

- Best Parks...Pages 4-13
- Landscaping race...Pages 14 & 15
- Shows, Events...Pages 16 & 17
- Publisher's Picks...Pages 18-20
- Best New Rides...Pages 21-25
- Best Rides...Pages 26-33
- Wooden Coasters...Pages 34-42
- Steel Coasters...Pages 44-47

September 2014 | Vol. 18 • Issue 6.2

www.amusementtoday.com

SeaWorld San Diego hosts 2014 Golden Ticket Awards

Amusement Today presents awards in 29 categories

SAN DIEGO, Calif. — In 1964, **George Millay** debuted **SeaWorld San Diego**, bringing us up close and personal to the experiences found in a marine life park. Incorporating sea life attractions and making it the focus of an entire day of discovery would prove to be a success. Following this, Millay would eventually expand SeaWorld into a chain of parks. Over the years, the SeaWorld family of parks has evolved — educating, entertaining and moving those that come. The number of animals saved and protected has been inspiring. Bringing people and animals together in encounters and interactions, these are life memories people take home with them every day.

Rick Schuiteman, vice president of entertainment, looks forward to welcoming the industry. "It's so cool for SeaWorld San Diego to be hosting this year's Golden Ticket Awards ceremony...what an honor! We not only have the opportunity to showcase our beautiful park to the leaders of the theme park industry, it also allows them to experience the wonders of San Diego, also known as America's Finest City!"

John Reilly, general manager for SeaWorld San Diego, enjoys this property on a daily basis. When AT asked what he feels is the defining attribute of the San Diego property, Reilly responds, "Our team members. Their passion and talent wow me every day."

Amusement Today is thrilled to be hosting its 17th annual **Golden Ticket Awards** at **SeaWorld San Diego**. Here, attendees enjoy a dynamic mix of shows, encounters, rides and beauty — all at the original SeaWorld park, now celebrating its 50th anniversary.

"I hope our industry visitors leave the Golden Ticket Awards weekend so inspired by the animals at SeaWorld that they take action to make a difference for wild populations," says Reilly.

The annual awards presented by **Amusement Today** have not only become prized keep-



sakes honoring our industry winners and their accomplishments, but the ceremony weekend has become an enjoyable networking opportunity full of laughter and fun, as well as a chance to experience the strengths of each host park.

Like athletes in training or musicians pouring their soul into their songs, the many parks and water parks within the amusement industry strive to make their guests' days at the park the best they can possibly be and to continue to push themselves harder to make the best even better. Or perhaps, making connections within families that children will remember long after they are grown is a way they touch lives day after day. The Golden Ticket Awards salute the finest in the industry. Congratulations go to those that not only have taken top prize, but also to those that have worked hard to rank on the charts, and even especially those who each day try to make it there in the future with their continual expectations of excellence.

With each year, our experienced panel of experts continues to grow worldwide. AT has never had the exact same group of voters twice. Hundreds of people around the globe have shared their collective expertise with us along with their hard-earned dollars in the parks to give back to those that have made their lives a little more pleasurable. **Amusement Today** is indebted to the fan, those enthusiastic individuals that "get" what this industry does day after day, and celebrates with parks when they've given it more than 100 percent.

— **Tim Baldwin**



SeaWorld San Diego, celebrating its 50th anniversary this season, hosted the 2014 Golden Tickets Awards, presented by **Amusement Today**, on Sept. 6, 2014. Event attendees were treated to the park's mix of animal shows and marine-themed rides. COURTESY SEAWORLD



NEWSPAPER

POSTMASTER: Dated material.
PLEASE RUSH!
Mailed Monday, September 8, 2014

PRRST STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
FT. WORTH TX
PERMIT # 2069

SUBSCRIBE TO
AMUSEMENT TODAY
(817) 460-7220





NEWTALK



EDITORIAL: Gary Slade, gslade@amusementtoday.com

Golden Ticket Awards fun facts



Slade

When *Amusement Today* and **SeaWorld San Diego** host the 2014 Golden Ticket Awards on Sept. 6 in the Mission Bay Theater, it's easy to remember and recognize the 29 award categories that will be given out to those who won. But so many other parks have placed, or are simply worth a mention. Here are a few GTA fun facts as tabulated by AT's Tim Baldwin:

- **Dollywood** (along with its sister property **Dollywood's Splash Country**) is a finalist in more categories than any other park — 10.

- **Cedar Point** has more coasters on the charts than any other park — seven. **Six Flags Magic Mountain** is a close six.

- A total of 94 parks from 11 different countries are on the GTA charts.

- Winners in seven categories, out of 25, have gone undefeated.

- The oldest coaster on the charts is **Rutschebanen**. It opened at **Tivoli Gardens** in 1914 and celebrates its 100th birthday this year. The newest coaster is **Goliath** at **Six Flags Great America**, which opened on June 19 of this year.

- The farthest coaster from the *Amusement Today* offices is **Wood Coaster** at **Knight Valley** in China.

- Thirteen roller coasters on the charts have been designated ACE Roller Coaster Landmarks by **American Coaster Enthusiasts**.

- No roller coasters in the Top 10 Steel Coaster list go upside down. **Iron Rattler** at **Six Flags Fiesta Texas** is the highest ranking coaster with a full inversion. Ironically, **Outlaw Run** at **Silver Dollar City** does go upside down and is in the Top 10 on the Wood Coaster chart.

- **Mammoth** at **Holiday World & Splashin' Safari** is the most expensive Water Park Ride on the charts pricing out at \$8 million. **The Falls** at **Schlitterbahn Waterpark Resort** gives the longest ride. One circuit on The Falls lasts more than 20 minutes.

Amusement Today would like to thank our 2014 host facilities, **U.S.S. Midway**, **Belmont Park**, **San Diego Zoo**, and our host park **SeaWorld San Diego**, as well as our event sponsors, **Mack Rides**, **Leisure Labs LLC**, **Chance Rides**, **Larson International**, **Extreme Engineering**, **Dynamic Advantage** and **Chestnut Identity Apparel**, for all their help in making this year's event another success!

CARTOON: Bubba Flint



EDITORIAL: Tim Baldwin, tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

A Year of Innovation



Baldwin

What a year of amazing new rides. Granted some had some delays in opening, but I have to admit that this year's crop of new rides saw one of the most impressive displays of innovation I've seen in years. Each season typically brings about a crop of solid new rides, but 2014 made it supremely

challenging for the voters.

Start with record holders. **Kings Island** not only brings back the inverted coaster after an eight year absence in the U.S., but delivers the longest, tallest and fastest version ever made. **Six Flags Great Adventure** took the drop ride to terrifying new heights. **Canada's Wonderland** created an interactive dark ride with the longest uninterrupted projection screen. **Six Flags Great America** created the steepest drop on a wooden coaster that currently holds records for speed and height on that drop as well. **Schlitterbahn Kansas City** captivated the media with the world's tallest waterslide.

Then there was the reimagining of classic ride concepts. **Phantasialand** pushed the flume ride to spectacular new levels. **Europa-Park** created the next-generation dark ride with an en-

tirely new innovative ride system that is nothing short of amazing. **Universal Orlando** took the indoor coaster idea and gave it a sensory overload as they've never done before. And who couldn't be moved by the **Knoebel** family successfully opening a ride concept from almost a century past? After countless people told them to give up after years of trial and error, Knoebels triumphantly opens the only wood trough **Flying Turns** on earth.

Family rides opened to great success as well. Filling a void at **Dollywood**, **FireChaser Express** proved a less intimidating ride can still be exciting no matter what your age. **Story Land** in Glen, New Hampshire rose up the charts by opening a junior sized woodie that is packed with excitement and was met with great fanfare.

Before the year closes out, I will have visited more than 30 parks in 2014 alone, and I feel extremely blessed to have enjoyed so many of these marvelous new attractions. And yet, I still yearn to embrace those I have yet to do, because I know the dedication and effort that goes into opening each one. Kudos to the industry for making a memorable new year for visitors to parks everywhere.

AMUSEMENT TODAY STAFF

Gary Slade, Founder
Publisher and Editor-in-Chief
gslade@amusementtoday.com

Stacey Childress / Childress Media
Web & Graphic Design
stacey@childress-media.com

John Robinson / W.H.R. Inc.
Daily E-mail Newsletter
johnwrobinson@cinci.rr.com

Tim Baldwin
Editorial
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

Dean Lamanna
Editorial
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

Pam Sherborne
Editorial
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

Scott Rutherford
Editorial
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

Jeffrey L. Seifert
Editorial / Special Projects
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

Sammy Piccola
Accounting / Circulation
(817) 460-7220
spiccola@amusementtoday.com

Sue Nichols
Advertising
(615) 662-0252
snichols@amusementtoday.com

Bubba Flint
Cartoonist
bflint@amusementtoday.com

Amusement TODAY
Your Amusement Industry NEWS Leader

Deliveries
2012 E. Randol Mill Rd., Suite 203
Arlington, Texas 76011

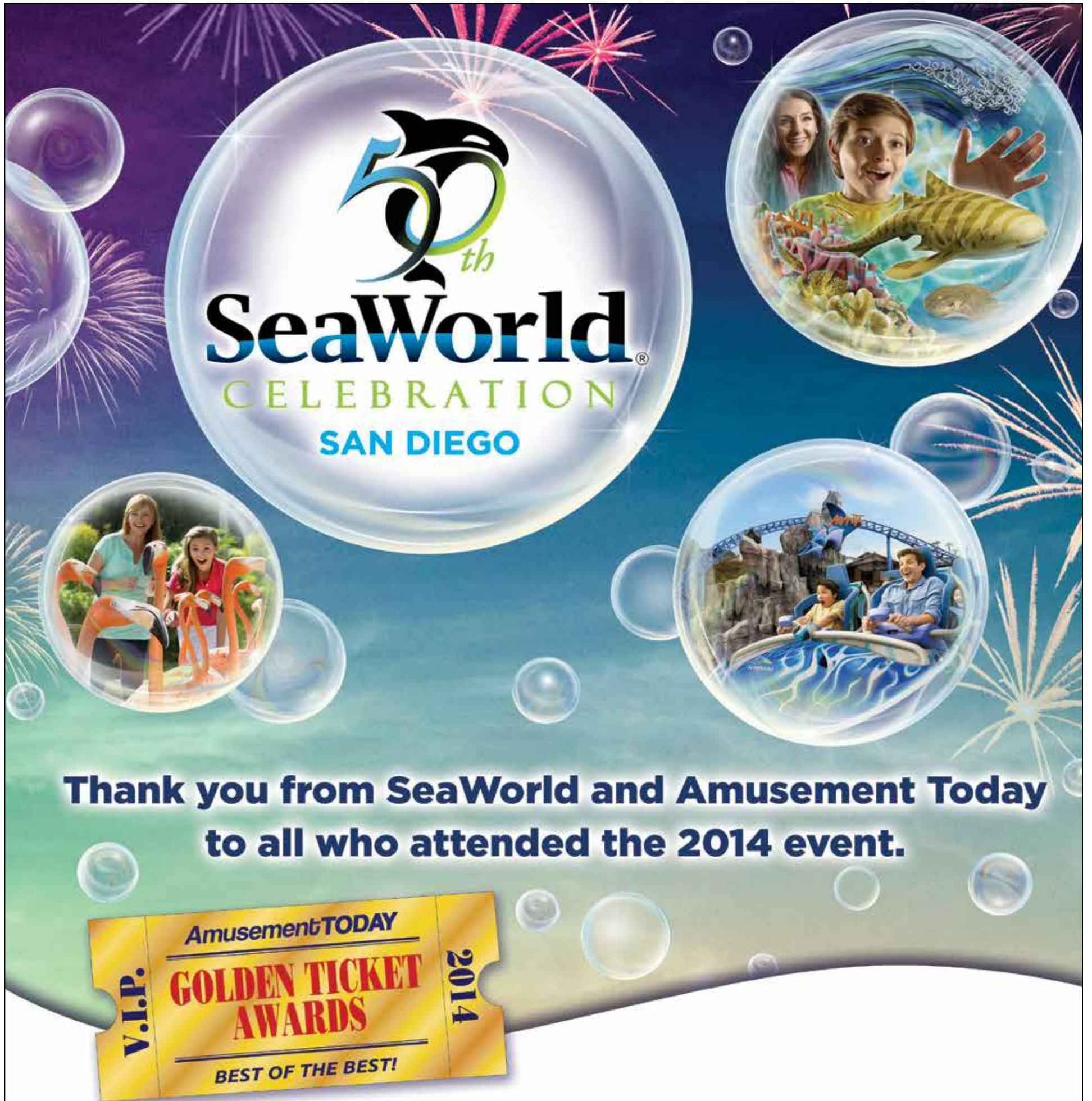
Member of:
IAAPA, AIMS International, PAPA,
NEAAPA, NJAA, OABA, WWA, TTIA,
NAARSO and IISF

Subscription rates (U.S. & International) are: 1 year (14 issues) \$50; 2 years (28 issues) \$100; 3 years (42 issues) \$150. Send check or money order (U.S. funds only, drawn on a U.S. bank) to Amusement Today, P.O. Box 5427, Arlington, Texas 76005-5427. Your cancelled check is your receipt. Please allow up to six weeks for your subscription request to be processed and the first issue mailed.

Amusement Today is an independent newspaper, published monthly by Amusement Today Inc., P.O. Box 5427, Arlington, Texas 76005. Presort Standard Postage (Permit No. 2069) pre-paid at Fort Worth, Texas. The entire contents of this newspaper and its related websites are copyrighted and trademarked by Amusement Today 2013, with all rights reserved.

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to Amusement Today, P.O. Box 5427, Arlington, Texas 76005-5427.

Contributors: Andrew Mellor, Keith Kastelic, Richard Munch, B. Derek Shaw, Curt Schimmel, Joel Styer, Janice Witherow



**Thank you from SeaWorld and Amusement Today
to all who attended the 2014 event.**

Belmont Park • SeaWorld • The Midway • San Diego Zoo • Aquatica San Diego



Europa-Park overtakes top spot for Best Park

STORY: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

It could potentially be called the biggest upset in Golden Ticket history. For the past 16 years, **Cedar Point** has claimed the ticket for **BEST PARK**. Their massive collection of rides, extensive roller coaster line-up and resort hotels made for a dynamic package that most fans thought to be unbeatable. Across the waters, **Europa-Park** has quietly been gaining momentum. First charting in 2005, the largest attended theme park in Germany would step forward and move back for a period of years, ranking in various positions from No. 4 to No. 8. It was all forward starting three years ago. In 2011, the park finally moved into third, and the following year it was No. 2. Last year, the vote was so close that it was less than 1 percent difference in the voting. Today, the park welcomes more than 5 million guests a year with its successful formula and has done what many thought to be impossible — taken the Golden Ticket.

"We graciously thank the voters for this prestigious honor, says Roland Mack, owner of Europa-Park. "Every day we pour our hearts into the attention to details and into making Europa-Park a little bit better. What a thrill to know that the most experienced enthusiasts in the world have voted Europa-Park as Best Amusement Park and also the first European park to achieve this award. It is a great honor for the whole Mack family and our



235 years of family business. I wish my father was able to share this award in person." Mack adds, "A big thank you to our production company, Mack Rides, whose top level attractions have contributed largely to our success."

Cedar Point, however, still claims its sheer legions of fans. Unquestionably the highest rated park in North America, the land of giants stands tall in the No. 2 position. **Dollywood**, as a finalist in more categories than any other park, moves up a notch to No. 3, nudging **Knoebels Amusement Resort** to the No. 4 spot. **Disneyland** keeps its No. 5 ranking to complete the upper half of the 10 parks on our BEST PARK list.

Schlitterbahn Waterpark Resort, also considered to be an untouchable legend, maintains its lead to take **BEST WATER PARK**. Nestled along the Comal River in New Braunfels, Texas, the property redefines one-of-a-kind with its abundance of signature attractions and imaginative creativity. The massive **Splashin' Safari** (No. 2), which has grown by monumental proportions from its simple debut in 1993, today occupies close to 40 acres.

Dollywood's Splash Country first appeared on the finalist charts three years ago in the No. 4 position. It moves up a ranking this year to No. 3. Ironically, **Walt Dis-**



BEST PARK: Europa-Park COURTESY EUROPA-PARK

ney World's Blizzard Beach (No. 4) and **Typhoon Lagoon** (No. 5) make a return to the charts, bumping off two other contenders from last season.

BEST CHILDREN'S PARK gives **Idlewild & Soak-Zone** a five-year run with the Golden Ticket. Taking control in 2010, the idyllic haven in the woods has delighted families with youngsters since 1878.

One of the most dramatic rises of the 2014 results is **Story Land** in Glen, N.H. Last year, the children-centered park finally appeared on the charts in a tie for No. 4. This year, it climbs significantly into the No. 2 spot. The park added the Roar-O-Saurus roller coaster this year and it was welcomed favorably with guests and voters.

"We are absolutely thrilled to hear about our jump," say General Manager



BEST PARK No. 2: Cedar Point COURTESY CEDAR POINT

Eric Dziedzic. "Although we are biased, we have always known that Story Land is a special place. With the addition of the Roar-O-Saurus this year, we have received some great press. The staff here takes each guest experience to heart; we have great rides, shows, landscaping, characters, shops, and food, but it is our team members that make

Story Land what it is. It is an honor to be included in the list."

Two sister properties, **Legoland California** (No. 3) and **Legoland Florida** (No. 4) challenge each other for the next positions. Following those siblings is a pair of newcomers gladly welcomed to the charts. Scoring an equal amount of votes, **Enchanted Forest** in Turner, Oregon, and **Santa's Village** in Jefferson, N.H. score a tie for the finalist charts this year.

As of yet uncontested, **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk** glides to a cozy win for **BEST SEASIDE PARK** in 2014. Its perfect mix of sand, sun and fun resonates with our voters.

Blackpool Pleasure Beach holds onto the No. 2 spot with its location adjacent to the Irish Sea. This English classic has welcomed holiday travelers since 1896. Also in Europe, **Gröna Lund**

► See PARKS, page 6



BEST MARINE LIFE PARK:
SeaWorld Orlando
AT/TIM BALDWIN



BEST MARINE LIFE PARK:
No. 2: SeaWorld San Diego
AT/GARY SLADE

EUROPA PARK®

THEME PARK & RESORT

Experience. Time. Together.

Thanks to all our fans for supporting us in the Golden Ticket Awards!
It is a great honor to follow in the footsteps of Cedar Point.

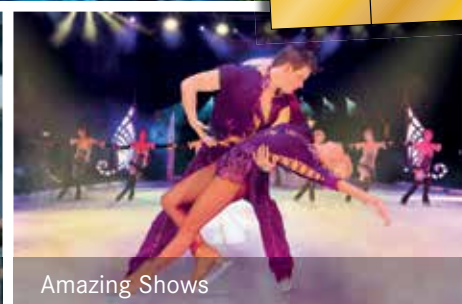
See you soon – at EUROPA-PARK, the best park 2014!



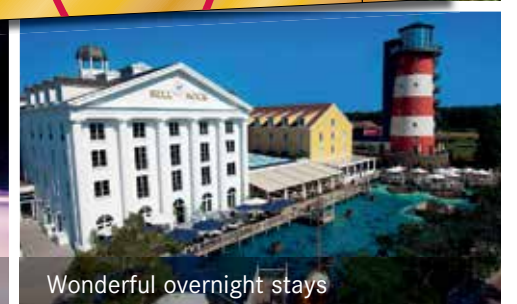
Splashing fun



High-speed thrill rides



Amazing Shows



Wonderful overnight stays

Europa-Park – Theme Park & Resort in Rust near Freiburg/Black Forest

Info-Line +49 7822 77-6688 · www.europapark.com

© MACK
INTERNATIONAL GMBH



►PARKS

Continued from page 4

(No. 3) in Stockholm, Sweden, has welcomed visitors since 1883, many of whom arrive by cruise ship and passenger ferry from other countries. **Morey's Piers**, a locale that has made summer trips to Wildwood, N.J. an annual tradition, claims the No. 4 finalist. And on the other coast, San Diego's **Belmont Park**, with its historic and preserved Giant Dipper coaster pops onto the chart to round out the top five.

Schlitterbahn Galveston Island snares the Golden



BEST WATER PARK:
Schlitterbahn Waterpark Resort
AT/TIM BALDWIN

Ticket for **BEST INDOOR WATER PARK** for 2014. The South Texas property has a unique roofing system that can change from indoors to outdoors during desirable temperatures and back to an indoor setting in a mat-

ter of minutes. **Kalahari Resort Sandusky** continues to hold the No. 2 spot, while its sister property, **Kalahari Resort Wisconsin Dells**, slips a notch to No. 4. Taking that third place position is **World Waterpark** inside West Ed-



BEST INDOOR WATERPARK:
Schlitterbahn Galveston Island
COURTESY SCHLITTERBAHN

monton Mall. This park was the first to take the Golden Ticket in this category. **Splash Landings** at the Alton Towers Resort in Staffordshire, England completes the top five. Event host **SeaWorld San Diego** has a tough chal-

lenger to go up against for **BEST MARINE LIFE PARK**. **SeaWorld Orlando** has always maintained a solid lead in this category and once again ranks No. 1. The San Diego property, the original ► **See PARKS, page 7**

PARK AND RIDE WINNERS

RANKED BY PERCENTAGE OF VOTES CAST



BEST NEW RIDE FOR 2014 (Amusement Park)			BEST NEW RIDE FOR 2014 (Water Park)		
Flying Turns	Knoebels Amusement Resort	27%	Verrückt	Schlitterbahn Kansas City	59%
Banshee	Kings Island	19%	Colossal Curl	Water Country USA	11%
Goliath	Six Flags Great America	11%	Bahama Blasters	Six Flags Fiesta Texas	10%
Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts	Islands of Adventure	10%	Deep Water Dive	Kentucky Kingdom	8%
Lightning Run	Kentucky Kingdom	9%	Snake Pit	Dorney Park/Wildwater Kingdom	4%
BEST PARK			BEST SEASIDE PARK		
Europa-Park	Rust, Germany	25%	Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk	Santa Cruz, Calif.	45%
Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	16%	Blackpool Pleasure Beach	Blackpool, England	16%
Dollywood	Pigeon Forge, Tenn.	9%	Gröna Lund	Stockholm, Sweden	15%
Knoebels Amusement Resort	Elysburg, Pa.	8%	Morey's Piers	Wildwood, N.J.	12%
Disneyland	Anaheim, Calif.	8%	Belmont Park	San Diego, Calif.	4%
Universal's Islands of Adventure	Orlando, Fla.	5%	BEST INDOOR WATER PARK		
Magic Kingdom	Orlando, Fla.	4% (tie)	Schlitterbahn Galveston Island	Galveston, Texas	25%
Tokyo DisneySea	Tokyo, Japan	4% (tie)	Kalahari Resort	Sandusky, Ohio	19%
Busch Gardens Williamsburg	Williamsburg, Va.	3.5%	World Waterpark	Edmonton, Alberta, Canada	12%
Holiday World	Santa Claus, Ind.	3%	Kalahari Resort	Wisconsin Dells, Wis.	9%
BEST WATER PARK			Splash Landings	Staffordshire, England	8%
Schlitterbahn	New Braunfels, Texas	55%	BEST KIDS' AREA		
Splashin' Safari	Santa Claus, Ind.	17%	Kings Island	Mason, Ohio	26%
Dollywood's Splash Country	Pigeon Forge, Tenn.	5%	Efteling	Kaatsheuvel, the Netherlands	13%
Blizzard Beach	Orlando, Fla.	4.5%	Knott's Berry Farm	Buena Park, Calif.	10%
Typhoon Lagoon	Orlando, Fla.	4%	Universal's Islands of Adventure	Orlando, Fla.	9.5%
BEST CHILDREN'S PARK			Nickelodeon Universe	Bloomington, Minn.	9%
Idlewild & SoakZone	Ligonier, Pa.	34%	CLEANEST PARK		
Story Land	Glen, N.H.	13%	Holiday World	Santa Claus, Ind.	23%
Legoland California	Carlsbad, Calif.	12.5%	Dollywood	Pigeon Forge, Tenn.	13%
Legoland Florida	Winter Haven, Fla.	10%	Disneyland	Anaheim, Calif.	12%
Enchanted Forest	Turner, Ore.	5% (tie)	Europa-Park	Rust, Germany	10%
Santa's Village	Jefferson, N.H.	5% (tie)	Busch Gardens Williamsburg	Williamsburg, Va.	9%
BEST MARINE LIFE PARK			BEST SHOWS		
SeaWorld Orlando	Orlando, Fla.	52%	Dollywood	Pigeon Forge, Tenn.	45%
SeaWorld San Diego	San Diego, Calif.	12%	Six Flags Fiesta Texas	San Antonio, Texas	12%
Discovery Cove	Orlando, Fla.	10%	Europa-Park	Rust, Germany	8%
Six Flags Discovery Kingdom	Vallejo, Calif.	9%	Silver Dollar City	Branson, Mo.	6.5%
SeaWorld San Antonio	San Antonio, Texas	8%	Disney California Adventure	Anaheim, Calif.	6%



► **PARKS**

Continued from page 6

in the chain of parks, celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, and keeps the silver in the No. 2 position. Also in Orlando, **Discovery Cove**, where all guests get to swim with dolphins, moves up into the No. 3 spot. **Six Flags Discovery Kingdom** in Vallejo, Calif., mixes marine life, zoo animals and thrill rides into one multi-faceted property. It also climbs a rung slotting in at No. 4. These two climbs cause **SeaWorld San Antonio** to slip a couple of notches back to the No. 5 position.



BEST CHILDREN'S PARK:
Idlewild & SoakZone
COURTESY IDLEWILD



BEST SEASIDE PARK:
Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk
AT/JEFFREY SEIFERT

PARK AND RIDE WINNERS

RANKED BY PERCENTAGE OF VOTES CAST



BEST FOOD

Dollywood	Pigeon Forge, Tenn.	21%
Knoebels Amusement Resort	Elysburg, Pa.	18%
Epcot	Orlando, Fla.	17.5%
Silver Dollar City	Branson, Mo.	13%
Europa-Park	Rust, Germany	7%

BEST WATER RIDE (PARK)

Dudley Do-Right's Ripsaw Falls	Universal's Islands of Adventure	21%
Valhalla	Pleasure Beach, Blackpool	12%
Splash Mountain	Disneyland	11%
Timber Mountain Log Ride	Knott's Berry Farm	10.5%
Mountain Slidewinder	Dollywood	9%

BEST WATER PARK RIDE

Wildebeest	Splashin' Safari	23%
Master Blaster	Schlitterbahn	16%
Mammoth	Splashin' Safari	15%
The Falls	Schlitterbahn	7%
Congo River Expedition	Schlitterbahn	8% (tie)
Verrückt	Schlitterbahn Kansas City	8% (tie)

FRIENDLIEST PARK

Dollywood	Pigeon Forge, Tenn.	39%
Holiday World	Santa Claus, Ind.	14%
Silver Dollar City	Branson, Mo.	11%
Knoebels Amusement Resort	Elysburg, Pa.	6%
Disneyland	Anaheim, Calif.	5%

BEST DARK RIDE

Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey	Universal's Islands of Adventure	20%
Twilight Zone Tower of Terror	Disney's Hollywood Studios	10.5%
Radiator Springs Racers	Disney California Adventure	10%
Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man	Universal's Islands of Adv.	9% (tie)
Haunted Mansion	Knoebels Amusement Resort	9% (tie)

BEST OUTDOOR SHOW PRODUCTION

Illuminations	Epcot	27%
World of Color	Disney California Adventure	19%
Fantasmic!	Disneyland	11%
Lone Star Nights	Six Flags Fiesta Texas	10%
Fantasmic!	Disney's Hollywood Studios	9%

BEST LANDSCAPING

Busch Gardens Williamsburg	Williamsburg, Va.	24%
Gilroy Gardens	Gilroy Calif.	23%
Efteling	Kaatsheuvel, the Netherlands	17%
Dollywood	Pigeon Forge, Tenn.	6%
Epcot	Orlando, Fla.	5%

BEST HALLOWEEN EVENT

Universal Orlando Resort	Orlando, Fla.	28%
Knott's Berry Farm	Buena Park, Calif.	20%
Knoebels Amusement Resort	Elysburg, Pa.	14%
Kennywood	West Mifflin, Pa.	9%
Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	6%

BEST CHRISTMAS EVENT

Dollywood	Pigeon Forge, Tenn.	41%
Disneyland	Anaheim, Calif.	10%
Silver Dollar City	Branson, Mo.	9.5%
Magic Kingdom	Orlando, Fla.	9%
Kennywood	West Mifflin, Pa.	7%

BEST CAROUSEL

Knoebels Amusement Resort	Elysburg, Pa.	40%
Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk	Santa Cruz, Calif.	27%
Six Flags Great America	Gurnee, Ill.	5.5%
Kennywood	West Mifflin, Pa.	5% (tie)
Phantasialand	Brühl, Germany	5% (tie)

BEST INDOOR COASTER

Revenge of the Mummy	Universal Studios Orlando	21%
Space Mountain	Disneyland	14%
Winjas	Phantasialand	12%
Black Diamond	Knoebels Amusement Resort	9%
Mindbender	Galaxyland	8.5%

BEST FUNHOUSE/WALK-THROUGH ATTRACTION

Noah's Ark	Kennywood	32%
Frankenstein's Castle	Indiana Beach	17%
Gasten Ghost Hotel	Liseberg	15%
Ghost Ship	Morey's Piers	12%
Lustiga Huset	Gröna Lund	11%

We're flying high with excitement!
Thank you for voting us Best Children's Park.



It's a Giant Thrill

TO BE VOTED THE WORLD'S BEST SEASIDE PARK—THANK YOU!

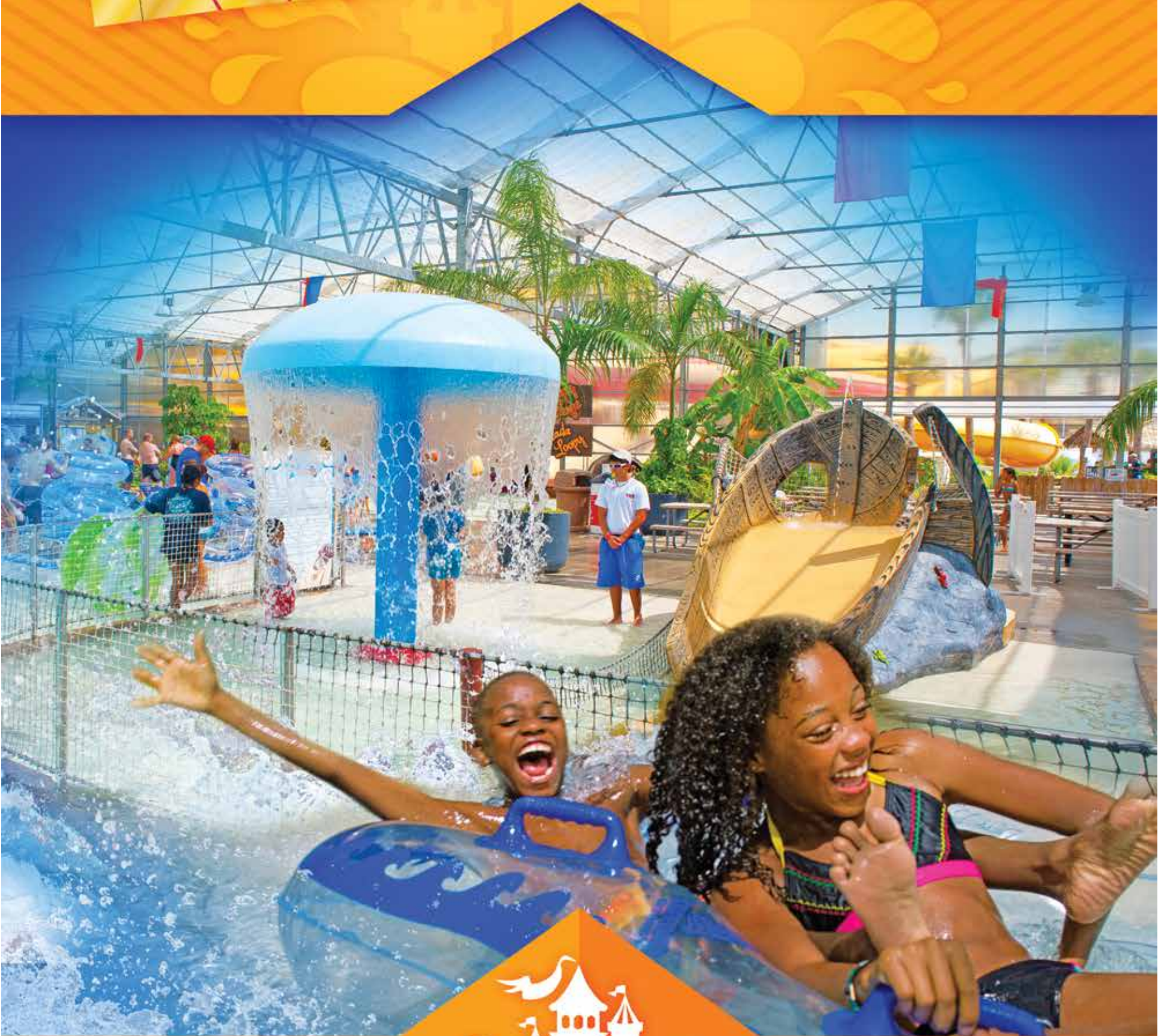


Giant Dipper Roller Coaster—since 1924

beachboardwalk.com



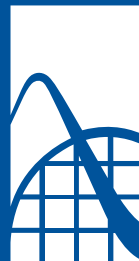
THANK YOU Amusement Today and Golden Ticket Voters for this honor. For the seventh year in a row, you've voted us **THE WORLD'S BEST INDOOR WATERPARK!**



Congratulations to Europa-Park!

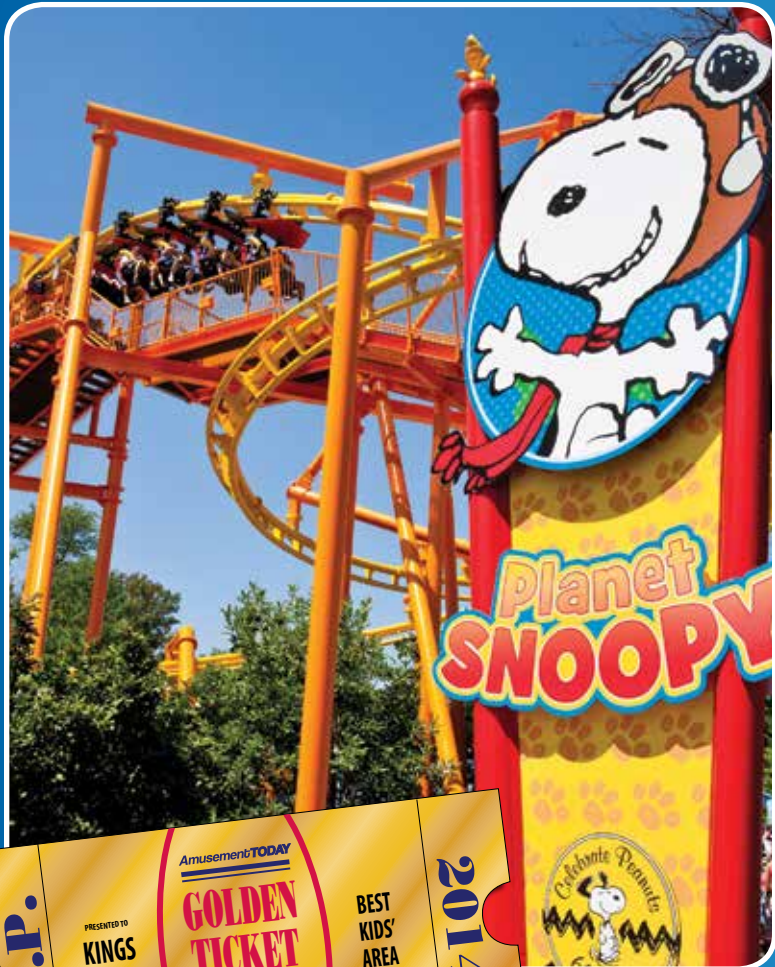
Enjoy The Ride!

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT



Cedar Fair
Entertainment Company®

World-Class FUN



Thanks
for your support in the Golden Ticket Awards!

Cedar Fair is proud to be the winner of two Golden Ticket Awards,
and to have 25 other amusement parks, rides and roller coasters ranked among the best in the world!

BEST Amusement/Theme Park
Cedar Point, Best Park 16 years in a row!

BEST Landscaping
#2 Gilroy Gardens

BEST New Ride
#2 Banshee™ • Kings Island

BEST Halloween Event
#2 Knott's Berry Farm
#5 Cedar Point

BEST Kids' Area
#3 Knott's Berry Farm

BEST Water Ride
#4 Timber Mountain Log Ride
Knott's Berry Farm

BEST New Waterpark Attraction
#5 Snake Pit
Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom

TOP Steel Roller Coasters

- #4 Diamondback • Kings Island
- #6 Leviathan™ • Canada's Wonderland
- #10 Intimidator™ • Carowinds
- #13 (tie) Magnum XL-200 • Cedar Point
- #13 (tie) Intimidator™ 305 • Kings Dominion
- #15 Behemoth® • Canada's Wonderland
- #16 Banshee™ • Kings Island
- #19 Top Thrill Dragster® • Cedar Point
- #28 Maverick® • Cedar Point
- #37 Steel Force® • Dorney Park
- #49 Volcano, The Blast Coaster
Kings Dominion

TOP Wooden Roller Coasters

- #7 Gold Striker® • California's Great America
- #8 The Beast® • Kings Island
- #12 Prowler® • Worlds of Fun
- #15 Shivering Timbers® • Michigan's Adventure
- #35 Blue Streak • Cedar Point
- #44 Ghost Rider® • Knott's Berry Farm

from Coast to Coast!

Offering Best Day of the Summer Experiences Every Day

Cedar Point®

Sandusky, OH cedarpoint.com

Soak City®

Sandusky, OH www.soakcitycp.com

Knott's Berry Farm®

Buena Park, CA knotts.com

Knott's Soak City®

Orange County www.soakcityoc.com

Kings Island®

Cincinnati, OH visitkingsisland.com

Canada's Wonderland®

Toronto, ON canadawonderland.com

Kings Dominion®

Richmond, VA kingsdominion.com

Carowinds®

Charlotte, NC carowinds.com

California's Great America

Santa Clara, CA cagreatamerica.com

Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom®

Allentown, PA dorneypark.com

Valleyfair®

Shakopee, MN valleyfair.com

Worlds of Fun & Oceans of Fun®

Kansas City, MO worldsoffun.com

Michigan's Adventure®

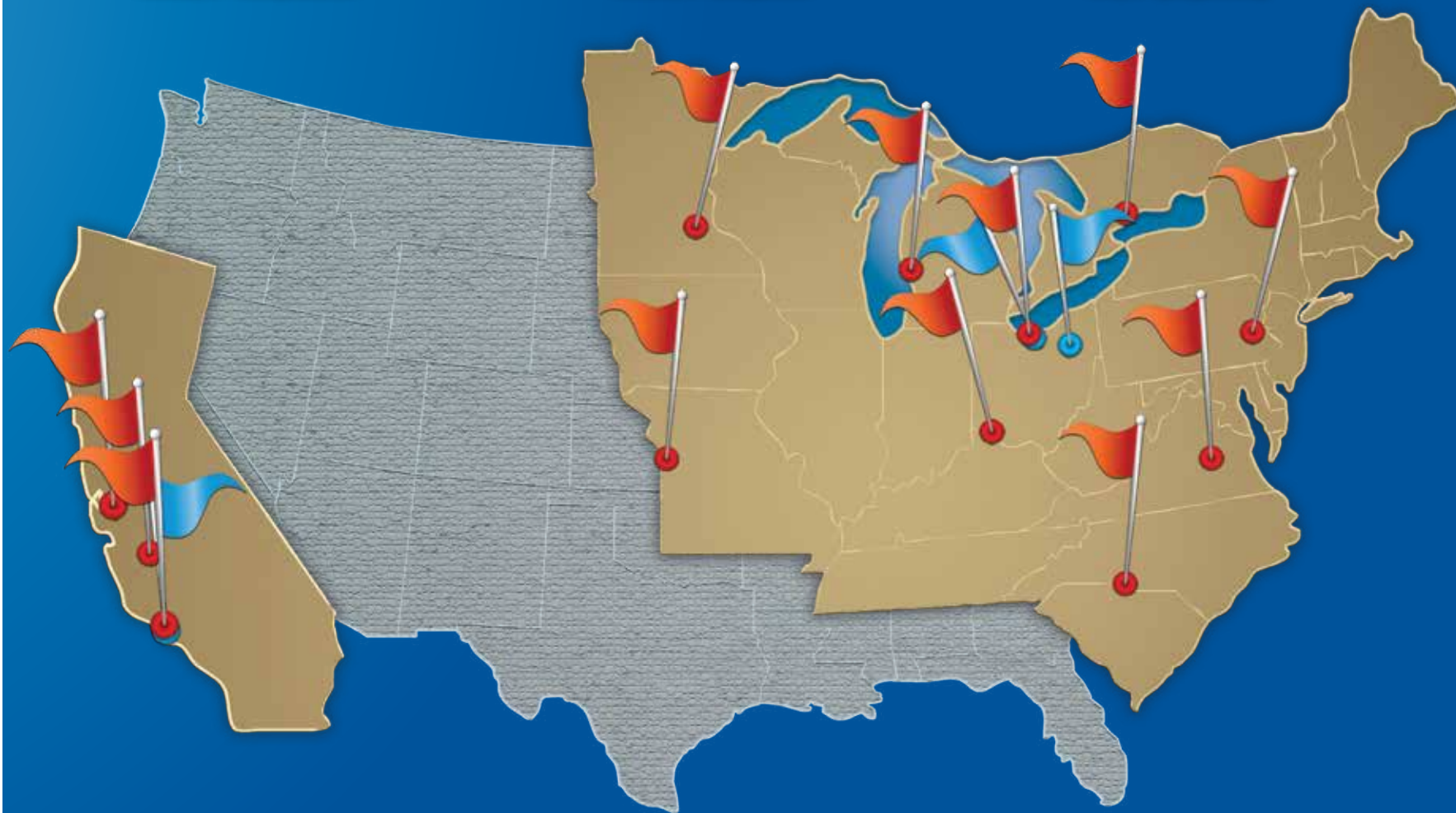
Muskegon, MI miadventure.com

Wildwater Kingdom®

Aurora, OH wildwaterfun.com

Gilroy Gardens

Gilroy, CA gilroygardens.org



Cedar Fair
Entertainment Company®

One Cedar Point Drive Sandusky, OH 44870-5259 (419) 627-2233 cedarfair.com NYSE: FUN

© 2014 Dale Earnhardt, Inc. Intimidator™ and Intimidator™ 305 take their names from Dale Earnhardt, "the Intimidator". © 2014 Peanuts Worldwide LLC. Peanuts.com © 2014 Cedar Fair, L.P.

Busch and Gilroy duke out Landscaping in close race

Two garden theme parks separated by just two votes

STORY: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

From time to time, the Golden Ticket Awards can prompt some fierce competitions. Long time winner **Busch Gardens Williamsburg** is the only park to claim **BEST LANDSCAPING**. This year, however, became battle of the Gardens. **Gilroy Gardens** made a charge against the Busch Gardens powerhouse and all but came down to a photo finish, with Williamsburg holding on to the prize, but only by a mere two votes. Could second place Gilroy unseat the perennial giant? The true winners here would be visitors to both parks who would benefit from the beauty that such a competition brings. Kudos to both challengers for dazzling your audiences.

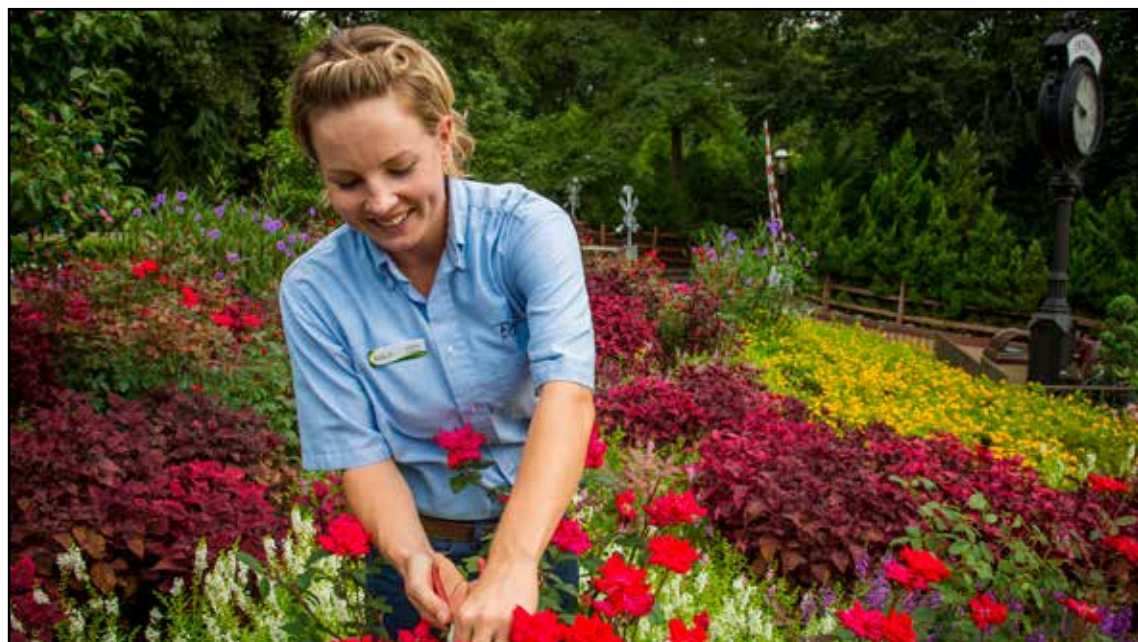
When AT asked Barbara Granter, general manager for Gilroy Gardens, how she felt about the close

race, she said, "Really! We were that close? It does feel a bit like the Olympics – winning a silver medal is fantastic, especially for such a little property, but it would have been incredible to have gotten gold." Granter smiles, "Gilroy is 'the little park that could,' so watch out! One day we will make it."

In addition to a variety of color the landscaping provides, the sculpted bushes and famous Circus Trees add a completely unique and one-of-a-kind experience to a visit to Gilroy.

Last year's tight race ended in a tie between **Dollywood** and **Knoebels** for **BEST FOOD**. This year the tie was broken with Dollywood taking the Golden Ticket and Knoebels maintaining a relatively close second.

Joel Lindsey, director of foods for Dollywood believes eating is a part of the



BEST LANDSCAPING: Busch Gardens Williamsburg
COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS

day's experience. "There is such steep competition in our industry. We are so excited with this Golden Ticket; it is a testament to our team's focus on quality and variety."

Rounding out the five finalists are familiar faces: **Epcot** (No. 3) with its worldwide smorgasbord, and **Silver Dollar City** (No. 4) and its hometown cooking. **Europa-Park** is our newcomer on the chart this year. The German theme park offers 54 restaurants today with a vast array of cuisine, compared to five when the park opened in 1975.

FRIENDLIEST PARK could be an extremely tough category for our voters as most parks train employees to be friendly. To make it on the charts is a true accomplishment. **Dollywood** has taken the Golden Ticket for a third year in a row.

Three parks have claimed top rank in this category in Golden Ticket history. **Holiday World**, a long-time recipient, still holds the No. 2 spot, and **Silver Dollar City** still charts highly at No. 3.

Knoebels Amusement Resort has been noted for friendly employees among its many charms and takes No. 4 on the list, and **Disneyland** makes a return to the chart, rounding out the top five.



No.2 Gilroy Gardens
AT/TIM BALDWIN



CLEANEST PARK: Holiday World
COURTESY HOLIDAY WORLD

Holiday World makes it a 15-year lock on the **CLEANEST PARK** category. The Golden Ticket is utilized in training of new employees to stress not only the reputation of the park, but the importance of a commitment by everyone to continue the exemplary standards.

Dollywood (No. 2) and **Disneyland** (No. 3) keep their respective rankings from last year's chart. **Europa-Park** enters this category in the No. 4 position, bumping down **Busch Gardens Williamsburg** a notch, but still retains its claim to finalist in the category.



BEST FOOD: Dollywood
AT/TIM BALDWIN



FRIENDLIEST PARK: Dollywood
AT/TIM BALDWIN



***Thank you
very mulch!***



**Busch
Gardens**
WILLIAMSBURG, VA

To our landscapers, voters and everyone who help make Busch Gardens® naturally fun and beautifully wild year after year, **Thank you.**

©2014 Sea World Parks & Entertainment, Inc. All rights reserved.

That's entertainment! Shows and festivals delight audiences



STORY: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

Dollywood takes **BEST SHOWS** for a sixth year, this time with an impressive margin. With the park's namesake at the helm, entertainment must certainly be a high priority. Many genres of music are featured in numerous shows as well as family offerings in other varieties of performances. Even with such formidable competition, **Six Flags Fiesta Texas** retains its second place hold and still maintains its 20-plus year reputation for outstanding performances. **Europa-Park**, in a first year appearance last year, was locked in a three-way tie for fourth place. The German theme park, which offers 15 different shows daily, moves up a notch to claim the bronze this year. **Silver Dollar City** continues its tradition of being one of the honored finalists in fourth place, while **Disney California Adventure** is a newcomer to the chart rounding out the top five.

In the category of **BEST OUTDOOR NIGHT SHOW PRODUCTION**, our five finalists remain, but positions have juggled. **Epcot** fans have stayed the course when it comes to voting, still loving the "Illuminations: Reflections of Earth" multi-media extravaganza for more than a decade. It has only been unseated once. Industry speculation persists that its West Coast cousin can eventually overtake it with "World of Color" at **Disney California Adventure**. The gap continues to shrink, but Epcot stays strong, leaving "World of Color" still locked in at No. 2.

The other three positions have shifted. **Disneyland** resurfaced on the charts last year with its extremely popular "Fantasmic!" show. This year it climbs two notches up to third place. This upward movement causes **Six Flags Fiesta Texas'** "Lone Star Nights" and **Disney Hollywood's Studios'** version of "Fantasmic!" to each slip a notch, but still hang on to the charts as finalists.

Due to their short run, holiday festivals are often challeng-



BEST SHOWS: Dollywood (top left); No. 2: Six Flags Fiesta Texas (left).
COURTESY DOLLYWOOD;
AT/TIM BALDWIN

BEST OUTDOOR SHOW PRODUCTION: Illuminations: Reflections of Earth, Epcot (left); No. 2: World of Color, Disney California Adventure
AT/JEFFREY SEIFERT;
COURTESY DCA

BEST HALLOWEEN EVENT: Universal Studios Orlando (top left); No. 2: Knott's Berry Farm (left).
COURTESY UNIVERSAL;
COURTESY KNOTT'S

BEST CHRISTMAS EVENT: Dollywood (top right); No. 2: Disneyland (right).
COURTESY DOLLYWOOD;
COURTESY DISNEYLAND

ing for voters to get to numerous incarnations. Parks have now established reputations for making the trek more of a planned destination for many voters. Many people make an annual pilgrimage to **Universal Studios Orlando** for its Halloween Horror Nights. The mega-event once again claims the ticket for **BEST HALLOWEEN EVENT**. **Knott's Berry Farm** dominates the West

Coast with its legendary "The Haunt at Knott's Scary Farm," and takes the No. 2 spot. In this category, all positions remain unchanged (for now) with **Knoebels Amusement Resort** (No. 3) and **Kennywood** (No. 4) taking Halloween fun to the traditional park scale. **Cedar Point** jumped on the charts last year and keeps its spooky fun in place again this year completing the top five.

If the weather cooperates, the addition of Christmas operating days has really allowed many parks to extend their season and up their attendance. The magic of the holidays is a time for families to have fun together and this often can make for the right formula for a successful yuletide festival. **BEST CHRISTMAS EVENT** is once again wrapped up by **Dollywood**, keeping its

shiny bow as the sole winner of this category intact. Our No. 2 and No. 3 spots flip-flop this year, with **Disneyland** nudging up just ever-so-barely ahead of **Silver Dollar City**. **Magic Kingdom** continues its spirited popularity in the No. 4 spot. **Kennywood** was a new contender on our charts last year, and it looks to start a yuletide tradition of staying in the top five finalists.



Thank You Amusement Today!

BEST
SHOWS



BEST
FOOD



FRIENDLIEST
PARK



BEST
CHRISTMAS EVENT



Love every moment™

Dollywood.com



2014 Publisher's Picks: Turnstile, Legend

Hyland Hills Water World protects its icons

When a water park has entertained long enough to celebrate 35 summers of providing fun to its guests, it means they have done their job during that time, or the guests would not continue to come back as repeat customers.

Along the way it usually means the park has created a ride, or attraction, that becomes a park icon in the guests eyes. Such is the case with the community-owned **Water World**, part of the **Hyland Hills Parks & Recreation District** in Federal Heights, Colorado, just outside of Denver.

But in this case, the park created not one, but two unique rides that are truly entrenched into the park's slide lineup, and labeled as "must-do" rides.

First up was the 1990 installation of **Lost River of the Pharaohs**, followed by the 1993 installation of **Voyage to the Center of the Earth**. Both of these family rafting type rides are indoors and are of dark ride in nature.

The creative minds of R&R Creative Design, Sally Corporation's lifelike animatronic figures, special effects, and custom rockwork from National Rock & Sculpture allowed the park to create these two iconic attractions inhouse and with lasting success.

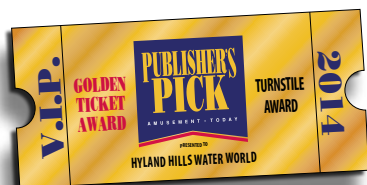
Now in 2014, these two guest favorite dark-ride attractions have been enhanced in a big way.

Voyage to the Center of the Earth, with its 1,600 foot-long course, now features a more realistic looking, life-sized T-Rex which underwent a complete overhaul this winter. The T-Rex is now able to take a six-foot leap towards the floating guests with four very intimidating movements. Also added were three animated prehistoric turtles and two birds featuring wingspans of 10 feet. The T-Rex Cave was enhanced with even more animation as well as all new lighting and sounds effects from R&R Creative.

At the 1,500 foot-long **Lost River of the Pharaohs**, the park added animation to the two scary statues in the Throne Room. It added laser effects to both a new mural and numerous mummies and added the off-the-wall water effects of the spitting Pharaoh hounds.

Hyland Hills Water World spent just \$150,000 to upgrade these two classics for their guests to enjoy, proving that just a little effort can move the turnstile. The results have been phenomenal with guest feedback off the charts.

With their vision to enhance these two very unique icons through added storylines, visuals, animation, lighting and sound, *Amusement Today* is honored to name **Hyland Hills Water World** as our Publisher's Pick for the **2014 Turnstile Award**.



Hyland Hills Water World spent the off-season refurbishing two of its very unique and iconic attractions. Shown here are the **Lost River of the Pharaohs** (above) and **Voyage to the Center of the Earth** (left).
COURTESY WATER WORLD

George Millay reshaped industry with water

If ever an individual created a sea change in the amusement industry, it was **George Millay**. As the leading creative force behind the **SeaWorld** theme park chain and the father of the water park, Millay had a vision that was more than just adding water to fun — it revolutionized our business by using our most vital natural resource to engage parkgoers and enhance the interactivity of their experience.

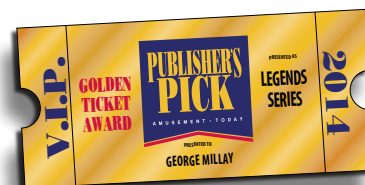
Water, or at least his close proximity to it, was a constant in Millay's life. Born in 1929 in San Diego, he grew up in Ocean Beach, San Francisco and Hawaii and served in the Navy for three years. Upon graduating from UCLA in 1955, he worked briefly as a stockbroker before he and a business partner opened the **Reef Restaurant** in Long Beach in 1956. That eatery became the cornerstone of **Specialty Restaurants Corporation**, with which Millay remained involved for another decade.

Even while enjoying that success, Millay partnered with two UCLA fraternity brothers, Dave DeMotte and Milt Shedd, and the wildlife curator at Marineland in Palos Verdes, Ken Norris, to begin developing a marine life park called **SeaWorld** on San Diego's Mission Bay. Today, half a century after that landmark opened in 1964, the company encompasses 11 destination and regional parks across the U.S.

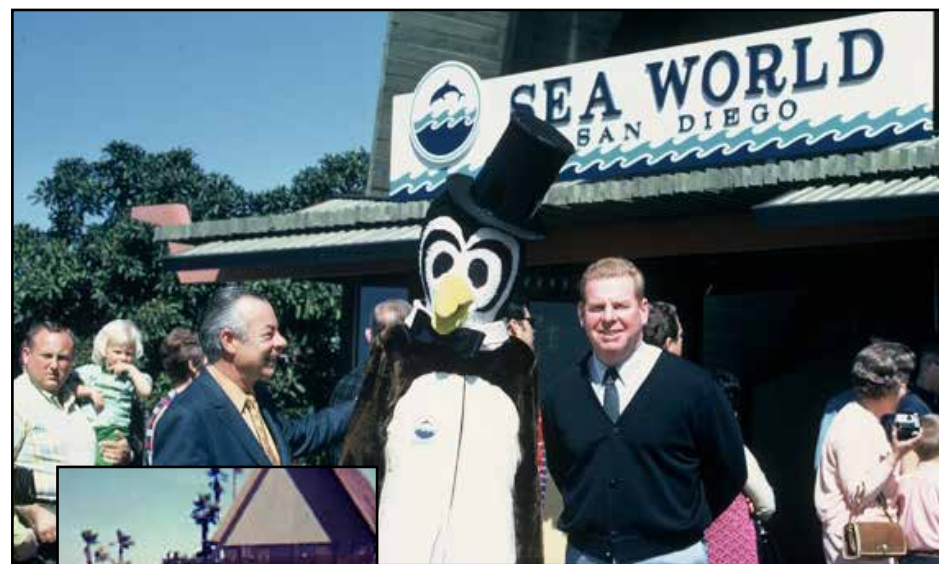
Millay's enthusiasm for the business of fun did not stop with SeaWorld. At the start of the 1970s, he assisted with the development of **Magic Mountain** theme park north of Los Angeles. And in 1974, he formed another company, **Leisure Marine**, in San Diego, with which he explored the feasibility of a new type of park featuring water-based attractions. From this, the national **Wet 'n Wild** water park chain emerged.

"Water-oriented activities are among the fastest-growing forms of recreation in America," Millay said at the time. "People are demanding activities that they can participate in."

Millay left us in 2006, but he also has left us with a legacy of entertainment that has fulfilled the public's desire for participatory fun while also promoting conservation and showcasing the natural wonders of our world. Like water is to humanity, his concepts will remain a life force in our industry — and for this, *Amusement Today* honors **George Millay** with its **2014 Legend Series Award**.



George Millay



SeaWorld San Diego, opened in 1964, was the pride of George Millay, who co-founded the original park and presided over the SeaWorld chain until 1974, when he built, in Orlando the first of what would be seven **Wet 'n Wild** water parks by the time he sold the company in 1998. At left, George with his wife, Anne, at SeaWorld.
COURTESY SEAWORLD PARKS & ENTERTAINMENT

2014 Publisher's Picks: Person, Persons

Jeff Pike gave the gift of 'life'

Finding one's dream job is a goal to which many of us aspire. Those able to attain it do so through desire, diligence and hard work. **Jeff Pike** is one of those people. He knew as a young boy that he wanted to design roller coasters. His unwavering resolve paid off handsomely when **Great Coasters International, Inc.** co-founders **Clair Hain, Jr.** and **Michael L. Boodley** recognized Jeff's potential and hired him as he completed his engineering degree in the late '90s.

While Jeff brought with him the technical wizardry of modern engineering techniques, he was able to flourish due to the assistance of Mike, who acted as his mentor. Mike and Jeff combined their talents, and along with the GCII team, they created some of the most amazing wooden coasters seen since the industry's Golden Age in the early 20th century. During this time, a close bond between the pair developed, which further facilitated their inspired work.

When Mike decided to retire in 2000, he effectively passed the torch to Jeff, who was working his way up to a position as GCII's lead designer. Thanks to Mike's influence and tutelage, Jeff helped GCII become a respected global leader in finely crafted wooden coasters. Jeff would forever be grateful to Mike for taking the chance on him and allowing him to realize his dream.

Thirteen years later, Jeff faced a difficult decision when he learned that Mike's health was in rapid decline with his kidneys failing due to complications from diabetes. He needed a kidney transplant. Many of Mike's close friends stepped up to help by being tested to see if they were a match. Mike was adamant that Jeff not be a transplant candidate due to commitments to his wife and young children. Of course, Jeff would not be deterred. Against astronomical odds, he turned out to be a perfect match. After much testing and working to lose weight as the doctors ordered, both Mike and Jeff checked into a New Jersey hospital for the procedure in December 2013.

The surgery was a complete success, but the road to recovery was a difficult one, especially for Jeff. The pain he endured as he healed was substantial, but with the same fortitude that served him all his life, he persevered. Today, both Mike and Jeff are healthy and living life to the fullest with their enduring friendship intact.

For selflessly offering the ultimate gift — the gift of life to a dear friend — as well as helping to keep the traditional wooden roller coaster alive and well into the 21st century, **Jeff Pike** is AT's choice for **2014 Person of the Year**.



Jeff Pike has enjoyed much success as a designer with Great Coasters International, creating top-ranked wooden roller coasters for many age groups to enjoy. AT FILE



Jeff Pike (left) and Mike Boodley in a New Jersey hospital following kidney transplant surgery. COURTESY MIKE BOODLEY

SeaWorld Rescue teams rehabilitate wildlife

The 50th anniversary of **SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment** this year celebrates a milestone beyond the creation of fun. It marks the fifth decade of the company's unique commitment to conservation. This includes public education and — through the work of the nonprofit **Hubbs-Sea World Research Institute**, established in 1963 — species study and preservation, as well as environmental stewardship.

This commitment culminates with SeaWorld's recently announced **Blue World Project**, a greatly expanded, state-of-the-art killer whale environment that first will be built at **SeaWorld San Diego**, plus more than \$10 million in new matching funds for research and conservation projects related to killer whales and ocean health. These developments will enhance further the company's reputation as one of the world's foremost zoological organizations and a global leader in animal welfare, training, husbandry and veterinary care.

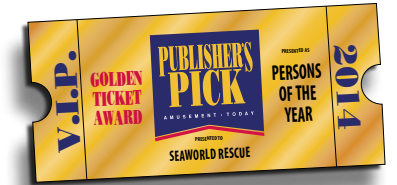
Behind the scenes, important work has long been carried out through SeaWorld's animal and rehabilitation program, which gives ill, injured and stranded animals a second chance at life and with the goal of returning them to their ocean home. Nationally, **SeaWorld Animal Rescue Teams** have rescued and rehabilitated more than 23,000 animals. SeaWorld San Diego's team alone has rescued more than 7,000 marine mammals and more than 8,000 marine birds since 1965.

In 2013, the SeaWorld San Diego team — utilizing a state-of-the-art medical and laboratory facility — rescued a near-record number of California sea lions as a result of an **Unusual Mortality Event** (UME) that caused juvenile sea lions to strand on beaches along the central and southern coastline of California. SeaWorld cared for more than 411 sea lions, the majority of which were part of the UME, in addition to other marine mammal species, including 10 elephant seals, 12 harbor seals, one fur seal and five dolphins. In addition, SeaWorld took in and cared for 267 birds. As of the first quarter of this year, the park had already rescued more than 185 marine mammals and more than 120 sea birds.

For their tireless dedication to animal welfare, *Amusement Today* presents its **2014 Persons of the Year Award** to the **SeaWorld Animal Rescue Teams** based in San Diego, Calif.; Orlando, Fla.; and San Antonio, Texas.



SeaWorld Animal Rescue Teams based in San Diego, Orlando and San Antonio, are on call 24/7 to give ill, injured and stranded marine mammals and sea birds a second chance at life. Nationally, more than 23,000 animals have been rescued and rehabilitated. COURTESY SEAWORLD



"PERSONS OF THE YEAR"
SEAWORLD RESCUE PROGRAM

**SeaWorld® thanks
Amusement Today
for recognizing the
efforts of our dedicated
and passionate employees.**



SeaWorld®
RESCUE



"BEST MARINE LIFE PARK"
SEAWORLD ORLANDO

Knoebels, Schlitterbahn Kansas City win Best New Rides



STORY: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

When *Amusement Today* introduced the Best New Ride categories in 2005, **Hades** at **Mount Olympus Water & Theme Park** became our first winner, which was followed by **The Voyage** at **Holiday World** a year later. These two coasters pushed the boundaries of what a wooden coaster could do. **Maverick** at **Cedar Point** was our next winner. For a park of giants, it was a new direction of something exciting that remained low to the ground with Intamin using a dual launch. Each year since, we've continued to see some real innovations. **Waldameer's Ravine Flyer II** by The Gravity Group overcame years of obstacles to become the signature ride for the park, one that jumps a roadway below. **Prowler** at **Worlds of Fun** pushed Great Coasters International into a more traditional out-and-back layout that somehow incorporated all the action of their twister coasters. **Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey** at **Universal's Islands of Adventure** showed us we only thought we knew what a dark ride could do. **New Texas Giant** at **Six Flags Over Texas** from the minds at Rocky Mountain Construction and Ride Centerline innovatively transformed an aging woodie into a new, smooth, dynamic experience. **Dollywood's Wild Eagle** brought the new B&M wing coaster genre to North America with its biggest incarnation at the time. Last year, **Silver Dollar**



BEST NEW RIDE (PARK):
Flying Turns, Knoebels Amusement Resort
AT/GARY SLADE

City utilized Rocky Mountain and Ride Centerline to rethink the wooden coaster from the ground up. The innovative **Outlaw Run** raced to a Golden Ticket win.

Water parks also saw innovation over the years with LIM water coasters such as **Splashin' Safari's Wildebeest** and **Mammoth**. Schlitterbahn reintroduced thematic versions of aging rides into visual and interactive experiences such as **Dragon's Revenge** and **Congo River Expedition**. Later they truly pushed the envelope with **The Falls**, creating an endless attraction that lasted longer than 20 minutes for a single circuit.

Innovation was still strong in 2014 (see editorial, page 2). **BEST NEW RIDE (PARK)** arrives this year in a mindset not seen in the category before. In contrast to all our previous winners for new attractions, **Knoebels' new Flying Turns** is not intended to be a thriller at all. Joe Muscato of Knoebels Amusement Resort said, "It was never meant to be an extreme ride. We wanted a ride that is unique and a lot of fun. We're very pleased with the reception the Turns

has received. The squeals and laughter we hear coming from the trough tell us it's a success." Having ridden a Flying Turns at **Euclid Beach** and being completely thrilled by it in his younger years, Dick Knoebel adds, "When the idea was brought to the Knoebel family about recreating it, I was convinced this would be a coup. At the IAAPA summer meeting in 2005, I was told by Kurt Mack-Even 'you'll never get it.' I replied sternly that, 'We would.' And, with my German stubbornness and Marine Corps resolution, we pushed on, overcoming each obstacle that we met – and there were substantial ones." Knoebel grins, "But, with the perseverance of the Knoebel family and staff, we won." A true testament to dedication, Flying Turns takes the Golden Ticket.

Other finalists took previous successes and carried them further. **Banshee** at **Kings Island** (No. 2) reintroduced America to the excitement of the inverted roller coaster, B&M's most prolific style of coaster. After an eight year absence since the last U.S. installation, Kings Island sculpted the skyline with me-



No. 2: Banshee, Kings Island
AT/GARY SLADE

ga-statistics creating the tallest, longest and fastest version ever created. Likewise, **Six Flags Great America** followed the success of last year's winner and built a new wooden coaster from the ground up that incorporates radical maneuvers, including one of the longest spans of upside down travel. Yes, on a wooden coaster. **Goliath** (No. 3) also boasted records of tallest, steepest and fastest drop of any woodie running today. **Universal Studios Orlando** knows a good themed attraction, and the indoor coaster **Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts** (No. 4) continues to capitalize on the immense popularity of that literary and film franchise.

Our fifth finalist actually came down to a battle between two new steel coasters: **Helix**, a dual-launched multi-inversion coaster from Mack Rides at **Liseberg** and **Lightning Run** from Chance Rides at the newly re-opened **Kentucky Kingdom**. Separated by a mere two votes, Lightning Run snags the final spot and proved a coaster with modest height can still pack an amazing punch.

For **BEST NEW RIDE (WATER PARK)**, one stood above the others, literally. **Verrückt** at **Schlitterbahn Kansas City** and its journey to opening day has been under scrutiny via the internet microscope. At more than 17 stories, the world's tallest waterslide is thrilling passengers with its high-speed plummet in three-person rafts. Terri Adams, COO of **Schlitterbahn Waterparks**, says, "Having ridden, it is an incredible ride! Everyone I've talked to – whether from Kansas, Texas or wherever they traveled from – has said the ride was more than worth it and lived up to the hype. Now that is gratifying!" She adds, "The ride isn't just a great success, it has created an icon in the city, something that is a 'must do' when you are in the area. In that way, we have given something back to our local fans that have supported us year after year."

ProSlide supplied a trio of finalists this season. **Colossal Curl** stands dramatically at the front of **Water Country USA** combining a funnel and wave into the exhilarating four-person slide. **Bahama Blasters** at **Six Flags Fiesta Texas** and **Deep Water Dive** at **Kentucky Kingdom** capitalize on the hot trend of drop capsule waterslides. The San Antonio version is the world's steepest, while the Louisville installation is the tallest of all drop capsule rides. These attractions come in at Nos. 2, 3 and 4, respectively.

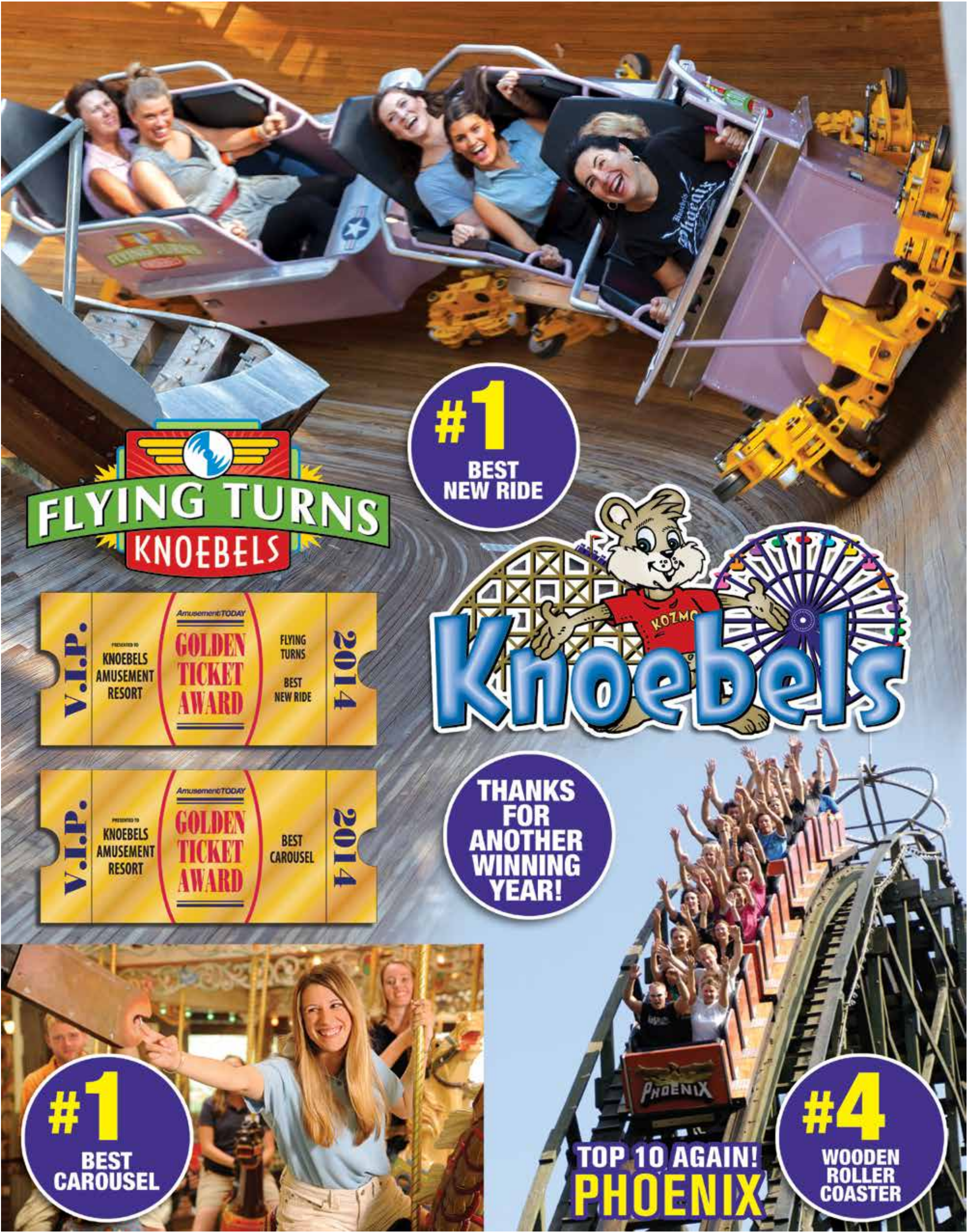
WhiteWater West brings in **Snake Pit** at **Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom** to round out the five finalists. This multi-slide complex includes six slides, three of which are drop capsule slides, a pair of tube slides and a tight-twist Constrictor slide.



BEST NEW RIDE (WATER PARK):
Verrückt, Schlitterbahn Kansas City
COURTESY SCHLITTERBAHN KANSAS CITY



No. 2: Colossal Curl, Water Country USA
AT/TIM BALDWIN



FLYING TURNS
KNOEBELS

#1
BEST NEW RIDE

V.I.P. PRESENTED TO **KNOEBELS AMUSEMENT RESORT** **AmusementTODAY GOLDEN TICKET AWARD** FLYING TURNS BEST NEW RIDE **2014**

V.I.P. PRESENTED TO **KNOEBELS AMUSEMENT RESORT** **AmusementTODAY GOLDEN TICKET AWARD** BEST CAROUSEL **2014**



THANKS FOR ANOTHER WINNING YEAR!

#1
BEST CAROUSEL

TOP 10 AGAIN!
PHOENIX

#4
WOODEN ROLLER COASTER

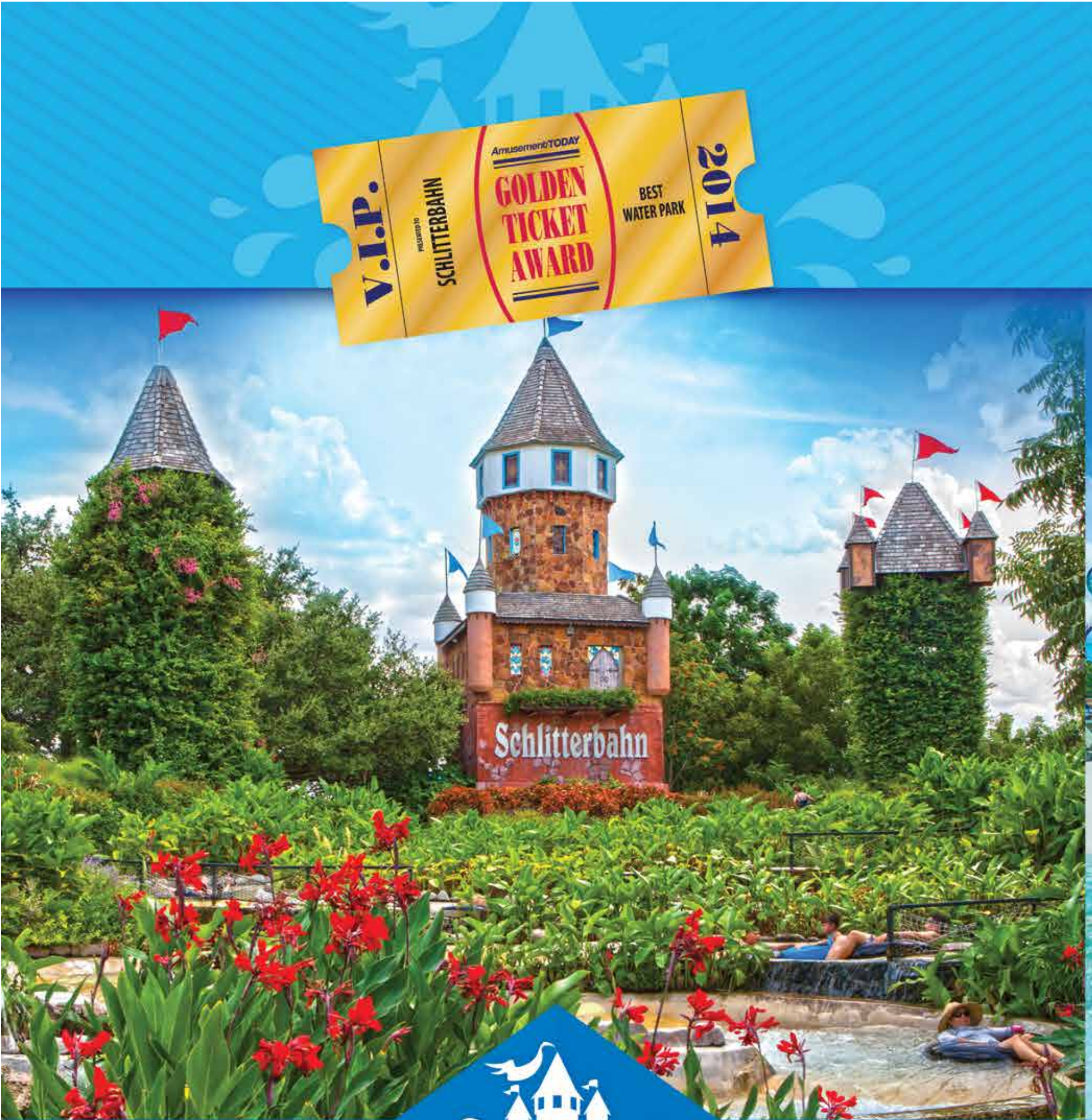


THANK YOU Amusement Today and Golden Ticket Voters for joining the insanity! The World's Tallest Waterslide is now officially **THE WORLD'S BEST WATERPARK RIDE!**



SCHLITTERBAHN.
WATERPARK
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

© 2014 Waterpark Management, Inc. All Rights Reserved.



SCHLITTERBAHN.
WATERPARK & RESORT
NEW BRAUNFELS, TEXAS

© 2014 Waterpark Management, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

THANK YOU Amusement Today and Golden Ticket Voters for this honor. For the seventeenth year in a row, you've voted us
THE WORLD'S BEST WATERPARK!



On behalf of our entire Schlitterbahn family of Waterparks and Resorts, we appreciate your continued support!

Hang on! – 2014 Golden Ticket ride winners

STORY: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

The wide variety of ride attractions is what makes the true amusement park experience completely memorable. Our 2014 charts see some consistent winners and some new faces.

For **BEST DARK RIDE**, **Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey** at **Universal's Islands of Adventure** takes the Golden Ticket for a fourth year. **Twilight Zone Tower of Terror** at **Disney's Hollywood Studios** takes a step higher over last year and moves into second place. A new player, **Radiator Springs Racers** in **Disney California Adventure's** amazing new Cars Land hits our charts at No. 3. This super dark ride has passengers encountering all the characters from the famous film while indoors before bursting into a race with an opposing vehicle outdoors for a grand finish. Our other two finalists stay on the charts, but drop a couple of notches – **The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man** at **Islands of Adventure** (No. 4) and **Haunted Mansion** at **Knoebels Amusement Resort** at No. 5.

While not quite making the official charts, it was very inspiring to see the newly-refurbished **Calico Mine Ride** at **Knott's Berry Farm** receive a significantly large number of votes this year thanks to the park's dedication and respect for rides from the past.

Although the separation of first and second was reduced considerably this year, the **Grand Carousel** at **Knoebels Amusement Resort** still keeps **BEST CAROUSEL** and is the only park to ever do so. **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk** would seem to be possibly closing in. Both historic carousels feature beautifully restored band organs and offer ring dispensers to thrill both the young and old.

Six Flags Great America keeps its third place position, but is followed by two new entries into the charts. Tying for the No. 4 spot are **Kennywood** and **Phantasialand** with their beautiful carousels. The **Phantasialand** installation is Europe's largest carousel.



For **BEST INDOOR COASTER**, the top three spots remain unchanged: **Revenge of the Mummy** at **Universal Studios Orlando** (No. 1), **Space Mountain** at **Disneyland** (No. 2), and **Wings** at **Phantasialand** (No. 3). **Knoebels** surfaces in this category with **Black Diamond** in fourth place, moving down **Galaxyland's Mindbender** to fifth, and incidentally pushes **Rock 'n' Roller Coaster** – once a Golden Ticket winner – at **Disney's Hollywood Studios** off the chart of finalists.

A new question is pondered: How long will it be before Universal becomes its own competition with **Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts** once voters get back to Orlando for this new player? What will be pushed

around in future years?

BEST FUNHOUSE/ WALK-THROUGH ATTRACTION goes to **Kennywood's Noah's Ark** once again. The following two places also remain unchanged: **Frankenstein's Castle** at **Indiana Beach** (No. 2) and **Gasten Ghost Hotel** at **Liseberg** (No. 3). **Ghost Ship** at **Morrey's Piers** climbs a rung up to No. 4 and **Lustiga Huset** at **Gröna Lund** rounds out the five finalists.

In the category of **BEST KIDS' AREA**, the apparent lock on the Golden Ticket remains with **Planet Snoopy** at **Kings Island**, the only park to ever claim this prize. **Efteling** in the Netherlands moves up two spots into the No. 2 spot, while **Knott's Berry Farm** (No. 3) jumps back on the charts following its kids' area revamp. These two developments push back **Universal's Islands of Adventure** to No. 4 and **Nickelodeon Universe**

► See RIDES, page 28



BEST DARK RIDE:
Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey,
Universal's Island of Adventure
AT/TIM BALDWIN



BEST CAROUSEL:
Grand Carousel, **Knoebels Amusement Resort**
COURTESY KNOEBELS



BEST FUNHOUSE/ WALK-THROUGH ATTRACTION:
Noah's Ark, **Kennywood Park**
COURTESY KENNYWOOD



BEST KIDS' AREA:
Planet Snoopy, **Kings Island**
AT/TIM BALDWIN



BEST WATER RIDE:
Dudley Do-Right's Ripsaw Falls,
Universal's Island of Adventure
AT/TIM BALDWIN



Kennywood®

Best Funhouse/Walk-Through Attraction Noah's Ark, Kennywood

Kennywood says **"Thank You!!"**
to Amusement Today
and its readers
for this prestigious award.



kennywood.com

►RIDES

Continued from page 26

to No. 5.

Want to get wet? People seem to love doing just that during a hot day at an amusement park. **Universal's Islands of Adventure** and their long-running favorite, **Dudley Do-Right's Ripsaw Falls**, take the gold for **BEST WATER RIDE**. Interestingly, **Valhalla** at **Blackpool Pleasure Beach** climbs back to second place. The Intamin ride took the Golden Ticket in 2003. **Splash Mountain** at **Disneyland** appears on our charts this year (No. 3), while interestingly it was its Florida counterpart in 2013. **Timber Mountain Log Ride** at **Knott's Berry Farm** (No. 4) remains in the list after its fantastic 2013 restoration, and **Dollywood's Mountain Slidewinder** still has numerous fans keeping it on our chart of finalists at No. 5.

Two parks have established a stronghold on **BEST WATER PARK RIDE** in recent years, and that would still remain true, but a tie for



the No. 5 spot introduces a new player, and one that is sure to be a significant challenger in the years ahead. The standings in this category start with **Holiday World & Splashin' Safari** with its Golden Ticket win for **Wildebust** and the third place win for **Mammoth**, both built by ProSlide. **Schlitterbahn Waterpark Resort** in New Braunfels boasts three finalists: **Master Blaster** (No. 2), **The Falls** (No. 4) and **Congo River Expedition** (No. 5). All of these world famous attractions were developed in-house. Now, tying for that fifth spot is sister park **Schlitterbahn Kansas City**. The debut of **Verrückt** created a media frenzy from the moment it was announced as the world's tallest water slide. Three riders at a time plummet down a steep drop from more than 17 stories. Watch this one. It's going to climb.



BEST INDOOR COASTER:
Revenge of the Mummy,
(top)
Universal Studios Orlando
COURTESY UNIVERSAL



BEST WATER PARK RIDE: Wildebust, (left)
Holiday World
& Splashin' Safari
AT/TIM BALDWIN

WILLIAM H. ROBINSON, INC.

**CONGRATULATIONS
TO ALL OF THE
2014 AWARD WINNERS
& NOMINEES!**



The
B!g idea
People!

**WE ARE YOUR GOLDEN TICKET
... TO THE BEST OF THE BEST
IN AMUSEMENT MARKETING!**

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

1428 Maple Ave. • Hamilton, OH 45011 • 513.737.9012 • www.TheBigIdeaPeople.com



REVENGE OF THE
MUMMY™
THE RIDE

PREMIER RIDES IS PROUD AND HONORED TO BE A PART
OF UNIVERSAL STUDIOS' FORMULA FOR SUCCESS

Proudly delivering
award-winning
attractions to
our clients
year-after-
year.



Premier Rides

Inspire. Create. Entertain.

www.premier-rides.com | info@premier-rides.com



more
✓
**Four #1 Golden Ticket
Award Winners**

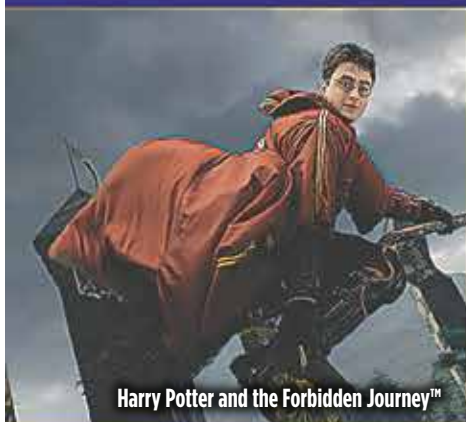


BEST DARK RIDE
Harry Potter and
the Forbidden Journey™

BEST HALLOWEEN EVENT
Universal Studios Florida® -
Halloween Horror Nights®

BEST WATER RIDE
Dudley Do-Right's Ripsaw Falls®

BEST INDOOR COASTER
Revenge of the Mummy®



Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey™



Dudley Do-Right's Ripsaw Falls®



Revenge of the Mummy®



Halloween Horror Nights®

See it all at UniversalOrlando.com

HARRY POTTER, characters, names and related indicia are trademarks of and © Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. Harry Potter Publishing Rights © JKR.
(s14)

Rocky and Bullwinkle and Friends TM & © Ward Prods. Universal elements and all related indicia TM & © 2014 Universal Studios. © 2014 Universal Orlando. All rights reserved. 1404992/LR

IMAGINE PLEASURE!

V.I.P. AmusementTODAY
GOLDEN TICKET AWARDS
BEST OF THE BEST!

MACK RIDES
- SINCE 1780 -
Die weite Welt ist mein Feld.
Heinrich Mack-Wagenfabrik
WINDENGLÜCKENFELD



12 - time Golden Ticket Award winner Dudley Do-Right's Ripsaw Falls!
Congratulations Universal Resort Orlando !

Coaster, water ride or dark ride - we can make your dreams come true.
Visit us online: mack-rides.com

230 years
MACK
RIDES GmbH & Co KG



YOUR SUCCESS IS OUR PASSION.

Passion for this industry is the lifeblood of our company. It fuels our quest for the ultimate water rides and our full devotion to every project.

Because we're invested in our customers' success on a personal level, nothing feels better than helping you be your best.

Congratulations to these ProSlide customers, all recognized with 2014 Golden Ticket Awards. And special recognition to Holiday World's Wildebeest for its Best Water Park Ride Award. Now a five-time champion, winning every year since the HydroMAGNETIC® ROCKET™ was installed.

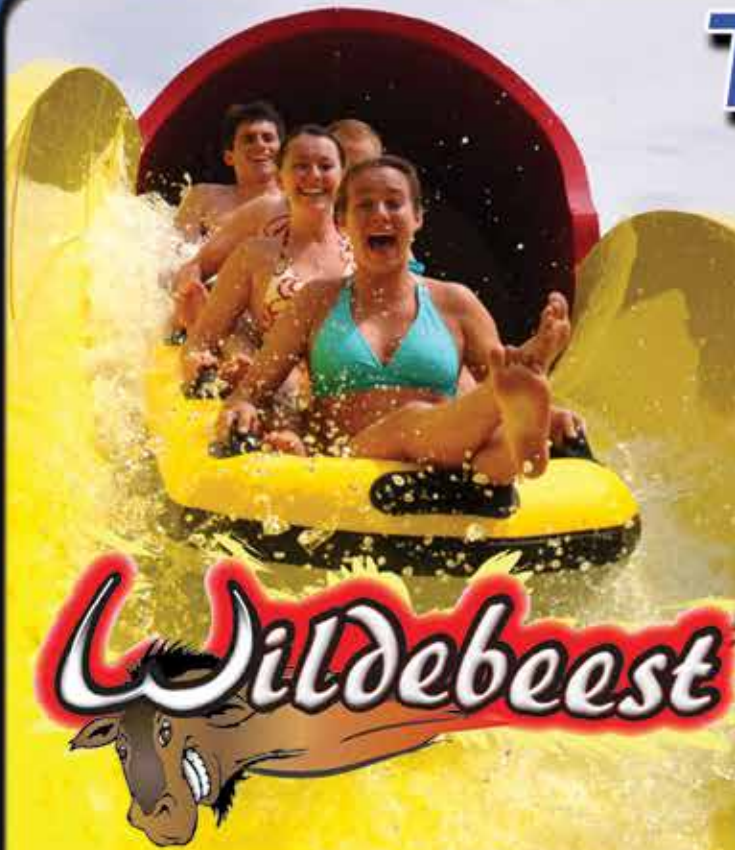
Find the perfect water ride for your park: www.proslide.com

Visit us at EAS, Booth 8557 & WWA, Booth 601



Thank You
For awarding us...

**The Best
Water Park Ride
5 years running!**



**The Cleanest Park
for the fifteenth
consecutive year!**



**NEW
in 2015**

THUNDERBIRDTM
**Nation's First
Launched Wing Coaster!**

Holiday World
& Splashin' SAFARI[®]

1-877-463-2645 HolidayWorld.com
Santa Claus, Ind.

The roar of wood — old and new — continues to thrill



BEST WOODEN COASTER
No. 1: Boulder Dash, Lake Compounce
COURTESY LAKE COMPOUNCE



No. 2: El Toro, Six Flags Great Adventure
AT/GARY SLADE



No. 4: Phoenix, Knoebels Amusement Resort
AT/GARY SLADE

STORY: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

The look, the sound, the smell — there is something unique and special about the nostalgic charm of a wooden coaster. From century old classic to the most modern of marvels, a wooden coaster is a “must have” for any park. And those parks that have dismantled one know the loss that this entails. Wooden coasters have a loyalty among enthusiasts that no other genre can claim. As evidence to that, **Magic Mountain’s Colossus** has never placed on the Golden Ticket charts, until this year when it was announced the ride would be closing in August. Perhaps as an homage to the appeal of wood, it appears on our charts for the first time at No. 44.



Ever since 2008, five power hitters are dominating the top spots for **BEST WOODEN COASTER**. Four of them have snatched the ticket at some point, and true to the nature of coaster rankings, it flexes just a bit this year. **Boulder Dash** at **Lake Compounce** snagged top billing last year, just as it had done in 2004. It holds tight a second year in a row. **El Toro** at **Six Flags Great Adventure** refuses to slip any further than No. 2, and **The Voyage** at **Holiday World** inches back up to third place after a five-year streak of taking the Golden Ticket. **Phoenix** at **Knoebels Amusement Resort**, a



No. 3: The Voyage, Holiday World
AT/TIM BALDWIN



No. 5: Thunderhead, Dollywood
COURTESY JOEL STYER

true testament to preservation, keeps a Top 5 grasp at No. 4, while **Thunderhead** at **Dollywood** competes with the pack. Like a race of fine thoroughbreds, this charge of wooden coasters could quite possibly be the most nail-biting category of all.

The remainder of the Top 10 is story-filled as well. **Ravine Flyer II** at **Waldameer Park**, the only coaster on Earth to jump a highway, has firmly held the No. 6 spot for years, not giving an inch. **Gold Striker** at **California’s Great America**, a co-host park of last year’s Golden Ticket Awards, jumps higher than any other coaster from its previous position, moving from No. 26 last year into the Top 10 at No. 7. **The Beast** at **Kings Island** (No. 8) shares bragging rights with **Knoebels’ Phoenix** as the only two Top 10 coasters from our inaugural year in 1998 that still remain rated with that prestige in today’s charts. **Outlaw Run** at **Silver Dollar City** was voted Best New Ride last year and stays in the top tier at No. 9. **Balder** at **Liseberg** in Sweden climbs a few notches into upper rungs making it the highest rated international wooden coaster and the only one to break into the ten most popular woodies.

Two other international coasters make significant climbs. **Troy** at **Toverland** located in the Netherlands leaps from its No. 28 spot last year up to No. 16. **Wodan Timbur Coaster** at Germany’s **Europa-Park** climbs from its previous spot of No. 31 up to No. 21. Overall, 12 wooden coasters outside the U.S. land on our charts. With those coming from nine international destinations, such diversity speaks to the experience of our panelists.

First timers on our charts also include the new-for-2014 **Goliath** at **Six Flags Great America** (No. 23), the long awaited first
► See **WOOD**, page 35

►WOOD

Continued from page 34

full season of **Flying Turns** at **Knoebels Amusement Resort** (No. 25) and **White Lightning** at **Fun Spot America**, a summer opener from 2013.

And making a return is the oldest coaster on the charts, **Rutschebanen** at **Tivoli Gardens** in Denmark. The rare scenic railway celebrates a 100th birthday this year.



The oldest wooden coaster on the GTA charts is the **Rutschebanen** at **Tivoli Gardens**. The Denmark coaster celebrates its 100th birthday this year. TOP COURTESY OF CURT SCHIMMEL; BOTTOM AT/TIM BALDWIN



AMUSEMENT TODAY

NEW DIGITAL EDITION

EXCLUSIVELY FOR PRINT SUBSCRIBERS



Access all of the professional NEWS content you expect from Amusement Today right on your tablet, phone or laptop! Plus, it's Android and iOS compatible!

Try the Digital Edition FREE today at www.amusementtoday.com/digital



THANK YOU AMUSEMENT TODAY!



VOTED THE #1 WOODEN COASTER IN THE WORLD AGAIN!

THANK YOU
AMUSEMENT TODAY



**BOULDER
DASH**
lake compounce



PHILADELPHIA TOBOGGAN COASTERS, Inc.



Five of the Top Ten wooden coasters use PTCI trains



#1



#8



#3



#6



#4



*Congratulations to the 2014
Golden Ticket winners, and thanks
for your patronage!*

Tom Rebbie
President, PTCI

THE LIST

2014 TOP 50 WOOD ROLLER COASTERS



RANK	NAME	PARK	LOCATION	YEAR	SUPPLIER	POINTS
1	Boulder Dash	Lake Compounce	Bristol, Conn.	2000	Custom Coasters	1480
2	El Toro	Six Flags Great Adventure	Jackson,N.J.	2006	Intamin	1291
3	The Voyage	Holiday World	Santa Claus, Ind.	2006	Gravity Group	1129
4	Phoenix	Knoebels Amusement Resort	Elysburg, Pa.	1985	Dinn - PTC/Schmeck	1036
5	Thunderhead	Dollywood	Pigeon Forge, Tenn.	2004	Great Coasters Int.	837
6	Ravine Flyer II	Waldameer	Erie, Pa.	2008	Gravity Group	719
7	Gold Striker	California's Great America	Santa Clara, Calif.	2013	Great Coasters Int.	619
8	The Beast	Kings Island	Mason, Ohio	1979	KECO	614
9	Outlaw Run	Silver Dollar City	Branson, Mo.	2013	Rocky Mountain	605
10	Balder	Liseberg	Gothenburg, Sweden	2003	Intamin	393
11	Lightning Racer	Hersheypark	Hershey, Pa.	2000	Great Coasters Int.	342
12	Prowler	Worlds of Fun	Kansas City, Mo.	2009	Great Coasters Int.	302
13	The Raven	Holiday World	Santa Claus, Ind.	1995	Custom Coasters	298
14	Thunderbolt	Kennywood	West Mifflin, Pa.	1968	Vettel/Miller	270
15	Shivering Timbers	Michigan's Adventure	Muskegon, Mich.	1998	Custom Coasters	264
16	Troy	Toverland	Sevenum, Netherlands	2007	Great Coasters Int.	260
17	Giant Dipper	Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk	Santa Cruz, Calif.	1924	Prior & Church/Loooff	238
18	Comet	The Great Escape	Lake George, N.Y.	1994	PTC/Schmeck	211
19	Jack Rabbit	Kennywood	West Mifflin, Pa.	1920	PTC/Miller	204
20	Kentucky Rumbler	Beech Bend	Bowling Green, Ky.	2006	Great Coasters Int.	203
21	Wodan Timbur Coaster	Europa-Park	Rust, Germany	2012	Great Coasters Int.	200
22	Cyclone	Luna Park/Coney Island	Brooklyn, N.Y.	1927	Kenan/Baker	177
23	Goliath	Six Flags Great America	Gurnee, Ill.	2014	Rocky Mountain	166
24	Colossos	Heide Park	Soltau, Germany	2001	Intamin	162
25	Flying Turns	Knoebels Amusement Resort	Elysburg, Pa.	2013	Knoebels	155



THE LIST

2014 TOP 50 WOOD ROLLER COASTERS



RANK	NAME	PARK	LOCATION	YEAR	SUPPLIER	POINTS
26	Hades 360	Mount Olympus	Wisconsin Dells, Wis.	2005	Gravity Group	143
27	The Legend	Holiday World	Santa Claus, Ind.	2000	Custom Coasters	137
28	Wooden Warrior	Quassy Park	Middlebury, Conn.	2011	Gravity Group	122
29	El Toro	Freizeitpark Plohn	Lengsfeld, Germany	2009	Great Coasters Int.	119
30	Blue Streak	Conneaut Lake Park	Conneaut Lake, Pa.	1938	Vettel	117
31	American Thunder	Six Flags St. Louis	Eureka, Mo.	2009	Great Coasters Int.	114
32	Grand National	Blackpool Pleasure Beach	Blackpool, England	1935	Paige	110
33	Megafobia	Oakwood Leisure Park	Pembrokeshire, Wales	1996	Custom Coasters	108
34	Tremors	Silverwood	Athol, Idaho	1999	Custom Coasters	105
35 (tie)	Blue Streak	Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	1964	PTC/Hoover	104
35 (tie)	Boardwalk Bullet	Kemah Boardwalk	Kemah, Texas	2007	M&V/Gravity Group	104
37	Playland Wooden Coaster	Playland at the PNE	Vancouver, B.C., Canada	1959	Phare	103
38 (tie)	Apocalypse	Six Flags Magic Mountain	Valencia, Calif.	2009	Great Coasters Int.	101
38 (tie)	White Lightning	Fun Spot America	Orlando, Fla.	2013	Great Coasters Int.	101
40	Twister	Knoebels Amusement Resort	Elysburg, Pa.	1999	Fetterman/Knoebels	100
41	Rutschebanen	Tivoli Gardens	Copenhagen, Denmark	1914	Thompson	98
42	Racer	Kennywood	West Mifflin, Pa.	1927	PTC/Miller	96
43	Wild Mouse	Blackpool Pleasure Beach	Blackpool, England	1958	Wright/Blackpool	95
44	GhostRider	Knott's Berry Farm	Buena Park, Calif.	1998	Custom Coasters	94
45	Colossus	Six Flags Magic Mountain	Valencia, Calif.	1978	IAD	86
46	Tonnerre de Zeus	Parc Asterix	Plailly, France	1997	Custom Coasters	85
47	Hellcat	Timber Falls	Wisconsin Dells, Wis.	2004	S&S	78
48	The Boss	Six Flags St. Louis	Eureka, Mo.	2000	Custom Coasters	70
49	Viper	Six Flags Great America	Gurnee, Ill.	1995	Starkey/Six Flags	69
50	Wood Coaster	Knight Valley	Shenzhen, China	2011	Great Coasters Int.	68

SUBSCRIBE



PRINT + DIGITAL EDITIONS

Subscribe now to access all of the professional NEWS content you expect from Amusement Today right on your tablet, phone or laptop! It's Android and iOS compatible!

www.amusementtoday.com/subscribe

ONLY \$50

PER YEAR

Thanks For Voting

OUTLAW RUN

**ONE OF THE TOP 10
WOODEN ROLLER COASTERS**



Branson, MO

silverdollarcity.com





THIS IS HOW WE ROLL

RMC

Reriding coaster history

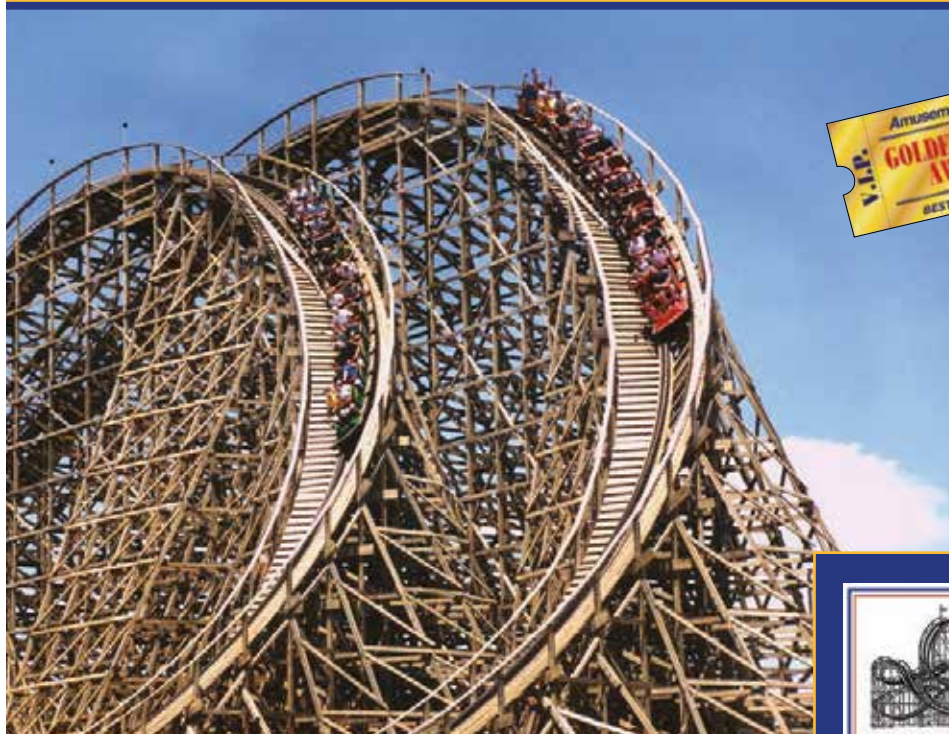
(208) 772-8181

www.rockymtnconstruction.com

IBox Track Patent US 8,590,455 | Topper Track Patent Pending

GREAT THEN GREAT NOW

Smooth – Thrilling – Economical – Proven



Lightning Racer at Hershey Park 2000



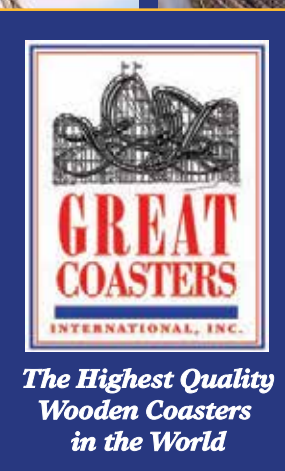
Thunderhead at Dollywood 2004



Gold Striker at California's Great America 2013



White Lightning at Fun Spot Orlando 2013



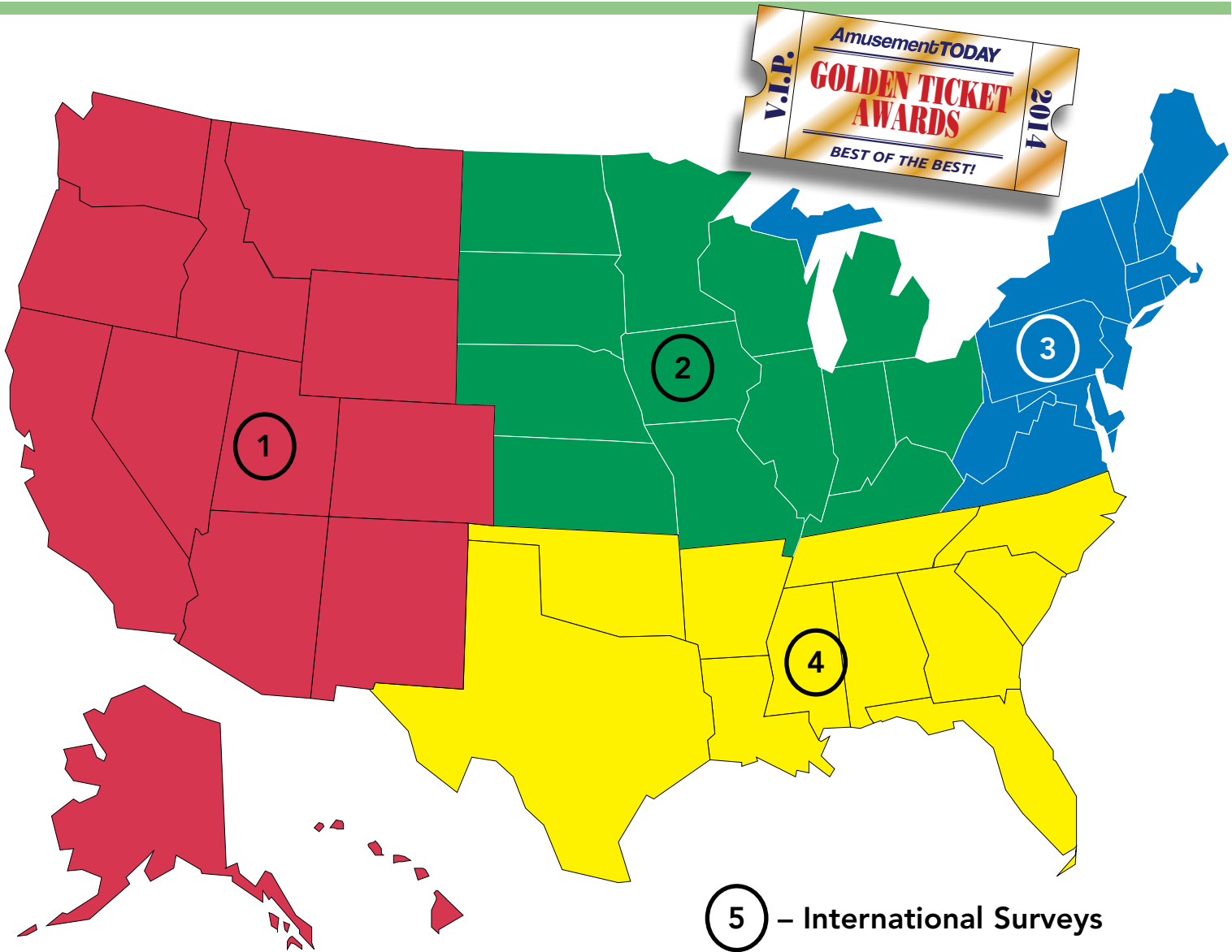
Great Coasters International, Inc. • 2627 State Rt. 890 • Sunbury, PA 17801
570.286.9330 • www.greatcoasters.com

Our panel of experts

Since *Amusement Today* introduced the **Golden Ticket Awards** in 1998, we continue to seek out the most experienced park enthusiasts to participate in our survey. *AT* follows a fair and balanced protocol of dividing our ballots between four geographical regions (see color map at right) of the United States. In addition to the hundreds of surveys sent to American enthusiasts, international fans are also sought out and we invite such fans to contact us for participation in future years. *Amusement Today* thanks the hundreds of voters who helped form this year's panel of experts and make the 2014 Golden Ticket Awards a reality.

Are you a qualified candidate? Contact Golden Ticket Awards Communications Coordinator Tim Baldwin at tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com and we'll see if you would make a good representative for your region on next year's new panel.

Of note, park employees, manufacturers, and *Amusement Today* staff are not eligible to be on the panel.





Safety is our business

AMUSEMENT INDUSTRY
MANUFACTURERS AND SUPPLIERS INTERNATIONAL

**DON'T MISS OUT ON THE INDUSTRY'S
TOP SAFETY SEMINAR!**
WITH OVER 300 CLASSES
THERE IS SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE



**AIMS SAFETY SEMINAR
AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**
JANUARY 11–16, 2015
ORLANDO, FLORIDA
DOUBLETREE BY HILTON ORLANDO AT SEAWORLD
REGISTRATION FEE: \$595 PER STUDENT



INFORMATION: CALL (714) 425-5747 WEBSITE: WWW.AIMSINTL.ORG

New favorites break into Steel Top 10 survey results



BEST STEEL COASTER

No. 1: Millennium Force, Cedar Point
AT/TIM BALDWIN



The oldest steel coaster on the GTA survey is the bicentennial favorite, the Whizzer at Six Flags Great America.
AT/GARY SLADE

STORY: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

With barely a half century of history behind them, tubular steel coasters don't retain the admiration quite to the extent that wooden coasters do. Voters — and the public — tend to be drawn to newer, flashier installations. In that light, a glance at this year's **BEST STEEL COASTER** chart will find that not a single ride in the Top 10 even existed when *Amusement Today* introduced the Golden Ticket Awards in 1998. Certainly a shout out has to go to Arrow's **Magnum XL-200** at **Cedar Point** for holding on the longest. For a time a No. 1 Golden Ticket holder, Magnum remained in the upper tier longer than any other 20th century coaster. It is only this year that it finally slips from the Top 10, still popular at No. 13.

A trio of Intamin powerhouses still control the top three spots. **Millennium Force** at **Cedar Point** maintains its wild popularity and takes the



Golden Ticket for the fifth year in a row, and ninth time overall. **Bizarro** at **Six Flags New England** continues to thrill riders and easily holds the No. 2 spot. Last year, Europe's highest-rated coaster, **Expedition GeForce** at Holiday Park, inched up into third place, but this year adds even more votes to secure the No. 3 spot.

That's when things change. Six of the remaining Top 10 are claimed by B&M machines. **Diamondback** at **Kings Island** finds a new resurgence this year leaping all the way to No. 4. Its jump from last year's No. 14 position is one of two significant changes. **Leviathan** at **Canada's Wonderland** not only is the second international steel coaster in the coveted upper 10, but also makes a

tremendous climb to No. 6 from its previous ranking at No. 15. The 300-foot coaster has made major advances each year since being built. Other B&M coasters on the Top 10 list are **Six Flags Great Adventure's Nitro** (No. 5), **Apollo's Chariot** at **Busch Gardens Williamsburg** (No. 7), **Six Flags Over Georgia's Goliath** (No. 9), and **Intimidator** at **Carowinds** (No. 10).

Completing the Top 10 is Rocky Mountain Construction's original hit, **New Texas Giant** at **Six Flags Over Texas**. The wood-to-steel transformation saved this legendary woodie from the wrecking ball years back and started a successful strand of transformations that continue to deliver hit after hit.

Three new-for-2014 coasters debut on the charts this year, all provided by different manufacturers. **Banshee** at **Kings Island** reintroduced the B&M inverted coaster to America, complete with record-breaking dimensions. It lands at No. 16. **Lightning Run** at **Kentucky Kingdom**, a new style Hyper GT-X coaster from Chance, appears in the upper half at No. 25, and **Helix**, an impressive new double-launched, multi-inversion thriller at Sweden's **Liseberg** screams in at No. 30.

Seeing a surge in popularity are other European installations, including **Blue Fire Megacoaster** at **Europa-Park**, rising up to No. 17, **Phantasialand's Black Mamba** vaults up to No. 24 from its 2013 position at No. 34. **Lisebergbanan** at **Liseberg**, streams up to No. 35 from its prior ranking of No. 48. Back here in the states, another interesting and radical climb is **Six Flags Magic Mountain's Tatsu**, flying into the No. 34 spot from its 2013 ranking at No. 50.

Eleven international coasters are on our steel charts. Those not yet mentioned are: **Behemoth** at **Canada's Wonderland** (No. 15), **Alton Towers' Nemesis** (No. 21), **Goliath** at **La Ronde** (No. 26), **Euro-Mir** at **Europa-Park** (No. 42), and **Piraten**, a returning favorite from **Djurs Sommerland**, now at No. 46.

The oldest coaster on the charts? **Six Flags Great America's** bicentennial family favorite, the **Whizzer**.



No. 2: Bizarro, Six Flags New England
AT/TIM BALDWIN



No. 3: Expedition GeForce, Holiday Park
COURTESY KEITH KASTELIC



No. 4: Diamondback, Kings Island
AT/GARY SLADE



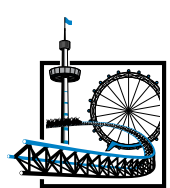
No. 5: Nitro, Six Flags Great Adventure
AT/GARY SLADE



AND AGAIN: THE VERY BEST IN STEEL



... AND OUR WOODIES DON'T NEED TO HIDE EITHER!



INTAMIN
AMUSEMENT RIDES
www.intaminworldwide.com

See us at EAS Amsterdam
Booth #8335

THE LIST

2014 TOP 50 STEEL ROLLER COASTERS



RANK	NAME	PARK	LOCATION	YEAR	SUPPLIER	POINTS
1	Millennium Force	Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	2000	Intamin	1139
2	Bizarro	Six Flags New England	Agawam, Mass.	2000	Intamin	1049
3	Expedition GeForce	Holiday Park	Hassloch, Germany	2001	Intamin	764
4	Diamondback	Kings Island	Mason, Ohio	2009	B&M	579
5	Nitro	Six Flags Great Adventure	Jackson, N.J.	2001	B&M	563
6	Leviathan	Canada's Wonderland	Vaughan, Ont., Canada	2012	B&M	500
7	Apollo's Chariot	Busch Gardens Williamsburg	Williamsburg, Va.	1999	B&M	484
8	New Texas Giant	Six Flags Over Texas	Arlington, Texas	2011	Rocky Mountain	465
9	Goliath	Six Flags Over Georgia	Austell, Ga.	2006	B&M	422
10	Intimidator	Carowinds	Charlotte, N.C.	2010	B&M	387
11	Phantom's Revenge	Kennywood	West Mifflin, Pa.	2001	Morgan	384
12	Iron Rattler	Six Flags Fiesta Texas	San Antonio, Texas	2013	Rocky Mountain	367
13 (tie)	Magnum XL-200	Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	1989	Arrow	366
13 (tie)	Intimidator 305	Kings Dominion	Doswell, Va.	2010	Intamin	366
15	Behemoth	Canada's Wonderland	Vaughan, Ont., Canada	2008	B&M	318
16	Banshee	Kings Island	Mason, Ohio	2014	B&M	317
17	Blue Fire Megacoaster	Europa-Park	Rust, Germany	2009	Mack	304
18	X2	Six Flags Magic Mountain	Valencia, Calif.	2002	Arrow	292
19	Top Thrill Dragster	Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	2003	Intamin	273
20	Mind Bender	Six Flags Over Georgia	Austell, Ga.	1978	Schwarzkopf	249
21	Nemesis	Alton Towers	Staffordshire, England	1994	B&M	245
22	Montu	Busch Gardens Tampa Bay	Tampa, Fla.	1996	B&M	229
23	Alpengeist	Busch Gardens Williamsburg	Williamsburg, Va.	1997	B&M	220
24	Black Mamba	Phantasialand	Brühl, Germany	2006	B&M	179
25	Lightning Run	Kentucky Kingdom	Louisville, Ky.	2014	Chance	165



THE LIST

2014 TOP 50 STEEL ROLLER COASTERS



RANK	NAME	PARK	LOCATION	YEAR	SUPPLIER	POINTS
26 (tie)	Goliath	La Ronde	Montreal, Quebec, Canada	2006	B&M	157
26 (tie)	Skyrush	Hersheypark	Hershey, Pa.	2012	Intamin	157
28 (tie)	Maverick	Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	2007	Intamin	138
28 (tie)	Wild Eagle	Dollywood	Pigeon Forge, Tenn.	2012	B&M	138
30	Helix	Liseberg	Gothenburg, Sweden	2014	Mack	134
31	Raging Bull	Six Flags Great America	Gurnee, Ill.	1999	B&M	124
32	GateKeeper	Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	2013	B&M	117
33	Griffon	Busch Gardens Williamsburg	Williamsburg, Va.	2007	B&M	116
34	Tatsu	Six Flags Magic Mountain	Valencia, Calif.	2006	B&M	115
35	Lisebergbanan	Liseberg	Gothenburg, Sweden	1987	Schwarzkopf	113
36	Kumba	Busch Gardens Tampa Bay	Tampa, Fla.	1993	B&M	110
37	Steel Force	Dorney Park	Allentown, Pa.	1998	Morgan	106
38	SheiKra	Busch Gardens Tampa Bay	Tampa, Fla.	2005	B&M	101
39	Full Throttle	Six Flags Magic Mountain	Valencia, Calif.	2013	Premier	95
40	Shock Wave	Six Flags Over Texas	Arlington, Texas	1978	Schwarzkopf	90
41	Manta	SeaWorld Orlando	Orlando, Fla.	2009	B&M	87
42	Euro-Mir	Europa-Park	Rust, Germany	1997	Mack	81
43	Goliath	Six Flags Magic Mountain	Valencia, Calif.	2000	Giovanola	79
44	Whizzer	Six Flags Great America	Gurnee, Ill.	1976	Schwarzkopf	77
45	Kingda Ka	Six Flags Great Adventure	Jackson, N.J.	2005	Intamin	76
46	Piraten	Djurs Sommerland	Jylland, Denmark	2008	Intamin	74
47	Raptor	Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	1994	B&M	73
48	Cheetah Hunt	Busch Gardens Tampa Bay	Tampa, Fla.	2011	Intamin	71
49 (tie)	California Screamin'	Disney California Adventure	Anaheim, Calif.	2001	Intamin	70
49 (tie)	Volcano: The Blast Coaster	Kings Dominion	Doswell, Va.	1998	Intamin	70

GTA

2015

AmusementTODAY

V.I.P.

GOLDEN TICKET AWARDS

2015

BEST OF THE BEST!

SEPT 11 AND 12

LUNA PARK

CONEY ISLAND

PREVIEW NIGHT: SEPT 11, 2015

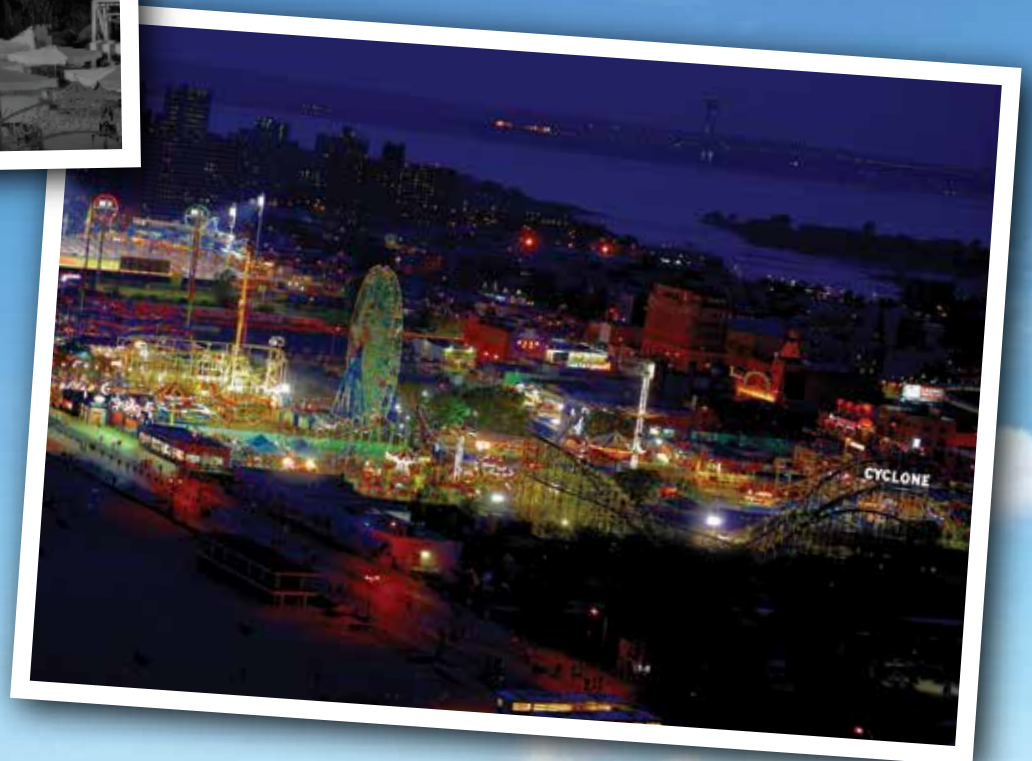
VICTORIAN GARDENS


CENTRAL PARK

NYC



Join Us for the 2015 Golden Ticket Awards in
NEW YORK CITY
September 11 & 12, 2015



POWERED BY

ZAMPERLA™

OPERATED BY

CAI Parks
Central Amusement International, LLC