

New Memories are made at KennyKon XXIV

by Nikki Blake

photo by Joel Brewton



Registration for KennyKon XXIV started bright and early on Sunday, July 14 – 8:30 a.m. to be exact. If you were one of the 170 attendees from 12 U.S. states who arrived at Kennywood before 9:15, you had the opportunity to get your sugarfix in the form of Ice Cream For Breakfast. For a \$3 donation that benefited Give Kids the World (GKTW), attendees could purchase ice cream donated by Kennywood and top it with cereal. Because of the generosity of attendees, or perhaps because of our ice cream cravings, \$218 was raised for the nonprofit resort, located in Kissimmee, Florida. Kids aged 3 to 18 who have life-threatening diseases and their families can stay at the GKTW Village for an all-expenses-paid vacation that includes admission tickets to nearby Florida attractions, such as Universal Orlando and Walt Disney World.

After socializing and eating ice cream, we all walked through the tunnel and into the park. Once

in the park we could enjoy ERT on *Thunderbolt*, *The Exterminator*, and *Whip*. A special treat for ERT this year was that for the first half hour, *The Exterminator* ran with all the lights on, for the second half hour it ran with all the lights off, and for the final half hour it ran in regular mode.

At 11 a.m. we were free to ride and eat whatever we wanted. Of course, there were ITOTs scheduled for us, which included a fifth anniversary ITOT on *Ghostwood Estate*, *Carousel*, *Jack Rabbit* and *Racer*. In addition to the ITOTs – pretty much a tradition now – there was a contest open to all attendees. This year it was the Logo Scavenger Hunt. Participants were to look for the KennyKon XXIV logo throughout the park, and the person that found the most logos would win a prize.

Around 6 p.m. we all gathered in the picnic area for a much-needed break and dinner. On the menu was BBQ chicken, pulled pork, penne pasta with sauce, tacos, haluski, salad and

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THE QUEUE LINE

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

Chris Bentz.....	Grindstone, PA
Lisa Bodnar.....	Greensburg, PA
Maureen Connolly.....	Pittsburgh, PA
Carol & Leah Davis.....	New Galilee, PA
Molly Fitzsimmons.....	New Galilee, PA
Mike Funyak.....	Irwin, PA
Molly Grella.....	McDonald, PA
Brittany Hill.....	Pittsburgh, PA
Lynnae Hughes.....	Evans City, PA
Aaron Lesko.....	Dravosburg, PA
Sabrina McLaren.....	Youngwood, PA
Avery & Zack Mesher.....	West Newton, PA
Gary Miller.....	Pittsburgh, PA
Lara Miller.....	Murrysville, PA
Kathleen Overly.....	Lower Burrell, PA
Matthew Palm.....	White Oak, PA
Dale Pope.....	Pittsburgh, PA
Ethan, Jim & Michelle Riling.....	Pittsburgh, PA
Ron Schaub.....	Brackenridge, PA
Zachary Stewart.....	State College, PA
Donna Waybright.....	McKees Rocks, PA



Congratulations to WQED-TV senior producer, writer and narrator **Rick Sebak** ("Kennywood Memories," "Great American Amusement Parks") who was honored by the Press Club of Western Pennsylvania with the President's Award for lifetime achievement . . . condolences to **Dave Swank** and **Joe Swank**, whose father passed away in late May as the result of stroke complications . . . congratulations to **Chase Fiore**, who graduated from Carnegie Mellon University this past spring with a BS in Technical Writing and Communications . . . best wishes to **Linda Cramer**, who retired in late May after 25 years with Pennsylvania's Office of Unemployment Compensation Tax Service . . . congratulations to **Ed Adler** who celebrated the 65th anniversary of his first coaster ride at this year's Kennykon by riding Kennywood's Racer at least once every year since his first ride in 1948! . . . congratulations to **Tarryn Borden** who graduated from Peters Township High School in spring and went on the ACE Central Europe international trip with her mother, **Pat Borden**, as her graduation gift . . . congratulations to **Bill Linkenheimer Jr** who celebrated his 80th birthday this month . . .

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**

A Most Engaging Coaster Ride



photo courtesy of Lake Compounce



photo by Rus Ozana

ACE Western Pennsylvania Assistant Regional Representative and logo designer extraordinaire **Mike Matscherz** popped the question to **Janine Rebbie** during a spin on Lake Compounce's Boulder Dash during a pre-ACE convention event there on June 15. Janine is the daughter of **Tom Rebbie**, president and CEO of Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters Inc. (PTCI). Mike presented the ring during the ride while in front of the on-ride photo camera (see photo at left) and made it official when they arrived back in the station, that was followed a round of applause and cheers by friends and dozens of strangers who were in the station. Needless to say, she said yes. Since then, all kinds of good things have happened. The park posted a picture on their Facebook that drew over 1,000 Likes. A wedding has been planned for September 2015. And most recently, *Boulder Dash*, which operates with PTCI trains, was rated as the Worlds #1 Wooden Roller Coaster in *Amusement Today's* Golden Ticket Awards!

Rep Rap

by Ryan Lucas

I was given the task of writing my first Rep Rap column as an assistant regional rep and I wanted to think about what I would like to convey to my fellow members. It is a large amount of work to compile *The Fun Times* and deliver it to your mailbox. In this and all of our issues, you will read about at least one of our regional events. ACE Western Pennsylvania hosts over a half dozen formal and informal events throughout the year.

A search of the events page on the ACE website lists over 50 events at parks throughout our region and beyond this year. To simply receive the publications and perhaps attend a regional event each year is not getting the full value or experience of your ACE membership. To this day, I can still vividly remember my first ACE event – the 1995 Summer Conference at Darien Lake, Seabreeze and Waldameer. Most of my favorite memories growing up are of ACE events throughout the world, including the 2002 European Coaster Odyssey. The events are memorable for the coasters and the food of course, but just as much for the people that I have met and became great friends with.

I can also remember a handful of ACE national conventions at parks across the country that I and many other regional members have attended including at Kentucky Kingdom, Holiday World, Six Flags Great America, Busch Gardens, Six Flags Over

Texas, Dollywood, Six Flags New England and a pair here in Pittsburgh. The Coaster Cons are memorable for the social events, Midway Olympics, park tours, special show performances, boat cruises, helicopter tours, photo and video contests and the banquets. All of those activities do not actually involve riding roller coasters but spending time with fellow members. The past three in Arlington, Texas; Pigeon Forge, Tennessee; and New England have really set the bar high for the premier annual ACE event of the year. If you can, please consider attending Coaster Con XXVI next summer in California – you will not be disappointed.

The true measure of ACE friends is when you meet them outside of an amusement park. I have seen fellow ACEers at one of my jobs (the voice of Gate A outside Heinz Field), birthdays, weddings, holiday parties, sporting events, graduation parties and even funerals. There is no better place to meet other ACE members than at regional and national ACE events. If you have never been to a CoasterBash! or KennyKon event, this is your official invitation. Before you fill your summer schedule and use all of your vacation time in 2014, check out the ACE events page and plan a road trip. In addition to riding some new coasters, you will be sure to make some new friends.

In Memory of Karen Fox

August 20, 1958 - July 8, 2013



It is with great sadness that we pass along the news that Karen Fox passed away suddenly on July 8, 2013, as a result of complications of a recent illness. Though a resident of eastern Pennsylvania, Karen has been a regular at ACE Western Pennsylvania events for many years and had friends here who will miss her dearly. Some might recognize her as a volunteer at the ACE Preservation Fund Sales Table during CoasterBash! events. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her life partner Jim Shivers and all of Karen's friends and family.

I will always remember when we met 20 years ago at Stricker's Grove (me being the crazy guy who was sticking his head up through the roller coaster track) and at Kings Island when we both commiserated with upset digestive tracts. We have made many fond memories together with Jim and my dad, Ed. You will be sorely missed in my life.

– Matt Adler

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cookies. The food was delicious, and to wash it all down we also had unlimited soft drinks.

While in the picnic area we heard from our regional representative, Bill Linkenheimer III, who was described as looking fit and trim by Kennywood's general manager, Jerome Gibas. Bill introduced Kennywood personnel, without whom KennyKon would not have been possible: Public Relations Director Jeff Filicko, Operations Manager Marie Ruby, and Community Relations Manager Andy Quinn and Gibas. Also at dinner we learned that four persons had perfect scores on Logo Scavenger Hunt: Matthew Macumber, Sarah Macumber, Sue Macumber and Ken Simone. All won a free ride on Sky Coaster!

With full stomachs and renewed energy, ACEers continued on with their day, with more scheduled ITOTs, such as the Gran Prix (which turned 40 this year), *Sky Rocket*, and *Turtle* – perhaps the best ITOT of the day. Another benefit for attendees was a guaranteed last ride on *Black Widow* to avoid the lines that the general public faces on this popular ride. Immediately following that was the always-anticipated 45-minute night time ERT on *Phantom's Revenge* with two trains running!



photo by Joel Brewton

Although ACE events may have changed from the days of Coaster Con III that Jerome Gibas recalled, during which attendees were allowed to walk on the catwalk of *Thunderbolt* to take pictures and dogs were allowed to ride, I think it's safe to say that we all made another great new memory at KennyKon XXIV.



photo by Joel Brewton

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photo by David Hahner III

Over 20 ACEers visited Lakemont Park to enjoy Gary Baker Memorial Day, which, among other things, included a round of miniature golf and rides on *Leap the Dips*, the world's oldest roller coaster. Special thanks Melissa Vyborny and Chris Harpster of Lakemont Park for their hospitality and providing members with complimentary All Day Ride and Slide passes for this special day that allows us to remember a very active ACE member who passed away in 2009. Lakemont was one of Gary's favorite places and he worked diligently to raise money and awareness to get *Leap the Dips* restored.

CALENDAR OF REGIONAL EVENTS

Friday, October 18, 2013

ACE Ghost Lake
co-sponsored by DAFE
Conneaut Lake Park
Conneaut Lake, PA

Saturday, October 19, 2013

**ACE/DAFE Phantom
Fright Night**
Kennywood
West Mifflin, PA

Friday, November 30, 2013

ACE Holiday Magic
Kennywood
West Mifflin, PA

Saturday, March 8, 2014

CoasterBash! XXV
Salvatore's
South Hills of Pittsburgh

Visit ACEwesternPA.org for updated information on all ACE Western Pennsylvania events.

ACE-DAFE PHANTOM FRIGHT NIGHT

KENNYWOOD

Saturday, October 19, 2013

7 p.m. - 1 a.m.

Don't miss ACE Western Pennsylvania's 12th annual informal event at Kennywood's Phantom Fright Nights. Discount tickets are available in advance for \$26 each plus \$1 handling per order (any number of tickets). Checks are accepted from ACE members only, though you can purchase as many tickets as you like, including for non-member guests. Also, the tickets may be used any night that Kennywood is open for Phantom Fright Nights during 2013. Ticket orders must be RECEIVED by October 11 to allow sufficient time for the tickets to be sent via First Class mail. Along with your payment, clearly indicate how many tickets you are purchasing and to what address you want them sent. Also include an email address, so that a confirmation can be sent to you. **MAKE YOUR CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO BILL LINKENHEIMER** and mail to:

ACE/DAFE Phantom Fright Night
C/O Bill Linkenheimer
PO Box 15353
Pittsburgh, PA 15237-0553

A schedule of informal/optional meeting times at roller coasters and haunted attractions will be included with ticket orders, included on the event flier that can be found at ACEwesternPA.org, and also sent out via email to those on the region's e-blast list. Refunds will not be issued for unused tickets.



CONNEAUT LAKE PARK

Friday, October 18, 2013

7 p.m. - midnight

ACE Western Pennsylvania joins forces with DAFE and invites you to discover 13 "levels of fear" during this informal event at Ghost Lake, the Halloween event at Conneaut Lake Park, which truly takes things up a notch in terms of the scare factor. All guests of Ghost Lake visit the levels of fear in a designated order, so it lends itself to enjoying it as a group. The final level of fear is none other than the ACE Roller Coaster Landmark *Blue Streak*. Even though the park is open for five hours, ACE and DAFE members and their guests who can arrive at the designated time will enjoy a discount and express entry. Members and their guests can meet up at the "Conneaut Lake Park" sign (close to the roadway and by the pond) at the front gate at 7:15 p.m. At 7:30 p.m., they'll be escorted into the park as a group and will enjoy a \$5 discount (including non-member guests). Complete details are included on the ACE Ghost Lake event flier that can be found at ACEwesternPA.org.



KENNYWOOD

Saturday, November 30, 2013

5 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Enjoy Kennywood during the holidays with the park's third annual foray into December operation. Attendees in the past were blown away by the festive atmosphere and the park decorated with hundreds of thousands of holiday lights. There is no event registration. When you arrive at the park, we encourage you to meet up with your fellow members for ITOTs (Informal Takeover Times) of various rides and to enjoy the shows together. The schedule of ITOTs will be included on the ACE Holiday Magic event flier that will soon be available at ACEwesternPA.org, and also sent out via email to those on the region's e-blast list..



A full-color version of *The Fun Times* is available online for download on the region's website.



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