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Wake Nation opens with new family park



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By Eric Robinette

Staff Writer

FAIRIFIELD — Wake Nation, Fairfield's wakeboarding park, launched into its sixth season on Thursday with a new attraction for families: the Aqua Glide water park.

That park, located next to the main lake in Joyce Park, was added this year after a successful run at Wake Nation's park in Houston, Texas, last year, said Brian Frantz, the park's manager.

Wake Nation attracts between 3,000 and 4,000 people per year, with visitors coming from as far as Alabama and Minnesota, Frantz said.

"Wakeboarding's just a good way to be outdoors and enjoy the water. It's a good sport and a healthy activity. Wake Nation is the only cable park within six or eight hours of here," said Troy Young of Brazil, Ind., who was at the park Thursday.

The new water park features water slides for both adults and children. There is a smaller inflated slide and a jungle gym on the small pond. Parents can also get on the slides and other attractions with their children, Frantz said. The new park received few visitors on its first day, but that didn't surprise Frantz, who said he expects attendance to pick up once children are off school in the summer.

The main attraction remains the wakeboarding, which is kind of a combination of waterskiing and skateboarding. Wakeboarders hang on to a cable with a pulley mechanism guiding them around the lake. They can then jump and flip over the ramps in the water.

The lake for the adult wake boarders is largely unchanged, but the park now serves beer and wine.

"We did add one new rail — nice and mellow. Kind of easy for beginners as well as wake skaters. We have the pavilion, so if you come and have a birthday party for children, you would get your own private area with picnic tables and lawn chairs," Frantz said.

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