

**AMERICAN  
COASTER  
ENTHUSIASTS**

**NEW ENGLAND**

# THE NEW ENGLAND DISPATCH

The official newsletter of the ACE New England Region (VT, CT, MA, ME, NH, and RI).

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## **NOR'EASTER 2010**

*By Peg Batchelder*

March 13 was a rain-soaked Saturday, but that didn't put a damper on Nor'Easter, our region's annual winter event. Nearly 100 people made the trek to Lake Compounce to enjoy a day spent in the company of their fellow coaster enthusiasts. The Lake Compounce training room was the venue for this year, and Jerry Brick, General Manager of the park, was our host.

Visitors were delighted to be able to drive right into the park to meet for the event. On entering, they were greeted with Nancy Stillwagen's display table for Gunther Hall merchandise and a varied selection of drinks and snacks – including Assistant Regional Rep Emery Picotte's freshly made deep fried Oreos. Each place at the tables in the main room was set with goodies from Lake Compounce. Side tables held a tempting array of door prizes and a silent charity auction of personal items from the collection of former ACEer Lee Moon, who passed away earlier this year.

The afternoon was filled with many activities for all to enjoy. Regional park representatives included Jerry Brick as well as Larry Litton and Melissa Pinkerton from Six Flags New England. Each speaker talked about their park's plans for 2010 and answered many questions from the group. Jerry also took members of the group on a slightly damp but very interesting tour of the park. There were several presentations by members. World travelers Bob and Cheri Armstrong took everyone on a tour of coasters and culture in Korea and Japan. Shirley Parmelee told an interesting story of how she obtained a video about the woman who lived in the house built under the former Coney Island Thunderbolt, and then showed the video. Michael Coutermarsh and Scott Lanciani talked about the New Whalom Park Ownership Program, which hopes someday to be able to build a new version of the beloved former park.

Several unique items – including original SFNE Bizarro banners and a centennial banner from Quassy – were featured at our live auction, which raised \$230 for the ACE Preservation Fund and Roller Coaster Museum and Archives. The silent auction raised \$71 for the American Cancer Society and the Alzheimer's Foundation.

Assistant Regional Rep Jason Pytka presented a special recognition, the ACE New England Region Spirit Award, to Emery Picotte, who has donated many hours of time to ACE on both a regional and a national level. A member of ACE for more than twenty years, Emery has always been willing to help out wherever needed, whether it be running crazy errands or building elaborate items for the club's use. He served as the Coaster Con Photo Contest Director from the mid-90s up until last year, and has served the New England Region as Assistant Regional Rep since the late '90s. Congratulations, Emery!

Thanks to everyone who made this year's Nor'Easter a success, especially to our host Jerry, our SFNE representatives Melissa and Larry, our regional rep and assistant reps Peg, Mike, Jason, Donna, Emery and May, and to the crew of formal and informal volunteers who purchased supplies, helped lug boxes of food and Gunther Hall merchandise, set up the various tables, assisted with the auction and door prizes, and cleaned up afterwards. And finally, thanks to all the attendees who braved the wet weather - it wouldn't be Nor'Easter without you! *(Photos follow on page 2.)*



Photo: Anthony Ubinas

Photo: Anthony Ubinas



Photo: Cheri Armstrong



Photo: Mike Thompson

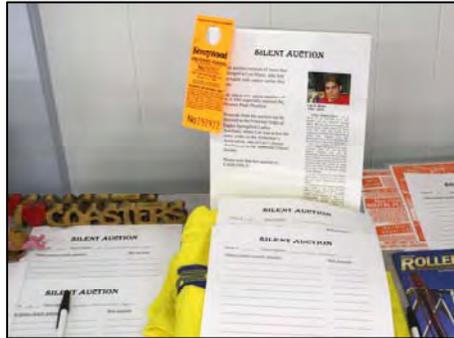


Photo: Mike Thompson



Photo: Michael Coutermarsh



# STRIDE-A-THON CONTEST

By Joshua Martins



I would like to start off with telling everyone a little bit about me to understand the passion I have for coasters, as well as life. I am a 32 year old single father of 2 amazing boys ages 7 & 5 who also love going to amusement parks. In my spare time I also enjoy performing Horrorcore Rap music by the moniker Dr. Gigglez. I have performed with many stars including Bone Thugs & Harmony, Insane Clown Posse, Tech N9ne, Vanilla Ice, and The Blood Hound Gang.

Many of you have seen me at ACE events, as well in many amusement parks. As a member of ACE, I have learned the love for roller coasters. Recently I found out about a contest on the Six Flags New England Facebook site about a contest called Stride-a-thon [sponsored by Stride gum] which was for riding *Cyclone* for 6 hours. The prize was 2 season passes. The thrill seeker in me was intimidated as well as excited because last year the coaster was pretty rough. I had to write a 2-paragraph essay on why I was the ultimate thrill seeker as well as how and why I should win. Here is what I wrote to get a spot on the ride.

*“Looking for an Ultimate Thrill seeker? Look no further. I love traveling the country in search of great coasters. Six Flags seems to have the greatest selection as I have ridden El Toro at Great Adventure 30 times in a row during an ACE Event last Sept. Without getting off once. I’ve ridden the 300ft Sky coaster in Orlando and ridden all the rides on the Stratosphere Hotel in Las Vegas. I’ve been in a shark cage in Florida and I follow the thrill rides. I am ready to conquer this amazing wooden coaster named Cyclone!!! Cyclone is the ultimate ride to try to last 8 hrs. The roughness that comes with age to be banging around lap after lap is a challenge im ready to meet. How am I going to win? That is easy. I am going to win because I never quit anything no matter the challenge. I say bring it on, Ill even ride it in the back the whole 8 hrs. I do not need bathroom breaks. Just focus and enjoy an amazing wooden coaster as an ACE member and my love for coasters. This is a must win to be enjoyed for all!”*

All the participants had to be there no later than 10am to check in and sign waivers. When they were ready to walk us to *Cyclone* before the rope drop, 11 people were ready to ride for the next 6 hours. Each of us was allowed to each bring a guest, so I took along my friend Nadine. After stopping for a group photo at the stairs, we walked into the entrance, picked our seats and were buckled in and restraints checked for a 10:30 start time. Nadine and I took the back seat. Most of us knew that *Cyclone* was re tracked in a few places to help take out a lot of the rough spots, but some still remained. However, the coaster was much more rideable than pervious years. There was some great air time on the first hill, we and realized this won’t be so bad. We rode the red train for the next 3 hours. Every 10 cycles we were able to switch seats, so we decided to move up one seat every time we could switch.

At 1:30pm they gave us our one and only break for 20 minutes. I will say I never ran to a bathroom that fast in my life. We were told to be back by 1:55, or we would be disqualified from the contest. Another way to get disqualified was puking on the ride.

They then decided to give us the blue train for the last 3 hours. I don’t know why, but the red one was smoother than the blue. It was also decided to have us sit in the first 4 rows because 11 riders had turned into 7, and they wanted to start putting the general public on to help with the long line created by using only one train for us and one for everyone else.

For those who think that the contest was easy, you are dead wrong. It was very tiring, as well as a total mind game. It took a lot out of everybody. I was craving *Johnny Rockets* and had to go to the bathroom again. Seeing *Blizzard River* and *Shipwreck Falls* did not help that, and the smells from *Panda Express* right in front of the ride made us all want to get off the ride, but we struggled and fought to stay on. We sang songs, interacted with guests cheering us on and clapped on each ride. Then finally 4:30 came around, and we took our final ride. Our legs felt like Jell-O as we got off and walked by the entrance for the final group photo of the survivors. Nadine and I decided not to be in the running for the season pass prize because we already had them and wanted to give others a chance. Six Flags was very thankful for our gesture and decided to give us 2 exit passes.

I really want to thank Melissa Pinkerton and Ashley Andriuli for putting this wonderful event together and also for letting me be a part of it. It was an experience I will remember for the rest of my life. I took pride in this event and did this for all ACE members. I am proud to be an ACE member and for the amazing things this organization does for the parks and what the parks do for ACE as well!!!!



# SNOW TUBING ADVENTURE

By Joshua Martins

On February 27, 2010, a bunch of ACE members took part in the first annual Snow Tubing Adventure at Ski Ward in Shrewsbury, MA. The day was cloudy, and we even got to see some snow flurries while tubing. I took my 7 year old son Devin with me. Since he has never gone Snow Tubing on trails before, this was the perfect place to start. There are 5 trails with no twists or turns and a couple of hills; I even achieved some airtime. We had 2 hours to enjoy the place. Although Ski Ward is not very big, I was still impressed at the tow hill and the amount of fun one could have while riding. I saw many faces that I have seen at local ACE events and was happy to see everyone having a lot of fun. I managed a lot of runs. As the crowds were decent and the temperature a little chilly, it was the perfect time to ride. The workers were very friendly and ran the trails with great efficiency. Sometimes I would get slowed down near the end from black mats that keep you from plowing into other guests, but as the evening went on and the snow started freezing, you would fly right over them and get some great air time and speed. The food prices were cheap, and the food was great. It was your typical fare of burgers, fries and even mozzarella sticks, and of course many hot and cold beverage choices.

Ski Ward is a good place to get your feet wet if you have never gone tubing, before heading further north to more extreme trails. The trails did not give me as extreme thrills as, say, *Bizarro*, but it is still a good place for a family to enjoy. Next winter I plan to take both my children back to Ski Ward – it’s a great place. Two thumbs up! I do hope that ACE holds another event here as I will attend again!

[Ed. note – this event was put on by the New England Region of ACE. Thanks to Sammy Dick (holding camcorder in photo) for coming up with the idea!]

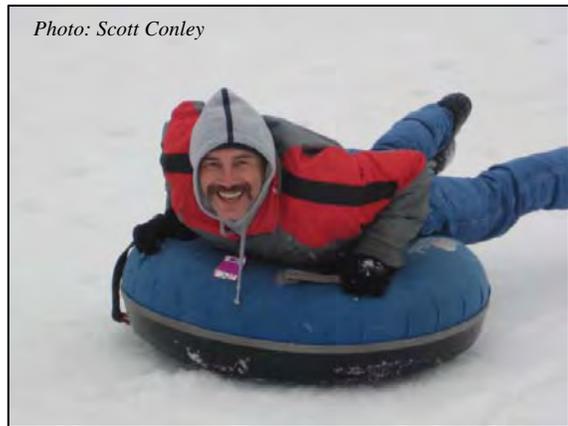


Photo: Scott Conley



Photo: Scott Conley



Photo: Scott Conley

## REGIONAL REP CONTACT INFO

If you have an idea, suggestion, question, or news you want to share with us, there are several ways to contact your New England Regional Reps.

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## NEW MEMBERS

The New England Region of the American Coaster Enthusiasts would like to offer a warm and sincere welcome to the newest members in our region: Cynthia and Wayne Barchard, Brockton, MA; Janice Benda, Andover, CT; Ryan Franciscus, Middletown, CT; Marie Harnedy, Merrimack, NH; Spencer Ryan Hastings, Chicopee, MA; Kyle Edward Majkowski, Haydenville, MA; Nadine Pasterczyk, Chicopee, MA; Michael C. Sales, Castine, ME; and DiAnne Sloane, Avon, CT. See you on the rails!