entertainment for Crystal Lagoons Island Resort.

Eric Cherasia, vice president of the Crystal Lagoons brand told *Amusement Today*, "This is the next wave of bringing family entertainment in a very epic way by bringing the beach to the desert."



A new Crystal Lagoons Island Resort broke ground and will debut in Fall of 2022. The resort will have an adventure park themed with classic Mattel franchises, including a Hot Wheels roller coaster (above right). COURTESY CRYSTAL LAGOONS

The lagoon itself will be the centerpiece of the resort, with waters eight to 10 feet deep in the center. The resort will include the finest of dining and retail shops, and will have a venue within that is large enough for weddings and other entertainment events."

This resort concept marks the first time the Crystal Lagoons brand has been used in a tourism/hospitality-themed brand.

The fun for resort guests doesn't stop at just the lagoon interaction. The Mattel Adventure Park will feature an indoor

FEC along with outdoor rides all geared to the Mattel brand of toys.

Highlights at the park will be a Hot Wheels-themed looping roller coaster and a first life-sized Thomas the Tank Engine electric-battery powered passenger train, both to be supplied by Chance Rides, Wichita, Kan.

The park also will feature a Hot Wheels race track that is being implemented into the Lagoon. Hot Wheels go-carts for all skill levels, with interactive Hot Wheels AR-racing systems, will be available for the more com-

petitive speed-seeking drivers.

"At Mattel, we are home to some of the most iconic, multi-generational franchises in the world," said Julie Freeland, senior director, global location based entertainment, Mattel. "By partnering with Crystal Lagoons Island Resort, we will be offering new and immersive ways for families to experience classic brands like Hot Wheels, Thomas & Friends, and more."

"A passion for innovation and excellence has driven the design of our venue. Mattel shares

our vision and sets the platinum standard for the concept of play. We are thrilled to create the country's first Mattel Adventure Park in Glendale," Cornell told AT.

"We are delighted for Glendale to be the flagship location for this resort that will bring technology and globally established partners to create a one-of-a-kind environment," said Kevin Phelps, city manager. "The Crystal Lagoons and the Mattel themed Adventure Park will complement our thriving sports and entertainment district and support our goal of being a premier destination for visitors from across the globe and for Glendale residents. Over the coming weeks we look forward to sharing details on the iconic hotel, restaurants, and entertainment brands that will join the Mattel Adventure Park in calling Glendale home as part of this world-class resort development."

Crystal Lagoons Island Resort is projecting attendance of 5,000 to 6,000 visitors per day.

"I know Crystal Island Lagoon Resort will add so much more to the visitor experience, and it's starting to become an attraction all on its own — save all of our technologies — and enhance the experience. That'll make this destination a must stop for people just visiting Arizona, as well as a must see for those who call people Arizona home," said Glendale Mayor Jerry Weiers.

—Story contribution by Laurin Privateer

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Dick Chance of Chance Rides (left) and Mark Cornell at the resort's ground breaking ceremony. AT/GARY SLADE



# FAMILY SPINNING COASTER



With Storm Chaser the British theme park Paulton's Park opened 2021 the newest family spinning coaster from MACK Rides. Free spinning gondolas, a high-capacity train design and a balanced layout design are the cornerstones of this popular family attraction from 40 inch rider height. For more please visit [www.mack-rides.com](http://www.mack-rides.com)

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Operating as a cross between a roller coaster and a zip line, Extreme Engineering has been granted a U.S. patent for its Cloud Coaster. COURTESY EXTREME ENGINEERING

## Cloud Coaster granted patent

ATHENS, Texas — Extreme Engineering announced the company was awarded a U.S. patent on the Cloud Coaster family coaster.

The coaster and trolley system were issued U.S. patent number 10,835,834. The patent includes many claims on the family coaster's design.

"I'm thrilled about our latest patent," said Phil Wilson, executive vice president with Extreme Engineering. "This further enhances Extreme Engineering's IP portfolio. It feels fantastic that our company gained another U.S. patent."

The abstract of the patent states: "A rail coaster operates as a cross between a roller coaster and a zip line. A rail may be suspended under a frame by flexible cables or solid brackets. The rail may tum, incline, decline, or twist, but need not twist to still provide a 'rolling' degree of freedom for a rider. An eddy current brake provides proportional braking as a function of speed." These claims protect Extreme Engineering's Cloud Coaster features and breakthrough designs.

Extreme Engineering's first U.S. patent was on the mobile climbing wall and auto-belay, which at the time was patent number 6,390,952. "This really sets us far from the competition, always inventing forward and protecting our ideas," stated Wilson.

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



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## Orlando World Center Marriott hotel adds AGS MiniLinks mini golf course



Orlando World Center Marriott added a MiniLinks course from Adventure Golf & Sports, which featured blue putting greens. COURTESY ADVENTURE GOLF & SPORTS

ORLANDO — The largest Marriott hotel in the world, **Orlando World Center Marriott**, was faced with a major dilemma as the Memorial Day weekend neared. The facility's main pool was shut down for emergency maintenance, and the hotel already had an abundance of reservations for the upcoming holiday weekend. In order to help keep its guests entertained, the hotel opted to install a portable 18-hole miniature golf course from **Adventure Golf & Sports** (AGS) on the property.

"We are continually looking for experiential offerings for families and the mini golf course provided the perfect option for an outdoor family friendly activity," said **Kamiya Woodard**, director of recreation at the hotel about the installation, which was initially in response to the crisis of the shutdown pool.

"We looked at an array of activities but felt miniature golf would truly capture all ages of our leisure guests. And we had the perfect outdoor location for it. We definitely wanted something portable to move in and out because of so many events and activities taking place outside."

Woodard did some calling around to some other Marriott properties that have added mini golf courses as well, and continually found that AGS came up as a top resource.

"I requested three proposals and selected [AGS] because of their customer service. **Heather Simpson**, my account rep, was quick in response time and worked through every detail with me," added Woodard. "I made it very clear what we were looking for. The turnaround time, communication and professionalism were greatly appreciated."

AGS proposed the hotel install a MiniLinks course, which

is designed for portable indoor and outdoor use and comes in a full size and junior version. Both versions are installed using patented, interlocking modular panels that are permeable for efficient water drainage.

"We were looking for something portable and durable. MiniLinks was the best option for our operation," said Woodard.

"We needed to have it arrive in a short period of time," said Woodard. Given that the Memorial Day holiday weekend was fast approaching. "I gave Heather our budget and said, 'This is what our budget is. Can you work with this?' I was definitely hounding her on time constraints. We wanted it up and running within three to four weeks and AGS was able to make that happen."

Even with the helpful staff of AGS, the staff at Marriott created its own hurdle as it prepared for the installation. "It really was just timing, shipping and we were good to go at one point," explained Woodard. Then Marriott executives realized they could have a different color of turf. "They didn't necessarily like green turf on a green lawn. They wanted something that popped. We wanted our course to stand out. We wanted the guest to see it, be drawn to it and come on down to start playing. AGS already had blue turf in stock, so that didn't affect shipping time."

Although the 18-hole full-size MiniLinks course requires only a minimum of 3,000 square feet, the Orlando Marriott had abundant space and was able to spread the course over 7,800 square feet directly below the hotel's main lobby on their activity/event lawn.

"People love it," said Woodard. "All ages have enjoyed

it, and we normally have a line waiting to play on weekends." She added, "We knew reopening after COVID that we had to accommodate social distancing and we knew this would be an easy enough activity where we could execute that. When guests come out to the course, they don't start until someone is at least two holes ahead of them, and then it's a nice flow all the way around."

The MiniLinks course now joins other attractions the Orlando Marriott uses to entice and retain guests.

"Our water slide tower and splash zone were added to the resort in 2013 and have proven to be great enhancements to our offerings. We want to expand that even further, which is why we are building an additional water slide tower and a lazy river which is scheduled to open in spring 2022," commented Woodard.

•marriott.com

## Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk debuts Lighthouse Lift-Off

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. — **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk** recently debuted its long-awaited tower ride from **Sunkid**. Dubbed **Lighthouse Lift-Off**, the tower is one of the more popular rides offered by Sunkid, with more than 110 installations worldwide.

The Boardwalk managers chose the ride because of its interactive nature. The operating principle of the attraction has guests pulling the rope of the tower so that the double seat moves upward (with motorized assistance). Passengers decide how high they wish to travel and any time the rope is released, the double seat gently descends.

During the ride, the **Lighthouse Lift-Off** rotates around its own axis, rewarding passengers with a panoramic view of the ocean and beachfront boardwalk.

The **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk** ride is painted red and white, and it features a large beacon house, reminiscent of a classic lighthouse. As a result, the ride blends in visually with the backdrop of the beach.

"**Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk** is thrilled to welcome **Lighthouse Lift-Off** to our lineup of exciting and unique rides. It's a new and fun experience for our youngest riders, and the lighthouse theme matches our seaside boardwalk perfectly," stated **Kris Ray**, spokesperson, **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk**.

•beachboardwalk.com



The towering family attraction **Lighthouse Lift-Off** blends into the natural seaside scenery of **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk**. The interactive ride provides fun for guests of all ages. COURTESY SUNKID



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Zone Out Arcade, which aims to provide a unique and unforgettable experience for the entire family, recently integrated Embed's cashless solutions. COURTESY EMBED

## Australia's Zone Out Arcade goes cashless with Embed

NELSON BAY, Australia — Embed recently announced it had provided integrated cashless solutions to Zone Out Arcade located in Nelson Bay, Australia.

The FEC opened its doors to the public on Christmas Eve 2020, in time for the Australian summer school holidays. Family-owned and operated locally, Zone Out Arcade aims to provide a unique and unforgettable experience for the entire family by offering the arcade games, basketball hoops, air hockey tables, skill-testers and a unique ball drop where players go inside the machine and try to get as many balls into the holes as possible.

"Although there was an ongoing pandemic, we were seeing people come into our venue quite quickly and strongly motivated to have fun with their family and friends," said Emily Pattison, Co-owner, Zone Out Arcade. "We're so grateful for the customer support from Embed, which enabled us to open our premises on time. Embed's support team has remained constant, efficient, and reliable."

Embed's integrated business platform enables business owners to achieve greater operational efficiency while reducing costs and increasing profitability. Fitted with Embed's self-service kiosk, award-winning smartTOUCH readers and integrated with Embed's point-of-sale and prizes redemption management system, Zone Out Arcade is equipped with a total integrated solution that works on the ground and is centrally accessible from anywhere, anytime.

"We believe that anything is possible and offer solutions to meet the wide-ranging needs of guests and operators alike," stated Renee Welsh CEO of Embed.

•embedcard.com

## Fiafia adds Semnox's Parfait

U.A.E. — Dubai-based children's play area and cafe chain Fiafia has implemented Semnox's cashless RFID wristband system, handheld POS, F&B POS and inventory management system for its outlets located at Ferdous and its new facility at DIFC.

Fiafia's interactive and engaging indoor play area designed to entertain and educate children, makes the entertainment center chain a very popular and loved destination.

"Our search for the right system to manage the kids play area and the cafeteria ended with Semnox," said Alia Nabooda, owner of Fiafia. "A simple-to-use system, easy metrics and their extensive experience has helped in automating most of our work."

RFID systems and technology has been changing the landscape of the entertainment and leisure industry by enabling cashless operations and streamlined experience for its customers. Semnox's Parafait for FEC's offers an innovative, cost-effective and comprehensive all-in-one solution.

"Fiafia serves as a perfect venue for the children to learn and have fun at the same time," said Meghashyam, client manager for Semnox. "We implemented a cashless RFID wristband system to fully manage the children's play area and the cafeteria. I wish Fiafia the very best and we look forward to doing more business with them in future."

•semnox.com



## FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT CENTRAL

AT: John W.C. Robinson

jrobinson@amusementtoday.com

At the Chamwell Centre in Gloucester, U.K., Innovative Leisure has installed a four panel DigiWall interactive climbing wall, measuring more than nine feet tall and nearly 15 feet wide. The attraction is located in the center's Rebound therapy room. The center is one of the U.K.'s largest special need schools catering to pupils with severe learning difficulties as well as those with complex medical conditions and physical disabilities.

DigiWall is an interactive fusion of climbing wall and computer game. Using their whole body to play, participants follow the lights and sounds on the wall to play six interactive and multi-sensory games as DigiWall responds to their actions. By combining a traversing wall with touch sensitive technology the attraction provides experiences built on physical activity and the use of multiple senses.

The venue had a small space where it wanted to add a stimulating and interactive climbing activity which could be used by people of all ages and abilities. The four panel DigiWall fitted perfectly into the space and has had some very good feedback since.

Fruition Partners, a Denver-based private equity firm, announced its partnership with The Track Family Fun Parks, a family entertainment center in Branson, Missouri. The Track will continue to be led by Craig Wescott and Mike Russell, who have been involved since The Track's inception 40 years ago.

Jay Coughlon, managing partner and co-founder of Fruition Partners, said, "What Craig, Mike and the entire Track team have built over the years is great entertainment for people of all ages! The Track offers an incredible collection of family attractions including multi-story go-kart tracks, thrill rides, arcades and the iconic Ferris Wheel from the Chicago Navy Pier, all in the heart of the rapidly growing vacation and recreation destination of Branson, Missouri. We are excited to leverage The Track's model and partner with or acquire other strong FEC operators with a particular focus on the south / southeastern United States."

"Fruition, with their focus on people, was a natural fit when Mike and I decided to partner with a private equity firm to grow The Track," said Wescott. "Our fathers started something truly special and we continue to build upon their legacy. With Fruition, we look forward to investing in our existing staff and properties while adding new attractions and experiences in Branson and beyond."

Fun Spot America Atlanta is partnering with Rocky Mountain Construction (RMC) on the next big thing for Atlanta. A new roller coaster design process is underway and scheduled to debut in 2022. This will be Fun Spot America's largest roller coaster investment ever. It will be the first of many new marque rides and attractions yet to come to Fun Spot Atlanta.

"RMC is a highly sought-after designer and manufacturer of award-winning roller coasters. We're pleased to be able to provide huge thrills for families and coaster enthusiasts at our Atlanta park," said Fun Spot America CEO, John Arie Jr.

Fun Spot America has yet to announce additional details about the coaster, but the park is pursuing a naming rights sponsorship opportunity with one of Atlanta's major sports franchises.

A major chain of indoor snow centers is planned by the Virginia-based Alpine-X.

The first in a series of what will be 20 venues is at Fairfax Peak, Washington D.C. It will also include a hotel, gravity-powered mountain coaster, zip lines, multiple F&B outlets and other facilities.

"Today there is an estimated 9.2 million active skiers and snowboarders in the US, a market that would be much larger if the sport were more accessible," said John Emery, CEO at Alpine-X. "We are on a mission to address this market gap."

University Family Fun Center bills itself as "Philadelphia's only traditional arcade," an urban venue close to several college campuses that thrives on local regulars and walk-in trade. William Schoepe opened the former University Pinball in 1977 it was strictly pin games, with over a hundred flippers to choose from.

When Schoepe's son Billy took over the arcade in 2009, he and his wife Rebecca remade it as an FEC, adding skeeball and table, video and redemption games. They changed from coins to tokens too, but it wasn't until 2020 that the Shoepes finally made the switch from tokens to Intercard cashless technology. Billy calls it "the greatest thing I've ever done." Billy is thrilled to do away with token and ticket jams and theft.

According to Billy, the FEC has noted a "huge increase in purchasing" since the change to cashless. "Before, the most I would get was a twenty dollar bill for a hundred tokens, which to me was freaking phenomenal," stated Billy. "Now I can take credit cards. People can put in a hundred dollars and get the [game] credit price down to like, 18 cents a credit which is a terrific value for customers."

Georgia-based FEC, Stars and Strikes is celebrating the 16th anniversary of its first location in Cumming, Georgia.

The 50,000+ square foot facility features a recently upgraded and expanded arcade with 15 new video and redemption games. The expansive arcade also includes a new prize store.

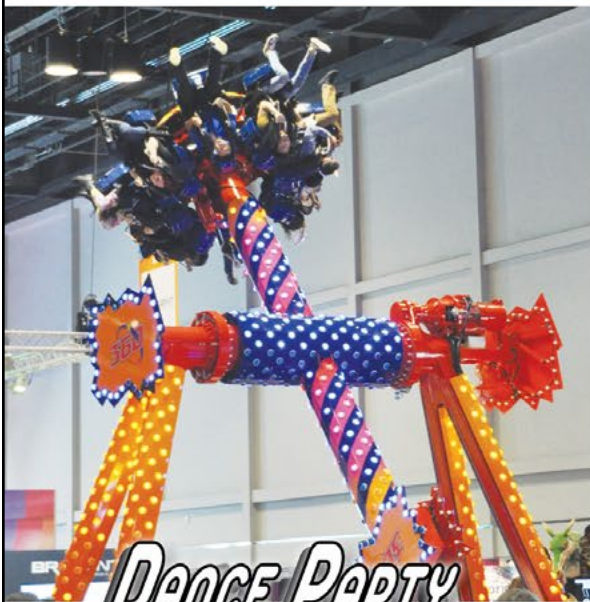
"We're excited to unveil the exciting new arcade upgrades to the Cumming community, and continue to provide family-focused entertainment that guests of any age can enjoy," said Chris Albano, managing partner and co-founder of Stars and Strikes.

# Spinning family fun onto the midway!



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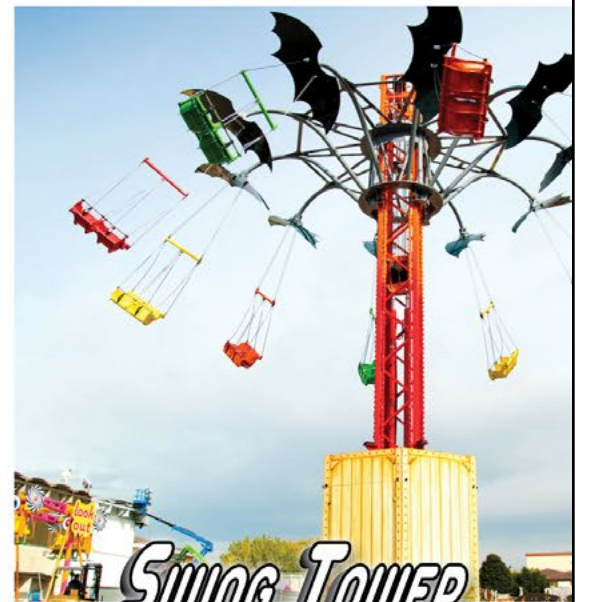
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# Two new still dates help Reithoffer Shows; venues begin to return

AT: B. Derek Shaw  
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

DOTHAN, Ala. and PERRY, Ga. — This spring, **Reithoffer Shows, Inc.** put on two inaugural still date events, a 10-day one in Dothan, Alabama, called Spring Fling and the 12-day, May Days on the Midway, in Perry, Georgia. Dothan is home to the **National Peanut Festival**, while Perry is the site of the **Georgia National Fair**. Both are held each fall with Reithoffer (blue unit) providing the thrills. In 2020, due to the pandemic, neither one took place.

**Sharon Popovich** who handles social media for the show explained how these events came about: “**Rick [Reithoffer, president]** talked to the fair presidents at both about a spring festival in January. He knew he wanted to have events in the south and wanted to support his fairs in the process. The idea was a win-win for both sides. We could “rent” the facility and provide a much-needed income boost for our fairs.”

The Dothan Spring Fling, April 2-11, featured 40 total rides, 16 of which were kiddie, along with 40 games and 25 food concessions. The top favorite rides were Giant Wheel (**Chance Rides**), Super Himalaya (**Bertazzon**), Indy 500 (**Zierer flitzer**) and Galaxy Coaster (**Interpark**). The new Dragon Coaster (**Jung-Max Rides**) was there as well.

The carnival took place during Easter weekend and included an Easter egg hunt in which kids found an egg in a tub of corn kernels as they came through the gate. The eggs contained “tickets” for free items including ride wristbands and various food offerings. A total of 2,000 prize tickets were awarded over the first Friday, Saturday and Sunday of the Spring Fling.

The National Peanut Festival staff provided advertising and social media on their website and social media accounts. “They were fantastic,” said Popovic.

Ride armbands cost \$25 during the week and \$35 on weekends and included admission. Children ages 4 and under were admitted free. Individual ride tickets were available on the midway. Reithoffer Shows gave 6,000 \$5 off coupons to graduating students in Dale, Henry, and Houston counties.



Above, a picturesque twilight sets in at May Days on the Midway entrance area. Below, the new Jung-Max Rides Dragon coaster appeared at both still date sites: Dothan and Perry. COURTESY REITHOFFER SHOWS, INC.



Any remaining coupons were distributed to teachers.

Popovich was asked about COVID-19 mitigation practices. “We provided temperature screenings at the entrance; hand sanitizing stations all throughout the midway and did our usual cleaning and sanitizing [of rides] as well as multiple signs with COVID protocol warnings. Our employees wore facemasks, but the public was not required to wear them. We provided ample space between each ride and encouraged social distancing.”

Hours for the Spring Fling were 5 p.m. to midnight on both Fridays; 12 p.m. to midnight on both Saturdays; 1 to 9 p.m. on both Sundays (including Easter); and 5 to 10 p.m. Monday-Thursday. Free gate admission was offered, as “People wanted to get out – do something,” said Popovich.

160 miles northeast and 38 days after the Spring Fling concluded, May Days on the Midway began in Perry, Georgia, running May 20 to 31. There was a total of 45 rides, 14 were kiddie ones, along with 50 games, 12 independent food stands and 25 of their regular food concessions. The most popular rides, as in



Reithoffer Shows had 45 rides at May Days on the Midway. The company also featured 50 games, 12 independent food stands and 25 of its regular food concessions in Perry. COURTESY REITHOFFER SHOWS, INC.

► See **SHOWS**, page 30



Above is a portion of the 40 rides offered at the 10-day Spring Fling in Dothan, Alabama. Upon entering the grounds kids were busy "selecting" an egg with one of the prizes, while hoping for the big prize, a free ride wristband (below). COURTESY REITHOFFER SHOWS, INC.



## ►SHOWS

Continued from page 29

Dothan, were Giant Wheel, Super Himalaya, Indy 500 and Galaxy Coaster. A new Dragon Coaster was at the event as well.

Popovich explained the role of the **Georgia National Fairgrounds & Agricenter** staff with May Days on the Midway. "They are still without a full staff at this time, so [the fair] asked that we handle most everything. We provided all the necessary elements needed such as trash clean-up, etc. They provided advertising on their social media and website which they did a terrific job on that."

Midway hours were Monday-Friday: 5:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m., weekends: 12:00 p.m. to midnight and Memorial Day: noon to 11:00 p.m. Armband prices were \$25 weekdays, \$30

Saturday/Sunday/Memorial Day with individual tickets: \$1.50 per ticket, 11 tickets for \$15, 22 tickets for \$25 and 55 tickets for \$55.

As per Georgia Governor **Brian Kemp's** office, no COVID-19 protocols were required. Reithoffer Shows did not require face masks; however, they did provide hand sanitizing stations all throughout the midway and provided ample space between each ride.

Both carnival events are expected to return next spring, becoming annual ones. "We are truly grateful to be working and providing our midway to our guests again!" said Popovich.

The 2021 Georgia National Fair takes place October 7-17, while the National Peanut Festival is scheduled for November 5-14.

- [reithoffershows.com](http://reithoffershows.com)
- [nationalpeanutfestival.com](http://nationalpeanutfestival.com)
- [georgianationalfair.com](http://georgianationalfair.com)



There were 2,000 prize tickets provided in Easter eggs kids could pick from upon entry to the grounds. Half were for free ride wristbands (above). COURTESY REITHOFFER SHOWS, INC.



## MIDWAYSCENE

AT: B. Derek Shaw

[bdshaw@amusementtoday.com](mailto:bdshaw@amusementtoday.com)

The **Canadian National Exhibition (CNE)** was set to take place August 20 to September 6. However, a second year of cancellation due to COVID-19 puts this time-honored, 142-year, Canadian tradition in peril as the organization may have to close its doors.

Without critical financial support from all levels of government, a second year of cancellation puts the CNE in jeopardy of surviving through the latest pandemic restrictions that will not be lifted until Canadian Labor Day, September 6. CNE officials told *NetNews Ledger* it's "facing huge financial pressure" and that it's "at risk of being unable to host another fair."

"While we understand the importance for public health authorities to take necessary measures to stop the spread of COVID-19, we are also conscious of the impact the cancellation of the CNE will have for its attendees, vendors and the many youth employed for the event," said **John Kiru**, president of the Canadian National Exhibition board of directors in a statement on this year's closure.

Since 2013, the CNE has been governed by the **CNE Association (CNEA)**, a not-for-profit agricultural organization. They are financially independent and responsible for producing the large-scale event without any sustained government funding. Revenue generated each year is reinvested into the following year. The pair of back-to-back cancellations (2020 and 2021) and financial losses will have a consequential impact on the future of the CNE.

A "Save the CNE" petition was started by City of Toronto Councilor, **Mike Layton**. It calls on the provincial and federal government to contribute \$5.5 million each to the CNE. In part, the petition reads, "The popularity of the 18-day fair makes a significant economic contribution to the economy of the GTA (Greater Toronto Area) and province, generating \$93.1 million and \$128.3 million respectively. The CNE is also an important employer, particularly of youth, keeping nearly 5,000 people per fair season in its employ and supporting 700 independent vendors." Nearly 22,000 people have signed the petition.

There was a fair in Del Mar, California, only not of the usual size and proportion. The **San Diego County Mini Fair** dubbed, "Home Grown Fun," was smaller in scale than the usual **San Diego County Fair**. It was limited in attendance, with a very small midway. Rides included the Grand Wheel (**Kroon**), a carousel, along with a Wacky Worm and more. The family midway offered a total of 12 rides, mostly kiddie. There also was a live pony ride. Many fair favorites were still offered including shopping, numerous food concessionaires, agricultural-themed exhibits, demonstrations, contests and "edu-tainment" that was designed to educate children and their families. The 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. mini fair started June 11 and ran through July 4 (being closed Mondays and Tuesdays.) Parking was \$12 and \$10 admission. **Ray Cammack Shows, (RCS)** handled the ride midway with additional rides supplied via **Helm and Sons Amusements, Caprice Enterprises** and **Bishop Amusement Rides**.

Earlier this month, the **Santa Maria (California) Fairpark** hosted both a ride midway and virtual livestock show and auction, since the **Santa Barbara County Fair** nor-

mally held on that site was canceled. **Helm and Sons Amusements** billed its midway as the "Greatest Portable Theme Park." The fair is scheduled to operate July 1-4 and 8-11.

Tickets started at \$25 in advance. Admission to the portable theme park included access to all rides and live entertainment. The event also offered games and food available for purchase.

It was supposed to come back for a limited second season engagement of 40 days at **Trimper's Rides** in Ocean City, Maryland. The 155-foot Midway Sky Eye (**Lamberink**) **Wade Shows/Michael Wood, dba Biggest Wheel LLC** was installed 10 feet (three meters) over the amusement park's property line, spilling onto the boardwalk right-of-way (albeit in the air.) That violated town zoning codes on land owned by Ocean City.

In October, Trimper's told the mayor and council they desired to bring the wheel back, however, wanted to move it to the east closer to the Boardwalk, making it more easily visible to vacationers as they got closer to the end of the promenade. Town officials never revisited the matter even though Trimper's and **Wood Entertainment** sought to have the issue again placed on the agenda the past several months. Park President **Antoinette Bruno** told the mayor and council the assumption after the October meeting was that the four-foot allowance discussed at that time was acceptable and that the Big Wheel's new position fell just short of that. In reality, it was an additional six feet.

Ocean City officials said they support the wheel but told Trimper's that it couldn't stay in that spot. Wood brought three smaller rides to justify the trip from San Antonio, Texas. Reconfiguring the location would result in dismantling or moving other attractions in the park, resulting in more than \$100,000 in expenses. The massive wheel with LED lights and 36 enclosed gondolas, is now down, awaiting its next move in mid-July when it travels over 900 miles west to **Wisconsin State Fair** in West Allis, August 5-15.

In April, the **Pennsylvania State Showmen's Association** and the **Pennsylvania State Association of County Fairs** published a 25-page document on reopening fairs across the commonwealth. Titled "PA Fair Industry Reopening Plan," it was shared with all 103 fairs in the state and 27-member show operators. Mandatory operational requirements that must be followed by the fairs, outside contractors, exhibitors, and concessionaires were included along with best management practices for consideration by fairs. The comprehensive plan was meant to supplement state and local health and safety rules.

With all COVID-19 restrictions lifted June 28, in Pennsylvania, the document is not as relevant now, however the work done and synthesis of all the information provided by seven organizations is invaluable. They included: **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**, **International Association of Fairs & Expositions (IAFE)**, Office of the Governor of Pennsylvania, **Pennsylvania Department of Health, Pennsylvania Amusement Parks & Attractions (PAPA)**, **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA)** and the **Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA)**.

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# WATER PARKS & RECREATION

▶ Raging Waves adds ProSlide RallyRacer — page 36 / News Splash — page 36

## Baha Bay upscale water park opens in Bahamas Beachside Resort

AT: Jeffrey Seifert  
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

NASSAU, The Bahamas — **Baha Mar**, the 1,000-acre resort complex on the island of New Providence in The Bahamas, is set to debut its new luxury beachfront water park, **Baha Bay**, on July 2. The new water park will be the latest addition to Baha Mar's guest amenities and offerings.

The \$200 million water park is set upon 15 acres of spectacular oceanfront property. Inspired by the natural beauty of The Bahamas, and developed exclusively for Baha Mar, Baha Bay embodies Bahamian island pleasure with exhilarating entertainment for the entire family. Baha Bay offers an array of aquatic experiences, including 24 water slides, a tropical action river, a triple-lane surfing simulator, the first **ProSlide** dueling water coaster and **FlyingSaucer 45** raft ride in the Caribbean, along with the world's first casino gaming pavilion inside a water park. In addition to the exciting array of aquatic activities and thrilling water slides, Baha Bay also includes splash zones for kids of all ages; beachside tranquility; and well-appointed, full-service cabanas ideal for privacy, entertaining and relaxation.

Of the 24 waterslide attractions, several can be considered high-profile attractions, including **Dueling Riptide Coaster**, which will blast riders uphill with water jets, have them race side by side then duel face to face through **RallyPoints**. Riders will experience G-forces as they accelerate into open curves on the **FlyingSaucer** sections. **Hammerhead** and **Cyclone**



Located along the pristine sand beaches of Cable Beach, Baha Bay at Baha Mar offers multiple water play experiences in a luxurious tropical setting. COURTESY BAHAMAR

**Rush** are both multi-person raft rides. On **Hammerhead** guests will zip around speedy curves as they slalom through multiple open saucers; riders on **Cyclone Rush** will spin around a massive bowl slide then drop into a wave wall for a moment of weightlessness. **Thunderball**, an open channel freefall slide and **Devil's Backbone** are both extreme body slides. **Devil's Backbone** begins with a drop capsule before guests careen through sideways loops including one made of clear acrylic.

For smaller guests **Turtle Beach** has shallow pools for little ones to splash around in, kiddy slides and a splash zone. **Stingray Cove**, with its interactive play structure, has a bit more excitement including a tipping bucket that dumps onto the play area and larger kid-sized waterslides for the more adventurous.

Multiple food and beverage al fresco dining options

offer world-class culinary concepts. Innovative cuisine locations include **The Market**, home to **Cleo Grill**, **Sam's Crispy Chicken**, **Plant Nation** and **Chill**. **SLS** which operates one of the three hotels and multiple restaurants at the resort, developed the elevated dining venues. Additional individual restaurants include the popular **Umami Burger**, **Barracuda Food Truck** and the famed **Sugar Factory**. The latter can be considered an attraction unto its own with a full-service restaurant, café, confectionary shop, retail store, carousel bar overlooking Baha Mar's iconic fountains, and the debut of **CandyOcean**, a one-of-a-kind aquatic-themed immersive experience. The first **CandyOcean** by **Sugar Factory** will feature life-size sculptures of dolphins and sharks blowing bubble gum, flamingos frolicking on cotton candy clouds, and other sea life-inspired attrac-

tions. **Sugar Factory's** confectionery shop includes the signature floor-to-ceiling candy wall with more than 500 types of candy. The dining room, replete with red tufted banquet seats, crystal chandeliers and antique brass accents, will seat 200, with seating for an additional 100 guests on the spacious outdoor patio.

Coinciding with the debut of the Baha Bay water park is the reopening of the **Baha Bay Beach Club**. Guests seeking a less thrilling experience can relax at one of the club's infinity pools which overlook the endless turquoise Bahamian waters. The luxurious **Beach Club** features 15 full-service private cabanas, daybeds, breathtaking infinity pools and pool-side lounge areas for optimal seclusion and relaxation. Baha Bay Beach Club is also home to the **25 Degrees North** restaurant serving coastal California-inspired bites and drinks.

"We're thrilled to reveal the launch of Baha Bay," said **Graeme Davis**, president, Baha Mar. "As the latest addition to the resort destination's collection of celebrated adult and family-friendly offerings, Baha Bay will provide our guests with new exceptional experiences, suitable for all ages, as we continue to redefine the Caribbean vacation."

The Baha Bay water park project is the result of a collaboration of multiple entities and contractors. In addition to the waterslides provided by **ProSlide Technology**, **WhiteWater West** installed the **FlowRider** surf simulator and **Murphy's Waves** supplied the action river and wave pool. The lavish tropical-themed water park was conceptualized by **DTJ Designs** of Boulder, Colorado, with architectural services provided by the international firm **SB Architects**. **Bahamas Environment Group** served as the building contractors. **John Cates** of **Adeana Creations** was responsible for the retail establishments.

The Baha Mar resort complex, located on the pristine white sands of Cable Beach, includes three hotels — a **Grand Hyatt**, **SLS** and **Rosewood**, for a total of 2,200 rooms. The resort also includes a massive casino; spa; the stunning **Royal Blue** golf course; racquet club; retail shops; Las-Vegas-style show fountains and a staggering array of more than 30 bars, restaurants and lounges. Situated within the resort are 284 private residences.

•bahabay.bahamar.com



The younger set will have plenty to do on the interactive play structure at **Stingray Cove** (above left). The **Cyclone Rush** and **Hammerhead** raft slides serve up a variety of exciting thrills for families or groups of friends as rafts traverse saucer sections — or a bowl and a wave wall (above right). COURTESY BAHAMAR



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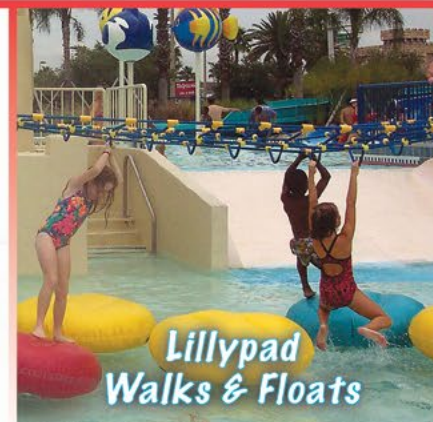
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# Raging Waves adds ProSlide RallyRacer: Aussie Mat Dash

AT: Jeffrey Seifert  
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

YORKVILLE, Ill. — Mat racers have always been great additions to a water park, allowing families or a group of friends to simultaneously enjoy the ride together, while adding the visual excitement of a side-by-side race.

Two years ago, ProSlide took the concept a step further by adding multiple tunneled sections. On previous slides, once the rider left the tubed section and entered the flat racing section, it remained flat throughout. Trying to have a mat slider enter another tube ran the risk of having that rider bump the side of the tube at the opening. Now, by using a specially designed rounded channel, ProSlide is able to safely funnel the mat rider into and out of enclosed sections multiple times. The first slide of this type opened in 2019 at Hersheypark. The new slide allows each rider to seamlessly speed through a fast spiral beside their fellow racers and then track their progress as they go in and out of open and closed-slide areas along the way. The low divided sections are what ProSlide refers to as RallyPoints, where the low separators allow riders to see and hear each other as they rocket to the finish.

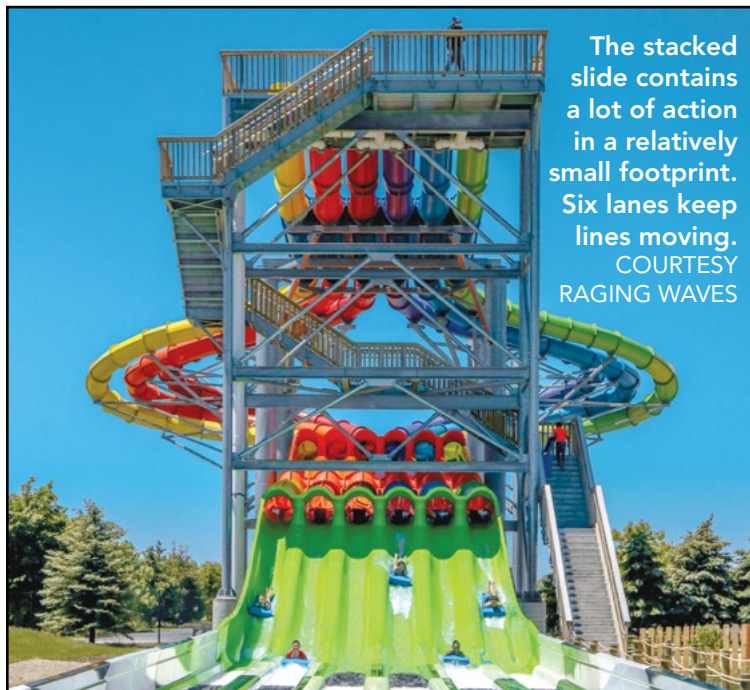
Proslide modified the design by stacking the beginning of the slide over the middle section giving riders a thrilling 400-foot slide with a smaller footprint than that of previous mat racers. Two of these stacked designs were built in 2020, one at Waldameer Park in Erie, Pennsylvania, and the other at Raging Waves in Yorkville, Illinois. The latter is premiering its Aussie Mat Dash this season.

On Aussie Mat Dash, six riders start with a straight tunneled section before entering the first RallyPoint. That leads into a massive tunneled section that has riders reversing direction, as they encounter a colorful array of light and dark sections throughout the tube before bursting into daylight for the second RallyPoint, directly under the first. One more tunneled section awaits, before the final RallyPoint leads to the finish and runout. In all, there are three enclosed-flume sections interspersed with the three RallyPoints that have riders seamlessly speeding in and out of open and closed-slide areas along the way. Designed for riders 42 inches tall or above, Aussie Mat Dash is 400 feet in length. The attraction also features timing clocks so riders can check their speed at the end of the ride.

"We are thrilled to invite families back to Raging Waves this summer," said co-owner Randy Witt. "Offering guests new and innovative attractions and experiences has always been at the forefront for our team at Raging Waves, and we cannot wait for guests to experience Aussie Mat Dash for the first time this summer!"

Aussie Mat dash brings the park waterslide count to 32. Family-owned Raging Waves opened in 2008 by Randy Witt along with his wife and his late brother-in-law. Located on 58 acres southwest of Chicago, the park has grown to become the largest water park in Illinois. The park includes a wave pool, a quarter-mile-long lazy river, three kiddie pool areas, 43 private cabanas and several high-profile waterslide attractions.

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



The stacked slide contains a lot of action in a relatively small footprint. Six lanes keep lines moving. COURTESY RAGING WAVES



## NEWS SPLASH

AT: Jeffrey L. Seifert  
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

California's **Aquatica Water Park** in San Diego opened May 29 for its final season as Aquatica. Located in Chula Vista, the park first opened in 1997 under the name **White Water Canyon**. After being acquired in 1999 by **Cedar Fair**, it operated as **Knott's Soak City** from 2000 until 2012 when the park was sold to **SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment**. It became SeaWorld's third Aquatica-branded park when it reopened in 2013. At the end of this season, the park will be transformed again into a new **Sesame Place** theme park. The Sesame brand is licensed to SeaWorld Parks and the San Diego/Chula Vista location will be the second Sesame Place park after the original in Langhorne, Pennsylvania, which has been in operation since 1981. The transformation is part of SeaWorld's strategy to capitalize on its licensing deal with **Sesame Workshop**, the producer of the popular Sesame Street show.

The new Sesame Place San Diego will feature seven themed rides including roller coasters and a carousel. Along with the rides will be live shows, character interactions, a parade and an interactive musical play area. The new park will not lose its water park lineage as 11 of the existing water attractions including the 500,000-gallon wave pool will be incorporated into the new Sesame Place.

The proposed **PHX Surf Park** in Maricopa, Arizona, could become an exciting entertainment development project for the greater Phoenix area. Comprising 71 acres on currently vacant land, the proposal includes a large outdoor surf park; a full-scale water park with slides, wave pool and lazy river; restaurants; hotel and concert venue.

"The park will create a unique attraction that offers advanced active entertainment, progressive surfing experiences, water play, related retail and dining, concert and open space, and hospitality — all immersed with 'ocean views' and the sound of crashing waves breaking in the desert sun," developers wrote in a pre-application narrative.

Maricopa City Council gave an initial consent approval for the purchase of three parcels of land on which to build the park. Once the land transaction is complete, the developers will need to submit more concrete plans including specific designs for the city to review along with engineering permits and building permits.

Now that **Ocean Breeze Waterpark** in Virginia Beach can open for the 2021 season, guests will finally be able to enjoy its new attraction. Operation Splashdown, a Mammoth River serpentine raft ride developed by **ProSlide Technology**, was supposed to debut last season, but the park was only open a short time in 2020.

The multi-color slide operates with round rafts accommodating two to five people with a maximum of 700 pounds. Dispatched from a 60-foot tall tower, riders will encounter twists and turns, exciting drops and sharp curves along the unpredictable 600-foot-long course.

**Big Kahuna Water Park** in Destin, Florida, revealed \$800,000 in renovations when it opened this past May. Current Owner **Tim Murphy** indicated that the previous park owners had deferred maintenance over the last several years, so it was time for a massive revitalization. For this season, all the slides were re-glazed, food venues were upgraded and a new rooftop bar was added.

At the attached adventure park and golf course, 18 holes were added to the existing 36-hole golf course.

Opened in 1985 by local entrepreneur **Joe Bruner**, the park had been a landmark destination for years. It was acquired by **Apex Parks** in 2014 and started falling into disrepair. **Boomer Parks** CEO Tim Murphy acquired the park in a bankruptcy settlement.

"When I came here about a year ago, the place was in really bad shape," Murphy told the 80 or so people who gathered for the grand opening. "We want to try to bring back the glory days of the past."

"We're looking to have people stay longer and spend money, that's the name of the game," Murphy added. "We've put in a tremendous amount of work. Our goal was to re-establish ourselves as a destination park in Destin."

**The Big Pool**, the former historical centerpiece in Garden City, Kansas, has been replaced with a new aquatic facility, **Garden Rapids at the Big Pool**. The \$14 million project, which broke ground last year, is now welcoming guests for its first summer.

The new facility replaces The Big Pool, which opened in 1921 as one of the largest hand-dug pools in the world. During its heyday, it held 2.5 million gallons of water. However, over the last few years the pool was leaking up to 200,000 gallons of water each day and keeping the pool refilled and clean was becoming an issue. The city looked at options to repair or rebuild the pool but ultimately decided to completely replace the aging facility.

The new aquatic center features a lazy river, zero-depth entry pool, competition pool, children's play area, splash pad, and several waterslides. Among the waterslides is a pair of Fly High slides which can launch people nearly 10 feet into the air depending on a person's weight and speed. The water park also includes a Slipstream slide which riders slide down while standing up. The slide products were provided by **Splashtacular LLC** of Paola, Kansas. Garden Rapids is the first municipal facility to feature the Fly High slides and the first water park in the Midwest to offer a Slipstream slide. Riders on the Fly High slides land in a deeper section of the pool that is also used for diving competition.

The facility held its ribbon-cutting ceremony on Memorial Day weekend although everything is not yet in place. Semi-private cabanas and the splash pad will be added throughout the summer. The cabanas are expected to be completed by mid-July followed by the splash pad in mid-August.

*"Our team holds no boundaries at the WWA Show as key learnings are the star of the show. Our teams are anxiously anticipating this one-of-a-kind industry collaboration, in person."*


- EVAN BARNETT, PRESIDENT/  
GENERAL MANAGER, TYPHOON TEXAS



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SAN ANTONIO, TX U.S.A.



# DEEP IN THE HEART OF THE WWA SHOW



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*We'll See YOU in San Antonio!*



► Quassy hosts high school proms — page 40 / Woman of Influence: Sandra Daniels — page 41

## Morgan's Wonderland Camp caters to visitors of all abilities, needs

AT: Tim Baldwin

tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — Quite often, the amusement industry can blur into a cohesive mold of ride hardware and funnel cakes. Every now and then, something tugs at heart-strings to remind people of this special business and the memories it creates.

**Morgan's Wonderland** opened in 2010 as a nonprofit and gained national attention by creating a park for children and families of all abilities. Its biggest challenge was educating people that it *wasn't* just an amusement park for those with special needs but a place of inclusion that was created for all people to play and interact together.

The nonprofit park was such a success that **Morgan's Inspiration Island** was created next door in 2017. Combating the Texas heat, the water park is tailored to all families, even those with members in wheelchairs.

With the **Morgan's Wonderland Inclusion Foundation** established in 2020, the mission has com-



The elevated challenge course is made for fully abled and physically challenged participants to interact side by side. AT/TIM BALDWIN; COURTESY MORGAN'S WONDERLAND

pleted its newest chapter in inclusion. Located about 20 miles north of Morgan's Wonderland, a new destination called **Morgan's Wonderland Camp** throws the idea of summer camp — although open year round — a new twist. Everybody can come.

"We believe Morgan's

Wonderland Camp constitutes another of the world's greatest places for inclusive, barrier-free recreation," founder **Gordon Hartman** said. "It features more than 20 major elements including ziplines and a challenge course like none other. Special adaptations enable those with special needs to enjoy these thrilling attractions just like everyone else. All in all, we're proud to offer our guests an array of activities and facilities in a positive, uplifting environment."

The \$34 million endeavor (\$15 million of which was pledged by partner **Valero Energy**) resides on 102 acres in a wooded area north of San Antonio. While the area is being developed around the property, the unspoiled rugged terrain offers the feeling of a true camp, but with modern amenities and a vast offering of activities.

Among them are an assortment of bikes for all abilities; an arts and crafts area, which

includes a digital photography room and library; an amphitheater suitable for singalongs and storytelling; an aquatic facility featuring a heated pool, splash pad and relaxing river; an indoor, temperature-controlled basketball and volleyball court; a ranch offering horseback rides; target sports and archery; a nature center where campers interact with animals of all kinds and learn educational facts; and two ziplines.

The shorter zipline is 450 feet long; the longer one is 700 feet. Both rise 11 stories. For it to be inclusive, special harnesses are designed for individuals without upper body strength, and spaces for oxygen tanks and medical devices were built in allowing those devices to be taken aboard.

"When I went down for the open house, I was listening to people in wheelchairs talk about how special it was that a company built a zipline that they could ride," said **Logan Checketts**, president, **Altitude**



**Rides and Attractions.** "Not knowing that I happened to own that company, hearing that just made me feel incredible."

Checketts was surprised how the project opened the door. A second installation catering to such individuals was placed in **Camp Courageous** in Monticello, Iowa, shortly thereafter. The company, formerly known as **Soaring Eagle**, continues to market the zipline under the Soaring Eagle name, although the company offers multiple attractions in its portfolio.

"I have to give a shout out to the vision of the Morgan's team for initiating the changes needed to make an inclusive product," said Checketts. "They envisioned what they needed, and we were delighted to partner with them."

The speed can be adjusted to be more suitable for those who prefer a slower ride or still fly full throttle.

Main buildings in the complex are the dining hall that can seat 630 people at 63 tables, a camp store and a medical center. The medical center is an original house that stood on the property.

► See MORGAN'S, page 39



Morgan's Wonderland Camp is part of a nonprofit organization. A Soaring Eagle zipline (above right) was tweaked to accommodate all riders.

AT/TIM BALDWIN; COURTESY MORGAN'S WONDERLAND



## BUILDING ON OUR HISTORY!

### EXPANSION IS UNDERWAY!

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Regardless of physical ability, the system on the rock wall allows everyone to try (above left). All water activities offer zero entry (above right). A climate controlled pool adds to the accessibility. AT/TIM BALDWIN; COURTESY MORGAN'S WONDERLAND

## ►MORGAN'S

Continued from page 38

"Mr. Hartman owned the majority of the land, but there was a chunk of it that he needed to make the camp what he envisioned," said **Leslie Mouton**, director of marketing. "It was owned by a family. A woman's husband had passed away, but the house was special to her. Gordon started talking with her. She said, 'I don't know why, but I had this *tug* that I am supposed to do this.' She was recognized on our VIP night, and she was blown away. She then knew why she was compelled to do it."

Other buildings on the complex were designed to match the original house for a cohesive feel.

If this all-inclusive facility wasn't inspirational enough, the dedication to the community makes it even more so. Three partners enjoy a unique relationship with Morgan's Wonderland Camp.

The **San Antonio Food Bank**, which serves food-insecurity families in northern San Antonio, needed a branch in that part of town. With a facility built directly into the dining hall, the Food Bank serves meals for the campers while having a place to operate. For legal reasons, the Food Bank pays one dollar a year for the space. Likewise, the **Bexar County Sheriff's Office** has a substation located on the campground to shorten response times when area citizens call for assistance. The **Edwards Aquifer Authority** has created a 9,000-square foot EAA Education Outreach Center to broaden understanding of how the aquifer functions and the critical necessity to safeguard San Antonio's drinking water. This is part of the educational offerings while staying at the camp.

"We're really big about community-based instruction," said Mouton. "Eventually that will grow, and we can have groups from



Lower bunks have been designed to allow easy transfer of wheelchairs. AT/TIM BALDWIN

schools and civic groups. It will be hands-on education."

Ten smaller cabins sleeping 16 in eight bunkbeds include a private room that sleeps three additional campers. Three shower stalls, three toilets and one bathtub are in the restroom facilities. A washer and dryer, along with a refrigerator are in place as well. Ten larger cabins sport two sides of 16 beds, along with two bathrooms. A total of 32 campers can bunk in the larger cabins. All cabins are climate controlled.

"When we decided on a camp, that brings some new challenges," said Mouton. "Horseback riding always had different ways to accommodate different people of all needs, but not on a rock wall, a challenge course or a zipline. The bunk beds were designed to be lower to be able to transfer easily from a wheelchair, plus the headroom allows them to sit up. The walking/biking trails

are wide enough so that if you are in a wheelchair, you don't have to go one in front of the other, you can be side by side and talk and communicate."

The rock wall and challenge course can accommodate those in wheelchairs via a specially designed pulley system and specific challenge course.

For the summer, Morgan's Wonderland Camp has welcomed camping partners, but the campground is making preparations to welcome the public starting in November for family weekends and outings. Like its sister parks, visitors with physical and cognitive challenges are admitted free.

"Like Morgan's Wonderland, the entire thought process when Gordon creates all these places is let's not imagine *if* there can be places where people can do these things side by side, let's make *if* happen," said Mouton. "We're a journey of inclusion."



An amphitheater makes for a great meeting space.

AT/TIM BALDWIN

## Dollywood announces resort, \$500 million investment



The 302-room HeartSong Lodge & Resort is just one part of the destination's \$500 million expansion investment planned for the next decade. COURTESY DOLLYWOOD

PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. — **The Dollywood Company** embarks on an ambitious investment strategy that will see the Smoky Mountain vacation destination invest more than half-a-billion dollars over the next 10 years across its properties. One of the first projects in the campaign is the 302-room Dollywood's **HeartSong Lodge & Resort**.

The new HeartSong Lodge, located adjacent to the much-heralded **DreamMore Resort and Spa**, serves as the next element in the company's thriving lodging business. Set to open in 2023, the new property ushers in another period of tremendous growth for the company and for the entire Smoky Mountains region.

The new investment plan provides Dollywood's Dreamer-in-Chief plenty of opportunities to do what she does best for many years to come.

"I'm always dreaming and coming up with new ideas and things I want our guests to experience," **Dolly Parton** explained. "We wanted to talk about this last year, but with everything going on, we knew we needed to pause because it just wasn't the right time to do it. Things are looking brighter, and with the popularity of the Smokies soaring, there are more people than ever wanting to visit our area."

"I'm so proud of this place that we've been able to build here in the Smokies," she continued. "I always dreamed of accomplishing two things with Dollywood. I wanted to give jobs to the folks who live here, and I wanted to give visitors another reason to come and experience the beauty of the Smoky Mountains. I'm so happy with what we are doing to make sure our guests have a great season this year, and being able to announce the new HeartSong Lodge & Resort is just one more way we're going to be able to help families reconnect, explore and discover together. I truly believe the natural beauty of the Smokies and the warmth of this special place will inspire every guest to nurture the 'heartsong' within them."

Welcoming the outdoors in with high ceilings, exposed beams and natural layered textures, Dollywood's newest resort offers lodging options for multi-generational families and couples. The five-story resort will also feature themed suites and loft rooms tucked into the dormers. Many of the resort's spacious rooms include balconies, which provide a "place among the leaves" for families to escape everyday stresses while reconnecting.

This reimagined Smoky Mountain lodge features four-story, lantern-inspired windows in the resort's welcoming atrium, epic indoor and outdoor pools that provide guests a refreshing escape in all seasons, and a picture-perfect outdoor cove with family gathering spaces, communal firepit and screened-in porch. With 26,000 square feet of flexible indoor and outdoor meeting space, the property can accommodate gatherings for several hundred guests. From the two-story HeartSong Event Center to spacious outdoor meeting spaces and event lawn, the resort offers numerous options to provide a unique and inspiring setting for groups.

With more than three million visitors annually at **Dollywood** theme park and **Dollywood's Splash Country** water park, the Pigeon Forge parks comprise Tennessee's most-visited ticketed attraction.

# Chocolatier restaurant opens as final piece of Chocolatetown

AT: B. Derek Shaw  
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

HERSHEY, Pa. — Memorial-Day weekend marked the opening of the final piece in the \$150 million, 23-acre Chocolatetown entrance area and section of Hersheypark. The Chocolatier Restaurant, Bar and Patio has 290 seats inside and seating for 150 outside, occupying the entire second floor of the Hersheypark Supply Company building. The year-round, full-service restaurant operating 11 a.m. – 9 p.m. during the summer season, does not require admission to the park. This is the largest restaurant in the Hershey area.

The décor and theming throughout the 11,800-square-foot restaurant (including kitchen) pay homage to Milton S. Hershey's legacy. Seating and displays feature past and present elements from the Hersheypark ride collection, along with one-of-a-kind views of neighboring attractions. The 7,600-square-foot patio and outside bar provide never-before-seen panoramic views of Hersheypark, including the relocated 1919 Philadelphia Toboggan Company carousel, Candymonium, a Bolliger



The Chocolatier's second-floor patio provides never-before-seen views including the carousel, Candymonium and Hershey Kisses Fountain (above). Below left, the restaurant's staff includes (l to r): Ryan Hancharik, restaurant manager; Rick Larsen, executive chef; Cher Harris, corporate pastry chef and Bryan Dailey, managing director, restaurant group. Below right is some of the seating in the 290-seat restaurant with the bar and fiber optic profiles of three of the park's roller coasters. AT/B. DEREK SHAW



& Mabillard (B&M) roller coaster that opened last season and the Hershey Kisses fountain.

Comet car-themed booths

and Tilt-A-Whirl-inspired booths, along with more traditional seating, fill The Chocolatier restaurant. On the patio are three Fender



Bender bumper cars and an antique car from the Twin Turnpike that were refurbished by students from The Milton Hershey School.

Additionally, carpentry students crafted a pair of 10-foot-long tabletops from rough-cut white oak to create twin founders' tables in the indoor dining area. Even the letter "c" from the former Flying Falcon ride signage adorns an outside brick wall.

Fiber optic track lights hanging in the middle of the restaurant are shaped as side profiles of three coasters found inside the park: Wildcat, Fahrenheit and Candymonium.

The menu showcases food and desserts all infused with the ingredient synonymous with Hershey, chocolate. The full-service Carrousel Bar, in the center of the restaurant, offers cocktails with ingredients inspired by Hershey's candy. Even the names of the food and drink pay tribute to past and present rides in the park. Milton Hershey School culinary students created the chicken and waffles menu item (inspired by one of Mr. Hershey's favorite dishes) in collaboration with The Chocolatier Executive Chef Rick Larsen.

Milton's Ice Cream Parlor and The Sweeterie, both located on the first floor, opened earlier in the spring.

•hersheypark.com

## Sequins, tassels, gowns, tuxedos, Quassy spring 2021 had it all

AT: Pam Sherborne  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

MIDDLEBURY, Conn. — It has been party time at Quassy Amusement Park for the last few months as local high schools have found the park to be a perfect fit for proms as well as post-graduation ceremony parties.

The family-owned park has been part of the community in Middlebury, Connecticut, since 1908 and the commitment to be relevant to that community continues.

George Frantzis, park co-owner, said in the first week of June, when it is all said and done, the park will have hosted 17 or 18 proms this past spring. The progression into hosting post-grad parties had begun in June. Frantzis said they will end up hosting nine or 10 of these.

"The students are really enjoying it," Frantzis said. "After a year of being locked down, missing events like this, we are just trying to make lemonade out of lemons."

It all started, Frantzis said, when Eric Anderson, park president, was out to dinner with a local high school principal earlier in the spring.

"They were talking and the idea of the proms just came up," Frantzis said. "Eric came in the next day and we sat down and discussed it. We put it out there to some of the area schools and a few bit. Then, it just spread like poison ivy."

The prom evenings, held on the weekends, would start up after the park closed at about 5 p.m. Quassy operated weekends during this past April, from 11 a.m.-5 p.m., until Memorial Day weekend.

The first thoughts for a prom theme were country chic.

"But, these students wanted the glam," Frantzis said. "They wanted to get dressed up. They wanted their gowns. They wanted their tuxedos. The young la-



Officials at Quassy Amusement Park found that students coming to enjoy their proms in the park's after hours wanted the glam. They came in gowns and tuxedos and loved the photo opportunities that included getting a photo on a carousel horse or one of the other rides at the park. COURTESY QUASSY AMUSEMENT PARK

dies would come into the park with gowns and high heels. It was great."

Each school had choices of menu items, scheduling. The park's crew set up numerous photo opportunities and used lighted decorations.

"We started with a fun menu like sliders, pigs in a blanket, things like that, but ended up going into dinners like Chicken Marsala," Frantzis said. "We said, 'okay, we can do that, too.'"

The students took photos, dined and danced. Afterward, the students had a changing area where they donned their street clothes and started riding rides and playing games.

The proms wrapped up at about 12:30-1 a.m.

The post-grad parties started after the graduation ceremonies, at about 10:30 p.m. They wrapped up about 4 a.m.



"We would roll out the red carpet for the graduates," Frantzis said. "Our crew working the event would line up on either side of the carpet and applaud and say congratulations."

The scheduling gave those students time to ride and play first. About two to three hours of food service was provided afterward and then group activities would start. Some activities included a DJ for dancing, arts and crafts, group games and/or a hypnotist show.

Frantzis said he feels these spring events are most likely there to stay at Quassy. He has enjoyed them and they have added a whole new element to the park.

He also is glad that he is able to share the 4 a.m. calls with his son, George Frantzis III, who is the park's human resources director and over the park's rides.

•quassy.com



# Women INFLUENCE

## Sandra Daniels Vice President, Communications and Diversity Six Flags Entertainment Corp. Arlington, Texas

### A view from the top...

**Six Flags Entertainment Corp.**, with headquarters in Arlington, Texas, operates 27 parks in the United States, two in Mexico and one in Montreal, Canada.

**Sandra Daniels** started at one of those properties, **Six Flags Over Texas**, in 2000 as the marketing manager. She is now in the corporate office and, after 21 years, is still growing, learning and loving the industry.

### Accomplishments and affiliations...

- Member, International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA), served on both N.A. Communications and Global Communications Committees
- Served on the Advisory Board of the Arlington (Texas) Salvation Army
- Member, Arlington (Texas) Chapter of the NAACP
- Longtime member of Mount Olive Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas

### Daniels finds home in theme parks

ARLINGTON, Texas — Sandra Daniels' journey with Six Flags Entertainment started 21 years ago. She remembers well those first years, how she was struck with the commitment and loyalty of her co-workers.

"And I am still struck," Daniels said. "Our team members love what they do and it shows. We are in the business of delivering smiles, which makes for a pretty special environment."

When Daniels started working at Six Flags Over Texas, Arlington, in 2000, it was her first experience in the amusement industry. She didn't have family members in the business. The thought of working at an amusement park had entered her mind, once, when she was attending Dallas Carter High School. Some of her classmates were getting summer jobs there. Her dad nixed the idea because it was "too far away."

Daniels was born in the west Texas town of Vernon and was raised in Dallas, Texas. Her dad, Riley Willard, was a long-time educator. Her mom, Juanita Willard, was a manager in manufacturing. There were five children and Daniels was the oldest.

"Growing up, it was my responsibility to sort of watch out for the younger ones, make sure they got their snacks in the afternoons, until my parents got home from work," she said.

As a youngster, she was familiar with the Six Flags park in Arlington. Her family would occasionally make a day event there.

"It was a big event for us," she said. "We all got new outfits for it."

After high school, Daniels attended the University of North Texas, in Denton, about 40 miles northwest of Dallas. She was there for journalism, radio and television, and started working in that field while still a student.

She worked at several local stations in several different positions, including news director, and entertainment reporter for the then nationally syndicated Tom Joyner Morning Show, where she covered the Grammys and American Music Awards. She also hosted a public affairs show on Channel 4 called Insights, and worked behind the scenes as a producer for a CBS 11 infotainment show called Positively Texas.

While she was producing a live segment for that show at Six Flags Over Texas, a chance encounter led her to the amusement park industry and a major career change.

"I ran into a friend and former colleague while I was there," Daniels said. "He told me that Six Flags Over Texas was looking for a public relations manager and that I ought to apply. He gave me a contact name and phone number on a piece of paper. I stuck in my pocket."

And then she forgot about it. However, fate was not finished with Daniels.

"A couple of weeks later, they called me about the position," she said.

Apparently her friend, Rick Erickson, had mentioned to a Six Flags person that he had spoken to her and she might be interested.

"So I agreed to interview for the position," Daniels said. "And, then, I went on a second interview, and a third."

She was offered the job. She accepted. And she is glad she did.

"It turned out to be the best job I had ever had," she said.

Daniels knew little about the internal workings of a theme park. She got started by getting out into the park, meeting the team and gathering story ideas to pitch to news media.

"It seemed there were great stories everywhere I looked," she said. "I met people who had been with Six Flags for



25, 30, 40 years, plus. I met teachers who worked at the park to earn extra money, but also because it was fun.

She found Six Flags was an entire "city within a city."

"Although I hadn't come up through the Six Flags ranks, I felt welcomed and my co-workers taught me a lot about the industry."

Her husband, Gary Daniels, was very supportive of her job change. At that time, her daughters, Brianna, now 30 years old, and Brittany, now 25, were very young.

Her husband also worked full-time in television, but the two had already learned to juggle and find balance between family and work.

"You know, I think women need to give themselves a break," Daniels said. "We carry around a lot of guilt and wonder if we're doing enough. And the fact is, we all work really hard to be the best we can be in our home lives and professional lives."

In 2007, Daniels moved to the corporate level at Six Flags as the corporate director of public relations. Not long afterwards, she was named vice president of communications.

Last year, a second title of diversity

was added to her job title.

"Diversity and inclusion are a part of our business model," Daniels said. "We want our work force to reflect the community in which they are located. We have a robust training on diversity. We take this very seriously."

"Diversity and inclusion is a priority for our company, it's something our CEO and entire senior leadership team are very passionate about," Daniels said. "We have done a lot, but we aren't done yet. We are just getting started."

After all, she said, Six Flags is in the business to make people happy.

After all, Six Flags is in the people business. "We want our guests and our team members to feel a sense of family at our parks."

Family is very important to her. She is extremely proud of her daughters and what they have accomplished. Both of her parents are still alive and she has an abundance of nieces and nephews and even three grandchildren.

"I enjoy my job," she said. "I never get bored. It is different everyday. I am challenged everyday."

"This industry really gets into your blood."

—Pam Sherborne

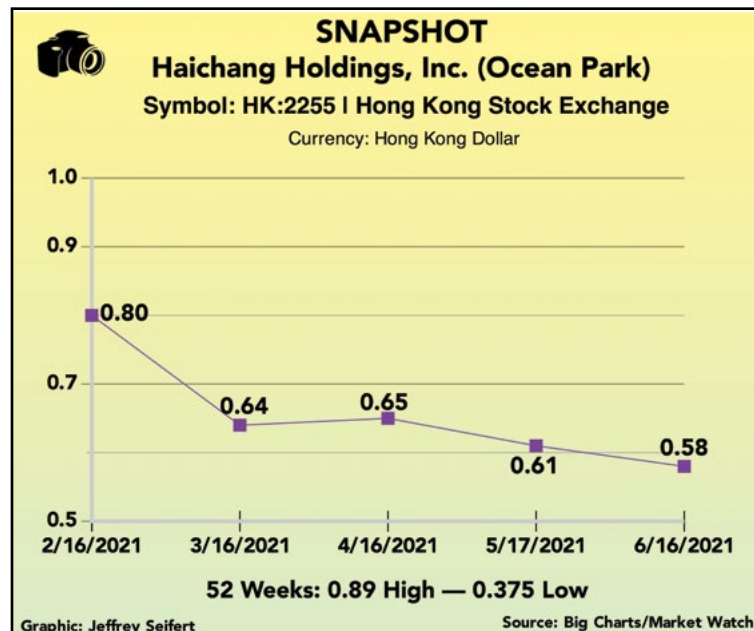
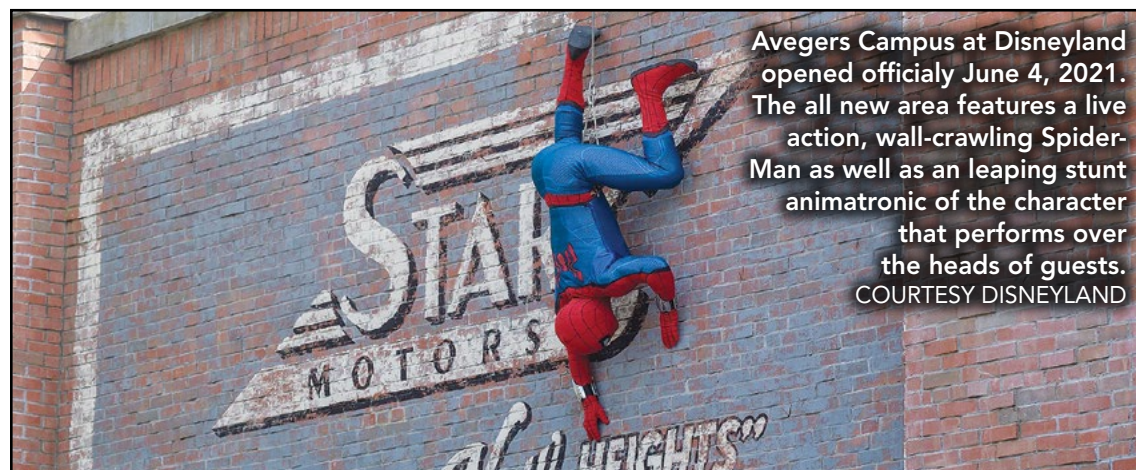
## MARKET WATCH

COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 06/16/21	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	98.48	99.64	49.26
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	46.14	52.50	22.81
Comcast Corp./NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	57.12	59.11	37.77
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	174.66	203.02	108.02
Dubai Parks & Resorts	DXBE:UH	DFM	0.08	0.15	0.07
EPR Properties	EPR	NYSE	53.06	56.07	20.62
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	JP:9010	TYO	5400.00	6500.00	2611.00
Haichang Holdings Ltd.	HK:2255	SEHK	0.58	0.89	0.38
Lefoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	17.60	23.05	14.50
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	42.10	44.40	14.65
Royal Caribbean Cruises, Ltd.	RCL	NYSE	88.52	99.24	45.06
Sansei Technologies, Inc.	JP:6357	TYO	839.00	875.00	538.00
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	54.38	58.26	13.37
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	43.46	51.75	16.06
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	888.00	900.00	620.00

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

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

—SOURCES: Bloomberg.com; Wall Street Journal



## DIESEL PRICES

Region (U.S)	As of 6/14/21	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	\$3.275	\$0.774
Midwest	\$3.233	\$0.977
Gulf Coast	\$3.040	\$0.866
Mountain	\$3.382	\$1.036
West Coast	\$3.465	\$0.886
California	\$4.084	\$0.866

## CURRENCY

On 6/17/21 \$1 USD =

0.8268	EURO
0.7104	GBP (British Pound)
110.14	JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.9009	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.3020	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.2199	CAD (Canadian Dollar)

## BUSINESS WATCH

## Sustainability commitment from WhiteWater

VANCOUVER, B.C. — **WhiteWater West** has announced a corporate-wide commitment to implement more sustainable environmental practices for all its operations and products as well as those of its suppliers, with ambitious waste and carbon footprint reduction goals in the next 20 years. It aims to be a driver of sustainable change in the industry, both up the supply chain as well as downstream to address the climate crisis.

Approaching the issue holistically, the company is implementing a Sustainability Scorecard, with focus on four areas: corporate; manufacturing and supply chain; parks and products as well as social responsibility. The Sustainability Scorecard will hold WhiteWater accountable for making progress toward truly sustainable practices, with each area setting ambitious goals for the coming years.

The corporate aspect of the Sustainability Scorecard covers WhiteWater's day-to-day operations, with the goal of achieving ISO 14001 standards for waste reduction and environmental management by 2025. This certification will not only serve as an internationally recognized external validation, but it will also embed environmental thinking in the business strategy.

To make a meaningful difference in combatting climate change, WhiteWater is looking beyond its own industry. Water is at the core of what the company does, so it feels strongly about protecting this resource. Because the oceans are as important as the forests in removing carbon from the atmosphere, WhiteWater will be donating 1% of its corporate profits to water-focused NGOs.

"The time has come for all business leaders to confront sustainability issues head on," said Paul Chutter, chief commercial officer. "WhiteWater needs to advocate environmentally friendly practices, starting with ourselves, and up and down the value chain. With the climate in crisis, we need to make sustainable changes a priority. We are taking the initiative not just because our clients, their guests, our employees, and new regulations will demand it, but because it is the right thing to do."

## Fun Spot America Adds Sbarro Pizza

ORLANDO — **Fun Spot America, Orlando** is bringing in a huge variety of new food and beverage for the Summer of 2021. Guests can indulge in the famous XL NY pizza slices from **Sbarro Pizza**.

"The goal of implementing Sbarro is to allow diners a variety of delicious cuisine options while at an affordable price. We couldn't be more excited for their arrival," stated Fun Spot America's Sr. Vice President of Food and Beverage **Albert Cabuco**.

Guests can grab their piece of the pie inside the Sky Diner. Fun Spot America is planning to announce additional new food and beverage concepts for each of its parks in the coming summer months.

## Disney parks reopen worldwide

PARIS — Every **Walt Disney Company** theme park around the world has reopened for the first time in 17 months after unprecedented coronavirus closures shuttered all 12 parks at one point or another for months at a time amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Disneyland Paris** and the adjacent **Walt Disney Studios Park** reopened on Thursday, June 17 — making the duo the final two Disney theme parks to return from pandemic closures around the globe.

"The last 17 months have challenged us," said Disney Parks, Experiences and Products Chairman **Josh D'Amaro**. "Needless to say, we are absolutely thrilled. While we still have work ahead, we will always rise to the challenges and opportunities that shape our business and embrace a future full of endless possibilities."

**Shanghai Disneyland** was the first Disney theme park around the globe to shut its gates on Jan. 25, 2020.

## ON THE MOVE

Stern Pinball, Inc. announced that **Tom Kopera** will be joining the company as director of mechanical engineering. In his new role, Kopera will lead mechanical engineering, the whitewood lab, the model shop, and the bill of materials group.

Kopera brings experience as both an engineer and as an executive overseeing large development efforts. Prior to launching **Kopera Design & Engineering**, he served as chief operating officer for **iLight Technologies** and held a series of directly relevant roles such as: director of the top box studio at **WMS Games**, Director of mechanical engineering at **Midway Games** and project engineer



Kopera

on numerous **Williams Electronics** pinball titles. Kopera has also been the game designer on several pinball titles including Williams Electronics' Cactus Canyon and Stern's The Rolling Stones.

"Tom's leadership will help support all of our efforts as we continue to grow the company and continue to produce the most fun and revolutionary pinball machines in the world," said **George Gomez**, EVP and chief creative officer.

**Family Entertainment Group** (FEG), a designer, developer and operator of family-oriented entertainment and amusement gaming facilities congratulates **Lisa Price** on her new role as vice president of brand development.

Price joined FEG in 2008 as a merchandise manager at **Kalahari** in Sandusky, Ohio. Since that time, she has continued to accept more responsibilities culminating in her promotion to vice president of merchandise. After assuming the vice president role, Price has taken the lead in several other key areas of FEG including overseeing marketing operations as well as food and beverage. These expanded responsibilities required that Price's title be modified to better reflect her role within the company.



Price

**Polin Waterparks** Operations Director **Volkan Sofuoglu** recently moved to London and due to this had to leave his position with the company.

Polin Waterparks announced that **Koray Özbulut**, who has been working as production and innovation director at Polin Waterparks since 2018, has been appointed as the company's new operations director as of May 2021. Koray Özbulut will lead all processes of production, quality and innovation, planning, project management and field services in his new role at Polin Waterparks.

Koray Ozbulut completed his undergraduate degree in Mechanical Engineering at **Yıldız Technical University** in 2000 and his Executive MBA master's degree at **Koç University** in 2007.

During the first years of his career, he worked as supply and purchasing engineer, production team leader as well as production manager respectively at **Arçelik-LG**. Since 2018, he has been working at Polin Waterparks.



Özbulut

Cedar Fair Entertainment Company announced that its unitholders reelected **Daniel J. Hanrahan**, **Lauri M. Shanahan** and **Debra Smithart-Oglesby** to the Board of Directors of its general partner, **Cedar Fair Management, Inc.**, for three-year terms expiring in 2024.

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

"We are pleased to announce the reelection of Dan, Lauri and Debra to our Board," said President and CEO **Richard A. Zimmerman**. "During the COVID-19 disruption, it became apparent how fortunate we were to have a Board of Directors comprised of very seasoned and highly experienced professionals capable of providing invaluable counsel and strategic thinking that helped successfully navigate such unique and difficult circumstances."



Hanrahan



Shanahan



Smithart-Oglesby

**Cedar Point** announced that **Carrie Boldman** has been named vice president and general manager of the park. She succeeds **Jason McClure**, who has been promoted to senior vice president, park operations, at Cedar Point's parent company, **Cedar Fair Entertainment Company**.

"Carrie is a talented leader with an impressive track record in product development and design," said **Tim Fisher**, chief operating officer of Cedar Fair.

Boldman previously served as Cedar Point's vice president of merchandise and games, and brings 25 years of experience in strategic development, brand management and merchandising expertise to her new role. She spent 16 years as director of product development and design for **Disney Parks** and Resorts. She then spent two years as director of marketing and sales for **The Chef's Garden**, a family-owned sustainable farm in Huron, Ohio, before joining the Cedar Fair team in 2013. Boldman will also make history as the first female general manager of the park in its 150 years of operation.



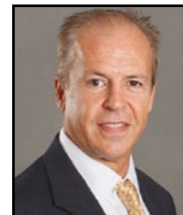
Boldman



McClure

Carowinds announced that **Manny Gonzalez** has been named vice president and general manager of the park. He succeeds **Pat Jones**, who has been promoted to senior vice president, park operations, at **Cedar Fair Entertainment Company**.

Gonzalez has held a number of leadership roles with in the entertainment and leisure industry. These roles include vice president and general manager at **Six Flags** in Oklahoma City for 17 years, chief operating officer at the **Columbus Zoo and Aquarium** in Ohio for nearly three years, and a board member of **Hawaiian Falls Waterparks** in Dallas/Ft. Worth, Texas, from 2015-2017. For the past three years, Gonzalez has served as vice president and general manager at **California's Great America**.



Gonzalez



Jones

## OBITUARIES

## Alpine Amusement Co. creator, showman Donald Massie Jr.

BURBANK, Ill. — Donald Raymond Massie Jr. age 83, formally from Burbank, IL passed away peacefully on May 23, 2021. Massie passed just before the start of his 27th season of Alpine Amusement Co., with his beloved family by his side.

Born April 21, 1938 in Bloomington, IL, Massie served in the Navy from 1956-1960 before continuing a career in technology creating software programs. Along the way, his entrepreneurial spirit grew, and he set eyes on the potential opportunities at the McClean County Fair and boldly made the decision to purchase a popcorn trailer prompting his eventual departure from IBM.

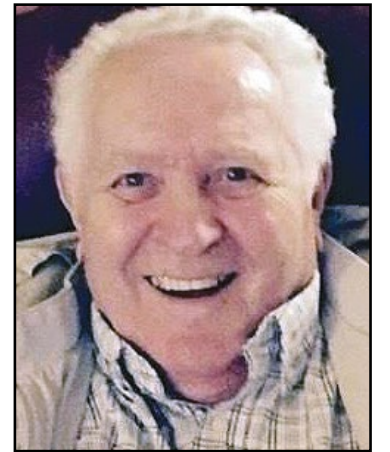
This promoted his start as an independent operator working with several Chicagoland companies, primarily with Steve Thebault and Astro Amusement Co.

Many years later, Massie pursued his enterprising passion and started his journey with his son, Donnie III to create Alpine Amusement Co. in 1994. He took pride in growing Alpine Amusement Co. from a few rides to over twenty-two rides, games and concessions.

Massie also used his background to launch computer programs specific to the amusement industry. He was a leader in investing in one of the first automatic ticket machines in the Chicagoland area. He loved the rides and concessions but had an extraordinary passion for crunching the numbers, tracking ride revenues, and percentages of growth. He was known for having high expectations and setting the bar high in everything he did.

When his medical condition forced him into semi-retirement, he loved spending time with his daughter Shari and his son-in-law Jim. Don loved his grandchildren Drew and Paige so much and received great satisfaction in having them spend their summers with him at the carnival working the rides and games. He beamed with pride as he sat shotgun while Drew drove his first loads and was honored that his grandson loved the business as much as he did.

Massie was laid to rest at the Showmen's Rest after being a member of the Showmen's League Association for more than 51 years. Don Massie Jr. always lived life to its fullest.



Donald Massie Jr.

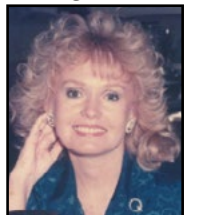
## Malinda Drew Nicholson, retired owner of Great Southern Midway

AUGUSTA, Ga. — Malinda Drew Nicholson, age 74 entered into rest on Monday, June 14, 2021 due to injuries sustained in an automobile accident.

Nicholson was born in Shelby, North Carolina to the late James H. Drew, Jr. and Eula Whitworth Drew. A generous and compassionate soul, she had a great love for animals and people alike.

Nicholson owned and managed her own outdoor amusement business — Great Southern Midway — in addition to serving as past president of the Miami Showman's Association, and past president of the country's oldest benevolent showman's association, the Ladies Auxiliary Showman's League of America.

She also served on the board of the Georgia Coliseum and the Georgia Women's Democratic Association. Following her retirement, Nicholson owned as Antique Mall in Augusta, Georgia.



Nicholson



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# SAFETY, MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

▶ Six Flags offers tickets as vaccine incentive — page 48 / Appetize launches payment technology — page 53

## Renewed operations, festivals carry Six Flags Over Texas in 2021

AT: Tim Baldwin  
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

ARLINGTON, Texas — Things could have become increasingly tricky for Six Flags Over Texas, and in some respects they have. Announced for 2020 was Aquaman Power Wave, a Power Splash coaster from Mack Rides that was to be the only one of its kind in North America. But a global pandemic put those plans on hold. It would have to wait a year. But even that changed.

Enter Ron McKenzie, a Six Flags marketing veteran (AstroWorld, Six Flags St. Louis, Six Flags Fiesta Texas) that took the helm as park president last fall. Analyzing the situation of the purchased coaster under construction having only one vehicle, he felt it was more appropriate in the long term to reevaluate the project. By rethinking the installation with the addition of a turntable for a second unit, the capacity increase was the right decision in the long run.

"It shouldn't come as a shock to us that people come to Six Flags to ride rides. The more rides we can get guests on, the better the guest experience," said McKenzie. "We took an inventory of our attractions to see where we could improve that. As we got to thinking about that for Aquaman, we found we could do a much better job if we added a second boat. We had a lot of discussions and conversations about it (internally and with Mack Rides) and decided we could have a better ride if we waited a year and could have the expanded and enhanced capacity. It has given us the opportunity to revisit the thematic elements. I'm all about immersive storytelling experiences."

But that would push the project to 2022. So what to do in the transition year?

Quite simply, Six Flags and McKenzie haven't sat still since he arrived.

"Specific goals would continue to be focused on what was always important to me as a marketing director, and that was delivering a great experience for our guests," McKenzie told *Amusement Today*. "I ask the team every day in every meeting we do, 'What do we have to do today to make it a great day for our guests.' Whatever that answer is, as long as it can be safely done, is what we need to do."

The first move was to restore the train tracks (altered for ride construction) so that the park's steam train could resume operation. "Hearing those sounds, that steam whistle, not only motivates the guests, but also motivates our team members," McKenzie remarked.

The park was entering its Halloween and holiday seasons, so as restrictions allowed, guests were finding fresh events. But with the arrival of 2021, the park's 60th anniversary would



The park's entrance plaza sets the stage for the 60th anniversary. AT/TIM BALDWIN

go without a new attraction.

Already this season, the park has offered three new festivals. Capitalizing on some of the holiday theming in place and the park's snow hill, a new Fire & Ice Festival took place in the early winter months, complete with new characters and fireworks. That was followed by a Viva La Fiesta festival in the spring with more live music, specific foods and park

décor. As summer begins, The Best of Texas festival has introduced new foods, new shows and live animals.

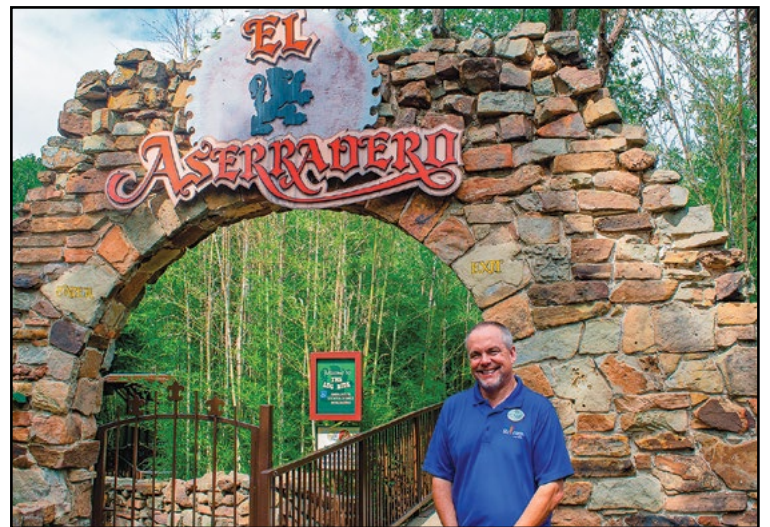
"When we were thinking about not having Aquaman to promote, we asked what could we build the year around?" McKenzie posed. "Obviously the 60th anniversary of Six Flags Over Texas is something we want to celebrate. So we decided to use our 60th anni-

versary positioning as an overlay to do a series of festivals and events throughout the year. It's something the team has wanted to do for many, many years. We thought this was a great opportunity to do that. We were also going into year two of year-round operation, so we needed to have something to talk about right out

▶ See TEXAS, page 46



Casa Magnetica is a tilted house attraction dating back to 1962 that has been renovated and reimagined (above left). Park President Ron McKenzie stands in front of the relocated original entrance of the world's first log flume ride (above right). AT/TIM BALDWIN; COURTESY SIX FLAGS OVER TEXAS



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Six Flags has offered a Fire & Ice Festival, Viva La Fiesta! and The Best of Texas Festival. AT/TIM BALDWIN; COURTESY SIX FLAGS OVER TEXAS

► **TEXAS**  
Continued from page 45

of the gate. My challenge to the team was to make the park look materially different right after the holidays. Our guests loved it. They loved the decorations; they loved the ice carving show. The more we heard from our guests, the more we knew we had a home run. So we put together a festival plan for the rest of the year."

However, rides and attractions have not been forgotten. The park has analyzed many of the resources the park has in place and has reopened the world's first log flume, developed by Arrow in 1963. The park boasts two flumes, but the

second one (1968) is ADA accessible and is the one the park typically operates. Over time, the original fell into disrepair and had not operated in a few years. This spring, McKenzie and his team brought it back online, repainted and refreshed.

"The weekend we opened Flume 1, I saw a guest looking back at the ride and asked him if he rode it," said McKenzie. "He said, 'Yes, I did. Thank you so much for getting it open. I used to ride this ride with my grandfather as a teenager. We lost him about five years ago, and just riding it brought back all these incredible memories.' I went back and told my team that these are the reasons why we get up and come to work

every morning. We're creating memories all day."

Casa Magnetica, a tilted house attraction dating back to 1962, was still in place, just boarded up since its last guests staggered through 10 years ago. Now it has reopened completely renovated and features a new storyline.

"Our operations and entertainment teams were very passionate about bringing it back," McKenzie beamed. "We had to get it done for our 60th anniversary. Jacob Dell of Magic In The Sky remembers going to that attraction as a kid. He instantly stepped up to help us get Casa back open. The goal is to keep Casa open and put different overlays over the course

of the season. It has been a hit."

With both the entrance to Casa Magnetica and the relocated flume entrance to its original location paired together, Operations Director Chris Baker said, "It brings new life back to this corner of the park that was pretty quiet beforehand."

Along the way, park improvements have spilled over into landscaping.

"The winter freeze helped us a little bit with the landscaping," McKenzie said. "We lost a lot. We used that opportunity to refresh some landscaping beds and bushes. We're going to continue to work on that as we move through the year. This park has so much potential and the DFW market is growing. We know we

have to continue to refresh and improve and add rides."

Six Flags Over Texas' official birthday is August 5, when it will turn 60 years old. The front entrance has décor accentuating the occasion with banners, a fountain show and a large picture frame. A mini festival is planned for the week of the park's birthday. With a renewed spirit, management is taking the park confidently into the future.

"Operating a theme park in a COVID environment has been difficult, but we continue to focus on those core things: friendliness, guest service and cleanliness. Those are things all well within our control," McKenzie said.

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# Obtaining and maintaining water in water rides, lagoons & ponds

**AT:** Harold Hudson  
Special to Amusement Today

Harold Hudson has previously served on the board of AIMS International and was the recipient of the inaugural AIMS Safety Award. In the story below, Hudson shares some of his insights with AT readers.

STEVENSVILLE, Md. — I was overjoyed to hear the announcement that **Ride Entertainment** had partnered with **Ecological Laboratories** to bring the amusement industry a water treatment product that is effective, easy to use and does not harm your equipment and the environment. Ecological Labs Microbe-Lift/WR is this amazing product.

I have been working in the amusement industry for over 40 years (since joining **Six Flags** in 1978). I mainly dealt with rides and loved every minute of it, but in an area somewhat outside of rides there were nagging challenges I consistently faced, as has every amusement park. That challenge was maintaining quality water in water rides, ponds and lagoons. Of particular concern were rides where guests are in close proximity with the water. Most difficult were water rides with lots of outdoor surface area and lots of water. In these rides, daily contamination occurs with organic matter such as bird and animal droppings and sometimes their dead bodies, leaves, and twigs. This is in addition to the human contamination when riders are splashed or lose hats and other personal items during the ride.

When it comes to main-



**Ecological Labs has developed Microbe-Lift/WR in order to provide a natural, cost-effective way of treating reducing organic waste in water attractions.** COURTESY RIDE ENTERTAINMENT

taining water quality in theme parks, the rapids ride, shoot-the-chutes and flume rides are definitely in the category of challenging. I have seen all these rides when the water was dirty, ugly and smelly. It was not pleasant to be splashed.

The typical water treatment for these rides is chlorine because that's all we know. We know swimming pools. Chlorine is a sanitizing agent that, when used in the right proportions, kills biological elements. However, chlorine is challenging in many significant ways:

- Maintaining appropriate levels, approximately 1ppm, of chlorine in a water ride is a challenge as chlorine can dissipate quickly. On a hot sunny day, 90% of chlorine can be lost in just 2 hours.

- Chlorine levels must be checked multiple times per day and adjusted if needed.

- Chlorine can be damaging to ride equipment causing rust and corrosion.

- Chlorine can be harmful to riders, and the environment if not maintained at the proper level.

Park operators often take the most expensive process of dealing with the issue of water quality: dump the dirty water and refill with new (less dirty) water. Now, with Ecological Laboratories there is a better and more sustainable way to achieve higher water quality while improving the overall ride experience. Microbe-Lift/WR, produced by Ecological Laboratories, is a natural treatment that is effective in achieving the rapid reduction of the organic waste consti-

tuents that builds-up within bulk water.

So, what is Microbe-Lift/WR? Microbe-Lift/WR contains many species of live bacteria that have been cultivated for compatibility, reproduction, and growth to an adult state so they can attack and eliminate organic waste in water rides, ponds, and lagoons. Once combined in the package, the bacteria begin to grow and react synergistically to one another. They go through millions of reactions and pathways that produce a unique product. In layman terms, Microbe-Lift/WR accelerates nature. It contains only organisms that are already found in the environment yet are sometimes insufficient in population to fully process the contaminants in water. The bacteria in Microbe-

Lift/WR produce the necessary enzymes to successfully and safely breakdown organic contaminants typically found in water. Microbe-Lift/WR essentially turbo-charges nature and allows it to process and clean water at higher levels and more efficient levels than otherwise achievable.

Of note, Ecological Laboratories does not recommend that Microbe-Lift/WR replace chlorine, but chlorine use can and should be greatly reduced when using Microbe-Lift/WR.

The bottom line is the microbial technology is incredibly effective in achieving the rapid reduction of the organic waste constituents that builds-up within bulk water, including air born material like pollen, bird droppings, human waste of both types. It also promotes a biological reduction in intestinal pathogens, i.e., bio control for E coli, as well as mitigate any odor related issues that develop from the organic matter that has accumulated in the water over time. Microbe-Lift/WR gets rid of organic matter and clears up water in rides, ponds, and lagoons in as little as 14 days.

I know Microbe-Lift/WR can make a big difference in the water quality in any facility and highly recommend to the amusement industry.

•rideentertainment.com



**Water attractions such as rapids rights (above left) and log flumes (above right) have become industry mainstays. Microbe-Lift/WR opens the door for more cost-efficient maintenance of these types of attractions.** AT FILE

# Six Flags theme parks use tickets as vaccine incentives for public

ARLINGTON, Texas — Six Flags Entertainment Corporation announced in May that Six Flags Great America would provide 50,000 one-day tickets — over \$4 million in value — to the State of Illinois in support of COVID-19 vaccination education programs in areas heavily impacted by the pandemic.

“Six Flags is honored to partner with state leaders to encourage Illinois residents to get vaccinated, especially in underserved communities,” said Six Flags President and CEO Mike Spanos. “We appreciate Governor (J.B.) Pritzker’s leadership on this initiative and we look forward to moving to Phase 5 very soon,” continued Spanos.

Tickets are distributed to newly vaccinated Illinois residents through local health department initiatives and community organization vaccine education campaigns.

In addition to the ticket offer, Six Flags Great America hosted a mobile vaccination team at the theme park the first weekend of June to further support the state’s vaccination efforts.

Also in June, California’s Six Flags locations announced Californians 12 and up who get at least their first vaccine dose at certain clinic locations would be eligible to receive one of 50,000 free theme park tickets. The tickets provided by Six Flags Entertainment Corp. in



Six Flags parks in California — including Six Flags Discovery Kingdom (above) and Six Flags Magic Mountain (below left) — and Illinois’s Six Flags Great America (below right) have pledged over \$8 million in free tickets as COVID-19 vaccination incentives. COURTESY SIX FLAGS



California are worth an additional \$4.5 million.

“Six Flags is proud to support efforts to vaccinate more Californians, particularly in underserved communities,” said Mike Spanos. “California is a priority market for the company. We are

continuing our commitment to local communities through ticket donations and by hosting vaccination sites at our parks across the country. We are excited to safely create fun and thrilling memories for our guests.”

On June 15, the state

of California allowed all theme parks to return to full attendance with no capacity, mask or social distancing restrictions. Six Flags parks announced the theme park ticket giveaway to coincide with the change in policy.

The new giveaway comes after California promised to pay 2 million people \$50 each in the form of gift cards to get shots and awarded \$50,000 each to 30 vaccinated people drawn at random. The incentives doled out in the weeks leading up to Tuesday’s full reopening of the economy totaled \$116.5 million.

During an event at Six Flags Magic Mountain just outside Los Angeles, California Governor Gavin Newsom defended the promotions, saying they have increased vaccinations at a time when more was needed to get people to overcome hesitations. He also acknowledged that he has been having fun acting as a game-show host at the lottery-style drawings, even as he insisted he is also focused on negoti-

ating a state budget and preparing for a drought-driven wildfire season.

“We’re fully reopening California’s economy, but we’re not letting up on our efforts to get more Californians vaccinated — especially in our hardest hit communities — so we can all safely get back to the activities and places we love, including our state’s iconic landmarks,” said Newsom. “Getting every eligible Californian vaccinated is how we maintain our incredible progress and bring our state roaring back from this pandemic.”

Six Flags continues to reiterate its dedication to making a positive difference in communities throughout the country. As part of that commitment, the company has pledged up to \$5 million in investments and ticket value by the end of 2022 toward programs dedicated to equality and the socio-economic advancement of people of color.

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Mary Jane Brewer • [mj.brewer@aimsintl.org](mailto:mj.brewer@aimsintl.org)  
Holly Coston, (714) 697-6654, [h.coston@aimsintl.org](mailto:h.coston@aimsintl.org)

### A sneak peak at what's new for AIMS International in 2022

Here at **AIMS International**, we are so excited that the amusement industry is coming back in a such a big way this summer season, and to celebrate and support the growth we're seeing, we have big plans for new programs that will be rolled out in time for the 2022 AIMS International Annual Safety Seminar, which will be held in-person in Galveston, Texas, January 9-14, 2022. Here's a sneak peek at what we're working on:



#### AIMS Safety, Security and Risk Management Program

Offering Associate and Professional-level certifications, The Safety, Security and Risk Management Program is specifically designed for safety and security professionals working in the amusement industry today. This program features a fully customized two-year academy containing a targeted curriculum that prepares students to sit

for a new safety, security, and risk management associate-level certification exam. The professional-level safety, security and risk management certification credential can be earned once the associate-level has been achieved and will require additional course work and independent study. Stay tuned for more details and a full description of the course and certification requirements coming soon.

#### AIMS International Membership Program

A new look to an existing program, the new AIMS International Membership Program is designed to engage amusement industry professionals in the mission of AIMS, which is to improve safety in the amusement industry through leadership in education. Examples of the benefits AIMS members can expect to see include: discounts on safety seminar and on-line education tuition, access to a members-only library of educational content which can be used for in-house staff training, customized educational courses and the opportunity to host AIMS outreach events at your facility. We will be rolling out details soon about new membership categories, as well as a full menu of benefits that AIMS members and subscribers can take full advantage of in 2022.

#### AIMS International Young Professionals Affiliate Program

Students and young professionals who are age 30 years or younger with less than five years of full-time experience in the amusement industry can look forward to customized educational programming, discounts and other benefits specially designed to help them gain knowledge, learn valuable skills, engage with industry veterans and ultimately to grow into the next generation of amusement industry leaders.

Want to teach at AIMS? We are now accepting proposals for presentations at the 2022 AIMS International Safety Seminar. Contribute your knowledge and hone your presentation skills as you become a member of the prestigious faculty for the industry's leading safety seminar. Presentation proposals are being accepted until July 31 at [aimsintl.org/get-involved/be-an-instructor](http://aimsintl.org/get-involved/be-an-instructor).

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# ASTM's most important standards for amusement rides, devices

W. CONSHOHOCKEN, Pa. — After a seemingly endless winter amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, amusement parks are eagerly awaiting a flood of guests looking to escape the reality of the world with family and friends. At the same time, **ASTM International's** committee on amusement rides and devices (F24) has been hard at work developing and revising standards to help make sure these amazing experiences are as safe as possible.

**Franceen Gonzales**, executive vice president, **WhiteWater West** and chair of F24, said of the upcoming year, "We are very optimistic for the 2021 season as parks begin to reopen and are heartened by the commitment to safety as a pillar in the success of our business. As these types of venues re-emerge from shutdowns, our standards are more relevant than ever."

The committee on amusement rides and devices consists of roughly 1,200 members globally and is responsible for 24 standards.

Here are three of the committee's most significant standards according to Gonzales, which have been re-



approved for the upcoming year.

## Standard Terminology Relating to Amusement Rides and Devices (F747)

To help streamline discussions on standards in the amusement rides sector, this specific standard creates a repository of terms approved by the committee to be used as effective communication tools.

## Standard Practice for Ownership, Operation, Maintenance, and Inspection of Amusement Rides and Devices (F770)

Safety is the top priority when it comes to amusement rides. This standard provides general guidelines for the operation and maintenance of rides and devices to be performed by the owner.

## Standard Practice for Design of Amusement Rides and Devices (F2291)

Covering everything from go-karts and bumper cars to waterslides and bumper boats, this standard involves all that goes into designing larger mechanical rides, establishing a set of guidelines for this purpose to ensure functionality and safety.

In addition to these critical standards, there are several new standards making their way through development by the committee.

- New Practice for Managing the Lifecycle of Amusement Rides and Devices (WK67624): As rides age, they need constant maintenance and spare parts. This standard will provide owners and operators with guidelines on devices and when they may be near-

ing the end of their lifecycle, as well as how to assess their usefulness as spare parts for other, similar devices.

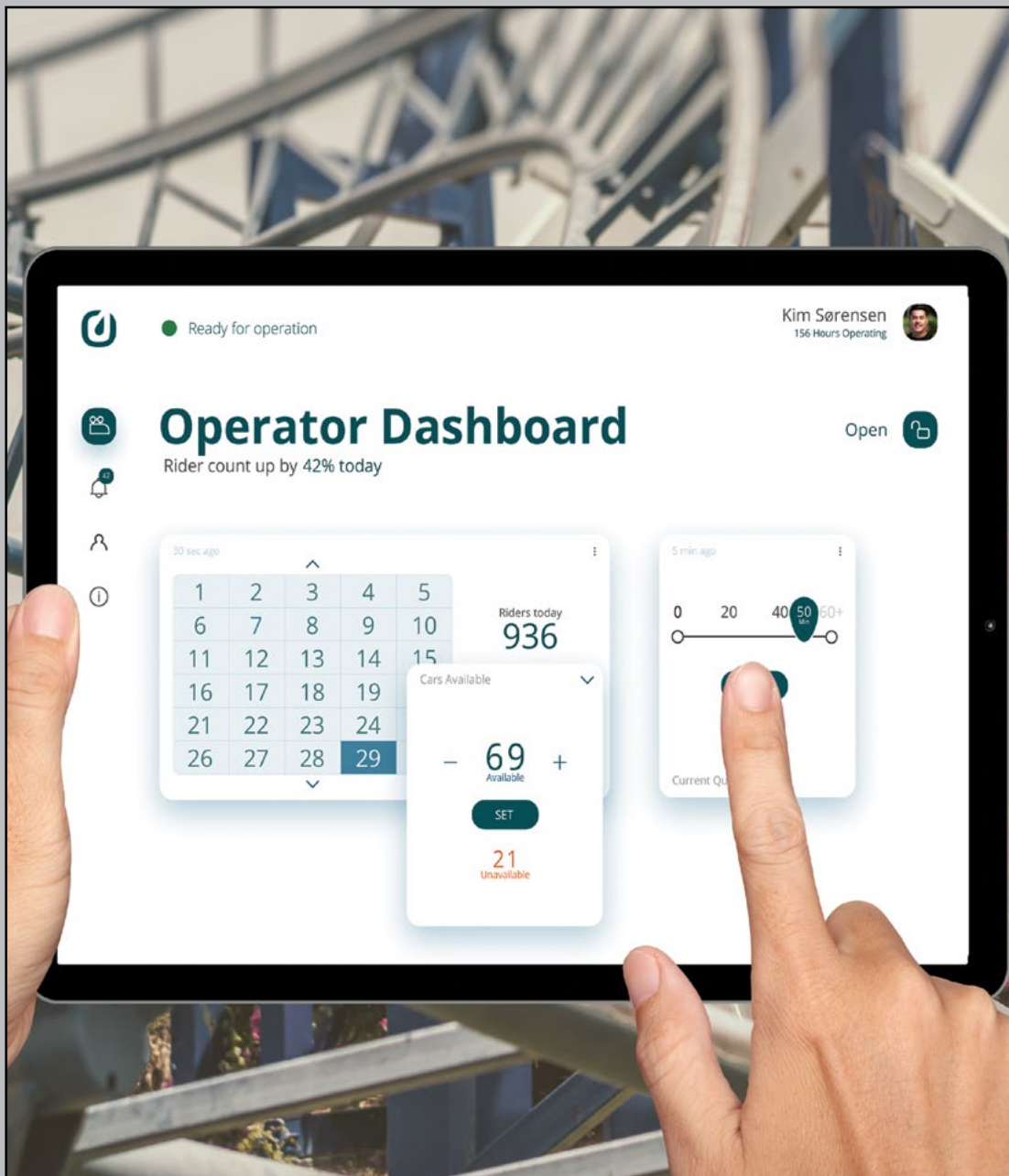
- Standard Practice for Risk Assessment & Risk Reduction for Amusement Rides and Devices (WK60829): This standard aims to put ride analysis at the forefront of the standardization process, adding more opportunities for owners to verify the safety and assess risks in their devices.

- New Practice for Body Flight/Indoor Skydiving (WK70227): With the recent explosion of amusement experiences having to do with body flight or indoor skydiving, standards are needed to ensure patron and employee safety. This standard would set a baseline for both portable and permanent attractions to reduce potential hazards.

2020 was not an easy year, and all of us could probably use some fun with family and friends at local amusement parks this summer. Thanks to the standards being created and updated by the committee on amusement rides and devices, we can all enjoy these amusements a little more safely.

•[astm.org](http://astm.org)

## Mobaro offers new ride operator app for free in 2021



LONDON — Delivering its award-winning CMMS to more than 120 parks and attractions globally, **Mobaro** has launched the latest addition to their suite of industry-specific software.

This time, ride operators and their management teams are at the center of attention. The new app dubbed RideOps lets users perform a range of vital operational workflows.

Many facilities rely on pen and paper for much of the documentation taking place at each ride. As with traditional maintenance checks, this approach lacks the opportunity of information to flow in real time.

The new RideOps app supports: 'Ready for operation' prompts for operators, ridership documentation, real-time queue time monitoring, ride capacity utilization insights, downtime capturing, as well as manuals and guidelines. Future releases of RideOps will add even more value to the operators with access to training and certification, operator checklists and ride notes for creating daily logs. The application is available with the same degree of flexibility as Mobaro's main mobile app. It is available on any tablet or computer browser over WiFi or cellular and no cables are needed.

Parks can add RideOps this year and get it free of charge for the rest of 2021, experience the value of consistently keeping track of activity across the rides in the park. The first parks began using the RideOps app at the end of April 2021.

Maintenance, safety and operations have been a key focus for Mobaro since the beginning, offering a suite of tools to firmly support the often heavy workflows and documentation needed to run a site in an efficient, cost-effective and safe way.

"What we aim to do with RideOps is to both facilitate the on-ride workflows like documenting ride cycle count, number of riders, queue time and more, but that is just part one," said **David Bromilow**, director of parks and attractions at Mobaro. "While it will work alone, RideOps could potentially revolutionize things when used in conjunction with Mobaro."

RideOps is acquirable as a standalone app that focuses on the on-ride workflows, and, later this year, Mobaro will add more connections to the main platform.

•[mobaro.com](http://mobaro.com)

## AHLA statement issued on CDC's updated guidance

WASHINGTON D.C. — **Chip Rogers**, president and CEO of the **American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA)**, recently issued a statement on updated face-covering and physical distancing guidance from the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**.

"Like all Americans, we are excited for a return to normal life, which includes travel. The recent CDC guidelines for vaccinated Americans lifting certain face-covering restrictions was welcome news and should help speed up a much-needed recovery. Throughout the pandemic our Safe Stay guidelines continued to evolve to align with the current environment and CDC guidelines, and the same will be true as we work to reopen.

"In light of the recent CDC announcement that fully vaccinated people no longer need to wear a mask or physically distance in most settings, our Safe Stay guidelines will relax mask requirements for guests who are fully vaccinated. At this time, we are not asking hotels to require proof of vaccination status, but we do ask that all guests and workers, vaccinated or not, respect and honor these revised guidelines. Unvaccinated guests should wear face-coverings at all times and practice physical distancing," stated Rogers.

"As we await further direction on how CDC guidance applies to business, hotel employees — who are the backbone of our industry — should continue to wear face-coverings indoors for the time being and follow local business and workplace guidance. For vaccinated employees working outside, or not in close contact with others, our guidelines will permit hotels to implement protocols easing face-covering requirements. Of course, all hotels are required to follow state and local requirements which may go beyond what is recommended by the CDC."

Rogers continued, "Moving into the next stages of recovery and as vaccination rates continue to increase, we will carefully consider all new guidance in accordance with all applicable federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules and regulations. In the meantime, Safe Stay's rigorous health and safety protocols will continue to help support peace of mind for travelers."

•ahla.com

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# Physical distancing on amusement rides is counterproductive

Erik Beard is a managing member and general counsel to International Ride Training and the second vice president of NEAAPA. He has worked in the amusement industry for over 25 years. What follows is a column he recently shared with the amusement industry.

Bottom line: Spacing riders out on rides is actually counterproductive to reducing potential exposure because ride capacity has an inverse relationship to line length. The fewer people you allow on your ride, the more people are waiting in your line and the longer they are waiting.

The goal of social distancing and reduced capacities is to reduce the likelihood of “close contact” with individuals with COVID-19. The **Center for Disease Control (CDC)** has defined “close contact” as being within six feet of an infected person for a cumulative time of 15 minutes or more over a 24 hour period. The State of New York, in its reopening guidance, has shortened the threshold time to 10 minutes. Keeping people spaced out on rides avoids close contact for the length of the ride cycle, but it dramatically increases the number of people waiting in the queue and the length of time they are waiting — which increases the likelihood of “close contact” in that location. Some numbers below illustrate the point:

•Average roller coaster cycle time (includes loading/unloading and ride time):

approximately 3.5-4 minutes

•Average flat ride cycle time (includes loading / unloading and ride time): approximately 5 minutes (flat rides tend to load / unload less quickly than coasters because there is typically less staffing at these rides and the ride units may be spread out over a larger area).

Thus, if we load every seat on the ride, without regard for social distancing, riders from separate travel groups will be within six feet of one another for an average of 3.5-5 minutes depending on the type of ride. Recall though that because of the number of people in the park, it is highly unlikely that the same groups of unrelated riders will be seated near one another on more than one ride per visit. Assuming, therefore, that a rider is infected, it is unlikely that another guest will be in “close contact” (under either the NYS or CDC definition) with that rider by virtue of common participation on a ride.

Contrast this with the effect on the queue of spacing people out on the rides. Imposing six foot social distancing on a roller coaster, for example, can easily cut capacity on the train by two-thirds. In other words, a train that is designed to accommodate 24 riders at a time may only be able to accommodate eight if required to socially distance. The effect this has on the line length & waiting time is significant.



Social distancing on rides may actually lead to increased risk of exposure to COVID-19 as guests spend more time waiting in line than if rides are run at full capacity. AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON

#### Hourly throughput assuming full capacity:

•60 minutes in an hour / 4 minutes per cycle equals 15 cycles per hour

•15 cycles per hour x 24 riders per cycle equals 360 per hour (assumes single train operation)

#### Hourly throughput assuming 1/3 capacity due to social distancing

•60 minutes in an hour / 4 minutes per cycle equals 15 cycles per hour

•15 cycles per hour x 8 riders per cycle equals 120 per hour (assumes single train operation)

The 240 riders per hour that are not riding under the social distancing scenario are waiting in line — a line that is now moving 67% slower than a line for a ride operating at full capacity. So, a 10-minute wait for a roller coaster at full

capacity becomes a 17-minute wait with social distancing. A 30-minute wait for a roller coaster at full capacity becomes a 50-minute wait with social distancing. Whereas filling a ride to capacity would be unlikely to bring riders within “close contact” of one another due to the duration of the ride, lowering capacity on the ride actually makes it more likely that guests will be in “close contact” with one another in the queue because of the dramatically increased waiting times.

Social distancing in the queue does not solve the problem. Experience in the summer of 2020 and with parks currently operating have shown that the shorter the waiting time, the more effective social distancing measures are. In essence, it is easier to get riders to maintain social distancing when the line is moving than when they are

standing around for longer periods of time. The longer people wait in line the closer they tend to drift together despite efforts to maintain social distancing with ground markers and staffing. The key to maintaining distancing in the queues is to keep the line moving as much as possible and not let it stagnate.

#### A couple of other points to consider

•Parks such as **Disney World**, **Universal Studios**, and the **Cedar Fair** parks have already begun fully loading their rides to keep line lengths to a minimum. These properties have recognized that riding an amusement ride outdoors is significantly safer than such things as prolonged airplane, bus, or train travel — none of which are currently required to be socially distanced.

•The likelihood of viral exposure on an outdoor amusement ride is significantly reduced, even within six feet, because of the airflow around the vehicle and the rider. A recent **Brown University** study looked at viral exposure between the driver and opposite side, rear seat passenger in a car with all windows rolled down and the car moving at a speed of 50 mph. The study found that the rate of viral transmission between the two individuals was almost imperceptible.

Outdoor amusement rides have even greater airflow than a car with all the windows rolled down since riders are surrounded by open air at all times. If the rate of transmission in a vehicle is almost imperceptibly low, the rate of transmission on an outdoor, fast moving amusement ride must logically be no worse (and likely less).

—Erik Beard

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# Appetize launches new entertainment venue payment technology

LOS ANGELES — **Appetize** introduced **Appetize Payments**, an all-in-one solution that combines payment processing services along with Appetize's cloud software. Launched at a time when larger venues and hospitality brands are looking to unify their tech stack, **Appetize Payments** eliminates the need for expensive third-party services, provides transparency in pricing, offering a single point of support.

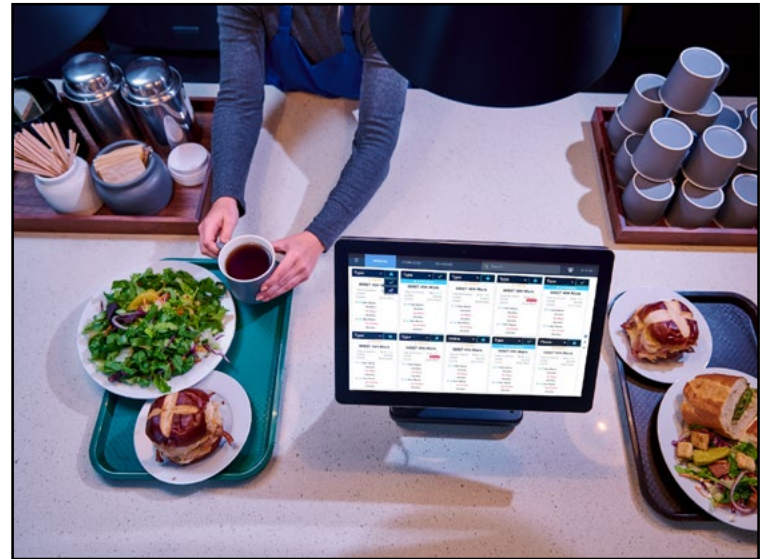
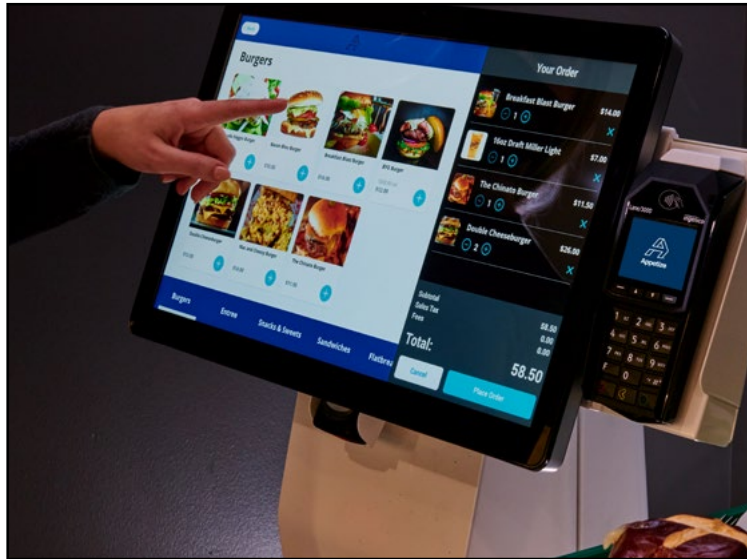
"We launched **Appetize Payments** due to increasing demand from enterprise customers for a more streamlined and transparent payment solution," said **Appetize Chief Strategy Officer and Co-Founder Kevin Anderson**. "Offering our own payments solution in addition to our industry-leading software suite reduces friction and will ultimately allow our customers to focus on growing their business. This is an important next chapter in the evolution of our platform."

**Appetize Payments** is now available in all **Appetize** products for multiple industries including sports and entertainment, attractions, food service, education and restaurants.

All **Appetize Payments**-enabled software and hardware supports dip, tap, scan, RFID and NFC functionality, digital currencies/wallets, and the leading loaded value and gift card platforms. **Appetize** supports PCI validated and Point-to-Point Encryption (P2PE) solutions that allow for a drastically-reduced network scope and security assessment.

"Adopting **Appetize Payments** allowed us to have an all-in-one solution that conveniently streamlines our payments and software," said **Eric Sanchez**, controller at restaurant chain **Hale & Hearty**. "The platform simplifies our support and reporting models, and ultimately, saves us money on every transaction processed since we no longer have to pay a percentage to a third party. We're excited to continue working with **Appetize** for many years to come."

Since the product launch, more than 50%



All of the newly launched **Appetize Payments** enabled software and hardware supports dip, tap, scan, RFID, and NFC functionality, digital currencies/wallets, and the leading loaded value and gift card platforms. COURTESY APPETIZE

of new **Appetize** partners have signed up for **Appetize Payments**, including **Hale & Hearty**, **FC Cincinnati**, **Allen Eagle Stadium** and **Hillsboro Hops**.

**Appetize Payments** offers free enrollment in interchange saving programs to reduce card brand fees and in-person installa-

tion if onsite assistance is required. There is no long-term commitment or early termination fees, with the goal of taking the pain out of payments for businesses, while improving experiences for customers.

This new offering works with **Appetize's** full suite of omnichannel solu-

tions, including point-of-sale devices, self-service kiosks and handhelds. Management and staff have access to **Appetize's** **Activate** software, which allows devices to switch seamlessly among stores, revenue centers and service modes; **Interact**, which provides self-service capa-

bilities through kiosks and mobile web; and **Connect**, a web-based management portal designed to power multi-site operations, giving venues a real-time management, reporting, and analytics platform that can be accessed from anywhere at any point in time.

• [appetize.com](http://appetize.com)

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BREAKING NEWS

# Roller Coaster Museum to debut newly unearthed, historic Arrow ride footage

PLAINVIEW, Texas – As pioneers of the amusement industry, the **Arrow Development** company built some of the most legendary roller coasters ever created from 1959 to 2001. Now, the **National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives** (NRCMA), the world's largest collection of amusement ride vehicles and blueprints, will soon debut never-before-seen, recently preserved test footage from their Arrow film collection.

"To be able to preserve and then share this footage

with fans around the world is an absolute thrill," **Richard Munch**, NRCMA historian. "By digitizing these incredibly rare films, we will be able to tell the history of the roller coaster that much better, to a much larger audience than ever before."

The Arrow film collection, which will debut as part of **American Coaster Enthusiasts'** "West Texas Roundup" event, consists of film reels, tapes and DVDs. They were donated from roller coaster manufacturer, **S&S-Sansei** of Logan, Utah, who purchased Arrow's

assets in a bankruptcy sale in 2002. There are hundreds of hours of donated footage still requiring digitalization and preservation, some of which can be seen now at [rollercoastermuseum.org](http://rollercoastermuseum.org).

While continuing its expansion and collection of artifacts, the NRCMA needs support from the industry and from fans of amusement parks everywhere to continue these efforts. Donations can be made online at the site listed above or by mailing the NRCMA at P.O. Box 5424, Arlington, Texas 76005.



**S&S-Sansei** donated hours of rare test footage from Arrow Development to the National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives. The footage will debut at the American Coaster Enthusiasts' West Texas Roundup event in July. COURTESY NRCMA

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