

CAMPGROUND

INDUSTRY E-NEWS

**YOSEMITE IS EVACUATED
AS WILDFIRE BLANKETS
THE VALLEY IN SMOKE
& TEMPERATURES SOAR**

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Yosemite is evacuated as wildfire blankets the valley in smoke and temperatures soar



LEFT: Firefighters are battling to contain a huge wildfire just to the west of Yosemite that has threatened the park's forest and sent up smoke that obscured vistas of parkland

BELOW: Trees burn in Stanislaus National Forest, near Yosemite National Park, as part of a blaze that has killed one and injured two

YOSEMITE National Park has been evacuated as firefighters desperately attempt to control enormous wildfires in a heatwave which has seen temperatures soar to 120F.

Campsites and lodges emptied out after disappointed tourists were ordered to leave the heart of Yosemite by noon Wednesday.

Firefighters are battling to contain a huge wildfire just to the west of Yosemite that has threatened the park's forest and sent up smoke that obscured vistas of parkland.

Yosemite Valley will be closed until at least Sunday, along with a winding, mountainous, 20-mile (32-kilometer) stretch of California's State Route 41

that leads in, park spokesman Scott Gediman said.

At least a thousand campground and hotel bookings will be canceled - to say nothing of the impact on day visitors, park workers and small businesses along the highway, Gediman said. Rangers went to campsites one at a time to inform visitors of the closures. Hotels guests got phone calls and notes on their doors.

'This is the prime visitor season, so this wasn't an easy



decision to make,' Gediman said. 'This was purely for safety's sake.'

Officials were quick to point out that Yosemite wasn't under imminent danger from the Ferguson Fire. Authorities decided on the closure to allow crews to perform

protective measures such as burning away brush along roadways without having to deal with traffic in the park that welcomes 4 million visitors annually.

The last time the 7.5-mile-long (12-kilometer-long) valley was closed because of fire was 1990, he said.

Yosemite Valley is the centerpiece of the visitor experience, offering views of landmarks such as Half Dome, Sentinel Dome, Bridal Veil Fall, El Capitan and Yosemite Falls.

The glacial valley has been enveloped by a choking haze of smoke from the Ferguson Fire.

Visitors are advised to 'limit activity during the periods of poor air quality,' the park said in a statement. 'Some facilities and services are closed or



A helicopter gathers water from the Merced River to fight the Ferguson Fire along steep terrain behind the Redbud Lodge near El Portal along Highway 140 in Mariposa County, California

diminished.'

Over nearly two weeks, flames have churned through more than 57 square miles (148 square kilometers) of timber in steep terrain of the Sierra Nevada just west of the park. The fire was just 25 percent contained Tuesday.

Mandatory evacuations are in place in several communities while others have been told to get ready to leave if necessary.

More than 3,300 firefighters are working the fire, aided by 16 helicopters. One firefighter was killed July 14, and six others have been injured.

Heavy fire equipment operator Braden Varney, 36, died early Saturday on the fire line, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection said.

Varney was driving a bulldozer to create a gap in vegetation to keep the flames from extending into a

nearby community, according to Cal Fire Fire Chief Nancy Koerperich.

Rhonda Salisbury, CEO of Visit Yosemite/Madera County, said the regional visitors bureau has been relocating tourists statewide following the closure.

'People are heartbroken,' she said. 'Some want to ride it out for a few days and see if they can get back in the park.' Others want help finding places to stay away from Yosemite.

Gediman suggested valley visitors divert to Tuolumne Meadows, on Yosemite's northern edge, or to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks to the south.

'There are wonderful places to visit in the region, so we're asking people to consider alternative plans,' he said.

In the state's far north, a nearly 4-square-mile (10-square-kilometer) wildfire

has forced the evacuation of French Gulch, a small Shasta County community that dates to the Gold Rush.

Global temperatures have soared in recent weeks in a worldwide heatwave which is expected to last in some places until the end of August.

England has recorded highs of 33°C (91.94°F) this week, Sweden is basking in the hottest summer in over a century, while the mercury topped-out at an unseasonably warm 38°C (100°F) in parts of Southern California, and heat levels have soared to more than 46°C (115°F) in Saudi Arabia.

In Japan, at least 65 people have died and a further 22,000 have been hospitalised with heat stroke as a result of skyrocketing temperatures, which have reached record highs of 41.1°C (105°F) in the capital of Tokyo.

The heatwave, which started to set record temperatures

across the world late last month and is predicted to continue until the end of August, is caused by persistent high pressures, experts have stated.

Stationary regions of high pressure across the globe have halted weather patterns from moving eastwards.

This immobilisation of weather fronts was triggered by an unusually weak jet stream, high Atlantic ocean temperatures and the continually rising temperatures caused by warming.

This potent combination has doomed the northern hemisphere to weeks of oppressive heat, say scientists.

Temperatures approached 120 degrees in parts of the U.S. Southwest on Monday, and forecasters said this week could bring the region's hottest weather of the year.

Phoenix reached a sweltering 115 degrees (46 Celsius), which broke the previous daily record, according to the National Weather Service.

Firefighters and city officials Monday morning distributed bright red cloth visors, hand fans and blue-colored cooling neckerchiefs to downtown Phoenix commuters, advising them to stay inside as much as possible.

A heat advisory was in effect for west Texas and southeast New Mexico into Monday evening, with high temperatures well into the triple digits, the service said.

Full Article:
<https://dailym.ai/2LEfIGo>

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Some annual renewals trouble campground owners



CATSKILL, N.Y. - Local campground owners are unhappy with a revised version of the town of Catskill's

proposed campground law which they believe is too restrictive.

A public hearing held by the

Catskill town and planning boards was held June 5 for campground owners and residents to share their views on the proposed law to regulate transient camping and the operation and maintenance of campgrounds for transient use.

Under the proposed law, no property owner can allow his or her land to be used for camping unless they have obtained a campground license.

The proposed law will stop campground owners from adding new features to their sites, Brookside Campground co-owner Bonnie Schroader said, adding her campground

couldn't have been built as it is under the proposed law.

"Every section of this law is basically, 'You have to refer to the town,'" Schroader said. "They can come on my property at any point in time without notice for any reason."

Cathy Ballone and her husband Ben have invested millions of dollars into refurbishing the 150-acre former Catskill Game Farm in Kiskatom and converting the site's giraffe house into a small inn. Ballone will not retrofit the site to accommodate what's in the law, she said.

"It's cost prohibitive. The headache isn't worth it to us," Ballone said. "We're not going

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to build a campground under regulations like that. It doesn't make any sense for any business owner to do that."

By building up clientele and advertising and investing significant money in the Game Farm site, the business would not make a profit in the first two years - and the proposed law exacerbates the situation, she said.

"We would be pushing five years of not making a profit," she said.

A meeting was held following the June 5 public hearing with Catskill Town Supervisor Doreen Davis, members of the town Planning Board and its chairman Joseph Izzo, town attorney Michael Smith and campground owners including Schroeder, Davis said.

Brookside would operate under a grandfather clause, protecting it from the regulations of the proposed law, except for expansions. The site would have to be registered annually, Davis said.

It would be similar to registering a car on an annual

basis, Davis added.

"We reviewed it [the proposed law] literally line by line," Davis said. "Everybody's existing business was grandfathered."

Ballone is concerned about having to renew a campground license every year. If in one year, the license is denied, her business could be forced to close, she said.

"I have to get approved every year to open my doors next year. What if they say no?" Ballone said. "What if I piss off the wrong person in town?"

Davis had not heard about this concern from Ballone, but she reached out to the businesswoman to talk about the law. Ballone did not attend the meeting Davis held with campground owners.

No law regulating campgrounds exists on town books, meaning the town board has to be prepared for an influx of Airbnbs into the area, Izzo said.

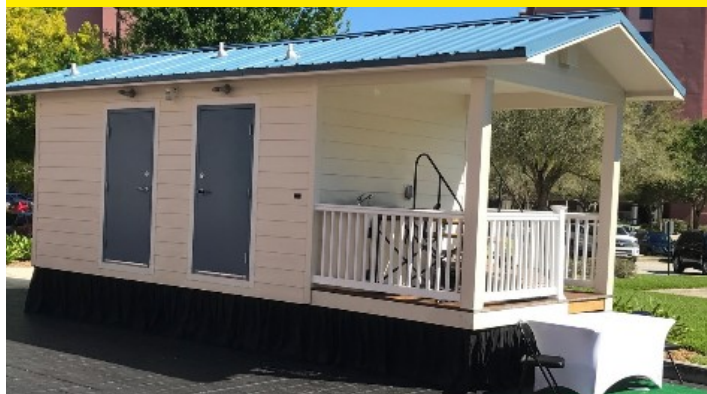
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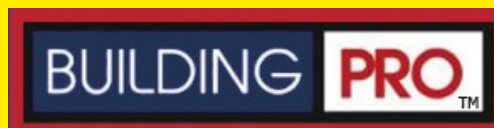
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Following up on campground ADVOCATE



AS we mentioned last week, several suppliers, many of them essential to the operation of campgrounds, have formed a new marketing strategy to jointly market their services and goods.

This new business called CAMPGROUND ADVOCATE will now be tele-marketing together. The idea is for this strategy came from MCPS for Campgrounds whose hugely successful telemarketing has made them one of the top suppliers of credit card processing in the campground industry. MCPS has over

650 campground customers, are members of ARVC for 12 years, are members of 14 other state and regional Campground Associations and have an A+ rating with the Better Business Bureau. Their retention rate is an unusually high 96%.

There are only a few suppliers in the campground industry who tele-market their goods or services to campground owners. This is because goods must be seen, and telephone conversations are not effective at all for selling by phone. Those

suppliers usually advertise in trade journals, exhibit at industry shows, or rely on the Internet to actually display their products. Services, however, can be explained over the phone and when Lieberman explained these figures and his disappointment in the numeric results of telemarketing to several other suppliers at industry trade shows, they commiserated with him, yet remarked that they would love to actually tele-market their services.

There are certain services that are, or may be, essential

to all campgrounds. Services such as: insurance; credit cards; certainly a source of funds for expansion; or even buying or selling a campground, would be called essential. Then there are those that MAY be helpful, such as an active website or marketing brochures that publicize a campground. Even a product that has become very popular could be added to the mix.

Now Campground Advocate is almost ready to roll out the tele-marketing campaign as announced last week. 5 of the 7 participants have responded and are signed up for the marketing venture. They are ALL well known suppliers with enormous reputations. There are two more, however, that because of many factors including the weather or that this is the busiest time for campgrounds nationwide, will not be ready at the proposed launch date.

So Art Lieberman, President of MCPS has decided to postpone the launch for one week to August 6th. "We want to launch this business at full tilt," says Lieberman

It is probable that you will get the full picture in the next issue of this publication.

Source: Press Release

Paula Horwitz named ARVC's education director

THE National Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds (ARVC) has announced the hiring of Paula Horwitz as ARVC's director of education and events, as well as executive director of the ARVC Foundation, according to a press release.

Paula joined the ARVC team in mid-July after serving most recently as director of education for The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation in Denver, where she oversaw the development and execution of all educational programming and curriculum.

Previously, she served two years as manager of

instructional design for the Colorado State University-Global Campus. Paula has a bachelors in English literature from Penn State, a Masters in liberal studies from the University of Denver and a Masters in curriculum and instructional design from the University of Colorado-Colorado Springs.

"Paula is exactly what ARVC and the ARVC Foundation need as we strategically look at our educational programs of the future, stated ARVC President and CEO Paul Bambei. "Clearly, members are asking for fast-paced, video-based online training

tools that can be easily accessed at their convenience and Paula perfectly fits the bill. Look forward to seeing ARVC turn a new page in the educational arena, starting with a first glance at the Outdoor Hospitality Conference and Expo in Oklahoma City this November."

To contact Paula send her an email at phorwitz@arvc.org or call her at 303-681-0401 x120.

Source:
Press Release



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Hurricane season forecast changes for the better with fewer storms predicted



SOME good news from top hurricane forecasters: The 2018 Atlantic hurricane season should be quieter than normal, according to a new prediction released Monday.

Meteorologist Phil Klotzbach and other experts from Colorado State University – regarded as the nation's top seasonal hurricane forecasters – predict 10 named tropical storms will form, of which four will become hurricanes.

That is a sharp decrease from their forecast in April, when they said 7 hurricanes would form. One system, Subtropical Storm Alberto, already formed in May.

If the quiet forecast comes to fruition, 2018 will be a welcome relief after the destructive 2017 season, which saw monsters like Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria tear paths of death

and destruction across the Caribbean and the U.S.

"We have decreased our forecast and now believe that 2018 will have below-average

activity," the Colorado State forecast said. "The tropical and subtropical Atlantic is currently much colder than normal, and the odds of a weak El Niño developing in the next several months have increased."

Hurricanes need the fuel of warm ocean water to develop and strengthen.

El Niño is a natural warming of tropical Pacific Ocean water, which tends to suppress



the development of Atlantic hurricanes. During an El Niño, strong upper-level winds roar across the Caribbean and Atlantic, tearing apart developing tropical storms.

In its most recent forecast, the Climate Prediction Center gave a 50 percent chance of an El Niño forming in late summer or early fall.

"With the decrease in our forecast, the probability for major hurricanes making landfall along the United States coastline and in the Caribbean has decreased as well," Colorado State said. The probability of direct hit on

the U.S. coast from a major hurricane – classified as a Category 3, 4, or 5 on the Saffir-Simpson scale – is down to 39 percent from 63 percent.

But experts caution it only takes one storm to make it a disastrous season.

"As is the case with all hurricane seasons, coastal residents are reminded that it only takes one hurricane making landfall to make it an active season for them," the forecast said. "They should prepare the same for every season, regardless of how much activity is predicted."

The poster child for that theory was the 1992 hurricane season.

That season was relatively quiet overall, with only seven named storms. But the first of them was catastrophic Hurricane Andrew, which devastated portions of South Florida and killed dozens of people.

Meanwhile, the eastern Pacific hurricane season, which gets a boost from El Niños, has been very active so far, with six named storms, of which three have been hurricanes.

Source: <https://usat.ly/2zeUS6a>

Avoid frivolous lawsuits with Campground Immunity Law



ACCIDENTS happen at campgrounds all the time. Someone trips on a log while on a hike or burns themselves around the campfire. It happens. These are just some of the inherent risks of camping.

It's what happens after an accident that can be a body blow to you and the future of your campground.

A few months later, an envelope arrives in the mail - it's a notification of a lawsuit.

Know your campground wasn't negligent in any way, but now it's too late - you're the defendant in a lawsuit and a costly process begins.

This scenario happens with regularity all across the country and ARVC is focused on providing a solution for all

our members. ARVC is fighting hard for campground immunity laws like the one successfully passed by the Wisconsin State Legislature in 2016.

"ARVC is focused on this as a member benefit because we see enormous value in stemming the tide of frivolous claims and lawsuits for accidents that are not the responsibility of our campground owner members," says Paul Bambei, president and CEO of ARVC. "These lawsuits often range in the tens of thousands of dollars or more and are rarely won without the benefit of this type of immunity law."

Bert Davis, owner of Badgerland Campground in Stoughton, Wis., says the immunity law in Wisconsin has given campground owners

across the state peace of mind that a frivolous lawsuit won't endanger their ability to provide a priceless experience for their campers.

"This law helps protect our parks in Wisconsin and by default also helps keep the quality time spent with family and friends a main priority to our owners and managers," Davis says.

"Using the momentum from Wisconsin, ARVC has teamed up with lawyer Mark Hazelbaker, who played a major role in the immunity law's passage in the state, to create a toolkit to help other states recreate the success seen in Wisconsin.

"What we're trying to do is give campgrounds the ability to innovate and expand without the fear of

being sued by campers when the campground owners have simply provided the experience the campers were looking for in the first place," Hazelbaker says. "It's like this. If you go into a boxing ring and put on gloves and someone punches you, you shouldn't be able to sue them. That's the experience you wanted when you stepped into the ring. These laws provide the same type of protections to campground owners based on the inherent dangers of camping."

Davis says Hazelbaker's knowledge of the law and how state governments work was a vital part of the success in Wisconsin, and mixed with the power ARVC has in numbers, he sees a golden opportunity in other states.

"Government is a very complicated animal. Most of us don't want to deal with it because we don't understand its complexity," Davis says. "Good laws that serve a great purpose take time, following the correct procedure, and getting it to the right person to sponsor it. Those were the three big things I witnessed that had to happen to make it law in Wisconsin. So, having the ARVC toolkit is a huge leg up we didn't have in Wisconsin. It's great ARVC is taking what worked in Wisconsin and tailoring it to work in other areas."

Full Article:
<https://bit.ly/2AddzHF>

Protecting your property from brush and wildfires



BRUSH fires and wildfires are a concern for multiple locations throughout the United States. From January 1 to July 15, 2018, there

have been more than 33,000 wildfires, burning about 3.3 million acres, according to the National Interagency Fire Center. Losses from wildfires

added up to \$5.1 billion over the past 10 years.

Philadelphia Insurance Companies encourages policyholders to learn more about this exposure and the ways to prevent structural damage from these fires.

Brush fires can attack a building in three different ways:

1. Flying embers are blown by the wind and ignite combustible external elements. This is the most common method.
2. Fire spreads from a bush to the walls of a structure.
3. Radiant heat from high flames around a building

causes the structure to reach an auto-ignition point.

When the fire hazard is high, it is important to keep a clear defensible space. PHLY recommends there be a minimum clearance of 300 feet for grass and brush fire exposure and a minimum of 500 feet for forest fire exposure.

Some things to keep in mind:

- Established roadways provide engineered features to offer some barrier and allow access for firefighting personnel, fire-mitigation efforts, and evacuation.

Full Article: <https://bit.ly/2NPf7d3>

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The American Glamping Association is setting industry standards



THE American Glamping Association (AGA) announced its formation earlier this

summer, according to a press release. Spearheaded by Under

Canvas CEO Sarah Dusek and Co-Founder & CSO of GlampingHub Ruben Martinez, the AGA will establish and create professional industry standards and ratings across the growing U.S. travel category of glamping – short for glamorous camping – leading to “exceptional” experiences for the consumer.

The goal of the AGA is to set standards that increase the level of professionalism and provide travel enthusiasts with more knowledge, eliminating unmet consumer expectations.

“There is a lack of clarity for the consumer about what

glamping is. We are simply starting the conversation and encouraging all the major players in the glamping community to join the association,” said Dusek. “We want to build and grow the industry together.”

According to the release, glamping has been around since 19th century African wildlife safaris, but has since exploded, bringing a wave of new destinations, accommodations and price points.

For more information visit www.americanglampingassociation.net

Source: Press Release



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KOA named one of top 25 tech businesses in state of Montana



KAMPGROUNDS of America Inc., based in Billings, Montana, has been named one of the top 25 tech businesses in the state of Montana.

The list was compiled by the Montana High Tech Business Alliance, which included businesses in various industries from throughout the state.

The businesses were ranked based on their history of bringing wealth to Montana, investing in their communities and creating jobs.

Of the top 25 businesses on the list, KOA was the company based in Billings. Kampgrounds of America Inc. ranked 14th on the list of 25, according to a release from the Montana High Tech Alliance.

Kampgrounds of America was founded in Billings in 1962 by local entrepreneur Dave Drum. The company has grown to include more than 500 family camping locations in the United States and Canada, and employs approximately 75 people at its

Home Office in Billings. That number includes a Technology Department that develops and maintains KOA's proprietary campground operations and reservations software called KampSight.

KOA has 18 campground locations in Montana.

To view each company's profile on the Montana High Tech Business Alliance website, go to www.mthightech.org/montana-top-tech-employers-2018/#koa

Here are the 25 businesses included on the Montana High Tech Business Alliance list:

1. Advanced Electronic Designs, Bozeman
2. Allied Steel, Lewistown
3. Applied Materials, Kalispell
4. AT&T, Missoula
5. ATG, Missoula
6. ATR, Hamilton
7. Blackfoot, Missoula
8. Blackmore Sensors and Analytics, Bozeman
9. Century Companies, Lewistown
10. CTA, Bozeman
11. Edulog, Missoula
12. FICO, Bozeman
13. Helix Business Solutions, Dillon
14. Kampgrounds of America Inc., Billings
15. Loenbro, Great Falls
16. Montana Instruments, Bozeman
17. Murdoch's Ranch & Home Supply, Bozeman
18. Oracle, Bozeman
19. PROOF Research, Columbia Falls
20. Schedulicity, Bozeman
21. SoFi, Helena
22. Synesis 7, Butte
23. WGM Group, Missoula
24. Workiva, Bozeman
25. Zoot Enterprises, Bozeman

Source: Press Release

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CalARVC sees plenty of activity in 2017 & 2018

Editor's Note: This letter was written by Debbie Sipe, executive director/CEO of the California Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds (CalARVC).



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2017 YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

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Read our 2017-18 Year in Review:

- Relaunch of an image rich,

mobile-friendly, park centric Camp-California.com along with 200,000 of the Camp-California! Guide.

- Conducted a reservation software comparative session and disaster planning day.
- Made removal and eviction forms free. Each fillable form comes with instructions guiding you through the how and when to use.
- Exclusive access to the

best practices in guest management and regulatory information covering a wide range of topics on CalARVC.org.

- Attorneys at your fingertips. Our legal hotline gets you the answers you need.
- Award-winning lobby team focused this year on protecting parks from California's state and regional water boards.
- Access to your peers and

experts with CalARVC's Spring and Fall RV Park Days.

Every week we keep you up-to-date with relevant information delivered via our Coffee Talk E-news and monthly with our printed CalARVC News.

We are able to do all of this because of your commitment to the industry and to CalARVC. Thank you for your membership. I encourage you to reach out to other parks in California and share our efforts. Let them know that we are working hard to make all California parks more profitable.

The stronger we are; the stronger you are!

Though we did lose a key staff member and best friend, we are building a new, remarkable team to serve you for years to come. For those of you who may have missed the announcement, Susanne White passed from this world on May 7th after only 48 very short years. But not before sharing her wisdom and vision for CalARVC with each staff member. Her energy and ideals will live on through each of us.

I hope to see you at one of our RV Park Days this coming year. In the meantime, please feel free to contact the office with any questions or concerns.

Developer planning 668-acre RV park in Florida



FRUITLAND PARK, Fla.-
A developer unveiled plans Thursday for a 668-acre RV park on the east and west side of Lake Unity Nursery Road and south of Eagles Nest

Road.
There has been some blowback to the idea of Crappie (pronounced "croppy," since it refers to the fish) RV Park and Marina.

"...a resort planning THOUSANDS of RV campsites including HUNDREDS of mobile homes crowded into that area would really bring TOO MUCH TRAFFIC to our residential roads!" wrote one man on Facebook.

Developer Steve Lumbert also got an earful from neighbors at a presentation he gave at Calvary Baptist Church, according to at least one person who attended the information session.

Art Ayris, who owns property on Bay Forest Lane abutting the site, said he would prefer to see the land remain undeveloped. But he

said he has spoken to the developer, who told him that he is looking into alternative entry points to Lake Unity Nursery Road to ease traffic concerns.

The city of Fruitland Park has been receiving calls, but the land is in the unincorporated part of Lake County.

County planning and zoning officials have received the application to rezone 14 mostly vacant parcels from multifamily to planned unit development. It is tentatively set to go before the planning and zoning board on Oct.

Full Article:
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Lake George RV park adds water amenities for its guests



QUEENSBURY, NEW YORK - A new water park is thrilling campers at the Lake George RV Park.

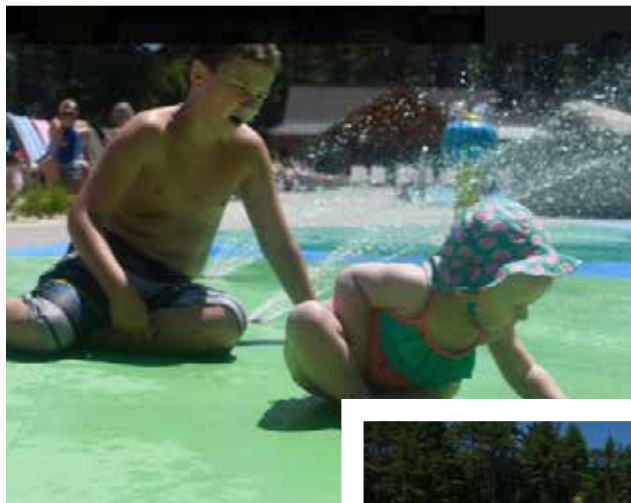
On July 1, the park opened a splash pad, complete with a water slide, sloped-entry pool and a large hot tub capable of seating 38 people.

"I feel like we're in a resort," said Jo-Ann Epstein after relaxing in the hot tub.

Epstein, a teacher from Fairfield, Connecticut, has a seasonal camper at the park. Her children were so excited about the new amenities that they were counting down the days until the splash pad opened.

It took 10 years to design and 10 months to build, said park President Dave King. It was a "multi-million-dollar" project.

"We were watching trends in the industry and figuring out



what our guests would really like," he said.

They seemed to have guessed right: campers thanked him effusively as he strolled through Cascade Cove with a reporter.

This fall, the park might add a poolside bar. There are also fireplaces and a fire pit near the pool, waiting for autumn weather.

But the main goal was to make children happy, King said.



"The majority of our guests are families with that younger age group, toddler to 12," he said. "This is pretty awesome to entertain the younger set."

His other big demographic is the elderly. Both groups wanted a "zero-entrance" pool, in which there are no stairs to climb.

"You walk right in like at the beach," King said. "It's great for our young swimmers - they go a little deeper each day and before you know it, they're swimming across the pool in their water wings. I get a lot of elderly people too, and people in wheelchairs. They can go straight into the pool in a wheelchair."

The water park is only open to guests of the park. For those who do not own an RV, the park has some available for rent at \$280 per night. There are no tenting spaces.

Vanessa Stoner of Stanfordville, in Dutchess County, brought her 1-year-old daughter to the splash pad to sit near the sprays.

"She loves it," Stoner said as she hovered over her daughter.

Her son, 12, was running back and forth from the twisty,

enclosed water slide to his sister in the spray. Stoner laughed.

"He used to only do the indoor pool. Now he wants to be out here," she said.

The slide got top marks with all the children.

"It's a lot bigger than a normal water slide," said Julia Epstein, 10. "It surprises you when you get down to the bottom and you don't know when, because it's really dark."

Source
<https://bit.ly/2LBMdQb>



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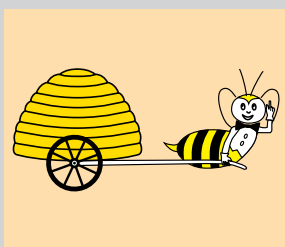


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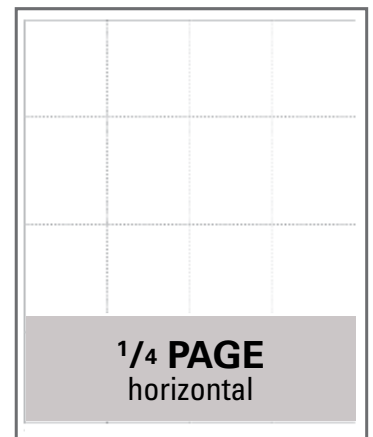
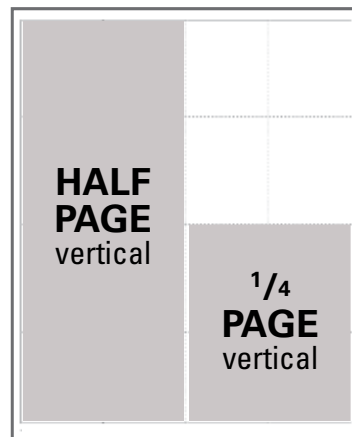
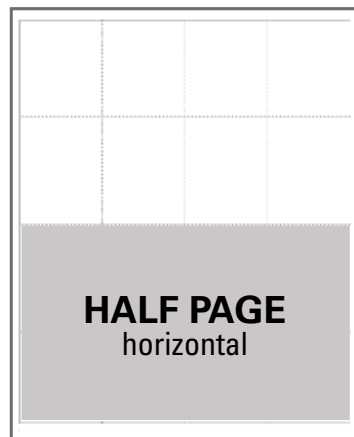
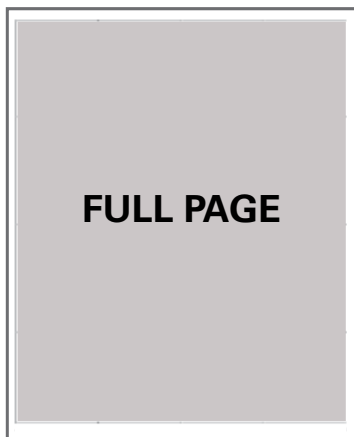
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