



## Six Flags, Mack Rides debut Aquaman: Power Wave, the first in North America



The huge splash refreshes riders while creating a huge spectator draw on the midway.  
COURTESY SIX FLAGS

AT: Tim Baldwin  
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

ARLINGTON — Aquaman took his time surfacing in the Lone Star State, but his arrival has flooded Six Flags Over Texas with screams, smiles and laughs. Many attractions have been “years in the making,” but Aquaman: Power Wave has had its own sea of challenges.

Six Flags originally intended for the Mack Rides PowerSplash to open in 2020. Had it opened as planned, it would have been the second such ride in the world.

However, a list of situations pushed the project back, starting with COVID-19. Like numerous theme park projects, construction on several attractions hit pause when the world grappled with what the future may hold. Aquaman: Power Wave was one of them.

During this holding period, the management at the time took the opportunity to reassess and address the chain’s initiative to get more people on rides. By adding a turntable to accommodate a second boat, Six Flags could greatly increase its capacity.

This was a solid goal and one that would make great sense for the long-term, but it did require part of the track to be removed, foundation work to be dug and poured, and — most importantly — Mack Rides had to manufacture and supply the intended turntable and second boat. With numerous projects already under fabrication, the German manufacturer had to fit that in. All that meant the ride would be pushed to 2022.

“The redesign had been already done previously as we only had installations

with the turntable,” said Maximilian Roeser, head of marketing, Mack Rides. “To install the turntable station was not that complicated but took quite some time to produce, ship and install. The capacity increases massively, and the biggest benefit is the time the ride operators get while loading.”

While the benefits of the decision were there, it did come with challenges.

Northwest Coasters oversaw the construction and installation. “The site was already snug,” said Kevin Messick, president, Northwest Coasters. “To install the turntable, we had to take out three pieces of track, demo the existing concrete and put in the turntable. It was a very tight location because most of the infra-

► See AQUAMAN, page 6

## Busch Gardens Tampa Bay soars to new heights with help of S&S Worldwide

AT: David Fake  
Special to Amusement Today

TAMPA, Fla. — Serengeti Flyer, the latest installment of S&S Worldwide’s Screamin’ Swing model thrill ride officially opened to all guest at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay on February 27, 2023, after a three-day pass holder sneak peek of the attraction.

The park provides this description of what to expect from its newest extreme thrill attraction: “With each swing, riders will soar higher and higher, above Busch Gardens Tampa Bay’s expansive 65-acre Serengeti Plain while experiencing multiple negative-G moments before plunging back toward the Earth. Serengeti Flyer features twin dueling arms that soar progressively higher reaching speeds of 68 mph and a maximum height of 135 feet at the ride’s peak.”

Serengeti Flyer stands an impressive static height of 105 feet and does reach a dynamic height of 135 feet when the two 20-person gondolas are in full motion at speeds up to 68 miles per hour. This matches the record-breaking specs of the ride’s sister installation, Tidal Surge, at SeaWorld San Antonio,

► See BUSCH, page 9



Serengeti Flyer stands at an impressive static height of 105 feet and features twin dueling arms that soar progressively higher, reaching speeds of 68 mph.  
COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS TAMPA BAY

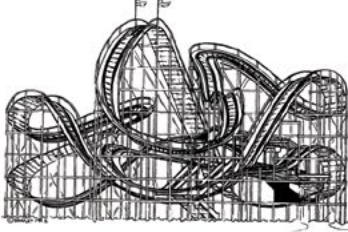




LAMBETZ

ZINGER

COMING SOON 2023



**GREAT  
COASTERS**  
INTERNATIONAL, INC.

SUNBURY, PA 17801 | PHONE: 570.286.9330  
[WWW.GREATCOASTERS.COM](http://WWW.GREATCOASTERS.COM)





# A Tradition of Delivering Excellence from 1961



Climb aboard the lithium-ion battery powered Electric C.P. Huntington™ Train one of the most popular attractions for guests.



Artistically crafted for an authentic, distinctive look, each Chance Rides Carousel is a masterpiece.



The sleek, maneuverable Sunliner™ II and Tramstar™ are the ultimate people movers!





# AMUSEMENT VIEWS

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

## A new season is upon us



Robinson

When I first signed on to *Amusement Today*, I always wondered why our issue count always restarted at #1 with the April edition each year. Just seemed odd to me, but I accepted it as likely just a result of when the publication originally launched.

However, as this issue came together, it finally made more sense. Yes, there are a few parks and attractions that remain open year-round — particularly with the more recent proliferation of indoor FECs — but this is when things start to really open up. This is the time of year when most seasonal parks — the originators of much of our industry — either open their gates to the public or are steeped in last minute preparations to do that very thing. These are the months when families are prepping to enjoy Spring Break trips or plotting an upcoming summer vacation.

*Amusement Today* starts its annual publication year with April because our industry's season starts to come alive in April. New attractions are opening, job fairs are in full swing and every member of this industry is beginning to settle in and brace for the triumphs and challenges of the months ahead.

Our 27th year of publication is beginning with this issue, *Amusement Today* is officially more than a quarter of a century old. However, our staff — like so many in this industry — have dedicated many more years in service to amusements and attractions. Gary Slade, Tim Baldwin, Jeffrey Seifert, Pam Sherborne, Sammy Piccola and more ... they've all dedicated decades of their lives to an industry that starts fresh again with each new season. New smiles ahead, new thrills to come and old friends to share them all with.

This is not an industry that someone works in for a paycheck or as a stepping stone. This is an industry that becomes a part of who you are and freshens your love for it with the start of each new season.

Here's to all of us as we start this season!

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

**FLINT'S VIEW:** Bubba Flint



**INDUSTRY VOICE:** Susey Storey, *Storey to Story Communications*

## Driving the industry, forging relationships

Have you ever thought about how supporting women leaders in the attractions industry positively impacts the future employees?

Our industry proudly points to the connection, shared passion and support we easily share with one another. Talk to any woman in the industry and the conversation goes deeper. This industry is about creating fun for families, and it can be bittersweet for women as they work to support those they'll never meet, while balancing the needs at home.

We are the businesses of evenings, weekends and holidays, and yet we still ask why there aren't more women in leadership roles. It's not about having a career versus a family but rather, can female industry leaders have both? The answer is yes, and it's through that connection our industry fosters.

During shared conversations about employee retention and per caps, women often discuss life at home, too. That's where



Storey

magic happens. Open conversations about guilt over not having family dinner together lead to solutions such as having shared breakfast instead. Worry about working on holidays leads to planning "Friendsgiving traditions." The ingenuity and fresh perspectives women bring to their roles apply as much to forecasting season pass sales as they do to managing teenagers' schedules.

This month, *AT* launched a new column (*Focus on the Horizon*, page 37) highlighting the upcoming industry leaders. They're a special group. Some are next generation, born into the industry; some grew up dreaming of careers in it. They recognize important conversations about adapting, adjusting, finding independent solutions and showing up apply at work as well as at home. That those who make memories for others, also do so for their families. I can't think of a better way to inspire our future leaders than by supporting the women leaders we have today.

**AmusementTODAY**  
Your Amusement Industry NEWS Leader

*Amusement Today* is an independent, privately-owned trade newspaper published 14 times per year by Amusement Today Inc., P.O. Box 5427, Arlington, Texas 76005. The entire contents of this newspaper, and its related websites, are Copyrighted and Trademarked 2023 by Amusement Today Inc., all rights reserved.

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Founder & Publisher

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

### Accounting & Classified

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

### Advertising

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

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

### Editor & Production Manager

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

### Editorial

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

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

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

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

### Monthly Contributors

David Fake, Bubba Flint, Ron Gustafson, Susan Storey, Janice Witherow

### Association Memberships

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

### Industry Affiliated Charities

Give Kids the World Village, Morgan's Wonderland, National Roller Coaster Museum & Archives





# 2 MINUTE DRILL



AT: Janice Witherow

## Eric Fluet, Get It Done Marketing

With more than 25 years of experience with leading corporations in the amusement industry, including **Merlin Entertainment** and multiple **Six Flags** theme parks, **Eric Fluet** knows what it takes to succeed in the business of hospitality. In 2017, he launched **Get It Done Marketing**, a freelance marketing firm with a focus on attractions, and he has not looked back since. Eric's sense of community, thoughtful leadership, creative flair and spirit of entrepreneurship are endearing qualities he brings to every job to "Get It Done."



Eric Fluet has spent more than 25 years in the amusement industry, launching his own marketing firm — **Get It Done Marketing** — in 2017. COURTESY ERIC FLUET

**Title:** Principal, Get It Done Marketing.

**Number of years in the industry:** 28.

**Best thing about the industry:** The people. The comradery, passion, and dedication of the professionals in this industry blows me away.

**Favorite amusement ride:** Hagrid's Magical Creatures Motorbike Adventure. I don't want to spoil the surprise for anyone who hasn't ridden it yet, but adventure and excitement at every turn!

**If I weren't working in the amusement industry, I would be ...** Owning and operating a local sign shop.

**Biggest challenge facing our industry:** Macroeconomic market pressures and our ability to pivot during short operating seasons.

**The thing I like most about amusement park season is ...** The excitement and optimism at the beginning of each season. New year, new opportunities.

**When you have out-of-town guests, where is your favorite place to take them?** Depending on the time of the year, we'll take them to do something touristy in NYC.

**Favorite author:** I am currently reading through Ben Macintyre's books, but I am also a fan of J.K. Rowling.

**What's your typical breakfast?** I'm a big fan of a hot breakfast when I am on the road. Scrambled eggs, bacon and coffee are the go-to.

**What's one thing you do on Friday to jumpstart the weekend?** I try to get through my email to make sure I've responded to anyone who needs something from me prior to the weekend.

**When I say politics, you say ...** Got to go, I hear my mom calling me...

**Who's in charge of dinnertime in your house?** My wife.

**Go-to after dinner drink:** Vodka cranberry.

**If money were no object, I would ...** Keep working. I don't know how to turn it off.

**The coolest thing on my desk right now is ...** I do keep an old pewter Daffy Duck business card holder from my Six Flags days on the corner of my desk.

**What is your guilty pleasure?** Binge watching streaming shows

**Favorite one-stop shop:** Target.

**The busiest day of the week for me always seems to be ...** Monday.

**The celebrity I wish lived next door to me is ...** Chip and Joanna Gaines

**What song always makes you want to dance?** Not much of a dancer but about any song can get me singing in the car.

**The one place I would rather be more than anywhere:** On a baseball diamond.

**The TV show I never miss is ...** I really enjoy watching *The Mandalorian* with my boys on Saturday morning.

## THE INDUSTRY SEEN

### It's a big DEAL



DUBAI, U.A.E. — The staff at Embed's exhibit at the Dubai Entertainment, Amusement and Leisure (DEAL) Show celebrated the success of STATS alongside members of Amazon Web Services (AWS) at the event. After its successful unveiling during IAAPA Expo 2022 in Orlando, Embed has taken its new STATS service — a development powered by AWS — overseas, debuting it at DEAL from March 14-16, 2023. "It was thrilling to see how huge the potential is for STATS here in the region," said Saeed Abdillahi, EMEA sales manager at Embed. COURTESY EMBED

1-800-553-2476  www.kaypark.com



**KAY PARK RECREATION**  
MAKING PLACES PEOPLE FRIENDLY • SINCE 1954

Coupon Code  
AT2023PA



Tables, Benches, Litter Receptacles, Grills, Bike Racks, Bleachers, Dog Park Equipment, Drinking Fountains & More!



## ►AQUAMAN

Continued from page 1

structure was already in. The decision to come back and install the turntable extended the project at least a year.”

The modifications, combined with COVID restrictions and supply chain interruptions admittedly pushed the project back further than what would be desired.

“Any time you shut down a project and come back over a year later, it’s always a challenge. Parts go missing, parts aren’t in the right place — we had three days to get everything out and clean everything up,” said Messick. “The track was in. It’s not designed to be taken out that easily. It was labor intensive, but everyone worked well together.”

Six Flags Over Texas wasted no time rolling it out in 2023. Even with some chilly days in late February, season pass holders were able to enjoy preview rides. The ride made its official debut on March 11, the first day of the park’s spring



**Aquaman: Power Wave is the first Mack Rides PowerSplash in North America. Riders speed up a vertical tower nearly 150 feet up in the air (right). AT/TIM BALDWIN**

break calendar. Aquaman: Power Wave opened to a tidal wave of cheers.

Although simple in appearance, the wide stretch of track crosses a retaining pool and is sandwiched between two vertical towers, the tallest of which is 146 feet. Using linear synchronous motors, riders are launched three times, gaining speed on each subsequent launch, eventually reaching 62 mph. These bursts of speed

and vertical climbs are thrilling on their own, particularly with a surprising airtime hill positioned in between. But the big moment arrives at the ride’s finale.

Mack Rides has developed an ingenious section of track within the pool that fills in mere seconds so that as the boat plunges from its highest climb, it skims into

► See AQUAMAN, page 8



**NWC**  
NORTHWEST COASTERS

**Complete Roller Coaster Construction**  
**Excavation and Foundations**  
**Renovation & Rehab**  
**Contact us for all your construction needs**  
 Email: [kmessick@northwestcoaster.com](mailto:kmessick@northwestcoaster.com)  
 208-553-4440

[Northwestcoaster.com](http://Northwestcoaster.com)



MACK RIDES PRESENTS

# POWERSPLASH



CONGRATULATIONS TO SIXFLAGS OVER TEXAS FOR THE PREMIERE OF AQUAMAN: POWERWAVE!  
Powerful launches, dizzying heights and an extraordinary splash are ready to be explored. The 20-seater boats reach up to 125 ft and drop with over 60 mph into the water. Learn more about our PowerSplash and other attractions of Mack Rides at [www.mack-rides.com](http://www.mack-rides.com)



## ►AQUAMAN

Continued from page 6

the pool creating an enormous splash. It's everything a park wants a spectator draw to be.

"We work with weirs and an elevated pool of water surrounding the track in the splash zone," said Roeser. "When there should be no splash, the pumps get the water around the track out of the way making it a dry, back-and-forth roller coaster. When the boat is about to splash and decelerate we open the weirs and the water level rises in a matter of seconds."

"The mechanical side of me was fascinated with how fast that system could push out that water and then pump it back in," noted Messick. "You have seconds. It's impressive. That water is also a brake, so the water is a big deal."

"My favorite part is the massive 90-degree drop and the splashdown at the end," said **Richard Douaihy**, park president. "It's amazing. It's epic."

"My favorite thing about



The huge wave thrown off by the attraction makes it an ideal draw for its Texas audience (above left). Years in the making, Aquaman: Power Wave easily captivates onlookers now that it is open. COURTESY SIX FLAGS; AT/TIM BALDWIN

this ride is that it gets faster and faster as you go," said **Chris Ozimek**, regional marketing director, Six Flags. "I love the airtime moment as you go backward on the big launch. It's incredible. Most people don't notice this little hill in the middle, because they look at the towers."

The top speed is 63 mph. "Six Flags Over Texas is the first Six Flags park, and we really wanted something unique and different, and that's how we came around

on this ride," said Ozimek. "It's the only place in North America that you can ride this. We think it's not only going to make our current fans excited about the summer, but I also think we're going to entertain a legion of new fans because of this ride."

When asked by *Amusement Today* if he thought other parks would take notice, Ozimek said, "Other parks should take notice because it is a great ride. It exceeds our expectations."



"This PowerSplash installation will show many parks that a launch coaster and a water/spill ride are a great combination," said Roeser. "We already know from several installations in Kazakhstan, South Korea and the prototype in Belgium that this is a landmark attraction, and many guests will want to ride it."

In addition to the innovative splash zone, the ride itself also checks and confirms that each restraint is

locked, indicating authentication by lights at the ride attendant's feet on the turntable.

While the park confirmed the ride was operational at the end of last summer, the upcoming fall and winter events became the focus then. However, Six Flags was eager to make it available to guests as early as possible.

"It's a big ride. We know it has taken a few years, but trust me, it is worth the wait," Douaihy said.

# MAY ISSUE

## 2023 Park Preview

### DEADLINE APRIL 10, 2023!

What's NEW at your facility?

Let us know!

Amusement Today will include you in our

2023 Park Preview appearing in May 2023!

CONTACT:

Jeffrey Seifert

(817) 460-7220

jseifert@amusementtoday.com

Parks & Attractions acquires FECs, builds on their foundations — pages 42-43

## Amusement TODAY

TM & ©2023 Amusement Today, Inc.

March 2023 | Vol. 26 • Issue 12

Your Amusement Industry NEWS Leader

**Embed's transformative tech opens gates to FEC of the future**

AT: Susan Storey  
Special to Amusement Today

SINGAPORE — Family entertainment centers (FEC) are the fastest-growing and arguably the most diverse — segment of the global attractions industry. Innovative technology has helped raise the bar for guests of all ages, making unique, affordable and repeatable alleys, competitive challenge games and even nostalgic classics are evolving, so too are the tools FEC owners and operators rely on to keep everything smoothly running. The transition to cashless operation for the FEC industry had been steady but slow. However as COVID-19 quickly moved around the world, the need for touchless solutions moved the timetable forward. It was no longer a nice idea; it was necessary.

Embed's focus on providing integration services for FECs has evolved to help clients think about their company from a future viewpoint, beyond the current day-to-day operation. This work begins with providing seamless solutions for payment reporting and management.

» See FUTURE, page 6

**INSIDE:**

Amusement Expo 2023 anticipates high attendance

pages 22-23

Print Edition

Ship preparing for 2023

AT/RON GUSTAFSON

Camp Fimfo opens Cliff Carver by Wiegand, Texas' first alpine coaster

AT: Tim Baldwin  
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

NEW BRAUNFELS, Texas — Camp Fimfo in Texas' Hill Country is one of two such named properties in the Lone Star State. Situated in a scenic setting...



## ►BUSCH

Continued from page 1

which opened in 2022. The previous record holder, Skyhawk, at Cedar Point held the record between 2006 and 2022 with a static height of 103 feet.

"Thrills are in full swing at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay with yet another exciting record-setting ride for our guests to enjoy," said **Neal Thurman**, park president of Busch Gardens Tampa Bay. "As the world's tallest and fastest ride of its kind, Serengeti Flyer joins a world-class portfolio of attractions, offering breathtaking views of the park and a one-of-a-kind experience for all our guests."

That "Full Swing" took a little longer than expected to get in motion.

"We have been working on [Serengeti Flyer] for a little while. We actually started in 2020 prior to COVID with some of the foundation and underground work and then we had to shut down for COVID. We restarted again here in April of 2022," Thurman said.

"As we look at different rides in the park, we want to have a wide variety of things for people to do, so we want to have a variety of rides. We are certainly known for our roller coasters, but we wanted to do something that was unique and different, and that's what led us to Serengeti Flyer."

"Serengeti Flyer's

## Busch Gardens SERENGETI FLYER

thrilling ride experience is bound to provide riders with a pulse-pounding encounter that can only be found at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay," he added. "We believe that Serengeti Flyer will be the perfect high-thrill addition to our world-class portfolio of attractions including Iron Gwazi, the Golden Ticket Award Winner for the Best New Roller Coaster in 2022."

"This is a new kind of ride for this park," said **Andrew Schaffer**, corporate director at **Sea World Parks and Entertainment**. "Serengeti Flyer is a 105-foot swing ride, so it's going to swing you back and forth through 230 degrees of rotation, getting you up to a height of 135 feet. So, if you can imagine, you are actually past the horizontal point and you are upside down for a moment."

Guests are seated back-to-back in rows of 10 across two gondolas, allowing for 40 guests to experience the ride at once, which will also yield a high guest capacity, once the park has ironed out the kinks of an expedited load/unload process.

The one-minute-and-20-second ride duration consists of 13 full swings, each with increasing negative-G moments.



Busch Gardens Tampa Bay believes that Serengeti Flyer will be the perfect high-thrill addition to its world-class portfolio of attractions including Iron Gwazi, the Golden Ticket Award Winner for the Best New Roller Coaster in 2022.

COURTESY

BUSCH GARDENS TAMPA

"When you hit those top peaks, it does feel like you stop for a second before you get forced back down again," Schaffer said.

Because Serengeti Flyer is in the Nairobi area of the park and utilizes the old Rhino Rally load station, it offers riders spectacular views of the Busch Gardens Tampa Bay's Serengeti Plain as they ride — granted, only as long as the rider is not too scared to keep their eyes open.

"You can see pretty much the entire view of the park sitting on one side like Cheetah Hunt, Gwazi, you can even see downtown Tampa and then from the other side, you can see all of the animals that are out there, 65 acres of animals on the other side," Schaffer explained.

"It really forces you forward and backward, and it gives you that stomach-dropping feeling when you're doing it. And then once you get up to that 135 feet - at the full swing, it's just a really cool experience," Schaffer added. "It's



thrilling - it's got a lot of forces and power behind it. So it's definitely a fun ride,"

"The goal out of making this attraction, every time, is making the guests happy. So really, when I see smiling and excited faces coming off the ride — it's perfect for me," Schaffer concluded.

The unique thrill of Serengeti Flyer are not the only thing to love about the ride, it is also a truly family-friendly attraction. With a minimum height requirement of only 48 inches and providing wheelchair accessibility, it is open to a wider range of families (although, it is necessary for wheelchair guests to transfer onto the ride's restraint system from their wheelchair).

S&S Worldwide describes its Screamin' Swing as "a truly new and unique ride experience designed to offer a smooth, thrilling ride to every 'kid' who ever dreamed of swinging higher! The Screamin'

Swing meets the needs of any amusement park with passenger capacities of 32 and 40 passengers per ride cycle, and features a small footprint, low maintenance costs and maximum thrill."

With 18 Screamin' Swings of various size and capacity currently operating around the world (U.S. (15), U.K. (1), Sweden (1) and Russia (1) according to coasterpedia.net), the popularity of the ride lives up to S&S's claim.

The first Screamin' Swing was introduced at Knott's Berry Farm in 2004. It operated with a maximum capacity of eight passengers and was decommissioned in 2015.

Serengeti Flyer is the third Screamin' Swing installation in the SeaWorld chain of parks after Finnegan's Flyer at **Busch Gardens Williamsburg** in 2019 and Tidal Surge at SeaWorld San Antonio last year.



The two 20-person gondolas are in full motion at speeds up to 68 miles per hour and reach a dynamic height of 135 feet when in motion. COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS TAMPA



# PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

▶ Paradise Pier debuts with Zamperla ride package — page 14 / 2023 Florida State Fair is successful — page 26

## Traders Village in Grand Prairie celebrates 50 years of growth

AT: Tim Baldwin  
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — Sandwiched between State Highway 360 and the 161 tollway, Traders Village was built before either of those highways existed. The weekend flea market opened in 1973 with just 12 shops. It was a project originated by JC Pace, and three generations of the Pace family are still the owners.

“JC Pace did not realize that he was creating what would become the largest weekend flea market in the United States,” said Tim Anderson, president.

“Traders Village started as a small business incubator and remains so today,” said Anderson. “A place where the little guy can start a business, a side hustle or just sell some extra stuff. Tens of thousands of small businesses started at Traders Village, some of which are no longer small businesses.”

That handful of shops has grown into more than 3,000 vendors each weekend. Traders Village has been such a huge success that two other sites were built in the state, one in Houston and one in San Antonio. A fourth facility has recently been acquired. Western Playland in Sunland Park, New Mexico, will see the reverse course of a flea market adding an amusement park to an amusement park adding a flea market.

The diversity of goods to be found by shoppers ranges from fresh fruit to tires to puppies.



Traders Village President Tim Anderson cuts an official grand opening ribbon for Prairie Screamer while the Pace family and city officials look on (above). Prairie Playland mixes old classics with new thrillers (below left). President Tim Anderson welcomes dignitaries and speaks on 50 years of history of Traders Village (below right). AT/TIM BALDWIN



“Traders Village is about helping the little guy,” said Anderson. “Traders Village is about economic development. It’s not strip centers and chain restaurants. It’s about helping and lifting up our friends, neighbors and people in our community.”

Shopping is the main purpose of the flea market, but at its center is Prairie

Playland. What started decades ago as an assortment of simple, classic rides, now boasts a mix of those classics from Eli Bridge and Allan Herschell to modern thrillers from Chance Rides and Larson International. Although its most recent ride, Prairie Screamer (a large roller coaster from E&F Miler), made a debut late



last fall, an official grand opening took place with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on March 4. On that date, the flea market had a 50th-anniversary celebration with a parade, speakers, a live band and more.

“Fifty years ago, the only things in Grand Prairie were Traders Village and the Wax Museum,” noted Grand

Prairie Mayor Ron Jensen.

That’s very different today. Within a two-mile radius, the relatively new 161 tollway has brought in Epic Waters Indoor Water Park and the Epic Central campus featuring park and recreation development, The Main Event, Bolder Adventure Park and shopping developments such as IKEA. Soon to arrive are an Andretti Indoor Karting and Games and Bass Pro Shop.

“Traders Village has grown beyond a simple flea market,” said Anderson. “Shopping is important, but it is more.”

“Traders Village has been an important part of our entertainment community for 50 years,” said Jensen. “We celebrate with them on their anniversary and applaud their success and contributions to our community.”

Traders Village hosts numerous events throughout the year. Cultural festivals, celebrity appearances, live concerts and more create events to draw crowds. While admission is free, Traders Village estimates more than 3 million visitors a year in attendance — all within just weekend operation.

Visitors find a wide range of food offerings. Traders Village offers \_\_ food stands or restaurants at the flea market.

“The food is really good, and I should know because I eat here every weekend,” joked Anderson.

▶ See TRADERS, page 12

**IRG**  
**Intermark Ride Group**

- Fabbri Group
- Gosetto
- Moser Rides
- Ride Engineers Switzerland
- Used Rides

www.intermarkridegroup.com  
TEL 615.370.9625



Fabbri Pirate TM & PM



Gosetto Fun House



RES New Dual Wheel





*Sail into the sky with a smile!*



PO BOX 638 • PLAINVIEW, TEXAS 79072 • (806) 293-1353 • LARSONINTL.COM



# AMUSEMENT PARK MARKET PLACE



**HAMMERED**

Phone: 435-258-7901  
www.altitudeattractions.com

ALTITUDE  
RIDES AND ATTRACTIONS



**n**  
**Naughton**  
Insurance, Inc.

EST. 1947

Specializing in Insurance Programs for  
Amusement Parks, Water Parks and  
Family Fun Centers.

www.naughtoninsurance.com



**ETF**  
imaginative engineering

Your specialist for people movers  
and interactive dark rides

www.etf.nl



**Sunkid**  
we move, you smile.

Contact us!  
sunkidworld.com  
Tel: +43 5412 68131  
info@sunkidworld.com

**Sunkid - Water Park Conveyors**  
+3800 Installations | 75 Countries | World Wide Service



**HODGDON**  
**CONSULTING**

The destination for building your brand  
and maintaining its presence

- Advertising & Branding
- Public Relations
- Social Media & Email Marketing

hodgdonconsulting@gmail.com  
207-536-8192



**get it done GiD**  
MARKETING

25 years of strategy and execution

For more:  
ERIC FLUET, ICAE  
at 201-962-6414



**TRAINWORKS**  
**GLOBAL**

- Locomotives
- Caboose
- Trolleys
- Rock Cars
- Crossing Signals
- Passenger Coaches
- Rail, Track Supplies & Tools
- Track Construction Services

704-654-8355 • TrainWorksGlobal.com  
email: Steve@TrainWorksGlobal.com



**Wiegand**  
SPORTS USA

**FUN**  
HAS NO  
OFF-SEASON

WWW.WIEGANDSPORTSUSA.COM

## TRADERS Continued from page 10

Anderson, General Manager **Mark Kane**, and Amusement Park Director **Steve Thomas** all had amusement industry experience before joining the Traders Village team.

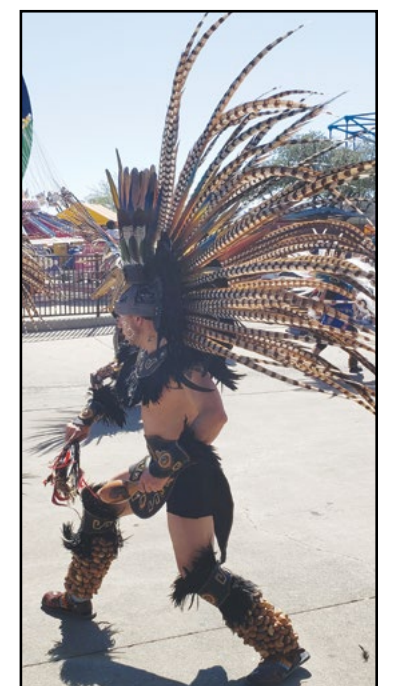
"Prairie Screamer has been a big boost for us," said Thomas. The fact that we have been around for 50 years and are still growing is simply amazing."

The new Prairie Screamer roller coaster has been exceptionally popular. "It is the perfect size ride for Traders Village," said Anderson. "It's very family oriented but also has just the right amount of zip. Don't underestimate it."

Currently, between the four properties, Traders Village owns and operates 65 rides. It is the second-largest operator of rides in the state of Texas.

"I fully expect Prairie Playland to continue to grow, adding new rides and attractions, along with our other markets," Thomas told *Amusement Today*. "Currently we are on target to grow beyond our 3 million annual attendance and surpass that with another record-breaking year."

Just like the shopping opportunities, Prairie Playland is a bargain as well. An all-day ride wristband is only \$14.99 for those under 48 inches. With the four larger rides added, the price is 18.99.



Native dancers helped add culture to the 50th-anniversary parade.  
AT/TIM BALDWIN

Keep our amusement park industry strong!  
Buy products and services from these suppliers.



# P'Sghetti

Children's Coaster

## BOWL

SIX LAYOUTS AVAILABLE!

Opening in 2023!



### Details

- Base frame option available for indoor or outdoor use
- Inclusive train design fits both children and adults
- Weld-free track design for reduced maintenance
- Theming opportunities for both the track and trains!

### Ride Stats

Height	24.5' [7.5 m]
Length	566' [172.7 m] 592' [180.4 m]
Footprint	162' x 83' [49.5 m x 25.3 m]
Capacity	1,200 pph
Power	100 kW
Height Req.	36" [91 cm]

MODEL A      MODEL B      MODEL C      MODEL D



Also available in other sizes!  
[SkylineAttractions.com/PSghetti](http://SkylineAttractions.com/PSghetti)

**SKYLINE**  
 ATTRACTIONS, LLC  
 ORLANDO, FL USA  
 +1 407-587-0080  
 SKYLINEATTRACTIONS.COM





# Paradise Pier opens with Zamperla rides, Technical Park wheel

AT: Tim Baldwin  
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

BILOXI, Miss. — Paradise Pier Fun Park opened on March 3. The term “pier” is a unique interpretation as it technically is designed as a parking garage with an amusement park on top.

“The unique visibility of the Paradise Pier Fun Park is a great way to make the most of limited waterfront space here on the coast, and it is a wonderful addition to the area,” said Tessy Lambert, marketing. “We needed more elevated family fun, and this park provides that in a fun and exciting way.”

“Paradise Pier is not your typical seaside pier,” said Michael Coleman, North American sales, Zamperla. “Its connection to the Margaritaville Resort Biloxi provides access from their indoor FEC as well as the over-water parking structure on which it sits.”

Zamperla was the largest provider of rides for the facility.

“With a zero level for the park approximately 40 feet in the air, installations took more thoughtful consideration,” Coleman told *Amusement Today*. “The team from GLS did a great job positioning their cranes and working with care while flying our equipment into place. Operating rides out over the water isn’t something new to the industry,



but it certainly takes a high level of attention to detail as conditions can change at a moment’s notice.”

If weather flares up, the Margaritaville Resort offers restaurants, bars and activities undercover.

“The Zamperla Group appreciates the trust put in us to provide 80% of the attractions for their newest endeavor,” said Coleman. “Our engineering staff worked tirelessly to ensure each attraction got the necessary attention needed to operate and provide safe, enjoyable experiences for guests while encountering hurricane force winds and highly corrosive salt air.”

A total of 12 Zamperla rides offer a range of thrills.

Larger rides are a swinging galleon (Hit the Deck), the first Air Race 6.2 in the U.S. (Puddle Jumper), Sky Tower (Buoy Blaster) and a Mega Disk’O 24 (SOS).

“[SOS] is placed along the water. The dynamic movement of the ride will have guests feeling as if they are going to spin out in the Gulf of Mexico,” said Coleman.

Mid-sized rides include a Pump N Jump (Tropical Hopper), sporting a palm tree theme with pineapples and mangos — which Coleman deems “absolutely adorable.” A Midi-Family Swinger (Treehouse Twirl), Samba Tower (Whirlwind Balloons) and Sky Tower (Bouy Blaster).

On the tamer side are Super Happy Swing (Sea Swinger), Speedway 8 (Beach Cruiser) and Jump Around (Wave Rider). Saltwater Stables is the first Double Decker Carousel from Zamperla in the world with a custom nautical theme and full ADA wheelchair access.

The biggest thrill is a Discovery Revolution 16 (Storm Surge). This 16-passenger pendulum swings riders 360 degrees.

“For families traveling to the region, I think

**Storm Surge is the most daring attraction, flipping riders 360 degrees.**  
COURTESY LODGING & LEISURE INVESTMENTS



The park’s visibility is even more dramatic at night. The observation wheel from Technical Park stands 180 feet on the 40-foot pier structure (above). Zamperla provided 12 rides for Paradise Pier (below). COURTESY LODGING & LEISURE INVESTMENTS

this is a no-brainer stop on the journey with something for everyone to enjoy,” said Coleman. “Views from the lobby bar and guest accommodations provide aerial views of the park typically only seen from drone footage. Sunset views from the park are amazing as well and provide a great vantage point for guests of all ages.”

Another iconic eye-catcher is a wheel from Technical Park. The 180-foot wheel (Tide-Turner) beckons tourists to the pier. It features air-conditioned gondolas and a captivating light package after sunset.

“Building the Ferris wheel on a pier, or in this case, a parking garage, creates challenges because the loads at the base of the wheel affect the structure with limits to be considered ensuring compatibility,” said Marco Grigolo, Technical Park. “Structural and civil engineers shared skills and were engaged to check the feasibility of making sure the reactions were within admissible tolerances, especially since the underlying structure was an already existing parking garage.”

Climate-controlled gondolas can be a real advantage in year-round operation.

“Air-conditioned cabins are a plus, especially on



giant Ferris wheels, because of the slow speed and longer observation experience. It enhances the attractiveness of a premium experience,” said Grigolo.

An Aerophile Aerobar attraction is also on site. A complimentary drink and souvenir cup are included on the attraction, which is an additional \$19.99 per person.

A small family spinning coaster from SBF-Visa (Rolling Thunder) rounds out the mix, offering fun on rails for both young and old alike. In addition to the spinning cars, a rollover vehicle allows riders to flip.

Guests will see colorful characters roaming the park.

“The mascots of Paradise Pier Fun Park are fun and memorable characters that are sure to bring a smile to visitors of all ages,” said Lambert. “Captain Charlie is a brave

and adventurous boy who loves the sea and his loyal parrots, Theo and Delilah. Kenny the shark is always looking for new adventures, while Eward the Dutch Duck is always up for a good joke. Together, these characters create a fun and inviting atmosphere for all who visit.”

Hurricane Katrina wiped out many waterfront amusements 17 years ago. Paradise Pier is now open daily.

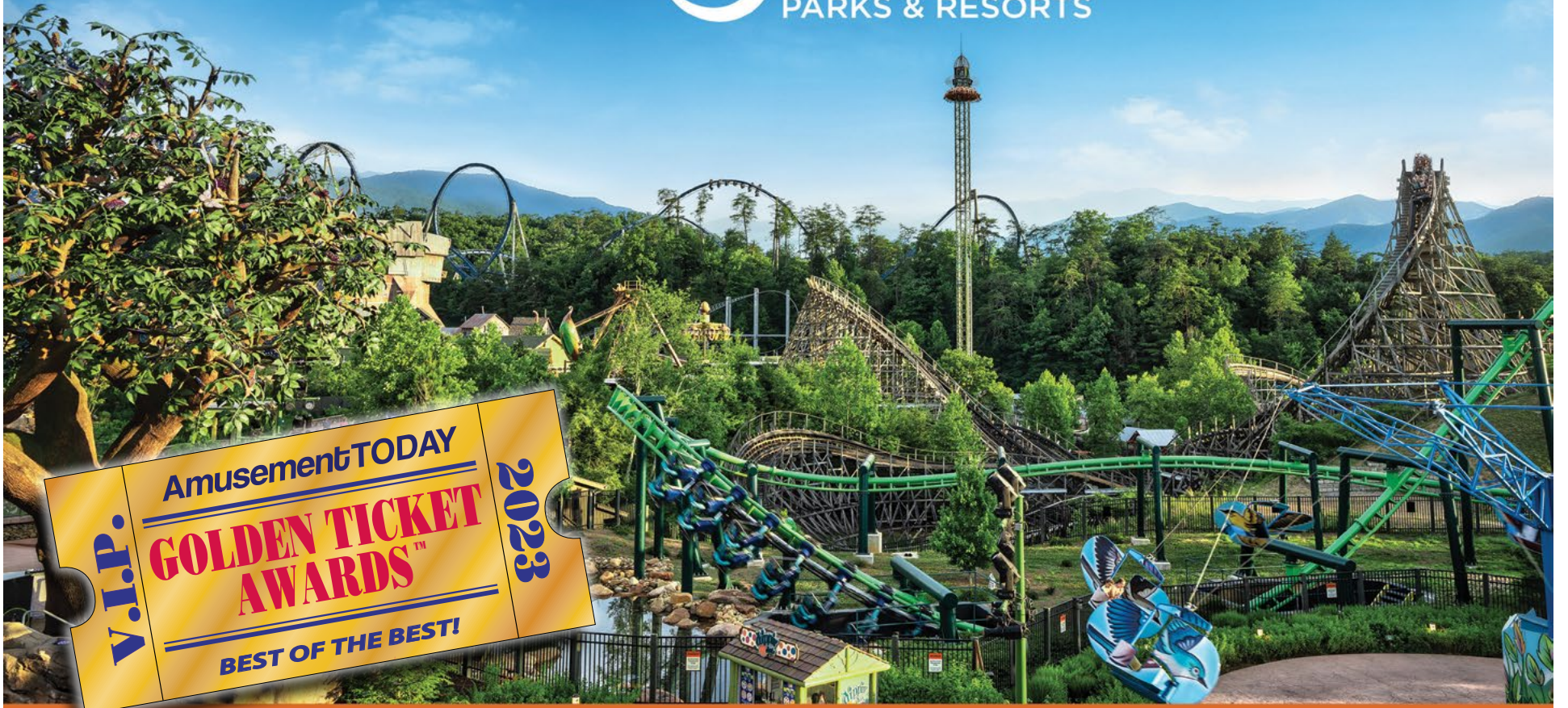
“Biloxi needed more of a dedicated family fun presence and Paradise Pier Fun Park is the perfect addition,” said Lambert. “It’s a great way for tourists to experience fun and exciting activities in a safe and family-friendly atmosphere. From exciting rides and attractions to delicious food and live entertainment, there’s something for everyone to enjoy.”

•paradisepierbiloxi.com



# Dollywood®

PARKS & RESORTS



SEE YOU SEPTEMBER 8 - 9 AT DOLLYWOOD  
FOR THE 2023 GOLDEN TICKET AWARDS



**BIG BEAR**  
MOUNTAIN

**OUR BIGGEST EXPANSION  
IN WILDWOOD GROVE**

**COMING SPRING 2023**

Dollywood.com



# Forest Park Miniature Railroad on track for upcoming 2023 opening

AT: Pam Sherborne  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

FORT WORTH, Texas — The **Forest Park Miniature Railway** in Fort Worth, Texas, which has been running in the park since 1959, has been a family affair and **Mary Talley, Talley Amusements**, has never taken that lightly.

It has been a labor of love for her family and now as sole owner of the company **Forest Park Rides** since Jan. 20, she is all too happy to continue that legacy.

But she has had to hit the ground running to get the iconic miniature trains up and running in time for summer tourists and locals alike. COVID, as well as some health issues of extended family members that were operating the trains, have kept the attraction closed since 2022.

There has been a lot to do within a short time frame to get it done.

The ride includes three **Chance C.P. Huntington**



While everything will get a fresh coat, Mary Talley of Talley Amusements has decided to keep the colors of orange and lime green that the trains were painted in 1997. COUTESY FOREST PARK RIDES

train engines. She shipped two to **Western Train Co.** in Temecula, for a complete overall. The third, which she calls a rescue train in case one of the main ones go down, is being refurbished in-house.

All three of the trains are being converted from gasoline powered to diesel.

"Tommy (Talley, Mary

Talley's husband) is redoing all the coaches in-house," Talley said. "He is the best in the business."

She also has a crew working on the five miles of track, including the bridges, of course. One of the bridges that crosses the Trinity River is a 350-foot-long trestle bridge.

From the depot, the train heads east and then cuts north to cross the Trinity River into Trinity Park. Along its five miles, the train travels under a highway and takes the scenic journey through the park.

Talley has a concession stand in Trinity Park; and the train stops there after



crossing the river.

Talley said the trains and coaches were refurbished in about 1997. They

► See TRAIN, page 17

## Property Insurance "Done Right"

This program only offers Property Insurance. It's our specialty.



### Park Owners and Risk Managers

Give this brochure to your insurance agent/broker to access the ParksPlus Property Program!

### Amusement Industry

Dedicated Property Program for:

Theme Parks • Water Parks  
And Other Amusement Industry Related Risks

### Highlights

#### Program Designed for the Amusement Industry

- ✓ All Risk Coverage
- ✓ Earthquake, Flood, and Named Windstorm available
- ✓ Tailored deductible options
- ✓ Customized, manuscripted policy form specifically designed for the Amusement Industry
- ✓ Amusement underwriting expertise with 50+ years combined experience



### Managed by ParksPlus Underwriting Agency LLC

(an affiliated division of Intersure Insurance Brokers Corp.)

David A. Chodzko C.I.P.

davidac@parksplusinsure.com • Agency Phone: 352-593-3688

Mailing Address: PO Box 15121, Brooksville, FL 34604

Overnight-Type Deliveries: 18015 Devonwood Drive, Brooksville, FL 34604

*Insuring Amusement Risks for 20+ Years*



Insurance Underwriting & Security: ParksPlus Insurance Co. Inc.

ParksPlus Insurance Company Inc. is a subsidiary of Talisman Insurance Company. They have satisfied statutory financial requirements, and their reinsurance support is provided by companies with an excellent A.M. Best Rating.





The Forest Park Railway's five miles of track take riders across six bridges, one of which is a trestle bridge 350-feet long (above). Tommy Talley is refurbishing all the coaches for the Forest Park Railway in-house (right). COURTESY FOREST PARK RIDES



► **TRAIN**

Continued from page 16

changed the colors of the trains at that time.

"One was painted orange and the other a lime green that looked great going through the park," she said. "We are going to keep those colors."

The Forest Park Miniature Railway has been a tradition at the park for gen-

erations of riders.

"Let's just say you know how the Texas Star is an icon at Fair Park in Dallas? Well, this train has been the same thing for Fort Worth."

Talley comes from a long line of showmen. Her great grandfather, **Bill Hames**, began the family legacy. He had a traveling carousel, pulled by horse, as far back as 1910. That business grew into the amusement compa-

ny, **Bill Hames Shows**.

Talley said her grandfather, also **Bill Hames**, decided that he wanted to be in the **Guinness World Records** by building the longest miniature railway in the world.

So he did.

According to the Forest Park Miniature Railway website, on opening day, over 1,500 people rode the train, 70 to 100 passengers at a time. The following

day, the crowd grew to over 4,000 riders and attracted so many patrons that there was a traffic jam in Forest Park.

Due to the popularity and limited amount of operating hours, 5,000 patrons rode the train while over 3,000 were given refunds, because there were not enough hours in the day. At the time, a ride on the train cost 35 cents per rider.

After his death, Talley's parents **Maryellen Hames**

**Brown and Buster Brown**, inherited the amusement company, including the train.

For years, the railroad operated with the Texas Chief as the main engine, but that was retired in April of 1973 when a new line of **Chance C.P. Huntington** Trains were introduced. Forest Park was one of the first miniature railroads to take delivery of the C.P. Huntington Model.

**Lagotronics Projects**<sup>®</sup>  
Creating Unforgettable Memories



**Interactive Walkthrough**

- Wireless Devices
- Hidden Targets
- Discover Clues
- Special Effects
- Scoring System

[www.LagotronicsProjects.com](http://www.LagotronicsProjects.com)



# MSC Cruises' Seascape thrills guests by taking Robotron out to sea

AT: Pam Sherborne  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

MIAMI, Fla. — During the last month of 2022, MSC Cruises christened one of its newest cruise ships, the MSC Seascape. Not only does this cruise ship carry the newest of the new as far as amenities and technology, but it also carries with it what has been touted as the first-ever customizable onboard interactive robotic thrill ride, the Robotron.

While cruise passengers are becoming more accustomed to participating in such activities as roller coasters, drop slides, zip lines, go-kart racetracks, water slides and surf simulators, among others, aboard their ships, this high-tech entertainment attraction adds a new dimension to what can now be offered onboard ships.

The Robotron was developed for the Seascape by RWS Entertainment Group, with the robotic arm built by the German company Kuka, the same company that built the arms for Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey attractions at multiple



## Universal parks.

Combining the thrill of a coaster with personalized music and lighting, the ride's robotic arm has an attached gondola that seats three riders and flies them nearly 175 feet above the sea.

The ride is perched on one of the ship's upper decks just above the outdoor pool. It allows riders a 360-degree view of the horizon.

Before boarding, riders select their desired thrill level. The ride has three levels, from family-friendly to high intensity.

Also before boarding, each of the three riders chooses a song from a pre-selected list by a touchscreen. Each song is played for about one-third of the three-minute ride session.



MSC Cruises newest ship set sail in December and perched on one of its upper decks is the Robotron thrill ride. Developed by RWS Entertainment Group with a robotic arm by the German company Kuka, the ride is giving cruise passengers another entertainment option. The Robotron allows for passengers to get 360-degree views of the horizon. Riders are able to select their own thrill level as well as their music for the ride session. COURTESY MSC CRUISES

A nearby LED screen pulses with lighting effects.

The ride gives riders twists and turns, flipping on their backs, stomachs and completely upside.

As for restrictions, riders must be at least seven years old, four feet tall and weigh no more than 298 pounds. Closed-toed shoes are required, no sandals or

flip-flops are allowed.

Early indications of the Robotron by riders have been very favorable.

"Our latest flagship will serve as a great representation of all that we stand for at MSC Cruises, including sustainability, groundbreaking technology and modern design, combined with an immersive and

enriching guest experience delivered with European flair," said MSC Cruises U.S.A. President **Rubén A. Rodríguez**.

The ship features 2,270 cabins with 12 different types of staterooms and suites. It also features 11 dining venues; 19 bars and lounges; six swimming pools, including an aft infinity pool and an expansive waterfront promenade and one luxurious Yacht Club. Guests sailing on Seascape are enjoying 98 hours of live entertainment per cruise.

The MSC Seascape offers year-round cruises from Miami to the Caribbean and the Bahamas. The inaugural season will feature two itineraries: Eastern Caribbean with port callings at Ocean Cay MSC Marine Reserve and Nassau in The Bahamas, San Juan in Puerto Rico, and Puerto Plata in the Dominican Republic; and Western Caribbean with port callings at Ocean Cay MSC Marine Reserve, Cozumel in Mexico, George Town in the Cayman Islands, and Ocho Rios in Jamaica.

•msccruises.com

**DIVIN' DOLPHINS**  
INTERACTIVE FAMILY RIDE 24 SEATS

**THE NEW RIDE FOR YOUR  
THEME OR MARINE LIFE PARK,  
PIER, ZOO OR DOLPHINARIUM**

**Fabbri**  
group

WWW.FABBRIGROUP.COM





The Attraction Industry's  
**PREMIER EVENT IN ASIA**

# THE EXCITEMENT IS BUILDING

**13-16 JUNE 2023**

MARINA BAY SANDS, SINGAPORE

**The region's largest and most comprehensive attractions industry event returns**, bringing you an immersive event experience you won't find anywhere else in the Asia-Pacific region.

**REGISTER NOW**

[IAAPA.org/IAAPAEspoAsia](https://IAAPA.org/IAAPAEspoAsia)

@IAAPAHQ | #IAAPAEspos







Pacific Park celebrated the Sea Dragon's retirement by displaying the original two-headed dragon outside the amusement park on the Santa Monica Pier deck so guests would have an opportunity to say goodbye. COURTESY PACIFIC PARK

## Pacific Park Sea Dragon, retired, new one debuts

SANTA MONICA, Calif. — The original Sea Dragon ride opened with Santa Monica's Pacific Park on May 26, 1996, and after carrying more than 12 million guests, took its last ride via heavy-duty helicopter from Pacific Park on the Santa Monica Pier and landed at the Port of Hueneme in Ventura County into retirement on Thursday, March 9, 2023.

A new \$1.5 million Sea Dragon has been installed in the identical space and delivers the same high-swinging ride experience, but features a variety of new ride enhancements, including custom music and sound to amplify the experience, wind generators and a misting system to make riders feel as if they are riding the dragon out over the open ocean, and shaking seats to replicate the stormy seas. The new Sea Dragon lights up the evenings with energy-efficient LED lights lining the ride car and 40-foot tall ride supports. Pacific Park's custom, all-new Sea Dragon ride is designed and built by **Chance Rides Manufacturing, Inc.** of Wichita, Kansas.

The original Sea Dragon has appeared in several Hollywood films including *Iron Man* and *Her*. The Sea Dragon was also the subject for *Stella Rose and the Sea Dragon* book with authors Stella Harris and James Harris, along with illustrator Michael Bailey.

"The original Sea Dragon has provided millions of Pacific Park guests with fun memories with family and friends over the last 26 years," said **Nathan Smithson**, director of marketing and business development at Pacific Park on the Santa Monica Pier. "The enthusiasm that guests have for the original Sea Dragon and its extreme popularity prompted us to introduce the all-new Sea Dragon and reimagine the ride experience while providing the same classic swing ride that guests know and love so well."

HP Helicopters provided the Sea Dragon with a high-flying farewell as it departed on its last ride by helicopter 250 feet over the Pacific Ocean to California's produce and autos specialized commercial seaport, the Port of Hueneme, for transport to its retirement destination at **City Museum** in St. Louis, Missouri, where it will continue to fly high on top of the museum's roof and sit next to a big **Eli** Ferris wheel, slides and other eclectic attractions.

Pacific Park celebrated the Sea Dragon's long tenure of service at the two-acre amusement park by displaying the original two-headed dragon outside the amusement park on the Santa Monica Pier deck so guests would have an opportunity to say goodbye, take a photo and even contribute to its legacy by sharing videos, photos and memories of their experience.

• [pacpark.com](http://pacpark.com)



Forbidden Frontier at Adventure Island, the family-friendly interactive attraction that debuted at **Cedar Point**, Sandusky, Ohio, in 2019, won't return to the park this year.

Part scavenger hunt, part friendly competition, the area featured more than a dozen actors interacting with young guests as they participated in numerous role-playing activities.

The attraction took up several acres near the back of the park, adjacent to Iron Dragon and Top Thrill Dragster roller coasters.

Cedar Point Director of Communications **Tony Clark** said guests who experienced Forbidden Frontier enjoyed it.

"Just as we evaluate our other attractions, including how popular they are, how guests use them and how the park landscape could evolve over time, we followed this same evaluation process for Forbidden Frontier and decided it was time to close this chapter," he reported.

The 2022 opening of the **Lost Island Theme Park** in Waterloo, Iowa, was a bit of a roller coaster ride.

A fire in early 2022 kept the flume ride offline, supply chain issues kept the launch coaster grounded and delayed the park's opening by a week and road construction meant a few too many twists and turns to get to the park.

But park officials are looking at 2023 with much optimism and the reason is those two rides will be ready for opening day.

The thrill coaster Matugani is "definitely going to be 100 percent operating," according to park officials. And the SuperFlume also will be fully operational.

On Feb. 28, a new doll was seen for the first time on It's a Small World attraction at **Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom**. The attraction has a long-standing legacy of its diverse representation to honor all people from around the world. The new doll, in a wheelchair, is building on that diversity.

Among those seeing the new doll for the first time were cast members who are part of the Disney's ENABLED Business Employee Resource Group, a cast member-led group with a shared passion for accessibility.

The ownership of **Funderland**, Sacramento, California, has changed. But it is unlikely to affect the experience for Sacramento families. The Sacramento City Council last month approved the sale of the children's amusement park in Land Park from **Samuel Johnston** to **Gordon Johnston**. The sale, which occurred sometime after October 2020, a city staff report stated, is now formally approved by the council.

The 2023 season at **Gilroy Gardens Family Theme Park**, Gilroy, California, got off to a colorful start in March with a new event: the Fantastical Flowers Spring Celebration.

This two-month event features brightly colored blossoms, larger-than-life silk sculptures and floral-themed food and family activities throughout the park.

The event started on March 25 and will run through May 29.

Along with the rainbow of colored flowers, guests are being greeted by a human-sized "birdhouse" as they cross over the flower-festooned Sycamore Bridge.

The park's 40-plus rides and attractions are open and live entertainment provided by The Flower Buds in an interactive drumming and comedy performance is being featured.

Restaurants and carts throughout the park offer floral-themed food and beverages.

As the **National Football League** (NFL) Draft approaches, football fans are getting more and more information regarding the NFL Draft Experience.

The NFL Draft is being held this year in Union Station, Kansas City, Missouri. The NFL Draft Experience will be held in areas surrounding the Union Station. Events will run April 27-29.

Registration opened last month via the NFL One Pass App. With it, fans can gain free entry to what the NFL calls its interactive football theme park all three days draft.

Kansas City officials began closing roads and bringing in equipment last month.

Fans will be able to view the NFL Draft Theater from the North Lawn or run a 40-yard dash against a digital **Saquon Barkley** and **Derrick Henry**.

There will be a vertical jump, obstacle course and field goal kick on an almost regulation-sized football field along with other football skills and drills.

In addition, fans will be able to get photos with all three Kansas City Chiefs Lombardi trophies, Super Bowl rings and NFL Hall of Fame exhibits.

There also will be daily concerts and free autographs from NFL legends to be announced closer to the events.

Even though the NFL Draft is in the evening on Thursday and Friday, the NFL Draft Experience opens at noon and runs until 10 p.m. each of those two days. On Saturday, it runs 9 a.m.-6 p.m.



# Serving Montgomery Inn Barbecue is as easy as:



Heck, we even fold the wet naps for you.

## WE'RE MONTGOMERY INN, AMERICA'S #1 RIBS RESTAURANT\*.

We've been providing great meals, featuring our world-famous Montgomery Inn Barbecue Sauce, for theme parks and other attractions for years. We know how the aroma of smoked barbecue pulls in the customers. We know how important it is please your guests with delicious, nutritious meals. We know how our pulled pork barbecue and pulled smoked chicken barbecue sandwiches melt in your mouth and we know how incredibly easy these meals are to prepare.

Make your guests happy. Make your food servers happy. Make the easy choice of Montgomery Inn.





# Level One Bar and Arcade opens location in downtown Cincinnati

AT: Pam Sherborne  
 psherborne@amusementtoday.com

CINCINNATI, Ohio — A second location of **Level One Bar and Arcade** opened Feb. 24 in an urban area of Cincinnati called Over-the-Rhine. Fans of vintage arcade games, such as Donkey Kong, Ms PacMan and Space Invaders have rallied in support.

The Cincinnati location offers more than 40 arcade games, over 10 pinball machines and has two lanes of Skee Ball. There also are multi-player games and a bar area, all in more than 4,500 square feet of space.

The bar joins several tenants in the **Mercer Commons** project, a mixed-use space owned by **Cincinnati Center City Development Corp.** (3CDC).

Owner **Paul Burkhart** opened the original Level One Bar and Arcade in Columbus, Ohio, in 2015. When the space became available in Cincinnati's Over-the-Rhine area, he decided that his business would be a perfect fit for this urban core.

There is "no specific demographic for arcade-lovers," Burkhart commented before the opening, but he felt that this urban location would ensure that the business would be available to all walks of life.

He liked that idea as did



**Paul Burkhart**

officials with 3CDC, which is a private, non-profit real-estate development and finance organization focused on revitalizing Cincinnati's urban core with the city government and local corporations. Its work is focused on the central business district and in the Over-the-Rhine neighborhood.

"We're elated Level One has decided to break into the Cincinnati market," said **Lindzie Gunnels**, a senior commercial leasing officer with 3CDC, in a statement when Burkhart had made his decision to open there. "We think it's a great concept for the space and will add new life to this block of Walnut Street."

Much like the first Level One Bar and Arcade, Burkhart's new endeavor has no cover charge. There is no charge to play the arcade games, but there is a charge of around 50 cents each for

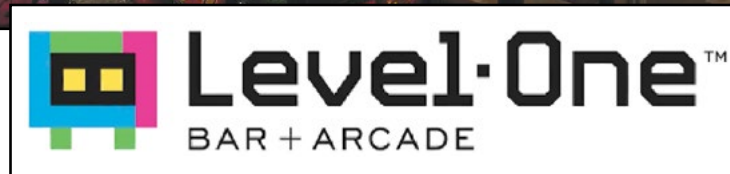


playing the pinball machines and Skee Ball.

The venue has 24 taps and along with the regular brands, there will be a rotation of local brews. There are themed cocktails, as well as drinks named after classic video games like Pong, Frogger, Tapper and Galaga, along with non-alcoholic "mocktails," juices and fountain drinks.

Like its sister location, the Cincinnati Level One Bar and Arcade doesn't have a kitchen, but they do encourage their guests to patronize local businesses. Guests are free to bring in their own food or order delivery.

Burkhart opened his first location in Columbus in 2015, but he has been obsessed with vintage and retro arcade and pinball machines



The Level One Bar and Arcade opened in an urban environment of downtown Cincinnati dubbed Over-the-Rhine. The venue houses more than 40 vintage arcade games and more than a dozen pinball machines. COURTESY LEVEL ONE

for many years. He bought his first pinball about 25 years ago. After that, there were no holds barred.

According to a local news article, Burkhart said: "We had a house built around a walk-out basement where I could bring in machines."

He used about half of his own inventory to open the Columbus location.

Level One Bar and Arcade primarily caters to those 21 years and older. They do allow children to come with their parents 12 noon-6 p.m. on Satur-

days and Sundays.

It is open seven days a week: 4 p.m.-12 a.m., Monday-Thursday; 4 p.m.-2 a.m., Friday; 12 noon-2 a.m., Saturday and 12 noon-12 a.m., Sunday.

The location is open to special parties during normal hours or, if needed, the entire venue may be rented out for private events.

The Columbus location has a game league. Hopes are that will carry over to Cincinnati as well.

Other special events include Trivia Nights.

•level1bar.com



At Level One Bar and Arcade, there is no cover charge and all video games are free to play. Visitors are welcome to book parties and special events at Level One Bar and Arcade, as well as rent out the entire facility for a private party (above right). COURTESY LEVEL ONE



# THE ULTIMATE CASHLESS PAYMENT SYSTEM

For arcades, attractions & family fun centers



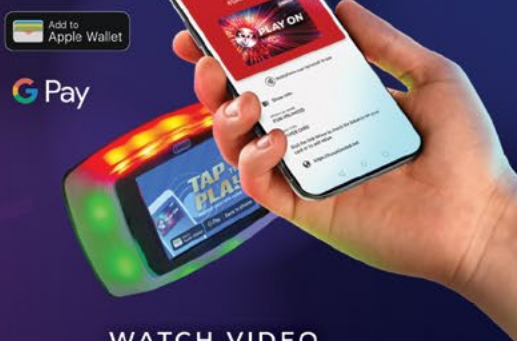
SEA Expo 2023  
Booth 1E101  
May 28-30

SEE YOU THERE

**STATS.**  
powered by AWS  
DATA IN A DASH



**MOBILEWALLET.**  
TAP. RELOAD. PROFIT.



**KIOSK+**  
GAME-CHANGING  
SPACE-SAVER



HERE'S WHY



Increase revenue, operational efficiency, continuous business growth and more - Find out how Embed solutions helped these customers achieve their business goals, and become FECs of the Future.

**MAKE** it happen  
for you too.  
**THE SWITCH.**

[www.embedcard.com](http://www.embedcard.com)





After signing a licensing deal with global toy and entertainment giant Hasbro, Seven will open Play-Doh sites at eight of its entertainment destinations across the country over the next 10 years. COURTESY SEVEN

## SEVEN, Hasbro to debut first Play-Doh attractions

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — Saudi Entertainment Ventures (SEVEN), in agreement with Hasbro, Inc., will develop and operate the world's first Play-Doh-themed entertainment centers. The centers will open at SEVEN entertainment destinations in eight locations in Saudi Arabia over the next 10 years.

Guests will be able to enjoy multilevel playscapes, creativity stations and sensory discovery activity areas that fully immerse them in the essence of playing with Play-Doh compound or toys. The centers will feature a café area for parents where they can enjoy their time while their children enjoy the Play-Doh entertainment. There will also be a dedicated party and events room.

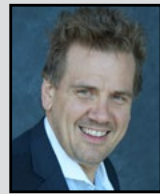
SEVEN has partnered with Thinkwell Group, a global strategy, experience design and production agency, to develop the Play-Doh-themed entertainment centers.

"Our strategic partnership with Hasbro serves to bring the best-in-class entertainment attractions to the people of Saudi Arabia," commented Abdullah AIDawood, chairman, of SEVEN. "Our Play-Doh-themed entertainment centres will inspire the creative minds and imaginations of children across the Kingdom. Children will be able to learn while having fun at our Play-Doh centers located at SEVEN entertainment destinations. We are delighted to once again be pioneering the Kingdom's entertainment landscape with the first ever Play-Doh-themed entertainment centers as we continue to enhance the quality of life for the people of Saudi Arabia."

SEVEN is investing more than \$13 billion to build 21 entertainment destinations which will provide unique and innovative world-class entertainment experiences and global partnerships from within the sector.

"We are thrilled to be working alongside SEVEN to bring these truly unique experiences to PLAY-DOH fans in the Kingdom," stated Matt Proulx, vice president of location based entertainment at Hasbro, Inc. "Championed by our Blueprint 2.0 strategy. We're excited for people to visit these immersive attractions in the future that we're sure will delight new and lifelong fans and families of the brands for many years to come."

The licensed agreement was signed by Eng. Essam Al Jubair, chief operating officer for SEVEN, and Devrim Anadol, commercial director at Hasbro MENA.



## FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT CENTRAL

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

Bowling, axe throwing, arcade games and a new restaurant are coming to Harrisburg, South Dakota. The owners of Air Madness plan to convert the building's rental space for basketball and other sports into an expanded family entertainment center.

The indoor trampoline park attracts kids, so the project will offer something for the entire family.

"That's the whole reason for the bowling and the axe throwing," explained Josh Anderson, director of finance and investment. "The kids can jump, and then mom and dad can throw axes or go bowling."

Plans are being finalized, but the space likely will hold a dozen bowling lanes and eight to 12 axe throwing lanes, he said. The expanded arcade would have more games than the current offerings at Air Madness. The laser tag arena in the complex likely will be repurposed for the new offerings. The location's Conquer Escape Rooms and Conquer Gaming — which offers video gaming computers and consoles and virtual reality play — will remain.

Betson Enterprises recently finished an upgrade to the 40-piece game room at Lakepoint Station in Cartersville, Georgia.

"Working with Betson has more than exceeded my expectations. Everyone we worked with was extremely helpful and aided us in accomplishing our vision," said Seth Curlee, general manager of Lakepoint Station. "Our guests are excited about the new games. We were able to get some of the best games on the market."

Brandon Horton, Betson game sales consultant, gave recommendations to Lakepoint Station on game selection and layout to make the most of the space available, enhance customer experience and generate maximum revenue. The Betson Enterprises team installed various games, including Fast & Furious Arcade, Break The Plate, Dodgeball Deluxe, Carnival Wheel, Virtual Rabbids Ultra HD, Shipwreck and Halo Fireteam Raven.

Treetop adventure course company Go Ape has opened its newest outdoor experience in Arlington, Texas. The park includes the company's popular Treetop Adventure and Treetop Journey courses, with ziplining and sky-high obstacles, as well as outdoor axe throwing in a beautiful park setting.

"Go Ape is thrilled to open our newest outdoor adventure park in Arlington, as it provides the location and setting for exhilarating family fun," said Vernon West, CEO of Go Ape. "We're excited to inspire Dallas/Fort Worth families to live life adventurously through our ziplining, ropes and obstacle

courses [as well as] axe throwing."

Go Ape's Treetop Adventure course takes visitors on a three-hour self-guided tour through the forest canopy while navigating suspended obstacles and epic ziplines over the Trinity River. The Treetop Journey allows explorers of all ages and abilities to navigate tree-to-tree crossings, obstacles and two ziplines at heights of 20 feet above the ground. Outdoor axe throwing offers friendly and fun competition, with five unique games and four outdoor targets for visitors to test their techniques.

Intercard has completed another arcade installation for Round1 Bowling and Amusement's newest location at the North Star Mall in San Antonio, Texas. It is the 42nd of Round1's U.S. locations to use Intercard technology.

The San Antonio location features a Texas-size arcade with a massive array of the latest games including hard-to-find Japanese games available exclusively at Round1. The Intercard system controls every aspect of arcade management including card sales, redemption and service.

"Round1 decided that Intercard would provide them with a stable, reliable, and efficient method for managing multiple complex sites and growing their business," said Bill Allen, North America sales director for Intercard. "We are exceedingly proud to be associated with an energetic company that is an innovator in our industry."

On the heels of the release of its gravity-defying latest DLC course Walkabout Mini Golf: Upside Town, Mighty Coconut — an independent entertainment studio based in Austin, Texas — announced plans to vastly expand the universe of its popular Walkabout Mini Golf virtual reality game including an innovative creative collaboration with Meow Wolf for a transformative new course coming in Q3, the addition of an AR-powered version for iOS coming this summer and deals to bring the title to hundreds of arcades in the location based entertainment industry.

The plans expand on the studio's strategy of quirky accessibility, building on Walkabout Mini Golf's 17-and-counting courses which feature immersive gameplay with realistic physics as well as iconic settings.

For the game's third licensed course, Mighty Coconut has partnered with Meow Wolf — the perspective-shifting arts and entertainment company that inspires audiences to explore creative possibility and storytelling through its exhibitions. The Meow Wolf course for Walkabout Mini Golf will be available in VR, mobile and physical locations this summer.





FREE BREAK  
DANCE

SPIN!



LAUGH!

TWIST!



Supplying Amusements New to Used

(908) 526-8009 • [www.RIDES4U.COM](http://www.RIDES4U.COM)



# 2023 Florida State Fair ends well despite rocky first weekend

AT: B. Derek Shaw  
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

TAMPA, Fla. – Mother Nature had her own idea on what weather conditions to offer during the Florida State Fair. “Unfortunately, we had rain and very high winds the first weekend both Saturday and Sunday of the 2023 Florida State Fair. Despite that setback, coupled with Super Bowl LVII, we had a record next weekend which made for a solid year,” explained Cheryl Flood, CEO of the Florida State Fair. The last Saturday of the fair broke daily attendance and revenue records.

Referred to many times as Florida’s Fried Food capital, the 119th edition had 405,888 attendees, down slightly from last year. The 2023 theme was Your Fun Is Here!

There were 90 rides, with over 30 being kiddie ones, 80 games, 30 food stands and 15 direct sales.

Frank Zaitshik, owner of Wade Shows talked about the new rides at the spot. “There’s a whole bunch this year. There’s a new Ring of Fire (named Infinity, Larson International) [and] a brand-new Wave Swinger (Bertazzon). I’m really proud that after three years of refurbishment we are back with our Mack Himalaya, that’s themed Hit In 2000. My friend, Corky Powers, had a brand-new taxi kiddie ride (Crazy Cabs, SBF/Visa Group), a brand-new kiddie Wipeout (SBF/Visa Group), [and] a brand-new Techno Jump (Sartori Rides). Bob DeStafano (Dreamworld) had a monster truck (Wisdom Rides of America) that’s new, [and he] had a Tornado (Wisdom) that’s new. This is the first season for Technical Park Superman and the second season for his Bertazzon



Wade Shows as midway manager orchestrated 90 rides for the 12-day Florida State Fair. Booking in were Powers Great American Midways, Wood Entertainment Company, Iconic Attractions, Dreamland Amusements, Wonderland Amusements and Gambill Amusements. The lineup featured a newer Larson loop attraction that Iconic Attractions brought in using all-new LED lighting (below left). Powers Great American Midways recently took delivery of a Sartori Rides portable-model Techno Jump which made its debut at the Florida State Fair (below right). COURTESY FLORIDA STATE FAIR; AT/GARY SLADE



Super Himalaya.” All told, there were 11 new rides at the fair.

Zaitshak/Wade Shows served as the midway manager of the massive arsenal of rides from (in addition to his show) Powers Great American Midways, Iconic Attractions, Dreamland Amusements, Wood Entertainment Company, Sue Shorb (Wonderland Amusements) and Gambill Amusements.

The top three grossing/most popular rides included the Super Slide (SBF/Visa Group performance slide); Sky Glider sky ride, both owned by the Florida State Fair and the 155-foot Midway Sky Eye (Lamberink) owned by Michael Wood. Ride revenue came in at \$4,689,566.

“Frank Zaitshik and the Wade Show team did a fantastic job,” said Flood. “In my opinion, this was their



best presentation in our history providing more seating, expanding Kiddie Land, and partnering with other owners to bring some new rides to the Florida State Fair. Frank Zaitshik is always striving to be the best, his attention to detail and his overall operation is unmatched.”

When asked what sets this fair apart from others, Flood said, “The I-4 region where the Florida State Fair sits is a

mecca of entertainment offerings, all less than a one-hour distance from our grounds. Our potential guests have so many entertainment options to choose from, of where to spend their leisure dollars. This keeps us on our toes to ensure that we remain relevant, in a very vast and changing market.”

Special promotions included Heroes Day with free admission for law enforcement, first responders, active or retired military, veterans, doctors, nurses, hospital and emergency clinic staff with valid ID. Also, Date Night Deal which included buy-one-get-one admission after 3:00 p.m. \$3.00 Thursday for rides, games and select food items after 3:00 p.m. was another promotion along with Family Day where youth



**SONNY'S BBQ**  
SINCE 1962







**SIPPERS BY DESIGN**



**'BIG NOSE' SALOON**  
TOMBSTONE, AZ



**CALDWELL ZOO**

[WWW.SIPPERSBYDESIGN.COM](http://WWW.SIPPERSBYDESIGN.COM)

**(800) 395-9980**

[SALES@SIPPERSBYDESIGN.COM](mailto:SALES@SIPPERSBYDESIGN.COM)





## MIDWAYSCENE

AT: B. Derek Shaw

bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

**Renee Alexander**, who has served as **Minnesota State Fair** deputy general manager for 13 years, is now the new CEO. She took over for retiring CEO **Jerry Hammer**, who has held the post for 27 years. She has more than 20 years of experience with the Great Minnesota Get-Together, playing a key role on their senior management team.

Alexander originally worked in entertainment and marketing from 1989 through 1994 and returned to the organization in 2005. As an integral member of fair leadership, she's involved in every facet of the operation. Her successes on many levels have earned her a high profile locally and nationally in the world of fairs, festivals, entertainment and event management.

"This is a large role to fill, and we're confident that Renee is a qualified and proven leader," said State Fair Board President **Joe Scapanski**. "The Great Minnesota Get-Together is world-famous for its tradition of excellence. We're looking forward to Renee's vision of maintaining that tradition and building on the State Fair's amazing legacy."

"My commitment to the Minnesota State Fair extends well beyond this merely being a job," Alexander said. "I love this institution and all that it stands for – a showcase of the very best of our state, a place where amazing memories are created and where 'The Great Minnesota Get-Together' is more than a slogan; it drives at our mission. I believe my work in this industry and my unique experience will serve us well as I take on the tremendous responsibility of leading this incredible organization."

Alexander is a former board chair of the **International Entertainment Buyers Association**, an active participant with the **International Association of Fairs and Expositions** and is a graduate of the Leadership Music and Leadership St. Paul programs. She earned a degree in business communications from the **University of Wisconsin-River Falls** and has called Minnesota home since childhood.

The **Delta County Chamber of Commerce**, Escanaba, Michigan, recently named **Matthew Valiquette** to serve as the Chamber and **Upper Peninsula State Fair's** operations manager. In this position, he will make important strategic, planning and policy decisions. Valiquette will also develop, implement and review current operational policies and procedures along with hiring and supervising maintenance personnel.

Most recently, he served as executive director of the Bay Area Workforce Development Board in Green Bay, where

he coordinated and oversaw all of the business affairs of the organization. Prior he served as a military intelligence officer in the **U.S. Marine Corps**, honorably retiring in 2009 following a 21-year active-duty career, which included multiple combat tours in Iraq. He was also a master instructor for the **U.S. Naval Academy** in Annapolis, Maryland, where he taught political science.

"Matt has an impressive background and brings to our organizations all the skills that we are looking for in an operations manager," chamber Executive Director **Vickie Micheau** told the *Daily Press*. "He has exceptional communication and leadership abilities, which are crucial for motivating staff members and connecting with stakeholders."

"My initial primary goals are really focused on familiarizing myself with current operations and building relationships with the countless community stakeholders involved in the Chamber and U.P. State Fair," said Valiquette.

The fair takes place August 14 – 20, with **Skerbeck Entertainment** handling the carnival rides.

The **Southeast Alaska State Fair**, Haines, Alaska, has a new director in advance of this year's festivities. The fair has been without a permanent director since **Kari Johnson** left last August. **Beverly Kryder** is no stranger to state and county fairs as she told *KHNS FM* radio. "My background was the **Elkhart County 4H** fairgrounds, Goshen, Indiana. I was there for 17 years. And then I got the bright idea that I'd like to retire and move to Ohio to be closer to my daughter. I got there and guess what? COVID hit. I did start working at **The Ohio State Fair** as a customer [service] representative, [then] COVID hit. The whole fair closed down for two years, as did most fairs."

"I feel that life has a lot to offer. It just felt like a good change. I did grow up in a small town. So, a small town I'm used to."

While Kryder is still getting her feet wet in the new position, she has positive things to say about the organization and looks forward to adding her experience.

"[We've] got a great crew here. They're going to teach me what I can bring to them. I hope it is consistency, support and just make them the best team possible. We do need to grow a few positions. I believe. Program wise, you've got a good sound program, maybe I can help tweak a few things from the experience that I've had with new ideas."

The annual Southeast Alaska State Fair takes place July 27-30. While the fair has no carnival provider, it owns a Ferris wheel and carousel along with some inflatables.



The Sky Glider sky ride, owned by the Florida State Fair, serves as an effective transportation device to get fairgoers more easily around the grounds. COURTESY STEFAN HINZ

## ► FLORIDA

Continued from page 26

17 years of age or younger received free admission to the fair until 6:00 p.m. with a paid parent or guardian, 21 years of age or older. Kid's Day is another annual promotion. Youth 17 years of age or younger received free admission until 6:00 p.m. with a paid parent or guardian, 21 years of age or older with a valid ID. Finally, there were Senior Days, any Monday through Friday of the fair where admission was \$10 for seniors 55+ online or at the gate.

The media mix included 37.7% broadcast TV/cable, 7.8% broadcast radio, 11.3% out of home, 31.8% digital and 7.5% print.

Some of the new, best or unusual food items were Tampa Cuban funnel cake sandwiches, apply fries, dill pickle lemonade and Mexican sweet corn pizza.

New this year, the Florida State fair instituted an after 6:00 PM youth policy, throughout all 12 days, where those, 17 and under, had to be accompanied by a paid parent or guardian, 21 years of age or older. "This change of policy had very positive outcomes," said Flood.

The fair offered over 40 entertainment options, all free with the price of admission. Some included **The Flying Royals**, crisscrossing trapeze act originally innovated in the 1950s and '60s by the **Great Otari Troupe** and again in the mid-1990s by the **Caballero Family** for **The Greatest Show on Earth**.

An BMX freestyle show combined top action sports athletes with the theatrics of cycle circus complete with high-tech pyrotechnics music

and lighting. **Annalise Nock**, a female daredevil starred in her own thrill show. As seen at **Sea World San Diego**, it featured daredevils who climbed over 65 feet in the air, walked a wire and other stunts. The Wet and Wild Water Show featured three different styles of fly boards, hover boards, jet levitation, and jet surfs.

"Cast in Bronze" was a musical experience covering five centuries of history with four tones of bronze carillon bells. The 35 bells and have a total weight of four tons each. **Fireguy** danced, juggled, and preformed multiple stunts all with the addition of fire. Evening performances included a unique glow show.

Flood was asked about employment challenges and strategies. "After years of employment challenges, we raised our minimum wage above the local average. Additionally, we have moved to **Saffire** ticketing, which provided an automated ticketing system for our guest which greatly reduced the minimum staffing level and improved operation efficiencies."

"The 2023 Florida State Fair was one of the most challenging state fair's in my role, but one of the best ones. We instituted a lot of changes this year and tough decisions were made, but ultimately, they were the right ones, and we look forward to providing an improved state fair year over year. It takes a supportive board, great team, community, emergency management partners, vendors, food, games, and carnival provider to host such a great state fair, and I'm thankful I have one of the best," said Flood.

The 2024 edition takes place February 8-19.

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



# Third generation Aussie showman Chippa Chant continues success

AT: B. Derek Shaw  
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

LAKES ENTRANCE, Victoria, Australia – **Chants Amusements Pty Ltd** is a very active traveling show that is on the road throughout eastern Australia. Third generation showmen, **Chippa Chant**, started at a very young age, traveling with a Wall of Death attraction and balancing acts that his father and grandfather operated.

Today, the show manages 10 major rides and 20 family and kiddie rides, along with over 25 games and a few food joints. *Amusement Today* caught up with the show at Lakes Entrance where it played from December 26 to January 22. “It’s been good. This is my 9th year here. As you can see driving in, it’s a beautiful place,” said Chant, who is the managing director. “We enjoy this over the summer — it’s like a break because we only work from 6 to 10 at night, so we get lots of time to enjoy the surf and water ski and enjoy some family time.” (Note: In the southern hemisphere, it was their summer season.)

“We do all the major shows in Australia – Brisbane, Adelaide and Melbourne,” said Chant. This is in addition to numerous agricultural shows that number one a week. Chant explained a typical season for his show: “In Australia we are very lucky, as we can work all year long. I’m from



Chants Amusements' Mondial Wheel is really striking at night (above left). Viewed from the Mondial wheel, the Lakes Entrance midway (above right) offers major attractions such as an Eli Bridge Scrambler, Australian-made Dodgem bumper cars, ARM Rock Star, KMG Speed and a Bertazzon Rock and Roll Matterhorn. AT/B. DEREK SHAW



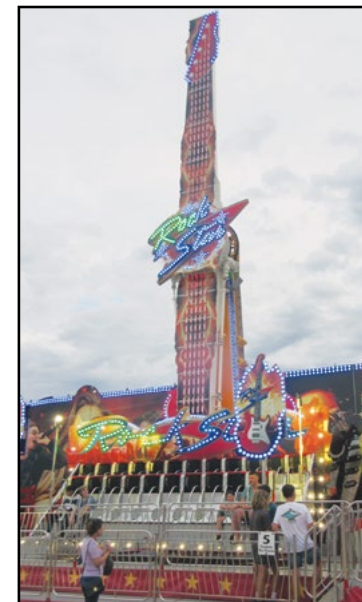
Victoria. I do about six to seven months of the year here. Then when it’s winter here and freezing cold, we go to Queensland. There it’s like summer in Victoria. We spend June, July, August there. We cover the whole [entire] eastern states of Australia — we do four states.”

At one time the company played 50 locations a year. “We’ve backed off now because we are a much bigger operation. We do a lot of our own events. Now [we play] probably 20 to 25 [spots]. We spend longer times at each location and we find that for us it’s less work and easier and better for us.”

There are really three big players in Australia as Chant explained. “Ourselves [along with] **Jamie Pickett** which is **FJF Amusements** (his brother is **Ben Pickett**, from **Ray Cammack Shows (RCS)**



The bumper cars are always popular. The ride building was made in-house, and the attraction uses Barbieri cars (above). The ARM Rock Star ride is a crowd favorite (right). AT/B. DEREK SHAW



in America) and **Greg Webster**. He’s a mate of ours — he’s the other big player (**Joyland Amusements**). They are all very good operators; their equipment is very nice and very well maintained and they are all very good people.”

Chants talked about the changes he has seen in the industry: “Growing

up it was like a way of life. We used to get around the campfire and have a bit of fun and all that. Now it has turned into a real business in Australia. COVID really knocked the hell out of us over here. We lost two to four years of work. Insurance is a big, messy problem here at the moment. Where

we used to have 10 or 12 insurance companies fighting for our business, we have one. So, they’ve really got us jammed up against the wall and they are really robbing us at the moment. It is what it is. We are showmen. We are very resilient people. We just push forward and find ways around roadblocks.”



Cassie Evans and Chippa Chant sell tickets at the four-week Lakes Entrance carnival spot (above left). The show’s perimeter fence has Chants banners all along it to keep people from looking in while enticing them at the same time (above right) AT/B. DEREK SHAW



# WATER PARKS & RECREATION

▶ Epic Waters offers new WhiteWater attraction — page 32 / News Splash — page 32

## Sun Splash Family Water Park reopens following hurricane damage

AT: Jeffrey Seifert  
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

CAPE CORAL, Fla. — Hurricane Ian made landfall in South Florida on September 28, 2022. With sustained winds of 150 mph, the storm was just shy of a category five hurricane. The storm caused widespread flooding along the coast and inland with the cities of Sanibel, Cape Coral and Fort Myers suffering catastrophic damage.

At the time, Cape Coral's **Sun Splash Family Water Park** had shifted to late season, weekend-only operation. When the park closed at the end of the operating day on Sunday, September 18, there was little cause for concern. The park was heavily promoting its 2023 season pass and offering a free souvenir cup good all season. It was also gearing up for its first-ever Halloween celebration, Spooky Splash Bash, which was planned to take place every weekend in October.

Meanwhile, the National Hurricane Center was keeping its eye on a tropical wave development near the Cape Verde Islands off the coast of Africa. At first it appeared to be losing its strength as it passed over the islands. However, just five days later it had made its way across the Atlantic and organized into a tropical depression. Heading into the Caribbean, its future path remained unclear, but residents in Florida were advised to start taking precautions. Once it slammed into Cuba as a high-end cat-



Following five months of cleanup, the park was ready to welcome season pass holders during its preview weekend. COURTESY SUN SPLASH WATER PARK

egory three storm, it became evident that Florida's west coast was in the trajectory to be the next target.

Park Director **Eric Reed** told *Amusement Today* they had an idea that it would be a significant weather event and started to make preparations. They tied all the chairs to the cabanas and moved as much equipment as they could into buildings. Although Sun Splash is located in a flood zone, its location in the center of town on what could be considered higher ground compared to the rest of the city, kept flooding to a minimum. Of course, damage from the sustained winds and heavy rainfall still occurred. The frames of the cabanas could not withstand the wind, and most were toppled, taking the chairs and tables with them. Building roofs were dam-

aged and some pump rooms were breached. One of the slide towers sustained platform damage. Fortunately, other than being covered with leaves and debris, none of the fiberglass slides were significantly impacted. But, it was evident that cleanup efforts were going to take some time. The park, which would have operated for five more weekends, was obviously going to have to remain closed.

The surrounding area was not so lucky and some tourist hotels closer to the Fort Myers Beach that had been there for decades may take years to repair; some may never reopen. During the recovery process, the park's wide-open parking area and a nearby field offered FEMA a place to use as a staging area. People were living in tents at first, then



campers and pods started moving in. The park was without power and water for about the first 10 days but once that was restored, workers were quickly able to get the bath house back in operation. That provided welcome showers and changing rooms, which they continued to use through the end of January.

The first weekend the park was closed, **ProParks** paid the seasonal staff for the

hours they were scheduled to work. Following that, a handful of seasonal employees who were able to work were brought in to help with cleanup efforts and to prepare the park for the off season. Reed said, "It was an abrupt ending, which is kind of sad, because usually it's a lot of fun for all the kids who work there, and it was suddenly over."

▶ See **SPLASH**, page 30

**VLocker**  
www.vlocker.com

See how we helped our  
customers increase their profits...

CASE STUDIES





High winds from Hurricane Ian knocked over trees and sent debris into pools and the lazy river throughout the water park as seen in the above photos. COURTESY SUN SPLASH WATER PARK

**► SPLASH**  
Continued from page 29

For the next five months the park continued with repairs. Furniture and cabanas were replaced and the slides that were nicked or scratched by debris were touched up and polished smooth. Roofers and contractors were brought in to repair buildings and the pumps were inspected and tested to make sure they would operate within normal parameters.

When asked about the expected turnout for the upcoming season, Reed told AT that he hopes Sun Splash will be able to provide an escape for the locals who are continuing to recover and for those looking for recreation. "Unfortunately, a lot of the beaches are still unusable right now; we're going to be one of the few places that people can come to," he said.

ProParks Attractions Group began to manage Sun Splash in November 2021.

During what was not quite its first full year of operation, it was determined that the water park draws both local visitors and tourists. "We learned that a lot of people would come from overseas to Fort Myers and then vacation in Cape Coral," said Reed. Although tourism may be slow to recover, the locals should appreciate having the water park back in operation.

Sun Splash opened in 1992 as a recreational amenity for the community of

Cape Coral and up until last year had been operated by the Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Department. As the population and attendance increased, the city began looking at developing a public/private partnership for the operation and maintenance of the water park. Last year the city of Cape Coral executed a long-term lease agreement with ProParks. Although unable to complete a full year of operation, revenues had risen sharply

through the use of online ticket sales, season pass sales and promotions. The park opened for the 2023 season with a pass holder weekend preview on March 11 and began its regular season on March 18 just in time for the spring break crowds.

ProParks is already looking toward investing in the future with the addition of a wave pool and new admissions building for the 2024 season.

•sunsplashwaterpark.com

# WILLIAM H. ROBINSON, INC.

## The Big Idea People!

513.737.9012 • www.TheBigIdeaPeople.com



**LET OUR BIG IDEAS LEAD TO BIG EYES & SWEET CROWDS!**  
GRAPHIC DESIGN • MARKETING • PRINTING • PRODUCTION • PRESS RELEASES

*A Creative Services Company Serving the Amusement, Water Park & Support Industry for over 50 Years!*







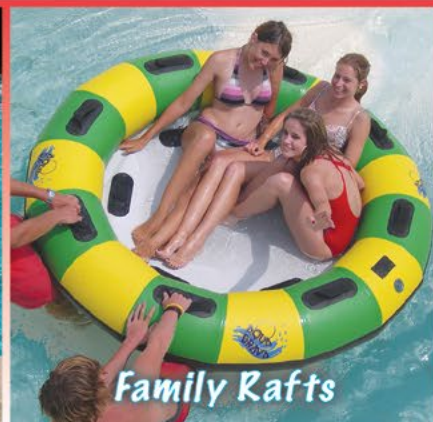
**Zebec Water Sports**  
www.zebec.com  
+1 (513) 829-5533  
Fax: +1 (513) 892-7466  
email: zebec@zebec.com

# Splash into quality water sports products!

- Rafts •
- Tubes • Racer Mats •
- Lily Pads • Bumper Collars •
- Safety Padding • Rope Netting • Heavy Duty Tubes •
- Bumper Boat Tubes • In-Line Rafts • Snow Rafts • Life Vests •



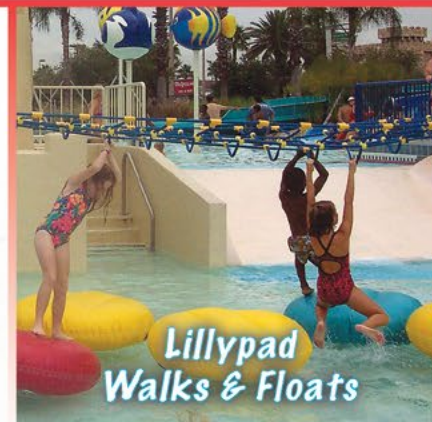
**Inflatable Barriers**



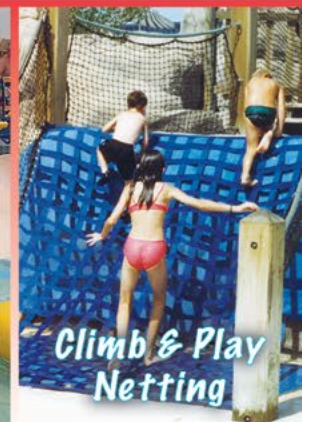
**Family Rafts**



**Sidewinder Tubes & Rafts**



**Lillypad Walks & Floats**



**Climb & Play Netting**





## Epic Waters offers new WhiteWater attraction

AT: Jeffrey Seifert  
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — When Epic Waters indoor water park opened in 2018, its collection of 11 waterslides from **WhiteWater** included Lasso Loop, an AquaLoop looping slide with an AquaLaunch drop capsule. Big on thrills, the slide had plenty of fans, but it wasn't for everyone. Because it had an uphill section, there was a slight chance a slider would not complete the course. A hatch door and evacuation platform were in place to safely extract the occasional unfortunate thrill-seeker who ended up sliding back down into the valley of the tube. Spiraling through an oblique loop with the possibility of a slideback was a little too intimidating and kept some potential riders away.

A little more than a year later, the park opened an outdoor wave pool in early 2019. Since that time there had been no new additions to the water park. Now, five years later, the park was looking for something new.

**Michael Wampler**, director of marketing, told *AT* there had been no new additions to the interior building in five years. They sat down with the team to brainstorm on a new blockbuster attraction and decided to replace the existing Lasso Loop with ¡Locura! "We'll make room for this new ride, by taking an existing ride out," said Wampler.

The new ride uses the existing AquaLaunch capsule but following the drop, all of the fiberglass was replaced. The new slide is brighter in color and more translucent than the previous attraction, so observers see the rider as they leave the drop capsule and can track them all the way through the slide and into the runout.

Starting from 70 feet above the floor, once the floor drops out, riders plunge nearly 40 feet before they start to curve into the sidewinder loop at nearly 35 mph. Because the new slide is downhill all the way, the high speed is consistent throughout the 387-foot course with riders experiencing up to 3 Gs as they scream through the 360-degree horizontal loop.

The runout to the slide was increased in length and the sides were raised as sliders send up a significant rooster tail of water as they level out and begin to decelerate.

With the new slide following much of the same footprint as the previous slide, the park was able to reuse the existing steel support pole and reconfigure some of the support arms. Work was done in the evenings so disruption to the park was kept to a minimum. The cabana area under the slide became a construction site, temporarily closing that section. The previous slide was removed and the new slide erected in less than 14 days.

The literal translation of the Spanish ¡Locura! is "madness." With a significant portion of the DFW Metroplex being Hispanic, Wampler said he only has to market to the non-Spanish speaking thrill seekers. The logo plays off the Hispanic heritage by giving it southwest-Aztec look and feel. To help explain the ride, marketing is using the cutline, "Hair. Raising. Fun!"

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



## NEWS SPLASH

AT: Jeffrey L. Seifert  
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

**World Waterpark** inside the West Edmonton Mall in Alberta, Canada, will be opening two new slides this summer. The pair of intertwining slides are replacing the park's original Corkscrew slides that opened with the park in 1986. Those enclosed body slides closed on November 4, 2022, after 36 years of operation. The new slides from **ProSlide Technology**, also enclosed, utilize translucent fiberglass along with special lighting effects such as stripes. Other features include different color sections and a brief open trough section. Guests aboard the new slides will be seated in two-person inline tubes. The slides will share the same 50-foot slide tower and runout pool and both are approximately 450 feet long.

**Walt Disney World's Blizzard Beach** water park closed on March 19, 2023, for refurbishment. On that same day, **Typhoon Lagoon**, which had been closed, reopened. This continues the trend started a few years ago that has only one water park open at time. The two water parks have not been open at the same time since early 2020.

Blizzard Beach was closed for several months last year, but finally reopened in November with some new theming element inspired the popular animated film *Frozen*. This new closure, less than five months later, came as a surprise.

The **Great Wolf Lodge** in Perryville, Maryland, will open three weeks ahead of its planned August 1 date. The original date was announced during last year's topping off ceremony in July and the resort started taking bookings shortly thereafter. In order to fill the property this coming July, the hotel is offering a 30% discount to those choosing a stay between July 15 and August 1.

When it opens, Great Wolf Lodge Maryland will become the company's 20th resort. It will also be the largest Great Wolf Lodge to date with a 700-suite hotel, multiple restaurants, ice cream shop and a 126,000-square-foot indoor recreational center that includes a water park, rope climbing center, bowling alley and gift shop.

The majority of guests visiting a **Great Wolf Resorts** property come from within a 300-mile radius. The Maryland location is a convenient drive for families from Baltimore, Philadelphia, Wilmington, and the Mid-Atlantic region.

A new \$35-million, 115,000-square-foot recreation center in Morristown,

Tenn. opened its doors in March. The **Morristown Landing** complex features an aquatic center, fitness center and a community center with meeting rooms for corporate gatherings, educational classes and family celebrations.

The main attraction of the aquatic center is a 10-lane lap pool that can be used by the community for recreation and practice. An elevated seating area also makes it suitable to host competitions for area schools. Other aquatic amenities include a therapy pool, indoor splash pad, two indoor waterslides and one-meter diving boards.

The recreation center has been on the drawing board for more than a decade. Funding was put into place in 2019 with the implementation of a property tax increase of 25 cents per \$100,000 in valuation. Ground breaking took place two years ago in March 2021.

In honor of its 10th anniversary, **Foxlake Adventures**, a popular outdoor activity park in Dunbar, Scotland, is adding a massive water assault course. The new 100-meter floating water park will feature 20 ninja warrior-style obstacles. Obstacles for thrill-seekers to conquer include Ninja Jump, Dragon Tail and Temple along with an epic 3.8-meter (12-foot) inflatable tower, Mount Rainier and two meter (six foot) Mount Baker. The new aqua park provides the perfect challenge of balance and nerve for a range of ages and abilities.

Director of Foxlake Adventures **James Barbour** said, "We are delighted to add a floating Aqua Park obstacle course to our range of action-packed activities at Foxlake Adventures, including wakeboarding and our ropes assault course, and also create 20 new full and part-time roles."

Like most floating obstacle water parks, timed sessions are offered throughout the day, with guests paying £19 (\$23) per person for a 50-minute session. The aqua course can also be leased by groups for company or school outings.

Although primarily intended to attract adventurers, the park does offer lighter activities such as Segway tours and open water swimming.

Foxlake Adventures opened 10 years ago as a cable wakeboarding park, and has continued to expand with new offerings over the last decade such as Ringos — towed rubber rafts.

The previous addition was a low, over-the-water ropes course, called Foxfall, that unlike most ropes courses, does not require tethering, as guests who fall off the course, land in the water.





## DID YOU KNOW?

WHILE GUESTS SPEND AN AVERAGE  
OF 4 HOURS IN THE PARK, ONLY 5% OF  
THAT TIME IS ON RIDES.



## YOU NEED MORE THAN GREAT RIDES TO MAKE THE BEST DAY EVER.

Are you giving enough attention to the time in between the rides?  
Each moment matters when it comes to maximizing joy and creating rave reviews.



Sign up at the [joyeconomy.co](https://joyeconomy.co) to receive exclusive content to inspire you on how to make 'best ever days' for your guests and your venue.





# BUSINESS & NEWSMAKERS

▶ Beech Bend Park owner Dallas Jones passes — page 39 / NEAAPA conference, HOF inductions — page 40

## Busch Gardens Tampa Bay reimagines area as Springs Taproom

AT: Tim Baldwin  
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

TAMPA — In addition to its amazing collection of thrill rides and animal encounters, **Busch Gardens Tampa Bay** is also known for its food, bars and festivals. In a recent culinary move, the park has introduced Springs Taproom, a new casual and laidback lounge for guests.

Springs Taproom has a little history woven into the new offerings. It replaces Garden Gate Café, which repurposed the iconic Hospitality House. That facility dated back to the park's grand opening in 1959.

"Enhancing the guests' experience is always top-of-mind and the perfect motivation to reimagine and renovate into a new and exciting Busch Gardens Tampa Bay," said Park President



The distinctive architectural angles date back to 1959 (right). An expanded offering of beer selections makes Springs Taproom an ideal spot to cool down. AT/TIM BALDWIN

**Neal Thurman.** "Springs Taproom reflects that vision, a blend of history with modern décor with a relaxing atmosphere for all guests to enjoy."

Located in the Bird Gardens area of the park, outdoor seating overlooks a pond and the park's lush landscaping.

"Just like the recently opened Pass Member

Lounge, Springs Taproom is yet another venue that provides guests with options," said Thurman. "A relaxing and laid-back setting to enjoy different types of brews, handcrafted cocktails, refreshing frozen drinks and delicious eats."

"What's exciting about Springs Taproom is that the outside of the icon-



ic structure is fully preserved while inside it was a complete transformation," noted **Eddie Delgado**, communications manager. "It's laid-back, modern and another great food and beverage option for our guests."

The distinctive steeply angled roofline makes the venue an architectural standout.

Inside, the walls and flooring have received a fresh makeover. Modern decoration, along with some historic photos create a connection between the past and the present.

"For Springs Taproom we added more options of beers on tap than what was previously offered," said Delgado. "Some beers do rotate seasonally."

A total of 12 beer options will always be available, as well as some refreshing frozen beverages, which will be popular in the warm Florida climate. Small bites, as well as related food offerings to ongoing festivals, provide snack options.

"Springs Taproom is both the evolution of the park's history and history in the making," Thurman told *Amusement Today*. "As part of the park's ongoing expansion, it was beyond exciting to watch it evolve from ideation into the incredible venue it is today — a phenomenal transformation with a great outcome, the overwhelmingly positive feedback from our guests."

•buschgardens.com/tampa



The design makeover was a floor-to-ceiling transformation. COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS



## Going Round and Round on Insurance?

For a comprehensive review of your coverage and exposure, call 913.432.4400 or visit [hwins.com/RoundandRound](http://hwins.com/RoundandRound)

**HAAS & WILKERSON**  
INSURANCE

Independent agent representing Westchester, a Chubb Company, Programs Division. Insurance provided by Aetna American Insurance Company and its U.S. based Chubb underwriting company affiliates. Chubb is the marketing name used to refer to subsidiaries of Chubb Limited providing insurance and related services. All products may not be available in all states. For a list of these subsidiaries, please visit [www.chubb.com](http://www.chubb.com).

**Westchester**  
A Chubb Company



# The 28th NJAA Variety Show held along with NAARSO training



The show started as a motel show in the mid-1970s at the Aztec Hotel in Seaside Heights, New Jersey. Vendors operated out of their rooms, with attendees traveling from room to room. Other recent locations have included the Trump Marina and Taj Mahal, both in Atlantic City. This was the 14th time at the Golden Nugget. COURTESY NJAA

AT: B. Derek Shaw  
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — The East Coast Gift and Variety Show occurred at the Golden Nugget Resort and Casino, March 8 and 9. Run by the New Jersey Attractions Association (NJAA), the event was held in conjunction with the East Coast/Mid-Atlantic regionalized National Association of Amusement Ride Safety Officials (NAARSO) outreach safety school. The training was again held online in conjunction with the expo. There were 70 participants in the virtual training.

The 25 participating vendors brought their newest games, prizes and food for attendees to see, purchase and bring back to their establishments. On the first day of the expo, the NJAA hosted its 32nd annual scholarship kick-off cocktail party on the trade show floor.

“It was a great two days for all involved,” said Kim Samarelli, NJAA executive director. “The NJAA thanks all that came out to support this year! We cannot wait for next year’s show.”

The NJAA fosters, promotes and advances the amusement industry in the state of New Jersey.

•njamusements.com



There were 25 vendors selling the newest arcade games, prizes, plush toys, uniforms, rides, insurance, ice cream and cashless vending systems. Beston, occupying 11 show spaces, had a large assortment of arcade games. Other participating companies included AA Global Industries, Best Toy, BMI, Bob’s Space Racers, Bruno & Company, Caravan, Classic Toy and Goffa, Good Stuff, Hershey Ice Cream, Intercard and Jazwares. COURTESY NJAA



Sureshot Redemption is a great source of retail merchandise and redemption prizes. The Ontario, California, company was one of 25 vendors. Other participating businesses included Locker North America, Mg Import, Mitchell Yarwin Sales, Player One Group, PIA Products, Pipeline Games, RBI Toys, Rhode Island Novelty, Rides 4 U, Vertigo and Wonderful Jungle. COURTESY NJAA

**The #1 Leading Slide Manufacturer in America!  
World’s Largest 5 Lane, One Trailer Slide — 108 ft.!**

- Financing and Leasing Available
- Slide or Rain Bags
- Trades Considered
- 90 ft. Fiberglass Slide
- 65 ft. Fiberglass Slide

**FREDEKSEN INDUSTRIES, INC.**  
5212 St. Paul St. • Tampa, Fla. 33619 • (813) 628-4545 • FAX (813) 621-3679  
funslide.com

**The Scrambler**

- Seats remain on ride for transport
- Fast Set-up and Tear-down
- 36-Passenger Capacity
- Simultaneous Loading
- Fan Light Package
- Mast Covers
- Sweep Panels
- 28-Foot Trailer

**ELI BRIDGE COMPANY**  
Building rides people have enjoyed for over a century

217-245-7145 fax 217-479-0103  
info@elibridge.com elibridge.com



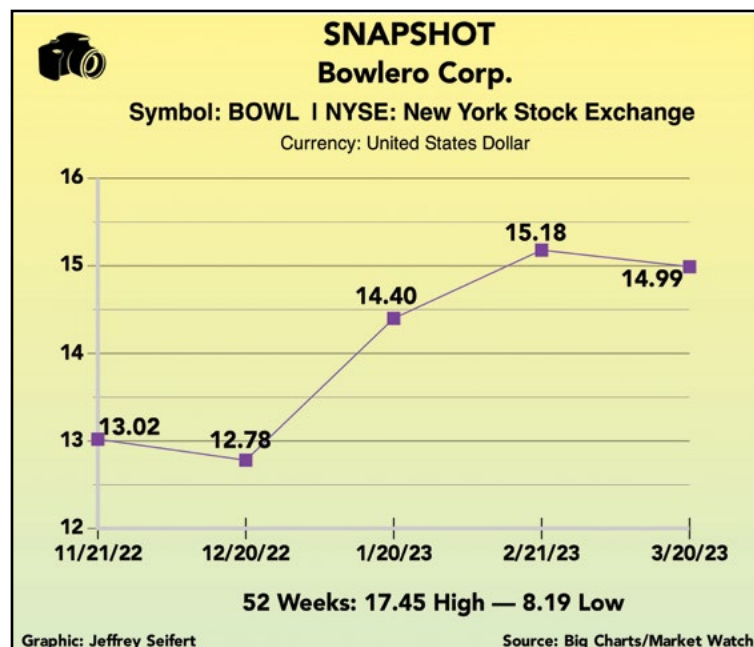
**MARKET WATCH** \*Featuring NEW listings! \*

COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 3/20/23	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
<b>PARKS</b>					
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	82.54	132.93	71.72
Bowlero Corp.	BOWL	NYSE	14.99	17.45	8.19
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	43.87	57.48	37.58
Comcast Corp./ NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	36.43	48.42	28.39
Dave & Busters Entertainment, LLC	PLAY	NASDAQ	35.95	52.53	29.59
EPR Properties	EPR	NYSE	36.77	56.38	34.58
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	JP:9010	TYO	4255.00	5130.00	3745.00
Haichang Holdings Ltd.	HK:2255	SEHK	1.55	4.29	0.81
Lefoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	17.65	20.20	15.40
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	41.79	46.23	26.41
Parks America, Inc.	PRKA	OTC	0.42	0.26	0.53
Royal Caribbean Cruises, Ltd.	RCL	NYSE	61.35	87.68	31.09
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	57.80	76.57	40.01
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	24.87	44.82	16.83
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	778.00	900.00	650.00
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	94.22	144.46	84.07
<b>SUPPLIERS/OTHERS</b>					
Brogent Technologies, Inc.	TW:5263	TSEC	131.00	148.50	99.6
Sansei Technologies, Inc.	TYO:6357	TYO	798.00	926.00	722.00
Topgolf Callaway Brands	MODG	NYSE	20.97	25.96	16.80

Details and information available at [amusementtoday.com/stocks](http://amusementtoday.com/stocks)

**Worldwide Markets** — CSE/DK: Copenhagen Stock Exchange; HK: The Stock Exchange of Hong Kong; JP: The Tokyo Stock Exchange; NASDAQ: National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations; NYSE: New York Stock Exchange; OCT: Over-the-counter stocks; TAIEX: The Taiwan Capitalization Weighted Stock Index; TYO: The Tokyo Stock Exchange; TW: The Taiwan Stock Exchange.

—SOURCES: Bigcharts.com


**DIESEL PRICES**

Region (U.S.)	As of 3/13/23	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	\$4.653	(\$0.974)
Midwest	\$4.094	(\$0.950)
Gulf Coast	\$3.998	(\$1.112)
Mountain	\$4.431	(\$0.535)
West Coast	\$4.538	(\$0.878)
California	\$5.312	(\$0.952)

**CURRENCY**

On 3/20/23 \$1 USD =	
0.9372	EURO
0.8202	GBP (British Pound)
131.82	JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.9257	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.4909	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.3729	CAD (Canadian Dollar)

**BUSINESS WATCH**
**Six Flags reports fourth quarter, annual results**

ARLINGTON, Texas — **Six Flags Entertainment Corporation** reported fourth quarter revenue of \$280 million, net income of \$13 million and adjusted EBITDA of \$99 million. For the full year, the company reported revenue of \$1,358 million, net income of \$109 million and adjusted EBITDA of \$465 million.

"We are pleased to have delivered record fourth quarter adjusted EBITDA, which provides evidence that our new strategy and our new culture are beginning to take hold," said **Selim Bassoul**, president and CEO. "I'm proud of our team's commitment to elevating the guest experience. In the fourth quarter, we launched three new events and amplified our largest event of the year, Fright Fest, which drove improved attendance trends and guest satisfaction. Our team is hard at work developing an exciting lineup of new events, rides and attractions for 2023, as we look to build on our success in the fourth quarter."

Total revenue for fourth quarter 2022 decreased \$37 million, or 12%, compared to fourth quarter 2021, driven by lower attendance, partially offset by higher guest spending per capita. The decrease in attendance was driven by an increase in ticket prices, the elimination of free tickets and heavily-discounted pass products, and fewer operating days. The company did not open six parks in fourth quarter 2022 that were open for Holiday in the Park in fourth quarter 2021, which accounted for 279 thousand additional guests in fourth quarter 2021.

**Hurricane effects SeaWorld financials**

ORLANDO — **SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.** reported its financial results for the fourth quarter and fiscal year 2022.

"In the fourth quarter we delivered record revenue, our second highest net income and record adjusted EBITDA. For fiscal 2022, we delivered record revenue, record net income and record adjusted EBITDA," said **Marc Swanson**, chief executive officer of SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc. "Results for the fourth quarter versus the prior year would have been even better if it weren't for significant adverse weather impacts in most of our markets during the November and December holiday period, and the negative impact of Hurricane Ian in October and Hurricane Nicole in November. We estimate that these combined weather-related impacts reduced attendance by approximately 249,000 guest visits during the quarter."

Total revenue was a record \$390.5 million, an increase of \$19.7 million or 5.3% from the fourth quarter of 2021. Compared to the fourth quarter of 2019, total revenue increased by \$92.5 million or 31.0%. Total revenue was a record \$1,731.2 million, an increase of \$227.5 million or 15.1% from fiscal 2021. Compared to fiscal 2019, total revenue increased by \$333.0 million or 23.8%.

**Dynamic Technologies defaults on creditor**

TORONTO — **Dynamic Technologies Group Inc.** announced that its \$16 million senior secured credit facilities with **Promising Expert Limited** matured on February 28, 2023, and the company is currently in default for non-payment of the same. The default under the PEL Credit Facilities constitutes a cross-default under the terms of the company's \$2 million subordinated secured loan with **Export Development Canada** (EDC).

The company is having ongoing discussions with PEL, who remains supportive. Based on those discussions, the Company does not expect PEL to issue a demand for payment at this time or to take any immediate steps under the PEL Credit Facilities. Under the terms of an intercreditor agreement between PEL and EDC, EDC must provide 90 days advance written notice to PEL before accelerating payment of the EDC loan obligations or commencing an enforcement action and only then if PEL is not diligently pursuing its own enforcement action in good faith.



# Focus on the HORIZON

## Carr is an 'all star' team player

ORLANDO — Many of us mark our careers with the items we keep: the saved lanyards, the photos of team buildings and the tchotchkes on our desks. For Conner Carr, corporate manager of rides and Engineering for SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment, he marks professional highpoints with a new pair of shoes.

Originally from Liberty, Missouri, Carr felt the pull of the attractions industry after a visit to Walt Disney World. "It was the first time, the only time, we went when I was a kid," he shared. "I remember going on Expedition Everest and loving it. Then I saw a show on the Discovery Channel about the making of the ride. It was like seeing the wizard pull back the curtain, being able to learn and see how the roller coaster was built." He never forgot the show, or the rush he felt after that first introduction to theme park ride design and development.

Carr attended the University of Missouri and studied Mechanical Engineering. While there, he accepted a summer internship as a maintenance technician at Silver Dollar City. He was immediately embraced by park and the people. "I still carry the advice I received and think about the many conversations had with everyone I worked with," Carr said. "I learned a lot working alongside the maintenance crew. I saw how the park took care of the rides, including daily track walks and preventative procedures. Most importantly though, I learned firsthand how important it is for the operations and maintenance team to partner together. Very often each will approach a project or challenge with different goals. By sharing these needs and goals with each other, the final shared outcome benefits the guest. I apply that philosophy to everything I do for SeaWorld, whether it's with my internal colleagues or the vendors, construction teams or others who support each project so it can

move from concept to reality."

While in college, a family friend told him about the annual IAAPA Expo, prompting Carr to take a risk and attend the expo, alone with the goal to begin networking and job searching. "It was by pure accident I was on the same flight as a group from the corporate offices of Herschend Family Entertainment," Carr shared. "We talked on the trip down, and they invited me to walk and explore the trade show floor with them. It not only helped open doors but was another example of how supportive the people of the attractions industry are, including those who hope to be!"

Upon graduation Carr moved to Orlando, Florida, and became part of SeaWorld's corporate team. And he has been there ever since. "I am part of the team that develops and oversees the rides and attractions at our company's parks. Each project brings new challenges and inspiration; it's all I hoped my career would be."

While new roller coasters and thrill rides are recognized as the "sexy" part of the job, Carr points to a favorite game as an analogy to his approach to smaller projects. "Deciding where to place a new waterslide within an existing park is just as fun as building a large ride," he said. "Figuring out where to install it within the existing layout is like playing Tetris. You twist and turn the footprint, to make it fit, make it work, all while also starting to think of the next project, and the next move."

Carr does acknowledge big projects are special and points to the March 2022 opening of Sesame Place San Diego as a core memory. "It was amazing to be a part of that project," he smiled. "To bring together our incredible SeaWorld team with the Sesame Street brand — it's something I never dreamed I would be doing. We opened SeaWorld's first new park in nine years, combining waterslides and rides with Elmo, Abby, Grover, Cookie Monster —

## Conner Carr SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment Orlando, Florida



all of the them!"

Which brings us back to the shoes. Anyone who attends a team member or media preview of one of SeaWorld Parks' new rides, slides or attractions should also take note of Carr's feet. He celebrates each grand opening wearing custom designed Converse Chuck Taylor All Stars. "It has definitely become my tradition," he laughed. "I thought it would be cool to create a pair that matches the color and theme of the first attraction I worked on. The rest is history. Yes, they're a conversation piece, but they're also a personal way to highlight what I've been a part of. I do have a pretty cool collection."

With two big coasters opening soon, Pipeline: The Surf Coaster in Florida and DarKoaster in Virginia, however, he won't hint as to what color scheme will adorn the 2023 pair.

Rides, new parks and kicks aside, Carr says the people of the attractions industry are what inspire him most. "I heard at my first IAAPA Expo and then again at my first ASTM International meet-

ing that the public knows theme park companies as strong competitors," he said. "However, those of us in this industry know we are supportive professionals, focused on safety, sharing key learnings and moving forward. I felt this when I first arrived at SeaWorld and it continues to energize and inspire me each time I attend an industry meeting or event."

In 2022, Carr earned his Master's Degree in Engineering Management from the University of Central Florida, pointing to it as both a personal and professional goal. "It also helped me remember to always bring a fresh perspective to anything I work on. Designing a parking lot may not sound important, but it requires the same focus and detail need when developing a new ride. We begin to think of the guest experience the minute someone arrives at one of our parks and that even includes how and where they will park. I'm proud to be a part of any project that helps make our guests' days memorable."

—Susan Storey



## PAPA Spring Meeting again held in Chocolatetown U.S.A.

HERSHEY, Pa. — One hundred five members and guests of the **Pennsylvania Amusement Parks & Attractions Association (PAPA)** gathered February 27 and 28 for the annual spring meeting at **Hershey Lodge and Convention Center**. Member parks and attractions, suppliers and manufacturers and individual members comprised the participants. The organization strives to foster an environment where industry peers can gather and learn from one another.

The first day included a board of directors meeting in the afternoon, followed by a reception and banquet that evening. Both the board meeting and evening proceedings were led by **Mike Fehnel**, director of strategic initiatives for **Cedar Fair Entertainment Company** and outgoing PAPA president. "It was a great meeting," he said. "The board of directors got together for an almost two-hour long session, going through any number of topics."

Reflecting on his tenure as president, Fehnel said, "It was an interesting two years as we were coming out of the pandemic. It was great to see the folks of the industry come together and to meet, talk and discuss how we get back to giving fun to our guests." He also had complete confidence in the new president. "I think **Scott Silar** is going to do an amazing job as incoming president. I look forward to seeing everyone this summer at the meeting at **Dutch Wonderland**."

The organization again held a 50/50 raffle for the **Barbara J. Knoebel Scholarship Fund** raising more than \$700. The winner, **Tony Rossi**,

**Hersheypark**, donated his portion back to the fund. Each year, seven \$1,000 scholarships are awarded to students who work at any of the participating member parks or attractions. Upon conclusion of dinner, many attendees retired to watering holes throughout the complex to continue networking and imbibing.

The second day began with the annual breakfast membership meeting. Association business included reports on various aspects of the industry: legislative updates, Amusement Ride Safety Advisory Board, a recap of the fall **Parks and Carnivals Education (PACE)** ride safety seminar, water park issues, PAPA website, marketing and human resource matters. PAPA Secretary/Treasurer **Dick Knoebel** again gave his report, this time with a few more words, paraphrasing, "I've just returned from a galaxy far, far away, and we are solvent!"

Newly installed President Silar commented on the camaraderie of members: "At the end of the day, PAPA is here to support its members, both our facility members [and] our supplier and vendor members. We're here to support them and be a common voice and get the message out that Pennsylvania is a happening place for travel, hospitality and tourism. We welcome all the guests that come to Pennsylvania to have a safe and memorable experience and make memories that can last a lifetime."

The new officer team includes **Rick Knoebel**, first vice president and **Tom Rebbie**, second vice president. Dick Knoebel retains both his positions.

Upon conclusion of the meeting, some of the attendees participated in the popular, roundtable discussions. They were held in the Hersheypark service center conference room with 30 people from five parks involved in the lively conversation.

"Our members a few years ago decided they wanted to have a forum to bounce ideas off of each other," said Silar. "Our industry is wonderful in that no facility wants to recreate the wheel. We all have the same struggles; we all have the same successes. We met to bounce ideas off of each other, how can we learn from each other — what can we do to help better our industry as a whole?"

Some of the topics discussed included recruiting and retaining generation Z people, retirees looking for supplemental income and providing comfort for employees working in both heat and cold environments since many parks now operate under extended seasons.

This was the 88th PAPA spring meeting. The organization was formed in 1935 with **R.L. Plarr** from **Dorney Park** serving as the first president. In 1946, famed roller coaster designer **Herbert P. Schmeck** from **Philadelphia Toboggan Company** was president. The annual spring meeting is traditionally held in Hershey. The 2023 summer fun meeting will be held at Dutch Wonderland, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, July 17 and 18. The next PACE ride safety seminar takes place October 30 - November 2 in the western part of the state with **Kennywood** being the location for the "hands-on day" training.

—B. Derek Shaw

### ON THE MOVE

**Merlin Entertainments** has appointed **Susan Ang** as the new divisional director for Asia-Pacific (APAC), Midway, effective April 1, 2023. Ang's appointment follows the news that **Rob Smith** is returning to the U.K. and stepping into the new role of managing director, Midway, Merlin Entertainments.



Ang

Ang has been with Merlin for over six years and was most recently the regional director, Asia, Midway. With over 25 years of global experience in the tourism industry, Ang is well equipped to support Merlin's APAC region through its next leap of growth — under recently appointed Chief Executive **Scott M. O'Neil**.

In her new role, Ang will lead the overall management, regional strategies and financial responsibilities for Merlin's 32 attractions across the APAC region. This includes Merlin's 22 attractions across Asia and 10 attractions in Australia and New Zealand.

**Cedar Fair Entertainment Company** announced that **Monica Sauls** has joined the company as senior vice president and chief human resources officer. She is based at the company's office in Charlotte, North Carolina, and reports to President and Chief Executive Officer **Richard A. Zimmerman**.

"Monica is a dynamic leader with more than two decades of experience in aligning

business and human resources strategy to drive innovation, employee engagement and revenue growth for leading consumer brands," said Zimmerman.

Sauls brings more than 20 years of experience leading HR functions and culture transformations within large, complex global organizations. Most recently, she was senior vice president and chief people officer of chicken restaurant chain **Bojangles**, where she led a team that modernized people practices that accelerated restaurant staffing during the national labor crisis.



Sauls

**Six Flags Entertainment Corporation** announced that **Ramar Vaughan** has been named general manager of the company's Maryland-based Six Flags America theme park and Hurricane Harbor Maryland water park. Vaughan most recently served as director of in-park services at the park, a role that he assumed in December 2016.



Vaughan

"Ramar is a dynamic leader with passion for Six Flags America and the communities we serve. With his proven track record of success, we're thrilled to have his leadership as we usher in a new era at such an important property," said Six Flags Vice President **Jason Freeman**.

## Baynum Solutions adds Chloe Hausfeld as director

NEWPORT, Ky. — **Chloe Hausfeld**, a 12-year veteran of the entertainment and attractions industry, has been appointed a director at **Baynum Amusement Solutions**, responsible for developing new business and managing projects.

Hausfeld also will be responsible for cultivating key client and vendor relationships while helping direct growth efforts for Baynum Amusement Solutions.

"We are excited to have Chloe Hausfeld join our Baynum Amusement Solutions team," said **Walter Bowser**, president, Baynum Amusement Solutions. "Her industry experience, connections and business development skills will provide an immediate impact to our continued growth. Most importantly, her positive and fun-loving attitude will be a perfect fit for our organization and clients."

Hausfeld, a graduate of the **University of Cincinnati**, joins Baynum Amusement Solutions after nearly 12 years with **Jack Rouse Associates (JRA)**, part of **RWS Entertainment Group**, as vice president. In her role there, Hausfeld traveled extensively to industry symposia, coordinated logistics for JRA's activations, and provided client service and vendor relations at the events.

Hausfeld was also named the Young Professional of the Year in 2017.



Hausfeld



## OBITUARIES

## Six Flags Parks' Thomas Major passes away at the age of 81

BURLESON, Texas — Thomas Henry Major passed away on February 7, 2023, with his daughters by his side. During his final days, he was surrounded by friends.



Majors

Major was born on July 21, 1941, in Waxahachie, Texas, and graduated from Milford High School in 1959. After high school, he attended the University of Texas in Arlington. While in college, he applied for a job at the newly opened Six Flags Over Texas. That job marked the beginning of a lifetime career in the theme park/entertainment business, an industry he loved.

In 1961, while working as a ride operator for Six Flags Over Texas, Major's enthusiasm for his work earned the attention of his bosses. From 1964 to 1965 he was one of just two Six Flags employees selected to operate the Log Flume ride at the World's Fair in Flushing, New York.

## Edmond Dangler, formerly of Six Flags, Cedar Point passes

SANDUSKY, Ohio — Edmond W. Dangler, 72, passed away January 24, 2023, at Firelands Regional Medical Center in Sandusky, Ohio.

Early in life, Dangler learned the importance of hard work. Starting in 1986 at Six Flags Great Adventure in Jackson, New Jersey, and ending a 45-year long career in the amusement park business at Cedar Point in Sandusky, Ohio, retiring as the vice president of maintenance, construction at the park. He was a man of very strong faith and he exemplified the importance of family, hard work and doing what is right.



Dangler

Following his time in the Army, Majors returned to work for Six Flags Theme Parks. For 35 years, he dedicated his time and energy to a company he believed in. His positions ranged from lower level management to several VP titles, relocating many times at the company's request. He worked at Six Flags parks in St. Louis, Georgia, New Jersey (twice), Michigan and Texas. He retired from the company as the senior vice president and general manager of Six Flags Great Adventure in New Jersey.

After relocating to Wichita Falls, Texas, he was the general manager at Castaway Cove Waterpark until his retirement.

Majors loved roller coasters and often commented that riding one was the best way to "get your heart started in the morning." His favorite ride was the Texas Giant, one he shepherded through construction and installation at Six Flags Over Texas. Majors was dedicated to an industry that made people smile, bringing excitement to their lives.

Dangler was the loving husband of almost 40 years to Deborah L. Dangler; loving father of Ryan (Allison) Dangler and Jessica (Brian) Dietrick; the most amazing Pop-Pop to Kayla, Lucy, Avery and Hudson and a loving brother to Carol (Jimmy) Vacchiano, David Dangler and Joseph Dangler. Ed was preceded in death by his parents, Ethel (Fette) and Joseph Dangler; and brother, Richard Dangler.

Dangler's loved ones regarded him as one of the kindest souls on this planet and a gentle giving man who worked tirelessly to ensure that his family had everything they needed. They noted that he was a humble man of a generation of knowledge and hands-on experience.

## Beech Bend Park and Raceway owner Dallas Jones passes away at age 82

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — Dallas Clay Jones, age 82 years, passed away peacefully on Saturday, Feb. 25, in Bowling Green, Kentucky, surrounded by his family.

He was the son of the late Alex Franklin Jones and Sylvia Lorene McElwain Jones.

Friends and family have many fond memories of Jones. But Jones' successes in bringing joy to his community and region with Beech Bend Park and Raceway in Bowling Green, Kentucky, is, along with his family, his legacy.

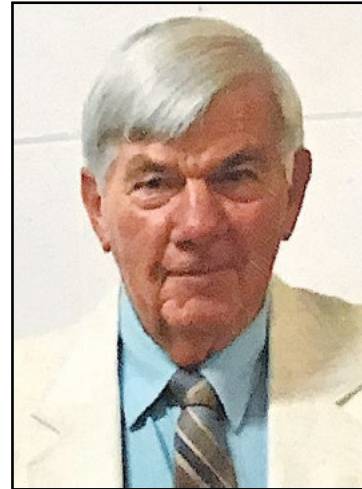
Born in 1940 in Cleaton, Kentucky, Jones grew up working on a farm. He was the third of nine children. His love of cars, his determination and his entrepreneurial spirit were evident in his younger years.

Just a year out of high school in 1959, Jones married his high school sweetheart, Alfreda Cottrell. In September 1960, Dallas and Alfreda had their first child, Charlotte (now Charlotte Jones Gonzalez). In 1963, they had their second daughter, Dana (now Dana Jones Porter), and a son, Clay Jones (who preceded Jones in death), was born in 1972.

During those early years, the family spent quite a bit of time at Beech Bend Park. Jones was a racer and raced at Beech Bend Raceway in his 1956 Chevrolet first and later in his 1962 Chevrolet. Both of these race cars also were his transportation to work.

In 1974, Jones and his wife leased the Hardinsburg, Kentucky, dragstrip. They ran that for one season, then seized the opportunity to lease the Owensboro, Kentucky, dragstrip. They operated that track through the 1987 season.

While operating the raceways, Jones, in 1981, also began a trucking company, Clay's Trucking Company,



Dallas Jones

then added DC Transport and DC Trucking some years later. The companies are still operated by the family.

In 1984, Jones and his wife purchased Beech Bend Raceway. Jones retired from his job at the grocery company, and it was all hands on deck for the entire family as they grew the Beech Bend Raceway into a nationally renowned racing facility.

In 1987, Jones and his wife purchased the remain-

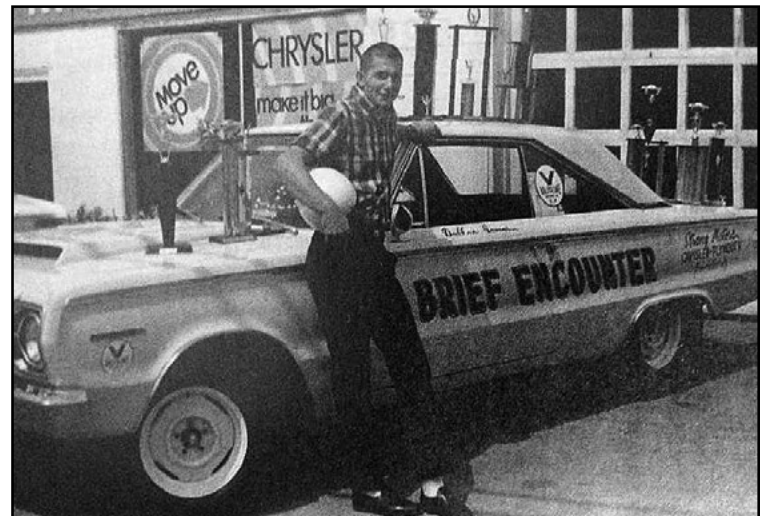
ing property at Beech Bend, which included the campground and amusement park land.

The Jones family began to rebuild Beech Bend Park. The campground was renovated, and Jones began to add a few new rides each year. His daughter, Charlotte Jones Gonzalez, along with her husband Rick Gonzalez, officially joined the Beech Bend company.

Growth continued at the park with a water park added in 2004. Today the park draws annually hundreds of thousands of visitors from throughout the region.

Jones is survived by his wife of 63 years, both his daughters, a son-in-law, Jonathan Porter, and a daughter-in-law Stephanie Jones.

Jones' funeral service was held on March 1, 2023, at the J.C. Kirby & Son Lovers Lane Chapel in Bowling Green.



Dallas Jones as a young racer. COURTESY BEECH BEND PARK



Dallas Jones, center, surrounded by his family. COURTESY BEECH BEND PARK



# NEAAPA holds successful Education Conference, Annual Meeting

NASHUA, N.H. — Nearly 140 people from across the New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (NEAAPA) region and beyond came together to learn, network and celebrate two outstanding contributors to the attractions industry at the 110th Anniversary Education Conference & Annual Meeting, which was held at the Sheraton Nashua Hotel from March 6-8, 2023.

Sixty attendees participated in NEAAPA Education Roundtables on March 6. Over the course of 90 minutes, people rotated through the six different roundtables, each table covering a different topic. Members of NEAAPA's Board of Directors and President's Council led discussions on Legal and Advocacy; Marketing, Promotions, and Sales; Safety and Security; Food, Beverage, and Retail; Operations and Live Entertainment. A reception and dinner followed this session.

Tuesday, March 7, had panels and speakers covering even more information to help members get ready for the upcoming 2023 summer season. Kicking off the day, Increasing Your Sales, Revenues, and Profitability, a panel discussion led by Michael Van Buren of New England Ice Cream, Dave Oberlander of Sodexo Live!, and Kim Imbornone of New England Ice Cream, which helped attendees learn how to have a stronger relationship with suppliers to help build up their bottom lines. That was followed by How



NEAAPA's 110th Anniversary Education Conference & Annual Meeting featured multiple popular seminars for attendees. AT/GARY SLADE

Technology Can Add to Your Bottom Line. This session, also a panel discussion, was led by Dorothy Lewis of Xpressposts.com, Meagan Achenbach of Palace Playland Amusement Park, and Ed Rogers of Ryan's Family Amusements of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire. Using phone apps and maximizing the use of your POS system can help with decreasing expenses and making your team more efficient.

During lunch, members shared their craziest stories in a mini session called You Can't Make This S#! Up. The afternoon classes were seminar-style. Winning the War on Talent: Using Recruitment and DEIB to Make It a Great Season! was taught by John Henderson and Allison Ebner of The Employers Association of the Northeast. They discussed ideas like the importance of having a strong Employee Value Proposition,

how belonging can amp up recruitment and retention, and the impacts of unconscious bias in the workplace. The final session of the day was Emergency Management: Preventing and Preparing for an Active Shooter Event, which was led by Steven Cileli of Lock-It-Down Consulting. A retired Rhode Island law enforcement professional, Lt. Cileli walked attendees through the active shooter drill and debrief that was conducted recently at Roger Williams Park Zoo.

Later in the day was the Vendor Showcase, NEAAPA's mini trade show, which had 11 members displaying their latest products and services. This led to the Annual Meeting Reception and was followed by the Annual Meeting Dinner. During the dinner, Richard Munch of the National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives and a founding member of American

Coaster Enthusiasts delivered the keynote talking about the present and future plans for the museum, located in Plainview, Texas. This was followed by the Annual Business Meeting, led by outgoing NEAAPA President Dave Oberlander. He presented the President's Award to Steve Gioe of The SSA Group for his continuing contributions to bolstering NEAAPA's learning opportunities both in-person and online. Twenty new NEAAPA members and 15 members reaching a membership longevity milestone were also recognized. The election of officers and directors was held, naming Chris Nicoli of Canobie Lake Park as NEAAPA's 58th President, Erik Beard of International Ride Training as 1st vice president, Ron Patalano of Roger Williams Park Zoo & Carousel Village as 2nd vice president, and Charlene Conway of Carousel Family Fun Center as treasurer. Directors elected with terms expiring in 2026 are Chris Bourgeois of Rhode Island Novelty, Joe Montalto of High Mountain Enterprises, Matt Naughton of Naughton Insurance, Individual Member Tom Tessitore, and Dennis Vourderis of Deno's Wonder Wheel Park.

After making his first address as president of NEAAPA, Nicoli turned the stage over to Awards Committee Chair John Guertin of Guertin Graphics and Awards. The Alan E. Ramsay Safety Award was presented to Melissa Plante

of CLM Risk Management for her continuing work on safety, both as a third-party inspector and as the IAAPA Expo "Safety Guardian Angel" ensuring safety for all attendees at the annual convention in Orlando, Florida. The Paragon Award for Marketing Excellence was presented to Clara Rice of RWS Entertainment Group for her work on integrating recent acquisitions JRA and Ted with cohesive marketing and social media throughout all divisions. The Meritorious Service Award, presented to a NEAAPA member who has gone above and beyond for the association was given to Pete Barto of PB Amusement for his work to bring back the Golf Tournament as part of the NEAAPA Summer Meeting. Net proceeds from this event go to the Pinnacle Scholarship Program, awarding scholarships to post-secondary education students who are working for NEAAPA members.

The evening was capped off with the NEAAPA Hall of Fame inductions. Ron Gustafson and Gary Slade were this year's inductees, joining 46 other respected individuals for their contributions to the attractions industry. Gustafson recently retired from Quassy Amusement and Waterpark and worked at the former Midway Amusement Park and for Powers Great American Midways, working in marketing, advertising, and special events. Slade is the owner and publisher of Amusement Today, the nation's only monthly publication dedicated to the attractions industry.

NEAAPA's upcoming events include the Spring Leadership Seminar on May 22, 2023; Summer Meeting and Golf Tournament on July 24 & 25, 2023, at Quassy Amusement and Waterpark and Lake Compounce Theme Park; and the Tom Morrow Social and IAAPA Dinner on November 15, 2023, during this year's International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions Expo in Orlando, Florida.

—Ed Hodgdon



Richard Munch of the National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives and a founding member of American Coaster Enthusiasts delivered the keynote address at the event (above left). Amusement Today Publisher Gary Slade and industry veteran Ron Gustafson were inducted into the NEAAPA Hall of Fame for their contributions to the industry (above right).

AT/GARY SLADE; COURTESY NEAAPA





*would like to thank*



*for recognizing Publisher Gary Slade and  
inducting him into the NEAAPA Hall of Fame!*

*"Quick note of congratulations on your induction into the NEAAPA Hall of Fame! You have tirelessly served the industry through your endeavors so well noted in the NEAAPA press announcement. Your accomplishments have been broad and deep as they relate carrying the industry flag. We proudly ran the announcement today in our news. I am personally glad to see this acknowledgement by NEAAPA. You're a good man and a great industry representative."*

—Dennis L. Spiegel,  
International Theme Park Services

*"David and I are so excited for you and your induction into the NEAAPA Hall of Fame. You have worked hard and are very deserving of this honor, not only in New England but in many other markets as well."*

—Kristi and David Dean,  
Joyland Park



*"Congratulations, Gary!!! Well-deserved!"*

—David Mandt, IAAPA

*"Congratulations Gary. Well deserved award. You have been a good friend through the years."*

—Paul Borchardt,  
Wonderland Park

*"I've been loving seeing all the news and photos from our industry friends celebrating YOU and your induction to the NEAAPA HOF. Absolutely well deserved. Congratulations!"*

—Lauren Wood Weaver,  
Sally Corporation

*"I just wanted to write a quick note to congratulate you for your induction into the NEAAPA Hall of Fame! A well-earned position."*

—Sarah Brack,  
CAVU Designwerks





# SAFETY, MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

► Pa. Ride Safety Advisory Board meeting — page 44 / Wallace joins AIMS International board — page 45

## AIMS announces departure of Executive Director M.J. Brewer

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — **AIMS International** announced that Executive Director **Mary Jane (M.J.) Brewer** will depart her position effective April 10, 2023.

"M.J.'s exceptional leadership and innovation navigated AIMS through a critical time in history and helped us achieve record growth," said Board President **David Bromilow**. "We are incredibly appreciative of her dedication and proud of her vast achievements. She strengthened the foundation of our organization and we will continue the progress she has achieved during her time at AIMS International."

AIMS International's board of directors noted several of Brewer's key achievements included ensuring AIMS stayed relevant and ahead of the curve on technology use to deliver an outstanding seminar and educational platform for students and instructors, including a critical pivot during the coronavirus pandemic. As executive director, Brewer oversaw steady growth of AIMS' online programming and in-person workshops and created the Academy of Amusement Risk Management, Safety and Security program, which is now in its second year. She partnered with industry-leading organizations to grow AIMS International's annual safety seminar's educational offerings as well as extending educational outreach programs across the U.S., Canada and South America, and growing AIMS International's footprint to include the Pacific Northwest, Columbia and surrounding countries.

Under Brewer's leadership, AIMS International developed and executed upon five key strategies: driving the organization's revenue, growing programming, achieving record safety seminar attendance and sponsorship revenue and continually delivering upon the AIMS mission of providing cutting-edge safety, maintenance and operations education to the industry.

"I'd like to thank the board of directors for their ongoing support and faith in me to lead this organization. Managing AIMS International is a responsibility I have not taken lightly and hope that my successor will continue to deliver relevant, world-class safety education and certification programs that will reach even more amusement industry technicians around the globe," Brewer said. "I have had the pleasure of working with many great professionals and look forward to continuing my connection to AIMS into the future. It has been my absolute privilege to lead this amazing organization for the past four years."

The AIMS board has begun its search for a new executive director.

"This role is critical to the continuity of operations so we will make sure the search process is thorough and expedited to help smooth this transition. While we are sad to see M.J. leave, we wish her well and look forward to working with the future executive director and continuing the rewarding work of supporting and uniting safety professionals around the globe," Bromilow said.

•[aimsintl.org](http://aimsintl.org)



Mary (M.J.) Brewer

## Evolv Technology reaches milestone with customers

WALTHAM, Mass. — AI-based weapons detection security screening provider **Evolv Technology** is now partnering with venues in 45 U.S. states, as well as Puerto Rico, as security professionals from sports stadiums and theme parks to schools and hospitals integrate advanced weapons screening technology into their layers of safety planning. The company more than doubled its customer base in 2022, working towards its mission of making the world a safer place for people to live, learn, work and play.

"We have now screened over a half a billion visitors, reflecting our rapidly expanding customer base in healthcare, education and industrial workplaces," said **Peter George**, CEO of Evolv Technology. "We are committed to provide innovative solutions for our customers, and to serve as partners in their safety operations."

Evolv is helping to make a fundamental difference in venue safety as part of a layered approach to security. To that end, Evolv customers used the Evolv Express system to tag over 176,000 weapons in 2022—including 93,000 guns and 83,000 knives carried by visitors entering venues. In the fourth quarter of 2022 alone, Evolv customers tagged nearly 70,000 weapons — including 36,000 guns and 33,000 knives. That's an average of about 400 guns every single day being stopped from entering venues where

# evolv

weapons are prohibited at the end of last year.

Through a combination of powerful sensor technology, proven AI and comprehensive analytics, Evolv Express scans for concealed weapons without imposing the negative, inconvenient or anxiety-inducing procedures that can accompany metal detectors. Evolv Express uses AI to instantly distinguish threats from most everyday objects, such as keys and cellphones, as people walk through at the pace of life. Unlike metal detectors and their newer upgrades, Evolv Express flags the precise location of a potential threat so that guards can respond in a more efficient manner toward incident resolution rather than requiring invasive and time-consuming procedures such as wandering, body searches and "yo-yo'ing" an individual through a system.

"For those who set off an alarm, the secondary screening check is immensely easier and creates much less friction than it did before with the metal detectors," said **Brandon Covert**, **Haslam Sports Group**, vice president of IT, operator of **FirstEnergy Stadium**, home of the **Cleveland Browns**. "We know exactly where the alert is located on the body by seeing it pinpointed on the Evolv Express tablet, so verification and remediation of the threat is much faster and less invasive."

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

 **PREMIER SERVICE™**  
A division of Premier Rides

DEDICATED TO SAFETY 24/7/365

PREMIER RIDES

1007 EAST PRATT STREET

BALTIMORE, MD 21202

WWW.PREMIER-RIDES.COM

INFO@PREMIER-RIDES.COM

+1.410.923.0414



ANNUAL REHAB SUPPORT



# 2023 NWSC Safety Seminar went on as the snow came down

AT: Pam Sherborne  
 psherborne@amusementtoday.com

PORTLAND, Ore. — The 2023 Northwestern Showmen's Club (NWSC) Safety Seminar began pretty much as it has for the past 40-plus years. Scheduled to run this year Feb. 21-25, on the campus of Funtastic Shows in Portland, Oregon, day one and day two passed just as planned.

Weather reports called for snow and record-low temperatures for that week, and planners, instructors and participants of the seminar watched closely. On day three of the event, the snow began to fall right on schedule.

"The snow hit, and it came in fast and furious," said Tracy Burback Munoz, NWSC treasurer.

The seminar was hosted by NWSC President Boyd Newton. Newton as well as Bev Burback, seminar chair, and Morrie Haworth, co-chair of the event, had a big



Avery Wheelock stands among the NWSC Safety Seminar attendees while teaching students during this year's event. On the third day of the event, snows began to fall (above right) in Portland, Oregon. But, as showfolks say, "The show must go on" and the seminar continued. COURTESY NWSC



decision to make.

"Were they going to be forced to shut down the seminar or not?" Munoz said. "The weather just kept getting worse and worse by the hour."

"Well, they set out and pooled the instructors and it was clear that they are true show folks," she said. "It was unanimous: 'the show must go on.' We are so blessed to have the instructors we have

to present our seminar. They are a huge part of the industry and volunteer their time to make a difference."

Munoz said 100% of the instructors and 95% of the students made it to the seminar the next day. Classes went on as normal for those who got in from the storm, but unfortunately, the kitchen crew that serves breakfast, lunch and dinner was completely snowed and iced in.

Theresa Spromberg, part of the Funtastic Shows office staff, jumped in and headed up the new kitchen crew, which consisted of instructors and Funtastic employees.

"They just jumped in and did what we show folks do best — get the job done," Munoz said.

Seminar planners sent out a special thanks to Doug Haworth, Martin Vine, Ter-

ry Jones, C.W. Craven and Paul Hognlund.

"They prepped food, grilled, served and even did the dishes," she said.

Munoz said attendance this year was down to 110, but they felt like the forecasted snowstorm attributed to that.

The NWSC Safety Seminar was established to pro-

► See NWSC, page 46

*More than 45 years in the industry!*

**MACLAN**  
 Corporation

MACLAN.COM • 800.788.3951 • LAKELAND, FLA.

• LOAD WHEELS • GUIDE WHEELS • UPSTOP WHEELS • CNC HUB MANUFACTURING •  
 • FLUME WHEELS • NYLON WHEELS & PARTS • SOLID URETHANE PARTS •



## SAFETY MARKET PLACE



**IRM**  
INTERNATIONAL RIDES MANAGEMENT

PROUDLY WORKING WITH THE FOLLOWING NORTH AMERICAN COMPANIES:

- Premier Rides • Fibrart • Larson International •
- Swanee River Railroad • PTC •

irmrides.com • Facebook.com/IRMRides

Consulting Services for the Amusement & Entertainment Industries

Specializing in:

- Third Party Safety Inspections
- State Ride Certifications
- Operator Training
- Documentation Reviews
- On-site Operational Audits
- Risk & Loss Control Surveys

**WORLDWIDE SAFETY GROUP**

Avery L. Wheelock  
President  
Cell: 813-505-3938  
avery@worldwidesafetygroup.com

www.worldwidesafetygroup.com



**SARTORI**  
AMUSEMENT RIDES

100% Italian  
Manufactured

+39 0429 800222  
info@sartorirides.com www.sartorirides.com



**PPG PAINT SOLUTIONS**

- On-site consultations and tailored product solutions
- Development of specifications
- Standardized solutions that drive efficiency
- Delivery to keep you on schedule, at no cost to you
- Dedicated, knowledgeable sales specialists
- Order paint anytime, anywhere - 24/7

CONTACT  
**Buddy Allen** - Senior Corporate Accounts Manager  
hallen@ppg.com | 980-433-1242

©2022 PPG Industries, Inc. All Rights Reserved. The PPG Logo is a registered trademark of PPG Industries Ohio, Inc. PPG830706

Keep our amusement park industry strong!  
Buy products and services from these suppliers.

# Pa. Amusement Ride Safety Advisory Board holds quarterly meeting, advises

AT: B. Derek Shaw  
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Representatives from the amusement industry along with community volunteers selected at large met at the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture headquarters in mid-March for a Pennsylvania Ride Safety Advisory Board meeting. Input from this body is used to help the Bureau of Ride & Measurement Standards determine their course of action on a particular ride approval process. (Note: All communities mentioned are in Pennsylvania.)

Walt Remmert, director of the bureau updated board members on the department's activities since the last meeting in September, including an increase in Agri-tourism. He also introduced Dennis Paczkowski as the newest amusement ride quality assurance safety inspector for the bureau. Previously he spent 23 years at Knoebels Amusement Resort. This brings the department to four QA staff to cover the Commonwealth.

"We are more than proactive again," said Remmert. "We are hoping to add a fifth QA inspector during this [new] administration."

Prior to the approval portion, Tony Rossi with Hersheypark, along with Brad Kirkham, an engineer from Rocky Mountain Construction, gave an update on the progress of Wildcat's Revenge. They are using approximately 30% of the existing Great Coasters International structure and footers. Primarily the lift hill before the world's longest under flip and section leading from the brake run into the station are the areas being repurposed.

The coaster will be able to handle three trains, each accommodating 24 passengers or 1,200 per hour on the 63 mph, two-minute-and-45-second



ride. Load and unload will be in two different areas. A class 5 restraint system will be in place along with a minimum locking sensor. There will be heated brake boxes, a back up power source and a completely enclosed work garage under the station.

There were 25 ride/attraction approvals to come before the advisory board, from 15 entities. Most were either an amusement ride, adventure park attraction or water park structure. These included ropes courses, zip lines, an open face slide, obstacle course and a Hurricane 360 VR ride.

Approval was given to the Carousel Holland Grand Carousel to be used for a Philadelphia Art Museum event operated by Ray Cammack Show. Other rides discussed were a Sartori portable Techno Jump purchased by Powers Great American Midways, as well as an SBF/Visa Group Mini Reverse Time (small Wipe Out), which is the first one in the state. Kennywood Park is getting a Gryphon park model, only the second in the world. (The first opened August 22 last year at the Pacific National Exhibition. Matthew Palko with the

park, and Christopher Tobin, Zamperla ride engineer, made the presentation. While the ride is in a shipping container in transit, opening is scheduled for May 26.

Additional manufacturers included Adventure Solutions, Aerial Attractions LLC, Angel Playground, DOF Robotics, Edventure Builders, Port Farms, Waterford, (in-house attractions), Slick Slide Co., Thrillz, Treetop Builders, and Wizard Works Design Group, LLC.

After the approval portion, Steve Gorman with Waldameer Park & WaterWorld, Erie, gave a construction update on Rocket Blast, a ProSlide Technology attraction. It is considered a water coaster with three blast sections and three saucer sections. Before being commissioned, G-force testing will be conducted.

Upcoming dates were set for ride safety advisor board meetings with three more this year: June 20, September 7, December 5, and March (TBD) in 2024. All meetings take place at 10 a.m., 3rd floor conference room, Department of Agriculture, Harrisburg.



An SBF/Visa Group Mini Reverse Time purchased by Powers Great American Midways was one of multiple rides coming to the state that were discussed at the quarterly meeting. A similar model was on display at IAAPA Expo 2022 (shown above). AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON





# NEWS & NOTES

[www.aimsintl.org](http://www.aimsintl.org)

Amusement Industry Manufacturers and Suppliers International, Ltd.  
P.O. Box 5178 • Jacksonville, Fla. 32247  
Phone: (714) 425-5747 • Fax: (714) 276-9666

## Wallace joins AIMS International board, wager to step into new role

The 2023 **AIMS International Safety Seminar** in Galveston, Texas, started out for me with an exciting reward of being elected to the association's board of directors. I remember receiving the phone call from a mentor suggesting they would nominate me [to run for the upcoming open board seat] and feeling both puzzled and honored. I wondered if I had the qualifications to help contribute with the other board members in their goals of bringing this organization to another a higher level coupled with the empowerment of even being considered. After a good night's sleep reflecting on the idea, I knew this was a challenge I really wanted to win.

For 10 years, I have participated in the AIMS International Safety Seminars as both a volun-

teer and a vendor supporting the organization and its goals. The proximity of my family's company located in Lakeland, Florida, allowed me to easily attend during the many years as it was held just 45 minutes away in Orlando, Florida. I continued to follow the seminar as it was held in Galveston, Texas, and I am excited for its future return to Orlando.

Our company — **Maclan Corporation** — was founded in 1975 by both my father and grandfather, so our customer relationships are long and genuine. We are a family company and I am proud of that as I think of my amusement industry friends and business contacts as



Wallace

my extended family.

As a part owner in the business, I have the ability to support the organization from the top. Our company is a worldwide supplier of dynamic products to the industry with a focus on roller coaster wheels. I work directly with many of the students that already attend AIMS, and intend to help grow the attendance with other contacts that have yet been able to join in on the education.

I am both honored and excited to join the AIMS International Board as a manufacturer/supplier and feel I can bring some fresh energy to the great team already in place. Existing board members have years of tenure that I am eager to learn from as well. Given the past years of participation at the seminar, I have established a good working

relationship with the other board members and look forward to nurturing that even further.

It is bitter sweet to be filling the vacant spot of **Franceen Gonzales** of **Whitewater West**. She has given tireless hours of support to this organization and leaves a huge opportunity for me to fill. Her future endeavors still allow me to have an "ear to bend" as I learn the innerworkings of the board and its many reaches of involvement educating the men and women who keep our industry moving forward safely every day.

I may be new on the board, but I'm willing and I am also eager to listen to your safety seminar suggestions, ideas or concerns.

—Maegan Wallace  
Maclan Corporation  
(863) 665-4814  
[maegan@maclan.com](mailto:maegan@maclan.com)

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



**SAVE THESE DATES!**  
**AIMS SAFETY SEMINAR**  
**& CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**  
**JANUARY 7-12, 2024**  
**IN ORLANDO, FLORIDA**

**PLANNING FOR 2024 CLASSES IS UNDERWAY!**

**PLEASE SEND ANY SUGGESTIONS OR IDEAS FOR TOPICS TO: [INFO@AIMSINTL.ORG](mailto:INFO@AIMSINTL.ORG)**

*Early registration begins in July!*

**(714) 425-5747 • [www.aimsintl.org](http://www.aimsintl.org)**  



# SAFETY MARKET PLACE

**SAFETY, SECURITY, OPERATIONS, RISK MANAGEMENT & INDUSTRY DEFENSE**

SERVING THE AMUSEMENT INDUSTRY

**The Hoffman Consulting Group**

464 Mississippi Ave.  
Palm Harbor, Fla. 34683  
(419) 607-0431  
email: [pat@thehoffmancg.com](mailto:pat@thehoffmancg.com)  
[www.thehoffmancg.com](http://www.thehoffmancg.com)

**CONTROL SYSTEMS & CONSULTING FOR THE AMUSEMENT INDUSTRY**

- \* NEW INSTALLATIONS
- \* RETROFITS
- \* PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER CONSULTING

**IRVINE ONDREY ENGINEERING**

*WE CONTROL THE THRILLS!*

CALL 734.353.0679  
[WWW.IRVINEONDREY.COM](http://WWW.IRVINEONDREY.COM) \*BRIAN@IRVINEONDREY.COM

**BAYNUM**  
AMUSEMENT SOLUTIONS

**WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED**

- Waterslide Interior Gelcoat & Exterior Coatings
- Ride Vehicle Automotive Refinishing
- Tower & Aqua Play Unit Restoration
- Attraction Installation & Relocation
- Steel & Wood Coaster Painting
- Theming & Rebranding

[www.baynum.com](http://www.baynum.com)  
(859) 491-9800 office  
[info@baynumpainting.com](mailto:info@baynumpainting.com)

**ARE YOU READY FOR THEM**  
MESSAGE REPEATERS FOR RIDES, FRONT GATES AND WATER SLIDES

Message Repeaters can be configured to operate Triggered\*, Continuous, Scheduled or Periodically.  
(\* triggered via PLC, Human, or Sensor)

Available in Amplified Power Ranges from 22-600 Watts, and line level out for existing P.A. Systems.

for more info contact  
Audio Innovators  
800 222 9929  
[sales@audiinnovators.com](mailto:sales@audiinnovators.com)  
[audiinnovators.com](http://audiinnovators.com)  
Providing TurnKey Solutions Since 1975

Window Units

**YOUR OUTLET FOR KENWOOD TWO-WAY RADIOS AND NORCON WINDOW COMMUNICATORS**

Amusement Engineering for You

**Kumbhak**  
The Amusement Engineers

RIDE UPGRADES, SAFETY SOLUTIONS & REVERSE ENGINEERING OF COMPONENTS

[www.kumbak.nl](http://www.kumbak.nl)

**CHAIRKIT**  
PRERIDE TO PERFORMANCE

LAUNCH, LOADING AND RAFT RETURN CONVEYORS FOR WATERSLIDES

The only kit your chair needs. [www.chairkit.com](http://www.chairkit.com)

**LJM & Associates, Inc.**

**INSPECTION SERVICES Worldwide**

**727-365-4473**

[@rideinspections](https://www.facebook.com/rideinspections)

**Amusement TODAY**  
Your Amusement Industry NEWS Leader

*We ARE your Safety News Source!*

*Subscribe Today!*

[www.AmusementToday.com](http://www.AmusementToday.com)

► **NWSC**  
Continued from page 43

mote continuing education by amusement industry professionals. The interactive classes and hands-on settings deliver the ideal venues for raising the level of safety awareness within the carnival industry.

The NWSC Safety Seminar is aligned with **Portland Community College** for accreditation in their Continuing Education Units (CEUs) Program providing 2 CEUs for participation and completion of the seminar.

Some of the content instructors included: **Steven Elliott**, a registered professional engineer; **Ray Rieger**, **Ray Rieger Loss Control Services**; **Bucky Elkins**, founder and CEO of **West Coast Training and Development Inc.**; **Avery Wheelock**, safety inspector, **LJM and Associates**; **Jon Eyerly**, shop supervisor, **Funtastic Shows**; **Kim Jones**, electrician, **Funtastic Shows**; **Ron Burback**, owner, **Funtastic Shows**; **D. Martin Vine**, professional with expertise in management, maintenance, training services and **John Lamoreaux**, professional with expertise in mechanical and electrician.

Examples of classes held during the week include active shooter, the human cost of accidents, emergency evacuations, inspecting tools, a truck shop and game shop, ride signs, belts, pulleys and motors, fire extinguisher safety, accident lawsuits, specific ride inspections, daily inspections, creating manuals, natural and operating disasters, rigging, forklift, welding, fasteners, oil and hydraulics, inflatable inspection and maintenance and coaster wheels and safety inspection.

NARRSO or AIMS testing took place on Friday at the end of the seminar.

Sponsors, which donate financial support, included *Amusement Today*, **Davis Shows Northwest**, **Show Folks of America**, **Allied-Mcgowen**, **Outdoor Amusement Business Organization**, **Arthur J. Gallagher**, **Galaxy**, **Prime Pacific** and **Funtastic Shows**.

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

Keep our amusement park industry strong!  
Buy products and services from these suppliers.



**SOLD** **CLASSIFIEDS**

**AUCTION**

**NORTON  
AUCTIONEERS**

**THE INDUSTRY EXPERTS!**  
Professional Auctioneers & Appraisers  
*Carnivals • Parks • Carousels  
FEC's • Museums • Tourist Attractions*

P.O. Box 279, Coldwater, MI 49036  
**517-279-9063**  
Fax: 517-279-4899  
www.nortonauctioneers.com  
E-mail: Dan@nortonauctioneers.com

**FOR SALE**

- KMG Freak Out (T/M).....\$449,000
- Bertazzon Matterhorn (T/M)....\$299,000
- Zamperla Baja Buggy.....\$69,000
  - ARM Super Shot.....\$289,000
- Chance Double Decker Carousel.....\$299,000
  - Huss Pirate Ship (T/M).....\$399,000
  - ABC Portable Log Flume.....\$699,000
  - S&S Frog Hopper.....\$29,000
- Visa Floor Pickup Mini Scooter (6 cars).....\$49,000



Supplying Amusements New to Used

Call Len or Earl  
(908) 526-8009 • FAX: (908) 526-4535  
www.Rides4U.com

**BOOK REVIEW**

**Kings Island: A Photographic Journey captures theme park's 50 year history**

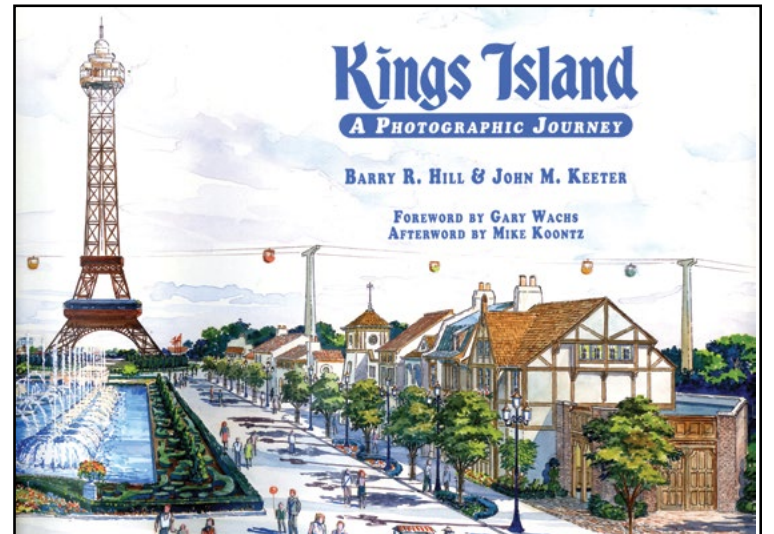
**REVIEW:** Tim Baldwin  
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

Before Kings Island closed for its 50th anniversary season last winter, the park had released a coffee table book titled *Kings Island: A Photographic Journey*. Long in the works, the two collaborators sifted through thousands of photos to orchestrate a collection of images to thrill both the most devoted and loyal of fans to its youngest and newest.

Barry Hill oversaw the written text, while John Keeter was the mastermind of selecting a treasure trove of images.

The hardbound book contains almost 200 pages. Within them are hundreds of images that showcase drawings, memorabilia and photos of all things Kings Island. From its roots as Coney Island in Cincinnati to the construction of a new theme park to its various owners over five decades, the book covers it all.

Suitably, the chapters aren't divided by decades but by ownerships. Following a recap of Coney Island history, subsequent chapters spotlight years with Taft Broadcasting, Kings Entertainment, American Financial, Paramount and Cedar Fair. Focusing on the directions of each gives a more cohesive sense of the park's history more than just decade numbers.



A look back at Coney Island and its struggles at its riverside location provide a footnote of the theme park's history before the Kings Island blueprints were even drawn. Coney Island was a marvelous place, but key people at the time realized the theme park boom was something to take advantage of — and management made a historic move.

The Coney Island chapter is one of the book's most valuable jewels. Many fans know the origins of Kings Island, but to see its predecessor so beautifully displayed is something special. Viewing Kings Island's original attractions — those that moved from Coney Island along with brand new installations — is fun to see, noting where they were located back then and what is on those sites currently.

While a couple of rides are missing from the

50-year catalog, the big ones — the historically notable and innovative attractions — are spotlighted, demonstrating why Kings Island was always at the forefront of theme park ingenuity.

The Racer's impact to theme parks is well known, but it is easy to see why Kings Island was considered to be at the cutting edge with other innovations such as The Bat, the first suspended coaster in a theme park; King Cobra, the first stand-up roller coaster manufactured for North America; and Vortex, the world's first seven-inversion roller coaster.

If there was a wish to be had, it would have been nice to have a bit more text or captioning in the spaces available to bring the enormous selection of photos into historical context, but the title of the book, *Kings Island: A Photograph Journey*, stays true to its purpose. (Of note, this would make an ideal companion piece to *Kings Island: A Ride Through Time* by Evan Postingle, which covers the park's history through text.)

A forward from Gary Wachs, the "Father of Kings Island," and an afterword by Mike Koontz, the current vice president and general manager, give it bookends of authenticity.

As promised in its title, the photographic journey is a delight to fans and historians alike. It makes for a great keepsake. It retails for \$75.



*Kings Island: A Photographic Journey* captures the history of the Cincinnati-area theme park, including past attractions such as the Enchanted Voyage of Hanna-Barbera dark ride. COURTESY KINGS ISLAND: A PHOTOGRAPHIC JOURNEY

**Amusement TODAY** Your Amusement Industry NEWS Leader

**EXTRA! EXTRA! YOUR DESKTOP EDITION!**

All the industry NEWS delivered to your inbox daily ... for FREE!

Sign-up today at [AmusementToday.com](http://AmusementToday.com)





Discover more  
about this concept

# Integrated Rides

What is “Integrated Rides”?



**Antonio Zamperla SpA**  
Vicenza - Italy | ph +39 0444 998 400  
zamperla@zamperla.it

Zamperla's world-famous collection of flat rides is woven with a Zamperla coaster to maximize the capacity: this is the concept of Integrated Rides.

Placing a flat ride within a coaster footprint provides opportunities for increased ROI and dwell time in an area that would have otherwise been vacant. The result is an immersive environment that creates shareable moments between riders at different attractions.

Discover more on [zamperla.com](https://www.zamperla.com) and follow us on [f](#) [@](#) [t](#) [i](#) [@zamperlarides](#)