



Candidate Platforms for ACE Offices:

President Vice President Secretary and Treasurer

Presented in alphabetical order, by office.

All candidates submitted platforms for this publication.

Proposed Constitution and Bylaw Changes



ROBERT ULRICH
Turtletown, Tennessee
Candidate Platform for President

When elected your president two years ago I advocated member participation, new member recruiting, improved communication with members and the industry, and empowering entrepreneurialism to promote club "ownership" by all to demonstrate why ACE is the premier coaster enthusiast social club.

Since joining in 1995 I have continuously volunteered to help ACE become the best community it can be. As an assistant (1997-2001), Southeast regional representative (2001-2010), region director (2010-2014) and now as ACE president, my philosophy can be summarized as the "**ACE Advantage.**" As a member of ACE we should always unapologetically differentiate our excellence.

- ACE publications provide unique, creative and entertaining opportunities
- ACE is one of the few coaster enthusiast clubs focused on history and preservation
- ACE members are knowledgeable experts and influencers who help promote attractions and events
- ACE is a community of volunteers whose only motive is their enjoyment of roller coasters

The Accomplishments

As president, my first goal was to recruit a team of directors who would take ownership of a specific area of expertise and lead it. Without the dedicated Executive Committee to back me up ACE would not be the exemplary club it is today. I cannot express my gratitude enough to the individuals who have

taken on these responsibilities and dedicated their efforts to help lead the club. While I have a vision, it requires the entire EC to create the reality.

In the past two years ACE has:

- Launched a new website
- Expanded our member and industry communication efforts with improved IAAPA Expo coverage
- Created the member-only online version of *ACE News*
- Given back to the community with charitable efforts through the new "ACE Cares" initiative
- Started a well-received monthly podcast
- Initiated a member recognition process with liferevents@aceonline.org
- Continue to grow, now with over 6,000 members

Personally, I am fortunate to have attended all of the national events as president, and regional and park events to the best of my ability.

The Next Term

While I am satisfied with ACE today, I think there are still many areas for improvement. Elsewhere during this election is a bylaw change to add an operations director and redefine the membership director position. While ACE is recognized around the world within the amusement industry, I feel we're not doing enough to acknowledge the individual members who really are the club.

ACE is a unique social network, and there's more to know more about you than just your coaster count. Through the email LifeEvents@ACEonline.org we've started a set of member acknowledgment initiatives, the first to send a small congratulatory gift to new parents when they add a new baby in the ACE family. I'm hoping we begin to share career achievements and other significant events in our members' lives. In the future, when the industry looks at ACE I want it to recognize not only the organization but also the individual members with their unique talents and contributions, which make our club great.

But don't think of this as believing we are an elite. If anything, I want to be more approachable and transparent. I think ACE is welcoming now but I'd still like to see us invite more people into the tent.

▶ Additionally, I've been asked so many questions about how things work that I believe we could do a better job letting people know how decisions are made.

The Current Situation Is Temporary

While I write this the world is in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis, and we're hoping June can still virtually enjoy the launch of "World Roller Coaster Appreciation Month." As a club we've had to cancel the international trip, and Coaster

Con 43 has been postponed to 2021. We'll meet the challenge to post the annual reports and hold the business meeting online, and also have a way to answer member questions and communicate the candidate positions about the 2020 ACE election. The online balloting process we've successfully used in the past is a reassuring factor in this process.

Even though no one knows when or what it will be like when the parks reopen, when they do I think ACE should enthusiastically support

their decisions be it in person or through other actions. I've had many friends speculate about how life will be changed when this is all over. I hope every ACE member continues to look forward to the next time we can get together, whether it's during an official ACE event or just an informal meetup.

I hope to see you during much happier times in a queue. Stay safe and strong. Be healthy. Thank you for your support and your vote.

✓ ACE 2020



JEFFREY NIEMIEC
Monterey Park, California
Candidate Platform for
Vice President

- Region: ACE Southern California
- Formerly ACE Eastern Pennsylvania Region 2007-2017

One of the best parts of serving as vice president is the ability to meet and interact with members of this club. Over the past two years, I have been able to meet more members as they reached out with questions, suggestions or help requests. Being able to serve in this manner has come with challenges and learnings, but acting as your vice president has reminded me why I joined nearly 15 years ago: to share this passion with like-minded individuals who are willing to get up at 3 a.m., ride 28 times before getting off and clapping until their hands are raw for media day at *West Coast Racers*.

Over the past two years ACE's membership numbers have increased. I'm ecstatic to have been in the room and part of the conversations and decision making that have tried to improve the experience for members while raising the profile of the club. While I can't pretend that every plan of action or new idea rolled out smoothly every time, I always try to act in the best interest of the club.

To try and encourage new membership, I've created a few different working groups. These groups have produced conversations and ideas from committee members that led to some interesting actionable items. It's a work

in progress to try and engage with as many members in the process as possible. But, allowing members to take ownership of projects and ideas brings more people into the successful operation of our club. Getting more people involved in volunteering and feeling invested in the club has been another of my favorite parts of serving on the Executive Committee.

A new organization I created within ACE is the Youth Advisory Committee. It's a group of younger members who hold conversations and vet ideas with the goal of engaging with and attracting new members. While the coaster-riding population is certainly diverse, many of the most avid fans of roller coasters and parks in general are on the younger side. The membership of ACE does not reflect this, and so the Youth Advisory Committee attempts to address that disconnect. Our work discusses the member experience from a youth perspective and if there is more we can be doing to make the club accessible and relatable to younger people. ACE offers member benefits to a wide array of coaster connoisseurs, and we as a club need to focus on attracting those younger members, who can potentially be members and friends for decades.

ACE College Chapters is also a program that took root within the past year. A pilot program operated at Beacon College in Florida for the 2019-2020 school year. From this first club chapter at the college level, we have learned more about what college students are looking for within this kind of club environment. The ACE College Chapters are always looking for more students or college professors to undertake new programs at schools and continue to expand. As the program evolves, I am looking into ways to potentially partner with engineering programs or subjects related to the amusement industry. It's a work in progress to develop the best path forward for this type of new venture.

In an advisory role, I also oversee ACE Cares, the segment of the club that works with charitable organizations to give back to worthy causes. Under the leadership of the chairperson, the number of partner events with Give Kids The World were scheduled to increase before

the events unfolding around the world began to transpire. I look forward to strengthening that relationship once we are able to convene together once again. As a club, ACE members consistently raise near or at the top of all fundraising events we participate in, and it goes to show how caring and involved ACEers are.

Another project I'm spearheading is the inclusion of ACE information tables at parks during national events. The first occurrence of information tables was during the 2019 season and allowed us to interact with people who were intrigued by all the ACEers wearing badges on lanyards. Interaction with guests varied by time of day, but it allowed us to talk to people who were excited about coasters but have never heard of the club. If nothing else, some great impressions were left on potential members and they left with one of ACE's business cards.

The most essential job performed by the vice president is chair of the Disciplinary Committee. When people are referred to me for a violation of our bylaws, it is something I take very seriously. These are issues that compromise the integrity or functionality of our club. I've attempted to strike a balance between fairness for individual members coupled with what is best for the club in the long term. As many of the issues pertain to social media, people need to be able to reasonably express themselves as they see fit on personal pages while simultaneously keeping the integrity of the club intact. As such, I am undertaking the project of drafting code of conduct articles that specifically cover social media and online presence. ACE started over 40 years ago and pre-internet, but our code of conduct must be kept current and respond to the realities of the world we operate in. This isn't a part of the job that is enjoyable for any party, but I ultimately care deeply about the integrity of this organization.

On the personal side, I am a former electrical engineer and current full-time high school teacher who focuses on applied engineering in the classroom. I am also head coach of the school's speech and debate team and work with several other teams and individual competitors

in the Pasadena area. Approaching three years of living in California, I spent the first 29.8 years of my life in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. My first roller coaster was the Phoenix at Knoebels, and that first taste of coasters led me to pursue a degree in mechanical engineering. To this day,

I help kids design their own coasters as part of my engineering curriculum in hopes of imbuing a love for coasters to the next generation.

ACE provides a service that cannot be replicated. By bringing individuals together with

a love of parks (and coasters), giving them a forum to meet friends and ride together, this organization fosters friends and great memories. If you choose to retain me as your vice president, I will be honored to continue to help keep ACE the most predominant coaster club in the world.

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ROBERT REAGAN
Fort Worth, Texas
**Candidate Platform for
Vice President**

I'm an old school ACEer. I love to promote and visit the traditional parks and to ride the classic wooden coasters. A big piece of what ACE was founded upon over 40 years ago. I didn't grow up that way. I visited my local theme park, Six Flags Over Texas, four times between the 1960s and the 70s. A chance coincidence got me my first job in Ride Operations there in 1979. Still wasn't a coaster nut, though. My first time to ride the *Shockwave* was a mandatory crew ride, in the spring of 1980. A funny thing happened that summer. Employee bus trips were scheduled to other Six Flags parks. I took one to Georgia, and had so much fun that a few weeks later I went on another. This put me in St. Louis, with a stop on the way at Worlds of Fun. I was starting to get coaster comfortable by now. Then, I rode the *Screaming Eagle*. Everything changed. The location, the engineering, etc. I was hooked. A friend was also a regional rep. He saw the spark and gave me an ACE app. I joined ACE in September of 1980. Member #604. I love to share that story, since it helps renew the wonder and joy this club has been in my life this last 40 years.

In the early days of ACE, the club was challenged in our goals. It was easy to promote the new, but the old was at risk. We began building relationships with the parks and builders that continue to this day. We had to learn, through triumph and failure, how to save the classics. Of the parks I visited between 1979 and 1990, eight parks are gone, along with 36 coasters I rode in them. Seventeen more coasters were closed and moved. I feel privileged that I was a part of

ACE while we were learning to slow the losses. We now have many tools, and the respect of the industry, to encourage parks to preserve their heritage when possible. I was directly involved with two coaster-saving efforts. A small group of us spent about a year and a half speaking at public hearings, speaking to the media, and getting industry contacts involved to try and save the *Comet* at Fair Park in Dallas. We were unsuccessful, but learned a lot about the process. We did get the trains and station saved. Four of us also visited the site of the Fairyland Park *Wildcat* in 1989. We documented the ride with photos and video, and then made the initial pitch to Gary Story at Frontier City. Although modified for the site, it was a successful save which still runs today.

A bit about myself. I'm married (almost 38 years), with two grown kids, and four granddaughters. I'm a shipping transportation Load Planner for a logistics company. I've attended many local, regional, national, and international coaster events since Coaster Con in 1981. I've both organized and helped with events. I consulted with Kiku Lani Iwatu of Termite Art Productions to recommend parks for the 1996 special Wild Rides, plus follow-up programs, including at the time virtually unknown Holiday World.

I spent a while as a regional rep. A challenging and humbling experience. Regions were much smaller then, and ACE did not provide a budget to reps. ACE had five reps handling Texas and four bordering states. My region unintentionally expanded when one rep passed away and three others dropped out. I produced a newsletter, with postage and writing help from some generous fellow members. I expanded the mailout of these to include the members who were without an active rep. My accomplishments included reestablishing the ACE relationship with AstroWorld. An enthusiast more than 10 years earlier had made a negative public remark about a coaster train change to the *Texas Cyclone*. While I was a rep, I included PR Rep Barb in the regional mailings, and invited her to our winter events. A few of us got to attend the opening of Dungeon Drop in 1997, and we showed that ACE can be responsible with the media and can be beneficial to the park. This started a long relationship where ACE was

actively involved in the next two coaster debuts, and the park and ACE partnered all the way to the final day of the park. Another success was with SeaWorld San Antonio. I got the word in mid-1996 that they were adding a coaster. Although operated by Busch Entertainment, this was a new thing for the SeaWorld parks to open a coaster. I called and got in contact with Bob the PR director. My first challenge was to introduce ACE, and why I was calling. Two of us attended that media announcement event, and it was then Bob really started to get a feel for how ACE could help them. More than 50 ACEers were allowed to attend the media event, starting a long history of hosting ACE that continues to this day. The park hosted the regional winter event in 1999, and ACE helped open the *Steel Eel* with more than 100 in attendance. We also held a midseason event that was unique. SeaWorld had groups for "Dinner with Shamu." A meal was held by the Shamu practice pool, with trainers answering questions, and killer whales swimming a few feet away. We were invited to be the very first group to try a lunch version, which is now a regular occurrence. The ACE kids really loved getting up close with these amazing creatures.

During my time as regional rep, ACE members were able to attend the opening of seven coasters in the region and we held about 10 regional events. Newsletters were published every two to three months. My time as rep ended with the change to larger regions, with fewer reps and new national ACE funding. Just prior to this time, I spent about 2 hours on the phone with the regional rep director describing what would make the regional rep system more effective, and I emailed what would become roughly the current format.

In short, feel free to vote for me. I embrace the technology of the future, but can't forget the past. My five years in the industry give me unique insight when working with the business. I've successfully built relationships that ACE continues. Since June of 1981, I've represented ACE and the industry in the media more than 200 times. I understand that our fun is the industry's business. The history of our industry is strongly tied to the history of ACE. We need to go back to emphasizing the preservation of the classics.



LISA ZAGARELLA
Cranston, Rhode Island
Candidate Platform for Secretary

I am pleased to accept the nomination for secretary of ACE. I am seeking a second term because I have learned so much during my first term and am excited for the opportunity to continue to grow my skills in service of our great organization. Having joined ACE in 2013, I still consider myself a "new" member. Since starting a family, I have been fortunate to share many ACE experiences with my husband and my children. Both of my sons, Drew and Bruce, have had their first coaster milestones as members of ACE. As a family, we are so fortunate for the

friends that we have made through ACE and the great memories that we continue to build.

Since becoming secretary of ACE, I have continued to volunteer at local events and have provided updates for *ACE News* about the Executive Committee meetings as well as some of the events in the New England region. During this time, I have learned so much about the job of secretary, from setting up an eBoard to maintaining the copious and detailed records that set ACE apart as one of the most professional enthusiast organizations around the amusement industry. Aside from my duties as secretary, I have assisted with preservation efforts by writing donation letters and have applied my writing skills to writing and editing copy for plaques honoring members and parks.

Outside of ACE I have continued to build my leadership skills by teaching at the graduate level and attending Boston College's Lynch Leadership program, which has afforded me the opportunity to network with leaders both inside and outside of the education industry and to gain insight around both the technical and adaptive aspects of organizational leadership. I have also expanded my professional learning around

diversity, equity and inclusion, which is work that I am passionate about. During my tenure as secretary, I have also continued my work as a school leader on an administrative leadership team working to turn around a failing middle school. In this role I prepare agendas, and facilitate and document meetings for six content teams, a group of coaches and two school improvement teams. In this setting, I continue to hone valuable collaboration skills, working with a team of five instructional leaders to move our school forward and hope to continue to work with the ACE Executive Committee in an equally collaborative fashion, doing whatever I can to move our organization forward.

I am excited for the opportunity to continue as secretary of ACE because I believe in the mission of our club. I am grateful that I was entrusted with the opportunity to serve ACE during these past two years and look forward to continuing to work behind the scenes to help foster the memorable experiences that ACE provides for all of us. I remain committed to the future of ACE and welcome the opportunity to help ACE continue to thrive. I appreciate your kind consideration of my candidacy and hope for your vote.

ACE 2020



CHERI ARMSTRONG
Hatfield, Massachusetts
Candidate Platform for Treasurer

In 1994 I became a member of this wonderful organization, ACE. This is the best decision I ever made. At first I joined for the love of riding roller coasters, and now I continue for the friendships that have developed over the years. The enjoyment of riding with friends who share my passion is one of the greatest benefits of ACE. Volunteering for ACE is one way I can repay ACE for many years of fun.

I am pleased to accept the nomination for ACE treasurer. I have enjoyed serving in leadership positions as secretary and treasurer for the past eight years. These roles have provided me with experience that will be valuable if I am elected to continue to serve on the Executive Committee. Through my work history and experience I am

confident I can fill the treasurer position.

My first experience volunteering with ACE was helping at registration for regional events. This quickly grew to volunteering at national events, both during registration and helping out in the General Store. I am currently the co-planner of the ACE international trips, having worked on the Mexico and Japan trips. Unfortunately, our upcoming trip to Italy, scheduled for July 2020, has been postponed. I am confident my overseas travel to many countries will continue to assist in planning of future ACE international trips.

I have supported ACE and its members in other ways as well. I have donated to ACE's Preservation Fund and the National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives (NRCMA) through purchasing many auction items and have also donated numerous items for auction. I have supported members in their fundraising for Give Kids The World and a Walk in the Park (Six Flags New England event). Preservation is always important to me, and I have supported *Leap The Dips*, *Zippin Pippin* and other preservation efforts. I have also donated many items to the NRCMA, which continues to promote the protection and preservation of roller coasters and amusement park artifacts and memorabilia.

My first ACE national event was the 1994 Spring Conference at Stricker's Grove, Kings Island and Kentucky Kingdom. I had no idea

what to expect at an ACE event and had never even heard of Stricker's Grove, the first park of the weekend. My husband, Bob, and I arrived, found registration, and, as they say, the rest is history. ACE had the entire park for the afternoon, and we quickly discovered what a great organization we had joined. We were blown away when we saw members, evidenced by name badges, operating the *Tornado*, and others pitching in to cook lunch. Everyone was friendly and had a coaster story to share. Actual tornado sightings and severe thunderstorms did not dampen our fun as we headed to Kings Island, where we were treated like royalty. Every coaster was running and many drink stands were open, offering free beverages.

Since that first event many years ago, I have attended 170 ACE events (21 conventions, 44 additional national events, 111 regional events, four international trips and many park-sponsored events. I have traveled extensively throughout the United States and Canada, enjoying large corporate parks and small family parks. I have yet to find a park I have not enjoyed. I love to support the small parks and appreciate the family atmosphere they promote. I relish the opportunity to experience all the wonderful history, beauty and attractions at each place. I have photographed each of the 1,500+ coasters I have ridden and donated thousands of pictures to *ACE News*, *RollerCoaster!*, the ACE census and ACE archives.

For many years I enjoyed parks with my husband, Bob, who introduced me to this hobby in 1971. I now have the pleasure and the utmost enjoyment in sharing this passion with our 11-year-old grandson. Sharing my love and enthusiasm of coasters with him, and watching him have the same joy as I do, is my greatest

pleasure. Observing a park through a child's eye as he visits a park for the first time is a wonderful experience.

I want to continue my role as ACE treasurer, first because I have years of accounting experience. But, more important, I want to

give back to ACE for all the wonderful years of memorable events, the great people I have met and the fantastic friends I have made. I want to continue to help in making sound financial decisions, and looking at all sides of the issues. I truly appreciate your support.



Proposed Bylaw Change #1

Creation of Operations Director and Revision of Membership Director (formerly Membership Services Director) position

The Executive Committee has unanimously recommended the implementation of a bylaw change that will allow for the creation of an Operations Director position whose role is to support club operations, including website management, email communications, database administration and other indirect services to the membership. The Membership Director position will focus on direct member services, including membership questions, benefits, recognition and recruiting. To be able to add an additional director position, amendment of the bylaw must be ratified by a majority of those members voting.

Bylaw Two: Directors – Proposed modifications to Sections 1, 3, 5 and 7, and adding Section 8 (changes shown in bold and strikethrough)

Section 1. The Member ~~Services~~ Director shall oversee the **recruitment and retention efforts for all ACE members; resolution of member issues; recruitment and management of volunteers;** ~~management of membership records and member issue resolution; solicitation and maintenance of ACE member benefits and maintenance of benefits and discounts; organization's IT components, including systems, web site architecture, development, email, and databases; and design;~~ **and purchasing, marketing, distribution, sale and reporting of ACE branded merchandise**

Section 3. The Publications Director shall supervise the preparation and publication of *RollerCoaster!*, ~~and ACE News and the annual calendar;~~ **and** undertake correspondence necessary for the completion of each issue; **and oversee the maintenance of the ACE photo archive.**

Section 5. The Region Director shall supervise the performance of all Regional Representatives; ~~oversee solicitation of volunteers, maintenance of lists of opportunities and members wanting to volunteer, and placement of volunteers;~~ and appoint Regional Representatives with the approval of the President.

Section 7. **The Operations Director shall oversee the management of membership records; the organizations' information technology components, including systems, website architecture, development, email and databases; and support the efforts with the implementation of tools and technology for the benefit of the club.** ~~Directors shall appoint staff to perform responsibilities within his or her area with the approval of the President.~~

Section 8. Directors shall appoint staff to perform responsibilities within his or her area with the approval of the President.

Discussion:

After the previous reorganization, the Executive Committee realized that the Membership Services Director's responsibilities were potentially overwhelming for one volunteer, and that ACE needed a director to focus on member recruiting, retention and recognition.

ACE is a growing organization and wants to continue to provide the best services and benefits possible to its members. By creating the Operations Director position, the Member Services Director will be able to focus on interfacing with and celebrating our current members, while continuing to develop ACE's membership base to ensure the club's future success.

Additionally, with the transition to *ACE News* becoming an online publication and the website redesign, ACE has updated and continues to expand its digital presence. The Operations Director will allow a dedicated volunteer to focus on maintaining and expanding the digital capabilities of the club, including the data around

which of our services and initiatives affect our membership the most.

To Summarize:

If you vote for the change in the bylaws, you are voting to create the position of Operations Director and revise the responsibilities of the Membership Director, Publications Director and Region Director, effective September 15, 2020. If you vote against the bylaws change, no new position will be added and the Membership Services Director will continue to be responsible for both the technical and operational aspects of ACE, as well as the direct interactions with members, including member recognition, recruitment and retention.

Proposed Bylaw Change #2

Elimination of the ACE Trial Membership

On October 19, 2019, the Executive Committee eliminated the Trial Membership category. To be able to eliminate this category permanently, amendment of the bylaw must be ratified by a majority of those members voting.

Bylaw Four: Membership, Section 1 – Proposed modification to eliminate subsection G. (change shown in strikethrough)

~~G. Trial Memberships are extended to any individual for a period of six months with all membership benefits, except Trial memberships are not eligible to vote in ACE elections and cannot register for international ACE events at the discounted member rate. Trial memberships are available only once per person, are not available to current members or to memberships that have expired within the last 24 months, and are not renewable except at regular annual membership costs.~~

Discussion:

The Trial Membership was eliminated with the dues reduction. This category was also not successfully recruiting new members as most trials did not renew as full members upon expiration.

To Summarize:

If you vote for the change in the bylaws, you are voting to ratify the elimination of trial memberships. If you vote against this change the Trial Membership will remain in the Bylaws even though it is no longer being offered. No other membership categories or benefits are affected.



Proposed Constitution Change

Clarification of Candidate Qualifications

The Executive Committee has recommended the implementation of a constitutional change to clarify the membership qualifications for a candidate for an elected office. This change ensures that the proposed candidate is currently an active ACE member. To be able to implement this change, a constitutional amendment must be approved by two-thirds or more of those members voting.

ARTICLE IV-Officers – Proposed modification to Section 1 (additional text shown in bold)

Section 1. The officers of ACE shall be the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and the Immediate Past President of ACE. Officers shall perform the duties prescribed by this Constitution and its Bylaws. To be nominated or elected, a member must be in good standing for a period of at least three **consecutive** years **immediately** prior to being nominated or elected. A member may be elected to only one office.

Discussion:

The current language is unclear around the

timeframe for having been a member of ACE in good standing. The new language preserves the intention of the original language while being explicit that the nominee must be active and in good standing during the three-year period before the election.

To Summarize:

If you vote for the amendment, you are voting to maintain a past precedent around the ACE election procedures and to eliminate a potential loophole that would allow someone who is not currently a member in good standing to run for office. If you vote against this amendment, the lack of clarity will remain in the Constitution.

