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# AMUSEMENT TODAY <sup>©</sup> <sub>TM</sub>

Your Amusement Industry NEWS Leader!

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**SeaWorld Orlando unveils long awaited Antarctica Empire of the Penguin...Page 14**



COURTESY SEAWORLD ORLANDO

**Fun Spot America opens in Orlando See Bonus Section B**

## Six Flags Great Adventure opens most significant addition in park's history

**STORY:** Pam Sherborne  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

JACKSON, N.J. — Safari Off Road Adventure, Six Flags Great Adventure's traditional Wild Safari attraction revamped, remade and revitalized, became totally less traditional for the 2013 season and response, according to Six Flag officials, has been tremendous since opening May 24.

Six Flags doesn't release monetary figures but Kristin Siebeneicher, Six Flags spokesperson, said this is the most significant improvement to this New Jersey park in its 40-year history.

The new 350-acre attraction left its Wild Safari old format — more of a ride-through Safari-themed section — to a totally new format where patrons are driven in a giant Safari truck with a truck guide. The ability to take guests off-road and right up to the animals, along with personal guides, has offered an experience totally unique to Six Flags Great Adventure.

"Wild Safari remained unchanged for 38 years, and we are thrilled to begin an exciting and unprecedented new  
▶ See OFF ROAD, page 4



Giraffes are just one of the 1,200 animals guests taking the new Safari attraction may see. The Safari Off Road Adventure is included with admission into the park, but to feed the giraffes in Camp Aventura costs a little extra.  
COURTESY SIX FLAGS GREAT ADVENTURE



Six Flags Great Adventure's new Safari Off Road Adventure, which opened May 24, allows guests to get up close and personal with the animals, even these large rhinos, one of the 80 different species on the Safari's 350 acres of land.  
COURTESY SIX FLAGS GREAT ADVENTURE

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# NEWS TALK

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**EDITORIAL:** Gary Slade, [gslade@amusementtoday.com](mailto:gslade@amusementtoday.com)

## Kudos



Slade

As the summer season swings into full gear, there are plenty of pats on the back to go around the industry. A few worth mentioning for a job well done are:

• **John Arie, Sr.**, for having the faith that a traditional amusement park can indeed survive in the back yard of the big Orlando themers. An all-time record revenue opening day of Fun Spot America is just the way to prove the critics wrong. And to **Chance Rides/Vekoma Rides Intl.** and **Great Coasters Intl.** for the job each did in bringing family coaster thrills to Fun Spot America.

• **John Fitzgerald**, Six Flags Great Adventure, for overseeing the park's largest capital investment ever, to reinvent the always popular animal safari park. Now, included with admission to the theme park, guests on Safari Off Road Adventure get to view the animals closer than ever before in open-air Safari vehicles out in the middle of the animal's habitat.

• **Raffi Kapreyalan**, Knott's Berry Farm, for his vision to not only bring the Timber Mountain Log Ride back to its original glory, but for actually making it better, thus enshrining this "heirloom" attraction the way ride creator Bud Hurlbut would have wanted.

• **John Reilly**, for the beautiful job that transformed Soak City into the new Aquatica San Diego. As John was quick to point out, there are advantages to being the third, as in the third Aquatica to open in the company's waterpark profile.

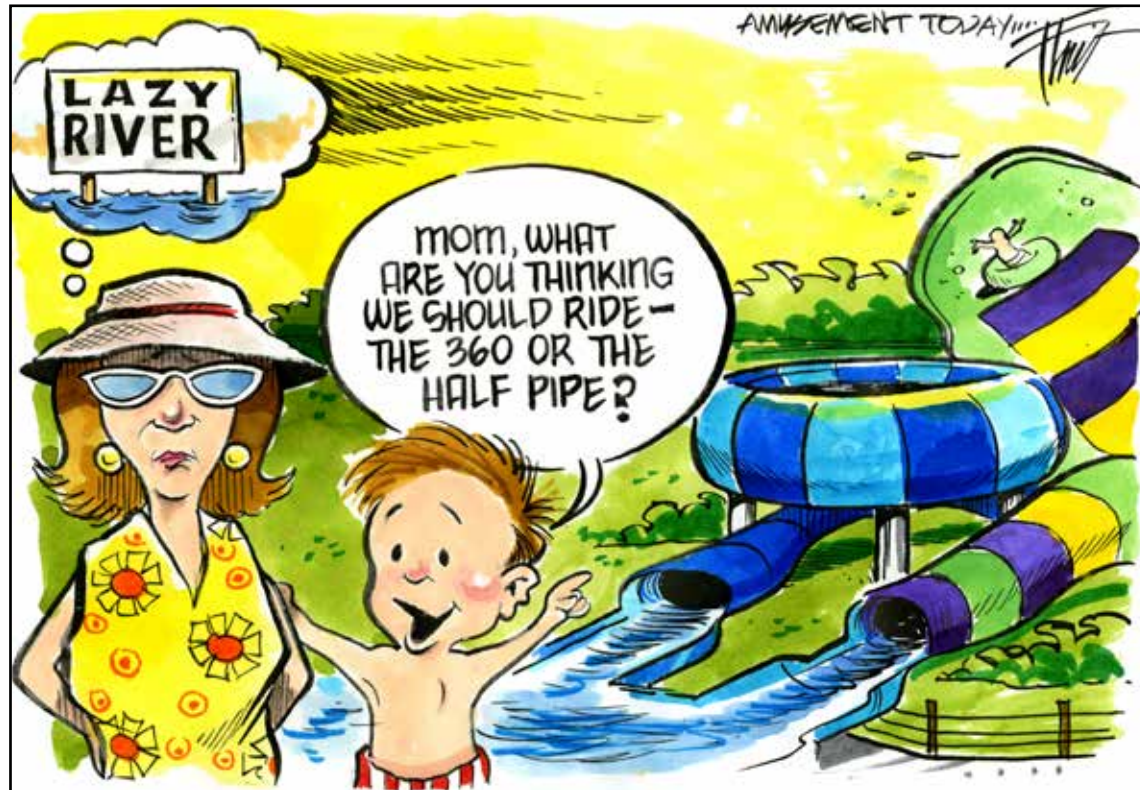
• **David Riddles**, White Water Bay for having to open the largest new ride capital in the park's history — just one week after the devastation left from the Moore, Oklahoma Tornado — only to have to endure a second tornado a week after opening the ride. Kudos also for all the work the park did in fund-raising efforts that benefitted the American Red Cross, which continues to be on the scene helping families who have lost everything.

• And to all the piers, parks, arcades, and other amusement attractions along the **Jersey Shore** who did manage to get their facilities open following the much publicized Superstorm Sandy that ripped the state's amusement attractions into shreds.

—Gary Slade

Gary Slade is founder and publisher of Amusement Today

**CARTOON:** Bubba Flint



**EDITORIAL:** Scott Rutherford, [srutherford@amusementtoday.com](mailto:srutherford@amusementtoday.com)

## Unexpected simplicity



Rutherford

Thanks to Walt Disney, central Florida has become the most theme park-centric locale on the planet. The concentration of tourist attractions is staggering and, at times, overwhelming.

Reporting for this issue, I found SeaWorld's new Antarctica: Empire of the Penguin to be an amazing accomplishment, an immersive experience that both educates and entertains. It is something one expects from the creative minds at SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment. But often in life, it is the *unexpected* that truly inspires.

That's what I encountered covering the expansion of Fun Spot America. With heavy hitters like Disney, Busch and Universal dominating the field, often the smaller players are overshadowed. But sometimes, along comes an underdog, someone who begins small and perseveres despite the odds. Like the fine folks who operate DelGrossos, Knoebels, Santa Cruz and Lake Winnie (to name but a few), the Arie

clan behind Fun Spot has done something truly remarkable on I-Drive.

I had the pleasure to meet and interview John Arie, Sr. during the re-opening of Fun Spot. In the epicenter of Orlando action, Arie and his family created an anomaly: a traditional amusement park that manages to shine brightly despite stiff theme park competition. This is due to the fact that Arie understands his audience. His research included visiting numerous parks and talking with their owners. He discovered that simplicity is often the answer. Instead of striving for colossal themed 'experiences,' sometimes people want — or can only spare time for — an afternoon or evening escape. And it's to them that Arie caters.

Fun Spot guests choose the duration and pace of the visit. The park offers thrilling, family-oriented roller coasters, flat rides, food options and other attractions that won't break the bank or require a week's vacation. And if opening day is any indication, Arie has a hit. He's subscribed to a formula that family-owned-and-operated parks have followed for long time: offer a good time at good value and success is ensured.

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# 2 MINUTE DRILL



COMPILED: Janice Witherow

## Jeffrey Siebert, Six Flags Fiesta Texas

If you know Jeffrey Siebert, you know a guy who is full of energy and has a genuine passion for the amusement industry. Since November, Jeffrey has taken on the role of director of marketing for Six Flags Fiesta Texas in San Antonio, where his creative talent is being put to good use. His career path has spanned from (now-defunct) Americana Amusement Park in Ohio to (then-Paramount's) Kings Island and Schlitterbahn Waterpark Resort. A true family man, Jeffrey loves adventures with his wife Lisa and their two children.



Jeffrey Siebert shows off his prized name tag collection, including two tags from the now defunct Americana Amusement Park. His passion for parks and their history is evident in the photo above. COURTESY THE SIEBERT FAMILY FILES

**Title**  
Director of Marketing.

**Number of years in the industry**

20 years (first year was 1994). I've been a fan since day one!

**Best thing about the industry**

New ride and service innovation. I love the fact that innovation is at the heart of the Six Flags culture.

**Favorite amusement ride**

I can't pick just one. The Beast: favorite wood coaster. Iron Rattler: favorite steel coaster. And Indiana Jones at Disneyland Resort.



Siebert

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

A college professor. I truly enjoy learning and sharing with the next generation.

**Biggest challenge facing our industry**

How do we continue to thrill and surprise the next generation of guests? What once was considered a major thrill ride is now, in many cases, considered a family ride.

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

The non-stop energy and excitement of what's next, what does the next day have in store and what is the next opportunity to dazzle our guests.

**It's July! My Independence Day plans are to**

Spend the day with 20,000 of my closest theme park friends and watch our great fireworks extravaganza.

**Are you ... a morning person or a night owl?**

Yes!

**The TV character that best reflects my personality is ...**

Part Michael Scott from The Office (somewhat crazy), part Alice from the Brady Bunch (always tidying up after our guests and at home too), and part National Geographic Explorer Guy (curiosity).

**My latest splurge was**

Bumper boats for our pool (shhhhh... it's our 8-year-old and a 4-year-old's birthday surprise).

**Favorite candy bar**

Hershey Bar... hands down, unless you are riding the SooperDooperLooper, then hands up!

**If I could read anyone's mind, it would be ...**

Walt Disney. I would have loved to have had a glimpse at the true inner genius.

**The coolest place I have ever vacationed would have to be ...**

The United Kingdom. My wife Lisa and I love traveling through the UK. Sandusky, Ohio, is a close second.

**In my opinion, the all-time greatest professional athlete hands-down is ...**

Michael Jordan.

**Are you more of a wine and cheese or beer and pretzels kind of guy?**

Actually, beer and cheese... more specifically, a beer and dip guy.

**The celebrity baby I would most like to baby-sit is ...**

The e-Trade "talking" baby.

**In one word, my job is ...**

Amazing!

**I know it's going to be a good day when ...**

The sun is shining, my family is happy and our park guests are rolling in for a day of fun.

**On Sundays, I love to ...**

Relax and then have a family adventure for the day.

**I can do a pretty good impression of ...**

Mr. Magoo (but please don't ask).

**My last home improvement was ...**

Putting up new ceiling fans in our kids' rooms. A princess fan and a space-themed fan in case you were interested.

**You live in Texas. What three things should everyone see in your home state?**

The Riverwalk in San Antonio, Gulf beaches and Six Flags Fiesta Texas (not necessarily in that order).

**My favorite month of the year seems to be ...**

July! I love everything about it ... hot, sunny and full of fun.

**If I had an extra day in the week, I would do this with it ...**

Take more one-day family trips. We can't get enough.

## THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

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www.RollerCoasterMuseum.org

•**1884:** The first communication cable between Great Britain and the United States was installed in 1884. The final section of the then famous Bennett-Mackey cable landed about 600 feet from the Oriental Hotel on the afternoon of October 18, in **Brighton Beach (Coney Island)**, Brooklyn, N.Y.

•**1899:** Several cars on the roller coaster at **RiverView Park**, outside Baltimore, Maryland, collided with another train on July 21.

The train returned on the wrong track and met a waiting train at high speed. Nine passengers were seriously injured and were aided by physicians, then rushed to the hospital. One of the injured, a 22-year-old woman, had a depressed fracture of the frontal bone of the skull and a broken nose, besides other painful cuts and bruises about the face and body. Except for this one injury, none of the injuries were considered life threatening.

•**1904:** Formerly **Sharpshooter Park**, the famous **Riverview Park** would open for the first time under its new name, on July 2, with a **Figure 8 Toboggan**. The park would flourish just northwest of Chicago, and become world famous for its eclectic collection of wooden roller coasters, at one time operating seven different coasters. The park, still revered in Chicago, would close forever after the 1967 season.

•**1924:** In late July, **Frederick Church & Frank Prior** announced that **Harry G. Traver** would get exclusive rights to all **Bobs** coaster built east of the Mississippi River and Canada. The rides would be designed by Church, and installed by Traver Engineering Company. Traver had already closed contracts to install Bobs coasters in **Revere Beach**, outside Boston, Massachusetts, at **Savin Rock**, in West Haven, Connecticut and **Palace Gardens** in Detroit, Michigan. He said that he also had five other contracts still pending.

•**1941:** A complaint filed in White Plains, New York, by a dozen local families in Rye, specifically sought an injunction against the late operation of two roller coasters, the **Airplane** and **Dragon Coaster**, and the **Octopus** ride at neighboring **Playland**, claiming that the noise disturbed their sleep and made the neighborhood undesirable. The residents requested that the rides cease operation by 10 p.m. on weekdays, and 11 p.m. on weekends. The residents would fail to force earlier night closings, when on July 28 a judge overturned the complaint, based on the failure of the complainants to properly file a class action suit against the County Park Commission. Unfortunately, even today, the residents continue to be involved, this time in possibly reducing the size of the amusement park, under the guise of increasing profits.

• **1978:** On July 4 the **Tornado** roller coaster opened at **Adventureland** in Altoona, Iowa. It was the first large-scale coaster for the four-year-old park and the first original design from **William L. Cobb** who had previously worked with **John Allen** and **Dan Rosser** on **The Great American Scream Machine** at **Six Flags Over Georgia** and **Screamin' Eagle** at **Six Flags Over Mid-America**. Two years earlier Cobb had built the **Texas Cyclone**, based on the original **Coney Island Cyclone**. Designed as an out-and-back, the Tornado is situated at the corner of the property and follows a gradual 45 degree curve rather than the typical straight out and back configuration.

—Compiled by Richard Munch, NRCMA and Jeffrey Seifert, AT

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## ▶OFF ROAD

Continued from page 1

chapter for Six Flags Great Adventure,“ said John Fitzgerald, park president.

“Guests are truly enjoying getting closer to our animals than ever before,” Siebeneicher said. “The greatest compliments we are getting are coming in from our amazing truck guides.”

Six Flags Great Adventure is boasting 1,200 animals in the new Safari section with 80 different species from six continents including elephants, rhinos, tigers, giraffes, and lions. There are 11 different themed areas, one of which, Camp Aventura, allows guests to walk freely in the Safari, a major change from the former attraction. This is the first time in the park’s history that guests can now disembark their rides in the Safari area.

Camp Aventura is about halfway through the adventure, which lasts anywhere from 45 minutes to an hour. At Camp Aventura guests can get up close and personal with some of the smaller residents such as potbellied pigs, a two-toed sloth, exotic birds and reptiles, a 120-pound albino Burmese python, and a variety of baby animals currently being raised.

“Right now, we have a baby llama and a blackbuck calf we are hand raising when their mothers couldn’t care for them,” Siebeneicher said. “Our guests can feed and pet some of the animals and have their pictures taken with them. This includes feeding our towering giraffes from our new giraffe deck.”

The giraffe feeding is an additional cost at \$5 per person and \$4 for Season Pass Holders.

The other 10 themed areas are: The Americas, Afrikka, Wilds Plains, Serengeti Grasslands, Kingsland, Black Bear Ridge, Terra Ursus, Bird Sanctuary, Didgeradoo Pass and Tigris Asiana.

Following the fall 2012 closing of the drive-through Wild Safari, Six Flags Great Adventure officials began the major renovation that included a redesign of various simulated natural habitats and the creation of Camp Aventura. New waterways for the trucks to cross were added. New pathways for the off-roading were created, and new theming, new portals and signs



### Six Flags Great Adventure Safari Off Road Adventure

#### Size/Species

350 acres/close to 80 unique species

#### Animals

1,200 from six continents including elephants, rhinoceros, bears, lions, tigers, kangaroos, zebras, exotic birds and snakes

#### Tour Type/Length

Off-road, splashing through ponds, climbing hills and venturing over rugged terrain/45 minutes plus

#### Vehicles

Fleet of 18 seating 30 to 35 guests in rugged, open-air safari vehicles, customized from surplus 5-ton Army trucks. Features extended truck beds with row seating, customized audio/video package, animal print pattern exterior and themed props

#### Attraction Cost

Not released, but is the largest attraction cost in the park’s 40-year history

were constructed.

There are now 18 rugged open-air safari vehicles, which have been customized from surplus five-ton army trucks. The truck beds have been extended and feature row seating with customized audio/visual packages, animal print patterns on the exterior and themed props. The trucks can hold between 30 to 35 guests.

Siebeneicher said the park recruited a team of truck guides that had to complete a lengthy audition and training process with the resident animal experts and an acting coach.

“They provide an informative play-by-play of exactly what our guests are seeing, and can answer the myriad of questions our guests throw their way,” she said. “Since every tour is slightly different (they drive to where the animals are), they have to adjust to each and every trip. The tour guides come from a variety of different backgrounds, from teachers to students, actors, comedians, animal experts and animal lovers.”

The new truck guides weren’t the only new employees hired for the section. A fleet of truck drivers who have CDLs were hired and animal educators were hired for Camp Aventura.

“Plus, we have two operations crews that run the landing stations, a merchandise store, snack stand, Kodak photographers and retail personnel,” Siebeneicher said.

The new section is no longer an extra cost attraction as it was with Wild Safari. It is included with the theme park admission. It is accessed from

inside the theme park. The trucks are loaded in the Frontier Adventures section of the theme park at a new loading station.

There is also an entertainment element to the Safari, the story of the Wilds Family, a family of conservationists who build and run the Safari as their family’s animal preserve. The Wilds help narrate the tour from flat-screen televisions on each truck.

Park officials were putting the finishing touches on the attraction in early June, which included the new private catering area. This was expected to be completed by the third week of June.

Opening soon in the area is a new zip line, which will take guests soaring above the Safari and the animals.

Soaring Eagle Inc. is the manufacturer of the zip line, with Six Flags Entertainment installing it. The zip line is 600 feet long, with a 90-foot tower and a speed of up to 28 mph.

It has the ability to carry two seated passengers and it pulls riders up and backwards to the top of the tower, which is high above the Terra Ursus (European brown bear) section and then zooms them forward and down, over the bears and Camp Aventura.

The zip line will carry an additional cost. Pricing is \$12 for single rider and \$20 for double riders. Season pass holders will get a \$5 price break at \$15 per ride for double riders.

Although no definite date has been set for the opening of the zip line, it will open this summer.

## New Jersey vendors help create new Safari Off Road Adventure

Six Flags Great Adventure used as many local vendors as was possible to create the new Safari Off Road Adventure. According to Kristen Siebeneicher: “As you know, our state was greatly impacted by Hurricane Sandy and we wanted to support local businesses and workers in our own community. New Jersey’s campaign is ‘Stronger Than the Storm’ and these businesses really pulled together and worked hand-in hand with us to produce an incredible new VIP-style animal experience for our guests.”

Here is a list of vendors for Safari Off Road Adventure:

•**Eastern Surplus and Equipment Company** provided the fleet of 18 surplus, 5-ton army trucks and helped with the custom design theme

•**Force Concrete** supplied all concrete including new, massive lion moat (the fencing was removed so guests can see directly into the lion area without a visual barrier)

•**Hartley Industries** supplied the carpentry for two loading stations, retail building, new giraffe deck (feeding area), and roofing

•**Jersey Central Power & Light** electrical work

•**Jackson Township Municipal Utilities Authority** supplied new water and sewer lines to Camp Aventura (this was formerly a very remote area of the Safari)

•**Jersey Shore Steel** supplied all queue rails, handrails, and magnetic gates

•**SunRise Unlimited** provided clearing, demolition, the new access roads, and new off-road elements

•**Sun Electric** provided electrical work

•**Millstone Electric** provided electrical work

•**Jammer Door** supplied the new automatic electric gates that divide each section of the Safari to keep animals safely separated

•**Weber Group** fabricated the new, themed section portals, and the giant obelisk at Camp Aventura (all signs, designs and theming elements were designed in-house by Les Hudson, VP of Design for Six Flags Entertainment);

•**Birdsall Engineering** supplied general engineering for the project

•**Hatch Mott McDonald** provided engineering for water and sewer

•**Central Jersey Mechanical** provided plumbing, water and sewer assistance

•**Carl’s Fencing** supplied all new fencing, particularly the extensive fencing around new Camp Aventura

•**Soaring Eagle Inc.** manufactured the zip line (Six Flags Entertainment is the installer).

—Source: Six Flags Great Adventure

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*Gerstlauer coaster first to feature 14 inversions!*

## Record-breaking looper opens at Alton Towers Resort

**STORY:** Andrew Mellor  
amellor@amusementtoday.com

ALTON, U.K. — The world's first 14 loop roller coaster made its debut at Alton Towers Resort in Staffordshire, U.K., in May — and went straight into the record books!

The Smiler, built by German manufacturer Gerstlauer, has officially received the Guinness World Record status for the most inversions on a coaster anywhere in the world, breaking the previous record of 10 inversions held by a number of other coasters, including the Intamin-built Colossus at another Merlin Entertainments owned U.K. venue, Thorpe Park, near London.

The new attraction has been built at a cost of £18 million (U.S. \$27 million) and is the park's biggest ever investment. It is situated in — and totally dominates — the X Sector area on the site of the old Black Hole indoor coaster, a Jet Star 2 from Anton Schwarzkopf, and took over eight months to construct. And in addition to all those inversions, the Smiler also features a series of "twisted psychological effects including optical illusions and blinding lights designed to mess with your mind," according to the park.

The new coaster utilizes four, 16-seater trains with riders seated four across in four rows, one behind the other. The duration of each ride is 165 seconds along the 3,838-foot (1,170 meters) long track, which features a highest drop of 98 feet (30 meters) and a maximum speed of approxi-



Far left: Alton Towers Resort's newest coaster dominates the X Sector area of the park. Left: a 16 passenger vehicle navigates its way through the 3,838 foot long course. Below: the twisting and turning track that makes up the record-setting 14 inversions on The Smiler makes for a forest of steel supports and track. COURTESY ALTON TOWERS

mately 53 mph (85 kmh). Minimum rider height is 53 inches (1.4 meters).

Commenting on the attraction, Alton Towers' Katherine Duckworth said: "We have been saying that The Smiler will 'marmalise' your mind for a long time and today we can officially reveal that it is set to do the same to your body. The combination of 14 loops with a variety of elements such as optical illusions, designed to mess with your mind, make The Smiler a truly unique roller coaster. This is by far the most exciting roller coaster for Alton Towers Resort to date. It is twice as big as Nemesis and our biggest ever investment."

John Wardley, a ride consultant on The Smiler who has also been involved in the creation of many of the rides at the park, commented: "The amount of time, money and



energy that has been poured into creating this world-first attraction is huge. I've been

working in the industry for over 35 years and this roller coaster really does push the

boundaries. Who knows what we will have to do to top this one!"



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# Wallace & Gromit come to Blackpool Pleasure Beach

## \$8 million Thrill-O-Matic ride replaces Gold Mine

**STORY:** Andrew Mellor  
amellor@amusementtoday.com

BLACKPOOL, U.K. — The U.K. seaside park Blackpool Pleasure Beach (BPB) has chalked up a world first with the official opening of the first Wallace and Gromit themed ride ever to be built.

The Thrill-O-Matic, as it is called, is the culmination of two year's work by the BPB and Aardman Animations teams in conjunction with Wallace and Gromit creator Nick Park and several key suppliers. These included designer Nick Farmer of Farmer Attraction Development, along with U.K. companies KD Decoratives, Paragon Creative and WGH Leisure Transportation.

Officially opened by BPB managing director Amanda Thompson, deputy managing director Nick Thompson and Nick Park, the film's creator, the new dark ride represents an investment of £5.25m (U.S. \$8 million) and replaces the old Gold Mine ride which had entertained visitors to the park for approximately 40 years. Seated in a four-seater, slipper themed cars modelled on Wallace's slippers, riders are transported into the world of Wallace and Gromit with the attraction taking them through a series of scenes based on all the Wallace and Gromit short films, namely *A Grand Day Out*, *The Wrong Trousers*, *A Close Shave* and *A Matter of Loaf and Death*, and the feature length film, *The Curse of the Were Rabbit*.

Huge effort has clearly gone into the creation of the numerous scenes within the four minute-plus ride and it literally has to be ridden a number of times to truly appreciate all the theming, props and special effects which so vividly recreate scenes such as rooms in Wallace and Gromit's house, Wallace's various inventions and, of course, the many characters themselves. The ride track follows the same layout as the previous Gold Mine ride but a completely new ride system has been employed.

"Wallace and Gromit have

a special place in the heart of lots of people so we thought it would be an ideal fit to have their first ride here at Blackpool Pleasure Beach," said Amanda Thompson. "We are very proud of the ride and we know that families will want to ride it again and again to see all their favorite characters."

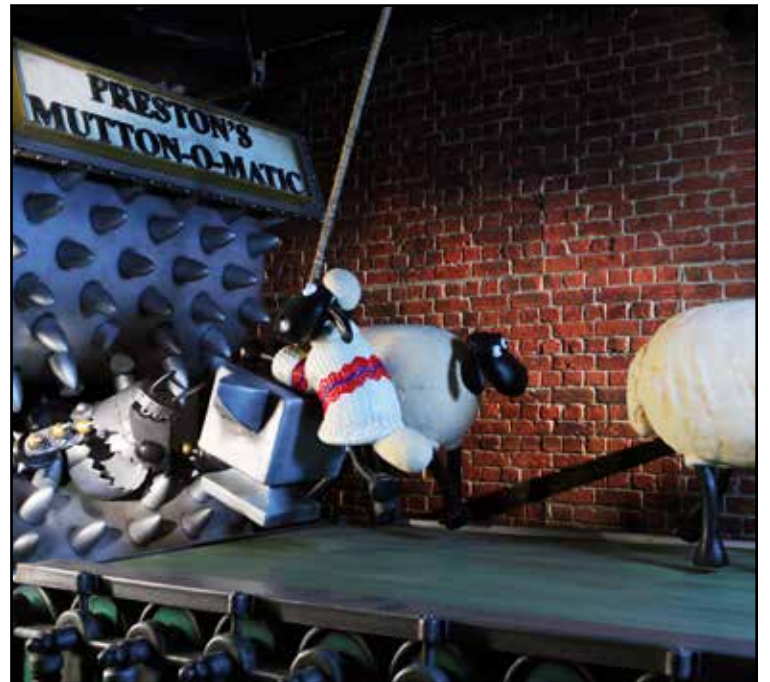


Where once the old Gold Mine ride stood in the center of the Blackpool Pleasure Beach site, the new highly-themed Thrill-O-Matic dark ride now stands.  
COURTESY BLACKPOOL PLEASURE BEACH



Above left, each set in the Thrill-O-Matic ride has been recreated in great detail, like this breakfast scene. Above right, riders will recognize numerous scenes from the Wallace and Gromit films as they move around the new attraction, including this Mutton-O-Matic animation.

COURTESY BLACKPOOL PLEASURE BEACH



An array of Wallace's inventions are depicted within the ride such as this Bunny-O-Matic machine.

COURTESY BLACKPOOL PLEASURE BEACH



Ready to take the first ride on the Thrill-O-Matic are Blackpool's deputy Managing Director Nick Thompson (back left), Aardman's Merlin Crossingham (back right), Wallace and Gromit creator Nick Park and Blackpool's Managing Director Amanda Thompson.

COURTESY BLACKPOOL PLEASURE BEACH

## Vekoma Hurricane coaster hits Denmark's Fårup Sommerland

JYLLAND, Denmark — Fårup Sommerland chose Danish Constitution Day of June 5 to introduce its newest roller coaster, the Hurricane (Orkanen).

Manufactured by Dutch ride supplier Vekoma, the company that also provided the park's popular Mine-Express coaster in 1992, the Hurricane is a 1,486-foot-long custom-designed Family Suspended Coaster that features a number of unique attributes including having much of the layout constructed above a large lake.

"Fårup is a place for the whole family, and therefore the Hurricane is an attraction for both young and old people who have the courage to gain an extraordinary experience," said Fårup Sommerland Managing Director Per Dam Jensen. "The Hurricane fully lives up to its name by being the epitome of speed and excitement in a new way, whilst not being too wild for anyone to dare try it. It is a family thrill at its very best."

The Hurricane ride experience begins with the 10-car train climbing to a height of just over 63 feet. After the train slips over the crest of the lift, it plunges toward the water's surface

at 46 mph and suddenly burrows into an underwater tunnel. From here, riders are treated to a high-speed ascending banked turn that whips them back into daylight and through the remainder of the course, which is peppered with an exhilarating and creative mix of ride elements.

Fårup Sommerland worked closely with Vekoma to produce a coaster that offered plenty of excitement for its demographic. The high degree of rider freedom is reinforced by the fact that the track was built so the trains would be in close proximity to trees, the ground and the water, which seems to magnify the sense of speed.

"We are very proud with the addition of the Hurricane in Fårup Sommerland. This ride featuring an underwater tunnel, an overbanked horseshoe, two horizontal loops and numerous changes in direction is unique in its kind," said Vekoma Senior Designer Stefan Holtman. "Further this ride is terrain-following, keeping its speed and excitement until you enter the station. The Hurricane is definitely a ride which you want to ride over and over again."



Fårup Sommerland's 2013 season is highlighted by the opening of the Hurricane, a custom-designed Family Suspended Coaster supplied by Vekoma. The 1,486-foot-long coaster features a number of unique attributes including an underwater tunnel, an overbanked horseshoe, two horizontal helices and numerous changes in direction.

COURTESY FÅARUP SOMMERLAND

## Samsung Everland takes guests on safari in new Lost Valley

**STORY:** Andrew Mellor  
amellor@amusementtoday.com

YONGIN, South Korea — A new safari experience created at a total cost of U.S.\$50 million has been opened at Samsung Everland in South Korea.

Designed by dan pearlman experience architecture in Berlin, Germany, the Lost Valley is a one-of-a-kind safari attraction. It takes guests on a journey to a place shrouded in legend and featuring an impressive array of animal and plant life, as well as a unique

history and landscape which visitors discover and experience in one of eight specially designed amphibious vehicles produced by Porcellio Manufacturing Ltd in the U.K. to a design by dan pearlman.

This latest addition to the park was planned and constructed over a two-year period and sets a worldwide benchmark for experience architecture, according to dan pearlman, while also building on the reputation of the Samsung Everland brand as one of the top ten leisure parks in the world.

The fully integrated safari adventure is based on a legend that takes guests deep into the heart of the Lost Valley and gets each visitor personally involved. Dan pearlman therefore created a fictional place that utilizes all of the topographical features in the area but also gives the impression that the valley has been in existence for ever.

The legend created, based on a fictional story of when man and animals lived together in a peaceful co-existence, serves as the basis for the overall plan and character of the

Lost Valley and is reflected throughout the park. The experience begins with the Hidden Entrance, which introduces visitors to the history of the location and includes the Wildlife Trail, that leads to the first camp of the original settlers that also serves as lodging for the Wildlife Watch Team.

Just past this building is where the amphibious vehicles await guests who, once aboard, are taken through the elephant forest, along a gigantic waterfall, to the Temple of Tau, a white lion whose spirit protects the valley. A 1,260 meter long,

intricately designed rock wall is a major feature here, which as well as its stunning visual effect, also serves as living quarters for the animals.

The Wet Savannah features the Great Water Hole while a bridge for feeding the giraffes enhances visitor interaction with the fauna. This is followed by the Flamingo Swamp, the last stop on the tour, which both educates and entertains.

Hourly capacity around the Lost Valley is 1,200 passengers and visitors get to see nearly 30 different species of animals during their tour.



The Lost Valley experience is based on a legend of when man and animals lived together in a peaceful co-existence. COURTESY DAN PEARLMAN EXPERIENCE ARCHITECTURE / SAMSUNG EVERLAND



Visitors are transported around the Lost Valley in specially designed amphibious vehicles. COURTESY DAN PEARLMAN EXPERIENCE ARCHITECTURE / SAMSUNG EVERLAND



Around 30 different species of animal can be found in Samsung Everland's latest attraction. COURTESY DAN PEARLMAN EXPERIENCE ARCHITECTURE / SAMSUNG EVERLAND





# PARKS & ATTRACTIONS

RIDES

ENTERTAINMENT

REVENUE

SUPPLIERS

## Six Flags Over Texas swings into record books

*Funtime-supplied Texas SkyScreamer stands 403 feet tall*

**STORY:** Jeffrey L. Seifert  
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

ARLINGTON, Texas — As the oft-overused adage goes “everything is bigger in Texas,” in this case it’s certainly true. On Thursday, May 23, 2013, with much fanfare, Six Flags Over Texas previewed the Texas SkyScreamer to the media, local dignitaries and a couple dozen coaster enthusiasts. At 403 feet it is the tallest structure between Dallas and Fort Worth, and certifiably the tallest swing ride in the world.

Twenty-four riders sit two across in open-air swings attached with chains to a 60-foot wide gondola. As the gondola rises into the air it starts to spin eventually reaching speeds up to 35 mph swinging the chairs out to form a 124-foot diameter circle. At that height the din of traffic and sounds of the park disappear — replaced by the sounds of the Texas wind. At its 40-story peak, guests have the ultimate view of the Arlington, Dallas and Fort Worth skylines.

Adam Sandy, sales director for the Ride Entertainment Group, Funtime’s North American sales representative, noted, “I was amazed because on a clear day riders can easily see both Dallas and Fort Worth. In the park, you are eye-to-eye with the Superman towers and the famed Oil Derrick.”

“We are thrilled to add the tallest swing ride in the world to our premier line up of rides and attractions,” said Steve Martindale, park president of Six Flags Over Texas. “It offers

▶ See SFOT, page 10



Six Flags Over Texas debuted the worlds’ tallest swing ride on May 23. Standing 403 feet tall the Texas SkyScreamer is the creation of Austria-based Funtime, and is represented in the U.S. by Ride Entertainment Group. Below, former park show star Deidre Thornell entertains guests on media day with her style of country music.  
AT/GARY SLADE



## SkyScreamer redefines skyline at Six Flags Over Georgia

ATLANTA, Ga. — Six Flags Over Georgia’s monstrous Goliath hypercoaster once ruled as the southern themer’s tallest attraction. Not anymore. The park’s new 24-story SkyScreamer tower swing ride assumed that honor when it opened to the public on Memorial Day weekend.

Located in the park’s Lickskillet area on the site of the former Wheelie, a Schwarzkopf Enterprise that operated 1977-2012, SkyScreamer takes 32 riders seated two-abreast in open-air swings to a height of 240 feet. At the highest point, the swings form a 98-foot-wide circle, reach speeds of 40 mph and offer spectacular views of the park as well as the Atlanta cityscape in the distance.

“SkyScreamer is unlike any other ride at Six Flags Over Georgia,” said park president Dale Kaetzel. “The sheer height alone will draw attention and the excitement of soaring over the entire park in open air swings will be a unique experience for thrill-seekers of all ages.”

SkyScreamer was manufactured by Funtime Industries of Austria. Maryland-based Ride Entertainment Group handled the sale and installation of the ride.

“We are excited to open another StarFlyer at a Six Flags park. This is our 6th with the company and the 7th is the 400-foot Texas

▶ See SFOG, page 10



Six Flags Over Georgia’s skyline has been redefined with the opening of SkyScreamer, 240-foot-tall tower swing ride supplied by Funtime Industries of Austria. The new ride accommodates 32 riders seated two-abreast open-air swings that revolve at speeds of 40 mph.

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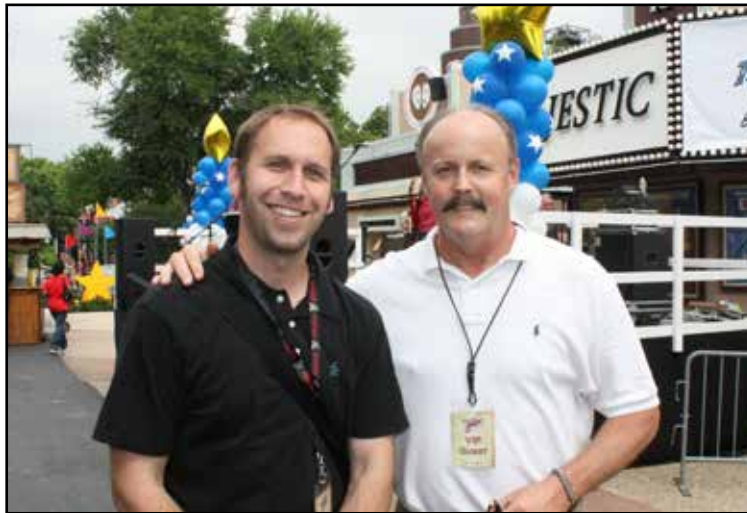
## ►SFOT

Continued from page 9

the most unique ride experience for an attraction of this kind, and also lives up to the Texas mantra that everything is bigger in the Lone Star state!”

Texas SkyScreamer’s tower is painted red, white and blue with a globe that is surrounded with the words “Six Flags” and topped with the park’s iconic flags. The tower has redefined the park’s skyline.

SkyScreamer was manufactured by Funtime Industries of Austria; Maryland-based Ride Entertainment Group handled the sale and installation of the ride.



Ride Entertainment’s Adam Sandy, left, and Les Hudson, vice president of design for Six Flags Entertainment Corp. enjoyed the opening of the Texas SkyScreamer.  
AT/GARY SLADE

## ►SFOG

Continued from page 9

SkyScreamer at Six Flags Over Texas,” said Adam Sandy of Ride Entertainment Group. “The StarFlyer is really a great ride for Six Flags Over Georgia. We feel it rounds out a strong ride collection by giving them another attraction to offer families and thrill-seekers alike. The 44-inch (accompanied) rider height requirement allows a wide range of guests to soar over two hundred feet in the air. When flying above Six Flags Over

Georgia you see a little bit of everything- from the classic John Allen wooden out-and-back coaster to the park’s new icon, B&M’s Goliath.

“Six Flags has been a great partner for Funtime and we have enjoyed working with them to enhance the ride,” added Sandy. “They have a strong engineering group that has been a good sounding board as Funtime has worked to continue to improve the experience for both park guests and the teams that maintain the ride.”

—Scott Rutherford

# Six Flags Over Texas historic log flume celebrates 50 years

STORY: Jeffrey L. Seifert  
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

ARLINGTON, Texas — On June 18, 1963, Six Flags Over Texas opened the world’s first log flume from Arrow Development. At a cost of \$300,000 it was a significant investment for the young park, but one that paid off. Placed in the Spanish section of the park, El Aserradero (The Sawmill), promised riders an exciting journey through a water-filled trough followed by a 44-foot splashdown.

Water rides had been amusement park staples for at least 100 years. Shoot-the-Chute and Old Mill rides that had been around since the early 1900’s took rather simple approaches to the handling of water flow. Shoot-the-Chute rides plummeted down a ramp into a splash pool below and were merely pulled backward out of the water, maneuvered by an on-board ride attendant, or relied on the current from the splashdown to float back to the station. Old Mill rides (also themed as the Tunnel of Love) utilized a moderate current produced by a turning mill. Some of the later models offered drops but the chute portion of the ride was always a gentle flowing current often augmented with scenes and tunnels.

It wasn’t until the early 1960’s that Karl Bacon of Arrow Development started researching hydrodynamics and took the use of water as a ride conveyance to new levels. During his research, he contacted the U.S. Navy for information and they lead him to the fact that water flow



Testing of the world’s first log flume as seen at Arrow Development’s Mountain View, California facility.  
COURTESY NATIONAL ROLLER COASTER MUSEUM / RON TOOMER COLLECTION

was one of the few dynamics that can work from scale. He experimented with small-scale models and learned how water behaved at high speeds and eventually learned how it could be controlled. Once everything worked properly at a small scale, it would work the same at a larger scale.

There was also a lot of experimentation with the shape of the boat. Despite the danger, it was common for loggers to hop on board a log or specially designed boat and ride a genuine log flume (sometimes for miles) either for thrill or to inspect the flume for damage. Bacon wanted to capture that type of thrill and designed the boats to look like hollowed out logs. They quickly learned however, that some type of spoiler was needed in the front to channel the water away from the passengers or

they would get soaked. The result was a curved area in the front of the log that directs water back towards the front and off to the sides. This creates a spectacular splash, gradually slows the logs, and keeps riders from getting too wet.

Six Flags’ El Aserrado proved so popular that a second flume was added in 1968. Completely independent, it shares the same name and queue as the original. Because the first flume is not easily handicap accessible, the park always opens the newer flume first, adding the original 1963 flume only on busy days or for special events.

*Amusement Today* contacted Larry Cochran, former Six Flags CEO and original log flume ride supervisor about that flume’s opening.

“The Six Flags Over Texas log flume was a prototype

from Arrow Development. Karl Bacon and his team built a heck of a ride, but as a prototype ride, it was not without problems,” Cochran said.

“The ride ran from day one, but it was up and down for about the first month while Arrow tweaked the water flow from the pumps. They also determined they had an error on the depth of the trough in the loading station. Arrow shut the ride down for a few days so a quick rebuild could be done. But with any new ride, it wasn’t long before the ride was running like clockwork and thrilling the guests,” Cochran said.

And just how was his first ride on the El Aserrado? “It was a fantastic, thrilling ride,”

he said. “Even with the lift hill of just 25 feet (big for 1963) I thought it was the greatest ride in the world. Judging by the success it had on the park and industry, I was not alone in my thoughts.”

From that auspicious beginning 50 years ago, the flume ride has become an amusement park staple. Arrow Development led the way, selling 67 Log Flumes and Hyper Flumes from 1963 to 1994. Other manufacturers such as Barr Engineering, O.D. Hopkins, Intamin, Mack Rides and Reverchon started producing flumes as well.

Congratulations to Six Flags Over Texas for its half a century of wet thrills on the El Aserrado log flume.



The El Aserrado log flume was originally built for \$300,000 and is themed to a sawmill. The ride debuted on June 18, 1963. Right, construction of the ride as seen in spring, 1963.  
COURTESY NRCMA / SFOT COLLECTION





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## Classic family attractions expanded and polished

# Knott's Berry Farm revamps Boardwalk area, log ride

**STORY:** Dean Lamanna  
Special to Amusement Today

Mack Rides Mouse, Larson Flying Scooter, highlight new rides

BUENA PARK, Calif. — Parks in super-competitive markets like Southern California typically shoot for the “Wow!” when unveiling new attractions each year. This season, Knott's Berry Farm took a different approach — carefully considering its crop of hardy amusement perennials and then asking itself: *How do we maximize what we've got?*

Tinkering with beloved attractions and cozily familiar corners is always a gamble, and Knott's hasn't left much to chance. A visually dynamic three-ride expansion of its popular Boardwalk section, which fills the gaping hole left by the removal of the long-dormant, circa-2000 Intamin Perilous Plunge, and a renovation of its classic Timber Mountain Log Ride display disciplined meticulousness — crucial in a compact, pedestrian-friendly park that delivers charm and fun built on decades of experience.

Media day festivities at Knott's on May 30, held in front of its new Boardwalk Pier collection of rides and attended by a host of local dignitaries who helped cut a long, boysenberry-colored length of taffy to mark the Boardwalk expansion's opening, emphasized the park's commitment to tradition.

“The goal of any theme park is not only to provide exciting rides and attractions, but also to create an environment that makes you feel like you have been transported to somewhere special,” said Raffi Kaprelyan, vice president and general manager of Knott's, who got his start in the industry here 33 years ago. “Thanks to our creative team at Knott's, this area makes you feel like you have been walking along a seaside boardwalk. It enhances our entire park and works to compliment our themed areas.”



**Kaprelyan**



The new Boardwalk Pier at Knott's Berry Farm features two new rides, the Mack Rides — supplied Coast Rider (above and left) and the Larson Intl. — supplied Surfside Gliders (above right). At right, the park refurbished its Eli Bridge Scrambler which had been in storage for several years. Below, views of the boardwalk pier convey its ambiance by day and by night.

AT/GARY SLADE;  
BOARDWALK PIER  
COURTESY KNOTT'S



general spiff-up includes bright new paint in striking color combinations on most rides and buildings — making it spit-shiny and fresh. It also makes the visual connection with the brand-new Boardwalk Pier, which is partly accessed via a wooden footbridge over the modified former Perilous Plunge pond (re-named Boardwalk Bay), feel cohesive and cool.

The three new rides here, all positioned within or adjacent to the repurposed pond, are traditional amusement park favorites: Coast Rider, a

sharply twisting, wild mouse-type roller coaster (Mack Rides); Surfside Glider, a zippy flying scooter swing ride with two-passenger planes (Larson International); and the Pacific Scrambler (Eli Bridge), a restored classic returned to the park after years in storage.

Kaprelyan noted the balance that Boardwalk Pier delivers to this otherwise thrill ride-packed section of the park. “This addition brings a group of family attractions to the Boardwalk so that families have opportunities to share their experiences together,” he

said.

### Restoring

#### Timber Mountain Log Ride

One of the most beloved theme park attractions anywhere in Southern California, the Timber Mountain Log Ride has been given a make-over landing north of \$5 million. The refurbishment of the flume / dark ride hybrid and its landmark mountain enclosure, built in 1969 at a total cost of \$3.5 million, included an overhaul of its extensive, animatronic character-stocked scenes, new and enhanced au-

dio, and a general exterior cosmetic upgrade with new paint and artificial evergreens.

Telling the story of a late 19th century logging community and sawmill, the three-level Timber Mountain was the brainchild of theme park pioneer Wendell “Bud” Hurlbut nine years after his successful introduction of the Calico Mine Ride at Knott's. Completing the five-month makeover was San Bernardino, Calif.-based Garner Holt Productions, a major creator of theme park and museum

► See KNOTT'S, page 13

### Bolstering the Boardwalk

The Boardwalk section's

# ►KNOTT'S

Continued from page 12

animatronics (including prolific work for Disney parks worldwide). The company supplied hundreds of state-of-the-art animated figures and props — most modeled directly from the existing scenes, human figures and props, but also including some new ones.

“We approached the project almost from a preservationist’s standpoint,” said Bill Butler, creative design director for Garner Holt. “How do we take this attraction, which is in a state of disrepair, and bring it up to a standard that would see that it would last for the next 45 years — and also enhance it? So we went to the source: Bud Hurlbut. He had said in an interview in the mid-1990s that he really wished he could’ve gotten back to [his Knott’s] attractions to add new technologies... we wanted to enhance and continue to tell the story of the 1880s logging camp in the Sierra Nevada and add to that new animatronics technologies that would really change the way we’re able to create characters and scenes.”

The improvements cer-

tainly worked for Ethan Wayne, son of screen legend John Wayne, who attended the original July 1969 opening of the log flume with his dad and returned to the park on May 30 to help celebrate its reopening.

Being present on Timber Mountain’s very first day as a seven-year-old “was one of my clearest early memories of doing something fun with my father,” Wayne told the media day crowd. “It’s been a long time, but... I can still feel the excitement I felt that day as a little boy. It’s a memory, but it’s also a connection to my father, who I lost when I was 17.”

Beyond making memories, the attraction also became an industry touchstone.

“The Timber Mountain Log Ride not only embodies the spirit of Knott’s Berry Farm, but it also set the bar for all themed attractions that came after,” said Raffi Kaprelyan, who worked for Bud Hurlbut from 1979-83 and noted that the flume continues as the park’s most popular ride, carrying more than 2.7 guests annually. “Bud made numerous contributions to Knott’s Berry Farm, but I think that the Timber Mountain Log Ride remains his crowning achievement.”

### Other Knott’s ‘hot spots’

Aside from the park’s bigger attractions news, making its summer debut at the Charles Schulz Theatre is “Snoopy...Unleashed!” — an ice-skating spectacular incorporating Peanuts characters, professional skaters, elaborate sets and music.

Also new this summer is Boom Town, a roving troupe of nine acrobats offering a unique interpretation of life in the small town of Calico in the 1860s.

Visitors will also find a tangible but unadvertised ongoing improvement throughout the park: the replacement of hundreds of square yards of bumpy asphalt tarmac with more level, uniform and visually appealing walking surfaces — particularly in Ghost Town, where new landscaping and floral accents will help tame the summer heat.



Wayne



Butler



The Timber Mountain Log Ride at Knott’s Berry Farm reopened following a complete \$5 million makeover. The mountain was repainted, new pine trees added and all 10 animated scenes replaced with new figures. Other structural work on the ride, as well as refurbishment on all the logs, was also performed.  
AT/GARY SLADE



California-based Garner Holt Productions supplied 39 new animated figures for 10 scenes for Knott’s Timber Mountain Log Flume which reopens on May 30. Shown here is Desert Valley (above); Hitchhiker (right) and Fire in the Hole (bottom).  
AT/GARY SLADE



## FAST FACTS

### Name/Park

Timber Mountain Log Ride/Knott’s Berry Farm, Buena Park, Calif.

### Type

Themed Log Flume

**Original Opening/Cost**  
July 11, 1969/\$3.5 million

### Reopening/Makeover Cost

May 30, 2013/  
\$5 million plus

**Mountain Height**  
75 feet

**Flume Length/  
Final drop Height**  
2,100 feet/42 feet

**Duration/Capacity**  
4 min./1,800 pph

**Number Scenes/  
Animated Characters**  
10/39

### Scene Order

- 1) Sawmill (low lift)
- 2) Dog and Man on Porch
- 3) Desert Valley
- 4) Tunnel with Hitchhiker
- 5) Caves
- 6) Campsite
- 7) Long Dark Tunnel
- 8) Hootenanny
- 9) Workshop
- 10) Fire in the Hole (high lift)

**Number of Log Vehicles**  
36

**Reservoir Size/Depth**  
350,000 gallons/15 feet

**Ride Refirbishment/  
New Animation Supplier**  
Knott’s Berry Farm/  
Garner Holt Productions,  
San Bernardino, Calif.

**Designer/Manufacturer**  
Bud Hurlbut  
Buena Park, Calif.  
with Karl Bacon  
Arrow Development Co.  
Mountain View, Calif.  
(Arrow Flume No.13)  
—Source Knott’s Berry Farm

## FAST FACTS

### Name/Park

Knott’s Berry Farm,  
Buena Park, Calif.

### Ride Area

Boardwalk Pier, located in  
Boardwalk section  
(2 new rides,  
1 rebuilt ride)

### New Rides

#### •Coast Rider

Wild Mouse Coaster  
Mack Rides  
Waldkirch, Germany  
52 feet tall /  
1,339 feet long

37 mph/2.5 minutes long  
10 cars, 4 riders per car

#### •Surfside Gliders

Flying Scooter  
Larson International  
Plainview, Texas  
28 feet tall/10 rpm/  
almost two minutes long  
8 vehicles, 2 riders per car  
—Source Knott’s Berry Farm

# Antarctica: Empire of the Penguin takes guests on chilling adventure

*SeaWorld Orlando's massive attraction is 1/3 of park's size*

ORLANDO, Fla. — SeaWorld and its sister properties are well known for creating amazing rides and attractions. However, the newest offering at SeaWorld Orlando — Antarctica: Empire of the Penguin — is absolutely unique in its approach and execution to entertainment, education and environmental conservation.

Guests' gradual immersion into the chilling continent begins the moment they step into Antarctica, which takes up one-third of the entire Orlando property. Antarctica is a realm in SeaWorld where icebergs, snowcaps and howling winds dominate the landscape. They'll also meet a very special penguin named Puck, and it's through his eyes that guests learn about penguin life along with beauty and inherent dangers of this frozen land at the bottom of the world.

## The Ride

At the heart of the new attraction is a first-of-its-kind trackless ride system that allows guests to become one with the storyline as they follow Puck's adventures. Each mobile simulator vehicle allows guests to choose one of two levels of exploration — Wild Expedition or Mild Expedition — for various degrees of ride intensity. Designers say each version has multiple variations for a feeling of unpredictability.

"When our little hero penguin learns to waddle and slide, we'll feel what it's like as the car moves and reacts to the storyline. When he takes his first swim or barely escapes danger, our guests will feel as if they're right there with him," explains Brian Morrow, SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment creative director. "On this adventure, we learn that we're a lot like penguins. We'll find we need each other and our families to survive."

The trackless ride system was supplied by Oceaneering International, which was also responsible for other popular attractions including The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man, Transformers: The Ride, and The Curse of Dark-Kastle. Each of the vehicles seat eight riders in two rows. Once dispatched from a loading dock, they begin a graceful dance as if gliding on ice, taking their passengers through several scenes that follow Puck on his adventure. The story is told through the use of animation and special effects such as wind, sound and temperature change. The gradual lowering of the ambient temperature from the mid-90s of a typical Florida summer day is accomplished in 10-degree increments as guests pass through each section of the attraction. By the time they complete the "ride" portion, their bodies are fully acclimated to the constant 30-degree environment required by the penguins.

Local Orlando composer, Mike Avila spent over a year creating the original musical score for Antarctica: Empire of the Penguin, which was performed by a 65-member piece orchestra and recorded in a Seattle church. The vocals for the theme song "One World, One Family" were recorded by award-winning county music artist, Lauren Alaina.

## The Penguin Family

Stepping off the adventure ride, guests find

themselves among a colony of Adelie, gentoo, king and rockhopper penguins in a 30-degree habitat filled with wind, snow, rock and chilly water. New technologies combine to create a freezing, but dry climate, allowing guests to spend time in the penguins' amazing world. The habitat that is home to nearly 250 penguins also includes a 170,000-gallon, 16-foot-deep saltwater pool where guests can watch as they dive and 'fly' underwater.

Antarctica: Empire of the Penguin also includes educational elements. Kids can "measure up" to all 18 species of penguins carved into the rocks in the plaza. They can engage in kid-height and kid-friendly interactive touch screens and talk with SeaWorld educators to learn more about the importance of community and how penguin colonies work together and rely on each other for survival.

## Dining and Retail

Culinary delights can be found at Expedition Café, where American, Asian and Italian (the three major signatories of the Antarctic Treaty) cuisines are featured in a mess hall setting. A hydroponic garden produces fresh herbs that chefs incorporate into the menu. Outside seating available under canvas type sails, and two Quonset-type huts provide seating for guests dining on a mix of cooked-to-order food and quick-serve delights.

Glacial Collections gift shop is the place to shop for all penguin lovers. The retail shop's color scheme of black, bright yellows, oranges and whites, and the penguin-shaped displays welcome guests to browse the cache of splendid penguin-related items. Hero Puck is anticipated to be the popular take home treasure. His journey, his love of family, and his connection, especially to children, make him a very desirable keepsake.

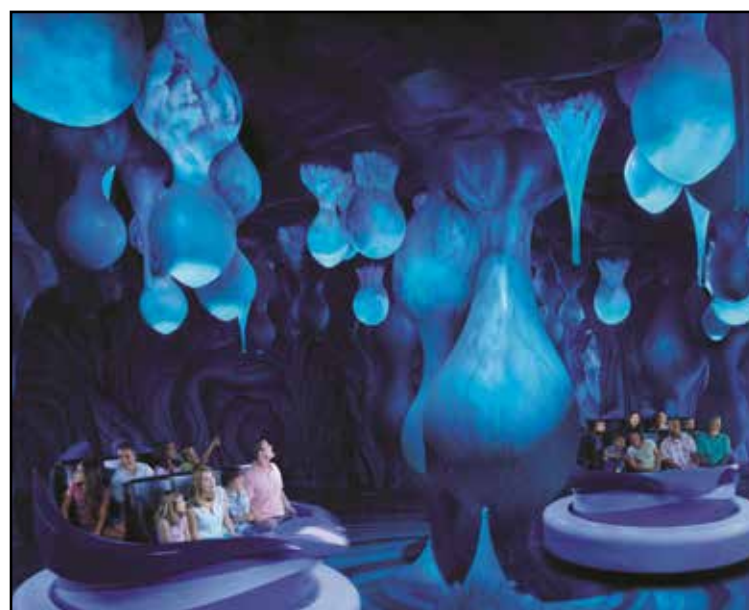
AT toured the new attraction in June just as the hot Florida sun was gearing up for a scorching summer. After the experience, we spoke with SeaWorld Orlando Public Relations Representative Sharon Moore about how guests were reacting to the park's largest expansion project to date. "They love it. In many cases I believe it exceed their expectations. There are so many levels to the experience," said Moore. "From the story of Puck's birth and his adventures, the ride portion and the up-close encounters in the Penguin habitat to the unique dining and penguin-themed retail, this attraction is one that truly offers something for virtually every visitor. We're quite pleased with how guests are responding."

Antarctica: Empire of the Penguin is an all-family experience that can be found only at SeaWorld Orlando. "We've taken our guests and fans on astounding journeys," concluded Terry Prather, SeaWorld Orlando's president. "But no one has ever experienced what we're bringing to Orlando this year. The first-of-its-kind ride, the cold, the wind, the thrills and danger of Antarctica, coupled with getting up close to penguins in their freezing world is something only SeaWorld can do."

—Scott Rutherford



SeaWorld Orlando's Antarctica: Empire of the Penguin combines state-of-the-art interactive ride technologies (bottom two photos) and up-close animal encounters (above) for adventures that are different each time. During the attraction's three years of construction, it required nearly 400 designers, craftsmen, animators, a symphony orchestra, penguin experts, scenic and lighting designers and ride experts to create. COURTESY SEAWORLD





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# Larson Flying Scooter takes flight at Six Flags Great Escape

**STORY:** Scott Rutherford  
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

LAKE GEORGE, N.Y. — Six Flags Great Escape recently became the latest North American park to introduce the classic Flying Scooter to its ride arsenal. The new attraction, dubbed Screamin' Eagles, was supplied by Texas-based Larson International and opened to the public on May 30, 2013.

Situated in the park's Fest Area section near Alice in Wonderland, the new Screamin' Eagles provides guests with a unique aerial adventure as well as a bird's eye view of the River Dee.

The Screamin' Eagles experience begins with riders boarding one of eight vehicles that are suspended on cables from radiating sweeps. As the ride begins to rotate, each 'pilot' utilizes a moveable forward rudder to gain altitude and maneuver their vehicle through dips, dives and plunges at speeds up to 40 mph.

The Great Escape's guests quickly discovered the interactive aspect of the Screamin' Eagles. Rebecca Close, communications manager, Six Flags Great Escape Resort Properties, explains how visitors are embracing the new attraction. "Guest reaction to the new ride has been really exciting for us here at The Great Escape. Its location in the Fest Area allows guests to soar over the river that runs through the park really adding to the feeling of flying," said Close. "They also love that it can be as thrilling as they want it to be. Many have ridden multiple times to really get the hang of the moveable front wing to get the most exhilarating ride. Guests also continue to comment about how great it looks when in operation. It adds a feeling of excitement as you approach that portion of the park. Screamin' Eagles has completely changed the face of our Fest Area and is the perfect addition to our park."

AT also spoke with Les

Hudson, vice president design at Six Flags, about the artwork, name and thematic aspects that make the Screamin' Eagles such an attractive addition. "It was a collaborative process. First the name was selected by a group including Corp. Design, Marketing and The Great Escape team. We wanted a name that reflects the flying nature of the experience," explained Hudson. "The direction we wanted to take with the design of the cars and structure was to promote the ride as edgy and cool so that it appealed to teens as well as families. A combination of a fierce eagle and flames fit the bill, and I was very pleased with the execution by Larson. In the end [it's a] cool looking ride."

While the Screamin' Eagles looks great during the daytime, it really comes to life when the sun sets thanks to a dynamic light package supplied by Florida-based amusement industry illumination

▶ See SCOOTER, page 18



Six Flags Great Escape recently launched the Screamin' Eagles, a modern take on the classic Flying Scooter ride. Supplied by Texas-based Larson International, Screamin' Eagles provides guests with an interactive aerial adventure as well as a bird's eye view of the River Dee. Night riders are dazzled with an array of LED lights, supplied by Denny's Electronics.  
AT/JOEL STYER



# Gravity Group's Hades 360 barrel rolls into Mt. Olympus

**STORY:** Scott Rutherford  
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

WISCONSIN DELLS, Wis. — The Gravity Group is fully accustomed to sending riders through unique elements on their wooden roller coasters. The Ohio-based company has produced several wooden coasters that are easily categorized as 'intense.' They have no qualms with including numerous instances of airtime and banking the track up to 90 degrees on their projects.

So, it should come as no surprise that TGG pushed the envelope even further by incorporating a complete inversion on Hades, a wooden coaster they opened at Mt. Olympus Water & Theme Park in 2005. Previous attempts to send wooden coasters through a vertical loop or corkscrew have used steel as a primary structural track component rather than simply a running surface for the wheels. Hades 360 is unique because it uses a fully wooden track, making it the only traditionally laminated wooden-tracked inversion in existence.

The decision to add an inversion to Hades resulted from a discussion that engi-



A 12-car Timberliner train whips through the barrel roll on the new Hades 360 at Mt. Olympus Theme Park. Designed by The Gravity Group, the inversion is followed by a high-speed 110-degree overbanked turn. In addition to the new elements, nearly 90 percent of the coaster's layout features new wooden track. COURTESY THE GRAVITY GROUP

neers from The Gravity Group had with Nick Laskaris, owner of Mt. Olympus Theme Park. Work on the ride's turnaround was being proposed and rather than merely re-profile the track, it was decided to try something completely dif-

ferent. The result was Hades 360.

"Since the 1990s, we had been talking with Nick about going upside-down on a wooden roller coaster," said Chad Miller, an engineer at The Gravity Group. "Fast for-

ward to today and we have all the tools required to make it happen, from our new Timberliner trains that can handle the corkscrew's rapidly twisting track to the sophisticated computer programs required to design just the right track

shape.

"Special attention was given to the structural framing of the ride," continued Miller. "We wanted to maintain the feel of a wooden roller coaster with trussed structure flying past you as you go through the roll. At the same time, we wanted to give the structure an open feel and so we cantilevered the track so there is nothing below you when you are upside down. The result is something quite unique and thrilling."

The barrel roll element occurs just after the 12-car Timberliner train exits the first underground tunnel. Once riders complete the inversion they are then treated to a new high-speed 110-degree overbanked turn that positions the train for a rapid dive back underground and run to the station.

When asked what, if anything was done in addition to the inversion and other reworked sections, Laskaris said: "Just as with any other wooden coaster, it can get rough the older it gets. So I decided change about 90 percent of Hades course to brand new track. All the underground

▶ See HADES 360, page 18





These renderings show the look and design of the new Thunderbolt, a custom roller coaster being supplied by Zamperla for Luna Park's 2014 season. COURTESY CAI



## NYCEDC announces new Thunderbolt for Luna Park

BROOKLYN, N.Y. — New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) announced a new major roller coaster, Thunderbolt, will be built at Coney Island and open for next year's summer season.

Thrilling riders with speeds of 65 miles per hour, the 125 foot tall roller coaster, featuring more than 2,000 feet of track, will sit near the historic B&B Carousell and the new Steeplechase Plaza, and mark another important milestone in Coney Island's rebirth.

The new Thunderbolt will be built and operated by Central Amusement International (CAI), the operator of Luna Park, entirely through private investment. The announcement comes just two weeks after the mayor officially opened Coney Island for the 2013 summer season and unveiled the new Steeplechase Plaza, a two-acre public open space featuring the recently restored B&B Carousell in a state-of-the-art pavilion.

"With our recent opening of the beaches, the B&B Carousell, and now the Thunderbolt roller coaster, Coney Island is once again demonstrating its incredible resilience," said NYCEDC Executive Director Kyle E. Kimball. "For a decade, the City has made investing in Coney Island a priority. The Thunderbolt roller coaster will build upon that commitment by providing visitors to Coney

Island with a fantastic new attraction, boosting the local economy and helping create jobs in the neighborhood still recovering from Hurricane Sandy."

"As we continue to honor our commitment to delivering entertainment and thrills to locals and tourists visiting New York, we're excited to announce our newest roller coaster, Thunderbolt," says Valerio Ferrari, president of Central Amusement International, LLC. "This is going to be the first steel custom roller coaster in Coney Island since the debut of the Cyclone in 1927."

CAI was selected to build the coaster following a Request for Proposals (RFP) issued by the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) in the Fall of 2012 seeking development on the West 15th Street site. Thunderbolt is designed as a one-of-a-kind 'out and back' steel coaster, taking riders in a vertical lift reaching a staggering height of 110 feet. Once riders reach the top of the lift, the train will be unleashed onto the first vertical drop and then through a series of elements and inversions while traveling at 65 mph. The ride will then make its return through a series of "bunny hills" that will give riders a floating sensation until the train returns back into the station.

## Falcon's Fury riding into Busch Tampa

Intamin to supply drop tower with unique thrill element

TAMPA, Fla. — For more than five decades Busch Gardens Tampa has delivered some of the world's most exciting thrills that have set the stage, and Busch Gardens is ready to drop big news.

In spring 2014 Busch Gardens Tampa is taking guests' experiences to new heights with Falcon's Fury, the first drop tower of its kind in the world. Additionally, with no connecting structures, it will be the tallest freestanding drop tower in North America.

### Falcon's Fury

No bird can match the speed of a falcon in its hunting dive. The falcon is the fastest animal on Earth, reaching speeds of 200 mph. Designers were inspired by this bird of prey during the development of the new attraction.

Falcon's Fury will stand at 335 feet and take riders soaring 60 mph straight down. Located in the Timbuktu area, Falcon's Fury will be visible from any location in the park and even across the Tampa Bay area. The ride is being supplied by Intamin/IntaRide.

At the ride's highest point Busch Gardens has added an element of surprise. Like its bird of prey namesake, riders will pivot 90 degrees in midair to a face-down dive position. An instant later they'll plunge 60 mph at 3.5 Gs straight down with speed and power like they've likely never experienced before.

Construction in the Timbuktu area of the park has already begun, and Falcon's Fury is scheduled for completion in spring 2014.



Concept art for Busch Gardens new Falcon's Fury, coming to the Tampa themer in 2014. COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS



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Before Six Flags Great Escape would debut its new Larson Flying Scooter ride, the name and thematic design package had to be decided. Here, the final approved colors and art design for the Screamin' Eagles is seen as created by Les Hudson and Six Flags Design. The finished ride, which mirrors this concept exactly, opened to thrilling success on May 30.

COURTESY LES HUDSON/  
SIX FLAGS DESIGN

## ►SCOOTER

Continued from page 16

specialists Denny's Electronics. "The LED lights were supplied by Denny's, who does a great job for us on all of our rides," said Larson's Jeff Novotny. "This U.S. supplier delivers on time and produces a first-rate product every time."

In addition to the new Screamin' Eagles, Six Flags Great Escape also plans to mix things up even more with the re-introduction of a guest

favorite: Canyon Blaster in Reverse. This thrilling twist on the classic Arrow Development-designed Canyon Blaster mine train will feature several cars of the ride's train being reversed. Operating in July for a limited time, the experience will send guests reeling through the family coaster's 1,800-foot-long course backwards. The Canyon Blaster train will offer both the reversed and forward-facing seating option.

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## ►HADES 360

Continued from page 16

sections and the corners are brand spanking new. The majority of the work was done in-house under the supervision of Jeff Mason. We worked with this crew before. This a great bunch guys who do an excellent job."

Hinting that perhaps that another wooden coaster project at Mt. Olympus could be in the cards, Laskaris added: "Hopefully, we'll see them again soon ..."

Before Hades 360 even opened, Laskaris saw a 50 percent increase in summer hotel bookings. "It looks like a lot of people are excited about the ride," he added.

Guests staying at one of the Mt. Olympus Resorts receive free admission to the park's seven roller coasters, 40 water slides and nine go-kart tracks. For more details, visit: [www.mtolympuspark.com](http://www.mtolympuspark.com).



The Timberliner trains, also supplied by The Gravity Group, create more open thrills for riders as they descend down the 140-foot tall first drop on Hades 360. The revamped coaster opened in May at Mt. Olympus Water & Theme Park.

COURTESY  
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## Oklahoma's White Water Bay opens largest expansion

*Waterpark dodges tornados, loses power for one day; some team members hit hard*

**STORY:** Jeffrey L. Seifert  
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla. — White Water Bay added a combination ProSlide Wave and Cannon-Bowl for the 2013 summer season — the largest expansion to the park in 20 years. Dubbed RipQurl and Pipeline Wave, the combination of these two exciting rides from one ride platform is the first of its kind in the country.

RipQurl utilizes two-passenger rafts with inline seating and features a 317-foot long, 41-foot descent through a winding tunnel before emerging into a bowl, where the rafts revolve around the outside perimeter before being dropped through a corkscrew exit.

Guests on Pipeline Wave can board two-person face-to-face WhirlyWheel rafts or single tubes. The initial plunge takes riders through a 201-foot long tunnel dropping 41 feet where they gain speed then blast into a highly-banked curve, experiencing a moment of weightlessness before plunging into second tunnel that leads to the splash pool.

The park also added about 5,000 square feet of new carpet to the area in front of and all around the wave pool. "We listen to what are guests have to say and decided to upgrade the wave pool area with brand new carpet,"

said General Manager David Riddles. "Hopefully next year we will be adding more." The carpet was provided by Shaw Floors, a company that specializes in indoor and outdoor floor coverings for home and commercial use. Shaw used a special dye to satisfy the needs of White Water Bay. The carpet was purchased through Davis Carpet, a local dealer in Yukon, Oklahoma.

*Amusement Today* also asked Riddles about the effect the recent tornados have had on the park. "We are a community park and are helping with donations to the American Red Cross. We had a couple of employees who had families that were affected but for the most part our team faired pretty well," said Riddles. Just a week after the interviews, *AT* learned the park lost one day of operation on Saturday, June 1, after losing power from the second round of tornados that tore through Oklahoma on the evening of May 31.

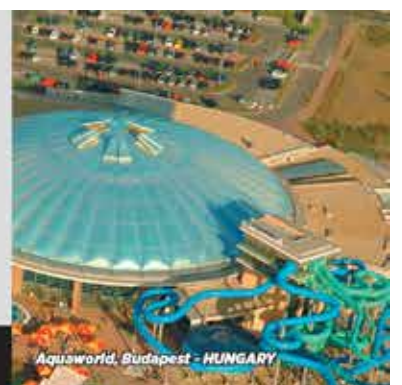
White Water Bay, Oklahoma's largest waterpark is open daily through August 14, 2013. The park is owned by CNL Lifestyles Properties and operated by Premier Attractions Management.



**Riddles**



White Water Bay has opened the 2013 season with its largest expansion in 20 years. A dual slide tower from ProSlide features the company's popular Wave and CannonBowl slides. Below left, as part of the park's improvements, guest found more than 5,000 square feet of new carpeting to walk on around the wave pool. AT/GARY SLADE





# Latest in SeaWorld's colorful waterpark chain debuts Expansive beach, tropical exotica highlight Aquatica San Diego

AT/GARY SLADE

**STORY:** Dean Lamanna  
Special to Amusement Today

CHULA VISTA, Calif. — An oasis has sprung to life in the semi-arid environs of this sprawling city in the southern San Diego metropolitan area, not far from the Mexico border and less than a half hour from SeaWorld San Diego.

With its official opening June 1, the newest property in the South Seas-themed Aquatica SeaWorld's Waterpark chain sent water and guests cascading down its serpentine slides and set its wave pool in much-anticipated motion. Aquatica San Diego, like its sister parks in San Antonio, Texas, and Orlando, Fla., features guest experiences from serene to extreme — combining leisurely and high-speed water play with the kind of up-close, educational animal experiences that anchor the SeaWorld brand.

Lush landscaping heavy with palm trees and flowers, combined with naturally integrated exhibits featuring Caribbean flamingos and freshwater turtles, have replaced much of the hardscape that characterized the former Knott's Soak City waterpark, which Orlando-based SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment bought from Cedar Fair in a reported \$15 million transaction late last year.

Beginning just this past January, SeaWorld undertook a rapid and extensive transformation of the 17-acre developed portion of the 67-acre property, creating a new entrance, adding retail and dining facilities, transplanting thousands of full-grown trees and shrubs, and renovating and brightly repainting the ex-



SeaWorld San Diego's marketing team of Paty de Saraco, left, and Kat Danganan have created the Splash Team and work together to post blogs and other news events, like Aquatica's opening, to electronic media. Their video blogs can be found on [InsideSeaWorld.com](http://InsideSeaWorld.com).

AT/GARY SLADE

isting slides as well as installing new water activities. The park's biggest attraction, the 500,000-gallon Big Surf Shores wave pool — boasting five-foot swells — has been graced with a huge beach that doubles the park's previous seating capacity and comes complete with private cabanas. Some 43,000 square feet of white sand have been added here.

In a pre-opening chat with AT, David Cromwell, vice president of Aquatica San Diego, explained that the goal was to create a "resort-like experience" for families.

"We want a visit here to be so relaxing, enriching and exciting that people will come back and generate good word of mouth," said Cromwell, a San Diego native who worked his way up to his current position from a high school summer job at SeaWorld. "Along with comfort-enhancing amenities and services, the Aquatica brand brings with it a distinctive, peaked-roof ar-



**Cromwell**

chitectural style and vibrant graphics throughout the park — as well as the animal connection, which really ties us to SeaWorld."

In addition to Cromwell, the grand opening "lei cutting" was attended by notables including Chula Vista Mayor Cheryl Cox, County Supervisor Greg Cox, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Jerry Sanders, and San Diego SeaWorld President Park President John Reilly.

Aquatica San Diego will have on-site animal care specialists among its peak team of 450 employees. The park will be open daily through Labor Day and weekends in September.

Other attractions highlights:

- HooRoo Run: Two enclosed and two open-air slides make for a thrilling 80-foot descent.

- Kiwi Curl: Three 60-foot-tall slides that test the adrenaline — with the option of sliding in the dark.

- Walhalla Wave: This 78-foot ride is designed for fami-

▶ See AQUATICA, page 22



Above, the Aquatica San Diego team, left to right: Lisa Aiu, director of park operations; John Reilly, park president SeaWorld San Diego; David Cromwell, vice president of Aquatica; Carlos Cuevas, director of revenue and Kevin Cook, director of maintenance. Below, the Aquatica thematic touches can be found with wildlife, landscaping, and vibrant color on building and slides.

AT/GARY SLADE





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## RiverRush debuts at Dollywood's Splash Country

**STORY:** Jeffrey L. Seifert  
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. — RiverRush, Dollywood's newest attraction opened to season passholders on Friday May 10, 2013 and to the general public, the next day. The \$6 million ProSlide HydroMagnetic Rocket is the largest capital improvement made to Splash Country since it opened in 2001.

The new attraction, nestled in the trees, covers more than an acre of hillside in a newly developed section of the park, between the park's Big Bear Plunge whitewater-rafting-inspired slide and Bear Mountain Fire Tower, and takes advantage of the natural terrain. Riders ascend up the slope on 237-foot conveyor belt that elevates the four-person raft nearly four stories from the initial loading point. The excitement commences with a quick turn off the lift and first plunge of 25 feet at a 45-degree angle. The wild ride continues over the 1,175 feet of fiberglass channel dashing through tunnels, hairpin turns, four magnetically-boosted uphill climbs and three downhill plunges.

Dolly Parton was on hand to open the ride and helped dispatch the first riders. "Growing up, playing in the creeks and streams here in the Smoky Mountains, I could only dream of something like a water coaster. But look at us now" said Dolly Parton. "I don't ride these rides, I've got too much to lose, like my hair, my makeup," added Parton. "Even though I don't ride, I like to create these things for people to enjoy."

"Our guests love the new ride," said Pete Owens, public relations director. "It combines a technology most of them have never experienced with the incredible terrain and beauty of the park."

With a conveyor lift there is no need for guests to climb



**Riders enjoy the thrills of this ProSlide HydroMagnetic Rocket that recently debuted at at Dollywood's Splash Country as RiverRush.**

COURTESY DOLLYWOOD'S SPLASH COUNTRY

flights of stairs. A boardwalk ramp leads to the loading station making the attraction handicapped accessible. Each ride lasts about one minute and 20 seconds. With four-person rafts and a conveyor loading system the ride has a theoretical capacity of 720

guests per hour.

RiverRush has its own game available for both IOS and Android operating systems as part of the Dollywood Adventures/Dollywood Explore applications. The app is available at Google Play or the iTunes app store.

and drenches everyone every five minutes.

Adult admission to Aquatica San Diego is \$38 for ages 10 and up; ages 3-9, \$30. Cabana rentals extra. For information on season passes and various admission packages and cross-promotions between Aquatica and SeaWorld San Diego, as well as operating hours, visit [www.aquaticasandiego.com](http://www.aquaticasandiego.com).

•Loggerhead Lane: Guests can swim or drift in an inner tube down a winding 1,250-foot long lazy river, with more than a dozen Caribbean flamingos enjoying life along the route.

•Walkabout Waters: This four-story interactive attraction offers hands-on fun with slides, hoses, jets and geysers. A 500-gallon water bucket tilts



### NEWSPLASH

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

Famous Indian actor **Salman Khan** filmed a fight scene for his upcoming movie "Mental" at **Dubai's Wonderland Theme and Waterpark**. Though no details were released, Salman was filmed taking on several men in a major scuffle, after which the actor was drenched in sweat and bleeding profusely. The actor is known to frequent Dubai and has referred to the Emirate as his favorite holiday destination, so it comes as no surprise that he choose Dubai as the location for his next movie.

**Silverleaf Resorts Inc.** announced in May plans to build a \$10 million indoor waterpark at its **Fox River Resort** in Sheridan, Illinois. The 19,000 square-foot facility will feature the usual aquatic play structure with tipping bucket, lazy river and multiple body and tube slides. A 10,000 square-foot entry building will house food outlets, an arcade, gift shop and changing rooms. The project has already broken ground and is expected to open by summer 2014. The Fox River Resort is one hour from Chicago and near Starved Rock State Park. The private club features a large selection of amenities for its members including two swimming pools, a golf course, tennis courts and horseback riding.

**Aquatica Orlando** is once again offering an unlimited after-2 p.m. admission pass for the same price as a single day's admission. The pass is good for the rest of 2013 and there are no blackout dates. The pass is \$50 for children 3-9 and \$55 for adults.

**Soak City Waterpark** at Kings Island in Mason, Ohio, will be offering Dive-In movies on Friday nights from June 21 to July 26. The park will show movies that appeal to guests of all ages on two large screens located above the 650,000-gallon Tidal Wave Bay wave pool. Soak City and the Dive-In movies are included with admission to **Kings Island** amusement park.

The **Chimelong Waterpark** in Guangzhou, China, held a unique publicity stunt to open the waterpark for the 2013 season. 10,000 female guests, all clad in bikinis, formed a giant snake-like "2013" in front of the park's wave pool. Chime-long has been doing a bikini stunt every year since 2008. This year the snake-like 2013 coincides with the year of the black water snake in Chinese Astrology.

When the brand-new **Wet 'n' Wild Las Vegas** waterpark opened in May, the park auctioned off inaugural rides on four of its attractions. The auction took place on eBay between May 16 and May 23 for rides on the park's Rattler, Constrictor, Hover Half Pipe and Royal Flush Extreme attractions. The package also included four tickets to the grand opening event and use of a private cabana for the evening, souvenir gift bag and complimentary meal service. Proceeds from the auctions benefited the Andre Agassi Foundation for Education.

The New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority unanimously approved plans to allow the 22-acre theme and waterpark to be added to the controversial **American Dream** mega-mall at the Meadowlands in New Jersey. The ground lease has been transferred to Triple Five, the owner of the **Mall of America** in Minnesota and the West Edmonton Mall in Canada. Site preparatory work was approved and the 5.41 acres needed for the water park have been listed in need of redevelopment.

The New York Giants and Jets, having long opposed the project, filed a lawsuit in June to have it shut down. At stake are the parking spots around the stadium, which the teams now control and can generate upwards of \$12 million a season. American Dream plans to add 30,000 parking spaces within walking distance of the stadium.

East Rutherford Mayor James Cassella slammed the two teams for being "greedy" and "selfish" and putting their interests ahead of taxpayers.

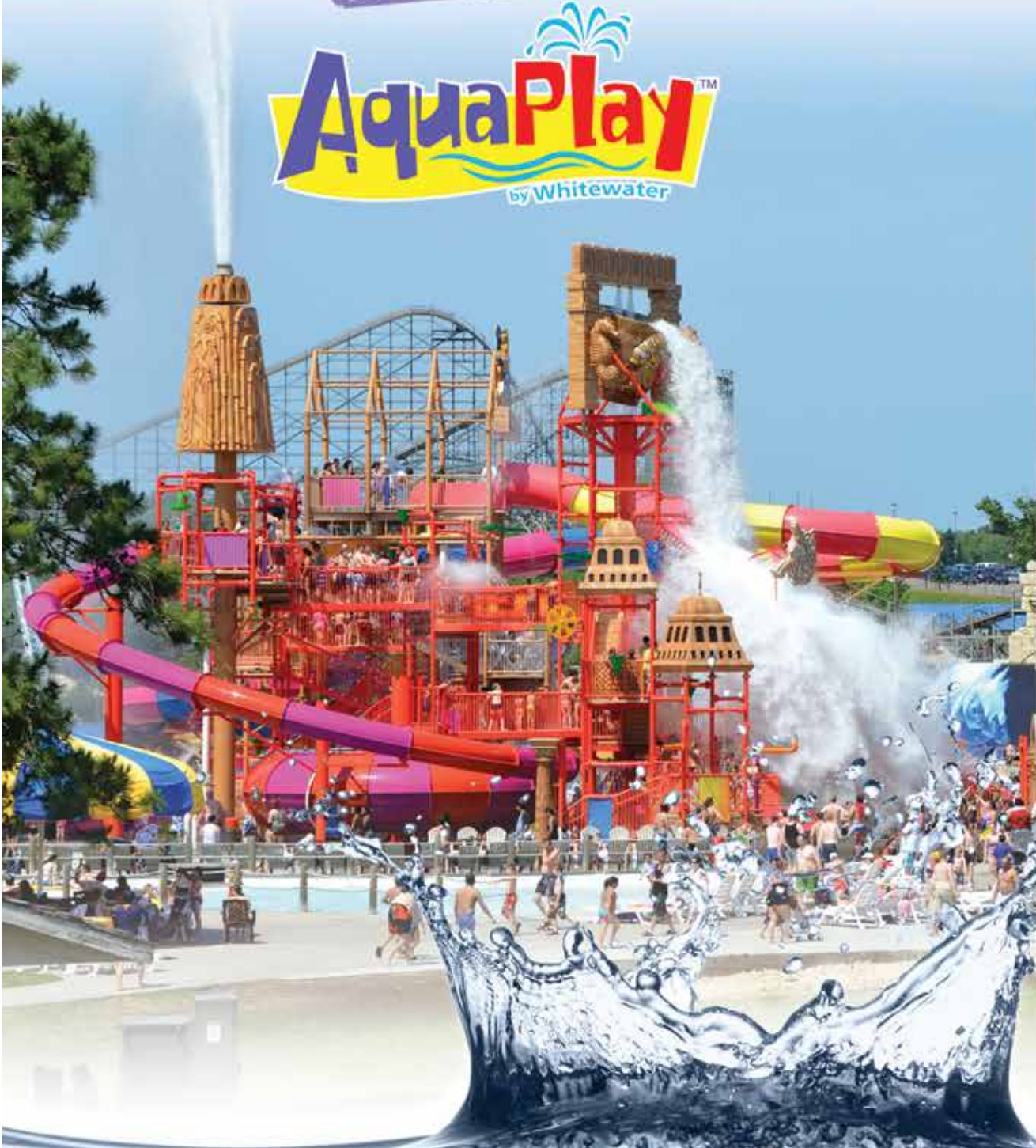
## ►AQUATICA

Continued from page 20

lies to enjoy together (height requirement is 42") in a gigantic tube.

•Tassie's Twister: Plunge down a 75-foot water slide in a multi-person raft through thousands of gallons of water before dropping into a six-story funnel.

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# Lake Winnie has cool hit with new Soak Ya! waterpark expansion

**STORY:** Scott Rutherford  
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

ROSSVILLE, Ga. — Lake Winnepesaukah's much-anticipated May 27 debut of Soak Ya! waterpark proves that after 88 years it is still one of the coolest area locations to spend the season. The Memorial Day debut of the five-acre waterpark expansion is the culmination of an aggressive five-month construction that returned the North Georgia amusement park, which began as a swimming attraction in the 1920s, to its water heritage.



"Lake Winnepesaukah kicked off the unofficial start of summer on Memorial Day with the grand opening of Soak Ya! waterpark. Guests of all ages are thoroughly enjoying the Adventure River, while the more adventurous are flocking to the body slides and tube slides," said Talley Green, public relations director and fourth generation of the family-owned and operated park. "The kiddie area is teeming with pint-sized patrons playing in the fountains and trying their first rides down slides designed just for them. The shady lounge seating provides areas for relaxing for both children and adults. Our guests are definitely en-



A young boy has fun on these floating bottle caps while hanging onto the net, suspended above.

COURTESY LAKE WINNEPESAUKAH/WHR INC.

joying getting soaked at Lake Winnie!"

Located on the west side of the amusement park between the Cannon Ball and the lake, Soak Ya! major features include:

- Crazy River with Beach Lagoon.
- Wave action and multiple surprise features on the River.
- Eight body and tube slides.
- Coke Float Crossing
- Kiddie Splash Park
- Retail, concessions and lounge areas
- Changing area with lockers.

The new waterpark features "Made in the USA" slides and other waterplay equipment designed, engineered and manufactured by North Carolina-based Aqua-Blue International. The facility was designed by architect Christopher M. Jones of North Palm Beach, Fla. and Aquatic Development Group of Cahoes, N.Y. Aquatic Builders Ltd., a division of the master-plan design and engineering firm, lead the park's construction. More than 100 construction jobs were filled by local contractors including Adman Electric, Inc., Architectural Surfaces, B&B Steel Erection Company, Inc., Brown Brothers, Inc., Chazler, Inc., Increte Systems, Integrated Concrete, Metal Masters Mechanical Contractors, Modern Heating and Air Conditioning, Sequatchie Concrete Service, Inc., Silvers Plumbing and Mechanical, Inc., and Young's Paving.

Of local economy interest, Soak Ya! provided close to 60 new seasonal positions at the park. Advertising and marketing for the park is provided by William H. Robinson, Inc. of Hamilton, Ohio.

The Soak Ya! waterpark is the first major expansion of the amusement park since the 1960s when Lake Winnie doubled in size and added two signature attractions: the antique wooden carousel and the popular wooden Cannon Ball Roller Coaster. The new waterpark is the first of a three-phase expansion that is expected to triple the water entertainment complex's size in years to come.



Lake Winnepesaukah kicked off the unofficial start of summer on Memorial Day with the grand opening of its new SoakYa! waterpark, the first major expansion of the amusement park since the 1960s. The five-acre waterpark features "Made in the USA" slides and other waterplay equipment designed, engineered and manufactured by North Carolina-based AquaBlue International.  
COURTESY LAKE WINNEPESAUKAH/WHR INC.





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# BUSINESS

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## Parks launch new shows to drive attendance, increase length of stay



Mickey Mouse, in classic sorcerer's apprentice mode, and a cast of beloved Disney characters that includes King Louie from *The Jungle Book* embark on a series of musical adventures through a magical sorcerer's map in "Mickey and the Magical Map," a new live show at Disneyland's Fantasyland Theatre.

COURTESY PAUL AUYEUNG AND PAUL HIFFMEYER/  
DISNEYLAND

### New themed area, stage show enhance Disneyland Fantasyland

ANAHEIM, Calif. — In the realm of What's New, the 2013 summer season is a breather of sorts for the Disneyland Resort after its massive success in redefining and reintroducing Disney California Adventure (DCA) last year. Yet the debut of two new attractions at DCA's flagship sister park, Disneyland, continues to build on that impressive momentum.

Launched on Memorial Day weekend, the live "Mickey and the Magical Map" lights up the just-refurbished Fantasyland Theatre. The ambitious musical production, from Walt Disney Imagineering Creative Entertainment (WDICE), was conceived for children of all ages and marks the return of Disney storytelling to the 28-year-old outdoor venue.

"Each new show we create is a chance to push story-

telling in a new direction," said Michael Jung, theatrical development executive for WDIC. "At Disney, we love the challenge of continuously looking at our classic tales and most recent stories to see how we can bring live entertainment and excitement to today's audiences."

"Mickey and the Magical Map" features Mickey in his timeless role as the sorcerer's apprentice, while wise sorcerer Yen Sid ("Disney" spelled backward) directs his Map-makers — a singing-dancing ensemble capable of taking dreamers to any place imaginable and painting a map so large it spans the theater's entire stage. (The innovative prop has more than 35,000 square inches of LED screen surface.)

Apprentice Mickey lets his curiosity get the better of

▶ See MICKEY, page 28

### Busch Gardens Tampa debuts "Madagascar Live!"

TAMPA, Fla. — Busch Gardens Tampa's newest live stage show "Madagascar Live! Operation: Vacation" premiered on May 18 in the park's Stanleyville Theater. Guests party along with the characters from DreamWorks Animation's hit Madagascar franchise, including Alex the Lion, Gloria the Hippo and King Julien on a vacation adventure at Busch Gardens Tampa.

To celebrate the arrival of the laugh-out-loud, high-energy family show, the Tampa park hosted a premiere party weekend on May 18-19, complete with on-the-hour dance parties and meet and greets, in addition to the show's premiere.

"We are thrilled to partner with DreamWorks Animation to bring the hugely popular ▶ See MADAGASCAR, page 28



"Madagascar Live! Operation: Vacation" is a new live show that premiered on May 18 in the park's Stanleyville Theater. Singers, dancers and a live band join the rollicking Madagascar characters Alex the Lion, Gloria the Hippo and King Julien as they amp up the party to full throttle.

COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS

### Six Flags Discovery Kingdom premieres new Cirque Dreams Splashtastic in Dolphin Theater



Cirque Dreams Splashtastic, a new presentation recently made its debut at Six Flags Discovery Kingdom. Created, produced and directed by acclaimed Broadway Director and Cirque Dreams founder Neil Goldberg, the production combines feats of strength with the graceful leaps and bows of bottlenose dolphins.

COURTESY SIX FLAGS

VALLEJO, Calif. — With remarkable precision, the uniquely skilled artists, aerialists and acrobats of Cirque Dreams take the Dolphin Harbor Theater stage in an all-new aquatic production that combines feats of strength with the graceful leaps and bows of bottlenose dolphins. Cirque Dreams Splashtastic — the Most Amazing Show Above H2O, opened to the public on May 25 in a limited run engagement, a first foray into this depth of entertainment by the park.

"We are excited to bring the distinct magic of Cirque Dreams to our Northern California," said Don McCoy park

▶ See CIRQUE, page 28

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## ►MICKEY

Continued from page 27

him as he stumbles upon the map's magical powers, which take him and the audience on a fantastic journey of imagination. Theatrical stage wizardry unveils worlds of color, adventure and beloved characters.

The Mapmakers are outfitted in some of the most elaborate costumes ever presented in a live Disney show.

"The costumes needed to have a modern infusion of style and edginess while still retaining an antique quality that comes with Fantasyland," said Matt Davidson, senior costume designer. "I have always liked the inventiveness of Steampunk, which comes from the Jules Verne, H.G. Wells world of futuristic-styled technology being possible in the Victorian era. The aesthetic uses lots of copper, antique brass, leather and rivets. It's kind of a warm, hand-crafted look that fit perfectly."

The 22-minute show, with a summertime schedule of five performances daily for as many as 1,800 guests at a time, incorporates appearances and songs by King Louie from *The Jungle Book* ("I Wan'na Be Like You") and by Sebastian from *The Little Mermaid* ("Under the Sea"), and from *Pocahontas* ("Just Around the Riverbend") and *Mulan* ("Reflection"), among others.

For part of its history, the Fantasyland Theatre served as an area where guests could meet Disney princesses. With the opening of the new Fantasy Faire area in Fantasyland last March, they now enjoy a whimsically customized home of their own.

Fantasy Faire's architecture immerses guests in an enchanting European fairytale village where characters and stories from Disney animated movies come to life. Design highlights include timbered and stone walls, chimney vents, arched windows and tiled rooftops with steeply pitched gables. The village is located next to Sleeping Beauty's Castle and extends Fantasyland's boundaries.

In the Royal Hall, Fantasy Faire brings tales to life through live characters representing Cinderella and others. Interactive storytelling with vaudeville-style Renaissance thespians is the highlight at the Royal Theatre — an open-



**Disney princesses including Cinderella await Disneyland guests at the new Fantasy Faire, an immersive, European-flavored storybook world that extends Fantasyland and brings its timeless tales to life. Guests also are treated to an interactive, vaudeville-style storytelling experience at the Royal Theatre.**

COURTESY PAUL HIFFMEYER/DISNEYLAND



air tent structure accommodating more than 300 guests (not including perimeter standing room). The venue utilizes elements from this location's former Carnation Plaza Gardens stage, which hosted school and community music groups as well as decades of headliners such as Count Basie, Tommy Dorsey and The Osmonds.

In addition to familiar songs from Disney animated films, shows at the Royal Theatre feature a live piano player in the style of a silent movie accompanist. To keep the fun going at the story's conclusion, beloved characters including Belle, Rapunzel and Flynn Rider remain on hand to greet the audience.

Fantasy Faire's visual and aural treats are rounded out by some innovative sweets. Maurice, Belle's inventor fa-

ther from *Beauty and the Beast*, has a food wagon, Maurice's Treats, across from the Royal Theatre — selling bread twists in a choice of chocolate, strawberry or cheddar cheese garlic, as well as a signature beverage, Boysen Apple Freeze — a blend of 100 percent apple juice and wild berry flavor.

Between the Royal Theatre and the Royal Hall, there's Fairy Tale Treasures, offering Princess-themed gifts and souvenirs. Detailed woodwork features acorns and sculpted squirrels, with some squirrels holding up acorns as if they were jewels.

By extension, Disney fans will likely perceive the park's new "Magical Map" show and Fantasy Faire section as jewels added to an already dazzling theme park crown.

—Dean Lamanna

## ►MADAGASCAR

Continued from page 27

lar Madagascar characters to Busch Gardens," said Park President Jim Dean. "Both Busch Gardens and DreamWorks share a common mission to provide quality entertainment to audiences. This show is certain to have families engaged and amused and will round out the triple play of amazing shows, thrilling rides and unique animal encounters that our park delivers."

The energetic stage show encourages families to sing, clap and dance along to original songs and party favorites on a 20-minute musical adventure. Singers, dancers and a live band join the rollicking Madagascar characters as they amp up the party to full throttle. And as part of each show, guests can meet the characters following the performance in Stanleyville Theater, which has been renovated and is now an enclosed and air-con-



**Madagascar Live! features stunning costumes and is sure to entertain audiences with its mix of comedy, music and dancing.** COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS ditioned theater.

SeaWorld San Diego was also debuting Madagascar Live! just as *AT* went to press. For SeaWorld, some of the show's dialog has changed and the stage set has more blue ocean-like colors, compared to the green jungle colors at Busch Gardens. The Seaworld theater underwent a complete makeover to accommodate the show, including the adding of a stage, costume storage area and dressing rooms for the cast.

## ►CIRQUE

Continued from page 27

president. "This beautifully executed show truly elevates the entertainment value for our guests who can expect an electrifying experience."

This dynamic visual spectacle showcases physical prowess as the performers bring together a series of high-flying stunts and daring aerial acts above water. In the water, dolphins will emulate some of the artistry in their own way, as marine mammal trainers guide them through a series of show-stopping behaviors.

The show is created, produced and directed by acclaimed Broadway Director and Cirque Dreams founder Neil Goldberg and was designed to celebrate "aquatical" strength of both the popular marine mammals and the hand-picked international cast, who hail from nine countries.

"Our goal was to complement the personalities of the dolphins and performers through playfulness, extraordinary feats, synchronicity and unparalleled showmanship," said Goldberg. "Cirque Dreams Splashtastic will be one of those unique and memorable entertainment attractions rarely experienced."

The partnership with Goldberg and his acclaimed Cirque Dreams entertainment



**Cirque Dreams Splashtastic features amazing balance and movements, most of which are seen by performers suspended over the chillings waters of the Dolphin Harbor Theater.** COURTESY SIX FLAGS

brand represented an opportunity to bring a Broadway-caliber production to the park for the enjoyment of audiences of all ages.

Cirque Dreams Splashtastic — the Most Amazing Show Above H2O is included with park admission and will run two shows daily until August 11, 2013.

## OBITUARIES

## Fajume Rides' Mike Safie, Jr., dies in car accident

EL SALVADOR — Mike Safie, Jr., vice-president of Fajuma Rides died in a fatal car accident in El Salvador on May 8. He was 53.

Safie, Jr., was vice-president of the many Safie-owned family businesses begun by his father, Mike Safie, Sr. The Safie family is best known in the carnival industry for the ride company Fajume Rides, which they began in 1983. The amusement ride manufacturing company made the popular Wacky Worm family roller coaster. Over the past several

decades, they have exported hundreds of rides to countries all over the world.

In addition to the manufacturing business, the family operated over 200 rides with five carnivals that play through Central and South America.

Friends wishing to offer condolences may do so via e-mail (ventas@fajume.com) or by mail at the following address:

Fajume Rides, Prolongacion Calle Arce #2320, San Salvador, El Salvador C.A.

## Former IAAPA chairman Boyd Jensen dies at 86

ST. GEORGE, Utah — Boyd F. Jensen, former IAAPA chairman, passed away in St. George, Utah, on May 29, 2013. He was 86.

Born the May 23, 1927, in Salt Lake City, Utah, he was the fourth of five children. In 1945, though WWII was ending,



Jensen

like his brothers, he enlisted in the Navy and served proudly for two years. Upon completing his service, he studied at the University of Utah, earning his bachelor's degree in business and a law degree. He retained his membership in the Utah Bar for more than 50 years.

Boyd's career was devoted to his public relations work for Lagoon Corp., where he eventually became executive vice president and worked more than 60 years. Boyd loved his work in the amusement park industry and his relationships within IAAPA, for which he served on numerous committees and as chairman of the board. This gave him the opportunity to interact with national and international leaders and visit amusement parks around the world with his wife, Beverley.

Community service was also one of his priorities. He served on his local school district and the Utah State School Board for many years and was

involved in local and national political campaigns. Numerous organizations and individuals benefited from his sincere devotion to charitable and philanthropic causes, and he was recognized for those contributions through awards and honors related to his professional and community service. As a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, he served a mission to Sweden, his ancestral home—he loved all things Swedish. He served faithfully in many church callings, including positions of leadership. Together, he and Beverley served an inner city mission in Salt Lake City, Utah.

As a family, the Jensens express deep love and appreciation to the many amusement industry members, especially Boyd's Lagoon family and the Freeds, with whom he worked collaboratively for so many years. They have brought so much joy to him over the course of his life. It was more than work. It was a culture of hard work, service, and inestimable fun. Also the IAAPA family was always in Boyd's thoughts, and his respect and affection for IAAPA staff and volunteers knows no bounds.

Boyd and his wife, Beverley, were married for nearly 58 years and are the parents of five children, 29 grandchildren, and 18 great grandchildren.

Contributions in Boyd's name may be made to the industry charity Give Kids The World.



## FAST TRACK

COMPILED: Scott Rutherford,  
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

**Busch Gardens Tampa** welcomed three lion cubs to the more than 12,000 animals at the Florida themer. The two females and one male arrived at Busch Gardens from South Africa May 18. Guests will soon be able to see the cubs in the Edge of Africa area of the park. Once they are large enough, the Busch Gardens animal care team will start introducing the cubs to the lion and hyena habitat of the Edge of Africa attraction.

**Quassy Amusement Park** has unveiled its new website (www.quassy.com), which has been in a behind-the-scenes development for months. The new website relies heavily on park photos and brief descriptions to promote the many amenities the 105-year-old property has to offer. Besides photo highlights of rides and Splash Away Bay waterpark, the site incorporates videos of major attractions such as the award-winning Wooden Warrior roller coaster and the new Quassy Quest Laser Maze.

**Legoland Discovery Center** Dallas/Fort Worth's Lego Star Wars Episode IV Miniland model display opened to the public on June 8, 2013. Young Padawans and their families can explore a large-scale, interactive Lego model display, chronicling the adventures of *Star Wars: Episode IV A New Hope*. Join the Rebel Alliance as they plot to destroy the Galactic Empire's powerful Death Star.

The Las Vegas Strip will get a whole lot sweeter when **Hershey's Chocolate World** retail experience opens at New York-New York Hotel & Casino this winter. The flagship store will occupy two floors, boast a 70-foot façade and provide guests with an experiential concept that will immerse them in the candy brands they love. This store spot will be located between the Statue of Liberty and Brooklyn Bridge and feature a towering Hershey's Milk Chocolate bar, an 18-foot Reese's Peanut Butter Cup and dazzling entrances in the shape of Hershey's Kisses Chocolates.

**Blueprint Entertainment** has announced the takeover of the Belgian science center **Earth Explorer** from **Merlin Entertainments** at ECSITE in Gothenburg, Sweden. With this acquisition the chairmen of Blueprint Entertainment, Mike Boris and Andreas Waschk, are now operating three science centers in Germany and Belgium and have thus created the leading private management company for science centers in Europe.

For the second year in a row, **Morgan's Wonderland** in San Antonio, Texas has won a certificate of excellence from TripAdvisor, the world's largest travel website, for earning exceptional traveler ratings over the past year. This prestigious award, which places Morgan's Wonderland in the top-performing 10 percent of all businesses worldwide on TripAdvisor, is given to businesses that consistently earn high ratings from TripAdvisor travelers.

**New Orleans City Park**, recognized as one of the largest, most expansive urban public parks in the country is now offering a Family

Fun Pass – a bundled package for visitors to enjoy the park and its top attractions. Nestled inside the park are a number of amusement-style family attractions where visitors can do everything from walking through the Botanical Garden to riding a historic, antique carousel to experiencing childhood fairy tales in Storyland.

**Cedar Fair Entertainment Company** and **Panama Jack** announced a five-year agreement, extending Panama Jack's reign as Cedar Fair's Official Sun Care Partner of its parks. The extended agreement includes product offerings such as sun care products, sunglasses, hats and Panama Jack soft goods, to be offered for sale within Cedar Fair's expansive network of parks.

**Auntie Anne's Pretzels** has added amusement parks to its nontraditional venue portfolio. This spring, the 25-year-old soft pretzel icon opened locations at three amusement parks including **Cedar Point**, **Worlds of Fun** and **Kings Island** after entering into an agreement with **Cedar Fair Entertainment Company**.

The **Subway** restaurant chain enjoyed a busy period in the first quarter of 2013. It opened more than 600 new locations around the world and crossed the milestone of 39,000 locations. In the non-traditional development category, the Subway chain now has 9,000 such restaurants, of which more than 160 opened during the first quarter in places such as airports, department stores, hospitals and park and recreational facilities. Stores recently opened at **California's Great America**, Santa Clara, Calif.; **Glacia Children's Museum**, Tampa, Fla.; and the **Villages Resort Waterpark**, Flint, Texas.

**Six Flags New England** opened its **Rivers Edge Picnic Grove** for an overnight outdoor adventure. Both Boy and Girl Scouts traveled from all corners of New England on Saturday, June 8 for this once in a lifetime overnight experience. With over a hundred tents erected, campers could gaze at the stars and coasters at the thrill capital of New England. Each camper received an honorary Camporee Badge for participating in the event.

The **Portofino Bay Hotel** at **Universal Orlando** will be opening 18 kids' suites themed around the popular *Despicable Me* film franchise and their theme park attraction, **Despicable Me Minion Mayhem**. Available beginning October 1, the suites will bring children right into the movie and the bedroom of Margo, Edith and Agnes.

**Disneyland** is celebrating 50 years of the iconic audio-animatronic attraction the **Enchanted Tiki Room**. Annual passholders can receive a special recreation of the 1963 Enchanted Tiki Room brochure, available while supplies last, which includes the original graphics, copy and even a special message from Walt Disney.



# NEWS & NOTES

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## AIMS International conducts first international certification test in Singapore

SINGAPORE — AIMS International is pleased to announce that the first international certification test for maintenance and operations was held on June 5th, 2013.

Testing was coordinated with the IAAPA Asian Attraction Expo and Universal Studios Sentosa Resorts in Singapore. Testing requires the presence of AIMS board members and was conducted by current Roger Berry, AIMS International president, and Mark Moore, past president.

AIMS will also be extending testing opportunities at the IAAPA Euro Attractions Show this fall in Paris.

Anyone interested in testing should refer to the AIMS website [www.aimsintl.org](http://www.aimsintl.org) for qualifications and applications, or contact Holly Coston at (714) 425-5747 for more information.

## Sponsorship opportunities available for 2014 AIMS Safety Seminar in Orlando

**Kelly Bernish**  
AIMS business consultant  
[kellyb@aimsintl.org](mailto:kellyb@aimsintl.org)



**Bernish**

Now that the schedule has been set and registration has begun, AIMS is once again happy to announce our sponsorship opportunities for the **2014 AIMS Safety Seminar**, set for January 12-17 in Orlando, Florida. Our sponsors are a very important part of the overall success of this annual safety seminar. A special thank you to our first official 2014 sponsor and new member, **Bliss Swiss**, known for their observation wheel expertise. If you haven't done so yet, please join the AIMS LinkedIn Group for up-to-date sponsor announcements.

This year sponsorship levels include Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze levels.

### Platinum Level

(2 options at \$5,000 each)

The Platinum Level Option 1 is the "Be the Instructor" sponsor. Benefits include official sponsorship of one of our classrooms throughout the seminar, as well as your name and logo

embossed on the official AIMS Safety Seminar instructor gifts. Last year's Maglites were a huge hit with our instructors!

The Platinum Level Option 2 is the "Ballroom and Lunch" sponsor. In recognition the Ballroom will be named for this sponsor. Gatherings during the seminar are abundant and this is where they happen. The sponsor's name and logo will be displayed on all materials outlining activities at the Ballroom as well as signage at the Ballroom. Additionally, sponsors at this level can also choose to be the sponsor for the lunch for a day or the Welcome Reception.

All sponsorship levels, including the Platinum level will be recognized in all national, and international marketing efforts, including email blitz marketing that directly targets prior students, facility management, and a compilation of leads generated from various sources including our manufacturer/supplier base as well as press releases to the various trade and online news entities. Other recognition includes direct mailing of materials to various clients, direct contact via representation and trade show activities (i.e. ASTM, IAAPA Expo, EAS Expo, facility visitations,



and telephone correspondence) and of course recognition on the AIMS website, [aimsintl.org](http://aimsintl.org). Additional recognition will be in the student and instructors packets and special recognition will be given at the opening reception and closing lunch. A brochure area will be provided in the registration area for sponsor's literature.

### Gold Level

(multiple available at \$2,000 each)

AIMS Gold Level sponsorships include "Classroom and Registration" sponsorship at \$2,000 each. At this level the sponsor logo will appear throughout the seminar on one of classrooms and more importantly, one of the busiest areas of the seminar, the registration area, will be branded with this sponsor's logo and information.

### Silver Level

(multiple available at \$1,000 each)

The AIMS Ambassadors

are an important part of every seminar. These up-and-coming young professionals help with every detail to bring the best seminar to all of our attendees. The important Silver sponsorship at \$1,000 is our "Sponsor an Ambassador" level. Sponsors at this level will help provide food and lodging for these volunteers. The official AIMS Ambassador shirts will be branded with this sponsors information.

### Bronze Level

(2 options at \$500)

Finally, the Bronze Level offers the "Snack and Audio Visual" sponsor two options at \$500 each. This level will be an official named sponsor for either the a.m. or p.m. daily snack as well as recognized for sponsoring the audiovisual needs of the seminar.

Sponsorships can be additionally tailored to the needs of any company and budget. Please join AIMS in making our industry safer for everyone by sponsoring this world class safety educational event! For more information regarding sponsorships or to become an AIMS member, please contact us at: [aims.office@gmail.com](mailto:aims.office@gmail.com) or visit the AIMS website at [aimsintl.org](http://aimsintl.org).

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## NEW JERSEY AMUSEMENT ASSOCIATION

### SUPERSTORM SANDY

# Restore, Rebuild and Reopen

## President Barack Obama, Prince Harry of Wales, N.J. Governor Chris Christie visit New Jersey piers

### *President Obama visits Jenkinson's Boardwalk; declares Jersey Shore 'Open for Business'*

POINT PLEASANT BEACH, N.J. — On May 28, 2013, Jenkinson's Boardwalk was paid a visit by President Barack Obama and his host for the day, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie. President Obama was visiting the Jersey Shore seven months after Superstorm Sandy to view recovery efforts first hand. After a brief meeting with members of the Storino Family, owners of Jenkinson's, the president and governor ventured onto the boardwalk where they were greeted by excited onlookers.

Obama also spoke with Ed Jarrett, sculptor of Sandy Castle, and played a boardwalk

game, Touchdown Fever. After Governor Christie won President Obama a prize, they shook hands with nearly everyone in attendance. While continuing their stroll down the boardwalk they were joined by the N.J. First Lady, Mary Pat Christie and children, who taught the president how to play the Frog Bog.

The visit lasted approximately half an hour before the duo left for President Obama's scheduled speech in nearby Asbury Park where he officially declared the Jersey Shore "Open for Business."



President Barack Obama visits Jenkinson's Boardwalk in Point Pleasant, N.J. on May 28.

COURTESY NJAA

### *Prince Harry visits Casino Pier, plays and wins at Ball Toss; sees coaster demolition*



Prince Harry plays a Ball Toss game at Casino Pier with Allie Cirigliano (left) and Taylor Cirigliano (right) while new Jersey Governor Chris Christie looks on.

COURTESY CASINO PIER

SEASIDE HEIGHTS, N.J. — Casino Pier was honored to have Prince Harry of Wales stop at the park on May 14 during his tour of the recovering Jersey Shore, on the same day that Weeks Marine began removing the Star Jet roller coaster from the Atlantic Ocean.

"It was meaningful to know that a Prince from another country cared enough to see in his own eyes how New Jersey was destroyed by Superstorm Sandy. The event went extremely smoothly and everyone in the town was

courteous to the Prince and the government officials," said Casino Pier's Marketing Manager Maria Mastoris.

The large crowd of guests assembled on the freshly cut boardwalk as Prince Harry and his escort, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, shook hands with the Casino Pier staff, residents of Seaside Heights, cleanup volunteers and local officials. Prince Harry was very cordial and shook each hand of the guests on the pier, even telling a woman that the region's determination to rebuild

showed "that great American spirit."

Casino Pier's Director of Operations, Lou Cirigliano, was lucky enough to see his daughters, Taylor and Allie, play against Prince Harry at the Ball Toss game. Sure enough, the Prince won a stuffed blue elephant and a Hello Kitty doll for the girls!

"It may have been a short visit, but it brought great exposure to the shore and let people know we are open and ready for business!" Mastoris said.



New Jersey Governor Chris Christie (center) poses for the camera with Keansburg Mayor George Hoff (left) and Keansburg's Bill Gehlhaus. COURTESY NJAA

### *Governor Christie visits Keansburg Amusement Park*

KEANSBURG, N.J. — New Jersey Governor Chris Christie visited Keansburg Amusement Park during his Memorial Day weekend tour of the Jersey Shore.

Despite the chilly and damp weather that blanketed the coastline during the holiday weekend on Friday and Saturday, the sun came out on Sunday. "I brought the sun with me," Christie joked as he greeted a large group of park guests.

Christie met with the park's co-owner

Bill Gehlhaus, who showed the governor how far the 108-year-old park has come since being ravaged by the storm. The majority of attractions are operating, games and arcades are new, and the beloved carousel has been completely rebuilt.

During the Memorial Day holiday, the message that the Jersey Shore is back and open for business not only resonated in Keansburg, but throughout the entire state.



## CONTINUING COVERAGE | SUPERSTORM SANDY

Coastal N.J. park operators push for summer readiness

## Shore resorts work to dispel lingering post-storm misconceptions

**STORY:** Dean Lamanna  
Special to Amusement Today

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — This Jersey Shore entertainment center, as do other amusement-oriented beach communities from Keansburg south to Cape May, wants you to know that it is fully up, running and ready for summer — and it has been since well before Memorial Day.

More than seven months after Hurricane Sandy, public misconceptions about the general post-storm state of the Garden State were still lingering. While New Jersey Governor Chris Christie was happily showing President Barack Obama around the newly restored Jenkinson's Boardwalk in Point Pleasant Beach on May 28, many beach communities and amusement operators were still working diligently to spread the basic message: *We are open for business.*

Before the holiday weekend arrived, Kimberle Samarelli, executive director of the New Jersey Amusement Association, felt that that regional and national media — having descended on the hardest-hit towns along the central and northern coast in droves since the storm's immediate aftermath — should have been doing much more to spotlight rebuilding and recovery. "We should be seeing more pictures of the beautiful boardwalks being built and what's already reopened," she said.

Although grateful that they were spared a direct hit by Sandy, South Jersey seaside resorts from Atlantic City on down were especially frustrated by ongoing emphasis on scenes of damage and the

accompanying perception that the entire shoreline was destroyed. Many chambers of commerce and individual amusement operators took heavily to social media, which they themselves can control, to fix that image. Some businesses enlisted the aid of more far-reaching public relations firms in Philadelphia and New York City.

At the state government level, the problem was not unanticipated. By late last year, Christie had established the Governor's Office of Recovery and Rebuilding, which, together with the New Jersey Division of Travel and Tourism, has launched a \$25 million marketing and advertising campaign to restore the Jersey Shore's prized leisure and vacation reputation.

Meanwhile, amusement operators and tourism bureaus are collaborating like never before to convey a common message.

In Wildwood, Morey's Piers — long a promotional leader for the city and neighboring North Wildwood and Wildwood Crest — has intensified its networking efforts.

"We continue to work with our local tourism departments, chambers of commerce and fellow businesses to further promote the message that our shore communities are open for business," said Maggie Warner, manager of digital media and public relations for Morey's.

In Atlantic City, a non-profit consortium of local businesses called the Atlantic City Alliance (ACA), established in 2011 to broaden the resort's appeal beyond a day-tripping gambling destination, has been taking a corrective

approach ever since Obama's very first post-storm visit to New Jersey last November.

The problem, according to Jeff Guaracino, ACA's chief strategy and communications officer, became evident with the live news coverage of the storm.

"In the middle of the hurricane, we knew that the visiting media — especially the broadcast media — were not familiar with the city or the main Boardwalk versus the unused portion of it [in the North Inlet, the only section damaged]. The national media immediately assumed that the damage had occurred to the famed [main stretch] of the Boardwalk that people know and love. To make matters worse, the broadcasters were using stock footage of previous summers showing the crowded Boardwalk and Steel Pier, and then cutting to where they were doing live reports, saying, 'This is the Boardwalk today.' It was misleading and just wrong."

Inaccurate reporting on the city's condition was aggravated when Obama landed at Atlantic City International Airport, where the national media had gathered to document the start of his initial post-storm damage assessment tour — although that actually did not begin until he boarded a helicopter for Seaside Heights, to the north.

"People don't always know their geography," Guaracino said, "and they weren't able to make the distinction between the nationally famous Steel Pier and, for example, Seaside Heights, which landed on the cover of *People* magazine. So we had a lot of perception repair work



While several businesses remain closed or are very actively rebuilding, amusement park operators — including Jenkinson's Boardwalk (above) in Point Pleasant Beach and Morey's Piers (below) in Wildwood — want the public to know that Summer 2013 is in full swing.

AT PHOTO; COURTESY MOREY'S PIERS



to do."

That work, requiring a total expenditure falling between \$500,000 and \$1 million, included taking out a full-page ad in *The New York Times*, running TV and radio spots, messaging via social media, collaborating with Steel Pier and other business on special events, and conducting weekly research studies. The latter revealed early on that 44 percent of the country thought the Boardwalk had been destroyed.

"Even more shocking, that number was higher in our close-by tourism theater states of New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland," Guaracino noted. "So it was a major concern for us that half our customer base thought we were damaged in the storm."

Thanks to ACA's efforts,

which culminated just a few days before Memorial Day weekend with a national press release urging media once more to correct the record about the condition of Atlantic City's Boardwalk, the misconception number has dropped to below 15 percent in key markets.

"The job is yet not done, but it's vastly improved," Guaracino said.

To take its own measure the Jersey Shore's recovery progress, the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA), led by its Wildwood-based chairman, Will Morey, will revisit park operators in the state on June 27. IAAPA has continued to work with state and federal officials to provide assistance and services where needed.



Wildwood, North Wildwood and Wildwood Crest — collectively known as The Wildwoods — issued this promotional banner in the spring to ensure that prospective visitors knew the beach towns were fully ready for seasonal fun.

COURTESY GREATER WILDWOODS TOURISM IMPROVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

# MARKETWATCH

## RIDING THE MARKET



Company	Prices One Month Ago	Prices 06/13/13	52 Weeks High	52 Weeks Low
<b>Cedar Fair L.P.</b>	<b>\$43.97</b>	<b>\$40.40</b>	<b>\$44.29</b>	<b>\$27.50</b>
<b>MGM Mirage</b>	<b>\$15.34</b>	<b>\$14.96</b>	<b>\$15.95</b>	<b>\$8.83</b>
<b>Six Flags Ent. Corp.</b>	<b>\$79.09</b>	<b>\$74.68</b>	<b>\$80.62</b>	<b>\$49.80</b>
<b>CBS Corp.</b>	<b>\$51.53</b>	<b>\$47.36</b>	<b>\$52.46</b>	<b>\$29.85</b>
<b>Walt Disney Co.</b>	<b>\$66.58</b>	<b>\$64.30</b>	<b>\$67.89</b>	<b>\$46.21</b>
<b>Apollo Global Mgt. LLC</b>	<b>\$27.34</b>	<b>\$24.03</b>	<b>\$28.14</b>	<b>\$12.00</b>
<b>Blackstone Group</b>	<b>\$23.45</b>	<b>\$21.14</b>	<b>\$23.80</b>	<b>\$11.76</b>
<b>Village Roadshow</b>	<b>\$5.25</b>	<b>\$5.12</b>	<b>\$5.46</b>	<b>\$2.95</b>
<b>NBC Universal</b>	<b>\$23.46</b>	<b>\$23.68</b>	<b>\$24.13</b>	<b>\$19.24</b>
<b>SeaWorld Entertainment Inc.</b>	<b>\$38.88</b>	<b>\$37.13</b>	<b>\$39.65</b>	<b>\$30.26</b>

## CURRENCY DIESEL PRICES



Region (U.S.)	As of 06/10/13	Change from year ago
<b>East Coast</b>	<b>\$3.839</b>	<b>\$0.021</b>
<b>Midwest</b>	<b>\$3.877</b>	<b>\$0.181</b>
<b>Gulf Coast</b>	<b>\$3.748</b>	<b>\$0.050</b>
<b>Mountain</b>	<b>\$3.865</b>	<b>-\$0.008</b>
<b>West Coast</b>	<b>\$3.870</b>	<b>-\$0.032</b>
<b>California</b>	<b>\$4.008</b>	<b>-\$0.058</b>

### TOP 7 MOST TRADED CURRENCIES



On 06/13/13 \$1 USD =

<b>0.75121 EURO</b>
<b>0.6385 GBP (British Pound)</b>
<b>96.26 JPY (Japanese Yen)</b>
<b>0.9242 CHF (Swiss Franc)</b>
<b>1.0537 AUD (Australian Dollar)</b>
<b>1.0191 CAD (Canadian Dollar)</b>

## PEOPLE WATCH

### KeyLime Cove promotes three

KeyLime Cove, the Gurnee, Ill. indoor waterpark resort, announced promotions of **Melanie McCole** to Human Resources manager, **Devin Johnson** to front Office Manager, and **Anthony Quiroz** to Housekeeping Manager.

McCole brings more than 10 years of hospitality experience to her new role overseeing crew member relations. She was formerly the Human Resources coordinator.

Johnson is responsible for overseeing the front desk; the hotel telephone system, PBX; and bell service operations. Prior to his promotion, he was the front desk supervisor.

Quiroz is responsible for the cleanliness of the 414-room resort. Previously, he was the night supervisor for the Housekeeping department, and held various housekeeping positions since KeyLime Cove opened its doors in 2008.

### Premier Rides wins award

**Premier Rides, Inc.**, Baltimore, Md., was presented the prestigious Maryland International Business Leadership Award by **Governor Martin O'Malley** on May 2, 2013, during the 17th Annual World Trade Center Institute (WTCI) Ceremony held at the American Visionary Arts Museum in Baltimore, Maryland. The award represents innovation, international success, and excellence in leadership; qualities and accomplishments possessed by Premier Rides that were demonstrated to receive the award.

Founded in 1989, and jointly financed by private business and the State of Maryland, the WTCI is one of the largest international business networks of its kind in the United States. The WTCI's mission is to drive the growth of Maryland's flourishing global business community.

**Jim Seay**, president of Premier Rides, said, "We are extremely proud to have won this award and are very grateful for the WTCI's recognition. This award is confirmation of all of the Premier team members' dedication and focus to successfully expand our business into the international market."

### Holiday World names Vice Presidents

Holiday World park president, **Matt Eckert**, recently announced the promotion of three members of the staff to the position of vice presidents for the Santa Claus, Indiana park.

"As we continue to grow, it's important that we have a strong, experienced management team in place," says Eckert. "Our three new vice presidents have proven themselves as leaders and innovators here at the park."

Holiday World's new vice presidents are:

**Mike Kamp** has been named vice president of Operations. Kamp joined Holiday World as director of Maintenance & Safety in 2004; he was promoted to General Manager of Guest Experience in 2007. His new responsibilities include park operations and construction.

**Alison Montee**, has been named vice president of Support Services. Montee joined Holiday World in 2011 as director of Accounting & Finance. Her new responsibilities include oversight of the park's financial management, plus human resources, safety and IT.

**Eric Snow**, has been named vice president of Marketing, Sales and Guest Entertainment.

Snow began his career at Holiday World during high school, when he served as a seasonal ride operator and marketing intern. He returned to the park full-time in 2007 as Director of Admissions and more recently served as Director of Special Events. His new responsibilities include oversight of special events, communications, and admissions.

### Volkan Sofuoglu joins Polin team

Polin Waterparks & Pool Systems, Istanbul, Turkey, recently announced the addition of **Volkan Sofuoglu** to its management team. Sofuoglu will head the newly

developed Technical Operations and After-Sales Department at Polin, which was created following a recently completed reorganization at the company.

Sofuoglu previously served as head of the Project Management and Installation Divisions at ThyssenKrupp Elevator and Escalator, a division of ThyssenKrupp AG, a German multinational conglomerate corporation based in Essen Germany.

In his new position at Polin, Sofuoglu will manage three departments now housed under one umbrella. Those areas-Project Management, Engineering, and Installation & After-Sales-were consolidated after the company's recent reorganization effort.

### Gateway Ticketing UK appoints new operations executive

Gateway Ticketing Systems UK, announced the appointment of **Tom Lee** to its team of staff based at the company's Hammersmith, London, offices.

Lee, whose title will be operations executive, joins Gateway from another provider of ticketing software to the attractions industry where he was responsible for the successful implementation of ticketing systems for a variety of different clients. He brings to Gateway 11 years' experience of working with customers to understand their unique needs and requirements, translating these into practical and deliverable solutions. His past experience covers both the attractions and airlines industries.

Commenting on the appointment, Gateway Ticketing Systems UK's operations director Andy Povey said: "Tom joins us at a very exciting time for Gateway UK. Over the next few months we will be adding to the 34 sites we already have in operation across the U.K. and working to achieve our goal of being the first point of call for any park, museum, zoo, gallery or visitor attraction when it comes to increasing revenue by engaging with their visitors."



**Sofuoglu**



**Kamp**



**Montee**



**Snow**



**Lee**

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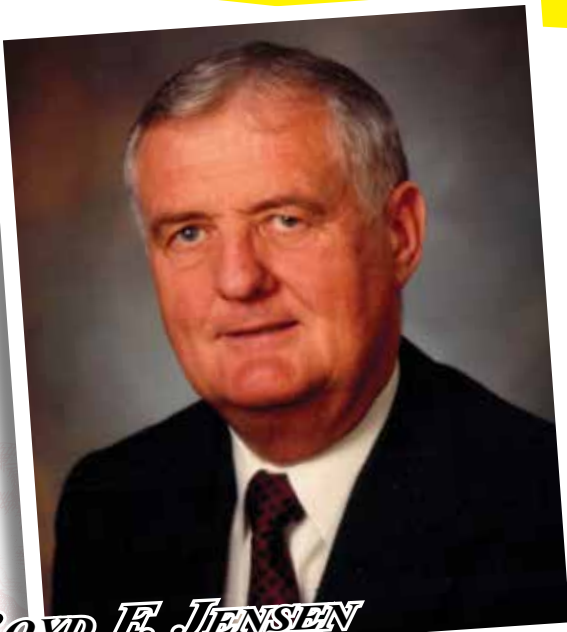
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# MIDWAY

CARNIVALS

STATE FAIRS

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## Weather doldrums

### Carnival owner experiences weather a little too close for comfort

ALMA, Mich. — This spring has been filled with severe storms bringing rains, hail, high winds, and tornadoes to many parts of the country. Those in the outdoor amusement business industry know that every year they are on the road the weather is likely to play some sort of factor in their lives.

Yet, there are always those first times.

Joyce Brady, who owns Playworld Amusements with her husband Jeff Brady, experienced a first in May.

Here is her story:

Playworld Amusements, based in Alma, Mich., stays within about 100 miles of home during the first part of the season. After Memorial Day weekend, their dates become longer in length and the locations of these dates are further away.

Joyce Brady takes advantage of these close-to-home dates. Many times she will drive their motor home to their home, collect the mail and take care of other business while her husband stays on the road with the rest of the carnival.

On Monday, May 20, she did just that. (This was the same day the EF5 twister hit Monroe, Okla.)

She knew the weather forecasters were predicting severe weather. Of course, she says now, her experience seems like nothing compared to what happened in Oklahoma. Yet, it was scary for her.

When Joyce arrived at her home in Alma, she took her two small dogs inside her house from the motor home.

She then went to collect the mail and, as she passed her motor home, decided to get her laundry basket from inside and take it into the house.

"In the time it took me to go into the motor home and get the laundry basket, the weather completely changed," she said. "When I got back out of the motor home, I looked into the sky and half of it was green and the other half was pink. Then, about a quarter of a mile down the road, I saw a funnel just drop down out of the clouds. The winds were up and before I could run into my house, I saw my kayak get picked up like a toothpick."

She dropped the laundry basket and ran inside.

She grabbed her two dogs and raced for the basement, dialing her cell phone so she could speak with her husband.

"He said where he was the skies were blue," Joyce said. "I just wanted to tell him that I loved him. I wanted to say something nice."

Then, she called her sister and went into panic mood.

But, Joyce said, the funnel apparently did not stay on the ground very long. She heard the weather quiet and she realized it was over. When she emerged from her basement, the house was like it should be. And, except for her outdoor furniture being thrown about and the clothes from her laundry basket strewn across her lawn, everything was okay.

The storm had knocked over an abundance of trees, however, community-wide. Power was off except for right in the center of Alma. She de-

▶ See BRADY, page 38

### Rain, rain go away says Myers International Midways

**STORY:** Pam Sherborne  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

COLUMBIA, Tenn. — "The weather's just stupid," said Bobby Myers, the first of June as weather maps showed a long line of severe weather marching towards him and his carnival playing in this southern middle Tennessee town.

Myers, Myers International Midways, said rain has plagued him since they started their route the middle of March so much so that he really has no good early indicators of the season.

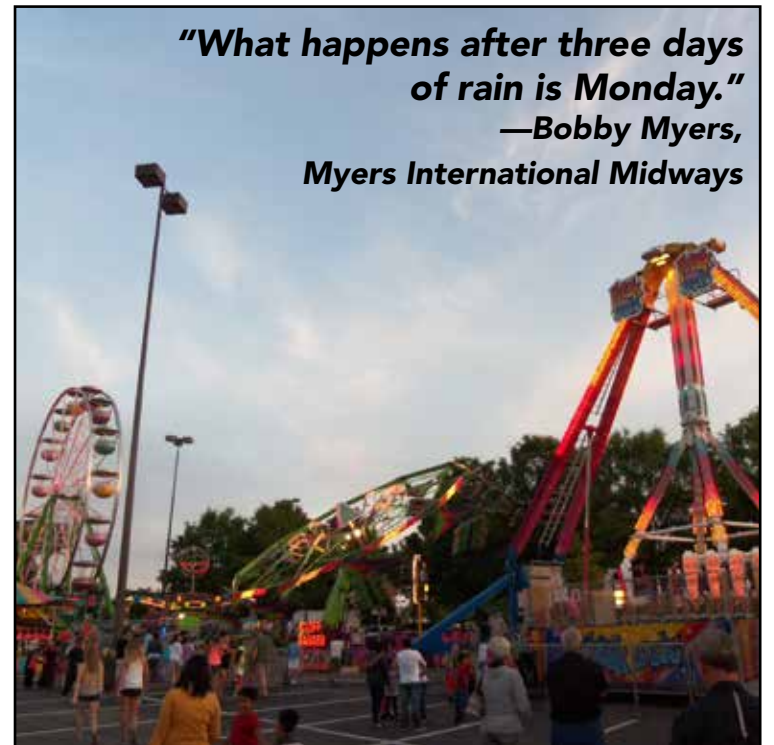
"We just haven't had enough dates without rain," he said. "It goes back to an old saying, 'What happens after three days of rain is Monday.'"

Myers International Midways starts their season in mid-January, supplying equipment to Belle City Amusements for some early year dates. The carnival then goes to the Florida State Fair the first of February.

"We then pick up with our own route in mid-March," Myers said. "We are split into two units until after Labor Day when we start playing our larger dates."

Myers runs one of the show's units while his mother, Gloria Myers, runs the other, along with some help from David Starkey.

The carnival owns between 46 and 48 rides and will swap them back and forth between the two units throughout the first part of the season. On some of the dates, such as the mall dates, they are really limited to the number of rides. For example, they had about 18 rides at a date at Cool Springs Galleria, Franklin, Tenn.



**"What happens after three days of rain is Monday."**

**—Bobby Myers,**

**Myers International Midways**

Limited to about 18 rides at this early June date at Cool Springs Galleria, Franklin, Tenn., Myers International Midways likes to put some of their best forward. Seen here, are the show's KMG Freak Out, foreground to the right; Dartron Cliff Hanger, center, and in the background at right, their Mulligan Wheel.

AT/SUE NICHOLS

He had about the same number of rides at the Columbia date. They were prepared for bad weather there and had already decided to move on out early if the forecasts did come to fruition. The next date was in Kentucky.

Myers hadn't purchased any new equipment for this season. He has, instead, decided to wait and see how it goes.

Myers said the carnival industry has become increasingly hard and the unpredictable weather of the last few years hasn't helped. He does have some food concessions as well as games. He books others in.

"The games business has become really tough," he said. "Because I have some of these,

I see what they are doing and it isn't much. I'm carrying fewer games now than ever before.

"It is a pretty scary time in this business right now."

Because of that, Myers has diversified. He has several other businesses, which he can depend on. He has shopping centers, restaurants, duplexes and bars. One very lucrative business has been his Lifetime Products company.

"We are building about 30 bunkhouses a year now," he said. "It is doing very well. We build everything from the ground on up. It is gotten to the point that if you order one today, it will be mid-October before you get it."

▶ See MYERS, page 38

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## ►BRADY

Continued from page 37  
cided to drive over to their winter quarters about seven miles away. It took her 45 minutes to get there due to fallen trees. But, everything there was fine, too.

Her first thought was: "I have been on the road for a long time and have been in about a dozen tornadoes along the way," she said. "This was the first time I have ever heard that freight train sound."

—Pam Sherborne

## ►MYERS

Continued from page 37  
He feels more secure having these other businesses just in case he ever needs to go to them.

Yet, he does hope things improve.

Myers Midways hasn't raised their ticket prices, but Myers said that is not because they needed to.

"We have needed to, but people can't afford it the way it is," he said. "This may be a very determinate year."

# Wisconsin State Fair creates food contest

**STORY:** Pam Sherborne  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

WEST ALLIS, Wis. — Unique and unusual new foods are commonplace at the Wisconsin State Fair, West Allis, Aug. 1-11, but this year the selection has risen to a new level with the introduction of the Fair's First Annual Food Competition: The Sporkies.

Eight finalists have been selected from over 40 entries, and a panel of celebrity judges

will choose the winner of three Golden Spork Awards on Tuesday, July 30. All submissions will be available for purchase at the Wisconsin State Fair, which will take place Aug. 1-11.

The inaugural Sporkies Competition has promoted creativity and ingenuity among Fair food vendors, who were encouraged to add some flair and pizzazz to their entries. To be considered for the competition, vendors had to submit a new food item as well as a detailed description, ingredient list and photos. Vendors were challenged to create the most inventive and exotic culinary creations they could engineer.

An internal panel of Wisconsin State Fair Park employees conducted the preliminary judging based on a rigid scorecard with three judging criteria – Appearance & Presentation, Creativity & Originality

and Presumed Taste.

The eight finalists include: Cajun Mac-n-Cheese, Tropics at the Fair; Deep Fried Peanut Butter & Bacon Nuggets with Berry Weiss Jelly, Saz's; Iced Irish Coffee Float, Slim McGinn's Irish Pub; Mac Attack, West Allis Shrine Club; Mela Fritta Gelato On-a-Stick, La Coppa Gelato; Rasta Shrimp Sliders, Tropics at the Fair; Slaw-Tered Chicken, Island Noodles; and the Thanksgiving Waffle, Slim McGinn's West.

A panel of celebrity judges will taste, deliberate and eventually choose winners in each of the following categories: Best Tasting, Most Creative and Grand Champion.

The final judging and presentation of The Golden Spork Award for each of the three categories will take place Tuesday, July 30 at the Bank Mutual Amphitheater at Wisconsin State Fair Park.

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For the first time, the Wisconsin State Fair, West Allis, is holding a food contest. Called The Sporkies, this new annual food competition was open to the approximately 200 food vendors that participate at the state fair. Here are photos of two of the eight finalists, the Irish Coffee Float, (left) from Slim McGinn's Irish Pub, and (above) deep fried peanut butter and bacon nuggets served with Berry Weiss jelly by Saz's. COURTESY WISCONSIN STATE FAIR

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## MIDWAYLIGHTS

COMPILED: Pam Sherborne, psherborne@amusementtoday.com

A small group of middle school-age boys are alleged to have broken into the 4-H and FFA offices on the **Clay County Fairgrounds**, Spencer, Iowa, and taken spray paint cans, which they used to mark on buildings.

The group of boys, who were spotted behaving suspiciously by a walker on the grounds, reportedly broke into the 4-H and FFA offices and stole cans of spray paint. Damage included spray painting on the Horse Barn and damage to the ticketing and information booths.

Clay County Fair Manager **Jeremy Parsons** said a bunch of lights were broken under the grandstand and The Depot and the Clay County Conservation cabin area sustained damage as well. A window was broken out of the announcers' booth at the outdoor arena.

"We're still putting a dollar amount on the vandalism," Parsons said to a local news agency. "We're definitely looking at thousands of dollars."

"I feel like the fairgrounds should be a great park area where people can come walk their dogs, or walk or ride bikes, but sometimes I have to question that when things get damaged," he said. "There are no plans to shut the grounds down, but it does cause one to think."

The **Clay County Fair** is set for Sept. 7-15, 2013. **Goldstar Amusements** will provide the midway for the event. Rides expected on the midway this year include the **ARM's Super Shot, Chance's Pharaoh's Fury, Zamperla's Rockin Tug and Sellner/Larson International Dizzy Dragons**.

This year is the first time in the history of **Oakland County Fair**, Davisburg, Mich., that the fair will open on a holiday and organizers have been very excited about the possibilities.

The event will run from July 4-14. A fireworks show is planned during the evening of July 4 and midway promotions are also planned. The midway is provided by **Playworld Amusements**.

An old favorite, the off-road demolition derby, is back and will be held on July 5, after being taken off the schedule for the last few years.

Other events include a variety of musical entertainment, rodeo and Monster Trucks.

There's a new twist to the **Colorado State Fair's** cashless smart card system that fair officials hope will help ease the sting fairgoers to the Pueblo event may feel with the new process.

Fairgoers will be able to use smart cards for up to five years after they purchase them and any smart card balance of more than \$50 can be reimbursed during the first two weeks after the fair's 11-day run in August.

Fair General Manager **Chris Wiseman** told fair board members Wednesday during their monthly meeting that state law prohibits entities from keeping overage accumulated from unused smart cards.

"Under state law that money has to be kept with us for five years," Wiseman had said. "We have to recognize those cards for five years and at the end of five years, we have to turn that money over to the state's unclaimed property program, which we get a percentage of."

Officials at **Wisconsin State Fair**, West Allis, set for Aug. 1-11, 2013, were excited to announce a new partnership with Prairie Farms, which encompasses serving as both the Official Dairy Sponsor of the Fair as well as the Day Sponsor on Thursday, Aug. 8.

As Official Dairy Sponsor, Prairie Farms milk will be served throughout the Fair Park, including a location in the Wisconsin Products Pavilion. During "Welcome to the Prairie Day" on Aug. 8, families can enjoy free product samples, and fun activities and contests for all ages in Central Park.

In addition to its new partnership with the fair, Prairie Farms will also serve as the Official Cream Supplier for the Wisconsin Bakers Association. Prairie Farms cream will be used to make the more than 350,000 Cream Puffs that are sold each year during the Wisconsin State Fair.

This year the Wisconsin State Fair will celebrate 162 years of tradition that is rooted in offering families diverse entertainment and agricultural education at a great value. Prairie Farms is a farmer-owned dairy cooperative founded in 1938 currently celebrating their 75th anniversary.

In the face of a wildfire, multiple earthquakes and rain, the **Silver Dollar Fair**, Chico, Calif., closed with higher attendance figures than last year.

Fair Director Scott Stoller said after the fair that his "conservative" estimate for the fair attendance was 61,125, up about five percent from 2012.

"We weathered the storm and earthquakes," said Stoller.

Before the fair opened, California firefighters camped out there while fighting the Panther Fire, which consumed 8,000 acres northwest of Butte Meadows. Firefighters left before the fair began.

On Thursday night, a magnitude 5.7 earthquake was registered in Greenville and felt in Chico. There were multiple aftershocks felt, one of which measured 4.9.

Stoller said while it did rain Monday, most of the heavy rain occurred before the fair opened and then when it was near closing.

While rain impacted Monday's attendance, those who came out enjoyed cooler weather and shorter lines. All shows, rides and the demolition derby took place, Stoller said.

After issues with automated gates in 2012, the **Kentucky State Fair Board** is working on a plan to ease traffic congestion into the 2013 state fair. The **Kentucky State Fair**, Louisville, is set for Aug. 15-25, this year.

In 2011, automated parking gates were installed with the intention of getting fair-goers into the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center faster.

They didn't. The automated machines took too long to accept bills, and sometimes patrons had to insert bills multiple times. Traffic began to congest at gates.

Now, with hopes of avoiding that situation at this August's Kentucky State Fair, board member **Ron Carmicle** will chair a task force to find ways to make parking go more smoothly.

Options include cheaper parking prices for people who park further away from the convention center buildings — such as grass lots across from Phillips Lane or possibly at Papa John's Cardinal Stadium using a shuttle, Fair Board President **Rip Rippetoe** said.

"What we want to be able to do is take away that inconvenience, because we're in the experience business," Rippetoe said. "If we don't have a good experience coming into a place, odds are that just by human nature we're not going to enjoy that event."

Other options include using social media to di-

rect fair patrons to gates that aren't congested, and reconfiguring traffic cones to make vehicles move more smoothly.

The fairgrounds usually has about 19,000 parking spots. But not for the Kentucky State Fair.

**North American Midway Entertainment** provides the carnival for the fair.

Wahkiakum County commissioners appointed **Patty Dursteler** as manager of the **Wahkiakum County Fair**, Cathlamet, Wa.

Dursteler is a long-time fair volunteer. She is also a member of the fund-raising Wahkiakum Fair Foundation, and she agreed to take a sabbatical from that board while she serves as fair manager.

Commission Chair **Blair Brady** said Dursteler will have a six month contract with a maximum of 70 hours in two months, in an effort to keep the position from falling under the county's contract with its union employees.

**Coleen Gilboy** has gone from being the office manager for the **Ledbetter Law Firm** to director of the **Verde Valley Fair**, Cottonwood, Ariz.

Gilboy was hired and was on the job at the Verde Valley Fair just days before the wraps were off the 2013 fair, which ran April 30-May 4. **Browns Amusements** provided the midway.

She admits she is still amazed at the huge number of volunteers who come together and are involved in presenting the fair.

Home beer makers have entered this year's **New York State Fair**, Syracuse, Homebrew Competition in record numbers.

New York State Agriculture Commissioner **Darrel Aubertine** said for this year's competition, 140 exhibitors have submitted 407 different home-brewed beers. That's up from 74 exhibitors and 267 entries last year.

Two bottles of the winning beer, and the beer's recipe, will be taken to the **F. X. Matt Brewing Company** in Utica. There, the beer will be analyzed and, with the winning brewer on hand, the recipe will be brewed in F. X. Matt's new state-of-the-art pilot brewing lab.

The resulting beer will be bottled and entered in the ProAm Competition in the **Great American Beer Festival** in Denver, Colorado.

The New York State Fair is set for Aug. 22-Sept. 2. James E. Strates Shows will provide the midway like it has done for the past 60 years, plus.

With Indiana being the second largest popcorn producer in the U.S., the **Indiana State Fair**, Indianapolis, has decided to celebrate popcorn at this year's fair, set for Aug. 2-18.

With the **Year of Popcorn** campaign, fair officials have devised a variety of ways popcorn will be celebrated including, of course, having popcorn readily available for snacking.

One very unique way fair officials are celebrating is to show off a very large popcorn ball. Fair officials, along with Year of Popcorn sponsor **Weaver Popcorn**, have created the "World's Largest Popcorn Ball" that will be unveiled at the 2013 event. This 5,200-pound spectacle will be housed in the Ball State Ag/Hort Building.

The **A-maize-ing Popcorn Adventure**, a popcorn maize as opposed to a corn maize, will be set up for patrons enjoyment.



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Powers Great American Midways has played the Apple Blossom Festival, Winchester, Va., for the last 12 years and this year was one of the best. Here, set up side by side are two of the carnival's newest rides, the ARM Vertigo, far right, and the Wisdom Genesis, center. To the far left, is a carnival ice cream concession.  
AT/SUE NICHOLS

## Powers Great American Midways seeing good season indicators

**STORY:** Pam Sherborne  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com  
DANBURY, Conn. — So far, so good for Powers Great American Midways.

Corky Powers, who was playing the Danbury Fair Mall at the first of June, has been seeing people ready to spend on the carnival, weather permitting.

His early route takes him

slightly into the northeast. He played the Apple Blossom Festival, Winchester, Va., April 30-May 5, and had one of the best years he has had in the last 12 years he has played there.

"We have had rain over the last three weekends, but when the rain lets up, people are spending money," he said. "If it stays the way it is, I think 2013 will be a good year."

Powers has a total of 58 rides, which are split into two units until the last part of July when the two are combined to play the bigger dates. No dates were added this year, Powers said.

"It will be a carbon copy from last year," he said.

He would benefit from a move of some of his dates, but he knows that is hard and he is happy to play the route he has right now.

Powers did add some additional rides this season. He received an ARM Rock Star and Wisdom Genesis at the end of 2012. He is awaiting arrival of a Falgas train ride and he has on order a retrofit of a Wisdom Rampage.

"And we are always updating our trucks and transportation equipment," Powers said. "We added nine new tractors this year."

Powers said he and his staff spend a lot of time during the off-season in not only working, and refurbishing rides, but also making strides in beautifying the midway. The carnival upgrades landscaping, adds light towers and is looking at ways to add additional shading. He has also invested in LED lighting. His midway is now about 95 percent LED.

"It has been a costly investment but I think it will pay off in the end," he said.

They also invest in new wraps with Chuck Waters coming in to do those for him.

"The rest of the refurbishments we do ourselves," he said.

Have Midway news of interest you would like featured in  
**MIDWAY LIGHTS**

E-mail it to Pam Sherborne  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

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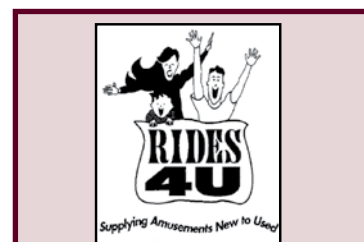
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## THIS JUST IN

### Silverwood open two new rides

COEUR D' ALENE, Idaho — Sil-  
verwood Theme Park has opened two  
new rides for the 2013 summer season.

The first, SpinCycle, a 104 foot  
tall monster thrill ride that has a cy-  
lindrical-shaped vehicle which seats  
24 people facing outward, with legs  
dangling and wearing only a harness.  
The vehicle rotates 360 degrees at 13  
revolutions per minute while at the  
same time it swings like a giant pen-  
dulum all the way upside down 104  
feet above the ground.

SpinCycle is from SBF/Visa  
Group, represented in North America  
by Len Soled at Rides 4U.

The second ride, named Barn-  
stormer, is a family-fun ride from  
Zamperla that gives youngsters the  
feeling they are flying freely among the clouds. Located in Gar-  
field's Summer Camp, Barnstormer seats 20 passengers and can  
easily accommodate adults as well as children.

Both rides will opened on May 25 and represent a \$2.2 mil-  
lion investment.



**SpinCycle**

### Tropic Capital sells loan portfolio to Boulevard

TREASURE ISLAND, Fla. — Allied International Holdings,  
Inc. (Allied) is delighted to announce that Tropic Capital Corp.  
(Tropic) recently sold the majority of its loan portfolio to Bou-  
levard Bank. Prairie Financial (Prairie), a division of Boulevard  
Bank will service the loans on behalf of the bank. In a press re-  
lease, Allied issued the following statements: "We think very  
highly of Prairie's management team and are confident that the  
Prairie staff will service these accounts with the same courtesy  
and care that the Tropic staff has offered over the years."

"While Tropic succeeded for many years in servicing the  
outdoor amusement industry, the recent costly financing and  
regulatory environment made it non-economic for Tropic to  
meet the increased demand for lending. As such, Allied decided  
to discontinue extending financing for rides and equipment and  
to focus all efforts on what Allied does best for the industry we  
know and love. As an essential part of our industry's fabric for  
over 30 years, Allied shares an expertise in understanding the  
risks and needs associated with the operations of these special-  
ized entertainment businesses. This in-depth and comprehen-  
sive knowledge gives Allied a very special and unique ability  
to meet insurance needs which other providers simply do not  
possess."

"The exceptional combined team of Allied Specialty Insur-  
ance and T.H.E. Insurance look forward to many more years of  
utilizing our operational and risk management expertise to ben-  
efit customers and the industry we consider family with the ser-  
vices that have defined Allied. We are excited about your past  
business success and look forward to helping you to continue  
to grow."

### WhiteWater AquaSphere set to debut

VICTORIA, Australia — WhiteWater West has announced  
the commission of a new and thrilling family slide complex to  
Australia's newest multi-purpose aquatic centre, The Frankston  
Regional Aquatic Center.

Currently under construction and set to open in mid-2014,  
the center will feature WhiteWater's AquaSphere, a 79-meter  
long thrill slide, combined with a 114-meter long Constrictor  
and an interactive AquaPlay.

Frankston City Council Mayor, Cr Sandra Mayer said: "We  
are incredibly thrilled to unveil the world's first AquaSphere at  
our center and know it will be an outstanding attraction for the  
local community".

"We chose WhiteWater because of their excellent reputa-  
tion for innovative attractions and designs", said Bruce Mackay,  
Frankston Regional Aquatic Center manager.

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