



## Special Amusements: Aligning Regulatory Requirements with Creative Goals Seminar 1

### Agenda and Session Descriptions

8:30AM to 10:30AM

**Special Amusement Occupancies** with Scott Brooks (Principal Architect – Design Assurance; Walt Disney Parks and Resorts, US; Joel Edwards (Fire Marshal, Reedy Creek Improvement District); and Curtis Donahou (Staff Fire Protection Technical Specialist, Walt Disney)

Description: The themed entertainment industry is evolving at an ever increasing pace, as ride and show designers continue to push the technological boundaries in many new directions. Unfortunately, building and fire codes have not necessarily evolved to keep pace. This discussion will highlight the importance of the partnership among the Designer, the Contractor, and the AHJ in order to achieve the Owner’s creative goals. Keys to success include education, open-mindedness, and a critical thinking approach based on a thorough knowledge of the intent of the prescriptive code requirements and development of alternative ways to achieve that intent.

The discussion will then focus on possible changes to the prescriptive code requirements themselves. The current code language for special amusement buildings has not changed significantly in the last 30 years, but the industry itself has. The focus will be on how proposed changes in the code language could affect the design and construction of these attractions.

*See Speaker Bios – Pages 2-3*

10:30AM to 11:15AM

**Life Safety in Haunted Attractions and Escape Games** with Ben Armstrong (Netherworld Co-Owner); Phillip Rogers (Netherworld Operations Manager and Retired Captain - Cobb County Fire Department).

Description: This session will discuss the background of modern life safety in special amusements, the state of the haunted attraction

industry around the country, and the rise of Escape Games as a new form of special amusement.

Speaker Information: Ben Armstrong is the Co-Owner Of NETHERWORLD Haunted House/Escape The NETHERWORLD and has spoken at many conferences and conventions in the Haunted House Industry. Philip Rogers is a retired Cobb County Fire fighter and the Operations Manager at NETHERWORLD Haunted House.

11:15AM to 12:00PM

**Panel Discussion and Questions** with All Speakers

12:00PM to 12:45PM

Lunch

1:00PM to 4:30PMJ

**Netherworld and Escape Game Haunted House Tour** (Transportation to/from facility will be provided)

### **Speaker Bios**



#### **Joel Edwards, Deputy Chief and Fire Marshal; Reedy Creek Improvement District**

Joel Edwards is the Deputy Chief and Fire Marshal for the Reedy Creek Improvement District. Reedy Creek Improvement District operates as a special taxing district in the State of Florida and was established in 1967 to provide governmental services to the Walt Disney World Resort. Joel has over 25 years of public service experience with twenty years dedicated to fire prevention, code enforcement, and plans review. Joel has extensive experience in fire suppression and fire alarm design, inspection, testing, and maintenance of water based fire protection systems, and NFPA codes and standards.

Joel currently manages the fire prevention program of the Reedy Creek Fire Department which includes the day to day operations of the division, supervision of 22 code enforcement professionals performing fire & life safety inspections and fire sprinkler inspections, fire and life safety plans review for all new construction and renovation work within the District, and preplanning and design review for new projects.

Joel is an alumni of the University of Central Florida with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Public Administration and holds a State of Florida contractor license for water based fire protection systems. Joel serves on the city council for the City of Bay Lake Florida and is also a member of the Florida Fire Sprinkler Association and National Fire Protection Association.



**Curtis Donahou, Staff Fire Protection Technical Specialist; Walt Disney Parks & Resorts U.S., Inc.**

Curtis has been in the fire and life safety field since 1981 and a licensed fire alarm contractor in the State of Florida since 1989. He holds a Degree in Fire Science from Seminole State College and level IV certification in Fire Protection Engineering Technology from the National Institute for Certification in Engineering Technology, NICET.

Since 2002 Curtis has worked for Walt Disney Parks & Resorts with responsibility for design, testing and commissioning of fire alarm and smoke control systems in a variety of occupancy types including assembly, special amusement, hotel dormitory and others. Curtis also provides leadership, guidance and strategic planning on policy and procedures surrounding life safety matters. In addition, he conducts training classes on fire alarm system design, system response in special amusement attractions and smoke control systems

Curtis has been married for 30 years and has five adult children.



**Scott Brooks, AIA, NCARB, LEED-AP, Principal Architect-Design Assurance; Walt Disney Parks & Resorts U.S., Inc.**

Scott Brooks is the Principal Architect-Design Assurance for Design & Engineering at Walt Disney World. In this role, he provides design guidance on both large and small projects, especially in the areas of code compliance, life safety, and accessibility for people with disabilities.

Scott has been a registered architect for 30 years, in practice with architectural firms in both Michigan and Florida before joining the team at Walt Disney World in 2003. During his time at Disney, he has been the architect of record for multiple projects, including the Cinderella Castle Dream Suite that opened in January of 2007. In addition to professional practice, Scott has taught at Valencia College in the Construction Technology Program.

Scott and his family have lived in Florida since 1990, and he has been active in the community for most of that time. He has volunteered with multiple community organizations and boards. He was elected to the Kissimmee City Commission in 2002, and he currently serves on Kissimmee's Historic Preservation Board. Professionally, Scott is a member of the AIA, ICC and NFPA. Scott attended the University of Michigan, receiving Master degrees in Architecture and Business Administration.