

AMUSEMENT TODAY

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All about the BUSINESS of FUN!



Sandusky, Ohio

Host Park

2004 Golden Ticket Awards
August 27, 2004

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**ANOTHER
GREAT YEAR!**

Thank you readers of
Amusement Today!

2 Golden Tickets!

Phoenix ranked #4!



AMUSEMENT TODAY

All about the BUSINESS of FUN!

Gary Slade
 Publisher and
 Editor-in-Chief
 gslade@amusementtoday.com

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 AWARD WINNER
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EDITORIAL

All in fun

When *Amusement Today* started the Golden Ticket Awards in 1998, the purpose was to survey those who travel to parks during the park season and gain a little insight as to what parks were doing a great job. Based on those surveys, the "Golden Tickets" were awarded to those very parks who were doing a great job, in the spirit of "fun".

Little did any of the *AT* staff realize just how sought after these awards would become by the parks. Proof of that is seen at amusementtoday.com each year on the date that the winners are posted on our Web site. It is by far the most visited day of the year with more than 2,000 visits each year.

Proof is also now being seen each year in the marketing of the Golden Tickets by the winning parks. From giant banners flying in the parks, to Golden Ticket reproductions being seen on media kit folders, letterheads, press releases and in advertising campaigns, the Golden Tickets have carved out a place in the amusement industry.

The staff at *AT* is proud that these awards are being used by parks worldwide to help promote goodwill and fun about our industry. At a time when the media, congressmen and others want to focus on the few isolated negative incidents in our industry, it's nice to see and hear about the winning Golden Ticket parks in our national media. From the *Discovery Channel*, to *USA Today* to even Paul Harvey, the Golden Tickets have become a positive marketing and public relations plus for this industry that is based on fun.

Congratulations not only go to the 2004 class of winners, but also to all those who placed in our annual survey. We had fun with it and we hope you and your guests have a little fun as well.



Tim Baldwin

Accentuate the positive

Ask any teacher who is trying to instill good behavior in their students, and they will tell you "Let students know when they are doing things right." Yes, it is also important to let children know when they make mistakes or poor choices, but the impact is greater on the class as a whole when someone is rewarded for doing things correctly.

Athletes and celebrities are often regarded as role models and challenged to live up to this responsibility. People tend to look up to those that have been successful and have done a good job.

The Golden Ticket Awards work in the same way. To acknowledge when parks do things well, there is motivation for all parks to strive for that goal. While a park might have a location far from the population density or a collection of attractions that is on a smaller scale than some of the bigger destinations, there is still much we can learn from each other.

In the 2004 survey results, there are often categories that have clear winners. But when 37

parks are listed for being Friendliest Park, that is a good sign. Likewise, 31 parks were mentioned for being Cleanest Park, a clear indication that effort is being made to do a good job.

Too often, we seem to be in such a rush that we sometimes forget there is much to be learned from each other and that we need to pat ourselves on the back from time-to-time. Wouldn't it be beneficial to take a walk through your park and tell employees that they are doing a good job? Accentuate the positive. Let people know that you appreciate what they are doing. By recognizing when they are doing it right, people are more motivated to continue to do so. Everyone's job is made a little easier with a compliment every so often.

There is no question that the 2004 Golden Tickets let people know that people are doing it right. If competition made the voting more challenging each year, then that would be a wonderful thing. Accentuate the positive. Words can be a powerful tool for the better.

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P.O. Box 5427
 Arlington, Texas 76005-5427

(817) 460-7220
 Fax (817) 265-NEWS (6397)

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

Member of:
 IAAPA, AIMS International,
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STAFF

Gary Slade
 Publisher and
 Editor-in-Chief
 gslade@amusementtoday.com

Sammy Piccola
 Accounting / Circulation
 spiccola@amusementtoday.com

Bill Rea
 Advertising Director
 1213 Whispering Oaks
 Richardson, Texas 75081
 (972) 690-6822 / Fax (972) 690-0484
 brea@amusementtoday.com

Sue Nichols
 Advertising Sales
 (615) 662-0252
 P.O. Box 238, Pegram, Tenn. 37143
 snichols@amusementtoday.com

Tim Baldwin
 tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

Stacey Childress, Graphic Artist
 production@amusementtoday.com

Bubba Flint, Cartoonist
 bflint@amusementtoday.com

Paul McDonald
 Phone/Fax (352) 241-9773
 pmcdonald@amusementtoday.com

Scott Rutherford
 Phone/Fax (304) 297-2380
 srutherford@amusementtoday.com

Amusement Today's 2004 Golden Ticket Awards

2004 survey receives big response; 20 Golden Ticket winners named; three gain Publisher's Pick Award



Tim Baldwin
Amusement Today

Formulating a list of experienced, well-traveled park and ride enthusiasts is a daunting task, as is tabulating the hundreds of responses. This spring, *Amusement Today* sent out surveys around the globe with a final deadline of being received on July 23. Hundreds were received.

Such an endeavor as the Golden Tickets presents challenges not only to *AT*, but to the parks and voters, as well. In many respects, all parks try to provide their guests with clean and safe thrills in a pretty and friendly environment. To combine all parks into one basket and ask voters to choose only one pick in each category is rather intimidating for the voter, to say the least, not to mention extremely competitive between parks and their peers within the industry. But from this challenge comes the prestige of acknowledgement of being among the Best of the Best. It is with pride that *Amusement Today* is able to assemble such awards and bestow them on parks that stand as fine examples within the industry.

AT is also grateful to the countless voters who send in their thoughts and choices from all over the world so that the Golden Tickets can be a reality. It is a tribute to their expertise that categories ranging from landscaping to roller coasters can find parks on our charts from seven international countries outside the U.S.



Best Kid's Park category added to park survey

The Golden Tickets have always saluted the Best of the Best. Since 1998, *Amusement Today* has acknowledged winners for Best Park and Best Waterpark. Incidentally, Cedar Point and Schlitterbahn have proven to be an unstoppable force in those two categories taking top honors once again in 2004. This year, *AT* introduces Best Kid's Park to shine a spotlight on those smaller venues that aren't built for large audiences, but are particularly marketed towards smaller children. Legoland in Carlsbad, Calif. is congratulated for claiming the first award in this category. Idlewild, with its amusement park-in-the-woods ambience in Ligonier, Pa. charmed audiences for second place, and Memphis Kiddie Park, recent hosts of an enthusiasts convention, rounded out the top three.

In regards to children, bigger theme parks often have dedicated areas that cater to the tots and up-and-coming rider. Paramount's Kings Island continues to impress with its expansive kids areas featuring numerous rides, themed attractions, and four children's roller coasters. Islands of Adventure in Orlando adds imagination to its kids areas and places second on the survey. Kidzville at Paramount's Kings Dominion contains numerous children-related activities to

rate it third with our voters.

Behind Cedar Point, Islands of Adventure and Blackpool Pleasure Beach hold their second and third spots respectively in the category for Best Park. IOA boasts numerous fans due to its elaborate theming, and Blackpool captures the hearts of enthusiasts with a historic collection of coasters and a massive assortment of amusement rides.

While Schlitterbahn boasts the highest percentage votes of any category, Splashin Safari in Santa Claus, Ind. makes a strong play at second place for Best Waterpark. Disney's whimsically-themed Blizzard Beach adds an imaginative winter touch to waterparks and completes the top three.

—Tim Baldwin



Photos courtesy Schlitterbahn and Cedar Point

Left to right, Schlitterbahn in New Braunfels, Texas continues to claim prize for Best Waterpark. Cedar Point in Sandusky, Ohio rates as Best Park. This is the seventh year in a row for each park to win their top park honors.



Photos courtesy Paramount's Kings Island and Legoland California

Left to right, Paramount's Kings Island is voted to have Best Kid's Area in an amusement park, while Legoland California sweeps new Best Children's Park category, recognizing parks geared to smaller guests.



Thank You!

Holiday World & Splashin' Safari is honored to have been chosen by Amusement Today to receive the first Publisher's Pick Golden Ticket Award for Customer Service. As the recipient of the Golden Ticket Award for Friendliest Park Staff for the seventh consecutive year and the Golden Ticket Award for Cleanest Park for the fifth consecutive year, we would like to thank all of our employees for a job well done. We would like to thank you for the third Best Wooden Coaster award for the Raven and the fifth Best Wooden Coaster award for the Legend. We are also honored for your high ranking of Zinga as the second Best Waterpark Ride, ZOOMbabwe as the third Best Waterpark Ride and Splashin' Safari as second Best Waterpark.



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It's showtime!

Best Outdoor Night Show Production added to Best Show survey

Amusement Today expanded the Show categories this year with a new Golden Ticket award - Best Outdoor Night Show Production. Several parks culminate a day's experience with a large-scale production at night, particularly when summer hours are extended. For this new category, it was a hard fought battle to the end, but taking the top prize was Six Flags Fiesta Texas for their Lone Star Spectacular, a pyrotechnic/laser extravaganza on the park's cliff walls. Disney made a strong charge with Epcot's Illuminations in a close second, and Fantasmic on both coasts battled each other for third and fourth.

The overall show package and dedication to quality and variety place Fiesta Texas once again as the No. 1 rated spot in the Golden Tickets for Best Shows. Dollywood scores a second place spot with their strong emphasis on show entertainment for their wide range of guests. Busch Gardens Williamsburg rounds out the top three, a park well known for its solid show lineup.

—Tim Baldwin



Photos courtesy David Lipnicky and SF Fiesta Texas
Above, Reflections of Rockville is just one of the numerous shows Fiesta Texas puts on in their entertainment package with a variety that caters to many tastes. Below, The Lone Star Spectacular is a brilliant use of Fiesta Texas' natural quarry setting.



Courteous staff, park beauty, landscaping, food add to fun experience for guests

In addition to thrilling rides, qualities such as cleanliness, value, beauty, and friendliness help a day's visit gel into unforgettable memories.

Over the years, Holiday World in Santa Claus, Ind. has built a solid reputation on many of these attributes. Topping our list once again in the Friendliness and Cleanliness categories, Holiday World's strong commitment to both is evident in the training of their employees to excel in these areas. In the Cleanest Park category, Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom takes second place and Busch Gardens Williamsburg nabs a third place. Both of these chains are well known for their attention to detail. Taking second and third in the Friendliest Employees category are Dollywood and Knoebels, both exhibiting a laid-back, down home family feel.



Most parks strive to be as beautiful as they can be. Once again, Busch Gardens comes in first in both Landscaping and Most Beautiful Park. Likewise, Efteling in The Netherlands scores second place honors in both categories. Bonfante Gardens in California takes third in Landscaping and Europa Park in Germany takes third in Most Beautiful.

For Most Beautiful Waterpark, Schlitterbahn, Blizzard Beach, and Typhoon Lagoon take the three top spots respectively.

Value and taste continue to put Knoebels at the top of our charts for Best Food. Silver Dollar City's country cooking puts them at second, and Busch Gardens and Kennywood snag a tie for third.

—Tim Baldwin



Photos courtesy Holiday World, Busch Gardens Williamsburg, Schlitterbahn and Knoebel's Amusement Resort

Top to bottom: Holiday World is a real crowd pleaser when it comes to cleanliness and friendliness. Busch Garden's great landscaping helps earn top honors for beauty. Schlitterbahn's shady riverside environment makes for a beautiful setting. Eating is almost as fun as riding at Knoebels Amusement Resort.



Step right up for a Golden Ticket ride!

Best Dark Ride; Best Water Ride and Best Waterpark Ride winners announced in 2004 survey

Dark rides hold a special place in the history of amusement parks. A long running favorite is the Amazing Adventures of Spiderman at Universal's Islands of Adventure. Once again, Spidey webs up the top spot for Best Dark Ride. The innovative attraction incorporates elaborate

scenes, 3-D effects, pyrotechnics, and simulator action into one unforgettable ride experience. A little less high-tech, but still incredibly fun is Knoebels Haunted Mansion coming in second. Disney's Twilight Zone Tower of Terror combines extreme thrills with amazing dark ride scenes to claim



third place.

Having fun and getting wet is very popular in parks. A long-time fan favorite is

Dudley Do-Right's Ripsaw Falls from Islands of Adventure. It takes top spot in Best Water Ride. Blackpool's Valhalla receives raves for its combination of water thrills and dark ride chills. IOA's Popeye and Bluto's Bilge-rat Barges continues to claim numerous fans as their favorite raft

ride.

In the Best Waterpark Ride category, three unique attractions hold the top three spots. Schlitterbahn's Master Blaster splashes into first, while Holiday World takes the next two spots with their Zinga and Zoombabwe attractions.

—Tim Baldwin



Photos courtesy Universal Orlando, Gary Slade and Schlitterbahn

At left, Universal's Spiderman continues to wow the panel as Best Dark Ride. Also at Islands of Adventure, Dudley Do-Right's Ripsaw Falls, center, makes for a top-rated Water Ride. At right, Master Blaster at Schlitterbahn offers guests an atypical uphill waterslide experience.

Hang on and scream, the train is leaving the station!

The Best Wooden and Steel Roller Coasters announced

Tim Baldwin
Amusement Today

It's an exciting announcement when a coaster forges its way to the No. 1 spot. Built in 2000, Lake Compounce's Boulder Dash debuted in the No. 12 spot in its opening year, a challenging feat for having been open only a few months. From there it has been a continuous upper top-ten contender. For 2004, Boulder Dash claims the Best Wooden Coaster Golden Ticket. Its mountainous setting and rollicking speed continue to amaze and delight new fans each year.

A comment on Boulder Dash's entry-year debut makes this year's spectacular premiere of Dollywood's Thunderhead in the No. 6 slot even more impressive. Watch this Great Coasters masterpiece continue to climb as one of the newest destination coasters for



At left, Boulder Dash at Lake Compounce has a one-of-a-kind setting situated between a mountain and a lake. Millennium Force, right, reclaims No. 1 and is one of four top ten steel coasters for Cedar Point.



Photos courtesy Lake Compounce and Cedar Point

enthusiasts to reach.

Other up-and-coming stars to keep an eye on are Silverwood's Tremors, as the biggest climber on the charts, and Liseberg's Balder and Cliff's New Mexico Rattler appearing for the first time,

notably in the Top 25.

On the steel charts, well, it's war. Cedar Point's Millennium Force held the top spot for 2001 and 2002. Last year, Superman Ride of Steel at Six Flags New England took it with a

stronger lead. This year, Millennium Force reclaims it by a small margin. This battle of the Intamins could easily be one of the biggest competitions in the upcoming years. Stay tuned to *Amusement Today*.

Europe's highest rated coaster continues to be Expedition GeForce at Holiday Park in Germany. Ten of the top fifty steel coasters are international picks, while six international woodies appear on the AT charts.

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Park and Ride Winners

Ranked by percentage of votes cast



Best Park

Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	35%
Islands of Adventure	Orlando, Fla.	15%
Blackpool Pleasure Beach	Blackpool, England	11%
Knoebel's Amusement Resort	Elysburg, Pa.	7%
Kennywood	West Mifflin, Pa.	6%

Best Waterpark

Schlitterbahn	New Braunfels, Texas	56%
Splashin' Safari	Santa Claus, Ind.	18%
Blizzard Beach	Orlando, Fla.	6%
Typhoon Lagoon	Orlando, Fla.	4%
Boomerang Bay (PKI)	Kings Mills, Ohio	3%

Friendliest Park Staff

Holiday World	Santa Claus, Ind.	43%
Dollywood	Pigeon Forge, Tenn.	11%
Knoebels Amusement Resort	Elysburg, Pa.	8%
Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	6%
Silver Dollar City	Branson, Mo.	5%

Cleanest Park

Holiday World	Santa Claus, Ind.	36%
Magic Kingdom	Orlando, Fla.	11%
Busch Gardens Williamsburg	Williamsburg, Va.	10%
Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	8%
Disneyland	Anaheim, Calif.	7%

Best Shows

Six Flags Fiesta Texas	San Antonio, Texas	34%
Dollywood	Pigeon Forge, Tenn.	14%
Busch Gardens Williamsburg	Williamsburg, Va.	12%
Silver Dollar City	Branson, Mo.	8%
Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	5%

Best Food

Knoebels Amusement Resort	Elysburg, Pa.	28%
Silver Dollar City	Branson, Mo.	13%
Busch Gardens Williamsburg	Williamsburg, Va.	(tie) 10%
Kennywood	West Mifflin, Pa.	(tie) 10%
Epcot	Orlando, Fla.	9%

Best Landscaping

Busch Gardens Williamsburg	Williamsburg, Va.	44%
Efteling	Kaatsheuvel, The Netherlands	19%
Bonfante Gardens	Gilroy, Calif.	9%
Magic Kingdom	Orlando, Fla.	4%
Epcot	Orlando, Fla.	3%

Best Water Ride

Dudley Do Right's Ripsaw Falls	Islands of Adventure	23%
Valhalla	Blackpool Pleasure Beach	21%
Popeye and Bluto's Bilge-rat Barges	Islands of Adventure	9%
Splash Mountain	Magic Kingdom-WDW	7%
Journey to Atlantis	SeaWorld Orlando	6%

Best Kid's Area

Paramount's Kings Island	Kings Mills, Ohio	50%
Islands of Adventure	Orlando, Fla.	10%
Paramount's Kings Dominion	Doswell, Va.	7%
Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	6%
Knott's Berry Farm	Buena Park, Calif.	5%

Best Waterpark Ride

Master Blaster	Schlitterbahn	37%
Zinga	Splashin' Safari	14%
Zoombabwe	Splashin' Safari	10%
Tasmanian Typhoon	Boomerang Bay (PKI)	4%
Voyage to Center of the Earth	Hyland Hills Waterworld	(tie) 3%
Whitewater Tube Chute	Schlitterbahn	(tie) 3%

Most Beautiful Park

Busch Gardens Williamsburg	Williamsburg, Va.	36%
Efteling	Kaatsheuvel, The Netherlands	23%
Europa Park	Rust, Germany	9%
Islands of Adventure	Orlando, Fla.	7%
Epcot	Orlando, Fla.	4%

Most Beautiful Waterpark

Schlitterbahn	New Braunfels, Texas	31%
Blizzard Beach	Orlando, Fla.	25%
Typhoon Lagoon	Orlando, Fla.	14%
Splashin' Safari	Santa Claus, Ind.	7%
Hyland Hills WaterWorld	Denver, Colo.	5%

Best Kid's Park

Legoland	Carlsbad, Calif.	41%
Idlewild	Ligonier, Pa.	13%
Memphis Kiddie Park	Cleveland, Ohio	10%
Sesame Place	Langhorne, Pa.	7%
Dutch Wonderland	Lancaster, Pa.	4%

Best Outdoor Night Show

Six Flags Fiesta Texas	San Antonio, Texas	22%
Epcot	Orlando, Fla.	21%
Disney-MGM Studios	Orlando, Fla.	13%
Disneyland	Anaheim, Calif.	12%
Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	10%

Best Dark Ride

Amazing Adventures of Spiderman	Islands of Adventures	37%
Haunted Mansion	Knoebels Amusement Resort	22%
Twilight Zone Tower of Terror	Disney-MGM Studios	6%
Droom Vulcht (Dream Flight)	Efteling	(tie) 4%
Indiana Jones...Forbidden Eye	Disneyland	(tie) 4%

2004 Golden Ticket Awards can be found online at:

AMUSEMENT TODAY.COM



Park, individual, supplier each recipients of 2004 Publisher's Pick

Holiday World pushes the envelope of customer service

There's no question that parks everywhere do everything in their power to entice customers - it's simply good business. But it takes a special effort to make those visitors not only feel like special guests, but appreciated as well. This balance of bringing in patrons and making them feel welcome is often interrupted by fees, upcharges, and expensive daily necessities. Thankfully, this is not the case at Holiday World and Splashin' Safari.

Throughout the park's history, there has never been a fee to park a vehicle. When Holiday World introduced Splashin' Safari to the park as an integral part of a day's visit, the administration avoided the easy profit of making guest rent tubes, such as their nearby competitors. Touches such as these are always appreciated by guests.

This hospitality continued in the year 2000 when general manager Will Koch wanted to do something special for the guests, to show them how much the Koch family and the park staff appreciated them. By using a little creativity, a little daring, and a whole lot of marketing sense, the folks at Holiday World introduced free soft drinks to all guests who entered the park each day. It was virtually unheard of and the world took notice. The park wasn't in a position to put in a \$10 million roller coaster, but this concept was something they could deliver to their guests. And they loved it. Really loved it. And yes, each

guest felt appreciated and enjoyed more of a value to their family's visit that day.

When you've got a good thing going, it is easy to stand back and be content. But not so here. Two years later, Will Koch once again challenged the Holiday World staff to think of how else they could increase their customer service. The waterpark director came up with the idea of free sunscreen to all park visitors. To anyone who has ever been in a waterpark on a summer's day, the benefits of this are readily apparent. Convenience, value, comfort, and safety all add up to one more component to a wonderful day. The folks at Holiday World will testify, their customers feel appreciated.

It doesn't take a lot of creativity to think up ways to reach into the guests' wallets, but it takes a strong, concentrated effort for a park to introduce better value and customer service. Paired with their commitment to friendliness and cleanliness, I applaud Will Koch and his staff at Holiday World for their inventiveness and creative innovation in the industry.

With the announcement of the introduction of free soft drinks, a friend of Koch's came up to him at IAAPA and asked him "Are you crazy?" I don't think so. It is refreshing to see a little heart and a little kindness mix to create a successful synthesis of smart business and new standards of customer service in the industry.



Dan Feicht, recording Cedar Point's history for 26 years

As a high school student one of the first things I had the opportunity to learn was photography. A Yashica Mat 124-G camera, a bulb flash, and a pocket full of film at Friday night high school football games in Texas launched a career for me in print media. During this 25-year plus span, I've had the opportunity to meet many other fellow journalists, television anchors, radio personalities and photographers along the sidelines and at other events.

While covering an assigned event, it's common to visit with your fellow photojournalists. Discussions always range from the event itself, to how did you start in the business, to what type of camera and film do you prefer. I guess I didn't think about it at the time, but one of the things I should have considered was that with every photo that is taken, you are also recording history for future generations to enjoy.

My career was launched because of a football game. Dan Feicht's career was launched because he threw a dart.

During one of his many trips to Cedar Point in 1966, Dan decided try his luck when he stopped at the "throw the dart at the balloons" game. Luck and skill were on his side that day as he won the game. The prize was a camera and it would be his first, one that he could call his own. Dan took the camera, loaded it with film, and soon was photographing his first roller coaster, the Blue Streak, his personal favorite.

A career was being launched before the very eye of the camera lens.

At the young age of 15, Dan Feicht landed a job as the sports photographer for the *Bowling Green Sentinel Tribune*. Hard work and dedication would help him to receive his bachelor's of science degree in journalism, majoring in photojournalism, from Bowling Green State University. He would also work for the *Sandusky Register* as a staff photographer.

Then came the opportunity of a lifetime, the chance to be the park photographer for Cedar Point.

It's been 26 years and Dan is still at the Point, cameras in tow, where he now serves as the parks media services manager, responsible for generating images for all of Cedar Fair's parks on film and video.

Dan has been awarded four Telly Awards, which honor non-network television commercials and programs and non-broadcast video and film production, for four different videos he has produced for Cedar Point.

While it would be impossible to calculate the number of photos Dan has taken of the parks through the years, one thing is certain, thanks to Dan, Cedar Point's history for the last 26 years have been well documented and preserved as seen through Dan's eyes and his cameras. Smile Dan, it's photo time!



Amusement industry's oldest supplier, Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters, celebrates 100 years

When a company celebrates its 100th anniversary in the United States, it's a big deal. When a company in the amusement industry celebrates its 100th anniversary I see it as an even bigger deal.

Founded by Henry B. Auchey and Chester B. Albright in 1904, the Philadelphia Toboggan Company was formed to manufacture amusement rides and devices. Although PTC's focus was and always has been on roller coasters and their trains, the company produced many other rides through the years.

Fun house attractions, play sets, sports car rides and other rides called the Cuddle-Up and Crazy Daisy were all part of the PTC catalog. The company was not without water rides as it produced countless Old Mills, Mill Chutes and Shoot the Chutes rides.

Thanks to an outstanding team of master woodcarvers, PTC would become world-famous for their hand-carved wooden horse carousels. The company produced 75 of these magnificent machines before hand-carving stopped in 1925.

PTC would become most noted for its wooden roller coasters and production of coaster trains, or rolling stock. The very best in coaster designers and builders would team up with PTC to produce 150 wooden coasters with the last coaster, The Screamin' Eagle being built for Six Flags St. Louis in 1975. The who's who in design-

er names for PTC included John Miller, Joe McKee, Frank Hoover, Shirley Watkins, Herb Schmeck and John Allen, to name just a few. One classic example of PTC's coaster work is the 1964-built Blue Streak at Cedar Point.

Although not building wooden coasters today, PTC remains busy building the coaster trains found on approximately 80 percent of all operating wooden coasters. With more than 1,400 total coaster cars in operation worldwide, PTC is the industry's leading supplier for wooden coaster trains.

Today, the company is guided by its co-owner and president, Tom Rebbie. When the company was purchased in 1991 from former owner and president Sam High, it became Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters, Inc. It was Sam High who hired a young Tom Rebbie in 1977, teaching him all about the PTC product. Tom is now the senior employee on the staff.

The company operates out of a 46,000 square-foot manufacturing facility in Hatfield, Pa. PTC employs 11 dedicated workers who create the coaster trains that are enjoyed by millions of riders each year who ride wooden roller coasters.

At 100 years, PTC is the oldest exhibiting company each year at the annual International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions trade show. That said, *Amusement Today* congratulates PTC on its 100th anniversary!



Cedar Point's Dan Feicht: King of park photography

Dan's Top 10 Cedar Fair photos span 26 years

Amusement Today is honored to have this opportunity to print, for the first time ever, Dan Feicht's 10 favorite photographs that he has taken during his 26-year career with Cedar Point. Feicht's favorite roller coaster is the Blue Streak, the first roller coaster he photographed in 1966 with his first camera, which he won at the "throw the darts at the balloons" game on Cedar Point's Main Midway.

Dan Feicht's Top 10 Cedar Fair photos, by number: 1) Three blurs of the Raptor's coaster trains are caught on film; 2) A series of photos spliced together to show Mean Streak's massive wooden structure and first drop; 3) A hand held strobe, tripod-mounted camera capture the "George R"; 4) Pre-shoot planning catches fireworks at Dorney Park; 5) A work basket from one of the two cranes constructing Top Thrill Dragster provides a never before seen view; 6) Faces illustrate the Snake River Falls experience without showing the ride; 7) This Gemini photo was made for a series of murals used in the park; 8) The impossible shot made possible. An IMAX movie showing on the screen with the audience visible. 9) Dan's "it just makes me feel happy" photo and 10) The topping off of the Millennium Force lift hill, in 5-degree weather and wind!



Dan Feicht is the media services manager for Cedar Point Amusement Park Resort. His responsibilities include generating images for all Cedar Fair, L.P. parks on film and video. Feicht received his bachelor's of science degree in journalism, majoring in photojournalism, from Bowling Green State University. He has been a member of Cedar Point's public relations department for 26 years.



Feicht



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The List

2004 Top 50 wooden roller coasters

RANK	NAME	PARK	LOCATION	YEAR	SUPPLIER	POINTS
1	Boulder Dash	Lake Compounce	Bristol, Conn.	2000	CCI	972
2	Shivering Timbers	Michigan's Adventure	Muskegon, Mich.	1998	CCI	854
3	Raven	Holiday World	Santa Claus, Ind.	1995	CCI	843
4	Phoenix	Knoebels Amusement Resort	Elysburg, Pa.	1985	Dinn/PTC	745
5	Legend	Holiday World	Santa Claus, Ind.	2000	CCI	634
6	Thunderhead	Dollywood	Pigeon Forge, Tenn.	2004	GCII	530
7	The Beast	Paramount's Kings Island	Kings Mills, Ohio	1979	KECO	448
8	GhostRider	Knott's Berry Farm	Buena Park, Calif.	1998	CCI	434
9	Texas Giant	Six Flags Over Texas	Arlington, Texas	1990	Dinn/Summers	395
10	Lightning Racer	Hersheypark	Hershey, Pa.	2000	GCII	376
11	Tremors	Silverwood	Athol, Idaho	1999	CCI	290
12	Comet	The Great Escape	Lake George, N.Y.	1994	Schmeck/PTC	289
13	Rampage	Visionland	Bessemer, Ala.	1998	CCI	279
14	Megafobia	Oakwood Leisure Park	Pembrokeshire, Wales	1996	CCI	251
15	Colossos	Heide Park	Soltau, Germany	2001	Intamin	246
16	Cyclone	Astroland (Coney Island)	Brooklyn, N.Y.	1927	Keenan/Baker	231
17	Cornball Express	Indiana Beach	Monticello, Ind.	2001	CCI	230
18	Thunderbolt	Kennywood	West Mifflin, Pa.	1968	Vettel/Miller	221
19	Grand National	Blackpool Pleasure Beach	Blackpool, England	1935	Paige	207
20	Georgia Cyclone	Six Flags Over Georgia	Atlanta, Ga.	1990	Dinn/Summers	199
21	Ozark Wildcat	Celebration City	Branson, Mo.	2003	GCII	162
22	The Boss	Six Flags St. Louis	Eureka, Mo.	2000	CCI	160
23	Balder	Liseberg	Goteborg, Sweden	2003	Intamin	159
24	New Mexico Rattler	Cliff's Amusement Park	Albuquerque, N.M.	2002	Cliff's	142
25	Twister	Knoebels Amusement Resort	Elysburg, Pa.	1999	Fetterman/Knoebels	125

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The List

2004 Top 50 wooden roller coasters



RANK	NAME	PARK	LOCATION	YEAR	SUPPLIER	POINTS
26	Tonnerre de Zeus	Parc Asterix	Plailly, France	1997	CCI	124
27	Texas Cyclone	Six Flags AstroWorld	Houston, Texas	1976	Cobb	119
28	Wildcat	Hersheypark	Hershey, Pa.	1996	GCII	117
29	Viper	Six Flags Great America	Gurnee, Ill.	1995	Starkey/Six Flags	115
30	Timber Terror	Silverwood	Athol, Idaho	1996	CCI	111
31	Coaster	Playland	Vancouver, British Columbia	1958	Phare	98
32	Giant Dipper	Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk	Santa Cruz, Calif.	1924	Prior & Church/Looff	92
33	Villain	Geauga Lake	Aurora, Ohio	2000	CCI	88
34	Jack Rabbit	Kennywood	West Mifflin, Pa.	1927	Miller/PTC	87
35	Timberwolf	Worlds of Fun	Kansas City, Mo.	1989	Dinn/Summers	86
36 (tie)	Grizzly	Paramount's Kings Dominion	Doswell, Va.	1982	Summers/KECO	71
36 (tie)	Son of Beast	Paramount's Kings Island	Kings Mills, Ohio	2000	Stengel/Paramount	71
38	Gwazi	Busch Gardens Tampa	Tampa, Fla.	1999	GCII	70
39	Racer	Kennywood	West Mifflin, Pa.	1927	Miller/PTC	67
40	Excalibur	Funtown USA	Saco, Maine	1998	CCI	62
41	Great American Scream Machine	Six Flags Over Georgia	Atlanta, Ga.	1973	Allen/PTC	59
42	Blue Streak	Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	1964	Hoover/PTC	57
43	Cyclone	Six Flags New England	Agawam, Mass.	1983	Cobb	56
44	Screamin' Eagle	Six Flags St. Louis	Eureka, Mo.	1976	Allen/PTC	54
45	MegaZeph	Six Flags New Orleans	New Orleans, La.	2000	CCI	47
46 (tie)	Big Dipper	Geauga Lake	Aurora, Ohio	1925	Miller	45
46 (tie)	Roar	Six Flags Marine World	Vallejo, Calif.	1999	GCII	45
48	Roar	Six Flags America	Largo, Md.	1998	GCII	40
49	Thunder Run	Six Flags Kentucky Kingdom	Louisville, Ky.	1990	Dinn/Summers	36
50	Hurricane	Boomers	Dania Beach, Fla.	2000	Coaster Works	33

LETTERS

To the Editor:

Congratulations on another great year of work from you and your staff, Gary! Thank you for making our lives so full of fun by letting us know where the action is.

Dave and Wanda Bamforth
Austin, Texas

LETTER POLICY

Amusement Today welcomes letters from our readers. Please send letter to: *Amusement Today*, P.O. Box 5427, Arlington, Texas 76005-5427. Letters may also be faxed to AT at (817) 265-6397 or emailed to: production@amusementtoday.com.

Please include your name, address and zip code, along with a daytime phone number, so we may contact you for clarification and confirmation if needed.

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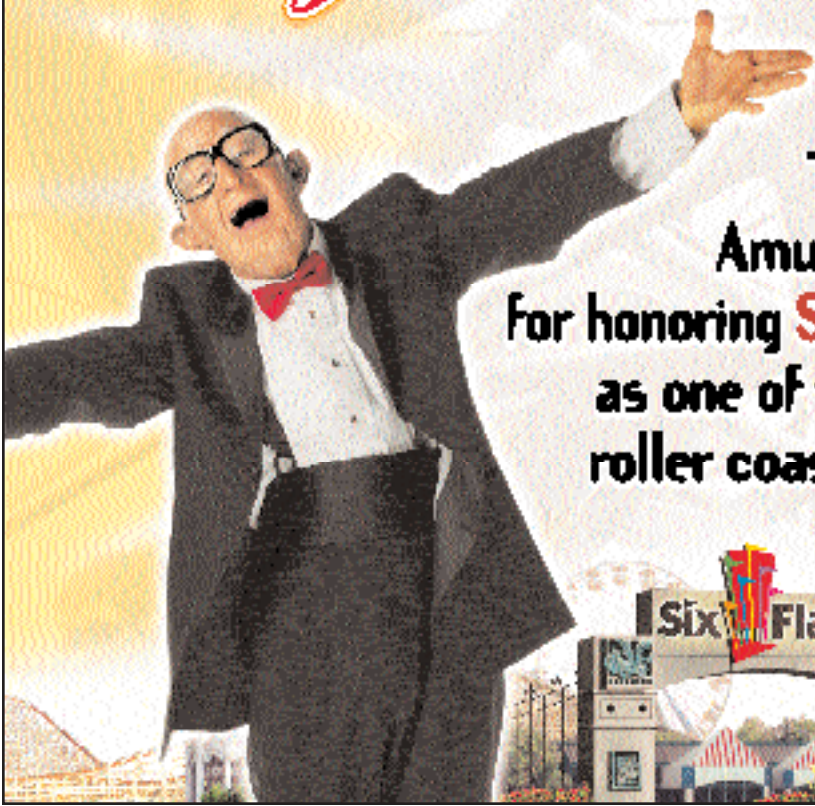
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The List

2004 Top 50 steel roller coasters

RANK	NAME	PARK	LOCATION	YEAR	SUPPLIER	POINTS
1	Millennium Force	Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	2000	Intamin	1181
2	Superman Ride of Steel	Six Flags New England	Agawam, Mass.	2000	Intamin	1167
3	Magnum XL-200	Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	1989	Arrow	767
4	Expedition GeForce	Holiday Park	Hassloch, Germany	2001	Intamin	694
5	Apollo's Chariot	Busch Gardens Williamsburg	Williamsburg, Va.	1999	B & M	636
6	Nitro	Six Flags Great Adventure	Jackson, N.J.	2001	B & M	554
7	Top Thrill Dragster	Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	2003	Intamin	433
8	Phantom's Revenge	Kennywood	West Mifflin, Pa.	2001/1991	Morgan/Arrow	421
9	Montu	Busch Gardens Tampa	Tampa, Fla.	1999	B & M	347
10	Raptor	Cedar Point	Sandusky, Ohio	1994	B & M	314
11	Steel Force	Dorney Park	Allentown, Pa.	1997	Morgan	282
12	Superman Ride of Steel	Six Flags America	Largo, Md.	2000	Intamin	266
13	Superman Ride of Steel	Six Flags Darien Lake	Darien Center, N.Y.	1999	Intamin	260
14	Raging Bull	Six Flags Great America	Gurnee, Ill.	1999	B & M	248
15	X	Six Flags Magic Mountain	Valencia, Calif.	2002	Arrow	245
16	Dueling Dragons	Islands of Adventure	Orlando, Fla.	1999	B & M	244
17	Nemesis	Alton Towers	Staffordshire, England	1994	B & M	242
18	Goliath	Six Flags Magic Mountain	Valencia, Calif.	2000	Giovanola	233
19	Alpengeist	Busch Gardens Williamsburg	Williamsburg, Va.	1997	B & M	232
20	Incredible Hulk	Islands of Adventure	Orlando, Fla.	1999	B & M	203
21	Mind Bender	Six Flags Over Georgia	Atlanta, Ga.	1978	Schwarzkopf	181
22	Kumba	Busch Gardens Tampa	Tampa, Fla.	1993	B & M	152
23	Volcano	Paramount's Kings Dominion	Doswell, Va.	1998	Intamin	135
24	Goliath	Six Flags Holland	Flevo, The Netherlands	2001	Intamin	130
25	Titan	Six Flags Over Texas	Arlington, Texas	2001	Giovanola	124



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The List

2004 Top 50 steel roller coasters



RANK	NAME	PARK	LOCATION	YEAR	SUPPLIER	POINTS
26	Shock Wave	Six Flags Over Texas	Arlington, Texas	1978	Schwarzkopf	94
27	Superman Krypton Coaster	Six Flags Fiesta Texas	San Antonio, Texas	2000	B & M	93
28	Mamba	Worlds of Fun	Kansas City, Mo.	1998	Morgan	90
29	Kraken	SeaWorld Orlando	Orlando, Fla.	2000	B & M	88
30	The Big One	Blackpool Pleasure Beach	Blackpool, England	1994	Arrow	86
31	Euro-Mir	Europa Park	Rust, Germany	1997	Mack	84
32	Air	Alton Towers	Staffordshire, England	2002	B & M	81
33	Storm Runner	Hersheypark	Hershey, Pa.	2004	Intamin	79
34	Medusa	Six Flags Great Adventure	Jackson, N.J.	1999	B & M	66
35	Superman Ultimate Flight	Six Flags Over Georgia	Atlanta, Ga.	2002	B & M	65
36	Xcelerator	Knott's Berry Farm	Buena Park, Calif.	2002	Intamin	64
37	Dominator	Geauga Lake	Aurora, Ohio	2000	B & M	63
38	Desperado	Buffalo Bills Casino	Primm, Nev.	1993	Arrow	60
39	Big Bad Wolf	Busch Gardens Williamsburg	Williamsburg, Va.	1984	Arrow	55
40	Top Gun	Paramount's Carowinds	Charlotte, N.C.	1999	B & M	50
41	California Screamin'	Disney's California Adventure	Anaheim, Calif.	2001	Intamin	48
42	Talon	Dorney Park	Allentown, Pa..	2001	B & M	47
43	Superman The Escape	Six Flags Magic Mountain	Valencia, Calif.	1997	Intamin	46
44	Riddler's Revenge	Six Flags Magic Mountain	Valencia, Calif.	1998	B & M	45
45	Mindbender	Galaxyland	Edmonton, Alberta, Canada	1985	Schwarzkopf	43
46	Wildfire	Silver Dollar City	Branson, Mo.	2001	B & M	38
47	Lisebergbanan	Liseberg	Goteborg, Sweden	1987	Schwarzkopf	31
48	Colossus	Thorpe Park	Chertsey, England	2002	Intamin	30
49 (tie)	Magnum Force	Flamingoland	Malton, England	2000	Schwarzkopf	28
49 (tie)	Rock n' Roller Coaster	Disney-MGM Studios	Orlando, Fla.	1999	Vekoma/WDW	28



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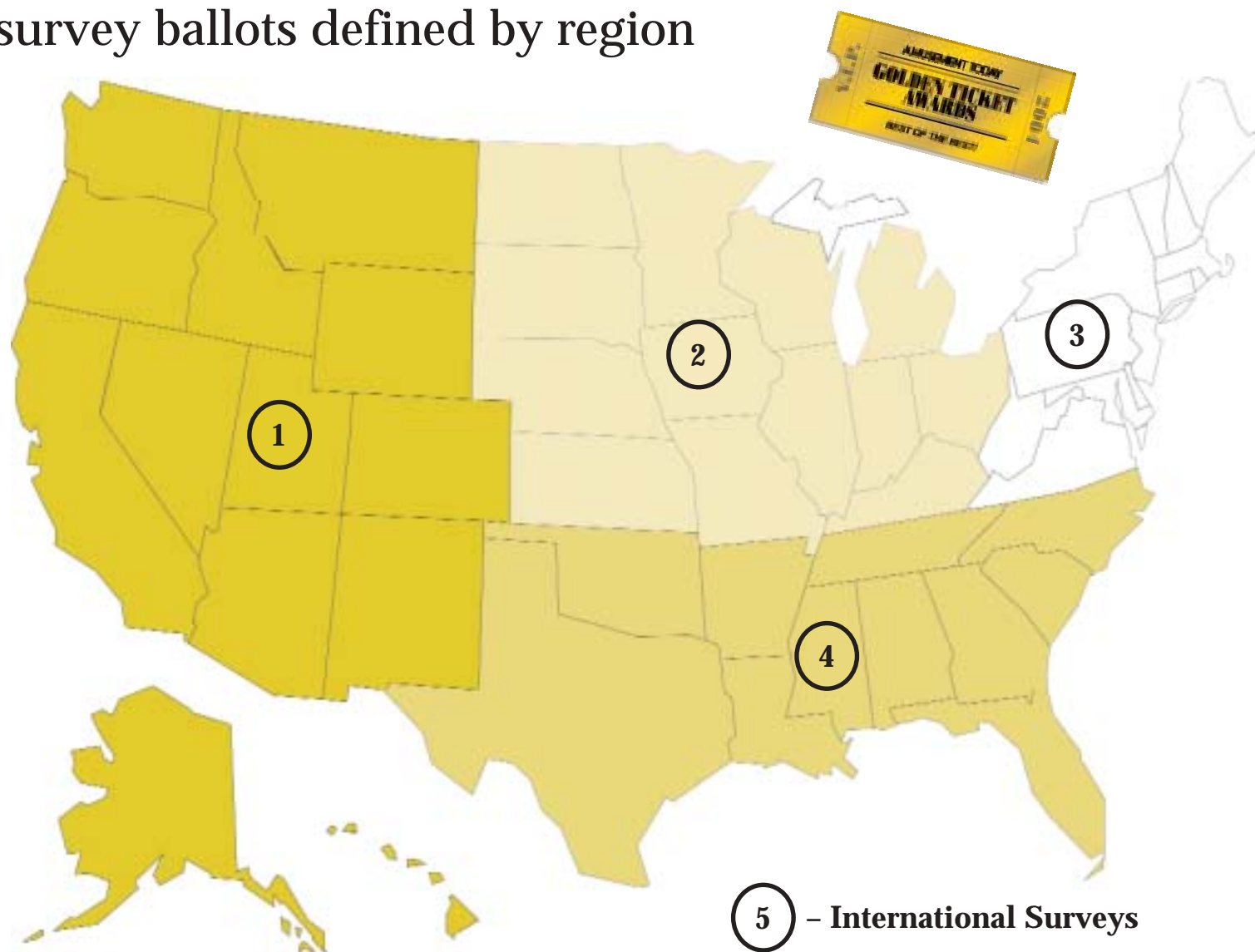
WALT DISNEY WORLD

Golden Ticket survey ballots defined by region

From its inception in 1998, *Amusement Today* has continued to seek out the well-traveled enthusiast and park aficionado. In an effort to keep the Golden Ticket Award survey balanced and as fair as possible, the United States is divided into four geographical regions and an equal number of survey ballots were sent to each region. In addition, several international participants also took the survey.

Amusement Today is extremely indebted to the hundreds of kind people who took the time, effort, and thought into completing the survey and returning it to *AT*. Your expertise is not only appreciated, but also your kindness.

Any well-traveled enthusiasts who wish to be considered for the 2005 survey can contact us by email at tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com or by postal mail. *Amusement Today* is eagerly interested in expanding our international participants.



Three-year format awards

Best Indoor Roller Coaster		
Rock'n' Roller Coaster	Disney-MGM Studios	19%
Space Mountain	Magic Kingdom	12%
Exterminator	Kennywood	11%
Flight of Fear	Paramount King's Island	10%
Revenge of the Mummy	Universal Studios Orlando	8%
Best Carousel		
Knoebels Amusement Resort	Elysburg, Pa.	37%
Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk	Santa Cruz, Calif.	10%
Six Flags Over Georgia	Atlanta, Ga.	8%
Islands of Adventure	Orlando, Fla.	6%
Cedar Point (Cedar Downs)	Sandusky, Ohio	5%
Best Indoor Waterpark		
World Waterpark	Edmonton, Alberta, Canada	40%
Great Wolf Lodge	Sandusky, Ohio	22%
Alton Towers/Splash Landings	Staffordshire, England	10%

Certain Golden Ticket Awards get three-year format

Each year *AT* places a handful of categories on a three-year rotating format. Some categories last seen in 2002 will re-emerge next year on the 2005 Golden Ticket Awards.

This year three never-before-seen categories grace our awards, also on a rotational basis. First up is Best Indoor Roller Coaster, a new twist for coaster fans to acknowledge those rides placed within darkened and themed interiors to add to the coaster experience. Taking top honors is Rock 'n' Roller Coaster at Walt Disney World. Also in Orlando is the second place pick, the long-loved Space Mountain at the Magic Kingdom. Completing the top three is the themed spinning mouse

coaster, Exterminator at Kennywood.

That touch of nostalgia of reaching for the brass ring keeps the Grand Carousel at Knoebels well perched at the top of the list for Best Carousel. Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk and Six Flags Over Georgia receive votes to take second and third place for their beautiful acquisitions.

Perhaps the most difficult category for our panel to vote on is Best Indoor Waterpark. For 2004, World Waterpark in West Edmonton Mall splashes in first. Sandusky's Great Wolf Lodge places second, and coming in third is Alton Tower's resort hotel Splash Landings.

—Tim Baldwin



Rock 'n' Roller Coaster at Disney-MGM Studios in Orlando takes guests through three inversions and numerous themed scenes.



Guests love a spin on Knoebels' Grand Carousel, one of the last remaining such classics that let riders reach for the brass ring.



Photos courtesy WDW Resort, Knoebels and Tim Baldwin

World Waterpark in West Edmonton Mall allows year-round water fun in the largest mall on the planet.

Memories of past Golden Ticket Awards

SCRAPBOOK

NUMBERS

This edition of our Numbers column focuses on some fast facts surrounding the annual Golden Ticket Awards.

4

is the number of years that *Amusement Today* has conducted a ceremony for the Golden Ticket Awards. Sites listed by year are: 2001, Holiday World & Splashin' Safari; 2002, Paramount's Kings Island; 2003, Schlitterbahn with Fiesta Texas as a co-host and 2004, Cedar Point Amusement Resort.

4

as in a four-way tie. Four parks are tied for having won their category every year, 1998-2004. Those holding the seven-year streaks are: Cedar Point, Best Park; Schlitterbahn, Best Waterpark; Holiday World, Friendliest Park and Busch Gardens Virginia, Best Landscaping.

7

is the number of years *AT* has conducted the Golden Ticket survey, which began in 1998.

20

is the total number of Golden Tickets won by Cedar Point, (1998-2004) giving the Point the number one slot for most Golden Tickets won. No, they don't get an award for that honor. Number two on the list is Holiday World with 18, while third place is anchored by Schlitterbahn with 15.

113

is the total number of Golden Tickets given out to the parks and suppliers. The number includes the Publisher's Pick awards and includes the 2004 class of award winners.



Last year, host park Schlitterbahn baked a Golden Ticket cake for the attendees. Below, Busch Gardens Virginia installed this 1998 Golden Ticket sign on the employee entry road as a daily reminder of its numerous awards.



Holiday World's Will Koch expresses his excitement on winning a Golden Ticket in 2001.



On hand for the 2003 Golden Ticket Awards at Schlitterbahn were front row l to r: Linda Hays, Pat Koch, Gary Henry, Gary Hays, Richard Kinzel and Daniel Keller. Back row, l to r: Maureen Boothe, Jana Faber, Tim Baldwin, Gary Slade, David Bode, Melinda Ashcraft, David Blazer and Sydne Pervis.



Paramount's Kings Island played host to the Golden Ticket Awards Ceremony in 2002. Proudly showing off their "Best Kid's Area" were, l to r: David Mandt, Jeffrey Siebert and Craig M. Ross.



Gary and Linda Hays of Cliff's Amusement Park accept the first-ever Publisher's Pick Award.

Amusement Today file photos

Parks receiving Golden Tickets love to show their guests their winning Golden Tickets through signage and banners as evident in these three photos. At left, Schlitterbahn created a walk-through arch. At right top, Fiesta Texas and Cedar Point, right, each used creative banners to tell their story.





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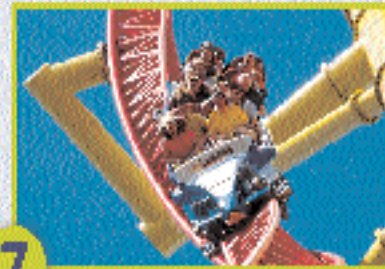
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