



IAAPA Convention Day 2: New Florida theme park attractions, underwater cars and more



Wednesday was the second day of the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions annual convention in Orlando.

The expo features just about everything the world of theme and amusement parks has to offer — including over 1,000 vendors providing entertainment and presenting the future of amusement attractions.

One feature on Day 2 was a preview of the new water house coming to Busch Gardens in Tampa called "Castaway Falls." The attraction will feature four slides, three buckets and a family-friendly theme.

"We want to make sure we don't forget about the kids in the middle. We don't forget about the kids who are too old for the kids' rides but not old enough for the adult rides. We want the whole family to come, we want everyone to play together," said Connor Carr, of Busch Gardens.



Animated scenes will surround audience members at Lonely Dog Immersive Experience, which is set to open soon on International Drive. DEWAYNE BEVIL/ORLANDO SENTINEL/PHOTOS

The Lonely Dog experience

New attraction to immerse visitors into whimsical world

By Dewayne Bevil
Orlando Sentinel

Lonely Dog has traveled from paintings in New Zealand and through a 300-page novel to arrive at a fresh attraction coming soon to Orlando's International Drive. The Lonely Dog Immersive Experience is expected to open late this month. Its centerpiece is a theater setting with dozens of projectors pointed at walls in multiple directions, down to and including the floor.

"It's a jaw-dropping experience to walk in," said Cliff Dew, producer. "You go into a movie theater, there's one projector and one screen. You go into our space and there are 28 projectors, and you're not walking in it — you're in it. You're in the show. You've become, viscerally, part of the



The experience includes selfie spots where audience members can put themselves on the title character's porch as well as Celia Crane's performance area.

whole experience." The imagery in the experience comes from paintings by Ivan Clarke, a New Zealand-based artist. His original Lonely Dog piece featured a fully clothed, standing canine watching a departing ship as darkness falls.

Over the years, his whimsical series expanded to 200 works to portray a land filled with dog and cat characters. Eventually, Clarke and writer Stu Duvall created a "Lonely Dog" novel that expanded those characters' world. The new Orlando attraction is an animated 30-minute adaptation of that book. "It's a great story about a society of cats and dogs where the cats rule, and dogs are the underlings. They're not at war with each other, but they're kind of on opposite sides," said Rob Pearman, producer. "And it's music-based. The cats like opera, jazz and classical, softer music... where dogs like more dirty rock 'n' roll and blues." Pearman said, although the "Lonely Dog" book included some lyrics, Geoff Pearlman, the producer's brother, was brought in to compose complete songs.

Embassy cleared in under 1 hour

Biden praises airlift of dozens of staffers from Sudan capital

By Matthew Lee, Tara Copp and Asamer Madhani
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — U.S. special operations forces carried out a precarious evacuation of the U.S. Embassy in Sudan on Sunday, sweeping in and out of the capital with helicopters on the ground for less than an hour.

No shots were fired. With the final embassy employee out of Khartoum, the United States shuttered its diplomatic mission indefinitely. Remaining behind in the East African nation are thousands of private American citizens. U.S. officials said it would be too dangerous to carry out a broader evacuation operation. Battles between two rival Sudanese commanders had forced the closing of the main international airport and left roads out of the country in control of armed fighters. The skirmishes had killed more than 400 people. In a statement thanking U.S. troops, President Joe Biden said he was receiving reports from his team on efforts to assist remaining Americans in Sudan "to the extent possible." He also called for the end to "unconscionable" violence there. About 100 U.S. troops in three MH-47 helicopters carried out the operation. They airlifted all of 70 remaining U.S. employees from a landing zone at the embassy to an undisclosed location in Khartoum.

