

Everyone, Time to Scream! (Didn't Hear You, Mayor)

At a Coney Island Opening, One Guest Stays on the Ground, and Saves His Voice

By ASHLEY PARKER

It was not Edward Munch's "Scream." It was not Michael Jackson's "Scream." And it was not even Howard Dean's infamous Iowa scream.

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, as a crowd witnessed on Wednesday, is apparently not one for screaming.

On a day so foggy that the Boardwalk's towering Ferris wheel seemed to brush the clouds, Mr. Bloomberg traveled to Coney Island to help christen Scream Zone, an amusement park that will feature four "thrill" rides.

"Nothing says summer like Coney Island, I think it's fair to say," Mr. Bloomberg said, speaking as the sun began to peek out and the sky turned a pearly blue. "And this week may have gotten off to a damp and gloomy start, but the fact is, we are here ready to open four new spine-tingling rides at America's greatest seaside destination. And the fact that we are ready to do that means that sunny days are ahead for New York City."

Scream Zone will operate alongside Luna Park, the amusement park that opened last year and helped draw 450,000 people to Coney Island, according to the city. It has two roller coasters, the first major ones since the terrifyingly rickety Cyclone opened in 1927.

"If you have thrill-seeking friends or loud neighbors, send them down to Scream Zone," Mr. Bloomberg said. "It is the one place in the city where you can scream all you want, and nobody will call 311 to complain. Or if they do, let me say we won't pay a lot of attention to it."

The mayor does not seem to be much of a roller-coaster aficionado. He said that he might have ridden one as a boy at Revere Beach in his home state of Massachusetts, but that he had no "great recollections of it."

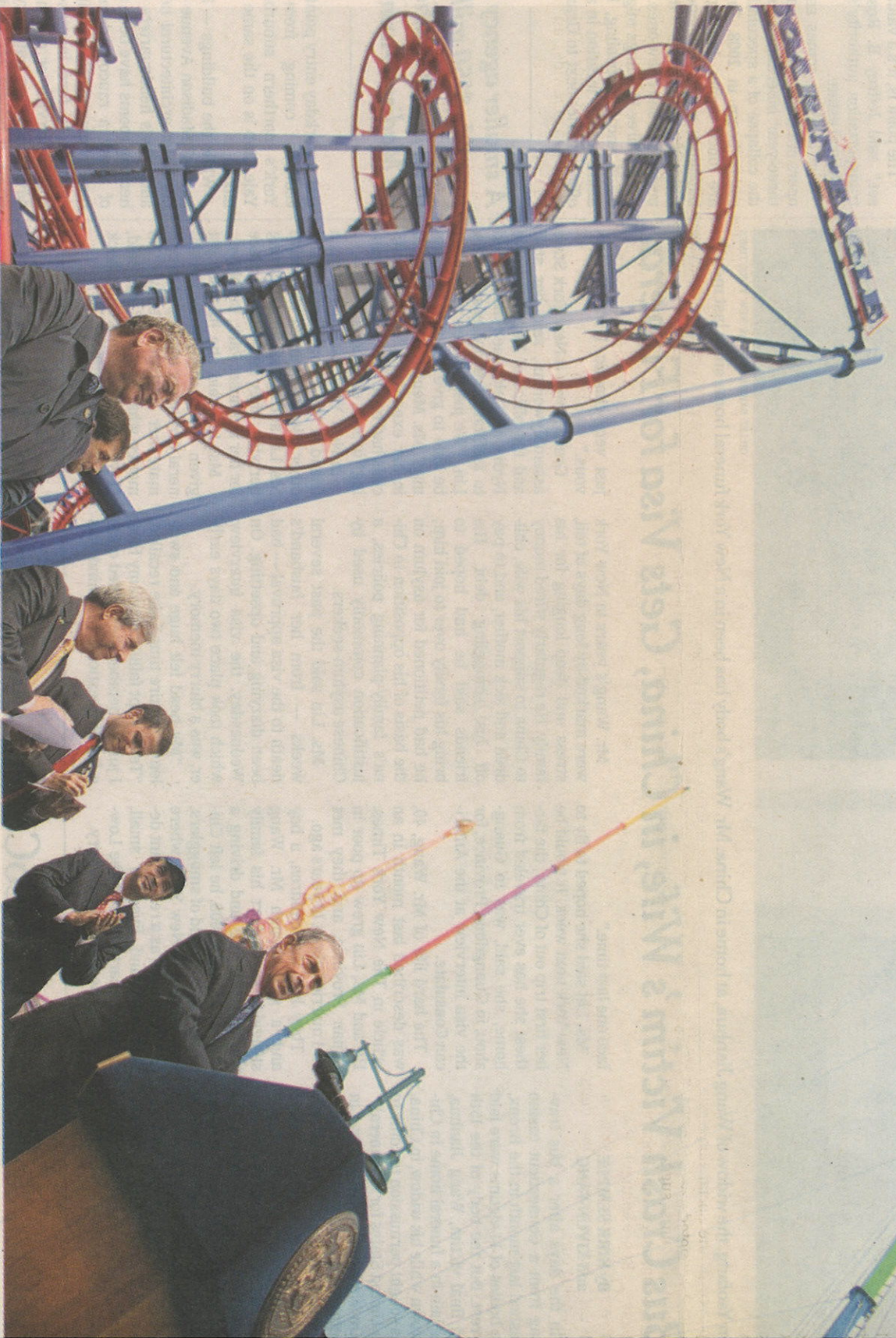
That did not stop Antonio Zamperla, the president of Zamperla S.p.A., a company that designs and manufactures amusement park rides, from rallying the crowd.

"It is now time to scream!" Mr. Zamperla said. "C'mon, where is the scream? Are you ready?" Everybody cheered, while Mr. Bloomberg opened his mouth — but no words seemed to come out. "Great," he half-quipped, half-stated as the applause died down.

The mayor seemed to relish more the idea of others twisting their stomachs into Nathan's pretzel-size knots.



Left, the Sling Shot at Scream Zone, a new amusement park in Coney Island. Below, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg at the opening of the park. When asked if he would be going on a test run, the mayor, with a grin, said he was too busy with "pressing city business."



PHOTOGRAPHS BY YANA PASKOVA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

"We have a special announcement today," he said when he took the podium. "The members of the press have volunteered to go on all of the rides, but no seat belts."

And when he introduced Marty Markowitz, the Brooklyn borough president, the mayor joked that Mr. Markowitz had volunteered to go on every ride when Scream Zone was ready.

"I said yes," Mr. Markowitz said. "I will go on that sling-shot ride right over there, provided that the mayor ponies up thousands of hundred-dollar

bills, high up, so that it will soften my fall. I don't see a buck out there, mayor!"

Finally, it was time to scream. The mayor made his way to the Sling Shot, a large blue and yellow orblike contraption that shoots riders 150 feet into the air at 90 miles per hour, and began counting down.

"Get ready, they're going up," Mr. Bloomberg said, looking skyward. "0, 1, 2, 3."

With that, he flipped a large black switch and, after a brief pause, the orb shot into the air.

Reporting the News on Bloomberg, for Bloomberg

By ASHLEY PARKER

Henry Goldman writes his articles on a Bloomberg terminal. His paychecks are stamped Bloomberg L.P. His company ID badge: Bloomberg. And the subject of his stories? Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg.

Mr. Goldman is Bloomberg's man on Mr. Bloomberg. For 10 years, his assignment has included chronicling Mr. Bloomberg's ups and downs for the global news service the mayor founded. Now, as Mr. Bloomberg's third term wobbles through a rough start, with his approval ratings the lowest they have been in eight years and news coverage increasingly critical, Mr. Goldman's task has gotten trickier: maintaining his down-the-middle style during one of the toughest periods of the mayor's admin-

istration.

Mr. Goldman's job is inherently problematic: cover the mayor too positively and risk looking like a sycophant; cover the mayor too negatively and risk the ire of the man who pays his salary.

"I can't think of a more uncomfortable position to be in," said Joyce Purnick, the author of "Mike Bloomberg: Money, Power, Politics" and a former City Hall bureau chief for The New York Times. "I'm not suggesting any direct pressure to write a certain way or cover something or not cover something or ask something or not ask something. I don't think Henry would put up with that. But the pressure to just stand up straight and keep things objective — it's just got to be very, very difficult. I don't know how he does it."

While much of Mr. Goldman's work is praised by his colleagues, Bloomberg News's coverage of the mayor has come in for some criticism. Last month, an article in Editor & Publisher magazine criticized the New York news media for the way it covered Mr. Bloomberg's handling of the December blizzard that left the city paralyzed. Bloomberg News, the article reported, "totally ignored the intense debate over the mayor's whereabouts as 20 inches of snow closed in on New York."

"The news service," said the article, written by Allan Wolper, "behaved as if City Hall had sent over a city editor to make sure the majority owner of its company wouldn't get into trouble during any of his snow days."

Mr. Goldman, 61, has covered some of



MICHAEL APLETON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Henry Goldman is the City Hall reporter for Bloomberg News.

A veteran reporter who was once given a 'Rock and a Hard Place Award'

Mr. Goldman's portfolio includes titles other than the mayor. Bloomberg News describes him as a state and local municipal finance reporter, and says that differentiates him from other reporters based at City Hall. Mr. Goldman declined to be interviewed for this article, but in 2002, he told American Journalism Review, "It's a difficult assignment."

"I'll stick to documents, what he says and what he does and what others say and will do it faithfully," he said in an interview. "In this job, I'm going to be a lot more conservative writing about