

# Storyland and Playland board members resign, fundraising to start

By Marc Benjamin

The Rotary Storyland and Playland board resigned Wednesday night except for one board member who will join a new management committee overseen by Fresno Chaffee Zoo Corporation officials.

Wayne Thomas, a Fresno lawyer, is the lone Storyland and Playland board member to join the new board that includes businessmen Scott Miller and Bruce Batti, as well as retired Fresno County Supervisor Susan Anderson and John Valentino, Fresno Chaffee Zoo Corp. board chairman. Storyland and Playland's board had about a dozen members.

An evaluation of the parks shows about \$850,000 in repairs are needed. The board for the two parks had trouble raising money and attendance was falling since peaking in 2011.

Under an agreement reached last week and approved by the Fresno Chaffee Zoo Corporation, zoo officials will oversee the new board and manage the parks, initiate a fundraising effort and use zoo employees on a donated or reimbursement basis to get the parks operating again by early next year. Storyland and Playland will also employ its own staff as required for operations, renovation or maintenance.

On Thursday, a fundraising effort will be announced by Valley Yellow Pages, which will send preaddressed envelopes inserted into bags of each of the 290,000 phone books delivered in the Fresno area.