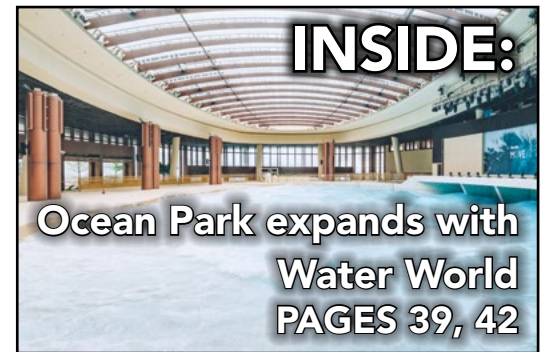


Amusement TODAY CELEBRATING 25 YEARS!

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November 2021 | Vol. 25 • Issue 8.1

Digital Edition

Energy, optimism on the wings of the upcoming IAAPA Expo 2021

IAAPA Expo 2021 returns to the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida. AT/TIM BALDWIN



AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

ORLANDO — The last time that the **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA)** met in person for the IAAPA Expo here was in 2019. In that year, a record 42,200 people attended.

As banners and lights are hung at the **Orange County Convention Center**, Orlando, Florida, scene of the IAAPA Expo, organizers hope for a successful event, but reaching that 40,000 plus number for the Nov. 15-19 will be hard to do.

For one thing, there were still international travel restrictions at a time when potential foreign travelers would be making plans for the trek to Orlando.

The White House announced the reopening to fully vaccinated air travelers from the 26 so-called Schengen countries in Europe including France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland and Greece, as well as Britain, Ireland, China, India, South Africa, Iran and Brazil. In mid-October, the White House confirmed the ban will be eased on November 8.

The White House also announced land travel

► See IAAPA, page 8

Walt Disney World celebrates 50 years with new shows, attractions

AT: David Fake
Special to Amusement Today

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — On October 1, **Walt Disney World** and **Magic Kingdom Park** with its central icon, Cinderella's Castle, celebrated 50 years since the official opening day in 1971. Walt Disney World, as it ultimately became known, was early on originally referred to by its namesake, **Walt Disney**, cryptically as 'Disney's Florida Project' and later, simply, 'Disney World.'

Sadly, Walt Disney did not live to see his dream come to fruition as he passed away on December 15, 1965, just a little over a year after the project was announced. Walt's older brother **Roy Disney** postponed his retirement to complete Walt's dream. It was Roy who, after Walt's death, officially dubbed the 27,000-acre resort in Central Florida, Walt Disney World to honor his late brother's legacy.

In the years since, the world has watched Walt Disney World grow from a single park with two resort hotels, to four theme parks, two water parks, and more than 25 resort hotels.

From Space Mountain to Star Wars: Rise of the Resistance, along the way there have been



Cinderella's Castle — the icon of Magic Kingdom Park — has received a facelift including new EAridescent royal colors, gold bunting, sparkling embellishments, and a 50th logo adorns the balcony (above left). At night, Disney Enchantment paints high-definition projection mapping onto the castle against a backdrop of fireworks. EPCOT has opened the fine dining experience Space 220 (above right). AT/DAVID FAKE

many new attractions added to the Magic Kingdom's original 23 which opened in 1971. In all, there is currently a total of 173 rides and attractions across all of Walt Disney World.

Of course, there were also many milestones celebrated. In 1976 the five-year anniversary had a patriotic, American Bicentennial

theme. The 10th or 'Tencennial' anniversary was a year-long celebration that, inexplicably, had a coinciding television special run in January of 1982, and concluded with the opening of **EPCOT Center** (later renamed Epcot and now EPCOT) on what was technically the 11th anniversary of WDW. The 15th anniversary saw



a new car given away each day for 365 days. And who could forget the 25th anniversary with its pink, inflatable, candy-topped birthday cake castle overlay?

As for the 50th anniversary, multiple, exciting new projects and attractions were announced back as early as 2019 and were scheduled to open coinciding

with the anniversary. Then in 2020 there were many questions about what, and even if, anything would take place for the 50th when Walt Disney World was shuttered for four months due to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the subsequent budget cuts and layoff of

► See DISNEY, page 6

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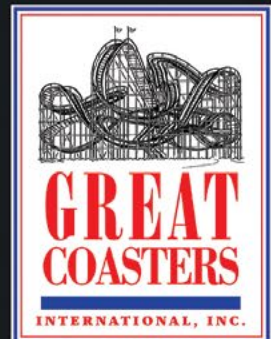
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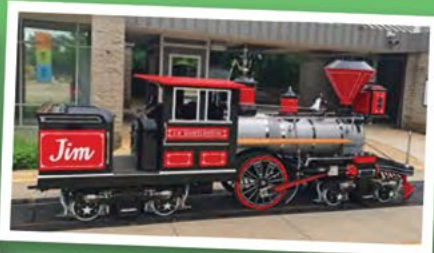
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AMUSEMENT VIEWS

AT NOTEBOOK: John W.C. Robinson, jrobinson@amusementtoday.com

Expo expectations



Robinson

For the past couple months, whenever I've run into someone from the industry, there has consistently been one hot topic question on everyone's mind: What do you expect from IAAPA Expo 2021?

Whether it's been a business collaboration, a social event or even just a surprise meeting, all industry people have had the upcoming expo on their mind and are continually curious about what they should expect this year.

I recall when the COVID-19 pandemic began, some already feared in March of 2020 that IAAPA Expo 2020 would not happen. I was more optimistic and was certain it would occur, but I was wrong. 2020 was the first year there was not an industry expo to look forward to, to build the following year's business on and to make connections to further the future of our industry. But 2020 is the past, events are returning and IAAPA Expo 2021 is — quite literally — just around the corner.

So what should we expect?

There have been some common thoughts and musings. 2021 saw the industry start to rebound, but there's still a long way to go before things are back to pre-2020 levels or better. Even with the United States' travel restrictions being eased starting on November 8, the international presence at IAAPA Expo 2021 likely will not be what we have become used to. And, while many are still nervous about the dollars and cents of it all, everyone is eager to once again shake hands with associates and friends from across the globe at the annual event.

I've even heard of a few companies who are eager for the event and seizing the opportunity to stand out on the showfloor — and in the industry — knowing that this year will be different than any other.

I look at the upcoming Expo and see nothing but a chance for true optimism. Buyers may be more cautious than previous years, but they will be buying. Exhibitors may not be pulling out all the stops, but they are eager to be on display and move the industry forward.

More than an annual meeting, IAAPA Expo has become an annual celebration of the industry as it closes the book on one season and looks optimistically towards the next. No matter the scale or the changes to the guest list, this is the party that we've all been holding on to our invitations for far too long. It's time to walk through the doors and enjoy the opportunities the event brings. Anything is possible!

FLINT'S VIEW: Bubba Flint



INDUSTRY VOICE: Hal McAvoy, IAAPA

Highly-anticipated return

The attractions industry is blessed with many strengths. A commitment to making memories, to providing safe family entertainment, to being resilient and innovative, and to coming together to help one another by sharing learnings and best practices. This said, who would have thought that COVID-19 would still be impacting our personal and business lives this far into 2021?

While progress has been made with vaccination rates, it is not happening consistently around the world, and many facilities and organizations are still working to reopen and restart. As an international association, IAAPA must stay connected with our members' situations and provide services and products that can assist. This includes leading the way by helping members reconnect in-person.

It was amazing to see our members come together in Barcelona, Spain, for IAAPA Expo Europe back in September. The atmosphere was electric and the emotions were high as we finally came back together. 8,500 industry professionals met, shared, and conducted important business. They saw the latest innovations in products and



McAvoy

services across a trade show floor that was exciting! The sights, smells, and sounds elicited both joy and relief that our industry truly is on the way back.

Time flies when you are having fun, and we are now ready for IAAPA Expo in Orlando, Florida. Our plans have come together and the IAAPA team has feverishly prepared for the return of our mem-

bers — and friends — to connect, learn, and do business once again. The Orange County Convention Center will again be alive with the vibrant exhibits and energy we have been craving since we wrapped IAAPA Expo 2019.

As I get ready to again welcome exhibitors, members, speakers and participants to our premier in-person event, I am humbled and grateful. Thank you for your support and dedication to each other and to our industry. Thank you for coming together with the IAAPA team, pivoting, adjusting, and communicating. Together, we are all moving the global attractions industry forward. I am honored to be part of this journey to recovery, and to be a part of a community that is brave, nimble and connected.

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

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Your Amusement Industry NEWS Leader

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2 MINUTE DRILL



AT: Janice Witherow

Ken Whiting, Whiting's Foods at Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk

Ken Whiting has dedicated his professional life to managing his family's food service business at **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk** where **Whiting's Foods, Inc.**, is the largest supplier of food and beverages to the California seaside park. After working his entire career in the attractions industry and providing four decades of service in various roles with **IAAPA**, Whiting is stepping into the position of Chairman of the Board for the industry association. Anyone who knows Whiting, knows he is up for the job ... he's a true leader with grit and passion, enjoys a challenge, has a keen interest in people and the business and is a downright good guy. On top of all that, he participates in marathons and triathlons! All the best, Ken!

Title: President.

Number of years in the industry:

It's been a lifetime ... but let's go with 40+.

Best thing about the industry:

The constant innovation, growth, willingness of sharing information ... and the people.

Favorite amusement ride/attraction:

Across the street: Giant Dipper at Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk.

Across the globe: Pirates of the Caribbean at Shanghai Disney.

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

Be lead singer in a country band.

Biggest challenge facing our industry:

Every aspect related to the hangover from COVID, with staffing at the top of the list.

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

We are in the people business, and connecting with new members of our team can be impactful.

I am really looking forward to this at the IAAPA Attractions Expo this year ...

To learn the next big thing.

In one word, I hope my time at IAAPA's helm will be ...

Purposeful.

My downtime is spent ...

Running.

It's November! For me, that means ...

The IAAPA Expo is coming soon.

At the grocery, you will most likely find me in this aisle:

Actually, wandering all the aisles. I'm constantly amazed at the new products, packaging and displays.

Hidden talent:

I can ride a unicycle (at least I used to!).

When people visit me in California, I always show them this ...

Surfing, and the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk.



From managing his family's food service business — the largest at Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk — to stepping into the role of IAAPA's chairman of the board, Ken Whiting continues to display his leadership and passion for the industry.
COURTESY WHITING'S FOODS, INC.

I am inspired by ... What is possible.

My biggest worry is ...

Not pursuing what's possible.

For me, the ideal Friday evening consists of ...

My wife and I hanging out with family and friends.

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

A restaurant that has a view, with a great steak, a cold Corona, and my wife and I are on vacation!

The longest flight I have ever taken was ...

Australia. Four movies, six drinks, and I think two days long.

Words I live by:

From my mother: "If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all"

Best time of day: Early morning.

Favorite type of pizza:

Margherita with extra garlic.

In one word, my style can be described as ... Positive.

The book I am reading right now is ...

Dale Carnegie, *How to Win Friends and Influence People* for probably the 50th time!

My childhood nickname was ... Kenny.

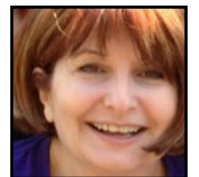
THE INDUSTRY SEEN

Holy donations, Batman!



ARLINGTON, Texas — Following a screening of the Rocky Mountain Construction documentary *This Is How We Roll* [see page 76], Jeff Braziel (member of American Coaster Enthusiasts) donated an original Batman The Escape print from his personal collection to the National Roller Coaster Museum. With the museum under construction in Plainview, Texas, Braziel made the donation at the offices of *Amusement Today*. The pastel artwork was created in 1993 for the debut of the Intamin stand-up coaster as it was being installed at AstroWorld (formerly of Houston, Texas). AT/GARY SLADE

Reflections ON FUN



AT: Lottie Minick

Traveling pet circus

In 1978, when **Magic Springs** in Hot Springs, Arkansas, first opened, the park had an animal sideshow: *Monte Millions' Traveling Pet Circus*. For a quarter play — no matter what the animals accomplished — the guest would receive a small prize.

The circus did not have the best location and the performing animals were not-so-talented, however the vendor was a family member of one of the park's investors. Nepotism can make things interesting.

"Guess Your Weight" monkey had some light-up buttons to punch for banana treats. Guests did not care if he got close to their weight, they just enjoyed seeing his delight in the treats. "Rambling Tic Tac Toe" rooster crowed and pecked buttons for his treats, then pecked the glass hoping to peck a park guest. Few checked to see if a winning Tic Tac Toe was ever achieved. "Bunny Hop" bunny slept — a lot — no matter how many coins guests put in his slot for him to jump over a plastic carrot. His true talent lie in his cuteness.

When the park closed in the fall for weekends-only operation, someone found "Tap Dancing" duck was left in his glass and tented box. Starving and thirsty, he was rescued. The big discovery was the revelation that the duck danced on cue because his dance floor was actually a hot plate!

"Tap Dancing" duck found a wonderful home with the park's games manager, living out his days with a menagerie of furry friends and never had to dance again.

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.

► DISNEY

Continued from page 1

many cast members.

Rumors of project cancellations and holds began to flood in. It was not looking good for the normally guaranteed high-caliber celebrations for which Disney is known. Ultimately, Disney was able to prepare and roll out an 18-month Anniversary party referred to as the “World’s Most Magical Celebration.” And while some of the planned attractions have been delayed until 2022 or 2023, the people at Disney must be commended for what they were able to accomplish.

So, what can guests expect if they plan to visit Walt Disney World between now and April 1, 2023? The following is a list of the already open new rides and attractions, as well as an overview of those that are delayed but opening soon.

Cinderella Castle’s ‘Earidescent’ makeover

The icon of Magic Kingdom Park has received a facelift including new EARidescent royal colors (the colors of the 50th Celebration), gold bunting, sparkling embellishments, and a 50th logo adorns the balcony. Mickey, Minnie and friends have received matching special EARidescent color and embroidered costumes.

Disney Fab 50

50 golden anniversary character sculptures have been placed around all four parks. The sculptures range in size and placement, with some almost hidden. Favorites include Stitch and Abu in Magic Kingdom Park’s Tomorrowland and Adventureland, respectively.

Beacons Of Magic

The Icons at all four Walt Disney World theme parks come to life after dark, each with their own special lighting. Each light show is set to the music of “The Magic is Calling,” a new anthem written specifically for the 50th Anniversary. The lighting used on three of the four icons is special, high-def projection mapping. The outlier is EPCOT’s Spaceship Earth’s “Points of Light” transformation. At this park, the geodesic dome has been outfitted with hundreds of bright, color-changing LED lights that give the 39-year-old attraction new life — even if the interior transformation of the attraction has, unfortunately, been put on hold indefinitely.

Space 220 restaurant

This fine-dining experience adjacent to Mission: Space in EPCOT’s World Discovery neighborhood is an attraction all its own. The restaurant

invites guests to feel as if they travel 220 miles above Earth to the Centauri Space Station for lunch or dinner. “At Space 220, we hope to take guests on a culinary journey with our signature prix fixe menu that will let them customize the perfect meals for their crew and expedite their trip to space and back, allowing them ample time to enjoy all that EPCOT has to offer,” said Kyle Collins, marketing director for Patina Restaurant Group, which manage the restaurant.

Disney Kitetails

Animal Kingdom’s Discovery River is the stage for this larger-than-life kite and inflatables show. Two different shows alternate and include character kites themed to *The Lion King* and *The Jungle Book*. The kites in the show are spectacular, but the production and show design are perplexing with the use of Jet Skis and especially the uncomfortable to watch manner of “ditching” the kites into an on-stage, cordoned-off section of the amphitheater. This show does not seem to fit with Disney’s normally high-level show standards and conjures up unfortunate memories of EPCOT’s short-lived, pre-IllumiNations, daytime lagoon show, “Surprise in the Skies.” The show quickly became referred to as “Mistake on the Lake” and was part of the Walt Disney World 20th anniversary in 1991.

Disney Enchantment

This new nightly Castle show at Magic Kingdom Park paints high-definition projection mapping on Cinderella’s Castle and down Main Street with Disney music against a backdrop of spectacular fireworks. Inspiring everyone to believe in the magic that lives within them, the show’s stirring soundtrack is anchored by a new emotional original song, “You Are the Magic,” written and performed by multiple Grammy winner Philip Lawrence, whose musical career began as a Disney cast member performing in Walt Disney World shows. The show is narrated by *Black Panther* queen, Angela Bassett.

Harmonious

This massive nighttime spectacular is the long-term replacement for “IllumiNations: Reflections of Earth,” now that the interim show, “EPCOT Forever,” which ran for two years, concluded its run. The new show, one of the largest nighttime events ever created by Disney, tells a story about the shared global connection we all have as humans. The 20-minute show features massive floating



EPCOT’s “Harmonious” features massive floating set pieces, custom-built LED panels, choreographed moving fountains, lights, pyrotechnics and lasers (above). Remy’s Ratatouille Adventure — the dark ride which first appeared at Disneyland Paris — opened at the France pavilion within EPCOT’s World Showcase (right). AT/DAVID FAKE

set pieces, custom-built LED panels, choreographed moving fountains, lights, pyrotechnics and lasers. Imagineering Senior Music Producer and Creative Director Yaron Spiwak explains the show as a labor of love culminating out of 111 recording sessions from nearly 240 artists from around the world singing in their native languages and all recorded remotely during the pandemic. “A lot of the time, you know, there’s the story of the show and there’s the music of the show. On this show, they’re a little bit mixed, I think. Almost like the musicians that are performing in the show are telling the story. The resulting ensemble is a magnificent cultural symphony unlike anything heard before. It is the story of us,” he said.

Remy’s Ratatouille Adventure

This dark ride clone of the ride of the same name at Disneyland Paris, finds its State-side home in the France Pavilion in EPCOT’s World Showcase. Because of the nature of the international pavilions around World Showcase, Disney Imagineers were able to duplicate the ride, as is, including the voice tracking which alternates between the languages of French and English. The trackless ride system uses an embedded guide wire. Guests experience sights, sounds and even smells of Gusteau’s restaurant as they scurry through the attraction with a mouse-eye-view throughout the ride which



is a combination of physical sets and 3D scenes. Ride vehicles move and tilt to create a more immersive experience, and the result is an adorable attraction, suitable for all ages, that captures the fun, whimsy and magic of the film.

Two highly anticipated E-ticket attractions that were planned to open as part of the 50th anniversary celebration have been delayed — Guardians of the Galaxy Cosmic Rewind at EPCOT, one of the largest indoor rollercoasters ever built, and the TRON Lightcycle Run roller coaster at Magic Kingdom Park. It was announced they will open in mid-2022 and early 2023, respectively. The new opening dates will still both occur during the 18-month celebration.

Indeed, there is much to applaud about what has transpired over just the past few weeks, much less the past half-century. It is no wonder why it is scheduled to last a year and a half — especially when what is truly being celebrated is broken down by the numbers. It is difficult to comprehend the statistics. For example, there can be as many as 70,000+ cast members employed at one time by Walt Disney World at its peak, or that during its busiest season the population across the resort can reach nearly 200,000, and that

this Central Florida swampland would become the “Theme Park Capital of the World.”

In a television interview in 1955 Walt mused, “I only hope that we never lose sight of one thing — that it all started with a mouse.” Yet many “Disneyphiles” and theme park junkies wonder if Roy, in the five years and five days he survived his brother, ever himself realized the legacy that he, too, was creating by believing in his brother’s vision and making it his life’s work to see that Walt’s dreams were fulfilled. At no time did Roy take any credit for his part in making Walt’s dream come true or for making Walt Disney World a success.

In his dedication speech for the resort, Roy said, “Walt Disney World is a tribute to the philosophy and life of Walter Elias Disney... and to the talents, the dedication, and the loyalty of the entire Disney organization that made Walt Disney’s dream come true. May Walt Disney World bring joy and inspiration and new knowledge to all who come to this happy place... a Magic Kingdom where the young at heart of all ages can laugh and play and learn together. Dedicated this 25th day of October 1971.” His words are immortalized, cast in bronze and displayed at the base of the flagpole at the head of Main Street.



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IAAPA Foundation grants scholarship funding to Breda University

BALTIMORE, Md. — The **IAAPA Foundation** announced that its board of directors has granted scholarship funding for two international students to attend **Breda University of Applied Science** during the 2021-22 and 2022-23 academic years.

Tom Wages, executive director of the IAAPA Foundation, stated: "This funding is an expression of the support that the IAAPA Foundation board members have for the attractions management degree program that Breda University offers, and for Breda's demonstrated commitment to the attractions industry. The IAAPA Foundation is very pleased to play a role in Breda's efforts to support the attractions industry."

Breda University of Applied Sciences is a Dutch vocational university located in the city of Breda in the Netherlands. A medium-sized public institution for higher education, Breda University caters to 7,000 Dutch and foreign students from more than 100 different countries. As a world-renowned

university for leisure and management, Breda University specializes in preparing students for international careers for various industries including attractions management.

"We are thankful for the financial support of the IAAPA Foundation and the student networking opportunities at the IAAPA Expos," said **Bart Stadhouders**, Breda University coordinator of the Attractions & Theme Parks Management program. "We are very proud of our recent Attractions and Theme Park Management graduates from Breda University. Nearly all of the students found excellent jobs within the attractions industry, working for great companies such as **Efteling, Floriade Expo, Make-a-Wish, Plopsa Group, Swedice** and **Toverland**. It is our stated goal at Breda University to bring more students into the attractions industry in the future."

The selection process for the scholarships includes an evaluation of the student's submission

of a motivational letter and a video pitch. Two students will be chosen per year to be awarded with this prestigious scholarship.

"The IAAPA Foundation has had a great relationship with Breda University for a good number of years," offered **Jim Seay**, chairman of the IAAPA Foundation and president of **Premier Rides**. "Their students have an amazing amount of passion for the global attractions industry, and they literally light up the room when they participate in IAAPA Expo educational sessions and the young professionals forums. Their enthusiasm is great for the industry, and it is wonderful that the IAAPA Foundation is continuing to support the students' aspirations to be a part of our great business."

The IAAPA Foundation relies exclusively on generous private donations to support the future leaders of the global attractions industry. Financial support is crucial to this industry effort and donations can be made through iaapa.org.

IAAPA

Continued from page 1

for fully vaccinated individuals from Canada and Mexico will be admitted in early November as well. Again, no specific date. Air travel has been permitted with restrictions applied.

And even though it has been reported that health officials are seeing the summer COVID-19 pandemic surge easing, some potential attendees may still be hesitant to mingle with large crowds.

Yet the industry that brings fun to millions annually seems to be ready to partake in that fun as well.

IAAPA officials are feeling the energy.

With the exception of several special events as well as the 18th Annual IAAPA Charity Golf Tournament set to happen over the weekend, Nov. 13 and 14, the conference officially gets underway Monday, Nov. 15, with educational sessions starting as early as 8 a.m. This year there have been planned more than 90 education sessions and roundtables designed specifically for attractions professionals.

IAAPA has created new



The expansive IAAPA Expo show floor (above left) will fill the convention center, allowing buyers and exhibitors to once again meet in person. In addition, IAAPA seminars and educational opportunities will return during the event (above right). AT/TIM BALDWIN



learning opportunities for attendees this year that will be held on the trade show floor in a designated area. Called EDUTalks, IAAPA is presenting fast-paced, 15-minute sessions during scheduled times.

Sure to be a highlight this year is Legends Panel set for Wednesday, Nov. 17, curated and hosted by **Bob Rogers**, founder and CEO of **BRC Imagination Arts**. This year's panel includes the Legends Behind The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man, **Thierry Coup**, **Phil Hette**

Scott Trowbridge.

The trade show will kick off on Tuesday, Nov. 16 and run through Friday, Nov. 19. Hours are: 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Tuesday-Thursday, and 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Friday.

IAAPA is offering Trade Show Floor Tours this year. Attendees will be led to participating exhibitors who will showcase their services and demonstrate their products.

The annual Lunch and Learn is back and set for Tuesday, Nov. 15. This year the luncheon will feature a key-

note presentation from **Josh D'Amaro**, chairman of Disney Parks, Experiences and Products. This time offers attendees an opportunity to share ideas, discuss trends and network with peers from across the global attractions industry.

The announcement of the IAAPA awards winners will take place during the Opening Reception set for Tuesday evening, Nov. 16. The award announcements include IAAPA Hall of Fame inductees, IAAPA Service Award recipients, the IAAPA

Young Professional of the Year and IAAPA Brass Ring Award winners.

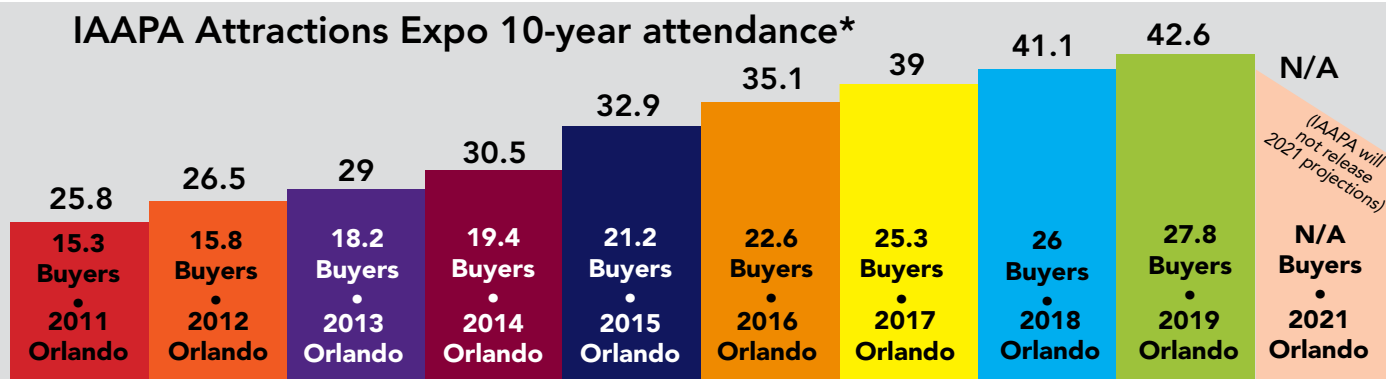
All throughout the week, IAAPA Expo planners have scheduled networking opportunities for attendees to meet and greet those in the same segment of the industry. There are ample opportunities to network with a larger group, especially during this year's IAAPA Celebrates, set for Thursday evening, Nov. 18, at Star Wars Galaxy's Edge at **Disney's Hollywood Studios**.

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FASTFACTS



IAAPA Attractions Expo 10-year attendance*



*in thousands (AT Research)/No IAAPA Expo held in 2020

Busch Gardens auction caps off Give Kids The World fundraiser

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

KISSIMMEE, Fla. and WILLIAMSBURG, Va. — One of the larger fundraisers for non-profit Give Kids The World Village is Coasting for Kids. This multipark event encourages coaster fans to come out and ride coasters and enjoy activities, raising funds for the Village.

Busch Gardens Williamsburg upped its game this year. In addition to the funds raised from fans, the park also auctioned off some significant items.

"The culmination resulted in \$25,000 from the auction bringing the total to \$62,000. In the 15-year history of Coasting for Kids, the Busch Gardens event was the most successful we've ever had — by a long shot," said **Steven Amos**, vice president, Give Kids The World Village.

"It started off as something simple, a friendly competition between Busch Gardens Williamsburg and **Kennywood**. It was a light-hearted challenge. Busch Gardens is usually the first park to go during Coasting for Kids and Kennywood tends



Coasting for Kids is a big fundraising event for Give Kids The World (above left). A car from Busch's retired Big Bad Wolf coaster (above right) brought in the biggest auction sum. COURTESY GIVE KIDS THE WORLD



to be last over Labor Day weekend. Busch Gardens would always be leading the fundraising total, and Kennywood would find some really great auction items at the last minute and always go into first place. This past year Busch Gardens was having none of that and worked with their maintenance people to find some items backstage that would benefit Give

Kids The World."

Signage, hard hats and collectibles were some simpler items put up for bid, but the real showstoppers were ride vehicles. Cars from Big Bad Wolf, Loch Ness Monster and the LeScoot log flume brought in large amounts, with the beloved (and extremely missed) Big Bad Wolf bringing in the largest bid.

The pandemic changed

many things both for the Coasting for Kids event and the Village itself. In the past, the fundraiser had seen as many as 16 different cities (in 2019). In 2021, the number of participating parks dropped to seven, but the total still reached \$135,000, only a few thousand shy of that impressive amount raised by enthusiasts two years prior — with nine less parks!

"I think during the pandemic, the mission resonated very well," said Amos. "A kid was not getting their wish, so every park we went to was record-setting."

Busch Gardens Williamsburg did separate auctions over a period of weeks during August.

► See **BUSCH**, page 10

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At right, a car body from Loch Ness Monster was an auction item for fans to claim. This year, trams will carry guests through part of the holiday displays during Night Of A Million Lights (far right). COURTESY GIVE KIDS THE WORLD



► **BUSCH**
Continued from page 9

Amos told *Amusement Today* that it isn't a requirement to host a Coasting for Kids event for a park to do an auction that benefits the Village.

"I think a great example of a park partner is **Holiday World**," he said. "Holiday World did a Coasting for Kids event for the first time last year. Three new parks joined us last

year with **Kentucky Kingdom** and **Lake Compounce** joining in. But **Holiday World** had 20 experiential auctions and 20 tangible items during its enthusiast event, **HoliWood Nights**."

Give Kids The World Village was forced to close for 10 months, reopening the third week of January this year. "We wanted to make sure we were offering a safe experience for our wish families when they come here," said Amos. Even at a reduced capac-

ity, the organization is delivering the experience they want to.

"We didn't slow down during the shutdown," said Amos. "We looked at it [to where] when the property is empty, let's do this construction when it has less impact to the families. We approved \$4 million in projects. We're full steam ahead."

In 2020, while the facility was closed to guests, one of its fundraising efforts was **A Night of a Million Lights**.

With guests now returning, the Village will bring the event back this Christmas, but the footprint will be different.

Last year, guests walked over a mile to appreciate the beautiful displays. This year, visitors will ride trams through the area where families are now staying in the villas.

"This year our lights dance. We've created six vignettes that are three minutes long. We've worked with some of the best

companies in the country to come out and design, install and maintain these displays. **Universal, Disney, Ripley's, SeaWorld**, even **IAAPA** is involved in it. I think it is a more joyful experience," said Amos. "Partners at our new marketplace, such as **ICEE, Dippin' Dots, Super Pretzel** ... they are so incredible. Not only are they donating their stands, but 100% of the profits goes to the kids as well."

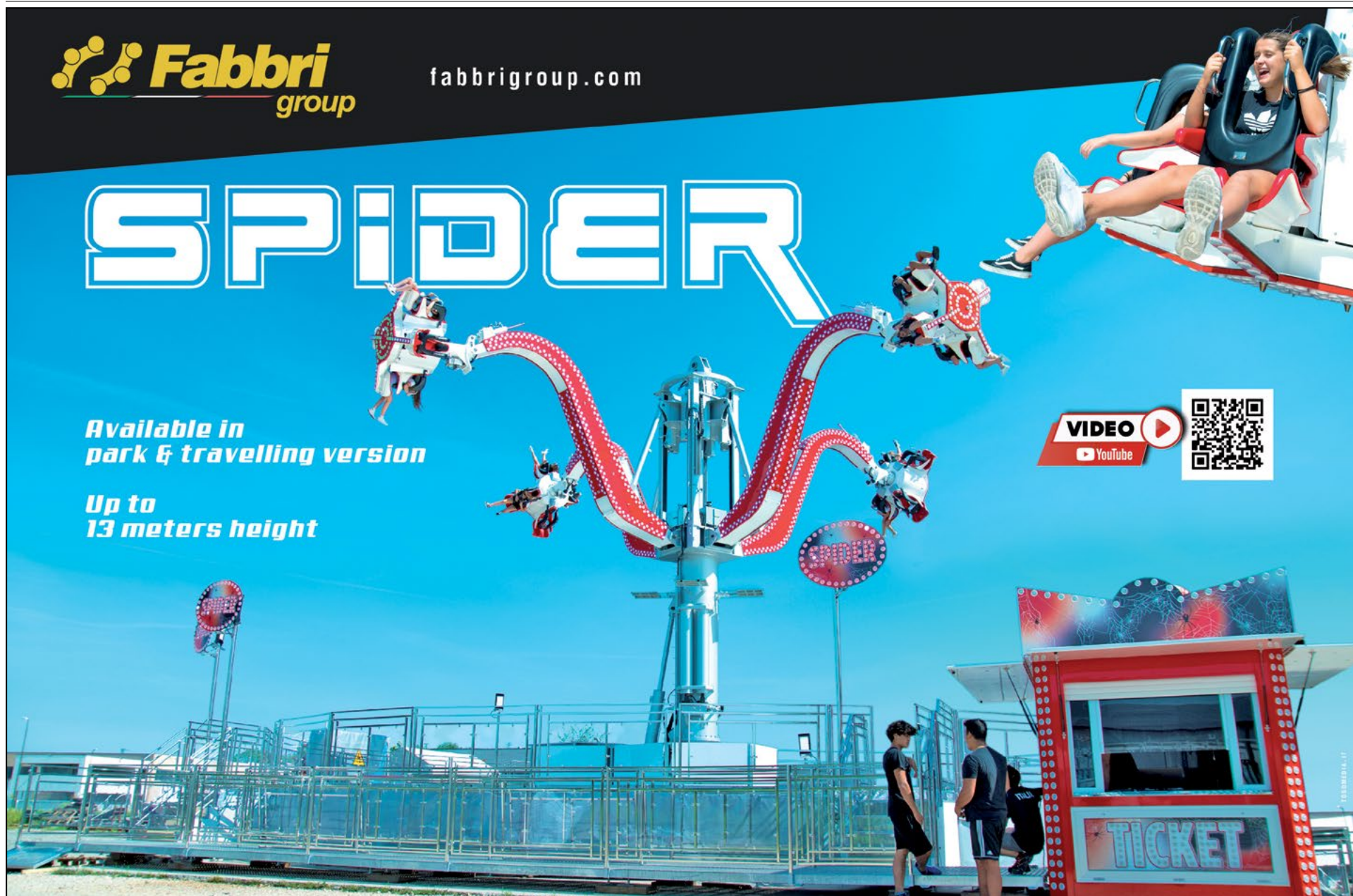


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2021 IAAPA Expo exhibitor listing

List is current as of Oct. 19, 2021. For last-minute changes, booth additions and cancellations, consult the IAAPA show directory.

2 Way Supply/Motorola Solutions	4542	Aquakita	3034	Bright White Paper Co.	4351
360 Karting	4683	Aquatic Design Group	1956	Brogent Technologies Inc.	5115
3DX Scenic	1880	Aquatic Development Group	2654	Brunswick Bowling Products	4854
40 Below Company	3766	Aquaventronics	4891	Bumper Boats, Inc.	2650
911 Cell Phone Bank	3317	Architectural Design Consultants, Inc.	1733	Bungalow Scenic Studios	2089
A&A Global Industries	824	ARC-Studios	4265	Buzzpark	4886
Aardvark	2648	Arihant Water Park Equipment	2854	BuzzyBooth	3282
ABC rides switzerland	5120	Arkadia VR Arena / Inowize	1829	C Nelson Mfg Co/Versa Cart	3804
AC RadioCom	3726	Art Attack	5147	C. and S. S.r.l.	1935
accesso	5131	Art-FX Studios, Inc.	2878	C. Cretors and Company	4054
AccuCash / Socal Safe Company	3983	Artistic Contractors, Inc.	369	Cabanas by Academy	2745
Acoustiblok, Inc.	3309	Ascentium Capital	5774	Cadron Creek Play	740
Action Lighting	4602	Astro Carpet Mills	4654	Calico Cottage	2833
Adrenaline Amusements	2015	Atlas Commercial Products	6162	Camaleon LED	4411
Advanced Animations, LLC	971	ATM Merchant Services	408	Capital Online Auctions	5673
Advanced Reservation Systems (aRes Travel)	4644	Attraction & Entertainment Solutions Sponsor Only		Caravan Soft Toys and Big T Toys & Sports, Inc	3403
Adventure Golf & Sports	4867	Attractions.io	4649	Castle Golf, Inc.	2671
Adventureglass	2638	Audio Innovators Inc.	2634	Catalate Commerce	2735
Aerophile S.A.S.	4424	Autoclear	3208	Cawley Company / The	4102
AG Ninja	4075	AutoFry/MultiChef - MTI Products	3854	Cemrock	1957
AIMS International	4217	Autograph Foliages	2652	Centaman	4136
Air & Water Systems	3390	Avalanche Aquatics	2836	CenterEdge Software	4447
Airparx	4475	Avius	3800	Central Tent (an Allstate Tent Company)	2902
AirTrack Factory BV	4573	Avivatech LLC	3683	Chairkit Foerdertechnik GmbH	3626
Alcorn McBride, Inc.	869	AVS Companies	2682	Chance Rides	2804
Alinco Costumes, Inc.	3612	Axcitement	2990	Chance Rides	2603
Alive Risk	4133	Axess AG	4343	Chao Cards	4003
Allen & Company Inc	4409	B J Toy Company	2709	Characters Unlimited Inc.	3712
Allied Powers LLC	4257	Bad Dog Tools	122	Chicago Gaming Company	613
Alterface	2051	Bagjump Airbag Systems	4678	Chicago Mascots Company	4682
Altitude Rides and Attractions LLC	5110	Ballast VR	2038	Christie Digital Systems	Sponsor Only
Aluvii, Inc.	4438	Bandai Namco Amusement America Inc.	1300	Chuckwagon Soda	3708
Alvarado Manufacturing	4852	BarChefs	3481	Citywave	2052
Amazing Magnets	3715	Battech	4520	Claffey's Frozen Cocktails	3266
AMEGA Teknoloji Sanayi ve Ticaret A.S.	2869	Battle Company	3078	Clark Food Service Equipment	3882
American Amusement Machine Assoc. (AAMA)	919	batwin + robin productions, inc.	Sponsor Only	Classic Products Corp	4388
American Changer	821	Bay Tek Entertainment	1015	Classic Toy Company, Inc.	1620
American Christmas, LLC	3047	Bazooka Ball / Fluorescent Print	2965	Cleanbox Technology	2183
American Coaster Enthusiasts (ACE)	4318	BDR Design Group	2067	CLM Entertainment and Safety Office	4631
American Holtzkraft, Inc.	2746	Beaudry Interactive, LLC	766	Cloward H2O	2231
American Locker	4400	Beekeeper	3358	Clubspeed	2871
American Paper Optics	3602	Beezland Hand Made Crochet Play Grounds	754	CO2Meter	3765
American Specialty Insurance	4702	Ben's Soft Pretzels	3254	Coastal Amusements, Inc.	1319
American Tent	1849	Berk Enterprises Inc	3215	COIN TECH Cashless System	1604
AMI Entertainment	104	Bertazzon	4020	Cold River Mining	2042
AMPP	4236	Betson Enterprises	615	Combat Karting	4680
Amusement & Music Operator's Assoc. (AMOA)	318	bHaptics Inc.	3278	Commercial Recreation Specialists	3067
Amusement Advantage Guest Exp. Solutions	4418	Big Break Foundation	859	Comply Amusement Safety Ltd	3727
Amusement Canvas Outfitters	3281	Big Sky Miniature Golf Construction	4267	Composite Effects, LLC	2890
Amusement Connect	210	Billings Productions, Inc.	2852	Concept 1900 Entertainment	2031
Amusement Construction Co. Inc.	4874	Birket Engineering	667	Conductix-Wampfler	2829
Amusement Devices & Mfg LLC	4669	Biz Karts Inc.	4486	Connect&GO	1860
Amusement Entertainment Risk Insurance Assoc.	3617	Black Light Unity	4288	Continuum Preparedness	4544
Amusement Products, LLC	4869	Blacklight Attractions / Halloween Productions	4467	Convergence, LLC	867
Amusement Source International	600	BMI Leisure	4364	Coogar Products, LLC	4744
Amusement Supply Company	5169	Bobproducts.com LLC	2190	Cool-A-Zone	3311
Amusement Today	4215	Bob's Space Racers, Inc.	2615	Core Cashless LLC	4440
Anchor Industries	4600	Bob's Space Racers, Inc.	2821	Cornerstone Architecture	3682
Andamiro Co.,Ltd.	1800	Bolliger & Mabillard Inc.	4815	Cosm Inc	Sponsor Only
Animax Designs, Inc.	1065	BoMar Soft Playgrounds	2156	Cossio Insurance Agency	5469
Antari Lighting and Effects USA	664	Bonita Marie International/BMI Merchandise	1324	Cost Inc.	4726
Anvio VR	3273	Boogle SRL	3883	Costume Specialists, Inc.	2827
Appetize - Now part of SpotOn	3354	Bookoo Bookings	4478	Cotton Love	1336
Apple Industries, Inc.	417	BounceWater Inflatable Sales	8000	CPI - Pageantry World	3231
Aqua Revival	2149	BounceWater Inflatable Sales	5683	Crayola	Sponsor Only
AquaBanas	5772	Bouncing Angels	5154	Creative Visions	3269
Aquaglide	1838	Bouncing Angels, Inc.	8240	Creative Works	3672
		Bouncy Castle Network	5471	CTM Group/Eurolink	1824
		Bowling Proprietors' Association of America	804	Cumming Corporation	1851
		Boxblaster Virtual Reality	2891	Cyclone Distributors Inc	5674
		Bradley Corporation	2850	D&D Technologies	3028
		Breeze Creative	2060	Daiwa by U.S Jacleam, Inc.	2065



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Daniels Wood Land, Inc.	1369	Felimana Luna Park SA	3621	Hologate	4482
Danken	4284	Fiberbuilt Umbrellas & Cushions	2036	Holovis	3429
DataSpan	4247	Fiberglass Coatings, Inc	2957	Hoodmart / Naks	3362
Day One Lighting	3236	Fibrart	2280	Hot Games	303
Deep Blue	4651	Fiesta	1831	Hownd	5150
Delta Strike	4278	Firestone Financial	815	Hullabaloo Sales Inc.	8330
Deltrain	3829	Fix Your Park LLC	743	Hullabaloo Sales Inc.	8325
Design Concepts	3202	Flagship Carpets / Jane Farrell Turf and Carpet	3669	Human Touch	1854
Design Master Fence	3728	Flecks Systems/WM Polymers	2734	Huss Park Attractions GmbH	4024
Designer Palms	4756	Florida Attractions Association	3326	HVD bv	3378
Designs In Motion	2864	Foamdaddy	1631	I.E. Park S.r.l./Amusement Rides & SOLI Bumper Cars	4211
Dewesoft	1651	Force Dynamics, Inc.	2862	i2K / Inflatable 2000	4667
DFX	3373	ForeverLawn Inc.	4254	Ice Creative Entertainment	1983
DiCAPac USA, Inc.	3203	Formula K Amusements, Inc.	3224	iCombat Laser Tag	4090
Diga-Talk+	4235	Forrec	2069	ID&C	4345
Digital Centre America	124	Frazil / Freezing Point LLC	4162	Ideal One Amusement Software	2678
Digital Centre America Inc.	1821	FreeStyle Slides, Inc.	2950	Ideas Extremas	3869
Digonex Dynamic Pricing	2188	Froggy's Fog	2690	Ideattack, Inc.	2074
Dinoscapes	1847	Fujifilm North America Corporation	4333	iFLY Indoor Skydiving	2889
Dippin' Dots, LLC	3900	Fujimi, Inc	4262	IMC-International Mascot Corporation	3717
DNP Imagingcomm America Corporation	4458	Fun & Fun Toys Inc	3013	Immersive Arts	3982
DOF Robotics	2286	Fun Express	1826	Immersive Planet	3062
Donna Italia	3267	Fun Spot Manufacturing, LLC	4879	Immotion Group	1372
Doppelmayr	3720	Fun Wine	3456	Inclusion Solutions	3880
DOTTO SRL	3824	Funk Bowling North America	3686	InCord Play	2831
Doug Fleenor Design, Inc.	3890	Funlandia Play Systems Inc.	4082	Incredible Technologies, Inc.	728
Dr. Fuji / ACIGI	4171	Funovation	3072	Indiana Ticket Company	2818
Dronisos - drone show systems	873	Galaxy Multi Rides	5171	Indoor Playgrounds International	4454
DSM Sales & Manufacturing, Inc.	508	Game Over Escape Rooms - Cube Challenges	3878	Infinite Creative Enterprises, ICE Inc.	747
Duna USA	857	Game Show Mania, LLC	4658	InfiniteAloe	864
Dutch Wheels BV	3428	Game Time International/ GTI	5528	Infinity Massage Chairs	2215
DW Innovation Lab	469	Games To Go	6163	InflatableOffice LLC	5440
Dynamic Attractions	1662	Garrett Metal Detectors	3988	Innovative Concepts in Ent., Inc. (ICE)	1806
E&F Miler Industries, LLC	4718	Gatemaster Technology	4059	Inntopia	742
E2M Technologies	3011	Gateway Ticketing Systems, Inc.	4847	InPark Magazine	965
Economy Tent International	4700	Gellyball	3684	Instasplash	8320
eInflatables	5969	Genesis Studios	2180	Intamin	5121
Elaut Group (Benchmark Games, Coast to Coast, Elaut)	1024	GEP Productions Inc.	319	Intercard	2206
Eldorado Climbing	3417	Gerstlauer Amusement Rides	4831	Interlink LG Ltd	3000
Electric Gamebox	2874	Give Kids the World	4233	Int'l Board of Credentialing and Cont. Educ. Standards	3226
Electrosonic	1362	Global Archery	4665	Int'l Independent Showmen's Foundation	2917
Eli Bridge Company	4621	Global Fun Sports sp. z o.o.Sp.K	2128	International Special Attractions, Ltd	2964
Elite Crete Systems	3978	Global Special Effects	5447	Invest Quebec International	856
Elite Laser Tag Equipment	3006	Globe Ticket	2608	IPConfigure	4251
Ellis & Associates, Inc.	2636	GLOWORKS	3702	iPlayCO	4069
Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery	3359	Goffa International Corp.	2611	IQ Billiards	3986
Embed	606	Gold Medal Products Co.	2200	Ital-Resina di Di Talia Angelo	3320
Empex Watertoys- Canada	2806	Gold Standard Games	818	ITEC Entertainment	2184
Enchant Studios	3484	Good Stuff Company	1310	J & J Amusements, Inc.	2662
Endureed	3060	Gooest Media	4356	Jack O'Lantern Journey	2949
Enjoy Tech	3274	Gorilla Seal	4617	Jack's Magic Products	2933
EnterIdeas	4011	Gosetto S.r.l.	4231	Jane Farrell Turf & Carpets, Inc.	3671
Entertainment Central Productions	3881	Gould Manufacturing	2819	JET - Jennison Entertainment Technologies	1327
entertainment resource GmbH	1878	Granite Insurance	3928	JK Coin Supply	103
EPR Properties	Sponsor Only	Gravity Group Wooden Coasters	4828	JKJ Workforce Agency Inc	3989
Escalera Inc.	2027	Great Coasters International, Inc.	2273	JKRP Architects	4774
Escapology	4259	Greenspan Projects Ltd.	1871	Jolt	4060
ETC	973	Haaga	4652	JR Automation	Sponsor Only
ETF Ride Systems	4229	Haas & Wilkerson Insurance	4421	JRA	1666
Event Hawk Marketing	4773	Halloween & Attractions Show (TransWorld)	4471	JRS Ventures	410
Event Rental Systems Software	4660	Happy Jump, Inc.	5454	JumpOrange	8530
Evolv Technology	4349	Happy Snacks	4002	JumpOrange	5678
Eworks Pro	4420	Harris Miniature Golf Courses, Inc.	2865	Ka'ana Wave Company Inc.	3679
exA-Arcadia	1710	HAWE Micro Fluid GmbH	2918	Kalkomat / IGPM	917
Expert Hosiery	4074	Haystack Dryers Limited	2158	Karaoke Machines S.L./KaraokeMedia	2811
Extreme Engineering	4800	HB Leisure Ltd.	3628	Kart1	4273
Eye Candy Inflatables	5655	Head Rush Technologies	4004	Kay Park Recreation Corp.	2800
EZ Inflatables Inc.	5762	HEC Worldwide Inflatables	5669	Kellytoy U.S.A., Inc.	2006
Fabbri Group	4820	Herborner Pumps	2045	Kenwood	4342
Facilities Management Express	3888	High Trek Point of Sale	4642	Kern Studios & Mardi Gras World	1067
Falcon Water Tag Extreme	4780	Hitch-Hiker Mfg / Personal Protected, LLC	4240	KettenWulf Inc.	4618
Falcon's Creative Group	2091	HiWater	2675	Kevins Worldwide	4662
Family Fun Corp.	1869	Hoffman Mint	820	KioSoft Technologies	2120
Fast Fiberglass LLC	3200	Hogan Stakes	5672	Klopp: Money Handling Equipment	2020

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Koliseum	1815	Mindgames Escape Rooms	2669	Penny Press Factory LLC	2026
Komuse America, Inc	811	Mini Melts Ice Cream	4067	PeopleVisionFX	2849
Kong USA, LLC	3283	Mini Melts USA Inc.	4066	Perky's Pizza, John Daly Pizza	100
Kool Replay	5433	MK Themed Attractions	3054	Phenomena VR Arena	4875
Korona POS	4656	Mobaro	3826	Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters, Inc.	2824
Kraftwerk Living Technologies GmbH Sponsor Only		Moboosts	4264	Phototouch Inc.	4690
KristallTurm	Sponsor Only	Modern Masters/Rust-Oleum	571	PIA Products	302
KumbaK The Amusement Engineers	3926	Mondial World of Rides	4511	Piaggio Fast Forward	3490
Kusser FountainWorks	1858	Moser's Rides	2606	Piano Distributors	3486
Kwik-Covers	2903	Moss Distributing, Inc.	426	PicBox Company	4688
L3DFX	1062	Murphys Waves Ltd.	4213	Pipeline Games Company	3615
LAI Games	1000	NAC Semi	2049	PizzaOvens.com	4243
Lake Country Corporation	3420	Nardi USA	4159	Plantscape Commercial Silk	2062
Landmark Studio & Design	4757	National Amusement Park Historical Assoc. .	3818	Player One Amusement Group	2002
Larks Entertainment	4480	National Aquatic Safety Company (NASCO) .	2645	Playmind	1817
Larson International, Inc.	4220	National Assoc. of Amusement Ride Safety Officials .	3619	PlaySmart	4790
Laser Encore	854	National Photo Folders	3158	Polar King	3262
LaserBlast	4469	National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives	4317	Poligon by PorterCorp.	3031
Laserforce International	3469	National Ticket Company	3026	Polin Group	846
LaserTag by Zone	4365	Nationwide Instruction for Cardiovascular Educ., Inc.	2733	Polin Waterparks	840
LASERTAG.NET	3578	Naughton Insurance, Inc.	2609	Pol-Rides	8070
LASERTRON	800	Nautical Furnishings	1856	Pool Safe Inc	2835
LASERWAR	310	Nayax	1611	Porviva GmbH	2937
Launch Logic	2056	NEAAPA - The Northeast's Entertainment Assoc.	3027	Positron	3779
LaZer Runner Laser Tag Systems	4080	Neil Enterprises Inc.	4359	Powerhouse Toys	510
Le Waf	3567	Neptune Radio	3156	PPG Architectural Coatings	1658
LearningZen	3611	Nets & More	1633	Premier Polysteel Outdoor Furniture	3271
Legendary Escape Games	8150	Neveplast SRL	4626	Premier Rides, Inc.	2600
Leisure Activities	5653	New Vue	3802	Preston & Barbieri S.r.l.	5020
Leisure Development Partners	1683	N-Flatables/Cutting Edge	5166	Price Chopper Wristbands/TapNGo	3400
Leitner-Poma of America	3206	Ninja Jump	5462	Primera Technology	3665
Lewis Agritainment	4357	Ninja Jump	8230	PrimeTime Amusements	2013
Life Floor	2142	Noitom	3419	Pro Forma Advisors LLC	1959
LifeFormations	1866	Northeast Insurance Center	4336	Progressive Specialty Glass Company, Inc. .	3464
Light Infantry Arms, LLC	2773	Novelty Inc Wholesale	2919	PromoTEX USA	3137
LightUpToys.com, LLC	5143	Nutis Visual Communications Group	3478	ProParks Attractions Group	1749
Little Buddy, LLC	726	nWave Pictures S.A.	1047	ProSlide Technology	2054
Long Range Solutions	3259	NXT Capture	2708	Public Restroom Company	4244
Lonzo Law - The FEC Lawyer	3681	Oasis Illusions	572	Pucker Powder by Creative Concepts, Inc. .	4154
LUC Urethanes, Inc.	4413	Oceaneering Entertainment Systems	2262	Puka Creations	1602
Luna-Park Sp. z o.o.	5428	OCT Vision Inc.	1654	Pulse Innovations	4290
LvLuP Audio Towers	3984	Oh!Fx	4464	Purdue University Fusion Studio for Enter. and Eng.	1980
Lyte Charging Systems	3783	Old World Cone	3308	QNC Inc/ Quik 'n Crispy	3024
Mack Rides GmbH & Co. KG	2269	Omega Carpet Patterns	3606	QubicaAMF Bowling Products	1006
Maclan Corporation	4518	One Fat Frog Food Trucks	3865	QubicaAMF Bowling Products	1306
Magic Jump Inc.	5182	One Inflatable Inc	5478	Radiant Mfg.	1783
Magic Jump, Inc.	5481	Oneail FX Studios LLC	666	RadioBoss 2-Way Radios	4334
Magnet World, Inc.	4603	Op-d-op, Inc.	3781	Rain Drop Products	1845
MagneTag Foam Combat Tag	4473	OpenAire	2659	Ralph S. Alberts Co. Inc	3624
Magnetic Cash - Cashless System	813	Opfor Solutions, Inc.	2182	Ramaker & Associates, Inc.	2859
Majestic Manufacturing, Inc.	5426	Original Jumping Pillows	4781	RAMPF Group, Inc.	672
MajorMega	3971	Orlando Special Effects, Inc.	1981	Rapid Prototyping Services	4134
Martin & Vleminckx Rides	5420	Outdoor Amusement Business Association .	3136	Rave Sports	3038
Martin Aquatic Design & Engineering	1840	Outdoor Factory	1058	RCI Adventure Products	4029
Mason Water Slides	2633	Overland Power Carts	6161	Redbone Products, Inc.	3318
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International participants enjoy successful IAAPA Expo Europe

BARCELONA, Spain — The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) held its first expo since 2019 with September's IAAPA Expo Europe 2021. Looking forward with optimism was the theme of the opening address at the expo, and it carried through the week as the event brought attractions industry professionals together in Spain. Preliminary estimates indicate the Expo attracted 8,500 participants, including 5,800 qualified buyers and 439 exhibiting companies. The buyer participants represented 3,200 companies. IAAPA Expo Europe focused on resilience, innovation and moving forward.

"IAAPA Expo Europe represents a fresh start for our entire industry," said Jakob Wahl, vice president and executive director, IAAPA Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA), during the opening session. "This expo is about preparing for the future, inspiring each other, and sharing important learnings from the global pandemic."

The education conference began at theme park destination PortAventura World.



Exhibitors and buyers were excited to return to the in-person showfloor of IAAPA Expo Europe. COURTESY IAAPA

The resort hosted the IAAPA Safety Institute, and a behind-the-scenes tour of the park, as well as IAAPA EMEA's first-ever Sustainability Day. The full-day sustainability event featured industry professionals from the EMEA region sharing their parks' strategies for becoming carbon neutral, incorporating sustainability practices throughout their facilities, and providing guidelines to create a sustainability plan that supports business

goals. Participants also took an exclusive tour of PortAventura Dreams, the park's onsite resort which provides annually complimentary visits to 200 children with critical illnesses and their families.

To recognize PortAventura's commitment to sustainability and pioneering efforts across all lines of business, as well as its openness in sharing best practices with the industry, IAAPA presented the first-ever IAAPA EMEA Award for Extraordinary

Efforts on Sustainability to the park during the Expo.

On Tuesday, internationally known travel writer Doug Lansky presented the opening keynote presentation about using challenge and crisis as inspiration for positive change. His engaging speech was then followed by Amanda Thompson OBE, chairman of the board of directors, IAAPA; Hal McEvoy, president and CEO, IAAPA; and Wahl officially cutting the blue ribbon and declaring the trade show floor open.

Exhibitors and attendees filled two halls of the Fira Barcelona Gran Via, and together discussed critical business needs, discovered new products and services, and looked at solutions to entertain guests while meeting new guidelines and procedures that have evolved due to the global pandemic.

"The attractions industry truly is like a family," shared McEvoy. "To finally come back together — in person — means a great deal. We understand our members and the industry are still working through the ongoing impact of COVID-19, but we are confident the industry will emerge from these chal-

lenges stronger than ever. Our role is to help members and the global attractions industry push through, and IAAPA Expo Europe was an important step toward full recovery."

The professionals in the business of fun also had fun during the Opening Reception at Tibidabo Amusement Park. One of the oldest parks in the world, the sold-out event was filled with food, rides, attractions and conversation high above the Barcelona skyline.

"This week's show demonstrates the strength of the attractions industry throughout the EMEA region, and the rest of the world," continued McEvoy, "Exhibitors represented more than 43 countries around the world. International attendees came to meet with them and make serious buying decisions for their upcoming season and beyond."

Plans for IAAPA Expo Europe 2022 are already underway. IAAPA Expo Europe 2022 will take place in London, U.K., on September 13-15. Advance exhibit sales are strong; more than 325 exhibitors have reserved 11,745-square-meters of contracted booth space.

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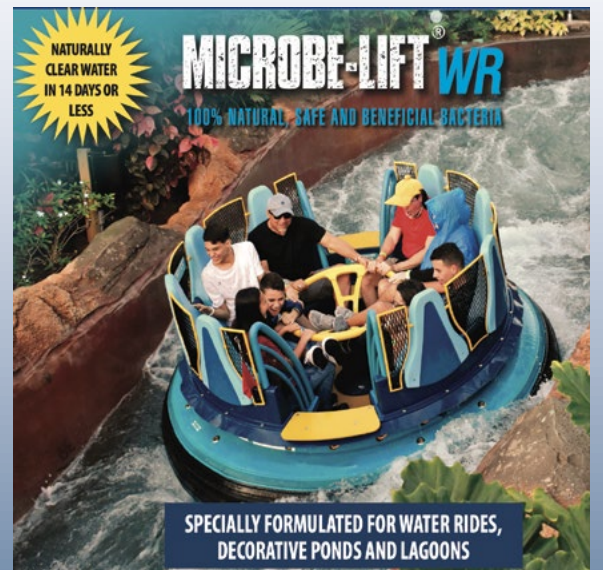
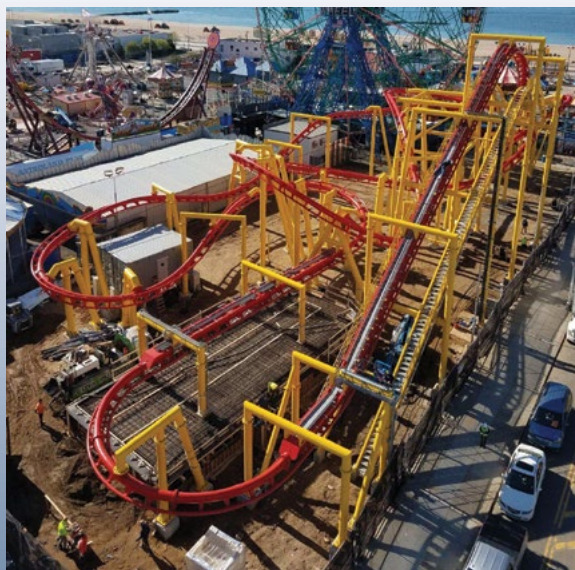
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PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

► Big River Waterpark and Adventures expanding — page 26 / Holiday events boost Fun-Land — page 32

Fiesta Texas gives Premier coaster Poltergeist complete makeover

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

SAN ANTONIO — In 1999, Six Flags Fiesta Texas began evolving the recently acquired property into a fully developed theme park. In that year, the park added 10 new attractions. In so doing, it increased the annual attendance by more than one million in that single year. Among those attractions, the largest installation was Poltergeist, a LIM-launched coaster from Premier Rides.

In the two decades that have followed, the park has continued to up its game. In the past 10 years, the park has pushed for first-of-its-kind additions or elevated rides to where they are signature attractions. Attendance has continued to climb.

In between its new rides for 2021 and 2022, the park has turned its attention back to Poltergeist. Originally painted teal and yellow with a simple but stylized station house, the attraction received an incredible makeover this summer.

"We had this great ride that was visually stunning, and our guests enjoy it, but it was declining in popularity and looking its age," said Park President Jeffrey Siebert. "We are always looking at rides per guest and asked how we can take this good existing asset and make it new again and increase demand. We wanted to take it to what we knew it could be or even what it should have been when it launched in 1999."

"Originally it was going to be a turnkey project with Magic In The Sky. They've been a partner with us for a variety of things," said Ben McTyre, director of entertainment. "Because of [constraints], we divided the project into inside the building

and outside. "Magic In The Sky took the interior and Fiesta Texas and the entertainment team took care of everything on the outside. We crafted all the sculpted pieces you see on the outside. Our sculptors and scenic painters did an awesome job."

The queue line was completely reimaged. Previously, steel rail zigzagged back and forth in long rows (and in reality, were rarely needed). The transformation began here. A new portal on the main walkway now has gargoyles, back-lighting and glowing eyes. A second arch to the queue now has a sign notating Bartholomey Manor. Once within "the estate," guests surmise the new owner is much more sinister than anything they had experienced in the past.

"As you approach the ride, you immediately notice the ride looks much more ominous," Siebert told *Amusement Today*. "There are new gargoyles at the gate. From there the entrance has been opened up to make an entrance plaza. There are now audio and fans and shade components, as well as scary statues and tombstones and a mausoleum. The owner's car in a new garage has some haunted effects. A hedge maze then leads to the stairs to the indoor haunted house experience."

Fiesta Texas has its own in-house sculpting equipment and was responsible for two ghoulish figures reaching from the front porch and the very rooftop.

What was once an open-air station is now an air-conditioned mansion. Guests currently walk through hallways with draperies and portraits, a foyer with a stairwell to nowhere and a haunted fireplace, also sculpted by the park.

"I am completely surprised



A completely repainted track and structure now sports a ghostly green (above). The enclosed station now conveys a Victorian theme and is air-conditioned. Both coaster trains have been completely refurbished (inset).

COURTESY SIX FLAGS FIESTA TEXAS

at how the existing space provides a completely new experience," said Chris Ozimek, director of marketing. "After winding through the outdoor cemetery and garden, guests enter the mansion to realize an actual indoor haunted walk-through adventure. They move through the foyer and living room, then make their way into the library to find their seats between the bookshelves."

"I think the original incarnation of Poltergeist always



had a little disappointment once you got into the station," said Jacob Dell, owner, Magic In The Sky. "You had a spooky-looking haunted house and then walked up the stairs to a standard coaster station. What we have attempted here is to deliver the payoff when you come into the house. By redo-

ing the porch, it now feels like you are really going into the haunted house. The sound and special effects in the launch sequence as well as effects when the 'Poltergeist' returns into the house — we think it is pretty dramatic for guests. It's

► See POLTERGEIST, page 24

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The queue and stationhouse have a new look that helps convey the story. Numerous sculptures in both the queue and stationhouse were carved in-house by the Fiesta Texas team (above right). COURTESY SIX FLAGS FIESTA TEXAS

► POLTERGEIST Continued from page 22

new; it's a surprise."

The two trains have been completely refurbished with new paint, images and padding. The station now has a Victorian ambience, and the storyline continues as riders are launched into the tunnel.

"The response has been great," said Siebert. "It was fun that initial night; we had a full house. The queue was full for the first time probably since 1999. What has been more rewarding is to see that demand sustained. All through Fright Fest the queue has been full."

The transformative process took about two months during the summer. Following the 4th of July holiday weekend, the ride was temporarily closed. It reopened Labor Day weekend and during September continued to receive fine-tuning and detailing so that it was ready for the huge crowds of Fright Fest.

"There wasn't a better time to reopen and relaunch the attraction than right before our Fright Fest event," said Siebert.

"The Poltergeist refresh infuses new life into a 20+-year-old attraction," Ozimek told AT. "It is now one of the most popular rides in the park. The coaster track is wrapped in a new bright green color that demands attention from all guests as they arrive. It seems to actually glow in the dark when illuminated at night to truly create a jaw-dropping visual."

"It has been very collaborative," added Dell. "Fiesta Texas is an excellent partner for us. We love working with them. Jeffrey is a band leader that has good direction for a high-level story concept. Ben's team in entertainment gets together with our team to make it a quality experience."

"One of the folks at Magic In The Sky restores custom homes. Some of the wood placed inside is from a decommissioned Victorian home in San Antonio," shared Siebert. "When you look at the banister and crown molding, they are literally from homes 120 to 130 years ago. I love the richness of it. As we approach our 30th anniversary, we are creating a ride that is much more robust and truly surprises. It's going to serve us for decades to come."

"I think any kind of storytelling enhances a ride experience," said McTyre. "In order to be a true theme park, you have to tell a story and convey a feeling."

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Legacy Entertainment, Lotte World celebrate 10 year milestone

HOLLYWOOD, Calif. and SEOUL, S. Korea — October 2021 marks the 10-year anniversary milestone of the first collaboration between Hollywood-based **Legacy Entertainment** and Seoul-based **Lotte World**. During the course of the past decade, Legacy and Lotte World have realized eight projects located at the site of the park together, driving park attendance from 5.8 million visitors in 2011 to a high of 7.6 million as of early 2020.

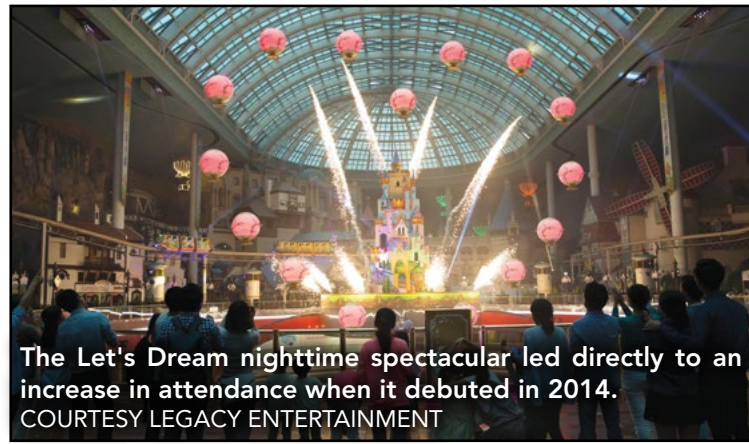
Executives of both companies say that their unique creative partnership will be taken to the next level later this year upon the opening of **Lotte World Adventure Busan** — an all-new, 25-acre outdoor theme park located in the country's second-most-populous city.

Yaeli Chung, Legacy Entertainment's managing director of South Korea, reflects on the relationship: "Now in its 32nd year of operation, Lotte World is an icon of Korea. We are deeply

honored and humbled to have had the opportunity to work closely with the Lotte World team to create attractions and experiences which have positively impacted the lives of millions of people every year."

The portfolio of completed Legacy/Lotte World projects, which ranges from immersive themed lands to a nighttime spectacular, have helped to modernize the park. Originally sporting an international theme — popular in the 1980s when the park opened, with zones themed to England, France and Spain, among others — Legacy, in its design, specifically aimed to create themed districts and experiences that are timeless, not relating to any specific time-frame or period.

The first such attraction, named **Jumping Fish**, debuted in 2012. Utilizing **Zamperla's** popular **Flying Tigers** ride system, Legacy helped elevate the experience by setting the attrac-



The **Let's Dream** nighttime spectacular led directly to an increase in attendance when it debuted in 2014. COURTESY LEGACY ENTERTAINMENT

tion in a detailed sea cave environment, complete with original characters and lighting effects. Following a successful launch, a new interactive media theater dubbed 'Do You Speak Beluga?' was quickly added adjacent to **Jumping Fish**, rounding out this new aquatic themed zone.

Nearby, the Legacy team transformed two **S&S Frog Hoppers** into an all-new experience themed to the popular Korean fairy tale of **Brother Moon**

and **Sister Sun**. This immersive children's attraction, named **Tall Tales**, was the first such attraction in the country based on traditional folklore.

The team reimaged the park's ticketing zone into the **Lotte World Welcome Centee** — an upscale arrival lobby more akin to a luxury hotel than a theme park. Further expansions included a **Triotech XD Theater**, an elaborately-themed **ABC Rides** mini flume and the **Wild**

Tours immersive district which is home to **Sega's Wild Series** simulators.

The largest project to date at the Seoul park was the 2014 debut of the "Let's Dream!" nighttime spectacular. Combining a light parade with a multimedia production, the nightly event featured many groundbreaking elements, including the largest fleet of drones ever utilized in a theme park, as well as the first use of hologram effects in a parade. Upon its debut, the production directly led to a 2.8% boost in park attendance and a 35% increase in visitor length of stay.

Lotte World theme park in the southern city of Busan is in the final stages of construction. Centered around the theme of a magic forest, the outdoor park will feature five themed zones filled with themed architecture, garden displays and anchored by rides from **Mack Rides**, **Zamperla**, **ABC Rides** and others.

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Big River Waterpark and Adventures' big dreams coming to fruition

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

NEW CANEY, Texas — An ambitious deadline for the installation of amusement rides in the **Big Rivers Waterpark and Adventures'** area referred to as the Fairgrounds looks as though it will come to fruition.

At least that is the hope of **Monty Galland**, park owner, who had announced at the end of September the addition of 11 rides to his water park and adventures park.

"We are expecting to be done by December 1," Galland said. "We are having a Christmas celebration beginning then, and we really hope we have the rides operating."

"Right now, we are pouring the concrete," he said. "We already have the utilities, power, drainage and sewer lines."

Galland worked with **Len Soled, Rides 4 U**, to purchase six of the rides. Soled said he supplied Galland with three brand new rides and three

A new area is rising in the grassy area near the entrance of Big Rivers Waterpark and Adventures in New Caney, Texas. Plans are to have the area up with rides operational by the first of December for the park's Christmas event that will last during the month. COURTESY BIG RIVER WATERPARK



Rides include three new SBF/Visa rides, one of which is a spinning coaster with one roll-over car, similar to this one on display at IAAPA Expo 2019 (inset).
AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON

▶ See **BIG RIVER**, page 28

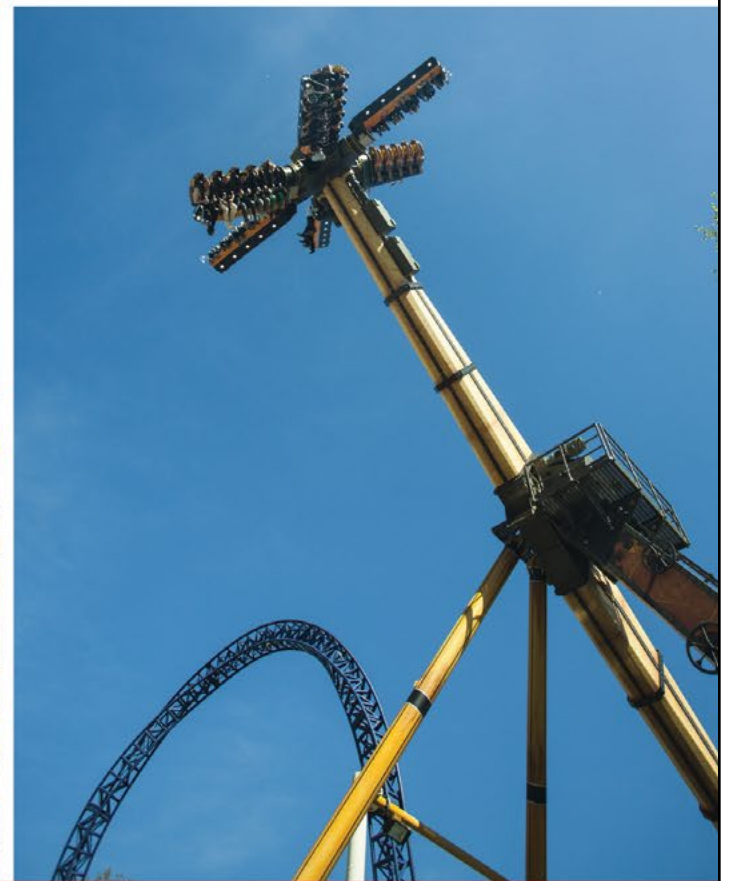
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Big Rivers Waterpark and Adventures, New Caney, Texas, has a large variety of activities. Wild Isle includes a floating water park with a challenge course (above). The expanded amusements in the park will have a Flying Scooter attraction (right) from Larson International. COURTESY BIG RIVER WATERPARK; AT/GARY SLADE



► **BIG RIVER**
Continued from page 26

used rides.

"One of the rides is a brand new spinning coaster that has one roll-over car and three spinning cars," Soled said. "This coaster has to be more elevated than the traditional spinning coaster to allow for the roll over."

Soled said he will be exhibiting this SBF/Visa spinning coaster at the 2021 International Association of

Amusement Parks and Attractions Expo this month.

The other two new rides are the large SBF/Visa Pirate Ship and the Midi Dance Party 360, also by SBF/Visa.

The used rides are a Moser 12-meter drop tower, which came from Funplex in Mt. Laurel Township, New Jersey; a Zamperla Samba Balloon ride from Jolly Rogers Amusement Park, Ocean City, Maryland; and a Wisdom Tornado from Incredible Pizza.

Galland said he also will

have a Larson International Flying Scooter and several kiddie rides.

"We will have a broad range of rides that will appeal to a broad range of people," Galland said. "Once we have them going, guests here will be able to float in a lazy river that is almost one-third mile around or climb a 50-foot tower or spin around," Galland said.

He is planning to have a couple of midway games as well. Once the rides are op-

erating, he plans to construct a building for concession to offer traditional fair foods and beverages.

"We are locating the Fairgrounds area in a grassy area near the entrance," Galland said.

"We are creating an amusement park," Galland said. "Our goal is to have a broad range of appeal to bring

in guests from north of Houston and the surrounding area. We will be adding more rides along with more water attractions over time."

Galland admits this new endeavor is exciting, "as long as it doesn't scare the heck out of me."

► See **BIG RIVER**, page 30

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Aerial Adventure includes a four-story challenge course (above), a climbing wall (below left) and ziplines (below right). COURTESY BIG RIVER WATERPARK



►BIG RIVER Continued from page 28

Galland's Big Rivers Waterpark and Adventures Park already has a broad range of appeal because of the variety of activities. The water park not only offers that lazy river but also a wave pool, a slide tower, several raft slides and a children's play area.

The area called Wild Isle has a floating water park which includes a challenge course in the middle of the lake on the property.

Aerial Adventure includes ziplines, a four-story challenge course and a climbing wall touted as the tallest outdoor climbing wall in Texas. The Dry Adventures area offers a petting zoo, alligator habitat, giant maze, axe throwing, archery and more.

Admission to the Fairgrounds will be included with the anticipated "Christmas at Big Rivers" program, occurring from November 26 through the end of the Christmas season for 2021. Galland said he anticipates all rides to be operational by then. But if any unforeseen challenges arise for any of the rides, they will be done by the start of the 2022 season.

"We close during the months of January and February," Galland said. "We will continue to do that. We open the second week of March, which is spring break here. Then, we will be open until the end of 2022."

Galland doesn't plan to replace any of his attractions with the additions to the amusement park. He has set 140 acres aside for the ride park.

•bigriverswaterpark.com



Big Rivers Waterpark and Adventures is home to a popular children's play area dubbed Texas River Country. COURTESY BIG RIVER WATERPARK



Disneyland Resort, Anaheim, California, is testing a new initiative in an effort to become more environmentally friendly.

Officials there have placed three receptacles at Galactic Grill in Tomorrowland: one for trash, one for food and a third which is divided into compartments for mixed recycling and liquids.

They are asking guests to sort their food waste when they are done.

Park officials realize the food sorting program is a slow work in progress, but they hope, over time, guests will become used to doing this.

With close to 100 places to eat at the Disneyland Resort, asking guests to sort like this will go a long way to achieving a goal Disneyland has to become a zero waste facility by 2030.

Park officials have stated they already divert about five million pounds of food waste from landfills each year. It's eventually converted into graham cracker-like crumbs, which supplement animal feed for farmers all across the country.

Bass Pro Shops founder **Johnny Morris** plans to revive a theme park south of Harrison, Arkansas, that closed nearly 30 years ago. That theme park was called **Dogpatch USA** and operated for about two decades. What a revival of the park will look like has not been revealed, but some discussion has it being more of a nature park.

Morris bought the property, known as Marble Falls, in 2020 for more than \$1 million. The land has changed hands multiple times.

Dogpatch USA was based on the comic strip **Li'l Abner**, created by cartoonist **Al Capp** and set in a fictional village called Dogpatch.

It originally opened in 1968 and closed in 1996.

The amusement park at **Margaritaville Resort & Family Entertainment Center**, Biloxi, Mississippi, is on track to open in summer 2022, according to comments reported by a representative of **Lodging and Leisure Investments**, the company that operates Margaritaville.

Planned for the amusement park is a 200-foot-tall wheel and the **Aerobar**, the bar in the sky. The wheel has been named **Sky View Ferris Wheel** and will give riders views out over the water.

The **Aerobar**, built by **Aerophile**, has riders strapped in, facing each other in a circle with the bartender in the middle. The ride slowly rotates as it climbs 115 feet in the air. It takes two minutes to rise to the summit, where it typically holds for five minutes, followed by a two-minute descent.

Other rides also are planned.

The amusement park is the second phase of the Margaritaville Resort Project. The first

phase was the transformation of the former **Casino Magic** into Margaritaville Resort Biloxi after it was damaged by Hurricane Katrina. That was completed and opened in 2016 with 371 guest rooms, restaurants, bars and Escape, which has an indoor climbing wall, zipline, roller coaster, simulated golf, video games and other attractions.

Phase 3 will include a second hotel tower on the west side of the amusement area.

After years of planning, community input and innumerable meetings, workers are close to finishing the **Nido & Mariana Qubein Children's Museum**, High Point, North Carolina. The new museum features a mix of entertainment, education and exploration on the roughly four-acre site.

Officials hope to open it this fall.

The \$30 million project will house 75,000 square feet of exhibits encompassing a plethora of activities including an area for science experiments and an arts studio, along with a Bricks Room with Legos and an activity room called **Courage Climber** — a space with petal-shaped platforms where the biggest potential fall is only 18 inches off the ground.

An outdoor area will include a **Chance Rides** double-decker carousel, featuring 32 animals, plus chariots and a spinning tub.

Nintendo has confirmed plans to expand Super Nintendo World, its recently opened themed area at **Universal Studios Japan** in Osaka, with a new Donkey Kong area. Construction already appears to have been underway for some time.

Images released by Nintendo confirm that the Donkey Kong zone will be accessed through a large round door that already exists in the park, which is currently almost entirely Mario-themed. The zone will be a significant addition that increases Super Nintendo World's overall size by about 70%, according to Nintendo.

In a statement, Nintendo indicated that the new area will include a roller coaster, interactive experiences and themed merchandise and food. "Guests will be able to take a walk on the wild side through the lush jungles where Donkey Kong and his friends live."

The restoration of the world-famous stained glass window at **Alton Towers Resort**, located in Staffordshire, England, near the village of Alton, has been completed after almost two years. Scaffolding was removed last month from around the vast three-story window that is located in the iconic Banqueting Hall Bay Window at the former mansion of the **16th Earl of Shrewsbury**, known today as Alton Towers.

The Gothic-style mansion is the centerpiece of the park and was home to the Earls of Shrewsbury.

Measuring 10 meters by six meters (approximately 31 feet by 20 feet) and including 36 panels, the window is heraldic in design and celebrates the lineage of the Earls of Shrewsbury dating back to the Norman conquest of 1066. Its central window showcases the coat of arms of the Earls of Shrewsbury, above which is the coats of arms of the Talbot family, dating back to 1442.

The massive stained glass window was originally commissioned by the 16th Earl of Shrewsbury in 1850 to be a part of the Alton Towers Gothic mansion. It was created by architect **Pugin**, famous for his Gothic revival style with works including **Big Ben**, the **Palace of Westminster** and **Cheadle's St Giles' Church**.

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Holidays, themed mini-golf help boost Fun-Land of Fredericksburg

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

FREDERICKSBURG, Va. — Taking advantage of its newly renovated mini-golf course, **Fun-Land of Fredericksburg** is trying something new. The family entertainment center is enticing families to return with Spooky Golf.

“We had just refurbished the golf course, and I thought it would be fun to do something like somebody’s front yard on steroids,” said General Manager **Clint Novak**. “We put a ton of inflatables out there, decorations, corn stalks and all sorts of fun, fall [decorations].”

Spooky Golf features 13 inflatables, nine scarecrows, more than 100 effect lights on the greens, bushes and throughout the course. Pumpkins and cornstalks add their own accent as well. While the inflatables and décor make it fun during the day, it is the lighting that adds to the atmosphere at night.

Renovation of the golf course took all summer, which included power upgrades to the course. It took less than two weeks to do the Halloween overlay. The investment was around \$5,000.

“The inflatables were the easy part. Set them where they want to go, blow ‘em up and stake ‘em down,” Novak said. “The lighting was the hardest part. For the most part, it was a very simple setup.”

Novak said his team dedicated two long nights to



install the lighting and ensure the effect was what they were wanting.

This is the first year for Spooky Golf, but Fun-Land had experimented with Halloween promotions before.

“We had done haunted houses in our laser tag arena before. We were only able to do the ‘big one’ one year,” Novak told *Amusement Today*. “If we gave it more time, it would probably become more successful, but we just didn’t have the ability to let it run the way it was. We gave it a year, but then COVID hit, and we were unable to bring that back.”

Spooky Golf seemed a logical, family-friendly alternative. In its initial weeks, Fun-Land had already seen a seven percent increase over 2019 numbers. As the dates grew closer to Halloween, the FEC put together a Trick-or-Treat Meet and Greet. Princesses, superheroes and other fun

By day or night, the Halloween overlay brings smiles to families. Inflatables and special lighting have been added to create Spooky Golf. COURTESY FUN-LAND OF FREDERICKSBURG

characters were positioned on the golf course, and families could buy tickets to go out and trick-or-treat and mingle with the characters.

“We used our social media as much as we could boosting posts and did a lot of teasers when we were setting up,” said Novak. “We also used local media, the local newspaper and radio stations and our partners that we can do what we call ‘trades.’ We put advertising together on all those outlets to market Spooky Golf.”

Players can enjoy Spooky Golf for \$10 or it is included with the all-day wristband.

Surprisingly, the idea of



decorating the golf course was first conceived for Christmas. The FEC will continue this holiday fun once Halloween ends, and the park transforms the golf course into Holly Jolly Golf.

Fun Fore All, an FEC in Cranberry, Pennsylvania, also offers a Halloween-themed golf course.

“I was well underway doing ours, and remembered they did one as well,” said Novak. “They have already done a Christmas overlay there outside Pittsburgh. It snows there and for us we don’t get that much snow. We have a

very mild winter here. Most of our snow is after Christmas.”

Holly Jolly Golf will have more than 30,000 lights, festive inflatables and fun elements that people can golf through.

“Holly Jolly Golf was the first on our radar. I said if we were already paying the money for power and do all this stuff, the infrastructure would already be there. It would be relatively [inexpensive] to do a Halloween version as well,” said Novak. “That would give us two uses for the power we had out there.”

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From above, the lighting added to the renovated golf course is seen. COURTESY FUN-LAND OF FREDERICKSBURG



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New Betson game room part of Gravity Trampoline Park remodel



KOKOMO, Ind. — The **Betson** distribution team recently finished a 30-piece game room install at the Kokomo, Indiana, **Gravity Trampoline Park** as part of a new remodel.

Betson Midwest Game Sales Consultant **Brian Conway** provided Gravity Trampoline Park with game and layout recommendations to optimize space utilization, maximize the customer experience and generate the most revenue. The new slate of games installed by the Betson installation team includes Nerf Arcade, Hot Wheels, Marvel Avengers, Connect 4 Hoops, Monopoly Roll n Go, Pearl Fishery, Power Roll, StepManiaX, Taj Mahal, Fun Zone and Wizard of Oz Coin Pusher.

Gravity Trampoline Park is a central Indiana indoor trampoline park offering an 18,000-square-foot entertainment facility. It features the Gravity Cafe and the second-level viewing deck. Gravity Trampoline Park closed for remodeling in July and reopened in October with its new adventure ropes course, ninja warrior course and the new state-of-the-art arcade.

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AT: John W.C. Robinson
jrobinson@amusementtoday.com

Puttshack, a tech-infused mini golf experience with global food and drink, has announced that it has signed a second Atlanta, Georgia, lease at High Street — a \$2 billion, 36-acre mixed-use destination. This announcement follows the success of Puttshack's first U.S. location in Atlanta's The Interlock, which opened in April 2021. Future locations have also been announced for Oak Brook (Chicago), Miami, Boston, Houston, Nashville and Scottsdale. The High Street location in Atlanta is scheduled to open in 2023.

"Our first ever location in the U.S., Puttshack Atlanta, continues to exceed all expectations," said **Joe Vrankin**, CEO of Puttshack. "We're excited to bring Puttshack to another vibrant Atlanta neighborhood as soon as possible."

As the first anchor tenant to be announced for High Street, the more-than-26,000-square-foot Puttshack space will feature four custom-made, tech-driven, highly competitive mini golf courses. They are powered by the brand's patented Trackaball technology, which is integrated throughout the entire game experience. The tech allows for seamless automated scoring, bonus points opportunities, interactive games at each hole and more. The game play is also matched by an innovative, globally inspired dining menu and full cocktail bar, as well as a high-energy, upscale vibe.

The Void, which created in-person VR experiences but was forced to shutter its business in 2020 during the pandemic, may be coming back. A former investor looks to be planning to relaunch it with key employees after acquiring the IP and other assets, according to a report from *Protocol*.

In its heyday, The Void counted investors like **Disney** and **Comcast**, and created high-profile VR titles like *Avengers: Damage Control*, *Star Wars: Secrets of the Empire* and *Ghostbusters: Dimension*. It created theme park-type centers that allowed visitors to don VR headsets, backpacks and tactile vests to explore VR worlds complete with real-life touches like functioning doors and other props.

After seeking protection from creditors, it transferred assets to a holding company which sold the business to a company called **Hyper Reality Partners** (HRP) earlier this year.

HRP has reportedly signed key employees who previously worked for The Void, including its Chief Creative Officer **Curtis Hickman** and Vice Presidents of Content **Jason Howard** and **Steve Shaiken**.

According to a placeholder page on the site, "The Void [and HRP] are now entering a period of rapid expansion and are looking for more talented team members to join us. This is a unique opportunity to shape the future of VR and the entire entertainment industry."

The Hub Family Entertainment Center of Missoula, Montana, announced on Sept. 13 that it is closing permanently. The FEC offered indoor go-karts, a two-story laser tag arena, an arcade and a restaurant. "We have so appreciated the enormous

support of the community both near and wide," the Hub's website reads. "Because of a devastating and unexpected death in our family last December, we have had no alternative but to make this difficult decision."

"We had planned to stay open longer, but once news of our pending sale became public, keeping and finding employees became all the more difficult. The last nine years have been amazing and we really have loved every minute."

Fuquay-Varina, North Carolina, is putting taxpayer dollars toward helping homegrown businesses expand as the town's population explodes. The town approved a \$250,000 economic development incentive to help a local businessman build a family entertainment center on a six-acre lot.

Bryden McCormick, a dentist, is working on a \$10 million project to build a family entertainment center with a bowling alley, laser tag and arcade along North Carolina Highway 55 in Fuquay-Varina.

"It felt like the right thing to do — invest in the community, keep that money here in southern Wake County," McCormick said. He added that the project incentive helped him decide on building the center in Fuquay-Varina instead of Holly Springs. The funds are taxpayer dollars paid out to the project developer.

The indoor climbing park concept known as **Liggettville** is coming to downtown San Antonio, Texas. The attraction is moving into a 2,700-square-foot space at the **Shops at RiverCenter**. Construction began in October.

Liggettville is a venture from Rope Courses Inc. (RCI) which is owned by **Jim Liggett**. Liggett is listed as the owner of the project property in San Antonio.

Liggettville's indoor parks feature attractions like Clip 'n Climb and SkyTrails. Clip n' Climb flips traditional rock climbing courses into wonky, colorful climbing courses, according to the RCI website.

Tilt Studio, a 100,000-square-foot indoor family entertainment center, opened in October at the Magnolia Mall in Florence, South Carolina.

The fun center features a jungle-themed laser tag arena; mini-bowling; two blacklight mini golf courses; Spin Zone bumper cars with Flip Zone cars, Indy driving simulator and a redemption center with hundreds of prizes.

Guests at Tilt Studio Magnolia can enjoy more than 100 classic and modern interactive video and redemption prize games, for all skill levels.

The October 27 grand opening ceremony included a ribbon cutting and a Golden Ticket contest. Thirty lucky winners each received three hours of unlimited video games at the FEC.

"Our guests will never be bored," Tilt Studio President **Ron Kostelny** said. "Our team really knows how to entertain and amaze. We believe that the region is going to respond very positively."

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Kansas State Fair not impacted by rising COVID-19 numbers

AT: B. Derek Shaw
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HUTCHINSON, Kan. — COVID-19 cases were starting to multiply close to the start of the Kansas State Fair. However that did not deter 281,000 from attending. “We consistently saw the crowds coming out and enjoying the great food and family traditions this event offers,” said new General Manager Bryan Schulz, who started in early August. “We had 10 days of beautiful weather, and aside from one quick rainstorm that delayed the Logan Mize/Sawyer Brown concert, we couldn’t have asked for better fair conditions!”

The theme of the largest annual event in the state was “Celebrating All Things Kansas.”

North American Midway Entertainment (NAME) was the midway operator, providing 41 rides with 17 of them kiddie rides, along with eight food stands. “We had a great year at the Kansas State Fair! Having missed it in 2020 because of the pandemic, it was great to be back and giving people plenty of rides to enjoy. While the overall attendance was less than previous years, because of the pandemic, [337,400 in 2019] the midway sales broke our previous record set in 2019. It seems like the guests who came out were ready to have some serious fun – and that’s what we’re great at providing,” said Lynda Franc, corporate marketing director for NAME.

There were no new rides this year, however NAME brought back perennial fair favorites like the Giant Wheel (Chance Rides) and the Bullet Train roller coaster (Interpark). The Top three most popular rides included the Bullet Train, Giant Wheel and



Freak Out (KMG.)

Franc talked about COVID-19 mitigation challenges. “We always work closely with the event managers and any local health authorities. This time around we were placing sanitizing stations at almost every ride so that we could be proactive.”

Franc was asked about collaborating with fair staff. “Incredible, it was great to work with the team at the Kansas State Fair. They are always looking to put on an amazing show and we are happy to have been a part of that for 2021.”

Schulz was pleased with the NAME midway operation. “We have a long-standing relationship with them and work well together.” There were numerous special promotions designed to get more traffic through the gate. Tasty Tuesday offered \$2 concession items at select vendors all day providing a great opportunity to try out new food. Shop Till You Drop was a one-day promotion on Wednesday with participating vendors who offered discounts on select merchandise. \$4 after 4 on gate admission Tuesday and Thursday of the fair. Part of the \$4 after 4 promo included the First Annual Pub Crawl from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. for \$30. Crawlers received one free drink from



NAME brought 41 rides to the Kansas State Fair including the KMG Freak Out, which was one of the top three most popular rides this year and a perennial favorite. COURTESY KANSAS STATE FAIR

participating vendors, along with a commemorative T-shirt.

The Kansas State Fair has a limited advertising budget, so they leverage their dollars with local television and radio stations for optimal buys and station sponsored events that help supplement coverage. This is also done through ticket trades and includes newsprint ads. They also utilize email blasts, paid and unpaid digital advertising on social media, YouTube and Google ads for further reach.

Schulz was asked about COVID-19 mitigation challenges and practices. “Our management team closely watched the community data, as the safety of our fair patrons, vendors and staff was of utmost importance to us. We recommended the use of masking in all buildings. We had over 100,000 masks avail-

able on-grounds, and had one-way traffic patterns throughout the buildings. Outside, we made masking optional, including the grandstands. We worked closely with the Kansas Department of Health and offered free and safe COVID-19 testing and vaccinations on site during the 10 days of our event.”

Carnival Eats attended the fair and will be airing two separate episodes featuring the new/best/unusual foods. This was the first-time that Carnival Eats has ever produced two epi-

sodes at one Fair.

Grandstand entertainment included Nelly with Willie Jones, Chayce Beckham (American Idol season 19 winner,) 38 Special and Darci Lynne Farmer.

When asked what set the fair apart, Schulz said, “The Kansas State Fair is a celebration of all things Kansas. We are the heart of the Midwest and are proud of our agricultural background and home-grown values.”

The 2022 dates are September 9-18.

•kansasstatefair.com



The Chance Rides Giant Wheel is always a crowd pleaser. This year attendance was down from over 337,000 in 2019 (the last time a fair was held) to 281,000 this year. However, organizers were pleased with the outcome. COURTESY KANSAS STATE FAIR

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On the Midway: Houghton Enterprises



Houghton Enterprises brought in 20 rides to the Ephrata Fair, of which 11 were kiddie ones. A few are seen on one of the streets in the downtown area. New to the spot were an Eli Kiddie Wheel, S&S Frog Hopper and Zamperla Helicopter. AT/B. DEREK SHAW



The 102nd fair is seen from atop the Watkins Expo Wheel. Ephrata, Pa., a town with a population of 13,842, is home to the largest multi-day street fair in Pennsylvania. AT/B. DEREK SHAW



What makes this fair unique is rides, games, food, crafts, non-profits and commercial exhibits are all staged throughout 10 blocks in the downtown area on streets closed during the five-day event, drawing upwards of 150,000 attendees. It has Tent City for agriculture and a mid-week parade, which is rare for most fairs. AT/B. DEREK SHAW



Part of the Houghton family operation, from l: Jason, Jimmy, Jason Sr. and Jim Houghton. "We had a great run in northeastern Pennsylvania. We are paying our bills," said Jimmy Houghton. "2019 was our best year ever. We doubled the best year ever," chimed in Jim Houghton. AT/B. DEREK SHAW



MIDWAYS SCENE

AT: B. Derek Shaw

bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

A total of 1,498,774 visitors attended the 2021 **Big E**, in West Springfield, Mass. During the fair's 17-day run, single day attendance record was set when 177,238 visitors came to The Big E on the third Saturday. Daily attendance records were also set: the first Tuesday, Sept. 21, 56,769; the second Sunday, Sept. 26, 136,512; and the third Friday with 113,827 visitors.

A diverse concert line-up of more than 80 individual performances, fair foods, rides and unique shopping experiences provided something for everyone in the family. Social media outreach to fans and followers across the Internet continued to grow this year. When the fair ended, The Big E had over 246,000 followers on Facebook, more than 12,300 Twitter fans, and 37,000 followers on Instagram.

The **Kentucky State Fair**, Louisville, had a great incentive to drive attendees to their website before they arrived. Online early bird admission tickets were available July 2 to August 5 for \$8 per person, which included parking. From August 7 to August 29, the online price for admission with parking was \$10. Otherwise, it was \$10 admission and a \$10 parking fee.

From its website regarding the pricing: "After a year without having a public fair, we thought it was important to focus on accessibility so we could bring as many Kentuckians together to experience the concerts, the food and the fun unique to our annual festival," said **David S. Beck**, president and CEO of **Kentucky Venues**. Supplying the Thrillville carnival rides at the fair was **Kissel Entertainment, LLC. Kentucky Kingdom and Hurricane Bay**, while physically on the same grounds, were not involved.

After a first-time run of 18 days this year, the **Great New York State Fair** is reverting back to their traditional 13-day stretch, citing it is more sustainable. The expansion was announced a couple years back, after the Syracuse-located fair experienced numerous years of record-breaking attendance prior to the pandemic. Many revenue areas were up even with a lower turnout (800,000 vs. 1.3 million.) The smaller-date footprint will not overlap as much with other fairs in the state, including the **Erie County Fair**, Hamburg.

"The state Association of Agricultural Fairs applauds Governor [**Kathy**] Hochul for this decision. It reduces conflicts among fairs and ensures that fairs can have access to the widest assortment of vendors. It will also allow agricultural exhibitors, especially youth exhibitors, to be part of both their home county's fair and the state fair," said Jason Lawrence, president of the **New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs**, in a release from the governor's office. The 2022 edition runs August 24 to September 5, with **Wade Shows** holding the ride contract. The Great New York State Fair has been held since 1841.

Unfortunately, the social media rumor mill was saying there was a stabbing at the **Topsfield Fair**, Massachusetts, during its run, on October 9. What actually happened was a woman cut herself on a zip tie during the 4-H Horse Show. She was transferred to a local hospital with non-life-threatening injuries. The

fair was proactive and made an announcement immediately, in part saying, "There was no stabbing on the fairgrounds. Please know that the safety of our guests is most important."

The individual posted later, saying in part, "It was a painful but foolish mistake. It's too, bad the attention didn't go to the kids and how well they did, how hard they work or what a great organization the 4-H is and how awesome it was to be at the Topsfield Fair. No coverage of that, though. No pictures of the horses and young riders, just junk coverage of a non-story about me slipping with my knife and stabbing myself [laughs]. So, sad."

The **Wisconsin State Fair** Interim CEO and executive director is **Shari Black**, the state fair board announced in mid-October. Black replaces **Kathleen O'Leary** who is retiring after 24 years.

"Shari has a wealth of experience and knowledge that makes her an excellent choice for interim CEO and executive director," Chairman **John Yingling** said in a released statement. "The board looks forward to working with her and the staff to continue the forward momentum we have seen at **State Fair Park** in recent years."

Black served as executive director for the **Waukesha County Fair** for 15 years. In 2016, Black transitioned to Wisconsin State Fair Park as senior director of event services, which included managing year-round facility rentals as well as the fair's amusement ride and game area, SpinCity. She was promoted to chief programs officer in 2019, which included overseeing agriculture, vendor services, competitive exhibits, entertainment and all rides and attractions for the event.

In July, **Kathy Bartels** was named CEO of the 45-acre **Glenn County Fairgrounds**, Orland, California. A Tulalake, California native, Bartels attended **Butte College** and later **California State University - Chico**, earning a bachelor's in business administration. Five years ago, Bartels left her previous position at **Save Mart** to come to work for the Glenn County Fairgrounds, hired by then CEO **Ryann Newman**.

"I was hooked after my first fair," said Bartels in an interview with the **Glenn County Transcript**. "Then (I) expanded my knowledge of the fair industry under **Miki Martin**. Seeing all the vendors, exhibitors, animals, carnival, food and watching our community enjoying something that you helped bring together is special."

The nearly one-ton record-setting pumpkin at the **North Carolina State Fair** will make a lot of pies. A news release from the fair said **Chris Rodebaugh** of Lewisburg, West Virginia, set a record with a 1,965.5-pound pumpkin. That's a bit short of the world record at 2,703 pounds set by **Stefano Cutrupi** of Italy.

Joseph Pitchford, spokesperson for the **North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services**, told **The News & Observer** of Raleigh that the fair's giant pumpkin competition is recognized by **Great Pumpkin Commonwealth**, which allows the fair to accept out-of-state entries. In the watermelon contest, **Andrew Vial** of Liberty also set a state fair record with his 341-pound melon. That was close to the world record of 350.5 pounds set by grower **Chris Kent** of Sevierville, Tennessee, in 2013.

WATER PARKS & RECREATION

▶ Niagara Splash World opens in New York — page 44 / Record-breaking Wibit water park — page 46

Ocean Park adds Water World expansion to the Hong Kong resort

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HONG KONG — Opened on September 21, 2021, **Ocean Park's Water World** covers more than 600,000 square feet on a spectacular hillside location. The new park features both indoor and outdoor sections and will operate 365 days a year.

Water World boasts 27 attractions, including nine state-of-the-art waterslides, two wave pools and Hong Kong's first-ever indoor surf simulator, Surf Striker. The park consists of five themed adventure zones, spread over three different levels and takes full advantage of its waterfront location with sweeping views of the sea from many of its pools and slides.

In a press release, **Paulo Pong**, deputy chairman of Ocean Park, stated, "Water World is set to bring out the adventurous spirit in all of us. With an architectural design that embraces the natural terrain, it gives adventurers the opportunity to take in the beauty that surrounds our Southern District. We're so looking forward to welcoming everyone to Water World."

Although providing a spectacular location, the natural hillside terrain presented some construction challenges. The complex topography required some careful excavation and ride placement. **WhiteWater West** of British Columbia, Canada, was one of the suppliers of the park's waterslides and attractions. **Emily Colombo**, vice-president of strategic partnerships at WhiteWater, told AT, "The ride design for Ocean Park was incredibly unique. The rides were designed to integrate into the landscape while protecting the beautiful natural growth of Hong Kong. The designers of Ocean Park had walked the site countless times and really narrated how the rides were to live within the area, and it was a very complex process for our team to design safe, fun attractions while ensuring we followed the vision of the Ocean Park team."

David Bogdonov, region-



These aerial views show the massive ETF skylight system surrounded by a green roof as well as the multiple levels and careful placement of each attraction. COURTESY OCEAN PARK WATER WORLD

al vice president, Asia Pacific, WhiteWater, added, "Ocean Park is one of the most dramatic water park sites I have ever seen in my 23 years in the industry. The site has extreme topography, and the slides are designed to start at different locations and elevations, as well as terminating at different locations and elevations; plus the high frequency and intensity of typhoons in Hong Kong mean wind load and drainage posed another challenge. We really leveraged our expertise on this project as it was a very challenging site! When we designed our rides, we had to position the support structures very carefully because we were required to avoid certain areas that are critical to the drainage of the site.

The hillside did offer some advantages, however. The sloping gradient of the setting made it possible to build gigantic water slides without having to construct tall or extensive support structures.

The rides at Water World are designed to provide a sense of discovery. According to Colombo, "You can begin riding down a slide in one area of the slide, and end up indoors, or in another unique



land of the park. Conveyor systems allow for natural circulation of guests while the vehicles move autonomously from zone to zone. Rides starting and ending in different locations require more care in safety and operational design if line of site is not available."

Visitors start their day at Splendid Reef, a welcoming area right on the shores of the South China Sea. Here guests can take a walk along the seafront and enjoy the ocean air,

browse for new swimwear at one of the storefronts or — if they are ready to dive into the thrills — stroll down Water World Plaza to meet with guides who will help them plan their day. The Torrential River zone offers some of the more exciting attractions such as Cyclone Spin/Tropical Twist, two WhiteWater Giant AquaTube slides that guests can enjoy on two-person inline rafts. Rainbow Rush, an eight-lane, Aquatwist Matracer slide

starts with a DNA-style twisting tunneled section, then finishes with the side-by-side lanes where competitors can see how fast they traversed the slide via overhead timing clocks.

Torrential River is also home to two attractions from **ProSlide Technology**. Cavern Chase is a Mammoth river that has four-person rafts navigating light and dark sections full of twists and turns. Vortex is

▶ See OCEAN PARK, page 42



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▶ OCEAN PARK

Continued from page 39

a combination BehemothBowl 40/Tornado 60. Adventurers on this slide will first swirl into an open bowl then drop into the humongous vortex. The Tornado 60 has an open notch in the top and was created specifically to fit into the indoor environment.

Thrill Valley is another high-adrenaline zone with Thunder Loop, Daredevil Drop and Bravery Cliffs body slides, that include a flat-line loop and Aqua Drop capsules. Among the notable attractions in this section is Sky High Falls, a massive WhiteWater Boomerango utilizing six-person rafts.

Regarding Sky High Falls, Colombo stated, "The Family Boomerango as it was in its traditional form, did not fit without dramatic excavation. Knowing the Boomerango experience is the best in the world, and that we wanted to deliver the best to the guests of Ocean Park, we were tasked to reimagine the experience to nestle into the hillside. We knew that providing amazing views of the Boomerango wall was critical, while also minimizing any cut and fill of the hillside. The Boomerango Squeeze is now a ride that WhiteWater can boast in its portfolio, and we thank Ocean Park for the opportunity to develop a brand-new ride together."

Hidden Village and Adventure Coast offer tamer, more family-friendly attractions such as lazy rivers and water play structures, including Whisker's Splash a highly-themed multi-level WhiteWater AquaPlay 1050 that provides the opportunity for kids and their families to enjoy multiple



Competitors emerge from the twisted tunnel section of Rainbow Rush to finish the race side by side. COURTESY OCEAN PARK WATER WORLD

slides and interactive water-play features. Hidden Village is mostly indoors and includes the Horizon Cove indoor wave pool, kid-friendly attractions and shows. Adventure Coast features the Big Wave Bay outdoor wave pool and Riptide action river. Guests here can enjoy sweeping views of the sea, lounge in a cabana or get some snacks at one of the eateries.

Ocean Park is divided into two main attraction areas — The Summit and The Waterfront or Lower Park. Water World is nestled into the hillside in The Waterfront section occupying the former Bird Paradise area of the park which contained aviaries and a flamingo pond. Built at a cost of HK\$4 billion (US\$513 million), Water World has been in the works for several years and was

announced shortly after the 2013 closure of Bird Paradise. In January 2014, Ocean Park released plans for the addition of 30 new attractions, a 495-room hotel, and a world-class water park which, at the time, was to cost HK\$2.29 billion, with an opening projected to take place in 2017. The project suffered years of delays and cost overruns.

In addition to Canadian companies WhiteWater West and ProSlide Technology, other suppliers involved with the Water World project included **Barr + Wray** of the U.K., Scotland's **Murphys Waves** and **Water Technology Inc.** of Wisconsin. **Gammon Construction** of Hong Kong was the primary engineering contractor.

The **Hong Kong Ocean Park Marriott Hotel** opened in February 2019. The

Fullerton Hotel Ocean Park is expected to open before the end of the year. The hotels, along with the opening of Water World are significant steps toward transforming Ocean Park into a major leisure and destination resort. The 44-year-old park, once one of Asia's top attractions, is in the midst of a massive overhaul. The park secured HK\$6.8 billion (US\$874 million) in government funding in March to assist with capital expenditures. The park's makeover aims to turn it into a financially self-sufficient leisure and retail resort with a focus on education and conservation. Three new zones will be developed on top of its animal attractions, education programs and thrill rides. The Lower Park will be transformed into a brand-

new admission-free retail, dining and entertainment zone surrounding the water park. Two other new zones will be developed at The Summit of the park with adventure and wellness-themed attractions.

In keeping with Ocean Park's new focus on conservation, Water World's unique design will minimize energy usage and the park's impact on the environment. The park's main building is equipped with large doors and roof vents to utilize the sea breeze to provide natural ventilation that will reduce energy requirements for air circulation and mechanical cooling. An ETFE (Ethylene Tetrafluoroethylene) translucent skylight roof system along the judicious use of glass walls maximizes the amount of daylight reaching the interior which minimizes the need for artificial lighting during daytime hours. A natural grass green roof surrounds the skylights which reduces rain runoff and provides additional insulation and heat absorption. All of the facility's pools use the latest filtration technology for water conservation.

Since its opening in 1977 as a not-for-profit organization, Ocean Park has demonstrated its commitment to conservation by donating part of the proceeds from admission tickets and selected merchandise to the Ocean Park Conservation Foundation, Hong Kong, to support its wildlife conservation projects across Asia.

•waterworld.oceanpark.com.hk



The indoor wave pool located under the ETFE skylight is equipped with a stage and a massive LED screen to provide entertainment (above left). Guests on board a six-person raft (above right) experience weightlessness at the apex of Sky High Falls. COURTESY OCEAN PARK WATER WORLD





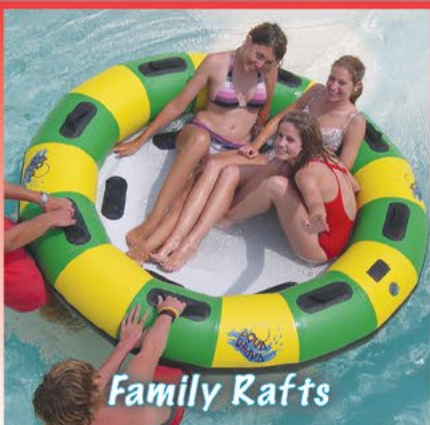
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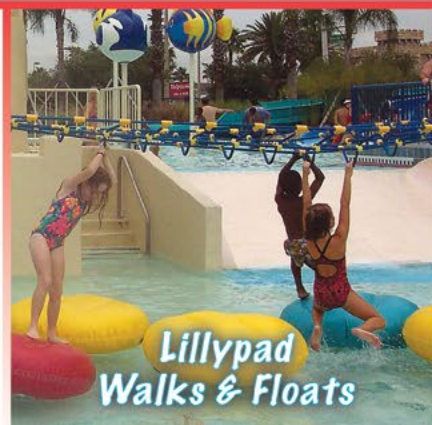
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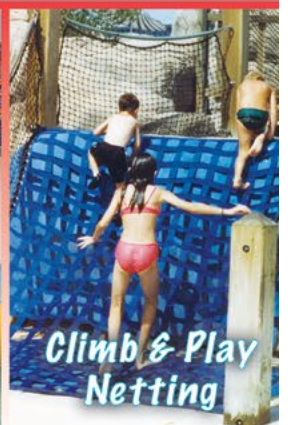
Family Rafts



Sidewinder Tubes & Rafts



Lilypad Walks & Floats



Climb & Play Netting

New York's Fantasy Island partially reopens as Niagara Splash World



Water park attractions at the reopened Niagara Amusement Park & Splash World include the lazy river, as shown in this photo taken when it was Martin's Fantasy Island.

AT FILE

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GRAND ISLAND, N.Y. — The water park at the former **Fantasy Island Amusement Park** managed to reopen at the tail end of the summer season. The park opened to the public on Saturday, August 28, with limited water park attractions and food options. Guests who were at least 36 inches tall could purchase an admission for the heavily discounted “special preview” rate of \$14.99; those 35 inches or less could enter free with an accompanying adult. The Lazy River, Dragster Drench (**ProSlide ProRacer**), Cannon Bowl (**ProSlide CannonBowl**) and a few other attractions were open for guests to enjoy. The park had hoped to open every weekend in September, weather permitting, however with slightly cooler weather predicted for the final weekend, the park announced on September 23 that it was closing for the season.

Chicago-based investor **Gene Staples**, who stepped in as the new operator in

May, had hoped to open the water park in July, but supply issues and repairs from massive amounts of vandalism took longer than expected. Although the season was short, the opening was likely staged to show the community that the previously shuttered amusement and water park is no longer abandoned and that urban explorers and vandals need to stay away. VP of Operations **Gary Fawks** told a local news station. “It’s taken several months of hard work just to get to this point, and I want everyone to know, this is just the beginning.” Getting the water park ready now will also give the maintenance crew a head start on getting the rest of the park open for the 2022 season.

Staples has said he plans to open the full park next year as **Niagara Amusement Park & Splash World** with a new roller coaster that would be a major attraction. He is also on record as saying he wants to emphasize a family entertainment theme at the park and will be working

to acquire rides for all ages. After the park was closed in February 2020, many of the rides were sold. But two iconic attractions, a **Chance Rides Gondola Wheel** and the **Custom Coasters**-built Silver Comet roller coaster remain, although both are in need of repairs.

Staples, a Chicago-based investor, has become a savior of sorts of shuttered amusement parks, after purchasing and reopening **Indiana Beach Amusement Park** in Monticello, Indiana, and **Clementon Park and Splash World** in Clementon, New Jersey. Both of those parks were up and running for the 2021 season.

Niagara Amusement Park & Splash World has a storied history dating back to 1961. Located on Grand Island just south of Niagara Falls, it originally opened as **Fantasy Island**. Its location along Interstate 190, one of the main thoroughfares to Niagara Falls, was likely cho-

► See NIAGARA, page 45



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► NIAGARA

Continued from page 44

sen to attract tourists heading to the Falls. The original venture lasted through 1981. The park did not open in 1982 but was purchased that year by **Charles Wood**, who, in 1954, founded **Storytown USA** in Queenstown, New York, near Lake George. Wood reopened Fantasy Island in 1983 and added its first water park in 1984. Wood expanded Storytown USA by adding adult rides and renamed it **The Great Escape**. In 1989 Wood sold both parks to **International Broadcasting Corporation (IBC)** although he remained as chief executive officer of both parks and his son-in-law, **Tom Wages**, was retained as general manager of Fantasy Island. In 1992, IBC went bankrupt and Wood reacquired both parks. To give the Grand Island park a new identity, Wood renamed it **Two Flags Over Niagara Fun Park**, a reference to its close proximity to the Canadian Border. After operating the park for two years, Wood listed it for sale and it was acquired by a local carnival operator, **Martin DiPietro** who changed the name to **Martin's Fantasy Island**. DiPietro successfully operated Martin's Fantasy Island for 22 years but was eventually looking to retire. He sold the park in 2016 to **Store Capital** and arranged for a lease-operator agreement with California-based **Apex Park Group**. At the time, DiPietro was impressed with Apex's experience with family destinations.



Dragster Drench (ProSlide ProRacer) and Cannon Bowl (ProSlide CannonBowl) are two of the more popular slides that were reopened for guests to enjoy. COURTESY NIAGARA SPLASH WORLD

val operator, **Martin DiPietro** who changed the name to **Martin's Fantasy Island**. DiPietro successfully operated Martin's Fantasy Island for 22 years but was eventually looking to retire. He sold the park in 2016 to **Store Capital** and arranged for a lease-operator agreement with California-based **Apex Park Group**. At the time, DiPietro was impressed with Apex's experience with family destinations.

Shortly after the sale, Apex Parks CEO **Al Weber Jr.** died unexpectedly, and the

company seemed to have lost its way, struggling for the next few years. After the end of the 2019 season, Apex announced the closure of Fantasy Island. Two months later, Apex listed Indiana Beach for sale. Although Indiana Beach was pretty much left intact, Apex stripped most everything of value from Fantasy Island. The amusement park had once boasted more than 40 rides and attractions including four roller coasters, but within a few months, all that was left were the Ferris wheel, the wooden roller

coaster, a handful of partially dissembled kiddie rides and the buildings. Apex also left most of the waterslides. Apex made no attempt to secure the property, and vandals and urban explorers soon moved in. Staples told reporters that almost every door had been kicked in, and almost every window was shattered. Perfectly good fixtures like sinks and toilets were smashed to pieces, television screens were smashed, and boxes of items like souvenirs and plush toys were ripped open and the contents dumped on the

floor. The exteriors of many of the buildings were covered in graffiti as were most of the waterslides.

Despite the setbacks, Staples remained committed to reopening the park. Getting the water park back open was just the first step. "All of this sets the stage for us for the opening for next year on a much grander scale," said Fawkes. Hopefully, by this time next year, we will be looking back and reporting on a successful summer season for the yet-again rebranded park.

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Record-breaking Wubit water park comes to Saudi Arabia

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BOCHOLT, Germany — Founded in 1996 by two friends Robert Cirjak and Romann Rademacher, Wubit Sports GmbH has achieved extraordinary success in the inflatable water park industry. The company, famous for its floating water park obstacle courses throughout the world, has once again broken its own record. In 2019 the obstacle course at **AquaDreamland**, Bali, which spells out the name of the country, Indonesia, when seen from above, was certified by **Guinness World Records** as the largest floating water park in the world covering 28,900 square meters (312,038 square feet).

Records are made to be broken, however, and an even larger water park off the coast of Saudi Arabia is awaiting certification. Installed at **Pure Beach** in King Abdullah Economic City, more than 200 inflatable modules comprise the park covering an area of approximately 34,000 square meters. The floating obstacle course, which spells out Saudi Arabia, can accommodate up to 700 people at a time.

The **WubitTag** system started in 2016 with the installation of a floating water park in The United Arab Emirates that cleverly spelled out Dubai in both English (left to right) and Arabic (right to left) languages. Since that time, other destinations have jumped on the bouncing-surfaces bandwagon including Cancún, Mexico; Poreč, Croatia; Siyam (Siam), Thailand; and Vinpearl, Vietnam. The original Dubai installation has been so popular that it was expanded with more modules to read I ♥ Dubai.

This latest project, with modules that weighed more than 17-tons total, was transported from Wubit's facility in Germany to Saudi Arabia over a period of four days. A six-person Wubit installation team then proceeded to set up the park in the warm, salty waters off Pure Beach. Fortunately, Wubit products are made with the highest quality PVC and are suitable for installation in all kind of environments — even the highly saline water and glaring sun of Saudi's western coast. In order to meet the deadline, the team worked day and night to set up the water park in record time. Operator **Blue Limits**, a local Saudi company, hosted a grand opening in August.

The Red Sea, with its clear water and spectacular coral reefs has been a popular tourist destination since the 1950s — particularly with divers — but mostly along the coast of Egypt. Saudi Arabia set out to expand its tourism appeal beginning in 2017 when **Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman** established the Red Sea Project, which focuses on tourism and the establishment of world-class recreation facilities along Saudi Arabia's west coast. The resorts area of King Abdullah Economic City is expected to exceed 25,000 rooms within 120 hotels with the aim of attracting both local and international tourists. Planned amenities include golf courses, an equestrian club, yacht club and a range of water sports.

The project also marks another milestone for Wubit, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. Saudi Arabia was the 100th country to receive a Wubit Sports Park.

•wubitsports.com



NEWS SPLASH

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The planned **Capital Region Aquatic Center** in Schenectady, New York, is one step closer to becoming a reality now that organizers have secured funding from the county. The 80,000-square-foot facility at **Mohawk Harbor** has been in the works since the idea was first presented in 2013. Estimated to cost \$35.4 million, organizers have been stitching together funding through tax credits and donations from philanthropists and local foundations. In September, Schenectady County committed \$5 million and the Schenectady City Council passed a resolution in support of applying for state grant funding. Plans for the proposed aquatic center features four pools, including a 50-meter competition pool, diving well and an eight-lane programming and instructional pool. The complex aims to position itself as a magnet for visitors across the northeast, hosting local, regional and national aquatic competitions while also serving as a public resource.

Park district and village officials in Forest Park, Illinois, broke ground in September on a new triple splash pad and other renovations planned near the **Forest Park Aquatic Center**. When completed, the space will feature several shade structures and three splash pads of varying complexity to appeal to different age groups. The **Town Splash Pad** at the south end of the grounds will feature hoops and larger spray fountains, with a snake-like pattern drawn across the pad. The **Jousting Grounds Splash Pad** will, as the name suggests, feature forward-facing water sprays that kids can aim at each other, along with a spray fountain in the middle. The **Castle Splash Pad** on the north side of the grounds will include a water slide and several smaller spray fountains. The improvements will cost around \$1.9 million, with the funding coming from the park district's existing capital funds.

The plan to update the aquatic center was formulated last year when the center was not able to open. Park officials realized the need to better utilize the space outside of the center.

The main pool is very popular, and it is hoped that the splash pads will provide more opportunities for kids to get wet and alleviate some of the crowded conditions at the pool. The long-term plan is to eventually upgrade the entire facility.

The city of Evansville, Indiana, celebrated the grand opening of the **Deaconess Aquatic Center** at the beginning of October. The \$30 million complex was funded from multiple sources including an \$18 million bond issued through the city's parks and recreation department. The remaining funds came from private-sector and public donors including the **Deaconess Health System** which purchased the title sponsorship.

The facility replaced the aged **Lloyd Pool**, which opened in 1975 and reached a state where it could no longer be repaired.

The center is divided into two separate areas — competitive and recreational — each with its own dedicated locker rooms. The

competition pool is a stretch 50-meter pool where diving and swimming can occur at the same time. The 50-meter pool can be converted to accommodate both collegiate and high school swim meets with 10 north-south racing lanes and 28 east-west racing lanes. There is also a mezzanine with seating for 992 people that provides views of the entire area. The leisure pool will have a zero-depth entry area and will include play features, basketball goals and space for swim lessons. A splash park is located outside, adjacent to the aquatic center.

Officials hope the center will bring sports tourism to the Evansville region. The facility has been named host of the 2026 **NCAA** division II men's and women's swimming and diving national championships.

Despite the emphasis on competition, **Deputy Mayor Steve Schaefer** reiterated that the facility is not just for competitive swimming, stating, "Obviously we want our community to use the pool. I think everyone will be extremely impressed with the product they're getting."

A survey of residents in Lakewood, Ohio, revealed that the city's **Foster Pool**, built in the 1950s and last updated in the 1980s needs to be renovated. Although it is a cherished asset, people recognize that it is at the end of its useful life and it needs to be updated. Of those who responded, 78% wanted slides, splash features and other amenities added.

The current proposal calls for a redesign that will feature a zero-depth entry recreation pool with a small current river, whirlpool, two waterslides and a splash pad. A separate L-shaped competition pool will feature six 50-meter lap lanes running east to west, and an additional four 25-meter parallel lap lanes. At the east end of the pool, the wider area can accommodate 10, 25-meter lap swimmers running north to south. The pool also has a deep end with a diving board in the northeast corner.

Other amenities include shade structures, lounge chairs, in-water seating and a renovated pool house with family changing rooms.

The city of Derby, Kansas, could welcome a public-access 3.3-acre **Crystal Lagoon** surrounded by a hotel, apartment complex and a glamping "glamorous-camping" site. Plans for the development were presented to the local city council who approved a resolution to consider the project and hold a public hearing.

The Crystal Lagoon would bring a beachfront environment to the state of Kansas and allow for aquatic activities such as swimming, paddle-boarding, kite surfing, snorkeling, and other activities normally reserved for beachfront locations. Plans include newly-developed heating technology that can keep the lagoon in operation year-round.

The lagoon would be a first for the state of Kansas, and one of the few that would offer public access. Several Crystal Lagoon projects currently in the works are being established as privately-owned entities.



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BUSINESS & NEWSMAKERS

▶ **Woman of Influence: Susan Storey — page 54 / Soaring Eagle becomes Altitude Rides — 56**

Six Flags hits home run relocating headquarters to former ballpark

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ARLINGTON, Texas — When the **Texas Rangers** moved into the city-funded **Globe Life Park** (then known as the **Ballpark in Arlington**) in 1994, the sports venue was state of the art. While it didn't have the enclosed, air-conditioned luxury of its new cousin, **Globe Life Field**, the property boasted a square block of classic architecture that was instantly beloved. The Dallas-Ft. Worth baseball team moved into its new digs in 2020.

While the playing field has now been reconfigured to host football games for high school, the four floors of office space on what was once the center field entrance needed new tenants.

"This office space was the offices for the Texas Rangers from the time the ballpark opened in 1994 to the time they moved across the street," said **Lenny Russ**, senior vice president, operations services, **Six Flags**. "We had to come in and renovate and took the whole infrastructure down to the studs. We built it from scratch to suit the needs of Six Flags. We were able to come in and build collaborative workspace — all the departments are centralized for their entire teams to ensure there is more collaboration."

Six Flags worked with architects to make sure the design was conducive to employees to be grouped together.

"In our old offices, you might have hid finance people in three different parts of the building, but here there is a whole finance section. Tasks can get done more easily with the group working together," said Russ, who led the charge in facilitating the move. "We actually downsized the space from those offices but now have more usable space."

Within the facility are stra-

telegically placed meeting rooms of various sizes. Ten rooms allow meetings and discussions to range from a full board to a round table of six. Cleverly, each meeting room is named after a signature attraction in one of the chain's parks.

"We have a really good internal design department. In our old offices, our conference rooms were named after DC characters or Looney Tunes [IP]. When we sat down on this one, we thought, 'Why not use the great history of Six Flags? Let's name these [meeting rooms] after roller coasters.'"

Many conference rooms sport a large mural of famous attractions or have a glass window that overlooks the playing field.

"One of the things I like about the offices is the flexibility," said **Laura Doerre**, executive vice president, general counsel & chief administrative officer. "Each conference room is a little bit different — different size, a little bit of a different vibe — so that you can have a two-person collaboration up to a senior leadership meeting."

Many areas are open concept, a strategy Six Flags feels is where new office buildings are heading. Breakout rooms provide the meeting space where the workspace is more communicative.

A meal/break area also provides opportunities for networking, both in climate-controlled indoor space or on the outdoor outfield deck outside the floor-to-ceiling glass windows.

"All the meeting rooms are equipped with the latest technology to allow for collaboration," Russ told *Amusement Today*. "In the past we had one video unit in one of our conference rooms. Now with the invention of Zoom and Teams, etc., you need that capability to present without having to plug in wires and computers — it's ready to go. It has been



Six Flags relocated its headquarters to the former Globe Life Park. After stepping off the elevators, visitors immediately feel a sense of fun (right).
AT/GARY SLADE, TIM BALDWIN

really good for that technology to come in and allow for virtual meetings, particularly now with the pandemic."

In addition to the modern space, there is still a sense of pride in finding new and renewed purpose for a well-loved piece of architecture within the city.

"I remember when it was built," said Doerre. "And when the city announced it was building another one, I thought, 'They just built one.' I think what makes this facility special to us is that it is perfectly positioned near our two parks in Arlington. Our mission is to create fun and thrilling memories for all, so what better place like the stadium to remind us of that every day. You can't look at the ballpark or the field and not be reminded we are here to make people happy. We love that aspect of it."

From the moment staff and



visitors step off the elevators, the stage is set. Each of the three elevator doors is overlaid with fun attractions. The company's mission is stated above them, and the company logo is illuminated behind a welcome desk just steps away.

The previous headquarters

were a few miles away in a facility that began as a data center.

"They really weren't designed to be the headquarters," said Russ. "When the [Oklahoma City office] was sold off, we needed a place to have

▶ **See SIX FLAGS, page 50**

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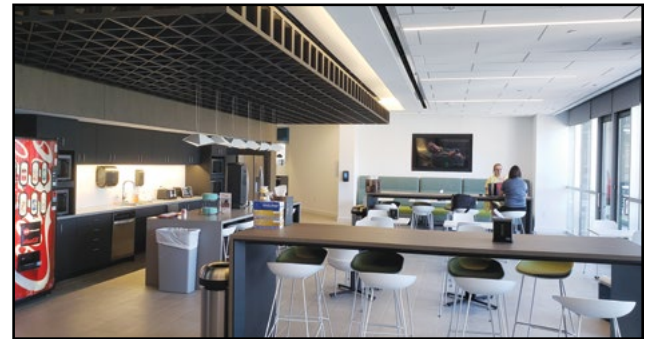
“Our Chance Observation Wheel brings that old time carnival nostalgia back to the Myrtle Beach Boardwalk except with an upscale modern flair. We just celebrated the 10-year anniversary for the SkyWheel in May 2021, and we wanted a lighting package that would bring it to a whole other level. We were looking for a dynamic package with many options to customize light shows to satisfy our guests. Eworks Pro gives us countless opportunities for different designs with an array of colors we can customize to meet all our guests' expectations. It really just brings life to the Myrtle Beach skyline.”

Rachel Beckerman
Marketing & Brand Manager
SkyWheel Attractions



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Ten meeting rooms spread throughout the facility range in size from smaller ones to this large one for board meetings (above left). Technical Support Analyst Tim Flemmons is pictured at the Tech Support Desk, where team members can get quick answers to any IT-related questions (above middle). The break area (above right) also offers indoor and outdoor spaces for collaboration and networking. AT/TIM BALDWIN

▶SIX FLAGS Continued from page 48

employees come, so we retrofitted the Avenue J space. We built out the space, but it was a hodge-podge. As we grew in that next ten years, we had to go in and continue to retrofit areas.”

“Who knew how important meeting technology was going to be when we designed the new offices,” remarked Doerre.

The initial plan was to move in about the time the pandemic broke out. Negotiations took about six months to final-

ize, and the new office design took off in late 2019. The City of Arlington provided an incentive package to Six Flags to help lure the theme park giant back into the city’s boundaries. Now, in its new home, windows on the east side of the offices look directly at **Six Flags Over Texas**.

“The city wanted us, and we wanted to be back in Arlington where Six Flags began,” said Russ. “It worked out perfectly, the Rangers needed a core tenant.”

The company holds a 15-year lease on the facility.

With the arrival of the

COVID pandemic, the move-in didn’t go as envisioned.

“It was interesting how quickly our IT department adapted when the word came down last March. It was obviously disappointing we didn’t get to move in on day one,” said Russ. “It was a good start. We allowed employees to come in sporadically at the latter part of 2020, but really opened the office back up in 2021.”

With the nation’s business shift of many companies finding success with a hybrid situation, Six Flags, too, is adopting

the flexibility of in-person and remote working.

“One of the things that COVID taught us is that it broke that myth that people couldn’t work effectively from home,” Doerre told AT.

With two world-class stadiums nearby, management hasn’t been challenged with many traffic issues. The workday and game schedules typically work well together. Doerre even noted the convenience of attending a game at the end of the day. “It adds to the vibrancy,” she said.

Any surprises?

“I remember the first time I heard a high school band warming up on the field in the middle of my workday. It was a little bit of a surprise,” laughed Doerre. “It was equally cool and a little bit distracting.”

Spread throughout the complex is artwork reflective of Six Flags, its attractions and the amusement industry. The facility incorporates fun images and nods to the parks in signage and nameplates on various rooms.

In all, the office complex provides a work environment for more than 150 people.

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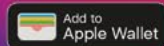
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Joey Slawinski
Director of Operations



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Pete Stearns
Senior Director, Midway Operations



MARKET WATCH

COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 10/19/21	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	126.79	136.89	49.40
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	45.64	52.50	24.48
Comcast Corp./NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	54.24	61.80	40.96
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	171.18	203.02	117.23
Dubai Parks & Resorts	DXBE:UH	DFM	0.08	0.13	0.07
EPR Properties	EPR	NYSE	51.49	56.07	22.47
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	JP:9010	TYO	4560.00	6500.00	4205.00
Haichang Holdings Ltd.	HK:2255	SEHK	1.90	2.80	0.38
Lefoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	18.10	23.05	14.50
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	47.47	49.13	19.55
Royal Caribbean Cruises, Ltd.	RCL	NYSE	84.47	99.24	51.33
Sansei Technologies, Inc.	JP:6357	TYO	842.00	922.00	566.00
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	58.26	61.85	19.56
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	42.05	51.75	19.37
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	818.00	944.00	642.00

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



Walt Disney World Resort recently unveiled the cars for EPCOT's forthcoming Guardians of the Galaxy: Cosmic Rewind attraction set to debut in Summer 2022.
AT/DAVID FAKE

BUSINESS WATCH

Dolly Parton's businesses raise \$700,000

PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. — **Dolly Parton**, along with her Smoky Mountain businesses — **Dollywood**, **Dolly Parton's Stampede** dinner attraction, **Pirates Voyage Dinner & Show** and **Hatfield & McCoy Dinner Feud** — as well as **The Dollywood Foundation** raised \$700,000 in support of the **United Way of Humphreys County** as it seeks to help residents following the catastrophic flooding in late August.

Parton selected the United Way of Humphreys County to receive the donation because it is the home of her friend, country music legend **Loretta Lynn**. Lynn chose United Way as the benefactor because of the work they are doing in the rebuilding efforts. After the support the Smokies received following the 2016 Sevier County wildfires, Parton knew she needed to help.

"I hope that this money can be put to good use to help the people of Middle Tennessee with what they need during their recovery," Parton said. "Loretta and her people helped us out so much following the wildfires in 2016 that I just knew we had to do something to help them. They have our prayers and our thoughts as they go through this time."

Several counties were affected, but Humphreys County received the most damage. More than 20 people lost their lives due to the catastrophic flooding caused by more than 15 inches of rain that fell in a relatively short period of time in late August.

Universal, Pokemon alliance

OSAKA, Japan — **Universal Studios Japan** and **The Pokémon Company** announced a new collaborative partnership between the two entertainment leaders. The companies will enter a long-term partnership to jointly explore groundbreaking entertainment that will immerse guests into the world of Pokémon with innovative technology and creativity beginning in 2022.

"Pokémon is beloved by fans around the world. We are honored to have a long-term partnership with The Pokémon Company while developing groundbreaking Pokémon entertainment at Universal Studios Japan for both Pokémon fans and our guests," stated **J.L. Bonnier**, president and CEO of Universal Studios Japan. "The globally popular Pokémon characters combined with Universal's innovative approach to creating authentic and one-of-a-kind theme park entertainment promise excitement for the entire family. Our efforts to develop new guest experiences will continue to help reinvigorate the tourism market."

"The incredible team at Universal Studios Japan have the creative vision and leading expertise in world-class theme park technology to imagine a uniquely Pokémon experience," added **Tsunekazu Ishihara**, president and CEO of The Pokémon Company. "For 25 years, Pokémon has curated a legacy of trendsetting innovation while becoming one of the most beloved entertainment brands in the world through video games, animation, and more. This strategic alliance with Universal Studios Japan reflects our commitment to continue delivering the joy of Pokémon in ever evolving ways for years to come. We are looking forward to the day when we can welcome fans from around the world to all enjoy it together."

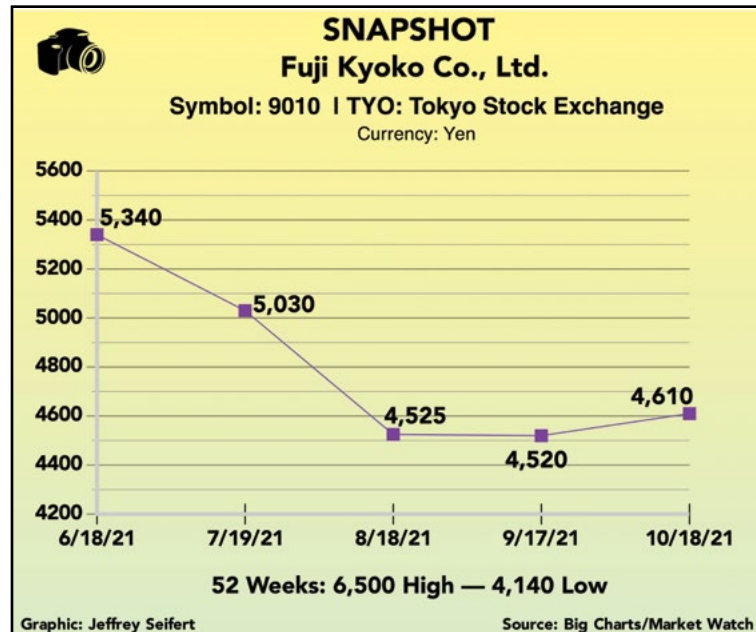
Futura Form partners with Gardaland

ISTANBUL — A new project has officially joined **Polin Group's Futura Form** with **Merlin Entertainment's Gardaland** after executives from the companies signed an agreement to work together.

General Manager of Futura Form, **Ali Cuneyt Sayin**, Technical Units Manager of Futura Form, **Erman Pakman** and Business Development Manager Polin Group Italy & Futuraform Gardaland/Jumaji Project Manager, **Gabriele Geraci**, flew from Turkey to Italy to meet with **Aldo Maria Vigevani**, CEO of Gardaland SpA, and formalize the contract.

Gardaland has been steadily expanding in both size and attendance over the years. Now, in its most recent expansion, it will include Futura Form.

Futura Form is a composite manufacturing company under Polin Group that was founded in 2012. The company provides production, design, and project-management services in addition to developing and producing a wide range of custom composite products.



DIESEL PRICES

Region (U.S)	As of 10/18/21	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	\$3.655	\$1.190
Midwest	\$3.615	\$1.346
Gulf Coast	\$3.422	\$1.279
Mountain	\$3.732	\$1.406
West Coast	\$3.860	\$1.318
California	\$4.530	\$1.291

CURRENCY

On 10/20/21 \$1 USD =

0.8588	EURO
0.7251	GBP (British Pound)
114.21	JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.9213	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.3395	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.2348	CAD (Canadian Dollar)



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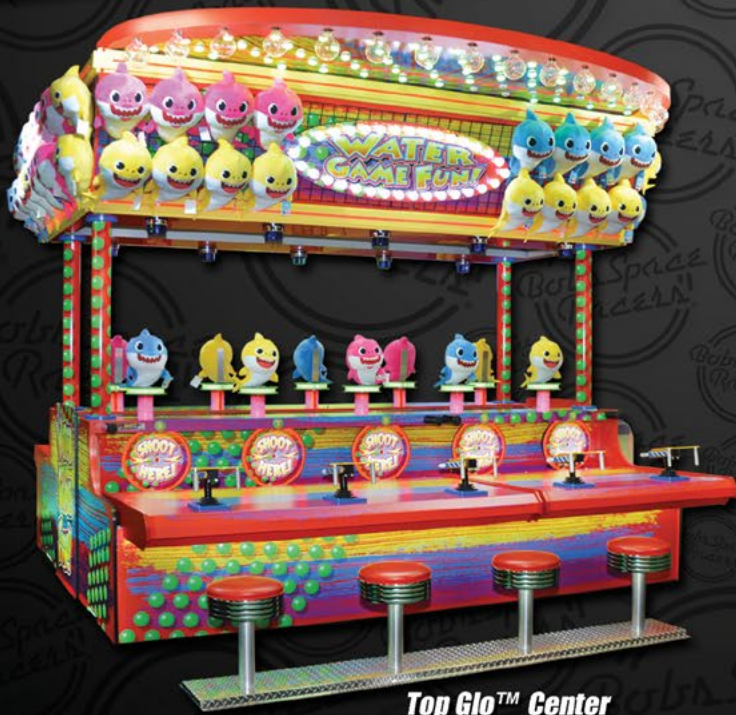
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Women INFLUENCE

A view from the top...

The **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA)** represents industry attractions, supplier companies, consultants and individual members from more than 100 countries. Members include professionals from amusement parks, theme parks, attractions, water parks, resorts and family entertainment centers. Founded in 1918, the association is now headquartered in Orlando, Florida.

Susan Storey, as the director of global communications, brought 20 years of industry experience when she came on board for the second time in 2017.

Accomplishments and affiliations...

- 2019 FPRA Golden Image Award of Distinction
- 2018 PRSA Phoenix Award Public Relations Campaign
- 2017 PRSA Bronze Anvil Satellite Media Tour
- 2015 PRSA Alchemy Award of Excellence Integrated Campaign
- 2014 IAAPA Brass Ring Award - Best Public Relations Program
- 2014 WWA Wave Award — Public Relations Project
- 2014 PRSA Alchemy Award PR Excellence
- 2012 Marcom Awards — Publication Writing

Storey's career is perfect circle

ORLANDO — Susan Storey was a hometown girl. She was born and raised in Rochester, New York. Seabreeze Amusement Park was her hometown theme park. She was close to her family and extended family and always had friends with which to go on adventures close to home.

When it came time to go to college, she went to the State University of New York in Genesco, only about 35 miles south of Rochester.

Yep, she was a hometown girl, except for one little itch.

"I wanted to go to Disney World," she said. "I wanted to work there. I was the kid that never gave up on Mickey Mouse."

That pursuit of Mickey Mouse led Storey on a great adventure, an adventure of life that is nowhere near over. After 24 years in the amusement industry, she has no idea what is next.

Right now, though, she feels blessed to be where she is and balanced both in her career as part of IAAPA and as being a career mom to her 10-year-old son Aiden.

She believes that everything she has done has led to this.

She looks back at her different jobs, her moves, and feels like they have all been pieces of a puzzle.

"I guess one day the picture will be revealed," she said.

Or, perhaps, it already has.

In her younger days, after graduating from the State University of New York in Genesco, New York, with a bachelor's degree in Interpersonal and Organizational Communication, she took chances and opportunities when they arose.

She has met many people with some amazing jobs and responsibilities.

She recalls first meeting Jim Seay, Premier Rides.

"His job was to build a roller coaster," she said. "I just couldn't get my head around that."

And now she can say, "I have opened parks. I have opened hotels. I have opened rides."

Storey's first actual experience in the amusement industry did take her to the Magic Kingdom and Mickey Mouse. She participated in a college program her sophomore year for one semester. She lived in Orlando with five roommates and was immersed in the industry. She also worked at a retail outlet in the Magic Kingdom.

That program gave way to her declaring her major in communications. It also gave way to her first job after graduation. During the program she met Henri Landwirth, founder of Give Kids The World (GKTW).

She didn't get a job with Disney and Mickey right after graduation, but she did with GKTW.

"I loaded up my Pontiac Sunbird and headed to GKTW in Orlando and I was so lucky to have done so," she said. "I had 72 hours to get there."

GKTW was a young nonprofit at the time. It became very hard for Storey to stretch her paycheck.

"I joked that I had to decide if I would eat that day or my dog would," she said.

That first stint in Orlando was short lived. Landwirth introduced Storey to John Graff, then executive director of the IAAPA. She ended up securing a job with IAAPA.

"I loaded up my Sunbird again and headed to Washington D.C.," she said.

And so it began. She worked as communications



director for IAAPA from March 2000 until March 2002 and then joined Six Flags Great America as the public relations manager until 2004.

Then, it was back to Orlando from March 2004 to July 2005, as the senior public relations representative for Universal Orlando Resort.

She went from there to Doswell, Virginia, where she worked for Cedar Fair Entertainment Company as public relations manager until August 2007.

She moved to Orlando in 2007 to work again with GKTW as the director of communications until July 2011.

In January, 2012, she moved from sunny Florida to Madison, Wisconsin, where she was the communications director at Great Wolf Lodge.

In July 2016, she went back to Orlando and became the director of communications of Sea World Parks and Resorts.

Then in August 2017, she went back to IAAPA and was named the director of global communications.

"I never left a position because it was bad," she said. "Many times I hated leaving, but I would see an opportunity and I felt like I had to take the risk. I have always felt the need to make connections and keep those connections.

"I work where I play, and I play where I work. I genuinely walk the talk."

She has always seen many changes over the years.

"When I first started, I would have to send slides out for publications," Storey said. "Just the way we communicate is so different. In some regards, I feel personal communication is becoming a lost art."

She also works hard to get the word out to young women that there are great opportunities and great careers in the amusement industry. There were times through her years she might get a roll of an eye from a man in maintenance when she would go to get details on a ride so she could understand it.

"I would show up with my open-toe shoes, and I would get a roll of an eye, but when they found out I sincerely wanted to know the information, it changed things," she said. "I never changed who I was."

Storey has had women mentors along the way including Debbie Evans, Franceen Gonzales, Kim Schaefer, Susan Lomax and Cindy Emerick.

"I really feel my life has come full circle," Storey said.

It seems that circle will continue to spin.

—Pam Sherborne

IAFE Convention, Trade Show will offer educational tracks, promise of fun

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. — The International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE) plans for the 2021 IAFE Convention & Trade Show are going full-steam ahead, according to IAFE Director of Meetings **Kate Turner**. The event takes place Nov. 28 to Dec. 1, 2021, at the **Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center** in San Antonio, Texas.

Workshops will be divided into tracks in a variety of categories. Attendees can stick with one track throughout, or they may choose from IAFE's complete list of topics. Track categories include Agriculture, Marketing & Sponsorship, Facilities/Operations, Entertainment & Ticketing, Commercial Exhibits & Concessions and Professional Development.

"Booth spaces for the 2021 IAFE Trade Show are 70% sold," stated to IAFE Director of Sales **Steve Siever**. "Our office has seen an uptick in booth sales in recent weeks — as the summer fair season



GROW FAIR STRONG

winds down. Our showcasing stages are completely sold out and we've had great interest in our Verified Buyers / Exhibitor Breakfast event."



Siever

"The IAFE Trade Show is the one opportunity during the year for us to see our friends and clients all in one place," said perennial exhibitor and IAFE supporter **Ryan Wilkerson**, president and CEO of **Haas & Wilkerson Insurance**. "It's like a family reunion where we actually get some work done as well! Coming out of COVID, I can't

think of another place I'd rather be. We have attended a few other trade shows for other family entertainment industries and the energy was off the charts. I expect the IAFE Trade Show will blow the others away."

Gary Berg, of long-time exhibitor **G.L. Berg Entertainment** echoed similar sentiments: "Each year our company uses the IAFE convention and tradeshow to kick off the next year's fair season work. It is a wonderful way to showcase our acts, connect with current clients, and meet new clients from all around the country. It is a great value."

•iafeconvention.com

Strike-U-Up going up at Skyline Attractions



ORLANDO —Skyline Attractions shared that it recently sold a multi-tower Strike-U-Up attraction. While the company is unable to share the park which will be home to the family-friendly ride, Skyline is working hard to assemble and ship it. Strike-U-Up was Skyline Attractions' first attraction, a hybrid midway game and amusement ride that allows everyone to participate together. COURTESY SKYLINE ATTRACTIONS

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Soaring Eagle evolves, becomes Altitude Rides and Attractions

Logan Checketts now behind the wheel of company

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

LOGAN, Utah — After founding **S&S Sports** in 1994, creative mastermind **Stan Checketts** invented air-powered thrill rides. Selling off S&S Sports, the new company became **S&S Power** before later becoming **S&S Worldwide**. The company found great success selling air-powered drop towers, roller coasters and giant swings, among other attractions. As the new millennium progressed, Checketts' role changed as others took direction of the company. Always creating, Checketts developed an incredibly accessible zipline attraction and founded **Soaring Eagle** in 2010.

As the pandemic dominated world news in the last 18 months, a quiet change



Logan Checketts

took place. Checketts sold Soaring Eagle to a different Checketts, longtime partner **Logan Checketts**. Despite the coincidental name similarities, the two gentlemen are actually not related.

"Stan and I signed the official papers in January of 2020," Logan said. "It was a good time for both of us. Stan turned 80 this year and has enjoyed being on the road with Sandy. He came to me



The saddle sling provides the thrill of bungee jumping, a sling shot and somersaulting. COURTESY BIGFOOT FUN PARK

to look [at things] and was ready to turn it loose. We had previous conversations about it before when he was ready, and he came to me, and we made it happen."

Ownership isn't the only thing that changed, so did the company's name. It is now **Altitude Rides and Attractions**. However, the Soaring Eagle zipline is still one of the company's hot-selling products.

Logan Checketts emphasized that the team remained intact. The only departure was Stan himself.

"He's a good friend. We've had a great relationship all the way through. He still comes out to the shop and helps us out and gives us advice. I still call him when I need help. He still has my back. He'll sell some still," Logan stated.

When asked if the name similarities create confusion, Logan told *AT*: "It's very ironic. I grew up knowing about Stan and then I met him and bought rides from him. Then I went from a customer to a salesperson then from a salesperson to a partner."

When *Amusement Today* asked if changing the company's name after Soaring Eagle had been established caused any confusion, Logan replied, "There's a step there we obviously had to make with our customers. With Soaring Eagle, we built such a good name over the years. We have a lot of loyalty there. We have customers that have appreciated the good service. As we go forward, it was a good time to make the change to Altitude Rides and Attractions because

all the rides we deal with are changing altitude. There is a lot of natural thrill to it. It just fit."

Logan said the company's focus is to continue to bring rides that are efficient, safe and exciting. He likes things that are unique.

The company has sold 70 Soaring Eagle ziplines around the world. Other products include the Daring Drop and Saddle Sling.

"We listen to our customers' needs and try to bring innovative things to the table. We look for attractions that are new and fresh and help sustain our customers' business. We'll continue to offer good service and bring neat, new products to the table. We'll build off the Soaring Eagle portfolio but will add some custom rides to that in the future."

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Soaring Eagle ziplines continue to be a popular seller, now with 70 installations. COURTESY ALTITUDE RIDES AND ATTRACTIONS

ON THE MOVE

Stern Pinball, Inc., announced the hiring of **Seth A. Davis** as president. In this role, Davis will join the company's leadership team and be accountable for the future performance of the company and its extended enterprise. He will report to **Gary Stern** — founder of Stern Pinball, who will continue to serve as chairman and CEO of the company. **Dave Peterson** will continue to serve as vice chairman and EVP of the company.

A life-long gamer, prior to joining Stern Pinball, Davis spent a combined 21 years at **The Walt Disney Company** and the **General Electric Company**. He served in a wide variety of functions and in entrepreneurial roles, at increasingly senior levels.

"I'm honored and very excited to join Stern Pinball," said Davis. "I'm really looking forward to working with Gary, Dave and the rest of the leadership team, as well as our distribution, supply and licensing partners to serve the pinball community. We have a great foundation on which to build, and I'm very excited about the future of Stern Pinball and pinball in general."

Immediately prior to joining Stern Pinball, Davis served on the executive team responsible for the highly successful subscription-based streaming services **Disney+** and **ESPN+**. Earlier in his career, Davis served in Disney Corporate Financial Planning leading business transformation projects; as Head of Product Management for Connected Experiences within Disney Games and Consumer Products as part of **Walt Disney Imagineering**; as leader of Disney's Digital Games Console and PC line of business; and, as Director of Disney Games' Strategy, Market Analytics, and Product Planning.

"I am very excited to have Seth join our team at Stern Pinball," said Gary Stern. "Seth's appointment will further help secure our future. His experience in gaming, operations, strategy and general management will help us continue our aggressive growth plans. As a life-long gamer, Seth understands the passion of pinball fans and our obligation to serve that growing global community through great pinball games and experiences."

Wisconsin State Fair Park Board Chairman **John Yingling** announced **Shari Black** will serve as interim CEO and executive director. It was previously announced that **Kathleen O'Leary**, CEO and executive director of Wisconsin State Fair Park retired from state service at the end of October after 24 years in various management roles.

Per the State Fair Park Board policies and procedures, Yingling may appoint an interim director and is also tasked with selecting a committee of board members to conduct a search for the next CEO/executive director.

"On behalf of the entire State Fair Park Board of Directors, I would like to thank Kathleen for her 24 years of service to the State of Wisconsin," said Yingling. "Kathleen's passion for the Wisconsin State Fair was infectious, and her hard work and dedication will never be forgotten."

"Shari has a wealth of experience and knowledge that make her an excellent choice for interim CEO and executive director," Yingling added. "The board looks forward to working with her and the staff to continue the forward momentum we have seen at State Fair Park in recent years."

Black has been involved in the fair industry for more than 20 years. She served as executive director for the **Waukesha County Fair** in Waukesha, Wisconsin, for 15 years. In 2016, Black transitioned to Wisconsin State Fair Park as Senior Director of Event Services, which included managing year-round facility rentals as well as the fair's amusement ride and game area, SpinCity. She was promoted to Chief Programs Officer in 2019, which included overseeing agriculture, vendor services, competitive exhibits, entertainment and all rides and attractions for the State Fair event.

"I am honored by this opportunity to lead the talented team at Wisconsin State Fair Park," said Black. "Together, we will continue the progress made by the board, Kathleen and staff by remaining focused on financial stability, safety and continually improving the experience for all visitors to Wisconsin State Fair Park."

Connect&GO, which offers e-commerce, point of sale, ticketing, access control and payment solutions for attractions, announced the arrival of **Tara Morandi** as senior vice president, sales and marketing. With over 15 years of experience in the attractions industry, Morandi will be responsible for driving Connect&GO's market development strategy in North America and Europe.

"I'm thrilled to be joining the team at Connect&GO and be back in an industry that I'm passionate about. There is so much potential to help our clients simplify their operations with flexible technology solutions, and I'm excited to lead that growth," confirms Morandi.

Prior to joining Connect&GO, Morandi was the vice president of marketing at **Accesso**, a leader in the development of technology solutions for the attractions industry for nine years. Before that, she served as the director of marketing at **ProSlide**. Most recently, she served as vice president of marketing at **Plus Delta Partner**, a California-based player that helps non-profit organizations improve their fundraising.

"Her addition to our management team demonstrates Connect&GO's dedication and ambition to become a global leader and disrupt conventional thinking with innovative technology solutions focused on generating revenue for our clients," said **François-Pierre Moffet**, chief operating officer of Connect&GO.

Dominic Gagnon, president of Connect&GO added: "Her deep knowledge of the industry from both a supplier and customer perspective, along with her proven leadership skills and entrepreneurial spirit will allow Connect&GO to accelerate its growth and increase its international presence."

**Black****Davis****Stern****Morandi****OBITUARIES****Alan Joelson, former park owner and entrepreneur, dies at age 87**

LOS ANGELES — In late September, Alan Joelson passed away peacefully at home in the arms of his beloved wife, Yasmina, at the age of 87. Since the end of November 2017, he had been in declining health caused from a head injury from a fall. During this time, he showed strength, determination and discipline in doing his best to recover. However, he succumbed to respiratory complications from pneumonia and gradual weakness in his health.

With his self-will he became a successful lawyer in London after passing the bar exam. He practiced law for many years creating his law firm Joelson, Wilson & Co. (which still exists today). Being a businessman and entrepreneur at heart, he left the firm in the mid-1970s to join

Pleasureama, a company that specialized in the amusement park business in London with the London Dolphinarium, which was the first indoor Dolphinarium; Marineland in Majorca Spain; and African Lion Safari Park in Australia.

After leaving Pleasureama in the late 1970s, he and his then-partner started Southbrook Entertainment in the U.K. with which they bought Windsor Safari Park, opened Aquapark in Torremolinos, Spain; invested in movie deals with the now defunct Canon Group, Inc.; and owned the playrights to the musical *Oliver*.

Moving to Los Angeles in 1987, his company purchased Raging Waters Water Park in San Dimas, California.

During the 2000s, he bought and sold Alabama Adventure Amusement & Water Park in Bessemer (Birmingham), Alabama, twice while it was under receivership.

Joelson was loyal and renowned for his integrity in business dealings. He made friends wherever he went and loved nothing better than to spend time laughing and reminiscing with family and friends. He was an entertainer and a reader of history and politics.

He is survived by his wife of 34 years, Yasmina; their children Rachel and William; his sons Elliot and Dan; his stepson Iskander; his nephew Steve; his grandchildren Lizzy, Clare, Aliah and Aiden; and his brother and sister-in-law, Driss and Mouna, as well as their three children: Nezha, Hassan & Kenza.

Former WED Enterprises concept artist David Negron Sr. passes

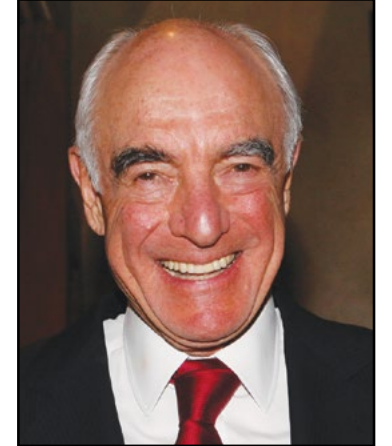
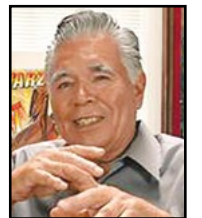
LONG BEACH, Calif. — David Negron Sr., a conceptual painter, illustrator and storyboard artist with credits including *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Blade Runner* and the *Ace Ventura* movies, passed on October 12 of natural causes. He was 85.

Born on Dec. 24, 1935, in Del Rio, Texas, and raised in San Antonio, Negron attended Baylor University, Texas A&M and, after leaving Texas in 1965, the Art Center College of Design in Los Angeles. He landed a job at 20th Century Fox as a conceptual painter and worked on *Doctor Dolittle* (1967), *Hello, Dolly!* (1969) and *Tora! Tora! Tora!* (1970).

Negron moved to Disney, where he illustrated for movies and created posters for such films as *Kidnapped* (1971) and *Escape to Witch Mountain* (1975). For WED Enterprises, the amusement park division, he created conceptual paintings for Disneyland and Walt Disney World attractions such as Space Mountain. He also painted the three-panel mural based on turn-of-the-century scenes that appear inside The Plaza Inn restaurant at Disneyland and Disneyland Paris.

He was a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Survivors include his children, Cynthia, Laura, David Jr., Joel and Lawrence; 18 grandchildren; and 21 great-grandchildren.

**Alan Joelson****Negron**

Despite absence of ceremony, Golden Tickets graciously received

ARLINGTON, Texas — If 2020 was a year of uncertainty, 2021 was one of re-emergence but with baby steps. Almost all parks were able to reopen, but new challenges were unexpected. Staffing shortages were rough, hours were shortened and supplies delayed. Still, the industry moved forward.

Amusement Today was incredibly pleased to bring back its annual awards

in a way that allowed parks and operators to step back and celebrate the accomplishments that were made. Obstacles owing to the global pandemic and strained operations prompted AT to not host a live networking event this fall, but even without a ceremony, the awards were able to bring positive vibes once received.



Leah Koch, public relations, and Holiday World Park President Matt Eckert accept the Golden Ticket for Best New Water Park Ride from Amusement Today's John Robinson (center). COURTESY HOLIDAY WORLD & SPLASHIN' SAFARI

"It was SO much fun to have our Golden Ticket Awards hand-delivered by the energetic and lively John! Even on a cloudy day, it was great to take the awards to the winning attractions this year for the photo opportunity, and it was especially fun to celebrate twice!

"Every Golden Ticket Award we've ever won is on display in our team member lobby — we love to display the awards there as a thank you to our team. We may decide which attractions to build, but our team members are the ones who keep it running efficiently so as many guests as possible can experience the fun. The awards are for all of us to share."

—Leah Koch, public relations, Holiday World



Representing Dollywood's Front Gate team, park hosts stand with the Golden Ticket for Best Guest Experience (above). Dollywood received four Golden Tickets in 2021, including this one for Best Kids' Area (below). COURTESY DOLLYWOOD



"The hosts at Dollywood's Front Gate are among the first people our guests interact with when they visit our theme park. When we received the 2021 awards, it was so appropriate that these hosts represented us in acknowledging the arrival of these awards. They definitely are a key reason that Dollywood was awarded the Best Guest Experience Golden Ticket. Our hosts in Wildwood Grove love creating memories for guests in the Best Kids Area winner, one of four Golden Tickets the park received. We were so delighted to share the experience with our dedicated team."

—Pete Owens, VP of marketing/public relations, Dollywood



Park President Jeffrey Seifert holds Six Flags Fiesta Texas' two Golden Tickets for 2021 (right). Above, the win was celebrated in the park's 2021 Fright Guide for its Halloween event. COURTESY SIX FLAGS



"It was so exciting to share the news when we received this award. We included the GTA artwork on the front panel of our 2021 Fright Guide that is distributed in the park. We also added it to the park map displays inside the park. It was really rewarding to show that pride to our visitors this fall."

—Chris Ozimek, director of marketing, Six Flags Fiesta Texas



Amusement Today's Tim Baldwin (far right) presented the Renaissance Award to Six Flags Over Texas management before a crowd of park enthusiasts. Holding the award are Director of Operations Chris Baker and Park President Ron McKenzie. COURTESY JAY JACOBS

"Our team is so excited to bring the legacy of Six Flags Over Texas to life through projects like Casa Magnetica and El Asseradero to name just a couple. We are focused to continue that work and believe that the future for our park is unlimited. Thanks again for this amazing honor!"

—Ron McKenzie, park president, Six Flags Over Texas

The Knoebel men — (from left) Rick, Dick, and Brian — celebrate repeated wins for Best Food and Best Wooden Coaster. COURTESY KNOEBELS AMUSEMENT RESORT



2021 GOLDEN TICKET AWARDS**Golden Ticket Awards Mailbag...**

EUROPA PARK®
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14.09.2021

Dear Tim,

On behalf of the entire family, we would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you and express our appreciation for the shared strong relationship that the Mack family and our Team has built with you and the Amusement Today Team.

During the last year and a half, since the pandemic started, it has obliged us to think differently, operate differently, and make some tough decisions. At the same time our perpetual commitment to quality and exceeding the guests expectation has gotten stronger than ever.

So, when Amusement Today puts so much effort into the Golden Ticket Awards, it is really more than ever a "BIG DEAL" to all of us in the industry. The success of a park has a great deal to do with the spirit and moral of everyone involved in the park. Winning a most prestigious Award as the 'Golden Ticket for Best Park' so many consecutive times is a huge morale builder for our Team Members. Even to see that Rulantica finishing in the top 5 has had a noticeable positive effect on the Rulantica Team.

We can only imagine how much work goes into this and we want you to know we very much appreciate all the hard work and emotions you, Gary, Jeff, John and the whole Amusement Today Team invest in this each year.

On behalf of our whole family a BIG THANK YOU for a job well done. And we look forward to your next visit to the EUROPA-PARK Resort!

Best wishes,

The Mack family



2021 GOLDEN TICKET AWARDS



Above left, Amusement Today Publisher Gary Slade (right) presents the Golden Ticket for Best Waterpark to Angela Flournoy, digital content strategist and Schlitterbahn Park President Darren Hill. Schlitterbahn impresses upon its staff the importance of maintaining excellence with a wall of its accumulated awards spanning more than two decades (above right). COURTESY SCHLITTERBAHN; AT/GARY SLADE



"As we continue to improve our product and the way we do things, we are thrilled to be recognized for this award. We deeply appreciate everyone seeing the value in such a product for the preservation and advancement of the premier landmark of our industry — the wooden roller coaster."

—Michael Graham, The Gravity Group



AT's John Robinson (right) presents the Golden Ticket for Best Innovation to principals Michael Graham and Chad Miller. COURTESY GRAVITY GROUP



Scene75 founder Jonah Sandler (right) accepts the Publisher's Pick: Turnstile Award from AT's John Robinson. COURTESY SCENE75

General Manager Manny Gonzalez holds up the Golden Ticket for Carowind's fifth win for Best Steel Coaster (Fury 325). COURTESY CAROWINDS



Larry Bill (left) is seen accepting his award for being an amusement industry Legend. COURTESY GRAVITY GROUP



[Shocked by the announcement he was being acknowledged as a Legend] "I was very surprised and humbled by the award."

—Larry Bill, The Gravity Group

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▶ **New AIMS International program — page 66 / Carowinds will host 2022 Ride Camp — page 74**

Baynum Painting keeping on the road, in the sky with projects

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

CINCINNATI, Ohio — **Chris Baynum**, founder of **Baynum Painting**, likes to visit the painting projects his company is working on. Lately, he has spent many days on the road.

"We are very busy," Baynum said. "We are doing 10 coasters right now."

And adding to the 10 coasters are other rides such as the Wild River Falls in **Dollywood's Splash Country**, Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, the Bakuli water-slide and tower at **Holiday World** and a Ferris wheel at **Morey's Piers**. Baynum gave *Amusement Today* a list of 21 projects they are currently working on in different stages of progress.

In mid-October Baynum painters were busy painting the 300-foot-tall Eiffel Tower at **Kings Island**, Mason, Ohio. Baynum has painted the tower twice in the past: 1988 and 2006.

"We hope to be finished at the end of next week," Baynum said, in mid-October. "It will take us about 12 weeks to finish this project because of its size. We try to target most of our projects between six to eight weeks."

In addition, the tower has now been painted by three generations of the Hopkins family of specialty painters. That has been very special for **Chad Showalter**, director, communications, and others at Kings Island.

"Knowing that they are involved in the project, just like they were more than 30 years ago, is reassuring," Showalter said. "You know



Above are before (left) and after (right) images of Baynum Painting's work on Pandemonium at Six Flags Over Texas. The team at Baynum is currently hard at work on the 300-foot-tall Eiffel Tower at Kings Island (below left). Below right, the work on Phantom's Revenge at Kennywood shows just how challenging some projects can be for Baynum Painting.
COURTESY BAYNUM PAINTING



they understand the complexity of painting the tower and what it's going to take to get the job done well."

Showalter said when he was a child, his family would play a game during their annual day trip to Kings Island.

"The first one to spot the Eiffel Tower in the distance

would win the first contest of the day," he said. "Today, I've heard so many people relay the same story about their annual trip to the park. It's just one example of how important the Eiffel Tower is to the Kings Island experience and the part it plays in so many families' traditions.

Showalter said they are repainting the tower this year in preparation for the park's 50th anniversary.

"We wanted it looking just like it did the day we opened," he said.

Baynum said his painters are using a mix technique in the painting process. They are

both spraying painting and rolling and brushing it. For the spray paint, they are using an acrylic paint that has special properties such as a dry fall. The spray of the paint that doesn't hit the tower goes out about eight feet and pretty

▶ **See BAYNUM, page 64**

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LEGACY RIDE UPGRADE
PICTURED: HONKER DINGER DERBY, SESAME PLACE



It will take Baynum Painting about 12 weeks to finish the 300-foot-tall Eiffel Tower repaint for Kings Island's 50th anniversary in 2022. COURTESY BAYNUM PAINTING

► BAYNUM Continued from page 63

much just becomes a dust that falls to the ground.

"We brush and roll the majority of our projects, but we have done the Eiffel Tower this way each time we have painted it," he said. "Once you go down that road, you stay with it."

Baynum said spray painting does save time, but it also uses more product. By the end of the Eiffel Tower project, they will have used about 1,500 gallons of primer and finish.

The prep of a ride is where most of the time is spent. It is about 70% of the job. Surfaces have to be sandblasted, scraped and then primed. In addition, in most circumstances, a park will want to be able to open the ride that is being repainted on the weekends. That means, of course, Baynum painters have to clean up the work space on Fridays so the park can welcome guests that evening.

That hasn't been the case at Kings Island. But at **Knott's Berry Farm**, Buena Park, California, the Halloween event is requiring the rides to be operational just about every night.

Baynum said all the company's projects have special considerations that add excitement. Currently, they are painting Phantom's Revenge at **Kennywood**, West Mifflin, Pennsylvania. The project is requiring a color change.

"That is pretty exciting for us," he said. "We are going from black and green to black and purple. That coaster is huge. It drops over the side of a [ravine] with a huge amount of rigging."

Baynum started on that coaster back in September. It is expected to take four months to complete.

"We are brushing and rolling that 100%," he said. "We have between 10 to 15 painters on that one."

With the current amount of work coming into the company, Baynum said he has had to increase his staff by about 30%. He now has close to 100 employees.

"And it seems everyone wants to get their projects completed by the end of the year," he said. "That helps them with their taxes."

He admits that with the pandemic, parks can use any help they can get.

•baynumpainting.com

2021 PROJECTS

- **Busch Gardens** - Cheetah Hunt, Montu
- **California's Great America** - Flight Deck
- **Camelback Resort** - Mountain Mayhem
- **Dollywood** - Bear Mountain Fire Tower, Wild River Falls
- **Great Wolf Lodge** - APU Steel
- **Hersheypark** - Comet, Skyrush, Tidal Force
- **Holiday World** - Bakuli
- **Idlewild** - Large train bridge
- **Kennywood** - Jack Rabbit, Phantom's Revenge, Racer, Thunder Bolt
- **Kings Island** - Adventure Express, Eiffel Tower, Racer
- **Knott's Berry Farm** - Pony Express, Xcelerator, Fun House
- **Morey's Piers** - Ferris Wheel, Great Nor'Easter
- **Six Flags Magic Mountain** - Tatsu
- **Six Flags Over Texas** - Pandemonium
- **Wild Adventures** - Swamp Thing, Tailspin Disco

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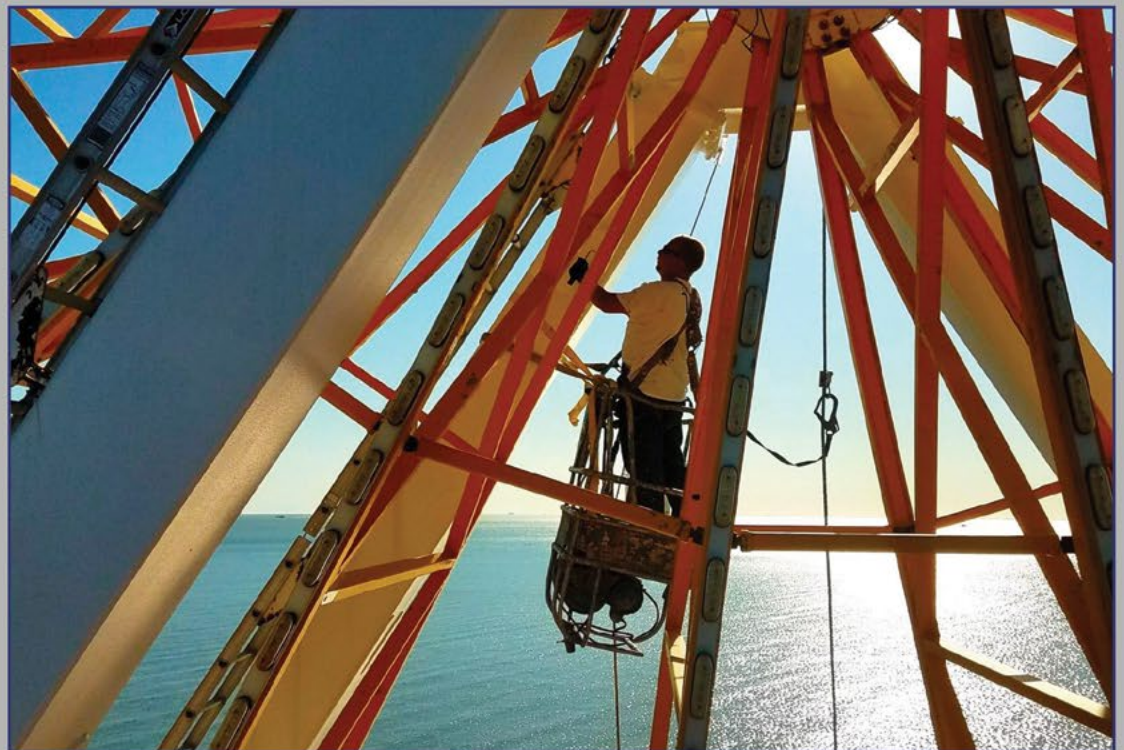
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New AIMS International program to highlight growth, evolution

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

GALVESTON, Texas — The 2022 **AIMS International Safety Seminar**, set for Jan. 9-14, Galveston, Texas, will showcase several examples of how AIMS continues to evolve in rapidly changing times, keeping the organization relevant and the industry in which it operates safe.

First and foremost is the new certification program that will be debuted. Called the Academy of Amusement Risk Management, Safety and Security, with the acronym AARMSS, this new program was created in response to a recognized need in the amusement industry for specific and in-depth safety education and certification.

"Risk management and loss control are key to the success of any business and the skills necessary for optimal performance should be fundamental in all managers' growth for a specific industry," said **MJ Brewer**, AIMS executive director. "There is really no where else to get this education at this level of detail."

Brewer said AIMS board members had been looking to create a program like this for several years. They found that most of the current seminar content was geared toward technicians, those geared toward operations, maintenance, those type of functions.

"We saw that there was this whole group of people working in safety, but not being reached by safety seminar content," Brewer said. "These are people that are risk managers, people who manage claims, people who deal in codes and regulations, people in security."

Based on the following foundational pillars: Safety, Security, Emergency Management and Risk Management, the AARMSS curriculum is specifically designed to educate and equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively manage an amusement industry safety, security and risk management program.

AARMSS courses are unique to the Academy and cannot be found anywhere else in the AIMS International educational network nor at any other amusement industry educational seminar.

The courses will be taught by subject matter experts from both within the industry as well as professionals from outside agencies which specialize in the course topics.

The program is a three-year program. Safety and Security are the primary focus of year one with the second-year agenda dedicated to Emergency and Risk Management.

The program is limited to 25 students per course. Each student is required to complete all program requirements within a three-year window.

In addition to the program curriculum, successful completion of an **OSHA 10** class is required prior to the first year with solo work and independent study by the students required between the first and second year, reinforcing the program pillars. AIMS is offering the **OSHA 10** class at its seminar.

The additional work includes, but is not limited to, select **FEMA** Emergency Management Institute courses and Academy webinar classes.

As part of the selection process, candidates must complete an application and show proof of their eligibility, which includes at least 36 months of employment in the amusement industry in a safety related role or 36 months of experience in a safety-related role in another industry plus at least six months of employment in the amusement industry. Candidates also must participate in an admissions interview conducted by AARMSS faculty.

Successful program candidates will be awarded one of two certificates: Certified Amusement Safety & Security Associate (CASSA) or Certified Amusement Safety and Security Professional (CASSP) based on the program requirements below.

Certified Amusement Safety and Security Associate (CASSA) requirements:

- Proof of eligibility employment as stated above;
- 8.0 CEUs (80 hours) from an approved continuing education provider earned during the two-year program period;
- Proof of a high school diploma or equivalent;
- Submission of a resume;



- Admission Review/ Letters of Recommendation/ Questionnaire;

- Pre-requisite before year one: OSHA 10 Course Completion (will be offered at AIMS).

To qualify for the Certified Amusement Safety and Security Professional (CASSP) certification, the candidate must complete the program within three years. Faculty advisor assigned to each student.

Requirements include:

- Pre-requisite: CASSA Certification;

- 10 years of experience in a safety role (with at least five years in the amusement industry);

- 4.0 CEUs (40 hours) from an approved continuing education provider earned during the one-year program period;

- Co-teach four hours (one course in each of the four pillars) at the in-person Safety Seminar;

- Completion of a project or dissertation (to be approved by AARMSS faculty);

- Interview with AARMSS faculty;

- Pass the CASSP exam.

This new program is an exciting new AIMS offering. Yet the organization is evolving in other regards as well. For the 2021 seminar, AIMS board members and safety seminar planners had to pivot and present a virtual seminar. The result was a success with over 160 content hours.

The virtual annual seminar set in motion a new offering for those in the industry that aren't as mobile and can't travel as frequently during the off-season. Called AIMS connectED, this virtual platform offers members online training and education courses from any mobile device or computer connected to the internet.

Eric Fluett, AIMS marketing partner, reported AIMS connectED has 43 hours of content and more will be added.

AIMS International 2021/2022

AARMSS Safety and Security first year faculty

- Rich Powers – American Specialty Insurance
- Jeff Abendshien – Recreation Engineering Inc.
- Kevin Garrison – Recreation Engineering Inc.
- Patrick Hoffman – The Hoffman Group
- Jason Freeman – Six Flags Corporation
- Franceen Gonzales – WhiteWater West
- Randy Wilke – Six Flags Corporation
- Brent Johnson – Traction Auditing
- Ken Berryhill – Cedar Fair Corporation
- Akmal Ali – Aluma
- Matt Nebel – Walter P. Moore Company
- Pete Dalton – PAD Command Consultancy
- Nick Buffa – Orange County Fairgrounds

First year AARMSS Classes — Safety and Security

- OSHA Overview - part 1
- Developing an Effective Security Program - Standard Operating Procedures
- OSHA Overview - part 2
- Venue Security Best Practices part 1
- NFPA Life Safety 101 Basics - part 1
- Venue Security Best Practices part 2
- NFPA Life Safety 101 Basics - part 2
- Secure Design - Perimeter Hardening part 1
- Developing a safety culture - part 1
- Secure Design - Perimeter Hardening part 2
- Developing a safety culture - part 2
- Introduction to SAFETY Act
- Understanding ASTM
- Modern Day Security Risks
- Food and Beverage Safety
- Case Study: Attack on the Ariana Grande Concert (Manchester, U.K.)
- Extreme Operational Excellence
- Patron/Employee Physical Screening Best Practices
- AHJ and Governmental requirements
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
- Introduction to Walkway Safety
- Security from an Insurance Perspective

"It just shows again that we are taking AIMS to the next level, we are growing and evolving," he said.

The upcoming International Safety Seminar will include over 300 hours of content for the upcoming event, with 82 instructors. **Ellis and Associates**, which presented the aquatics portion for the virtual seminar, will present that same portion live in January.

"We also have partnered with **International Ride Training** for the first time to present the ride operations training," Brewer said. "We are working with the **Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA)** to help us with our carnival track. We are very excited about all three of these agencies coming together to enhance our content."

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10 great reasons to participate in the AIMS International Safety Seminar

1) Safety is the top core value in the amusement industry and the **AIMS International Safety Seminar** is consistently rated the best and most comprehensive amusement industry safety seminar worldwide.

2) No other seminar offers such a diverse range of classes. At the AIMS International Safety Seminar, attendees can choose classes that fit their needs. There are eight tracks to choose from — Maintenance, Inspection, Operations, Aquatics, Carnival, Adventure Attractions, Safety and, new this year, an in-person Spanish Language track with topics covering maintenance, operations and inspection. Attendees can choose one track or can mix and match courses from any or all the tracks to customize their education experience.

3) New educational partners! Back by popular demand — **Ellis & Associates**, the leader in aquatics risk management and safety training, will be delivering the aquatics education

track. New this year — **International Ride Training**, the industry experts in ride operator training, will be creating and delivering all new educational content for the Operations track and **OABA** will be coordinating the all-new Carnival track curriculum and courses.

4) The new Academy of Amusement Risk Management, Safety & Security (AARMSS) debuts at this year's in-person 2022 AIMS International Safety Seminar. Specifically designed for experienced amusement industry safety and security managers, AARMSS features exclusive courses that fit into four distinct pillars: Safety, Security, Risk Management and Emergency Management. AARMSS applicants must have an OSHA 10 (or greater) card and must submit proof of at least 36 months of experience in a safety and/or security management role. The academy prepares students to sit for the new Certified Amusement Safety & Security Associate and/or Professional certification exams. Space is limited to just 25 applicants, so apply soon to

reserve a spot in the inaugural program!

5) Attracting more than 450 students from across the industry — Theme and Amusement Parks, Waterparks, Carnivals, Zoos, FECs, Cruise Lines, Adventure Attractions and more. Attendees will learn from their peers and make connections they can use for years to come. From ride inspectors, maintenance, operations and aquatics technicians to senior management and industry suppliers, there are sessions for everyone.

6) Classes are taught by more than 70 instructors — all high-profile industry experts in their fields. Through live, in-person Q&A and networking, students can ask questions, share ideas, and gain more great connections.

7) It's affordable! Tuition is just \$495 (for a limited time), with no requirement to be an AIMS member. The CEU certificate is even included in the price.

8) Attendees can apply for scholar-

ships! AIMS International provides two scholarships to the AIMS Safety Seminar in memory of **Jake Kaminsky** (funded by his family and friends) and **IAAPA** provides five seminar scholarships in memory of **Alan Ramsay**. Application information can be found at aimsintl.org. OABA also offers four scholarships to OABA members who are first-time attendees. Visit oaba.org to learn more.

9) AIMS delivers! More than 92% of students who attend an AIMS International Safety Seminar plan to return to another AIMS International Safety Seminar.

10) Become certified! There will be opportunities to sit for exams for all levels of the four certifications (Inspection, Maintenance, Operations and Aquatics) during the 2022 AIMS International Safety Seminar. Applications are available at aimsintl.org/scholarships.

For more information, please email info@aimsintl.org or contact MJ Brewer, Executive Director, 714.425-5747.

Space for this AIMS page is provided courtesy of *Amusement Today* as a corporate partner of AIMS Intl. Content is provided by AT & AIMS.



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Safe Zone to make equity offering on the StartEngine platform

MELBOURNE, Fla. — Re-affirming its commitment to meet the growing market demand for affordably priced and easy-to-install gunfire detection coverage, **Safe Zone Technologies** announced the launch of an investment crowdfunding campaign on the **StartEngine** platform at startengine.com/safe-zone-technologies.

According to Safe Zone President **Mike Anderson**, the company plans to leverage the strength of the largest crowdfunding platform to raise \$1 million at a per-share price of \$4.64. The funds will be utilized to expand production and marketing of its second-generation Safe Zone Gunfire Detection System, which now features a patented tri-mode data capture system and automated 9-1-1 data exchange.

Founded in 2016, Safe Zone has raised over \$3 million in multiple rounds led by St. Petersburg, Florida-based **Seedfunders, LLC**. Safe Zone has established a base of resellers that includes national distributors and more than 2,000 trained installers across the U.S.

"Society's need for a superior gunfire detection system that is affordable and easy to install for every type of venue grows stronger by the day, as the tragedies of the last few years demonstrate," Anderson said. "Safe Zone eliminates the barriers of cost and complication that have so far prevented gunfire detection from becoming a mainstream option for facilities of every type. Our goal is to grow from protecting 4000 lives daily now to

protecting hundreds of millions of lives every day."

At its current rate of growth, the market for gunfire detection is expected to become a \$7 billion industry by 2026. "No other solution currently available on the market matches Safe Zone's accuracy, resolution, reliability and cost-efficiency," continued Anderson. "Safe Zone disrupts the industry, offering costs of up to 80% less than the traditional providers."

Safe Zone combines state-of-the-art detection hardware with leading edge machine learning capabilities to create a sophisticated and reliable gunfire detection system. The system's small inconspicuous sensors are designed to be quickly and easily installed throughout any facility to

provide 24/7 active site-wide monitoring. When gunfire occurs, Safe Zone alerts on-site security, building occupants and local authorities within seconds and provides detailed information that includes number of shots fired, type of firearm and a map tracking the shooter's location and movement.

Key to the system's performance accuracy is the patented tri-mode data capture system that features acoustic, spectral infrared and shock sensors that instantaneously collect data that is then analyzed by a cloud-based machine learning system.


When gunfire is confirmed, Safe Zone immediately activates the always-on **RapidSOS** network to 9-1-1 Emergency Communications

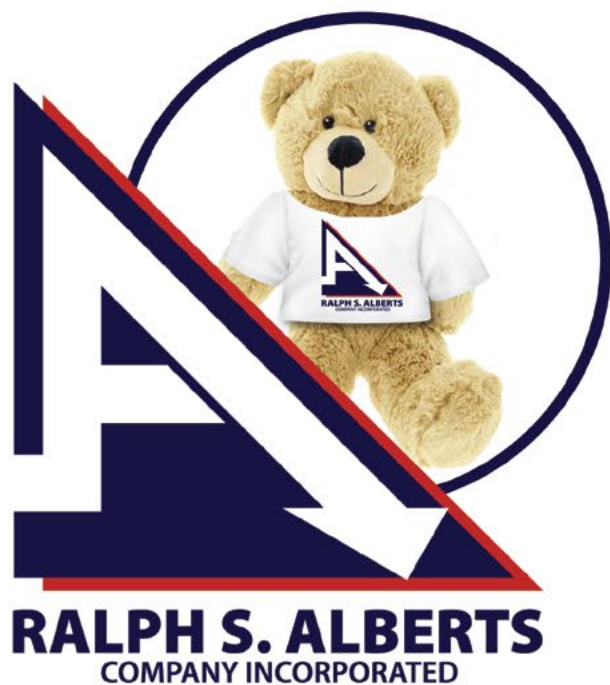
Centers (ECC), providing rich meta data with all the critical information to facilitate a rapid, effective response to end the threat sooner. Safe Zone is the only gunfire detection system utilizing this network.

Push alert notifications are immediately sent to team member mobile devices with the free mobile app that can be downloaded from the **Apple Store** and the **Google Play Store**. In addition, SMS text messages are sent to an unlimited number of contacts in a user-managed list. What's more, Safe Zone open API easily integrates with other systems such as door locks, alarm panels, cameras and emergency notification systems that can be programmed to respond in the event of an alert.

•safezonetech.com

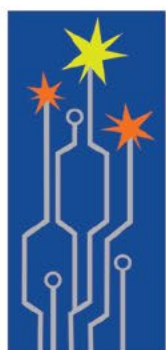
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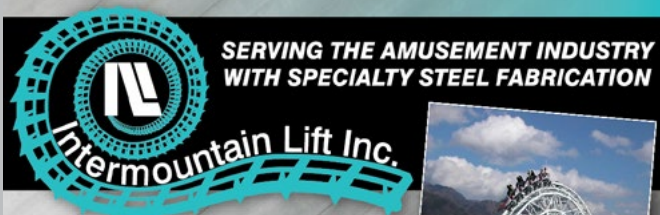
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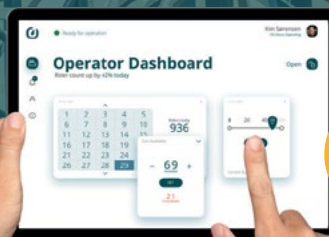


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Embed provides integrated cashless solutions to Australia's Planet Royale

PERTH, Australia — Improving the business of fun, Embed provided integrated cashless solutions to new entertainment hub **Planet Royale** located in the western Australian city of Perth.

Launched on August 16, 2021, Planet Royale lifted the Perth entertainment scene as it kickstarted the business amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Hospitality entrepreneurs **Ray Strauss** and **Sasha Fagan** took pride in delivering exciting pop culture-themed features within their two-level venue. The FEC includes an old-school arcade bar **Barcadia**, which boasts of an enticing collection of pinballs and arcade games dating back to the 1970s as well as the latest releases in the scene.

To bring the vintage to this era — and the new normal of the post-COVID world — Planet Royale engaged Embed to provide cashless solutions, enabling the business owners to achieve greater operational efficiency while reducing costs and increasing profitability. The integrated solutions included a point-of-sale (POS) machine, a self-service kiosk and 70 of Embed's award-winning smartTOUCH arcade debit game card readers.

"Opening an entertainment venue in the pandemic has been tough. We have had a few curve balls thrown our way, but we have managed to navigate our way through them," said Fagan.

"We're able to launch on time and focus on other business matters since Embed takes



Embed's award-winning smartTOUCH card readers (above) and self-service kiosks (inset) help increase operational efficiency while reduce costs and optimizing profits for FEC Planet Royale.

COURTESY EMBED



the pressure off us by providing such reliable systems," Strauss added. "When we were given a one-day notice of a soft opening, [Embed] came online immediately on a weekend and worked hard to get our systems operational for the opening. If not for Embed's help, we would not have had the very successful opening we had."

"Having contactless and cashless systems in our venue makes our guests feel safe, and we're grateful to Embed for making this possible for us. Their solutions keep our customers in the zone, and we're very happy with the turnout of our first month."

Equipped with cashless and contactless business sys-

tem, Planet Royale customers can expect a safe, fun and unique guest experience when visiting the entertainment joint.

"Our 'customer first' approach focuses on solutions that enable the optimum guest experience, and it's the driver behind our development efforts because when the customer thrives, the operators thrive!" said **Renee Welsh**, CEO, Embed. "Helping our customers lower their operating costs while driving higher profit and achieving their business goals is the core of everything we do at Embed."

•embedcard.com



Modern and vintage arcade games and pinball machines — all augmented with Embed's smartTOUCH card readers — fill the massive game room at Planet Royale. COURTESY EMBED



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ASTM, Brazilian National Standards body sign a memorandum of understanding

W. CONSHOHOCKEN, Pa. — ASTM International and the Brazilian Association of Technical Standards (ABNT) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Sept. 24.

The MoU will allow direct adoption of ASTM International standards in Brazil to enhance ABNT's support for public and private sector stakeholders in Brazil and aid in the development of Brazilian national standards.

In addition to the MoU, a commercial agreement was signed between the two organizations on Sept. 24. Ricardo Fragoso, director general, and Nelson Al Assal Filho, director of standardization, signed both agreements on behalf of ABNT. Kathie Morgan, president, ASTM International, and Teresa Cendrowska, vice president, global cooperation, ASTM, signed the MoU; Morgan, and Jim Thomas, vice president, sales and marketing, signed the commercial agreement.

"We at ASTM International recognize the importance of ABNT's work with the Brazilian and global



ASTM INTERNATIONAL

standards communities," said Morgan. "We look forward to continuing a long-term and mutually beneficial relationship with ABNT as enabled by these agreements."

"ABNT is very pleased and gratified — and I am personally as well — to enter into this MoU and updated commercial agreement with ASTM International, since both agreements are fully aligned with and will help advance ABNT's organizational mission, vision and values," Fragoso said.

"Cooperation with ASTM International under the terms of these agreements will support ABNT in responding efficiently to market and societal needs, providing Brazilian society with knowledge that enables competitive and sustainable production, delivery



Kathie Morgan

and use of goods in services in the domestic and foreign markets and contributing to scientific and technological development, environmental protection, consumer protection, health, and innovation."

While ASTM International and ABNT have a long-standing commercial agreement, the new agreement will enhance this collaboration. This new agreement allows ASTM to expand the accessibility of its standards and services to all Brazilian companies, organizations, and universities.

ABNT was founded in 1940 and was officially adopted by the Brazilian government in 1962.

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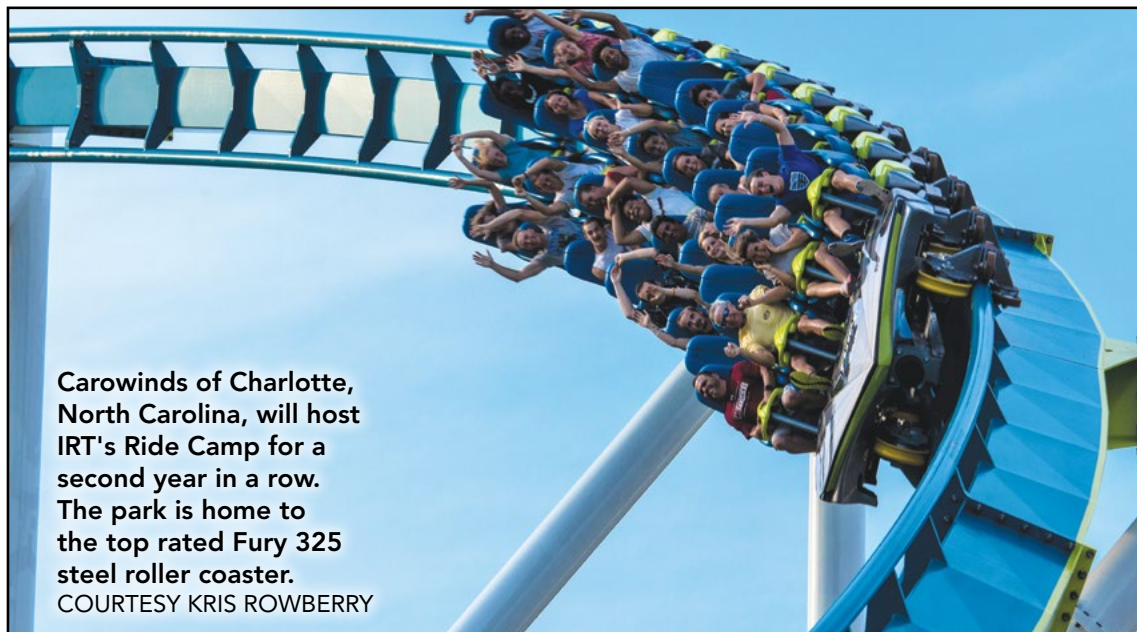


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Carowinds of Charlotte, North Carolina, will host IRT's Ride Camp for a second year in a row. The park is home to the top rated Fury 325 steel roller coaster. COURTESY KRIS ROWBERRY

International Ride Training announces Carowinds will host 2022 Ride Camp

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — International Ride Training will host its Annual Safety School — also known as Ride Camp — at Carowinds in Charlotte, North Carolina, from February 8-11, 2022.

Ride Camp is led by an

impressive faculty that combined has decades of real-world experience. These Ride Camp Counselors (as they are known) represent various parks from around the United States and Canada. There are also many guest speakers in

a four-day, highly immersive, educational and training experience focused on ride safety and operations best practices.

Ride Camp attendees — dubbed Campers — work intensively both in the classroom and in hands-on training using the park's rides to learn and brush up on ride safety training techniques.

Cindee Huddy, IRT managing member, said, "We work hard with our esteemed faculty to ensure that every Camper learns great training techniques, with a level of industry knowledge and best practices to bring back and implement into their facility, all while having an amazing week in the Carolinas."

The 2022 Ride Camp also offers classes in ride operations safety, ADA compliance, normalization of deviance, guest service, training tips and techniques, industry updates, deposition readiness, and aquatic operations, among others.

"This year's Ride Camp, we want to give our Campers the necessary tools to enhance their safety, risk management, and compliance programs," noted Erik Beard, IRT managing member and general counsel.

"Having the opportunity to host this year's school again at Carowinds is a real treat for IRT. It is a beautiful park with a dedicated team who rolls out the red carpet for our attendees," said Patty Beazley, IRT managing member.

Registration for Ride Camp is available online and opens on November 1, 2021.

•ridetraining.com/ridecamp

Fun Spot America locations join IRT's iROC Program

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — International Ride Training (IRT), an industry leader in operational safety services for the amusement industry, welcomed Fun Spot America Theme Park's three locations — in Orlando, Kissimmee and Atlanta — as the newest members of the International Ride Operator Certification (iROC) family of parks.

Fun Spot America joins two dozen other amusement and water parks across the United States and Canada — including: Cedar Point, Knott's Berry Farm, Elitch Gardens, Nickelodeon Universe and Dreamworks Waterpark at American Dream, Silverwood Theme Park & Boulder Beach, Canada's Wonderland and Holiday World & Splashin' Safari — with iROC ride operators welcoming their guests every day.

Designed by International Ride Training, the iROC Program is the world's only third-party certification of ride operator safety, efficiency, and professionalism. Built on the "Ten Critical Components of Ride Operator Safety," iROC enhances standardization, risk management, education, support and communication all to improve guest and operator safety.

"Fun Spot America has always been about 'Safe, Clean Fun.' iROC is a perfect fit with this cultural belief," said Mark Arie, chief operating officer of Fun Spot America Theme Parks. "iROC has given us a framework for consistent training and accountability within our ride operations department that will bring a group of already impressive operators to the next level in terms of safety, professionalism, and efficiency. Whether in Orlando, Kissimmee or Atlanta, we can't wait for our guests to see the next set of iROC Ride Operators in action."

"Guests to any park — be it a water park, fixed-site theme park, carnival, family entertainment center or a standalone attraction — expect that their ride experience will always be safe, conducted with an eye toward great guest service and feature a professional operator," said Erik Beard, managing member and general counsel for IRT. "Fun Spot America Theme Parks have been truly special for many years, embodying the 'Safe, Clean, Fun' mantra in everything they do. iROC won't detract from what makes these parks so special, it will complement that uniqueness in a way that will surely enhance the guest and employee experience at each facility. We are proud beyond measure to welcome them all to the iROC family."

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The team at Fun Spot America parks celebrate the recent joining of International Ride Training's iRoc program alongside IRT's Erik Beard (far right).

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iaapa.org/expos/iaapa-expo

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njamusements.com/expo.php

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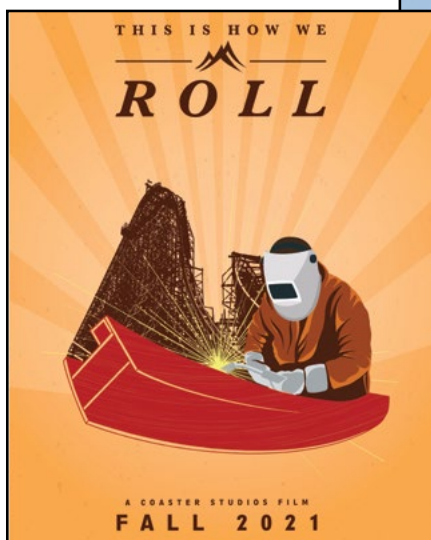
Rocky Mountain Construction the subject of new documentary

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

RICHMOND, Va. — **Coaster Studios**, a YouTube staple for roller coaster fans, has put its creative talents to use and has spent the last two years crafting an 80-minute amusement industry documentary called *This Is How We Roll*. The subject is Idaho-based **Rocky Mountain Construction**.

"I myself was inspired by RMC," said filmmaker and Director **Taylor Bybee**. "To create a film that will go on to inspire others is incredibly rewarding. Everyone knows about their rides, but not everyone knows their story. I think once people hear about all the perseverance, hard work and determination that went into bringing these rides to life, they'll see RMC through a different lens."

The documentary follows the story of **Fred Grubb** and his desire to resolve the continual upkeep on wooden roll-



er coasters at his local attraction, **Silverwood Theme Park**. The film takes viewers to the beginning and the creation of RMC's I-Box track.

"Being around Fred nearly every day for the past 12 years really desensitizes you to how much of a cowboy he really is!" said **Jake Kilcup**, COO of Rocky Mountain, following a screening of the film. "It was tons of fun to relive some of



the stories from our past."

The company's 20-year history really came into its own in 2011 with its first wood-to-steel track conversion of **Six Flags Over Texas' Texas Giant**. Paired with engineer **Alan Schilke**, Grubb's risk-taking journey ignited the amusement industry with

rides unlike anything created. Before long, the company's product was in high demand, and *This Is How We Roll* traces that growth.

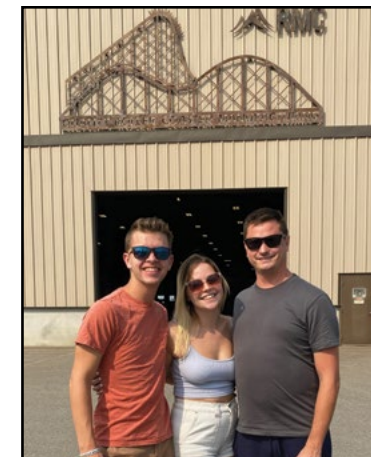
"RMC exploded onto the amusement park scene. They went from a relatively unknown company to the hottest thing in the amusement

industry in less than 10 years," Bybee told *Amusement Today*. "That's pretty dang impressive! That doesn't just happen by accident, so of course I wanted to know what the story was there. I had no idea just how much went into developing the I-Box track and all the little stories that came along with Fred's backstory and the entire creation of RMC as a whole. Every aspect of their story made me gain so much more appreciation for their rides."

Among those featured in the film are representatives from **Six Flags, Dollywood, Silver Dollar City** and more. Industry companies such as **Irvine-Ondrey, Amusement Today** and **S&S Worldwide** reflect on the dynamic company's contributions to the theme park world.

"RMC was on board from start to finish," said Bybee. "In pitching this project to them, I felt a huge sense of respon-

▶ See **ROCKY**, page 77



Filmmaker **Taylor Bybee**, producer **Sarah Anderson** and cinematographer **Scott Schaffer** visit the **Rocky Mountain Construction** facility. COURTESY COASTER STUDIOS

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This is How We Roll follows the story of Rocky Mountain Construction founder Fred Grubb (above left). Above right, *Amusement Today's* Tim Baldwin (left) was the emcee of the screening in Arlington, Texas, seen here with filmmaker Taylor Bybee and RMC COO Jake Kilcup. COURTESY COASTER STUDIOS; AT/JEFF SEIFERT

►ROCKY

Continued from page 76

sibility to get it right and do their story justice. I wanted to make the best documentary I possibly could because they make the best rides they possibly can. It ended up being a lot bigger project than I think any of us realized, but that's okay, we were having fun at it!"

With close to two years of filming and production, the documentary is richly scored with an original soundtrack, often written with specific themes to match specific coasters.

The world premiere took place at Silverwood Theme Park in early September where Rocky Mountain Construction had built a single-rail coaster, Stunt Pilot, this season.

"Great memories! It was great to see it for the first time with the whole RMC team and Fred's brothers," Kilcup told *AT*. "The documentary was super fun to watch. The past 12 years at RMC have been a whirlwind; it was a great opportunity to sit back and enjoy the accomplishments of our team. It stirs up a lot of emotions between all the different challenges we've had over the years. RMC is driven by talented, good people."

Following the world premiere in Idaho, other screenings took place in Arlington, Texas; Cincinnati, Ohio, and Orlando, Florida. On October 8, the documentary became available for viewing via **Vimeo**. To stream the film costs seven dollars. It can be purchased for \$10.

"Spending all that time getting to know everyone who makes these rides possible was an absolutely incredible experience," said Bybee. "Sure, their rides are great and all, but now when anyone asks me what my favorite thing about RMC is, my answer is: the people."

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BREAKING NEWS

AnimatedReality from PeopleVisionFX to debut at Orlando's IAAPA Expo 2021

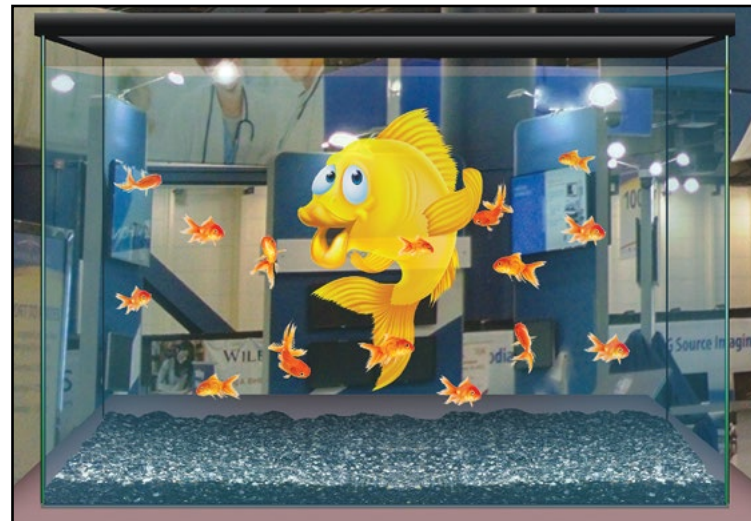
ORLANDO — PeopleVisionFX will be exhibiting its newest special effect technologies at IAAPA Attractions Expo, at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, November 16-19. The display will include the worldwide debut of the company's new technique for AnimatedReality.

AnimatedReality allows for holographic elements that are fully integrated within real physical environments. Images can be produced in virtually any size to communicate any story — all without the need for any special headgear.

Wayne Sullivant, president of PeopleVisionFX says that the development of AnimatedReality was prompted by the need to communicate with an audience that can be unimpressed with traditional media.

"AnimatedReality utilizes holographic images to attract an attentive audience and engage the audience in a fun, interactive involvement with any presentation," said Sullivant.

Utilizing the unique



AnimatedReality fully integrates holographic elements into real, physical environments. COURTESY PEOPLEVISIONFX

PhotonOpticon system for image projection, AnimatedReality creates innovative experiences that captivate audiences and communicate information. The technique literally adds a new dimension to real environments.

AnimatedReality is a novel and natural addition to holographic imaging. It is specifically designed for face-to-face applications such as themed attractions, museums, trade shows and special events. The technology goes beyond the

flat confines of conventional video to include almost unlimited information such as light-hearted animations, photos and videos, all in actual 3D holographic space.

Presentations featuring AnimatedReality can be modular and upwardly compatible, so that the design can be upgraded for future events and incorporate new stories. The technology is compact, adaptable and reliable, with no moving parts.

•peoplevisionfx.com

Water coaster sections delivered to Quassy Amusement Park



MIDDLEBURY, Conn — Quassy Amusement & Waterpark's new water coaster will soon start taking shape as sections of the two-person raft ride — shown on shipping pallets — were delivered to the property in mid-October. The state-of-the-art attraction will be located in Quassy's Splash Away Bay water park and ready for the 2022 season. The water coaster is being provided by ProSlide Technology, Inc., of Canada and will be the largest single investment in the park's 114-year history. COURTESY QUASSY AMUSEMENT PARK



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