



SUNDAY BEST
AMUSEMENT PARKS IN PA

Photo illustration by Abby Rhoad, PennLive

COASTING THROUGH SUMMER



LARRY DEKLINSKI, The News-Item

Impulse, Knoebels Amusement Resort

WHAT'S NEW AT PARKS THROUGHOUT THE STATE

» Impulse, a brand-new steel roller coaster, makes its debut this spring at **KNOEBELS AMUSEMENT RESORT** in Elysburg. The tower roller coaster features nearly 2,000 feet of track, a 98-foot-high chain lift hill, a 90-degree freefall drop, multiple inversions, speeds over 55 mph, three eight-passenger roller coaster cars and more. Impulse is the first major steel roller coaster to open at Knoebels since 2005. www.knoebels.com

SEE MORE OF WHAT'S NEW ON PAGE D7

Feel the thrill at some of the nation's oldest amusement parks right in your own backyard

Is there anything more synonymous with summer than a trip to an amusement park? The thrilling rides, sweet treats and shows provide families with a fun escape that's a car ride away. Lucky for us, Pennsylvania is a prime place for parks. There are eight traditional amusement parks between Allentown and Pittsburgh that are reachable from the midstate in about three hours or less.

Some of the nation's oldest and best are here. From Hersheypark, which was founded in 1906, to Kennywood, which got its start as a trolley park in 1898, each of the state's amusement parks has more to discover than coasters and funnel cakes. They have must-visit history as well as thrills.

Lakemont Park in Altoona is home to the oldest operating roller coaster in the world, Leap-The-Dips. Idlewild, in Westmoreland County, the oldest park in Pennsylvania and third-oldest operating in the U.S., recently was honored as the world's best amusement park for kids. And Knoebels in Elysburg was voted the top "most underrated amusement park in the world" by BuzzFeed.

Whether you're looking for the highest, fastest

ride in the Keystone State, a trip down a lazy river in a tube or a place to watch the kids take their first kiddie coaster ride, there's a park for you and your family. Pack a picnic and sunscreen. We're taking a daycation. Note: Driving distance is from Harrisburg. Cost is for one-day pass in most cases.

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» Midstate offers plenty to do close to home

HERSHEYPARK

» 100 W. Hersheypark Drive ; www.hersheypark.com; 800-437-7439, 717-534-3900

» Hersheypark's 13th coaster, Laff Trakk, billed as a 21st-century fun house, makes its debut this season. According to the

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375 MILLION

people visit amusement parks annually in the United States and Canada.

\$18.8 BILLION

in revenue is generated annually by amusement parks in the U.S. and Canada.

Source: IAAPA.com

Reefer madness: Let the medical marijuana bill come up for a vote

When Julie's teenage son was battling cancer, doctors prescribed a long list of drugs to help him deal with the pain, fatigue, nausea, fever, and other nasty side effects of the disease and its treatment. "Oxycontin, Vicodin, even Dilaudid — he was prescribed them all. He was afraid to take them, afraid he would get addicted. And the side effects were really awful," she said. She asked her real name not be used, because the drug that eventually gave her son relief is illegal in Pennsylvania. "Marijuana helped him to be able to eat and sleep. It gave him relief from the pain." Julie is not alone in hailing the medical benefits of marijuana. A growing list of



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supporters — including many families of sick children — are pushing lawmakers to enact legislation that would legalize medical marijuana in Pennsylvania.

These families are not pothead, hippie freaks looking to fill every law-abiding home with a bong and the sweet whiff of cannabis. They are

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GOVERNOR'S RESIDENCE

Second Sunday events offer look inside

The traditional home of Pennsylvania's first family will be open to the public for a series of Sunday summer events.

Gov. Tom Wolf and first lady Frances Wolf have announced the Second Sunday events at the Governor's Residence beginning today.

Each of the monthly events will allow visitors to explore the residence and gardens from 1-4 p.m., and will include a specific theme for each of the day's family-friendly activities.

"The Governor's Residence is a key symbol of Pennsylvania's rich history and culture," Frances Wolf said in a news release. "We are excited for this opportunity to open the house and gardens to the public throughout the summer, so Pennsylvanians can take advantage of this historical icon while also participating in a host of activities for the whole family."

The dates and themes for each Second Sunday event are as follows:

- Today: Fifth annual Arts in the Garden
- July 12: Good Gardening, Great Health



- Aug. 9: Creatures of the Garden
- Sept. 13: Gallery Walk & Garden Tours

The Second Sunday events will be in addition to the spring tours of the mansion, which are offered 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays. Reservations are required for guided tours.

For details, visit www.residence.pa.gov, or call 717-772-9130.

— Sean Adams, sadams@pennlive.com

JUBILEE DAY • CHECK OUT OUR GUIDE ON WHERE TO PARK, WHAT TO SEE AND HOW TO HAVE FUN, PAGE D2

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