



Business / Tourism

SeaWorld, Guy Harvey team up on ocean conservation



Marine wildlife artist Guy Harvey will paint this Mako mural at SeaWorld Orlando.

(SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment Inc.)



By **Arlene Satchell**
Sun Sentinel

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SeaWorld, GuyHarvey partner on ocean health

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SeaWorld announced Wednesday that it is partnering with conservationist Guy Harvey to promote ocean health and shark conservation.

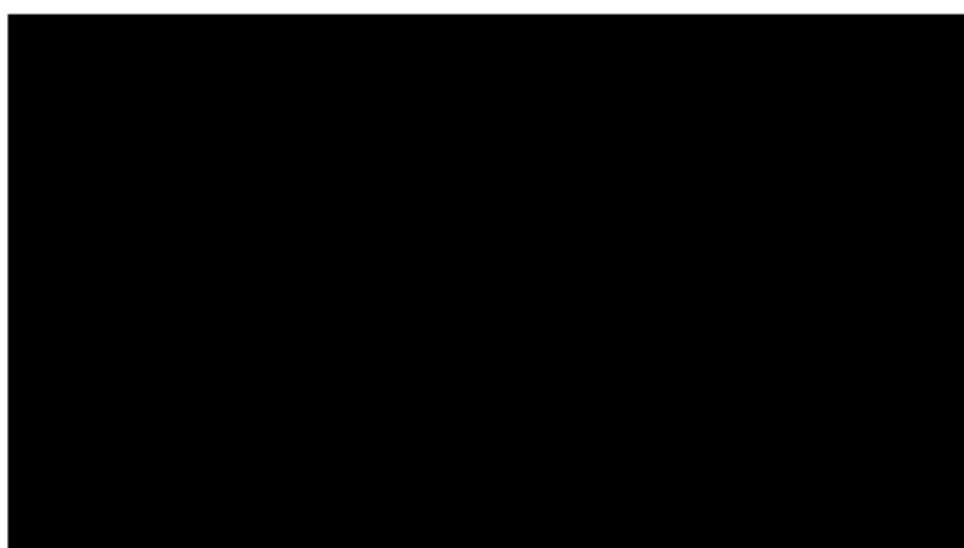
The focal point will be SeaWorld Orlando's new roller coaster, named Mako for one of the ocean's fastest known sharks.

Harvey and Joel Manby, president and CEO of SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, made the announcement at Nova Southeastern University's Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography in Hollywood, home of the Guy Harvey Research Institute.

The partnership will further SeaWorld's mission to protect marine animals and their habitats and also create meaningful experiences for its theme park visitors, the company said.

The coaster, scheduled to open June 10, will feature interactive exhibits for people waiting in line for the ride. Among the "edu-tainment" offerings will be shark-tagging videos filmed by the research institute from expeditions off Mexico and others in its library, Harvey said.

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programs to encourage conservation.

As part of the partnership, Harvey will make appearances at the theme park and in coming weeks travel there to paint a signature Mako mural for the attraction's launch.

"This [partnership] is about shark research, shark education and shark conservation," he said. "We're dealing with extinction for probably 50 or 60 or 70 species of sharks."

Guy Harvey paintings and apparel will be created exclusively for SeaWorld and sold in the shops exiting the Mako ride. A portion of sales will benefit the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation.

Harvey's foundation, based in Davie, funds scientific research and educational

Asked Wednesday about the value of the



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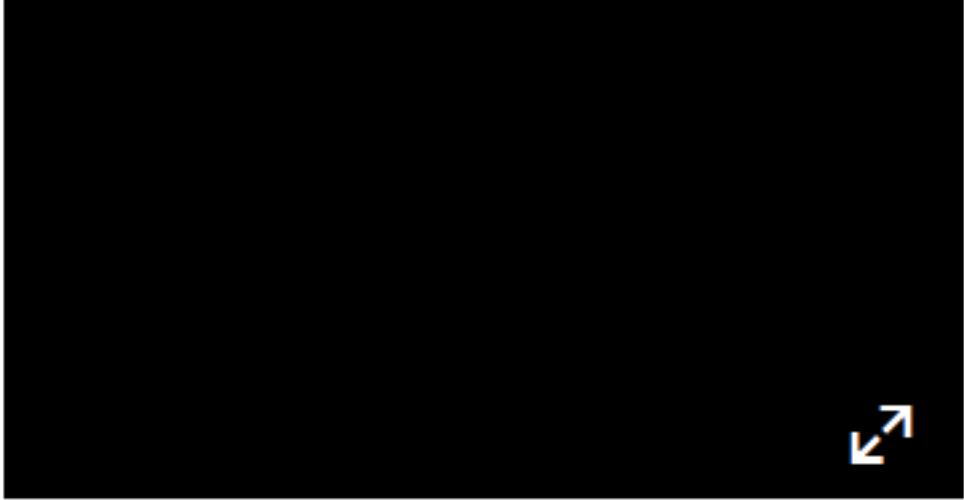
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Mako will be Orlando's tallest, fastest and longest coaster.
(SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment Inc)

partnership, Harvey said: "Priceless."

"Through the vehicle of SeaWorld, we can now tell the story, the remarkable story about these animals to a much greater and wider audience than I or my organization can reach," Harvey said.

SeaWorld has encountered a storm of criticism since the 2013 documentary "Blackfish" questioned its treatment of

captive orcas. The company last month announced that it would phase out its orcas, and it has since tried to cultivate a reputation for conservation rather than controversy.

Members of SeaWorld's animal care team recently joined a Guy Harvey Research Institute shark tagging expedition off the coast of Mexico. They tagged six Mako sharks over the course of four days.

Those sharks will be followed by students and researchers at Guy Harvey's Institute at Nova Southeastern University and can be viewed by the public online at GHRitracking.org.

"We're committed as an organization to use our platform of 20,000 employees and also 20 million guests that come to our park to better educate people about the plight of animals in the wild," Manby said. "Unfortunately, the statistics are not good for sharks in the wild."

Manby said he was shocked to learn that about 100 million sharks are killed every year, 73 million of them to fund and supply a global shark-finning trade.

About a third of all sharks are on the endangered species list, Manby said.

"We want to make sure that message about sharks and their plight gets out to more and more people," he said. "We will put meaningful dollars, research and man hours towards reducing this troubling trend."

Mako will be Orlando's tallest, fastest and longest coaster. It is situated on SeaWorld's two-acre Shark Wreck Reef area, which is inspired by an underwater shipwreck.

In addition to Mako, the area features Shark Encounter, Sharks Underwater Grill, shops and educational experiences dedicated to several shark species.

Information from staff writer Sandra Pedicini was used in this report.

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