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Cars Land turbo-charges DCA

New gateway, themed area refuel Disney California Adventure

STORY: Dean Lamanna
Special to Amusement Today

ANAHEIM, Calif. — After months of publicity engine-revving, the Disneyland Resort finally gunned the motor of Cars Land, the intensely anticipated new themed area inside Disney California Adventure (DCA), on June 15.

The peppy, well-oiled park-within-a-park, which impresses in every aspect of its production, is designed to help quell the fits and starts of the resort's 11-year-old second gate and give it an aesthetic veneer — and a level of attendance — more in tune with adjacent Disneyland and the Disney brand.

Cars Land, based on the popular Disney-Pixar *Cars* films and sprawling across 12 acres, is the largest piece of the Disneyland Resort's five-year, property-wide renovation and expansion (see *AT* February 2012 for a complete overview). The bulk of the effort and \$1.1 billion investment have been lavished on DCA, with Disney's promotional push highlighting Cars Land and the revamped DCA entrance area, Buena Vista Street, as key features of the park's "grand reopening."

The two new lands follow several major additions to

► See **CARS**, page 7



DCA's new Cars Land, a 12-acre themed area inspired by historic Route 66 and Disney-Pixar's hit *Cars* films, caps a five-year, billion-dollar-plus expansion and renovation of the park.

COURTESY
DISNEYLAND RESORT



New Manta attraction surfaces to applause at SeaWorld San Diego

Mack Rides, Falcon's Treehouse, ThemeWorks all contribute to coaster's crowd-pleasing appeal

STORY: Dean Lamanna
Special to Amusement Today

SAN DIEGO, Calif. — It glides. It dives. It flies from the depths of its oceanic environs with swooping, twisting and sometimes startling maneuvers. Meet Manta, a new roller coaster attraction at SeaWorld San Diego.

Named for the whip-tailed, gracefully rippling giant ray known for bursting from the sea



Reilly

and going momentarily airborne, Manta — incorporating a 100,000-gallon aquarium and shallow touch pool — handily and quite spectacularly fulfills the SeaWorld mandate that all attractions provide interactive, marine conservation-themed edutainment.

"Manta is a ride attraction, but it's really a lot more," said SeaWorld San Diego Park President John Reilly during the coaster's Memorial Day weekend debut. "It delivers exactly what our guests want: a fun family coaster complemented by an incredible hands-on animal experience. Manta not only tells the story of the ray, it gives you the sensation of being one — soaring, diving and skimming the ocean's surface."

At the ribbon-cutting ceremony on May 26, Reilly gave a shout-out to *AT* Publisher Gary Slade, with whom he had shared several preview rides on Manta earlier and who was impressed by the attraction's relentlessly twisting, low-to-the-ground track layout. "Gary told me, 'Thank you for putting the 'fun' back in the roller coaster,'" Reilly

► See **MANTA**, page 4



SeaWorld San Diego guests riding the new Manta coaster are all smiles over the new family friendly ride. The LSM coaster opened on May 26.

AT/GARY SLADE

NEWSPAPER

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California tidbits



Slade

Random thoughts from some of Southern California's newest star attractions at the parks:

•**Disney California Adventure:** What can a \$1 billion makeover get you? Anything you want. The much needed icon that DCA needed has arrived. Radiator Springs Racers, based on the *Cars* movie lineup takes the proven technology from Epcot's Test Track by letting riders now race each other on side-by-side tracks through a desert landscape. And this is just one portion of the entire new Cars Land. This is Disney's best work yet.

•**Legoland California:** When I first heard the news for a junior-sized Shoot the Chute I thought Merlin had lost it. No need to worry. Pirate Reef delivers all the fun and splash as the big chutes rides. Thanks to Legoland's master model builders, this ride has more wet factor than many waterslides can create. And, thanks to two entry/exit points, this Hopkins Rides jewel of the Pacific waterway is accessible to both theme park and waterpark guests. Waterparks owners/operators should take a close look at this install and its use of Empex Watertoys.

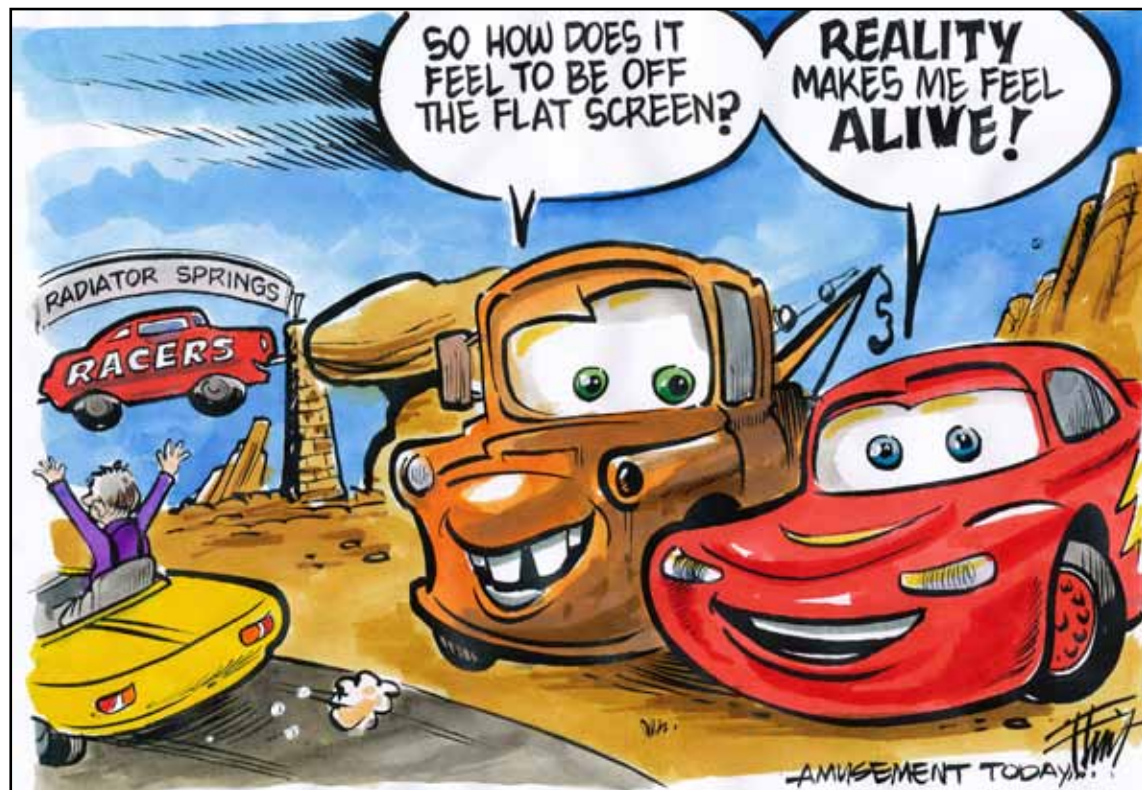
•**SeaWorld San Diego:** As I told park GM John Reilly following our first ride together, "SeaWorld brought the fun back to the roller coaster." By that I mean no inversions, an ultra smooth, fun and exciting coaster that lets guests and coaster enthusiasts come back for more. In a day when many coaster are not re-rideable, Manta is just the opposite — re-rideable a 1,000 times over. Kudos to Falcon's Treehouse for their outstanding preshow, Mack Rides for designing the coaster gem of the year and the park for putting the new area together in such a professional manner.

•**Universal Studios Hollywood:** For Transformers: The Ride-3D, the Hollywood park took the success of this dark ride technology from its sister parks in Orlando and Singapore to rewrite the film action to fit the 1984 Hasbro toy figure. This \$100 million ride uses all the latest gadgets in film technology. Dark ride fans will now make this a summer checkoff on their to-do list.

—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: Andrew Mellor, amellor@amusementtoday.com

The magic of Harry Potter heads for Japan



Mellor

We have all been hugely impressed by the Wizarding World of Harry Potter (WWoHP) at Universal Orlando Resort and since opening two years ago it has entertained millions of visitors from around the world in a unique, yes, dare I say it, "magical" way.

I think it's fair to say that almost everyone who has been to the attraction has come away awestruck by the creativity and astonishing detail that has gone into bringing the books and films about the boy wizard's exploits to life, placing guests right in the heart of the action in a way, I would suspect, few ever imagined possible. I know I for one was totally blown away by it during my visit.

It's great news, therefore, that further incarnations of the attraction have now been announced, one at Universal Studios Hollywood and now another for Universal Studios Japan (as reported in this issue of AT). Although revealed some months after the announcement for the California venture, it is the Japanese WWoHP that is sched-

uled to open first of the two, in late 2014, with California set for 2016, I understand.

Some may well, of course, question whether or not the Harry Potter phenomenon will be as popular in a few years time as it is now, but I don't see that being an issue — and clearly nor do the powers that be at Universal. Indeed, almost a whole generation has been brought up with the joys of Harry Potter so it's a no brainer. And when you look at some of the figures involved, they tell their own story.

Each of the seven books by J.K Rowling has broken sales records, with the series to date having sold approximately 450 million copies globally and been translated into over 70 languages. The Warner Bros. Pictures produced films have grossed over \$7.7 billion to date worldwide at the box office, making Harry Potter the largest grossing film franchise in history. In Japan, the Harry Potter film series has earned \$893 million to date at the box office and has been seen by more than 78 million people.

Wherever the park attractions are built, therefore, success is assured, now and in the long, long term.

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2 MINUTE DRILL



COMPILED: Janice Witherow

Paul T. Couch, Dollywood

Paul T. Couch's theme park career began as a performer and musician both at Kings Island and Opryland USA. Having produced shows for Opryland, the Lucas Theater in Savannah, Georgia, and Nashville's fabled Ryman Auditorium, Couch now brings his production expertise to Dollywood Theme Park where he serves as Director of Entertainment. Dollywood's award-winning shows have received numerous IAAPA Brass Ring Awards and Golden Ticket Awards for excellence over the last several years. Paul's organization, talent and pleasant disposition are an ideal combination for his profession. He lives near Dollywood with his wife and their beloved dog.



Dollywood's Paul Couch accepts the Golden Ticket Award for Best Shows during the awards event last September at Holiday World and Splashin' Safari.

AT/FILE

Title
Director of Entertainment.

Number of years in the industry
33.

Best thing about the industry
It continuously renews itself.

Favorite amusement ride
The shuttlecraft simulator at "Star Trek, The Experience" in Las Vegas (yes, I am one of those!).



Couch

If I wasn't working in the amusement industry, I would be...
Designing and building furniture.

Biggest challenge facing our industry
Understanding what motivates our audience.

The thing I like most about amusement/water park season is ...
The season of new possibilities it represents.

Favorite appetizer
I always order the soup.

The last thing I do before leaving work is ...
Make sure I know what I have to attend to tomorrow.

If I could guest star on any television show, it would be ...
The New Yankee Workshop. I would hold Norm Abram's safety glasses any day of the week!

The last thing I "Googled" was ...
"Willie the Duck." If you grew up in Pittsburgh in the 60s you totally get that.

It's July! I will celebrate Independence Day by ...
Wrapping my dog in her Thundershirt and curling up with her and my wife while we wait for the neighborhood fireworks wars to subside.

The last thing I cooked was ...
Something on the grill. I am the designated griller.

My latest TV obsession
The re-imagined incarnation of Battlestar Galactica.

The scariest thing I have ever done is ...
Carried Ricky Skaggs's \$45,000 fiddle through a long, pitch-black, junk-filled corridor behind a hotel ballroom stage.

When I look out my front door at home, I see ...
Granny's Knob...it's a large hill or small mountain... take your pick.

It is 3 p.m. on a workday. Where would we typically find you?
I work in theme park entertainment...what in the world is typical?

When I need some peace and quiet, I go to ...
The driver's seat of my 68 Firebird convertible and cruise the highways and byways of Sevier County.

You are at the grocery store. What aisle do you spend the most time in?
The produce section. When did there get to be so many different kinds of apples? I think the guy that comes up with all the different names for apples is the same guy that comes up with the names for paint colors.

Favorite magazine
Amusement Today readers have awarded Dollywood the Golden Ticket for Best Shows for the past three. I have become quite fond of this publication.

When people come to visit me, I make sure to take them to ...
Why, Dollywood of course! (I hear the shows are good).

Favorite weekend getaway
Nashville. This was my home for over 20 years and the place where I figured out what I wanted to be when I grew up.

The last junk food I ate was ...
Are hot dogs still considered junk food? Or have they managed to slip onto that food pyramid thing? I'm going with hot dogs.

My perfect Sunday is ...
Sunday brunch at this sweet little bistro in downtown Sevierville and then home to indulge in a stack of brand new recreational reading.

I absolutely can't live without ...
Morning "family time" with my wife and dog.

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

Presented by



www.RollerCoasterMuseum.org

•**1895:** On July 4, **Sea Lion Park** opened at **Coney Island** in Brooklyn, N.Y. It is generally considered the first gated amusement park requiring patrons to pay an admission just to enter the property. Sea Lion Park was also home to the infamous **Flip Flap**, the first looping coaster in the U.S. Constructed by **Lind Beecher**, it opened in Toledo, Ohio in 1899 and was moved to Sea Lion Park in 1900 where it operated for three years.

•**1904:** **Riverview Park**, Chicago, Ill. held its grand opening on July 2. It was one of the America's great urban amusement parks and operated for over 60 years. At its zenith the park featured more than 120 rides and was home, through the years, to 19 different roller coasters including a **Prior & Church Bobs** coaster and a **Bartlett Flying Turns**. As many as seven coasters operated simultaneously in the 1960s.

•**1907:** On July 28, a fire at **Steeplechase Park** at **Coney Island**, Brooklyn, N.Y. destroyed most of the park. Owner **George C. Tilyou** posted a sign that read "To enquiring friends: I have troubles today that I had not yesterday. I had troubles yesterday which I have not today. On this site will be built a bigger, better, Steeplechase Park. Admission to the burning ruins — ten cents." The park was rebuilt for the 1908 season and was fully operational by 1909. Three years later, Tilyou died. His children continued to operate the park for the next 52 years. It was Coney Island's longest running park.

•**1974:** **The Great Adventure Entertainment Center**, Jackson, N.J. opened to the public on July 1 with two parks — **The Enchanted Forest** and **Wild Animal Safari**. The \$10 million park was developed by restaurateur **Warner Le Roy**. Original plans called for multiple attractions including a sea-life park, floral park, sports complex, shopping district, hotel and campground to open over a five-year period. The plans were never realized and in 1977 the park was sold to Six Flags. Since that time Six Flags opened a waterpark in 2000 and continues to run the amusement park and safari animal park.

•**1984:** An \$80 million indoor theme park known as **AutoWorld** opened on July 4 in Flint, Michigan, a project of **Six Flags**. Although Gov. James J. Blanchard predicted the new park would trigger "the rebirth of the great city of Flint" the park would close just six months later. Several attempts were made to reopen the amusement park or use the domed venue for other purposes, until it was finally demolished in 1997.

•**2002:** After completing 33 coasters and operating for 11 years, **Denise Dinn** closed **Custom Coasters International** and filed for bankruptcy. No attempt was made to reorganize the company and all of the assets were eventually liquidated at auction. The closure came during construction of the **New Mexico Rattler** roller coaster leaving **Cliff's Amusement Park** in a bind. **Linda and Gary Hayes** hired the now jobless work crew, and completed the coaster on their own.

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► MANTA

Continued from page 1

said.

The ride component of Manta is a linear synchronous motor (LSM) double-launch coaster with blue steel track that sprawls across five acres formerly occupied by Forbidden Reef, the oldest section of the park, just north of SeaWorld's Dolphin Point. Following the initial launch, which propels the 20-seat, ray-shaped trains to a maximum speed of 43 mph in just two seconds, riders soar into a 54-foot drop (24 feet are below grade) and a well-paced half mile course of twists and short drops that supply surprising bursts of airtime.

In conceiving, developing and constructing what became the park's single largest-ever capital investment — unofficial cost estimates range between \$35-50 million — over a three-year period, SeaWorld worked closely with German



Far left, Manta's station and ride theming was created by ThemeWorks. Middle, after viewing an impressive pre-show film by Falcon's Treehouse, riders are launched into this first banked turn and drop. Above, Manta's riders enjoy the return trip home after a second LSM launch.

AT/GARY SLADE



Above left, Before the first LSM launch, Manta riders are treated to a special underwater film (Falcon's Treehouse) of manta rays and other sea life through a projection system that's the first of its kind in the U.S. Above right, the massive interactive ray pool is part of both the ride's entry queue and ride exit area. AT/GARY SLADE/FILM COURTESY FALCON'S TREEHOUSE

ride design company Mack Rides, which also engineered the park's popular Journey to Atlantis water coaster eight years ago.

"We enjoyed [the collaboration] with SeaWorld very much," said Christian Freiherr von Elverfeldt, managing director of Mack Rides, who was onsite during the coaster's public debut. "We already had the coaster system and technology designed and were happy with its operation [as Blue Fire] at Europa-Park in Germany."

According to Freiherr von Elverfeldt, the most significant challenge and modification for the SeaWorld installation involved adding the second LSM launch, which, in the absence of a taller, gravity-based coaster structure, was needed to maintain the breathless pace of the ride through its second half and get the coaster back to the station.

"Manta's success is important to Mack from a marketing standpoint, because it's our first launch coaster in America," said Freiherr von Elverfeldt. "It has exceeded our expectations."

There's plenty of carefully and artistically wrought multimedia warm-up to the coaster excitement, beginning with the ride-optional, underwater queue that affords intimate views of hundreds of fishes and dozens of smaller rays of different species. (Actual manta rays, which can reach 25 feet in width, have rarely been kept in captivity and will not be found here.) A concrete floor stamped with the impressions of seashells leads into this reef-exploring experience.

Back outside, Manta's lushly landscaped loading station, with its extensive bamboo fencing and hand-painted ceiling artwork (courtesy of High Springs, Fla.-based ThemeWorks, Inc.), evokes an exotic Southeast Asian island — complete with palm trees, Japanese black pines, a collection of cycads and a succulent garden. Small shrines, Japanese rockwork, potted bonsai trees and a stone pagoda and bell tower (structures dating back to the park's 1964 opening) enhance the atmosphere.

Upon exiting the station, the train rolls into temporary darkness and then brakes inside a cavernous launch tunnel, where 22 projectors fill a 270-degree wrap-around

screen with undersea images of gliding rays. The train rocks forward and back ever-so-gently, as if in a water current, while riders absorb this magnificent scene set to music of increasing tempo. Suddenly, a hatch rises ahead and the train bolts from the tunnel, diving into the spaghetti-bowl track. A second LSM stretch propels the train through the second half of the course.

Utilizing a state-of-the-art projection system that's the first of its kind in the U.S., Manta's show component was supplied by the attraction design and production firm Falcon's Treehouse, headquartered in Orlando. The company, which has a long history of creative collaboration with SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, last worked with the San Diego property on the multimedia storytelling elements for Journey to Atlantis.

"We were incredibly lucky to work with such a talented creative and technical team at Sea World San Diego," said Scott Miller, director of project management — Asia, for Falcon's Treehouse. "When we were brought on board, Manta's show component was already in the concept phase and we were asked to participate in its refinement. We helped to influence the deci-

sion to proceed with a media tunnel product for the launch experience."

In addition to supplying the film production, music and audiovisual equipment (including 22 synchronized projectors) for the coaster launch, Falcon's Treehouse coordinated the train's rocking movement in the launch tunnel with ride manufacturer Mack, enhancing the immersive experience.

The overall Manta attraction package also features two new eateries: Manny Ray's, with a California-inspired menu, and Fusion Smoothies, offering a variety of delicious blended drinks. The Manta gift shop, an original building that was part of SeaWorld's Japanese Village when the park opened in 1964, features gifts and souvenirs highlighting the experience of the ride, as well as items that focus on the sea and its associated lifestyle, such as resort and surf-type apparel.

SeaWorld's John Reilly said initial public reaction to Manta's mix of coaster fun, interactive exhibits and marine conservation theming is encouraging. "So far, we're getting great reviews, and people are really connecting with the animals. We couldn't be happier."

FAST FACTS

Attraction/park

Manta
SeaWorld San Diego
San Diego, Calif.

Type

LSM coaster

Maximum height/drop/speed

30 feet/54 feet/43 mph

Track length/duration

2,835 feet/
1 minute, 40 seconds

Trains

4 total, 20 seats each

Manufacturer

Mack Rides
Waldkirch, Germany

Supporting suppliers

Falcon's Treehouse,
Orlando, Fla. (film) and
ThemeWorks, High
Springs, Fla. (theming)

Official debut

May 26, 2012



Elverfeldt



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►CARS

Continued from page 1

DCA in recent years, including the rousing, finely tuned nighttime water spectacular “World of Color” and classic Disney dark ride The Little Mermaid — Ariel’s Undersea Adventure.

“From the thrills of Cars Land to the romance of Buena Vista Street, the work that’s been done throughout this entire expansion is extraordinary,” said Tom Staggs, chairman of Walt Disney Parks & Resorts. “Disney California Adventure is a testament to what we at Disney Parks do best — connecting our guests to the iconic stories, characters and music they love, helping them make shared memories to last a lifetime.”

Added Disneyland Resort President George A. Kalogridis: “Every component of our expansion — from attractions, merchandise and dining locations, to new entertainment and re-imagined hotels — has been crafted to add exciting new pages to our 57-year-old story. Now, more than ever, the Disneyland Resort makes the Anaheim/Orange County region a multi-day family vacation destination second to none.”

The public relaunch of DCA was preceded by a splashy media preview June 13-14. The festivities commenced with red carpet VIP

Get more, pay more at the Mouse House

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Ahead of expected attendance increases this summer with the reintroduction of its revamped Disney California Adventure (DCA) theme park, the Disneyland Resort has raised admission prices.

For example, a one-day ticket for either Disneyland or DCA, previously \$80 for guests 10 and up, now is \$87. And a premium annual pass to the resort that includes parking, previously \$499, now is \$649.

Disney officials have offered no specific reason for the resort’s price hikes, stating only that they are part of the company’s periodic pricing evaluation and adjustment.

arrivals, including Bob Iger, chairman and chief executive officer of The Walt Disney Company; John Lasseter, chief creative officer of Pixar and Walt Disney Animation Studios (and co-director of the *Cars* movies); and many of the actors who have supplied the colorful *Cars* character voices.

The Goodyear blimp Spirit of America flew overhead, providing aerial coverage of the celebration and its climactic fireworks above the artificial desert peaks of Ornament Valley — the towering backdrop for Cars Land’s fictional town of Radiator Springs.

“The *Cars* films are particularly close to my heart, so seeing Radiator Springs come to life at Disney California Adventure is a dream come true,” said Lasseter. “The artistry and attention to detail... is absolutely incredible, and I couldn’t be more proud of the teams at Pixar and Walt Disney Imagineering who worked side-by-side to make this project a reality.”

Power Steering

While competing California theme parks busily hyped their big new rides as “mega-attractions” prior to mid-June, the wheelie-popping arrival of Cars Land at DCA deflates previous industry applications of the term.

Built around a 525-foot-long asphalt pedestrian boulevard — modeled after and named for historic Route 66 — that unfurls toward a Cadillac fin-shaped mountain range, Cars Land invites guests to explore “the cutest little town in Carburetor County,” Radiator Springs.

Here, amid a plethora of 1950s-60s-style neon and nostalgia, there are three family attractions showcasing places and characters from the *Cars* movies: Luigi’s Flying Tires, a bumper cars-style ride with circular vehicles propelled on a cushion of air around an 8,000-square-foot platform; Mater’s Junkyard Jamboree, a high-capacity, Whip-like flat ride; and Radiator Springs Racers, a track-based, indoor/outdoor racing experience that carries guests in speeding Cars character vehicles on one of the largest and most elaborate rides ever created for a Disney park.

Fans of the movies will also recognize the new area’s themed shops and restaurants, like Flo’s V8 Cafe, the Cozy



Radiator Springs Racers is a high-tech, indoor/outdoor slot car ride that sends six-passenger “car-acters” racing around a hilly, twisting course. Track banking reaches a maximum of 45 degrees, and each vehicle will log about 36,000 miles after a year of operation — the equivalent of more than 14 trips along the original Route 66.

AT/GARY SLADE

Cone Motel and Ramone’s House of Body Art.

“We want guests to think they are on this great road trip...almost like they are going home,” said Kathy Mangum, executive producer of Cars Land and vice president of Walt Disney Imagineering (WDI), who explained that each Cars Land attraction has its own personality, based on the cartoon denizens of Radiator Springs. “Guests will feel as if the town is being operated by the characters. Everywhere you look there is a funny little car nod. After all, it is a land built by cars.”

Much of the area’s vintage highway theming was inspired by a research trip Walt Disney Imagineers took along the actual Route 66. Other automotive “detailing” was created in collaboration with Pixar animators.

Cars Land’s elaborate western landscape, which includes hundreds of live cacti and other plant specimens, is anchored by a 280,000-square-foot desert mountain backdrop that houses DCA’s biggest new draw: the six-acre Radiator Springs Racers.

Utilizing the same com-

puter-controlled slot car technology introduced in 1999 by Test Track at Epcot in the Walt Disney World Resort, Lake Buena Vista, Fla., this high-octane ride loads guests into six-passenger sports cars for a scenic road trip through Radiator Springs, with a stop at either Luigi’s Casa Della Tires or Ramone’s House of Body Art. Then, two cars line up on the dual track and exit the town in a burst of speed, zooming along nose-to-nose — with guests never knowing which car will win.

Elsewhere in Cars Land, Luigi (voiced by actor Tony Shalhoub) also invites guests to test-drive his new shipment of “Flying Tires” — an experience akin to being loosed on an enormous air hockey table. Riders lean left and right aboard the two-person cushioned vehicles, floating and bumping along in an attraction reminiscent of Disneyland’s classic Flying Saucers.

At Mater’s Junkyard Jamboree, Mater himself (voiced by comic actor Larry the Cable

► See CARS, page 8



At 280,000 square feet and 125 feet tall, Cars Land’s Ornament Valley mountain range is the largest artificial rock structure in any U.S. Disney park. It incorporates six distinct classic car tail fin outlines (plus a few familiar hood ornament shapes) from 1957-62 and sports a desert color palette as well as dramatic night lighting. COURTESY DISNEYLAND RESORT

►CARS

Continued from page 7

Guy, who has also contributed his trademark Southern drawl to seven songs) issues his own unique call, courtesy of a Junkyard Jukebox that has lured baby tractors into Mater's Junkyard. The tractors swing guests around in hitched trailers.

Souvenir enthusiasts will find Disney and Disney-Pixar gifts and clothing at themed retail shops throughout Radiator Springs. Dining options are highlighted by Flo's V8 Cafe, inspired by old roadside greasy spoons. The distinctive, orange cone-shaped Sally's Cozy Cone Motel offers cone-themed snacks (ice cream cones and chile "cone" queso, among other "cone"-coctions), while Fillmore's Taste-in, as the New Age hippie van-in-residence, celebrates the natural health benefits of fresh fruits, bottled water and juices from the comfort of a tie-dyed geodesic dome.

Walt's Road to Success

While Cars Land is commanding the most attention and excitement at the newly improved DCA, guests now enter the park through another richly detailed land: Buena Vista Street.

The rethemed and redesigned area, which was

previewed last summer with the unveiling of a Streamline Moderne ticket gate modeled on L.A.'s now-gone, 1935-built Pan-Pacific Auditorium, captures the early-20th century creative spirit of Walt Disney as never before — and enhances the immersive storytelling experience that resort executives and Walt Disney Imagineers have mightily strived to bring to the park.

"The whole street comes alive to put you right there with Walt when he first stepped off the train in California [in 1923], with all the optimism and opportunity he felt was there for him at the time," said Lisa Girolami, director and senior show producer for WDI. "Every piece has to be there when you walk into a story, to know where you are, what time it is, what's happening and to really be able to take in the music, the colors and the ornamentation on the architecture."

DCA's new architectural icon, the Carthay Circle Theatre, is a majestic, Spanish Colonial Revival building at the end of Buena Vista Street that recalls the great L.A. movie palace where Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* premiered in 1937. Adorned inside with historic Walt Disney Studios photos and exhibits, it houses the Carthay Circle Restaurant and Lounge, specializ-



In addition to Radiator Springs Racers, Cars Land is home to a pair of new flat rides: Luigi's Flying Tires, featuring Cars characters Luigi and Guido as hosts to a festival of tires that carry guests on a two-inch air cushion created by 6,714 small vents; and Mater's Junkyard Jamboree, where Mater the tow truck has corralled a herd of runaway baby tractors and entices guests to board hitched trailers for an old-fashioned "tow-si-do."

AT/GARY SLADE : MATER'S JUNKYARD COURTESY DISNEYLAND RESORT

ing in Southern California cuisine, and anchors the central plaza from which guests set out to enjoy the different areas of the park.

While the interior of the Carthay Circle Theatre evokes the grand elegance of a classic movie premiere, the ambience of the restaurant and lounge is warm and family friendly. "We've created a sanctuary to escape from the bustle of the park," said Andrew Sutton, executive chef of the Carthay Circle eatery and the Napa Rose restaurant at Disney's Grand California Hotel & Spa, also located within DCA.

Other food outlets on Buena Vista Street include Fiddler, Fifer & Practical Café (the names of the Three Little Pigs in the "Silly Symphonies" cartoon), a quick-service diner showcasing Starbucks coffee; Clarabelle's Hand-Scooped Ice Cream (named for Mickey Mouse's cow pal); and Mortimer's Market, a kiosk offering whole and cut fruits, bottled water, juices and soft drinks.

Highlighting the expanded shopping opportunities on Buena Vista Street are Elias & Co, an elegant department store carrying vintage Disney merchandise; Big Top Toys, featuring innovative and interactive games and playthings; Julius Katz & Sons, stocking home décor and kitchen gadgets; and Trolley Treats, offering packaged candy, gourmet marshmallows and all kinds of goodies.

The name of the latter store is a nod to the area's new "old" form of transport: the Red Car Trolley, based on L.A.'s historic (and long-

defunct) Pacific Electric Red Car Line. It carries guests from Buena Vista Street down Hollywood Boulevard to the footsteps of the famed Hollywood Tower Hotel, home to The Twilight Zone Tower of Terror.

Street characters and entertainers, such as the Red Car News Boys and the jazzy musicians Five & Dime, add to the lively fun along Buena Vista Street and are among the dozen or so entertainment experiences now found throughout DCA. This summer also has also brought the Mad T Party (nighttime family fun inspired by Tim Burton's 2010 film version of *Alice in Wonderland*) in Hollywood Land and the return of the Pixar Play Parade.

The tale-spinning heart of Buena Vista Street and the whole of DCA lies in a statue called, appropriately enough, "Storytellers," located at street level in the central plaza. The statue presents Walt Disney as a humble young man, dreaming of achievements to come, standing alongside Mickey Mouse.

"Set in this time period, Walt Disney could have been you or I, or anybody at that time...," said Ray Spencer, WDI's creative director for Buena Vista Street. "It's part of the story of the street, a story of humble beginnings. It's a story of a wonderful, inspirational time period with a wonderful, inspirational, gifted man who created what we can now enjoy as The Walt Disney Company."

It is also a story about a creative journey with no end.

"Walt Disney once said, 'We keep moving forward,

opening new doors, and doing new things, because curiosity keeps leading us down new paths,'" noted resort president George A. Kalogridis. "Our 'new path' is built firmly on Walt's legacy, enriched with traditions that could only be found in the park that felt his footsteps."



Towering nearly 90 feet over Buena Vista Street, the Carthay Circle Theatre, inspired by the Los Angeles site where Walt Disney premiered *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* in 1937, is the new welcoming symbol of DCA. At three-quarter scale to the original building, it is about 13 feet taller than its iconic counterpart, Sleeping Beauty Castle, across the promenade in Disneyland.

COURTESY DISNEYLAND RESORT

DCA welcomes Ghirardelli



Welcoming San Leandro, Calif.-based Ghirardelli Chocolate Company to DCA's expansion were (from left) Mary Niven, vice president, Disney California Adventure; Ernst Tanner, CEO, Lindt & Sprüngli AG; and George A. Kalogridis, president, Disneyland Resort. Located in the Pacific Wharf area, the chocolatier's first outlet sited within a theme park will present each shop visitor with a complimentary chocolate sample.
COURTESY DISNEYLAND RESORT/GHIRARDELLI



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Reporter's Notebook

Asian Attractions Expo exceeds expectations

HONG KONG — IAAPA's 2012 edition of the Asian Attractions Expo, held June 5-8 in Hong Kong, exceeded records set at 2011's Singapore show.

All total, 5,150 registered for the 2012 show, up 439 from last year. This year's show had registrations of: 3,220 total qualified buyers, 1,079 total buying companies and 274 total exhibiting companies, up 38 from last year.

IAAPA has announced that AAE 2013 will be held June 4-7, 2013 at the Sands Expo and Convention Center at Marina Bay Sands in Singapore.

Quoted

" Having decided on the location, we looked at the supplier options and because of its experience in the field and excellent reputation within the industry, Huss was the natural choice."

—Merlin General Manager Craig Dunkerley on the selection of Huss Park Attractions as the supplier of its new Sky Tower at the England sailing Olympic venue

Denmark's Legoland kicks off 2012 season with largest single-year investment

Zierer-built coaster features snowmobile theme, vertical drop

STORY: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

DENMARK — Legoland Billund in Denmark has marked the 2012 season with the largest single investment in the history of the park which has seen the opening of the new Polar Land area.

Created at a cost of DKK 75 million (U.S. \$12.5 million), Polar Land features a host of attractions, including a centerpiece roller coaster, Polar X-Plorer, a genuine penguin habitat named Penguin Bay, the Ice Pilot School, previously the Power Builder (a Kuka RoboCoaster), the Polar Pizza and Pasta restaurant, a retail outlet and 44 new Lego models.

The Polar X-Plorer, built by Zierer, is a 'free-fall' roller coaster and one of only three of its kind in the world. Featuring a snowmobile themed train, the ride covers a total area of 3,400-square meters (36,600 square feet) and takes passengers through a polar landscape with real penguins on a 111 second journey along the 498 meters (1,634 feet) of track, past polar animals built from Lego bricks, through an ice waterfall and into a 16.5-meter-high mountain, at a height of 10 meters (33 feet). Inside the mountain the experience reaches its climax as the 16-seater snowmobile suddenly vertically free-falls five meters (16.4 feet) in a "crashing through the ice" feature, landing safely back on the tracks to continue its journey to the end of the ride. Visitors experience a G-force of up to 4.2 G's and a top speed of 65 kmh (40 mph) during the ride. Hourly capacity of the coaster is approximately 850 riders.

Penguin Bay is home to 15 Gen-

► See DENMARK, page 10



Above, Polar Land is suitably themed throughout with a range of features, including 44 Lego models. Below, the new Polar X-plorer coaster from Zierer is one of only three such rides in the world which incorporate a free-fall section. COURTESY LEGOLAND BILLUND



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Duinrell adds Gerstlauer coaster, upgrades accommodations

STORY: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

NETHERLANDS — Following a range of upgrades to its Duingalows, campsites and the Duinhostel in 2011, Duinrell in the Netherlands has continued to invest in the park for 2012 with the addition of a brand new roller coaster in its amusement park as well as the installation of approximately 40 new Duingalows.

The new Dragon Fly family coaster, supplied by German manufacturer Gerstlauer, has a special theme with the train being decorated to match with the main attractions in the surrounding area, while all the support pillars are painted in a wood finish so that it fits perfectly into the woodland setting in which it has been built.

Just like a real dragon fly, the coaster takes guests flying through trees and the train's blue coloring, with a beautiful wing print, not only matches the tracks and themes of the other coasters (Kikkerachbaan and Falcon) but also other surrounding attractions such as Water-spin, Splash and Mad Mill.

The new ride has a track

length of 361 meters (1,184 feet) and a maximum height of 18 meters (59 feet). Top speed is 50 kmh (31 mph), while a key feature is its almost silent running with the track being filled with sand to reduce noise levels. A new anti-roll back system is also incorporated which adds further to the quiet operation of the ride.

"The Dragon Fly is situated in a woody environment and is a nice family coaster which is very popular among our guests," said Duinrell director Philip van Zuylen van Nijevelt. "Children of a minimum height of one meter are allowed to ride this coaster, which is our second coaster supplied by Gerstlauer. The first is the Falcon which is more suitable for thrill seekers. The Dragon Fly is perfect for families with younger children."

As mentioned, also new for this year are around 40 Duingalows which have been brought in to replace the oldest Duingalows on the site. The new Premium XL holiday bungalows are very spacious and are built along the fringe of the park close to the Duinrell Plaza facilities.



The new Dragon Fly coaster is the second coaster ride at Duinrell to be supplied by Gerstlauer. It has been designed and painted to fit in with the wooded area in which it operates. COURTESY DUINRELL



►DENMARK

Continued from page 9

too penguins, born and bred at Edinburgh Zoo in Scotland and now accommodated in a penguin habitat developed in partnership with zoologists from Atlantis by Sea Life and

designed to match the birds' natural patterns of behaviour. To this end, for example, both the temperature and light match natural cycles on Antarctica, while there is also a designated nest building area and rocks to climb on, along with a suitable distribution of aquatic and land areas.



The Penguin Bay area provides an authentic habitat for 15 Gentoo penguins. COURTESY LEGOLAND BILLUND

Huss Sky Tower to highlight Olympic venue

ENGLAND — German ride manufacturer Huss Park Attractions has announced that it is in the process of building a major observation tower on Weymouth, Dorset seafront on the south coast of England for Merlin Entertainments.

The tower, which will reach a height of 179 feet and provide panoramic, 360-degree views over the English channel and surrounding countryside, is due to be completed in time for this year's Olympic sailing events set to take place in Weymouth and neighbouring Portland.

The structure will be built on the town's Festival Pier and will feature a rotating gondola capable of accommodating up to 70 passengers, including guests with disabilities and wheelchair passengers. The gondola, incorporating floor to ceiling windows will rotate as it ascends and descends.

A total of 29 concrete piles are being sunk at the pier to act as a watertight barrier for the structure's foundations. When complete, the weight of the attraction will be 143 tons.

An official groundbreaking ceremony took place in January when work on the tower's foundations began. U.K.-based Merlin

Entertainments will be the operator.

Mirko J. Schulze, CEO of Huss Park Attractions GmbH, said: "It is the first time we have worked with Merlin Entertainments and the whole team is delighted to be part of this important and prestigious project. Everyone at Huss is working very hard to ensure everything is done in accordance with the client's wishes and to ensure their full satisfaction. Fabrication of the tower itself and gondola is finished and delivery to Weymouth started on time in early March 2012. We are happy to have established this challenging starting point with Merlin and are looking forward to seeing the Huss Sky Tower in operation for this major event."

For Merlin, General Manager Craig Dunkerley said: "The decision to develop the Weymouth Sea Life Tower was in part inspired by the spectacular success of the London Eye and subsequent expansion of the Eye brand to also encompass the famous Blackpool and Sydney Towers. Having decided on the location, we looked at the supplier options and because of its experience in the field and excellent reputation within the industry, Huss was the natural choice."

World's highest water coaster debuts at Mirabilandia

STORY: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

ITALY — The Italian park Mirabilandia, part of the Parques Reunidos group, was ready to debut its latest major attraction, just in time for the start of the summer season, with the opening of the spectacular Divertical water coaster, the highest such ride anywhere in the world.

Topping out at a height of 60 meters (197 feet), the new thriller has been designed and built by Intamin and is being touted by the park as “the most important investment in the history of Mirabilandia.”

Themed on the world of power boats, the ride utilizes up to 12 passenger boats that are carried to the top of the main drop hill via a vertical lift. Following release from this point of the ride, passengers reach a maximum speed of 110 kmh (62 mph) as they drop over 60 meters (197 feet) into a splashdown feature followed by a classic coaster section which twists and turns before entering a final water

section and returning to the futuristically styled station.

In the build-up to the launch of the new attraction, a promotional campaign was created by Mirabilandia which gave park fans the opportunity to customize their own Divertical boats with a choice of colors and graphics, via a special interface on the park's website. The winning designs have been used on the boats and the winners were due to be guests of honor at the ride opening.

“We have thought to offer our fans a one-off opportunity by putting their own signature on and personalizing one of the Divertical boats,” explained Riccardo Capo, CEO of Mirabilandia. “This is a way to reward the passion and enthusiasm of our fans who follow the construction of this big attraction which will change the image of Mirabilandia.”

“Divertical is, in fact, not only the highest water coaster in the world, but it will become one of the symbols of the park thanks to its impressive mass and innovative concept.



Mirabilandia's new Divertical water coaster, supplied by Intamin, is the tallest such ride in the world. Riders will experience a drop of 197 feet while reaching speeds of 62 mph. Following the initial drop, the ride continues with a coaster portion of track before splashing riders in the water for a second time. Up to 12 boats are used on the ride, which has been given a powerboat theme. COURTESY MIRABILANDIA



We must not forget that Divertical will be the highest coaster in Italy and will finish on top

of the podium that, together with Katun (a Bolliger and Mabillard inverted coaster)

and iSpeed (an Intamin launch coaster), will totally belong to Mirabilandia.”

Harry Potter attraction set for Universal Studios Japan

STORY: Andrew Mellor
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JAPAN — Universal Studios Japan (USJ) has announced that, in partnership with Warner Bros. and Universal Parks and Resorts, it will be bringing The Wizarding World of Harry Potter (WWoHP) to Japan within the next three years, marking the global expansion of the hugely popular themed entertainment experience that opened at Universal Orlando Resort in June 2010.

The announcement of the new park was made in May by Glenn Gumpel, president and CEO, Universal Studios Japan; Brad Globe, president of Warner Bros. Consumer Products; and Michael Silver, president, Global Business Development, Universal Parks and Resorts. They were accompanied by James and Oliver Phelps, who played the roles of Fred and George Weasley in the Harry Potter film series, while guest of



The Wizarding World of Harry Potter is set to come to Universal Studios Japan in late 2014 and will include all the features and authentic design work that have made the Orlando attraction such a huge success. COURTESY UNIVERSALORLANDO RESORT

honor at the announcement ceremony was Ichiro Matsui, governor of Osaka.

According to the parties involved, the WWoHP at USJ

will be as “magnificent and as impressive as the WWoHP at Universal Orlando Resort.” Just as in Orlando, the Japanese attraction will

faithfully bring to life the stories created by J.K.Rowling in her books and as captured on screen in the Warner Bros. films.

The USJ attraction will be similar to that in Orlando and will include Hogwarts Castle, Hogsmeade and multiple themed attractions. It will be created with the same commitment to authenticity and the same high level of talent and resources, including the creative leadership of Stuart Craig, production designer for the entire Harry Potter film series.

The themed area itself will be a fully immersive environment for the entire family that will bring the stories of Harry Potter to life and be faithful to the visual landscape of the films. And just as the WWoHP in Orlando brought significant increases in tourism, jobs and economic benefit to the central Florida area, so too are similar benefits expected to come to the Osaka/Kansai region, and the entire country, as a result of the new venue at USJ.

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Reporter's Notebook

Coastin' For Kids event raises money for GKTW

SANDUSKY, Ohio — Roller coaster fans proved they have big hearts and strong stomachs on June 10 at Cedar Fair Entertainment Company's "Coasting For Kids" event, which raised nearly \$114,000 for Give Kids The World Village (GKTW). That's twice as much as the event collected in its first three years, bringing the four-year total to more than \$200,000.

At Cedar Fair's flagship park, Cedar Point, more than 75 participants took marathon rides on the Magnum XL-200 and Gemini. Some logged more than 100 rides in a single day, stopping only for water and a quick bite to eat.

"This year's riders showed an unparalleled level of dedication and enthusiasm," Cedar Point spokeswoman Annie Zelm said.

Quoted

"We've pushed the boundaries of 3D, hyperrealism and immersive special effects to transport our guests, physically and viscerally, into the world of Transformers."

—Universal Creative President Mark Woodbury describing the park's collaboration with Michael Bay, the film series' director and the creative consultant for *Transformers: The Ride-3D*

Verbolten haunts the Black Forest at Busch Gardens

Virginia themer's Oktoberfest section rehab completed with Zierer coaster

STORY: Scott Rutherford
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. — Something mysterious is lurking in the woods at Busch Gardens, and park guests are queuing up in droves this season to find out just what it is. The Virginia themer pulled out all the stops for its latest attraction, Verbolten — Brave the Black Forest.

The new-for-2012 ride caps off a two-year refreshment of the park's Oktoberfest village, which also includes Mäch Tower, a 240-foot drop tower from Moser's Rides; an award-winning pretzel-themed restaurant; and a new show inside Das Festhaus (*Entwined: Tales of Good and Grimm*). This massive endeavor culminates in the largest capital expansion in the park's 37-year history.



Verbolten

Inspired by Germany's Autoban, the Verbolten experience begins with the queue and station, which have been painstakingly themed as a German motorist touring agency presided over by brother and sister Gunter and Gerta Schwarzwald. Gerta operates the visitor center where travelers rent cars while Gunter oversees the garage that supplies the cars. The elaborate storyline woven into the attraction, along with plenty of props and TV monitors, keeps guests entertained as they move toward the loading platform.

At the heart of Verbolten is a sprawling steel roller coaster that, like its predecessor, the Big Bad Wolf, takes full advantage of the park's undulating terrain. Supplied by German ride manufacturer Zierer, Verbolten features 2,835 feet of track that includes indoor and outdoor sections with propulsion provided by Linear Synchronous Motors (LSM).



Verbolten's five roadster-themed trains each seat 16 riders who are secured with individual lap bars. A height requirement of 48 inches makes the ride accessible to a wide range of guests.

AT/SCOTT RUTHERFORD

Verbolten utilizes five roadster-themed trains (red, orange, blue, green and yellow) that each seat 16 guests. To maximize capacity, Zierer designed the platform with a dual loading system. When one train is filled, it advances onto a holding brake as its successor takes on passengers. Trains are dispatched every 60 seconds. With riders secured by individual lap bars, the train rolls out of the station for a tranquil drive through the countryside. After a leisurely, extended S-turn, an abrupt detour leads into a harrowing adventure through the forbidden Black Forest.

The first LSM launch segment propels the train at 55 mph up and into

the "event building" where riders are treated to an airtime hill followed by a collection of high-G turns in darkness laced with healthy doses of UV strobe lights, audio and other special effects. After the train is smoothly braked to halt and held in place by powerful magnets, riders experience one of three storylines — *The Spirit of the Forest*, *Lightning Storm* or *The Big Bad Wolf*.

Next comes one of Verbolten's most shocking attributes. With riders distracted by the show around them, the train suddenly freefalls 16 feet to a lower level. Before anyone can recover, a quick dip leads the train outside to the second LSM launch corridor.

► See VERBOLTEN, page 14

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► VERBOLTEN

Continued from page 13

A powerful burst of energy pushes riders back into their seats and into a wicked right-then-left ascending turn. This maneuver positions them high above the park atop a derelict covered bridge. Surrounded by sounds of creaking and splintering wood, the train moves ever closer to the precipice, eventually slipping over and plunging 88 feet to the Rhine River below. Like the Big Bad Wolf before it, the train whips through another S-turn over the water and then climbs back up the hillside. A floating speed bump and banked left turn leads into the brake run.

Extolling Verbolten's virtues

During an on-site interview, *AT* spoke about the creation and debut of Verbolten with Larry Giles, Busch Gardens' vice president of design and engineering. "Verbolten's installation went extremely well. Despite a hurricane early on in the construction process, the mild winter helped us keep on schedule.

FAST FACTS

Attraction/park

Verbolten
Busch Gardens
Williamsburg, Va.

Type

LSM coaster

Features

Two LSM launch sections; in-the-dark show building with light/sound/environmental special effects including a 16-foot horizontal freefall drop section; high-speed drop/S-turn over Rhine River

Maximum height/speed

88 feet/53 mph

Track length/duration

2,835 feet/
1 minute, 30 seconds

Trains

5 total, 16 seats each

Manufacturer

Zierer Karussell GmbH
Offenberg, Germany

Official debut

May 25, 2012



Verbolten's queue and station are expertly themed as a German motorist touring agency. The dual loading station substantially decreases wait times for guests. AT / SCOTT RUTHERFORD

Zierer did their job by keeping the equipment and other shipments consistent. Once they arrived, the track segments all fit perfectly with one another as well as the foundations we had prepared. A Memorial Day weekend debut was our target but we actually opened two weeks earlier than that. As compared to some of our other ride startups, Verbolten is well above average.

"Guest reaction to this new ride has been phenomenal. I've been here 24 years and worked through a dozen of these openings and I'm blown away by how much people love this ride," continued Giles. "Our intent was to create a complete experience for guests instead of simply a roller coaster. It begins with our themed queue and its storyline. Then we have the show building, which is something that really sets Verbolten apart from any other coaster.

"Verbolten is our most technologically complex



Larry Giles, Busch Gardens' vice president of design and engineering, on the boarding platform with one of Verbolten's five trains. AT / SCOTT RUTHERFORD

attraction. The LSM launches have been completely reliable and performed exactly as promised. I feel they really add a new dimension to the ride, especially at the beginning when trains are literally sucked into the Black Forest, and again at the end when they are suddenly thrown back out," said Giles.

Replacing the Wolf

To make way for Verbolten, park officials made the painful decision to retire the Big Bad Wolf, a beloved Arrow Huss suspended coaster that thrilled Busch Gardens guests for 25 seasons before being removed in 2009. Closing a ride that had so many fans was a risky move for Busch Gardens. This suspended coaster was absolutely unique but the forces it generated, especially during the manic drop and turn over the river, were extreme and taking their toll on the aging steel track. Using the wording "the ride had reached the end of its operating life" left a void that for some fans will never be filled.

Larry Giles fully understands the public's attachment to the Big Bad Wolf. "We get a lot of repeat visitors, and for many in this region Busch Gardens is *their* theme park. Generations come here year after year. For many, the Big Bad Wolf was their first roller coaster," Giles explained. "All my kids grew up riding it. And due to its relatively low height requirement, it was the most accessible coaster to the largest group of visitors. When we decided to retire it, we were very concerned about how loyal guests were going to react to losing a favorite ride. It was something that we considered very carefully.

"When the time came to choose the BBW's replacement, we looked back at all of its best features. We kept the flowing exit from the sta-



tion and, of course, that spectacular final drop and turn over the river. We knew that was a wonderful and thrilling segment; we didn't want to take it away. So we made the drop ten feet taller and used as many of the Wolf's support foundations as we could to allow Verbolten's trains to follow almost the same path as the Wolf did for so many years.

"We fully recognize that

the Wolf was a unique roller coaster, and there will most likely never be another one to offer that same experience. We, too, were saddened to see it go. People are telling us that they loved the Wolf, and will miss it always. But they're also embracing Verbolten as an excellent ride," concluded Giles. "It's a worthy successor to the Big Bad Wolf and this very special area in the park."



Verbolten's finale features a trip across a 'collapsing' bridge and an 88-foot plunge to the Rhine River below. Like the Big Bad Wolf before it, this section is a highlight of the ride experience. AT / SCOTT RUTHERFORD

Kennedy Space Center welcoming visitors during 50th anniversary year with tours

SPACE CENTER, Fla. — NASA is offering visitors rare access to several key areas of Florida's Kennedy Space Center during its 50th anniversary year to enhance a popular destination that already features an array of authentic attractions showcasing the space program and opportunities for up-close viewing of ongoing rocket launches.

A special Kennedy Space Center Up-Close Tour has been extended through the end of 2012 to provide visitors a look inside the 525-foot-tall Vehicle Assembly Building (VAB), where the Apollo rockets and space shuttles were assembled. One of the largest buildings in the world, the VAB had been off limits to visitors for more than 30 years until the tour was added in November.

The visitor complex remains one of the best vantage points to see rocket launches taking place from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. More than 10 launches have been scheduled for 2012 to carry NASA science missions and government satellites, as well as to test commercial space programs.

"We want people to know that a visit to Kennedy Space Center remains a visit to an operating facility where a lot of exciting things are happening. It's a world-class destination that offers a truly authentic and memorable visitor experience, and this year is an ideal time for Florida residents and vacationers to visit," said Bill Moore, chief operating officer of Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex.

Events are planned to mark milestones in the creation of the future home of the space shuttle Atlantis, expected to open in July 2013. Ground was broken in January on the exhibit, and this fall Atlantis will "roll over" from its processing facility inside the Kennedy Space Center to the visitor complex for permanent display. The 65,000-square-foot

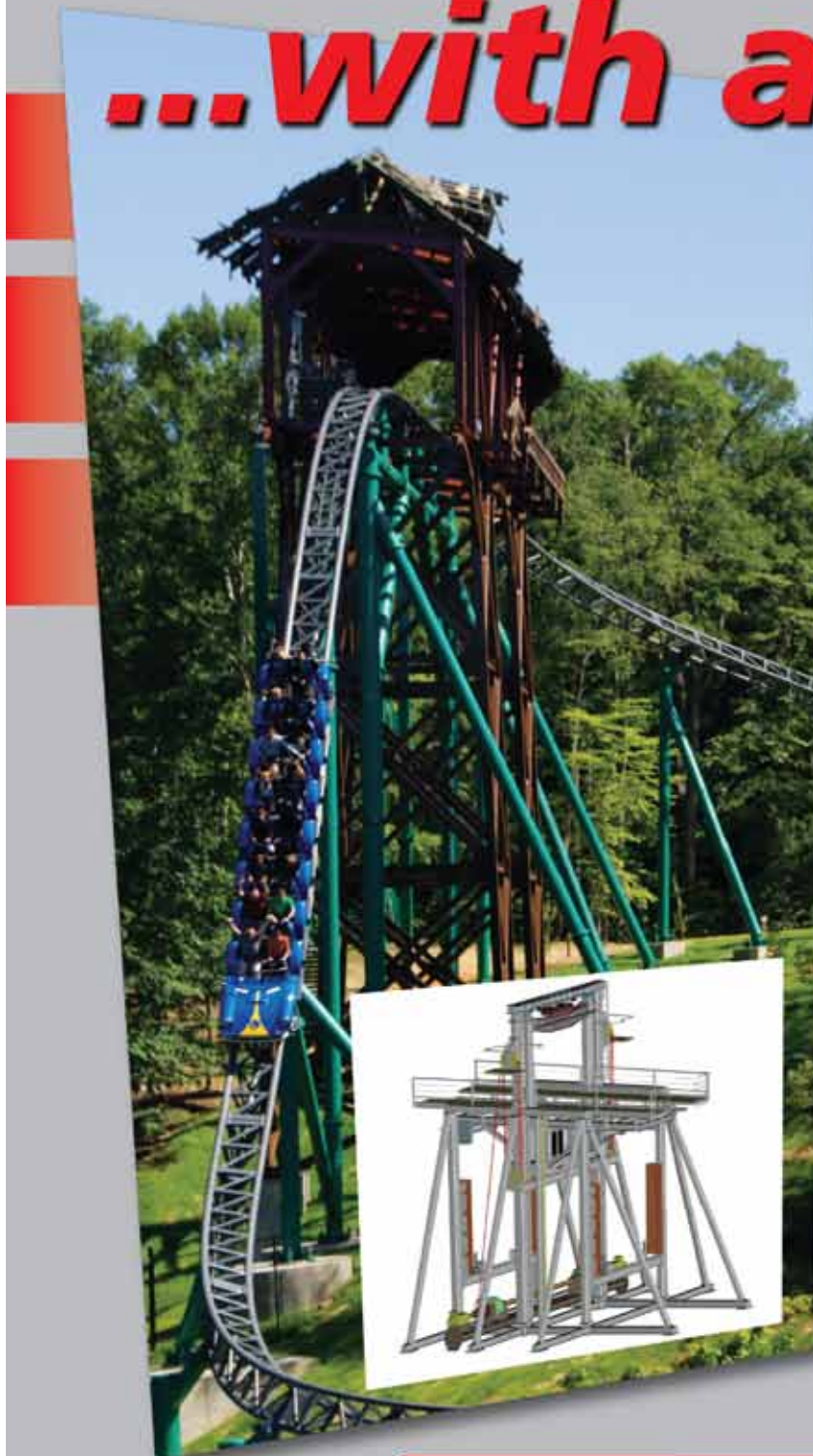
Atlantis exhibit will provide guests a unique vantage point to view Atlantis up close, while telling the story of the 30-year Space Shuttle Program through a number of hands-on, interactive and immersive mediums.

KennedySpaceCenter.com.

Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex is offering rare behind-the-scenes tours for its 50th anniversary year, including one taking visitors inside the massive, 525-foot-tall Vehicle Assembly Building, where the Apollo rockets and space shuttles were assembled and the Launch Control Center, where NASA directors and engineers supervised all of the 152 launches for the space shuttle and Apollo programs.
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Above, The popular game WhirlyBall opened May 19 on I-Drive in Orlando. At right, top to bottom, the \$7 million WhirlyDome, by SP Entertainment, is an FEC that also features dual bowling lanes, Lazer Tag, a motion base simulator, arcade games and a bar/restaurant area. AT/MARLON SCOTT

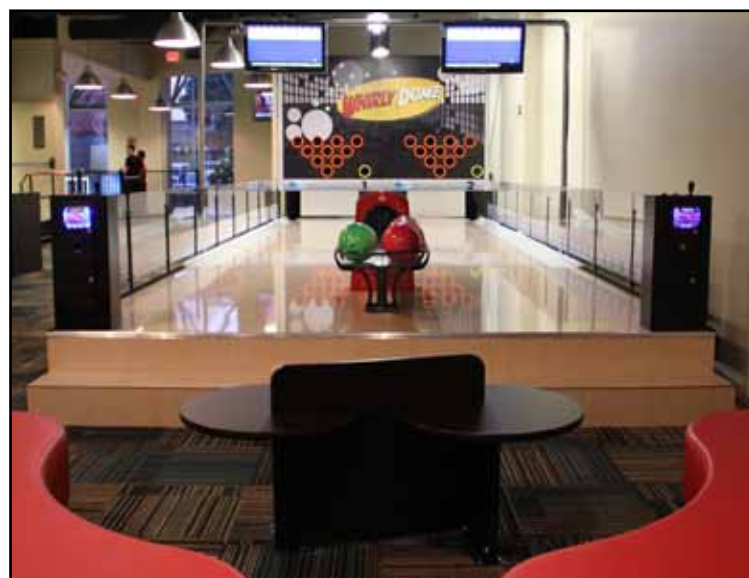
WhirlyDome opens on Orlando's I-Drive

ORLANDO, Fla. — The WhirlyDome, by SP Entertainment, opened on May 19 on the tourist driven International Drive in Orlando, Fla. Housed in the former Sports Dominator store on I-Drive, WhirlyDome is a \$7 million dollar project housing several entertainment experiences. A 20-ton second floor was built to house the second of two Flotron WhirlyBall courts, a Laser Tag by Zone with an Ocean Quest theme designed by Creative Works and a cocktail bar.

The lower level has Laser Frenzy, dual bowling lanes, an F1 motion base simulator, and indoor/outdoor dining areas. A full kitchen facility was built to accommodate a Bloodhound Brewpub and Eatery concept plus catering for private parties. Guests can pay as they go with credits loaded into a WhirlyCard.

Owners tout the facility as the only WhirlyBall facility in the area, with the next closest facility located in Atlanta. Also WhirlyDome is the only one located in a retail environment that draws from walk-up tourists on I-Drive as well as private groups.

• WhirlyDome.com
—Marlon Scott





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SkyScreamer flies at Six Flags Great Adventure



Funtime of Austria delivers second round of towers to Six Flags

STORY: Scott Rutherford
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

JACKSON, N.J. — Six Flags Great Adventure's 2012 season is highlighted by the debut of SkyScreamer, a 24-story tower swing ride. Anchoring the park's newly-themed Adventure Alley, an area tailored to entertain families with rides they can experience together, SkyScreamer takes traditional swing rides to the next level.

Thirty-two guests board the ride and sit two-abreast in open-air swings as they climb to the top of SkyScreamer's 240-foot tall tower while spinning around. At full swing, guests soar in a 98-foot circle at speeds of 40 mph and are afforded spectacular views of the park and surrounding countryside.

During a soft opening on May 17, Nick Jonas of the Jonas Brothers, fresh off his Broadway run in "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying," was among the very first to ride SkyScreamer along with cast mate Michael
▶ See SKYSCREAMER, page 19



Fiesta Texas SkyScreamer makes debut

Due to ride height restrictions placed on the park, Six Flags Fiesta debuted its 200-foot tall SkyScreamer, when the ride opened in May. The Fiesta Texas version was given a different paint scheme giving it a unique look.
AT/TIM BALDWIN

Supplied by Funtime of Austria, Six Flags Great Adventure's new 240-foot tall SkyScreamer is the tallest of four 32-seat StarFlyer units to open in the U.S. Guests sit two-abreast in open-air swings as they climb to the top of the ride's tower all the while spinning around a 98-foot circle at speeds of 40 mph. AT/SCOTT RUTHERFORD

Six Flags America makes a stand with Apocalypse

STORY: Scott Rutherford
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

BOWIE, Md. — While the Mayan's end-of-days prediction is scheduled for the conclusion of 2012, Six Flags America decided to get a head-start on disaster with the introduction of Apocalypse – The Last Stand. Ranking as the park's eighth roller coaster, Apocalypse is a first-generation stand-up model supplied by Switzerland's renowned steel coaster manufacturer, Bolliger & Mabillard.

The mayhem struck Six Flags America on June 7 with a trainload of zombies taking the first spin aboard Apocalypse, which is located near the first drop of the park's Wild One wooden coaster. The attraction was built partially on the site of the former Skull Mountain, an Intamin water coaster that was retired in late 2011.

"As guests approach Apocalypse—The Last Stand,



they are met with signs of impending doom: airplane wreckage, burned out vehicles, evidence of the undead and scorching special effects," said Rick Howarth, Six Flags America park president. "We selected this ride for Six Flags America, complete with a timely 2012 Apocalypse theme, to broaden our roller coaster collection and give guests a multi-sensory thrill ride experience."

Upon entering the attraction, guests wind through a queue, stepping further and further into an end-of-the-world scenario. They then stand four-abreast in one of two seven-car trains that each
▶ See APOCALYPSE, page 19



Mayhem has descended on Six Flags America in the form of Apocalypse – The Last Stand, first-generation stand-up coaster supplied by Bolliger & Mabillard.
AT/SCOTT RUTHERFORD



►SKYSCREAMER

Continued from page 18

Urie (former "Ugly Betty" star) and several other Broadway cast members. Jonas described SkyScreamer as "the perfect ride to start the day."

AT spoke with Six Flags Great Adventure's Communications Director Kristin Siebeneicher about SkyScreamer's construction and debut. "The installation of SkyScreamer went smoothly. Once the massive footers were installed, it was amazing to see how quickly the tower was erected," said Siebeneicher. "The ride has performed well and the reaction to SkyScreamer has been tremendous. It's wonderful to see children, teens, adults and seniors all soaring 24 stories in the air. The ride is gentle enough for all ages, yet its height and speed make it thrilling enough to please adrenaline junkies. SkyScreamer is the perfect cornerstone of our newly-themed Adventure Alley section, which is designed to evoke nostalgia and features rides for the entire family.

"This season, we also added a music-themed Scrambler, Déjà Vu, Air Jumbo flying elephants, and coming in July, new bumper cars named Fender Benders. They join our existing Big Wheel, a 150-foot Ferris wheel," added Siebeneicher. "It may be interesting to know that during the extensive research we completed last year, the number one thing our guests told us – from both teens and adults – was that they wanted to see more rides the entire family could enjoy together. And



Six Flags Great Adventure's Communications Director Kristin Siebeneicher and associate Kaitlyn Turi pose before the park's new SkyScreamer opens.
AT/TIM BALDWIN

that was the foundation for Adventure Alley."

Supplied by Funtime of Austria, Six Flags Great Adventure's new SkyScreamer is the tallest of four 32-seat StarFlyer units to open in the United States. Six Flags Fiesta Texas opened their version earlier this spring while Six Flags Discovery Kingdom and Six Flags St. Louis both introduced SkyScreamer rides in 2011.

Funtime is represented by Ride Entertainment

Group (REG) of Millersville, Md. "We are excited about all of the StarFlyers opening at Six Flags parks around the chain," said REG's Adam Sandy. "At Great Adventure, the SkyScreamer anchors the park's new Adventure Alley section, which is a great nod to the classic 1970's theme park. It is full of rides the entire family can enjoy together and the SkyScreamer is a thrilling addition to a classic amusement park skyline."

►APOCALYPSE

Continued from page 18

accommodate 28 riders. After making the 100-foot ascent to the ride's apex, a twisting first drop propels them through a tight, convoluted 2,900-foot-long course at speeds of 55 mph. The turbulent journey is highlighted by two complete inversions (a vertical loop and corkscrew).

Before ravaging guests at SFA, Apocalypse began its life as Iron Wolf at Six Flags Great

America where it operated from 1990 through the 2011 season. Fans wondering if the ride lost any of its bite during the transformation from Iron Wolf to Apocalypse can rest assured. Aside from an elaborate thematic package and an outstanding new orange-on-charcoal color scheme (provided by amusement industry veterans Baynum Painting), the coaster provides virtually the same intense ride characteristics they enjoyed during its years in Illinois.

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Legoland California's Pirate Reef makes big splash



Hopkins supplies "JUNIOR" Shoot the Chute; Empex Watertoys provides water blasters

STORY: Jeffrey L. Seifert
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

CARLSBAD, Calif. — All hands were on deck as the new Pirate Reef attraction at Legoland California opened on Friday, May 25. The main feature of the new attraction is a specially designed Shoot the Chute ride from Hopkins Rides of Haines City, Florida. Instead of the 50 to 100-foot thrilling drop typical of most Shoot the Chute Rides, Pirate Reef features a modest 25-foot drop and a gentle slope that is more suited to small children — the park's primary audience.

After plunging down the chute, the 20-passenger boats make their way through two life-size Lego pirate ships where Captain Blue Brick and Captain Red Brick are currently engaged in battle. The 20-foot high and 40-foot long ships are designed for guests to climb aboard, battle each other with water cannons and blast passengers on the ride as they splash down 25 feet

Despite its smaller size, Pirate Reef, a Hopkins Rides Shoot the Chute ride, creates a big splash, both before and through the two Lego-brick themed pirate boats.

TOP: AT/GARY SLADE;
BOTTOM: COURTESY LEGOLAND

soaking daring guests on the bridge below.

Lego frogs, installed by Master Model Builders and designed to spray water at passengers, are part of the more than 30 pirate-themed Lego models that went into Pirate Reef. The models were created out of more than 223,000 Lego bricks and include both Captain Red Brick and Captain Blue Brick, pirates, monkeys, parrots and more. The water cannons were supplied by Empex Watertoys of Canada.

Jim Glover, vice president of sales for Hopkins Rides said, "We started more than a year-and-a-half ago to design a ride that would be more for their guests with an average age of six years old. We designed the ride with a nine-meter drop and extended the runout so it provides a nice smooth deceleration so children can have a great time with lots of water and the traditional splash." Glover added, "One of the tasks was to design this ride for both use in the theme park and the waterpark."

The entire attraction will be accessible from the Legoland Theme Park as well as the separately-gated Legoland Water Park. One boat can be used for the waterpark and the other for the

▶ See LEGOLAND, page 21



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►LEGOLAND

Continued from page 20

theme park. The queue area, ride gates and even the bridges are set up to keep the guests from the two different parks segregated.

Early results from Legoland California show that the smaller lift height, and drop of the ride, can still result in the same big splash and same soak factor, that riders are used to seeing and experiencing with the taller Hopkins versions.



Left to right: Pirate theming made from Lego bricks is found at Pirate Reef's entrance and throughout the ride as are several water cannons (Empex Watertoys) used to create extra H₂O fun while riders try to avoid the extra soaking that is in store as they approach the two pirate ships. AT/GARY SLADE

Pirate Reef riders drop, splash, and smile at Legoland California





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New 3D film ride raises competitive stakes in SoCal

Uni Studios Hollywood digs in for battle with "Transformers"

STORY: Dean Lamanna
Special to Amusement Today

UNIVERSAL CITY, Calif. — With theme parks to the north and south firing great promotional guns this summer in a combined billion-dollar bid to win Southern California's tourist dollars, Universal Studios Hollywood is looking to solidify its position behind perennial leaders Disneyland and its sister park, Disney California Adventure, among the region's top draws.

At an estimated cost of \$100 million, "Transformers: The Ride-3D" should ably defend the park's enviable ranking.



A visceral extension of the blockbusting *Transformers* movie franchise, itself based on the popular Hasbro toy products introduced in 1984, "Transformers: The Ride-3D" takes the motion simulator experience to a highly sophisticated new level of mobile, audiovisual immersion.

Deploying an inventive storyline that finds humanity caught in an intergalactic war between the heroic Autobots and the evil Decepticons — humanoid robots that morph at will into objects ranging from cars and trucks to exotic weaponry — the ride marries the very latest film advances to cutting-edge, track-based vehicle simulator technology.

The adventure sends 12-passenger Autobot Evac

Joining Optimus Prime at Universal Studios Hollywood for the May 24 premiere of "Transformers: The Ride-3D" were (from left) Tom Williams, chairman and CEO, Universal Parks & Resorts; Mark Woodbury, president, Universal Creative; Larry Kurzweil, president, Universal Studios Hollywood; Steve Burke, president and CEO, NBCUniversal; Ron Meyer, president and COO, Universal Studios; and Steven Spielberg, the ride's executive producer.

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vehicles on a breakneck chase from the headquarters of the top-secret N.E.S.T. (Nonbiological Extraterrestrial Species Treaty) agency through city streets and across rooftops, and even crashes them through an office building, on the hunt for a missing shard of the All-Spark, a powerful Transformers artifact.

It's a wildly bucking, spinning, in-your-face and altogether seamless multi-level 3D thrill ride additionally enhanced by the elements of wind, heat and mist — the apotheosis of the *Transformers* movie experience. This is definitely not your uncle's "Back to the Future" simulator ride.

"Transformers" was previewed to the media on May 24 with a red carpet affair attended by, among others, Universal Studios President and COO Ron Meyer, Universal Studios Hollywood President Larry Kurzweil, Universal Parks & Resorts Chairman Tom Williams and Oscar-winning film-

maker Steven Spielberg, the executive producer of both the ride and the film series. Also attending were *Transformers* film star Glenn Morshower, who appears in the ride experience; Frank Welker, who voices the ride's Megatron character; and Peter Cullen, who voices the ride's Optimus Prime character.

Michael Bay, the film series' director and the creative consultant for both this "Transformers" ride and the version of it that debuted last December at Universal Studios Singapore, made a videotaped appearance on a temporary screen erected in front of the attraction, which is housed within a giant new sound stage that bridges Universal's theme park and lower-level production backlog.

The park's Larry Kurzweil praised "Transformers," with its photo-realistic computer-generated imagery supplied by the Oscar-winning wizards at Lucasfilm Ltd.'s Industri-

al Light & Magic, as having the "perfect" combination of features — "an exhilarating blockbuster with non-stop action and astonishing special effects. It has all the elements to become one of the world's most dynamic theme park thrill rides and a centerpiece attraction at Universal Studios Hollywood."

Describing the park's collaboration with Michael Bay, and its resulting dedication to the brand, as "extraordinary," Universal Creative President Mark Woodbury added: "We've pushed the boundaries of 3D, hyperrealism and immersive special effects to transport our guests, physically and viscerally, into the world of *Transformers*."

Also contributing to the park's most ambitious attraction ever was the inclusion of the voices of several actors from the movie.

"It was essential for us to work with the authentic voice actors that created the *Trans-*

FAST FACTS

Attraction/Park
Transformers: The Ride-3D/
Universal Studios
Hollywood
Universal City, Calif.

Type
Track-based motion/flight
simulator combined with
high-definition 3D film
and multimedia effects

Soundstage size
60,000 sq. feet

Building height
60 feet

Track length/duration
2,000 feet/4 minutes

Vehicles
12 passengers each, seated
in three rows, themed to a
new Autobot called Evac

**Film / Audiovisual
component**
34 projectors aimed at
14 oversized, custom-
configured screens
spanning a combined
4,000 feet; 5,000 watts of
surround sound
per vehicle

Production
Universal Creative,
Hasbro, Industrial Light &
Magic

Official debut
May 25, 2012



On Universal Hollywood's new "Transformers: The Ride-3D", riders wear the 3D glasses, giving the film technology, above, a realistic look and feel.

COURTESY UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD

formers characters," said Thierry Coup, senior vice president of Universal Creative. "The fans will really appreciate that."

Fans may also appreciate a new Transformers-inspired beverage called Energon that is available at the Transformers Supply Vault, a new retail store introduced in conjunction with the attraction. Served in 22-oz. collectable vessels and infused with a pulsating All-Spark lighted ice cube, the fun elixir was created by award-winning Universal Studios Hollywood Executive Chef Eric Kopelow.

What better way to toast the park's latest amusement benchmark?

Frontier City makes a splash with Wild West Water Works

WhiteWater West provides themed waterplay structure

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla. — Grab your swimsuit and head to Frontier City! That's the message being sent out from the Frontier City marketing department this season.

Why? Because the Oklahoma city themer now offers Wild West Water Works, a giant-themed Rain Fortress from WhiteWater West.

Wild West Water Works is five stories tall (52 feet) with 198 ways to stay cool, eight colorful slides, a 1,000 gallon tipping bucket, and offers a spacious lounging deck, changing facilities, showers and more, creating a refreshing water oasis for guests of all ages.

This newest section of the park, located on the park's former employee parking lot, just south of the Wildcat roller coaster, was a first class installation in all areas.

Wild West Water Works (the actual structure) sports a theme that pays tribute to both Oklahoma's rich heritage of Wild West and Native American.

From the moment guests enter the new area, they are greeted with a massive center walkway art sculpture that contains a nine-foot tall Sa-



Top row: This artist cacti sculpture (left) and detail to building theming (right) help anchor the guest experience at Frontier City's new Wild West Water Works. **Middle row:** WhiteWater West provided the themed Rain Fortress structure. **Bottom row:** the largest landscaping project in park history, and themed props are just part of the attention to detail the park gave its new water area. AT/GARY SLADE

guaro cactus, three barrel cacti and four clusters of prickly pears all accented by freshly planted knockout roses. Desert Steel's Eric Carroll of Newton, Kansas was the artist hired to create the \$15,000 plus

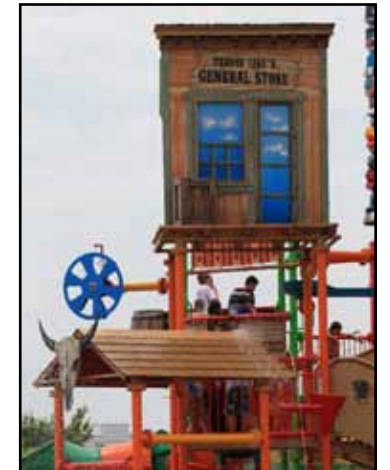
art sculptures.

As guests make their way to the bathroom and changing areas, they enter spacious/showering facilities that are lined in colorful tile and state-of-the-art fixtures found in up-scale spas and resorts.

Adjacent to the waterplay structure, the lounge areas are accented with ten, 20-foot diameter shark shade umbrellas from Anchor Industries to help shade guests from the sun, while not playing in the water. The Rusty Spur Cafe rounds out the area serving food and drink for the new section.

The \$3 million Wild West Water Works featured more than 1,050 yards of concrete poured to create the fun and lounge area. After that was completed, the single largest landscaping job in the history of Frontier City got underway to add that first-class touch.

"We are excited and proud to offer this new experience to our guests" says Stephen Ball,



The Two Johns Saloon and show (above) along with the Wildcat's new coat of paint help the Frontier City guest experience the be best its ever been. AT/GARY SLADE



Ball

general manager at Frontier City. "Families will be able to extend their visit at the park with this new area, allowing for a place to relax and cool off in the heat of the Oklahoma summer. This new attraction, in addition to our great rides, shows and concerts, makes Frontier City the best entertainment experience and value in Oklahoma."

Ball also pointed out during AT's visit, that Frontier City pulls its water from six water wells and the aquifer under the parks property lines. A seventh well, that reaches 245 feet deep, was drilled just for the new Wild West Water Works, offering clean water from what Ball described as nature's finest water filter.

Wild West Water Works has a capacity of approximately 800 guests per hour and uses 10 fully trained lifeguards to watch all aspects

of the structure at all times. The new waterplay area is free with park admission. It opened to the public Memorial Day weekend.

In other

Frontier City news:

- Guests saw a shine of new paint throughout the park this year with the Wildcat (wooden coaster), The Prairie Schooner (swinging ship); Eruption (S&S Sky Sling) and numerous buildings throughout the park all looking new and fresh.

- Guests will enjoy the return of Two Johns Saloon (show) and the Santa Fe BBQ restaurant.

- As a result of the waterplay expansion, employees now have a nice new paved parking lot, north of park, that is actually closer to their back area where employees clock in and out for their work shifts.

—Gary Slade

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Reporter's Notebook

Oklahoma beats Texas for hottest summer on record

TULSA, Okla. — The states of Oklahoma and Texas have argued for years on everything from cattle, oil, water and football.

Now, thanks to the National Climatic Data Center in Tulsa, they don't have to argue who had the hottest summer in 2011.

Oklahoma gets the win.

Oklahoma's average temperature last summer was 86.9 degrees, whereas Texas finished with 86.7 degrees.

Thanks to the hot summer of 2011, both state's assortment of waterparks all reported record attendance.

Stephen Ball, Frontier City GM, told AT that it's cross town sister park White Water Bay had a record 2011 thanks to the heat.

Quoted

" We invested \$10 million of our money in Draper, now they want to raise our taxes so they can put us out of business."

—Cowabunga Bay owner Shane Huish on the city's attempt to raise the taxes of residents and the waterpark to fund a recreation center

Mammoth opens with huge response at Holiday World & Splashin' Safari

ProSlide delivers massive \$9 million HydroMagnetic water coaster

STORY: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

SANTA CLAUS, Ind. – Holiday World & Splashin' Safari's 2012 expansion turned out to be the largest single-ride investment in the park's history.

The new \$9 million ProSlide Technology Mammoth opened the weekend of Friday, May 11, and since has caused quite a stir not only among the park's patrons, but in the industry as a whole.

"It is the world's largest water coaster," said ProSlide Marketing Director Brad Goodbody. "It is the longest (1,763 feet) and the widest (12 feet across the internal path). It is also the highest capacity, with a capacity of over 1,000 riders per hour. It also has more power than any other water coaster."

In 2010 ProSlide completed the construction of its Wildebeest water coaster for Holiday World. At that time, that ride was being touted the world's longest. Now, it places second.

And, park officials are absolutely thrilled.

"One of the last conversations I had with my late brother Will was in the weeks after Wildebeest opened, in May of 2010," said Dan Koch, Holiday World president. "Will was ecstatic with the public's reaction to our water coaster. We agreed we needed to find a way to outdo our incredible 'beest.' I feel we have done just that with Mammoth. Will would have loved it!"

Koch went on to say, "I was the first to ride Mammoth! All I can say is, 'Wow!' Mammoth does not disap-

▶ See MAMMOTH, page 28



Holiday World & Splashin' Safari's new Mammoth HydroMagnetic water coaster from ProSlide is a record setter. The \$9 million ride is the world's longest such ride at 1,763 feet, and uses 100 LIM's to blast the six-passenger rafts through the course.
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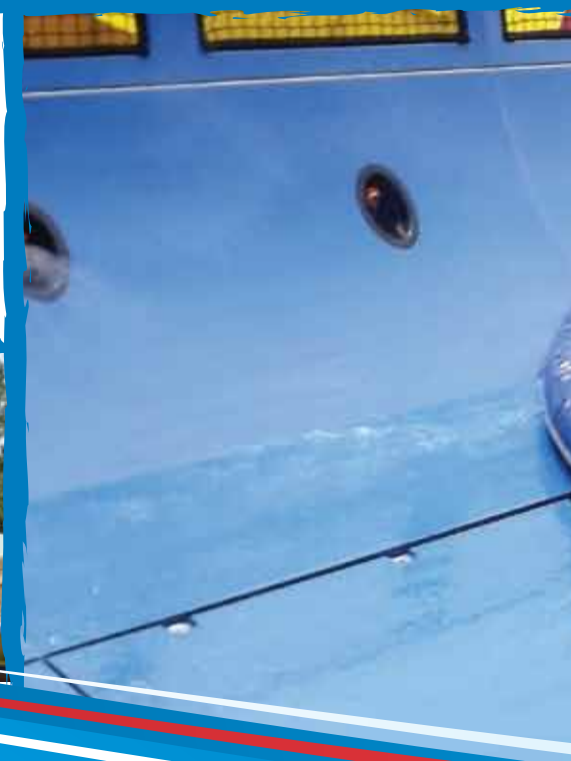
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► MAMMOTH

Continued from page 25

point. I can't wait to get on it again!"

Goodbody said his first ride on the Mammoth was very interesting.

"It was the response of some of the riders I found really interesting," he said. "About halfway up the first incline, a couple of the riders got sort of freaked out and had to get off. It really does give you that roller coaster feel as you go up. This ride has done the best job I have ever seen to breach that gap between a water ride and a coaster."

The Mammoth uses Hydromagnetic technology to propel the six-person raft up a series of hills utilizing linear induction motors (LIMs). This is a technology ProSlide has used before, such as on the Wildebeest. Goodbody said this ride has 100 LIMs.

The ride begins with a 300-foot conveyor ride "lift hill," followed by a series of drops including a three-story drop at a 45-degree angle, plus six additional drops. The drenching ride includes a total of seven drops, adding up to 187 feet of total "drop."

"The new twist to this water coaster is the six-passenger boats — this is brand new design," Koch said. "These round boats add tremendous capacity, plus riders may be facing forward, backward or even sideways. It's all the fun of Wildebeest, plus Mammoth is taller, longer and wider."

The new raft, which ProSlide has designated as the clover wheel raft, was specifically developed for this ride, Goodbody said, adding that Z-Pro manufactured the raft for them.

"The rafts have multiple levels," Goodbody said. "The inner portion has six individu-

FAST FACTS

Name/Park

Mammoth/
Holiday World & Splashin'
Safari, Santa Claus, Ind.

Height/Length

70 feet/1,763 feet
(the world's longest)

**Number of drops/
tallest drop**

7 drops totaling 187 feet/
32 feet at 45-degree
angle

Linear Induction Motors

100 LIM's throughout
6 uphill sections, 2 of
which are camel humps

Ride time/Capacity

3 minutes/1,000 pph

Footprint

Approximately 3.2 acres

Suppliers

ProSlide Technology, ride
Z-Pro, rafts

Cost/Opened

\$9 million/ May 11, 2012

al seats that cradles the riders providing back support. There are no seat belts, but there are handles to grab on to."

The outer portion of the raft is plastic and on the bottom are the metal contact plates that react to the magnetic power being produced by the LIMs. Goodbody said the magnet motors are about 30 inches by 20 inches in size and produce 670 pounds per foot of power.

Mammoth's tallest elevation is 69 feet higher than its lowest drop. The conveyor-style lift hill replaces any slide-tower stairs, making the water coaster accessible to riders who might have difficulty

walking up stairs.

Goodbody said ProSlide's relationship with Holiday World has been great. The success of the Wildebeest was tremendous, he said.

"They came to us and said they wanted something bigger with a larger capacity and more thrills," Goodbody said. "We were already developing the Mammoth concept but Holiday World's ride is completely customized to that park."

It is customized, he said, to the park's landscape among other features. It is built on a hillside so the elevation of the ride doesn't appear to be as high. Park officials and ProSlide worked side by side to save the natural foliage of the area — the trees and wood settings.

After Mammoth opened to the public last month, there were modifications made. Concluding these modifications, the ride has gone up to having 12 rafts flowing through it.

"I understand the lines are still sort of lengthy, but that happens with a new ride," Goodbody said. "Apparently, when they open the ride for the day, guests just run straight for it."

The response the Mammoth has gotten has caused other park officials to take a closer look at it. Goodbody said they are already working on another one that will end in a ProSlide Tornado. That ride, set to open in November, is located at Yaz Island Underworld, UAE.

Other park additions for 2012 include "Rock the World" Christian music festival, a new family-friendly event called Holiday World's Happy Halloween Weekends throughout the month of October, plus park-wide Wi-Fi and rental cabanas.



ProSlide used Holiday World's natural terrain in the design of Mammoth. The HydroMagnetic water coaster features 100 LIM's to power the rafts through the course providing a capacity of 1,000 pph. COURTESY PROSLIDE



ProSlide spins into Jeddah with Saudi Arabia's first Tornado

ProSlide Technology, Inc., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, has announced that Stationery Fantasies Water Park in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia is the latest location to be installing ProSlide's most iconic water ride, the Tornado. This project marks the first ProSlide Tornado in Saudi Arabia and continues the momentum and growth of ProSlide water rides in this region. The Tornado was on Stationery Fantasies' wish list when the park set out to select an expansion ride for their waterpark. ProSlide has now surpassed 70 Tornado installations worldwide. This announcement comes immediately after ProSlide reported a very successful DEAL trade show in Dubai, UAE where ProSlide showcased their assortment of water rides and the future plans of water ride development.

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PLAY NETTING



ROPE & NETTING

Utah city wants to tax residents, Cowabunga Bay to build rec center

DRAPER, Utah — The city of Draper, Utah is attempting to tax residents and businesses to build a recreation center. Among the business to be taxed is the \$10 million privately funded Cowabunga Bay waterpark. The proposed center includes a family swimming area and lazy river and would compete with the waterpark the city is attempting to tax. Owner Shane Huish said “We invested \$10 million of our money in Draper, now they want to raise our taxes so they can put us out of business. They don’t have to turn a profit. It’s unfair competition. I will do everything I can do to stop it.”

To further complicate matters, Salt Lake County is already planning a recreation center in Draper, and the residents are already paying a county tax to fund that project. The city scheduled the bond election in June, a time usually set aside for emergency elections, as voter turnout is much less than that of November elections. If the bond passes, some local businesses could see a 50 percent increase in their property taxes.

WhiteWater provides on board waterpark to new Carnival Breeze cruise ship



Setting sail on the high seas for the very first time on June 3, Carnival Breeze, the newest Carnival fun ship, now offers guests a splashing good time with Carnival WaterWorks, an onboard waterpark featuring a signature Champagne Bowl waterslide, AquaDrop waterslide that extends over the ship’s side, an AquaPlay 1050 multi-level interactive play structure and other exciting attractions all provided by WhiteWater West. COURTESY WHITEWATER WEST



CORRECTION

In the Hurricane Alley story (June 2012, page 23) AT misidentified the supplier of the wave generation equipment for the new waterpark’s wave pool. The actual supplier was Aquatic Development Group’s (Cohoes, N.Y.) Wave Tek system. AT regrets the error.



NEWS SPLASH

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

The Timber Ridge Lodge & Waterpark in Lake Geneva, Wis. received an environmental stewardship award from Wisconsin-based **Orion Energy Systems**, a technology company that specializes in energy management. The waterpark recently completed a lighting retrofit project that reduced their energy consumption for lighting by more than 75 percent. The new system will save the lodge more than \$22,000 annually and reduce their carbon emission by 191 tons.

The city council of Temecula, Calif. approved the sale of a 19-acre parcel of city-owned land for the development of a new waterpark. **Wild Rivers Temecula** is expected to open in 2013. The approval brings to an end more than six years of waterpark proposals for the city that had never panned out.

The Greenville County Recreation District (South Carolina) has mandated life jackets for all guests less than 42 inches in height at all three of its waterparks. Even though two near-drownings last year were blamed on lack of adult supervision, the district is not taking any chances. Every guest under 42 inches, including swimmers, non-swimmers and infants must wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket and be accompanied by a responsible adult at all times when in the waterpark. The district purchased 1,500 life-jackets for distribution at the three waterparks, but the district is encouraging parents with young children to purchase their own.

Closed since 2009, **Splash Down Dunes** waterpark in Porter, Indiana may get a reprieve. **Seven Peaks Marketing of Utah**, which operates two waterparks and three family fun centers, hopes to close on the property and have it up and running in 2013. Seven Peaks determined that the materials in the waterpark are in good shape, but the grounds will need extensive work. The waterpark is close to the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, which made the location of the property attractive to Seven Peaks.

On June 4, 2012, Seven Peaks Marketing announced the acquisition of **Bluff Falls Water Park and Family Fun Center** in Poplar Bluff, Mo. Upon completion of the acquisition, the park was renamed **Seven Peaks Waterpark Poplar Bluff**. The fun center is open year-round and the waterpark had already opened for the season. “The acquisition of Seven Peaks Waterpark Poplar Bluff is a part of Seven Peaks’ expansion into the Midwest and additional announcements concerning the purchase of other amusement parks will be forthcoming,” said Gary Brinton, CEO of Seven Peaks.

The controversial waterpark that had been proposed at **The Forks** in Winnipeg, Canada, has been pulled by the developers. Criticism from city councilors and negativity from people in the community over a \$7 million grant from the city to help build the waterpark was one of the many factors that led to the defeat of the project. Others were concerned about a waterpark going into such a desirable piece of property near the popular historic district. Adding to the controversy was the fact that the new waterpark would have been near the Goldeyes baseball team, owned by the city’s mayor. The agent for the waterpark developer was one of

the mayor’s longtime business partners in the Goldeyes.

The New Philadelphia Kiwanis Club and the American Red Cross held a fundraiser at the **Uhrichville Water Park** in Ohio. The Annual Red Cross Duck Race was held June 5 with proceeds benefiting the local Red Cross chapter. Ducks were available for \$5 each or a quack pack of six for \$20. Purchase of a duck also included admission into the waterpark.

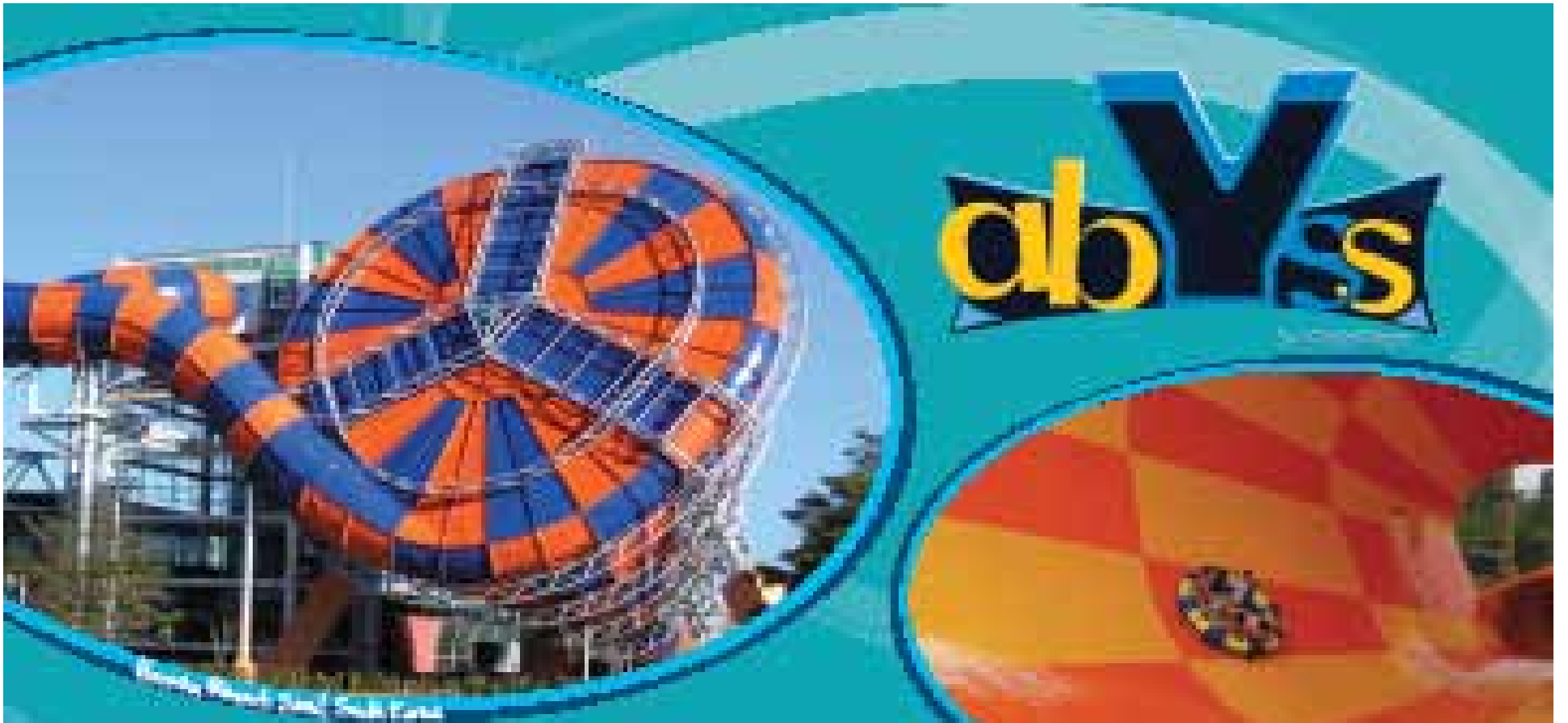
On Saturday, May 26, the West Edmonton Mall’s **World Waterpark** hosted Ukrainian Night. Edmonton’s famous Ukrainian dance troupe along with the Shumka School of Dance performed the world’s largest kolomeyka — a folk dance — in the water. Tickets for the evening were only CAN\$10, a substantial savings over the park’s usual admission price.

The old **Swing Zone** family entertainment center in New Bern, N.C. has been transformed into a waterpark. **Captain Bly’s Shipwreck Cove** was expected to open mid-June. Charles Blythe of Trenton, N.C. purchased the closed property last fall and refurbished the facility. The center’s original mini golf course and batting cages were refurbished and new waterslides added.

Although **Legoland Florida’s** waterpark officially opened on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend, 400 guests were given a free preview along with the media the Thursday before. The offer to attend free had some guests queuing up at the gate the night before. The new waterpark is a refurbishment of the previous **Cypress Gardens Splash Island**. Adding the Lego touch is a Build-A-Raft river ride which has guests attaching large, floating Legos to their innertubes before heading into the lazy river. Admission to the park is \$12 in addition to the \$75/\$65 admission ticket to Legoland. Admission to the waterpark only is not available. Legoland is encouraging guests to purchase a two-day package.

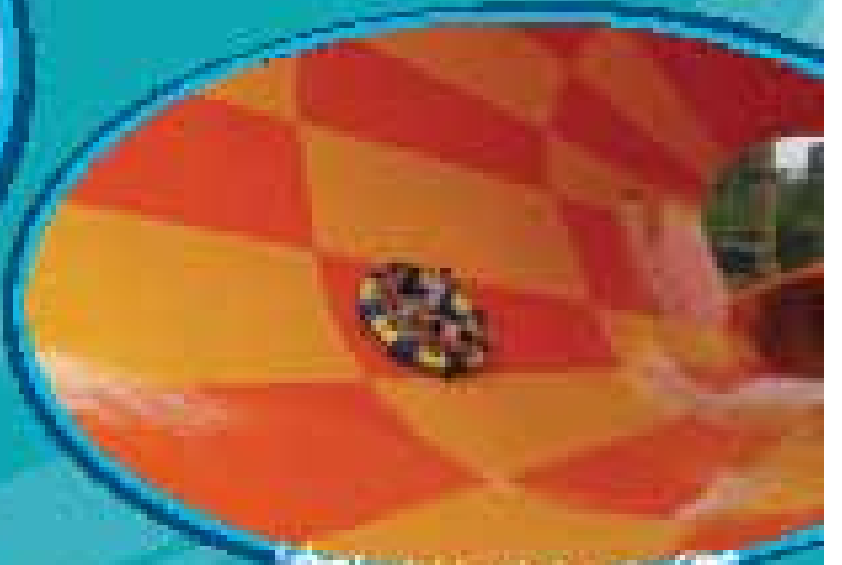
Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine has filed a lawsuit against the **Beach Waterpark** in Mason, Ohio for violating the state Consumer Sales Practices Act. The waterpark sold approximately 8,800 season passes at an average price of \$89 before announcing in March that it would close. Instead of refunds, the Beach offered pass holders a package of alternative experiences at local attractions that was valued at more than \$200. Many felt the compensation package was too restrictive and not very useful. In his lawsuit, DeWine stated that the offers were not adequate substitutions to what the consumers paid for. The lawsuit seeks consumer restitution, a permanent injunction and civil penalties.

Children ages 4 to 15 now have an exclusive spa at The **Great Wolf Lodge in Sandusky**. Scoops Kids Spa opened on June 5 as an ice cream-themed spa that offers manicures, pedicures and facials, complete with their own flavorful products, designed especially for children. The Scoops spas have been extremely popular at Great Wolf Lodge locations nationwide. With the Sandusky installation complete, all 11 Great Wolf Lodge locations now have a Scoops Kids Spa.



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Key Lime Cove welcomes guests for behind-the-scenes tours

Tour highlights park's state-of-the-art ozone disinfection system

GURNEE, Ill. — Key Lime Cove takes so much pride in their state-of-the-art water filtration system, they are inviting everyone to come and see it. The staff now offers a waterpark tour at 8:30 a.m. on weekends, prior to the park's opening. Guests take a walking tour of the pump room under the waterpark and are shown the ozone disinfection system. Guides explain how ozone is 200 times stronger than chlorine but has no effect on skin or hair. Ozone is a highly effective sanitizer, effective against bacteria, viruses, spores, fungus, mold as well as Cryptosporidium, E. coli, and salmonella.

Chief Engineer Robert Williams is the ecological expert at KeyLime Cove. He oversees the ozone purification program to produce some of the purest water anyone could swim in, anywhere on Earth. Its pH value is the same as a human teardrop.

"We are conducting tours to educate parents about the water their kids are swimming in," said Robert Williams. "We are proud of our state-of-the-art ozone disinfection system which provides impeccable water quality and clarity, as well as air quality. Ozone destroys 99.9 percent of bacteria, viruses, spores, fungus and mold. It leaves the water sparkling clear and fresh." Williams added,



Key Lime Cove's Chief Engineer Robert Williams shows off one of the park's Climate Center's that lets resort guests view the current water temperature, air temperature and humidity. AT/GARY SLADE

liams added, "I believe that the condition of a pump room is a direct reflection of how an operation is run. Our waterpark technicians take air and water quality seriously. They are trained to know every pipe and how the water flows through all 176 valves and 46 gauges." To date, there are few waterparks and municipal pools in the U.S. that are using ozone technology.

KeyLime Cove is rapidly becoming known as a destination of choice. TripAdvisor, the world's largest travel website, announced its top Travelers' Choice Hotels for Families, naming KeyLime Cove Indoor Waterpark Resort the No. 1 Family Hotel in the U.S. and No. 2 worldwide. The 10th annual Trip Advisor Travelers'

Choice Awards are based on millions of reviews and opinions posted on TripAdvisor by travelers from around the world. Top hotels for families were determined based on properties that were most highly rated by people who traveled with their family.

"With the help of millions of travelers around the globe, TripAdvisor is thrilled to recognize the world's most outstanding hotels with the Travelers' Choice Awards," said Christine Peterson, president, TripAdvisor for Business. "Recognizing the best of the best based on traveler feedback and reviews, value and quality are the hallmarks of our Travelers' Choice winners."

► See TOURS, page 33



Guests attending the park's behind-the-scenes tour will be shown the spotless pump room which features 18 pumps, 176 valves and 42 gauges. The pump room is maintained by five full time technicians, who hard test water samples every two hours. The system makes pure ozone, recognized by the EPS as an antimicrobial disinfectant. AT/GARY SLADE



Key Lime Cove's indoor waterpark features 420,120 gallons of water and an air quality system that refreshes the air every 20 minutes during operation. The park has a capacity of 1,476 guests. AT/GARY SLADE

TOURS

Continued from page 32

"We are honored. There can be nothing more rewarding than being recognized by our own guests as the very best," said Dale McFarland, general manager of KeyLime Cove. "We appreciate our guests for their continued patronage and for taking the time to share their reviews

of our hotel, amenities and guest service on Trip Advisor."

KeyLime Cove is an island-inspired family vacation destination less than an hour drive from Chicago and Milwaukee. As The Official Resort of Six Flags Great



McFarland

America, the year-round resort features 414 suites and staterooms. The resort's entertainment and amenities include a 65,000 square-foot, 84-degree tropical-themed indoor waterpark; an arts, crafts and activities center for kids; arcade; multiple restaurants and 6,000 square feet of banquet and meeting space.

—Jeffrey Seifert



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Reporter's Notebook

IAAPA Europe announces new address

BELGIUM — IAAPA Europe has announced that it has moved to new office facilities to better service its members throughout Europe.

IAAPA asks that members make note of the new contact details below:

IAAPA Europe IVZW
Rue du Congrès 37-41,
B-1000 Brussels, Belgium
Telephone: (32) 2 609 54 45
Fax: (32) 2 609 54 46
Email: nkopf@IAAPA.org
Web: www.IAAPA.org/europe

As a reminder, the IAAPA Euro Attractions Show 2012 will be held October 9-11 in Berlin, Germany. Members interested in attending or exhibiting are asked to contact IAAPA Europe.

Quoted

"I think the industry will be thrilled with the exhibit, and many will see their parks or coasters highlighted throughout."

—National Roller Coaster Museum board member and historian Richard Munch on the NRCMA's premier exhibit now open at Dollywood

NRCMA premier exhibit opens at Dollywood

PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. — It's been a long time in the making; however park historians, hobbyist organizations and the general public are all embracing the roller coaster/amusement park exhibit that runs daily, now through September 16, 2012. This is the inaugural exhibit of the National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives (NRCMA) in a 1,250 square foot exhibit space formerly occupied by the Dollywood Parton Museum, which is now housed in its own building. America's Roller Coasters & Amusement Parks exhibit is located in Heritage Hall — a space directly above the cave, in the lower end of Craftsmen's Valley at Dollywood, Pigeon Forge, Tennessee.

Contained in this traveling exhibition are 20 displays of various sizes, covering all aspects on the subject of roller coasters, along with a few related areas of interest. The displays and videos represent a good portion of the current industry as well as historical artifacts, photographs, and other items that represent the past. Many of the displays have a connection to the roller coasters at Dollywood with a balance between old and new.



One highlight includes the display of a Prior and Church designed roller coaster car from the Giant Dipper at Belmont Park, San Diego, Calif. alongside a Thunderhead car that is the "rolling stock" on that coaster at Dollywood. The 1925 Frank Prior and Fredrick Church car is what gave Mike Boodley the inspiration to design "Millennium Flyer" style roller coaster cars for Great Coasters International built roller coasters around the world. In the exhibit Boodley is featured on a video where he explains his design process.

Another highlight is the showcase on Arrow Dynamics, one of the major steel roller coaster manufacturers of the late 20th century, headed by the late amusement industry legend and IAAPA Hall of Fame Ron Toomer, who has a panel citing his industry accomplishments as a celebrated designer. A favorite area is sure to be the roller coaster enthusiasts' room, showing the extent to which aficionados collect and display anything and everything roller coaster related. Other exhibits include: Parks of Tennessee, Wild Eagle (Dollywood's newest coaster), Hall of Fame coasters, Coasters in Movies, a map of all U.S. parks both in operation and defunct and a roller coaster history timeline.

The museum board has been looking for the opportunity to showcase many of the items and artifacts that are housed in their 2,600 square feet of storage in Plainview,



America's Roller Coasters & Amusement Parks, presented by the National Roller Coaster Museum, is now on display for this season only at Dollywood. The exhibit features full size coaster cars (top) to paneled exhibits (above), giving the guest plenty to view and read.
COURTESY NRCMA

Texas on the Larson International manufacturing site. Until a permanent museum is built, the traveling exhibit is an opportunity to show and share some of the items acquired along with educating the general public about all aspects of roller coasters — history, operation, physics, images, design, memorabilia and more.

Will the Dollywood exhibit make an impact? "Our expectation is that the industry will look at this as a first step," said Richard Munch, board member of the National Roller Coaster Museum and the person with the long-term museum vision when he co-founded the American Coaster Enthusiasts in 1978. He continued, "I think the industry will be

► See EXHIBIT, page 38

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With new ownership comes big changes at Noah's Ark waterpark

New ProSlide Quadzilla added to ride lineup

WISCONSIN DELLS, Wis. — Change was the first thing visitors saw as they entered Noah's Ark on opening day, Saturday, May 26. Palace Entertainment, the new owners of America's largest waterpark, transformed the front entrance of the park and have a lot in store for visitors in 2012. With the opening of the highly-anticipated new ride, Quadzilla, a bounty of new food options and tremendous ways to save, park officials are hoping to enhance the customer experience while inside the park.

"We are putting our efforts into creating an atmosphere of family fun and giving new reasons for our patrons to visit the park and return again and again," says Doran Carrell, general manager of Noah's Ark Waterpark. "It's important to have a balanced mix between thrill rides and family attractions."

Quadzilla, the new, ProSlide 4-lane KrakenRacer waterslide will be a major attraction this summer, but Carrell also believes the new food options will thrill the taste buds of many visitors. Noah's Ark has added Nathan's popular foot-long hot dogs and hand-dipped ice cream, sundaes, milkshakes and root beer floats to the menu. A new

Backyard BBQ includes Austin City Blues pork ribs, oven roasted chicken and Johnsonville andouille sausages. Sides like corn on the cob, baked beans and macaroni and cheese are also offered. There's a new Bavarian nut cart with freshly roasted almonds, cashews and pecans, and a new eatery that serves Villa Prima Pizza and burgers.

On the lighter side, Noah's Ark is offering turkey and veggie burgers, freshly made garden salads, veggies and dip, fresh fruit cups, and pineapple, vanilla and orange-flavored soft serve that is both fat free and lactose free.

With the addition of a new park entrance, Noah's Ark will now be completely enclosed. Visitors no longer have to wear wristbands to show that they have paid admission to all the attractions. After entering the park, visitors have full access to every attraction.

The park's summer concert series, "Rock the Ark" will kick off on Saturday, June 30. One of 10 winning bands from a statewide music competition held last March will perform every Saturday, from 2 to 4 p.m., at the Wave Stage through Labor Day weekend.

—Jeffrey Seifert



Noah's Ark waterpark did not let a change of ownership slow down its efforts to add new slides for the new season. The Wisconsin park removed a set of older slides and used the same platform to introduce Quadzilla, a 4-lane KrakenRacer from ProSlide.

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Submarine Theater removal underway at Aquarena Springs

As part of its ongoing transformation of Aquarena Springs (San Marcos, Texas) from a once-popular water wonderland tourist attraction to an ecological and environmental education facility, Texas State University has removed the unique Submarine Theater. Built in 1972 it was the only theater of its type. Show spectators viewed the activities through the theater's windows. The show began on the water's surface then as the theater slowly submerged, aquamaids performed underwater dance routines and various stunts, even having an underwater picnic. At its peak, the theater was entertaining as many as 2,000 guests each day. As additional funds become available, the remaining attractions — the Intamin Sky Tower, and Von Roll Skyride will also be removed. The historic glass bottom boats are in the process of being restored, and the boat tours will continue. AT/TIM BALDWIN

—Jeffrey Seifert



►EXHIBIT

Continued from page 35

thrilled with the exhibit, and many will see their parks or coasters highlighted throughout. We tried to include everyone, but I am sure we missed a few parks."

"I feel it will be special for Dollywood," said Pete Owens PR manager for the Dollywood Companies, who also serves on the National Roller Coaster Museum board. Owens continued, "Our employees and management team were very supportive during the preparations, installation and opening of the exhibition.

This unique display is something a little extra for Dollywood guests."

America's Roller Coasters & Amusement Parks exhibit is open daily, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. through September 16 and is free with admission to Dollywood.

The National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives is a 501c3 non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and protection of the history of the roller coaster and the amusement industry. Cash and artifact donations can be made by contacting the NRC-MA: P.O. Box 5424, Arlington, Texas 76005-5424.



FAST TRACK

COMPILED: Scott Rutherford,
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

Disneyland's Carnation Plaza Gardens, the park's iconic bandstand and dance floor located just off the Hub, has been a popular place for music and dancing since its opening in 1958. Despite heated protest from long-time fans of the Gardens who recognized it as one of Walt's most hallowed park venues, the opposition won. On April 28, 2012, Disneyland hosted its final dance night there. It was decided that the area could better serve guests by being removed and re-imagined as a character/princess meet-and-greet location.

Kings Dominion's new free mobile app (available at iTunes and Google Play Store on Android phones) allows guests to plan their day at the park, purchase tickets and scan a barcode from the mobile ticket on an iPhone or Android at the front gate. It includes a GPS enabled map of Kings Dominion along with a park guide; friend finder function, allowing guests to keep track of their group while at the park; and access to information such as lodging and other accommodations near the park. KD plans to add new features to its mobile app throughout the year.

The newest **Ripley's Believe It or Not! Odditorium** opened on June 7 in the Light Street Pavilion on Baltimore's Inner Harbor. The two-story, 10,000-square-foot facility is home to hundreds of exhibits, oddities and innovative interactive activities as well as **Ripley's Marvelous Mirror Maze** and the **4D Ripley's Moving Theater**.

Six Flags Over Georgia celebrated its 45th anniversary on Saturday, June 16, 2012 with a day filled with live entertainment, a commemorative ceremony with celebrity guest **Jeff Foxworthy**, hundreds of cupcakes and a fireworks extravaganza that capped off the day. Six Flags Over Georgia opened its gates for the first time on the same day in 1967 as the Southeast's first regional theme park.

Registration is now open for **IAAPA Attractions Expo 2012**. Those who register by August 17 will save 40 percent on admission, have early access to ticketed events and have the chance to win the Golden Token — an all-access pass for you and a colleague to attend ANY education program or networking event during IAAPA Attractions Expo. More details can be found at: www.IAAPA.org.

SkyVue, the towering 500-square-foot observation wheel rapidly taking shape on the Las Vegas Strip, has completed the first phase of construction and is beginning its vertical climb. Focus is now turning to its retail and dining experience. Upon opening, SkyVue will be the largest observation wheel in the Western Hemisphere and the first attraction of its kind in Las Vegas.

Legendary **Disney** costume designer and Imagineer **Alice Davis** was recently honored with a window dedication ceremony on Main Street, U.S.A. — one of the highest honors be-

stowed upon an individual by the Disneyland Resort. Davis was recognized for designing clothing and patterns for attractions including *It's a Small World* and *Pirates of the Caribbean*. The tradition of dedicating windows at Disneyland began more than 50 years ago when Walt Disney dedicated many of the windows along Main Street, U.S.A. to individuals who helped make the park a reality. To date, more than six dozen individuals have been honored in this manner.

Augmented Reality has joined forces with The CTM Group; a leader in children's rides and souvenir penny machines, found all over the United States, Puerto Rico and abroad. CTM has always tried to stay ahead of the kiddie ride industry with their extremely successful simulator rides such as the Rollercoaster and the Virtual Racer, and now, The CTM Group continues to take their children's entertainment concept to an innovative new level.

Knott's Berry Farm is enticing collectors and park fans with the launch of their first ever collector pin trading program. Knott's initial series, released on Memorial Day weekend, consists of 31 different designs that include the Peanuts and Knott's collection. Both feature seasonal events, rides, attractions and characters that are uniquely Knott's. New pins will be released weekly and will range in price from \$6.99 to \$9.99. Knott's Official Trading Pins have two classifications, pins that can be purchased in one of Knott's designated retail locations and "branded" pins that can be only be acquired by trading with Knott's Berry Farm team members. All trading pins feature the official Knott's Pin Trading logo embossed on the back. The "branded" pins will carry an additional identification, Snoopy's paw print on the front of the pin.

The Virginia Zoo has opened an outdoor habitat for its orangutan residents. The zoo says the orangutans had never before experienced direct sunlight or walked on soft grass. The outdoor exhibit also will give them the chance to venture onto a 40-foot climbing structure, 16-foot sway poles, vinelike ropes, raised platforms and hammocks.

Connecticut's **Sea Research Foundation's Mystic Aquarium** kicked off its inaugural Summer Drive-in Movie Series on June 28 with James Cameron's *Titanic*, starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet. Complimenting the success of the aquarium's newest exhibit, *Titanic – 12,450 Feet Below*, "Titanic" is being presented on a 40-foot screen.

On June 15, the first of six Starbucks cafes coming to Disney Parks opened in the Fiddler, Fifer and Practical Cafe at **Disney California Adventure** park. The cafe will serve Disney favorites, including signature sandwiches and desserts, in addition to Starbucks items. Soon Starbucks will be available at all **Disneyland** and **Walt Disney World Resort** theme parks.

Newly formed Mack Media to offer popular 4D film to parks

GERMANY — During the Asian Attractions Expo, held June 5-8 in Hong Kong, Mack Media GmbH & Co. KG based in Rust, Germany showcased its first own production together with the distribution partner Brussels, Belgium-based nWave Pictures S.A.

The crowd pleaser *The Secret of Balthasar Castle* has already been screened in the Magic Cinema 4D in Europa-Park since November 2011. The overwhelming response from visitors of Germany's largest theme park has encouraged the newly formed media division Mack Media to now also offer the film to other theme parks and attractions. The film is now available under the title of *Castle Secret*.

In cooperation with the makers of the most successful German animated film *Die Konferenz der Tiere – 3D* (Animals United), after just under one year's development, Euromaus and his friends have been brought to life in a 15 minute 4D-adventure. In the *Castle Secret*, Euromaus, Euromausi, Eurofant, Böckli and Louis solve the mystery of the mysterious Balthasar Castle. The five funny animals master many exciting situations together.

The animated film was presented in a mini 4D cinema made especially by nWave. Michael Mack said, "We are very proud that we have made the leap to the international market with *Castle Secret*. Thanks to the ability to adapt the language, the film can really be used anywhere and there is already a German and English version. We have put a lot into this project and the positive feedback shows us that it has been worth it.

"Together with the partner company nWave, the global market leader for the production and marketing of 3D and 4D films, Mack Media will now distribute this digital adventure and is looking forward to the reaction from abroad," Mack concluded.

Mack Media GmbH & Co. and nWave Pictures S.A. have teamed up to offer the popular 4D film from Europa-Park, *The Secret of Balthasar Castle* to other parks around the globe. COURTESY MACK MEDIA GmbH & CO



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mike@rideentertainment.com



Gutknecht

A common definition of the word enthusiasm is "a strong excitement of feeling or something inspiring zeal or fervor." When you look up the definition of the word contagious, you'll see that it means "exciting similar emotions or conduct in others." Great — now that we've gotten our English lesson out of the way, where are we going with this? I think that enthusiasm is contagious.

I work in an office in Cottonwood

Heights, Utah. It's a great place to work with several private offices, a conference room, a kitchenette; it even has a fireplace for those cold Utah winters. I'm close to a freeway and near several restaurants with very good food. It's a great place to be productive, but like most people, I occasionally have times when I am going through the paces but am not exactly enthusiastic about my job.

For me, being around others is a great motivator. Making the trip back to the east coast office of Ride Entertainment located outside Annapolis, Md. always motivates me in my job. I get to see what others in the company are doing and feed off of the enthusiasm they have for their projects.

I also occasionally make site

visits for Skycoaster to certify Site Controllers. I find that visiting the various sites and working with the employees who love their jobs is another way for me to get enthusiastic about my job.

I recently made a trip to Northern California where I visited Six Flags Discovery Kingdom and California Great America and was amazed at the enthusiasm the staff members of both of these great parks had for their jobs. Visiting the parks and seeing people who really enjoy their jobs made me feel good.

On the flight home, I was reflecting on my time at each park and found myself smiling and enjoying the memories of the previous couple days. It made me realize that I had caught the enthusiasm bug.

The AIMS Safety Seminar is another great tool in creating enthusiasm among your staff. The great classes combined with the extraordinary networking make attending the AIMS Safety Seminar a priceless opportunity to help your staff stay enthusiastic with their job. Combine this with the incredible amount of knowledge imparted to the students by instructors who are icons within the amusement industry and you have an event that will bring benefits to all who attend for years to come.

I encourage you to take a good look at the offerings at the AIMS Safety Seminar and expose your staff to the enthusiasm bug. Together, let's start an epidemic and make our industry better than ever.

AIMS member spotlight: Don Hankins

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

steve.laycock@rides.com

Don Hankins

Independent Ride
Inspector



Hankins

For a number of years, Don Hankins was a fixture around the state of Oklahoma. Now, even after retiring in 2009, he continues to service the industry that he had come to love. Don continues to spend one week of his own time each year at the AIMS Safety Seminar but instead of just taking classes he is giving back to the industry as a volunteer instructor at the AIMS Safety Seminar. As if attending classes and instructing other classes were not enough, Don took some time out of his schedule during the last AIMS Safety Seminar to answer questions for AIMS New & Notes.

How did you get started in the amusement business?

It was 1988 and I was hired by the state of Oklahoma Department of Labor as a Boiler/Amusement Ride Inspector. My career with the state led

me to obtain my NAARSO Level 3 in 2000. Then in 2003 I was promoted to Senior Amusement Ride Inspector and in 2006 I was promoted to Assistant Director of the Safety Standards Division. I retired in 2009 after 21 years of service with the State of Oklahoma.

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

Over the years I have done a number of things but always enjoyed mechanical things and believe strongly in education so I attended Great Plains Area Trade School for auto mechanics. However, when I joined the navy they felt I had an aptitude for electrical work so I was sent to Construction Electrician 'A' school and Dive school for underwater construction. Later I was sent to electrical 'B' and 'C' school as well. Being in the navy allowed me to travel so between 1971 and 1979 I served all over the world with the Seabees. When I left the navy I was a Construction Electrician 1st Class. After working civilian electrical jobs and attending Cameron University I ended up with the State of Oklahoma. In my spare time I was an EMT for a volunteer ambulance service for 16 years.

What do you do in your free time?

In my younger days I was an avid bicycle rider and could be found most weekends on a bicycle tour or race. My riding now is more recreational but I still enjoy it along with bowling and yard work. I also enjoy reading, particularly

non-fiction and especially enjoy reading about the history of the amusement ride entertainment business and the people who were involved in the early years of this industry.

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

While serving in the navy I had the opportunity to live in Australia for three years. I found Australia a wonderful country and would jump at the chance to go back.

What is so special about your work?

I'm my own boss, how great is that? I do independent inspection work, much of it for The Lundy Group. This allows me to travel across the country working with a large number of parks, carnivals, fairs, water parks, and FEC's. I enjoy meeting and working with all these different people and seeing their facilities, however, I owe a great deal to the State of Oklahoma. I was in my early years with the state when they sent me to every school you can think of. I attended schools on accident investigation, electrical safety and nondestructive testing. I also attended AREA, NAARSO, and AIMS seminars on a regular basis.

How long have you worked independently?

I have been doing independent inspection and consulting work since 2009." I am one of the lucky people, I have a job that I enjoy every day and

being a part of the amusement industry continues to be a joy to me.

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

I learned that you can learn new and important things from the first time students as well as from the students who have been in the field 50 years. Come to AIMS with an open mind and open ears and you will learn much that will help you do your job better.

What was your favorite class at the AIMS Safety Seminar?

Any class that I don't have to teach; no, really it would be very difficult to pick a favorite class because I find I learn something in every class I take. That being said, I think those classes where the students take an active part in the class are the best. As a presenter at AIMS I often find students teach me as much or more than I teach them.

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

We should always strive to learn, to improve what and how we do things. Attending a safety seminar provides for a chance to exchange ideas, learn different and many times better ways to doing things. Attending the AIMS Safety Seminar in particular gives you a chance to meet and discuss problems and ideas with a good number of different manufacturers.

In general, how was your over-

► See SPOTLIGHT, page 41

ASTM Amusement Rides Committee focuses on trampoline park safety

W. CONSHOHOCKEN, Pa. — Trampoline parks are one of the fastest growing segments of the attractions industry. In the last year, the popularity of trampoline parks has risen dramatically and new facilities are opening almost weekly. Stakeholders, recognizing this growth, have come together to develop an ASTM standard practice for this unique attraction.

At the ASTM Committee F24 on Amusement Rides and Devices' global safety standards meeting last fall, Subcommittee F24.60 on Special Rides and Attractions met with trampoline park stakeholders and representatives of the International Association of Trampoline Parks to establish a special task group. This Trampoline Court Task Group, led by Phil Slaggert,

president of Amusement Evaluation and Testing, included the input of suppliers, inspectors, operators and consumers to develop ASTM WK35776, New Practice for the Design, Manufacture, Installation, Operation, Maintenance, Inspection and Major Modification of Trampoline Courts.

"Members of the IATP have been involved with the

standard development for trampoline courts since the first informational meeting," says Jeff Platt, chairman of the International Association of Trampoline Parks. "The publication of an effective standard for trampoline courts is key to providing an enjoyable participatory experience for our guests."

"I am extremely pleased with the dedication and com-

mitment the task group members have shown," notes Slaggert. "The amount of time this group has volunteered to develop an effective standard for trampoline courts is amazing."

The next trampoline court task group in-person meeting will be held July 18 and 19 at Xtreme Trampolines in Buffalo Grove, Ill. All interested stakeholders are invited to at-

tend.

The next ASTM Committee F24 meeting will be held Oct. 18-20 in Reno, Nev., and will be open to all with an interest in safety and a desire to contribute to amusement industry standards.

Additional information for prospective members can be found at www.astm.org/COMMIT/F24.htm.

▶ SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 40

all experience at the AIMS Safety Seminar and how prepared were your instructors?

My overall experience at this AIMS Safety Seminar and for that fact all of the AIMS Safety Seminars that I have attended have been great. That is why I keep coming back. I think the instructors are very well prepared. It is a challenge each year to present a class or classes that will keep a first year student as interested as someone who has a number of years in the industry so I would like to say a big "thank you" to each person who has ever taken their time to instruct me.

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

It would be very hard to name just one person as there have been so many talented people I have met and who have made an impact on me over my years at AIMS. I am, however, very excited to see the new faces and the young people entering our industry and their desire to learn and attending AIMS. I encourage them to take the time during different networking opportunities to talk with those who have been around for a while. Their knowledge and stories could fill a book.

—Steve Laycock




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Safety in the Classroom

MAINTENANCE/INSPECTIONS

QUESTION:

Why is it so important to have the ride structure and its components regularly (NDT) inspected for cracks, especially in the welds?

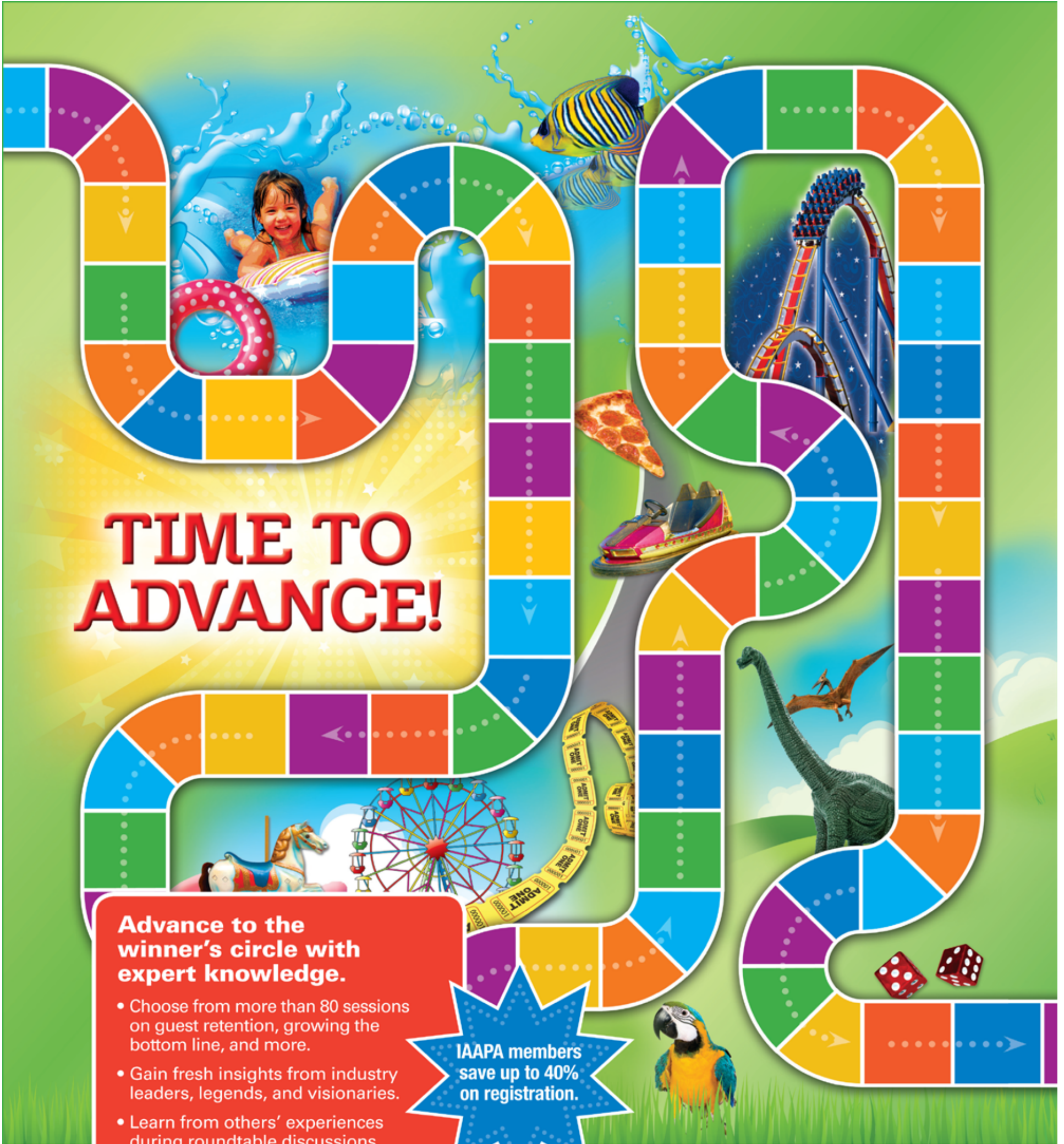
ANSWER:

Obviously, a failure of the structure or a component could have serious safety consequences. Rides are dynamically loaded structures and the resulting fluctuating stresses could result in fatigue induced failures. Imperfections in the weld, local changes in geometry and changes of the material properties around the weld as a result of the welding process make it easier for cracks to initiate and grow in the welds.

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Joe LaGuardia, 63, served New York State Fair for 32 years

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Bonnie Brocius, marketing director/talent buyer, Great Allentown (Pa.) Fair, reflected about the passing of her colleague and good friend, Joe LaGuardia, as she packed on Thurs., May 17 to attend his wake that afternoon in Syracuse.

LaGuardia, who served the New York State Fair in Syracuse for 32 years, died on May 14. He succumbed to complications while being treated for amyloidosis, a rare blood disorder. He was being treated at the Boston Medical Center. He was 63 years old.

"He was a guy that really meant a lot to me," Brocius said. "I met him in 1990 at an IEBA (International Entertainment Buyers Association) convention. He represented the fair and a fairer man has never lived. He was a paramount leader in our industry."

Having the same job duties, marketing, booking entertainment, and publicity, for their perspective fairs, Bro-

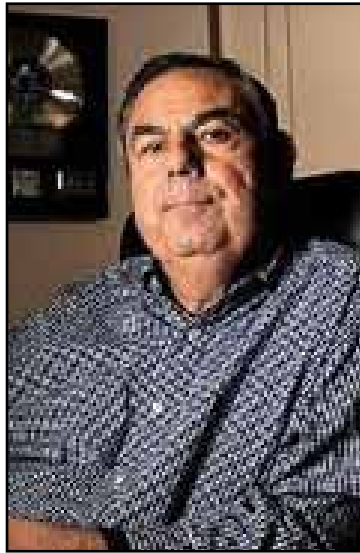
cius and LaGuardia not only became close colleagues, joining together as routing partners, but also formed a friendship that extended beyond them to their families.

"He was just coming out of a medical induced coma," Brocius said. "But, he recognized me right away. He squeezed my hand. I told him that I was standing there with his wife and my husband, but that was the best squeeze I had ever had from a man."

Brocius had also brought a list of industry names, people who had called about him.

"He nodded as I read each one of the names," she said. "I was so very glad that I was able to bring the industry into his room that day."

Brocius said LaGuardia forged huge relationships with the booking agencies and bands across the country over the years he was at the state fair. And, since LaGuardia, like Brocius, booked all entertainment such as grounds acts, he had relationships with many types of en-



Joe LaGuardia

tertainment agencies.

"He brought huge acts to fairs, like Frank Sinatra — acts that normally didn't book into fairs," she said. "He broke through and booked shows into grandstands that normally didn't go there, like music festivals. And, he wanted to take care of his talent. He wanted them to have the best facilities, because he knew they were on the road all year. He spent a lot of time

throughout the year finding the best for them. Joe was very respected in this position."

Carey Harveycuter, executive director, Salem (Va.) Civic Center, home to the Salem Fair, said he had known LaGuardia for 15 years.

"He knew his market," Harveycuter said. "He programmed his fair so well. He took his budget and stretched it better than anyone I have ever known."

In a local news report, Tom Young, former Syracuse mayor and friend of LaGuardia's, said his death was a shock. Although there is no cure for amyloidosis, there is treatment that can give patients a fairly normal life.

"Everyone expected he was going to recover," Young was reported as saying.

In another report, former State Fair Director Peter Cappuccilli, was quoted as saying: "Joe was the leader in the industry, there's no question about it. And if you know Joe, it's because he cared and

he knew his job. This is not only a tremendous loss for his family and friends, but also a tremendous loss for the community. Joe did so much in the community. He was active in so much and he just made it a better place to live in Syracuse."

He served on the boards of the Syracuse Chiefs, the Greater Syracuse Sports Hall of Fame and the Central New York Arthritis Foundation.

LaGuardia was an ardent golfer and past president of Bellevue Country Club. When he was still at the Fair, LaGuardia sometimes brought music stars such as country singer Vince Gill to play at Bellevue.

He was very active in the International Entertainment Buyers Association.

"I can tell you there isn't a dry eye in Los Angeles, New York and Nashville today," she said.

LaGuardia is survived by his mother, wife, Carol, their three children and three grandchildren.

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MARKETWATCH

RIDING THE MARKET



Company	Prices One Month Ago	Prices 06/13/12	52 Weeks	
			High	Low
Cedar Fair L.P.	\$26.84	\$27.85	\$31.74	\$16.43
MGM Mirage	\$10.40	\$10.98	\$16.05	\$7.40
Six Flags Ent. Corp.	\$44.48	\$49.95	\$50.77	\$24.72
CBS Corp.	\$30.02	\$31.41	\$35.00	\$17.99
Walt Disney Co.	\$44.33	\$46.23	\$46.65	\$28.19
Apollo Global Mgt. LLC	\$10.76	\$12.70	\$17.94	\$8.85
Blackstone Group	\$11.54	\$12.32	\$17.78	\$10.51
Village Roadshow	\$3.15	\$3.08	\$4.12	\$2.41
NBC Universal	\$18.88	\$19.37	\$21.00	\$14.02

CURRENCY



Region (U.S.)	As of 06/11/12	Change from year ago
East Coast	\$3.818	\$-0.150
Midwest	\$3.696	\$-0.209
Gulf Coast	\$3.698	\$-0.198
Mountain	\$3.873	\$-0.115
West Coast	\$3.902	N/A
California	\$4.066	\$-0.179

TOP 7 MOST TRADED CURRENCIES



On 06/13/12 \$1 USD =
0.7954 EURO
0.6445 GBP (British Pound)
79.3695 JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.9553 CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.0052 AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.0292 CAD (Canadian Dollar)

PEOPLE WATCH

Cedar Point hires new marketing rep

Cedar Point, Sandusky, Ohio, announced **Annie Zelm** as its new marketing programs representative.

Zelm will be responsible for coordinating with regional media to promote the park's upcoming events, including this year's new attractions, Dinosaurs Alive! and Luminosity, the park's live nighttime show.

She will also be responsible for responding to all media inquiries and planning special events at the park.

Zelm looks forward to bringing her energy and experience to the park as it begins an exciting new season. Before joining the marketing team, she worked for four years as a reporter and editor at the *Sandusky Register*. She has also held leadership positions at Kings Island in Cincinnati.

IAAPA adds two to association's team

The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) added two staff members to its global headquarters staff in Alexandria, Virginia.

Ryan Strowger joined the attractions industry trade association as vice president of exhibitions, conferences, and sales. In this role, Strowger is responsible for growing IAAPA's three trade shows: Asian Attractions Expo, Euro Attractions Show, and IAAPA Attractions Expo. He will also oversee IAAPA conferences and manage the exhibit, advertisement, and sponsorship sales teams.

Most recently, Strowger served as director of business development for the International CES (Consumer Electronics Show), which is owned and managed by the Consumer Electronics Association.

Amy Pepin joined IAAPA as manager of conference, trade show, and meeting operations. Pepin will work with the director of conference and trade show operations and the director of meetings to oversee trade show and event registration, coordinate special events, manage attendee services, and play a key role in event housing and transportation logistics.

She comes to IAAPA with six years of event planning experience, most recently with John Snow Inc., a public health research and consulting firm, where she planned conferences in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean. Before John Snow Inc., she served as educational programming manager for the American Resort Development Association and was responsible for logistics and programming for trade association events in the United States.

ACE honors Ron Toomer's legacy with plaque at Cedar Point



On Saturday, May 19, members of American Coaster Enthusiasts (ACE) presented a memorial plaque to Cedar Point honoring legendary coaster designer Ron Toomer. Toomer's career spanned 93 roller coasters from 1966 to 1998, with Cedar Point being home to five of Toomer's coaster creations: Cedar Creek Mine Ride, Corkscrew, Gemini, Iron Dragon, and the world-renowned Magnum XL-200. As Mr. Toomer's coasters were a critical part of the exploding popularity and growth of both roller coasters and Cedar Point during the latter part of the 20th Century, it is fitting that Cedar Point received this award highlighting his vital importance to the development of the steel roller coaster. Ron Toomer passed away last September, however, his wife Betty and daughter Carol attended this very special presentation as guests of Cedar Point and ACE. AT/TIM BALDWIN

Saffas, former owners of Jenks amusement park die days apart

TULSA, Okla. — The two former owners of Indian Nations Amusement Park, Jenks, Oklahoma, died days apart. Farris P. Saffa, 93 died April 10 with his wife of 59 years Anne Saffa, 87, passing on April 16.

The son of Lebanese immigrants, Farris Saffa grew up in Drumright.

Starring as an All-State quarterback in high school, he went on to play football on a scholarship at the University of Notre Dame.

Following graduation, he served three years as a paratrooper during World War II, jumping out of gliders over Europe with the Army's 82nd Airborne Division.

After the war, he became a beer distributor in Tulsa where he met and married his wife Anne Saffa, a native of New Madrid, Mo.

She worked at St. John's Medical Center as a medical transcriptionist, taking dictation from surgeons as they came out of surgery.

In the late 1960's, the Saffas bought Skyline Park in Jenks, Okla. and its iconic Sky King wooden roller coaster, which at the time was billed as the world's longest. They would later rename it as Indian Nations Amusement Park. Seeing the opportunity to make a better investment from the park, they would close the amusement park and convert a portion of the land for a housing development.

The Saffas are survived by three daughters, Toni Wersal, Terri Saffa and Tamme Saffa-Baker; a son Ferris Saffa Jr.; five grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

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MIDWAY

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Skerbeck Shows enjoying a very good 2012

STORY: Pam Sherborne
 psherborne@amusementtoday.com

REDFORD TOWNSHIP, Mich. — Bill Skerbeck, Skerbeck Brothers Shows, had no reason to complain as the 2012 season was getting into full swing last month.

His unit was playing in this Michigan city at a local church festival.

"When we get the weather, we get the crowds," Skerbeck said. "Memorial Day weekend was the closest we have gotten to being rained out this year."

The 2011 season was a lot different. Last spring was the wettest on record for him.

"But, by July 4th, last year, the weather had worked itself out and it was great," he said. "We had the strongest September we have ever had."

Skerbeck said he hopes that upswing will continue for his show throughout the entire 2012.

New for the show this year is an Owens Cuckoo Haus purchased from Barry Jamieson, World's Finest Shows, Ontario, Can. Bill Skerbeck and his brother, Joe Skerbeck, also purchased a used Wisdom Orient Express from Andy Schoendienst, Luehrs' Ideal Rides, Belleville, Ill., and various other items such as canvas and inflatables. This will be the third season for the show's A.R.M. Vertigo, which was purchased factory new.

For much of the season, Skerbeck said he and his brother split the carnival into two units. They have a total ride arsenal of about 50 rides so they usually carry about 25 on each unit. They also own 30 games, six food trailers and eight generators.

"We have about eight other rides in various stages of condition," Skerbeck said.

Skerbeck Brothers Shows, based in Escanaba, Mich., is traced back to 1857.

"Our people were circus people from Europe, what we call the old country," he said. "In about 1880, they came to the states and stayed in the

▶ See SKERBECK, page 46



Here is Skerbeck Brothers Shows' Chance Century Wheel with their Seller (now Larson) Strawberry located near the base of the wheel. Skerbeck Shows has three wheels – this Century Wheel, an Eli Bridge Wheel and a Mulligan Wheel. AT/SUE NICHOLS



This is one of the new purchases for Skerbeck Shows for the 2012 season. This Owens Cuckoo Haus had belonged to Barry Jamieson, World's Finest Shows, Ontario, Can. Skerbeck said this has worked out to be a very nice attraction for his company. AT/SUE NICHOLS

Reporter's Notebook

New sponsor on board at the Colorado State Fair

PUEBLO, Colo. — The largest building on the Colorado State Fairgrounds will have a new name by the time the State Fair, set for Aug. 24-Sept. 3, 2012, rolls around.

Southwest Motors has joined the sponsorship team and the events center will don its name, the Southwest Motors Event Center.

The 7,800-seat center is home to a number of fair and community events including concerts, roller derby competitions, and weddings.

The new sponsorship package with Southwest Motors includes \$35,000 with a three percent increase annually for a minimum of five years.

In 2011, over 100 sponsors helped to promote youth and agriculture by creating over \$1.6 million in revenue for the Colorado State Fair.

Quoted

"If we can find other sources of revenues, then we don't have to raise our ticket prices to keep up with the increase in operations."

—Wade Shows owner Frank Zaitshik on adding sponsorships to his rides

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►SKERBECK

Continued from page 45

circus business. In 1900, they bought their first ride. It was a horse pulling a merry-go-round. They started buying more rides and, by 1910, they had gotten out of the circus business and just traveled with rides."

And, that was the begin-

ning.

In 1975, Skerbeck and his brother took over the operation of the show.

"Of course, our families are with us," he said. "My wife, Carla, and Joe's wife, Debbie, work with us. Now our adult children are also working on the midway. So, I guess there will be a sixth generation."



This is the third season for Skerbeck Brothers Shows' A.R.M. Vertigo. It has been a very successful ride for the show.
AT/SUE NICHOLS

Indiana authorities continue search for fire suspects

SHELBYVILLE, Ind. — The Indiana Department of Homeland Security issued the following news release:

Local and state authorities are asking for the public's help as they continue to look for the suspect(s) responsible for setting the Shelby County Fair grandstand on fire. The Indiana State Fire Marshal's Office is offering a \$5,000 reward for anyone with information that leads to an arrest.

The Shelbyville Fire Department, the Shelby County Sheriff's Department, and the Indiana State Fire Marshal's Office continue to investigate the fire which occurred during the early morning hours of May 19, 2012 at the Shelby County Fairgrounds, 901 Fair Avenue, Shelbyville, Indiana. Local and state investigators determined the fire that destroyed the historic grandstand was intentionally set.

Authorities are encouraging anyone with information about this fire, no matter how insignificant the information may seem, to call one of two hotlines to provide information.



MIDWAYLIGHTS

COMPILED: Pam Sherborne, psherborne@amusementtoday.com

The **State Fair of Virginia** and **The Meadow Event Park** could change hands again, according to a news report.

Tennessee-based **Universal Fairs LLC** president **Mark Lovell** bought the 150-year-old fair's intellectual property at an auction for \$5.67 million on May 22. Lovell later reported that a group approached him with an offer to buy the fair and the property.

Lovell said he made a counteroffer. If the group accepts it, the property will be sold. He didn't identify the potential buyer.

Lovell plans to operate the property as a "full-event facility" with the fair and other activities, such as trade shows and weddings. But if the price is right, he's open to selling the property.

The historic **Michigan State Fair** will make a comeback this summer after a three-year absence, donning a "Made in Michigan" theme and featuring numerous attractions.

The 2012 **Great Lakes State Fair** is set for Aug. 31 through Sept. 3, 2012, at the **Suburban Collection Showplace** in Novi — a 235,000 square-foot venue with five-acres of outdoor space for fair activities.

All fair features will sport the "Made in Michigan" theme and focus will be placed on the state's agriculture and commodities.

According to the Great Lakes State Fair website, attractions will include agriculture and livestock exhibits, rides provided by **Arnold Amusements** based in Traverse City, Mich., a Michigan Brewery Beer Garden and the Detroit Shrine Circus.

Michigan country and Americana musicians will perform at the event, but no names have been released.

The fair will be funded by sponsors and donations rather than by the state.

Disneyland, Anaheim, Calif., is giving up on California — the letters in the name, anyway.

Disneyland Resorts spokesman **Kevin Rafferty** told a local news agency that the giant letters that spelled out the state's name outside the **Disney California Adventure** theme park will be donated to the **California State Fair**, Sacramento, for a new entrance.

The letters, popular with picture-takers, have stood at the park's entrance since its opening in 2001, but they won't fit with a major expansion to the re-themed park.

They were given to the volunteer association of the **California Exposition and State Fair in Sacramento**. The group will use them for a new building entrance.

Delaware County Fair board officials say that preparations for this year's **Delaware County Fair**, Muncie, Ind., are in full swing. New events, new stages and even a new grandstand will greet visitors during the July 9-21, 2012 run.

Last year, the Delaware County Fair board made a commitment to offer even more family-friendly options. This includes a family area set up near the midway and different activities each night, such as clowns, animal shows and the Colts Caravan. That area will also include bounce houses for the little ones.

Parking costs are being reduced from \$10 to \$5.

The 2012 **Alameda County Fair**, Pleasanton, Calif., is celebrating its 100th birthday with new exhibits, a return of the downtown parade, a brand new concert format and a variety of new attractions. The fair began June 20 and will run through July 8.

Butler Amusements, Fairfield, Calif., is providing the midway for the 2012 event.

Visitors to the event are getting the chance to be part of the history of the fair by purchasing a brick for the Alameda County Historical Monument. They are able to peruse the memorabilia available symbolizing the fair's most tributed moments

Author Victoria Christian has authored a book on the history of the fair.

A new mobile website for the 2012 event is giving visitors fair information at their fingertips.

Missoula's Board of County Commissioners has banned smoking at the **Missoula (Montana) County Fairgrounds**, except in designated areas.

The newly signed resolution applies to all public events, including the **Western Montana Fair**.

The catalyst for the resolution was a structure fire at last year's fair.

The fair manager had said that the buildings at the Missoula County Fairgrounds are old wooden buildings, many of which are of historical significance. Smoking is a public safety risk with the potential to cause fires.

Officials with the **Du Quoin State Fair** reported its revenue from non-fair events is up dramatically over the past 10 years. It is having a huge impact, they said, for the entire region.

Fair Manager **John Rednour Jr.** was quoted as saying in a local news story that: "As far as revenue coming into the fairgrounds, we're talking about 6-700,000 dollars, maybe even a million within the next couple years. But for the communities surrounding, it's millions and millions of dollars in economic impact.

Motorcross, horse racing, and camping are just a few examples of the non-fair events that take place throughout the year at the fairgrounds.

"The non-fair income actually consists of money paid by vendors, renters, promoters, camping fees and, during non-fair events, generally, we charge parking," said Rednour.

The fairgrounds aren't the only place benefiting from the visitors that come to these events. Local restaurants and hotels, as well as many other area businesses, are also reaping the benefits.

Officials say non-fair events are held at the fairgrounds more than 300 days a year.

The **Oakland County Fair** at **Springfield Oaks County Park** in Davisburg, Mich., has been extended to 10 days this year, running from July 6-July 15. During this 10-day event, there will be a midway with carnival rides (provided by **Playworld Amusements Inc.**, Alma, Mich.), a free circus, Oakland County Idol contest and exhibits ranging from aerospace to woodworking.

There will be a large variety of favorite fair foods and space for families to pack a picnic and eat in the comfort of an activity pavilion. And, there will be a variety of entertainment and daily promotions.



Playworld Shows, based in Alma, Mich., has been hit with more than its share of rainy days already in 2012. Set up in Dearborn Mich., the show had its Larson Ring of Fire, with the Fajume Wacky Worm set up near its base. At left, the Mulligan Wheel is one of the draws for the midway, as are food and games.

COURTESY PLAYLAND SHOWS

Playworld Shows seeing abundance of spring rains

WARREN, Mich. — Weather had not been friendly to Playworld Shows at the first part of the 2012 season. Joyce Brady, who owns the show with husband Jeff Brady, said June 11 that out of the last 10 weeks, they had had only one really good weather week.

"And that ended up being a great event," she said. "When the weather is good, so is the business."

In fact, when speaking with *AT*, Brady said they were setting up in Warren for a downtown fair. And, it was raining. But, she hoped it would let up when the event started.

Playworld Shows is based in Alma, Mich., and plays Michigan for the first part of the season until Labor Day weekend. Then, the show heads to the Carolinas for the remainder of the season.

Brady said that what she has been seeing is that the well-established dates are doing better than those that haven't been around as long.

"We play a lot of still dates at the early part of the season," she said. "If the date is not a well-established one, it just doesn't draw the folks."

The Brady's increased their 38-ride arsenal this year with five attractions, but only one was on the midway in mid-June and that was the

used Owens fun house purchased from E.K. Fernandez, Magic Island Carnival in Hawaii.

Also purchased were two Hampton rides from Dalton — a tractor ride and a VW ride. They purchased a brand new Tivoli Remix, and a Zamperla Air Raid.

"We don't have any of these as yet," Brady said. "The Air Raid we purchased will be the first trailer-mounted version of the park ride. We won't get that one until the fall."

The Brady's son, Kyle Brady, was still in Hawaii with Fernandez in June. He took two rides, the A.R.M. Super Shot, which belongs to Playworld Shows, and the Dartron Rave that he purchased last year.

"He worked this out with Fernandez," she said. "He left the first of May and was expected to be gone for about six weeks."

Brady said her son made his Hawaiian connection in the 2011 season.

"Fernandez's foreign workers were late getting to his show so he reached out to the industry," Brady said. "A group of carnival owners' kids went over there to help out until his workers could get on the midway."

—Pam Sherborne

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Zaitshik adding sponsor-themed ride, looking to go cashless

The 2012 season going well for Wade Shows

STORY: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

SPRING HILL, Fla. – In mid-May, Frank Zaitshik, owner, Wade Shows Inc., was busy with some of his crew here going over rides, putting finishing touches on upcoming technological changes for his midway and preparing to

hit the road again after very successful early year routes.

Although he only had two units out during late spring where traditionally he would have three, he felt the 2012 season had already gone extremely well for the show. He described his early year Florida and Texas routes as “outstanding.”

“I gave up some of our east coast dates this year so after the Florida route, we shut down the Wade unit, leaving us with two units on

the road,” he said. “The good news here – we have had time to go through all the rides. As we finish up these, we can swap them out with rides on the road.”

Of course, the down side was not having the revenue produced by dates.

He said he would have rather had a shorter down time, then kicked back up during the Memorial Day weekend. But, the time had been very productive.

For starters, Zaitshik was

awaiting the return of his Hrubetz Tip Top, which he purchased earlier in the year. The ride cars were being wrapped by Kraft Macaroni and Cheese, making this ride the second sponsored-themed ride by that company. The first, a Zamperla Crazy Daisy, operated during the 2011 season.

“This second ride is entire-

ly Kraft Macaroni and Cheese themed,” Zaitshik said, “not just the tea cups like the first one. The entire ride will have the blue and yellow colors.”

This is not Zaitshik’s first sponsorship agreement for a ride, yet this one has been very successful. Not only does Kraft pay for the sponsorship,

▶ See WADE, page 50



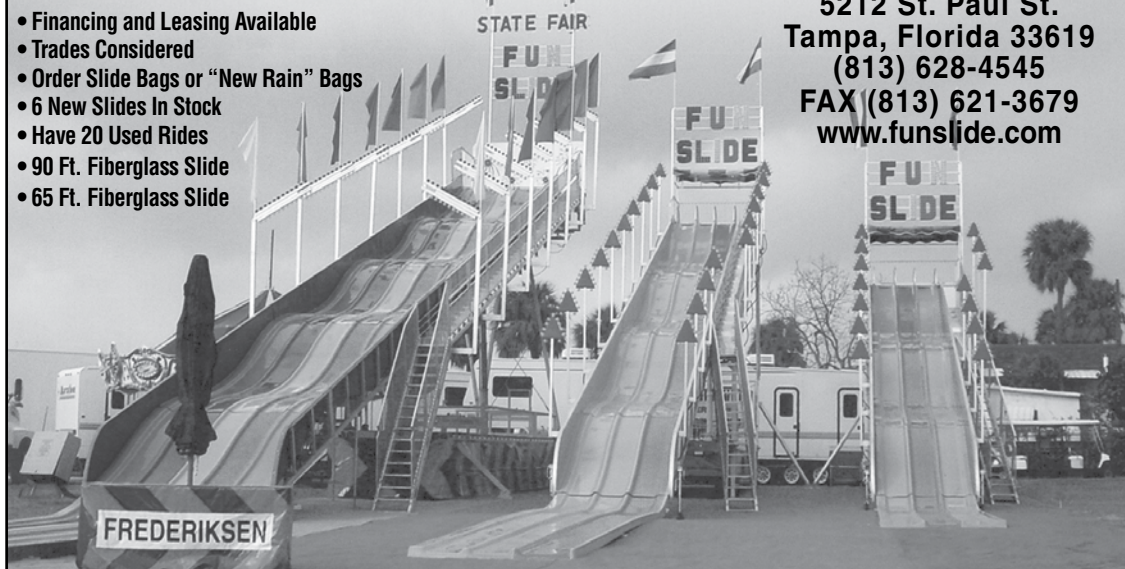
This is the first ride Frank Zaitshik, Wade Shows Inc., themed for Kraft Macaroni and Cheese. It is a Zamperla Crazy Daisy and operated on the midway during the 2011 season. He will have a second Kraft Macaroni and Cheese themed ride on the midway for the 2012 season, a Hrubetz Tip Top. AT/SUE NICHOLS



This Angry Birds games on Wade Shows’ midway has been getting a lot of attention. Frank Zaitshik, owner, Wade Shows, said he was glad to see something out there a little different, even though he doesn’t own any games except for a Denny’s Electronics water race game. This Angry Birds game is owned by Mike O’Connor. AT/SUE NICHOLS

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►WADE

Continued from page 48

representatives have come out to two of Wade Shows events to host special promotions.

Zaitshik feels this type of extra revenue source is a good opportunity and he plans to look at it harder.

"As one fair manager said during a seminar I attended, this type of sponsorship is not only good for the carnivals, but it is also good for

the fairs," he said. "If we can find other sources of revenues, then we don't have to raise our ticket prices to keep up with the increase in operations. We will certainly be looking at it harder."

Some years ago, Zaitshik had a sponsorship deal for his Fabbri Mega Drop with Pepsi Zero. The ride sported the brand logo. But, that was a one-time deal.

Also, during this down time, Zaitshik has also been

working on taking his mid-way cashless. He was in negotiations in May so he did not release any company names, as far as which company he might use for the system. Zaitshik said he feels continuing to be on the cutting edge of technology is the best way to go. He implemented a fast pass system, which he calls a Gold Pass, several years ago as a customer service for those that don't want to wait in long lines.

For the 2012 season, he wants to be able to do the Ozark Empire Fair, Branson, Mo., set for July 27-Aug. 4, 2012, and the Missouri State Fair, Sedalia, Aug. 9-19, with a cashless system for rides only. He provides about 40 rides for each of those dates.

In 2013, he wants to offer the cashless system for all rides for all dates, meaning he will have about 100 rides on the cashless system next year.

Then, he wants to include

the rides and games in 2014.

He plans to use a downloadable card, a Fun Pass. As the program begins, patrons will still need to go to a ticket office to get the card downloaded, but eventually he sees using kiosks where patrons can download the card themselves.

"Our ticket sellers will become card scanners," he said.

Does he think he will recoup his monetary outlay any time soon for the program and the implementation of it?

"Heck no," he said. "But, we pride ourselves at having the state-of-the-art technology here. It will be more of a customer service. People think that doing this will decrease workforce pilfering. But, we think it will eventually be a revenue producing system by the discounts and such we will be able to load onto the card."

For the 2012 season, Zaitshik purchased a Technical Park Street Fighter and a Chance Inverter earlier in the year. He bought a used Wisdom Sizzler, making this his third Sizzler, and, of course, the Hrubetz Tip Top that was rethemed to Kraft Macaroni and Cheese ride.

Zaitshik's Wade unit started back up June 19 at the Livonia (Mich.) Spree, June 19-24, and then on to the Delaware State Fair, Harrington, July 19-28.

Political debate to be a 2012 Nebraska State Fair attraction

LINCOLN, Neb. — Nebraska U.S. Senate hopefuls Deb Fischer and Bob Kerrey have agreed to a campaign debate at the State Fair in Grand Island.

The Lincoln Journal Star reported the candidates will square off on Aug. 25. Fair dates are Aug. 24-Sept. 3, 2012.

Both are seeking to fill the seat that will open after the retirement of Democratic U.S. Sen. Ben Nelson. Nelson announced in December that he will not seek re-election.

Kerrey, a Democrat, is looking to return to the U.S. Senate after leaving office in 2001. The former Nebraska governor most recently served as president of The New School, a university in New York City.

Fischer, a Republican, is a Nebraska state senator from rural Valentine.

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