Attorney Ben Stewart Alerts Public to Amusement Park Accident Statistics in Interview with LawyersandSettlements.com

LawyersandSettlements.com recently interviewed attorney Ben Stewart of Stewart Law Group, PLLC, about the dangers associated with amusement park accidents. In his interview, Stewart provided insight to the various types of amusement park injuries that can occur, as well as some tips on what amusement park visitors should do if they have been involved in, or suspect they've been involved in, an amusement park accident.

Arlington, TX (PRWEB) August 03, 2013 -- Bigger. Higher. Faster. That seems to be the goal of many major amusement park attractions in their quest to draw in thrill-seekers to the nation's theme parks each summer. Take, for example, the new Six Flags' Texas SkyScreamer which, according to an msn.com report, lifts riders up 40 stories and swings them around at speeds of up to 35 miles per hour*. With the ever-increasing complexity and speed of newer attractions, the concept of a potential injury at an amusement or theme park may not be surprising. And yet, according to attorney Ben Stewart of Stewart Law Group PLLC in a recent interview with LawyersandSettlements.com, many amusement park accidents involve the 'quieter' rides at smaller parks.

"Even coin-operated amusements found at shopping malls can be a source for injury to children", Stewart says. A report released earlier this year by the Nationwide Children’s Hospital in Columbus Ohio that studied emergency room visits over a 20-year period from 1990 through 2010 concluded no fewer than 11,000 injuries to children from coin-operated mall amusements**. Overall, according to the Ohio study 92,885 children in the US sought treatment in emergency rooms following injuries stemming from an amusement park accident during that time period.

According to the Nationwide Children’s Hospital study, 20 children a day were treated in a US emergency ward for injuries related to, or stemming from an amusement located in a theme park or mall. The study concluded that the average annual injury rate due to amusement park accidents was 6.24 injuries per 100,000 US children. **

Those findings appear to challenge a statistic observed by the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAPPA), which holds that the chance of being seriously injured on an amusement is one in 24 million.***

Attorney Ben Stewart's firm has handled a number of amusement park accident lawsuits. “We had a doctor who suffered a brain injury on a Mission to Mars ride at Disney World, a nurse who broke her ankles on a waterslide and a little girl whose intestines were flooded with water from a malfunctioning water jet on another waterslide. There are of course less serious injuries, but many can be catastrophic.”

A recent theme park accident occurred July 19th at Six Flags Over Texas when a 52-year-old patron fell to her death from the Texas Giant rollercoaster. Rosa Ayala-Gaona, according to various media reports including ABCnews.com, had expressed concern about being properly strapped in prior to the ride commencing. Tragically, Ayala-Gaona somehow slipped out of a T-shaped restraint and tumbled 75 feet to the ground below.

According to Stewart, a common tendency among injured patrons, beyond an obviously catastrophic injury, is
to walk away mistakenly thinking an injury has not occurred. “People get off the roller coaster and feel like they have motion sickness,” says Stewart. “They don’t realize that they have actually suffered a closed head injury. The nurse that broke her ankles thought she was okay. She didn’t want to spoil the day for her family and it was only the next day that her feet turned black and she realized how seriously she had been hurt,” says Stewart.

The issue, notes the attorney, is that a delayed response puts the potential for compensation with an amusement park accident lawsuit in jeopardy.

“Naturally, your first concern is medical attention, but you should also report that accident and get it on the record. If you wait too long, the midway may have been disassembled and moved on to the next location,” Stewart says. “There’s no way to see how the ride malfunctioned, or question the workers. The evidence is gone.” It’s easy enough to do, Stewart says. A patron exits a ride feeling woozy and simply thinks it’s a temporary reaction to the motion of the ride. By then it is too late to file an incident report.

“You have to preserve evidence. Alert the management that something has happened,” Stewart says. “Ask to fill out an incident report. Get a copy of the report and get a name,” says Stewart. “We have turned down very legitimate cases because there was no official incident report.”

LawyersandSettlements.com provides special legal news coverage of amusement park accident lawsuits along with information regarding legal help for amusement park accident injuries.

*"Recoil in terror at Six Flags' new 40-story open-air swing ride", msn.com, 5/30/13, see - now.msn.com/texas-skyscraper-at-six-flags-is-tallest-swing-ride-in-the-world

** "US Pediatric Injuries Involving Amusement Rides, 1990-2010", Meghan C. Thompson, Thiphalak Chounthirath, Huiyun Xiang, Gary A. Smith, Clinical Pediatrics, May 2013, see - intl-cpj.sagepub.com/content/52/5/433.abstract


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