

# TRAVEL

O&amp;E MONDAY, MAY 13, 1991

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IRIS SANDERSON JONES

## Military can visit Sea World for free

Anheuser-Busch Inc., which owns four Sea World and two Busch Gardens facilities as well as Cypress Gardens in Florida, has joined forces with the United Service Organization in a program called Yellow Ribbon Summer.

The program includes a \$1.2 million Desert Storm Scholarship Fund for children and spouses of American soldiers killed in the Persian Gulf. The scholarships can be used at any college, junior college or accredited school of vocational training without regard to financial need or academic achievement.

If you're interested, contact USO world headquarters in Washington D.C. by calling (202) 783-8121.

THE PROGRAM also allows active-duty military and reservists and dependents to visit the company's seven entertainment parks free from Armed Forces Day, May 18, through Labor Day, Sept. 2.

The parks include Sea Worlds in San Diego, Calif., San Antonio, Texas, Orlando, Fla. and Aurora, Ohio near Cleveland.

Free admission is also available at Busch Gardens parks in Williamsburg, Va. and Tampa, Fla. as well as Cypress Gardens in Winter Haven, Fla.

The USO celebrated its 50th anniversary in February. It serves more than two million military personnel and their families.

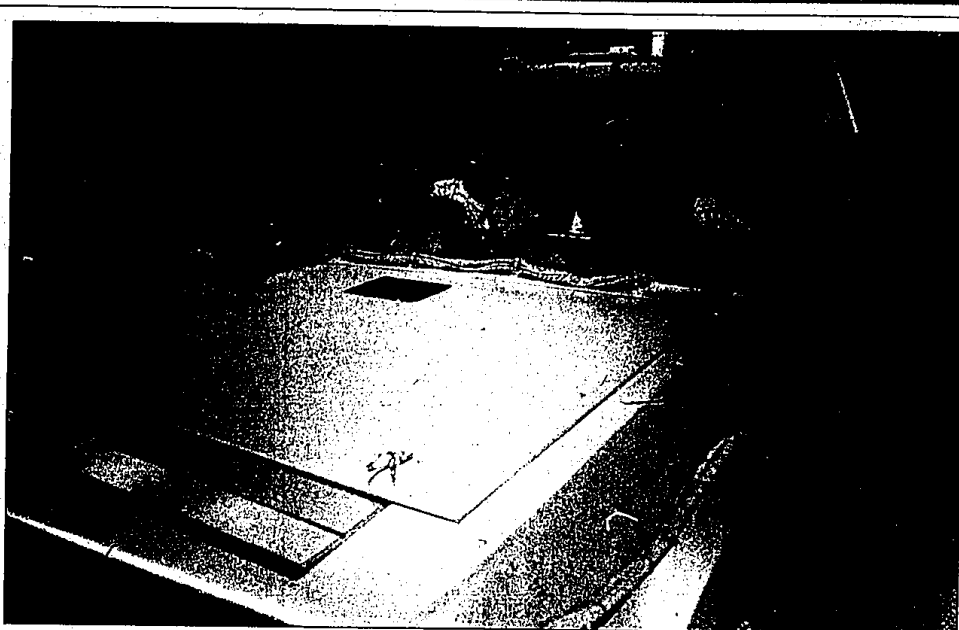
TECUMSEH, MICH. holds its 16th annual historic house tour noon to 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, May 18-19. Promenade the Past 1991 includes seven restored houses and the old stone church that serves as a headquarters for the Tecumseh Area Historical Society and the Promenade itself.

Tickets are \$5 before May 17, \$6 the day of the tour, \$5 anytime for seniors and students. For information, call (517) 423-2374.

THE BAHAMAS are offering a new wrinkle, maybe two new wrinkles, to the travel scene. The promotion-minded islands, determined to jump-start a summer season, have appointed Vernal Sands "Director of Sunshine."

His first official act is to launch an adult spring break promotion that gives travelers a chance to combine college-style shenanigans with other Bahamas attractions at a discount May 24 to June 30. Bookings made by June 20 entitle you to special air and hotel rates, with packages starting as low as \$350 for a three-night stay.

It's a promotion, but it brings up an important point. The Caribbean is not much hotter in summer than winter. We go south mid-winter because it's cold here. And we don't usually go to the islands mid-summer because it's hot here. Check it out with your travel agent.



Photos courtesy of Universal Studios

The car in Back to the Future — The Ride seats eight, more than can be said for the standard DeLorean, but doesn't actually go anywhere. Hydraulics and special effects make the "ride" what it is.

## 'Future' ride a kick for Florida visitors

By Iris Sanderson Jones  
special writer

Back to the Future — The Ride, the newest thrill at Universal Studios in Orlando, Fla., opened May 1 after a month of technical rehearsal. Michael J. Fox, who starred in the three versions of "Back to the Future," was on hand for the event.

Was the ride thrilling? The VIPs who attended the opening were given only water or champagne before

they experienced the ride, which should tell you something.

If you are a roller coaster fan, you know that exciting moment when you are pulled up the tracks to the very top of an impossible slope, poised to plummet down, down, down.

Back to the Future — The Ride is a different experience. You "fly" at the speed of sound around city skylines, crash through signs, plunge into volcanoes and lift off to outer space, screaming all the way, but your con-

veyance never actually moves away from the place where you entered it.

Can you be satisfactorily scared out of your wits if you don't physically round a curve at hundreds of miles an hour?

I am a coward at heart, so I had no intention of finding out for myself, but the least I could do for my readers was check out the surroundings.

Universal Studios opened last year as a \$630 million joint venture of MCA Inc. (which owns Universal Studios in California) and the London-based Rank Organization. You enter the park at the intersection of I-4 and the Florida Turnpike in Orlando.

You need not pay the admission price to visit the largest Hard Rock Cafe in the world, which can be entered from inside or outside the park.

Admission to the Studios for fun lovers 12 years old or older, including tax, is \$30.74 for one day, \$51.94 for two days, \$21.38 and \$41.34 respectively for kids 3 to 11. Ages 2 and under are free.

Many people buy tickets at a discount through air/hotel/park packages. Once you have paid admission, rides, attractions and Nickelodeon Studio tours are free. Parking fees are \$4 for cars and \$6 for recreational vehicles.

Many of the rides are not suitable for babies and very small children. Universal provides a "baby exchange area" so dad can ride while mom holds the baby, and vice versa.

Like most theme parks, you walk around with a map in your hand. Each area has stage shows, shops, rides, etc. This map is color-coded so you can pick your way through the highlights from the front lot, where the facilities are concentrated.

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This scene of fictional Hill Valley is part of Back to the Future — The Ride's setting.



## Blastoff

### Neil Armstrong museum entertains Ohio tourists

By Kathy Wall  
special writer

At 10:56:20 p.m. EDT, July 20, 1969, Neil A. Armstrong stepped onto the moon's surface and said, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

Armstrong is one of many Ohioans who dared follow his dreams and reach for the stars. The history of these men and women is recorded in the Neil A. Armstrong Air and Space Museum in his hometown, Wapakoneta, Ohio.

Ohio Gov. James Rhodes announced plans for the museum while Armstrong was still on the moon. It opened on the third anniversary of the lunar landing in 1972.

Travelers often spot the dome rising out of the hillside just north of Wapakoneta on the west side of I-75 near the Bellfontaine Road exit.

Armstrong is a local point. The FSD Skylancer he flew for the Air Force in the early 50s stands as a welcome beacon to the museum. It's perched at the end of a long run-

way, or imaginary "lunar landing strip" complete with blue runway lights, that leads to the domed museum.

The entry hall of the futuristic concrete structure is lined with photographs of Ohio's 15 astronauts. Newly appointed astronauts are added as soon as the poster-size photos are available.

The museum is set up chronologically. Beginning with man's earliest attempts at flight, the first gallery contains the Wright brother's Model G aero-boat that flew from the Miami River in 1913. The basket and trophies of Dayton balloonist Warren Riser are exhibited near the dirigible airplane from the Toledo II, the first manned and powered machine to fly over New York City.

The sloping carpeted walkway leads to the second gallery. Dominating space here is the red and yellow Aerona TAC Champion that the 15-year-old Armstrong used to earn his pilot's license. The bicycle he rode to the airfield is also on display.

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