



The Queue Line Chronicle



David Lipnicky, Regional Rep
2175 N. Hwy 360 #911
Grand Prairie, TX 75050
(817)445-8786
regrep@acesouthcentral.org

Scott Connor—Assistant Regional Rep
sconnor@aceonline.org
Jason Knutson—Assistant Regional Rep
jknutson@aceonline.org
Jeremy Murphy—Assistant Regional Rep
jmurphy@acesouthcentral.org



ACE South Central Region—Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana—Summer 2006

West Texas Round-up Corals Fun and Surprises – By David Lipnicky



ACEers never quite know what to expect when we head west to lasso some fun at two of our favorite traditional amusement parks. Whether it is one of the most unique steel-loopers in the world, cyclone-like winds, an insane Himalaya,

great factory tours, Texas heat, the most unforgiving (and taunting) miniature golf course known to man, driving rains, or a maniacal *Mad Mouse*, the bi-annual West Round-up is always an event to remember. Although the event took a backseat to the national ACE Spring Conference in 2004, the 2006 edition came back to form during the Friday and Saturday of the Memorial Day weekend.

The event kicked off in Lubbock, Texas at Joyland Amusement Park with ERT on all three coasters – the always fun *Little Coaster*, the delightful *Galaxi*, and that maniacal *Mad Mouse*. With a little coaxing from park owners David and Kristi Dean, the Regional Rep Team and a few attendees ventured out of the park to find where the track of AstroWorld's *Greezed Lightnin'* is currently being stored in preparation for its rebirth at Joyland. Relying on Curly's keen navigational skills, the region's *Greezed Lightnin'* search team got lost, not once, not twice, but three times! Luckily, Assistant Regional Rep Jason Knutson conveniently lost the caravan, and finally found Greezy and notified "Expedition Everlost" of its locale. After a few pictures as the sun was setting in the west Texas sky, the weary coaster explorers rejoined the remaining ACEers for a dinner that offered very tasty Texas treats.

The ride formerly known as *Greezed Lightnin'*



David and Kristi Dean talk to the group after dinner

David and Kristi Dean gave highlights about their surprise acquisition of the famed *Greezed Lightnin'* and gave ACE tidbits about its eventual location in the park. The Deans then surprised us with a trip to the park's souvenir storage room so each attendee could pick out a free T-shirt or souvenir. While unexpected, we completely appreciate the wonderful down-home Texas hospitality. After more time to enjoy the park, it was time for the night ERT session on all three coasters, the insane Musik Express (Himalaya), and other flat rides. It all came and went too quickly, but everyone left the park with smiles and were ready for day two.



Venturing up I-27 to Plainview, Texas took the ACE caravan to Larson International. While most normal people would say breakfast burritos with a Larson Ring of Fire ERT chaser to start a Saturday morning is just lunacy, we would not! Many

burritos and loops on Ring of Fire were enjoyed before the Regional Rep Team presented Larson with a national ACE appreciation plaque for all of Larson's support to ACE's national and regional efforts.

Then the Regional Rep Team unveiled the Anton Schwarzkopf commemorative plaque ACE gave AstroWorld in 2002, which Lynda Baldwin of Six Flags Theme Parks rescued when AstroWorld was dismantled after the 2005 season. (Thank you Lynda!) The plant tour was interesting as ever as ACEers were able to see many of Larson's amusement projects in progress up close.

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The Curly Seat

A view from the South Central Regional Rep seat
David Lipnick—ACE South Central Regional Rep
regrep@acesouthcentral.org

There are people who prefer to live in the past. While these people can often help preserve history for future generations, if that desire becomes too deeply entrenched, they are unable to move forward through adversity. Other people live with their eyes fixed on the future. While their visionary abilities can often locate hidden destinations at the edge of the horizon, if their eyes are too firmly locked on solely on what may exist at the end of the path, they often keep tripping as they bump into every pothole along the road. Then there are those who learn from the past and apply it to where they are on the map to better get where they want to go, or find a completely new way to reach their destination.

Now given my reputation for navigation – OK, OK, my possession of the “rat lost in a maze” gene, I might be the last one to use the analogy of roads and maps. And other than my ability to never find Michigan’s Adventure in less than 100 minutes while only 3 miles away from the park, many of you are wondering why in Hades I have started out this Curly Seat like some philosophical take on bad draft screenplay of a ‘Back to the Future’ knock-off. Well, I might as well get to that.

While many of us still have plenty to say about either the rich history or unnecessary destruction of AstroWorld, this particular ride in The Curly Seat is not the right place for that right now. I do believe the closure of AstroWorld will accomplish two things -- 1) go down in history as one of greatest mistakes in the history of the amusement industry and 2) will eventually become known as the defining act of the old Six Flags, Inc. regime. Still, some in the industry have taken (and some will have the opportunity to take) bold steps in establishing their own defining moments by crafting some good out of this senseless park closure.

Anyone who knows Paul Borchardt of Wonderland Amusement Park in Amarillo knows he is a true Texas original who takes his business with equal measure of fun and seriousness. Knowing his park, his customer base, as well as current and future industry trends, Paul knew a family style roller coaster would fill a need of his patrons. Paul could have purchased a new modest-sized coaster from a vast array of manufacturers, a

move that certainly has some advantages. Maybe it has been all of Paul’s interactions with ACE all these years, but he naturally saw advantages in pursuing the venerable *Mayan Mindbender* from the recently closed AstroWorld. Besides filling that customer niche as well as gaining instant admiration from us ACEers, I am sure Paul certainly saw that maintaining a piece of Texas amusement heritage *and* laying claim to a bona-fide roller coaster from a major amusement park chain would play very well to his local customer base in Amarillo. Forget the giddy delight ACEers may have for this move, this is a very smart business decision that resulted from someone else’s silly mistake.

Anyone who has met David Dean knows he is another true Texas character. While he sometimes puts forth a reserved, laid-back demeanor while running Joyland Amusement Park with his wife Kristi, anyone who experienced ACE Spring Con 2004 knows not too far under the surface, David may be as wild as our most enthusiastic ACEer. Crazy? Perhaps, but after the stunning April announcement that Joyland purchased AstroWorld’s *Greezed Lightnin’*, I will say “Crazy like a fox”. Considering the size of Joyland, I do not think any ACE member could have expected this move. Still, the decision makes sense when you look at it. Joyland knew it needed a signature ride to stay viable in a rapidly changing amusement industry. Much to the amazement of many ACEers across the county, *Greezy* did not find a buyer at two AstroWorld auctions. While a new wooden roller coaster would have pleased ACEers from all over, the acquisition of arguably the greatest Schwarzkopf shuttle-loop ever built is one JOHN HANCOCK of a signature ride for the city of Lubbock, the South Central region, and anyone who champions coaster preservation. While I typically favor wood over steel, the sight of that 70-foot Schwarzkopf loop and those gargantuan spiked inclines on each end make for one monstrous billboard for the park that a medium-sized woodie could just not pull off. In addition, the aspects of Texas amusement heritage and bona-fide roller coaster from a major amusement park chain should also play very well in Lubbock. This coaster coup d’etat should extend the viability of the park for many years while

elevating Joyland to a “must experience” coaster destination park for enthusiasts near and far. Again, a smart business decision rising from the ashes of someone else’s bad miscalculation.

While my first ride on each of these resurrected machines will be like a long, cool, drink of sweet Texas lemonade on a hot summer day, please be aware Wonderland and Joyland did not stir up their tasty concoctions alone. Six Flag’s new management (including former AstroWorld GM Chuck Hendrix and others) and our own Gary Slade (with his triple-billed hat as ACE member, Roller Coaster Museum Board member, and *Amusement Today* publisher) had huge rolls in making this all happen. Larson International in Plainview, Texas is working on the rolling stock refurbishment for both coasters, while AstroWorld’s former Maintenance Director, Kent Maulsby, will have a key role in *Greezed Lightnin’*’s reconstruction.

On a related note, Six Flags’ new management (namely former AstroWorld Operations Supervisor Linda Baldwin – and we suspect with some help of former AstroWorld GM Chuck Hendrix) secured the Schwarzkopf plaque ACE awarded to AstroWorld in 2002 and donated our gift back to the ACE Museum!” Total class from the new Six Flags regime. Now, Six Flags’ new management team is also defining themselves with some bold moves to enhance the customer experience and ensure their long-term viability. While an ol’ time park-goer like me will cringe at \$15 parking or fewer mega coasters built than in the past, this Regional Rep has generally been very encouraged by the changes as a whole, as the chain has a good start in redefining its parks for the better. However, a crown jewel in the *new* Six Flags management legacy could be bringing a brand new Six Flags park to the Houston area – just north of Conroe or west of the city (near Katy). Bringing back the major theme park experience to the 4th largest market in the United States would be the defining moment for the new Six Flags leadership. Now I am not saying a new park should have the AstroWorld moniker—there was and will only be one AstroWorld—just a new park would be a memorable legacy for the new Six Flags. And that my friends is my view from The Curly Seat.



Terrifying. That's how I remember the *Zephyr* at Pontchartrain Beach. By the time I had ridden *Zephyr* I had ridden only one other woodie, *The Comet* at

intense and highly effective. Due to the trees surrounding the ride you had the sense of being on a fast and far off adventure. The ride was relentless. About midway there was a turnaround at the east end of the ride which led to a series of smaller hills that took you back to the station.



Texas State Fairgrounds. I already loved rollercoasters but I was still terrified of woodies, probably because I had limited experience with them. I visited Pontchartrain Beach in 1981 and if memory serves the *Zephyr's* station house was located near the entrance to the park. Very little of the *Zephyr's* layout was visible from within or even outside the park as the trees and vegetation around the ride were overgrown. This made the ride ominous and somewhat mysterious, creating a sense of "what does it do and where does it go once it leaves the station?" The paint on the structure was considerably worn which heavily contributed to the seeming "danger" of the *Zephyr*, but the ride still called.

Unfortunately the park is gone, along with its many rides including *Zephyr Jr.* As of the summer of 2004 there is nothing to really indicate to people that a park once stood there. However, the station house for the *Ragin' Cajun* still stands. A small building made to look like a lighthouse that was located near the entrance to the park is still present. There are also several tiles from the midway still on the ground. These are enough to bring back the fond memories of New Orleans' lost treasure and that fantastic coaster called the *Zephyr*.



Once the train left the station a curve and a tunnel lead to the open lift hill. At the top sat a kitschy 1950's-era "tower" which the train passed under. From here the train was facing away from Lake Pontchartrain and the Beach's parking lot was clear. The train quickly found its way into the first drop and from here the ride went "out of control". The *Zephyr* was an out'n'back configuration but with a few mild bends along the way. There was at least one tunnel after the first drop. The head-chopper effect was



All photos by Gary Slade—1983



Schlitterbahn Galveston Celebrates a Grand Opening — By Jason Knutson

During Winterfest 2006 at Six Flags Over Texas, the crew at Schlitterbahn sent along some custom made coupons just for ACE members. One of those coupons was an invitation to the Schlitterbahn Galveston grand opening celebration to be held later in the year. The grand opening finally came on Saturday May 13th, and even though it was May, the day started out very cool. Guests were able to arrive an hour early and get the entire Wasserfest area (which is the section that is enclosed for the winter months) to themselves. If you weren't awake before your first rides of the day you certainly were afterwards as the cold water was quite a shock early in the morning. However after a few rides it became tolerable and as the day heated up would no longer be an issue. Ten o'clock arrived and as the gates opened the park quickly filled up. Most of the ACEers in attendance quickly headed to the recently opened Surfenburg section of the park to get some rides before the lines got too long. This area includes the parks two Master Blaster watercoasters as well as the Boogie Bahn. The Galveston park features many of the items that are also found at the other Schlitterbahn parks. From the Splash Cash to the hot tub with swim up bar the Galveston park delivers what frequent Schlitterbahn guests would expect. While this park isn't a resort like the original park, it does offer up a lot of family fun and a lot closer to home for the people of the Houston-Galveston area. The park provided a tasty Texas barbecue lunch with sides and drinks for those who attended and afterwards everyone was free to enjoy the rest of the day at the park

Schlitterbahn Galveston is a great way to spend a summer (and winter!) day and with the closing of AstroWorld/WaterWorld and Adventure Bay is something the Houston-Galveston area needed. A huge thanks to Terri Adams, Jeffrey Siebert and the Schlitterbahn Galveston crew for allowing ACE a chance to check out this new Galveston attraction.



(Photo by Jason Knutson)

West Texas (Continued from Page 1)

However, the highlight at Larson was the tour of the larger pieces of coaster history stored for ACE's museum initiative. The biggest hits were the sections of *Texas Cyclone* track and the *Greezed Lightnin'* launch system, which Larson will refurbish before its installation at Joyland. Special thanks go to Larson International and Gary Slade of the National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives for setting up this bonus tour. Again, the time to get to the event's next destination came all too soon, but ACE had some more coaster riding to do.



A few more miles up I-27 took the ACE spring tour to Amarillo and Wonderland Amusement Park. Light crowds gave the 20 ACEers plenty of time to enjoy the various delights Wonderland has to offer at a leisurely pace. ERT on the *Texas Tornado* got things rolling. After some pleasant free time in the park, came the activity that has given your Regional Rep nightmares – the West Texas Round-up's Miniature Golf Tournament.. Seriously, although your Regional Rep is no slouch

on the miniature golf course, Wonderland's course is so sadistically challenging, it has literally given your normally fearless leader more than one bad dream. The recurring dream centers around all the West Texas attendees waiting behind Curly in order to play through while after 6, 16, 26 strokes, and Curly is still not able to sink "the Volcano hole", or "the Roller Coaster Hole", or, well ... you get the point. While Robert Reagan won the tournament, Curly and Assistant Regional Rep Jason Knutson did get a hole in one! (And Curly has not had a Wonderland Miniature Golf nightmare since.)

A great Tex-Mex dinner tantalized out taste buds, and Owner/General Manager Paul Borchardt entertained our vast inquiries – many about the park's acquisition of AstroWorld's *Mayan Mindbender* - during an extended Q&A session. An evening ERT session on all three coasters – the funky *Big Coaster*, the zippy *Cyclone*, and the totally unique *Texas Tornado* – was a treat for all. However, the ERT session was not the end. The Borchardt's holding true to their reputation for Texas hospitality held a post-ERT rest and relaxation session complete with frosty beverages. While Paul and ACE wanted the night to last at least a little longer, the majority of attendees had a long drive further west Sunday morning for ACE Southwest's companion event in Albuquerque. While four ERT sessions, three meals, two tours, three locations, and a lost expedition is quite a lot, it seems to go all too fast each time. However, it will only get better in 2008 with probable ERT on *Greezed Lightnin'* and *Mayan Mindbender* as part of the event highlights. Our thanks go to David and Kristi Dean and the Joyland staff, Jeff Novotny and Larson International crew, Gary Slade, and Paul Borchardt and the staff at Wonderland for showing ACE great generosity and a fantastic time.

(Photos by Jason Knutson)



ACE appreciation plaque being presented to Larson International



Greezed Lightnin''s flywheel assembly in storage at Larson



Enjoying a delicious fajita dinner at Wonderland

Web Site Information—<http://www.acesouthcentral.org>

As a reminder, you can download this newsletter in full color from our regional web site in the members section. If you haven't already done so, sign up an account today and start downloading! If you've just recently joined our region you will also have access to all past newsletters created by the current regional rep team!

Do you take photos of parks or at events? Would you like to share these with other members through the regional web site? If so please email me at webmaster@acesouthcentral.org to get started. The process is fairly easy and I can provide basic instructions. You will need to be familiar with resizing photos to use this new feature. Uploaded photos may also be used in newsletters.

ACE South Central Goes to Albuquerque — By Jason McMillon



for the Southwest Region, greeted each eager ACE member and coordinated this great event.



you and is relentless in its thrills. If for no other reason alone, it's the opinion of this author that the trip to Albuquerque was worth it for this crown jewel of a coaster.

Also part of the ERT was the S.D.C. manufactured *Galaxi* coaster. Quirky, yet fun, it's a nice counterpoint to the breathtaking *Rattler*.

After two full fun-filled days in Lubbock and Amarillo, 11 members from the ACE South Central region joined our friends from the Southwest region for the ACE Day at Cliff's crossover event. Kevin Knapp, Assistant Regional Rep

What did you want for lunch? If you could think of it, it was catered. BBQ, grilled chicken, hamburgers, hotdogs, fruit, and dessert, it was all there. And interestingly, RC Cola on tap!



During lunch, the park owner, Gary Hays, dropped by the pavilion for a visit and to talk about the park's history and the direction they are taking in the future. Mentioning the success the park has had with *The New Mexico Rattler* and most recently the ARM/Larson manufactured Cliff Hanger drop ride, one has to wonder what other thrills they have planned for the future.

No trip to this gem of an amusement park would be complete without a turn on the enclosed bumper cars set to rock music and disco lights. All that was missing was a fog machine and your polyester leisure suit!

Continuing the tradition, the park announced they would continue to give ACE members a buy-one-get-one entry into the park if you showed your ACE card.

Thank you to Cliff's and all our friends in the Southwest region who made this add-on day for the West Texas Round-up a great success! It really was a perfect ending to a perfect event. Hope to see everyone again next time in 2008!

(Photos by Jason Knutson)

Four ACEers SPEND 45 HOURS IN COURT WITH THE JUDGE – Compiled by David Lipnicky



Photo By Charlotte Schroeder

ACE South Central members Polly Nichols, Sean Shaver, Nathan Laughlin, and Don Carlson along with 6 radio station contestants successfully completed 45 hours on *Judge Roy Scream* at Six Flags Over Texas during August 2-4. All 10 winners will get an all expenses paid trip to a Six Flags park of their choice, \$450 cash, 2007 Six Flags Over Texas season passes, as well as other goodies! The Regional Rep Team and contestants would like to thank Jane Hatter, Sandra Daniels, Steve Calloway, the employees of Six Flags Over Texas, and The Ranch 95.9 FM for asking ACE to participate in this 45th Anniversary event. The other Ride-A-Thon participants included Charlotte Schroeder, Cheryl Shaver, Robert Reagan, Sharon Reagan, Daniel Kraig, Assistant Regional Rep Scott Connor, and Regional Rep David Lipnicky. Special thanks goes to Cheryl, Daniel, Scott, & David who stayed up all of the second night to help keep the winning riders spirits up and passing out antacids and Advil during the most taxing part of the event. Extra-Extra special thanks to ACEer Garrison Lewis who spent the ENTIRE time at the event handing out water and snacks to contestants. Instead of giving a cycle-by-cycle account of the event (there were 555 cycles), here are some quotes from the ACE participants.

I can now claim to have spent the night at an amusement park. If I can sleep on the Judge Roy Scream loading dock, then why can't these

mattress companies make something I can sleep on?

—Daniel Kraig

I remember the reaction from friends and co-workers. They all asked me the same question, "Are you INSANE"???? To which I would simply reply, "Why yes, I am insane. Thank you." Nobody at work thought that I would be able to complete the task. This just gave me even more determination. In life, I believe that anyone can do what they set their mind to. Our boundaries are limitless. You just have to believe, and it will be so. Riding on *The Judge* for 45 hours was a great experience for me! It allowed me to spend quality time with old friends, meet new friends, and prove to myself that I had the sheer will and determination to complete the task at hand. A lot of people said that they would never do it again. But not me... BRING ON THE NEXT CHALLENGE! (I just hope it's not The Texas Giant, because I personally don't think that there is enough will or determination in the whole world for ANYONE to complete that challenge!) It was an honor and privilege to be a part of this wonderful event. And the memories of those 3 days will live on forever in my mind ... P.S. David...Thanks for the Imodium!

—Polly Nichols (Ride-A-Thon Winner)

A Texas Size THANK YOU to all involved for giving me the opportunity to participate in the Ride-A-Thon. I had a lot of fun! Our ride-a-thon chant "one more time!" —Charlotte Schroeder

Let me start by saying that the ride-a-thon was definitely a learning experience. It was an honor to be selected to help Six Flags promote their 45th anniversary. Having said that, I will tell you that



Photo By David Lipnicky

I surprised many by even attempting to ride *The Judge* for the 45 hour Ride-A-Thon. I had fully intended to do my best to stay on the ride for the full 45 hours. After about 11 hours, as a result of the heat, I had several places on my body where the restraint had rubbed me raw. I looked at Sean and said, "There is no way I will be able to last the full 45 hours." He replied, "You have lasted a lot longer than I ever anticipated you would, if you are that uncomfortable then you need to stop riding."

For the next couple of laps I debated and decided my time would be better spent helping Garrison deliver food, drinks and anything else the other ACE riders needed, and in the end, to any of the 10 riders who were still riding, to assist them in successfully completing the ride-a-thon. I spent the next 33 hours, with only 3 1/2 hours of sleep, walking up and down the exit ramp numerous times every 45-minute interval, to help make the other riders comfortable by keeping them hydrated and fed snacks.

Garrison and I also kept the count board up to date after the first 24 hours cycle.

Being in the park for almost 45 hours (I left for about 30 minutes to buy a lounge chair and a few other essentials we had forgotten) was quite an experience. The ride-a-thon was a first in many ways for me. It was the first time I had spent the night in a park, the first time to be interviewed on live TV, the first attempt at a ride-a-thon of any length, the first to learn about some of the amenities offered the employees by Six Flags, such as the Taqueria Cantina, where I was allowed to go get breakfast tacos for a few of the ACE riders after the first 24 hours of the ride.

I must say I was very impressed by the support of the employees of Six Flags, especially Jane, who made an attempt to make sure every rider had ample drinks, snacks, fruit, and food that they requested. She made several trips to the store to buy bananas and other items that were the favorites of the riders. Six Flags did a remarkable job taking care of all of the riders and their companions. I was proud to be standing with the winners after their 45 hours ride-a-thon, especially Sean and the other ACEers.

—Cheryl Shaver



IF you spend 45 hours on a coaster, in 105 degree temperatures bring lots of sunscreen, deodorant, and patience! (Don't forget the change of underwear to prevent what I like to refer to as Swamp-A**.) I spent 41 of the 45 hours over an axle – my lower back that felt like someone took a jackhammer to it. I can remember riding the coaster and watching this lady walk her dog along the fence line located along the JRS, by letting him off the leash and letting him chase the coaster cars out AND back not only at night time, but in the morning as well, and that giving me motivation for some unknown reason. I remember changing my shirt about 10 times, but not every 4.5 hours. I can remember Nathan telling me that 250 was sounding like a really good number to quit on, and I told him it wasn't, before he put me in row 12 for hours 30-36.

Papa John's Garlic pizza sauce and riding JRS does NOT go together whatsoever. One is able to sleep in row 8 after 45 hours, especially 2 out of the last 3 laps, with Six Flags management, the media, the Justice League, and all of the other Warner Brothers Characters present on the exit side of the station. Even though the temperatures were over a hundred degrees for the two previous weeks, and there was an exact ZERO chance for rain in the forecast, you can never be too safe by packing your fleece for a Ride-A-Thon in August

in Arlington TX. Waiting for TV interviews after the Ride-A-Thon can be more grueling than actually doing the Ride-A-Thon itself.

I know that this was one of the most mentally & physically challenging things I have done to my body, probably 2nd hardest to only graduating basic training 20 years ago. Last, but certainly not least, special thanks go out to my wife Cheryl and Garrison Lewis for helping all of us out with snacks and water.

—Sean Shaver (Ride-A-Thon Winner)

Kudos to those who made it the 45 hours, and more kudos for those who rode several hours on the axles. Especially Sean with his 41 hours. I thought I was prepared, but now I really know what to bring if there is a next time. Sun Screen, padding, pack water in case they temporary run out, bug repellent, sun glasses, a stop watch to make sure you are back in time and a sense of humor in case ending up on the axle. Even though I did not make the full 45 hours, I think it was one of my best vacations.

—Sharon Reagan

Judge may be an easy ride for a while, but after all day in the heat, it gets tough. Just lasting through the riding itself is not hard, it is the mental exhaustion that gets you. I nearly gave up during the first night around 3 in the morning; it is really hard to get over that hump of sleepiness. After the halfway point, there was no giving up, not when I had already been through 300 rides and 22.5 hours. There is almost no way that anyone could have made it without a ride partner during the latter part of the marathon. The last morning is all a blur, from what I remember, the station seemed to look different because of my extreme exhaustion. I slept for 10 hours afterwards, woke up, had dinner, and went back to sleep for another 8 hours. I had wanted to do a marathon for years, and now I have been able to complete a marathon. I'm just waiting for the next one, and I'll be that much more prepared.

—Nate Laughlin (Ride-A-Thon Winner)

“WHAT was I thinking??!! Actually, I had a blast, and look forward to another one, just not real soon. The ride crews were awesome and deserve raises for putting up with us! To Harmon, Heywood, and the entire gang from “95.9 The Ranch”, thank you so much for providing those needed doses of humor in the mornings. To all of my co-riders (and Garrison), you are wonderful and I would do it with you again anytime, anywhere, any roller coaster in the world!”

—Scott Connor

While I have wanted to do a coaster marathon since I was a kid and read about Richard Rodriguez holding the world coaster marathon record in the Guinness Book of World Records, I was a last minute replacement for an ACEer who could not get the vacation time off. I knew 45 hours on coaster was something this 40-something body was not prepared to complete. 24 hours, yes! 30 hours, maybe. 45 hours, are you crazy? ... In 100+ degree Texas heat, are you psychotic?! As a result, I went in with three goals. Not to be the first one to bail – check! Do at least 100 circuits – check! Complete at least 12 hours – well, when Nate & I drew Row 9, I knew sitting on an axle

for the first six hours was going to take as much out of me as the heat. After making through the hottest part of day one by completing 10 hours, my back told me it had enough. I knew if I stopped at 10, I could come back the next evening to help Garrison support the surviving ACEers through the second night. I can now say I participated in a marathon and spent the night in an amusement park. I can also say that I now have a special bond with the 11 fellow Ride-A-Thon participants – this bond will unite the 12 of us together as few other things can. I want to thank Nate - my riding partner for my 10 hours. We spent a lot of time talking during this time, and I still look back fondly of those conversations.

—David Lipnick

I cannot forget the nonstop Beatles and Beach Boys played in the station at night.

—Garrison Lewis (ACE Pit Crew).

Here are some lines Garrison Lewis heard after telling the story to the GP waiting in line: “382 times? That’s crazy!” “ Those same people are riding that coaster for 45 straight hours? No way I could do that.” One of his favorites: “Did you drink all those bottles around you?” just goes to show how smart some people are.

Here are some of the quotes Garrison remembers from the riders (and Jane): “Garrison, what number are we on?” —Everyone at some point. “How long until break” —Everyone at some point. “Lets not do this one and take an early break” —Radio contestant. “OK, guys, breaks over. Get back to the train.” —Garrison. “Uggggg” —Everyone. One of Garrison’s favorites: “Not another @\$%&* axle!!” —Sean. “This pizza isn't sitting well” —Radio contestant. One Garrison HATED to hear: “Garrison, run out to my car and get...” —Don. “You’re staying the whole time? Wow you’re crazy.” —Jane

The staff was very surprised and excited to have 10 riders at the finish. Leading up to the event, I didn't think anyone would make it and we would not even finish the entire 45 hours. But, once 10 people got to the last night I wanted each of them to make it through and win. When it finally looked as though these last 10 would all make it, we made the call to turn one prize into ten, and the award ceremony ended up being really fun! All the news crews were there and the winners finally got to celebrate! But did the ten winners go home? NO! Most of them stayed around and rode the Titan, Batman and other coasters that morning! I think that was the most amazing part of the entire 3 days!

—Jane Hatter (Six Flags Over Texas)



**DAVE'S ... ER,
KARI'S TOP 10 FAVORITE THINGS
ABOUT HAVING A DAD AS AN ACE
REGIONAL REP (by Kari Lipnicky)**

10. Trying to remember the names of your father's coaster friends that you know you have met somewhere before.
9. Newsletters as stocking stuffers.
8. Helping with event registrations (YAY!) and newsletter mailings (paper cuts as a way of life).
7. Cringing at most roller coaster comments made by classmates, because they are just plain stupid.
6. Still riding every kiddie coaster in existence ... with your father ... riiiiight.
5. The guarantee that you will go to Winterfest and Lone Star Coasterthon each year, but waking up at 5 a.m. when my normal weekend wake-up time is noon ... (no sleepy time for Kari)
4. Long road trip vacations (sleepy time for Kari) with 10 to 25 parks included!!!
3. Trying to find the most annoying show on TV to put on in the background while your father is finishing up on the regional newsletter.
2. Getting to see uncle Scott Conner more than my real uncle, PARTY TIME!!!
1. Spending quality time laughing at your father because he cannot find the Fiesta Fest Top 10 List for the Fall 2005 newsletter.



**Nuts & Bolts
(Items in Brief)**

Bell's Receives Final Approval To Build A 2nd Wooden Coaster — After nearly five years and an extended legal battle, the Tulsa County Board of Adjustment - now with the blessing of local neighbors - granted Bell's Amusement Park a special exception to build a second wooden roller coaster. The new coaster - most likely to debut in 2008 - will be more of the twister variety as opposed to the out-and-back layout of the existing *Zingo* coaster. In addition, initial plans indicate the new coaster will be concentrated in the southern part of the park and intersect with *Zingo*!

Journey To Atlantis Comes To Sea World San Antonio With a Twist — Many of us have been speculating for weeks if the new buzz of activity at Sea World San Antonio could be a 3rd incarnation of the popular Sea World water coaster. It is now official -- *Journey to Atlantis* is coming to Texas in 2007! Hats off to Busch & Sea World for making this ride layout the 3rd unique take within the Journey to Atlantis theme. This version will be a MACK Supersplash model. Want to know what unique twist will set this newest version apart from the JTAs in Orlando and San Diego? Part of the ride will send riders backwards! Sea World San Antonio's Press Release (http://4adventure.com/seaworld/tx/ftp_press_releases_articles.aspx?pr_num=897) has additional ride details.

South Central Region Parks Score Big At The Golden Ticket Awards — Congratulations to Fiesta Texas, Schlitterbahn, the State Fair of Texas, Sea World San Antonio,

Six Flags Over Texas, and Pat Thompson of Western Playland for your awards and rankings in Amusement Today's 2006 Golden Ticket Awards! Here is a quick rundown on winners in our region:

- #1 Best Waterpark - Schlitterbahn New Braunfels
- #1 Best Shows - Fiesta Texas
- #1 Best Waterpark Ride - Master Blaster (Schlitterbahn New Braunfels)
- #1 Best Landscaping (Waterpark) - Schlitterbahn New Braunfels
- #2 Best Marine Life Park - Sea World San Antonio
- #2 Best Outdoor Night Production - Fiesta Texas
- #2 Best Park Concert Venue - Fiesta Texas
- #14 Wooden Roller Coaster - *Texas Giant* (Six Flags Over Texas)
- #27 Steel Roller Coaster - *Titan* (Six Flags Over Texas)
- #33 Steel Roller Coaster - *Superman Krypton Coaster** (Fiesta Texas)
- #36 Steel Roller Coaster - *Shock Wave* (Six Flags Over Texas)

* *Superman Krypton Coaster* also earned a #1 Floorless Coaster ranking

Two 2006 Publishers Picks were from our region. They were the State Fair of Texas (Dallas) for its remarkable 120 years of amusing the biggest fair crowds in the United States, and Pat Thomson of Western Playland, (El Paso, Texas) for doing the unthinkable and moving his entire park to a new location. Full details are at Amusement Today's 2006 Golden Ticket site (<http://www.amusementtoday.com/2006gta82706.html>).

Editors Notes: Some of the ride-a-thon quotes had to be edited for space. While all riders thanked the park, the thank-yous were grouped into one blanket "thank you" at the beginning of the article. Some portions of quotes were removed to make the article fit in available space.

Thank You!

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Feature Members: Judi and Casey Allen

You're one of a small handful of 'Mother/Son' teams in ACE. How did your mutual love of all things roller coaster develop, and how did you discover ACE?

Judi: Family tradition, my father introduced me to the *Zephyr* at Pontchartrain Beach when I was about 6 years old. In turn I introduced Casey to the joy of coasters. From there it's history.

Casey: Watching the Discovery Channel specials about coasters, there was always this wild group who traveled all over to ride coasters. WOW!

You were members for quite some time before you made it to an event. What is your favorite event (current or past) and why?

My work schedule conflicted with the events so we just drooled over the flyers. Don't know if we have a favorite event but our most memorable was our first ever, the 2003 Spring Con at AstroWorld. AstroWorld was our home park for many years and holds many firsts for us so it was only right that our first event was in that park.

Now for the tough question. Wood or steel?

Judi: Love them both. For heavens sake it's a COASTER

Casey: Out of control wild wooden coasters & steel loopers.

What types of park or ride souvenirs do you collect?

Pins, cups & park maps but also have a fair amount of coaster parts

& pieces lying around the house.

Tell us about your track records. Most sough after coaster? What parks top your list as favorites?

Judi: 200, 50 wood, 150 steel, *Raven*, Kings Island, Lake Winnepesaukah, Beech Bend

Casey: 195, 49 wood, 146 steel, *Olympia Looping*, Kings Island, Lake Winnepesaukah, Beech Bend

[Editor's note: Judi finally got to add *Raven* to her list of accomplishments this summer!]

What interests and hobbies do you have outside of ACE and riding roller coasters?

Is there anything else? We do like to go camping.

Judi, you're known for making some pretty wild coaster road trips. Tell us about the longest or most memorable one.

Hard choices again. Longest single trip, 16 days driving 3,580 miles, 9 parks & 54 coasters. Most memorable, spur of the moment trip to Islands of Adventure in Orlando the day before Hurricane Floyd raked the coast of Florida with 190 mph winds. 2 cars headed south on I-75 and a million going north. We did make the park before being evacuated though.

Casey, you briefly worked in the amusement park industry including a stint as a roller coaster operator. Reflect on that for us.

I was quickly promoted to ride supervisor but did enjoy operating the flat rides and roller coasters for a short time. My fondest memories are running the rides seeing the smiles hearing the laughter and screams knowing in some small way I was bringing pleasure to the guests.

Free question: say anything!

Casey: I want to say thank you to all the ACErs for making me feel so welcome. It is wonderful being one of the crowd.

Judi: I love to ride the coasters, it doesn't matter who made it, wood or steel, and to think that I get to do this with my son Casey and a large number of friends that I have gathered over the years in ACE it just doesn't get any better than that. In case anyone was wondering I have no intention of ever growing up.

More Judge Roy Scream Ride-A-Thon Photos
(by David Lipnicky)

