

NEWS RELEASE

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2008 SEASON BEGINS AT GHOST TOWN IN THE SKY

Maggie Valley, NC – Ghost Town in the Sky, North Carolina's mountain top family theme park, will open for the 2008 season on Friday, May 2. Ghost Town is famous for its Wild-West theme, live-action shows and beautiful setting on top of Buck Mountain, which is elevated over 4000 feet. The park is nestled at the foot of the Great Smoky Mountains and is 4 miles east of the Blue Ridge Parkway's Milepost 255 in Maggie Valley. Maggie Valley is 14 miles east of Cherokee and 34 miles west of Asheville.

A day at Ghost Town starts by taking a twenty-minute chairlift ride with 75-degree inclines up the side of a mountain. The multi-level, 90-acre park features live action shows, rides, crafts and live music. Musical guest performances, along with a series of cartoon and comic book characters, have been scheduled throughout the season. A complete entertainment and special events schedule can be found on <http://ghosttowninthesky.com/Special/upcomingEvents.html>.

Ghost Town originally opened on June 11, 1961 and remained opened until 2002. The landmark re-opened for the first time in five years under new ownership in 2007 and has been a vacation destination for decades.

Greater Variety of Entertainment for This Season

New in 2008 is American Music Hall which will hold live musical performances and daily entertainment shows. The new Hall is 7000 square feet and seats over 500 guests featuring country bands to legendary gospel singing groups.

Ghost Town gunfights are being created and staged by Robert Bradley, who has performed at Ghost Town for forty-five years. "We have added explosive new scenes and three different gunfight shows daily," said Bradley.

"Our shows, gunfights and performances are being offered in such a way that all of our guests can wind their way around the park and enjoy all of it, and they can join us again on the very next day and be thrilled by a completely different series of shows and performances," states John Buccafusco, Ghost Town's Entertainment Director.

New for children this year is a gem-mining attraction where kids can find up to twelve different gem stones, and gold-panning attraction. Enjoyed by all ages will be the Scenic Train which circles Ghost Town's Wild West Main Street.

Ghost Town will also host live wolf demonstrations five days a week. Local and Naturalist Robert Gudger will enlighten park guests about how man and wildlife in the mountains can co-exist.

Sharing the spotlight with Gudger will be Rick Byrd and his Native American Dance Team presenting the pageantry and color of their authentic dances.

Ghost Town is re-vamping the existing food options and will also open two more food venues, the Timberwolf Café and the Iron Horse Grill. The Timberwolf Café is inside the American Music Hall. Guests can enjoy a full-service lunch while also enjoying the live entertainment.

*The **Cliffhanger** Will Open In June*

The highly anticipated re-opening of The Cliffhanger Rollercoaster, located *literally* on the side of Buck Mountain, is scheduled to open this June. Since originally built in 1985 there have been improvements in coaster equipment and materials as well as improved safety standards which have impacted the originally planned opening of the rollercoaster last year.

The Cliffhanger has several qualities that set it apart and makes this a unique experience. It has a top speed of roughly 56 miles per hour. As a rider leaves the terminal, the illusion is given that you are going to fall off the mountain. An exciting loop generates three g-forces of pressure as riders travel 2,063 feet along a fun-filled ride.

The cars alone are very uniquely engineered, creating an open atmosphere to enjoy the views. "There are only a handful of loop coasters in the world that exist without a shoulder harness restraint," states Larry Moyers of Rotational Motion. The cars have no side panels either.

Aside from the cars on the train, the Cliffhanger is so unique because the station (where guests enter and exit the ride) is built higher than the loop. Riders experience the loop within 7 seconds of beginning the ride! With typical coasters, you experience the lift at the beginning to travel to the coaster's highest point; The Cliffhanger, the terminal is at the highest point, and the lift is at the end of the ride. Another example that sets the Cliffhanger apart is the distinctive and beautiful setting that surrounds the coaster.

In keeping with the tradition of the park, Ghost Town in the Sky's new ownership group had a daunting task to create a safe environment for the guests. The goal was to keep the uniqueness and tradition of the Red Devil while bringing the coaster to new safety standards by adding components. An outside company, Rotational Motion, had the difficult task of re-designing and updating the coaster. Moyers states that "over 10,000 man hours have been put into the manufacturing of the cars." Kevin Bailey, General Manager of Ghost Town states, "This is an engineering feat. We have had four different engineering companies and three outside contracted crews in addition to our own construction crew during such a tedious process."

The Cliffhanger will boast a magnetic brake system to assist the existing air brakes and to improve rider comfort. The new seats will utilize ergonomic padded lap bars and retractable seatbelts which were specially engineered and manufactured for the coaster. "The seatbelts were created to have a triple back up system", Moyer states, "and the lap bar system has less than ½ inch of travel for a secure and comfortable fit." Other new features include polyurethane wheels for a smoother ride and synthetic lubricants instead of petroleum based will be used for less friction and a better ride.

In addition to the improved safety standards at Ghost Town, the park offers an affordable vacation or getaway. Currently a season pass, which gives passholders unlimited access to Ghost Town each day that it's open to the public, is on sale for the same price as two admission tickets. Coupons for daily admission are being distributed throughout the season by third-party partners, such as Kentucky Fried Chicken, Taco Bell and Food Lion, throughout the Southeast as well as print advertising and direct mail distributed throughout the Eastern United States. "We want to be affordable and give a good value. With the rising cost of gas and a slow economy, coupons will help encourage folks to choose Ghost Town as

their entertainment destination,” says Hank Woodburn, founding partner of the new ownership group that took over the park in 2006.

The original owner, R.B. Coburn, passed away recently on April 1, and Ghost Town is celebrating his life and his accomplishments of making Maggie Valley a tourist destination by establishing Founders Day each year on June 11.

Daily admission tickets and season passes are available at www.ghosttowninthesky.com or at the ticket gate located at the entrance to Ghost Town.

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