



Waterparks Are Making Waves with Surfing

Two waterparks, one coastal, the other inland, one outdoor, the other indoor, one the Beaches Turks and Caicos Resort and Spa's Pirate's Island Waterpark, a seasoned resort expansion, the other, Waves of Fun, near Chicago, a new standalone, about as different as low and high tide, are bracing for early 2009 grand openings expected to usher in a heretofore unparalleled swell of business. Each promises entertainment value for all ages, unique to their individual location.

One feature they have in common will nonetheless gain for each "first" status. Beaches Turks and Caicos Resort and Spa's Pirate's Island is the first hotel resort waterpark and Waves of Fun, the first indoor waterpark in the United States, to install SurfStream™, the world's first standing wave machine. The machine was developed by Solano Beach, Calif.-based American Wave Machine, Inc. (AWM) and is the brainchild of AWM president and founder, **Bruce McFarland**. A product breakthrough in artificial wave technology, it replicates the experience of real ocean surfing.

According to McFarland's company partner and wife, Marie, the first installation anywhere was in an outdoor waterpark in Taiwan. These first three, she noted, represent all the categories of waterparks, indoor, outdoor, and hotel resort.

SurfStream™ versatility and flexibility of application is apparent for venues, operators and surfers alike. For venue operators, it has broad appeal because the system is adjustable, and can accommodate several wave riders at one time, regardless of type of board. For surfers, waves can be modulated

to individual skill level, from beginners to the more experienced to advanced surfers. For venues, machine design can be suitably configured to fit from massive to compact space, and integrate into the park water system.

McFarland's credentials are impressive, degreed in engineering with emphasis in fluid dynamics and years of experience in the field. Yet his love of surfing and family background is the provenance behind the product.

He and his siblings grew up riding the waves off the California coast, along with his father and following in the foothold of his great uncle, Charles Wright, who is recognized as one of San Diego's first surfers in the 1920s, taught by the great Hawaiian surfer, Duke Kahanamoku.

McFarland's creation is the first true standing wave surf pool. Riders use real surfboards with fins to surf on a deep cushion of water. They can achieve the most sought after surfing experience, "the long ride," in this enclosed area, where standing waves form up from subtle bottom contours onto an open river of water. Since the waves do not travel toward a shore or boundary less space is needed to create waves, less power than older sheet flow technology is needed, so SurfStream can accommodate up to five riders per 12-foot wave simultaneously.

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The surf simulator is part of a complete Pirate's

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Island Waterpark at Beaches Turks & Caicos Resort Villages & Spa renovation. A spokesperson for the resort said, "We're very excited about the waterpark's overhaul, taking it up to 10 times its original size and making it one of the largest in the Caribbean. The 45,000-square-foot park will truly be an aquatic playground." Features besides SurfStream are seven new waterslides, a 650-foot lazy river meandering through a mermaid trail, magical grotto, cascading waterfall and overhead boardwalk.

The new Pirate's Island Waterpark, with a pool and aqua play area that reflects the pirate theme, is set to open in January 2009 along with the new Italian Village, a \$125 million addition.


The ability to surf in the Midwest is the definitive marketing ploy that is expected to draw not only locals but also visitors from all over the region to Waves of Fun, under construction in Sandwich, Illinois, a 60-minute drive west of Chicago.

"The surfing aspect is part of the logo and we'll be able to play off of being the first ever in the country to have a standing wave surfing machine," commented Waves of Fun Assistant General Manager **Tony Korzyniewski**. Marketing will also focus on teens who are usually left out," he added. "We expect teens, young active adults and even some grandpas to give it a try because, not as aggressive as flow rider, surfers ride on top of a 3-foot wave, and provides a unique experience they can't get anywhere else."

The other offerings at the park, geared to all ages and families, include a 45-foot-tall slide tower that will house two 54-inch tube slides and two 32-inch speed slides, a four-story Hawaiian themed interactive water play structure with over 50 water play elements, a lazy river and a wave pool. The park will also have an arcade, a surf shop, a concession court and the Aloha Grill restaurant, party rooms and cabanas.

The anticipated opening is spring of 2009. "Creating a surfing scene in Sandwich, Ill., will appeal to that growing population there, those skateboarders and other adventurers that want to venture into fun things," he said. ↗

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