



Dollywood opens FireChaser Express, Gerstlauer family coaster



STORY: Scott Rutherford
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PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. — During the past 29 years, Dollywood has steadily evolved into a dining and entertainment destination with sumptuous food options and award-winning live shows. But it's also rapidly becoming a true thrill ride park. Home to world-class attractions such as the top-rated Thunderhead wooden roller coaster (2004), Mystery Mine (2007) steel coaster/dark ride and the Wild Eagle wing coaster (2012), Dollywood offers an evolving arsenal of high-profile rides.

But park officials wisely recognized that there was still a niche to be filled. They knew they needed a ride that could provide excitement for both families with children as well as more seasoned visitors looking for thrills. That may seem like a difficult thing to do, but Dollywood managed to pull it off with the finesse one has come to expect from the Smoky Mountain themer and its parent company Herschend Family Entertainment. To accomplish the task of creating an exciting ride with across-the-board appeal, including a relatively modest rider height requirement of just 39 inches, Dollywood once again turned to Gerstlauer. The result is FireChaser Express, a dual-launched family roller coaster like no other.

Having successfully col-

laborated on Mystery Mine, the Herschend creative team knew the German ride manufacturer could help them accomplish their goal. Dollywood's Pete Owens explains why Gerstlauer was selected to provide the ride system for what would become FireChaser Express. "This is the second project we have done with Gerstlauer in the last seven years. They understand that we are doing more than just creating a ride — we want to tell a story and create an experience for families to enjoy," Owens told AT. "We have been very pleased with Mystery Mine, the first Gerstlauer Eurofighter built in the U.S. It fit the story we were trying to tell and created the experience we wanted. The same is true

for FireChaser Express. It is perfect for what we wanted to accomplish. It is a family ride that is exciting; helps tell our story of volunteer firemen but has some surprises!"

Decked out in a custom-designed firefighter outfit, Dolly Parton officially opened the ride to media and invited guests on March 20, 2014. "My new FireChaser Express has folks goin' in all different directions, and that's going to be a lot of fun, but it teaches an important lesson, too," said Parton. "FireChaser Express celebrates our heroes — firefighters — and it reminds the rest of us that we can all be heroes if we'll just step up and help others, whether it's in a small way or a big way."

► See DOLLYWOOD, page 4

Dollywood's new FireChaser Express family roller coaster features top-notch theming around the ride's station and queue area. During the ride's debut, Dolly cheers on firefighters as their water bucket brigade prepares to launch the first train onto the course.
COURTESY DOLLYWOOD



As this photo illustrates, FireChaser Express is able to accommodate a wide range of riders and physical dimensions. The train's individual ratcheting lapbars accommodate full-size adults on down to small children who've reached the 39-inch height requirement. AT/SCOTT RUTHERFORD

NEWSPAPER
POSTMASTER: Dated material.
PLEASE RUSH!
Mailed Friday, April 25, 2014

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
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NEWTALK

EDITORIAL: Gary Slade, gslade@amusementtoday.com

Tidbits



Slade

Amusement Today's new **Digital Edition** is here, and available for all to test on their touch screen mobile devices. AT has contracted with Colorado-based Olive Software to bring this exciting new service to our subscribers. It is the same format as found with many of our nation's daily newspapers, including *Denver Post*, *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, *The Detroit News* and *USA Today* to name just a few.

The digital service is free through the distribution of the August issue, so check it out at amusementtoday.com [top right corner on home page]. Beginning with the Sept. issue, only PAID print subscribers will be able to access the digital edition, which will post a minimum of one full week earlier than the mailed print issues. So check it out, be the first to be in the know with the latest industry news and let us know what you think!

Congratulations to two industry park veterans on their recent park deals. **Dan Koch** now heads up **Alabama's Splash Adventure** and **Jack Falfas** takes over the former **Bluff Falls Water Park**, rebranded in 2014 into **Hydro Adventures**. We look for great things to happen at each property both this summer and in the years to come!

SeaWorld San Diego kicked off its big 50th celebration on March 21 with the launch of its new Explorer's Reef, a massive rebuild of its front gate to now include a series of interactive touch pools that greet guests as soon as they enter the park. Based on the positive reaction AT saw during the unveiling, it's obvious SeaWorld has landed another guest favorite. See pages 34-36 for full coverage.

Congratulations to SeaWorld Entertainment Inc. on selling 17,250,000 shares of common stock at \$30 per share during its second public offering, which ended April 9.

—Gary Slade

CARTOON: Bubba Flint



EDITORIAL: Andrew Mellor, amellor@amusementtoday.com

Early season optimism



Mellor

I'm writing this column at the beginning of April, that time of the year when parks around Europe and the US are just starting to open up for the new season.

And what a great time it always is, especially if the weather is favorable and adds some warm, bright days to the early part of the season. It makes a massive difference and puts potential visitors in the right frame of mind for a day out at their favorite park, as well as helping to increase that feeling of optimism for a successful few months ahead on the part of owners and operators.

With the global industry in general enjoying a very strong and successful period of late, it's not surprising that there are so many new projects coming on stream this year, from completely new parks to numerous new rides and other attractions. I've previously heard of many of these from manufacturers at various trade shows around the world and it's good to see them now a reality and ready to entertain! Indeed, I understand it is something of a

record year in Europe for new attractions of varying kinds, proof of a buoyant industry and increased confidence on the part of operators. China may be the country on everyone's lips at the moment as the most active in this business, but there's plenty going on elsewhere too!

And many of these projects aren't simply off the shelf installations. In numerous cases parks are customizing or theming rides in special and unique ways to differentiate themselves from others and create something really special, while new themed areas are also being introduced which are home to all kinds of ride based and other entertainment.

Intellectual properties also continue to be utilized and whether it's an in-house type IP or one renowned throughout the world, they will combine with new attractions of varying types to provide important marketing and promotional opportunities for their host venues and an added draw for visitors.

So to all those operators who have recently re-opened their parks for 2014, I wish you a great season and hope that the momentum of success we have witnessed in the past couple of years continues.

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Member of:

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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.

Contributors: Andrew Mellor, Richard Munch, Janice Witherow

2 MINUTE DRILL



COMPILED: Janice Witherow

Kelly Bernish, Global SHE Solutions, LLC

Kelly Bernish has successfully led teams at the Disney, SeaWorld and Anheuser-Busch Companies and is currently enjoying the launch of her own company, Global SHE Solutions, LLC. Based in the Orlando area, Kelly's focus is on offering full-service consulting in the disciplines of safety, health, environment (SHE) and risk management. Kelly serves on numerous industry committees and boards and is a passionate community volunteer. She has received several honors and awards for her work related to safety. Kelly's warm personality projects an energy that has undeniably contributed to her professional growth.



Bernish

Title
President, Global SHE Solutions, Principle Partner, Women in SHE: A Leadership Collaborative.

Number of years in the industry
28.

Best thing about the industry
The people; they are like extended family!

Favorite amusement ride
Hands down Kraken at SeaWorld Orlando.

If I wasn't working in the amusement industry, I would be ...
A college professor teaching safety and women's studies.

Biggest challenge facing our industry
Harmonization of standards worldwide, which is a vital effort to ensure our industry continues to offer our guests a safe experience no matter where they are in the world.

The thing I like most about amusement/water park season is ...
I started my career in Ohio where there was a "season." It was always an exciting time as we scrambled right up to Opening Day to get the park just perfect. It also was nice since it meant the weather was going to get better!

Favorite fruit
Tomatoes.

The last item I purchased for more than \$100 was ...
New court shoes for tennis.

When I look out my back window at home, I see ...
Dolphins and manatees ... I live on the Banana River.

The hobby I have that would probably surprise most people is ...
Turtle watching! I volunteer to survey turtle nests at the crack of dawn during turtle season.

Favorite national newscaster
Hannah Storm. I really admired her as a female sportscaster years ago during the Olympics. And she is still doing a great job.

In one word, what's your take on junk mail?
Recycle!

My next vacation will be to ...
We are going on an Alaskan Cruise this summer ... can't wait!

All-time best ballgame food
The chicken nachos at the Amway Center in Orlando.

You live in Florida. What's the neatest undiscovered thing about your state?
The great back roads. Every year we host the IAAPA/Give Kids the World Charity Motorcycle Ride, and everyone always says they never knew such beautiful country existed in Florida.

Favorite outdoor activity
I am an avid tennis player which comes in second to a great walk on the beach.

I always wanted to learn how to ...
Play the guitar well. I've played here and there, but not very well.

The one thing that really gets on my nerves is ...
People who are our restaurant servers, theme park workers, hotel housekeepers and such, deserve the utmost gratitude and kindness, and it makes me crazy when people do not treat them that way.

I am a big fan of ...
All sports! Love to watch and play. I am a season ticket holder for the Orlando Magic, love the Cleveland Indians, the Buckeyes and the Cleveland Browns!

The drink I typically order when in a restaurant is ...
A good glass of red wine.

Pick one: steak or seafood
FRESH seafood.

The last movie I saw was ...
The Heat with Melissa McCarthy and Sandra Bullock ... I love to laugh until I cry!

My favorite time of the day is ...
The morning when everything is quiet and fresh.



THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

COMPILED:
Richard Munch

Presented by



www.RollerCoasterMuseum.org

•**1906: Luna Park**, the new **Frederick Ingersoll** enterprise on the banks of Four Mile Run, Virginia, just south of Washington D.C., opened on May 28. Reached by streetcar, the park was fashioned after several of Ingersoll's numerous other Luna sites across the country. With scheduled entertainment and all the new attractions running at full capacity, the new park would include all the delights of the time, including a **Shoot the Chutes**, a **Scenic Railway**, a ballroom, a pool and restaurants. It would close in 1915 and today is the site of a sewage treatment plant.

•**1919: Woodside Park**, in Fairmount Park in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, opened on May 3 with two new gravity thrill rides. In an unusual move, park management contracted the **L.A. Thompson Scenic Railway Company** to build two of their popular railways for the 1919 season. Considered unique, part of the length of both rides used the same structure with moving figures and other novel features for the interior scenes. It was noted that the park was practically rebuilt from the ground up to emphasize a new start, after a devastating fire in May 1917 which destroyed a portion of the park, including **Thompson's Mountain Scenic Railway**. Beside the two new railways, a **Mangels Whip** and **Zarros Fun House** rounded out the lineup of new attractions.

•**1924:** The wooden roller coaster at **Dorney Park**, near Allentown, Pennsylvania, opened on May 18. **Herbert Schmeck**, of the **Philadelphia Toboggan Company**, designed the medium sized out-and-back coaster, which was simply known as **Coaster**. Because the park competed with nearby **Central Park**, it was redesigned for 1930 by Schmeck and included a more twisted layout, which is better known today as **Thunderhawk**. It remains the oldest operating roller coaster in all the properties owned by Cedar Fair.

•**1992:** One of the most innovative installations in the final decade of the last century, **Batman: The Ride** opened to the public at **Six Flags Great America**, Gurnee, Illinois on May 9. The park's general manager, **Jim Wintrode**, initially conceived the idea of a coaster train running on the outside of a loop, and worked with **Bolliger and Mabillard** to create the highly anticipated design. The inverted coaster opened to great fanfare and would eventually be replicated, with models opening throughout the world.

•**2003: Top Thrill Dragster**, an **Intamin** company installation at **Cedar Point**, Sandusky, Ohio, would be the first full circuit coaster to break the 400 foot barrier. With a track height reaching 420 feet, it was the world's tallest and fastest coaster when it debuted on May 4. To bring a fully loaded train to the top of the only hill, the hydraulically launched coaster accelerates to an average of 120 mph in under four seconds. While the intense ride lasts all of 35 seconds from start to finish, it is perfectly situated in the center of the park where non-riders can enjoy each launch from a grand stand. Many consider a ride on the popular attraction as the ultimate experience at Cedar Point.

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► DOLLYWOOD

Continued from page 1

The Ride

As with many of Dollywood's themed attractions, a rich backstory is a vital part of the overall experience. Located in the park's Wilderness Pass area, FireChaser Express celebrates the volunteer-based fire departments of the 1940s that protected the neighboring Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Coaster passengers are recruits needed to help Chief Pete Embers spot any potential fire hazards in the area. They are especially mindful of recent lightning in the area as well as Crazy Charlie Cherriebaum's Gas & Fireworks Emporium, which is located nearby. Recruits never know when they might be called to save the day.

After arriving at the boarding platform (Station No. 7), 14 guests are secured with individual lap bars in one of three seven-car trains. When the five-bell alarm sounds, an efficient tire drive propels the train forward at 16 mph in just 1.7 seconds. A swirling section of swooping dives eventually lead to the lift hill, which utilizes a traditional chain to

raise the train up the side of the mountain to a maximum height of 79 feet.

After cresting the lift, riders enjoy a leisurely section of track at the tree line that includes a swoop turn, a flat curve and a shallow drop into a high-banked fan turn. It's at this point that FireChaser Express kicks into high gear. The train picks up speed and then careens through one of several wooden fire towers (re-purposed from the former Adventure Mountain ropes course), a series of drops, air-time filled camelbacks and curves that hug the rocky hillside. A serpentine track section finds the train slithering into a fireworks testing area littered with crashed rockets and other charred remnants, and finally into Crazy Charlie's fireworks shed where the train is braked to halt. Flames, sparks and other special effects keep riders occupied while a track switch behind them rotates.

Then, with a blast of smoke, the train is suddenly launched backwards from 0-20 mph in just two seconds. What follows is a quick ascent and

subsequent reverse plunge that surprises riders with strong positive Gs. A sweeping banked turn leads up and then very quickly down into the brakes. The train is held in place until another rotating track switch allows it to roll backward into the station to its original starting point.

It's quite obvious that Dollywood has another hit on its hands with FireChaser Express. Park guests just can't seem to get enough of it. Watching trainload after trainload of excited guests enjoying the new coaster, Pete Owens sums it up: "The best compliment you can receive when you build a ride is families riding, getting off and getting right back in line. That is exactly what we have with FireChaser Express. It is a great addition to the park and with only a 39-inch height requirement we are seeing first-coaster riders and whole families ride together."

Gerstlauer is represented in North America by Maryland-based Ride Entertainment Group of Companies.

AT speaks with Gerstlauer's Siegfried Gerstlauer

Mechanically speaking, FireChaser Express is an absolute marvel to watch as well as ride. But it was a bit of a challenge considering what Dollywood was asking the engineers at Gerstlauer to do to create this most impressive attraction. AT spoke with Siegfried Gerstlauer and asked him to comment on these challenges, specifically the launch system, track switches and the ride's control system:



Gerstlauer

On the launch systems:

"While the launch system was designed for Dollywood, it definitely has its roots in the Family Shuttle. That system, which we developed a few years ago, utilizes tire drive to accelerate the trains and we used a similar system on FireChaser.

On the track switches:

"We already had a switch track system in-use on a family coaster in Spain. We used what we knew from that project to design a system that could take a lot of use, and ended up with an extremely safe and durable system for reversing the trains. At Dollywood the system utilizes hydraulics to move the switches and has safety pins that need to lock and unlock as part of every cycle.

On the ride safety system:

"It really is a complicated system. With the ride having two launches, a chain lift, a block brake, and two reversing points, there is a lot more to control than a traditional chain lift coaster. However, much like on Mystery Mine, we have a well-designed 'base' control system so we could easily add on to it to develop the complicated safety system needed for this ride.

On building a family coaster:

"I really am happy with the resulting ride. For the past 15 years a lot of parks have shied away from family coasters as they felt 'bigger is better.' But at Dollywood, you can really see that a family coaster can be marketable, fun, and attract a wide range of ridership. The ride design process was a great partnership with Dollywood and we are extremely appreciative of the opportunity. Not only is the coaster great, but Dollywood added so much to it with their theming and storytelling. We appreciate having them as a partner."

—Compiled by Scott Rutherford

FAST FACTS

Name/Park

FireChaser Express,
Dollywood
Pigeon Forge, Tenn.

Type

Steel multi-launch family coaster (features forward/backward launch sections)

Height/Length/Speed

79 feet/2,427 feet/34.5 mph

Ride Vehicles

Three 7-car trains (each car seats two riders)

Manufacturer

Gerstlauer Amusement Rides GmbH

Engineering Track Calculations

Ingenieur Büro Stengel (centerline layout)

Ride Broker

Ride Entertainment Group

Opened

March 22, 2014



Dollywood's new FireChaser Express once again proves that rides don't require gargantuan physical statistics to be successful. Gerstlauer utilized creativity and ingenuity to produce a family roller coaster that appeals to both family's with small children as well as those visitors looking for thrills.

AT/SCOTT RUTHERFORD

Dippin' Dots themed ice cream bursts into Dollywood

PADUCAH, Ky. — Dollywood guests will experience an explosion of flavor with new Dippin' Dots FireChaser Cherrybomb Ice, specially developed for Dollywood and its new FireChaser Express roller coaster. FireChaser Cherrybomb, available only at Dollywood and Dollywood's Splash Country, delivers a sour cherry and fruit flavor with unexpected bursts of popping candy.

"It has a great mix of flavors," said Dollywood's Pete Owens. "The popping candy really helps bring it home for FireChaser Express."

A new exciting flavor isn't the only thing Dippin' Dots brings to Dollywood this season. The original beaded ice cream introduces the Tennessee Tornado Sundae Shop, a Dippin' Dots destination that serves a menu of Dippin' Dots treats such as sundaes, shakes and floats.

"Returning to Dollywood has been a thrill for the entire Dippin' Dots team," said Dippin' Dots LLC Director of Sales, Adam Gross. "This opening marks the culmination of hard

work and determination, not to mention the vision, creativity and quality that have been devoted to this project."

Dippin' Dots is being served at six locations within the Dollywood theme park and at two additional locations inside Dollywood's Splash Country waterpark. All eight locations will serve the new FireChaser Cherrybomb flavor.

Dippin' Dots are tiny, flash frozen beads of ice cream, yogurt, sherbet and flavored ice. Invented in 1988 by microbiologist and entrepreneur Curt Jones, Dippin' Dots offers more than 30 different flavors, plus seasonal flavors. The company's administrative and production headquarters are located in Paducah, Kentucky. Dippin' Dots are sold in more than 130 retail locations and thousands of entertainment venues and special events nationwide. The company's International division oversees licensees in a dozen countries.

•www.dippindots.com



Dollywood guests can experience an explosion of flavor with new Dippin' Dots FireChaser Cherrybomb Ice, specially developed for Dollywood and its new FireChaser Express roller coaster. Available only at Dollywood Resorts parks, the mix delivers a sour cherry and fruit flavor. COURTESY DOLLYWOOD



Family Coaster „FireChaser Express“ Dollywood, USA

America's first
dual-launch forward
and backward
Family Coaster



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CANADA

British Columbia

Canada Place, Vancouver...Fly Over Canada — Vekoma I-Ride Panoramic Flight Simulator

Nova Scotia

Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site, Louisbourg...Chance Rides Tramstar

Ontario

Canada's Wonderland, Vaughan...Wonder Mountain Guardian — Triotech 4D interactive dark ride on Zamperla ride system

Fantasy Fair at Woodbine Center, Toronto...Moser 11m. Spring Ride Tower

Neb's Funworld, Oshawa...Sparetime Express — E&F Miler coaster relocated from Jeepers (Maryland)

Toronto Zoo, Toronto...Soaring Eagle Zipline

Camping Lac Georges, Val-Alain...ProSlide Twister, Freefall, TurboTwister, Kidz ProRacer and Kidz Twister

La Ronde, Montreal...Demon — Mondial Roll Over

MEXICO

Distrito Federal

Six Flags Mexico, Mexico City...Medusa Steel Coaster — Rocky Mountain transformation of Medusa wood coaster to steel track; 60m. Funtime Slingshot

Jalisco

Selva Mágica, Guadalajara...Bullet — Schwarzkopf Wiener Looping/Bullet shuttle relocated from Flamingoland (opened Dec. 2013)

UNITED STATES

Alabama

Splash Adventure Waterpark, Birmingham...Wacky Worm Coaster; Rio Grande train; Kiddie Boat ride; SBF Balloon wheel

Arizona

Wildlife World Zoo, Lichtfield Park...Chance Rides Big Dipper coaster; Larson Flying Scooters

Arkansas

Little Rock Zoo, Little Rock...Chance Rides C.P. Huntington train

Magic Springs, Hot Springs...Sky Shark — Skycoaster

California

Aquatica, Chula Vista...Taumata Racer — ProSlide 6-lane OctopusRacer

Adventure City, Anaheim...Rewind Racers — new Gerstlauer family shuttle coaster; themeing by R&R Creative Design

Disneyland, Anaheim...Big Thunder Mountain Railroad — Rebuild of existing ride with new track by Dynamic Attractions

Gilroy Gardens, Gilroy...Children's Water Play area

Golfand Sunsplash, Mesa...ProSlide SuperLoop with SkyBox

Hurricane Harbor, Valencia...Bonza Pipeline — ProSlide SuperLoop with SkyBox, FreeFall with SkyBox

Knott's Berry Farm, Buena Park...Restoration of Calico Mine Ride — Garner Holt Productions

Legoland California, Carlsbad...Legends of Chima waterpark expansion with Lion Temple wave pool

Oakland Zoo, Oakland...SBF/Visa Safari Jeep track ride

Ravine Waterpark, Paso Robles...Racer — ProSlide 4-lane ProRacer

San Diego Zoo, San Diego...Chance Rides Tramstar

Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, Santa Cruz...New paint on Giant Dipper — Baynum painting

Scandia Family Fun Center, Sacramento...E&F Miler wild mouse relocated from Casino Pier, N.J.

SeaWorld San Diego, San Diego...50th anniversary celebration; new touch pools at explorer's reef

Six Flags Discovery Kingdom, Vallejo...Tsunami Soaker — Mack Rides Twist 'n' Splash

Six Flags Magic Mountain, Valencia...Speedy Gonzales Hot Rod Racers — Zamperla family gravity coaster

Universal Studios California, Universal City...Despicable Me Minion Mayhem — 3D simulator

Colorado

Elitch Gardens, Denver...Brain Drain — Larson Giant Loop

Florida

Aquatica, Orlando...ProSlide 3x SuperLoop with SkyBox, FreeFall with SkyBox

Big Kahuna Waterpark, Destin...ProSlide 3x TurboTwister

Busch Gardens Tampa, Tampa...Falcon's Fury — Intamin Sky Jump drop tower

Disney's Animal Kingdom, Lake Buena Vista...New theater for Festival of the Lion King

I-Drive Live, Orlando...SeaLife Aquarium, Madam Tussaud's Wax Museum, Orlando Eye — 425-foot observation wheel

Legoland Florida, Winter Haven...Duplo Valley — new themed area with Lego farm animals, mini tractor ride and waterplay area

Florida Miracle Strip Pier Park, Panama City Beach...RipTide — SDC Galaxi relocated from Pharaoh's Adventure Park (California); teacup ride

Super Speed Fun Park, Panama City Beach...Chance Rides Sea Dragon

Universal Studios Florida, Orlando...Diagon Alley — New Harry Potter-themed area with Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts enclosed roller coaster; Hogwarts Express train ride

The Magic Kingdom, Lake Buena Vista...Seven Dwarfs Mine Train — custom Vekoma mine train with swinging cars.

Wet'n'Wild Orlando, Orlando...Aqua Drag Racer — 4-lane KrakenRacer

Georgia

Six Flags Over Georgia, Austell...New waterpark with Tsunami Surge — custom complex ProSlide Hybrid: PipelineWave + CannonBowl 30; custom complex 2x PipeLine + CannonBowl 40

Idaho

Roaring Springs, Boise...Corkscrew Cavern — ProSlide SuperLoop with SkyBox

Silverwood Theme Park, Athol...Spinning Coaster — Visa spinning, figure-eight coaster

Illinois

Fox River Resort, Sheridan...WhiteWater AquaPlay 650, Giant AquaTube, Kids Slides, PoolSider

Santa's Village Azoosment Park, Dundee...WildCat — Pinfari Zyklon Z47 relocated from

Fun Spot (Indiana)

Six Flags Great America, Gurnee...Goliath — new Rocky Mountain Construction wooden coaster

Indiana

Holiday World, Santa Claus...Mayflower — Chance Rides custom-themed Pharaoh's Fury; Overhaul of 14 Voyage trains — PTCI; new themed areas designed by PGAV

Indiana Beach, Monticello...Dragon Wagon — new Wisdom Rides coaster; Wisdom Rides tornado; Zamperla Rockin' Tug; SBF Balloon Wheel; Rio Grande train; kiddie boat ride

Indianapolis Zoo, Indianapolis...SkyQuest — Chance Rides elevated track people mover

Iowa

Adventureland Park, Altoona...Storm Chaser — Mondial Windseeker

Modern Woodman Park, Davenport...Chance Rides 90-foot Giant Wheel

Kansas

Schlitterbahn Waterpark, KansasCity...Verrückt — world's tallest water slide

Kentucky

Hurricane Bay at Kentucky Kingdom, Louisville...ProSlide PipeLine, Mammoth, FreeFall, CannonBowl 40, Tornado 12

Kentucky Kingdom, Louisville...Lightning Run — Chance Rides Hyper GT; Fearfall — Larson/Arm Super Shot; Professor John's Flying Machines — Larson Flying Scooters

Louisiana

New Orleans City Park, New Orleans...Live Oak Lady Bug — new Zierer family coaster to replace previous coaster with lifespan shortened by damage from Hurricane Katrina

Maryland

Montgomery Parks, Rockville...Cabin John Miniature Train — Chance Rides C.P. Huntington train

National Harbor Waterfront, National Harbor...Capital Wheel — Chance Rides R60 observation wheel

Ocean Amusement, Ocean City...Bertazzon bumper cars

Six Flags America, Upper Marlboro...Ragin' Cajun — Zamperla spinning mouse relocated from Six Flags Great America, new paint by Baynum Painting; Larson Flying Scooters; overhaul of Roar and Wild One trains — PTCI

Massachusetts

Berkshire Ski Resort, Charlemont...ADG Mountain Coaster

Edaville USA, Carver...Kersplash — E&F Miler Water Coater relocated from Washington State Fair/Puyallup; Sally Dark Ride system

Great Wolf Lodge Fitchburg, Fitchburg...ProSlide Tornado 60, Mammoth, SuperLoop with SkyBox, Kidz Twister, Kidz ProRacer

Six Flags New England, Agawam...New England Sky Screamer — Funtime 403-foot StarFlyer

Michigan

Avalanche Bay, Boyne Falls...the Big Couloir — ProSlide SuperLoop with SkyBox

Michigan's Adventure, Muskegon...Overhaul of four Wolverine Wildcat cars — PTCI

Zehnder's Splash Country, Frankenmuth...ProSlide Hybrid: Tornado 24+Tornado 24, SuperLoop with Skybox, TurboTwister with SkyBox

Minnesota

Valleyfair, Shakopee...New Route 76 themed area with Northern Lights — Zamperla Skater Coaster

Missouri

Hydro Adventures, Poplar Bluff...Twisted Six — WhiteWater West mat racer; 14 new Shaller Enjuneering go-karts

Six Flags St. Louis, Eureka...Tsunami Soaker — Mack Rides Twist 'n' Splash

White Water, Branson...KaPau Plummet — WhiteWater 2x FlatLine Loops with drop capsule

Worlds of Fun, Kansas City...Steel Hawk — Mondial Windseeker relocated from Knott's Berry Farm

Nevada

Adventuredome, Las Vegas...El Loco — new custom S&S El Loco coaster

Cowabunga Bay, Henderson...New waterpark (delayed from 2013) with attractions from Polin Waterpark & Pool Systems

The Linq, Las Vegas...High Roller — 550-foot observation wheel (World's tallest)

Wet'n'Wild Las Vegas, Las Vegas...Tornado — ProSlide Tornado 45

New Hampshire

Story Land, Glen...Roar-O-Saurus — new Gravity Group family wood coaster

New Jersey

Casino Pier, Seaside Heights...Bertazzon Musik Express; Technical Park 40-meter Ferris wheel; SBF 17m. Drop and twist tower

Clementon Park, Clementon...Overhaul of 4 HellCat cars — PTCI

Diggerland, West Berlin...New construction-themed adventure park utilizing heavy construction equipment as attractions

Keansburg Amusement Park, Keansburg...Looping Star — Pinfari Looping Zyklon ZL42 relocated from Sauble Beach (Ontario); S&S Frog Hopper

Land of Make Believe, Hope...ProSlide SuperLoop with SkyBox

More's Piers, Wildwood...Zierer Wave Swinger

Mountain Creek, Vernon...ProSlide SuperLoop with SkyBox

Playland's Castaway Cove, Ocean City...Pirate Ship — Chance Rides custom-themed Pharaoh's Fury

Six Flags Great Adventure, Jackson...Zumanjaro Drop of Doom — 415-foot Intamin free fall ride (World's tallest)

Steel Pier, Atlantic City...SBF 9m. pneumatic drop and twist tower; Technical Park 60m. Ferris Wheel

Storybook Land, Egg Harbor Township...WorkZone — themed car ride with construction vehicles and animatronics

New Mexico

Cliff's Amusement Park, Albuquerque...Wind Rider — ARM Vertigo

Western Playland, Sunland Park...Visa Spinning Coaster

New York

Buffalo Zoo, Buffalo...Wattman Mini Express train

Fantasy Forest at Flushing Meadows, New York City...Zamperla Speedway

The Great Escape, Queensbury...Extreme Supernova — 15m KmG Afterburner

2014 NORTH AMERICA PARK PREVIEW

Luna Park, New York City...Thunderbolt — new custom Zamperla multi-element coaster with elevator lift

Martin's Fantasy Island, Grand Island...KMG Speed

Seabreeze Park, Rochester...Bertazzon Wave Swinger and Zamperla Balloon ride

Splish Splash Waterpark, Calverton...Interactive boat/water battle ride with theming by R&R Creative Design

North Carolina

Carowinds, Charlotte...Surfer's Swell — ProSlide PipeLineWave, Dorsal Fin Drop — CannonBowl 40

North Carolina Zoo, Asheboro...Chance Rides Tramstar

Ohio

Cedar Point, Sandusky...Lake Erie Eagles — Larson Flying Scooters; SlingShot — Funtime 72m. Slingshot; Pipe Scream — Zamperla Skater Coaster; overhaul of Blue Streak trains and Mean Streak trains — PTCI

Columbus Zoo, Columbus...Specialty Vehicle Economy Shuttle

Hocking Hills Nature Trails, Logan...Rope Course system

Kings Island, Mason...Banshee — new B&M inverted coaster; Renaming and painting of suspended coaster to Bat, painting of Skycoster and Delirium — Baynum Painting

The Beach, Mason...Soaring Eagle Zipline; 400-foot four-lane mat racer ride

Oklahoma

Bell's Amusement Park, Tulsa...Allan Herschell Little Dipper relocated from Fun Spot

Pennsylvania

Dorney Wildwater Kingdom, Allentown...WhiteWater Triple AquaDrop, Constrictor

Hersheypark, Hershey...Cocoa Cruiser — Zamperla family gravity coaster with helix; painting of Great Bear and Storm Runner — Baynum Painting

Kennywood, West Mifflin...Overhaul of four Racer cars — PTCI

Sesame Place, Langhorne...Cookie's Monster Land — new themed area Flying Cookie Jars and Captain Cookie's High 'C' Adventures

Puerto Rico

Surf and Fun Waterpark, San Germán...New waterpark with multiple slides, wave pool and lazy river

South Carolina

Crown Reef, Myrtle Beach...Explosion — ProSlide PipeLine, Kidz Twister, Twister

South Carolina Broadway at the Beach, Myrtle Beach...B&N giant slide

Family Kingdom, Myrtle Beach...Zamperla Magic Bikes and Jump Around relocated from Freestyle Music Park

National Amusements, Myrtle Beach...Visa Bumper cars, Visa spinning coaster and KMG Speed

South Dakota

WaTiki Indoor Waterpark Resort, Rapid City...WhiteWater AquaLoop, Freefall, Whizzard Mat Racer (2), 2-lane Mini Multi, Giant Slide, Flowrider Double, Waves 10 m. Fish slide

Tennessee

Dollywood, Pigeon Forge...FireChaser Express — new Gerstlauer family launched coaster with backward section

Texas

Castaway Cove, Wichita Falls...WhiteWater AquaLoop

Corsicana Water and Adventure Park, Corsicana...new waterpark designed by LARC with multiple slides and water fountain show

Hawaiian Falls Pflugerville, Pflugerville...WhiteWater Body Slides, AquaTube, Multi-Lane Mat Racer, AquaDrop, Inner Tube Slides, Wave pool; theming by R&R Creative Design

Hawaiian Falls White Settlement, White Settlement...New park with WhiteWater Multi-Lane Mat Racer, AquaDrop, Inner-Tube Slides, Wave Pool; theming by R&R Creative Design

Kemah Boardwalk, Kemah...Iron Eagle — Soaring Eagle Zip Line; Larson Giant Loop; Overhaul of six Bullet cars — PTCI

Pirate's Bay Waterpark, Baytown...WhiteWater Boomerango and Colorado Drop Slide

San Antonio Zoo, San Antonio...Zootennial Carousel — Chance Rides 50-foot wildlife carousel

Six Flags Fiesta Texas, San Antonio...Bahama Blaster — ProSlide 4x SuperLoop with SkyBox

Six Flags Hurricane Harbor, Arlington...Wahoo Racer — WhiteWater 6-lane Whizzard; painting of several attractions — Baynum Painting

Six Flags Over Texas, Arlington...Bugs Bunny Boom Town — new kids area with three new rides

Trader's Village, Grand Prairie...Flea Fall — Larson/Arm Super Shot

Trader's Village, San Antonio...Flea Fall — Larson/Arm Super Shot; Chance Rides Pharaoh's Fury; Moser Rides 12m. spring ride

Wet'n'Wild Splashtown, Spring...Rebranding of park as Wet'n'Wild; ProSlide enclosed Mammoth and new raft lift

Wonderland Park, Amarillo...Refurbished Eli Scrambler; Pipeline Plunge new paint; LED lighting on drop tower

Utah

Hogle Zoo, Salt Lake City...Zoofari Express — Chance Rides C.P. Huntington locomotive and four coaches

Virginia

Great Waves Waterpark, Alexandria...WhiteWater Master Blaster

Kings Dominion, Doswell...Return of the iconic Singing Mushrooms — Garner Holt Productions

Water Country USA, Williamsburg...Colossal Curl — ProSlide Hybrid: Tornado 24 + Tornado Wave

Wisconsin

Prairie Athletic Club, Sun Prairie...ProSlide 2x Twister with DropSlide



Australia

Aquanation, Ringwood...ProSlide SuperLoop with SkyBox
Docklands, Melbourne...Melbourne Star Observation Wheel — Sanoyas Rides Corporation (opened December 2013)
Dreamworld, Coomera...ProSlide Tornado 12
Funfields, Whittlesea...Typhoon — ProSlide CannonBowl 40 with extended slide (world's longest)
Luna Park, Sydney...Hair Raiser — Larson/ARM Super Shot drop tower
Wet 'n' Wild Gold Coast, Oxenford...Expanded kids area with six ProSlide Kidz attractions
Wet'n'Wild Sydney, Sydney...Ride Entertainment Group 250-foot Skycoaster; new waterpark (opened Dec. 2013) with ProSlide Behemoth Bowl (2), Mammoth (2), Tornado, Tornado Tantrum, Tornado 60, Tornado Wave, 6 Kidz slides

Austria

Familypark Neusiedlersee, St. Margarethen...Heege Butterfly
Fantasia, Salzburg...Knights Ride Tower — ABC Rides family freefall tower
Vienna Prater, Vienna...Windowbana — two level ghost ride; Moser Rides 15m. revolving drop tower

Azerbaijan

Winter Garden Gabala, Gabala...Whitewater SuperBowl, Constrictor, Poolsider, AquaTube, Master Blaster, AquaLoop, Whizzard, Boomerango, Speed Slide

Belgium

Plopsa De Panne, Aidnkerke-De Panne...Viktor's Race — refurbished Zierer large Tivoli; indoor waterpark with wave pool, lazy river and multiple slides including ProSlide SuperLoop with Skybox

Brazil

Água Lokos, Capão da Canoa...Inversa — suspended shuttle coaster
Coney Island Park, Sao Paolo...30m. Ferris Wheel
Hopi Hari, Vinhedo...Intamin 10-inversion coaster

Bulgaria

Aqua Mania Waterpark, Albena...New waterpark with ProSlide Mammoth, 4-lane ProRacer, Dropslide twister (2) and 4 Kidz attractions
Club Hotel Bolero Aqua Park, Golden Sands...New waterpark with ProSlide CannonBowl 30, Tornado 12, 3x Pipeline, Kidz MiniRiver

Chile

Fantasilandia, Santiago...Mack Rides Twist 'n' Splash

China

3D Vision Creation Park, Binhai...Flare Meteor — Golden Horse suspended looping coaster
Chimelong Ocean Kingdom, Hengqin Island...New park with B&M wing coaster; Mack Rides water coaster and SuperSplash
Chimelong Ocean Kingdom, Xiangzhou...WhiteWater Giant AquaTube, AquaTube, AquaDrop, AquaPlay, Wave Channel, AquaSpray
Euro Park, Penglai...White Horse Coaster
Fantawild Adventure (Jinan), Jinan...New park with Martin & Vleminckx/Gravity Group wooden coaster; Vekoma Boomerang
Fantawild Adventure (Wuhu), Wuhu...Vekoma Boomerang
Fantawild Dreamland, Shifeng...New park with Martin & Vleminckx/Gravity Group wooden coaster; Vekoma Boomerang
Foshan Nanshai Bay, Foshan...ProSlide HydroMagnetic Rocket, TornadoWave, Tornado 60, 2x CannonBowl, 2x SuperLoop with SkyBox, 2x FreeFall with SkyBox
Great Mall of China, Sanhe...New park with Premier Rides launched coaster; Vekoma Dive Pretzel and Motorbike coasters
Happy valley (Shanghai), Songjiang...B&M inverted coaster
Happy Valley (Wuhan), Hongshan...OCT Thrust SSC1000 — S&S compressed air launched coaster
Hello Kitty Theme Park, Anji...Intamin coaster wheel with 8 fixed and 8 rolling cabins
Hotgo Park, Fushun...New park with Martin & Vleminckx/Gravity Group wooden coaster
Jinling Happy World, Jin'an...Journey to the Stars — Hebei Zhongye 11 inversion roller coaster
Jiujiang County Dream Park, Jiujiang...New park with family and mine train coaster
Kunshan Dream of Water Waterpark, Kunshan...WhiteWater Family Boomerango, Abyss, Rattler, SuperBowl
Middle Zhejiang Amusement City, Wucheng...New park with looping and mouse coaster
Nantong Adventure Kingdom Water World, Nantong...WhiteWater Family Boomerango, Family Raft Ride, Master Blaster, Python, SuperBowl, 3-lane Whizzard, AquaLoop, Rain Fortress, Waves, Wave Channel, Double FlowRider
Ningbo Indoor Waterpark, Zhejiang...WhiteWater Superbowl, Inner-Tube Slide, AquaPlay Rain Fortress, Kids Slides, Abyss, Family Constrictor, Family Rattler, Aqualoops, Multi-Lane Mat Racer
OCT Yunnan Spa & Waterpark, Yunnan...New park with ProSlide Tornado 60, CannonBowl, Tornado 12, TurboTwister with SkyBox, Pipeline, FreeFall, Hyrbird: Tornado 24 x 3, 6-lane ProRacer
Qihe Happy World, Qihe...New park with multiple coasters from Beijing Jiuhua; Mack launched looping coaster
Romon World, Yinzhou...New park with Maurer Söhne X-car coaster; Intamin multi-element coaster
Sinma Kingdom, Luquan...New park with Hebei Zhongye double loop/double corkscrew coaster and Golden Horse Space Car
Sino Wonderland, Huainan...Speed Shuttle — Beijing Shibaolai suspended looping coaster
Spiritsland, Luzhou...Leap of the Liquor — Hebei Zhongye double loop/corkscrew
Sun Park, Dongcheng...Beijin Jiuhua Motor Coaster
Tianmu Lake Water World, Liyang...WhiteWater Python, Family Boomerango, SuperBowl, 4-lane Whizzard, Flatline Loop, Free Fall Plus, Kids Slides, AquaSpray, AquaPlay Giant Rain Fortress

Tieling Waterpark, Tieling...ProSlide Hybrid: Tornado 24+Tornado 60, Tornado 12, TurboTwister with SkyBox, CannonBowl 40 with explosion
Xianlong Lake, Anhui...WhiteWater Family 6 Abyss, Family 6 Python
Xishuangbanna Theme Park, Xishuangbanna...Zamperla MotoCoaster/Pony Express; B&M Flying Coaster; Intamin Water Coaster
Yancheng Happy Valley, Tinghu...New park with Golden Horse suspended looping coaster and sit-down coaster; Hebei Zhongye double loop corkscrew

Denmark

Bakken, Klampenborg...Falken — Gerstlauer Sky Roller
Djurs Sommerland, Nimtofte...Vikingeland — new themed area with two new rides: Drageskibet — Huss swinging ship; Vikingetårne — self-hoisting tower rides
Knuthenborg SafariPark, Lolland...ABC Rides Big Splash
Legoland Builand, Builand...Ghost — The Haunted House, walk through with indoor drop tower — ABC rides
Tivoli Gardens, Copenhagen...Restoration of mountain peaks to scenic railway for 100th anniversary

England

Center Parks Woburn, Woburn...ProSlide enclosed Tornado 45, 2x PipeLine, 2x Twister, TurboTwister, 2x Kidz ProRacer, 2x Kidz Twister
Chessington's World of Adventure, Chessington...Retheming and re-opening of Mack Blauer Enzian
Crealy Devon's Great Adventure Park, Exeter...Shark Trip — roller coaster
Drayton Manor, Drayton Bassett...Zamperla Air Race
Drusillas Park, Sussex...Hello Kitty Secret Garden — new themed area with meet and greet, beauty parlor and three rides: Metallbau Emmeln car ride; Zamperla tea cup and sky hopper rides
Paulton's Park, Romsey...Bertazzon Double Decker Carousel
Pleasurewood Hills, Lowestoft...Marble Madness — Maurer Söhne wild mouse relocated from Flamingoland
Thorpe Park, Chertsey...Angry Birds Land — themed area with Simworx 4-D attraction

Finland

Linnanmäki, Helsinki...Kingi — 75m (246-foot) Moser Rides revolving drop tower
Power Park, Alahärmä...Work in Progress — Construction-themed interactive Fun House from Gosetto SRL

France

Antibes Land, Antibes...Mack Wild Mouse relocated from Walygator Parc
Dennlys Park, Dennebroeucq...40m. Drop tower
Didi'Land, Morsbronn-les-Bains...Cyclon Coaster — SBF Visa Group Cyclon (Zyklon-style)
Disneyland Paris, Paris...Ratatouille: The Adventure – L'Aventure Totalement Toquée de Rémy — 3D trackless dark ride; Le Bistrot Chez Rémy — themed restaurant
Family Park, Saint-Martin-le-Beau...unknown roller coaster
Fraispertuis City, Jeanménil...Ronde des Rondins — Zierer Tivoli coaster relocated from Parc Astérix
Futuroscope, Poitou-Charantes...Raving Rabbids 5D attraction
Kingoland, Plumelin...New park with Appolo Coaster — Pinfari Zyklon Z64 relocated from OK Corral and Speed Chenille — Soquet coaster relocated from Fami P.A.R.C.
Nigloland, Dolancourt...Alpina Blitz — Mack Rides multi-element coaster
OK Corral, Cuges-les-Pins...Zierer Jet Skis
Parc Saint Paul, Saint Paul...Aérotrain — Vekoma junior coaster

Germany

Bayern Park, Reisbach...Zierer 40-seat Wave Swinger, Kontiki, Family Freefall Tower
Belantis, Leipzig...Small oval roller coaster
Eifelpark, Gondorf...Eifel-Blitz — DAL Brucomela (Big Apple)
Erlebnispark Steinau, Steinau a d Straße...Erlis Seifenkiste — small oval coaster
Europa-Park, Rust...Arthur - die Attraktion — Mack Rides inverted dark ride powered coaster themed to Arthur & the Minimoy; Zierer Family Freefall tower; Zamperla Jump Around
Freizeit-Land Geiselwind, Geiseilwind...Black Hole — Zierer enclosed coaster relocated from Movie Park Germany
Heide Park Resort, Soltau...Flug der Dämonen — B&M custom wing coaster
Holiday Park, Hassloch...Sky Scream — Premier Rides launched coaster
Legoland Deutschland, Günzburg...Hotel expansion; X-Wing Starfighter made of Lego; new 3-D film
Phantasieland, Brühl...Chiapas — themed Intamin reversing flume ride with indoor and outdoor sections
Tier- und Freizeitpark Thüle, Friesoythe...Slide tower
Therme-Erding, Erding...Addition of eight waterslides from Wiegand-Maelzer
Trampoline Trier, Trier...Butterfly — Heege Butterfly and Racing Coaster — SBF Visa Group indoor coaster
Trampolino Familien- und Freizeitpark, Andernach...Small oval roller coaster
Traumlandpark, Sonnenbühl...ABC Rides mini flume

India

Balvatika, Ahmedabad...Larson Fire Ball
Dream Land Waterpark, Mumbai...WhiteWater Family Rattler, 6-lane Whizzard, AquaLoop
Gurgaon Waterpark, Delhi...WhiteWater AquaLoop
Kishkinta Theme Park, Chennai...Hindustan Amusement Machines Zyklon-style coaster
Lonavala Water Park, Mumbai...WhiteWater Speed Slide, Free Fall, AquaTube, Rattler, Boomerango, SuperBowl, 4-Lane Mat Racer, Master Blaster, Rain Fortress, Wave Pool

Indonesia

Fantasyland amusement park (Jaya Ancol), Pademangan...Refurbished Zierer Tivoli coaster
Grand Wisata, Jawa Barat...WhiteWater Waves, Kids Slides, Kids Boomerango, Kids Rattler, Family Python, SuperBowl, Constrictor, Family Rattler

2014 INTERNATIONAL PARK PREVIEW

Jungleland, Bogor...Zierer Force One

Water Bom Waterpark, Bali...WhiteWater Combination Constrictor + Python , Body Slides, Inner-Tube Slides

Iran

Chitgar Lake, Tehran...WhiteWater AquaLoop, Family Boomerango, Abyss, Giant AquaTube, Kids Slides, Constrictor, Whizzard, Waves, Extreme River, Free Fall slides

Iraq

Al Zaqre's Dream Park, Baghdad...Vekoma suspended looping coaster

Majidi Park, Kasnazan...New park with multiple rides including Wacky Worm and Beijing Shibaolai loop/corkscrew

Ireland

Flow House Tramore, Tramore...WhiteWater double FlowRider

Italy

Cinecittà World, Rome...New park with Intamin 10-inversion coaster and Intamin indoor family coaster with free fall drop; Intamin 54m. Giant Drop

Japan

Tokyo Summerland, Tokyo...WhiteWater Abyss

Universal Studios Japan, Osaka...Vekoma junior coaster

Yomiuriland, Inagi...Twist Coaster Robin — S&S El Loco

Morocco

SindiPark, Casablanca...Gerstlauer Euro Fighter 320+

the Netherlands

Yumble FEC, Roermond...Adventure — Vekoma flight simulator; Ranger — Vekoma/ETF 3D interactive dark ride

Norway

Hunderfossen Familiepark, Fåberg...Il Tempo Extra Gigante — Zierer ESC coaster

Phillippines

Flow House Seasons Mall, Molino...WhiteWater double FlowRider

Gloria's Fantasyland, Dapitan City...Arrow Development loop and corkscrew relocated from DelGrosso's/Libertyland

Russia

Anapa Aqua Park, Anapa...ProSlide TornadoWave, 6-lane KrackenRacer, Hybrid Tornado 24 x 3; Hybrid: Tornado 24+BehemothBowl 40

Pitor Land, St. Petersburg...WhiteWater double FlowRider

Sochi Park Adventureland, Sochi...New park with Mack launched looping coaster and Wild Mouse; Vekoma Giant Inverted Boomerang and I-Ride flight simulator; S&S~Sansei tower ride

Saudi Arabia

Dana Bay, Khobar...WhiteWater AquaPlay 750

South Africa

Numz Adventure Island, Dolphin Coast...WhiteWater InnerTube Slides, Kid's Slides,

Whizzard Mat Racer 4-lanes, Family Boomerango, Constrictor, AquaTube, Giant Slide, AquaPlay Rain Fortress, Wave Pool

South Korea

Children's Grand Park, Neung-dong...Vekoma suspended family coaster

Lotte World Kimhae Waterpark, Busan...WhiteWater Abyss, Family Python, Rattler, AquaLoop, Master Blaster (Dueling), Family Raft Ride, Family Boomerango, Speed Slides, AquaTube, Inner-Tube Slide, FlowRider Double, Surf Waves, AquaPlay 1050, AquaPlay Giant RainFortress

Seoul Grand Children's Park, Seoul...Zierer Kontiki and Wave Swinger

Spain

Aquapolis, Villanueva De La Cañada...The Cobra — ProSlide Hybrid: Tornado 24 + BehemothBowl 40

Parque Warner Madrid, San Martín de la Vega...Warner Beach — new Looney Tunes-themed waterpark

Port Aventura, Salou...themed Boat Battle from Mack Rides

Sweden

Liseberg, Gothenburg...Helix — Mack Rides multi-element coaster

Skara Sommerland, Azwall...ProSlide Tornado Wave

Switzerland

Connyland, Lipperswill...Mammut The Ride — Gondola ride through a tree trunk with special effects

Thailand

Central City Bagna, Bangkok...ProSlide Tornado 12

Catron Network Amazone, Pattaya...New waterpark with cartoon-themed slides and attractions from Polin

Vana Nava Water Jungle, Hua Hin...WhiteWater Abyss, Rainfortress and Boomerango

Turkey

Ankapark, Ankara...New park with Zamperla flying and twister coasters; Intamin 10-inversion and LSM-launched coaster, Rapids Ride, Hyper Splash, Flying Island; Zierer Force 190 coaster, elevated seating coaster, Jet Skis

Mall of Istanbul, Istanbul...Zamperla coaster; Moser Rides 18m. Jungle Lift

Vialand, Istanbul...Nefeskesen (Breathaker) — Intamin LSM-launched (Jet Ski) coaster; Fatih'in Ruyasi' — Intamin tow boat ride with theming by Heimotion

UAE

Adventureland, Sharjah...Zamperla MotoCoaster

Ukraine

Aquapark Yalta, Yalta...WhiteWater Aqualoop, AquaDrop, Whizzard, Boomerango, SuperBowl, Constrictor, Master Blaster, AquaPlay

Lavina Mall, Kiev...Vekoma suspended family coaster

Respublika Mall, Kiev...Vekoma junior indoor coaster



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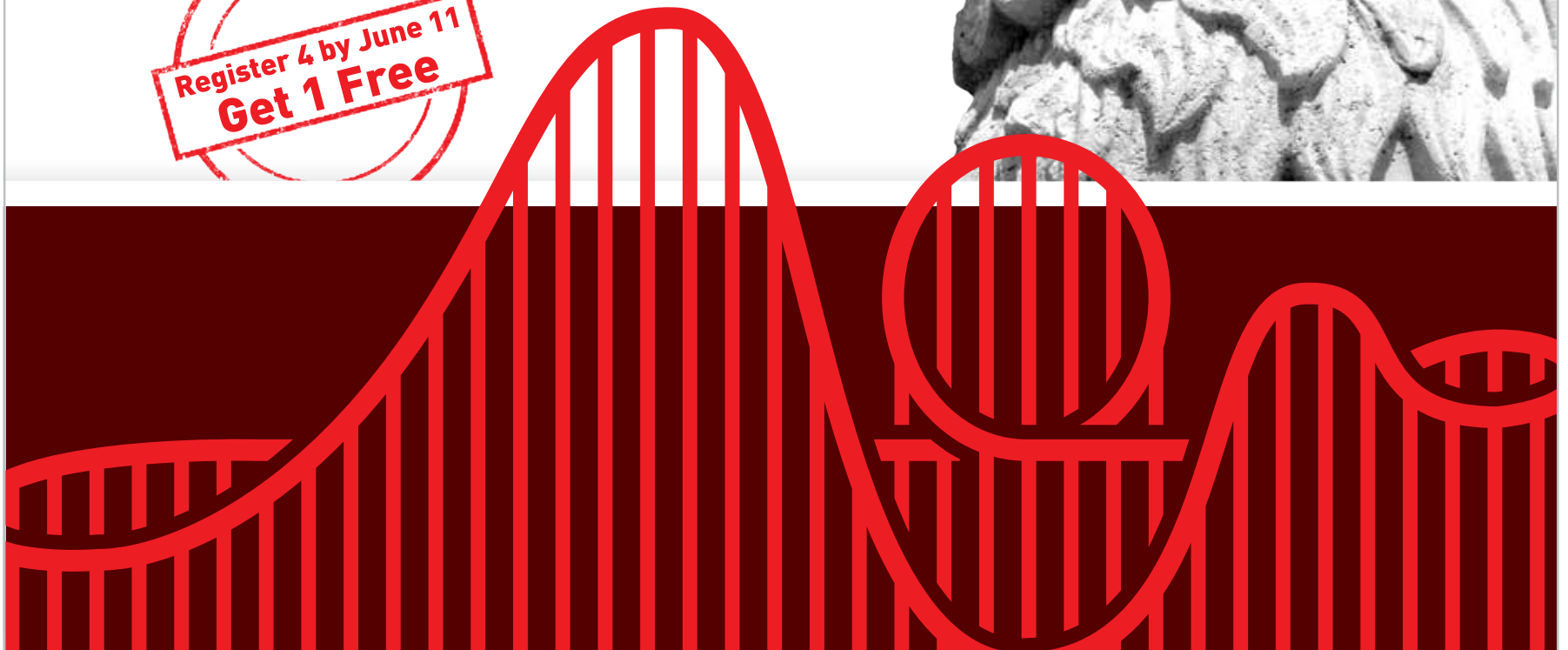
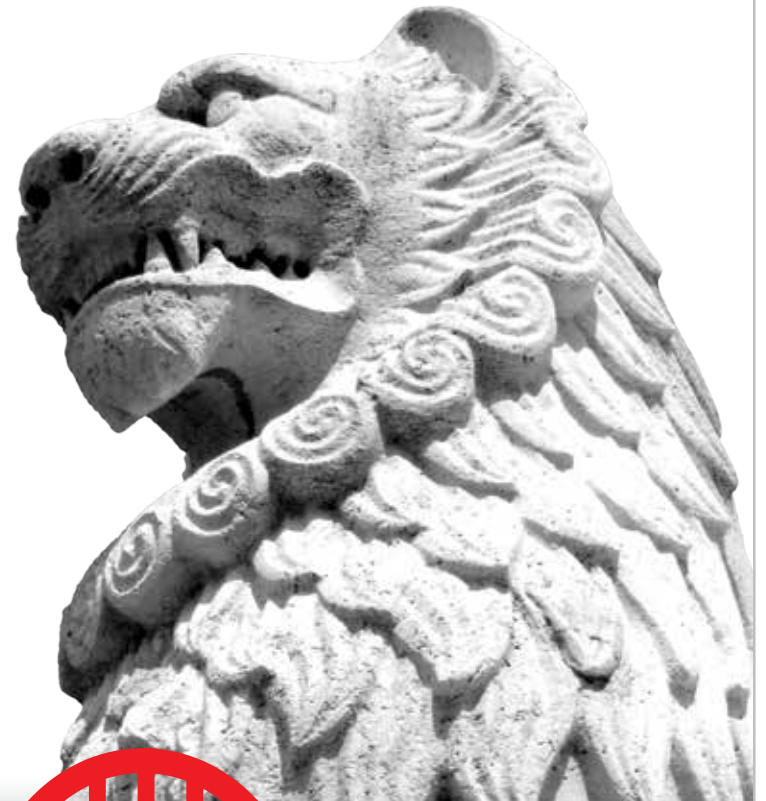
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INTERNATIONAL

► Rocky Mountain Construction announces first International project — See Page 14

Disneyland Paris to add new immersive Ratatouille dark ride

STORY: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

PARIS, France — Disneyland Paris is set to unveil a major new attraction and mini-land at its Walt Disney Studios park this summer, inspired by the Oscar-winning Disney/Pixar film *Ratatouille*.

The film tells the story of Rémy, a young rat who has amazing talents in the kitchen and dreams of one day becoming a great chef. This leads to a fun but perilous journey that eventually sees him become the head chef at one of the most famous restaurants in Paris and his arrival at Walt Disney Studios Park will see him share his culinary delights and crazy adventures with resort guests.

On the attraction *Ratatouille: L'Aventure Totalement Toquée de Rémy*, guests will shrink down to the size

► See RATATOUILLE, page 13



The new *Ratatouille*-themed attraction and mini-land will open at Disneyland Paris this summer. COURTESY DISNEYLAND PARIS

Merlin links with DreamWorks for new Shrek attraction



Shrek and friends will become a major draw for Merlin when the company introduces *Shrek's Far Far Away Adventure* to its line-up of midway attractions.

COURTESY MERLIN AND DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

STORY: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

POOLE, England — Merlin Entertainments has teamed up with DreamWorks Animation in a new collaboration that will see the creation of a unique themed visitor attraction based on *Shrek* and his friends, one of the most successful animated franchises of all time.

The landmark attraction will transport visitors through a live interactive adventure featuring *Shrek*, *Fiona*, *Donkey*, *Puss in Boots* and other favorites from the hugely successful franchise and will see an initial roll-out of six attractions during the next nine years. The first of these will open in London in the summer of 2015.

It will be the first time that Merlin has worked with a Hollywood studio to create a scaleable branded entertainment experience based on a globally recognized enter-

tainment franchise. It is also the first time that DreamWorks Animation will help to produce an attraction of this magnitude by licensing the use of its characters and stories.

The first *Shrek's Far Far Away Adventure* will be sited at London's County Hall alongside Merlin's other leading attractions in its South Bank cluster — the EDF Energy London Eye, the London Sea Life Aquarium and The London Dungeon. The 2,000 square meter (21,528 square foot) experience will be based on a brand new adventure being written by the DreamWorks team.

It will feature a *Shrek* interactive walk-through adventure and a character courtyard where visitors will be able to meet *Shrek* and his swamp friends, along with characters from *Madagascar*, *Kung Fu Panda* and *How to Train Your Dragon*. In

addition, there will be a rotating exhibit area supporting DreamWorks Animation film and DVD releases as well as a branded retail outlet.

The *Shrek* attraction will become part of Merlin's successful midway roll-out program as the sixth brand alongside Legoland Discovery Centers, Madame Tussauds, Sea Life, The Dungeon and The Eye Brand.

Merlin Entertainments Chief Executive Nick Varney commented: "Developing an attraction based on *Shrek* and his friends is hugely exciting for Merlin Entertainments and the start of what we hope will be a wider collaboration with DreamWorks Animation. Merlin's expertise in delivering memorable days out for visitors and DreamWorks' skill in developing globally recognized entertainment franchises will be a winning combination."



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Heide-Park debuts Germany's first wing coaster

STORY: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

SOLTAU, Germany — The first wing coaster to open in Germany made its debut at Heide-Park Resort in Soltau at the end of March.

Built by Swiss company Bolliger and Mabillard, Flight of the Demons is a €15 million (U.S. \$20.7 million) addition to the park and is situated in an abandoned village in the Transylvania themed area. The story behind the ride is one of flying demons conjured up by villagers, a big mistake as the demons always need new souls to renew their energy to become strong and to continue their flight. The villagers therefore “sacrifice” the souls of visitors to save their own souls.

The spectacular new coaster caters to guests who are over 10 years old and from 1.40 meters (4.5 feet) to 1.95 meters (6.5 feet) in height. It features a track length of 772

meters (2,533 feet) and utilizes two, 24-seater trains with nothing above or below riders to create a unique flying feeling.

The highest point on the ride is approximately 40 meters (131 feet) and the top speed reached is approximately 100 kmh (62 mph). Riders experience 4g during their journey as they are pushed down into their seats with up to four times their body weight and also travel through a total of eight flight maneuvers and five inversions. These include a dive drop, underground descent, high speed camelback, Immelmann, revolution roll, panorama curve, pretzel loop and an overbanked turn with 90 degree incline. There are also seven near miss elements, adding further excitement to the experience.

“We aim to offer our guests more and more groundbreaking experiences and that is why we are investing €15



Riders experience a total of eight flight maneuvers and five inversions on Heide-Park's latest coaster. COURTESY HEIDE-PARK

million in Germany's first wing coaster,” says Sabrina de Carvalho, chairperson of the executive board. “This is the

largest investment in our 35-year history as a theme park.” Construction of the attraction began in March last year

with opening coming a year later when the park's 2014 season began on March 29.

360 Play Leicester hosts BALPPA meeting for FEC members

LEICESTER, United Kingdom — 360 Play's Leicester FEC played host to a meeting of fellow play center operators from around the U.K. on February 6, 2014 when Family Entertainment Center Association (FECA) members of the British Association of Leisure Parks, Piers and Attractions (BALPPA) attended a meeting at the venue.

The day-long meeting at 360 Play on Meridian Leisure Park was attended by more than 60 members who were welcomed by 360 Play Managing Director Duncan Phillips, who provided some background details on the development of 360 Play and sister company DP Associates.

Attendees also heard from speakers on a variety of subjects, among them BALPPA Chief Executive Paul Kelly who touched on several key issues for members, including government discussions over changes to school holiday times and, more recently, a suggestion for longer school days, both of which would impact hugely on the play center and attractions sectors. He also provided details of various forthcoming BALPPA



360 Play's Leicester FEC played host to a meeting of fellow play center operators from around the U.K. on February 6, 2014 when Family Entertainment Center Association (FECA) members of the British Association of Leisure Parks, Piers and Attractions (BALPPA) attended a meeting at the venue. COURTESY 360 PLAY

PA events of relevance to the FECA members, such as seminars and other FECA regional meetings.

A presentation on marketing strategies and Public Relations was provided by David Leon of Partners Leisure Ltd., followed after lunch by an

open forum which saw discussion and debate on a wide range of subjects and challenges relating to the operation of children's and FECs including the results of a benchmarking survey, social media, business expansion and pricing. Attendees were also given a



tour of the 360 Play site, both indoors and outdoors.

Duncan Phillips commented: “We were delighted with the attendance on the day and felt it was a very worthwhile meeting for all concerned. A number of key topics were discussed and it

was a great opportunity for those in the industry to hear how their peers do things and how they deal with the many different challenges that arise from day to day. All in all I felt it was an extremely successful event.”

nWave Pictures explores Galapagos Islands in new 3D IMAX film

BRUSSELS and BURBANK, Calif. — nWave Pictures has released its new film *Galapagos: Nature's Wonderland* at IMAX theatres and digital 3D cinemas in North America and Europe. A presentation of Colossus Productions in association with SKY 3D, and distributed exclusively worldwide by nWave Pictures Distribution, the 40-minute film is written by renowned naturalist David Attenborough, produced by Anthony Geffen and directed by Martin Williams. *Galapagos: Nature's Wonderland* explores the Galapagos archipelago with its remarkable collection of unique plants and charismatic animals, filmed for the very first time in 4K 3D using revolutionary digital filmmaking technology.

The film is scheduled to premiere at a number of theaters this spring. Additional theaters will be added as the footprint expands domestically and internationally over the coming months, with the Asian premiere set for April

4 at the Beijing International Film Festival held in association with the China National Science and Technology Museum.

Eric Dillens, chairman of nWave Studios, said, "*Galapagos: Nature's Wonderland* showcases our commitment, working with creative filmmakers like David Attenborough and Anthony Geffen, to bring visually compelling stories to the

giant screen cinema industry. There is no doubt the film will foster greater understanding of a fascinating biological treasure: an archipelago, which is home to some 9,000 species, of which 80 percent of the land-dwelling population is indigenous."

Galapagos: Nature's Wonderland takes audiences to a paradise unlike any other. Located close to the equator

in the Pacific Ocean, these remote volcanic islands have developed over millions of years in relative isolation. The result is a living museum of nature, with an abundance of curious plant and animal species that have adapted to thrive in this unique and challenging environment. Giant half-ton long-necked tortoises lumber among dancing blue-footed boobies and flightless cormo-

rants. Penguins living thousands of miles from their natural habitats share the seas with unique marine iguanas that spit sea-salt. This is a story of discovery, of survival against the odds, and of nature's ingenuity.

The Galapagos Islands are governed by Ecuador and lie some 600 miles from the coast of South America.

•Galapagos.nWave.com

►RATATOUILLE Continued from page 11

of a rat and join Rémy and his friends as they scurry through the kitchen, dining room and walls of Gusteau's famous Parisian restaurant, while at the same time trying to avoid the nemesis from the film, Chef Skinner. It is a first-of-its-kind Disney attraction and will immerse guests into an animated world in which they will experience what it's like to be a rat in a human sized world.

The attraction will be located in a new corner of Toon Studio that has been transformed into a Ratatouille-inspired version of the City of Lights. Additionally, the new mini-land will also feature a shop, Chez Marianne Souvenirs de Paris, and a rat-scale themed table service restaurant, Bistrot Chez Rémy. The restaurant, which will be the only one of its kind across Disney parks worldwide, will be directly adjacent to the new main attraction.

After Crush's Coaster, Cars Race Rally and Toy Story Playland, Ratatouille will be the fourth attraction at the Walt Disney Studios Park inspired by a Disney/Pixar film.



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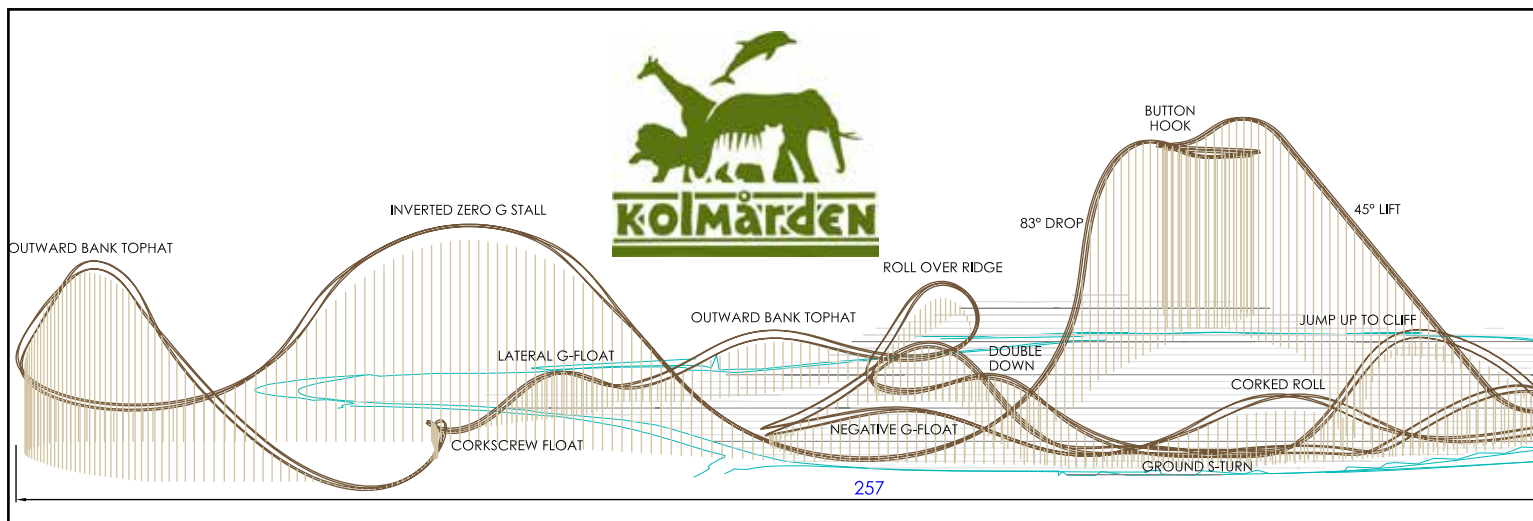
RMC building record-breaking wooden coaster in Sweden

ÖSTERGÖTLAND, Sweden — Kolmården, the largest wildlife park in the Nordic region, plans to light up its forest in 2016 with the debut of Wildfire, a massive terrain wooden roller coaster from Rocky Mountain Construction (RMC).

With a layout and profile crafted by Alan Schilke, RMC will build Wildfire's track and custom trains in the U.S. from its own patented designs. The support structure will utilize Swedish lumber while Vekoma, RMC's European agent, will handle the coaster's electrical and control systems. RMC has inked a deal making Vekoma its ride sales and support partner throughout Europe.

The name Wildfire has a strong link to the natural and cultural history of the area. Wildfires helped to shape the landscape and have been critical to the unique biodiversity that has been preserved in the area until this day.

"Wildfire, along with the other investments at the park, is being built in order to develop Kolmården as one of Sweden's top destinations," said Mats Olsson, CEO at Kol-



mården. "By continuously expanding the park, Kolmården will become an even better destination and we can attract more visitors. This will enable us to reach out to more people with our public education initiatives."

Wildfire's physical attributes are indeed impressive — it will be 4,265 feet long; stand 187 feet tall with an 83-degree, 16-story first drop; offer 12 moments of weightlessness; and feature three complete inversions (zero-G stall and two barrel rolls). But its within a dense forested environment and placement around a towering natural rock cliff that will help to land it in a class all its own.

During the initial survey of Kolmården's rugged mountainous terrain, RMC's Fred Grubb said: "We have a lot of challenges on this site. There's a lot of rock here, and lot of different elements we have to work with. We have to fit all this within the coaster and its structure. We have a track product that allows us to put certain elements that haven't been done before. We can go upside down, we can put in over-banked turns. ... a lot of different tricks. This ride is what we call a 'mega coaster.' It's big; it going to be exciting; it's going to set records."

"We're going to use this cliff and this rock and we're going to incorporate it into the coaster. The view from the top will be breathtaking. This is going to be the longest ground-up coaster RMC has built with our new track product. There are no other wooden coasters like this in all of Europe. We've also had to put in a 45-degree lift, which is steeper than normal. That's so we can climb up the cliff and get on top of it. And to get over

Above, This computer rendering gives a first look at Wildfire's 187-foot tall lift hill and the massive 4,265-foot long layout. Below, these CGI images show the ride's impressive 83-degree, 16-story drop and (bottom) the track layout as it races through the ever changing ground terrain. COURTESY KOLMARDEN



it, we've put a very, very steep drop in it — 83 degrees, which is almost vertical," Grubb added. "We're very excited to work with Kolmården on this. I think we're putting together a great team. Combining the wood coaster with this cliff will make this the most unique wooden coaster in the world."

Wildfire will utilize two of RMC's custom-designed six-car trains with riders seated two-abreast for a total of 24 passengers per train. Guests will be treated to a top speed of 70.2 mph during the two-minute adventure.

"For a long time, our goal has been to build the world's best roller coaster at Kolmården. The challenge has been to develop a world class roller coaster that blends in with the extraordinary landscape and the park's atmosphere. This has finally been made possible thanks to modern technology. We are delighted that this dream can finally be realized," said Johan



Tidstrand, principal owner of Parks and Resorts.

Amusement Today asked Parks and Resorts Ride Manager Peter Osbeck about his excitement about Wildfire: "I have worked in this business for 35 years, helped create and build 14 coasters. I never thought that I would be building a coaster of this magnitude. Wildfire will be so awesome that very few will understand how extreme and fantastic it will be to ride."

Wildfire, which will open at Kolmården in the spring of 2016, belongs to a new generation of hybrid wooden roller coasters. The ride is being built using new, patented technology that is pushing the boundaries for wooden coasters. The first ride to use the new technology was Outlaw Run, which opened in 2013 at Silver Dollar City. Wildfire will be the first roller coaster of its type built outside the United States.

FAST FACTS

Name/Park

Wildfire/Kolmården, Östergötland, Sweden

Type

Wooden terrain coaster

Height/Length/Speed

187 feet/4,265 feet/70 mph

Elements

83-degree 160-foot first drop; over-banked turns; three inversions (zero-G stall and two barrel rolls)

Ride Vehicles

Two six-car trains (each car seats four riders, two-abreast)

Design/Construction

Alan Schilke
Ride Centerline /
Rocky Mountain
Construction

Control System

Vekoma Rides Mfg. B.V.

Opens

Spring 2016

The European Showmen's Union visits Dublin for 38th Congress meeting

Irish Showman's Guild hosts event for European group; each association celebrates 60 years of history

DUBLIN — The Irish are known for their great kindness and hospitality. At the beginning of the year, the participants of the 38th Congress of the European Showmen's Union (ESU/UFE) were able to experience it firsthand. From January 3 - 5, 2014, the European showmen were guests of the Irish Showmen's Guild.



Showmen representatives from Germany, Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium, Ireland, Scotland, England, Sweden and Portugal met in the Irish capital to discuss current topics of European showmen profession and to develop joint solutions.

In the elections for the executive committee, President Albert Ritter has been confirmed by a large majority in his office. The Vice Presidents Nicole Vermolen, Charles Senn and Franck Delforge and Secretary General Steve Severeys were also re-elected. New member of the ESU Executive committee is the Secretary general of the Irish showmen association, Chris Piper, who had succeeded his compatriot Russell Perks as Vice president. Bernhard Ger-

European showmen and the future of fairgrounds for the past 60 years. Ritter said: "With over 70,000 members in the national associations, the ESU is one of the largest professional organizations in Europe. The ESU had gained a large acceptance and appreciation within the institutions of the European Union and the European Commission over the past decades."

President Ritter thanked the Irish colleagues for the perfect organization of the Jubilee Congress. The President warmly welcomed the delegates of the British Showmen's Guild and the Scottish section in the ESU circle.

After the presentation of the work results in 2013 by President Ritter and Secre-

etary General Severeys, Steve Severeys and Frank Hakelberg, managing director of the German Showmen's Guild (DSB), reported about the criteria and conditions for obtaining the European fairground culture in the UNESCO list for the cultural heritage. Another focus at the ESU congress was the uniform implementation of the European standard EN 13814 for rides in Europe. DSB Managing director Hakelberg informed everyone about the current state of the atypical German route, which guarantees no grandfathering and so the owners of older rides are disadvantaged. The ESU continues to call for a Europe-wide scheme to secure the European showmen profession.

The lecture about EN 13814 was followed by a PowerPoint presentation of the newly elected Deputy secretary general Bernhard Gerstberger about transport directives for showman's vehicles in Europe.

Following the technical presentations, the delegates discussed current topics from the national associations. The Scottish colleagues spoke about double charging requirements when applying licenses for fairgrounds in their country that are in strong contradiction to the European directive 2006/123/EC. The ESU promised its full support and will check on the problem.

Still current for the industry are the transport problems especially of the Irish and Finnish showmen. The executive committee decided to speak in Helsinki with the political authorities about solutions.

Other topics in Dublin were the cooperation of the ESU with the European Commission, the education of the young showmen in Europe, VAT rates, marketing and social media. The exchange over the course of the fairground season in 2013 and the positive development of the Christmas markets in Europe ended the 38th Congress of the European Showmen's Union 2014.

The social highlight of the international showmen meeting in Dublin was a large double birthday party at the Hotel Gibson. Until the early morning the guests celebrated 60 years European Showmen's Union and 60 years Irish Showmen's Guild accompanied by Irish folk music and traditional dances.

"With over 70,000 members in the national associations, the ESU is one of the largest professional organizations in Europe. The ESU has gained a large acceptance and appreciation within the institutions of the European Union and the European Commission over the past decades."

—ESU President Albert Ritter on the political important of the European Showman's Union

stberger, executive director of the Austrian showmen's association WKO, was elected as Deputy secretary general.

In his opening speech President Albert Ritter pointed to the political importance of the European Showmen's Union who successfully committed to the interests of the

tary General Severeys, Steve Severeys and Frank Hakelberg, managing director of the German Showmen's Guild (DSB), reported about the criteria and conditions for obtaining the European fairground culture in the UNESCO list for the cultural heritage.

Another focus at the ESU



Jim Seay, president of Premier Rides, shakes hands with Dennis Speigel, President of International Theme Park Services, after signing the contract to build the Dragonfire Coaster (custom high-thrill indoor/outdoor dark ride launch coaster) at Qatar's Doha Oasis Mall. The project is slated to open in 2017.

COURTESY PREMIER RIDES

Premier Rides selected to supply coaster for new Doha Oasis Mall

BALTIMORE, Md. — Premier Rides has been selected by the Halul Real Estate Investment Company to design and build the signature attraction for the new Adventure Island in the Doha Oasis Mall. The highly-themed custom high-thrill indoor/outdoor dark ride launch roller coaster will be located in Doha, Qatar.

Jim Seay, president of Premier Rides said: "Qatar is one of the most exciting places to be in the world right now. The development is unprecedented and combined with the preparations for the 2022 World Cup, there is a tremendous amount of energy in the country. We are extremely honored to be part of what is happening there. The magnitude of the Doha Oasis Mall project is quite stunning. One has to be there to see and appreciate the amazing scale."

International Theme Park Services Inc. (ITPS) is the lead consultant on the \$300 million Adventure Island where the signature dark ride launch coaster will be installed. ITPS has consulted on and constructed more than 500 amusement parks in about 50 countries.

Named Dragonfire, it will be one of the largest and most sophisticated attractions ever built by Premier Rides, and will incorporate Premier's award-winning technologies such as magnetic launches, high speed switches, and multi-directional movement of the vehicles. Additionally the attraction features a backwards launch unlike any other where riders are launched up an extremely high vertical twisting spike that rises dramatically above the mall and is fully encapsulated to allow guests to take in the view and to appreciate just how high above the building they are while remaining in a climate-controlled environment.

Seay commented, "Halul has brought together the theme park industry's 'best of the best' to design and manage the mall's entertainment element. Premier's engineers have worked with the ITPS design team for almost a year to create together a stunning attraction that complements the scale of the mall and the desire for a world class attraction experience."

"This is one of the largest, most complex, complicated projects we've ever worked on," Dennis Speigel, president of ITPS shared. "It will be a seven-acre indoor theme park along the lines of a Mall of America. It's all state-of-the-art equipment, the latest and greatest."

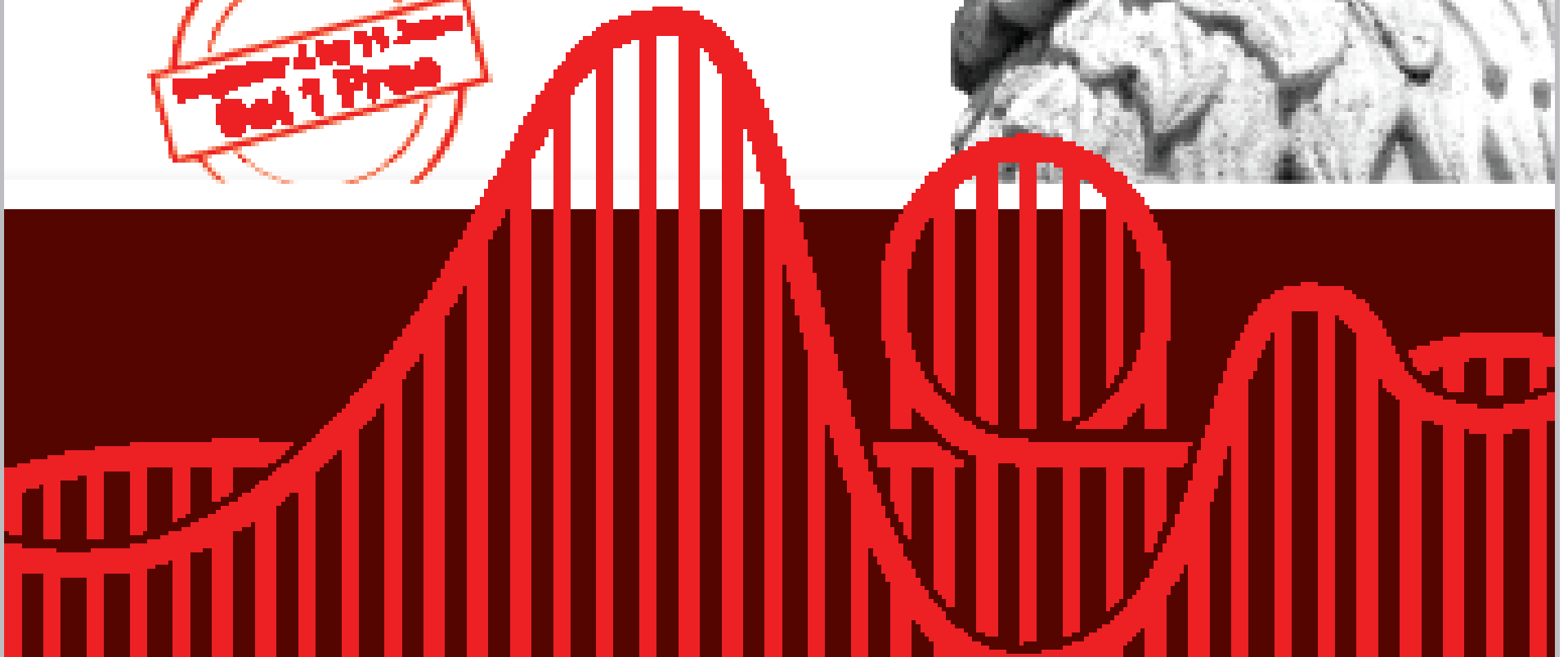
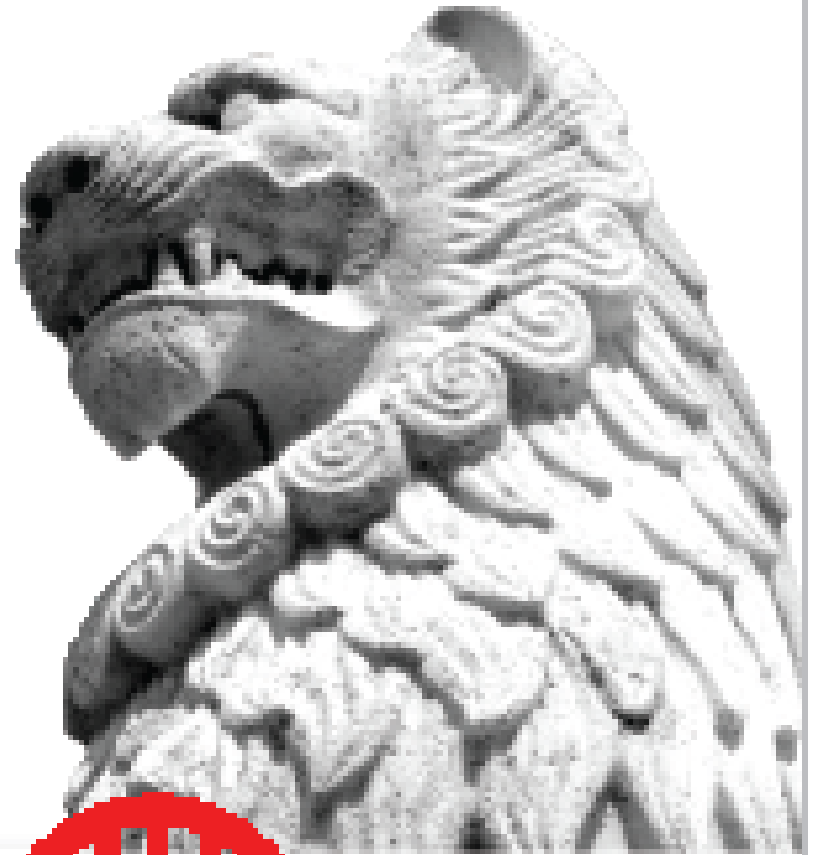
"The entertainment component of the complex will be first class," added Hasan Abu Rub, project director for Halul Real Estate Investment Company. "We wanted a signature ride that would have a global impact and we are pleased to partner with Premier Rides on Dragonfire. Premier's innovation and quality is evident in their work for other clients such as Universal Studios and together we will create for our valued visitors a one-of-a-kind world-class attraction."

Located in Qatar, the Doha Oasis Mall project will consist of upscale retail shops, fine dining experiences and an indoor amusement park that will make the facility a landmark in the region. The project is slated to open in 2017.

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WATER PARKS & RESORTS

▶Thunder Island celebrates 35 years, remembers simple beginnings as a go-kart track — Page 24

Two parks get new ownership groups

Former Bluff Falls water park now led by Jack Falfas

POPLAR BLUFF, Mo. — United Parks announced on April 4 the purchase of the former Bluff Falls Water Park. The water park will reopen in 2014 under new management and the name Hydro Adventures. Besides the name change, United Parks will be making many other improvements throughout the year, including the addition of a major new water slide named Twisted Six, opening July 4th weekend, and a Triple Threat Basketball attraction. The 50-foot tall mat racer slide is being supplied by WhiteWater West.

There will be many other updates and improvements throughout the year including: 14 new go-carts from Texas-based Shaller Enjuneering with a state-of-the-art control system, and renovations to the mini-golf course and batting cages.

Expansions of food services will not only offer a more robust menu to individual park guests, but will now be available to cater for group events and birthday parties.

United Parks will also be adding two new Halloween Events in the fall: an all-ages event during the day, named Hydroween, and a scary event in the evening named Hydro-HalloScreams.

"I'm very excited about the opportunity to grow this park." Jack Falfas told *Amusement Today*. "It's a relief to get the deal completed on our first



Falfas



property and we are already talking to other parks and hope to have more announcements soon."

As part of their strong commitment to safety, United Parks will require all lifeguards to be trained and certified by the Ellis & Associates National Pool & Waterpark Lifeguard Training course. United Parks is also committed to creating a clean and friendly environment with plans to update and improve the park in the future, continually adding to the overall fun and experience of their guests.

The non-water park attractions, including the batting cages and renovated go-carts and mini-golf, will open mid May. The water park will open Memorial Day Weekend.

John Shanrock, a 35 year industry veteran has been named the park's new general manager.

United Parks is an indirect subsidiary of Purchase Capital and is focused on opportunities in the amusement park, water park, and entertainment industries. The senior leadership includes Jack Falfas and a team that brings more than 70 years of experience to the company. Hydro Adventures is United Parks' first operating property.

Alabama's Splash Adventure water park headed up by group led by Dan Koch



BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — The Koch family has acquired Alabama's Splash Adventure water park and will re-open the park for the 2014 summer season. Dan Koch, who led the acquisition, is bringing his family's seven decades of experience in the amusement and water park industry to his new home in Alabama, following the success the family enjoyed at Holiday World & Splashin' Safari in Santa Claus, Ind.

"I am thrilled to be living and working in this community," said Dan Koch.

"Our family wants Alabama's Splash Adventure Waterpark to be the number one choice for family fun and family memories for generations to come."



Koch

Koch Parks, Inc. has purchased the water park with 89 acres of land, which will aid in future expansion. General Attractions, LLC, the park's previous owner, will retain 150 acres surrounding the park for future development. Dan's sister Natalie Koch, is a partner in the business.

Kent Lemasters, President of General Attractions, LLC said, "We are pleased that the Koch Family are the new owners of



Splash Adventures

COURTESY GOOGLE MAPS © 2014 GOOGLE

Splash Adventure. We feel very confident that because of their very high reputation and experience of over 75 years in the amusement park industry, that they will continue to take the park forward to new, high levels of achievement for the benefit of the entire area including those who visit the park and the surrounding communities and we wish them every success."

The Koch family has a reputation for superior customer service and will operate the park with a special focus on providing safe, family fun for all ages. New attractions for the 2014 season include:

- Fajume, Wacky Worm; Zamperla Rio Grande train; Allan Herschell boats and SBF Balloon Wheel all sold from Gillian's Funland, Sea Isle City, N.J. by Intermark Ride Group.
- Mini Helicopters from Waldameer Park.
- Junior Bumper Boats from

Kiddie Bumper Boats.

- Laser Maze by Funavation.

The park is also busy getting numerous rides and water rides in the amusement area rehabbed/rebuilt and inspected as quickly as possible. While some rides may get open in time for the second half of the summer season, Koch told *AT* that some requiring more work — like the Rampage wooden roller coaster — will not reopen until 2015. The Rampage will get all new track, control system, chain as well as a total refurbishment of the PTC trains.

All guests will enjoy free parking, free sunscreen, free access to inner tubes and free in-park WiFi.

Additional expansion plans for Alabama's Splash Adventure Waterpark are currently being developed. The park will re-open for weekend operations beginning May 17.

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Zoom Flume announces Gravity Gorge Zipline attraction for 2014

Guests can soar through the air on 700 foot long zipline



EAST DURHAM, N.Y. — Zoom Flume, New York's number one destination for family fun, recently announced a new attraction for the true thrill seeker: the new Gravity Gorge Zipline.

The Gravity Gorge Zipline will send guests soaring over 700 feet through the air and nearly 100 feet above ground. Guests will soar through the air, past the water park's premier attractions and will even take a gravity-defying flight over the gorge at the center of the park.

"The zip line was engineered by Mark Glynn, Geotechnical Engineering, Lockport, N.Y." Zoom Flume General Manager Ed Kerrigan told *Amusement Today*. "The construction of the towers and zip line installation was done by Zoom Flume Staff with

construction consultation by Canopy Tours, Haines Falls, NY.

"We're thrilled to have such a unique attraction at our water park," Kerrigan, said. "The zipline will offer a gut-wrenching, heart-pounding, adrenaline-filled experience for our guests and will provide a perfect complement to the lineup of family-friendly attractions we're proud to have at Zoom Flume."

Park guests will pay an additional fee to ride Gravity Gorge, but are sure to be treated to a pulse-pounding ride unlike any other in the area. The park will open to the public for the 2014 Summer Season starting on June 14.

• www.zoomflume.com



Construction is in the final phases on the Gravity Gorge Zipline tower, new this summer at Zoom Flume.

COURTESY ZOOM FLUME



NEWS SPLASH

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

Hong Kong's **Ocean Park** has unveiled its vision for a new water park in 2017. Ocean Park closed its **Water World** water park in the mid 1990s but guest comments since that time have indicated a need for a replacement. Although no name has been chosen, plans reveal a park with both an indoor and outdoor wave pool, a surfing simulator and at least a dozen other high-profile attractions.

Sandcastle water park in Blackpool, England, has sprung leaks — three in fact. The massive indoor waterpark, which opened in 1986, had lost over 7.5 million liters (1.9 million gallons) of water over the winter months. A crack was discovered in one of the pools, along with a fracture in a 12-inch pipe buried 16 feet underground plus problems with some dry joints in the pipework 20 feet below ground level. Fixing the leaks required a shut down of the water park for a few weeks as teams worked around the clock to get the leaks fixed and the popular water park open again during the busy winter season. At least one of the major leaks was blamed on a problem resulting from construction flaws when the park was built nearly 30 years ago.

Although most of the news of **Kentucky Kingdom's** resurrection and reopening has focused on the dry ride package, **Hurricane Bay**, the park's water park is also adding new attractions. In addition to a refurbishment of the existing attractions, the water park will double in size with the addition of a new wave lagoon, adventure river, kids cove, and a five-story multi slide complex. Also included are an enclosed Mammoth, Pipeline, FreeFall, MutliBump, CannonBowl 40 and Tornado 12 — all from ProSlide.

Recognizing the impact a new water park will have on the city and not wanting to face delays, the city of Pflugerville, Texas, made an unexpected \$7 million payment from its general fund to finance the start of construction of the **Hawaiian Falls** water and adventure park scheduled to open this spring. The funding was originally to come from bank loans taken out by taxpayer-funded **Pflugerville Community Development Corporation** (PCDC) but approval of the loans took longer than expected. The PCDC is expected to pay back the loan from the city once its bank loans are approved. If that does not happen, the city has a clause to collect money directly from the corporation's funding base — a half-cent sales tax on city transactions — until the loan is repaid. The quick action by the city will allow the water park to open as scheduled. Mayor **Jeff Coleman** has assured city residents that they will not be affected by the loan.

The new **Tarpon Springs** splash park in Florida, will keep the resident children wet and cool. Approved by the city commission last November, it is expected to open before the end of the school year. The splash park will be somewhat educational as it incorporates indigenous creatures into its fountains of fun. A manatee, sponge diver, stingray, pelican and Atlantic tarpon will all playfully

spout water. The new splash park is conveniently situated on 1.5 acres next to two other city parks, one for adult fitness and the other for dogs. "We've got the adults taken care of, the animals taken care of and now the children will be taken care of," City Manager **Mark LeCouris** said. "It's one stop for all three."

Adventure Bay, the new waterpark in Windsor, Ontario, had to shut down for a little fine-tuning. Responding to more than 10,000 guest complaints about slippery floors resulting in falls, the park closed for four days in February. During that time an after-market, sand-based coating was applied to the floor, providing the necessary friction to alleviate slipping without being too rough or uncomfortable for bare feet. The city is also taking other comments to heart, and will install additional tables and seating and is considering purchasing a conveyor for the Python slide rafts, so guests do not have to struggle carrying the large rafts up the stairs.

Despite some opening-week problems and growing pains, the new **Wet'n'Wild Sydney** made an AU \$ 6 million (U.S. \$5.64 million) profit in its first few weeks of operation. Pre-opening sales of 160,000 season passes generated \$12.5 million in revenue. Attendance at the waterpark has exceeded expectation with more than 400,000 guests passing through the gates between its December 12 opening and January 31.

The citizens of Thornbury, England, have spoken. With a vote of 286 in favor, the city will replace an aging pool in **Mundy Park** with a new water park. 96 people voted in favor of refurbishing the existing pool. Although no specifics were given, it appears the new park will be geared toward smaller children with spray devices and small slides.

A fire department-themed children's spray park for **Lely Aquatic Park** in Orland, California, received a donation from **Deseret Farms**, a fruit and nut grower in the local area. The charitable contribution will add a Dalmation Dog — complete with fireman's hat and spouting water — along with several park benches surrounding the spray park.

The newest **Schlitterbahn** waterpark in Corpus Christi, Texas, is on track for a June opening despite cold and rainy winter weather. **Steven Tyson**, the assistant project manager, said they've already made sweeping progress. "It's been an incredible experience to be here and see how the land's transformed from just a golf course and sand — and now — we're standing in a river." Like other parks withing the Schlitterbahn family, this one has used a lot of recycled and repurposed materials, including wood from Loblolly pine timbers reclaimed from the Bastop, Texas, wildfire; and ropes, lifeguard boats and cots from the decommissioned USS General John Pope, a U.S. Navy troop transport used in World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War. The ship, commissioned in 1943, ended up in Brownsville, Texas, for dismantling.

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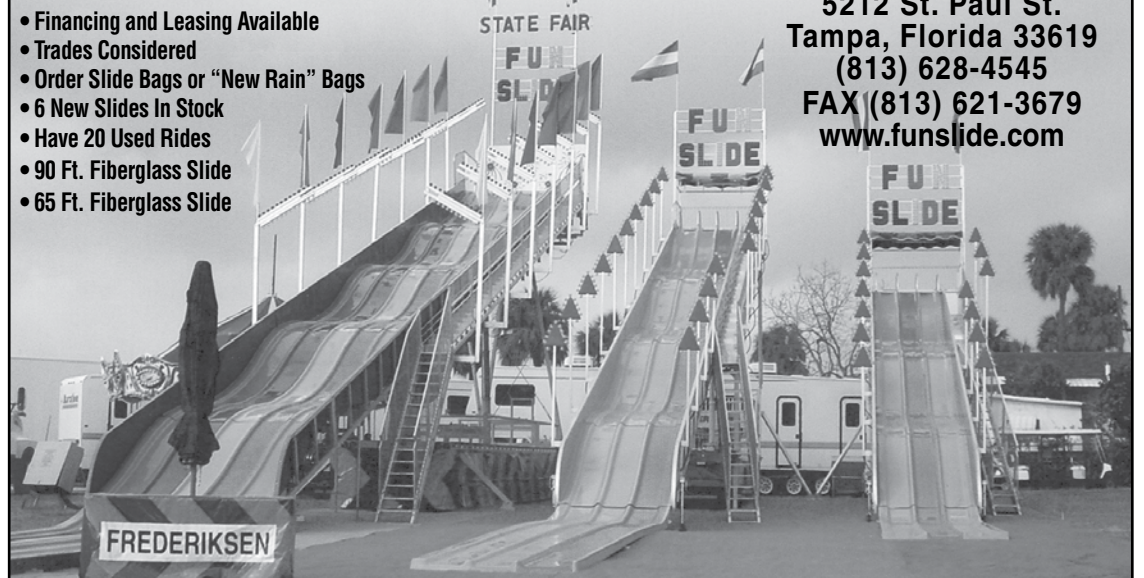
Hawaiian Falls' two newest park layouts unveiled

As construction rushes to finish up Hawaiian Falls' two new-for-2014 waterparks, AT gets this preview look at each property courtesy of Anaheim, Calif.-based R&R Creative Design. Below, the White Settlement property shows the compact design with zipline towers. The Pflugerville property (bottom) is a more expanded property and shows a triangular zipline design. Both parks, expected to open in time for the summer season, will feature slides from WhiteWater West. R&R is providing the park design and theming at both properties. COURTESY R&R CREATIVE



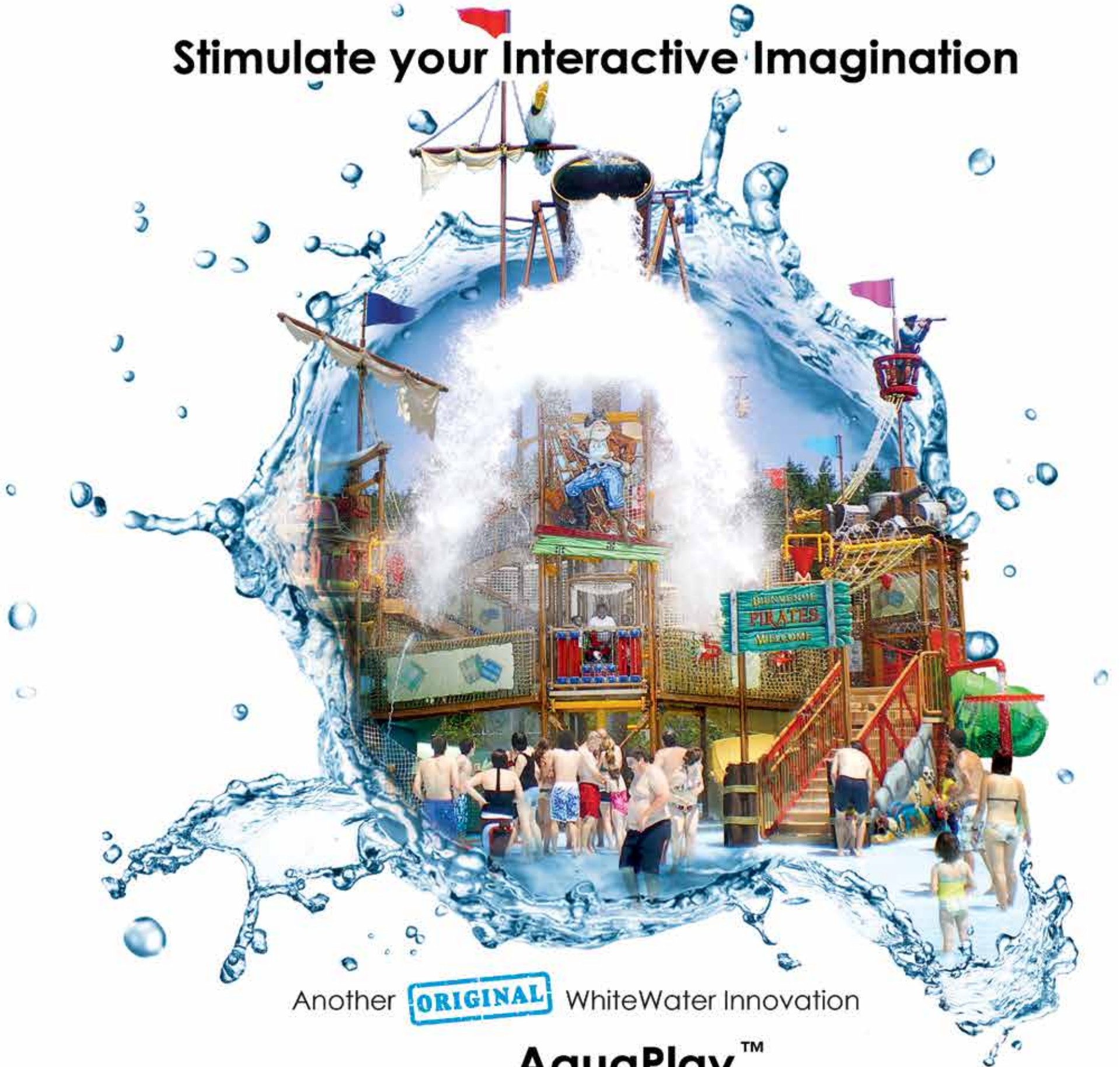
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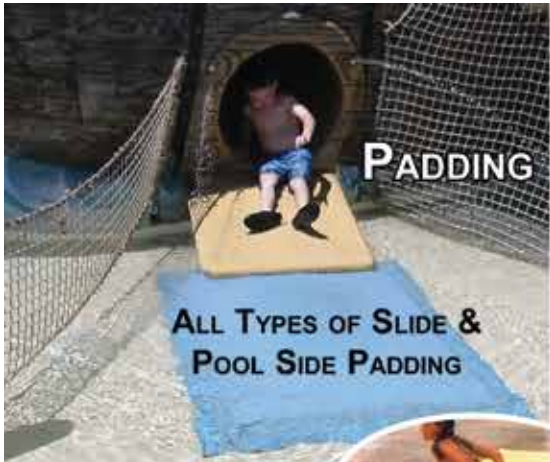
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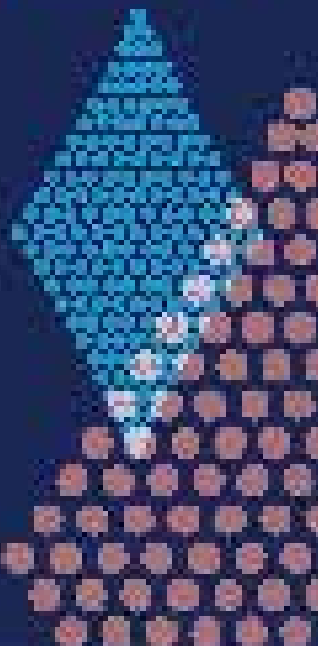
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Park began in 1979 as a go-kart track

Thunder Island owners continue to look ahead while remembering the past

STORY: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

GRANBY, N.Y. — In its 35th year of operation as an entertainment facility, owners of Thunder Island continue to look at ways to move through time efficiently, successfully and suitably to their own needs.

The amusement facility, predominately now a water park, began as a go-kart track built in 1979.

"It was actually built in an apple orchard," said Tammie Perau, who owns the facility with her husband Harry Perau. "The property belonged to his family. He already had the go-karts when we met."

But, then the two started expanding and changing the size and scope of the facility.

After the go-kart track, came a BMX track, which grew to be one of the most popular in its area in the northeast.

From there, the two purchased a helicopter ride, bumper boats and an Eli Bridge 16 wheel from Playland Park, Rye, N.Y., in the late 1980s.

A miniature golf course was added to the mix and the facility's banquet business was started.

Then, the two decided they wanted a water ride.

"I really wanted to buy just one waterslide," said Harry Perau. "I had met Rick Hunter (ProSlide Technology) and told him I was thinking about buying a waterslide. He said, 'you can't just have one slide.'

"He then told me there was a park that was going out of business," Perau continued.

The water rides were dismantled from a county-owned park in Pennsylvania and re-erected at Thunder Island. There were two body slides, one tube ride and two kiddie slides.

"Rick told me these attractions would be the least expensive water attractions I would ever buy," Perau said. "He was certainly right. When I purchased my ProBowl (from ProSlide), I think I paid the same for just the tower as I did all the first water rides."

Within just the last four or five years, the facility began

making other changes. The bumper boats were removed and replaced with a small lazy river ride.

ProSlide's ProBowl was installed, featuring a 45-foot tall tower.

The wheel was sold two years ago and replaced by a Soaring Eagle Zip Line.

"I really, really like this ride," he said. "Anyone can operate it and everyone likes it."

Harry Perau said over the years some very interesting back stories have come out. The idea of the go-kart track came from some overly energetic 21-year-olds who had too much time on their hands.

"It also stemmed from a banker who saw potential and wrote a garage loan and modified auto loan for the go-karts," he said. "The 'Jungle Golf' course was designed on bar napkins in the dead of winter. The current clubhouse/office building was built from the ashes of the former building on its foundation."

The park's ProBowl had actually been sent first to a facility in Florida whose owner rejected the color tint.

"After a call from ProSlide, we took delivery, laid out a pool, built a tower and installed it in a three-month time frame," Harry Perau said. "The newest slides, the enclosed black water tunnel twisters, had been a design on the boards for three years."

However, Perau said budgeting, cold summers, and a booming entertainment industry across the nation creating a demand stalled the project and put it beyond reach.

"But when the market crashed six years ago, and a Marriott cancelled a project after the fiberglass was manufactured, ProSlide once again called...," he said.

Today, Thunder Island still has the original go-kart track, with three styles of karts.

"We no longer have the kiddie go-karts," Tammie Perau said. "We only have go-karts for adults."

The facility has a two-acre miniature golf course, eight water slides, a kiddie mini river, kiddie activity pool, Sliders Cafe, clubhouse for sales, offices and game room, and the



Thunder Island, started 35 years ago as a go-kart track, has grown today to include much more as seen in this view from the Soaring Eagle Zip Line. Below, the ProSlide ProBowl tower is just one of several waterslides for guest to enjoy. At bottom, group catering at its special events area is a big part of the park's company bookings.

COURTESY THUNDER ISLAND

Soaring Eagle Zip Line.

The complex also has an adjacent Oasis outdoor barbecue pavilion where outdoor company picnics, birthday parties and steak and clam bakes are held.

The indoor Oasis, an 8,000-square-foot facility with old hardwood floors and an antique wooden bar, hosts many wedding receptions, reunions, senior dinner dances, proms, fundraisers, holiday parties and company workshops.

Tammie Pareau said the company picnic and special event areas of the park have grown substantially over the last years.

Yet, with all this success, the Perau family is not the one that will sit quietly on what they have. In fact, over the last year Harry Perau has taken a very close look at possibly selling the facility or partnering with a larger company.

"We put some feelers out there and we got about a half dozen offers but they were all from people offering revenue sharing," Harry Perau said.

Those offers came from people who wanted to place a ride in the park for either the park to operate or the ride owner to operate.



But, these options weren't very appealing.

"All those that made these offers either wanted us to operate more hours per day and/or add more days to our season," Harry Perau said. "After running this park for 35 years, I really didn't want to do that.

"At the same time, we

started moving some dirt around on the additional 80 acres we purchased for expansion," he said.

So, for now, he is looking forward and ahead, thinking perhaps that area might be great for a camping area and, of course, more waterpark expansion.

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Key Lime Cove in Gurnee, Ill. was recently presented a community service award. AT/FILE

KeyLime Cove receives award from American Hotel & Lodging Association

GURNEE, Ill. — KeyLime Cove, the Chicagoland Indoor Waterpark Resort, was awarded the Outstanding Community Service Award from the American Hotel & Lodging Association. The AH&LA Stars of the Industry Awards were

distributed at the AH&LA Stars of the Industry conference in Washington D.C. held in April.

KeyLime Cove shows its dedication to its local Lake County residents by supporting non-profits and community events related

to serving the basic needs of its residents such as food, clothing, shelter, education and health. Recent community service involvement includes:

- **Annual Community Days Campaign** In 2013, KeyLime Cove raised \$52,345 through its annual Community Days Campaign, benefiting the United Way of Lake County, Gurnee Police Department and the Gurnee Fire Department who used a portion of their funds to purchase Thermo Imaging Cameras.

- **Cook County Anti-Drug Poster Contest** KeyLime Cove is a primary sponsor providing one-night gift certificates to the winners as well as helping judge the submitted artwork by seventh and eighth grade students in Cook County.

- **Donating Goods & Services** KeyLime Cove regularly donates to various charitable causes through the state of Illinois. Since 2010, more than \$178,000 in room value has been donated to a variety of causes related to children's health and education.

"The hotel industry has always contributed greatly to the local communities that they serve. Hotel members of the Illinois Hotel and Lodging Association (IHLA) are leaders in supporting various good causes, often with little fanfare and public awareness," said IHLA President and CEO Marc J. Gordon. "KeyLime Cove has consistently done an outstanding job in serving many good causes and projects in its community and throughout the state of Illinois. IHLA is very proud that KeyLime Cove was the recipient of the American Hotel and Lodging Association's 2013 "Outstanding Community Service Award."

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PARKS & CARNIVALS

▶ SeaWorld San Diego celebrates 50 years — Pages 34-36 / Midway numbers up in Houston — Page 37

Kings Island unleashes Banshee, world's longest inverted coaster

MASON, Ohio — Kings Island is one of those parks that likes to do things big. The Beast and Diamondback are prime examples of this over-the-top dedication that keeps thrillseekers coming back for more, year after year. The park's 15th roller coaster, Banshee, fits in quite nicely with its older siblings. Securing the title of world's longest inverted coaster, Banshee screamed onto the scene on April 18, 2014 when it took its first public riders.



"The ride has been designed with the thrill-seeker in mind. It's an incredible ride delivering two and one-half minutes of non-stop action. The elements incorporated into this ride make for a ride experience that is unmatched on an inverted roller coaster," said Greg Scheid, Kings Island vice-president and general manager.

Carrying a price tag of \$24 million, Banshee is the biggest investment in Kings Island's history. The new thriller replaces and takes over the same real estate previously occupied by the Son of Beast wooden coaster, which departed this earthly plane in 2012.

Supplied by Switzerland's Bolliger & Mabillard, Banshee stands 167 feet tall and treats riders to a 68 mph tour of the ride's 4,124 feet of track. The ride layout, specially designed for Kings Island, includes a unique collection of elements: a 150-foot Curved Drop, Dive Loop, Vertical Loop interacting with the lift, Zero-G-Roll, Batwing, Outside Loop, Spiral, In-Line-Roll, and Carousel.

Constructed over undulat-



ing terrain, Banshee offers several unique elements that distinguish the ride from others of its kind. Two of the most unique features about Banshee are the massive size of every loop, and unlike other roller coasters, the top speed isn't reached until halfway through the ride's

▶ See BANSHEE, page 31

Top, Kings Island has introduced Banshee, the world's longest inverted roller coaster. Right, the new B&M coaster features 4,124 feet of track and a 167-foot-tall lift, which threads the first vertical loop. Above, riders experience the Batwing.

AT/GARY SLADE



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Kings Island's The Beast celebrates 35th anniversary



MASON, Ohio — Very few roller coasters have managed to attain the iconic status of the The Beast at Kings Island. Built to shatter world records, this one-of-a-kind super wonder exploded onto the scene in 1979 as the world's longest, tallest and fastest wooden roller coaster. It was envisioned to deliver the ultimate thrill, and it did not disappoint.

FAST FACTS

The Beast at Kings Island celebrates 35 years of terror in 2014, having first opened on **Friday, April 13, 1979** after two years of research and design – all by Kings Island personnel, and one year of construction.

The record-breaking features of The Beast included:

- A 7,359-foot long track (1.4 miles) and ride time of four minutes, 10 seconds
- Vertical drops of 135 feet (at a 45-degree angle) and 141 feet (at an 18-degree angle)
- A 125-foot long underground tunnel at the bottom of the 135-foot drop
- Eight banked turns, some to 45 degrees
- A massive, 540-degree helix tunnel near the end
- Speeds up to 64.77 miles per hour

To get the project off the drawing board and underway Kings Island called in **Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters** legendary designer **John Allen** to help overcome one technical problem related to capacity. Allen solved the problem with the addition of several sets of horizontal track-side pusher tires that helped speed up each PTC train's departure from the station. Listed below is the team that made The Beast a reality:

- **Charles S. Meachem, Jr.**, Chairman of the Board, Taft Broadcasting Company
- **Dudley S. Taft**, President, Taft Broadcasting Company
- **Gary S. Wachs**, Executive Vice President, Amusement Park Group, Taft Broadcasting Company
- **Charles Flatt**, Vice President Construction & Engineering, Amusement Park Group, Taft Broadcasting Company
- **William C. Price**, Vice President & General Manager, Kings Island
- **Frank Thompson**, Operations Director, Kings Island
- **Walt Davis**, Director of Park Services, Kings Island
- **Charles Dinn**, Director of Construction, Maintenance & Engineering, Kings Island
- **Bill Reed**, Director of Rides, Kings Island
- **David Palmer**, Director of Marketing, Kings Island
- **Dick Fussner**, Director of Loss Prevention, Kings Island
- **Chris Schaffer**, Controller, Kings Island
- **Al Collins**, Resident Engineer, Kings Island
- **Jeff Gramke**, Assistant Engineer, Kings Island
- **Jimmie Nickell**, Assistant Director of Construction, Maintenance & Engineering, Kings Island
- **Charles Swing**, Maintenance Manager, Kings Island
- **Charles Wright**, Carpenter Foreman, Kings Island

The Beast has accumulated the following statistics since it opened in 1979:

- Each of the trains has traveled a total of 865,133 miles. That's the equivalent of 35 times around the world!
- A grand total of 48,882,975 million rides have been taken by park visitors.
- 1980 was the record year for the most number of rides. There were 2,150,353!
- July 17, 1981 was the record day, with 20,885 riders.
- The record hour was 1,680 on June 15, 1980 (Normal capacity is 1,200).

—Source: Kings Island

Appropriately unleashed to media and invited guests in a steady downpour on Friday, April 13, The Beast instantly became an international superstar. Sprawling over 35 acres of forested ravine outside the park proper, this phenomenal coaster amazed every thrillseeker who had the courage to climb aboard for a high-speed rampage through the dark woods.

Designed by Al Collins and Jeff Gramke with input from the Philadelphia Toboggan Company's John Allen, the Beast broke new ground like no previous ride. Working without the aid of modern computers, the Kings Island team poured their collective hearts and souls into delivering an attraction featuring a collection of over-the-top elements never attempted including nearly 1.5 miles of wooden track, underground tunnels, blazing speeds approaching 70 mph and more than four minutes of ride time.

Over the years, the ride has been tweaked and adjusted for maintenance reasons but it still retains the title of "world's longest wooden coaster" at 7,400 feet. Its raucous double-layer spiral finale endures as one of the most intense, intimidating and memorable instances on any operating roller coaster on the planet.

And now, 35 years later, The Beast still rules in a class all its own with the unwavering admiration from a legion of devoted fans. Though there may be taller and slightly faster wooden coasters out there, none can match the length or raw, primal power of this Ohio original.



The iconic Beast at Kings Island celebrates its 35th anniversary in 2014. The monstrous ride (shown here under construction) debuted in 1979 as the world's longest, tallest and fastest wooden roller coaster. Built on 35 acres of dense forest outside of the main park, The Beast treats guests to a powerful four-minute rampage that includes underground tunnels, speeds of nearly 70 mph and an intense double-layer helix (below) final that never fails to impress.

COURTESY KINGS ISLAND



Kings Island's Racer to give 100th million ride

Not to be forgotten, also reaching a milestone this year is Kings Island's Racer wooden coaster, which will give its 100 millionth ride later this season. The Racer's best season was 1976 when the duel-tracked beauty gave 3,681,338 rides in one season, a park record for ride capacity. Opened with Kings Island in 1972, the Racer was the first wooden coaster to be built in a theme park

AT/SCOTT RUTHERFORD

► BANSHEE

Continued from page 29

course. Since Banshee's lift hill is on a higher elevation than the other side of the ride that goes down into a valley, the total elevation change is 208 feet from the highest point at the top of the lift hill to the lowest point, which is the bottom of the Bawtwing between loops four and five.

"The in-line roll near the end of the ride is one of my favorite elements. It will surprise you," said Greg Scheid, Kings Island vice-president and general manager.

Banshee utilizes three trains with eight cars per train. Riders will be arranged four abreast for a total of 32 riders per train. Hourly capacity with three trains is expected to be 1,650 guests.

Banshee is themed to a wailing mythological messenger from the underworld with flowing white hair and gleaming eyes. Textured lighting and other lighting effects will bring the Banshee legend to reality, creating the ultimate night ride experience.

"If you think riding the Beast at night is a thrill, wait until you experience a night



One of the most unique ride elements on Banshee is this Zero-G-Roll, shown above.

Top right, Banshee lead Kings Island to its all-time opening day attendance record. Right, Banshee finishes with this thrilling Carousel spiral. AT/GARY SLADE



ride on Banshee. Like the Beast, it's something you'll always remember and look forward when you visit Kings Island," said Don Helbig, public relations area manager, Kings Island

"It's everything an inverted roller coaster should be, and more," added Richard Zimmerman, chief operating officer, Cedar Fair Entertainment Company.

FAST FACTS

Name/Park
Banshee/
Kings Island
Mason, Ohio

Type
Inverted steel coaster

Height/Length/Speed
167 feet/4,124 feet/68 mph

Elements
150-foot first drop; total elevation change of 208 feet; seven inversions (dive loop, a vertical loop encircling the lift hill, a zero-gravity-roll, two bawtwing loops, outside loop, spiral, in-line roll and carousel)

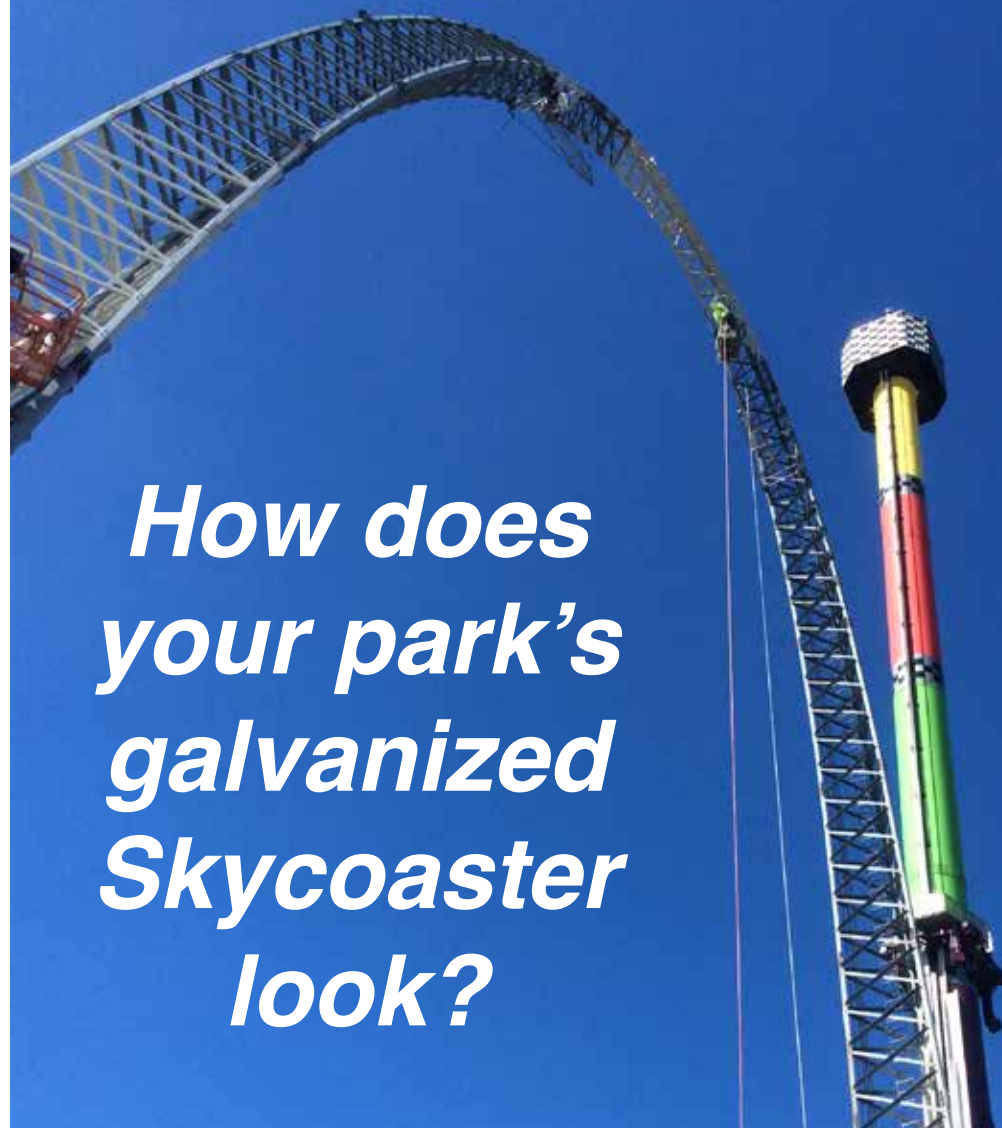
Ride Time/Capacity
2:30/1,650 pph

Ride Vehicles
Three, 8-Car trains
(each car seats four riders)

Design/Engineering
Bolliger & Mabillard

Cost/Opened
\$24 million/April 18, 2014

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Ruling the roulette roost

Caesars Entertainment officially rolled out its much-anticipated new Las Vegas attraction, The High Roller, a record-breaking 550-foot tall observation wheel with high-tech, climate-controlled enclosed gondolas, in early April. Look for the complete story behind this landmark scenic ride, which serves as the dramatic backdrop for the company's newly opened outdoor shopping promenade on The Strip called The Linq, in the June AT.

AT/GARY SLADE



Adventuredome opens Batman game

SimEx-Iwerks teams up with Warner Bros. Consumer Products to offer Batman-branded laser maze attraction

LAS VEGAS, Nevada — SimEx-Iwerks has announced the launch of a new fully themed Batman attraction that was developed exclusively with Warner Bros. Consumer Products on behalf of DC Entertainment. The first of its kind, the Batman Laser Challenge, recently opened at the Circus Circus Adventuredome in Las Vegas just in time for the park's spring break crowds. The interactive game expands on the typical laser maze model by infusing a powerhouse brand to enhance the experience and appeal to a broad demographic.

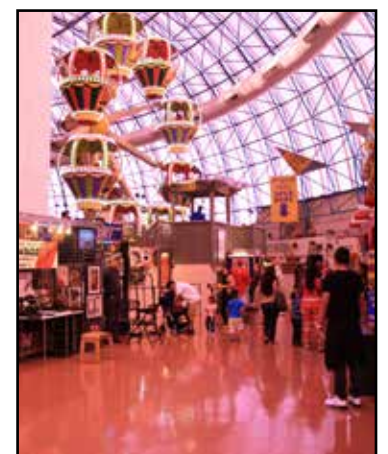
The Batman Laser Challenge delivers an action-packed adventure that features high-visibility lasers, UV lighting, branded elements, character dialogue, music and special effects. The highly recognizable Batman brand drives attendance, invoking nostalgia in some guests, while others will connect with its modern day blockbuster successes.

"Our guests are very excited about this new attraction, many opting to take on the challenge more than once to improve their score or to compete with a friend," says Tom Nolan, vice president of the Adventuredome.



Above, the Batman Laser Challenge recently opened at the Circus Circus Adventuredome, where players compete against each other via a scorecard posted on a computer screen. Right, with El Loco coaster construction now complete, Circus Circus has started the complete repainting of the entire theme park flooring.

AT/GARY SLADE



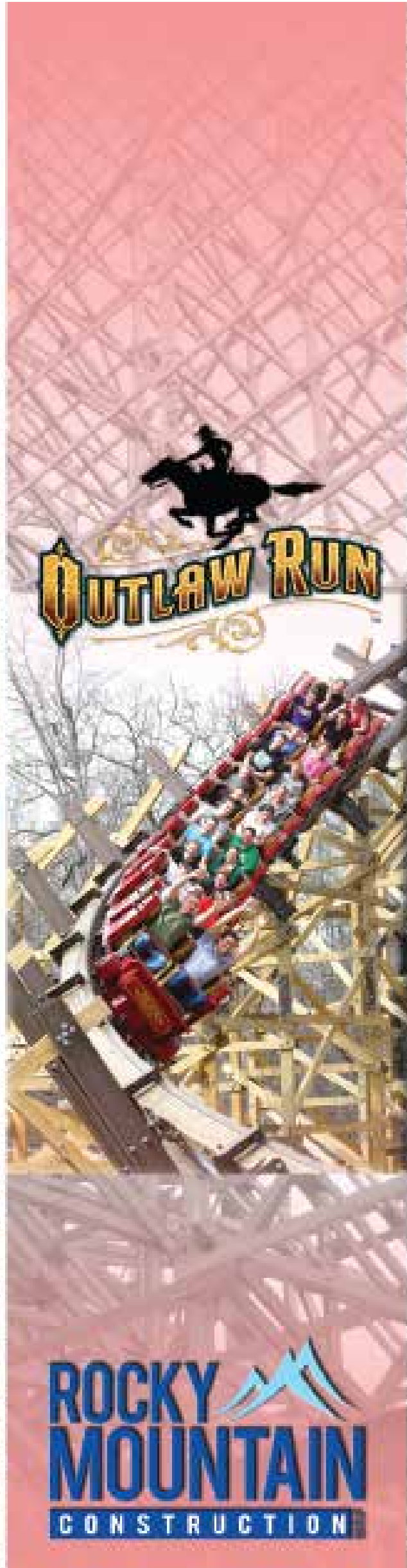
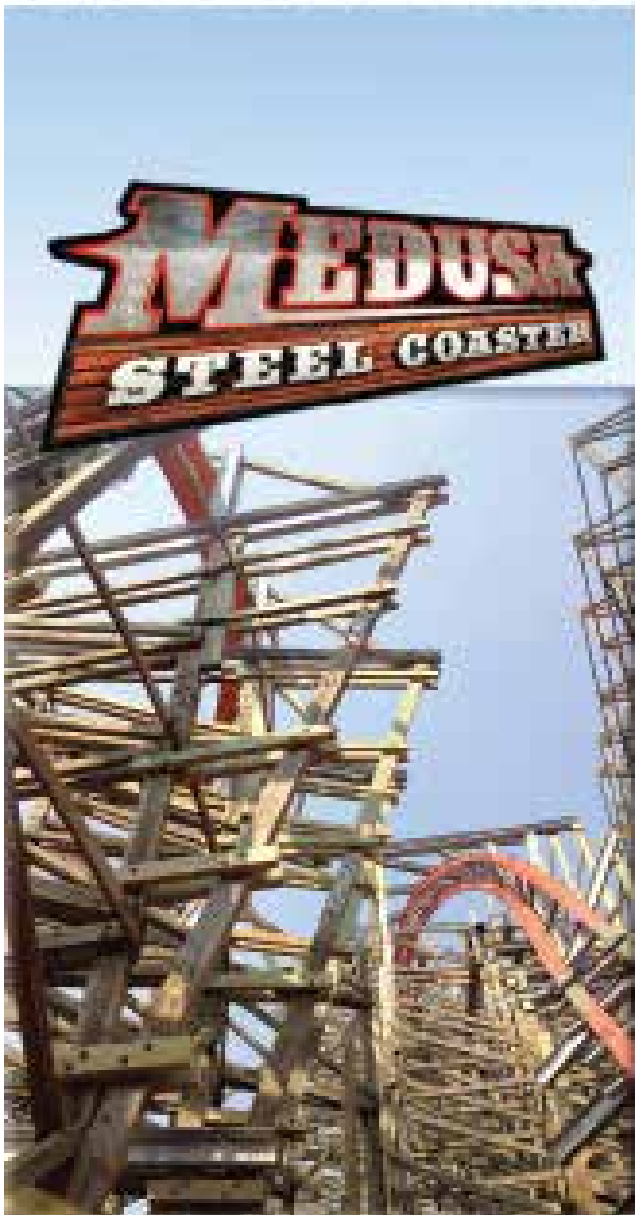
"Warner Bros. Consumer Products is proud to continue our partnership with SimEx-Iwerks to bring a dynamic and exciting dimension to the ever-popular Batman brand," said Karen McTier, executive vice president, Domestic Licensing and Worldwide Marketing at Warner Bros. Consumer Products.

"We are excited to add this one-of-a-kind attraction to our extensive entertainment portfolio," says Mark Cornell, senior vice president of Attractions Development at SimEx-

Iwerks. "The Batman brand will elevate guest experience and generate incremental revenue at any site."

The Batman Laser Challenge requires minimal space, has a throughput capacity of 30-40 guests per hour and performs well as a stand-alone attraction or as a complement to a 4-D Theater. The experience is available in both single and double maze configurations and challenges guests to train with Batman in order to protect the citizens of Gotham City from The Joker.

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New Explorer's Reef enlivens 18-month celebration

SeaWorld marks 50 years with eco-messaging, splashy fun

STORY: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

SAN DIEGO, Calif. — When it comes to combining nature, education, conservation and entertainment, no amusement company in history has done it like SeaWorld. And this year, the Southern California park that started it all marks its golden anniversary.

In late March, SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, headquartered in Orlando, Fla., and now encompassing 11 destination and regional theme parks in key markets across the U.S., launched an 18-month, multi-property celebration of its 50-year milestone with a media party and the introduction of a newly themed entrance area at its founding San Diego location.

The ambitious promotion, called Sea of Surprises, includes special events and new shows at SeaWorld's Orlando and San Antonio, Texas, parks. "Madagascar Live! Operation: Vacation" has debuted in Orlando, while a new ski show is thrilling guests in San Antonio. All three parks now feature spontaneous encounters with "animal ambassadors," such as Magellanic pen-



guins and flamingoes, and a new evening show, "Shamu's Celebration: Light Up the Night" — with original music and production elements plus plenty of fireworks.

In addition, the parks have launched a variety of guest communications enhancements that include games, informational apps and touch screens.

In San Diego, where the first SeaWorld opened its gates on Mission Bay in March 1964, exclusive anniversary highlights more than a year in the making surround an immense wave sculpture at the entrance that is 30 feet tall and 100 feet long. They include an efficiency-enhancing, concierge-style makeover of the ticketing area and the complete transformation of the inner entrance plaza into a colorful, three-acre, undersea-themed

section called Explorer's Reef.

An immersive experience incorporating four 24,000-gallon saltwater and freshwater touch pools, Explorer's Reef was inspired by a coral reef and the wildlife often found in this type of ocean environment. It offers up-close, interactive encounters with smaller forms of marine life, such as shark pups, rays and horseshoe crabs, as well as new open-air retail and food outlets.

"Explorer's Reef transforms our guests' arrival by providing them with unparalleled welcoming services and then transporting them into the world of the sea as they pass under an iconic and stunning wave," said John Reilly, president of SeaWorld San Diego. "The promise of SeaWorld is delivered immediately, giving our guests — especially kids — opportunities to connect with amazing animals as soon as they enter the park."

Two new shaded Relaxation Stations, a project partnership between the park and Southwest Airlines, allow guests to rest their feet and recharge their electronic devices. And SeaWorld San Diego is commemorating its history with more than a dozen

► See SEAWORLD, page 35



SeaWorld San Diego is celebrating 50 years by completely transforming the park's arrival experience. Explorer's Reef opened on March 21 for the celebration kick-off, and it immediately immersed park guests into an undersea oasis. From the moment they enter the park, guests can connect with the sea through multiple touch pools featuring shark pups, rays, skates and delicate little cleaner fish. AT/GARY SLADE



Clockwise from top left: From 1964 to 1987, one of the most recognized icons of SeaWorld San Diego was the A-frame entrance; SeaWorld's opening day on March 21, 1964 is depicted in this image. The park drew more than 400,000 guests that first year; Japanese Village was part of SeaWorld when the park first opened in 1964 and SeaWorld trainers Julie Scardina (left) and Suzanne Morgan (right) starred with Clyde the California sea lion (center) in one of SeaWorld's most popular sea lion and otter shows, Spooky Kooky Castle, which ran from 1989 to 1991.

COURTESY
SEAWORLD SAN DIEGO



SEAWORLD

Continued from page 34

Memory Markers containing images of attractions that once existed at different spots around the park.

Mid-century reflections

After treating invited press and VIPs to a lavish hors d'oeuvres-and-open bar preview of Explorer's Reef and the new Shamu evening show the previous evening, SeaWorld announced its major anniversary for the media on the morning of Friday, March 21 — rolling out an hour-long, Web-streamed presentation of entertainment and executive speeches amiably hosted by ABC-TV soap opera star and personality Cameron Mathison.

Highlights included a 50-year video countdown showcasing park and company milestones, including wildlife research and rescue. A particularly memorable moment came with a tribute to SeaWorld's oldest employee, 78-year-old Charli Manzano, who was hired before the park first opened. She currently works as a SeaWorld receptionist.

Jim Atchison, the affable Florida-based president and CEO of SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, took the (sea) lion's share of the presentation time — thoroughly outlining the company's accomplishments and goals.

"One of my favorite pieces from our historical archives is the first business plan for SeaWorld...,"

Atchison said before the crowd. "It pledged that the new park would have 'a completely distinctive concept of presentation which will open a new dimension of human knowledge and understanding of the undersea world and its inhabitants. The result will be both educational and entertaining.'



ATCHISON

"Fifty years later, this vision still lives at the heart of what we do.... We inspire, we educate and we motivate people to care about wild animals and wild places. And, as our world moves into the next half century, the knowledge and understanding our company creates by bringing humans into contact with marine animals will be more important than ever."

Several family members of SeaWorld's four founders — the original visionaries were George Millay, Milton Shedd,

► See SEAWORLD, page 36



Left: To showcase SeaWorld's commitment to the environment and passion for protecting the ocean, a series of giant sculptures (made from trash collected in the oceans) are on display like this gigantic Tufted Puffin standing almost nine feet high. Right: The cool Sea Street Band plays a variety of music to excite guests. The combination of brass and percussion keeps the energy high as the band travels along SeaWorld's walkways inviting guests to join the party. COURTESY SEAWORLD



SeaWorldSanDiego.com

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SeaWorld's 50-year tide of fortune

SAN DIEGO, Calif. — When SeaWorld opened in 1964, it occupied just 21 leased parkland acres along Mission Bay and had 45 employees. Adult admission was \$2.25, an annual pass was \$4.25 and the first-year attendance was about 400,000.

Today, with adult admission priced at \$84 and an annual pass fetching \$328, the now 190-acre park draws about 4.5 million visitors annually, employs 4,000 during peak season and reportedly pays rent in the neighborhood of \$14 million to the city each year.

The following business highlights, provided by SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, illustrate the growth and evolution of SeaWorld San Diego and its parent company over half a century.

1961: San Diego City Council approves 50-year lease to **Marine Park Corp.**, headed by **George Millay**, for a 21-acre park on Mission Bay.

1963: **Mission Bay Research Foundation** (later known as Hubbs-SeaWorld Research Institute) is established before park opens.

1964: **SeaWorld** opens March 21; with an initial investment of \$1.5 million, its attractions include Hawaiian Punch Village, Japanese Village, Lagoon Stadium, Saltwater Aquarium, Sea Grotto and Theater of the Sea, with several dolphins and sea lions.

1965: **Shamu** becomes first killer whale on display.

1966: **Seal and Penguin Arena** opens (expanded into Sea Lion & Otter Stadium in 1982).

1967: **Atlantis Restaurant and Bayside Skyride** open.

1968: **Freshwater Aquarium** and **Water Fantasy Show** both added.

1969: **PSA Skytower** opens.

1970: **Tide Pools** added; **SeaWorld Ohio** opens near Cleveland (closes in 2001).

1971: **Whale Arena** opens (later becomes Dolphin Stadium).

1972: **Walrus** exhibit opens.

1973: **Sea Otter** exhibit added; **SeaWorld Orlando** opens.

1975: **Avian** facility opens.

1976: **Captain Kids' World** opens; **Harcourt Brace Jovanovich** purchases all three parks for about \$50 million.

1977: **Seal and Lion** exhibit opens.

1978: **Shark** exhibit debuts.

1983: **Penguin Encounter** opens.

1987: New five-million-gallon **Shamu Stadium** and new entrance place open.

1988: First successful killer whale birth; **SeaWorld San Antonio** opens.

1989: **Anheuser-Busch** purchases SeaWorld parks and two additional theme parks for \$1.1 billion.

1990: **Forbidden Reef** (bat rays and eels) opens.

1991: **Lagoon Stadium** expands and becomes water ski show.

1992: **Shark Encounter** opens.

1994: **Mission Bermuda Triangle** opens (replaces Nautilus Amphitheater).

1995: **Shamu's Happy Harbor** kids' play area unveiled.

1997: **Wild Arctic** opens (replaces Mission Bermuda Triangle).

1998: **Dolphin Interaction Program** inaugurated; release of J.J. the rescued grey whale.

1999: **Shipwreck Rapids** ride and **Shipwreck Reef Café** open.

2000: **Pirates 4D** attraction opens; **Oiled Wildlife Care Center** opens.

2001: **Cirque de la Mer** show debuts.

2002: California Coastal Commission approves SeaWorld master plan for expansion.

2004: **Journey to Atlantis** ride opens.

2005: New sea lion and otter show, **Deep, Deep Trouble**, debuts.

2006: New Shamu show, **Believe**, debuts.

2007: New Shamu night show, **Shamu Rocks**, debuts.

2008: Anheuser-Busch (including Busch Entertainment Corp.'s 10 parks) acquired by Belgian brewer **InBev** for \$52 billion.

2009: **Blackstone Group** buys SeaWorld and Busch Gardens parks from Anheuser-Busch InBev for more than \$2 billion.

2010: **Blue Horizon** dolphin show debuts.

2011: **Turtle Reef** opens; new Shamu show, **One Ocean**, debuts.

2012: **Manta** roller coaster opens.

2013: Company purchases former Knott's Soak City in San Diego suburb of Chula Vista and re-brands it **Aquatica**, SeaWorld's sister water park; **Madagascar Live!** show debuts; private equity firm Blackstone takes SeaWorld public, becomes largest shareholder; SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment expresses interest in international expansion.

2014: **Explorer's Reef** opens at SeaWorld San Diego; 50th anniversary activities launched company-wide.

SEAWORLD Continued from page 35

Ken Norris and David DeMott, all UCLA graduates — were in attendance. The two youngest of Millay's three surviving children, Chrislyn and Gavin, offered some thoughts to *Amusement Today* about their late father, a 1994 International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions Hall of Fame inductee who also established the Wet 'n' Wild water park brand and the theme park now known as Six Flags Magic Mountain in Valencia, Calif.

Characterizing his dad as a "strong provider" with Christian values who believed in reading and education, Gavin Millay described George as "a really kind-hearted, understanding guy" despite a very confident bearing that made him somewhat intimidating.

"If you were honest and straightforward with him, he would give you the world. If you weren't, then you'd be out of his world very quickly," said Gavin, who worked as a parking lot attendant at SeaWorld for two summers during his teens. "As an employee, as well, the only other things he'd ask for were dedication and good, hard work.

"He was very humble about all the great things he accomplished. And he was very slow to take credit for anything — saying he got lucky a lot and attributing his success to others around him."

"We just viewed SeaWorld as a cool place to go," added Chrislyn Millay, who recalled being wowed as a child in the 1960s by the park's Tide Pools and Skytower and credited her father with steering her toward a career in advertising. "We knew our dad was connected with the park, but we didn't realize at that time that he was creating a legacy."

Emphasizing conservation

SeaWorld's anniversary media event included clear and detailed messaging that was, in part, a response to controversy.

Over the past year, SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment has endured pressure as a result of a documentary feature, *Blackfish*, which conveyed a negative depiction of SeaWorld's orca care and training program. While the company president Atchison tackled the film's charges head-on in an open letter published by several media outlets (*AT*, March 2014), a California assemblyman's subsequent introduction of a bill to ban live performances, captive breeding and import / export of killer whales



Two of SeaWorld San Diego's first families pose for the AT camera during the park's preview night. Above, sister and brother Chrislyn Millay and Gavin Millay. Right, park president John Reilly with Char DeMotte
AT/GARY SLADE



in the state made news ahead of the San Diego anniversary festivities.

SeaWorld, which has described the film as "propaganda," has hired a lobbyist and has met privately with California lawmakers seeking to halt the proposed legislation (it's presently on hold).

The Southern California park and its parent company got a boost on March 18, when the San Diego City Council proclaimed March "Sea World San Diego Anniversary Month." Mayor Kevin Faulconer thanked the park for its wildlife education programs and the globally recognized species preservation work of the nonprofit Hubbs-Sea World Research Institute (established in 1963, before the park opened), while lauding its contributions as a top regional employer (93,000 locals have worked at the park since its debut) and tourism force.

"Over the last five decades, we've inspired more than 156 million guests, educated more than nine million students about marine animals and environmental stewardship, and fostered critically important research studies with animals at our park," the company said in one of several statements issued relative to the proclamation. "There is no organization more passionately committed to the physical, mental and social care and well-being of animals than SeaWorld."

SeaWorld also used its March 21 anniversary media event to underscore its long, impressive and singular history of conservation, research and wildlife rescue. It is one of the world's foremost zoological organizations and a global leader in animal welfare, training, husbandry and veterinary care. Additionally, it has rescued and /

or rehabilitated more than 23,000 marine animals.

SeaWorld's international conservation partners include the National Wildlife Federation, The Nature Conservancy, World Wildlife Fund and the Ocean Conservancy. In San Diego, SeaWorld provides support for The Living Coast Discovery Center, the San Diego Oceans Foundation and the San Diego Audubon Society.

SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment has created the SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund, a non-profit, private charitable foundation committed to supporting wildlife and habitat conservation, research, education and animal rescue programs worldwide.

To spotlight further the company's environmental commitment, a series of giant sea life sculptures are being displayed throughout the SeaWorld parks. It commissioned an environmental art group, The Washed Ashore Project, for large-scale works created from ocean debris. The art pieces symbolize the urgent need to preserve ocean habitats.

At SeaWorld's San Diego flagship park, the opening of Explorer's Reef is a fitting, full-circle representation of the company's unique success in combining entertainment with conservation and education.

"It's the high point of an unprecedented expansion of capital attraction investments at SeaWorld," said the park's John Reilly. "With Turtle Reef, the Manta roller coaster, new shows and events, and now, a transforming arrival experience and animal attraction, SeaWorld is well-positioned for its next 50 years."

• www.seaworld.com/celebration



The 2014 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo set an abundance of records during its March 4-23 run, including an attendance record drawing more than 2.48 million fairgoers. It drew 1,377,416 fans to the rodeo and concerts, representing a 5.3 percent increase over the same 20 shows in 2013. COURTESY HOUSTON LIVESTOCK SHOW AND RODEO

Old records broken, new ones set again at Houston Livestock Show/Rodeo

STORY: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

HOUSTON, Texas — Houston is red hot. The oil industry is booming. The housing market is booming. The service sector is booming.

And, apparently, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo continues to reap the benefits from the growing sprawl. The 2014 annual event did what it has become very adept at doing, breaking records.

Here are some of those highlights:

- Total 2014 attendance reached 2,485,721 visitors, setting a 20-day attendance record. The 2013 attendance record of 2,506,238 visitors included a 21-day event.

- RodeoHouston paid attendance reached a record 1,377,416 fans, representing a 5.3 percent increase over the same 20 shows in 2013.

- Nine of the 2014 Rodeo-Houston performances landed

in the list of the show's top 20 paid rodeo attendance records.

- More than \$34 million was made in food concessions, also setting a record. About \$16 million was made at Aramark concessions (Reliant Park's concessionaire); \$8.7 at Rodeo-Houston in-house concessions; and \$8.4 million at the carnival concessions (a 9.15 percent increase over the gross in 2013)

- Ray Cammack Shows, the midway provider, grossed \$16,186,511 in ride and game tickets, a 9.33 percent increase over 2013.

COO Leroy Shafer said the Houston Livestock Show has been on a growth curve for the last five or six years.

"Actually, it really started after the 2008 economic downturn," Shafer said. "People stayed at home and came here."

► See HOUSTON, page 38

MIDWAY FAST FACTS

Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo

- There were more than 2.4 million total riders
- More than 1.5 million players played midway games
- The La Grande Ferris Wheel saw 75,000 riders
- 50,000 visitors rode the carousel
- The three most popular rides were the Sky Ride, Zamperla; Windstorm, SDC and Euroslide, Euroslide.com

—Source: Ray Cammack Shows

Shafer to change HLSR roles in Oct.

HOUSTON, Texas — In 1974, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo grossed \$2 million.

That was COO Leroy Shafer's first show. He had been hired the year before in public relations.

The 1974 event had 100 volunteers, handed out 20 scholarships, had a rodeo attendance of 411,513, and had a general attendance total of 671,428.

And, as Shafer looks back at that first year, numbers of this year's event come easily to his mind. Some of those include: the 2014 event grossed \$130 million, approximately, in operational revenue, worked with 28,500 volunteers, will hand out 737 scholarships, had a rodeo attendance of 1,377,416, and a general attendance of 2,485,721.

"In 1974 Elvis played here," Shafer said. "He performed on a 16-by-20-foot turning



Shafer

table pulled in here by a John Deere tractor. He used the same PA system that was being used for the ball games.

"There were six fulltime employees," he said. "When I was hired, I was the seventh. Now we have 112 fulltime employees."

Shafer said the size and scope of the show has been greatly enlarged and improved over the years. The presentations in all areas have grown. State-of-the-art sound systems replaced the PA systems years ago.

He feels there is certainly room for more growth. And, he plans to be there over the next years to not only make sure that happens but also to enjoy it.

Yet, Shafer does plan to transition his position of COO in October of this year.

His status will change to emeritus and he will work closely with the new COO for most likely the next couple of years to ensure a smooth conversion.

"I will move from the COO responsibility

► See SHAFER, page 38



CARNIVAL LIGHTS

COMPILED: Pam Sherborne, psherborne@amusementtoday.com

Clifford "Rip" Rippetoe will serve at least two more years as CEO of the **Kentucky State Fair board** at \$250,000 a year.

The board renewed Rippetoe's contract effective July 1, the *Courier-Journal* reported. He's been working since the beginning of 2013 on an 18-month contract.

Dr. Mark Lynn, chairman of the fair board, said the board was impressed with Rippetoe's "ability to enhance business, improve our financials and increase efficiencies."

The **South Dakota Legislature** has given final approval to a measure that would further regulate amusement rides.

The bill's sponsor, **Sen. Al Novstrup** of Aberdeen, says the bill would impose regulations similar to those in other states and is supported by industry trade groups. Novstrup is president of **Thunder Road**, a chain of family fun parks in the Dakotas.

Mobile amusement rides, such as those that travel from state to state, already must have insurance. The bill would require those rides to have yearly certified inspections and daily inspections by operators. Rides fixed in one place also would have to be inspected daily.

For the first time, New York state is looking for one vendor to operate all of its year-round restaurants at the **New York State Fairgrounds**, Syracuse.

Those venues include the Empire Room and banquet facility in the Art and Home Center, the Somerset Room and banquet facility, also in the Art & Home Center, plus permanent restaurants spots in the Center of Progress and Horticulture buildings.

The winning vendor will get a five-year contract for the four restaurants and the banquet rooms, according to the request for proposals issued by the state **Department of Agriculture and Markets**, which oversees the fair. There's an option for a five-year renewal.

The contract would allow the winning vendor to run those restaurants year-round, for weddings, trade shows or other events, and during the 12-day fair itself, set for Aug.21-Sept. 1, 2014.

Four people who were injured in the **Vortex** accident at the **2013 North Carolina State Fair**, Raleigh, have hired **Willie Gary** as their attorney and plan to file a \$150 million lawsuit against the owners of the ride, according to a news release.

A news release said Gary is representing Kisha Gorham, Anthony Gorham, Justen Hunter and Shykema Dempsey.

The four were injured in October, when the Vortex started unexpectedly and threw some of them off the ride.

The news release said the lawsuit is being filed against **Powers Great American Midways and Family Attractions Amusement LLC**.

Hamburgers on doughnuts. Turkey legs bigger than balloons. Battered and deep-fried candy bars.

Of all the overindulgent food at the **Miami-Dade County Fair**, Miami, Fla., March 13-30, none stood out more than the world's largest hot dog.

Weighing in at 125.5 pounds — the naked dog tipped the scale at 51 pounds; the rest of the heft came from a gargantuan bun and gallons of condiments — the dog was cooked for three hours on a 100-foot mobile grill that travels from fair to fair on the bed of a 27-ton tractor-trailer.

Brett Enright, founder and CEO of **Juicy's Outlaw Grill**, already holds the Guinness record for largest commercially available hamburger. His 777-pound behemoth burger costs \$5,000 and can be ordered with two days' notice.

Like Juicy's burger, the world's largest commercially available hot dog is available to order for your next wedding, bar mitzvah or dinner party, a relative bargain at \$1,000.

►HOUSTON

Continued from page 37

Added to that, Shafer said the growth Houston is currently experiencing has been the greatest factor.

"Our carnival has set a record for the past seven years," he said. "All our auditing is not totally complete but we know that we went over \$130 million [in seven years] in operational revenues. No other event or fair in the world is in that stratosphere."

In looking at the growth of the city and the growth of the show, Shafer said numbers prove that the show is engaging Houston's new population. He said about 80 percent of the event's attendance comes from the greater Houston metropolitan area.

And, during the last five to six years, more than 60 percent of the event's attendance is being reached by new media instead of the traditional media such as television and newspapers. The marketing staff is

using texting, email blasts, the show's mobile app, its website and social media.

"We also had an increase in our sponsorship revenue," Shafer said. "Our total sponsorship revenue was \$14,143,224, a 14.1 percent increase over 2013."

Ray Cammack Shows provided 80 rides on the midway this year.

"The visitor experience at the 2014 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo was exceptional, thanks to the dedication

and attention of our volunteers and staff," said Joel Cowley, show president. "So many different facets of the Show — horse show, livestock show, rodeo, carnival, music, shopping and dining — provided a unique combination for family fun and created an overall success."

Shafer will begin his transition from the position of COO in October, 2014, but plans to remain at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo for years to come.

►SHAFER

Continued from page 37

ties to advising and consulting," he said. "I will work in the areas of marketing, entertainment, media relations, crisis management and on other special projects as they arise."

"But, the transition of leadership will be at the top as far as importance," he said.

As these changes near, Shafer feels the leadership structure currently be used at the event will stay the same.

"Right now, we have a CEO, COO, and general manager," he said. "We also have five executive directors that head up the major divisions of the show. I think this leadership structure will remain the same."

Shafer stays away from the word retirement, because that isn't his plan. He expects to be at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo for years to come and he is looking forward to his new roles.

Shafer directed the marketing and presentation of the music concerts when he first arrived at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

Over the years, he was actively involved in the design of the new Reliant Stadium and Reliant Center. He has been active in local youth and community efforts, and served on numerous committees representing the show.

He was instrumental in developing a series of surveys and computer programs to analyze the audience draw and customer satisfaction quotients for concert artists at the show. Those programs, rewritten and refined many times, still serve as a basis for signing show talent.

Shafer received a bachelor's degree in agricultural journalism from Texas A&M University and a master's degree in technical journalism from Iowa State University.

He served in the U.S. Army (active and reserve) from 1969 to 1989. He completed one tour of duty as a helicopter pilot with the 12th Combat Aviation Group, Republic of Vietnam (1970-1971). He commanded the 75th Maneuver Area Command Aviation Detachment in Houston from 1981-1986.

—Pam Sherborne

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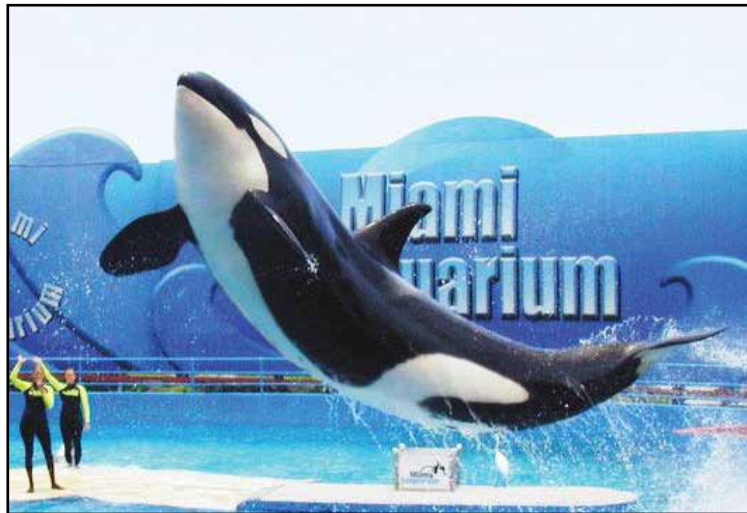
Palace Entertainment acquires South Florida's Miami Seaquarium

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. — Festival Fun Parks, LLC dba Palace Entertainment, announced on March 28 that it has signed an agreement for the acquisition of Miami Seaquarium in South Florida.

Miami Seaquarium is the longest continuously operating oceanarium in the United States. The park has grown steadily over the past half century and today offers eight different marine animal shows and presentations each day and provides a fun-filled mix of exhibits, shows, attractions, food and shopping opportunities. Miami Seaquarium, which attracts more than 500,000 visitors each year, is recognized as South Florida's most popular gated attraction.

Fernando Eiroa, Palace Entertainment's president and CEO, comments, "Palace Entertainment is excited to be adding such a premier entertainment and educational destination to our collection of family parks. We understand the commitment that Miami Seaquarium has to wildlife conservation, community involvement and their dedication to both educate and entertain guests."

"Palace Entertainment has an incredible record of theme park success," said Andrew Hertz, president & general manager of Miami Seaquarium. "We are excited to be joining our 58 years of heritage with the Palace Entertainment family of parks. This is a great fit between Palace Entertainment



The Miami Seaquarium is a 38-acre oceanarium located on the island of Virginia Key in Biscayne Bay, Miami-Dade County, Florida and is located near downtown Miami. Founded in 1955, it is recognized as the oldest oceanarium in the United States. COURTESY MIAMI SEAQUARIUM

and Miami Seaquarium, and many years to come." Miami Seaquarium is located on Virginia Key in Miami-Dade County, which

owns the property. County parks officials are completing a review of the proposed acquisition and are expected to present their findings to the board of county commissioners for approval of the transaction in the coming weeks.

Miami Seaquarium is a family-oriented marine-life park open to the public 365 days a year that provides visitors with a greater understanding and appreciation for marine life through shows, presentations and marine-life exhibits. Miami Seaquarium is an accredited member of the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums, an international organization committed to the care and conservation of marine mammals.

Mall of America announces expansion

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. — Mall of America, the nation's largest retail and entertainment destination, Mortenson, a U.S.-based construction and development services company, Hotel Development LLC, an enterprise of the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, and the city of Bloomington, Minn. recently announced the beginning of a \$325 million expansion project during a groundbreaking event.

The expansion will include a 342-room JW Marriott hotel, office tower, high-end retailers, new dining options, a tourist welcome center and large event space. An extension of the Mall on all three levels on the north side, it is the most significant construction project at the property since opening in 1992. Completion is scheduled for fall 2015.

"This is a major milestone for Mall of America," said Paul Ghermezian, chief operating officer for Triple Five Worldwide. "For more than 20 years, it has been our dream to increase the size of the mall, firmly establishing it as a world renowned attraction."

"Mall of America is an iconic retail and entertainment destination known around the world," said Tom Lander, vice president at Mortenson Development. "We are pleased to be the development and construction partner for this important expansion."

Pin Stack bowling to anchor new complex

DALLAS, Texas — West Plano will now be home to a unique dining and entertainment destination, Pin-Stack, with an anticipated opening of late winter 2014. Entertainment Properties Group, Inc. has purchased seven acres of land at the Dallas North Tollway and Windhaven Pkwy to create a 50,000 square-foot venue which will feature a restaurant, full-sized bowling lanes, private lanes available to book for events and an array of indoor games and attractions.

Staking claim in West Plano, which is quickly becoming an entertainment and nightlife district of the DFW Metroplex, is a bold and purposeful move by



Entertainment Properties Group. "We are thrilled to be adding the PinStack brand to our portfolio. Buying and developing this land in West Plano for our flagship Pin-Stack marks our first foray into the urban core and represents the start of a new chapter that will include future developments of this nature."

Entertainment Properties Group, Inc. has commissioned prominent restaurant

design duo Coeval Studios, whose work is peppered throughout the DFW restaurant landscape. Patrons can expect a modern, attractive and forward aesthetic with bold finishes, inviting lighting, and a user-friendly layout with discreet separation between dining and entertainment. In a concerted effort to align with corporate and business needs, onsite tech-forward meeting spaces will be available.

Based in Dallas, Texas, Entertainment Properties Group operates five entertainment venues located in Texas, New Mexico, and Colorado. The company is planning a national expansion and is currently in negotiations for multiple locations.

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STORY: B. Derek Shaw
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HERSHEY, Pa. — Ninety one members of the Pennsylvania Amusement Parks Association (PAPA) met March 10 and 11 for their annual spring meeting at Hershey Lodge. Eleven of the 17 member Pennsylvania parks participated. There were 14 other member organizations in attendance including manufacturers and suppliers.

Day one started with the PAPA Board of Directors meeting followed by a reception and banquet that evening. It was hosted by Brian Bossuyt, director of sales and Marketing of Camelbeach Mountain Waterpark in Tannersville, Pa. (in the Poconos). He is the current president of PAPA, starting his second year of a two year term. Retired Hersheypark Park Vice President, Franklin Shearer, led the invocation. He said he was filling in for Buddy Knoebel, chaplain of this group. "And heaven knows this group needs a chaplain!" he quipped. Keynote speaker was Rob Fulton, president of the Pennsylvania Association of Travel & Tourism. Top priorities of this organization include the establishment of a Tourism Partnership, a Public/Private partnership, local room tax standards across the state and support of a post Labor Day school start.

Day two was reserved for the annual breakfast membership meeting. Association business included reports in various aspects of the industry: legislative, Amusement Ride Safety Advisory Board, Ride Safety Seminar, scholarships, water park and human resource issues.

Other business included the election of Mike Fehnel, as second vice president. Fehnel is general manager of Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom who is serving the unexpired term of Jason McClure, who is now at Cedar Point in the general manager capacity.

The morning session provided attendees with a look at the new website being developed by Next Generation Web Technology of Lansdale, Pa. for the Pennsylvania Amusement Park Association.



The 2014 PAPA officers, shown left to right, are: Jeff Davis, vice president, Sesame Place; Brian Bossuyt, president, Camelback Mountain Waterpark and Carl Crider, past president/chairman, DelGrossos's Amusement Park.

AT/B. DEREK SHAW



A trio from Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom were in attendance. They are, l to r: Keith Koepke, director of Operations, Brad Nesland, vice president of Maintenance & Construction and Mike Fehnel, vice president and general manager. Fehnel was elected as second vice president, to fill the unexpired term of Jason McClure who is now at Cedar Point. AT/B. DEREK SHAW

Company President, Roger Hammond, made the presentation. The new site is in the testing stages at the moment. Now on-line [see sidebar], one feature will give member parks the opportunity to post their important dates and events throughout the season. The association also awarded four, one thousand dollar scholarships this year to deserving park employees who are students.

Upon conclusion of the event, 40 attendees participated in an open roundtable discussion at Hersheypark Service Center. In the three years the informal meeting has been held, this was by far the highest attended one. The discussion, coordinated by Gary Chubb, senior director of

Maintenance at Hersheypark covered the entire gamut. Topics included: lifeguard staffing, common ADA opportunities, locker usage, employee recognition program, early and late season staffing, new "hot" retail items and guest scams across multiple parks.

This was the 79th Spring Meeting of the Pennsylvania Amusement Parks Association. It was formed in 1935 with R.L. Plarr from Dorney Park serving as the first president. In 1946, roller coaster designer Herbert P. Schmeck from Philadelphia Toboggan was president.

The 2014 Summer Meeting will be held at Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom, Allentown, Pa. July 14 and 15.



PAPA launches new website

LANSDALE, Pa. — It's been seven years since the Pennsylvania Amusement Park Association (PAPA) had anything done to their website in regard to content and presentation. The site was broken and had no support.

The new site was developed by Next Generation Web Technologies of Lansdale, Pa. Company President, Roger Hammond said the initial work started in January, based on a referral. "I did the Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters website a few years back. They were happy with my work," said Hammond.

One of the goals was to create a more interactive site for all 82 members (amusement parks, manufacturers and others). Another goal is to get Pennsylvania tourists to take a look. "We want to create traffic and get regular citizens to come to the site," said Hammond.

The home page of the site, www.paamusementparks.com, features a Pennsylvania map which clearly and easily shows where all member parks are located along with the major highways that lead to their location.

The 17 member parks now have the opportunity to post their important dates and events throughout the season. An event calendar lists opening dates. Special event weekends announcements, coupons and other special offers are another feature of the new site.

Member parks all have an icon with basic content. The PAPA website committee consists of Hammond, Janine Rebbie, PTC, who serves as chair and content gatekeeper, Brian Bossuyt-Camelbeach Mountain Waterpark; Brian Gorman-Waldameer; Mike Fehnel- Dorney Park and Jeff Davis- Sesame Place.

Members should submit submissions to Janine Rebbie at: janine.ptc@comcast.net

The Pennsylvania Amusement Parks Association was formed in 1935 by a group of amusement park owners and managers. Its goals are to promote the industry by gathering and disseminating information, secure the interchange of knowledge among members relating to better management and methods of doing business, upholding a good public image, and by united action, exert influence upon legislation to promote the best interest of the industry.

Their annual spring membership meeting offers an opportunity to meet and discuss common problems and challenges and to hear speakers on topics of vital interest to all members. In addition, a summer meeting at a member facility affords a chance to meet fellow members in a relaxed setting. The 2014 summer meeting will be held at Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom, Allentown, Pa. July 14 and 15.

Next Generation Web Technologies began operation in 1981 as Next Generation Software. They began with the development of education and business applications for desktop and Network systems. In 1999, Next Generation began developing and converting applications for the Internet and today work exclusively in development of websites and web based applications. They have also developed community based directories; local business and restaurant directories and focus on local online marketing.

—B. Derek Shaw

NEAAPA inducts three into Hall of Fame

STORY: Ron Gustafson
Special to Amusement Today

STURBRIDGE, Mass. — John and Elizabeth Bowen, owners of the former Whalom Park, Lunenburg, Mass., and Robert Harkins, a member of the management team at Six Flags New England, Agawam, Mass., are the newest members to be inducted into the New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (NEAAPA) Hall of Fame.

The ceremony took place during NEAAPA's 101st Annual Meeting at the Sturbridge Host Hotel and Conference Center here on Tuesday, April 1.



John Bowen was born into the park business in 1944. His first jobs in the park included hiding Easter eggs and watering flowers. During high school he advanced to sweeping the midway and emptying trash barrels into the bed of a dump truck.

He took a break from the business and obtained an undergraduate Masters in Business Administration degree. He also worked for General Electric and General Tire & Rubber Co. in the Washington D.C. area before receiving a law degree. He served as the park president from 1975 to 1998, splitting his time between Whalom Park and the family law firm.

During his years associated with NEAAPA, he served on the board of directors as well as secretary and president. He also served with the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) on several committees and workshop panels.

Elizabeth was also very involved with NEAAPA and IAAPA. She served on NEAAPA's board of directors and as secretary/treasurer for several year and chaired IAAPA's convention awards committee. Elizabeth handled Whalom's promotions and public relations for 20 years. The park closed in 2000.

During his 59-year career,



Above, John and Elizabeth Bowen speak during their acceptance of NEAAPA Hall of Fame induction. Left, Robert Harkins thanks the NEAAPA HOF committee for his 2014 induction. COURTESY RON GUSTAFSON/NEAAPA

Robert Harkins created the groundwork for the food service division at Six Flags New England. He started working at the facility when it was Riverside Park – living adjacent to the popular attraction.

His accomplishments include the ability to introduce branded and non-branded concepts, innovation of new food products and equipment and coordinate large capital expansions.

Robert served as NEAAPA president in 1984 and 1985.

More than 30 have been inducted into the prestigious hall since it was formed in 1998.

Others honored

Numerous other awards were presented during the dinner/meeting, attended by 85 NEAAPA members.

Justine Brewer, NEAAPA Awards Committee chair, presented the following:

- Six Flags New England, Paragon Award for "unequaled excellence in graphic promotion."

- Alyssa Brown, Quassy Amusement and Waterpark, Middlebury, Conn., Pinnacle

Award for "peak perfection in customer service." The award includes a \$500 scholarship.

- Bud Selmi, Story Land, Glen, N.H., Alan E. Ramsay Meritorious Service

- Melissa Plante, CLM Entertainment Group, Woonsocket, R.I., Meritorious Service



The 2014 NEAAPA officers, as seen left to right: President David Sugrue, Ocean Beach Park, New London, Conn.; First Vice President Ryan DeMaria, Canobie Lake Park, Salem, N.H.; Second Vice President Dorothy Lewis, Fun Station Entertainment Group, Danbury, Conn.; Treasurer Charlene Conway, Carousel Family Fun Centers, Fairhaven, Mass. and Secretary Ed Hodgdon, Funtown Splashtown USA, Saco, Maine. COURTESY RON GUSTAFSON/NEAAPA

Award.

Prior to the dinner, NEAAPA staged a number of workshops as well as a vendor product showcase.

The organization will hold a spring supervisor seminar in May at Canobie Lake Park, Salem, N.H., and gather on Aug.

13 for its annual summer meeting at Southwick's Zoo, Mendon, Mass.

NEAAPA is one of the nation's oldest amusement park associations, dating back to the 1920s. For more about the association visit www.neapaa.com.

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MARKETWATCH



COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 4/11/14	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
Apollo Global Management	APO	NYSE	27.49	36.51	20.86
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	30.14	35.38	19.15
Merlin Entertainments Group/ Legoland	MERL	LSE	359.30	368.60	3.20
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	48.99	54.69	38.28
Comcast Corp./ NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	47.96	55.28	38.75
Comcast Corp./ NBCUniversal Media	CMCSK	NASDAQ	47.36	53.10	37.34
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	77.01	83.65	58.84
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	9010	TYO	984.00	1289.00	716.00
Haicahang Holdings Ltd.	2255HK	SEHK	1.65	2.27	1.56
Leofoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	11.65	14.90	11.40
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	23.91	28.75	11.72
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	29.99	39.65	27.48
Shenzhen Overseas Chinese Town Co., Ltd. (OCT)	000069	SZSE	4.68	6.77	4.30
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	38.87	42.94	31.86
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	3023.00	3080.00	2880.00
Village Roadshow	VRL	ASX	7.05	8.05	4.91

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Worldwide Markets: ASX, Australian Securities Exchange; CSE, Copenhagen Stock Exchange; LSE, London Stock Exchange; NYSE, New York Stock Exchange; NASDAQ, National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations; SEHK, Hong Kong Stock Exchange; SZSE, Shenzhen Stock Exchange; TSEC, Taiwan Stock Exchange, Corp.; TYO/TSE, Tokyo Stock Exchange
—SOURCES: Bloomberg.com; Wall Street Journal

DIESEL PRICES

Region (U.S.)	As of 04/07/14	Change from year ago
East Coast	\$4.075	\$0.066
Midwest	\$3.942	-\$0.014
Gulf Coast	\$3.793	-\$0.095
Mountain	\$3.955	\$0.056
West Coast	\$3.894	-\$0.129
California	\$4.056	-\$0.140

CURRENCY

On 04/11/14 \$1 USD =

0.7211	EURO
0.5956	GBP (British Pound)
101.71	JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.8782	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.0621	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.0897	CAD (Canadian Dollar)



BUSINESS WATCH

Holiday World names agency of record

SANTA CLAUS, Ind. — **Holiday World & Splashin' Safari** has named **Williams Randall Marketing** in Indianapolis as the park's agency of record. The agency wrote and produced Holiday World's three new television commercials, which will air in a variety of markets starting in late April. Williams Randall's team also designed the park's new brochure, billboards, print and radio ads.

Six Flags named to InformationWeek Elite 100

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — **Six Flags Entertainment Corporation**, announced on April 2 that it has been named to the **2014 InformationWeek Elite 100** — a list of the top business technology innovators in the United States.

"It is an honor to be named to the *InformationWeek* top 500 for the fourth year in a row, and our team is ecstatic to be selected as one of the elite 100 for 2014," said **Michael Israel**, chief information officer for Six Flags.

This is *InformationWeek's* 26th year identifying and honoring the nation's most innovative users of information technology. For 2014, the assessment was narrowed to a more elite 100 organizations.

Six Flags, Unilever announce partnership

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — **Six Flags Entertainment Corporation** and **Unilever**, one of the world's leading suppliers of food, home and personal care products, announced on March 20 a strategic partnership, naming Unilever Ice Cream the official frozen novelties and hard scooped ice cream for all Six Flags theme parks in the U.S.

During the five-year agreement, Unilever Ice Cream will have exclusive marketing and sales rights for all novelty products including Good Humor, Magnum Ice Cream Bars, Fruttare Frozen Fruit Bars, Klondike and Popsicle brand products, as well as Breyers hard scooped ice cream. The partnership also includes in-park brand exposure of Unilever ice cream products through digital and static signage via the Six Flags Media Networks and branded patio locations throughout the parks.

AIR selected as preferred FEC insurance provider

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — **The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions**, (IAAPA), in conjunction with the IAAPA Family Entertainment Center (FEC) Committee, selected **Amusement Insurance Resources** (AIR), a division of the insurance brokerage firm **Britton Gallagher**, as its new preferred FEC insurance program provider. The IAAPA-endorsed insurance program, AIR Elite, is managed by AIR and exclusively available to IAAPA North American FEC members. The program is designed to enhance safety within the FEC industry and provide reasonable insurance premiums for IAAPA members. IAAPA has offered a similar group liability program to its FEC members since 2007.

In 2013, IAAPA issued a request for proposal for a group liability insurance program provider. The IAAPA FEC Committee reviewed the submissions and interviewed prospective partners before choosing AIR.

"We are pleased to begin a new partnership with Amusement Insurance Resource," said IAAPA FEC Committee Chair **Gregg Borman**. "AIR Elite provides IAAPA's FEC members with affordable, comprehensive insurance coverage and additional educational and consultative services."

CenterEdge Software completes Mexico install

MEXICO CITY, Mexico — Entertainment facility solutions provider **CenterEdge Software**, Roxboro, N.C., recently completed its first ticketing and capacity management system installation in Mexico.

The company finished the week-long on-site installation for **Sky Zone Indoor Trampoline Park** — creator of the world's first all-trampoline, walled playing court — in February, with the facility going live March 3 in Naucalpan, a suburb of Mexico City.

The CenterEdge team included a Spanish-speaking staffer who helped with training on the waiver kiosk, individual and group point-of-sale, and capacity management solutions.

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New track, audio, LED lighting for Disneyland classic

Big Thunder Mountain Railroad 'rumbles' anew after rehab

STORY: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Undertaking the renovation of a much-loved ride that has thrilled more than 225 million guests in 35 years isn't just a matter of making repairs and enhancing technology. It's a responsibility that requires the careful preservation of classic elements that have created indelible memories across generations.

Such was the task facing Disneyland's in-house attractions maintenance team six years ago when Big Thunder Mountain Railroad, the park's iconic 19th century / Wild West-themed runaway mine train coaster, started showing signs of middle age.

"The ride was built in 1979 and was almost 30 years old when we started planning the renovations," noted David Smith, program manager of facility asset management at the Disneyland Resort. "From a maintenance perspective, we were going out and making repairs to the track more frequently — because it was just fatigued. It was a piece of metal that was vibrating 16 hours a day, 365 days a year.

"We have engineers who watch that stuff very closely. When they say it's time to replace it, that it has reached its useful life span, that's when you start designing and fabricating a new track."

To that end, Smith's team ordered the replacement of approximately two-thirds — or half a mile — of the coaster's steel rails. Dynamic Structures of Port Colquhlan, British Columbia, Canada, which previously retracked Disneyland's Space Mountain, fabricated the new track.

"The only areas we didn't do were the three lift hills and the track coming out of the maintenance bay into the station," Smith said. "Those are the low-energy, slow-speed areas. From a lineal footage perspective, they represent about a third of the length of the track."

During the 14 months the coaster was closed for construction, its computerized operating system, dark ride elements and general atmospherics also were refurbished.



After six years of planning and refurbishment, including a 14-month closure while two-thirds of its track was replaced (left) and a slew of technological and cosmetic upgrades were performed (above), Disneyland's 1979-built classic coaster Big Thunder Mountain Railroad (below) resumed thrilling park guests in mid-March.

AT/GARY SLADE AND DISNEYLAND RESORT

"An old version of software that we had written was difficult to update," said Smith, "and the hardware it ran on had no more room or memory left. We needed new computers, and we needed to write new programming for the computers to bring it up to date."

The upgraded rolling stock is identical to the original; its restraint and safety systems are unchanged. The coaster's passenger capacity also remains the same, as does the ride's peak speed of about 28 mph — although since its mid-March reintroduction, it has been running a bit faster than previously.

"The goal was not to increase the peak speed," Smith said. "We did pick up a nominal amount of speed because of the smoothness and stiffness of the new track. That probably will decrease over time as the trains wear in and the track wears a little bit and gets a little more flex in it."

For additional practicality and efficiency, the coaster station's unloading platform was expanded by several feet and a holding area was added for mobility-challenged guests, who must enter through the ride's exit.

On the presentation side, the entire audio system was replaced, as was most of the incandescent show illumination (the latter was scrapped wherever possible in favor of more

efficient LED lighting). Much of the manmade mountain's Utah desert-inspired "rockwork" has been repainted and animatronic critters have been rebuilt. But the overall look of the attraction, though "refreshed," is virtually the same as longtime Disneyland fans have always known it.

"We took great pains to make sure that Big Thunder Mountain Railroad came back exactly the way it was," said Smith, pointing out the delicate nature of rehabbing legacy attractions. "It's a challenge that we face at Disneyland: We want to have new things for guests to experience, but at the same time you have these attractions that people are emotionally attached to — so you want to try to rebuild them and not take

away the classic elements."

He cited the Rainbow Ridge (officially Big Thunder) miniature town portion of the ride as an example.

"Some of those buildings dated back to Disneyland's old, original [1956] Mine Train ride, but they were not in a salvageable condition. So we really went to great lengths to make sure that we photo-documented all the graphics and all the props and everything that was out there, and we did laser scanning to make sure that we could build them back exactly the way they were."

Smith and his team are very proud, however, of some new excitement added to the third, enclosed lift hill involving a dynamite blast inside a mineshaft — complete with

sparkling fuses along the craggy walls and an explosive burst of "smoke."

"Our explosive new finale is a real high point," he said. "That's my favorite part. But also, just refreshing all the audio and lighting really helps you see and hear and feel the ride's story the way it was intended."

For Smith, who has been with the Disneyland Resort for 13 years and first rode Big Thunder Mountain Railroad in 1983 at age 22, the experience of ensuring the coaster's viability for decades to come can't get any sweeter.

"It's just a great ride," he said. "I thought it was one of Disneyland's best attractions when I first rode it, and I still do today."



Koch family members travel to Silver Dollar City for learning exchange

Editor's note, when AT first learned at the IAAPA Attractions Expo 2013 that members of the Koch family planned to intern at Silver Dollar City during the month of December as a learning exchange project, we not only supported the idea, but asked if they would share their thoughts on the month-long exchange.

Below are thoughts from Leah Koch about her experience at the Branson, Mo. theme.

May we now suggest an internship at any of the faith-based Hawaiian Falls waterparks in North Texas...

STORY: Leah Koch
Director of Creativity
Holiday World & Splashin' Safari
leahkoch@holidayworld.com

"...Holy night, all is calm, all is bright..."

As I joined in yet another Christmas carol led by Peter Herschend's booming voice, I served another spoonful of green beans onto an employee's plate and smiled. My sister went about bussing tables and her fiancé continued to serve salad to the wonderful citizens of Silver Dollar City. My sister, Lauren, her fiancé, Michael, and I had only been in Branson about five weeks total, and we were nearly finished with

our time there, and I was beginning to wish I was coming back after the holidays. As we served Christmas dinner to the employees, I realized I recognized a lot of these people, and they were starting to feel like family.

That's the thing about our industry. We're a community.

Until November, our community was fairly small and limited to Holiday World and Splashin' Safari. My siblings and I grew up here, and we always knew in the back of our minds that we wanted something to do with the park when we grew up (though I think it was farther in the back of Lauren's mind than mine). Unfortunately it took the untimely passing of our father [Will Koch] for us to realize we wanted to be actively involved. Lauren and I both knew our father wanted us to get experience elsewhere before we came back to Holiday World full-time, and we knew that even though we had a lot of knowledge about the theme park industry, we had much more to learn. We decided to take a month or two and try to "intern" at another theme park.

Joel Manby at Herschend Family Entertainment answered the call, and suggested we visit Silver Dollar City because our parks share very similar roots.



Back home at Holiday World from a month of learning at Silver Dollar City are sisters Lauren and Leah Koch, with Lauren's fiancé, Michael Crosby, in the middle.

COURTESY HOLIDAY WORLD

So the second our Happy Halloween Weekends were finished, Lauren, Michael and I packed our bags and road tripped to Branson. We had no idea what we were in for as we drove deeper into the Ozarks.

It was the best. The three of us (or the three musketeers as we came to be known) had a wonderful time. We experienced the park's history at Legendary University. We helped guide guests around the park during the White Glove Gala (when we barely knew the layout ourselves). We got to watch Peter and Jack Herschend talk about the early years of SDC during an interview. We also helped stuff bags for their 5K

run (in record time), stood backstage for their incredible "It's a Wonderful Life" stage show, and helped employees' children decorate cookies. We also got to try some of their new menu items for next year. They're awesome.

We got to ask questions we probably wouldn't have dared ask at Holiday World. We were there to learn, and we absolutely did. We all worked together at times, but we also got to individually learn about the things that interested us. During our time there, we also discovered that we knew way more than we ever thought.

When we returned to work at Holiday World, we spent a lot of time spouting out random tidbits to Holiday World President Matt Eckhart before we finally organized our thoughts and wrote them down.

We consider ourselves incredibly lucky for the wonderful opportunity to learn so much from such a world-class theme park. The staff at Silver Dollar City was wonderful and we're excited that we know even more talented professionals. We're lucky to be a part of such a wonderful industry, where instead of shutting one another out we welcome an open exchange of ideas and are willing to help.

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Cynthia L. Gardella dies at 65

ALTOONA, Pa. — **Cynthia L. (DelGrosso) Gardella** passed away at UPMC Altoona on March 15, 2014. She was 65.

Born in Altoona, she was the daughter of the late Ferdinand and Mafalda (Pulcino) DelGrosso. She married Peter J. Gardella Jr. on Oct. 24, 1971. She was a graduate of Bishop Guilfoyle High School and the University of Pittsburgh, and a member of St. Joseph Catholic Church, Bellwood, Pa.

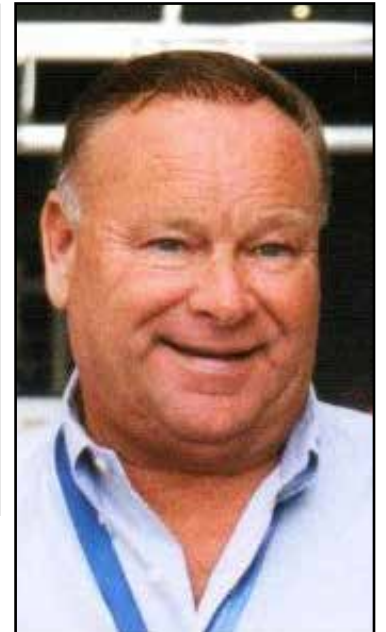
Cynthia retired from sales and operations at DelGrosso's Amusement Park and Marianna Foods. She was also an active member on the

Board of Directors for DelGrosso Co.

Cynthia taught secondary Spanish at St. Joseph by the Sea, Staten Island, N.Y., and at Bishop Guilfoyle High School. She was a member of the Italian Heritage Society and enjoyed entertaining, cooking and traveling.

Surviving are her husband of 42 years, a daughter, two sons and step-daughter as well as two sisters, four brothers and their families.

Contributions may be given to Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic High School, 2400 E. Pleasant Valley Blvd., Altoona, Pa. 16602.



N.J. concessionaire 'Fritz' Rolle dies at home at 65

DELRAY BEACH, Fla. — **Frederick J. "Fritz" Rolle, III**, a lifelong Jersey Shore concessionaire, passed away at his home here on April 3, 2014. He was 65.

A familiar businessman on several New Jersey boardwalks, Rolle was a partner in Jenkinson's South in Point Pleasant Beach and MCR Concessions in Wildwood.

From 1992-93, Rolle served as president of the New Jersey Amusement Association (NJAA). He was on the board of directors for more than 30 years.

NJAA honored Rolle for his contributions to the industry in 2012.

Rolle, who also lived in LaValette, N.J., was born May 19, 1948, in Lakewood, N.J. He is survived by his wife, Jeanne; two sisters; his children, Kimberle Rolle Samarelli, Rebecca Rolle and Frederick J. Rolle, IV; and two grandchildren.

Several generations of the Rolle family have worked in the industry, operating beach rental, game and food concessions. Kim Samarelli currently is executive director of NJAA.

Memorial donations may be made to Give Kids the World, 210 South Bass Road, Kissimmee, Fla., 34746, or online at www.gktw.org. Rolle raised \$70,000 for the non-profit children's concern as co-chair of the annual NJAA Golf Outing.

The staff of AT, which worked closely with NJAA in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, extends its personal condolences to Kim Samarelli and her family.

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Adventuredome's El Loco newest thriller at Circus Circus

STORY: Dean Lammanna

LAS VEGAS, Nev. — Over the last two decades, roller coasters in the desert destination have launched, booped, rebooped and even rolled languorously atop a lower-at-most 1,000-foot top.

With at least two such high-profile rides and an entire theme park adjacent to one casino resort having also been dismantled in that time, the Adventuredome at Circus Circus Hotel & Casino — the indoor fun park that has survived the head vicissitudes of family entertainment since its debut as Grand Slam Canyon in 1993 — has done something exceedingly right: providing rides and attractions in a climate-controlled environment connected to a resort known for its kid-friendliness for half a century.

It took more than six years of planning and decision-making to choose and customize a new thrill attraction that would both complement the park's popular Carnival Blast roller coaster and fit into the tight, dome-roofed footprint left by the River Runner flume ride.

But on Feb. 18, after several weeks of extensive testing and media testing, El Loco — an acrylic, inverting wild mouse-style coaster from S&S-Sauer Technologies, Inc. — and drops in such close proximity to one other ride that for an instant, they got the sensation for its official opening.

Tom Nolan, vice president of operations for the park, described the coaster as "the perfect addition" to the enclosed facility's arsenal of two dozen rides and attractions.

"El Loco offers our guests something they have never experienced before," Nolan said in a chat with Amusement Today just outside the coaster's exit on opening day. "Rides enjoy El Loco's twists, turns and drops in such close proximity to our other rides that for an instant, they got the sensation for its official opening."

El Loco, from S&S-Sauer Technologies, Inc., performs its wild mouse-on-steroids acrobatics with precision and family-friendly comfort within the dramatic confines of The Adventuredome at Circus Circus. It replaces the park's 20-year-old, five-story River Runner Shoot the Chute ride.

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FAST TRACK

COMPILED: Scott Rutherford,
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The power of the Force returns to **Disney's Hollywood Studios** for five consecutive weekends (every Friday, Saturday and Sunday) from May 16-June 15, 2014 for the park's annual **Star Wars Weekends**. Guests will enjoy a galactic event packed with out-of-this-universe entertainment and their favorite Disney's Hollywood Studios attractions. More than 60 characters from the *Star Wars* saga appear in the theme park, and each evening will end with *Symphony in the Stars*, a special pyrotechnics salute to the films.

Travis Williams, Mark Gu and Meghan McGaugh, former MBA students at the **University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV)**, have created the idea for **Omnia Las Vegas** — a nightlife venue highlighted by extreme amusement park attractions. Omnia is Latin, meaning "All," and this park will encompass everything that is exciting and unique about Las Vegas. The trio has built a business plan to bring this unique idea to fruition. The venue, which would be located on the south end of the Las Vegas Strip, will be at the forefront of sustainability and engineering. This nocturnal amusement park for adults will include extreme rides, next generation arcade games, a nightclub, bars and concert space. Omnia will cater to resident thrill seekers and tourists chasing a natural high.

The team's next steps is to complete a feasibility analysis and build an investor-ready platform. They hope the Disney Accelerator program will make this a reality.

The Battlestar Galactica (touted as the world's tallest dueling roller coaster), a star attraction at the **Universal Studios Singapore** theme park, may be closed for good. It was reported in *MyPaper* that the sci-fi themed rollercoaster, which has been closed since July 2013, will be replaced by a new ride by the end of this year. It was also reported that the new ride will follow a movie theme, and is expected to have new interiors and a fresh coat of paint, among other changes. **Resorts World Sentosa (RWS)**, which manages the theme park, has not issued any statements with regards to the closing of Battlestar Galactica. RWS has only previously said that the "ride is unavailable as it undergoes an attraction review." The ride was closed for over nine months, about a week after the theme park opened in March 2010. The ride was closed due to technical problems, when cracks were found in the seat-post supports of the coaster cars. It re-opened in February 2011.

The World's Largest Dinosaurs roared into Dallas, Texas, April 6, 2014 at the **Perot Museum of Nature and Science** for a limited engagement. The world-class traveling exhibition, presented locally by Highland Capital Management, will be on view in the Jan and Trevor Rees-Jones Exhibition Hall.

Imagine Exhibitions, Inc., in partnership with **Rovio Entertainment** and **JRA (Jack Rouse Associates)**, has announced **Angry Birds Universe: The Art and Science Behind**

a Global Phenomenon. The new blockbuster from Imagine will tour in Science centers, natural history museums and non-traditional venues throughout the world beginning in 2014. *Angry Birds Universe* will feature highly immersive environments, interactive media and a variety of physical, social and fun interactive exhibits.

Redemption Plus has announced their partnership with **License 2 Play** to be the exclusive industry supplier for the popular **DC Domo** brand of licensed plush. License 2 Play is the official license manufacturer for retail and amusement rights for DC Domo, along with several other top brands. This dual license features two highly recognizable and widely popular brands. Together the two brands have had an explosive partnership that has netted them great acclaim and have been featured in *USA Today*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *IGN* and *Buzzfeed*. This new deal will continue to generate excitement with the end user and help drive game revenue.

Core Cashless announced further plans to bring their new Paydia cashless technology to the boardwalk. Following Phase 1 in the spring, Core will now be providing solutions for both the **Jenkinson's Aquarium** and **Jenkinson's Pavilion** for a Phase 2 deployment scheduled for later this year. This will allow the park owners to unify all the separate areas of the boardwalk with one piece of software. Core will be providing both online and onsite cashless solutions, including print-at-home ticketing, access control and data reporting. Guests will be able to purchase tickets to the Aquarium online and use their Jenkinson's Fun Card at even more places around the boardwalk. Installation at the Aquarium and Pavilion will take place in the fall.

In a historic, global event, guests and cast members at **Disney Parks** around the world united in song to celebrate the 50th anniversary of **It's a Small World**, the classic Disney Parks attraction that opened as a tribute to peace and hope at the **1964 New York World's Fair**. Fans from around the world could join the festivities in a first-of-its-kind, online global sing-along at SmallWorld50.com.

A **PGAV**-designed theme park in China — **Chimelong Henquin Ocean Kingdom** — has set five Guinness Records: World's Largest Aquarium; World's Largest Aquarium Tank; World's Largest Underwater Viewing Dome; World's Largest Aquarium Window; World's Largest Acrylic Panel. St. Louis-based PGAV served as the product strategist, master planner, lead design consultant, and lead designer of the 125-acre attraction on Henquin Island near Macao. Ocean Kingdom took three years to construct, and features seven unique areas, each themed around a different part of the world's waterways. Ocean Kingdom is home to thousands of animals and boasts numerous rides, attractions, retail, and dining choices.

IAAPA seeks director of Safety and Accessibility

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) is seeking a director of Safety and Accessibility. The director of Safety and Accessibility will report to the senior vice president, Safety and Advocacy and will oversee the association's safety programs, represents the association before global standards-setting bodies, and serves as a member resource on safety, security, and accessibility issues.

Interested candidates

must have a college degree, engineering preferred, and 5-7 years' experience working in a safety position. Amusement or attractions industry experience is preferred and experience working with OSHA is strongly preferred.

Interested candidates can apply via the IAAPA Job Board.

No phone calls or agencies please.

For more information contact IAAPA's Susan Mosedale, at smosedale@iaapa.org.

PEOPLE WATCH

National Ticket announces three staff hires

National Ticket Company in Paxinos, Pa., has announced the addition of three new staff members.

John Watlington joins the account executive team and will be covering the Mid-Atlantic region. He spent the past 15 years as a sales and product development executive focusing on the use and development of cutting edge ticket and admission products.

Kyle Wiskow also joins the account executive team. He previously worked for multi-national corporations of Tyco and GE as well as private corporation Mercury Graphics where he sold custom printed tickets to collegiate sports teams.

Fred Proscino comes to National ticket with a background in military, aircraft/airframe, avionics, optics as well as ticketing for all self-service kiosk applications.

IAAPA welcomes three new employees

IAAPA welcomes three new staffers to its headquarters office in Alexandria, Virginia. They are;

Rosaria Leong began at IAAPA in February after her seven-year tenure at the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization where she served as an accountant, senior accountant, and then controller. As IAAPA's controller, Leong has overall responsibility for the association's financial records, including ledgers and statements. She oversees the association's annual audit as well as establishes internal controls and financial policies.

Before joining IAAPA in February, **Kavita Avasthi** served as an accounts payable and payroll specialist for the Children's Defense Fund, a nonprofit organization based in Washington, D.C. In her role as IAAPA's manager of accounting and human resources, Avasthi implements employee compensation and benefit programs and manages the association's day-to-day accounting programs including accounts payables and receivables.

Molly Fernandes joined IAAPA as its marketing director in February after working 10 years in various capacities at Consumer Electronics Association, including member relations and International Consumer Electronics Show (CES) exhibitor marketing. Fernandes is responsible for the development and implementation of marketing initiatives and campaigns related to IAAPA's programs, products, and services, including promoting IAAPA events.

Jan Sherman retires from Sally Corporation

After a 32-year career with Sally Corporation, **Jan Sherman** (assistant vice president of creative services) retired from the Jacksonville, Fla.-dark ride company in March. Replacing Sherman is **Lauren Wood**, who will handle requests and duties related to editorial and advertising.

All of the staff at AT wishes Jan all the best as she begins retirement and we say thank you for all the help given to us in the past 18 years.

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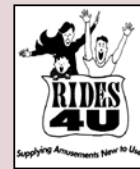
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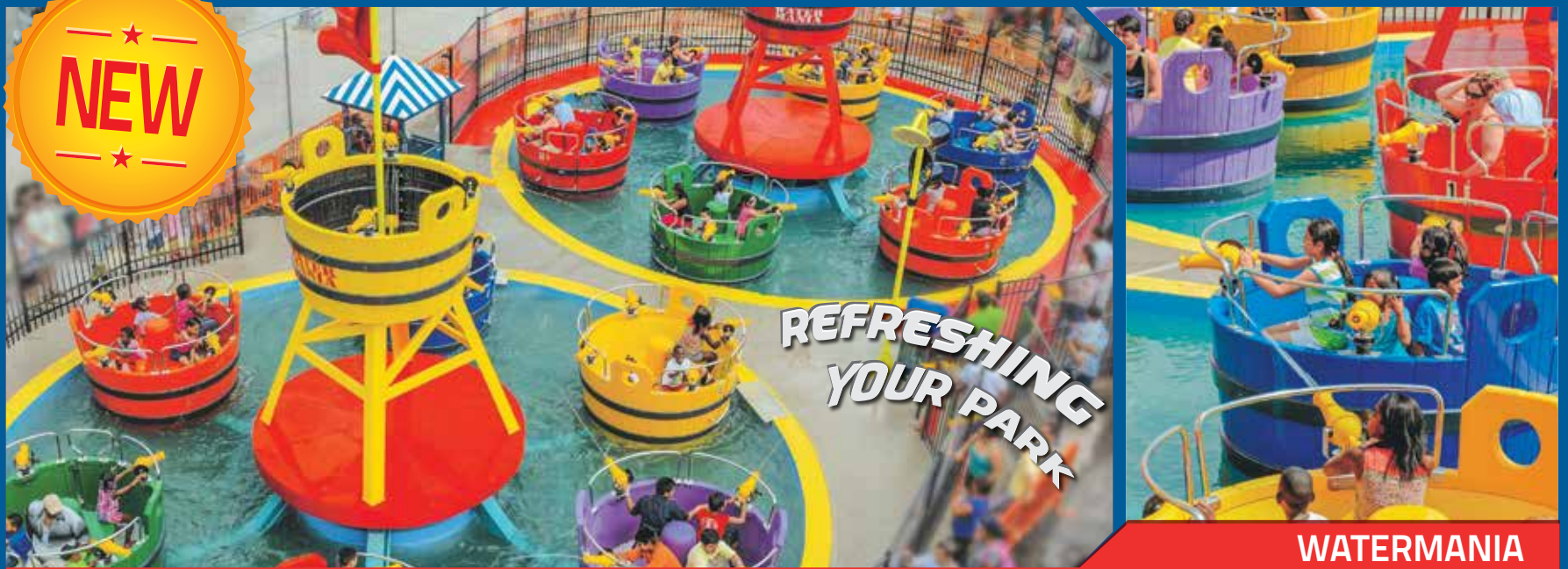
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