

RUSTY LUCAS
P.O. Box 422
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May 6, 2005

Bates Brothers Amusement Co.
1506 Fernwood Road
Wintersville, OH 43953

Dear Amusement Brothers:

I live in Erie County, Ohio near the biggest amusement park in the world. So many locals to this area go to Cedar Point during the summer to enjoy thrilling rides and fun times (they open for the new season tomorrow - OH! the traffic!), yet it still amazes me how packed the Erie County fair is each summer out there by old man Johnson's farm and the County Administration building. I heard that you guys do the amusement rides for the local county fair and that made me wonder how many other county fairs you do. That season is rapidly approaching once again! Have you ever had a conflict where you cannot do two different counties in the same weekend, or do you have extra rides and staff to do multiple fairs at the same time in opposite ends of the state? Do you provide thrills for people in other states as well?

I also have to ask this question. Do you have any uncles, cousins, or other male relatives named Norman? I bet you get asked that question a lot, but I think it would make for a very interesting amusement ride if Norman Bates was the person behind the controls. I can imagine him saying: "Yes mother! I am slowing the ride down to a complete stop before letting the good children out of the carts." That would be pretty funny. Or if you guys have a fun house to go with the rides, it would be pretty awesome if it was made up like the Bates Motel! Do you have to get clearance from the Alfred Hitchcock estate to do something like that?

There are so many possibilities. I imagine Bates is a pretty common name, though. I know that the Bates Manufacturing Company makes office supplies... there is a Bates real estate company I think I saw once online... and even the Carlton-Bates electronics firm... Are you any relation to any of those?

Anyway, the main reason why I am writing to you is to suggest a simple mission statement for you and your brothers which I think sums up your entire operation. You could even put this on a sign or a decal sticker to place on each ride at its entrance: **Bates Amusements are Safe and Fun.** Obviously both of those items are important. You could say that sitting in a detached car seat with a working seat belt is safe, but I wouldn't call that very much fun. You could also say that swinging on the end of a rope over forty foot tall treetops is fun, but I wouldn't call that

very safe. But Bates Amusements is able to marry fun and safety together and come up with some kick ass fun and safe rides. (You can debate over whether fun or safe should come first in that mission statement, but I think from the responsibility standpoint, you should always specify safety as your primary concern, so that is why I put it before fun in the above mission statement).

So now that you have my ideas, I must tell you that I actually grew up in Wintersville and lived not very far away from Bates Hill. Do you know that hill? I used to catch the school bus right at the top of Bates Hill every single morning! Is that hill named after you?

I don't live there anymore, but I have fond memories of throwing buckeye walnuts down the road to see if the school bus tires would run them over. That was a lot of fun. But of course, I would never do this while the bus was moving or even nearby, because that would not have been safe. See? Once again the fun must take a back seat to safety. Actually, what I would do is roll the buckeye walnut out into the road at the top of Bates Hill to the spot where I imagined the school bus tires would hit once it arrived to pick me up. Then I would just wait to see if Kenny the bus driver would run over the buckeye walnuts.

Please let me know if you are going to do the Erie County fair again this year and I will try to make it. I imagine that the fairs will be starting soon enough, and that you probably have some other places that you set up rides in the spring and early summer. Do you do the Jefferson County fair also? I think it is the best county fair in Ohio because they have that fair at Friendship Park. That location just shouts out friendliness and brotherhood. Here in Erie County, the only thing shouted out at the fair is old man Johnson yelling, "Get the hell off my lawn! This isn't a damn parking lot." Although last year when the fair was in town I did see him out there collecting money from cars that wanted to park there in his yard. He'd do anything for a buck.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rusty Lucas". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Rusty Lucas

p.s. I miss the old hometown and my favorite Giannamore's Pizza. Do you think you could send me a Bates Brothers baseball cap and a Giannamore's Pizza t-shirt for free? I would appreciate that very much!