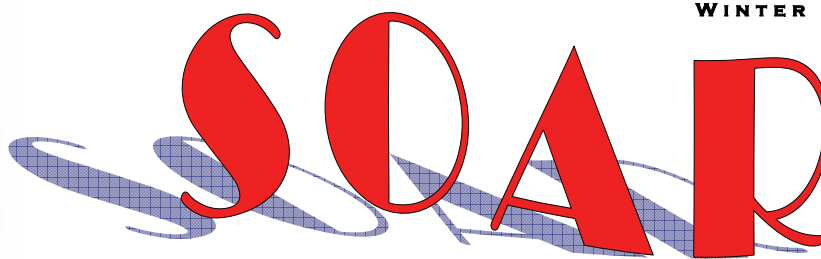


AMERICAN COASTER ENTHUSIASTS

SOUTHERN OHIO REGION



Southern Ohio Area Rollercoastering

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Special points of interest:

- OUR Region hosts Coaster-Con XXX this June! Get involved and be a great host.
- Wyandot Lake closed for the season, will reopen 2008
- New coaster at Kings Island
- Loop is gone on SoB

Ralph Stricker 1928-2007

I'd like to start this newsletter off with a moment of silence for Ralph Stricker, creator and owner of Stricker's Grove. He passed away on January 12th. His obituary can be found at <http://dunes.cincinnati.com/classifieds/obits/obitDisplay.aspx?d=1/15/2007&st=1&id=710325>.

The family will keep the park open and we will still be visiting there in June.

Island and Cedar Point and a special display for KI's 35th anniversary. We've got speakers, food and prizes so don't miss the fun and fellowship.

I've received some great input from the members of the Southern Ohio region. I appreciate the pictures and trip reports that you send in. I thank Don Flint for the picture of the Sea Dragon (when it was closed, not while riding!) that I've made into my new background. See inside for more.

This is going to be a fun year for Southern Ohio ACE members. Be gracious hosts to our visitors, responsible riders in the parks and have a great time. See you in line!



Visit

<http://www.aceonline.org/ACENewsNOW/>

for the latest, up-to-date news

If you receive the printed version of this newsletter and can now access the online version, please send me an email. It saves ACE a bit of money if I can just send a postcard instead of the full newsletter and you'll get the newsletter a week earlier.

Well, the time is here. This is our shot to be remembered in ACE. This summer, a record number of ACE members will descend upon our playground. I've had a couple dozen members volunteer to help, but we could use more. Send me a note, or come to WinterSoar were we will be making plans.

Speaking of WinterSoar, Brian is working hard to ensure a good time for us on March 5th at Kings Island. There will be a park tour, speakers from Kings

Welcome New Members!

Pictures from Beast Bash 2006



Photos by Dave Jackson if not (RJ)

Tour of the maintenance building (RJ)

We've got some scary looking ACE members



These guys just love riding the King Cobra (RJ)



Local Park News

Cedar Fair Making Big Changes at Kings Island

In time for 1000 (yes, we are going to set a record this year!) ACE members to descend upon the new Kings Island, there will be a "new" Son of Beast and a "new" flying coaster. I have to put "" around new because they really aren't new, but they will be new experiences at Kings Island.

First, the loop is gone from the Son of Beast! Maureen says "removing the loop allows us to use lighter trains. This will reduce the load on the structure and hopefully be more comfortable as well. It's like a whole new ride!" I kinda hope they don't nerf it to the point of making it the southern version of the Mean Squeek (I mean Streak) and it turns out as just a scenic railway type ride. It has the size and speed to be a great coaster if they can get some good trains on it.

Next, KI is adding a much needed steel coaster, and a cool one at that! Geagua Lake's flying X-Flight is moving down I-71 to become Kings Island's Firehawk. From their press release:

Kings Island celebrates its 35th anniversary in 2007 by soaring to new heights with its 14th roller coaster, Firehawk. Debuting Memorial Day Weekend, this innovative flying coaster propels willing test pilots 115 feet in the air and through five inversions at speeds of more than 50 mph – all while facing the ground, experiencing the inconceivable feeling of human flight.

The best of the best begin their mission just behind Flight of Fear roller coaster in Coney Mall. After boarding their four-across yellow and red pilot seats, guests are lowered backward and begin their ascent up the 115-foot-tall red and steel gray lift hill, only to be flipped over and jetted at top speeds through ½ mile of steel track over the course of 2 minutes and 30 seconds!

"The addition of Firehawk reflects our commitment to combining one-of-a-kind thrills with fantastic family entertainment," said Greg Scheid, Kings Island's vice president and general manager. "We're looking for some real thrill seekers who are ready and willing to fly. What a way to celebrate our 35th anniversary!"

Cedar Fair has always been a first class park owner, not that Paramount lacked much. It will be very interesting to see what other changes are in store for us this year. Welcome back riders! How was your ride?

Stricker's Grove

Stricker's Grove continues on under family management (with a combined experience of over 100 years!).

For 2007 they are removing the helicopters and Old Car ride, but adding the Round Up from Americana, Apple Ride from Cave City, and the Hampton Car ride and Dumbo ride from Wyandot.

Stricker's Grove is a featured destination of this year's CoasterCon. If you've never been there, now is your chance.

Wyandot Lake

Closed for 2007. Will open in 2008 with supposedly a spinning mouse and probably some other great surprises along with the venerable Sea Dragon.

Member's Section

A trip report from the perspective of teenagers.

The trip consisted of four teenagers. My brother and I have been ACER's since 2000 I believe. Starting off with a surprising parking situation was the parking gates weren't open for cars to park before nine o'clock. That was kind of a bummer to have to sit in a line of cars just waiting to pay my ten dollars for parking, which for me is high. Following that we bought our ACE discounted tickets with no problems, go in and waited for the ACE walk back by the new sign. You can't miss it.

The Beast didn't open until 11:00 so we were able to go back to the Italian Job Stunt track for our first ride. I had never ridden it before, and honestly wasn't that impressed with it. The stationary theming was cool to say the most, but when the train stops where the helicopter is shooting, I wanted to laugh. Maybe that's just my sinister teenage humor system I have, but I'm glad I didn't have to wait for the ride. We then made it over to Flight of Fear for the second train of the day, which is always fun. I wish I could of ridden it last year with the lights on, but hopefully there will be another chance. We then headed over to the Racer for rides both forwards and backwards, both stations were still walk on. The next ride was the Adventure Express, which I have always enjoyed as a nice comfortable ride and one of my more favorite mine rides.

After that we headed over to the Vortex and walked on. I always tell myself I will never ride that ride again, but I always seem to ride again thinking it won't beat the **** out of me, and it always does. I don't understand why people ride it, maybe just because it looks all big and bad with it's incredibly slow chain and 6 inversions. I also never feel safe in the train, I would love it if a seatbelt was installed from in front of your crotch to attach to the OTSR. By that time it was 11:00, and we walked over to the Beast, which now wouldn't open for another twenty minutes, so we rode the Tomb Raider ride. I had never ridden anything like that before in my life and enjoyed it, but I didn't understand it. What were we doing on the ride? Or what is the plot behind the ride? I would also love to have a chance to watch that ride in action with the lights on.

By that time the Beast was open and we were able to walk on to the second row and had a great ride. It was running very smooth (I'm sure the trims have a lot to do with that). By that time we decided to make our way over to the Action zone part of the park in hopes to ride Delirium, Drop Zone and Face/Off. Every line in that section of the park was out of the queue and swinging around the line. I'm sure it had something to do with Son of Beast still not in operation. It was getting hot out and we forgot our swim trunks so we bagged the rest of our day. The only other time I had ridden Face/Off was when I had a serious charlie horse on my left leg, so I was unable to enjoy the ride.

For the most part, a good trip, great walk on riding for the first 2 hours, but then it just wasn't worth it to stay. I also asked some employees about what they thought of the new Cedar Fair management, and one employee said the biggest change was that the exec's had to wear a suit and tie while walking around the park. From what I could tell, not much has changed, but the big looming question is what Cedar Fair is going to do with Son of Beast.

Chris Mills
Hilliard, OH



Top Thrill Dragster



Wicked Twister

Karen Carter-Creatura

Dave Jackson is always taking great photos and posts them <http://community.webshots.com/user/coasterbear>



Winter SOAR

Saturday, March 3rd from 5-9pm The International Restaurant at Paramount's Kings Island

Bring an extra pair of shoes, you will get muddy and we don't want to track it in the restaurant.

Join the Southern Ohio Region as we meet in the off-season to get together, hear what the parks are doing and see what our members have been up to. Win cool prizes and munch on some pizza. If you are interested, stick around and we'll start to make plans for the ACE CoasterCon THIS year in our area.

Tentative Agenda

- 5:00 KI Construction Tour
- 6:00 Pizzas & Sodas open
- 6:30 Meeting starts with member presentations
- 6:45 Park presentations
- 8:00 CoasterCon XXX discussions

All this for just \$8/person.
Kids 5 and under FREE.
Yes, we try to keep the costs down at these things!



Special Highlight is Paul Bonifield's presentation on the 35th anniversary of Kings Island

This is an ACE regional meeting. Members and their guests only please. Southern Ohio Region members are especially encouraged to attend and get involved in the CoasterCon planning.

No registration necessary, just come and enjoy. If we need more pizzas or sodas, Assistant Rep Brian Neal is lucky enough to live near by and will keep our gathering stocked. If we have too much, you may take a box of pizza home. For any questions, please let me, Russ Johnson, know at rjohnson@aceonline.org or (937) 667-1149. We hope to see you there!