

# Lake Compounce

## NEW ENGLAND'S FAMILY THEME PARK

***For further information, contact:***

*Tracey Blackman*

*860-583-3300 ext. 6902*

*tracey@lakecompounce.com*

*or*

*Dawn McAbee*

*860-652-0300 ext. 540*

*dawnm@cashman-katz.com*

### **America's Oldest Amusement Park Celebrates 160 Years of Family Entertainment**

**BRISTOL/SOUTHINGTON, CT (March 22, 2006)** – Lake Compounce Family Theme Park will open its doors on May 13 for its 160<sup>th</sup> season, making Lake Compounce the oldest continuously operating amusement park in the country. Home to the only roller coaster built into the side of a mountain, and famous for free soda, the history of the park is rich.

To commemorate the 160<sup>th</sup> season, there will be a plaque placed in the park and various celebrations throughout the summer.

The story of Lake Compounce began in 1846 when Mr. Gad Norton, a property-owner in Bristol, Connecticut, was approached by scientists who wished to use his 28-acre lake for an "experiment in electricity". The well-publicized event drew thousands of spectators to Mr. Norton's beautiful 300+ acres of property amidst woods and water. Though the scientific experiment was a dud, visitors were so enamored with Mr. Norton's property that he decided to open it to the public as a picnicking and swimming area.

From that day forward, the property grew as a family amusement center to include rides and a concert ballroom. In 1914, the Green Dragon, Lake Compounce's first electric powered roller coaster was opened. In 1937, the "Starlite Ballroom" was expanded to host acts such as Cab Calloway and the young, up and coming vocalist, Frank Sinatra. The genuine open-air trolley and America's oldest Carousel, both built in 1911, remain favorites of park visitors to this day.

The Norton's owned the park until 1986 when it was sold to a series of owners. In 1996 Kennywood Entertainment purchased the park. Since then more than \$60 million in rides and attractions have been added, and the park continues to grow. This season the park will unveil a thrilling new ride, "Thunder N Lightning": a screaming swing which catapults riders to heights of almost 100 feet at 60 miles per hour.

Lake Compounce has been awarded "Best of Connecticut" by readers of Connecticut Magazine for the past 6 years in a row. With amazing new rides and entertainment, Lake Compounce is expecting its 160<sup>th</sup> season to be the best yet.

#### **ABOUT LAKE COMPOUNCE:**

Lake Compounce, New England's Family Theme Park, is owned by Kennywood Entertainment of Pittsburg, PA. Kennywood assumed control of the park in 1996 and invested nearly \$60 million in rides and attractions. New for the 2006 season is "Thunder N Lightning", a screaming swing with two giant swinging arms that will hold 32 passengers and will catapult riders to heights of almost 100 feet at 60 miles per hour, with four G's of force.