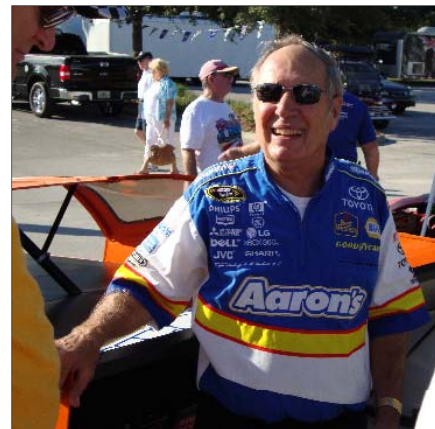


# Hot Dogs & Hot Rods, plus a Hot Day!

September 23 was a hot day in The Villages, and it was made even hotter by the awesome display of hot rods that descended on the Saddlebrook Sports Complex for the first annual “Hot Dogs & Hot Rods” event sponsored by The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club. The event was an outreach effort on the part of the Club to promote interest in racing venues of all types, from stock cars to sports cars and just about everything in between. And it wasn’t only cars that made up the show...there were some interesting luminaries from the world of motorsports on hand, also. Among them were perennial fan-favorite dirt track legend Emil “Buzzie” Reutimann, former Florida racing star Buddy Pearce from nearby Stonecrest, long-time stock car racing pioneer and Villages resident Arthur “Buster” Burt, and world-renowned aviatrix and automotive pioneer Betty Skelton Erde, to name a few.



Zephyrhills, Florida native Emil “Buzzie” Reutimann was on-hand to greet race fans.

Commenting on the success of the event, club president Glen Carter cited the diversity of the cars on display. “We had everything from dirt track stock cars, to NASCAR-type cars, to



A “grand” display of multiple types of cars (Glen Carter)

Corvettes, to Classic Mustang Cobras, along with a great collection of vintage cars and trucks and classic hot rods from the 1930s era. We even had an original “Whizzer” motorized bicycle on display, and you just don’t see that kind of stuff everyday!” declared Carter, himself a former Alabama stock car competitor. Carter also noted that there were several currently active competition vehicles on display, including a Slingshot car, a mini-stock car, and several

late model stock cars, as well as several mini-sprint cars that compete at tracks in the local area. “To sum up in a word...Grand,” quipped Carter.

In case you’re wondering about the “hot dogs” portion of the event’s title, co-organizer Peter Tetrault reported that the club offered free hot dogs, bottled water, and soft drinks to attendees as their reward for perusing the displays. In total, he noted, the club dished out over 375 wieners and roughly 400 bottles of liquid refreshment. “It made for a more festive event” said Tetrault, “Free food is always a welcomed addition to a gathering like this.”

Mike Touchette, Tetrault's partner in organizing the event, agreed, and also pointed out that this event was a bit unique in that it represented a joint venture between the club and The Villages Recreation Department, and was basically the first part of a two-part venue for the day. The second part, Touchette reported, was a golf cart drive-in movie following the conclusion of the car show. And, wouldn't you know it, the movie was "Days of Thunder," the 1992 NASCAR-themed film featuring Tom Cruise as a rising star in the sports highest level. "The whole day was a huge success," commented Touchette, "and shows what can be done when groups work together."

With a successful event like this now in the books, it's safe to say there will be more joint ventures like this in the years ahead.

More photos from the show:



