



# 2009 PRESS KIT

## **WILD ADVENTURES**

*Wild Adventures began its first full operating season under the ownership of Herschend Family Entertainment in 2008. HFE is a company dedicated to "creating memories worth repeating" for families with unique and highly-themed entertainment and brings this dedication to Wild Adventures.*

Wild Adventures got its start as a weekend horse farm for Kent & Dawn Buescher in the early 1990's and later evolved into Valdosta's first petting zoo. In 1994, the family opened Liberty Farms and expanded their collection of animals as well as adding a playground and entertainment venue. The full-fledged amusement park opened in 1996 with free concerts and park admission and Wild Adventures was born shortly after.

In 2002, the park included Splash Island Water Park and a family adventure area with miniature golf and a go-kart track. Over the next two years the plan was put into motion, creating an unparalleled family theme park for the region.

Due to setbacks, the park was sold to Herschend Family Entertainment in 2007. Herschend Family Entertainment (HFE) took over at the end of September 2007 and promised a bright future for the park.

Today, Wild Adventures Theme Park is the premiere family destination in the region. With hundreds of animals, over 50 rides and big name entertainment, this is a park families visit over and over again.

Plans for 2009 include a renovated water park to provide a more family-oriented themed water experience. Included in the water park plans is the opening of Wahee Cyclone, a giant water slide. In the future, Wild Adventures will provide more festival events and opportunities for families, to create memories with repeating.

## **Herschend Family Entertainment Corporation (HFE)**

HFE took root in 1950, when Hugo and Mary Herschend acquired a long-term lease on Marvel Cave near Branson, Missouri. They brought their teenaged sons, Jack and Peter, from the Chicago area to operate the attraction. Hugo and Mary bought additional land surrounding the cave and began building the cave's business. Hugo died in 1955, and Peter left college for a year to help Mary operate the cave. When Jack was released from the Marines in 1956 and returned to help, Peter completed college and then entered the Army.



In 1960, the Herschends and 17 staff members opened a small 1880s themed village on the cave's grounds as a diversion for people waiting to take a cave tour. There was no advertising budget but press agent Don Richardson conceived the idea of giving silver dollars as change. The coins attracted attention and Silver Dollar City benefited greatly from the word-of-mouth advertising.

Silver Dollar City added craftsmen and attractions, and Peter Herschend returned from the Army to throw his considerable energy into the business. The first year, Silver Dollar City drew 125,000 visitors, four times the number that toured the cave. The Herschends discovered that they were now in the theme park business, Peter said. In 1976, the Herschends bought Gold Rush Junction Park in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. They spent about \$1 million in improvements and reopened the park as Silver Dollar City, Tennessee.

To provide more objective direction for the theme parks, the Silver Dollar City Corporation was formed in the late 1970s when Jack and Peter chose a management-by-objectives system with a four-member board of directors. In 1980, White Water water park was opened in Branson.

The Herschends formed a partnership with country music legend Dolly Parton in 1986. Silver Dollar City, Tennessee, was renamed Dollywood.

The Dollywood Corporation opened its first Dixie Stampede, a dinner attraction featuring horses, music, games and entertainment, in 1988 in Pigeon Forge. Dixie Stampede was soon established at other locations: Myrtle Beach in 1992, and Branson in 1995.

In 1998, the Corporation entered a long-term lease with the State of Georgia to manage the historical attraction, Stone Mountain Park, near Atlanta.

In 2001, the Herschends partnered with Dolly Parton to open Dolly's Splash Country water park in Pigeon Forge.

In 2004, HFE purchased Ride The Ducks International (RTDI) with amphibious tour operations now in four U.S. cities. The purchase followed three years in partnership identifying potential to build an international leadership position. The RTDI fleet includes operations in Branson, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and is also an attraction inside Stone Mountain Park.

In 2007, Herschend Family Entertainment purchased *Wild Adventures Theme Park* in Valdosta, Georgia, a 166-acre park with 100 rides and attractions including nine roller coasters, hundreds of animals and a water park. HFE also acquired two aquariums; Newport Aquarium (Newport, Kentucky across the river from downtown Cincinnati) and Adventure Aquarium (Camden, NJ across the river from downtown Philadelphia).



## **WHAT'S NEW**

*Discover even more family adventures than before in 2009, including the park's first new water ride in many years, the Wahee Cyclone and a revamped water park. More festivals throughout the year mean more memory making for you and the family!*

**Wahee Cyclone** - Be careful not to get swept away on this water ride of monstrous proportions. Experience the Wahee Cyclone on four-person tubes, splashing and swaying in a 45 – foot funnel. Hold on tight or you might wipe out as your propelled out into a pool of water. The only thing bigger than the ride is the fun! The Wahee Cyclone is set to open on March 28<sup>th</sup>.

**All-New Water Park** - The water park is undergoing a complete transformation to include more water, more excitement, and more thrills! Enter a Polynesian water world and take part in new aloha experiences such as themed dining, larger lockers and changing accommodations and more. Step out of Georgia with your family and enter a tropical world this Spring.

**Imagine** – A new musical comedy for the entire family! Follow Lucy into the forest where she discovers a variety of characters on her path to self discovery. The show is full of musical performances with fun songs including, "I Think We're Alone Now," "Imagine," and "Joy to the World." Be prepared to participate in this song and dance theatrical show.

**Lorikeet Landing** – Enter the environment of a lorikeet and get up close to these brightly colored birds. Make friends with the different varieties of birds in the landing and they may even land on your shoulder! Guests can feed the lorikeets and parakeets nectar or simply marvel in the beauty of these flying creatures. Be sure to check out the other animals in this interactive animal experience.

**Saddle Up Pony Rides** – Hop on a pony and gallop around, this new attraction is definitely all-interactive! Catch a ride on one of our friendly ponies and travel down a path to discovery, right here in the park! This attraction is included with park admission.

**Festivals** - *Kidzpalooza* kicks off the summer and the young *and* young-at-heart will delight in all the new fun and activities in store for them. An all-new thrilling theme will delight small and big kids alike! *BBQ and Bluegrass* will fill your ears with music and your appetite with the best barbecue in the South. BBQ always tastes better with Bluegrass!

For more information on the upcoming events and new additions to Wild Adventures Theme Park, please call 229-219-7080 or visit [www.wildadventures.com](http://www.wildadventures.com).



## **CONCERTS**

*Let us entertain you! 2009 will be one of the best years of live entertainment at Wild Adventures. The All-Star Amphitheater will be host to big names in entertainment. Animals always take the stage and this year will be no different. Expect more animal interactions throughout the park as well as more exciting animal shows. It's entertainment gone wild!*

Keith Urban will kick off the concert season on Saturday, March 14. Vince Gill and Amy Grant will perform together at the park Saturday, April 18. Contemporary Christian artist Chris Tomlin will appear at Wild Adventures Saturday, July 18, 2009. Rock star legend Bret Michaels comes to entertain the crowd Saturday, October 10. These are just a few of the big names in entertainment to visit the park this year!

## **DAILY SHOWS**

**Amazing Cats-** Tigers have symbolized beauty, power and fierceness for over 5,000 years. They are the largest of the big cats and one of nature's fiercest predators. Watch in awe as you meet the softer and sometimes funny side of these ferocious beasts as they demonstrate a series of tricks.

**Creature Feature-** Did you know that the only way to tell the gender of a Macaw is to have a blood test performed? Or that a millipede doesn't actually have a thousand legs? If you'd like to learn more and get a close-up look at some critters from around the world, then be front row and center for this show. Our animal handlers will showcase various mammals, reptiles, birds, insects and arachnids from the far corners of the earth.

**North American Predators-** It's cougars and wolves and bears—oh my! Discover some of the fiercest predators found on this continent and get to know their softer side as well.

**Imagine** – A new musical comedy for the entire family! Follow Lucy into the forest where she discovers a variety of characters on her path to self discovery. The show is full of musical performances with fun songs including, "I Think We're Alone Now," "Imagine," and "Joy to the World." Be prepared to participate in this song and dance theatrical show.



## RIDES

*Whether you are a roller coaster enthusiast or like to spin, twirl and swirl, Wild Adventures has a thrilling ride for everyone! There are more than 50 rides to excite the small adventure to the veteran thrill seeker.*

## COASTERS

**Boomerang** - It's out and back for a taste of Aussie excitement on this steel coaster! Passengers are hauled backwards up the lift hill and then launched into an over 50 mph careening blast through corkscrew inversions and hills, before coming to a halt high on a hill. Then it's the same screaming journey all over again...but backwards!

**Cheetah** - Prowling the African Pridelands of Wild Adventures, The Cheetah looks to take unsuspecting victims on a wild chase. This beast is the king of our jungle, standing at 90 feet tall and 3,000 feet long, racing across the land at more than 50 mph. Passengers will thrill with this wooden coaster, and its zero "g's," great air time and classic figure-eight ending.

**Hangman** - It sits, towering over the Wild West, looking for those with the fortitude to brave its daring loops. Hangman is aptly named, as passengers sit with feet dangling while this steel beast races at speeds of 65 mph through 7 dizzying inversions and plenty of twists and turns.

**Bug Out** - This "wild mouse" style coaster packs a great punch with its hairpin turns and sudden hills. Individual cars give each passenger the "front car" feeling as they race along a track that seemingly disappears before taking sudden 180-degree turns at more than 50 feet in the air!

**Swamp Thing** - From the murky depths of the South Georgia swamp comes...Swamp Thing!! Thrill with this suspended family coaster fun as you swoop and soar over the Swamp Area. Watch out for your toes though, as this coaster whisks you perilously close to our fearsome gators. No retrieving articles on this ride! Swamp Thing is the perfect coaster for the whole family.

**Ant Farm Express** - Scurrying over the track like busy little ants, this junior coaster is a great ride to make little ones feel like they're big kids! Of course, it works well for the "big kids" who want to feel like they're little too!

**Gold Rush** - Park prospectors are going crazy over Wild Adventures' Gold Rush! Just high and fast enough to be thrilling for the less-seasoned passengers, Gold Rush delivers dips and turns with just the right intensity for a smooth ride in the Wild West.

**Fiesta Express** - Grab your party hats and join the fiesta! This miniature mouse coaster features wee hair pin turns sure to elicit screams of delight and giggles of joy.



## THRILL RIDES

**Geronimo Skycoaster** (pay-extra attraction) - The name says it all! One to three passengers are fitted with a special harness, connected to a cable and then hoisted 180 feet in the air.

Once the ripcord is pulled, look out! "Geronimo!" it is, as riders rush toward the earth at dizzying speeds, only to have the cable play out in a pendulum motion that is part sky-diving, part hang-gliding.

**Double Shot** - Blast off into excitement times two! Double Shot air launches passengers on a vertical tower 70 feet in the air. Suddenly, the bottom drops out and the ride plummets toward the earth...but it ain't over yet! It's back up again to repeat the experience over and over!

**Pharaoh's Fury** - Walking like an Egyptian was never this fun! Face the fury of the Pharaoh, an Egyptian Barge determined to take it's passengers on a wild ride. Feel the rush of 80 mph wind in your hair as you swing, defying gravity as you catapult back and forth until you're sure you can't go any higher—but you do!

**Aviator** - Charter your ride to excitement! Aviator lifts passengers 100 feet in the air and swings them in giant circles in the sky. Soar and swoop using the passenger controls for a thrilling ride in the wild, blue yonder!

**Yo-Yo** - "It don't mean a thing if you ain't got that swing!" And boy have we got the swing for you! Whirl through the air 25 feet above the ground in an exhilarating circular pattern. Add your own twists and turns in the individual seats for your own unique ride.

**Sidewinder** - Strap in your seats, face-to-face with your friends, and then hang on! Sidewinder tilts and spins in a dizzying frenzy while tipped at a thrilling 40-degree angle! Passengers bobble and wobble in circles of spinning fun!

**Swingin' Safari** - It's time to rock & roll! Hop aboard this waving spin ride for a thrilling, fast-paced race around the track, set to the hottest tunes on the radio!

**The Rattler**- It's a "Rattler" round-up at Wild Adventures! For those who dare, "The Rattler" sends passengers soaring more than six stories in the air, flipping them almost upside down as it swings through its 240 degree arc. And if that's not enough excitement, the giant pendulum spins as it swings!

## WATER RIDES

**Blackfoot Falls** - Legend has it that a mysterious rushing water fall ride exists in the Wild West area of the park. Oh, folks don't know what they're getting into when they board that boat- it starts out mighty peaceful-like. But boy howdy! The locals know it's so powerful a ride, that even innocent bystanders are attacked by a wave of water when the boat plunges 50 feet into a gigantic pool of water!



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**Tasmanian River Rapids** - Climb aboard mate and dare to brave the rushing rapids of this river ride as the raft careens down a wave and waterfall filled path! Hang on tight as a whirlpool threatens to suck you under before you shoot off down-stream

**Frontier Flume** - Little ones will love grabbing a log flume and shooting down this miniature version of Blackfoot Falls. A gentle splash will greet riders as they wash around the gully into a wave of fun!

## **FAMILY FUN**

**Adventure Quest Raceway** (pay-extra attraction) - NASCAR, watch out! Adventure Quest Raceway is here, so bring on the green flag! Fill your need for speed on a twisting track with hairpin turns and loads of fun. Gas powered go-carts take you up to speeds of 15-20 miles per hour and of course, it's a race to the finish! The smaller racers can ride the junior track and play like the big kids!

**Adventure Golf** (pay-extra attraction) - It requires a steady hand and a watchful eye to navigate our 18-hole adventure golf course. Complete with sand traps and water hazards, this twisting, turning course offers up a few extra challenges, like a racing water fall!



## **ANIMALS**

*Animals take the center stage at Wild Adventures in 2009, as a tribute to the park's origins as a petting zoo. From the new greeters at the front gate to all new animal shows and encounters, guests will be invited to make a personal connection with the parks feathered, scaly and furry friends. Scattered throughout the park in natural habitats, hundreds of wild animals are ready to entertain our guests.*

**Lorikeet Landing** – Immerse yourself into a bird's paradise when you enter this tropical aviary where lorikeets, parakeets, tortoises and other exotic animals live together. You will enjoy this up close experience with colorful, friendly birds. Watch out! They may even land on your shoulder to relax.

**Safari Train Ride**- Trek through the plains of the African Pridelands on the Safari Train and see dozens of African deer, antelope and more in a special "free roam" area, where the animals are able to intermingle freely, much as they would in the wild. The train passes through this area, leaving nothing between you and the wildlife. The ride will also take you past the giraffe, elephants, camels, zebras and a variety of other animals.

**The Boardwalk**- Take a peaceful walk along the boardwalk that runs through the Swamp Area at Wild Adventures. Stroll amongst dozens of colorful, chattering birds, scampering lemurs and other primates, a variety of deer species, a black bear habitat and, of course, our fearsome gators.

**Snake House**- If you dare, brave a trip through the Snake House, where you'll find more than a dozen exhibits of reptiles and snakes, including some brilliantly-colored species found in the tropics and a magnificent King Cobra.

**Giraffe/Elephant Overlook**- A peaceful spot in the park to grab some shade and watch our elephants and giraffe at play. Daily feedings of the giraffe allow visitors to get an up-close and personal look at these gentle giants. All three of the elephants are females that have retired from one sort of show business or another. One even appeared in the live version of "The Jungle Book!"

**Furry Friends Petting Zoo**- Make new friends at the Furry Friends Petting Zoo! Say hello to miniature horses, chicks, baby rabbits and more little creatures in this special attraction for little ones and every member of the family.

**Australian Outback**- Visit with friends from down under, including kangaroos and wallabies! Located behind the Boomerang, you might even catch a glimpse of a baby joey in the springtime!

**African Pridelands**- Discover the king of the jungle, our majestic lion and his two lionesses, as well as fierce tigers. Don't be surprised to find the tigers lounging in their pond, as it is a favorite spot in the hot summers. Other friends such as monkeys, smaller cats and several species of exotic birds dwell in the Pridelands as well.



## **DINING & SHOPPING**

*Wild Adventures pulls out all the stops to make dining and shopping an adventure in itself. Pull up a chair at one of the indoor restaurants or just make a quick stop at one of the many snack stands for a wide variety of great food. And whether it's one of those forgotten "necessities" or a unique souvenir, you'll find it in the Wild Adventures' gift shops.*

**Safari Burgers** - Sit down in comfort and enjoy cheeseburgers, chicken sandwiches, Kid's Meals or cool, crisp salads.

**The Marketplace** - Looking for a caffeine or candy fix? Discover fresh-brewed Starbucks® coffee, along with soft-serve ice cream and candy.

**Mama's Pizzeria** - Pizza and hot wings are the specialty of the day and they're just like Mama makes! Bite into a hot cheesy slice of pizza and pair it with a fresh garden salad, breadsticks or wings.

**Jack-A-Roo's** - An amusement park favorite! Cooked fresh and served with a variety of toppings, these funnel cakes are one of the best treats in the park!

**Jungle Canteen** - Dig into fully-loaded foot-long hot dogs, nachos, pretzels, cotton candy, soft frozen lemonade and more!

**All-You-Care-to-Eat Concert Buffet** - Prepared especially for the concert crowd, this buffet features juicy fried chicken or hot dogs, cole slaw, baked beans, ice cream and drinks. (Served only on concert days.)

**Box Office** - Pick up a quick snack and go! Choose from Sno-Cones, pretzels, cotton candy, popcorn, candy apples and drinks.

**Doc Holliday's** - The Wild West has never tasted so good! Fresh-off-the-grill cheeseburgers and chicken sandwiches are paired with french fries, cookies and ice-cold soft drinks.

**Lonestar Family BBQ** - Pull up a chair and indulge in the best BBQ in the South! Choose from mouth-watering smoked chicken, succulent ribs or tender pulled pork BBQ. Add delicious sides and then top it off with a decadent dessert.

**Tumbleweeds** - Roll through your day like a tumbleweed with snacks on the go such as turkey legs, onion petals and corn dogs.

**Cantina** - It's south of the border flavor! Beef or chicken tacos, tornadoes, churros, nachos and ice-cold soft drinks.

**Dockside Chicken and Fish** - A taste of the waters! Seafarin' choices such as popcorn shrimp and chicken, fried fish and other tasty foods.



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**Fresh Corn Dog Company** - Bite into a fresh, hand-dipped foot-long corn dog served with fries or battered jumbo onion rings.

**Adventure Emporium** - Discover a wide variety of unique items for all ages, including clothing, jewelry and all things Wild Adventures!

**Kids Gone Wild** - This store offers up great stuff for the young and young-at-heart.

**Safari Outfitter's** - Hop off the Safari Train and pick up a souvenir of your trip at the Outfitter's.

**Blackbeard's Bazaar** - Located on the dock of the Grand Lagoon, the Bazaar is where pirates of all ages can find a veritable treasure trove of shopping.



## **SPLASH ISLAND WATER PARK**

*An oasis of refreshing adventure waits at Splash Island Water Park. Crash rolling waves or conquer the heights of the interactive water-play area. Zip down one of the many slides or simply float your cares away on a lazy river journey. It's your choice! For your convenience, Splash Island has changing rooms, showers and rental lockers. Complimentary life vests are available for the little ones, as well as daily tube rentals. Come on in; the water's fine! If the water thrills and paradise views make you hungry, check out Surfside Café or Splash Snacks for all of your favorites!*

## **WATER THRILLS**

**Polynesian Adventure-** Bold thrill seekers can conquer all four stories of "Polynesian Adventure," a gigantic play structure set right in the middle of a pool! Loaded with hundreds of interactive features, guests can climb platforms and rope ladders, delight in slippery slides, shoot water cannons and take a ride on a spinning water wheel. But watch out below; the 42-foot high Tikki Head will send more than 300 gallons of water cascading over bathers every few minutes!

**Paradise River-** Imagine yourself without a care in the world, relaxed and floating down crystal-clear waters under the blue sky and bright sun. It's right there waiting for you in the "Paradise River," more than 1,000 feet of lazy bends and curves. So grab a tube and prepare to have fun!

**Catchawave Bay- Surf's Up!** It's the battle cry of the wave pool as the daring brave the surf of Catchawave Bay. Crash a four-footer or bob on the waves in an inner tube as the surf rolls in the 20,000 square-foot pool. Periods of calm punctuate the surging waves, allowing the less adventurous bathers to splash in the pool. Tubes are available but not necessary to enjoy Catchawave Bay.

**Bonzai Pipeline-** Catch the storm of excitement on the Bonzai Pipeline! Only those brave of heart will climb to the top of the 60-foot platform and choose a route to the earth below. Two lightning-fast speed slides send bathers slipping and sliding faster than you can say "water wedgie," as you experience the heart stopping drop on the blue slide or take a couple dips down the green slide. Then, hop back up and take on the body-pinning force of the twisting and turning tube slide.

**Kalani Blasters-** Why have just one, when two gives you twice as much fun? Take your choice of two slides and hop on your tube for more than four stories of twisting and turning fun before splashing into the pool below. And when you're done, climb back up and try the other one! Tubes are provided for the slide and daily rental tubes can be used as well.

**Sea Turtle Cove-** We haven't forgotten the littlest of fishes! "Sea Turtle Cove" serves up much gentler water fun with pop jets, bubblers and just-the-right-size slides, cleverly disguised as playful fish. It's a great way to make the introduction to water park fun!



**Wahee Cyclone** – The only thing bigger than this super charged ride, is the fun! The newest addition to Splash Island Water Park is the Wahee Cyclone, standing 48-feet tall. This giant funnel sends four riders in a cloverleaf-like raft plummeting through complete darkness before free-falling into a huge funnel. Inside the funnel, guests will be rocketed up one side and down the other until they are deposited through the end of the funnel.

## **DINING**

**Surfside Cafe**- Take a break from the surf and sun with a cheeseburger in paradise, or other snack favorites such as pizza, chicken sandwiches, salads, fries and smoothies!

**Splash Snacks** – In the mood for something cold? Enjoy a glass of cold Lemonade or sip on a made to order Smoothie.

## **SHOPPING**

**Wave Gear** - Find unique items for your water park experience! Bathing Suits and sandals, as well as the park essentials: sunglasses, water-proof disposable cameras and sunscreen.



## **DAILY ADMISSION PRICES (PER PERSON)**

Admission prices include most rides, Splash Island water park, animal exhibits, daily shows, concerts, special events and a Second Day free\*. Parking is additional.

### **Regular (ages 10-54)**

\$45, plus tax

### **Junior/Senior (ages 3-9 and 55+)**

\$40, plus tax (age 2 and under is free)

\*Second day free tickets are available with any standard Regular, Jr/Sr or Group one-day admission. Second day tickets are non-transferable and must be used the next consecutive operating day of the first day's visit. Second day free tickets are not available for school group, media complimentary or manager complimentary tickets.

## **2009 PASSPORTS**

### **Passport - \$69, plus tax, ages 3 and up**

The Passport 2009 offers unlimited admissions to Wild Adventures through December 31, 2009, including Splash Island Water Park, the rides, animals, shows, concerts, and festivals. A new benefit this year is early entrance to the park on concert days and select Saturdays in the summer. Additionally, pass-holders will enjoy 50% admission discounts when visiting other Herschend Family Entertainment properties, including Dollywood and Dollywood's Splash Country in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, Stone Mountain Park in Atlanta, Georgia and Silver Dollar City, Celebration City and White Water in Branson, Missouri.

### **Gold Passport - \$89, plus tax, ages 3 and up**

Upgrade to the Gold Passport and receive all the benefits of the Passport 2009, as well as free parking, free Adventure Golf and go-karts, plus 10% off food and merchandise.

### **Parking**

Cars; motorcycles; vans; pick-ups	\$7 per day
R.V.'s (no hook-ups or overnight parking)	\$9 per day
Charter buses/school buses	Free

### **Discounts**

AAA Discount	10% off Regular Admission (with AAA card)
Military	\$3 off Regular Admission (with military ID)

### **Group Rates (rates are per person)**

Wild Adventures is the perfect place to host your next corporate picnic, church outing, family reunion or other group function. With discounted admission rates and a variety of meal options, your next group get-together will be spectacular. Must be paid admissions; Passports or other admission tickets not counted toward group rate. To plan your group outing, contact Group Sales.



### **School Group Rates**

We've made your next field trip easy! Visit our website for downloadable lessons written to state standards, including plans, worksheets and onsite activities for pre-school, primary and secondary grade levels. Then, visit the park to complete a great lesson in biology! To plan your school group outing, contact Group Sales.

### **Group Meal Options**

Custom catering is available with indoor banquet rooms or outside pavilions. Call Group Sales for more information. The park also offers group meal vouchers for greater flexibility. Meal tickets must be purchased with group admission tickets.

Contact Group Sales at 1-800-808-0872  
for more information and to make reservations.