

First of its kind in North America

Cliff's Amusement Park opens with Larson Int'l. Giant Loop

Pam Sherborne
Amusement Today

In Albuquerque, N.M., Cliff's Amusement Park owners Linda and Gary Hays went about doing the normal chores to prepare for their 2010 season last month.

Yet, there was one thing that wasn't normal. They were also preparing to open North America's first 22-meter (72-foot) Giant Loop. Manufactured by Larson International, Plainview, Texas, the new ride replaced the smaller version installed for the 2009 season.

"We knew we were getting the larger version," said Gary Hays. "But since the larger version couldn't be ready by the 2010 season, we bought Larson's smaller version knowing we would swap it out this season."

So, when the park opened for the season April 10, so did the ride, equipped with an LED lighting package. Response has been great, Hays said, and the height of the ride is very impressive for parkgoers.

"We are very excited about it," Hays said. "It is

▶ See **CLIFFS**, page 4



AT PHOTOS / GARY SLADE

The Giant Loop, from Larson International, lights up the Cliff's nights, thanks to this impressive LED light package.

Supplied by Germany's Mack Rides

Tom & Huck's RiverBlast opens at Silver Dollar City

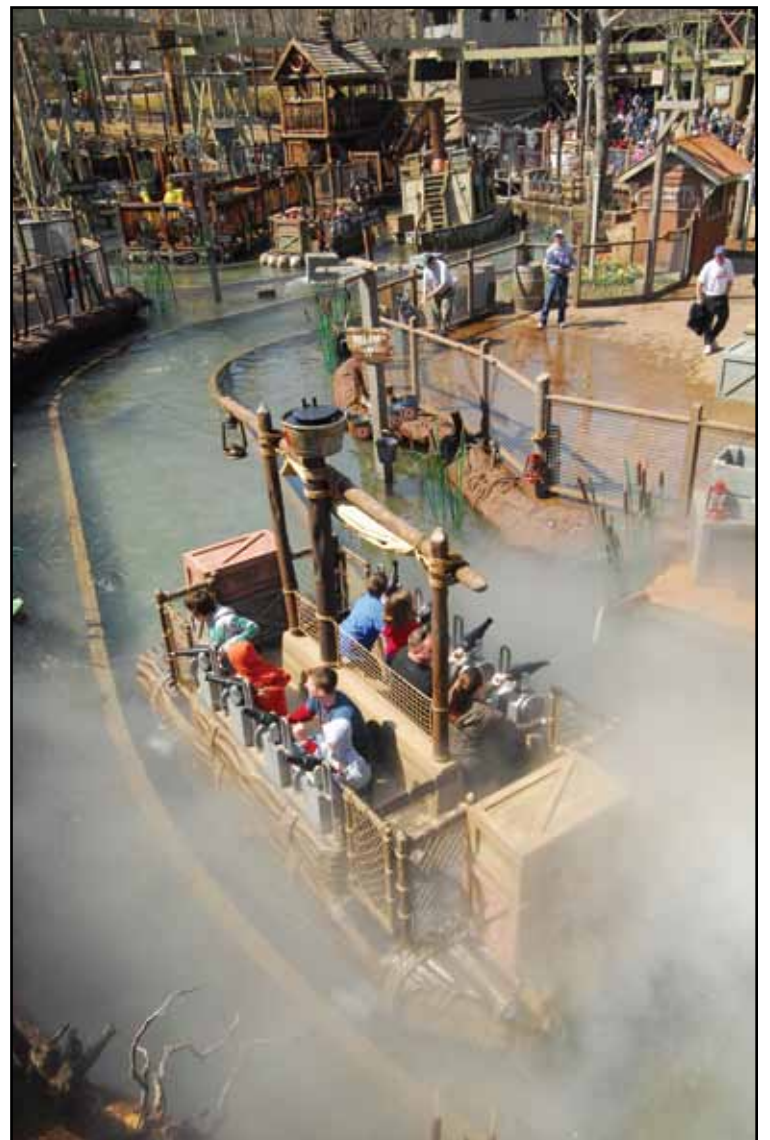
Scott Rutherford
Amusement Today

Silver Dollar City is marking its 50th anniversary this season with the introduction of Tom & Huck's RiverBlast - America's biggest water battle ride. Supplied by Mack Rides, this new interactive attraction sets the world's record as the German company's longest Boat Blaster ride built to date.

Sporting plenty of the immersive thematic details for which SDC's parent company Herschend Family Entertainment (HFE) is renowned, RiverBlast is based on the adventures of two of American writer Mark Twain's most endearing characters, Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn.

The five-minute RiverBlast experience begins with eight guests boarding one of eight rafts equipped with an equal complement of hand-powered water soakers (63 total). As the rafts are then released into the main channel, a gentle current propels them along the 570-foot-long Mighty White River. Despite the leisurely pace of the 'river,' riders instantly find themselves

▶ See **SDC**, page 6



PHOTOS COURTESY SILVER DOLLAR CITY

Silver Dollar City celebrates its 50th anniversary this season with Tom & Huck's RiverBlast, Mack Rides' longest Boat Blaster interactive water ride.

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New Six Flags CEO must correct years of wrong

While it probably comes as no surprise that recent Six Flags CEO Mark Shapiro won't be around to see this year's daily operation get underway, (he has been replaced by former Paramount Parks CEO Al Weber, Jr., who was named Interim CEO) or next year's 50th anniversary of its flagship park, Six Flags Over Texas, one does not have to look far to find what's right and what's wrong with the entire chain.

What's right

Shapiro made it known he wanted a clean park and most of all, clean restrooms. He achieved this system-wide and even upgraded and built additional restrooms. This simple move resulted into all-time highs on guest satisfaction surveys.

Shapiro was all about capacity. He removed rides and coasters that were high on down time. He gave the parks additional maintenance budgets to get rides running and at full capacity. He did the same thing in the food services departments, giving restaurants makeovers and additional cooker / fryer capacity needed to handle in-park demand.

Sponsorship. Bleeding money and trying to fight off bankruptcy, Shapiro turned to corporate sponsorship in an attempt to keep the chain afloat. While he did secure record cash in ad deals, it was not enough to save the chain from the bankruptcy process.

What's wrong, and has been wrong for years

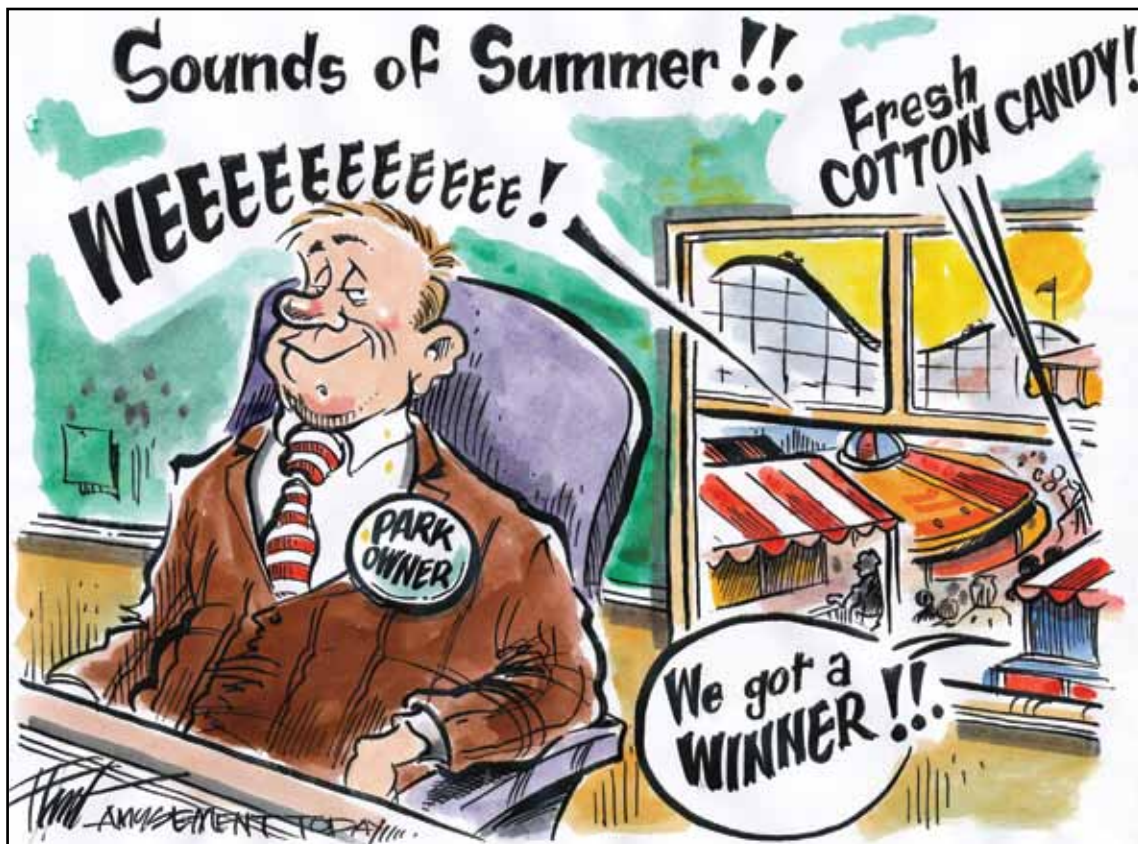
Theming. We are going to call it like it is. Six Flags does not operate theme parks any longer. They operate amusement parks that have some themes. Corporate sponsorship plastered all over coaster trains, in-park buildings and more has taken the lack of actual theming in the parks to an all-time new low.

Shows. In some parks, live stage productions were pulled in favor of less expensive to produce, video taped presentations. Just wrong in so many ways.

Poor ride selections. For many years prior to Shapiro's arrival, Six Flags focused almost exclusively on record-breaking roller coasters or DC Comic character-themed rides as a way to boost the front gate and retail. It was a "scare the hell out of them" mentality. Rarely did any of these installs fit the area's theme. Just as rare was the lost art of using stories as a device to entertain guests.

And that is exactly what the new CEO must do with Six Flags as it heads into its 50th anniversary year: return the parks to that time of "telling a story and entertaining its guests."

—Gary Slade



Scott Rutherford

Here comes the rain...again

The flooding that ravaged Tennessee and Kentucky this spring was a sobering reminder that Mother Nature is to be respected. While hurricanes are more dramatic when they pummel coastal regions, they are relatively predictable. Storm-related floods can strike almost anywhere, anytime with little to no warning.

Especially painful to watch was the news coverage of the destruction wrought on the citizens of Nashville, particularly the Gaylord Opryland Resort. Had the former Opryland theme park survived, it too would have suffered almost unthinkable damage. These same storms ravaged Beech Bend Park, which suffered its most costly flood in 73 years.

Park operators have always been at the mercy of weather. Especially vulnerable were those situated on major rivers. When in check, these vital arteries brought in crowds via steamship and ferries, but when out of control, they could prove deadly. Cincinnati's Coney Island endured a staggering number of submersions. The Ohio River's perennial flooding was a major impetus for the park's relocation and revamping into Kings Island in the 1970s.

Today, Six Flags Over Georgia, Six Flags Over



Rutherford

Texas and Valleyfair are prime examples of parks accustomed to having portions of their property and rides inundated. Even picturesque Knoebels in the Central Pennsylvania mountains has to contend with the frequent flooding of two creeks that bisect its property.

But amusement industry folk are a resilient bunch. Those who find themselves victim to weather-related disasters

immediately respond by assessing damage, rallying their forces and getting to work to reopen as soon as possible. Pitching in to help a neighbor seems to be part of our makeup. Indiana's Holiday World recently 'auctioned' themselves off to raise thousands of dollars that went directly to Nashville-area flood victims. In the same vein, AT's own Sue Nichols – who just suffered her own share of losses in the floods – spent much of her free time during and after the disaster delivering hot food and supplies to the ruined homes of her neighbors (and their pets) who lost virtually everything they owned.

I find such selflessness in the face of disaster admirable and inspiring. Bravo to those who give of themselves during difficult times like these. Bravo.

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2 MINUTE DRILL



Compiled by Janice Witherow

Dennis Speigel

International Theme Park Services, Inc.

As President of International Theme Park Services in Cincinnati, Dennis Speigel is recognized globally as a leader and expert with 50 years of experience in the amusement and attractions industry. Dennis began his career path as a ticket taker at Coney Island Amusement Park where he quickly caught the "bug" to stay in the business. He later held management positions at both Kings Island and Kings Dominion, was affiliated with Taft Broadcasting Company and served as President of IAAPA. Dennis has generously volunteered his time and expertise to the industry by sitting on many different Boards and committees over the years. In addition to his great success, Dennis is approachable, efficient and just plain fun. All this, and the man is a great chef!



Speigel

Title
President (28 years).

Number of years in the industry
Celebrating 50th year!

If I wasn't working in the amusement industry, I would be ...
A maitre d' at a swanky 5-star restaurant (How many are in your party?).

Best thing about the industry
The camaraderie, friendships and smiles we put on faces.

Favorite amusement ride
The Beast at Kings Island.

Biggest challenge facing our industry
The maturing of our industry and also coming up with alternatives and options for people to visit parks to improve their visit and work with their hectic schedules.

The thing I like most about amusement/water park season is ...
Seeing all of the people come and have a terrific time!

It's June! My favorite summertime drink is ...
A bourbon and water on my front porch in Jackson Hole!
YEE HAW!

Most bizarre favorite fashion statement at the moment
Young people who pierce their ears with those huge rings. What in the hell are their ears going to look like at my age?

My biggest fear is ...
Getting too old to enjoy going to an amusement park ... Nah, second thought, that will never happen!

The three words that best describe my car are ...
Bright, fast, sexy.

When I say Oprah, you say ...
Uma ... David Letterman tried that at the Oscars opening and flopped big time!

When ordering ice cream, I typically get ...
Butterscotch ... yum, yum.

My life motto is ...
"We are not here for a long time ... We are here for a GOOD TIME!"

If I had to eat one thing every single day, it would be ...
Artichokes. I just love those prickly little devils any way you can prepare them.

I usually call it a night at ...
11:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.

The song that always makes me want to dance is ...
Anything by Otis Redding, Wilson Pickett or The Temptations ... I love Mo-Town.

If money were no object, my next vacation would be ...
I have over 6 million air miles and have been basically everywhere because of our wonderful industry, so I am happy to just be home with the family.

My friends all call me ...
Spig ... or when they need something!

At lunch time, you can usually find me ...
With a friend ... Robert Brown, Mu Sinclair or Ron Felder ... downtown Cincinnati at one of our favorite restaurants.

The household chore I least enjoy is ...
Cutting grass ... only did it once. Hey ... I was working in parks in the summer!

This summer, I am really looking forward to ...
Swimming with my grandson Dayton in our pool we built for him. He's my best buddy!

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

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►CLIFFS

Continued from page 1

very unique in its action, because it takes riders completely upside down."

Jeff Novotny, Larson's owner, said the company had been conceptualizing the larger version for quite some time.

"There was a lot of working together with the Hays," Novotny said. "We worked with them on color, lighting and the train. We worked with them on the capacity and the loading platforms. It has been a long time since we first starting producing the smaller version."

Like the smaller version, the Giant Loop consists of two continuous and concentric rings, one fixed and one rotating. The fixed ring forms the track and supports the ride. The rotating ring is the passenger carrying system. The dual

concentric rings, one rotating within the other, forms the hubless wheel structure. The design allows the ride to operate like a ferris wheel but with no visible means of support.

The larger ride has two and one-half times more steel in it than the smaller counterpart.

"Our other versions are manufactured to go down a highway," Novotny said. "But, we did make the larger one to fit inside an ocean freight container for international transport."

The LED lighting package was added at Larson International's headquarters and supplied by Crossroads, located in Tulsa, Okla.

Even though this is the first Giant Loop in North America, it is the second one worldwide. The first was installed in an amusement park in Taiwan about 10 years ago.



AT PHOTOS / GARY SLADE

At 72 feet tall, Cliff's new Giant Loop from Larson International is not only visible height wise, but also showcases visible smiles from riders and is rapidly becoming one of the most popular rides in the park.

"That one was also custom-designed," Novotny said. "It was manufactured to withstand heavy winds associated with a typhoon."

The ride operates with

variable speed. As it goes up one side then the other, it slows as it reaches its apex until it turns the riders completely upside down. It makes the complete turn four times

going counterclockwise, then four times going clockwise.

"Our real target for this ride is the smaller to mid-size parks," Novotny said. "It is a very flexible ride, as far as theming."

Because the center is hubless and spokeless, the center section may be fixed with a sign, logo, and projection screen. The hubless ride could be used as an entrance into a park or, as Novotny said, or a route through which a coaster could go.

But, for right now, Hays said they are just using it as their new piece. Improvements were made to the area where the ride is located in the park.

"We added some games there and remodeled a bumper car building," he said. "Now we are just praying for good weather."



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Silver Dollar City's history began with Marvel Cave

Park themed to 1880s mining town celebrates its 50th in 2010

In 1946, Chicagoans Hugo and Mary Herschend vacationed in the Ozarks and discovered a tourist attraction now called Marvel Cave. By April 1950, the Herschends relocated to Branson with their teenage sons, Jack and Pete, and took over the management and tours of the cave.

After implementing improvements to make cave access easier, the Herschends researched above-ground improvements, such as creating a pleasant waiting area. They eventually settled on the idea of recreating an 1880s mining town that had once existed on



the site.

Following Hugo's death in 1955, Mary and her sons began building the 1880s Ozark village. Mary was committed to authenticity and preservation; there would be no imitation storefronts. She also insisted on preserving the natural beauty of the area, especially the trees.

The park's name originates with a promotional campaign that involved giving change to visitors in the form of silver dollars. The word-of-mouth advertising from guests spread far and wide about an exciting new destination in the Ozarks.

When SDC opened in 1960, the village was home to a blacksmith shop, a general store, an ice cream parlor, doll shop, and two 1800s authentic log structures which had been relocated and restored along with the Wilderness Church. A daily outdoor re-enactment of the infamous feud between the Hatfields and McCoys was a highlight of the entertainment.

That first year, Silver Dollar City drew more than 125,000 people, four times more visitors than the number that toured Marvel Cave. "We discovered we were in the theme park business," said



PHOTOS COURTESY SILVER DOLLAR CITY

The Flooded Mine remains one of Silver Dollar City's most beloved rides. Recently, arcade-style guns were added that allows guests to fire at targets during the indoor section.

Pete Herschend.

Under the Herschend's guidance, SDC embarked on a steady path of brand growth and expansion. Over the years, a steam train and stage coach rides were added while the long-standing tradition of craft demonstrations began. The first craft festival held at the park in 1963 had native craftsmen demonstrating 19 crafts including woodcarving, tie hacking, shingle splitting, blacksmithing, weaving, lye soap making and candlemaking. Visitors were so inter-

ested in the demonstrations that more resident craftsmen were added, including a glass blower, a weaver, a potter and a silversmith.

Today, Silver Dollar City is one of the world's most popular and charming theme parks. It has grown to encompass more than 55 acres, offering 40 shows, 22 exciting rides and attractions – including five roller coasters and four water rides – along with a showcase of America's heritage crafts with a demonstrating colony of 100 resident craftsmen. Despite its

overwhelming success, Silver Dollar City still manages to balance down home family attitude with modern theme park mentality.

While Silver Dollar City was the company's first endeavor, Herschend Family Entertainment today owns, operates and manages 24 themed entertainment properties across nine states including Tennessee's Dollywood and Georgia's Wild Adventures.

And as the Herschend clan is fond of saying, 'it all began with a hole in the ground.'

FAST FACTS

Silver Dollar City key historical dates

- 1950 - the Herschend family acquires long-term lease of Branson's Marvel Cave.
- 1960 - Silver Dollar City opens on top Marvel Cave.
- 1969 - CBS-TV's *The Beverly Hillbillies* films five episodes at SDC.
- 1972 - *Fire in the Hole*, mine-themed enclosed steel roller coaster.
- 1981 - *American Plunge* log flume.
- 1984 - *Tom Sawyer's Landing* play area featuring *Becky's Carousel*.
- 1990 - *Furniture Factory* opens
- 1993 - *Thunderation*, an *Arrow Dynamics* mine train coaster.
- 1994 - *Marvel Cave* commemorates 100 years of tourism.
- 1999 - *BuzzSaw Falls*, Premier Rides' steel coaster/water ride hybrid.
- 2001 - *Wildfire*, a B&M steel looping coaster.
- 2005 - *Powderkeg*, S&S Power air-launched steel coaster, opens from a re-working/enlargement of *BuzzSaw Falls*.
- 2006 - *The Grand Exposition* children's area.
- 2007 - *Giant Barn Swing*, S&S *Power Screamin' Swing* ride.
- 2010 - *RiverBlast*, Mack Rides interactive boat ride.



Several of Silver Dollar City's classic rides include the *American Plunge* log flume, far left, and the always popular *Fire in the Hole*, center and above.

“Not only is this the longest such ride worldwide, but with its concrete trough, the use of real river rock lining the reservoir, and great Tom Sawyer theming everywhere, HFE and the park executed a really beautiful family attraction.”

—Bob Dean, Leisure Labs LLC

SDC

Continued from page 1

embroiled in a soaking water fight. Along with battling riders on other rafts and different points along the course, they can retaliate against a total of 17 sharp shooters on the river bank who are armed with their own soakers. Additionally, RiverBlast offers riders 150 unique targets on which to fire, but even some of those shoot back. It's a safe bet that SDC's newest adventure is virtually guaranteed to get guests wet, one way or another.

Amusement Today spoke about the RiverBlast installation with Bob Dean of Leisure Labs, the company who represents Mack Rides in the U.S. "Silver Dollar City was able to integrate their Boat Blaster beautifully into the topography of the park and it is absolutely seamless with its surroundings. Not only is this the longest such ride worldwide, but with its concrete trough, the use of real river rock lining the reservoir, and great Tom Sawyer theming everywhere, HFE and the park executed a really beautiful family attraction."

Some of the more dramatic theming HFE created for the RiverBlast adventure include:

- The Foggy Bottom - a billowy blanket of fog hanging over the river to offer an atmosphere of mystery and false sense of security.

- Stuck in the Mud Surprises - a small vessel snagged while traversing the White River has scattered its cargo along the water. The floating debris, buoys and bells are filled with special effect targets, some of which fire back at the shooter.

- The Whitewash Fence - instantly recognizable from Twain's stories, the white-washed fence may seem the best place for bystanders to get a look at the action, but it's also the perfect opportunity for riders to drench those risking a peek.

- Tom & Huck's Tree Fort - Tom & Huck's makeshift tree

FAST FACTS

Ride/Park

Tom & Huck's RiverBlast
Silver Dollar City,
Branson, Mo.

Type

Interactive boat ride

Course Length

570 feet

Ride Duration

Five minutes

Ride Vehicles

Eight 8-seat rafts

Special Features

Onboard hand-powered water soakers (63 total);
land-based hand-powered water soakers (17 total);
150 targets

Manufacturer

Mack Rides, Germany

Opened

March 19, 2010

fort is every kid's dream, and filled with special targets and water guns aimed directly at riders.

- Leaky Sluice - Super soakers and shooting geysers may splash up enough fun on their own, but Tom and Huck's overhead sluice has sprung a leak and a deluge of water may fall right on the rafts.

Silver Dollar City officials are pleased with the reaction from guests to the park's new RiverBlast. "From the laughter, smiles and water-soaked crowds, it's obvious that Tom and Huck left Silver Dollar City a new adventure that our guests love. We can build the tallest, the fastest, the wildest ... but we are at our best when we create attractions that involve the entire family," said SDC Attractions Manager Kevin Lotter. "RiverBlast gave us the opportunity to create a unique and highly-themed area that fits perfectly into the storyline of our park."



PHOTOS COURTESY SDC

Sporting Herschend's trademark theming, SDC's new Tom & Huck's RiverBlast allows riders and spectators alike to engage in friendly water battles.



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Bobbejaanland presents Zorro themed show

Belgium's Bobbejaanland has a reputation to uphold when it comes to its horse shows. And the 2010 season will continue that tradition as the park stages a show based on the world-famous figure of Don Diego de la Vega, better known as Zorro, and his black steed Tornado.

Running through the end of August, the new presentation offers a specific interpretation of the legend of Zorro, and casts an original light on his relationship with Dona Esperança. The performance starts with a masked lady sitting in the audience, who attracts the hero's attention. Zorro approaches her, but she steals his horse and makes off into the distance. Zorro must find out who she is, but that entails the risk that his identity will be revealed, which he wants to avoid at all costs. What follows is a thrilling sequence of dance, acrobatics, heroic dueling, roman riding and spectacular horse stunts, with spectacular fire and light effects, and a surprising ending.

The 'Zorro' show lasts approximately 25-30 minutes and can be seen the park's Horse Arena at the Cowboy Village.

Supplied by Mack Rides

Space Fantasy opens at Universal Studios Japan

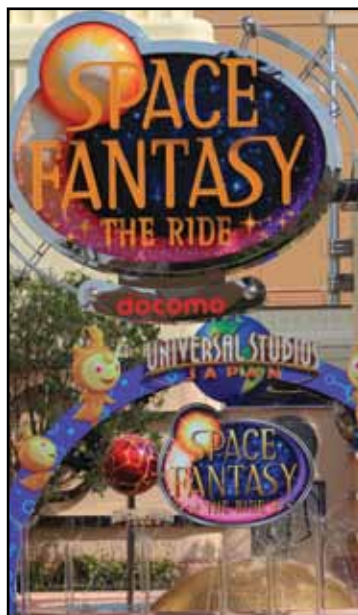
Andrew Mellor
Amusement Today

A new themed spinning coaster in the dark is the latest major ride attraction to debut at Universal Studios Japan.

Installed in an existing building which previously housed the ET Adventure attraction, it is the first installation of Mack Rides' Spinning Coaster 2.0 which utilizes a combination of free spinning and controlled spinning of the vehicles, with a drive on the bottom of each car. Thus the attraction takes advantage of both systems for different sections - the high speed thrill ride elements in which the cars are free spinning and the more serene "story telling" dark ride elements where passengers are moved in the direction of the themed areas. The systems also allow for a more comfortable ride on the lift hill and after the "uncontrolled" spinning elements.

The storyline around the ride, named Space Fantasy - The Ride, is a mission to save the sun which begins on planet Earth and takes guests on a journey into the Solar system to restore the sun's power before returning to Earth.

Describing the attraction, Mack project manager Harry Endres commented: "The creation of the layout which best fit the existing building was an exciting job. Our goal was to integrate all design elements desired by Universal Studios into the ride layout. To enable this we had to utilize the full size of the building and in some areas were forced to lead



Above, Space Fantasy - The Ride has replaced ET Adventure at Universal Studios Japan. At right, riders begin and end their Space Fantasy experience in an impressive, continually moving loading/unloading station area. PHOTOS COURTESY MACK RIDES



the track very tightly along walls and around the existing piles of the building.

"Due to building limitations the ride erection had to be planned in great detail, while in addition to this Universal Studios also had to bring in huge theming elements. The co-ordination of all

the different work at the site was a real full time job. However, the whole project was a great teamwork of all parties involved."

Space Fantasy has a track length of 595 meters (1,952 feet) and a maximum height of 7 meters (23 feet). The result is a combination of dark-ride

and high-speed thrill sections. In total 19 trains were delivered, each with two cars and seating for eight people. Ride time is 270 seconds and an impressive hourly capacity of 1,920 riders is achieved via the use of a conveyor belt station, so the trains never stop in the station.

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Kolmården to open unique Safari gondola experience

Andrew Mellor
Amusement Today

A unique new ride attraction that will take guests into the heart of a wide range of animal enclosures for an “up close and personal” experience is to be added to Kolmården Djurpark in Sweden.

Set for opening in 2011, Safari will be the world’s first zoo gondola ride and will provide a truly thrilling adventure as it takes visitors through the safari park in specially designed gondolas that will travel 2.5 meters – 20 meters (8 feet – 66 feet) above the ground. It will bring guests as close as possible to animals from around the world including lions, bears, giraffes, wolves and many others.

The announcement of this latest attraction comes on the back of Kolmården’s most successful year ever in 2009 and will mark the park’s largest single investment to date.

“Safari is a shining new example of what we do best at Parks & Resorts Scandina-



The new Safari attraction at Kolmården Djurpark will offer guests a unique, ‘up close and personal’ experience.

via,” said Jan Roy, president and CEO of the park’s owner, “create unique, high quality and innovative experiences to delight our guests of all ages. We had a fantastic 2009 and are thrilled to be able to make this kind of investment off the back of a deep recession. This is our largest investment to date – 120 million SEK (approximately U.S. \$16 million)

and a great way to celebrate and show our appreciation to our visitors.”

The new ride will feature a 2,640 meters (8,661 feet) track and gondolas will travel at a speed of 1.5 meters (5 feet) per second during the 26.5 minute experience. There will be a total of 78 gondolas each accommodating up to eight riders, providing an hourly capacity



RENDERINGS COURTESY KOLMÅRDEN DJURPARK

of 1,200.

“We wanted to create an attraction where one can experience the animals in a new and unique way,” explained park President Magnus Nilsson. “Today you travel by car through the safari park and the new attraction will be more environmentally friendly because the cable car will be run by renewable electricity.

“We expect an increase in the number of guests from about 600,000 to about 800,000 (as a result of the new attraction). A ride with Safari will be included in the entrance ticket.”

The new attraction is being built by Austria company Doppelmayr Seilbahnen GmbH.

Innovative Leisure installs major ropes course at Scotland Zoo

Innovative Leisure recently completed the installation of a major high ropes adventure course at Scotland’s Edinburgh Zoo.

Featuring a collection of challenges, the new Sky Trail offers a new form of family entertainment to the zoo and is the first installation of its type to be completed by Innovative Leisure in a U.K. zoo. The structure blends well into the surrounding landscape with its jungle theming and having been finished in outdoor natural colors.

The attraction has been installed adjacent to the award-winning Budongo Trail chimpanzee enclosure, providing participants with a ‘chimps eye view’ of the enclosure and perhaps a chance to imitate some of the climbing exploits of the adjacent primates.

The Sky Trail Discovery 10 pole at Edinburgh Zoo takes up to 25 participants at any one time, providing an hourly throughput of approximately 100. It can open with a minimum of two staff rising to three or four when at full capacity.

Scotland’s Edinburgh Zoo recently became home to major high ropes adventure course, which was designed and installed by U.K.-based Innovative Leisure.

PHOTO COURTESY INNOVATIVE LEISURE

The trail consists of a 262-foot-long track, 19 feet above the ground, and provides a challenging experience carried out in perfect safety with the use of a continuous belay system throughout the course. A series of testing elements suitable for all skill levels make up the course and, unlike on some other high ropes courses, participants are able to pass slower users at intermediate platforms using a unique node connection system, thus helping to maintain good throughput.

“We are delighted to have had the opportunity to install our first major high ropes course in such a prestigious location,” commented Innovative Leisure Managing Director Phil Pickersgill. “It’s a



truly impressive structure and blends in perfectly with its surroundings, with the special theming chosen and the materials used. Having it right next to the chimpanzee enclosure adds further to the experience too and is obviously highly appropriate.

“Fun, exciting, physically challenging activities such as those provided by major high ropes courses have grown massively in popularity with

those who take part and, in the case of children and young teens, their parents, who see them as offering a healthy alternative to other, less active options,” he added.

Also delighted with the installation is Edinburgh Zoo’s Commercial Director Gary Wilson, who said: “The first reviews from the public are all saying that they think the Sky Trail is fantastic and they will come back to the

zoo just to have another go. It is also very positive for the zoo to have this type of play equipment beside a chimpanzee enclosure where the kids can interact with the chimps in the same way the chimps play in the trees. The chimps also seem to be very interested in all that is going on and they too look to be stimulated by the experience as well as all who have a go on it.”



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BRIEF

The Great Escape opens season with new entertainment

The Great Escape & Splashwater Kingdom, Lake George, N.Y., opened for the 2010 season on May 8 with a host of renovations, top-tier entertainment and guest benefits. The Great Escape's 2010 season highlights include:

- Cinderella's Castle – Young princesses will experience even more magic as Cinderella's castle has been rebuilt from the ground up. Created straight from the fairytale, the new structure and surrounding landscape are the perfect backdrop to the Pumpkin Coach and Cinderella herself.

- Storytown Train - Featuring a journey through the early years of Storytown, USA and The Great Escape. Popular elements from the nursery rhyme themed park have been renovated and given new homes along the tracks.

Additionally, the 2010 season will offer nine new shows including the exciting live and local concert series featuring the area's best bands performing live in the Storytown section of the park. The popular Dive Theater will also be home to the new Arctic Olympic Games dive show while two new song and dance performances will run daily in the Alpine Fest Haus and Jolly Tree Theater.

Busch Gardens Tampa Bay introduces new Sesame Street children's area

Busch Gardens Tampa Bay is welcoming families this season to an all-new, Sesame Street-themed land featuring Elmo, Big Bird and all their friends. Sesame Street Safari of Fun is filled with kid-size rides, water fun, shows and memorable adventures that celebrate the spirit of Africa as Sesame Street and Busch Gardens unite to create the Florida themer's latest signature attraction.



"Only at Busch Gardens can you meet versions of the Sesame Street characters in unique African-inspired costumes and have experiences with them you can't find anywhere else," said Jim Dean, Busch Gardens' executive vice president and general manager. "With this new addition to our park, Busch Gardens really does have something for everyone. We expect to see many more families come to enjoy all that our park has to offer."

Sesame Street Safari of Fun provides rides to delight kids and kids-at-heart. A major highlight is the new junior roller coaster designed for parents and children to ride together. The 24-foot tall Air Grover (Zierer family steel coaster) features 600 feet of track that takes riders on a twisted tour of the Sahara. Other attractions include 'Oscar's Swamp Stomp' offering cool water

Fun provides rides to delight kids and kids-at-heart. A major highlight is the new junior roller coaster designed for parents and children to ride together. The 24-foot tall Air Grover (Zierer family steel coaster) features 600 feet of track that takes riders on a twisted tour of the Sahara. Other attractions include 'Oscar's Swamp Stomp' offering cool water

See **BUSCH**, page 12



PHOTOS COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS

Busch Gardens Tampa Bay's new Sesame Street Safari of Fun section includes, clockwise from top left: Air Grover, a Zierer family coaster; Lights, Camera, Imagination! show; Dine with Elmo and Bert & Ernie's Watering Hole.

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Quassy opens new SBF tower ride



PHOTOS COURTESY QUASSY

Quassy Amusement Park's new-for-2010 family tower ride - Free Fall 'N' - recently opened to rave reviews from thrillseekers. Custom built for the historic Connecticut park by Italy's SBF Visa Group, the tower's square gondola seats up to 12 riders and reaches a maximum height of 35 feet. Additionally, SBF outfitted Free Fall 'N' with a state-of-the-art LED computerized lighting system.

►BUSCH Continued from page 11

fun, and 'Bert & Ernie's Watering Hole,' a wet adventure filled with bubblers, geysers, jets, dumping buckets and more. 'Big Bird's 123-Smile with Me' photography studio gives kids the chance to share a hug and a smile with Sesame Street friends, and musical performances bring safari tales to life. The new destination for family-friendly adventure replaces Land of the Dragons and doubled its size to 2.5 acres.

In addition to the rides and play areas, families can

watch their favorite characters on the big screen. Sesame Street presents *Lights, Camera, Imagination!* daily in the park's 4-D theater, located in Timbuktu. The movie features Elmo, Cookie Monster, Big Bird and other lovable Sesame Street characters trying to save the Sesame Street Film Festival. Their adventures are brought to life with zany 4-D gags and special effects like wind, water and other surprises.

Guests can share breakfast or lunch with Elmo and friends on select days at an outdoor dining facility in Sesame Street Safari of Fun. Fill up on hugs from everyone's favorite char-

acters, delicious food served buffet-style and family together-time during these unique dining experiences. The menu includes items sure to please both adults and kids.

Fans of Sesame Street can celebrate their birthdays at Sesame Street Safari of Fun. From a Dine with Elmo to an exclusive party for a group from 20 to 50 that includes front of the line access to Air Grover and reserved seating for the daily show, Sesame Street Safari of Fun is the new destination for family friendly birthday parties. More information can be found at: SesameStreetSafari-OfFun.com.

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Rides-4-U helps park with initial ride package

New park opens along the Daytona Beach boardwalk

Pam Sherborne
Amusement Today

The 48,000-square-foot lot along the Daytona Beach (Fla.) boardwalk, which now sports a new amusement park, bears little resemblance today to the dusty, bare area it was just a few short months ago.

In fact, park owner Stan Manousos was granted a green light just this past March that allowed him to go ahead with plans of installing a cluster of amusement rides and new landscaping now called The Boardwalk Amusements and Rides.

It was a rush, but it came to fruition. It opened Saturday, May 8.

"So far, it has been well received," said Brian Fish, director. "There was certainly a need there and we were happy to fill it."

The rides are a Chance Giant Wheel, a Dartron Hurricane, a Sellner Tilt, and a Fredrickson slide. Manousos worked with Len Soled, Rides 4-U in securing those rides.

In addition, Fish said a go-kart track should be opening sometime at the first of June.

"We will also have two or three smaller kiddie rides soon, but I don't know the specifics," he said. "We wanted something for the smaller

kids so we can have a good mix. They should be in about the same time as the go-kart."

Fish said there are no food and beverage operations at the new park and he didn't think they would go in that direction. The neighbors on both sides of the park, Mardi Gras to the south and Joyland to the north, are arcade operations operating food and beverage. Joyland also has a slingshot type attraction.

The Boardwalk Amusements and Rides is landscaped with grass, flowers and a fountain.

Soled also has heard things are going well.

"I think the only downside I have heard is that the lights on the Giant Wheel are attracting the turtles," he said. "It is mating season and they are running toward the lights."

"This is one of just a few start-up parks this season," he said.

Manousos, a local businessman, is part owner of the Daytona Lagoon waterpark, just about a five-minute walk from the new park. He is leasing the spot from a group of businessmen and investors.

The area had been home to Midway Fun Center, Pizza King and other businesses leveled by a wrecking ball in 2007. Rumors had abounded since



Daytona Beach now has a new place for funseekers. Called The Boardwalk Amusements and Rides, the park, which opened on May 8, features a handful of rides including a Chance Giant Wheel and Dartron Hurricane. A go-kart track, shown here under construction is expected to open in early June. PHOTOS COURTESY BOARDWALK

then about what might go there, such as an amusement park similar to what Manousos has built or even a hotel. Manousos said if the hotel is ever built, he will just move

his rides somewhere else.

He plans to keep the park open year-round.

Fish, who also oversees the waterpark, said the park will be open from 1-10 p.m.,

Sunday-Thursdays and 11 a.m. to midnight on the weekends.

"But, once our tourist season gets going, we may stay open until 2 a.m. on the weekends," Fish said.



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CORRECTIONS

In our recent coverage of the opening of Kings Dominion's new Intimidator 305 gigacoaster, we credited the ride's designer as Intamin AG, which was what the park published in its own press releases in print and online. The park's information was apparently incorrect as Sandor Kernacs has requested the ride's designer to be listed as IntaRide LLC.

AT would like to clarify details involving our coverage last month of the new-for-2010 improvements at Georgia's Wild Adventures. The multi-year renovation of the park's Cheetah wooden coaster was initiated by Great Coasters International, Inc. in 2008, which included a complete re-profile and re-banking of the back turnaround and the first half of the figure-8 element. The most recent enhancements on Cheetah were completed by The Gravity Group, who worked alongside park staff in an effort to further improve the ride's performance.

From BRC Imagination Arts

NASA's Kennedy Space Center opens Exploration Space

The fifth collaboration between NASA, The Kennedy Space Center and BRC Imagination Arts has opened its doors to the public. Exploration Space, a 10,000-square foot attraction that is among the most technically complicated exhibits at the Kennedy Space Center Visitors Complex, puts visitors at the center of the future of space travel, inspiring young visitors to play an active role in making the next 20 years of space exploration a truly revolutionary mission.

Exploration Space is the first attraction at the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex to examine the near future of space exploration. Rather than celebrating the accomplishments of the past, Exploration Space is about what's potentially ahead: from new spacecraft concepts to a life-sized Lunar Electric Rover and the latest spacesuit technology, explorers of all ages get a glimpse into the future of space travel, today.

"Exploration Space combines the best of live theater, interactive exhibits and new media to engage, encourage and educate young audiences in particular," said Matthew Solari, director of education development at BRC Imagination Arts.

Filled with light, color, sound and energy, Exploration Space features large-scale digital projections, dimensional exhibits and immersive experiences, inviting guests to become a part of the future of space exploration. The main show, *Explorers Wanted*, runs approximately twice an hour, transforming the entire space into a live theater environment with a compelling message that there is room for all kinds of people in the future of space exploration.

"Exploration Space is a story about potential – not just of space travel but also of each individual, and how we can contribute to future missions," added Bob Rogers, BRC's founder and chief cre-

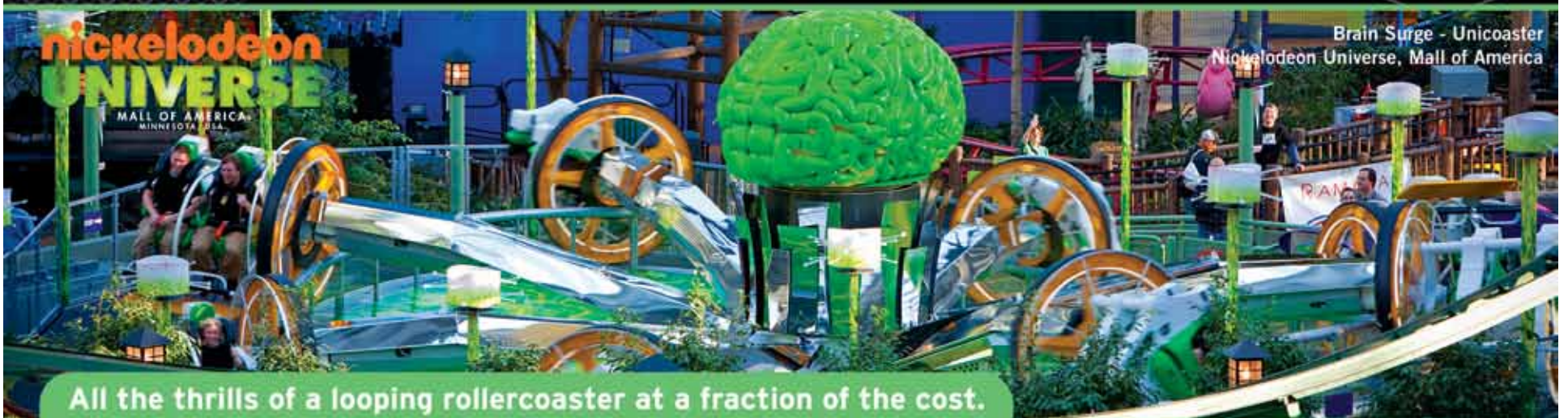


NASA's new Exploration Space attraction lets visitors view, clockwise from top: Spacecraft Development, Lunar Electric Rover, and Approach and Descent exhibits. PHOTOS COURTESY NASA

ative officer. Rogers has served on several NASA committees advising the space program and received the NASA Public Service Medal in 2002.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

New book, Web site celebrates Ferris wheels

Circles in the Sky is the first full-length biography of George Ferris, civil engineer, inventor, and pioneer in the development of structural steel in bridge building. Author Richard Weingardt details the story of the original Ferris Wheel, revealing rare details about Ferris, his life and times, and how the Wheel brought about his downfall. The book further explores the story of the Ferris clan, a classic American family of pioneers, ranchers, and entrepreneurs.

Published by the American Society of Civil Engineers, *Circles in the Sky* appeals to anyone interested in engineering marvels, history, and the Ferris wheel, which reminds us that America was built by dreamers and innovators such as George W. G. Ferris Jr.

The book's companion Web site (www.ferris-wheel.org) includes a map of major wheels around the world, a game to identify pictures of some of these, and a competition to share stories of readers' favorite Ferris experiences. Along with a photo gallery, an interactive diagram of the original Wheel, biography of George Ferris, and excerpts from the book.

Camden Park adds Zamperla Rockin' Tug

West Virginia's charming, family-owned Camden Park kicked off its 107th season on May 1 with the addition of the Camden Princess, a Rockin' Tug that Italy's Zamperla custom-designed for the Mountain State's only surviving amusement park.

Camden Park General Manager Jack Boylin had Zamperla outfit the new ride as a sternwheeler in homage to the Camden Queen, a river boat that plied the waters for 14 years at the park.

The Camden Princess is situated in the secluded lower end of the park adjacent to the WV Log Flume. "The more we have to do on that end, the more time that people are spending down there," said Boylin, whose grandfather J.P., ran the park for more than 50 years. "We like this ride because it is a family ride. It seats 24 people and has a rocking motion built in, and while it rocks it spins so it goes clockwise and counter clockwise at the same time."

Boylin said even though it was a difficult ride to put into a tight space, he enjoyed working with the family-owned Zamperla.

"We try and add a big attraction every year and so we're trying to get everything nice and well rounded," Boylin said. "This works well here themed

with the Log Fume and our history with the stern-wheeler theme. The log flume is one of our most popular rides, so it's nice to have something nearby. We think that is one of the prettiest parts of park, especially if you're looking at the golf course across the lake."

Jay Gillian wins Ocean City Mayor's seat

Jay Gillian, owner of Gillian's Wonderland Pier in Ocean City, N.J., and Gillian's Funland in Sea Isle City, N.J., was elected mayor of Ocean City on May 11, defeating his opponent by more than 1,000 votes.

Gillian said his campaign theme was about bring the community back together.

Summer Nightastic! returns to Disneyland

Guests visiting California's Disneyland Resort this season are in for a real treat as *Summer Nightastic!* returns, bringing with it the all: new *World of Color* presentation.

Presented on Paradise Bay, 'World of Color' is a major milestone in the multi-year expansion of Disney's California Adventure park. The show combines hundreds of versatile, performing fountains, popular Disney music and an all-new kaleidoscope of audio and visual effects, including both classic and new animation projected on giant screens of water. 'World of Color' takes the audience on an imaginative, emotional journey into the colorful worlds of Disney classics such as *The Lion King* and *The Little Mermaid* along with Disney Pixar films including *Toy Story* and *Finding Nemo*.

"Nighttime is especially exciting during the summer at Disneyland and Disney's California Adventure parks," said George A. Kalogridis, president of Disneyland Resort. "The addition of *World of Color* to our *Summer Nightastic!* entertainment program continues to raise the bar for the after-dark experience at Disneyland Resort."

The premiere of *World of Color* will add new sparkle to the lineup of favorite nighttime experiences in Disneyland and Disney's California Adventure. A formidable, fire-breathing dragon joined the cast of *Fantasmic!* last summer, and the *Magical* fireworks spectacular also debuted in 2009, sending Dumbo into the air over Sleeping Beauty Castle for the first time.

Summer Nightastic! 2010 premieres June 11, and



PHOTOS COURTESY DISNEYLAND RESORT

World of Color will be the newest component of Disneyland Resort's Summer Nightastic! which includes the Magical fireworks show (above) and Fantasmic! (below).



continues nightly through Sunday, Aug. 29, at Disneyland and Disney's California Adventure. *Magical* fireworks continue through Labor Day weekend. *World of Color* and *Fantasmic!* will continue to entertain guests on select dates year-round.

Guests will enjoy magical thrills in the popular *Fantasmic!* spectacular on the Rivers of America in Frontierland. Recent enhancements include the climactic transformation of the evil Maleficent from *Sleeping Beauty* into a fully animated 40-foot-tall dragon. The show has also added digital video technology and an appearance by Flotsam and Jetsam, the slithering eels who serve Ursula the Sea Witch in *The Little Mermaid*.

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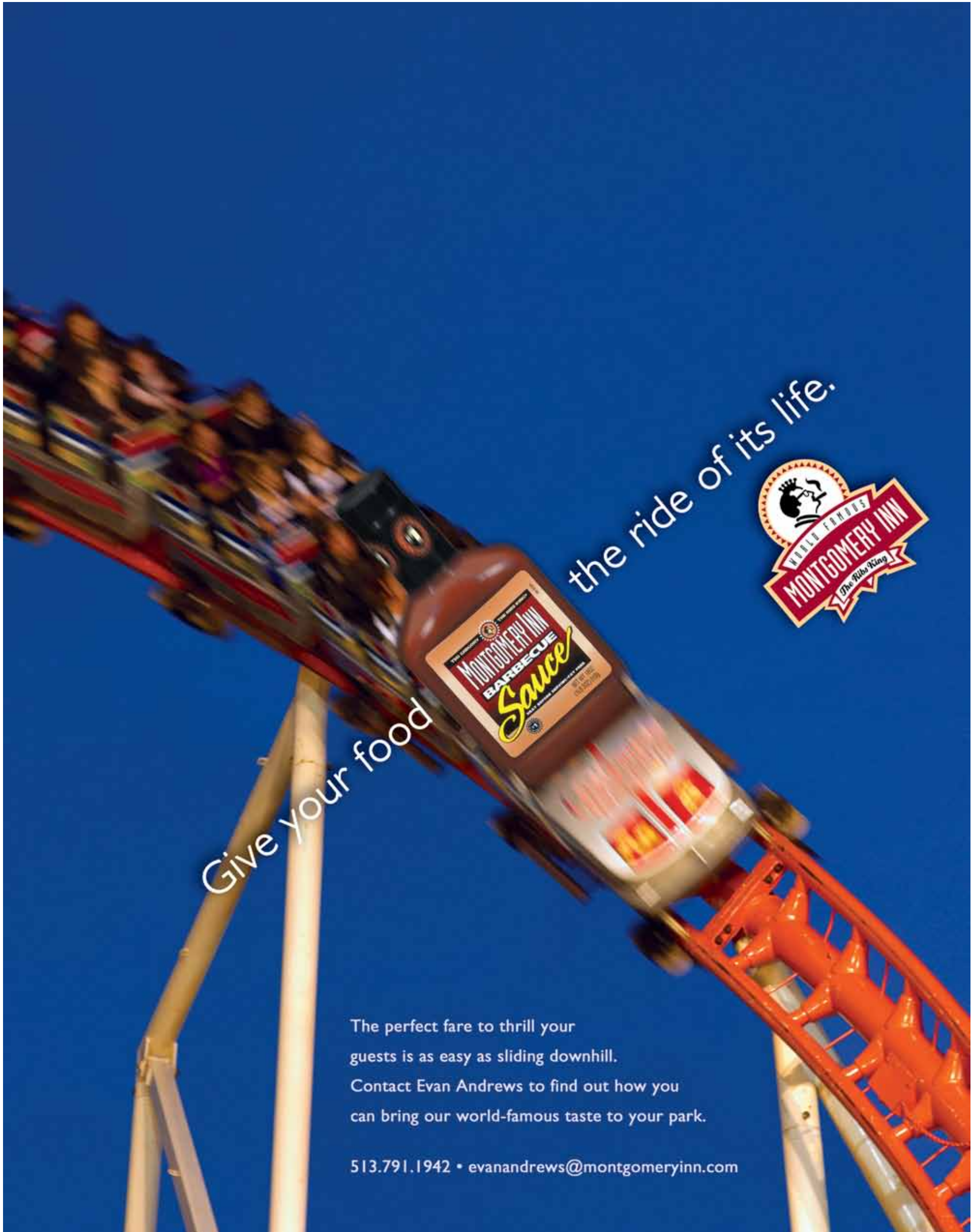
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BRIEF

Myrtle Waves celebrates 25th anniversary

Myrtle Waves, a PARC Management waterpark located in Myrtle Beach, S.C., is getting a facelift for its 25th season including a new roadside marquee, 11 pool-side private cabanas, new landscaping and parking lot overhaul, as well as remodeling and refinishing the Ocean in Motion Wave Pool, two restrooms, Sharkies Snack Shack, and the Island Café. Myrtle Waves has also added new colors on rides and attractions throughout the park.

"We're extraordinarily excited to unveil the park this year," said Myrtle Waves' General Manager Graham Faris. "What better a way to celebrate our 25th season than pulling back the curtain on an off-season loaded with improvements?"

Newly-installed tropical-themed cabanas will offer guests daily rentals of a private, shaded retreat with call-in wait service and other exclusive perks including free locker rentals and discounts on food & beverage orders, retail, and more. "Our new pool-side cabanas afford us a great opportunity to offer an exclusive guest experience while giving the park a fresh and clean look at the same time," said Vince Nicoletti, director of marketing for PARC Myrtle Beach.

Slide equipment provided by WhiteWater West

CoCo Key Hotel and Water Resort opens in Orlando

Tim Baldwin
Amusement Today

In May of 1970, prior to the opening of Walt Disney World and the plethora of attractions that would soon make the area the world's playground, a pioneer named Finley Hamilton opened I-Drive's original hotel. Originally built as the Hilton Inn South, it was nicknamed "Finley's Folly" as no one thought it could be successful being so far from downtown Orlando. To his pleasure, Finley's foresight proved to be hugely successful. Even Disney executives stayed at the property as Walt Disney World was being completed. Today, the facility lies right in the heart of the action – centered on I-Drive between the Universal Orlando resort and SeaWorld.

Of course, during the past 40 years, the property has been known by different names. It changed hands to become a Ramada and then eventually the Legacy Grand Hotel. In 2008, the latest owners, CNL Lifestyle Properties, purchased the property and began a \$19 million renovation last spring. On April 15, 2010, CoCo Key Hotel and Water Resort Orlando opened to the public. Its aim is to capture the spirit and feel of Key West. It is the 10th property in the CoCo Key chain.

This re-imagining of the property came complete with a 54,000 square-foot waterpark. Geared toward families, the waterpark facility offers fun and thrills no matter the age.



For the bigger thrills, three waterslides are geared toward the more adventurous. Three pools provide exercise and relaxation. An outdoor children's play island offers interactive fun that includes water cannons, slides and a sizable 400-gallon tipping bucket that offers its deluge every few minutes. And for the youngest of all resort guests, a play area geared toward the small ones provides a zero depth entry pool.

With the more high profile capital supplied by WhiteWater West, CoCo Key offers guests a two-person Boomerango slide. "This is my favorite slide," says Richard Jackson, director of sales and marketing. "It provides guests with near-vertical sliding complete with moments of weightlessness. It is very unique and the first such attraction in all of Florida. It's a real thrill!"

Surfer Splash and Over the Falls are more traditional bodyslides, with the Surfer Splash being milder than the twisted Over the Falls, a high speed enclosed thrill slide.

Several areas seem to accommodate particular ages and specific likes. Minnow Lagoon is designed for the very

► See COCO KEY, page 20



CoCo Key Hotel and Water Resort has opened in Orlando, Fla. In the mix of new waterpark equipment is this slide tower, with Boomerango slide from WhiteWater West. Below, hotel guests can still enjoy the traditional setting of a swimming pool.
AT PHOTOS/
SAMMY PICCOLA



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Australia's Wet 'n' Wild Water World to get first models

WhiteWater West launches Dueling AquaLoop waterslides

WhiteWater West Industries Ltd., based in Richmond, B.C., Canada, has announced the launch of the Dueling AquaLoops waterslides, expanding the AquaLoop family with a thrilling new design that doubles capacity and takes guest entertainment to a whole new level.

The Dueling AquaLoops are a unique configuration of WhiteWater's immensely popular AquaLoop looping

waterslide.

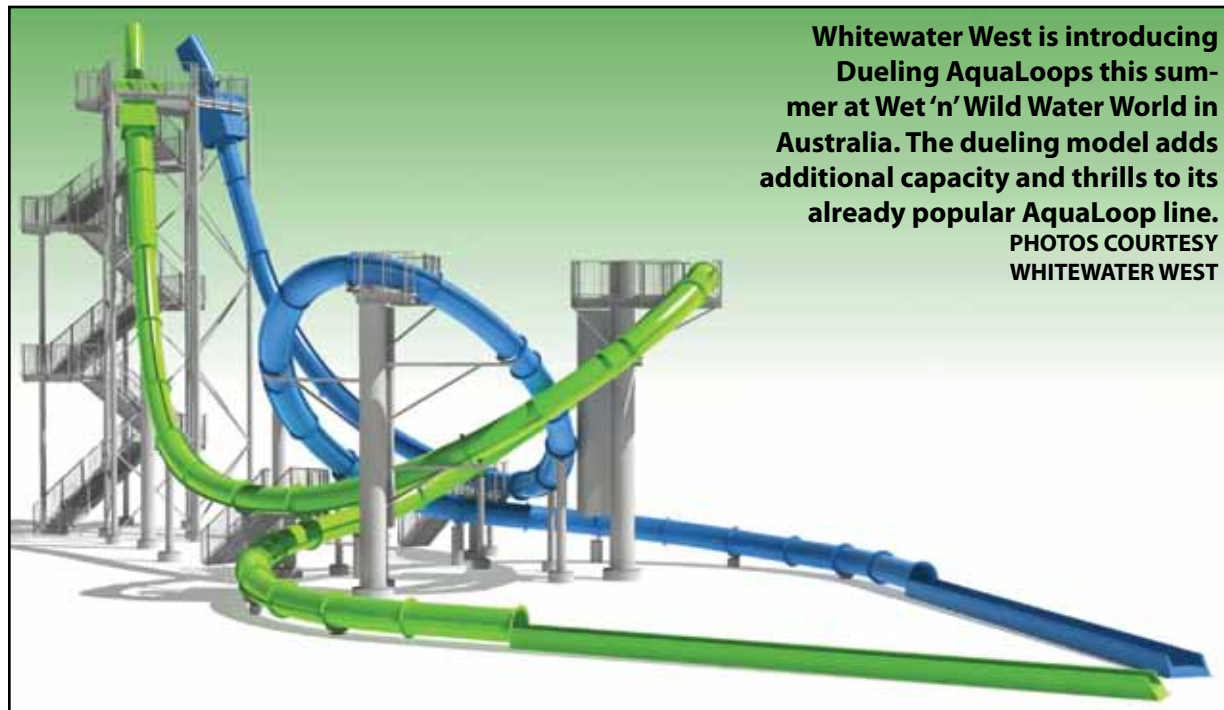
The Dueling AquaLoops put one rider against another in a head-to-head speed challenge, delivering heart-pounding excitement for riders and offering entertainment for spectators below. Starting from a single tower, riders stand inside the launch capsules and await the countdown. 3...2...1...go! The floor drops and riders plunge 45 feet (17 meters) down, accelerating to speeds of nearly 38 mph

(60 km/h), hurtling up and over the near-vertical loop as more than 2.4 G's press their bodies against the flume before they splash into the runoff.

The first Dueling AquaLoops – two of them, totaling four AquaLoops – are currently being installed at Wet'n'Wild Water World in Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia.

"The Dueling AquaLoops are one of the most exciting waterslide concepts to

hit the market in a long time", says Bob White, general manager of Wet'n'Wild Water World. "Sending guests on a head-to-head race through the trap doors, down the flumes and around the nearly vertical loops will be amazing. We loved the idea so much; we're putting in four AquaLoops! The ride has already generated unprecedented interest from our guests, so we are looking forward to a great summer!"



Whitewater West is introducing Dueling AquaLoops this summer at Wet 'n' Wild Water World in Australia. The dueling model adds additional capacity and thrills to its already popular AquaLoop line.

**PHOTOS COURTESY
WHITEWATER WEST**



► COCO KEY

Continued from page 19

youngest visitors. A zero-depth entry pool along with mushroom water features and pint-size slides offer a lot of wet fun. On a bigger scale, Parrot's Perch is an interactive play island with cannon features, slides and a 400-gallon tipping bucket that never fails to draw screaming guests enthusiastic to be absolutely soaked under its roaring waterfall. Coral Reef Cove is geared toward teens with its water volleyball areas and Cyclone waterslide. For a more secluded feel, CoCo's Beach offers a relaxing experience with chaise lounges, a hot tub, a fire pit, and a tiki bar.

In addition to the waterpark additions, the resort offers other amenities to keep guests entertained when taking a break from the more hectic schedule of the nearby mega-parks. TradeWinds is a full service restaurant that features a breakfast buffet and dining during dinner hours. The casual environment complements the tropical fare on

the menu. A food court area in the waterpark section is available to guests from 6:00 a.m. to midnight. Other food options are available, including room service. Key Quest Arcade is a 6,500 square-foot state-of-the-art video arcade. Resort guests also receive free transportation to and from the Universal and SeaWorld parks.

CoCo Key is savvy enough not to compete with the area's larger parks. Vicki Johnson, communications representative for CoCo Key, says the property is on a different level. "Based on feedback from our guests who have experienced other area waterpark hotels, CoCo Key is a more complete waterpark experience." At the same time, the resort isn't on a massive scale such as the nearby long-standing Wet 'n' Wild or the newer Aquatica. "The bigger parks are geared for older audiences, charge significantly more and don't have a hotel attached to them."

The resort features 391 spacious guest rooms, including eight two-bedroom suites and four junior suites. The \$19 million renovation has

seen plenty of upgrades to the rooms. High definition TVs, in-room Wi-Fi access, and granite showers and countertops are now the norm. A fitness center and business center also help meet the needs of those staying overnight. Depending on the season, room rates range from \$99 - \$149.

However, a hotel stay isn't required to enjoy the property. Resort guests receive a super value of enjoying the waterpark for only \$19 per room (up to four people). A family of four can relax and enjoy it all for less than \$5 a person, which makes for a nice break from a busy vacation schedule. Non-resort guests can come in and enjoy the waterpark as a day guest for \$19.95 per person, and Florida residents even receive a discount rate of \$14.95.

"CoCo Key is somewhat like a cruise ship on land," Johnson tells *Amusement Today*. "It offers something for everyone...thrilling waterpark rides, a firepit, a terrific tropical pool in an area separate from the waterpark, completely renovated rooms, quick service

dining, full service restaurant, awesome guest service and an enviable location with quick access to all area theme parks." Johnson quips, "Okay, so cruise ships don't have that last one. That gives CoCo Key a leg up."

More of a variation on the typical indoor waterpark, Florida's climate allows the resort to operate the waterpark facility with portions under a canopy. Johnson says, "The Orlando resort offers an ideal setting for guests. It puts the guests in complete control of how they'd like to experience the waterpark. Those eager to bask in the Florida sunshine can opt for the park's waterslides and Parrot's Perch found in the outdoor portion, along with an area of chaise lounges and tables and chairs." Johnson adds, "Others who prefer a more shaded experience for themselves and their young children can enjoy the park's canopied covered section which includes Minnow's Lagoon, Coral Reef Cove and the Wet Rooster bar." Add to this that even with the few weeks the property has been open,

the service staff has been garnering rave reviews on travel sites.

Hotel Manager Frank Key also explains the Cylleinius cashless system guests are able to utilize. "Parents eager to maximize their own time at CoCo Key will appreciate the cashless convenience found across the resort." Key explains to *Amusement Today*, "Upon check-in families receive bar-coded wristbands that allow items like snacks and arcade cards to be charged back to their rooms. The system lets parents set limits to help control kids' spending, and allows them to enjoy quality time around the resort."

Backed up to I-4, CoCo Key may be new, but not undiscovered. An eight foot wall keeps the traffic out and tropics in. Still, drivers are bound to see the newest kid on the block with the tallest attractions jutting skyward at the side of the road. With all the excess that surrounds a massive Orlando vacation, a more relaxing, moderate pace just might fill the bill for many Florida audiences.



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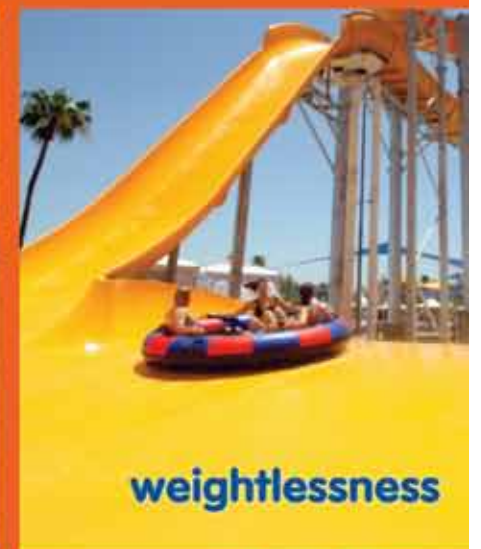
high thrill drops

Ocean World, Korea



going vertical

Ocean World, Korea



weightlessness

Wet 'n' Wild, Arizona



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New Royal Caribbean ship launches two FlowRider Doubles

During the first week of November 2009, Royal Caribbean International's Oasis of the Seas departed the shipyard in Turku, Finland and headed out of the Baltic Sea and into the open ocean.

After an investment of \$1.4 billion and millions of man hours, the 20-story-tall Oasis of the Seas had to clear one last barrier before being in the clear: the Danish bridge called the Great Belt Bridge. Oasis of the Seas cleared the bridge with two feet to spare. Perhaps the 110,000 gallons of water stored on the ship to power the Double FlowRiders in the stern gave the ship that extra two feet of clearance.

Oasis of the Seas is a miracle of modern maritime engineering. Standing 1,180 feet long, 154 feet wide, 240 feet high and weighing in at 225,000 gross tons, Royal Caribbean

International's Oasis of the Seas is one of the engineering marvels of the 21st Century. The largest cruise ship in the world packs an incredible amount of accommodation, food options and entertainment into one ship, which will comb the seven seas with as many as 5,400 guests and 2,160 crew in 2,700 staterooms.

Oasis of the Seas is a ship divided up into seven "neighborhoods:" Central Park, the Royal Promenade, Pool and Sports Zone, Vitality at Sea Spa and Fitness Center, Entertainment Place and Youth Zone. The Boardwalk area in the stern of the ship features the AquaTheater an ocean-sized pool that goes as deep as 21 feet in the diving area, and holds 139,000 gallons of water. According to Royal Caribbean, the AquaTheater in the Boardwalk is "a remark-



RENDERING COURTESY WAVE LOCH

This rendering shows the location of the two FlowRiders located on the pool deck of Royal Caribbean's new Oasis of the Seas. The FlowRider Doubles debuted in Nov. 2009.

able outdoor venue at the stern of Oasis of the Seas with a backdrop of the ocean across the horizon. The amphitheater-style space will celebrate water with a full-spectrum of day and night options, includ-

ing professional diving and theatrical performances. The first of its kind and the most technologically-advanced area of the ship, the AquaTheater will be a complete sensory experience that plays on the element of surprise, as the latest technology and design features amaze audience members."

The Pool and Sports Zone also "celebrates water" with

the addition of not one but two FlowRiders – the flowing "sheet wave" technology developed by Wave Loch of La Jolla, Calif. While Oasis of the Seas cruises through the seas at a top speed of 26 knots, displacing 225,283 gross tons of water, each FlowRider flows 55,000 gallons of water to create an endless wave that is enjoyed by all ages: from kids riding bodyboards, to the more advanced, standup flowboarders.

Oasis of the Seas is the second generation of Royal Caribbean ships to feature the FlowRider. Currently, there are three ships in the Freedom-class cruising the high seas, with one FlowRider in the stern. Royal Caribbean learned from these three ships that their guests want to ride waves while riding on the bounding main, and that the inclusion of the FlowRider helped to make the Freedom-class ships one of the most popular Royal Caribbean ships ever, and among the most popular at sea.

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ProSlide's SuperLoop makes debut

WhiteWater World at Dreamworld on the Gold Coast of Australia recently introduced the first ProSlide SuperLoop.

Appropriately dubbed The Wedgie, the experience begins at a height of 58 feet where riders climb into the launch capsule (ProSlide SkyBox) positioned over a near-vertical drop. With ankles crossed and their hands behind their head, the floor suddenly drops out and they are propelled into a narrow 32-inch enclosed tunnel, instantly accelerate to a top speed of 38 feet per second. Powerful positive-Gs glue them to the side of the wall as they negotiate the tight 360-degree SuperLoop. A quick final drop leads to the run-out at the bottom of the slide.

Just as is the case with many of ProSlide's other speed slides, the SuperLoop has no weight restrictions and is available to any riders who meet the 48-inch minimum height requirement.

The SuperLoop opened to the public on April 2.



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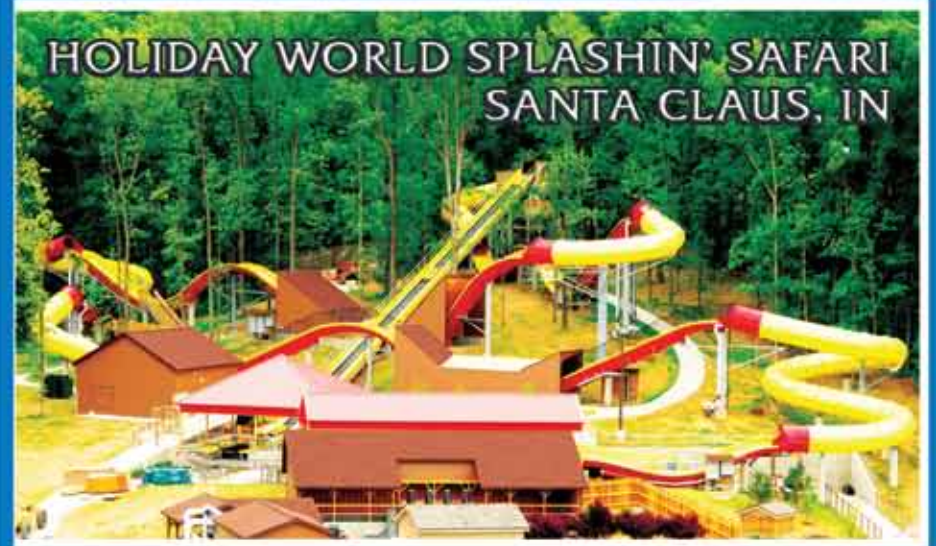
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BRIEF

Recent IAAPI Expo deemed success in India

The Indian Association of Amusement Parks & Industries (IAAPI) for the 10th time played host to India's largest amusement, leisure and entertainment Expo in Mumbai, India. The show was held March 18-20, 2010 at the Bombay Exhibition Center.

The Expo enjoyed participation of more than 80 exhibitors from many countries including Argentina, Belgium, Canada, China, Finland, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Philippines, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand, The Netherlands, U.A.E., U.K. & U.S.A. The number of visitors increased substantially compared to the last year.

Officials found that many first time exhibitors found IAAPI Expo a perfect platform to find the right business clientele. The annual trade event is getting international acclamation with the every increasing number of foreign participants.

IAAPI's 11th Expo is slated for March 15-17, 2011 at the Bombay Exhibition Center, Goregaon East, Mumbai, India. For more details, visit: www.iaapi.org.

North Carolina's Ghost Town in the Sky finds buyer

Scott Rutherford
Amusement Today

U.S. Bankruptcy Court Judge George Hodges approved a deal on May 4 for American Heritage Family Parks LLC to purchase North Carolina's Ghost Town in the Sky theme park. Headed by Al Harper, owner of the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad (www.gsmr.com), the deal involves paying \$7 million to BB&T, who is Ghost Town's largest creditor. Additionally, \$105,000 in back taxes will go to Haywood County while another \$300,000 will be parceled out to smaller creditors owed



Maggie Valley's Ghost Town in the Sky

money from the park.

Harper says he made the offer to buy Ghost Town because he honestly believes the unique mountaintop park can

be returned to its former glory, and that its reopening and success is crucial to Western North Carolina tourism.

Despite the scheduled

payouts, Ghost Town still owes approximately \$2.5 million to several other small businesses, and it is possible that many of them will never be reimbursed. "That's what makes this deal a bittersweet victory for everyone involved," said Steve Shiver, Ghost Town's current CEO. He added that it was the only option if they wanted to keep Ghost Town open for the people of Maggie Valley.

Though the approval of Ghost Town's purchase technically paves its way back to viability, as of press time it was unclear if the park would be open for the 2010 season.

Al Weber named Six Flags President and Interim CEO

Six Flags Entertainment Corporation announced on May 12 that Al Weber, Jr., former president and CEO of Paramount Parks, Inc., has been named Six Flags President and Interim Chief Executive Officer, effective immediately. The company is retaining an executive search firm and will consider both internal and external candidates to serve as permanent CEO.

"I am excited to have this opportunity to serve as President and Interim Chief Executive Officer of Six Flags," said Weber. "The company has made great strides to improve park operations and has significantly reduced its outstanding debt, paving the way for Six Flags to continue investing in its operations to provide an even more enjoyable experience for the whole family."

In an E-mail to Six Flags employees, outgoing President and CEO Mark Shapiro said, "With the company's financial restructuring now complete, the new board and I have agreed to part ways. Although sadness is with me as I write this last note to you, there also is an enormous amount of pride and gratification in the way we held together to bring this company back from

the precipice. Six Flags is in better shape today than it was five years ago – better, because of each and every one of you."

Under Shapiro's leadership, Six Flags achieved all-time record highs in guest satisfaction surveys, saw money put back into the parks to improve aging facilities and witnessed record revenue from corporate sponsorships.

All of this comes on the heels of Six Flags Entertainment Corp. (formally Six Flags Inc.) emerging from Chapter 11 bankruptcy. The terms of the restructuring were confirmed by the Court effective as of April 30, 2010.

The restructuring reduced Six Flags Entertainment's indebtedness and mandatorily redeemable preferred stock from approximately \$2.7 billion at December 31, 2009 to approximately \$1.0 billion at emergence (excluding seasonal drawings under the company's revolving credit facility at emergence). As a result, the company's annual cash interest expense will be significantly reduced to approximately \$75 million. The restructuring also included \$725 million in new equity committed by the new shareholders. The plan also provides

for payment in full of all of the company's trade creditors.

An application is expected to be made to list the new common stock of Six Flags Entertainment on the New York Stock Exchange.

First Quarter earnings

Six Flags Entertainment Corporation (formerly Six Flags, Inc.) announced on May 17 its consolidated operating results for the quarter ended March 31, 2010.

Total revenue of \$57.3 million increased 12 percent from the prior-year quarter's total of \$51.1 million, primarily reflecting \$4.3 million of revenues from the Six Flags Great Escape Lodge and Indoor Waterpark, the results of which were consolidated in the first quarter of 2010 as a result of adopting new consolidation accounting rules.

Per capita guest spending, which excludes sponsorship, licensing and other fees, increased 3 percent to \$35.44 in the first quarter of 2010 from \$34.27 in the prior-year quarter, reflecting increased per capita in-park spending, partially offset by decreased season pass pricing.

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Chance Morgan modifies rides for the park

Morgan's Wonderland, a fun park for special needs, opens in San Antonio

Pam Sherborne
Amusement Today

It's unusual for a park official to say, "It's not about how many tickets we sell at the door."

But, those were the very words Dave Force, general manager, Morgan's Wonderland, San Antonio, Texas, used about his new facility. Force retired from SeaWorld San Antonio after spending 34 years with the company. He told *Amusement Today* he was very excited to be part of this first endeavor.

"It's about our guests experiencing something for the first time in their lives," Force said.

Morgan's Wonderland is being touted as the world's first ultra accessible family fun park. Every feature, building, attraction, playground, and ride on the 25 acres was designed specifically for children and adults with special needs, their family members, caregivers, friends and entire community.

And, since the park's soft opening March 3, there have been visitors from 29 different U.S. states. By the end of May, Force expected to increase that number to 33 states. Most out-of-state visitors have been families. But, many local visitors have come from charitable organizations, schools and classrooms of special needs groups, and other groups.

Park features include: amusement rides with wheelchair accommodations and other special modifications; clusters of themed spaces offering imaginative play and interactive sensory stimulation; and playgrounds, picnic areas, and garden areas. There is an amphitheater for special events. All guests are fitted with RFI (Radio Frequency Identification) wristbands. Monitors are located throughout the park so all of the group can be located easily.

The soft opening the first of March was done so the park could begin to welcome the different communities of special needs.

"One day we had guests with autism," Force said. "The next day, we had the hearing impaired. Then, we had the



"It's not about how many tickets we sell at the door. It's about our guests experiencing something for the first time in their lives."/>

**—Dave Force, general manager
Morgan's Wonderland, San Antonio**

hearing visually impaired. Then, those in wheelchairs. Then, we started blending the communities together. And, we also needed to determine what a comfortable capacity would be for the park."

All guests have to make reservations. So far the park has had up to 1,400 guests at one time. That has happened twice and it seemed to be a comfortable number for everyone.

Force said he believed the soft openings were very successful for the special park.

Fortunately, there weren't any surprises.

"You have to understand that this entire park was designed with special needs individuals in mind," he said. "If people are in a wheelchair, there is nothing they can't do in this park."

Chance Morgan, Wichita, Kan., supplied the amusement rides. There is a carousel, safari ride and train ride. The company took their traditional rides and modified them to meet the needs of the parkgoers.

"We worked very closely with the park," said Larry Breitenstein, director of sales for Trams and Entertainment, Chance Morgan. "They had a lot of input. They knew what they wanted."

For example, the carousel, which is 36-feet in diameter, is fitted with several new components. The company gave some seats a higher back. They "split" some of the carousel animals and put a bench in the middle. That allows an individual that can't ride a tradi-

tional carousel animal to have the experience anyway. This animal moves up and down just like on a traditional carousel animal.

Chance manufactured the train and modified it to offer more wheelchair positions so individuals that need these spaces can sit along the train, not just at the front or back, with their companions.

The train called the Wonderland Express takes riders around an eight-acre lake, and past rest areas reminiscent of Africa, Germany, Japan, Mexico, and Italy.

The safari ride, called the Off-Road Adventure Ride, enables an individual in a wheelchair to sit comfortably with their companions as it weaves its way through the park.

"We did all this with their guidelines," Breitenstein said. "We are really excited because now we have these concepts that we can expand on and take to other facilities."

Breitenstein said park officials came to Chance about the train and everything just evolved from there.

Additional park areas include: Sensory Village, clusters of theme spaces offering imaginative play and interactive sensory stimulation; Water Works, an interactive area with water-related elements such as spinning water wheels; an outdoor music area; the Pirate Island Playground, equipped with sails where individuals can imagine they are sailing a pirate's ship; several large pavilions for special group events; and playgrounds with accessible play elements.



PHOTOS COURTESY MORGAN'S WONDERLAND

Morgan's Wonderland, being touted as the first ultra accessible family fun park, opened in San Antonio, Texas, on March 3. All of the attractions, gardens, playgrounds, etc., on the grounds of the 25-acre park were created to accommodate individuals with special needs, including three Chance Morgan rides. Chance modified its traditional train, carousel and safari ride to comfortably and completely fit the needs of the special parkgoers.

Force said they created the chair. This also allows the platform to swing freely.

"We did this because we wanted people to have the exact same experience as everyone else," Force said. "We have double wide ramps to create additional security for

► See MORGANS, page 27

►MORGANS

Continued from page 26

accommodate everyone. We have seen parents in wheelchairs actually be able to take their children up a ramp and put them on a slide for the first time ever. And, that is what this park is about."

Morgan's Wonderland was a dream created by philanthropist Gordon Hartman, president and CEO of the Gordon Hartman Family Foundation. In 2007, the foundation was instrumental in the creation of SOAR (Sports Outdoor and Recreation), a non-profit organization to raise funds for the park construction.

So far, \$32 million have been raised by private and public donations. Force said they are only "\$4 million shy of paying off what they have already spent."

Operating capitol will come from the event at the Event Center and money brought in by the adjacent 14-field soccer complex.

The 18,000-square-foot Event Center, located on the property, has a full basketball court for traditional and wheelchair basketball. It is also being used for volleyball and tennis for individuals with special needs.

But, it can also be used to accommodate money-making community events. There is room for up to 550 people for a seated dinner and up to 700 for a casual gathering. There is also a 900-square-foot meeting room.

Admission into the park is free for the special needs individuals. It is \$5 for their companions.

"We won't be making our money at the gate," Force said.

Silver Dollar City makes memorial tree donation to Knoebels

In a move that spans the class and friendship two parks share with one another, Silver Dollar City in Branson, Mo. has sent Knoebels Amusement Resort in Elysburg, Pa. a gift in the form of a Dogwood tree.

The tree was sent as a memorial to the late Barbara Knoebel from the citizens of Silver Dollar City and all of the Herschend Family Entertainment Corp. families and employees.

The Dogwood tree is eight feet tall, was planted in a 3 foot high base on April 21, just in time for the park's season opener on April 24.

A hand-made plaque from SDC's Blacksmith shop was included and read, "In Honor and Memory of Lady Barbara Knoebel from the Citizens of Silver Dollar City Mo. 2009." Brad Thomas, VP and GM of Silver Dollar City told



Silver Dollar City in Branson, Mo. donated this Dogwood tree to Knoebels Amusement Resort, in Elysburg, Pa., to honor the memory of the late Barbara Knoebel. The two parks have shared a great relationship. The tree was planted in time for the park's 2010 season opener on April 24.

PHOTOS COURTESY KNOEBELS



Amusement Today, "For more than 50 years Jack and Pete Herschend have had a passion for trees. The two enjoy a great rela-

tionship with the entire Knoebel family and wanted to honor Barbara with something that would last a little longer. The

gift of a Dogwood tree was the proper way to do that."

We could not agree more.

Ferrari World receives award for excellence

Andrew Mellor
Amusement Today

Even before it has welcomed its first guests, the spectacular Ferrari World theme park in Abu Dhabi has been officially recognized with an award presented for excellence in real estate development and architecture.

Set to open in the second half of 2010, Ferrari World Abu Dhabi received recognition in the Cityscape Abu Dhabi Awards 2010, winning the "Best Commercial, Office, Retail Future Development" award which rewards excellence in real estate development and investment in the Middle East and North Africa. Awards are given to companies and projects that have shown outstanding performance and achievement in real estate development and architecture.

"It is a great honor to receive this award on behalf of the entire team who have worked on the Ferrari World Abu Dhabi project," commented Mohammed Al Mubarak, Chief Commercial Officer of owner and developer Aldar Properties.

"This award is a testament to Aldar's long term vision and commitment to excellence," commented general manager Claus Frimand. "Ferrari World Abu Dhabi is a tru-



PHOTO COURTESY FERRARI WORLD

The award winning Ferrari World building is a hugely impressive structure inspired by the classic double curve side profile of the Ferrari GT body.

ly unique and iconic landmark for the United Arab Emirates and the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. We look forward to welcoming the world to this distinctive attraction later this year."

Located on Yas Island, Ferrari World will be the world's first Ferrari theme park and the largest attraction of its kind. The building in which it will be housed features an iconic sleek red roof directly

inspired by the classic double curve side profile of the Ferrari GT body, spanning 200,000 square meters (2.15 million square feet) and carrying the largest Ferrari logo ever created. The venue will feature more than 20 rides, attractions and shows, each designed to bring to life a different part of the Ferrari story. Among them will be what is being touted as the fastest roller coaster in the

world, the F1 coaster, from Intamin, and a twin track racing coaster from Maurer Sohne, along with a variety of Italian delicacies and unique shopping experiences.

Farah Leisure Parks Management L.L.C, a joint venture between Aldar Properties PJSC and ProFun Management Group Inc., will be responsible for managing and operating Ferrari World.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Cedar Fair reaches agreement with investor

Cedar Fair Entertainment Company announced that it has reached an agreement on May 5 with its largest unitholder - Q Funding III, L.P. and Q4 Funding, L.P. ("Q") - that will allow Q to participate actively in the company's selection of new directors.

Under the agreement, the company will increase its board from seven directors to nine immediately following the company's 2010 annual meeting of unitholders, scheduled for June 7, 2010. The two new directors will be selected from a list of candidates developed by the executive search firm of Spencer Stuart, which Q has retained, based on criteria developed by the company and Q. The company and Q will mutually agree upon two Class I directors, with a term expiring at the company's 2013 annual meeting of unitholders. If Cedar Fair and Q are unable to agree prior to the company's 2010 annual meeting of unitholders, then the company and Q will each select one Class I director in their sole discretion. The company has agreed to reduce the board back to seven directors by the company's 2011 annual meeting.

In addition, under the agreement, Q has agreed to voluntarily dismiss the action it filed on April 29, 2010 in the Court of Chancery of the State of Delaware against Cedar Fair and its general partner. Q has also agreed to vote all of its units on the two matters to be considered at the company's 2010 annual meeting of unitholders as recommended by the board.

Ripley Entertainment acquires four attractions

The franchised businesses of Ripley's Believe It or Not! Odditorium and the Guinness World Records Museum in Copenhagen, Denmark, have been acquired by Ripley Entertainment Inc., a global leader in location-based entertainment.

In addition, the company purchased two other Danish attractions - The Mystic Exploratorie and the Hans Christian Andersen's Wonderful World. All four family attractions are located in the city center of Copenhagen. Ripley's and Hans Christian Andersen are across from Town Hall Square, and Guinness and the Exploratorie are located on The Walking Street, near Kings Square.

The Ripley's Believe It or Not! first opened in 1992 and the Guinness opened in 1994. The Exploratorie and the Wonderful World are both one of a kind interactive family attractions created by the former owners of the four businesses. Ripley also owned and operated the Louis Tussaud's Wax Museum in Copenhagen for 33 years before closing it in late 2007.

The acquisition of these four attractions follows the company's January acquisition of the Believe It or Not! Odditoriums in Branson, Mo., and Orlando, Fla.

"The four Copenhagen attractions are in a great location in a busy tourist zone, and we are very pleased to be bringing them into our corporate family," said Jim Pattison Jr., president of Ripley Entertainment Inc.

Lake Compounce opens with Text2Ride

Lake Compounce, in Bristol, Conn., opened its 165th season on May 15 with new technology, a Text2Ride cell phone based reservation system.

The new Text2Ride system gives guests the opportunity to purchase credits and use those credits to reserve a time to ride Boulderdash, Zoomerang, DownTime, Thunder n Lightning, Wildcat, Bumper Cars, Ghost Hunt, Saw Mill Plunge and Thunder Rapids. Guests will send a text and will then receive a text back confirming their time to ride. "Lake Compounce will be the first amusement park in the country to offer this type of technology," said general manager Jerry Brick.

In other news, new attractions for Lake Compounce in 2010 include 'It's Magic!' which will be performed in the Starlight Theatre daily, as well as a brand new cast of Cirque en Vol acrobats performing on the outdoor stage near the Zoomerang. Children's entertainment will feature two new shows to be performed in the kid-land section known as Circus World.

JoylandBooks.com celebrates anniversary

JoylandBooks.com, one of the world's largest suppliers of amusement park, fairground, circus and seaside books, is celebrating 10 years of retailing industry publications with a series of light-hearted articles on the amusement park nostalgia Web site: www.themagiceye.co.uk.

Owner and founder Nick Laister claims JoylandBooks.com was the first online retailer focusing only on amusement park and fairground books when it launched in April 2000. Initially, the site was set up as a way of promoting his own book, which was expected to be published that year:

"I would like to say that I had a eureka moment when I came up with the idea of setting up a bookstore specializing in books and DVDs that celebrate everyone's nostalgic memories of seaside holidays and classic amusement parks," said Laister. "But in fact, I was writing a book on the history of seaside amusement arcades and the fascinating characters that worked in them and decided I need a Web site to promote it. As it turned out, the book (*Pennies by the Sea*) was not published until 2006 and rapidly sunk without a trace, by which time Joyland Books had grown beyond all of my expectations into probably one of the most successful specialist retailers in the world."

JoylandBooks.com became nationally famous in 2003, when it set up a campaign to help save Margate's Dreamland Pleasure Park and to build the world's first amusement park exclusively made up of thrilling historic rides. Laister is now chairman of the Trust that is building this exciting new attraction using several million pounds of grant funding awarded by the Government and Heritage Lottery.

Busch Gardens Tampa Bay launches new in-park text messaging campaign

Busch Gardens Tampa Bay recently debuted an in-park text messaging campaign designed to help guests make the most of a visit to the park.

The messages provide coaster wait times, fun-for-the-family scavenger hunts, valuable promotional offers for food and gifts and did-you-know facts about the park's 'hidden gems.'

"The feedback from our guests has been incredible — they love this level of service and how it enhances their park experience," said Jim Dean, executive vice president and general manager of Busch Gardens Tampa Bay. "With text messaging, it's very natural for our guests to get park updates during their visit. On a moment's notice, we can let them know about wait times on the coasters or even take them on a scavenger hunt."

At the park's front gate, guests receive instructions on opting into the service and it's nothing more complicated than texting a keyword to an SMS number. Within minutes, they will receive updates directly to their mobile device. They're automatically

unsubscribed from the service after 12 hours and can opt-out at any time.

"My favorite is the quiz we have for Sesame Street Safari of Fun, our new attraction," said Dean. "Parents and kids are having a great time with it. We text trivia questions about Safari of Fun, things to notice and spot. Parents and kids need to keep their eyes open — they never know what we'll ask!"

Cedar Fair announces free military admission

Cedar Fair Entertainment Company, based in Sandusky, Ohio, has announced that it will offer free admission to active and retired United States military personnel on Sunday and Monday of both the Memorial Day and July 4th weekends as a part of its Tribute to the Armed Forces program.

Also as a part of its Tribute to the Armed Forces program, active and retired members of the U.S. military will be able to purchase discounted admission tickets for members of their immediate family (maximum of six) at a special military discount price. The free ticket offer will be available on the Sunday and Monday of each weekend and a valid military ID must be presented.

"We wanted to do something special to honor the men and women of our Armed Forces," stated Jack Falfas, Cedar Fair's chief operating officer. "These brave men and women sacrifice so much of their time with their families to help protect our country and this was our way of saying thank you to them by allowing them to save money and spend a fun-filled day together with their families."

Tickets for this special promotion are available at each U.S.-based Cedar Fair Entertainment Company amusement and outdoor waterpark. For more information guests can log on to: www.cedarfair.com/armedforces.

"Rollercoaster Tycoon" riding to the screen

Sony is getting into the roller-coaster theme park business ... sort of.

Sony Pictures Animation has pre-emptively picked up rights to the Atari video game "Rollercoaster Tycoon," and is developing the project as a live-action/CGI hybrid.

The "Tycoon" franchise, created by Chris Sawyer, is a popular series of computer games that simulate a combination of designing roller coasters and amusement park management. Each game challenges players with open-ended amusement park management and development while allowing them to construct and customize their own unique roller coasters.

The games are popular in the PC world, generating more than \$300 million in sales and giving Atari bragging rights for having the third-best-selling PC title of all time in the U.S.

Ripley's attraction to open in El Paso

Ripley's Marvelous Mirror Maze & Candy Factory will be opening its doors this summer at The Outlet Shoppes at El Paso [Texas].

The attraction features hundreds of mirrors with an amazing surprise at every corner, twist and bend. Plus, the spectacular and colorful candy store has a splendid variety of candies of all kinds — from old fashioned root beer barrels to the most current confections, all set in a fantasy candy factory surrounding.

The Mirror Maze features nearly 2,000 square feet of mirrored paths, surprising corners, dead ends and rotating mirrors! Music, mysterious sounds and colorful lighting effects make the experience even more daunting — and fun for all ages.



PEOPLE WATCH

Great Wolf announces several staff changes

Great Wolf Resorts, based in Madison, Wis. has announced several staff changes. They include:

Kris Willis has been named general manager of Blue Harbor Resort & Conference Center located in Sheboygan, Wisconsin.

Willis is responsible for the successful daily operation and management of the 182 all-suite resort with 64 villas and its more than 250 team members. She brings over 20 years of experience in the hospitality industry to her new position.

Prior to joining Blue Harbor Resort, Willis was the director of sales & marketing at KeyLime Cove indoor waterpark resort in Gurnee, Illinois. Before that she was the director of sales & revenue for Country Springs Hotel, Waterpark & Conference Center in Waukesha, Wisconsin.

Shannon Kirchberg has been named director of sales & marketing for Great Wolf Lodge, Grand Mound, Washington.

Kirchberg is responsible for achieving occupancy and revenue objectives and directing the daily efforts of the field sales managers. Additionally, she is responsible for executing sales and marketing programs to generate visits from corporate meeting and group audiences, as well as leisure travelers.

Before joining Great Wolf Lodge, Kirchberg was the director of sales & marketing for Embassy Suites Seattle – Tacoma International Airport. While there she received a Marketing Award for the Embassy Suites brand and the Shining Star Award for volunteering and organizing events for Starlight Starbright Children’s Foundation, an international non-profit children’s organization. Prior to that, she was the director of sales & marketing for Doubletree Guest Suites Southcenter in Seattle.

Katie Schulte has been named director of sales & marketing for Great Wolf Lodge in Wisconsin Dells, Wis.

Schulte is responsible for achieving occupancy and revenue objectives and directing the daily efforts of the field sales managers. Additionally, she is responsible for executing sales and marketing programs to generate visits from corporate meeting and group audiences, as well as leisure travelers.

Before joining Great Wolf Lodge, Schulte was the sales training and development manager for Hiltons of Chicago. Prior to that, she was the vice president of sales and marketing for Emagine HOW... in Las Vegas. She has experience with hotel sales, banquet and conference facilities, cruises and catering.

Ken Broom has been promoted to assistant general manager at the Great Wolf Lodge in Grapevine, Texas.

Serving as director of sales and marketing at the Grapevine property, Broom led the group sales and marketing team to company-wide success in 2009. With more than 23 years of experience in the hospitality industry, his leadership and customer service skills are an asset to the Great Wolf team. Broom reinforces Great Wolf Lodge’s culture of teamwork and collaboration across every level. It is this commitment to excellence and pioneering that makes Great Wolf Lodge an industry leader.

EMAIL NEWS BRIEFS TO: GSLADE@AMUSEMENTTODAY.COM

Riding the Market



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

Company	Stock Name	Prices 05/13/10	High	52 weeks Low
STOCK EXCHANGE: NYSE, OTC BB*, NASDAQ**, SYDNEY ASX***				
Cedar Fair L.P.	FUN	\$13.63	\$15.79	\$6.03
MGM Mirage	MGM	\$14.36	\$16.66	\$5.34
Six Flags, Inc.	SIXFQ**	\$0.02	\$0.59	\$0.32
CBS Corp.	CBS	\$15.00	\$16.98	\$5.65
Walt Disney Co.	DIS	\$34.75	\$37.98	\$22.05
Great Wolf Resorts, Inc.	WOLF**	\$2.75	\$3.95	\$1.93
Landry’s Restaurants	LNRY	\$22.09	\$23.35	\$7.75
Blackstone Group	BX	\$12.35	\$17.22	\$8.54
Village Roadshow	AU:VRL***	\$2.23	\$2.54	\$0.88
NBC Universal	GE	\$18.05	\$19.70	\$10.50

Region (U.S.)	As of 05/10/10	Change from year ago
East Coast	3.136	0.881
Midwest	3.102	0.946
Gulf Coast	3.087	0.889
Rocky Mountain	3.169	0.899
West Coast	3.233	0.904
California	3.269	0.932

ON-HIGHWAY DIESEL PRICES



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

\$\$\$	TOP 7 MOST TRADED CURRENCIES
	On 05/14/10 \$1 USD =
0.79400	EURO
0.67825	GBP (British Pound)
92.99234	JPY (Japanese Yen)
1.11331	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.11247	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.01573	CAD (Canadian Dollar)

Quassy’s John Frantzis honored for tourism

John Frantzis, co-owner of Quassy Amusement Park in Middlebury, Conn., was honored recently during the 2010 Governor’s Awards for Excellence in Culture & Tourism in Hartford, Conn.



Frantzis

Frantzis was the recipient of the Distinguished Advocate Award for decades of work to promote tourism and for serving on various tourism-related

boards and commissions. The award was presented during a statewide gala in the atrium of the Legislative Office Building with Gov. M. Jodi Rell and other dignitaries in attendance.

Recipients of the Distinguished Advocate Awards are Connecticut residents who have worked to strengthen, preserve or promote the creative industry in the state. They have made a significant impact on one or more organizations or have made important contributions to their communities, regions or the state.

AMUSEMENTTODAY.COM

Steven Beattie Patrick, former ride engineer for Disney and Universal dies at 59

Design engineer Steve Beattie Patrick, whose visionary work with Walt Disney Imagineering, Jet Propulsion Laboratory and his own company, Interactive Design Engineering, ranged from projects such as the Mars Rover to theme park rides to concert stage effects for performers Madonna, Michael Jackson and Paul McCartney, has died at the age of 59 after a year-long battle with kidney cancer.



Patrick

Steve Patrick was born on December 2, 1950 near Kyushu, Japan to Haruko Ota, from Kobe, Japan, and Roy Beattie Patrick, originally from Laramie, Wyoming and living in Japan while serving in the U.S. Army.

The Patrick family moved to the U.S. in 1957, first to Boulder City, Colorado, eventually settling in the San Fernando Valley.

Steve graduated from California State University at Northridge in 1975 with a

Bachelors of Fine Arts. Under the mentorship of Walt Disney Company legend Bob Gurr, he subsequently designed ride vehicles for Disney’s EPCOT Center, then worked at Universal Studios where he designed the simulator motion base for both “Back to the Future” (now “The Simpson’s” ride) and “Earthquake L.A.” As a senior engineer with Disney Imagineering he was instrumental in the development of theme park equipment, special effects and animatronics robots. He was an active member of the Themed Entertainment Association.

“The outstanding thing that everyone liked about Steve is he was always ready to do anything; his being there really made a difference,” says Bob Gurr, who developed more than 100 designs for Disney attractions including Autopia, the Matterhorn Bobsleds and Monorail systems.

“I remember we were working on the flying saucer for the closing ceremony of the 1984 Olympics here in Los Angeles. We had five weeks to design, engineer and build the whole thing,” Gurr continues.

“Well, at that time Steve had this little Alfa Romeo convertible. We were both

gear heads, and he was always there with that Alfa, saying ‘Okay, I got these parts, now what do you want?’ He had that basic attitude at Disney, and in his own business. He was always learning new stuff; loved to pick up on anything new.”

In 1992, he formed Interactive Design Engineering (IED), and provided engineering for consumer companies and online platforms such as Xulu, as well as designs for the entertainment industry, concert tours and theatrical equipment, and continued his work with theme parks, including Universal Studios Japan. He was the head of the engineering team for Designs International of Dallas, Texas.

With Designs International, he was head of engineering for Sega Projects, working on Joylopus in Japan and Sega World at Piccadilly Circus in London.

Designs International CEO Marshall Gardner describes Steve as: “A very rare soul who thrived working on great projects and mechanical systems with the best talent around—and Steve was unquestionably one of the best!”

An avid fly fisherman, photographer

and sculptor, he loved to spend time in the Eastern Sierras and national parks. He was a lifelong car enthusiast and a valued member of the Porsche 912 Registry and Porsche Club of America. He was a leader of Boy Scouts of America Troupe #288 in La Crescenta, and a member of Sierra Pacific Flyfishers. He loved food, wine, music, and also enjoyed studying art, archeology and anthropology; he recently traced his paternal genealogy to 11th century England.

Steven Patrick died on April 23 at his home in Altadena, California.

He is survived by his wife Debbi Swanson Patrick, sons David and Christopher from his previous marriage, mother Haruko Ouellette, sisters Angelique Ilo and Trish Jacobs, as well as beloved aunts and uncles, nieces, nephews and cousins.

Memorial services will be scheduled at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Steven Patrick’s name to The Awareness Center in Pasadena via check (www.awarenesscenteryoga.org) or to Southern California Hospice Foundation online (socalhospicefoundation.com).



NEWS & NOTES

www.aimsintl.org

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AIMS Seminar to top 340 hours of instruction

Mark Moore

Uremet Corp.

AIMS president

mark@uremet.com

The AIMS International Safety Seminar held annually in November is the industry's most comprehensive educational program. I would like to take the opportunity this month to expand on the details of this seminar.



Moore

The Safety Seminar is now in its 35th year of operation and is dedicated to making the amusement industry a safer and better experience in all aspects for the patrons' participation and for all who work in the amusement industry. The seminar was started 34 years ago by very concerned manufactures of rides who thought there needed to be better communication between themselves and the maintenance and operations personnel as well as inspectors of amusement rides and devices. As a result of these early pioneers the safety in the industry has continued to increase to the highest levels of today.

Throughout the years, the safety seminar has grown to a full 40-hour week of theory and hands-on instruction as well as certification of ride maintenance technicians, operators and this year inspectors. These classes are instructed, in the tradition set forth by our founders, by the ride and device manufacturers, suppliers and other industry knowable leaders. Educational credit for attendance is given in the form of CEUs, Continuing Educational Units granted by Greenville Technical College. Manufacturers' and suppliers' instructors work directly for the company they represent and can bring first-hand knowledge of their products safety

inspection items directly to our attendees. Other instructors volunteering their time to the AIMS Safety Seminar have extensive experience, most being in the industry their entire working career. This year's seminar will have more than 95 instructors involved in 135 different classes resulting in 340 total hours of instruction.

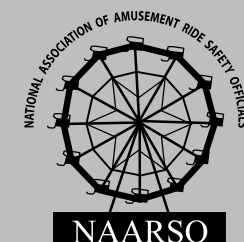
The educational curriculum is divided into several specialized tracks which contain specific classes, each geared toward allowing the individual student to gain specific knowledge on given topics. These tracks are divided into maintenance, operational, mobile, and water related subject, each designed to provide improvement for the first time attendee and enrich the most experienced. This is accomplished by offering basic and advanced classes in certain topics. Students can either pick a particular track or they can select random classes that best fits their needs. In either case, AIMS International has a commitment to bringing the highest level and most accurate information directly to our attendees.

Included in the 40 hours is the unique opportunity to attend the IAAPA Expo show floor and see the latest and newest rides and attraction devices. To enhance this experience each attendee is required to visit a certain number of exhibitors. The attendees will have an opportunity to meet manufactures and suppliers in a causal setting to be able to talk with them one on one about specific questions they may have. AIMS believes this format of classroom education, hands-on experience, and key networking with peers from other parks, carnivals, shows, manufacturers, and suppliers provides the best format for learning. AIMS Safety Seminar, your best choice to further your knowledge and share your experience.

NAARSO & AIMS continuing relationship

Clyde Wagner, president of NAARSO, and Mark Moore, president of AIMS International, would like to take this opportunity to explain the relationship and mutual acceptance of continuing education units (CEU's) earned through each of the organizations.

Both organizations are recognized as leaders in the industry for training and certifying ride technicians, ride operators, and ride inspectors. Both acknowledge the value that each program provides for the industry. NAARSO and AIMS want to assure the industry that both organizations will continue to work in alliance with each other. For continued certification, the board of directors of both organizations has approved the acceptance of CEU's issued by either organization.



It is the goal of each organization to improve the safety of the amusement industry. Both AIMS International and NAARSO have spent considerable time, effort and resources in maintaining their respective programs to the highest level of education, and in keeping their programs up-to-date with the rapidly changing technology and standards of the amusement industry. Each year, the two organizations are responsible for training over 600 individuals in the latest changes and advancements. This undertaking is vast and diverse enough to require the expertise of both organizations to maintain this quality of education. Both organizations are continuing to work together to assure that the amusement industry will continue to remain a safe venue for family entertainment. Everyone involved with the two organizations is very passionate not only about the industry and its safety record, but also about their service to the organizations.

During the past 20 years, NAASO and AIMS have provided the amusement industry with the most up-to-date training for ride operators, ride technicians, and ride inspectors. The two organizations have always honored the education provided by either organization as credit towards certification for their own organization's program. It is the desire of NAARSO and AIMS that the industry understand that the two organizations will continue to cooperate with each other and recognize the training provided by each program.

Both presidents are committed to their own organizations continuing to work together to provide the best training and education possible and will help insure that the amusement industry remains a safe place not only for entertainment, but also to work in. Each look forward to a future in which the two organizations will share safety information and training with each other in order to achieve the safety goals of each organization.

• Clyde Wagner: cwagner05@earthlink.net
• Mark Moore: mark@urement.com

AIMS International Education Committee



The AIMS Education Committee, shown l to r: Brian King, Mark Moore, Holly Coston, John Nieslesky, Dennis Clark, C.W. Craven, Gina Claassen, Ed "Derby" Zakar, Maud Hendriks, Wally James, Alan Ramsey, Tony Claassen, Mike Gutknecht and committee chair Patty Beazley.
AIMS PHOTO

Pat Hoffman receives prestigious ASTM award

Pat Hoffman, corporate vice president of Risk Management and Safety for Six Flags, has been honored by the ASTM Committee F24 on Amusement Rides and Devices with the Jimmy Floyd Award for his many years of dedicated service as a member of ASTM. Hoffman has been recognized for his outstanding technical contributions to the development and improvement of amusement ride standards and for invaluable leadership resulting in the use and application of F24 standards within the amusement industry.

Jim Seay, president of Premier Rides, Inc. and chairman of ASTM F24 remarked, "I have known Pat for more than 20 years and he is one of the most passionate people in the industry when it comes to ensuring the safety of our guests. I am proud of his accomplishments."

Staff manager of ASTM Technical and Committee Operations, Len Morrissey noted, "Pat is a fantastic example of how dedicated people in the amusement industry are to safety. His recognition is well deserved."

The award is given in memory of the portable amusement industry great Jimmy Floyd's many years of exemplary service to ASTM and the amusement industry and whose life was a shining example of all the best characteristics of a leader and a friend.

ASTM Committee F24 on Amusement Rides and Devices was formed in 1978. F24 meets twice a year, usually in February and October, with more than 100 members from around the world attending several days of technical meetings. The Committee, with current membership of over 500 global members, currently has jurisdiction of 17 standards, published in multiple languages in the Annual Book of ASTM Standards, Volume 15.07. These standards have and continue to play a preeminent role in all aspects important to amusement rides and devices.

ASTM International is one of the largest voluntary standards development organizations in the world – a trusted source for technical standards for materials, products, sys-

tems, and services. Known for their high technical quality and market relevancy, ASTM International standards have an important role in the information infrastructure that guides design, manufacturing and trade in the global economy.

Pat Hoffman, Six Flags corporate vice president of Risk Management and Safety, receives the Jimmy Floyd Award at the ASTM F24 Conference. Pictured with Hoffman is Patty Sullivan, President of Eli Bridge Company and Jim Seay, President of Premier Rides. PHOTO COURTESY ASTM





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National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives completes new 2,600-sq.-ft. Texas building

History preserved.

A 2,600-square-foot building stands in an empty field in Plainview, Texas. It is filled with memories. Glee-filled screams and afternoons of smiles sit on its shelves. In its new building, the National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives houses tens of thousands of artifacts, papers and archives, but among the most exciting items in their collection is the assortment of ride vehicles that span the age of the amusement park.

"While it might not be the Smithsonian, it can easily compare to the proverbial candy store for the thousands who have enjoyed what the industry has had to offer in the last century. There is a little bit of everything there and certainly something for everyone, even if you had never stepped foot in an amusement park," Richard Munch, NRCMA historian said. "It seems like almost every day something shows up, whether cars, track, photographs, brochures or coffee mugs."

Two major acquisitions recently have taken their rightful place in this archive warehouse adjacent to ride manufacturer Larson International's Plainview offices. A section of track, lead car and attraction signage from Busch Entertainment's (now SeaWorld Parks) Big Bad Wolf formerly located at Busch Gardens in Williamsburg, Virginia. The classic red and black paint scheme on the suspended cars and track manufactured by Arrow sparkles inside the newly constructed NRCMA building.

"Having a full train from



Sections of Texas Giant track, including this piece from the top of the ride's lift hill, await shipment to the NRCMA.

the ride, with genuine track structure, there is no doubt that this will be another signature piece in our collection for some time because of its importance in the development of the suspended coaster. It was a well known and beloved ride, with one of the most unique designs ever conceived integrated into a hillside along a waterfront," Munch said.

The NRCMA also acquired artifacts from the original Texas Giant, which was one of the highest rated coasters in the 1990s, in as much as it was a local and fan favorite following in the heels of the ever popular Texas Cyclone in Houston. Ironically the NRCMA now has parts from both historic Texas coasters for future generations to enjoy. Six Flags management

in Arlington was gracious in allowing museum personnel the opportunity to visit the site, select items like cars, track and signage, all for potential exhibits.

"We felt that this will be an important piece in our collection because of its timely significance in the more recent race to build (or maintain) larger wood coasters, as well as some of the changing technologies in track construction," Munch said.

While the NRCMA building is not open to public tours, it is a first step in the evolution of a dream more than 30 years old. Invited key industry, key vendor and enthusiast groups have toured the facility and more is planned in the future. Several items from the collection are currently on loan for anniversary displays at parks around the country including Dollywood. Rehabilitated Blazing Fury, Thunder Express and Flooded Mine cars are all on display at the park's Hall of Memories display created to celebrate the park's 25th anniversary season.

"It is a great partnership for the museum," Gary Slade, NRCMA board chairman said. "Historically significant parts of the museum's collection are out on loan for display at the originating park, and in return the park rehabs the ride vehicles and returns them to the museum collection."

To make donations or to contact the NRCMA, go to www.rollercoastermuseum.org or contact the NRCMA at P.O. Box 5424, Arlington, Texas 76005 or call (817) 460-7220.



PHOTO COURTESY SESAME PLACE

Shown l to r, in front of Geno's Steaks in Philadelphia are: Henry Bachstein (Sesame Place), the winner Ramon Rosario (Zamperla), Robert J. Caruso (Sesame Place) and Jeff Davis of Sesame Place, all sporting Yankee caps, some not by choice!

Yankees vs Phillies rivalry: winnings cashed in

It took several months, but finally the winner cashed in on his winnings in Philadelphia on May 10, 2010!

We're talking about a "serious" 2009 Yankees vs. Phillies World Series bet between Ramon Rosario, representative for Zamperla, a ride manufacturing company, and his clients at Sesame Place, the nation's only theme park based entirely on Sesame Street, located just outside Philadelphia in Langhorne, Pa. Used to the fast action, Rosario has assisted with many of the parks' amusement rides. Since he's based in North Jersey, he's a major Yankees fan. With Sesame Place based in the Philadelphia area, their friendly working relationship was turned into a competition. If the Phillies won, Rosario promised to treat the Sesame Place team to a New York steakhouse dinner. But, if the Yankees won, the prize was a yummy Philly cheese steak at the world famous Geno's. And, part of the winnings was a picture taken with everyone wearing Yankees hats.

Uremet details new SuperLite 480 wheel for wooden roller coasters

California-based Uremet, one of the world's leading suppliers of high quality, high-performance solid polyurethane industrial wheels, has released details on SuperLite 480, a new line of road and guide wheels designed specifically for wooden roller coasters.

SuperLite 480 reduces the weight of a typical coaster train by approximately 480 pounds (based on a train with 48 wheels), thereby reducing train/track wear and overall maintenance costs. Uremet's patent-pending two-piece system, which utilizes an aluminum hub and steel outer ring, is also re-treadable, which reduces future replacement costs.

Uremet's SuperLite 480



wheels are backed by the company's high quality manufacturing standards. The company's capabilities span research and technology development, design, engineering, prototype development, testing, manufacturing and repair. Customers have come to rely on its quality, durability, safety, innovation, engineering and technical support.

• www.uremet.com.



PHOTOS COURTESY NRCMA

The National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives recently completed a 2,600-square-foot building on donated property located next to Larson International in Plainview, Texas. In January, the NRCMA and Larson hosted a barbecue lunch for members of the small parks group, who were having their winter meetings in Amarillo. The facility also recently created a display that pays tribute to the Big Bad Wolf suspended coaster, formally at Busch Gardens Williamsburg (Va.).

MIDWAY

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CARNIVALS

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REVENUE

SUPPLIERS

BRIEF

A great showman, Bill Lowery, 69, passes away

Carroll "Bill" Lowery, owner of Lowery Carnival Co., Gulf Shores, Ala., passed away May 11, at age 69.



Lowery

His son, Tony, said, "His heart just wasn't strong enough anymore."

The elder Lowery had been taken to the hospital on the last day of this year's International Independent Showmen's Association's Extravaganza, Gibsonton, Fla. He had become weak and the family thought it would be best to call emergency.

Lowery did go back home after that, but was apparently taken ill again.

"Everyone is fine," reassured Tony Lowery, clearly very emotional. "I will tell you about my father one of these days; I just can't do it right now."

"He was a wonderful father and a great showman," he said. "Everyone in the business will attest to that fact."

He was buried May 19 in Kaplan, La., where he was raised.

The Lowery Carnival is a family owned and operated business. Bill and his wife, Carolyn, grew up in

► See LOWERY, page 37

Horse racing at California fairs plays a significant roll in overall success

Pam Sherborne
Amusement Today

Stuart Titus called it a story of David and Goliath.

"We had no other choice than to stand up against the world, literally," said Titus, the general manager of the Humboldt County Fair, Ferndale, Calif.

His fair, residing in the extreme northwest portion of the state, is rich in history and steeped in horse racing. But, it was going broke.

"Historically, our fair's horse racing has always been overlapped with another horse racing event," Titus said. "Because of our location and our one-half mile track, we've never been given another opportunity. But, we were just going broke with that model."

And, the reason, in large part, lies in the fact that there is a decline of horses, trainers and owners participating in not only California racing fairs but also in stand-alone tracks. The sluggish economy has played a role in this. According to Titus, while costs for breeding, raising and training Thoroughbreds have increased, the purses have remained static causing a lack of newcomers into the business.

"Another cause is that I don't think the state realized that when they began to allow Advanced Deposit Wagering (ADW), that fees and commissions from that would not be dispersed in a better way," Titus said.



PHOTO COURTESY CALIFORNIA STATE FAIR

Horse racing at California fairs is a tradition, but, because of the decline of the number of horses and handles, some fairs are seeing a reduction in the number of days of horse racing at their events. The races make a significant impact to the overall success of the fairs. For example, at the California State Fair, Sacramento, pictured here, the daily gross commissions for horse racing are in the \$85,000-\$125,000 range during the fair.

The ADW allows people to stay at home and place their bets. There are less people at the tracks and the companies providing ADW are allowed to keep the larger share.

"I think they are looking at reorganizing that structure," Titus said.

So, in the face of all this, Titus also realized that at his last year's fair, he had an attendance of 57,000, of which about one-half were there to go to the races. This attendance was up over 2008 and the handle at the tracks was higher. But Titus knows this won't last forever. He had two fewer days of racing last year, dropping from 10 days to eight.

So, Titus went before the California Horse Racing Board

to ask, or perhaps the better word is plead, to give Humboldt some un-overlapping horse racing at this year's fair. A decision was handed down in January when the board was approving the fair racing dates. The approval for the 2010 schedule was done with a four to three split. Representatives of the state's recognized trainer and owner groups, the California Authority of Racing Fairs and the Pacific Racing Association, which operates Golden Gate Fields, opposed the decision to grant Humboldt the week without competition. They had argued that most horsemen would not be willing to support the program in Ferndale because of the expense of shipping there and low purse levels.

Titus realizes that for him, however, it is a tremendous opportunity this year and he definitely plans to take full advantage.

"Northern fairs can no longer have the overlap," he said. "It is really getting down to the dog eat dog. Everyone is scraping by so they are getting desperate. It is a predatory existence and being small and away, doesn't help us. But, because our track is smaller the way it is positioned, it is a very personal experience here and people love it."

But, there is a lot of uncertainty in this industry. Even though the fair, which runs from Aug. 12-22 this year, has an un-overlapped week, the other week is overlapped with the Sonoma County Fair, Santa Rosa, July 28-Aug. 15. And, next year, the schedule could be again all together different.

Take, for example, the San Joaquin Fair, Stockton. That fair didn't know they had it so good when it enjoyed un-overlapped racing from 1988 to 2006. But, then the good times stopped and the confusion began. In 2007, they did have to compete with overlapping events. In 2008, the board decided to separate the fair from their horse racing – keeping the fair in June and moving the racing to two weeks in September to alleviate some travel for the horsemen.

"But, in 2009, it changed again," said Debbie Cook, CEO. "After the 2008 fair, we

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Carnival Profile:

Kiernicki triple Wonder Shows size in 11 years by hard work

Pam Sherborne
Amusement Today

Since Ken and Anita Kiernicki purchased Wonder Shows 11 years ago from its founder, Henry Saluk, the two have more than tripled the size of the Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada carnival and there is still room to grow.

"We are always pondering something," said Anita Kiernicki. "We go to Gibtown (the International Independent Showmen's Association's Extravaganza in Gibsonton, Fla.) every year."

And, the 25-ride show is seeing its best season ever so far. In mid-May, the show had been on its route for about three weeks. They travel from mid-April until the end of August. They do indoor corporate parties during November and December.

"It is too cold up here to do

anything outside during that time," she said, with a laugh. "We do the indoor parties at the convention center. We can have up to eight rides."

During the season, the Kiernickis travel primarily in Manitoba and, from time to time, a little in Ontario. And, they play primarily festivals and special events such as the Niverville (Mb.) Old Tyme Country Fair, this year set for June 11-12; the Winnipeg Beach Boardwalk Days, July 16-18; the Peguis (Mb.) Treaty Days, July 19-24; the Stonewall (Mb.) Quarry Days, Aug. 20-22; and the Morden (Mb.) Corn and Apple Festival, Aug. 27-29.

Everyday they play, they offer a \$25 wristband that is good from the beginning of the day to the end of the day.

The Kiernickis have been in the outdoor amusement industry together for about 20

years, but Anita Kiernicki said her husband has been in the industry for a lot longer.

"Ken has been in the business since he was a teenager," she said. "His brother was working on Wonder Shows and got Ken into it. He also owned some rides."

Ken Kiernicki left the carnival business for the park business for about six years. He managed a park called Tinkertown Amusement Park in Winnipeg.

But, then it was back to show business. They returned to Wonder Shows and worked a variety of jobs on the midway. When the opportunity arose for them to buy the show, that is what they did.

"My husband is as good as any of the carnival guys in the world," Anita Kiernicki said. "He is very meticulous. He likes everything to look so so."

He takes the time during the off-season to work on the rides, painting and doing whatever needs to be done.

"He even makes his own fencing," she said. "But, during our off-season, we like to try to have a holiday with our family. I work on the books and try to keep up with the housework."

They have two daughters, 12 and 16 years old. The girls travel with them now some during the season.

"The hours on this job are really something," she said. "I would like to know how to maintain a healthy diet on a midway?"

She said their staff means everything to them and they feel fortunate to have a very good one this year.

She said they have visited carnivals in the U.S. often. She feels one of the biggest differences between carnivals in Canada and those in the U.S. is the large amount of equipment many carnivals in the U.S. carry with them on the road.

"They just have more stuff," she said. "Plus, the population is different in the U.S. There are just more people."



Here are **Cassandra, Marissa, Ken and Anita Kiernicki, owners, Wonder Shows, Winnipeg. This 2007 Hilite Gondola Wheel is one of the 25 rides owned by the Kiernickis for Wonder Shows. PHOTOS COURTESY WONDER SHOWS**

P.B.J. Happee Days sees rain turn to sun with Larson, KMG rides

Pam Sherborne
Amusement Today

The first three weeks on the road for P.B.J. Happee Days Show, Marion, Ark., was great.

"The weather was just beautiful," said Pam Casper, who, along with her husband Tim Casper, owns the show. "It lasted for about three weeks."

"The last three weeks have been rainy," Tim Casper said. "We have had rain every Friday and Saturday for the last three weeks."

That was in mid-May. The Caspers had moved their show back home to Marion between dates. They had been in Southaven, Miss., and were getting ready to head to Batesville, Miss.

"To pavement," Pam

Casper said. "I will be very glad to be on pavement and not be sloshing around in mud."

The show was playing in northern Mississippi April 24 when the EF4 tornado touched down in Yazoo and Holmes counties killing 10 people.

"We weren't in the tornado, but we had golf ball size hail," Tim Casper said.

There was a lot of rain during the Spring Festival in Southaven as well.

"We have been playing that date for 30 years," Pam Casper said. "It's a good date, but it rains there every year."

The Southaven event is a barbecue competition that leads up to Memphis in May.

Even with the rain, however, the Caspers said their

► See PBJ, page 36



P.B.J. Happee Days Show, Marion, Ark., experienced some wet weather early in the season, but the sun was shining when they set up the new KMG Nemesis and the Larson Ring of Fire in Southaven, Miss.

AT PHOTOS / SUE NICHOLS

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Clay County sets attendance record

Pam Sherborne
Amusement Today

Attendance at the 2010 Clay County Agricultural Fair, Green Cove Springs, Fla., March 31-April 9, rose 22 percent over the 2009 event, setting a new record for attendance.

There were 102,728 visitors this year.

"It was just a wonderful fair," said Pete Sutton, fair manager. "We attribute this increase to just the whole package. All the stars aligned, the dots connected and we were dealt a perfect hand."

"It was the most balanced fair we have had," he said.

Deggeller Attractions, Stuart, Fla., supplied the midway this year just as the carnival has done since the inception of the fair 24 years ago. The show brought in 40 rides for the 2010 event, including five new ones for the fair: the Wild Cat Roller Coaster; Wind Surfer (Wisdom); Tea Cups (Sellner); Viper (Wisdom); and Orient Express (Wisdom).

There was ample addition-



PHOTO COURTESY CLAY COUNTY AGRICULTURAL FAIR
The Clay County Agricultural Fair, Green Cove Springs, Fla., set an attendance this year when it drew 102,728 fairgoers. Deggeller Attractions, Stuart, Fla., supplied 40 rides on the midway. Deggeller has played this fair since its inception 24 years ago.

al entertainment including, of course, livestock shows and exhibits. There was also Rosaire's Royal Racers pig racing, a Frog Jumping Show, Life on the Farm exhibit, Sponge Bob and Dora, C & N Cart Classic Lawn Mower Racing, Florida High School Rodeo, and Team Freestyle MotoCross Stunt Show.

Musical entertainment included DeWayne Shaw, Lee Brice, Joey Stuckey, Jimmy Wayne with Emily West, Juli-

anne Hough, 38 Special, Belamy Brothers, Palmetto State Quartet, and Big Engine.

The fair created a Toddler's Village for this year's event. It is an extension of the kiddie land and features such attractions as bouncers and grounds acts.

"It was very well received," Sutton said. "We always re-invest in our fair, keeping our infrastructure up to date and doing other improvements."

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►PBJ

Continued from page 35

new KMG Nemesis has been doing great. The ride was set up at the International Independent Showmen's Association (IISA) Extravaganza in Gibsonton, Fla., this year. The Caspers took position of it after the show.

"We always have people riding it and standing around watching it," Tim Casper said.

Pam Casper said they also made some tractor and truck

purchases for this year.

"We are already looking at what we might want to purchase at the end of the season for next year," she said. "We are looking at either an Owens glass house or a spinning kiddie ride. We may also purchase another bunk if we have a good season."

The Caspers feel it will be a good season, but Pam Casper feels they will probably feel the pinch of higher gas prices this season because of the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

"I think fuel will go sky high," she said.

She said her husband has had some conversations about bio diesel fuel with some fair boards that use that alternative on their grounds.

"But, I really don't know much about that," she said. "We, however, have been recycling the cooking oil we use on the midway. We use it to heat our barn in the wintertime. Tim spent a lot of money to get that started, but it has worked for us."

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► **RACING**

Continued from page 33

decided to cut our fair calendar to five days in 2009 because of the financial situation we were in with no horse racing the year before. But, then the racing board decided to move our racing back to June to coincide with the fair. So, we did have two weeks of racing, with just one week of fair last year."

Because the fair board in Stockton decided to keep the five-day fair because of depleting funds for 2010, the horse racing board decided to cut one week of racing from Stockton.

"They wanted the racing to go just during the fair," Cook said. "Fortunately, for us, the industry has come up with some replacement funds for us. We will survive this year, but it is very much up in the air for next year, our future. Without horse racing, we are no more."

The replacement funding actually comes through a state agency, she said, in which the industry supplies funding.

And, there are other changes in California racing fairs.

The Solano County Fair, Vallejo, Calif., won't even have horse racing at its fair in 2010. And, after making that announcement, the Solano fair announced new dates. It will run June 23-27, in contrast to July 22-26 in 2009. This way the fair will not overlap with the California State Fair, Sacramento, set for July 14-25 this year.

In addition, the fair board felt these days will fit better with school calendars, Junior Livestock programs, Six Flags Discovery Kingdom operations and the availability of carnival operators, as well as food and commercial exhibitors.

It was a difficult decision for Vallejo, according to fair manager Michael Paluszak. In 2009, between 4,000-5,000 people attended horse races during the fair. Overall attendance was 50,000 that same year. So, they figured that about 10 percent of those coming to the fair attended the races. It is a number that can be overcome, but not one they wanted to lose.

"The board had the tough choice between their love of horse racing, and the realities of declining attendance, revenue and horse population industry-wide, as well as our own aging racing facilities," Paluszak had said through a written statement when making the announcement, accord-

ing to the local Times-Herald in Vallejo.

In that same Times-Herald story, Solano County Supervisor Barbara Kondylis said she supported the decision and was quoted, saying: "We'll just have to make do and make it the best we can. There are fairs that go on all over Northern California without horse racing that are fun and wonderful."

Yet, horse racing has traditionally been a big part in some of the California fairs. Others with racing include: the

Alameda County Fair, Pleasanton; California State Fair, Sacramento, the Big Fresno (Calif.) Fair and the Sonoma County Fair, Santa Rosa.

Dave Elliott, the California State Fair's assistant general manager of racing events, said, overall, the handle is in decline at racetracks nationally, but the business continues to net dollars for each including Cal Expo. The daily gross commissions for horse racing are in the \$85,000-\$125,000 during his fair.

► **LOWERY**

Continued from page 33

the carnival industry. They married in 1960 and had three children. Other than Tony, there is another son, Carroll, Jr., and daughter, Jacqueline. They have eight grandchildren.

All three of their children still take an active role in the family business.

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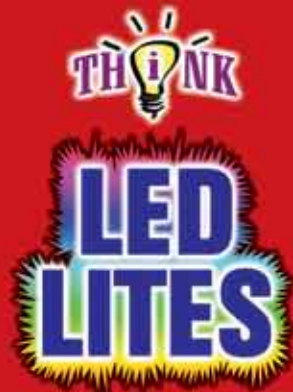
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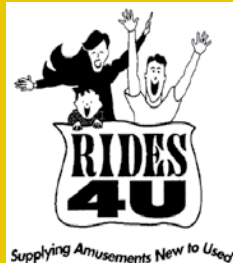
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