

AMUSEMENT TODAY™

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Parks in transition

Steel Pier initiates three-year, \$102 million redo, expansion

STORY: Dean Lamanna
Special to Amusement Today

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — With a history anchored in the shifting sands and fortunes of Atlantic City for 114 years, Steel Pier — that storied icon of diving horses and daredevil amusements — is further fortifying its berth on the Jersey Shore.

New plans for the amusement landmark unveiled in February by Steel Pier Associates, which parlayed its tenuous, two-decade Steel Pier tenancy into ownership with its purchase of the 1,000-foot-long structure for \$4.3 million from Trump Entertainment

Group last summer, call for a \$102 million renovation and expansion to be completed by 2015.

The Steel Pier project is part of a proposed 10-year citywide redevelopment push called the Tourism District Master Plan. Established last year, it includes the revitalization of the entire boardwalk.

"This is the beginning of Atlantic City's renaissance," said Anthony Catanoso, president of Steel Pier Associates, whose long-held mission has been to promote the resort's tradition of family amusements alongside its latter-day gambling industry. "It's go-

▶ See **STEEL PIER**, page 4



Steel Pier's 2013 season will bring a Funtime StarFlyer tower, an Intamin ZacSpin coaster or similar ride, and a nightclub in the 20,000-square-foot skybridge connecting the pier to the Trump Taj Mahal Casino Resort across the boardwalk.
COURTESY STEELMAN PARTNERS

Palace Ent. acquires Noah's Ark

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. — Festival Fun Parks LLC, doing business as Palace Entertainment, announced on March 2 that it completed the acquisition of Noah's Ark waterpark, located in the popular, family vacation spot of Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin.

Noah's Ark bills itself as America's largest waterpark with 70 acres, 51 water attractions, including two wave pools and two lazy rivers plus dozens of other various attractions. Located in the city of Wisconsin Dells, known as the "Waterpark Capital of the

World," Noah's Ark is the region's most popular family attraction and has two hotels on the property featuring over 300 rooms.

Noah's Ark offers the greatest variety of water rides in the nation, including the Black Anaconda watercoaster. *The Travel Channel* hailed Noah's Ark as "The place for water in the Midwest," and TripAdvisor.com named Wisconsin Dells the number one family vacation destination in the U.S.

Fernando Eiroa, Palace Entertainment's President and

CEO, comments, "We are very happy to be adding such an iconic waterpark to Palace's array of family parks across the nation. We understand how important this park is within the Wisconsin Dells community, and we are dedicated to enhancing the Noah's Ark brand. We look forward to meeting our new neighbors and community leaders and forging lasting relationships and partnerships."

Tim Gantz, one of Noah's Ark's previous owners stated, "When we considered the sale

▶ See **PALACE**, page 4

Lease approval moves Kentucky park closer to possible 2013 re-opening

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — On February 23 a unanimous vote by the Kentucky State Fair Board to approve a lease with Bluegrass Boardwalk, Inc. moved the reopening of the closed 57-acre amusement and waterpark (formally Six Flags Kentucky Kingdom) in Louisville closer to reality.

"We can't wait to get started!" says Bluegrass Boardwalk's Dan Koch. "We've got a lot of work to do to get the park reopened in just 15 months, but we'll get it done. We'd like to thank the fair board for putting their faith in

us and the community at large for their tremendous cheers of support."

Following the lease approval, Bluegrass Boardwalk's next steps are to secure financing and continue the application process for economic development incentives from Kentucky's Tourism Cabinet. Bluegrass Boardwalk will not request public monies from the Kentucky Legislature.

Bluegrass Boardwalk's plans are to invest \$15-\$20 million to reopen the park in May of 2013, with continued invest-

▶ See **KENTUCKY**, page 4

NEWSPAPER

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EDITORIAL: Gary Slade, gslade@amusementtoday.com

Slow economy?



Slade

Amusement industry analysts have always reminded us that in tough financial times, the amusement industry is usually the one industry that thrives.

As North Americans see the price of fuel continue to rise and their finances continue to shrink from the lack of an improving economy, it appears the analysts may

indeed be correct again.

While it's too early in the new season to project how guests will attend or spend at parks this summer season, one trend has certainly emerged, and that's spending by the parks.

This summer, Busch Gardens Williamsburg, SeaWorld San Diego, Canada's Wonderland, Dollywood and Six Flags Great America are all rolling out multi-million dollar state-of-the-art roller coasters to draw guests in.

The Disneyland Resort is wrapping up a massive, and perhaps the biggest expansion on property ever, with the June launch of its new Cars Land. Sister park, the Magic Kingdom in Orlando begins opening phases of its new Fantasyland expansion and overhaul. SeaWorld San Antonio is wrapping up a complete makeover and massive expansion of its waterpark, transforming it into its Aquatica brand. Legoland Florida reopens a bigger and better waterpark this summer. And then, Landry's reveals plans for its new \$60 million Pleasure Pier, opening this Memorial Day weekend, that will mark the return of amusements to Galveston.

But the spending is not stopping there. Plans have already been announced by the Arie family to expand its Action Park facility in Orlando for next season. The Catanoso family of N.J. Steel Pier fame has announced a \$102 million redo and makeover of the Atlantic City Pier amusement park. Universal Orlando has removed Jaws to make room for a new major attraction. And those are just the projects AT is allowed to talk about.

Slow economy during a political campaign year? One would not know it by the announced spending plans in the amusement industry.

—Gary Slade

Gary Slade is the founder and publisher of Amusement Today. His love for amusement parks began at age six when he first visited Pontchartrain Beach Amusement Park and Six Flags Over Texas. His long newspaper career helped lead to the launch of AT in 1997.

CARTOON: Bubba Flint



EDITORIAL: Scott Rutherford, srutherford@amusementtoday.com

Here comes the sun



Rutherford

Spring is upon us. This is the time of year that folks in the outdoor entertainment business prepare and look forward to. Though the downtime after a long, hot summer season may be a welcome respite, those who live and breathe the amusement industry can hardly wait for "Opening Day." They begin to get antsy once the traditional winter holidays are finished. And by the end of February and the beginning of March, many are chomping at the bit to get back out there.

Though some employees at the seasonal parks may have enjoyed several months off, the same cannot be said for those who work behind the scenes. I'm referring to the construction and maintenance crews who kick into high gear once the summer crowds have moved on to more sedate diversions. These are the people who make it happen. The high-flying steel workers who construct their towering edifices like enormous erector sets, and the carpenters and craftsmen who hammer and drill to lovingly build the complex constructions that become wooden roller coast-

ers. The off-season is when these teams work away from the public eye.

But then there are the year-round parks, those facilities in south Florida and California that operate 365 days a year. Here the maintenance crews have only the late night and early morning hours to take care of business. Somehow they do it and make it look effortless.

This past February, while enjoying a much-needed winter break at Walt Disney World, I found myself walking through the Magic Kingdom and contemplating the Herculean effort that must go into keeping this place in such perpetual pristine condition. Not a flower is out of place, not a single light bulb on an attraction or building is allowed to remain dark. If construction is going on — as is the case with the current Fantasyland expansion — Disney makes every effort possible to keep the guests separate from the disarray behind The Wall. They are masters at maintaining the illusion and keeping the magic alive for their guests.

So, kudos to the unsung heroes who toil in the dark of night and less than ideal weather conditions to maintain and bring to life the rides and attractions that summer guests expect and enjoy.

Have a great season!

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2 MINUTE DRILL



COMPILED: Janice Witherow

Patty Beazley, When Pigs Fly, LLC

Patty Beazley began her career in the amusement industry as a front-line employee for Opryland USA Theme Park in Nashville, and at the closing of this famed park in 1997, she had worked her way up to the position of director of operations. She then took on the responsibility of general manager at Nashville Shores Water Park and by 2002, she and business partner Cindee Huddy established the company When Pigs Fly, LLC, a hospitality and safety consulting business. Patty serves as the education chairperson and safety seminar director for AIMS; in addition, she is an active member of IAAPA, WWA and ASTM and has been awarded several honors for her impressive seminar presentations. Full of life and energy, Patty is also just plain fun to be around!



Zamperla's Ramon Rosario and Patty Beazley with Win Pigs Fly ham it up onstage during the 2011 Golden Ticket Awards at Holiday World. Beazley is also active in AIMS International and her annual ROTC safety training course each year. AT FILE

Title
Co-owner and CEO.

Number of years in the industry
35 years.

Best thing about the industry
Meeting new friends all over the world.

Favorite amusement ride
Any carousel.

If I wasn't working in the amusement industry, I would be
Teaching any Psychology class at the post-secondary level.

Biggest challenge facing our industry
Understanding and motivating the generational workforce.

The thing I like most about amusement/water park season is ...
Meeting the guests and overcoming any challenges of the day!

Favorite fruit
Pineapple.

The last item I purchased for more than \$100 was ...
Microsoft 2011 for my Mac.

The hobby I have that would probably surprise most people is ...
I love to do yard work, and I have a vegetable garden every year.

Favorite national newscaster
Retired NBC anchor, Tom Brokaw.



Beazley

It's April! The best thing about springtime is ...
Seeing the trees, flowers and peonies bloom in my yard!

In one word, what's your take on reality TV?
Really?

All-time best ballgame food
A great hotdog with a cold beer. (Okay, that's two!).

Favorite outdoor activity
Working in the yard or taking a long walk.

I always wanted to learn how to ...
Play the piano.

My favorite place to talk on the phone is ...
On my deck.

In 20 years, I hope to be ...
Retired, traveling and hopefully I have made an impact on our industry.

You live in Nashville. What three things should everyone see in your hometown city?
Grand Ole Opry, Tootsie's Orchid Lounge and the Country Music Hall of Fame.

When I meet someone for the first time, I notice ...
His or her eyes and teeth.

Growing up, my favorite band was ...
Earth, Wind & Fire.

It's Saturday night. Where would we typically find you?
Entertaining friends while grilling out on the deck to be followed by poker.

The worst movie I have seen lately is ...
I can't think of a worst, but I thought "Bridesmaids" was one of the funniest!

Ultimate fried food
Chicken (hey, I'm from the South!).

If I was famous, my stage name would be ...
You got me on this one!

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

Presented by



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• **1921:** John H. Stavin sold **Glen Island Park**, in New Rochelle, N.Y. in early April for residential development. Locally, the park had been lost in the competition with **Rye Beach Park**, as well as **Starlight Park** and **Clason Point Park** in The Bronx, N.Y. The high-end homes never materialized, but today the park is part of the Westchester County Parks system, along with the parkland surrounding **Playland**.

• **1932:** In mid-April, fire at **Conneaut Lake Park**, Pennsylvania destroyed three buildings and damaged several concessions, including destroying the roof of the **Merry-go-Round** building and parts of the old **Scenic Railway**. The coaster was rebuilt and would eventually be replaced by the **Edward Vettel Blue Streak**, which has become one of the nation's greatest coaster preservation stories.

• **1972:** Exactly 40 years ago this month, **Kings Island** amusement park in what was then Deerfield Township, Ohio opened to the public on April 29. The 364-acre theme park was built by the Taft Broadcasting Company. Taft had purchased Cincinnati's **Coney Island** in 1969, but with no room to expand, and repeated flooding from the Ohio River, Taft decided to move the park inland. The company originally purchased 1,600 acres of property about 25 miles north of Cincinnati. With the exception of the existing wooden roller coasters, most of the rides at Coney Island were moved to the new park.

• **1987:** After five years of private ownership following a leveraged buyout, **Cedar Fair** returned to public ownership as a master limited partnership with an initial public offering on April 29. Trading commenced on the New York Stock Exchange under the stock symbol "FUN" at \$10 per unit.

• **1998:** **Disney's Animal Kingdom** opened on April 22 as the fourth theme park at **Walt Disney World**. The 500-acre park is the largest single Disney theme park in the world, and the only one themed around animal conservation. The park consists of seven themed areas all surrounding the park's centerpiece, the Tree of Life, a 145-foot tall artificial tree. The park attracts an estimated 9.6 million visitors per year, which ranks as the seventh most attended theme park in the world.

• **2000:** It was a taxing day for preservationists, when on April 15, the **Charles I.D. Loeff** carousel at **Whalom Park** in Lunenburg, Mass. was auctioned off piece by piece by **Norton Auctioneers**. It was a last-ditch effort by the struggling park to raise money to continue to operate. However, Whalom Park closed at the end of that year. The Loeff carousel featured a menagerie of 56 animals and horses hand carved by Loeff and his associates over a period of several years, with some horses believed to have dated back to the 1880s. The 50-foot carousel was assembled around 1909 or 1910 and came to Whalom Park between 1912 and 1914 where it operated for more than 88 years.

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► STEEL PIER

Continued from page 1

ing to be a family-friendly resort with an adult component, instead of the other way around.”

Initial improvements at Steel Pier will get underway with the 2012 summer season. Most visible will be the addition of six rides: a Fabri Booster, a Zamperla Dune Buggy, a Bertazzon Swing Carousel, and – all from Italy-based SBF Visa Group – a Midi Dance Party 360, an Airborne Shot and an Octopus.

A general pier makeover includes new facades, a refinished deck, new electrical infrastructure and lighting, and new office and storage buildings. A beer garden and an arcade will also be installed on the first level of the pier’s ornate entrance pavilion.

Catanoso walked AT through the three main year-long phases of the project, which will begin immediately after next Labor Day and see the eventual enclosure of 65 percent of the pier for all-season use, along with a 25 percent increase in usable square footage. All plans are tentative.

Phase 1, to be completed for the 2013 season, transforms the 20,000-square-foot third level of the pier’s entrance pavilion – an enclosed bridge connecting Steel Pier to the Trump Taj Mahal Casino Resort across the boardwalk – into a night-



By 2015, Steel Pier will be 65 percent enclosed for year-round operation. It will include a 2000-seat venue and a 200-foot Ferris wheel with climate-controlled gondolas and an LED billboard. COURTESY STEELMAN PARTNERS

club and café. On the pier’s seaward end, an Intamin Zac-Spin coaster or similar attraction will replace the helipad, which will be relocated to the roof of the entrance pavilion, and a nearly 400-foot-tall StarFlyer swing ride from Funtime Group will be added.

Phase 2, to be completed for the 2014 season, adds a new, two-level structure extending from the entrance pavilion that will enclose one third of the pier’s rides and, on its second level, will house retail, a café and possibly a Ma-

dame Tussaud’s Wax Museum. A 200-foot Ferris wheel with 42 climate-controlled gondolas for year-round use and a huge LED billboard radiating from its hub will be installed atop this structure.

Phase 3, to be completed for the 2015 season, doubles the enclosed portion of the pier. The additional structure will house on its upper level what Catanoso calls “the most exciting part of the project” – the Marine Ballroom, a multipurpose venue with up to 2,000 seats for private events

and public performances. “Three major entertainment companies are interested in managing it,” he said.

According to Catanoso, \$6 million of this season’s total \$15-20 million investment is coming from the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA). As the project progresses, it will have a blend of traditional financing, CRDA financing and state Economic Development Authority grants, and it will rely additionally on the equity of the company’s partners.

Not returning to Atlantic City: Steel Pier’s legendary diving horse attraction, last seen in 1993. Plans to revive the show as part of the current pier renovation were dropped following opposition by animal rights activists and others.

“We are a family operation, and we’ve been in Atlantic City for 20 years delivering wholesome family entertainment and giving back to the community,” Catanoso said. “We’re not going to do anything that will impugn our reputation.”

► PALACE

Continued from page 1

of the park, we were excited that a company such as Palace, with so much experience in waterparks, theme parks, animal parks and family entertainment centers, would come to this area,” added former co-owner Dan Gantz. “We look forward to the future success of Noah’s Ark, its employees, and see this as a positive move for the area as a whole.

Palace Entertainment is one of the leading leisure park operators in the United States. With parks located in 11 states, Palace Entertainment continues its expansion of brands within the family entertainment sector and greets over 13 million visitors annually. Palace Entertainment was founded in 1998 then purchased in 2007 by Parques Reunidos of Madrid Spain.

► KENTUCKY

Continued from page 1

ment in future years.

“We’re bringing our business model of exceptional safety, cleanliness, friendliness and value for families,” says Natalie Koch, a partner in the new park development. “That means free soft drinks, free sunscreen and free use of inner tubes.”

Bluegrass Boardwalk, Inc. is a partnership of four members of the Koch family in Santa Claus, Indiana: Holiday World president Dan Koch, his sister Natalie Koch, their cousin Kathy Kamp, and her husband, Michael Kamp, who is a General Manager at Holiday World. Dan, Natalie and Kathy are grandchildren of Holiday World’s founder, Louis J. Koch, who opened the park (originally called Santa Claus Land) in 1946.

First look: Fun Spot America, Orlando, Fla.



Project approval from the Orlando (Florida) City Commission was granted in early March for Fun Spot America to continue its \$20 million expansion that will enlarge the Fun Spot Action Park from five acres to 15 acres just off International Drive in Orlando. The highlights of the rendering shown here are: GCII wooden coaster, addition of in-house-built go-kart track (noted as green track), S&S Screamin’ Swing (from Wild Adventures) and Chance Rides double deck Carousel (from Cypress Gardens) and a duel SkyCoaster (from MGM Grand Adventures) to open in early 2013. A waterpark featuring equipment from SplashTacular is still in development with no opening date scheduled. On tap for 2014 will be a Vekoma family suspended coaster and a wide mix of rides from American ride suppliers to round out the thrill factor. COURTESY FUN SPOT AMERICA



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Reporter's Notebook

Tibidabo still recovering

SPAIN — Tibidabo amusement park in Barcelona recorded a loss of €1.5 million in 2011 despite a gain of 40,000 visitors — a 10 percent increase over the previous year. The attendance figure is an improvement over 2010, when the park had a deficit of 2.2 million and lost 34 percent of its visitors, dropping from 617,903 in 2009 to 402,009.

The decline is blamed on the July 2010 collapse of El Pendulo, an Italian-made swinging pendulum ride, in which a 15-year old girl was killed.

The park is aiming to reach 600,000 visitors, a "magic number" which officials claim is key to the recovery the iconic park.

"It's the ideal figure for the park to give us the needed economic balance. If not for the accident, this is the figure the park would get," said city councilor Joan Puigdollers

Quoted

"China is getting to a time where a high quality project can and will be built there."

—Ikonic Entertainment Group's co-founder and CEO Tony Christopher said on his company's agreement to design and develop the largest theme park in China

High dive, ice shows a highlight this season at Pleasure Beach Blackpool

STORY: Andrew Mellor
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ENGLAND — Pleasure Beach Blackpool, in northwest England, opened for the 2012 season in early February with the promise of a range of new attractions to keep visitors entertained throughout the year.

The promotion of Wow Weekends got things off to an early start with a range of special offers to tempt guests to the venue in February, with the park open during weekends and the school half term week. Weekend opening was also offered in March before the season got into full swing in April.

Among the new attractions set for the main part of the season will be a special troupe of Mexican Olympic high divers, La Quebrada, who will bring their unique show to the park in July in a purpose-built arena in the shadow of The Big One roller coaster.

The troupe's performances have wowed audiences around the world with death-defying high dives from heights of up to 25 meters (81 feet) and the routine combines comedy, fire and Olympic dives. They will perform their first dive on July 16 and continue until September 2.

And staying with the live entertainment offering, the park's famous Hot Ice ice skating show will celebrate its 75th production in 2012 when Entice will be skating its way on to the ice. Featuring more than 30 skaters from around the world, the latest ice show will feature over 400 stunning costumes along with music, lasers and pyrotechnic effects. A "jaw dropping illusion of the senses" is promised with world-class performers taking to the ice for the show which premieres on July 4, with both matinee and evening performances.

Another special occasion will be the first birthday of Nickelodeon Land, which will take place on May 4. The

▶ See BLACKPOOL, page 6



The Hot Ice show at Pleasure Beach Blackpool will mark its 75th production in 2012. Below, The iconic Revolution looping coaster will be given a new industrial look this year. COURTESY PLEASURE BEACH BLACKPOOL



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CDA revokes share transfer for sale of Fort Fun

STORY: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

GERMANY — France based Compagnie de Alpes (CDA), operator of numerous leisure sites including leisure parks and ski areas around Europe, has announced the revocation of the share transfer executed for the sale of its Fort Fun Abenteuerland due to irregularities which have come to light since the signing of the sale contracts.

In early January this year, the company announced that it had signed contracts for the sale of Fort Fun in Germany to the German organization One World Group. However, a press release issued by CDA at the very end of January states that “CDA has been informed by German authorities that rep-

resentatives of One World Group, the purchaser of the Fort Fun park, were suspected of producing false documents concerning the bank guarantee associated with payment of the balance of the transaction price (€5.75 million, U.S. \$7.5 million), to take place on January 31, 2012.

“To protect its interests on a precautionary basis and by virtue of a provision specific to German law, CDA has sent the buyer a notification of the revocation of the share transfer executed at the time of the transaction. Fort Fun will be thus reincorporated into the group’s scope of consolidation as of January 31, 2012, pending further information as to the outcome of this situation.”

Fort Fun became part of CDA upon the takeover of Grévin & Cie in 2002. The park hosted almost

280,000 visitors during the financial year 2010/11. It recorded sales of €5.7 million (U.S. \$7.5 million) and generated an EBITDA of €560,000 (U.S. \$735,000) for the same period.

CDA is a major player in the European leisure industry, operating 11 leading ski areas in the Alps and 15 leisure parks, including Parc Astérix, Walibi parks and Futuroscope. One World Group is a German family company held by Ms. Catherine Ziegler and her son. It made its debut in the amusement park sector in 2006, focusing on attraction design and masterplanning for parks. For several years the group has been looking into the possibilities of establishing a park or taking over an existing site in Germany.

Funtura FEC opens at Ukraine mall

STORY: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

UKRAINE — A large new indoor family entertainment center has opened at the Donetsk City Mall in the Ukraine as part of the venue’s second phase of development.

Situated on the top floor of the building, the new FEC was designed and created by Belgium-based KCC Entertainment Design and is the largest development of its kind in the Eastern European country. Previously, there was a small video arcade area and the mall already had a bowling center and cinema.

The new FEC covers an area of almost 10,000 square meters (107,639 square feet) and accommodates more than 25 rides and attractions, including a 1,000 square meters (10,764 square foot) ice rink. Other key attractions are



A view of Funtura’s ice rink, ice bar and games areas.
ALL COURTESY KCC ENTERTAINMENT DESIGN

a Half Pipe (one of the first in the world), Sidewinder and GyroLoop from Moser’s Rides; a Rotating Drop Tower, Top Dancer, bumper cars, Jolly

Jumper, carousel, trampolines and Airborne Shot from SBF/VISA; mini bowling from Qubica AMF; a 5Di Theatre from Alterface; an FX simulator from FX Simulation; a Max Flight from MaxFlight; a Comfyland area by Comfyland; and soft play from Cheers.

A selection of novelty and redemption games are also on offer and there is a toddler area for the youngest visitors. Funtura therefore caters to all ages and interests and the attractions mix is complemented by a themed family restaurant, food court, ice bar and restaurant/lounge.

The theming behind the project is based on the story of a tropical island that becomes a new civilization when it meets an ice boulder. Funtura becomes a refuge for animals of all kind, a lost paradise inhabited by animals from all over the world that each have a unique story.



The Funtura FEC is the largest venue of its kind in the Ukraine and accommodates a wide range of attractions suitable for almost all ages. COURTESY KCC ENTERTAINMENT DESIGN



►BLACKPOOL Continued from page 5

new themed area, featuring 12 rides, made a big impact when it debuted last year and when the rest of the park closes at 5 p.m. on the day, Nickelodeon Land will stay open until 7 p.m. A birthday cake cutting ceremony will also mark the day.

One of the park’s most famous rides will also be treated to a transformation, with the iconic Revolution looping coaster being given a stun-

ning new ‘industrial’ look, and Pleasure Beach Managing Director Amanda Thompson, OBE, said: “2012 is already going to be a memorable year with the Olympics and the Diamond Jubilee taking place. At Pleasure Beach we have our very own celebrations. We are really looking forward to welcoming the high divers to the park and I am sure they will be a huge success. Celebrating Nickelodeon Land’s first birthday will be fun and we are looking forward to the rest of 2012 being a huge success.”

Find even more news at:
amusementtoday.com

Los Angeles-based Ikonic launches major China project

STORY: Andrew Mellor
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CHINA — The Ikonic Entertainment Group has announced that it has reached a co-operation agreement with Shiyan, China-based Taichi Lake Group to design and develop what is to become China's largest theme park and world class leisure resort project.

The U.S. \$3.1 billion project, set in Hubei Province's Wudang Mountain region, will see Ikonic provide master planning, concept creation, schematic design, design development and construction oversight services in support of the project's entertainment related components, which include a Taichi Kung Fu themed park, a \$50 million live show and related media production and publishing, totalling over \$300 million. The Wudang Mountain area is the birthplace of Taichi King Fu, an important center of Chinese Daoist culture and a thriving commercial hub.

Ikonic is a new company formed in Los Angeles to provide the total project turnkey services to the entertainment real estate business in China. The company is the brainchild of Tony Christopher, the founder and CEO of Landmark Entertainment Group, and Jack Chen, a Chinese-American businessman and founder and CEO of Transworld Capital Group (TCG), a financial advisory and investment firm specializing in cross-border business development and transaction management in China.

The agreement will feature Ikonic as the master designer and project manager for a series of projects commissioned by Taichi Lake Group. These include the Kung Fu themed park at Wudang Mountain, an amusement park in Qingzhou, Shandong Province, a live show combining Daoist and Taichi Kung Fu culture with western entertainment concepts and high-tech special effects, with Ikonic as the producer and master contractor, a documentary on Daoism and Taichi King Fu with Ikonic as co-producer with a Hollywood studio, a touring show of Daoist and Taichi King Fu culture at U.S. colleges and a video game featuring Taichi King Fu legends, with Ikonic as the producer of both the latter elements.

"We've been working in China for over 15 years and have seen a lot of changes, but China is getting to a time where a high quality project can and will be built there," said Ikonic co-founder and CEO Tony Christopher. "I believe China deserves a high quality project such as this which will be based around a mix of entertainment, education and Chinese culture. I think once this happens, theme parks in China will find a big success.

"Our Kung Fu themed park is interesting because the area we are developing near Wudang Mountain is known for the development of Taichi and Taichi Kung Fu. But it will be an internationally based park and I think it will hit the cultural aspect perfectly and be very entertaining and suit-



Ikonic's Chinese project will feature a mix of entertainment, education and Chinese culture and include this Kids Zone Bridge, above, and Tea House Tree House at right.

COURTESY IKONIC ENTERTAINMENT GROUP



able for the Chinese Market.

"In China now culture is a pillar industry. The central government is pushing the further development of culture as a strategic development direction that they are moving forward in. They are

really interested in delivering Chinese culture to the world utilizing different technologies and culture as the cornerstone of this strategy."

Severn-Lamb joins Clifton Cowley Group

UNITED KINGDOM — Severn-Lamb, the specialist light urban and leisure transport systems manufacturer, has joined the Clifton Cowley Group (CCG), also based in the U.K., in a move that will enable the company to further develop and grow as it combines its existing design, engineering and manufacturing skills with the larger organization's widespread expertise.

Clifton Cowley is a group of technology, intellectual property, engineering, manufacturing, design, chartered accountancy and marketing specialists who work to develop and grow innovative ventures. The group invests in and develops their

portfolio companies with a focus on servicing technology businesses.

In Severn-Lamb's case, the new partnership has brought numerous benefits to both the company itself and its global client base. It has enabled an extension of the products and services on offer while also providing Severn-Lamb with the opportunity to collaborate with an engineering consultancy company, as well as taking advantage of in-house marketing capabilities, additional funding resources and all the additional benefits that come with being involved in a diverse group.

"Joining the Clifton Cowley Group has been a significant move

for Severn-Lamb," said Managing Director Patrick Severn Lamb, "and we have quickly seen a variety of benefits in being involved with them, as will our clients. The group incorporates a number of companies, several with unique skills and expertise, and we have been able to make use of these as part of the group.

"As well as bringing our own manufacturing and engineering expertise to the group, we are also helping to open up new potential market areas for CCG as a whole. It's therefore a great partnership for all parties and I'm looking forward to developing Severn-Lamb further in the future for the company's benefit

and that of our clients."

As a result of joining the group, CCG has sponsored a re-launch of the Severn-Lamb brand, which has included a review of the products and services on offer, the design of an updated logo for a more modern look and a push for further diversification into other market areas. In addition to the familiar leisure and resort sectors, Severn-Lamb is now also promoting more actively into the light urban and special purpose vehicle sectors, as well as growing its engineering and support services division which covers all types of engineering, refurbishment, maintenance, repair and service work.

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Reporter's Notebook

Foundation poured on largest observation wheel in Western Hemisphere

LAS VEGAS, Nev. — The massive foundation for what will be the largest observation wheel in the Western Hemisphere, and third largest in the world, was poured on March 1 in Las Vegas, Nev. across from Mandalay Bay.

SkyVue is a 500-foot tall wheel that will feature 32, 24-passenger gondolas and offer two HD LED Multi Media displays in the center of the Wheel, measuring 50,000 square feet.

The wheel is being developed by Howard Bulloch and David Gaffin, both of Compass Investments. Also on board are Keith Robertson, president of JKR & Associates, John Woods, president of Norcross Construction, LLC and LEDCOR, the manufacturer of the wheel.

The SkyVue wheel is scheduled to open July 4, 2013.

Quoted

"We wanted to do something more with Pirates and make a big ride with a big splash!"

—Legoland California Project Designer Lindsay Burroughs said on the addition of Pirate Reef, the first ever junior-sized Shoot the Chute from Hopkins Rides

Branson tornado doesn't stop the music, the fun or the season opening

STORY: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

BRANSON, Mo. — Lynn Berry, director of public relations, Branson Chamber of Commerce and Convention and Visitors Bureau, feels her city was saved by what could have been a severe blow for the economy here and the people that call it home.

"We were really blessed," Berry said, following a deadly outbreak of tornadoes that ripped through areas from the Gulf Coast to the Great Lakes and resulted in more than 35 deaths in five different states. "Nothing was totally devastated here. We are fine. We are now dealing with the construction."

An EF-2 twister bounced around the City of Branson, the self-pro-

claimed "Live Music Capital of the World," during the wee hours of Feb. 29 hitting several of the area's theaters and attractions, and residential areas. More than 30 injuries were reported in Branson.

But, damage was apparently minimal as city officials announced the city was up and running and ready for visitors just five days after the tornado hit.

Branson was just one of numerous cities that were hit by the storm outbreaks that trekked across areas on Feb. 29 and March 2 and 3, the more deadly coming March 2. More than 100 tornadoes were reported. Weather experts have called the outbreak, where tornadoes were reported from the Gulf Coast to the Great Lakes and eastward, unusual in size

and intensity for the time of the year. The deaths were reported in Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, Alabama, Illinois and Georgia, but significant damages were reported, of course, in Missouri and Tennessee. As it moved eastward, there were storm-related damages in Mississippi, Florida, South Carolina and North Carolina.

Branson has a population of 10,500, but during tourist season, that number can swell to 70,000 and more. Tourist season normally starts here the first weekend in March. The storm outbreak just skirted that timetable. City officials believe one reason there were no fatalities here was because the tourists hadn't yet arrived.

Branson is full of an array of attractions. There are approximately
▶ See TORNADO, page 10

Circus Circus remodels rooms, adds attraction

LAS VEGAS, Nev. — Circus Circus Las Vegas recently unveiled a series of remodeled guest rooms and welcomed its newest attraction, The Chuck Jones Experience.

More than 1,900 guest rooms in the Casino and Skyrise Towers have been remodeled, offering guests a fresh selection of accommodations.

"The newly redesigned rooms embody the personality of Circus Circus and how we want our guests to feel during their stay," said Don Thrasher, president and chief operating officer of Circus Circus. "We've incorporated modern touches and design elements while maintaining the classic comfort that keeps guests coming back to our hotel time after time."

Contemporary jewel and earth tones welcome guests into the Casino Tower rooms. Nestled within the

CIRCUS CIRCUS

LAS VEGAS

15-story tower, these accommodations feature classic furnishings, pillow-top mattresses, 40-inch flat-screen TVs and Wi-Fi Internet access. Guests also have the option of choosing a Large King room featuring an expanded seating area for added comfort.

Refreshed and rejuvenated, the rooms in the 29-story Skyrise Tower welcome guests with jewel tones, while providing easy access to the relaxation of the hotel's pools and the excitement of The Adventuredome. For additional guest comfort, flat-screen TVs, pillow-top mattresses and Wi-Fi Internet access combine to create a memorable stay.

The remodeled rooms are part of an overall re-fresh at Circus Circus that also includes new wallpaper and carpet throughout the property.

In addition to the redesigned rooms, Circus Circus also recently welcomed The Chuck Jones Experience to its roster of on-site entertainment options.

Guests are engaged with interactive exhibits, displays and learning opportunities as they travel through the art, life and mind of legendary animator Chuck Jones. As a four-time Academy Award recipient, Jones is best known for creating *Looney Tunes* and *Merrie Melodies* shorts, *Tom & Jerry* cartoons and the TV version of Dr. Seuss' *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, along with many other animated classics.

At the Chuck Jones Experience, special workshops and lectures on the art of animation, screenings of several Jones' animated films and a never-before-seen collection of more than 250 drawings, doodles and paintings are sure to entertain visitors of all ages.

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Universal Orlando's creative team previews new Spider-Man



Members of the Universal creative team at Universal Orlando Resort preview some of the new enhancements being made to The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man including all-new 4K digital high definition animation, sophisticated 3-D projection systems, a new music score and all-new 3-D "Spider-Vision" glasses. The glasses, seen here, feature new lenses made of dichroic filters for amazing color and clarity, and allow guests to experience hundreds of new details within the towering visual spaces. The award-winning attraction re-opened to the public on March 8, 2012.

COURTESY UNIVERSAL ORLANDO

TORNADO

Continued from page 9

20 area attractions. There are 50-plus live entertainment theaters and 200 hotels. The tornado did cause damage to five or six of the city's 50-plus theaters, and 12 to 15 of the city's 200 hotels.

Attractions that were still closed March 6 when this story was written were the Branson Auto Museum, Flash Country Indoor and Lost Treasure Golf.

A WWII Mustang that sat in front of the Branson Veterans Museum was blown off its base and into the parking lot.

"It's not back up yet but we have cleaned it," she said.

Popular attractions, including Silver Dollar City, Titanic Branson, White Water, and the Showboat Branson Belle, escaped unscathed.

According to a Branson local news report, damaged venues included the Baldknobbers Jamboree show, where the opening was to be postponed until March 8; The Americana Theatre, which had a projected re-opening around April 15; and the Branson Variety Theater.

There also was some damage to the city's convention center.

"The damage to the convention center was centered in the walkway connector between the convention center and the Hilton Hotel," Berry said. "There is a lot of glass there which blew out, therefore damaging the inside. The hotel had a lot of windows broken out which allowed rain to come into the rooms. The hotel will be closed about 90 days, which will affect our convention business."

Berry said they have tried to keep people informed through the Chamber of Commerce Website.

"We have suggested that everyone call and get an update if they are planning to come soon," Berry said.

Berry was also reported saying earlier that: "Dolly Parton's Dixie Stampede didn't have a flower out of its flower beds, but Dick Clark's American Bandstand Theater, right across the street, had significant damage."

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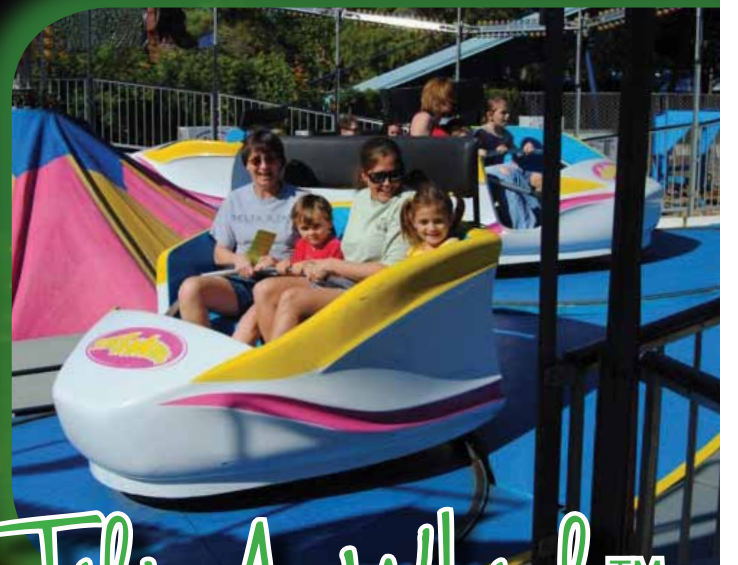
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Parks keep roller coasters on track with rehabs

STORY: Scott Rutherford
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

Continuing last month's look at winter roller coaster rehabs, we now turn our attention to several other notable projects as the parks ready their most popular rides for the upcoming 2012 season.

Waldameer Park

First up is the Comet, a junior wooden coaster at Pennsylvania's Waldameer Park. Opened in 1951, the Comet was designed by Herbert Schmeck and built by the Philadelphia Toboggan Company. Slightly taller and longer than PTC's earlier junior models of that era, the Comet is among the few wooden roller coasters that still employ a manual skid braking system, which turns out to be the focus of the ride's current improvements.

Waldameer's Brian W. Gorman details the Comet's 2012 enhancements and the reason for their implementation. "Since 1951 when the Comet was installed, it has been operated with large manual levers that activated different sections of friction brakes in the brake run. In the past, it operated with two trains until more recently when Waldameer decided it was unsafe to rely only on human reaction [to control the brakes]. Over the past couple decades, Waldameer has operated only one of its two Comet trains. Being a very popular ride, the line for the Comet often spilled out into the midway. This forced the decision to update the braking system to a computer controlled operation in order to make the ride safer as well as increase capacity by operating with the second train."

The Comet's elegant crescent-shaped station presented a unique problem when designing the new brake setup. "We have a curved brake area in the station, so we cannot use the typical straight brake fins found in most coasters," said Gorman. "This magnetic/pneumatic friction brake system is a new custom design created by Velocity Magnetics (velocity-magnetics.com) to handle our curved brake section and skid brakes."



Knoebels popular Phoenix is getting 400 feet of new track coming off the lift hill and continuing through to the first turn. Structural Technologies is completing the work for the park. COURTESY KNOEBELS

According to Gorman, the entire friction braking system has been removed from the start of the brake run to the end of the station. "Replacing it will be two initial sections of single-sided magnetic brakes provided by Velocity Magnetics," he said. "These brake sections will be raised and lowered by computer-controlled pneumatics and will slow the incoming train as it enters the brake run. Following the two magnetic sections will be seven computer-controlled pneumatic friction brake sections that will continue to slow the train until it rests in the station."

To handle the Comet's new brakes, the park contracted with industry veteran Terry Hoffman at American Amusement Rides (www.amrides.com) to provide the coaster's new computer control system. Additionally, the Comet will receive a new lift chain, new VFD (variable frequency drive) motor, and new chain sprockets. These items are all being provided by Costasur (www.costasur-inc.com). The Gravity Group consulted on the installation of this project.

Gorman was quick to point out that the Comet will not be losing its status as an ACE Coaster Classic as a result of these updates.

Knoebels

Amusement Resort

Being home to two top-rated wooden roller coasters is an honor Knoebels Amusement Resort does not take lightly.

The park's own maintenance staff and their on-site lumber yard is typically able to handle all their needs but thanks to near-record breaking flood damage sustained last September, Knoebels has sought assistance so the park staff can concentrate on getting ready for the 2012 season.

AT spoke with Brian Knoebel about this situation. "Normally, we don't have outside contractors come in to work on our coasters. In fact, this will be the first time since we built the Phoenix in 1985. But we're still in full cleanup mode from last year's flood. Structural Technologies, Inc. has been contracted to rebuild 400 feet of track on the Phoenix. We're starting near the top of the lift hill and rebuilding the first drop and the climb into the first turn. This will include new laminates from the ledgers up as well as all-new running steel.

"I wanted to put a plug in for Great Coasters International, Inc," said Knoebel. "Along with performing some off-season work on our Twister coaster, they are also the ones who went to war with the federal government over the ban on CCA [chromated copper arsenate] pressure treated lumber versus the inferior ACQ [alkaline copper quaternary] treated wood. The latter is fine for your deck or fencing but the constant pounding a coaster endures, especially in the track area, requires lumber that will last. Thanks to GCII's efforts, we're now allowed to use a

better grade of lumber that will increase the longevity of our wooden coasters."

Also getting some TLC at Knoebels is the much-anticipated Flying Turns. "We are getting closer. We've rebuilt the entire trough, replacing the original cypress with more durable wood," said Knoebel. "This has been done to prepare for testing of the next train incarnation designer Mike Boodley is developing. For the first time, we can finally see the light at the end of the tunnel. Stay tuned."

Disneyland

The Matterhorn Bobsleds is getting a major face lift for the 2012 season. Along with cosmetic attention being lavished on the mountain facade and interior sections, the most noticeable aspect will be the addition of new ride vehicles. Modeled on the rockets used on the original Space Mountain at Florida's Walt Disney World, the new Matterhorn vehicles will seat three guests each with their own lap bar as opposed to the original fleet, which accommodated four riders per car seated in pairs. The Matterhorn will resume operation on June 14, 2012.

Walt Disney World

Closed since Jan. 9, Big Thunder Mountain Railroad

at the Magic Kingdom is undergoing a major refurbishment. Cosmetic attention is being given to the 'rock' mesa as well as a number of special effects that have been missing for a while. Extensive trackwork is also on the agenda. Reopening is slated for May 28, 2012.

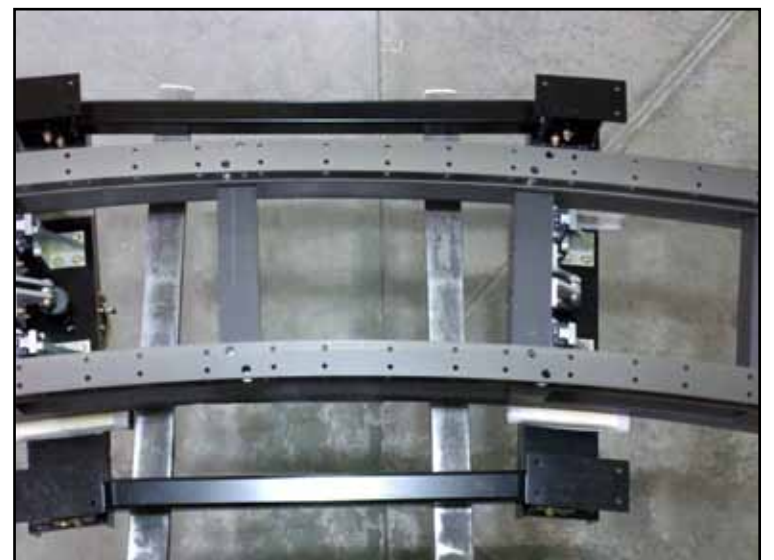
A number of other rehab projects are underway for the new season. These include:

- At Pennsylvania's **Hersheypark**: Gerstlauer is supplying new trains for the 1977 Schwarzkopf-built SooperDooperLooper.

- Idaho's Rocky Mountain Construction is replacing approximately 30 percent of the track on **Six Flags Over Georgia's** Georgia Cyclone.

- Along with their extensive overhaul of the **Coney Island Cyclone**, GCII has performed rehab work at **Dutch Wonderland** (Kingdom Coaster); **Morey's Piers** (Great White); **Magic Springs** (Arkansas Twister); and **Parque Warner Madrid** (Coaster Express).

- **Wonderland Park** in Amarillo, Texas is adding magnetic braking from Velocity Magnetics to its historic Miler Mouse coaster, in an effort to not only make the ride safer, but to ease the wear of the vehicle.



Waldameer Park has added magnetic braking into the curving brake run/station of the park's historic Comet coaster, a first for Velocity Magnetics. COURTESY WALDAMEER





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Kings Island unveils 40th anniversary logo

KINGS ISLAND, Ohio — On April 29, 1972 Kings Island opened its \$30 million royal gates outside of Cincinnati, Ohio to a mere 7,000 curious guests. The slogan used to entice their visit was “C’mon Get Happy!” and admission to the park boasting 65 attractions was \$6.00. It didn’t take long for word to get out, though. By the end of the first season Kings Island had set a theme park industry record by playing host to more than two million guests.

Since then, more than 120 million visitors have experienced the park to date.

To help honor the park during this anniversary season, a new 40th anniversary logo has been unveiled.

Kings Island opens for the 2012 season April 28. Daily operation begins May 11.

Waldameer takes delivery of new Chance Rides train

ERIE, Pa. — In order to improve capacity on its popular L. Ruth Express railroad, Waldameer Park has received a second C.P. Huntington engine and coaches from Chance Rides.



Since the replacement of Waldameer’s L. Ruth Express train engine last season, plans have been in the works to purchase a whole new train for the 2012 season. This means less time waiting in line and more time riding the Waldameer classic. Sporting a two-tone blue with white trim color scheme, the new train offers a wheelchair accessible car directly behind the engineer.

The L. Ruth Express railroad will operate the new blue train every day in the summer and add the second maroon train on busier days to increase rider capacity.

Waldameer Park will introduce a second C.P Huntington from Chance Rides for the 2012 season. The park’s L. Ruth Express railroad will operate the new blue train every day in the summer and add the second maroon train on busier days to increase rider capacity.
 COURTESY WALDAMEER PARK

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Frontier City to add WhiteWater AquaPlay

Wild West theme picked for structure

OKLAHOMA CITY — Frontier City has partnered with Canada's WhiteWater to build Oklahoma's newest and largest waterplay attraction — a custom themed AquaPlay RainFortress dubbed Wild West Water Works.

"When we decided to expand with the new attraction, we chose WhiteWater to conceptually design and manufacture Wild West Water Works because we knew their team would bring our ideas to life," said Stephen Ball, Frontier City's general manager.

Wild West Water Works will showcase the most unique wild, wild west theme yet; from the saloon to the windmill, great thought was taken in the design process to ensure an eye-catching, memorable experience for guests.

The 52-foot-high AquaPlay RainFortress multi-level interactive play structure will also feature a 1,000-gallon tipping bucket that resembles a barrel, 200 interactive play elements and eight waterslides to entertain kids of all ages. Frontier City's Wild West Water Works will debut in May 2012.



Frontier City has partnered with Canada's WhiteWater West to produce Wild West Water Works, a custom themed AquaPlay RainFortress, for the 2012 season. The 52-foot-high interactive play structure will feature a 1,000-gallon tipping barrel, 200 interactive play elements and eight waterslides. COURTESY WHITEWATER

Legoland California announces major 2012 investments

First ever junior-sized Shoot the Chute ride being introduced by Hopkins Rides

STORY: Jeffrey L. Seifert
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

CARLSBAD, Calif. — Legoland California will open a new Pirate Reef attraction on May 24. The main feature of the new attraction will be a specially designed Shoot the Chute ride from Hopkins Rides of Haines City, Florida. Instead of the 50 to 100-foot thrilling drop typical of most

Shoot the Chute Rides, Pirate Reef will feature a modest 25-foot drop and a gentle slope that is more suited to small children — the park's primary audience.

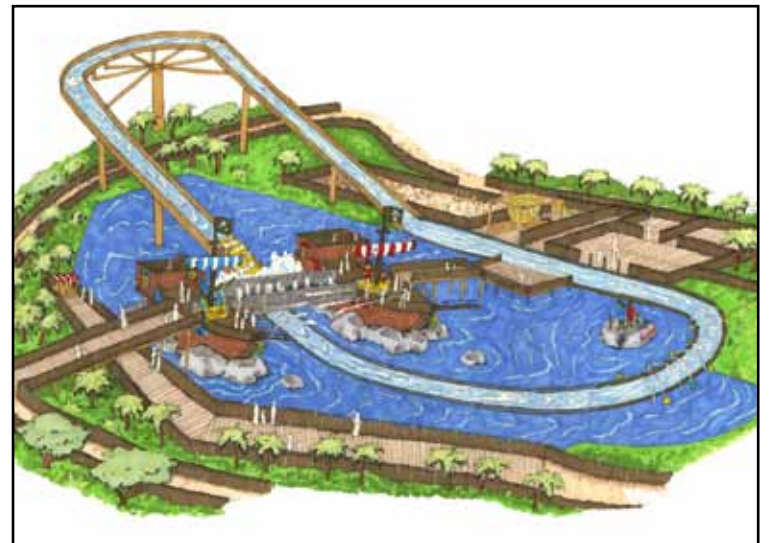
After plunging down the chute, the 20-passenger boats make their way through two life-size Lego pirate ships where Captain Blue Brick and Captain Red Brick are currently engaged in battle. Park guests on board each ship will be armed with water cannons to spray at the opposing ship as well as the helpless riders

on board the Shoot the Chute boat passing between them. A third interactive component is a bridge between the two ships that will get doused with a wave of water created when the boat lands at the bottom of the chute.

"The biggest thing they are going to be excited about is getting to stand on board a large life-size Lego pirate ship and they're going to get really wet," exclaimed Project Designer Lindsay Burroughs when speaking about what guests can expect of Pirate Reef. "Each ship is about 40-feet long and more than 20-feet high," she continued. Burroughs also explained that Legoland surveyed thousands of guests to find out what they'd like to see as the next attraction. "Through research, it was determined that with Pirate Shores, our current pirate-themed area, being so strongly liked and our new Legoland Water Park being so popular, we wanted to do something more with Pirates and make it a big ride with a big splash!"

The entire attraction will be accessible from the Legoland Theme Park as well as the separately-gated Legoland Water Park.

In addition to the new Pirate Reef attraction, Legoland



This artist rendering shows the walking bridge that will be built between the two ships, at Legoland California's new Pirate Reef, a junior-sized Shoot the Chute from Hopkins Rides. COURTESY LEGOLAND CALIFORNIA



A giant Opee sea killer has arrived at Legoland California. The 63-inch by 34-inch model created out of 20,000 Lego bricks is just one of many new models and scenes that was added to Lego Star Wars Miniland.

COURTESY LEGOLAND CALIFORNIA

California will expand its popular Star Wars Miniland area that debuted last summer. New Lego models will be introduced in each scene as well as a never-before-seen Lego Star Wars Gallery.

In the Naboo area, guests will discover an "underwater" scene featuring an Opee sea killer as it pursues Obi-Wan Kenobi, Qui-Gon Jinn and Jar Jar Binks. Other new Lego models include a Sandcrawler in the Tatooine scene; Rebels caught in a net trap set by Ewoks in Endor; and a new Crystal Tower in Christophsis.

The new Lego Star Wars Gallery will feature 3-foot-tall Lego minifigures from each episode. Characters will include: Wicket, Princess Leia, R2-D2, Captain Rex, Darth Vader, Han Solo, Luke Skywalker, Anakin Skywalker, Boba Fett, Chewbacca, Yoda, Ben Kenobi and Darth Maul.

In addition, there's a new life-size Darth Maul Lego model in combat-ready pose with his double-bladed lightsaber.

The expanded Star Wars Miniland attraction made it debut the last week of March.

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Reporter's Notebook

2011 Parksmania Award goes to Acquavillage Water Park in Italy

CECINA, Italy — Acquavillage Water Park in Cecina, Italy has been named Italy's Best Water Park in 2011 by Parksmania.

Acquavillage Water Park added two family rides in 2011, contributing to the award. The new slide complex Intrigo (Italian for intrigue) contains both a family rafting waterslide and a rafting waterslide with a conveyor in-between. Acquavillage contracted Piscine Castiglione (Italy), the leading European Swimming Pool Company for the new additions while Polin (Turkey) supplied the waterslides.

The Parksmania Award is considered the most important ceremony of the Italian amusement sector. 2011 marked the tenth edition of the award ceremony, held December 10, 2011 at Gardaland. The owner of Acquavillage Water Park, Marcello Padroni, received the prize.

"AcquaVillage was particularly attentive to guests' needs and market trends," stated Parksmania's judges. "They made a huge investment in the Cecina park through the realization of a double attraction, offering fun and entertainment both to families and adrenaline-lovers."

Quoted

"At Aqualand Frejus we are bringing King Cobra to France!"

—Aqualand Waterpark Manager Michel Moenner on the park's decision to add Polin's popular King Cobra waterslide for this season

Quassy to expand waterpark in 2013 with four new attractions

MIDDLEBURY, Conn. — Saturation Station the popular waterpark at Quassy Amusement Park in Middlebury, Conn., is going to spring a major leak.

Four new attractions will be added to the facility for the 2013 season, nearly doubling the size of the waterpark, Quassy officials have announced. Construction is expected to start late this summer.

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"We're excited about moving forward with our plans to expand Saturation Station," said Quassy President Eric Anderson. "The waterpark has been extremely popular and we will be able to provide even a more memorable experience for all of our guests with these new elements."

Three huge waterslides will be at the heart of the project: a BulletBowl tube slide and two FreeFall bodyslides, all from ProSlide Technology Inc. of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Quassy will also install what it has named Splash Away Bay, a 2,000-square-foot Vortex Splashpad by Vortex Aquatic Structures International Inc., Pointe-Claire, Quebec, Canada.

"Our guests have requested a waterplay area just for the toddlers, and Splash Away Bay will be just that," noted George Frantzis II, a park owner.

All of the new attractions will be located adjacent to the existing Saturation Station modular waterplay area and waterslides.

The empty parcel to be developed,



Quassy Amusement Park President Eric Anderson surveys the site of the waterpark expansion project at the Middlebury, Conn., property. Four new attractions will be added to the popular Saturation Station waterpark for the 2013 season, according to the park. COURTESY QUASSY

overlooking Lake Quassapaug, was formally occupied by the Mad Mouse roller coaster, which was dismantled at the conclusion of the 2010 season.

About The Attractions

The BulletBowl is a two-person tunneled tube ride that will drop more than 30 feet and travel more than 210 feet. When the tube emerges from the tunnel it is sent spinning into a gigantic bowl where speed and centrifical force keep the riders glued to the outside of the bowl. As the tube circles and slows down, it plunges into the center of the bowl and exits into a landing trough.

The ride will have a capacity of more than 300 persons per hour with a minimum height requirement of 48 inches to participate. As of February of this year, 14 BulletBowl installations existed worldwide.

The FreeFall slides, which will share the same loading platform with the bowl tube ride, are also known as extreme bodyslides.

ProSlide revolutionized speed slide design in 1991 with the advent of its narrow, u-shaped fiberglass flume profiles.

Quassy's two new bodyslides will
▶ See QUASSY, page 18



This rendering shows the three new waterslides coming to Quassy Amusement Park from ProSlide Technology Inc. COURTESY PROSLIDE



Quassy Amusement Park will add a Vortex Aquatic Structures International Splashpad for the 2013 season. The park has named the attraction Splash Away Bay, a waterplay area for young children. COURTESY VORTEX

►QUASSY

Continued from page 17

each be more than 140 feet in length with riders traveling at rates of more than 20 feet per second. The two flumes will accommodate more than 300 riders per hour with a minimum height requirement of 48 inches. Riders will come to a stop in runoff troughs.

"These new slides will take Quassy's waterpark to the next level — adding more value to the guest experience," Anderson noted.

For The Kids

Splash Away Bay will be located next to the new waterslides and has been designed as a play area strictly for younger children.

A multitude of attractions will be incorporated into the area including a rainbow spray tunnel, geysers and themed hands-on water play elements.

"We envision this being an extremely popular play area for youngsters — especially toddlers," Frantzis said. "It will be very parent-friend-

Quassy completes site work for new Zamperla tea cup

MIDDLEBURY, Conn. — Thanks to a rather mild New England winter, the site work for the new Crazy Cups ride at Quassy Amusement Park has continued to move ahead a rapid pace. The electrical system and fence for the family attraction are now in place.

The new attraction, being built in Italy by Zamperla, will be located adjacent to the park's Carousel Court and will feature six huge tea cups spinning on a revolving platform. Each of the cups will have the capability of seating an family of four.

The Crazy Cups are expected to be ready for the park's 2012 opening.

ly so the adults can easily keep an eye on their children. It's not an attraction for older children, but geared toward those under 8 years old."

M.E. O'Brien & Sons Inc. of Medfield, Mass., is the regional distributor of the Vortex products to be used at Splash Away Bay.

Anderson and Frantzis, owners who oversee daily operations at Quassy, said construction of the new attractions will continue throughout the fall and winter with an official opening slated for Memorial Day weekend of next year.

The waterpark expansion is part of a multi-year project — a \$5 million improvement plan initiated by the park in 2009. The first phase was completed in 2010 with the addition of the Free Fall 'N drop tower from Italian ride manufacturer SFB.

Quassy officials did not put an estimated dollar value on the waterpark expansion, but did note that additional seasonal staffing would be added once the attractions are completed. The project is being financed by TD Bank.

The park employees more than 300 seasonal workers during its April to October run.

Saturation Station opened in the spring of 2003 adjacent to Quassy Beach at the 20-acre amusement park which opens its 104th season on April 28.

• www.quassy.com



Coin-Op Watershooter

Photo Courtesy of Beachpark

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NEWSPLASH

COMPILED: Jeffrey L. Seifert, jseifert@amusementtoday.com

It looks like Las Vegas will have to wait at least another year before getting a waterpark. The previously announced **Splash Canyon** waterpark decided that rather than trying to open this year on Memorial Day as planned, the park will instead open in 2013. "Moving our opening date to 2013 wasn't an easy decision, but it was the right long-term one," said Roger Bulloch of SPB Partners, the developer behind Splash Canyon. "Now we'll be able to more fully enhance the guest experience, engage the community, and develop ideas, partnerships and sponsorships. We'll also eliminate a compressed construction schedule and, most importantly, provide a complete season," he added.

Turner Broadcasting System Asia Pacific is planning the world's first Cartoon Network-themed waterpark, to be located in Bang Saray on the East Coast of Thailand. Scheduled to open in 2013, and named **Cartoon Network Amazone**, the waterpark is a nod to the lush Amazon Rainforest while infusing the world's most popular animated series and toon heroes. Phase one of the waterpark is already underway and when completed will cover 14 acres of coastal plains in Bang Saray, just 15 minutes from Pattaya Beach City.

Zoombezi Bay, which is owned and operated by **Columbus Zoo and Aquarium**, has signed a five-year agreement with **Lo-Q**, to install and operate its Q-band waterpark ride reservation system. Zoombezi Bay opened in 2008 following an extensive refurbishment of the old **Wyandot Lake** park and has since delivered steady annual increases in attendance rates, including a large proportion of season-pass holders. The Q-band utilizes a revolutionary RFID wristband that is waterproof and lightweight.

KeyLime Cove, the popular Chicago area indoor waterpark resort, was distinguished as the 2011 eMarketer of the Year by TravelClick and Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMAI) at the Adrian Awards gala in New York City. This was the second year in a row KeyLime Cove was recognized with this honor. KeyLime Cove was also honored with two 2011 Gold Adrian Awards for their partnership campaign with **Six Flags Great America** as well as for their online retargeting display campaign.

The giant leisure pool at **Beech Bend Park** in Kentucky is going to be a lot more active this season with the addition of a Lily Pad Walk across the middle of the pool. Specifically designed for kids, the challenge is to step from lily pad to lily pad to get 50 feet across the pool. The kids can grab an overhead net for help, but balancing on the floating lily pads will still be tricky. The Lily Pad Walk will debut when Splash Lagoon opens on May 17.

Sahara Sam's Oasis Indoor Water Park in West Berlin, N.J. scheduled a special celebration on March 30, to celebrate three years of fun in southern New Jersey. Sahara Sam's Oasis opened its doors on March 15, 2009 as the state's first free-standing indoor water park and entertainment complex. Sahara Sam's has provided nearly 1,000,000 visitors affordable, family oriented fun.

Even though a proposed waterpark in Campbell River, B.C. will be fully funded by the local **Rotary Club and Campbell River Firefighters Association**, the city has not yet committed to provide the funding to pay for the water and electric utility costs or ongoing maintenance. The city needs to budget \$75,000 annually in order to operate the waterpark. The Rotary Club was hoping to begin construction in April for a June opening, but without a commitment from the city, the project may have to be put on hold or abandoned.

Aquatica Texas the new waterpark at **SeaWorld San Antonio** has announced an opening date of May 19 just before the Memorial Day weekend. The opening of Aquatica culminates a year-long expansion of and renovation of the existing waterpark.

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Sunway Lagoon expands with WhiteWater Abyss

MALAYSIA — WhiteWater, based in Richmond, B.C., Canada, has announced that it has been commissioned to provide Sunway Lagoon with Malaysia's first Abyss attraction.

Sunway Lagoon will offer one of the world's largest Abyss waterslides on the highest slope in Asia, as well as hundreds of dazzling LED lights.

The Abyss will take up to six riders through a thrilling series of open and enclosed sections with gripping twists and turns before plummeting them into the core of the Abyss. With increased wall height and a lengthened funnel, WhiteWater's designers have created the largest drops and sustained oscillations, while eliminating the need for water brakes on this popular funnel-like slide.

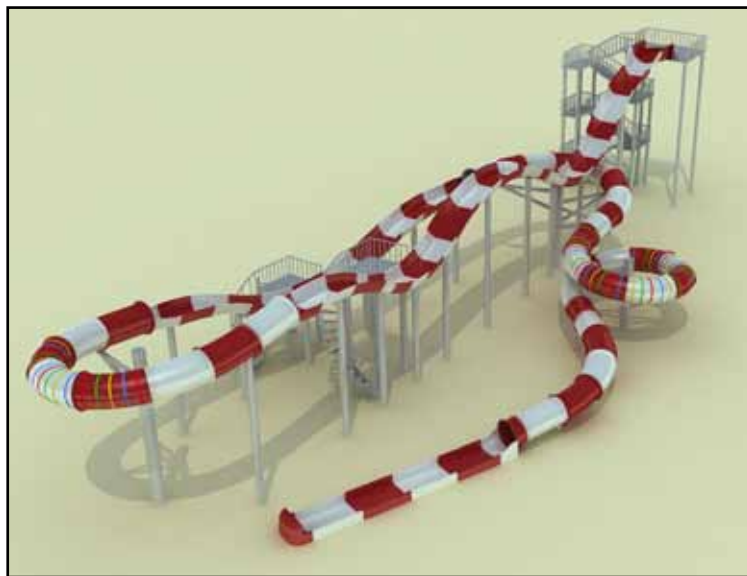
Sunway Lagoon's newest addition will join a host of many exciting attractions including the world's largest man-made surf wave pool and an ever-popular FlowRider stationary sheet wave attraction.

•www.sunwaylagoon.com

Five Aqualand Water Parks in France to expand in 2012



Polin's Tropical Paradise Aquatower will open this summer at Aqualand Cap d'Agde, Aqualand Saint Cyr Sur Mer, and Aqualand Bassin d'Arcachon. COURTESY POLIN



Polin's unique water coaster ride, Uphill Navigatour and their Tunnel Body Slide are scheduled for delivery to Aqualand Saint Cyprien. COURTESY POLIN

Polin named as supplier of major attractions

FRANCE — Polin has announced new additions to five of the Aqualand Water Parks in France. The parks that will be adding new water slides and interactive waterplay structures are: Aqualand Frejus, Aqualand Cap d'Agde, Aqualand Saint Cyprien, Aqualand Saint Cyr Sur Mer, and Aqualand Bassin d'Arcachon.

Last year Aqualand Bassin d'Arcachon and Aqualand Saint Cyr Sur Mer expanded with new attractions from Polin. Now one year later, Aspro Ocio Group, the owner of Aqualand Waterparks decided on a larger expansion plan, this time covering five of their parks. The group retained Polin as their waterpark supplier.

All five waterparks are adding unique rides and waterplay structures. They are:

- King Cobra is going to Aqualand Frejus (the first of this slide type in France);
- Aqualand Cap d'Agde is adding a tropical themed waterplay structure;
- Polin's unique water coaster ride, Uphill Navigatour

and their Tunnel Body Slide are scheduled for delivery to Aqualand Saint Cyprien;

- Aqualand Saint Cyr Sur Mer is installing a tropical themed Aquatower, and

- Aqualand Bassin d'Arcachon is installing a Mini Pirate Slide — a mini kids slide with pirate theming and a themed multi level waterplay structure.

The new rides will open in summer 2012. All the new slides at Aqualand Waterparks will use Polin's unique Resin Transfer Molding (RTM) process for superior color effects and color retention.

The highlight attraction will be the King Cobra slide going to Aqualand Frejus. King Cobra is a gorgeous waterslide that offers one of the most "intense" riding experiences of the industry, while proving itself as the number one attraction in terms of visual impact and spectator appeal. It creates a truly different experience both for the riders and for the spectators. With its unique design configuration, fiberglass theming, coloring and its unique riding path, King Cobra is expected to bring excitement to Aqualand guests.

"We have worked with Polin for several years and we are very excited to continue with Polin once again," said Michel Moenner, waterpark manager, Aqualand Waterpark. "We appreciate that they innovate every year with new slides."

"For 2012 we are adding many revolutionary attractions to our various parks," continued Moenner. "At Aqualand Frejus we are bringing King Cobra to France! King Cobra is a new generation waterslide and we are proud to have this unique ride in our park. We can't wait for the opening."

Spain-based Aspro Ocio Group is the largest operator of leisure parks and centers in Europe with over 40 venues in the leisure market including 13 Aqualand Waterparks in France and Spain.

—Jeffrey Seifert

LATE EXCLUSIVE!

Alabama Adventure rebranding into Splash Adventure

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Alabama Adventure officials have announced that Alabama Adventure will become a new waterpark adventure named Splash Adventure.

The new name, Splash Adventure, is a result of plans to operate and expand the waterpark attraction with new water only oriented rides and attractions. The waterpark will be expanded onto the Main Street entrance and the area adjacent to the existing waterpark.

General Attractions, LLC, the company that recently purchased Alabama Adventure, plans to open the Splash Adventure Water Park in mid-May with new water oriented adventure attractions that are not available in other waterparks. The company will discontinue the operation of the amusement park rides except for early season special group outings in May. The

park plans to sell all 20 plus amusement rides which include everything from large amusement thrill rides such as a wood coaster, boomerang steel coaster to mid-size rides and children's rides.

This new business development and marketing strategy is a result of the popularity of waterparks and water attractions throughout the world, America and Alabama.

Kent Lemasters, park spokesperson and president of Amusement-Aquatic Management Group, Inc. (AMG), states, "We developed this waterpark business strategy after analyzing the Alabama market, the area's demographics, the park's attendance and the huge popularity of the waterpark as compared to the amusement park. The waterpark was, hands down, the most popular of the two parks. We also conducted market research and

surveys of our visitors to determine what they liked and wanted to see added to the park. Seventy percent of those surveyed said they visited the park because of the waterpark."

All waterpark rides, slides and new attractions will open in mid-May. Exact operating schedules and the new attractions for the 2012 season will be announced in late March.

For more information on Splash Adventure, visit the website www.alabamaadventure.com or call (205) 481-4750.

Superior Equipment and Larry Moyers have been secured by the park to oversee the amusement ride liquidation. The list of rides for sale may be seen in this issue of *Amusement Today*, page 31, the company's website (www.amusementridesales.com) or by calling (865) 977-7294 for more information.

Clementon Park installing Aquatic Development wave pool

CLEMENTON, N.J. — Clementon Park and Splash World will feature the largest expansion in the waterpark's history including the addition of the 23,000-square foot Big Wave Bay wave pool. The new massive attraction will start making waves Memorial Day weekend when the park opens its gates for its 105th consecutive operating season.

Clementon Park and Splash World was acquired in November 2011 by an investor group led by former Six Flags executives Kieran Burke and Gary Story. At the time of the acquisition the new owners promised significant improvements in time for the 2012 season.

"We are thrilled to be bringing such a large, spectacular, family-friendly attraction to Clementon Park and Splash World so soon after acquiring the park," said Burke. "This extraordinary wave pool and its enormous capacity puts our water park on par with the best in the country and lines up perfectly with whom we are and what we offer — two great parks in one showcasing quality, close-to-home family entertainment at an affordable price."

Included in the expansion are new restrooms, changing rooms and 10 gigantic 20-foot shade structures installed throughout the expansion to provide comforting shade on those super sunny summer days. Two major food service facilities are being expanded to offer popular fare and to drastically increase speed of service. The park is also introducing its first Tiki Bar, offering adult beverages and big screen television viewing.

New cabanas, getting installed atop the famous cylindrical Cove Restaurant, will offer guests shade, comfort and exclusive privacy while overlooking the frolicking fun at Big Wave Bay or the beauty of sparkling Clementon Lake.

"The addition of Big Wave Bay marks the fifth, and most sensational, major attraction introduced at Clementon Park and Splash World in the last five years," said David Dorman, the park's general manager. "The changes have been truly transformational. If a family has not been here before, or not visited in a while, they will be wowed by improvements."

Big Wave Bay will be pro-

vided by Aquatic Development Group of Cohoes, N.Y. It will be located in the center of the park, between the Laguna Kahuna waterplay structure and the Funnel Cake Factory. Two of the ride park's existing attractions, the Samba Tower and Kite Flyer will be relocated to allow expansion of the waterpark.

Clementon Park is expanding its waterpark in 2012 with a new wave pool from Aquatic Development Group.

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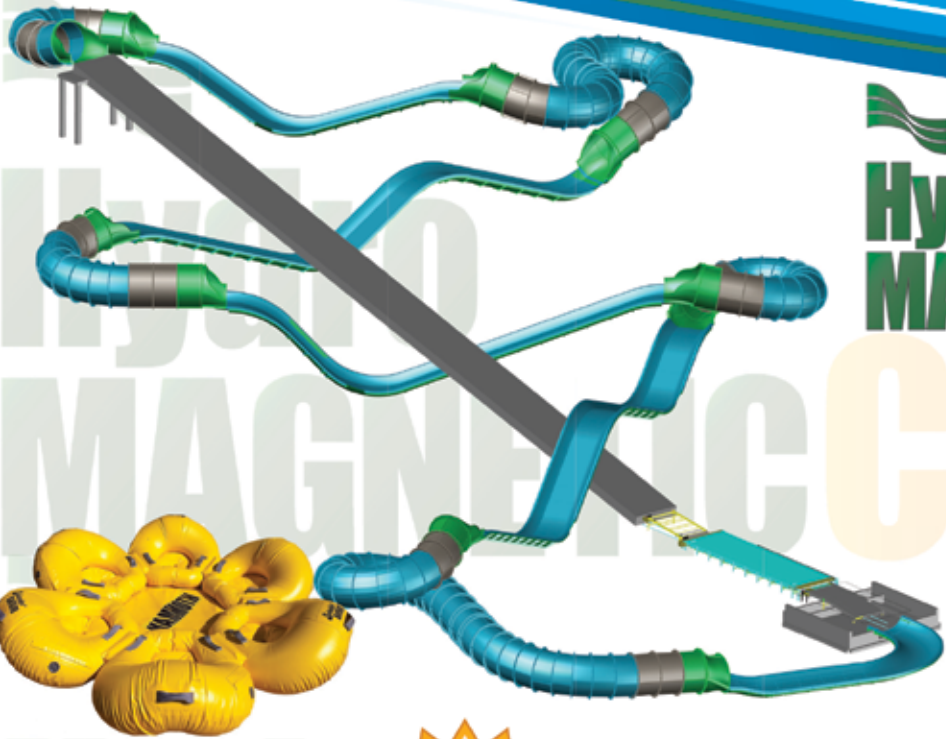
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Reporter's Notebook

Book now to attend annual Gala benefiting Give Kids The World

ORLANDO, Fla. — The 24th Annual Give Kids The World Black & White Gala has been scheduled for June 2, 2012 at The Grand Ballroom in the Peabody Hotel in Orlando.

Cocktails begin at 6:30 p.m. followed by dinner at 7:30 p.m. Tickets always go fast for this sold out event so GKTW officials suggest attendees purchase their tickets early. Individual tickets are \$200 per person, tables may be reserved for \$2,000.

Persons interested in attending should contact Lisa Bertin-Queen at (407) 396-1114 ext 4225 or via email to: lisab@gktw.org.

Give Kids The World Village is a 70-acre, nonprofit storybook resort where children with life-threatening illnesses and their families are treated to a week-long, cost-free fantasy vacation.

Quoted

"We are solvent!"

—Dick Knoebel, PAPA's secretary/treasurer when asked to give the association's financial report during the PAPA Spring Meeting, Feb. 27 and 28 in Hershey, Pa.

PAPA's annual Spring Meeting well attended

STORY: B. Derek Shaw
Special to Amusement Today

HERSHEY, Pa. — One hundred six members of the Pennsylvania Amusement Parks Association (PAPA) met February 27 and 28 for their 77th Annual Spring Meeting at Hershey Lodge. This was one of the "stronger" attended PAPA spring meetings in recent times. The event was attended by representatives of 23 manufacturers and 11 parks and attractions.

The first day consisted of a board of directors meeting followed by a reception and banquet that evening that was run by Carl Crider, general manager of DelGrosso's Amusement Park in Tipton, Pa. He is the current President of PAPA, entering the second year of his two year term. Speakers included Chip Cleary, president and CEO of IAAPA and Representative Jerry Stern (R-Blair County), chairman of the Tourism and Recreational Development Committee, which oversees Pennsylvania's second-largest economic sector.

Cleary talked about the Asian Attractions Expo, a show run by IAAPA, which is showing a 20 percent growth in vendor participation. Attendance is also rising at a similar pace.

Stern's remarks touched on the



fact that the state's tourism dollars are down 25 percent from four million to three million. (Pennsylvania now ranks 44 out of the 50 states in terms of tourism funding.) Representative Stern introduced HB 2056, this past December, which calls for the establishment of a Pennsylvania Tourism Commission.

The second day was reserved for the Membership Meeting held over breakfast. Association business included reports in various aspects of the industry: legislative, Amusement Ride Safety Advisory Board, Ride Safety Seminar, scholarships, waterpark and human resource issues. When asked to give a financial report, Secretary/Treasurer Dick Knoebel responded, "We are solvent!"

Pennsylvania House Bill 137 (still in committee) deals with dates and times of school terms and sessions. President Carl Crider said, "We obviously feel that this legislation is important not only to our industry but for all tourism related industries in Pennsylvania. With tourism the second largest industry in the state, the economic

impact of delaying school opening until after Labor Day is substantial and broad based. Therefore, we support any such legislation that has a positive impact on tourism." If the bill is passed, it is estimated that 500,000 more people would visit the state during the days leading up to Labor Day.

Also addressing this issue was Carl Wilgus, president/CEO of the Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau, who spoke at the breakfast meeting. Part of the problem is the number of school districts in Pennsylvania: 581 in 67 counties. Each district has the ability to determine when their classes begin. The Commonwealth mandates 180 days of instruction completed by June 30 of each year. Wilgus is suggesting that parks take the grass roots approach and go district by district to gain their support. Each school board has nine members, so five in support of starting classes after Labor Day is all that is needed. In most cases, only four days is the amount that need to be shifted for a post Labor Day start. Wilgus also shared numerous economic and social advantages of a post Labor Day start, along with a hand-out that explains the logic and the process to help fight school calendar "creep."

The Pennsylvania fall 2012 Ride Safety Seminar is scheduled for the end of October in the Altoona area and will include more Pa. Class 1 topics this
▶ See PAPA, page 26



Crider



On hand at the PAPA Spring Meeting in Hershey Pa. were, l to r, from Knoebel's Amusement Resort, Dick Knoebel, Rick Knoebel, Rick D'Aprile (Allied Insurance) and Brian Knoebel. AT/B.DEREK SHAW



Enjoying time to catch up during PAPA were, l to r: Andy Quinn, Kennywood; Chip Cleary, IAAPA and Rich Henry, PTC. AT/B. DEREK SHAW

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►PAPA

Continued from page 25

year (Inflatables) along with Pa. Class 2 (Major Rides). This event is coordinated jointly by PAPA and the Pennsylvania State Showmen's Association, with training and certification through NAARSO. The hands

A strong turnout was on hand for the 77th Annual PAPA Spring Meeting held in Hershey, Pa. Feb. 27 & 28.

AT/B. DEREK SHAW

on portion will take place at DelGrosso's Amusement Park. The fall 2011 seminar drew 107 attendees in 18 classes at Bloomsburg University, with the hands-on portion being held at Knoebels Amusement Resort.

The Association also awarded four, one thousand dollar scholarships this year to deserving students throughout the Commonwealth. There were 59 applicants.

After breakfast, the meeting continued informally

with a brainstorming session for those interested, at the Hersheypark Service Center conference room. Led by Hersheypark's Gary Chubb, more than 25 people attended, discussing topics ranging from Human Resources, Operations and Regulations.

When asked about his inaugural year in office and plans for the upcoming year, PAPA President Crider said, "My first year was a learning experience but I enjoyed it very much thanks to the cooperation and encouragement of the PAPA members and fellow officers and directors. I look forward to my second and final year and keeping with the mission of PAPA which is to promote the industry by gathering and disseminating information to the membership, encouraging the exchange of knowledge among members relating to better management and methods of doing business, upholding a good public image and exercising one voice related to legislative issues that promote the best interests of the industry."

The Pennsylvania Amusement Parks Association was formed in 1935 with R.L. Plarr from Dorney Park serving as the first president. In 1946, roller coaster designer Herbert P. Schmeck of Philadelphia Toboggan was president. The 2012 Summer Meeting will be held at DelGrosso's Amusement Park July 16 and 17.



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77th Annual PAPA Spring Meeting Hershey, Pa.

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ASTM F24 safety meeting sees record attendance

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — ASTM F24, the committee on amusement rides and attractions which produces global safety standards for the amusement industry, held its semi-annual meeting from February 16th-18th in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Approximately 50 separate meetings were held, each one focusing on a specific safety element of the amusement industry. Attendance was at an all-time high with more than 200 safety experts from around the world participating.

In addition to traditional sessions on issues like ride design, operations, and maintenance, some of the areas discussed included nontraditional areas of growth such as the participatory attractions of zip lines, rock wall climbing, inflatables, Zorbs, and trampolines. A number of meetings focused on water-related attractions which continue to see ample growth in the resort and hotel industry. A significant amount of work continues to be performed on the subject of trains, which bal-



lotted a new standard for the first time.

Jim Seay, chairman of ASTM F24 committee and president of Premier Rides, commented, "I was very impressed by the dedication shown by so many people who are both passionate about safety and volunteering their valuable time to participate. As one example of many, the trampoline task group that had proactively been established last year met for two days straight. Compelling input was provided by consumers who had been personally affected in a trampoline incident. The task group's work effort was remarkable."

Following up on a grow-

ing trend, a number of sessions were held to assist both domestic and global representatives with the adoption of ASTM F24 standards. The recently passed Canada-specific standard was used as a model for other countries that wish to incorporate internal requirements and existing standards into their adoption of F24 standards. A newly established task group focused on the Latin American adoption of F24 standards met to review the model. Len Morrissey, director/TCO division of ASTM International, stated, "With the success of the Canadian and Colombian efforts, we will be reaching out to specific countries in Latin America within the next month to assist with the adoption of F24 standards. We also established a task group to address New Jersey's desire to harmonize with F24."

The ASTM F24 meetings were sponsored by Great Wolf Lodge, IMPACT, Premier Rides, ProSlide Technology, Rockwell Automation, SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, Tapeswitch, and Uremet.

ASTM informs congressional review of standards

W. CONSHOHOCKEN, Pa., — Leading standards experts from ASTM International testified Feb. 29 before a committee of the U.S. Congress during a review of the effectiveness of the U.S. standards system.

James L. Seay, chairman of ASTM Committee F24 on Amusement Rides and Devices and owner of Premier Rides, Baltimore, Md., represented ASTM International on the panel of witnesses and described the many beneficial attributes of public and private collaboration in the development of voluntary consensus standards. As the owner of an innovative small business, he discussed ASTM's ability to provide an open and transparent forum "where the voice and expertise of all stakeholders — including those from small businesses and consumer groups — contribute directly to the development of international standards that are grounded in technical quality and market relevance."

As the Congressional discussion turned to the standards policies of the United States and its global trade partners, Seay recommended that countries and regions strive to embrace the international standards criteria established by the World Trade Organization (WTO) and recognize the flexibility to choose from a broad portfolio of international standards that includes those of ASTM International. "For the amusement industry and others, ASTM standards are utilized around the world in support of regulatory and business objectives because they meet WTO criteria, have multinational involvement in their development, and they have global reach in their application. Barriers to their acceptance often results in expensive and time consuming efforts to develop duplicative and potentially conflicting standards," concluded Seay.

Mary H. Saunders, director of the Standards Coordination Office of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), also testified at the hearing.





NEWS & NOTES

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Re-nourish your safety program on a daily basis

Mike Gutknecht

Ride Entertainment Group
of Companies and
AIMS president
mike@ride
entertainment.com

As I've written in previous columns, I'm a big bicycling fan. It doesn't really matter what type of bicycles we are talking about; I like riding them all. On my mountain bike, I've found that there is no better place to be than Park City, Utah. On my beach cruiser you'll find me gliding the boardwalk from Newport Beach to Huntington Beach, and when it comes to road biking, just give me a wide enough shoulder where I don't have to worry about getting clipped by a passing vehicle. I've put several thousands of miles on my bikes over the last few years, and



Gutknecht

quite frankly I consider myself a fairly educated bike rider.

A friend of mine recently asked me if I would be willing to go on a 100 mile bicycle ride for a fundraiser in southern Utah. It's been nearly 25 years since I've attempted to ride 100 miles in one day, but with some encouragement from my friends and family, I decided to give it a shot. I had almost two months to prepare for the ride.

Being winter in Utah, most of the training occurred indoors on my training rollers. Nearly every day during that two month period, I rode my bike on the trainer for deliriously boring hours of going absolutely nowhere. However, saddle time was important and I thought that the time I spent preparing would be enough to get me through the upcoming century ride.

When the day of the ride finally arrived, I was confident that I had done all that I could to prepare myself for the upcoming challenge. I lost most of my winter weight, had spent countless

hours on the trainer, and had eaten all the right foods the week before to give my body the nutrients I would need to make it.

One hundred miles: the plan was to knock it out in seven hours or less. It was a cool 32 degrees when the ride started at 8:00 a.m. The 25 mile ride to the first rest stop had a lot of ups and downs, but generally it was a slow climb to a 3,971 foot elevation. When I arrived at that first stop, I was a little sore, a lot cold and disappointed in my performance, but a 100 mile ride is a mind game just as much as a physical one and I was sure I had the determination to make it.

The next 25 miles, however, had a different plan for me. By the time I arrived at the 50 mile second stop, my body was telling me that it was done... time to sit down and relax for the rest of the day, maybe even the rest of the week. I was devastated – what did I do wrong after all of the preparation I had made?

After much soul searching and analyzing every action of the previous two months, I was able to determine that although I had put together a thorough training plan, I hadn't put any thought into how I was going deal with obstacles along the ride. It was truly a disappointment after a couple months of training, but also a very humbling experience that taught me an important lesson.

I realized that no matter how much prep work you do, make sure that you re-evaluate your plan along the way to ensure you can reach your goal.

In my case, I trained hard, ate right, lost the weight, but didn't re-examine my plan of execution during the ride. In other words, I should have stopped several times along the route to evaluate how the ride was going, stretch the muscles and re-nourish myself with food and drink.

In our amusement industry, stopping to evaluate your safety program

► See SAFETY, page 29

AIMS member spotlight: Kristle Montgomery

Editors note: This is a series of articles to run in AIMS News & Notes that spotlight an AIMS member who has been active in the annual AIMS Safety Seminar. To suggest a future spotlight on an AIMS member contact Steve Laycock at:

steve.laycock@rides.com

Kristle Montgomery

Legoland California
Ride Operations Supervisor

Kristle Montgomery is a native Californian who is a New York Yankees baseball fan. She has been working for the last two years as a Ride Operations Supervisor for Legoland California and after two years still feels lucky to be able to go to work every day for a company that she respects so much. Kristle attended the 2011 AIMS Safety Seminar and during that week spent some time answering questions for AIMS News & Notes.



Montgomery

Legoland California and the Merlin Entertainment Management Training Program. During the interview process it was apparent to me that people at Legoland were more than just coworkers, they were family. Unfortunately, I did not get that job but I knew I wanted to work in such an environment so when I got a call back regarding an Operations Supervisor position I applied again. I could picture myself working at Legoland for the long term so when I was offered the position I accepted and became the first outside candidate to be hired into a supervisory position within the Attractions Department."

What did you do before you were in the amusement business?

"Before working for Legoland California, I was trying to find my career. I had worked a few different jobs but didn't see any of them as careers. I graduated from UC San Diego with a Bachelors of Arts in History and was involved with several student leadership organizations including student government. My position at Legoland California allows me to use my leadership skills as well as my love for teaching which I developed while working for Kaplan as an academic manager for tutoring centers."

What do you do in your free

time?

"My free time is usually spent relaxing as much as possible. I also love sports, especially baseball. In the summer, when time permits, I enjoy wakeboarding and jet skiing. I am also very close with my family and enjoy spending time with them."

Tell us something about yourself that is not commonly known by your amusement industry peers.

"I was originally planning to go to law school. With a degree in History and Political Science it was the natural route to take. Now, however, I am looking more into an MBA program and special training and development programs to help me further my career."

What is so special about the facility for which you work?

"What's so awesome about Legoland California is that we cater to an audience that isn't generally catered to. Our target audience is children ages 2 to 12. Yes, children will outgrow our park but they have most of their first amusement park experiences with us. The highlight of my day is walking past our junior roller coaster and seeing a child experience it for the first time. Our park is magical for these children and the park is geared exactly toward them."

Tell use one thing you have learned from the AIMS Safety Seminar.

"I learned a lot of things at the AIMS Safety Seminar, but I think the most important thing I learned is that we are all in this together. Everyone comes to this seminar with their own ideas and ways of doing things and when we put it all together we can come up with what might be considered the industry's leading best practices. You also make contact with others who will help you troubleshoot when you need it. AIMS isn't each amusement venue showcasing what they do best, but rather each amusement venue sharing ideas as necessary to help everyone run safely and efficiently."

What is your favorite class at the AIMS Safety Seminar and why?

"This year my favorite class was Practical Teaching taught by Pete Carmichael (Six Flags New England) and Steve Laycock (Chance Rides). This class brought a small group of people together and really helped each one of us fine tune our presentation skills. Everyone in the class had a different experience and we all were able to offer constructive criticism in an open environment that stimulated growth."

► See SPOTLIGHT, page 29

How did you get started in the amusement business?

"I read about an opportunity at

► **SPOTLIGHT**

Continued from page 28

I also think the Hot Topics and Round Table discussion type classes taught at AIMS are well worth anyone's time. These classes bring us all together to talk about solutions to real problems that each of us face in our daily work life. It also lets you practice your note taking skills because I guarantee you will leave with pages upon pages of ideas!"

Why should someone attend a training seminar and particularly the AIMS Safety seminar?

"Networking and for the sake of educating yourself. The people who teach these seminars have experiences that are going to help you do better at your amusement venues. What is great too is that no one thinks of themselves as an expert, teachers and students are there to learn and look for new industry leading techniques. The friends and contacts that you make at these seminars are invaluable. I can call someone from a 'rival' park and talk through ideas on training or other hot topics and be able to trust their opinions. This seminar provides a fresh set of eyes and ideas when you need them."

In general, how was your overall experience at the AIMS Safety Seminar and how prepared were your instructors?

"I look forward to this seminar every year. This is only my second time here, but the experience you get is phenomenal. My instructors were well prepared and were not afraid to stray away from their prepared presentations if the class needed to go another way. There wasn't a class or instructor that I had this week that didn't leave an impact on me and provide new ideas for me to take back to Legoland."

Tell us one person you have met here during a networking opportunity time that has made an impact on you and why.

"It is hard to pinpoint just one person that made the biggest impact on me because everyone I encountered this week provided me with new ideas and confidence. Lori Kaupp, Pete Carmichael, Matt Bosslett, Cindee Huddy, and Patty Beazley are just a few of the instructors and friends that I made at AIMS this week,

each of them instilling a piece of their own experiences and knowledge in me that will leave an impact at Legoland California. They are all amazing teachers and each of them took the time to listen to my ideas and offer suggestions and feedback as well as new ideas. Pete has given me new confidence with making presentations. Matt has helped Legoland more than he will ever know with developing our employees and our orientations. He has great ideas

and shares them because he wants everyone to be successful. Lori, Cindee, and Patty are three of the most knowledgeable individuals I have met, each with a uniquely different teaching style that engages you and makes you want to learn and improve. I know I can go to any of them at anytime for advice and feedback that I may need and I am lucky to be able to call them friends and mentors."

—Complied by **Steve Laycock**

► **SAFETY**

Continued from page 28

is just as important as a bicyclist evaluating performance on a century ride. Just like that bicyclist, it's important to "re-nourish" the safety program by updating the methods, policies and procedures used on a daily basis. At AIMS, we are constantly striving to offer the best safety seminar in the amusement industry in order to provide that nourishment to the park owners, operators and maintenance staff. We are excited about our

upcoming safety seminars and look forward to providing each and every student with a beneficial and meaningful experience while attending the seminar. Promoting safety within the amusement industry is the ultimate goal of AIMS International. The specific steps we take are leading the AIMS members and the seminar students toward that goal to make our industry as safe as possible.

We are proud of our partnership with the amusement industry and look forward to continuing our path for many years to come.



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► **Safety in the Classroom** TIP #1
of 4

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MARKETWATCH

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Company	Prices One Month Ago	Prices 03/07/12	52 Weeks	
			High	Low
Cedar Fair L.P.	\$27.07	\$27.99	\$28.92	\$16.44
MGM Mirage	\$13.96	\$13.41	\$16.05	\$7.40
Six Flags Ent. Corp.	\$43.79	\$45.26	\$49.04	\$24.72
CBS Corp.	\$29.90	\$29.79	\$30.55	\$17.99
Walt Disney Co.	\$40.98	\$41.75	\$44.13	\$28.19
Great Wolf Resorts, Inc.	\$3.31	\$4.22	\$4.45	\$2.02
Blackstone Group	\$16.69	\$14.90	\$19.63	\$10.51
Village Roadshow	\$2.92	\$3.10	\$4.45	\$2.41
NBC Universal	\$19.18	\$18.77	\$20.85	\$14.02

CURRENCY



Region (U.S.)	As of 03/05/12	Change from year ago
East Coast	\$4.167	\$0.223
Midwest	\$3.974	\$0.151
Gulf Coast	\$4.020	\$0.208
Mountain	\$3.986	\$0.141
West Coast	\$4.275	N/A
California	\$4.454	\$0.332

TOP 7 MOST TRADED CURRENCIES



On 03/07/12 \$1 USD =

0.7592 EURO
0.6326 GBP (British Pound)
81.1563 JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.9153 CHF (Swiss Franc)
0.9428 AUD (Australian Dollar)
0.9977 CAD (Canadian Dollar)

PEOPLE WATCH

Dave Frazier named VP and GM of Valleyfair

Cedar Fair recently announced that **Dave Frazier** has been named vice president and general manager of Valleyfair Amusement Park in Shakopee, Minn.

Frazier, 46, has more than 25 years of experience in the amusement and theme park industry. He spent 17 years within Cedar Fair beginning in 1984, including six years at Valleyfair in various seasonal roles. Most recently he served as the general manager of Nickelodeon Universe, an indoor amusement park at the Mall of America in Bloomington, Minnesota.

"We are pleased to welcome Dave to our senior management team," said **Richard Zimmerman**, Cedar Fair's chief operating officer. "He is a disciplined leader who is truly customer focused. With the extensive amount of experience Dave already has with Cedar Fair and the markets in which Valleyfair operates, we are confident in his ability to deliver the 'best-day-of-the-year experience' to our guests each and every time they visit our park."

Holiday World announces new directors

Holiday World & Splashin' Safari, Santa Claus, Ind., President **Dan Koch** recently announced the appointment of three directors to the parks' staff.

Erin Smith is the parks' new director of games. She is responsible for overseeing the games department which includes selecting games and game prizes while overseeing the hiring, training, and management of 80 seasonal employees. Smith began her career at the park seasonally in 2001 and was named full-time Merchandise Manager in 2007. She is a graduate of South Spencer High School and the University of Southern Indiana, where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management with an emphasis in Human Resources. Smith is working on achieving a Masters in Business Administration from Murray State University. She lives in Santa Claus.



Smith

Joshua Polk is new to Holiday World & Splashin' Safari. As the park's director of human resource management, he is responsible for the hiring of 2,100 seasonal employees plus full-time staffing needs and support. Polk is a graduate of Murray State University, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. He and his wife, Candace, have two daughters.



Polk

of human resource development, having previously served as director of human resource management, director of human resources, and director of rides & admissions. Berg's responsibilities include guiding staff development, the management of staff support services, plus managing a staff of 20 seasonal employees. Berg started seasonally with the park in 1989 as a member of the rides department. He is a graduate of Forest Park High School and Indiana State University, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Recreation Management. He is a certified Professional in Human Resources (PHR). Berg lives in Ferdinand with his wife, Rachel, and their four children.



Berg

Cedar Fair adds Semmelroth to management team

Cedar Fair recently announced **Kelley Semmelroth** as the company's executive vice president and chief marketing officer – a newly created executive role.

"To ensure our marketing communications deliver breakthrough growth and our brands are elevated to compete in this ever-changing marketplace, we are adding additional marketing talent to our executive team," said **Matt Ouimet**, Cedar Fair's president and chief executive officer. "Along with a strong passion for the tourism industry, Kelley has a deep background in customer relationship management, brand management, advertising and strategic planning. Her experience, combined with our strong, park-based marketing teams, gives us the talent we need to continue to grow our business and deliver the 'best-day-of-the-year experience' to our guests."

Semmelroth comes most recently from TD Bank where she served as the Senior Vice President of Marketing and previously, Bank of America and Walt Disney Parks and Resorts where she also held executive marketing positions.

Disneyland employee celebrates 55 years

This past December, the Disneyland Resort in Anaheim, Calif., honored cast member **Oscar Martinez**, who recently celebrated his 55th anniversary with the resort. Martinez, a cook at Carnation Café on Main Street, U.S.A., began his career at Disneyland as a busboy. Over the last half century, he has trained thousands of cast members and has become a favorite of many guests who visit him year after year. Martinez is the first Walt Disney Parks & Resorts cast member to achieve this 55-year milestone and the first to receive the newly created 55-year Snow White-themed service award.

IAAPA announces addition of three new employees

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — IAAPA welcomes three staff members to its headquarters and Hong Kong offices:

Stephanie Robert (pronounced ROW-BARE) began in February as vice president, membership and marketing services. In this role, Robert is responsible for the oversight of all membership and marketing services provided by IAAPA including: new member sales, membership renewal, overall member customer service, and trade show, product, service and event marketing.

Brian Skepton joined the association in November 2011, as advertising and sponsorship sales executive for *Funworld* magazine, IAAPA's digital and online products, and publications related to the associations Expos around the world.

A graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, his career has included positions with ABC National News Programming, *Adweek*, Springer Science + Business Media, and The American Psychiatric Association. Skepton works in Alexandria, Va.

Jessica Yan started in November 2011, as exhibit and membership sales executive for IAAPA Asia Pacific's office. In her role, Yan promotes and sells exhibit space to the Asia-Pacific market for IAAPA's three trade shows: Asian Attractions Expo, Euro Attractions Expo, and IAAPA Attractions Expo. She also recruits new members and supports the needs of current IAAPA members in the region.

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Walt Disney Parks & Resorts recently confirmed that 10,000 new positions are being created worldwide – including 7,000 in the United States – through broader expansion efforts including two new cruise ships, a new resort in Shanghai and the recently opened Aulani, a **Disney Resort & Spa**, in Hawaii.

Redemption Plus' innovative new Kit of the Month program makes it easy to rotate attention-grabbing mixes into their clients' jumbo cranes every month. The jumbo kits featured will include a mix of seasonal themes, such as Easter and Halloween, along with first to market characters like the K-9 Kubes.

Daniels Wood Land is accepting orders on Hen House Hoedown, a mini shooting gallery offering an incredible amount of entertainment and excitement within a compact footprint. It features two gun stations, a powerful control system and 11 targets including: an egg laying chicken, a train horn, dancing chickens, fly-up cans, and their quick-shot challenge. Details: www.danielswoodland.com

Jack Rouse Associates Southeast Asia recently unveiled its relocated studio in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. JRA is one of the first tenants in the new 28-story building, which is located in Kuala Lumpur's Mont Kiara area.

Jack Morey commissioned **Neal McPheeters**, an accomplished Cape May painter, to create high-quality painted renderings of Morey's Piers two new waterpark attractions for 2012. The painted renderings will be used in the general brochure for 2012 and will be displayed in the Morey's Piers offices.

Madagascar: A Crate Adventure, the **Universal Studios Singapore** mega-flume attraction, has been nominated as Best New Park Attraction of 2011 as **About.com** 2012 Readers' Choice Award. The nine-minute indoor flume ride transports guests into the world of Alex the Lion, Marty the Zebra, Melman the Giraffe and Gloria the Hippo using a range of special effects that immerse them convincingly into the story and the experience.

Morey's Piers will offer plenty of new dining options for 2012. Guests will find **Mini Melts**, a cryogenically frozen ice cream treat, scattered throughout the piers. There will also be new slushie stands located on Surfside and Adventure Piers.

Icon: The Influence of Elvis Presley, a new exhibit chronicling **Elvis Presley's** influence on pop music performers has opened at **Graceland** in Memphis, Tenn. The exhibit includes 75 items on loan from the **Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum**, plus other memorabilia from artists who have been influenced by Elvis.

The legal battle that halted flights on **Dollywood's SkyZip** has been settled. The theme park will assume operation from the Hawaii-based company that installed the attraction.

Skyline Eco Adventures, the tour operator, claimed Dollywood caused the damage with nearby construction, but Dollywood filed a counterclaim holding that the other company breached its contract.

Boblo Island Amusement Park's 1913 mechanical organ that serenaded dancers in the early decades of the 20th Century, recently sold at auction for just over a million dollars in Boca Raton, Fla.

Six Flags Entertainment Corporation has announced a new marketing relationship with **Lowe's**, the world's second largest home improvement retailer, to be the Official Home Improvement Retailer and presenting sponsor of opening weekend at participating Six Flags parks across North America.

San Diego's historic **Plunge Pool in Mission Beach** has reopened, 10 months after it closed because the operator said he couldn't afford the renovations needed to keep the structure safe. The indoor pool is one of the most popular attractions at Belmont Park, but it was shuttered last May when a rental dispute erupted.

Six Flags Over Georgia is offering South Carolina residents a chance to visit the park through part of 2012 for a discounted rate in celebration of the park's 45th anniversary. For \$45 South Carolina residents can purchase a season pass that is valid for admission every day during the park's 45th anniversary season, which is \$10 less than a one-day ticket.

Sunway Pyramid has been voted by the public as **Malaysia's Most Favorite Mall** in an online voting contest organized by **Tourism Malaysia**. Sunway Pyramid chief executive officer **H.C. Chan** said more than 300 shopping malls in the country competed for the prestigious award.

To help promote **Transformers: The Ride 3D**, **Universal Studios** has created a viral Web site and social media game (PrepareForBattle.com). Once signed up, players get a welcome video message from General Morshower played by actor Glenn Morshower in the film series.

For the first time in the park's 53-year history, **Busch Gardens Tampa** will launch a winter holiday event – **Christmas Town**. Running Nov. 30 through Dec. 23, 2012, the park will be transformed into a nighttime holiday wonderland of wintery surprises. Guests can look forward to special entertainment, live music, festive treats, holiday shopping and thousands and thousands of twinkling Christmas lights around every turn.

The Milwaukee County Zoo is now offering "Behind the Scenes Weekends" where visitors can watch zookeepers maintain habitats, provide medical treatment and take care of the zoo's inhabitants in areas normally off limits to the general public.

2012 IAAPA Leadership Conference a success

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — One hundred and eighty six industry leaders from 23 countries participated in the second annual International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Leadership Conference, held Feb. 22-24 in Los Angeles, California. The figure represents a 10 percent increase over the number of participants in 2011.

Attractions industry leaders and managers experienced two and half days of out of the classroom learning at area IAAPA member locations. During the event IAAPA announced the IAAPA Leadership Conference 2013 will take place in São Paulo, Brazil, in early March.

"The Leadership Conference was a great success," said IAAPA Chairman and Managing Partner of Europa Park Roland Mack. "We had top representatives of all regions of our industry together

and experienced a warm and open-minded welcome in all the businesses we visited. The possibility to exchange thoughts and ideas on an international level is much appreciated by our members."

The IAAPA Leadership Conference brings together attractions facility and supplier company owners, CEOs, GMs, directors, and managers for firsthand learning and exclusive networking opportunities. This year participants experienced revolutionary technology and new rides and attractions, and discovered different ideas to establish successful business partnerships. Host facilities for this year's event included: Universal Studios Hollywood, Six Flags Magic Mountain, Technifex, Pacific Park on the Santa Monica Pier, California Science Center, and The Disneyland Resort.



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Vekoma Boomerang PM	\$1.8 million
Bertazzon Music Express PM	\$275,000
Preston Crazy Dance PM	\$100,000
Skytrans Mfg. Shoot The Chute PM...	\$1.2 million
Huss Pirate PM	\$100,000
Miler Spiral Kid Coaster PM	\$50,000
Zamperla Balloon Wheel	Sold
Zamperla Red Baron	Sold
Zamperla Speedway	Sold
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Morgan's Wonderland begins third season

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — Morgan's Wonderland, a unique, safe and affordable family theme park offering a variety of attractions including rides and playgrounds for everyone's enjoyment, kicked off its third season on March 2.

"Non-profit Morgan's Wonderland is the very first park of its kind because it was designed with special-needs individuals in mind but built for everyone to enjoy," said philanthropist Gordon Hartman, CEO of The Gordon Hartman Family Foundation. "It's been gratifying indeed to welcome more than

200,000 guests from all 50 states and more than 30 other countries in just two years of operation. We're eager to build on this success and attain even greater milestones during the 2012 season."

The inspiration for Morgan's Wonderland came from Hartman's 18-year-old daughter Morgan. Her soaring spirit despite personal challenges sparked within Hartman a deep desire to create a haven not only for those with special needs but also for their families, caregivers and invited friends.

www.MorgansWonderland.com

Timberplay new partnership brings Santa & Cole street furniture to the U.K.

UNITED KINGDOM — Timberplay officials recently announced a new partnership with the world-class street furniture specialists, Santa & Cole. The addition of this classical, thoughtfully designed range of products will enhance Timberplay's

offer to professionals working in the field of enhancing external environments.

Based in the renowned European design city of Barcelona, Santa and Cole work with handpicked independent designers to create a line of products that are both beautiful and functional.


Paul Collings, managing director at Timberplay, said of this new partnership: "Santa & Cole share great synergy with the Timberplay brand. Their commitment to originality and innovation is something that Timberplay respects as it mirrors our own values and those of our existing partners."



Santa & Cole was established in 1988, originally an interior furniture and lighting specialist they then worked alongside the key exponents of Barcelona's transformation in preparation for the Olympics. A number of key products developed at this time formed the basis of Santa & Cole's first urban collection and several are still retained within the current core collection. The company has built an enviable reputation, spanning over 30 countries, working with engineers, landscape architects and town planners, among others, on some of the most highly regarded projects in the public realm.

Santa & Cole have invested significantly in developing products that deliver savings on their ongoing operational costs. For instance, their widespread use of LED has significant implications for the long term running costs of street and pedestrian lighting. This is part of their commitment to the smart city concept of using sensors and information networks to improve efficiency and reduce waste.

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Reporter's Notebook

Calgary Stampede launches new online project

CANADA — Celebrating a century of legendary stories this year, the Calgary (Alberta) Stampede, is asking its visitors to share their favorite memories as part of its unique, online My Stampede project to mystampede@calgarystampede.com.

According to Calgary officials, up to eight standout submissions will be awarded "the experience of a lifetime" at this year's Stampede, July 6-15, winning tickets to the rodeo, chuck wagon races and Grandstand Show as well as western clothes and centennial-themed gifts.

All submissions will remain a lasting memory, forever in the archives of the Calgary Stampede, and available to revisit anytime, including the next centennial.

Quoted

"Crabtree values variety, affordability, and family fun, just as we do here at the State Fair of Louisiana."

—Louisiana State Fair President and General Manager Chris Giordano on the hiring of Crabtree Amusements for this year's fair

Florida State Fair officials looking at proposal to extend fair dates

STORY: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

TAMPA, Fla. — On April 30, the Florida State Fair Authority will meet. One of the items on the agenda will be if they will vote on a proposal to extend the number of days of the Florida State Fair.

Executive Director Chuck Pesano said if the fair asked him what his recommendation would be, he would suggest the fair be extended six days on the back end of the fair dates, thus giving the fair a third weekend.

The fair, which ran Feb. 9-20, this year, had a decrease in attendance compared to the numbers in 2011. This year, attendance was approximately 457,000, compared to the 2011 number of 487,000.



Yet, the fair reported two days of single day attendance records.

"When we had the weather, people came out," Pesano said. "Since our fair is held during the school year, our weekends are when we really draw. The first weekend this year, we had cool to cold temperatures for our area. The second weekend, we have some rain. We basically have these weekends to draw our biggest crowds."

Records were set on the first Friday, Feb. 10, of the fair when 78,366 people came through the gates. That is an all-time single day attendance record. The final day of the fair, Monday, Feb. 20, there were 56,737 on the grounds, which also set a single-day record for the final day of the fair.

"We also set four midway daily grosses," Pesano said. "The first Friday



Even though attendance dipped between seven and eight percent from this year's Florida State Fair, Tampa, and the 2011 fair, officials were still pleased with the results. The event drew approximately 457,000 patrons this year and set two all-time single-day attendances. This is a view of the crowded midway with the new Stinger (Loop Fighter), manufactured by Technical Park, and brought in by Reithoffer Shows. This is the only Loop Fighter in the U.S. It ranked number five in the top five rides.

COURTESY FLORIDA STATE FAIR

(Feb. 10) was the first time we have ever gone over \$1 million in ride grosses. So, it was not only a record single-day for that first Friday, but a record for any one day of ride grosses ever."

The official number showed the ride gross on that day was \$1,012,000, breaking the previous record of \$862,000.

Tuesday, Feb. 14, the ride gross was \$111,000, setting a single day ride gross. On Wednesday, Feb. 15, the \$117,000 ride gross set another single

day ride gross. On the last day of the fair, Monday, Feb. 20, the ride gross approached \$585,000, setting another single day gross.

Pesano said the fair board has asked him and his staff to do their due diligence in researching the pros and cons of expanding the fair. On April 30, the fair may or may not be prepared to vote on the matter. If the board does vote to approve an extension, then Pesano said the next step would be to ap-

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►FLORIDA

Continued from page 33

ply to the state Department of Agriculture for the extension.

Operations Director Fred Brown said it is his understanding that if the board does approve the extension, it would probably not go into affect until 2014.

"We had this many days a long time ago, but it just wasn't successful for us," Brown said. "But, that was a long time ago and things have changed...who knows?"

Pesano said if the fair dates were extended another six days to take in the a third weekend, it would not only give the fair more days but would give the additional days closer to March when the weather is more stable. Plus, there wouldn't be any conflicts with other events.

New this year on the grounds was a restroom facility built in the center of the grounds. Pesano said the new building cost about \$300,000 and was equipped with updated amenities.

Brown said there were 114 rides on the midway for the 2012 fair. New pieces included

TOP RIDES AT 2012 FLORIDA STATE FAIR

1. **Super Slide**, built by Dave Barham for the fair, owned by Florida State Fair, total gross \$183,180
 2. **Sky Glider**, built and owned by Sky Fair Inc., \$171,107
 3. **Hit in 2000 Himalaya**, built by Mack, owned by Wade Shows, \$141,044
 4. **Giant Gondola Wheel**, Chance, Wade Shows, \$117,659
 5. **Stinger (Loop Fighter)**, Technical Park, Reithoffer Shows, \$96,389 *
 6. **Super Himalaya**, Bertazzon, Reithoffer, \$88,846
 7. **Himalaya, Wisdom**, Dreamland Amusements, \$88,376
 8. **Vertical Swing**, Zamperla, Reithoffer Shows, \$85,487
 9. **RC48 roller coaster**, Pinfari, Wade Shows, \$72,887
 10. **Magnum**, Mondial, Wood Entertainment, \$71,086
- * New ride.

Reithoffer Shows' Stinger (a Technical Park Loop Fighter). Reithoffer Shows is based in Gibsonton, Fla.

Kyle Brady, Playworld Amusements, Alma, Mich., brought in Dartron's The Rave, another new ride for the fair.

Foods that made a hit this year included the Amish Baking Co., out of Sarasota, Fla. Brown said they were so busy that the operator, Nathan Peachy, had to fly his sister in from Pennsylvania to help them out. The company was offering large homemade donuts and pretzels.

"Another concessionaire that did really well was Stephen Ebers from New Jersey," Brown said. "I saw him at the New Jersey State Fair and got his card. I didn't really think he would come all the way down here, but he did and did really well."

The concession offered lobster, filet mignon, and a variety of other dishes.

Walker's Concessions offered all seafood dishes including lobster bites and conch fritters.

"I would say of all the concessionaires, these three did really well," Brown said.

No official contract at this time for Mega Midway Entertainment to play the 2012 Putnam County Fair

COOKEVILLE, Tenn. — Those in attendance at the Putnam County fair board meeting that took place at the end of February were asked to leave for 45 minutes while the board consulted with the county attorney in private.

According to the local newspaper *Herald-Citizen*, the board first discussed volunteers for the fair that is to take place Aug. 2-11, 2012. Then, fair board President Bill Dyer said that the meeting had been called to discuss the contract the fair had with Glenn Geren, Mega Midway Entertainment, based in Lake Park, Ga. The carnival has been playing the fair for about nine years. A two-year contract extension took the carnival through 2011.

Following discussions between the board and the county attorney whether the board needed to officially hire the county attorney before private client-attorney conversations or whether by the mere fact the county attorney already represented the board in his present capacity, the board took a recess having decided they were already covered under client-attorney privileges. The board members then asked all those attending except for the board members and attorney to leave the room. The private meeting ran about 45 minutes.

After the meeting concluded, one board member said they really couldn't comment, but they still had the same carnival.

More information would be presented at the next meeting.

—Pam Sherborne



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2012 IISA exhibitors show newest and finest

STORY: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

GIBSONTON, Fla. — At the conclusion of the 2012 International Independent Showmen's Association Extravaganza and Trade Show, Gibsonton, Fla., Mike Curci, **Midway Stainless Fabricators**, Hillside, N.J., felt potential customers were being very cautious about their spending.

FINAL IN A SERIES

"I think last year they came with some money to spend," Curci said. "But, maybe, not so much this year. I think the weather last year and the economy have people holding onto their money more this year than last."

Nevertheless, Curci is staying busy. At this year's IISA show, which ran Feb. 6-11, he exhibited several of his food trailers, including a lemonade and ice tea, as well as a newly designed ticket booth. The

booth he was showing was going to Corky Powers, Powers Great American Midways.

"It is my own design that I created," he said. "It has a screen over the windows that can be programmed as text mode and video mode. It can show a video of a ride operating and then go into the text mode. It can be set to go back and forth."

"I really like to make things different," he said. "I like to use LED lights. I like new designs. I try to do something unusual."

Curci was among many exhibitors at the 2012 IISA show. The following is information from more that were on hand.

Hitch-Hiker Manufacturing Company, New Middletown, Ohio

Hitch-Hiker's Holly Swartz said Gibsonton was good for her company. The company exhibited a new mustards trailer (corn dogs,

hot dogs, and fried trailer) at the show, which was built for Bill Morton, a concessionaire that travels with Ray Cammack Shows, Laveen, Ariz.

There was also a new trailer on display that was built for Brenda and Joe Premont, Grannys Foods, San Antonio, Texas. This is the second Hitch-Hiker has built for the Premonts.

"Brenda and her husband are independent concessionaires and they travel a lot with NAME," Swartz said. "They do a lot of the fried Twinkies, Oreos and foods like that. She is famous for her chocolate-dipped cheesecake."

The Premonts had a unique feature built for their new trailer, Swartz said. It is a slide-out that is rounded instead of squared.

"She plans to use it for display," Swartz said. "She said she wanted to put a chocolate fountain in it. There are small floodlights at the top of the slide-out where she can light up anything in there. A chocolate fountain lighted at night will look great."

The trailer was built with an ample number of warming drawers made to keep Premont's chocolate warm.

Swartz said her company is booked through about August manufacturing new trailers for customers. They are building one for Steve Marcus, another independent concessionaire. That trailer will have wide wings for more signage.

Show Me Fabrication, Sedalia, Mo.

Bill Fike said he felt they had a pretty good show this year in Gibsonton.

The company gained several new qualified leads even though there were no actual sales there.

"But, we are selling now," he said.

Show Me brought two trailers to Gibsonton including Slushes, which received much



Show Me Fabrication, Sedalia, Mo., exhibited two trailers this year at the IISA trade show – this lemonade and Slushes. AT/SUE NICHOLS



Carlo and Cindy Guglielmi, Ital International, Nashville, Tenn., have been very busy with sales this past winter. But, Carlo Guglielmi said the IISA seemed somewhat slow. He was pleased to hear that a ride he sold to Reithoffer Shows, Gibsonton, Fla., and was debuting at the 2012 Florida State Fair, Tampa, was doing very well. AT/PAM SHERBORNE

attention.

"I think the economy still has a lot of people concerned," Fike said. "I think people are looking at something special. They want something that will make that person with a tight budget spend some money."

Ital International, Nashville, Tenn.

Carlo Guglielmi, Ital International, had said prior to the Gibtown show, that this show is traditionally a great place to sell used rides since most buyers tend to buy new rides earlier in the off-season.

It didn't happen this year, but Guglielmi said after the show, "we are making sales now."

"We saw fewer people at the show than usual this year," he said.

Still the winter proved very busy for Guglielmi who not only sells used amusement rides but also represents Bertazzon and Technical Park.

He had sold a Loop Fighter to Reithoffer Shows, Gibsonton, Fla., and it was making a debut at the 2012 Florida State Fair, Tampa, which ran Feb. 9-20. Guglielmi said he was pleased when he heard the ride was doing very well there.

Dalton Kid Ride Rebuilders Inc., Foley, Mo.

Kevin Dalton said his
▶ See GIBTOWN, page 36



Hitch-Hiker Manufacturing Company, New Middletown, Ohio, built this trailer for Brenda and Joe Premont, Grannys Foods, San Antonio, Texas. One of the special features is this rounded slide-out where the Premonts plan to display a chocolate fountain. There are several spotlights in the top of the slide-out that shines on the fountain. AT/SUE NICHOLS

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►GIBTOWN

Continued from page 35

company exhibited several kiddie rides at the IISA show this year. One was a tractor ride that had been purchased by Mary Talley, Talley Amusements, Haslet, Texas.

Dalton also sells fold-up gates and fencing. He had two fold-ups on display that were going to Arnold's Amusements, Traverse City, Mich.

"While we were at Gibtown, we sold a fold-up to Mike Featherston, Gold Star Amusements (Minneapolis), one to Jeff Brady, Playworld Amusements (Alma, Mich.), and Sherwood Amusements (Upper Falls, Md.)."

Amusement Sales Inc.

(Fabbri), Arlington, Texas

Jeff Miller, president, Amusement Sales Inc., said he made some sales leads at the 2012 IISA show and he was "trying to make hay out of them."

"The Gibsonton show is always a wild card because you never know who is going to be there or what the mood will be," Miller said.

Fabbri has had a lot of success with one of the company's newest rides, the Daytona Round Ride. The cars allow two kids or one adult and one child to ride together. Riders not only go around, but can also be steered from left to



Bob Space Racers' Whopper Water was exhibited by the Daytona Beach, Fla., based company at the 2012 IISA trade show. This trailer version has been extremely popular for the company. Here, it is donned with Smurf plush.

ALL PHOTOS AT/PAM SHERBORNE UNLESS NOTED

right or the other way around providing a whole new experience.

The company also offers an array of other portables include the Wacky Worm and spinning coasters.

Bob's Space Racers, Daytona Beach, Fla.

On display at the 2012 was Bob's Space Racers popular portable version of the Stinky Feet, a water race game with multiple targets. That game has a permanent park version as well as an arcade version. It has done very well in all areas for Bob's Space Racers.

Among other products, the company also was showing its trailer version of Whopper Water where it was donning Smurf plush. Whopper Water trailer design allows for functional weather protection for customers, simplified operation and optimum game layout for guest efficiency.

Sippers by Design, Miami

Sippers by Design's Lisa Dominique stayed very busy throughout the IISA trade show. On display was her colorful and creative drink ware, including her Lemon Wedge, Alien Space Invaders, Astronauts, new NASCAR Race Car, new ICEE Bear, and new Clear Shakers.

Some top selling drink ware includes Candy Stripes, Twister, Boots, Handle Quarts, Hurricanes, Stadium Cups, and the Tiki sipper.

Amusement Wraps, Ironton, Ohio

The Wheeler family is a talented family. Rebecca Wheeler, said her husband, Chuck, has been doing his artwork for the industry for many years.

"He first began in this industry doing air brush," she said. "Now, he is creating these amusement wraps."

The large piece of artwork behind her could be used to go around just about any type of signage.

And, it is truly a family affair. The Wheelers have two sons and a daughter. One son works in sales for the family business, while the other does installation. Their daughter is involved in the graphics of the wraps.

Gold Medal Products, Cincinnati, Ohio

Gold Medal's Bo Wilson said the company was introducing a new chocolate and caramel dip designed for apples this year at the show.

People were asking for it, he said, so the company delivered. Gold Medal was also exhibiting their popcorn and nacho equipment.

Chef's Fun Foods, East Brunswick, N.J.

Sam Saleh, company partner, said the Chip Stix section of Chef's Fun Foods has been phased out. The company now has a variety of brands and was introducing several new products at the IISA trade show. The company introduced new seasons for their Tatorstix product and introduced their new Waffstix, a waffle on a stick with a variety of glazes.

"We are tailoring our products to parks and carnivals," Saleh said. "We want to redevelop ourselves to fit into the U.S. market better."

Belshaw Adamatic Bakery Group, Auburn, Wash.

Patti Jones and Clark Conner, with Belshaw, were on

hand for the IISA event giving out the company's mini donuts, a favorite among attendees and other exhibitors alike. The two were busy demonstrating the company's donut equipment as well as providing information on the variety of other products the company offers.

Belshaw manufactures an array of industrial bakery equipment.

Fun Food Factories, Chilton, Wis.

Paul and Cindy Neuber were busy giving out samples of corn dogs that had been made from the company's "Cindy's Famous Corn Dog Mix." The two, who are concessionaires with their own trailers and route, have also started selling their veggie mix and funnel cake mix.



Patti Jones and Clark Conner, with Belshaw, Adamatic Bakery Group, Auburn, Wash., were on hand for the IISA event giving out the company's mini donuts and having fun doing so.



Gold Medal Products, Cincinnati, Ohio, introduced a new product at the 2012 IISA trade show – a chocolate and caramel dip designed for apples.



Sam Saleh, company partner, Chef's Fun Foods, East Brunswick, N.J., shows off the company's Tatorstix and Waffstix at the 2012 IISA trade show.



Midway Stainless Fabricators, Hillside, N.J., brought several products to the IISA show this year. One was this newly designed ticket booth, which features a programmable screen above the ticket windows. This one was going to Corky Powers, Powers Great American Midways.

More than \$2 million has been raised to date

No date set for public opening of carnival museum

STORY: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

GIBSONTON, Fla. — The building is complete and exhibits continue to come in, but exactly when the carnival museum, being built by funds raised by the International Independent Showmen's Association (IISA), will open up to the public is still not known.

Jim Elliott, a member of the museum board, said the nature of the carnival industry is pretty much the same reason a public opening isn't in the foreseeable future.

"We had a museum consultant here about a week ago," Elliott said, at the end of February. "He gave us some very good suggestions. Now, we need to figure out how to proceed."

But, since most people on the museum board are carnival operators and they will hit the road soon for the 2012 season, making decisions as a board, much less implementing any of those decisions most likely won't happen until next fall.

The first thing and perhaps the most important decision to be made is to determine the museum storyline.

"We need to figure out what story we want to tell," he said. "Then, we need to figure out how to tell it. If we could just get everyone on the same track, we could make some of these decisions. But, we may have to wait now until everyone gets back off the road."

The IISA's museum committee has been raising money for the museum for years. "Money would be raised throughout the season and then when folks would get back from the road, we would work on the building to complete a phase," Elliott said. "We did this for about three years."

But, interest began to wane and the project stalled. That was when Jim Fredericksen, Fredericksen Industries, Tampa, Fla., made a large monetary donation. Construction, as well as interest and fundraising, began again.

So far, Fredericksen has donated \$1,160,000 to the museum fund. Elliott said, aside from Fredericksen's donation, another one million dollars has been raised.



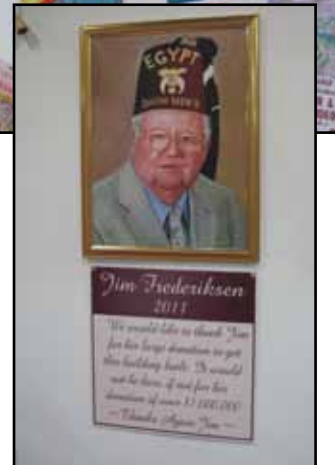
The 18,000-square-foot building houses an array of exhibits. In the 60-foot peak of the building stands a 1900 Conderman Ferris wheel, which was donated by Avery Wheelock. Fredericksen donated his Allen Herschell American Beauty carousel. A King Amusement Company made King Tugboat ride was put on display by Tom I. Arnold. It is a 1950 vintage ride.

"We have a bumper car, a kiddie fire engine and a couple of cars that came off a dark ride," Elliott said. "We have a car off an Allan Herschell helicopter ride on display. We have a very large carnival model that was made by and donated by Ray Gentry from Muskegon, Mich. It took him 20 years to build it."

The model carnival is about 65 feet long and about four feet wide, with "every imaginable carnival ride on it."

There also is a gaming
▶ See MUSEUM, page 39

The building for the International Independent's Showmen's Association is complete and exhibits continue to be donated or loaned, but museum board members are still not sure when the museum will be open to the public. Some exhibits in the museum include, clockwise from top left: an Allen Herschell American Beauty carousel; a 1958 King Tugboat Ride; vintage signage and carousel decorations and this 1920's Rocky Road to Dublin Car. Inset photo: Jim Fredericksen, Fredericksen Industries, has donated \$1,160,000 to the museum project. AT/GARY SLADE



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SEEN AT 2012 GIBTOWN

Shooting Star Amusements

GIBSONTON, Fla. — Joe and Brenda Medeiros, Shooting Star Amusements, British Columbia, Canada, were shopping at the 2012 International Independent Showmen's Association Extravaganza and Trade Show, Gibsonton, Fla., but they had pretty much already made their big purchase for the season.

Joe Madeiros said they purchased a Fabbri Kamikaze from Jessop Amusements, Cambridge City, Ind., the first of February before going to the trade show. With the addition of the Kamikaze, the show now has 18 rides and plays 16 events a year.

Brenda Medeiros said she began an online trivia game as a promotion a couple of years ago. The game is found on Facebook and consists of individual contests throughout the season. The grand



Joe and Brenda Medeiros, Shooting Star Amusements, British Columbia, Canada. AT/PAM SHERBORNE

prizewinner for the past two seasons won a trip to Disneyland, Anaheim, Calif.

"I plan to continue the trivia game, but I may change the grand prize," she said. "I don't know right now."

The first winner was a local school teacher who went

to Disneyland and took with her the carnival's mascots, which are two teddy bears named Twinkle and Sparkle.

"She took all these photos of Twinkle and Sparkle on various rides and such," Brenda Medeiros said. "It was so cute."

Thomas Amusements

GIBSONTON, Fla. — Jarrod, Catheryn and little Emma Thomas, Thomas Amusements, Newfoundland, Canada, stopped by the Amusement Today booth during the 2012 International Independent Showmen's Association Extravaganza and Trade Show, Gibsonton, Fla. Jarrod Thomas said since his parents, Bill and Gayle Thomas, were now semi-retired, he and his wife are pretty much running the carnival now.

"But, my parents are here somewhere," he said.

Thomas said he is the third generation in his family to run the show.

Thomas Amusements plays about 22 dates in 20 weeks of the year. The show has 18 rides including a Majestic Manufacturing's Catch 'N Air that used to belong to Jake Inners, Majestic Midways, York, Pa., purchased for the 2012 season.



Jarrod, Catheryn and little Emma Thomas, Thomas Amusements, Newfoundland, Canada. AT/PAM SHERBORNE

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CalPRO takes home important victory

STORY: Pam Sherborne
 psherborne@amusementtoday.com

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — CalPRO, an organization created in 2006 for California Portable Ride Operators, took home a victory recently in what seems to be an ongoing fight against that state's Department of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH), which wishes to raise inspection fees for portable rides in the state.

In fact, DOSH did implement a regulation in January 2011 that did just that. But, Boyd Jensen, Garrett & Jensen, on behalf of CalPRO, filed a lawsuit against DOSH in February 2011. DOSH then later responded with an opposing motion.

On Dec. 31, 2011, a hearing on the Opposing Motions for Summary Judgment took place at the Los Angeles County Superior Court. Jim Hall, president of CalPRO, was also present. After two sessions of argument and a break by the Court, the judge finally made his ruling close to noon.

Regulation section 344.18, which established new fees and requirements of portable ride operators that went into effect last year, was declared invalid with the judge's granting of CalPRO's Motion for Summary Judgment. This means that the inspection fees in effect prior to January 2011 will be in effect until further notice.

The lawsuit filed by Jensen on behalf of CalPRO in February 2011, was seeking to invalidate and enjoin implementation of the new regulations. The lawsuit stated that the new regulations were "in total violation of the express terms of Labor Code 7904-7905 by portioning out their 'administrative costs' when the Labor Code authorizes inspection costs' only."

The suit went on to say that: "... DOSH has for years attempted to find a way, without the statutorily required 'substantial evidence' and against unanimous statewide public and statewide agency oppositions, to assess fees at a cumulative rate of \$309 an hour to inspect simple carnival rides, which is approximately eight times the national average for the hourly rate charged by safety engineers and exponentially higher than any surrounding states all of which DOSH is statutorily required to acknowledge and explain but has intentionally ignored."

There are other elements in the museum as well. There are signs, parts of entrance gates, smaller exhibits inside display cases, and two Sellner Tilt-A-Whirl cars. A library and research area has been established. Some want to build a theater area and another building in back of the current museum where wagons could be housed.

► MUSEUM

Continued from page 37

section.

"We have an original park model Bob's Space Racers race game," he said. "We have a restored digger machine from Dale Parker who used to build them. And, going way back, we have a Country Store Wheel. This came to us from Paul and Beryl Dell. It goes back to the 1940s."

It is definitely coming along though, Elliott said.

Hopefully, he said, it won't be too long before they can make the necessary decisions and begin to implement them.

Of course, I won't be around either for about four months during the season," Elliott said.

Elliott is semi-retired from the carnival industry. His son, Tracy Elliott, now runs the family business, Elliott's Amusements, based in Mason, Mich. But, Elliott still owns a bulldozer and a lemonade trailer, which he takes out on the road with this son.

There are other elements in the museum as well. There are signs, parts of entrance gates, smaller exhibits inside display cases, and two Sellner Tilt-A-Whirl cars. A library and research area has been established. Some want to build a theater area and another building in back of the current museum where wagons could be housed.

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Have Midway News of Interest?

E-mail it to Pam Sherborne

psherborne@amusementtoday.com

Crabtree Amusements hired for 2012 Louisiana State Fair

SHREVEPORT, La. — The State Fair of Louisiana announced last month the hiring Crabtree Amusements, Inc., as the carnival for the 2012 State Fair. The new carnival will showcase several new rides and an overall fresh look to the State Fair of Louisiana Midway.

"We are pleased to partner with Crabtree," said Chris Giordano, state fair president and general manager. "It is a large carnival that will open up many possibilities for the fair. Plus, Crabtree values variety, affordability, and family fun, just as we do here at the State Fair of Louisiana."

The 2012 fair will run Oct. 25-Nov. 11.

Crabtree Amusements, Inc., Staples, Texas, has provided carnivals at many fairs across the country including:

- The Colorado State Fair, Pueblo, Colo.;
- Star of Texas Fair & Rodeo, Austin, Texas;
- Heart of Texas Fair & Rodeo, Waco, Texas and
- Wyoming State Fair, Douglas, Wyo.

"We pride ourselves in offering families a safe, enjoyable, fun-filled day to remember," said Crabtree

THE State Fair OF LOUISIANA

Amusements President, Pat Crabtree. "We feature bright, clean equipment, courteous employees and many comfort features to ensure the satisfaction of our patrons. Safety is a top priority at Crabtree Amusements. Our equipment is well maintained and conforms to industry standards."

The 2011 midway was provided by Lowery Carnival, Gulf Shores, Ala.

The State Fair of Louisiana provides a variety of attractions including an abundance of free grounds attractions including the Circus Hollywood, the Ultimate Safari, roving entertainers such as Dallas the Fire Guy and PJ the Clown, livestock shows and educational agricultural exhibits. Fair goers can also attend the State Fair's many headline concerts for free with admission. Rodeo lovers can expect some of the biggest names on the professional circuit riding champion bulls and horses and competing at the annual State Fair of Louisiana PRCA Rodeo.

—Pam Sherborne

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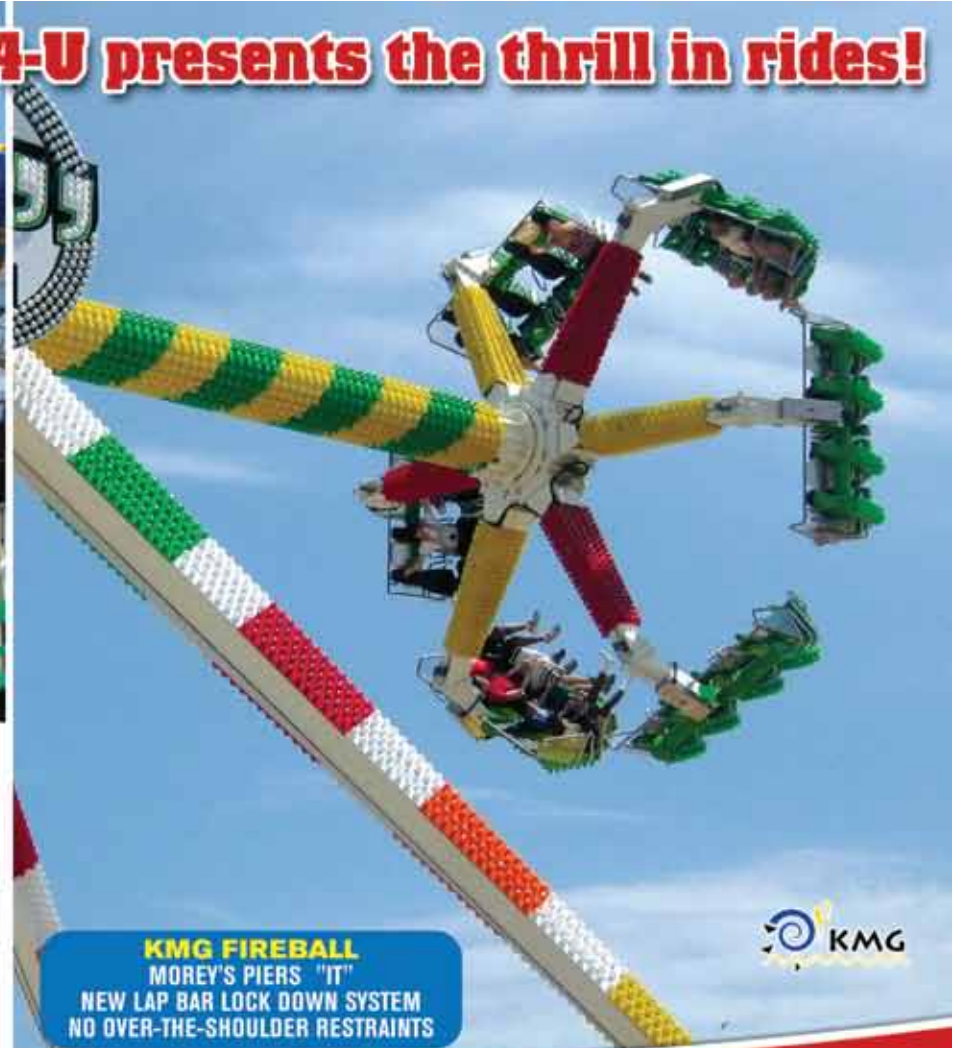
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MIDWAYLIGHTS

COMPILED: Pam Sherborne, psherborne@amusementtoday.com

With near idyllic and dry weather, the 100th Centennial Edition of the **South Florida Fair**, West Palm Beach, was up in attendance by over four percent compared to a year ago. Total reported attendance for the 17-day event, which ran Jan. 13-29, was 588,370 the third straight up year.

Rick Vymlatil, the fair's president and CEO, following the end of the fair said that: "It was a solid fair."

"Both midway and admission revenues were up nicely," Vymlatil said. "Once again, a number of individual or daily records were broken including five single-day midway records and two single-day admission records. Since this was our 100th anniversary, we were hoping this would be a special year and it was."

Wade Shows, Livonia, Mich., provided the midway with more than 200 rides, games and attractions.

Vymlatil noted the introduction of a number of new events some of which grew rapid legs such as the first Annual South Florida Fair 5K Run, which debuted on Dec. 31 at the Okechee Park attracting 480 runners.

The "Party of The Century," the fair's signature Centennial event, drew much praise. It was an invitation-only party held during the fair.

The debut of Wade Shows' Gold Access pass, enabling riders to enter quick entrance lanes for rides, was a hit.

"We will promote this heavier next year," Vymlatil said.

The 2013 South Florida Fair will run Jan. 18-Feb. 3.

From the South Florida Fair, Wade Shows' scheduled included: the **Central Florida Fair**, Orlando, Fla., March 1-11 (another 100th anniversary fair); the **Okeechobee (Fla.) County Fair**, March 12-18; **Gulf Beaches Rotary Spring Fling**, Treasure Island, Fla., (March 15-18); the **Poteet (Texas) Strawberry Fest**, April 13-15; **Fiesta San Antonio (Texas)**, April 19-29; and the **Gibraltar Trade Center**, Taylor, Mich., May 11-20.

A bill passed unanimously by the State of South Carolina House last month places new regulations on miniature train rides in hopes of preventing another tragedy like the **Cleveland Park**, Spartanburg, S.C., train crash last year, the bill's sponsor said.

Senate Majority Leader **Harvey Peeler**, R-Gaffney, was the primary sponsor of the legislation known as Benji's Law — named in honor of six-year-old **Benji Easler**, who died during the park's miniature train derailment March 19, 2011.

The bill requires miniature trains to have working speedometers and devices that would limit speed to the manufacturer's recommendation or less. It also requires training for drivers and documentation of that training, as well as mechanical inspections of the trains to include a speed test.

State inspectors already examine such rides, but a Labor, Licensing and Regulation worker resigned after the crash last year after admitting to falsifying the inspection report for the Cleveland Park train that crashed.

The Spartanburg County Coroner's Office found that speed was the lone cause of the crash, which also injured 28 people on board, including the driver, **Matt Conrad**. Conrad's attorneys have disputed those findings.

Alpine Amusements, Naperville, Ill., has a new date to place on the 2012 calendar. The carnival will play the **Racine County Fair**, Union, Grove, Wis., when it runs July 25-29.

Murphy Brothers, Tulsa, Okla., was playing that date as well as the **Wisconsin State Fair**, which runs 10 days the first of August. The Wisconsin State Fair announced it would go independent in 2012, so, due to routing, Murphy Brothers decided to forego the Racine County Fair as well.

A five-month search for a new leader at the **Dixon May Fair**, Dixon, Calif., ended last month. **Richard Persons**, currently chief executive officer of the **Lake County Fair** in Lakeport, Calif., will do double duty and also serve as interim CEO of the Dixon May Fair. He replaces **Jack Murphy**, who left last September to pursue other career opportunities.

"The timing with Dixon is perfect," said Persons in a prepared statement. "Besides the obvious financial benefits for each fair, this arrangement also allows me to see how things are done at another fairgrounds, and to help them with my knowledge of what works well here (in Lake County)."

Earlier last month, officials with the Lake County Fair board approved an agreement to provide management services to the Dixon May Fair. Persons is slated to be in Dixon two to three days a week through Dixon's annual event, set for May 10-13. Then, he returns to Lake County to prepare for that fair's Aug. 30-Sept. 2 run.

Persons has been the CEO of the Lake County Fair since November 1996. Prior to that, he served as the deputy CEO of the Solano (Calif.) County Fair from 1990-96 and assisted May Fair managers numerous times.

Frazier Shows, Scottsdale, Ariz., purchased a new KMG Speed at the 2012 International Independent Showmen's Association Extravaganza and Trade Show, Gibsonton, Fla., in February. The ride is expected for delivery in June 2013.

California's network of fairs last month announced plans to introduce legislation that will allow them to continue generating jobs and millions of dollars in tax revenue for state and local governments, according to the **Western Fairs Association (WFA)**.

Based on a sampling of performance at fairs statewide, WFA reported that 2011 was a banner year with record attendance and a \$165-million tax contribution to state and local governments. Yet the future success of California fairs and related revenue benefits are in jeopardy because state fair funding is slated for a total elimination.

As of January 1, California's network of 78 fairs will see its annual state allocation of \$32 million cut to zero, according to WFA. That \$32 million has traditionally functioned as seed money that kick starts annual operations. Citing California Department of Food & Agriculture statistics, WFA officials said that cutting that support could result in a significant reduction of the following economic benefits to the state:

- \$2.65 billion in total economic impact to California;
- 30,000 jobs;
- \$66 million in states sales tax;
- \$99 million in sales taxes for cities and counties.

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- JUNE 5 & 6**
WWA Asian Symposium, Hong Kong SAR, China
- JUNE 5 - 8**
IAAPA Asian Attractions Expo, Hong Kong SAR, China
- JULY 16 & 17**
PAPA Summer Meeting, DelGrosso's Amusement Park, Tipton, Pa.
- SEPTEMBER 6**
Annual AIMS Board of Directors Meeting, Pigeon Forge, Tenn.
- SEPTEMBER 7 & 8, 2012** Golden Ticket Awards, Dollywood, Pigeon Forge, Tenn.
- OCTOBER 1-5 (Trade Show Oct. 3 & 4)**
32nd Annual WWA Symposium & Trade Show, Paris Hotel, Las Vegas, Nev.
- OCTOBER 9-11**
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