

Manufacturers optimistic for good IISF trade show

Mary Wade Burnside
Amusement Today

Bob's Space Racers will be taking five mobile game trailers to the International Showmen's Foundation Trade Show and Extravaganza, which will be held Feb. 9-13 in Gibsonton, Fla.

If that seems optimistic for a product that often is the last one a carnival patron will pay money to play, then operations manager Tony Cassata is happy to own up to that.

"We did IAAPA (the International Assn. of Amusement Parks and Attractions) in Las Vegas this year, and believe it or not, we had one of the biggest shows we've ever had," said Cassata of the Daytona Beach, Fla. amusement game manufacturer. "We were caught off guard, which was a good thing. So our activity over the holidays has been very busy."

While the economy might be a factor that will prompt some potential customers to keep their wallets in their pockets, Cassata believes there are others who are seeing a brighter future.

"To tell you the truth, a lot of people are saying, 'We're tired of listening to this on the



EXHIBITOR LISTING ..PAGE 26

TV and the radio. We're going forward with a new attitude for 2010.' I have park people traveling and carnival people traveling. We sold a new piece, a double-decker water game, the Water Whopper."

Cassata admits that if customers are playing games, then things must look up.

"We're at the bottom end of the totem pole," he said. "People pay to get into the park or the carnival, they pay for rides and they pay for food. Games are the last item on the list. But good operators are coming up with different merchandise to entice people to play games, or they're coming up with different bargains. If a game is \$3, they are charging two for \$5 or whatever it takes to get the person up to the counter."

Victor Wisdom, president of Wisdom Rides, also expressed optimism for this year's extravaganza at Gibtown.

"I would hope to do better this year," he said. "We always hope for that. People

survived last year. Maybe they just barely survived, but the sky didn't fall in. I think people are more relaxed than a year ago. There was all this gloom and doom throughout the country, not just in the industry but everything. But I think a lot of shows made it through."

The Sterling, Colo.-based company anticipates having two rides at the show, a monster truck kiddie ride and a Cobra conversion. Last year, Wisdom had three rides at Gibtown.

"We're looking forward to seeing the customers we haven't seen in a while," Wisdom said.

Although the economy was a universal problem last year, many carnivals encountered weather that some say was worse than the financial woes the country encountered.

"The weather was the real problem," Wisdom said. "Pretty much the people I talked to that got good weather overall said they were as good or better than the year before. The problem was, others had months of tragic weather. That was a serious problem for people throughout the year. But they did make it through. I think a lot of people are more



AT FILE PHOTO

Most manufacturers exhibiting at this year's IISF trade show, Feb. 9-13, believe business will be good and that the economy is showing signs of improving.

optimistic that it was a fluky year as far as the weather."

Lisa Dominique, owner of Miami-based Sippers By Design, also said that the economy can work in favor of the industry to which she provides plastic drinkware and stadium cups with prints on them.

"I'm hoping it's going to get better this year," said Dominique, who will have a booth at Gibtown with "a

lot of product," including the alien sipper, cowboy boots and longneck yards.

"I think a lot of staycationers are going to more of the carnivals and festivals, so I think it's going to pick up," Dominique said. "Instead of people traveling and going out of state, I think fairs and festivals are going to be doing a lot better."

Carlo Guglielmi, chief
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Cypress Gardens is saved, again

The up and down roller coaster like ride that Cypress Gardens has been on the last several years appears to be heading into a non-stop full speed run, thanks to U.K.-based Merlin Entertainments.

The well respected theme park company announced that it had sealed the deal to purchase the Winter Haven, Fla. theme park and plans to rebrand the facility into Legoland Florida for the 2011 season. Cypress Gardens first opened on Jan. 2, 1936 featuring 8,000 varieties of plants from more than 90 different countries. It was founded by Dick Pope. All three elements of the property will remain, the theme park, the waterpark and most importantly the historic botanical gardens will give the Florida Legoland a uniqueness that none of the other Legoland parks can ever duplicate.

While we are sure that Merlin will treat the gardens with respect and manicure them into an even greater beauty than they have been before, *Amusement Today* urges Merlin to look at two other pieces of Florida history that must be kept in the new designs for the property.

Cypress Gardens was built on the gardens. It was also built on the water ski show and the famous pyramid of skies it became known for. The water ski show first debuted in 1943 in front of a crowd of military soldiers. Soon after, Cypress Gardens was named the "Water Ski Capital of the World." Up until the last few years, the park also held the record for the world's longest continuously running entertainment show. If the gardens are the heart of Cypress Gardens, then the ski show is its soul and must be included for future generations, young and old, to enjoy.

Another historical attraction that must be saved is the Starliner wooden roller coaster. Operating for more than 41 years at the Miracle Strip Amusement Park in Panama City, Fla. this classic, but simple out-and-back, was moved to Cypress Gardens by then owner Kent Buescher where it thrilled guests once again. Florida is not known as a wooden roller coaster state, but the Starliner is a woodie worthy of keeping and one that MANY age groups enjoy riding.

—Gary Slade



Scott Rutherford

A new season is at hand

The second decade of the 21st century is upon us, and with it comes plenty of challenges. Chief among these is the weather, which has long been a concern and determining factor for outdoor entertainment operations. Old Man Winter has been having his way these past few months with much of the northern hemisphere. Arctic blasts wreaked havoc throughout much of Europe, closing landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower and disrupting international air traffic and commerce for extended periods.

Here in North America, it was much the same story. One of the most brutal winters in memory swept down from Canada, freezing all in its path and hampering everything from transportation to agriculture. Icicles dangling from Florida's citrus trees along with gloves and heavy coats at Walt Disney World perfectly illustrated these strange climatic events.

Despite the sustained adverse weather, the affected amusement and theme parks had no recourse but to push on with the knowledge that springtime and its warmer weather will eventually arrive.

While many areas of the U.S. are still brav-



Rutherford

ing the cold, snow and torrential rains, several parks and traveling shows in the southern half of the lower 48 are trying to prepare their facilities and equipment for a rapidly approaching season.

Fortunately, northern parks like Kennywood and Knoebels still have a few months to get things in order before they open their 2010 attractions, but

several southern facilities are racing against the clock to wrap it up. Among the parks introducing major multi-million dollar roller coasters are Carowinds and Kings Dominion. Construction crews battled the worst of nature's wrath in an effort to complete their towering rides in record time. Both Intimidator steel coasters (B&M and Intamin-supplied respectively) are now complete and should begin testing by the time you read this in preparation for their much anticipated late March/early April debuts.

Soon enough – hopefully – winter will finally bow to spring, and before we know it summer will be here. And that's when the *real* fun begins again.

Here's to wishing everyone best of luck and a spectacular 2010 season!

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IISF**Continued from page 1**

manager of Nashville-based Ital International, also believes the bad weather harmed carnivals and amusement parks more than the economy.

"A lot of carnivals were rained out," he said. "They need to recuperate as much money as they can."

Ital International will have two booths at Gibtown, subletting one to ride manufacturer Bertazzon. "They've been exhibiting with us there for many years," Guglielmi said.

Ital will not have rides at Gibtown but instead photographs, as well as a bumper car and a carousel horse. Used rides have gotten more interest from customers recently than new ones, Guglielmi said.

"Expectations are always good," he added. "Let's hope they come true. We're anticipating more business for used rides. It's getting late for new. We might not be able to deliver early if the order is placed in February. For a major new ride, it's getting late."

Eli Bridge also will not be taking any rides to Gibtown. "We've pretty much been running an indoor booth," said general manager Tim Noland. "It's been quite a while since we've taken an actual ride down."

The manufacturer has seen a bit of a slowdown, Noland said, but he hopes that starts to get reversed.

"I hope we have a good turnout," he said. "It's hard to guess how people are doing. We've had mixed feedback."

Tom Chestnut of Chestnut Identity Apparel sees business on the upswing.

"The economy has taken a turn," Chestnut said. "We're optimistic that things are going to continue to get better. It seems like things have picked up."

Taking several pieces down to Gibtown will be Len Soled of Somerville, N.J.-based-Rides-4-U, who plans to exhibit a Choco Cup ride, manufactured by SBF. This ride has already been sold to A & P Enterprise Shows, Custer, Wis.

He will exhibit a new SBF Puppy Love mini pirate ship that has been purchased by Beauce Carnival, Quebec, Canada.

He will bring two trains, the Chopper Train

and the Hillbilly Train. Mike Featherston, Gold Star Amusements, Minneapolis, has purchased the Chopper. Jimmy Otterbacher, Otterbacher Shows, Riverview, Fla., has bought the Hillbilly train. Both trains are manufactured by VISA.

In addition, Soled plans to have a large display of the LED lights he offers. The display will include the LED package he installed on the Mulligan Wheel, owned by Corky Powers, Powers Great

American Midways, Corfu, N.Y.

"In addition, I will be hosting a cocktail party from 7-9 p.m., Thursday, during the Gibtown show," he said.

Teresa Rimes, the treasurer/secretary of the International Independent Showmen's Assn., did not have potential attendance numbers for the event. Last year, about 8,000 people attended.

"We were very happy for what we got with the economy," she said.

In mid-January, Rimes did not have numbers of exhibitors or rides, although she said at that point the IISF had 90 contracts for the inside and 50 for the outside.

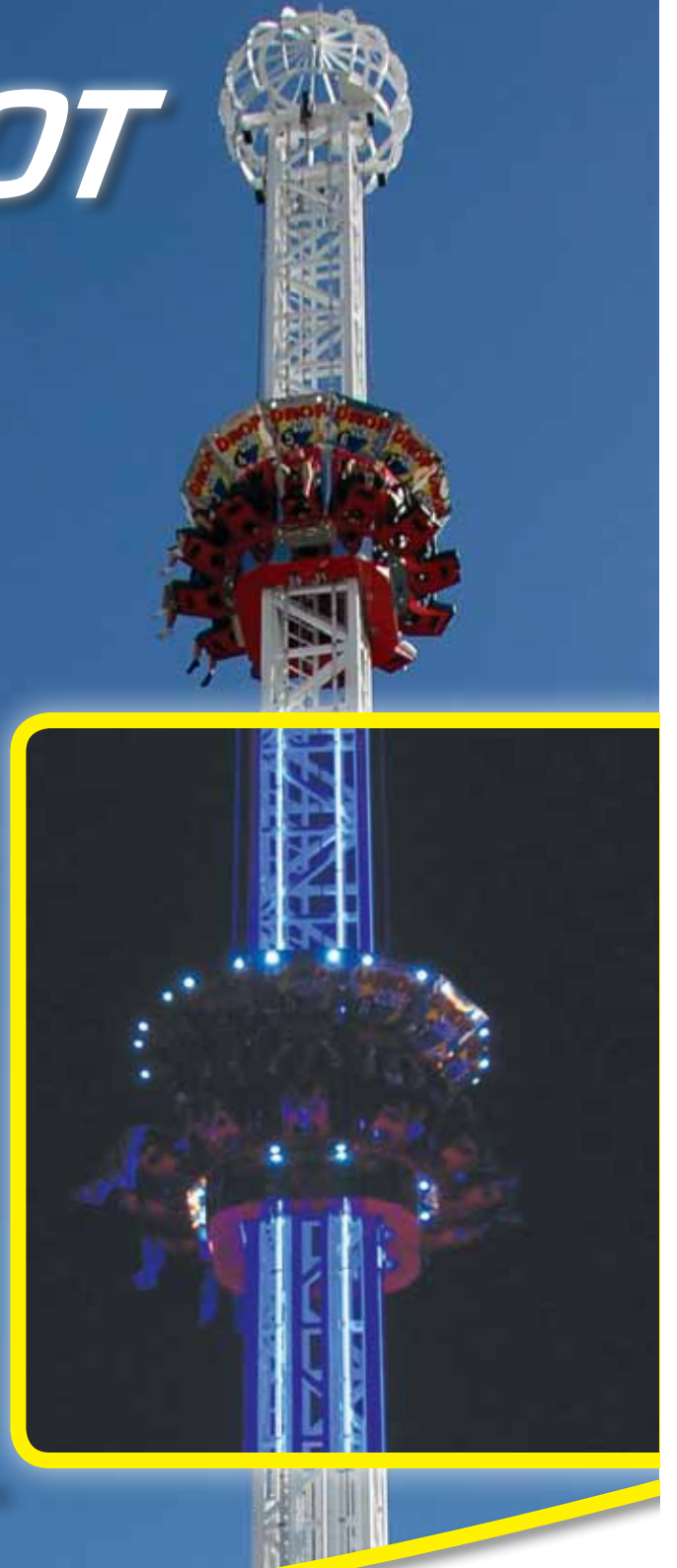
"That doesn't really mean anything because some companies have 19 booths and others have only one," she said.

As for the timing of the event, it suits Dominique of Sippers By Design, who expressed that the new year seems to make people more

willing to get down to business.

"It's at a perfect time of year," she said. "In February, everybody is going out into the marketplace and festivals are opening up. It's a very good show where you get the buyers that are buying right then and there. IAAPA is great, but at that time of year before Christmas, people aren't ready to make a decision. You've got to follow up after the holidays."

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Photos courtesy Jason Knutson



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Compiled by Janice Witherow

Steve Gorman

Waldameer Park and Water World

A former mechanical engineer for General Electric (GE), Steve Gorman found his career taking an unexpected turn to the amusement industry 15 years ago, and he hasn't looked back since. As president and general manager of Waldameer Park in Erie, Pa., Steve is responsible for all aspects of the park, and with his relaxed approach, smart business sense and attention to detail, it's easy to see why he's had success. Steve is past-president of the Pennsylvania Amusement Park Association and has been a guest speaker for sessions ranging from the IAAPA Expo and NTSB to classroom talks and the FAA.



Gorman

Title
President/General Manager.

Number of years with Waldameer Park
15 years.

Best thing about the industry
Providing family fun to our guests, and the networking among the parks.

Favorite amusement ride
The Ravine Flyer II of course!

If I wasn't working in the amusement industry, I would be ...
Still working as a mechanical engineer at GE.

Biggest challenge facing our industry
Government, at all levels, hindering growth.

The thing I like most about amusement/water park season is ...
That it is a season! The non-operating months give you the opportunity to recover, review, and plan for improvement.

The last time I ate fast food was ...
Saturday after the IAAPA Expo. We went to the Hoover Dam and Boulder City and stopped at Taco Bell.

My all-time best vacation was ...
A four-week journey around the U.S. after college, before entering the real-world at GE.

My hidden talent is ...
Wood carving – although it's still hidden because I don't carve enough! I'm also a serious Masters indoor track competitor and placed 9th in my age group in both the 400m and 800m races at last year's U.S. Championship.

Favorite flavor of ice cream
Moose Tracks. But – put any ice cream over a warm brownie and I'll devour it.

Pick one: hot air balloon ride or deep sea diving
Easy – Hot air balloon ride (still on my list to do), since I have a fear of big fish and sharks.

For me, the worst outdoor chore is ...
Cleaning up the dog poop in our yard.

The one thing I always seem to put off is ...
(See above answer!) – Cleaning up the dog poop in our yard.

On a typical Sunday morning, you can find me ...
Running.

Coollest animal at the zoo
Monkeys, they're fun to watch.

My "must-see" television show is ...
"24" – Jack Bauer is always running out of time.

I would best describe my kitchen as ...
The room where most activity occurs: homework, newspaper reading, mail review, bill paying, and of course dining. It's also our dog's room.

Three things I would pack on a camping trip
My pillow (I have a hard time with different pillows), my running shoes and shorts, and my wife.

The book I would recommend everyone reading would have to be ...
"The Hobbit."

If I was to join the circus, I would hands-down be ...
A trapeze artist, wouldn't that be fun?

The song that reminds me most of my life is ...
"Born to Run" by Bruce Springsteen.

Favorite sports team
Boston Red Sox.

I really love my ...
Wife Nancy, who is my best friend, and my three children.

To suggest a candidate for the Two-Minute Drill feature, contact columnist Janice Witherow at jwith-erow@amusementtoday.com or (419) 357-3520.

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HIT Entertainment enjoys continuing global success

HIT Entertainment, one of the world's leading independent children's entertainment producers and rights owners, has enjoyed a stellar year across its attractions business, with a series of successful launches and new partnerships around the world. Performance highlights include impressive visitor numbers at Thomas Land, Drayton Manor Park and at the newly opened Thomas Land, Shin-Misato, as well as the recent deal signing for Asia's first Little Big Club at the Family Indoor Themepark, Puteri Harbour.

HIT Entertainment is fast becoming a key player among the world's independent branded attractions licensors. The company's three core attractions' properties comprise Thomas Land, Thomas Town and The Little Big Club, all based around some of its most popular and well loved children's brands.

Terri Ruffley, V.P. live events & attractions, HIT Entertainment said, "Attractions are a significant part of HIT Entertainment's business plan and over the past three seasons we have been developing a series of core products from our portfolio of well loved brands. Thomas Town, Thomas Land and the Little Big Club have all proved to be highly successful attractions and looking ahead we plan to exploit them further, working with new partners in markets where our brands are already loved."

More adventure coming to Europa-Park's Iceland



PHOTO COURTESY EUROPA PARK

Europa-Park's Iceland area will get a new water ride from Mack Rides for the 2010 season.

Andrew Mellor
Amusement Today

Germany's Europa-Park is adding another large attraction to its constantly expanding ride portfolio in 2010 with the addition of a new family ride in the Iceland themed area.

The new Whale Adventures – Splash Tours water ride, to be built by Mack Rides, will take visitors both young and old on what is being described as "an exciting expedition" through the waters around the volcanic island of Iceland, encountering whales and other sea creatures on the way. But, not surprisingly, there is a little more to the ride than just that, with each of the eight person boats

featuring eight water cannons enabling passengers to fire water at guests in other boats as well as spectators watching around the ride, who can also join in with a number of land-based water cannons to fire back at those on the boats.

Each vessel is themed in the style of a whale watching boat and accommodates four passengers on each side. Up to 10 boats will be used on the ride, all of them equipped with water cannons, and the surrounding theming will depict an Icelandic fishing harbour. Entry to the attraction will be via the Icelandic building. And for guests who prefer to observe the action from above, and avoid getting wet, a colourful lighthouse feature

► See EUROPA, page 6

Pro-Fun to manage Egyptian theme park

Andrew Mellor
Amusement Today

ProFun Management Group has been chosen by the Heliopolis Association of Egypt to provide operational management and strategic direction for the new Suzanne Mubarak Family Park in Cairo, Egypt.

Currently under construction in an area designated as "new Cairo," the new park is being overseen by Egypt's First Lady, Her Excellency Suzanne Mubarak, and will be the first of its kind in the world that fully combines both education-museum quality learning and interactive programs in a family entertainment theme

park garden setting.

The new park, set within a 28 hectare (approximately 70 acres) site, will provide visitors with a unique educational and entertainment experience through learning, fun and participatory activities. Opening is planned for mid 2010 and the park will be part of a huge new residential and business community called "new Cairo," situated 20 minutes north of Cairo International Airport.

The experience provided in the park will target both children and adults and will feature a range of learning activities and workshops in addition to rides, live shows,

► See PRO-FUN, page 6



PHOTO COURTESY PRO FUN

The main entrance to the new Suzanne Mubarak Family Park in Cairo, Egypt, begins to take shape.



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►EUROPA

Continued from page 5

can be climbed for a bird's eye view.

Iceland made its debut in the park in the spring of 2009, which was highlighted by the opening of the Blue Fire launch coaster.

For 2010, in addition to the new water ride, a new Gazprom themed world area, located next to the Blue Fire coaster, will be added. It will take visitors on a journey through the world of energy to learn how energy is generated, transported and used, with the Russian energy supplier also having been signed up as a new sponsor at the park.

►PRO-FUN

Continued from page 5

attractions, merchandise and food outlets. The park will also host a variety of group functions for schools, birthdays, meetings, exhibitions and special events.

Commenting on California-based ProFun's selection, company President and CEO David H. Schmitt said: "We are extremely pleased to have been selected by Egypt's Heliopolis Association as their choice from a worldwide search for a management and operations group to open and manage this very high profile project. The new park, or edu-tainment center as it is currently referred to, is being overseen by Egypt's First Lady, Her Excellency Suzanne Mubarak, and she is very active in all phases of the project activities."

ProFun has formed a Cairo-based operation, ProFun Egypt Ltd., to work with the Heliopolis Association to open and manage the new park and has appointed Mike Patrick as Pro-Fun Egypt's executive project director to manage the park's on-site, day to day pre-opening tasks as well as staffing and operations requirements.

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Dreamworld marks Australian theme park 'first'

Andrew Mellor
Amusement Today

A new live show at the Australian theme park Dreamworld has been entertaining guests with a unique mix of action, music and fun.

For a four week period from December 26 to January 22, MTV Plugs Into Dreamworld – Summer Series combined some of the nation's most recognizable faces to "mash" together the best of MTV in a highly charged and entertaining live show which was part stunt show, part game show. Packed with "pumped up music" and lots of fun, the 30 minute show took the best elements from the MTV channel to a live theme park audience, three times a day in the Dreamworld studios.

MTV Networks Australia managing director Dave Sibley commented that the new show "encapsulates all of the action, music and glamour you have come to expect from MTV, all wrapped up in an amazing live theatre-style show,"

while Dreamworld CEO Noel Dempsey, commenting prior to the opening of the show, said: "Every Dreamworld guest will be entertained – from Boomers to Gen Xers, Gen Ys and younger. It's the union of the biggest youth brand in the world with the biggest theme park in the country."

A stunt team performed throughout the show while tying the action together on a stunning stage set, and "dropping the most pumping tunes" at the same time, was a DJ host and a variety of Aussie celebrity guests. Features of the show included extreme bike stunts, break dancing, crazy quiz show segments and humorous pranks.

And in a special countdown to 2010 event, New Year's Eve at Dreamworld fused "rock with rides" when the park presented a line-up of a host of alternative bands for its Amped NYE special over-18 event, at the same time opening its usual array of white-knuckle rides.



PHOTO COURTESY DREAMWORLD

Dreamworld MTV dancers dressed in killer boots and signature bling, the face of MTV and one of the hottest young presenters in the country. Ruby Rose, helped launch the new MTV Plugs into Dreamworld - Summer Series.

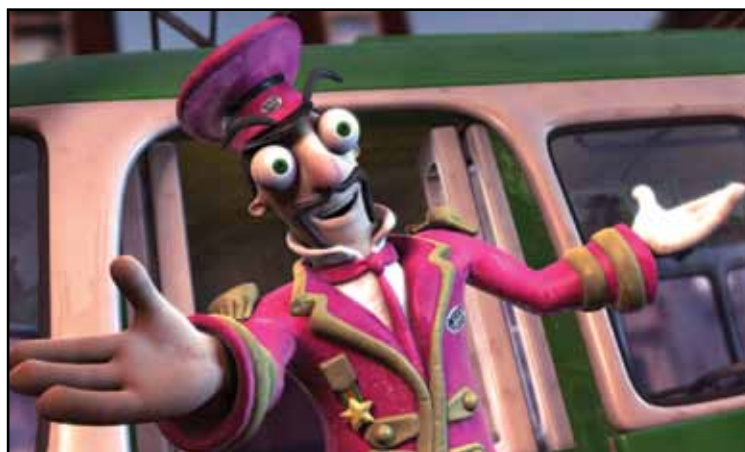
Red Star announces opening of new film project

Animation studio Red Star, based in Sheffield, England, has showcased its hugely successful 3-D animation in a pair of prestigious 4-D film projects which recently opened at two major British visitor attraction venues.

In July, The Beatles Story in Liverpool debuted *Fab 4-D*, a 4-D film experience that takes visitors on an exciting journey through the music of the world's biggest band, while in June, London's Science Museum opened *Legend of Apollo*, an immersive 4-D experience celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Apollo moon landings.

Fab 4-D is the major attraction at the newly opened Beatles Story Pier Head in Liverpool. Following the success of the Beatles Story's first site at the Albert Docks, The Beatles Story Pier Head is a second venue housed in the new Mersey Ferries terminal building on Liverpool's famous waterfront.

Fab 4-D is an immersive film experience in which visitors are seated in a specially constructed theater to watch a stereoscopic 3-D film that takes them on a journey through the Beatles' music of the world's



IMAGES COURTESY RED STAR

The Beatles and the Apollo 15 mission to the moon are highlighted in two new immersive 4-D theater attractions introduced this year in England by animation studio Red Star.

biggest band. The experience is enhanced by immersive 4-D effects, with guests being splashed with water as they dive on the Yellow Submarine and smelling strawberries in Strawberry Fields. The 4-D theater itself was installed by simulation and effects theater specialist Simworx.

At the Science Museum in London, *Legend of Apollo* is the inaugural film to play in the new Force Field theater. Currently celebrating its 100th anniversary, the Science Museum is world renowned for its unrivalled collection of space artifacts and the new theater, installed by Metropolis Entertainment, provides visitors with a 3-D film experience with the added dimension of 4-D special effects.

The film follows the adventure of the Apollo 15 mission from take off to landing on the moon and the exploring of the moon's surface, culminating in its triumphant return to earth. Significantly, the film's technical consultant was David R. Scott, former commander of the Apollo 15 moon landing, who ensured the film accurately depicted an astronaut's experience.



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Knoebels prepares for 2010 season, new 2011 Black Diamond ride

While work continues on the much-anticipated debut of the Flying Turns at Pennsylvania's Knoebels Amusement Resort, workers are also quite busy during the off-season with other park improvements for both this season and next year. Among these are the upgrading of the park's infrastructure, mainly the electrical and telephone systems along with the preparation work required for the installation of the park's new Black Diamond ride slated to debut in 2011.

The Black Diamond is a complete reworking of the classic 1960-built John Allen/PTC Golden Nugget that Knoebels purchased from the Moreys of Wildwood, N.J.. Instead of the gold mining theme the ride sported from 1960-1992 in Wildwood, Knoebels will recreate the attraction with a coal mining motif. To make way for the ride, the park relocated a number of its quaint cottages and other buildings as well as the Bald Eagle enclosure.

As of late January, Knoebels had already poured the concrete slab on which the coaster will be erected and was concentrating on refurbishing the ride's track, vehicles and control systems.

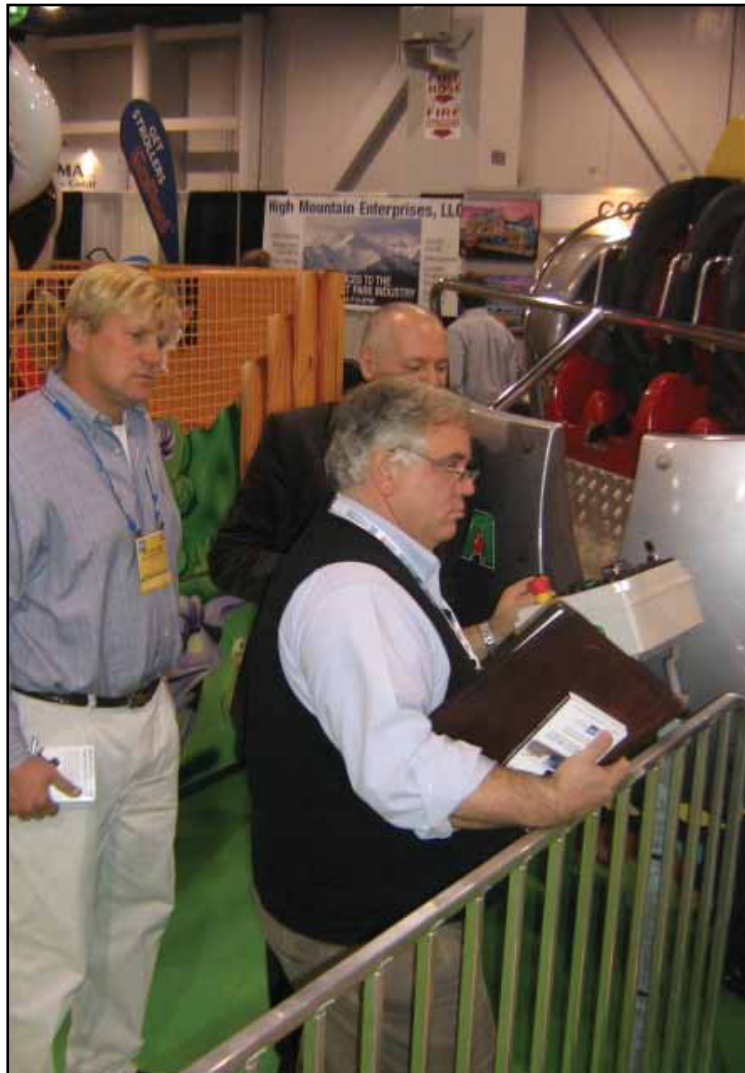
Quassy adding new SBF/Visa tower ride

Officials at Connecticut's historic Quassy Amusement Park recently announced that a new 35-foot-tall tower ride is being added for the 2010 season.

Dubbed "Free Fall 'N,'" the attraction has been custom-built for the park by SBF Visa Group of Montagnana, Italy. It will gently lift up to 12 rides – adults or children – to the top

of the tower before making a series of abrupt drops.

"This family drop tower is the first phase of our multi-year plan to update equipment and infrastructure at the park," said Eric Anderson, a Quassy co-owner. "We've ridden these drop towers, and they are extremely exciting – an ideal fit for our demographic."



Quassy owners Eric Anderson (left) and George Frantzis II look over the controls similar to the new ride they purchased for Quassy Amusement Park while at the IAAPA convention in Las Vegas. In the background is a manufacturer representative.



PHOTOS COURTESY QUASSY

Custom built by Italy's SBF Visa Group, Quassy's new family tower ride (shown under construction in the SBF factory) will seat up to 12 riders and reach a height of 35 feet.

Final details of the unit constructed for Quassy were ironed out during the recent IAAPA annual Expo in Las Vegas. The sale was brokered by SBF's United States representative, Rides 4U, Inc., of Sommerville, N.J.

"We really took a production unit and customized it to the height and color schemes we wanted," Anderson continued.

The tower ride will also be the first unit produced by SBF Visa Group incorporating a state-of-the-art LED computerized lighting system. "These lights are incredible," said Quassy owner George Frantzis II. "They're a show in themselves and lend to our continued efforts in going 'green' – using less energy in park operations."

In addition to the new tower ride, the Fieldside Pavilion, Quassy's largest area for catered group outings, has

received an extensive facelift for 2010. An all-new stainless steel food preparation and service area has been built in the pavilion during the off-season as well as other improvements made.

"Basically, the entire inside of the structure will have a brighter, more modern atmosphere," Frantzis said of the project. The huge structure was built in 1952 and can host groups of 500 to 3,000 persons. Its adjacent great lawn area has volleyball, basketball, horseshoes, bocce and baseball.

Numerous other infrastructure projects have been completed during the fall and winter. Quassy's popular Trabant ride, a park staple since 1965, was totally refurbished by the facility's safety and maintenance department.

Quassy opens for its 102nd season of operation on Apr. 24, 2010.

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Park to become Legoland Florida

Merlin acquires historic Cypress Gardens

Merlin Entertainments, based in the U.K., announced on Jan. 21 a planned multi-million dollar investment in the biggest family tourist center in the world with the planned opening of Legoland Florida.

Merlin has purchased the historic Cypress Gardens in Winter Haven Florida from property investment company Land South Group and will open Legoland Florida on the site at the end of 2011.

The deal to buy the 145-acre site includes the freehold on the current theme park and waterpark as well as an operating lease in perpetuity on the historic botanical gardens. Merlin plans a significant multi-million dollar investment over a number of years, up to and beyond opening, in what will be the biggest Legoland theme park to date. In line with the group's "resort" strategy for its theme parks this is likely to include both accommodations and the addition of further branded attractions from the Merlin portfolio. This will build on the \$100 million that has been invested over the last few years in improved infrastructure on the site.

A proven concept

The Florida development will be Merlin's second Legoland park in North America and will play an important role in the group's continued growth in the US. It will provide a full-day, year round, theme park experience geared towards families with children between the ages of two and 12. Its design will mirror the successful concept of the four existing Legoland parks in Denmark, Germany, U.K. and California. However, as with the other four, it will also have its own unique "twist" reflecting its stunning location and its Florida heritage.

The decision to open a Legoland park in Florida follows considerable research in the area by Merlin over a number of years. This indicated a high recognition of the Legoland park brand and a 90-percent-plus intention to visit by families in this target market. The issue therefore has been to find the ideal site. Cypress Gardens has long been a popular location for millions of visitors. Merlin believes its central Florida location,



AT FILE PHOTO

Along with the gardens, Cypress Gardens was known for its water ski show and their famous pyramid formation.

approximately 30 minutes from Orlando and also close to Tampa, is the perfect site for a leisure brand as powerful and compelling as Legoland.

The development follows the outstanding success of Legoland California which opened in 1999. Legoland California was recently voted the country's best children's theme park by *Amusement Today* for the sixth year running. It is also recognized as the fastest growing theme park in the U.S., enjoying an increase in visitor numbers year-on-year, including a six-percent increase in 2009.

Legoland Florida will be the biggest Legoland park ever opened and will offer a unique mix of more than 50 rides, shows and attractions, including spectacular Lego models and other interactive elements for the whole family to enjoy together.

The park is expected to create more than 1,000 new jobs by opening; as well as boosting the Florida economy through the use of local contractors for development.

Nick Varney, chief executive of Merlin Entertainments, said, "Legoland Florida will be one of the most exciting and important projects Merlin has ever developed. It is a unique opportunity for us as Florida is the biggest family tourist center in the world. We have been looking for the right site there for some time and in Winter Haven we plan to create one of the best and certainly most beautiful, theme parks in the world. Legoland California has already proven how much U.S. families love the unique Legoland concept. Now we are bringing that fun and experience to a much wider audience - the millions of U.S. and international visitors who come to

Florida every year."

John Jakobsen, managing director of Merlin's Legoland Parks Operating Group, said, "Legoland parks are based on the universally popular Lego toy products and offer families the opportunity to let their imaginations run free and become completely involved in Lego experiences. A Legoland park is the ultimate platform to showcase the Lego values and the endless possibilities of the Lego idea. Legoland Florida will add a completely unique, exciting dimension and experience for families visiting the area."

Florida's Governor, Charlie Crist, was pleased with the announcement that Legoland was coming to his state that is known for its selection of parks and attractions.

"We are delighted at this news. We are extremely happy that the future of Cypress Gardens is secure. Legoland is one of the most exciting names in family attractions and a welcome new addition to Florida," Crist said.

Merlin did not release any details during the press announcement about the types of rides that will be installed at the park, but it is believed that the facility will have the typical Lego-themed rides found in its other properties.

Rides-4-U and Ital International continue to list the last of the rides that are for sale from the Cypress Gardens property. See ride list on page 12. Merlin officials did not release any details on the status of the historic Starliner wooden roller coaster or the Flying Island.

It was also unknown at press time if Merlin plans to keep the ever-popular water ski show as part of the Legoland entertainment package.

History of Cypress Gardens

Cypress Gardens, located in Winter Haven, Fla., opened on January 2, 1936, as a botanical garden planted by Dick and Julie Pope. Over the years, it became one of the biggest attractions in Florida, known for its water ski shows, lush gardens, and Southern Belle models.

It became known as the "Water Ski Capital of the World" because many of the sport's landmark firsts and over 50 world records broken there. Numerous movies were filmed at the park, including portions of *This is Cinerama*, the first feature filmed in the wide-screen format, and a string of Esther Williams films and TV specials in the 1950s and 1960s. With their addition of a custom photography boat named Miss Cover Girl in the early 1960s, the park became a popular site for the filming of television commercials.

Competition for guests increased after Walt Disney World Resort opened nearby in 1971. In the early 1980s, the Papes retired and transferred the park to their son, Dick Pope, Jr.

In the 1980s, book publisher Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich purchased the park along with SeaWorld, Circus World (later rebuilt as Boardwalk & Baseball) and Stars Hall of Fame, but sold most of the businesses to Anheuser-Busch in 1989. Busch continued to operate Cypress Gardens until April 1, 1995, when a group of the park's managers led by Bill Reynolds bought the property.

Under president and CEO Reynolds, the park operated until April 13, 2003, when it closed after a prolonged tourism decline following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Immediately the Friends of Cypress Gardens was founded and led by Burma Davis Posey. Within three and a half months, the grass-roots effort raised \$13.5 million and saved the park.

On February 22, 2004, Adventure Parks Group, owned by Kent Buescher, purchased the property and renamed it Cypress Gardens Adventure Park. The purchase of the amusement park portion of the Cypress Gardens property was part of a larger conservation transaction. In that transaction, the entire 150-acre site was purchased from its previous owner, First Gardens, L.C., by The Trust for Public Land, a national conservation organization. TPL then sold a conservation easement over the entire property to the state of Florida, while Polk County, purchased the 30-acre gardens portion of the property, less the development rights conveyed in the state easement. Adventure Parks Group purchased the balance of the property, also subject to the conservation easement.

Buescher's plan to reopen the park in September 2004 was delayed by damages created by hurricanes Charley, Frances, and Jeanne. Cypress Gardens Adventure Park finally opened in November 2004. One of its new attractions, the Triple Hurricane roller coaster, was named for the tumultuous storm season. The adjacent Splash Island waterpark opened in 2005.

In September 2006, Adventure Parks Group filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection at the Florida site following approximately \$30 million in damages sustained by the 2004 hurricanes.

Land South Adventures, a subsidiary of Mulberry, Florida-based Land South Holdings, purchased Cypress Gardens at a bankruptcy auction on October 16, 2007, for \$16.9 million, leaving Buescher as interim manager until Baker Leisure Group of Orlando, Florida, took over park operations in January 2008.

On November 10, 2008, Land South Holdings announced the temporary closure of the park, which was shut down November 17 of that year. It reopened on March 28, 2009, with an expanded waterpark named Splash Island. The animals, however, were gone, and the rides did not operate or had already been removed.

On September 23, 2009, owner Land South Holdings LLC announced that the park was closing immediately, saying that all avenues to keep the park open had been explored but that they were unable to find a way to "keep the park running in its traditional form."

The newest chapter in the park's history was written when it was announced on January 15, 2010, that the world's second largest theme park and attraction operator U.K.-based Merlin Entertainments bought Cypress Gardens with intent to use the site for the fifth Legoland. Legoland Florida will debut in 2011.



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Boondocks FEC teams up with Texas Digital

Boondocks Fun Center recently expanded its use of VitalCAST digital signage to its newest facility in Kaysville, Utah. Texas Digital was once again chosen as the provider to deliver state-of-the-art information and entertainment to the facility, which offers miniature golf, bumper boats, two go-cart tracks, laser tag, arcade, 20 lanes of bowling and more. The Kaysville center opened in late 2009.

The Boondocks installation includes seven 47-inch vertical LCD screens: two at the ticketing area, two at the bowling counter and two at the snack bar, as well as one at the bowling vestibule. Additionally, three 47-inch vertical LCDs are in polished aluminum freestanding LCD enclosures, one double-sided unit by the entry walkway and one single-sided unit by the restaurant entrance. Four 47-inch horizontal LCDs show entertainment content by the dining area. All the screens run Texas Digital's VitalCAST software, which allows pricing, imagery and other features on the displays to be updated automatically and simultaneously with a few clicks of the mouse.

"We loved the improved ability to communicate with our guests that digital signage has provided. It is a clean and dynamic medium that has allowed us to get rid of

the messy signs that previously cluttered up our sales counters. In addition to keeping our offerings up to date, digital signs make it possible to better recognize groups, birthdays and other distinguished guests as they arrive," said Damon Day, vice president of Boondocks Fun Center. "We chose VitalCAST because of the feature set, ease of use and customer support. We used a different digital signage application in the past that was not easy to use nor was it adequately supported. This experience has given us an even greater appreciation for VitalCAST and Texas Digital's approach to digital signs."

This is Texas Digital's second installation at Boondocks Fun Centers; the first was in Draper, Utah. Boondocks will expand their digital signage usage to another location in Colorado in 2010.

"Texas Digital is pleased that Boondocks Fun Center, named World's Best Family Entertainment Center in 2007 by IAAPA, has selected our solution to drive their LCD signs at another location," said Dennis Davidson, president and COO of Texas Digital. "It is a wonderful opportunity to be a part of their impressive facilities, and we look forward to working with them on future projects."

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OBITUARY

Santa's Village Calif. theme park creator J. Putnam Henck dies at 91

J. Putnam Henck, a native of Los Angeles who spent his life in the mountains and created an iconic, winter-themed Santa's Village amusement park that pre-dated Disneyland, died Jan. 15 at his Rimforest, Calif. home. He was 91.

Henck and his actress/singer wife Pamela Wright opened Santa's Village in the San Bernardino Mountains on Memorial Day 1955, six weeks before Disneyland's debut. The park included the Bumble Bee Monorail, Whirling Christmas Tree, Gingerbread House, and Welcome House. The park closed in 1998, though several of the buildings remain as well as at least one of its signature 15-foot candy canes.

Busch Gardens Tampa opening new Sesame Street area

This spring, Busch Gardens Tampa Bay welcomes families to an all-new, Sesame Street-themed area featuring Elmo, Big Bird and all their friends. Sesame Street Safari of Fun will be filled with rides, shows and memorable adventures that celebrate the spirit of Africa as Sesame Street and Busch Gardens unite to create a signature attraction found nowhere else.

"This new attraction is going to be unlike anything families have encountered before, with unique African-inspired costumes for Elmo, Big Bird and their friends, and exciting adventures for families to share," says Donnie Mills, Busch Gardens' executive vice president and general manager. "With the addition of Sesame Street Safari of Fun, Busch Gardens truly has something for all ages, and this new destination in

the park is certain to be a hit among families and kids."

Sesame Street Safari of Fun is being created where Land of the Dragons existed, and will double the area's current size to 2.5 acres. The new section's major attractions will include: Air Grover, a Zierer junior roller coaster; and Bert & Ernie's Water Hole, a waterplay area filled with bubblers, geysers, jets, dumping buckets and more. Big Bird's 123-Smile with Me photography studio gives kids the chance to share a hug and a smile with Sesame Street friends, and musical performances bring safari tales to life.

In addition to the rides and play areas, guests will also be able to watch their favorite characters on the big screen. "Sesame Street presents Lights, Camera, Imagination!" will run in the park's 4-D theater, located



RENDERING COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS

Busch Gardens Tampa Bay's Land of the Dragons area will be replaced with Sesame Street Safari of Fun for the 2010 season. Air Grover, a Zierer junior coaster, and Bert & Ernie's Water Hole, a waterplay area, are the anchor attractions.

in Timbuktu. The new 4-D movie brings Sesame Street Muppets' adventures to life with zany 3-D gags and spe-

cial effects like wind, water and other surprises.

Families will be able to share breakfast and lunch

with Elmo and his friends on select days at an outdoor dining facility adjacent to Sesame Street Safari of Fun.



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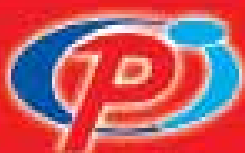


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CLM acquires inspector training program

CLM Entertainment recently announced that it had acquired the Certified Risk Evaluator (CRE) Program from Glynn Barclay & Associates (GBA). The CRE program was created by GBA in 1989 as a training program for individuals to conduct inspections of amusement facilities for insurance companies. Since that time, GBA has certified hundreds of individuals with the CRE program. The program has a proven record of success over the past 20 years and a CRE is also an approved inspector in several states.

"The CRE program has undergone a complete overhaul" said Alan Ramsay, president / CEO of CLM Entertainment. "In addition, the 40-hour program is in its final stages of accreditation by a university in order that attendees can obtain CEU's." The program was previously accredited by Old Dominion University when GBA conducted the CRE program.

The CRE program is comprised of a core curriculum focusing on items such as basic Risk Management terminology, National Fire Protection Standards, (NFPA), Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) Codes and general related knowledge on electricity, physics, hydraulics and more.

"One of the unique features of the re-done program is that there are over 15 elective modules that someone can take after

they have completed the core program. With the CRE needing so much information to do an effective job, the modules are a perfect way to dedicate the appropriate amount of time to study each specialty" said Ramsay. Some module topics include amusement rides and devices with a heavy focus on ASTM F24 Standards, water parks, FECs, Ski / Snow tubing facilities and a dozen more.

Ramsay noted that the industry has changed dramatically over the last decade and CLM Entertainment is proud to bring a program to the amusement industry that has been proven to improve safety and reduce losses to facilities and insurance companies. "While there are other wonderful and also very successful certification programs such as the National Association of Amusement Ride Safety Officials (NAARSO) Amusement Ride Inspector, our program goes several steps further."

CLM Entertainment is finalizing the course materials and will be conducting its first CRE certification program in early spring of 2010.

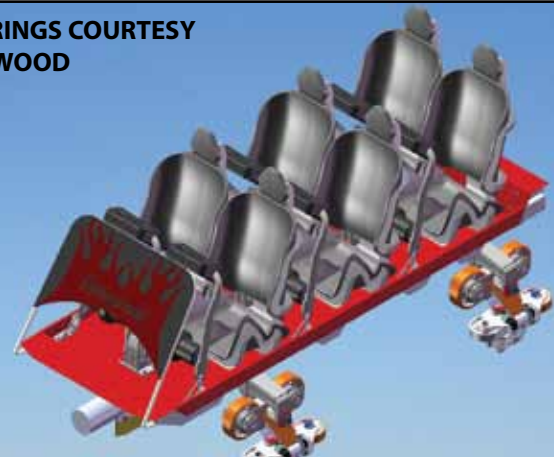
"Glynn Barclay and GBA was ahead of its time when this program was created 20 years ago and now CLM Entertainment is proud to continue its success and making our already safe industry even safer," Ramsay concluded.



Kennywood coaster named

Kennywood's new Premier Rides-designed Sky Rocket will use LSM technology to launch riders from 0 to 50 m.p.h. in three seconds. The 2,100-foot-long compact coaster is being constructed on the site of the park's former Turnpike ride and will open this spring.

RENDERINGS COURTESY KENNYWOOD



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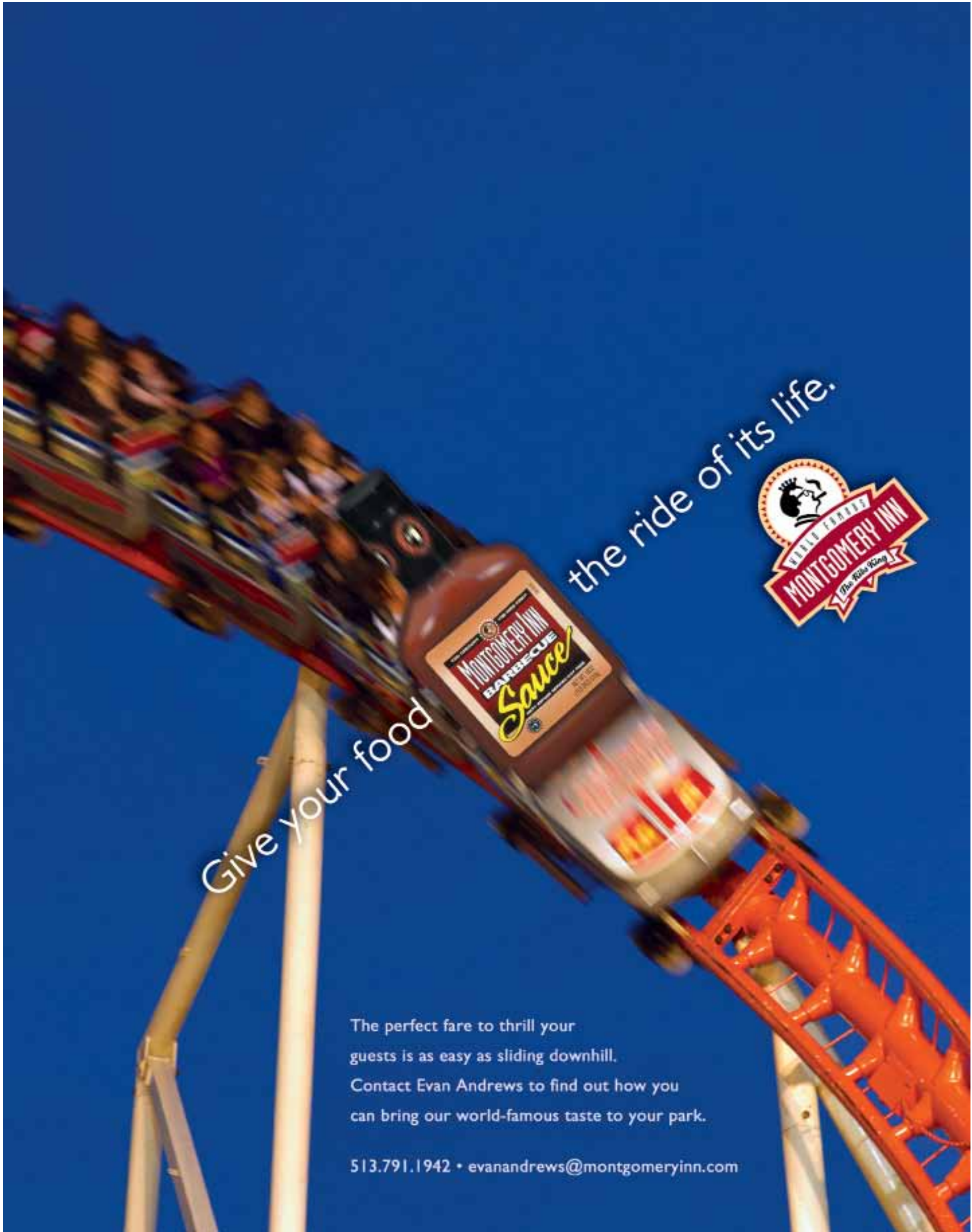
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BRIEF

Great Wolf Resorts reaches agreement for new Great Wolf Lodge in Pittsburgh

Great Wolf Resorts, Inc., announced that it has signed a letter of intent related to the proposed development of a Great Wolf Lodge resort adjacent to The Galleria at Pittsburgh Mills in Tarentum, Pa., outside of Pittsburgh. The resort will be developed by Zamias Services, Inc.

Great Wolf Resorts will receive license fees for use of the Great Wolf Lodge brand name and other intellectual property at the resort, and will receive management fees to operate the resort on behalf of the owner. It will also advise on certain development-related matters. The resort will be owned by a joint-venture, with the company receiving a small minority equity interest for its development-related services. The Pittsburgh resort will be the company's third that it manages and in which it does not have a majority ownership interest.

"As part of the company's long-term strategy to pursue license-and-management transactions, we are very excited about the development of a new Great Wolf Lodge resort which will be connected to The Galleria at Pittsburgh Mills. The resort will provide the area's many residents a distinctive and memorable year-round vacation experience," said Kim Schaefer, chief executive officer. "Great Wolf Lodge is a leading family entertainment brand, and we believe there are numerous opportunities such as this to leverage our brand, business model and expertise."

Legoland California to add new waterpark, show

The earliest glimpse of the world's first Lego-themed waterpark was unveiled Jan. 8 to media and invited guests at Legoland California Resort's annual press conference. A three-story banner featuring an artist's rendering of Legoland Water Park was raised during a presentation by Resort General Manager Peter Ronchetti who revealed Water Park details as well as business results for 2009 and plans to launch "A Clutch Powers 4-D Adventure."

"2009 was a record year here at Legoland California Resort," said Ronchetti during the press conference. "We celebrated the park's tenth birthday on March 20 and launched a brand new Bob the Builder 4-D movie. The Inauguration scene in Miniland U.S.A. made headlines around the world and our new Dune Raiders slide attraction added a fun new element to Land of Adventure. And over at Sea Life, we added Sharks Revealed – a great new exhibit teaching kids all about the life cycle and evolution of sharks."

Ronchetti continued, "Many theme parks across the country have reported difficult trading and necessary cost control actions as a result of the challenging economic climate over recent months. So we feel very fortunate with all of the expansion here at Legoland California Resort, to be able to report that our attendance continues to grow."

Ronchetti reported that 2009 marked six years of continuous growth for Legoland California with a six percent growth in attendance over 2008. He also reported guest satisfaction ratings in the high nineties, a statistic rarely heard in the amusement park industry.

The 2009 season was also the first full year of operation for Sea Life Carlsbad, the aquarium located next door to Legoland California. The

Aquarium welcomed several hundred thousand guests making it the third highest attended Sea Life Aquarium of the 29 Sea Life centers worldwide.

"Legoland California Resort expects continued success in 2010 with the investment of more than \$15 million dollars into the resort," said Ronchetti as he described plans for Legoland Water Park and "A Clutch Powers 4-D Adventure."

The 5.5-acre Legoland Water Park opens in June 2010 and will be located at the north end of Legoland California behind Fun Town. The entrance will be located between the Factory Tour and the Adventurer's Club. Geared for families with children ages 2–12, Legoland Water Park features a six-person raft slide, single-person tube slides, body slides, a lazy river and hands-on toddler areas.

At press time, suppliers to the new waterpark had not been announced.

"Legoland Water Park will be lots of fun, constructive play including slides, Lego friends and, the feature I am personally the most excited about – the Build-a-Raft concept where kids customize their own raft made of soft Lego bricks before floating down a lazy river," said Ronchetti.

Bill Vollbrecht, master model builder-turned project designer for Legoland California also spoke during the event. Vollbrecht, who is the lead designer for the Water Park, built a Lego model as inspiration for the Water Park design. Vollbrecht unveiled that original model during the press conference as well.

"When designing the world's first Lego themed waterpark, what better way to start than to take it from a child's perspective," said Vollbrecht. "Imagine a child beginning to build a fun Lego tower that they could actually



PHOTO COURTESY LEGOLAND CALIFORNIA

Artist's rendering of the new Legoland Water Park currently under construction at Legoland California. The 5.5 acre facility, which is geared toward visitors 2-12 years old, opens in June 2010.

play inside with their family. They would dump out a bucket of bricks of every color and combination, and create a fantastic, imagination-filled world. And that's exactly what I was able to create beginning with these Lego models we are showing you today."

Legoland California guests will be able to upgrade their park tickets to include Legoland Water Park for just \$10. The Water Park will also be included in the price of Water Park Hopper tickets and Resort Hopper tickets which include Sea Life Aquarium as well. Water Park admission will also be included in Resort Memberships.

Just in time for Spring Break, "A Clutch Powers 4-D Adventure" premieres Mar. 19. Clutch Powers is a brand new character from Lego and is the

best builder and explorer in the Lego universe. The creative world of Lego comes to life in this 10-minute show featuring amazing 3-D effects combined with rain, wind and a giant Lego monster for an action packed and fun 4-D adventure running daily in Lego Show Place. Ryan McPartlin, who plays Dr. Awesome on NBC's "Chuck" is the voice of Clutch Powers.

"Lego Racers 4-D" which opened in 2002, will be closing to accommodate Clutch Powers. "Bob the Builder and the Roller Coaster" and "Spellbreaker 4-D" will continue to run daily in Lego Show Place.

Additionally, Legoland California Resort is launching a new Web site: www.LegolandWaterPark.com.



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ProSlide Topsy-Turvy going to Aquatica

SeaWorld's Aquatica waterpark is adding its first attraction since it opened almost two years ago. The "Omaka Rocka," which translates to "rocking river," is ProSlide's innovative new Topsy-Turvy Surprise Adventure two-seat tubing ride.

Omaka Rocka will feature two slides with three open funnels on each that let enough light in so that riders can see the next thrilling twist and turn. Riders travel in two-seat tubes through enclosed sections before dropping into each funnel that replicate the half-pipe experience of extreme sports. They will experience near weightlessness as they go up one side and back down the funnel before going into the dark enclosed sections and into the next funnel.

Aquatica is a one-of-a-



PHOTO COURTESY AQUATICA

SeaWorld's Aquatica waterpark is constructing the world's first Topsy-Turvy Surprise Adventure from ProSlide. The new attraction is slated to open in March.

kind waterpark that could only come from SeaWorld. Inspired by a whimsical take on the South Seas, Aquatica immerses guests in the playfulness of the sea, taking them in, over and under the water with the

world's most unique water rides and animal encounters. Aquatica mixes animal experiences, waters from serene to extreme, high speed water-slide thrills and wide, sandy beaches.

Raging Waters San Dimas adding Dr. Von Dark's Tunnel of Terror

Raging Waters in San Dimas, Calif. will be the next Palace Entertainment property to install Dr. Von Dark's Tunnel of Terror attraction. Both New York's Splish Splash and North Carolina's Wet'n Wild Emerald Pointe debuted the ride in 2009.

At the heart of Raging Water's newest slide is a highly-themed TantrumTwist from Canada's ProSlide Technologies.

As with the other two versions that opened last season, the adventure begins at the laboratory of the sinister Dr. Von Dark. Two test subjects board a special "whirly tube" facing in opposite directions that force the tube to spin while it slides.

Without warning, they plunge into total darkness and down a 40-foot drop. Riders accelerate at lightning speed through a pitch-dark tunnel, when out of nowhere the bottom of the ride completely drops out. Careening wildly, the tubes are propelled back and forth up the steep banked sides while spinning the whole time. With a watery blast, they enter the upper hemisphere of the fully enclosed Tornado Funnel and are catapulted through back-to-back "verti-

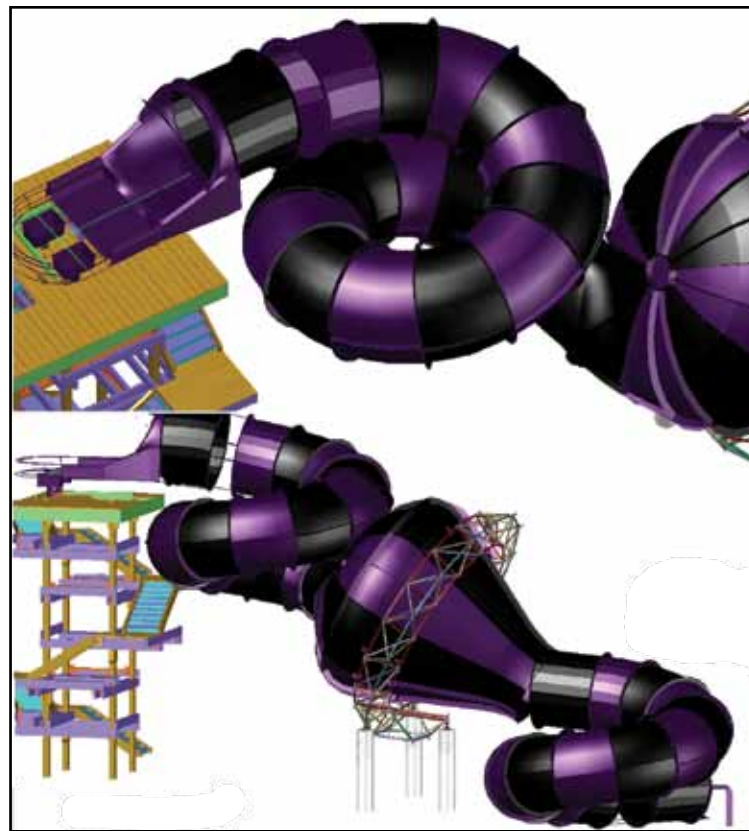


PHOTO COURTESY RAGING WATERS

Raging Water's Dr. Von Dark's Tunnel of Terror is the west coast's first example of a ProSlide's highly-themed TantrumTwist waterslide. Two units made their debut last year at Palace Entertainments' Wet 'n' Wild Emerald Pointe and Splish Splash waterparks.

cal" banks, spinning two complete 360 rotations while being held by the tornado's powerful centrifugal force. Riders are then jettisoned down the mouth of the funnel, down

towards the certain doom that is projected on a special effects water curtain completely covering the only escape route.

• www.ragingwaters.com

BUSINESS

www.AmusementToday.com

REVENUE

PEOPLE

RESORTS

AIMS INTL.

SUPPLIERS

BRIEF

Morey's Piers featured in newly released book

In honor of the piers' 40th anniversary, *A Wild Ride – The Story of Morey's Piers, Planet Earth's Greatest Seaside Amusement Park* is a new large-format book that chronicles the origins of the Morey Family empire on the New Jersey shore as it grew from a single gravity slide concession to its status today as one of the greatest family-owned amusement operations anywhere.

Written by Jack Wright of Cape May-based Exit Zero Publishing, with heavy input from the Morey Organization itself, *A Wild Ride* is a heartfelt examination of the ups and downs of Morey's Piers. Included in the text are features on many of the rides and attractions that helped distinguish Morey's Piers from the competition.

Sporting 192 pages separated into 12 chapters with attention-grabbing names like *Monster Attractions* and *Tacky and Proud Of It*, *A Wild Ride* is packed with a wonderful collection of black & white and color images that effectively capture the inception and evolution of the Morey empire.

"This book is a celebration of our history and our founders' vision," said Morey Executive Vice President, Jack Morey.

A Wild Ride can be purchased at the new Morey Store, located on Morey's Piers, for \$19.95 plus tax. For more information contact Lindsey Young at (609) 846-1065.

International Bowling Campus opens in Arlington, Texas

For the first time in the 5,000-year history of the sport, the bowling industry will be united under one roof with the grand opening of the International Bowling Campus (IBC) in Arlington, Texas, an unprecedented event in sports history. The IBC, located at 621 Six Flags Drive, is in close proximity to the new Dallas Cowboys Stadium, the Rangers Ballpark and Six Flags Over Texas. The 100,000-plus square-foot IBC complex will house more than 200 employees. On Jan. 25, the campus opened its doors with a historic ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by a gathering of national and local celebrities.

The campus will serve as home to the new and expanded International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame. The state-of-the-art museum will feature interactive displays and exhibits along with rare, one-of-a-kind items from the various eras dating back to 3,200 B.C. The IBC will also house the International Training and Research Center (ITRC) and an expansive pro shop making it the premier pro shop of the bowling industry. Additionally, the IBC will act as the central operating facility for the Bowling Proprietors' Association of America (BPAA) and the United States Bowling Congress (USBC).

"The International Bowling Campus marks a first in sports and its impact on the bowling industry simply cannot be understated. Bringing together all of the leading entities in bowling under a single roof is a tremendous



PHOTO COURTESY BPAA

Arlington, Texas is the new home of the International Training and Research Center for bowling as well as the International Museum and Hall of Fame. The 100,000-plus square-foot Bowling Campus opened on Jan. 25.

step forward in uniting and strengthening our industry," said Steve Johnson, executive director of the BPAA. "With already more than 69.3 million bowlers in the U.S. alone, the opening of the IBC sets the stage for a new era of growth for bowling and signifies the incredible worldwide resurgence in popularity that bowling has seen in recent years."

"The grand opening of the International Bowling Campus is a historic event that ushers in a thrilling new era for bowling. Through the creation of the IBC, which includes the first International Training and Research Center, we have a world-class facility that enables us to offer tremendous resources to help

enhance the sport of bowling across all levels of play," said Stu Upson, executive director of the USBC. "Additionally, working side-by-side with the BPAA will further enable us to enhance and strengthen the sport of bowling on a local level."

In addition to the BPAA and USBC, the International Bowling Campus will include:

- International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame – formerly located in St. Louis, Mo., the International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame collects, preserves and displays the 5,000-year history that has led to the sport of bowling's worldwide success. In addition to outlin-

ing the history of bowling, the completely interactive 21st century International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame will focus on the contemporary era of the sport, specifically its youth programs and international competition. The museum will also house the Celebrity Hall of Fame exhibit, including inductees Lynn Swann, Jerome Bettis and Tom Candiotti. Custom bowling industry merchandise and branded memorabilia will be available at "Spare Partz," a unique concept in museum stores.

- International Training and Research Center (ITRC) – A United States Olympic Committee-recognized training center, the ITRC will serve as a world-class training facility for professional and amateur bowlers, and will include 20 lanes for training, research, testing and television broadcasts (of the 20 lanes, six will be used exclusively to test and certify bowling equipment prior to worldwide distribution, replicating all lane conditions). The center's research area will include cutting-edge tools such as a robotic ball thrower, a computerized ball tracking system and a state-of-the-art biomechanics package designed to analyze actual bowling movements and test equipment. The center will be the training home for Team USA, Junior Team USA, international teams, numerous college and high school teams and elite coaches.

The campus will also be home to the International Bowling

► See **BOWLING**, page 20

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PEOPLE WATCH

Sue Nichols joins Chestnut as sales rep

Sue Nichols has joined Chestnut Identity Apparel, Inc. as an East Coast sales representative as of January 2010. Chestnut Identity Apparel provides uniforms for amusement parks, carnivals, fairs and concessionaires through its www.amusementline.com division.

Nichols will continue her duties as an advertising sales representative for *Amusement Today* and is a noted artist specializing in amusement park, carnival and fair artwork and merchandise via her Web site: www.5centride.com.

Prior to joining the *Amusement Today* ad sales team in 2004, Nichols worked for *Amusement Business* magazine for many years. She began her career in the amusement industry in 1981 with National Ticket Company.



Nichols

Terrie Zajo promoted to GM spot at Great Wolf Mason

Great Wolf Resorts, Inc., announced that Terrie M. Zajo has been promoted to general manager of Great Wolf Lodge at Kings Island in Mason, Ohio.

Zajo is responsible for the successful daily operation and management of the 401, all-suite Great Wolf Lodge and its more than 450 team members. She brings over 25 years of experience in the entertainment industry to her new position.

Zajo began her career with Great Wolf Lodge as the assistant general manager when the resort opened in 2006. She is on the board of directors for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Warren and Clinton Counties, Great Wolf Resorts' charity of choice. She is also on the board of directors for the Warren County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Prior to joining Great Wolf Lodge, Zajo was employed by Paramount's Kings Island for 22 years. Most recently, she served as vice president of resale where she was responsible for all in park spending in the departments of F&B, retail, games and attractions. Zajo holds a B.S. in Education from the University of Cincinnati.

Previously, Patrick Alvarez was the general manager of Great Wolf Lodge in Mason. Alvarez now serves as general manager for the company's Great Wolf Lodge resort located in the Pocono Mountains, Pennsylvania.

Space Center Houston fills two key positions

Space Center Houston, The official visitors center for Johnson Space Center has named **Melanie Johnson**, as director of education and **Richard H. "Dick" Sanger** as director of development.

Dr. Johnson received her Bachelor's degree in International Trade/French from Auburn University, a Master's degree in Hospitality Management from the University of Houston and a Doctoral degree in Education from Texas Southern University.

"We are excited about having Dr. Johnson's experience in these relevant areas to support the goals of Space Center Houston and NASA's Johnson Space Center", states Richard Allen, president and CEO of Space Center Houston.

Dr. Johnson comes to Space Center Houston from serving as faculty development director for the Art Institute of Houston.

Richard H. "Dick" Sanger joins Space Center Houston as director of development. Located in Houston since 1990, he was the co-founder and CEO of ABT Management, Inc. and most recently, served as vice president of administration and corporate/board secretary for Eagle Broadband. As an independent contractor, Dick has been working on special projects with Space Center Houston over the past few months.

Richard Allen said, "I am excited about adding Dick to our staff. His experience will serve him well in his new position where he will be responsible for the development of new sources of funds, working to grow the size of the Board and add committees to help development of Space Center Houston's important mission."

Sanger has been an active member of Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership and has been chairman of their International Business Development Committee since 1998.



Johnson



Sanger

Riding the Market

presented by Bryan T. Pope, The Pope Firm



This information is believed to be accurate, but is not guaranteed. Returns provided do not include reinvestment or dividends.

Company	Stock Name	Prices 01/19/10	High	52 weeks Low
STOCK EXCHANGE: NYSE, OTC BB*, NASDAQ**, SYDNEY ASX***				
Cedar Fair L.P.	FUN	\$11.94	\$13.97	\$5.75
MGM Mirage	MGM	\$12.21	\$14.25	\$1.81
Six Flags, Inc.	SIXFQ**	\$0.10	\$0.59	\$0.58
CBS Corp.	CBS	\$13.43	\$14.56	\$3.06
Walt Disney Co.	DIS	\$31.01	\$32.75	\$15.14
Great Wolf Resorts, Inc.	WOLF**	\$2.42	\$3.95	\$1.26
Landry's Restaurants	LNRY	\$21.30	\$22.19	\$3.60
Blackstone Group	BX	\$13.56	\$17.22	\$3.55
Village Roadshow	VLRDY***	\$10.022	\$10.022	\$2.67
NBC Universal	GE	\$16.54	\$17.52	\$5.727

Region (U.S.)	As of 01/18/10	Change from year ago
East Coast	2.923	-0.546
Midwest	2.834	-0.570
Gulf Coast	2.831	-0.604
Rocky Mountain	2.827	-0.578
West Coast	2.947	-0.609
California	2.008	-0.689

Prices per gallon; Information provided by U.S. Department of Energy

ON-HIGHWAY DIESEL PRICES



TOP 7 MOST TRADED CURRENCIES

On 01/20/10 \$1 USD =

0.69702 EURO
0.61052 GBP (British Pound)
90.77637 JPY (Japanese Yen)
1.02855 CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.08237 AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.02855 CAD (Canadian Dollar)

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BOWLING

Continued from page 20

Pro Shop and Instructors Association (IBPSIA), the School for Bowling Center Management, the Billiard and Bowling Institute of America (BBIA), Bowling News Network (BNN), Strike Ten Entertainment (STE), Bowling Writers' Association of America (BWAA) and The Bowling Foundation.

"The new facility will bring events such as the BPAA Bowling Summit, International Bowl Expo in 2011 and numerous nationally televised bowling competitions, which will enhance Arlington's reputation as a leading Southwestern tourism destination," said Dr. Robert Cluck, mayor of Arlington.

The grand opening events were held in conjunction with the BPAA's Bowling Summit, which was attended by proprietors representing thousands of bowling centers from across the U.S. as well as the industry's leading manufacturers and suppliers.

• www.internationalbowlingcampus.com

Benchmark Games sees major order for 2010

Benchmark Games officials recently announced that extensive orders for game equipment came as a result of the manufacturer's involvement at the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions Expo in Las Vegas.

"Between our domestic distributors, export customers, and our national account customers, we had a terrific November," said Al Kress, Benchmark co-owner. "We are looking forward to a great 2010 with a large backlog of orders going into January and a major order already in hand for delivery in the second quarter of 2010."

Of note, the popular Pop-It X-Treme 8.5 model has caught the attention of arcades and FECs on a worldwide basis. Other new products for 2010 include Red Hot Single, Wheel Deal X-Treme and PokerKard along with other favorites such as Slam-a-Winner X-Treme, Red Hot Fire & Ice, and Tickets-to-Prizes. Game machine add-ons gaining popularity are the Receipt Printer for Ticket-to-Prizes, the Ticket Emulator and the Card Dispenser.

Benchmark Games prides itself in creating attractive and quality games for the amusement industry. All games carry a one-year 'front to back and top to bottom' warranty. Benchmark continues to work in developing games with favorable price points. In 2009, their creations were soundly accepted and proven revenue winners.

The coming year should be a real winner for Benchmark and those businesses willing and able to invest in the very popular and profitable games. The Florida based games manufacturer is expanding its new line of products that continue to be tested and released in 2010. Currently four new titles are out on test.

Interactive GPS gaming software transforms parks into real-life game boards

Ranger Quest is a choose-your-own-adventure style game that offers players the opportunity to craft their own experience according to preference and skill level as they wait in long queues or explore a venue.

Played using the GPS Ranger handheld video tour guide device equipped with GPS technology, visitors assume a character role and follow video clues, answer trivia questions and solve Flash-based games and puzzles to earn points and work their way towards unraveling the mystery at hand. Each Ranger Quest game is customized to the venue or destination hosting it and contains unique characters and plots. Destinations can offer such themed missions as a Wild West adventure, safari hunt, international spy mission, or pirate's bounty, to name just a few options.

Participants can play by themselves or compete against family and friends, earning points as the game advances. Utilizing GPS technology, the game is easily integrated with existing landmarks and points of interest within a theme park, zoo or city tourism zone. BarZ Adventures, an Austin, Texas-based GPS multimedia tour company created the new experiential software to offer an interactive activity that engages visitors as they explore destinations at their own pace.

"We are excited to launch the Ranger Quest multiplayer game system to venues and attractions worldwide. Ranger Quest is a group activity that has been designed to enhance the fun and excitement of a visit to any venue in the world. Ranger Quest, along with our educational and engaging tour guide products, offers increased options for our customers and their visitors. We are especially pleased to have the award-winning International Spy Museum offer the first Ranger Quest gaming experience," said W. Lee Little, BarZ Adventures founder and CEO.

The GPS Ranger hardware



PHOTO COURTESY RANGER QUEST
Ranger Quest uses a handheld video tour guide device equipped with GPS technology to allow guests to play games as they wait in long queues.

device utilized to play the Ranger Quest game features a 4-inch sunlight viewable touch screen, dual-speaker stereo system and the ability to use headphones. The system supports full-color video, audio, still photography, musical soundtrack, animation and Flash-based games. All of these elements combine to create an experience where players interact with the device and their surroundings in an electronic cat-and-mouse game that's part scavenger hunt, part "Clue."

Venues purchase the system and develop the customized content in coordination with BarZ; the resultant experiences can then be offered as fee-based activities or complimentary with the price of admission if desired. Venues can incorporate maps to facilities and concessions, as well as GPS-triggered ads and promotions for gift shops, restaurants and concessions. The handheld devices can also be used for GPS multimedia tours that are less for the adventurous tourist and more for the "intellectually curious," enabling several visitor options to be available on one system. BarZ Adventures currently has GPS Ranger tours at a variety of national parks, zoos, attractions and historic cities across the nation.

• www.barzadventures.com.

IAAPA 2009 - LAS VEGAS

IAAPA Expo exhibitors honored

The 2009 Best Exhibitor Awards were presented during IAAPA Attractions Expo 2009, taking place at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Las Vegas, Nevada. Exhibitor honors consist of the Image Award for most attractive trade show booth and Exhibitor Awards, divided into sub-categories based on booth size.

The 2009 Image Award was presented to **Environs, Inc.** in Jacksonville, Fla. as the company which represented the best overall booth from a visual perspective.

First place and honorable

mention winners for Best Exhibitor Awards in the following categories included:

100 – 200 square feet

First Place: **Get in Line**, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Honorable Mention: **Perky's Pizza**, Oldsmar, Fla.

300 – 500 square feet

First Place: **Environs, Inc.**, Jacksonville, Fla.

Honorable Mention: **Adrian Fisher Design, Ltd.**, Portman

Lodge, Durweston, Dorset, U.K.

600 – 1,000 square feet

First Place: **SplashTacular Entertainment**, La Quinta, Calif.

Honorable Mention: **Funovation, Inc.**, Boulder, Colo.

1,100+ square feet

First Place: **WhiteWater West Industries, Ltd.**, Richmond, British Columbia, Canada.

Honorable Mention: **MagiQuest**, Tillamook, Ore.

Top FEC's recognized

Magic Planet Kuwait and iT'Z in Houston, Texas won the title of 2009 Top Family Entertainment Centers (FECs) of the World during the FEC Reception at IAAPA Attractions Expo 2009 held in Las Vegas, Nev. Judges from IAAPA's FEC Committee evaluated the nominees on operational efficiency, décor and ambiance, marketing savvy, and managerial performance.

iT'Z **Family Food and Fun** in Houston, Texas, features video and redemption games, family

rides like "Disk'O" and the "iT'Z Express" train, bumper cars, bowling, and party rooms dedicated to sports, cartoons, and family movies. Guests enjoy gourmet pizzas and a soup, salad, and potato-bar in dining rooms adorned with chandeliers, big screen televisions, and wireless Internet connections. The facility specializes in corporate events and birthday parties, and offers e-invitations for customers to download through their web site.

Magic Planet Kuwait in

Kuwait, is operated by Majid Al Futtaim Leisure and entertains all ages. Located in The Avenues, Kuwait's largest shopping center, the facility includes a 4D theater, bowling, billiards, arcade games, a food court, and thrill rides including "Smash Bugs," bumper cars designed especially for kids; the "Grasshopper" tower ride; and the "Crazy Caterpillar" flying cart. Magic Planet also emphasizes safety, and equips its "fun team" employees with a variety of training.

Entertainment recognized with Big E

IAAPA presented its annual Big E entertainment awards during the recently held IAAPA Attractions Expo in Las Vegas, Nev.

In its eleventh year, the awards honor the best in live entertainment at amusement parks and attractions throughout the world. Held at the Renaissance Las Vegas Hotel, the ceremony kicked off with Las Vegas-grandeur featuring performances by "Jubilee!" show girls, "Le Grande Cirque" performers, and popular Las Vegas magician Jason Byrne.

The 15 categories recognized productions, individual performers, sports, edutainment, and spirit. The Big E Awards were sponsored by Heartbeat Productions, Inc., Matt Davenport Productions, Inc., and RWS and Associates Entertainment, Inc.

This year's Big E award winners are:

Best Overall Production More Than \$2 million

Winner: "The Gift of Angels," **Universal Studios Japan**, Osaka City, Osaka, Japan.

Honorable Mention: "Magical Starlight Parade," **Universal Studios Japan**, Osaka City, Osaka, Japan.

Best Overall Production \$1 million – \$2 million

Winner: "Hot Ice," **Blackpool Pleasure Beach**, Blackpool, U.K.

Best Overall Production \$500,001 – \$1 million

Winner: "Forbidden," **Blackpool Pleasure Beach**, Blackpool, U.K.

Honorable Mention: "Cirque de la Mer," **Sea World San Diego**, San

Diego, Calif.

Best Overall Production \$300,001 – \$500,000

Winner: "Take Flight - An Avian Adventure," **San Diego Zoo**, San Diego, Calif.

Honorable Mention: "Matt Hoffman's Danger Defying Daredevils," **Six Flags Magic Mountain**, Valencia, Calif.

Best Overall Production \$150,001 – \$300,000

Winner: "Headin' West," **Silver Dollar City**, Branson, Mo.

Honorable Mention: "Christian Farla Live! Magic Show," **Walibi World**, Biddinghuizen, Netherlands.

Best Overall Production \$50,001 – \$150,000

Winner: "Pure Country Radio," **Six Flags Over Georgia**, Atlanta, Ga.

Honorable Mention: "The Jeerk Show," **Silver Dollar City**, Branson, Mo.

Best Overall Production \$25,001 – \$50,000

Winner: "The Soda Pops," **Hersheypark**, Hershey, Pa.

Honorable Mention: "Creature Feature," **Six Flags Fiesta Texas**, San Antonio, Texas.

Best Overall Production, \$25,000 or Less

Winner: "Bunsen & The Burners," **Hersheypark**, Hershey, Pa.

Honorable Mention: "Grand Tournament of Champions," **Legoland California**, Carlsbad, Calif.

Best Atmosphere/Street Performer

Winner: "Funsation Celebration," **Dutch Wonderland**, Lancaster, Pa.

Honorable Mention: "Gem Tones," **Dollywood**, Pigeon Forge, Tenn.

Best Sports Show

Winner: "Brown Entertainment's Cirque Magnifique," **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk**, Santa Cruz, Calif.

Honorable Mention: "Winter Wonderland on Ice," **Silverwood Theme Park**, Athol, Idaho.

Best Live Edutainment Show

Winner: "Creature Adventures Starring The Kratt Brothers," **Dollywood**, Pigeon Forge, Tenn.

Honorable Mention: "The Jungle Rumble - Going Green Edition," **Six Flags Great Adventure**, Jackson, N.J.

Heartbeat Award

Winner: "Sha-Kon-O-Hey!," **Dollywood**, Pigeon Forge, Tenn.

Spirit Award

Winner: Chris Ambraz, **Busch Gardens Tampa**, Tampa, Fla.

Best Female Performer

Winner: Renee Schee, **Six Flags Fiesta Texas**, San Antonio, Texas.

Honorable Mention: Samantha Freistat, **Hersheypark**, Hershey, Penn.

Best Male Performer

Winner: Gabriel Myers, **Dollywood**, Pigeon Forge, Tenn.

Honorable Mention: Wong Tsz Kwan, **Ocean Park Hong Kong**, Aberdeen, Hong Kong.

Waterpark award winners announced

Two attractions won the title of 2009 Must-See Waterparks on Nov. 18, during IAAPA Attractions Expo 2009 in Las Vegas, Nev. The award recognizes outstanding waterparks throughout the world which provide visitors with unique and memorable experiences, top-notch guest service, operations, and safety.

Dollywood's Splash Country won first place and **West Edmonton Mall's World Waterpark** was honored as runner-up during the Waterpark Meet-and-Greet, which kicked off the Waterpark & Resort education program at the Expo. Awards are judged by the IAAPA Waterpark Committee, made up of waterpark operators and managers from around the world.

"Both Splash Country and World Waterpark are well-deserving and truly go above-and-beyond when putting the customer first," says Andy Maurek, assistant manager of safety operations at Hyland Hills Water World in Colorado and chair of the IAAPA Waterparks Committee.

Dollywood's Splash Country in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, United States, opened in 2001 in Tennessee's Great Smoky Mountains. Its attractions include "The Cascades" leisure pool, themed with rock grottos and bubbling fountains; "Downbound Float Trip," a more than half-million gallon-lazy river; "Big Bear Plunge" raft ride; and "The Butterfly" and "Swiftwater Run," which are large waterslide attractions. The park recently incorporated a cashless wristband payment system and also features shaded "Canopies" and

"Retreats"—private areas for guests with lounge chairs, satellite television, ceiling fans, dining tables, and a direct phone line to food and beverage service. Splash Country's goal is to expand its offerings as technology advances, while still maintaining the Southern hospitality and natural landscape of the Smoky Mountains.

Founded in 1986, **World Waterpark** in West Edmonton Mall in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, is open year-round and features a 2.7 million gallon-wave pool and more than 20 waterslides, including "Howler" and "Sky Screamer," which propels riders up to 32 miles per hour. The indoor park is viewable from two levels in North America's largest shopping and entertainment center and entertains more than 560,000 guests each year. Its attractions include a permanent indoor bungee jump, zip line, and indoor fireworks at the park's annual "New Year's Eve Family Beach Party." The facility recently added Caribbean Cove, a 6,000-square-foot interactive waterplay area for families and children, and it plans to add new slides and renovate its changing rooms next. The park is known for creating an 82-degree, year-round beach environment for families on the landlocked Canadian prairies.

Previous winners of the prestigious award include Caribbean Bay in Kyeonggi-Do, South Korea, and Morey's Piers in Wildwood, New Jersey, USA, in 2008; and Chimelong Waterpark in Guangzhou, China, Splish Splash in Calverton, New York, USA, and Hyland Hills Water World in Denver, Colorado, USA in 2007.



AT PHOTOS / PAM SHERBORNE

Brian McDowell, owner, Chipstix, was at the 2009 IAAPA tradeshow for the first time this year exhibiting his new food product, Chipstix. The Chipstix is a spiraled, fried, potato on a stick.

Souvenir awards honor retail items

IAAPA announced the winners of the 2009 Souvenir awards during its recently held IAAPA Attractions Expo in Las Vegas, Nev. The awards honor excellence in merchandising by recognizing the most creative and innovative items offered at an IAAPA member attractions during the 2009 season.

Judging is based on creativity, memory, impact, and theme.

In the **Best Hat** category, **Sea World** in Gold Coast, Australia, won with a blue-brimmed baseball-type cap featuring animals from the waterpark and resort. A dolphin, sea otter, shark, and other characters from the park peer out from pinwheel-sections of the hat, the Sea World logo is featured on the front, and two embroidered water bubbles adorn the front corner of the bill.

In the **Best Keychain** category, **Hersheypark** in Hershey, Pa., won with its realistically-stitched, baseball-shaped soft toy, emblazoned with a smiling Hershey Kiss and the park's logo and colors.

In the **Best T-Shirt** category, **Busch Gardens Williamsburg** in Williamsburg, Va., won with its emoticon-themed casual wear in pink and other fluorescent colors. The T-Shirt displays the course of emotions experienced while riding a roller coaster, and ends with a simple beaming face above the theme park's name. The T-Shirt's fitted cut for teenagers is fashioned to appeal to young adults and the text-messaging generation.

In the **Best Drinkware** category, **Warner Bros. Movie World** in Oxenford, Queensland, Australia, won for its 3-D ceramic Superman mug which features a large handle in the form of an "S" and the Warner Bros. character positioned for takeoff against the glass' bold

colors and American flag icon. The three-dimensional relief accentuates Superman's features and provides a tangible element of fun for the customer.

In the **Best Toy** category, **Efteling** in Kaatsheuvel, Netherlands, won for its Fairytale Tree puppet theater featuring an all-in-one printed, pop-open 3-D stage. The theater features built-in curtains which unveil plush finger-puppets including a princess, dragon, and classic fairytale characters.

In the **Best Gift** category, **Legoland Windsor** in Windsor, U.K., won for its chess board, complete with Velcro-closure carrying case. Pieces on the chess board are portrayed by medieval court gothic characters, and double as standard Lego pieces with interchangeable accessories.

In the **Best Visual—Overall Store Design** category, **Busch Gardens Tampa Bay** in Tampa, Fla., won for its Howl-O-Scream Shop of Horrors, complete with spooky décor, red and black Halloween furniture, cracked mirrors, and blood-filled barrels, among its creative "Teddy Scares" plush bears, clothing, and other retail items.

In the **Best Visual—Feature, Focal Display, or Window** category, **Busch Gardens Williamsburg** in Williamsburg, Va., won for "Abby Cadabby's House," a life-like playhouse centered in their retail area for children to enjoy while parents shop nearby. The house contains an imaginative kitchen play set, Sesame Street souvenir racks, benches for young visitors, and detailed renderings of popular Sesame Street character, Abby Cadabby.

Spirit of Excellence awards presented

Six Spirit of Excellence awards were presented by IAAPA during the recently held 2009 IAAPA Attractions Expo in Las Vegas, Nev. The awards recognize IAAPA member-facilities dedicated to excellence in training and professional development and to showcase attractions with leading human resource programs.

Busch Gardens Tampa Bay in Tampa, Fla., won the **Best Employee Recognition Program** category. Its "World Class Summer" program, designed to create a simple yet impactful reward system, incorporated the Guest Satisfaction Challenge, which measured service areas of employee courtesy, park cleanliness, park arrival process, attraction line speed, culinary satisfaction, and merchandise satisfaction. Progress was tracked, published, and rewarded each week, and team members could easily follow results on giant score boards, turning the experience into a friendly competition. Rewards came in the form of free lunches, popsicles, and sodas. As a result of the challenge, team members were consistently engaged in work, maintained a higher level of involvement and sense of ownership in the park, and sustained positive attitudes and high energy performance during the summer season.

Hersheypark, in Hershey, Pa., won the award for **Best Recruitment Program** with its recently transformed hiring process. The park's "TEAM Screen" evaluation assesses applicants based on transportation and availability, expression, appearance, and model communication behaviors. In-park interview session events then create an exciting hiring atmosphere and set a high expectation for guest service. In the past year, 14 interview session events yielded 3,744 scheduled interviews, and newly implemented on-site physicals have made it possible for employees to begin working sooner. Employee service survey scores also increased with the new process. The park employs 350 full-time and 4,056 part-time employees.

Hersheypark also won the award for the **Best Orientation Program**. The park sends a "Welcome to the Sweetest Team on Earth" message to its newly hired employees and its "Onboarding Team," creates an interactive experience for new hires with tools like GameShow Pro computer quizzing software. The orientation program emphasizes the park's culture of mutual respect and illustrates how to present a ser-

vice promise to guests and coworkers. One hundred and fifty orientation sessions are held at Hersheypark throughout the year, with 20 full-time managers in attendance to train employees and encourage program graduates. www.hersheypark.com

Merlin Entertainments Group in Poole, Dorset, U.K., won the award for **Best Supervisor Training Program**, nominated by their Madame Tussauds location in New York City. Founded in 2006, its "Graduate Program" lasts two years and is designed to increase retention while teaching future senior leaders skills and strategies for communication, teamwork, and time and change management. Participants—or "graduates"—in the program are hosted at different Merlin facilities and placed in several roles during the program to learn and train with operations, processes, and histories of each department. Throughout the program, graduates are evaluated by line managers, group training managers, human resources professionals, and graduate managers. Fourteen staff members were hired on from the program in 2006 and 2007, and 12 in 2008.

Conner Prairie Interactive History Park in Fishers, Ind., won the award for **Best Guest Services Training Program**. With its "Opening Doors to Great Guest Experiences" program, the park equips staff to facilitate memorable learning experiences for guests. Around 20 new staffers attend each five-day training course to analyze guest-staff interaction via video, study feedback surveys, and participate in discussions facilitated by Conner Prairie's Experience Managers. Topics include the first interaction between employee and guest, creating engaging experiences, and best practices in family learning at museums and attractions.

The St. Louis Zoo in St. Louis, Mo., won the **Best Safety Awareness Program** award. In 2006 the free-admission facility developed a safety department with the goals of reducing incidents and strengthening confidence in zoo operations. The new programs and services involve drug testing, hands-on fire extinguisher training, vehicle safety training, development of contractor safety handbooks, a First Aid facility, and the creation of a Command Center. The new program has reduced worker compensation premiums at the zoo by 54 percent and loss-time accidents by 900 percent, decreasing from 18 in 2005, to only two in 2008.

MIDWAY

www.AmusementToday.com

CARNIVALS

FAIRS

FESTIVALS

REVENUE

SUPPLIERS

IISA event more than just a shopping trip

There is definitely more than buying and selling going on before, during and after the International Independent Showmen's Association (IISA) Trade Show and Extravaganza, which will run Feb. 9-13.

Aside from the IISA events, two other mobile industry trade associations will be represented and on site, hosting meetings, receptions, and educational workshops.

It is a very busy time.

Business meetings for IISA are held after the trade show. Steve Ianni, Strates Show, will remain the president of the association through the Extravaganza. He is expected to turn over the reins to Larry Nieu Kirk, Sam's Concessions, on Feb. 16.

Moving up the officer chain are Beau Pugh, Reithoffer Shows, first vice president and Mark Popovich, Wade Shows, second vice president. The third vice president was to be elected Jan. 22.

The Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA) will hold its annual meeting and chairman's reception during the Gibtown event.

"This is our 45th annual meeting," said Bob Johnson, OABA president. "We plan to start at 5:30 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 11, at the Crowne Plaza, Tampa East."

▶ See IISA, page 27



Mike Weatherston,
2010 SLA chairman



Larry Nieu Kirk,
2010 IISA president



Dominic Vivona Jr.,
2010 OABA chairman

Carnival owners plan to look for the new and different at Gibtown

Pam Sherborne
Amusement Today

The creative as well as the ingenious exhibitor will most likely be the winner at this year's International Independent Showmen's Association (IISA) Trade Show and Extravaganza, which is set for Feb. 9-13, at the IISA showgrounds in Gibsonton, Fla.

For example, Mike Weatherston, Gold Star Amusements, Minneapolis, plans to do a little window shopping this year.

"I am going to meet with some canvas people and I have some uniform things to handle," Weatherston said. "Other than that, I think I will just see what's shakin'."

Those organizing the event were optimistic in January that the February event would be a good one. It seems the carnival owners are buying. However, many had already made their purchases for the 2010 season.

Weatherston, for example, may "window shop," but he has already purchased one ride for the 2010 season, a Larson Ring of Fire. His son, Michael, has already purchased a new 53-foot trailer from Space Craft. His son will use the trailer for new living quarters.

But, he plans to look just as does Randy Kissel, Kissel Amusement Co., Cincinnati, Ohio. Like Weatherston, he has already made a purchase, an Eli Bridge Scrambler from Durant Enterprises, Dupont,



PHOTO COURTESY KMG

This is a similar ride to the ride Tim Casper, PBJ Happee Day Shows, Marion, Ark., will pick up from KMG at the Gibsonton show. Casper owns the first Inversion-12 in the U.S.

EXHIBITOR LISTING ..PAGE 26

Ohio.

"I will probably finalize it down there," Kissel said. "But, I don't know what else I might buy. I guess we just need to find out what is out there. I have an open mind."

Tim Casper, PBJ Happee Day Shows, Marion, Ark., has already made his purchase, too. He made it quite some time ago.

"I actually made this purchase at the IAAPA (International Association of Amusements Parks and Attractions) show a year ago," Casper said. "I didn't intend on making it then. But, I saw it and really wanted it."

Casper is very excited. He is expected to take pos-

session of the first KMG Inversion-12 ride. That ride will have its exclusive premiere at the Gibsonton show. This first U.S. Inversion is named "Nemesis360," said Peter Theunisz, sales and services, KMG.

"Casper and his son also have ordered the full LED light package, stainless steel fences, and optional hydraulic rams, and more," Theunisz said.

"This is the 12th Inversion-12 that has been manufactured and the first one in the United States," Casper said. "This one goes all the way around. The seats also spin."

Rick Reithoffer, Reithoffer Shows, Gibsonton, Fla., will also take a look at what is interesting at this year's show. He has already purchased a Zamperla Barnyard. He picked it up mid-January.

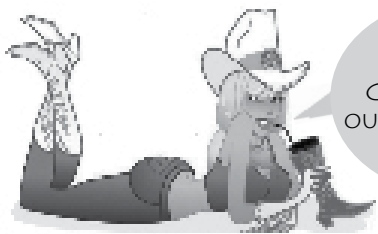
"But, I'll be there to see what is new and what is interesting," Reithoffer said. "I want to take a look at Owens new Fun House. I have spoken with the new owner of Dartron and I plan to be there and meet with him."

Corky Powers, Powers Great American Midways, Burgaw, N.C., will do a little window shopping as well. He has just about everything he actually needs, so if something strikes him, well,...

"In 2009, I bought a Zamperla Balloon ride and a Zamperla Kite Flyer," Powers said. "I also purchased a new Larson Ring of Fire, a Chance

▶ See OWNERS, page 27

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Lots of nostalgia and tradition at the Fort Worth Stock Show

Pam Sherborne
Amusement Today

Mary Talley, Talley Amusements, Fort Worth, Texas, is excited about her new "nostalgic" kiddie rides she has on her show this season.

She was debuting them at the 2010 Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo, Jan. 15-Feb. 7.

Her new rides include: rebuilt Allan Herschel Pony Carts, Cars and Wet Boat Ride; a Hampton ATV; Hampton Alligators; and a Hampton car ride. She had also purchased a Majestic Quadzilla, which she completely refurbished.

"But, these kiddie rides are for me," she said. "I can remember my children riding these rides. They are so cute."

She hoped the visitors at this year's Fort Worth Stock



AT PHOTOS / GARY SLADE

Thanks to an awesome display of night lights, the midway rides by Talley Amusements take on a fun and festive look each night during the Fort Worth [Texas] Stock Show and Rodeo.

Show and Rodeo would enjoy them as much as she is.

The first weekend of the event couldn't have gone better, according to Becky Gibbs, of the event's publicity department.

"We had a great weekend," said Gibbs, on Jan. 18. "We had a sold out performance for the Best of Mexico Celebracion

rodeo and we expect the same thing for the Cowboys of Color Rodeo. The weather was beautiful and sunny. We had 212 entries and 1,744 animals in our parade on Saturday, Jan. 16."

One of the new features this year is the WinStar Rodeo Roadhouse, a club that offers musical entertainment prior to

and following each rodeo.

"We also found some original artwork from the rodeo over the years," Gibbs said. "We enlarged them and hung them along the walls in the coliseum concourse. It looks like a museum in there. We also have created a new cowboy contestant hospitality suite."

Along with the Best of Mexico Celebracion and the Cowboys of Color, the Bull's Night Out rodeo (PRCA's extreme bull riding) and the PRCA rodeo should also prove to be popular.

The show also offers a large variety of exhibits, including a myriad of animal exhibits.

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A - B

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 American Changer Corporation Outside Space
Amusement Today..... *Breezeway Space*
 Anchor Industries Inc..... 415-416 / 515-516
 Audio Innovators, Inc..... 725-726
 B J Toy Company, Inc..... 114-116
 Belshaw Adamatic Bakery Group..... 110
 Berk Enterprises 410-414
 Best Toy Mfg. Ltd. 1018-1020
 Bob's Space Racers Inc..... Outside Space
 Bones Pictures & Toys 1118-1123
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 Buzz Barton - Ice Man 301

C-D

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 Caravans Unlimited, Inc. Outside Space
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 118-125 / 218-219 / 224-225
 Carousels Usa 312
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 Checkers Industrial Safety Products, Inc.....
 Non-Exhibiting Supplier
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 Chipstix Ec Llc..... 1109-1110
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E-F

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 Fajume S.A. De C.V. Outside Space
 Fibre Core Trailers..... Outside Space
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 Forks Rv..... Outside Space
 Frederiksen Industries, Inc. Outside Space

February 9-13

Show hours are 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
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Fred's Tents & Canopies..... 727-728
 Fun & Fun Toys, Inc..... 919-920

G-H

Galaxy Amusement Sales..... Outside Space
 Gloworks Imports, Inc..... 1004-1005
 Goffa International Corp..... 719-721
 Gold Medal Products Co..... 422-424 / 522-524
 Good Stuff Corporation..... 830 / 930
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 Haas & Wilkerson Insurance 618-620
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I-J

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 Image Productions 626-627
 Indiana Ticket Company 722-723
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K-L

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 404-409 / 504-509 / 603-609
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 Nica/National Independent Conc. Assoc. 624

O-P

On Site Signs Ohio 808-809
 On-Site Canvas Products, Inc. 208
 Oregon Rides, Inc. (Dba Ori Ind)..... 316
 Oval Framecraft Inc. 819
 Peek-A-Boo Toys 326-331
 Plh Consulting, Inc..... 812
 Poster Originals..... 318

Q-R

Quick Fuel Fleet Services 813
 Rapsure Concession Trailers Inc. Outside Space
 Red Bone Products, Inc. Outside Space
 Red Bone Products, Inc. 1101-1103
 Rhode Island Novelty Co., Inc. 1023-1030
 Rides-4-U, Inc. Outside Space
 Rocken Graphics 1107-1108

S-T

Safe Strap Company, Inc. 807
 Schantz & Sons Inc. Outside Space
 Shalom Toy Co., Inc. 824-827
 Show Me Fabrication, Inc..... Outside Space
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 Sippers By Design 701
 Sobyco Electric Supply Inc..... Outside Space
 Space Craft Mfg., Inc. Outside Space
 Specialty Insurance Ltd..... 1003
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 Stinson Band Organ Co. Outside Space
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 Summa Inc..... 209
 Sunbelt Capital, Inc. Dba Usedrides.Com. Outside Space
 Taylor Freezer Of Albany Inc. Outside Space
 The Installers..... 621
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Tourist Attractions & Park Magazine *Breezeway Space*
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 Toy Network 912-916 / 1012-1016
 Trailer Connection/RecreationByDesign... Outside Space
 Triangle Poster & Printing Co. 630 / 730
 Truckers Accounting & Permitting Service
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 Twistedmugs.Com / Bayou Billy 321
 Tyaut Designs Company..... 425-426

U-V

Uni-Glide Trailer Co. Outside Space
 Uremet Corporation..... 512
 Urethane Associates Inc. 911
 Victor Products Inc..... 427-428 / 528
 Virginia Toy & Novelty 822-823
 Visa International S.R.L. Outside Space

W-Z

Wapello Fabrications Co. 628
 Wapello Fabrications Co. Outside Space
 Waterloo Tent & Tarp Co., Inc. Outside Space
 Waterloo Tent & Tarp Co., Inc. ... 803-804 / 903-904
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 Wells Cargo, Inc..... Outside Space
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 Wizard Show Painting..... 816
 Worldride Service & Supply Inc. Outside Space
 Zamperla Inc..... Outside Space

► **IISA**

Continued from page 23

During the meeting, the association will recognize the 2010 Hall of Fame inductees, George W. "Billy" Burr, a former carnival owner and current circus fan, and the late Bill Capell, deceased, who was an amusement park owner and a circus owner.

The OABA's Pioneer Award recipient, Bob Cassata, Bob's Space Racers, will also be honored. Wayne McCary, Eastern States Exposition, West Springfield, Mass., and OABA's last year's chairman will preside over the annual meeting. At the end of that meeting, he will turn the gavel over to incoming Chairman Dominic Vivona, Jr., Amusements of America.

Immediately following the meeting, OABA will hold its annual Chairman Reception in honor of Vivona.

When Vivona takes over, Bill Johnson, Fantasy Amusement Company, Arlington Heights, Ill., becomes the first vice chair and Jeanne McDonagh, McDonagh's Amusements, Chesaning, Mich., the second vice chair. The third vice chair will be

elected during the annual meeting.

In addition to holding its annual meeting, the OABA will offer three educational workshops at the IISA Gibtown club this year.

"Tony Cassata and I worked with Ianni to bring these workshops to the show," Johnson said.

The first will be held at 1 p.m., Wed., Feb. 10. It will focus on updates of the Consumer Protection Safety Commission findings and

regulations as they regard to lead and phthalates content in certain products, "especially those that come from China," Johnson said.

The second workshop is expected to be held at 1 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 11. Wayne Pierce, of AdventureLaw, will present it and focus on the wage and hour changes and how to stay within compliance.

The third will be held at 11 a.m., Saturday, Feb. 13. It will focus on LED lights and

how they can best be used. Tom McDonagh, McDonagh's Amusements, Chesaning, Mich., and David Collins, Rides-4-U, Somerville, N.J., will present this workshop.

The Showmen's League of America (SLA) Scholarship Committee will meet at 9 a.m., Friday, Feb. 12., to select recipients for the 2010 year. Following that meeting, at about 10:30 a.m., the Nominating Committee will come together to start the selection process for the club's

next vice chair that will come in next December. At noon, the SLA will hold its Board of Governors meeting.

Mike Weatherston, Gold Star Amusements, Minneapolis, took over as SLA Chairman of the Board at the end of 2009. Rich Byrum, Butler Amusements, Fairfield, Calif., is now first vice chair and Mary Chris Piche, Allied Specialty Insurance, is second vice chair. Chris Atkins, Thomas Carnival, was elected third vice chair late last year.

► **OWNERS**

Continued from page 23

Pharaoh's Fury and A.D. Toler bought a new Vertigo Tower ride which he has booked onto this show exclusively. I also bought a Sellner Dizzy Dragon last year and a couple of new generators. We pretty much have a variety of things. We are starting to replace some of our older rides with newer versions.

"And, we are always looking for something new," he said. "We like to get a couple or three rides every year."

Jake Inners, Majestic Midways, York, Pa., said he will be at the Gibtown show, but he plans to do more vacationing than actual shopping. He has already purchased a Zamperla Mini Jet and a new Gull Wing 450-kilowatt generator. He has also purchased a used Chance Sky Diver that he plans to completely refurbish.

"And, I have purchased a Wisdom Himalaya," Inners said. "It was supposed to be shipped to Gibtown so I could pick up there. But, they have gotten behind so I will get it a little later."

Tom Atkins, Thomas Carnival, Austin, Texas, said he will be at Gibsonton this year.

"We are looking to replace our Gravitron," he said. "That is all we are really planning to do."

"I personally think this ride is a winner!"
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Vander Vorste plans to get Windstorm on the 2010 route

Rides-4-U and Itat International partner up to sell some rides

Pam Sherborne
Amusement Today

In mid-January, independent ride operator Steve Vander Vorste, from New Braunfels, Texas, still had three semis waiting for him on the west coast filled with parts of his new ride, two in California and one in Seattle, Wash., the latter the origin of the caravan.

It was to have eventually taken 10 loads to get the Windstorm, a steel coaster by S.D.C., which had been in operation at Fun Forest Amusement Park, Seattle, since 1993 to Vander Vorste's

shop in New Braunfels.

Vander Vorste purchased the coaster in late December. It was announced late last year that Fun Forest would close. Itat International, Nashville, Tenn., and Rides-4-U, Somerville, N.J., had the exclusive to sell the larger rides for park owner Steve Robertson.

The deal worked out was more of a trade, said Carlo Guglielmi, Itat International, making it a little complicated. But, whatever the details, Vander Vorste now plans to completely restore the coaster and get it out on the road for the 2010 season.

"Not only will we be doing a complete sprucing up, there are some things you have to do to a ride that has been permanent before you can make it portable," Vander Vorste said. "The electrical part has to be changed. We will put all the electrics into one trailer. And, we are still looking at the other things we might possibly do."

One possibility is installing magnetic brakes before the 2010 season starts. Vander Vorste likes the existing sign so there are no plans to change the ride's name.

"We will paint it, but we
▶ See COASTER, page 29

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► COASTER

Continued from page 28

haven't chosen the colors yet," he said. "I think I will get my family to help with that. This renovation will be a family affair."

The Windstorm, which has 1,445 feet of track length and is about 52 feet high at its highest point, will most likely take eight to 10 trailers to move from date to date. His Crazy Mouse coaster takes six semis to move.

The Italian ride manufacturer S.D.C. is now out of business. Reports throughout the years stated that when the Windstorm was operating, it was the leading ride at Fun Forest.

"In the '60s, S.D.C. made a ride called the Galaxy," Vander Vorste said. "The Windstorm was the newer version. There are four other Windstorms in the U.S., one at Santa Cruz Beach (Calif.) Boardwalk; Old Town, Kissimmee, Fla.; Celebration City, Branson, Mo. (moving to Wild Adventures, Valdosta, Ga.) and in Adventureland, Long Island. This one will be the first portable."

After the fair ended, Fun Forest was developed replacing the fair's midways area. The five acres of Fun Forest are at the base of the Space Needle landmark observation tower.

Robertson said the land is owned by the city which has plans to develop it. He now has sold all of his major rides. He will keep the kiddie rides and the pavilion used for the bumper boats for now. He will stay open through Labor Day weekend 2010.

"I've been here for 42 years," Robertson said. "It is just time to do something else."

Len Soled, Rides-U, said his company and Ital International partner for the sale of rides from time to time. The two companies also have exclusive rights to sell the rides at Cypress Gardens, Fla., and Astroland Amusement Park, Brooklyn, N.Y.

"We sold Fun Forest's Music Express, by S.D.C., and the Tivoli Orbiter to Butler Amusements, Fairfield, Calif.," Soled said. "The Zamperla Galleon went to Oscar's Amusements (Birdsboro, Pa.)."

The park's Chance Century Wheel went to David Helm, Helm & Sons Amusements in Colton, Calif.

Robertson said Zamperla

purchased the Reverchon flume ride called the Wild River.

"Zamperla plans to recondition it and then send it to Argentina," he said. "I will now take deposits on the kiddie rides, but they can't be moved until after September."

In mid-January, Vander Vorste didn't have any signed contracts for the Windstorm, but he expected to get it out on the road quite a lot.

"I hope it will be an exciting ride," he said.



AT FILE/PHOTO COURTESY STEVE VANDER VORSTE

The S.D.C. Windstorm coaster (above left) as seen in operation at Fun Forest Amusement Park in Seattle, Wash. is moving to Texas where new owner Steve Vander Vorste will take the coaster out on the road after a complete rehab. Above right, the rehab begins with the baseline grid that the coasters support structure mounts to.



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