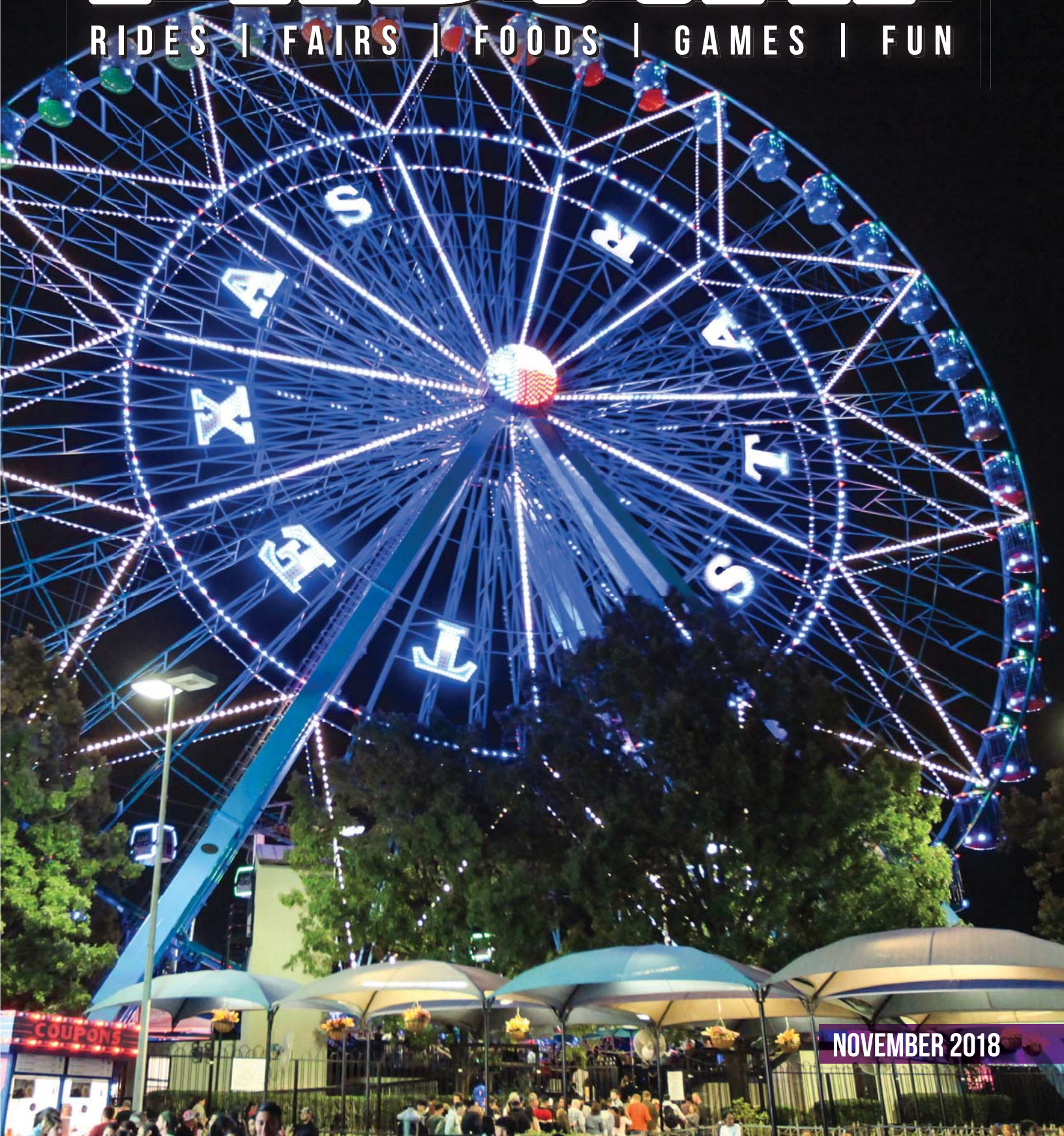


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#MIDWAYMAG

Photo by Kevin Brown, State Fair of Texas

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ON THE COVER:

*The Texas Star owned by Talley Amusements at the 2018 State Fair of Texas.
Photo by Chris Emory.*

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NOVEMBER 2018

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MIDWAY MOMENT



Sharon Barlow

Welcome to MIDWAY!

I am humbled to say this is my fourth letter to you as editor of MIDWAY Magazine, but any of you who have known me for any length of time know that I have been writing to you for much longer than that. You

also know that this is my most favorite part of MIDWAY Magazine. Yes, we work very diligently each month to share with you feature stories on events, carnivals, manufacturers and suppliers, and concessionaires. Truthfully, there are so many stories to be told, we could publish a hundred pages every month and still not cover everything. I love MIDWAY Moment because that is the place where I can share things in a little different light.

As many of you may know, I am a mom of three daughters. My middle daughter truly seems to struggle with middle child syndrome. She's not the oldest who did everything first, and she's not the baby. She's stuck in the middle. She seems to relish comparing herself to other things or events that are in a similar situation, things that are passed over as we jump from one event to the another. She recently compared herself to Thanksgiving. The holiday stuck between the fun of Halloween with its costumes and candy and Christmas with its endless presents and parties. I can honestly say, I found this more than a little disturbing that we are possibly perhaps unintentionally skipping over a day to enjoy family and friends and to count our many blessings. Even in our industry, Thanksgiving is sandwiched between IAAPA in Orlando and the IAFE in San Antonio. I am certainly not suggesting that we are not thankful for the blessings in our lives, but I can't help but wonder if we don't take a few minutes every day or one day out of 365 to just be grateful, are we not taking a tremendous amount for granted? As we take things for granted, we run the great risk of becoming complacent and forget those who have helped us along the way.

This November, I encourage each of you to find a few minutes in your incredible busy schedules not to consider the many material things you have been blessed with but to remember someone or perhaps the many people who have encouraged you with a smile and a kind word or helped you to get where you wanted to go. As you do, just whisper a simple thank you. For me, those people are you. Thank you!

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TRENDS BECOME TRADITIONS AT THE STATE FAIR OF TEXAS

By Kevin Freese



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Photo by Kevin Bacon



Photo by Stefan Hinz

In a year focused on innovation, the State Fair of Texas in Dallas introduced a new initiative to welcome fairgoers through its gates that might not otherwise be able to attend. For many, just the words “state fair” conjure up delights for all the senses, but the experience can be prohibitive for individuals with autism and those with other sensory-related concerns. That all changed with the creation of Sensory-Friendly Mornings.

From 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. every Wednesday, the State Fair of Texas made adjustments to programming throughout the fairgrounds to better accommodate those with sensory-related concerns. “Providing a family friendly experience is at the core of the state fair’s mission, and so we wanted to make the fair a little more welcoming to a group of folks that might be overwhelmed by all the sights and sounds during most operating hours,” says Karissa Condoianis, Senior Vice President of Public Relations at the State Fair of Texas.

In order to achieve their goal of making the fairgrounds a welcoming place for those with sensory-related concerns, the state fair partnered with IBCCES—an organization that specializes in helping those with autism—as well as other local groups. The state fair provided a guided itinerary on their website that helped direct families to activities that were approved for those sensitive to sights and sounds. And, because no one should miss the enjoyment of the midway, all sound and lighting were turned down on rides for an hour once the funzone opened at noon. “There were a wide range of people that benefited from this,” says Karissa. Migraine sufferers and individuals with epilepsy were also better able to enjoy the midway during these designated times.

Ride operators on the independent midway were happy to participate in Sensory-Friendly Mornings. “I thought it was a great idea,” says Mary Talley who provided several attractions at the fair. “My daughter had friends in school that couldn’t normally come to the carnival because the lights might cause them to seizure. Something like this would have really helped them.”

According to the fair, the Sensory-Friendly Mornings



Photo by Chris Emory



Photo by Chris Emory

program was very well received by the community. As an extension of the program, the fair offered its guests designated quiet zones at various locations so they could depressurize when needed. These zones were open during all normal operating hours.

This year marked the 132nd edition of the event, which ran from Friday, September 28 through Sunday, October 21. Overall, the 2018 State Fair of Texas was a success with over two million fairgoers attending the 24-day run. “That’s despite eleven days of rain,” says Karissa. “We also had temperatures that dipped down into the forties, which I believe made it the coldest fair since the 1936 Texas

Centennial edition.”

A huge final weekend helped to contribute to the big numbers. According to organizers, about 429,000 guests visited the grounds on the final weekend. Earlier in the week, the fair was forced to close earlier than usual due to the inclement weather. To accommodate, the fair operated on extended hours during the final weekend.

The independent midway at the State Fair of Texas featured 73 rides this year. Included in the lineup was the new Gosetto dark ride owned by Bobby Myers of Fair Ride Entertainment. The two-trailer ride premiered earlier in the



year and is the only one of its kind in the United States. Fair Ride Entertainment also provided their spectacular Gosetto New York New York Fun House, Ice Jet (Chance Thunderbolt), and Wisdom Monster Truck kiddie ride at the event.

Mr. Ed's Magical Midway provided a new attraction this year, the Air Maxx. The ride joined a Zero Gravity owned by Mr. Ed's which has appeared at the fair before.

The Talley family offered 15 rides at the fair including two new attractions—an Orbiter and ChooChoo Express. Other Talley attractions included a Kamikaze, Fast Trax slide, Iron Dragon coaster, Giant Wheel, and the pendulum-based swing

ride called the Beast. Talley is also the owner of the fair's iconic Texas Star wheel, which is a permanent attraction.

The Texas Star was the top-grossing ride at the 2018 State Fair of Texas. It was followed by the fair's gondola sky ride known as the Texas Skyway, which is operated by Mike Demas. Rounding out the list of top-five grossing rides was the Crazy Mouse coaster owned by Steve Vandervorste (S.J. Entertainment) and two other permanent attractions—the Love Bug operated by Prime Pacific Entertainment and a Pirate Ship operated by Steve Edens. Other ride providers included Alamo Attractions, Caprice Enterprises, Danny England, Jeremy Floyd, and Michael Wood among others.



Photo by Chris Emory

UP UP
AWAY!

The state fair's midway is overseen by Rusty Fitzgerald who serves as the Vice President of Operations and Special Projects. "Rusty enjoys working with multiple operators, and we see value in being able to select all of the rides that appear on the midway," says Karissa. The fair has a very strict ride safety program. They hire all of their own ride inspectors to conduct ride safety training during the fair and who perform inspections throughout the event.

The FunCard System developed by Ron Burback and his team has been in use on games at the State Fair of Texas for nearly decade. The system has helped organizers keep track of statistics when it comes to games and it has become a popular feature that fairgoers enjoy. Within the last few years, the state fair has implemented Etix for their entry system. "Online ticketing has allowed us to get exact attendance numbers, which is very helpful," says Karissa.

No discussion of the State Fair of Texas would be complete without including the subject of food. The event is notorious for its tasty treats and new offerings each year. There were at least fourteen new food items joining the menu this year including Sothern Fried Chicken Nachos, Bacon Brittle, and King Crispy Coconut Crab Sliders. Other new creations displayed strong ties to the state's Tex-Mex traditions. There was the Fried Cup of Corn "Elotes" which was the result from combining traditional elotes with sweet southern corn in a flaky pastry. Another must-eat were Supra Stuffed Mini Sopapillas injected with strawberry cream cheese filling.

Among the most iconic foods offered at the state fair is a Corny Dog from Fletcher's. This year the concessionaire served a new item consisting of American soft melting cheese and hot dog dipped in their one-of-a-kind batter and deep fried. It was called the Cheezy Pup. "Whether its for the original or the new Cheezy Pup, Fletcher's is one of those experiences you have to try out," says Karissa.

Since 2005, the state fair has hosted the Big Tex Choice Awards competition. As part of the competition, concessionaires who have participated at the fair for at least one year can enter new and creative food items that are judged by a selected panel. This year the fair accepted



Photo by Kevin Bacon



Photo by Kevin Bacon



Photo by Stefan Hinz



Photo by Kevin Bacon



Photo by Kevin Bacon



Photo by Stefan Hinz

almost fifty entries. In the category of “Best Taste Savory,” this year’s winner was Fernie’s Hoppin’ John Cake with Jackpot Sauce created by Winter Family Concessions. The Garza family took home the award for “Best Taste-Sweet” with their Arroz Con Leche (Sweet Crispy Rice) dish. The winner of the “Most Creative” category was the Cotton Candy Taco by Justin and Rudy Martinez.

Adding excitement to all of the festivities at the fair each year are throngs of college football fans that converge on the nearby Cotton Bowl Stadium. The State Fair Classic football game was played on opening weekend. “That is an annual game between Grambling State University and Prairie View A & M University,” explains Karissa. “That game has been played during the state fair since the 1920s.” The Red River Showdown between the University of Texas Longhorns and the Oklahoma Sooners is one of the most anticipated college football games of the season. It is also hosted at Cotton Bowl Stadium during the fair. The Red River Showdown has been at the State Fair of Texas since 1929.

A third college football game was added to the lineup this year. The State Fair Showdown between Texas Southern University and Southern University was played on the final weekend of the event. The State Fair Showdown is scheduled to be played for the next two years. “College football at the fair is really special,” says Karissa. “The atmosphere that the fair brings to college football is unmatched.”

While many young children may be entertained by the energy-



Photo by Chris Emory



Photo by Chris Emory

packed football games, there were also plenty of new activities geared just toward them. The fair's new Home on the Range attraction located inside the Coliseum featured a petting zoo and a fun, educational exhibit called Little Hands on the Farm. The farming attraction was completely re-designed from a previous exhibit and featured farm-to-market activities. Families could next stroll over to the new All-Star Stunt Dog Show—a guest favorite in 2018. With the cold and wet weather, fair guests were appreciative of indoor and sheltered locations for attractions like Home on the Range and the dog show. “We actually had air conditioning in mind when we moved some of these activities indoors, but it turned out to be just as useful in the rain and cold,” says Karissa.

From preparedness for weather challenges to the new Sensory-Friendly Mornings program and everything in between—the State Fair of Texas lived up to its mission this year and exemplified the 2018 theme of celebrating Texas innovation. As this year's innovations become traditions for the event, the State Fair of Texas is surely already looking for the trends they can introduce during next year's edition. ▪



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BREAKING THE RULES

How many rules exist for owning and operating a Carnival? Plenty! These include OSHA, State Ride Regulations, Food Safety, Labor Laws, National Electric Code (NEC), and numerous federal, state, and local regulations.

Breaking or NOT following the rules can lead to something as simple as a slap on the wrist. It can also be as devastating as an injury or death of an employee or guest. Many sayings, phrases, and clichés have been coined to justify breaking the rules.

How many of the rules are you following? How many are you ignoring? How many do you NOT know about?

IGNORANCE

Ignorance is simply defined as a lack of knowledge or information. When used in conversation, the term ignorance has a negative connotation. When you say that someone is ignorant, they are usually offended. But the true definition is just a statement of fact and not a subjective judgement. Ignorance

can be voluntary or involuntary.

Involuntary ignorance is when someone is unaware that certain rules exist. They are ignorant and choose to not look for information on the rules. The phrase "ignorance is bliss" is used to falsely justify apathy. They do not conduct the research, and they do not worry about it.

Voluntary ignorance is when someone is aware that certain rules exist but refuses to take 'reasonable pains' to learn and understand. In other words, they have made a deliberate choice to ignore learning more about the rules. They know that rules exist for labor laws, OSHA, ride regulations, et cetera but elect to ignore the research needed to find out more. They receive information in the mail or in a newsletter but ignore reading it. Because, if they do, they will find out how out of compliance they are.

Fact: [this is what I was told by a Carnival owner regarding recent blog posts and email newsletters that I had been sending out.](#) "If I read the email newsletter, I may find out how out of compliance I am."

Whether involuntary or voluntary, “Ignorance of the law is no excuse”. (Latin =Ignorantia juris non excusat). Both are a ‘Head in the sand’ approach. An unwillingness to recognize a problem or situation.

How many rules and regulations have you chosen to ignore? How many rules and regulations do you not even know about?

ETHICS

Morals describe an individual’s values concerning what is right and what is wrong. An example of a moral might be cheating on an exam (i.e. an individual considers it wrong to cheat on an exam). Morals vary greatly between individuals.

Ethics can be seen as the actions one takes toward a set of morals. Good ethics would follow what is considered right by the individual (i.e. does not cheat on the exam). Bad ethics would NOT follow what is considered right (i.e. cheats on the exam).

When a person violates his own values, they may come up with justifications that make it okay to have broken their own values. The saying ‘it’s only illegal if you get caught’ comes to mind. This is a justification to break a rule.

Organizations have morals and ethics as well. These can be driven by the collective group and influenced by leadership.

How do you feel when you violate one of your personal values? What are your company’s morals? Ethics?

RIDING DIRTY

(Riding dirty is a pop culture reference to driving with illegal drugs or contraband in a vehicle. It is also used as slang for hiding illegal activities.)

The results of ignorance...a true story.

I met with a small Carnival recently. I learned that they had three people sitting in jail. The night before, the three of them were out

on the town. The driver got pulled over for speeding. The police searched the vehicle. They found illegal drugs and illegal weapons. All three were taken to jail. The driver was a recent hire. The other two had been with the show for a while. As the phone rang continuously, the supervisor had to plan on how he would get the rides finished and ready for opening the following day. His goal was to get the two passengers back to the midway ASAP while also contacting a local temp agency to get additional manpower.

This story demonstrates a few points of ignorance. The first is with the two passengers. Did they know who they were riding with? Did they do the research on their new friend? Were they ignorant? Voluntarily ignorant? Involuntarily ignorant? Did they make the right choice to ride in the vehicle? The second is the Carnival. Did they know who they were hiring? Did they know but ignore? We don’t know the details of what led to the situation, but the results are painful for the workers and the Carnival.

This story also demonstrates the ‘pulling of threads’. When pulled over for speeding, the police looked for other violations. They found some much bigger issues. Could something similar happen to a Carnival? Yes, when an incident occurs (employee injury or death or ride accident), they will want to see your papers. They will also look for other non-related violations.

Are your papers ready? Have you made ethical decisions in your operation? Have you researched the rules and regulations? Have you made the choice to implement those into your organization?

WHAT TO DO...

Make good choices! Search if rules exist. Study what the rules require. Implement the rules. Information is available everywhere.

And just because you have not been caught breaking the rules, does not indicate that your day will not come. It will. Karma is real. What is your karma? Are you ‘riding dirty’?





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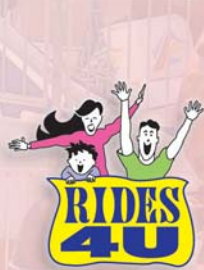
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“FINANCING EVERYTHING BUT THE SMILES ON THE MIDWAY”

By Kirby Asplund

Relationships matter.
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OA Finance continues to be a leading lender to the outdoor amusement industry after a hard reset to zero in 2014.





First a little background: Paul Muller came to outdoor amusement twenty-five years ago, when he joined Southern Leasing, a company that offered lending to the industry. When Southern left the market, Paul stayed, founding his own company, Prairie Financial, with his wife, Pam. Prairie Financial was eventually sold to Boulevard Bank, in part, to secure more customer funding. In 2011, Boulevard was sold to Scottrade. And though the Prairie Financial business model had proved very effective, Scottrade sold the bank and shut down the outdoor amusement division in 2014.

Suddenly finding their company closed, the Prairie Financial staff gathered around the kitchen table in the Muller home and re-committed to the industry. Even without corporate backing, they would stay together, and go it on their own. OA Finance was born.

“We’d had the same group of people on our team all these years,” says Paul. This included the Mullers, along with Mark Walker, a long-time coworker and former banker, who now has 21 years of experience in the industry. Son Wade Muller had joined in 2007. A more recent addition, Tamara Asplund – who happens to be Pam Muller’s sister – joined the company in 2015 to serve as the receptionist and manage equipment titles.

With the advent of the new company, industry relationships were crucial. “There was great personal loyalty,” says Wade. “We had been loyal to our customers, and when we were effectively starting over, they were loyal to us.” Even today, OA Finance has enjoyed a very high percentage of repeat business – estimated at 75%, with customer relationships that have lasted 10 to 15 years and more. The company also enjoys long-term relationships with equipment manufacturers and manufacturer’s representatives.

The success of OA Finance hinges on personal industry relationships, as well as a deep understanding of the outdoor amusement industry.

This has been an interesting year in outdoor amusement – with hurricanes, torrential rain in large areas of the country, and massive fires in the Western U.S. The financial impact can be devastating for show owners. “When dates are cancelled due to weather or other conditions outside of their control, that revenue is gone,” says Wade. “There are no ‘make up’ dates. We

listen. We understand. We want to help shows thrive and get to the next year.”

“Banks operate on a very different business model,” adds Mark Walker. “The outdoor amusement industry tends to be very seasonal, weather dependent, and cash intensive. So, where a bank might consider an investment in our industry to be a serious risk, when you understand how the outdoor amusement industry works, it makes perfect sense.

OA Finance is “strictly amusement.” When people call OA Finance they can be assured that they’ll reach someone who knows them, knows their business, and understands their rides, their equipment, and how the industry works. This is crucial.

“We’re fully committed to the amusement industry,” says Wade, noting that many competitors have begun to deemphasize amusement lending in their portfolios. “We think it’s important to remain completely focused,” he adds. “There’s a loyalty factor, and we have relationships with many of the key industry players going back 20 to 25 years. We understand



Photo by Timothy S. Allen Photography

that our success is tied to the future of the outdoor amusement industry: their success is our success.”

As in many segments of the economy, there have been significant changes in the outdoor amusement industry in the past 10 to 20 years. Mark Walker cites the example of a food trailer: “In 2008 the typical food trailer was 14-foot long and cost around \$60,000. Today, a well-equipped trailer is often 24-foot and can cost a quarter of a million dollars.” Which means the average show owner has a much more pressing need to have a trusted source for reliable funding.

Rides represent a similar increase. A Ferris wheel can easily run from \$750,000 to upwards of \$2-million. Funding for the outdoor amusement industry can cover a wide range of equipment – such as rides, bunkhouses, food trailers, generators, and even vehicles. “We like to say, ‘We finance everything but the smiles on the midway,’” says Mark.

These days, there is another facet of funding that is becoming more and more prominent. “We’re seeing more and more





consolidations and buy-outs,” Wade says. “There are shows buying other shows, as well as a generational shift as some of the owners are looking towards retirement, and their sons and daughters are taking over.”

That kind of shift is happening within OA Finance, as well, with Paul and Pam Muller looking down the road at eventual retirement, and son Wade and Mark Walker representing the next generation of leadership. (Wade is currently the president of OA Finance.)

Wade estimates that the company has worked on more than

2000 deals for clients since Prairie Financial was founded in 2000 – with a total value of over \$300-million dollars. “It’s a lot of money,” he says, “but it represents much more. Shows need companies like OA Finance that understand their business and are willing and able to work with them through good times and bad. They need infusions of capital to invest in and grow their business.”

The bottom line, according to Wade Muller, “We’re fully committed to the industry. We’ve been here. We’re here. We’re going to be here into the future.”



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THE INDUSTRY. WE’VE BEEN HERE.
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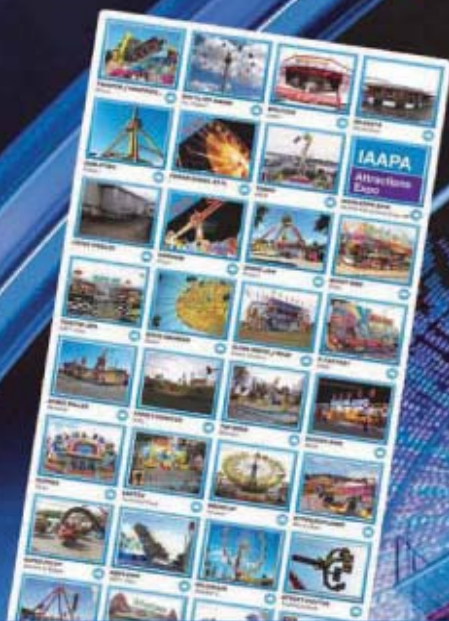
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Albert Frieden of Battech Enterprises knows a lot about making rides go. He also knows about life on the go, especially with a steady pace of new attractions rolling out of Battech's facilities in Salem, Oregon. "We've had a very busy year, which is good," says Albert, noting that Battech has delivered a new ride every consecutive month since December of last year. A wide variety of the company's product line has been in demand during this period. "We've delivered multiple Zero Gravities, DownDrafts, Black Widows, and slides," continues Albert.

If repeat business is the best evidence of customer satisfaction, then Battech has made one customer in particular very happy. Three of the manufacturer's most recent deliveries premiered with Powers Great American Midways. The show reserved Battech's July, August, and September delivery slots. According to Albert, Corky Powers purchased a new DownDraft and his wife Debbie bought a ride called Kraken, which is a custom theme for Battech's latest attraction—the Black Widow. Bob Lyon who works for PGAM replaced an older model Zero Gravity with a new unit. All three rides were part of the lineup at the 2018 North Carolina State Fair in Raleigh.

The amusement industry has warmly embraced the return of the DownDraft, a ride first released by Dartron Industries in 2000 and reintroduced by Battech four years ago. "The DownDraft has always been a solid piece and there are several of them still going strong after nearly twenty years on the road," says Albert. Building upon its already durable design, Battech has improved the mechanics

HE BELIEVES THAT THE DOWNDRAFT IS AN APPEALING RIDE BECAUSE OF ITS UNIQUE ACTION THAT IS AKIN TO THE CLASSIC HRUBETZ HURRICANE, THOUGH WITH A MUCH BIGGER PRESENCE THAN THE OLDER RIDE.



of the DownDraft and completed extensive cosmetic work to heighten its midway presentation. At least one new DownDraft has been delivered each year since it was released by Battech. “We did two of them back-to-back this year,” notes Albert. He believes that the DownDraft is an appealing ride because of its unique action that is akin to the classic Hrubetz Hurricane, though with a much bigger presence than the older ride.

The Battech DownDraft has a 30-passenger capacity with simultaneous loading for efficient rider turnaround. Traveling on a 48-foot trailer and setup in less than two hours by two people, the ride is also quick to move.

The Zero Gravity has been the all-star of Battech’s lineup this year. The company has completed five of them in 2018. “As a manufacturer, I notice that these things come in cycles,” reports Albert. “In 2017, we only delivered one Zero Gravity, yet we sold five Cliff Hangers. This year we’ve only done one Cliff Hanger while the Zero Gravity has been in high demand.” While there are

peaks in popularity, both rides have been in steady production over the last several years.

New to the Zero Gravity this year is an eye-catching lighting package installed on the bottom of the ride’s sweeps. “We added lighting on the bottom of the sweeps for a customer earlier in the year, and it was a feature that other customers want when they hear about it,” shares Albert. “It completely changes the look of the ride during operation and gives it a much better presentation.” The entire ride—top to bottom—is decorated in CMD, RGB-style LED puck lighting.

The Zero Gravity purchased by Bob Lyons and traveling with Powers Great American Midways includes the new lighting package and will be on display at the 2019 IISF Trade Show & Extravaganza in Florida.

Like the DownDraft, the Zero Gravity has a history that includes production under Dartron and roots that extend back to Hrubetz Rides via the Round Up. The style of ride has always been known for its high capacity, holding thirty-three passengers at one time.

Battech’s newest product is also

steeped in amusement ride tradition. The Black Widow was introduced in 2017. Its story began when Frank Zaitshik of Wade Shows approached Albert with interest in upgrading the show’s Eyerly Spider. A modernized drive system was chief among Frank’s requests. Battech transformed the ride from one that relied on 1930s-era technology into a modern-day machine. The end result was a ride that is much more user-friendly and easier to maintain. Instead of mechanical clutches, Spiders upgraded by Battech and the new Black Widows now utilize push button controls, making them much easier to operate. Battech has also addressed all of the issues associated with old Eyerly Spiders with their new drive system and other modern features. “We eliminated the reoccurrence of old problems by looking at the history of the Spider,” Albert says.

The rebuild of the Spider for Wade Shows was a success. “We were able to prove that a new drive system and the other modernizations of the Spider would work which allowed us to move onto designing a trailer-mounted version of that style of ride,” says Albert. Battech has produced four Black Widows since the ride was introduced. They have also continued to rebuild and upgrade existing Spiders for other customers.

THE ZERO GRAVITY HAS BEEN THE ALL-STAR OF BATTECH'S LINEUP THIS YEAR. THE COMPANY HAS COMPLETED FIVE OF THEM IN 2018.



The Black Widow's DNA can be traced back to the Eyerly Octopus, an attraction that made its debut in 1936. Originally developed as a piece of flight simulation equipment, the Octopus easily translated as a thrilling midway attraction. A larger piece known as the Monster and based on the Octopus was released in 1956. The Spider was introduced a decade later in 1966. Albert cemented his ability to upgrade and design a modern version of the Spider in 2015 when he acquired the assets of ORI, LLC (formerly Oregon Rides, Inc. and Eyerly Aircraft Company). Albert admits, the Spider was the first project he wanted to tackle. Skinners Amusements of Marengo, Illinois was the first show to purchase the new Black Widow.

The Kraken themed version of the ride was designed specifically for Debbie Powers and Powers Great American Midways. Its name is a reference to a mythical sea creature said to lurk in the waters around Norway and Greenland. The ride's vibrant artwork pays homage to the legendary creature and serves as a bright addition to the Powers' midway. Like other Black Widow units, the trailer-mounted piece is much easier to setup than its predecessors.

Work on new projects at Battech's facilities continued as the three new rides delivered to Powers Great

American Midways dazzled at the North Carolina State Fair. "We're just finishing up a park model slide," says Albert. The company has delivered several new portable slides in recent years. They also completely rebuilt a 28-foot slide for a customer not long ago. Like new slides offered by Battech, the rebuild features the latest in LED lighting technology.

Next year will mark the tenth year since Albert Frieden formed Battech Enterprises. He founded Battech—named after his children Brienne, Anne, and Taylor—upon purchasing the assets of Dartron Industries in October of 2009. Albert first joined Dartron as a mechanical engineer in 2004. He was later promoted to general manager in 2007. At the time, the ride company was owned by Bob Coil who was nearing retirement. With a strong head for business and a wealth of experience, Albert stepped into the role of ownership at the new Battech Enterprises.

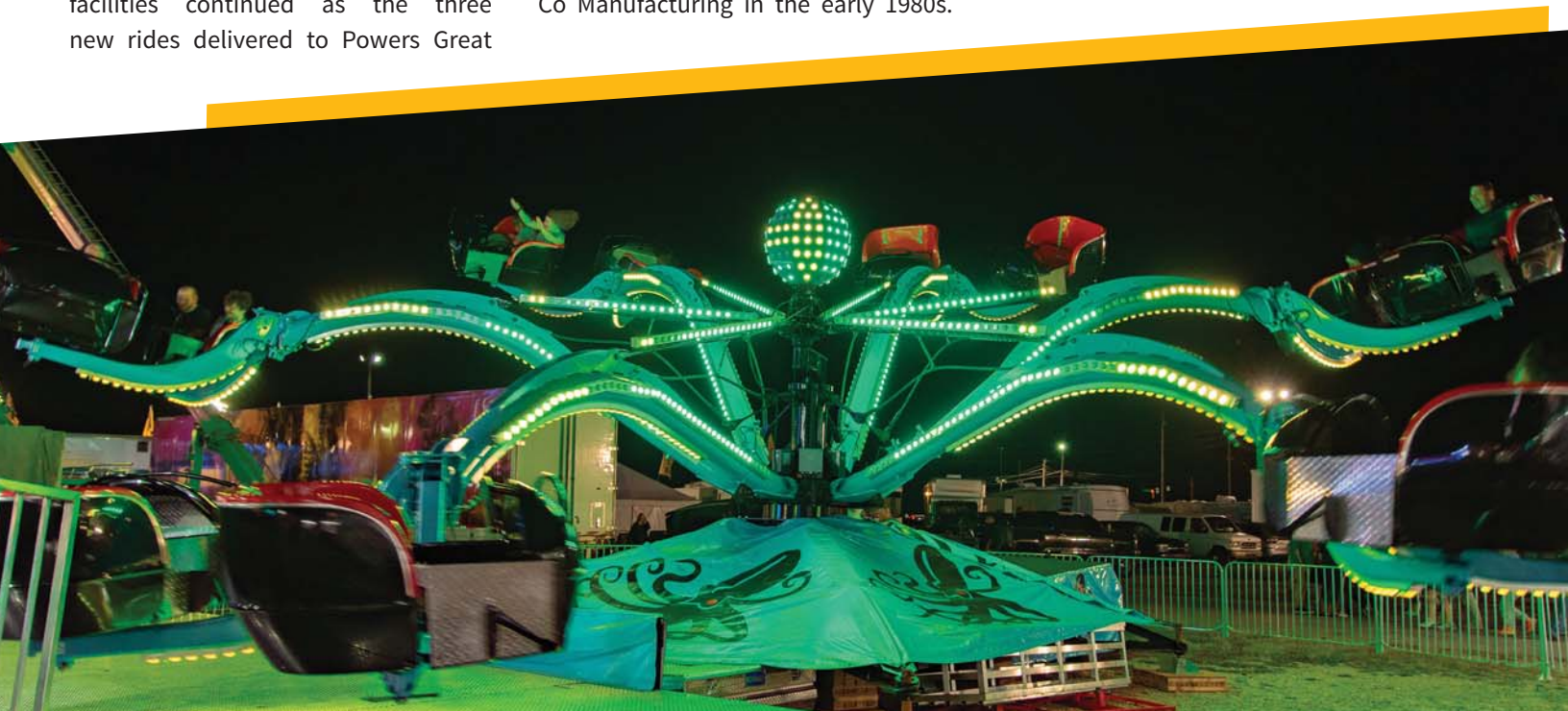
Battech's ties to the industry extend as far back as the Hrubetz-Bushnell Company founded in 1939. Company owner Frank Hrubetz later sold the business to his son-in-law Dan Kilinski who renamed it Kilinski Manufacturing Company in 1976. Along with a change in organizational structure, the company became Man-Co Manufacturing in the early 1980s.

Bob Coil purchased the company in 1991 and renamed it Dartron. While the strength of this ride-building tradition is still cherished at Battech, the company has also found new ways to meet the needs of the industry and seeks to present the best quality product.

Battech Enterprises has grown much over the past decade. Their facilities have expanded and now include a CNC machine shop. "The CNC equipment allows us to build a lot more of our product in-house which streamlines the building process and maintains a consistent schedule," says Albert.

The company's labor force has also expanded over the past few years. Instead of relying on a predominantly seasonal crew as was the case in years past, they now have a fulltime, permanent staff of about thirty employees.

Battech has ride delivery openings available as soon as April 2019, but with a busy production schedule lined up into the new year, Albert is always in search of more space and quality employees. With some veteran staff members close to retirement, he hopes to attract youthful new staff members that are hard-working and eager to





learn. In this regard, Albert feels like he can relate to some of the tribulations that carnivals have with staffing. “Carnivals have a tough time getting employees and so do we,” he says. “The biggest obstacle to our industry right now is labor shortages. For carnivals, the H2B program is extremely crucial and its outcome has a rippling effect throughout the industry.”

Albert notes that rising costs of materials is also a serious challenge to the manufacturing industry. He has seen the cost of raw materials increase by 20% in the past few months—a trend he believes will continue.

Not one to dwell on the negative, Albert points towards technology as one of the most optimistic developments for the industry. Advancements in the mechanics of rides and lighting have been a pleasure to observe over the last decade. He is also appreciative of the role technology plays in conducting business. “It helps me communicate

with customers interested in a ride because I can send them a picture or short video of the piece,” he says. “It has also made customer service much better. Now if ride owners have a maintenance request, they can snap a picture and send it. It’s easier from a parts perspective and for documentation.” Like many who live life on the go, Albert admits that he’d be lost if his phone went missing.

Of all the aspects of the industry that appeal to Albert, it’s interacting with his customers that he enjoys most. “There is a wonderful diversity among the customers in this industry, and I always enjoy getting to know show owners on a personal level,” he states. While Albert gets to know many of his customers through trips to their midways, he also looks forward to seeing so many of them at one time this November at the IAAPA Attractions Expo. Whether it’s a discussion about the season or the prospects of a new ride, there will be a lot to talk about.



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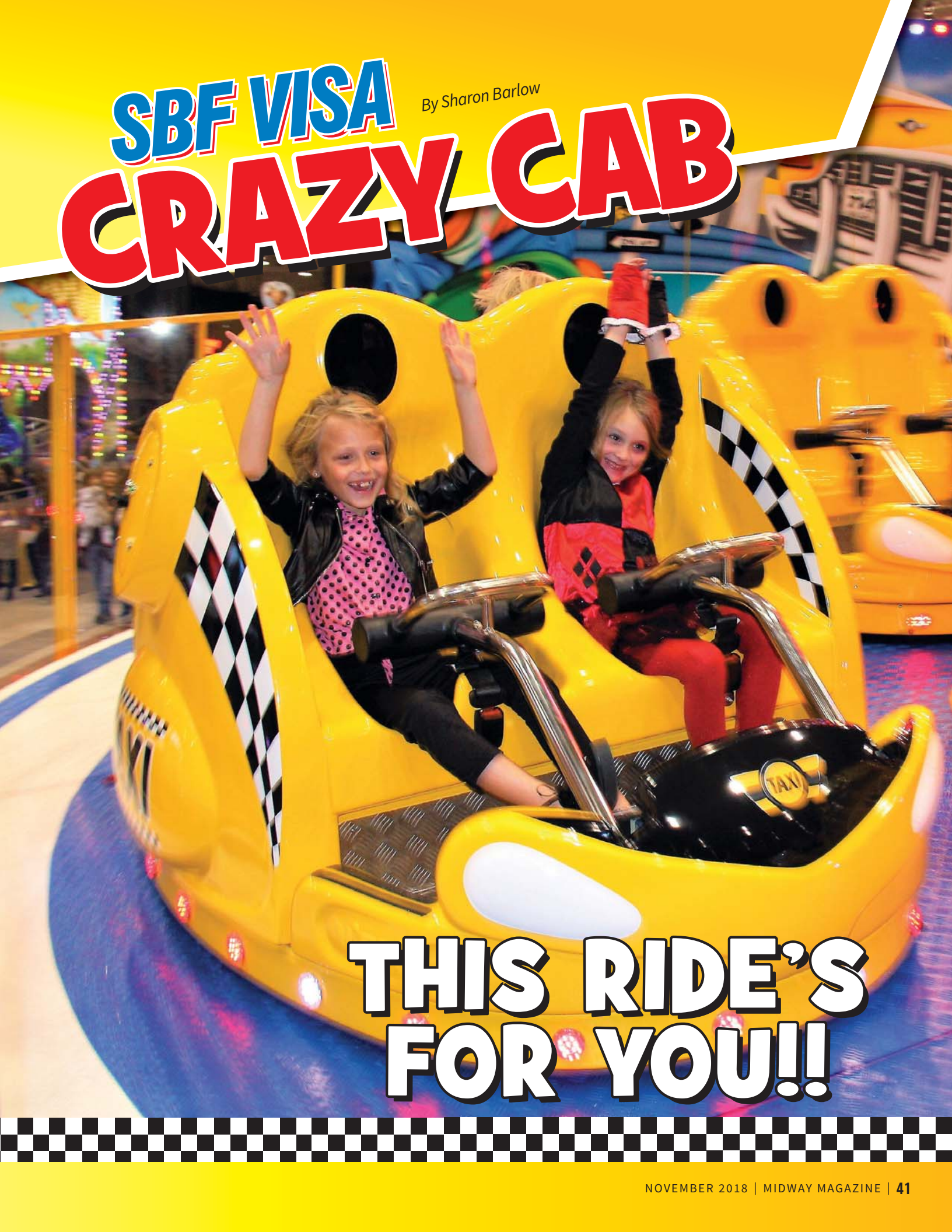
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SBF VISA CRAZY CAB

By Sharon Barlow



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“I don’t think the manufacturer was too happy when he saw feet coming out from under the ride. Then when he realized Eric was from A.R.M., that was the icing on the cake.”



It’s been a crazy long week, and an exhausted young couple catch each other’s eyes over the top of the heads of their six-year old twins who are jumping up and down, crazy with excitement. At home, there’s laundry to be done, grass to be cut, bills to be paid, but this is the last day of their county fair and promises are promises. The line for the ride is long, but it loads quickly. Doubting their own sanity, they each pick a kid and take a seat in the bright yellow car painted to resemble a cab. Does that flashing sign say Crazy Cab? Now they are convinced. They are crazy. But as the cab begins to spin, the smiles and giggles are infectious. By the time the ride pauses to change direction, everyone is laughing, hands in the air, the worries of the week forgotten. While most people measure success in dollars and cents, Len Soled of Rides-4-U counts his success in the smiles and laughter that his rides bring to midways, parks, and family entertainment centers across North America. By that calculation, Len Soled and ride owners will be more than successful, as the SBF Visa mini break dance called Crazy Cab finds its spot on midways throughout the country, beginning



with Bates Brothers Amusement Company.

Len has made his career by knowing which rides are going to generate the most smiles and laughter, but he certainly appreciates when a respected show owner like Eric Bates of Bates Brothers Amusement Company and a ride manufacturer as well corroborates his selection. “We introduced the park model of the Crazy Cab at the 2017 IAAPA Expo,” Len tells. “Eric showed some interest, but he wanted to inspect it first.”

Len laughs, “I don’t think the manufacturer was too happy when he saw feet coming out from under the ride. Then when he realized Eric was from A.R.M., that was the icing on the cake.”

Eric quickly recognized that the Crazy Cab was an exceptional ride. “It is like seeing a pretty lady,” he jokes. “You know you want to marry her. I had no doubt that it was going to be a good ride and a good grossing ride.”

As the prototype was a park model, Eric initially considered trailer-mounting the ride himself, but after brainstorming with Mark Blumhagen of Rides-4-U, the two developed a design that everybody including SBF Visa felt could work. “There was really no issue with making





this ride portable,” Eric explains. “We relocated the seats from the way they were on the park model so that when the two sides of the ride fold up with hydraulic cylinders they interlock with each other. So, there’s a knack to getting the seats positioned correctly on the platform. Did that take reengineering? Yes. We simply took the park model and relocated the center point of the seats where they spin. Then when we move them around, we can lock the seat down. When the side raises up the seats overlap with the opposite side. We just needed a better design for a portable ride versus a park model ride. Did it change the ride as far as its ability to be thrilling? No.”

“The nice thing about it is it all fits on

a 28-foot pup trailer,” Len adds. “The majority, less the perimeter fence, is hydraulic, so there’s no manhandling anything. The cars stay on the platform. The scenery folds and stays on the trailer. I think it’s a very well-executed design and very, very portable.”

The newly-portable Crazy Cab made its debut in October on the midway of Bates Brothers Amusement Company at the I-X Trick or Treat Street in Cleveland, Ohio. “The Crazy Cab has so many attributes that make it a great ride,” Eric shares. “The best rides are flat-loading so that everybody rides simultaneously. That’s a great thing. The lap bars are automatic, and of course, the operator makes sure they are secure. When I

see young parents ride with their little kids, and they’re having as much fun as the kids, that’s an excellent piece of equipment.”

According to Eric, the Crazy Cab will continue to be an excellent ride for many years to come. “As Mr. Connie Fernandez of E. K. Fernandez Shows used to say, this will be an evergreen ride, meaning it’s a good ride year after year. That’s important. Another thing that’s important is with the way it’s designed, one man can safely run it. With today’s labor issues and payroll, that’s a really good thing.”

After its debut, the Crazy Cab will be on display in the Rides-4-U booth at the

2018 IAAPA Expo where it will be joined by other exceptional family rides. “We will be bringing the SBF Visa Spinning Coaster that we call the XXL. Everyone needs to be ready because we have just enough safety clearance that we don’t lose someone’s head along the way,” Len laughs. “Seriously, we are going to be right up around the rafters of the convention center.”

The XXL will be the third evolution of the Spinning Coaster. “We started with a compact model that you could enter at ground level,” Len explains. “Then we jumped it up about one meter taller which is only about four feet, and we added a big scenery sign. The cars go through the scenery. We jumped sales dramatically with that as everybody was like, ‘Wow! This thing really pops!’ Now, we have people telling us that it’s a great coaster, but they need a little more capacity. So, we went from four cars to five cars, and we added some additional height. I think this could jump the market and become a major piece. It’s going to create a lot of excitement.”

While the XXL will be bigger, it will maintain all the attributes that made the spinning coaster a great ride from the beginning. Len says, “From day one, this thing was built like the Rock of Gibraltar. Everybody who went over it, parks, carnivals, family entertainment centers, they all couldn’t believe the thickness of the steel SBF Visa uses to construct the track. They’ve all been very impressed with the track and the electrical components as well as the cars which are very nicely designed. The nice thing, however, is we are still able to maintain a 36-inch height requirement when accompanied by an adult which is very unusual for a lot of coasters. Now, most of these coasters even the kiddie ones require 42 inches. There’s quite a lot of kids that fall between 36 and 42 inches, and they get restricted. So, this is a big plus for this coaster. It will definitely be something exciting for the family.”

Len also warns all visitors to the Rides-4-U booth to look out, because he’s bringing a brand-new ride to the trade show called Look Out. “I’m really excited about this one,” he exclaims. “It’s an up and over ride with a capacity of eight on each of the gondolas facing forward and back. Basically, there’s a pod on top and one on the bottom. You load the entire pod and then bring it around to load the other. Then you let it roll. It reaches a height of around 35 feet, so it has a nice zip to it. It’s got a cute theme with big eyes on it. Grandma, grandpa, families, kids, everyone can ride together.”

Smiles and laughter are certainly one of the rewards the show owner can expect when he brings families together to enjoy the rides on the midway. As for a show owner visiting Len Soled in his booth at the 2018 IAAPA Expo? Some might even say, they would be crazy not to.

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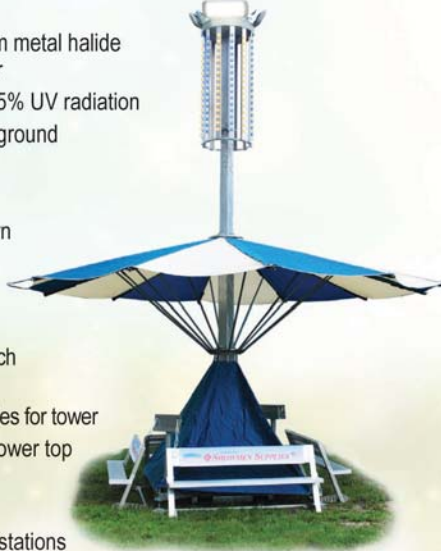
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Tally-ho! In the late 18th century, the cry tally-ho could be heard across the countryside to alert hunting parties that a quarry had been sighted and competing parties could back away. During World War II, RAF fighter pilots used the term as they engaged enemy aircraft in battle. NASA astronauts adopted tally-ho to signify sightings of other spacecraft. In the mobile amusement industry tally-ho could become the cry of Talley Amusements as they prepare to breach the boundaries of their home state of Texas and set their sights on major events across the country starting in the great state of Ohio.



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TALLY-HO!

TALLEY AMUSEMENTS WINS OHIO

by Sharon Barlow

Photos by Chris Emory & Stefan Hinz



The Ohio State Fair first opened its gates to an estimated 30,000 visitors from throughout Ohio in 1850 in the small community of Camp Washington, two miles east of downtown Cincinnati. Overcoming adversity from its inception, including a cholera outbreak that forced the Ohio Board of Agriculture to shift the first fair from 1849 to 1850, The Ohio State Fair established itself as a trendsetter for state fairs. After moving to its current location at the Ohio Expo Center in 1886, The Ohio State Fair continually presented interesting exciting events and programs to the millions of people who flooded the gates over its tenure. In 1896, it became the first fair to add an electric lighting system. In 1903, the fair featured its first butter cow and calf sculpted by A.T. Shelton & Company. During World War I, an 8,840 square foot American flag was displayed, and in 1941, for the first time, 150 women were hired as ticket takers in place of men. The Sky Glider and Giant Slide became permanent fixtures in 1969. Over the decades, attendees have consumed hundreds of thousands slices of pizza and corn dogs and drank millions of glasses of iced tea.

For the mobile amusement industry, The Ohio State Fair has always been a coveted event, and over the years, the fair has hosted great carnivals including Gooding's Million Dollar Midway and Pugh Shows before Amusements of America became its carnival of record for 26 years. In 2017, however, this iconic event suffered a terrible blow forcing fairs and carnivals throughout the world to reevaluate their operations. The Buckeye State's fair needed more than good luck to recover as media coverage continued to rub salt in a painful wound.

The Ohio Expositions Commission quickly took the necessary steps to heal and launched the extensive RFP process for a new carnival midway in February of 2018. Companies were evaluated on the quality of their rides, games, shows, and other concessions as well as their management philosophies and policies. Other considerations included their level of experience and their performance during the previous three years including the timeliness of their ride, game, and attraction opening, the frequency of which rides and shows did not operate as well as the overall appearance of the show, the personnel, and the midway itself. Of utmost importance was safety. Finalists were invited to Columbus to make presentations to the selection team before being visited in operation at a fair to be evaluated on their rides, record-keeping, and operation procedures.

After six months of careful evaluation and consideration, the Ohio Expositions Commission announced that it had selected a carnival that was positioning itself to be a trendsetter for the industry for a four-year contract beginning in 2019. They had selected Talley Amusements.

According to Virgil Strickler, the Ohio State Fair Manager, "Talley Amusements is a rising star in the amusement business. Talley's commitment to safety, ride maintenance and quality, and professionalism contributed to the company receiving the highest score in our robust selection process."



Certainly, much of the industry was in shock that a carnival based in Fort Worth, Texas would venture more than 1,000 miles to play The Ohio State Fair. According to Tom and Mary Talley, this was something for which they have been preparing for many years. “Our goal from our start in 1995 was to build our ride arsenal up to be a state fair carnival,” Mary admits. “We are a state fair carnival.”

While even Virgil Strickler recognized that Talley Amusements was a state fair carnival with no state fair, the decision to limit their route to predominately within the state of Texas was due to Tom and Mary’s commitment to their family and three daughters, Meagan, Cortney, and Taylor. “We have purposely kept Talley Amusements close to home until I finished the daily mothering part of my life,” Mary explains. “When the RFPs were sent out for the New Mexico State Fair a few years ago, we

chose not to submit a bid. The primary reason was that the first two years of the contract would have been Taylor’s last two years of high school. I would have been away from her for basically the whole month of September for the New Mexico State Fair as well as the month of October for the State Fair of Texas.”

Tom and Mary’s decision was also perhaps history repeating itself as Mary’s father, Buster Brown, grandson of Bill Hames, intentionally kept his family’s show close to home. “From the time I was a young kid until I was 16 or 17 years old, we stayed in Texas,” Mary remembers. “At that point, my dad was ready to take The Bill Hames Show to the next level.”

Even while Buster Brown was touring his carnival in the state of Texas, he was carefully and systematically developing a concept that would allow the Bill Hames Show to play

such iconic events as the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and the Colorado State Fair. “Back in the day, The Bill Hames Show only owned 16 rides,” Mary shares. “My dad really originated the concept of bringing in independent ride operators maybe without even realizing it. He surrounded himself with as many independent operators, including the rides he owned personally, as the show had rides.”

“As he bought rides,” Mary continues, “he bought large, spectacular rides that he would contract with other carnivals in other states. Then, he would bring them back to his show in Texas for the larger events. When the timing was right to take the show to the next level, he was prepared.”

Buster Brown’s example has heavily influenced Tom and Mary’s ride selections as they have prepared for this next level. “Even when we were



a small show, we purchased state fair equipment,” Mary explains. “We’ve taken some of these rides or part of the show to other places to assist other carnivals and we have booked them into independent fairs for the last 20 years. We have played the San Diego County Fair, the Ventura County Fair, the Minnesota State Fair, the Iowa State Fair, and, of course, the State Fair of Texas.”



In 2019, Talley Amusements will take more than 55 rides to the Ohio State Fair which they will supplement with a select few independent ride owners of what Mary considers to be the best of the best. “We own an arsenal of beautiful rides,” she claims, “but Tommy and I feel strongly that subcontractors only enhance our midway. They make Talley Amusements look even better because these independent owners have built these little empires. They have two or three excellently maintained rides that look like our rides, but we don’t have to worry about operating them. They book in, and they are part of our Talley team. That’s how my father built his carnival to be the absolutely beautiful trendsetter that it was.”

Mary is adamant that it is not the number of rides or the age of rides that matters, but it is the quality of the rides that Talley Amusements brings to the midway. “We have a really nice show,” Mary states. “And I will give most of the credit to Tom. I can’t even begin to tell you

what a hard-working man he is. He’s one of those show owners who is constantly on the midway working right along side of his staff. He not only manages the carnival, he’s physically working on it.”

“I’m fourth generation,” she continues, “and I know of very few show owners who work on the midway like he does. I’m just really blessed to have a business partner who is so dedicated. I will give you an example. When we were at the State Fair of Texas, I was speaking with a ride inspector, and he mentioned that he had not seen me out much. I explained that I had been working in the office. He said, ‘Man, the first person I see out here every morning is your husband, Tommy.’”

“He’s out hours before anyone else. That’s just who he is. He loves this industry. He loves his business. He’s dedicated to being the best.”





According to Mary, being the best also includes a strict safety and maintenance program. “Tom and our safety team maintain all of our rides so that they all look brand new because it’s really not about how old a ride is but how it’s maintained and the things you do to make sure it’s safe. You also have to look at the whole piece of equipment. In light of recent events, some people are under the false impression that a ride needs to be brand new to be safe, and it’s just not true.”

Mary admits that safety is Talley Amusements’ first priority and was a large component of the RFP process with the Ohio State Fair. “It was a great RFP. They asked all the right questions. They were obviously focusing on the safety and quality of the equipment. When they visited us at the North Texas State Fair, they even brought a state inspector with them. I have so much confidence in Tom’s ability and what he does to maintain this equipment. We will go to the Ohio State Fair and set a new trend for the next level of safety and excellence.”

Tom and Mary admittedly were thrilled when the announcement was made that Talley Amusements had been awarded the Ohio State Fair. Tom officially stated,

“Talley Amusements is honored to be the next amusement provider at the Ohio State Fair. We look forward to putting our 200-plus years of combined experience to work, delivering the safest and best-possible entertainment experience, adding another successful chapter to the proud Ohio State Fair tradition. Our commitment to the people of Ohio and the state fair is to provide a destination experience, while continuing to establish industry best-practices for safety and quality.”

While the attention is currently on Talley Amusements, Mary’s desire is that the primary focus will be the Ohio State Fair. “We want to bring the very best carnival we can to every event,” she exclaims, “but we don’t need the credit. I want people to say, ‘I just went to the Ohio State Fair, and I had the best time! It was the best carnival I have ever been to!’ It doesn’t matter if they say Talley Amusements. We know it’s us. That’s all that matters.”

Talley Amusements is now a state fair carnival with a true state fair. As Tom and Mary Talley continue to expand their boundaries and grow their show, the mobile amusement industry should perhaps continue to listen for Tally-Ho!



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PROJECT 2009: *Surf Ride*

By: Sharon Barlow



Ride manufacturers throughout the world compete to bring the newest, fastest, most daring spectacular rides to the midway. For years, KMG has led the charge developing rides like the Freak Out, Speed, and Inversion, rides that guaranteed thrills to the thrill seeker and revenue to the carnival owner. In 2009, recognizing a growing trend in the amusement industry for a desire for rides that families could experience together, KMG engineers developed a ride designed for the young, the old, and anyone in between to enjoy. The name at the time was simply Project 2009.

Unfortunately, Project 2009 was a ride before its time as longtime showman and representative for KMG throughout the world, Peter Theunisz, met with no success with the initial introduction of the ride. “Unfortunately, much of the industry was experiencing a financial crisis at that time,” Peter shares. “No one was interested in gambling on a prototype. Buyers were ordering rides with proven success such as the Freak Out, Speed, and Inversion. Fortunately, KMG was continuing to grow with these rides, but Project 2009 was shelved for the time-being.”

By 2016, the amusement industry experienced a resurgence as families returned to the midway full force. Parks, showmen, and carnivals launched a quest for new rides, and topping the list of requests was the family ride. Project 2009 was taken off the shelf and reevaluated. More



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than the economy had changed since the project was initiated, and while the idea was still great, the KMG engineers were able to adapt the latest developments in technology to make what was already great even better. Riding a wave of success, Project 2009 was named Surf Ride.

Constructed on one semi-trailer, Surf Ride can be easily set up in 30 to 40 minutes by only two people. Once the platform is lowered the counterweights can be lifted, and the ride is ready to be used. Between the two rotating sweeps the main center platform holds

two gondolas of eight persons each, which can spin clockwise and counterclockwise while the platform is in motion. The gondolas always stay up right. Once the sweeps start rotating a pleasant swinging motion will occur. When the gondolas start to spin slowly, while the sweeps are rotating, riders will enjoy a motion very much like spinning and riding the waves, hence the name, Surf Ride.

The Surf Ride's new ride programming system, fast loading system, and 16-person capacity make it easily possible to ride 500 people per hour while new type





drives and LED lighting require less power. The Surf Ride, however, is priced less than the Freak Out and the popular X-Factory.

Within weeks of the introduction of Surf Ride, Mr. Mike Klinge, a very savvy showman from Germany, placed the first order. Naming it the X-Force, Mr. Klinge themed his ride with the always popular super heroes. “The X-Force was an instant success,” Peter claims. “Once other showmen saw the impact the ride was having on the midway, orders two, three, and four were placed quickly.”

The second Surf Ride was recently completed and will make its debut at the Winter Wonderland in Hyde Park, London. Initially with a holiday theme consistent with its debut event, the ride will thrill families until January

2019. At that time, it will become the Wipe Out and be shipped to Australia and its rightful owner, Mr. Broderick Pavier, owner of Golden Way Amusements.

Like all KMG rides, the Surf Ride brings fun and excitement to the midway as families create lasting memories together. While Project 2009 may have been a ride before its time, the time for the Surf Ride is NOW!

KMG invites you to visit their booth #4859 at the 2018 IAAPA Expo to see the Surf Ride for yourself!

For more information please feel free to contact sales agent Peter Theunisz (0031-655-795-792 / p.theunisz@kmg.nl).



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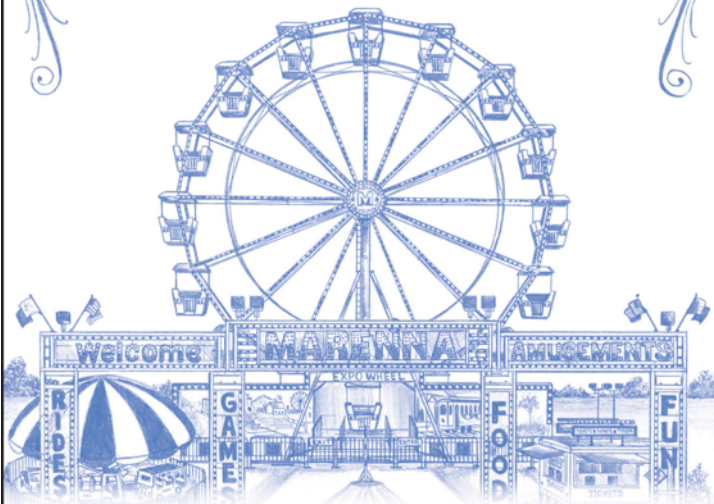
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