

4 Weekend March 19-21, 2004

Park offers a break, with tradition



Nighttime amusement park Celebration City will be open during the daytime for Spring Break Days.

Historical theme park Celebration City is open this weekend and next for Spring Break Days.

By Gail Reynolds
FOR THE NEWS-LEADER

Not heading to Florida? Consider celebrating spring break at Celebration City.

The Branson amusement park is open this weekend and next — and the Wednesday sandwiched in between — for Spring Break Days.

You'll get to experience, in the daytime, the 30 rides and attractions at this nighttime amusement park that opened last year. Plus, you'll get a preview of the park's newest rides: The Flying Circus and Chaos.

"We're really excited about these two new rides," says Steve Honeycutt, general manager.

"The Flying Circus is really a great family interactive ride which can involve parents and small kids — the qualifying height is only 36 inches tall.

"The neat thing about it, is that as the ride spins around, passengers will be able to use a rudder to control swinging in and out."

Chaos, as its name implies, is geared for older youth.

"Now Chaos — which should be very popular with the teens who will enjoy it immensely — spins around and goes up to 90 degrees while the car goes into the opposite direction," he says.

Peggy Woodworth of Springfield, whose family visited Celebration City several times last

summer, is pleased about the spring opening.

"I think that this Spring Break thing is wonderful," she says. "We've been cooped up all winter and instead of having to go to the warm beaches, which are really far away ... and expensive, this gives us the chance to get out with our families and have some fun — without piling up the mileage."

The park, with a nostalgic theme, features early 1900s-style Victorian-era carousels, fountain and sculptures on Celebration Street; and an Electric Boardwalk amusement rides and arcades like those of the 1920s and '30s.

On its Route 66, the 1950s and '60s are revived with drive-in diners, shiny autos, restaurants and the WildCat, a wooden roller coaster that reaches speeds of 45 miles per hour while dropping eight stories.

"Everyone in my family loves the park, even my 2-year-old," says Woodworth, wife of Lael and mom to Brandon, 9, Noah, 6, and Alexa, 2.

"Most of all though, I love the laser show at the end because it gives all of us that wonderful chance to unwind after a full and very active long day."

The outdoor laser production show, "Celebrate" — showcased on a water screen and featuring fireworks, projections and music — will be presented at 6:30 p.m. during Spring Break Days.



FILE PHOTO

Want to go?

What: Spring Break Days at Celebration City

When: Noon to 7 p.m. today, Saturday, Wednesday and March 26 and 27; the laser show starts at 6:30 p.m.

Where: 1383 Missouri 376, Branson (turn south off Missouri 376 onto Mutton Hollow Drive, just west of Missouri highways 376 and 76)

Tickets: One day admission plus tax is \$27 for ages 12 and older, \$25 for seniors 62 and over, \$22 for kids 4 to 11 and free for children 3 years and younger; season passes and combination packages (with other Herschend Family Entertainment venues) are available.

Information: 1-800-831-4386, 1-800-888-7277 (season passes) or www.silverdollarcity.com

ALSO: The park opens for the regular season on May 14.

Early Warning

Early warning not early enough for you? Log-on to News-Leader.com to search for events.

Women's Day

The fifth annual Women's Day Symposium is from 8

6:30 p.m. March 27 at Highland Springs Country Club, 5400 S. Highland Springs Blvd. The event offers live

BRANSON

Musical "Down From His Glory," 7 p.m. March

Wireless Amphitheater. Tickets \$34.50-\$130. (816) 931-3330.

Empire Fairgrounds E-Plex, Norton Road and Grant Avenue. Admission is \$6, \$2 for ages 2 to 12. 833-2660.

Wildflower Hike 1 to 2-30

Concert scorecard

Top-grossing concerts ranked by average box office gross per city

Rank	Artist	Last week
1	Bette Midler	\$1,085,543
2	Rod Stewart	\$947,927
3	George Strait	\$809,883
4	Dave Matthews & Friends	\$747,654