



New England News

2 Industry Icons To Be Inducted Into The NEAAPA Hall Of Fame

NASHUA, N.H. – Industry icons James Patten III and the late Haig Gulezian will be inducted into the New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (NEAAPA) Hall of Fame on Tuesday, March 24.

The gala event will take place during NEAAPA’s 107th Anniversary Education Conference & Annual Meeting at the Radisson Nashua Hotel here.

Patten, a past secretary, vice president and president of NEAAPA, served as general manager at the former Shaheen’s Fun Park, also referred to as Fun-O-Rama, in Salisbury Beach, Mass., while Gulezian was known as an entrepreneur in the amusement industry and had other business ventures.



James Patten III



Haig Gulezian

Worked For Father-In-Law

While attending Babson College in Massachusetts, James Patten III started working at the Salisbury Beach facility in 1965 for the late Roger J. Shaheen, owner of the amusement park. It was there he met and married Shaheen’s daughter, Jilda.

Following his college graduation in 1967, James was named general manager of the amusement park and was involved with the business until it closed in 1990. It was during his management stint that Shaheen’s facility evolved from a tiny business with one ride and a couple of food stands into a full-fledged beachfront park.

James also served on the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Board of Directors (1976-82) and chaired the organization’s safety committee. In addition, he was

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2020 Summer Meeting**

Hall Of Fame

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chairman of IAAPA's ASTM International F-24 Committee on Amusement Ride and Devices from 1978-82. IAAPA honored James with its meritorious service award for all of his volunteer work during those years.

Associated With Other Properties

He built a national reputation throughout the industry and assisted with the construction of Whale's Tales Waterpark in Lincoln, N.H., worked with Morey's Piers, Wildwood, N.J., and the former Boblo Island Amusement Park, Ontario, Canada, prior to his retirement in 1990.

In 1970 he and the late Myron Klayman, who worked at the former Paragon Park, Hull., Mass., introduced the vendor showcase at NEAAPA's annual gathering. Klayman, a past president of the organization (1976-77), was inducted into the NEAAPA Hall of Fame in 2016.

Now residing in Florida, Mr. and Mrs. Patten have three children, Janel, Jarrod and J.R., and three grandchildren.

Businessman

Haig Gulezian was the son of hard-working Armenian immigrants who set the example for him. He strived to own his own businesses since he was young, including making false teeth and then opening a potato chip company. He also owned numerous apartment buildings in Haverhill, Mass., according to family members.

He entered the amusement industry by creating Haig's Miniature Golf in Methuen, Mass. It was there, in the 1950s, he met the love of his life, Gladys, when a local church visited the attraction.

On Sundays he turned the business over to his brother so he could see Gladys at church and the couple eventually married.

Last Venture

In 1979 Haig put all he had accomplished on the line to purchase land in Nashua, N.H., and construct Fun World, an indoor entertainment complex with the latest video games such as Pac-man and Asteroids.

Family members said it was his keen sense of anticipating evolving trends that allowed him to be successful in the growing video game market during that era. An annual buyer at the IAAPA Expo, he would purchase the latest state-of-the-art games for his business.

During one instance, he had to shut down a lane

Those In NEAAPA Hall Of Fame

Since 1998, NEAAPA has inducted 43 people into the Hall of Fame. The past inductees are:

Roger Shaheen, Shaheen Enterprises
Anthony Pero, Ocean Beach Park
Edward J. Carroll, Jr., Riverside Park
Henry Bowen, Whalom Park
Edward J. Carroll, Sr., Riverside Park
Lawrence Stone, Paragon Park
Alton Lipkin, NANCO / Nancy Sales Co.
George Frantzis, Quassy Amusement Park
Anthony Sr. and Laura Berni, Canobie Lake Park
Claude and Stella Captell, Canobie Lake Park
Kasmir and Rita Ulaky, Canobie Lake Park
Kenneth and Violet Cormier, Funtown Splashtown
Tom Morrow, Canobie Lake Park
Ed Connor, Riverside Park
John Frantzis, Quassy Amusement Park
Robert & Ruth Morrel, Story Land
James P. & Eleanor R. Brady, Six Gun City
John F. Naughton, Naughton Insurance
Wayne McCary, Eastern States Exposition
Conrad Ferla, Rocky Point Park
Suzanne McHugh Piscitello, Canobie Gifts
Fred L. Markey, Dodgem Corp.
Kate Horner-Wall, Lake Compounce/Riverside Park
Anthony Berni, Jr., Carl Berni, Christine Ulaky,
Raymond Captell, Canobie Lake Park
Alan Ramsay, CLM Entertainment
Robert Harkins, Six Flags New England
John & Elizabeth Bowen, Whalom Park
Normand & Cecile Dubois, Santa's Village
Myron Klayman, Paragon Park
Justine Brewer, Southwick's Zoo
George Frantzis II, Quassy Amusement & Waterpark
Gene Dean, Fiesta Shows/Dean Enterprises

of Daniel Webster highway adjacent to Fun World, install a garage door, and then crane a full-sized Mazda Miata car frame video game into the building.

He made multiple expansions and changes at his business, including outdoor go-karts, indoor bumper cars, and even an indoor mini golf course.

Making a transition to more popular family attractions in the late 1990s, he replaced his lineup with an indoor roller coaster, Himalaya ride, and a two-story Venetian carousel imported from Italy.

The early success of Fun World was attributed to his

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Welcome To The 107th Conference And Meeting



Eric Anderson

Hello fellow members, and welcome to the 107th Education Conference and Annual Meeting of our great association.

One of the many highlights of this annual meeting is the induction of two new members into the NEAAPA Hall of Fame: James Patten III and Haig Gulezian. This select group of industry innovators and pioneers is the highest honor NEAAPA awards to the membership and we have two excellent recipients being added to the growing list of exceptional people.

The current board and all of the committees have been working on various projects to bring additional value to all members and I personally want to thank all of them for their diligence and time dedicated to making NEAAPA the leader in regional associations.

Yours in NEAAPA,
Eric Anderson, president

SWT Program Is Valuable To Seasonal Operations

(Editor's note: This article was provided to New England News by association member Greenheart Exchange.)



CHICAGO - Members of the New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (NEAAPA) and seasonal businesses throughout the United States face unique challenges with low unemployment and young Americans increasingly focusing on academics and extracurriculars over school breaks.

For some, the U.S. Department of State's J-1 visa Summer Work Travel (SWT) program has become a valuable means of supporting seasonal operations while enhancing workplace diversity.

Successful use of the program, however, requires a robust commitment to cultural exchange, and resources for participant housing and transportation.

The SWT program is a cultural exchange program that stems from the Fulbright-Hayes Mutual Education
(See SWT Program, Page 6)

Hall Of Fame

(Continued From Page 2)

son, David, who oversaw the construction.

Family members added that Haig had the grand vision, yet David was the brains in making Fun World a reality.

Haig Gulezian, who died in 2002, may best be remembered for successfully creating affordable year-round indoor fun for all ages, but he was also a caring family man. Supported in all of his endeavors by his wife, Gladys, the couple had five children.

Haig's legacy continues today as Fun World is operated by his daughter, Sandra Gulezian-Manougian, and grandson, Peter Manougian.



Summer Work Travel program employee at Canobie Lake Park in Salem, N.H. (Submitted photo)

NEAAPA Members On The Show



Floor During IAAPA Expo In Nov.



NEAAPA Photos



George Frantzis III Returns To Quassy As HR Director

MIDDLEBURY, Conn. – George Frantzis III has been named human resources director at Quassy Amusement & Waterpark here, park officials announced.



George Frantzis III

“Small family businesses are the foundation of a great economy. My position specifically deals with creating great entry

-level opportunities for our employees and providing an excellent experience for our customers,” he said. “I’m extremely proud to be a part of the team again!”

Frantzis, 27, is among fourth-generation family members working at the property, which was purchased by his great-grandfather, John Frantzis, along with two business partners in 1937.

He previously served as ride supervisor at the lakeside facility from 2010-15 before exploring other opportunities.

Today the park is wholly owned by the Frantzis and Anderson families, which reside locally and oversee day-to-day operations of the seasonal business.

The amusement ride area of Quassy opens for the 2020 season on April 25 with Splash Away Bay waterpark and Quassy Beach slated to open on May 23.

For more information about the park and 2020 special events, visit www.quassy.com.

SWT Program

(Continued From Page 3)

and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961. Its purpose is to foster mutual understanding through first-hand experiences of American people and culture.

The program is administered by the U.S. State Department, which is the same government agency that engages in diplomacy with other countries’ governments.

SWT participants are young adults, typically between the ages of 18 and 25. As college students, the program allows them to come to the U.S. on their long school break, for up to four months.

They choose to participate to improve their English, visit a country they see in American media, gain work experience, and meet friends from around the world.

To ensure a robust cultural exchange, the State Department designates SWT sponsors, like Greenheart Exchange, to vet interested students and hosts for eligibility, match participants with appropriate positions, and support participants while they’re in the U.S.

Although sponsors approve participants, individual visa applications can be denied. Some program cancellations due to visa denials or personal circumstances are to be expected. For this and other reasons, businesses must stay in regular communication with the sponsor they partner with before, during, and after they host students.

Not Just Work, Not Just Travel

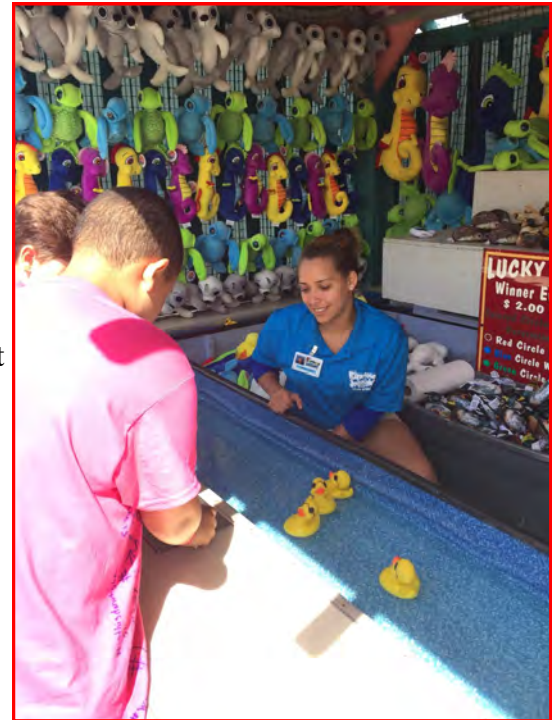
As the SWT program is widely supported by NEAAPA, many members are aware of its core mission to foster mutual understanding. Qualified U.S. businesses also benefit from the work component of the SWT program.

Working enables students to defray the costs of the program while striking the right balance between work and cultural immersion is a key element of a successful program.

Colin Lynch, director of operations at Water Country, Portsmouth, N.H., shares that making sure the participants have a full work and travel program experience “and not just a work program or a travel program” is one of the key challenges for successful hosts.

Their solution? Water Country requires participants to “take time off and not work seven days a week.” Combined with Colin’s suggestions for what to see and do, participants are empowered to explore New England

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A SWT program student works a game stand at Funtown Splashtown USA in Saco, Maine (Submitted photo)

SWT Program (Continued From Page 6)

and the cultural exchange mission of the program is fulfilled. At the same time, a reasonable minimum number of work hours ensures Water Country has the staff base they need.

Jared Turgeon, international coordinator at Sodexo at Canobie Lake Park, Salem, N.H., says, “My favorite part of hosting the students is getting to show them the area I grew up in and teaching them about culture here in both the USA and New Hampshire. Twice per month I take the students on cultural trips around New Hampshire where they can explore everything that our state has to offer.”

Jared added that many of the friendships formed on the program last and result in reunions all over the world as he travels for work.

Another key ingredient for a successful SWT program is assistance with housing and transportation. Some host organizations subsidize housing costs, while others help identify affordable options. With transportation, some host organizations have innovated by purchasing a passenger van to transport employees, while others subsidize public transit passes. Such assistance can make a job offer more attractive to potential participants.

State Department regulations already outline requirements for appropriate housing and for the proximity of the housing to a workplace. Updated regulations that are currently under review will more rigorously address both. Host organizations that proactively provide assistance in this area will be ahead of the curve.

Benefits to American Workplaces

In addition to supporting staffing, more than 92 percent of host organizations surveyed in 2017 reported that participating in the program contributed to a positive workplace culture and brought an international flair to their establishment.

Mark O'Reilly, personnel manager at Canobie Lake Park says, “Hosting SWT participants gives a great opportunity for the students to learn about our culture and to share their culture with our park. It is great to see students join our team and feel like they belong from the moment they arrive to the moment that they leave and to also leave with a summer full of memories.”

Similarly, Colin at Water Country shares, “Hiring J-1 SWT participants allows the opportunity for our domestic employees to work and socialize with a more diverse employee base than typically possible.”

While the SWT program is privately funded and uses no federal taxpayer dollars, it is important that our Congress members know that we value the program.

In addition to the advocacy efforts, NEAAPA members are already engaged in, those interested in voicing support for the SWT program can join Americans for Cultural Exchange (americansforculturalexchange.org), a grassroots coalition of more than 1,000 businesses, chambers of commerce, and trade associations that support the SWT and other exchange programs. Joining is free and provides access to newsletters and advocacy updates.

Powers Goes Into OABA Hall Of Fame

TAMPA, Fla. – Corky (Les) Powers, owner of Powers Great American Midways (PGAM), was inducted into the Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA) Hall of Fame recently at the Sheraton Tampa Brandon Hotel here.



Corky Powers

Involved in the industry all of his life, Powers started his own carnival in 1980 under the name of Amusements of Rochester and built a successful route for the business in New York and Pennsylvania.

The show grew into a leader in the industry after Powers took his operation into North Carolina in the late 1980s by



securing a number of established fair contracts.

Today PGAM can field more than 50 rides and plays major fairs, including the North Carolina State Fair in Raleigh, Dutchess County Fair, Rhinebeck, N.Y., and The Great Allentown Fair, Allentown, Pa.

The Corfu, N.Y., carnival has its winter quarters in Whiteville, N.C., and is one of the newest members of the New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions.

For more about PGAM visit powersmidways.com

Manufacturers & Suppliers News



Rides 4U package at IAAPA Expo. Rides 4U Debuts Package

SOMERVILLE, N.J. — During November's International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Expo in Orlando, Fla., Rides 4U unveiled a package of attractions suited for family entertainment centers and amusement parks looking to make an impact in a small space.

“For years, we’d discussed the possibility of locating multiple rides within one footprint. We did it,” stated Len Soled of Rides 4U. “The result was a complete grouping of rides that will thrill and delight guests all inside of the footprint of our new Big Air Coaster.”

The Big Air Coaster was the headliner of the package. The coaster’s rectangular layout features turns and bunny hops that send Visa’s popular spinning coaster cars whirling. In addition, the coaster train can feature the new 360-degree spinning “hamster wheel” car, which sends guests whirling in a whole new direction.

Beard On IBCCES Board

The International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES), a leading global provider of training and certification on autism and cognitive disorders, appointed Erik Beard to its executive advisory board.

Beard is a managing member and general counsel of International Ride Training in Nashville, Tenn., where he oversees the company’s legal needs and also supports its amusement ride safety training, certification, auditing and accessibility programs including the International Ride Operator



Erik Beard

program, the world’s only third-party certification of safety, efficiency, and professionalism for amusement ride operators.

“I’m excited to be a part of IBCCES’ advisory board.” said Beard. “IBCCES has, in a very short time, made a major impact on the amusement industry by increasing awareness and accessibility at our parks and attractions through the Certified Autism Center program. As someone that works hard to strengthen accessibility, inclusiveness, and ADA compliance through International Ride Training’s ‘ADA FAQ’ training program, I intend to further strengthen IBCCES’ connections to the amusement park industry, and to raise awareness for the need to implement autism and other cognitive disorder training and certifications.”



Joe Herbert



**Brandon
Horton**



**Steve
Lamoreaux**

Three Promoted At Betson

CARLSTADT, N.J. - Betson Enterprises has announced the promotions of Joe Herbert, Brandon Horton, and Steve Lamoreaux, each to regional sales manager.

Herbert is based out of Betson Florida and will help manage in the Southeast region under the direction of regional sales director, David Capilouto.

Horton, working out of the Betson Texas office, will assist in managing the Southwest region alongside Brian Serck, the area’s regional sales director.

Lamoreaux will work with regional sales director, Mike McWilliams, in managing the Mountain States and Pacific Northwest regions. Steve is based out of Betson’s Utah office.

Betson is a worldwide distributor of arcade and amusement equipment, parts and service.

*Send your manufacturers and suppliers news to ron@quassy.com and secretary@neaapa.com for the next edition of **New England News**, the official newsletter of the New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions*

Manufacturers & Suppliers News



WhiteWater officials with Brass Ring Awards.

WhiteWater Wins Brass Rings

ORLANDO, Fla. – WhiteWater West Industries, Richmond, British Columbia, Canada, received three Brass Rings Awards at the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) annual Expo here in November.

The honors won were:

- * Best New Product: Water Park Ride/Attraction under \$1 million for Tailspin
- * Best New Product: Major Ride/Attraction between \$2 and \$5 million for Spinning Rapids Ride Fusion
- * Best New Product: Major Ride/Attraction over \$1 million category

Triotech Installs Attractions

MONTREAL—Triotech has installed three distinct attractions at Resorts World Genting's Skytropolis indoor theme park in Malaysia, including the largest Triotech Dark Ride Theatre in Southeast Asia.

Just opened is Sky VR where Triotech is showcasing its attractions, namely the award-winning XD Dark Ride Interactive Theater featuring a custom 32-seat room.

There are also be two of Triotech's innovative virtual reality experiences: the VR Maze.

Rounding out the installations is a Typhoon simulator, a top-ranked ride worldwide.

All of the new attractions feature several different media contents allowing guests to experience a different adventure every time they participate.

"Southeast Asia, and particularly Malaysia, is a strong growing region and we are happy to bring Triotech award-winning attractions to Resorts World Genting's unique and innovative project," said Ernest Yale, Triotech's founder and CEO.

Visit trio-tech.com for more information.

Bower Joins Ralph S. Alberts

MONTOURVILLE, Pa. — The Ralph S. Alberts Company has expanded its customer service department with the addition of Mikayla Bower.

Bower joins company after serving as a customer service representative at a regional bank in the Williamsport Pa. area.

She is a 2019 graduate of St. Francis University, Loretto Pa., earning a bachelor's degree in business management.

Bower will be working with Andrew Vogelsong in RSA's customer service department in support of clients and will also assist with company-wide marketing initiatives.

The Ralph S. Alberts Company, Inc., established in 1963, provides seating, foam/PUR safety padding and theming to ride manufactures and amusement parks worldwide.



Mikayla Bower



Peter Wolf



Tom Chiarella



Jamie Elswick

3 Named To Posts At Gateway

GILBERTSVILLE, Pa. - Gateway Ticketing Systems, the world leader in ticketing, admission control and revenue-generating solutions for the attractions industry for more than 30 years, has announced a pivotal new hire and two strategic promotions.

Peter Wolf joins the executive management team at Gateway as the new director of sales and marketing.

Peter comes to Gateway with more than 15 years of sales and marketing experience. Most recently he served as vice president marketing and business development for Glory Global Solutions, one of the global leaders in cash handling automation solutions.

Former Sr. Manager, Product Development, Tom Chiarella, has been promoted to the executive management team as director of product.

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Tom joined Gateway in 2014 as a program manager

Manufacturers & Suppliers News

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Tom joined Gateway in 2014 as a program manager.

Industry veteran, Jamie Elswick, has been promoted to the role of strategic account manager where he will support the key relationships with Gateway's enterprise customers. Jamie was promoted from business solutions architect where he formerly managed new customer acquisition.



Named Best New Coaster Of '19

BALTIMORE — *USA Today* has named Busch Garden Tampa Bay's Tigris as 2019's best new roller coaster in their popular 10Best New Amusement Park Attraction poll.

Tigris, built by Premier Rides, Inc., of Baltimore, opened at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay ahead of schedule last April.

With guests racing along more than 1,800 feet of steel track and a 150 foot skyward surge, Tigris is Florida's tallest launch coaster. Featuring a triple launch, forward and backward motion, breathtaking vertical drops, and unmatched views from the thrilling heartline roll, Tigris gives riders an experience unique to any other in the world.

Premier is currently constructing Ice Breaker, SeaWorld Orlando's (Florida) first launch coaster.

The ride is slated to open this spring and feature four launches, both backward and forward, culminating in a reverse launch into the steepest beyond vertical drop in Florida — a 93-foot tall spike with 100-degree angle.

Located near the Wild Arctic Attraction, the ride's theme is reflective of this area with a nod to Ice Breaker's conservation partner, Alaska SeaLife Center.

Seay Given ASTM Award

SAN DIEGO - Jim Seay, president of Premier Rides, Baltimore, Md., was presented the prestigious Award of Merit by ASTM International during the ASTM F24 Committee on Amusement Rides and Devices meeting here. He also received the honorary title of Fellow.

The Award of Merit was established in 1949 to recognize distinguished service by individual ASTM members. Seay is longstanding member of ASTM and served six years as ASTM F24 chairman.

He has helped expand the use of ASTM standards globally, and his efforts and technical expertise led to the development and publication of the most widely used ASTM F24 standard: F2291.



Jim Seay

Bell Named To IAAPA Panel

GILBERTSVILLE, Pa. — Steve Bell, business solutions architect at Gateway Ticketing Systems, has been selected to serve on the 2020 International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) North American Regional Advisory Committee.

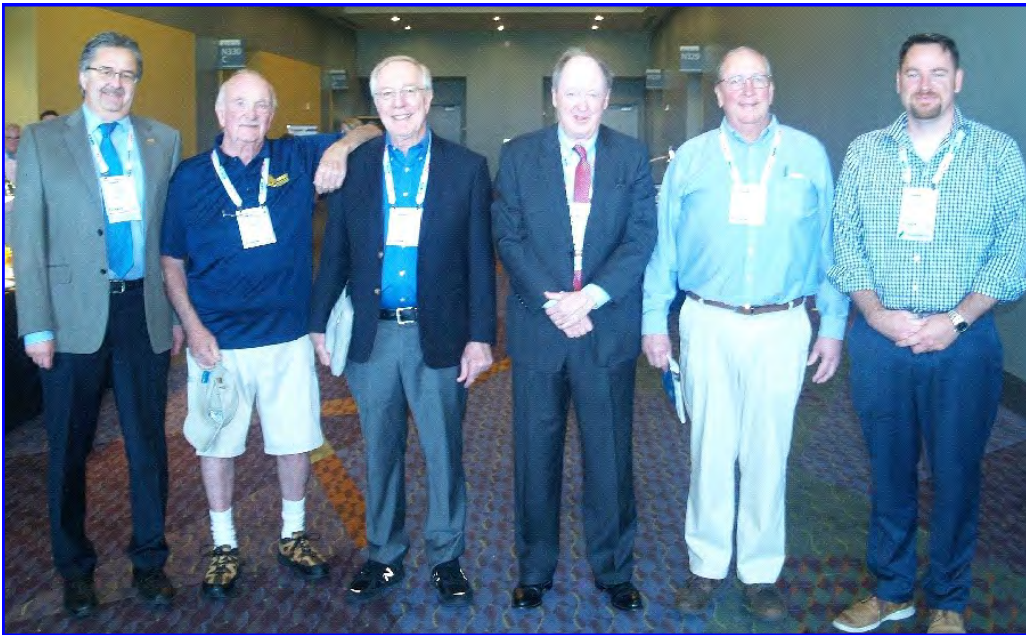
The committee is made up of attractions industry leaders who come together to help guide IAAPA as it serves the global attractions industry. With a focus on North America, this volunteer committee helps IAAPA create regional events and membership forums as well as educational and networking opportunities.

Steve's 18 years of attractions industry experience, including 10 with Gateway Ticketing Systems and three years volunteering with IAAPA, gives him the experience and insight he'll need to represent the interests and priorities of the attractions industry throughout North America.

Steve joins other industry professionals on the committee, including Committee Chairman Ted Molter, chief marketing officer, The San Diego Zoo. Steve's appointment is a one-year term. In addition to serving on the NARAC, Steve remains on IAAPA's North American Manufacturers and Suppliers Sub-Committee.



Steve Bell



**NEAAPA
Luncheon
At IAAPA**



Past Presidents Of NEAAPA At Luncheon

The New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (NEAAPA) held its annual luncheon and a board meeting during the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Expo in Orlando, Fla., in November. Dozens were on hand at the noon gathering, including these NEAAPA past presidents (from the left): Carl Bernie, Canobie Lake Park, Salem, N.H.; John Frantzis, Quassy Amusement & Waterpark, Middlebury, Conn.; David Daly, Daly Cavanaugh LLP, Wellesley, Mass.; Kevin Naughton, Naughton Insurance Inc., Providence, R.I.; Dave Sugrue, Centerplate, Mashpee, Mass.; and Ryan DeMaria, Canobie Lake Park. (NEAAPA photos)

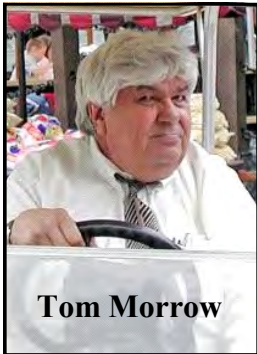


Board met following luncheon at IAAPA Expo.



Always a good turnout (above) and a great lunch prepared by Centerplate (left).

Morrow Dinner & Social Held During IAAPA Expo



Tom Morrow

ORLANDO, Fla.—The New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (NEAAPA) held its annual Tom Morrow Dinner & IAAPA Social during November's International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions Expo. More than 140 attended the gala evening event at Maggiano's Little Italy at Pointe Orlando on International Drive.

The dinner honors the late Morrow, a past president of NEAAPA and operations manager at Canobie Lake Park, Salem, N.H., who became affectionately known as "Mr. NEAAPA" for his years of dedication to the association and the industry.

He also became a member of NEAAPA's Hall of Fame in 2006, a year before his death.



Dinner Sponsors

The Tom Morrow Dinner sponsors in attendance were (from the left): Gaylee Gillim and Jerry Landers, International Amusement & Leisure Defense Association; Michael Marra-Powers, Premier Rides; Brian Ramdat, NXT Capture; Sara Seay, Premier Rides; Jackie Thomas, Uncommon USA; Gary Slade, *Amusement Today*; Tom Tessitore, National Ticket; Josh Hays, S&S Worldwide; Carl Berni, Canobie Lake Park. (NEAAPA photos)



Lake Compounce GM Jerry Brick Honored



Jerry Brick

BRISTOL, Conn. – Jerry Brick, general manager of Lake Compounce, has been honored with a 2019 ACE Award, presented by The New England Carousel Museum’s Board of Directors and the Bristol Center for Arts & Culture.

The ACE Awards honors those who contribute to the arts, culture, and entertainment of Greater Bristol.

Jerry, born in Buffalo, N.Y., began his career in 1986 making cotton candy at Darien Lake Theme Park in Darien Center, N.Y.

After college he worked at Darien Lake, then a Six Flags property, full time until 1994. From there he went on to work for the Marriott Corporation as a traveling manager. He handled a variety of accounts: mostly zoos, aquariums, and theme parks, throughout the east coast.

Late in 1995, Jerry took a position working for the Wet N’ Wild Corporation in Greensboro, N.C. and in October 1996 he moved to Lake Compounce and became their food and beverage manager.

After just three days, he was quickly and impressively promoted to the director of revenue. In 2000 he moved into the assistant general manager role and then in October 2004 was promoted to general manager.

He was named the Industry Person of the Year in 2017 by industry publication *Amusement Today* in the Theme Parks and Attractions category and has served on numerous boards for the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions.

Six Flags To Earn Certified Autism Center Designation



Jason Freeman

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — Six Flags Entertainment Corporation, the world’s largest regional theme park company and the largest operator of waterparks in North America, announced that each of its 26 parks will earn the Certified Autism Center (CAC) designation from the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES).

This initiative will mark the first-ever family of parks to earn the designation at all locations.

“We are proud to partner with IBCCES to ensure that guests on the autism spectrum have the best possible experience when visiting our parks,” said Six Flags Vice President of Safety Jason Freeman. “The certification process will equip our team members with the tools and training needed to better

serve guests with special needs. We want them to know Six Flags stands ready to welcome them with open arms.”

Many individuals and families with children on the autism spectrum or with sensory sensitivities find it challenging when visiting new places or planning family trips. The potential for sensory overload combined with a lack of understanding and awareness at parks and other recreational venues can often be overwhelming.

The CAC designation from IBCCES, the only credentialing board providing these services for the amusement and attractions industry, requires that at least 80 percent of guest-facing staff at each park complete a training and certification program through IBCCES as well as complete onsite audits and make a commitment to ongoing training.

The staff training focuses on understanding the autism spectrum and strategies for communication, guest experience, and safety, while the onsite audit will give each park techniques and guidance on additional updates.

As a Certified Autism Center, Six Flags parks will provide:

- * Trained, courteous, front-line team members with the ability to identify visual cues to better accommodate guests with cognitive disorders and help them enjoy their time in the park;

- * A sensory guide for each ride and attraction so guests can make informed decisions about the ride experience and their level of comfort;



(See SIX FLAGS, Page 13)

FrogWatch USA Offered At Roger Williams Park Zoo



FrogWatch USA offered at zoo.

United States and around the world, and it is essential that scientists understand the scope, geographic scale, and cause of these declines.

After passing a test on identifying frog calls at the end of the training, certified citizen scientists then commit to monitoring a local amphibian habitat (such as a pond or lake) approximately once a week for about 15 minutes and collecting/submitting data on what they hear. Data collected will be added to a national FrogWatch USA database.

FrogWatch trainings cover a large amount of information and protocols. While frog watching is a great after-dark family activity for all ages, the trainings are designed for interested older children and adults.

PROVIDENCE, R.I.— Amphibian species are disappearing at an alarming rate across the globe due to several factors such as habitat loss, pollution, and disease.

Roger Williams Park Zoo recently offered the opportunity to become a citizen scientist at by joining FrogWatch USA and help save our frogs.

FrogWatch trainings cover the importance of amphibians in the environment, how monitoring our local population helps to protect various species of frogs, factors to consider in choosing a site to monitor, how to tell frog species apart by their calls, and how to report findings to FrogWatch USA.

Frogs and toads play an important role, serving as both prey and predator, in wetland ecosystems and are considered indicators of environmental health. Many previously abundant frog and toad populations have experienced dramatic population declines in the

Six Flags

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* Special in-park sensory spaces, where guests with sensory needs can relax in a less stimulating environment;

* Expanded culinary options to meet guests' dietary needs (such as gluten-free items); and

* An updated Accessibility Guide available at sixflags.com, guest relations and ride information centers at each park.

"IBCCES is extremely excited to work with a family of parks with this level of commitment," said Myron Pincomb, IBCCES Board chairman. "So many families just need more communication and understanding from parks and other attractions, so they can make those memories together that we all cherish. In some cases, small changes can make a huge impact, and our certification program ensures each park is committed to long-term growth and understanding, not just a one-time training."

Six Flags New England, Agawam, Mass., is a NEAAPA member and Jason Freeman served as the association's president in 2010.

HOOPLANDIA Slated For June At ESE

WEST SPRINGFIELD, Mass.— Greater Springfield, Mass., is the birthplace of basketball. And now, it is the birthplace of an extraordinary new event to celebrate one of the great games on Planet Earth.

Introducing HOOPLANDIA, the largest 3-on-3 basketball competition and celebration on the East Coast – planned for June 26-28 and hosted by Eastern States Exposition and the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.



The event will feature hundreds of games for thousands of players of all ages and playing abilities, with divisions for young girls, boys, women, men, high school elite, college elite, pro-am, "over the hill", wheelchair, wounded warrior, special Olympians and more. Other exciting features:

* 100 outdoor blacktop courts will be placed throughout the roadway and parking lot network of the Eastern States Exposition fairgrounds in West Springfield.

* Slam-Dunk, 3-Point, Free Throw, Dribble Course, Vertical Jump and Full Court Shot skills competitions will be spotlighted.

* Themed State Courts will be mobilized along the Exposition's famed Avenue of States, with replica capitol buildings of the six New England states.

For more information visit www.hooplandia.com.