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8 MARCH 2017 ISSUE 73

Financial discipline 'top priority' for SeaWorld says Manby

SeaWorld CEO Joel Manby has said that financial discipline remains a top priority for the operator, after end of year results saw both revenue and attendance decline in 2016.

The company announced a company-wide restructuring in December, which saw 320 jobs cut after a sharp dip in attendance. The restructuring was necessary after heavy decline at SeaWorld's Florida and Northeast park locations saw attendance drop in 2016 by 471,000 visitors – a 2.1 per cent overall decrease across the company's parks year-on-year.

On top of that the company also recorded a net loss of US\$12.5m (€11.8m, £10m) in 2016, compared with a net profit of US\$49.1m (€46.3m, £39.5m) the year before.



Joel Manby has laid out a five point plan to turn around SeaWorld

"We've stepped up our intensity in terms of enhancing financial discipline across the organisation," said Manby, speaking during an earnings call. "We have made

significant progress on this front. Last quarter, we announced a comprehensive cost optimisation programme to achieve a targeted US\$40m (€38m, £32.5m) in net savings by the end of 2018.

"During the fourth quarter, we realised approximately US\$1.5m (€1.4m, £1.2m) in savings from our cost optimisation programme and reported costs of US\$8.9m (€8.4m, £7.2m) in relation to the elimination of positions."

Manby added that the company's cuts were significant as SeaWorld continues to scrutinise its own financial outlays. He also said SeaWorld is becoming significantly more efficient in its use of expenditure for developing physical assets.

More: http://lei.sr?a=t7w7N_A

Comcast agrees to buy rest of Universal Japan for US\$2.3bn

After purchasing a majority stake in Universal Studios Japan in 2015, Universal's parent company Comcast has reached a deal to acquire the remaining 49 per cent of the theme park for US\$2.3bn (€2.2bn, £1.9bn).

Universal is purchasing the stake from a number of parties, including Goldman Sachs, former Universal Japan CEO Glenn Gumpel, private equity firm MBK Partners and US hedge fund Owl Creek.

The deal places a total net value of US\$7.4bn (€7bn, £6bn) on the park, which includes the assumption of any debt.

The US\$1.5bn (€1.4bn, £1.2bn) majority acquisition of Universal Japan in late 2015 proved a great success for the operator last year, with year-on-year theme park



The deal values the park at US\$7.4bn

revenue in 2016 increasing 48.2 per cent to US\$4.9bn (€4.6bn, £3.9bn), and operating cash flow also increasing 49.6 per cent to US\$2.2bn (€2bn, £1.7bn).

Universal Japan opened its Wizarding World of Harry Potter attraction in 2014 and has continued to invest off the back of its success, starting an aggressive expansion of its theme park business globally, including plans for Nintendo-themed attractions worldwide, its upcoming Volcano Bay in Orlando opening at the end of May, and its largest ever theme park project – a CNY¥50bn (US\$7.4bn, €6.65bn, £6bn) development set to open in Beijing in 2020, the company's fourth Universal theme park and resort in Asia.

More: http://lei.sr?a=4V2K2_A

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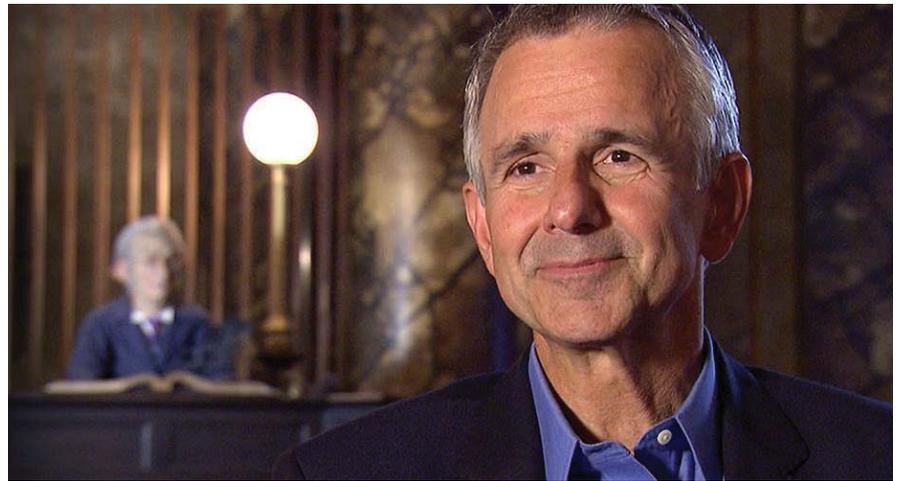
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Woodbury is also president of Universal Creative, developing projects such as Harry Potter

Woodbury named Universal vice chair

Universal Studios has named Mark Woodbury to the newly created role of vice chair of Parks and Resorts, with Woodbury also continuing to serve in his existing role as president of Universal Creative.

Holding various roles within Universal over the course of the last 28 years, Woodbury leads a multidisciplinary team of professional project managers, designers, artists,

engineers, financial analysts, architects and builders, focused on providing content that fuels the continued growth of the division.

In his additional role, Woodbury will also report to Tom Williams, chair and CEO of Universal Parks and Resorts, working alongside him to lead and develop Universal's parks division.

More: http://lei.sr?a=b4j9S_A

McDonald's opens restaurant museum above ancient Roman road in Italy

McDonald's has opened its first ever restaurant-museum hybrid thanks to the discovery of an ancient road buried for centuries and unearthed when construction on the site started in 2014.

In addition to the McDonald's restaurant in Frattocchie, just outside of Rome, €300,000 (US\$318,000, £253,000) was spent on restoring the street, which visitors can enjoy while tucking into their Big Mac thanks to a transparent floor installed within the restaurant.

Buried for more than 1,700 years, Rome's Superintendency for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape managed the project, with McDonald's financing the restoration. In addition to discovering the road, three adult male skeletons were also



The road was discovered during construction of the restaurant

discovered, buried hundreds of years ago after the road had fallen out of use.

Measuring around 45m (147ft) in length, the road was built at some point between the second and first century BC and is linked to the Appian way – an ancient road linking Rome to the south of Italy.

More: http://lei.sr?a=C7q4e_A

Under pressure Met director Thomas H Campbell resigns

Thomas H Campbell, director of New York's Museum of Metropolitan Art, has resigned following reports that trustees and colleagues had become "disillusioned" with his leadership after eight years in the role.

Campbell's resignation comes at a time when the prestigious institution is dealing with a potential US\$40m (€38m, £32.5m) deficit if it fails to get its finances under control, according to Met president and COO Daniel Weiss. The museum ended the previous financial year with an US\$8.3m (€7.9m, £6.8m) budget deficit.

According to *The New York Times*, tensions within the institution are at an all-time high, with increasing concerns among staff and trustees about the Met's financial health, as well as Campbell's capacity to lead the US's largest museum.

The Met recently delayed a US\$600m (€563.4m, £492.4m) redevelopment of its southwest wing by up to seven years as bosses aim to get the institution's finances in order.

"At a moment when art and culture have an especially profound role to play in fostering



Campbell will stay on at the museum until June, leaving as director after eight years in the role

mutual understanding, I am especially proud that our visitor base is the largest and most diverse in the museum's history," said Campbell in a statement. "At the same time, we are on track to be financially stable and have a solid strategic path forward."

Campbell will stay on until June, with Weiss serving as interim chief executive. Weiss will work with Campbell and the museum's leadership on a transition plan while the Met seeks a new director.

More: http://lei.sr?a=z6J8B_A

Out of this world creatives call for art museum on the Moon

Those eagerly anticipating the colonisation of the Moon will be delighted to know they'll be able to get a dose of culture 384,400km away from Earth's atmosphere, after artists Julio Orto and Joey Cannizzaro proposed The Museum of Contemporary Art on the Moon, or MoCAM as it would be known.

Offering fantastic views of Earth, the duo have already purchased a 20 acre plot of land on the Moon, located in Area D 6 Quadrant Charlie – the extreme northwest corner of the recognised Lunar Chart.

MoCAM's architectural style has been conceived by Mexican architect Mauricio Mastropiero, whose design has been "conceived as an extension of human life and pays homage to our natural instinct for exploration".

The experience would be divided into three main spaces, starting with an outer building that is partially underground inside an artificial mountain, an open flexible space that changes according to the museum's needs and a core that hosts the principal exhibition. There would



The plan is a response to "the inevitable creation of human communities on the Moon"

also be a farming greenhouse, restaurant, gift shop, storage areas and resting areas.

Working in conjunction with the Indianapolis Museum of Contemporary Art (IMOCA), MoCAM has begun a process "dedicated to displaying the most interesting, cutting edge, relevant art from the world, Moon habitants, or in the case

of future encounters, any other form of intelligent life we may meet."

MoCAM offers an inaugural Earth-based show, *Mystic Hyperstitions in the Heart of Empire*, as an online venture, with the works also part of IMOCA's *The Museum of Real and Odd*, which opened in February.

More: http://lei.sr?a=d7M2K_A

Notice of Default raises questions over Six Flags Vietnam

Six Flags' proposed Vietnam project has hit troubled waters, after its franchise partner NaVi Entertainment failed to fulfil "contractual obligations", prompting the operator to serve the company a Notice of Default.

Reporting its Q4 2016 results, Six Flags revealed that growth in guest spending revenues was partially offset by sponsorship and international licensing fees, which were down US\$5m (€4.7m, £4m). The operator attributed this to the faltering Vietnam development, blaming "a result of our partner's failure to fulfil their contractual obligations".

"We're not going to delve into specifics in terms of what has occurred there in terms of our partner going into default on the agreement," said Six Flags CEO John Duffey, speaking during the earnings call.

"We have the utmost confidence that we'll be able to remedy this situation. We have provided our partner with a Notice of Default and we're currently working with them to remedy that. We believe this is a timing issue.



Six Flags will operate its under-development overseas ventures under licensing agreements

Vietnam continues to be a great market for us and our hope is that we'll get this project back on track. But if we don't, we still view that as a great market and there are other partners that we could aggressively pursue."

Six Flags announced the Vietnam plans in March last year, with plans to use the Six Flags and Six Flags Hurricane Harbor names under a licensing agreement.

More: http://lei.sr?a=e2K8N_A



The proposal still needs approval

Celtic FC reveals hotel and museum plans

Scottish football club Celtic has announced plans for a hotel and museum complex to be built next to the 47-time Scottish Premier League (SPL) champions' home ground.

The proposal, which also includes a ticket office and retail store, will be submitted to Glasgow City Council for approval, with the development to come up outside the main stand of Celtic Park.

Celtic's 2009 masterplan by GD Lodge Architects and McInally Associates also details housing, retail, leisure, office, civic and public realm developments.

More: http://lei.sr?a=F3T6g_A

Crowdfunding campaign launched for Brixton's Bowie lightning bolt memorial

The extraordinary life and career of music icon David Bowie could be marked with a gravity-defying lightning bolt sculpture in the London district where he was born.

Architect Zac Monro, arts collective This Ain't Rock'n'Roll and sculptor Tom Carter have proposed the three-storey, 9m (29.5ft) tall steel memorial, which reimagines the famous bolt sported by Bowie on the cover of his 1973 album *Aladdin Sane* as a giant three-dimensional structure in the heart of Brixton.

The plans have been developed in consultation with Bowie's management team in New York and London and have the support of the local Lambeth Council.

If given the green light, the bolt will be built in Tunstall Road, directly opposite



The project cost has been estimated at £1m (US\$1.3m, €1.2m)

Brixton Underground station, and next to the existing David Bowie mural – a focal point for tributes since the artist's death in January 2016. It will be called *ZiggyZag* in reference to both its shape and Bowie's extra-terrestrial Ziggy Stardust persona.

More: http://lei.sr?a=Z6F6N_A



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Great Barrier Reef bleaching could wash away one million visitors

With warming waters devastating parts of the Great Barrier Reef, the Australia Institute – a Canberra-based think tank – has predicted more than a million less people will visit the natural wonder should coral bleaching continue.

The process – which turns usually colorful corals white and translucent – occurs when coral becomes stressed by high water temperature, with climate change making it a more and more regular occurrence. The reef, which is a key tourism draw for the north east of Australia, suffered from mass bleaching in 2016, with around 93 per cent of the coral affected, 22 per cent dying as a result.

The Australia Institute conducted a survey of 3,000 people located in the US, UK and China – the nation's key tourism markets – and of 1,400 Australians, asking how coral bleaching would affect potential holiday plans.

Using the results to project how the country's tourism sector could be affected by the bleaching, the institute said that 175,000 potential visitors could be put off



Coral bleaching is killing swathes of the Great Barrier Reef – roughly 22 per cent in 2016

visiting Australian altogether, costing an estimated AU\$1bn (£777m, €733m, £618m) in annual tourist revenue.

Of those surveyed, more than a quarter of UK respondents said they

were less likely to visit because of bleaching, while a third of Americans and 55 per cent of the Chinese market also said they were less likely to visit.

More: http://lei.sr?a=Z6f7g_A



Police are still investigating the incident

Taiwan waterpark gets green light to reopen

Formosa Fun Coast, the Taiwan waterpark where 15 revellers were killed and hundreds injured in 2015, has been given permission to reopen to the public.

The attraction, which is located in the Bali district of Taipei County, was closed immediately following the tragedy and its license to operate was withdrawn.

The Taipei Administrative High Court overturned the suspension on 1 March, finding insufficient evidence to show the operator knowingly put the public in danger, but upheld a NT\$50,000 fine.

More: http://lei.sr?a=t7U3g_A

'Life Everywhere' for Ecsite as Porto conference programme revealed

The European Network of Science Centers and Museums (Ecsite) has revealed the programme for the 28th edition of its annual conference, coming to Porto, Portugal in June.

Across more than 100 sessions, 400 people will speak at Ecsite, combining two workshop days and a three-day conference.

This year's conference takes the theme of "Life Everywhere", with the message being a celebration of the diversity of life formed over millions of years.

Nina Simon, the author of *The Participatory Museum* and *The Art of Relevance*, and Alice Roberts, anthropologist and professor of public engagement in science at the University of Birmingham, will be delivering this year's keynote speeches.



Alice Roberts will deliver a keynote at this year's event

Simon, who is executive director of the Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History, led an institutional turnaround based on grassroots community participation. Roberts has been a regular on British television since 2001, when she appeared on *Time Team Live*.

More: http://lei.sr?a=m5h9N_A

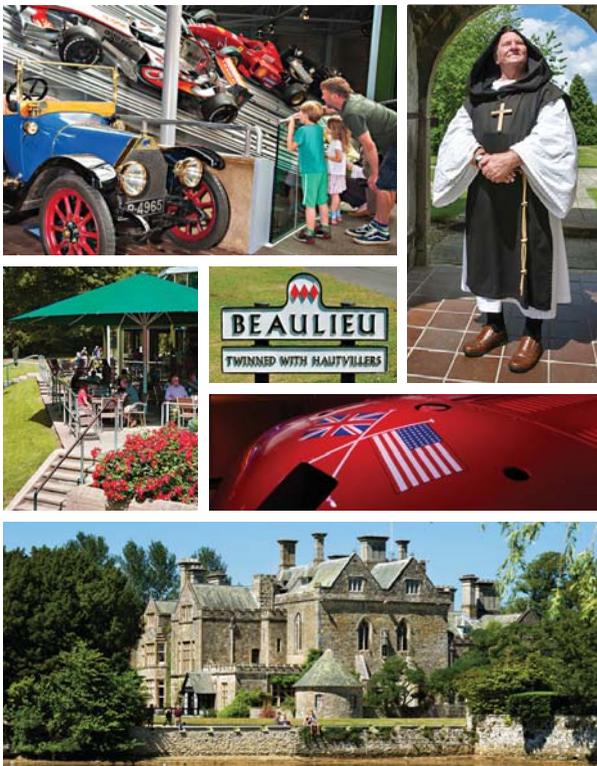


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AAA 2017**China Import and Export Fair Pazhou Complex, Guangzhou, China**

The Asia Amusement & Attractions Expo covers 80,000sq m (860,000sq ft) and will have a number of top suppliers exhibiting, with companies coming from more than 30 countries worldwide to showcase their products.

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Tel: +86 20 2331 8547

www.chinaexhibition.com

18-20 MARCH 2017

China Attractions Expo Beijing, China

Organised by the Chinese Association of Amusement Park and Attractions (CAAPA), CAE is the most established international amusement and attractions exhibition in China, drawing more than 375 international exhibitors and 30,000 visitors in 2016.

Email: lily@leisureandattractions.com

Tel: +44 161 818 8277

www.leisureandattractions.com

23-26 MARCH 2017

Halloween & Attractions Show America's Center Convention Complex, St. Louis, Missouri, US

The Halloween & Attractions Show is a four day event showcasing products for horror attractions or anything Halloween related. The event now also features Escape Room City – an area dedicated to the room escape and adventure game industries.

Email: stephanie@haashow.com

Tel: +1 847 453 4285

www.haashow.com

3-4 APRIL 2017

IAAPA US Advocacy Days 2017 Hyatt Place, Washington DC, US

The two-day event provides IAAPA members based in the United States with the opportunity to meet with influential



Conference sessions for the EZE event will be held at Parc Zoologique de Paris

13-16 MARCH 2017

EAZA EZE Conference 2017 Paris Zoo, Paris, France

Hosted at Paris Zoo and L'Aquarium tropical du Palais de la Porte Dorée, the biennial EAZA European Zoo Educators conference brings together educators

from across Europe for three days of presentations, workshops and activities focused on sharing good practice and highlighting future trends.

Email: info@eaza.net

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www.eaza.net

members of the United States Congress, and to discuss pressing priority issues affecting the US attractions industry.

Email: agold@IAAPA.org

Tel: +1 703 836 4800

www.cqrcengage.com/iaapa/advocacyday

27-29 MARCH 2017

DEAL 2017 Dubai World Trade Centre, United Arab Emirates

Held annually, DEAL is the region's most anticipated and biggest attraction for global and local stakeholders in the amusement and entertainment industries that are looking for a strong entry into these markets.

Email: lilia@iecdubai.com

Tel: +971 4 3435777

www.dealmiddleeastshow.com

5-7 APRIL 2017

Zoo Design Conference University of Wroclaw, Poland

Three days of moderated sessions dedicated to zoo design trends and developments, enrichment for animal welfare and the technical aspects of zoo design, as well as best practice for large and small facilities.

Email: darek.zdzieszynski@mcc.org.plwww.zoodesignconference.com

7-10 MAY 2017

AAM MuseumExpo 2017 St Louis, Missouri, US

The American Alliance of Museums (AAM) will host more than 5,000 museums professionals in May when they convene for the organisation's Annual Meeting and MuseumExpo. More than 100 sessions are scheduled to take place, with topics ranging from collections management and curatorial practice, to education and audience research.

Email: registration@aam-us.org

Tel: +1 202 289 1818

www.annualmeeting.aam-us.org

17-18 MAY 2017

Museums + Heritage Show Kensington Olympia, London, UK

The free-to-attend Museums + Heritage Show offers two days of seminars, cultural attraction experts and sector suppliers. An awards ceremony will also take place, recognising best practice within the world of museums, galleries, and cultural and heritage visitor attractions.

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“The aim is to inspire the visitor to want to go out and experience the real Everglades for themselves”

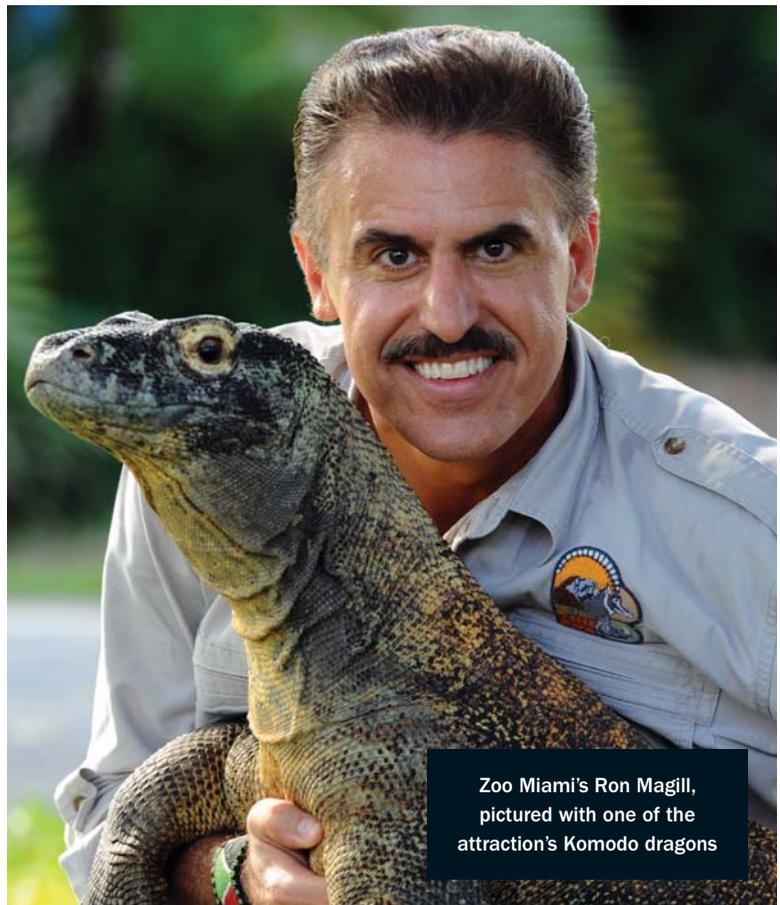
Ron Magill director of communications, Zoo Miami

Zoo Miami is in Ron Magill's blood. As he celebrates his 37th year at the Florida attraction, he's also celebrating the opening of the long-awaited Mission Everglades exhibit, which focuses on the wildlife and habitats of the zoo's own doorstep.

Built with an investment of \$33m (€31m, £26m), the 4.5-acre (1.8-hectare) expansion features 60 different species native to the region, including alligators, crocodiles, black bears, the Florida panther and a variety of birdlife. The aim is to give visitors an understanding of the importance of the Everglades and demonstrate that local wildlife is under just as much pressure from loss of habitat as species further afield.

“Florida: Mission Everglades is the culmination of many years of understanding the need to have an exhibit that showcases some of the amazing wildlife that occurs right in our own backyard,” says Magill, director of communications at the zoo. “It's a condensed trip through this natural treasure, providing some amazing up-close and interactive experiences that would be extremely rare or impossible in the wild.”

Entering Florida: Mission Everglades, visitors first experience the aviary and the ▶



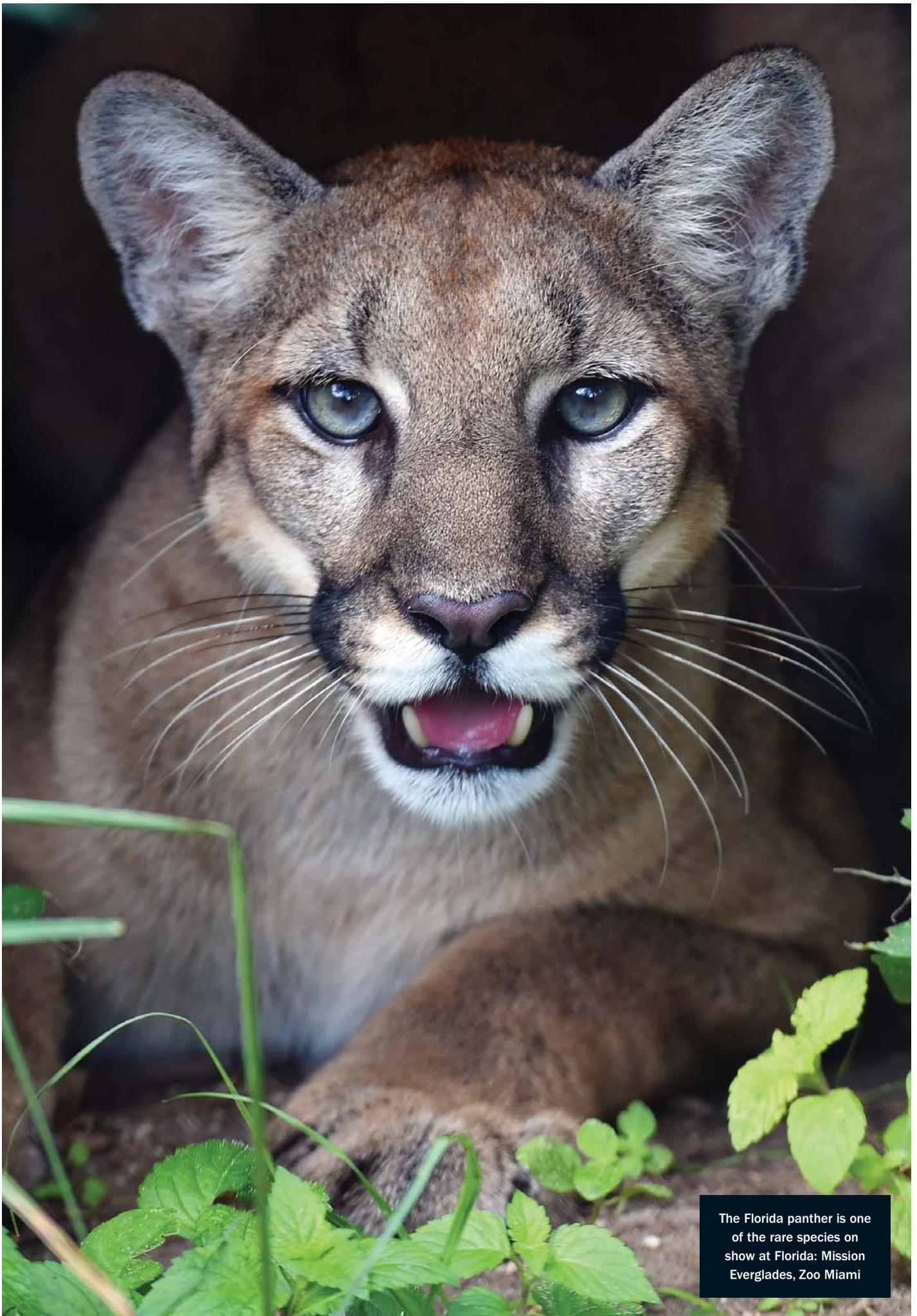
Zoo Miami's Ron Magill, pictured with one of the attraction's Komodo dragons

ALL PHOTOS: RON MAGILL



Children in the croc tube (left); viewing the bears (above); crossing the rope bridge above the alligators





The Florida panther is one of the rare species on show at Florida: Mission Everglades, Zoo Miami



Mission Everglades exhibits include (clockwise from top left) otters, wood ducks, alligators and bald eagles



► lake, where they see a variety of indigenous birds such as blue jays, red-bellied wood peckers, pelicans, ibis and herons. Next visitors can enjoy the river otter exhibit and the crocodile exhibit, both of which feature underwater transparent viewing tunnels, before going on to meet land mammals like the black bear and the endangered Florida panther – with live demonstrations between zookeepers and animals – and a variety of native reptiles and amphibians.

Lastly, visitors enter the boardwalk where they can take a rope bridge across

the alligator’s watery den, learn the story of the zoo’s rehabilitated bald eagles and climb the treehouse to spot the bobcat, racoon and grey fox. All this is complemented by the cypress-themed adventure playground and cafeteria and a new boat ride, the Lostman’s River Ride.

Threatened ecosystem

“The aim is not to satisfy one’s curiosity about the Florida Everglades, but rather to ignite a passion for it that will inspire the visitor to want to learn more and go out and experience the real Everglades for themselves,” says Magill, who started his career at the facility as a zookeeper in 1979. “The message is that all of these natural treasures are directly connected to us in providing not only beautiful wild areas for us to enjoy and visit but also being our main source of fresh drinking water and that to compromise any of these elements can threaten the entire ecosystem which could have catastrophic effects on our quality of life.”

Due to its many innovations and several “firsts” for the zoo, the project posed a fair number of challenges. Some elements had to be dropped in order to stay on budget, and the project was delayed several times due to the demands of the complex engineering and building needed.

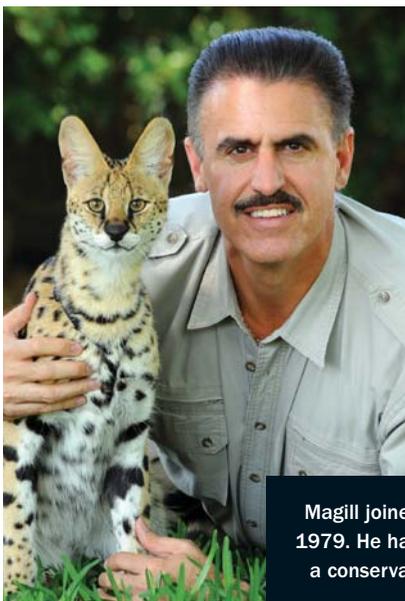
“The Life Systems Support elements alone were the largest ever done at the zoo and required a tremendous amount of planning and development,” says Magill.

Magill, who founded the Ron Magill Conservation Endowment to support conservation of the wild counterparts of the zoo’s exhibits, says Mission Everglades has received an overwhelmingly positive response in its first couple of months, the only complaints being that the Florida panther and bald eagle are fairly timid and difficult to see and that the boat ride, which costs \$5 per guest, has had mixed reviews.

“With the panther and bald eagle, it’s take time for them to become more comfortable. With the boat ride, we are currently exploring enhancing the ride as well as alternative pricing options.”

With this project, Zoo Miami is investing in its own surroundings to help preserve the Everglades long into the future.

Magill says: “We believe that most visitors will come to the natural conclusion that the Everglades is too beautiful and important to lose and will remember the impact that their visit made on them when it comes to making decisions in the future regarding the protection and wellbeing of this precious environment.”



Magill joined the zoo in 1979. He has also set up a conservation charity

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Derren Brown's 'reimagined' ghost train to up the scares for 2017

Derren Brown's new ride at Thorpe Park is about to take on a darker persona, with the attraction set to travel "to a horrifying new destination" in 2017.

Renamed Derren Brown's Ghost Train: Rise of the Demon, officials at Merlin have promised a "new deeper, darker, more intense journey" for the dark ride, which merges grand illusion, live action, virtual reality, special effects and physical movement to create an all-new experience, reimagining the ghost train concept for the 21st century.

The Ghost Train, which opened last year, was built for purpose to introduce new journeys over time, meaning it can be continually tweaked and updated to offer a new guest experience. Merlin's creative team used the ride's debut year to learn about the attraction's operations, identifying how to heighten the realism of the VR experience via leveraging the behaviour of guests on the ride.

In upping the fear and enhancing the ghost train experience, Derren Brown,



Thorpe Park gave Brown a brief of 'no boundaries to fear' for the 2017 version of the ride

Merlin Magic Making and Figment Productions have worked together to explore the VR filmmaking field. With the ride already installed, a camera crew was able to shoot new footage on the ride

during the park's off-season, with footage live-streamed to a VR headset, allowing the director and producers to monitor performances from outside the train.

More: http://lei.sr?a=E5J8d_A

Elon Musk plans 2018 trip to the Moon and back for two intrepid space tourists

The space tourism race is well underway, after SpaceX CEO Elon Musk revealed two customers will be going on a flight around the moon as soon as 2018.

The wealthy pair will spend a reported US\$70m (€66m, £56m) on the trip, with the anonymous individuals soon to begin training for the endeavour.

The journey will cover 400,000m (644,000km) and will take a week to complete, with the pair "slingshotted" around the moon and then

returned to Earth. According to Musk, the mission would be completed on autopilot.

"Like the Apollo astronauts before them, these individuals will travel into space carrying the hopes and dreams of all humankind, driven by the universal human spirit of exploration," said Musk. "We expect



Elon Musk wants to send paying tourists into space

to conduct health and fitness tests, as well as begin initial training, later this year."

SpaceX is the biggest competitor to Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic, with both companies in competition to capitalise on the potentially super-lucrative space tourism industry.

More: http://lei.sr?a=N7q7A_A



Parks could come to China and Spain

Puy du Fou set to open three new parks by 2027

Nicolas de Villiers, president of Puy du Fou, has announced plans to accelerate the company's growth outside France, with three new openings by 2027.

The first will be in Toledo, Spain, with an investment of €140m (US\$147.7m, £120m) to create a park dedicated to the history of the country.

Discussions are also underway for a park in China, with the aim of opening a Puy du Fou park in the country by 2025.

A third park with a yet-to-be determined location could open in either China or Europe by 2027.

More: http://lei.sr?a=K9P2E_A



Hype will be the park's sixth coaster when it opens in April

Särkänniemi teases 'Hype' rollercoaster to debut in April

One of Finland's largest theme parks has announced plans to bring Premier Rides' Sky Rocket II steel rollercoaster to the park as one of its signature new attractions.

The ride, which first appeared at Six Flags Discovery Kingdom under Superman branding, will now come to Särkänniemi in Tampere as "Hype".

Reaching heights of nearly 150ft (45.8m) and speeds of up to 62mph (100kmph), the ride will be the park's tallest and fastest, and second-tallest and third-fastest coaster in the country when it opens on 29 April.

Hype will be the park's sixth coaster, opening in 2017 ahead of SeaWorld San Diego's own version - Electric Eel - which launches in 2018.



Bowie joined Electrosonic's London headquarters in 1987

Electrosonic CEO Jim Bowie steps down after 30 years

Jim Bowie is to step down from Electrosonic after 30 years at the company.

Bowie will cease his role as CEO of the AV powerhouse - which has brought some of the attractions industry's biggest shows, rides and exhibitions to life - in June this year.

Bowie's replacement has not been appointed, but executive chairman of the board Steve

Leyland will take the reins in the interim.

Bowie, who joined Electrosonic as an engineer in 1987, will stay on as senior adviser to the board.

"We're coming off an exceptional year in 2016, with a great backlog for 2017," said Bowie. "I'm looking forward to seeing what the team will achieve in this next chapter."



Copper is a powerful antimicrobial that can kill germs

Fantasilandia installs anti-bacterial surfaces

Fantasilandia in Santiago, Chile has replaced its most used and touched surfaces with antimicrobial copper.

Fantasilandia collaborated with Procobre for the installation, which included new copper turnstile bars at the entrance to, and throughout the park, and grab rails on the Tren Minero rollercoaster, one of its most popular attractions.

Copper was selected to reduce the spread of disease, as it is a powerful antimicrobial that can kill germs, including influenza A, E.coli, norovirus and MRSA.

Gerardo Arteaga, general manager at Fantasilandia, said: "We wanted to provide extra protection so the only thing our visitors take away with them are happy memories."



NSC Creative unveils We Are Stars, an immersive VR film

NSC Creative launches a new VR experience

Immersive production studio NSC Creative has created *We Are Stars*, an immersive science documentary available for virtual reality (VR) headsets.

We Are Stars is the first NSC film available in VR format and the third film in the NSC 'We Are...' series, following on from its previous dome theatre films *We Are Astronomers* and *We Are Aliens*.

The film features narration by Andy Serkis, and takes viewers on a 13.8 billion year journey through the universe.

Made in collaboration with leading scientists, cosmologists and astrophysicists, among others, *We Are Stars* aims to present humanity's current understanding of the universe, and answer the question: Where did it all come from?



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We are currently seeking an experienced Project Manager to be responsible for the overall direction, coordination, implementation, execution, control and completion of projects ensuring compliance with company strategy, commitments and goals.

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They must also ensure adherence to Simworx Quality Procedures and Health and Safety at all times.

The role will evolve travel both in the UK and abroad on company business possibly at short notice.

The successful candidate will have proven working experience in a project based role with a solid technical background and understanding or hands-on experience in the delivery of mechanical and electronic systems. It be beneficial if they also had working experience of the theme park industry.

They will come from a great educational background, preferably in the fields of computer science or engineering for technical project managers. An AMP / PRINCE II certification would be beneficial.

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The Site Installations Supervisor must have recognised qualifications in one or more of the below disciplines: Mechanical Engineering/ Maintenance, Electronics and Electrical Engineering, Construction Management, Site Health & Safety.

They will have experience of providing engineering field installation services for electrical and mechanical motion systems, be able to understand and work from site installation plans and have excellent oral and written communication skills.

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For more details on the above jobs visit www.am2.jobs

Vancouver Aquarium set to phase out beluga programme over next 12 years

Vancouver Aquarium has outlined significant expansion plans for the next 12 years, including the eventual phasing out of its captive beluga programme.

The aquarium was left reeling last November when two of its whales died in quick succession, with Aurora and Qila dying days apart.

As part of the CA\$100m (US\$76.1m, €72.2m, £61.3m) expansion, the aquarium is building a larger enclosure for its Arctic beluga habitat, with a new water filtration system and improved security measures.

“The aquarium has announced a new conservation programme centred on a small group of



Aurora was one of two whales to die at the aquarium

non-breeding belugas that will be brought back to Vancouver from peer accredited institutions to participate in an expanded Marine Mammal Research Programme,” said the aquarium in a statement.

“By the end of 2029, the aquarium intends to discontinue its display and this important on-site conservation research programme will come to an end.”

More: http://lei.sr?a=J3Y4q_A

Japan’s government targets national parks as next big tourism draw

Japan’s Environment Ministry wants to capitalise on the country’s tourism boom, unveiling plans to draw 10 million overseas visitors to its national parks on an annual basis by 2020.

According to the Japan National Tourist Organisation (JNTO), the estimated number of international travelers to Japan in 2016 reached 24 million – a 21.8 per cent increase on 2015’s figures and the highest numbers since JNTO started its records in 1964.

For Japan’s 33 national parks, overseas visitors totalled 4,902,000 in 2015 and 5,457,000 in 2016, with the ambitious project aiming to double figures in four years.



Fuji-Hakone-Izu drew 2.6 million foreign visitors last year

Eight parks have been initially selected for the project, which calls for training of tour guides, developing experience-oriented tour plans, opening new cafés and upgrading signs.

The eight parks will also work out a joint strategy for foreign tourists, with the remaining 25 national parks then using that information to apply the same strategy.

More: http://lei.sr?a=g7G9H_A

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