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Digital Edition

Wonder Woman Fight of Courage sets records

Six Flags Magic Mountain shatters barrier with 20 roller coasters



Three high-speed inversions are intertwined in the layout. COURTESY SIX FLAGS MAGIC MOUNTAIN

AT: Tim Baldwin
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VALENCIA, Calif. — In general terms, it wasn't that long ago in the amusement industry that just having a lineup of roller coasters in the double digits was considered extraordinary. While many parks have attained that status today, there are countless parks globally that still have a coaster arsenal of less than 10. Six Flags Magic Mountain has now reached a milestone that very few park operators — as well as enthusiasts — would ever have dreamed possible. The California thrill park now boasts 20 roller coasters.

"We are honored to hold the record for most coasters at any theme park on the planet with a record 20," said Don McCoy, park president. "It's a tremendous accomplishment and speaks to our commitment to providing not only the biggest and the best rides, but also something for thrill-seekers of all ages."

The latest addition is a return to the partnership with Rocky Mountain Construction (RMC). After the wild success of Twisted Colossus in 2015, this collaboration helps reinvigorate the area of the park themed as DC Universe.

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Zamperla provides spinning coasters on opposite sides of globe

AT: Tim Baldwin
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VALLEJO, Calif. and WINTERBRO, Norway — Zamperla is enjoying putting a spin on fun. Two new spinning coasters from the company have opened this summer, one in Norway and one in California. Each represents a different model on what Zamperla has to offer.

Tusenfryd in Norway opted for the Compact Spinning Coaster. Six Flags Discovery Kingdom selected the classic spinning coaster. The one at Tusenfryd is the largest Compact Spinning Coaster to date.

"This our second Compact Spinning Coaster," said Adam Sandy, Zamperla's roller coaster sales and marketing director.

"The first went into Luna Farm in Italy. When it comes to spinning coasters, we now have three in the portfolio: Twister Coaster, the classic Zamperla spinning coaster; Compact Spinning Coaster: a train of spinning vehicles for smaller projects; and Super Twister: a train of spinning vehicles for high-capacity layouts. Currently, we have one installed at Warner Brothers World Abu Dhabi."

According to Tusenfryd General Manager Bjørn Håvard Solli, the Compact Spinning Coaster was part of a multi-year investment plan to grow and "future proof" the park's business. For 2022, the park invested more than five mil-

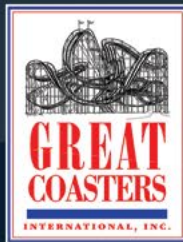
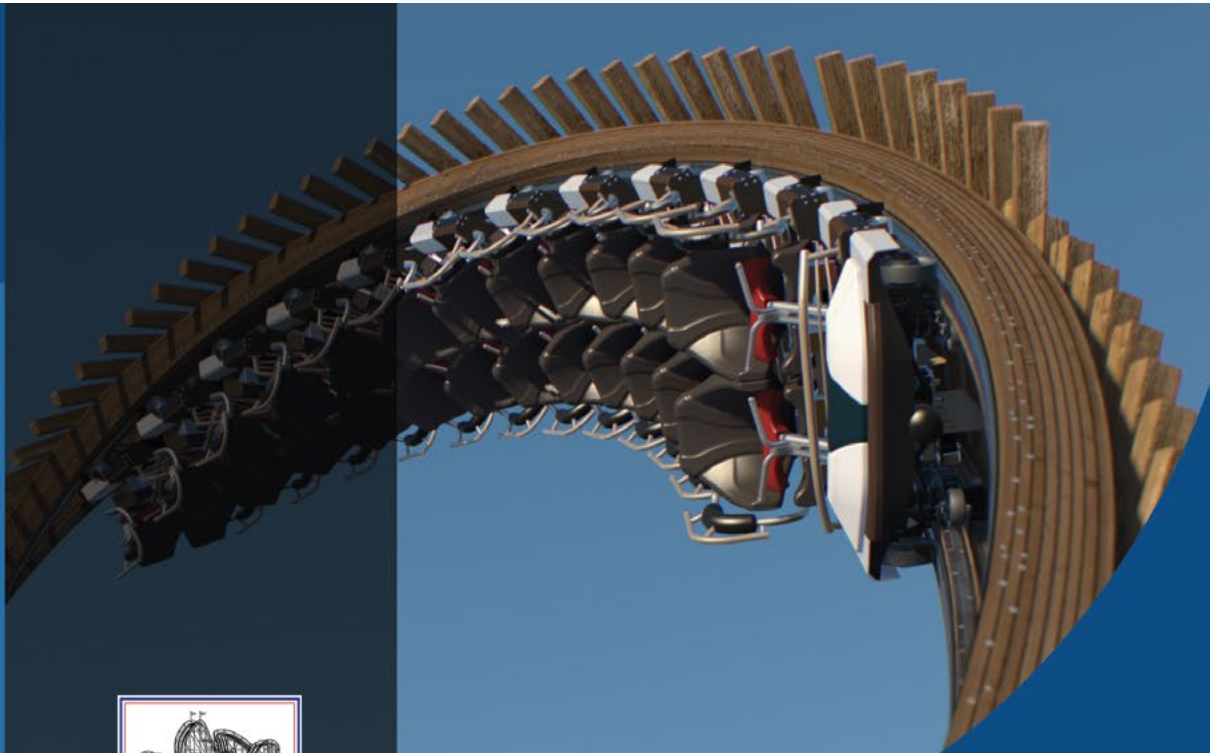
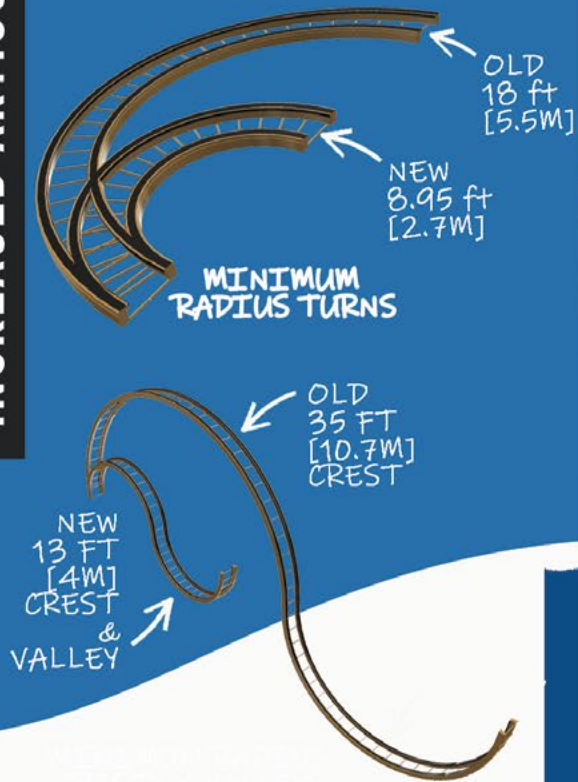
► See ZAMPERLA, page 7



Huri Huri is an example of Zamperla's Compact Spinning Coaster. COURTESY TUSENFRYD

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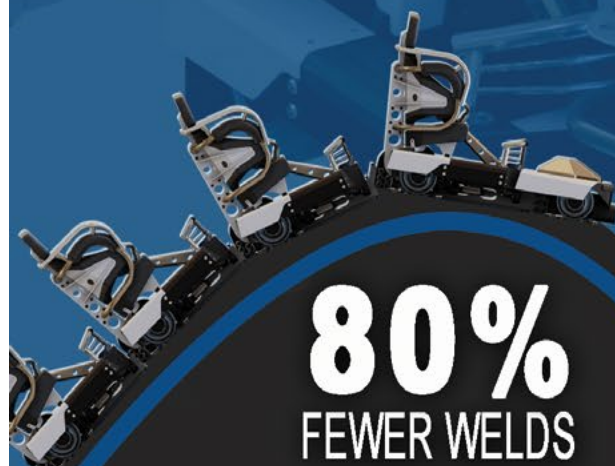
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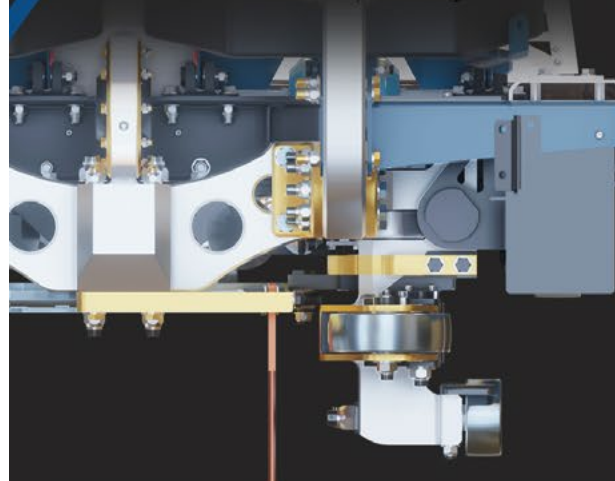
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AMUSEMENT VIEWS

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

Work ethics start with us



Robinson

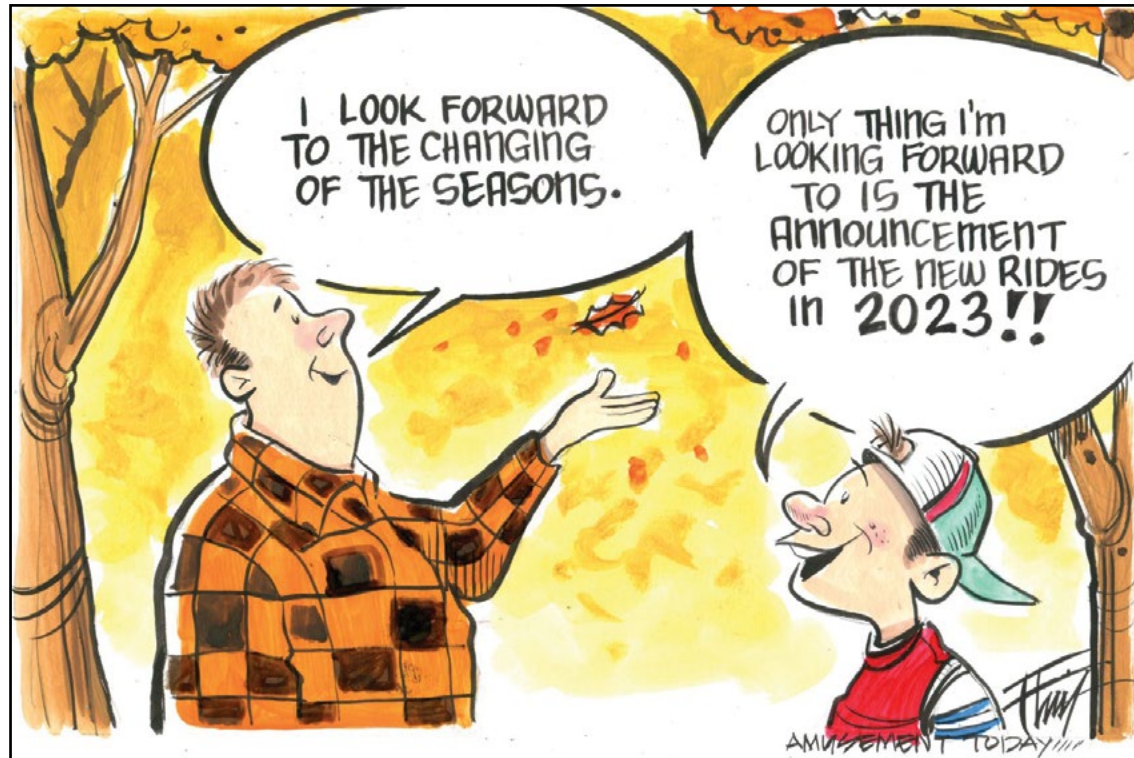
The country is still dealing with a shortage of staff and employees. Moreover, once employers have hired people, there's been an ongoing issue of a lack of work ethic in the new employees ... with new hires ready to quit weeks after starting a new job.

My now 78-year-old father — William H. Robinson — was 16 when he started as a kiddyland ride operator at a local amusement park. It was his first job ever and one that paved the way for his lifelong career in the amusement industry. However, the lessons he learned on that job and serving the industry — as he rose through the ranks — are ones he imparted to the next generation and the one thereafter. One would be hard-pressed to find a member of my extended family who did not have their first job working for "Uncle Bill" and would not still admit that he imparted on them the work ethic they still carry with them to success today. I've even met complete strangers in our hometown area who remember working for him and commented on what a hard boss he was but what great lifelong lessons they learned at their first job working for him at the park.

My girlfriend's daughter was recently hired for her first job at Cincinnati's Kings Island. Her father had one of his first jobs at the same park more than 20 years ago. The reality is, so many teens find their first job inside the front gates of an amusement industry facility. What those teens see, hear and learn there are the beginnings of how they'll carry themselves throughout their future careers. Those careers, those young minds, are what will drive the future business world for all of us.

Our industry as a whole needs to remember that we're a cornerstone of the workforce of the future. It falls to our parks, facilities and management to help teach and support not only a strong work ethic but a positive work environment. We have it within our influence to keep the roller coaster of tomorrow's workforce on track and send tomorrow's business pioneers to thrilling new heights.

FLINT'S VIEW: Bubba Flint



INDUSTRY VOICE: B. Derek Shaw, bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

Industry trade publications are on your side

I have been covering the fair and carnival scene for our trade newspaper since 2016. During that time, I have honed a standard list of questions that I ask all fairs and festivals. I also have a similar set of questions crafted for midway ride providers.

Earlier this season, one carnival unit manager responded to my request with: "These questions are not general enough for my comfort."

These were questions asked and answered by the hundreds of fairs and carnivals that I have covered with recap articles since mid-last decade. Things like number of rides, games and food joints, top grossing rides, new ones for that spot, COVID-19 challenges and their experience with that event are not delving into anything controversial or giving away company operational trade secrets. I can see where ride midway revenue might be a question some operators could find invasive; however, many



Shaw

respond with a percentage higher or lower from the previous edition, which suffices, without showing their hand.

Could it be that some staff are not used to being interviewed? Many companies these days, unfortunately, do not have a person in a promotion capacity or have not filled the position when

someone leaves.

It is important to remember, we are a trade publication, along with less than a half dozen others, who exist to support and promote your efforts. We are not the local TV or radio station or daily or weekly paper searching for sizzling news to share with the general public.

Our job is to promote what you do and why you do it. Nothing more and nothing less. We are all in the attractions business together.

I'm hopeful fairs and carnivals will welcome us with open arms. They are in the business of entertaining their guests, we are in the business of informing industry readers.

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

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2 MINUTE DRILL



AT: Janice Witherow

Chad Miller, The Gravity Group LLC

Chad Miller knew he wanted to be a roller coaster designer since he was a kid. After studying the intense field of engineering in college and being somewhat "burned out," Chad took a break and played drums in a band and even worked a short stint at a pizza place before jumping full force into engineering. Today, he is one of the partners at **The Gravity Group, LLC**, the Cincinnati-based firm with more design experience and expertise than any other wooden roller coaster design team. Chad is a family guy, cool and calm with a great passion for all he does.

Title: Partner and Design Engineer.

Number of years in the industry: 24

Best thing about the industry: Everyone helps each other out, even competitors.

Favorite amusement ride: As a kid, I was fascinated by The Zipper at the county fair. It's such a crazy contraption! As for current rides, nothing beats a good wooden coaster!

If I wasn't working in the amusement industry, I would be ... Probably an architect designing super-cool houses, Frank Lloyd Wright-style.

Biggest challenge facing our industry: Right now, it seems to be the fallout from COVID. Parks aren't buying new rides like they used to. The silver lining is that they're fixing up older rides instead.

The thing I like most about amusement/water park season is ... Finally getting to ride whatever we just spent all winter working on!

The last song I downloaded was ... I don't download much music, but the last record album I bought was Chris Stapleton's *Starting Over*.

My secret celebrity crush is ... Janelle Monae.

Favorite place to chill out ... I've been to Australia quite a bit lately. That's a pretty nice place to chill out.

When I look out my office window, I see ... My office doesn't have a window. But when I look out my office door, I see a window. And if I look out that window, I see a parking lot and a Tyson meat processing facility.

Favorite meal: One served with a beer.



One of the partners in The Gravity Group LLC, Chad Miller is an engineer who has known he's wanted to be a roller coaster designer since he was a kid.
COURTESY THE GRAVITY GROUP LLC

The best moment of my career so far would have to be ... I have two. The first was seeing the 90-degree bank in the underground tunnel on Hades at Mt. Olympus. It was our first design as The Gravity Group. The second moment was just a few weeks ago as The Gravity Group celebrated its 20th anniversary. It felt awesome to get together with all our employees and their families and look back on the last 20 years.

Finish this sentence in one word: This summer has been ... Chaotic.

You just won the lottery! The first person you call is ... My wife.

The sport I wish I was really good at is ... Pool.

The one thing I did lately that I wish I could take back is ... Switching my cell phone service to AT&T. I miss you Verizon!

Person from my past I would most like to re-connect with: My local Verizon guy.

Pick one: steak or lobster? I guess lobster. But I'll take a good pork loin over both of them.

All-time favorite television character: Tony Soprano.

My perfect day off is spent ... Ideally, I'm at a music festival with my wife and kids (12 and 15 years old) watching a band that we all like. It actually happens sometimes!

THE INDUSTRY SEEN

Worldwide getting around



ELYSBURG, Pa. — Avery Wheelock (left), principal of Worldwide Safety Group, discusses safety items with Rick Knoebel, a fourth generation co-owner of Knoebels Amusement Resort. Wheelock was onsite numerous times in July doing insurance company inspections of the park's rides, games, food and building structures. Based in Plant City, Florida, Worldwide Safety Group does a variety of services for the amusement and carnival industry, including third party state inspections, risk assessment inspections, loss control surveys for insurance companies, ride operator training, documentation reviews as well as on-site operational audits. AT/B. DEREK SHAW

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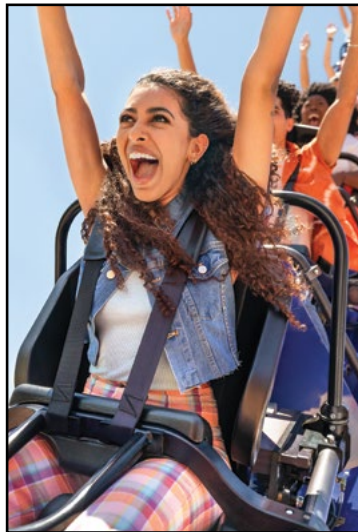


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Wonder Woman Flight of Courage is Six Flags Magic Mountain's 20th roller coaster. The ride's design makes it the only roller coaster in Magic Mountain's lineup that passengers ride single file (above middle). Four trains keep the queue continuously moving. COURTESY SIX FLAGS MAGIC MOUNTAIN

► **SIX FLAGS**
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Wonder Woman Flight of Courage is the latest single-rail coaster from RMC, and it is the tallest and longest model built to date.

"Wonder Woman Flight of Courage has quickly become a guest favorite, and that's not a surprise. The uniqueness of the single-rail track and coaster design itself, coupled with the continuous-moving loading system provides an overall thrilling and positive experience for our guests," said McCoy. "We're continuously working to be more innovative with new technology and offers, to increase our overall guest experience and satisfaction."

The ride, for the most part, is the same one engineered for New Jersey's **Six Flags Great Adventure**.

However changes had to be made to work the coaster into the California site.

"The brake run and exit of the station had to be turned at a 90-degree angle to utilize an existing station," said **Jake Kilcup**, COO, RMC. "The ride still needed to run up toward Apocalypse [2009 **Great Coasters International, Inc.** woodie], but we needed to make the jog in the track to come into the station."

Coaster connoisseurs were quick to point out the additional banked curves at the end of the ride helps differentiate it from its New Jersey cousin.

"All of our coasters hold a unique element and are built into the terrain of the park, which is what makes Six Flags Magic Mountain so different from other parks," McCoy told *Amusement Today*. "Our construction

and design teams put so much time and dedication into these projects. At Six Flags Magic Mountain, we strive to deliver high-thrill attractions — the tallest, the fastest, the first-of-its-kind coasters — and we're lucky enough to have the ability for customization."

The single-rail coaster, known commonly as raptor track, was introduced in 2018. Now in its fifth year of development, *AT* asked Kilcup if improvements had taken place over the years.

"We've learned from the initial release and made changes to the track, trains and mechanical components," he said. "We made changes to simplify the initial manufacturing as well as ongoing maintenance of the rides."

Wonder Woman Flight of Courage operates with four trains. The continuous-

moving flow in the station helps the ride reach maximum capacity. Riders board and exit while the train gradually moves forward.

With the remarkable feat of 20 different coasters, it could be somewhat challenging as to what to select for the next coaster.

"Wonder Woman Flight of Courage is unlike any other ride at our park," said McCoy. "Six Flags Magic Mountain is known for having high-thrill attractions, and this coaster is just that. The single-rail aspect is unique from our other rides in that riders fly along the track solo. You can really feel every tight turn and twist, which ups the thrill factor."

"It's something they don't have!" noted Kilcup, regarding a single-rail coaster. "For a park with so many experiences, I'm sure it was difficult for them to identify the right product to add to their impressive lineup. I think we were able to do that with the unique look and feel of the raptor coasters."

With a height of 131 feet, it inches above the former installation at Great Adventure by, well, inches. Snagging the bragging rights of tallest of its kind, its length of 3,300 feet does the same. The top speed is 58 mph.

When asked to pinpoint a favorite moment, McCoy stated: "It has to be the first drop. The single-file ascent up the 131-foot lift and 87-degree drop down is the perfect setup for the rest of the ride. The entire ride delivers on every point,

making it truly one of the best coasters in our park."

During the course of the ride, thrill seekers are turned upside down three times. The inversions are a dive loop, a zero-G stall and a zero-G roll. The second upside-down maneuver is an enthusiast favorite with riders staying suspended upside down over an elongated stretch of track.

Wonder Woman Flight of Courage joins other attractions at the park themed to DC Comics characters, including Superman, Batman, The Riddler and Lex Luthor. A retired attraction themed to Green Lantern had its queue building repurposed for the latest coaster.

"Magic Mountain is an incredible park with great people," said Kilcup. "Six Flags has been amazing to work with over the years. From the park to the corporate team, we really enjoy spending time with them."



The first drop is taken at 87 degrees. COURTESY SIX FLAGS MAGIC MOUNTAIN

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►ZAMPERLA

Continued from page 1

lion euro, with the Zamperla coaster being one of the centerpiece attractions.

The roller coaster helps round out the park's offerings in terms of family attractions. It is currently the seventh coaster at the park. The arsenal ranges from kiddie to high thrill. Of note, a more extreme coaster is planned for 2023.

One of the favorable attributes of the ride is that the height requirement is only 90 centimeters (36 inches) which makes for a large number of children who can ride with parents.

"We have received a lot of positive feedback, especially on the spinning feature," said Solli. "And we are experiencing that the age segment on this ride is wider than what we expected. This is probably also related to that the positioning of the ride is quite high above ground and very visible to the visitors."

The park had planned an upgrade for several parts of the park. Two minor children's rides were relocated, creating space for the coaster. Its name is Huri Huri.

"A part of the park upgrade for the 2022 season was retheming a zone with an 'adventure' concept," Solli told *Amusement Today*. "We renamed a lot of rides and POS in that area, using names from i.e. Maori language. Huri Huri can translate into something like 'turn around and around' — which we thought was a fair description of a spinning coaster."

Marco Mazzucchi, Zamperla sales manager, said, "Working with the **Parques Reunidos** and Tusenfryd teams allowed us to partner and develop a world-class family coaster that features a detailed custom theme. It was an honor for them to choose us to work with during the first phase of their investment."

In America, the Six Flags Discovery Kingdom ride opened in late May.

"As the world leader in thrills, Six Flags continues to raise the bar to deliver the most unique and innovative experiences in the



Sidewinder Safari is classic Twister coaster from Zamperla (above left, inset). The spinning cars take on an "adventure" motif (above right). COURTESY SIX FLAGS, TUSENFRYD

industry," said Six Flags Discovery Kingdom General Manager **Dameon Nelson**. "Sidewinder Safari is unlike any other ride in Northern California, featuring the thrill of a unique, spinning roller coaster combined with an opportunity to encounter reptiles up close, which continues Six Flags Discovery Kingdom's long legacy of promoting animal conservation through education."

"Guest reaction to the ride has been very positive, and it has continued to be one of the most popular rides in the park since opening Memorial Day Weekend," added **Marc Merino**, marketing and communications manager, Six Flags Discovery Kingdom. "Our guest makeup consists of a lot of families and Sidewinder Safari is an attraction that the entire family can enjoy."

The classic spinning coaster offers 1,378 feet of track and stands almost 43 feet tall. Each single car can hold up to four riders.

Prior to the installation of Sidewinder Safari, the plot of land was used as a guest interaction of elephant rides. As cultural perspectives have shifted over time, the new coaster now offers family thrills.

"When the park first opened in Vallejo in 1986 as an animal-only facility, elephant rides were offered to guests," said Merino. "Sidewinder Safari is a great representation of the park as it is today, which is a unique combination of both animal education and

thrill ride experiences."

After entering the attraction, visitors can observe various types of snakes.

"Aside from the ride itself, the animal element is added with an entirely new reptile exhibit that has been built into the queue experience," Merino told *AT*. "Themed as a lost temple, guests have the opportunity to come face to face with reptiles from all over the world, while testing their knowledge of snake myths. This theming is extended into a new food and beverage location called Sidewinder Snacks and everything exists cohesively with this area of the park next to Tava's Jungleland and Odin's Temple of the Tiger."

The coaster was originally slated to open in 2020. When the pandemic struck, California was under some of the harshest restrictions.

"Six Flags Discovery Kingdom was the first theme park to reopen in the state of California as a throwback to

the park's early days as an animal park with The **Marine World Experience**, where guests got to walk through the park like it was before the rides were introduced," shared Merino. "We focused on other unique offerings to our guests throughout the year including cultural festivals, a renaissance and Charles Dickens fair, as well as early in the pandemic a Drive-Thru Holiday in the Park offering where guests actually got to drive through the park in their own vehicles to experience the holiday decorations."

The spinning coaster now places the park's coaster count in the double digits at 10.

The Zamperla team is also excited to share the accessibility options for its ride vehicles.

"The Six Flags installation features a unique harness that allows a wide range of guests to ride," said Sandy. "We are utilizing an ADA system developed for thrill rides like the Discovery

on some of our coasters. We strive to make our attractions accessible to as many riders as possible."

Since 2014, Zamperla has supplied more than 50 spinning roller coasters worldwide.

"One important thing to note is that we have worked to bring our design concepts like Cost of Ownership into all of our coasters. Therefore, even the smaller Compact Spinning Coaster has design features that work to keep the annual maintenance and labor costs down," noted Sandy. "In addition, it has features that other rides of this type do not: mechanically-released lap bars, automatic vehicle alignment, adjustable wheel bogies and kicker motors. When combined with a great layout, beautiful theming created in partnership between the Tusenfryd and Zamperla teams, and the gorgeous environment at Tusenfryd, we know this installation offers a wonderful experience."

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PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

► Traders Village adds pair of Chance Rides attractions — page 16 / Successful Ohio State Fair in 2022 — page 32

Alabama's The Park at OWA rebrands its parks to Tropic Falls

AT: Tim Baldwin

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FOLEY, Ala. — Over the summer, OWA Parks & Resort have taken on a new look and transformation. Since its opening in 2017, the 520-acre property has grown substantially, as has the city of Foley. The resort has many facets, and at its heart is the amusement park formerly known as **The Park at OWA**. This season, a transformation has taken place. The amusement park, along with a brand new indoor water park, has been renamed **Tropic Falls**.

Just 10 minutes north of the sandy beaches of Gulf Shores, the thriving area has a lot to offer. A sports complex is adjacent to OWA. A 90,000-square-foot indoor events center hosts tournaments for gymnastics, pickleball and volleyball, and 16 state-of-the-art outdoor sports fields bring in soccer, football and lacrosse competitions. Nearby is a **Tanger Outlets** shopping location.

The resort is owned and operated by the Poarch Band of Creek Indians.

The park has a complement of roller coasters, children's rides and thrill rides for all members of the family. This year, to combat the heat, a splash pad called Wacky Waters was installed in the spring. As summer kicked into gear, a new indoor water park opened to further offer wet and refreshing fun. [Look for a full article on the indoor water park in AT's OCT issue.]

"It took us quite a while to come to the conclusion to make everything one name,"



said **Kristin Hellmich**, director of strategy and media communications, Poarch Band of Creek Indians. "For a long time when we started on this journey, we were going to let the amusement park remain The Park at OWA and then create a brand for [the indoor water park]. What we realized is when we constructed the park in 2017, it was done very fast to meet the demand of the rest of the development. So there were opportunities for us to go back and make adjustments based upon what the guests have told us."

Management felt a cohesive name would help guests understand the offerings and aid in long-range sales goals.

"After months of research, we realized the best approach was to rebrand everything under one umbrella. Ultimately, when a guest goes to the front gate, we want them to buy the complete package, which includes the indoor water park, theme park and eventually the wave pool," Hellmich said.

Currently, guests have two options. If they just want the rides, they can buy a ticket to the amusement park for \$29.99, but if they want both parks, they can buy the complete package at \$69.99. Because the entrance to the indoor water park lies within the amusement park, the option to just enjoy the water park by itself does



The front gate (above) sports a rethemed look. The new indoor water park at Tropic Falls debuted in summer 2022. COURTESY OWA



not exist. However, the park has a unique protocol to do just that when the inclement weather causes rides to shut down. They offer a \$49.99 rainy day ticket.

"It has rained almost every day this summer. It has been challenging," Hellmich told *Amusement Today*. Hopes were that the wave pool would have opened earlier. "Instead of losing opportunities for guests to visit because of storms, we have the Rainy Day ticket when the amusement park isn't able to operate."

The indoor water park does have a capacity limit, so in order to ensure that those guests have a great experience, the lesser ticket is still available if the combo tickets sell out.

The total rebrand of the amusement park is about

\$10 million, according to Hellmich. Some of the first steps of the new theming involved the front gate taking on a new look. The admissions building has been revamped and the gate has been completely redesigned. More shade was implemented for those waiting to enter.

"Once inside, there is this fountain that has been completely redone and we've added the Tropic Falls logo and rockwork," Hellmich said. "That was one of the most photographed spots. Those are the largest changes [so far]. We hired a local artist who has painted about a dozen murals throughout the park. He uses tropical-

inspired prints. It helps bring that theme together."

A former restaurant has been rebranded to Baha Grill. An overhaul of the exterior has given a more tropical aesthetic, which has also spilled over into the menu offerings.

Tuki, a toucan, is the park's new mascot.

"A mascot has been on the drawing boards for years," Hellmich noted. "It was hard to decide what the mascot should be. Luckily when we created Tropic Falls, we ended up selecting a toucan. Those birds are not indigenous to our space. So we played up to that idea that he flew down

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Inside the entrance, a new fountain provides a perfect photo opportunity (above left). Tuki the Toucan is the park's newest mascot (above middle). OWA opened the amusement park in 2017 with a large lineup of Zamperla attractions (above right). COURTESY OWA

► **OWA**

Continued from page 8

here to vacation and liked it so much he made it his home."

International Mascot Company was a partner in creating Tuki. His look has a beach bum motif with a Hawaiian printed shirt, flip flops and a straw hat. Guest reaction has led the park to investigate selling plush toucans in the retail stores.

"We are incredibly proud of OWA, the direction it is moving and the economic impact it continues to have on not only the local community but state as well," said **Cody Williams**, CEO and president of Creek Indian Enterprise Development Authority, an economic development arm of the tribe. "With the addition of the new indoor water park and the wave pool, we will be creating an additional 400 new jobs for our community. That opportunity, to create such a strong impact for our community, is something we hold in the highest regard."

A **Marriott** hotel is now part of the growing OWA resort, as is the Downtown district featuring many dining options and retail stores. "Owa" is a Creek word that means "big water." The rebrand plays to this.

"I think the biggest moment for me is to watch guests come in the front gate and get excited. They have that sparkle in their eye," said Hellmich. "They say, 'Let's take our picture together.' It's fun to see that carry over in the water park too. It's nice to see them kind of gasp a little with excitement and surprise. I like seeing them enjoy the look and feel of it. I've noticed some of the guests even dressing in more beachy attire. They're leaning into the theme."

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PNE Playland's Skybender is first installation of Zamperla Gryphon

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

VANCOUVER, B.C. — Rarely is the amusement industry in a state of complacency. New ideas are always being innovated. New concepts for roller coasters, water rides, theaters and flat rides are continuously under development. In the case of **Playland at PNE**, it so happens to be the first installation of a new flat ride from **Zamperla**. Called **Gryphon** by the manufacturer, Playland dubs it **Skybender**.

"We are very excited to add a new thrill ride to our Playland ride lineup," says PNE President and CEO **Shelley Frost**. "Skybender is unlike anything currently available in Canada and is one of the few rides anywhere in the world offering a single rider experience."

"Every installation is an exciting project, but the first of many always holds a special place for us," said **Michael Coleman**, North America sales, Zamperla.



The park artistically made the first installation of a Zamperla Gryphon aesthetically pleasing. COURTESY PLAYLAND

"Following IAAPA 2021, I flew to Italy to experience the Gryphon at our facility prior to the purchase. Being the first of its kind, the ride had undergone an extended factory acceptance testing process which allowed us the opportunity to truly understand the ride and how it performs. We were instantly blown away by the experience."

As with the majority of flat rides, Gryphon rotates in a circle. Passengers (24) are seated individually on arms

and secured with an over-the-shoulder harness. Once the ride is in motion, the arms swing out and the diameter of the circular motion increases. From there, different movement patterns are created. The alternating outward swings elicit screams as passengers are thrust 100 degrees, while the wave pattern becomes a hypnotic "must watch" to spectators.

The wave pattern is reminiscent of the Music Express ride, which was retired to

make room for Skybender.

"When people traditionally think of Playland at PNE, they think of amusement park, not theme park," Coleman told *Amusement Today*. "The Gryphon is part of their long-term redevelopment plan and the attention paid to details on this installation gives an indication of what is to come; their all-in budget for the ride and externally themed elements came to \$2.7 million CAD. The bold colors of

the ride are carried through the entire area: fencing, flowers, the operator booth. PNE installed a Gryphon statue, whose name is Skybender, which watches over the ride area and provides guests with an 'Instagram-able' backdrop with wings and a tag line of, 'I'm So Fly.' Upon entry to the queue line, guests pass under the Skybender marquee which has a slightly hidden message of, 'Spread your wings.' Overall, this is certainly a leveled-up effort from the folks at Playland at the PNE, and we truly appreciate the care they took with showcasing our first Gryphon."

Coleman feels the 48-inch height requirement offers a broad appeal in the thrill ride market. The single seat arrangement allows for a rapid load/unload, helping a facility to realize good throughput. He notes it is the first ride in North America with Zamperla's newest RGB+W LED light package, which is made in Italy.

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Familypark Austria debuts Intamin flume ride, country's highest

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

BURGENLAND, Austria — The log flume has been a popular staple in theme parks since first introduced in 1963. Intamin began supplying flume rides in late 1970s. This summer, the Liechtenstein company provided Biberburg to Familypark Austria. It is the tallest flume ride in that country.

Biberburg translates to Beaver Lodge. At the ride's official opening, instead of a traditional ribbon cutting, Provincial Council Daniela Winkler and Managing Director Filipe de Witte did a tree trunk sawing.

The ride stands 17 meters (56 feet) at its tallest point, taunting passengers with a thrilling drop to follow. Biberburg has several unique features that make it a true signature attraction.

"Thanks to the rather vast number of different elements available in our portfolio meeting different

requirements, we were able to come up with a number of 'neat tricks' on a rather compact footprint," said Sascha Czibulka, executive vice president, Intamin. "The ride length of only 325 meters features basically everything needed to achieve a varied and fun-filled experience on a flume ride — reverse direction, a few drops, a vertical lift followed by a rather spectacular drop and a speed hill and all this paired with a number of 'wet experiences.'"

"The operation of the elevator is the first of its kind — incredibly strong elevator belts and a counterweight keep the system in balance, which is driven by four electric motors," said Matthias Bano, project lead. "The 17-meter height of the tower already raises the adrenaline, and then the boat literally plunges into the depths."

"Since the purchase of the family park, it was clear that we would continue to invest heavily in the



The ride's splash finale also reaches to an adjacent splash zone. COURTESY FAMILYPARK

development of what this unique amusement park has to offer," said de Witte. "With the Beaver Lodge, we have succeeded in span-

ning the entire family."

Companie des Alpes is the owner of Familypark. According to park officials, a large water ride had been in

the plans for some time.

"The eight-passenger boat is the most common one nowadays when it comes to flumes," said Czibulka. "The reason is simply owed to the rather high capacity demands because such a flume ride is a very popular water ride and caters to a rather wide audience."

Fanciful theming plays an important role in making the ride special. Beavers, dams, saws and lumber accentuate the ride experience. Spectators have a designated splash zone at the ride's finale.

"Our customers think it is great. They love the height and the giant splash," said Ira Kama, marketing. "A lot of our visitors find the splash area very refreshing on a hot summer day."

Ride time is more than three minutes. An approximate € 10 million investment was made for the project. The attraction was built on a site that was formerly used as a petting zoo.

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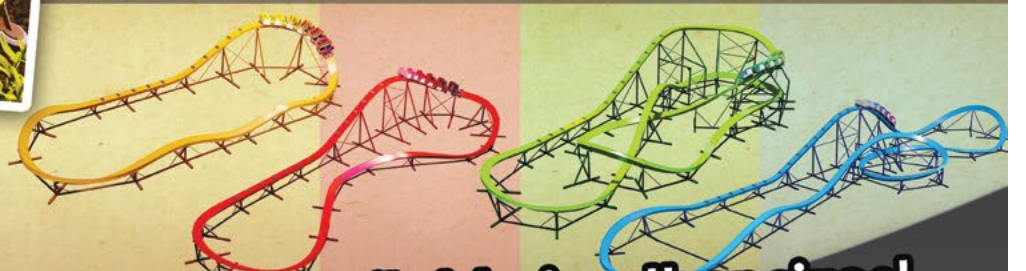
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Footprint	162' x 79' [49.5 m x 24.1 m]
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Power	100 kW
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Vekoma-supplied coaster to Dollywood will be the park's longest

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. — In 2019, Dollywood, the award-winning theme park in the Great Smoky Mountains, opened its largest expansion in the park's history. Wildwood Grove was an area themed to nature that welcomed young children and their families, offering attractions that everyone could ride together. A splash pad for the little ones and areas for even the youngest of fun-seekers was a crowd-pleasing success.

In 2023, Dollywood will grow Wildwood Grove with a roller coaster from Vekoma. This partnership started with a family suspended coaster in the original section. Soon, Big Bear Mountain will be the park's longest roller coaster.

"Our relationship with Herschend Family Entertainment and Dollywood has been outstanding, and we are extremely excited to see this project coming true after more than one year in the works," said Ricardo Tonding



Big Bear Mountain will be Dollywood's longest roller coaster. COURTESY DOLLYWOOD

Etges, Vice President sales and marketing Americas, Vekoma. "Working with the Dollywood team has been a pleasure and we appreciate our collaboration, which started with Dragonflier — a huge hit for Dollywood — and now with Big Bear Mountain. The two coasters nicely complement each other and the existing lineup of the park."

One of the strongest selling points — in addition to its significant length — is that the height requirement to ride is only 39 inches.

"The entire idea behind Wildwood Grove when we built it in 2019, as well as this first expansion, the focus has been 'family.' It's the opportunity for kids and family to ride together," said Pete Owens, vice president of marketing and public relations, The Dollywood Company. "We wanted a family thrill coaster. The experience we have with Firechaser Express — what a great 'first-ride' coaster with the forward and reverse launches — Big Bear Mountain has three launches, and while it

will be quicker than Firechaser Express, it is going to be an adventure coaster for families. Maybe not a 'first ride' but a 'second ride' for a lot of kids."

Big Bear Mountain will stretch along the backside of Wildwood Grove, making for a dramatic backdrop. Its orange track will stretch just shy of 4,000 feet. With a top speed of 48 mph, it is geared to a wide range of guests but will offer solid thrills.

Big Bear Mountain will feature three launches. The first is used to dispatch trains

from the station with a simple launch. Two longer areas will propel riders to the maximum speed. At its tallest point, the coaster will rise 66 feet in the air. The layout of the course is a tangle of dips, directional changes and banked curves.

"We wanted that thrill — that close-to-the-ground experience," Owens told *Amusement Today*.

A first for Dollywood will be onboard sound in each train. Diving through rocky tunnels and behind waterfalls will also be signature moments for the attraction.

"We have succeeded in creating onboard audio solutions which offer a high quality of sound, while being reliable. There is definitely a trend for this type of extra feature to make the coaster experiences more immersive and focused on the story," said Etges.

"What's great about onboard audio is in the storytelling," said Owens. "It affords us the opportunity to make the ride a much more immersive experience."

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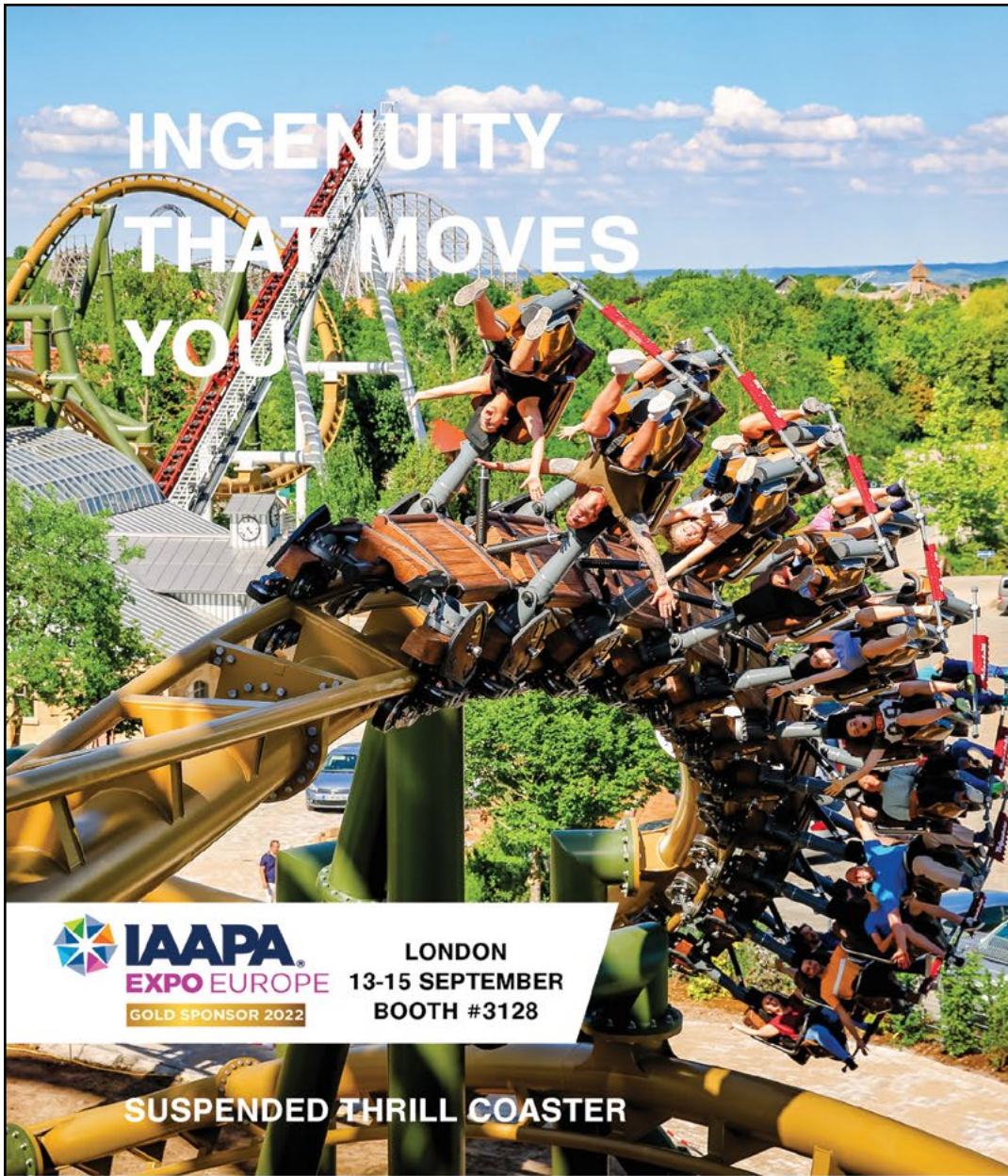
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Houston's Traders Village adds two attractions from Chance Rides

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

HOUSTON, Texas — **Traders Village** officials decided that 2022 was a great time to add to the fun at the 100-plus-acre Houston location.

So, in came a new **Chance Rides** carousel with hand-crafted and hand-painted **Bradley and Kaye** figures and a new **Chance Yo-Yo**. Both rides have been a great fit to the weekend marketplace offerings and have had a great response from visitors.

"Providing a memorable family experience has always been top priority," said **Lee Ann Murray**, senior marketing director. "When we decided to expand our ride offerings at our Houston market, we wanted to add a ride that was popular for all ages.

"The Yo-Yo fit perfectly, an old school, high-flying, incredibly fun ride," Murray said. "And who doesn't love a carousel? Our 2022 Americana Carousel is a work of art, with hand-painted majestic wildlife figures, that makes it



Traders Village, Houston, Texas, added two new amusement rides this year, a 36-foot Americana carousel (above left) and a Yo-Yo (above right). Both attractions were produced by Chance Rides. COURTESY CHANCE RIDES



a visually stunning addition." Murray said they have worked with Chance Rides in the company's other markets.

"We knew they could deliver not only the ride and service, but the experience we wanted for our guests," she said.

The 36-foot Americana carousel features wildlife figures such as zebras, tigers, horses and giraffes.

Traders Village's new Yo-Yo center tower stands a little over 36 feet tall at the

very top of the arms, giving it great visibility. Riders are suspended in 32 self-loading swings.

In full whirlwind mode, the Yo-Yo uses centrifugal force to create a circle of riders 73 feet in diameter. The ride's arms also tilt 10 degrees creating a high-flying experience.

Houston's Traders Village is open on the weekends, and it features an array of entertainment along with its mega shopping experience.

With the new rides, there

are now nine amusement rides, bumper boats and an indoor interactive playground. There also are special events and musical entertainment performances on special dates.

There is a variety of vendors selling items from trinkets to treasures, from tires to jewelry, from collectibles to trends.

The Houston location, which opened in 1986, is one of three Traders Villages in Texas. The first was opened in Grand Prairie in 1973 and

the third opened in 2011 in San Antonio.

In other Traders Village news, the Grand Prairie location officials are anticipating opening a new ride there, the Prairie Screamer roller coaster, this fall. The coaster, built by **E&F Miler Industries**, was purchased by Traders Village in 2020 from **Scandia Amusement Park**, Ontario, California.

It, since, has been undergoing renovations.

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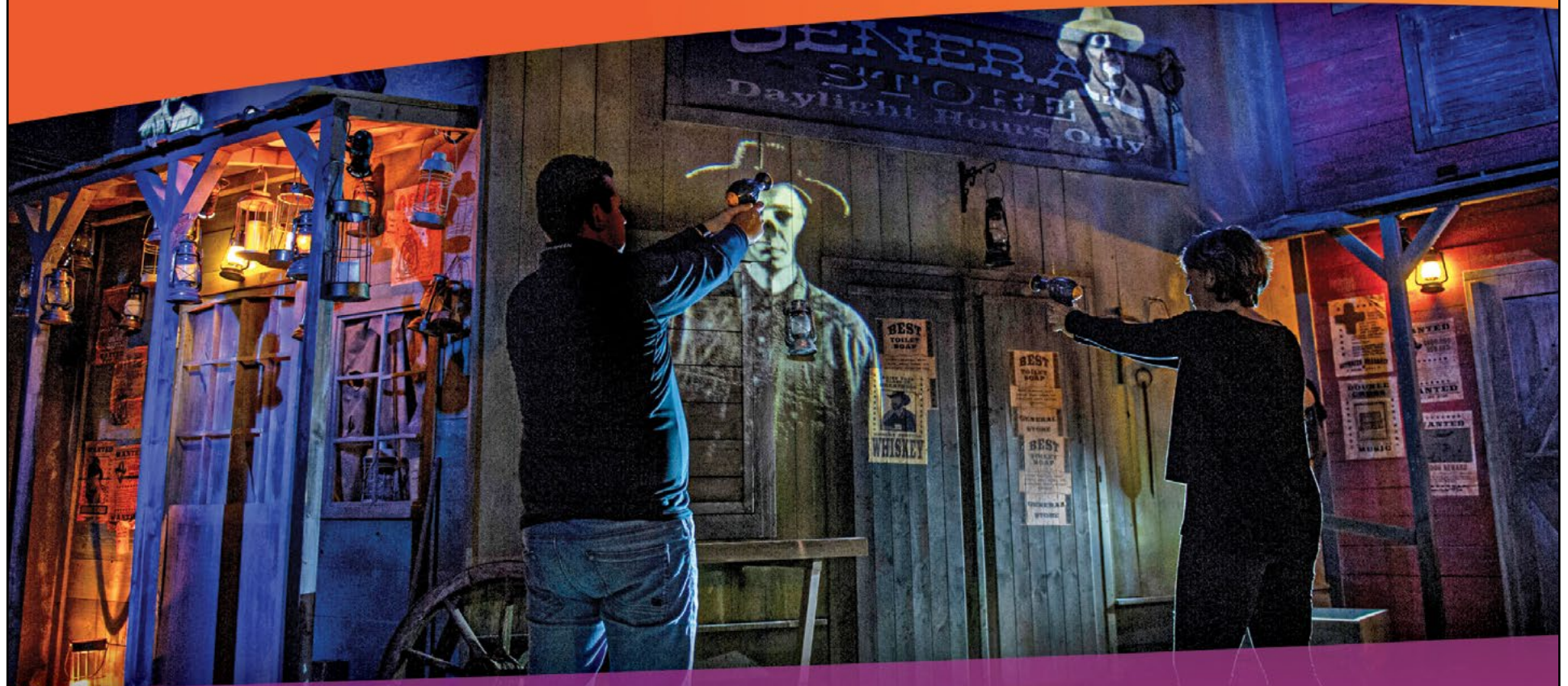
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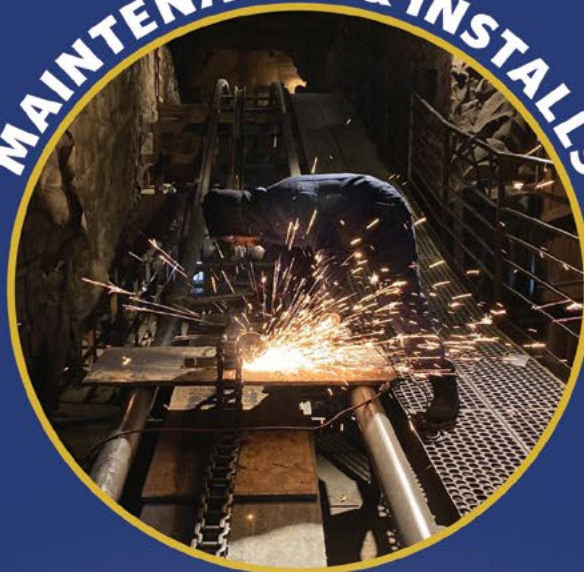
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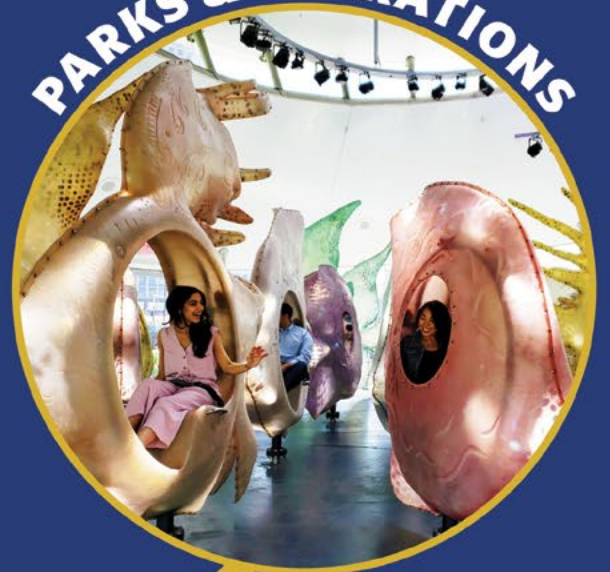
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Six Flags Great Adventure rebrands B&M coaster, Medusa returns

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

JACKSON, N.J. — In 1999, the industry was intrigued with a new genre in Bolliger & Mabillard's portfolio. Coaster riders experienced seating above the track but witnessed the floor being removed before being dispatched. Dubbed a floorless coaster, this first-of-its-kind multi-looper was a crowd-pleasing hit right out of the gate. Medusa was a clever coaster name and the coasters as snakes in the logo were delightfully creative.

Ten years later, the coaster was rebranded to Bizarro, a DC comics villain, and some new thematic props were added. This summer, the wrath of Medusa returned. The epic scream machine

returns to her original form, but showcases a new color palette, logo, Gold Rush-era backstory and theming.

"The transformation from Bizarro to Medusa does catch your eye up close and from afar," said Gabriel Darretta, communications. "Medusa's new color scheme — with its bright green track and copper supports — brings a sense of new life to the ride that helps it stand out amongst the trees. The most dramatic element of this transformation, and probably my favorite, is the entry portal. Standing 35 feet tall, this giant version of our newly designed Medusa logo looms eerily over you as you walk through it. If you remember Medusa's original entry portal, this current iteration should bring back

some memories, as you walk through its wooden opening toward the queue."

The park credits Kristin Fitzgerald as the brainchild behind the reimagining.

The tale of Greek immigrant brothers, the Batos, traveling to California during the Gold Rush in 1874 (100 years before Great Adventure opened its gates) weaves a story of a quest for riches that leads to Death Valley and an unforgiving town of outlaws. According to the legend, earth tremors, mineshaft collapses, a rattlesnake infestation and underground coal fire plagued the outpost. Certain the town was cursed, the brothers named the town "Medusa."

"When Medusa first opened in 1999, it was themed

to the Medusa Mining Company, and our goal was to pay homage to that storyline while giving a fresh and relevant new take on this attraction," said Darretta.

"The transformation was no easy task," Darretta told *Amusement Today*. "Quite a few things were taken into account when identifying current theming elements, and how they factor into the new direction. It started with the strength in the design of the new logo, and our team felt it would stand up to what its previous iteration had offered."

This fall during Fright Fest, the park will capitalize on the new legend as the restless spirits of the Batos brothers haunt Frontier Adventures in a western showdown against Medusa.



The new entrance portal makes for a dramatic vista as guests approach the ride. COURTESY SIX FLAGS

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Park Post-its



AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

The **Arnolds Park Amusement Park** in Arnolds Park, Iowa, is raising funds to help freshen up one of its classic attractions – the Topsy House.

The Topsy House was constructed in 1930 as a part of the amusement park. The house looks normal inside, but it is mounted at an angle so the floor is a steep grade.

Located at the park's entry, Topsy House is an optical illusion that leaves guests off-balance. But the historic attraction needs a little tender loving care, according to park officials, who say they would like to redo Topsy House from the inside out. New paint, new boards, new illusions and a new entrance are in the plans.

A fund-raiser was held last month at the park's Roof Garden Ballroom.

The effort to bring the beach back to **Bay Beach Amusement Park**, Green Bay, Wisconsin, has hit another roadblock. City officials were hopeful to start construction on a pier and boardwalk for the beach this fall, but now they're planning to spend the next few weeks reassessing the entire beach project.

Constructing a 450-foot pier overlooking the bay was supposed to kick off the first of two phases of bringing swimming back to Bay Beach Amusement Park for the first time in more than seven decades.

According to a news article that ran on a local Fox News website, three bids for the work all came in at least \$1 million over the city's budget, putting the entire project back to the drawing board.

The city had the pier budgeted at \$2.1 million. Three bids ranged between \$3.1 million to \$3.8 million.

City officials said they'll look at potentially rebidding another, more affordable design. They also believe another plea for donations could help.

An X-wing starfighter from *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* will be among the hundreds of new objects on display at the **National Air and Space Museum** when it reopens in Washington, D.C. Oct. 14.

The reopening of almost half of the popular museum marks the end of the first phase in its seven-year, \$1 billion makeover. Eight of its 23 galleries, an upgraded planetarium and store and cafe will welcome visitors for the first time since construction closed the building six months ago.

Visitors will encounter new artifacts alongside old favorites such as the Wright Flyer and the Apollo 11 command module, both showcased in new exhibits. With the reopening of the west side, the renovation will continue on the rest of the museum.

Roller coaster fans will have more chances to visit **California's Great America** in 2023.

The **Cedar Fair**-operated Santa Clara theme park, which traditionally hasn't opened until the spring each year, has announced plans to welcome visitors on weekends all year round beginning in January.

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FACE Amusement enjoys benefits of continued Embed partnership



Downtown Flavortown — FACE Amusement's newest concept — opened its first location in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, in partnership with Guy Fieri. COURTESY FACE AMUSEMENTS

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AT: John W.C. Robinson
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JOHNSON CITY, Tenn. — In 1987, Clarence Mabe opened Rockin' Raceway in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. His sons **Bucky** and **Rusty Mabe** evolved their father's FEC dream and, in 2013, they reimagined their father's legacy under the brand **FACE Amusement**.

"We live by our core values every day which are Faith, Attitude, Consistency, Excellence. FACE is a multi-faceted operator that thinks differently," explained Bucky Mabe, CEO. "We operate indoor and outdoor attractions, which range from less than 1,000 square feet to more than 40,000 square feet. We also focus on our STAR Experience, a five-step proven process for creating the ultimate experience for our guests."

Focused on providing a high-end, luxury environment to all guests, everything in a FACE location aims to be cutting edge. One of the primary cogs in that design is implementing cashless solutions from **Embed**.

"When we opened our first **Arcade City** location in 2013, we realized that the market was ready to switch from tokens and tickets to a digital form of currency," detailed Mabe. "Since then, all our existing locations have been moved to Embed. By upgrading our previous



Bucky Mabe

systems to Embed's, most of our existing locations saw an immediate 20-30% increase in sales."

From the moment a guest walks into a FACE Amusement FEC until the time they redeem a prize or exit an attraction, it is clear they are not at an average arcade. To help accomplish this, FACE locations utilize Embed's gamecards, SmartTOUCH readers and PRIZES Redemption POS.

"Embed's card system is important to the overall guest experience because it is where all their transactions take place within the attraction," stated Mabe.

Its forward-thinking and high-tech approach actually aided FACE's FEC properties as they reopened after the recent COVID shutdown. "Luckily, we already installed and were using Embed systems, which made it easier to open back up to the public,"

explained Mabe.

As technology evolves and the popularity of FECs increases industry-wide, FACE plans to stay ahead of the game and continue to deliver new ideas and engaging experiences.

"FACE's willingness to always think differently and flip our older concepts completely upside down to try to give guests new experiences keeps us unique in the industry," said Mabe. "We just did a partnership concept with celebrity chef **Guy Fieri** called '**Downtown Flavortown**,' which brings together high-quality food and fun in an upscale yet family environment."

The new Downtown Flavortown concept is thriving on its integration with Embed's system. "Embed is crucial to all our operations moving forward," said Mabe. "As we continue to grow and expand, our hope is that Embed will continue to innovate and add features that are important to our guests where we can continue to give our guests world-class experiences."

FACE Amusement currently operates in high tourism areas such as Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg, Tennessee; Orlando, Florida and Branson, Missouri. The company has plans to deliver its unique service model throughout the U.S.

•faceamusement.com



With the 2013 opening of its first Arcade City location, FACE Amusement sensed its customer base was ready to move away from tokens and to a digital form of currency. Since then, all of the company's FEC locations utilize cashless solutions from Embed. COURTESY FACE AMUSEMENTS

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Mighty Coconut is receiving positive reviews for its walkabout VR minigolf

AT: Pam Sherborne
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AUSTIN, Texas—**Mighty Coconut**, the entertainment studio behind Walkabout Mini Golf, a multi-player game on the Meta Quest, has been taking its global player community on a series of grand adventures, first with a new series based on the 1986 movie *Labyrinth*, and, now, with a new trio of VR mini golf courses based on the literary masterpieces of French novelist **Jules Verne**.

Walkabout Mini Golf is an immersive multi-player experience with the fundamental principals of themed experience design but in virtual reality. It has created a new frontier for studios developing immersive content in a holistic way that engages global audiences.

The "Walkabout Mini Golf: Labyrinth" was made possible with Mighty Coconut collaborating with **The Jim Henson Company**. The undertaking widens the range of entertainment realms the studio is offering, having already announced courses based on mythological "lost cities," films, and classic video game titles.

Labyrinth was originally released as a musical fantasy film directed by **Jim Henson** with **George Lucas** as executive producer.

Jules Verne is widely known for being a technological futurist. "Walkabout Mini Golf: Jules Verne" downloadable content will take on the voyages in Verne's novels of *Journey to the Center of the Earth* (1864), *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1870), and *Around the World in Eighty Days* (1872).

"As lifelong fans of Jules Verne as well as the spirit of adventure and sense of place his writing evokes, we're excited to interpret these epic novels into totally new experiences for our global player community," said **Lucas Martell**, executive producer and head of Mighty Coconut. "With 'Walkabout Mini Golf: Labyrinth' and 'Walkabout Mini Golf: Myst' (coming in the last quarter of 2022), we're re-interpreting the narrative worlds those properties are known for.

"And, now, with Jules Verne, we have the opportunity to bring classic literature into the fold," Martell



Up next from Mighty Coconut is Walkabout Mini Gold: Jules Verne.

COURTESY MIGHTY COCONUT said. "And who wouldn't want to mini golf in these fantastical settings?"

The first to launch on this mini golf voyage will be "Walkabout Mini Golf: Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea." It will be released later this month.

"Walkabout Mini Golf: Journey to the Center of the Earth" and "Walkabout Mini Golf: Around the World in Eighty Days" will be available in 2023.

Mighty Coconut was founded in 2014 on the heels of Martell's award-winning animated short film, "The Oceanmaker." The company has quickly risen in popularity with Walkabout Mini Golf and is now one of the top-rated multi-player games on the Meta Quest platform.

According to information released by the company, players have loved Walkabout Mini Golf's lush environments, true-to-life physics and curated social experience with a self-paced, intergenerational appeal to advanced and novice players alike. The game has almost a perfect five-star rating with over 7,800 reviews on Meta Quest.

Martell also is known as the co-creator of *Spies in Disguise*, the **Fox/Blue Sky** animated feature starring **Will Smith** and **Tom Holland**. The original short film *Pigeon Impossible* as well as *The Oceanmaker* have been seen more than 30 million times online and screened at over 350 festivals in 63 different countries.

•mightycoconut.com



The VR Walkabout Mini Golf: Labyrinth was produced by Mighty Coconut and released at the end of July 2022. COURTESY MIGHTY COCONUT



**FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT
CENTRAL**

AT: John W.C. Robinson
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Inc. magazine announced that **Altitude Trampoline Park** has been named on its annual Inc. 5000 list, a ranking of the nation's fastest-growing private companies. The brand had a strong July, opening three new parks in Mandeville, Louisiana; Cincinnati, Ohio and Jacksonville Beach, Florida.

"We have been, and will continue to be, dedicated to working with our franchise system to create new opportunities for growth and innovation for our company," said **Mike Rotondo**, CEO of Altitude Trampoline Park. "With our recent opening in Jacksonville Beach this past month, Altitude has grown to one of the world's largest family entertainment franchises. It's an honor to add one of America's fastest-growing private companies to that distinction."

A new entertainment complex is under construction along Edison, N.J. The **Supercharged Entertainment** location is set to open this fall with the bold claim that it will include the largest indoor go-kart track in the world.

The company already operates a similar 80,000-square-foot facility in Wrentham, Massachusetts. On social media, the company touts its new multi-level N.J. go-kart track will be "28% bigger" with 10 elevation changes and enough room for four-wide racing.

In addition to the race track, Supercharged Edison promises to feature axe throwing and bumper cars. A two-story Drop N Twist Tower (**SBF/Visa**) will offer additional thrills. An arcade is planned with over 140 games, prize redemption, and virtual reality. A **Burgers & Brews** restaurant will be part of the complex too.

Construction is underway on a new location for Lake Charles, Louisiana, family entertainment center, **Lake Area Adventures**. The new location will be a 35,000-square-foot complex.

Lake Area Adventures General Manager **Tim Robles** said the investment is forward-looking.

"Our goal is to expand the entertainment and recreation opportunities for people of all ages," Robles said. "This is going to give families, groups of friends and even businesses a place to come together, enjoy a great meal and have some fun. We're excited to see this dream become a reality."

The multi-faceted entertainment complex will include a temperature-controlled pool, custom-designed inflatable jump air park, state-of-the-art video game lounge, Southwest Louisiana's first bouldering/rock climbing wall, a configurable event space, a performance stage for live entertainment and its own restaurant.

Family-owned-and-operated Texas trampoline park **Bounce Bounce** is preparing to open a second location in Missouri City, Texas.

Bounce Bounce's original location has been open for six years in Cypress, Texas and has a small coin-operated game room. In addition to trampolines, the new facility in Missouri City features an arcade and redemption center.

Both locations utilize **Semnox's** Arcade Software Solutions. Customers can purchase RFID arcade cards from Parafait's self-service kiosk, check account balances and recharge accounts with maximum efficiency and minimal involvement from Bounce Bounce staff.



www.armrides.com  

EVERY RIDE SHOULD BE A STAR



Ohio State Fair successful run in 2022, features numerous firsts

AT: B. Derek Shaw
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COLUMBUS – Visitors to the Ohio State Fair — which ran July 27 - August 7, 2022 — were able to experience numerous first-time events and activities, including a digital midway, Malro Family Fun Day, a new Little Farmers exhibit and a new performance area. This also was the first year of the implementation of Tyler’s Law with additional ride inspections pre-fair and each day of the fair, conducted by the Ohio Department of Agriculture, the state agency that oversees ride safety.

Attendance clocked in at 886,473; a slight decrease of approximately 5% compared to the 934,925 people who attended the 2019 Ohio State Fair. The 2021 fair was limited to agricultural and educational competitors and their families, making those attendance figures not comparable to 2022.

“Fairs are very weather dependent, and with a few days of rain, it is not surprising that we saw smaller crowds those days. On days with good weather, we saw higher attendance than 2019,” said Ohio State Fair General Manager

Virgil Strickler. Combined revenue was up, with record-setting concession revenue, sponsorships and the highest-ever Sale of Champions.

Mary Talley, co-owner of Talley Amusements, the carnival provider said, “The weather was a huge factor regarding revenues for the carnival midway this year. I feel like we would have set a record had it not been five days of rain or a threat of rain. Although our numbers were pretty even with 2019 revenues. COVID-19 seemed to be a non-issue when watching our customers have a great time!”

The Fort Worth, Texas-based operation brought in 69 rides, along with 22 food concessions and nearly 40 games. Of that total, booked in was Primetime Carnival with 14 rides, along with Jeremy Floyd, Topscan (Mondial), two kiddie rides via Joyrides Inc. and Steve Lisko with two new Italian kiddie rides.

The top rides included the Giant Wheel (Lamberink), Century Wheel (Chance Rides), Zero Gravity (Dartron round-up) and Big Kahuna (also Chance). Gross midway revenue was



Talley Amusements provided 69 rides, along with 22 food concessions and nearly 40 games. The company booked in a few rides from Primetime Amusements, Jeremy Floyd, Joyrides Inc. and Steve Lisko. Magic Money is the RFID-based digital ticketing system used by Talley Amusements. COURTESY OHIO STATE FAIR



approximately \$2.35 million. Magic Money is the RFID based digital ticketing system the carnival used. Fairgoers had approximately 80 different points of sale at digital kiosks to use cash or credit

cards to purchase RFID cards or wristbands. The RFID card credits could be used on rides, games and food within Talley’s footprint. “Magic Money is by far the best digital ticketing system on the mar-

ket, said Talley. “The system works well for us. It was new to the Ohio State Fair this year and was well received by our customers. Change is never easy, but the entire fair staff had no complaints as well as the Ohio State Auditors.”

“Talley Amusements has a dedication to the safety of fairgoers, which is instrumental to our fair’s success,” said Strickler.

The carnival had an equally good experience, “The Ohio State Fair staff, Ohio state troopers and the ride inspectors are very accommodating and an absolute pleasure to work with,” said Talley.

Advance sale promotions included early bird admission pricing the month of May via Ticketmaster and all of June through July 26 advance-sale admission, also through Ticketmaster and starting July 1 tickets could be purchased at participating O’Reilly Auto Parts locations.

For three hours on August 3 from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. was a sensory-friendly event. All the lights and sound were turned off on all the rides. People could visit the fair’s educational and sensory activities, take a break in a quiet room, or use their sensory accessibility

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K-Days attendance increases after two-year hiatus

▶OHIO

Continued from page 32

AT: B. Derek Shaw

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EDMONTON, Alberta, Canada — “We could attribute an increase in our attendance to the fair not taking place for the last two years, due to the pandemic, but I would like to say it was credited to the great offerings and programming we offered this year. The Community came out in support in an amazing way,” said **Amanda Frigon**, fair director, **K-Days** run by **Explore Edmonton Co.**, a destination marketing organization.

When all was said and done, 760,899 people walked through the turnstiles during the 10-day event, up from 702,000 in 2019, the last year it took place at the **Edmonton EXPO Centre & Exhibition Grounds**.

“The weather was spectacular,” said **Gregg “Scooter” Korek**, vice president with **North American Midway Entertainment (NAME)**, the carnival provider. “There were nine out of ten perfect summer days in Alberta.”

A total of 42 rides (25 majors and 17 kiddie) were brought in. NAME also had 48 games and 18 food joints. New rides to that spot included a double decker carousel (**Chance Rides**) and **Raptor Run (SBF/Visa Crazy Cabs.)** The most popular rides were the **Crazy Mouse (Zamperla)**, **Niagara Falls flume (Reverchon)** and **Polar Express (Mack)**.

Korek talked about the ride midway revenue: “It was really good, north of 25%, up from 2019” 2019 was the last time K-Days took place. “We had an exceptional fair. We did really, really well.”

NAME has had a strong season (at the time this article was written), previously playing **Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba**, **Brandon**; **Red River Exhibition**, **Winnipeg**, **Manitoba**; **Calgary Stampede**, **Alberta**; **Westerner Days**, **Red Deer**, **Alberta**; **Queen City Exhibition**,



NAME enjoyed 25% higher ride midway revenue, up from 2019 the last time K-Days took place. An **SBF/Visa Mini Break Dance** dubbed **Raptor Run** was new to this spot (right), along with a **Chance Rides** double decker carousel. COURTESY SCOOTER KOREK/NAME

Regina, Saskatchewan and **Saskatoon Exhibition**, also Saskatchewan.

“They were really good [to work with],” said Korek in regard to the **Explore Edmonton** organization. (Previously **Northlands** was the operator.) “They did an exceptionally good job on transition the past two years. They brought Frigon on who was with the previous operator. Her expertise and wealth of experience [was invaluable]. The event was safe and clean with lots of great programming. It was pretty seamless.”

Frigon was pleased with what NAME provided: “Wonderful, very happy with our midway provider. This is a long-standing relationship.”

Ticketed promotions included a **Kids Day**, **Indigenous Day** (new this year), **Provide Day** and a **Community Day**.

Frigon went on to talk about their media mix. “We focused a lot of our marketing resources to digital and some traditional for this year and had a large focus on creating the stories and



opportunities for media to get involved in the event.”

Top new food winners were a cheesy Korean rice dog by **Corndog King**; the fisherman poutine by **Poutine King** and chili lime popcorn shrimp perogies by **International Perogies**. Other new or unusual food items included glazed donut grilled cheese, mac and cheese soft serve, Korean squid ink corndog, **Oreo** fried rice, pickle lemonade and samosa poutine.

When asked what sets K-Days apart from other similar events, Frigon said, “We put a major focus on community engagement and activation with partners within our community, supporting local. We were also the first in the province and maybe Canada to implement a site-wide [alcohol] license.”

Ticketed concerts included **Sabrina Claudio**, **Polo G** and **Jessie Reyez**, while **Crystal Waters**, **Marianas Trench** and **Classified** were some of the free shows.

K-Days began over 130 years ago as the **Edmonton Exhibition**. Originally held by the **Edmonton Agricultural Society** at the original Fort Edmonton site, the exhibition was a celebration of technology and innovation in the late 1800s. People traveled from all over to experience the exhibition and see the latest advances in agriculture, industry and science.

With rising interest in the Wild West and Alberta’s heritage in the 1960s, the exhibition expanded its focus to blend modern innovation with historical tribute. As a nod to the history of the Canadian Gold Rush in Edmonton, the exhibition was renamed “**Klondike Days**.” Through the renaming of the exhibition to the current K-Days, the event has always served as a gathering place and celebration of summer for northern Alberta.

The 2023 K-Days will take place July 21 – 30.

•k-days.com

guide to find other fair opportunities. By using a blue handprint next to specific events, the daily schedule for that day indicated which activities throughout the grounds were sensory friendly.

Also new this year was a **Malro** family fun day. Intestinal malrotation, a congenital birth defect, is a rare but serious disorder that occurs in approximately one out of every 500 births. **Taylor Talley**, of **Talley Amusements**, is one such adult who sought treatment at **Cleveland Clinic**.

To bring awareness to the issue and provide entertainment and fun for “malro” patients and families, **Talley Amusements** offered free VIP access to rides, games, and food that day. Those who registered in advance were sent complimentary Ohio State Fair admission tickets via **Ticketmaster**. The fair provided approximately 1,000 free admission tickets to those who registered online.

This year there were 29 different new foods. The fair launched a new mobile app to help fairgoers navigate through the many food offerings. In the app, visitors could access a fair map which pinned each building, restrooms, wheelchair charging stations, gates, camping locations and every food vendor location on the grounds. Each food vendor was listed with their menu offerings and tagged with key words.

“This year, we are focusing on metrics that matter, highlighting what the Ohio State Fair does for the community,” said Ohio State Fair Assistant General Manager **Alicia Shoults**. “As a growing trend, many fairs across the country are working to place a focus on community impact rather than attendance alone, which is just one of many factors contributing to a fair’s success. The Ohio State Fair is a place where our community comes together to celebrate all that is great about our state. We provide scholarships, youth development, and opportunities for continued growth.”

The 2023 fair comes back around July 26 – August 6.

•ohiostatefair.com



MIDWAYSCENE

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The sky ride at **Expo Square**, Tulsa, Oklahoma, site of the **Tulsa State Fair**, is slated for sale at a mid-October auction, unless a citizen's group can get national historic protection.

The **State of Oklahoma's Historic Preservation Office** issued a preliminary opinion recommending the 1965 **Von Roll** sky ride be considered for placement on the **National Register of Historic Places** (NRHP). That opinion was hand-delivered to Expo Square officials in mid-August. It appears officials at Expo Square and Tulsa County had been quietly planning to demolish the ride for years, according to a *FOX23* investigation in May. It is one of only 10 still in operation in the United States and one of only three owned by a public entity.

The next step would be an application with the federal government; however, the state opinion could allow the ride to immediately become eligible for certain grants to help maintain it even without official NRHP status.

The sky ride has a limited run of 11 days each year at the Tulsa State Fair. The last time the ride operated was during the 2019 fair. In July, Expo Square's Chief Operating Officer, Amanda Blair, told *FOX23* Expo Square never attempted to seek historic preservation for the ride before determining it would need to be torn down due to upkeep costs.

The site of the **East Texas State Fair**, Tyler, may be in jeopardy. The construction of the **Rose Complex Center** will be completed by the end of the year, raising questions on where the East Texas State Fair will be held after the 50-year lease expires in 2026. That project took six acres of the 75-acre fairgrounds.

In 2005, the **Park of East Texas**, which is responsible for operations of the annual state fair, purchased a 240-acre tract located between Highways 31 and 64. The purchase was to facilitate a plan to install the infrastructure supporting a new Agri-tourism theme park that would also be home to a future fairground. Fair officials are facing pressure to raise enough funds to relocate one of the state's largest events that attracts 250,000 annually.

"It's not easy to start over," said **John Sykes**, the fair's president and CEO, told *The Tyler Loop*. "We certainly intended to be here until 2026. We understand that we need to get in a hurry. The fair is a community event... that cuts across everything. Anybody and everybody can participate. I love county fairs. They are a part of history across this nation. I certainly want to make sure we can keep Tyler's."

•
Wisconsin State Fair, West Allis, officials were more than pleased that 1,003,450 fairgoers visited the 10-day fair this year. This represents a 19 percent increase over 2021 attendance. "After 171 years, the Wisconsin State Fair remains a time-honored tradition for our community and state," said Shari Black, chief executive officer and executive director in a release. "The noteworthy attendance is proof that fairs continue to be a mainstay in Wisconsin summers. With another phenomenal state fair in the books, together as a staff, we look forward to 2023."

The early-August fair again operated an independent midway.

•
 "We are very excited to be working with **Kissel Entertainment** again this year," said **David S. Beck**, president and CEO of **Kentucky Venues** (the **Kentucky State Fair** operator), in a prepared release, adding, "Kissel delivered a fabulous midway experience last year and has upgrades planned for this year that I'm sure our fairgoers will enjoy."

The Thrillville midway, that ran August 18-28, featured new rides and amenities. "Our company was pleased to provide a top notch midway last year, and enthused to be back in 2022," said **R.A. Kissel**, president of Kissel Entertainment. The Okeana, Ohio, operator brought in multiple new rides to the spot, including: **Big Kahuna (Chance Rides)**, **Cyborg (Wisdom Hurricane)** and **Sizzler (Chance scrambler)** which were alongside two new kiddie rides, **Rockin' Tug (Zamperla)** and **Rumble in the Jungle (Sellner Manufacturing)** obstacle course.

The VIP experience ticket unveiled last year was again offered this fair. That experience provides customers a tented area with cooling stations, restrooms, water, and ability to order food. The VIP pass also allowed patrons to jump to the front of the line at all rides on the midway. Added this year was a VIP Concierge booth to avoid ticket lines and quickly check guests in.

"Our goal is to provide a safe and fun midway that goes above and beyond public expectations at each and every event we produce," said Kissel.

•
 The 2022 **Branch County Fair**, Coldwater, Michigan, has a new person at the helm. **Keith Bildner** has taken over as fair manager succeeding **Jan Murphy**, who retired after 32 years of service. Bildner, who was on the fair board the past 12 years, six as president, resigned from that group to take over the manager position.

Also new this year was the carnival provider. **Elliott's Amusements**, Mason, Michigan, was brought in for the August 7-13 fair.

On the Midway: Chautauqua County Fair



Returning after a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chautauqua County Fair, ran in Dunkirk, New York, July 19-24, 2022.

COURTESY POWERS & THOMAS MIDWAY ENTERTAINMENT



Powers & Thomas provided the event's midway which featured rides such as Genesis from Wisdom, Pharaoh's Fury by Chance, an ARM High Flyer, a Wisdom Sizzler, Tilt-A-Whirl from Larson (above), Flying Elephants by Kolmax Plus (below), three-abreast Chance carousel, a Larson Dizzy Dragons, a Zamperla Fire Chief, Expo Wheel from Wadkins and a Dalton Farm Tractors ride.

COURTESY POWERS & THOMAS MIDWAY ENTERTAINMENT



Advanced sale tickets were \$10 and included gate admission, rides, and grandstand events (with exception of the demolition derby). COURTESY POWERS & THOMAS MIDWAY ENTERTAINMENT

WATER PARKS & RECREATION

▶ Germany's first Endless Surf — page 40 / News Splash — page 40

Soaky Mountain debuts unique fusion waterslide from WhiteWater

AT: Jeffrey Seifert
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SEVIERVILLE, Tenn.— This summer, **Soaky Mountain Waterpark** debuted a unique combination waterslide that combined two popular attractions from **WhiteWater West**. The latest attraction integrates a master blaster water coaster with a boomerang slide into what WhiteWater refers to as a **Blasterango**. Soaky Mountain purchased two of them, placed them side by side and dubbed the dual attraction **The Edge**.

Not only is it a double slide for double the capacity, but riders are dispatched at the same time so they can duel throughout the course to see who gets to the finish line first. Starting from the top of a 70-foot ride tower, riders board double tubes in each side-by-side chute. A conveyor dispatch system rolls the pair of rafts forward simultaneously into the first 30-foot plunge. Water jets then blast the riders uphill and into the first tunneled section which is highlighted with colorful circular rings inside the dark tube. Emerging into daylight, riders plummet again into a second valley with an uphill blast into the second tunneled section. This one is a little more dizzying with laser-like AquaLucent horizontal stripes whiz-



The Edge, a massive dueling waterslide combining a Master Blaster and Boomerango, is the first of its kind.

COURTESY
SOAKY MOUNTAIN
WATERPARK

zing past the riders producing a sci-fi, warp-like visual. The stripes start longer, and then become shorter and shorter, giving a sense of increased speed while the riders progress through the turn.

The third plunge launches riders into the boomerang section where they will first feel an increase in G-forces at the bottom of the trough then head skyward to experience weightlessness as the raft reaches the top of the wall, loses momentum, then falls backward. Here, each pair of riders will get a good visual of the competing raft to see who is



ahead and who climbs farther up the wall. As the rafts gain speed dropping backward, they traverse a zero-G speed bump as they exit the boomerang, enter a long runout to trim some of the speed, then gradually enter a splash pool for a smooth stop.

To further increase the exciting visuals, the tops of the boomerango are made of a translucent material, and a jagged design in the wall makes it look like the rafts are going to exceed the

height of the slide and fall over the edge. The finish line is stacked with lights and effects to indicate who is the winner and who went over "The Edge."

"We are thrilled how Blasterango Battle at Soaky Mountain has become an instant icon and the best ride in the park," said **Doug Smith**, WhiteWater global head of sales. "It's not only a billboard attraction; it's a dueling water coaster that offers a multitude of sensations. This is a memo-

rable ride where guests will experience uphill blasts and mega drops, multiple Gs, and special sound and light effects to intensify the race — and encourage guests to compete over and over again."

According to **David Andrews**, general manager of Soaky Mountain Waterpark, "The Edge is a strong addition to our park and the lineup of attractions we have to offer. We knew the guests wanted more thrill and more that they can do together. We of course wanted innovation. The Edge rolls all of that together, but it is also a show piece, standing off the front of our mountain frontage for all of Sevier County to view. It has been a fan favorite in '22."

In addition to the new water coaster, per guest recommendations, the water park expanded the decking in two areas of the park and added 1,000 new seating options. The water park also increased the number of large umbrellas to provide additional shaded areas around the park.

Soaky Mountain Water Park was announced in 2019 as a 50-acre outdoor water park counterpart to the popular **Wilderness at the Smokies** resort and indoor water park. It is owned and operated by **The Wilderness Resorts and Waterparks** ownership group. Completed in 2020, it managed to open on June 27, 2020, at the height of the global pandemic with safety protocols and restricted capacity levels.

Located across the street and up the hill from the **Sevierville Convention Center** and **Wilderness at the Smokies**, it is open to all guests, although there are special package deals for those staying at the resort.

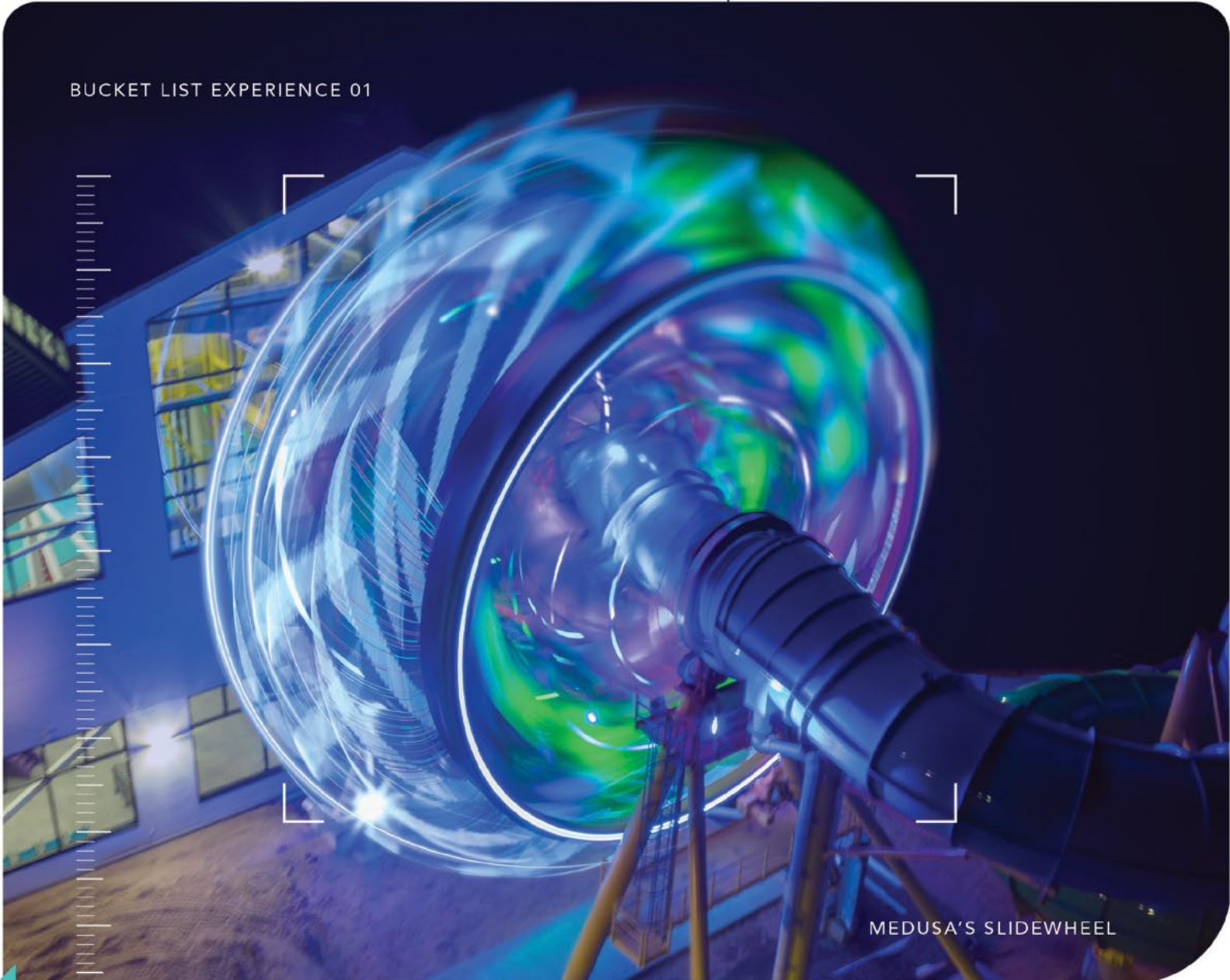


The jagged mountain peaks painted on the Boomerango section followed by a translucent top portion, give thrill seekers the illusion they are going over the top edge of the slide. COURTESY SOAKY MOUNTAIN WATERPARK



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BUCKET LIST EXPERIENCE 01



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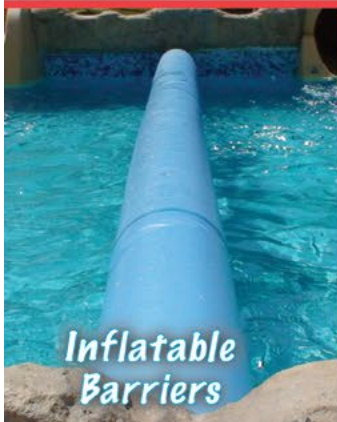
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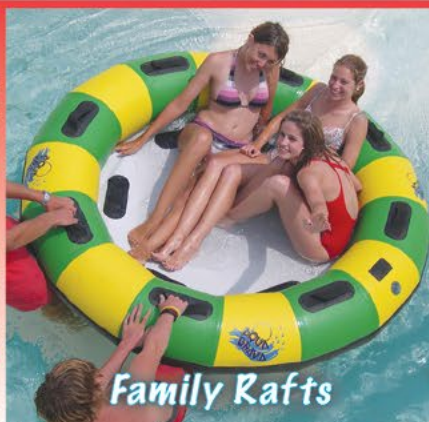
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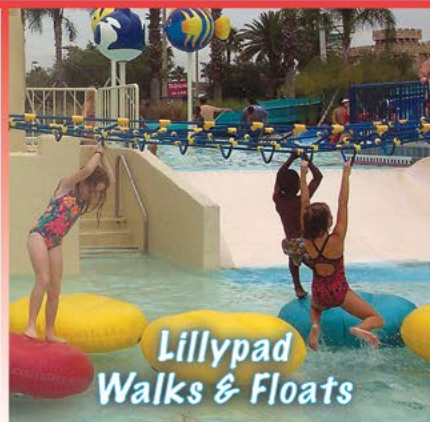
Inflatable Barriers



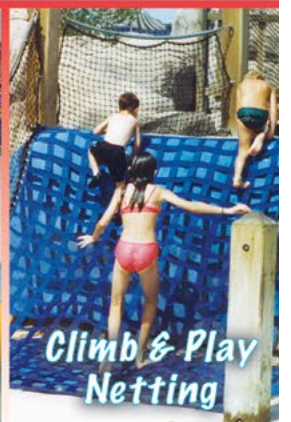
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Surftown breaks ground on Germany's first Endless Surf

AT: Jeffrey Seifert
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

MUNICH, Germany — The construction of an **Endless Surf** wave pool was first announced last year. On July 28, 2022, official groundbreaking took place at a site in Hallbergmoos, close to the Munich International Airport.

The world-class surf park is 180 meters (590 feet) long and can produce a variety of waves for all skill levels. Most notable, the equipment can produce a “peeling wave” along its entire length with a duration of up to 20 seconds.

In addition to the Endless Surf wave pool, the entire facility, known as **Surftown MUC**, is surrounded by buildings that will feature a water theme reminiscent of the shape of a breaking wave. The complex is to include an outdoor fitness area, children’s playground and a beach area where participants and observers can lay down and relax. Contemporary eateries will cater to the surf crowd and to nearby employees who might want to take advantage of the surf vibe on their lunch break.

The developers of Surftown MUC hope to create a meeting place for the region: from onlookers to nearby employees seeking a meal, to young surfing talents and to families and children who want to spend a day outdoors enjoying the beach and surf atmosphere.

“At the core of all our planning is the unique surfing experience, which should provide visitors — from absolute novices to Olympians — a safe environment for everything that makes this sport such a passion,” says Chief Surfing Officer **Michi Mohr**. “And that includes an innovative surf school and coaching concept for beginners, intermediate surfers and pros, in addition to a relaxed and cool ambience and additional outdoor sports facilities.”

The center is also designed to host international surfing competition with its state-of-the-art generation equipment capable of producing perfect and continuous waves up to 2.5 meters (more than 8 feet) in height every 10 seconds.

A self-imposed goal to realize climate-neutral and sustainable concepts has resulted in the incorporation of various ecological approaches: More than 90% of the energy needs of the facility and surrounding buildings will be generated from photovoltaic systems (solar panels) placed on the property and in an adjacent open space. The remaining electricity needs will be met by green electricity from the local power grid.

Paul Chutter, president of **WhiteWater & Endless Surf**, said: “Bringing customizable waves to an already vibrant surf community surrounding the Eisbach River will surely solidify Munich as a surfing hub for Germany and beyond. We’re incredibly honored to contribute to this rich surf culture alongside the dynamic team behind Surftown MUC. This moment marks a huge milestone for us all and we can’t wait to start rolling out Endless Surf waves in Munich.”

The facility will not use treated water from the city supply but instead draw local groundwater, which is in abundance in Hallbergmoos owing to its swampy topography. Special systems to filter and circulate the water are designed to minimize energy and water usage.

Incentives to use public transportation, electric cars, e-scooters and bicycles will encourage visitors who travel to the facility will be as eco-friendly as possible.

Surftown MUC is slated to test operations and start fine-tuning the equipment in late 2023 with a plan to open to the public in spring 2024.



NEWSPLASH

AT: Jeffrey L. Seifert
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After more than 40 years of thrilling guests, the Old Yellar ride at **Rapids Water Park** in Riviera Beach, Florida, has been retired.

Among the first fiberglass slide installations in Florida, Old Yellar opened on Memorial Day weekend in 1979. The attraction consisted of four slides built onto an artificially created slope. As with many slides of that era, riders were required to sit on mats and the fiberglass slide was built into the ground, without the use of any support structure. In keeping with the name, the iconic slides were painted bright yellow.

The last day to ride Old Yellar was August 14. No details have been released on what will take its place but park officials have hinted that it will be the park’s biggest and most thrilling attraction to date.

In July, Redmond, Oregon, moved one step closer to getting a new recreation center. Since the closure of an activity center in January, the **Redmond Area Parks and Recreation District** has been struggling to relocate activities that took place in that center to other locations. Group fitness, youth classes, and art and cooking classes have already moved to the senior center or other spots in Redmond, but replacements for the weight room, basketball and racquetball courts have yet to be found and will likely require a new building.

A five-year levy will be placed on the ballot in November. If approved, the average homeowner would see an increase of about \$180 in property taxes. The bond would generate \$49 million to be earmarked for construction of a new facility.

The new building will have multiple gymnasiums and meeting rooms to hold all the aforementioned activities as well as a new indoor track, climbing wall and an aquatics center.

The proposed aquatic center is to include a multi-use pool with a lazy river and water slide; a 25-meter, eight-lane competition pool with built-in diving board and deep diving well; a hot, therapeutic pool; and a children’s water play splash area.

Once the bond is approved, the center could take another two to three years to construct.

The **National Aquatics Center** in Beijing, China, started opening back up to the public in phases in July. Often referred to as the Water Cube, the center was originally built to house the swim-

ming competition for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad in 2008.

Following the Olympics, a large portion of the center was converted into the 12,000-square-meter (130,000-square-foot) Happy Magic Water Cube water park with the design project led by **FORREC** of Ontario, Canada. The project won the **World Waterpark Association’s** Industry Innovation Award in 2010. The diving platforms main competition pool and training pools remained in place.

With the advent of COVID-19 in 2020, the Water Cube was closed. Then, the competition pool where Michael Phelps won eight gold medals was converted into an ice rink to be used for the curling competition at the 2022 Winter Olympic Games, also hosted by Beijing. On the south side of the building, an underground ice sports was built with permanent ice rinks. During the winter Olympics, the venue was called the Ice Cube.

At the end of the games, the temporary main ice rink was removed and the main competition pool was refilled.

Now a dual water and ice facility, the center has been upgraded with a smart system that provides all visitors with digital cards for membership and training services. Using only their phone, visitors can check their membership status and make appointments.

Stringent COVID-19 prevention measures are being observed. Visitors are required to make appointments online, present negative nucleic acid test results received 72 hours prior to visitation, and undergo body temperature and health code checks before entering the venue. In accordance with the requirements of local authorities, the venue will also limit the number of entries.

The **Epic Companies** of West Fargo, North Dakota, released details, in July, of a hotel and indoor water park complex for Fargo, North Dakota. Although a hotel brand has yet to be confirmed, the proposal shows a 125-room hotel and a 45,000-square-foot indoor water park called **The Wave by Epic**.

The Epic Companies have appointed **Eric Goolst** as the water park and hotel director. Goolst has a long history in the hospitality sector including a stint with **Great Wolf Lodge Resorts**.

Plans for the water park include multiple slides, including one with a trap door; a zero-depth splash pad; a water play structure; lazy river and an activity pool with a Ninja-warrior-type feature. The project is expected to be completed in the fall of 2024.



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BUSINESS & NEWSMAKERS

▶ IAAPA Expo Europe returns to London — page 44 / Tim Timco retiring from S&S Worldwide — page 48

CEO Tim Murphy leads Boomers Park properties into success

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

BOCA RATON, Fla. — **Tim Murphy** was eight years old when he started learning about business. His mom and dad had opened a family entertainment center (FEC), **Spirit of 76**, in New Jersey and he helped out.

"I watched my dad do good business and I watched him do bad business," Murphy said. "I learned a lot from him during those early years."

Those lessons early in his life got him ready for a career in financing and accounting. But, whether or not he figured that one day he would take a business from \$10 million in the red to \$8 million in the black in about nine months is anyone's guess.

But that is exactly what happened when he began working with **APX Operating Company LLC** on **Boomers** parks. APX acquired 16 entertainment facilities from **Apex Parks Group, LLC** and pulled Murphy in as a consultant. Now he is the CEO of Boomers.

"I guess I wasn't totally surprised when this happened," Murphy said. "I just looked at the fundamentals. If you move a lever this way, that will happen. If you move it that way, this will happen."

There is a little more to those fundamentals than



the-one-handed-lever approach, but, basically, that is where he began when he visited each of the parks that APX had acquired accessing their viability.

Murphy helped APX narrow down the number of facilities from 16 to eight, with six FECs and two water parks remaining.

The Boomers locations that made it through that first assessment and are included in the turnaround are located in Irvine, Livermore, Santa Maria, Los Angeles and Modesto, California, as well as Boca Raton, Florida, **Big Kahuna Water Park**, West Berlin, New Jersey, and **Big Kahuna Water Park**, Destin, Florida.

He looked into each facility to take note of what was there and what wasn't.

"Because the former operators were in bankruptcy, there really wasn't any money to put back into the businesses," Murphy said. "We went in and started cleaning the places up. We remodeled. There is no longer any ripped carpets. We began rebranding the facilities. We changed the colors from brighter colors such as orange to more of an American theme with red, white and blue, and then added in neutral colors,



COURTESY
BOOMERS PARKS

white, gray and black."

Murphy was striving for brand consistency across the board.

"We added to the food and beverage menus," he said. "We added flatbread, sliders and salads. We used better quality food products so it would taste better. Alcohol was already being served, but we started making better drinks. We wanted to give people what they wanted."

He also took a good look at the demographics in real time. The Boomers facilities were geared to ages 10 to 12 years old. But, what he saw were young adults and corporations.

He began to change the facilities to gear them toward this group.

He took a look at where the facilities were located. For locations where the weather stayed fairly moderate, an outdoor area was created with Edison lights, canopies and tables and chairs. For those locations where the weather could get very hot, they created a cool chill atmosphere inside.

He looked at the competition. Murphy didn't jump right into adding any new attractions. He feels that adding a new attraction doesn't always draw more attendance.

So, what is in the future?

"We will keep refining our entertainment venues," he said. "We will take care of them and make sure they are well maintained."

"We also are looking to buy more facilities," he said. "I visited at least 50 last year."

Murphy's 35-plus-year career in the entertainment and attractions industry has helped him go to work quickly for APX and turn the Boomers entertainment facilities around.

After his parents sold their FEC in New Jersey, the

▶ See MURPHY, page 44

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IAAPA Expo returns to London after an 11-year absence

AT: Pam Sherborne

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LONDON, U.K. — Returning to London for the first time since 2011, great expectations abounded as preparations were underway for the **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Expo Europe 2022** set for Sept. 12-15.

Expo Europe 2022 will be held at the state-of-the-art **Excel London**, which boasts a 100-acre waterfront campus with seven on-site hotels and over 40 cafes, bars and restaurants.

By May 2022, IAAPA reported there were more than 470 exhibiting companies from the European region and beyond registered to showcase on Excel London's 15,000 net square meters (161,458.5 square feet) of exhibit space.

The trade show will run Sept. 13-15 and will be packed with the latest products and services, including state-of-the-art rides, virtual reality, motion simulators and design and theming. There will be companies exhibiting the newest in food and beverage, health and safety, point of sale, playground equipment, arcades and coin machines, and pools and water equipment.

"We could not be more excited to bring this year's show to London," said **Peter van der Schans**, executive director and vice president of IAAPA EMEA.

"Our European membership benefits from us changing the Expo location every year," he said. "Hosting this year's show in a world-class destination such as London offers the global attractions industry an opportunity to showcase their brands and network as we continue to rebound."

The first day of the conference, Sept. 12, will offer five different day-long special events.



The Excel London center is host to IAAPA Expo Europe 2022, set for Sept. 12-15. There will be more than 470 registered exhibiting companies on the trade show floor and industry professionals will lead a long list of educational sessions as well. COURTESY IAAPA

They include Sustainability Day, Safety Day and a Backstage Tour of **Chessington World of Adventures Resort**. All three of these special events take place at Chessington World of Adventures Resort, Chessington, U.K.

This resort includes over 40 rides and attractions along with more than 1,000 animals and a Sea Life center. There also are two themed hotels and a glamping site.

The Indoor Entertainment Day has multiple local locations for this event such as **Immersive Gamebox**, **Nickelodeon Adventure Lakeside**, **Orsett Hall Hotel**, **Puttshack** and **Wipeout Lakeside**.

Water Park Day will start out with informational sessions at the Excel London and conclude at **Wakeup Docklands** located in the sheltered waters of the Royal Victoria Dock in downtown Lon-

don. This park offers a variety of water activities such as cable wakeboarding, stand up paddle boarding and hydrofoiling.

The Opening Ceremony is set for the morning of Sept. 13, prior to the opening of the trade show. It will feature industry leaders including **Hal McEvoy**, ICAE, president and CEO, IAAPA; **Duncan Phillips**, founder and managing director of **360 Play**, chairman of **BALPPA**; **Amanda J Thompson** O.B.E., CEO from **Blackpool Pleasure Beach**; **Jakob Wahl**, COO IAAPA, and **Ken Whiting**, ICAE, 2022 IAAPA chairman of the board, president, **Whiting's Foods at Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk**.

Educational sessions will begin after the Opening Ceremony as well. The sessions will feature leading industry professionals giving unique insights on sustain-

ability, guest experience, technology and safety.

Some of the sessions are Crisis Communication Planning; Hospitality by Design; You've got Data. Now what?; Be Inclusive! Learn How to Make it Happen for Your Organization; Foodalicious: New Trends and Ideas to Innovate Your Food and Beverage Experience; Career Slam - Find Your (Young) Professional Purpose; Understanding the Mechanism of Public Funding Opportunities and New UK Attractions You Need to Know About.

Lunch and Learns are scheduled as well as panels geared to specific areas of the industry.

Opening Reception is set for the evening of the Sept. 13 and will be held at the **Museum of London Docklands**.

•iaapa.org

►MURPHY

Continued from page 43

family moved to Florida.

Murphy worked at **Walt Disney World** from 1982 to 1989, in the restaurant areas.

He then attended the **University of Central Florida Orlando** and received a Bachelor of Science in accounting in 1990. He re-

ceived an MBA from the **College of Orlando** in 1992.

Murphy has since served more than 150 entertainment, restaurant, and food and beverage brands across more than 10,000 locations in C-suite and senior positions.

Additionally, Murphy is a board director with **Coney Park**, **Happy City** and **YuKids - Family En-**

tertainment Amusement Parks, part of The **Carlyle Group**, a private equity firm which operates 150 plus family entertainment centers and amusement parks in Latin America.

Additionally, Murphy worked with brands including **Rebounderz Trampoline Parks**, **Darden Restaurants** (Olive Garden, Bahama Breeze, etc.), **Red**

Lobster, **Jimmy John's**, **Applebee's**, **Sonny's Bar-B-Q**, **Denny's**, **El Pollo Loco**, **Hardee's**, **Golden Corral** and **Firehouse Subs**.

He has overseen more than 35 purchase transactions involving over 1,200 restaurant, store and park locations. With extensive experience in buying and selling businesses, handling negotiations with

buyers and sellers, and creating strategic partnerships to build strong brands, Murphy has facilitated deals ranging from \$11 million to more than \$350 million.

Murphy is a member of **IAAPA**, **CAPA**, **FAA**, **AAMA** and **WWA**. He is also a licensed commercial real estate broker in Florida.

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DelGrosso's Park & Laguna Splash hosts PAPA Summer Meeting

AT: B. Derek Shaw

bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

TIPTON, Pa. – The annual **Pennsylvania Amusement Parks & Attractions (PAPA)** summer fun meeting took place July 19 and 20 at **DelGrosso's Park & Laguna Splash**. Nearly 80 members and guests enjoyed food, fun, collaboration and networking during the two-day event. The host park is celebrating their 75th anniversary this season.

Day one started with a scramble golf tournament at **Sinking Valley Country Club** raising over \$1,000 for the **Barbara J. Knoebel** scholarship fund, which annually assists student employees of PAPA member organizations in the form of scholarships for educational purposes. The four-person team scramble event allowed golfers of any skill set (even for those that only play once a year in this event) to have fun and contribute to their team's success.

The 14 players were provided a goodie bag, lunch and drink tickets sponsored by **Carl Crider** and the family at **DelGrosso's**. Four strokes are all that separated the four teams that played



Getting ready for the summer fun meeting are (l to r): **Nancee and Carl Crider; Mike Fehnel, PAPA president and Scott Siler, 1st vice president.** AT/B. DEREK SHAW

in the tournament, with the "Killer Bees" team, comprised of **Brian Knoebel (Knoebel's Amusement Resort), Bradford Doolittle (Haas Wilkerson), Melissa Bamford (Baynum Painting)** and **Pete Barto (PB Amusement)** taking home the trophy. "We had a lot of fun and everyone contributed," said Barto, who coordinated the outing again this time.

That evening attendees enjoyed a cocktail reception, followed by dinner at **Laguna Splash Water Park**. Each person was given two tickets to place in either basket to win a basket of **DelGrosso's** sauces or a basket of numerous items from the amusement and water parks. After lots of

lively conversation, attendees left the park with a goodie bag provided with numerous items including a few jars of the delicious pasta sauce **DelGrosso's** is known for.

Mike Fehnel, PAPA president, described day two activities: "It was a great day at the park which looks absolutely amazing. We started this morning with a breakfast, which was outstanding. We had numerous times for tours of the tomato sauce factory, which was very, very fascinating to watch. It was a little bit of a *Laverne and Shirley* moment, watching things go down the conveyors."

Time was set aside mid-morning for a board meet-

ing. As usual, Treasurer **Dick Knoebel**, gave his lengthy report saying, "We are solvent," adding, "Keep the dues money coming." There was a lot of discussion during committee reports. A few highlights included removing the word, "enforcement" from the by-laws as that does not accurately reflect the role of PAPA, relaxed dress codes to attract more potential employees and the website needing revitalization from member organizations to keep the info from becoming too stagnant. This includes new marketing content and the creation of two additional pages: Hall of Fame member listings with short bios and past president listings.

Gary Chubb talked about the 2022 PACE (Parks and Carnivals Education) ride safety seminar that takes place October 24–27 in the Allentown, Pennsylvania area. "Hands-on" training (rain or shine) will take place October 25 at **Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom**, Allentown, Pennsylvania. This annual seminar is held in conjunction with the **Pennsylvania State Showmen's Association (PSSA)** and offers both 24- and 32-hour certifica-

tion training sessions. The educational portion of the seminar is led by instructors from **NAARSO (National Association of Amusement Ride Safety Officials.)** Inspector testing is also offered for Pennsylvania certified inspectors and/or NAARSO levels.

"We finished up with an outstanding lunch as you would expect here at **DelGrosso's**," said Fehnel. Every Wednesday, throughout the season, the park offers **Spaghetti Wednesday's**.

This was the first PAPA event that offered registration online via **Ticket Leap**.

PAPA formed in 1935 and promotes the industry, allows for the exchange of knowledge among members, upholds a good public image and monitors legislation and regulatory concerns. **R.L. Plarr** from **Dorney Park** served as the first President. In 1946, roller coaster designer **Herbert P. Schmeck** from **Philadelphia Toboggan**, served as president. The 2023 spring meeting will be held at the **Hershey Lodge**, February 27 and 28. The 2023 mid-July summer fun meeting host and site has yet to be determined.

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NEAAPA ends July hosting successful summer meeting

AT: Ron Gustafson

Special to Amusement Today

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — The 109th Anniversary Summer Meeting of the **Northeast's Entertainment Association (NEAAPA)** drew 85 attendees for a two-day event, July 25-26, in the Providence, Rhode Island, region.

The gathering kicked off with a golf tournament at **Cranston Country Club**, Cranston, Rhode Island, to support the organization's Pinnacle Scholarship. The annual \$500 award is presented to an industry employee or team that has demonstrated "peak perfection in customer service."

The morning tournament had 23 members play the links and raised \$1,000 toward the scholarship program. **Haas Wilkerson Insurance**, Fairway, Kansas, sponsored a raffle for the tournament with a **Garmin Venu GPS watch** awarded. **Ryan DeMaria**, operations manager at **Canobie Lake Park**, Salem, New Hampshire, was the winner.

Capturing the tourney title was the team of **Ramon Rosario, Zamperla, Inc.**, Boonton, New Jersey; **Bradford Doolittle**, Haas & Wilkerson; **Melissa Bamford, Baynum Painting**, Newport, Kentucky and **Pete Barto, PB Amusement**, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania.

The winners will be immortalized with their



Members line up for the dinner buffet at **Roger Williams Park Zoo & Carousel Village.**

AT/RON GUSTAFSON

names engraved on the new NEAAPA Golf Champion's Trophy, which will be awarded to the winners and passed on each year like the National Hockey League's Stanley Cup.

Off to the races

The afternoon included go-kart, bumper car and bumper boat rides at **Seekonk Grand Prix** in Seekonk, Massachusetts. The property also had free play on miniature golf and video games for NEAAPA members.

Roger Williams Park Zoo & Carousel Village, Providence, hosted dinner provided by member

supplier **SSA Group** also of Providence. There was also exclusive evening time to explore some exhibits, which included close-up encounters with some of the animals and time to talk to handlers.

Children in attendance were treated to the Big Backyard play areas on the property.

A brief business meeting was conducted by President **Dave Oberlander**.

Day at the zoo

Exclusive tours related to operations, catering and retail highlighted the second day of the NEAAPA Summer Meeting at the zoo. Members were also treated to train and zip rides and free time in the 60-acre complex as well as lunch.

The summer meeting concluded with an afternoon tour of **Rhode Island Novelty** in Fall River, Massachusetts. The massive 500,000-square-foot building consists of showrooms, warehouse and distribution areas.

Sponsors of the NEAAPA gathering were: **Dippin' Dots**, Paducah, Kentucky; **Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters Inc.**, Hatfield, Pennsylvania.; **Premier Rides, Inc.**, Baltimore, Maryland; **Ralph S. Alberts Co., Inc.**, Montoursville, Pennsylvania, and **Southwick's Zoo**, Mendon, Massachusetts.

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MARKET WATCH

COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 8/24/22	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	102.76	149.78	86.97
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	43.72	62.56	37.78
Comcast Corp./NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	37.11	61.80	36.57
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	116.41	187.58	90.23
EPR Properties	EPR	NYSE	46.26	56.38	41.14
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	JP:9010	TYO	4110.00	5110.00	3650.00
Haichang Holdings Ltd.	HK:2255	SEHK	7.72	8.57	1.09
Lefoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	16.55	19.95	15.40
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	34.67	51.17	26.41
Royal Caribbean Cruises, Ltd.	RCL	NYSE	41.94	98.27	31.09
Sansei Technologies, Inc.	JP:6357	TYO	800.00	926.00	702.00
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	54.56	76.57	40.01
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	25.44	47.24	19.8
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	818.00	900.00	766.00

STOCK PRICES ABOVE ARE GENERALLY QUOTED IN THE FOREIGN CURRENCY IN WHICH THE COMPANY IS LOCATED
 *Dubai Parks and Resorts halted trading on the Dubai Financial Market due to an acquisition by Meraas Leisure and Entertainment LLC earlier this year.

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

BUSINESS WATCH**Six Flags reveals second quarter performance**

ARLINGTON, Texas — **Six Flags Entertainment Corporation** reported second quarter 2022 financial results.

Total revenue for second quarter 2022 decreased \$24 million, or 5%, compared to second quarter 2021, driven by lower attendance and a \$5 million reduction in sponsorship, international agreements and accommodations revenue. The decrease in attendance was net of a favorable visitation shift of approximately 200,000 guests from first quarter to second quarter 2022 due to the later timing of the Easter holiday in 2022, which impacted operating calendars as a result of schools scheduling spring-break vacations in the second quarter of 2022 versus the first quarter in 2021. The decrease in attendance was partially offset by higher guest spending per capita.

"This is a transitional year for Six Flags, as we reset the foundations of our business model to focus on delivering a premium guest experience, while at the same time, correcting for decades of heavy price discounting," said **Selim Bassoul**, president and CEO. "Our guest satisfaction scores are well above 2021 and our guest spending per capita has increased more than 50% versus pre-pandemic levels. We believe our initial progress validates the potential of our new strategy, and provides a very healthy earnings base from which we can grow."

Total revenue for first half 2022 increased \$32 million, or 6%, compared to first half 2021, driven by higher per capita spending. This was offset by lower attendance. As a result of the change to the company's reporting calendar, three fewer days were included in first half 2022 compared to the first half 2021, which accounted for 89 thousand additional guests in first half 2021

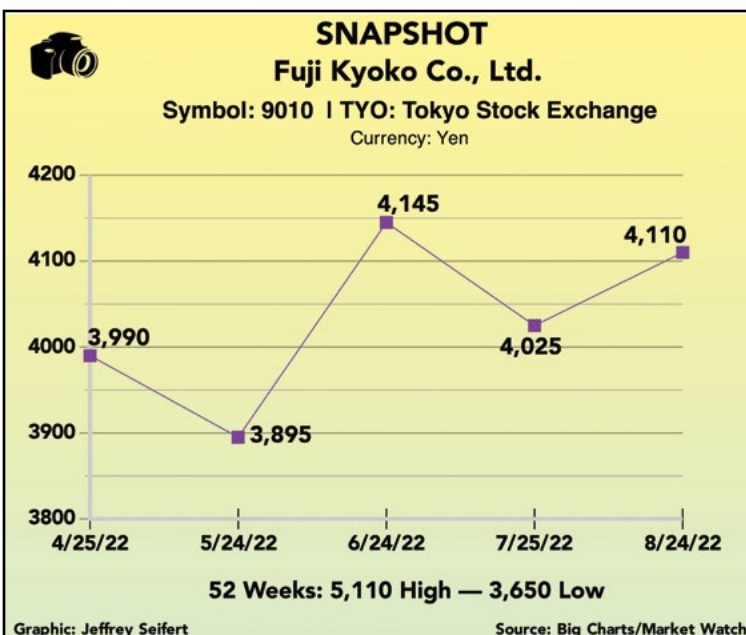
Walt Disney Co. succeeds in third quarter

BURBANK, Calif — The **Walt Disney Company** reported earnings for its third fiscal quarter which ended July 2, 2022. Revenues for the quarter and nine months grew 26% and 28%, respectively. Diluted earnings per share (EPS) from continuing operations for the quarter increased to \$0.77 from \$0.50 in the prior-year quarter. Excluding certain items(1), diluted EPS for the quarter increased to \$1.09 from \$0.80 in the prior-year quarter. Diluted EPS from continuing operations for the nine months ended July 2, 2022 increased to \$1.66 from \$1.02 in the prior-year period. Excluding certain items, diluted EPS for the nine months increased to \$3.22 from \$1.91 in the prior-year period.

"We had an excellent quarter, with our world-class creative and business teams powering outstanding performance at our domestic theme parks, big increases in live-sports viewership, and significant subscriber growth at our streaming services. With 14.4 million **Disney+** subscribers added in the fiscal third quarter, we now have 221 million total subscriptions across our streaming offerings," said **Bob Chapek**, chief executive officer, The Walt Disney Company."

Disney's parks, experiences and products division saw revenue increase 72% to \$7.4 billion during the quarter, up from \$4.3 billion during the same period last year. The company said it saw increases in attendance, occupied room nights and cruise ship sailings. The company said it has been able to bring back in-park experiences such as character meet-and-greets, theatrical performances and nighttime events at Disneyland, which has allowed it to increase capacity at its parks.

Cedar Point announced that the Wild Mouse (Zamperla) will debut in 2023 in a new themed area called The Boardwalk.
 COURTESY CEDAR POINT

**DIESEL PRICES**

Region (U.S.)	As of 8/22/22	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	\$4.922	\$1.625
Midwest	\$4.890	\$1.674
Gulf Coast	\$4.619	\$1.581
Mountain	\$4.885	\$1.246
West Coast	\$5.130	\$1.487
California	\$6.029	\$1.745

CURRENCY

On 8/24/22 \$1 USD =

1.0025	EURO
0.8474	GBP (British Pound)
137.08	JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.9663	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.4470	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.2962	CAD (Canadian Dollar)

ON THE MOVE

S&S Worldwide, Inc. announces the retirement of Tim Timco

NORTH LOGAN, Utah — As officially announced in **S&S Worldwide, Inc.**'s Board of Directors meeting on July 26, **Tim Timco** will be retiring as president & CEO of S&S Worldwide, Inc., after 40 years in the amusement industry. Timco's retirement as president and CEO will go into effect September 1, 2022, but he will remain with the company through 2023 as a corporate advisor.

Timco first joined S&S in 2012 as director of business development, was promoted to vice president – sales & marketing in 2014, became president of the company in 2015 and then promoted again to president and CEO in 2016.

Under Timco's leadership, S&S has continued to progress within the industry while attaining a number of achievements over the last six years. These successes include its best-selling and most successful roller coaster — the 4D Free Spin Coaster, the Golden Ticket Award winning Steel Curtain coaster (**Kennywood**) with the U.S. record for the most inversions, Maxx Force coaster (**Six Flags Great America**) holding the record for the world's fastest inversion, Tidal Surge (**SeaWorld San Antonio**) the tallest and fastest Screamin' Swing and the company recently signed its largest single contract in its history.

Timco started in the industry with **National Ticket Company** and served as a senior executive for 25 years with them. Much of his time in the industry has been spent contributing and serving on multiple boards. Timco served four years as an **IAAPA** board member, four years



Timco

as chair of IAAPA's M&S Committee, over 20 years on the **PAPA** Board of Directors, and six years being part of the **British Association of Leisure Parks, Piers and Attractions** (BALPPA) Management Committee.

Timco said: "I consider myself extremely fortunate and blessed. My 40 years in the amusement industry have been very rewarding both personally and professionally. I have developed relationships with people from all over the world that have become lifelong friends and have memories that I will cherish forever, but now it is time to move on to the next chapter in my life. I thank this wonderful industry, the amazing team at S&S and my dear family for all their support over the years, it certainly has been a great ride!"

Effective September 1, 2022, **Jason Mons**, currently the COO of S&S, has been promoted to president & COO of S&S. Mons started with the company in 2004 and has been the company's COO since 2016.

"I am extremely confident that Jason will provide the leadership and wisdom in continuing the success and high standards that S&S has established within the amusement industry," offered Timco.

Effective September 1, 2022, **Noboru Rachi**, currently the CEO of **Sansei Technologies Inc.**, will also take the position as CEO of S&S Worldwide, Inc.



Mons



Rachi

Family Entertainment Group (FEG) welcomed **Yoo Jin Yi** as head of information technology.

Yi has worked in the IT industry for over 20 years. He first began working in the hospitality and restaurant space in 1999 with what was then a small startup called **Opentable.com**.

He was part of a small team of employees who launched the Chicago market for Opentable. He later joined the **Gibsons Restaurant Group** in 2006. In 2008 he took over its IT department and helped the group grow to 14 locations which grosses \$350 million annually.

The operational and technical knowledge he learned in the restaurant space has helped him identify new technologies that benefit both customers and operators. FEG stated that with the fast-changing environment of today's customer needs, Yi's research and education about new technologies will provide solutions to offer better customer experiences in the future.

RWS Entertainment Group has tapped zoo and museum industry veteran **Robby Gilbert** as its new global director, business development. Gilbert joins the team as RWS and its subsidiary **JRA** expand their planning, design, implementation and operations capabilities for zoos, aquariums, science centers and botanical gardens worldwide, and as RWS offers custom leased experiences and merchandise featuring iconic brands, including all-new **Hershey** and **Guinness World Records** attractions.

"Robby has spent the last 14 years building



Yi

amazing partnerships with zoos, aquariums, science museums and botanical gardens around the world," said **Kevin Kreczko**, senior vice president, marketing & business development at RWS Entertainment Group. "As our new Global Director, Business Development, he'll help to deliver immersive leased experiences, dynamic science exhibits and engaging cultural attractions to our clients. With the addition of Robby to the team, and with the expansion of our leased experiences offerings to top brands like Hershey's and Guinness World Records, we can raise the experience of visitors to new heights across more markets than ever before."

Gilbert specializes in the development, management and operations of entertainment and educational attractions based on scientific and mission-oriented goals. Prior to RWS Entertainment Group, Gilbert served as chief executive officer of **HRG Concepts**, which collaborated on the concept design, fabrication and installation of exhibit elements for **Phoenix Zoo**, the **San Antonio Zoo**, the **Nashville Zoo**, the **Baton Rouge Zoo** and multiple traveling exhibits. Other experience includes the development of over two dozen STEM/STEAM-based leased experiences around the world and supervising the production of a variety of full-scale animatronic figures.

Europe's largest leisure entertainment experience company, **The Experience Department** (TED), expanded its European-based leadership team, welcoming **Jake McCoy** to the new position of director of operations. McCoy joins TED's U.K. office from his previous role at TED parent company,



Gilbert



McCoy

RWS Entertainment Group.

"**Six Flags, SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment, Paultons Park, Chester Zoo, Westfield**, major shopping malls and celebrities have trusted Jake McCoy to oversee their custom, large-scale events," said **Robin Breese-Davies**, CEO, Europe of TED. "We are thrilled that he now calls the U.K. home and will be expanding our amazing events and entertainment to include new Halloween and holiday immersive experiences. Jake will also play a tremendous role in creating efficiencies that benefit our clients and our partners."

McCoy is a graduate of **Creighton University's** Theatrical Design and Technology program. He has been making headlines since graduating early and arriving in New York City, landing a leadership role with **Broadway Dreams Foundation**. He joined RWS Entertainment Group in 2015.

Stern Pinball, Inc. announced the appointment of **Taylor Bancroft** as technical producer for the award-winning, industry transforming Insider Connected.

"Taylor is an incredibly talented producer with strong management and organizational skills. She brings a unique perspective and voice to the development of new features for Insider Connected that will create a better player and operator experience," said **Seth Davis**, president.

Bancroft will be responsible for coordinating and managing development efforts for Insider Connected, acting as a liaison between internal and external development teams. She will work closely with engineering, product management, sales, and marketing teams.



Bancroft

Six Flags announces Board of Directors changes

ARLINGTON, Texas — **Six Flags Entertainment Corporation** has appointed **Chieh Huang** as an independent director, effective August 1, 2022. The company also announced that **Denise M. Clark** has decided to resign from the board for personal reasons, effective August 1, 2022.

"We would like to welcome Chieh to Six Flags," said **Ben Baldanza**, non-executive chairman of the board. "His entrepreneurial mindset and extensive background in information technology will provide the board and the company valuable insight and guidance as we execute our new premiumization strategy and position the company for profitable growth."

"I am delighted to join the Six Flags Board of Directors," said Huang. "As a lifelong fan of the Six Flags brand, the team's vision to use technology to enhance the guest experience and become more efficient could not be more exciting for me. I look forward to contributing to this success."

"We also extend our thanks to Denise for the impactful contributions she made during her service to Six Flags," continued Baldanza. "The company benefitted greatly from her thoughtful counsel and leadership serving on the Audit Committee and as Chair of the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee, and we wish her well."



Huang



Clark

Extreme Engineering adds new COO, promotes key company executives

ATHENS, Texas — **Extreme Engineering**, announced the addition of **Rob Wyatt** as chief operating officer, along with the promotion of two internal leaders to continue to drive expansion and exceptional service to the company's clients. **Phil Wilson** has been promoted to the position of chief development officer and **Kris Benken** to vice president of business development.

"We are excited by these announcements, which will help us in our next chapter of continued growth and success," said **Jeff Wilson**, founder and CEO, Extreme Engineering. "Rob is the right choice for our executive team with his strong track record of innovation, execution, producing excellence that drive results for clients. Phil and Kris are incredible professionals who understand the attractions industry. Phil understands the attractions industry better than anyone I know and will continue to push us in new ways. Kris always puts his clients' needs first and will remain committed to identifying new client solutions to meet their ever-changing needs."

With more than 30 years of experience in global design and project management, Wyatt is known for his focus

on leading entertainment project developments to deliver solutions that provide commercial success and mutual benefit to the location's area and local culture. He is an active member of the **Themed Entertainment Association (TEA)**, the **International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC)**, and **IAAPA**, the global association for the attractions industry. Wyatt holds a Master of Fine Arts from **California State University**, and a Bachelor of Arts from **Southern California College**.

Phil Wilson has been with Extreme Engineering since its inception in 1995, when he founded the company with his father, **Jeff Wilson**. He has helped grow **Extreme Engineering** to become one of the most respected manufacturers and suppliers in the industry. Through Wilson's creativity and marketing communications, Extreme Engineering has been globally recognized many

times, earning significant awards including "Best New Product" five years in a row, along with 16 international amusement industry awards to date. In his new role, he will oversee all strategic partnerships, global marketing, fabrication services, custom attraction development and new product concepts. Wilson is an active volunteer with IAAPA, having served on the Board of Directors and several committees. He is also a member of the TEA. Wilson holds a Bachelor of Arts from California State University and is an IAAPA Certified Attractions Executive (ICAE).

Kris Benken joined Extreme Engineering in 2015. He spent the early part of his career working in the hospitality industry and later managing several amusement attractions. In his role, **Benken** will lead all adventure ride sales, sales support and sales strategies. He is also a member of TEA and serves on IAAPA committees. Benken holds a Bachelor of Arts from **Florida State University**.



Wyatt



Wilson



Benken

OBITUARY

Willi Mack of Mack Rides passes at the age of 99



Willi Mack (left) takes a ride with his godson, Roland Mack. COURTESY MACK RIDES

WALDKIRCH, Germany — Willi Mack, brother of Franz Mack and godfather of Roland Mack, died in his house on the Mack Rides company premises in Waldkirch, Germany, on July 3, 2022. The entrepreneur was 99 years old. He was the last member of the sixth generation of the Mack family and its eldest member.

Mack Rides traces its history back to 1780, when the company began as a maker of wagons. Transportation vehicles followed and eventually carnival rides were introduced. Today, the eighth generation of the Mack family continues to be instrumental in the amusement industry.

Willi Mack trained as a blacksmith in his father Heinrich Mack's company. After the father's death, he took over the company together with his brothers Herman and Franz.

In 1975, Franz and his son, Roland, founded Europa-Park.

Willi Mack was fascinated with speed and roller coasters throughout his life. At the age of 92, he sat next to his godson Roland in the first row of the Alpenexpress VR ride during the inauguration of the ride in 2015, and one year later made an appearance in the same style during the opening of the Baa-a-a Express. He was unofficially named the "oldest test pilot" of Europa-Park.

"Willi always had speed in his blood," his godson Roland said.

Willi is the last of that generation and still lived on the factory grounds. He liked to walk around and see what was new. He was always amazed at the progress and technology that is being added to the manufacturing and operation of rides.

His brother, Franz, was inducted into the IAAPA Hall of Fame in 2005.

The visionary Willi Mack played an important part in the development of the family business which led to the success it enjoys today. Mack Rides continues to be one of the most sought-after manufacturers of roller coasters and water rides.

Willi Mack (far right) tests out the virtual reality on Europa-Park's Alpenexpress Enzian with his godson Roland Mack. COURTESY MACK RIDES



Monty Jasper steps off the roller coaster and takes a little time

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

NEW BRAUNFELS, Texas — **Monty Jasper** had reached that point in his life where he knew it was time to retire.

"Well, I was old enough," he said, laughing. "I just think you get to a point when all the things you wanted to achieve start clicking into place, like family, finances."

He left his post with **Cedar Fair Entertainment** at **Schlitterbahn Waterpark**, in New Braunfels, Texas, on May 27.

He and his wife, Suzanne, are doing things that they haven't had the time to do before, like stopping by museums.

"I finally had time to go to the LBJ museum (LBJ Presidential Library) in Austin, Texas," he said.

They have a cruise coming up.

When *AT* caught up with him, they were spending a few days at **Walt Disney World**. The two have three grandchildren, all boys so far, with another grandchild on the way. They don't yet know if it is a boy or a girl.

There now will be more time spent with them.

But Jasper said he doesn't plan to just sit by the pool, although he has done that, too.

"I've thought about this a lot," he said. "God has blessed us. When you have



Monty Jasper

been blessed like this, you want to find a way to give back. I want to find a way to give back to the industry that has been so good to us."

When Jasper started out in the amusement park industry in 1973 as a ride operator at **Six Flags Over Texas**, Arlington, he most likely didn't know that it was this industry that would keep him intrigued and motivated for the next 49 years.

In fact, it was his father that suggested he thought a good fit for him was to major in mechanical engineering. He took his father's suggestion and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in that field from the **University of Texas-Arlington**.

"It was fun, the summers working at Six Flags," he said.

But the further along he got into his career, he said it became "serious and complicated" as he stayed on the cutting edge."

His work in safety and writing ASTM standards were important and significant. In fact, it is this work that he feels he has given to the park industry.

During my career, I had an opportunity to work with several groups to create rules, policies, guidance and regulations that were hoped would give direction for future industry professionals to follow," Jasper said. "This work would allow safety to be improved across our industry. They would allow others coming later to build on them and further improve the future.

"I worked with ASTM in several areas and helped write sections of the standards for amusement ride and attraction design. Through the state of Ohio, I helped craft regulations that would improve ride and water park safety in that state. At Cedar Fair, I worked with others to craft company policies that strengthen safety there for the guests and associates."

Jasper was with Six Flags for 22 years and Cedar Fair for 27 years.

During those years, he had the opportunities to work on many great rides and attractions.

"Probably the best was Millennium Force as it seemed to generate the most excitement at the time and impacted our business in a big way," he said. "Other rides like, Top Thrill Dragster, Maverick and Gatekeeper are a few more of the rides that added to those experiences and were highly impactful."

Yet with all the wonderful opportunities, he feels the most significant things he is taking with him in his retirement are the friendships he made.

"The people that I have met and worked with have been the most rewarding experience from the job for me," Jasper said. "They have made it all worthwhile. Added to that is the fact that all of us had a hand in helping our park guests have great family experiences. It makes all of these personnel relationships richer."



History was made at Cedar Point on May 13, 2000, with the opening of the Millennium Force steel roller coaster. Making that vision come true were from left: Don Miears, Cedar Point; Sandor Kernacs, Intamin; Richard Kinzel, Cedar Fair and Monty Jasper, Cedar Point. The coaster would become one of Jasper's favorite projects to work on during his 47-year industry career. AT/GARY SLADE FILE PHOTO

Jasper influences industry

"Monty is a consummate professional who contributed so much to our industry, our company and our associates during his remarkable career. His experience, judgment and attention to detail were second to none.

"And many of his colleagues looked to Monty as a mentor, someone who would teach through example and take the time to help them think through how to solve a problem."

— **Richard Zimmerman**

"Monty is one of the outstanding individuals in the industry and I consider myself very fortunate to have worked with him at Six Flags and ASTM.

"I have known Monty since about 1978, when I went to work for Six Flags. Monty worked at Six Flags Over Texas (Arlington) and after graduating from University of Texas Arlington with a degree in mechanical engineering, we hired Monty as a corporate engineer. Six Flags had a policy of having an independent engineer at each park, and Monty was eventually assigned to the position of corporate engineer at Six Flags Astroworld.

"He worked in this position for many years and, based on his request, was transferred to the park as vice president of maintenance and construction, where he remained until he found an opportunity at the other major regional theme park operator, Cedar Fair. Monty moved to Cedar Point (Sandusky, Ohio) as the vice president of maintenance and construction.

"Being the outstanding safety expert he is, Monty transitioned to the role of safety engineer for all Cedar Fair parks. Like his original role at Six Flags, Monty visited and inspected all the Cedar Fair parks, monitoring parks and rides for safety.

"When Cedar Fair acquired Schlitterbahn, Monty volunteered to move to New Braunfels, Texas, to oversee upgrades and maintenance at that park until his retirement.

"I'm sure Monty still has his heart in the industry, and I know I will have the opportunity to work with him in the future. Lucky me."

—**Harold Hudson**



Monty Jasper, seated front row, was ride foreman at Six Flags Over Texas' Speelunker Cave ride in 1976 as seen in this crew photo taken for the annual yearbook.

COURTESY MONTY JASPER



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SAFETY, MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

▶ AIMS plans new Adventure Attraction course — page 56 / Six Flags unveils inclusive safety restraint — page 59

Playland's Wooden Coaster open to public after refurbishment

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

VANCOUVER, B.C. — The iconic Wooden Roller Coaster that has taken riders rolling up and over against the Vancouver skyline at Playland Amusement Park reopened in late July following an 18-month, CA\$1 million (\$768,000) restoration.

“It’s exciting that our beloved Wooden Coaster is now open,” said **Laura Ballance**, spokesperson, **Pacific National Exhibition (PNE)**, the non-profit organization that operates Playland Amusement Park. “A ride on the coaster is a tradition that goes back for generations in British Columbia, and this retrofit ensures it will be in top form to ride for millions more thrill seekers for years to come.”

The coaster, which originally opened on this site in 1958, has been described as an old-world, all-time classic. It also has been described as a “living” structure being made entirely of wood outside of the friction plates where the train’s metal wheels meet the frame of the ride structure.

Officials at PNE decided in 2021 that with an uncertain season ahead due to Covid that it was a good time to do the restoration. The refurbishment was not related to any specific safety issue but rather an overall upgrade that should give the coaster another 60-plus years.

“The Wooden Coaster



After a 18-month, CA\$1 million (\$768,000) restoration, Playland Amusement Park, Vancouver, B.C., reopened its iconic Wooden Roller Coaster in late July. Originally opened in 1958, this is the most extensive retrofit done to the ride in its history. COURTESY PNE



is one of the most highly maintained rides in the country, but as a living structure built from wood, we must undertake regular maintenance prior to the opening of the park each year,” Ballance said. “As we approached summer 2021, there were many un-

knowns as to how much, if any, of the Playland season would be saved due to COVID-19 closures. With the park potentially being closed already due to the pandemic, and in consultation with our engineering consultants, it made sense to continue with the refurbishment plan at this time.”

The Wooden Coaster was designed by **Carl Phare**, and the head of construction was **Walker LeRoy**.

The international engineering team assembled to complete the extensive project sought to ensure the signature Playland Wooden

Coaster ambience of yesteryear was respected in the modern retrofit.

For the engineering lead on the restoration, PNE officials reached out to Quebec-based **Martin and Vleminckx Rides (MVR)**, a

▶ See COASTER, page 54

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FAST FACTS

Opened 1958

Designed by **Carl Phare**
Head of construction was **Walker LeRoy**

Train features eight, two-person cars

Maximum speed of 45 mph

Maximum track height of 75 feet

Track length of 2,840 feet

Ride time: 90 seconds

Averages 1/2 million guests annually

Cost of construction: \$200,000

2022 PNE Wooden Coaster retrofit features:

Installation of over 1,200 lengths of structural grade Douglas Fir. This equates to over 12,000 feet of lumber

More than 4,700 man-hours have been invested in this project.

Engineering lead on the project was **Martin and Vlemickx Rides.**

COASTER

Continued from page 52

company that is known for its manufacturing, fabrication, installation and restoration of wooden roller coasters. MVR has constructed 13 new wooden roller coasters in the last 10 years, including locations in: China, Australia and across North America.

This is the most extensive retrofit in the coaster's 64-year history, including undergoing the addition of lap belts in the train to meet incoming safety standards.

The Playland Wooden Roller Coaster trains have a maximum speed of 45 mph. The maximum track height is 75 feet at the highest point, which is the first hill.

The coaster is powered by a 75 hp electric motor which lifts the 16-passenger, specially-designed train up the first hill. Once each train passes over the first hill, it negotiates a series of climbs, dips, banks, horseshoe turns and a classic reverse curve.



Playland's Wooden Roller Coaster is made entirely from Douglas Fir. And that is what Martin and Vlemickx Rides (MVR), the lead engineering firm for the restoration, used to replace some pieces. COURTESY PNE

The Playland Wooden Coaster has received countless accolades including Coaster Classic and ACE Roller Coaster Landmark designation from **American Coaster Enthusiasts.**

Owned by the City of Vancouver, the PNE organi-

zation manages a total of four activity streams including the Playland Amusement Park. The other three are the 15-day annual **PNE Fair**, Park Care and Facility Maintenance and an expansive portfolio of year-round events.

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Save lives with safety education

What sets **AIMS International** apart is the unique opportunity students have to either choose a targeted track of pre-populated courses or to fully customize their experience by choosing courses from a variety of tracks. With over 200 live instructor-led classes across 10 different tracks (Maintenance, Inspection, Operations, Aquatics, Safety/Security, Adventure Attractions, Carnival, Spanish Language and Young Professionals), the AIMS International Safety Seminar offers the most diverse, up-to-date and relevant safety education courses available in the amusement industry.

Everyone responsible for the care and safety of amusement industry guests will benefit by attending the **AIMS International Safety Seminar** in Galveston, Texas, January 8-13, 2023. New this year will be an enhanced Adventure Attractions

Track with updated courses specifically developed for family fun centers, trampoline parks, aerial adventure courses and other non-traditional amusement operators. For a second consecutive year, **International Ride Training** (IRT) will partner with AIMS International to create the custom-curated Operations Track and **Ellis and Associates** (E&A) will return for a third year to offer the latest in aquatics safety education in the Aquatics Track. Also returning for a third year will be the Spanish-language Track, where Spanish-speaking safety professionals from Spain, Mexico and throughout Latin America can gather to listen to safety experts deliver, in their native language, the most current and relevant safety education currently available in the amusement industry. Level I and Level II Spanish-language certification exams are also available at the seminar for those

interested in earning a prestigious AIMS International certification.

AIMS International is proud to announce the second year of its new **Academy of Amusement Risk Management Safety & Security** (AARMSS) which will be hosted once again during the 2023 AIMS International Safety Seminar in Galveston, Texas. AARMSS is designed specifically for those with experience working in safety and security management positions and are seeking advanced education opportunities in the areas of safety and security management, risk management and emergency management. This two-year academy culminates in the opportunity to sit for a new Amusement Safety & Security Certification (ASSC) exam, which will test on-the-job knowledge as well as the AARMSS curriculum. The second-year students will have the

chance to sit for the ASSC exam at the upcoming safety seminar. A limited number of candidates are accepted each year, so be sure to register soon.

Manufacturers and suppliers in the amusement industry attend the AIMS Safety Seminar to learn about the latest issues and practices in safety and security. They know they'll benefit by learning from the industry's top experts and gain valuable information and feedback from people who maintain and operate their products and services on a daily basis. Sponsorship opportunities are still available to current active members of AIMS.

Early-bird registration for the 2023 AIMS International Safety Seminar at just \$595 opens September 1 and will be available for a limited time. Full class selection will be available in October.

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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AIMS Safety Seminar planning underway, to include new program

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

GALVESTON, Texas — With a brand new track and the second year of a 2022 new program, plans are well underway for the 2023 AIMS International Safety Seminar, which will be held for one more year at the Galveston Island Convention Center, Galveston, Texas, Jan. 8-13.

According to AIMS Executive Director **Mary Jane Brewer**, it is shaping up to be the best safety seminar ever, with many core ride maintenance, inspection and safety courses returning and some brand new ones being introduced, specifically the new track, Adventure Attractions.

This new program was created to address safety concerns of amusement attractions that fall outside the traditional theme park, carnival and water park. These attractions include mountain coasters, trampoline courts, inflatables, parasailing, aerial adventure courses, zip



M.J. Brewer

lines, eco tours, tethered helium balloons and many others that are not covered in the traditional amusement industry safety education curriculum.

"We are really excited about this new track," Brewer said. "We assembled a group of industry experts to form a committee to create the safety education geared to this part of the industry."

Brewer said as the number of non-traditional amusement rides and devices, termed "Adventure Attractions," continues to grow into a much larger seg-



The 2023 AIMS International Safety Seminar will feature multiple classroom opportunities similar to the one pictured above from the 2022 seminar. AT/GARY SLADE

ment of the amusement industry, AIMS International saw the need to develop a specialized safety education curriculum."

Then, AIMS staff assembled a group of industry professionals involved in the operation, maintenance or inspection of adventure attractions. These experts formed a committee that has created the educational portion.

"We will have a full week of classes for the Adventure Attractions track at the 2023 conference," Brewer said. "There will be one room dedicated to this program."

"The Adventure Attractions Committee, as well as the AIMS staff, believe this new track will greatly enhance safety in this segment of our industry,"

Brewer said.

A new Adventure Attractions Certification program also is currently being developed and is slated to be introduced in 2023.

"Hopefully, we will be able to introduce this certification in 2024," Brewer said.

Courses in the Adven-

► See AIMS, page 57



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▶AIMS

Continued from page 56

ture Attractions curriculum include Building an Adventure Attraction Safety Program; Evacuation Plan; Patron Education, Communication and Denying Entry; Maintenance Program Requirements; Inspection Program Requirements; Training Program Requirement and Communicating Your Adventure Attraction Safety Program.

Others are Hayrides/Trams/Trackless Trains AND Bumper Boats/Go Karts; Mountain Coasters/Alpine Slides; Harnessed Adventure Attractions; Inflatable AquaParks/Water Elements/EcoTours; Airbags/Foam Pits/Soft Play and Parasailing/Indoor Skydiving/Balloons Helium.

A field trip to Urban Air Houston, Texas, also is in the planning.

Back by popular demand for a second consecutive year, AIMS International will partner with **International Ride Training (IRT)** to create the enhanced custom-curated Operations Track.

New ride maintenance, inspection, safety, security, crowd management and car-

nival safety courses will be offered, as well.

AIMS also is planning the second year of the Academy of Amusement Risk Management Safety & Security, AARMSS, which was introduced for the first time in 2022. This is the program specifically designed for those with experience working in safety and security management positions and are seeking advanced education opportunities in the areas of safety and security management, risk management and emergency management.

Brewer said the 2023 seminar registration website opened on Sept. 1.

"Registrants will find a new, more convenient way to sign up for the seminar, while still offering the same option to fully customize their seminar experience," Brewer said.

This year, more than 300 courses will be divided into the following tracks:



AIMS staff and members are preparing big things for the 2023 AIMS International Safety Seminar, set for Jan. 8-13, at the Galveston Island Convention Center, Galveston, Texas. COURTESY GALVESTON ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER

Maintenance Level I, Maintenance Level II, Inspection Level I, Inspection Level II, Operations, Aquatics, Safety, Leadership, Carnival and more.

"With the click of a button, registrants can choose the path to enroll in one of these tracks, which will be pre-populated with the relat-

ed courses, so that individual courses do not need to be selected," Brewer said.

However, registrants who want it, will still have the option to customize their own schedule by choosing individual courses from any track, if they choose that path.

"We have never made

any participant enroll in just one track, but they now have the opportunity to do that easily if they want," she said.

Staying well ahead in planning preparations, the 2024 AIMS International Safety Seminar is already set to be held in Orlando, Florida.

•aimsintl.org

AIMS International Adventure Attractions committee members

Lance Miller,
chairperson

•
Eddie Kinder,
Urban Air

•
Tim Sharp,
Urban Air

•
David Knight,
State of Colorado

•
Steve Thomas,
Traders Village

•
Kym Powell,
Royal Caribbean
Cruise Lines

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Avery Wheelock,
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Rick Achard,
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As rides returned to Ohio State Fair, LJM returns to inspect midway

COLUMBUS, Ohio — After shuttering the **Ohio State Fair** for the summer of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and eliminating the ride midway for the event as the fair eased back into life post-pandemic, **Talley Amusements** made its long-awaited return with its ride midway entertainment for the 2022 edition of the Ohio State Fair.

Returning with Talley Amusements was **LJM & Associates, Inc.**, which brought its inspection services to the Ohio State Fair midway. Leading up to the fair's opening, the team members checked every ride throughout the midway, including the kiddie area and conferred with fair representatives and the state inspectors.

Once the fair was open, LJM inspected rides throughout the event as needed. Three rides which had received a recent refurbishment required daily inspections to ensure the work was properly maintained.

This was the first year of operation for the fair under the newly enacted "Tyler's Law." Named for 18-year-old **Tyler Jarrell** who lost his life in a tragic accident at the 2018 Ohio State Fair, Tyler's Law strengthens ride safety by adopting the latest standards of **ASTM International** for the storage or use of rides outside of Ohio.



LJM & Associates worked alongside fair representatives and Ohio State ride inspectors to thoroughly check over all rides along the 2022 Ohio State Fair's ride midway prior to opening day. Three of the rides along the midway — including the Spider (above) and Helix (right) attractions — had received recent refurbishment.

As a result, LJM & Associates' team members performed daily inspections on the ride prior to opening to the public.

AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON



LJM inspectors provided their inspection services along all midway rides both prior to the fair opening and throughout the event as needed. They also aided in ensuring all rides were in compliance with the newly enacted "Tyler's Law." Rides ranged from newer attractions to classics such as this Chance Zipper (left).

AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON

Six Flags delivers inclusivity, safety for all its guests

ARLINGTON, Texas — **Six Flags Entertainment Corporation** has become the world's first theme park company to revolutionize and design a specialized restraint harness that allows access to all Six Flags Thrill Rides for guests with physical disabilities.

In addition, as the world's first theme park company to be accredited, at all properties, as Certified Autism Centers, autistic guests and their families can now explore more inclusive options while visiting the parks. This accreditation is in partnership with the **International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES)**, the only credentialing organization providing this form of certification.

"Six Flags is proud to be the industry leader on these innovative programs that allows our guests to enjoy the more thrilling rides that our parks have to offer," said **Selim Bassoul**, Six Flags President and Chief Executive Officer. "This offering, coupled with the IBCCES certification at our parks, shows our unwavering commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion."

The custom restraint harness offers multiple sizes that are able to accommodate riders with physical disabilities such as a missing limb or appendages starting at 54" tall. Approximately 98% of all Six Flags theme park rides are equipped with an individually designed harness. Certain rider restrictions and qualifications will apply.

"Six Flags is synonymous with thrills, but safety and inclusivity is the cornerstone of everything we do," said **Jason Freeman**, vice president, public safety and risk management for Six Flags. "We are proud to implement these key, new safety programs that bring thrills within reach for all guests," regardless of disability or limitations he added.

•sixflags.com

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and Six Flags Fiesta Texas
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goldenticketawards.com

IAAPA Expo Europe 2022

September 12 - 15, 2022
London, United Kingdom
iaapa.org/expos/iaapa-expo-europe

WWA Show

October 4 - 7, 2022
Las Vegas, Nevada
wwashow.org

2022 PACE Seminar

October 24-27, 2022
Allentown, Pennsylvania
email: srdirmaint@gmail.com

Pennsylvania Amusement Ride Safety Seminar

November 8-10, 2022
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
paridesafety.com

IAAPA Expo 2022

November 14 - 18, 2022
Orlando, Florida
iaapa.org/expos/iaapa-expo

IAFE 2022

November 27 - November 30, 2022
Indianapolis, Indiana
fairsandexpos.com/Annual-Convention

2023 AIMS International Safety Seminar

January 3 - 13, 2023
Galveston, Texas
aimsintl.org/aims-international-safety-seminar

IAAPA FEC Summit

January 22 - 24, 2023
Nashville, Tennessee
iaapa.org/events/connections/summit/fec-summit-2023

NAARSO Safety School

January 28 - February 3, 2023
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina
naarso.com/safety-seminars

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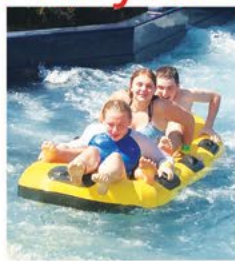


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BREAKING NEWS



The new section will be a retheming of the former Crossroads. COURTESY CAROWINDS

Carowinds plans for multiple new rides, redesign of area into Aeronautica Landing

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Starting with a makeover of a park section into County Fair in 2017, Carowinds leadership has gone throughout the park transforming former areas into fresher experiences. The fourth and latest area will be called Aeronautica Landing when the park opens for its 2023 season and its 50th anniversary.

The new land capitalizes on the Carolina's spirit of invention, exploration and aviation. The focus is on the history and future of flight. Construction of Aeronautica Landing is currently taking place in the space formerly known as Crossroads. Six rides will be a part of the section.

Zamperla is providing four of those rides: Air Race 6.4, Disk'O, Nebulaz and Windstarz — each themed after the area's new motif.

"We're extremely proud to partner with Cedar Fair and Carowinds for this installation," said Ramon Rosario, director of North America sales, Zamperla. "The close collaboration between our internal art department and Cedar Fair's team is going to create an immersive aeronautical experience for the guests at Carowinds while honoring the history of flight. Cedar Fair's team has done a wonderful job during the creative process to imagine thematic concepts and how they can be applied to our machines. The attention to detail will be enjoyed by their guests at Carowinds for years to come."

The forthcoming Disk'O is dubbed a "Skater" version and features an oblong platform.

"Because of the unique 24-passenger gondola, it brings the height restriction down to 36 inches, which will really open up the experience to a much bigger and younger audience," said Michael Coleman, North America sales, Zamperla.

Replacing the older bumper cars are new versions supplied by Majestic Manufacturing. Hover & Dodge will feature new bumper cars.

"Cedar Fair has been a client for 30 years plus. It's a nice group to work with," said Vince Kudler, president, Majestic. "These bumper cars are more for the times. Kids today have demanded more over the years. Rides have become more sophisticated and interactive, so we're offering something different not only appearance wise but a little more interactive. We've

had something in development for them to offer."

A rethemed classic Chance Trabant will round out the ride offerings in the new land.

In addition to the replacement of the bumper cars, three attractions have been retired to make room for the reimagined area.

A new restaurant called Terminal A will offer a craft beer bar and patio. A refreshed existing location and an additional food and beverage snack option will also be found in Aeronautica Landing. A game area will also take on the aviation theme in their challenges.

Vice President and General Manager Manny Gonzalez said: "This region played such an integral role in the history of developing and testing the tools for aviation, and we believe Aeronautica Landing will help bring that to life for our guests for years to come."



Zamperla's "skater" vehicle on the Disk'O has a lower height requirement (above). A themed Nebulaz (right) will be one of four Zamperla rides — and six total — in the new section.

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