



Charlie Canfield of the Santa Cruz Seaside Co. takes a spin on the Looft Carousel, which turns 100 in August, on Friday at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk.

DAN COYRO/SENTINEL

# Centennial Spin

Boardwalk

Celebrations begin for historic carousel's 100th anniversary

By NATALIA WILLIAMS

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The Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk is celebrating 100 years for the Looft Carousel. The merry-go-round was actually installed 100 years ago this August, but the festivities have already begun.

The Boardwalk held a pri-

vate party Thursday to celebrate the famed carousel and followed that with a birthday bash for Boardwalk employees and friends on Friday.

The events mark the beginning of the Boardwalk's summer season, which includes free concerts, discount nights

SEE CAROUSEL ON B4



SHMUEL THALER/SENTINEL



DAN COYRO/SENTINEL

ABOVE: Boardwalk patrons grab some birthday cake Friday in celebration of the Looft Carousel's 100th anniversary. LEFT: The Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk's Looft Carousel is a National Historic Landmark and local treasure that has been in operation since 1911.

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Boardwalk to offer movies, concerts, circus this summer

By SASCHA ZUBRYD

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SANTA CRUZ — The Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk promises a summer filled with movies, concerts and circus acts this year.

That's in addition to the usual beachfront rides, bowling, miniature golf, arcade games and restaurants.

New this year, six free movie showings will take place on the beach at 9 p.m. on Wednesdays. The movie series will start July 6 with "The Lost Boys" and end Aug. 10 with "Back to the Future."

SEE BOARDWALK ON B4



The Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk is commemorating the 100th birthday of the Loeff Caroussel, which was delivered to the Boardwalk in August 1911.

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## CAROUSEL

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and family events.

Marq Lipton, vice president of marketing and sales for the Boardwalk, said that the private party was meant to both kick off the summer season as well as celebrate the longevity of the amusement park. "We are kicking off our 2011 season by celebrating the 100th year of our oldest ride and the favorite ride of many people."

There have been some updates to the historic ride, too. Lipton said that in preparation for the 100th anniversary, the Boardwalk renovated many parts of the ride including the original horses, the organ facades and the building exterior. The Boardwalk also added a Memory Wall, where it is possible to purchase a bronze plaque to commemorate or honor someone. The proceeds from the wall will go toward continued restoration of the carousel.

Restoration has always been a tedious process, as the carousel averages 400,000 riders per year.

Now in its 100th year, the carousel has seen a lot of riders. In its lifetime, there have been two world wars, 18 presidents, the Great Depression and women gaining the right to vote. While it boasts 73 unique horses, it also offers two chariots or seats, which were originally a way for women to ride without being immodest.

The carousel was built by German immigrant Carl I.D. Loeff, a furniture maker who would construct horses out of wood scraps in his living room. He made more than 50 carousels in his lifetime, and the Boardwalk's is one of six still intact in the U.S.

The Boardwalk originally purchased the carousel for \$18,000. Today, two Loeff carousel horses are valued at more than that.

The Boardwalk's carousel is home to other unique features. In addition to an original 342-pipe Ruth & Sohn organ from 1894, a Wurlitzer 165 organ was

installed in 2007 and in commemorating the carousel's birthday, a Wurlitzer 146 was added this week. Although the newest addition won't be played, it has been held in storage and the Boardwalk wanted it to be displayed. It also serves as a back-up to the working organs, Boardwalk Communications Manager Brigid Fuller said.

Further, the carousel's ring machine is one of 20 left in the world. The ring machine allows riders to pull rings from a dispenser and throw them into a target in the wall. While it was originally manually operated, it was mechanized around 1950.

Management has to replace 40,000 rings a year because they are consistently taken home as souvenirs. However, the rings are now made of steel and brass rings are only used for special occasions.

As part of the celebration, the Boardwalk is offering two weeks of "Grab the Ring" this summer, where brass rings will be added to the ring machine and can be exchanged for prizes.

## BOARDWALK

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The complete movie list is on the Boardwalk's website, [www.beachboardwalk.com](http://www.beachboardwalk.com).

Dancers, drummers, acrobats and contortionists with Cirque Polynesian, a circus for families, will perform every Sunday through Thursday July 10 to Aug. 18. The free shows will be on the Beach Bandstand.

Free concerts on the bandstand are planned Friday nights June 17 to Sept. 2. Bands will include the Gin Blossoms,

Eric Burdon and the Animals and Eddie Money.

Seating for the movies, circus and concerts is right on the sand, so bring beach chairs and blankets.

The Loeff Caroussel marks its 100th anniversary this year, and the Boardwalk is celebrating with a special wine: 2007 Boardwalk Caroussel Syrah from Hallcrest Vineyards in Felton.

On weekends, transportation to the Boardwalk from the County Governmental Center at 701 Ocean St. will be provided for free to ease parking congestion. A shuttle will run every 30 minutes.

## IF YOU GO

SANTA CRUZ BEACH BOARDWALK

**WHAT:** Summer events

**WHEN:** June through August

**WHERE:** 400 Beach St.

**COST:** Free admission. All-day unlimited rides \$29.95. Season pass \$69.95. Parking is \$6.

**DISCOUNTS:** (June 20 through Sept. 1) All rides \$1 Mondays and Tuesdays after 5 p.m.; unlimited rides \$9.95 Wednesdays and Thursdays after 5 p.m.

**INFO:** Call 423-5590 or email [guest.services@beachboardwalk.com](mailto:guest.services@beachboardwalk.com).

**CONCERTS:** [www.beachboardwalk.com/concerts](http://www.beachboardwalk.com/concerts)

**MOVIES:** [www.beachboardwalk.com/movies](http://www.beachboardwalk.com/movies)

**CAROUSEL:** [www.beachboardwalk.com/carousel](http://www.beachboardwalk.com/carousel)

**SHUTTLE SCHEDULE:** May 28-30; June 25; July 2-4, 9, 16, 23 and 30; Aug. 6-13; and Sept. 3-5.