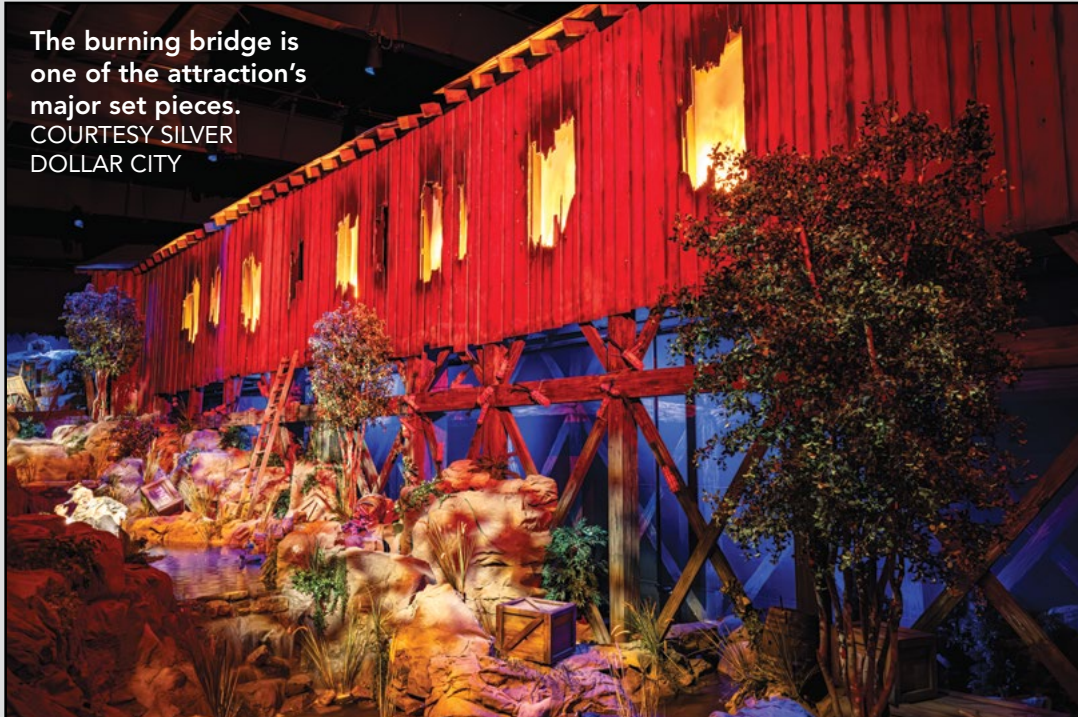




Silver Dollar City preserves original soul on new Fire In The Hole



The burning bridge is one of the attraction's major set pieces. COURTESY SILVER DOLLAR CITY

Rocky Mountain Construction supplies the company's first dark ride/coaster

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

BRANSON, Mo. — Since opening in 1960, **Silver Dollar City** has remained true to its origins. Staying "on theme," the story behind the theme park transports guests back to the 1880s with a tagline: "You have a great past ahead of you." The 1880s was the time period when Marvel Cave was discovered. The theme park sits atop the cave and tours are still given on operating days.

As Silver Dollar City enjoyed growing success, owners **Jack and Pete Herschend** knew they needed a big ride to keep guests coming, but at the time, a roller coaster didn't seem to fit the story they were telling. By adopting the true-life tale of the Baldknobbers (a vigilante group) burning down the mining town of Marmaros, near where Branson resides today, it seemed to be an ideal fit.

Fire In The Hole debuted in 1972 as an indoor dark ride

► See FIRE, page 6

Multiple suppliers add four new attractions

Morgan's Wonderland debuts the park's biggest expansion to date

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — When **Gordon Hartman** opened **Morgan's Wonderland** in 2010, his wish for a place where children and families of all abilities could play together became a reality. Since then, the amusement park has become a part of a campus of various opportunities. **Morgan's Inspiration Island** became the first ultra-accessible water park. **Morgan's Sports** and "The MAC" (Multi Assistance Center) have become part of the complex. A short drive away, **Morgan's Camp** is both innovative and exciting to let all kids enjoy a camping experience.

The original park has undergone its largest expansion to date. When reopening for spring break in March, Morgan's Wonderland added four new attractions. The \$6 million investment brought new rides, as well as refreshed the existing park. To do so, the park had to close for a few months for the construction to take place. 2024 is the park's 15th season.

"We want to make sure we are always MQ — Morgan's Quality," said Hartman at the opening. "The four new rides were included on a list of 592 items that had to be done in 98 days. How would you like to be given that to-do list? The beautiful thing is we are

able to be here today because we accomplished that. There were so many people that made that possible."

Park President **Richard Pretlow** said, "Every square inch of the park has been touched. All of our bathrooms have been upgraded. We have added four adult changing tables across the park. We have put additions to several of our buildings to make sure we can accommodate friends of all abilities."

The new rides offer a diverse set of experiences to make sure everyone can enjoy something new.

"What we really wanted to do with the rides here is

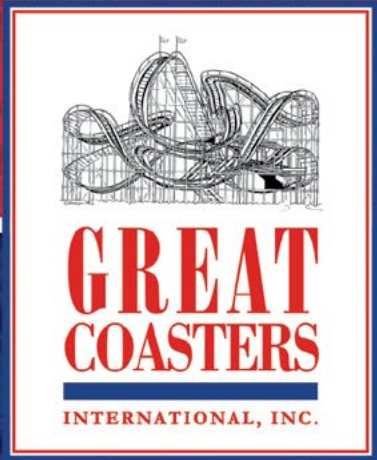
► See MORGANS, page 8



Wheelchair-accessible gondolas make for an easy boarding process. AT/TIM BALDWIN

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 RIDE HEIGHT: 141 ft (43 m)
 SPEED: 61 mph (98.1 kmph)

HYBRID

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 RIDE HEIGHT: 88 ft (26.8 m)
 SPEED: 46 mph (74 kph)

SLAB COASTER V2
 TRACK LENGTH: 1,775 ft (541 m)
 RIDE HEIGHT: 100 ft (30.4 m)
 SPEED: 54 mph (87 kph)

OUT-AND-BACK COASTER
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 MAX SPEED: 43 mph (69 kph)
 RIDE HEIGHT: 78 ft (24 m)

COMPACT COASTER
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 RIDE HEIGHT: 55.7 ft (16.9 m)

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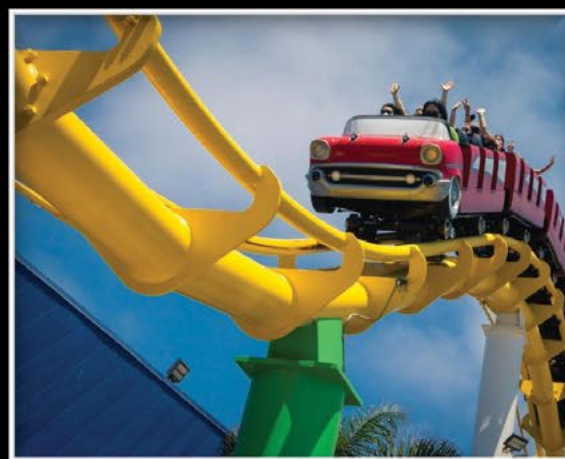


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AT NOTEBOOK: John W.C. Robinson, jrobinson@amusementtoday.com

Old is young again



Robinson

I cannot begin to tell you how young I was. It was an IAAPA Summer Meeting at Dollywood — which had fairly recently been rebranded from Silver Dollar City — which I'm wagering was around 1989, only because the now-defunct Thunder Express had recently opened.

The only reason I recall the coaster was there was because, quite honestly, I was still terrified of coasters at that age and refused to ride it. Knowing my fear of coasters, my father and others lured me onto the neighboring Blazing Fury (a clone of the original Fire In The Hole at Missouri's Silver Dollar City) under the guise of it just being a dark ride. After the experience, needless to say, my anti-coaster self was not thrilled with the surprise drops and twists.

Once I overcame my fears, I learned to love the ride for its way of luring guests in under the promise of a simple train ride through a themed city, only to surprise them with some fun roller coaster elements. A "victim" of the trick by my friends and family, I performed the same subterfuge over the years to many of my own friends and family. Just talking them into trying the ride based on it being a dark ride and a way to cool off on a hot summer day, only to have them laughing and cursing my name when surprised by the wicked drops contained within.

Even this tried-and-true con had started to wane in its effect as the years went on, though. Young teens I'd bring to the park were unimpressed by the dated characters and only minor drops. The fun can't last forever, I suppose.

Or, maybe it can! Silver Dollar City's recent revamp of its version of the attraction ups the ante for modern audiences, delivering the thrills as we remember from our childhood and letting new generations step into the world of coasters under the illusion of a calm, themed ride.

The experience is a classic one, the reactions of friends and family are timeless ... and, now, they're preserved to be enjoyed again and again!

FLINT'S VIEW: Bubba Flint



INDUSTRY VOICE: Michael Andre, Gateway Ticketing Systems

Benefitting from advanced options, still keep it simple

As the industry forges ahead in the post-COVID era, there's a strong sense of positive anticipation for the upcoming season. The 'revenge travel' trend is gradually subsiding as guests catch up on what they missed during the pandemic. Despite inflation, consumer spending remains robust, instilling optimism about the industry's potential to match pre-pandemic numbers.

Last year, the prevailing sentiment was cautious optimism, with the industry slowly inching back. However, this season heralds a significant shift towards a more proactive stance, driven by the increasing sophistication of advanced sales and dynamic pricing models. Notably, we are witnessing some customers extending dynamic pricing to their online travel agency sales channels, underscoring the growing influence of these models.

The industry is experiencing a notable shift towards self-service solutions. This move



Andre

tackles the challenges of rising wages and staffing availability but also fosters a more guest-centric approach. These solutions empower guests to manage their experiences — from booking to check-out — enhancing convenience and reducing operational costs. There's a concerted drive toward enhancing

guest experiences through premium pricing for exclusive offerings, as venues strive to provide unique and unforgettable encounters.

Leveraging tools and technology — including AI-generated descriptions and marketing verbiage — allows for quick dissemination of offers through various sales channels. However, amidst this innovation, there's a conscious effort to strike a balance between offering diverse options and maintaining simplicity for guests, avoiding the complexity of "legacy pricing schemes," and making it easy for what guests really want to do — enjoying experiences together with friends and family.

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2 MINUTE DRILL



AT: Janice Witherow

Jessi O'Daniel, Shipwreck Island Waterpark

Jessi O'Daniel started her career in the amusement industry working in guest services at **Kentucky Kingdom** in 2014. She was quickly promoted and served in several positions at the park, including a vice president role at the age of 25. Currently, she is the general manager at **Shipwreck Island Waterpark** in Panama City, Fla., and is loving every minute of it. Jessi has volunteered her time and talent on various **IAAPA** committees over the years and brings a sense of energy, dedication and a strong work ethic to the job.

Title: General Manager.

Number of years in the industry: 11.

Best thing about the industry: Connecting with other members just as passionate about providing safe, epic experiences for guests.

Favorite amusement park ride: Maverick at Cedar Point. To operate... anything with a Sartori operating panel (bonus points if the controls are in Italian).

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

Probably a lawyer. My mom always told me I was really good at arguing.

Biggest challenge facing our industry ...

In my opinion, incorporating technology without losing the nostalgia and experience associated with visiting parks and attractions.

The thing I like most about the amusement park season is ...

The smell of fresh-baked treats walking down the main midway, riding my bike through the park before it opens for the day while it is still quiet, the sounds of rides whooshing, laughter and people having good time with their loved ones.

In one word, my garage is ...

Organized. And full of fun things ... from memorabilia from working at parks to my entire tool set that I use to get the park ready for season!

Favorite sports team: Louisville Cardinals.

Dream car: A lavender vintage Bronco with brown leather interior.

To me, this is so overrated:

H-E-B and Blue Bell ice cream. Sorry Texans, I just don't get it!

My superstition is ... Never say "it's going to rain," it never rains on the park!



Jessi O'Daniel found success in the industry beginning with Kentucky Kingdom, where she was promoted to vice president at the young age of 25. COURTESY JESSI O'DANIEL

The last concert I attended was ...

Renee Rapp (iykyk).

Favorite person you follow on X would be ...

The Taylor Swift conspiracy theorists.

On my lunch hour, I typically ...

Spend time running my personal errands or checking emails.

The most adventurous thing I have done lately is ...

Attempt to use a paint sprayer; it's more complicated than it looks!

Favorite summer activity:

Visiting other parks.

Proudest moment: Being promoted to vice president at Kentucky Kingdom. It was something I worked at for years and fought for despite being only 25 years old at the time compared to my peers with decades of experience.

My "happy hour" cocktail of choice is ...

Watermelon White Claw.

Favorite breakfast food: Protein pancakes.

I wish I could ... Multiply myself. I could get a lot more done in a day.

If I was marooned on a desert island, the one thing I would absolutely have to have with me would be ...

My Bronco. I would put it in sand mode and live out of that thing!

THE INDUSTRY SEEN

Quite the 'press'ing visit



COHOES, N.Y. — Aquatic Development Group (ADG) recently welcomed local newspaper *Albany Business Review* to its company headquarters. The publication was working on a featured article showcasing ADG's latest innovation, EpicSurf, a deep-water stationary surf wave. In addition, it discussed ADG's extensive history in designing and building water parks and the company's manufacturing of more than 550 wave systems worldwide. During the visit, writer Luke Nathan spoke with both Ed Kapper (left), head of manufacturing, and Bruce Quay (right), chief operating officer, at ADG. COURTESY ADG

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► FIRE

Continued from page 1

that had a few coaster dips near the end for a finale.

While the ride is steeped in authentic regional heritage, Park President **Brad Thomas** admits the park has taken creative liberties in the telling. “We’ve made the baldknobbers a little humorous,” he said.

The closing of a beloved attraction is always tough.

“The emotion of closing the former ride ... there was a connection deeper than any of us imagined,” Thomas told *AT*. “All of 2023 following the announcement that the ride was going to close, we had people coming from all over the country with these stories of how they had ridden it with their grandparents or great-grandparents. They wanted to come back and ride it with their grandchildren. The story and connection with the old ride was a huge shock. I knew December 30 was going to be a special day. It was so full of emotion.”

The new version retains the story of the original but updates it with guests being invited to preview the new fire wagons from the Silver Dollar City Pumper Factory. Of course, the town comes under attack, and visitors are then charged to help put out the fire.

“We knew the No. 1 sacred cow of this park (beyond our



The iconic sign in front of the ride sports real fire within the burning city (above left). The new trains from RMC (above right) feature onboard sound.

AT/TIM BALDWIN

theme) was the story of Fire In The Hole,” said Thomas. “We knew as we replaced the former ride, we had to pay tribute to that ride and its connection to this park and connection to those stories.”

With the official grand opening on March 30, throngs of people have come to see how the park has created a from-the-ground-up new re-creation. Standing at five stories, the new building is immediately recognized as being significantly substantial. The façade complements the Fire District area (formerly Fireman’s Landing).

“Fire In The Hole is truly the centerpiece in the newly rezoned Fire District, now serving as the star attraction that joins together the other 10 adventures in that area,” said **Dalton Fischer**,



communications manager. “The other attractions serve as ‘warm-ups’ to Fire In The Hole and challenges new recruits to work their way up to Fire In The Hole.”

“We’ve had this fire-themed district since 2015,” said Thomas. “As we were looking for locations for the new Fire In The Hole, this land where it sits was always pinpointed as an opportunity for growth. With the fire-themed attractions here, now the district gets even bigger.”

With most other rides in the area being geared toward the younger set, Fire In The Hole has a 36-inch height requirement that makes it easy for kids to step up to a “big ride.”

Even the most ardent purists should love the new version, as it carries all the heart and soul of the original.

“The onboard audio helps tell the story in a way we’ve never been able to do,” said Thomas. “There are special sound effects. The ability to have music ongoing throughout the ride just helps the overall experience in surrounding the guest. The original theme song was created 52 years ago. **Dailey and Vincent** are known throughout all bluegrass genres; they grew up coming to Silver Dollar City and riding Fire In The Hole. They signed up to do the recording of the new Fire In The Hole.”

Casey and the Atta Boys, a local bluegrass group, went into the studio to record fire-related songs that now accent the newly named Fire District. Silver Dollar City did a similar approach when opening Time Traveler in

2018 with bluegrass versions of songs relating to “time.”

As guests approach the ride, a new iconic sign stands in front. Big, bold letters announce the attraction, but as visitors examine it more closely, they note the town ablaze at the top (using real fire).

“We’re super proud of it,” said Thomas. “It looks great in the daytime, and it looks even better at night.”

Riders pass 14 scenes during the experience.

“I was most surprised by the scale of the burning bridge in that particular scene. Most of the scenes leading up to that moment sort of tease the impending plunge down the flaming structure. Once you finally see the bridge in the darkness, you realize just how giant the entire attraction really is,” said Fischer.

“Hearing an oncoming locomotive, then seeing one headed straight for you is probably my favorite moment,” said Fischer. “The pumpers dive underneath the steam engine.”

Rocky Mountain Construction supplied the track and trains.

“When we are looking at [new] rides, we look at different options,” said Thomas. “We knew we weren’t wanting the fastest or steepest drops; we do that on other ride experiences. Rocky Mountain was able to provide the specific track we were wanting. We had an incredible experience with Rocky Mountain Construction when we opened Outlaw Run in 2013. It was a Golden Ticket winner and has withstood the test of time.”

“I think we’re all about

producing the best rides in the world,” said RMC President **Darren Torr**. “We’ve brought a lot of innovation into the hybrids where we have renovated rides, and our single rail was innovative. We’re very pleased to enter the family demographic with this powered dark coaster.”

Pete Herschend was on hand for the preview of the new version, more than half a century since he debuted the original. “I am overwhelmed with how wonderfully well-built it is,” he told *AT*. “It tells the story better than the old Fire In The Hole, and it is a better ride. It’s quite smooth. It’s an excellent ride.”

“It was our first time doing a powered ride and onboard audio. The Silver Dollar City team couldn’t have been better to work with,” noted Torr. “We had a platform to start with from the old ride, and we took that as a great starting point. We modernized it and made it something special. The story is great; I’m blown away. I’m so proud to be a part of it.”

Two characters from the ride now have their own retail. Red Flanders has been looking for his pants for more than half a century (after the Baldknobbers stole them). Now, a Flanders Mercantile shop offers all sorts of souvenirs, including his pants.

“It’s fun merchandise,” said Thomas. “After 52 years, Red Flanders is getting the notoriety he deserves.”

His wife, Sadie, now has a pretzel-dog café.

In 2013, Silver Dollar City worked with **Hiland Dairy** to create a “temporary flavor” of ice cream for the debut of Outlaw Run. While it continues to be a huge seller, they added another flavor in 2018 for Time Traveler, the park’s spinning coaster. Now, Fire In The Hole has its own flavor, which sports a s’mores vibe.

Fire In The Hole is only the beginning, according to Thomas. “Adjacent to Silver Dollar City to the west, we have 1,200 acres of empty land. Silver Dollar City and our parking lots are less than 200 acres. What that means is that this is just the first of many, many opening days of new things that will be forthcoming.”



The ride’s façade fits perfectly into the newly renamed Fire District (above). For more than half a century, Red Flanders (left) has been telling his wife his pants have been stolen. They are now available in the new gift shop, Flanders Mercantile.

AT/TIM BALDWIN





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►MORGANS

Continued from page 1

one of the things I noticed when I [joined Morgan's]," said Pretlow. "We have a lot of rides here that cater from two to 10, but we really didn't have anything for teenagers and older special-needs adults. If you are a special-needs child, at some point you become a special-needs adult. You want something with a little more thrill to it. That teenager wants a little more something to do. Rocket's Sky Flight Adventure is our first thrill ride. It's 13 stories up, so from 130 feet in the air, you can see downtown San Antonio."

The Soaring Eagle zipline was provided by **Altitude Rides and Attractions**. It is the first four-seater, ultra-accessible zipline in the world. Riders can choose to face forward or backward.

"We have two different settings," said Pretlow. "We have the fast setting that I call thrill mode, and the slow set-



Standing 13 stories, Rocket's Sky Flight Adventure gives Morgan's Wonderland a high-speed thrill ride. Supplied by Altitude Rides and Attractions, it is the first ultra-accessible, four-seater zipline in the world. A 4-D simulator offers a roller coaster-type ride. It was supplied by SimEx-Iwerks (below). AT/TIM BALDWIN

ting for folks who may have issues with torso or neck control. Rather than coming in fast like a thrill ride, it comes in very, very slow."

Jette's Wonder Bikes was provided by **Zamperla**. While the majority of riders will use bicycle pedals to move up and down, two arms have gondolas in which wheelchairs can roll aboard and use the arm handles to make the ride go up and down.

"The Magic Bikes at **Give Kids The World** was our initial focus on accessibility," said **Michael Coleman**, North American sales, Zamperla. "The wheelchair-accessible gondolas on our Magic Bikes have gone through three or four iterations, focused strictly on functionality and accessibility. As our engineers and operators around the world provided feedback, we decided we could still be even better. This newest iteration of the accessible gondola is not only rider-friendly but also operator friendly. When the accessible gondola is not needed for a wheelchair, it has a seat that is removable that can be used by anyone."

Some guests might opt to choose the accessible gondola for a different way to interact. "The hand motion can create a repeat-rider experience," said Coleman. "The ease of removing the seat takes less than a minute. It's a more comfortable scenario for everyone at the attraction."

The new attraction takes the place of a retired "off-road" car ride.

The park's butterfly motif has been incorporated into the new flat ride.

"The marketing team here at Morgan's did a wonderful job utilizing their IP," Coleman told *Amusement Today*. "

A 4D Magic Cinema from **SimEx-Iwerks** provides a roller coaster-type experience where even visitors in wheelchairs can feel the simulated motion by the use of two moving platforms. Water effects that spray rid-



ers always elicit giggles.

"When we approached them, they said, 'Challenge accepted,'" reported Pretlow. "The special platforms give the same experience as those in the regular chairs. It's also air-conditioned for those hot San Antonio summer days."

The park has an eight-acre lake that it has used for catch-and-release fish-

ing experiences, but now guests can take a leisurely ride on the lake in 30-passenger boats. The boats are supplied by **Hanko Boats** of Berwick, Louisiana.

On the horizon is a fitness center and **Morgan's Inclusion Campus**. Within the next few years, the goal is to debut the first ultra-accessible hotel ever built.



Manufactured by Zamperla, Jette's Wonder Bikes (above) let riders use handles if their capabilities don't allow use of the foot pedals. Owner Gordon Hartman stands with Zamperla's Michael Coleman (left). AT/JEFFREY SEIFERT, TIM BALDWIN



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PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

► Sunkid's Shipwreck Cove to Belmont Park — page 28 / FECs — pages 34-38 / MIDWAYS — pages 39-46

Sally Dark Rides brings SpongeBob to Las Vegas at Circus Circus

AT: Tim Baldwin

tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

LAS VEGAS — Before Sin City adopted the “What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas” mantra, there was a flourish of family attractions to bring in a new demographic. While later development tended to lean toward high rollers, Circus Circus Hotel and Casino has maintained its focus on providing family entertainment.

Opening this spring, the casino has added a standalone attraction called SpongeBob's Crazy Carnival Ride. Supplied by Sally Dark Rides, the ride immerses guests in the world of Bikini Bottom, SpongeBob's home. Filled with colorful sets, special effects and vivid game-play projections, the hilarious ride also includes six animatronics from Sally that really bring the ride to life.

“This incredible project has excited our entire team from Day One,” said John Wood, president of Sally Dark Rides. We thank Circus Circus, Nickelodeon and Paramount for trusting us to create this original tale with SpongeBob SquarePants, Mr. Krabs, Patrick and their friends. Sally is known for bringing beloved brands to life, and it's been an honor to develop an entirely new experience with these lovable and silly cast of characters.”

Sally has created some very dramatic or haunted-themed attractions. However, this comical storyline still fits into the company's groove.

“Sally Dark Rides has been fortunate to work with a



SpongeBob's Crazy Carnival Ride is a new Sally Dark Rides installation at Circus Circus. The attraction features six animatronic figures from Sally, such as the Mr. Krabs character which greets guests at the entrance (above left). Aromas add to the experience as riders run through the seven-minute ride, which includes a scene of an animatronic SpongeBob grilling hamburgers (above right). AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON

wide variety of clients and ride themes,” said Rich Hill, chief creative officer, Sally. “Whether the story we tell in attractions is based on a comedy-based animated series like *SpongeBob SquarePants* or a creepy haunted theme like *Ghostbusters*, our creative team strives to make the ride appeal to a wide variety of guests, maximizing the audience demographic. That ‘wide net’ design philosophy can be a challenge, but it is one we have honed over four decades. Ultimately, it translates into attractions that are sure to become park favorites, creating memories for generations of families who experience the story-based adventure together.”

Circus Circus has boasted ride offerings in its **Adventuredome** since 1993. The SpongeBob attraction exists outside the facility.

“This ride is a standalone attraction on the Promenade,” said Shana Gerety, general manager, Circus

Circus. “It is not part of the Adventuredome. This ride is such an attraction, we wanted it to be a standalone, and our customers have appreciated it. Customers do not always have hours to enjoy the Adventuredome, so this is a great experience for guests.”

Throughout the interactive attraction, Mr. Krabs invites riders to try their luck at a collection of midway games as they move through his new money-making carnival. SpongeBob and Patrick, who are trying to assist him, accidentally grab boxes of Krabby Patty ingredients instead of the carnival game equipment. The devious Plankton sees an opportunity to steal the Krabby Patty recipe and the result is a hilarious experience for guests of all ages.

“I'm particularly fond of the carnival game Patrick Star hosts, titled ‘Plate Smash!’,” Hill told *Amusement Today*. “The idea was initiated when my wife and I

were on our honeymoon 17 years ago. While visiting an amusement park in Germany, we walked up to a breaking-plates game on the midway. Very simple concept: dozens of plates, tea sets, and fine china lined up on shelves along the back wall, a stack of rubber balls on the table in front of us (four balls for one euro!). We asked, ‘We want to play the game, but how do we win?’ The host said, ‘You don't win ... you just break the plates!’ We dropped about €40 smashing plates with balls that day — and had a complete blast doing it. Since then, I knew it would end up in a ride someday.”

“I love the fact that not only do we have the visual excitement, but we also have the smells of cotton candy and burgers while on the ride,” added Gerety. “It is a nice little enhancement to cover all your senses.”

Riders pick up the storyline as they enter the attrac-

tion and work through the staging zones. Once aboard, passengers travel through 15 vibrant scenes. Sally worked with various partners to bring the whole experience together.

“It was a large, talented team!” noted Hill. “With Sally Dark Rides functioning as show producer, we enlisted our friends at **ETF Ride Systems** to create nine trackless, five-passenger ‘carnival carts’ for the attraction. The carts ended up being super cute, fitting the comedic ride theme and tight building space perfectly. We chose ETF's Mystic Mover ride system because of its compact size and smooth movement. The vehicles speed out of the load station, slow down and dwell in front of the seven interactive carnival game scenes, rotating 180 degrees quickly with a tight turning radius, highlighting special moments in the ride. The vehicles also have

► See SALLY, page 11



► **SALLY**
Continued from page 10

a very narrow and short reach envelope, allowing wayside ride elements to be much closer to the guests than with some other bigger ride systems.

“**Alterface** provided interactive gaming equipment and show triggers; **LightSwitch** was hired for their lighting expertise; **Nassal** built the sets and scenery. Of course, Sally was in charge of designing the ride and project management. Sally built the animatronics, animated scenery, and oversaw all of the teams through the design, production, and installation phases,” he said.

The attraction repurposes a 5,000-square-foot building outside the Adventuredome. It previously contained a restaurant.

“To make the ride as ‘legit’ as possible, we went right to the source and hired **Paramount/Nickelodeon** to develop the interactive game and CG animation,” said Hill. Directed by Paramount Senior Show Producer **Ted King**, the talented artists at **Platige Image** animation studio created the characters and video game. The extremely talented writer **Julie Depew** was also brought on for script duties. Performances by the original voice actors **Tom Kenny** (SpongeBob), **Bill Fagerbakke** (Patrick), **Roger Bumpass** (Squidward), **Mr. Lawrence** (Plankton/Fred), and **Clancy Brown** (Mr. Krabs) really make the ride feel on-brand.”

“The partnership and collaboration we shared with Sally Dark Rides and Circus Circus has been truly remarkable,” said **Marie Marks**, SVP, Themed Entertainment, Paramount. “From the very beginning we knew we were creating something special, and we are ready to welcome fans of *SpongeBob SquarePants* to this fun-filled new ride.”

“I would be remiss if I didn’t talk about our amazing client, Circus Circus,” said Hill. “Their in-house rides team and their general contractor at **TEAM Construction** built all of the facility infrastructure (walls, floors, wiring) and were a major factor in this highly complicated ride project opening to the public on time and on budget. It

really was a team effort!”

SpongeBob SquarePants has been entertaining audiences since its first broadcast in 1999.

“The ride really does feel like a natural extension of the *SpongeBob* universe. The jokes, gags and story being told are perfectly delivered. It is just fun!” said Hill. “I have been a huge fan of *SpongeBob* and anything even remotely related to the show for most of my life. This was a dream project, and I just feel lucky to have been given the opportu-

nity to work with this amazing team of dark ride dreamers, creating an incredible ride that is sure to entertain crowds of smiling guests for years to come.”

“This ride truly brings people of all ages,” Gerety told *AT*. “We have certainly seen this ride be a hit with the older riders, encouraging their younger kids/teens to come join them. This ride is engaging for people of all ages. Something we were hoping for and absolutely achieved.”



Nine vehicles from ETF feature a whimsical motif.
AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON

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AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

Officials at **Sesame Place Philadelphia** and **Sesame Place San Diego** announced last month their renewed commitment to the Certified Autism Center (CAC) designation, as well as continuing to enhance the onsite experience for guests.

The CAC is a certification awarded by the **International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES)** to organizations that complete training requirements and offer accommodations for autistic and sensory-sensitive visitors.

Both Sesame Place parks have also completed an onsite review by IBCCES, resulting in the development of sensory guides and robust pre-planning resources. The certification and renewal processes require extensive specialized training for employees, focusing on sensory awareness, motor skills, program development, communication and emotional awareness.

Sesame Place ambassadors completed additional certifications in neurodiversity, as well as related first responder training to expand their skills and knowledge, supplementing IBCCES' standard training for Certified Autism Centers.

In 2018, Sesame Place Philadelphia became the first theme park in the world to be designated as a CAC. In 2022, Sesame Place San Diego followed.

The **Glenwood Caverns Adventure Park** in Glenwood Springs, Colorado, will host special events and launch deals as part of its 25th anniversary celebration.

These include a grand anniversary party on May 18 and savings on National Natural Landmark Combo tickets.

The new KidZpass season ticket for children ages three to eight years old was launched at **Worlds of Fun** in Kansas City, Missouri, ahead of its May 4 season opening.

The theme park also kicked off its new KidZfest event, which runs for three weekends and includes live entertainment, DJ-hosted dance parties, food and beverage options and interactive activities.

Work is expected to begin soon on the expansion and renovation of the **Blank Park Zoo** in Des Moines, Iowa.

The \$18 million project will include the construction of a new aquarium, a new Wild Iowa exhibit and new habitats

for animals such as tigers and lions.

The zoo has raised \$12.3 million, or two-thirds of the total funding required to finish the expansion.

Valleyfair amusement park in Shakopee, Minnesota, has announced that its ValleyScare event will return this year with new additions. The park had modified the event for more family-friendly offerings in the past two years. It will now be a separately ticketed event.

The Halloween event will run on select dates from Sept. 21 through Oct. 26 and feature new night rides, three new and revamped scare zones and three new mazes.

The **Sullenberger Aviation Museum** will reopen at its new location near Charlotte Douglas International Airport in North Carolina on June 1.

The new museum building will cover 105,000 square feet and include interactive exhibits showcasing the history and current state of the aviation sector.

In late March 2024, **Nickelodeon Universe** at Minnesota's **Mall of America** introduced the theme park's newest addition, Fly with Appa. Based on the popular Nickelodeon franchise, *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, guests can climb aboard a sky bison and take to the skies. Riders embark on a journey with stunning aerial views as they travel up, down and all around.

During the grand opening, walk-around character Aang from *Avatar* inaugurated the attraction with a ribbon cutting and was available for meet-and-greets with young guests.

Idlewild & SoakZone in Ligonier, Pennsylvania, is preparing to reopen for its 147th season on May 18.

This year, the amusement park will feature a revamped Story Book Forest with a new beanstalk and pea pods in the Jack and the Beanstalk scene, an updated Rub-a-Dub-Dub Three Men in a Tub scene, a new roof in the Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs scene and new siding for the Good Ship Lollipop.

On March 29, **Dutch Wonderland** of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, opened for its longest season ever. The opening marked the park's second season of its Eggcellent Easter Celebration.

The event featured more than 7,000 live blooming flowers, massive Easter eggs scattered around the kingdom, as well as seasonal food and beverage offerings.

"In 2024, we are continuing to grow and expand our robust family-friendly lineup of events here at the kingdom," said **Megan Hartman**, Dutch Wonderland general manager. "In our second year of the Eggcellent Easter Celebration, we are adding even more family-friendly activities, budding flowers and even more chances for families to meet our beloved Easter Bunny, Tuft."

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S&S WORLDWIDE

Vekoma supplying Oz-themed rides to Warner Bros. Movie World

AT: Tim Baldwin

tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

GOLD COAST, Queensland, Australia — If a park is based on movies and their themes, the iconic 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz* is an ultimate selection on which to base exciting attractions. **Warner Bros. Movie World** is adding a new section to bring this legendary film to life.

“Movie World fans in Australia will get to step into Oz like no fan has done before. A first of its kind, *The Wizard of Oz* land will extend the storytelling and bring one of the most iconic and beloved films to life in an amazing way,” said **Peter van Roden**, SVP, **Warner Bros. Themed Entertainment**. “We are over the moon — or should we say rainbow — to be bringing Oz to guests of Movie World in 2024.”

“Incredible theming and state-of-the-art technology complement the physical ride elements to provide a unique and world-class guest experience for Warner Bros. Movie World,” said **Village Roadshow Theme Parks COO Bikash Randhawa**. “From the moment guests enter the *Wizard of Oz* precinct, they will become fully immersed into the world of Oz as they are met with the visuals of iconic scenes from the movie, including Emerald City at the start of their journey. Throughout the precinct, there will be themed areas paying homage to the classic film with sculptures, picture ops and audio visuals.”

Anchoring the new land are two new roller coasters supplied by **Vekoma**. The most dramatic of the two will be *Flight of the Wicked Witch*, a family suspended coaster. Spectators on the midway will look up to see riders soaring overhead darting in and around the Wicked Witch’s castle. The top speed will be 67 k/ph (42 mph), and the track length is just shy of 1,500 feet. The roller coaster will stand 19 meters (62 feet) tall.

A highlight is sure to be the flight through the castle where guests waiting to



The Emerald City and two Vekoma attractions will captivate guests when the new *Wizard of Oz* land opens later this year. The racing family coasters — *The Kansas Twister* — will dive through a barn and other “Kansas” props (below left). Dramatic theming will enhance the roller coaster themed to the Wicked Witch (below right). COURTESY WARNER BROS. MOVIE WORLD



board will see riders fly — and scream — close by just above them. The moment is sure to build anticipation.

“Aside from the physical ride element, the theming for this ride will be unlike anything we have done in the park before, and I am really looking forward to our guests experiencing this — it encapsulates the entire entry, queuing and load stations, which all mirror the Wicked Witch of the West’s castle with flying monkeys, vultures and haunted trees!” beamed Randhawa.

The second coaster is actually a pair. Two family boomerang coasters will intertwine and be themed as *Kansas Twister*. The park bills it as the first racing roller coaster in the Southern Hemisphere. The two tracks are 22 meters (72 feet) high, and the dueling layouts are 225 meters (732 feet) and 220 meters (721 feet) long. Top speed is 58 km/h (36 mph).

As passengers race and twist around props and theming that reflect a Kansas farm,

the trains also race through a barn at one point — going both directions.

“The combination of the family boomerang racer and the suspended family coaster creates a unique blend of ride experiences, not yet seen in the world — three coasters in one site actively interacting with each other is definitely a world’s first,” said **Ricardo Tonding Etges**, VP, marketing and sales, Vekoma. “It is going to be a perfect integration of two totally different ride experiences: a family thrill suspended coaster experience with an unobstructed flying sensation and high speed and a racing shuttle coaster experience with forward and backward runs, plus several crossing and dueling effects.”

Guests on the family suspended coaster only have to be 105 cm (42 inches) tall to ride. The family boomerang welcomes children of 95 centimeters (38 inches).

“Excitingly, both of the new rides have commensurate height restrictions that will



allow younger Movie World guests the opportunity to experience their first roller coaster,” said Randhawa. “When adding new attractions to our parks, we need to look at options which will not only add to our experiences but provide experiences for the whole family.”

“The new precinct will be developed in the retired Arkham Asylum area and will transform the space into the colorful and vibrant world of Oz as seen in the nostalgic 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz*,” said **Village Roadshow CEO Clark Kirby**. “This precinct is going to be like nothing we have ever done at Movie World, and we are working closely with our partners at Warner Bros. Themed Entertainment to make this one of the most beautifully themed precincts in Australian theme parks.”

“The combination of the three coasters was specifically created for the site,” noted Tonding Etges. “The way they perfectly interact with each

other, optimizing the use of the space, maximizing capacity while creating three different coaster experiences in one area was a brilliant move from the team at Village Roadshow Theme Parks in partnership with Vekoma.”

“The decision to retire the Arkham Asylum section was made primarily due to the main attraction reaching end of life,” Randhawa told *Amusement Today*. “Once this decision was made, we worked closely with Vekoma to select the attractions which would add to our theme park experience, and excitingly, we are now completing one of the most significant investments in the park’s 30-year history, which will completely transform this area of the park.”

“It is mind blowing. The *Wizard of Oz* is not only one of the most famous movies of all time, but it also has a special place in the heart of people of many different generations, as it definitely stood the test of time,” Tonding Etges added.

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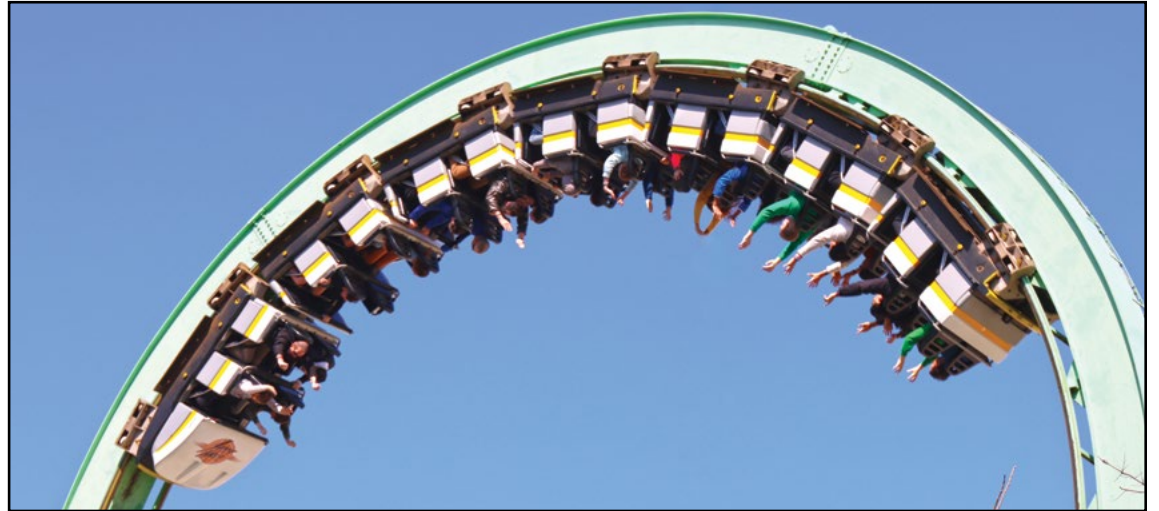
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Six Flags Over Texas celebrates milestone ride aboard Shock Wave



In early March, Six Flags Over Texas celebrated the 50 millionth rider aboard the Schwarzkopf-built Shock Wave roller coaster. While members of the public were brought aboard as the collective "50 millionth rider," invited guests were allowed backstage to capture rare photo and video angles of the legendary steel coaster. The ride celebrates its 46th anniversary during the 2024 season. Would-be riders (right) were also treated to cupcakes and a custom Shock Wave cocktail in a souvenir cup. COURTESY KRISTOPHER ROWBERRY



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Adventureland opens with new rides, phase one of renovations

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

FARMINGDALE, NEW YORK — Adventureland officials have announced the details of its multi-year, five-phase \$10 million redevelopment plan, marking one of the biggest investment projects in the park's 62-year history. The park, located in Farmingdale on Long Island, New York, added two new rides this year and will open the 2025 season with another.

The last major investment project was in 2015 with the installation of the Turbulence ride, which cost \$5 million.

"We saw an opportunity to improve and enhance the guest experience," said Caitlin DiSclafani, park manager. "These investments add value to the park and to the guests' experience. We're excited to leave a lasting legacy in the park for generations to come."

The two new rides greeting guests this year are



The Moon Chaser ride from Huss is a 45-foot-tall galaxy-themed thrill ride which spins, twists, dips and inverts riders. It is currently the only ride in the park that goes upside down. COURTESY ADVENTURELAND

the Jr. Pirate Ship Ride and Moon Chaser. The second phase involves the addition of a first-of-its-kind custom-made ride called Wave Twister, which is expected to open in time for the spring 2025 season.

There are at least two more planned rides that are to be added over the next three

phases. These will be the first new rides since the addition of the Fireball in 2022, which was a \$2 million investment.

A new area called Legacy Corner is being created to house some of the new rides. It will be located on the front southeast side of the park, a little over an acre in size. In addition to the new rides,

Legacy Corner will offer new concession stands, restrooms, and other amenities.

"Our family is very excited to bring the dream of redeveloping Pirate's Cove into reality with the groundbreaking of Legacy Corner," said Steve Gentile, park president. "We are thrilled to kick off this five-year project

with Moon Chaser, which I'm sure will be an amazing addition to Adventureland and fan favorite for the people of Long Island. To be able to have the best that our amusement industry has to offer right here in Farmingdale, the heart of Long Island, is something very special. It is a privilege that we do not take for granted!"

Adventureland estimates that by the end of the fifth phase, there will be a 10% growth in employment to support the new Legacy Corner section, which is expected to be completed in 2028.

In the weeks leading up to its 2024 season opening,

► See RIDES, page 22

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►RIDES

Continued from page 20

which was at the end of March, Adventureland officials announced the retirement of the Log Flume, Pirate Ship ride and Spinning Cars to make way for new rides.

The Pirate Ship ride was installed in 1987, which makes it more than 35 years old.

"With older rides, they need more maintenance and become difficult to repair over time," DiSclafani said. "Also, finding replacement parts becomes increasingly difficult, as the parts are no longer being made."

The Jr. Pirate Ship, manufactured by U.K.'s **Modern Products**, is geared toward, but not limited to, children who are from five to eight years old. They must be about 36 inches tall to ride with an adult and 47 inches tall to ride alone.

This ride is located by Kiddieland near the arcade. It is similar to the larger-scale Pirate Ship ride.

The Moon Chaser, is a 45-foot **Huss** Top Spin. It



Adventureland also debuted a Jr. Pirate Ship by Modern Products (above left). The Wave Twister (above right), manufactured by RES Rides, is coming to Adventureland in 2025, as part of the second phase of the park's renovations. COURTESY ADVENTURELAND



features a galaxy theme as it spins, twists, dips and inverts riders. The ride is currently the only one in the park that goes upside down. With a 55-inch height requirement, this ride is geared toward children who are 11 years old or older. It seats 28 people at a time.

The second phase of the park project will introduce the new ride Wave Twister, by **RES Rides** of Switzerland. This is a first-of-its-kind ride that was custom-built for Adventureland.

The Wave Twister will have unique movements along an

L-shaped track that simulates the motion and feel of riding atop huge ocean waves. It will have two gondolas carrying 10 passengers each installed on a rotating platform, which all rotates while traveling over an almost 280-foot-long track and reaching a height of over 60 feet.

The track is custom-built in a boomerang shape to fit into a space in Legacy Corner, which will maximize the available space in that section.

This is the second ride manufactured by RES Rides at Adventureland. The first

ride installed by RES was the Fireball.

Along with the new additions to the park, officials at Adventureland announced a new partnership with **Catholic Health**, which is sponsoring the main entrance and the City Hall Building, now renamed the Catholic Health Wellness Center.

"Adventureland and Catholic Health both support the health, wellness, and safety of Long Island families, so we are very excited to announce

a partnership between these two Long Island institutions," said DiSclafani.

Another addition is a blue line throughout Adventureland that will direct guests from anywhere in the park to the Catholic Health Wellness Center.

"Adventureland was founded in 1962 as a local place to have fun and relax as a family. The park is now a destination amusement park, home to classic rides, including our iconic Ferris Wheel and Carousel and new thrills," said DiSclafani.

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 **STREICHER Group**

Legoland Florida guests build, race Lego Ferraris in new experience

AT: David Fake
Special to Amusement Today

WINTER HAVEN, Florida — This Spring Legoland Florida Resort and Ferrari unveiled their latest attraction, Lego Ferrari Build and Race.

The new interactive attraction is the latest installation of Merlin Entertainments' Legoland collaboration with the high-end luxury Italian sports car designer and manufacturer.

The attraction is very much aligned with the creative inspirational experience one expects from a Lego-themed attraction. More experiential in nature than a ride or attraction, Lego Ferrari Build and Race challenges guests young and young at heart to get creatively inspired by Ferrari's racing history the moment they step into the Lego Ferrari Garage.

The "garage" is chock-full of facts presented through plaques and videos that string together a historical timeline of Enzo Ferrari and the lega-



The centerpiece of Legoland Florida's Lego Ferrari Build and Race is the world's only life-size Lego Ferrari 296 GTS model. The cherry red sleek replica is constructed of over 424,000 Lego elements and took some 1,850 hours to complete. AT/DAVID FAKE

cy of the Ferrari name.

However, the main focal point of the garage is the full-size Lego-made Ferrari, which guests not only can physically touch while they pose for photos but also sit behind the wheel in the driver's seat of this remarkable one-of-a-kind creation.

This centerpiece of the Lego Ferrari Garage is the

world's only life-size Lego Ferrari 296 GTS model. The cherry-red, sleek replica was constructed brick by brick utilizing over 424,000 Lego elements, which took 1,850 hours to complete.

Legoland Florida Resort says the creation is the craftsmanship of a specially chosen "pit crew," comprised of a designer, six Master Model

Builders and three animators who ensured that every detail matched that of a real Ferrari 296 GTS.

Complete with working headlights, an open driver's side door, and a roaring engine, the Lego Ferrari 296 GTS model serves as the welcoming showpiece of the experience. The model measures 15 feet long by seven-

and-a-half-feet wide by four feet tall and weighs in at nearly two tons.

By beginning the Lego Ferrari Build and Race experience with such a spectacular model, Legoland Florida Resort jumpstarts guests' imaginations in preparation for the next stop of the experience — the Build Zone.

The Build Zone invites guests to use the creative influence of the garage experience and unleash their imagination to fire on all cylinders as they create their very own Lego Ferrari race car.

Next, guests fine-tune their vehicles' performances

► See FERRARI, page 26

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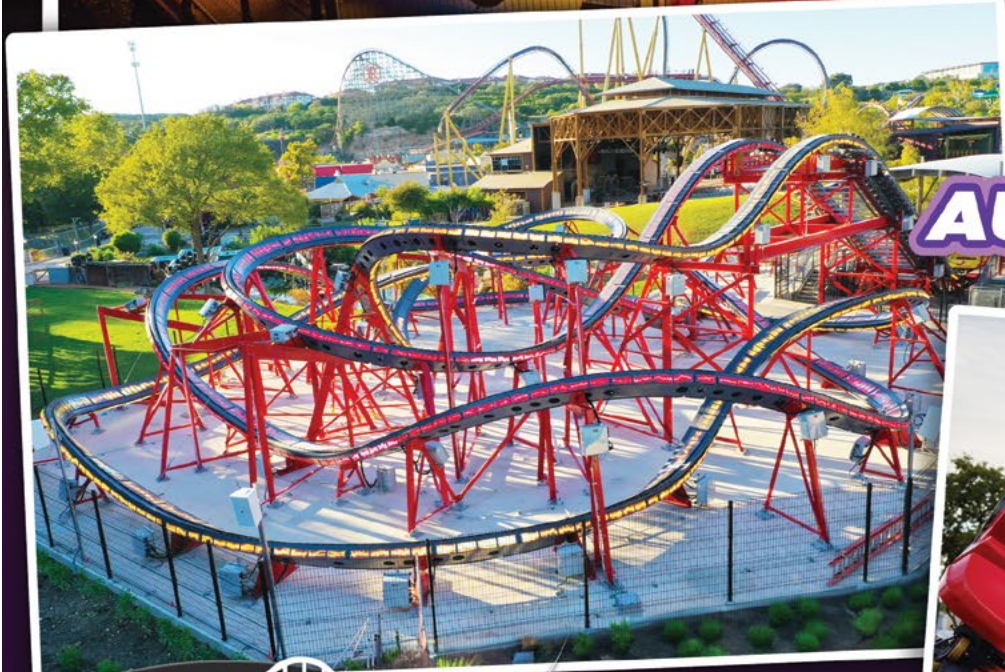
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Gröna Lund's new theme park area to be inspired by history

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — **Gröna Lund** is submitting the first building permit applications for an upcoming expansion of the park onto a nearby parking lot. The site has historically housed the **Nöjesfältet** amusement park, as well as the **Stockholm Exhibition** of 1897. The vision for the new area is to blend the past with the future — inspired by the optimism and innovation of the late 1800s. The goal is to create a new amusement park area characterized by joy and optimism across generations.

The new themed area draws inspiration from the Stockholm Exhibition of 1897, hosted on the expansion's location by the waterfront of the historical island of Djurgården.

"The historical connection will influence the architecture, but we also want to embrace the positive spirit and inventiveness that characterized the era," stated **Christer Fogelmarck**, Gröna Lund's CEO of parks and resorts. "Our vision is for the area to become an oasis of experiences, entertainment, food, and wondrous theming. We want to create a place where all guests can feel joy and optimism, something we need now more than ever."



► FERRARI Continued from page 24

in the Test Zone on one of three extreme test tracks, each with different obstacles.

To conclude the fully customizable experience, guests digitally scan their creations and convert them into a digital, virtual twin.

Once cars are scanned, guests modify engine sizes, tire specs, power and aerodynamics, and can even add personalized license plates and colorful electronic stickers.

Guests then take on other racers in the Virtual Race Zone, racing to take the checkered flag.

Guests have three laps to set their fastest time and use touchpads to give their car extra acceleration and the ability to change lanes. All guests are encouraged to join in the fun and cheer on each race as they watch leaderboards that update in real-time.

The youngest drivers are not left out of the experience. They are given the opportunity along the way to enjoy the Lego Duplo Build Zone and drive their imagination and design their own Lego Duplo Ferrari creations with larger bricks specifically made for smaller hands.

Three additional versions of the experience have

already opened at **Legoland California Resort**, **Legoland Billund Resort** (Denmark), and **Legoland Windsor Resort** (United Kingdom). However, the latest version consists of the best aspects of its predecessors and one new design improvement.

At Legoland Florida Resort, the Virtual Race Zone finale of the experience is set on its end and presented vertically, not flat or horizontally like the previous incarnations. This change was made in an effort to allow guests of all sizes to be able to clearly view their design's digitized virtual twin as it races around the track.

"We are thrilled to open this unique attraction for our guests," said **Rex Jackson**, the managing director of Legoland Parks, North America. "LEGO Ferrari Build and Race is unlike any other attraction we have here at Legoland Florida Resort. It celebrates the global popularity of Ferrari and F1 racing while challenging everyone to imagine, build and race the Lego Ferrari-themed car of their dreams."

"We are happy to strengthen our collaboration with Merlin Entertainments, a key strategic partner for Ferrari, by expanding our offering to engage Ferrari

fans of all ages," shared a Ferrari spokesperson. "After the success of the Lego Ferrari Build and Race attractions at Legoland California Resort, Legoland Billund in Denmark and Legoland Windsor in the U.K., we are delighted to open this attraction at Legoland Florida Resort."

"This attraction furthers our ongoing collaboration and relationship with Ferrari," added Jackson. "Lego Ferrari Build and Race has quickly become a guest favorite at Legoland California Resort, and now our guests on the East Coast can design and race Lego cars again and again."



Lego Ferrari Build and Race celebrates the global popularity of Ferrari and F1 racing while challenging everyone to imagine, build (above middle) and race (above right) the Lego Ferrari-themed car of their dreams. AT/DAVID FAKE

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Sunkid provides new Shipwreck Cove tower ride to Belmont Park

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

SAN DIEGO — As the summer season begins to kick in, Belmont Park is offering something new for its guests. A new attraction called Shipwreck Cove is welcoming visitors.

Sunkid has supplied the main portion of the attraction, a tower ride on which riders pull themselves to higher elevations.

"If we were going to add a ride to the park, we wanted to make sure what we were adding was going to attract who our current audience base is," said Sarah Abelson, director of marketing, Belmont Park. "As you pull yourself up on the rope, the tower rotates slowly on its axis, so the [park] can be observed from a 360-degree perspective. You can see the park from all different views, more so than on any other ride."

The new ride stands almost 30 feet tall.

Belmont Park is a compact entertainment space that doesn't have a large amount of real estate that can be used for expansion. Cleverly, nothing had to be retired to install Shipwreck Cove.

"There wasn't anything



Riders of all ages easily pull themselves up a rotating tower via a rope. The new attraction features an aquatic theme to align with other rides in the area. COURTESY BELMONT PARK

in this location prior, so this is like a new build for the park," said Abelson. "Nearby Shipwreck Cove was already a submarine-themed ride called Dip & Dive and a boat-themed ride known as Wave Jumper. They incorporate themes of water into their experiences," noted Abelson. "When we were brainstorming different concepts or rides we could bring into the park to fit into this area, we concluded that a ship-themed ride resembling the 'tower' of a ship would seamlessly integrate into the existing ride lineup. This rounds it out; it's like the 'water area'

of the park. It fits in so beautifully."

The park offers a mix of rides that cater to both families and thrill seekers. Park management feels this new attraction brings something different.

"It's definitely the interactive component; it's also the concept that anyone of any age can ride it," said Abelson. "It's up to the rider to pull themselves up. Any rides we bring in we want to pop into any of our audiences. This hits all of that. It involves simple interaction from the rider. It's easy for them to enjoy, but they still get to work at it."

"The Sunkid Heege Towers are wildly popular around the globe," said Tim Viox, Leisure Labs, LLC, which represents Sunkid in the U.S. "There are now more than 150 operating in 30 countries. As with all Sunkid Family Rides, the Sunkid Heege Tower adds an element of interactivity to engage riders — and more importantly, families. This is an attraction where the riders directly influence the experience."

"Sunkid prides itself on providing rides and attractions for the entire family," Viox said. "The tower is the perfect ride for any park or FEC, large or small."

"The Sunkid team is currently working on a new concept that takes family thrills to new heights. We can't wait to share it," Viox told *Amusement Today*.

In the summer, the tower ride will be accentuated by a play structure surrounding it, which will help carry the theme. Although that play structure is yet to come, the tower ride portion of Shipwreck Cove opened in mid-April. According to Abelson, installing the play equipment won't interfere with continual ride operation.

The play structure is being designed and supplied by Daniels Wood Land. The structure will help the area maintain a cohesive feel. The play areas will be prefabricated to drop in.

"The great thing about Belmont Park is that it attracts everyone," Abelson said. "We capture such a unique demo because it's so diverse. Young families want a super fun day by the beach with their kids; the millennial crowd is looking for a fun way to extend their day at the beach into the night. You can hop on a ride but also dine in a rooftop sushi restaurant afterward. We hit on all these elements that are uniquely San Diego in one experience. Belmont Park is the perfect iconic beachside experience. It doesn't matter how old you are. It's an experience for everyone."

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Coming this summer, a themed play structure from Daniels Wood Land will surround the tower. COURTESY BELMONT PARK



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Scruffy Dog, Wonder Garden win 2024 MENALAC Design Award

AL MALQA, Riyadh — Scruffy Dog Creative Group announced that Wonder Garden, a prominent feature of 2023's Riyadh Season, has been awarded "Best Design for a Leisure & Entertainment Facility 2024" at the MENALAC Awards.

The team at Scruffy Dog worked closely with Sela on this project, contributing services and creativity. The award won for this immersive experience recognizes the thoughtful and engaging design that defined this one-of-a-kind themed amusement park.

Wonder Garden was a key attraction during last year's Riyadh Season, a



Wonder Garden at Riyadh Season was recognized for its immersive and engaging design. COURTESY SCRUFFY DOG CREATIVE GROUP

winter festival that ran from October 2023 to March 2024. The attraction was a statement of what's possible in contemporary, themed entertainment design, creating a vibrant and engag-

ing space for visitors.

"The client had a clear vision from the start and set out to create a flora-inspired wonderland that celebrated nature in all its glory," stated Scruffy Dog

representatives in a release.

"The project's success lay in its ability to offer a truly immersive experience, blending entertainment with a visually captivating environment inspired by

the beauty of the natural world."

Scruffy Dog's role was focused on developing the client vision and developing the creative, producing the concept masterplan and the technical development. We undertook this role in close partnership with the Sela team and contributed to bringing this vision to life. The collaborative effort underscored our shared commitment to excellence and innovation in leisure and entertainment spaces.

The company also congratulated Sela on its well-deserved recognition which reflected the hard work, creativity and dedication of all involved.

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Icon observation wheel, mini golf, more coming to San Antonio



The mini golf course will be overlooked by Grandisimo. COURTESY ICON EXPERIENCES

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — **Icon Experiences** is making plans to add an elevated entertainment experience to downtown San Antonio, Texas, creating a destination for family, friends and visitors to rise above their daily view and discover a one-of-a-kind San Antonio.

The destination will be anchored by Grandisimo, a 200-foot-tall observation wheel that celebrates the larger-than-life spirit of Texas. With 42 fully-enclosed, climate-controlled gondolas, Grandisimo will serve as a family-friendly destination.

Guests will experience a grand new view of downtown San Antonio and views up to 20 miles in all directions from the largest observation wheel in Texas.

Grandisimo will be complemented by several other familiar experiences, each with their own unique San Antonio flavor. Guests will also delight in the custom-crafted carousel and mini golf course highlighting local creative artistry as well as signature food and drinks inspired by the tastes of Texas.

Pending local permits and approval, construction is slated to begin in 2024 with completion in late 2025.

Icon Experiences — led by partners that began their entertainment industry careers in Central Texas — creates and operates experiences that inspire first-class destinations which bring communities together for fun and inspiration.

•iconexperiences.com



The Icon Experiences' attraction coming to San Antonio will feature a custom-crafted carousel. COURTESY ICON EXPERIENCES

Dino Valley land opens with new rides, interactive area at Legoland California

CARLSBAD, Calif. — **Legoland California Resort** unveiled Dino Valley in late March 2024. The theme park opened the new land in honor of its 25th birthday, introducing an immersive prehistoric land with three rides, two new costume characters, and a build-and-play station.

"Dino Valley has been in the making for two years, after extensive research asking our guests what they'd like to see next and dinosaurs took the cake," stated President of Legoland California Resort **Kurt Stocks**. "Transforming two rides into prehistoric journeys the whole family can enjoy together along with building more than 30 Lego models created out of more than 1.8 million Legobricks with interactive and animated features is a testament to our commitment to innovation and family fun."

The area's attractions include Dupplo Little Dino Trail (an interactive ride where kids can use cameras



Legoland California's new Dino Valley features three new rides including a Gerstlauer junior coaster dubbed "Coastersaurus." COURTESY LEGOLAND CALIFORNIA

to "capture" the dinosaurs and play hide and seek with them along the way), Explorer River Quest (a river expedition that interacts with multiple dinosaur models, and Coastersaurus (a Gerstlauer junior coaster).

To bring this new land to life, a team of master model builders from all around the world helped design and build more than 30 Lego models that now roam Dino Valley. One of the largest Lego models is a giant

T-Rex, which can be found in Explorer River Quest. It is created out of more than 140,000 Lego bricks, took four master model builders 700 hours to build and stands 11 feet tall. A brightly colored Stegosaurus spans 12-feet long and is made of over 119,000 Lego bricks, while a Parasaurolophus mother stands nearly 11 feet tall, is eight feet long and nearly six feet wide, created of more than 178,000 Lego bricks.

•legoland.com/california

An after-hours Toverland presents Europe's biggest escape experience

SEVENUM, The Netherlands — Security normally keeps **Toverland's** gates closed at night, but for one weekend the theme park offered its guests the chance to explore the park after closing time.

Toverland set the stage for Europe's biggest escape experience on April 12 and 13, 2024. After closing time, brave guests took on the role of security guards and were responsible for protecting the 50-acre theme park.

In the escape experience's plot twist, Toverland should be deserted — but inexplicable things are happening. That means that the security patrol encountered an exciting adventure with codes, riddles and puzzles. In order to enjoy the one-of-a-kind experience, Toverland fans had to register online for a chance to win the opportunity.

"Many people dream of having a theme park all to themselves," stated **Bart Jaspers**, the park's marketing and communications manager. "With the Toverland Escape Experience, we are responding to this wish, and prize winners can experience for themselves what it is like to protect a magical place like Toverland. To keep the experience truly exclusive, we are only offering the Escape Experience for two nights."

Teams consisted of four to six people, and the park recommended the experience be limited to guests 12 years-of-age or older.



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Amusement Expo expands showfloor, welcomes record numbers

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

LAS VEGAS — Amusement Expo International (AEI) concluded its annual conference and trade show after a packed week — March 18 - 21, 2024 — that showcased the growing interest in the power of play and profits. The resurgence of both exhibitors and attendees continues to demonstrate that face-to-face conversations and meetings are vital to the game and out-of-home entertainment industry.

The event is a co-presentation of the Amusement & Music Operators Association (AMOA) and the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA).

Among the hundreds of games and new technologies on the show floor, there were also plenty of eentertainment experts presenting emerging concepts and fun ideas to meet this rapidly growing trend in industry. Both exhibitors, products and educational offerings delivered in demonstrating how attractions can build a competitive edge for bars and restaurants with leagues and tournaments, as well as how operators can leverage the latest retro-chic games to build engagement.

The 2024 edition of the AEI proved so popular that the trade show exhibit space was forced to expand by 20% to house its 205 exhibitors. That number included 60 new companies to the exhibit floor.

Those exhibitors were



Amusement Expo attendees eagerly awaited the opening of the event's expanded showfloor (above left). Triotech was keen to showcase its latest interactive, attendant-free offering — SuperBlast (above right). The trade show floor was filled with various offerings for FECs, arcades and attractions, including photo booths from Apple Industries (below left). The expo share its floorspace with the BCA Expo, which showcased the latest in billiard tables and stylings, as well as encouraging guests to explore all of the exhibit floor with fun raffles (below right). COURTESY AEI; AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON



able to showcase their product lines to a record-breaking 4,679 attendees (topping the attendee record set by the 2023 event).

The event also hosted 24 educational sessions, including the popular VR Summit as well as a keynote address by former New York Jets and Kansas City Chiefs Head Coach Herm Edwards.

Edwards was just one of more than 75 leading industry speakers, panelists and roundtable moderators sharing their wisdom with attendees.

"AEI has been another amazing show and we're

privileged to keep our ear to the ground and stay close to our customers — the members of the Embed family — friends, and partners in the industry, especially at a time when system reliability is a hot topic in the industry," shared Renee Welsh, CEO of AEI exhibitor Embed. The company was an AMOA Operator's Choice Award winner at AEI for its Mobile Wallet 2.0 product. "We are honored to bag this amazing award and beyond grateful to our partners and members of the Embed family for making this possible!"

Six AMOA Innovator

Awards and Operator's Choice Awards were given during the event. In addition, 19 AAMA Awards were announced including Manufacturer, Distributor, Supplier and Allied Members of the Year, the AAMA Lifetime Achievement Award Winner, and 14 AAMA Amusement Industry Hall of Fame inductees.

"Footfall was steady, and the organization was commendable, contributing to a productive and enjoyable experience overall," shared Christian Martin of Triotech. The company was showcasing its attendant-

free coin-op interactive simulator, SuperBlaster.

The multiday event offered multiple engaging networking events including the VR Reception, Industry Gala and the popular Beers & Cheers which was held as the showfloor closed on opening day.

"We had a wonderful time connecting with customers and prospects about our latest offerings, including PCS Social Boost, our Social Media Management service for FECs," shared Lauren Cañellas of exhibiting PartyCenter Software.

Attendees also worked together for the good of the industry and the community with \$30,000 generated by AEI's Charity Fund 50/50 Raffle and \$15,000 contributed to Ronald McDonald House Children's Charities of Greater Las Vegas.

The AEI was held concurrent with five co-locating events: BCA Expo, VR Arcade Game Summit, NBVA, Laser Tag Convention and Foundations University.

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Seen at the 2024 Amusement Expo International in Las Vegas



Stern Pinball's always popular Pinball Alley remains an engaging mainstay on the Amusement Expo showfloor. AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON



Raw Thrill's Godzilla VR standalone system put guests in the middle of wild kaiju fun. AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON



Centeredge Software allows FEC owners to operate from a centralized hub, which is entirely configurable. AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON



Payment solutions provider Semnox showcased its popular array of products including the Parafait suite of solutions. AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON



New on the showfloor in 2024 was Rocket Ball, which combined aspects of mainstays pinball and air hockey for an engaging tabletop gaming experience. AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON



Originally conceived for the home market, American Pinball's Galactic Tank Force has begun to prove very popular in multiple arcades nationwide. AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON

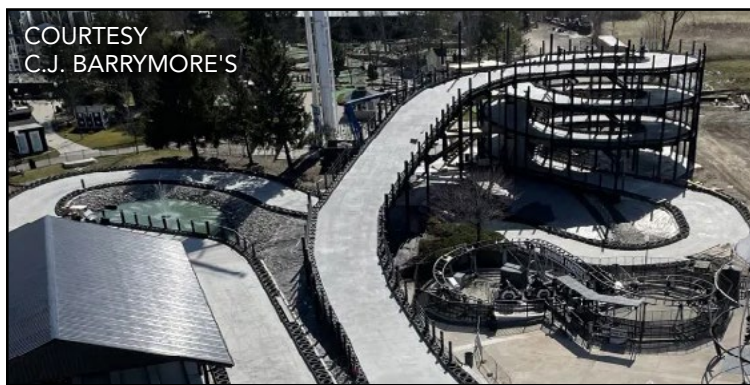


FunTrax encourages guests to be "Be a kid, play!" with their enclosed, interactive model train setups. AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON

Embed representatives were eager to demonstrate the benefits of the company's multitude of technological solutions for the modern FEC, including Mobile Wallet and the Success Squad. AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON



In what has become an industry trend, the long-standing midway Derby Day game has been redeveloped into a standalone, interactive video game that requires no attendant. Amusement Source international had the popular ball-rolling game on display for guests to tryout. AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON



C.J. Barrymore's new track a go

CLINTON TOWNSHIP, Mich. — C.J. Barrymore's — the 2018 Golden Ticket Award winner for "Breakout FEC" — is preparing to open its new, three-story Indy SkyTrack, a three-story go-kart track standing 30 feet tall and running 1,500 feet long.

A grand opening for the \$3-million track will take place May 3. Construction for the project, which is a renovation of an old track that was built in the 1980s, started in September 2023. The older, smaller track had a three-lane pit, where karts are loaded, which was doubled to six lanes in the renovation.

"We broke ground the day after Labor Day. We've had a tremendous, mild winter that allowed progress for construction to go really quickly," C.J. Barrymore's Vice President **David Dalpizzol** explained to *The Detroit Free Press*.

The opening of the track also coincides with the park's 50th anniversary celebration.

FECs benefit from access to organized customer data

DALLAS, Texas — Gone are the days of quarters and tokens driving arcade and FEC income. Redemption cards and mobile payment options are becoming the industry-wide norm. With that adaption comes the availability of a wealth of knowledge and data about guests activities, interests and preferences. But what should an FEC do with guest data and how can they use it to make business decisions?

"Data collection tools are easily accessible now more than ever," **Kash Ahmad** of **Embed** explained to *Amusement Today*. "While 90% of today's data has been created in the last two years alone, 97% of data still sits unused by organizations."

"To turn your data into actionable insights for decision-making, organize it into coherent sets in specific contexts. Business intelligence (BI) dashboards are excellent tools that take data, organize them into reports, and visualize into sets of information you can use to make business decisions." Some data that operators can turn into actionable insights through BI dashboards are games performance, manpower allocation, inventory, sales as well as guest spending and behavior.

"Consider getting the right tech partner/solutions provider for your BI dashboard/tool to organize and automate your data into actionable insights," recommended Ahmad. Automation solves many of the challenges FEC operators face such as time-consuming and labor-intensive data work and risks of data error and miscalculation. "Systems such as Embed's STATS provide easy-to-interpret data to identify key revenue management areas to increase profitability. They generate and access smart, near-real-time reports with deep insights into game and guest activities anytime, anywhere across all multiple business locations and consumer touchpoints."



Ahmad



FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT CENTRAL

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

Chuck E. Cheese has announced a new partnership with the **American Society for Deaf Children (ASDC)** to enhance inclusivity at its play centers.

Irving, Texas-based **CEC Entertainment Inc.**, parent to the brand, said the partnership is intended to enhance birthday parties, special celebrations and other events for the deaf or hard of hearing.

"Entertainment and play are universal, and children who are deaf or hard of hearing deserve equal opportunities to enjoy the fun at Chuck E. Cheese," said **David McKillips**, CEC CEO. "This partnership with ASDC enables us to continue fostering a welcoming environment where every child can play and celebrate birthdays with friends and family, showcasing how the world does childhood."

In addition to raising money to support the ASDC, the company said it was implementing training programs across all Chuck E. Cheese locations, including educating cast members on basic American Sign Language greetings and offering educational videos on deaf culture.

Sky Zone announced it will be opening new locations in Oregon, Texas and three more in California by the end of 2024. These new leases are the latest additions, as the company continues to grow nationally with a slate of upcoming new parks including Boynton Beach, Fla., Mountlake Terrace, Washington, and Lincoln Park, Illinois, bringing Sky Zone's unit count to nearly 300 by the end of 2024.

"Opening new Sky Zone parks in Texas, California and Oregon will give us market share in strategic target markets," said **Shawn Hassel**, CEO of Sky Zone. "We continue to capitalize on real estate opportunities where there are growing numbers of young families building demand for our business and leasable former retail spaces that perfectly fit our large footprint and model."

The new locations are set for Happy Valley, Oregon; Frisco, Texas; as well as San Jose, Santa Clarita and Huntington Beach, California.

A group of New Jersey investors have announced plans to open a large family entertainment center in South Jersey. The complex, a franchise of **Launch Entertainment**, will feature bowling, an arcade, laser tag, obstacle courses and an air track basketball court, as well as a Krave restaurant.

Rhode Island-based **Launch Entertainment** announced plans to open the complex in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, and are projecting a grand opening date of 2025.

Launch Entertainment currently has 29 locations in 14 states. The Cherry Hill location will be the first in New Jersey.

At the end of March, a new **G3 Family Entertainment** family entertainment center in Carthage, Missouri, officially opened with a ribbon cutting.

The center features bowling, an arcade and indoor playground.

"We're trying to bring the family unit back together, which is something that we've already started to achieve," said **Tom Garrison**, owner of G3 Family Entertainment. "We've been open for a month now. We've already seen families come as a unit and doing things together."

Intercard has installed its cashless technology in **Aztlan Urban Park**, the new amusement park located in Mexico City's famous Bosque de Chapultepec, one of the world's largest urban parks. Aztlan Urban Park replaces an older amusement park and is part of the city government's plan to refresh the popular destination, which includes museums, a historic castle and other public attractions.

Sacoa announced its latest installation at **Ka-Ko Jo's**, located at **Rimrock Mall** in Billings, Montana. This family entertainment center which opened its doors in late February 2024, offers visitors an entertaining gaming experience.

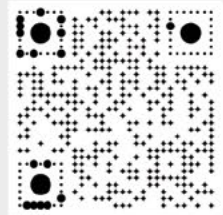
The installation has included state-of-the-art hardware such as Spark card readers and POS systems. In addition, Sacoa's redemption module has been seamlessly integrated to enhance the customer experience.

"We are thrilled to have partnered with Sacoa for the cashless system," stated **Sean Kennedy**, owner of Ka-Ko Jo's. "Their technology has enabled us to streamline our operations, maintain efficient control of our business and maximize resources to improve the overall experience."

With 60 games spread across 8,000 square feet, Ka-Ko Jo's offers a diverse selection of entertainment for visitors of all ages. Guests can also enjoy immersive virtual reality attractions.



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EVA entertains wide array with first-branded North American arena

AT: Tim Baldwin

tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

FLOWER MOUND, Texas — Most people have heard the term virtual reality at some point or another and generally have a simple understanding of the technology. Educating the residents in Flower Mound, a “mid-cities” town between Dallas and Fort Worth, of the vast entertainment potential of VR was the challenge of **Salem Thyne**, president of EVA.

“There is no better single virtual reality experience in existence today,” he said. “It is so immersive.”

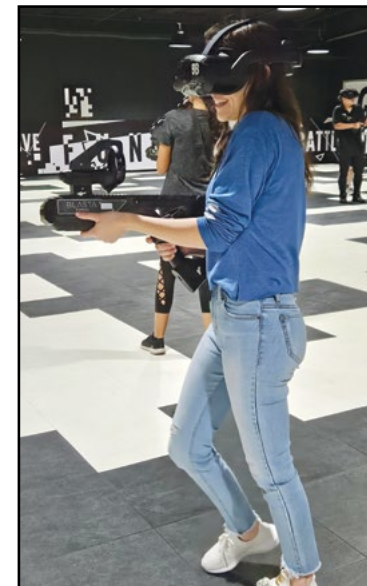
Thyne has a diverse background. He began in restaurant management before transitioning into the Navy nuclear program. After learning how nuclear plants operate, he moved on to uranium enrichment in international operations. He then moved on to technology in the oil and gas sector. Such an individual isn’t expected to suddenly want to own and operate an FEC.

“I’ve always believed in doing things differently. I think there is a challenge to do something better than what’s been done,” he told *Amusement Today*. “With my experience with a startup in gas and oil technology, we really invited innovation. One of the guys at the startup saw [EVA] and how they survived the pandemic. He thought it would be a cool business and asked what I thought about it. From there we did our due diligence. When I saw it, I was blown away. I knew we had to bring it to the United States.”

The arenas are clearly the



Participants roam a giant QR code to be transported into imaginative worlds. AT/TIM BALDWIN



big draw and quite the “wow” when customers enter the establishment. Players are seen competing in two 5,500-square-foot arenas, which have black and white patterns. It’s as if visitors have been engulfed in a huge QR code. The gameplay is so sophisticated that it places players on different levels, even though they are on the same floor.

But other offerings at EVA provide a more well-rounded experience. A full bar, smaller VR experiences, dining options and even free games (foosball, corn hole, 501 darts, video games, etc.) help make the facility an enjoyable place to play and stay.

It is evident when one talks to Thyne, that passion flows through him.

“We have three values of our business — fun, community and innovation,” he said. “Everything we do, we want to have fun. Work doesn’t have to be exclusive from that. Community is the most important one. We have to think community first and community-centric in everything we are doing as a busi-

ness — pricing, strategies, cost, amenities and value. I believe in value. The economy is tough on families. If we’re not an added value to the community, we shouldn’t operate. Lastly is innovation. I always want to be looking at the next thing.”

EVA is short for Esports Virtual Arenas. While extremely popular across Europe — there are 32 facilities globally — the North Texas installation is the first EVA-branded facility in North America. It opened in early 2023, and Thyne noted that even though they learned a lot, he feels the company has succeeded in its goals for the first year and is eager to innovate, renovate and expand.

Amusement Today asked, “Why Flower Mound and not the heart of Dallas?”

“Flower Mound tends to be a bubble,” he said. “There isn’t a lot of entertainment. People tend to stay in the area. It’s a challenge, and I like challenges. If I put this in Frisco with a high-volume alliance, I would probably



President Salem Thyne brought the EVA brand to the U.S. in 2023. AT/TIM BALDWIN

ensure the success of my business despite myself. I’d be profitable by the foot traffic of the location. If I wanted to expand later on, those could fail because of intrinsic flaws in the business. In Flower Mound, if it works here, it works anywhere. I like to do that from the very beginning of a business.”

While the facility does digital marketing, Thyne attributes success to word of mouth.

EVA has a staff of about 25 who are cross-trained to handle multiple jobs. Employees have clear objectives to be met to earn higher wages by being trained in more areas. He feels that team members are more invested in the company if they understand the business and its aspects. A chart when signing in clearly lists weekly objectives — from profits and losses to cleaning duties to bonus incentives. As the person at the top, Thyne wants all his employees to understand how the business works.

Employees complete daily procedures placed in operating apps on their

phones, which streamlines work protocols.

Repurposed from a former building, the unassuming exterior gives way to a very modern, elevated look inside. Thyne noted he avoided the noise and flash of a typical arcade. “We designed it for adults,” he said.

Several tickets, packages and promotions allow patrons to fully engage in the arena that fits their needs. Although the term *esports* is used, the variety of scenarios in the gaming content offers team cooperation or battle tactics. The otherworldly visual environments are remarkably realistic.

Thyne continuously is thinking up new ideas on how to expand the business of attractions.

“I don’t think that I always have to be successful in the business, but if I can introduce something that is innovative and new, then someone else can say, ‘Wow, that’s possible,’ and it leads to the next iteration. The next advancement might be wildly popular,” he said. “That’s the best value I put out.”



In addition to the arenas, a bar, food options, smaller VR experiences and an assortment of free activities make EVA a great social space. A bartender sets one of the FEC’s favorite cocktails aflame (above left). AT/TIM BALDWIN

2024 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo draws record crowds

AT: Pam Sherborne
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HOUSTON, Texas — Total attendance at the **2024 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo**, Houston, Texas, Feb. 27-March 17, showed continued growth, welcoming 2,533,185 guests over the 20-day event. The 2023 total attendance was 2,479,004.

This year's show included 10 first-time entertainers, seven record-breaking auctions, two record-breaking paid stadium attendance records and the highest overall attendance record since 2017.

Chris Boleman, Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo president and CEO attributed the Rodeo's success to its offerings, which run the gamut from agriculture, education, entertainment and honoring western heritage. He also attributes the success to the scores of volunteers who give their time to the annual event.

"With the dedication and commitment of our 35,000 volunteers, we proudly upheld Houston's favorite tradition in support of our \$27.3 million commitment to Texas youth and education this year," Boleman said.

While the annual show



Total attendance at the 2024 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, Houston, Texas, which ran Feb. 27-March 17, was 2,533,185, up from 2023's number of 2,479,004. Here is a look over the midway provided by Ray Cammack Shows. COURTESY HOUSTON LIVESTOCK SHOW

and rodeo is not just about numbers, those numbers truly can tell the story.

For example, in three days, the World's Championship Bar-B-Que Contest broke the all-time attendance record and entertained 234,456 guests.

The Rodeo Houston Super Series invited the world's top rodeo athletes to compete in eight traditional rodeo events. The athletes competed for a share of \$2,178,000 in prize money. Each event champion rode out of **NRG Stadium** with \$50,000, plus winnings from the preliminary rounds.

The 20-day event

featured 360 contestants. Competitions included Bareback Riding, Barrel Racing, Breakaway Roping, Bull Riding, Saddle Bronc Riding, Steer Wrestling, Team Roping and Tie-Down Roping.

Ray Cammack Shows provided the carnival again this year. There were approximately 2.7 million rides taken on the midway. The top five rides were: XL Le Grande Wheel, Skyride, Raptor Coaster, Rave Wave and Crazy Coaster.

The carnival brought 128 semi-trucks full of carnival prizes to the 2024 Rodeo. There were about 490,000 prizes won this year. The top five food items

on the midway were turkey legs, jumbo corn dogs, Michelagua, deep-fried Oreos and funnel cake.

Aside from the midway, food offerings were abundant

at the Houston show. There were some new food vendors but also a large number of new foods from existing vendors. There were new foods also on the midway.

The livestock and horse show competitions drew 37,510 entries.

The junior auction sales totaled \$26,198,052 (unaudited preliminary totals). Some of the sales included the Junior Market Steer category Grand Champion, which sold for \$1,000,000 (tied 2022 Rodeo record), and Reserve Grand Champion for \$650,000.

In the Junior Market Lamb category, the Grand Champion sold for \$500,000 (Rodeo record) and the Reserve Grand Champion sold for

► **See HOUSTON, page 40**



Shopping is designed to be fun at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. This year over 303,000 individual items of rodeo and entertainer merchandise were sold. COURTESY HOUSTON LIVESTOCK SHOW

2024 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo by the numbers

Overall Attendance: 2,553,185

Committed \$27,317,634 to the youth of Texas

The junior auction sales totaled \$26,198,052 (unaudited preliminary totals)

Approximately 2.7 million rides taken on the Ray Cammack Shows midway.

Hosted the first Volunteer Appreciation Day, honoring more than 35,000 volunteers across 110 committees

More than 303,000 individual items of merchandise were sold

More than 400 drones — in addition to fireworks — lit up the sky during the evening shows

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Some of the ride offerings by RCS at the 2024 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo are silhouetted on the midway during a Texas sunset. COURTESY HOUSTON LIVESTOCK SHOW

► HOUSTON

Continued from page 39

\$240,000 (Rodeo record).

In the Junior Market Pen of Broilers, the Grand Champion Pen of Broilers sold for \$295,000 (a Rodeo record) and the Reserve Grand Champion Pen of Broilers for \$115,000 (a Rodeo Record).

Under the School Art category of Grand Champion, a Rodeo record was tied, when it sold for \$275,000 this year. That tied the 2023 record. The Reserve Grand Champion Work of Art went for \$200,000, another record.

A new all-time paid concert attendance record was set this year on March 10 with the **Los Tigres del Norte** on Go Tejano Day. It drew 75,595.

The second highest-paid concert attendance record was on March 13 with **Nickelback** drawing 75,036.

Paid rodeo/concert attendance reached 1,331,478. The highest-paid rodeo/concert performance from 2024 was held on March 15 with the **Jonas**

Brothers drawing 75,600.

The Rodeo committed \$27,317,634 to the youth of Texas in 2024. That includes \$14,618,000 in scholarships to be awarded this summer, \$9,535,350 to junior show exhibitors, \$2,679,494 in educational program grants and \$484,790 in graduate assistantships.

Over 71,000 students participated in scheduled school tours and field trips. More than 15,000 little cowboys and cowgirls rode the pony rides.

There were 1,175 chicks that hatched in the poultry exhibit during the 2024 show and 74 piglets, 24 lambs and 19 calves were born at the birthing center.

Over 303,000 individual items of Rodeo and entertainer merchandise went home with guests during the 2024 event.

The drone show came back bigger than before with performances every Saturday and Sunday during the Rodeo at 8 p.m.

More than 400 drones and fireworks lit up the sky for approximately 10 minutes.

• rodeohouston.com



The world's top rodeo athletes were invited to compete in eight traditional rodeo events. COURTESY HOUSTON LIVESTOCK SHOW



MIDWAYSCENE

AT: B. Derek Shaw

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On April 1, the **State Fair of Louisiana** announced its new partnership with **Talley Amusements Inc.**, of Fort Worth, Texas. The fair board in their decision said Talley creates a permanent park atmosphere that's dedicated to creating fun and unforgettable experiences for its guests.

The Talley portfolio includes numerous fairs across the United States, including the **Ohio State Fair**, **Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo**, the **State Fair of Texas** and numerous rides to the independent midway of the **San Diego County Fair**, Delmar, California.

This past January, the fair requested proposals from interested carnival providers. The fair was previously played by **Crabtree Amusements** and later **Amusement Midway Providers**.

"We're honored to be selected as the next carnival provider for the State Fair of Louisiana," said **Mary Talley**, vice president of Talley Amusements, to the *Bossier Press-Tribune*. "Our team is committed to delivering the cleanest, safest carnival midway experience, ensuring that our guests can enjoy themselves with their families and create cherished memories that last a lifetime."

"We are very proud to partner with Talley Amusements as our carnival provider. Their attention to detail, extensive selection of rides, and wow factor will be a must-experience for fairgoers," said **Robb Brazzel**, fair president and general manager.

The 2024 State Fair of Louisiana runs from October 30 to November 17 (closed Mondays and Tuesdays). Operating hours will be from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. on weekdays and from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

In late March, representatives from the **Chemung County Fairgrounds**, Horseheads, New York, announced the 182nd fair will be two days shorter this summer. Traditionally, the **Chemung County Fair** had been a six-day offering, now down to four from July 31 to August 3.

Representatives said the decision was made so new carnival provider **Wheelock Rides**, out of Syracuse, can operate from 1 p.m. to 9 p.m. daily. In addition to a 25% reduction in operating days, the fair is lowering gate admission by 60%. Those 16 and under will be able to attend for free, all in an attempt to bolster attendance.

Each day features a different theme. Veterans Day is Wednesday, Senior Citizen Day is Thursday, First Responders Day takes place Friday and Family Day is on Saturday. During each of these days, gate admission will be free for recognized individuals based on the theme, and all admissions are free on Saturday.

Grandstand acts include harness racing, demolition derby, and truck and tractor pulls, along with midway acts, bands and other activities for the duration of the fair. The entertainment headliner on the grandstand is **The Oak Ridge Boys**, in an attempt to bring a music choice for the older generation.

Pennsylvania's **Clearfield County Fair and Park** grandstand is 100 years old this year. In 1924, the **Osborn Engineering Company**, Cleveland, Ohio, the same firm that designed the old **Yankee Stadium** in 1923, was hired as the concrete and steel grandstand architect. The 3,010-capacity grandstand first opened on September 23, 1924. It is 210 feet long and 72 feet wide.

The company was also the architect for **National League Park** in Boston, which was the home of the **Boston Braves** (now the **Atlanta Braves**) until 1945. "These designers know their business," a 1924 ad for the grandstand stated.

The **Clearfield Park Board** sold bonds with a six percent interest to pay for the \$75,000 project.

The admission prices for the 1924 grandstand shows were as follows: reserved seating day program, Tuesday, 35 cents; Wednesday, 50 cents; Thursday, \$1; and Friday, 35 cents. General admission was 25 cents for the evening shows.

Box seats for the week cost \$15 for a four-seat box, \$20 for a six-seat box and \$25 for an eight-seat box.

The entertainment at the 1924 fair included horse racing with a \$4,000 purse, band concerts by the "Famous **Clearfield American Legion Band**," and the "**King Bros. Kentucky Thoroughbred Racers**" thrill show.

The wait is almost over. "Carnival Nights," a series of 10 stamps from the **United States Postal Service** will be issued on June 6. The forever stamps feature stunning night shots of various carnival rides, with many of the images showcasing machinery from **Butler Amusements** of Fairfield, California. The Ferris Wheel was taken at the 2014 **Iowa State Fair**.

Stamps are selected by the **Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee**, members of which are appointed by the postmaster general. The group selects subjects for future stamp issues.

"Whether young or young at heart, everyone loves spending a summer evening at a carnival," a brief on the "Carnival Nights" stamp collection from USPS says. "The stomach-twisting thrill rides, the indulgent snacks and sweets, and the general spirit of light-hearted fun make America's carnivals and fairs a place for visitors of any age to enjoy."



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As seen in Brandon during 2024's expanded Florida week

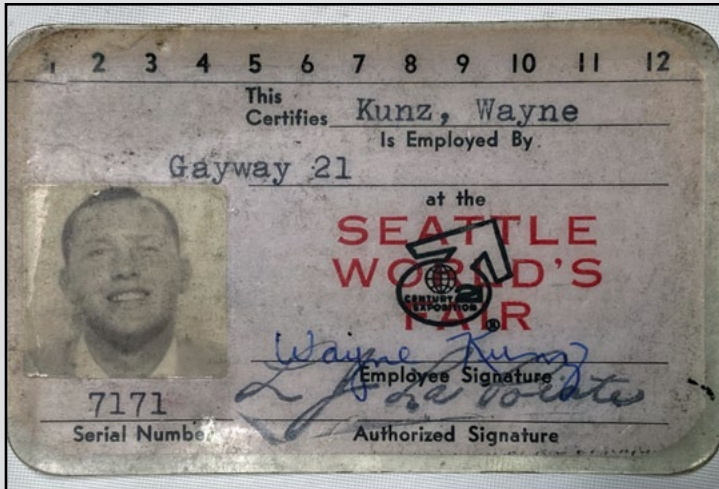
BRANDON, Fla. — Florida Week became two weeks in 2024, as the four key organizations scheduled with what worked best for them. **National Independent Concessionaires Association (NICA)**, **Showmen's League of America (SLA)** and the **Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA)** operated the first week leading up to Super Bowl LVIII. The **International Independent Showmen's Foundation (IISF)** offered events that started after Super Bowl Sunday. Those were covered in a previous issue (*April 2024, page 28*). Here's some of the highlights from the first week.



OABA Hall of Fame inductees (l to r): Bill Johnson and Johnny Dooland with Scott Siefker, accepting for Eugene Siefker, who posthumously received the Pioneer Award. COURTESY OABA



Ben Pickett (right) of Ray Cammack Shows accepted the gavel as 2024 chair of the OABA board of directors from Rick Reithoffer, who served in that position last year. COURTESY OABA



To this day, OABA member, Wayne Kunz still keeps his Seattle World's Fair Employee ID card in his wallet as a remembrance. AT/B. DEREK SHAW

NICA Foundation Trustees Don Kenna and Greg Miller, received their service plaques. They are pictured with NICA Foundation Liaison Jessica Gottsche and NICA Foundation President Audrey Poole. COURTESY NICA



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Despite inclement weather, Miami-Dade County Fair performs well

AT: B. Derek Shaw

bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

MIAMI, Fla. — With the theme, “Spaceventure,” the 21-day **Miami-Dade County Fair**, held in Tamiami Park, hosted 512,437 fairgoers. This was down slightly from 516,416 in 2023. Not opening on Friday, March 22, and opening late the following day due to inclement weather contributed to the drop in attendance.

“For the most part, the weather did cooperate with us in Miami this year, although there were a couple of days that had significant rainfall — so significant that collectively the decision was made to close for a full day and then open a little later on the following day,” said **Lynda Franc**, corporate marketing director for **North American Midway Entertainment (NAME)**. “Outside of that, Miami shone bright for us.”

The Fairland, Indiana-based operation brought 87 rides to the 72nd edition of the fair, with 39 in Kiddieland. New this year to this spot was a **KMG X-Drive** and a **Bertazzon Wave Swinger**. The most popular rides were the **Super Wheel (Dutch Wheels)**, **Sky Ride (Bergathon)** and **Euroslide (Visa International)**. This was the inaugural event for 2024.

The experience with the fair was positive, according to Franc. “We had an excellent time working with the Miami Youth Fair. They really hit a home run with the ‘Spaceventure’ theme this year, and it was great to see



everything come together.”

Eddie Cora, president of the Miami-Dade County Fair & Exposition summed up the 20-year relationship with NAME: “Excellent!”

Cora talked about what sets their fair apart from others, around the country. “The Miami-Dade County Fair is laid out so that all the components are mixed. There is no independent side, no carnival side. Every ride, food location, game operation, etc, is dependent on the others around them for its success. Our philosophy is that we need everyone pulling in the same direction to provide the guest with the best possible experience.”

Special promotions included five-dollar days (\$5 admission, \$5 off unlimited rides tickets, \$5 food deals); half off admission before 6 p.m. (Monday through Friday) and free admission every Thursday for military and first responders. For the first time, the fair partnered with **Miami-Dade County Animal Services**, offering four admission tickets to the fair to anyone who adopted pets during the duration of the fair.



It was a whirl of lights all 20 evenings of the Miami-Dade County Fair. New this year to the Miami-Dade County Fair was a Bertazzon Wave Swinger (below). COURTESY NAME/SCOOTER KOREK

Guests 5 and under and guests 65 and older receive free admission every day.

In the food categories, the fairgoer’s choice for best new savory food was a hibachi duo. This is vegetable fried rice with a choice of two proteins: chicken, steak or shrimp. It comes with a side of zucchini and onions and a choice of Yum Yum or Teriyaki sauce. The fairgoer’s choice for best new sweet food was a cinnamon roll sundae. The critic’s choice winner for best new savory food was tostones invasion, which are steak-filled plantains with shredded cheese, pico de gallo and topped with a choice of cilantro sauce or flavorlane sauce. Critic’s choice of best new sweet food went to strawberry shortcake crepe burritos.

“Our media mix included heavy digital, social and radio advertising. We also included television, cable and OOH [out-of-home] elements,” said Cora.

A new security plan was implemented at this year’s fair. “We worked with local law enforcement, private security and our event staff to create a multi-layer security plan that included the introduction and implementation of an unaccompanied minor policy and enforcement of our guest code of conduct,” said Cora.



There was a plethora of daily shows and strolling entertainment. This included the Youth Fair Circus, Constellations in Ice, **Boogie Storm**, Game Show Arcade, Kenyan Acrobats, Show-Me Safari Pig Races, Space Adventures Thrill Show, Agricadabra, Cowboy and Cowgirl Circus, **Catherine Hickland’s Comedy Hypnosis and Other Mind Amazements**, **Stilt Circus**, **Tadpole and Katie the Clowns**, Shimmer and Shine, a strolling DJ, a strolling Astronaut and “The Amazing Bubble Factory.” On top of that, the fair had a daily parade and local bands every night.

The fair had a positive experience when it came to employment. Cora explained, “This year the employment pool was very strong. Concessionaires, games and fair staff were able to fill all open positions

for the first time in years.”

He added, “We’d like to thank the community for their support of the 2024 Youth Fair. The annual event is the largest fundraiser of our organization, a private nonprofit, and the funds raised stay in our community, allowing us to award scholarships to students and fund various youth educational and agricultural programs throughout the year. Every person who enters through those gates helps us achieve our goal of giving back to this community. Over the years, the fair has given back more than \$40 million in improvements in our parks, educational and agricultural programs, as well as scholarships and awards to the students who participate in our programs each year.”

The fair returns March 13 – April 6, 2025.

•thefair.me/thefair



The Miami-Dade County Fair welcomed 512,437 fairgoers, down from 516,416 in 2023. COURTESY NAME/SCOOTER KOREK

Strong work ethic keeps Burback's midway lights shining bright

AT: Ron Gustafson
Special to Amusement Today

PORTLAND, Ore. — **Ron Burback** learned something important about leading a productive life at an early age: work ethic.

"I still go to work every day," Burback, a founder and owner of **Funtastic Traveling Shows**, said during an extended telephone interview with *Amusement Today*.

That comment is a testament to a man who has spent most of his life in the amusement industry and at age 91 shows no signs of slowing down.

"I started when I was 14, picking up ping pong balls in a goldfish game," he said of his first job for the **Shrine Circus**.

"They paid me off in change," Burback sniggered.

He then landed a position at the former **Jantzen Beach Amusement Park**, a Portland landmark, working for veteran concessionaire the late **G.P. (Jerry) Mackey**.

"I wound up making as much as \$60 for the night, and that was a lot of money in 1947," he said of the experience. "Jerry was my mentor and a past president of the **Pacific Coast Showmen's Association** and **Showmen's League of America**. I've loved the business ever since."

Burback continued working for Mackey "off and on" until the park, which operated from 1928 to 1970, was permanently closed.

"Jerry wanted me to move to Seattle, but my wife



Ron Burback

didn't want to move, so we started a carnival," he said of a business opportunity after Jantzen Beach's demise.

Unique partnership

"A couple of fair managers came to me and asked if I would put together a show," he reflected. "At the time I had games at **Oaks Amusement Park** (Portland) and worked with **Robert Bollinger**, who owned Oaks and had the rides."

The two men became partners and, in 1971, secured the midways for the **Multnomach County Fair** (Portland, Ore.) and **Southwest Washington Fair** (Chehalis, Wash.).

Burback and Bollinger incorporated the following year and Funtastic Traveling Shows was born.

"We were partners for 22 years, and there was never a cross word," Burback said of the endeavor. "Bob actually took control of the park after his father died, and when we were offered those fair contracts, Bob wanted me to buy his rides, but I said no."



A Huss Enterprise spins on the Washington State Fair midway. COURTESY WASHINGTON STATE FAIR

Burback added that he really wasn't interested in purchasing the carnival business outright, but wanted to acquire the amusement park as Bollinger's interest in operating the property was waning.

"Bob didn't want to sell it (park) to me, as he was afraid I would sell the property for condos. Of course, I wouldn't do that," Burback noted. "They did put together a group (1984) to run the park, but they were not park people. A committee member wanted me to take over the park, so my wife and I ran it for a number of years, and what they paid me we donated back to the park."

Oaks Amusement Park became profitable again during the Burbacks' tenure, and Bob Bollinger officially retired in 1985. He donated the facility to the **Oaks Park Association**, a non-profit organization

that operates the amusement park to this day. He died in 2004 at age 95.

"They still have the greatest skating rink in the world," Burback asserted. "Everyone in the city of Portland has gone there one time or another and got on that floor with a girl so you could hold hands while skating around the rink. It's the best-run skating rink in America, and I still go in once in a while to listen to the organ."

On with the show

Building up the carnival business was certainly a labor of love as Burback readily admits it was a "piece-by-piece" process.

Today's show has dozens of portable rides and a number of permanent pieces at the **Washington State Fair** in Puyallup, a location Funtastic has held for years.

"I've got plenty of

rides," he noted. "And there's not a stick of lumber which isn't new on the (permanent) wooden coaster. We completely rebuilt it."

Known as **Classic Coaster**, the 1935 ride was designed by industry legend **John Miller** (1872-1941) under contract with Bob Bollinger and his father, Edward. It was originally designed as a side-friction coaster to run trains from the former **Scenic Railway** at Oaks Amusement Park.

The track was updated in 1950 to accommodate trains manufactured by the former **Prior & Church** company of California. The ride is 55 feet high, and the track runs 2,650 feet in an out-and-back configuration. It has been designated an ACE Roller Coaster Landmark by **American Coaster Enthusiasts**.

A **Schwarzkopf Wildcat**

► See BURBACK, page 45



Above left, a busy midway is seen at the Washington State Fair in Puyallup featuring Funtastic Traveling Shows. Above middle is the Chance Giant Wheel on the Funtastic Traveling Shows midway. Ronald E. Burback is pictured above right with his son, Ron Burback (far left); wife, Beverly Burback and daughter, Tracy Munoz, (far right). COURTESY WASHINGTON STATE FAIR; AT/GARY SLADE



A Technical Park Revolution 360 is a spectacular ride on the Funtastic Traveling Shows midway. COURTESY WASHINGTON STATE FAIR



Classic Coaster at the Washington State Fairgrounds is one of several permanent rides on the property. It is an ACE Roller Coaster Landmark. COURTESY WASHINGTON STATE FAIR

►BURBACK

Continued from page 44

steel coaster is another permanent fixture at the fairgrounds. It opened in 1985 and was refurbished after the 2019 season.

A C.P. Huntington train (Chance Rides), and some larger pieces remain at the fair year-round, including a unique Zierer Hexentanz ride themed as Inferno.

"We use the permanent rides several times during the year outside of the state fair," Burback said. "I own some of them while others are a partnership. We also own some older rides that came out of the World's Fair in Seattle (1962) and my son, Edward Burback, does a great job in maintaining all of the equipment. My daughter, Tracy Munoz, does a number of things to

help manage the operation."

As for the Washington State Fair, it's the largest single event Funtastic plays.

"They extended their dates, so we had to give up the Oregon State Fair," Burback said of the growth of the Puyallup event. "I had no problem giving up other dates as the Washington State Fair attendance is now over a million. It's one of the largest fairs in the country."

More than 60 rides were fielded at Puyallup in 2023, including Revolution 360 (Technical Park), Rock Star and Vertigo (A.R.M. USA), Sea Dragon and Grand Wheel (Chance), Enterprise (Huss), Scrambler (Eli Bridge), Starship 2000 and Tornado (Wisdom).

The children's SillyVille section featured Lolli Swing and Flying Tigers

(Zamperla), Construction Zone (Eli Bridge), Bear Affair (Larson), Sky Fighter and Helicopters (Allan Herschell) and Dragon Wagon (Wisdom).

The 2024 edition of the fair is slated for August 30 to September 22.

Need small fairs

He was also quick to point out that small fairs are critical to the mobile industry, saying, "We play small and big fairs. Like most people, we need the small fairs to enable us to play the big ones."

The route services 30 to 40 locations each season, with Funtastic taking long hauls off its radar in recent years playing in just

Oregon and Washington.

"At one time we played in North Pole Alaska, Memphis Tennessee and places in between — but no more," he quipped. "In those days we were operating five units."

Continuing to discuss smaller fairs and the dwindling number of available carnivals to service them, he offered this perspective: "I see the consolidation of some fairs as the way to go. I've told many fairs to put five or six fairs together and chances are good you will get a carnival. Then, if five carnivals go out of business, the chances of those consolidated fairs not having a carnival are slim."

He also touched on the COVID pandemic and its effects on the industry, saying: "One thing that came out of COVID was the fact that we could explain that we needed to bring in less equipment because we didn't have personnel to run it. Because of that, 2021 and '22 were very good years for many of us in the industry."

The carnival operates its offices in Portland year-round and has several acres in Washington State to store equipment. Between 20 to 30 staff are kept on full time and "that ticks up in the spring" as the show hits the road.

"We don't have what you would really call winter quar-

ters," he said. "We get most of our off-season work done here at our 80,000-square-foot complex."

As in much of the industry, getting help has become a yearly challenge.

"Nobody wants to travel with carnivals here in the U.S., and if they do, I can't find them," he said of the situation. "And the H2B (work Visa) program is a nightmare."

Despite the ongoing employment issue, Funtastic plans on fielding two units this season.

An icon

Though he might not readily admit it, Burback is an industry icon. He is a past chair of the Outdoor Amusement Business Association's (OABA) Board of Directors and a member of its hall of fame (2009). In 2019 he was honored with the AIMS International Safety Award.

"It takes a long time to get a good name in this business, and you can ruin it real quick. Be 100 percent honest and do what you say," Burback stressed. "I spent about 35 years in the amusement park business and 50 years in the carnival, and there are great people in both industries. I am a hybrid, so I guess you could call me a carry or a parky."



The Washington State Fair midway begins to illuminate as the sun sets in the western sky. COURTESY WASHINGTON STATE FAIR

“ This new program provides OABA standards that help improve our entire industry. That is something we can all be proud to support. ”

.....

Industry veteran and OABA Chair
Andy Deggeller
 President of
 Deggeller Attractions

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WATER PARKS & RECREATION

► News Splash — page 48

Mega Mayhem ProSlide water coaster opens at Rapids Waterpark

AT: Jeffrey Seifert
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

RIVIERA BEACH, Florida — On April 4, Rapids Waterpark, South Florida's largest water park, debuted Florida's only dueling water coaster. Mega Mayhem is a massive water coaster that stands 53.7 feet tall with two flumes, each 837 feet in length. The attraction features two side-by-side lanes so riders can race each other as they travel downhill, uphill and around high-banked turns and saucer sections at speeds of 22 mph.

Designed by ProSlide Technology of Ottawa, Canada, Mega Mayhem is the longest Dueling PipelineBlast/FlyingSaucer20 Water Coaster in North America. Riders in two-person rafts will encounter three uphill blast zones, enclosed tube sections, open rally points and a pair of saucer sections.

After climbing to the top of the 54-foot tower, thrill seekers board two-person rafts and encounter the first drop immediately after dispatch. The rafts then enter enclosed tubes highlighted with translucent stripes and graphics. Although following a similar course, the tubes are not parallel; one crosses over the other so that when the pair of rafts meet at the next open rally point, the



These overhead views show how well this massive slide makes use of its limited space with multiple layers and crossovers. COURTESY RAPIDS WATERPARK

raft that was on the left, is now on the right, and vice-versa. The rally point, with its low sidewall, allows the competing rafts to see each other as they negotiate a wavy double-down rally point. Entering back into enclosed tubes, the rafts once again switch positions, so when they encounter the second drop and first uphill blast, they are back on the same side as when they started. Another pair of enclosed tubes has thrill seekers switching positions again before heading into the third drop and second blast. The second blast

sends riders into enclosed tubes to set them up for the first pair of dueling saucers. The third and final blast thrusts riders into the second set of dueling saucers before they enter the final enclosed tube leading into the splash pool where the winner of the duel is revealed.

"This ride will blow you away. The blast zones are incredible and like no other water ride. This isn't just a slide, it's a water coaster, launching you through the twisting turning racecourse," said Bryan Megrath, Rapids



Waterpark general manager. "With more than 40 rides and attractions, the addition of Mega Mayhem transforms Rapids Waterpark into the thrill capital of South Florida."

"You are going to get soaked on Mega Mayhem, and you are going to love

every minute of it," said Audrey Padgett, director of sales and marketing. "There are drops on this ride, there are uphill blasts on this ride, there are tight corners — it is different every time, and you're going to want to ride again and again," she added.

Rapids Waterpark opened in the West Palm Beach area in 1979 with just four waterslides on four acres of land. It has grown to become a 35-acre park with more than 40 slides and water-related attractions, including a quarter-mile lazy river, 25,000-square-foot wave pool, FlowRider surf simulator, kids' struc-



Several rally points, drops and uphill blasts with low divider walls allow competing rafters to see each throughout the course. COURTESY RAPIDS WATERPARK

► See MAYHEM, page 48



Riders begin their race when dispatched from the 54-foot high platform. COURTESY RAPIDS WATERPARK

►MAYHEM

Continued from page 47

ture with tipping bucket, body slides, mat racer, tube slides and raft rides. The installation of Mega Mayhem represents a milestone in the park's 46-year history being the largest attraction to ever be built at Rapids Waterpark.

"Rapids has grown from four acres to over 35 acres since 1979, and we've built some of the biggest water rides in South Florida," added Megrath. "The addition of Mega Mayhem, our biggest ride ever, will continue in our mission to create fun and memorable experiences for our guests and reinforces Rapids as the leader in thrills."

"Rapids Waterpark has been thrilling guests in South Florida for more than 40 years. This year with Mega Mayhem, we're going to welcome more tourists and visitors from all over the country in what is bound to be

Rapids' biggest year yet. It's going to be a 'mega' year," said Padgett.

To celebrate Rapids Waterpark's 45th anniversary, the park will have special events all season long, including family-friendly foam parties, dive-in movies, a mermaid and pirate party, as well as adults-only parties with a DJ. For the 2024 season, the park is open daily through September 2, followed by a weekend-only schedule from September 7 through December 1.

Rapids Waterpark is operated by **Premier Parks** of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Premier Parks operates 15 family theme parks, water parks, and visitor attractions, including on-site accommodations, an adventure park and marina, world-class concert facilities and the one-of-a-kind **City Museum** in St. Louis, Missouri. More than six million people visit a Premier Park property every year, generating annual revenue of \$250 million.



Thrill seekers careen through one of the saucer sections feeling the positive Gs of the high-speed turn. COURTESY RAPIDS WATERPARK



NEWS SPLASH

AT: Jeffrey L. Seifert

jseifert@amusementtoday.com

Work is progressing at the **Salisbury Aquatic Centre** in South Australia with a planned opening for 2024. The facility has already begun to pre-sell memberships even though a specific opening date has yet to be announced.

The AU\$29.9 (\$19.5) million was funded jointly by the City of Salisbury and the Government of South Australia's Local Government Infrastructure Partnership Program. It has been a significant undertaking since its start in 2022.

Once completed, the remake of the original **Salisbury Pool** will have a new warm water program pool, a new 25-meter lap and leisure pool, a fully equipped health club, 10-meter triple waterslide tower, splash pad, 50-meter outdoor lap and leisure pool, group fitness room, picnic area and café.

Ground breaking took place in March on a new CA\$46 (\$33.4) million aquatic center at Lac La Biche in Alberta, Canada. The center is being constructed right next to the **Lac La Biche Bold Centre**, a 250,000-square-foot community and recreation center with two ice arenas, two field houses, an indoor track, fitness and wellness center, dance studio, as well as outdoor baseball diamonds, tennis and basketball courts, soccer fields and even an outdoor campground.

The aquatic center will complement the Bold Centre by adding a six-lane competition-level swimming pool, teaching and leisure pool, two hot tubs, waterslides, lazy river and an interactive waterplay area.

The aquatic center has been on the drawing boards since 2018. It has gone through several iterations as resident feedback continued to push for a more elaborate center to replace an aging facility at the **Portage College** campus that was built in 1988. Currently operated by the county, the Portage pool will be transferred to the college when the new center opens.

Funding was provided by the hamlet of Lac La Biche, as well as Lac La Biche County, a provincial grant and a federal grant. The aquatic center is expected to open in 2026.

A **Wibit** inflatable water park has taken up residence in the Aloha state. **Wai Kai at Hoakalei Resort**, on the island of Oahu, is a nine-acre waterfront recreation and lifestyle venue centered on the 52-acre Wai Kai lagoon. The venue includes one of the world's largest deep-water standing surf wave pools

along with stand-up paddle boarding, outrigger canoeing, dining, entertainment, as well as the ability to host festivals, parties, cultural events and more.

The New **Wai Kai AquaVenture** obstacle course features 20 interconnected inflatables featuring monkey bars, towers, slides, bridges, beams, planks and hurdles.

"We are excited to expand our offerings with the opening of Wai Kai AquaVenture," said **Jerry Pupillo**, director of business development and general manager of Wai Kai said in a press release. "The new challenge course is a terrific way to spend a day on the water. With our new obstacle course, restaurants and variety of water activities, Wai Kai is the perfect spring break and beyond destination for both kama'aina and visitors."

The former **Holiday Springs Waterpark** in Texarkana, Arkansas, is on track to open Memorial Day weekend as **Big Dam Waterpark**.

The old park had been neglected for the last few years and needed a lot of attention, so along with a refresh, it was decided a new identity would be beneficial. The Big Dam name pays tribute to the Big Dam Bridge in Little Rock, Arkansas, and will capitalize on Arkansas's identity as "The Natural State." The water park will now feature a beaver and nature theme along with a new mascot — Benny Beaver.

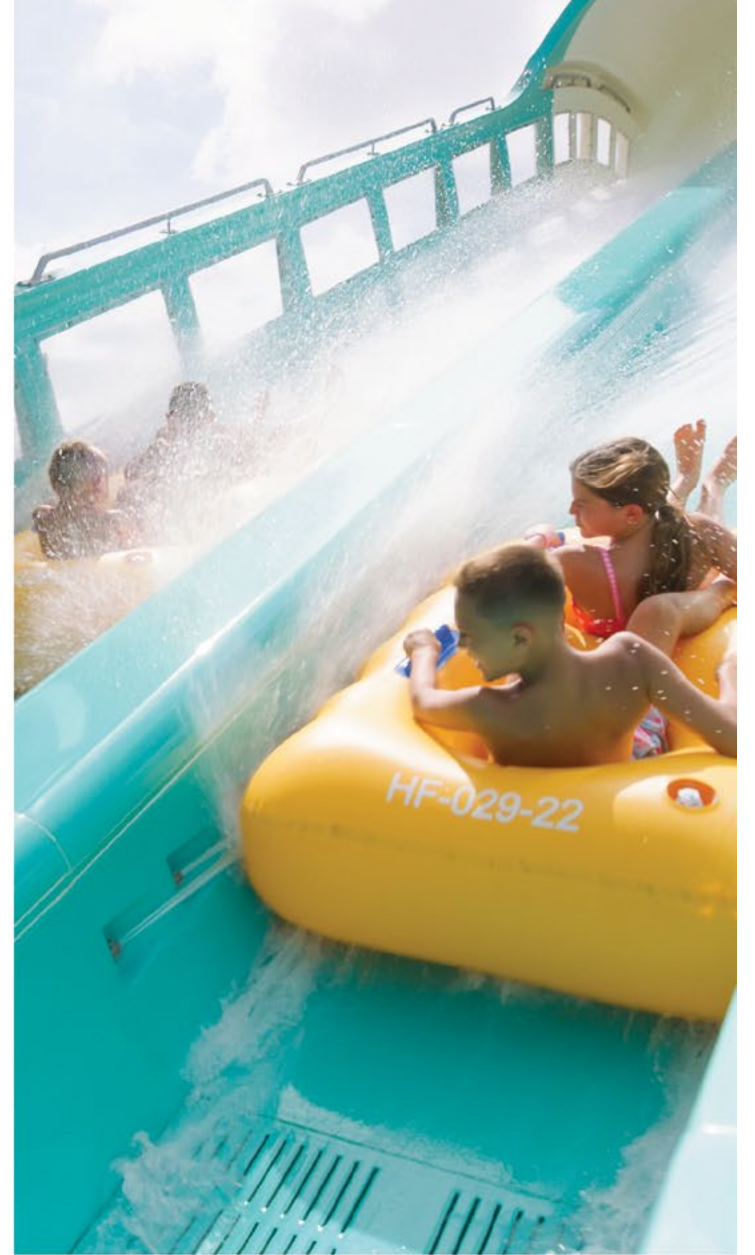
The transformation of the park was carried out by **P2:3 Consultants** of Canton, Texas. The owner, **Johnny Blevins**, also developed and operates the five **Splash Kingdom** family water parks in East Texas and Louisiana.

"The former Holiday Springs Waterpark needs a lot of attention to it, so one of the things we are doing is we are going to go through all of the attractions and make sure everything is working properly. Then we want to provide the brightness, vibrance and fun back to the park," said Johnny Blevins, president/CEO of P2:3 Consultants.

The new **Great Wolf Lodge** in Webster, Texas, is expected to be completed earlier than originally planned. The grand opening is now scheduled for September 13, 2024, almost two months ahead of its planned November premiere.

When it opens, it will become the 22nd lodge in the **Great Wolf Resorts** family.

Webster is located southeast of Houston near **NASA's Johnson Space Center** and the **Kemah Boardwalk** entertainment district.



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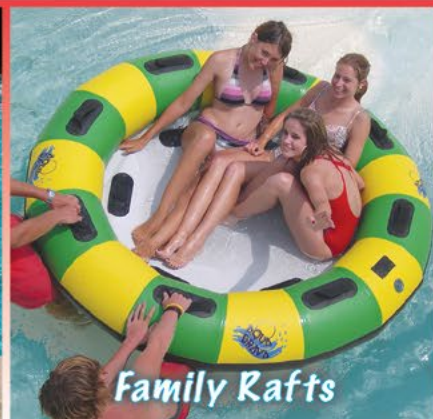
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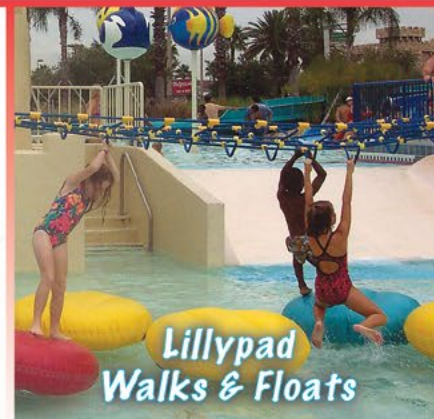
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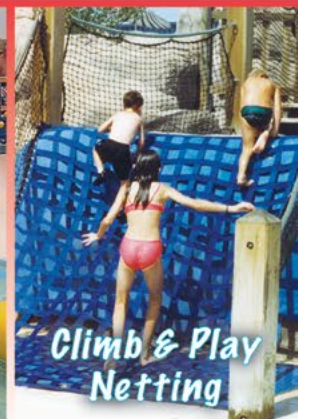
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BUSINESS & NEWSMAKERS

► IAAPA Foundation refines focus on scholarships — page 54 / Women of Influence: Dolly Parton — page 60

After 70 years, Kay Park Recreation looks back and towards future

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

JANESVILLE, Iowa — **Kay Park Recreation Corp.**, a pioneering manufacturer of outdoor park equipment, turns 70 years old this year.

Founded by **Keith Borglum**, known as “Kay,” the company has flourished under the stewardship of the Borglum family for two generations.

“Customer service has always been our top priority,” said **Marilee Gray**, the company’s marketing director. “By consistently delivering quality products with integrity, we’ve cultivated enduring relationships. Our gratitude to our customers is immeasurable as we celebrate seven decades of making their spaces people friendly.”

The journey began when Keith Borglum responded to a request from the City of Cedar Falls, Iowa, to craft steel charcoal grills for local parks. Setting up shop on his parents’ farm, Keith’s commitment to quality quickly earned acclaim, leading to an expanding product line including picnic tables, benches, trash containers and bicycle racks.

Over the decades, Kay Park Recreation Corp. has grown exponentially, serving customers nationwide and beyond. Keith Borglum and his wife, **Joyce Borglum**, nurtured the business with dedication until their passing in



Kay Park Recreation looks back where it was with its first picnic products (above left) as it celebrates the future in its 70th anniversary year. The company’s numerous current picnic products include an array of tables (above right), benches, grills, trash receptacles and shade solutions. COURTESY KAY PARK RECREATION

2016 and 2018, respectively.

Today, their sons, **Chris Borglum** and **Larry Borglum**, carry forward the legacy with passion and innovation.

From that steel charcoal grill to those early picnic tables and benches, Kay Park’s line of products is huge. The company now makes 97 different park benches. It manufactures 123 different commercial picnic tables, 62 types of bleachers, 17 bike racks, 25 types of outdoor sports equipment, 31 pet park products, 12 different pedal boats and canoes, and 22 different umbrellas and shade solutions.

Kay Park manufactures towable seating and staging, crowd control barriers, drinking fountains, litter receptacles, planters, message centers, solar charging stations and, yes, grills and fire rings.

For quick turnarounds, Kay Park Recreation car-



Above left are Kay Park Recreation’s current owners: (l to r) Chris and Larry Borglum. Pictured above right are Chad DeBoer, Kay Park Recreation vice president sales and marketing, and Marilee Gray, Kay Park marketing director, who visit many trade shows for the company throughout the year. COURTESY KAY PARK RECREATION; AT/GARY SLADE

ries 24 different quick-ship items such as different types of grills, low-profile bike racks, commercial bike racks, and a variety of picnic tables and benches.

The company serves municipal and government agencies, schools and colleges, apartment complexes and other multifamily housing facilities, business and industrial rentals, and restaurants and quick-ser-

vice food locations.

The company also serves amusement, resort and hospitality venues, architects, builders and landscapers and athletic clubs.

Sales of Kay Park’s products span all of North America.

As Kay Park Recreation Corp. commemorates 70 years of excellence, the Borglum brothers are spearheading strategic initiatives

to propel the company into the future. Plant operations have been expanded, the workforce enlarged and machinery upgraded to ensure continued quality and efficiency.

Notably, the company is poised to transition to solar power, with a newly constructed solar field at the Janesville facility. Gray

► See KAY, page 54



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►KAY

Continued from page 53

said they are waiting on one part to get the solar project up and running.

"We will run our entire plant on solar power," she said. "We are hoping to be up sometime in late summer or early fall."

The two-acre solar field encompasses 638 solar cell modules arrayed in seven rows. It is expected to generate 438,000 kilowatts of green energy per year and meet all of Kay Park's electrical needs.

The solar field will benefit the company financially as well as enhance its green-product image. Kay Park already uses recycled plastics in the manufacture of many of its products.

Gray also said the company is in the process of expanding its outdoor games products to such items as pickleball nets and funnel ball games.

•kaypark.com

Kay Park Recreation product range

Benches (97 styles)

•

Bike racks (17 styles)

•

Towable seating and stages (8 styles)

•

Bleachers (62 styles)

•

Drinking fountains (25 styles)

•

Flags and flag poles (4 styles)

•

Grills and fire rings (31 styles)

•

Planters (13 styles)

•

Bollards (16 styles)

•

Message centers (6 styles)

•

Commercial picnic tables (123 styles)

•

Umbrella and shade solutions (22 styles)

•

Solar charging stations (2 styles)

IAAPA Foundation refines focus on scholarships and furthering industry workforce development

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

ORLANDO — Anyone new to the amusement industry quickly learns what IAAPA is. However, even those who have enjoyed long-term careers in the industry may not be intricately familiar with the IAAPA Foundation. At first mention, one might assume they are one and the same, but they are separate organizations.

"The discussions in creating the IAAPA Foundation really began in 2008," said David Mandt, executive director. "However, the mission back then was very different than what it is today. We were formed as a 501(c)(3) organization in 2014. The original focus was on industry research and education. For a couple of years, we gathered information, data and perspectives on the industry in more of an academic sense. The foundation board refined its focus to see how to use the time and energy better to provide something more valuable to the industry. So, the focus became more about workforce development."

The Foundation knew members were struggling to fill career positions. The efforts weren't geared toward the seasonal positions but the full-time career positions.

"Many people stumble into this industry, and then it just gets into your blood," said Mandt. "However, many schools fail to include discussions about the business aspects of the industry in their curricula. We want people to understand it is a professional industry with careers. They don't realize there are robust careers beyond the [seasonal workers] that are often the most visible in attractions."

The refocused Foundation began offering scholarships in 2016.

"Our mission is inspiring those life-changing careers," Mandt told



Auction winners at IAAPA Expo Europe raised more than €7,000 for the IAAPA Foundation in 2023. COURTESY IAAPA FOUNDATION

Amusement Today. "Since the pandemic, finding the right team members to operate and manage our businesses has become a greater challenge. It is that evolution that the Foundation is serving a critical need."

Scholarships can be academic (to help with tuition), experiential (by sending students to IAAPA Expo) and in professional development (by helping people attend professional seminars).

"The role of experiencing the IAAPA Expo is determined by the faculty at the school the student is attending," said Mandt. "Recipients have a very curated week and meet industry leaders and attend educational sessions. The tradeshow showcases all the behind-the-scenes aspects of the industry."

"I have about 50 to 60 students who attend the Expo every year, and 15 to 20 of those are only able to attend thanks to the financial support from the IAAPA Foundation," said Dr. Swathi Ravichandran, Bowling Green State University. "I see the light go off; I see the benefit of our students coming to [the Expo]."

Some recipients are sent to IAAPA events or safety seminars provided,

for example, by AIMS and ASTM F24.

"Those scholarships are designed to jumpstart the development of people who are early in their careers and show promise," said Mandt. "We have a need in the industry for those engineers and people who are going to create the next great attractions. What better way than to be at the AIMS Safety Conference and learn about maintenance and inspections and operations or to be at ASTM meetings and sit at a table where experts are discussing global safety standards that impact design."

Under development is a program designed to support people with disabilities to find their place in the industry.

The Foundation works with partner institutions who create the criteria and the application process, and those schools select the winners to receive the scholarships.

"They know their students better than we ever could," noted Mandt. Fundraising for the IAAPA Foundation can be in large donations or in smaller, simpler fundraising events.

"The more financial support we get, the more outreach, the more scholarships, and the more programs we can create to build awareness," said Mandt. "We have greatly appreciated support from individual donors, corporate donors and through fundraising events and activities."

No portion of any donations goes to IAAPA. In fact, IAAPA the association has pledged a dollar-to-dollar donation match for every dime that comes in through the end of the year.

Since 2016, the IAAPA Foundation has provided \$230,500 in scholarships to 107 people in North America and Europe. It provided 52 scholarships in 2023, valued at approximately \$76,000.

•iaapa.org/foundation



IAAPA Foundation Executive Director David Mandt (center) poses with scholarship recipients from the Rosen College of Hospitality Management. COURTESY IAAPA FOUNDATION

Mattel Adventure Park announced, coming to Kansas City 2026

KANSAS CITY, Kan. — **Mattel, Inc.**, through a licensing partnership with **Epic Resort Destinations**, announced plans for a second Mattel Adventure Park location in a new entertainment resort destination located in Bonner Springs, Kansas. The family-friendly themed entertainment destination is set to open in 2026, with plans to break ground later this year.

Mattel Adventure Park Kansas City will offer the highly anticipated attractions of **Mattel Adventure Park** (Glendale, Arizona) including fully-themed Hot Wheels roller coasters such as the Hot Wheels Bone Shaker: The Ultimate Ride and the Hot Wheels Twin Mill Racer.

There is plenty in store for park guests from other fan-favorite Mattel brands such as Thomas & Friends: World of Sodor, which includes five family-friendly experiential attractions and rides, including a dedicated indoor play space for little adventurers.

"Mattel Adventure Park Kansas City will bring our iconic



COURTESY EPIC RESORT DESTINATIONS

brands to life with epic roller coasters, family-friendly attractions, an immersive theatre, themed dining and so much more," said **Josh Silverman**, chief franchise officer at Mattel. "We are thrilled to expand these themed entertainment destinations and invite new fans to experience the world of Mattel in all-new ways as they create lasting memories with loved ones."

Mattel Adventure Park Kansas City will also be home to the larger-than-life Barbie Beach House, featuring an interactive retail experience where fans can build their customized Barbie sets in the Barbie Dream Closet Experience, which uses hologram technology to bring Barbie to life right before guests' eyes. The attraction also includes a unique, Barbie-themed flying theater and The Barbie

Rooftop restaurant and bar.

At He-Man vs. Skeletor Laser Tag, Masters of the Universe fans can fight for Eternia in a massive laser tag arena in the likeness of the iconic Castle Grayskull fortress. Mattel Adventure Park will additionally offer a mini golf experience featuring 18 holes inspired by Magic 8 Ball, Pictionary and other beloved Mattel games, plus a larger-than-life custom climb Uno structure that delivers nostalgia and adventure for all ages.

"We are proud and excited to announce Kansas City, Kansas, as the second themed entertainment destination location for Mattel Adventure Park, an Epic Resort Destinations licensing partnership with Mattel," said **Mark Cornell**, president of Epic Resort Destinations. "We are bringing Mattel's powerhouse brands to life through state-of-the-art technology and engaging experiences. This new destination is sure to provide infinite fun for the whole family."

Renovated Knott's Hotel opens, fresh stylings tell classic love story

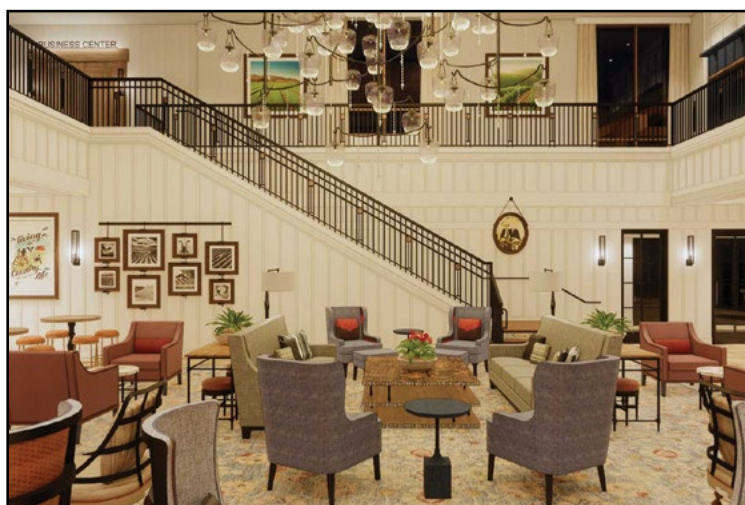
BUENA PARK, Calif. — **Knott's Berry Farm** has announced the completion of a multimillion-dollar transformation of **Knott's Hotel** in Buena Park, California.

The renovated hotel aims to provide a farmhouse-style stay experience to guests and pays tribute to the park's founders, **Walter and Cordelia Knott**.

The hotel's 322 rooms cater to both businesses and park guests. Each guest-room and suite has been renovated to reflect a farmhouse chic style, with hand-crafted accents throughout.

Parent company **Cedar Fair's** creative team focused the hotel's new backstory on Walter and Cordelia Knott — the couple who built a roadside berry stand in 1923 where the Buena Park theme park now stands today.

"This is a love story," Cedar Fair Experience Design Studio Director of Creative Development **Ken Parks** told *The Orange County Register*. "That's really key. If you look back at



The renovated Knott's Hotel aims to provide a farmhouse-style stay experience. The new Thirty Acres Kitchen is a full-service restaurant featuring a double-sided, wrap-around bar that extends into the lobby (above right). All 322 guest rooms have been redesigned and present a stylish, country guest house feel (below). COURTESY KNOTT'S BERRY FARM

their history, you can see it's reflected in who they really were as a couple. And that love story really is reflected in what we tried to do with the hotel."

The hotel features a new outdoor courtyard and an expanded gift shop, as well as The Pantry — a coffee bar serving Starbucks coffee and grab-n-go items.

A new full-service restaurant at the Knott's Hotel, dubbed Thirty Acres Kitchen, includes

an expanded outdoor dining veranda. It offers a menu featuring farm-inspired dishes and classic American cuisine.

The lobby's double-sided wrap-around bar serves craft cocktails and small plates. A black and white wedding portrait of Walter and Cordelia Knott, with the couple wearing matching boysenberry print outfits boasting a striking splash of purple, hangs next to a horse-shoe bar between the lobby.



In addition, the renovation includes 20,000 square feet of overhauled meeting space, which caters to

corporate meetings, weddings and more, with a capacity to host more than 300 guests.

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COURTESY KENNYWOOD

Golden Ticket Awards host hotel reservations, award nominations open

WEST MIFFLIN, Pa. — Plans are already under way for the Golden Ticket Awards, hosted by Kennywood on September 6 and 7. *Amusement Today* is eager to welcome the global industry once again with a lively networking event.

2024 sees a return to a traditional amusement park, and Kennywood is one of the most treasured in the U.S. For more than 125 years, families have been coming to Kennywood to enjoy the exciting mix of modern-day thrill rides with historic classics that have made it one of two amusement parks to be designated as a National Historic Landmark.

For more than a quarter century, *Amusement Today* has spotlighted the many strengths of the amusement industry. The park will add its own flair to the annual Golden Ticket Awards ceremony. In addition to the core categories, the new-for-2024 categories and brand-new additions (along with Publisher's Picks and Legends) will make for a fresh industry experience. Among its numerous attractions are a record three roller coasters that have been designated ACE Roller Coaster Landmarks by **American Coaster Enthusiasts**.

A handful of industry categories are now open for nominations. Individuals or companies can spotlight achievements in these categories: Best Innovation of 2024, Best New Installation of 2024 and Leadership. Go to goldenticketawards.com/nominate for information and details on the process of making a nomination. Nominations open on May 6 and will be accepted and reviewed through June 25, 2024.

The Golden Ticket Awards have honored the Best of the Best for more than a quarter century, and the two-day outing has become the Networking Event of the Year. All professionals in the amusement industry are welcome. *Amusement Today* is proud to maintain the Golden Ticket Awards as a free industry event. All industry professionals will find arranged tours and casual opportunities to connect with what's happening in the industry, making for a vital and beneficial experience for all who attend.

The host hotel is the **Westin Pittsburgh**. Reservations can be made beginning April 22, 2024, with discounted rooms available via goldenticketawards.com/2024hotel.

Part of the event will take attendees to **Sandcastle Water Park** for an evening of socializing and industry networking.

Once again, a golf outing is planned for September 6. Following the fun and laughter, all proceeds benefit the **National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives**. "Held at one of Pittsburgh's top golf venues, this event is your chance to support the NRCMA while enjoying a day of golf and camaraderie. Stay tuned for more details," said tournament organizer **Melissa Bamford of Baynum Painting**. Registration information will be available on April 26, 2024, at goldenticketawards.com/2024golf.

•goldenticketawards.com



SEE YINZ
SEPTEMBER 6 & 7

AT THE 2024 GOLDEN TICKET AWARDS



ON THE MOVE

ASTM International announced the appointment of **Andrew G. Kireta Jr.** as the organization's new president, effective May 1, 2024. Kireta's background in standards development and familiarity with the organization uniquely positions him to lead ASTM International into future growth and innovation. He will succeed **Katharine Morgan**, who served in the role since 2017 and will retire after a 40-year career with ASTM.

"We are thrilled to welcome Andy as president of ASTM International," stated **Bill Griese**, 2024 chair of ASTM's board of directors. "Andy has spent years supporting ASTM International in a variety of volunteer roles and is exceptionally well-suited to lead the organization forward. He brings a strong commitment to ASTM's mission, values and membership. Kathie's dedication and engagement have made it possible for us to find the right leader for ASTM's future, and we are delighted she will help to ensure a smooth transition as Andy assumes the role in May."



Kireta

Kireta is president and CEO of the **Copper Development Association** and has been with the not-for-profit trade association since 1992, serving the past two decades in an executive management capacity. He has been an ASTM International member since 1998, and joined the board of directors in 2014, serving as chair of the audit and finance committee in 2017, vice chair in 2018 and 2019, and chair of the board in 2020. Kireta also previously served as vice chair and chair of the board of **SEI International**, an ASTM affiliate.

Ellis Aquatic Innovations, the **Ellis & Associates** company driving advanced technology solutions for the aquatics industry, named **Mark Oostman** vice president of operations. Oostman is a 40-year veteran of the industry, most recently serving as director of operations, where he has been instrumental in the installation and operation of the Ellis Aquatic Vigilance System, also known as EAVS. Since launching EAVS installation just 18 months ago, Oostman and his team have established the integrated, analytic, artificial intelligence system for drowning protection in dozens of aquatic facilities across the country.



Oostman

"Mark Oostman's depth of experience in aquatic facility management, operations and financial management, as well as his experience working alongside many E&A clients, will play an important role in his stewardship of EAVS," said E&A Founder and CEO **Jeff Ellis**. "We are grateful for his work ensuring the successful launch of EAVS installations in the U.S. and excited about his stewardship of the truly life-changing and life-saving technology that EAVS delivers."

Early in his career, Oostman played a significant role in the growth of Ellis & Associates as a national business development manager and

Giuliana Guglielmi joins her family as part of Intermark Ride Group



Giuliana Guglielmi

Giuliana Guglielmi has joined **Intermark Ride Group** as a project manager. In this role, she assists with contract management, coordinates records management activities and executes digital media strategies.

She has a master's in business administration and 10 years of program and project management experience working in the public sector. Giuliana and her husband also own a party rental business in her hometown of Nashville, Tennessee.

Giuliana grew up attending IAAPA shows and visiting parks and fairs with both her parents: **Gina Guglielmi** of Intermark Ride Group and **Carlo Guglielmi** of Ital International. She is looking forward to being a part of the amusement industry and learning from industry professionals around the world.

subsequently as a member of the board. Prior to returning to E&A in 2021, he served as the president and CEO of **The Lifeguard Store**, where he was pivotal in the company's revenue growth, providing uniforms, safety equipment and recreational supplies to the aquatics industry.

Gateway Ticketing Systems has announced the appointment of **Kristen Hasenauer** as the new human resources director and member of the executive leadership team.

"We are excited to welcome Kristen to our executive team," said **Michael Andre**, president and CEO of Gateway Ticketing Systems. "Her leadership style, which prioritizes people, innovative ideas for career development, and passion for human resources programs, will have an immediate positive impact on our company."



Hasenauer

Hasenauer's role will be pivotal in shaping and executing human resources strategies that align with the company's core values. Her expertise in career pathing, HR initiatives and people development make her an ideal candidate for this position. Hasenauer's dedication to talent retention, fostering employee engagement and driving organizational success will be pivotal in cultivating and enhancing the company's culture.

JRA, part of **RWS Global**, has announced the hiring of **Lisa Jey Schanley** as its new director of business development. Schanley currently serves on the **Themed Entertainment Association** board of directors, Western Division, and is the co-chair of the communications committee.



Schanley

"Since I'm a writer and artist, JRA has always satiated my love for story, design, artwork and creativity in any form," said Schanley. "I have always admired the company's work from the sidelines, but no longer! I am eager to collaborate

with the incredibly talented team at JRA and to showcase the company's unique vision and shining personality worldwide."

In her new role, Schanley will spearhead the strategic development of an expansion of offerings to serve both new and existing clients, playing a pivotal role in driving the firm's growth trajectory across diverse markets. With over two decades of experience in business development, growth strategies, marketing and PR, Schanley brings a wealth of expertise to her new position.

Previously, Schanley served as strategic account director, immersive experiences at **HYPERVSN**. She has also worked with **Technomedia** and **Nassal**, where she showcased her aptitude for driving business solutions, expansions and strategic partnerships.

Ellis & Associates (E&A) has named **Joe Stefanyak** vice president of Ellis Education. Stefanyak has served E&A as a client director for 15 years and is active in the aquatics industry holding volunteer positions with dozens of organizations and committees dedicated to safety. In this new role, Stefanyak will oversee all Ellis Education content and team members, manage **Ellis Aquatic Innovations** client relationships and lead training for new installations of the Ellis Aquatic Vigilance System.



Stefanyak

"Joe Stefanyak's contributions to the aquatics industry are immeasurable," said Ellis & Associates Founder and CEO, **Jeff Ellis**. "E&A clients around the globe have benefited from his expertise and dedication. I've never seen anyone with a more powerful drive to continually improve aquatic safety. I am thrilled that Joe has accepted this new role within Ellis & Associates."

Since joining **Kennywood Park** in 1985 as a high school senior, Stefanyak has dedicated his career to safety, operations, maintenance and leadership. Stefanyak was part of the team that built and operated **Sandcastle Waterpark** and served as the director of operations at **Idlewild & SoakZone**.

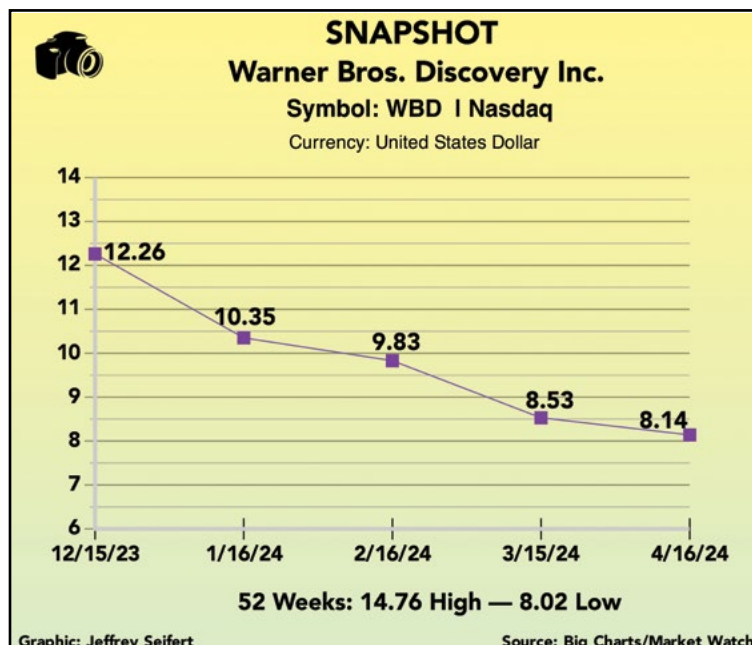
MARKET WATCH

COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 4/17/24	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
PARKS AND ATTRACTIONS					
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	123.19	133.56	79.92
Bowlero Corp.	BOWL	NYSE	12.13	16.20	8.85
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	38.64	45.39	34.04
Comcast Corp./NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	38.00	47.45	36.39
Dave & Busters Entertainment, LLC	PLAY	NASDAQ	53.82	69.82	31.65
EPR Properties	EPR	NYSE	40.05	49.10	39.02
Falcon's Beyond	FBYD	NASDAQ	9.68	44.00	7.02
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	JP:9010	TYO	3540.00	5820.00	3515.00
Haichang Holdings Ltd.	HK:2255	SEHK	0.72	1.68	0.67
Lefoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	17.90	28.45	16.15
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	42.03	51.35	34.12
Parks America, Inc.	PRKA	OTC	0.39	0.61	0.23
Royal Caribbean Cruises, Ltd.	RCL	NYSE	127.97	141.70	59.37
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	23.78	28.99	18.29
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	716.00	816.00	684.00
United Parks & Resorts Inc.	PRKS	NYSE	51.16	61.30	40.87
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	112.94	123.74	78.73
Warner Bros Discovery Inc.	WBD	NASDAQ	8.23	14.76	8.02
SUPPLIERS/OTHERS					
Brogent Technologies, Inc.	TW:5263	TSEC	115.00	139.00	108.00
Sansei Technologies, Inc.	TYO:6357	TYO	1267.00	1515.00	931.00
Topgolf Callaway Brands	MODG	NYSE	15.67	23.01	9.84

Details and information available at 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 4/15/24	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	\$4.068	(\$0.130)
Midwest	\$3.965	(\$0.062)
Gulf Coast	\$3.710	(\$0.166)
Mountain	\$3.956	(\$0.148)
West Coast	\$4.218	(\$0.238)
California	\$5.256	\$0.293

CURRENCY

On 4/17/24 \$1 USD =

0.9413	EURO
0.8040	GBP (British Pound)
154.52	JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.9128	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.5591	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.3809	CAD (Canadian Dollar)

BUSINESS WATCH

Santa Monica's Pacific Park has new owner

SANTA MONICA, Calif. — **Santa Monica Amusements LLC (SMA)**, the operating group of **Pacific Park** on the Santa Monica Pier, announced its sale to **SC Holdings (SC)**, an investment firm with extensive experience in the consumer, entertainment and hospitality sectors. Over the next five years, SC will make \$10 million in capital investments in Pacific Park's food and entertainment programs, supporting park operations and keeping it a fun and welcoming destination for tourists, families and the community.

Pacific Park is a cultural institution and hub for entertainment and recreation located on the Santa Monica Pier, which welcomes ten million visitors annually. As the only admission-free amusement park in Los Angeles, Pacific Park has delivered some of Southern California's highest-quality entertainment for almost 30 years.

Pacific Park's Vice President and General Manager **Jeff Klocke** and his long-tenured management team will continue to lead the park's day-to-day operations. Collectively, this team has 300 years combined experience managing the park's operations.

"Having SC as owners and investors in Pacific Park is a milestone moment," said Klocke. "The Pier is a treasured part of Santa Monica, and a place where both tourists and Angelenos come for fun and relaxation. SC's investment and resources will help us expand what makes Pacific Park great today and write its next exciting chapter."

Disney progresses on affordable housing

BUENA VISTA, Fla. — In April 2022, **Walt Disney World** announced a plan to contribute to the solution of the growing need for affordable housing in Central Florida. The company dedicated nearly 80 acres of its land for a new mixed income housing community in Orange County, Florida. The community would include approximately 1,400 units, over 1,000 of which would be reserved as affordable.

Since then, the company identified a renowned affordable housing developer with experience in Florida, **The Michaels Organization**, to build, own and operate the community. This initiative is privately funded, not government funded. The developer is not seeking impact fee waivers typically available for affordable housing, meaning it will pay millions of dollars for Orange County to use toward schools, transportation, infrastructure and more.

Orange County leaders have said creating more affordable housing is a top priority for the region and Walt Disney World feels it can help in a meaningful way by gifting this land. The company also hopes this model can inspire other companies and organizations in Central Florida and beyond.

More resorts coming to Universal Orlando

ORLANDO — **Universal Orlando Resort** revealed details about its two newest hotels, **Universal Stella Nova Resort** (opening January 21, 2025) and **Universal Terra Luna Resort** (opening February 25, 2025). Brought to life by the award-winning Universal Creative team and co-owned and operated by **Loews Hotels & Co.**, the hotels place guests and clients in the center of marvelous galaxies and diverse planetary elements for an experience unlike anywhere else in the universe.

Boasting a combined total of 1,500 luminous, ultra-modern and surreal guest rooms, Stella Nova Resort and Terra Luna Resort provide even more options for guests and clients to experience a Universal Orlando vacation at an affordable price point.

Stella Nova Resort and Terra Luna Resort will open adjacent to the forthcoming **Universal Epic Universe** and just minutes away from the existing Universal Orlando theme parks.

Women INFLUENCE

A view from the top...

Few people are as ubiquitous as **Dolly Parton**. As a country music singer and guitarist, Parton has bridged genres and generations. As a business leader, she is a brand icon all her own, and for the attractions industry, she is the driving force who inspires **Dollywood's** team members and guests.

Faith, partnership and passion creates true harmony for Parton

PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. — There is an old adage that says the two most important days in a person's life are the day they are born and the day they know why. As we seek our "why," it is through dreaming big and taking the steps to make those dreams come true that we truly grow. For decades, Dolly Parton has needed no introduction. Her name has become synonymous with musical talent, success, drive, giving back, inspiring others and having fun all along the way. In 1986, Parton added "Dreamer in Chief" as one of her professional hats of many colors. As one of the owners of Dollywood Parks and Resorts, Parton welcomes millions of families each year to Tennessee to visit the famous park bearing her name. With Dollywood, she has created a world-class destination that also celebrates her beloved Smoky Mountain region and gives back to her hometown and community.

For a woman whose list of accolades and awards makes everything seem easy, she points out that one's inner voice and dialogue set the tone for what they can accomplish. "It's important to understand who you are, what you know and what you don't," she explained. "God comes to us through the people we meet and when you surround yourself with good people, He shines through to help you dream and do more than you even first imagined."

She points to her business partners, Jack and Pete Herschend, as an example of knowing when something is meant to be. "One of the smartest things I've ever done is go into business with them," she explained. "God has always brought the right people into my life at the right time, and I am so blessed that together we created

a beautiful park that continues to grow beyond our earliest plans and dreams. When we first met, we united over our shared values, faith and goals. Since then, we have not looked back."

Parton also explains a key part of the success she has shared with the Herschends has been the work itself, right alongside them. "Great things are not accomplished alone," she explained. "Jack and Pete refer to me as 'Dolly Partner,' and I think that is the best compliment they could give me. Together, along with our amazing team at Dollywood, we do more and keep creating new experiences for our guests."

Parton also recognizes that her persona means a lot to the park's guests and that they come to the park wanting to feel her presence and personality. "We created something different at our first hotel, DreamMore Resort," she shared. "Along with our great Southern hospitality, food and accommodations, you could say we 'Dolly-ized' the experience, so our guests feel like they are getting to know me a little bit better."

Parton worked with the team to design and create the pink, butterfly-decorated penthouse-style Dolly Parton Suite at the hotel, as well as convert her touring motorcoach to the one-of-a-kind Dolly Suite 1986 Tour Bus Experience. She personally chose the hand-painted murals, colors, fabric and décor for the unique suite to give guests a glimpse into life on the road. The bus is more than just a memorable overnight getaway experience; the booking fee is donated to the Dollywood Foundation.

"It's important to know who you are," Parton further said. "And to have the confidence to let that shine through. Giving back has



Dolly Parton
Dollywood
Pigeon Forge, Tennessee

always been important to me, and it is a core value for our entire team at Dollywood. Serving others is one of Dollywood's core values, and we weave it into everything we do. At DreamMore, when our guests stay in either the Suite or my personal 'Gypsy Wagon' motorcoach, the money from their stay supports the Imagination Library. It is an example of something truly special."

To date, the Imagination Library has gifted more than 240 million books to children from birth to the age of five. In the United States alone, one in seven children under the age of five receives free books courtesy of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.

As a business leader, world-renowned performer and theme park owner, when asked what is next, Parton pauses only for a brief moment. "My first love has always been music," she said. "So much so, my family jokes I was born crying in the key of G. Music has always been a part of everything I do, and being able to share that love with our park guests and fans is very special to me." She points to the "Sing-a-long with Dolly" live

show that took place last month during the park's "I Will Always Love You" Music Festival and the upcoming interactive The Dolly Parton Experience, which will open later this month, as new examples that seamlessly blend the best in theme park entertainment with the music that helped make her a household name. Both experiences celebrate Parton's musical journey while connecting guests with her beloved songs during their park visit.

"Many years ago, I said in an interview that I wanted to build a theme park," Parton added. "Through incredible people like the Herschends and the amazing team of people who joined us, I have learned so much. Together we have done more than we set out to do — and we are not done."

"God comes to us," she finished. "He connects us with others to learn from and can grow with. We just need to be open to hear Him. Through Him, I have been able to dream big, and do even bigger things. For that, I am so thankful and blessed."

—Susan Storey

SAFETY, MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

► Swannee River Railroad trains on track for 2024 — page 64 / Wonderland confronts challenges — page 74

SkyRide renaissance: Busch Gardens Tampa Bay's attraction reopens

AT: David Dake
Special to Amusement Today

TAMPA, Florida — Earlier this year, Busch Gardens Tampa Bay reopened its 50-year-old SkyRide, a large-scale ropeway attraction, which had not reopened with other park attractions after having been closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

The extended closure of the ride led many to believe the attraction's days were numbered.

That concern, however, appeared to be eliminated in August 2023 when Busch Gardens Tampa Bay posted a video of a park worker wiping down a freshly painted SkyRide gondola to social media outlets.

The video was captioned, "Don't worry! It's not going anywhere— just receiving a little TLC. Stay up to date on our social media and website for more details and information regarding the SkyRide!"

Then shortly into the new year, park fans were delighted to learn that SkyRide would finally reopen to the public on February 2, after being closed for almost four years.

The park's website description of the ride invites guests to "Take in the breathtaking and beautiful views of the park from a different point of view aboard the SkyRide. Embark on a sky-high Serengeti adventure as you soar above the Serengeti Plain and marvel



United Parks and Resorts' refurbishment and reopening of Busch Gardens Tampa Bay's SkyRide after its extended closure is especially remarkable considering that since the mid-1990s there has been a trend of park operators choosing to remove similar rides. Below, an early Busch Gardens Tampa Bay brochure shows the park's SkyRide flying over the now defunct monorail, with which SkyRide shared a station queue building prior to the installation of Cheetah Hunt roller coaster.

AT/DAVID FAKE; COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS TAMPA BAY

at the amazing animals that call Busch Gardens Tampa Bay home. As you continue your journey, venture into the Stanleyville area, catching glimpses of thrilling rides like Kumba, Congo River Rapids and the family-favorite Stanley Falls Flume. Relax on this iconic ride suspended 50 feet above the bustling excitement of the park."

Having opened in 1974, SkyRide is one of the longest operating rides at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay.

The ride is a Von Roll type 101 or VR101, large-scale gondola ride.

Currently known as Von Roll Holding AG, the Swiss industrial group, founded in 1803, focuses on systems for electrical applications such as power generation, transmission and

storage, but was at one time best known as a manufacturer of sky rides, observation towers and monorails.

Von Roll installed 43 VR101 large-scale gondola rides around the world between 1952 and 1995, which included Disneyland's and Magic Kingdom's Skyways in 1956 and 1971, respectively. Thirteen VR101 installations are still operating today, including Busch Gardens Williamsburg's and Busch Gardens Tampa Bay's SkyRides.

When the Busch Gardens Tampa Bay SkyRide opened, it carried guests from a dual station alongside the park's Monorail which has been replaced by the loading platform for Cheetah Hunt roller coaster.

SkyRide's 1.1-mile-long



cable carries guests about 50 feet above the park's veldt and its herds of animals and other rides and attractions.

Between 2010 and 2011, it was necessary to close SkyRide due to required modifications to accommodate the Cheetah Hunt roller coaster, which interacts with SkyRide, including a unique flyover where the

roller coaster passes over and under the cableway.

The Crossroads end of the SkyRide is the "drive" station housing an electric motor that pulls the cable by turning the large bull wheel on which the cable runs. The counterweight which maintains cable

► See SKYRIDE, page 62

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► SKYRIDE

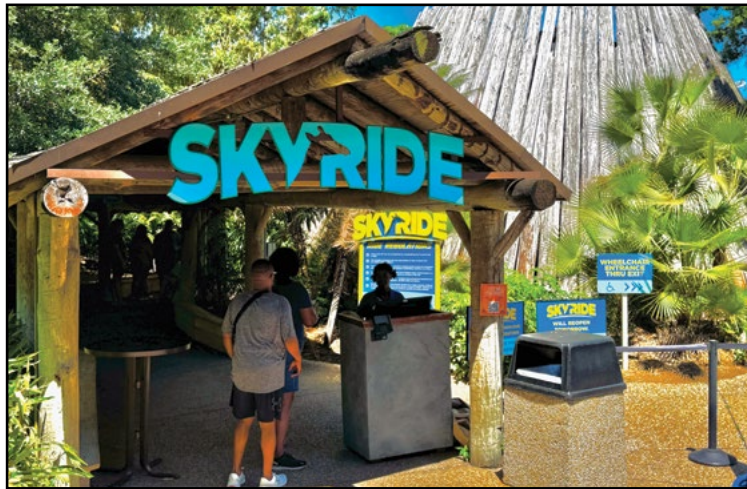
Continued from page 61

tension for the ride as the weight fluctuates with gondolas attaching and detaching from the cable for loading and unloading in the stations is housed in the Congo Station at the far end of the rides path.

The counterweight is hidden under the station with the station's bull wheel mounted on a track so it can easily slide forward and back as weight fluctuates and the counterweight rises and falls beneath the station.

Along with its reopening this year, the park announced the ride would become an upcharge attraction. The newly instated fee is \$5 per ride, each direction, with the exception of passholders, for whom there is no charge.

While some guests took to social media to express their irritation with the new upcharge fee, many amusement park and ride enthusiasts countered the negative sentiments by expressing



The reopened SkyRide provides tremendous views of wildlife on the park's veldt. The ride's course features interactions with other attractions including Serengeti Flyer (above left) and the Cheetah Hunt roller coaster. AT/DAVID FAKE

their happiness that SkyRide even still exists. Those in-the-know realize that the fee isn't necessarily a simple "cash grab," but a necessary move to offset the operational and maintenance costs.

Thankfully, over the years **SeaWorld Entertainment** — now **United Parks and Resorts** — which owns the Busch Gardens parks as well as six other brands, has seen the value and importance of preserving some of the parks' older and more nostalgic rides,

such as SkyRide.

United Parks and Resorts' refurbishment and reopening of SkyRide after an extended closure are especially remarkable, considering that since the mid-1990s there has been a trend of park operators choosing to remove similar rides due to the high overhead costs that accompany their operation.

In fact, while there once were hundreds of such sky ride/gondola/ropeway attractions at parks in the U.S. alone, there are currently fewer than 66 installations

still in operation worldwide, according to **Coasterpedia.net's** most recent update of its list of operating "ropeways" (2020).

Digging into the statistics further, it becomes apparent that there are fewer than 25 large-scale gondola ropeways like Busch Gardens Tampa Bay's SkyRide still operating. The majority of ropeways still operating are much smaller scale ski lift-type ropeways lower to the ground and with far shorter spans, such as Skyview operating

at **Hersheypark** (its large-scale gondola ropeway, Sky Ride, a **Giovanola/Intamin** installation was removed in 1992 after operating since 1974).

Across multiple upcoming issues of *Amusement Today*, we will further delve into the details of additional, still operating sky rides, such as **Cedar Point's** Sky Ride, as well as taking a look at new or updated ropeway and gondola attractions, such as **Legoland New York Resort's** new-for-2024 Minifigure Skyflyer.

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Texas' Swannee River Railroad Company rolling out the trains

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

LUFKIN, Texas — **Todd Swan** said he has been busy, busy, busy.

As the owner of **Swannee River Railroad Company**, located in Lufkin, Texas, and one of two employees, he and his son, **Jason Swan**, the other employee, screw every nut, bolt, washer, etc., into every train, both locomotive and coach he makes.

"When a product is introduced, we have touched all of it," Swan said. "It is a labor of love."

Since he founded the company in 2014, he has rolled out 43 trains, in a variety of sizes, 12-inch gauge, 14-inch gauge, 16-inch gauge, 18-inch gauge and 24-inch gauge.

He sold 10 trains last year, a big number for him. He has completed seven of them and is still working on the other three.

"Usually, we build about three or four in a year," Swan



Above left is the Swannee River Railroad new 24-inch gauge, SR24-Steam Outline (located at Remlinger Farms of Carnation, Washington), which features a 75 horsepower and four cylinder turbo-charged Kohler Diesel with six coaches. The City of Sedalia, Missouri purchased the above right 15-inch gauge train. COURTESY SWANNEE RIVER RAILROAD COMPANY

said. "It has been a little bit crazy, and I am worn out."

Swan never really meant to be in the business of building trains. In fact, he said it was actually an accident that grew from a hobby of live-steam backyard trains. He had an interest in backyard trains and subscribed to a newsletter about the hobby. He wanted to

build one for his kids.

It was in 2010 when the "accident" happened.

"I was a sales rep for **United Rentals**," he said.

He went door to door, making visits to potential customers. He visited a man that he describes as a junk collector.

"I mean, that was pretty

much what he was," Swan said. "I noticed he had a train made by the **Miniature Train Company** there, and I asked him if I could buy it."

The man didn't want to part with it, but he did let Swan take it home and copy it.

"I built a version of that train and put it in my backyard for my kids," Swan said.

At the time, his daughter was five and his son was 10.

"It was a hit," he said.

Word got out.

"The only problem was the size," he said. "The adults wanted to ride, and when they would turn to take a picture of little junior,

▶ See SWANNEE, page 65

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RICK BASTRUP
Foreword by Gary Slade, *Amusement Today*

★ ADVENTURES OF A ★
THEME PARK DESIGNER

My Personal Story of Creating Memorable Theme Park Rides and Attractions



The above left Swanee 18-inch gauge custom GP38 widebody was sold to Zilker Eagle in Zilker Park of Austin, Texas. The above middle SR24-Steam Outline train is now at Swanee's owner farm, Holly Springs Farm, Nacogdoches, Texas. Above right is a 24-inch gauge GP38-2 that was purchased by Forest Park Miniature Railroad in Fort Worth, Texas. COURTESY SWANEE RIVER RAILROAD COMPANY

► **SWANEE**

Continued from page 64

they would fall off."

So, he knew he had to make it bigger. The 24-inch gauge train Swan made was big enough.

"You can sit in it," he said. "You don't sit on top or hang over the back."

He started getting phone calls from people wanting him to make them a train.

"They would call and ask, and if it was for their backyard, we would work it out," he said. "But then I got a call from a city park, and I thought, 'Well, this is a different thing.'

Then he started getting calls from zoos and farms."

That is when he knew he was onto something. He founded Swanee River Railroad and has been making trains ever since. He has a small shop in Lufkin, Texas, and contracts out the actual manufacturing.

But it is hands-on every step of the way.

The designs are his and his son's. When he first started, he would take sketches of what he wanted to a contractor on a napkin taped together and say, "Can you do this?"

Now, he and his son can take a thumb drive and say,

"Can you do that?"

His son is a self-taught graphic designer now.

Swan also likes to go with the trains when they are being delivered, especially the 24-inch gauge trains, which are more complicated than the smaller ones.

"I like to know where they are going and what they will run on," he said. "I like to take a look at the tracks. A train only runs as well as its tracks. I will sometimes make some recommendations about the tracks, but I don't work on them."

Swan said he has sold a train to just about every

venue in the amusement industry except for an actual amusement park.

"Those are usually 36-inch gauge, and we haven't gone that big yet," he said.

The agri-entertainment segment is seeing a lot of growth and many of them want to offer the train rides. In fact, Swan has now opened one. Called **Holly Springs Farm** and located in Nacogdoches, Texas, it opened on March 15.

Swan has a mile and a half of train track there. For the spring, there is a gem mine and food trucks on the weekends.

"It will be a seasonal operation," Swan said. "We will be open for the spring until May 26 and then shut down for the summer to do some planning on what else we will put in there. Then, we will open back up in the fall as a pumpkin patch and hopefully, we will have a Christmas event."

Swan already has new customers and repeat customers alike. One of his trains has gone to **Mary Talley**, who owns the train operation in **Forest Park Miniature Train Railroad** in Fort Worth, Texas. She also is the owner of **Talley Amusements**.

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Party Center Software provides solutions for FECs and their guests

AT: Susan Storey
Special to Amusement Today

CAMERON PARK, Calif. — In 2006 entrepreneur Scott Drummond opened Bounceopolis, an indoor play facility in El Dorado Hills, California. As a new business owner, he experienced struggles with managing staff, vendors and customers. The challenges inspired Drummond to take matters into his own hands and develop a software solution that would allow him to automate key aspects of his business. As Bounceopolis began to thrive, in part his program, Drummond recognized other indoor play center and family entertainment center (FEC) owners and operators were dealing with the same challenges. This realization, and desire to share his solutions with others led to the creation of Party Center Software (PCS). The company has been serving and supporting the FEC industry ever since.

“First and foremost, we focus on the customer’s customer,” shared Rebecca Twomey, president, Party Center Software.



Twomey

“We are a problem-solving company. We want to help solve problems for the business owner and many times that means we must solve problems a customer faces when engaging with them.”



Party Center Software’s formula is even spelled out in its team’s titles: providing solutions for customer success is the number-one goal. Pictured from left to right during IAAPA Expo 2023: Courtney Drahos, director of sales; Eileen Hawkins, customer success consultant, Danielle Hardin, director of customer success; and Sarah Roberts, customer success manager. COURTESY PARTY CENTER SOFTWARE

As a software solution company, Twomey also notes that there are multiple touchpoints and areas the programs and services must impact to ensure success.

“We know that successful software implementation means it works equally for three primary areas of the business. It must be user-friendly on the back end for the employees. Many indoor play centers and FECs have young, teen-aged employees. The system has to be easy enough for them to use. It must also be secure for the business owner, so they don’t lose money. And the software must be friendly for the customer who is using the

website and booking the party. All those pieces must work together.

“Part of our process at PCS is we work as a collaborative consultant with our customers. We are supporting a family-driven industry, and we are parents with families of our own. As such, we will go online wearing our “parent hat” and take the customer journey from beginning to end.

“Having someone book through the website is the first step to our customers,” Twomey shared. “Our software makes it easy to book a party, buy tickets, manage online stores, digital waivers and point of sale. That is how we started. Over

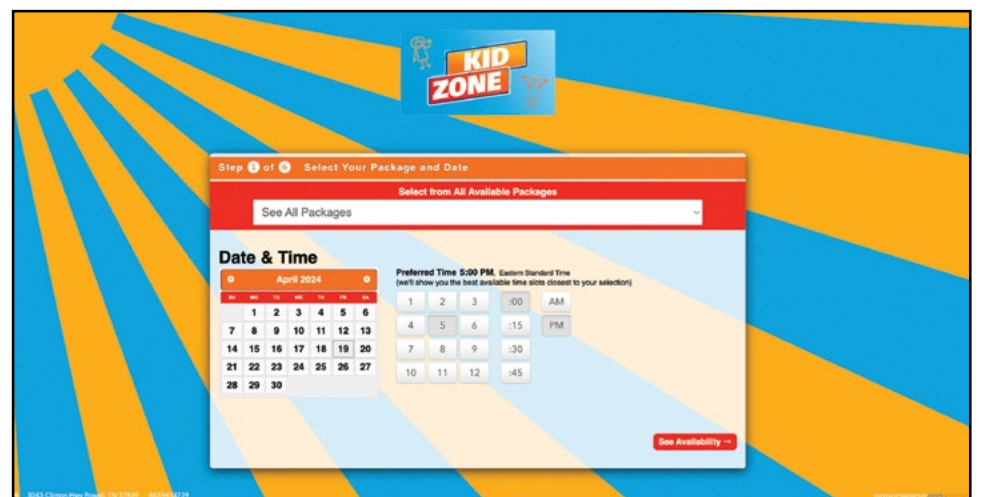
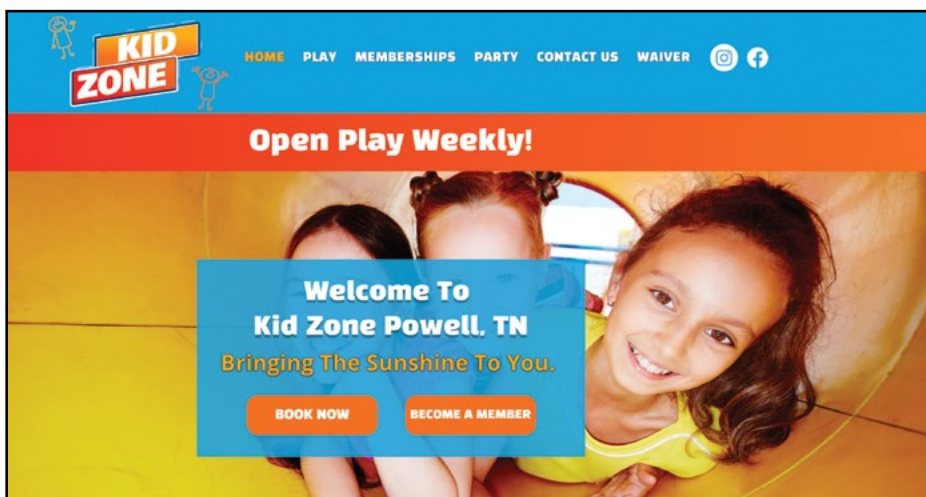
the years we have also discovered many of our customers don’t understand marketing, have the time to do it, or the resources to hire dedicated staff. Just because there is a booking button on the website does not guarantee customers can easily find it. So, the natural progression for us has been to add PCS’s marketing agency services.

“The consultative approach that we take with working with our customers helped us recognize we are more than just a software solution company,” Twomey continued. “We act as consultants just as much as we are informing them about how to use our product.

“The marketing services side of our business grew out of our efforts to be most helpful to our customers. In this way, PCS handles everything to get people through the door: parties are booked, revenue is being managed in a secure manner. That means our customer has been given time back to focus on what is most important — training staff, managing the operation and providing great customer service. Being our customer means they can then better serve their customer.”

She points to customers’ websites as the per-

► See PARTY, page 67



Party Center Software designed the website for Kid Zone of Powell, Tennessee, as well as an online booking portal for birthday parties and events. COURTESY PARTY CENTER SOFTWARE

►PARTY

Continued from page 66

fect example. “Having a website is not enough. You must attract people to your website and that’s done through marketing. Having a presence online through social media channels and ads, participation in chat groups and more. We saw many of our customers got our software for booking. They would add the booking link to their website but that did not automatically translate into more immediate sales. Users had to find the website engaging and easy to use online.”

When PCS’s customers asked for aid in that area, Twomey and her team realized they could not find trusted vendors to refer customers to whom also understood the unique needs and nuances within the industry. “Rather than leave our customers to figure that part out on their own, we decided we could solve it for them. That was the catalyst for us to take this next step to evolve from a software solution company into a full-service partner for our customers.”

An email marketing service was created with the addition of the PCS Automation Suite. The service gives customers the ability to build email marketing campaigns, schedule social media posts, and more. The addition of PCS’s Reputation Management Portal allows customers to see and manage online reviews all in one place. The portal also includes templates to help operators respond in a timely man-



Party Center Software’s Social Boost program provides social media assistance for time-strapped owners and operators, as well as monthly social media kits for savvy DIYers, with tiers designed to amplify a brand’s voice and engagement. COURTESY PARTY CENTER SOFTWARE

ner and track feedback for reoccurring comments and themes. An eBook about the importance of emergency plans was developed to help customers prepare for issues such as power and internet outages. The services go beyond traditional software solution companies and are critical to the way PCS support its customers.

Research is another critical part of PCS’s formula for success. For the last six years PCS has conducted and shared an annual Online Booking Study with its customers to help them better understand who is coming to them.

“The data has consistently shown us that most moms book parties just one week in advance of the event,” Twomey shared. “Only one week. That tells us that is a lot of decision fatigue that goes into booking. If a mom has to fill out a form and wait for a response, or if the website is difficult to use, that diminishes their experience and lessens their chance of booking.”

“Our data also shows

that most parties are booked on phones,” PCS Marketing Director **Laura Cañellas** added. “If a website is not mobile friendly, it does not matter how great our software is. Customers have to be able to easily find what they are looking for. Time is a precious commodity. We help our customers think like their customers and then together we implement solutions to make it easier for everyone.”



Cañellas

“Our number-one customer persona is indoor play, and our second is family entertainment centers,” Twomey continued.



“Our customers are where people are gathering, having parties, and getting together making those memories. Those are the customers we support.”

In the busy space of software solutions, Twomey acknowledges it can be hard for some companies to stand out and be noticed, but PCS does not worry about that. “We have borrowed the term ‘niche down,’” she explained. “This is great advice for us and helps keep us centered. We know the FEC industry is vast, and we know where we have the most success. We partner with indoor bounce, ninja parks, roller skating rinks, bowling centers, adventure parks — those are our

target businesses and customers. We can’t be everything to everybody, so we have honed our scope and expertise to know who our customers are and what problems they are facing. Then we work alongside them to help address and solve each one.”

“At PCS, we understand what we are doing is not just selling software. We are working with people as they build their lives and dreams. We are serving businesses that employ people in their communities, with people who are creating places for others to make memories. I can’t think of a better business to be in or industry to be a part of.”

•partycentersoftware.com



Each year, Party Center Software releases an annual Online Booking Study that includes the company’s most recent data on everything from average party revenue to who books the most parties and when. COURTESY PARTY CENTER SOFTWARE

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Pennsylvania amusement ride safety advisory board holds meeting

AT: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Representatives from the amusement industry along with community volunteers met at the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture headquarters in mid-March for a Pennsylvania Ride Safety Advisory Board quarterly meeting. Input from this body is used to help the Bureau of Ride & Measurement

Standards determine its course of action on a particular ride approval process.

Fred Strathmeyer, deputy secretary of agriculture, was complimentary of the work being done by the Quality Assurance inspectors and board members in the amusement industry. "Thank you for the great job you do. Kudos to you as an industry. What you do and what you bring to the industry is important. Public

safety is our number one goal in Pennsylvania," he said.

Joe Filoramo, ride safety supervisor for the Commonwealth, mentioned the department is working on better enforcement of bad inspections when they occur.

There were four ride/attraction approvals to come before the advisory board, down from a much higher number in the past. All four at the March meeting were grant-

ed conditional approval.

Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom had three representatives in attendance making a presentation on Iron Menace, the Bolliger & Mabillard steel dive coaster: Ryan Eldridge, PR and communications manager; Dan Lebo, operations manager and Paul Wieder, maintenance and construction director.

Iron Menace, the first dive coaster in the northeast, rises

152 feet, with a 95-degree drop, traverses 2,169 feet of track, and contains four inversions. It is the first brand-new attraction to be built at the park since 2005. The coaster is designed to operate two trains. Iron Menace will travel up to 64 miles per hour. Theming pays homage to the iron- and steel-making industry for which the Lehigh Valley is known.

Numerous ride questions were asked by the board and answered by park staff.

Camp Kon-O-Kwee Spencer, a facility owned by the YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh is adding a tower-to-tower zip-line for its upcoming camping season. The equipment is being installed by The Adventure Network, based in Chalfont. The camp, offering week-long experiences, is located in Fombell, Beaver County.

Powers and Thomas Midway Entertainment recently purchased a two-story portable fun house that will be traveling on its carnival route, from Italian manufacturer, Gosetto S.r.l. Called New York, New York, the walkthrough contains more than 16 different kinds of tricks, including a rotating barrel, toboggan, vibrating footboard and rolling carpet.

Fun City Adventure Park, York, is installing five attractions from Sviya Group, China, for its newly opened FEC. These include an air court, climbing attraction, soft play playground, trampoline court and a warrior court.

There was discussion among board members about continuing education credits offered by organizations outside of Pennsylvania. A policy updated in September 2023 now requires course curriculum to be submitted to the bureau within a specified timeline to allow state inspectors to make travel arrangements to audit the training program. Mentioned were NAARSO, AIMS and Northwest Showmen, as ride inspectors within the Commonwealth had taken classes with these organizations after the change went into effect.

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Sharing knowledge was the foundation of AIMS from its beginnings

Many of you have attended an **AIMS International** Safety Seminar, know someone who has, or have heard of AIMS. But do you know the rich history of the organization?

Sixty years ago, in 1964, a group of suppliers from the amusement industry joined together to create an organization to showcase their products, teach proper maintenance and inspection procedures, as well as provide answers to questions and issues about their attractions. They called this new organization **The American Recreational Equipment Association (AREA)**.

Remarkably, all of these companies are still represented in the AIMS membership. **Dick Chance**, son of **Harold Chance**, attended the 2024 seminar, and **Chance Rides** is still a sponsor and member. **Allan Herschell** merged with **Chance Rides** in 1970. **Philadelphia Toboggan Company** and **Eli Bridge** are still members. **Sellner Mfg.**, who created the Tilt-A-Whirl, was bought by **Larson International**, which was acquired by **Rocky Mountain Construction** ... all of which are members of AIMS.

Harold Chance held the first Safety Seminar in



AREA's original Board of Directors from 1964 (l to r): Watson Brey, Allan Herchell Co.; John C. Allen, Philadelphia Toboggan Company; Harold Chance, Chance Mfg.; Lee Sullivan, Eli Bridge Co. and Art Sellner, Sellner Mfg. Co. Inc.
COURTESY AIMS INTERNATIONAL

Wichita, Kansas, with 30 attendees. The seminar was held there for 10 years. After which it moved to Greenville, South Carolina, and inspectors were added to the seminar attendees, bringing maintenance and inspectors together.

Dick shared his father's thoughts on the importance of safety education: "My dad saw a need to help prevent accidents. Even though

we will never know how many accidents we have prevented, percentage-wise we have far fewer claims than there were in the '60s and '70s."

When asked about the expansion of operators and safety personnel to the seminar, Chance added: "We can design and build them as safe as possible, but if we don't educate the operators, we're only focusing on half the battle. It takes the whole team working together to have a safe industry. We all must live it to make sure that happens. The AIMS seminar helps us all really live it."

In February 1994, AREA was reestablished as AIMS International, an organization dedicated to continuing safety in the amusement industry.

AIMS continues to have a lasting impact on the industry and on the professionals that serve it.

The beating heart of AIMS is the association's members. These professionals understand that the best way for them to individually succeed is for them to share their knowledge and actively learn from one another.

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—Amy Lowenstein

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Hersheypark opening day debuts new Comet trains from PTC



HERSHEY, Pa. — The oldest continually operating coaster at Hersheypark received a glossy upgrade this off-season. New trains from Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters, Inc. were craned onto the tracks of the popular Comet coaster in mid-March. The trains feature an "out of this world design" and were ready for riders to enjoy when the park opened on March 29 for the 2024 season. COURTESY HERSHEY PARK

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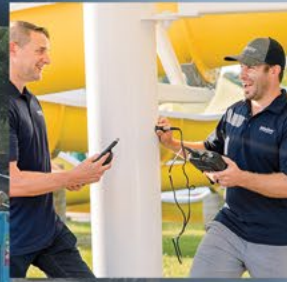


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Wonderland's 2024 season underway, officials confront challenges

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

AMARILLO, Texas — Wonderland Amusement Park in Amarillo, Texas, began its 2024 season, its 73rd, over Easter weekend. Officials were pleased with the opening as guests enjoyed the park's offerings.

Newly painted signs, benches, tables and trash receptacles met guests, giving out an array of new colors. Newly painted rides also greeted guests with flourishes of new artwork donning murals and ride vehicles.

Yet, deep in the halls of the park's executive office building, park officials were still somewhat disappointed by what they couldn't offer their guests at the beginning of the 2024 season. And, mainly, that is an operating Hopkins Shoot the Chute and a Chance Yo-Yo.

"We have guests asking us why some of our rides



aren't operating," said Rebecca Parker, the park's comptroller and part of the Borchardt family that owns and operates Wonderland.

She said it is hard to explain to them the challenges.

As of April 15, a new ride, the Crazy Couch by Skyline Attractions, was at the park. They are awaiting the installment of the ride and its inspection.

The new ride can seat up to 10 children or eight children and two adults. It tilts back and forth, up and down and side to side by two rotating motors.

It should be available for guests soon, Parker said.

A long-awaited chain for the Shoot the Chute ride had



The 2024 season for Wonderland Amusement Park has brought with it some challenges that officials are working through and area positive they will overcome. COURTESY WONDERLAND

finally been delivered to the park from Germany. This is the second chain that has been ordered for the ride to get it up and running.

"The first one was the wrong size," Parker said.

She explained that Shoot the Chute had been

down since 2019.

"Daddy (Paul Borchardt) ordered the new chain in 2019," she said. "It came in 2020, but it didn't fit."

Between 2020 and 2023, park officials and the original manufacturer of the first chain were trying to iron

out who would pay for the wrong part.

"We have since settled with them," Parker said. The new chain was ordered last November. "We are just waiting for the installation,

► See WONDER, page 75

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The park hopes to install the new chain and have its Shoot-the-Chute operational this season (right). Kristen Borchardt Lovey repainted the Frog Hopper's carriage and the center frog on top (far right). AT/GARY SLADE; COURTESY WONDERLAND



► **WONDER**

Continued from page 74

which hopefully will be this week. Daddy thinks we will get the chain on, fill the ride with water, which takes about two days, and that will be that. We are all hoping it will be just like that.”

The ride will still need to be inspected before opening it to the public.

The Yo-Yo has been down for about two years. It was sent to Chance for regular maintenance. Chance sent it back last year.

“We put it up, but it wouldn't run,” Parker said. “We had to take it back down and send it back to Chance. We have been told now that it is ready to be shipped. We are looking forward to that, but it also will need to be inspected before taking riders.”

Yet with all this being said, they are optimistic for the 2024 season. The artwork on the rides has been done by Parker's sister and Borchardt's daughter, Kristen Borchardt Lovey.

“She is a traveling artist and so talented,” Parker said. “She was here for two months during our off-season and then left. Now, she is back painting more.”

She has painted the Frog Hopper vehicles and the center frog on top. She has painted the panels of the Helicopter ride.

“Our Himalaya had been without a mural and she painted that,” Parker said.

The spine and the cars of the Tilt-A-Whirl have been repainted by park staff as have the cars on the Cyclone. The Cyclone cars have new colors, yellow with a red starburst.

The park has installed all new fencing around the Rattlesnake River ride and a new painting completed that update.

• wonderlandpark.com

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- Zamperla Red Baron.....\$59,000
 - SBF Crazy Cars.....\$89,000
 - S & S Frog Hopper.....\$49,000
- Moser 8 MT Drop Tower.....\$69,000
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 - Chance Sea Dragon.....\$199,000
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Artistic concept rendering. Courtesy of Cedar Point



Opening at Cedar Point in 2024



Artistic concept rendering. Courtesy of Cedar Point

- Total Track Length
1043 meters
3422 feet
- Maximum height
128 meters
420 feet
- Maximum speed
193 km/h
120 mph
- Number of Trains
3
- Vehicles per-Train
5
- Passengers per-Train
20
- Height Restriction
132 cm / 52 in minimum
- Hourly capacity
1000 pph

Zamperla partners with Cedar Point on Top Thrill 2.

Our Roller Coaster Business Unit engineered and designed a new ride experience. It combines the ride's original and iconic top hat with a new 128 meter (420 ft) spike.



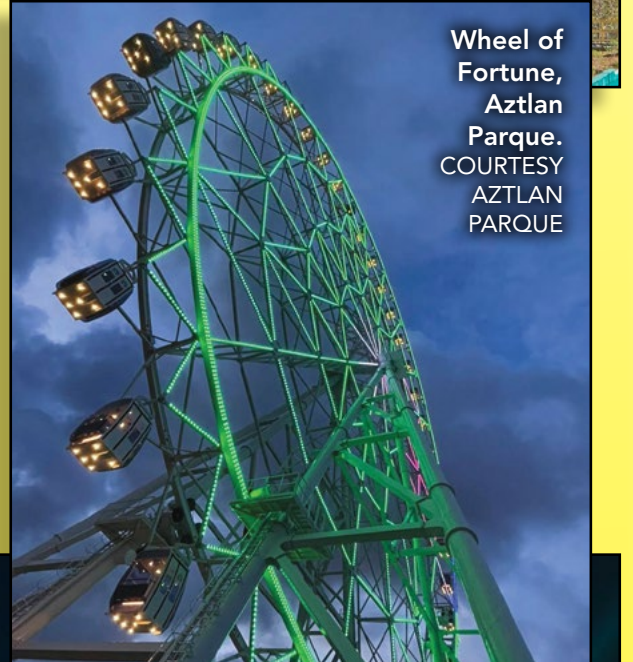
Discover more about this concept



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Digital Edition

Amusement Today's 2024 What's New Guide



2024 WHAT'S NEW GUIDE | NORTH AMERICA

Compiled by Jeffrey Seifert

This is a list of announced and confirmed projects for 2024 as of press time. Some manufacturers may have more projects for this year that have yet to be announced. These projects may open later this year.

CANADA

British Columbia

Playland, Vancouver....ThunderVolt — Zamperla refurbishment of former Miragica coaster from Senzafiato, Italy

Nova Scotia

Atlantic Splash Adventure, Hammonds Plains....SBF Visa Pirate Ship, Mini Breakdance

Ontario

Canada's Wonderland, Vaughan....Moosehorn Falls — WhiteWater six-person family Boomerango

Neb's Fun World, Oshawa....Zamperla ChronoZ; Zamperla Speedway; Playground expansion

Santa's Village, Bracebridge....RMC/Larson Flying Scooter

Québec

La Ronde, Montréal....Dinoparc — animatronic dinosaur experience

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

El Dorado Water Park, Punta Cana....ProSlide three body rides, three tubing rides, two rafting rides, one mat racer, and two KIDZ Zones

Nickelodeon Hotels & Resorts, Punta Cana....Three WhiteWater body sides

HONDURAS

Distrito Artemisa, Francisco Morazán....Zamperla Merry Go Round

MEXICO

Jalisco

Selva Mágica, Guadalajara....Zamperla Power Surge

Vallarta Adventures, Puerto Vallarta....WhiteWater FlowRider

Nayarit

Vidanta World, Las Jarretaderas....Vekoma family coaster; Vekoma Family Suspended Coaster; Vekoma steel coaster; Zamperla NebulaZ, Demolition Derby, Crazy Bus

México

Aztlán Parque Urbano, Mexico City....Laka Laka — Fabbri spinning mouse; Wheel of Fortune — Fabbri 85-meter wheel; Don Goyo — Fabbri Five-meter drop tower; Marometas — SBF Visa family coaster; Mocha — SBF Visa racing coaster; Serpentikha — Vekoma Family Suspended Coaster; Zamperla Mini Jet, Midi Tea Cup, Jumping Star, Jump Around Happy Swing, Samba Tower, Air Race, Discovery 16

UNITED STATES

Alabama

4D Farm, Cullman....Steel Coaster

Alabama Adventure, Bessemer....Rampage — year-long retracking project

Arizona

Sunrise Park Resort, Greer....Sunrise Apache Alpine Coaster — Wiegand Alpine Coaster

California

Belmont Park, San Diego....Shipwreck Cove, Sunkid Tower and play structure from Daniels Wood Land

Disneyland, Anaheim....Tiana's Bayou Adventure — retheme of Splash Mountain flume ride; Star Tours new film featuring Ashoka

Historic Hawes Farms, Anderson....Lil Dipper Roller Coaster — Herschell Little Dipper

Knott's Berry Farm, Buena Park....Reimagined Camp Snoopy area including

Snoopy's Tenderpaw Twister Coaster — Zamperla family coaster; Sally's Swing Along — Zamperla Super Happy Swing; Camp Snoopy's Off-Road Rally — Zamperla Convoy Dino Jeeps

Legoland California Resort, Carlsbad....Dino Valley — new themed land with new and/or rethemed attractions including Duplo Little Dino Trail, Explorer River Quest, Dino Outpost

Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, Santa Cruz....Dream Wheel — 65-foot Chance Rides observation wheel; Surge — Chance Rides Freestyle

SeaWorld San Diego, San Diego....Jewels of the Sea: The Jellyfish Experience — immersive aquarium

Six Flags Discovery Kingdom, Vallejo....New animal interactive encounters

Connecticut

Lake Compounce, Bristol....PTCI overhaul of Boulder Dash coaster train; Gravity Group engineered pre-cut retrack of Wildcat coaster; Boulderdash retrack with sections of Great Coasters Titan track and Ipe track.

Florida

Adventure Island, Tampa....Castaway Falls — ProSlide customized RideHouse

Aquatica Orlando, Orlando....Tassie's Underwater Twist — WhiteWater super bowl covers for existing slides along with audio and visual special effects

Busch Gardens Tampa, Tampa....Phoenix Rising — B&M family inverted coaster

Disney's Hollywood Studios, Lake Buena Vista....Star Tours new film featuring Ashoka
EPCOT, Lake Buena Vista....Luminous - the Symphony of Us — new nighttime fireworks and light show spectacular; Dreamers Point and Inspiration Garden new themed areas

Holiday Inn Orlando, Orlando....WhiteWater FlowRider

Legoland Florida, Winter Haven....Lego Ferrari Build & Race — Lifesize Ferrari made of Lego, virtual race car; Sea Life Aquarium (Fall)

Magic Kingdom, Lake Buena Vista....Tiana's Bayou Adventure — retheme of Splash Mountain flume ride

Rapids Water Park, Riviera Beach....Mega Mayhem — ProSlide longest Dueling PipelineBlast/FlyingSaucer20 Water Coaster

SeaWorld Orlando, Orlando....Penguin Trek — B&M launched family coaster

Universal Studios Florida, Orlando....Dreamworks themed land — transformation of former Kid Zone; Illumination's Minion Land

Georgia

Fins Up Water Park at Margaritaville, Buford....Major water park expansion with WhiteWater Blasterango and large hillside tube slide/Python combo

Six Flags Over Georgia, Georgia....Georgia Surfer — first-of-its kind Intamin Ultra Surf coaster; PTCI overhaul of Great American Scream Machine coaster train

Wild Adventures Theme Park, Valdosta....Dinosaur Explore — animatronic dinosaur exhibit

Idaho

Silverwood Theme Park, Athol....Eagle Hunt — ProSlide longest Dueling RocketBlast Water Coaster in U.S.; Salmon Run kidz slides

Illinois

Navy Pier, Chicago....Flyover at Chicago's Navy Pier — Pursuit flying simulation attraction

Six Flags Great America, Gurnee....Sky Striker — Zamperla Giga Discovery

Indiana

Holiday World, Santa Claus....Good Gravy! — Vekoma custom family boomerang

Indiana Beach, Monticello....All American Triple Loop — refurbished Schwarzkopf triple loop coaster relocated from La Feria Chapultepec Magico

Iowa

Adventureland, Altoona....Reimagined Underground coaster/dark ride; PTCI overhaul of Tornado coaster train

Arnolds Park, Arnolds Park....ADM Rides slide; PTCI overhaul of Legend coaster train

Malibu Jack's, Bettendorf....Twist-N-Shout — SBF Visa spinning coaster; Drop Tower — SBF Visa; spinning bumper cars; motion theater

Kentucky

Ark Encounters, Williamstown....Carousel - Journey of the Animals — custom Preston & Barbieri carousel



Kid Flash, Six Flags Fiesta Texas.
AT/TIM BALDWIN



Minifigure Skyflyer, Legoland New York.
COURTESY LEGOLAND



Boulder Dash,
Lake Compounce.
COURTESY CHRIS GRAY/
SKYLINE ATTRACTIONS

2024 WHAT'S NEW GUIDE | NORTH AMERICA

Kentucky Kingdom, Louisville....Christmas at Kentucky Kingdom — Christmas light display and season extension; 5-D Cinema new movies

Maine

Palace Playland, Old Orchard Beach....R&R Creative thematic and graphic designs

Maryland

Six Flags America, Upper Marlboro....New Steam Town themed area; SteamWhirler — Zamperla NebulaZ; PTCI overhaul of Roar coaster train; PTCI overhaul of Wild One coaster train

Six Flags Hurricane Harbor, Upper Marlboro....RipQurl Blaster — WhiteWater Master Blaster water coaster

Michigan

Bavarian Blast Waterpark at Bavarian Inn, Frankenmuth....New \$80 million water park expansion with 16 new WhiteWater attractions, wave pool, swim-up bar, action river, indoor/outdoor family spa

Cedar Valley's Wild Frontier Fun Park, Comins....Herschell Little Dipper relocated from Funland Amusement Park, Michigan

Minnesota

Nickelodeon Universe, Bloomington....Fly With Appa — Zamperla Aero Top Jet; Zamperla Happy Swing

Mississippi

Serengeti Springs at Hattiesburg Zoo, Hattiesburg....New water park with multiple attractions from WhiteWater

Missouri

Silver Dollar City, Branson....Fire In The Hole — Rocky Mountain Construction custom indoor themed coaster

Six Flags St. Louis, Eureka....Joker: Carnival of Chaos — Zamperla Giga Discovery

Nebraska

Vala's Pumpkin Patch & Apple Orchard, Gretna....Zamperla family gravity coaster

Nevada

Circus Circus Casino, Las Vegas....Spongebob's Crazy Carnival Ride — Sally Dark Rides and ETF

New Hampshire

Santa's Village, Jefferson....Midnight Flyer — Vekoma family coaster; Zamperla Go Go Bounce

Story Land, Glen....Moo Lagoon — Vortex Aquatic Structures farm-themed water-play structure

New Jersey

Casino Pier, Seaside Heights....SBF Visa Zero Gravity

Six Flags Great Adventure, Jackson....Flash: Vertical Velocity — Vekoma super boomerang; Savannah Sunset resort accommodations

Six Flags Hurricane Harbor, Jackson....Splash Island — WhiteWater Rainfortress 5 with seven slides and 475-gallon tipping bucket

Steel Pier, Atlantic City....Premier Rides spinning cars wild mouse

Storybook Land, Egg Harbor....Cinder Roller Coaster — SBF Visa spinning coaster

New York

Adventureland, Farmingdale....Jr Pirate Ship — Modern Products swinging ship; Moon Chaser — Huss Top Spin

Lake George Expedition Park, Lake George....Caldwell's Crazy Coaster — SBF Visa spinning coaster

Legoland New York Resort, Goshen....Minifigure Skyflyer — Leitner aerial gondola cableway

Niagara Amusement Park & Splash World, Grand Island....Serpent — S.D.C. Galaxi relocated from Fun Way Amusement Park, Michigan; Miner Mike — Wisdom Rides Miner Mike relocated from Knucklehead's, Wisconsin

Seabreeze, Rochester....Zamperla WindstarZ

Six Flags Darien Lake, Darien Center....Predator roller coaster Titan retrack from Great Coasters International

Six Flags Great Escape, Queensbury....Bobcat — Gravity Group custom wood coaster

North Carolina

Frankie's Fun Park, Charlotte....SBF Visa spinning coaster

Ohio

Cedar Point, Sandusky....Top Thrill 2 — Zamperla rebuild of former Top Thrill Dragster; PTCI overhaul of two Blue Streak trains

Kings Island, Mason....Camp Snoopy expansion including Snoopy's Soap Box



Eagle Hunt, Silverwood Theme Park. COURTESY SILVERWOOD

Racers — Vekoma family boomerang

Stricker's Grove, Ross....PTCI overhaul of Tornado coaster train

Oklahoma

Kiddie Park, Bartlesville....Dragon Coaster — Wisdom Rides Orient Express relocated from Joyland Amusement Park, Texas

Pennsylvania

Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom, Allentown....Iron Menace — B&M dive coaster; PTCI overhaul of two Thunderhawk coaster trains

Hersheypark, Hershey....Two new PTCI trains for Comet coaster; new seats for Skyrush hypercoaster

Idlewild & SoakZone, Ligonier....Zamperla family coaster relocated from Boomers! New York

Kennywood, West Mifflin....Potato Smash — potato-themed bumper cars (transformation of existing ride)

Knoebels, Elysburg....Zamperla Power Surge (rebuild with new drive system)

Lakeland Orchard, Scott Township....New engine from Swanee River Railroad

Sesame Place, Langhorne....Sunny Day Carousel — refurbishment and relocation of existing carousel; 123 Playground — play area with classic playground elements including slides, interactive panels and soft play mounds

South Carolina

Frankie's Fun Park, Columbia....SBF Visa spinning coaster

Myrtle Waves Water Park, Myrtle Beach....Four-lane mat racer relocated from Wild Water and Wheels Park

Shipwreck Cove, Duncan....Polin King Cobra, Multislide, Kamikaze-Freefall

South Dakota

Aberdeen Recreational Park, Aberdeen....Zamperla Barnyard

Tennessee

Dollywood, Pigeon Forge....The Dolly Parton Experience museum

Wilderness at the Smokies, Sevierville....Indoor water park expansion design by ADG with Ridge Runner — WhiteWater blaster coaster; Kaleidoscope Kavern — Moment Factory special effects river; Lagoon Lookout — Elevated glass-walled infinity edge pool

Texas

Aquatica San Antonio, San Antonio....Tikitapu Splash — ProSlide customized RideHouse

Dewberry Farm, Brookshire....Gold Rush — Herschell Little Dipper

Forest Park Miniature Railroad, Fort Worth....New engine from Swanee River Railroad

Hawaiian Falls Mansfield, Mansfield....Lava Launch updated drop capsule ride; Ohana Hall — 2,500-square-foot outdoor food and beverage facility

Hawaiian Falls Roanoke, Roanoke....Wahoo Wave — ProSlide Kidz Wave; Ohana Hall — 4,500-square-foot shade structure

Hawaiian Falls Waco, Waco....Keiki Kove — kid's sized waterslides with mini bucket drop

Holly Springs Farm, Nacogdoches....New engine from Swanee River Railroad

Kemah Boardwalk, Kemah....PTCI overhaul of Boardwalk Bullet coaster train

Morgan's Wonderland, San Antonio....New expansion with Jette's Wonder Bikes

Specialist for people movers and dark rides



2024 WHAT'S NEW GUIDE | NORTH AMERICA

— Zamperla all-access Magic Bikes; 4D Cinema — SimEx-Iwerks (gentle) motion theater; Rocket's Sky Flight Adventure — Altitude Rides and Attractions Soaring Eagle Zipline; Pirate Island Boat Cruises

National Roller Coaster Museum, Plainview....Thematic and show design by R & R Creative Amusement Designs Inc.

Old MacDonalds Farm, HumbleNew engine from Swanee River Railroad

Peppa Pig Theme Park, North Richland Hills....Daddy Pig's Roller Coaster — Zamperla Family Coaster; Zamperla Jumping Star

Schlitterbahn Waterpark Resort, New Braunfels....Schatze's Storybrook Park — redevelopment of former kids area with new slides, 70 interactive water features and Bow Wow Blaster — the world's first WhiteWater Mini Blaster kids water coaster

SeaWorld San Antonio, San Antonio....Catapult Falls — Intamin first-of-its-kind launched flume

Six Flags Fiesta Texas, San Antonio....Kid Flash Cosmic Coaster — Skyline Attractions p'sghetti bowl coaster (opened November); Metropolis Transit Authority — Zamperla aerial ride; Cyborg Cyber Revolution — Zamperla NebulaZ; Shazam! Tower of Eternity — Zamperla Sky Tower 22m

Six Flags Over Texas, Arlington....Sylvester and Tweety Bounce and Pounce — Zamperla drop tower relocated from Six Flags America; Daffy Duck Bucket

Blasters — Zamperla Watermania (reinstallation); Dino Off-Road Adventure — reimagining of the Chaparral Antique Cars with dinosaur theme

Tate Farms, Rockwall....Preston & Barbieri Dairy Farm carousel

Trader's Village, San Antonio....RMC/Larson Jumping Jumbos

Zilker Park, Austin....Zilker Eagle — new engine from Swanee River Railroad
Virginia

Busch Gardens Virginia, Williamsburg....Loch Ness Monster — new track segments from Premier Rides.

Massanutten Family Fun Park, Massanutten....Mountain Mayhem Fun Coaster — Sunkid mountain coaster

Washington

Remlinger Farms, Carnation....New engine from Swanee River Railroad

West Virginia

Brush Creek Falls Resort, Princeton....Mountain coaster

Wisconsin

Knucklehead's Bowling & Family Entertainment, Wisconsin Dells....Wisdom Rides Tiger Terror (opened November)

Mt. Olympus Water & Theme Park, Wisconsin Dells....Rise of Icarus — WhiteWater tallest body slide in North America; WhiteWater kids slides

2024 WHAT'S NEW GUIDE | TRAVELING SHOWS AND CRUISE SHIPS

Compiled by B. Derek Shaw and Jeffrey Siefert

CRUISE SHIPS

Royal Caribbean Utopia of the Seas....WhiteWater FlowRider Wave-in-a-Box Double

Royal Caribbean Icon of the Seas....WhiteWater FlowRider Wave-in-a-Box Double, largest water park at sea

Carnival Jubilee....Maurer Rides Bolt Coaster

TRAVELING SHOWS

A&P Enterprise Shows, Custer, Wisconsin....Luna Park Rides Ferris Wheel

Albion Amusements, Markdale, Ontario, Canada....Ital Resina Mystery Machine

All Canadian Entertainment, Ontario, Canada....Ital Resina Mini Wave Swinger

Alpine Amusements, Naperville, Illinois....Wadkins Expo Wheels Ferris Wheel

Amusement Midway Providers, Las Vegas, Nevada....Preston & Barbieri Six-Lane Slide

Andreasson, Sweden....Gosetto Fun House

Attracciones Roca, Mexico....Gosetto four-story Fun House

Bahama Breeze, Bahamas....Frederiksen Fun Slides Fun Slide

BAJA Amusements, Milford, Indiana....Wadkins Expo Wheels Ferris Wheel

Bates Borhters, Wintersville, Ohio....SBF/Visa Groovy Bus

Beauce Carnival, Quebec City, Canada....KMG Surf Ride

Big O Amusements, Astalula, Florida....Luna Park Rides Ferris Wheel

Bishop Amusement Rides, San Antonio, Texas....KMG X-Drive

Browns Amusements, Mesa, Arizona....Dragon Coaster; Mini Wave Swinger, Wave Swinger, Puppy Roll

Blue Sky Amusements, Islandia, New York....SBF/Visa Group Mini Breakdance; SBF Visa Dance Party

Bluegrass & Inflatables, Lawrenceburg, Kentucky....Luna Park Rides Ferris Wheel

Butler Amusements, Fairfield, California....KMG XXL, Khaos

Campbell Amusements, Branford, Ontario, Canada....Ital Resina Mystery Machine

City of Fun Carnival, Pleasant Grove, Utah....Moser Toxic

Classic Amusements, Hayward, California....Wadkins Expo Wheels Ferris Wheel

Coleman Brothers Shows, Middletown, Connecticut....Wisdom Axis, Chance Yo-Yo, Battech Zero Gravity

Cole Shows Amusement Company, Covington, Virginia....Gosetto New York New York two-story fun house

Deggeller Attractions, Stuart, Florida....Preston & Barbieri Family Swinger

Dreamland Amusements, Lake Tahoe, Nevada....Dalton Kid Rides Four umbrella rides

Drew Exposition, Augusta, Georgia....Autobahn, KMG Cyclops

Egyptian Exposition, Marion, Illinois....Luna Park Rides Ferris Wheel; ADM Rides Premier Bounce and Slide

Expectaculares Garcia, Mexico....Gosetto Bumper Cars, Gosetto 4-story Fun House

Family Fun Shows, Mankato, Minnesota....Luna Park Rides Ferris Wheel

Fantasy Amusement Company, Prospect Heights, Illinois....Dalton Kid Rides Motorcycle Jump

Fiesta Shows, Marshfield, Massachusetts....KMG Freak Out

Fiesta Shows, Seabrook, New Hampshire....Gosetto Custom Fun Factory two-story funhouse

Grupo Garcia, Mexico City, Mexico....Fabbri Group 42-meter wheel

Helm and Sons Amusements, Colton, California....Lamberink RL33 Wheel

Jolly Shows, Baltimore, Maryland....Fabbri Group Corsair (Pirate Ship)

Kissel Amusements, Okeana, Ohio....Wadkins Expo Wheels Ferris Wheel; Swing It

Lisko Family Midway Amusements, Lowlerville, Ohio....Ital Resina Mystery Machine

Little Woodrow's (Sports Bar), Houston, Texas....Frederiksen Fun Slides Fun Slide 4 slides total

Main Event Amusements, Solvay, New York....Kolmax Flying Elephants; Teacups

McDaniel Brothers Amusements, Garfield, Nevada....Wadkins Expo Wheels Ferris Wheel

Midwest Rides, NW Elk River, Minnesota....Ital Resina Mini Wave Swinger; 18-meter wheel; Kolmax Flying Elephants

Mitchell Brothers Amusements, Slidell, Louisiana....Ital Resina Mini Wave Swinger, Mystery Machine

Moore's Greater Shows, Lyford, Texas....Ital Resina Mini Wave Swinger

NAME, Farmland, Indiana....Preston & Barbieri Family Swinger

Orlando Fun Crew, Altamonte Springs, Florida....ADM Rides Joker's Wild

Peachtree Rides, Dunbar, Georgia....22-meter wheel; Ital Resina Mini Miami; Ital Resina Mystery Machine

Powers & Thomas Midway Entertainment, Wilmington, North Carolina....Gosetto New York New York two-story funhouse; KMG X-Drive

Primetime Amusements, Fort Lauderdale, Florida....Ital Resina Mystery Machine

Ragland Productions, Clayton, North Carolina....ADM Rides Ballistic

Razzmatazz, Chicago, Illinois....ADM Rides Premier Bounce and Slide

Reithoffer Shows, Gibsonton, Florida....Gosetto 2-story Fun House; Ital Resina Samba Balloon; Fabbri Group Booster

Robertson Amusements, Orangeville, Ontario, Canada....Luna Park Rides Ferris Wheel

Rockwell Amusements, Scituate, Rhode Island....Ital Resina Samba Balloon; Venetian Carousel

Scott's Amusements, Pilot Mound, Iowa....ADM Rides Fun House

Sheridan Amusements, Wallpaca, Wisconsin....Ital Resina Mini Wave Swinger

Snyder's Attractions, Chambersburg, Pennsylvania....Luna Park Rides Ferris Wheel

Strates Shows, Orlando, Florida....Ital Resina Samba Balloon

Suomen Tivoli, Finland....Gosetto three-level Fun House

Talley Amusements, Fort Worth, Texas....Fabbri Group 40 meter booster; ARM Rockstar

Tip Top Shows, Waupaca, Wisconsin....Runaway Train

TSA Amusements, Brooklyn, New York....18-meter wheel

Wade Shows, Livonia, Michigan....KMG XXL; ADM Rides Mind Winder; Star Flyer

WEEE Entertainment, Wichita, Kansas....Runaway Train

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RICK BASTRUP
Foreword by Gary Hasty, Amusement Today

ADVENTURES OF A THEME PARK DESIGNER

My Personal Story of Creating Memorable Theme Park Rides and Attractions

2024 WHAT'S NEW GUIDE | INTERNATIONAL

Compiled by Jeffrey Seifert

This is a list of announced and confirmed projects for 2024 as of press time. Some manufacturers may have more projects for this year that have yet to be announced. These projects may open later this year.

Argentina

Super Park, Buenos Aires....Looping Star — Pinfari Zyklon Loop 42 (former traveling)

Australia

Dreamworld, Coomera....Jungle Rush — Vekoma switchback coaster

Thredbo Alpine Resort, Thredbo....Wiegand Alpine Coaster

Warner Bros. Movie World, Gold Coast....Kansas Twister — Vekoma family boomerang; Flight of the Wicked Witch — Vekoma suspended family coaster; Flash: Speed Force — Intamin spinning cars shuttle relocated from Wet'n'Wild Water World, Queensland

Austria

Böhmischer Prater, Vienna....Zierer Flitzer relocated from Bakken

Wiener Prater, Vienna....Wiener Looping — Mack Rides custom Big Dipper

Belgium

Bellewaerde Park, Ypres....Mundo Amazonia — new themed area with Intamin next-generation rapids ride; Brazilian Buggies — Zamperla family coaster; Zamperla kiddie flume

Brazil

Cacua Show, Itapevi....New theme park with Giro Chocomonstros — SBF Visa Big Air coaster; Zamperla Kiddie Flume, Jump Around, Lolly Swing, Magic Bikes, WindstarZ, Speedway, NebulaZ, Juming Tower, Rockin' Tug

Cidade da Crianca, São Bernardo....Zamperla ChronoZ

Coney Island Park, São Paulo....Zamperla Magic Bikes

Hopi Hari, Vinhedo....Le Voyage — refurbishment and reopening of Intamin Giant Drop

HotZone, Barigui....Zamperla ChronoZ

Mirabilandia, Paulista....Vekoma giant inverted boomerang relocated from Six Flags Over Georgia; Intamin eight-inversion coaster relocated from Terra Encantada, Brazil

Park do Gorilão, São Paulo....SBF Visa spinning coaster

Playcenter - Parque Dom Pedro, São Paulo....Spinning Coaster — Zamperla compact spinning coaster; Zamperla Lolly Swing, ChronoZ, Magic Bikes

Thermas dos Laranjais, Olimpia....WhiteWater waterslide tower with two Epic six-person raft rides — the first of their kinds in the world: a Family Master Blaster + Orbiter + Anaconda Fusion and a Family Master Blaster + Constrictor + Galaxy Bowl Fusion

China

Aranya Resort, Beidaihe....WhiteWater splash pad

Boonie Bears Happy Harbour, Linhai....Family spinning cars coaster

Chimelong Qingyuan Forest Resort, Qingcheng....Mack Rides family coaster

China Hiin City, Xiangshan....Zamperla Thunderbolt

Dinosaur Dreamworks, Daye....Zamperla Lightning coaster; Inverted coaster; Jinma Rides spinning coaster

Dinosaur Town, Qingzhen....Zhipao multi-element roller coaster

Dream Space Water Park, Zhanjiang....New water park with 100% slides supplied by WhiteWater

Fantasy Valley, Xiangzhou....Mad Racers — Great Coasters International hybrid roller coaster

Fantawild (Hubei), Shashi....Vekoma family boomerang; Vekoma top gun coaster

Fantawild (Jiangsu), Hongze....Vekoma family boomerang

Fantawild (Yunnan), Yiliang....Vekoma family boomerang; Vekoma top gun coaster

Happy Valley (Guangdong), Nanshan....Coaster Adventures — Jinma Rides spinning coaster

Happy Valley (Sichuan), Nanxi....Steel family coaster



Hyperia, Thorpe Park.
COURTESY THORPE PARK

Hongmei Park, Tianning....Jinma Rides family roller coaster

Long Rainbow Park, Nankai....CHI Dragon Chases The Sun — family coaster

Oriental Heritage, Zhongmu....Vekoma family boomerang; Vekoma space warp coaster

Senbo Interstellar Place, Putuo....Antimatter Move — Multi element roller coaster

Sihui Happy World, Sihui....Jungle Mouse; powered family coaster

Silk Road Paradise, Qingdu....Inverse Time and Space Roller Coaster — Intamin Zac Spin

Snowstar Shanghai, Shanghai....New sports-entertainment tourist resort with indoor ski park and WhiteWater indoor water park

Sunac Cultural Tourism City, Haiyan....Maurer rides spinning coaster; Jinma Rides family coaster; Mack Rides PowerSplash; Mack Rides Hypercoaster

Suzhou Amusement Land Forest World, Huqui....Roller Coaster — Jinma Rides family roller coaster

Zhengzhou Haichang Ocean Park, Zhongmu....Family roller coaster

Columbia

Parque del Café, Quindio....Gerstlauer infinity coaster

Croatia

Aquapark Dalmatia at Solaris, Šibenik....New aqua park with multiple WhiteWater attractions

Shhhuma Aquapark, Velika....Polin Turbolance, Multisurf, Kamikaze+Freefall

Denmark

Bakken, Klampenborg....Zamperla Happy Swing

Djurs Sommerland, Nimtofte....El Grito — 60-meter (197-foot)-tall Funtime drop tower

Fårup Sommerland Aquapark, Blokhus....Two new slides with a tailspin and boomerang element

Legoland Billand Resort, Billund....Peppa Pig and Lego Duplo Playground

Tivoli Friheden, Århus....Vindfald — Gerstlauer Amusement Rides Euro Fighter

Egypt

Pyramiza Sahl Hasnesh, Red Sea Governorate....Polin King Cobra, Double Flying Saw, Rift, Racer Twin Hybrid, Mini Magicone+Sphere Combination, King Cobra, Dragero, Kamikaze-Freefall, Aquatube, Black Hole, Rafting Slide, Looping Rocket

Remal Resort Park, Sharm El Sheikh....Polin Black Hole+Uphill Flying Boats Combinations, Flying Saw+Sphere Combination, Rift, Windigo, Looping Rocket, Freefall, Body Magicone, Aquatube

England

Alton Towers, Alton....Nemesis Reborn — updated theme and B&M retrack of inverted coaster

Brean Theme Park, Brean....Runaway Train — family coaster

Drayton Manor, Drayton Bassett....New Wild West area with Intamin family launch coaster; Wave — new sit-down trains on former stand-up Shockwave coaster

Legoland Windsor, Windsor....Minifigure Speedway — dueling Zierer Force coaster (custom)

Lightwater Valley, Ripon....Rocket Rollercoaster — Interpark Cyclon

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Manning's Amusement Park, Felixstowe....Gosetto three-level fun house
Ocean Beach Pleasure Park, South Shields....Spinning Mouse — Levent Lunapark twister coaster
Thorpe Park, Chersey....Hyperia — Mack Rides hypercoaster
Web Adventure Park, York....Mine Train — Güven Amusement Rides Factory children's coaster

Ethiopia

GAST Conference & Wellness City Resort, Debiri....Zhipao four-ring roller coaster

France

Aquascope, Chasseneuil-du-Poitou....Major expansion, updated themeing and WhiteWater kids slides; Polin Family Space Shuttle+Family Space Boat Combination, Windigo, Looping Rocket, Black Hole, Spheres, Aquatube
Didi'Land, Morsbronn-les-Bains....Spinning Coaster — SBF Visa spinning coaster
Fééryland, Tournehem-sur-la-Hem....Let's Race — SBF Visa race coaster
Font-Romeu Pyrénées 2000, Pyrénées-Orientales....Mountain coaster
Futuroscope, Chasseneuil-du-Poitou....Eclipse indoor show; Hydro Dynamo — Art Engineering wild swing; Zamperla kiddie flume
Jardin des Bêtes, Montrozier....Izio Express — Zierer Force 10
La Récré des 3 Curés, Milizac....Jeepodino — Zamperla family coaster
Le Pal, Dompierre Sur Besbre....Fjord Explorer — Mack Rides water coaster
Loos Park, Loos-en-Gohelle....Chenille — Big Apple/Wacky Worm
O'Gliss Park, Le Bernard....Polin Stingray
Parc Astérix, Plailly....Edifis Tower — Zamperla 40-meter Vertical Swing
Parc du Bocasse, Le Bocasse....Fabbri Group Fabbri Group Corsair
Parc Spirou, Monteux....Zamperla Midi Teacup
Walibi Rhône-Alpes, Les Avenières....Mahuka — Intamin Hot Racer coaster
Winnoland, Saint-Pierre-du-Perray....Zamperla Magic Bikes

Germany

Churpfalpark, Loifling....Family Coaster — SBF Visa family launch coaster
Edelwies, Neukirchen....Eulenblitz — Zierer Force 10 (custom); Marienkäfer — family coaster
ErlebnisBocksBerg, Goslar....Drachenblitz — Weigand alpine coaster
Europa-Park, Rust....Voltron Nevera — Mack Rides custom Stryker coaster; Alpenexpress Enzian Mack Rides powered coaster (rebuild)
Hansa Park, Sierksdorf....Lost Trails of Roanoke — Adventure climbing structure
Heide Park Resort, Soltau....Dämonen Gruft — Preston Barbieri dark ride
Holiday Park, Hassloch....Zamperla Crazy Bus, Speedway
Jaderpark, Jaderberg....Ziegel-Blitz — Gerstlauer bobsled coaster
Karls Erlebnis-Dorf Döbeln, Mittelsachsen....Erdbeer Raupenbahn — SBF Visa family coaster; Knollis Mais Express — Human powered oval coaster; Bockwurstschleuder — Sunkid Butterfly II
Kienbergpark, Berlin....Wiegand mountain coaster
O2 Surftown, Munich....WhiteWater Endless Surf lagoon



Minifigure Speedway, Legoland Windsor.
COURTESY JUSTIN GARVANOVIC

Oskarshausen, Freital....Wiegand Alpine Coaster
Peppa Pig Park, Günzburg....Papa Wutz' Achterbahn — Zamperla family coaster; Zamperla Jumping Star
Phantasialand, Brühl....Avaros — heavily-themed climbing structure
Potts Park, Minden....PotziKarts — kids race cars
Rasti-Land, Salzhemmendorf....Verrücktwärts — SBF Visa Shift Gear coaster (soft opening October 2023)
Schwaben Park, Kaisersbach....Hans Dampf on a world trip — Aufwind Group train simulator ride
Serengeti-Park, Hodenhagen....Gozimba — Ride Engineers Switzerland Air Loop S; Samburo Moto — Technical Park Sidecar
Silderbergbahn Bodenmais, Bodenmais....Silberberg Coaster — Wiegand Alpine Coaster
Skyline Park, Bad Wörishofen....Berg- und Tal Hetz — SBF Visa family launch coaster
Taunus Wunderland, Schlangenbad....Gobbi Express — Mack Rides powered coaster
Traumland auf der Bärenhöhle, Sonnenbühl....Wichtelexpress — ART Engineering family coaster

Greece

Andriana Hotel, Kiotari....Polin Multislide, Freefall, Aquatube, Aquatube+Freefall Combination, Racer Sphere, Black Hole+Rafting Slide Combination

India

Fun n Food Amusement Park, New Delhi....Human-powered coaster; Powered family coaster
Wonderla Parks & Resorts, Kochi....Fabbri Group 40-meter scary drop

Indonesia

Funland, Deli Serdang....Mini Coaster — spinning cars coaster; Caterpillar — powered coaster
WaterbomBali, Kuta....World's largest WhiteWater AquaForms play structure

Iraq

Karbala, Karbala....Polin Wave Slide, 2 Pcs Tunnel Freefall+Kamikaze, 2 Pcs Twister, 2 Pcs Aquatube, Surf Safari, Aquatube+Body Slide Combination, Turbolance, Rafting Slide+Black hole Combination, Black Hole+Space Shuttle+Spheres Combination, Blach Hole+Uphill Navigatour+Rafting Slide Combination, Windigo, Space Hole, Looping Rocket

Ireland

Emerald Park, Ashbourne....Quest at Tír na nÓg — Vekoma family boomerang; Fianna Force — Vekoma suspended thrill coaster

Italy

Cavallino Matto, Castagneto Carducci....Zamperla Hydro Lift, Wave Blazter, Mini Jet, Rio Grande, Jumping Star
EuroPark Milano Idroscalo, Segrate....Hurricane — steel coaster
Italia in Miniatura, Rimini....Zamperla Rio Grande Train
Movieland Studios, Lago di Garda....Sahara Jeeps — kids jeep ride; Disaster - The Blockbuster Tour — tramcar tour

Japan

Nagashima Spa Land, Kuwana....World's largest WhiteWater funnel slide
Royal Hotel Okinawa, Okinawa....WhiteWater Boomerango/Body Slide/Open Body Slide
Seibuen Yuenchi, Tokyo....Zamperla Happy Swing
Tokyo DisneySea, Tokyo....Fantasy Springs new themed area
Tokyo SummerLand, Akiruno....WhiteWater Extreme River
Universal Studios Japan, Konohana....Mini-Cart Madness — steel roller coaster; Detective Conan 4-D Live Show

Kuwait

Messliah Beach, Kuwait....Beachfront community development; WhiteWater Adventure play structure

Lima

Play Park SJL, Lima....Big Apple/Wacky Worm coaster



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Malaysia

Genting SkyWorlds, Genting Highlands....Mad Ramp Peak — Dynamic Attractions synergy powered coaster; Andromeda Base — Dynamic Attractions SFX Coaster

Skytropolis Indoor Theme Park, Genting Highlands....Bolt — Beijing Shibaolai powered coaster

Morocco

Coco Park, Fès-Meknès....Zhejiang Juma Amusement Equipment Co. three inversion coaster; Twin helix sit-down coaster

Nador Waterpark, Casablanca....Polin Space Hole, Body Slide, Kamikaze, Freefall, Multislide, Rafting Slide+Flying Boats Combination, Spheres, Sphere+Flying Saw+Rift Combination, Wide Slide, Body

Netherlands

Avonturenpark Hellendoorn, Hellendoorn....RidderStrijd — Reverchon spinning coaster relocated from La Feria Chapultepec, Mexico

Bommelwereld, Groenlo....Zamperla Rockin' Tug, Mini Jet, GoGo Bounce

Nigeria

Sunrise Hills Waterpark, Abuja....Polin Tunnel Freefall, Aquatube, Rafting Slide, Black Hole, Multislide, Tunnel Freefall - Freefall, Kamikaze, Turbolance, Space Boat, Lazy River, Wave Pool, Leisure Pool

Norway

Hunderfossen Eventyrpark, Fåberg....Upgrade to Energy Centre edutainment playcenter

Philippines

Enchanted Kingdom, Santa Rosa....Zamperla NebulaZ

Pradera Islands Park, Lubao....Attack of the Aswang — Preston & Barbieri virtual reality coaster

Poland

Energylandia, Zator....Sweet Valley area with Choco Chip Creek — Vekoma mine train; Honey Harbour — Vekoma family coaster; Zamperla ride package

Majaland Gdańsk, Gdańsk....Zierer Force Two coaster; Zamperla Gogo Bounce; Magic Bikes, Rockin' Tug, Fire Brigade, Mini Jet

Portugal

Slide & Splash Water Park, Algarve....Black Hole — WhiteWater enclosed giant aquatube

Qatar

Meryal, Lusail....Alghazal — Intamin spinning cars coaster

Russia

Dream Island, Moscow City....Whirlwind in Jungle — SBF Visa spinning coaster

Scotland

Midlothian Snowsports Centre, Edinburgh....Mountain coaster

Slovakia

Fantázia Liptov Park, Liptovský Mikuláš....Vesmír — InterTech spinning cars indoor coaster

South Korea

Everland, Yongin....Mine Blower — RMC 208 ReTrak

Gyeongju World, Gyeongju....RMC Raptor Coaster; Zamperla powered coaster

Spain

Babylon Park, Madrid....Montaña Rusa — SBF Visa spinning coaster

Water World, Lloret de Mar....ProSlide world's first kids double TornadoWave and FlyingSaucer 8



Nemesis Reborn,
Alton Towers.
COURTESY
ALTON TOWERS

Switzerland

Belli's Mini-Freizeitpark, Roggwil....Goldmine Achertbahn — human-powered kiddie coaster

Conny-Land, Lipperswil....Rollerball M — Ride Engineers Switzerland Roller Ball coaster

Turkey

Anda Barut Collection, Didim....Polin King Cobra, Navigatour+Sphere Combination, Aquatube, Black hole+Flying Boats Combination, Body Slide, Body Slide+Kamikaze Combination, Kamikaze, Looping Rocket

Gloria Hotel, Antalya....Polin Black Hole+Flying boats Combination, Flying Saw, Sphere, Rift, Windgo, Looping Rocket, Kamikaze-Freefall, Mini Magicone, Aquatube

Land of Legends, Antalya....SpongeBob's Crazy Carnival Ride — Sally Dark Rides and ETF

Vogue Hotel Supreme, Bodrum....Polin Dragon Racer and Triango Combination

United Arab Emirates

Grand Hyatt Dubai, Dubai....WhiteWater three-slide tower development

Legoland Waterpark, Dubai....Polin Stingray, Double Rift, Looping Rocket, Navigatour, Wave Pool, Jacuzzi Pool, Lazy River

Real Madrid World, Dubai....Hala Madrid — Great Coasters International wooden coaster

Vietnam

Sun World Bà Nà Hills, Hòa Vang....Zierer Force coaster (custom); Mack Rides BigDipper

VinWonders, Nha Trang....Zamperla Disk'O, Endeavour, NebulaZ, Watermania, Midi Teacup, Lolly Swing, Jump Around; Fabbri Group 40-meter Inversion, Aladdin Ride



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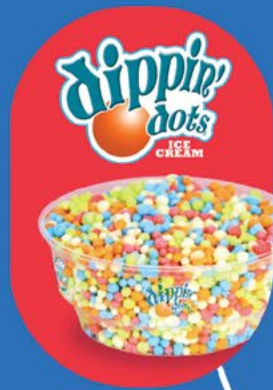


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