

Hall of Fame

The World Waterpark Association Hall of Fame exists to recognize and honor those individuals who have made noteworthy achievements in the development and advancement of the water attraction industry. The WWA Hall of Fame celebrates those individuals who have reached a position of eminence through contributions that have provided outstanding service, innovation or advanced the WWA and/or the water attractions industry.

Robert H. "Budge" & Arlene M. Brown

(POSTHUMOUSLY)

OAKWOOD LAKE

MANTECA, CALIFORNIA, U.S.A.



**BUDGE'S
SLIDE DESIGN
WAS A BIG HIT.**

What if your life's legacy lived in the smiles of millions of people who visited your park and enjoyed riding your waterslides? Well, that is the case for Robert H. "Budge" and Arlene M. Brown.

Budge and Arlene began their successful partnership when they were married in 1957. With a degree in agriculture from U.C. Davis and a ferocious drive to succeed, they found a way to buy a run-down farm near Manteca, California.

After many years of making it work on the farm and bringing 5 children into the world, Budge and Arlene decided to branch out into mining. They got a permit to mine sand and build a campground around Oakwood Lake, which was located in the hot Central Valley, an hour's drive from the San Francisco Bay Area. With profits made from the sale of the sand, Budge and Arlene began construction of Oakwood Lake Campground.

Around this time, the Brown family made a trip to Hawaii, where Budge was inspired by a natural waterslide. He decided when he got back to Oakwood Lake Campground, he would build a waterslide next to the campground. With just a farmer's knowledge of pumps and pipes, he built a 725-foot-long waterslide with an epoxy coating and using water pumped from the lake. Billed as the "World's Longest Waterslide," the attraction was an immediate hit with a price of \$1.00 per hour.

In 1975, business was booming, with the family working together at the park. Arlene managed the books and the children, and Budge grew the mining and waterslide businesses. Attendance was doubling every year, and the campground was successful because of the waterslide.

By 1977, Budge wanted to add more slides. However, he was frustrated by coating failures and the limitations of concrete construction. He wanted something safer and more exciting. He spent hours measuring how water and people moved differently on the concrete slide. One day, while taking a shower, the idea came to him of a design that would keep the water, rider and surface together during the ride with a safe, fast way to exit. Budge figured out that he could solve the problem of fiberglass slide design of the day by using a 5-foot-diameter fiberglass tube. Structurally rigid, it was made of matching top and bottom sections, combined with straights and turns of different radii.

Budge, who drew his designs by hand, designed the molds and learned to make fiberglass himself because no shop would make them for him. Budge's secret was a way of combining straights, curves, slope and radii to create a "luge" effect, with speed and g-force changes during the ride. The rider made smooth transitions from turn to turn—it was like a magic carpet.

Budge's slide design was a big hit. Ride capacity was huge, with a rider every 3 seconds. This was 10 times more per minute than most slides, even today. Budge's innovations resulted in the first fiberglass tubular waterslide, and the first three-sixty, seven-twenty and ten-eighty degree turns.

In the course of just a few years, he built waterslides throughout California, Australia and New Zealand under the brand name, The Happy Slide of Life. In fact, many waterslides built worldwide over the last three decades have been built with some variation of Budge's original design innovation.

A passionate pilot, Budge would often fly Arlene for hunting, fishing, sailing and diving trips. But he got a special kick from the smiling faces of people riding his waterslides.

Sadly, Arlene died in 2005 and Budge died in 2011. Yet, they're remembered for all that they contributed to the waterpark industry and their lasting influence on the design of waterslides everywhere.



Sam Haynes

BLUE BAYOU WATER PARK
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA, U.S.A.

**IN 1977, HAYNES
BUILT ONE OF
THE EARLIEST
WATERSLIDES,
“SOUTHWINDS
WATER COASTER.”**

“Imagination is everything. It is the preview of life’s coming attractions.”
– Albert Einstein

It takes plenty of imagination to take \$5,000 and grow it into 48 acres of theme and waterpark rides that have brought thrills to millions of people for more than two decades—and Sam Haynes has always had the kind of imagination to deliver amazing attractions.

Haynes got his start in the amusement industry in 1958, when at age 20, he borrowed the aforementioned \$5,000 and built one of the first go-cart rides in the South. The next season, he added three kiddie rides: a miniature train, the Ferris Wheel and the “Whip.”

In 1961, the kiddie rides were moved to a more central location and a kiddieland park called Fun Fair Park was opened with 7 rides. During its run, the park would add 10 major rides and see most of the Haynes family become involved with the park, many of whom remain involved today. In 1971, Haynes contracted with the local zoo and operated a train ride at the zoo for 17 years, Bayou Safari Railroad.

In 1977, Haynes built one of the earliest waterslides, “Southwinds Water Coaster.” Built on a manmade mountain, the slide stood 72 feet tall, covered four acres, utilized over 200,000 cubic yards of fill material and featured three individual flumes. Most early flumes were concrete and gunite, but Haynes once again employed his imagination and collaborated with a local campground owner to build fiberglass flumes for his new ride.

In 1987, Haynes purchased the failed and abandoned Fantasy Water Park, which had been started four years prior by a local real estate developer. The purchase included 18 acres fronting I-10 at a major intersection, most of the needed buildings, parking, a wave pool, a large activity pool and a rampage sled ride. The team, including long-time manager Denis Densmore, who joined soon after the close of the sale, worked day and night to clean and remodel the park. By the start of the next season, the park had a South Louisiana flavor, a new name—Blue Bayou Water Park—and two new waterslides. Most of the work was completed in-house, which became a trademark of Haynes’ team.

It also was at this time that Haynes and his team became members of the World Waterpark Association—a connection they’ve maintained for 27 years.

In 2001, more land was acquired as well as a permit to build a bridge to cross the I-10 right-of-way. The long awaited dream of combining the wet and dry parks was on the way. Fun Fair Park was closed after a 35 year run, and construction started on the new theme park, Dixie Landin’. As with Blue Bayou’s construction, the park again served as its own general contractor and did most of the work. The original rides were relocated, and were joined by several giant rides, including a two-drop 50-foot-tall log flume and a boomerang roller coaster.

Since that time, the parks have continued to enjoy steady growth. Blue Bayou now has 14 attractions, and Dixie Landin’ has 27 rides including four roller coasters. The current site is 48 acres and has a ½ mile frontage on I-10.

In addition to the parks, Haynes has had a successful career in intermodal trucking and industrial warehousing.

Jill White

STARFISH AQUATICS INSTITUTE

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA, U.S.A.



**WHITE HAS
CONSISTENTLY BEEN
RECOGNIZED AS ONE
OF THE LEADING
AQUATICS EXPERTS
IN THE WORLD.**

Jill White defines aquatics, and aquatics define Jill White. From the time she taught son, Lake, to swim, she has been a passionate educator and is responsible for many of the training programs and innovations taken for granted by many in the industry.

White grew up in the suburbs of Chicago, where she was a lifeguard and swim instructor in high school. In 1973, White married Robbin, a beach captain for the Chicago Park District and Level 5 Age Group coach. Together, they directed highly successful aquatics programs in Arkansas, Indiana and Florida while they raised their three children.

White also spent 8 years with Ellis & Associates in that organization's early years. As part of the E&A Sr. management team and corporate officer, White wrote training materials, conducted audits and directed Safety School and the learn to swim program. This was a very exciting time setting groundbreaking standards for training and operations that put the waterpark industry at the forefront of aquatic risk management.

Originally based in Colorado, White and her family left the mountains in the mid-'90s for beautiful Savannah, Georgia when given the opportunity to manage and operate a new, state-of-the-art indoor aquatic facility. While managing facilities, White recognized a need for an aquatic training, certification and risk management agency that focused solely on aquatics and offered programs and consulting in every facet of the industry.

In 1999, with her husband, she co-founded the Starfish Aquatics Institute, or SAI, to meet that need. In a little over a decade, SAI has grown into an internationally recognized aquatics agency, and White has consistently been recognized as one of the leading aquatics experts in the world. The innovative experiential methods of the instructor development courses created an international network of training centers where highly effective lifeguards, swim instructors and aquatic managers are developed.

In 2004, SAI entered into a strategic partnership with its publisher, Human Kinetics. This relationship allowed White to create and direct the Aquatic Education Center, a first in the aquatic industry for highly interactive online learning and blended training and continuing education. White's impact as an author and editor is significant, with a wide range of aquatic publications in print.

The winner of WWA's Al Turner Memorial Commitment to Excellence award in 2010, and consistently named to the "Aquatics International" Power 25, White is a passionate advocate of drowning prevention efforts and speaks at conferences across the nation and around the globe. In recent years, she spoke at the World Drowning Prevention conferences in Vietnam and Germany, and participated in the WWA's Middle East Symposium in Dubai.

White's hands-on and collaborate approach to drowning prevention extends to involvement with the World's Largest Swimming Lesson, the USA Swimming Foundation's Make a Splash program and being on the writing committee of the Model Aquatic Health Code.

Through her mentorship, the White family legacy in aquatics continues—with everyone involved in SAI in some manner, and leaders emerging. Daughter-in-law Jennifer has received award recognition for her work with the Starfish Swimming and PADI Swim School programs and son Lake was named a Best Speaker for WWA in 2013.

Clearly, the passion to save lives is being instilled for generations to come.