

# Rebel Yell

The Newsletter of ACE Mid-Atlantic  
For Delaware, DC, Maryland, and Virginia

## Jeepers, It's Winter



## Your 2013 Mid-Atlantic Events

Friday May 10 Coaster After Dark  
Six Flags America

Saturday, May 11 Oceanfest  
Trimpers, Baja, & Jolly Roger

Saturday, June 1 ACE Dives  
Busch Gardens Williamsburg

Sunday June 9th Coastin for Kids  
Kings Dominion

Saturday, July 6th Snoopycon  
Kings Dominion

Sunday, August 24th Wild West Fun Day  
Adventure Park USA

Saturday, October 12th Fall Thrillfest  
Kings Dominion

Sunday, October 13th Celebrate America  
Six Flags America

Early December Coastin Through the Snow  
Busch Gardens Williamsburg

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With the warm, beautiful weather on Saturday, March 9th, the 36 ACE members and guests visiting Six Flags America for Jeepers, Its Winter would never have guessed it was winter. A jam packed 4 hours started with a quick welcome by Havilah Ross, Marketing Manager for Six Flags America.

Havilah quickly turned the microphone over to Park President, Rick Howarth who revealed a secret to all of us, why the park is improving from guests feedback. Why is it? Because Rick personally reads each guest comment around 4am each day and sends it to the appropriate department by 7:30am.

This season all departments were focusing on a smoother guest experience with improved food options, including an all season dining pass, upgrades to food items including signature salads and a whole grain veggie pizza. We will also find Rita's Italian Ice in the waterpark and What is Fried? I know, you are wondering, well, what are they frying? Continued on page 8

## Busch Gardens in the Winter

“Our maintenance department moves into high gear when Busch Gardens is closed. All rides are serviced, which means they are dismantled, worked on, and then put back together. Tracks are inspected, wheels and carriages are inspected, ride units are checked, and harnesses, lap bars and seatbelts are all checked and replaced as needed. Coaster lifts are all thoroughly inspected. Chains, braking mechanisms, booster motors/wheels are examined with a fine tooth comb.. removed, checked and then replaced.

Once all are reassembled, they are each run, tested and run again for between 12 and 24 hours.” Renee, Park Operations Manager.

In addition, expect some changes to the entrance when you arrive as there continues to be plans to enhance the flow of guests through the area. The Emporium is also experiencing a renovation and in Italy, a new item will be appearing to join the already amazing food of Busch Gardens, Gelato! Thanks for Busch Gardens for finding ways to enhance what is already great! -Elizabeth Ringas, Richmond, VA



Photo courtesy of Busch Gardens Williamsburg

**Busch Gardens Williamsburg introduces gelato!**

## Planet Snoopy Construction Update

Stephen Peeples took an afternoon to update us on the winter progress of the newly expanded Planet Snoopy at Kings Dominion. One of the eight new rides was already on site (Woodstock Whirlybirds), with the rest due in the next week. In all, the new Planet Snoopy will have eighteen rides, including ten original rides that will be re-themed. Many of the rides will be family-friendly, which means that parents, siblings, relatives and friends will be able to enjoy the attraction with their little ones.

The footprint of the new Planet Snoopy will cover almost 14 acres. The current area, which includes the original children’s area that has existed since 1975 when Kings Dominion first opened, will encompass an additional seven acres. The Ghoster Coaster will be renamed the Woodstock Express. The John Allen-designed Philadelphia Toboggan Coaster has a wooden track that is 1385 feet long and 35 feet tall. It was originally called Scooby Doo when it first opened in 1974 as part of

the Lion Country Safari attraction.

The Taxi Jam will also get a new name. The steel kiddie coaster built in 1997 by E&F Miller will now be known as the Great Pumpkin Coaster. For those of you without the credit yet, we’ll see if we can get permission for ACERs to ride without a child again this year during ACE Thrill fest (Saturday October 12<sup>th</sup>).

Part of the children’s area was first re-themed as Planet Snoopy in 2010. That was the year the Ghoster Coaster lost the “Scooby Doo” prefix, and Scooby Doo & the Haunted Mansion was renamed Boo Blasters on Boo Hill. Boo Blasters originally opened in 2004 as the first interactive dark ride in the Mid-Atlantic region. It is still the only interactive dark ride in the Mid-Atlantic, and it will remain an integral part of Planet Snoopy.

The area will now include an 1100-foot family care center, several live shows, meet-and-greet opportunities and an open-air marketplace with fresh fruit and other healthy snacks. The first amusement park-based

Sweet Frog will also be located in Planet Snoopy. Sweet Frog is a Richmond-based self-serve froyo (frozen yogurt) eatery with multiple flavors and toppings. Sweet Frog will begin construction next week in the same building as the Woodstock Express photo counter.

The eight new rides will include Lucy’s Tugboat, Woodstock Whirlybirds, Linus Launcher and a new monorail ride, Snoopy’s Rocket Express. There will also be a new Snoopy-themed railway, Snoopy’s Junction, with Woodstock leading the way.

Plan to check Planet Snoopy out yourself at the first SnoopyCon, scheduled for July 6<sup>th</sup> at Kings Dominion. See all of ACE Mid-Atlantic’s 2013 events on our facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/acemidatlantic/events>.

-Stephen Peeples, Richmond, VA



Photos Courtesy of Stephen Peebles

## Eastcoaster or Snowcoaster?

Two traditions always happen in February, Groundhog Day & Eastcoaster, one of ACE's off-season events. On Saturday, February 2nd, ACERs from all over came to Northampton, PA for a day of fun, food & fellowship. One highlight of interest to us in the Mid-Atlantic region is Six Flags America. They sent their Marketing Director, Havilah Ross. She talked about the great season the park had last year, with the addition of Apocalypse, and a visit from the Travel Channel. She mentioned their new water attraction, Bonzai Pipelines (a water slide complex). They are hosting our annual non-riding event, Jeepers! It's Winter on Saturday, March 9, 2013. And, they are planning their Coasters After Dark event on May 10, 2013. It will include dinner & ERT on all the coasters in the park. Details are still being worked on. It's a great start to our 2013 season in the Mid-Atlantic region.

-Shannon Somerville, Chaptico, MD

## Intimidating, Volcanic, Insane Coaster Wars

Coming this summer to the Travel Channel: irrefutable proof that we are all certifiably insane.

On a cold, dark morning in October, ACEers from across the region and all points north and south braved the just-above-freezing temperatures at sunrise to pretend it was July as we rode the tallest and fastest coaster in Virginia and hammed it up for the cameras. This particular “July” morning was so cold that Kings Dominion had heaters below the Intimidator 305 station to keep the train's wheels warm in between rides. Once the sun appeared things did warm up a little, but only a little.

Once the TV shoot was done, ACE Fall Thrillfest began. To compensate for the lack of I305 ERT due to the filming, exit passes were provided for use throughout the day. And since Boo

Blasters was Boo Broken, our next event of the day was front-of-the-line privileges for the opening of Avalanche. Unique for being America's only Mack bobsled coaster, Avalanche turns 25 years old in 2013. With the closure of Disaster Transport, Avalanche is now the 4th-oldest operating bobsled coaster in the world, and one of only three in the US.

After Avalanche, it was time for the Whack-A-Mole Tournament. After several rounds of feverish competition, winner Noreen O'Connor-Ubinas walked

away with some KD swag. And after working up an appetite after whacking away at unsuspecting plastic moles, it was time for food, trivia and Q&A at the picnic pavilion, followed by an exclusive backstage tour of Intimidator 305, featuring the Rebel Yell turnaround and the Anaconda lift hill as a bonus. A few intrepid photographers were able to get four coasters in one shot: the aforementioned I305, Anaconda and Rebel Yell, plus Volcano. (Five if you count the Flight of Fear building.)



The day wrapped up with some Exclusive Haunt Time at Kings Dominion's new maze, No Vacancy, and early seating at their Haunted House 3D movie. But the weekend wasn't over for some...

On a just-as-dark but not-quite-as-cold Sunday morning, many of us returned to again pretend it was July as we rode the world's only complete-

circuit LIM-launched inverted roller coaster. Volcano: The Blast Coaster is notoriously fussy about cold temperatures but the mountain was in a good mood that morning and only the last row went out empty during filming.

Watch “Insane Coaster Wars” this summer on the Travel Channel, and you'll see a bunch of weird people wearing heavy coats and scarves in the middle of “July”.

-Danny Barnes, Asst Regional Rep Portsmouth, VA

## Something to Celebrate? Oh Yeah!



Sam Marks & Al Clowe on *Roar*



Joe Romano cuts Regional Rep Elizabeth Ringas in half.



Photos by Wes Friend

Brad and April on *Wild One*

Mike and Katie Zolnai, Tommy Spragg and John Allen take a momentous ride.

Superstorm Sandy may have slightly altered the weekend plans, but we had a super Celebrate America event on Saturday, October 27 anyway! The Travel Channel's *Insane Coaster Wars* crew lined up a visit the same weekend, so ACE teamed up for a fantastic regional event, that Six Flags hosted at no cost to ACE members! 90 ACER's and their guests were given the VIP treatment at this event.

Because Six Flags wasn't scheduled to open until noon, ACER's didn't have to arrive at 5 or 6AM like most media shoots ... things kicked off at 8AM. So with a good night's sleep behind them ACERs were check-in, provided exclusive event t-shirts, and then escorted back to the Superman area for a hot breakfast. The warm eggs, sausage, bacon, and biscuits were a nice change from normal 'continental' breakfast fare.

Because of Sandy's threat, *Insane Coaster Wars* had arrived prepared with two film crews, one to shoot Superman, and the other Batwing. ACERs were split into two groups, and the filming (and waiting!) began. As filming wrapped up (and some breakfast re-serves were had), attendees made their way to *Wild One* for some pre-lunch ERT. Six Flags closed the ride the public, while many of the ACERs got 5 or 6 rides in.

Everybody then made the trek to the picnic pavilion, and enjoyed a delicious lunch that included Italian Sausage and Peppers, barbeque, chips and salad. The cold weather didn't stop folks from also enjoying the premium ice cream dessert.

During lunch Linda Jensen, marketing director and Randy Wilke, director of operations, answered questions fielded by ACE members. It was then time for some trivia. Six Flags had put together some Jeopardy questions that provided a good challenging mix of both Six Flags trivia and Baltimore/DC area trivia.

After handing out many door prizes, lunch was concluded with an auction of items donated by Six Flags America including an original blueprint of *Apocalypse* in its former home, Six Flags Great America as *Iron Wolf*. The auction raised over \$300 for the Roller Coaster Museum.

As is customary the last couple of years at ACE Mid-Atlantic events, a few ITOTs (Informal Take Over Time) were scheduled throughout the afternoon. So after a few ITOTs, ACERs gathered in the early evening for VIP reserved seating at the acclaimed Joe Romano Magic Show. The highlight of this funny and entertaining show had to be when our region's esteemed Regional Representative, Elizabeth Ringas, was sawed in half!

Thank you to Six Flags America for another wonderful event. The ACE Mid-Atlantic rep team hopes that everyone will join us at the two events that will be hosted there in 2013! -Evangelos Ringas, Richmond, VA



## More perks for Members!

Busch Gardens Williamsburg, Six Flags America, and Kings Dominion are offering a discounted admission.

Visit [www.americancoasterenthusiasts.com](http://www.americancoasterenthusiasts.com) Membership Benefits for more details.



## John Akiyama, Reston, VA

1969-2012

John T. Akiyama joined ACE Mid-Atlantic for his final ACE event on Saturday, October 27<sup>th</sup> for the filming of Insane Coaster Wars and our Celebrate America event. John joined ACE on July 3, 1997 and had a true passion for roller coasters. He regularly attended our annual ACE Dives at Busch Gardens, where he consistently held a season pass. John passed away in December, 2012. Our condolences go to his family.



## Tanya Regan, New York, New York

1975-2013

We are sad to report ACE Mid Atlantic has learned of the passing of our dear friend Tanya Regan from New York. Tanya was always happy, upbeat and brought happiness and joy to those around her.

ACE Mid-Atlantic Assistant Regional Representative Bill Galvin recalls Tanya's favorite ride was Nitro. She was a big fan of Knoebels fudge stocking her freezer each fall to get her through the winter. While she was terrified of haunted houses, in recent years she was conquering her fear, and provided many hilarious moments for those of us who had the pleasure of going to haunts with her.

She was among those who volunteered last fall to help the victims of Superstorm Sandy.

Her infectious smile and joy will be sorely missed by all who knew her. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her family and friends.

The weekend of April 13th, many ACE Mid-Atlantic members headed out to their home park to ride for Tanya. A fitting tribute to someone who appreciated every ride.

Photo Courtesy of Bill Galvin



Photo Courtesy of Shannon Somerville

Photo Courtesy of Norreen O'Connor

## Oh what fun it is...

A warm and sunny afternoon welcomed 90 ACE members and their guests to Coastin' Through the Snow. Upon arrival, attendees got right to business, working on their trivia contest that they were handed at checkin. With everyone checked in, it was time for lunch. What better way to start an ACE event, but to eat! Lunch was an exclusive Christmas buffet served in the Castle O'Sullivan with Santa and Mrs. Claus in attendance. After a photo with Santa and door prizes, everyone headed on their way to the Forbidden Forest of Verbolten. Luckily, the beautiful weather and 5 train operation, granted everyone many rides without a wait. Ending our ERT session, attendees battled it out on the water gun shoot out. David Rager took the top prize of a Busch Gardens mug and blanket. Now it was time to depart for all that Christmastown has the offer, rides, shows, food, oh my!



Dan and Jill Ryan

Photo by Elizabeth Ringas



The Peebles Family by Elizabeth Ringas

After a busy afternoon experiencing Christmas Town, attendees stopped by the Festhaus to drop off their trivia contest sheets to see who knows Christmas Town the best. The winners were announced at the end of the day exclusive show seating for "Miracles" where cookies and hot cocoa accompanied a few more door prizes.

Many thanks to volunteers who made this event possible and Busch Gardens for welcoming us for another year. -Elizabeth Ringas, Regional Rep



Photo courtesy of Busch Gardens

Photos courtesy of Wes Friend

## ACE Mid-Atlantic kicks 2013 off on ICE

The Mid-Atlantic Region kicked off 2013 with Bumper Cars on ICE at Tucker Road ICE Rink in Fort Washington, MD.



Photo courtesy of Wes Friend of himself

Before you get the wrong impression, bumper cars are not exactly what they use; imagine bumper boats on an ICE Rink and you should see ACE having a good time.

Every year, the Prince George County Parks Department takes the “Bumper Boats” you usually find on a family fun center

“Bumper Boats” ride, puts them in a restricted area of the Tucker Road Ice Rink and calls the event “Bumper Cars on ICE”. The boats work quite well, you can gain enough speed to bump someone a good 40 or 50 feet or you can work the controls so you can spin in a circle or you can do your best to cause a massive pile up, much like real bumper cars. By Wes Friend of Germantown, MD



Mark Olfeld in the Joker's Jinx Launch Tunnel



Vassilios Ringas at the controls



Parker Friend in the bowl of Joker's Jinx

## Continued from page 1— Jeepers, Its Winter

They are open to suggestions! The season will begin with French fries, corn dogs, and a few surprises under the batter.

Other park improvements will begin the elimination of required lockers. Cubbies will be available at all rides with a sliding door to keep a segmentation of items from each train. We will also see a mega Plinko game, premium cabanas, entry improvements by moving bag check before the entrance, and lots of coupons within the park.

Following this whirlwind update, we learned more about the new slides, Bonzai Pipeline and the newest Park Sponsored Park Event, Coasters After Dark.

After a wonderful buffet lunch of barbeque and vegetable lasagna, we were introduced to Dan and Mark from Premiere Rides who gave us an update of last years creations, what they are working on now, and a video of the first full circuit launch of Joker's Jinx.

After a round of door prizes, everyone headed on the tour with a gift of a spring from Mind Eraser. Splitting into small groups, we toured the structure of Joker's Jinx from the station and controls, through the tunnel and then straight into the bowl of the ride. From the bowl, we walked through the basement of the station seeing the LIMs and the track from below. We could truly say we had seen it all and to be guided by Premiere Rides themselves, it was a phenomenal day! By Elizabeth Ringas, Richmond, VA

## From the Backseat, Elizabeth Ringas, your Regional Rep

We have welcomed the opening of our parks with great excitement this year and we are eager to get to more events for the fun, socialization, and extra special enjoyment of our parks. The regional rep team is exceptionally proud to have our entire calendar for the year published so you can plan ahead. We work vigorously to get event details out to you as soon as we can.

As I reflect on 2012, I realize how much we have grown in the Mid-Atlantic and ACE as an entirety. We are forward thinking, planning and looking to the best ways to service our members. Last year, we had one of our most successful years ever with so many visits from the Travel Channel and planned events around the region. Although hitches happen, circumstances change, and life happens, in the end we achieved the mission of ACE, to help others become knowledgeable of roller coasters and to create fellowship! Thank you for being part of this amazing organization and a huge thank you to each volunteer who has helped us to create what we are.

### How can you help?

- Attend an event
- Check yes to volunteer
- Send a pic of your next monumental ride
- Volunteer to be a writer for our newsletter
- Send a story about a trip you took
- Send in your pictures and a little about yourself

### Submission Dates for Rebel Yell Newsletter

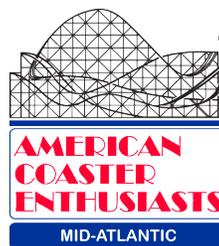
June 10th for July 1st edition

October 10th for November 1st edition

February 10th for March 1st edition



Elizabeth and her family—Asst Rep, Evangelos and her children, Calista, Melina, and Vassilios



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