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PALISADES AMUSEMENT PARK OUR FOND MEMORIES

By: Vince Gargiulo

For 74 years, Palisades Amusement Park was one of the nation’s most popular fun centers. Located atop the Palisades cliffs in the towns of Fort Lee, Cliffside Park and Edgewater, “The Park” as many locals called it, was home to over 200 rides and attractions.

Much of its success can be attributed to the massive marketing and publicity stunts it regularly pulled off.

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NEWSLETTER

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OFFICE SERVICES

Resolution Requests
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Dear Neighbor,

Bergen County is a place of enormous demographic diversity. It is a strength that sets us apart. We're a special collection of 70 communities with many distinct neighborhoods. From the Wall Street commuter to the high school math teacher, the South Bergen cop on the beat or the retail clerk at one of our many shopping malls, our residents are our neighbors, friends, and family members that makeup New Jersey's biggest and most influential county.

As a father, grandfather, husband, and homeowner, I want my office to be a conduit of economic opportunity, to lead Bergen County forward with the best ideas, the right priorities for our communities, and the strong, proven leadership we need to make Bergen County even better.

It's doing everything I can to keep property taxes stable while making sure we invest, grow, and prosper together. That means a commitment to "quality of life" concerns like excellent public schools, retaining our natural beauty and open spaces with great parks and recreation opportunities for people of all ages while never forgetting that taxpayers get their money's worth with the services they deserve.

During these challenging and turbulent times, I'm committed to the proposition that government must respond and change like never before. Whether you're a homeowner, tenant, small business owner, or one of our prized seniors now retired, my office is here to help no matter how small or tall the issue at hand. Feel free to call my office anytime at 201-336-6279 or visit me online at www.SteveTanelli.com.

Steve A. Tanelli

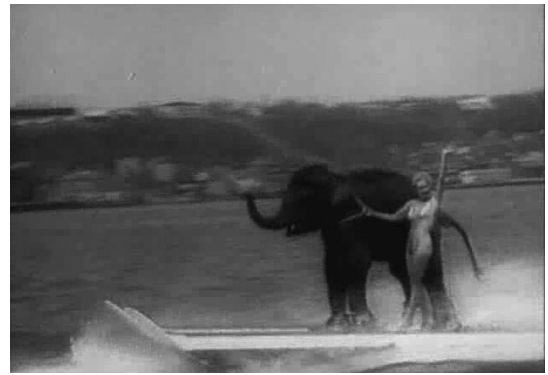
Freeholder Steve A. Tanelli

Many people over 60 can still sing the “Come On Over” jingle that was heard daily on radio and television. Some remember sneaking into the park via the hole in the fence behind the stage. What we did not know at the time was that the park management knew about the hole and instructed the security guards to turn their backs.

In the earliest days, Palisades hired aeronauts who flew dirigibles from the park, out over the Hudson River, always getting plenty of great press coverage. In 1925, a six-year-old youngster named Johnny “Freckles” Devine, claimed he could swim across the Hudson River. The park owner, Nick Schenck, took him up on that claim with the promise of free hot dogs, waffles, and a silver loving cup. The deal was struck, and Schenck made sure that every news organization was present to capture the event.

"Schenck received a million dollars' worth of free publicity."

But one of the greatest stunts occurred in 1958 with the water-skiing circus elephant. The ¾-ton pachyderm traveled across the Hudson, from New Jersey to the Forty-second Street docks and back, at twenty-five miles an hour, while accompanied by a beautiful showgirl. Photographers and newsreels captured the event and once again propelled the Palisades' popularity.



The one event I have a personal fondness for happened in 1964 when a new grocery chain opened in Bergen County. Shop-Rite Supermarkets and Palisades Amusement Park created a simple promotion. All you had to do is bring any Shop-Rite logo to the cashier in the admission booth at the amusement park and you received free admission plus tickets for two free rides.

Well for a 12-year-old boy from Cliffside Park, this was one challenge that I gladly accepted. I started looking through newspapers to locate any ad for Shop-Rite and would clip out the logo. Then, I remembered where I saw a bunch of those logos, all in one place. Mom had stocked the pantry with a wide variety of foods, all bearing the bright yellow logo of the new supermarket chain.



I got one of those brilliant ideas that kids my age tended to get. With razor blade in hand, I began to remove every label from every can and box that had that familiar new logo. Keep in mind, I didn't just cut out the Shop-Rite logo, I removed the entire label. Proudly bringing a shoe-box full of them over to Palisades, I received enough admission passes and tickets to enjoy the favors of the park for the entire season.



The expression of glee on my face was only outweighed by the expression of astonishment on my mom's face when she looked into her cabinets and discovered the "mystery of the labelless cupboard."

With no labels on any cans, it was impossible to tell the difference between a can of corn and a can of soup or a can of tuna and a can of cat food. Needless to say, Mom was not happy and my dream of visiting the park daily was shot down when I was grounded for the season.

Hundreds of thousands of people visited Palisades Amusement Park. For most, they will always cherish those fond memories of happier days, of a time when people shared laughs and smiles on the midways of a great American fun center.

Vince Gargiulo is a born-and-raised Bergen County resident. He grew up in Cliffside Park, just a short distance from the famed Palisades Amusement Park. As founder and executive director of the Palisades Amusement Park Historical Society, Vince authored two books, and wrote and co-produced the Palisades documentary for PBS, which won several awards and was nominated for a New York Emmy.

Online, Vince is the webmaster for PalisadesPark.com and he hosts the Palisades Amusement Park Historical Society group on Facebook, where the Park's memories are kept alive for future generations.

Resources for Small Businesses

Bergen County announced the CARES Small Business Grant Program funded through relief dollars from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Federal relief fund. The programs are aimed to assist small business owners affected by COVID-19.

The Bergen County CARES Small Business Grant Program will begin accepting applications on Monday, July 13th. The program is designed to provide relief to our main street businesses who were forced to close their doors as a measure to stop the spread of COVID-19. It will provide up to **\$10,000 in financial relief** to cover rent, property mortgage, and utilities expenses. For questions on how to apply, please email BergenCountyCares@co.bergen.nj.us.

2020 Census Bergen County Update

As of today, Bergen County continues to exceed the average response rate across the state and the country. Let us continue the excellent work to ensure that we do not miss out on critical federal funding for schools, roads, and other public services. The best part is it just takes 10 minutes to complete and is completely confidential, so please make sure to do so: <https://2020census.gov>

Still need more information? Your frequently asked questions are below.

Reasons to Fill Out the Census

- 1) **It's safe and confidential.** A federal law called Title 13 protects your personal data. Census Bureau employees take a lifetime oath, under severe penalty (5 years in jail & a \$250,000 fine), never to disclose personal data. Only general statistics are used. Personal data cannot be disclosed ever to any government agency at any level. Not the police, not ICE – NOT ANYONE!
- 2) **It's easy:** There are 9 questions. It generally takes about 10 minutes to fill out online. Or you can fill it out over the phone or by mail.
- 3) **It's Important:** It's very important to our community and our families in our community. Census data helps determine where more than \$45 billion in federal funding is distributed each year for New Jersey. The more accurate the information the more dollars we all get. It includes funding for schools, hospitals, first responders, Medicare, Medicaid, school food programs, senior programs, childcare, roads & highways and much more.

Nominate a Bergen County Veteran of the Week

Bergen County Veteran of the Week is a project in collaboration with the [Bergen County Division of Veteran Services](#) to collect, preserve, and make accessible the personal accounts of Bergen County veterans for future generations.

Since this is a weekly publication, we are always in need of great nominations. If you know a veteran who resides in Bergen County, please refer to guidelines below to nominate them.

Submission Guidelines

Bergen County Veteran Of The Week works best with 3 to 5 good photos — at least one of them should be in uniform. If possible, submit larger file sizes with better resolutions. Consider scanning a physical photo if you do not have a digital copy readily available.

Send the photos with the following information: Name, branch, occupation, and years of service.

Example:

- (Timothy “Tim” Lawson, Marines, 6672 Aviation Supply, 2006 to 2011)
- Tours, deployments, and campaigns (OIF, OEF, Vietnam, Gulf War, etc.)
- Notable awards (Purple heart, Bronze star, NAM, Army Achievement, etc.)
- Current geographic location (so we can localize the story and promote to the community)
- Bonus info includes what they’re doing now, significant moment(s) during their service and other unique information.

You can send all of the material to JDarley@co.bergen.nj.us.

In the subject line, put “[Veteran’s name] for Veteran of the Week.” It is important that you include as much of the requested material as possible, as it is necessary to complete and publish a Veteran of the Week.

Every Veteran is worthy of recognition. They do not need to meet any other criteria other than having honorably served their country.

