

Amusement park jobs: good pay, good times

By **MARTY MICHAELS**
Staff Writer

As you consider upcoming summer employment opportunities, do you face the inevitable ethic of "all work and no play"?

If the thought of an indoor desk job prevents you from rationally assessing your financial straits, perhaps a job with an area amusement park would brighten your outlook. All theme and entertainment parks hire additional employees during the summer season.

"Summer work with theme parks gives good work experience," said David Mandt, public relations director with Carowinds park outside Charlotte. "Everyone is looking for an internship, and this is a great chance, so that when the job hunt rolls around, the student's summer has been profitably spent."

Amusement parks in the Southeast

area are so varied that the student who is willing to apply persistently can almost suit the job to fit personal needs and expectations. There are several large parks, including Carowinds, Walt Disney World, Six Flags, King's Dominion, and Busch Gardens. The more immediate North/South Carolina area also contains more small-scale and personalized parks — Tweetsie Railroad, Grandfather Mountain, and Lakewood's Magic Harbor at Myrtle Beach.

At all parks, both the positions and pay scale vary widely. Many of the parks add an additional 25-cent bonus to the hourly pay rate if the employee meets certain requirements. At most parks, positions include ticket sales, ride hosting and operating, concessions, and food service.

Some specific opportunities may

be found at specialized parks. Tweetsie Railroad has a country fair section, a petting farm and a gift shop which must all be staffed, according to Nancy Wilson, assistant to the operations manager.

An interesting challenge for hang-gliding buffs exists at Grandfather Mountain. "We classify ourselves as North Carolina's top scenic attraction," said general manager Tom Huskins. He said the park now has about 14 employees, but in the middle of summer that number should rise to about 60. There are no rides, just the animal habitats and gift shops, but he said there are three or four positions open for hang-gliding demonstrators.

David Mandt of Carowinds said the park hires over 1,500 seasonal employees. The pay for new employees is minimum wage, with pay for those with previous Caro-

winds experience slightly higher. "There are positions posted in the personnel office which pay more," he said. "These are more managerial-oriented positions and would be good for students interested in such areas as business and public relations."

King's Dominion near Richmond, Va., hires about 2,000 seasonal employees each summer, according to park personnel clerk Claire Powell. Prospective employees do not need an appointment, but must be interviewed at the personnel office, she said.

Busch Gardens at Williamsburg, Va., also offers a wealth of positions. According to Martie Ann Brasher, personnel specialist at the park, there will be approximately 2,100 seasonal positions. "We have a turnover of almost 3,500 people throughout the year, and we really depend on students for the summer rush,"

Brasher said, adding that most student employees work from May until August.

Jackie Emhof of Lakewood's Magic Harbor in Myrtle Beach, S.C., said she assesses the need for approximately 40 additional employees this summer. "We will open the water slide on April 18 and will need about 20 people who are certified lifeguards to supervise the area," she said. About 20 people will be hired to fill various positions such as ride operators and food hosts. Emhof said there is no application deadline, and the park will be hiring people through July and August.

If these or other entertainment park opportunities in the area interest you, contact the park through its personnel division. A job in the pleasant environment of an amusement park may be just the ticket to summer employment.

Tour guides for historical sites find work in the past

By **ALSTON RUSSELL**
Staff Writer

Now is the time when parents start nagging their children about summer plans. For those who have avoided the summer school trap, these plans may be far from crystallization. If the thought of working as a bank teller or waiting tables reeks of monotony, historical sites may offer a fresh alternative. Some college students find the experience of working as a tour guide at a historic site more valuable than the tips left on the restaurant tables.

"You do it for the reward, not the money," said Bob Stern, director of information and public relations at Old Salem, in a recent telephone interview.

Old Salem, located in Winston-Salem, hires several college students each summer to serve as hostesses. Dressed in 18th-century Moravian attire, these students answer questions and tell the history of the

various buildings and crafts in the village, Stern said.

New Bern's Tryon Palace, the home of several North Carolina colonial governors, also hires college students for the summer. Wearing traditional 18th-century dress, they "describe the social history of the century while leading visitors through the palace," said Nancy Blades, director of education at Tryon Palace.

Colonial Williamsburg offers an even larger variety of historical interpretation jobs to students, according to a recent interview with Terrence Burwell, employment specialist for Colonial Williamsburg Association.

"Interpreters work in the areas of textiles, food programs, blacksmithing, foundry, print shops, silver-smithing, and musical instruments," Burwell said. "They relay specific information to the visitors about a certain trade or craft as it was done in the 18th century."

These hostess and interpreter jobs require approximately 40 hours of work a week with some weekend and holidays included, Stern and the others said. Pay ranges from minimum wage at Old Salem and Tryon Palace to \$4 to \$6, depending on experience, at Williamsburg.

Jobs in the restaurants, hotels, and gift shops attract those students who prefer waiting and sales jobs. Students are often hired to work in one of the five hotels or 10 restaurants associated with Williamsburg, Burwell said.

Biltmore House and Gardens in Asheville hires college students for positions in its winery, also. A few UNC students have worked as wine servers and sales clerks in the winery, said Jennie Carpenter, administrative clerk of Biltmore, in a telephone interview.

If one can sacrifice money for knowledge, the Atlanta Historic Society warrants close scrutiny. The Society's Walter McElreath

Museum uses volunteers to catalog and register items, care for exhibits, and occasionally plan upcoming exhibits, according to Mary Carter Whitten, curator of education and public programs.

Students can work in the library and archives or the education or publication departments as well. "We would love information about their (students') interests," Whitten said. "We try to match jobs to the person's interest."

Two Atlanta historical mansions, the Telley-Smith House and the Swan House, also provide the typical tour guide opportunities. Volunteers can "learn historic house site management," Whitten said.

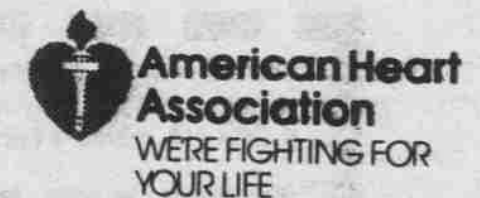
Prospective employees should not let the historical trivia associated with these sites intimidate them. Most of the sites do prefer an interest in history, but prior knowledge is not

required. Places such as Old Salem, Tryon Palace, and Colonial Williamsburg train their tour guides once they are hired.

"We want students who like people and enjoy relating to people," Stern said. The employers interviewed said they were basically looking for interested, dependable students who enjoy people and learning.

Interviews have already begun for summer positions at these sites. Tour guide openings fill rapidly, but positions in restaurants, gift shops, and volunteer services are still open.

For application information, contact the desired historical site.



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