



MetroLINE

Serving the ACE New York Metro Region

Spring 2005/Volume II Issue I

Welcome

From The Regional Rep

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome all Metro NYACE members, old and new, to what I know is going to be a fantastic 2005 season of roller coasters, theme parks, classic thrills and thriving friendships.

We here in the New York Metro area are quite lucky to be surrounded by one of the largest collections of parks and roller coasters in the entire country, with Coney Island's legendary Cyclone the nucleus from which all other rides gather their life-force.

And what a collection it is: NYC metro ACE members have the ability to enjoy short travel time to some of the best parks and coasters available, including **Knoebels Grove**, in Elysburg, PA and its fantastic pair of woodies; **Lake Compounce** in Bristol, CT and its thrilling pair as well; **Superman - Ride of Steel**, the ride that is purported by many to be the world's best steel coaster, in the state of Massachusetts; and many more well-regarded parks and rides. Closer to home, we have **Playland**, a National Historic Landmark park in Rye, NY, and the debut of the world's tallest and fastest coaster in New Jersey called **Kingda Ka**. And of course, right here in New York City, the historic **Coney Island**, birthplace of the modern amusement industry, and home to the National Historic Landmark Cyclone, still the world's best wooden coaster, and Mother of all amusement rides.

We look forward to all our NYC members enjoying countless hours together at our home parks, and the trips we'll take together to parks outside our area, during this upcoming season.

It's going to be a blast...don't miss it!

Colleen Whyte

If you would like to be included on the Metroline e-mail list, please send a message to Dave@mrdave.com.

From The Editor

Hello! Welcome to another issue of our local ACE Metroline newsletter. I would like to send out a hearty welcome to all of our new members in the Metro New York Region. If you have any questions or issues with regards to ACE, please feel free to contact me, and I will try to resolve and answer all of your questions. As you may already know, coaster season is upon us again, and I would like to try to keep you abreast of our local and regional events.

With regard to this newsletter, we are in need of volunteers. If you love to write, take pictures, or would like to have your profile showcased in the newsletter, please feel free to contribute anything of relevance. However, if you would rather remain behind the scenes, we are also in need of proofreaders, envelope stuffers, etc. If you have any questions, or would like to contribute, please feel free to contact one of the Metroline staff.

If you are brand new to ACE, this is your chance to come out, get involved and get to know your local members. I look forward to seeing you at our next ACE event.

Keith B. Johnson

Special Thanks

The Astroland Staff
Christi Carrano
Dorney Park
Dave Feuer
John Hunt
Keith Johnson
Terry Lind
Jim McDonnell

Jim McDonnell
Steven Miller
The Rafferty Family
Mark Rosenzweig
Robert Stanga
Steve Urbanowicz
Denis Vourderis
Colleen Whyte

INSIDE: THE "GREEN MONSTER" - PAGE 8

A Tribute to Jack Holmes

The Passing of a Longtime NYC ACE Member

1932-2005

ACE has lost another one of its dear members. Jack was an avid fan of the Coney Island Cyclone, and he is also one of the few members that I know in ACE that has actually ridden on the Aeroplane Coaster at Rye Playland. He also was a frequent contributor of articles to ACE, especially The Metroline.

One of my fondest memories of Jack is the time when he broke his foot at Coney Island, and some of the German ACE members purchased a wheelchair from one of the antique shops located on Surf Avenue. I can honestly tell you, that there was never a dull moment while riding coasters with Jack.

Jack has touched everyone's life from coast to coast to the European coast. I for one, am so glad that I have had the chance to have known Jack for all of these years, and I feel sad for the members who did not have a chance to know him. So when you are riding on the Coney Island Cyclone, just think to yourself that "This Is The Coaster That Jack Built". Jack will be missed dearly.....

Keith B. Johnson

Jack Holmes, roller coaster enthusiast extraordinaire, passed away in February. He was 72, born December 20, 1932.

I have very fond memories of talking with Jack about old Coney Island, and spending time with him on the Scandinavia Trip a couple of years ago. Riding the Cyclone with Jack was always enjoyable. I will miss him dearly.

Jack devoted his life to theater and roller coasters. In theater, he worked with some of the greats: Bernadette Peters, Mary Martin, Robert Preston, Ginger Rogers, Don Ameche. He was a composer, singer, composer-lyricist, musical director/conductor and arranger, and was proud to have had his original material performed in numerous cabaret acts throughout the world. He recently wrote the book, music and lyrics, with typical wit, for 'God Songs,' a full-length musical which was produced but has yet to be recorded.

His favorite roller coaster (out of over 650 internationally) was Balder, in Sweden's Liseberg Park, and he found Top Thrill Dragster to be his scariest ride.

Jack's mantra was "Music. Theater. Coasters. A good ride". He always said that "a healthy sense of humor and instant creativity are the keys to success in life".

Colleen Whyte



THE CYCLONE SAVES MY LIFE

by
Christi Carrano

I cannot recall a time in my life without rides. Some of my earliest and happiest childhood memories revolve around my Dad sneaking me out to the rickety old traveling carnivals that frequented our working class neighborhood. Visions of those hot humid summer days of me and my father crammed together in a ragged Scrambler car, wind in our faces, forces slamming me against my father's side, everything right in my small world, brings a feeling of warm nostalgia that makes even the toughest day seem bearable.

The Scrambler graduated to the Runaway Train, Rolling Thunder, Space Mountain and much to my Mother's horror, the Sooper Dooper Looper. She cannot, to this day understand the elevated state of Nirvana I find climbing a lift hill, arms raised to heaven as I plummet to earth with unabashed trust that I am secure in my lap belt. In fact, it was my mother's fear that fueled the mystery of the dangerous looking coaster that we always past while traveling on the Belt Parkway in Brooklyn. I would gaze with my eyes riveted to the windows of our van, straining to get a glimpse of the skeletal monster from behind the apartment buildings.

"So Dad, when are we going on *that*?" This question, without fail, would prompt a tirade from mom about the lack of safety

on coasters, especially the old wooden coasters and the blood thirsty gangs that apparently lurked around waiting to prey on anyone who went near the Cyclone.

So the legendary Cyclone in all it's glory and history was condemned at that time to stay hidden behind buildings and my imagination.

Later in my teens and twenties I became involved in roller coaster clubs and eventually ACE. During coaster discussions, the Cyclone was always on everyone's top coaster list, and I felt like a fraud for never having ridden it. My father's late friend and ACE member Kevin, would ply me with stories of the great Cyclone. "She is the ultimate Coaster," he would tell me, and according to Kevin, no self respecting coaster enthusiast hadn't taken a ride. The Cyclone became my opus.

Call it fate, karma, or serendipity, but just after the tragic loss for our country and my family personally on September 11th, I found myself hired as a first year teacher at a rather under privileged Junior High School in Brooklyn. Teaching Junior High School is never easy, but teaching in a school with no supplies, teacher support or library can be daunting. One of my 7th grade students who was 16 was on a 1st grade reading level. On top of a

stressful student body, several of who tried to right hook my head, I had a two hour commute into Brooklyn and a five hour commute home with traffic. I was driving as long as I was in class.

The highlight of my commute were the grey and white supports of the Cyclone that would wink at me reassuringly in the dawn and twilight light.

Around the holidays the crashing reality of the career I had undertaken began to hit home. The stress of the commute, on top of a very involved and intense job began to be overwhelming in the Thanksgiving traffic. A girl I met in school took pity on my situation and graciously allowed me to move in with her.

So I left my family and fiancé for the first time in my life. I moved into a loud urban neighborhood that was so foreign to my quiet boring Long Island block that it felt like I was moving into another country. Without the stress of the commute, my job, though not any easier, became more rewarding. I was more involved and focused with my students and lessons and I strived to make a difference. Winter turned into early spring. The impact of my students issues with violence, poverty, and neglect were really beginning to effect my outlook on the world. I missed my family, and searched for a place to call my own, a place

THE CYCLONE SAVES MY LIFE (Con't)

to collect myself, refresh and regroup.

I found that place one Friday evening as I was braving the traffic on the Belt Parkway to go to my parents' home. The sparkle of the *Cyclone's* lift hill in the newly setting sun caught my attention from the corner of my eye, and that glance was the beginning of a beautiful relationship, an epiphany of sorts.

I turned off the Parkway and made my way to Coney Island. I was surprised how silent the neighborhood was, and contrary to my mother's stories there were no gangs that I could see. I pulled up in front of the Cyclone, parked and fed the meter.

There she was in all of her ancient glory. Rough, like Brooklyn, but worldly, knowledgeable and ageless, very much like the neighborhood she resided in. No one was in line, the air was almost too cold to run the trains, but the lift chain was running and the sound of clicking metal was music to my ears.

With fluttering anticipation I paid my money and threaded my way through the chainlink labyrinth to the station. Two men, who reminded me of every big Italian family gathering I ever attended, helped me into the car and pressed down on the restraint bar. I am sure that I must have looked strange, a lone young woman in a dressy skirt and high heels, make up, and a nervous smile. The man smiled. "Ready?" he asked. "OH

yes" I replied, "I am a teacher and had a really tough day." With a knowing grin he pulled back on the brake and I was off.

The cool off-shore breeze hit me right away, wiping away the day's troubles, but making me feel even more alone than I was in the first car of the train. I saw the bay, the clear twilight sky and the top of the hill. I felt my father sitting next to me and heard the giggle of the inner 10 year old who opens herself up to adventure.

I raised my arms and offered my troubles to the universe, to God, and the Cyclone. The first drop was heaven and the exhilarating rush to earth and the feel of the car shake and shift on the tracks beneath me was one of the greatest affirmations of life I have had in quite some time.

I embraced the wind, the butterflies in my stomach and the adrenaline that forced deep cleansing laughter from me. I was home. I found my place, my oasis from a hard day, a sister to share my trouble.

From that moment on, weather permitting, I rode the Cyclone everyday. The men saw me coming and always asked how teaching went that day. I shared my new friend. My fiancé Jon discovered that he was a budding wooden coaster buff after riding the Cyclone and my father came to Brooklyn often to ride with me as well. My students came to call me "The Coaster Teacher" when they discovered my after school

pastime, and they tried to catch me after school at the Cyclone in hopes of hitching a ride.

I had a kinship with the Cyclone, a friend and confidant. I had a lot in common with "her". We both had our ups and downs, we both felt, the stress of our urban environment and we are both survivors. But most of all I felt and will always feel a great affection and gratitude towards the Cyclone, which for me is much more than wood, steel, a rich history of fun and tears of an unknown future. The Cyclone is the heartbeat of a neighborhood, a gateway to childhood, a connection to our past, a glimpse of a simpler time, and a breath of life when the wind has been knocked out of your spirit.



ACE METROLINE RIDERS

The Tale of Two Jims



Name: Jim McDonnell

Age: 33

Eyes: Hazel

Sign: Libra

Location: Manhattan

Occupation: Coordinating Producer & Researcher for television (specifically music documentaries)*

Favorite Park(s): Knoebels, Indiana Beach, Wildwood, Kennywood

Favorite Wood: Phoenix

Favorite Steel: Superman: Ride of Steel, (Six Flags New England)

Other hobbies: Scopitones (audiovisual jukebox from 1960s), 16mm films, out-dated technology, old movie palaces

Favorite Memorable Coastering experience: There are far too many to list, but one that I will always remember is my first ride on Ghost Rider at Knott's Berry Farm during Winter Solace four years ago - it was at midnight, all by myself (everyone was given a solo ride), in the very back seat - it was truly a memorable experience.

I was originally a member of ACE in the mid-80's when I was in high school, but did not rejoin until 4 years ago after making my first true-adult coaster pilgrimage (Lake Compounce, Quassy, SFNE, Whalom). I am extremely grateful that I got a chance to make it to Whalom before it closed.

**Editor's note: Jim has received a Grammy Award on behalf of VH1 for his excellent work on Sam Cook Legends documentary.*



Name: Jim McDonnell

Age: I stopped counting.

Eyes: two

Sign: Taurus

Location: Bronx

Occupation: Carpenter

Favorite Parks: Busch Gardens Williamsburg, Knoebels, Cedar point

Favorite Wood: The World Famous Cyclone, Coney Island, Boulder Dash, Phoenix, Comet, Cyclone (Six Flags New England)

Favorite Steel: Alpengeist, Superman Ride of Steel (Six Flags New England), Raptor, Medusa, Viper

Hobbies: Breweriana, comic books, cemeteries, and The Coney Island Polar Bear Club

Coney Island Trivia - Did You Know?

The Saturn 6 was installed in 1939 - which makes it the fourth longest operating ride at Coney behind the Cyclone, B&B, & Wonder Wheel. Please be aware it's the last of its kind - and deserves special recognition!



ACE GOOD SAMARITANS

By
Sam Rafferty

As we all know, ACE is an all-volunteer organization, but there are a few ACE members who volunteer their services to help others in need as well. I was forwarded an article that showcases a couple of local members extending their services to help the Tsunami victims. We should be very proud of the Raffertys from Staten Island.



"Our family lives on Staten Island, which is home to a large Sri Lankan community. A few days after this horrible tragedy my kids and I felt compelled to do something but couldn't figure out exactly what to do. So, we packed a few bags of summer clothes and brought them to the Buddhist Vihara which is a few miles away from our home. When we got there they desperately needed help packing so we stayed. I had my three children with me, and two of my children's friends as well. We've come back every day since and will continue to do so until they don't need us anymore. There is so much people can do besides give money!"

Happy 85th Birthday Wonder Wheel

Let's all wish Deno's Wonder Wheel a Happy 85th Birthday. The Wonder Wheel is an icon at Coney Island. I cannot picture Coney Island without the Wonder Wheel. People all over the world are familiar with the "ferris wheel with the swinging cars," and they will never forget their first time on this ferris wheel and nor will I. So whenever you visit Coney Island, please stop by and pay homage to the World Famous Wonder Wheel.

Dennis Vourderis of Deno's Wonder Wheel Park is offering an all-you-can ride wristband priced at \$8.99 for ACE members. To receive this discount, a current ACE membership card must be presented at the ticket booth located at the boardwalk entrance to Deno's.



Coney Island Ace Day - May 22

Coney Island and the Cyclone opens on Palm Sunday, May 22, 2005 from 12 Noon until 4:00 PM. All coaster enthusiasts and their guests are welcome. Just meet by the Group Sales ticket booth, across from the Cyclone around 11:45 AM and present your ACE membership card to purchase your wristbands (for you and your guests). The cost is \$10.99 for unlimited rides on the Cyclone and all the rides at Astroland.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

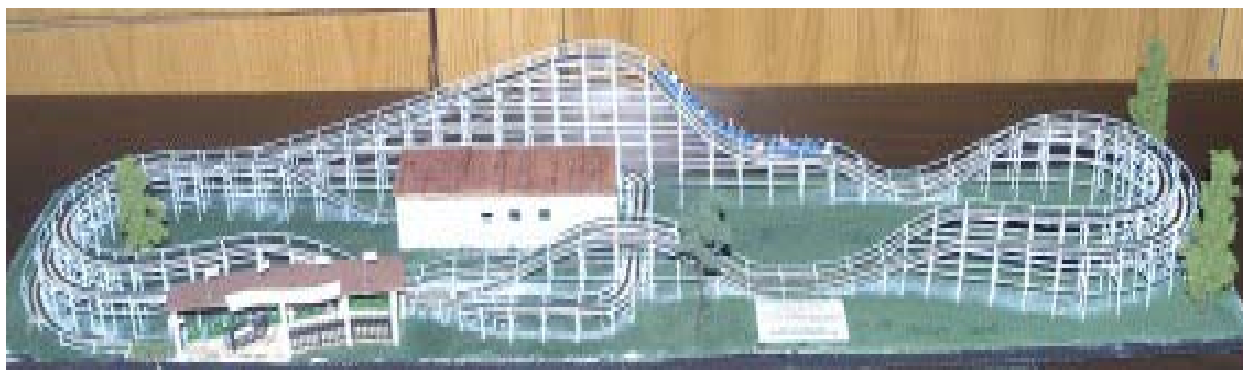


ACE HOBBY CORNER

The majority of ACE members have other hobbies besides riding on rollercoasters. They like to collect memorabilia related to their favorite pastime. Some of us collect refrigerator magnets and others collect park maps. This section of the Metroline will showcase various members' hobbies. If you have a special hobby related to the amusement park industry, please notify us and we will feature you in the Metroline.

In this issue of the Metroline, we're going to present two models designed by John Hunt. John has been an ACE member since 1980, and he is an avid rollercoaster model builder. The models shown below are two of John's latest creations.

Rollercoaster Classics



Margate Scenic Railway



The Bear Cat

THE GREEN MONSTER

Many of us baseball fans know what the "Green Monster" refers to, but there's another "Green Monster" that has risen at Dorney Park in Allentown, PA. Yes, it is "Hyrda", and whilst attending Eastcoaster this year, I was fortunate enough to go visit the construction site of this brand new thriller. I took a few pictures of the new ride, and it looks like it will be another exciting ride for Dorney.

Opening May 3, 2005	
Track Length	3,198 feet
Lift Height	95 feet
Lift Drop	105 feet
Inclined Dive Loop	62 feet
Speed	53 mph
Angle of Descent	68 degrees



PARK INFORMATION

	<p>2245 Route 110, Farmingdale, NY 11735 - Phone:631-694-6868 Currently all indoor kiddie rides are open year round Adventureland opens March 23&24, then open for Spring break March 26, open weekends/holidays until mid June, then open daily from June 27 September 6, weekends and holidays till Halloween New for 2005 – Wave Swinger replacing old Wave Swinger</p>
	<p>1000 Surf Avenue (at West 10th Street), Coney Island, Brooklyn, NY 718-265-2100 Admission to the Boardwalk, Beach and Park is free * Rides can be purchased individually from \$2.00-\$5.00 or a Pay-One-Price Ticket for major rides can be bought for \$14.99: Session I and Session II (Mon-Thur 12-6PM, 4-10PM and Fri 12-6PM only) Tickets sold up to 1 hour before session ends. Discount tickets are available for \$2 per ticket (contact Colleen Whyte for further details) * Kiddie Rides can be purchased in blocks at 10 rides for \$15 * The Cyclone Roller Coaster is \$5 with a re-ride at \$4 Opening Day March 20, 2005 Mermaid Parade June 25, 2005 Cyclone ACE Day May 22, 2005</p>
	<p>655 Long Island Avenue Medford, NY 11763-2517; 631-475-1771 June 20 - Labor Day: Sun - Thu 10am to 9pm; Fri - Sat 11am to 9pm; after Labor Day: Sun - Thu 11am to 8pm; Dec - March closed on Mondays New: Go-carts</p>
	<p>Deno's Wonder Wheel Park, 3059 West 12th St., Brooklyn, NY, Wonder Wheel 85th birthday Phone: 718-372-2592 FREE Admission. Hours: 11am-midnight. Open Weekends: April, May, Sept, & October. Open 7 Days: May, June, July, & August New for 2005: Super Shot manufactured by ARM</p>
	<p>1514 Broadway (between 44th and 45th Streets) New York, New York 10036, 1-800-TOYSRUS Monday thru Friday 10am-9pm Saturday and Sunday 11am-8pm 60 ft. tall ferris wheel, 3 Kinex ferris wheels, gigantic walkthrough Barbie's dollhouse</p>
	<p>1824 Shore Pky., Brooklyn, NY, Phone:(718) 996-4002 Open weekends in March Open daily in April Various theme nights throughout the season Pay One Price Admission: One Person - \$9.50 Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:00AM to 2:00PM Wednesday Evenings from 7:30PM to 10:30PM</p>
	<p>West Nyack, NY 1000 Palisades Center Drive 845-348-1000 Open year round Small kiddie coaster</p>
	<p>Playland Parkway, Rye, NY; 914-813-7010 Playland's major rides are 2 to 4 tickets each Kiddiland rides are 2 tickets each. 24-ticket book \$20 16-ticket book \$16 8-ticket book \$8.50 Single Ticket \$1.25</p>
	<p>Memorial Day – June 19 Weekends only 10am-5pm (631) 727-3600 June 20 – September 6 (Open Daily) 2549 Splish Splash Drive Riverhead, NY 11901 A great collection of water rides for the young and old.</p>
	<p>Open Memorial Day – May 21 – September 11 Weekdays 11am – 7pm Weekends 10am – 8pm 212-982-2229 New, flexible "Pay-as-you-Go" pricing: General Admission: \$6.00 per person (includes 2 ride tickets) Children under 36" tall enter free with paid admission! Ride Tickets: 10 for \$10.00 or 24 for \$20.00 Also sold individually for \$1.00 each. Ride tickets may also be used towards games. Pay-one-Price Wristbands: \$12.00 per person Available on WEEKDAYS ONLY. Wristbands entitle wearer to unlimited rides all day. Customers must purchase General Admission tickets in order to purchase wristbands.</p>