

MOTHBALLED

Extreme makeover, haunted edition

Boardwalk

Haunted Castle ride at the Boardwalk will be closed for renovations until 2010

8-7-09

By ARIANA SMITH

newsroom@santacruzsentinel.com

SANTA CRUZ — The creaks and the groans, prompting screams and moans, on The Haunted Castle ride will go quiet Sunday. But never fear, representatives for the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk said the 36-year-old ride will simply undergo renovations and open again next year.

However, there is one element that remains undecided: what to name the new ride? Fans of all things scary will have a say; the Boardwalk is inviting suggestions on its Web site.

"We're kind of asking people's opinion," says Brigid Fuller, publicist at the Boardwalk.

"We figured whatever we call it, a lot of people would always call

it The Haunted Castle because that's what they grew up with," says Fuller. "So we were curious: If it's going to be a brand-new ride, should we go all the way and give it a new name? But it seemed like most people wanted to keep the same name."

Through the creative process, the team came up with 50-100 names, according to Marq Lipton, vice president of marketing and sales at the Boardwalk.

Over the years, the Haunted Castle location has had many different faces. Since 1935, it evolved from a number of different "dark rides" — indoor, low-light attractions that usually feature props and slow cars on a track. It started as Dante's Inferno, eventually changing to Laughland, Treasure Island, Pirate's Cove, The Haunt-

ed House, and finally The Haunted Castle.

"From time to time we get new rides," says Lipton. "The Haunted Castle has been here since 1973. It's been down for a number of facelifts over those years, and now it's time we brought in a new attraction."

As of now, the ride operates with some fairly out-dated technology. But Lipton explained how a larger, newer version of Haunted Castle may appeal to riders.

The usual two-person car will be replaced by a four-person car that actually swivels instead of being fixed in a straight line. And upon first entering the ride, the cars will descend in a downward spiral. The majority of the ride will

SEE RIDE ON B14



PHIL CARTER/SENTINEL

The Haunted Castle at the Boardwalk will close later this month.

SENTINEL ONLINE

Watch a video of the Haunted Castle ride at www.santacruzsentinel.com.
View a concept video of the new ride at www.beachboardwalk.com/video/hc_new

MARQ LIPTON,

santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk

'This will be distinctly Boardwalk. We don't copy Disney; Disney copies us.'

RIDE

Continued from B1

actually be underneath the

Boardwalk, covering 10,000 square feet of basement space.

And although the concept video of the new ride recalls Disney's Haunted Mansion

— with similar swiveling cars and a hologram mirror that reveals ghosts sitting beside you — Lipton promises that is not the case.

"This will be distinctly

Boardwalk. We don't copy Disney; Disney copies us," he jokes.

The design was created by R&R Creative Amusement Designs of Anaheim,

in collaboration with Boardwalk technical and facilities staff. Boardwalk officials did not disclose the cost of the renovations, but Lipton says it is

a major project. If things run smoothly, Lipton expects to open the new and improved Haunted Castle on Memorial Day of 2010.