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THE

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The **FUNOFFICIAL** Newsletter of the
Western Pennsylvania Region

CoasterBash! celebrates 20 years

by Bill Linkenheimer III

CoasterBash! celebrated its 20th year in 2009. While ACE's Eastcoaster and No Coaster Con events date back noticeably farther, they are also national events. We are proud to say that ACE Western Pennsylvania's CoasterBash! is the longest running regional event. The 20 years of CoasterBash! have a rich history with many traditions. Taking a look at this year's event, you'll see an illustration of those traditions.

Bigger and better. Each year, CoasterBash! organizers graciously accept thanks and compliments from members who attend. Thus, each year CoasterBash! organizers have had a desire and goal to "out-do" last year and continue to make the event better and better. Originally known as "No-Coaster KennyKon," what started as a somewhat minimalist social gathering with some chips, 2-liter bottles of Pepsi, travelogue-style slide shows, and a presentation by Charlie Jacques, grew and grew, grew into CoasterBash!, and then grew some more. One thing that hasn't changed is the goal of bringing ACE members together to get an off-season coaster fix and enjoy each other's company.

Guest speakers. As previously indicated, Charlie Jacques, who has his amusement park-related publishing roots in Amusement Park Journal (an early enthusiasts' publication) long before writing books on Kennywood and West View Parks, was the event's first formal guest speaker. Thankfully, even after Mr. Jacques moved from western Pennsylvania to Ohio, he graced the CoasterBash! audience with his presence many more times.

Dozens of representatives from Kennywood have collectively given CoasterBash! attendees an inside look at the West Mifflin park through all kinds of aspects from food to maintenance to games to carpentry to Phantom Fright Nights and this year to filming motion pictures at the park, when Jeff Filicko took us behind the scenes of "Adventureland." Other parks from within the region and beyond have sent representatives to CoasterBash! These include Cedar Point, Conneaut Lake Park, Darien Lake, Del Grosso's, Dorney Park, Geauga Lake, Idlewild, Knoebels, Martin's Fantasy Island, and Midway Park to name a few.

Barry Kumpf, the general manager of Lakemont Park attended a number of the events—especially during the important years during which fundraising for the eventual restoration and reopening of Leap-the-Dips was taking place. Even in years when Barry wasn't a formal guest speaker, his dedication to the Leap-the-Dips project was unwavering as he would haul in boxes of items ranging from Slinkys to commemorative pieces of wood from the coaster that were sold to benefit the effort. Waldameer Park's Steve Gorman was a speaker both this year and last year with all of the excitement of the park's long awaited Ravine Flyer II that debuted in 2008; but Steve was speaking at CoasterBash! long before that.

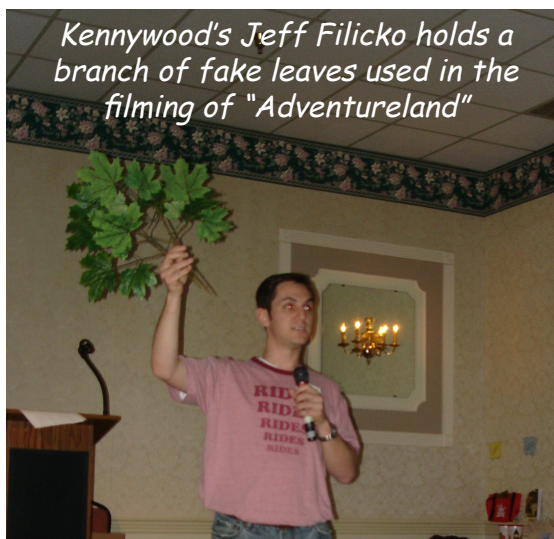
CoasterBash! has also experienced a handful of other interesting guest speakers including artist Linda Barnicott, WQED producer Rick Sebak, Velocity Magnetics' Dominic Marzano, the late George Zambelli of Zambelli International Fireworks, and the late Father Jack Hickey, who served as general manager of West View Park before joining the priesthood.

Food. No ACE event is really complete without food, is it? The food offering at CoasterBash! over the years really is quite an evolution. While the very first events were snacks and soft drinks, 1991 was the first year with any resemblance of a meal when organizers picked up a six-foot Italian submarine sandwich, over 20 pizzas, and hundreds of cookies. The following year, a similar thing was done with fried chicken. Full scale catering from an outside caterer who essentially just

set the food up and left, started with the 1993 event. From there, the food was all uphill as the event eventually moved to banquet facilities that provided in-house full-service catering. The dinner at this year's event with pork tenderloin and chicken Monterey with all of the accoutrements right up to cheesecake, was well received.

Jim Futrell. ACE Western Pennsylvania was fortunate to have the historian of the National Amusement Park Historical Association move into the region in the early 1990s. Since 1993, Jim has graciously shared his vast slide collection and even more vast knowledge with those attending CoasterBash! His ability to share such

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Hello and welcome to The Fun Times Spring 2009 edition. THE FUN TEAM extends a special congratulations to Maggie Altman, the newsletter's technical/stylistic editor. Effective with this issue of *The Fun Times*, Maggie will assume the title of Managing Editor. In this position, she will be the main contact for articles, photos, and other information to be included in future issues of the newsletter. In the past, she has been very instrumental in getting the newsletter published on time. She has also played a big part in our newsletter winning awards in ACE's annual newsletter contest at several Coaster Cons. Thank you Maggie and again, congratulations. See you in the queues.

~Matt

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THE FUN TEAM

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CHATTER!

Ohio resident and frequent ACE Western Pennsylvania event supporter **Susan Shick** continues her recovery after a double knee-replacement at the Cleveland Clinic in February and expects to be back in shape in time for Coaster Con...we're pleased to know that **Dave Swank's** parents are doing well after a rough winter during which his mother was injured in a car accident and his father suffered a mild stroke...congratulations to **Stacey & Ben Singer**, who, along with big brother **Bryan Singer**, welcomed **Alyson Stacey Singer** on March 2 weighing in at eight pounds and measuring 20 inches long...congratulations to **Charlie Haber** who recently became engaged to **Lindsay Rettinger**...condolences to ACE Eastern Pennsylvania assistant regional rep and loyal ACE Western Pennsylvania event supporter **Joel Styer**, whose mother, **Fern "Sis" Styer** passed away in April at the age of 87...congratulations to **Mike Matscherz** who once again is responsible for the winning design chosen for the logo of ACE's annual convention...**Mike Homza**, a member and volunteer of the Friends of the Fort Pitt Museum since 1972, was shown in a photograph in the Pittsburgh Tribune Review dressed in the clothing of a Fort Duquesne soldier from 1754, harkening back to another era for purposes of a news conference about the museum's future... congratulations to **Stephen Marziale** who just graduated from North Hills High School... congratulations to **Jason Eyer** who accepted a position with Hershey Entertainment, where he will be part of the management team at Harvest, a new restaurant that is part of Hotel Hershey's Grand Expansion. While we hate to see him and his wife **Shannon Eyer** leave western Pennsylvania, we wish them nothing but success!...

Have some Chatter for us? Did you or an ACE member you know retire, get a promotion, lose a pet, hit the lottery, take the trip of a lifetime, appear on television, or get arrested for running across the field during a Steelers game? SHARE IT WITH US! Email us at Chatter@ACEWesternPA.org or send us a note via conventional mail to the editorial address.

The Lucas Family: 2009 recipients of The Golden Kenny



Mary Lou Rosemeyer, left, presents the Lucas family with The Golden Kenny. Pictured from the left and flanked by Kenny Kangaroo is Ryan, Dave, and Val Lucas. April Lucas was not able to attend. This is the first time that the coveted award has been presented to an entire family.

Photo by Matt Adler

CoasterBash! celebrates 20 years

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an infinite understanding of amusement park history is unmatched. There have been a few years without a presentation from Jim, but he made up for it this year, with two great contrasting presentations—one on the broad history of the amusement industry and one focusing on the amusement parks that existed in the Pittsburgh area in 1904.

Jeff Croushore. Idlewild's man of many hats has only been a fixture at CoasterBash! for a few years, but he's certainly made his mark, and he's a tradition we hope will be around for a long time to come. While we thrive on every word from our speakers about what's new at their park or getting an inside story,



*Jeff Croushore of Idlewild hosts The Match Game
photo by Matt Adler*

Jeff entertains us in ways unlike all others and brings a smile to all. After having audience members make music from various pieces of Idlewild that Jeff brought with him last year, this year audience members participated in The Match Game show. Who knows what will be in store next year when Jeff steps off stage in his suspenseful, mime-like way to choose his "participants."

Member presentations. Hearing from the park representative is great, but one thing that makes CoasterBash! a little different is a variety of presentations from ACE's own members. Dave Altman, our region's own international traveler reliably takes us to many far away parks, most often in Asia, and shares great photos and stories. This year it was Japan's Kosmo World. We are greatly indebted to Ken Simmons for showing a video of virtually all of the new coasters (that premiered the previous year) at CoasterBash! since at least 1994. Likewise, Bill Linkenheimer III has a long history of photographing ACE events and showing them as slide presentations at CoasterBash! the following year. His presentation has been known as "Summer Flashback" since 1997. Continuing the tradition, CoasterBash! XX was kicked off with such presentations from Ken and Bill. In addition to these, the event has been blessed with lots of...

Creative Videos. Roller coaster videos made by ACE members continue to become more interesting, complex, and professional thanks to accessible technology and the amazing talents of some of our regional members. Joel Brewton and Pam Kanai were not only each winners in Kennywood's first video contest (held in 2008), but both have been contributing videos to CoasterBash! the past couple of years. In addition to showing the full version of her winning "My Kennywood Memories" video this year, Pam Kanai, along with husband Brian and consultation from Dave Hahner, masterfully edited footage shot by Ron Keller of the region's first KennyKon and a pre-KennyKon event at White Swan Park, both held in 1989. Mike Matscherz has not only shown many of his own

MTV-esque videos compiled from his travels, but has also graciously contributed his talents to make several of the event's opening videos for the past several years including the critically acclaimed "ACEanos". With this year's 1980s theme, Mike incorporated the opening segments of popular television shows "Cheers" ("ACEers") and "The A-Team" ("The Ace Team"), complete with theme songs.

Ever-Changing Venues. CoasterBash! has always been very dynamic. Even the name hasn't remained the same (it started out as No Coaster KennyKon). The format, food, contests, and variety of presentations is constantly tweaked and refined from year to year. There's no doubt that keeps it interesting. Another factor that's changed several times in the event's 20-year history is the location. Penn-Hebron Garden Club, Berkeley Hills Fire Hall, Davoli's Banquet Hall, Olympia Hall, and Garden City Hall have all hosted CoasterBash! at some point; and for the past few years, we've settled into The Bradley House, a division of Kennywood Entertainment. Sadly, The Bradley House will not be renewing their lease at the end of the year, and that fine facility will cease to exist. So for 2010, CoasterBash! will have yet another new home.

Mary Lou Rosemeyer. From what the records show, Mary Lou has been a fixture at CoasterBash! since 1998—a long time, but less than half the time that she's been a fixture in Kennywood's public relations department. At CoasterBash!, Mary Lou has become known for lots of things—telling us what's new at Kennywood and its sister parks, giving away pencils, sharing personal stories and showing off her grandchildren, and presenting The Golden Kenny award to some very deserving member. The only thing different this year was the footnote that it would be Mary Lou's last time representing Kennywood at the event, with the news already released that this would be her last summer at the park—a decision that wasn't exactly hers.



*Mary Lou Rosemeyer of Kennywood
photo by Matt Adler*

The return of Bayern Kurve took second stage to an emotional and inspiring speech that left no doubt that Mary Lou would miss Kennywood, but illustrated how this was just another of life's curve balls and that there are more important things than a job—such as family—her late husband Chuck and her grandchildren all figured into this lesson. In Mary Lou's own style, all this was tied together and brought full circle as she presented The Golden Kenny to none other than an entire family, and a very deserving one—the Lucas family (all four of them—Dave, Val, Ryan, and April), who humbly and graciously accepted. As with the location, the absence of Mary Lou representing Kennywood will be a change. One change we hope doesn't happen is Mary Lou's presence among us at future CoasterBash! events.

Conneaut Lake Park: Volunteering Pays Off

by Sarah Windisch

All photos by Sarah Windisch

The end of April and beginning of May is prime park season for enthusiasts, and this year my "other half," Erik and I joined several dozen other volunteers for the annual park spring clean-up to take advantage of the nice weather and get Conneaut Lake Park ready for the 2009 season.

Lisko & Sons Amusements will be operating the rides at the park this year and volunteers were organized for various jobs around the park and Hotel Conneaut to get the grounds ready for Memorial Day weekend. So what did everybody do? Well, I raked leaves in kiddieland and around some of the rides and along the side midway, planted flowers, raked leaves, shoveled wet leaves out of the Lazy River,



and shoveled leaves out of the kiddie pool. Next time you see me, my arms should be a little nicer! Seriously, it was fun since you move around a lot and are usually around people. While I was planting flowers along the main midway, I became a park spokesperson. The weather was nice and a lot of local people walk through the park and several dozen people stopped to ask about the status of the park and what we were all doing there. Those of us in the immediate area recruited a few volunteers and spread the word since it seems a lot of the local folks up there just don't know what's going on. People are going to see a lot more changes now as the rides are being put back together and so on.

Other volunteers concentrated on painting in the picnic groves, as there are already picnics booked. I was over there briefly and they got the first two done and at least started on the third. They were also working on the picnic tables. Some people were scraping paint, others painting. Someone with carpentry skills was fixing tables. There were people working at the hotel as well. Some people who brought riding mowers and weed-eaters did yard work. There were a handful of people who went over to Camperland to do a little painting. One guy with a pneumatic log splitter took care of a big tree that had been cut down over by

the hotel. Lots of leaves were raked, and I mean LOTS. I don't think I have ever seen so many leaves in my entire life. And they did rake leaves during the fall clean-up too!

The food stands and games will not be used this season, but Lisko & Sons will bring in trailers. Such trailers were brought in for Pumpkin Fest last fall, and it worked quite well and didn't look bad either.

We met the Liskos, and they are busting their butts to get things ready, working 12-hour days. I saw them paint and assemble the Flying Scooters, power-wash the Tilt-a-Whirl, power-wash and work on some of the kiddie rides (they planned to have all of kiddieland open for Memorial Day weekend), and a few of us saw them take the covers off the Tumble Bug. Tim Lisko spoke to us for a few minutes at lunch and explained that they are going to bring in some outside rides, as well as cycling out existing rides and bringing other rides in, I assume to keep things operating since some rides that are at the park now need worked on. Blue Streak is not expected to open for 2009 as it needs some work. Erik and some others were taking care of some of the grounds around/under the coaster. Erik said it was "pretty swampy" under



Sarah Windisch

the coaster. One ride that has been removed is the Ferris Wheel; from what I understand it was not able to be used.

Even though the volunteer weekends are over, if anyone is interested in going up to pitch in, there is still plenty of work to be done. All you have to do is call the park or send an email; go to conneautlakepark.com/volunteer.html for more information.

As for the Hotel, there was a LOT going on there. Air-conditioning was being installed in the Crystal Ballroom and in just a week it's amazing how much work has been done. They already hosted some high school proms. The hotel was not open to the public during the clean-up but they did have some rooms for those of us who were volunteering,

since they are doing work “behind the walls” with electrical stuff. It just seems like there are a million different projects going on at once; I don’t know how they keep it all straight. New toilets to be installed in the sleeping rooms filled the lobby and new toilet paper dispensers had just arrived.

The volunteers were given a free ride on the Kaylee Belle around the lake which was fun. The weather that weekend was beautiful so it was perfect. We got a good look at some of the docks behind the hotel, which were badly damaged by the ice on the lake. When we were leaving the first weekend, workers were pulling the old ones out, and by the following weekend had rebuilt them, mostly of the wood from the old ones.

The Beach Club wasn’t open to the public yet either, but that’s where they served lunch to the volunteers. Each day it was donated by area businesses and organizations, which is really nice and believe me, we work up an appetite!

Another new venture is rebuilding the boardwalk between the Beach Club and Hotel Conneaut. They are selling inscribed boards as a fundraiser; if you are interested, please visit the website at: conneautlakepark.com/boardwalk.html for more information.



Bernie Cramer

The park normally does a fall clean-up as well, so keep an eye on their Web site for more information. There are a lot of people who go up often, many from our area, which I didn’t know until we got talking to them. It’s amazing the friends that you will make when you are all covered with smelly goop in the lazy river. At least we all smelled the same! Seriously, if you volunteer, wear old clothes. And if you have old tools (especially power tools), gardening tools, (rakes, shovels, brooms, etc), mowers, or weed-eaters, please consider donating them to CLP since they lost a lot when the ballroom burned down. The volunteers bring up most of the stuff currently being used. Not everybody can donate time, but the park is always open to financial donations too. I am so excited about the park reopening this year. I know it will be a slow process and not every ride will be open at first, but this is the most promising it has looked

in the past two seasons. It is amazing to see how much work goes into the entire park, and it’s really satisfying to be a small part of it.

Erik and I have been working at the clean-ups for a number of years and even though it’s often a lot of hard work, we are thankful that we are able to physically do it and it’s so great to see how everybody works together. As a coaster enthusiast I look forward to riding Blue Streak again, but as a park enthusiast I also look forward to riding the Tumble Bug, Flying Scooters, and all of the other great rides that Conneaut Lake Park has to offer. Please support our region’s park to the north, since we haven’t been able to the past two seasons. Go there, spend a few bucks, stop in the Hotel and Beach Club to check it out and see what they’ve done, grab a meal, and have a good time. The lake is beautiful and the air is fresh, and a few hours there will do you good. You’ll be happy that you went! And enjoy those flowers—I planted some of those!



Sarah Windisch

The Queue Line

ACE Western Pennsylvania extends a warm welcome to its newest members.

Rob Berger.....	Beaver Falls
Edward, Jarrett, Patricia & Tarryn Borden....	Venetia
Bill Driscoll.....	Turtle Creek
Chase Fiore.....	Altoona
Mark Flis.....	Pittsburgh
Frank Golden.....	Murrysville
Carol & Jack Henry.....	Pittsburgh
James McDonough III.....	Allison Park
Erin McSparrin.....	Sarver
Margaret Miller.....	Kersey
Ryan Mondrics.....	Apollo
Carol Reiland.....	Duquesne
David & Mike Rossi.....	Duquesne
Celeste & Trevor Zambanini.....	Somerset

Calendar of Regional Events

Flying High at Waldameer Park

Waldameer Park

Erie, PA

Saturday, July 18, 2009

KennyKon XX

Kennywood

West Mifflin, PA

Sunday, July 19, 2009

Ridefest 2009

Lakemont Park

Altoona, PA

Sunday, October 11, 2009



This black & white photo titled "Steel" by artist Kevin Ross provides a very unique perspective of Phantom's Revenge with the Edgar Thompson Works seen in the foreground. The piece was on display at the Art All Night event held in the Lawrenceville section of Pittsburgh in early May. visit krossprocess.com for more information.



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