

Splash World prepares to open



Lifeguards are being trained by StarGuard ELITE at Niagara Amusement Park & Splash World on Grand Island Boulevard. (Photo from <https://www.facebook.com/splashworldny>)

Lifeguard training. (Photo from <https://www.facebook.com/splashworldny>)

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port, they still have many friends and family on Grand Island. The fan page has lots of vintage photos of the early years of the park and its iconic rides.

"I remember going there as a small kid, up on through my teenage years and even later on, even when it was owned by Apex," she said. "The park was successful at many points in time ... before its later decline ... why not share and rehash the excitement to get it going."

Debi said she has reached out to various park officials, and she

likes what they are saying about the plans. She encouraged them to provide details when something new has happened. She noted the response on the fan page has been pretty positive, across the board. "The excitement is only growing."

She said it helps that people shared some drone footage of the work underway to get the waterpark ready. "They wanted to open this summer, albeit it's August, it still looks like it's on track (to open) before things cool off."

As far as the theme for the whole park, Darren said it sounds like the new operators are trying to re-

vive the idea of the classic American amusement park, not a bunch of carnival rides.

"You can't be Darien Lake, you can't be Canada's Wonderland ... create something unique unto yourself," he said. "I think it's going to resonate with people."

Debi agreed: "I think it's a great fit."

"When Fantasy Island closed, our son was very upset," Darren said. "He loved Fantasy Island. He loved going there. It was part of growing up when he was a little bit younger. Ever since he heard the news that the park is going back, he can hard-

ly contain his excitement."

He added, "I think people need to understand that, when the park shut down, there was a lot of vandalism to the park, a lot of broken glass, a lot of graffiti, and they're basically rebuilding this park. So, I think people need to measure their expectations

and be patient. It's going to take a while to bring this back to what it was, and hopefully even make it better. Be patient, be understanding. There's a staffing shortage right now. It's hard to hire people.

"Let's give them a chance and let's root them on."

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