

INSIDE:



Schlitterbahn KC opens record height slide – 15 & 16

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Rocky Mountain and Six Flags partner in two new runaway hits Six Flags Mexico and Six Flags Great America debut new coaster experiences

STORY: Tim Baldwin
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MEXICO CITY, Mexico and GURNEE, Ill. — In 2011 and 2013, Six Flags partnered with Rocky Mountain Construction and Alan Shilke of Ride Centerline to transform two aging monolithic wooden coasters into spectacular hits. Redesigning the Texas Giant at Six Flags Over Texas and Rattler at Fiesta Texas into New Texas Giant and Iron Rattler utilizing I-Box track with a dramatic new layout met with overwhelming approval from their respective audiences. Previously, the high maintenance issues along with rider dissatisfaction with a rougher ride was indicative of a need for change. Long past their peak, the mega-woodies saw new life instead of a wrecking ball.

This summer, the two teams paired up again, this time doing one I-Box transformation and another new ride built from the ground up.

Medusa, a wooden coaster built at Six Flags Mexico in 2000 by Custom Coasters, had served its guests for a relatively short 14 seasons. Becoming somewhat aggressive after more than a decade, Six Flags opted to take the ride into the future using the successful formula it had seen before. Late in the 2013 season, the woodie gave its last rides.

Roberto Baez, communications manager for Six Flags



Six Flags Mexico transforms their aging wooden roller coaster into the highly-successful Medusa Steel Coaster using Rocky Mountain Construction's I-Box track. The ride is now faster and features three barrel rolls, including one right off the lift. At right, Six Flags Great America debuted Goliath. The zero-G stall is one of the longest spans of upside-down excitement on any coaster seen before. Both rides opened to rave reviews. COURTESY SIX FLAGS

Mexico, tells *Amusement Today*, "It took 10 months to transform our classic wooden coaster into Medusa Steel Coaster." He beams, "It is a completely new experience with a record-breaking seven heel-over-head maneuvers, including three full barrel rolls where riders experience the adrenaline of zero gravity."

Fred Grubb, president of Rocky Mountain Construction, is quite taken with the first inversion. When *AT* asked what the most dramatic changes were, Grubb says, "We put in the inversions, and particularly the one off the lift." In the past, a fast turn off the lift led to the first drop. Now, the steel version speeds around that



curve and does a barrel roll into the first drop. "It's an exciting, good element," reports Grubb. "We sped the ride up and put airtime in it," he adds. "It's really a convoluted ride." Medusa Steel Coaster stands 98 feet tall and hits speeds of 58 mph. Three zero-G barrel rolls join four over-banked turns on the 3,000 feet

of track. "The structure was in good shape," says Grubb. "We cut it down in parts and added in others."

When *AT* inquired if it was a challenge to market the coaster as a brand new ride, Baez conveyed the public understood the transformation.

"The response to Medusa Steel
▶ See SIX FLAGS, page 4

NEWSPAPER

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NEWTALK

EDITORIAL: Gary Slade, gslade@amusementtoday.com

It's state fair time!



The state fair and regional fair scene is in full tilt. Ohio to Minnesota; Iowa to Del Mar; Kansas to Texas, fairs across the country have wrapped up, are just getting underway or are in the final planning stages for their upcoming event.

Slade With the fairs in mind, *Amusement Today* found a feature story in *American Profile* magazine (July 20-26 edition) interesting and worth sharing.

Titled "5 Things We Love About State Fairs," the story selected these five, listed in order one through five:

1. Big Tex, State Fair of Texas in Dallas (Sept. 26-Oct. 19) takes the top spot. The 75-gallon-hat wearing, 55-foot-tall cowboy statue is the official greeter of the annual fair. After an electrical fire in 2012 destroyed the 1949-built Big Tex, a taller, heavier and stronger version of the Cowboy made his return to the fair last year.

2. Butter Cow, Iowa State Fair in Des Moines (Aug. 7-17) takes the second spot. Since 1911, 600 pounds of butter are transformed into a perfectly sculpted cow by way of tools mostly found in the common kitchen. The cow sculpture (kept behind glass at 40 degrees) serves as a tribute to Iowa's dairy industry.

3. Classic Coaster, Washington State Fair in Puyallup (Sept. 5-21) comes in at third. Since 1935, the 55-foot tall Classic Coaster has been thrilling fairgoers with its compact layout, dips and turns. Fun Fact: the coaster, originally built of Douglas Fir wood, was carried to the fairgrounds on horse-drawn wagons and was hoisted into place with a Model A Ford.

4. Pronto Pups, Minnesota State Fair in St. Paul (Aug. 21-Sept. 1) claims the fourth spot. Pronto Pups are plump hot dogs dressed in crispy cornmeal fried batter and have been a fair favorite since 1947. It was the first hot food item ever presented to fairgoers on a stick. The original recipe remains unchanged today.

5. Giant Cabbage Contest, Alaska State Fair in Palmer (Aug. 21-Sept. 1) rounds out the list of five. Alaska, with its 24 hours of summertime daylight, boasts fertile ground that grows oversized produce. The giant cabbage contest was introduced at the Alaska State Fair in 1941, with a winning entry of 23 pounds. In 2012, the fair winner set a Guinness World Record with a 138-pound cabbage. No word on how the winning cabbage was transported to and from the fair.

It's fair time. Go enjoy a ride on the midway, visit the arts and crafts exhibit, fill up on a corn dog and frosty beverage, play a game and catch a pig race. It's part of our American history, a part that is as strong and healthy as it has ever been.

CARTOON: Bubba Flint



EDITORIAL: Andrew Mellor, amellor@amusementtoday.com

A change for the better?



Mellor

The amusement park and carnival/fairground (depending on where you are from) industry has a history dating back many years and a key element of the business throughout this time has been the family ownership of parks and families running travelling enterprises, be they a single ride, a group of attractions or complete events.

Looking at the parks side of the business, in more recent times many have decried the gradual erosion of the family owned facility as increasingly larger operators, often with attractive offers, have seen the potential for greater things and have tempted owners to sell up. It's not been about the money in every case of course – some private park owners have had other very good reasons to want to dispose of their businesses – but whatever the reason it's hard not to think that a change of ownership from a private family concern to part of a corporate group or similar will, in some instances at least, change the atmosphere of a venue and how it feels, particu-

larly for regular guests.

One of the main reasons private owners may decide to sell, and end what in many cases have been several generations of family ownership, is the increased competition parks face in the modern era from fellow park facilities and the numerous other leisure time options people have to choose from these days. Competition for the leisure dollar has never been so strong and it's become increasingly harder for the private operator to continually invest in major attractions and facilities.

Parks may lose that personal touch when they are taken over by a bigger player but on the flip side a new owner will no doubt come in with the intention of investing heavily in their latest purchase, which is good news for all concerned. Indeed, some parks are totally transformed just a few years down the line as they are given a new lease of life.

Not everyone likes the idea of family — owned parks being swallowed up by the bigger players, and I sympathize with that way of thinking, but sometimes it's without doubt the right way for a park to go.

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2 MINUTE DRILL



COMPILED: Janice Witherow

Ramon Rosario — Zamperla, Inc.

When you meet Ramon Rosario, you know you have met a friend. Witty, dependable, hard-working and always full of life, Ramon has a special way of making people feel like they have known him for years. He has a true passion for his job as director of sales for Zamperla, Inc., and the amusement industry in general. Always a favorite presenter at *Amusement Today's* annual Golden Ticket Awards, Ramon typically brings the audience to laughter with his off-the-cuff approach and "anything goes" sense of humor.



Title

Director of Sales / Super Galactic Hero.

Number of years in the industry

20.

Best thing about the industry

Being in the business of making people smile.

Favorite amusement ride

Lots of favorites, but my stand-out ride would have to be The Phoenix wooden roller coaster at Knoebels.

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

SAD!

Biggest challenge facing our industry

Keeping our target audience engaged while competing with other businesses for the family entertainment dollar.

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

Visiting parks and watching people enjoy the fruits of our labor.

Favorite sandwich

BLT ... I love bacon!

It's September! Where would we find you on Labor Day?

Grilling for my family and then packing for another week on the road.

Complete this sentence: Television news is ...

Biased.

My all-time best vacation was ...

Last summer boating off the coast of Sicily with friends.



Rosario

The oddest birthday gift I have ever received is ...

A beer can hard-hat. It saw some use!

It's football season ... love it or loathe it?

I'm indifferent unless I am in Green Bay, Wisconsin, trying to find a hotel during a home game. In that specific case, I loathe it.

Coollest animal at the circus

Elephants. It is amazing what they are capable of.

In 20 years, I will be ...

Hopefully in good shape to enjoy my family.

What was your bravest moment?

Asking my wife to marry me.

When I say junk food, you say ...

In-N-Out Burger. No pun intended.

Favorite rainy day activity

Netflix with my wife.

The last movie I saw in the theatre was ...

One of the Star Wars movies.

The sport I play most often is ...

Old-fart softball!

The neatest thing anyone ever told me would have to be ...

"Yes!" This was when I asked my wife to marry me.

Right now, I would rather be ...

On a lazy river to beat this heat.

My phone rings about this many times a day

50!

The last thing I bought for under \$1 was ...

Bazooka gum at a Cracker Barrel somewhere.

I really wish someone would invent ...

Rogaine that actually works!

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY



Presented by the National Rollercoaster Museum

COMPILED: Richard Munch

•**1896:** In **Coney Island**, New York, the sensational event of the summer was the fiery destruction of the famous **Elephantine Colossus** (also known as the Elephant Hotel), on the evening of September 27. The fire began inside the structure, which had been vacant, and also burned down the **Shaw Channel Chute**, a roller coaster that circled the mammoth structure (and which used an elevator to bring cars to the top of the structure). The hotel opened in 1885, a 12-story pachyderm with guest rooms that faced the ocean, and featured an observation deck and a cigar store in one leg. Nearly 150 feet tall, it was considered one of the most prominent features of the Island, and its peculiar outline made it one of the first objects on shore visible from ships at sea. **James Lafferty**, the owner and designer of the hotel, also built the roadside attraction, **Lucy the Elephant**, which still stands in Margate City, New Jersey.

•**1919:** Another serious fire threatened **Coney Island**, New York, on September 28, when flames destroyed most of the wooden constructed **Sea Beach Palace** on Surf Avenue. Originally opened in July 1879, the famous building was brought to Brooklyn in sections from Philadelphia, where it was featured at the **Centennial International Exposition of 1876**. Primarily used as the terminal for the New York and Sea Beach Railroad, it would also house exhibits and performances by popular musical acts. By January 1920, a local syndicate was in the act of demolishing the remaining structure to build the Palace of Joy. The fire also slightly damaged parts of the adjoining **L.A. Thompson Scenic Railway**, which was repaired in time for the 1920 season.

•**1940:** During a September 12, 1940 Rockaway Chamber of Commerce meeting, owners of **Rockaway Playland**, in Queens County, New York, suggested that amusement parks were a dying breed of entertainment, caused by a combination of the great depression and the increased use of the private automobile. They also had decided not to provide any extensive improvements until the public demanded more thrill rides, claiming that people had more choices than ever to visit a city park, beach or swimming pool, within the comfort of their own car. They claimed that people no longer wanted thrills such as those provided by the roller coaster, the whip, the spinning rides and other typical amusement park concessions. They would be proven wrong over the next few years, as the world went to war in Europe and on the Pacific, where the amusement park provided some relief during difficult times.

•**1974:** Popular Western Pennsylvania radio disc jockey, **Jackson Armstrong**, and Kennywood Park employee **Bernie Kusibab**, rode the **Thunderbolt** at **Kennywood Park**, West Mifflin, Pennsylvania for 750 laps, finishing the continuous riding stunt on September 2. **Kusibab** began the marathon with another DJ, who became ill shortly after the start. Armstrong filled in and completed 441 miles and 31 hours on the venerable Pittsburgh landmark, besting the 728 lap record of four teenagers, who had ridden the Racer at Kings Island, Mason, Ohio, in June. A year later, **Mike Boodley** would grab the record with his 1001 lap ride on Brooklyn's Cyclone, at Coney Island.

•**2002:** The last wood coaster designed by **Custom Coasters International (CCI)** opened on September 28, at **Cliff's Amusement Park** in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Named in a contest, the **New Mexico Rattler** featured an 80 foot drop with 2,750 feet of track, including a final dive into a tunnel. Expected to open in late June 2002, CCI was unable to complete the ride in time due to financial problems. Park owners Gary and Linda Hays, who had been planning the project for nearly a decade, began the arduous task of hiring the coaster crew to complete the ride, as well as purchase the trains directly from **Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters**. This unusual construction process added 3 months to the project. Today, the popular steel framed ride remains the signature attraction at New Mexico's only major amusement park.

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►SIX FLAGS

Continued from page 1

Coaster has been phenomenal," he says. "Our guests appreciate that Medusa Steel Coaster is a completely new experience." Baez points out that Medusa offers the most inversions of any hybrid coaster around the world. "The first drop is an inversion!" he smiles.

Medusa Steel Coaster is Rocky Mountain Construction's first coaster project outside the states. When asked if this brought forth any challenges, Grubb mentions that shipping is a bit of an issue, getting acquainted with different work habits and the language barrier are minor factors, but overall it worked well. Baez comments, "Medusa Steel Coaster was an exciting project and we were pleased to partner with Rocky Mountain Construction. They are the experts in this kind of next-generation roller coaster."

Back in the U.S., Six Flags Great America debuted Goliath in mid-June. This time, it was not an I-Box transformation of a previous coaster. With the award-winning success of Silver Dollar City's Outlaw Run in 2013, Ride Centerline and RMC designed a completely new ride using a wood bed track with a top layer of RMC's exclusive Topper Track. Painting the top layer a vivid orange gives Goliath a distinctive, sleek look. Add to that a lift structure straddling two steel supports and the lines between wood and steel continue to blur.

"There was not enough room on the site for a conventional wood structure," says Grubb in reference to the

change of the original drawing of the ride to the completely modified wide-open lift hill. "We had to come up with this idea and people liked the look of it."

Goliath occupies the plot of land that was previously occupied by Iron Wolf, B&M's very first coaster built in 1990. Ironically, the station was built even prior with the Z-Force space diver coaster in the 1980s. With each installation, the station has had additions placed into it. With the Goliath project, the record-setting statistics still had to be contained into the landlocked space, making for a snug fit. It should be noted that sometimes such limitations can add to the intensity of a wonderful thriller.

Hank Salemi, park president for Six Flags Great America says, "I give a lot of credit to Rocky Mountain. We had to fit a coaster into this very unique space, including straddling an emergency service road and our railroad tracks adjacent to the ride. When we were looking for ideas, Rocky Mountain came to us with this opportunity. It was a home run."

Goliath has been promoting the tallest, fastest and steepest superlatives in its advertising. If any one wishes to challenge that claim of height, such as sister park Six Flags Great Adventure or Six Flags Fiesta Texas, the measurement claim comes in the size of the first drop. While standing at 165 feet, the drop streaks below ground level, holding the record at 180 feet. The dramatic 85-degree initial plunge sends riders into the tangled mayhem at 72 mph.

Other features include the two inversions, one a 180-degree roll into an inverted drop



Seen above is the sleek, towering structure that provides Goliath with a steep 165-foot lift; the world record 85-degree, 180-foot drop; and the upside down span of the zero-G stall. Goliath features two inversions and three dramatic overbanked turns. At right, riders cheer for the exhilarating airtime moments incorporated into the 3,100 feet of track. The ride was built from the ground up utilizing Topper Track. AT/TIM BALDWIN



and an upside-down zero-G stall. Three over-banked turns are incorporated in the non-stop action-packed layout as well.

Like Mexico, Goliath uses trains manufactured by Rocky Mountain. The restraints involve a belt and a lap bar, with curved moldings in front of the legs placing the rider in a "z" position for maximum safety.

Goliath gives Six Flags Great America bragging rights to four wooden coasters, the most in the theme park chain. American Eagle brought national fanfare to the park in 1981 for its massive size. Viper was added to the mix with a Cyclone twister style ride. In 2010, enthusiasts everywhere raved at the preservation of Kiddieland's Little Dipper nicely placed in the middle of the park. Now Goliath brings on a fourth for the avid thrill-seeker.

Salemi points out, "We have two rides here, Little

Dipper and Whizzer, and we have people who grew up in the Chicago area that say one of those two rides is the first coaster they ever rode. There is an old adage in the industry that says kiddie coasters don't do much for you. We're living proof, we had a great year we put in Little Dipper." And now with the new project, he says, "Goliath comes with very unique traits. Not just the three world records, but it also has two inversions. It is the first inverting wooden coaster we've opened at Great America. It is just amazing. It's truly a thrill-seeker paradise. Our guests love it, coaster enthusiasts love it — the response has been amazing."

Prior to the opening of Goliath, the park's long running marquee ride has been Raging Bull, a mega non-looping B&M steel coaster closer to the front of the park. Now, rather quickly to be honest, it would appear a war between the two as to which is the fan favorite has developed. Katy Enrique, public relations manager, grins, "We have a lot of guests say they like Goliath better than Raging Bull, which is a huge statement to make in this park." Amusingly, T-shirts in the gift shop exit have already capitalized on this coaster competition.

Testimony for the success of the installation can be found on the brake run. The uproarious cheers and fanfare are inescapable. Riders near this AT staffer were exuberant with one screaming "Best new ride at Great America!" With the trains smoothly slicing through 3,100 feet of track in no time, just as with Outlaw Run and Iron Rattler, riders are



Six Flags' Katy Enrique shows off the park's newest battle presented on merchandise. AT/TIM BALDWIN

craving more.

With two spectacular new additions to the Six Flags lineup of coasters, Rocky Mountain Construction, Ride Centerline and Six Flags continue an attraction battling record of 1,000. These undeniable hits create a grand slam of proven winners.

Salemi remarks, "The Rocky Mountain team was fantastic. We have such a good relationship with those guys. This is the first coaster they have built for [Six Flags] from scratch. Both Alan and Fred were hands on and here on site a great deal, and of course, their local team. The winter we had here — brutal temperatures, brutal snows... those guys were out here in inclement weather to get this thing done when they got it done. I'm so happy with their work. They are one of the pre-eminent coaster builders out there right now."

"We've created a great working relationship with Six Flags," says Grubb, "and we are going to continue to have great success with them."



Goliath's crowd pleasing experience comes from Rocky Mountain Construction's expertise paired with Ride Centerline's wild layout into one smooth, comfortable and thrilling roller coaster. Rocky Mountain provided the trains on both 2014 Six Flags attractions. AT/DAN FEICHT





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INTERNATIONAL

► Finland's Sarkanniemi adds High Voltage thriller from Zamperla — See Page 12

Europa-Park creates a new €25 million themed expansion

New Mack ride system leads a list of attractions

STORY: Tim Baldwin
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

RUST, Germany — In recent years, the world has seen amazing expansions of new themed areas embracing Harry Potter at Universal or Cars Land at Disney parks. Industry-minded folk might feel that only such year-round powerhouses can create imaginatively detailed lands to transport people away into such branded media environments. But Europa-Park has proven that assumption wrong.

This summer, the German theme park has set aside its traditional thought process of spotlighting European countries in favor of a popular movie franchise enjoyed throughout Europe. Arthur — In the Minimoys Kingdom is certainly much more than just a ride; it's a new land engineered to absolutely dazzle spectators regardless of age.

The new attraction makes use of every bit of the €25 million (U.S. \$33.8 million) invested into it.

Much of the focus with new attractions at Europa-Park is the extended year component. While the park is primarily dormant the first three months of the year, Europa-Park enjoys an extremely successful Christmas season spotlighting winter, as well as year round convention business with its Confertainment Center and resort hotels. Many conventioners can often book specific attractions or areas

of the park for those in attendance, giving the park good cause to look at a year round impact on any new addition.

Secluded back in a forested area, a new village is discovered after one crosses a bridge over one of the park's creeks. First impressions are immediate. This isn't just a ride, but something completely different. An indoor village is striking with its living, growing exterior. Not just themed, 500 square meters are alive with more than 3,000 plants on the façade of the building. Consisting mainly of bushes, shrubs and a variety of grasses, *Amusement Today* was on hand in the beginning to see the insertion of many of these living organisms earlier this season. Of note, one third are indeciduous plants giving the facade a green presence even in winter. Ingeniously, the upright vertical walls have a special irrigation system, including an irrigation computer which is very groundbreaking in Germany. The outside grounds have also been graced with three mulberry trees that are more than 200 years old.

If the outside looks impressive, the inside is even more so. On a dramatic scale, the interior is 45,000 square meters (147,638 square feet) with a 16 meter (52 foot) dome providing a spacious grandeur. Theming even extends outside of the indoor village with external queuing and outdoor sections to the high profile Arthur attraction. As riders fly by, it is even further enticement for guests to see what all is new.

Leading the pack of new attractions, the dark ride



On the new Arthur — the Ride at Europa-Park, guests are seated in comfortable four-seat suspended vehicles (left) that can climb, rotate, pause and launch. Above: The vehicles, in a train of three, glide above the fanciful Minimoys Kingdom that is decorated with 50 film figures and more than 850 poppies, leaves and grasses. COURTESY EUROPA-PARK

named after Arthur sports an amazing new ride system. Differing from just about any other dark ride, this new ride system from Mack Rides utilizes overhead roller coaster track with controlled vehicles that can climb, rotate, pause and launch. All these maneuvers culminate in a grand bit of storytelling. A continuous-moving platform keeps the line moving briskly, accommodating 1,100 – 1,500 passengers an hour. Eventually, three cars tethered together set off and experience the voyage through seven kingdoms as one cluster with each gondola getting its own surprise ele-

ment, making re-rides particularly fun. The ride begins with the storyline being developed via a projection screen where passengers get the sense that they are shrinking down to mere inches, just as the characters in the trilogy of Arthur movies are. Now in the Minimoys world, characters from the animated movie come alive as animatronics talk, move and jump at passengers as vehicles spiral upward inside a large tree. With bugs and critters and everyday objects now larger than life and interacting with guests, the ride is sheer entertainment. As the story progresses, riders

encounter dangers and experience launched speeds which add particular excitement. In two locations, the train of vehicles dart into the daylight tantalizing those queued up below for their turn. One of the particularly special highlights is the flight inside the village over hundreds of people below. In addition to the animatronics, sound, smells and lighting make the story vividly alive. Interactive buttons on the ride gondolas also let riders choose the direction in which they will face as they re-enter the honeycomb environment as they are returning

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Europa-Park's Michael Mack shares thoughts on new Arthur attraction

RUST, Germany — *Amusement Today* caught up with Michael Mack of Europa-Park to gather his perspective on the new Arthur — In the Minimoy's Kingdom expansion.



Mack

What is the most exciting thing about the new addition and the new ride system?

"I couldn't say what the one most exciting thing about Arthur — In the Minimoy's Kingdom is. It is the whole experience, the combination of detailed theming, the amazing ride, the food — I could go on. I am however particularly proud of the new ride system developed by Mack Rides. It is our first inverted, spinning, powered coaster and the possibilities we have there are almost endless. The cars accelerate and can be spin controlled at any time on the ride which gives a whole new dynamic to the ride. We ride relaxed through a beautiful scene, then encounter a rat, for example, and suddenly accel-

erate with incredible power; the system supports storytelling in a new dimension. We also work with aromas, lights, projections and, of course, extensive theming. A truly unique ride."

Working with a movie brand, it is sort of a first for Europa-Park. Was there any hesitation on doing an attraction that was not based on a European region?

"No. I met the famous French director Luc Besson about five years ago. When we talked about his movies and then, especially, *Arthur and the Invisibles*, I immediately felt his passion about the project and I knew that it would be a perfect match for Europa-Park. The passion and the attention to detail are a very close connection between Luc Besson and the Mack family. This is why we had so much fun developing and building this project, and it also is the key to the very successful start we have had. We couldn't have wished for a more positive feedback from our guests."

Mack Rides did the ride system. Whom did you partner with

for theming elements and animatronics?

"Working on a major project like Arthur — In the Minimoy's Kingdom, we obviously needed reliable partners. Especially as theming is such a crucial part to this attraction. It is the most sophisticatedly themed attraction we ever built, I would say. We worked with companies such as AAB, Heimotion, Kraftwerk, P&P Projects and TAA Industries."

How does this new expansion fit into the resort's near-year round operation?

"The tourism and theme park industry is very dependent on weather. It is therefore important for theme parks to have a range of attractions which are independent of weather. It has been an aim of Europa-Park to become more weather independent in the last years and with Arthur — In the Minimoy's Kingdom, we have definitely expanded this field."

"An indoor attraction, of course, also increases the capacity for our winter season, when, for example, the water attractions

are closed. It is, however, not our intention to have a year round operation in the nearer future."

What key people involved can you compliment?

"There are so many I could mention, but I think overall it was great team effort. We have never built a larger and more sophisticated indoor attraction. The ride system was a prototype and the work between Mack Rides and Emis Electrics once again was great. You could feel the energy and the dedication of each and every one. It was great to see the project develop, but I am not going to lie — I am happy that it is now up and running."

What length of time was involved from conceiving the concept to finishing the attraction?

"The first conversations with Luc Besson were more than five years ago. The planning for the actual attraction started about four years ago, and the ground-breaking was in November 2012 — where Luc Besson was, by the way, present."

—Tim Baldwin



Left: this close-up shows the detail of one of the 50 animatronic figures used throughout the Arthur attraction. Above: the train is launched into the daylight to surprise riders, and tantalize those waiting in the queue.

COURTESY EUROPA-PARK

▶ARTHUR Continued from page 7

to the station.

Prior to riding, the queue takes guests through some amazing theming. Sculpted trees and roots bring in the atmosphere in rich detail as guests queue indoors, while pathways outside let them take in the action overhead. It's all orchestrated wonderfully well. Inside the village, theming includes 5,500 cubic meters (16,400 cubic feet) of artificial rock landscape, 1,200 square meters (3,280 square feet) of green facade, more than 50 film figures, and more than 850 poppies, leaves and grasses.

"We have had amazing feedback. People write us to tell us how great they thought it was," says Dominik Seitz, press spokesman, corporate communications for Europa-Park. "You can see people coming through the exit of the ride going straight back into the queue to ride again. All with huge smiles on their faces."

The expansion, however, doesn't just stop at this one high-profile attraction. The height requirement for Arthur is only 39 inches (and an age

requirement of four years old), reaching a wide demographic, but there is much more inside to delight even the smallest of toddlers. Using forced perspective, many of the homes and habitats of the village are elevated in the trees. Slides from upper areas give children more overviews of the village, before slithering down inside enormous roots. The slides were provided by Atlantics of Germany. Other rides round out the ride package, as well. A freetail tower, themed with red poppies, was supplied from Zierer of Germany. A Zamperla Jump Around, which the park calls the Mül-Mül Carousel adds even more fun. Tots not tall enough for even these rides will find a play area just for them provided by Eibe, another German company. Interspersed with all this activity are resting areas, food and drink options, restrooms and shops, making for an all-encompassing new area.

While Europa-Park is celebrating this tremendous new addition to the theme park, Mack Rides is sure to be sought out for new attractions that involve storytelling. In addition to the controlled aspect of the dark ride experience, Mack

has stated that there can be actual roller coaster portions to the system as well. Let the ideas begin.

FAST FACTS

Name/Park

Arthur — the Ride/
Europa-Park

Ride System

Mack Rides

Ride Height/Track Length

44.29 feet/1,804 feet
long, indoor and
outdoor sections

Maximum Launched Speed

19.26 mph

Number of Trains

Seven, each seating
12 passengers

Capacity

1,100 - 1,500 pph,
number of trains in
operation varies pph

Supporting Partners

Ride: Emis Electrics, AAB,
Heimotion, Kraftwerk, P&P
Projects, and TAA Industries
Minimoy's Kingdom Project:
Zierer, Zamperla,
Atlantics, Eibe

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Speaker line-up promises 20 hours of key education at EAS 2014

STORY: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

AMSTERDAM, Netherlands — This year's Euro Attractions Show (EAS) is set to be another record-breaker and in addition to the largest trade show floor in the event's history the conference program running alongside the exhibition also promises some impressive educational opportunities and an impressive speaker line-up.

The program kicks off with the Institute for Attractions Management which will run September 21-23 and is a management development program aimed at managers in mid-career. On September 22, the IAAPA Safety Institute will be held, with safety colleagues from around Europe gathering to hear more on the development of the ISO, EN and more harmonization with ASTM standards.

On the same day, an EAS pre-tour will take participants to some of Holland's premier



attractions with visits to Efteling, Walibi Holland and Dolfinarium, while on September 23, the program of individual conference sessions begins. Among these will be one entitled *Mobile Manager: How to use mobile technology in every part of an attraction*, along with another entitled *Fun fright and festivals: how to develop season events to increase attendance and revenues*.

A session on branded goods and using intellectual properties will feature too, while the first day of the show will also see the popular session CEO's Speak repeated

once again, with four CEOs providing an hour of debate, discussion, story-telling – and fun. Participants on this occasion will be Andreas Andersen from Liseberg, Roderick van Zuylen from Duinrell Park, Mascha van Till from Walibi Holland and Tolga Alisoglu from Vialand, the shopping, entertainment and lifestyle complex which opened in Turkey in 2013.

The Leadership Breakfast takes place on the morning of September 24, with Steve Van den Kerkhof, CEO of the Plopsa Group and Studio 100 chairman, as the keynote speaker. His presentation will look at the history and success of Studio 100 and its Plopsa theme park division.

The second day of the show will also see sessions on crisis management, what mature attractions can do to renew and refresh their facilities, using social media to manage guest comments, and employee development strate-



Attendees at this year's EAS Leadership Breakfast will hear from Steve Van den Kerkhof, CEO of the Plopsa Group and Studio 100 Chairman. COURTESY PLOPSA GROUP/STUDIO 100

gies. The fifth annual IAAPA Europe Water Park Forum will be held on the same day.

The educational program on September 25, the final day of the show, will focus on the family entertainment center and indoor play center sectors,

while a post EAS tour will allow attendees to visit more key European attractions. Among these will be Phantasialand in Germany, and Toverland, Burgers Zoo and the Corpus Experience science attraction in the Netherlands.



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Simworx Angry Birds 4D flies into Thorpe Park

WEST MIDLANDS, U.K. — Simworx has installed a new Angry Birds 4D Experience at Thorpe Park Resort, near London, as part of the new Angry Birds Land at the park.

The new 4D experience is part of a partnership deal signed by park operator Merlin Entertainments plc and Finland-based Rovio Entertainment, creator of the Angry Birds franchise, who turned to Simworx to help create the world's first Angry Birds 4D Experience theater. It forms the unique centerpiece of the new area based on the popular game, which also features suitably themed dodgem cars, a drop tower ride and interactive games.

Simworx was contracted to develop and supply the new 4D Experience, ensuring that the attraction highlighted the high-impact special effects that visitors enjoy during the new 10-minute, 4D film, produced by Los Angeles film production company Pure Imagination. The theater incorporates 326 seats and various light and sound effects, along with a host of special effects to immerse guests in the experience. These include air gusts, water jets, leg ticklers, bubbles and smoke, in addition to a new, unique to Thorpe Park Resort, "catapult" chair movement linked to particular moments in the film. When the Angry Birds are pulled back into a catapult on the film, the viewers' seats also go back slowly until the birds are fired from the catapult. The seats are then propelled forwards very quickly to simulate the catapult firing movement.

The vast array of effects Simworx has incorporated into the high-tech theater puts visitors right in the centre of the action as they are taken through a fast-paced adventure as the Angry Birds attempt to get their precious eggs back from King Pig.

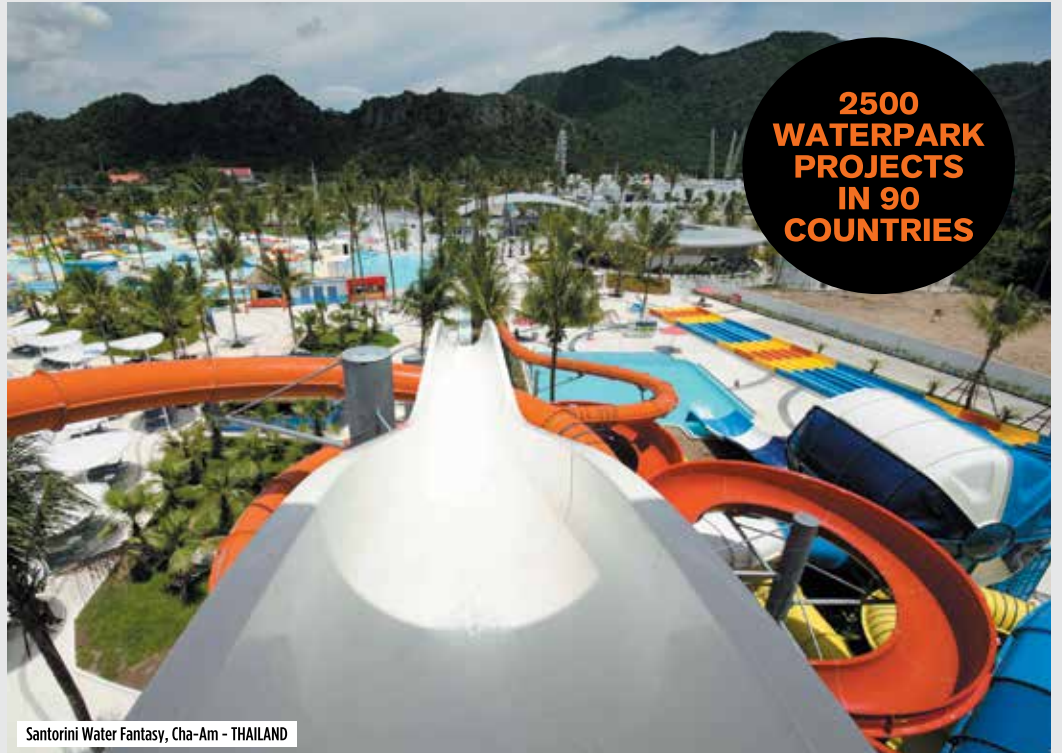
Simworx worked closely with the Merlin Magic Making creative team on the project. The company's Managing Director Terry Monkton said: "It's been a pleasure working with the Merlin team on such an outstanding project and we

are delighted to have been part of what will I'm sure be a very successful new area at Thorpe Park Resort. Angry Birds has a huge following and is popular with a very wide age range; what we've created within the 4D theatre immerses visitors in the experience to create a really fun attraction. We're delighted with the end result."

U.K.-based Simworx has installed a new Angry Birds 4D Experience at Thorpe Park Resort, near London, as part of the new Angry Birds Land at the park. The theater incorporates 326 seats and various light and sound effects, along with a host of special effects to immerse guests in the experience. The new 10-minute, 4D film is produced by Los Angeles film production company Pure Imagination. COURTESY SIMWORX



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Finland's Särkänniemi adds High Voltage thrills

STORY: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

TAMPERE, Finland – Following a major development last year when it introduced the new Doghill themed area, Finland's Särkänniemi has continued its investment in new attractions in 2014 with the addition of the High Voltage thrill ride.

The latest addition to the park's ride line-up is a model of Italian manufacturer Zamperla's Power Surge, which since its introduction has proved to be one of the company's signature thrill rides. It features six arms which rotate around a central hub attached to the ride's main arm which rises from the loading position to a height of 15.6 meters (51 feet) in a constantly spinning motion. Up to 24 riders at any one time twist, flip and spin through two motor driven rotations and a third gravity driven rotation, providing a different ride experience on every ride.

The upper part of the ride goes through a maximum of 12 revolutions per minute with the arms spinning at four revolutions per minute. Two, two-seater



rider carriers are positioned at the end of each arm and spin freely, hence a different ride experience each time. The height restriction for riders is 130 centimeters (51 inches) and it is located on the shore of Lake Näsijärvi at the park.

Särkänniemi has also introduced new technology in its planetarium for 2014 with the addition of new Digistar 5 equipment, an advanced digital Full Dome theatre system. U.S.-based Evans & Sutherland have also produced a fast-paced space adventure film called *Cosmic Adventure* especially for the park, which starts with an amusement park on the moon with a roller coast-

The major ride addition for 2014 at Särkänniemi in Finland was the High Voltage thriller, a Zamperla Power Surge, shown at right. Above, the new Doghill themed area added to Särkänniemi in 2013 is proving a popular addition to the park.

COURTESY SARKANNIEMI ADVENTURE PARK

er that takes passengers to the frontiers of space in a hybrid ship.

And the aforementioned Särkänniemi Doghill, added in 2013, has proven to be a popular addition to the park. Based on the characters created by Mauri Kunnas, a Finnish children's author who is also well-known all



over the world, the area has been constructed faithfully in the spirit of the books.

Doghill, which covers around 1 hectare (2.4 acres), is divided into the Town of Doghill, Doghill Farm and Pawhill, a small stage with activity area. Various play areas, beautiful, nearly life-size buildings and real

animals welcome visitors to step into a 19th century world with a touch of modern fun. The area has been designed with all sorts of seasonal activities in mind throughout the year too and at over €5 million (U.S. \$6.7 million), is Särkänniemi's largest investment of the 21st century.

Zamperla enjoying another busy year — worldwide

STORY: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

VICENZA, Italy — Italian manufacturer Zamperla continues to enjoy much success with new installations of rides in countries throughout the world and the continued growth of its already extensive product range.

One of the latest additions to the company's product line-up is the Revolution version of the well-known Discovery, which offers a 360 degree rotation. Four versions of the attraction have already been sold, including a custom model with 20 seats looking inwards and a maximum height of 37 meters (122 feet) for Firma Steindl, which has been installed at the Vienna Prater in Austria.

A Midi Discovery Revolu-



tion is also now in operation at Etnaland in Italy, while a similar model has been installed at Coney Island in the U.S. Both have 16 seats and a maximum height of 18 meters. A 30-seat model with a height of 30 meters, called Stratosfear, is also now thrilling visitors to Rain-

bow's End in Auckland, New Zealand.

The ride of the moment for Zamperla, however, continues to be the Air Race, 32 versions of which have now been sold in less than four years. Among the more recent installations have been an Air

Italian manufacturer Zamperla is enjoying another highly successful year in 2014 with numerous new ride openings throughout Europe and the rest of the world. This Midi Discovery Revolution is the 30-seat model added to Rainbow's End in New Zealand.

COURTESY ZAMPERLA

Race 6.4 (six arms, four-seater vehicles) at Drayton Manor Theme Park in the U.K. and another 6.4 model at Walygator in France. Additionally, an Air Race 8.2 (eight arms, two seater vehicles) has been delivered to the Mall of Istanbul in Turkey with a 6.2 model

going to the Mall of Arabia in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Staying in the Europe/Scandinavia region, Zamperla also continues to enjoy success with some of its classic rides, one example being the Power Surge that has opened this year at Särkänniemi in Finland (see separate article), while the company is also seeing continued success worldwide for its roller coaster division. In addition to the well documented Thunderbolt at Coney Island, other new installations have included a custom Twister coaster for the Mall of Istanbul and a Gravity Moto coaster for the Adventure Mall in Sharjah in the U.A.E. Other coasters have also been delivered to venues in the U.S., Japan, Indonesia and China.

Innovative Leisure gives two new locations the Sky Trail treatment

UNITED KINGDOM — Innovative Leisure is pleased to announce it has installed High Ropes attractions at two new U.K. locations — the National Water Sports Centre in Nottingham and North Bay Railway in Scarborough.

The National Water Sports Center (NWSC) has installed a double level Navigator course which pits its adventurous clientele against 36 rope elements. Patrons need never feel at risk as the course's cutting edge continuous belay system ensures maximum safety with enough freedom to create an adrenaline fuelled sense of danger. Guests can test their nerves across tight rope walks and cargo nets amongst the many elements the course offers. With a throughput of over 200 participants per hour, and a capacity of up to 50 people

at once, the Nottingham Sky Trail is geared to please and excite thousands of dare-devils this summer and beyond.

The NWSC site has also added a Sky Tykes Junior Ropes Course which gives children from as young as two years old the chance to try out challenging rope elements just like the bigger Sky Trail course. Utilizing the same belay system as Sky Trail, the Sky Tykes users hold their parent's hand as they tackle rope bridges and plank walks.

On the east coast and set in the Scarborough hills, North Bay Railway has been a popular local tourist attraction for many a decade. The park offers a collection of immaculately maintained mini engines that travel to the other side of the bay along the Scarborough coast, alongside a



Innovative Leisure recently installed High Ropes attractions at two new U.K. locations — the National Water Sports Centre in Nottingham and North Bay Railway in Scarborough. COURTESY INNOVATIVE LEISURE

boating lake and a traditional 19th century water chute.

The park is now ready to appeal to a more adventurous

audience with the installation of its Sky Trail High Ropes course. Not unlike the Nottingham course, the dou-

ble-level Navigator will take visitors far from their comfort zone and to dizzying heights to face its many rope-based elements. With the train travelling directly beneath the course, the ropes offer great views of the Peasholme Park.

"A two-tier Sky Trail has been installed at the North Bay Railway, Scarborough," said the attraction's owner, David Humphreys. "It has proven to be a hit from the start with our customers, keeping them on site for a longer period and helping with other secondary sales."

"The team at Innovative Leisure came up with their proposals for the site and helped with gaining planning approval. The build was completed without issue and the training given to the new staff was first class."



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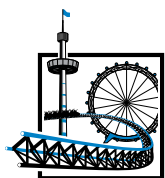
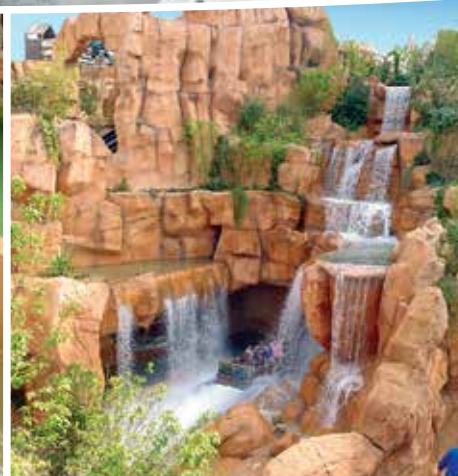
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WATER PARKS & RESORTS

▶ Newest Splash Kingdom's ground terrain posing challenges in first full season — Page 20

Schlitterbahn Kansas City goes 'insane' with record breaking slide

Texas testing...



Kansas City thrilling...



The concept for Verrückt began with a one-half size prototype (top) at Schlitterbahn's testing facility in New Braunfels. Above, Verrückt in action at Schlitterbahn Kansas City. Below, the Henry men of Schlitterbahn: sons Gary and Jeff with dad Bob in the middle.

AT/GARY SLADE; VERRÜCKT
COURTESY SCHLITTERBAHN KANSAS CITY



STORY: Jeffrey L. Seifert
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

KANSAS CITY, Kansas — Jeff Henry has long been a pioneer in the waterpark industry. After moving to New Braunfels at the age of 11, he became fascinated with the Comal River and learned about water flow just by watching the river. He started building water rides at age 15 and has never stopped. Attending undergraduate school for just one week, he has no formal training in physics or hydrodynamics, instead learning everything through trial and error. As Arrow Development founders, Karl Bacon and Ed Morgan learned, fluid dynamics is scalable. What works at smaller scales will work the same on larger scales. Henry also discovered this and devised many of his water attractions first as models.

From there it was onto larger test models — outdoors — large enough for a person to actually ride. What would eventually become a flow rider and master blaster, were little more than plywood structures where the idea that water could be propelled uphill was initially tested.

It should be no surprise then that Verrückt, the world's tallest waterslide, began life as a much smaller, very-temporary structure at the same secret testing ground where the flow rider and prototype master blaster were first set in motion. *Amusement Today* publisher Gary Slade was on hand — just as he was back in 1993 — to see history in the making. In December 2012, on a very temporary structure, a raft was lifted to the top by an excavating shovel. Weights were loaded, and the first raft was

sent down the drop, successfully climbing the second hill and landing into the splash pond below. A number of different weight combinations were tried, but with the laborious process of retrieving the raft and getting it back to the top, daylight was coming to end before it was determined safe enough for a human rider. The next morning Jeff Henry climbed aboard and took the first ride. After several test rides, the goal was achieved. He and several of his top people — most of whom have been working with Henry 10 to 25 years, or even longer — were satisfied it would work. Then the entire structure was disassembled. The secret testing ground once again lay dormant, waiting for Henry's next big idea

In November 2012 — a month before testing had begun, it was with bold confidence that Henry announced to the world that Schlitterbahn Kansas City would build the world's tallest, fastest, most extreme waterslide — with a projected opening date of summer 2013. Details at the time were sketchy: the slide would combine the breathtaking drop of a speed slide along with an uphill portion like a master blaster. Statistics were not released other than it would eclipse the current record-holder, Insano at Beach Park in Fortaleza, Brazil, which stands 134.5 feet tall. The ride would be known as Verrückt — German for insane.

Work progressed steadily and quietly through 2013, with the highest part of the structure up by March, but as the months marched on, it became clear the slide was not going to

open for the 2013 season. Outside of Kansas City, little attention was given to the massive structure until November of 2013, when a photo from the top of the slide was leaked to Twitter and went viral. Within 24 hours it had generated over a million hits. Talk shows from coast to coast picked up on the news and Schlitterbahn's in house video had generated 2.5 million hits. The news attracted the attention of the reporters at The Travel Channel. The network's popular show *Extreme Waterparks* was entering its third season of covering the wildest, most over-the-top and exhilarating waterslides in the world. What better subject than a waterslide that was quite literally insane?

In April, Schlitterbahn decided it was finally time to confirm the slide's record-breaking height. On April 25, populated with dignitaries ranging from *USA Today*, to the Governor of Kansas, and, of course, officials from Guinness World Records, Schlitterbahn Kansas City unveiled the world's longest tape measure stretched all the way down the slide — 168 feet, 7 inches.

The mood from that day likely changed quickly as initial runs revealed the drop and speed hump combination sent test rafts airborne. The resultant reprofiling took several weeks, pushing back the expected opening well into June. The five-story speed hill was raised 11 feet, and the approach from the bottom of the first drop was changed from 45 degrees to 22 degrees. The \$1 million remodel also included additional master blaster water jets to make certain the raft would make it over the now-

▶ See VERRÜCKT, page 16

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► VERRUCKT Continued from page 15

taller hill. On June 26, Kansas City news teams spotted test rafts successfully navigating the slide, but a planned media day on June 27, had to be cancelled owing to a problem with the conveyor system that delivers rafts to the top of slide.

Finally on Monday, July 7, the years of planning, designing, testing and retesting came to fruition. Jeff Henry and Schlitterbahn senior designer John Schooley boarded a raft and took the first ride.

Lifeguards, Schlitterbahn staff and even Mayor Mark Holland of Kansas City continued testing the ride on Tuesday. The media was given an opportunity to test their resolve on Wednesday and reporters from around the globe showed up to give first-hand reports.

The following morning, Thursday, July 10, Verrückt opened to the public. Because of Verrückt's popularity, Schlitterbahn uses a reservation system to allow visitors to enjoy the park and then show up at their allotted one-hour time slot. Reservations are typically gone in the first hour, but guests can enter a standby line. Individuals are selected from that line when someone doesn't show up for their turn or if someone needs an additional rider to fill out their raft. A full raft cannot exceed 550 pounds but must have a minimum of 400 pounds. All Verrückt riders have to be at least 54 inches tall and weigh less than 300 pounds. There is no age requirement, but there is one big requirement — riders must be willing to climb 264 steps to get to the top.

The 607-foot-long water slide starts with a 60-degree, 17-story near free-fall before swooping back up the 60-foot-tall roller coaster like hill, where riders go from 5 Gs to near weightlessness before descending again and finally coming to a stop in a runout area at the end of the slide.

The breathtaking experience from start to finish lasts about 15 to 18 seconds depending on how fast the raft is pushed over the speed hump. Velcro seat belts lash riders to the raft, and netting encloses the chute to encourage riders to lean back and to keep objects and people safely con-



Schlitterbahn Kansas City's new Verrückt holds the Guinness World Record for the tallest water slide at 168 feet, 7 inches. It features a free-fall first drop of 60 degrees followed by a 60-foot-tall roller coaster-like hill. Riders are secured in three person rafts with shoulder straps.
COURTESY SCHLITTERBAHN KANSAS CITY

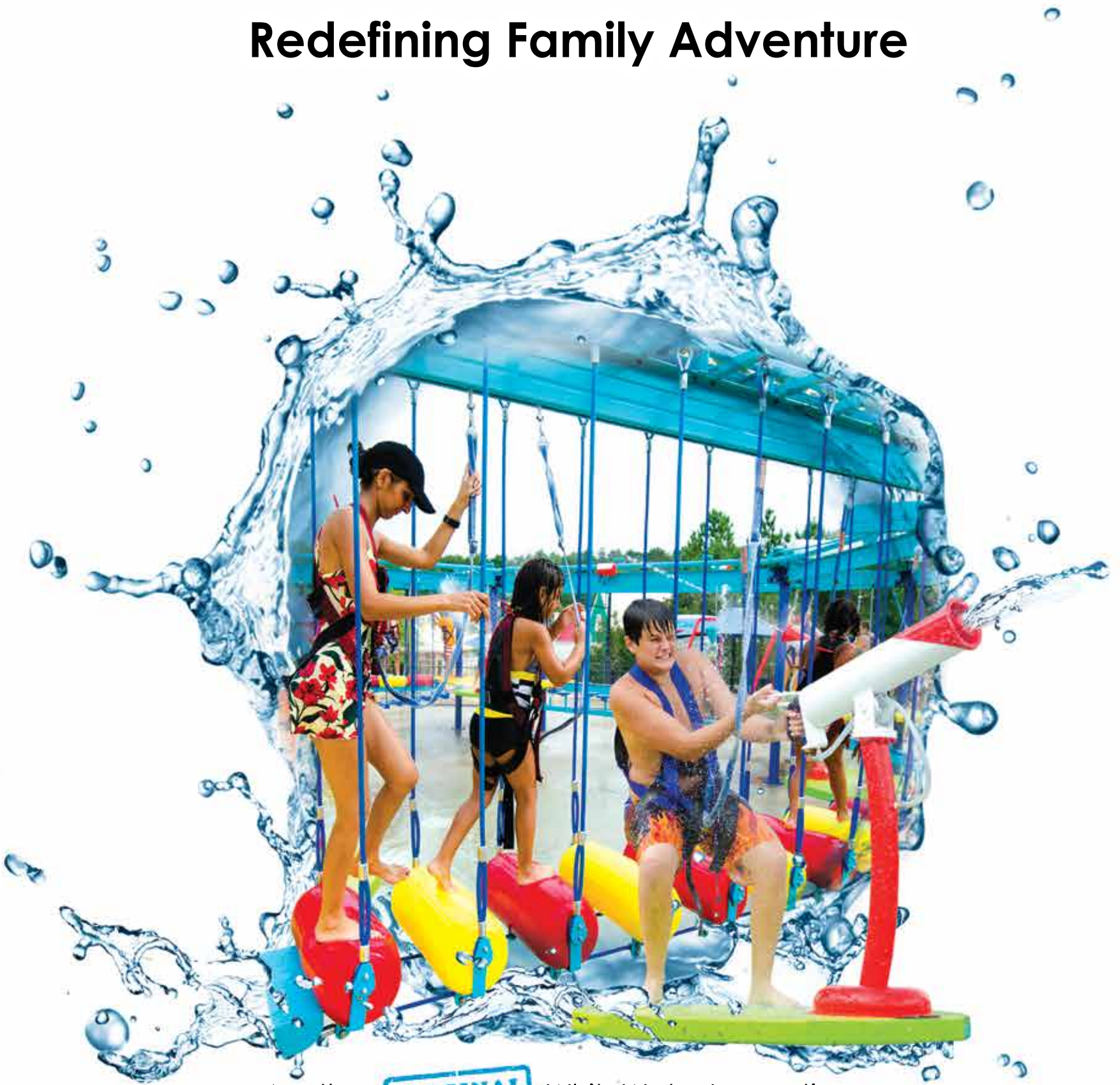
tained within the chute.

Guest reaction has been overwhelming, with some guests coming from as far as Alaska to experience this one-of-kind slide. The steep drop, speed bump and cool water splash, all add up to an experience like none other. Unlike the typical body speed slide, the raft takes all the friction, not the rider's back skin. Guests have commented on how great it was to actu-

ally see the drop as opposed to having to go feet first — although some may prefer not to see what lies ahead.

Jeff Henry says that as a proud Texan, he wanted the world's tallest slide to be in the United States. "The world's largest slide had been in Brazil, and we couldn't have that," said Henry. "I'm from Texas, it was a matter of pride."

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New water park for Jamaica Resort

ST. ANN, Jamaica — The island of Jamaica will soon have one of the Caribbean's most diverse oceanfront water parks in the entire Caribbean at Jewel Runaway Bay Beach & Golf Resort in Runaway Bay. Set to open in December 2014, The Jewel Runaway Bay Water Park adds another dimension to the all-inclusive resort.

Encompassing towering waterslides and family raft rides, the new water park also offers secluded, chic private cabanas and waterfall coves with a raindrop umbrella feature, known to reduce stress with soothing and therapeutic water streams. Located directly on the beach, The Jewel Runaway Bay Water Park is replete with a beach entrance featuring in-floor jetting geysers.

Jewel Resorts partnered with SplashTacular Waterslides, Waterpark Attractions firm and H2O Design to conceptualize the park's kid-friendly features along with touches that appeal to parents and individual travelers including natural design elements and a diverse selection of water features using the latest technology.

Designed for guests of all ages, the 9,000 square foot water park will bring more than 232,334 gallons of aquatic fun, excitement and relaxation to this all-ages Jewel resort in Jamaica. General Manager Scott Robbins stated, "This one-of-a-kind water park is not just for kids or the young at heart, there are features for everyone. Families, young children, teen, tweens and multi-generations, everyone loves a water park!"

In addition to extreme water rides, lazy leisure rivers and more, water park guests will have access to an expansive, oceanfront 5,000 square-foot sundeck, a raised entertainment stage for live music, a full-service dining plaza and bar and grill, as well as private club locker rooms with showers. Safety is a top priority in the design, and the water park is complete with its own first aid offices, a full time nurse on staff, and water park staff observation and lifeguard stations.

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NEWS SPLASH

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

PirateLand Family Camping Resort in Myrtle Beach, S.C. opened a new kid-friendly splash pool in July. The pirate ship-themed splash pool was added to the **Pirate's Oasis Waterpark** to provide families with a place that is just for kids. The addition adds more than 5,000 square feet of water activities surrounding a sunken 50-foot pirate ship. Features include water mushrooms, waterfalls, dumping buckets, and spacious decks for parents to relax and enjoy the sun while they watch their children play.

California's **Gilroy Gardens** newest capital investment opened in July. This second water play area is the largest capital investment made since 2005 when the park installed **Splash Garden**, its first water play area. Following the philosophy established by **Michael Bonfante** when the park was founded in 2001, the new **Water Oasis** seeks to educate along with providing fun. Water Oasis encourages kids to learn about water while playing in it. In addition to getting soaked by giant flowers, kids can pump and direct the flow of water in the water journeys area and get an introduction to the science of hydrodynamics. Although most kids don't seem to mind wet clothes all day, the new area also provides changing stations and lockers.

In June, **Soak Ya Water Park** at **Lake Winnepesaukah** opened for the season with a new attraction. "We've added the twists & turns of the **Zoom Flume** to Soak Ya!" exclaimed **Talley Green** of Lake Winnepesaukah. "It's one more way for our guests to splash into summer fun!"

The wild Zoom Flume offers a chance for riders to enjoy solo or with a friend as they slip, slide, & get wildly wet through its surprising tunnels! "Soak Ya! is loaded with the **Crazy River**, water slides for all ages, and the fun of **Coke Float Cove**," added Green. "The thrilling fun of Zoom Flume is a natural fit and a welcome addition!"

The new **Hydro Adventures**, in Popular Bluff, Mo., water park (formerly **Bluffs Falls Waterpark**) exceeded standards at a recent unannounced safety audit conducted by nationally recognized water safety consultants **Ellis & Associates**. The consultants observed that the lifeguard staff were universally professional, rescue ready and addressed environmental concerns.

It was noted that the supervisor staff did a great job of being both visible and available to the guard staff, with on deck management scoring an Exceeds Standards Level.

Administratively, the team performed to meet all standards. The facility was well maintained and all concerns were addressed. Water clarity was very good at all attractions.

Bluffs Falls was purchased in April by **United Parks** whose senior leadership includes **Jack Falfas**. Hydro Adventures is United Parks' first operating property.

On June 12-15, 2014, the **International Swimming Hall of Fame** celebrated its 50th anniversary by extending performance awards and inducting new members to the hall.

Opening day brought the ISHOF annual Paragon Awards recognizing excellence in performance and support of swimming programs to non-competitive deserving individuals.

Wally James, a long time leader in the water park industry was recognized for his nearly 35 years of work in support of recreational swimming by **Bruce Wigel** ISHOF CEO and **Sheila Taormina**, an inductee.

In the presentation, Wigel cited Wally's many leadership roles and physical support for the industry. In his acceptance comments, Wally pointed out to the audience that he was particularly appreciative of the recognition in view of the fact that he is a very weak swimmer who dislikes the water. He commented that more than one-half the population are similarly skilled and would have little chance to experience safe aquatic based recreation were it not for the accessibility of water parks.

Travelers now have a brand new way to get wet and wild in Myrtle Beach's **Grand Strand**, just named the top summer U.S. travel destination by TripAdvisor.com, with the opening of a brand new \$2 million water park at the oceanfront **Crown Reef Resort**. In addition to two new four-story enclosed waterslides, including the world's first hotel explosion slide, the water park features a kids' waterslide, sub play area with water sprays and bucket dumps, and a sun deck.

The 20-year-old resort has been undergoing a major \$7.5 million renovation since last fall. The water park is the final addition.

"The Explosion is a two-person serpentine-style ride with many left-to-right turns in 54-inch enclosed flumes," said **Nik Paas** of **ProSlide Technology Inc.** "There are tight radius, 360-degree turns where the fiberglass enlarges and explodes into a 72-inch diameter to provide a change of speed and direction and add an all-new experience to the ride."

The second twister slide, a one-person body slide, pumps 800 gallons of water per minute. The slides and other new water features will be enclosed during cooler months and are open aired during the summer months.

The **Comprehensive Cancer Centers of Nevada** has teamed up with **Wet'n'Wild Las Vegas** for a community-focused partnership that encourages park guests to keep skin safety in mind.

A colorful sunscreen kiosk upon entrance to Wet'n'Wild, offers complimentary SPF 30 sunscreen to visitors for the remainder of the park's operating season. Additionally, the kiosk is adorned with skin safety tips for guests to keep in mind not only during their visit to the park, but in their daily lives. Park-wide audio messages play periodically throughout the day, reminding guests to apply sunscreen and offering other proactive tips. Two additional kiosks have also been installed.

The broad-spectrum sunscreen fully protects skin against potentially harmful UV-A and UV-B rays, when applied and reapplied appropriately. The kiosks are designed with all ages in mind to urge park visitors to stay proactive with skin protection.

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Newest Splash Kingdom meeting challenges in first full season

Ground terrain makes park hard to see from I-20

STORY: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

HUDSON OAKS, Texas — Johnny Blevins' third Splash Kingdom water park posed an unexpected challenge for him this year.

The park, which opened in late July 2013, began its first full operational year over Memorial Day weekend. And, so far, things are going well.

"But, it also has been pretty interesting," Blevins said. "This park is not built on a flat area where people can see all the tall slide towers from the road."

That site first made construction a challenge. The site is hilly and rocky. There is a 70-foot topographical height distance from one side of the park to the other. The path for the lazy river was cut 20 feet down into solid rock forming a canyon. The four-lane mat racer slide provides a 40 foot ride down, but the actual tower is only nine feet tall due to how the natural terrain was utilized.

"When you are in the parking lot, you can see the western town facade where the ticket booths and offices are located," Blevins said. "You can see one of the slide towers as you get closer to the ticket booths."

But, other than that, the park has a tendency to disappear into its surroundings. The challenge of constructing

FAST FACTS

Suppliers for
Splash Kingdom Waterpark,
Hudson Oaks, Texas

All slide equipment,
Fibrart, Juarez, Mexico
(except slides in children's theme area)

Slides in children's themed area, **Fun Works,**
Humble, Texas

Wave Pool & Lazy River,
Aquatic Development Group (ADG), Cohoes, N.Y.

Engineering,
Brannon Corp.,
Tyler, Texas

on such a site, however, was not the only challenge Blevins faced. It posed a marketing challenge as well. That became very apparent over the course of this summer.

So, Blevins' hired a company to come out with eight-bladed drones, equipped with high definition cameras, to get aerial shots, which were used in any future marketing.

That has helped but Blevins said he still has patrons standing almost next to the lazy river and asking, "So, do you have a lazy river?"

Yet, all these challenges have created what Blevins has described as a "very cool park."

"There are more retaining walls out here than I have ever

seen," he said. "There are so many gunitite rock structures along with the natural rock structures."

There is also an abundance of attractions. There are 14 water slides, including five or six located in the children's area, a wave pool and the lazy river. The slides came from Fibrart, except for the slides in the children's area that were supplied by Fun Works. The supplier of the wave pool equipment was Aquatic Development Group.

Blevins said the type and number of attractions at the Hudson Oaks park are sort of a standard starting point for him. The Canton waterpark, which will celebrate a 10th anniversary in 2015, has had some additions and now has 18 slides.

The second Splash Kingdom was an existing waterpark located in Shreveport, La., that Blevins purchased four years ago. It has about 16 slides.

Blevins is also standardizing his concessions offerings.

"We develop the menus from our corporate office (in Canton)," he said. "We may have some regional offerings from time to time."

Included in the menu are the standard hot dogs and hamburgers, as well as grilled chicken, salads and turkey wraps. There is a separate pizza location.

All three of the parks have a picnic area outside of the gates so patrons can bring their own food.

Blevins said when he first opened the Canton park nine years ago, he really never planned to own multiple parks. He has three now and by this time next year, he will have three more open and operating. Two will be brand new parks in Greenville, Texas, and Nacogdoches, Texas. The third will be an existing waterpark. Blevins didn't disclose the name or location of that park, citing that the closing is not scheduled until late September. But, he said it will be in Texas as well.

He already has purchased the slides from Fibrart for the Greenville park. He hasn't purchased for the Nacogdoches park as yet.

And, he said he has about six more cities that have contacted him about the possibility of building a park in their cities.

Blevins said all of his parks will close after Labor Day.



Splash Kingdom in Hudson Oaks, Texas is enjoying its first full season. Shown here, top to bottom are: the themed western town entry area; a children's play area from Fun Works; Slides from Fibrart and more slides with Aquatic Development Group wave pool in background.
COURTESY SPLASH KINGDOM



FAST FACTS

Splash Kingdom waterparks are owned by Johnny Blevins in Canton, Texas. Here is a look at the Splash Kingdom family of waterparks

Existing locations:

Splash Kingdom, Canton, Texas, first park, opened 2005;

Splash Kingdom, Shreveport, La., existing park purchased by Blevins in 2010;

Splash Kingdom, Hudson Oaks/Weatherford, Texas, opened mid-summer 2013;

Future locations:

Splash Kingdom, Greenville, Texas, to open beginning of 2015 season;

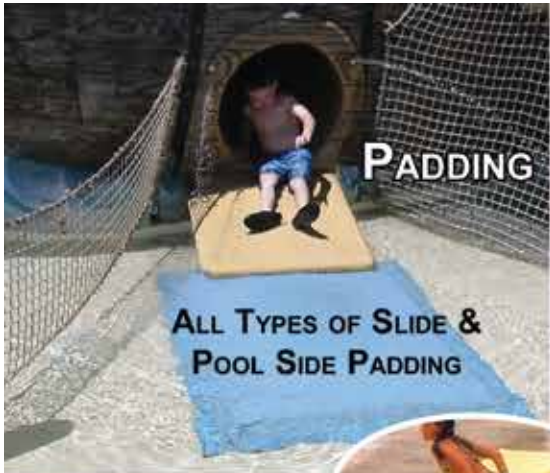
Splash Kingdom, Nacogdoches, Texas, to open beginning of 2015 season;

Existing Texas waterpark,

Blevins expects purchase to close in late

September and waterpark to reopen

beginning of 2015 season as Splash Kingdom



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Center Parcs Woburn Forest, UK



Water Country USA, USA



SeaWorld, USA

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PARKS & CARNIVALS

► Quassy announces two new rides from Visa/Rides 4U — Page 28 / Carnival news — Pages 32-36

Record-setting Zumanjaro opens at Six Flags Great Adventure

STORY: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

JACKSON N.J. — After two failed attempts to open the world's tallest drop tower, Zumanjaro: Drop of Doom, is now open. The first public riders experienced the 415 foot tower fastened to the side of the 456 foot Kingda Ka roller coaster on July 4. This comes after a Memorial Day weekend planned opening and another false start two days before America's birthday, that was just for the media. The latest, 41-story, thrill ride is part of Six Flags Great Adventure's 40th anniversary celebration. The original drop ride at the park, Stuntman's Freefall (Intamin 1983 – 2006, was only 13 stories tall by comparison.)

Seating on the new Intamin floorless ride, consists of three, eight abreast open seat cabins that face toward the Golden Kingdom section of the park. The restraint system is an over-the shoulder harness attached to seat belts powered by catch cars that slowly ascend the structure in just under 30 seconds. After what seems to be longer than it really is, the wait at the top, is followed by a quick plummet to earth at 90 miles per hour, in less than 10 seconds.

To put the size of Zumanjaro in perspective, it is higher than London's Big Ben and twice as tall as the Statue of Liberty. On a clear day, riders can even get a glimpse of the City of Brotherly Love's skyscrapers 52 miles southwest when perched at the top.

"Zumanjaro solidifies Six Flags' dominance as the Northeast's only destination for thrills. It is on every adrenaline junkies' must-do list," said John Fitzgerald, Six Flags Great Adventure park



president. "Zumanjaro is precisely the type of world-class, record-breaking attraction that our guests have come to expect from Great Adventure."

The final track piece was erected into place by Shamrock Construction, Matawan, N.J. in April. Delay number one (planned Memorial Day weekend launch) came due to the severe weather experienced in the northeast this past winter coupled with the extreme ride height making for difficult working conditions. The second delay (July media event) was due to permit approval not being granted from ride inspectors with the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs' Carnival-Amusement Ride Safety Unit.

Before boarding, Zumanjaro riders queue along an African baboon habitat, also new this season. Zumanjaro holds the records for the tallest and fastest drop tower ride in the world, taking the claim from Lex Luthor: Drop of Doom at Six Flags Magic Mountain in Valencia, Calif. The latter ride is the concept on which Zumanjaro is based. While Zumanjaro is the tallest drop tower, it is not the highest by elevation. The Big Shot (Stratosphere Tower, Las Vegas, Nev.)

Six Flags Great Adventure now holds the record for the tallest (415 feet) and fastest (90 miles per hour in less than 10 seconds) drop tower in the world. The Zumanjaro opened to the public on July 4.

COURTESY SIX FLAGS GREAT ADVENTURE

located atop the 921-foot high deck blasts riders 160 feet upwards to an elevation of 1,089 feet claims the title.

Visiting with *Amusement Today* about the mammoth attraction, Kristin Siebeneicher, communications director for Six Flags Great Adventure had this to say, "The response has been tremendous. The vast majority of guests who ride Zumanjaro want to get back on and ride again. There are a small number of guests who get off the ride and say it was terrifying and that once was enough!" She continued, "Most guests agree that the scariest part of the ride is the anticipation – the slow climb to the top (30 seconds) and the agonizing four-second wait before the gondola drops. The actual freefall is so exhilarating. From the top, the Earth looks so small. The drop lasts

► See SFNJ, page 27



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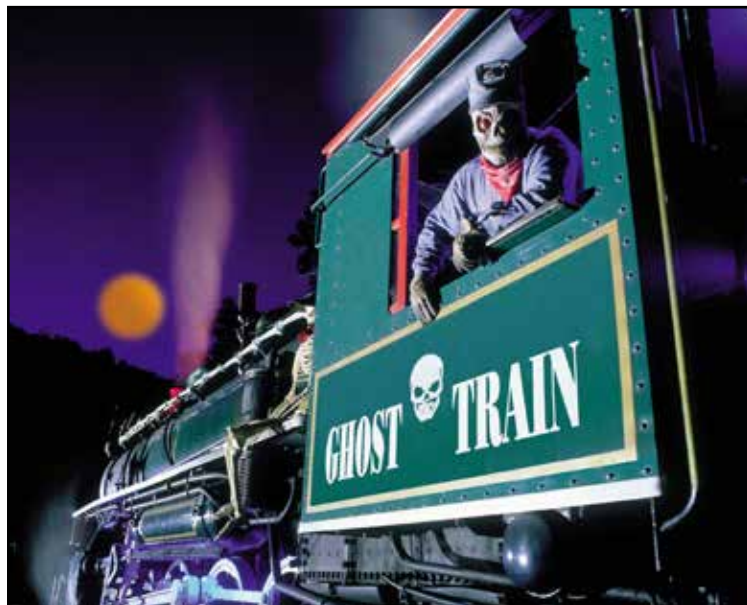
Creating Memories & Profitability

Tweetsie Railroad kicking off Halloween with Ghost Train 25th anniversary

BLOWING ROCK, N.C. — With summer quickly waning, officials at Tweetsie Railroad are preparing to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the theme park's popular Ghost Train Halloween Festival.

Beginning Friday and Saturday nights, Sept. 26–Nov. 1, daytime visitors can still enjoy all the Wild West adventure they've come to expect from Tweetsie, but the park will take a chilling turn when the gates open at 7:30 p.m. That's when ghosts and spirits fill the grounds, daring brave guests to take a trip in time to the Great Train Wreck of 1914. Ghost Train passengers will travel back to the scene of one of the worst (fictional) accidents in railroading history.

Named one of the Top 20 Events in the Southeast by the Southeast Tourism Society, the



Tweetsie Railroad's 25th anniversary of the Ghost Train festival runs Sept. 26 to Nov. 1. COURTESY TWEETSIE RAILROAD

Tweetsie hauntings include much more than the signature train ride. Guests will also be treated to a stroll through the

Freaky Forest; The Boneyard and its 3-D Maze; the disorienting Black Hole; and new-for-2014, the Warp Tunnel.

►SFNJ Continued from page 26

far longer than you would expect – you fall, and are completely aware that the Earth is growing larger and larger very rapidly. There's a nervous anticipation of when the brakes will slow you down because it feels like you're falling far longer than you should."

The first few weeks of operation have resulted in alternating dispatches between Kingda Ka and Zumanjaro, not concurrently as originally promoted. When asked, Siebeneicher explained, "We had intended for both rides

to run simultaneously. Several months ago during the documentation review process with the N.J. Department of Community Affairs ride inspectors, they expressed some concerns about loose articles possibly falling from Kingda Ka and striking passengers in the legs if their legs were extended beyond the gondola area. (The gondolas were designed with covers, so no items could land on the gondola itself – this concern was beyond the gondola area.) The tandem operation plan was developed several months ago, and executed during the programming process. It is unknown whether we will be able to run both

rides simultaneously in the future."

When asked what Zumanjaro and Six Flags mean to New Jersey tourism, New Jersey Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno had this to say, "Today strengthens the reputation of Six Flags as a trailblazer in providing innovative, cutting-edge entertainment for visitors of all ages, all while enhancing its legacy as one of the greatest theme park experiences anywhere in the world. We are thrilled that such an incredible venue is in New Jersey to provide unforgettable memories for so many visitors each and every year."

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Park also adding kiddie bumper cars

Quassy going Frantic with new Visa rides for 2015

MIDDLEBURY, Conn. — A new spectacular ride will be screaming into town for the 2015 season at Quassy Amusement & Waterpark here, park officials announced on Aug. 4.

Frantic will provide 360 degrees of pure adrenaline rush when it makes its debut in April at the family-owned

lakeside property.

"We spent a great deal of time researching our options for a new thrill ride and this will certainly be an exceptional addition," Quassy President Eric Anderson said.

Being constructed by VISA International (SBF/Visa Group), Montagnana, Italy, Frantic will lift and spin rid-

BREAKING NEWS

ers high above the midway in an area near the Grand Carousel, where the park's ticket booth was located until 2008. In addition, the park will be adding a new kiddie bumper car ride for smaller children, also provided by Visa International.

Called the Twist 'N Swing 360 by the manufacturer, Quassy coined the name Frantic for its newest family thriller, which will have colorful theming along with a stunning light emitting diode (LED) lighting package.

Riders are seated on a circular platform, suspended on a giant pendulum, with locking over-the-shoulder restraints securing them in place.

The loading platform floor retracts and the pendulum starts to gently swing back and forth between its supporting towers. At the same time, the ring of seats begins to rotate as the ride reaches greater heights with every pass. As Frantic climbs to 80 degrees, then 120 degrees, the G and negative-G forces generated by the ride increase, as do the screams from thrilled patrons.

The swinging action continues until the ride finally does a series of complete 360-degree, topsy-turvy flips.

"We recently had the opportunity to see and ride one of the first units in the United States," said Quassy's George Frantzis II. "It was all and more than we expected. The experience really convinced us this was the right addition



Quassy's Eric (left) and Sam Anderson look over ride manufacturing literature at the site of the new Frantic ride to be added at Quassy Amusement & Waterpark in Middlebury, Conn. Two new rides (from Visa Group through Rides 4U) have been purchased for the 2015 season. COURTESY QUASSY



Frantic is the new spectacular family ride coming to Quassy Amusement & Waterpark for the 2015 season. Rides 4U, North American representative for Visa presented the new ride to the park.

COURTESY QUASSY

for the park."

"Frantic is designed to accommodate children and adults and may be programmed for three different ride experiences: 80 or 120-degree swing only, or 360 degrees.

"The operator we visited told us everyone wants the full 360-degree ride and that's what we will expect here," Anderson alluded. "The unique action and thrill of the piece had guests lining up again and again. That, too, was another factor in convincing us this was the right choice."

Little drivers will get their chance

Quassy's Bumper Cars have been popular with park guests for decades.

Next season the younger generation will be able to drive their own set of wheels in the Collidoscope kiddie

bumper cars. The eight-car ride will be located near the Allan Herschell kiddieland rides behind the arcade building.

"We've answered the call to provide a bumper car experience for smaller children," Anderson said of the purchase. "And the timing was right for us to acquire the two-ride package from Visa."

Drivers as small as 36 inches tall may get behind the wheel on the children's attraction. The maximum height to ride will be 48 inches.

The new ride will be brightly themed and incorporate LED lighting on its facade.

Visa International is represented in the U.S. by Len Soled and Rides 4U of Somerville, N.J.

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Holiday World announces Thunderbird: Nation's first launched Wing Coaster

SANTA CLAUS, Ind. — The nation's first launched wing coaster will take flight over Holiday World in 2015.

Dubbed Thunderbird, Holiday World's first major steel roller coaster will feature a zero-to-60 miles-per-hour launch in 3.5 seconds, followed by multiple inversions — including a 14-story Immelmann loop, Zero-G roll, barrel roll, and a 125-foot vertical loop.

Continuing Holiday World's tradition of sending roller coasters through its thickly wooded and hilly terrain, Thunderbird will at first soar and loop high in the air and then hug the ground, surprising riders with rapid-fire "near misses" such as keyholes, themed elements, other rides, trees, and even the ground.

"A wing coaster creates a feeling of incredible freedom — you ride beside the coaster track with nothing above or below you," said Holiday World President Matt Eckert. "Thunderbird is the first launched wing



coaster in the nation — we can't wait to ride it!"

Eckert calls Thunderbird's manufacturer, Bolliger & Mabillard, the "Cadillac" of roller coaster [designers], known for their safety, quality and reliability. We've dreamed of adding a B&M steel coaster for many years and are excited that Thunderbird will be B&M's first launched coaster."

Thunderbird's \$22 million price tag is more than twice the amount of any other single-ride investment at Holiday World & Splashin' Safari in the park's 68-year history.

Thunderbird will be located in the park's Thanksgiving section. Construction is already underway and may be viewed live on Holiday World's ConstructionCam. Thunderbird will open next spring.



Holiday World will introduce the nation's first launched wing coaster in 2015. Dubbed Thunderbird, the ride will be supplied by Bolliger & Mabillard and will feature a zero-to-60 miles-per-hour launch in 3.5 seconds, followed by multiple inversions — including a 14-story Immelmann loop, Zero-G roll, barrel roll, and a 125-foot vertical loop. At \$22 million, the new coaster will cost more than twice the amount of any other single-ride investment in the park's 68-year history. COURTESY HOLIDAY WORLD



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Photos courtesy of Amusement Today

Goodtime Amusements owners see ups and downs in 2014

STORY: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

HELLERTOWN, Pa. — Irv and Marie Good, Goodtime Amusements, have gotten their seasonal route pretty much where they want it.

“We always go home at night,” said Marie Good. “We don’t have any trailers. Everyone that goes with us to work, comes home with us.”

Based in Hellertown, Pa., she said the furthest they go from their home is between 40 to 50 miles and even that can get challenging at times.

Good said she and her husband own 20 rides. They have two food trailers, a cotton candy and a funnel cake, the latter which she runs. She purchased a new funnel cake last year from Schantz Manufacturing.

“I ended up getting one

that was much larger than I had intended, but after looking it over, I felt like it was the best thing to do,” she said. “It is really nice. We have another family member that has a pizza trailer, which is booked in with us just about most of the time.”

The Goods start their season in May and end the last week of September. They book in other food trailers and games as the need arises.

“It all depends on what the committee wants,” she said. “Sometimes they do their own booking with this.”

The 2014 season has been “pretty much up and down” depending on the weather. The spring was rainy, but it seemed it was drying up for the summer.

She is seeing a trend being set toward more usage of a pay-one-price wristband at events.



This is Goodtime Amusements’s Starship 3000, manufactured by Wisdom, set up at a fireman’s carnival last month in Hellertown Pa. AT/SUE NICHOLS

“We are seeing this more and more,” she said. “I guess the way the economy is today, there are just so many other things out there to do. It does seem we are getting a smaller piece of the pie.”

The Goods were at the Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Big Time Celebration, Roseto, Pa., when *Amusement Today* spoke with them. That event ran July 22-27.

Then, they were to move to the Schuylkill County Fair, Summit Station, Pa., July 28-Aug. 2, then to the Carbon County Fair, Palm-

erton, Pa., Aug. 4-8.

The Goods have three children who work with them: Jeff Good, Judd Good, and Deb Good.

They didn’t purchase any new equipment for this season, but are always looking.

Florida State Fair partners with Wade Shows for midway contract

TAMPA, Fla. — The Florida State Fair Authority announced in late July its board of directors has formally approved Wade Shows as the new Florida State Fair Midway Manager.

The contract began immediately and Wade Shows will provide a new midway experience for the 2015 Florida State Fair set Feb. 5-16.

“We are so pleased with this process and excited about the possibilities,” said Doyle Carlton, Florida State Fair Authority chairman of the board. “It is always good to have a fresh set of eyes, and Frank Zaitshik of Wade Shows has been here at the fair, and has so many great ideas to invigorate our midway.”

The Fair Authority’s Midway Evaluation Committee brought forth the Wade Shows recommendation to the board after a formal Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) proposal and review process.

Projected benefits of the three-year agreement include increased patron safety, reduction of the fair’s midway overhead and increased revenue, and updated midway brand and uniformity, all while allowing provisions for the Fair Authority to have final control.

Carlton said there will be a new design to the midway that will be more family-friendly and lend itself to a very secure environment for fairgoers to enjoy.

“We feel this move will be positive for all involved,” he said.

From 1992 through 1997, and again from 2005 through 2014, the Florida State Fair operated under an independent midway structure.

The family-operated Wade Shows has had a long-standing relationship with the Florida State Fair. The company has been a part of the fair for 23 years, and has partnered with the Fair Authority on charitable events such as “Miles of Smiles” for underprivileged children.



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—Pam Sherborne

Bartlebaugh Amusements bogged down in rain

STORY: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

NEW CASTLE, Pa. – Rain has dampened the route of Bartlebaugh Amusements this year.

“Every week...,” said Allen Bartlebaugh, show owner, “...we have had days of rain every week we have been on the road.”

Springtime was wetter but the show is still seeing a lot of the wet stuff. He was in New Castle, Pa., when *Amusement Today* contacted him at the Western Pennsylvania Balloon Quest, which ran July 24-27.

“This past weekend when we were at the Jefferson Township Fair, Mercer (Pa.), it rained all of July 26 (Sat.) and we had to use winches to pull our equipment out of the mud on Sunday to move here,” he said. “When we have the weather, it’s okay.”

Bartlebaugh said an additional challenge he is having this year is labor. He used to hire foreign students labor under the J-1 visa program. But, he said, that program is no longer available to the carnival industry. He hasn’t tried the H-2B visa program yet. But, he has heard the problems people are having with that.

“We have had a big turnover in help this year,” he said. “We are having to hire about every other week. We hire them and I guess the work is just too much and they quit. There have been a couple of times that I have had to let them go.”

Bartlebaugh and his wife, Shelia Bartlebaugh, play almost exclusively in Pennsylvania. They begin in late April and close around the first of October.

The show, based in Madisonburg, Pa., was to move on to The Sheakleyville (Pa.) Homecom-

ing, July 28-Aug. 2 after the New Castle event, then on to Sykesville (Pa.) AG and Youth Fair, Aug. 4-9, and the Berlin Block Party, Aug. 12-16.

The show owns approximately 50 rides and carries about half that many on each of two units.

This is a 70-year-old carousel made by Vernon Garbrick. It is owned by Bartlebaugh Amusements and seen here at the Jefferson County Fair, Brookville, Pa., July 14-19. Allen Bartlebaugh, show owner, said he has seen a lot of rain so far this year.

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CARNIVAL LIGHTS

COMPILED: Pam Sherborne, psherborne@amusementtoday.com

USA Today released results from a reader's poll of America's top quirky landmarks. Coming in at first place is the **State Fair of Texas's** icon, **Big Tex**. Second place was awarded to the **Longaberger** home office building in Newark, Ohio, which is shaped like a giant wooden picnic basket, replicating the company's primary product.

Alliance, Nebraska's strangely memorable **Carhenge**, ranked number three with USA Today readers. This quirky stonehenge replica is built of 38 vintage cars.

A full list of the winners follows:

- Big Tex, Dallas
- Longaberger Home Office, Newark, Ohio
- Carhenge, Alliance, Neb.
- Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox, Bemidji, Minn.
- Fremont Troll, Seattle
- Cadillac Ranch, Amarillo, Texas
- Beer Can House, Houston
- Enchanted Highway, Regent, N.D.
- Ave Maria Grotto, Cullman, Ala.
- Peachoid, Gaffney, S.C.

Total attendance at the **California State Fair**, Sacramento, grew by eight percent this year representing the highest attendance level in six years. More than 750,000 guests came to see The Best of California on display during the 17-day event, which ran July 11-27. For the first time in more than 10 years, state fair attendance levels exceeded 70,000 visitors on four separate days, three weekend days (7/19, 7/26 and 7/27) and the second Tuesday of the fair (7/22), which was Wells Fargo Kids Day drawing 75,957 guests.

Additionally, the California State Fair became the most liked fair in the Western United States on Facebook with a new fan level of 108,196.

Factors being attributed to the huge 2014 success include: a combination of expanded programming and entertainment that attracted a diverse group of individuals; positive social media messages by fairgoers who helped spread their excitement virally; a strategic shift in the marketing campaign that focused on the best of California and the iconic blue ribbon; the addition of professional soccer games; and a doubling of

advance ticket sales.

State Fair organizers were pleased with these new records, noting that a number of challenges were overcome this year. Those challenges included the impacts of the drought, five days of temperatures in excess of 100 degrees, four wild land fires on or near Cal Expo's portion of the American River Parkway, a freeway closure on Wells Fargo Kid's Day due to the fires, record viewership in California of the World Cup on the State Fair's first Sunday, and rain on the state fair's second Sunday.

Butler Amusements provided the midway.

Attendance at this year's **North Dakota State Fair**, Minot, July 18-26, was the second highest in the history of the fair, falling just short of last year's record.

The fair wrapped up its nine-day run with a total of 314,446 patrons, just shy of the 2013 record of 320,485.

Murphy Brothers Expositions provided the midway.

Next year, the fair will celebrate its 50th anniversary. Staff already is working on some special activities, Marketing Director **Jennifer Hubrig** said.

The **Calgary (Alta.) Stampede**, July 4-13, saw an increase in attendance this year over 2013, while **K Days**, Edmonton, Alta., July 18-27, saw a slight dip compared to 2013.

Total attendance at the 2014 Calgary Stampede was 1,263,428. In 2013, it was 1,133,050. A record attendance was set in 2012 with 1,409,371 fairgoers on the midway.

K Days, formerly the **Klondike Days** and **Edmonton's Capital Ex**, had a total of 740,840 fairgoers this year. Last year's attendance was 781,743. A record attendance was set in 2005 with 810,503 fairgoers.

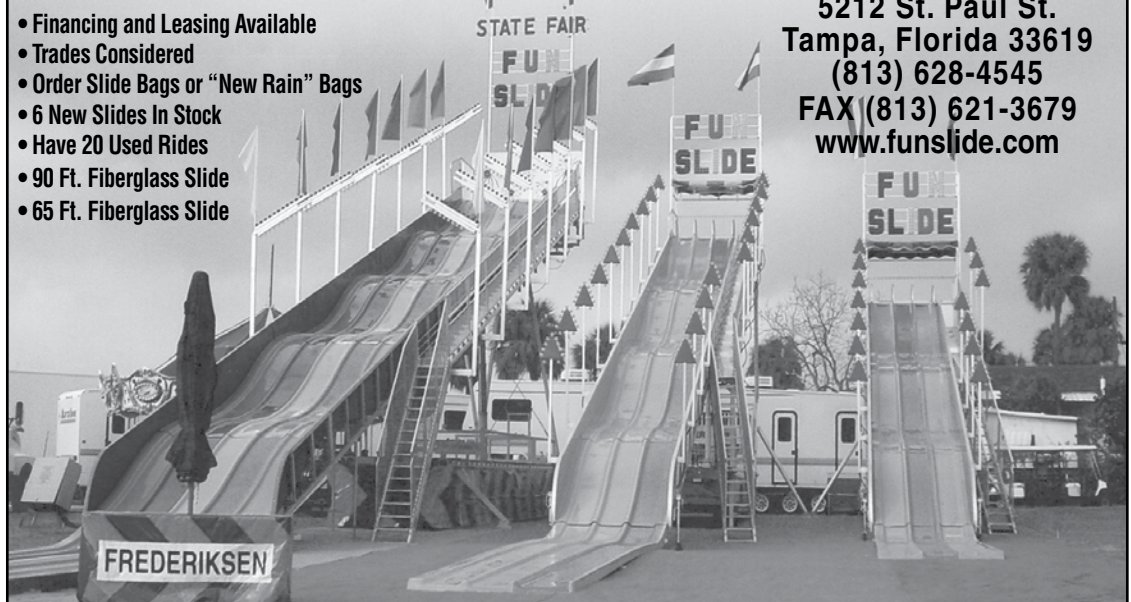
The dip this year was attributed to a storm that dumped almost three inches of rain on the midway on Friday, July 25.

Even so, officials were still pleased with the turnout.

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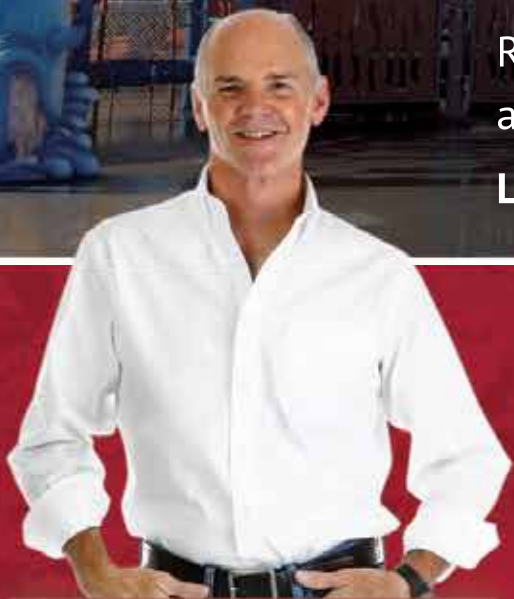
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BUSINESS & CLASSIFIEDS

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Twentieth Century Fox, Village Roadshow plan Korea theme park

SEOUL, Korea — Governor Hong Joon-pyo, Gyeongsangnam-do Province, Jeffrey Godsick, president of Twentieth Century Fox Consumer Products, and Tim Fisher, CEO of Village Roadshow Theme Parks, recently announced the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) agreements to plan for Korea's first international theme park and resort destination, Twentieth Century Fox World at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Korea Press Foundation. The proposed park will be part of a larger development in the Republic of Korea known as the Ungdong Entertainment Complex.

Initial plans for Twentieth Century Fox World Korea include a theme park spanning more than 75 acres of land and will be part of a 700-plus-acre leisure resort and development that will bring to life a fully immersive entertainment experience featuring some of Fox's most recognized and beloved film and television brands. The park will be located in the Ungdong Area of Busan-Jinhae Free Economic Zone, Jinhae-gu, Changwon City. Operating partner Village Roadshow joins the group as a design and development consultant, and the manager of



the studio theme park.

"We are signing the agreements and moving forward with plans for our global theme park project with Twentieth Century Fox Consumer Products to develop a world-leading theme park and with Village Roadshow to operate the theme park. We will make every effort to successfully develop this global theme park through close cooperation with Fox and Village Roadshow. Once the theme park is completed, we expect more than 10 million foreign and local tourists will visit and the local economy will be boosted by creating 30,000 jobs, which is equivalent to attracting 100 manufacturing businesses," said Governor Hong Joon-pyo.

"Korea provides a unique opportunity for an international theme park destination that will be

incredibly attractive to both a thriving domestic consumer as well as a quickly growing tourist market from China, Japan and across Asia," said Jeffrey Godsick, president of Twentieth Century Fox Consumer Products. "Village Roadshow Theme Parks is very excited to have the opportunity to work with the Gyeongsangnam-do Provincial Government and Twentieth Century Fox on the planning, design, development and operation of the theme park. With properties like *Alien*, *Ice Age* and *Planet of the Apes*, we believe this studio theme park will offer consumers in Korea and Asia the best theme park experience in the history of the industry," said Tim Fisher, the CEO of Village Roadshow Theme Parks.

The announcement of the plans to develop Twentieth Century Fox World Korea joins a host of groundbreaking location based entertainment announcements from Twentieth Century Fox Consumer Products. Fox Consumer Products recently announced Fox's first ever theme park, Twentieth Century Fox World, set to open in Malaysia in 2016. The park will feature a fully immersive entertainment experience featuring some of Fox's most recognized and powerful film brands.

Grand Texas announces Motorsportz element being added to Sportsplex

THE WOODLANDS, Texas — Grand Texas Sports and Entertainment District recently announced the addition of Motorsportz at Grand Texas.

A local company in The Woodlands, Palmetto Racing, is teaming up with Miller Performance USA located in Toole, Utah, to create the multi-purpose venue at Grand Texas. "These are the type of competitive racing activities that the entire family will enjoy participating in, and will visit again and again" said Tim Crawford owner of Palmetto Racing. Crawford took notice of a high level of demand for this variety of motorsports in the Houston market and the result is Motorsportz at

Grand Texas.

Motorsportz at Grand Texas is a complex entailing almost two miles of track for a combination of super karts that reach speeds of up to 90 miles per hour; test-track operations for sports cars; high performance driving schools; as well as more traditional karting and other motorsports activities.

The variety of up to four tracks will be dedicated to motorsports activities for both public and private use. "This type of family oriented racing will be very well received in Houston. We could not be more pleased to bring this to the deserving people of this great city" said Crawford.

In the Grand Texas



Sports and Entertainment District's evolving effort to bring world class attractions, competition and entertainment to the site in the Houston area, Motorsportz at Grand Texas is an integral part of the multiplicity of offerings coming to the District.

"Motorsportz at Grand Texas, when combined with

other activities such as the youth sports destination fields creates synergistic family activities that are incomparable" said Monty Galland CEO of the District.

The District commissioned a study by a nationally recognized company to determine the feasibility of the youth sports fields and the results showed an annual attendance in excess of 1.5 million within the first five years. "The demand for high quality baseball, softball, soccer, and other sports for tournament and traveling youth sports is obviously there and growing. We knew the demand was great but were very pleasantly surprised at what the data revealed," said Galland.

Galland went on to say "When you look at the lineup of offerings in the District — a world-class theme park and water park, adventure park, event center, minor league baseball, destination youth sports fields, retail, dining, hospitality, RV resort — and now this great new addition of Motorsportz at Grand Texas, it really makes the District unique in the world. We couldn't be in a more desirable market and our location at I-69 (formerly Highway 59) and Highway 242 is perfect for the needs of the District and all it will have to offer. We like to say "come for a day, stay for a week."

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Start planning now to attend the 2015 AIMS Safety Seminar

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ORLANDO, Fla. — The 43rd annual AIMS International Safety Seminar is scheduled for Jan. 11-16, 2015. The **Amusement Industry Manufacturers and Suppliers International** (AIMS) trade association was evolved from the **American Recreational Equipment Association** (AREA) in February 1994. The organization's purpose is to provide: Dedicated to Continuing Safety in the Amusement Industry.

It was early in the 1960's, when **Watson Brey**, Allan Herchell Co.; **John C. Allen**, Philadelphia Toboggan Company; **Harold Chance**, Chance Mfg. Co., Inc.; **Lee Sullivan**,

Eli Bridge Co.; and **Art Sellner**, Sellner Mfg. Co. Inc. got together and formed the AREA. It was their goal to establish an annual Safety and Maintenance seminar so that all the operators and manufacturers could gather to learn and work together.

The annual AIMS Safety Seminar is a comprehensive operations, maintenance and safety-training experience for individuals responsible for the care and safety of the amusement industry's guests. The seminar offers a diverse curriculum. And, this year, there will be over 30 new courses. These courses are replacing some of the older ones that have been offered.

Attendees can build a tailored course curriculum that best suits their needs and the needs of their employers. Safety information is carried home and shared with colleagues and co-workers back on the job. At-

tendees also build long-lasting relationships with colleagues and instructors. The instructors are all volunteers and are some of the industry's top professionals.

Many of the new classes being offered are for new as well as old disciplines. Family Entertainment Centers, Trampoline Courts, Adventure Courses and a Carnival curriculum are among the new classes being offered. There are several courses that offer certificates upon completion.

AIMS organizers are always looking for new ideas and new classes to add to the Safety Seminar. If you are interested in presenting a class at the seminar, please contact the AIMS Office at (714) 425-5747 or aims.office@gmail.com.

The AIMS Safety Seminar has both sit-down and hands-on classes. This participation is a requisite for all professionals in the amusement in-

dustry. The upcoming seminar is offering: Certified Maintenance Technician - Level I and Level II; Certified Operations Technician - Level I and Level II; Certified Aquatics Operations Technician - Level I; Associate Ride Inspector - Level I; Certified Ride Inspector - Level II; and Professional Ride Inspector - Level III.

The Inspector Certification, the Maintenance Certification, Operations Certification and the Aquatics Operations Certification programs are all designed to test the knowledge of individuals working in the specific field within the amusement industry. All have three levels of certification except for the Aquatics, which has only one. This year marks the second year that the Level I Maintenance, Operations and Instructor examinations will be offered in Spanish as well.

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New attractions debut Downtown and off-Strip

Long-awaited Las Vegas zip lines fly above Fremont St., Rio

STORY: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

LAS VEGAS, Nev. — After a couple years of development, construction, testing and permitting, not to mention multiple delays, two landmark zip line attractions opened in this city in advance of summer.

SlotZilla, a two-level zip line anchored at the east end of the Fremont Street Experience (FSI) in Downtown, partially opened April 27. Across the city, just west of Interstate 15 and The Strip, the VooDoo Zip Line debuted May 25 at the Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino on W. Flamingo Road.

While both attractions are being marketed as zip lines, they offer varying ride experiences.

Downtown's 'big jackpot'

The concept for SlotZilla sprang from a zip line operated on Fremont Street by Flightlinez, which has a major outdoor terrain zip line in Bootleg Canyon near Boulder City, southeast of Las Vegas. That company's attraction ran

for two and half years under a temporary lease and revenue-sharing arrangement with FSI until June of last year.

"Based on that success, we felt it would be appropriate to design and build a permanent zip line attraction," said Tom Bruny, director of marketing for FSI. "There's a lot of competition for the tourist dollar in Las Vegas. You've got to do things big and do them right, or you won't be able to compete."

That meant expanding on the capacity of the Flightlinez operation, which had four zip lines that ran halfway along the pedestrian street beneath FSI's four-block-long curved canopy, which also is the world's largest video screen. "It wasn't possible to add more zip lines width-wise, so we came up with a double-decker system where there would be four lower and four upper lines," Bruny said.

Housing the ride components, built in collaboration with Zip-Flyer, LLC, required the construction of a 12-story steel takeoff tower in the middle of Fremont between Las Vegas Boulevard and 6th Street — about half a block beyond the east entrance to the historic thoroughfare's canopied section. Instead of leaving it an exposed, utilitarian structure, however, FSI opted to "costume" it in gaudy Sin City fashion.

A giant slot machine adorned with flashing lights and two 37-foot-tall neon showgirls was deemed the perfect thematic fit. "There's nothing more iconic to Las Vegas than a slot machine," Bruny said.

The multi-million-dollar SlotZilla delivers a uniquely urban zip line experience as opposed to the typical rural one.

The lower-level zip line, launching from the "coin tray" 74 feet above the street, harnesses riders in a traditional seated position and carries them 850 feet — halfway through FSI — at about 30 mph. The upper level "zoom" line, descending from the slot machine's "pay table" 114 feet above the street (and expected to be open by Labor Day), will send riders gliding in a prone, Superman-like position at 35 mph over FSI's entire 1,700-



SlotZilla, at the Fremont Street Experience, provides eight zip lines and two different gravity-propelled courses on dual levels launching from a heavily themed 120-foot-tall structure. AT/DEAN LAMANNA (TOP LEFT); COURTESY SLOTZILLA/FREMONT STREET EXPERIENCE



foot length.

The lower-level zip line, at \$20 per person, has done "phenomenally well" since the attraction's opening, said Bruny, adding: "We think SlotZilla is going to be a new icon not only for downtown, but all of Las Vegas."

High-flying fun off The Strip

At the Rio resort complex, the VooDoo Zip Line — named after the hip lounge and steakhouse that shares the roof space of the property's 510-foot-tall Masquerade hotel tower — offers an even more unusual cable-based ride experience. It carries two passengers both forward and backward 820 feet in each direction, seated side-by-side in a ski lift-type car with very low sides and electronically secured seatbelts.

Yes, legs dangle freely nearly 500 feet above the ground!

Attraction co-owners Joe Shortal and Jon Borchetta, founding partners in Las Vegas-based New Capital Ventures, hit on the idea utilizing the scenic Rio vantage point



two years ago. Their brainstorming gathered steam when they attended an IAAPA convention in Orlando, where they met industry innovator Stan Checketts, who was there with his Logan, Utah-based company Soaring Eagle Zip Line, Inc. They invited him to Las Vegas

shortly thereafter.

Checketts nixed the entrepreneurs' initial idea of running a zip line from the top of the Masquerade tower to the ground. But when he saw the Rio's second, 20-story Ipanema tower across the resort's

► See ZIPLINES, page 41

FAST FACTS

Name/Location
SlotZilla/Fremont Street Experience, Las Vegas, Nev.

Type/Opening
Gravity zip line/
April 27, 2014

Carriage Style
Harness (seated and prone positions)

Height
114 feet (upper level),
74 feet (lower level)

Length
1,700 feet (upper level),
850 feet (lower level)

Speed
35 mph (upper level),
30 mph (lower level)

Number of Lines/Capacity
8/
80 pph (upper level),
120 pph (lower level)

Supplier
Zip-Flyer, LLC,
New York, N.Y.



VooDoo ZIPLINE

Strung between the 50-story Masquerade tower and the 20-story Ipanema tower at the Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino, the VooDoo Zip Line — from amusement whiz Stan Checketts — is a controlled thrill ride experience.

COURTESY
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►ZIPLINES

Continued from page 40

sprawling pool area, he knew a zip line between the two structures was feasible. About eight months of design and engineering work, plus negotiations with the Rio's owner, Caesars Entertainment, were followed by a year of construction, testing and approvals.

"Clark County is one of

FAST FACTS

Name/Location

VooDoo Zip Line/
Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino,
Las Vegas, Nev.

Type

Motorized zip line

Opening

May 25, 2014

Carriage Style

2-person seat
(electronic seatbelts)

Height/Length

490 feet/
820 feet (one direction)

Speed

30 mph (forward descent),
20 mph (backward ascent)

Number of Lines/Capacity

1/60 pph

Supplier

Soaring Eagle Zip Line, Inc.,
Logan, Utah

the strictest in the country [in terms of acquiring permits]," Shortal said. "We also had to get in line behind other projects in the city, including the High Roller observation wheel and SlotZilla."

With a duration of 80 seconds and an hourly capacity of about 60, the zip line can operate with one or two passengers up to a total weight of 450 pounds. An attendant will hop onboard with anyone not comfortable riding solo.

The ride also differs from other zip lines in that it utilizes a motorized cable and is not purely gravity-based. This allows the vehicle, which descends at 30 mph, to deliver a surprise moment.

The VooDoo Zip Line, which cost \$1.1 million, has crossover appeal. "Anyone from age eight to 90 could ride it, as long as you're at least 48 inches tall," Shortal noted. General admission is \$24.99.

"A lot of people announce new attractions in Las Vegas, but not a lot of them get done," he said. "I've been working with a great all-around team on this project, including Caesars, which has been a real blessing."

Shortal is confident the VooDoo Zip Line is a valuable addition to the Las Vegas amusement landscape: "It rolls the best features of all the rides in this city into one."

• www.vegasexperience.com/slotzilla-zip-line
• www.voodoozipline.com

Cinecittà World celebrates decades of international cinema

Historic Italian film studio opens theme park

STORY: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

ROME, Italy — Cinecittà World, the first theme park in Italy dedicated to cinema, was introduced on July 10 after a long gestation and construction period. Located near Castel Romano south of the country's capital city's center and about 16 miles southwest of its namesake, the historic Cinecittà film studios — founded in part by Benito Mussolini in 1937 as both a propaganda factory and a legitimate production facility — the park features a mix of rides, film sets and theaters.



Taking its cue from the Universal Studios parks and about 10 years in the brainstorming and planning, Cinecittà World was built at a cost of \$300 million and occupies 400 acres partly on the backlot of Dino Studios, now owned by Cinecittà and once the production home of the late film producer Dino De Laurentiis. The park was designed by three-time Academy Award-winning Italian production designer Dante Ferretti (*The Age of Innocence*, *Gangs of New York*), whose eye for detail, by all accounts, is evident in every aspect of the property — particularly in the theming and special effects that enhance its dark rides (including a motion simulator-based experience called Dante's Inferno) and several roller coasters.

In addition to 20 rides and attractions, Cinecittà World features eight working film sets, four theaters, four themed restaurants and live entertainment. The mood-setting soundtrack music throughout the park has been provided by the prolific and award-winning film composer Ennio Morricone (*Once Upon a Time*



Rome's famous old Cinecittà film studios have inspired the new, nearby Cinecittà World theme park. Mack Rides of Waldkirch, Germany, and Intamin of Wollerau, Switzerland, are among the attraction suppliers for the \$300 million, 400-acre property, which opened after an extended period of design and development in mid-July.

COURTESY CINECITTÀ WORLD



in America, *The Untouchables*, the "Spaghetti Westerns" of Sergio Leone and many more).

The park's attractions and environments have been inspired by or in some way themed to the most famous of the 3,000 films and television shows made at Cinecittà, where production was so intense by the 1950s that it led to Rome being nicknamed "Hollywood on the Tiber." In addition to undisputed American classics like *Ben-Hur* and the famous body of work by Italian filmmaker Federico Fellini, Cinecittà hosted productions including *Cleopatra* (1963), *The Agony and the Ecstasy* (1965),

Romeo and Juliet (1968) and *Gangs of New York* (2002).

Visitors enter Cinecittà World through the jaws of the Temple of Moloch, seen in *Cabiria*, a silent movie filmed in Turin, Italy, in 1914. The imaginative park also includes an ancient Rome set, a recreation of 1920s-era Manhattan and a corkscrew coaster launched out a spaceship.

More than 1.5 million guests are expected to visit Cinecittà World annually. According to online sources, expansion plans for the park include a nature reserve and a wellness center.

• www.cinecittaworld.it

2014 PAPA Summer Meeting held at Dorney Park



Above, Gary Chubb, Hersheypark and Brad Nesland, Dorney Park. Dorney Park served as the 2014 host facility. Below, Brian Bossuyt, Camelbeach Mountain Waterpark and current PAPA president with Brian Knoebel, Knoebels Amusement Resort.



ALLENTOWN, Pa. — The Pennsylvania Amusement Parks Association held its annual Summer Meeting July 14 & 15, 2014 at Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom. The event was well attended with 75 parks and suppliers making the trip to Allentown.

Brian Bossuyt, Camelbeach Mountain Waterpark is the current PAPA president and led the meeting.

The annual PAPA Golf Tournament was held to raise funds for the PAPA Scholarship Fund. This year's golf event raised \$1,200.

Sponsors for this year's PAPA Summer Meeting included: National Ticket Company, Premier Rides Inc., Dippin Dots, Skee-Ball, S&S Sansei Technology Inc., *Amusement Today*, Haas & Wilkerson, Midway Stainless Fabrications, Ralph S. Alberts and Philadelphia Toboggan Company.



The annual PAPA Golf Tournament was held to raise funds for the PAPA Scholarship Fund. This year's event raised \$1,200. Presenting the check here to PAPA are from left, Tim Timco, Sansei Technologies; Tom Rebbie, Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters, Inc.; Brian Bossuyt, PAPA president and Camelbeach Mountain Waterpark and Brad Marcy, Dorney Park.

AT PHOTOS/SUE NICHOLS



Above, Tim Timco, Sansei Technologies; Leanna and Joe Muscato, both with Knoebels Amusement Resort. Below, Joe James, Haas & Wilkerson Insurance; Carl and Nancee Crider, DelGrossos' Amusement Park and Brian Bossuyt, Camelbeach Mountain Park.



A large advertisement for Montgomery Inn Barbecue Sauce. The background is a blue sky with a blurred image of a roller coaster car. The text "Give your food" is written in white, curved letters on the left. The text "the ride of its life." is written in white, curved letters on the right. In the center, there is a bottle of Montgomery Inn Barbecue Sauce. The label on the bottle says "MONTGOMERY INN BARBECUE Sauce". In the top right corner, there is a logo for Montgomery Inn, which says "WORLD FAMOUS MONTGOMERY INN The Ribs King".

MARKETWATCH



COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 8/1/14	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
Apollo Global Management (Great Wolf Resorts)	APO	NYSE	26.20	36.51	24.06
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	32.42	36.08	21.30
Merlin Entertainments Group/ Legoland	MERL	LSE	348.90	354.50	3.20
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	51.67	55.76	41.96
Comcast Corp./ NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	53.39	56.49	41.06
	CMCSK	NASDAQ	53.22	56.23	39.73
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	85.38	87.63	60.41
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	9010	TYO	1106.00	1213.00	716.00
Haicahang Holdings Ltd.	2255HK	SEHK	1.16	2.27	1.09
Lefoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	12.80	13.75	11.15
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	26.26	28.75	16.27
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	27.75	37.17	27.39
Shenzhen Overseas Chinese Town Co., Ltd. (OCT)	000069	SZSE	5.68	6.49	4.30
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	38.29	43.19	31.86
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	3125.00	3205.00	2880.00
Village Roadshow	VRL	ASX	7.71	8.44	5.91

STOCK PRICES ABOVE ARE GENERALLY QUOTED IN THE FOREIGN
CURRENCY IN WHICH THE COMPANY IS LOCATED

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

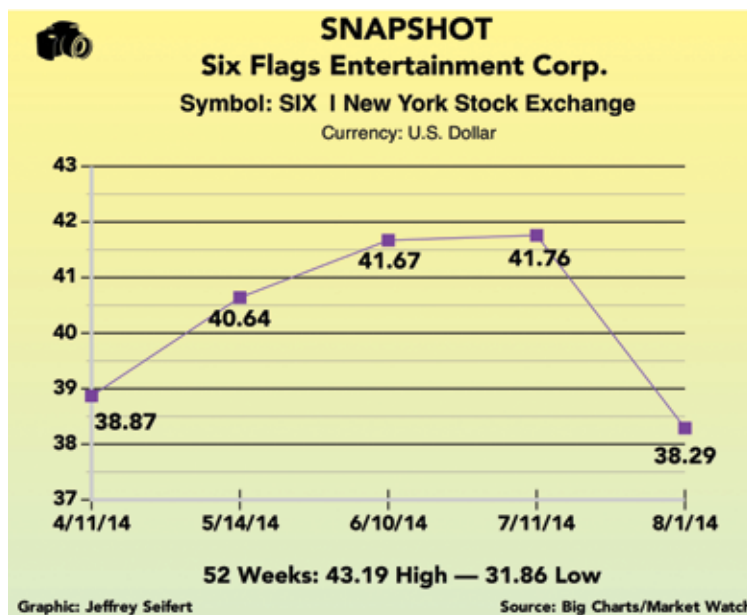
DIESEL PRICES

Region (U.S.)	As of 07/28/14	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	\$3.910	-\$0.021
Midwest	\$3.801	-\$0.085
Gulf Coast	\$3.767	-\$0.078
Mountain	\$3.888	-\$0.025
West Coast	\$3.928	-\$0.042
California	\$4.090	-\$0.032

CURRENCY

On 08/04/14 \$1 USD =

0.7443	EURO
0.5942	GBP (British Pound)
102.60	JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.9051	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.0730	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.0912	CAD (Canadian Dollar)



BUSINESS WATCH

Six Flags second quarter revenues up, visits down

Six Flags Entertainment Corporation (NYSE: SIX), announced on July 21 record financial performance in the second quarter 2014 as revenue grew \$13 million or four percent to \$377 million, fueled by higher guest spending. Adjusted EBITDA for the same three-month period was \$145 million, a \$7 million or five percent increase. Revenue for the first six months of the year was flat to prior year while Adjusted EBITDA increased two percent.

In the second quarter, total guest spending per capita grew \$4.21 or 11 percent to \$43.73, with admissions revenue per capita increasing \$2.56 or 11 percent to \$25.15 and in-park revenue per capita increasing \$1.65 or 10 percent to \$18.58. Attendance for the second quarter decreased eight percent to 8.2 million guests.

WhiteWater expands with new Shanghai office

Due to the explosive growth in Asia-Pacific, in particular China, **WhiteWater Shanghai** has moved to a larger office to be able to accommodate more clients, partners and employees. Along with space for the addition of more WhiteWater employees to the office, it also offers improved client accessibility as well as more meeting spaces for the growing number of client meetings and workshops.

Sean Hinton, WhiteWater's executive vice president, Asia-Pacific adds, "We are thrilled to have a new space that is reflective of, and responsive to the growth in this region. We invite all clients and partners to visit the new office and get to know our extensive and growing team in Shanghai."

With its expansion, the Shanghai office now becomes the largest of WhiteWater's 20 sales offices worldwide and the second only to WhiteWater Headquarters in Canada in terms of size.

The address for the new Shanghai office is as follows:

Jing'an Kerry Center, Tower 1, Room 2804
No. 1515 West Nanjing Road, Jing'an District
Shanghai, P.R. China, 200040

Cedar Fair Entertainment debuts FunTV

Cedar Fair (NYSE: FUN), announced on July 1 that it has created a way to make the wait time for its most popular rides and attractions fun and entertaining this summer with the debut of **FunTV**.

Designed to engage, entertain and enhance the overall guest experience, FunTV is broadcast on large outdoor HD screens with full audio in the queue area of more than 120 top thrill and family attractions across Cedar Fair's parks. Taking guests behind the scenes of an amusement park, FunTV offers original programming and other content designed to help them plan their day. Other features include park trivia, news, real-time weather, sports, interactive games and music videos.

"FunTV provides a great avenue for advertisers to reach an in-demand audience, delivering more than one billion impressions to teens, adults and families with young children in an ideal environment," said Cedar Fair Entertainment Company's Chief Operating Officer, **Richard Zimmerman**.

Time Warner Cable Media, the advertising arm of **Time Warner Cable Inc.** serves as the exclusive advertising representative for FunTV. FunTV is powered by **Reflect Systems**, a full-service provider of digital media solutions based in Dallas, Texas, and is a member of the **Digital Place-Based Advertising Association (DPAA)**.

Quick Hits...

• **IAAPA** has announced that **Ripley Entertainment** President **Jim Pattison, Jr.** will address industry leaders as the keynote speaker during the **GM and Owner's Breakfast** set for Nov. 19 during the annual **IAAPA Attractions Expo** in Orlando, Fla. Pattison will share what has enabled Ripley Entertainment to remain successful for nearly a century and is anticipated to surprise the audience in true Ripley fashion.

• **IAAPA** has announced that its 2015 FEC conference will be held in Dallas, Texas at the **Hilton Dallas/Rockwall Lakefront** on Feb. 8-10, 2015. Leading FEC professionals will gather to solve challenges, build their networks, compare information, and discuss successful strategies to increase profits. For more information on **FEC Dallas**, or to be a sponsor, contact IAAPA's **Brian Skepton** at bskepton@IAAPA.com.

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Walter Larson, Larson International founder dies at 84

Larson's Ring of Fire, Super Loops became a must have for carnival owners

PLAINVIEW, Texas — Walter F. Larson, a native Texan and lifelong citizen of Plainview, passed away peacefully on July 18, 2014.

Walter was born on Sept. 26, 1930 to Walter W. Larson and Anita Jarvis Larson. Upon graduation from Plainview High School, he attended American Flyers pilot training school in Fort Worth. He married his high school sweetheart Sharon Turner in 1950. He worked for Claude Hutcherson as a charter pilot and held special fond memories of the medical charter flights he flew.

Later, he opened a Ferguson tractor dealership in Plainview that became known as Larson-Turner Massey-Ferguson. After selling the dealership to the James Brothers,

he ventured into manufacturing high clearance tractors. He possessed a unique and uncanny ability to take what was good and improve it. These tractors were customized for a number of unique applications that included being used on tomato plantations, harvesting grapes and corn de-tasseling. He also manufactured Versatrac highway sweepers.

In the early 1970s, he began manufacturing amusement rides and is best known for the Super Loops portable carnival ride, known today as The Ring of Fire. He retired from this business in 2007.

Throughout the years he continued to have a tremendous passion for planes, trains and cars. He flew his own private planes



Walter Larson
1930-2014

for business and pleasure. He loved machinery and how it worked. He was fascinated by motors of all sizes and shape. He spent endless happy hours listening to music of all genres. He especially loved gospel music. He truly felt the music in his heart.

Jeff Novotny, who purchased the company from Walter in 2006 told *Amusement Today*, "Walter was always a mentor to me and

the opportunities he provided my family will never be forgotten. We continue to keep the company name, Larson International, Inc. in honor of Walter and his lifelong achievements."

Novotny continued, "One of my fondest memories with Walter was meeting him at his downtown toy store. This is where he kept his antique cars and motor coach and we would have a few drinks and play cards or talk about business. When my wife would call to see where I was, I would always respond, I am in 'liquid conference' with Walter and she knew exactly where I was and what we were doing."

OABA's Bob Johnson remembered Walter Larson saying, "We have lost another wonderful pioneer and great engineer in the amusement industry with Walter Larson's passing.

His Ring of Fire and Super Loops rides continue to help many showmen provide an entertaining, exciting and safe midway experience for hundreds of million riders. The OABA board extends our deepest sympathy to his family."

He was preceded in death by a daughter, Melinda. He is survived by his wife of more than 64 years, Sharon Larson; sister Sally Hale; daughters, Sarah Larson, Loretta Haynes and Alice Kofahl; six grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

Graveside services were held July 20 at the Plainview Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to: St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 710 Joliet St., Plainview, Texas 79072 or Cal Farley's Boys Ranch, 600 SW 11th Ave., Amarillo, Texas 79101 or to one's favorite charity.

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FAST TRACK

COMPILED: Scott Rutherford,
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

On July 17, the **Disneyland Resort** marked its 59th anniversary by reflecting on a rich heritage of making magic in a celebration held on Main Street, U.S.A. Guests, cast members and 59 Disney characters joined together to hear **Walt Disney's** opening day speech and to sing along to a medley of classic Disneyland Resort songs led by the **Dapper Dans** of Disneyland. Disneyland Resort also announced that the upcoming 60th anniversary Diamond Celebration will begin spring 2015.

Jump!Zone of Orange Park, Fla., announced the opening of a brand new family attraction at their Blanding Boulevard location. The children's inflatable indoor party and play center is now offering children and their parents a glow in the dark combat play arena called **The Battle Zone**. The 4,000-square-foot expansion also adds two private party rooms and space for an expanded arcade area.

Howl-O-Scream 2014 returns to **Busch Gardens Tampa** this fall with surprises and unexpected terrors around every corner. Busch Gardens' 300 acres will be overgrown with dark, sinister, adult-targeted fun. Hundreds of roaming creatures will swarm the streets, making escape nearly impossible. A chilling live show along with Florida's top thrill rides in the dark, including North America's tallest free-standing drop tower **Falcon's Fury** will keep the screams coming.

After opening seven days a week for the first time in decades, the **Museum of Modern Art** saw attendance rise seven percent last year, while the number of visitors to the **Metropolitan Museum of Art**, both in New York City, was flat despite a similar change. MoMA started opening its doors every day in May 2013, while the Met began its daily schedule on July 1, 2013. In announcing the change from six days to seven, executives at each institution said they were extending hours to better accommodate a growing number of visitors.

In celebration of 25 years, **Lotte World Adventure** theme park is holding its special **Let's Dream** nightly parade. The multimedia show and parade took approximately two years to organize and produce, and the newly launched, highly technical and LED light-filled character floats look as though they came straight out of a child's dream.

Dollywood has had a successful summer with the nightly fireworks show. **Dolly's Nights of Many Colors** is on for a second year in the theme park. Fireworks shoot into the sky to Dolly Parton's music. "We actually sent a team to China to hand pick the patterns that we have," said Dollywood's **Paige Bales**.

The **Italian Government** has ended the long-standing practice of allowing E.U. citizens aged over 65 free access to some 225 state-owned museums, galleries and archaeological sites. In Rome, for example, these include the Colosseum and Roman Forum, the fascinating archaeological museums of the Museo Nazionale Romano circuit and the Borghese Gallery.

The **Hertfordshire Studio** where all eight **Harry Potter** films were shot in England tripled its profits to last year with the bulk of the increase generated by its behind-the-scenes boy wizard tour. The tour, at **Leavesden Studios**, showcases costumes, props and sets from the Harry Potter series including a recreation of **Hogwarts' Great Hall**.

The third biggest aquarium on the planet is coming together in Kansas City at **A. Zahner Co.** Zahner is designing and building the exterior forms and surfaces for the elaborate ocean-based aquarium in Fortaleza, Brazil. The **Acuario Ceara**, carrying a price tag of \$130 million, is set to open in 2015. Zahner's fabrication shops are making the aluminum support frame and aluminum skin plates that cover it. These pieces will ship south and come together for the project.

Picsolve, a leading image capture partner for the leisure and entertainment industry, has announced user figures for its digital product suite. 400,000 people have registered for Picsolve's digital portal which has been rolled out to over 100 attractions worldwide. Picsolve's cutting-edge digital product suite, the result of three years investment and development, allows guests to access images immediately and is available in 13 languages and with an intuitive native app.

Feed the Children is joining forces with **Six Flags Entertainment Corporation**, to raise awareness and encourage support among park guests. The partnership between the world's largest regional theme park company and the non-profit hunger relief organization is part of Feed the Children's renewed vision to create a world where no child goes to bed hungry.

Houston Zoo is adding the world's largest gorilla exhibit. Construction of the \$29 million **Gorillas of the African Forest** exhibit is more than halfway done and we got the first peek at the progress. The exhibit will give the experience of being right in the middle of an African forest. The two acres will soon be home to 10 gorillas.

This fall **Halloween Horror Nights** at **Universal Studios Hollywood** and **Universal Orlando Resort** will introduce a terrifying new scarezone, **The Purge: Anarchy**, inspired by Universal Pictures' new thriller, which scored the highest opening for a horror film this year. The Purge: Anarchy scarezone will greet guests with pure unadulterated fear, bringing to life the turmoil and pandemonium that awaits those vulnerable to masked vigilantes in search of new victims.

A new **Haunted Mansion**-themed merchandise shop is opening this fall in the **Magic Kingdom** at **Walt Disney World Resort**. The shop will be located in the current **Yankee Trader** shop. Inspired by **Madame Leota**, the new location will carry select items from the upcoming Haunted Mansion authentic program.

PEOPLE WATCH

Legoland Florida gains new marketing dir.

WINTER HAVEN, Fla. — **Legoland Florida** announced the addition of **Rex Jackson** as the park's new marketing director. Jackson joins Legoland Florida after spending the last five years as marketing director at Darden Restaurants in Orlando, Fla., bringing his experience to the Legoland team. He will lead all marketing, communication, advertising and sales efforts of the park, including the unveiling of the Legoland Hotel in 2015.

"We are happy to add someone of Rex's stature to lead our marketing team here at Legoland Florida," said Legoland Florida General Manager **Adrian Jones**. "Rex brings a wealth of experience from his time at Darden and Procter & Gamble, and we are looking forward to him being part of our management team."

Picsolve announces new appointment

LONDON — **Picsolve**, a leading image capture partner for the leisure and entertainment industry, has announced its instrumental appointment of **Colin Tenwick** as non-executive chairman.

Tenwick joins Picsolve with a proven and award-winning track record in global technology businesses, after winning the prestigious "Technology CEO of the Year for a public company" at the UK Technology and Growth Awards and currently serving as Non-Executive Director at **AVG** and a Non-Executive Chairman at **Addison Lee**.

Previously Chairman and CEO of **Bookatable** and most recently non-executive chairman at **ControlCircle** — a leading provider of managed and cloud-based services to enterprises and online businesses, Tenwick's knowledge and deep understanding of running small and large enterprises, coupled with his consistent success in delivering turnarounds in technology organizations, will be invaluable in his new role within Picsolve.

Suzo-Happ appoints new sales rep.

MOUNT PROSPECT, Ill. — **Suzo-Happ** announced that **Aquiles Mila de la Roca** has joined the company as a sales representative for Latin America.

"We are very excited about the addition of Aquiles and his team," said **James Brendel**, CEO of Suzo-Happ. "This new strategic opportunity will grow and strengthen our market share in Central, North, and South America."

Mila de la Roca, has been in the industry for 15 years, with experience in the distribution, marketing, sales and support of various companies like **Atronic**, **Bally**, **Money Controls** and **Crane Payment Solutions** throughout Latin America. He will market and sell a full range of products for the Amusement, Gaming, Vending, Transportation and Retail industries. Mila de la Roca is based out of Miami, Florida and will be supported by his team composed of customer service, engineering and technical resources.

Frank Desocio new BPAA executive director

ARLINGTON, Texas — **The Bowling Proprietors' Association of America** (BPAA) announced that **Frank DeSocio** of Wichita, Kansas, has been named as its new executive director. DeSocio officially assumed his new position July 1, 2014.

The announcement ended a six-month search to fill the vacancy during which time BPAA executive officers rotated executive director duties at the International Bowling Campus in Arlington, Texas.

DeSocio, a bowling proprietor from Wichita, Kansas, is currently president of **Strike Ten Entertainment** (STE), the marketing arm of bowling. STE is a network of 2,100-plus of the most progressive bowling proprietors throughout the United States, whose mission is to ensure that potential partners fit the needs and expectations of bowling proprietors on a national and local basis by promoting bowling in a positive manner.

Around our industry...

• **Six Flags Great Adventure**, Jackson, N.J., celebrates the first sea lion pup born at the world's largest theme park. The healthy male pup named **Kona** weighed approximately 18 pounds at birth June 25, and now weighs in at 33 pounds at one month of age.

Kona is the park's fifth California sea lion. Mother **Anoki** successfully delivered her first pup under the careful observation of the park's veterinary and animal care teams at Seafari Theater in the park's Golden Kingdom section. At four days old, Kona began learning how to use his flippers and developed a signature call with his mother. Anoki continues to nurse her pup, and has proven to be an excellent mother.

• **The Themed Entertainment Association** (TEA), Burbank, Calif., announced that its next TEA International Board President will be **Steve Birket**, PE, of **Birket Engineering**. Birket officially became TEA President-Elect by a unanimous vote of the board on May 13.

Steve Birket has been active within TEA for more than 10 years, and part of the leadership since 2006, stepping up in 2010 to the TEA International Board level.

Second Playland book highlights park's 'golden years'

STORY: Jeffrey L. Seifert
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

In the golden age of amusement parks, almost every major metropolitan area was home to one, if not several of these popular pleasure grounds. Some were small, seedy, and may have lasted only a few years, others lasted for generations and became woven into the fabric of the cities in which they resided. When their time came to an end, the loss was lamented for years to come. Many former patrons scrambled to collect souvenirs and held on to their precious photographs to help keep the memories alive. Many have inspired books, television specials and fan clubs and hold a special place in the hearts of the locals who frequented them.

BOOK REVIEW

For the people of Northern California, that special place was San Francisco's Playland at the Beach. The area itself dates back to the 1880s as home to one of the first gravity railroad "roller coasters." It officially became Playland at the Beach in 1928 enthraling generations of San Franciscans for more than 40 years before being shuttered in 1972.

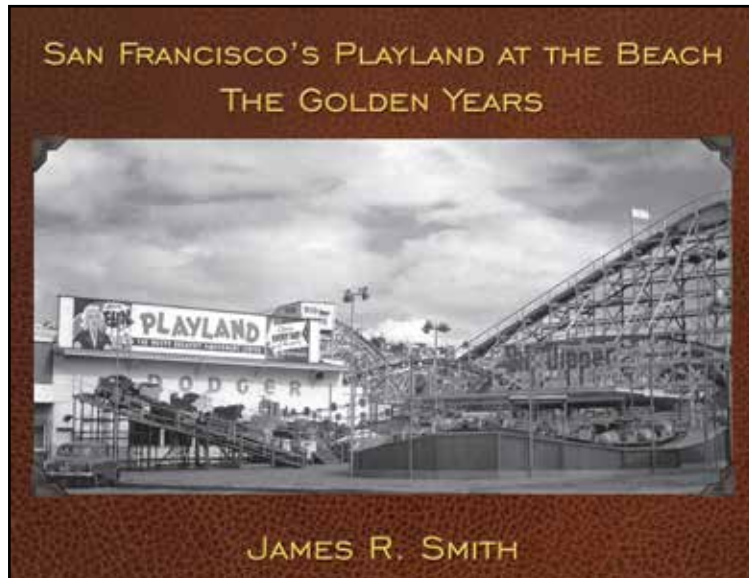
Released at the end of last year, *San Francisco's Playland at the Beach: The Golden Years* is a sequel to the 2010 release of *San Francisco's Playland at the Beach: The Early Years*. Both were written by San Francisco Historian James R. Smith who has provided a magisterial history of Playland with the completion of this second volume.

Author James R. Smith is a well-respected authority in California history. He is a frequent lecturer and discussion leader at universities, historical societies, libraries and bookstores.

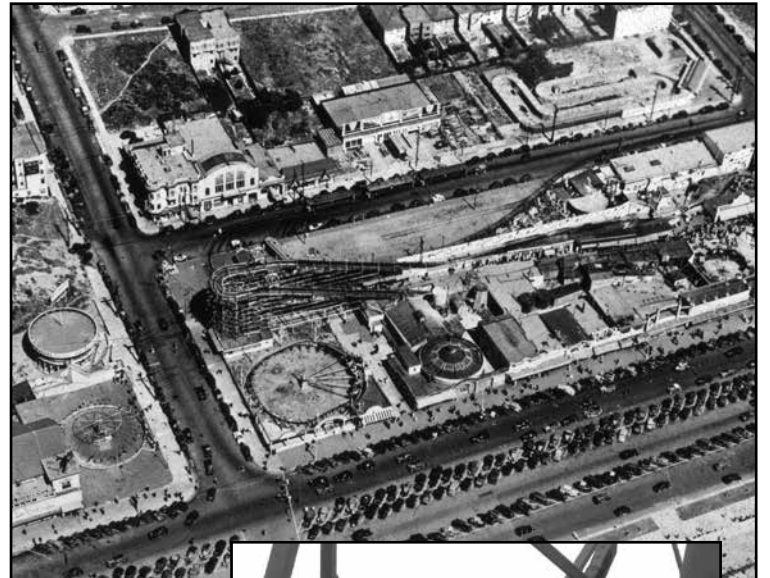
While *The Early Years* told the story of the beginnings of Playland, *The Golden Years* covers the era from 1940 to 1972. Though titled *The Golden Years*, the book also covers the gradual decline during the 1960s, the park's closure in 1972, and its subsequent destruction.

The large, soft-cover book is 11 inches wide by 8.5 inches tall, and its 152 pages are filled with more than 300 rare, black-and-white and color photographs — some never before published.

Though concentrating on



Top row, left to right: San Francisco's Playland at the Beach: The Golden Years book cover. This aerial view of Playland shows just a portion of the park in its heyday. The park extends along the beach to the left and right of this photograph. Bottom row, left to right: the Big Dipper was the largest ride at the park. Built in 1922 by Arthur Looff, it operated until 1955. Developer Jeremy Erts-Hokin dismantled Playland with little regard to the preservation of artifacts. Inset: an unknown worker (or vagrant) takes a break in a car of the partially-destroyed Alpine Racer, a German-made wild mouse imported by Mack Duce. ALL PHOTOS COURTESY CRAVEN STREET BOOKS



those golden years, the book does provide some historical information on the beginnings of Playland.

Amusements, food stands and attractions began to appear on Ocean Beach in the 1880s. But the area didn't become a traditional amusement park until 1921 when it officially opened as Chutes at the Beach. At the time there were over 100 concessions and nine big rides including the namesake Shoot the Chutes.

Two brothers, George and Leo Whitney opened concessions at the park in 1923 and in 1928 they purchased the park and renamed it Playland at the Beach. At the time it was still a collection of separate concessionaires, but by 1929 the Whitney Brothers owned more than half the park.

As Playland thrived throughout the 1930s the brothers continued buying up prop-

erty. In 1939 Leo Whitney retired and sold all of his shares to his brother. By 1942 George Whitney owned it all — nearly 2,300 acres of amusement park and attractions. (By comparison most modern-day amusement park average 200 to 500 acres.)

In 1954 Walt Disney visited Playland looking for ideas to incorporate into Disneyland. He left with not only ideas, but George Whitney's son, George Jr. whom Disney hired as a full-time ride consultant. The younger Whitney, who was Disney employee number seven, served as the Director of Ride Operations for Disneyland from 1954 to 1958.

When the elder Whitney died in 1958, George Jr. took over operations of Playland. The park thrived under his leadership even taking on Disney-like touches, but in 1964, the Whitney family decided to

sell the park but retained management of the property.

Developer Robert Frazier took ownership of the park but lacked the Whitneys' vision. In 1968 the Whitney family sold their contact for management of the park to showman Marty Davis.

The park started to take on a carnival feel, and Davis was often described as cheap and sleazy, wanting to milk Playland for every dime, but putting nothing back into it.

The park was no longer attractive or appealing and families drifted away from it. Playland faltered and eventually Frazier and the other stakeholders sold the park to a developer. Playland at the Beach closed on the night of Labor Day, September 4, 1972, and never reopened.

San Francisco's Playland at the Beach: The Golden Years is divided into 18 chapters high-

lighting a specific ride or group of attractions such as the Merry-Go-Round, funhouse and dark rides. Some of the chapters are again divided with sub chapters such as specific gags within the funhouse, or mini chapters of each of the park's dark rides. An index at the end of the books makes it easy to search for a specific photo.

Although some of the photos are captioned, most are explained by a wonderfully-written dialogue contained within the chapter. The photos provide not only a historic account of the park but offer a glimpse of everyday life in San Francisco at midcentury.

San Francisco's Playland at the Beach: The Golden Years is published by Craven Street Books an imprint of Linden Publishing, Inc. of Fresno, Calif. The list price is \$22.95 and it is available from bookstores and online booksellers.





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THUNDERBOLT



THIS SIZE CAN FIT ANY PARK



Total track length
681 m (2234')



Maximum track height
35 m (115')



Maximum Speed
25 m/s - 90 km/h - 56 mph



Max Vertical
+4.3 G's



Passengers per vehicle
9



Number of inversions
5



First 9 seats vehicle and new patent pending lap bar restraint.

