

AMUSEMENT TODAY TM

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Busch Tampa introduces new IntaRide LSM triple launch coaster

STORY: Scott Rutherford
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

TAMPA, Fla. — Central Florida is well known as the theme park capital of the world. While Orlando is the undisputed nexus of this thrill-centric universe, Busch Gardens Tampa (BGT) is a glittering satellite on the Sunshine State's west coast. BGT's entry into the 2011 thrill ride market is Cheetah Hunt, a 4,429-foot-long IntaRide triple launch LSM steel roller coaster designed to mimic the speed and agility of the world's fastest land mammal.

Like its namesake inspiration, Cheetah Hunt is an eerily quiet beast. Aside from the brief, high-pitch whine of the launches, Cheetah Hunt works its magic in near silence, charging with absolute power and precision. It doesn't matter if the train is leaping over obstacles, streaking through darkened trenches or skimming over the water, spectators don't hear this cunning feline coming until its already upon them.

To accommodate Cheetah Hunt, BGT engineers converted the historic monorail and Skyride station (located in the Crown Colony Plaza area) into the coaster's queuing, load/unload station and maintenance facility, which is located on the lower level. The ride covers a lot of real estate,



The centerpiece of Busch Gardens Tampa's 2011 expansion is Cheetah Hunt, an IntaRide LSM triple launch coaster that uses the force of repelling magnets to propel riders from 0 to 60 mph in a matter of seconds. The 4,429-foot-long coaster features three separate launches and this signature 'dream catcher' 10-story tower element.

AT/SCOTT RUTHERFORD



taking guests on a high-speed tour of the park's Serengeti Plain, which is home to several of Busch Gardens' large free-roaming animals.

The Cheetah Hunt experience

The ride begins with a

quick launch right out of the station that sends the train around a graceful fan turn and into the first of five subterranean trenches. It's here that Cheetah Hunt kicks into overdrive as the longest set of LSMs fire, rocketing the train

▶ See **BUSCH**, page 5



Alabama Adventure has opened Buzzsaw Falls, a Shoot-the-Chute ride from N.H.-based Skytrans Mfg. The ride opened on May 28 to great response, despite the area still in recovery from an April 27 EF5 tornado.

COURTESY ALABAMA ADVENTURE

Alabama Adventure opens Buzzsaw Falls

STORY: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

BESSEMER, Ala. — Alabama Adventure Water & Theme Park opened its new attraction, Buzzsaw Falls, May 28, to a great response.

Now, park officials have found themselves in a unique

position of being able to provide some needed relief for the entire community as residents continue the healing process of the EF5 tornado that passed less than three miles from the park on April 27. The tornado, which started in Tuscaloosa, Ala., continued its destructive

▶ See **ALABAMA**, page 5

NEWSPAPER

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EDITORIAL: Gary Slade, gslade@amusementtoday.com

Busch Tampa did it right



Slade

It's so nice to see a U.S. theme park doing the right thing.

At a time when many of the nation's themers are buried in opening rides, coasters and other attractions themed to superheros, cartoon characters or movies, it's nice to see a park giving a ride and area a theme that has nothing to do with licensed characters.

Such is the case with the new Cheetah Hunt launch coaster and Cheetah Run area at Busch Gardens Tampa, where the park has used nature as its latest theming backdrop.

Video panels and interactive touch-screen stations help educate visitors of the plight of cheetahs in the wild and why their numbers have dwindled to between 10,000 and 12,500 worldwide. Guests also now learn about Busch Gardens' partnership with the Cheetah Conservation Fund in South Africa and how CCF's efforts have helped build defense for cheetah populations, both in their native lands and around the globe.

Busch Gardens supports the conservation of cheetahs via the SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund, which has donated almost \$100,000 to cheetah efforts in Africa since 2005.

Guests go to theme parks to be entertained and to enjoy a story told through exhibits or through a themed ride experience. Busch Gardens has done just that with their new Cheetah Run area where guests see cheetahs up close and get to see a sample of their speed. Thrillseekers are entertained as well on the Cheetah Hunt coaster, which simulates the burst of speed for which cheetahs are known.

Thank you to Busch Gardens Tampa Bay for telling us an entertaining story. Your attention to detail is a breath of fresh air. —Gary Slade

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

CARTOON: Bubba Flint



EDITORIAL: Scott Rutherford, srutherford@amusementtoday.com

Summertime, sweet summertime



Rutherford

The off-season has passed and that special time of year those of us in the amusement industry live for is finally upon us. Though I dearly love the crisp nights of autumn and look forward to colorful foliage and the promise of holidays to come at year's end, it is *this* time I most enjoy. Long days of endless blue skies over crowded midways and fairgrounds is our reward for the cold and snow many of us endured during the downtime.

Whether you're "Goin' down the shore" or headed to "The beach," those and other similar phrases evoke the same emotional response: a feeling of anticipation and simple joy at the prospect of finding something amusement-related for entertainment at the ocean. The true seaside amusement park is a destination that exemplifies all that is summer. While inland parks and traveling shows are wonderful in their own right, there's something special about parks that hug the coastlines. I'm fortunate to be employed in a capacity that requires me to experience many such locations. And now my job has brought me to one

of those very special places.

A warm ocean breeze and the excited cry of a wheeling gull fills the morning air as I write this on the fifth-floor balcony of a classic 1950s hotel overlooking the broad expanse of white sand and blue-green water that make up the Wildwood, New Jersey landscape. In the distance, the silhouette of a wooden roller coaster and a Ferris Wheel on Morey's Piers both rise up through a light fog that will soon burn off. At rest in the rising sun, those rides and all the others patiently wait for the stroke of noon when they will awaken and accept their first eager passengers of the day.

Next stop on this working vacation is Seaside Heights and its two piers followed by visits to other amusement centers on the Jersey shore and points north. And then we hit that hallowed strip of ocean-side real estate in Brooklyn where it all began – Coney Island. That legend by the sea is making a comeback thanks to the efforts of those stalwarts who've stuck it out over the dark years, and the newcomers eager to make their own mark. This summer is starting off just the way I like it.

So here's to wishing everyone fair skies and good luck.

Have a great season!

AMUSEMENT TODAY STAFF

Gary Slade, Founder
Publisher and Editor-in-Chief
(817) 460-7220
gslade@amusementtoday.com

Stacey Childress
Web & Graphic Design
(817) 889-4441
schildress@affinitymm.com

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

Tim Baldwin
Editorial
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

Pam Sherborne
Editorial
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

Scott Rutherford
Editorial
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

Bubba Flint
Cartoonist
bflint@amusementtoday.com

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

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

Beth Jenkins
Advertising
(615) 794-7288
bjenkins@amusementtoday.com

AMUSEMENT TODAY

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

Member of:
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Contributors: Andrew Mellor, Richard Munch, Jeffrey L. Seifert, Janice Witherow, WHR Inc.

2 MINUTE DRILL



COMPILED: Janice Witherow

Jeff Filicko - Kennywood

Jeff Filicko didn't plan a career in the amusement industry. A graduate of Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, he first worked for his alma mater in the Public Affairs Department where he wrote for the university's publications and coordinated various media projects. At Kennywood since 2007, Jeff is the park's Public Relations Department of one, which has allowed him to learn a lot in a short amount of time. Jeff is fitting right in to the industry and upon meeting him, you get the feeling he is enjoying every minute of it.



Title
Public Relations Manager.

Number of years with Kennywood
4 years.

Best thing about the industry

The people. I've discovered that people working in the amusement industry have a unique passion for their work and are generally more fun to be around.

Favorite amusement ride

Any Bavarian Wave Swinger at night.

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

Hanging out with my other friends that do nothing but complain about how much they hate their job.

Biggest challenge facing our industry...

The evolving presence of social media and the many new ways we interact with our guests. Social media creates a connection with guests that goes beyond an operating season.

The thing I like most about amusement/water park season is ...

The thrill and excitement of opening day. The second most exciting thing would be the last day of the season!

My favorite catchphrase is ...

I love it when a plan comes together.

Three things people visiting Pittsburgh must see are ...

The view of the city from Mt. Washington, The Andy Warhol Museum and Kennywood, of course.

The celebrity who annoys me the most is ...

Snooki.



Filicko

Name something you love that no one else seems to like

The Cleveland Browns (I live in Pittsburgh... need I say more?).

I would spend an extra day off a week doing this ...

Spending time with my nieces and nephews.

Worst summer cleaning chore

Laundry...it's the worst any time of the year.

All-time favorite sports team

Cleveland Indians and Cleveland Browns.

People say I remind them of ...

Noah Wyle (from ER). I knew I should have been a doctor!

It's July! On the Fourth of July you can find me ...

Working and watching fireworks at Kennywood

My favorite things to wear are ...

My Lo-Top Chuck Taylor's.

If I could have lunch with anyone in the world, it would be ...

Jimmy Buffett.

The ultimate summertime song is ...

Margaritaville.

I would love to be famous for ...

My cooking.

The TV show I just can't get enough of is ...

Scrubs.

The last thing I saw on You Tube was ...

A trailer for the movie "Super 8."

Best food when it's hot outside

Cold beer (that's a food, right?).

When I say Lady Gaga, you say ...

No, thanks.

If I could snap my fingers and be anywhere, I would go to ...

The Beach Bar at the Postcard Inn on the Beach in St. Petersburg, Fla.

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

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•**1901:** Police stopped the operation of the new Loop-the-Loop ride in **Coney Island**, Brooklyn, N.Y. on July 22, though no specific reason was given. Some believe that the police had received calls that the ride was too dangerous, although not one death was ever reported on the ride. It closed after 10 seasons to make room for the Giant Coaster — the largest coaster ever built in Coney Island.

•**1910: Bergen Beach Park**, Brooklyn, N.Y. had a devastating fire on July 26, which consumed the hotel, the Opera House and the L.A. Thompson Scenic Railway. One of several Brooklyn parks that attempted to compete with Coney Island, it limped along for a few years then fell into disrepair until the Belt Parkway was built in 1938.

•**1917: The Leap Frog Railway** was finally completed at Cedar Point, in Sandusky, Ohio in late July 1917. It opened roughly two months late due to numerous delays in the delivery of building materials, and is one of only a handful of American coasters to open during the latter stages of World War I.

•**1924:** The only **Dip-Lo-Do-Cus** ride ever operated in the United States, was tested for the first time on July 3, at Olympic Park, in Irvington, N.J. The John A. Miller design, a combination coaster and Virginia Reel, opened the following day after being pronounced safe by local inspectors who had never seen anything like it.

•**1926:** On July 4, in Elysburg Pa., the **Crystal Pool** opened at what used to be known as the Knoebel Farm. The opening of the pool marked the formal beginning of what is now Knoebels Amusement Resort.

•**1938:** On July 22, officials from the New York World's Fair announced the plans for the novel 250-Foot high **Parachute Jump**, to be included at the Fair's lakeside amusement park. After a two-year run, the Tilyou family would purchase and move it to their Steeplechase Park, in Coney Island, Brooklyn, N.Y. for the 1941 season. Although inoperative, it still stands today and is a New York City Landmark.

•**1944:** Fire swept through the 1914-built **Old Mill** ride at Elitch Gardens, Denver, Colorado, on July 16. Six persons were killed, two of them employees who had rushed into the tunnel to rescue the riders.

•**1969:** The **Timber Mountain Log Ride** opened at Knott's Berry Farm on July 11 as the first elaborately-themed Arrow log flume. Most of the ride is enclosed in an artificial mountain, which was designed, built and for several years operated by Bud Hurlbut. The Timber Mountain Log Ride remains one of the most popular attractions at the park.

—Compiled by Jeffrey L. Seifert/AT and Richard Munch/NRCMA

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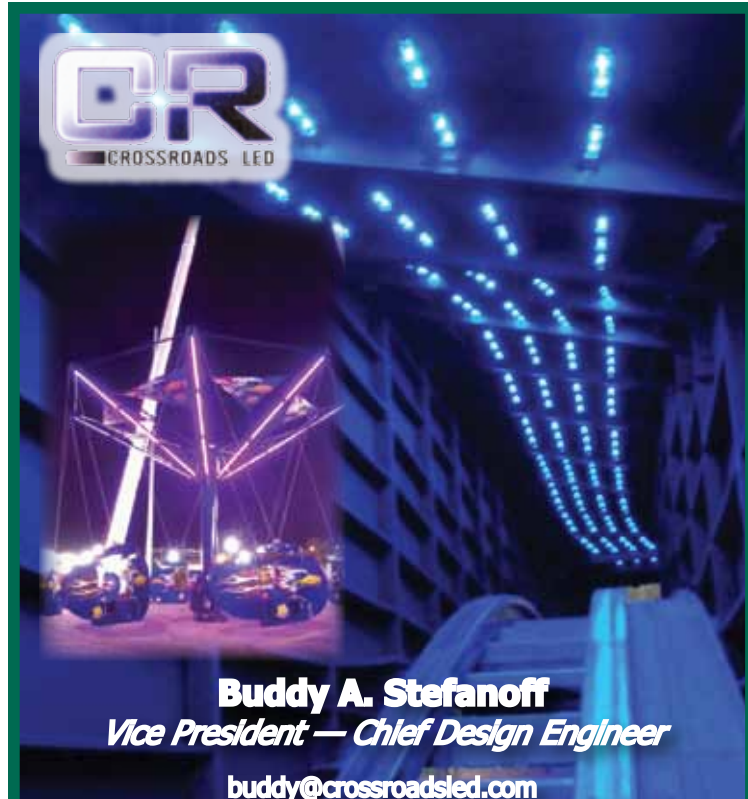
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OBITUARIES

Archie E. Brotzman Jr., owner of AEB Amusements dies at 70

Archie E. Brotzman, Jr., 70, of Williams Township, Pa., passed away on May 30, 2011 in Schuylkill Medical Center South, Pottsville, Pa. He and his wife, the former Dottie Lawson, celebrated their 29th wedding anniversary on April 1, 2011. Brotzman was the owner and operator of AEB Amusements, Easton, Pa., for over 50 years.

In addition to his wife, Dottie, he is survived by four sons, Christopher, of Perry Hall, Md., Adam, of Greencastle, Pa., Aaron and Archie IV Bubba, both at home; four daughters, Angela Skirnski and her husband Andy, of Roanoke, Vir., Audrey, of Thiells, N.Y., Amanda Turille and her husband Brian, of Omaha, Neb., and Ashlee Brotzman, at home; two brothers, Roger, of Easton, Pa., and Jerry, of Stockertown, Pa.; a sister, Elizabeth Ritter, of Allentown, Pa; five grandsons and four great-grandchildren.

Services were held at 10 a.m., June 2, the Strunk Funeral Home, Wilson Borough, Pa., with burial at the convenience of the family in St. Johns Union Cemetery, Williams Township, Pa.

Richard L. "Dick-O" Mueller of R.L. Mueller Popcorn passes away

Richard L. Mueller, Sr. "Dick-O," of R.L. Mueller Popcorn & Supply Co., St. Louis, Mo., died May 10, 2011. Started over 40 years ago, Mueller's company had been supplying the amusement industry with products ranging from popcorn machines and ice shavers to cotton

candy mix and nacho sauce. He was a WWII 8th Air Force Veteran and member of the Moolah Shrine. He is survived by his wife Dolores T. Mueller; children: Gayle (Michael) Eastman, Laurie (John) Lardner and Richard L. (Connie) Mueller, Jr; four grandchildren and sister Ruth Taschler.

Services were held at the Hutchens Mortuary in St. Louis. Internment was at the Salem Lutheran Cemetery.

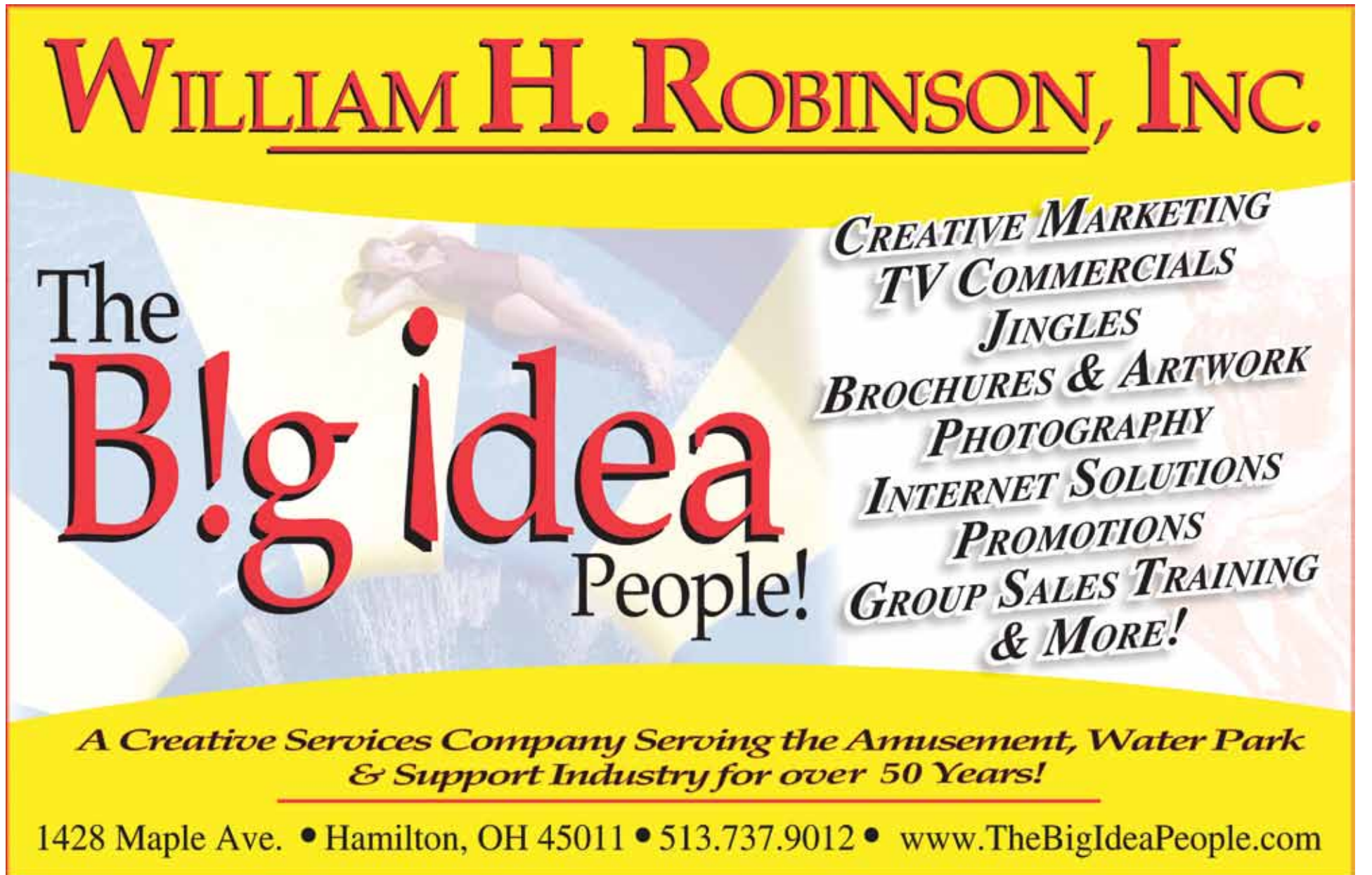
Frieda Foertsch, Holiday World flower lady dies at 100

The Holiday World family is mourning the loss of long-time employee and friend, Frieda Foertsch, who passed away June 5 at an Evansville assisted living facility.

Foertsch, who retired from Holiday World in 2009 at the age of 98, began her long career at the park in 1954. Over the decades, Frieda worked in many departments, including admissions and foods; she even sewed Santa suits. In more recent years, she was known as the "flower lady" who saw to it that the park's blooms were watered and weeded.

"Frieda was such a smart, strong woman," says park matriarch Pat Koch. "Her devotion to the park and kind humor provided an inspiration to us all."

Foertsch was born in Evansville in September of 1910 and moved to Spencer County in 1942. In the year 2000, she was named Indiana's Outstanding Older Worker and was included in a "60 Minutes" segment about older workers.



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►ALABAMA

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path for 154 miles. It caused the death of 240 people (the latest count as of June 1) and caused total devastation over a wide swath of land.

Season opening was delayed for one week out of respect to those affected by the storm.

But, in great fashion, the park opened May 7 and on May 28 the new attraction, a Shoot-the-Chute by SkyTrans Manufacturing, LLC, Contoocook, N.H., took center stage. Reaction has been tremendous, said General Manager E.J. Randolph.

"As many of our guests have told us, they are grateful we are so close and can provide a needed break from the rebuilding," Randolph said. "We are now sensing a 'get back to normal' feeling in the area. As one can imagine, the road to recovery for our guests and team members will be a long process."

Buzzsaw Falls now sits in an area close to the front gate that hasn't been used in several years.

"It was the site of a former outdoor walk through dinosaur attraction," Randolph said. "By placing the attraction in this location, we were also able to tie areas of the park into a more sensible layout without dead ends in a couple of spots."

By opening this attraction, management addressed survey responses from guests. Guests wanted a new ride in the park and they wanted something that would keep them cool in the hot Alabama summers. The Shoot-the-Chute gave the park a thrill ride and a water attraction rolled into one. And, as the waterpark in Alabama Adventure, called Splash Beach Water Park, is the signature draw, the new attraction was a perfect fit.

Buzzsaw Falls is the first major expansion at Alabama Adventure since 2005, although the park did install a WhiteWater West Industries Boomerango attraction in 2009.

The track length of Buzzsaw Falls is 610 feet. It takes riders up to a height of five stories before plunging down the chute into the splash pool producing massive waves that soak riders and onlookers alike.

The Shoot-the-Chute at Alabama Adventure has two boats with a maximum of 20 passengers per boat. That gives it the capability of supplying

rides to up to 1,000 passengers per hour.

Randolph said early on in the planning stages of the ride, they became aware of some Shoot-the-Chute boats that were no longer in use at Six Flags Great Adventure, Jackson, N.J.

"We had the boats sent to SkyTrans to determine if they could be refurbished or retrofitted, but decided to go ahead and purchase two new boats instead," he said.

Alicia Vincent Rohan, promotions manager, said it took about 15 months to construct the new attraction, from conceptualization to the finished product.

"Guests really seem to love the ride," Vincent Rohan said. "A few phrases I have heard as I have seen guests coming off the ride are, 'That ride was awesome,' 'This ride is what Alabama Adventure needed,' and 'Wow. We are soaked. That is the best ride ever.'"

The park even has fans following the new ride opening on Facebook.

"Attendance has been great as well," Vincent Rohan continued. "When Buzzsaw Falls opened, we saw a bump in attendance."

Management hopes that the positive response continues throughout the season, even in a time when so much has been lost in the community. Long-time industry veteran Larry Cochran oversees the park that is owned by Adrenaline Family Entertainment Inc. He told *AT* last month that he actually saw the tornado before seeking shelter. He spoke of the destruction.

Alabama Adventure donated \$3,710 from its opening weekend ticket sales to the American Red Cross. Park officials also donated four pallets of goods to the local emergency management authority. The park's maintenance team helped with debris removal.

"Our hearts go out to those families and team members who have a challenging road in front of them," Randolph said. "We are hopeful that when they do visit us, they can smile a bit more than they've been able to."

Alabama Adventure has 65 rides and attractions on its 90-acre location just outside Birmingham, Ala., including the Rampage wooden coasters, which places annually in *Amusement Today's* Golden Ticket Awards.

►BUSCH

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to its top speed of 60 mph. At the end of this corridor, the train abruptly leaps up and out of the trench, climbing almost vertically to a height of 102 feet into the coaster's signature 'dream catcher' tower element. Here, riders are treated to a swirling figure-eight maneuver that allows them to enjoy views of the park and downtown Tampa ... but only for an instant.

After this brief respite, the train plunges nearly 130 feet — the longest, steepest drop — into the second trench that pulls out beneath the tracks of the Serengeti Railway. Climbing upward once again, the train arcs completely over the park's Von Roll Skyride. A dip below a pedestrian pathway is followed by Cheetah Hunt's sole inversion, a graceful heartline roll that feeds directly into the block brake.

Next, riders are treated to one of the Cheetah Hunt's most impressive thematic elements. The train banks to the right and dives down into what was once part of the Rhino Rally course. Rushing past surging waterfalls, the train deftly weaves and snakes through a rocky canyon just above the river's surface. Once out of the canyon, the final set of LSMs propel the train up to 55 mph and into a perfectly shaped camel-back hill designed to produce the maximum amount of airtime.

From here, the train begins its final sprint home. After several high-speed dives, twists and turns, Cheetah Hunt finishes with a powerful left-hand dip-and-hop into the home brakes.

The inspiration behind Cheetah Hunt

Amusement Today spoke with Mark Rose, BGT vice president of design and engineering, about the concept and inspiration behind the Cheetah Hunt project.

AT: Why was this area chosen for the new coaster?

Mark Rose: "I've been thinking about the location of this coaster since 2000 when we took the monorail out of this building. I always wanted to re-purpose it as a loading station for a some type of coaster."

What was your inspiration for the Cheetah Hunt experience?



Busch Gardens Tampa's new Cheetah Hunt launch coaster features beautifully themed rockwork and a waterfall landscape area midway through the ride. Other highlights of the coaster include cheetah themed trains, shown at left, and one heartline inversion, shown below. AT/TIM BALDWIN



"Believe it or not, *Star Wars*. Specifically, a scene in *Episode VI: Return of the Jedi* where they're on the planet with the Ewoks and they get those speeder bikes and go racing through the forest. They're going around things very close, and I wondered what it'd be like to build a coaster that could simulate that action. We knew we'd need some type of technology that would allow us to launch close to the ground. Then we thought about what kind of animal display would we bring to the project, and we came up with cheetahs as our first choice. We combined the two and it's a perfect marriage."

Why was Intamin/IntaRide selected for this project?

"We interviewed a num-

ber of ride providers including B&M and others, but we found that Intamin had perfected the technology; they met our expectations. We benchmarked other coasters and we thought if we could take this system and utilize it the way Busch Gardens does things, we would have a really sweet ride. And I think we've done that."

At what point was it decided to use the old Rhino Rally section?

"For many years, I've contemplated what it would be like if we had this low-to-the-ground coaster that could use the old 'raging river' section of Rhino Rally. I always imagined how cool it would be for riders to suddenly, halfway through the ride, find themselves racing through a

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►BUSCH

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canyon, past rock-work right above the water surface. It's just another part of this ride that worked out very well."

Why was just a single inversion included on this ride?

"Our original idea was to create a ride that stayed close to the ground and mimicked how a Cheetah behaves, including the inherent speed and grace. From the start, we didn't want an aggressive ride that inverts riders multiple times like Montu and

Kumba. I think that heart-line roll is just one sweet element. Like we did with the Skyride going under the coaster, it was something else we added to catch riders off guard and surprise them."

How many trains can operate simultaneously?

"We can run a total of five, four-car trains at the same time. This is possible because of the dual loading station we specifically requested. Montu and Kumba both load 32 riders in each of their trains. Cheetah Hunt offers nearly the same capacity thanks to us loading two 16-passenger trains

at once. With an approximate 85-second dispatch, we can approach an hourly capacity in the 1,400s."

How massive are the power requirements for Cheetah Hunt?

"This ride does use a lot of electricity to power the stators and the rest of the systems. We have three separate control rooms to handle each of the launches. It's far more complicated than some of our other coasters. At one point during the construction, I started to refer to it as a 'machine' instead of a coaster. It really is an impressive operation that

performs beautifully."

From the president

Jim Dean, BGT president, summed up his park's newest resident: "This is our company's very first LSM launch roller coaster. The beauty of Cheetah Hunt is its 48-inch height requirement. We envisioned the ride as an 'extreme family coaster.' It's thrilling for older family members and coaster fans, of course, but it's also the first 'extreme' coaster for that 8-10 year-old demographic," said Dean. "Cheetah Hunt builds on our unrivaled ability to combine thrills with

immersive animal encounters. Our goal of this attraction was to allow guests to connect in a physical way with the speed, grace and agility of the cheetah."

Such is the magic of Cheetah Hunt. The end result is a highly accessible and re-ridable roller coaster that leaves riders not battered and windblown — like some more intense thrillers — but exhilarated and amazed by what they've just experienced. And, apparently, that was Busch Gardens' intention all along.

Busch's themed Cheetah Run complements new coaster attraction

STORY: Tim Baldwin

tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

TAMPA, Fla. — As they demonstrated all so well with Manta at sister park SeaWorld Orlando in 2009, Busch Gardens Tampa has implemented the company philosophy of incorporating new coaster attractions within new animal experiences for the park guests.

Deservedly ranked among America's top zoos, guests to Busch Gardens have a new environment to enjoy. The main thoroughfare through the new Cheetah Run area brilliantly traverses centrally through the Cheetah Hunt roller coaster's main launch and an elongated habitat where actual cheetahs exhibit their speed in displays throughout the day. Almost as if racing the coaster, cheetahs actually demonstrate their speed and agility several times daily showing guests just how fast they really are. A simple canyon like trench separates the felines from observers so visitors can feel very up close and personal with the exotic cats. For a more nose to nose experience, there are 12 glass viewing windows that allow guests of any age to get within an inch of the captivating animals.

Throughout the day, Busch Gardens' animal care experts conduct sprints with the cheetahs using a motorized lure system to stimulate the cats' natural instinct to chase. A 220-foot run path slices through the habitat stretching long enough for any of the 13 adult cheetahs to run at top speed, which can be 70 mph when hunting — the fastest of



Left to right: With 90 percent of the cheetah population having been lost in the last 100 years, Busch Gardens has joined forces with the Cheetah Conservation Fund. In the new Cheetah Run area, guest get close and personal with the cheetahs via these viewing windows. Busch Gardens also created this cheetah running area that lets the animals show off their 70 mph speed to park guests. AT/TIM BALDWIN

all land mammals, according to the Cheetah Conservation Fund. Busch partners with this organization and through exhibits, video touch screens, signage and interactions with animal experts, guests can develop further respect and admiration for the oldest of all African big cats. Over the past 100 years, the cheetah population has decreased by 90 percent and Busch Gardens hopes to help educate and enlighten visitors to aid in the conservation of these amazing animals. Today, the cheetah population has dwindled to 10,000 to 12,500 worldwide.

The entire new area has a welcoming environment. While the wide open space of the habitat features more than 11,000 square feet of grassland, as well as a waterfall, rock formations and shaded alcoves, there is also a presence of temple ruins in the area giving the space a sense of exotic mystery. This contin-

ues on into the themed station for the roller coaster where sculpted pillars and a rocky cheetah statue bring new life to a structure that was once a monorail station until 2000.

Amusement Today talked with Mike Boos, vice president of zoological operations for Busch Gardens, and asked how long he had to envision the animal portion of the new area. "From day one," Boos immediately relates. "When we decided to redesign this realm here, a ride and animal component was always part of that." He beams, "It's been many years in the making and it has turned out great, I think."

Although rides are the most popular elements at the park, Jim Dean, president of Busch Gardens and Adventure Island, says, "There are some people that come here and don't have any interest in riding. Our animal interactions are very important. As

are our shows. We have that nice balance of all three."

Interacting rides with animals seems to be Busch's forte, but with Cheetah Run, other considerations were in place. Boos adds, "The ride is very quiet; we did that on purpose. When the coaster goes by the animals, it's encased in a building. The supports are also filled with sand to cut down the reverberation, so it remains quiet. When showcasing these animals, we wanted to do it in the right way."

The theming also translates on the signature tower of the coaster. Colorful banners and the tree like motif disguise the typical stark appearance of coaster supports. Dean comments, "The tower is probably the most iconic thing in the park now. It fits perfectly into this realm." In re-using the old monorail station, Dean adds, "It was an underutilized asset in the park. It was a historic build-

ing in the park and we put a new face on it and rethemed it." Dean adds, "It really balances our park now. You don't want your park lopsided with attractions and it helps balance traffic flow."

Accenting the guest experience is street entertainment. Themed dancers, snake handlers, artists, an African band, or such similar performers can engage the visitor on any particular day in the themed area.

When Busch Gardens Tampa opened Jungala in 2008, incorporating animals that included orangutans and tigers into an interactive viewing environment, the park interwove a couple of simple rides and play areas wonderfully well. Today, the new Cheetah Run and Cheetah Hunt roller coaster build upon that expertise and have created a new world class attraction for the visitors that have come to enjoy the park.



INTERNATIONAL

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BRIEF

Larson Intl. delivers Super Shot tower to Saudi Arabia

SAUDI ARABIA — Larson International, Plainview, Texas, has confirmed delivery of the company's tower drop ride to the Al-Shallal Theme Park in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

The Super Shot ride opened on June 2, 2011. Seating 12 passengers, it stands 130 feet tall and includes a custom sphere at the top of the tower. Computer controlled LED lights, supplied by Oklahoma-based Crossroads LED, provided the vibrant multicolor lighting on the ride tower and sphere that was requested by the customer.

"The park requested the brightest, most vibrant orange color we could find for the tower structure," said Jeff Novotny, co-owner of Larson. "Crossroads LED was able to create a color you really want to view only with sunglasses!"

The tower, the first of its kind in the entire Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, provided its share of challenges Larson had to overcome.

"Getting our staff into the country was the most difficult travel experience we have encountered as it required getting a letter of invitation, having a Visa approved, sending the staff passports off to the Saudi Embassy in Washington, D.C. to be translated, and granting the Saudi's per-

► See LARSON, page 11

Ben 10 – Ultimate Mission opens at Drayton Manor

Unique Vekoma coaster leads host of developments at U.K. park

STORY: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

UNITED KINGDOM — A brand new junior roller coaster themed on Cartoon Network's hugely popular Ben 10 children's adventure cartoon character, was officially opened on April 23 at the U.K.'s Drayton Manor Theme Park.

Ben 10 – Ultimate Mission, supplied by Dutch company Vekoma Rides Manufacturing, is based on the company's junior coaster system and takes its design influences from the classic Vekoma Boomerang coaster, but without the inversions of the larger ride. It features an out and back track layout that first takes riders

on a forward facing tour of the track before they return along the same route traveling backwards.

The attraction is fully themed on Ben 10 and his adventures and guests are immersed in the storyline as soon as they enter the main queue line area, all of which is inside. Riders enter Asmath's laboratory where they learn that the earth is under attack from the evil Vilgax. Interactive screens provide information on the show and opportunities to play games while in the queuing area, as Asmath also speaks to guests on TV monitors.

Moving out of the laboratory, guests then enter the Alien Chamber and are immersed in an alien world as a host of effects including laser beams, flashing lights and warning alerts create the desired atmosphere. From here, they move into the load-



Pictured on the opening day of the new Ben 10 - Ultimate Mission coaster are (from l to r): Dan Tippetts and Dean Weal from theming company Meticulous Ltd.; Drayton Manor's Edward Pawley; Stefan Holtman from Vekoma Rides Manufacturing; Drayton Manor Managing Director Colin Bryan; Neil Beniston from building contractor DF Beniston, and Graham Saltmarsh, U.K. licensing director at Turner Enterprises Cartoon Network.

COURTESY DRAYTON MANOR THEME PARK

ing station to embark on their "mission."

The new coaster, which covers a total area of 60 meters by 22.5 meters in the Aerial Park section of the park, features a 180 meter long track

which rises to 20.5 meters at its highest point. A single train incorporates 10, two-seater coaches, each seat having its own individual lap bar and a very 'open' design. The train

► See BEN 10, page 9

The Gravity Group scores hit with Gröna Lund's new Twister coaster



A major highlight of Gröna Lund's 129th anniversary season is Twister, an ultra-compact wooden roller coaster supplied by The Gravity Group/Gravitykraft Corp.

COURTESY GRÖNA LUND

STORY: Scott Rutherford
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—*Twister*. There could not have been a more appropriate name chosen for the new-for-2011 wooden roller coaster The Gravity Group/Gravitykraft Corp. designed and built for Sweden's Gröna Lund. A major highlight of the park's 129th anniversary season, this new ultra-compact coaster's name illustrates its nature in every sense of the word.

Amusement Today spoke with Gröna Lund's Peter Osbeck about the inception and challenges in creating *Twister*. "Gröna Lund's last wooden coaster was removed in 1965. And since then, there's

► See GRÖNA, page 10



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Italy's Gardaland debuts B&M 'winged coaster'

STORY: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

ITALY — Gardaland in northern Italy has introduced the country's only 'winged' coaster with the opening of Raptor for the 2011 season.

Supplied by Swiss company Bolliger and Mabillard (B&M), the latest major addition to the park takes riders on a thrilling and intense two minute themed experience while seated not in a conventional coaster train but in seats fixed on either side of the track, with their feet dangling below. It is the 74th coaster to be built by B&M and took two years to complete from when the first sketches for the attraction were produced by Merlin Studios, the creative department of park owner Merlin Entertainments.

The story behind the attraction is of an implacable predator, an unknown winged creature which, awoken from its ancient sleep in the subsoil of Gardaland during works for the construction of the new ride, has started to devastate the land to avenge the human insult! The train represents the unknown predator that kidnaps (hence the dangling seats) whoever tries to tame it, dragging them in an extreme



flight through enormous, arid forests and devastated lands.

The surroundings of the ride are themed with ruins including a watch tower that is about to collapse, a large tree broken in two and a bridge with protection barriers, all

remains of the fury of Raptor which have become obstacles in the ride's path.

Riders travel on one of two, 28-seater trains, each of which is 6.5 meter (21.5 feet) wide and 15 meters (49 feet) in length, and hourly capacity is



Gardaland's detailed theming (shown on vehicle and at right) plays a big part in the ride experience provided by the Raptor coaster. Raptor seats riders on either side of the track with their legs dangling freely beneath them. The new B&M coaster at Gardaland is the Switzerland firm's 74th coaster project.

COURTESY GARDALAND

1,000. The track covers an area of 16,000 square meters and measures 770 meters in length, with features including three inversions, a climb to 30 meters (98.5 feet) on exit from the station and a top speed of almost 90 kph (56 mph). Seated

on either side of the track with no floor beneath them, riders are treated to an extreme experience made all the more so thanks to the close proximity of some of the surrounding features which passengers avoid 'only at the last second!'

As well as the ride itself, the theming, special effects and audio within the attraction play a big part in the overall experience and Merlin Studios worked closely with the whole team of technicians and scenographers at Gardaland to create the desired effect.

The project cost €20 million to complete and is the largest investment ever made in a single attraction in an Italian theme park.

Nickelodeon Land opens at Pleasure Beach, Blackpool

Mack Rides, Zamperla provide new ride mix

STORY: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

UNITED KINGDOM — The U.K.'s Pleasure Beach, Blackpool has developed a major new area of the park which opened at the beginning of the 2011 season.

Nickelodeon Land represents an investment of £10.3 million (U.S. \$16.8 million) and features 12 rides and attractions themed on the characters and other elements from the world famous children's entertainment brand. The new area was officially opened by actor and TV show panel judge David Hasselhoff, accompanied by Nickelodeon characters SpongeBob SquarePants and his buddy

Patrick, Dora the Explorer, the Rugrats and others.

Not surprisingly Nickelodeon Land is targeted at the family market, particularly those with younger children, and features a variety of rides and attractions, some of which are new and some of which are rethemed classics which previously formed part of the Beaver Creek area that the new land replaces.

Among the new rides is the SpongeBob Splash Bash, a Twist 'n' Splash ride from Mack Rides in Germany and the first one to be installed anywhere in the world. Similar in basic concept to the company's famous Tea Cups ride, the Splash Bash features lots of water and the chance for guests to fire water cannons at each other and surrounding spectators. The ride has a capacity of 54 people, with up to

► See BLACKPOOL, page 11



The SpongeBob Splash Bash is the first example of the Twist 'n' Splash ride from Mack Rides to open. The ride recently made its debut in Nickelodeon Land at Pleasure Beach Blackpool. COURTESY PLEASURE BEACH BLACKPOOL



► BEN 10

Continued from page 7

reaches a maximum speed during the ride of 55 kph and the hourly capacity is 640 passengers, who have to be a minimum of 1 meter in height to ride.

And, Ben 10 — Ultimate Mission has been a big hit with park guests from the start.

“It’s been very well received by everyone,” commented Edward Pawley, general manager of park operations. “All ages are going on the ride from children of 1m upwards — so around four years old — to teens, moms and dads and grandparents. It really is a genuine family coaster and is the first family boomerang in the world, which adds to the many other ‘firsts’ we’ve had in the past.

“It’s probably the largest junior coaster built to date and I refer to it as a ‘junior coaster on steroids!’ It’s something we didn’t have before and fits in between our teen coasters and the family coaster in Thomas Land. We are doing over the 600 people per hour that we envisaged too, due to the excellent station layout, and the



whole project was completed in just nine months, which is pretty impressive and a credit to all involved. Cartoon Network worked very well with our team and moved quickly with us to complete it, so that side of the project has gone well too, while Vekoma was also excellent to work with. We are delighted with all aspects of the project from the ride itself to the design and theming and, of course, the Ben 10 branding.”

The design elements of the attraction were carried out by U.K.-based Space Leisure, who also provided the audio effects and the touch screen interactives within the queue line area, while theming spe-



cialist Meticulous carried out all the theming work within the queuing area, following Space Leisure’s designs. A

Cartoon Network/Ben 10 retail outlet situated opposite the entrance to the ride offers a wide range of related prod-

The U.K.’s Drayton Manor Theme Park recently opened its highly themed family coaster, Ben 10 — Ultimate Mission. The coaster, supplied by Vekoma Rides Manufacturing, is themed to the popular Ben 10 Cartoon Network cartoon character.

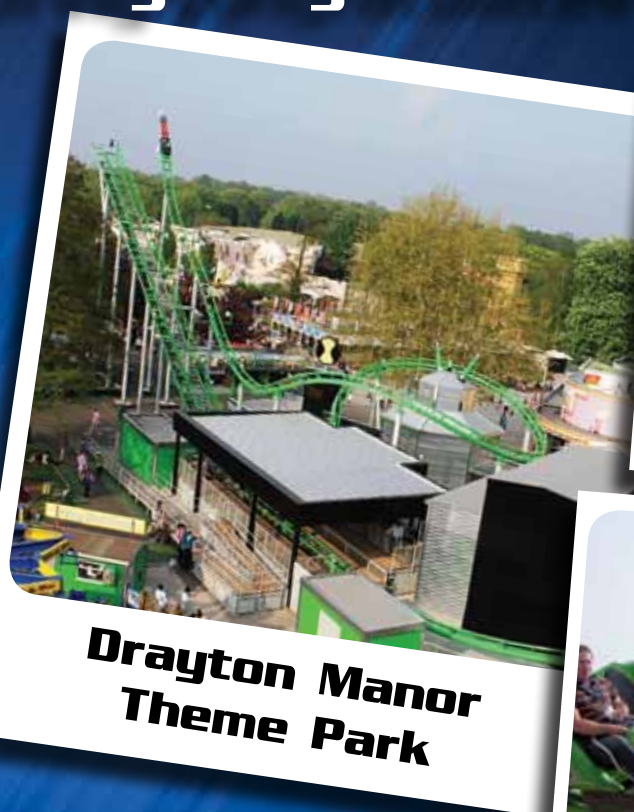
PHOTOS COURTESY DRAYTON MANOR THEME PARK; OVERVIEW COURTESY VEKOMA RIDES MFG.

ucts, while Chowder’s the diner adds the finishing touch to the street area adjacent to the ride.

Vekoma Rides Manufacturing congratulates



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►GRÖNA

Continued from page 7

been a wish to build another. The variety of different coasters at Gröna Lund is unique, however, a wooden one has been missing from the mix," said Osbeck. "The Twister project started in July 2009 when Gröna Lund's owner – Johan Tidstrand – had the idea to build a wooden coaster. We concluded that space was too limited. However, we discussed building on top of the Blå Tåget dark ride. It was then decided to remove the old building that housed the dark ride, construct a new concrete building with a stable roof so that a new coaster could run on the top. That became key to the project.

"After further discussions, Johan contacted Korey Kiepert at the Gravity Group and they decided to meet in Stockholm, explained Osbeck. "They discussed the site from all different angles and also decided the maximum size of the area for the coaster. Kiepert returned to the U.S. and created a rough design of the coaster. The objective was to build a wooden coaster with a steel structure. Steel would be used due to restrictions in terms of area and maintenance, and wood for the track because of the traditional look and feel of the coaster.

"During the autumn of 2009, Gröna Lund and the Gravity Group finalized project details. The board decided to go ahead with the coaster and replace Blå Tåget (see sidebar). The design that Gravity group provided was very exciting; the most twisted twister in the world with specially-designed trains that could negotiate tight curves. In early August 2010, before the season ended, we demolished the building that housed



Gröna Lund's new Twister was intentionally designed to interact with several other attractions including the Blå Tåget dark ride as well as the Jetline and Kvasten steel coasters.
COURTESY GRÖNA LUND

only possible on a wooden coaster with our Timberliners. Already people are noticing the difference with the comfort and tracking ability of the Timberliners."

Though somewhat landlocked due to its picturesque location on the seaward side of the Djurgården island, Gröna Lund is well accustomed to utilizing virtually every inch of available space when building new attractions. Kiepert explained the unique circumstances that went into bringing the Twister from concept to reality. "Twister would not have been possible without the detailed site information that Peter Osbeck from Gröna Lund provided for the project. Having worked on intertwining the park's roller coasters before [Jetline and Vilda Musen], he understood exactly what information we needed to make Twister a success. Throughout the design of the ride we took special care in the placement of the lift hill, first drop, and airtime-filled camel back so that it would create the

the dark ride and started the foundation work. The Gravity Group arrived with their personnel, while Gröna Lund provided six carpenters and they started to build the coaster in October. It was a tough job due to the confined area and extreme weather conditions that included heavy snowfall and freezing temperatures.

"Finally, on April 21, 2011 we were ready to dispatch the first train loaded with water dummies. Surprisingly enough, the first train made it all the way through without a single stop. And the rest is history."

Situated on the waterfront overlooking the harbor, the

\$8.5 million Twister stands 50-foot-tall with 1,574 feet of wooden track arranged in a convoluted layout. In addition, Twister sports the first Timberliner trains in Europe. The two six-car trains each seat 12 riders arranged two abreast with individual lap bars.

A ride on Twister is punctuated by steep drops, dramatic pops of airtime and quick directional changes. After chain release, the Timberliner attains a top speed of 37.9 mph, leaping over the Blå Tåget as well as over and under the Jetline and Kvasten coasters. Twister intimately interacts with more separate attractions

than any other wooden roller coaster in the world. Riders are treated to numerous close encounters with structure and track from the other coasters as they quickly hop and weave around the course.

"Twister and Quassy's Wooden Warrior demonstrate our company's ability to build an exciting, air-time filled ride regardless of height and length," said Kiepert. "Both rides have at least eight spots of airtime intermingled with highly banked track and extremely tight turns. Twister features turns that are as small as nine feet. The Wooden Warrior has turns as small as 13 feet. Such tight turns are

► See GRÖNA, page 11

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►GRÖNA

Continued from page 10

perfect backdrop across the bay for Stockholm. This ride was a first in many ways for our company. It was the first ride built by Gravitykraft Corporation in partnership with Gröna Lund. Many of our previous projects (including Quassy's Wooden Warrior) were built directly by the park. This ride was supplied in more of a turnkey fashion for Gröna Lund. Other unique elements to the project include its special galvanized white structure, composite red handrails, and our custom-themed Tim-

berliner trains."

"We had expected a great coaster but it exceeded all of our expectations, it was fantastic," said Osbeck. "When we look at our guests riding the coaster and see how extremely excited they are, we feel very happy."

"With Twister we were able to take a small space and fill it with some big fun. The guest reaction from the ride so far has been overwhelmingly positive. People love the ride and love the trains. Multiple newspapers in Sweden have given the ride a five out of five star rating," added Kiepert.

Gröna Lund's Blå Tåget dark ride rebuilt to accommodate new Twister coaster

Sally Corp. provides animation for dark ride

SWEDEN — Blå Tåget is a classic dark ride that first appeared at Gröna Lund in 1935. That ride was very popular until 1966 when it was replaced with another dark attraction. In 1982, the park opened Blå Tåget II, which was a great success until it was removed in August 2010 to make way for the park's new Twister wooden roller coaster.

Blå Tåget III opened this spring on the same site as its predecessors but with a new building and enhanced interiors. While the majority of the overhaul was done in-house by park staff, a select group of sub-contractors was employed to ensure the ride met 21st century standards yet still retained the original's classic feel.

Blå Tåget's new animatronics, including a giant dragon, were supplied by Florida's Sally Corp. The ride system itself was delivered by Italy's Gosetto Srl. The vehicles were designed by Gröna Lund in a retro motif much like those from the 1935 version.

"We also have an onboard system to enhance the special effects," said Gröna Lund's Peter Osbeck. "It consists of vibrators in the seat and pneumatic cylinders that tickle rider's backs unexpectedly, an onboard sound system and air blowers. Additional effects include a fog screen with a computerized film, a rotating barrel that gives riders a sensation of turning upside down, and real electric flashes that haven't been used in a dark ride before. The new Blå Tåget is very popular amongst our guests."

—Scott Rutherford



Gröna Lund's new-for-2011 Blå Tåget is the third incarnation of the park's dark ride to be built on the same site. The latest version was intentionally constructed with a roof that could support a portion of the park's new Twister wooden roller coaster.
COURTESY GRÖNA LUND

►BLACKPOOL

Continued from page 8

six in each of nine boats, and an hourly capacity of 1,080.

Other Mack rides incorporated into the new area are Dora's World Voyage, a round boat ride, and the Back Yardigans Pirate Treasure, previously the Bradley Beaver Pirate Ship. Several attractions have also been supplied by the Italian manufacturer Zamperla, these being the Bikini Bottom Bus Tour (a Crazy Bus), the Wonder Pets Big Circus Bounce (a Jump Around), the Fairy World Taxi Spin (an Aero Top Jet) and the Avatar Airbender (a Mega Disk'O).

As well as the Pirate Ship, several other existing rides have also been utilized in Nickelodeon Land, includ-

ing the Rugrats Lost River Log Flume, originally built by Pleasure Beach in 1991, Nickelodeon Streak, previously called the Roller Coaster, build by Charles Paige in 1933, and the Blue Flyer, previously the Zipper Dipper, from ACE Coasters in 1934. There is also the Krusty Krab Order Up, previously the Fruit Shoot, and finally, Diego's Rainforest Rescue, a hot air balloon themed children's round ride.

In addition to the rides, guests can also recharge their batteries at the Big Pizza Kitchen restaurant or buy Nickelodeon merchandise at the UK's first Nick Store, while costume characters also feature throughout the six acre area to provide meet and greet and photo opportunities.

Simworx installs New Zealand's first 4D effects theatre at International Antarctic Centre

UNITED KINGDOM — U.K.-based 4D effects theatre specialist Simworx has supplied the first ever 4D theatre attraction in New Zealand to the country's International Antarctic Centre in Christchurch.

The newly opened 4D Extreme theatre currently oper-

ates with world films, one of which

is shown during normal daytime opening hours and the other in the evenings for group bookings. The daytime film, entitled *Ice Voyage*, was custom produced and takes guests on a trip to Antarctica. The high definition footage was filmed by Emmy award winning cinematographer Mike Single and it is the first 3D movie to be filmed in this part of the world.

The cruise to Antarctica provides excitement and adventure for guests, enhanced by the various 4D effects which also feature in the theatre. These include wind, snow, water spray, low smoke and aroma, along with special effects lighting and three degrees of motion action seats to complete the experience.

The film being shown during the evening opening period is the award winning *Curse*

of *Skull Rock*, which tells the tale of the treacherous Captain Scabb and his unwitting crew as they search for the legendary lost treasure of Skull Rock. A fun, humorous, 12 minute adventure in full HD 3D projection, this again utilizes the various special effects within the theatre to maximize the

visitor experience.

Commenting on the installation, Simworx Managing Director Terry Monkton said: "We were very pleased to win the contract with the International Antarctic Centre. They researched a lot of potential suppliers for the attraction but decided to use Simworx. We took them to see our 4D effects theatres at both Drayton Manor Theme Park and *The Beatles Story* here in the U.K., which they were very impressed with and which clearly helped in making the decision. We also used a local engineering company in Christchurch to help with the installation so the client has local, on-site support when necessary. The project is also unique in the fact that it is the first theatre we have installed which is earthquake proof."

simworx
CREATING AMAZING 3D AND 4D ATTRACTIONS

►LARSON

Continued from page 7

mission to take finger prints and even retina scans," Novotny told *Amusement Today*.

"If that wasn't enough, it took just over a month for the ride to clear customs," he added.

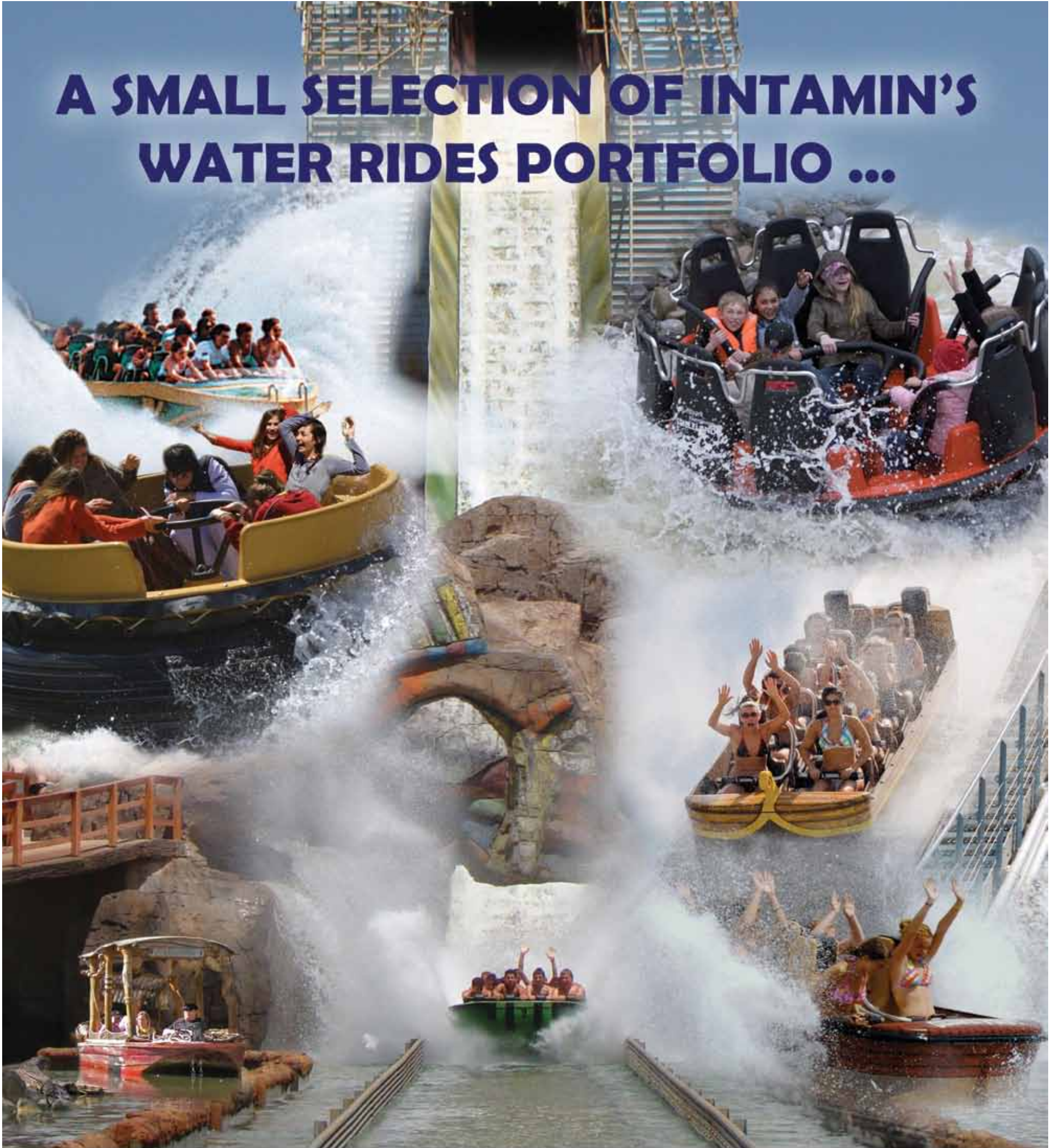
The park said that while they looked at the many different styles of drop towers offered on the market, the Larson product was chosen based on price, simplicity and overall rider experience. The park provided Larson with much support help in making the ride installation a smooth one.

Larson builds the Super Shot drop towers in conjunction with Ohio-based A.R.M. where together, they have delivered 14 park models to the amusement industry.



This Super Shot drop tower, from Larson International, opened on June 2 at the Al-Shallal Theme Park in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. According to the park, it is the first of its kind in the country. The LED's, shown on the tower here, were supplied by Crossroads LED.
COURTESY LARSON INTERNATIONAL

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Valleyfair opens new Peanuts-themed area

SHAKOPEE, Minn. — In mid-May, Snoopy arrived at his new home in grand style – by helicopter. The Minnesota-born beagle flew in to unveil Valleyfair Amusement Park's newest attraction, Planet Snoopy. The \$9 million, 3.5 acre Planet Snoopy features over 20 Peanuts-themed rides and attractions, including the Peanuts Playhouse, Snoopy Boutique and Planet Grill.

Immediately before the doors opened to the public, Snoopy and Larry MacKenzie, Valleyfair's vice president and general manager, accepted the key to the City of Shakopee from Mayor John. J. Schmitt as well as a proclamation declaring it Valleyfair and Planet Snoopy Day.

The arrival of Planet Snoopy to the park is fitting because it was Minnesota native, Charles Schulz, who introduced the Peanuts characters to the country in 1950. "We consider it an honor to welcome Snoopy and his friends to Valleyfair," says Larry MacKenzie, vice president and general manager for Valleyfair.

The Peanuts gang will entertain kids of all ages with "Charlie Brown's Hoedown" each day in the Peanuts Showplace and catch a bite before the park opens with the Gang at the character breakfasts.

Themed to DC Comics Super Hero Green Lantern

Six Flags Great Adventure relocates, rebrands B&M standup coaster

STORY: Scott Rutherford
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

JACKSON, N.J. – Six Flags Great Adventure continues its streak of installing high-profile DC Comics Super Hero-themed thrill rides with the introduction of the Green Lantern, a 4,155-foot-long B&M stand-up coaster for the 2011 season. Standing 15 stories above the midway and reaching speeds of 63 mph, Green Lantern ranks as the park's 13th coaster and one the tallest and fastest coasters of its genre.



"Green Lantern is a must-ride for any thrill seeker this summer," said John Fitzgerald, park president. "Built by Swiss engineers Bolliger & Mabillard, the wizards behind Nitro, Bizarro, Superman-Ultimate Flight, Nitro and Batman the Ride, Green Lantern delivers the incomparable adrenaline rush of standing up while upside down."

The two-minute and thirty-second ride begins with a brisk climb to a height of 154 feet. Once over the crest of the lift, a dramatic 180-degree swoop turn lines the train up for the 144-foot first drop followed by five inversions including a 121-foot-tall loop, a 103-foot dive loop, a 72-foot inclined loop and double corkscrew.

Six Flags Great Adventure's newest thriller operated in a previous



New Jersey's Six Flags Great Adventure added its fifth B&M coaster this season, a stand-up roller coaster themed to the Green Lantern comic character. AT/GARY SLADE

incarnation at now-closed Kentucky Kingdom as Chang from 1997 through 2009.

Walt Bowser, vice president of maintenance and construction for Six Flags told *Amusement Today* the move went without a hitch, resulting in a project that came in on time and on budget.

"The actual move of the ride went very well," Bowser said. "We shipped the ride from Kentucky to a Cincinnati storage yard, where we hired Baynum Painting to completely sandblast the entire ride structure and track before repainting with a two coat layer. While in Cincinnati we had a few pieces that needed to go to Clermont Steel Fabricators in Batavia (B&M's U.S. steel fabricator) to have minor repairs and adjustments made to those pieces. It all worked out very well."

To make sure the ride could produce the best hourly capacity possible, Six Flags moved an extra train it had at another park to go with

the two being moved from Kentucky. The park's in-house crews then took all three trains and did a complete 100 percent rehab of the vehicles to bring the trains back to a like factory-new condition. The park then hired Maryland-based Consign LLC to install a newly designed control system, one made for three-train operation.

The design of the ride's loading station, also by Six Flags, took in account the need to keep three trains running efficiently.

"I have to give all the credit in world to the park," Bowser said. "They wanted to max out the capacity of the coaster and they did it. They have the proper staff on hand each hour to make that happen."

Theming design and props for the ride were supplied by Indiana-based Weber Group and Georgia-based Entertainment Design Group.

Green Lantern gives the park their fifth B&M coaster,

more than any other park in the world.

In other news, Six Flags Great Adventure made changes in its safari section of the park:

- Guests can get in touch with their wild side in the theme park this season with the all-new Safari Discoveries. Located in The Golden Kingdom, the area offers a glimpse into the world of exotic animals and up-close animal encounters. The new area features a California sea lion exhibit and underwater viewing pool, a walk-through aviary – Parakeet Paradise, a Wild Safari nursery featuring exotic animal babies, and "Please Touch" ambassadors showcasing animals such as a Vietnamese potbellied pig, spotted skunk, giant Flemish rabbit, hedgehogs, snakes and more.

- Parents and young children can enjoy a newly-themed area, Safari Kids, featuring rides and attractions

► See STANDUP, page 14

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Six Flags Great Adventure's new-for-2011 major attraction is Green Lantern, a B&M stand-up coaster relocated from now-closed Kentucky Kingdom. The 154-foot-tall ride features a 121-foot-tall loop, a 103-foot dive loop, a 72-foot inclined loop and double corkscrew. AT/GARY SLADE



To keep non-coaster riding families entertained the N.J.-based park also made changes to its animal area. Highlights include a new sea lion show and underwater viewing area as well as an aviary called Parakeet Paradise. AT/GARY SLADE

Green Lantern Corps

Guardians of peace and justice, the Green Lantern Corps is a group of intergalactic police officers charged with the protection of the universe. A Green Lantern must be someone who has the ability and willpower to overcome great fear. Recognized as the greatest member of the Green Lantern Corps, Hal Jordan was the first Earthman ever inducted into the corps and also became a founding member of the Justice League of America. Green Lanterns are outfitted with a weapon unlike any other in existence: a ring that channels pure willpower in the form of solid green energy and that can manifest any construct the bearer imagines.

STANDUP

Continued from page 13

including a Safari Tours car ride, Air Safari plane ride, Sky Zooma balloon ride, Jumpin' Joey bounce ride, Bugaboo sit and spin and Raja's Rickshaws scrambler. Safari Kids also features a new bird show, *Extreme Raptors*, retail shop, Wild Things, and the Oasis Café serving kosher cuisine.

•In the show *Extreme Raptors* guests will be awed by the strength, speed and natural instincts of magnificent birds of prey as they swoop through the Adventure Theater in the newly-themed Safari Kids area. Guests have the opportunity to see these feathered friends up-close and learn how our actions can help in the survival of these mighty birds. The show runs through Labor Day weekend.

FAST FACTS

Ride/Park
Green Lantern/
Six Flags Great Adventure,
Jackson, N.J.

Height/Length/Speed
154 feet/4,155 feet/
63 mph

Ride Vehicles
Three eight-car trains
Four riders per car
(standing four abreast)

Designer/Builder
Ing.-Büro Stengel GmbH/
Bolliger & Mabillard

Opened
SFGAdv May 2011,
SFKK May April 1997

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Universal Orlando Resort announces plans for *Despicable Me* attraction

Number 1-ranked Spider-Man to get high-tech makeover

ORLANDO, FLA. — Universal Orlando Resort has announced that its newest attraction will be based on Universal Pictures and Illumination Entertainment's blockbuster 3-D-CGI feature *Despicable Me*, bringing minions, mayhem and a whole new level of 3-D family fun to its guests. The "Despicable Me" experience will replace the Jimmy Neutron attraction at Universal Studios Florida.

Universal also announced that The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man, the number 1-ranked dark ride in *Amusement Today's* annual Golden Ticket Awards, will be completely reanimated in 4K digital high definition — once again

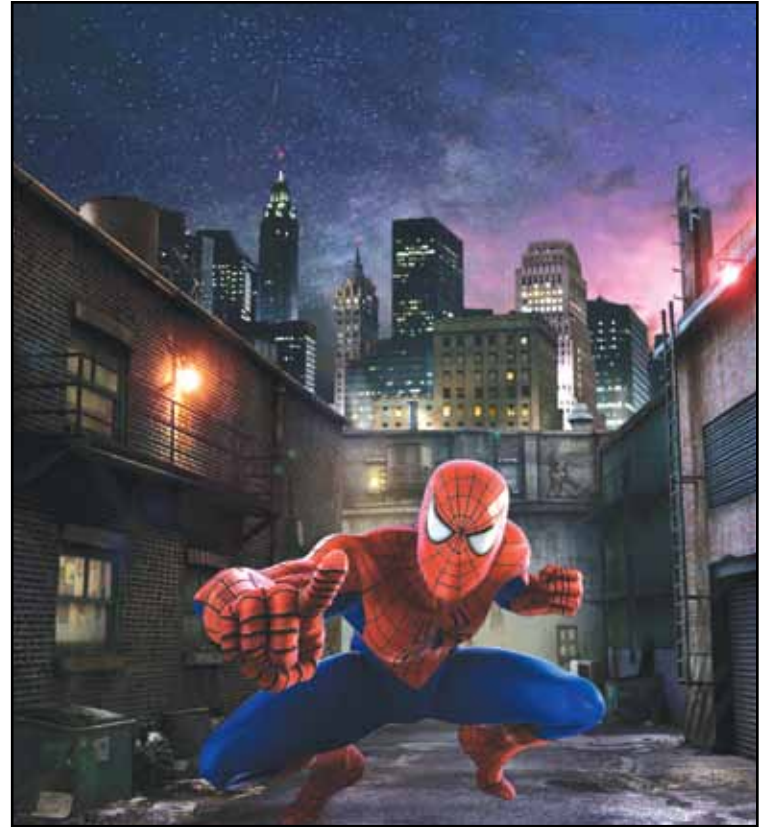


redefining the theme park experience.

Both will open in 2012 and are being developed by the same award-winning Universal Creative team that has brought all of Universal Orlando's spectacularly themed attractions to life. Both will utilize brand-new, highly sophisticated Infitec 3-D projection systems designed to make the experience sharper, clearer and

Above, a popular scene from the hit movie *Despicable Me*. The film comes to life in 2012 at the Universal Orlando Resort, with a new attraction by the same name. At right, a look at one of the new scenes from the high-tech makeover that is underway for The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man.

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► UNIVERSAL

Continued from page 15

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Despicable Me

With a worldwide gross of more than \$540 million, 2010's *Despicable Me*, from directors Chris Renaud & Pierre Coffin, is the sixth most successful film that Universal Pictures has ever distributed. It is now the 10th-biggest animated film in U.S. history. The 3-D animated adventure thrilled audiences

across the globe with its outrageous humor, endearing characters and compelling storyline – all of which guests will be able to experience exclusively at Universal Orlando in 2012.

"Despicable Me" will become the first-ever Universal animated film to be transformed into a theme park experience. The Universal Creative team is working closely with producer Chris Meledandri, the founder of Illumination Entertainment, to create all-new animation for an all-new "De-

spicable Me" adventure that places guests right in the center of the action.

Gru, one of the world's greatest super-villains, is bringing his high-tech empire – and his three adopted daughters – to Universal Studios, and he is looking for all the help he can get. First, he will transform guests into an army of mischievous, scene-stealing minions. Then he will train them. And that kicks off an unforgettable ride experience that creates a hysterical mix of chaos and

family fun.

"The 'Despicable Me' attraction is the latest example of how we tap into pop culture's most compelling stories and turn them into extraordinary theme park entertainment," said Mark Woodbury, president of Universal Creative. "This is a perfect fit for Universal Orlando, and we can't wait to bring this one-of-a-kind experience to life.

"As we write, design and animate our films at Illumination, it is our singular goal to

bring to life endearing and, hopefully, enduring characters," said Chris Meledandri. "With the creation of next year's 'Despicable Me' attraction at Universal Orlando, audiences will be able to immerse themselves in Gru's world for many years to come."

The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man

Already one of the most popular and innovative theme park attractions ever created, The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man at Universal's Islands of Adventure continues to raise the bar for theme park entertainment – combining advanced motion-based ride vehicles, 3-D digital film and live special effects to create an unparalleled ride experience. It is widely acknowledged as one of the best theme park experiences in the world – and it's about to get mind-blowingly better.

The newly reanimated, high-definition experience will unfold within the attraction's towering visual spaces – taking on even larger than larger-than-life proportions. The new digital animation – combined with the new Infitec system and new set enhancements – will transform what is already one of the most technologically advanced attractions ever created into what will feel like an all-new experience.

Facts about the enhanced ride experience:

- All-new digital animation done in 4K high definition – the highest HD resolution available.

- The new HD animation will allow guests to experience details they've never been able to before – from the flames spewing from Hobgoblin's pumpkins to the electricity arching through Electro's body to the stitching on Spider-Man's gloves.

- To take advantage of new HD clarity and detail, Universal Orlando is adding entirely new details to the film – and leaving it up to guests to find them.

"Guests will not believe their eyes when they experience the new Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man," said Thierry Coup, senior vice president of the Universal Creative Studio. "We are talking about a larger-than-life environment and the HD animation will make it even more remarkable than it has been. It will seem brand-new."

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Six Flags America to retire Skull Mountain for 2012 attraction

Donation being made to the National Roller Coaster Museum

BOWIE, Md. — Six Flags America recently announced that the park's Skull Mountain ride will be retired to make way for a new unnamed attraction slated to debut in 2012.

Unlike some park owners who closed rides – or entire parks, for that matter – unexpectedly without offering loyal guests the chance to say goodbye, Six Flags America officials announced in early June that Skull Mountain was closing but would continue to operate through July 10, 2011.

"For more than a decade, guests at Six Flags America have been thrilled and inspired by Skull Mountain, giving them the feeling of joining a one-of-a-kind pirates' voyage in Maryland's favorite theme park," said John Winkler, Six Flags America park president. "It's a piece of history for Six Flags America and we feel it's fitting to give it one last stand."

The Bon Voyage countdown for Skull Mountain began the week of June 13, 2011 when a boat was placed on the theme park midway offering unique photo opportunities for guests. A Fare-thee-Well Weekend for Skull Mountain was planned for



Six Flags America is retiring Skull Mountain, a hybrid water coaster/flume ride from Intamin, on July 10 to make way for a new for 2012 attraction. AT FILE PHOTOS

July 9 and 10, 2011 and included a two-day Pirate Festival, featuring pirate make-overs for guests and special entertainment from the cast of

The Blundering Buccaneers stunt show. In addition, Six Flags America held a last-rider auction, with proceeds benefitting the National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives. The park donated a boat from Skull Mountain to the National Roller Coaster Museum following the final voyage in July.

An iconic mainstay of the American Main, this half roller coaster/half water flume was introduced in 1997 as the Typhoon Sea Coaster, which was designed and manufactured by Intamin, Ltd. The first of its kind, the ride made history with a seven-story descent, at the time the world's tallest for a water-powered coaster. Renamed Skull Mountain in 2007, the ride's 2,200-foot-long track has undergone several changes during its tenure at the park, creating an entirely different experience from its first introduction.

Kudos to Six Flags America for the classy manner in which it said farewell to an attraction that was a guest favorite.

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Six Flags Discovery Kingdom introduces SkyScreamer tower swing

Funtime delivers second tower ride to Six Flags parks

Travis Air Force Base squadron members recently took flight at Six Flags Discovery Kingdom, Valejo, Calif., as the first 'flyers' to experience the park's newest thrill ride, SkyScreamer. Supplied by Funtime of Austria, SkyScreamer is the company's second 32-seat StarFlyer unit to open in the United States. Earlier this season, the first example made its debut at Six Flags St. Louis. Funtime is represented by Ride Entertainment Group, Millersville, Md.

Standing 150 feet above the ground near the main entrance, SkyScreamer is the equivalent in height to the park's tallest roller coaster, Medusa. With a capacity of 32 guests seated two abreast in open air swings, the 'star points' upon which the swings are suspended, spin while climbing to the top of the tower. At full swing, guests revolve in a 98-foot circle at speeds of 43 mph.

"There is nothing like SkyScreamer in Northern California," said Dale Kaetzel, Six Flags Discovery Kingdom park president. "The sense of soaring so high is both exhilarating and nail-biting, and it's that anticipation before the ride starts that gets the heart pumping."

SkyScreamer is topped with an iconic globe surrounded by the words Six Flags on two sides. Once the sun sets, SkyScreamer is illuminated from top to

bottom, creating a stunning new focal point. The colorful tower and globe help to completely redefine the park's skyline.

Adam Sandy of Ride Entertainment Group described to *Amusement Today* the challenges of installing the new ride and how its location enhances the guest experience. "The SkyScreamer is a great fit for Six Flags Discovery Kingdom and rounds out the park's skyline very well. Situated in a newly-built plaza in the middle of the Medusa roller coaster, the ride is a great fit for the park and brings life to the old tram storage yard. There were some challenges erecting the StarFlyer in this area because of everything going on around the ride. It was really shoe-horned into the spot, but those construction difficulties made for an installation that fits like a glove. Now that the work is done, park-goers are welcomed to the property by 32 screaming riders spinning above the park's main entrance; the StarFlyer really is a great way to welcome guests to Discovery Kingdom."

Six Flags Discovery Kingdom's SkyScreamer is the second such ride to open at a Six Flags park this season. The first ride opened on May 12 at Six Flags St. Louis. Six Flags brought the name SkyScreamer out of retirement where it was first used at the now closed Six Flags AstroWorld in Houston, Texas.



SkyScreamer, a 150-foot-tall, Funtime StarFlyer swing ride made its debut this spring at California's Six Flags Discovery Kingdom. The new ride, located on a new plaza inside the park's Medusa floorless coaster, seats 32 riders and helps to redefine the park's skyline. COURTESY RIDE ENTERTAINMENT GROUP



Legoland Florida sets opening date of Oct. 15, 2011

AT gets exclusive behind-the-scenes construction tour

STORY: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

WINTER HAVEN, Fla. — Recently, Legoland Florida announced an opening date of October 15, 2011. Over Memorial Day weekend, *Amusement Today* took an exclusive sneak peak at the construction of the property as seen in the accompanying photos. The park is designed for families with children ages 2 to 12. Admission has been set for \$65 for adults, \$55 for seniors 60 and over or children ages 3 - 12.

The 150 acre facility is located between Orlando and Tampa, with an approximate 45 minute drive to each city. Having purchased the former Cypress Gardens park located in Winter Haven, Florida, officials have finalized plans underway to transform the real estate into the largest of all Legoland properties. The first Legoland park was actually built as far back as 1968 in Denmark. In the past 15 years, three other Legoland parks have opened outside of London, England (1996); Carlsbad, California (1999); and Günzburg, Germany (2002).

"In a massive construction project like Legoland Florida, there are hurdles and unexpected opportunities nearly every day," says Craig Riebel, construction supervisor for Legoland Florida. "One of the most challenging things about this project is the unknown. Since Legoland Florida is being built over land that was the former Cypress Gardens Adventure Park, we continually find things that we didn't expect - various pipes and cables are the most common."

As work progresses, the park's 10 themed areas are starting to take shape:

Guests enter the park at **The Beginning**. This first themed "zone" (as Legoland terms it) features the entry plaza as well as one of the largest Lego retail stores and The Market Restaurant featuring freshly prepared, healthy family meals. Fans of the old Cypress Gardens facility will be thrilled to know that Island



Clockwise from top left: the entrance plaza of Legoland Florida begins to take shape; this structure will house the park's interactive dark ride; the foundations to the Aquazone Wave Racers are in place; the Dragon coaster will feature an indoor portion that passes many scenes inside a castle; Flight School is a junior inverted coaster manufactured by Vekoma and this bridge, made entirely of Lego bricks, was the first component of Miniland to be put in place. The park opens on Oct. 15.

AT/TIM BALDWIN

in the Sky will still be a main feature of the park, offering guests views from 100 feet. Of note, it is the only such ride in North America.

"The Island in the Sky has undergone a nearly top-to-bottom transformation," says Riebel. "From brand-new bearings to refurbished controls, this incredibly unique attraction will provide our guests with a 360-degree view

of Legoland Florida and surrounding Winter Haven. This ride is one of only three in operation around the world."

Fun Town gives a sense of entering a Lego village. In addition to a couple of eateries, rides and attractions will include a two-story Grand Carousel with fanciful Lego-themed horses, a 700-seat 4-D theater showing three different movies throughout the

day, a factory tour giving a firsthand look at how Lego bricks are made and retail offerings.

Entering **Miniland USA**, guests experience what park officials regard as the heart of every Legoland theme park. Painstaking hours dedicated by Lego staff recreate scenes from numerous areas — Florida (featuring Daytona Speedway and Kennedy Space Cen-

ter), Las Vegas, Washington, D.C., New York City, California and a pirate section.

"With nearly 30 million bricks used to build Miniland USA — it truly is the ultimate expression of what can be built out of Lego," says Adrian Jones, general manager of Legoland Florida.

Castle Hill offers the first of the park's four roller coasters. **See LEGOLAND, page 21**

►LEGOLAND

Continued from page 20

ers. The Dragon repositions the previous Vekoma Roller Skater coaster and extends it into an entirely new experience with a dark ride portion. Children's rides, a Princess Makeover, and a multi-level tree and rope climb adventure round out this zone.

Land of Adventure will allow visitors to explore hidden tombs and hunt for treasure. Lost Kingdom Adventure is an Egyptian-themed dark ride that includes interactive blasters as they ride in all-terrain roadsters. An outdoor foam ball complex will pit children against parents as they fire at each other. In addition to children's rides, the zone also features one of the more high-profile attractions to be retained from Cypress Gardens. Coastersaurus is the new name for the former Triple Hurricane wooden coaster. With some new track work and an additional car added to the coaster train for increased capacity, this is one attraction guests will be thrilled to see the park hold on to.

The **XTreme** zone features the most thrilling rides in the park. They include a brand new Mack wild mouse coaster called Legoland Technic Test Track Coaster, as seen at the sister park in California. Aquazone Wave Racers is a pair of rotating water rides that has riders standing on jet skis as they zip in and out of the waves. Technicycle is a Zamperla pedal-powered spinning machine that shoots riders into the air.

Lego City scales down fun experiences that give youngsters an opportunity to gain their licenses by captaining their own boat, drive their own car through town, or have the thrill of flight on a junior suspended Vekoma roller coaster.

Imagination Zone emphasizes exploring and creation. Several of the world's most exciting Lego models are featured and visitors can even build and compete their own Lego car or construct their own robot. Kid Power Towers will engage children and parents as they hoist themselves up to the top of a tower to get a great view of Lake Eloise.

Those that may remember the ski shows from Cypress



Legoland Florida has kept the historic gardens area of the former Cypress Gardens park and is working hard to have the non-attraction side of the property ready for opening. Here, as seen in the top two photos are letters outside the park's offices that mirror the dedication to preserving the botanical aspects of the park as well as this vista, which will soon return with colorful annuals planted in awaiting beds. In the middle two photos, visitors will continue to enjoy the exotic plantlife that made Cypress Gardens so memorable. The bottom two photos show the garden's famous banyan tree which is as mesmerizing and captivating as ever.

AT/TIM BALDWIN & JEFFREY L. SEIFERT

Gardens will be pleased to know the tradition continues in **Pirate's Cove**. This new water stunt show has now been taken over by swashbuckling pirates.

Duplo Village is a zone created for the smallest of toddlers. Numerous small rides will bring out the giggles in the youngest of guests.

Of course, in addition to the 10 themed zones, the true signature that will distinguish the Florida property from all other Legoland parks is the historic Botanical Gardens.

The park has taken great care to preserve the soul of the park which saw its origin more than 75 years ago. Legoland Florida is committed to maintaining this lush horticultural masterpiece, which includes the vast Banyan tree that was planted as a seedling in 1939. While each of the parks within the company are sure to have their own distinctions, this breathtaking garden area is admittedly incomparable. Combined with a wooden coaster and rare Flying Island, Legoland Florida is poised to



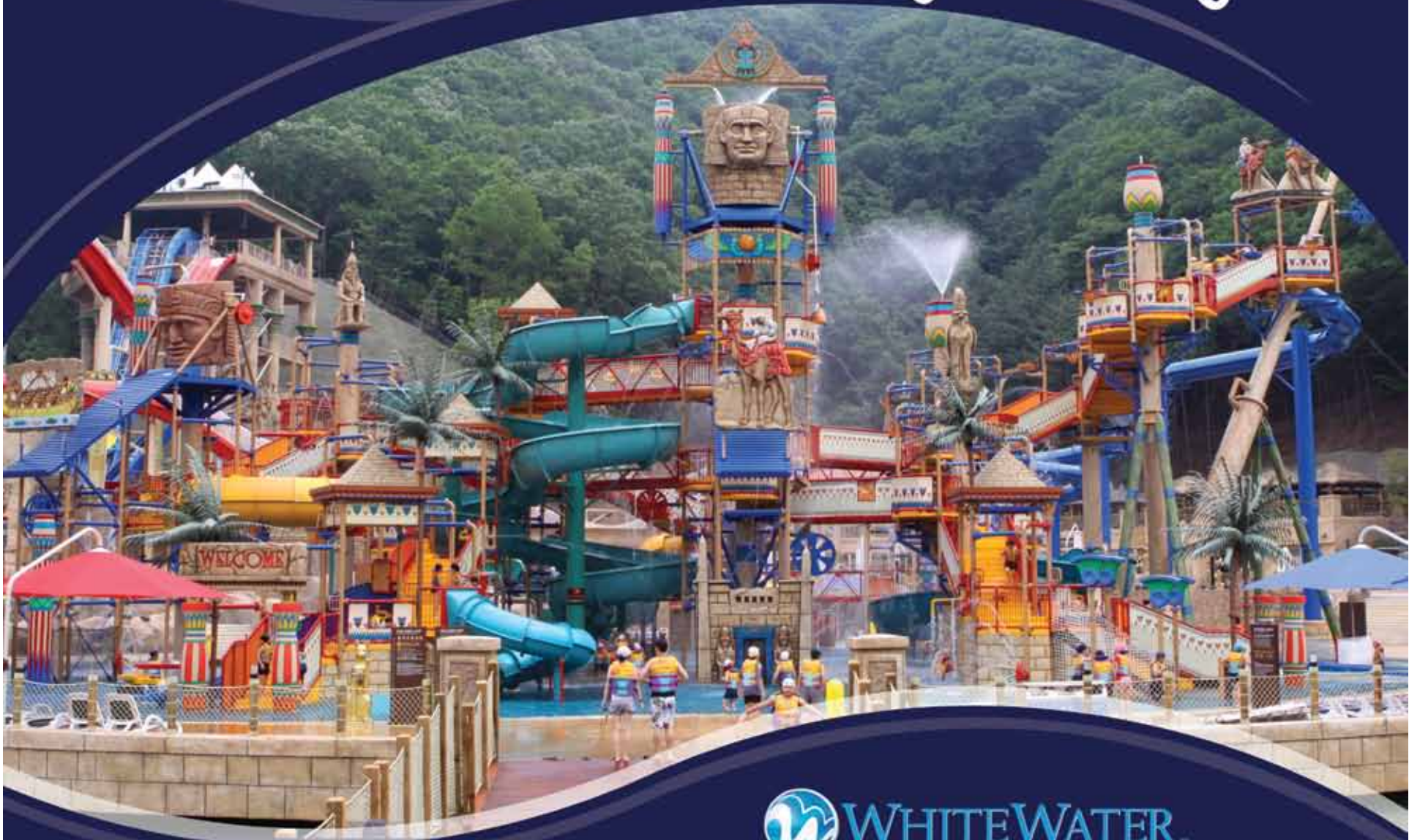
establish its own niche as the newest player in the Central Florida theme park landscape.

"Personally, I was thrilled that we decided to save nearly 660 trees and reuse all of the 10,000 tons of concrete dur-

ing the demolition process," says Riebel. "Watching a big company do what's right for the environment during 'construction conservation' has really been a source of pride for all of us."



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WATERPARKS & RESORTS

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Evergreen Wings & Waves Waterpark takes off after opening June 6

STORY: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

MCMINNVILLE, Ore. — The Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum campus celebrated its 10th anniversary June 6 by opening the newest addition to the campus, Evergreen Wings & Waves Waterpark.

And, this waterpark is not just any waterpark as guests quickly notice. There is a retired Evergreen International Airlines Boeing 747 aircraft sitting on top of the over 7,000-square-foot-building that houses the waterpark as well as an interactive children's museum.

It's not just for looks, either. With four slides, two on each side, coming out of the massive plane, it is an integral part of the park.

But, as guests begin to take in the entire indoor waterpark, they also will begin to notice the seven more water slides, a wave pool that holds more than 91,000 gallons of water, a play structure with a 300-gallon dumping bucket, a leisure pool with spa, a children's play area and an interactive children's museum dedicated to teaching visitors about the power of water.

"A lot of thought went into the design and features of the waterpark," said Larry Wood, Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum executive director, when announcing the opening. "Throughout the park, children and their families will find fun interactive and educational tools to enhance their experience."

Dave Garske, Hoffman Construction, the contractor for the entire project, said attendance has been great since opening, being almost at the capacity level of 1,500 guests.

Garke's firm has worked for the Evergreen organization since its inception. They delivered a turnkey project for the waterpark. But, he said, the idea of the waterpark came from Delford Smith, founder of the nonprofit Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum

and the Captain Michael King Smith Educational Institute.

Garske said Smith had noticed that the majority of the guests to the museum were adults. He wanted to create a way to reach out to all ages. But, the challenge was how to get children and their families to stay beyond the visit to the waterpark; thus, the interactive children's museum inside the waterpark.

The slides in the waterpark were supplied by WhiteWater West Industries, Vancouver, B.C. Garske said they worked with WhiteWater West to customize all the slides, of which there is 2,000 feet of slide surface.

Councilman-Hunsaker Associates, an engineering, planning, and design firm, was also on the project. Water Odyssey by Fountain People Inc. supplied the features at the toddler area, and Boss Display and Funtraptions LLC supplied the exhibits in the children's museum.

To get up to the plane slides, which are 62 feet above grade, guests use a staircase that was built in the middle of the building. The lower part of the staircase has glass rails so guests can see the entire park as they ascend. The staircase becomes enclosed for the last several landings. There are 111 steps to get to the plane.

The enclosed staircase, the plane and the slides, which run from the plane out over the roof of the building and then down into the park to splash pools, are climate controlled just like the rest of the park.

Once guests get to the plane level they can choose from four unique ride experiences.

The four slides coming from the plane are:

- Nose Dive - A high-energy, two-person inner tube ride that combines a fast initial drop into a high rate bank turn that leads the riders into a dark oscillation section before "breaking out of the clouds" and into the circular bowl below. The ride culminates with



Evergreen Wings & Waves Waterpark parks a retired 747 jet on top of its facility as its landmark. A wave pool, interactive AquaPlay structure and slides from WhiteWater are but part of the mix this indoor facility has to offer.
COURTESY EVERGREEN

a smooth transition and drop-out for a spectacular splash and water landing in the shut-down lane below. (This slide is green to compliment the theming in the south area of the park.)

- Mach One - Beginning in the dark, this slide opens up into a run of full amber transparent tubing right above the entry to the park. Visitors entering the park will be able to see the shape of riders going through the slide. This slide offers the thrill of enclosure, tight wrapping turns, switch-backs and drop sections. Riders slide on their backs with arms crossed over their chests and legs crossed as they shoot down this slide at high speeds. This body slide has a slope of 13 percent, which provides a speedy descent through the twisting, turning waterslide path. It descends 60 vertical feet. (This slide is orange to

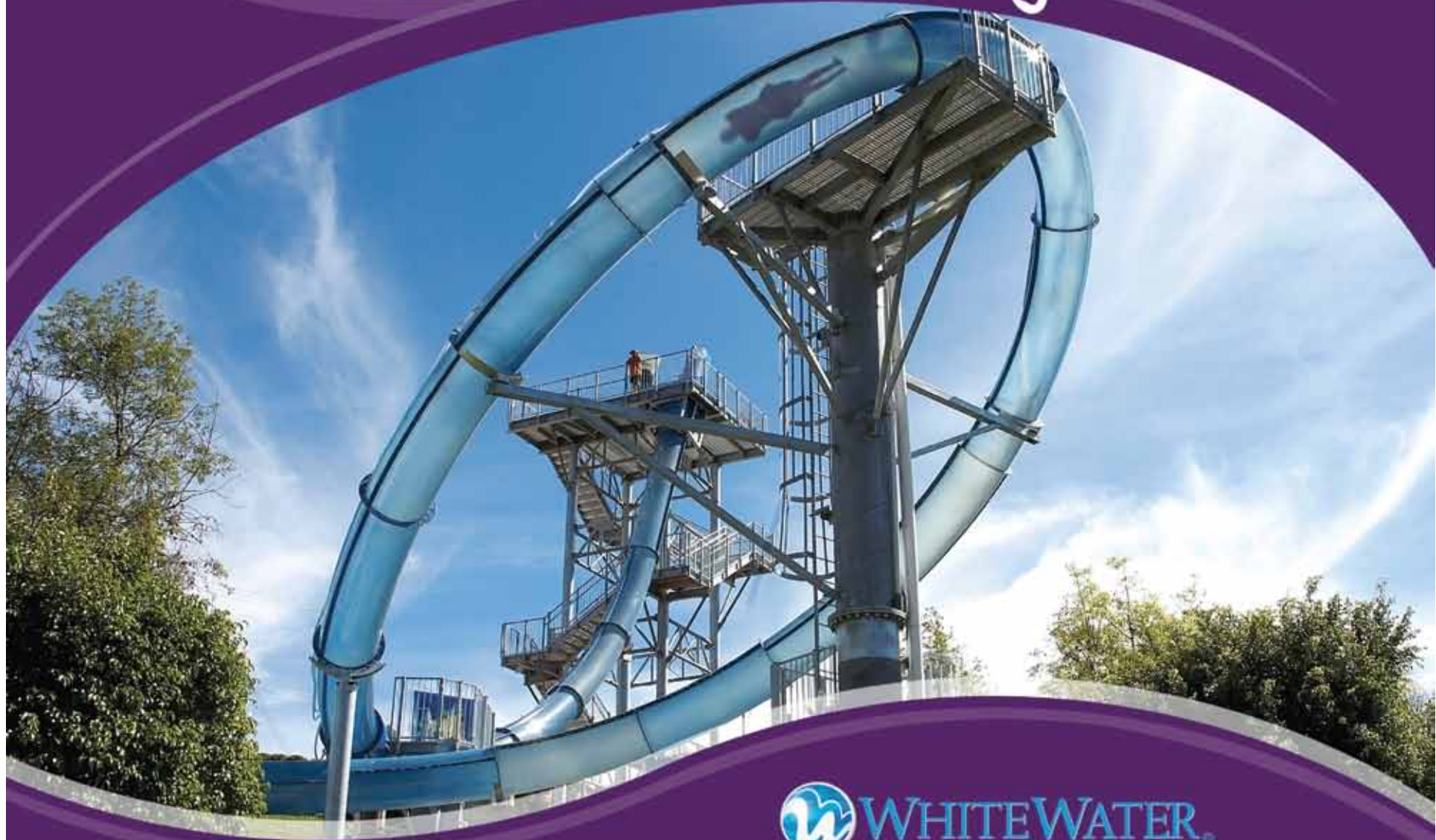
▶ See EVERGREEN, page 26





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Rapids Water Park debuts ProSlide's KrakenRacer

STORY: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — Response to Rapids Water Park's first-of-its-kind water attraction that debuted this past April has been great and all indications point to continued success.

The new attraction is a KrakenRacer from ProSlide Technology, Ottawa, Ont. Being called the Rapids Racer at Rapids Water Park, the attraction is the latest evolution of ProSlide's ProRacer.

"Rapids Water Park has had a great response from park guests," said park spokesperson Tina Hatcher. "Riders get

back in line over and over to do it again. It's also fun to see friends and family want to ride at the same time to race and beat each other's time on the scoreboard."

The attraction is a competition slide with six lanes. Riders start head first through enclosed, braided and twisting tunnels where they experience accelerating drops and twists before they speed towards the open racing lanes for one last stomach-dropping plunge and the chance to beat out their competitors.

It is a thrill ride, yet, Hatcher said, they have seen it lure all park goers.

► See RAPIDS, page 31



The Rapids Water Park in West Palm Beach, Florida recently debuted ProSlide's new KrakenRacer. This version features a total of six slides, grouped in sets of three slides each that mirror each set. COURTESY PROSLIDE

► EVERGREEN

Continued from page 23

represent high speed.)

•Tail Spin — Full blue transparent sections are included between drops to add light into the slide. This is a high-energy single/double inner tube ride that features fast acceleration off the start and transitions into a tight series of figure-eight-high banking curves. The ride is fully enclosed and provides a smooth yet thrilling level of energy. Tail Spin and Sonic Boom tube slides are similar, but separated by a difference of 3 percent in their slope and significantly different in the layout of the waterslide paths. One slide path consists of banked turn after banked turn in a series of switchbacks and figure 8's. The other slide path is a little bit milder as it incorporates

moderate transitions between 180 degree and 360 degree loops. (This slide is blue representing the river for the south side aviation theme.)

•Sonic Boom - Above the roof, the top section of this slide is transparent to allow light in and glimpses of the shape of the plane and building. Inside the park, the top section of the slide is removed and there is an open top. Starting from a slightly lower "decision height," this ride also accommodates single and double inner tubes, but offers gentler turns, drops and switchbacks than The Tail Spin. Better suited for first-time or novice riders, this is a superb lead-up ride to the two high-energy rides above. (This slide is yellow to give it a friendly feel to draw the younger visitors.)

For those that don't want



Aviation plays a big role in the theme of the new Evergreen Wings & Waves Water Park. Shown above is a helicopter above the tipping bucket of the AquaPlay structure and an authentic 747 aircraft on top of the waterpark's building structure. Guests may access the airplane from inside the waterpark. COURTESY EVERGREEN

to take the 111 steps it takes to the plane, they can still watch the excitement from live video feeds. For those just wanting to see inside the plane, they can climb up the stairs, then head back down again.

The park also encompasses a gaming center called Starcade, a concession area, family-style locker rooms and private rooms that are available for birthday parties or other celebrations.

The idea to use the Boeing 747 also came from the museum's founder. Garske said that at about the same time they were making preliminary plans for the waterpark, Smith was also planning to bring the retired plane to the museum. One thing led to another and it wasn't long before Garske's firm was sitting with other

experts to plan how to lift the plane on top of the building.

"We thought it might be easier to take the wings off and lift it that way," he said. "But, in the end, lifting the entire plane became the plan. We used the salvage gear that is used to salvage planes out of the Hudson River. We used a 750-ton crane and a 500-ton crane for the nose. It took nine months of planning and two test picks. On May 2, 2010, it took us one hour and eight minutes to put the plane into position."

Admission to the waterpark and museum is \$25 for those under 42 inches. It is \$30 for those over. That is for a visit for an entire day and for the entire grounds. Admission is \$10 for those just wanting to visit the museum.

Garske said the Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum most likely would grow again in the near future. There are future plans for the construction of a lodge.

The museum, which opened June 6, 2001, offers displays ranging from the elegant aeronautic designs of Orville and Wilbur Wright to an actual Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird that can fly at speeds of over 2,000 mph. The museum's centerpiece is the massive Spruce Goose plane, which was built entirely of wood due to restrictions of metals during World War II.

There are also exhibits celebrating the lives of the innovators, pilots and veterans who pioneered flight.

Evergreen Wings & Waves Water Park

- 10 waterslides equaling more than 2,000 feet of slide surface with four waterslides coming from the retired Evergreen International Airlines Boeing 747 aircraft positioned on the roof of the water park.

- Wave pool that holds more than 91,000 gallons of water.

- Play structure that includes a 300-gallon splash bucket and helicopter.

- Toddler area with bubblers, fountains and two sides.

- Leisure pool with spa.

- Children's museum designed to teach visitors about the philosophy, "H2O: Life needs water."

- "Starcade" gaming center for on-land fun.

- Concession area to keep swimmers energized.

- Private rooms available to reserve for birthday parties or other celebrations.

- Family-style locker rooms.



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The KrakenRacer is the newest headfirst mat racer slide series from ProSlide. Shown here is the six-slide version at Rapids Water Park in West Palm Beach, Florida. With six slides, the ride can deliver an hourly capacity of 900 riders. COURTESY PROSLIDE



► **RAPIDS**

Continued from page 26

“We’ve seen people of all ages enjoy the ride, from toddlers to grandpas to everyone in between,” she said.

Rapids Racer opened before Easter weekend. Hatcher said because it was in the middle of spring break and very busy when the ride opened, it was decided not to have a special grand opening.

The park pulls patrons from nine counties so new radio and television spots ran promoting the opening of the new attraction.

In a *Palm Beach Post* report that ran April 6, 2011, Tom Lumbra, president of the park, was quoted as saying that the new ride cost \$2 million.

In announcing the ride’s debut, ProSlide’s Rick Hunter, president and CEO, said this was just a great example of, “ProSlide’s relentless dedication to product development and innovation.”

Rapids Water Park chose the KrakenRacer in a six-lane configuration, but it is also available in other multi-lane footprints, two, four, eight and 10.

The waterpark sits on 30 acres in West Palm Beach. It offers 35 water slides from mild to thrill, along with a 25,000-square-foot wave pool, a quarter of a mile lazy river, and dancing fountains.

Another park feature that was added this year was a 1950 Allan Herschell Carousel. Lumbra told the *Palm Beach Post* in the April 6 story that he paid \$75,000 for the carousel. Then, he refurbished it by painting the horses and installing a new motor.

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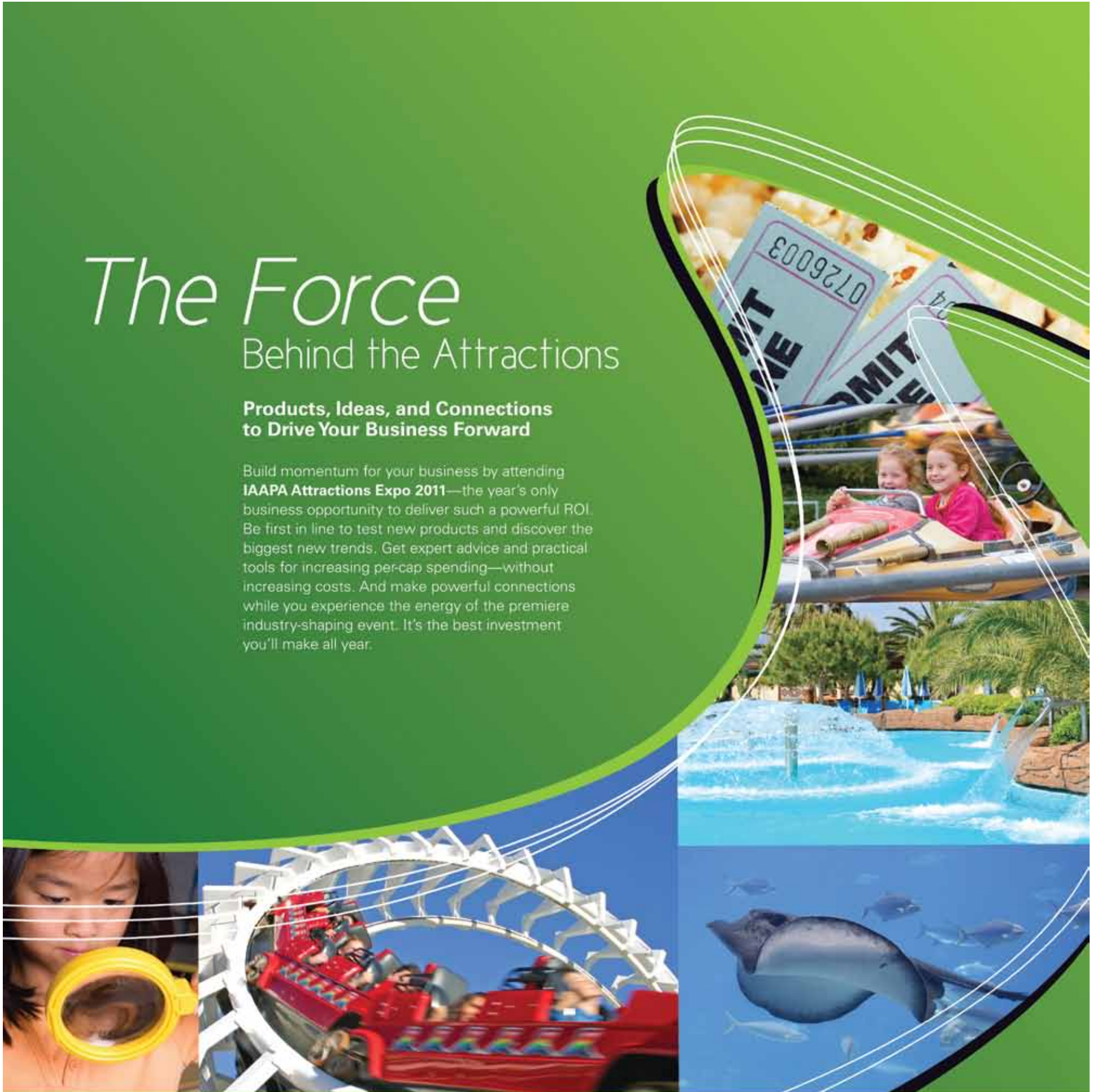


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BRIEF

Cedar Fair to acquire land adjacent to Dorney Park to facilitate expansion

SANDUSKY, Ohio — Cedar Fair Entertainment Company recently announced that Lehigh County has accepted its \$2.75 million bid to purchase 6.75 acres of land adjacent to Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom in Allentown, Pa.

Pending approval from the Lehigh County Commissioners, this land acquisition will enable the company to continue enhancing the guest experience at the park through the introduction of new rides and attractions, future park development and the expansion of parking facilities. The transaction is expected to close 30 to 60 days following approval by the county commissioners.

"We are excited about the expansion and development opportunities this additional space will provide to Dorney Park, as well as the increased economic impact it will have for the county," said Dick Kinzel, president and chief executive officer of Cedar Fair. "In addition, we appreciate the opportunity provided by the Lehigh County Commissioners to bid on this property and would like to thank them for their ongoing strong support of regional economic development and tourism."

Firestone Financial secures \$125 million credit facility

NEWTON, MA. — Firestone Financial Corp., a leading provider of equipment financing, announced the signing of a \$125 million, multi-year revolving credit facility. Provided through a bank group led by Citizens Bank, the facility is for a five year period and provides financing initially of \$125 million with the ability to increase up to \$150 million, subject to certain terms and conditions.

Firestone Financial, Pres-



ident and CEO David Cohen, said "We are extremely pleased with the terms we have received and the financial and operating covenants. These changes will allow Firestone Financial more flexibility to serve our markets and customers."

"We greatly appreciate the commitment and confidence that our bank group has in our company and

business," said Scott Cooper, executive vice president and CFO.

Jerry Sargent, president of Citizens Bank, Massachusetts, commended Firestone's management team. "Similar to our company, Firestone has built its business on relationships and an unwavering commitment to the client. The company has a unique ability to serve

its customers due to its deep knowledge of the industries it serves. We take great pride in this newly expanded partnership and look forward to supporting the Firestone growth strategy going forward."

In addition to Citizens Bank, banks participating in the financing are Wells Fargo Capital Finance, LLC, Bank of America, N.A., TD Bank, N.A. and Brookline Bank.

• www.firestonefinancial.com

National Roller Coaster Museum adds two board members

The preservation based organization completes its executive board

ARLINGTON, Texas — The National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives continues to move forward in its efforts to preserve and protect the history of the amusement industry. The museum executive board recently filled its two remaining open positions with an amusement industry veteran and a passionate coaster enthusiast.

"When your efforts are more of a crusade than just supporting an organization, it is difficult to find people who are as passionate as you are to work toward a common goal," Gary Slade, NRCMA board president said. "In Tom and Jerry are great additions to our board because they share the passion we all have to preserve the past of the amusement industry for future genera-



Tom Sheehan

tions."

Tom Sheehan, is an attorney and life-long advocate for theme parks and amusement manufacturers. Tom brings more than a quarter century of experience as a litigator defending the amusements and motor sports industries as a founding member of the Sheehan Firm. He served as Executive Director and General Council for the Amusement Industry Manufacturers and Suppliers International trade organization (AIMS). He is



Jerry Willard

a founding member of the International Amusement and Leisure Defense Association. He sits on the International Amusement Parks and Attractions Safety Committee (IAAPA), and routinely serves as an instructor for IAAPA, the National Association of Amusement Ride Safety Officials (NAARSO).

Jerry Willard is Deputy Director of Rail Administration for the San Mateo Transit District in California. Jerry joins the board as an executive committee mem-



ber of the American Coaster Enthusiasts (ACE). He currently serves as ACE vice president and was formerly ACE treasurer. Jerry is an 11 year veteran of ACE and brings enthusiasm and a passion for preserving the history of roller coasters.

The NRCMA continues to expand its collection of artifacts and is currently expanding its archiving facilities in Plainview, Texas but the museum needs support from the industry and from fans of coasters and amusement parks everywhere if these efforts are to continue.

Donations can be made online at rollercoastermuseum.org or by mailing the NRCMA at P.O. Box 5424, Arlington, Texas 76005.

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FAST TRACK

COMPILED: Scott Rutherford, srutherford@amusementtoday.com

Conneaut Lake Park has been chosen to compete in the National Historic Preservation Grant Challenge. Preservation means saving the places that tell the stories that make us who we are. The National Trust for Historic Preservation has used this platform for their annual "This Place Matters" grant challenge. Of 250 national submissions, 100 projects were selected to participate and will compete for three top prizes of \$25,000, \$10,000 and \$5,000 respectively. Supporters each get one vote to cast in the month-long contest beginning June 1 by visiting www.PreservationNation.org/communitychallenge.

Six Flags America officially kicked off the 2011 season on Memorial Day weekend with the opening of three new shows—Survivor Live, Bob the Builder Live, and Turn Up the Heat. These presentations are produced in partnership with RWS and Associates.

In their 25th annual survey, members of the **National Amusement Park Historical Association** named the Best New Attractions for 2010: the Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Universal's Islands of Adventure, and Kennywood's Sky Rocket LSM launch coaster.

Six Flags Discovery Kingdom, Six Flags Fiesta Texas, Six Flags St. Louis and **Six Flags Over Texas**, have changed the name of their Gerstlauer Spinning Coasters from Tony Hawk's Big Spin to Pandemonium.

Dave & Buster's Orlando will open its doors on July 18, 2011, in the heart of International Drive adjacent to Interstate 4. It will accommodate more than 1,000 guests with 40,000 square-feet of dining, entertainment and gaming space. With close proximity to the Orlando-Orange County Convention Center, the venue offers an ideal meeting space of more than 3,100 square-feet for group events, meetings and corporate team building.

SeaWorld San Diego recently opened Turtle Reef, the largest exhibit in the world dedicated to sea turtles. The attraction is intended to inform guests on how trash and pollution can affect the species and will highlight threatened and endangered sea turtles. Turtles in the attraction's nearly 300,000-gallon aquarium will include adults, some more than 50-years-old, as well as turtles that hatched at the marine-life park in October 2009. In addition to the turtles, Turtle Reef will feature thousands of tropical fish and a large underwater viewing window. Interactive elements such as a gaming wall and touch screen map will immerse guests and educate them on how SeaWorld cares for sea turtles. A new flat ride, Riptide Rescue (a Huss Airboat) will allow guests to spin in boats on their own rescue mission.

Legoland Florida officials recently revealed its official opening date: Saturday, October 15, 2011. Inspired by America's love affair with all things Lego, the new 150-acre theme park will cater to kids ages two to 12 with more than 50 'pink-knuckle' rides – from roller coasters to race cars – as well as family focused shows and attractions. Park officials disclosed the date, a closely guarded secret since the park broke ground last year, to help families already planning vacations in the fall. The park also unveiled a new online reservations program to make the vacation booking experience even easier. Travelers can now book tickets, accommodations, airlines and rental cars through the Web site: <http://florida.legoland.com>.

To commemorate Titanic's Irish heritage, **Titanic Museum Attractions** in Pigeon Forge,

Tenn. and Branson, Mo. will give away six 11-day trips for two to Belfast. The 12 winners of the "Back to Titanic 100th Year 'Tour Ireland' Sweepstakes" will cruise to Belfast where they will visit the birthplace of the world's best-known, most luxurious ocean liner. Complete sweepstakes details can be found at www.TitanicAttraction.com.

Ripley Radio is a journey through the weird, wacky, whimsical, wild, and totally unbelievable world of the odd, strange and unusual. Each show provides listeners with amazing and absolutely true tales of today, as well as facts culled from the extensive archives of the company that has been freaking out families for more than 90 years. For detailed information, visit: <http://webtalkradio.net/shows/ripley-radio-an-on-demand-oddcast>.

Knott's Berry Farm recently introduced its new MyPark App. Created for iPhones, iPads, and Droids, this new app is designed to help guests plan and navigate their way through Ghost Town and beyond. The MyPark App is loaded with valuable information including: admission ticket and season pass prices, operating hours, dining options, park map and entertainment schedules.

South Carolina's largest festival entertainment complex, **Broadway at the Beach**, will host a dynamic illusionist as part of its summer entertainment series. Throughout June and July, 'The Magic of Carl Michael' will take center stage five nights a week at 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. at Heroes Harbor, located next to Jimmy Buffett's Margaritaville. Michael will intrigue and engage people of all ages with his showcase of large illusions and other family-oriented tricks. In addition, Broadway at the Beach will soon announce another act on the Heroes Harbor stage beginning August 1 and running through Sept. 2. The Tuesday Night Summer Show of fireworks will begin May 31 and run throughout the summer until August 30.

Morey's Piers kicked off the summer season on Memorial Day weekend with amateur contestants competing to eat as many one-pound buckets of Curley's fries as they could in 10 minutes at the Second Annual Curley Fry Festival. "The Curley Fry Festival was such a success last year; we knew we had to bring it back. It's a day to celebrate good food and family on Memorial Day Weekend," said Kristel Jenkins, Morey's Piers events and entertainment manager. The 2nd Annual Curley Fry Festival celebrated Curley Fry's 6th birthday party where kids could decorate their own potato, enjoy strolling entertainment and take photos with mascot Curley.

Can you handle "it"? Morey's piers newest ride will also draw thrill seekers this year. Combining a swinging motion up to 120 degrees and a rotating center where gondolas seat a total of 24 passengers who are facing each other, "it" spins, swings and hurls riders 65 feet into the air. It also features a custom first-of-its-kind lap bar system designed by Morey's Piers in collaboration with KMG to give riders greater freedom of movement.

"We're thrilled to introduce 'it' to our ride roster," said Jack Morey, Executive Vice President. "It's literally like getting an enormous new toy and we hope our guests will enjoy 'it.'"

Don't forget to stop in at Jumbo's to see what's new for 2011. The restaurant now serves a selection of beer and wine along with its classic American Boardwalk fare and seafood in an updated family dining room. Spend a relaxing afternoon on the deck at Jumbo's soaking up the first rays of summer while enjoying some Cuban spiced fries and a daiquiri.

CLM Entertainment's Alan Ramsay dead at 41

Was past president for NEAAPA in 2004, 2005



Alan Ramsay

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — Alan E. Ramsay, 41, of Boyle Avenue, passed away June 12 at his home.

Born in Woonsocket, he was the son of Burton E. Ramsay and Judith (Yacino) Culgin of Ormand Beach, Florida. He was a life-long Cumberland resident.

He was a 1981 graduate of Cumberland High School and later earned his Fire Science degree from Providence College.

Alan Ramsay was the owner of CLM Entertainment for more than 10 years. He was the lead trainer, and Certified Risk Evaluator. He developed training manuals for amusement rides in various regions of the country and world. He was previously employed by Ripley's in Orlando, Fla. which he managed the company's Great Wolf Lodge in Niagara Falls. His first job in the amusement industry was at Rocky Point in Warwick, and later a manager at Roger Williams Park & Zoo in Providence.

He was a member of the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) and was past president (2004, 2005) of the New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (NEAAPA). He also served as the current secretary/treasurer for NEAAPA.

Among many interests and activities, he was a proud volunteer fireman for the Cumberland Hill Fire Department for many years, a certified diver working with the Cumberland Police Department and Cumberland Hill Fire Department.

Eastern State Exposition's Director of Sales and current NEAAPA President Gregory Chiecko remembered Alan saying, "Alan's life was embedded in the amusement industry. He was constantly on the go, providing his skills to make certain that anything he touched was done at 100 percent or better. This was certainly true with his dedication to NEAAPA. Alan was professional, confident and always striving to make NEAAPA a viable association to its members and to the industry."

"He always took the time to talk with people and he made you feel like you were the only person in the room. After giving notice of Alan's passing to our membership, I received

many e-mails commenting on Alan's life, continued Chiecko. "I believe this passage from Stephen Lipkin of NANCO and NEAAPA past president says it all: 'Alan has been the straw that stirs the NEAAPA drink; he definitely took over this role from Tom Morrow...' Alan will be missed, not only by the NEAAPA family, but by all he has touched in his lifetime."

Ron Gustafson, director of marketing for Quassy Amusement Park in Middlebury, Conn. said, "We are extremely shocked to hear of Alan's death. We have known Alan for years through our association with NEAAPA as well as IAAPA. He will certainly be missed for all of his contributions to the industry."

Amusement Today Publisher Gary Slade reflected on Alan's passing saying, "Tom Morrow and Alan Ramsay were the two individuals who welcomed myself and *Amusement Today* into their New England area group of parks. They were both all about making their regional park association successful and good at it. It's hard to believe that both of these fine men are now gone. It seems like we never take enough time to say thank you to those who have helped us, those we have become friends with and those we share industry time with. To that, I say 'thank you' Alan for all you did not only for *AT*, but for the entire amusement industry. I'm honored I got to call you my friend."

Besides his mother and father, he leaves his step-father Robert Culgin; sister Kimberly Ann Picard, and niece Ashley E. Picard all of Ormand Beach, Fla.

A celebration of his life was held June 18 at the J. J. Duffy Funeral Home in Cumberland. Burial was at the Resurrection Cemetery, Cumberland.

Donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Association of R.I., 245 Waterman Street, suite 306, Providence, R.I. 02906.

Holiday World set to host 2011 Golden Tickets, Sept. 16 & 17

Information on host hotel now available



Holiday World & Splashin' Safari in Santa Claus, Indiana will be the host park for the 2011 Golden Ticket Awards presented annually by Amusement Today. The park is home to the top ranked wooden coaster, The Voyage, shown here. AT/TIM BALDWIN

STORY: Janice Witherow
jwitherow@amusementtoday.com

Preparations for *Amusement Today's* 2011 Golden Ticket Awards hosted by Holiday World & Splashin' Safari in Santa Claus, Ind., on Friday and Saturday, Sept. 16-17 are well under way, and the two-day event promises to be a fun-filled "don't miss" industry occasion.

Information on the host hotel was recently finalized, and attendees can begin making reservations. Santa's Lodge, the closest hotel to Holiday World, will serve as the host hotel for the event. Rates are \$79.99 per night; plus tax. Reservations can be made by calling (812) 937-1902. Please use the code "Golden Tickets" when making reservations.

Special behind-the-scenes tours, a luau-style party and cocktail reception are being planned to kick-off the event on September 16. Other activities such as guided park tours, a day of experiencing Holiday World & Splashin'

Safari in operation and the anticipated awards' show followed by a special dinner will entertain attendees on September 17.

To check out the general itinerary for the Golden Ticket Awards, please log on to www.GoldenTicketAwards.com. A more specific agenda for the event, which will outline all of the details (including hotel information and registration), will be released at a later date. This event is reserved for working professionals in the amusement industry; representatives from parks and attractions, manufacturers, suppliers and consultants are invited to join Holiday World and *Amusement Today* at this fun-filled celebration.

This is the 14th annual year for the Golden Ticket Awards; they are presented to the "Best of the Best" in the amusement industry and are calculated from an international poll conducted by *Amusement Today*.

THE 2011 GOLDEN TICKET AWARDS ARE COMING SEPTEMBER 16-17!



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			High	Low
Cedar Fair L.P.	\$20.42	\$18.64	\$22.69	\$10.99
MGM Mirage	\$14.54	\$12.50	\$16.94	\$8.92
Six Flags Ent. Corp.	\$78.45	\$71.87	\$80.50	\$31.85
CBS Corp.	\$26.07	\$25.82	\$28.34	\$12.26
Walt Disney Co.	\$41.01	\$38.37	\$44.34	\$30.72
Great Wolf Resorts, Inc.	\$2.90	\$2.90	\$3.35	\$1.78
Blackstone Group	\$16.84	\$16.60	\$19.63	\$8.93
Village Roadshow	\$4.15	\$4.11	\$4.45	\$1.90
NBC Universal	\$19.59	\$18.39	\$21.65	\$13.75

CURRENCY



Region (U.S.)	As of 06/13/11	Change from year ago
East Coast	\$3.968	\$1.019
Midwest	\$3.905	\$1.013
Gulf Coast	\$3.896	\$1.022
Mountain	\$3.988	\$0.999
West Coast	\$4.248	\$1.044
California	\$4.163	\$1.109

TOP 7 MOST TRADED CURRENCIES



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80.36976 JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.84357 CHF (Swiss Franc)
0.94956 AUD (Australian Dollar)
0.98059 CAD (Canadian Dollar)

PEOPLE WATCH

Gary Quasebarth named Indiana Beach COO

Representatives from Morgan Management, the parent company of Indiana Beach Amusement Resort in Monticello, Ind., announced that **Gary Quasebarth** has been appointed as chief operating officer for the property.

This comes at a time when Indiana Beach Amusement Resort has embarked upon a multi-year, multi-million dollar expansion and improvement plan that includes a new entrance plaza, remodeled restrooms and facilities, and the addition of Adventure Point. Quasebarth joins the Indiana Beach family with extensive experience managing multi-million dollar construction projects, national sales efforts and themed entertainment. During his time at such venues as SeaWorld and Busch Gardens, he was involved with technical and park operations of eight theme parks, including management, design, marketing and special events.

"Gary brings a rich and diverse set of skills to Indiana Beach Amusement Resort," said Bob Moser, CEO Morgan Recreational Vacations, the parent company of Indiana Beach Amusement Resort. "We are investing millions of dollars in park updates, improvements and new attractions. This requires leadership and experience in construction, resort management and marketing. Gary is the right person for the job."

Adventure Point, the newest attraction to Indiana Beach Amusement Resort, joins the Boardwalk Funway Rides and Ideal Beach Waterpark. Adventure Point includes Zip Lines, a high ropes course, rock climbing and the Adventure Point Outfitters shop.

"Since my arrival I have received an open and warm welcome from this community," said Quasebarth. "What I've found at the resort and in this community are hardworking folks that care very much about this property. Local roots run deep at Indiana Beach and I'm glad to be part of the Beach Family."

WhiteWater welcomes Pat Finnegan

Canada's WhiteWater West, has announced the addition of **Pat Finnegan** to its team of more than 450 employees worldwide. Finnegan will represent WhiteWater as the vice president

of sales for the Northeastern U.S.

Finnegan is no stranger to the waterpark industry; he is a 26-year veteran who comes to WhiteWater from Chula Vista Resort, in Wisconsin Dells, Wis. He joined the Chula Vista team in 2006 as the VP of aquatic development and operations and went on to become VP and GM.

Prior to Chula Vista, he spent 18 years at Wet 'n' Wild Orlando, as director of operations, where he was a key player in modernizing the park, putting his experience in revenue operations, park operations, park services, food and beverage, catering, safety and security and guest relations to great use.

"WhiteWater is proud to welcome an individual of Pat's caliber and background to our team," affirms Andrew Mowatt, WhiteWater's executive VP of North American sales. "Pat brings a wealth of experience to the table and will have a huge impact both internally and with our waterpark customer group at large."

Sea Life Center promotes Craig Dunkerely

There is a new pair of hands on the tiller at Chessington's Sea Life center in the U.K.

Former Warwick Castle operations chief **Craig Dunkerely** has taken over as new Sea Life general manager.

Craig, 34, was qualified as a sports coach at Warwickshire College, but instead went to work at the Castle as food and beverage manager where he ended up spending 14 years. In 2009, he moved to become operations director at Chessington World of Adventures.

"I was fascinated by everything that went on at Chessington Zoo," he said, "and when the Sea Life attraction arrived I realized that marine life was just as fascinating."

Though only days into his new role, Craig is confident he made the right decision when he accepted the offer to take charge at the Sea Life Park.

"I have a great team here and we have bold and exciting plans to develop the park in the coming years, and I really love the area," he said.



Quasebarth



Finnegan



Dunkerely

Peter J. Crage resigns as CFO of Cedar Fair

Cedar Fair Entertainment Company recently announced that **Peter J. Crage** submitted his letter of resignation as the company's chief financial officer, effective June 22, 2011. Crage, 49, who has served in this position since 2005, left the company to pursue a new professional opportunity. **David R. Hoffman**, 42, vice president of finance and corporate tax, and **Brian C. Witherow**, 44, vice president and corporate controller, will lead the finance function in the interim while the company conducts a search for Crage's successor.

"I wish to thank Dick and my colleagues, as well as the board, for the confidence they have consistently shown me during my tenure at Cedar Fair," said Crage. "While I am tremendously excited about my new position, it was certainly not an easy decision for me to make given my strong connection to Cedar Fair and the wonderfully talented men and women who work here. I am proud of what we accomplished together and look forward to watching them build upon this success."

CORRECTION

In the May issue (page 10) of *Amusement Today's* 2011 Park Preview Guide, the wrong supplier was listed for the Europa-Park (Rust, Germany) new Volo di Leonardo suspended pedal monorial ride. The correct supplier should have been ETF Ride Systems of Nederweert, The Netherlands. AT regrets the error.

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Starliner coaster preserved, being stored in Florida

PALMETTO, Fla. — Much of the Starliner roller coaster of Miracle Strip and Cypress Gardens fame is neatly stacked outside the home of Joe Cadmus and is awaiting a buyer. "I developed a relationship with Cypress Gardens about three years ago when they started moving rides off the property," said Joe Cadmus of JCE Ride Werks.

AT EXCLUSIVE!

His company was responsible for disassembling, refurbishing and reassembling many of the rides that are now at the new Miracle Strip at Pier Park. "When Legoland announced that Starliner didn't fit their demographics. We negotiated a price and I removed the ride," said Cadmus.

Legoland gave him very little time to remove the coaster so he was unable to save the track and much of the horizontal supports, however almost all of the vertical bents were preserved and are in excellent shape. It was hoped the ride would be reassembled at Mir-



acle Strip at Pier Park but that has yet to come to fruition.

In the meantime the wood bents are now neatly stacked at his home. All of the components of the ride, including a 2007 PTCI train, the lift chain and related hardware, control systems and magnetic Dyna Brakes, are all stored under cover.

▶ See STARLINER, page 39

Above, coaster owner Joe Cadmus shows off the Starliner PTCI train he has in storage. In the right two photos, the coaster is neatly stacked in Joe's front and side yards awaiting a new home. He also has other hardware from the ride including lift chain, control system and magnetic brakes.

AT/JEFFREY L. SEIFERT





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Checking off my list

Patty Beazley

When Pigs Fly

AIMS seminar director and educational chairperson
Beazley@comcast.net

Curriculum and schedule developed. Check.

Classes downloaded and Website available for registration. Check.

Hotel booked. Check.

Flight reservations made. Check.

What am I preparing for and crossing off my "to do list?" The AIMS Safety Seminar to be held in sunny Orlando, Florida, November 9-14, 2011 at the Doubletree by Hilton Orlando at SeaWorld.



BEASLEY

If you are new to the amusement business and wondering what exactly is the AIMS Safety Seminar, it is a five day seminar of educational classes for individuals in the amusement business industry. The seminar classes cover in depth areas of aquatics, operations, maintenance, safety and inspections taught by some of the industry's best that volunteer their time.

Who attends an AIMS Safety Seminar? Anyone from front line, leads, supervisors, managers, and even senior management. The AIMS Safety Seminar prides itself on a small student to instructor ratio and a wonderful environment to network with other business organizations.

For the autumn seminar, we have completed our curriculum and I am proud to announce that we have over 25 new classes in a wide expanse of topics to offer. Classes such as Social Media, International Employees, Aquatic Fiberglass Inspection, ADA, Human Engineering and Visual Inspection to only name a few. We will be bringing back our core classes with revamped curriculums, in addition to many new instruc-

tors. Furthermore, all AIMS classes will be held at the Doubletree by Hilton Orlando at SeaWorld resort.

Due to popular demand, AIMS again will be offering specialty tracks for those who want a concentrated curriculum in Aquatics, ASTM, Leadership and Mobile Shows. AIMS will also offer Certification testing for the following areas and levels: Aquatics Level I, Operations Level I & II, Maintenance Level I & II, and for Inspection - Associate Ride Inspector (ARI), Certified Ride Inspector (CRI) and introducing in 2011, Professional Ride Inspector (PRI). Certification testing will be conducted mid-week during the AIMS Safety Seminar on Sunday, November 13.

Skycoaster will be hosting their "Skycoaster University" classes in conjunction with AIMS on Monday, November 14 with testing to be held on Tuesday, November 15, 2011. As implemented last year, AIMS will accept all Skycoaster classes for CEU's (Continuing Education Units.) Wow! I encourage those attending Skycoaster U to review all of the AIMS classes offered and join us a few days earlier.

I invite you to visit the AIMS Safety Seminar curriculum and classes at: www.aimsintl.org. For those who act quickly, AIMS still has some early bird rates available at a savings of \$100 for the price of \$495 for five days of classes. Lunches and breaks as well as the AIMS opening reception are included in this price. Anyone who is interested in the early bird rate, sponsorship for the seminar or donating to our fun silent auction, please contact Holly Coston at 714-425-5747.

In the next few months, look for our article on details of the 2011 AIMS Safety Seminar. In the meantime, I have a few other items to check off my list including new business cards for those exceptional networking events.

Hope all have a safe and prosperous summer!

AIMS member spotlight: Steve Shelton

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

steve.laycock@rides.com

Steve Shelton

Tulsa Expo Square
Supervisor and Manager
of Sky-Ride Operations

Steve Shelton was like many other typical teenagers, filling his summer free time with fun activities along with typical summer part-time jobs. That was until the hot Oklahoma sun changed his course of action, forever. Steve was attending the 2010 AIMS Safety Seminar in Orlando when he took a few minutes out of his busy schedule to answer some questions for the *AIMS News and Notes* page.



SHELTON

How did you get started in the amusement business?

"In the summer of 1988 when my lawn mowing business burned up with the Oklahoma heat, I went to work at Bells Amusement Park. This was a small family owned amusement park on the fairgrounds in Tulsa. I started as a ride operator that summer, but with training, worked my way up to a maintenance supervisor and inspector."

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

"Before I went to work for the amusement park I did what the typical teenager does, mow lawns and lifeguard. I also was very active in my local Boy Scout troop. While in Boy Scouts I worked hard to earn the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest honor one can earn."

What do you do in your free time?

"I spend my free time with my wife and our daughter who was born last June. I also raise Black Angus Cattle. I enjoy going to different amusement parks with my family, we are ride junkies and love coasters and extreme rides. I also spend what little free time I have left collecting anything Disney, you have to love the mouse!"

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

"The Tulsa Expo Square Fairgrounds is a 240 acre multi use facility. It is home to the Tulsa State Fair. We do many consumer and agricultural events throughout the year. I like the variety of these different events."

How long have you worked at the Tulsa Expo Square Fairgrounds?

"I have worked there for almost 10 years. The first few years were part time during the winter when Bells Amusement Park was closed for its season."

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

"There are many things that I have learned. The most important to me has been the importance of paperwork, documentation, good record keeping, and working closely with your manufactures."

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

"My favorite class at AIMS was any class where there was a lot of interaction which allowed me the opportunity to meet new people. I enjoy meeting and talking to so many people who all have amusement facility stories to tell. Each of these stories gives me more knowledge and insight on how to run and maintain my facility as well as how to better perform inspection that I am involved in."

Why should someone attend the AIMS Safety Seminar?

"AIMS is a great chance for inspectors, maintenance personnel, operators, and the manufacturer to get together to discuss and solve specific problems that many different facilities may face."

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

"AIMS has a great staff and knowledgeable instructors who all go out of their way to make sure the attendees get the information they need and their experience is enjoyable."

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

"There have been many knowledgeable and helpful people that I have met at AIMS and now call my friend. One of these is Don Hankison because he's a great instructor, a great listener, and just a wealth of knowledge who I can call on when I have a question."

▶STARLINER

Continued from page 37

The Starliner is a moderate-sized out and back coaster that stands 70 feet tall and is 2,640 feet long. It was designed by John Allen in 1963 and built by PTC for Miracle Strip in Florida. When Miracle Strip closed, the coaster was moved and completely rebuilt in 2007 at Cypress Gardens Adventure Park, where it ran for two years before that park

ceased operation. Joe is asking \$300,000 for the materials.

Individuals interested in purchasing the Starliner can email Joe Cadmus at: jcadmus64@aol.com.

—Jeffrey L. Seifert

The coaster's vertical bents are intact and neatly stacked. Although much of the cross bracing was cut, the boards are in good shape and can be reused elsewhere.

AT/JEFFREY L. SEIFERT



Santa's Village reopens with new name, attractions

EAST DUNDEE, ILL. — Santa Claus returns to East Dundee, Ill. this summer with the reopening of Santa's Village, which closed approximately six years ago after entertaining generations of families from 1959 through 2005. Now known as Santa's Village AZoosment Park, the property was purchased by Jason and Amy Sierpien, a couple who brought animals and associated activities through their educational animal business, A Zoo to You.

The Sierpiens realized there was potential in the beloved old park and when they got the opportunity, they took it. "Everybody knows this place," said Jason Sierpiens, who once worked at the park shoeing horses. "Nobody knows where East Dundee is, but they know where Santa's Village is."

Much of the original Santa's Village remains intact and has been renovated and combined with a petting zoo, exotic animal shows, pony rides. Original amusement rides from Santa's Village now re-opened include Balloon Race, Convoy, Sleigh Ride, and Starjet. Rides relocated from now-closed and Kiddieland are Midge-o-Racer and a Kiddie Whip. The park also features a collection of new rides including Dragon Coaster, Kiddie Ferris Wheel, Kiddie Hand Trains, Swings and a classic Tilt-a-Whirl.

More details can be found at: www.santasvillagedundee.com.



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The Big E shelters tornado victims

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. — The amusement industry has been affected in a variety of different ways by the abundance of tornado-spawning storms late this spring. Some industry members actually



McCary

have weathered the storms, while others have found different ways to be involved.

Officials of the Eastern States Expositions, West Springfield, Mass., volunteered the use of the fairgrounds to local victims there. The 4-H dormitory became a rescue shelter at the first of June for area tornado victims there.

There were still 91 West Springfield residents living in the building after the first week of June. The tornado, rated an EF-3, touched down in West Springfield June 1. The most updated reports AT could find by press time was that four people died from the storm and about 400 buildings were destroyed.

At the height of the crisis, a city official was reported saying the city was housing 170 residents. The city was using two school sites, but decided to consolidate. That was when The Big E donated the space.

Wayne McCary, president of The Big E, was quoted as saying in a story on masslive.com: "We were so fortunate that our facil-

▶ See TORNADOS, page 44

Pennsylvania carnival feels Mother Nature's power

STORY: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

BLOSSBURG, Pa. — Christina Benner and her husband, Kerry Benner, owners of Penn Valley Amusements, Middleburg, Pa., were in their second evening at the annual Blossburg (Pa.) Coal Festival, which had been set for May 25-28.

Rain had been forecasted for Friday, May 27, but hopes were that would happen late in the night, after the show had closed for the day.

The two were in their brand new cotton candy trailer. It was the third spot for the trailer purchased from Hitch-Hiker Manufacturing, New Middletown, Ohio.

"All of the sudden the wind just started blowing," Benner said. "It wasn't even raining. The wind picked up and made a whistling noise. We could hear trees falling and we could see people running.

"I turned to my husband and said, 'This is a tornado.'" She was right.

The tornado, which hit the area just about nightfall, was designated an EF1.

"Six people attending the festival were injured," Benner said. "A total of 23 people from Blossburg, including those six from here, were sent to the hospital."

Benner said they all felt lucky, however. Not one of her crew was injured. Not one of her rides was damaged. She will have to replace a roof on a game trailer. And, her new trailer was spared.

"It just happened so fast," she said. "It was calm, then the wind just started blowing. It didn't even rain until afterwards. People were run-

Joplin festival postponed, Alabama fairgrounds report no damage

Boomtown Days, Joplin, Mo., which had been scheduled to take place June 9-11, had been postponed in early June due to the tornado relief efforts, according to a spokesperson. Planners do hope to reschedule. They feel, eventually, the community will need that break.

Although the tornado that hit Joplin May 22 spared the historic Landreth Park where the festival is held, planners decided it was just too soon to hold an event such as this.

The EF5 twister leveled about 30 percent of the city of Joplin and, according to the most recent update, caused more than 120 deaths.

The April 27 deadly twister that hit northern Alabama spared the Alabama State Fairgrounds, Pelham. It is set for Aug. 26-Sept. 5.

ning around in panic. Some ran for their cars. There were seven cars on the lot that were smashed."

Trees fell, some 150 to 200 years old.

The committee hosting the festival had quite a few tents, trailers, and exhibits ruined beyond repair.

"They really received most of the damage," Bonner said.

But, as is the case in these instances, the town came together and began cleaning up the debris. Although Benner said they broke down and



The Benners, owners of Penn Valley Amusements, Middleburg, Pa., found themselves and their carnival in the middle of a tornado May 27 while they were in their second day of playing the annual Blossburg (Pa.) Coal Festival. While none of their crew were injured, there were six people injured that were attending the event. Trees were uprooted and snapped at the trunks. Seven cars were smashed. The festival committee's exhibits sustained much of the damage. The Benners will have to replace the roof of a games trailer.

COURTESY CLIFF ISENBURG

moved on Friday, "we really could have opened back up

Friday evening. It was that clean by then."

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Butler Amusements to take over as carnival provider for Fresno Fair

Butler Amusements, Fairfield, Calif., will be back as the carnival provider for the 2011 The Big Fresno Fair, set for Oct. 5-16.

COURTESY BUTLER AMUSEMENTS

STORY: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

FRESNO, Calif. — The Big Fresno Fair announced last month that Butler Amusements Inc., Fairfield, Calif., will be the new carnival partner for the 2011 Big Fresno Fair, providing 19 spectacu-

lars, nine majors and 20 kiddie rides. Butler Amusements had previously served as the fair's carnival provider from 1981 to 2005.

The 2011 Big Fresno Fair will run Oct. 5-16.

The fair issued a Request For Proposal for carnival providers in 2010, which Butler Amusements won, securing a three-year contract with The Big Fresno Fair effective October 2011 along with two, one-year options. Butler Amusements replaces Shamrock Shows, Fontana, Calif., as the carnival provider after their five-year contract expired.

"We are very excited to have Butler Amusements back as our carnival provider," said John C. Alkire, CEO, The Big Fresno Fair. "Butler Amusements was our carnival provider before for 24 years and they always bring quality rides and games that our Fair patrons love. We are looking forward to a great year with Butler Amusements with some amazing carnival promotions, so stay tuned."

Butch Butler, CEO, Butler Amusements, is also happy to be back at The Big Fresno.

"The Big Fresno Fair always has the top entertainment, attractions and promotions," said Butch Butler, Butler Amusements. "We have enjoyed a long history with Fresno and always have considered it our 'hometown' fair. We are thrilled to be back and are ready to provide the best in rides, games and customer service possible to Big Fresno Fair patrons."

Butler Amusements is a family run business that was started nearly 42 years ago. It now provides carnivals for over 120 different events each year, including more than 35 major fairs and festivals. It operates 125 amusement rides in seven different western states including California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Nevada, Arizona and Texas.

Butler said the carnival is dedicated to providing The Big Fresno Fair customers with safe and enjoyable rides, and a wide variety of food and game concessions, featuring some of the newest equipment available.

The Big Fresno Fair,
▶ See FRESNO, page 44

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Cajun Heartland Fair gets hot with an increase in attendance

STORY: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

LAFAYETTE, La. – The 2011 Cajun Heartland State Fair held May 26-June 1 was deemed a success as more people attended the event full of amusement rides and attractions, musical entertainment, and grounds entertainment.

The fair, in its 23rd year, is co-produced by North American Midway Entertainment and the Cajundome staff. It is (NAME) a free gate admission so exact attendance numbers aren't available. There is a parking charge of \$10 per vehicle.

Heidi Champagne, marketing director, Cajundome and Convention Center, said they have estimated this year's attendance at 125,000.

"We started out way above our 2010 numbers," Champagne said. "We had quite a bit of rain in 2010. During the last few days of our fair, we ended up down a little due to record-breaking heat. We had two or three days of 100-degree heat. Fairgoers waited until later in the day to arrive on the grounds."

Amber Swedgan, NAME, agreed. She definitely felt that attendance was up.

"This year's event drew more than 2010," Swedgan said. "The dip last year was largely due to the BP Gulf oil spill. We were not as good as the recording-breaking 2009 due to the days of 100-plus-degree heat."

She said the carnival rides ride over 100,000 people each year.

"We have been doing this event since 1994 as Farrow Shows," she said, adding NAME provided 26 rides for this year's event.

Champagne said new music and artists are presented in the grandstands every year.

"We added a free gaming exhibit called 'GameHype,'" she said. "All ages could play new video games for free on a variety of gaming consoles. We had a Papa Roach & Pop Evil concert in our Convention Center."

Highlights this year included "no rain," said Champagne, as well as the Show Me Safari Petting Zoo, which had

two new Pygmy Goats arrive during the fair.

Other grounds entertainment included acts such as the Fearless Flores Circus Thrill Show, Jingles the Clown, Show Me Swine Pig Races, Show Me Pony Rides, and Rouse's Kid's Corner.

▶ See CAJUN, page 44

North American Midway Entertainment fielded a midway of 26 rides at this year's Cajun Heartland Fair in Lafayette, La. The fair, which concluded on June 1, drew more than 125,000 this year, up from the 2010 numbers. COURTESY CAJUN HEARTLAND FAIR



Photos: Dan Feicht / dan@danfeicht.com

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►TORNADOS

Continued from page 41

ity was not impacted. We wanted to reach out to help people who were a lot less fortunate."

Even though the fairgrounds' 4-H dormitory has kitchen facilities, the public school system prepares and sends meals to the victims. There have been so many clothes donated that the city was no longer accepting them. The clothes and other donated items were also being stored in The Big E building.

For security reasons, the fairgrounds had barred people who normally use the area for walking and jogging from entering the area where the victims were being housed.

Those being housed in a dormitory had no idea when or where they might find other housing.

►FRESNO

Continued from page 42

founded in 1884, is the fifth largest fair in the State of California and represents the 21st District Agricultural Association. More than 500,000 people from throughout the state visit The Big Fresno Fair each year making it the largest event in the Central Valley.

Along with the carnival, the fair offers headline entertainment, free roaming entertainment from pirates to magicians, free grounds entertainment such as the Save Mart Wine Garden and Tachi Palace Sports Zone, horse racing, and special exhibits.

New this year is the 1st Annual Big Band Review, which

will take place on opening day. Junior High and High School Marching Bands throughout the State of California are eligible to compete for cash prizes at this Northern California Band Association sanctioned event.

The Big Fresno Fair and Butler Amusements will continue to hold the \$1 Carnival Ride Wednesdays promotion, which began in 2010 and was a huge success, as well as the popular Unlimited Carnival Ride Wristbands. The Unlimited Carnival Ride Wristbands can be purchased July 29-Oct. 4 for \$25. During the Fair the price will increase to \$30, Monday-Friday, and \$35, Saturday-Sunday.

The fair also offers a Season Pass as well for \$25, July 29-Oct. 4.

►CAJUN

Continued from page 43

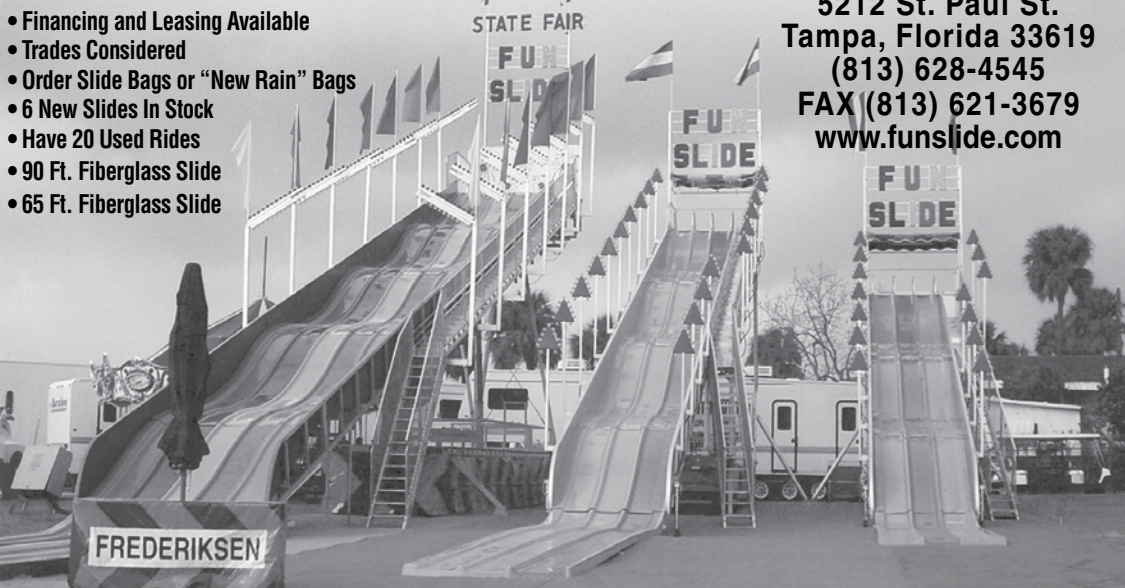
Promotions were offered each night, including a one-ticket ride night. That night patrons were asked to present

a Pepsi product or a non-perishable food item for donation at the tunnel entrance.

There was also Sonic Drive-In Night, where the Cox Grandstand featured music from Midnight Star and Krossfyre.

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MIDWAY TALK

Compiled by Pam Sherborne

The 2011 **San Diego County Fair** has just a few days left now and fair officials did what they could this year to help fairgoers save. The fair kept many of its popular promotions including the \$3 Tuesday admissions. New this year was the Passport to Savings, a coupon book with 100 coupons for savings not only on the fairgrounds but also to local restaurants, theme parks and stores. The independent midway at the 2011 San Diego County Fair in Del Mar offered close to 40 rides in Fun Zone and 40 in Kiddieland. There were about 40 games offered to guests.

New pictorial history books about the **Alameda County Fair**, Pleasanton, Calif., and **Nebraska State Fair**, Grand Island, recently have been published. The Alameda County Fair book, by local author Victoria Christian, was released May 23. The Nebraska State Fair book, written by Mary L. Maas, was released June 27. Noted amusement industry publisher Arcadia Publishing published both books. They can be obtained at area bookstores and retail establishments, as well as from the publisher.

For its 25th anniversary year, the **State Fair Meadowlands** has been treating fairgoers to brand-new entertainment during the 17-day event, which started June 24 and runs through July 10 at the New Meadowlands Fairgrounds, next to the New Meadowlands Stadium, formerly Giants Stadium, in East Rutherford. New Jersey State Fair Meadowlands is the largest fair in the New York metropolitan area, with more than 150 rides and attractions, as well as more than 50 food vendors, occupying 35-plus acres of fairgrounds and parking, next to the former Giants Stadium. Amusements of America, Monroe Township, N.J., is supplying the midway.

Despite a lagging economy, the **Montgomery County Fair and Rodeo** in Conroe, Texas held April 8-16 is regaining strength after a dip in revenues a few years ago. Overall revenues for 2011 increased roughly 33 percent from 2010 as the fair added more entertainment to its lineup for attendees' enjoyment. Attendance increased this year to 60,000. New this year included a scanning system at entrance gates to get better attendance figures. Another addition was the Rhinestone Roper, who can be seen on NBC's *America's Got Talent* this season. There was also live entertainment for the barbecue cook-off. Crabtree Amusements, Staples, Texas, provided the carnival for the event. The 2012 Montgomery County Fair and Rodeo is scheduled for April 13-22.

The man who stepped in to help get the **Sioux Empire Fair** here back on its feet is leaving. Tryg Fredrickson took over management of the fair after it was rocked by embezzlement and a financial crunch. Fredrickson will stay on through the fair this August, but will leave for a new position in Sioux Falls, S.D. after that. The Sioux Empire Fair Association has begun the process of looking for a replacement. The fair is set for Aug. 9-14, 2011. Todd Armstrong Show, Las Vegas, Nev., will provide the midway.

The **Illinois State Fair** will still go on in the wake of state budget cuts, but some blue-ribbon winners may find their prize checks smaller. Both the Illinois House and Senate, which are drawing up separate state budgets this spring, plan to cut funding for fair awards – by \$20,000 and \$40,000, respectively. The fair holds more than 8,700 contests, ranging from choosing the top animals and crops to best-decorated diapers and best breakfast food on a stick. The 2011 dates are Aug. 12-21. North American Midway Entertainment will supply the midway.

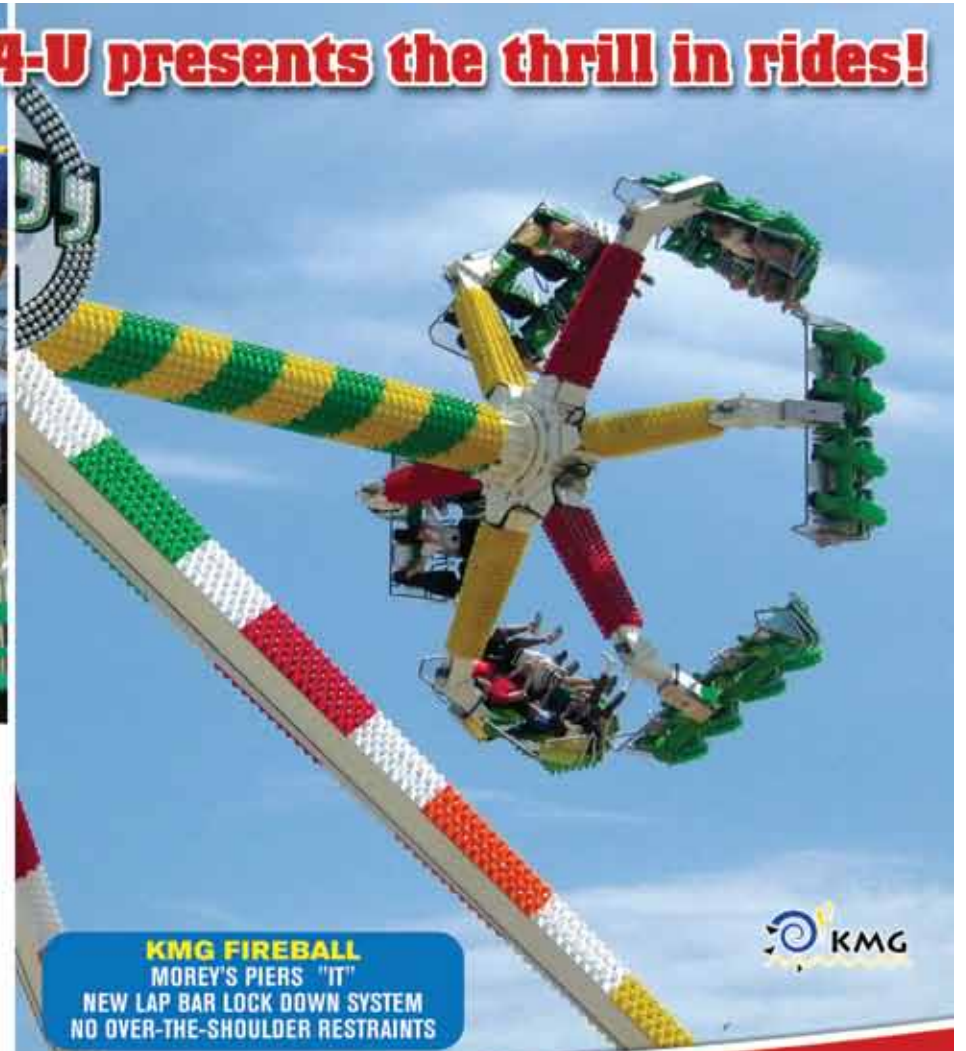
The 35th annual **Delaware County Fair**, located in Middletown, Del., had a new location here this year, the Granite Run Mall on Baltimore Pike. Glen Riddle and Concordville-Chadds Ford Rotary Clubs present the event, held June 7-12, annually. It was started in 1976.

The Granite Run Mall went under new management and has plans to revitalize the county landmark.

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Butler Amusements' Brajevich gets new trailer, optimism up

STORY: Pam Sherborne
 psherborne@amusementtoday.com



FAIRFIELD, Calif. — Butler Amusements, Fairfield, Calif., has been on the road since mid-February and, so far, as long as the weather holds out, business is good, said Mick Brajevich, general manager of the show.

"There has been a lot of rain but, up until now, there

hasn't been anything we can't overcome," Brajevich said.

Prices to operate have increased all over the U.S., but perhaps none more than in California as the state government continues to reel from money shortages in all areas. Brajevich said fuel prices are high. According to a California government Web Site, on May 4, diesel prices were averaging \$4.565 in northern

California; \$4.433 in central California and \$4.506 in the southern part of the state.

Brajevich and his wife, Kris, own about eight rides on Butler Amusements, which is owned by Butch Butler, and several games and food. He just recently purchased a new trailer from Hitch-Hiker Mfg., New Middletown, Ohio.

Kris Brajevich is Butler's daughter.

Butler has also made new purchases this year. Among new equipment he has purchased include: the Jet Spin, manufactured by Soriani/Moser; Neverland Bumper Cars, manufactured by Majestic and is permanently built at Cal Expo, Sacramento; Tea Cup by Zamperla; Dolphin Swing by Zamperla; and the Frog Hopper by S&S Worldwide.

Butler Amusements has been in business for over 40 years. The carnival plays about 120 different events and owns over 125 amusement rides. It plays California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Nevada, Arizona and Texas.

This is Brajevich's 21st year with Butler Amusements.

"I started in college and just really never left," he said.

He is not only the general manager of Butler Amusements, but also heads one of the two units.

His new Hitch-Hiker trailer is replacing an older model. The most unique feature of the new trailer is the removable end wings.

"If we have a lot of space on the midway, we can use our end wing signage," Brajevich said. "If there is just a limited amount of space, we can take the end wings off. That is a pretty unique thing."

He was to take possession of his new trailer by the end of May.

Brajevich feels it will be a good season for Butler.

"Things like higher fuel prices really can't be passed on," he said. "We are lucky that Butler is so large and plays so many large dates. It is easier for us to absorb the increase prices, which is what we have to do."

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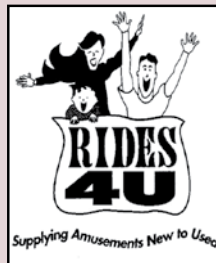
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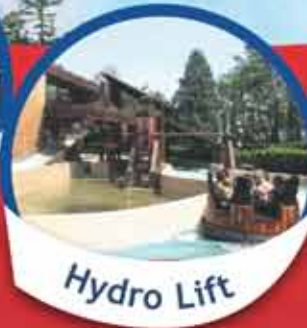
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