



Wednesday, January 31, 2007

## **Thrill ride taps creative side Psychotherapist is recognized for Web designed.**

By SALVADOR HERNANDEZ

The Orange County Register

ALISO VIEJO – Psychotherapist Jim Strawn needed an outlet from his work, something to lighten up his days from his work.

After a trip to Disney World in Orlando, Florida, the 40-year-old Aliso Viejo resident found an idea.

A fan of the classic television show "The Twilight Zone, Strawn was blown away by the Tower of Terror ride at the theme park. He decided to express his creative side by creating a Web site dedicated to the ride.

After about a year of work, Strawn's Web site was recognized as the 2006 Web Site of the Year by the American Association of Webmasters.

Here is more on the creator.

**Q: When did you launch the site?**

**A:** We launched the Web site in August. In October, I was told we received the Gold Site of the Month award. I was very excited then. They informed me we were in the site of the year running. At that point I thought, with all those applications, I figured we couldn't win.

**Q: What made you take on such a project?**

**A:** When I got out of grad school and was licensed as a psychotherapist, one of my mentors said that when you're dealing with so many problems, you need to get away and get some peace of mind. I kind of took that to heart and for the first time ever I got myself an annual pass to Disneyland.

I started meeting a bunch of people in special events (at Disney). One thing led to another and I got involved in a group called the National Fantasy Fan Club. I call it the Disney geeks.

**Q: Why the Terror of Terror?**

**A:** I'm a big "Twilight Zone" fan and when I saw they were going to do a ride, I thought, 'This is incredible.' When they finally green-lighted the one here, I was ecstatic.

I needed a creative outlet and I thought this would be great to do. I thought about doing 13 different topics to the 13 different floors.

**Q: Did it help? What was the creative process like?**

**A:** It was kind of a tedious process, but this was tapping into the creative side that had been stagnant. There were days I thought, 'What am I going to do? This is too much.' It was a lot more work than I thought it would be. I'm a perfectionist. I want to do something, I want to do it right and I want to do it good.

There were times I would just shut the door to my office and work on it for eight hours

during the weekend.

**Q: Why did you continue doing the work?**

**A:** Probably the whole thought that I was going to finish what I started. I put money and time into this.

**Q: Did you have any help?**

**A:** I had some help from one of my friends who lives in Tennessee and is a Web designer. His name is Jim too. He's credited in the site as well as a girl named Luisa who did a lot of art.

**Q: How much maintenance work do you do to the site now?**

**A:** I do updates on Mondays.

**Q: How many visitors have you had on the site?**

**A:** Right now, we're close to two million.

**Contact the writer:** [shernandez@ocregister.com](mailto:shernandez@ocregister.com) or 949-454-7309