

Kennywood prepares to host Amusement Today's 2024 Golden Ticket Awards

Registration details, event preview and more...
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Fanciful theming makes this Zamperla tea cup ride a real treat.
AT/TIM BALDWIN

Vekoma, Zamperla, Gosetto and SBF rides fill land at Energylandia

AT: Tim Baldwin
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ZATOR, Poland — It would be a challenge to find in the entire history of the amusement industry a specific park that has seen growth that matches that of **Energylandia**. Ten years ago, empty fields made way for the first assortment of family rides. A decade later, rides stacked next to rides have made the Polish property a theme park paradise. With more than 80 rides, including 18 roller coasters, the explosion of attractions is nothing short of staggering.

The newest themed land is Sweet Valley, and it has been many years in the making.

Playing into everyone's desire for desserts, the new area features several rides, a restaurant, a small outdoor theater and multiple sweet shops. A customized soundtrack and colorful pastels detail the area. The fanciful architecture doesn't just showcase the soft colors on flat surfaces; three-dimensional detailing and sculptural elements make each building bring a smile. Curved lampposts bring a cartoonish feel to the land.

► See **ENERGYLANDIA**, page 6

Playland at the PNE launches its newest coaster: ThunderVolt

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VANCOUVER, B.C., Canada — Playland at the Pacific National Exhibition has opened something new. The park has introduced two family coasters in the last 20 years, but those thrills were aimed more toward the younger set and their parents. ThunderVolt, the park's latest coaster has a little more zing.

Not only is this the park's first launched coaster, but management likes to tag it as the fastest launch coaster in Canada. ThunderVolt is a project from Zamperla.

"We know that this ride will thrill and amaze our Playland guests as well as visitors from across Canada and around the world. Positioned next to our historic Playland Wooden Coaster, the ThunderVolt represents a significant investment into the future of our park," stated **Shelley Frost**, PNE president and CEO.

"ThunderVolt uses our new Lightning trains, and they represent the next generation of roller coaster design," said **Antonio Zamperla**, CEO of Zamperla Group. "They are light, have a low maintenance cost and are extremely comfortable. A decade's worth of research was put into creating these fantastic coaster vehicles."

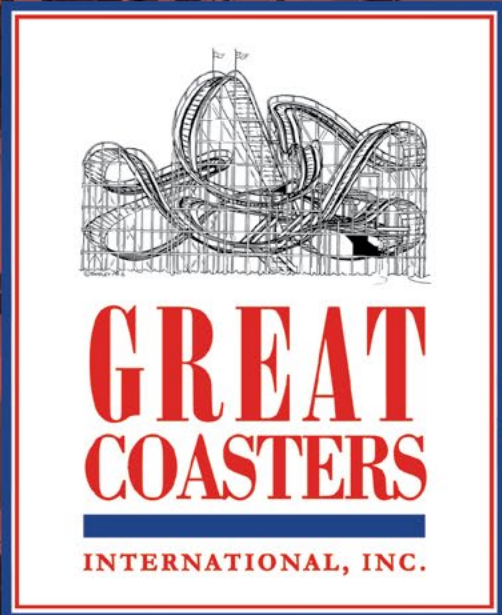
"The Lightning trains have been a great fit for the park," added **Adam Sandy**, roller coaster sales and marketing director, Zamperla.



"Playland needed good capacity for a single-train coaster and wanted an investment that would require minimum maintenance time and money over the life of the coaster."

"Guest reaction has been very strong. In particular, our guests appreciate the sudden acceleration, and the speed at which the train travels," said **Laura Balance**, PNE/Playland spokesperson. "What we are also hearing is that the ThunderVolt is an excellent juxtaposition to our historic Wooden Coaster, allowing riders to experi-

► See **PLAYLAND**, page 8



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AMUSEMENT VIEWS



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

Don't forget yesterday



Robinson

At a recent lunch with an industry friend, we slipped into discussing new flat rides and some of the classics. My associate made the offhand comment that "...physics can only move the body so many ways, so most of today's new rides are just refining and repeating what's come before." We then got lost in smiles talking about some of yesterday's classic attractions.

It got me thinking of how often I've stopped at a local fair that I just happened to drive by because it was a rare chance to take a spin on a Roll-O-Plane or flip on a Rock-O-Plane. With the Golden Ticket Awards at Kennywood this year, I'm already eager for one more ride on my childhood favorites of the Kangaroo and the classic Whip. Coasters can get bigger and faster, flat rides can get flashier and look a little crazier, but something about those classics can just never be truly overshadowed.

Granted, I'm someone who rides a 30-year-old Harley-Davidson because I prefer the organic sound and feel of a carburated engine versus modern fuel injected tech masterpieces. So maybe I'm a little biased ... or, maybe there actually is something more pure about the classics.

And it's not just yesterday's tech that I'm referring to. As a child growing up in this industry, the IAAPA Expo was a trade show and awe-inspiring, but it was all about sleek handshakes and business deals. But that was the start of prep for the coming season. Back then, the IAAPA Summer Meeting was the celebration of the year that was! It was about fun, laughter, smiles and enjoying the industry we'd built around us. It was networking by riding rides together or enjoying a meal together. It was business but, more so, it was about people.

As the IAAPA Summer Meeting has faded into obscurity, those of us who do remember it often look to the annual Golden Ticket Awards event — hosted by *Amusement Today* soon after Labor Day every year — as a way of continuing its traditions. It's a chance to celebrate the industry, showcase and enjoy our successes, and network with others by shedding the skin of the trade show floor and just being ourselves.

Those rides, those moments, those feelings from yesterday ... they are always a part of us. And there is an undeniable purity about the way they bring us together.

FLINT'S VIEW: Bubba Flint



INDUSTRY VOICE: Bill Buckley, Irvine Ondrey Engineering

The hidden gems of Europe

Having traveled the world and visited amusement facilities across six continents, it simply cannot be ignored that Europe is home to some of the finest parks in the world. European parks are notably great for their uniquely themed areas, insane attention to detail, operational efficiencies, affordability, as well as offering themed attractions and restaurants catering to a broad demographic.

Storytelling is readily evident across European parks. Without corporate ties, these parks lack the ball-and-chain effect of branded IPs. This allows them the freedom to create personal mascots and ride themes.

Efteling theme park in The Netherlands is a wonderful example in this regard. Set amidst lush gardens, Efteling is based around traditional fairytales. Efteling has grown from its humble beginnings but remains rooted in its origins.

The overall atmosphere and aesthetics of European parks are shaped by lush and exquisite landscaping. These parks seem to focus on tighter pathways flanked by smaller structures



Buckley

and greenery. This design enhances the immersive quality, and the close proximity of the structures to pathways makes them appear larger. Magical immersion results.

Rides and scenery often determine the overall guest experience at a park, but staff and operations are key factors as well. A reputation for efficiency is

found in operation at Europa-Park. The staff are well-trained. They load guests onto attractions so quickly, and dispatches happen so rapidly, that the park doesn't have a need to offer a "fastpass"-type option.

It is also evident that much thought went into the overall layout and design of European parks. Ride placement is so key to crowd control, and it is clear that guest flow was thoughtfully analyzed during the planning phase. Gröna Lund and Phantasialand are fantastic examples of how small parks can best utilize every inch of available space and ensure it is used to its utmost.

European parks offer detailed attraction wait times to guests, which lends to them never feeling over crowded or over sold.

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2 MINUTE DRILL



AT: Janice Witherow

Olivia Hain, Great Coasters International, Inc.

For **Olivia Hain**, the business of fun runs in the family. The daughter of **Clair Hain**, owner, founder and president of **Great Coasters International**, Olivia is making her own mark in the amusement industry as head of public relations and project manager for the famed roller coaster company. She brings a contagious energy, creativity and positive spirit to the job...and loves life! Olivia is also a self-professed coaster fan, foodie and nature lover.

Title: Head of Public Relations and Project Manager.

Number of years in the industry: 2.5 years... and counting.

Best thing about the industry: While making money is a fundamental aspect of any industry, the amusement industry transcends this narrative by focusing on creating fun and memories for people of all ages.

Favorite amusement ride: DC Rivals Hypercoaster by Mack Rides... Shhh don't tell my dad! Safe (but also true) answer: Thunderhead!

If I weren't working in the amusement industry, I would be ... Involved with an environmental organization. This could include growing produce or fungi for community consumption or implementing environmental procedures in governmental areas. Or, I would attend culinary school and potentially own a food truck.

Biggest challenge facing our industry: The quest for the "est" coasters and thrill rides — longest, tallest, fastest — has become a defining trend.

The thing I like most about amusement/water park season is ... Getting to ride the roller coasters!

What is your favorite restaurant to take people to? My kitchen!

It's officially football season. Who do you root for? Eagles Nation, baby!!! E-A-G-L-E-S, EAGLES!!!!

Best fall activity: Going on a scenic hike to enjoy the vibrant foliage and crisp autumn air.

Favorite author: Aldous Huxley.

Most people think I am ... Friendly and outgoing.



A coaster fan and nature lover, Olivia Hain is making her own mark on the industry her father found great success in.

COURTESY GREAT COASTERS INTERNATIONAL

The sport I really stink at is ... Soccer.

What's one thing you do on Friday to jumpstart the weekend? Going on a walk with my dog, preparing a meal for the days ahead, and enjoying a chat with my mom. These activities help me unwind and set a positive tone for the weekend.

Favorite childhood TV show: *SpongeBob Square Pants* or *Adventure Time* (I still mainly watch cartoons at 25 years old, forever a kid at heart).

Who's in charge of dinnertime in your house? Me! I like to be in control of how the food is prepared.

In one word, my house/apartment is ... Picturesque.

Favorite thing to wear: My Converse's.

If money were no object, I would ... Travel the world, invest in environmental conservation projects, and establish a foundation to support education and healthcare in underserved communities.

My favorite one-stop shopping store is ... In Indian Lake, New York (Adirondack region). It has the best cheap strawberry wine and hoagies!

The busiest day of the week for me always seems to be ... Monday, as I catch up on work and emails from the weekend and organize my schedule for the rest of the week. It's also the day that seems to pass the slowest. I bring the TGIF vibe to the office!

THE INDUSTRY SEEN

Chance in the Red Zone



CANTON Ohio — The Chance Rides wheel formerly of Cleveland's I-X Center has found a new home overlooking the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio. Renamed as The Red Zone, the wheel is now a part of the Hall of Fame Village's Play Action Plaza. Featuring views at 125 feet high from the top, it provides a unique and exhilarating vantage point of the landscape. Trucks and cars on nearby I-77 appear to be miniature in the distance.
AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON

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►ENERGYLANDIA

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The star attraction is Choco Chip Creek, a mine train from Vekoma. Featuring three lifts, trains spiral and intertwine with seemingly endless track and chocolate chip mountains. The custom layout features a long length (for a mine train) of 3,937 feet.

"Energylandia is always looking for maximum experience and capacity. With these three lifts and three trains we could offer all of this," said **Stefan Holtman**, sales manager, Vekoma. "Vekoma just developed this latest version of the mine train with a two- and three-lift version. It would speak for itself that we wanted to showcase the biggest version here."

Vekoma has manufactured 13 mine rides, the first being Big Thunder Mountain for **Disneyland Paris** in 1992. Having made a name for itself with huge, looping thrillers in recent years, opening to great acclaim, Vekoma's most recent mine train debuted six years prior to Choco Chip Creek (almost to the day). Perhaps with the exhilarating fun of this newest one, more customers will think about this industry staple as a fit for their park.

Dispatched in a burst of smoke, each of the three trains holds 32 passengers, with the lead car sporting a train engine in which a pair of riders can sit inside.

A second coaster, Honey Harbour, is a family roller coaster also from Vekoma. With a height of 38 feet and a speed of 29 mph, it's a great offering for the less daring



Honey Harbor is a Vekoma junior coaster that welcomes families in Sweet Valley (above left). Candy Carousel makes for a centerpiece in the main plaza of Sweet Valley (above right). AT/TIM BALDWIN



and the kid in everyone.

Vekoma has supplied more than half of the park's roller coasters — from children's and family rides to giant, launched signature attractions. This is the second junior roller coaster from Vekoma, along with two family boomerangs and a family suspended coaster. While Choco Chip Creek is suitable for families, it still offers some good thrills.

"After the park successfully opened in 2014, Energylandia came to the EAS show in Amsterdam that same year," Holtman told *Amusement Today*. "Being a small and unknown amusement park in a small town in Poland, they looked at the trade show for a supplier to deliver them three coasters for the following year! Very few suppliers believed in this, and Vekoma was able to successfully help them with this huge challenge. This is how the relationship was born. This has turned into a friendship which has already lasted for 10 years now. The owner always believed that a roller coaster

would be the best investment for his park as they are mainly the top attractions in a theme park with the biggest queue lines. The future looks promising as well."

Zamperla is no stranger to Energylandia, having partnered with the theme park throughout its vibrant Aqualantis expansion.

"The partnership between Zamperla and Energylandia has been remarkable. Despite being a young park, Energylandia has grown rapidly to become a top entertainment destination," said **Charles De Bruyne**, sales manager EU, Zamperla. "We are proud to contribute to its success with attractions that enhance the overall experience. Our collaboration continues to strengthen, and we look forward to the future."

Among the nine rides in Sweet Valley, five are from the Italian manufacturer. Twis'Tea is an adorable tea-cup ride with ride vehicles surrounding a birthday cake centerpiece. The whimsical, frosting-covered theming begs riders to ask for a slice.

"We're very pleased with the theming of the tea cups ride in Sweet Valley. The colorful decorations and details add a magical touch, creating a festive and welcoming atmosphere for visitors of all ages," said **Enrico Patechi**, creative design manager, Zamperla. "Zamperla has always placed great emphasis on creativity in the design of its attractions. Our creative team works tirelessly to ensure that every detail contributes to creating a unique, enjoyable and immersive experience for visitors. The tea cups ride in Sweet Valley at Energylandia is a perfect example of our commitment to delivering engaging and high-quality theming."

Other rides from Zamperla are Crazy Barn, Bumble Boats, Mini Track' Tour and Bon Bon Balloons. The Mini Track' Tour is a comical tractor journey via a powered rail through farm animals, lollipops and other candies.

The Candy Carousel is a two-story carousel from **SBF**, which can hold up to 50 people. SBF has been a supplier for Energylandia since its first years.

Candy Critters rotates younger kids in a ride supplied by **Gosetto**. As kiddos revolve in their vehicles, they interact with the attraction by aiming at targets on a central tree trunk.

"The characters on the tree move and then respond," said **Gina Guglielmi** of **Intermark**, who represents Gosetto. "It's very cute and both family- and kiddie-friendly. Riders are rewarded by movements, lights and sounds from the scene."

Gosetto sells the ride

with different themes: Magic Tree, Space Tree and now with a candy motif.

To have an area called Sweet Valley, it's an ideal location for guests to conquer their sweet tooth. Pop Mania serves ice cream novelties on a stick made in-house; Wacky Waffles offers crispy waffles; and Snowflake Peak dips up scooped ice cream. Smoothies, bubble tea and slushies are also found. Madame Bon Bon's, Hungry Hen and Beehive Bistro serve up more meal-like fare beyond the sweets.

With all the attractions in one area, Sweet Valley opens up new spaces to absorb crowds, as well as connects two existing lands, Aqualantis and Smoczy Gród. The park is divided into two clear halves joined by a tunnel beneath a road. With the new addition, there is a clearly balanced selection of rides now in both halves. Each of the lands that have been developed in recent years has exceptional theming to immerse the guests in the environment. Like the nautical feel of adjacent Aqualantis and Gothic, epochal architecture of Smoczy Gród, cohesive theming makes Sweet Valley a distinctive area to explore and experience it all.

Energylandia is located 31 miles (50 kilometers) from Krakow and 208 miles (335 kilometers) from Warsaw, Poland's capital city.

Energylandia opened in 2014 and is owned by **Marek Goczał**. He owns several businesses, among which are two Polish clubs called **Club Energy 2000**, as well as the energy drink, Energy 2000.



Choco Chip Creek is Vekoma's latest mine train, this one being a long version featuring three lifts and three trains. AT/TIM BALDWIN

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▶PLAYLAND

Continued from page 1

ence both the iconic feel and ambience of the vintage coaster and the state-of-the-art speed and acceleration thrills of the ThunderVolt.”

ThunderVolt reaches a top speed of 41 mph in seconds.

“They wanted a coaster that was fun, marketable and different than anything else in the Pacific Northwest. When this opportunity came up, we talked about how the coaster could be a great fit for the park and help redefine the property as the city took Playland in a new direction,” Sandy told *Amusement Today*. “It has the marketability of being the fastest launch coaster in Canada, but the coaster is designed to be a broad appeal steel coaster, not an extreme ride with niche appeal.”

ThunderVolt now gives the park a second signature attraction. The Carl Phare-designed wooden coaster, usually simply called “Coaster,” was built in 1958 and is regarded by enthusiasts as one of the finest wooden coasters of the era. Playland now offers a one-two punch of great thrills.

“With our core demographic at Playland being families, we also are hearing positive reviews as the ThunderVolt is capable of riding a wide range of thrill seekers, so it allows multiple generations to ride together,” said Balance.

Even though the ride operates with a single train that seats 12 passengers, the park feels it can still achieve 500 riders per hour since



Twelve riders at a time sizzle through the twisted layout. Following the exhilarating launch, riders rise up 60 feet into an airtime hill (below). COURTESY PNE, ZAMPERLA

there is no chain lift. With simple overhead restraints, the train is a fast load.

The new coaster fills a void left by the closure of an older Corkscrew coaster in 2018. It helps revive the northeast corner of the park. ThunderVolt stands next to the future site of an amphitheater.

“It’s fantastic to see the former home of the Corkscrew given new life with Thundervolt,” said Balance. “With the beautiful vistas of the North Shore mountains and Burrard Inlet in the background, the Thundervolt is situated on one of the most scenic locations I know for an amusement ride.”

Upon dispatch, riders ease into a lighted tunnel. The LED effects set the tone, and once launched, riders burst from the tunnel at top speed. The train rises into a 60-foot airtime hill. From there, riders are twisted and



tangled into a figure-eight type of layout. The track length is 1,246 feet of exhilarating adrenaline.

“It is a fun ride, and I think that is always important,” said Sandy. “But to Playland and Vancouverites, it means a lot more. The coaster stands as a symbol of the [future of] the PNE — to update the facility and turn it into a world-class destination for Canadians. It is extremely different from

any other coaster in Canada. In fact, in addition to being the fastest coaster launch in Canada, the ride offers great airtime, is extremely smooth and a coaster that perfectly balances the traditional wood coaster located only a few hundred meters away.”

ThunderVolt features an entrance portal that has dynamic outlines of animals in vivid colors on black.

“The eagle, bear and wolf on the entrance arch are all

animals found in our region, and given the deep connection British Columbians feel towards our forests and their animals, the ride pays tribute to this connection,” Balance told *AT*. “The wildness of the animals selected is an indication of the ‘wildness’ of the ride to come! The lines that can be seen on the arch are also representative of a topographical map of our region and include local landmarks. The concept was conceived by FORREC, who did all of the design elements, including landscaping, lighting and overall design for the ThunderVolt.”

Riders must be 52 inches to ride.

“My favorite moment is right at the start — the unexpected speed of the launch. Coupled with the light tunnel, it makes an extremely exciting start to the ride,” said Balance. “One moment you’re sitting at the entrance platform waiting to go, the next second you are launched into the tunnel. It’s a wonderful start to the ride.”

While several Zamperla rides have been purchased by the park, this is the largest project between the two parties.

Founded in 1910, the PNE’s home is Hastings Park, a multi-facility venue where the organization manages four activity streams: the annual PNE Fair, Playland Amusement Park, park care and facility maintenance, as well as its portfolio of year-round events. All revenues generated are invested back into park space, community programs and educational and entertainment experiences.

•pne.ca



Zamperla’s Lightning trains (above left) offer comfortable restraints and upper-body freedom. The launch tunnel at the left is accented with LED lights; the entrance portal at the right is decorated with regional animals and a topographical map (above right). COURTESY PNE, ZAMPERLA

PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

► Kings Dominion announces major B&M wing coaster — page 14 / Tripsdrill opens Wild Swing — page 26

Family fun soars at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay with Phoenix Rising

AT: David Fake
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TAMPA, Fla. — On July 21, Busch Gardens Tampa Bay debuted its tenth roller coaster and second family coaster, Phoenix Rising, an inverted Bolliger and Mabillard (B&M) creation on which passengers sit two-abreast.

Phoenix Rising has the distinction of being B&M's first inverted family coaster to be built in the U.S., and the only installation of its kind outside of China.

The new coaster is also the second of only two B&M family coasters to operate in the U.S., with Penguin Trek, B&M's first two-abreast, sit-down family launch coaster, having debuted earlier the same month at United Parks and Resorts' (formerly SeaWorld Entertainment's) sister park, SeaWorld Orlando, located just 90 minutes East of Busch Gardens Tampa Bay.

Located in the Pantopia-themed area, Phoenix Rising pays homage to, and theoretically rises from, the ashes of another "Phoenix," the defunct galleon-themed Intamin Looping Starship attraction that operated on the new coaster's site from 1984 until 2018 and later demolished in late 2022.

Considered a family coaster owing to its 42-inch minimum height and 77-inch maximum height, Phoenix Rising delivers a zippy and exhilarating experience for riders of all ages.

"We are thrilled to officially open Phoenix Rising to our guests and pass mem-



Phoenix Rising delivers a fun family coaster experience that both enthusiasts and those that are soon-to-be can enjoy. The coaster nicely rounds out Busch Gardens Tampa Bay's ride portfolio fun after back-to-back years of thrill ride installations. COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS TAMPA BAY

bers," said Stewart Clark, park president of Busch Gardens Tampa Bay on the opening day of the new attraction. "With a height requirement of just 42 inches, it's an adventure the whole family can enjoy together."

The coaster reaches 80 feet at its apex, then travels at speeds of up to 44 mph over its 1,831 feet of track delivering a considerably smooth, nonstop ride experience, which seems to fly by rather quickly owing to the absence of a mid-course block brake. This absence is attributed to the coaster's single-train operation (which combined with a slow initial turnover and dispatch, may prove to create the ride's only shortcoming — a substantial wait time, even on days with lower overall attendance).

Still, Phoenix Rising is

exactly what the park needed after back-to-back years of thrill ride installations with 2022 debuting Iron Gwazi, an extreme hybrid roller coaster installation from Rocky Mountain Construction (RMC) and 2023 delivering Serengeti Flyer, the world's tallest S&S Screamin' Swing thrill ride.

Prior to Phoenix Rising's opening, smaller family members were left with only one roller coaster option — Air Grover, a Zierer Force/190 model family coaster.

A good way to explain Air Grover's level of intensity is that it is big on the mild and short on the wild. But that is exactly what it was designed to be — a mild, enjoyable and unafrightening introduction to the roller coaster experience.

Missing was a coaster that delivered somewhere



between the mild and the wild. Busch Gardens Tampa Bay needed a coaster for those who had outgrown Air Grover, but weren't quite ready for the super thrills of the other offerings at the park.

"We really look at the portfolio of the park and try and make decisions [for new attractions] based on what makes the best sense for what we needed next in the park," said Andrew Schaffer, corporate director of project management with United Parks and Resorts.

"We knew we needed another coaster that was kind of in the right age and height range. Because before, you would go from Air Grover, then jump to something much larger. There was really nothing between the two.

"Kids reach an age where they are past the Air Grover stage. They're like, 'I really don't want to ride a Sesame Street ride.' Then they go look at a monster of a coaster like Iron Gwazi and they're like, 'Oh, that is way too scary.' So, we definitely wanted to find an attraction that was much smaller and less scary for the small to middle-sized kids. And we think Phoenix Rising really hits that nail on the head," continued Schaffer.

Not only does Phoenix Rising have a custom layout designed specifically for the area, but the ride experience is enhanced by some unique theming features.

"The ride has four dif-

► See PHOENIX, page 10



2 Story Fun House



Suspended Dark Ride



Eclipse



Wild Maus



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►PHOENIX Continued from page 9

ferent Phoenixes that follow along as you get on and ride this coaster," explained Shaffer. "The experience is randomized, so if you watch the screens in the station, you'll notice four different Phoenix characters that play on those screens."

The four Phoenixes with which guests take flight also have names and themes. There is Ignis: Protector of the desert realm, a.k.a. the Fire Phoenix (red), Aqua: Protector of the ocean realm, a.k.a. the Water Phoenix (blue), Glacius: Protector of the mountain tops and glaciers, a.k.a. the Ice Phoenix (purple) and then there is Terra: Protector of the rainforests, a.k.a. the Jungle Phoenix (green).

There is coordinating lighting on and under the seats that match the colors of the Phoenix on the OLED screens. So, every ride delivers a different feeling.

"If you come at night, you can also see the lighting on the ride and that changes for every ride too," added Shaffer.

"In addition to custom lighting, there is an original



Located in Busch Gardens Tampa Bay's Pantopia-themed area, Phoenix Rising pays homage to, and theoretically rises from the ashes of another "Phoenix," a defunct galleon-themed Intamin Looping Starship attraction that operated on the new coaster's site from 1984 until 2018.

COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS TAMPA BAY

score that was composed specifically for the ride. There are speakers right on the train, too. Mainly, it's kind of Phoenix-y sounds — bird sounds and wings flapping are playing as you go through the attraction and ride the coaster," explained Shaffer.

Erick Elliot, vice president of design and engineering at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay, agreed with Shaffer. He added "You get a great immersive ride, and one thing that's very special about this ride is that onboard audio. As you are soaring out over through the park, you have this great live audio soundtrack that enhances the ride."

Both Shaffer and Elliot

also spoke about the great views of the Serengeti from the lift hill and throughout the coaster's course.

"If you ride in the right seat, you have an amazing view of our Serengeti plain which is right where all the animals are out here," Schaffer said.

The bottom line is that Phoenix Rising is exactly what Busch Gardens Tampa Bay needed, delivering exactly what park officials wanted from it. Most importantly, it fulfilled a void that smaller, soon-to-be enthusiasts did not yet realize they were hoping for.

"It really makes it a great experience for the whole family to enjoy," Elliot concluded.

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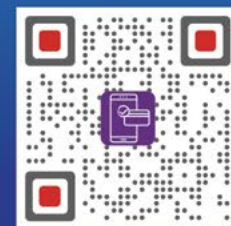
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Single-rail Mahuka from Intamin zips into Walibi Rhône-Alpes

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

LES AVENIÈRES, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, France—This summer, **Walibi Rhône-Alpes** opened its sixth coaster, and it is unlike any other coaster in France.

The coaster, named Mahuka, is a single-rail model supplied by **Intamin**. Exotic Island is a recently developed themed area of the park that evokes both mystery and the beautifully lush tropics with a Pacific islands feel. Mahuka means “to escape” in Hawaiian.

Notably, the ride is compact. But because of its tight nature, it emphasizes the thrill in a layout just shy of 2,000 feet.

Among Intamin’s portfolio, the coaster is dubbed a Hot Racer model.

“The Intamin Hot Racer, with the specially developed and designed single-rail track and the open single-seater train design, offers thrilling and exciting layouts on a small footprint, which were formerly only possible with the bigger LSM Coasters and Mega Coasters,” said **Sascha Czibulka**, executive vice president, Intamin. “Like this, Intamin can bring thrilling coasters also to smaller parks. The seat and restraint of the trains are the very same highly comfortable and most reliable system as used on our large-scale coasters, be it LSM or Mega. Furthermore, we are increasing the excitement level of the ride with our powerful state-of-the-art tire launches, granting a high level of layout flexibility without the need for big heights.”



Mahuka delivers 13 moments of airtime. Riders on Mahuka race through thematic structures (above right). The trains (below) are custom-designed to fit the theme. COURTESY INTAMIN



Mahuka features two launches. One takes place at the beginning of the ride, the other midway through. The launches deliver a speed of 42 mph.

To help the coaster fit into the land, thematic touches help tell the story. Guests journey into the remains of an abandoned temple but are cautioned not to provoke the God of Fire. The trains are stylized as exploration trucks.

A musical score was provided by **Audiogazer GbR**.

A distinctive characteristic of Mahuka is its iconic arch around 60 feet tall. What is unique about the structure is that the trains go both over the top and flip underneath.

“Originally the two high points after the launch were planned as stand-alone elements,” Czibulka shared with *Amusement Today*. “During the detailed design process, our engineers came up with the idea to combine the supporting structure of the top hat, as they were really close to each other, in

order to reduce the amount of steel and to provide a more aesthetic look of the element. It was a win-win development from the technical, cost and optical point of view. The park loved this idea so much, that they directly used this top hat as the entry portal to the new park area.”

Riders sit single-file, with nine riders per train. Mahuka operates with two trains. Riders must be between 120 centimeters (four feet) and 195 centimeters (six feet, five inches). An hourly capacity of 600 riders can be reached.

During the course of the ride, three inversions are included in the tangle of track. However, what is probably more memorable are the 13 moments of airtime, the most weightlessness on any coaster at the park. The elements are snappy and often close to the ground giving a rush of speed.

As this is the second installation of a Hot Racer model, AT asked if refine-



ments and improvements were made on the newest installation.

“Building upon its predecessor at **Luna Park** in Australia, the new Hot Racer has undergone a number of enhancements,” Czibulka confirmed. “The chassis was refined to enhance ride comfort and ensure an even better fit to the track. Additionally, the brand-new carbon-fiber lap bars contribute to a lighter train and lower center of gravity, enhancing the experience with an even smoother ride.”

The restraint system uses overhead lap bars, which offer a great sense of upper-body freedom without over-the-shoulder restraints.

The benefits of the single-rail coaster are both economical and environmental.

“Due to the use of modern manufacturing technologies and lightweight materials like aluminum and carbon fibers, the weight of the train could be significantly reduced,” said Czibulka. “In combination with the compact layouts, the amount of steel necessary to produce track and columns was reduced to a minimum, which has a positive impact on the overall carbon footprint of the ride without compromising on the ride experience. In addition, we are offering the possibility to recuperate the braking energy to either feed it back to the grid or to store the energy for the next launch of the train.”

Walibi Rhône-Alpes opened in 1979 and is currently operated by **Compagnie des Alpes**.

•intamin.com



Trains travel both above (above left) and below (above right) the iconic arch. COURTESY INTAMIN



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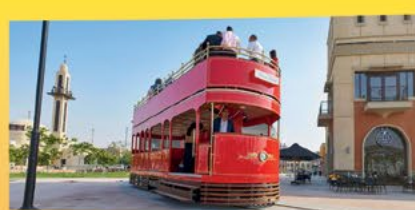
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Kings Dominion announces major B&M wing coaster: Rapterra

AT: Tim Baldwin
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DOSWELL, Va. — Already starting to rise at **Kings Dominion**, the park's 14th roller coaster will be a noteworthy attraction to entice guests to visit in 2025. Called Rapterra, it not only will be a wing coaster from renowned manufacturer **Bolliger & Mabillard**, but also a rare launched version of this genre. It is only the third wing coaster from B&M to do so.

"We're particularly excited about this attraction because it comes in our 50th anniversary year," said **Bridgette Bywater**, vice president and general manager. "This ride captures it. That feeling of flying is going to be exceptional."

The launch will send riders flying at 65 mph.

"We can push our [wing coaster] out at a speed that is going to have much more of that flying effect and feel," said **Matthew Sienko**, Rapterra maintenance manager. "There's going to be some close elements that give [riders] the realization of 'Oh, that was closer than I thought it was.'"

Rapterra will be a new anchor for a recently redeveloped land called Jungle X-Pedition. It comes with its



own backstory.

The legend says centuries ago, ancient leaders built a shrine to honor the mighty Jungle Hawk. People who entered the shrine became spiritually linked to — and temporarily possessed — the powers and abilities of the bird of prey.

Building the temple at the base of a volcano, Mt. Inferna, proved unfortunate. The ground surrounding the magma chamber collapsed, burying the Jungle Hawk temple under mounds of volcanic rock. The temple seemingly vanished from the earth. Archaeologists recently discovered the volcanic site and unearthed the remains of the Jungle Hawk shrine. The bird's ferocious spirit remains at the site, launching brave riders to exhilarating new heights.

"This used to be Volcano's site, and we wanted to pay homage to that part of our history," Bywater said. "It's completely differ-



Rapterra will be Kings Dominion's 14th roller coaster. The wingover element (below) will be at the ride's tallest point, 145 feet. COURTESY KINGS DOMINION

ent than anything else we've got and anything else in the area. People are really excited because it is so unique."

Volcano was a launched inverted coaster that was retired at the end of the 2018 season. The 1970s-built mountain/volcano structure was eventually demolished, so Rapterra fills the void left by its absence. Some columns and ruins stylized to ancient temple ruins will make for thematic storytelling.

After the ride's initial launch, the trains soar to 145 feet into an element the



park dubs a "wingover." A dive loop, in-line "raptor roll" and corkscrew flat spin provide the three inversions,

but other elements such as an airtime hill, S-turn and "wing slide" offer variety to the breathtaking flight.

Columns are painted a basalt gray, with 3,086 feet of patina green track making for the longest launched wing coaster in the world.

Two trains of 20 passengers will take to the sky next spring. The theoretical capacity is 1,140 guests per hour.

Rapterra is the second coaster from B&M at the park. With its height, it will be the third tallest on the skyline.

Kings Dominion opened in 1975. It was acquired by **Cedar Fair** in 2006. The recent merger between Cedar Fair and **Six Flags** makes it the largest amusement park operator in North America.

The Virginia theme park is planning a major celebration for its 50th anniversary.

"Kings Dominion means a lot to families in the area. That's a humbling legacy to maintain," said Bywater.

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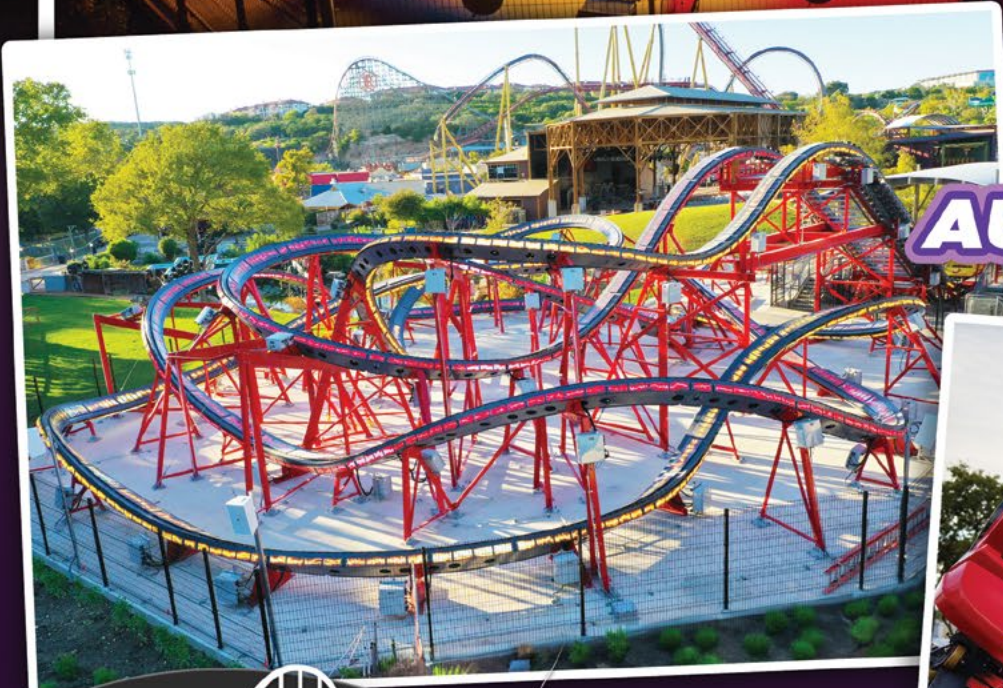
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Carowinds to add rides from Mack, ART Engineering, more in 2025

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Snoopy and his camping troop are getting around. **Carowinds** is the latest park under the formerly known Cedar Fair parks to introduce or expand on the Camp Snoopy theme. **Knott's Berry Farm**, **Kings Island** and **Canada's Wonderland** have found success with families enjoying the areas, so it isn't a surprise to see Carowinds finding it a good idea.

"We're excited to introduce the latest adventures in Camp Snoopy in 2025," said **Manny Gonzalez**, vice president and general manager.

"Our re-imagined Camp Snoopy will allow families to ride and play together, immersing them in a summer camp experience with the Peanuts gang. From the thrilling twists of Snoopy's Racing Railway to the splashes at Charlie Brown's River Raft Blast, our focus is on family fun. These new features will transform Camp



Charlie Brown's River Raft Blast will bring back a water ride into the theme park, this time in an interactive way. COURTESY CAROWINDS

Snoopy into more than just a place to play and cool off; it will become a destination for creating family memories."

Unique to Carowinds and any Camp Snoopy or Planet Snoopy area is Charlie Brown's River Raft Blast, an interactive water excursion from **Mack Rides**. This is particularly notable as the theme park itself currently

does not have any water rides, although Carowinds does offer a free water park, Carolina Harbor.

While aboard one of the seven boats, riders can shoot water blasts up to 33 feet to douse other boats or onlookers along the walkway. However, those spectators can be armed with blasters too to return fire.

"It will be a huge water battle between those people riding and those people watching," said **Maximillian Roser**, marketing, Mack Rides. "You better be watching where the water is coming from."

The journey is 415 long and is expected to take more than four and a half minutes to complete.

Most boats seat eight riders, but two of the boats are wheelchair accessible, and those seat seven riders.

"The introduction of the new interactive raft ride, Charlie Brown's River Raft Blast, and the splash play zones are particularly exciting, as they provide refreshing ways for guests to cool off during the hot Carolina summers," said **Courtney McGarry Weber**, communications director. "These additions add a much-needed water element back to the park, enhancing the overall guest experience."

Another family ride is Snoopy's Racing Railway. Built by **ART Engineering**, this will be the park's 15th roller coaster.

"The Snoopy ride for Carowinds will have the same track layout as Canda's Wonderland. We will have to adapt the support structure for integration into the site of Carowinds," said **Georg**

▶ See **CAROWINDS**, page 18

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Universal Orlando reveals secrets about monster-themed Dark Universe



ORLANDO — Universal will bring its timeless monsters to the present day with the debut of Dark Universe — one of the five immersive worlds featured at the all-new Universal Epic Universe opening in 2025. The most mysterious world of Universal Orlando’s newest theme park, this captivating new land will envelop guests in monstrous adventures across various attractions, shops, restaurants and character meet and greets that will thrill everyone from families to classic monster fans alike. The journey to Dark Universe begins the moment guests enter its electrifying portal, which harnesses the dark energy of Darkmoor (above left). As guests step foot inside, that same energy will pulsate throughout the entire village and connect at the top of Frankenstein Manor — the towering focal point of Dark Universe. Deep in the woods that sit on the edge of Darkmoor, guests will find Curse of the Werewolf (above right), a spinning family coaster inspired by *The Wolf Man*. The land in Epic Universe will deliver a first-of-its-kind theme park environment that offers family-friendly fun while also pushing the boundaries on intensity. COURTESY UNIVERSAL ORLANDO

► CAROWINDS Continued from page 16

Behringer, owner and CEO, ART Engineering. “Besides the nice and varied ride elements, the interaction between the waiting guests and the riders in the train when it comes into the station and gets the boost for the second turn is one of the cool things about this ride.”

The multi-launch coaster at Carowinds will sport a different storyline than its counterpart (in Canada) as Snoopy is racing to deliver root beer and pizza to Camp Snoopy’s Mess Hall where Woodstock and his buddies are causing quite a ruckus.

“The range of the rider group is always surprising. All ages — from small kids to the grandparents and coaster enthusiasts on one side to people who are usually afraid of coaster rides — love this attraction,” Behringer told *Amusement Today*.

It is the third family coaster in the Camp Snoopy area. The train seats 14 riders

and accelerates to 31 mph. The track length is 804 feet, but riders take two laps.

The new attractions will be utilizing the existing footprint of Camp Snoopy, effectively optimizing the space.

The rides are the main draw, but there is more to the expansion.

New splash play zones are a way to beat the heat. Kids can run through the water features while parents relax in the shade.

Also, a new Camp Store Meet-and-Greet Experience is situated in a newly remodeled Camp Store to visit with the camp-adorned characters from the famous IP.

“The remodeled Camp Store will feature a themed environment, providing an air-conditioned space perfect for photo opportunities and memorable interactions with Peanuts characters,” said Weber. “This themed area offers a comfortable respite from the heat, making the experience enjoyable for families throughout their visit — and for our associates.”

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New, reimagined rides entertain at Six Flags America's Steamtown

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

BOWIE, Md. — Six Flags America's new themed area has taken on a life of its own. Called Steamtown: Where the Past Meets the Future, it opened June 22, and was curated by none other than the likes of Professor Screamore.

In the season of celebrating the park's 25th anniversary, the steampunk-style theming on top of what was Old West facades, as well as new attractions and reimagined, restored, rethemed and enhanced offerings have been greeting guests all summer. There are new colors, features and effects adorning the area as well. And there is a vivid new charm of storytelling.

"It is part of our team's ambitious, multi-year plan to invest in our guest experience and park



The park's new Steamtown (above) is steampunk themed and has guests thrilled with the new adventures. The area includes reimagined bumper cars dubbed Electro Derby featuring modern technology and state-of-the-art buggies (right). COURTESY SIX FLAGS AMERICA

improvements," said Six Flags America General Manager **Ramar Vaughan**. "We are thrilled with our collaboration with Professor Screamore and excited to share our most detailed park realm to date."

backstory: After many years as a bustling mining town, the gold of Coyote Creek has dried up. A new, mystery investor has come to town and has big plans for the abandoned location. Guests

Here is the new [▶ See STEAM, page 22](#)



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Steamwhirler, a Zamperla Nebulaz, is a new ride and has become the center point of the park's new area.
COURTESY SIX FLAGS AMERICA

►STEAM Continued from page 20

will be invited to follow along as the town comes back to life as the mysterious investor — and their plans — are revealed.

The town of Coyote Creek was purchased in secrecy by Professor Screamore. After many years in the making, the Professor is finally ready to share his creations with the world.

Upon entering Steamtown, guests are greeted by a brand-new signature attraction for the whole family, Steamwhirler. This is a Zamperla NebulaZ ride.

The new Steamwhirler has become the center attraction of the new area. The four rotating arms of the ride are synchronized by a central gearing system, which provides guests with a pop of airtime each revolution.

Three existing rides were reimaged and enhanced to fit into the new area's storyline. They are Professor Screamore's Skywinder suspended coaster (formerly Mind Eraser), QuantumCanyon Rapids river rapids ride (formerly Renegade Rapids) and the Electro Derby bumper cars (formerly Coyote Creek Crazy Cars).

The Skywinder has two new trains, an enhanced operating system and a

Formerly known as Mind Eraser, Professor Screamore's Skywinder is a Vekoma suspended coaster boasting new trains and new colors.
COURTESY SIX FLAGS AMERICA

completely refreshed look. Manufactured by Vekoma, the coaster reaches speeds of 55 miles per hour. It now sports a new maroon and bronze color scheme that fits perfectly with Steamtown's theme.

It also was upgraded with state-of-the-art restraints.

Guests on the reimaged bumper cars Electro Derby are feeling the power of modern technology. These state-of-the-art buggies have been propelling themselves around the ring, bumping and dodging other riders.

The reimaged river rapids ride brings a little time travel into the mix. Guests board the traditional circular rafts and pass through a time portal as they leave the station. From there, they are transported to the prehistoric era with dinosaurs roaming along the edges of the raging river.

In addition to all of this, Six Flags America has brought back its popular stunt show. This summer it is called Steam Heist.

There also are new Steamtown food, beverage and retail options.

•sixflags.com



The Mob Museum, the National Museum of Organized Crime and Law Enforcement, Las Vegas, Nevada, has announced an extraordinary addition to its artifact collection: Al Capone's Colt 1911 .45-caliber semiautomatic pistol. Famously claimed by his family to have been called "Sweetheart" by Capone for saving his life on multiple occasions, this artifact is among the most significant belongings directly tied to the infamous criminal once named Public Enemy Number One.

The firearm, authenticated as a Colt 1911 manufactured in 1912 by the Office of Colt Historian, comes with a letter of provenance from Diane Capone, granddaughter of Al Capone.

The pistol's lineage after Al Capone's acquisition is well-documented. Originally left to Al Capone's wife, Mae, it was next passed to their son, Albert "Sonny" Capone. Sonny, an avid marksman and competition shooter, made modifications to his father's "Sweetheart" pistol. After Sonny's death in 2004, the pistol came into the possession of his daughters Diane and Barbara. Capone's pistol was sold at a 2021 auction, the first time the gun left the Capone family. In 2024, it has found a new permanent home in The Mob Museum's artifact collection.

Cedar Point in Sandusky, Ohio, will close its Snake River Falls flume ride on Sept. 2, after 31 years of operation. The closure will allow for the park's planned expansion. More details on that are expected to be revealed soon.

When the ride opened in 1993, Cedar Point officials said it was the tallest, steepest and fastest water flume ride in the world.

A significant change is coming to the carousel building at Henry Vilas Zoo, Madison, Wisconsin.

Last month, Feather Friendly window collision products were installed on two of the building's four glass panels to warn birds away from colliding with the glass.

The treatment comes after volunteers for Southern Wisconsin Bird Alliance monitoring zoo buildings for bird-window collisions in the spring found dead birds at the carousel.

Glass windows are invisible and

deadly to birds. They see reflections of trees, plants and sky through a window on the other side of a building and trying to get to that habitat, hit the glass instead.

The Feather Friendly treatment installed at the zoo is a film applied to the outside of the carousel building glass, which, when peeled back, leaves behind a grid of dots two inches apart that birds can see.

The carousel, called Conservation Carousel, began spinning at the zoo in 2006. It is open daily from April 1 through October 31.

Plans have been revealed to rebrand and upgrade the Oklahoma Music Hall of Fame in Muskogee. The \$2.4 million project will include upgrades to the museum, as well as its exterior and concert hall.

Halloween is just around the corner and Legoland Florida Resort is introducing a brand-new Monster Skytacular drone aerial show. So, along with being able to party with some favorite Lego monsters, Brick-or-Treat adds another reason to go to the resort.

The Monster Party will run on select Saturdays and Sundays from September 14 through October 27. A special opening will be held on Friday, September 13. This Halloween-themed bonus day gives even more time to enjoy the festivities.

This kid-friendly event is the only time of year when guests can meet the park's exclusive Lego monster characters, indulge in exclusive limited-time food and beverage offerings, enjoy special immersive Halloween shows and go trick-or-treating to collect loads of candy.

Happy Hauntings will take center stage this year at Story Land, Glen, New Hampshire. It is opening one week earlier than anticipated on Saturday, September 28, marking the park's longest season ever. Happy Hauntings closes out the park's 70th Celebration Season and will be a little Spookley and a whole lot of silly as the larger-than-life Spookley the Square Pumpkin, makes his debut at Story Land.

Gateway Ticketing Systems, a global leader in ticketing, admission control and revenue-generating solutions for the attractions industry, announced that it has been selected by the Milwaukee County Zoo to provide its Galaxy Guest Management and Ticketing System.

In the zoo's RFP, it was seeking qualified offers with significant experience in the design, installation, setup and ongoing support and maintenance of a best-in-class, all-in-one SaaS Zoo Management System software solution.

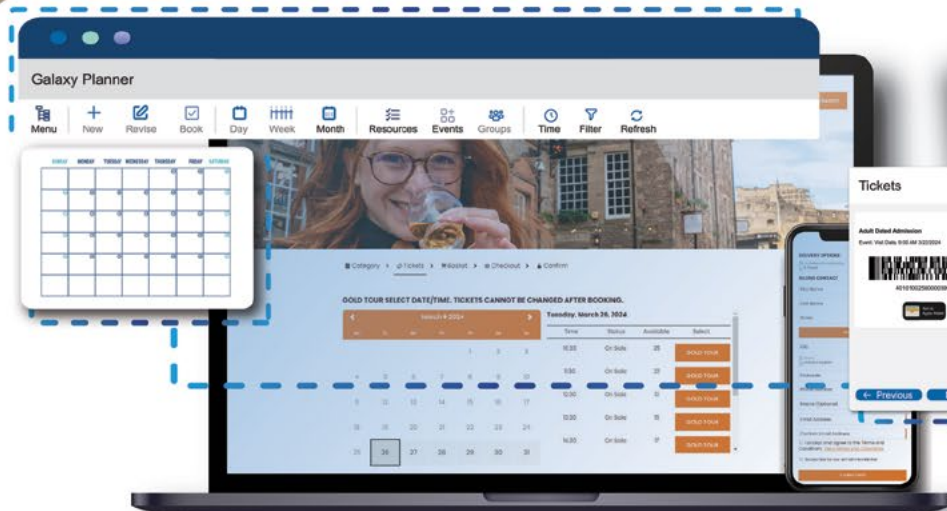
Located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the Milwaukee County Zoo averages about 1.3 million visitors a year and houses over 3,000 animals from 350 species sprawling over nearly 200 acres.



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Sylvan Beach Amusement Park adds new ride, more in 2024 season

SYLVAN BEACH, N.Y. — Sylvan Beach Amusement Park opened for the 2024 season in late June with a new family ride and numerous upgrades. A **Bradley and Kaye Kite Flyer** debuted in July in the center of the midway. The family ride was supplied by Wildwood, N.J.-based **International Rides Management** as part of a multi-ride package with more rides planned for future seasons.

The Kite Flyer has proven to be a popular addition, but that was only one of many changes made for the summer season. Many prices were rolled back to pre-COVID levels, which the general public noticed and appreciated. Sylvan Beach has also nearly completed a five-year upgrade program which has included repainting every ride, replacing miles of neon tubing on signage



Sylvan Beach Amusement Park is home to several vintage rides, including a 1974 SDC Galaxi coaster (above left). The park debuted a Bradley and Kaye Kite Flyer in July in the center of the midway (above right). COURTESY IRM

and buildings, and general improvements including roofing, flooring, lighting and painting to enhance the guest experience. The process was started in the spring of 2020 when the amusement park remained closed for the season. Sylvan Beach's parent company, **Empire Attractions**, utilized the downtime to start the projects.

During this time, Sylvan Beach also received a matching grant from the State of New York to renovate and upgrade the onsite **Yesterday's Royal Restaurant**. Empire Attractions is hoping to attract an operator to manage the property, which includes a steakhouse, homemade ice cream equipment, a turn-of-the-

century themed lounge and a live entertainment venue. Sylvan Beach is home to several arcades featuring many games no longer found in newer amusement parks, and home to several relocated vintage amusement rides, including a **Chance Rotor**, a 1974 SDC Galaxi relocated from **Fun Forest Park** in Seattle, Washington, and the 1954

Laffland, a custom-built dark ride installed by the **Pretzel Ride Company**. Also on site are several more classic flat rides, a large kiddie land, games of skill and a wide selection of food and retail offerings. Sylvan Beach Amusement Park is located on the eastern shore of the 57,000-acre Oneida Lake in central New York.



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Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk adds double fun with two new rides

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SANTA CRUZ, Calif. — Officials at **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk**, have been thrilled with the addition of its latest two new rides that opened at the beginning of this season.

The rides, a 65-foot-tall wheel and a Surge thrill ride, both manufactured by **Chance Rides**, made the 100th-anniversary celebration of the park's Giant Dipper wooden coaster that also took place this season even more exciting for park guests.

The new Dream Wheel is a modern take on a quintessential seaside amusement park Ferris wheel. This family-friendly ride features 15 colorful gondolas, each capable of seating four adults or six children.

The ride is suitable for riders with a low

thrill-seeking threshold and provides guests with stunning views of the Boardwalk, Monterey Bay, downtown Santa Cruz and the coastline.

Ferris wheels have been a part of the Boardwalk's history dating back to 1925, when the first wheel was installed. In 1945, a small kiddie wheel opened for operations.

The Boardwalk's previous Ferris wheel opened in 1959 near the location of the Pirate Ship ride. The wheel was moved to the Boardwalk's lower end in time for the 1984 season, where it operated until it was removed at the end of the 2017 summer season.

The Surge seats up to 24 people. It is a unique spin on a classic thrill ride providing Boardwalk guests with 360 degrees views. It has a classic spinning, tilting motion with outward-facing



Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, opened two rides in 2024, both from Chance Rides. Surge (above), is a Chance Freestyle ride. Also new is the 65-foot-tall Dream Wheel (right). COURTESY SANTA CRUZ BEACH BOARDWALK; AT/TIM BALDWIN



seating, providing easy entry for loading and unloading.

In addition, it has a pre-programmed, electric variable-speed drive that offers a variety of ride experiences.

Chance sells this ride as a permanent version as well as a portable ride with

one 48-foot trailer.

Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk carries an important history within its community. It dates back to 1904 when a local businessman, **Fred Swanton**, secured funding and government support to build the Neptune Casino. Two years later, that casino

burned to the ground, but another was built.

Attractions began to spring up, and by 1908, the park's first thrill ride, a roller coaster known as the L.A. Thompson Scenic Railway, opened. The park's Loeffl Carousell opened in 1911.

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Germany's Tripsdrill opens Wild Swing from ART Engineering

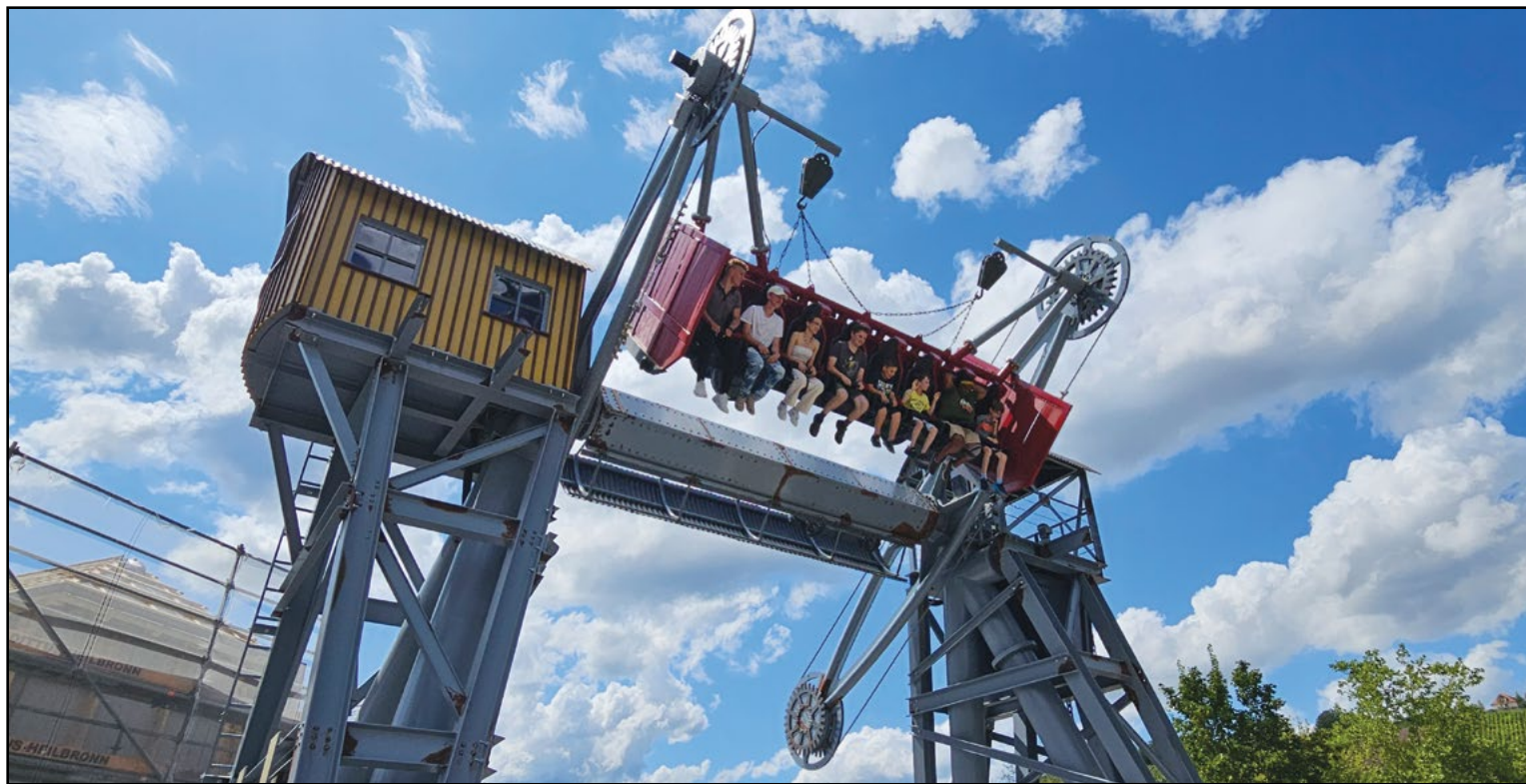
AT: Tim Baldwin
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CLEEBRON, Germany — Having opened in 1929, **Erlebnispark Tripsdrill** approaches a century of operation. In all the decades of entertaining guests, it has continued to add attractions to broaden the park's scope. For the 2024 season, Tripsdrill has added **Wilde Gautsche**, which translated means Wild Swing. It was supplied by **ART Engineering**.

"At Tripsdrill, we build attractions with unique ride experiences for the whole family," said **Benjamin Fischer** of the Fischer family who owns and operates the park. "The Wild Swing from ART Engineering expands our ride portfolio perfectly with its intense but still family-friendly G-Forces. We also didn't have this type of movement yet. It's a very smooth ride with very comfortable seats and restraints. You really have the feeling of flying over the area. In addition, even small kids can ride it due to the height restrictions of 0.90 meters (36 inches) accompanied by an adult and 1.20 meters (47 inches) without an adult. What's really nice to see is that every age group is having fun on this attraction."

The theming of the ride is a 19th-century loading crane, which gives the attraction a distinctive look.

Fischer explains: "Nearby the **Wilde Gautsche**, you can find the two roller coasters **Halsüber-Kopf** and **Volldampf**.



Wilde Gautsche is the latest Wild Swing installation from ART Engineering. AT/TIM BALDWIN

Volldampf is themed as the Swabian train 'Schwäb'sche Eisenbahn.' There is also an existing song about that train that the visitors can listen to in the station of **Volldampf**. Because of that, we took that theme of the train and station and designed our **Wilde Gautsche** like a 19th-century loading crane. In 2025 we will complete the theming of the queue with also a pre-show. We will still expand this area of the Swabian railroad — the **Wilde Gautsche** is just a part of this expansion. So, stay tuned for more exciting additions."

"Tripsdrill did big theming on the ride like a historical crane at a freight depot of a railway station," added **Georg Behringer**, managing director, ART Engineering. "The idea of

the theming has been done by **Alex Korting**. We supplied the theming in close coordination with him. All these rides that have been supplied to different parks have their own theming."

Once aboard, 16 riders sitting back-to-back in rows of eight are lifted on two huge arms. As the ride swoops over the top, it causes the gondola to swing back and forth, which makes for tummy-tickling sensations. However, riders never flip upside down, so it remains a thrill for a wide demographic. Riders experience the rotations in both directions.

"The guest reaction to **Wilde Gautsche** is great; we receive very positive feedback from our guests," said Fischer. "Children from 3 years and 90 centimeters can use the attraction accompanied by adults. So really the whole family can ride **Wilde Gautsche** together. Sometimes the adults are even more thrilled than their kids and the guests want to ride it again and again. So, we did everything right, our plan works."

ART Engineering has sold seven Wild Swings, with **Wilde Gautsche** being the most recent.

"The first ride was installed at **Fantasiana Park** in Austria in 2022. Only two

months later the second ride opened at **Potts Park** in Germany," Behringer said. "Our special seat-restraint system is allowing young children to ride. However, all age groups love the ride experience, even teenagers that are usually focused on thrill rides."

Amusement Today approached Behringer asking with some smaller parks among its clientele, if this was an affordable investment for parks of all sizes.

"Yes, the ride is an affordable attraction," he answered. "I think the ride is a great attraction for smaller parks but also a super addition at bigger parks because of the small footprint and unique motion system. The requirement for the site preparation is very easy. Installation and commis-

sioning time is within one week to 10 days. The design of the ride allows great options for theming."

Recent additions to Tripsdrill have been at the front of the park, including the new ride. Fischer tells AT this is intentional.

"Before 2021, most of the major attractions were located in the back of the park," he said. "We want visitors to spread out everywhere in the park and also find major attractions in the front part near the historical 'Old Woman's Mill.' We now see that it helps to manage the guest flow better. This also has the effect that all the older attractions in this area are now used more."

The site was newly developed, so no attractions were retired to make space.

•artengineering.de



Seated back-to-back, riders swing in a thrilling motion but never go upside down. COURTESY ART ENGINEERING



The park designed a 19th century loading crane to thematically fit into the area. COURTESY ART ENGINEERING



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Ride Engineers Switzerland reveals innovative Oracle attraction

AT: Pam Sherborne
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ALTDORF, Switzerland — Ride Engineers Switzerland (RES) will be one of the 600-plus exhibitors at this year's International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Expo Europe. And the innovative company will surely be touting its new creation, the Oracle.

IAAPA Expo Europe will be held September 23-27, 2024, in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

The Oracle is a family ride and a thrill ride wrapped into one exciting attraction. RES officials tout the ride as being the first ride in the world with three motorized rotary axles and a free axle all guaranteed to deliver nonstop thrill and excitement.

Four gondolas of four seat a total of 16 riders per ride cycle.

With multiple programs,



Ride Engineers Switzerland, has unveiled its new ride Oracle. The ride is expected to go on tour in the spring of 2025. COURTESY RES RIDES

the Oracle will be able to deliver either a gentle ride for younger passengers with panoramic views or a full-out thrill experience with countless turns and twists. And to top it off, the Oracle is available for permanent or transportable installations.

The transportable Oracle

will require just 16 meters by 15.5 meters (52.5 feet by 50.9 feet) of space and will reach a maximum riding height of 12 meters (39.4 feet).

RES has focused on designing the ride's transportable version to have an efficient build-up and individual design.

In addition, the Oracle has a story. RES's website teases with imagery and wording: "Imagine the fog over the crystal ball slowly lifting and revealing your future. A powerful and imposing part of the myth rises out of iron and steel. With an impressive fire column and a spectacle

of light, it magically draws you in and never lets you go. Discover the mysterious world of legendary Greek mythology with a ride on the Oracle."

The ride will go on tour in the spring of 2025.

RES is a manufacturer of both dry and wet attractions. Its line of dry rides includes tower rides, flat rides, thrill rides, roller coasters and observation rides.

Its line of water rides includes canyon rapids, flume rides, boats, water coasters and interactive water rides.

The company has over 30 years combined experience in the amusement industry. It won three awards in 2023 for its Vertical Dark Ride, Crazy Professor, Conny-Land, Switzerland. Those awards were the IAAPA Brass Ring Award, the Parkscout/plus Award and the European Star Award.

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Andretti's opens its latest FEC in Texas, complete with largest track

AT: Tim Baldwin
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GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — The old saying that everything is bigger in Texas is somewhat overused, but in the case of **Andretti's Indoor Karting & Games**, it is rather fitting. The recently opened facility in Grand Prairie comes in at 95,000 square feet.

"This is the tenth Andretti's and the fourth store in Texas," said **Collette Shillcutt**, general manager. "A Fort Worth location is also under construction."

While it isn't the first facility in the Lone Star State, it has some attributes that distinguish it from the others.

"We have the largest arcade of all the Andretti's stores and the largest track," said Shillcutt. "We have four different tracks and multilevel tracks designed by our team."

While the go-karts may squeak a bit when taking the turns, overall the track area is fairly quiet, which makes it great for spectators. And there is a lot of variety.

"We have Mini Mario upstairs that is for 4- to 7-year-old kids," Shillcutt told *Amusement Today*. "They get to drive themselves. They don't have to be in a car with Mom or Dad. They are in smaller cars designed just for them."

The junior track is intended for 9 years and older. The intermediate track is designed for 12 years and older. It reaches speeds of 25 mph. The adult track reaches speeds of 35 mph. If an event dictated, Andretti's



Andretti's in Grand Prairie boasts the largest arcade (above) of any of the company's properties. At the far left is the Triotech 7DXperience Dark Ride. Karting is more fun on multi-level tracks (below). AT/TIM BALDWIN, JEFFREY SEIFERT

has the ability to join the blue track and green track into one super track. That feature is not available at all the Andretti facilities.

Unique to Grand Prairie is an elevated viewing area that allows guests to become engaged spectators in all the races.

While karting is the big draw, Andretti's offers a multitude of ways to have fun.

The 7DXperience Dark Ride from **Triotech** offers visitors a 10-minute, interactive gaming experience.

"A great advantage of this attraction is that it comes with several rides, each with its own theme and storyline. This keeps guests coming back for more rides," said **Christian Martin**, vice president communications, Triotech. "The greatest strength is the interactivity. People compete with friends as they ride and aim to get the highest score. It brings



smiles and a fun experience to all guests."

Hologate, **Hyperdeck** and **Limitless** are three virtual reality attractions available at Andretti's. Along with that, there are virtual reality games.

The laser tag experience is from **Creative Works** of Fort Worth. Working creatively with Andretti's, this one is designed to be post-apocalyptic, and a sharp, two-story cityscape features numerous places to dart,

duck and hide.

"You can pick and choose and pay as you play, but we do offer a VIP package that gives you a little bit of everything, and we also have memberships," said Shillcutt.

Riding a trend of a rise in duckpin bowling, **Brunswick** provides **Spark Bowling**. The lanes are interactive with projections on the floor that interact with balls being rolled at the pins.

"Spark has a more

immersive feeling," said **Jason Dean**, director of business development, Brunswick. "What's great about Spark as opposed to other lane projection systems is ours integrates with the game and the scoring system. So, even a gutter ball can earn points. Games are integrated into the lanes so you can earn points by hitting targets. For events, there is also the ability to use pictures or corporate logos. Andretti's is the first to incorporate Spark with the short-lane duckpin bowling."

"I'm very excited about our food," said Shillcutt. "Our food is incredible. Everything from mahi mahi tacos to miso salmon and shrimp — it's very upscale food to your standards. It's a little bit of everything. Once you try it, you'll want to come back for the food, for sure."

The menu also has kids fare. In addition, there is a full-service bar that has craft cocktails and mocktails. Shillcutt finds the catered events to be particularly impressive.

In the heart of it all is a massive arcade. **Player One** supplied the catalogue of games. **Embed** provides the card service.

"Some of our games were purchased at IAAPA Expo and are the first ones out," Shillcutt noted.

There are six event rooms that can be configured into several sizes, even one giant room. A Mario Suite that overlooks the track can be rented out to groups. When it is not, the public is invited inside to be used as a viewing area along with bar service.

From an employment standpoint, Andretti's hired 387 team members, 67 of which oversee the tracks.

When the Grand Prairie location debuted, summer hours were from 10 a.m. to midnight Sunday through Thursday, staying open an hour later on Friday and Saturday. When school resumed, the hours transitioned to opening at 11 a.m.



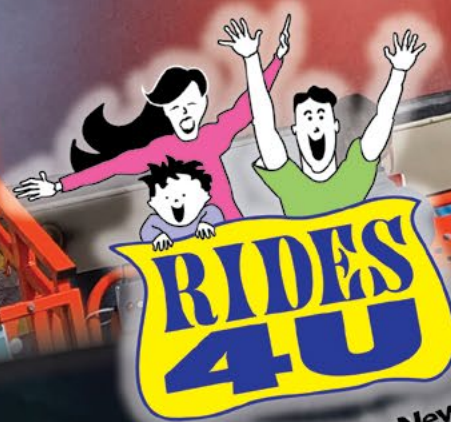
Brunswick's Spark bowling offers games on the lanes as well as scoring with pins (above left). Both the look and the culinary offerings are upscale (above right). AT/TIM BALDWIN



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AGS restores historic D.C. mini golf course to glory

WASHINGTON D.C. — **The East Potomac Miniature Golf Course** — America's oldest continuously operating miniature golf course, and the only outdoor miniature golf course in Washington, D.C. — was recently restored to much of its original 1931 splendor by **Adventure Golf & Sports (AGS)** and reopened in the summer of 2024.

"We were very pleased to have been selected by **National Links Trust** to rehabilitate this course," said **Scott Lundmark**, president of AGS. "This course is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and required exceptional attention to detail."

National Links Trust (NLT), a nonprofit organization dedicated to positively impacting the Washington, D.C. community and changing lives through affordable and accessible municipal golf, was chosen by the National Park Service (NPS) in 2020 to rehabilitate and operate three Washington, D.C. public golf courses.

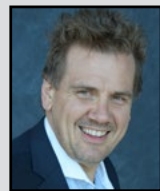
"We are fortunate to have a strong partnership with the NPS and a shared vision for the future of municipal golf in our nation's capital," said **Clark Pastrick**, director of capital projects for the NLT. "Our goal is to keep municipal golf accessible and affordable while improving the facilities to make them true community assets. This project plays an important role in that."

While transforming the course into a welcoming, affordable community hub, NLT also approached the project with historical accuracy at the forefront of their plans. Luckily for NLT and AGS, there were a number of images and news articles that helped inform the restoration process. They were also supported by the NPS, who provided additional knowledge throughout planning, design and construction.

For example, a couple of holes that had been re-routed over the years were restored to the original flow of play. Noteworthy restored features include replicas of the White House, Mount Vernon and the Capitol Building, which serve as obstacles, in addition to a wishing well, loop-de-loop, and "Marshmallow Man" obstacle. All of these features had long been lost or had significantly deteriorated over the last several decades. AGS, NLT, and the NPS worked collaboratively and with third-party companies to reproduce and restore these features.

"Being able to restore so many historic elements to the course has been exciting," Pastrick says. "We were fortunate to have a wealth of resources that were crucial to building and installing the various features with an extremely high degree of accuracy."

AGS began work on the project in the early spring, persevering through cool and rainy weather that at times made work challenging. Despite this, they completed their work on schedule, allowing grading, drainage and other sitework to commence in early summer. An exact reopening date has not been determined, but is expected to be in late summer of this year.



FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT CENTRAL

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Pinstack continues its San Antonio, Texas, expansion with the opening of its second location. The Texas-based bowling alley and entertainment venue opened the doors to its North Rim Pinstack location the week of July 11, 2024.

Pinstack calls its more than 54,000-square-foot facility "upscale" with 12 lanes and six VIP lanes. Pinstack North Rim also has a full high-ropes course 20-feet in the air, video games, virtual reality, laser tag and a 24-foot-tall, LED-lit rock-climbing wall.

"We knew that we wanted to open multiple locations in the area," said **Mark Moore**, CEO of **Entertainment Properties Group Inc.** "North Rim was a natural fit for our second location because of its proximity to major business headquarters, travel, tourism and shopping."

Betson Enterprises announced the completion of a state-of-the-art, 34-piece game room installation at **Action 500** in Dorval, Quebec, Canada. This major update introduces redemption games, a card system and the latest arcade offerings.

"We were amazed by the professionalism of Betson," said **Frederick Martel**, president of Action 500 Dorval. "They advised us perfectly all along the project. We now have an amazing arcade and redemption room! The revenue has been impressive right from the start, with our existing clients loving the new additions and customers coming in daily to play."

Regional Sales Director **Britannie Betti** spearheaded the transformation with a comprehensive game selection to fit the FEC clientele. The newly revamped game room now features a diverse array of attractions, including VR experiences like **Godzilla Kaiju Wars VR (Raw Thrills)**, merchandisers such as **Find A Key Deluxe (The Really Big Crane Company)** and **Showtime (Coastal)**, alongside redemption games like **Quarterback Pro (ICE)**, **World Football Pro (ICE)**, and **Connect 4 Hoops (Bay Tek Entertainment)**.

Chuck E. Cheese has introduced the first-ever nationwide, unlimited-visit monthly membership program for family entertainment centers.

The brand announced the extension after a very successful Summer Fun Pass season and per strong consumer demand, selling more than 350,000 passes to date. The new program allows families to visit Chuck E. Cheese as often as they want,

play up to 250 games per day, and enjoy discounts of up to 50% off on most food and drinks, plus other benefits.

"We wanted to create a program that makes Chuck E. Cheese more affordable for families," said **Mark Kupferman**, executive vice president of Chuck E. Cheese. "Amid rising costs, our goal was to offer great value, and develop an easy and fun solution for everyone. After nearly a year of successful testing in several markets, and great demand, we've seen firsthand how much families love it. We're thrilled to launch this program nationwide."

For a low monthly fee starting at \$7.99, automatically charged to their credit card, parents can bring their kids to Chuck E. Cheese whenever they want. Passes may be used at over 470 participating Chuck E. Cheese locations throughout the U.S.

Thrill-seekers are making their way through mazes and jumping over obstacles at Fresno, California's newest family entertainment center. **Syctron** opened its doors for the first time the morning of August 7, 2024.

The 28,000-square-foot building holds mazes, obstacle courses and an arcade. Tickets for a 90-minute session start at \$28, and an all-day pass costs \$36.

River Club Glen Arbor (RCGA), with 400 feet of riverfront footage on Crystal Rivers in northern Michigan, opened just before the 4th of July weekend, promising a unique dining experience. It features an outdoor 18-hole Bunkers & Bumps-style custom miniature golf course designed and built by **Adventure Golf & Sports (AGS)**, along with Mexican inspired food, a full bar and music.

"There's nothing like it anywhere in the Midwest," said **Mike Sheldon**, owner of the RCGA. "We're an 18-hole executive putting course with food and beverage, live music, riverfront and Sky Deck seating with a full bar and Mexican inspired food — so that's burritos, tacos, bowls, salads. We like to say, 'Everything good all at once!'"

According to AGS, the Bumper & Bunks style miniature golf course featured at River Club Glen Arbor is a fairways-and-greens design using interlocking, patented panels made from recycled materials that are also permeable for instant drainage so the course won't harm natural flora and fauna.

Despite heat, construction, Ohio State Fair enjoys a good run

ARM Rides delivers new Rock Star to dazzle fair midway

AT: B. Derek Shaw

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COLUMBUS, Ohio — Although the attendance at the Ohio State Fair was down from one million-plus last year, all were pleased in the end. Final attendance for the 12 days (July 24 through August 4) came in at 988,859 this year.

"As we all know, fairs are very weather dependent," said Ohio State Fair Assistant General Manager **Alicia Shoults**. "The first week, we had hot weather with temperatures in the high 80s and low 90s, along with threats of rain, which fortunately, held off. However, in the second week, we saw extreme heat consistently in the 90s and multiple days of pop-up thunderstorms and lightning. Despite the hot and sometimes rainy weather, though, we had great revenue over the course of the event. In fact, a brief storm on Saturday afternoon didn't hurt attendance as people went in buildings and then got back outside to enjoy rides, food and more."

Mary Talley, principal of **Talley Amusements**, summed up the weather as "challenging." During the week it was leaner than most days. Even with the weather, Talley was up 2% on ride gross.

The carnival brought in 67 rides, 32 main midway and 35 in kiddieland. New to this fair were **Defender (Fabbri Group Booster)**, **Thunderfest (Wisdom**



Talley Amusements brought in 67 rides. There were two midways, one had the larger rides while the other (above) contained the kiddie rides. **Hard Rock**, an **ARM Rock Star**, made its debut at the Ohio State Fair (below). It was delivered to the fair by company President **Mike Gill**, who even helped set it up for its initial run. COURTESY STEFAN HINZ

Himalaya), **Dumbo (Kolmax)** and **Hard Rock (ARM USA Rock Star)**.

"We ordered [Rock Star] in 2023. **Mike Gill** (president) delivered it to the Ohio State Fair. He even helped **Tommy [Talley]** set it up!" exclaimed Talley.

The three most popular rides were the **Fast Trax** slide (**Fabbri Group**), **Alien Abduction (Wisdom)** and the **Giant Wheel (Lamberink)**. There was also a **Century (Chance Rides)** wheel and an **Eagles Eye (Mulligan)** wheel.

Talley booked in **Alamo Amusements** with five rides, **Primetime Carnival** with four rides, **Big O Amusements** with two rides, **JoyRides, Inc.** with two rides and **Pride Amusements** with one ride. Talley also offered 40 games, 28 food stands and a dozen straight sales.

There was construction taking place on the fairgrounds with a narrow



midway and no additional room. "We were stuffed in like sardines," said Talley.

Ride midway revenue came in at \$3,274,447.

Talley was asked about her experience working with the fair. "I just absolutely adore **Adam Heffron** (new general manager). He was raised in the fair industry and is a pleasure to work with."

"Talley Amusements is

known for bringing clean rides and a beautiful midway to the Ohio State Fair," said Shoults. "Despite some ongoing construction projects requiring the layout to change, Talley adapted to keep just as many rides offered in previous years in a smaller footprint at the 2024 Ohio State Fair."

Shoults appreciates what sets this fair apart from

others. "All fairs are reflective of their community, and similarly, we take pride in celebrating the great state of Ohio — from music to food to talented artists. Some things we have that are unique and set us apart from other fairs are our All-Ohio State Fair Band and All-Ohio State Fair Youth Choir, musical groups comprised of hundreds of talented young musicians and singers from across the state, who are housed in fair dormitories and perform several times each day of the fair. In addition, we are known for our beautiful Natural Resources Park, an eight-acre arboretum with numerous free activities for families, including fishing, kayaking, touch ponds, and a 14-foot-tall talking animatronic Smokey Bear. We pride ourselves on having a large livestock show and junior fair, with more than 20,000 livestock entries from across the state of Ohio."

There were numerous special promotions and events including **ABC6** and **FOX28** opening day, a sensory-friendly morning from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., **WOSU** kids day with **PBS** kids characters and activities, **\$3 Thursday** (food deals on both Thursdays), **RecoveryOhio's** mental health day, **Molina Healthcare** Day, veterans and active military day free admission, **NBC4** family discount day, **AmeriHealth Caritas** senior day, **10TV** day, college student day, **Telhio** and **Ronald McDonald House** charities day, and **Donate Life Ohio**

► See OHIO, page 34



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Also new this year was a Kolmax Dumbo ride that enjoyed quite a bit of ridership on the kiddieland midway. COURTESY STEFAN HINZ



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OHIO
Continued from page 33

day. The fair has a \$420,000 advertising budget. The media mix is broken down into digital and social media: 43%, TV: 24.8%, radio: 13.9%, outdoor: 12.5%, movie theater: 2.5% and print: 2.6%.

For the first time, there was a new food avenue. This area contained a half dozen first-time food vendors and offered new foods, including savory “bombz,” fresh strawberries and creme parfaits, pickle lemonade, pickle pizza, maple bacon funnel cake, a variety of egg rolls, Mexican street corn, corn dog and other delicious options. The Ohio Poultry Association offered six new deviled egg flavors, as well as Velvet Ice Cream’s exclusive fair flavor, caramel popcorn ice cream.

“There were several new features this year, including a live mural competition with murals that were later moved throughout the fair to beautify the facility and celebrate Ohio artists, an activity path in our Lausche Youth Exploration space that allowed kids to collect lanyards and ‘brag tags’ for participating in activities, and more,” said Shoultz.

Entertainment included comedian Gabriel “Fluffy” Iglesias, Lauren Daigle and



Alabama: Roll on II North America Tour with special guest **Jade Eagleson**.

Employment challenges and strategies weren't an issue this year. “Our human resources team has done a fantastic job of getting information out into the community, and the quantity of applicants this year exceeded recent years,” said Shultz.

“We are in the midst of a massive construction project, which includes underground infrastructure work throughout the property, the demolition of four buildings to create two new buildings, and more,” said Shoultz. “This year, we faced the challenge

of relocating some fair favorites and creating new layouts and pathways to work around construction fencing and utility work. Working as a team to make these plans, and working closely with construction partners, vendors, ride providers, and relocated areas was vital. In addition, we took advantage of construction fencing to share renderings of new buildings and directional signage to relocated items and fair attractions. We also featured a project showcase with a video about the project, images of future buildings, and a 3-D site model showing new buildings and upcoming renovations to help educate fairgoers about the construction progress and the path ahead.”

“I’m excited to take it to the next level. This fair has the potential to be back in the Top Ten,” said Talley.

The 2025 fair takes place July 23 to August 3.

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Trio of new rides debuts on the Wisconsin State Fair midway

AT: B. Derek Shaw

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WEST ALLIS, Wisc. — This year three rides made their debut at the 173rd Wisconsin State Fair. One is brand new this year, while the other two appeared at the annual 11-day event for the first time.

A newly manufactured KMG XXL spectacular (named The Kraken) delighted thrill seekers with its gyrations, while a 2000 Reverchon spinning coaster known as Crazy Mouse was wildly successful as well. The Kraken is owned by Iconic Midway Rides (Marina Zaitshik and Johan Small) while the Crazy Mouse is part of Michael Woods' Wood Entertainment ride arsenal. Also, Dizzy Dragons, a Sellner Manufacturing circular flat ride, located in kiddie land, was brought in by Arnold Amusements.

The Kraken, a pendulum-type ride, is a swinging arm similar to others seen on major midways; however, it is over twice the size of the rest. Nicknamed 'Big Brother' to its smaller KMG counterparts, Freak Out and Afterburner, The Kraken stands at 131 feet and swings as high as 147 feet. The ride is transported on three semi-trailers, holding 20 riders per cycle with an hourly capacity of 400 people. It is the first portable ride of its type in the United States. Currently, setup takes 12 to 14 hours, however, that time should lessen as the carnival gains more time with it.

This head-turner ride was ordered in late 2022 and made its U.S. debut at the 11-day Fiesta San Antonio earlier this year. It then played Buc Days (Corpus Christi), and San Diego County Fair (Del Mar) before Wisconsin. It continues to play other major fairs throughout the rest of this season including Minnesota State Fair, Oklahoma State Fair and the State Fair of Texas.

Zaitshik talked about the reason her company settled on this particular KMG ride: "We were trying to find a piece in spots that we play that would be an asset to



This year was the first time Crazy Mouse (above left) appeared at the fair as it had been in Valencia, California. Dizzy Dragons (above right) was brought in by Arnold Amusements for the kiddie land of SpinCity. COURTESY WISCONSIN STATE FAIR



the fair and that customers would really love."

The crowd response proved that. "The reaction has been really great. People are shocked at how tall it actually is! Most people walking by jump in line or the ones not brave enough, stop to watch and take pictures and videos of it. The original, smaller predecessor has been a favorite since they debuted around 25 years ago, so this is just the giant version and people love it!" said Zaitshik.

"KMG was great to work with. They were very organized and professional from start to finish. If there were any issues, they addressed them immediately," said Zaitshik. "Shipping was a bit of a problem because of the limited number of routes currently, but that was out of their control. We're really happy with the final product and how they brought our theme and vision to life. A big thank you to the Kroon Family and Peter Theuniz!"

"The fairgoers' reaction to each of these rides has been phenomenal," said Marisa Mertens, public relations coordinator. "Both have consistently good lines, and it has been fun watching people as they approach each of them. There is always a small crowd stand-

Kraken is the first portable pendulum ride of its type in the United States. The KMG ride is owned by Iconic Midway Rides. COURTESY WISCONSIN STATE FAIR

ing at the base of the Kraken just watching others ride. The Dizzy Dragons was a great addition to our kiddie land area this year. This piece recently underwent some refurbishments and looked great on the midway. Families seemed to love it!" SpinCity, the area where all the attractions are located, had 38 rides. As this fair is independent, 19 different carnival providers were there this year (13 ride owners and six game owners).

"It has gone well," said Michael Wood. "Crazy Mouse was well received." The ride did very well with both the volume of traffic and revenue. "This has always been a good roller coaster event."

The coaster came up in discussions with fair staff when he first bought it. However, he had another

spot for it to go. The coaster was in Ventura, California, and his other three rides were in Ocean City, Maryland. "I wanted to consolidate my stuff." His other three rides are a Midway Sky Eye (Lamberink) wheel, Techno Power (Tivoli) and a Magic Maze (Owen Trailer). They all played at the Wisconsin State Fair, which allowed him to put his equipment in fewer places. (The wheel is in partnership with Wade Shows, doing business as Biggest Wheel LLC.)

How far you go and how much equipment you take are things Wood says he can control. "You can't control everything else," referring to the weather, attendance and other variables. Originally from Michigan, he said, "This is my stomping grounds."

A record-breaking 1,136,805 people visited the 2024 fair, beating the pre-

vious record of 1,130,572 from 2019. Fairgoers enjoyed more than 90,000 trips over the fair on the SkyGlider (Sky Trans Manufacturing,) which is a permanent ride on the grounds.

Mertens was asked if new rides are an integral part of the annual fair. "While we do strive to bring variety and new attractions to SpinCity each year, we are also very fortunate to have a phenomenal group of carnival providers who return year after year. It can be a hard balance to strike sometimes, but this year, all our new attractions were brought to us by owners who have previously operated in SpinCity."

The Wisconsin State Fair is scheduled to return from July 31 to August 10, 2025.

•wistatefair.com



MIDWAYSCENE

AT: B. Derek Shaw

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Julie LaFave is the new director of **The Great New York State Fair**.

"Julie's experience as operations director and interim director, coupled with her creativity and knowledge, are incredible assets to the long-term growth and vitality of The Great New York State Fair," Governor **Kathy Hochul** said. "I am proud to officially welcome her as the director of one of our most beloved traditions and look forward to working with her as we continue to invest in and grow this extraordinary showcase of New York's farmers, products, culture and diversity.

LaFave said, "I couldn't be more excited to be named director of The Great New York State Fair and play a role in growing a summer tradition that has captivated New Yorkers for over 175 years. I'm grateful to Governor Hochul for appointing me to this important role and to my team here at the fair who are working tirelessly to ensure that fairgoers leave with the feeling that the 2024 Fair was one of the best yet."

The 2024 fair ran August 21 through Monday, September 2 with **Wade Shows** as the carnival provider.

Andrew Hanschen is the new secretary/executive director of the **Showmen's League of America**. He takes over for **Cindy Henning**, who left at the end of May after a nine-year tenure. From a Facebook post: "It's been an absolute thrill ride from the start, hour for hour the most fun I've ever had at a job, and I can boast that I haven't gotten dizzy or had to throw up even once so far! I assisted Cindy with many special projects during her time in the office here, and I want to say that I really appreciate her as a person, and I appreciate the job she did for our organization. Please join me in wishing her the best in the future."

Hanschen is a fourth-generation showperson and past SLA scholarship recipient. He grew up traveling with the **Mighty Thomas Carnival**, spending every summer on the road traveling throughout Minnesota, the Dakotas, Montana, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Alberta and more. When he was 10, he was staffing the office window, issuing tickets. He continued to run the office and administer events off and on for many years.

Hanschen graduated from the **University of Texas** with a double major in History and Anthropology, currently living in Houston, Texas, with his wife **Kim** and 7-year-old daughter **Freyja**. Prior to the SLA position, he worked for a non-profit called **Urban Harvest**, managing a mobile farmers market fleet, as well as

doing seasonal installations for high-end retail stores including **Dior** and **Chanel**.

Craig Rudland has been part of many **North Dakota State Fairs**; however, this year is his first as its general manager. During his 42-year career at the fair, he has held several positions, the most recent being the assistant general manager, which he held for the past 12 years.

Rudland started his career the summer between eighth and ninth grades as a kid who needed a summer job and spending money. As the years progressed, he picked up more shifts, and once he graduated from high school, he started working at the fairgrounds full-time.

Aaron Ottmar, another longtime employee, will now serve as assistant general manager.

The 2025 fair comes around July 18 – 26, with **Amusement Midway Providers (AMP)** as the carnival operator.

New York Governor **Kathy Hochul** recently announced the launch of the state's nearly \$2 million marketing initiative to promote New York's more than 50 county and local fairs. The efforts include television, radio, and digital advertisements and billboards, a new County Fairs Passport program, and a transportation grant program to help boost attendance at the state's fairs, educate communities about the ways that fairs support local economies, and showcase New York State agriculture.

These new efforts are part of Governor Hochul's broader "Get Offline, Get Outside" summer campaign to promote physical and mental health by encouraging New York's kids and families to put down their phones and computers, take a break from social media and enjoy recreation and outdoor social gatherings.

"As a former 4-H kid, I know how impactful our county and youth fairs are — creating memories of a lifetime and providing incredible opportunities for fairgoers to learn more about New York agriculture," Governor Hochul said. "With the launch of these new initiatives, we are encouraging all New Yorkers to get outside and visit their county fairs, experience incredible agricultural exhibits, and enjoy great food and entertainment all summer long."

The state's marketing and advertising campaign, "Never Far from Fun," includes a 30-second TV ad that is being placed in broadcast, cable and connected television in every media market across the state (Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo, Elmira, Greater New York, Plattsburgh, Rochester, Syracuse, Utica, Watertown).

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WATER PARKS & RECREATION

► MSC Cruise ship offers enhanced family experiences — page 44 / News Splash — page 44

Schlitterbahn opens Schatze's Storybrook Park, new Hillside Terrace

AT: Jeffrey Seifert
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NEW BRAUNFELS, Texas — In April, Schlitterbahn Waterpark & Resort New Braunfels continued its tradition of premiering first-of-its-kind attractions by adding Bow Wow Blaster, the world's first water coaster for kids. The new water coaster is part of Schatze's Storybrook Park, an all-new kids' area that was developed in the original section of the park.

The new area, named after Schlitterbahn's short-legged mascot pup, features not only the world's first kids water coaster but six new waterslides, more than 70 interactive water features, spray toys, splash pads and a 1,200-gallon tipping water bucket.

"We unveiled the first new attraction in over a decade right here at Schlitterbahn — Schatze's Storybrook Park," brand activation and communications senior manager **Chris Ozimek** said during the opening ceremony held in April. "You probably know Schatze very well, but it's always been Schatze's dream to have a place where all of his friends can play together every day. That dream has finally come true."

Bow Wow Blaster is a pint-sized version of the park's famous Master Blaster, which opened in 1996 as a follow-up to the



The top deck of the new Hillside Terrace (above) offers views of the updated lagoon pool with downtown New Braunfels in the distance. Bow Wow Blaster offers gentle uphill blasts (below left) and curves (below right) for those not yet big enough to enjoy a full-sized blaster. AT/TIM BALDWIN



original Dragon Blaster — the world's first uphill water coaster. The new water coaster, dubbed a Mini Blaster, was supplied by **WhiteWater West** of British Columbia, Canada, which also supplied the Fur-Bidden Fort AquaPlay 550 waterplay structure and the new slides.

Like most Master Blaster water coasters, Bow Wow Blaster utilizes specially designed rafts to

accommodate two riders, although participants may ride alone if they are at least 40 inches in height and weigh at least 120 pounds. The minimum height is 36 inches but those between 36 to 40 inches must be accompanied by an adult. The maximum weight is 275 pounds per raft for either one or two people combined.

Storybrook Park is a redevelopment of the

space that was formerly used for Polywog Pond and Tadpool. But not everything from those two attractions was abandoned. Schatze's Fairy Tail Trail had a lot of nostalgic elements that the park felt needed to be preserved and although Polywog Pond and Tadpool were older, the park purposely refurbished the iconic frog slide and reinstalled it. The faeries at the top of the AquaPlay

structure are exact replicas of the faeries that were in the Polywog Pond, and the whimsical mushrooms in the spray ground pay homage to the mushrooms that were in the original pond.

The new area, next to Schatze's Central Park, is divided into three storybook lands: Fur-Bidden Forest, Schatze's Pawn'd and Fairy Tail Trail.

► See **SCHATZE**, page 42

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► **SCHATZE**

Continued from page 39

Sidewalks connect the three areas like a babbling brook — a “storybrook” — that cascades through an enchanted land. Classic stories are reimagined with Schatze’s reinterpretation into puppy-themed fairy tales including Little Red Riding Hound, Houndsel and Petzel, Rapawnzel and the Three Little Pugs. The new park also features shaded seating areas under which guests can relax or enjoy a meal.

“Schlitterbahn has always been known as a place where families come together to have fun, make memories and stay cool during the hot summer months,” said **Darren Hill**, vice president and general manager of Schlitterbahn Water Parks and Resorts. “We are known as a water park that introduces first-of-its-kind attractions, and with the addition of the world’s first water coaster for kids and Schatze’s



The Schatze’s Paw’nd area features a collection of three new body slides for little ones called the Three Little Pugs (above left). Fairy Tail Trail offers lots of whimsical elements (above right). AT/TIM BALDWIN



Storybrook Park in 2024, the tradition of families making lifelong memories in New Braunfels will continue for many years to come.”

It’s been a recent trend to reimagine iconic adult attractions into kid-sized versions. When *Amusement Today* asked who came up with the idea of a mini water coaster, Hill credits **Rick Belhumeur**, assistant general manager of Schlitterbahn Galveston Island. “We were talking about new children’s capital

in both the Galveston and New Braunfels parks, and he said he really wanted to do a kids’ master blaster,” said Hill. “New Braunfels won the contest of where the ride would go.”

Storybrook Park wasn’t the only capital improvement project for 2024.

“We have a whole new section of the park entrance that has huge brand-new restrooms,” Ozimek said. “There’s new lockers, new changing areas and then there’s a new restaurant

on the rooftop and it’s got this great view of the river below, so this isn’t the only thing new here this year.”

The new Hillside Terrace replaced the old Festhaus. According to Hill, the renovation of that space was much needed. It also required a partial rebuild of the Hillside Tube Chute that used to go through the Festhaus building. Even though it is the same length, the tube chute now has better flow, so it is a new experience for guests. To better

accommodate all patrons, the new terrace includes a much-needed elevator to transport guests who might have difficulty with stairs from the lagoon pool level to the street level.

Schlitterbahn Waterpark & Resort New Braunfels is a perennial favorite among water park connoisseurs. The park has won *Amusement Today’s* Golden Ticket Award for Best Waterpark for each of the 25 years that the award has been presented.

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New MSC Cruise ship offers enhanced family experiences

GENEVA, Switzerland — MSC Cruise's latest world-class ship, MSC World America is redefining family cruises with new programs and facilities developed in partnership with the **Lego Group**. As a family-owned company, MSC Cruises is known for its award-winning family offerings. Its ultra-modern new flagship will feature seven distinct districts, each bringing together a range of tailored experiences, with the Family Adventura District becoming the go-to destination for kids and families around the clock.

The family district will feature the largest-ever Doremi Land, spanning more than 10,000 square feet. Doremi, a family of mascots based on the ship's compass star logo, has entertained kids on MSC Cruises for more than a decade. Home to seven rooms dedicated to different age groups up to 17 years old, Doremi Land will also be the most technologically advanced kids' area of the fleet with the latest tech consoles on the market, along with sound and light effects. Baby services are offered in collaboration with **Chicco** — the leading global baby brand and a long-term MSC Cruises partner. Exclusively on MSC World America, the popular Kids' Clubs will be open all day, from 9 a.m. until midnight for the duration of each voyage. For dance competition fans, a new version of the Doremix family disco will arrive with new technology and stunning visuals. Parents and children will dance together to win the title of best dancers of the night on the global hits of the moment and original MSC Cruises songs for children.

In an elevated partnership with the Lego Group, MSC World America will offer the first Lego-themed parade at sea. Lego walkabouts designed to entertain children of all ages will march through the ship from Family Adventura to the World Promenade once per cruise.

For the first time, Family Adventura will also see a brand new area for master builders and brick enthusiasts called Lego Family Zone. Here, parents and children can play together, and Lego fans of all ages can unleash their creativity from morning to evening.

The new Lego family game show is a first in the cruise industry. During each cruise, families will have the opportunity to come together for an exhilarating team challenge, where parents and children can compete as true master builders on board. The competition will feature timed challenges, colorful bricks, and unexpected twists, all culminating in determining the ultimate winner.

In the Sportplex, guests will find a spacious and dynamic gaming space equipped with everything from basketball and tennis courts to interactive game shows and even bumper cars and roller skating. There will be a dedicated sports program on offer, which includes an evolution of football, basketball, zorb ball sessions, pickleball and hoverboards. Here, guests will also have the opportunity to enjoy the popular Drone Academy — voted the Number One activity for kids on board other MSC Cruises. After training in drone piloting skills, younger guests are put through their paces on this custom-built futuristic obstacle course, flying drones at top speed through neon shapes to beat friends and make their way to the top of the leaderboard. Specifically created for teenagers, Star Shooters, an adventure course in the Sportplex, tasks participants with hitting a target to secure points for ultimate victory while virtual reality at Luna Park will give guests access to the latest VR technology experiences, to transport them to other worlds from the MSC World America.

The MSC World America was constructed at the **Chantiers de l'Atlantique** shipyard in Saint-Nazaire, France. It was floated out of dry dock on April 7, 2024, and is undergoing final outfitting. It is scheduled to make its transatlantic crossing early next year and to begin cruising from its home port of Miami in April 2025.

—Jeffrey Seifert



NEWSPLASH

AT: Jeffrey L. Seifert

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The city of Fort Smith, Arkansas, voted to approve the purchase of more waterslides to expand **Parrot Island Waterpark**. However, before the purchase can move forward, the county will have to approve funding. The park is managed by **American Resort Management (ARM)** and representatives were on site recently to review the park's condition and make recommendations to the city.

Deputy City Administrator for Fort Smith **Jeff Dingman** said that the city is purchasing the slides at a discounted rate.

While discussing the future of the water park, ARM CEO **Rick Coleman** mentioned five slides were available at "an aggressive discount." The slides were originally built for a waterpark in Florida but didn't end up being installed.

The city says the five slides presented an opportunity to kickstart expansion plans to improve the water park's activities and further solidify its position as a premier water park in the region.

The slides will cost \$4.2 million with the city of Fort Smith and Sebastian County each responsible for \$2.1 million.

"The attendance that we've seen over this year and last year, we've had record numbers of attendees every day," said Dingman. "And the park is popular, not only within the city and the county, but throughout the region."

A major entertainment project in the form of a new, Hawaiian-themed water park is about to become a reality in Conselheiro Lafaiete, Minas Gerais, Brazil. Some of the features of the **Kilauea Acaqua Park** include a themed volcano, waterslides, heated pools, two lazy rivers, relaxing hot springs, a wave pool and a kids area. Construction on the park will begin in September. Project developers expect the first phase, which includes the volcano, a lazy river and a wave pool, will take 12 months to complete.

The **Mundy Park Pool** in Coquitlam, British Columbia, Canada, will not open for the 2024 season as planned. Citing "unexpected and unavoidable circumstances, largely construction delays," city staff confirmed in July that the new CA\$12-million (US\$8.7 million) **Spani Pool** replacement won't be open until summer 2025.

The pool was originally planned to open in the spring, but the pool tank had trouble holding its water.

Initial testing on the refurbished competition pool identified leaks resulting in the need for repairs and re-testing

of the tank.

Coquitlam City Council approved a major overhaul of the 52-year-old Spani Pool facility in February 2023. With the overhaul came a new name — Mundy Park Pool. At the time, Councillor **Craig Hodge** voiced a note of concern about having the pool ready by the spring of 2024.

The new design is set to include a leisure pool with a shallow entry, a lazy river, and a warming pool intended to provide therapeutic opportunities for residents. The renovated lap pool will stay the same size with eight swim lanes and a dive tank.

Crews were busy in August putting the final touches on the **Moana Springs Community Aquatics and Fitness Center** in Reno, Nevada, in preparation for its August 23 grand opening.

The Moana Springs Pool has been under construction for almost two years. To speed things up, the Reno Fire Department helped to fill the pools by tapping into the city's high-volume fire spigots. Fire chief **Dave Cochran** said it took about one million gallons of water to fill the pools.

The city says the demand for this type of facility is substantial. According to a study from the **National Parks and Recreation Association**, a city the size of Reno should have at least seven aquatic facilities, and with the opening of Moana, that brings the city to five total.

The new 52,000-square-foot facility includes a 50-meter indoor competition pool, multi-use indoor recreation pool, outdoor soaking pool, 5,000-square-foot fitness room, multi-use rooms and locker rooms.

The **Thebarton Aquatic Centre** in Torrensville, Australia, reopened in July following an AU\$8.7 million (US\$5.65 million) renovation and addition.

The key modifications include upgraded swimming pools complemented by a redeveloped concourse surrounding the pool areas. Changes included a new wet deck for the 25-meter pool, slip-resistant tiles, enhanced drainage systems, and a newly installed ramp leading into the main pool. The changing rooms were entirely reconstructed, now offering 50 percent more toilets and shower facilities than the previous space.

The plan also included the creation of two new multipurpose spaces designed to serve as venues for presentations, water safety education, various local learning programs and other events.



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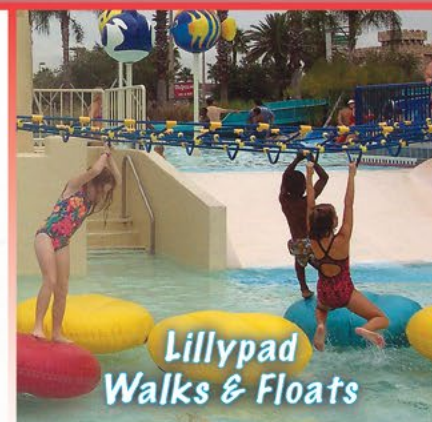
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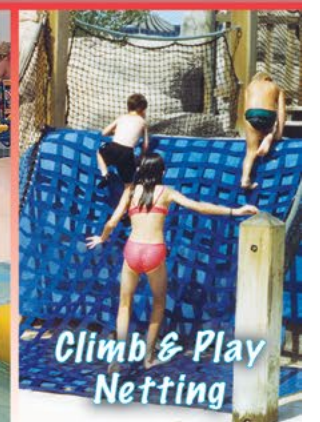
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BUSINESS & NEWSMAKERS

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IAAPA Expo Europe set for biggest trade show ever in Amsterdam

AT: Pam Sherborne

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AMSTERDAM, The Netherlands — The attractions industry's premier event in Europe arrives in Amsterdam with the biggest show floor ever. With education events set to run September 23-27 and the trade show, September 24-26, the **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Expo Europe** attendees will be offered the latest products, education sessions and networking opportunities with visionaries across the leisure and attractions community.

The 2024 event will be held at the **RAI Convention Center** in the heart of Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Known for its vibrant culture and high concentration of theme and amusement parks, IAAPA officials felt this location was



an obvious choice to host this year's exposition. The event will feature names like **Efteling**, **Toverland** and **Tomorrowland**.

The opening ceremony has been planned with performances to feature the Dutch culture with highlights to include traditional music and dance performances that reflect the rich heritage of the Netherlands.

"This year's IAAPA Expo Europe is an absolute must-visit for everyone involved in the attractions industry," said **Peter van der Schans**, executive director and vice president for IAAPA Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA). "I'm delighted to see it returning



The 2024 IAAPA Expo Europe will be held September 23-27, at the RAI Convention Center as well as elsewhere throughout The Netherlands. COURTESY RAI CONVENTION CENTER



Efteling's indoor family attraction **Symbolica** will be highlighted during one of the sessions at this year's IAAPA Expo Europe set for September 23-27, Amsterdam. Efteling also is the site for one of Monday's edutours. COURTESY EFTELING

to my home country, the Netherlands, with its rich cultural history in theme parks and vendors. We are excited to showcase the latest innovations, delve into diverse educational programs and foster new connections."

The trade show will feature more than 650 exhibitors sprawling over the 18,500 square meters (almost 200,000 square feet) of trade show floor within the RAI Convention Center. Attendees will have the chance to engage with some of the world's most acclaimed manufacturers and suppliers, exploring a wide range of cutting-edge products, services and solutions.



van der Schans

Although the official date of the event is set to begin on September 23, IAAPA is offering two sessions within the Institute Program. Set to run September 21 and 22 is the IAAPA Institute for Attractions Professionals. The IAAPA Safety Institute will run for one day only on September 22.

Monday, September 23, will offer attendees seven different edutours:

- **Water Park Day**, to take place at the **Center Parcs De Eemhof**, Zeewolde, about 45 minutes to the east of Amsterdam and created for owners, operators, designers and manufacturers in the water park industry. This is an opportunity for aquatics professionals to unite, share insights and exchange ideas.

- **Indoor Entertainment Day** will address all functions of running an indoor entertainment center.

Attendees begin at Ripley's **Believe it or Not! Amsterdam** with breakfast and speakers. Then they will move in rotating groups to such locations as **A'dam Lookout** and **This is Holland, City Center, Sherlocked, Madame Tussauds, Dungeon** and ending with a reception at **All Out**.

- The tour of Efteling located in Kaatsheuvel (about one hour south of Amsterdam), will take attendees to this park nestled in the south of the Netherlands. Attendees will take a look behind the scenes at the park's meticulously designed themed areas, including the mystical Fairy Tale Forest, where classic stories come to life.

- **Safety Day at Walibi Holland** in Biddinghuizen (about 50 minutes east

► See IAAPA, page 48

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Walibi Holland (above left) located in Biddinghuizen — about 50 minutes east of Amsterdam — is the location for IAAPA's Safety Day during the 2024 IAAPA Expo Europe. On the final day of the IAAPA Expo Europe, attendees have an opportunity to visit Toverland (above right), part of Amsterdam's large offerings of attractions. COURTESY WALIBI HOLLAND, TOVERLAND

► **IAAPA**
Continued from page 47

of Amsterdam) is where attendees will learn the latest developments and best practices in ride safety standards, risk management, ride safety design and safety compliance.

•Sustainability Day also is being held at Efteling. Attendees will get a chance to look at all of the ongoing sustainability practices at the park.

•Science Centers and Edutainment Day will take place at the **CORPUS, Space Expo and Naturalis**, located in areas south of Amsterdam, and focus on the intersection of education and intertwinement of science and natural history through state-of-the-art edutainment facilities.

•The edutour to **Avonturenboerderij Molenwaard** and **Family Resort Molenwaard**, areas about one hour south of Amsterdam, will take attendees to the heart of the Dutch countryside to view family-oriented destinations that blend educational fun with the charm of rural life.

On the afternoon of September 25, several more

Edutours are being offered. They are Amsterdam Culture and Art — It's all about Rembrandt, Amsterdam Food and Beverage and Amsterdam City Experiences.

The Amsterdam culture and art tour will take attendees on a journey through Amsterdam's most iconic cultural attractions designed to inspire and educate professionals in the amusement and attractions industry. It also will allow attendees to discover the world of Rembrandt's etchings and learn how printmaking played a crucial role in democratizing art.

Among the food and beverage tour stops will be the **Albert Cuyp Market**, where they will discover six family-owned businesses, each steeped in rich history.

The city experiences tour is designed to show attendees the city's beauty. It includes a canal cruise while indulging in Dutch Gouda cheese and bitterballen, accompanied by a local drink.

The edutour on September 26 is the **Artis Zoo**. This historic Artis Zoo is where tradition meets innovation in the heart of one of the world's oldest

zoological gardens.

The Opening Ceremony kicks off the morning of September 24. The trade show opens that morning as well.

There are an abundance of events happening on the floor as well as in the educational forums throughout the entire week of the IAAPA Expo Europe.

Meets and greets are scheduled for the Members Lounge with members working in IAAPA EMEA Safety Subcommittee on hand in addition to others. During the week on the floor will also be a Meet and Eat Job Fair luncheon in the IAAPA Theater. There will be IAAPA Trade Show tours during the week.

There are no extra costs for the above events.

The Young Professionals Forum and Reception is set for the evening of September 25.

Also, on the afternoon of the 25th is the Supervisors and Team Leaders Reception.

For attendees interested in receptions specifically for their segment of the industry, a quick check of the agenda will help in finding that.

New in 2024 is a September 26 afternoon

Food and Beverage Reception where attendees may meet fellow industry peers from their sector. There is an extra cost to this reception.

Following this reception and also new in 2024 is a Leisure and Holiday Parks Reception. Meet fellow attraction industry professionals who operate parks with overnight, family-friendly accommodations such as campgrounds, glamping, chalets, tree houses, bungalows and villas. This also is a separate ticketed event.

Educational sessions throughout the week run the gamut, with all facets of the industry being covered and presented by industry professionals. The list of topics for sessions and forums includes:

- Can We Innovate While Honouring Tradition?
- TEA Presents - Designing Experiences Beyond Opening Hours;
- Exploring Safety Regulations Exchange
- The Power of a Strong Employer Brand;
- Understanding and Shaping Park Performance;
- Emerging Trends in Recreation and Holiday

Parks for 2024;

•Maximizing Revenue and Engagement: Expanding Water Park Operations to Include Night Events and Year-Round Activities;

•Trends in Immersive Entertainment;

•The Power of Landscaping;

•Food & Beverage Trends;

•Oceana Fire Timeline: Managing Authorities, Stakeholders and Crisis;

•Future-Proofing Attractions: Digital Transformation Exchange;

•Active Entertainment: Profitable Business Models and Benchmarks for Small Businesses;

•Human Capital Exchange;

•IAAPA Research and Investment Analysis: Do the Numbers Justify the Investment?

•Boost Your Career: LinkedIn Workshop; and

•Iconic Ride Spotlight: Symbolica at Efteling.

The event ends on September 27 when attendees may choose to attend the Tech Forum: Breda University of Applied Sciences or attend the edutour at Toverland.

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2024 IAAPA Expo Europe exhibitor listing

List is current as of Aug. 15, 2024. For last-minute changes, booth additions and cancellations, consult IAAPA Connect+.

4WARD LLC	8955	Data Team Business Media	10537	Guangzhou Empower Digital Technology Co.,Ltd.	8066
A&P Projects	8670	De Haardt bv.	8508	Guangzhou EPARK Electronic Technology Co., Ltd.	8620
ABC Engineering AG	12608	de pinxi S.A.	9426	Guangzhou Funzone Games Co.,Ltd	14103
ACC Gbr.	8704	DEDEM S.p.A.	8287	Guangzhou General Inflatable Co., Limited	12937
accesso	12104	Delta Strike International Ltd	10437	Guangzhou Ifun Park Technology Co., Ltd.	14104
ACE Amusement Technologies Co., Ltd.	8062	Deltrain SA	10432	Guangzhou Joycycle Inflatable Co., Ltd.	8437
Acro-Games	8822	Design for Sport Developments Ltd.	8642	Guangzhou Jieshun Fun Equipment Ltd	8550
Activate Games Inc.	14012	Dewi Online	TT-010	Guangzhou Jiuyou Animation Technology Co., Ltd.	8068
Active Bowling Products B.V.	9415	DIERESIN SRL	8034	Guangzhou Joycycle Inflatable Co.,Ltd	12658
Adrenaline X-Treme Adventures GROUP SRL	9221	Digital Centre, S.L	8170	Guangzhou Kira Amusement Equipment Co. Ltd	8717
Advatek Lighting	TT-104	Digonex	12051	Guangzhou Leon Amusement Technology Co.,Ltd.	8552
Aerodium Technologies	10302	Diplik GmbH	14504	Guangzhou Leqi Amusement Equipment CO.M LTD.	8240
Aerophile S.A.S.	10337	Disco Design EOOD	8218	Guangzhou Lily Toys Co.,Ltd.	12843
AFP Technology - Inotec BV	12227	Disco Design EOOD	11102	Guangzhou Longcheng Electronic Co. Ltd.	8254
Africa Style	12149	Disco Design EOOD	9327	Guangzhou Minye Import and Export Co., Ltd.	8711
Airparx	12731	Discosmash BVBA	8035	Guangzhou Movie Power Technology Co.Ltd.	8538
Airquee Limited.	12743	DMG Events LLC.	8239	Guangzhou PDL Animation Technology Co., Ltd.	8766
AirTrack Factory BV	12257	DNP photo imaging Europe	9209	Guangzhou Planet Inflatables Limited	14309
Akrobat d.o.o.	12544	DOF Robotics	12516	Guangzhou Powerful Toys Co.,Ltd.	11101
Al Spaw	14404	Dongguan Unistar Industrial Limited	8539	Guangzhou Raise Technology Company	8767
Alberici SPA	8679	Dot.cy Developments Ltd.	8107	Guangzhou Sharp Blade New Material Co., Ltd.	12759
Alterface Projects	11403	Dotto S.r.l.	10104	Guangzhou Shunhong Entertainment Equipment Co., Ltd	11401
ALTUS / KOALA EQUIPMENT	8238	DP Company srl	8782	Guangzhou Solar Space Electronic Technology Co., Ltd	8008
Amarko B.V.	10426	Dreamland Playground Co.Ltd.	11105	Guangzhou SunZee Intelligent Technology Co., Ltd.	8340
AMECO BVBA	12923	Dronisos	10538	Guangzhou Superwing Animation Technology Co. Ltd.	8423
Amodino China	8052	Dutch Rides BV	9121	Guangzhou Unique Animation Technology Co., Ltd.	8265
AMS PLUS Inc	8640	Dutch Wheels BV	8507	Guangzhou Yanhe Trade Co., Ltd.	14204
AMUSOIRE	TT-019	Efes Çocuk Oyun Ekipmanları San. Tic Ltd ti.	12436	Guangzhou Yuto Amusement Technology Co.Ltd.	8342
Animando	8638	Egem Grup Ltd Sti	11601	Guestup	8137
ANKAM PLAY SYSTEMS PVT LTD	14312	eibe Produktion + Vertrieb GmbH & Co.KG	11323	Guzzi Eugenio	12900
Antalya Park	8381	Elaut	8648	HAFEMA Water Rides GmbH.	10026
Aoqi Inflatables Limited	12554	Electrocoin Sales Ltd.	8578	Hamac Trading Co Ltd	8228
APARC Attractions Pvt Ltd	8354	Eleven Ltd.	8158	Hangzhou Hogwood Amusement Equipment Co., Ltd	8255
Apex Timing SAS	8236	ELMAC II SRL	8478	Hangzhou Trains Equipment Co. Ltd.	9021
API WATER FUN GmbH	10008	EMA Makina Ve Yapi Mekanik Sist. San. ve Tic. A.S.	12249	Harry Levy Amusement Contractors Ltd.	8561
Apple Industries, Inc.	8674	Emiliana Luna Park S.r.l.	10117	Haystack Dryers Limited	12707
Aqua Drolics	12719	Empex Watertoys	11206	HB Leisure Ltd.	12960
Aqualand Industries	12928	ENGIE Electroproject B.V.	10718	Head Rush Technologies	11020
AQUARENA GmbH	10202	Ensol 360 Ltd.	8548	Heavy Solutions BV	8328
Aquaropa GmbH	12359	entertainment resource GmbH.	11315	Hebei Haiber Play Equipment Co.,Ltd.	14008
AQUATEC Europe	11611	Entre-Prises Climbing Walls	12831	Helix Leisure USA Inc (Embed)	11320
Arihant Industrial Corporation Limited.	10023	Enttec Americas	11501	Henan Jianpei Industrial Development Co. Ltd.	8744
Art Attack	8280	Environmental Street Furniture Ltd	8912	henbrandt	12982
ART Engineering GmbH	11005	EpicSurf	8237	Hengshui Jingu Jinlantern Art Co., Ltd.	14208
ART Nzo BVBA	TT-009	Escape Game Over PC	8010	Highlite International BV	8682
Arundo Reed B.V.	8607	ESF Emsland Spiel- und Freizeitgeraete GmbH & CoKG	8815	Hofmann Figuren/Christian Hofmann GmbH & Co. KG	11215
Atelier Artistique du Beton	10638	E-Sun Amusement Machine Co., Ltd.	TT-006	HOLOGATE GmbH	12428
atlantics GmbH	8800	ETF - SOIOS	10724	Holovis	8729
Attraction Technology Ltd.	8551	ETF Ride Systems	10625	Hongzheng (Shandong) Health Industry Co., Ltd.	10728
Attractions Factory Sp.z.o.o	8774	Euro Amusement Professional	11627	Hoyt & Lavt	14406
Attraktion! GmbH	11303	Eurogames SRL	11313	Hualong Dino Works	8155
Aulon Games	8022	Eurolockers B.V.	10012	Huawei Air Blower Manufacturing Co., Ltd.	12858
Avasto Recreatietechnik	8355	Euro-Matic Kft.	12020	Huss Park Attractions GmbH	12703
Avius	10710	European Leisure Industries bv.	12228	I Cing International Enterprise Co., Ltd.	14005
Axess AG	11405	Experimental Holding	8634	I.E. Park S.r.l./Amusement Rides & SOLI Bumper Cars	12110
BAGJUMP Action Sports GmbH	11016	Extraice S.L.	12726	I.PALEOHORINOS FOTISTIKA ABEE	8320
Bandai Namco Amusement Europe	8373	EyeQ Imaging Inc., Creators of Perfectly Clear	TT-015	IAAPA	14511
Batfast Cricket Centres Ltd.	8723	Fabbri Group	12116	IBG360 B.V.	8036
Battle Company	9015	FaceRacer LTD	8809	Ice'N'Go Kft.	8504
BattleKart Europe SA	8602	Falgas Deutschland GmbH	11415	ICombat Laser Tag	11201
Beckhoff Automation GmbH & Co. KG	11023	FareHarbor	14307	Idea Vending B.V.	11231
Beppe Jolanta Marjanska	8957	faszinatour GmbH	11103	Image + Digital B.V.	10101
Berliner Seilfabrik GmbH & Co.	12449	FIAM Automazione S.r.l.	11431	Imagic B.V.	9420
Bernd Wolter Design GmbH.	11302	FIDLOCK GmbH	14011	Imagina International	8352
Bertazzon 3B Srl.	12510	First Option Software	11406	IMAscore Gbr.	8316
BForce Proje Dan. A.S.	12457	FlowRider	10317	Immersive Planet Design S.L	12107
BigAirBag BV	10000	Flying Animation Technology Co., Ltd	8235	Imply Technology	10039
Billares SAM	11013	Food-Kings Service GmbH	8028	Import Marsaplay	8712
Billings Productions, Inc.	11205	Force Engineering Limited	10720	Indestroom Zrt	14105
Binzhou Nets Tribe Co. Ltd.	8542	FOREST DISTRIBUTION / FIBA	8651	Index Creative Village Public Company Limited	14506
Biz Karts	8404	FORMIT TECHNOLOGIE	8964	Indian Association of Amusement Parks and Industries.	14107
Black Light Unity International Limited.	14305	Fox Productions Clothing BV	8535	Innovative Leisure Limited	8588
BLUERAY Ltd	TT-003	Freesevice s.r.l.	8273	Intamin Amusement Rides Int. Corp. Est	12504
BMI Leisure NV	8929	Freunde der Erfrischung GmbH	8488	Intelligent Entertainment	8148
Bob's Space Racers, Inc.	10615	Fujian Sijia Industrial Material Co., Ltd.	14308	Intelligent Entertainment	8151
BoldMove Nation BV	9502	Funchal	11520	InterAction	11519
Booked It.	12975	Funk North America	9113	Interactive Lasergames GmbH & Co KG	8556
Booster Univerland	8304	Funtime Handels GmbH	12013	Interactive X-Wall	9309
Bowl-Easy B.V.	12000	Future Design Sp. z o. o.	9012	Interactive365	8136
Brogent Technologies, Inc.	12236	FX3	11210	Intercard, Inc.	11419
Brunswick Bowling Products	12204	G.L.D. Srl	12148	INTERIBI, S.L	8958
Bursapark Oyun Grupları SAN.VE TIC. LTD. STI.	12024	Gain LLC	10630	Interlink LG Ltd.	11624
Buzzpark Oyun Parkları Ekipmanları	11027	Gamaco	8201	International Expo Consults LLC.	14203
Carl Stahl ARC GmbH	TT-018	Game Castle International BV	8074	International Games Trade s.p.a.	12033
Castree Projects Ltd.	8742	Game Power Technology Co., Limited.	8655	InterPark International Ltd.	10018
CBK Technik Group	8212	Gameart Amusement Limited	11524	Investissement Quebec International.	8739
Cesit Mensucat A.S.	8932	Gateway Ticketing Systems, Inc.	12715	IPlay Water Attractions	12154
CHAIRKIT Foerdertechnik GmbH	10014	Gellyball Europe BV	8123	iPlayCO	10129
Chance Rides LLC	10616	Gerstlauer Amusement Rides GmbH	12903	Ishaq Assfour Trading Company	12152
Cheer Amusement (Nanjing) Co.Ltd.	12927	Gibbons Fans Ltd.	12757	Ital-Resina di Di Talia Angelo	12010
Cici's Inflatables Co., Ltd.	12538	Give Kids the World	10800	J Square Studio	8082
Cimolai Technology SPA	9008	Global Fun Sports sp. z o.o.Sp.K	9109	JB Inflatables BV	12550
City Golf Europe	11610	G-Look Amusement Machine Co., Ltd.	8948	JB Inflatables BV	12849
City Golf Europe	14010	Glopen	14408	Jeff Ellis & Associates, Inc.	10632
clickables online marketing	8139	Go Leisure Srl	12259	Jelly Belly Candy Company	11124
CM.com Netherlands	14110	GoAdventure ApS	8516	Jinhua Yiwei Technology Co.,Ltd	8654
CMC Europe BVBA	8713	Gold Medal Products Co.	12720	JNC Sales Ltd.	8474
COCHET SAS	8953	Golden EGG s.r.o.	8041	Jollyheap Sp.Z.o.o.	8166
Cogan S.R.L.	8270	Gosetto S.r.l.	12915	Jora Vision Europe BV	12500
Colordrops Creations	14212	Great Coasters International, Inc.	10311	Jora Vision Europe BV	12416
Concept 1900 ENTERTAINMENT	11327	Greenspan Ltd	8686	JPB Systeme	12207
CONVIOUS	8143	Guangdong Domerry Amusement Equipment Co., Ltd	8760	Jump Factory	12837
Crazy Jump S.n.c.	8051	Guangdong H-FUN Water Recreational Articles Co. Ltd.	12973	Jumpsalento di Vito Nicoli	12819
Crystal	11509	Guangdong Jinma Entertainment Corp.,Ltd.	11319	Jumpsocks	8284
CSE Entertainment Ltd.	12963	Guangdong New Blessing Inflatable products Co.,Ltd	12558	JVS GROUP s.r.o.	8928
Curious Factory	8528	Guangzhou Ailai Intelligent Technology Co., Ltd.	14311	KaGo & Hammerschmidt GmbH	10734
CV Entertainment Gbr	10730	Guangzhou Apple Tree Animation Technology Co.Ltd.	8367	KALKOMAT/IGPM DISTRIBUTION	12820
DAL Lunapark Makinalari	TT-007	Guangzhou Bouncia Inflatables Ltd.	12984	KANOPEO GmbH.	11521
Dartsee Ltd.	8335	Guangzhou Bravo Amusement Technology Co., Ltd.	8555	KARAOKE MACHINES S.L./KaraokeMedia	8308
		Guangzhou CeYuan Electronics Technology Co., Ltd	14508	Kart1	8100
		Guangzhou Channal Inflatable Co., Ltd	12749	Katapult Ltd.	8626
		Guangzhou Chuangyi Network Media Co.,Ltd	12057	KCC BV	11527
		Guangzhou Colorful park Animation Technology Co., Ltd	8268	KettenWulf Betriebs GmbH	11500

IAAPA EXPO EUROPE

KHG Bergmann GmbH	11629	Poly-Creation	8436	The Seasonal Group	8204
Kiddyfun Eventmodule	12957	Premier Rides, Inc.	11513	thejuice	11125
Kids Marketeers B.V.	8813	Preston & Barbieri S.r.l.	11413	Theme Central Lab S.L.	12021
Kilic Lunapark Ltd.Sti.	12157	PrimeTime Amusements	8737	Themed Entertainment Association (TEA)	10629
Kinetron Teknoloji A.S.	8039	Prison Island AB	8110	ThemeWorks s.r.o.	8926
King Lunapark	12046	Pro-Fab, S.L.	12638	Themics Philippines Inc.	8248
KioSoft Technologies	14509	PRO-GAMES POLAND	8057	Thier marketing GmbH	TT-005
Kirmes & Park Revue	12502	Progimpex	12219	ThisPlays International	8162
Klarer Freizeitanlagen AG	11031	ProSlide Technology, Inc.	12406	Timbolo Srl	TT-103
Kletterstein BV	8000	Prosporta Sweden AB	11209	TimeMission	8058
KMG Holland BV	12138	PTS Srl	14006	TONGYUN AMUSEMENT EQUIPMENT (SUZHOU) CO.,LTD	12827
Kolmax Plus s.r.o.	8908	Pura Vida Europe Ltd.	8961	TOPdarts	14303
Koppen Import - Export B.V.	9520	purematic	8140	Touch Magix, Inc.	8024
Kostuemwerkstatt Stefanie Ludwig	10032	PuttBrothers by Zone	8518	TouchWood Play	10714
KristallTurm GmbH & Co.KG	10107	Qingdao Aero Inflatable Co. Ltd	8412	Toy Tech SRL	8126
Kumbak Services B.V.	8001	Q-SYS, Division of QSC	8963	Toysmar Oyun Grupları - Bayram Algümü	8827
Kupper-Automaty Krzysztof Kupper	8047	QubicaAMF	10416	traceless materials GmbH	14409
KYLII KIDS	8639	QWEEKLE	10201	TreeLocate (Europe) Ltd.	9025
Kynoa SA	14201	RaceParx	14306	Triotech	10331
Lagotronics Projects B.V.	11213	RAEDER-VOGEL GMBH & CO. KG	11423	Truss Aluminium Factory a.s.	11410
LAI Games USA LLC	8568	Rainbow Inflatables Ltd.	12853	TUEV SUEID Industrie Service GmbH	11015
LAIV, S.L.	8281	Rainbow Productions Ltd.	11531	Tureks Uluslarası Fuarçılık A.S.	8251
Lampuga GmbH	14412	RAVE Sports	8738	TÜV NORD Nederland BV	11003
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Laser Quest	11000	Recras BV	TT-001	UK Department for International Trade	8624
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Laserforce International	8048	Red Raion Srl	12823	Unilux, Inc.	TT-002
LaserTag.com by Zone	8574	ReFerox Racing Simulators	8847	Unis Technology (H.K) Limited	8662
Lasertag.net OU	8040	RES RIDES AG	12725	United Distributing Co.Ltd.	8658
Leisure Activities Co., LTD	12739	Retro Arcade LLC	8949	Universal Rocks	8612
Leisure Development Partners	11409	Reuzenradbouw Lamberink B.V.	11505	Upside Down House UK Ltd.	8078
Leisure Expert Group B.V.	12232	Reverchon / SAMC Avia	12032	Uremet Corporation	12826
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Liben Group Wenzhou Toy Co., Ltd.	12023	Rides and Fun Srl	11109	Vacway Waterproof	14001
Lichtstark :: Visual Engineering	11010	RiMO Germany GmbH & Co.KG	8600	Valley-Dynamo	8562
LightUpToys.com	12920	Ritter	8193	Valo Motion	12250
Livingprojects BV	12108	RMC Rocky Mountain Construction	8016	Vantage	10417
Longfish Leisure BV	11424	ROBERS-LEUCHTEN GmbH & Co. KG	11223	VdW International	8344
LOPTICA-ZABAVA d.o.o.	14401	RobeToy	8401	Vectair Systems Ltd.	14410
Losi Francesco Elettronica Industriale	12038	ROLLER	10439	Vekoma Rides Manufacturing B.V.	10126
LUXOV®	9203	Romanvending Roman Rieck	11617	Velotti S.r.l.	8234
LX-Game Amusement Machine Co. Limited	8050	Rover International	10041	Ventrata	12130
M SKY CO., LTD.	8722	RPT Reklam ve Promosyon	12047	VENU+	8223
Mack Rides GmbH & Co. KG	10112	RS Simulation	14003	VEVRCA D.O.O.	11510
MADEA Concept	8350	S&S Worldwide, Inc.	10633	VGS	12106
MAGIC BOX eK Special Events	10001	S.M.A.P.S. Sminketeatret	TT-012	VideoBooth Systems Ltd.	11402
Magic Play SP. Z o.o.	8334	Socoa Cashless System	8362	Viewpoint Videos	12120
Magincets Sp. z o.o.	14109	Safari Dekor	14205	Vintia	12931
Magnetic Cash	8614	SAFF - Amusement	8135	ViPa Eventmodule GmbH	12979
Mamm'out bvba	11001	Sally Dark Rides	10034	Virtual Reality Slide	TT-011
Martin & Vleminckx USA, LLC	10035	Samurai Incentives and Promotions	8434	Virtual Zone Nexus SL	8916
Marty & Nelly Srl	9000	Sanero Kunstfelsen Srl	11211	Visit Group International AB	8216
MAURER Rides GmbH	11515	Sartori Rides Srl	12815	Vistafolia Ltd.	11305
MB SHOW s.r.l.s.	12008	SB International AB	11203	VIVATICKET S.P.A.	10004
Mecpower Electronics Co. Ltd	8278	SBF Srl	10020	VR Coaster GmbH & Co.KG	10113
Media Toys s.a.s. Di Sanapo Teresa & C.	12919	Scenoart Construct Group SRL	8018	Vulkoprin NV	10722
Megalodon Creations	8501	Sega Amusements International Ltd	8370	Walltopia	12216
Metallbau Emmeln GmbH & CoKG	11309	Sega Amusements International Ltd	8470	Water Safety Products, Inc.	14209
Mich Playground Co., Ltd.	11324	SELA GROUP S.R.L.	12909	Water Slides de Mexico S.A. de C.V. dba. Aquakita	12132
MK Themed Attractions	11119	Semnox Solutions Private Limited	8570	Water Technology, Inc.	12709
Mobaro A/S	8448	sensalytics GmbH	TT-016	Watergames&More B.V.	11026
Mobile Locker	8913	Severn Lamb & Trams International	12508	Wattman World	10532
Momentum Leisure	8116	Shanghai Besa Industry Co., Ltd.	8635	WEAD GmbH	11202
Mondogiochi Srl	8348	SHAPE bv	8732	Wenzhou Hello Amusement Equipment Co., Ltd	8828
Moser's Rides S.r.l.	10619	Shenzhen Aglare Lighting Co.,Ltd	8792	Wenzhou J&Bell Amusement Equipment Co., Ltd	12857
Mountaincart GmbH	8192	Shenzhen Aidisen Optoelectronic Co., Ltd	8668	Wenzhou Pokiddo Amusement Toys Co., Ltd.	12053
Mr.Snow GmbH	14004	Shenzhen Eternity Technology Limited	8583	Werbeagentur Aufwind GmbH	9401
MT-Electronic	9024	Showman Signs	11004	WhiteWater West Industries Ltd.	10118
MULTIDEKOR S.A.	8416	Shuffly	8922	Wibit Sports GmbH	12017
Multimax Electronics BV	8005	Sia Rujienas Saldejums	8534	Wider Matrix (GZ) Technology Co.,Ltd.	14411
Murphy's Waves Ltd.	11127	Sichuan Mifo Technology Co., Ltd	8683	Wiegand Josef GMBH & Co. KG	10013
Nayax	11620	Sidijk BV	11427	Wiegand.Waterrides GmbH	10009
NDK Teknoloji Sanayi ve Ticaret Limited Sirketi	12039	SIK-Holzgestaltungs GmbH	8056	WIK Sp.zo.o.	8358
NEO Xperiences	9409	Simtec Systems GmbH	11227	WIK Sp.zo.o.	8458
Neofuns Amusement Equipment Co. Ltd.	8337	Simworx Limited	11113	Wild in Art Limited	8725
Neveplast SRL	12016	SisyFox GmbH	11502	Wild Republic UK Ltd	8727
New Era Dinosaur Landscape Production Co., Ltd.	14108	Sky Plush Aps	8154	WITTENSTEIN	8914
NGT-Bowling	8604	Smeetz SA	8420	Wood Design Amusement Rides B.V.	10406
Nicematic	11605	Socotec Equipments	8283	World Waterpark Association	12723
Ningbo Sinoknit Co., Ltd.	11408	Socrates Imaging BV	10401	X-Corp B.V.	9402
Norditalia Ricambi	8165	Sodikart	8258	XD Productions	11310
NSM Music Ltd.	TT-014	Solien LDA	8070	XFD Xiamen Machinery Technology Ltd.	8762
nWave Pictures SRL	11115	Soquet SA	9020	Xiaofeixia Amusement Equipment Co. Ltd.	12926
Oakfusion sp. z o.o.	14009	SPI Global Play AB	10303	XTREM AVENTURES Concept	11615
OASYS Water Park Systems	11503	Spider International	11012	Xuanhua Hardware Products Co. Ltd.	8770
Okko Global E lence Hizmetleri Ticaret A.	12037	Spirello BV	12003	Xuchang qile inflatable co., Ltd.	12943
OMES New Park Srl	11619	Splashtacular, LLC	12971	YEN LUNAPARK MAKINA SANAYI TICARET ANONIM SIRKET	12977
Ondepo Polyester	12730	Sports Coach Simulator Limited	8632	Zamperla Group	10132
Open Doors Creative Communications GmbH	12727	SpringboardVR	8834	Zephir Objects B.V.	8009
OpenAire, Inc.	10609	SPS FILETS	8927	Zhejiang Lejian Amusement Toys Co.,Ltd.	8667
Ora	9013	Starpark LunaParkCilik Ltd. STI	12042	Zhejiang Qilong Amusement Equipment Co. Ltd.	14210
Orakel Bvba	12247	Stern Pinball, Inc.	8013	Zhengzhou Bigjoys Amusement Co., Ltd.	8734
OTK KART GROUP	8104	Storm Adventures	14301	Zhengzhou Wanle Amusement Equipment Co. Ltd.	9425
OUTDOOR FACTORY	12222	STY WATERPARKS	8440	Zhengzhou Winsun Amusement Equipment Co., Ltd.	12753
P&P Projects BV	10410	Sub Sea Systems, Inc.	12119	Zhengzhou Wolong Amusement Equipment Co. Ltd.	8962
Painting with Light bvba	11011	Sunkid GmbH	12223	ZHONGSHAN AIRO AMUSEMENT EQUIPMENT CO. LTD.	TT-008
Park Amusement Drift As	8004	Sunshine Amusement Equipment Co. Ltd.	8524	Zhongshan Fun Amusement Lighting Co. Ltd.	8277
Park Rides Lamborghini Srl	12004	SUNVIG B.V.	8262	Zhongshan LGM Amusement Equipment Co.,Ltd	8821
Petro Art Production	8250	Surf Loch	TT-017	Zhongshan Luck & Jinying Amusement Machine Co. Ltd	8484
PGK DESIGN S.R.L. Unipersonale	8558	Sweet Robo	8826	ZHONGSHAN SHINE TECHNOLOGY LTD	12124
PGOplay	12830	Sweet World Sp. zoo	8366	Zhuji ManMiao Knitting & Textile Co., Ltd.	11307
PH Gemax	8108	Swissdeck Europe	8677	Zhuji Yinuo Weite Knitting Co.,Ltd	9112
Pharos Architectural Controls	11024	Synergy Waterpark Rides Pvt. Ltd.	8512	Zhuoyuan Co., Ltd.	8339
Photo Experience	8628	T & F Sports Apparel	8134	ZIERER Karussell- und Spezialmaschinenbau GmbH & Co. KG	12803
Pixel Games GmbH	8044	TAA International GmbH	10325	Zigong City Ocean Art Co., Ltd	8242
Pixnami	8443	TAB-Austria Industrie	8021	Zigong Co-creation Culture Art Co., Ltd.	8618
Play In Business	8637	Team Park Project	10539	Zigong Dinosaurs Technology Co.,Ltd	8055
Playdiscount GmbH	8946	Technical Park S.N.C.	12809	Zigong Gengu Dinosaurs Science And Technology Co.Ltd.	8756
PlayFountain International	12054	Technologies Connect & Go Inc.	12145	Zigong Haitian Culture Co., Ltd	8207
Playfun Games Co., Ltd.	TT-004	Teddy Mountain UK Ltd	8122	Zigong LongXiangJiuYu Technology Ltd	12659
PLEYO	9009	Teddy Mountain UK Ltd	8121	Zigong My Dinosaurs Culture and Arts Co.Ltd	11112
PMS International Group PLC	12422	Tejix	8244	Zigong Red Tiger Culture Co., Ltd.	12708
POD International a Division of Point of Sports GmbH	8092	Tekin Lunapark makina lml.Sa.Ve Tic.Sti	8954	Zigong Rushan Culture Co.,Ltd	8536
Pol-Glass Sp. zo.o. Sp. k.	11019	The Dutch Drift BV	14405	Zigong Sanhe Robot Technology Co. Ltd.	8338
Polgun Waterparks & Attractions	12142	The Gravity Group, LLC	11219	Zigong Yuhua Technology Co., Ltd.	14106
Polin Waterparks	12528	The Park Entertainment N.V.	8947	Zipline Europe AB	12100
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COUNT ME IN!

Family-owned, operated parks report a good 2024, plans for 2025

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

UNITED STATES — With their own benefits and challenges, family-owned-and-operated amusement parks in U.S. are reporting a good 2024 season.

Some parks made some heavy investments, while others went the moderate route. Some are waiting until 2025 to bring in new attractions and instead added new events.

Beech Bend Park and Splash Lagoon, Bowling Green, Kentucky

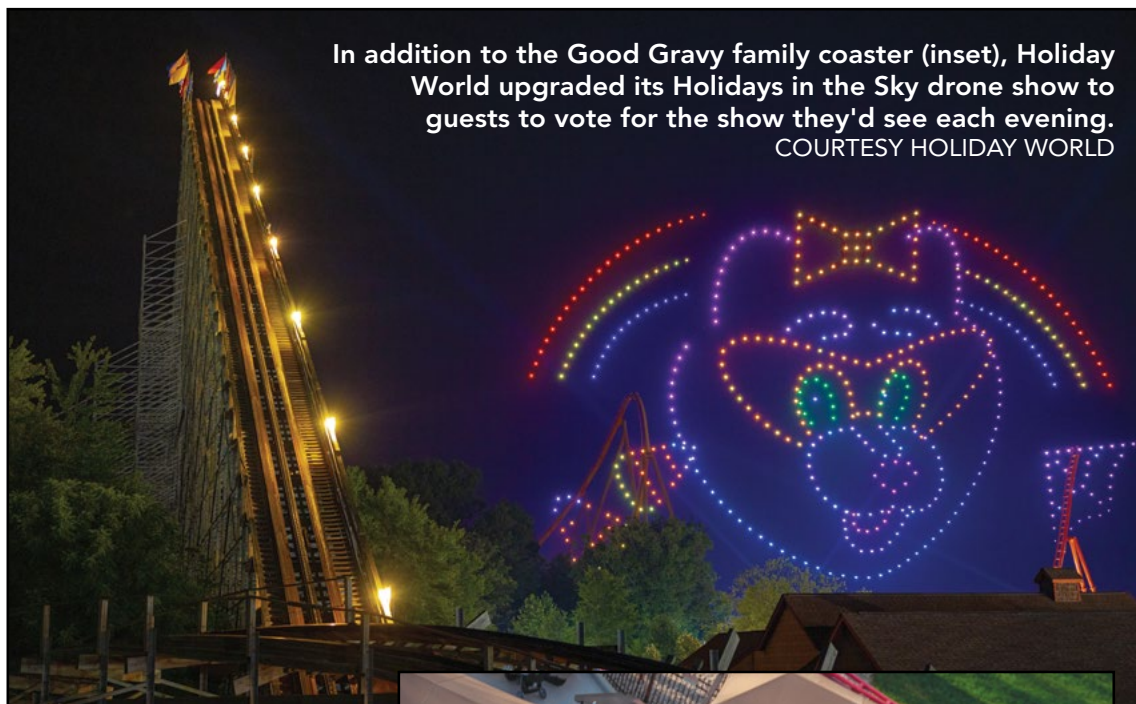
Beech Bend Park and Splash Lagoon was busy this season but a really wet June held down attendances a little.

"But it is what it is," said **Charlotte Gonzalez**, park general manager. "About 24% of our season was impacted by rain and storms. In July alone, 14 days were impacted by rain."

June was hot, but Gonzalez said attendance held up decently as it has in August.

The park didn't add any new major additions in 2024, but decided to invest in maintaining existing operations.

Approximately \$300,000 was spent on new filtration systems for the wave pool, Tiki Island and lazy river. The work was done by **Filtrex Filters**.



In addition to the Good Gravy family coaster (inset), Holiday World upgraded its Holidays in the Sky drone show to guests to vote for the show they'd see each evening. COURTESY HOLIDAY WORLD

"We did one slide restoration as well," Gonzalez said.

That was done by **Safe Slide Restoration**.

"We also had **Great Coasters International** come in and retrack about 400 feet of the Kentucky Rumbler," she said.

That coaster opened in 2006 and has reached a point where there is some type of repair annually.

"You know, wooden coasters are living and breathing things," she said.

The park brought back its Friday Night Lights event. Held on six Fridays in 2024, it allows park guests to stay in the amusement park until 9 p.m. and in the water park until about 7:30



p.m. After 9 p.m., fireworks light up the night sky.

"We offer a cheaper ticket for those wanting to come to this event alone," Gonzalez said. "Tickets were \$20 after 4:30 p.m. and people can come in to enjoy both parks.

"We also added more shade, benches and lighting," she said. "We switched

over some rides to LEDs."

Gonzalez is the daughter of **Dallas and Alfreda Jones**, who founded the park.

Besides the amusement park and water park on its over 350 acres of land, Beech Bend has the Beech Bend Raceway and campgrounds.

The Beech Bend Race-

way stays busy starting in March and runs through Thanksgiving.

The campgrounds are open 365 days a year. There are over 400 campsites and two cabins were added halfway through 2023. The cabins, which are within walking distance of the raceway and park, are air conditioned, with refrigerator, microwave and eating table and chairs, among other amenities.

Cliff's Amusement Park, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Cliff's Amusement Park has had a good 2024 season, according to **Justin Hays**, a part of the family that owns and operates the park.

Hays said attendance this season has been about even with 2023.

No new rides were added this year, but the park did install a new western-themed **Pan Amusements Shooting Gallery**.

Cliff's Amusement Park opened in 1959 and features numerous rides and attractions for all ages, as well as food and beverage and carnival style games.

It also features a water attraction, Watermania.

Holiday World and Splashin' Safari, Santa Claus, Indiana

Holiday World and

► See FAMILY, page 55



No new rides were installed at Cliff's Amusement Park, Albuquerque, New Mexico. However the park did add a new western-themed Pan Amusements Shooting Gallery. COURTESY PAN AMUSEMENTS



Lost Island Themepark, Waterloo, Iowa, reported a good 2024 season. Attendance was about the same as 2023. COURTESY LOST ISLAND THEMEPARK



Beech Bend officials spent \$300,000 on a new filtration system for the park's wave pool, Tiki Island, and lazy river, giving guests beautiful, clear water. Above right is one of Beech Bend's newer concession stands: Surf Shack. This is the first stand in the park to serve alcoholic beverages. COURTESY BEECH BEND PARK

►FAMILY

Continued from page 54

Splashin' Safari guests were greeted this season with a brand new family roller coaster as well as a variety of special events throughout the season.

Located in the park's Thanksgiving section, this coaster, manufactured by Dutch company **Vekoma Rides**, is a family boomerang ride, being touted as the first of its kind to open in North America.

Called Good Gravy!, the Vekoma family boomerang features a compact footprint (227 feet by 86 feet), forward/backward run (doubling use of the track) and travels at full speed through the station.

It has a construction height of 74 feet, with one train, 10 coaches per train and 20 persons per train. Track length is 643 feet. Maximum speeds are 36 miles per hour.

"We knew we were going to have a train shaped like a gravy boat from the beginning, but we had so much fun expanding the world of the Van Snoodles from our Sally dark ride, Gobbler Getaway," said **Leah Koch-Blumhardt**, communications and fourth generation owner. "We made up an elaborate back-

story to Grandma Gracy, the gravy-making prodigy, but at the end of the day, guests can just enjoy walking through Grandma's house on Thanksgiving Day. Special thanks to Vekoma Rides for creating the best custom family boomerang layout to date — though we might be a little biased."

The park also celebrated its 78th birthday in 2024. In celebration, the park held a nightly special edition of the Holidays in the Sky drone and fireworks show, with a few new scenes that paid tribute to the park's birthday. The nightly show was held through August 4.

According to Koch-Blumhardt, **Firefly Drones** was the presenter of the drone shows. Park guests were able to vote every day on which of four drone shows would be shown.

"We embedded the link on our 'Today in the Park' page and added signage with QR codes around the park to get votes," said Koch-Blumhardt. "The winner was determined each day at 5 p.m.

"Firefly Drones would hold four shows ready and would load the 'winning' show each night," she said. "Last year, it would not have been possible to load a different show at a moment's notice — it takes a

while to load the flight path to each individual drone."

On August 3, 1946, Koch-Blumhardt's great-grandfather, **Louis J. Koch**, opened **Santa Claus Land**. Seventy-eight years later, the park gets to celebrate the legacy of wonderful family memories with something previous generations couldn't have even imagined.

Lost Island Themepark, Waterloo, Iowa

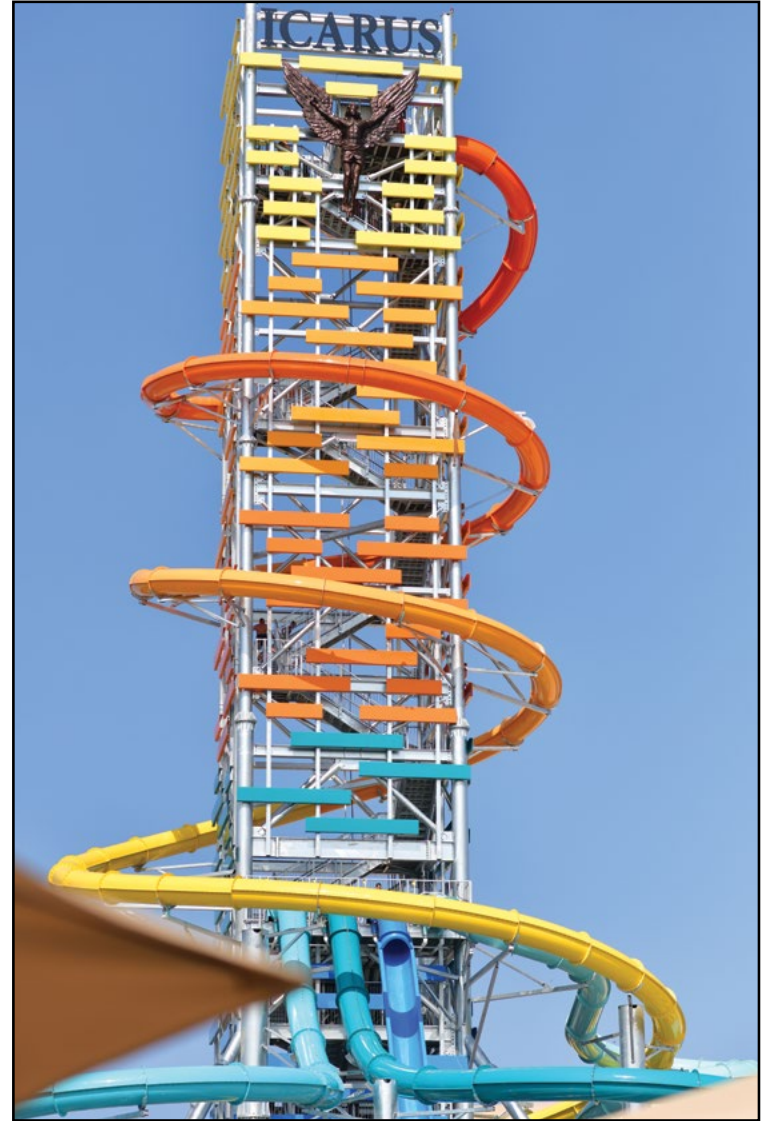
Lost Island Theme Park located in Waterloo, Iowa, had a good 2024 season with attendance about on par as 2023.

However, **Eric Bertch**, general manager, expects to see a boost in attendance next year with some exciting new additions. He expected those plans to be unveiled shortly.

"We did add a morning and evening welcome ceremony this year that let our character actors tell guests the story of Lost Island," Bertch said.

Lost Island is a 90-acre park, which features five themed lands and numerous attractions. It is owned by the Bertch family, who operate the **Lost Island Waterpark** that is located next to the site of the park.

Mt. Olympus Water & Theme Park Resort, Wisconsin Dells Wisconsin



Mt. Olympus Water & Theme Park Resort installed the Rise of Icarus Tower. Standing at a height of 160 feet, the tower is a collaboration between officials at Mt. Olympus, the architecture firm Ramaker and Whitewater West. COURTESY MT. OLYMPUS

Guests to Mt. Olympus Water and Theme Park this season were able to see one of Mt. Olympus's new offerings before even getting to the park. That was because the Rise of Icarus Tower, a five slide tower, stands at a height of 160 feet.

The tower opened in June. A collaboration between officials at Mt. Olympus Water & Theme Park, the architecture firm **Ramaker** and **Whitewater West**, the tower features four Aquatubes and a Freefall slide that, together with vibrant colors, retells the legend of Icarus in the most thrilling way.

The tallest slide, a High-Speed Aquatube called The Fall has the rider plunging from the record-breaking height of 145 feet, through a length of 780 feet, at speeds of up to 30 mph.

"The Rise of Icarus holds a special place in our family and park as we con-

tinually strive to introduce new and innovative attractions to our area," said **Maria Laskaris**, the park's social media marketer.

The resort is owned and operated by the Laskaris family,

In addition to the Rise of Icarus Tower, the park also added the Icaria Splash 'n Slide, a 12,000-square-foot kiddie area that includes 10 slides, water play features and wading pool.

Along with this, there is now more deck space with tables, umbrellas and lounge chairs, as well as air-conditioned cabanas.

Also included is a new bar, new concessions and a new retail and locker building.

Mt. Olympus Water & Theme Park Resort sits on 300 acres. It features numerous attractions, both wet and dry, plus golfing in the summer and fall and skiing and tubing in the winter.

Women INFLUENCE

A view from the top...

After serving in the **United States Marine Corp**, Savannah Boan wanted to work with alligators and crocodiles. She moved to Florida with her sights on **Gatorland**. Today, Boan champions conservation and educates everyone she can about some of the world's most misunderstood species.

A career sharing inspired stories

ORLANDO — "I have always loved alligators and reptiles," shared Savannah Boan. "When I was based in Southern California while serving in the Marine Corps, I also worked at a reptile zoo. Sometimes it was paid and sometimes it was volunteer, but it allowed me the opportunity to work with the animals. It brought a lot of joy."

That passion drove Boan after she left the military and was looking for her next role. "I thought I would continue to work as an air traffic controller and found a tiny airport on Merritt Island in Florida. I saw that as a way I could be close to alligators. I relocated to wait out that potential job and learned about Gatorland. That's when I knew I had found where I was meant to be."

Desire and reality don't often have the same timeline and Boan applied at the park, multiple times, for seven years. "If there was an opportunity in entertainment, I applied. If there was a role in food and beverage, I applied," she recalled. "I had a vision of what I could do for alligators and crocodiles, and I knew Gatorland would be part of that. I just needed to get my foot in the door."

It was after an interview with Gatorland President and CEO Mark McHugh in 2016 that Boan finally heard the words, "You're hired."

"My role was part-time at first, but I was not deterred," she shared. "I would come in early to help, learn and experience all I could before each shift. I worked as an education ambassador and later became the Crocodylian Enrichment Coordinator."

Boan also began to discuss ways Gatorland could help global conservation efforts for crocodiles and alligators. "Before I worked at Gatorland, I took a trip to

Cuba. I read about a small group of scientists who were working in the Zapata Swamp to help critically endangered Cuban crocodiles. I believed in what they were doing and knew Gatorland could help. Looking back, they probably thought I was crazy because I kept saying, 'I'll get a job and we'll work with you.' We did though. Mark and I, along with our park director eventually traveled to Cuba, saw the work and launched Gatorland's first conservation project. To date, we have helped release over 60 Cuban crocodiles into the Zapata Swamp."

That was the beginning. Boan has been instrumental in the creation of Gatorland Global, the park's conservation program. "I'm a member of the Crocodile Specialist Group which is a part of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature," she furthered. "The work these scientists and researchers are doing worldwide supports every species of crocodile and alligator. By understanding what they do and why it's important, I help bridge the gap between the scientific community and the public."

"Gatorland, zoos, aquariums, all are meeting points between complex science and the average person. It may take years for a scientific research paper to get published, but that doesn't mean the average person will ever see it. My role at Gatorland allows me to connect people with the species in our care and help educate them. There are fewer than 4,000 Cuban crocodiles in the wild. Were it not for research, studies and support from places like Gatorland, they may have already disappeared entirely."

And while it is incredible to be a part of scientific discussions,

Savannah Boan

Gatorland
Orlando, Florida



Boan knows she is a unicorn. "I am the only social media influencer in the crocodile specialist group," she laughed. "I often have to ask questions to fully understand what the work is for and why it's important. However, that means I can then easily share the information with our guests and followers. I hope it helps inspire the next generation."

As a woman on Gatorland's large predator team, Boan said at first it seemed like the alligators themselves were most hesitant to work with her. "None of the gators would respond to my voice," she said. "While women always worked at the park, I was the first to work directly with the big alligators and crocodiles. I would lower my voice to sound more like a man so they would respond to me. It took time, patience and relationship building to get them to trust me."

She is also quick to point out, she's not alone in her passion. "Globally there are many passionate women doing incredible conservation work for crocodiles and alligators. In Jamaica, Australia, Guatemala and Venezuela — it's

amazing to see women doing great things. I learn from them daily. It's only unusual if we treat it that way."

While Boan acknowledges she's always been self-motivated, she credits her father with instilling the value of hard work at an early age. "My dad frequently told me, 'Always be the hardest working person in the room. When you start a new job, do the role no one wants and do it better than everyone else. Learn it quickly and be ready for the next step.'"

That advice translated perfectly for her career path. "It's important to remember that working with animals, any animal, is a lot of work," Boan said. "Everyone loves cute videos, but behind the scenes, there is constant hard work. It's not glamorous or easy but it is rewarding."

Boan also reminds everyone to not give up. "Don't take no for an answer," she finished. "I pictured what I wanted to do, and I never let it go. Today, I work with the animals I love the most. What more could anyone want?"

—Susan Storey

NEAAPA holds its 111th annual Summer Meeting

SALEM, N.H. — NEAAPA's 111th Anniversary Summer Meeting and Golf Tournament, held over two days on July 29 & 30, drew over 110 attendees to the **Windham Country Club** and **Canobie Lake Park** to network with colleagues, meet up with friends and get a behind-the-scenes peek at the historic 122-year old amusement and water park.

Monday, July 29, started at the beautiful Windham Country Club, just a short drive from the park. Sixteen participants braved the brief, midday rain shower to raise funds for NEAAPA's Pinnacle Scholarship Program, which awards one scholarship to an employee whose post-secondary education is leading them to a career in the attractions industry. Just about \$1,000 was raised during the tournament, which will help to expand the program and fund future scholarships.

"This event is open to all abilities, including those who have never picked up a golf club ever," said Golf Committee Chairman **Pete Barto**. "We just ask that players have fun and to remember that it's for the kids." This year, the Canobie critters Garrett, Molly, and Petey visited the teams and were able to get into the action as celebrity golfers helping teams on the course.

For added fun, **Haas and Wilkerson Insurance** (Fairway, Kansas) sponsored a putting contest, **PB Amusement** (Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania) sponsored the Hole-In-One prize, and **Tatvam Analytics by NetServ** (Alpharetta, Georgia) provided two on-course games; the Wheel of Destiny



and Plinko Prize Drop, which added fun challenges to the tournament. Other sponsors included The Killer B's (Barto/Bamford/Bradford/Brian (Knoebel); **Premier Rides** (St. Petersburg, Florida), **Hodgdon Consulting** (Scarborough, Maine) and **Sally Dark Rides** (Jacksonville, Florida).

Winning the prestigious Pinnacle Golf Tournament Trophy this year was the team from Canobie Lake Park represented by **Ryan DeMaria, Anthony Berni III, and Brandyn Costa**, with **Bryan Carney** from **Dippin' Dots**.

Tuesday, July 30, kicked off with fantastic weather as attendees arrived at Canobie Lake Park and headed in to check out the many rides, water slides and attractions. The park had set up an area in the Castaway Island Water Park where guests could grab water and relax at one of the cabanas.

At the park's Northside Picnic Grove, the park served a great buffet lunch, including barbecue chicken, Italian sausage, corn on the cob and salads. Following lunch, Canobie Lake Park President **Carl Berni** welcomed the attendees. **Chris Nicoli**,

Canobie Lake Park's brand manager and current NEAAPA president announced the nine tours that would be available for attendees including Security/Entry/Screenings, IT/Network/Ticketing, Personnel & International Student Program, Entertainment, Operations and more.

NEAAPA's Board of Directors held a meeting at the Sons of Liberty Tavern, updating members on committee and board activities. During the meeting, a donation was authorized to be made in memory of **Jack Morey** to **Breakthrough T1D** (formerly JDRF).

For dinner, Canobie Lake Park's food and beverage team outdid themselves. During the cocktail reception, attendees were treated to a 12-foot-long charcuterie table. But the big surprise was behind the curtain, which was where the dinner buffet was. Carving station, lobster tails, plus mussels and steamers were on the menu, not to mention Dippin' Dots for dessert.

Attendees could also grab souvenirs courtesy of Canobie Lake Park and **Rhode Island Novelty**.

Sponsors of the Summer Meeting included: **Premier Rides, Inc.**; **Haas & Wilkerson Insurance**; **Ralph S. Alberts Co., Inc.**; **Gateway Ticketing Systems**; **Dippin' Dots**; **Rhode Island Novelty** and **Bass Resorts Sales**.

Next year's Summer Meeting and Golf Tournament is scheduled for July 28 and July 29, 2025, with a location to be announced this fall.

— Ed Hodgdon

Allentown's Dorney Park hosts the annual PAPA Summer Meeting

AT: B. Derek Shaw

bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

ALLENTOWN, Pa. — The annual **Pennsylvania Amusement Parks & Attractions** (PAPA) summer fun meeting took place July 22 and 23 at **Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom**. Enjoying the food, fun, networking and fellowship during the event were 103 members and guests.

The Club at Twin Lakes in Allentown was the site of the always popular scramble golf tournament that kicked off the first day. The 74 registered golfers enjoyed a beautiful day of golf, lunch and presentation of the newly created, coaster-themed **Barbara Knoebel Memorial Golf Tournament** champions trophy. **Brad Little**, graphic artist and paint shop supervisor with **Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters Inc.**, created this unique trophy.

Golf Chairperson, **Pete Barto** (PB Amusement, LLC), attributed the substantial growth of this year's tournament to the incredible support of Dorney Park, volunteers,

and a fun-for-all atmosphere that welcomed golfers and non-golfers to enjoy a day of networking and camaraderie. The tournament featured a \$10,000 Hole-in-One Contest, a \$5,000 Putting Contest, and numerous other on-course fun activities like the "Wheel of Destiny" and "Plink-n-Swing."

"We have focused on promoting this event as a fun industry event. We are not looking for golf ringers or players that take the game too seriously," said Barto. "We want friends that enjoy spending time with each other to have a fun social event that raises money for a great cause."

Team **Hersheypark** (**Jeremy Underkoffler, Robert Gordon, Jason Roth, and Brad Kirkham**) claimed victory for the second year in a row with a score of 10 under par, squeaking out a two-stroke victory over past champions, The Killer B's (**Bradford Doolittle, Melissa Bamford, Brian Knoebel, and Barto**). Reports have already surfaced that the Barbara Knoebel Memorial Golf Tournament Champions

Trophy will be proudly on display for the year in Hersheypark's Boardroom.

This year's event received unprecedented support from the amusement industry, Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom and several local businesses in the Lehigh Valley, raising nearly \$7,500 for the PAPA Scholarship Fund. The fund annually assists student employees of PAPA member organizations in the form of scholarships for educational purposes.

That evening attendees enjoyed a cocktail reception, followed by dinner in Parkside Pavilion at Dorney. Of course, there was plenty of lively conversation and fellowship among attendees.

The second day started with a breakfast buffet at Central Tool Annex, an eating area located in the brand-new Steel Yard section of the park, which pays homage to the rich steel-making history of the region. Concurrent with that were behind-the-scenes tours of Iron Menace, Ghost in the Machine (Halloween walk-thru), Steel Yard Gifts

and Iron Mill Grill.

There was then an hour of exclusive ride time on Iron Menace (**Bolliger & Mabillard**), MT Buckets (**Larson International** flying scooters), Possessed (**Intamin** shuttle), Whip (**Mangels**) and Thunderhawk (**Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters, Inc.**).

Over 35 of the attendees participated in a mid-morning board meeting held in Solomon Center. Treasurer **Dick Knoebel**, offered his usual financial response saying, "We are solvent." There were numerous committee reports, including an extensive legislative report.

Scott Silar, PAPA president reflected on the two-day summer meeting. "We're all about getting together and celebrating our successes and learning from what we might be able to do better. Operators across Pennsylvania and our vendors from all over the globe come together and share best practices, network and also talk about the issues affecting our industry and how we are able to position

Pennsylvania as a great place to take families on vacation. We had a great event in Allentown. Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom were absolutely fabulous hosts. [There was a] great turnout. We had a fantastic meeting."

Gary Chubb presented info on the 2024 PACE (Parks and Carnivals Education) ride safety seminar that takes place October 29 to November 1 at **Bloomsburg University**, Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania. A "hands-on" training day (rain or shine) is at **Knoebels Amusement Resort**, Elysburg, Pennsylvania. This annual seminar is held in conjunction with the **Pennsylvania State Showmen's Association** and offers both 24- and 32-hour certification training sessions. The educational portion of the seminar is led by instructors from **NAARSO**.

The 2025 PAPA spring meeting will be held at the **Hershey Lodge**, on February 24 and 25, while the summer fun meeting will take place at **Great Wolf Lodge** in the Poconos.

•paamusementparks.com

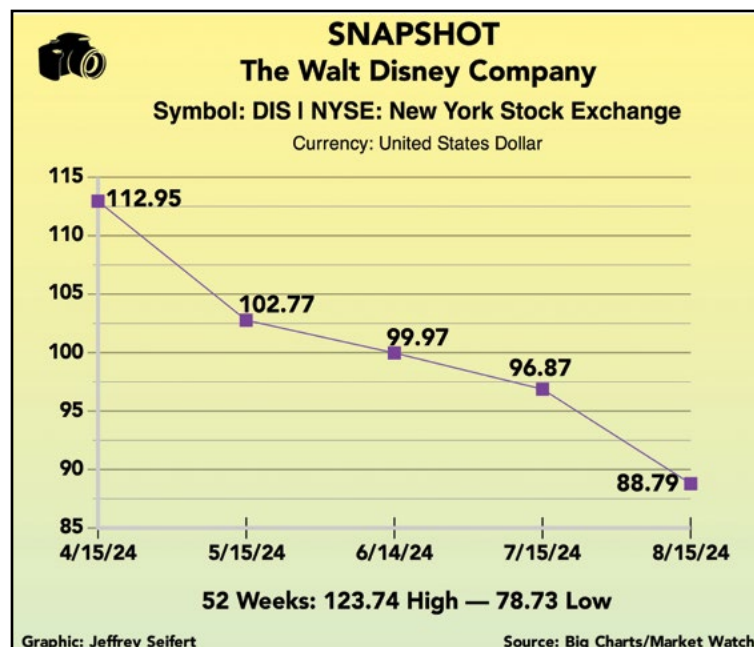
MARKET WATCH

COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 8/14/24	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
PARKS AND ATTRACTIONS					
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	136.16	145.16	88.59
Bowlero Corp.	BOWL	NYSE	11.01	15.47	8.85
Comcast Corp./NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	39.01	47.30	36.43
Dave & Busters Entertainment, LLC	PLAY	NASDAQ	31.23	69.82	30.45
EPR Properties	EPR	NYSE	44.213	49.10	39.65
Falcon's Beyond	FBYD	NASDAQ	10.74	44.00	7.02
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	JP:9010	TYO	2564.00	5630.00	2428.00
Haichang Holdings Ltd.	HK:2255	SEHK	0.70	1.24	0.65
Leofoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	17.80	22.45	16.15
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	38.08	48.25	33.44
Parks America, Inc.	PRKA	OTC	0.39	0.61	0.23
Royal Caribbean Cruises, Ltd.	RCL	NYSE	152.71	173.37	78.35
Six Flags Entertainment Corp.	FUN	NYSE	42.76	58.70	34.04
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	704.00	770.00	678.00
United Parks & Resorts Inc.	PRKS	NYSE	46.68	60.36	40.87
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	86.30	123.74	78.73
Warner Bros Discovery Inc.	WBD	NASDAQ	6.96	13.31	6.64
SUPPLIERS/OTHERS					
Brogent Technologies, Inc.	TW:5263	TSEC	189.50	204.00	108.00
Sansei Technologies, Inc.	TYO:6357	TYO	1419.00	1852.00	1026.00
Topgolf Callaway Brands	MODG	NYSE	11.40	17.64	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 8/12/24	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	\$3.778	(\$0.624)
Midwest	\$3.681	(\$0.636)
Gulf Coast	\$3.371	(\$0.724)
Mountain	\$3.697	(\$0.697)
West Coast	\$3.913	(\$0.797)
California	\$4.763	(\$0.755)

CURRENCY

On 8/15/24 \$1 USD =	
0.9081	EURO
0.7785	GBP (British Pound)
147.04	JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.8643	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.5107	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.3711	CAD (Canadian Dollar)

BUSINESS WATCH

Disney, unions reach agreement in California

ANAHEIM, Calif. — **Disney** has reached an agreement with four unions representing thousands of workers at its California theme parks, including ride operators, candy makers and parking attendants.

The coalition of unions said early July 24 that its 14,000 workers voted on the deal on July 29. After months of negotiations, the deal mandates an increase in the park's minimum wage from a previous \$19.90 to a final \$26 after three years, an increase of 31%. The new contract grants most of that hike straight away, boosting the wage to \$24 immediately.

"We have shown Disney that we are the true magic makers of the park and today proves that when workers stand together for what they deserve, we win," the coalition said in a statement.

Most of the more than 35,000 workers at the **Disneyland Resort** are represented by labor unions. The resort includes **Disneyland** as well as **Disney California Adventure** and the shopping and entertainment district **Downtown Disney** in the city of Anaheim, California.

Cedar Fair, Six Flags give pre-merger financials

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — **Six Flags Entertainment Corporation**, the largest regional amusement park operator in North America, announced financial results for standalone legacy **Cedar Fair** and standalone legacy **Six Flags** for the quarter ended June 30, 2024. The merger of legacy Cedar Fair and legacy Six Flags occurred on July 1, 2024, after the second quarter close.

For the quarter ended June 30, 2024, net revenues for legacy Cedar Fair totaled \$572 million on attendance of 8.6 million guests, compared with net revenues of \$501 million on attendance of 7.4 million guests in the second quarter of 2023. The increase in net revenues reflects the impact of a 17%, or 1.2 million-visit, increase in attendance and a 17%, or \$11 million, increase in out-of-park revenues, offset in part by the impact of a 3%, or \$1.92, decrease in in-park per capita spending.

For the quarter ended June 30, 2024, total revenues for legacy Six Flags were \$438 million on attendance of 6.9 million guests, compared with total revenues of \$444 million on attendance of 7.1 million guests in the second quarter of 2023. The decrease in net revenues was attributable to a 2%, or 155,000-visit, decrease in attendance and a \$9 million reduction in subscription revenue due to the steady attrition of legacy memberships. These decreases were partially offset by the impact of a 1%, or \$0.46, increase in total guest spending per capita(c) and \$1 million of incremental sponsorship revenue.

Walt Disney Company reports third quarter

BURBANK, Calif. — **The Walt Disney Company** reported earnings for its third quarter ended June 29, 2024.

"Our performance in Q3 demonstrates the progress we've made against our four strategic priorities across our creative studios, streaming, sports, and Experiences businesses," said **Robert A. Iger**, chief executive officer, The Walt Disney Company.

While results at the company's domestic parks decreased modestly in the quarter, attendance was comparable year over year and per capita spending was slightly up. The guest spending growth was attributable to increases in per capita guest spending on the company's cruise line and theme parks as well as higher per room spending at Disney resorts.

ON THE MOVE

Laramie Coffey has joined **Eastern States Exposition's** Agriculture department as the organization's livestock program coordinator. Coffey is responsible for coordinating all competitive livestock events during **The Big E** and year-round shows; developing and maintaining strong working relationships with breed representatives, regional and national associations, and other agricultural fairs; as well as supporting livestock show facilitation, initiatives and educational programming.

"I am thrilled to join the team at Eastern States Exposition as the Livestock Program Coordinator," said Coffey.

Prior to joining the Exposition's fulltime staff, Coffey initially came on board as livestock program assistant in a contractor role following her graduation.

**Coffey**

Wibit Sports announced further changes to its management team. **Tarak Charfi** joined on August 1 as managing director. **Ralf Schwung**, member of the management team since January, will assume responsibility for the firm's financial management. **Romann Rademacher**, co-founder of Wibit Sports, will gradually withdraw from operational management in the coming months, successfully completing the company's succession.

Tarak Charfi holds a degree in business administration and has two decades of experience in national and international settings. He joins Wibit Sports from noise protection manufacturer **Cellofoam**, where he served as vice president of sales.

**Charfi**

H. Betti Industries Inc., the parent company of **Betson Enterprises**, a leading distributor of location-based amusement products, announces the retirement of industry veteran **Rick Urba**. Urba has spent over four decades with the company, most recently as corporate controller. **Carmine Sodora** will join the company as his replacement and new corporate controller.

"Rick and I have worked together directing the financial activities of H. Betti Industries since 1980. Our incredible growth from a one-office operation to what we are today could not have been done without Rick building the financial infrastructure to support it," said **Bob Geschine**, president of H. Betti Industries. "We wish him well in his retirement."

Sodora brings over 20 years of experience in finance, having served as a chief financial officer and controller in various industries.

"Carmine brings an extensive knowledge of accounting, financial controls, and audit procedures, and has a great track record of delivering profit improvements, cost-control measures, and overall business growth," said **Catherine Algra**, chief financial officer of H. Betti Industries. "We feel he will be an excellent addition, and are excited to welcome him to our team."

RWS Global announced the appointment of cruise entertainment expert, **Ryan Fitzgerald** as executive vice president of sea production. With more than 20 years of experience in entertainment, cruise experiences, professional sports and events, Fitzgerald is set to enhance RWS Global's cruise entertainment division as the company continues its worldwide expansion.

Fitzgerald's appointment comes after RWS Global announced the launch of RWS Global Sports, following the acquisition of **Great Big Events**.

**Fitzgerald****OBITUARIES****Jack Morey of Morey's Piers passes away at 64**

WILDWOOD CREST, N.J. — Jack Morey passed away on July 19, 2024, surrounded by the love of his wife, sons and brother. He was born on October 17, 1960, in Cape May Court House to the late Will and Jackye Morey.

Following their father's death in 1998, Jack and his brother (Will) took the reins and expanded the Moreys' businesses to include three amusement piers, five restaurants, two water parks, two hotels and two golf courses.

Never losing sight of their family roots, Jack remained the hands-on creative force of the company throughout his entire career and viewed the world through an extraordinary lens. He was keen to defy conventional thinking, though not for the purpose of just being different. Jack earned a reputation for his wild, cutting-edge vision — he loved to tell people that it was his job to dream up 10 ideas and Will's job to keep him from doing nine of

**Jack Morey**

them. This approach helped to form an effective partnership with his brother (the Yin to Jack's Yang) as each sought to establish Morey's Piers as the world's best seaside park.

Jack's unbridled exuberance for life came naturally. In many ways a big kid himself with a natural inclination for fun and adventure, he loved to waterski barefoot, knew how to ride a unicycle, was a master waterman and skier and a lover of nature. But Jack also understood the gravitas of his role: creating cherished memo-

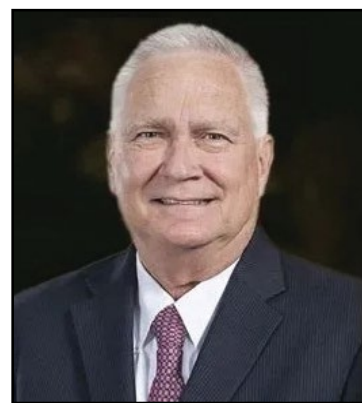
ries for families. He nixed the idea of a general admission charge for entering the piers, worried it would decrease access and negatively impact boardwalk culture. He took great pride in facilitating joyful moments for people from all walks of life, and he never lost sight of the human denominator. As he explained during one interview: "Our customers are like America, a melting pot, in every way. What they seem to have in common, regardless of their demographic or wealth, is their love for family and tradition."

Jack served on the Board of Greater Wildwoods Tourism Improvement and Development Authority where he led the strategic planning effort and spent much time volunteering with various organizations, including the Greater Wildwoods Chamber of Commerce and the International Association for Amusement Parks and Attractions.

Gold Medal's Dan Kroeger passes suddenly

CINCINNATI, Ohio — Gold Medal Products Co. announced the sudden passing of its former president, CEO and chairman, Dan Kroeger. On Wednesday, July 31, 2024, Kroeger passed away at the age of 72.

Kroeger was truly a visionary leader with an unwavering commitment to excellence. He got his start at Gold Medal by answering a newspaper ad for a sales position at Gold Medal in 1979. When he told his wife, Janet, that he was in the popcorn business, she was skeptical and asked how he could support a young family that way. Yet, Dan went on to build a highly successful 40-year career, culminating in his position as the president and CEO. Under his leadership, overall company sales grew a striking seven times over, marking some of the largest periods of growth for Gold Medal. However, Dan's greatest impact went beyond sales. His gift was in his relationships with others. He was known

**Dan Kroeger**

throughout the concessions industry and served with such notable groups as National Association of Concessionaires, the Outdoor Amusement Business Association, the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions, and the Gibtown Showmen's Club. His impact on the industry was valued as he was distinguished with numerous awards and recognitions.

It has been said by colleagues within the industry, "Everybody knows Dan!" He was influential yet down-to-earth. Dan was candid, open, and honest

with everyone. Whether you've just met him or known him for decades, he would make you feel like you're his best friend.

Third-generation owner and chairman of Gold Medal, Dave Evans offered the following: "What made Dan successful was not just his passion for the concession industry itself but his heart for the people. He was a friend, mentor, and leader to all who knew him. Dan would talk to anyone and everyone. He never met a stranger. To his wife Janet, I thank you for graciously sharing Dan with Gold Medal for four decades. You can trust that his legacy will live on in the lives of all who knew him."

Kroeger was the beloved husband of Janet (nee Ford) Kroeger for 49 years, father of Andrew (Cindy) Kroeger, Anthony (Susanne) Kroeger and Jennifer Kroeger. He was the loving grandfather of Addy and Anna Kroeger; Benjamin and Lucas Kroeger as well as Ingrid and Mia Pwu.

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Details and
registration available at
www.GoldenTicketAwards.com

The 2024 Golden Ticket Awards event hosted by Kennywood is just on the horizon.
COURTESY KENNYWOOD



Secure your registration for 2024's Golden Ticket Awards networking event

It's not too late. Registration is still open for the 2024 Golden Ticket Awards through August 23, 2024. Secure your spot at www.goldenticketawards.com

The Golden Ticket Awards will take place in Pittsburgh on September 6 and 7, with host venues being **Kennywood Park** and **Sandcastle Waterpark**. Thanks to *Amusement Today's* gracious sponsors, the Golden Ticket Awards event is still free to industry professionals. Bus transportation is available to both venues.

The Networking Event of the Year is more than just an exciting awards ceremony. It is a weekend to connect with industry colleagues and discuss best practices, champion successes and brainstorm solutions and new ideas.

RWS will be providing entertainment throughout the event.

A GTA golf outing will take place Friday morning benefiting the **National Roller Coaster Museum**.

Check-in and badge pickup will take place at the **Westin Pittsburgh** from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday. Attendees can enjoy downtown Pittsburgh or area sites at their leisure.

Social events, such as the Friday evening reception at Sandcastle Waterpark, will provide opportunities to engage with park operators and industry suppliers. Food, drink and entertainment will make it a fun evening.

Behind-the-scenes tours occur at the historic, traditional park, Kennywood, on Saturday morning. Take time during the day to explore a fantastic selection of classic rides and modern attractions. A spin on the Kangaroo, Turtle and Thunderbolt will take you back in time. A walk through Noah's Ark is a must-do, as is snacking on fries from the Potato Patch.

Then there are the awards. The 2024 Golden Ticket Awards are sure to bring about some cheers and some nice surprises. In addition to the many categories acknowledging the Best of the Best, *Amusement Today* places a spotlight on the industry with its Publisher's Picks and Legend Awards. Also, AIMS will present its Safety Award to the 2024 recipient.

Closing out the event, an after-hours social will take place following the ceremony in the heart of Kennywood. Entertainment, refreshments, great rides and lots of celebration will commence in a party atmosphere, bringing the industry extravaganza to a close.

On Sunday, the event credential will gain attendees access to Kennywood Park, Idlewild Park (in Ligonier) and the Pittsburgh Zoo.

Industry colleagues will be talking about it through trade show season. Be sure to secure your spot and make plans for an engaging and beneficial weekend of networking. Registration closes August 23, 2024, at 3 p.m. (Eastern).

•goldenticketawards.com



SEE YINZ
SEPTEMBER 6 & 7

AT THE 2024 GOLDEN TICKET AWARDS



SAFETY, MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

► Safety seminars ramp up for 2024-2025 — page 68 / Ralph S. Alberts Co. receives new certification — page 72

Vourderis' family perseverance keeps Deno's Wonder Wheel turning

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

BROOKLYN, N.Y. — It has been featured in films for decades, even into this last year. To say New York's Wonder Wheel is iconic would be an understatement. Standing at 150 feet tall, it is a globally recognized attraction with its thrilling rolling cars.

Built in 1920, the Wonder Wheel was designed by Charles Hermann and operated by Herman Garms Sr. and his family for more than six decades. In 1983, the Wheel was sold to the Vourderis Family who still oversee the operation of the ride.

"Let me start with an interesting story about the perseverance of the original builders," said DJ Vourderis. "This is what I think happened based on what we see on the Wonder Wheel now and photos taken in the early 1920s. When the Wonder Wheel opened in 1920, it is my opinion that it was too heavy for the main axle, and at one point during the first year, the main axle cracked. Rather than scrap the Wheel, they figured it out, and came up with a way to make the Wheel turn without any weight on the main axle."

According to Vourderis, it was an ingenious idea and remained a secret for many years.

"One time, we had a new ride inspector climb up to do our city inspections, and he panicked, screaming, 'Close the ride!' After we showed him how the axle was actually floating and did not bear any weight, he calmed down.



The Wonder Wheel has operated without its main axle holding weight at its ends for more than 100 years and counting. In fact, it is probably because of this modification in 1921 that the Wheel is still going strong to this day."

Within the hands of the Vourderis family, they hired a paint shop to repaint the Wheel.

"On that job, we met a man named Jorge Gallegos. He fell in love with the Wheel. He left the paint shop to come work with us, and he is still here today," Vourderis told *Amusement Today*. "If you come

to Deno's Wonder Wheel Park and ride the Wheel between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m., you will see him up in the center, greasing and checking everything out. Our welder is Tom Bonsignore, and we met Tom when our previous welder Bob Bonsignore, Tom's dad, retired. We are a family business through and through."

DJ Vourderis, winner of *Amusement Today's* Golden Ticket Awards for Leadership in 2021, recognizes the value of dedication from his employees and doesn't fail to praise them.

"There is also Reggie

The Wonder Wheel (above) is a New York City landmark. Workers on the Wheel (left) consider it a labor of love. AT/TIM BALDWIN; COURTESY DENO'S WONDER WHEEL PARK

Pryor. Reggie fills in all the gaps and gets things done. These guys are like uncles to my cousins, brothers and me. We've all been to each other's weddings, kids' birthdays, christenings, etc. We have become family through love. And it is all up to us to get it right. It is a labor, yes, but one filled with love and teamwork. Love makes the Wheel go round."

As much as that loving dedication makes things work, the preservation of the ride also comes with some challenges.

"When my grandfather Deno took over the Wonder Wheel from the original owners, it needed some TLC," Vourderis said. "I think they sold it to my family because

they believed in us. They saw in my grandfather Deno an immigrant that was hungry to make his mark on this world. And this immigrant and his family got the job done. They definitely could have gotten more money selling to someone else. Since there is no manufacturer, it is all on us to get and make parts for the Wonder Wheel."

Of the aforementioned main axle, keeping the system working involves extensive maintenance.

"Because there is no manufacturer, we have to make the parts ourselves," he shared with AT. "Sometimes that means we cut things in our shop (located underneath our kiddie park), sometimes we need to contract a machine shop. And more recently, we have started to 3-D print our own parts. However, all the supports for the Wheel are still steel."

It was actually a different ride that prompted the park to acquire a 3-D printer.

"There was a problem with the bushings on a brand-new ride we opened," he said. "When we tried to get the part from Italy, it was unavailable. Rather than keep the ride closed all season, we printed our own. Since then, the 3-D printer has been used more and more. It's great for small things like bushings, and many of our older Mangels rides, another manufacturer that is no longer around. Sometimes plastic can be better. These rides are very old, and each vehicle has dif-

► See WHEEL, page 63

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PICTURED: KANGAROO, KENNYWOOD

►WHEEL**Continued from page 62**

ferent amounts of wear. The 3-D printer allows us to print specific parts for each vehicle to make up for the different amounts of wear. In many cases these bushings are self-lubricating, so it helps with day-to-day maintenance too.”

The Wonder Wheel is painted every year.

“We are constantly looking for rust spots, and when they are identified, we use a 40,000 psi water blaster to take the old paint off,” Vourderis noted. “We prime in the wintertime and wait for the weather to warm up a little before putting on a fresh coat of ‘Wonder Wheel Green.’ And yes, the color is named after the Wonder Wheel. It’s an ongoing strug-

gle, being so close to the ocean, but it is essential in preserving that 104-year-old Bethlehem Steel.”

Vourderis owes the longevity of the ride to dedication and perseverance.

“We train our employees by example. There is no job in the park that the family doesn’t also do. Whether that’s climbing the Wonder Wheel or sweeping the floor. We are a team, and we make sure everyone who works with us knows that. Our maintenance crew consists of family, and the guys mentioned before who have become family. There are some things that cannot be taught but only learned in time. Maintenance on the Wonder Wheel is one of those things. Most importantly, you have to love it.



The Deno’s team keep a close eye on all parts such as this wheel roller. COURTESY DENO’S WONDER WHEEL PARK

Because it’s not just a job. It is a labor of love. And if you don’t love it with all your heart, you won’t put into this job what it needs.”

Creating a friendly atmosphere sometimes means admitting you’re human,

according to Vourderis. “It seems like today, we have to show so much strength, but saying I’m sorry is sometimes the strongest thing anyone can do.”

New York City designated the Wonder Wheel as

an official New York City Landmark in 1989.

“It is the jewel of Coney Island, as my father Steve likes to say,” Vourderis smiled. “And it was my father that gave so much of himself to the Wonder Wheel. I really don’t think it would be here without him, and his brother (my Godfather), Dennis. Today, my mother Stacy is the heart and soul of the park. We as a family continue to pour our hearts and strength into keeping the most romantic ride in the world turning. Every time we think we can’t do it anymore, we see an engagement, smile, kiss, hug, whatever; we see the joy that the amusement industry can provide. And we are a part of that. For that I am proud and grateful.”

•denoswonderwheel.com



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Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk's Giant Dipper celebrates milestone

AT: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. — Roller coasters thrilled audiences even before the turn of the 20th century. While all of those are just footnotes in the history of amusement parks, there is an elite selection from the early 1900s that still delight riders to this day. Less than 10 remain operating that have been around 100 years or more.

Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk's Giant Dipper is one such ride, turning 100 years old this season. Quite often, a park is imprinted on people's memories by a signature attraction, and for the Boardwalk, Giant Dipper is just such a legendary thriller. It is, in a word, classic.

Built by Arthur Loof in 1924, Giant Dipper was designated a National Historical Landmark by the U.S. National Park Service in 1987. Continuously operating in its original location since 1924, Giant Dipper is the fourth oldest coaster in the United States and has enthralled more than 68 million riders in the past century.

"I've lived here all my life. The Giant Dipper is a rite of passage. You can tell the kids who have been waiting for the day they can take their first ride," said Kris Reyes, spokesperson for Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk. "When they get off, it's all smiles on their faces. I started working here when I was 14, and I've been in my professional



Multiple murals along the Boardwalk (above, below) made for great photo ops celebrating the centennial anniversary. Giant Dipper's fan turn (right) is one of its most signature moments. AT/TIM BALDWIN



role with the Santa Cruz Seaside Company, the owners of the Boardwalk, since 2004. Anyone who lives close to the Boardwalk definitely has their very first Giant Dipper memory."

The wooden coaster, with its classic white structure and deep red running boards, looks stunning for its birthday closeup. The venerable woodie has received its makeover courtesy of Baynum Solutions.

"It is truly special when you think of how many amazing memories must have been made over the past 100 years on this iconic

coaster. What a fantastic treat to be a part of this celebration," Chris Baynum, president, told *Amusement Today*.

The coaster itself wasn't the only thing painted. Murals along the Boardwalk entries drew visitors into the occasion, as did celebratory props along the midway. Those who queue up to ride see fun signs and historical throwbacks on the walls on the ramp as well as in the station.

"We try to keep it looking beautiful all the time," said Reyes. "As anyone knows, caring for a wooden coaster right next to the



ocean is a difficult challenge. About two years ago we started planning, organizing and scheduling work to make it look as perfect as we possibly could. We had Baynum out last year and our carpenters did touch up as needed as we went into the season."

"We had a full lineup of events to celebrate the occasion of the Giant Dipper's 100th anniversary," said Reyes. "On May 17, we had a private party with all our friends of the Boardwalk and VIPs. We had a public celebration the day after and gave away buttons.

Dollar Dipper Days on Wednesdays are happening throughout the year. And we had a fan art contest. The submissions that have come in have been amazing."

Lovers of this classic coaster had the chance to demonstrate their artistic talents through August 16. Winners received Dipper swag, MyBoardwalk Cards and Boardwalk ride wristbands.

Specially made Giant Dipper merchandise was created for the milestone.

"That stuff has been fly-

► See DIPPER, page 66



Giant Dipper defines the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk. AT/TIM BALDWIN



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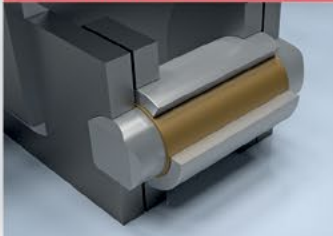
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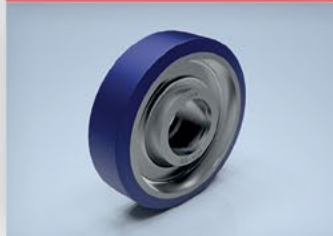
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►DIPPER

Continued from page 64

ing off the shelves,” Reyes told AT. “We sold out of a lot of items the first weekend. The popularity was much more than we forecasted.”

The Boardwalk is open daily from Memorial Day through Labor Day, which Reyes refers to as peak season. They try to extend the calendar in the spring and fall weekends with special events, such as a clam chowder cookoff.

“In my 20 years, I can’t recall a day when Giant Dipper hasn’t operated,” he said. “We try to have all the rides open on operating days. We take great pride in making sure that ride is running every day we are open, so certainly any major projects surrounding the Dipper will take place outside of our summer season.”

The ride stands 70 feet tall and has a track length of 2,640 feet. On busy days, two trains from Morgan

Manufacturing race over its rails. Its elegant fan turn is one of the ride’s most beautiful features.

“The Giant Dipper is the crown jewel and always will be. It’s what we’re known for. We’ll add things over the years, but Giant Dipper will always be our signature attraction and what we’re most proud of. It is beloved by millions of people and the 100th anniversary celebration will have something fun for everyone,” said Reyes. “Whether someone rides the Giant Dipper for the first time or the 100th time this summer, it will be a season of celebration in honor of this legendary wooden roller coaster.”

The Giant Dipper’s 100th anniversary was celebrated on the front of the trains (top), on big murals (adjacent right) and in photo op props (far right) around the Boardwalk.

AT/TIM BALDWIN



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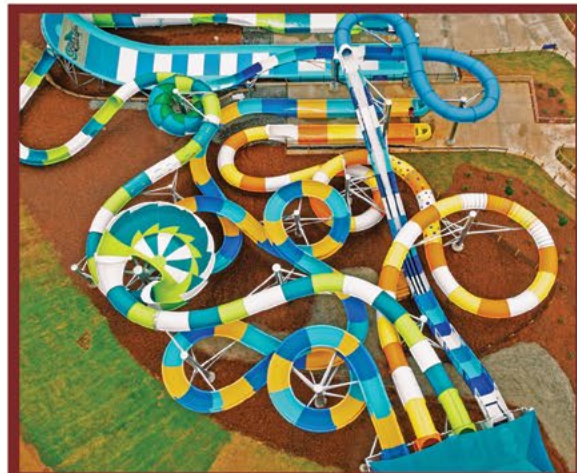
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Safety training seminars ramp up for upcoming 2024-2025 season

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

UNITED STATES — Off-season safety and training seminars ramp up quickly with timing on the line as an abundance of seminars, conventions and other industry events take place.

So, to get started early, the 2024 PACE Seminar is being held from October 29 to November 1 in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, with classes at Bloomsburg University.

The hands-on training portion is set for Knoebels Amusement Resort.

PACE Seminar is jointly sponsored by the Pennsylvania State Showmen's Association (PSSA) and the Pennsylvania Amusement Parks Association (PAPA).

The educational portion is presented and led by the National Association of Amusement Ride Safety Officials (NAARSO) instructors or industry



The PACE Seminar will feature hands-on training at Knoebels similar to the experiences at Kennywood (above left) during the 2023 event. Attendees, instructors and other contributors of the 38th Annual NAARSO Safety Seminar can participate either in-person or virtually, for the offered track options (above right). COURTESY PACE/GARY CHUBB; AT/GARY SLADE

experts.

This instruction with training is approved for both Pennsylvania and NAARSO.

All inspector levels, no matter what affiliation, are welcome to attend the seminar. Attendees select either 24 hours of

instruction or 32 hours of instruction.

There is a separate fee and sign-up for the Inspector Testing offered for Pennsylvania Certified.

On Tuesday, October 29, classes will be at Bloomsburg University.

The next day, Wednesday, October 30, is Hands-On Day at Knoebels.

Thursday, October 31, attendees are back at

Bloomsburg University.

Friday classes are only for those who need and/or sign up for the 32 hours.

The affiliated hotel is the Comfort Suites in Bloomsburg.

The testing schedule is tentative and could change, but in mid-August, it shows Pennsylvania Inspector Testing set for Thursday, October 31.

NAARSO Certification

Exams can be taken online.

More information about PACE may be obtained by contacting Gary Chubb at 717-649-1131 or email srdirmaint@gmail.com and/or Mike Funyak at 724-953-7414 or email mfunyak@delgrossos.com.

NAARSO's 38th annual Safety Seminar has been set for January 26-31, 2025, in

► See SEMINARS, page 69

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► **SEMINARS**

Continued from page 68

Charlotte, North Carolina. The seminar offers course programming and examinations for the following certifications: Limited Specialty; Inspection Certification Level I (basic), Level II (advanced) and Level III (sr); Operations Certification, Level I, Level II and Level III; Operations Certification, Level I, Level II and Level III and Aquatic Operations, Level I.

Examples of some of the curriculum topics include math knowledge, OSHA, wire rope inspections, hydraulics, pneumatics, generators, electric, legal aspects, braking systems, amusement ride chains, accelerometer, rigging, ASTM standards, bearings, ARC flash safety and dark ride and walk-through inspections.

The seminar is currently in the planning stages with specifics to come soon.

International Ride Training, the leading provider of safety training for amusement park ride operators, is holding its Ride Camp safety seminar February 10-14, 2025, in Galveston, Texas, at the San Luis Hotel and Resort and conducting hands-on training at the **Galveston Historic Pleasure Pier**.

The first day of the seminar is for new instructor training and certification.

The additional four-day event will focus on Ride Operator Safety and recertification of operators, providing attendees with the knowledge and skills needed to ensure the safe operation of amusement park rides.

Cindee Huddy, owner and managing member, said the 2025 theme is "Game on for Safety! Level Ops!"

The theme will be focused on achieving the highest standard in ride operations.

"Attendees will learn skills to be a coach in the field for their team of leaders who impact operators daily," Huddy said. "When a leader

has excellent coaching plans and executes them daily, it creates positive results and a winning team."

Huddy said IRT's educational committee has been hard at work planning the seminar.

The team has met monthly and has created a schedule and sessions that focus on ride operator training techniques, coaching safety at all levels, operational leadership, crisis

► See SEMINARS, page 70

International Ride Training's Ride Camp is full of animated activities and people. At right is **Ryan Protasi** of **Morey's Piers** at the 2024 Ride Camp. The 2025 event will be held February 10-14, 2025 at the **San Luis Hotel and Resort, Galveston, Texas**. The event's hands-on training will be held at the **Galveston Historic Pleasure Pier**. COURTESY IRT



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SEMINARS

Continued from page 69

planning and execution, maintenance terminology for operators, what operators need to know about ADA in the classroom and out at the rides, preventing normalization of deviance, creating effective standard operating procedures and much more.

The Ride Camp keynote speaker is **Heather L. Barnes**, owner of **Improv @ Work**.

“This session of improv exercises will promote confidence with operational leadership and how to lead authentically,” Huddy said. “Ms. Barnes will additionally teach a session on the importance of executive presence for operations leadership.”

Barnes has over 15 years of experience at the director level working in museums and aquariums. Currently, she is a faculty member at



Barnes



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Northwestern University at the Kellogg School of Management.

Throughout Barnes' career, she has applied improvisational techniques to teach science, communication and collaboration skills, and to create world-class participatory experiences.

A large portion of her practice involves working with STEM professionals to enhance science communication skills.

“At International Ride Training, ride operator safety knowledge is our top priority,” Huddy said. “Our Ride Camp seminar is designed to equip ride operators with the tools they need to ensure the safety of park guests and employees alike. We are proud to offer this comprehensive training program to amusement parks around the world.”

In addition to the safety training, IRT client attendees will have the opportunity to earn Instructor Certification as an iROC Ride Operator Safety Specialist upon successful completion of the seminar. This certification is recognized industry-wide and demonstrates a commitment to safety and excellence in ride operations.

Huddy said registration for Ride Camp will open in early fall. Early-bird pricing will be available for a limited time.

International Ride Training is a global leader in providing safety training for amusement park ride operators. With a team of expert instructors and a comprehensive curriculum, International Ride Training is dedicated to ensuring the highest standards of safety in the amusement park industry.

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Industry's #1 safety education seminar will be held January 12-17, 2025

AIMS International's annual Safety Seminar in Orlando, Florida, offers operators, maintenance personnel, and inspectors an opportunity to earn essential certifications and learn from industry experts in a week-long educational setting.

From the front line to management, more than 800 operators, inspectors, insurance reps, manufacturers, suppliers and industry professionals attend the AIMS Safety Seminar to learn about the latest issues and best practices in safety and security. By learning from the industry's top experts, valuable information and feedback is gained directly from those who maintain and operate attractions and related services every day.

Attendees choose either a defined track of courses or fully customize their experience by choosing courses from a variety of disciplines. The seminar offers the most diverse, up-to-date and relevant safety education courses available in the industry and includes over 200 live instructor-led courses offered across many disciplines, including maintenance, inspection, operations, aquatics, safety/security and adventure attractions.

In addition, the seminar offers a specialized track for young professionals entering the safety industry.

Highlights of the seminar include:

- Continued partnership with **International Ride Training (IRT)** to create and curate Operations content.

- Ellis and Associates (E&A)** returns to offer the latest in aquatics safety education.

- Multidisciplinary content for FECs and Adventure Parks.

- On-site certification testing offered in Maintenance, Operations, Aquatics, Adventure Attractions and Ride Inspection.

The annual seminar also hosts the Academy of Amusement Risk Management Safety & Security (AARMMS) designed to offer specialized advanced education opportunities. AARMMS focuses on Safety and Security Management, Risk Management and Emergency Management. This prestigious two-year academy culminates with the Certified Amusement Safety & Security Associate (CASSA) exam that tests knowledge gained through on-the-job experience as well as through the specialized AARMMS curriculum. Second-year students will have the chance to sit for the CASSA exam at the upcoming safety seminar. A limited number of candidates are

accepted each year, so register soon! More information about this innovative program is available on aimsintl.org/education.

Registration for the 2025 AIMS International Safety Seminar opens September 10, 2024. The early-bird registration rate of \$749 is available until October 14, 2024. Register now at aimsintl.org and secure your hotel at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Orlando at SeaWorld at the special AIMS rate of \$125 per night. The primary hotel fills fast, so be sure to book your rooms early. Email info@aimsintl.org or call 972-757-9993 for more information.

Safety Seminar Scholarships are available. To apply for a scholarship, please send an email to info@aimsintl.org to request an application. Scholarships cover the registration cost. Applications are due by October 15, 2024.

The AIMS International Seminar is an excellent opportunity for manufacturers, service providers and suppliers to interact with the industry and increase their visibility. Sponsorship opportunities to help support the seminar are still available, email sponsors@aimsintl.org for more information!

—Amy Lowenstein,
AIMS International

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

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Ralph S. Alberts Co., Inc., team celebrating new ISO certification from PRI

MONTOURSVILLE, Pa. — Ralph S. Alberts Co., Inc. announced that it has received certification to ISO 9001:2015 Standards. Performance Review Institute (PRI) Registrar recognized Ralph S. Alberts Co., Inc. for having met the stringent requirements of ISO 9001:2015 international standards, the company's ongoing commitment to satisfying stakeholders as well as its dedication to continual improvement of their management system.

"As a company, we value excellence, innovation and integrity as a means of delivering the best products to our customers in the best time. Becoming certified to the ISO 9001:2015 standards is a result of the commitment of our entire team to these values," said Seth Alberts, president and CEO, Ralph S. Alberts Co., Inc. "We are proud to receive this certification and will continue to exceed quality standards for our customers."

"Ralph S. Alberts Co., Inc. has demonstrated its commitment to world class quality management by implementing and becoming certified to the ISO 9001:2015 standard. They have joined an elite number of organizations worldwide who have achieved certification to this globally recognized quality standard," said Randy Daugharthy, vice president at the Performance Review Institute Registrar. "PRI Registrar is proud to partner with Ralph S. Alberts Co., Inc. in this accomplishment and look forward to continued support of their objective of quality excellence."

•rsalberts.com

Parts available online saves time, helps profits

DALLAS, Texas — Most of current shopping trends have seen a large shift to online shopping platforms since COVID, and people expect products to be delivered to their door after a few clicks on a mobile device or computer. Business-to-business (B2B) eCommerce represented 17% of all eCommerce sales in 2023, and has found its momentum online, offering increased flexibility and reduced sales costs for businesses.

"Today's operators are keen on looking for a tech partner with an online shop for parts," stated Embed's Global Transformation Growth Director Megan Lim. "Gartner forecasts that by 2025, 80% of B2B sales interactions will occur online, highlighting the swift digital evolution from traditional methods to eCommerce platforms."



Lim

One example of this comes in Embed's eSHOP which simplifies and accelerates parts purchasing and replacement, enabling operators to DIY online, from selection to payment. In the past year, 82.41% of Embed eSHOP visitors made a purchase and 64% of buyers are return customers, which showcases the consumer preference of shopping and payment convenience.

"We listened to the feedback from our customers and worked in real-time to deliver everything they requested," added Lim. "This frees up more time for FECs to focus on their operations to ensure no downtime occurs during operating hours because of missing parts or manual back-and-forth processes, like quotes, quote approvals, and invoices."



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Sunkid transports whitewater athletes who prepared for Olympics



CESSON-SÉVIGNÉ, France — The Base Sports Nature municipal facility in the town of Cesson-Sévigné, France, offers a wide range of activities for competitive and recreational athletes and clubs. The stadium for canoeing and rafting sports was given a facelift in 2023 and expanded to include a new 120-meter-long whitewater pool. A new boat transport system was planned and integrated into the system by Austrian conveyor technology specialist Sunkid. The facility hosted training for international kayak and canoeing athletes who were preparing for the 2024 Olympics in Paris. COURTESY SUNKID



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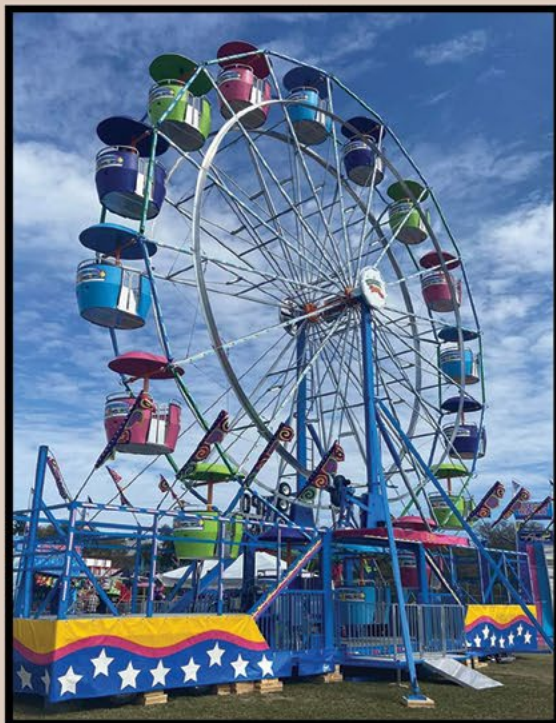


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