

BESA LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

THE DIGITAL NEWSPAPER



CHASING THE STORM: Vuyo, Diago, and Lesego acting all nonchalant early in the day while riding the 'Storm Chaser'.

Why Sit on a Couch When You Can Spin in a Metal Box Thingy in the Sky?

---- WRITTEN BY SOME OLD GUY

Gold Reef City. A name that has been around since what feels like the beginning of time. Your grandparents went there when they were at school. Your parents did the same. If you're in high school now, you went there yesterday, or the day before that, or last week, or pick a time in the past that correlates to when you were last there versus the time you're reading this.

But before we get into the day's play, let's have a **quick history lesson**; because things that have been around since the beginning of time, and especially things as iconic as *Gold Reef City*, deserve a trip down memory lane every once in a while. So, buckle up and make sure that bar clicks in safely because once you're locked in, there's no turning back (see what we did there?). **We're hilarious, we know.** Speaking of which, there's some hilarity involving Mrs Bosman and Miss Briers and a clicking-in bar story here somewhere, but you really had to be there to fully appreciate it.

Back to the history lesson. Did you know that *Gold Reef City Theme Park* opened in **1987** and that the park was designed to mimic the **1880s Gold Rush era**? And did you know that shaft number 14 (that was actually supposed to be number 13, but wasn't named number 13 because, you know, the number 13) was opened in 1897? Eighteen Ninety Seven! Let that sink in for a moment. Over its 84-year lifespan, (as a gold mine) it produced roughly 1.4 million kilograms of gold. **We didn't know that either.** But we do know it now and it kind of brings about a **sense of pride** because, let's be honest,

Joburg can get a bad rap sometimes and it's nice to know that there's still one or two 'gold mines' in our midst. See what we did there?

Okay, less 'yaddah-yaddah, more ching-ching'. **It was an early start** for some, especially if you're a learner who goes on one of our luxury BESA buses; a six-thirty pick up for a nine o'clock opening time seemed a tad more like a 'catching a local flight to Durbs' timeframe than a 'braving the Joburg traffic to get to a place that is, realistically, only about twenty-five minutes away timeframe. But better to be safe than sorry, you know, because with Joburg traffic **anything is quite literally possible.** But, we're 'yaddah-yaddah-ring' again aren't we?

So, let's talk about **the weather then.** Beautiful start! Clear blue skies and a warm sunny-sun-thing. Until it wasn't. Until it became un-blue skies and no sunny sun thing and more like not-clear grey rainy-rainy water falling from the sky, skies.

But that's okay, because enter *The Anaconda*. Enter *The Jozi Express*. Enter *The Tornado*, *The Mermaid*, *The Maverick*, *The Golden Loop*, *The Storm Chaser*, and other names that are designed to **evoke feelings of fear**, anxiety, stress, and nervousness. Ummmmm, so why are we doing this again? For fun you say? But such is what it is - fun. Excitement. Exhilaration. Thrill. **An absolute blast!** Special moments shared with friends! Times we'll always have in common.

Gravity - 1. BESA - 0

The Gold Reef Survivors Awards

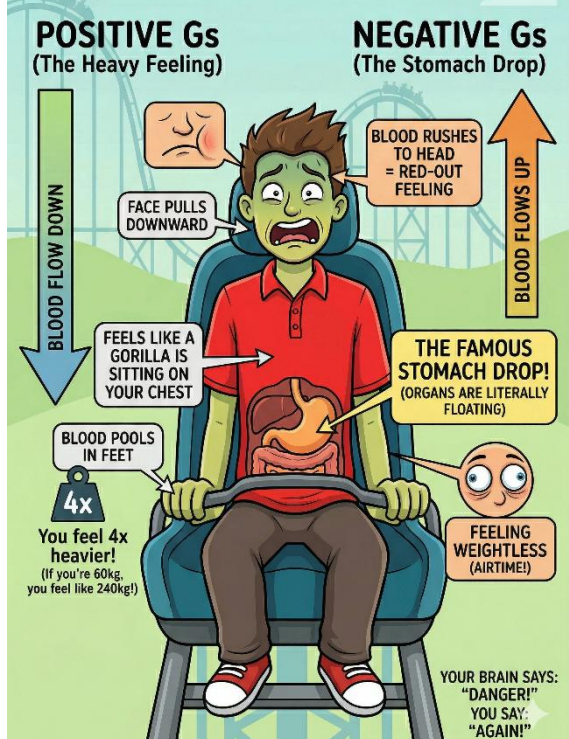
Disclaimer: Dear Parents, please be advised that during our excursion, several of our learners (and a few of our brave educators) successfully survived forces **equivalent to those experienced by fighter pilots.** So, if your child seems unusually attracted to the couch or exhibits a sudden horizontal lifestyle this weekend, please note they are simply recovering from being **four times heavier than usual.**

The 'Iron Stomach' Award: To the Grade 10 who conquered the *Golden Loop* three times. We recommend a light salad for your next visit.

The 'Abstract Artist' Award: To the anonymous riders of *The Maverick*. Your "contributions" to the concrete floor were...noted.

The 'Classroom Sanctuary' Medal: To the four educators who realised that a quiet desk and a cup of coffee are, in fact, the greatest thrills of all.

THE SCIENCE OF THE SCREAM (OR WHY YOUR FACE FEELS LIKE THAT)



What is a "G" anyway? One G is the normal pull of Earth's gravity that keeps your feet on the ground. **4Gs** means the riders felt **four times** their own body weight. So, if a learner weighs 60kg, at the bottom of that *Golden Loop*, they suddenly feel like they weigh **240kg**. This is why the "meh" feeling afterward is so palpable - **your muscles and heart just did a massive workout** without moving an inch.

And maybe even a sense of associated accomplishment; a sense of 'I overcame a fear of something' along with a sense of 'why did I choose to do this with my life when I could have stayed in bed and watched Netflix all day?'. But where would the fun be in that? Probably depends on who you ask really...

So, although a 'blow-by-blow' account of every ride and the associated euphoria each brings with it would be a fantastic read, we can't really do that mainly because, well, we only really maybe kind of only went on one ride and **it wasn't all that** euphoria-inducing. But it was *an experience*. An experience money just can't buy. You see, when you put four educators, who are far more at ease behind a desk or standing in front of a class, into a big metal box that is about to go on a big metal rail, at a 'put your pedal to the metal' speed, designed to test your mettle (see what we did there?), well, let's just say that things can get pretty interesting. It's all fun and games standing in line waiting for your turn, until it's your turn. Then you're there just **contemplating your life choices** and why you're sitting in a metal box thingy about to go on a rail thingy in the sky as opposed to 'not sitting in a metal box thingy and on a comfortable couch thingy looking at a screen thingy'. Anyways, that's where we found ourselves and to be honest, the **general consensus of 'meh'** afterwards was palpable. There were comments such as *'That's me, I'm done for the day'*, and *'The guy in front of me nearly hurled when we stopped'*, and *'Think it's time for me to retire from this now'*. We think that that general consensus is fair. One hundred percent fair...

But does a high school teacher ever truly retire from fun? Nope. Regardless of age or demeanour, our awesome staff members embraced the thrill and 'rolled back the years' by taking on all the aforementioned anxiety-inducing rides **with a sense of "Ha! Think this is stressful? Try standing up in front of a bunch of teenagers on a daily basis and teaching them something valuable. We laugh in the face of 'The Anaconda!' 'The Tower of Terror' you say? Try an 'hour of terror' in a classroom! 'The Tornado?' Ha! My whole life is a tornado!"**

Speaking of which - *The Tornado*; now everyone thinks the "big rides" are the ones to conquer but this ride is the great leveller. We'll do our best to provide a short description of how it works, although no number of adjectives will be able to capture **the true menace of this one**. So, you sit in a 'car-shaped' metal thingy with a partner. You get spun around in an anti-clockwise direction in a really big circular motion at a high speed, only to be further mini-rotated back and forth in a clockwise and anti-clockwise direction while already spinning in a clockwise direction until the car-shaped metal box thingy stops mini-spinning in that direction and **immediately mini-spins you the other way** while you're still spinning anti-clockwise in the bigger spin thingy. Many of our learners thought they *'had this one'* but many of said learners **did not** indeed *'have it'*. Most, if not all, left *The Tornado* looking decidedly 'green' and clearly feeling ill, with flushed cheeks and

red faces and sweat droplets running down their foreheads, and very **discernible thoughts of "why?"**. We're asking exactly the same question.

Now, before we end-off this award-winning bit of journalism excellence, there must be something said about **'The Maverick'** and **'The Storm Chaser'**. One of them puts you in an aeroplane metal box thingy and the other puts you in what can only be described as a **big claw-like metal pendulum** thingy with your feet dangling below (you know, because it's possible for your feet to dangle anywhere other than below you). Why anyone would look up at these rides and think *"Wow, that looks like a great time"*, **we'll never know**. But many did just that. **And kudos to them**. *The Maverick* (assuming there's a Top Gun name-reference happening here) not only takes you up **four-stories high**, it subjects you to 4Gs of force and is designed to **mimic the acrobatics of a stunt plane**. Having fun yet? Nope, because rumour has it, this was the ride that featured the most vomit-propelling moments, leaving the concrete floor looking more like a spew-strewn abstract piece of artwork rather than that of a platform from which to embark upon and disembark from a metal box aeroplane thingy. **Good times**. Needless to say, but we'll say it anyway, many a rider's dignity was left there.

The Storm Chaser looks like a **mild experience in comparison**, but alas, mild it is not. One Grade 8 learner described it as *'a gentle swing that was quite soothing until it was not a gentle-swing of soothing no more'* and then, we're assuming, it became a **violent swing of anything but soothing** spinning you around in an anti-clockwise fashion while penduluming you in a big pendulum-motion while **your feet dangle** below and follow the same penduluming and spinning motion that your body is doing because that's what your body does when it's subjected to what pendulums do. It also pendulums.

Oh wait, we nearly forgot to mention *'The Golden Loop'*. **This one is a Gold Reef Theme Park fan favourite!** Picture a roller-coaster loop in your mind's eye and you don't have to do much more to understand what this metal box thingy does. Yip, you guessed it, it does a *loop-di-loop*. You get locked into a metal-box-thingy-chair under a metal box thingy rail and then you **get flung at high speed** along a metal rail thingy while doing a forwards **loop-di-loop** until gravity takes over & stops you while climbing somewhat vertically in the air (*where you feel like you're about to go off the end of the world into the abyss*) until it sends you to do the whole thing in reverse. Sound like a great time? One of our Grade 10s thought so, she went on it **three times in a row**. Until she felt

sick. Well, we're by no means experts, but 3,5 to 4Gs of force three times in such short succession will probably do that to you. Make you feel sick that is. And not like the cool kids say, *'siiiiick'*. Not like that at all.

A trip to Gold Reef would not be complete without mentioning the carnival-type games and attractions which had a ripple-effect on our staff and learners to see **how many giant-ish plush and inflatables could be won**; and there were many that *were* won, including two giant avocados, a couple of pickles, some dinosaurs, and even a **cute little panda**. With a bit of *'tlc'* (that stands for 'tender loving care' kids) those plushies and inflatables will be a **life-long reminder** of a day well spent in the sun, with friends, love, laughter, and memories that will last well beyond anything that was ever taught in a classroom.

PS - This article number was supposed to be *Issue 13*. But has been numbered 14 because, you know, reasons.

Film-star Moments

The Actual Gold Reef Survivors



BRAVE STAFF MEMBERS: Miss Allan, Mrs Botten, Miss Briers, and Mrs Bosman who took-on the Jozi-Express (and many other rides too)



IN A PICKLE (this caption wrote itself): Sarah and Athena with **Jeremy Pickle**



GRADE 8s READY FOR ACTION: Blake, Chloe, Anesu, Alexia, Kelsey, Christopher, and Motheo.

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