



# Northeast News

2022 IAAPA Expo Edition

NEAAPA Newsletter

## Welcome To The 2022 IAAPA Attractions Expo In Orlando

Greetings and welcome to IAAPA's Attraction Expo.

What a wonderful way to kick off the Holiday Season! As NEAAPA continues to grow and diversify, I know of no other regional organization that is better prepared to manage the challenges that we experience as we grow and adapt, remaining always pliable, determined, and responsive.

We are well suited to be prepared for all contingencies. You might say, there's chameleon DNA in all of us. We are always ready for change and prepared for the unknown.

I would like to take a moment to give you a brief update on NEAAPA initiatives. Our committee work continues to move in a positive direction. Overall, we have a great program in place, and I congratulate all our committee members.

We appreciate your challenging work and for always being there. Our membership committee is working diligently to assist in bringing on new members. However, we could use your help. We need to spread the word to potential supporters on the value of the organization and what it means to be a member. Let's take this opportunity to jump start that initiative by letting everyone know the value of what you all do in support for new members and their respective businesses.

Furthermore, our education committee has done a great deal of work to prepare and provide online programs designed to assist all members in their frontline training. Our goal is simple; NEAAPA does not have a brick and mortar facility, we have a great deal of membership properties throughout the Northeast, in that we work as a group for the benefit of the whole. To that end, we also need your assistance to provide subject matter for the Academy. We hope to provide enough content to assist in developing a well-rounded educational process. Therefore, we ask everyone to please submit a portion of your current program that you feel  
(See WELCOME, Page 2)



IAAPA Attractions Expo show floor. (Photo courtesy IAAPA)

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**Next Edition:**  
**NEAAPA Annual Meeting**  
**Submissions to: [secretary@neaapa.com](mailto:secretary@neaapa.com)**

## Welcome

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would be relevant and specific to this initiative. Please check in with Steve Gioe for further assistance.

I know that each of you have a great deal to do over the next few days, whether you are looking for a new attraction, point of sale, ticketing, games, plush, menu options and more.

This will be a fun week to get things in motion for 2023, however it does not stop there. Other opportunities are available to choose from, such as education seminars, facility tours and social events, to name a few.

On Wednesday evening we have the Tom Morrow social at Maggiano's. I know I will see you there and I am looking forward to it as I do each year. Additionally, we also have the NEAAPA Board Meeting and luncheon, also on Wednesday. Make sure you check out the time and location, so everyone can enjoy this event and plan accordingly.

Finally, Universal Parks is hosting IAAPA's Thursday night social. I will be there and hope to see you at this wonderful event, as well.

Before I close, I would like to thank each one of you for your continued support of our organization. You, as valued members of NEAAPA, have the knowledge, experience, and vision to drive all our members to excel.

We could not accomplish what we do without your support and leadership. My personal respect and thanks go out to all of you. Enjoy the show and have a Great Holiday Season!

I hope to see you all at our NEAAPA Meet Up Member Outreach Event at Southwick's Zoo on December 3rd.

Yours in NEAAPA,  
Dave Oberlander, president



**Jason Freeman**

## Freeman Elected To IAAPA Board Of Directors

ARLINGTON, Texas-- NEAAPA Past President Jason Freeman has been elected to the International Association of Amusement Parks & Attractions (IAAPA) Board of Directors.

Jason is corporate vice president of operations, public safety, engineering and maintenance for Six Flags Entertainment Corp., here.

"This recognition is a testament to Six Flag's leadership position in the industry for safety and innovation, which is the cornerstone of everything we do" said Selim Bassoul, Six Flags president and CEO. "Jason's work has directly led to Six Flags becoming the first theme park company to be accredited as Certified Autism Centers at all its properties, and to the development of a revolutionary new restraint harness that allows access to all our rides for guests with physical disabilities."

Jason served as NEAAPA president in 2010.



## Festival Of Illumination Returns To Southwick's Zoo

MENDON, Mass.— Southwick's Zoo is again presenting Festival of Illumination, immersing guests into in the magical world of impressive and "larger than life" illumination exhibits, showcasing the incredible artistry of handcrafted Chinese Lanterns.

This year's theme "Once Upon a Time," an epic journey of forgotten stories, featuring Myths, Legends and Fairytales from around the globe.

Southwick's Zoo has once again partnered with the award-winning Zigong Lantern Group to create yet another one-of-a-kind premier Chinese Lantern Festival.

In addition to the breathtaking lantern exhibits, guests will experience live entertainment including Chinese Acrobats, Asian Night Market, interactive exhibits, specialty foods and more.

The Festival of Illumination runs 5 to 10 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday until Dec. 31. For more information, visit [www.festivalofillumination.com](http://www.festivalofillumination.com) or [www.southwickszoo.com](http://www.southwickszoo.com).

Beginning on Nov. 26 guest can also enjoy the addition of Southwick's Zoo's traditional Winter Wonderland holiday lights as well as holiday themed Chinese Lanterns.

# NEAAPA Members Recognized During Golden Ticket Awards Held In Texas



SAN ANTONIO — Several NEAAPA member properties and suppliers were recognized at the Sept. 10 Golden Ticket Awards ceremony at Six Flags Fiesta Texas here.

More than 200 attended the gala event, presented by industry trade publication *Amusement Today*, at it returned as an in-person gathering after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic. Awards were presented last year in a video conference taped at the National Roller Coaster Museum & Archives in Plainview, Texas.

## Properties Get A Nod

Two New England properties were finalists in the Best Family Park category with **Santa's Village**, Jefferson, N.H., placing second and **Story Land**, Glen, N.H., taking fifth place.

**Quassy Amusement & Waterpark's** Rocket Rapids water coaster placed second among the Best New Water Park Rides. The Middlebury, Conn., park's new ride was also 16th overall in the Best New Attraction Installation category. Rocket Rapids was supplied by **ProSlide Technology**, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Boulder Dash at **Lake Compounce**, Bristol, Conn., was fourth among Best Wooden Roller Coasters. The legendary Cyclone, **Luna Park/Coney Island**, Brooklyn, N.Y., placed 17th among the top 25.

Superman The Ride, **Six Flags New England**, Agawam, Mass., landed in seventh spot among the Top 25 Steel Roller Coasters.

## Suppliers Shine

**Premier Rides**, Baltimore, Md., shared the Publisher's Pick Renaissance Award with West Mifflin, Pa., park Kenywood for the restoration of the classic Kangaroo ride, a John Bartlett Flying Coaster that made its debut in 1962.

**WhiteWater West Industries**, Richmond, British Columbia, Canada, was recognized for providing the Best New Water Park Attraction, a rotating waterslide, at Mount Olympus and Theme Park, Wisconsin Dells, Wis.

**Sally Dark Rides**, Jacksonville, Fla., provided the Best New Family Attraction at Lost Island Themepark, Waterloo, Iowa.

The Golden Ticket Awards were established in 1998 and are the direct result of votes cast from around the globe.

More than 500 experienced travelers, divided equally among the nation as well as internationally, received ballots. Industry journalists and ride suppliers also have categories devoted to professional topics. For a complete list of 2022 winners, visit

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

The 2023 Golden Ticket Awards will be hosted at Dollywood, Pigeon Forge, Tenn.

For more information about trade publication *Amusement Today*, visit

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



## Welcome To The Awards Ceremony

*Amusement Today's* Tim Baldwin welcomed attendees to the 2022 Golden Ticket Awards ceremony at Six Flags Fiesta Texas. (NEAAPA photo)

## Manufacturers & Suppliers News

### Rebranding At Baynum

NEWPORT, Ky. -- Baynum Painting Inc. and its partner organization BPI Painting have announced they are rebranding as Baynum Solutions.



**Chris Baynum**

The company, which was founded 40 years ago and specializes in amusement parks and commercial painting projects, also announced a



new leadership structure with Chris Baynum, company founder and former president, transitioning to the role as chairman of Baynum Solutions' board of directors.



**Daniel Adams**

Daniel Adams, former vice president of business operations, has been promoted to managing director and will guide the day-to-day business of the company. In this role, he will oversee all operations and strategic planning, management of company policy, and coordinating the collaboration of resources across the various lines of business.



**John Andrews**

John Andrews has been promoted from vice president of sales to president of the commercial and industrial solutions side of the company and has more than 30 years of history working with Baynum.



**Walter Bowser**

Walter Bowser has been promoted from vice president to president of the amusement solutions line, where he'll be the new face of Baynum amongst its worldwide clientele in the entertainment, amusement and waterpark markets.

"As our businesses have continued to evolve over the past 40 years, our company has merged both sides of the company under this new master brand," said Baynum. "The purpose of the consolidation is to help clarify who we are and better reflect our expanded service offerings, since we do offer much more than painting and coating services."

Baynum has painted numerous iconic attractions around the world over its 40 years in business, including: Coney Island's Cyclone at New York's Luna Park, Hair Raiser at Luna Park in Sydney, Australia, and Kings Island's Eiffel Tower, to name a few. The Beast roller coaster at Kings Island in Cincinnati was the company's first Amusement Park project in the early 1980s.

For more information, [visit www.baynum.com](http://www.baynum.com).



**Betson's new facility takes shape. (Submitted photo)**

### Betson To Open New Facility

CARLSTADT, N.J. - Betson Enterprises will open a new state-of-the-art facility in Las Vegas, Nev. The 45,000-square-foot warehouse is in the Bromigo Industrial Plaza will feature 12 dock doors and six grade-level loading doors.

The facility will serve as a multi-purpose office location and distribution center for amusement equipment, parts, and gaming monitors.



"As our business expands in the gaming sector, it was important to set up a best-in-class distribution center to support our current and future efforts," said Richard-Zayas-Bazan, president of Betson Imperial Parts & Services. "The proximity to important manufacturers and suppliers makes Las Vegas the perfect location for this center."

"Our customers depend on Betson to deliver the best experience in the industry when it comes to arcade game rooms," said Bob Dipipi, vice president of sales and procurement for Betson Enterprises. "Las Vegas offers us another strategic touchpoint to get closer to our customers and provide top-level service."

Betson Enterprises veteran operations manager John McCann has been tasked with managing the facility. The center is strategically located 30 miles from the California state line and minutes from the Las Vegas "Strip," Harry Reid International Airport, and other vital locations.

"I'm excited to take on this new role and continue the Betson tradition of world-class distribution while helping grow the parts and gaming businesses and add another distribution point for amusement equipment," said McCann.

## Manufacturers & Suppliers News

### Timco Retires At S&S

LOGAN, Utah— Tim Timco has retired as president and CEO of S&S Worldwide, but will remain with the company as a corporate advisor.

Timco joined S&S in 2012 as director of business development, was promoted to vice president – sales & marketing in 2014, became president of the company in 2015, and then promoted again to president and CEO in 2016.



**Tim Timco**

Under Tim's leadership as president and CEO, S&S earned a number of achievements. These successes include its best-selling and most successful roller coaster the 4D Free Spin Coaster. In addition, the Golden Ticket Award-Winning Steel Curtain coaster

(Kennywood) with the U.S. record for the most inversions, Maxx Force coaster (Six Flags Great America) holding the record for the world's fastest inversion, Tidal Surge

(SeaWorld San Antonio) the tallest and fastest Scream-in' Swing by S&S, and the company recently signed its largest single contract in its history.

Timco said, "I consider myself extremely fortunate and blessed. My 40 years in the amusement industry have been very rewarding both personally and professionally. I have developed relationships with people from all over the world that have become lifelong friends and have memories that I will cherish forever, but now it is time to move on to the next chapter in my life.

"I thank this wonderful industry, the amazing team at S&S and my dear family for all their support over the years, it certainly has been a great ride!"



**S&S WORLDWIDE**  
Engineering Excitement



**Minisafari cars to be offered. (Submitted photo)**

### Ride Entertainment Partnership

STEVENSVILLE, Md.— Ride Entertainment, the Gold Standard in the attractions industry for sales and support, has announced a new partnership with Longfish Leisure of The Netherlands for all North American sales.

The agreement brings Longfish Leisure's Minisafari cars to Ride Entertainment's industry-leading portfolio of attraction manufacturers.

"We could not be more excited to represent a company as innovative and unique as Longfish Leisure here in North America," said Ed Hiller, CEO and founder of Ride Entertainment. "Any operator, big or small, can benefit from adding this attraction to their arsenal."

"With their established relationships across the attractions industry and experience with revenue share business models, Ride Entertainment was the clear group to partner with," said Oliver Lintott, CEO of Longfish Leisure. "We cannot wait to work with Ed and the team to show off the versatility that our Minisafari cars can offer to American family attractions."

The Minisafari gives young children the opportunity to navigate their own electric, scaled-down versions of Land Rover vehicles on a custom driving course. Topping out at three miles per hour, even an unused portion of your parking lot can become an adventure!

For more than 20 years, Ride Entertainment has been the global leader for innovation and customer satisfaction in the attractions industry.

Founded as a sales company focused on bringing the best thrill rides in the world under one roof, the company has expanded to serve every sector of the industry: sales, service and operations.

Visit [RideEntertainment.com](http://RideEntertainment.com) to learn more.

**Call For Submissions For Next Edition**  
News articles and photos (jpeg) may be forwarded to:

**secretary@neaapa.com**

**NEAAPA—The Northeast's**  
**Entertainment Association**

**PO Box 85, Saco, ME 04072**  
**Secretary Ed Hodgdon**  
**secretary@neaapa.com**  
**1-877-999-8740 Option 1**  
**www.neaapa.com**

# 85 Attend Two-Day NEAAPA Summer Meeting



## Tourney Champs

Winners of the NEAAPA summer meeting golf tournament were (from the left): Ramon Rosario, Melissa Bamford, Bradford Doolittle and Pete Barto. (NEAAPA photos)

hosted dinner provided by member supplier SSA Group, Providence. There was also exclusive evening time to explore some exhibits, which included close-up encounters with some of the animals and time to talk to handlers.

Children in attendance were treated to the Big Backyard play areas on the property.

A brief business meeting was conducted by President Dave Oberlander.

## Day At The Zoo

Exclusive tours related to operations, catering and retail highlighted the second day of the NEAAPA Summer Meeting at the zoo. Members were also treated to train and zip rides and free time in the 60-acre complex as well as lunch.

The summer meeting concluded with an afternoon tour of Rhode Island Novelty in Fall River, Mass. The massive 500,000-square-foot building consists of showrooms, warehouse and distribution areas.

Sponsors of the NEAAPA gathering were: Dippin' Dots, Paducah, Ky.; Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters Inc., Hatfield, Pa.; Premier Rides, Inc., Baltimore, Md.; Ralph S. Alberts Co., Inc, Montoursville, Pa.; and Southwick's Zoo, Mendon, Mass.

The 109th Anniversary Summer Meeting of NEAAPA – the Northeast's Entertainment Association – drew 85 attendees for a two-day event, July 25-26, in the Providence, R.I., region.

The gathering kicked off with a golf tournament at Cranston Country Club, Cranston, R.I., to support the organization's Pinnacle Scholarship. The annual \$500 award is presented to an industry employee or team that has demonstrated "peak perfection in customer service."

The morning tournament had 23 members play the links and raised \$1,000 toward the scholarship program. Haas Wilkerson Insurance, Fairway, Kan., sponsored a raffle for the tournament with a Garmin Venu GPS watch awarded. Ryan DeMaria, operations manager at Canobie Lake Park, Salem, N.H. was the winner.

Capturing the tourney title was the team of Ramon Rosario, Zamperla, Inc., Booton, N.J.; Bradford Doolittle, Haas & Wilkerson; Melissa Bamford, Baynum Painting, Newport, Ky.; and Pete Barto, PB Amusement, Mechanicsburg, Pa.

The winners will be immortalized with their names engraved on the new NEAAPA Golf Champion's Trophy, which will be awarded to the winners and passed on each year like the National Hockey League's Stanley Cup.

## Off To The Races

The afternoon included go-kart, bumper car and bumper boat rides at Seekonk Grand Prix in Seekonk, Mass. The property also had free play on miniature golf and video games for NEAAPA members.

Roger Williams Park Zoo & Carousel Village, Providence,



NEAAPA Secretary Ed Hodgdon welcomed attendees to the summer gathering.



# Canobie Lake Park Donates Corkscrew To Museum

PLAINVIEW, Texas – The National Roller Coaster Museum & Archives (NRCMA) has received the Canobie Lake Corkscrew into its permanent collection thanks to a donation by the park. The ride’s iconic loop is included in the donation and will have a featured location as the icon for the museum building in the future.



The Corkscrew started its life at Old Chicago theme park as the Chicago Loop. It was Arrow Development’s number two and the second coaster built to turn riders upside down twice.

The ride was also featured in the 1978 Brian DePalma movie *The Fury* starring Kirk Douglas, John Cassavetes and Carrie Snodgrass.

“This is an incredible opportunity to have an important piece of roller coaster history represented at the museum,” NRCMA Historian Richard Munch said. “As one of the first four models manufactured at Arrow’s Utah plant in 1975, it went to Illinois, then was moved to Alabama and later to New Hampshire. This last piece will have its final home at the museum and is expected to be a major calling card for the facility on State Highway 194, just northwest of Plainview.”

## Acquired In ‘85

Canobie Lake Park in Salem, N.H., purchased the coaster in 1985 and then opened the ride in 1987 after being granted a height waiver.

Munch added, “The effort to bring this section of the ride to Texas can’t be overlooked. It required five flat beds to move the cars, track and supports, which came with a hefty bill for shipping the equipment 2000 miles from New Hampshire to the Texas Panhandle. Beside the generosity of Canobie Lake’s ownership, I am thrilled that our board made this possible, especially with the work of Gary Slade and Hunter Novotny, and financial support of Jeff Novotny. It’s going to be a great billboard to those visiting for the first time, as well as the locals who will finally discover the purpose of this growing facility in Plainview.”

While construction continues at the museum’s main facility in Plainview, the NRCMA is still reliant solely on the generosity of industry fans and facilities.

You can purchase unique souvenirs at [rollercoastermuseum.org/store](http://rollercoastermuseum.org/store) with the proceeds going to the museum or donations can be made online at the museum website. Donations can also be made by mail to NRCMA at P.O. Box 5424, Arlington, Texas 76005.

For more information about Canobie Lake Park, visit [www.canobie.com](http://www.canobie.com)



## Donated To Museum

The classic Canobie Lake Corkscrew arrives at the National Roller Coaster Museum & Archives (above). The ride’s corkscrew is shown at its former home (below) at the Salem, N.H., park. (Submitted photos)



# Daily Records Shattered At Big E



**Mardi Gras Parade At The Big E. (Submitted photos)**

WEST SPRINGFIELD, Mass.— A total of 1,603,354 visitors attended The Big E here.

During the fair's 17-day run, an all-time single day attendance record was set when 177,789 visitors came to The Big E on the Saturday, Sept. 24. Five additional daily attendance records were also set.

A diverse concert line-up of more than 80 individual performances, fair foods, rides and unique shopping experiences provided something for everyone in the family.

# THE BIG E

## World-Class Entertainment

The entertainment line-up this year included concerts at The Big E Arena, sponsored by Truly Hard Seltzer: Dropkick Murphys; Unforgettable Fire; Brantley Gilbert with special guest George Birge; Nelly; Sublime with Rome; Bring Me The Horizon; Chase Rice & Jimmie Allen; The Happy Together Tour; and Lynyrd

Skynyrd.

The Court of Honor Stage, sponsored by MattressFirm, brought a rockin' line-up of acts: Alley Cats; Modern English; Yung Gravy; KT Tunstall; Everclear; Young@Heart Chorus; The Yardbirds; Canned Heat; The Main Squeeze; Johnnyswim; Buckets N Boards; Sounds of the 60s; Tai Verdes; DJ Jazzy Jeff; Madeline Edwards; LFO & Ryan Cabrera; Boogie Wonder Band; The Entertainer: Music of Elton John & Billy Joel; Jon Secada; All-4-One; ERNEST; Baha Men; Alien Ant Farm; American Authors; and John Waite. The stage was also the site of Collector Car Live, an automotive event that featured a first class lineup of collector, classic, and custom vehicles.

The E Stage, sponsored by Blue Chair Bay Rum, featured fresh sounds of local and emerging talent, offered every day of the Fair.

## Daily Offerings

Other daily offerings were: The Big Parade, sponsored by MGM Springfield; Viva Las Circus; Swifty Swine Racing Pigs, sponsored by Leaf Filter Gutter Protection; Sahara, presented by Camel Kingdom; Zultar, the Comedy Fortune Teller; Mobile Glass Studio; the Roaming Railroad; and rides and games on the North American Midway, including the new Sky-High Super Wheel.

The Young Building featured products from around the world, including Ireland's Dingle Peninsula Showcase with an array of authentic Dingle merchandise ranging from Louis Mulcahy Pottery, Brian de Staic Jewelry, Dingle Crystal, and more! The Dingle Peninsula Showcase was also the location of this year's new Halfway to St. Patrick's Day celebration.

The Big E's Space Chat Experience took place in The Big E Arena as New England students made live radio contact with Astronaut Bob Hines on the International Space Station. As part of an educational program intended to promote Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) activities, the Space Chat was an out of this world opportunity brought to students and Big E fairgoers by Amateur (Ham) Radio Operators.

The 2023 edition of The Big E will take place Sept. 15-Oct. 1. For more information, visit [TheBigE.com](https://www.thebige.com).



**Crowded Midway At This Year's Edition Of The Big E.**





Nicole Acevedo

## Acevedo Joins Marketing Team At ESE

WEST SPRINGFIELD, Mass.— Nicole Acevedo has joined the marketing department as communications and social media manager at the Eastern States Exposition here.

A West Springfield resident, Acevedo graduated Western New England University in May with a Bachelor of Arts in Creative Writing.

Over the course of her collegiate career, she served as the assistant editor of *The Westerner*, the University's newspaper; the hospitality chair for Spring Event, the campus' largest music festival; wrote and voiced two scripts for WAMC Northeast Public Radio; and was a two-time winner of the BOLD Media Festival's written category for her prose poems.

Although she is not a New England native, Acevedo has grown fond of the Greater Springfield community.

"I've found my home here. ESE is such an important pillar of the community, and I couldn't be more grateful or excited to be working as part of such a beloved organization," said Acevedo.



## History On Display

The Coney Island History Project, founded in 2004, is a not-for-profit organization that aims to increase awareness of Coney Island's legendary and colorful past and to encourage appreciation of the Coney Island neighborhood of today. The project's mission is to record, archive and share oral history interviews; provide access to historical artifacts and documentary material through educational exhibits, events and a website; and honor community leaders and amusement pioneers through the Coney Island Hall of Fame. Emphasizing community involvement, the Coney Island History Project teaches young people about local history and develops programs in conjunction with local schools, museums, senior centers, and other organizations. The project is located at 3059 12th St., Brooklyn, N.Y., adjacent to Deno's Wonder Wheel Park. For more information, visit [www.coneyislandhistory.org](http://www.coneyislandhistory.org)

## Opening In '23

SOMERVILLE, Mass.—Opening in the spring, LEGO Discovery Center Boston will give families in Boston and across the northeast the opportunity to experience the next generation LEGO Discovery Center following a \$12 million renovation. This will be the world's first renovation of a LEGOLAND Discovery Center to a LEGO Discovery Center along with a sister attraction in LEGOLAND Discovery Center Atlanta. Set to be named LEGO Discovery Center, the attraction will evolve an already popular offering of highly interactive indoor LEGO play experiences including a ride, 4D theatre and creative workshop, while adding new amazing experiences and a brand-new look and design.



## Dr. Coan Completes Tenure At Mystic Aquarium

MYSTIC, Conn.—Dr. Steve Coan, president and CEO of Mystic Aquarium, announced that he is completing his tenure after 20 years of service with the organization. The Board of Trustees has asked Dr. Coan to serve as CEO Emeritus and assist with the transition, including fundraising and strategic counsel.



Dr. Steve Coan

“Dr. Coan has been a transformational leader at Mystic Aquarium. We will never forget all the things that we and the community owe Steve!” said Dr. George Milne, chair of the Mystic Aquarium Board of Trustees.

“Dr. Coan has made Mystic Aquarium a place where all people feel welcomed. Today we are known nationally and internationally as one of the worlds best and most innovative Aquariums,” Milne added.

“Dr. Coan’s involvement with educational efforts nationally for the Boys and Girls Clubs, his championship of conservation efforts involving the Long Island Sound and the offshore canyons and his leadership on policy issues in Hartford and Washington have all made a difference. We will continue to work hard to live up to the high expectations, potential and impact that have been made possible by Dr. Coan’s unique contributions and leadership,” Milne added.

During Dr. Coan’s tenure, the campus and visitor experiences were transformed with construction of the Immersion Building, Wiederhold Animal Care Building, the Milne Conservation and Ocean Science Building, extensive infrastructure improvements to the facilities, renovation of the Ocean Conservation Center, and installation of several new exhibits including new exhibit galleries and touch tanks in the main aquarium building.

Dr. Coan led the organization through numerous crises including the aftermath of 9/11 when tourism came to a halt, the Great Recession in the mid 2000’s and most recently, the Covid global pandemic. During his tenure he has grown attendance and programming, and has raised over \$250 million, stewarding Mystic Aquarium to become the largest attraction in Connecticut and one of the largest providers of conservation and STEM education programming in New England.

## Adventureland Hosts Annual VIP Night Fundraiser

FARMINGDALE, N.Y. — Adventureland’s Helping Hands Foundation hosted their 5th annual VIP Night fundraiser in September at Adventureland here.

The event raised \$275,000 for Long Island, bringing the total raised from all five annual events to more than \$1 million. Funds raised will support the foundation’s scholarship program, grant program, and goods drive program.

Perfect weather made for an extraordinary night of rides, unlimited food, games, raffles, and more, all in celebration of Helping Hands.

The foundation awarded more than \$55,000 in scholarships to Long Island students through the Vivian and Tony Gentile Scholarship Program and the Sachem Dental Group Endowment—bringing the total amount donated to Long Island Students to more than \$200,000 in the last seven years.

Helping Hands also highlighted the local non-profits they have supported over the past year through their grant program—Splashes of Hope, Marty Lyons Foundation, Camp Pa-Qua-Tuck, Gigi’s Playhouse and more. The foundation also announced a \$50,000 pledge to the Good Samaritan Hospital’s neo-neonatal intensive care unit.

Supporters were also treated to a blessing by Catholic Faith Network President and CEO, Monsignor Jim Vlaun, and to live entertainment coordinated by Brian Rosenberg New York. Rising star Charlize Tuozzo sang the National Anthem.



Scholarships awarded during foundation event. (Submitted photo)

