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Patrons of Adventure Bay Family Water Park stay cool Thursday afternoon as the temperature hit 101 degrees. The water park opened for its second season on May 29 and is easily keeping up with last year's admission numbers.

By JESSICA CRAWFORD • Daily Leader Anyone who thought the newness of Adventure Bay Family Water Park would wear off after the first year of operation better think again. With record numbers through the gate just last Sunday, Adventure Bay Family Water Park continues to prove it will be quite a factor in the community's summer plans.

When asked how many patrons have visited the park so far this summer, manager Curtis Berens had a simple answer, "a bunch." "The biggest day was 1,183 through the gate with 890 in here at one time – that was this past Sunday," he said. "Through Sunday of last week we had 6,904 people. We had 1,060 the first day we opened. We are right in line with last year. Through last week, we are averaging 756 a day. I won't let more than 900 people in at a time, that is my maximum."

Berens credits his staff for making a day at Adventure Bay Family Water Park an enjoyable experience.

"I praise them," he said. "I take a lot of pride in them, and it means a lot to me that they do such a good job. I have a staff of 77, and we have anywhere from 25 to 35 on duty, depending on how busy we are at that time. I have 12 to 15 guards on all the time, once again, that depends on how many people are here. Nine on the deck is my minimum, I usually have 11 to 12 out there. When we get really busy, I put them in the towers, as well, to keep things safe in the towers."

Berens makes sure his staff is always on their toes. With such large crowds attending the park, the staff must be ready for anything. In-service training is something Berens insists upon in order to continue to provide a safe environment. Four members of his staff are very instrumental in providing such training.

“We are doing regular in-service training every two weeks,” he said. “Actually, I have an EMT on staff, Sayde McVey is becoming an EMT, Chance Carter is a former Marine – Brandi Price and Nikita Cole are two of my other leads. Brandi is kind of like my assistant this year. They are my lead staff. They take care of all my guards, all my in-service training. They are kind of like my eyes and ears and legs out there on the deck so I can be a manager.”

Experience, along with continuous training has already paid off for those attending the water park.

“We have had less incidents this year than we had last year,” Berens said. “We addressed some of the problems we had incidents with and corrected those issues. Now we are having a much better success rate with people not getting little cuts, bumps and scratches.”

The primary cause of several of these minor injuries, last year, could be attributed the slides. This year, Berens said, the problem is under control.

“We did a lot of work on the slides this past winter,” he said. “The boys have been waxing on them.”

Berens said this year’s concession stand has proven to be much more profitable than last year. He attributes the jump in sales to a larger range of choices.

“Our concession stand this year is up about 20 percent because are offering many more items than last year,” he said. “We have frito chili pie, chili cheese burritos, chili cheese hot dogs, mini tacos, cracker jacks, more frozen products and we will have a full line of snow cones here pretty soon. I have bubblegum, cotton candy and all of those flavors coming.”

On May 29, when Adventure Bay Family Water Park officially opened for the summer season, Berens said everything ran like clockwork. That, he credits to the individuals who gave of their time to lend a hand in getting the water park ready for its second season.

“We did have to do some of the normal repairs that you are just going to have to do every year,” he said. “Chance and myself spent three months working pretty hard on it. I had over 570 hours of community service help this year, both from the high school and the court system.

“It was a tremendous help, I never could have got all that work done by myself,” he continued. “I just want to say thanks to all of the people who helped with the community service program so we could get the facility open. There are certainly a few people that I can’t thank enough, they know who they are.”

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