

# AMUSEMENT TODAY™

*Celebrating Our 15th Year*

Vol. 15 • Issue 12

MARCH 2012

## Busch Gardens Tampa Bay introduces new ice show

TAMPA, Fla. — Busch Gardens Tampa Bay continues its tradition of delivering Broadway-style stage spectacles with its next generation ice show, Iceploration.

Launched Feb. 2, a cast of 20 brings to life an all-new adventure filled with world-class skaters, more than 75 original costumes, amazing aerial performances, master puppetry and live animal stars, with shows daily in the Moroccan Palace.

"The grand scale of this show sets a new standard of entertainment that further solidifies Busch Gardens as one of Florida's premier theme parks," said Busch

Gardens Park President Jim Dean. "Iceploration reintroduces the ice show to our most loyal fans while bringing together the things Busch Gardens stage productions do best: world-class entertainment with top-notch skaters, amazing costumes, original music, larger-than-life puppets and even animal stars."

Iceploration inspires audiences to "explore the world" on a 30-minute journey to the four corners of the earth. This multi-sensory story, told through theatrical skating and an all-new original score, is the collaboration

▶ See **BUSCH**, page 4



With a cast of 20 performers and 75 costumes, the new Iceploration at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay will help the park challenge for show votes in the annual Golden Ticket voting.

COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS

## 2012 Amusement Expo officials have high expectations

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

LAS VEGAS, Nev. — In early February, American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) President John Schultz said numbers of exhibitors and registrants for the upcoming Amusement Expo, set for March 14-16, were running ahead of 2011 for the same time period.

"We have been working hard to better our numbers," Schultz said. "It seems to be working."

The AAMA co-sponsors Amusement Expo with the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) and co-locates with the National Bulk Vendor Association (NBVA), which has its exhibitors grouped together within the same hall. Schultz said the NBVA would have about 50 exhibitors.

The trade show will be held at the Las Vegas (Nev.) Convention Center. Its purpose is to bring the coin-op and entertainment industry members together with industry manufacturers and suppliers. Amusement Expo also offers educational seminars and networking opportunities.

In 2009, the AAMA and the AMOA had their own separate trade shows. In 2010, after making the decision to co-sponsor the show, Schultz said there were 101 exhibitors



with 306 booths. In 2011, there were 135 exhibitors with 312 booths.

Trade show organizers fully expect to beat the 2011 numbers this year.

"We have 22 brand new exhibitors so far, too," Schultz said, in early February. "From 2010 to 2011, we doubled the number of buyers on the trade show floor."

The trade show schedule is 1-6 p.m., Wed., March 13; 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Thurs., March 15; and 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Friday, March 16.

Amusement Expo also presents an array of educational seminars, which are free to attendees. On Wednesday, March 13, those seminars run throughout the morning hours so as not to interfere with the trade show hours. Topics include such things as: "Gaming on the Street;" "Using Social Networking to Drive Business;" "Birthday Programs for the Next Century;" "Securing Your Business;" "The Road to Self-Redemption;" "Five Most Important Business Principals and Seven Primary Strategies to Grow Your Business, Your Profits and Have Fun Doing

It;" and "Cleaning and Maintaining Your FEC and Attractions – Would Your Location Get a Four-Star Rating?"

The Wednesday sessions will wrap up at 12:30 with Awards Presentation and the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony into the trade show.

The Industry Gala Reception is set for 6:15-8:15 p.m. at the Las Vegas Hotel.

The AMOA Breakfast and membership meeting is set for Thursday morning, after which two educational sessions will be held on "Relationship Selling...Group Events," and "Your Future... Looking into the FEC Industry Crystal Ball."

There are no educational sessions scheduled for Friday morning.

New this year for Amusement Expo is a two-day Foundations Entertainment University being held by industry experts just prior, March 12-13. This program isn't included in the Amusement Expo registration. However, registrants of the Foundations Entertainment University will gain entrance into the Amusement Expo trade show as well as its educational seminars.

"This will be an in-depth seminar completely directed toward the FEC industry," Schultz said.

This program is designed to cover all aspects of plan-

▶ See **EXPO**, page 5

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POSTMASTER: Dated material.  
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# NEWTALK

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

## Carnival museum a reality



Slade

One man, with volunteers, can make a difference.

We know this through the recent generosity of Jim Frederiksen, owner of Frederiksen Industries in Tampa. When Jim saw the efforts by the carnival industry to build its long-awaited carnival museum beginning to stall out, he stepped up with a

\$1 million-plus donation to get the project back on the fast track.

Three years ago the industry saw the museum's two-story, 18,000 square-foot building across from the Gibtown show grounds taking shape. Last year, trade show attendees were invited to tour the inside of the building. Restrooms, the elevator to the second floor and other touches were still in the construction phase, but visitors were able to get a first hand look of what this building would soon become.

This year, attendees were invited to visit during the five-day show and the International Independent Showman's Museum even hosted one evening after show hours with an open house. The museum has come a long way since last year's visit. It is now full of carnival history, displays, historic rides and ride vehicles as well as priceless photos and other archives. The library and research area is taking shape, as is an area for archiving carnival history.

Jim told AT that they had assembled a group of volunteers during the last six-months to donate their time two nights a week helping to get the museum ready for Gibtown. That group of 30-plus individuals pulled off nothing short of a miracle in making the museum a reality. Now with just a little more tweaking, Jim hopes the museum will be ready to open to the public in the next few months.

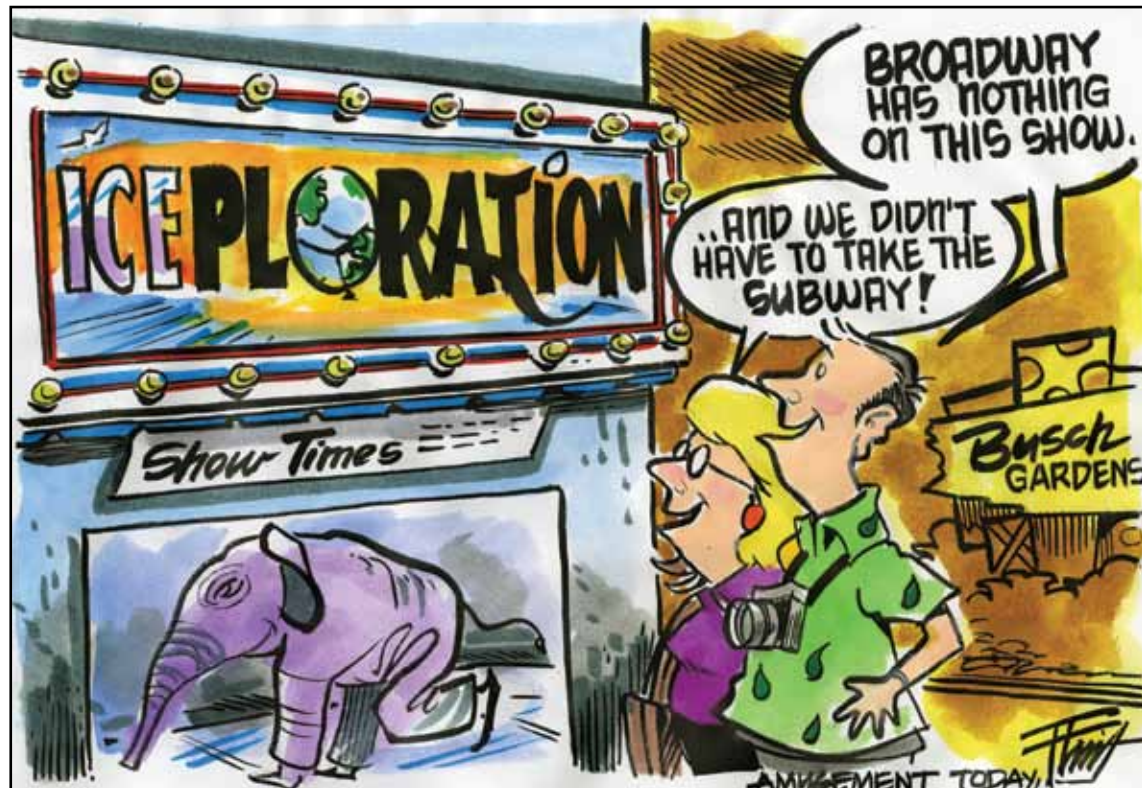
*Amusement Today* salutes Jim Frederiksen and his team of volunteers that made their dream for a carnival museum a reality.

As industry support continues to come in for the progress being made by the National Roller Coaster Museum, one only has to look at the carnival museum as a successful plan worth duplicating.

—Gary Slade

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

**CARTOON:** Bubba Flint



**EDITORIAL:** Andrew Mellor, [amellor@amusementtoday.com](mailto:amellor@amusementtoday.com)

## Going back to my roots



Mellor

As I write this column it's the time of the "Gibtown" trade show in Tampa, an event I have visited on a couple of occasions in the past, although admittedly many years ago in my earlier days as a sub-editor and journalist in the amusement industry.

However, the Gibtown show is one that I have a distinct empathy with in that it is run by the International Independent Showmen's Association (IISA) which serves in particular the travelling carnival side of the business, a connection with which I have through many year's working on the weekly *World's Fair* newspaper in the U.K., owned by four generations of my family up until around the mid 1990s.

It was AT publisher Gary Slade who suggested this tale would be a good subject for this column some time, to give readers a little background on how I became involved in the business. Well, briefly, my great uncle used to sell water cans and gas lamps to travelling showmen on the English fairs over 100 years

ago and was regularly given messages to pass on to others as he travelled around the grounds. He hit upon the idea of a newspaper as a way for showmen and their families to stay in touch (through articles, advertising, etc.) and founded the *World's Fair* in 1904 as a weekly, single sheet newspaper for the fair-ground community.

The business, and the newspaper, grew over the decades and I joined it in 1979 as a budding journalist and sub-editor, helping to produce a dedicated publication for the travelling fairground industry in the U.K., as well as, some time later, amusement parks, among other things. We subsequently founded a theme park magazine (*Park World*, in 1985) along with various other industry titles and so today I continue this Mellor "tradition," albeit now on more of a freelance basis.

I enjoy regaling the story of how I got involved in the business. I'm genuinely proud of my industry background and have enjoyed the many years of covering such a fun business with the publications I've been involved in. And I look forward to doing so for many more!

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Subscription rates are: 1 year (14 issues) \$75 in the USA; \$100 elsewhere; 2 years (28 issues) \$140/\$180; 3 years (42 issues) \$200/\$250. Send check or money order (U.S. funds only, drawn on a U.S. bank) to Amusement Today, P.O. Box 5427, Arlington, Texas 76005-5427. Your cancelled check is your receipt. Please allow up to six weeks for your subscription request to be processed and the first issue mailed.

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POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to Amusement Today, P.O. Box 5427, Arlington, Texas 76005-5427.

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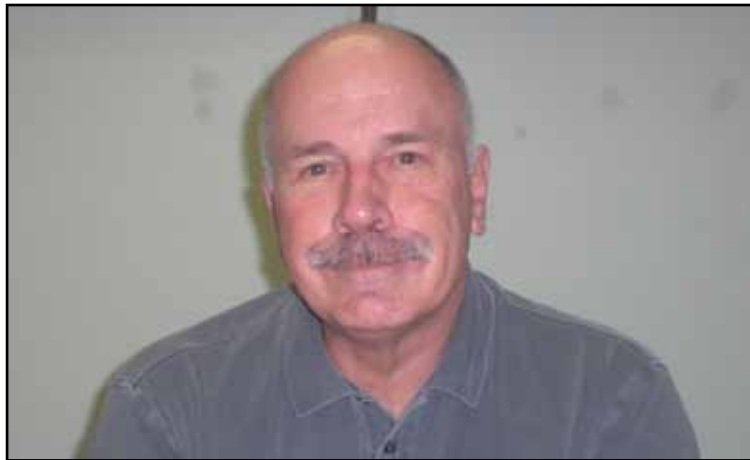
# 2 MINUTE DRILL



COMPILED: Janice Witherow

## Tim Sorge, Swings-N-Things Family Fun Park

Some people are simply meant to work in the amusement industry. Tim Sorge is one of those people. A pioneer of sorts in the Family Entertainment Center business, Tim owns the highly successful Swings-N-Things Family Fun Park near Cleveland, Ohio. He has served on numerous industry committees, task forces and Boards and is the recipient of IAAPA's "Meritorious Service to the Industry" Award. Tim's service to his community is also a top priority. His gracious spirit is evident upon first contact ... a great quality in this industry.



Tim Sorge, Swings-N-Things Family Fun Park

**Title**  
President/Owner (with my wife Joanne).

**Number of years in the industry**  
30.

**Best thing about the industry**  
The people you meet in the industry, providing good, clean, wholesome family fun and working with our management team and team members on a daily basis.

**Favorite amusement ride**  
Go-Karts ... every ride is different!



Sorge

**If I wasn't working in the amusement industry, I would be ...**  
A college baseball coach (my first career).

**Biggest challenge facing our industry**  
For the FEC industry, the economy is extremely challenging. This has also changed the banking industry, which greatly impacts small business owners and FECs. I love it when I hear banking commercials touting "relationship banking."

**The thing I like most about amusement park season is ...**  
CASH FLOW!

**Favorite rainy day activity**  
Imagining it is sunny.

**After a long day, I decompress by ...**  
In the summer, by watching a baseball game (Indians) on TV. In the off-season, watching reruns of Two and a Half Men, Seinfeld and The Big Bang Theory. All activities with my bride of 41 years, Joanne.

**Spring is on its way. The worst spring-cleaning job is ...**  
Trying to get my desk organized ... it's actually the worst fall, winter and summer job, too.

**What's one item you can't leave the house without?**  
Cell phone (wish I could).

**For breakfast, I usually eat ...**  
Cereal, yogurt, fruit and/or bagel with coffee.

**All-time favorite movie**  
Bull Durham.

**When it comes to television, I turn the channel every time I see ...**  
A political ad.

**You are on an elevator ... Do you look silently straight ahead or make small talk with fellow passengers?**  
Anyone who knows me knows I have a difficult time with short conversations, so I usually look silently straight ahead and bite my lip ... unless I'm in the Empire State Building; then all bets are off.

**The best advice I ever got was ...**  
The "Golden Rule"... Treat others like you would like to be treated.

**The one thing I never seem to have enough time for is ...**  
Relaxing.

**On a Saturday night, you can typically find me ...**  
Spending time with my wife and/or attending a family function.

**You live near Cleveland. In one word, describe the city's sports fans**  
Passionate.

**The last time I laughed out loud was ...**  
Last night watching TV sitcoms.

**At a party, my beverage of choice is ...**  
Long Island Iced Tea.

**I would describe my car as ...**  
Comfortable, loaded with amenities, but getting up there in miles (over 100,000).

**The most money I ever spent on a pair of shoes was ...**  
\$140.

**My favorite time of the day is ...**  
Early morning. I'm usually up by 4:30 or 5 a.m.

**Dream vacation**  
Somewhere warm, near an ocean with lots of Video Poker Machines close by!

## THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

Presented by



www.RollerCoasterMuseum.org

•**1907: Thomas Prior** resigned his position at **White City**, Chicago, Ill. in mid-March, to take the publicity director's position with the park's main competition, **Riverview Park**. Prior would eventually leave Riverview, to team up with **Frederick A. Church** in 1910, to form the famous amusement company, **Prior and Church**, in Venice, Calif.

•**1912:** An advertisement in the March 30 edition of *Billboard Magazine* stated: We are about to wreck **Wonderland Park**. After only seven seasons, the great Wonderland Park, in Minneapolis, Minn., would close, a victim of low attendance during its final two rain-filled summers. This included the sale of the **1905 L.A. Thompson Scenic Railway** that had five trains, seating 20 passengers each. According to the ad, the ride had to be sold within 30 days.

•**1920: Frederick A. Church** married Mrs. Anna Prior, the widow of his late partner, **Thomas H. Prior**, who died in September 1918. Ironically, Thomas' son **Frank Prior**, who took his father's place in the famous company, would now be a stepson to Mr. Church. The marriage took place in early March in Riverside, Calif.

•**1954:** In a complicated deal, **The Walt Disney Company** announced on March 29 in Hollywood, that it would be begin producing television projects, as an off-shoot of its motion picture studio, in a deal with the American Broadcasting Company (ABC). Disney would produce weekly one-hour shows, just prior to opening the much anticipated **Disneyland** park in Anaheim, Calif. in 1955. Many believe the wildly popular television show was an important part of the success of the new park, as Disney could now promote the park, as well as his interests nationwide.

•**1961:** A speeding train on the **Cyclone Racer**, at the **Pike** on Long Beach, Calif. derailed on Sunday night, March 12, as it plunged down a 60 foot drop. While five sailors were injured, most of the 15 passengers were able to walk away from the scene. The incident was initially attributed to losing a wheel, but an investigation revealed that the 600-lb. front end stabilizer, which guides the train around the circuit, separated from the rest of train.

•**1992: Cornelius Vanderbilt Wood Jr.** died on March 14 at the age of 71. A Native Texan, Wood was a developer of planned communities and amusement parks including **Disneyland, Freedomland, Pleasure Island** and **Six Flags Over Texas**.

•**1999:** Apollo's Chariot, at **Busch Gardens Williamsburg** opened on March 27. It was the first hyper coaster from **Bolliger & Mabillard**, who had previously made a name for themselves building looping coasters. The hyper coaster concept would prove successful for the firm, with hyper number 12 from B&M scheduled to open this year.

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## ►BUSCH

Continued from page 1

of an award-winning creative team with Broadway credentials, including Tony Award-winning costume designer Gregg Barnes (*The Drowsy Chaperone*, Best Costume Design Tony winner 2007; *Legally Blonde the Musical*, Best Costume Design Tony nominee 2007).

The 30-minute show opens with Austin, a digitally savvy preteen, who believes that technology has made his generation more connected to the world than ever before. But his grandfather — and old-world explorer — argues that the boy is more disconnected than he realizes, and takes him on an adventure around the globe. Through their travels they visit the African Serengeti, Great Barrier Reef, the Arctic and the Amazon rainforest.

The adventure unfolds as they arrive in the African Serengeti. Here, larger-than-life puppets and spectacular set design bring elephants and other awe-inspiring animals to life at a watering hole. Solo and chorus skating performances accompanied by acro-



batics tell an anecdote of an agile cheetah stalking graceful gazelles and meerkats.

Austin and Grandpa then dive into the Great Barrier Reef to explore the harmony of life on the ocean floor. An amazing black light transition and never-before-seen helium-filled puppets immerse the audience in the wonders of the sea, filled with parrotfish and lionfish, sea urchins, turtles and a moray eel.

In the Arctic, majestic skaters become striking snow flurries as a winter storm threatens the travelers. Austin and Grandpa witness even more beauty as they encounter the *Aurora Borealis* phenomenon, represented with theatrical lighting and projections. Then,

**Iceploration is Busch Gardens Tampa Bay's new Broadway-style stage spectacular. A cast of 20 brings to life an all-new adventure filled with world-class skaters, more than 75 original costumes, aerial performances, master puppetry and live animal stars, with shows daily in the Moroccan Palace.**

COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS

they share the stage with amazing live animal stars, including a Siberian lynx and a sled of Siberian huskies as they continue to traverse the tundra.

Austin and Grandpa wrap up their adventure around the globe immersed in the lush,



tropical Amazon Rainforest. Squirrel monkeys, sun conures and colorful macaws fill the air as playful frogs and a graceful dragonfly skate into the grand finale: a new signature song

called "Meet the World."

Iceploration performances are included with any daily park admission or annual pass.

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**►EXPO**

Continued from page 1

ning, designing or re-designing, developing and operating a location-based entertainment business for long term success.

Topics for this educational program include: "The

Location-Based Entertainment Industry;" "Different Target Markets;" "Consumer Out-of-Home Expenditures / Trends & Impact of the Great Recession;" "Site Selection;" "Cost Estimates and Budgets;" "Layout and Design – Indoor and Outdoor Facilities;" "Sourcing Equipment;" "Cash and In-

ventory Management;" "Food and Beverage;" "Games and Redemption;" and "Safety and Insurance."

During the week, there will also be an awards ceremony called the Innovator Award Program. This is a recognition program of the AMOA and the AAMA/AMOA Amusement Expo. It is open to all exhibiting firms at the 2012 Amusement Expo.

There are two charities that will have fundraisers during this time as well – the Wayne E. Hesch Memorial Scholarship and the AAMCF 13th Annual Charity Golf Tournament. The Hesch Memorial Scholarship was named in memory of the 1979 AMOA President Wayne E. Hesch. Since its inception, the charity has raised more than \$950,000 in scholarships. The AAMA's golf tournament has provided funding for a variety of charitable programs. The golf tournament is set for 1:30 p.m., March 13, Las Vegas Paiute Golf Resort.

In addition to these activities, at the same time the Amusement Expo is being held, the annual International Pizza Expo 2012 presented by the National Assn. of Pizzeria

Operators, also is being held in the hall next door.

"We have a crossover day where our attendees may attend their show and theirs may attend ours," Schultz

said. "We are really trying to put a better product together that will serve our growing industry. And, it is growing nicely."



John Schultz, right, president, American Amusement Machine Association, is expecting the trend for an increased number of attendees and exhibitors to continue for the 2012 Amusement Expo, which is set for March 14-16, Las Vegas Convention Center. With Schultz here is Pete Gustafson, Sega, at the 2011 event.

COURTESY AAMA

**Busch GARDENS TAMPA BAY**

**PTC TRAINS FOR SALE**

Five wooden coaster trains are available for immediate sale from Busch Gardens Tampa Bay.

Trains (six cars, 24 passengers per train) were supplied by Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters.

Trains operated 1999-2010 and have received all manufacturer recommended upgrades and maintenance throughout their service life. Each train is listed as in good condition requiring only the routine annual maintenance.

A list of spare parts is available upon request.

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# INTERNATIONAL

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## BRIEF

### IAAPA's Asian Attractions Expo 2012 headed to Hong Kong in June

**HONG KONG** — More than 4,500 attractions industry professionals from 60 countries — representing theme parks, waterparks, zoos, aquariums, museums, FECs, casinos, and resorts — will gather in Hong Kong June 5-8 to take part in education sessions, behind-the-scenes tours, and networking events at world-class facilities at IAAPA's Asian Attractions Expo 2012. They will see the exciting new products and services for the industry on a record-breaking trade show floor that will showcase amusement and theme park rides; architectural and design services; food and beverage innovations; coin-operated games, skill games, redemption prizes, and much more.

More than 275 companies from 30 countries will showcase goods and services in more than 100 product categories at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. Located on Victoria Harbour, the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre offers exhibit space in six halls, along with 52 meeting rooms and seven restaurants. It is adjacent and connected to two hotels and a shopping arcade.

## BALPPA celebrates 75th anniversary in style

**STORY:** Andrew Mellor  
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**LONDON** — The British Association of Leisure Parks, Piers and Attractions held its 75th anniversary dinner in January at London's famous Draper's Hall, with more than 100 members and their guests taking part in a highly successful evening.

Established in 1936, BALPPA represents the interests of owners, managers, proprietors, developers and suppliers within the U.K.'s commercial leisure parks sector, its membership encompassing a wide variety of venues such as theme and amusement parks, seaside piers, zoos and safari parks, children's play centers and FECs.

The association has always been at the forefront of activities relating to the industry, for example being a founding member of the National Amusements Council (NAC) in 1945, working on the Bet-

ting and Gaming Bill in the 60s and co-operating with the treasury on the impact of decimalisation on coin-operated devices.

BALPPA was a founding member of the Europarks Federation in the early 80's, while during the same decade it also worked closely with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) on a new Code of Safe Practice at Fairs, which included the first safety guidance produced by members for specific rides. BALPPA was also heavily involved, along with other industry bodies, in the launch of the Amusement

▶ See BALPPA, page 8



BALPPA's 75th anniversary dinner marked a significant milestone in the association's history. Among those in attendance were Chairman Adrian Mahon (third from left) and IAAPA Chairman Roland Mack (second from right), pictured here with past association Chairmen (from left) John Collins, Gary Smart, David Cam, Richard Pawley, Colin Dawson, John Bolloom and Tim Batstone.

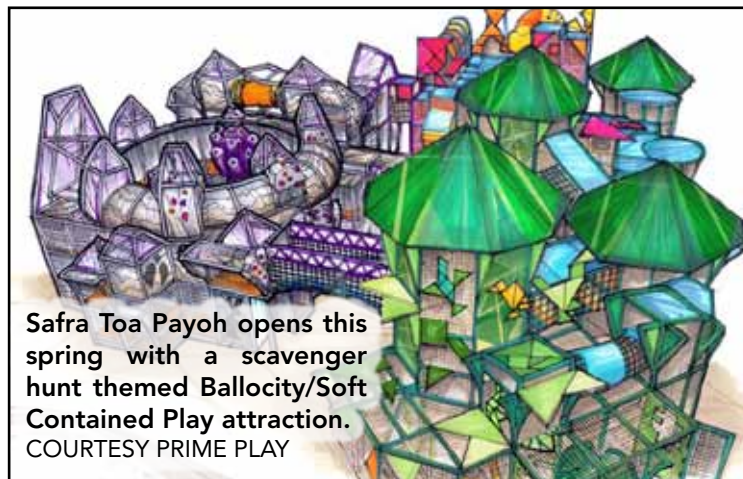
AT PHOTO

## Newest Safra project features edutainment attraction

### Prime Play picked as attraction supplier

**CANADA** — Prime Play has announced one of its most anticipated projects of 2012 with Safra Toa Payoh, in Singapore. Toa Payoh is the second Safra project that Prime Play's in-house team of experts has custom designed and built. Safra is a chain of sports, fitness and recreation clubs.

Opening this spring, Safra's newest Family Entertainment Center will offer a unique scavenger hunt



Safra Toa Payoh opens this spring with a scavenger hunt themed Ballocity/Soft Contained Play attraction. COURTESY PRIME PLAY

attraction that provides fun, entertainment and education. The integrated attraction will

feature three custom themed zones within a multi-level Ballocity/Soft Contained Play

structure complete with interactive touchscreens.

Children and their parents will explore these zones together in search of Tangram puzzle pieces, educating them about the world we live in. They can then take what they've learned and try to create their own tangrams on the touchscreens. This attraction will encourage repeat visits with changeable and rotating activities, as well as the anticipation of small prizes upon completion of the experience.

• [www.primeplay.com](http://www.primeplay.com)



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# 360 Play Family Entertainment Center opens in U.K.

*Second venue marks beginning of brand roll out by DP Leisure*

UNITED KINGDOM — Following the success of its first venue in Milton Keynes, U.K., DP Leisure (DPL), operator of the 360 Play Family Entertainment Center brand, has opened a second venue in Stevenage, Herts., also in the U.K.

The opening of the second venue marks the commencement of the roll out of the extremely successful FEC brand following its initial launch and development in Milton Keynes. The new center, situated on Stevenage Leisure Park, opened on December 12 and at 24,000 square feet, it is approximately a third larger than the original unit.

The bigger venue has also allowed DPL's sister company, DP Associates (DPA), to further develop the 360 Play concept, with its design and master plan bringing in a number of new attractions and creating specific zones which provide a theme park style layout, albeit on a much smaller scale, allowing visitors to 'discover' different areas as they move around the building.

The new unit features the familiar blend of creative play and amusement which has proved so successful at the company's Milton Keynes site. All accommodated at ground floor level, with the exception of party suites on the first

floor, the offer includes the familiar 360 Play blend of children's and family orientated activities and attractions, with three main zones offering different types of experience.

These cover physical play, creative play and skills play and include at the center of the building a major three story play structure incorporating a wide range of slides, climbing elements, crawl through tubes, ball zones and other familiar soft play offerings. In the same central area and beneath much of the play structure, a floor pick-up bumper car track featuring mid-size vehicles suitable for both children and adults forms part of the 'skills zone' which also features a carousel ride and various hands-on activities. Among these are a selection of family sports games and a climbing area made up of a series of climbing panels that children can climb along, rather than up.

Another area of the building incorporates a second, smaller play structure, this being specifically for under age four, along with a play garden and junior carousel, while adjacent to this is 360 Street housing the 'creative play' zone. Here visitors can find a host of different units offering a variety of interactive play elements such as Luigi's Pizza Parlour, Vets and Pets, a dressing up shop, a fire station, Twizzle's car body shop and more. This key area is designed to stimulate the creativity in young minds while

also providing an opportunity for parents to get involved too.

Also to be found in this section of the building is a café and a large seating area, one of several areas offering places for visitors to relax and base themselves before moving on to another part of the venue. Additional facilities elsewhere include a bespoke classroom, a private hire suite, the aforementioned party zone and an outdoor zone, Club 360, which is set to open in June 2012 and will feature sand and water play, outdoor soft play and an events area.

"We are delighted to have opened our second 360 Play venue and in an incredibly short space of time since coming on site," said Managing Director Duncan Phillips. "We completed the build in under three months and have created what we believe to be an engaging, entertaining and inspiring family orientated facility that I am sure will enjoy the great success we have witnessed at our Milton Keynes site.

"With a larger unit we've been able to take the 360 Play concept even further to enhance the experience and have incorporated additional design elements and features which I know will be well received. It's also a great site to be on with an excellent catchment area so we are looking forward to a successful future here in Stevenage to follow the success we continue to enjoy in Milton Keynes."

•[www.dpassociates.uk.com](http://www.dpassociates.uk.com)



DP Leisure has opened its newest 360 Play Family entertainment Center in Stevenage, U.K. COURTESY DP LEISURE

## ►BALPPA

Continued from page 7

Device Inspection Procedures Scheme (ADIPS) in 1997 following the publication of HSG 175.

The organization continues to be politically active too, working on a variety of campaigns which currently include Daylight Saving, the reduction of value added tax on attraction admissions in line with the majority of other European countries and the establishment of a level play-

ing field with non-commercial attractions for government and Heritage Lottery Fund funding.

BALPPA's membership today numbers more than 300 operator and trade associate members, many of whom were in attendance at the 75th anniversary dinner. Guest of honor was IAAPA Chairman Roland Mack while other attendees included current BALPPA Chairman Adrian Mahon and seven past BALPPA Chairmen.

## Premier Rides inks China coaster deal

CHINA — Baltimore, Md.-based Premier Rides has been selected to design and manufacture a signature high-thrill roller coaster for what will be the largest mixed-use development project in the world, the Great Mall of China. The Premier attraction, commissioned by the Berjaya Great Mall of China Co. Ltd., will be the tallest indoor roller coaster in the world. The ride will be designed and built in the United States and exported to China.

The yet-to-be-named launch coaster will integrate many exciting and unique elements, including Premier's advanced magnetic drive technologies. The layout will be enclosed in one of the largest free-span buildings in Asia. For competitive reasons, additional ride specifications will be released by the Berjaya Great Mall of China Co. Ltd. later in 2012.

Located near the Beijing International Airport in Yanjiao City, Hebei Province,

People's Republic of China, the 76-acre project will consist of various modern recreational facilities that integrate amusement and leisure into the commercial landscape. Retail shops, entertainment venues, an indoor theme park, and a waterpark will make the 15 million-square-foot Great Mall of China a landmark in the region. The project is slated to open in 2013.

Jim Seay, president of Premier Rides, commented, "The theme park market in China is an exciting one and all of us at Premier are motivated to not only be part of that market, but to also set the industry standard by bringing in a world-class attraction for the Berjaya Great Mall of China group. The minds behind the Great Mall of China certainly wanted to make a statement with their thrilling new project and we are honored to be part of their formula for success."

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# Aussie World takes The Plunge

*Reverchon supplies two-lift log flume*

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

AUSTRALIA — Australia's Aussie World on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland recently opened its third new ride of 2011 with the debut of The Plunge.

The new attraction is a Reverchon Industries-built, two-lift log flume providing guests with a water based experience in which they plunge down two ramps into a water

splash for an entertaining way to cool off on a hot Queensland day.

Prior to being purchased by Aussie World the ride was previously operational in France and is 225 meters (738 feet) in length. It features five boats and a first drop of seven meters (23 feet) and a second drop of 11 meters (36 feet).

General Manager David Thompson noted that The Plunge was the third new ride at Aussie World for 2011, following the successful opening of the Redback, a Zamperla Mega Disk'O 24, and Giant

Slide earlier this year, and added: "These three new rides complete an expansion project that has cost more than AUS \$2 million (U.S. \$2.02 million) and has reinforced Aussie World as a major player in the tourism industry on the Sunshine Coast.

"This year, due to the park's expansion, we have seen record numbers coming through our gates, proving that Aussie World has an exceptional product, and we will continue to remain affordable and offer extraordinary value for money."



The Plunge log flume at Aussie World is part of a AUS \$2 million (U.S. \$2.02 million) expansion project at the park. The ride features two lift hills and two drops.  
COURTESY AUSSIE WORLD

# Sally Corp. provides thrills for Ripley's Scream In The Dark! dark ride in Thailand

THAILAND — With the opening of Ripley's Scream In The Dark!, Sally Corporation's new interactive screamfest officially became part of the Ripley's entertainment zone attractions at Royal Garden Plaza in Pattaya, Thailand.

The 7,990-square-foot dark ride is located in close proximity to Ripley's Believe It or Not! Museum, Louis Tussaud's Waxworks, Ripley's Haunted Adventure, Ripley's Infinity Maze and 4D Moving Theater. Admission to the ride can be purchased as part of combination packages or alone, according to Somporn Naksuetrong, general manager of Royal Garden Plaza, who was instrumental in bringing the Sally ride to the upscale mall under the Ripley's banner.

Designed with an emphasis on animatronics and special effects, Ripley's Scream In the Dark! is tailored to frighten guests. The ride's scary and complex soundtrack plays a major role in the experience, which features an array of devious clowns, an evil ride-through a FogScreen clown face, and an advanced targeting system which incorporates new interactive technology: a Scream-O-Meter. The Scream-O-Meter measures the intensity of riders' screams...the more they scream, the higher their score.

The scoring is aided by several clown-costumed actors whose sudden and unexpected appearances in



**Sally's special effects and trademark animatronics — evil clowns in this case — bring to life Ripley's Scream In The Dark!, a new interactive dark ride at Ripley's entertainment zone attractions at Royal Garden Plaza in Pattaya, Thailand.**  
COURTESY SALLY

various locations in the ride elicit screams and hysterical laughter from riders. Crazy Clown, a colorful and somewhat sinister animatronic character (who also appears in the ride), serves as the greeter at the entrance to the attraction. He welcomes and taunts visitors in both English and Thai.

"Some themes never lose their appeal," said Sally CEO John Wood. "This is a fun ride

for people of all ages. Kids and teenagers especially are thrilled to be able to scream as loud as they can without anyone telling them to stop!"

"John Wood and the Sally team are a well known creative force in our industry that stands for "fun," and we're pleased to have the Ripley's name on Scream In the Dark!" said Jim Pattison, Jr., president of Ripley Entertainment.

# Spain's PortAventura to add B&M hyper coaster

*Reaching 249 feet in height, coaster to be tallest in Europe*

**STORY:** Andrew Mellor  
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SPAIN — A new record-breaking roller coaster is set to be the highlight of the year at Spain's PortAventura theme park.

Situated in Salou, Tarragona, about an hour's drive southwest of Barcelona, the park will invest €20 million (U.S. \$26.3 million) in the new attraction which is being supplied by the Swiss manufacturer Bolliger & Mabillard. The company also built the park's eight-inversion Dragon Khan coaster which was one of two coasters that began operations when the park originally opened in 1995. The other was the El Diablo from Arrow Dynamics.

It will be Europe's tallest and fastest hyper coaster, reaching a height of 76 meters (249 feet) and a top speed of 134 kph (83 mph) on the first descent, while it will also feature the longest drop on a European coaster at 78 meters (256 feet). Currently Silver Star at Europa-Park in Germany holds the record for being Europe's tallest coaster.

The speed through the rest of the ride will vary as it will be propelled by the force generated from the first drop.

Creating the silhouette of a mountain and transforming the park's skyline, the theme of the ride will take its inspiration from old explorations of the Himalayan Mountains. And in a first for the park, the new coaster will plunge passengers underground to recreate the experience of adventurers exploring the hidden depths of the mountains, while also providing a host of additional coaster sensations along with spectacular views of the surrounding area.

The new coaster, located in the China area of the park and named Shambhala, is part of a wider investment of €80 million (U.S. \$105.2 million) from 2012 to 2015 and builds on the successful launch of SesamoAventura, the children's area opened for the 2011 season based on the iconic Sesame Street television series. Further investment will continue to 2015, showing the management's commitment to build on the park's ongoing success as a family destination.

# IE Park / Soli Bumper Cars deliver to two Asia parks

ASIA— Italian ride manufacturer IE Park/Soli Bumper Cars has delivered brand new bumper cars and tracks to two of the largest and most popular theme parks in Asia.

Ocean Park, in Hong Kong, and Lotte World in Seoul, South Korea, recently took delivery of new bumper car tracks and, in the case of Ocean Park, new cars from the Italian company, which specializes in a wide range of vehicles in a variety of sizes through its Soli Bumper Cars division. These include junior models, mid-size, adult and a newly added model size, the Maxxi, which can accommodate two adults.

At Ocean Park, a total of 27 cars were supplied, these being the new, redesigned "1936" floor pick-up model, featuring a specially designed head restraint which is higher than on the standard model, as well as new, larger and more comfortable polyurethane seats. This model now also comes with three point safety belts, polyurethane trim on the dashboard and is avail-



Italian ride manufacturer IE Park/Soli Bumper Cars has delivered brand new bumper cars and tracks to two of the largest and most popular theme parks in Asia — Ocean Park, in Hong Kong, (left) and Lotte World in Seoul, South Korea.

COURTESY IE PARK/SOLI

able with different options for lights and headrests.

All the vehicles are painted in a metallic finish, as per the client's request, and IE Park/Soli Bumper Cars also supplied the track. This has a central aisle around which the vehicles are driven, in addition to a hinged opening section in one corner to allow for the maintenance of the cars just off the main operating area.

Commenting on the instal-

lation, Ocean Park's Chief Executive Tom Mehrmann said: "The Bumper Blasters bumper cars provide a more traditional attraction for the Thrill Mountain zone but one that is still very popular with all ages. The IE Park/Soli Bumper Cars ride has proven to be an important part of the overall mix of attractions provided in this exciting, fun-packed new area."

The project at Lotte World has seen IE Park/Soli



Bumper Cars supply a new track on which an existing fleet of 15 of the company's adult "Charlie" cars currently operates. These floor pick-up models, which also feature a specially designed, higher head restraint, were originally supplied in 2007 and have now been provided with a new track following the park's decision to move the attraction to a different location.

The attraction continues to be very popular at Lotte

World where Kang Incheol, head of the park's maintenance department, highlighted several benefits of the new track, including a simple electrical system, fewer cables and no requirement for foundations or anchor bolts (particularly advantageous to an indoor operation like Lotte World), all of which resulted in a quick and easy installation.

Both attractions opened at the end of 2011 and are enjoying much success, as IE Park/Soli Bumper Cars sales director Andrea Munari explained. "We are very happy to have had the opportunity to work with both Ocean Park and Lotte World on these two important projects. We have enjoyed much success over the years around the world with our range of bumper cars and tracks and these two installations show once again how popular such attractions are for all ages. I'm sure they will be a great success at Ocean Park and will continue to be so at Lotte World in their new location."



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AIR-RETENTION BLADDER SYSTEM



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## BRIEF

### Great America wood coaster plan may be back on

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — Now that the saga of California's Great America is over, Cedar Fair, which has retained operation of the park, has dusted off plans from a few years ago for a second wood roller coaster.

Scheduled to debut in 2013, the Great Coasters International (GCI) wooden coaster will send riders whirling into a twist around the Star Tower observation deck near the park's entrance. The 3,100-foot-long ride, proposed back in 2009, would include a terrain-hugging S-turn, a high-speed station fly-by and a series of zero-G camelbacks and bunny hops at speeds topping 50 mph. GCI is expected to provide two Millennium Flyer trains for the coaster.

The 108-foot-tall cloverleaf-shaped coaster was repeatedly delayed over noise concerns, a contentious football stadium proposal and the pending sale of the amusement park. Recently however, parent company Cedar Fair announced plans to remain as the long-term operator of California's Great America and signed an agreement allowing construction of the San Francisco 49ers' new football stadium in the amusement park's overflow parking lot. Noise concerns from neighbors will still need to be addressed.

## Landry's announces plans for Galveston Pier

**STORY:** Jeffrey L. Seifert  
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HOUSTON, Texas — The Lone Star State is about to get a little more amusing. In late January, Landry's, a local-based hospitality and entertainment company announced its plans for the hurricane-damaged 1940s Pleasure Pier in Galveston. The Galveston Historic Pleasure Pier will be a new \$60 million family-oriented entertainment center featuring a variety of attractions including rides, games, food venues and shops. Situated on 25th Street and Seawall Boulevard, the 1,130-foot pier extends into Galveston Bay and can hold between 6,500 and 7,000 people.

Anchoring the front of the

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pier will be a Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. 350-seat restaurant offering both indoor and outdoor seating. As the name implies, the restaurant offers, shrimp, shrimp, and more shrimp, with its diverse menu that includes non-seafood options as well. Bubba Gump will complement the existing Landry's Fish Tales restaurant across the street from the pier. Guests will be able to come and go as they please to either of these restaurants as well as the Shoppes at Pleasure Pier, also located on land.

In order to control crowds, access to the remainder of the

▶ See LANDRY'S, page 12



Landry's CEO Tilman J. Fertitta, left, and Galveston Mayor Joe Jaworski are both excited about the new Pleasure Pier returning to Galveston Island.

AT/GARY SLADE

GALVESTON ISLAND HISTORIC  
**PLEASURE PIER™**

When the new \$60 million Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier opens this May it will include 16 rides, 2 restaurants (including a Bubba Gump Shrimp Co.), games and more. The amusement pier's total capacity will be between 6,500 and 7,000 guests.  
COURTESY LANDRY'S

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## ►LANDRY'S

Continued from page 11

pier will require the purchase of an admission. Pier Pass single day (walk-on) tickets can be purchased at any of the 10 windows at the entrance, two automated kiosks, or purchased in advance and picked up at will call. The Pier Pass is \$10 for adults and \$8 for children (48" and under). Ride tickets are sold separately at booths and kiosks throughout the pier, or an all-day ride wristband can be purchased for \$25.99 per adult or \$19.99 for children. The Pier Pass can be upgraded to a ride wristband at any time. A family four-pack of ride wristbands can be purchased for \$84.99 (two adults and two children).

Once on the pier, guests will be able to enjoy 16 rides, play games from Bob's Space Racers, or find food at any of the quick service food stands. The ride package for the pier includes thrilling rides for adults, moderate rides for all family members, as well as kid-friendly rides. A number of different vendors were utilized to provide just the right combination for the limited

space on the pier:

- Texas Star Flyer**, a 200-foot-tall Funtime/Ride Entertainment Group (REG) swing ride;

- Pirate's Plunge**, an Interlink log flume with two drops of 40 feet and 20 feet;

- Iron Shark**, a custom Gerstlauer/REG 100 foot tall Euro-Fighter coaster with four inversions;

- Cyclone**, a 60-foot tall Larson International park model Fireball;

- Galaxy Wheel**, a Chance Rides 100-foot giant wheel;

- Revolution**, a Chance Rides rotating pendulum ride;

- Gulf Slider**, a Bertazon 3B Ltd./Ital International swinging carousel with single and double seats;

- Sea Dragon**, a Chance Rides 50-foot swinging ship;

- Rock & Roll**, a Bertrazon 3B Ltd./ Ital International Musik Express-style ride;

- Sky Shooter**, an SBF/Visa (Rides 4-U) rotating ride with a rider-controlled fly-out feature;

- Carousel**, a Chance Rides 36-foot double-decker carousel with sea creatures in addition to horses;

- Pier Pileup**, a Bertaz-

zon 3B, Ltd./Ital International bumper cars with an adult and kid section;

- Big Wheelin'**, an SBF/Rides 4-U Convoy big-rig truck ride just for kids;

- Frog Hopper**, a S&S Worldwide kiddie drop ride and,

- Texas Tea**, a Zamperla Tea Cup ride.

Of note, the Galaxy Wheel will have an LED light package that should be visible for miles. Revolution, Sea Dragon and Texas Star Flyer, the tallest swing ride in Texas, will all swing out over the water. The Iron Shark roller coaster will have a section of track cantilevered off the side of the pier, also over the water.

Landry's has acquired land along Seawall Boulevard to provide 500 premium parking spaces, as well as additional parking along 25th street, and the city is adding paid parking along the seawall. The Galveston Island Transit system will add a beach shuttle and tourist shuttle to help bring guests to the area, and several businesses and hotels are within walking distance of the pier.

Tilman J. Fertitta is the sole

owner, chairman and CEO of Landry's. As a boy growing up in Galveston, Fertitta rode his bike up and down the Seawall. In high school, he worked as a lifeguard at the Flagship Hotel. Fertitta envisions the Galveston Island Historic Pier becoming a preferred family destination with the same greatness as Chicago's Navy Pier, Santa Monica Pier and Coney Island's Luna Park. "Much of our plans for redeveloping the pier are inspired by the people and places that define Galveston's rich heritage," said Fertitta. "We have a proven track record for projects of this magnitude and complexity, and understand what is required to convert today's battered pier into a world-class venue."

Galveston Mayor Joe Jaworski added, "The City of Galveston's commitment to enhancing our seawall experience has now been improved upon by one of Galveston's own. Galveston is proud to witness Mr. Fertitta's and Landry's historic investment in recreating the Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier."

Fertitta told *Amusement Today* that he looked at various amusement piers before

making decisions. "I wanted everything to be more condensed, a lot of piers have too much space and not enough rides. We'll have more amusements than most. I also looked at the quality of food and noticed that none of the piers were themed. We're theming all the buildings to be the same — most piers are not master-planned like ours will be." In preparing the pier, Fertitta told *AT*, "We've been working on the foundation of the pier for a year. Besides doing repair to the 70-year-old pier, we've had to dig some pilings really deep as you can imagine what is needed to support a 200-foot tower. There will be some boardwalk areas, and there will not be any regular concrete, it will have a finished paver look."

Galveston Historic Pleasure Pier is planned to open in May 2012 and will employ more than 600 people. The pier is scheduled to be open all year long, although it will be open only on weekends during the off-season. During the summer weekends, the pier will be open late into the evening, some days until midnight.

•[www.pleasure-pier.com](http://www.pleasure-pier.com)

## Historic Galveston Pleasure Pier: a Century-old Catalyst for American tourism

GALVESTON, Texas — Throughout the 20th century, historic Pleasure Piers became America's centerpiece for preeminent entertainment and family amusement. Chicago's Navy Pier, Santa Monica Pier, numerous piers along the east coast, and Galveston's Pleasure Pier routinely drew record crowds and headliner entertainers. Originally, municipalities built most of these iconic piers for utility functions; the original Santa Monica Pier opened in 1909 to carry sewer pipes beyond the ocean's breakers. But entrepreneurs with vision transformed these massive steel and concrete over-water platforms into Pleasure Piers, and tourism soared to new highs as a result.

Historic Pleasure Piers have origins set in the cultural American Renaissance, circa 1876-1917, and specifically the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, known as The World's Columbian Exposition. Here, crowds totaling nearly half the American population experienced the first large-scale elaboration of a cultural style gaining momentum known as the City Beautiful Movement. The City Beautiful Movement flourished through the turn of the century, setting a reform in North American architecture and urban planning that used beautification and monumental grandeur in cities to



Galveston's historic \$1.5 million Pleasure Pier as seen in this late 1940's era postcard. COURTESY GALVESTON HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

boost morale and civic virtue for the good of all. Indeed, Chicago's World's Fair was a defining event in American culture, profoundly influencing architecture and the arts, while bolstering Chicago's self image and American industrial optimism.

Next in history came New York's Coney Island. Built on the legacy of World Fair midways, Coney Island was the largest and most famous of many new amusement complexes built across America. A key represen-

tative of City Beautiful ideals, Coney Island attracted millions of visitors each year until World War II, and featured three competing major amusement parks: Luna Park, Dreamland and Steeplechase Park. Operating and developing Pleasure Piers were heavily influenced, even inspired by Coney Island's success, and continually drew record crowds in post World War II America.

In the late 1940s, Galveston's Pleasure Pier became king as the largest

of its kind in the country. America's top dance bands routinely filled the mammoth Marine ballroom, while outside, in an open-air stadium, patrons watched movies under a star-lit sky. Fishing facilities, a full carnival midway and an aquarium exceeded expectations. Galveston's Pleasure Pier served as an iconic family destination through the ensuing decades, exponentially stimulating the island's tourism, commerce and pride.

Each historic Pleasure Pier has its own cyclical history of splendor, downfall, and for many, rebirth. Yet all join Coney Island in sharing a unique cultural phenomenon of nostalgic pleasure often revealed in pop culture's literature, stage, TV, film, music videos and video games.

In Galveston, Landry's has recently announced a momentous renovation plan to return the 25th Street and Seawall Boulevard pier to its magnificent roots as a preeminent Historic Pleasure Pier. Landry's intends to develop a world-class amusement park for all ages, a grand destination venue reminiscent of the City Beautiful Movement's style, purpose and effect.

Landry's is a national, diversified restaurant, hospitality and entertainment company based in Houston, Texas.



# Wooden coasters stay on track with off-season rehabs

**STORY:** Scott Rutherford  
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Keeping a wooden roller coaster in top operating condition is a full-time, year round task. In-house maintenance departments can readily handle the day-to-day preventative measures that wooden coasters require but when it comes to major overhauls and rebuilds, the parks turn to the specialists.

## PART 1 OF 2-PART SERIES

There are several projects in the works for 2012. Along with mighty Coney Island Cyclone's comprehensive rebuilding by Great Coasters International, Inc. (see *AT* February issue, page 19) two other companies — The Gravity Group, LLC (TGG) and Structural Technologies, Inc. (STI) — are currently engaged in their own respective rehab endeavors.

### The Gravity Group

Holiday World & Splashin' Safari's signature attraction is without question one of the most intense wooden coasters operating today. Keeping this powerful beast in check requires a tremendous amount of attention and manpower. For the 2012 season, Holiday World called on the ride's creators — The Gravity Group — to give The Voyage the most significant overhaul since its



**Structural Technologies is continuing its retracking of the Grizzly at California's Great America, with the high turn nearest the station receiving this year's attention.**  
COURTESY STI



**As part of its winter rehab of The Voyage at Holiday World, The Gravity Group is giving a major makeover to the coaster's first two valleys and the far back turn, known as the "spaghetti bowl" shown here.**

COURTESY HOLIDAY WORLD

debut in 2006. There are three target areas on The Voyage's 6,442-foot-long course in need of attention: the first two valleys and the coaster's ram-bunctious turnaround. After six years of operation, the park is attempting to smooth these areas out in order to improve the rider experience.

The Gravity Group's Chad Miller explains what his company is doing: "Over time and due to extreme forces, things move on all wooden roller coasters. For The Voyage, we've recommended adjustments to the structure on a ledger by ledger basis in the first two valleys. That's going to put that track back into its original shape, making perfectly smooth curves from end to end."

The Voyage's infamous "spaghetti bowl" turnaround is the other major part of the course getting some TLC. "Like the rest of The Voyage, this area is where we have some big forces in play, which cause the structure and track to shift and affect guest comfort," said Miller. "Holiday World's decision to completely 'gut' this 180 turn [clearing the element all the way down to the footers] has given us the unique opportunity to have another go at this section. The causal rider might not recognize the differences but Voyage fans probably will spot the improvements. This work will create not only a smoother ride but a slight increase in airtime."

And as for the question about when TGG's Timberliner trains will be employed on The Voyage, Miller responded with: "The Timberliners successfully ran on two of our rides last year (Grona Lund

and Quassy). They performed wonderfully. We've examined them after a full season of operation and we like what we see, but we'll continue to make improvements. We're currently going through TÜV approval on the Timberliners, which is a rigorous European certification process that will leave us with trains that are absolutely "bullet proof." We'll apply what we learn in building new trains so that we provide Holiday World with Timberliners that can withstand the big forces The Voyage produces. These custom-designed trains will be absolutely unique in the industry. We'll be testing the Timberliners on The Voyage this spring to build the confidence we need so that we're good to go for the public. We think the Timberliners and The Voyage are a match made in heaven."

The new and improved Voyage is expected to take its first flight when Holiday World opens for the 2012 season on May 5.

### Structural Technologies, Inc.

STI has crews scattered across the U.S. with multiple projects underway and others waiting in the wings. This month *Amusement Today* focuses on two of STI's most prominent rehabs for Cedar Fair.

Up first is Carowinds' Thunder Road wooden racing coaster, which is — like the Coney Island Cyclone — undergoing a major, near-complete reconstruction.

*AT* visited the work site where STI's Leonard Adams III detailed this season's round of improvements. "This is our fourth year working on

Thunder Road's rebuild. The weather has been wonderful and allowed us to be slightly ahead of schedule. We've rebuilt an additional 250 feet of track and structure from the ground up on each side of the outbound run. Though we've kept the same profile, we added some new footers along with 15 half bents into this area to help support the structure. This is the next to the final stage of the project. Next winter, we'll come back and rebuild another large section while the park maintenance team will complete the low speed hills into the brake run themselves. When it's finished next year, Thunder Road will be running the best it has since the day it opened in 1976."

Next on STI's list is the Grizzly at California's Great America. One of several contemporary designs based on PTC's Wildcat (Coney Island, Ohio, 1926-64), the 1986-built Grizzly is the park's only wooden coaster. STI returned to Great America this winter to continue the enhancement project they started four years

ago. "There were several areas that had a problem with shuffling or hunting that robbed the trains of speed and made for a bumpy, washboard-like ride," said STI founder Leonard Adams. "Each year we're out here we make small adjustments to the profile to tighten it up and eliminate that, which increases the speed. We fixed several ledgers that were out of place and rounded out the areas that needed it. This year we're concentrating on the high turn closest to the station, which is about 400 feet of track. We've been told that the work we did last year produced a significant increase in train speed. I expect this year's rebuilding and tweaking of the second high turn to yield similar results."

Other STI projects for this season include Knoebel's top-rated Phoenix. There the company is rebuilding - from the ledgers up - the entire first drop and climb into the first turn. STI will also return to Conneaut Lake to continue the ongoing rehab of the 1938-built Blue Streak. This season they will concentrate on the climb and approach into the turnaround. Though full details were still embargoed at press time, expect additional news regarding STI's involvement at Conneaut Lake Park.

"In keeping these wooden coasters running, we're preserving the past," said Leonard Adams III. "We'll go out of our way to save these important pieces of history. That's what we're all about."

Next Month: *AT* looks at work from Rocky Mountain Construction and numerous other coaster projects.



**Now in their fourth year of a five year total rebuild of Thunder Road at Carowinds, this wooden racer continues to receive new footers, support structure and track from STI.**  
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ORLANDO, Fla. — This year, Universal Orlando Resort will debut more adventure, excitement, laughter and awe-inspiring moments than ever before making 2012 an extraordinary year to be there.

The new experiences began debuting in February. Guests will discover the exhilarating entertainment of a new Blue Man Group show; marvel at breathtaking new animation and effects in The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man; dance and celebrate with their favorite animated characters during Universal's Superstar Parade and relive memorable moments from Universal Pictures most powerful and beloved films during the nighttime show Universal's Cinematic Spectacular – 100 Years of Movie Memories. And coming this summer guests will be transformed into minions for an incredible adventure inside the new Despicable Me Minion Mayhem attraction.

Universal Orlando will also be marking the Universal Pictures Centennial Anniversary Celebration during 2012 with a series of events to be announced throughout the year.

"We are about to offer our guests a historic range of incredible new entertainment experiences," said Alice Norsworthy, executive vice president of marketing and sales for Universal Orlando Resort. "This year will be filled with excitement and entertainment for the entire family."

The new 2012 experiences at Universal Orlando Resort include:

### Blue Man Group Opened Feb. 24, 2012 at Universal CityWalk

Universal Orlando's Blue Man Group show is taking their unique and captivating mash-up of high energy music, comedy, audience participation and collective exhilaration to another level. Featuring a new show environment, new music, new technology and new experiences, the show will allow audiences to join the Blue Men as they discover, engage and explore the world's obsession with cutting-edge technology. Signature Blue Man Group moments combine with new pieces for an explosive evening of entertainment. New show elements include the curious Blue Men interacting



Universal Orlando Resort has a host of new entertainment experiences lined up for the 2012 season. The offerings include the new Despicable Me Minion Mayhem attraction, left, and Hollywood Drive-In Golf to name just a few. COURTESY UNIVERSAL ORLANDO



with enormous "GiPads," a funny and insightful look at contemporary communication vehicles, and a new finale with an original Blue Man Group music score.

### The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man Experience Re-opening March 2012 at Islands of Adventure

Universal Orlando is transforming what is already one of the most amazing attraction experiences ever created into what will feel like an all-new adventure. The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man will soon feature all-new, 4K digital high-definition animation, new high tech 3-D glasses and upgrades to the set, audio and lighting systems. The re-animation of the ride film will include an entirely new level of detail for guests to discover, including a cameo by legendary comic book icon and Spider-Man co-creator, Stan Lee.

### Universal's Superstar Parade Opening Spring 2012 at Universal Studios Florida

Some of today's most beloved characters and stories will bring new adventure to the streets of Universal Studios during Universal's Superstar Parade – an all-new daily parade that features larger-than-life floats, state-of-the-art technology and hundreds of energetic street performers. Guests will sing and dance along with characters like the minions from Despicable Me, E.B. from the hit comedy, Hop, Nickelodeon's Dora & Diego and SpongeBob SquarePants during the interactive experience.

Guests will have the opportunity to enjoy performances and character meet and greets prior to the parade at select locations throughout the day.

### Universal's Cinematic Spectacular: 100 Years of Movie Memories Opening Spring 2012 at Universal Studios Florida

Narrated by award-winning actor and recent Golden Globe Cecil B. DeMille honoree, Morgan Freeman, Universal's Cinematic Spectacular will celebrate the most powerful and emotional moments from Universal Pictures' most iconic films — all on cutting-edge waterfall screens within the Universal Studios lagoon and surrounded by colorful fountains and pyrotechnics. The experience will take guests on a journey through epic cinematic moments filled with heroes, horror, laughter, good vs. evil and triumph. The new show opens this spring, runs all summer and then on select nights through the end of the year.

### Despicable Me Minion Mayhem Opening Summer 2012 at Universal Studios Florida

Despicable Me Minion Mayhem will take guests on a 3-D adventure with their favorite characters from the hit film – Gru, Margo, Edith, Agnes and the mischievous minions. The experience begins when guests enter Gru's home, where they learn that they're being recruited to become minions and undergo "minion training."

► See UNIVERSAL, page 17



## UNIVERSAL

Continued from page 16

Things don't go as planned, and guests find themselves on a hysterical journey with Gru and his daughters. Once guests make it through training, they join an interactive, minion-inspired dance party where they can show off their best moves.

Other new experiences opening this year include:

- Hollywood Drive-In Golf, a unique 36-hole miniature golf experience inspired by the classic drive-in movie era, opened in February at Universal CityWalk.

- A new immersive retail entertainment experience that will become home to SpongeBob SquarePants and other characters from the number one kids animated TV series, Nickelodeon's SpongeBob SquarePants. It will open inside Universal Studios this year.

## Whac-a-Mole delivered to Quassy



Quassy Amusement Park President Eric Anderson stands at a new addition for the 2012 season: a 9-player Whac-a-Mole group game from Bobs Space Racers. The attraction will open with the rest of the Middlebury, Conn., park on April 28. The park has been busy — like many others — during the off-season refurbishing equipment and adding new attractions for the coming season. Quassy staff has spent much of the fall and early winter repainting attractions at its popular Saturation Station waterpark and refurbishing its Chance Rides Music Fest. In addition, the park will add a new Zamperla family tea cup ride for 2012.

COURTESY QUASSY AMUSEMENT PARK

## After 35 years, Kurt Mack-Even retires from Mack Rides

GERMANY — After 35 successful years at Mack Rides in Rust, Germany, Kurt Mack-Even has retired from his role as managing director and the head of the sales department.

Since the 1970s Kurt Mack-Even was Mack Rides' primary contact for industry customers. Kurt will continue consulting for the sales department and will still be available for his clients.

Thorsten Koebele was announced as the chief officer of sales and marketing at Mack Rides. Koebele has 13 years of experience in the engineering offices as a design engineer and project manager. He also led the development department, already supporting the sales department over the years. Due to his extraordinary engineering knowledge the company felt he was the perfect contact person for sales.

At the beginning of January, Mack Rides installed a new executive board that includes: Christian von Elverfeldt (managing director and CEO), Thorsten Koebele (chief officer sales and marketing) and Günter Burger (chief technical officer).



Kurt Mack-Even



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## BRIEF

### Lotte World \$22M deal signed with WhiteWater

SOUTH KOREA — Lotte World, known as the world's largest indoor theme park, has just signed the largest contract in the waterpark industry with WhiteWater to open a new waterpark to be located in Kimhae, near Busan, South Korea.

The \$22 million contract specifies that WhiteWater will engineer, manufacture and install 100 percent of the waterpark's indoor and outdoor attractions. Lotte World Waterpark is anticipated to be completed in May 2013.

This exciting project will feature a thrilling array of waterslides including two MegaTube rides: the new Family Rattler and Family Python, the legendary Family Boomerango, AquaLoop, Abyss, an 8-Lane Whizard, Family Raft Ride, Dueling Master Blasters, as well as Speed Slides and Body Slides.

In addition to waterslides, Lotte World Waterpark will also offer a Surf Wave pool, a smaller, indoor Family Wave pool, a FlowRider Double and two AquaPlay multi-level interactive play structures with both featuring large tipping buckets.

## Six Flags Hurricane Harbor (N.J.) adding King Cobra

*Polin to deliver first of its kind ride to United States waterpark market*

JACKSON, N.J. — Six Flags Great Adventure announced in February the addition of King Cobra, an intense and visually-stunning, racing tube slide, opening at Six Flags Hurricane Harbor in summer 2012.

King Cobra promises one of the most extreme riding experiences in the industry while also delivering great spectator appeal. The slide tower will be the first of its kind anywhere in the United States. King Cobra's unique configuration enables two tubes to race through a circular path with twists, turns and surprises through enclosed and open sections of the slide at speeds up to 32 miles per hour. The ride's finale features a sudden, 25-foot plunge at a 50-degree angle with riders racing until the heart-pounding finish as they appear to be swallowed by the massive mouth of the cobra.

King Cobra is manufactured by Polin Waterparks and Pool Systems of Turkey, a world leader in the aquatic industry. King Cobra marks Polin's first major U.S. installation in the company's 35-year history. Polin's unique Resin Transfer Molding (RTN) technology allows for unique color patterns to be embedded into the fiberglass — in this case bold orange, black and yellow scales to resemble a massive cobra on both the interior and exterior.

"We are thrilled to work with Polin on this landmark project, and are confident that



Polin's popular and impressive Cobra-themed waterslide will make its U.S. debut this summer at Six Flags Hurricane Harbor in Jackson, N.J.  
COURTESY POLIN

King Cobra's intense ride experience and unparalleled design will make it our most popular and entertaining attraction," said Six Flags Great Adventure Park President

John Fitzgerald.

King Cobra is scheduled to open this summer in lieu of the previously announced Dive Bomber drop capsule. It's not known whether the

Dive Bomber attraction is on hold to open at a future date, or if those plans have been scrapped.

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# Wet 'n Wild Orlando adding themed water playground



Artistic rendering shows the look and detail of Wet 'n Wild Orlando's new sandcastle themed play structure from ProSlide. COURTESY WET 'N WILD

ORLANDO, Fla. — Wet 'n Wild Orlando is building a new water playground attraction. Covering an acre and supplied by ProSlide, the new sandcastle-themed water playground Kids' Park is expected to be the largest of its kind in Florida. Scheduled to open summer of 2012, this will be Wet 'n Wild's first new attraction in over four years.

"We are excited to offer a tremendous, new experience for families and children of all ages," said Michael Black, senior VP & GM of Wet 'n Wild. "As the waterpark recognized for shared thrills and multiperson attractions, we wanted to add new thrills for the kids to share with their families."

The new interactive water playground will span more than 60-feet in height, expand across two pools (two levels: upper & lower) and have

more than 85,000 gallons of water for guests to enjoy. The sandcastle playground itself will encompass more than 15,000 square feet, and will feature 17 slides and over 160 soakers, jets, waterfalls and water cannons.

Built on the site of Wet 'n Wild's current kids' park, the new attraction will be a beach-themed area unto itself with only one entrance/exit. The area will include dedicated seating for parents and guardians set amidst lush, tropical landscaping. The single access point will ensure that children do not wander into other areas of the park without their custodian's knowledge. "We've all seen kid's areas at waterparks," Black stated, "but this will be bigger and unlike any other around. It will be fun and engaging for everyone, stimulating our youngest guests and delighting entire families."

## New waterpark latest venture in Jay Peak expansion

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

JAY, Vermont — Like so many other ski resorts, Jay Peak Resort decided that relying on just the ski business alone was too risky to ensure the resort's success. Located just four miles from the Canadian border, Jay Peak, Vermont's northernmost mountain peak, is usually blessed with an abundance of snow. But, in this day and age, one snowless winter season could spell bankruptcy for the ski resort.

Jay Peak dates back to 1957 when it opened under the direction of former Austrian ski racer Walter Foeger. The addition of a Von Roll aerial tramway in 1967 moved the ski resort into the big leagues. Despite having the only aerial tramway in Vermont, its remote location kept it from becoming one of the overcrowded ski resorts often found in the east. Jay Peak had a loyal, if somewhat limited, group of followers, many of whom came from Quebec.

Resort president and COO Bill Stenger, also a co-owner, decided several years ago that Jay Peak needed to reinvent itself. Beginning in 2006 the resort added a golf course. Two years later brought about the addition of the upscale all-suites Tram Haus Lodge and spa along with the Ice Haus, an NHL-sized hockey arena that can be used for ice skating, ice shows and hockey. A Nordic Center opened in 2009 and features Nordic (cross-country) gear rental,

snowshoes, trail maps, guide information, a restaurant, an outdoor gathering area with fire pits and three upstairs suites available for rent.

The original Hotel Jay, a small 48 room hotel built in the 1970s was demolished. The new Hotel Jay and conference center, a huge contemporary 173-room timber lodge, held its grand opening in January. The adjoining Pump House opened in mid-December just in time for the holidays. The Pump House, a \$25-million indoor glass-enclosed waterpark, covers 50,000 square feet and has the capacity to hold 900 guests. Kept at a tropical 84 degrees, the building features a retractable roof allowing the indoor waterpark to become an open-air venue during the warm summer months.

Pump House attractions include one of the longest indoor lazy rivers in the world, a dual Wave Loch Flowrider, as well as the usual body and tube slides and waterplay areas. One of the highlight attractions is La Chute, one of the world's first indoor White-Water West AquaLoop rides. At 71 feet in height it protrudes through the roof in its own little glassed-in cupola. As with all AquaLoop slides, guests begin by entering a launch capsule. After a brief countdown, the floor drops out and the rider freefalls almost straight down reaching speeds up to 40 mph before getting propelled into the oblique loop.

Now that the Hotel Jay has opened, the Pump House indoor waterpark, restaurants,



shops, video arcade and Tram Haus Lodge are all interconnected with indoor walkways

and tunnels. The new Jay Peak Resort can now ensure its guests will have a good time

even if the slopes aren't covered with snow, or the greens are too wet for golf.

# Legoland Florida announces waterpark details, opening date

WINTER HAVEN, Fla. — Shortly after its October 2012 debut, Legoland Florida released details of its first expansion — Legoland Water Park. Scheduled to open May 26, 2012, the waterpark, part of the former Cypress Gardens Adventure Park will be completely refurbished and re-themed and will include a lazy river, body slides and an interactive waterplay structure.

“We’re very excited to share plans for this amazing new attraction,” said Legoland Florida General Manager Adrian Jones. “True to our mission, the waterpark attraction has been designed for families with children ages 2 to 12 and will add hours of water play to an already full day and move Legoland Florida into a multi-day experience for vacationers. The addition also adds another great value proposition for our annual pass members.”

Admission to the waterpark is available as a \$12 upgrade only to guests who already have an admission ticket to Legoland. An all-new Legoland premium pass will offer 12 months admission to Legoland, and seasonal access to the waterpark.

“This newest attraction is just one of many ways we will continue to evolve Legoland Florida over the next several years,” said Jones. “Creating



a multi-visit proposition for families adds another dimension to the Legoland Florida offering. Adding the water park attraction will fulfill this criteria as well as offering a unique attraction in Central Florida.”

These artist renderings give a view of what the Legoland Water Park will look like upon opening on May 26. The bottom rendering gives a look at the entire waterpark layout.

COURTESY LEGOLAND



## NEWS SPLASH

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

**Discovery Cove** in Orlando Fla. continues to make progress on its new Freshwater Oasis attraction, scheduled to open in Spring 2012. The all-new attraction will feature wading adventures in a tropical environment and give visitors face-to-face encounters with playful otters and curious marmosets.

**The American Red Cross**, responding to months of criticism over increased learn-to-swim fees announced plans to reduce those costs. The existing policy of \$5 per swim student will be replaced by June 1. The new policy will charge \$300 per pool property, as long as that property offers lifeguard training. The \$300 fee is good for up to 150 students. Additional students beyond that will be priced at \$1 per student. Properties that do not offer lifeguard training will be charged \$350 for up to 100 students, with each additional student priced at \$1. The American Red Cross has been providing water safety programs at pools and community centers across the country for over 65 years.

In addition to the rides and attractions covered in the *Amusement Today* February issue concerning the North Texas **Hawaiian Falls** waterparks, **SplashTacular** and Hawaiian Falls announced a new partnership, and the debut of another new attraction. **Hawaiian Falls Roanoke** will premier SplashTacular’s Double BowlsEye, featuring two rafts launched simultaneously down two enclosed slides, which will then empty into a massive bowl, where they will chase each other to finish. The ride is scheduled to open on the weekend of July 4, 2012.

**Lo-Q** has signed a three-year agreement with **Palace Entertainment** to bring Q-band, the virtual queuing system, to **Spish Splash** waterpark in Long Island, N.Y. Spish Splash will open their 2012 season offering the Q-band virtual queuing system to their guests, for an additional fee. The Q-band utilizes a revolutionary RFID wristband that is waterproof and lightweight. Guests that rent the Q-band can use the wristband to reserve a “virtual” place in line at the park’s most popular slides using kiosks located throughout the park. When their reservation time arrives, guests enter via a separate entrance and scan their band to be validated avoiding the long lineup. Spish Splash will offer two levels of the Q-band service for their guests to choose from, allowing them more time to enjoy the park and less time waiting in line.

**Pitorland**, the largest indoor waterpark in Russia and one of the largest in all of Europe opened to the public in January, in the city of St. Petersburg. The 25,000-square-meter (82,000-square-foot) facility is housed under a unique 43-meter (141-foot) wood-structure membrane-covered dome. The waterpark is part of a larger facility that includes tennis courts, a dance studio, bowling center, fitness center, cinemas, restaurants, cafes, bars, a shopping gallery, hotel and yacht club.

**WhiteWater West** has seen growth in the waterpark industry in “the land down under.” **The Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre** opened, on January 3, the first double FlowRider in the Australian state of Victoria. In Queensland, the largest AquaPlay waterpark in the southern hemisphere opened at **Zagames Paradise Resort**, consisting of two AquaPlay structures, with one dedicated to younger guests with shallow waters. At the **Big4 North Star Holiday Resort** in New South Wales, WhiteWater installed an AquaPlay with tipping bucket, AquaSpray and AquaTune.



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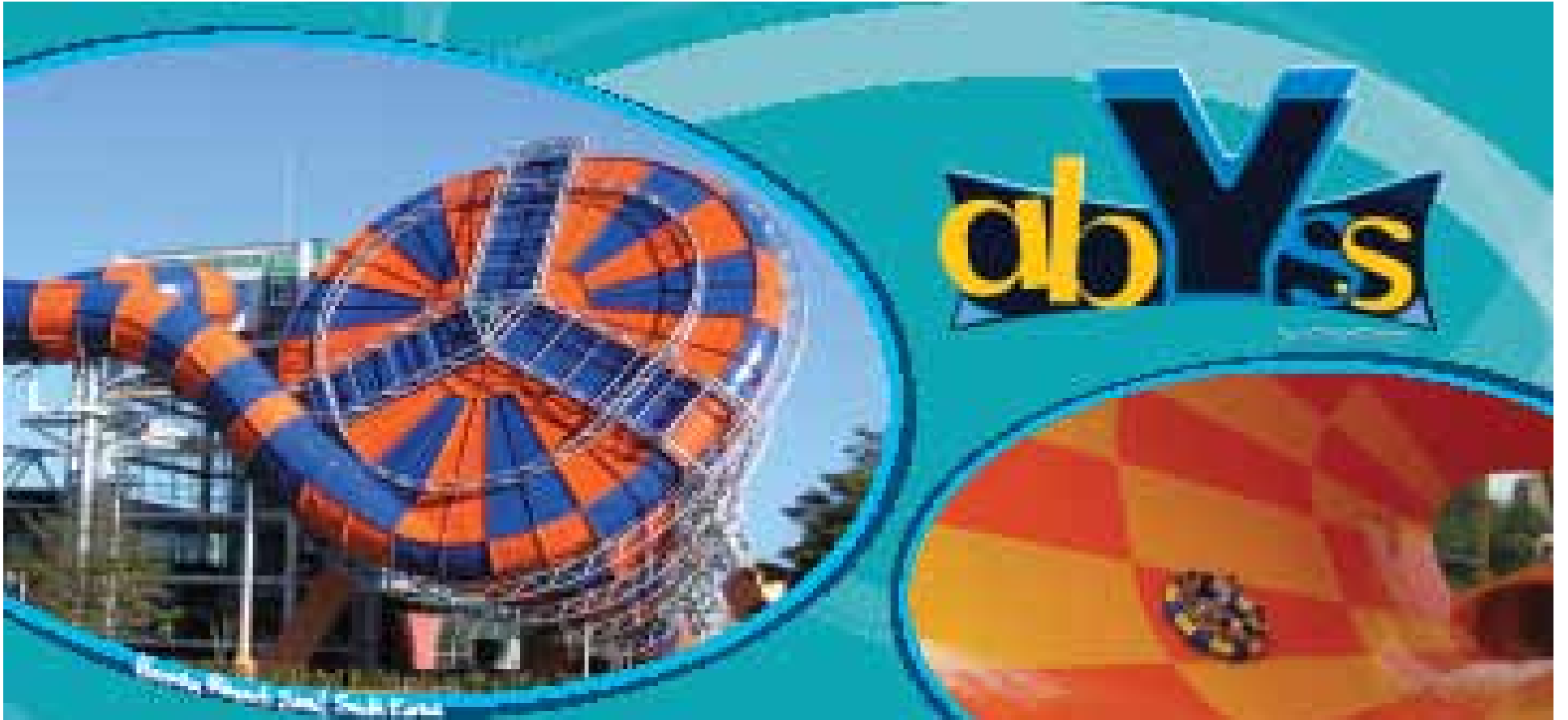
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## Schlitterbahn announces new year-round indoor waterpark hotel

NEW BRAUNFELS, Texas — Schlitterbahn, respected worldwide for ground-breaking water-based entertainment destinations, announced plans in February for a new 221-room, year-round entertainment resort destination — Schlitterbahn Beach Resort, South Padre Island, Texas.

Located on the pristine beaches of the Gulf of Mexico at the former location of the Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort, this exciting new beachfront resort destination will include lodging, retail, restaurants, a year-round indoor/outdoor convertible waterpark, new slides and rides and special access to the award-winning Schlitterbahn Beach outdoor waterpark. The first phase of this project is scheduled to open summer of 2012.

Not only will hotel guests



This artist rendering shows the end view of the Schlitterbahn Beach Resort with the new tree-themed entrance. COURTESY SCHLITTERBAHN

enjoy the new spacious upscale accommodations, but resort guests will also receive a variety of VIP amenities in-

cluding unlimited use of the waterpark for the duration of their stay, extended use of select park rides and attractions, beach access amenities, Wi-Fi and free onsite parking.

"We are pleased to have the opportunity to develop our new upscale waterpark hotel concept right here on South Padre Island," explained Jeff Henry, principal for the Schlitterbahn Development Group. "Our team has been working on the creation and design of this world-class destination for more than two years and we are excited to be announcing this project today. Without the support and financial commitment of our partner, American National Insurance Company, and the local government, the realization of this dream could not have become a reality."

The Schlitterbahn Beach Resort is expected to entertain hundreds of thousands of guests per year and will create several hundred new jobs, providing an economic boost to the region.

Additional resort and attraction information, including new waterpark technology, will be announced as the project's development continues.

As part of Schlitterbahn's ongoing commitment to the environment, this new resort includes the latest in energy and water saving technologies including compact fluorescent lights, LED technologies, low-flow fixtures and the constant capturing, filtering, sanitizing and recirculation of water through the new resort's rides and attractions.

## Dolly Parton, Gaylord team up for new Nashville park

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Two of the biggest names in Tennessee tourism are teaming up to bring a major family entertainment zone to Nashville. Gaylord Entertainment and Dolly Parton's Dollywood Company have entered into a memorandum of understanding for a 50/50 joint venture to develop a 114-acre family entertainment zone adjacent to the Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center. The Dollywood Company will serve as the operating partner.

Phase one of the project is a yet unnamed approximately \$50 million water and snow park, the first of its kind in the United States. Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam and Nashville Mayor Karl Dean joined Dolly Parton and Colin V. Reed, chairman and chief executive officer, for Gaylord Entertainment's January announcement at the Grand Ole Opry House at Gaylord Opryland.

"Tourism is the second largest industry in Tennessee, generating more than a billion dollars in tax revenue annually and employing more than 170,000 Tennesseans," Haslam said. "This project will be a welcome addition to the wide variety of attractions and destinations across our great state, and I applaud the collaboration and spirit that has led to this announcement."

### FIRST REPORTED ON amusementtoday.com

"Music City has become a travel destination unlike any other in the country," Dean said. "The addition of this family entertainment complex near Opryland adds a critical missing piece to our tourist offerings. It provides a unique leisure attraction that will further enhance our already booming hospitality industry, which is one of our city's top private sector employers."

The water and snow park will anchor the project, which offers room for future expansion. The park will provide a mix of high energy water activities for the summer season and designated snow activities for winter play. Once open, first year attendance is projected at 500,000, a large portion of which will come from out of state, bringing in substantial tourism revenue to Tennessee and Nashville. Dollywood expects to employ 450 full- and part-time employees.

This proposed attraction furthers Gaylord's focus on growing the leisure side of its business and continuing to drive revenue through its top-notch entertainment attractions throughout the year. The Dollywood Company is responsible for managing



Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam, left, Nashville Mayor Karl Dean, and Dolly Parton all spoke during the press conference about the details surrounding the new Dollywood branded water & snow park coming to Nashville in 2013. AT/SUE NICHOLS

Dolly Parton's Dollywood and Dollywood's Splash Country in the Smoky Mountains of East Tennessee, as well as her dinner theatre attraction, Dixie Stampede. Annually, these attractions attract approximately four million visitors and have won some of the industry's most coveted awards including "world's best theme park" and "America's most beautiful water park."

"I'm so excited about this opportunity," Dolly Parton said. "I am confident that partnering my Dollywood Company with a great company like Gaylord will create something truly special. We're all working on new types of entertainment to do in the daytime and nighttime for the whole family

so we bring new folks to the area year round."

"We are thrilled by the prospect of bringing to Nashville a family focused entertainment center with one of the preeminent theme park owners and operators in the country," said Colin V. Reed, chairman and chief executive officer, for Gaylord Entertainment. "I am confident this proposed attraction, which will be a destination not only for our hotel guests but also for the entire Nashville community, will meaningfully enhance our transient and leisure strategy by providing a fun, family environment at the doorstep of the Opryland Hotel. With Dolly Parton's country music legacy and strong ties to

Nashville, we can think of no better partner for this venture than Dolly's Dollywood Company."

"We hope that some other developers with great ideas will join us for phase two of this project. We're saying the water and snow park are the first phase, but who knows, if we see some great ideas we could be developing the entire zone by the time the snow and water park open. Wouldn't that be great for Nashville and the state," Parton said.

"We are in the early stages of planning and will make certain that any project we pursue is done so under the appropriate economic conditions and provides adequate returns for our shareholders," said Reed. "We are reserving approximately 35 acres for expansion and complimentary regional attractions and we have been working closely with state and city officials to ensure we have the proper infrastructure agreements in place for the project to move forward. We are looking forward to working on the next steps of this project and to it becoming a valuable part of the Nashville tourism community."

A late 2012, early 2013 groundbreaking date is expected with the park opening slated for summer of 2014.



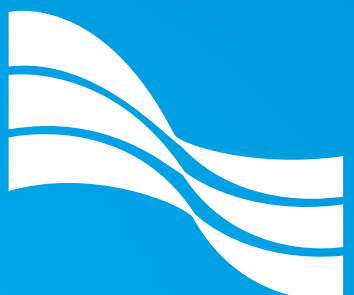


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## BRIEF

### Koch family forms new company to save Kentucky Kingdom

SANTA CLAUS, Ind. — Four members of Holiday World's enterprising Koch family continue to explore re-opening Louisville's amusement and waterpark (formerly known as Kentucky Kingdom) in 2013. Four family members have formed a new company — Bluegrass Boardwalk, Incorporated — to negotiate a lease agreement with the Kentucky State Fair Board, secure financing, and apply for economic development incentives from the Commonwealth of Kentucky. No public monies will be requested from the Kentucky Legislature by Bluegrass Boardwalk, Incorporated.

The members of the Koch family involved in discussions with the Kentucky State Fair Board as Bluegrass Boardwalk, Inc. are Holiday World President Dan Koch, his sister Natalie Koch, their cousin Kathy Kamp, and her husband, Michael Kamp, who is a general manager at Holiday World. Dan, Natalie and Kathy are grandchildren of Holiday World's founder, Louis J. Koch, who opened the park (originally called Santa Claus Land) in 1946.

For more information and updates on this developing story, visit: [bluegrassboardwalk.com](http://bluegrassboardwalk.com).

## Record attendance seen at NAARSO safety forum

**STORY:** Pam Sherborne  
[psherborne@amusementtoday.com](mailto:psherborne@amusementtoday.com)

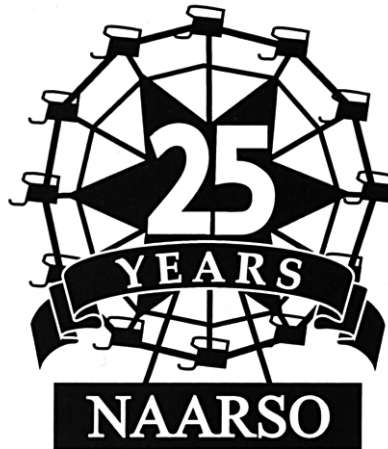
MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. — A record attendance was set this year at the National Association of Amusement Ride Safety Officials (NAARSO) Annual Safety Inspection Forum with 255 students attending.

"With teachers and other personnel, we have around 300 people here," said Leonard Cavalier, NAARSO's executive director, during the forum.

The 25th annual event was held Jan. 29-Feb. 3, at the Family Kingdom Park, Myrtle Beach, S.C., with some classes and sessions held as well at the Sands Ocean Resort, Myrtle Beach, the group's host hotel.

"The weather has been great," Cavalier said, "and the classes are going really well and are well attended."

Cavalier said one aspect attributing to the record turn-



out is that some of the companies represented sent more people to the forum than ever before.

"We have a very nice contingency here from Cedar Fair, about 17 or 18 folks," he said. "And carnivals Amusements of America and Reithoffer Shows sent 10 to 12 people each."

We had over 125 for testing with about half or more being Level IIs."

NAARSO's varying lev-

els of certification are specific upon the amount of education. All those receiving certification have to participate in continuing education as well.

Since beginning its certification program in 1994, NAARSO has certified 744 Level I inspectors, 275 Level II inspectors, and 74 Level III inspectors not including the number from last month's forum.

Another thing attributing to the increase in attendance is that "a lot of states are requiring companies to have a NAARSO certified person."

This year, participants were treated to a hands-on activity at the SkyWheel, the 200-foot wheel by Chance Rides that opened in 2011 at the Oceanfront Boardwalk and Promenade in Myrtle Beach. It is owned by Koch Development and Pacific Development.

According to Cavalier, NAARSO's forum participants were allowed to go

through the controls and study the operating mechanics.

Participants also were on the grounds of the Family Kingdom Park.

Curriculum offered included Inspections Techniques, Electric Hydraulics, Components, ASTM, Magnetic Breaking, Emergency Evacuation Systems, Safety Restraints, Pneumatics, and AIMS Certification Exams. Participants were to gain knowledge of coasters, welding inspections, aerial tramways, miniature trains, climbing walls, bearings and a whole array of other mechanics.

The classes on Jan. 30 and 31 were broken up into two groups: Primary and Secondary. A participant's path is determined by previous training and/or years in the industry. Primary covers basic inspection points and techniques as well as basic electric, hydra-

► See NAARSO, page 28

## Cedar Fair CEO outlines growth, financial goals

SANDUSKY, Ohio — Cedar Fair Entertainment Company (NYSE: FUN) hosted an investor meeting in New York City on Jan. 19 at which its president and newly named chief executive officer, Matt Ouimet, outlined his long-term growth strategy — known as "FUN-forward" — and the corresponding financial goals for the Sandusky, Ohio-based company.

"This is truly an exciting time for Cedar Fair," said Ouimet. "Given our favorable industry dynamics — including significant barriers to entry and a loyal, high-re-

peat customer base — as well as the significant momentum we have created for the company over the past two record-setting years, we see several attractive strategic growth opportunities in both the near and long term. We believe there are many compelling reasons for investors to choose Cedar Fair, and we are committed to rewarding them for their confidence

in us with meaningful and sustainable value creation through a balanced approach of distributions, growth investments, debt reduction and unit repurchases."

Ouimet cited Cedar Fair's high-quality, well-maintained parks, its recognized stature within the industry as an innovation leader and its strong brand positioning as the core driv-

ers of the company's financial and operational momentum.

"We believe we offer our guests compelling value by providing wholesome, exciting, quality experiences with the greatest thrill rides and family attractions, which is an especially strong entertainment proposition in today's discerning consumer market," Ouimet added. "Likewise, our goal is to continue to be a total return investment for our unitholders."

Components of the FUN-forward strategy include:

► See CEDAR FAIR, page 28



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## ▶NAARSO

Continued from page 27

lics and other related subjects. Secondary consists of elective one-hour classes covering different topics that include inspection of specific types of devices, codes and standards, employee safety and other topics not related to basic ride inspections.

In conjunction with the 25th Annual Safety Forum, NAARSO extended additional training and certification. For

those individuals involved in the rental side of the amusement industry, NAARSO offered the Limited Specialty class. This training covered inflatable devices, rock walls, Euro bungees/bungee jumps and trackless trains. These classes took place on Jan. 28 and 29 at the Sands Ocean Resort. They included instruction in the areas of inspection procedures, safe operation procedures, ASTM standards, fasteners, wire rope, electrical codes and recommended

documentation practices.

Another special this year was an eight-hour course that offered tips and information on how to create training programs. This class was held on Jan. 28.

Coming up for NAARSO are two to three outreach programs. The outreach programs draw about 50 students.

The 2013 Safety Forum will be held at Dollywood, Pigeon Forge, Tenn.

## ▶CEDAR FAIR

Continued from page 27

•Enhanced guest experience: Maintaining an unwavering focus on delivering compelling value for the price paid, at every park on every day. In the near term, the company will continue to add new rides and attractions while at the same time expanding evening event activities to provide enhanced value and extend the length

of each visit.

•Improved consumer messaging and relationship management: Modernizing the marketing and sales strategy and execution to ensure the company is most effectively segmenting its customer base and speaking to each audience with messages that “break through the noise” and create the proper emotional connection that drives action within the operating season.

•Dynamic pricing and advance purchase commitments: Incorporating a new e-commerce platform common to other industry players. The new platform will provide real-time data and dynamic pricing modification, while supporting incremental programs such as season pass installment sales and up-sell of benefits and value.

•Premium product offerings: Expansion of premium experience offerings for benefit-oriented guests. Examples of this will include premium parking and dining experiences, “fast lanes” at various high-demand attractions and “Fright Lanes” during Halloween events, among other things.

•Strategic alliance fees and promotional leverage: Industry benchmarking indicates an opportunity for the company to expand its strategic alliances while still protecting the integrity of the guest experience.

•Capital and expense productivity: Prioritizing capital to the highest return-on-invested-capital opportunities across the company's portfolio, encouraging manufacturers to innovate at lower costs and remaining disciplined in the management of costs. The company will also look to utilize its undeveloped land to drive additional park admissions through activities and investments that leverage its installed asset base.

“It's important to have a balanced mix between thrill rides and family attractions,” said Ouimet. “We are investing approximately \$90 million across all of our properties and have a very strong rides and attractions menu for the 2012 operating season.”



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- Refurbish flat ride components and ride units
- NDT inspections for the ride units per the manufacturer's specifications
- Assist with on-site set up if maintenance staff needs assistance
- General contractor and/or assist with construction projects
- Ride erection needs

[www.reamusement.com](http://www.reamusement.com)

# Fresh Look - IAAPA: Philadelphia Water Ice



Philadelphia Water Ice dipped up frozen treats at the November IAAPA show.  
AT/TIM BALDWIN

**STORY:** Tim Baldwin  
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

ORLANDO, Fla. — Fresh Look is an *Amusement Today* feature that spotlights first time exhibitors at the recent IAAPA trade show. *AT* sought out new and engaging vendors that may not have caught the eye of everyone attending the expo. As *AT* continues this feature throughout the winter and spring, be sure to take note of some new ideas that just might be a great fit for your park.

**What is it?**

Philadelphia Water Ice/Richman's Ice Cream Company has been serving stores, vendors and institutions since 1894. They manufacture Italian ices, ice cream, gelato and sorbet. Philadelphia Magazine rated it Best Italian Ice in a "Best of Philly"

**SECOND IN A SERIES**

feature.

**What made AT take notice?**

The frozen dessert was fat free, cholesterol free and still was totally delicious.

*Amusement Today* talked with Rob Kaleck, president of Philadelphia Water Ice:

**How was your first IAAPA experience?**

"The show was very big. We were impressed with the size and the number of attendees."

**Did the show meet your expectations?**

"Yes, we did make new contacts and from that we can build new relationships to build sales."

**Did you learn something from the experience,**

or would you have advice for future first-time exhibitors?

"I would highly recommend any company that sells any products that would be of interest to buyers from IAAPA. It was amazing to have so many companies under one roof and to be able to have such diverse attendees from all over the world."

**What is your biggest success story from the show?**

"We meet a lot of buyers at the show, but the most interesting was that we have been trying to sell a distributor in Orlando where the show was located, and we were able to invite him to the IAAPA show. He is now our customer by seeing our booth. He was impressed and wanted to sell our products."

•[www.philawaterice.com](http://www.philawaterice.com)

## New company offers industry maintenance, rehab, renovation options for park operators

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

MANSFIELD, Ohio— Reamusement is a new company recently formed to offer the amusement industry another option when it comes to ride/attraction maintenance, rehab and renovation.

Reamusement was created by three amusement industry professionals who have more than 70 years of combined park experience. Jack Falfas is a world-class operator in the amusement industry, Gary Gast is a well-respected maintenance and construction expert, and Randy Payne is president and CEO of Adena Corporation with construction and maintenance expertise. Reamusement's purpose is to deliver services to help the amusement industry with ongoing maintenance and storage.

Specific services offered by Reamusement include:

- Rebuilding ride units per manufacturer's specifications as well as all codes and certifications;

- Off-season service of coaster trains;
- Fiberglass and other carpentry repairs;
- Repainting;
- Inside storage;
- Welding if required after NDT testing;
- Refurbish flat ride components and ride units;
- NDT inspections for the ride units per the manufacturer's specifications, and
- Assistance with on-site set up if required by maintenance staff.

In addition to being ASTM standards compliant and AIMS participants, Reamusement's qualifications include NAARSO certified inspectors as well as certified welders and ride mechanics.

Reamusement realizes that turnaround time is critical for their clients' business. The company's goal is to have a rapid response time with prices and costs that are extremely competitive. All of the physical rebuilding is accomplished at the company's facilities in the United States.

•[www.reamusement.com](http://www.reamusement.com)



Industry veteran Jack Falfas heads up the new Reamusement service company for the amusement industry. AT/GARY SLADE

## ASTM standards guide now on sale

W. CONSHOHOCKEN, Pa. — The compilation, *ASTM Standard on Amusement Rides and Devices*, is now available in a print version. In addition to the English version (online and print), online versions of the compilation are also available in Chinese, Japanese, French and Spanish.

*ASTM Standards on Amusement Rides and Devices* provides all 16 ASTM standards that play a vital role in all aspects of the amusement ride industry, ensuring safety and quality assurance. Standards cover design and manufacture, testing, operation and maintenance, inspection, quality assurance, and terminology.

To purchase ASTM publications, search by stock number on the ASTM Web site visit: [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org), or contact ASTM customer relations at (610) 832-9585.

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# BOOK REVIEW: Crystal Beach Park, A Century of Screams

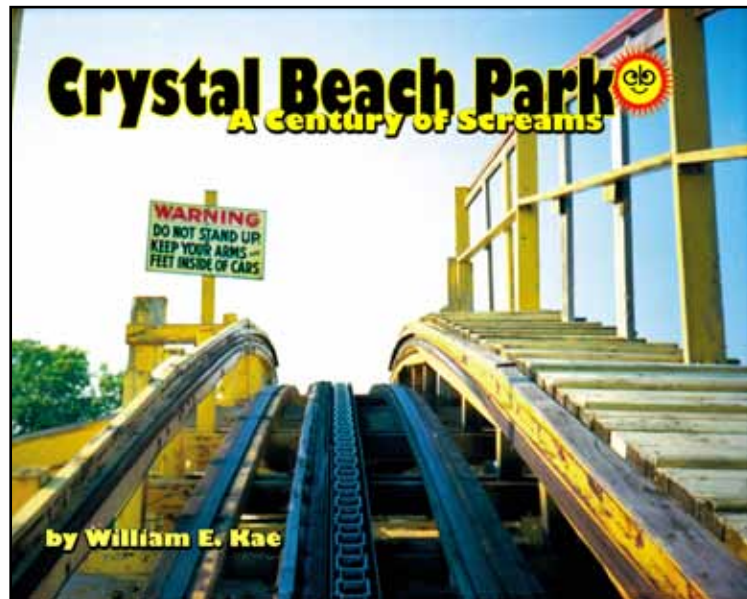
**STORY:** Jeffrey L. Seifert  
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

There was a time, not too long ago, when seaside amusement parks dotted the landscape. Before the advent of the multi-million dollar regional theme park, these small traditional parks provided a brief escape from the rigors of everyday life. Crystal Beach Park on the southern shores of Lake Ontario, was one of those traditional parks that entertained guests from Ontario and New York state for 100 seasons. The fascinating history of this wonderful park is brought to life in a new book, by Western New York native, William E. Kae — *Crystal Beach Park ~ A Century of Screams*.

The book is divided into 10 chapters, with the first eight chronicling a significant time period of the park's history, and the final two providing a postmortem and a look at the origins of the park. Augmenting each chapter is a spectacular collection of over 300 photos and illustrations gathered from friends, fellow historians and collectors, including prints from rare glass plate negatives that had probably not been seen in over a century. Blueprints and site plans illustrate the changes that occurred throughout the park's history.

Like so many parks of the era, Crystal Beach started out as a bathing beach. Officially opened on July 16, 1890, the park was rustic and primitive, with little more than a bathhouse. Eventually, hotels, restaurants, docks and piers were added, but it would take 15 years before the beach was transformed into an amusement park.

Early attractions added to the park included an Armitage-Herschell carousel, Ferris wheel, Old Mill, dance halls, Traver circle swing, bowling alley, and, although not proven, possibly an early Scenic Railway. As the decade moved on, more modern rides were added, including a miniature railroad and PTC carousel number 12. The first roller coaster of record was a Figure-8, and although proof of its existence is evident, the builders remain a mystery, with E. Joy Morris, Theodore Harton, or perhaps Fred Ingersoll as one of the likely designers. The Figure-8 operated from 1907 to 1916. A



much larger coaster, the Backety Back Scenic Railway was constructed by John H. Brown and opened in 1908.

1917 saw the debut of yet another roller coaster, the Giant Coaster, and like its earlier brethren, details of this project are also sketchy, although it is generally believed the Giant Coaster was built by T.M. Harton. It may have been one of the last side-friction coasters ever constructed. This particular ride continued to operate until the very last day the park was open.

As the 1920s rolled around, more attractions, typical of the era, were added: A Dodgem, Whip, Tumble Bug, larger Ferris wheel, and Caterpillar. It was however, the year 1927 that saw the addition of the most famous attraction of all. Designed and built by Harry Traver, the Cyclone roller coast-

er was perhaps one of the most maniacal devices ever created. The track was a knot of sharp twisting drops with extremely banked curves and abrupt directional changes. Legends surrounding the ride include having a nurse on duty at the station to attend to frequent injuries. In reality, bruises were probably common, but there are no records of a nurse on duty. Despite the intense ride and notorious reputation, the coaster survived for 20 seasons, much longer than its near twins at Palisades and Revere Beach, neither of which made it past eight seasons. The Cyclone was disassembled in 1946 and its structural steel was used to create the Comet, a new roller coaster that opened on May 22, 1948, and still operates today in a new location.

The next few chapters chronicle the park's evolution

and growth into what are considered its heyday years. These chapters contain color photographs and detailed descriptions of each and every attraction that ever graced the park from 1945 to 1972.

Chapter 6 begins with the death of longtime park president George Hall, Sr., in 1972, and the changes that started taking place under new management. Although new rides and attractions were added, many of the old classics were removed. Crystal Beach also started to face competition from new theme parks in the area: Darien Lake in 1980 and Canada's Wonderland in 1981. Although nearby Marineland had been in business since 1961, that park starting adding amusement rides including a large steel roller coaster in 1983.

The park's continued decline and efforts to revitalize it are discussed in chapter 7, and chapter 8 begins with the announcement that a development team was acquiring Crystal Beach. Although the park was open in 1989, it was apparent that management had other plans. The last operating day open to the public was Labor Day, 1989. Crystal Beach opened the following weekend for a previously booked company buyout, then closed its gates forever. An auction was held on October 17, 1989. Rides and landmarks that were not sold were demolished over the next few years. The park's largest asset, the Comet roller coaster was sold to Charles

Wood and eventually reassembled at The Great Escape, in Queensbury, N.Y. where it continues to operate.

There is no simple answer to the question of why the park eventually closed, and in chapter 9, Kae examines the combination of factors that contributed to its demise. It becomes apparent while reading this book that Kae was deeply attached to this park, and that many years of research have been poured into the chapters, yet he deliberately avoids becoming nostalgic. Instead, he clearly presents the facts and lets each reader provide his or her own memories. The book is a must-have for any person remotely interested in the fascinating history of this seaside park, and particularly for those who had the pleasure of experiencing a day at "Crystal."

*Crystal Beach Park ~ A Century of Screams* is part of a trilogy of books Kae has published on the subject of Crystal Beach. The first volume, *Steamers of the Crystal Beach Line* is a history of a select group of steam powered passenger boats that plied the water between Buffalo, N.Y. and Crystal Beach, Ontario. The second volume, *Crystal Beach Live* is a compendium of entertainers from the Buffalo and Toronto areas who performed at Crystal Beach. All three volumes are distributed by Buffalo Books.

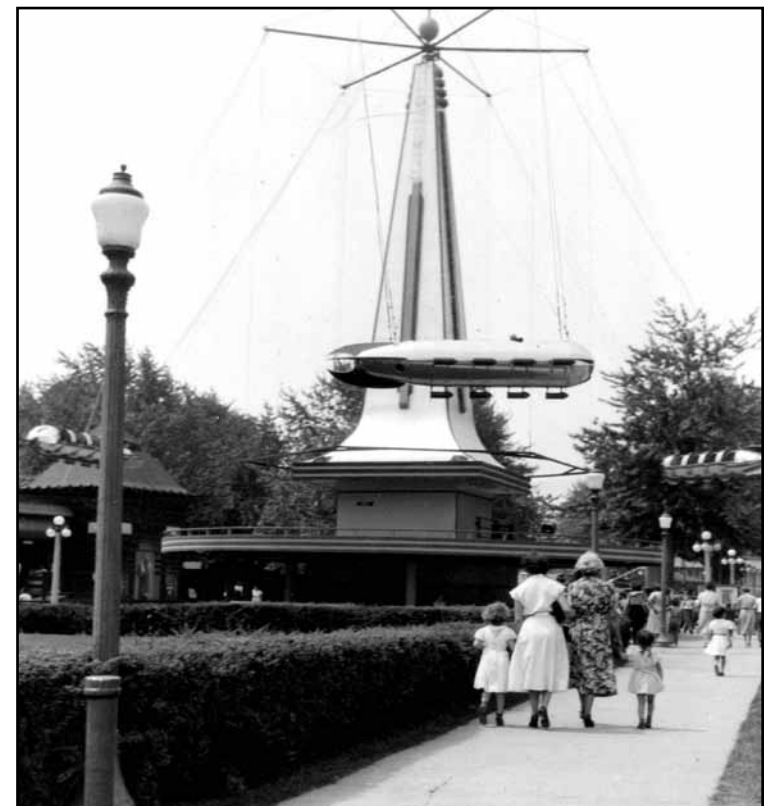
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•[www.crystalbeachhistory.com](http://www.crystalbeachhistory.com)



**Left:** This circa 1912 photo shows a busy midway with several early attractions including the Figure-8 coaster, shown in upper left corner of photo. **Right:** The Rocket Ships was the third incarnation of the original 1920s Traver circle swing. This circa 1947 photo shows the new stainless-steel rocket ship vehicles and art deco tower.

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# NEWS & NOTES

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## AIMS announces date change for annual Safety Seminar; offers two Expo opportunities

### Mike Gutknecht

Ride Entertainment Group  
of Companies and  
AIMS president  
mike@ride  
entertainment.com

I'm always amazed how different the first of each year feels compared to the end of the previous year. The last couple weeks of the year are filled with family get-togethers, gift giving, and eating way too much food.

The holiday songs that we listen to on the radio bring back memories of years past, and the idea of roasting chestnuts on an open fire actually sounds appealing. By the way, I've experienced 57 holiday seasons so far



Gutknecht

and have yet to roast one chestnut over an open fire, but I digress.

Once the first of the year comes around everything changes; it's time to roll up the sleeves, get down to work, and prepare for the upcoming season.

Things are no different at AIMS. The calm time of December has given way to the busy schedules of January and February.

While AIMS staff and the members of the education committee are busy brainstorming new class ideas and developing seminar updates, Mark Moore, Roger Berry and I visited the IAAPA office in Alexandria, Va. where we had the chance to work with Chip Cleary, John Henderson and Susan Mosedale to create new opportunities and collaborations for 2012.

I'm proud to announce that as a result of our meeting, AIMS will propose a one-day seminar for the IAAPA Attractions Expo in Orlando this No-

vember as well as a class for the IAAPA Asian Attractions Expo in Hong Kong this June. We are very excited about working closely with IAAPA to promote safety within the amusement industry on an international basis as well as looking forward to expanding our participation in each other's organization in the future.

In addition to the exciting new opportunities with IAAPA, AIMS is also thrilled to announce new changes in the annual AIMS Safety Seminar.

After listening closely to input from our seminar attendees, it became clear that a January time slot works best for most attendees. Therefore, the next AIMS Safety Seminar will be held in Orlando, Fla. in January 2013.

Our education committee is hard at work to develop new classes for our Maintenance Track that will delve deeply into the specifics of electrical and hydraulic components. In addi-

tion, we will be offering new Operations Track classes that provide procedures to turn industry standards into everyday practices. Our Ride Inspector track has become the best in the nation thanks to the tireless input from the finest ride engineers in the amusement industry, and our Waterpark Track is swamped with new ideas (pardon the pun).

Be sure to mark your calendar for the IAAPA Asian Attractions Expo safety class this summer, the one-day seminar at the IAAPA Attractions Expo in November, and the AIMS Safety Seminar in January 2013.

We are working hard to achieve our goal to make the 2013 AIMS Safety Seminar one of the finest seminars available to amusement industry professionals.

Hopefully we'll be able to get rid of those extra pounds we put on from all those roasted chestnuts as well.

## AIMS member spotlight: Jovie Chung

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

steve.laycock@rides.com

### Jovie Chung

Ocean Park, Hong Kong  
Health and Safety Manager

Memories made at amusement parks can last a lifetime. Sometimes those memories are created as a child and sometimes those memories are created as an adult. In this case, Jovie has memories of both, as a child visiting and seeing the sights of Ocean Park and now as an adult working at the same park. This last November, in conjunction with the IAAPA Expo, Jovie attended the AIMS Safety Seminar and while there answered some questions for AIMS News & Notes.



Chung

### How did you get started in the amusement business?

"I have a friend who has been working in the amusement business for a long time and from whom I have heard many interesting stories about the industry. So, when there was an opening at Ocean Park I applied and that is where I am now working."

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

"Before joining Ocean Park, I worked for Avery Dennison, Hong Kong BV. Their core business is manufacturing and printing retail apparel barcode tags. I was responsible for looking after the environmental, health, and safety items."

### What do you do in your free time?

"I enjoy movies and hiking."

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

"I love animals and especially cats. I have two at home. Other than amusement rides in Ocean Park, we also have animals such as pandas and dolphins which makes the workplace even more interesting for me."

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

"Ocean Park has a 35-year history in Hong Kong. I have a lot of memories of the park from when I was a kid and even as a teenager. Many Hong Kong people share the same feeling with me and I'm proud to be working in Ocean Park."

### How long have you worked at your present facility?

"I have worked in Ocean Park for more than 5 years."

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

"The connection between G forces and ride velocity, it applies all the high school physics into real world action."

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

"My favorite classes were the basic and advanced Human Engineering class. These classes gave me a brand new way to understand and look at human error, machines, and their connection."

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

"The five-day intensive seminar

gives me a way to gain and refresh my knowledge in the amusement industry. AIMS is particularly good at gathering industry experts and folks from all around the world, even Asian participants."

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

"My overall experience at the AIMS Safety Seminar was a very fruitful one with the well-prepared instructors and classmates from all over the world. There were lots of opportunities to share knowledge, practices, and experiences among folks from different amusement venues."

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

"That would be Craig Koeing with Holiday World who was voted 'Best Student' at the seminar. His active participation in class activities and discussions as well as his enthusiasm for the safety profession had a big impact on me."

—Complied by  
Steve Laycock

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| <b>Walt Disney Co.</b>          | <b>\$38.40</b> | <b>\$41.54</b> | <b>\$44.34</b> | <b>\$28.19</b> |
| <b>Great Wolf Resorts, Inc.</b> | <b>\$3.09</b>  | <b>\$3.51</b>  | <b>\$3.65</b>  | <b>\$2.02</b>  |
| <b>Blackstone Group</b>         | <b>\$15.31</b> | <b>\$15.96</b> | <b>\$19.63</b> | <b>\$10.51</b> |
| <b>Village Roadshow</b>         | <b>\$2.98</b>  | <b>\$2.87</b>  | <b>\$4.45</b>  | <b>\$2.41</b>  |
| <b>NBC Universal</b>            | <b>\$18.84</b> | <b>\$19.01</b> | <b>\$21.60</b> | <b>\$14.02</b> |

## FUEL PRICES



| Region (U.S.)     | As of 02/13/12 | Change from year ago |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| <b>East Coast</b> | <b>\$4.028</b> | <b>\$0.409</b>       |
| <b>Midwest</b>    | <b>\$3.857</b> | <b>\$0.378</b>       |
| <b>Gulf Coast</b> | <b>\$3.860</b> | <b>\$0.371</b>       |
| <b>Mountain</b>   | <b>\$3.841</b> | <b>\$0.330</b>       |
| <b>West Coast</b> | <b>\$4.017</b> | <b>N/A</b>           |
| <b>California</b> | <b>\$4.209</b> | <b>\$0.462</b>       |

## TOP 7 MOST TRADED CURRENCIES



| On 02/16/12 \$1 USD =                 |
|---------------------------------------|
| <b>0.7618 EURO</b>                    |
| <b>0.6369 GBP (British Pound)</b>     |
| <b>78.436 JPY (Japanese Yen)</b>      |
| <b>0.9197 CHF (Swiss Franc)</b>       |
| <b>0.9323 AUD (Australian Dollar)</b> |
| <b>0.9969 CAD (Canadian Dollar)</b>   |

## PEOPLE WATCH

### Rich Hill named Sally Corp. senior designer

**Rich Hill**, who joined Jacksonville, Fla.-based Sally Corporation 12 years ago as an artist, and four years ago became a member of the company's award-winning design team, has been promoted to the position of senior designer.

A graduate of the Art Institute of Pittsburgh, Hill studied under some of the most noted special effects designers in the movie and theme park industries before joining a small animatronics company as a sculptor and animatronics specialist, building characters for Rainforest Café, Walt Disney World, and Universal Studios. Later opening his own studio, Hill undertook design and sculpting projects for various theme parks and companies before joining Sally.

"Since joining the design department, Rich has done an outstanding job across the board, and as lead designer on several projects," says Sally CEO John Wood. "He brings knowledge, imagination and dedication to every project, and has become an invaluable part of our team."

Hill works directly with Drew Hunter, vice-president of creative design, on all aspects of conceptualization and design for the company's interactive dark rides, animatronics, and exhibits.



Hill

### Tom Klein joins Cedar Fair board

Cedar Fair, based in Sandusky, Ohio, recently announced that it has completed its national search for an independent director. **Tom Klein**, 49, has been appointed as a Class III Director of the general partner with a term ending 2014.

Klein is president of Sabre Holdings, one of the world's leading providers of technology to the travel industry. Prior to joining Sabre in 1994, he held a variety of sales, marketing and operations positions at American Airlines and Consolidated Freightways, Inc. In 2006 and 2007, Tom was recognized by *Business Travel News* as one of the industry's "25 Most Influential Executives."

"After a national search of independent candidates conducted by Korn/Ferry International, we are pleased to announce the addition of Tom Klein to our board of directors," said Matt Ouimet, Cedar Fair's president and chief executive officer. "His understanding of distribution and technology solutions make him a valuable addition to the Cedar Fair board and will add to the depth and quality of our decision-making process."

### Legoland Discovery Center Chicago names GM

Merlin Entertainments Group has announced that **Cassandra Weber** has been named general manager of Legoland Discovery Center Chicago.

"Having worked as a leader and innovator in the attraction industry for more than a decade, Cassandra has a proven track record of creating world-class guest experiences," said Janine DiGioacchino, director of midway attractions at Merlin Entertainment. "As we continue to grow and evolve, we are certain that Cassandra will serve as an invaluable asset."

"Legoland Discovery Center is one of Chicagoland's premier family destinations, and I am honored to be a member of this team," added Weber. "I am looking forward to a number of exciting new developments, which we have planned for the Center in 2012. We will also have the return of some much anticipated events like Lego Star Wars days and Pirates Weekend."

Relocating from Bloomington, Minn., Weber joins the Center after 11 years with Sea Life Minnesota Aquarium located in the Mall of America.

### Darien Lakes announces new appointments

Darien Lake Theme & Water Park Resort in Darien Center, N.Y. has named **Bob Montgomery** as the park's new vice president and general manager. Montgomery has been employed for over a decade by Herschend Family Entertainment (HFE), the management company of Darien Lake.

Darien Lake also appoints marketing veteran and Rochester, New York, native **Steve Hallowell** as director of marketing.

"The combination of entertainment and accommodations offered at Darien Lake are unique in the industry, and I am excited about this opportunity," said Montgomery. Prior to moving to Darien Lake, Montgomery worked at Wild Adventures, also an HFE property, as vice president and general manager. "The community has a lot of enthusiasm for Darien Lake, and I look forward to leading this great vacation destination, especially as we introduce three new family rides this year."

In his new role, Montgomery oversees all aspects of the park. **Chris Thorpe** now serves as assistant general manager at the park, reporting directly to Montgomery. Thorpe is responsible for employee development and relations.

## MAILBAG

### Murphy commends AT

Dear Mr. Slade:

I wanted to take a moment to commend you on the wonderful job you have done with your publication, *Amusement Today*. I have been reading this for many years and think you have done a great service to our industry. I go back to the days of the *Billboard* publication (before *Amusement Business*). I have been in the amusement industry my entire life and look forward to reading your publication to see what's going on around the country. It's not often that people take the time to let someone know they are doing a great job, yet, very often people have no problem telling you what you are doing wrong. Therefore, I wanted to let you know how much we appreciate what you do.

Sincerely,

**Gerald L. Murphy**  
**Chairman, Murphy**  
**Brothers Exposition**  
**Tulsa, Oklahoma**  
**Email: mei@oklahoma.net**

*Gerald, thank you for the kind words. It's nice to hear from the traveling side of our industry as we continue to report the news on carnivals, state fairs and various festivals as our annual budget allows.*  
 —Gary

### LETTERS POLICY

Letters must include printed name, company if any, city, state or country and valid email address. Letters must be the author's original words. Suggested length is 200 words or less. Longer letters may be edited to fit available space.

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# FAST TRACK

**COMPILED:** Scott Rutherford, srutherford@amusementtoday.com

Thousands of coins **Hersheypark** collected from the park's fountains at the end of last season – along with a portion of the admission to Hershey Sweet Lights, A Holiday Drive-Thru Spectacular – were donated to Children's Miracle Network at Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center. The check presented in Jan. totaled up to \$14,345.90.

California's **Gilroy Gardens** family theme park was presented with the 'Nonprofit of the Year' award for the Gilroy Chamber of Commerce's annual Spice of Life event.

**Chihuly Garden and Glass**, a new art experience, is taking shape at the foot of Seattle's iconic **Space Needle** with a planned opening for spring 2012. The exhibition, the first of its kind for a living artist and the largest and most comprehensive art glass exhibition to date, is located on the former site of **Fun Forest Amusement Park**, which closed in January 2011.

**Pirates! Legend of the Gulf Coast**, a new museum featuring storylines and exhibits based on Jean Lafitte and other infamous pirates, has opened its doors in Galveston, Texas.

**The Goddard Group** provided the concept, master planning, schematic design, and show design of the massive \$1.9 billion **Galaxy World Macau**, which opened to the public in Macau, China, in May 2011. The mega resort was the winner of the 2012 "World's Best Casino / Integrated Resort of the Year" Award, presented during the recent International Gaming Awards ceremonies in London.

**Downtown Disney** in Anaheim, Calif. has announced that it is opening an **Earl of Sandwich** restaurant this summer at a location now occupied by Compass Books and Cafe. There are 17 Earl locations worldwide, including one at **Walt Disney World**.

**The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man** at **Universal's Islands of Adventure** has been temporarily closed so engineers can upgrade the attraction with 4K digital high-definition technology. Spider-Man is slated to reopen this month.

**Legoland Florida** has been selected by the Orlando City Soccer Club, 2011 USL PRO Champions as the team's Official Family Theme Park. The multi-year partnership reinforces the Central Florida corporate community's interest in the growing soccer organization as it pursues entrance into Major League Soccer (MLS).

South Carolina's **Riverbanks Zoo and Botanical Gardens** has added **Sky High Safari Ropes Challenge** to the venue's entertainment line-up.

England's iconic **Manchester Wheel** is to be dismantled and removed from the city center to make way for upcoming Olympic events. The 190-foot-tall observation wheel first appeared in Exchange Square at Christmas in 2004. It will be closed on Sunday, April 15.

**Al Othaim Real Estate** has rented 10,000 square meters to establish an amusement park in **Al Qasr Mall**, a commercial facility developed by Dar Al Arkan in western Riyadh.

**Wilderness of the Smokies Resort** in Sevierville, Tenn. is building a 25,000-square-foot 'dry park' dubbed **Adventure Forest**. Construction is in full swing on a new addition that is to be expected to open this spring. The expansion will feature laser tag, a ropes course, mini-golf and a bowling alley.

**Great Wolf Lodge Niagara Falls** is the latest in the resort chain to introduce **MagiQuest**, the popular interactive computer game experience.

**The Walt Disney Co.** announced that its new cruise ship and improving theme park trends helped drive double-digit profit growth. The Burbank, Calif.-based entertainment company earned \$1.5 billion during the three months that ended Dec. 31, a 12 percent increase from a year ago. Total sales inched up one percent to \$10.8 billion for the quarter.

India's **Wonderla Amusement Parks**, a subsidiary of V-Guard Industries, is starting construction of its third theme park in Hyderabad. The company has acquired 65 acres of land for the park at Shamsabad.

**GlowGolf**, an indoor miniature golf course is now online at Independence Mall in Kingston, Mass. The neon-colored course has 54 holes and a number of different obstacles, such as a glowing windmill and neon plants and glow-in-the-dark golf balls.

**The National Museum of Organized Crime and Law Enforcement**, aka the Mob Museum, is open in downtown Las Vegas. It traces the history of the city from its inception in 1905. Former regulators and law enforcement officials give their perspective on the role of organized crime in the city's development.

The **Toronto Zoo** will receive two giant pandas from China next spring. Zookeepers will have five years to attempt to breed the animals before they move to the **Calgary Zoo** for five years.

**The Disney Cruise Line** has taken delivery of its fourth ship, the **Disney Fantasy**. Created by German shipbuilder Meyer Werft, the 4,000-passenger ship will travel across the Atlantic, eventually arriving to her homeport of Port Canaveral and an inaugural voyage on March 31.

Connecticut's **Mystic Aquarium** has reopened its 35,000-gallon **Stingray Bay** exhibit after a life support system upgrade and décor enhancement. The exhibit is home to 18 cownose stingrays, nine pork fish, two nurse sharks and a sea turtle name Charlotte.

**Chessington World of Adventures** in the U.K. plans to add a massive vehicle-based safari ride for the 2013 season. Plans submitted to the Kingston Council reveal the attraction will be located in the Wanyama Village & Reserve section of the park and will feature encounters with live animals.

**Mitsubishi** has secured the contract to build 106 ultra-high speed aerodynamic elevators for China's 2,073-foot-tall **Shanghai Tower**. The Mitsubishi elevators will travel at a rate of 3,281 feet per minute, more than twice as fast as typical skyscraper lifts.



Ghost Town in the Sky in Maggie Valley, N.C. has new ownership. AT FILE/SCOTT RUTHERFORD

## Ghost Town in the Sky finds new owner, could partially open in 2012

MAGGIE VALLEY, N.C. — Just as this issue was going to press, an enterprising North Carolina businesswoman stepped up in an attempt to return Ghost Town in the Sky to its former glory. Alaska Presley bid \$1.5 million for the 288-acre mountaintop property at auction Feb. 10 on the steps of the Haywood County Courthouse. She will be named as owner if no higher bids are made in the foreclosure auction. Presley earlier bought debts owed on the property and is using the foreclosure process to gain control of Ghost Town.

Alaska Presley was there to help the Maggie Valley park get started more than 50 years ago. But over recent years, the property fell on hard times, suffered through bankruptcy and has fallen into disrepair. Presley says she has purchased Ghost Town's bank notes and assets and wants to get it back up and running to help the people and businesses of Maggie Valley.

Presley says that once legal procedures are completed, Ghost Town will formally belong to her. She hopes to have at least part of the park open by the end of the 2012 season.

AT will continue to follow this developing story.

**AT BONUS ISSUE — JULY 2012**



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## Adventure Golf Services teams with Joravision

Adventure Golf Services and Joravision have launched a joint effort for the creation of miniature golf and related products in the European and Asian markets.

COURTESY AGS/JORAVISION

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. — Two companies, an ocean apart, known for creating miniature golf venues that engage the senses, are launching a joint effort for the creation of miniature golf and related products in the European and Asian markets.

The strategic alliance between Adventure Golf Services and Joravision was finalized at the recent International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions show.

“Our goal is to align core competencies and marry them to deliver enhanced value to our respective clients,” said AGS Vice President Scott Lundmark. “Our product and design capabilities are complementary. Customers will receive the best combination in the industry with an end product that is fun and one they will enjoy while the business owners will receive the return on investment they expect.

“For us, it’s a way to springboard and expand our presence overseas while allowing Joravision to bring our 30-plus years experience in miniature golf design, construction, fabrication and panel expertise to the marketplace.”

“In the last 10 years we have built many themed indoor miniature golf courses” said Jan Maarten de Raad, Jora Vision managing director. “We have created a spectacular venue in Belgium that received a THEA award. We love this form of recreation because it’s bringing kids and adults together to spend time with each other. With Adventure Golf Services we can work together to bring this great family experience to be immersive in outdoor situations. Their track record and experience in this field says it all. Also, they have developed with their unique panel system an innovative way to construct indoor mini golf courses. We hope to bring with AGS our innovative design skills for our indoor magical mini golf closer to U.S. business owners.”

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# MIDWAY

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## BRIEF

### Upcoming IAFE events/meetings announced

The off-season for the outdoor amusement industry is the time when industry members spend time with family, friends and colleagues while attending industry conventions and meetings.

The following is a listing of upcoming International Association of Fairs & Exhibitions zone meetings as well as state association fair meets:

- March 2-3: Saskatchewan Association of Agricultural Societies & Exhibitions Annual Convention, Lloydminster Exhibition, Lloydminster, Saskatchewan, Canada;

- March 2-4: IAFE Zone 5 Annual Meeting, Embassy Suites East Peoria - Hotel and Riverfront Conference Center, East Peoria, Ill.;

- March 9-11: IAFE Zone 3 Annual Meeting, Marriott Hotel, Springfield, Ohio;

- March 15-16: Colorado Festivals & Events Association Annual Convention, Ameristar Casino, Resort & Spa, Black Hawk, Colo.

- March 26-28: IAFE Zone 4 Annual Meeting, Plaza Hotel, Wausau, Wis.;

- March 29-31: Midwest Fairs Association Annual Convention, Sofitel Hotel-Airport, Miami, Fla., and

- March 31: Association of Connecticut Fairs Annual Spring Meeting, Northeast Utilities, Berlin, Conn.

## 2012 Fort Worth Livestock Show surpasses the one million mark, shatters records

Talley Amusements brings 48 rides

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

FORT WORTH, Texas — It is no secret that weather drives the outdoor amusement industry.

So, when officials at the Fort Worth Livestock Show and Rodeo realized the weather was supposed to cooperate for the run Jan. 13-Feb. 4, they felt fairly confident that the 2012 results would be good.

It seems that confidence wasn't unfounded. Final attendance figures reached 1,166,000, said Publicity Manager Shanna Weaver, shattering all previous attendance records.

"It was a milestone for us," Weaver said. "We are very fortunate to have experienced exceptionally warm and clear weather throughout the run of the show this year."

The previous attendance record was set in 2006 when 955,800 patrons came to the event. Last year's total reached 930,000 and that was despite the infamous ice storm that wreaked havoc on North Texas during its hosting of Super Bowl XLV in Arlington.

"We certainly did have the weather," said Mary Talley, Talley Amusements, Fort Worth, Texas. "This particular event is really weather driven."

Talley provided the midway with 48 rides. She purchased a Chance Big Kahuna for this season and had it at the Stock Show.



The 2012 edition of the Fort Worth Livestock Show set a new attendance mark this year thanks to near-perfect weather, with 1.166 million guests visiting the 24-day event. Talley Amusements brought 48 rides as shown here in this view taken from the Chance Rides Giant Wheel. New on the midway this year was a chance Big Kahuna. The Chance Wheel was recently outfitted with new all white LED lights that made the ride stand out for attendees coming over after the nightly rodeo performances.

AT/GARY SLADE

Since the Stock Show, Talley has purchased another ride, a farm tractor kiddie ride, manufactured by Dalton, Foley, Mo. She picked it up from the International Independent Showmen's Association Extravaganza held in Gibsonton, Fla., right after the Stock Show.

"I had actually paid for it in December, but it wasn't ready for the Stock Show," Talley said. "I doubt I will purchase any other new ride for the 2012 season."

Fair patrons were greeted with other new offerings as

well this year, one of which was an upgrade in technology. Weaver said they created a free "app" that smart phone users could use to navigate their way around the fairgrounds, find the next real-time event or plan an entire day. The application was available for both Apple and Android users. It included GPS functionality, parking maps, a daily schedule of events and many other functions to create customizable guest visits. The new application also allowed users to interact with Facebook and

Twitter.

In announcing the new technology for the event several months ago, Stock Show's President and General Manager Brad Barnes said: "We are proud to maintain the rich heritage and traditions of the Stock Show, while embracing these amazing advances in technology to enhance our visitor's experience."

Weaver said the technology upgrades were very well received.

Aside from the technology, also new was the Cow-  
▶ See FORT WORTH, page 36

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## ► FORT WORTH

Continued from page 35

boy Mounted Shooting Competition and an event called Kids Gone Wild, held in partnership with the Texas Wildlife Association. The latter featured: a KIDFISH "Catch Tank" stocked with two to five pound catfish that were caught and released; archery range; air gun rifle activity; Wii hunting; interactive trivia games; wildlife discoveries; bird mask creation; a Texas Outdoor Challenge; and many more fun and educational activities.

Weaver said other highlights included the PRCA rodeo action and the Junior Sale of Champions, which saw a record sale of \$2.9 million.

Top row, The rides midway area at the Fort Worth Livestock Show & Rodeo comes alive at night thanks to the rides provided by Talley Amusements. Bottom row, no midway is complete without a wide selection of food to choose from.

AT/GARY SLADE



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# 2012 Gibtown exhibitors display their best

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

GIBSONTON, Fla. — A little more than a month before the start of the 2012 International Independent Showmen's Association Extravaganza and Trade Show on Feb. 7, Waterloo Tent & Tarp President Pete Downs was noticing something a little different about his tents.

"When we put the LED lighting on them, the tents changed colors," Downs said. "We were in the shop and had the lighting and was putting it on one of the tents, when I said, 'Wait a minute. Look at what these lights are doing to these colors.'"

Waterloo, located in Waterloo, Iowa, is known for the manufacturing of tents and awnings and began manufacturing solar panels several years ago as a way of developing and expanding the product line.

Expanding product lines is certainly not new to manufacturing companies. And, as exhibiting companies that sell to the outdoor amusement business industry descended

upon Gibsonton, Fla., for the annual trade show, which ran Feb. 7-11, it was clear that company representatives were putting their best up for show.

The IISA expected over 300 exhibits at the show this year, with products inside and outside on the show grounds. Exhibitors range from manufacturers of plush and novelties to amusement rides and food trailers.

The event also includes educational sessions and social networking events. The sessions covered topics such as: cashless midways; regulations and policies on work-related falls; QR codes and how they can be used; an update on foreign labor issues; workers' compensation issues; forklift training; and information on maximizing benefits of the concession trailer.

Downs had set out to include his solar panels as part of his exhibit at the IISA in an effort to show how they could be used to light LEDs when he discovered the effect these lights had on the color of his tents.

When he realized what the lights could do other than

**PART 1 OF 2-PART SERIES**

just providing illumination, he and his staff scrambled to put together an outdoor exhibit. The company set up three tents with LED lighting and created a sound and light show.

The other thing Downs discovered was when he had put LED lights on his duck pond tent and began to blink the lights off and on, the duck became animated. He had installed the lights on the poles that run down from the top of the tent.

"It happens because certain colored lights drop out some of the colors on the tent," Downs explained. "It makes it look like the duck is quacking and moving the wings."

Downs was very excited. He feels that midway games are seeing a decline.

"This could bring back the excitement to the midway," he said. "This could bring people back to the games."

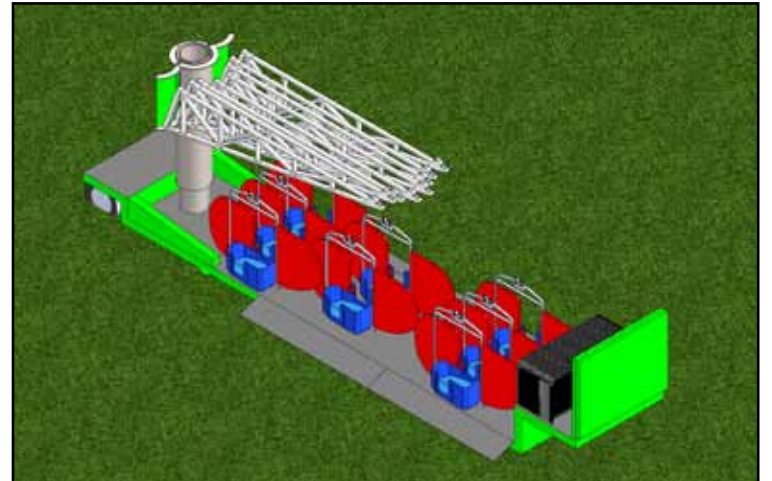
Exhibiting companies often bring new products to the IISA trade show and they always bring their tried and true. The following is a run-down of the some of the exhibiting companies and what they brought to the show:

**Majestic Manufacturing Inc., New Waterford, Ohio**

Majestic's Jeff Kudler had a picture of the Larson/Majestic Flying Scooters on display and on a new Charlie Chopper ride manufactured by Majestic. The ride on display is the second one the company has built and had been purchased by Triple Treat Shows of Cincinnati, Ohio. The first had been purchased by Bartlebaugh Amusements, Petersburg, Pa.

**Larson International Inc., Plainview, Texas**

Jeff Novotny and his wife, Stephanie, were on hand dur-



**Larson International Inc. and Majestic Manufacturing Inc., have partnered together to manufacture the Flying Scooter as a portable ride. The ride will mount on a 28-foot trailer and be equipped with LEDs. At right, Jeff Kudler, Majestic Manufacturing stands in front of a new Charlie Chopper ride that was sold to Triple Treat Shows, Cincinnati, Ohio.**



ing the show displaying a vehicle for their new Flying Scooters portable ride. Larson International has partnered with Majestic Manufacturing to build the ride. Novotny will be building the sweeps and vehicles, and Majestic is building the trailer. The ride will mount on a 28-foot pup trailer so other rides or equipment can be pulled as a tag. With the LED lights and lots of flash, Larson and Majestic are expecting this ride to be a hit.

**Wisdom Industries, Sterling, Colo.**

Victor Wisdom said the company's spinning coaster has been successful. The company has sold three so far. The first went to Powers Great American Midways, Corfu, N.Y., as Looney Lagoon. It was at the 2011 Gibtown show. Nick Pelino of Showtime Rides, Dallas, not only purchased the second one, but was also very involved in the

design.

"He wanted the jungle theme and he actually named the ride Jungle Twist," Wisdom said.

The third ride, and the second named Jungle Twist, was the ride being shown at the trade show. It was purchased by Luehrs' Ideal Rides, Belleville, Ill.

Wisdom was also displaying Alien Abduction, which is a new theming of Starship 2000, at this year's IISA show. He said the company has sold several of these as well over the past year.

**A.R.M., Wintersville, Ohio**

Mike Gill, president A.R.M., exhibited his company's newly designed Super Shot, a design which takes the ride off a 58-foot trailer and

▶ See GIBTOWN, page 38



**Quite by accident, Pete Downs, president, Waterloo Tent and Tarp, discovered how LEDs can not only change the color of his tents but can also create animation. When he turns the LEDs on that run down from the top of the supports on this duck pond tent to a blinking mode, the duck appears to be quacking and flapping its wings. The LEDs cause some of the tent colors to drop out and then back in as they blink causing this illusion of animation.**

AT/PAM SHERBORNE unless otherwise noted

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## ►GIBTOWN

Continued from page 37

fits its onto a 28-foot pup trailer. Gill said the ride has the same capacity, looks the same, has the same feel, same vehicles and the same mechanical braking system as the existing piece. The only difference, he said, to get it to fit on the 28-foot trailer, they reduce the height a little, moved the tower to the ear of the trailer and redesigned the trailer floor.

A.R.M. was also exhibiting a Vertigo 200 that Myers International Midways, Gibsonton, Fla., was taking possession of after the trade show. The ride stands 80 feet tall, has a 16-rider capacity and fits onto a 28-foot pup trailer.

### Frederiksen Industries, Tampa, Fla.

Jim Frederiksen was letting IISA trade show attendees



Victor Wisdom, Wisdom Industries, Sterling, Colo., sits in a car on his Jungle Twist spinning coaster ride at the 2012 IISA Trade Show, where he was not only exhibiting this ride but also the Alien Abduction. Wisdom said he has sold three coasters since debuting it as the Looney Laagoon at the 2011 show.



Jim Frederiksen, Frederiksen Industries, was letting the 2012 IISA trade show attendees know about his new venture with Mulligan Manufacturing, which became official last October and now has Frederiksen marketing and selling a portable Mulligan gondola wheel. Frederiksen hasn't stopped the sale of his popular slides either. He sold five in January and now has several more on order.

know about his new venture with Mulligan Manufacturing. He partnered with Mulligan last October and began marketing a single trailer-mounted gondola wheel. His first wheel was sold to Otterbacher Shows, Riverview, Fla., and, during the IISA trade show, Frederiksen inked a deal to sell another one to Pat Crabtree, Crabtree Amusements, Staples, Texas.

The trailer-mounted wheel stands about 55 feet tall.

And, just because Frederiksen is selling wheels now doesn't mean he is not selling his slides. In fact, his slide business has been going very well. Prior to the IISA trade show, he sold to Peachtree Rides, Alpharetta, Ga.; Big Fun Inc., Jensen Beach, Fla.; Planet Entertainment, an Australian-based company, and Michael's Amusements, Hebron, Ohio.

Since, he has sold slides to Al Belmont, Wizard's Festival

of Fun, Laurel Springs, N.J.; Homeniuk Rides, Simcoe, Ontario; Moegerle's Magic Carnival of Florida; Murray Brothers Shows, Cincinnati, Ohio; Fun Spot, Orlando, Fla., and two to PBJ Happee Day Shows, Marion, Ark.

### Rides-4-U, Somerville, N.J.

Len Soled, Rides-4-U, Somerville, N.J., certainly brought his share of rides to help the IISA show's back lot. He brought two brand new KMG rides — a Freak Out, which was going to Poor Jack Amusements, Milton, Ind., and a Speed, which was going to Armstrong Amusements, Marble Falls, Texas. He showed a new SBF Airshow, which went to Amusements Spectaculars in Canada, and an SBF Mini Tower, which went to New Jersey Valley Amusements, Wayne, N.J. He took a Dog Ride, manufactured by Visa, that had been

purchased by Majestic Midways, York, Pa.

And, he debuted SBF's trailer mounted Groovy Bus train.

Soled also delivered an LED lighting package to Myers International Midways, Gibsonton, Fla., for that carnival's Mulligan wheel.

### Chestnut Identity Apparel, Brookdale, Calif.

The Chestnut family kept themselves busy at the IISA trade show this year as they kept their booth bright with all the new LED products the company is now selling. The LEDs certainly brightened the company's line of apparel. Bob Chestnut said their new Surface Mount Device (SMD) LEDs were great for producing a very bright light. The floodlights can flood a parking area or any other larger area with a bright light at a fraction of the wattage.

"You can get 50,000 hours of lighting in these amusement lamps," he said. "And, they are waterproof."

Chestnut said these SMDs are the high end LED lighting, but that they also offer a lower cost lighting package. This lighting comes inside a single bar, which is easily installed. A customer can purchase a number of bars and simply clip them to the ride.

"At the show, we are selling the bars for \$19.95 each," Chestnut said. "The control device is \$1,000. So, you could light a small wheel for about \$5,000 and it will look really nice."

### Panda Promotions, Northfield, Ohio

This was Panda Promotions' first time to the IISA trade show and President



Bob Chestnut, Chestnut Identity Apparel Inc., shows off just some of the company's LED products at the 2012 IISA trade show. Chestnut also exhibited a full line of apparel at the show.

April Thomas was indeed glad she came. Along with Leonard Streets, Thomas set up in one of the booths that opens to the outside. She specializes in promotional products that advertise and fundraise, and she had on display anything from pens to cups.

### Peek-A-Boo Toys, Pennsauken, N.J.

Tommy Rafferty of Peek-A-Boo Toys said most of that company's booth was filled with new items. Some of the more popular plush lines were the frogs and bananas.

### Carousel Softtoys Inc., Boisbriand, Quebec

Ben Robillard, sales, said business was going well for Carousel Soft Toys. New plush lines that company was

► See GIBTOWN, page 39

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April Thomas, Panda Promotions, had a good first year at the 2012 IISA trade show. Her company specializes in promotional products that advertise and fundraise, and she had on display anything from pens to cups.

## S.C. Fair tests NAME's Fast Pass

COLUMBIA, S.C. — The South Carolina State Fair, Columbia, was a test site in 2011 for its carnival, North American Midway Entertainment (NAME), to try out its new Fast Pass program. The fair was held Oct. 12-23, 2011.

This program offered South Carolina State Fair midway customers a Fast Pass, which accompanied their wrist bracelets or ticket purchases and offered them premium front of the line access to all rides.

NAME offered a limited

amount of Fast Passes daily throughout the fair. Fast Pass holders were granted access to the rides first through a special gated entrance. For example, the Fireball that rides 24 passengers, 5 seats were reserved for Fast Pass guests.

Cost of the Fast Pass was \$15 in addition to the cost of the wrist bracelet or ticket packages. The Fast Pass was good for any one day of the 2011 South Carolina State Fair.



## Snow bound

Wright's Amusements, Elbert, Colo., hoped for a little better weather in Plainview, Texas, than the show was getting in Colorado. But, a snow storm blew through Plainview Feb. 13 and dropped several inches of snow on the ground. Jeff Novotney, Larson International, located in Plainview, said the snow was one thing but the temperature was another. It got down to 18 degrees that day.

## ►GIBTOWN

Continued from page 38

exhibiting included Bubbles, Fido, Fang, Charming, Drago, Prince, Benny the Bird, Monster the Ball, Tiger the Shark, Brutus the Monkey, Duck Dude, and Legend.

"Legend is the first piece that we designed," Robillard said. "We are trademarking it so no one else can copy it."

The company also displayed some of its T-shirts designs.

### BJ Toy Company, Pen Argyl, Pa.

BJ Toy's Larry Grunspan said his company had brought 36 families of plush this year to the trade show. Out of that number, 19 were brand new designs. The Floopy, Penguin, Duck, Frog and Pig lines were proving to be very popular.

"We have a lot of key customers that come to this show to place their orders," Grunspan said. "That has not changed this year. We also have several value lines that always do well."

Another line that was generating interest was the Fat Head line of plush.

### Rhode Island Novelty, Cumberland, R.I.

This company exhibited some of its lines of products this year.

"We really have a huge variety of things here," said Jeremy Pomfret. "We are a one-stop shop."

A sampling of some of their more popular items include inflatable toys, light-ups, plush with peace signs, multi-colored plush, knobby balls, Mohawk wigs, plush hammers and mallets, and pets on a 24-inch leash.



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## MIDWAYLIGHTS

COMPILED: Pam Sherborne, psherborne@amusementtoday.com

New manager of the **Oregon State Fair and Exposition Center**, Salem, **Toni Payseno** told a local newspaper there that she plans to work closely with farm groups, feeling they are a vital part of the fair's existence.

Payseno took over as manager of the fair Jan. 17. **Brian Silcott**, the previous manager, left in the spring of 2011 to pursue other interests.

Farm groups have criticized state fair management in recent years for lack of support. Criticism came to a head last summer when a dairy industry leader said the Western National Holstein and West National Jersey Show were pulling out of the fair.

Payseno plans to begin meeting with agricultural organizations "as soon as possible" and brainstorm with them on how to improve operations.

Payseno, a former urban development manager for the city of Salem, said she also hopes to increase revenue for the fair and exposition center.

The fair, set this year for Aug. 24-Sept. 3, has operated at a loss of between \$1.5 million and \$2 million annually in recent years.

**The Napa County Fair**, Calistoga, Calif., is hoping that a technical change in its federal tax paperwork might help it overcome a steep cut in state funding.

Fair Association CEO **Carlene Moore** told fair association board members last month that she was exploring whether the organization can be converted from what's known as a "501(c)(5)" organization to the more familiar "501(c)(3)."

That would allow people wishing to donate money to the fair to write the contribution off on their taxes as a charitable gift. The current designation, which doesn't allow contributors to write off their donations under most circumstances, dates back to the founding of the fair association.

With the recent state budget cuts in California, the ability to accept tax-deductible gifts would be advantageous in trying to make up future budget shortfalls.

An application to the IRS requesting the change will be sent. If the fair is turned down, they could create a new organization and possibly get that status. But, for now, fair officials are considering other ways to cut expenses and raise more money.

The 2012 Napa County Fair is set for June 29-July 4.

**The Butler County Fairgrounds**, Oxford, Ohio, is taking on a new look this year with the construction of two connected buildings that will provide a gathering place for the community during fair week and beyond.

Two 100-year-old buildings housing an office and the arts and craft hall, along with an old gas station being used as a county fuel depot, were knocked down late last year making way for the new \$1.4 million facility.

Despite wet weather, construction is underway with the hope of completion in time for the 2012 fair set for July 22-28.

The project will have two buildings sitting next to each other in an H shape with banquet space for up to 400 people and an improved kitchen. Much needed additional restroom facilities will be located in the center.

**Santa Cruz County Fair**, Watsonville, Calif., leaders will rely on volunteers for everything from answering office phones to managing operations as they attempt to bring spending under control in 2012.

During the past two years, the fair spent \$820,000 more than it brought in, according to a report presented to the board of directors last month.

The spending ate up reserves and, except for \$85,000 set aside for developing a master plan for the 110-acre fairgrounds, left the fair with \$7,000 in the bank to start the new year. The board approved a request to release the \$85,000 for day-to-day operations and to provide seed money for the annual fair set for Sept. 11-16, this year.

The board also approved a budget of \$1.1 million for the year, a reduction of about \$100,000 from the 2011 spending plan.

Budget woes in the **State of Kentucky** are hitting some departments hard while helping others. The Agricultural Commission, the state agency in charge of amusement ride inspections, is one agency that could be hit hard. The number of inspectors has already dwindled from 21 to nine over the past 15 years. Lawmakers were told last month that agency now only has one electrician in inspections.

Meanwhile, the **Kentucky State Fair Board** is hoping that the \$8.5 million in **Governor Beshear's** budget for the Expo Center will make it through the Kentucky State Legislature.

After University of Louisville basketball left Freedom Hall on the fairgrounds for its new home in downtown Louisville at the KFC Yum! Center, and **Six Flags** pulled out of **Kentucky Kingdom**, fewer people are going through the gates at the **Expo Center**, so annual revenue is below budget.

Executive Director of the Kentucky State Fair Board **Harold Workman** said the losses amount to about \$4.5 million a year in operating revenue. The Fair Board manages the KFC Yum! Center but is only paid a flat fee for that.

Workman said getting Kentucky Kingdom back open remains a priority, with the owners of **Holiday World** in southern Indiana still a possibility of operating a re-opened amusement park. But, the spring of 2013 is the earliest the park could re-open. He said they are still in negotiations with Holiday World owners, but other companies have also been in contact with the fair board.

**The Arkansas Music Pavilion (AMP)**, located in the Northwest Arkansas Mall (Fayetteville, Ark.) parking lot for the last seven years, will move its tent and stage to the **Washington County Fairgrounds**, also in Fayetteville, for the 2012 season.

Officials with the Walton Arts Center, which owns the AMP, said unsuccessful short and long-term lease negotiations with the new management of the mall have caused the need for a new location this year, if the season is to be saved.

The arts center's one-year agreement with the fairgrounds, which is home to the Washington County Fair as well as other events, includes an option to renew for an additional year at the end of the term.

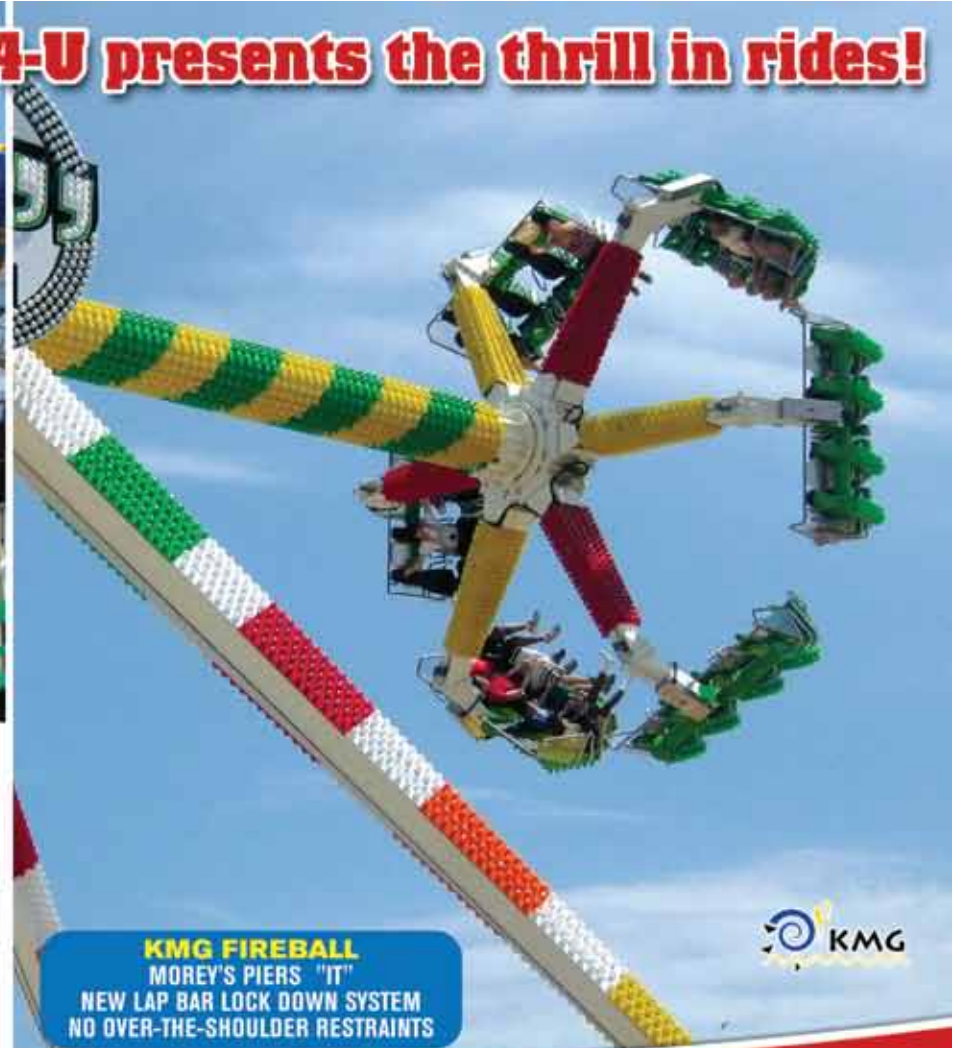
The 2012 Washington County Fair is set for Aug. 30-Sept. 3.



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Nearly 1,700 attendees at the four-day event in Hershey, Pa.

# Centennial PSACF/PSSA Convention a big success

**STORY:** B. Derek Shaw  
Special to Amusement Today

HERSHEY, Pa. — Attendance remained strong again this year for the Pennsylvania State Association of County Fairs (PSACF) and Pennsylvania State Showman's Association (PSSA) convention held at Hershey Lodge and Convention Center January 18-21. The annual event, celebrating a century in existence, brings together board members, volunteers and staff from most of the 114 county and local fairs held throughout the Commonwealth each year. It also is an opportunity for three dozen carnival owners/operators, along with food/game concessionaires, entertainers and suppliers to show off their wares by way of a two-and-a-half day trade show.

This year there were over 150 exhibit booths including the Communication Exhibits — an aisle devoted to scrapbooks, advertising and memorabilia from fairs held throughout the state during the past year.

In addition, educational seminars, daily workshops, breakfast table topics and banquets each evening completed the schedule of events. Wednesday evening was the night to showcase entertainment of all types and variety,



Seen at the PSSA registration area seated (l to r): David Pfeffer, past president, Pennsylvania State Showmen's Association (Tons of Fun Shows); Mary Ott, Ott's Concessions; Christina Bartlebaugh, Bartelbaugh Amusements; standing (l to r): Jerry Bartlebaugh, Bartlebaugh Amusements and Lisa Benner, Penn-Valley Shows. AT PHOTOS / B. DEREK SHAW

from musical acts, impersonators, magicians, comedians and clowns, western shows and more. Many of these acts were also on the trade show floor each day.

Each evening, hospitality rooms were the gathering places after the business of the day was over. The Showmen's Association, that has been in existence in Pennsylvania the past 44 years, had an active room. Others were hosted by Variety Attractions, Reithoffer Shows, Inc., Otto's Amusements, Penn Valley Shows,

Tropical Amusements, Good-time Amusements and numerous others.

The big topic this year for the fair attendees was the reduction in monies from the Pennsylvania Fair Fund Act. Through this fund, grants are made available to fairs, youth organizations and statewide organizations with an agricultural mission. Previously the fund was at four million dollars, now down below \$900,000. A good portion of this money is used to aide with premiums at each fair. This change contributed to four fairs that are no longer in operation.

The biggest concerns of the Showmen each season are fuel costs and weather conditions. The flooding experienced in late September, shuttered the 157th Bloomsburg Fair and greatly impacted a few others. Looking ahead to 2012, Past PSSA President David Pfeffer, (Tons of Fun Shows in Douglassville, Pa.), said he's "hoping for a good year."

Another challenge for the PSSA is membership. While many carnival operators across the state are members, there are still others who need to step up to the plate and get involved.

Another integral part of the PSACF portion of the convention is the crowning of the Pennsylvania State Fair Queen. Since there is no "official" state fair, the Saturday evening banquet serves as the opportunity to announce



Pennsylvania State Association of County Fairs officers, (l to r): Bruce Koppenhaver, secretary; Ron Miller, president and John Blaney, Jr., vice president.



Manning the booth was Bill Owen, Indiana Ticket Company.



J.D. Linn, Haas & Wilkerson was on hand to answer questions to attendees.

the 2012 Queen who visits any Pennsylvania fair upon request during the upcoming season. This year 57 contestants representing their local/regional fair participated in three days of judging activities before a winner to this 26th annual event was selected and crowned.

The Pennsylvania Showman Association held their banquet Friday evening. Various awards were presented to a variety of showmen for annual and lifetime contributions. That was also the time that a check was presented to the Pennsylvania Farm Show Foundation for \$18,000 — half the proceeds from the Showman's Carousel that operated during a 10 day farm show run in early January. The use of the carousel was donated by S & S Amusements, Inc, Scott Township, Pa. The 2012 farm show was the eighth time

PSSA has operated a carousel at the event. PSSA presented five \$2,500 scholarships to students from their half of the proceeds during the banquet. The program has raised and donated over \$200,000 in scholarships since inception.

The banquet also featured the installation of the 2012 PSSA President Larry Johnson, from York, Pa. Johnson is a Supervisor with Majestic Midways and also owns a few rides as a principal with KLS Amusements. He was quick to point out that the PSSA is a working organization, not a social club as some state organizations tend to be. PSSA is involved with the state legislature with food, game and ride issues. "The power of our organization rests with the various committees. My job is to keep everything running smoothly and everyone happy," said Johnson.

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