

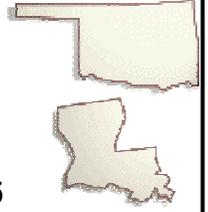


The Queue Line Chronicle



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ACE South Central Region—Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana—Winter/Spring 2005



Galveston Bay Provides the Backdrop for Winterfest 2005

Article and photos by Jason Knutson (unless noted)



The annual ACE South Central Winterfest event saw yet another new location for 2005. The Kemah Boardwalk located in Kemah, TX about 30 miles south of Houston on Galveston Bay. The Kemah Boardwalk is a popular local destination that contains over a dozen restaurants as well as shops,

rides, and a Stingray petting tank.

The meeting room for the event was located above Landry's Seafood House restaurant and provided a very nice view of the rides area and Galveston Bay. Attendees arrived in the meeting area via elevator and checked in with registration volunteers Scott Connor, Jeremy Murphy and Kari Lipnicky where they received a copy of the schedule with the door prize list on the back, a meal ticket, a wristband that was good all day for all the rides, and an AstroWorld keychain and pen.

Those that arrived early had a chance to enjoy the view of Galveston Bay as well as browse the dozens upon dozens of door prizes that had been generously donated by several parks both in and out of the region. As has been standard for the past couple years, the event started off with a video showcasing the previous years events. This year's installment was a photostory created by Regional Rep Curly. Shortly after the video Tim Anderson, General Manager of Kemah Boardwalk, and Jay Wilson, Amusements Manager, spoke to the group about some of the history of the Boardwalk as well as the huge expansion they had just completed in 2004. There was also time for a few questions to be asked before it was time to head over to The Cadillac Bar for lunch.



At the Cadillac Bar everyone was treated to prompt, friendly service and a very tasty tex-mex meal that they had selected from several choices when they registered for the event. No one had to wait more than a few minutes to be served their lunch as the staff was waiting with plates of food as people entered the eating area. As drinks and chip baskets were emptied, they were immediately refilled by the extremely attentive staff. As attendees finished up lunch, they made their way out to the rides area on the Boardwalk to take advantage of the complimentary "ride all day" wristbands they received when they signed in earlier in the day.

During the time scheduled for ride time, most attendees checked out the family type rides which included a 200' Chance observation tower, Pharaohs' Fury, Ferris wheel, Inverter, Aviator and Train. A few were more adventurous and crammed themselves into some of the kiddie rides as well. As ride time ended, everyone made their way back up to the meeting room where the rest of the day's activities and presentations would take place.

The afternoon's presentations started off with a video from Cedar Point showcasing Top Thrill Dragster after which Tim Baldwin passed out some pins that were created by the park for Coaster Con in 2004. Next up was a video greeting from ACE President Carole Sanderson filmed by David Lipnicky at the No Coaster event a few weeks earlier.

ACE's Events Coordinator, Yvonne Janik, was up next with an overview of the upcoming national events for 2005 including Spring Con, Coaster Con XXVIII, and Preservation Con. She also took some time to answer a few questions about the events. After Yvonne finished, Regional Rep David Lipnicky was up to talk about



Tim Anderson



Jay Wilson

Photos by David Lipnicky

(Continued on Page 4)



The Curly Seat

A view from the South Central Regional Rep seat

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Many of you know that my real (paying) job requires me to travel quite frequently throughout the year. While constant travel can be exciting at times, when it is mostly for work, frequently it can be absolute drudgery. I was quite lucky that my most frequent business trip had me staying an extended time in southern California. What made that good news even better is that my time in So-Cal would allow me to attend the Winter Solace coaster event at Knott's Berry Farm. I am a huge fan of KBF and its Winter Solace event, so I had to fight off any visible signs of extreme glee when my Regional Administrator told me the trip details surrounding this special assignment.

Now many of you know my feelings about many B&M coasters, so the fact that I would be able to ride KBF's new *Silver Bullet* inverted coaster was not really a reason I was looking forward Solace. This was probably a good thing, because my low expectations for that coaster made my Winter Solace VI experience all the sweeter. From the moment that I saw the tons of red and orange twisted steel that now dominates most of the visuals of the park, I started to change my mind about the value of this ride. As I gleaned looks of this metal masterpiece up close, I quickly saw that this ride was no mere cookie-cutter coaster. Now I will divert from the obvious element-by-element description of every aspect of the ride. That is not the point of this piece, and besides ACE's national publications do an excellent job of describing rides in images and words. Although there are a couple B&M inverteds I like better than *Silver Bullet*, what impressed me with this ride is how in every aspect this exquisite, but eerily quiet, machine is a perfect fit for KBF. From how *Silver Bullet* provides striking visual excitement weaving through most of the park, to how it draws hundreds of people from other popular rides each hour – making the waits for those rides notably shorter, to how it efficiently cycles those hundreds of people through each hour, to how the ride simply rocks is the real story in my book.

Why am I going on and on in a regional

newsletter about a park and coaster half-way across the country? Well ... this perfect fit started me thinking about possible perfect fits for the parks in our region in 2006. By the time next season rolls around, it will have been five years since *Titan* at Six Flags Over Texas made its debut. During that timeframe, the only other completely new coaster to come to our region was in 2004 when *Shamu Express* arrived at Sea World San Antonio. I point these facts out to show that the six fine parks run by Six Flags Parks and Anheuser-Busch are not just deserving, but overdue, for some capital expenditures of the coaster kind. So as I look into my Magic Coaster 8-Ball, here are some of the perfect coaster matches I hope to see in 2006:

- **Six Flags New Orleans:** This scrappy park could really use a signature steel coaster. A non-inverting steel hypercoaster would fit that bill perfectly. (Morgan, Intamin, or B&M hypers would all work extremely well at this often-overlooked park.)
- **Six Flags Over Texas:** Despite my love of coasters and this classy park, flat rides are really needed here. A nice flat ride package would really help round out the theme park experience for patrons. However, this Regional Rep would not say no to a Liquid Coaster (which would fit nicely into, or even over, the spot now occupied by Roaring Rapids).
- **Six Flags Fiesta Texas:** This outstanding park, which serves the 9th most populated city in the entire nation, has fewer coasters today than it had in 2000. This fact alone could really make a Regional Rep cry. While a medium-sized wooden out-and-back would be a neat complement to the *Rattler*, just

think of what Fiesta and B&M could do with a Flying or Dive Machine coaster soaring over, down, up, along, and possibly through that spectacular cliff wall!

- **Six Flags AstroWorld:** More than half a decade has gone by since this deserving park has received a new roller coaster. During this timeframe, this park serving the city with the nation's 4th largest population has actually lost two coasters (*Excalibur* and *Taz's Texas Tornado*). It does not take a rocket scientist from NASA to figure out that something is not quite right with this equation. A medium to large wooden out-and-back would be the perfect complement to the awesome *Texas Cyclone*. Many would love a *Shivering Timbers* type coaster to come to Texas. Hmmm ... Texas Timbers has a very nice ring! However, a non-looping steel hypercoaster would also be a great fit.
- **Sea World San Antonio:** One word ... "Wood!"
- **Frontier City:** While the park's small footprint presents considerable challenges, a wild mouse coaster (spinning or standard) would be an excellent fit in many ways for a park that has not seen a new coaster in a over a decade.

If AstroWorld received a B&M hyper and New Orleans received a Morgan hyper, just think of the friendly competition for bragging rights that would happen between these parks, their local supporters, and ACEers in and outside our region. And that my friends is my vision ... er, I mean view from The Curly Seat.

Dave's Top 10 Rejected Coaster Concepts

10. Bumper Car Coaster
9. Kiddie Dive-machine
8. Wooden Boomerang
7. Bungee Drop Coaster
6. Kiddie Boomerang

5. Stand-up Woodie
4. Air-Thrust Boomerang
3. Inverted Liquid Coaster
2. Catapult-Launch Stand-up Mouse
1. Top Thrill Boomerang

Assistant Regional Rep Corner with Scott Connor



Ahh. April showers bring May... daily openings! Whenever the annual torrential April floods hit my area (deep east Texas) it just serves to remind me that I'm only weeks away from that wonderful time when the parks open daily for the summer. If you can, get to your favorite park as soon as they open on weekdays and take advantage of some near-ERT conditions.

I was printing the envelopes for this edition of the Chronicle, and saw lots of familiar names but also noticed that there are quite a few new members of late. We have 400 members in our region as of April 12. If you've been a member for a year or longer, and have not been to one of our regional or park-sponsored events, I encourage you to attend one this year and see just what fun you're missing. Just don't ask me to pick a favorite, as I think that all of our regional and park events are incredible.

If you haven't signed up for our 'members only' section of the regional website, do so soon. If you are signed up, you can get the full-color version of the Queue Line Chronicle before it gets mailed! It's just one of the many advantages of our website and the internet in general. I'll be working with our webmaster extraordinaire, Jason Knutson, to make for an even easier login and download experience, and the details will be passed along soon.

LOST COASTERS OF TEXAS

Big Bend

By Tim Baldwin

The year 2005 marks the 25th anniversary of *Judge Roy Scream*. But the *Judge's* birth also marks the passing of *Big Bend*. For long time Texans or enthusiasts to this region, *Big Bend* brings fond memories of Six Flag's second decade. But newer ACEers to the area, or those that aren't quite as old as some of the veterans that call the south home, may not be familiar with *Big Bend*.

The Schwarzkopf jet racer was a continuation of his *Jet Star* and *Jumbo Jet* series. Those coasters were compact in nature and were production models duplicated numerous times. *Big Bend* was customized just for Texas, as the name implies.

A stroll alongside the trickling stream that lies adjacent to Splashwater Falls and stretches from Looney Tunes USA to the *Judge's* entrance helps place the location of *Big Bend*. Many green footings are still in place in that very stream. The station for the coaster is approximately where we see the Lost Parent train cars today. The ride was quite large and took up the space now occupied by our Wildcatter, Splashwater Falls, Snow Hill, and a portion of Looney Tunes USA.

Two spiraling lift hills carried the trains to the highest points with motors in each train, instead of the standard chain lift. The ride's signature elements were all about banked curves. Keep in mind that in 1971, Arrow's original *Corkscrew* was still years away. Aside from a few production models, the only steel coasters in existence consisted basically of a few mine trains. While certainly a "family coaster" by today's thrill standards, *Big Bend* was state-of-the-art for its time.



Photo by Gary Slade of *Amusement Today*

Sadly, it was not without operational problems. Capacity was not as high as the park would have liked, particularly when the decision came to reduce the trains from three cars to two. Carrying 12 riders instead of 18 per train caused long lines to become longer. *Big Bend's* queue house even consisted of two levels of zigzag queuing. Difficulties also plagued the ride and after nine seasons, even though riders enjoyed the coaster tremendously, the park gave in. Prompting numerous urban legends, *Big Bend* gave its last rides in 1979. In 1980, the *Judge* offered new thrills to take its place. After being dismantled, the coaster was shipped to Six Flags Over Mid-America. It was never re-erected.

All total, four of these jet racers by Anton Schwarzkopf were built in North America in the 1970s. *Zambezi Zinger* at Worlds of Fun debuted in 1973 and tickled riders right up to the change of the millennium. Both Great Americas opened *Willard's Whizzer* on the Bicentennial. The only remaining example left in North America is Six Flags Great America's *Whizzer*. Just a few short years ago, the park announced it was removing the ride and the public outcry made them change their minds. For those enjoying the Coaster Con this June, take a moment to appreciate what still runs in Illinois and remember what we have lost.

Winterfest at Kemah Boardwalk (continued from page 1)

the South Central Region event plans for 2005 and beyond. This included details on Schlittercon III to be held in New Braunfels over Memorial Day weekend and a video provided by Fiesta Texas to promote dates for Fiesta Fest 2005 which is to be held during the parks' Fright Fest instead of the usual Memorial Day weekend. David also showed a PowerPoint presentation he created as a tribute to Schlitterbahn and to help announce Schlittercon III.

AstroWorld was up next to talk about the changes in the park for 2005, introduce the new Public Relations Manager and take a few questions. Ron McKenzie talked about how well the park had done in 2004 in the guest compliments department and that they performed in the top three of the Six Flags parks in customer satisfaction. While nothing major was to take place for 2005, they were once again concentrating on improving the guest experience at the park which could be in preparation for something new in 2006. Ron also talked about the new Proslide Tornado being added to Splashtown on the North side of town and provided everyone with a promotional funnel for the ride which will open with the park. Joyce Ballenger, who everyone that attended Coaster Masquerade 2004 at AstroWorld should know well, spoke a while as well and introduced the park's new PR Manager, Donna Marie Jendritzka.

Before leaving, the AstroWorld crew took some time to answer a few questions and presented a plaque with a Batman The Escape guide wheel mounted to it created by Maintenance Director, Kent Maulsby. ACE member Jennetta Kaarstad was the lucky person to walk away with the plaque with her winning bid of \$210.00 which will go to benefit the museum.

After the quick auction the regional rep team presented this year's "Timmy" award to Jeffrey Seifert who has provided a tremendous amount of time and talent to the region over the past several years in various aspects that a lot of members don't always know about. Jeff creates all of the regional event flyers as well as providing audio/video support and equipment for various regional events and helping with the production of this and every other one of our newsletters.

Next up, a humorous video from Geauga Lake containing most of the management staff showing the construction on the new waterpark they are building for the 2005.

After a quick break to let games master Tim set up for his recent creation, it was time for some Coaster Jeopardy. This game based on the popular TV game show saw contestants Mike Robinson, Scott Connor and Jeremy Murphy compete for the top prize. While all 3 contestants were very knowledgeable and got many questions right, when it was all over, Scott Connor had won the game and took away first pick of the door prizes for which he selected a very nice Georgia Scorcher polo shirt.

After the game, the regional rep team was up to talk about the web site as well as take some questions from the members in attendance. The on-line features were once again stressed as it's been noticed that most members don't take advantage of downloading the on-line newsletters and several don't subscribe to the e-update list. To be kept updated of all the latest happenings in the region, the ACE South Central website and e-updates are the best options. It was suggested by a member to have a wallpaper download section which is currently being considered and may be something added in the future as time allows. Also, members were once again asked to submit some photos for the "photo of the month" feature on the web site.

Before drawing names to hand out over 100 door prizes, it was time for a quick auction to raise some money for the museum. Items included a Texas Cyclone 25th anniversary t-shirt, an IAAPA golf tee, a Cedar Point pin set and two Raven flags from Holiday World. When it was all said and done,



Some ACEers got in line for the wrong Ferris Wheel....



Train ride along Galveston Bay.



Yvonne talks about upcoming national events.



The AstroWorld crew takes time to answer a few questions

over \$600 was raised for the museum from the auction items and sales of posters from *Amusement Today*.

Finally, the time had come for the door prize drawing. 2005 was by far the largest selection of door prizes the region has ever seen at an event. In the end everyone ended up leaving the event with 3 items through the drawing as well as various other handouts provided by AstroWorld for a total of at least 6 items!

Some quick closing words from the regional rep team led into a couple parting videos. The first video which was filmed by David Lipnicky at No Coaster showed Jeff Siebert of Kings Island inviting Winterfest attendees to attend Coaster Con XXX in 2007 which is being hosted by Kings Island. The final video of the day was a promotional video created by Kings Island to promote their new ride for 2005, *The Italian Job*. The video featured Jeff Siebert and Maureen Kaiser from Kings Island Public Relations as the Brady Bunch (yes, all of the Brady Bunch) in a funny spoof of the Brady Bunch episode in which the family travels to Kings Island.

After the video ended it was unfortunately time to go. Yet another Winterfest was over. Attendees headed out to dinner, back to hotels, home or even hung out at the Boardwalk for a while to take advantage of a few more rides before hitting the road.

A HUGE thanks to all the following people who helped make Winterfest 2005 possible: Tim Anderson (General Manager), Jay Wilson (Amusements Manager) and Gaylyn Wisko (Catering Sales Manager) of Kemah Boardwalk for working with the regional rep team and providing the meeting space and free ride wristbands. William Neuman, Manager of the Cadillac Bar, and his staff for providing several options for lunch and providing outstanding service. Ron McKenzie, Joyce Ballenger and Donna Marie Jendritza of AstroWorld. David Blaster of Fiesta Texas. Sherrie Brammell of Schlitterbahn. Jeffrey Siebert of Paramount's Kings Island. Lexi Robinson of Geauga Lake. Gloria Waterhouse of Hampton Inn & Suites Houston/Clear Lake/NASA. Gary Slade of *Amusement Today* for providing copies of *Amusement Today*. Carole Sanderson, Jason McMillon, Kari Lipnicky, Jeremy Murphy, Tim Baldwin, Jeffrey Seifert, Mike Robinson, Robert Reagan, Sharon Reagan, Phil Pan, and Jeff Braziel for assistance before, after or during Winterfest. Also thanks to everyone who bid on auction items with money going to the museum.

Thank You!

In addition to everyone thanked in the Winterfest article, the David, Scott, & Jason Regional Rep Team would like to thank the following people for help with this newsletter and future event planning: Sandra Daniels and Jane Houser of Six Flags Over Texas. Robbie Connell of Humperdinks. Tim Baldwin, Jeffrey Seifert, Jason McMillon, and Kari Lipnicky.

THE CROSSOVER—News From Neighboring Regions

Southeast Region (14): ACE Southeast is having “Rip May Roarin’ Rampage” on June 4 at Visionland (Bessemer Alabama). May 25 is the deadline to register. The Southeast regional website (www.acesoutheast.org/mainpage.html) has a link to the event flyer in the upper left corner.

Southwest Region (20): ACE Southwest is planning to have two back-to-back events in Denver on the weekend of June 11-12. The first event will be at historic Lakeside Amusement Park on Saturday, June 11. The second event will be at Six Flags Elitch Gardens on Sunday, June 12. Event details will be finalized soon and the event flyers should be on-line before May.



The Coaster Jeopardy board.



Jeopardy contestants Scott Connor, Jeremy Murphy and Mike Robinson.



Jeffrey Seifert with his Golden Track Award.
Photo by: Tim Baldwin



Nuts & Bolts (Items in Brief)

Phone Number Update - In case you did not notice the change on the first page, (817) 455-8786 is the new telephone number for your Regional Rep.

Regional Event News

SchlitterCon III - This event will be held on May 28th at Schlitterbahn Waterpark Resort in New Braunfels, TX. Come find out why this legendary resort is the only waterpark to host an official ACE event. The Travel Channel, Amusement Today magazine, the Discovery Channel, and most in the amusement industry have cited this magical resort as the greatest waterpark in the known universe. Schlitterbahn Resorts is offering a **20% discount on room rates for ACE members** and non-members registered for SchlitterCon III. This discount is not available on-line, but the Resort Reservations number is (830) 625-2351, ext. 799 -- and you must mention that you are with the ACE group to receive this impressive 20% discount. The SchlitterCon III event flyer has all the details and is included with this newsletter, and is also available at <http://www.acesouthcentral.org>

Second Annual Lone Star Coasterthon Pre-Event Party - *Amusement Today*, Humperdinks Arlington, and the ACE South Central Regional Rep Team are happy to announce that the "2nd Annual Lone Star Coasterthon Pre-Event Welcome Party" will take place on Friday, September 9. This event will be open to all Lone Star Coasterthon attendees and all current ACE members and will run from 7-10pm in "The

Six Flags Room" at Humperdinks. Thanks to the support of *Amusement Today* (www.amusementtoday.com) and Humperdinks Arlington, this event will NOT have a registration fee. To make things even better, AT will once again provide party platters.

Lone Star Coasterthon - September 10-11 at Six Flags Over Texas in Arlington: LSCT is not only one of the oldest park-sponsored events for ACE members; it is a true southern legend in the realm of coaster events. *Why?* Multiple hours of ERT on numerous coasters; free parking; 2-day park admission; a unique event T-shirt; continental breakfasts, lunch, evening ERT refreshments, plus a meal voucher; stunning group photo locals; an official "Tim Baldwin created" coaster game; Q&A session with park officials; a copy of the group photo for each attendee; and more! All for an amazingly reasonable price that is lower than a single-day admission at some parks! While the event flyer will not be ready until late spring/early summer, the ACE South Central Regional Rep Team plans to have block of hotel rooms at a special "ACE Rate" and the "2nd Annual Lone Star Coasterthon Pre-Event Welcome Party" the evening before.

Fiesta Fest 2005 - October 15-16 at Six Flags Fiesta Texas in San Antonio: This joint ACE region/Park-sponsored event moves this year from the heat and one of the park's most crowded weekends to a cooler and lighter time of the year. Still, this powerhouse event will still deliver some of the best food, shows, activities, and unique coaster souvenirs anywhere, as well as some of the most fun and lively ERT sessions. To kick things into high gear, this will be the very first year we do Fiesta Fest "Fright Fest

Style"! Come ride the best B&M floorless coaster in the world, one of the best mine trains, and one of the most exciting and smooth LIM-launched coasters anywhere. Did we mention the unique event T-shirt, the marvelous Monster Mash Bash show, and the historic "cliff-top" photo tour? The event flyer will be available later, but a block of "ACE Rate" hotels rooms is planned.

Regional Member News

Congratulations to our own **Krista Keyes** ... um, we mean Krista Baskin. Krista and her beau Jeremy tied the knot on February 5th. Marriage will not take Krista away from coasters as the new couple is even planning to take their honeymoon in Orlando later this year! We wish Krista & Jeremy the very best (and we hope to soon see both of them at our events)!

While the Regional Rep Team tried to recruit members in the tradition way, regional ACE members **Phil** and **Cheryl Pan** used a different track. **Matthew Vincent Pan** was born to the proud parents on April 9. Too bad Phil & Cheryl did not take your Regional Rep's suggested baby name. Curly still thinks "Anton Toomer Pan" has a nice ring.

Now for some bittersweet news ... our own **Jennifer McIntyre** (formerly Reagan) and her husband Trevor are not just moving out of the region, but off the continent! Trevor's job in the Air Force is taking the young couple to Japan this May. Many in the region watched Jennifer grow up over the last two decades. While we will miss Jennifer and Trevor, they have our love, best wishes, and ultimate respect as they help keep freedom alive in America and around the world.

Schlitterbahn Galveston Update

(photos by Jason Knutson)

After a delay in construction caused by a fire that destroyed the building that was to be the indoor portion of the park, construction is progressing on the new park. The land is in the process of final clearing and several water slide parts and other items are now on site. Watch the photo gallery at <http://www.acesouthcentral.org> for future updates.

