



Guest speaker Duncan Paterson chats with Wendy Touchette prior to Wednesday's meeting of the The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club at Colony Cottage Recreation Center. Peter Travers / Daily Sun

Revved up over racing

Motor Racing Fan Club organizes trips to events

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By Caroline Klapper

To be a member of The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club, people need to meet two basic qualifications.

"We like anything that has a motor and goes fast," said Glen Carter, president and founder of the club.

For racing fans, those two criteria aren't hard to live up to, and in the few years since the club started in 2006, Carter has seen membership growing at a fast rate.

"There's just a lot of race fans," the Village of Summerhill resident said, adding he was surprised at how many Villages residents enjoy all types of motor racing.

"I had raced (stock cars) up in Alabama and the Carolinas. When I moved up here, I missed being able to talk to people about racing," Carter said. "It's just an exciting sport. You can pick a favorite driver and cheer him on. That's what makes it fun. We've just got a lot of members, and they love this club."

And don't think that the Motor Racing Fan Club members are mostly men. The ratio of men to women in the club is pretty equal, according to club secretary Silky Meegan, of the Village of Sabal Chase.

"All they have to do is come to a meeting, and they'll see half the members are women," she said. "For women who love racing, this (club) is the perfect outlet for them."

Meegan has been a fan of racing ever since her daughter took her to her first race in Charlotte, N.C., about 20 years ago.

"I've been with it ever since," she said. "I love the speed. I love the noise. Hearing the engines rev up – it just makes your heart beat faster."

Meegan and her fellow club members get plenty of chances to hear those engines up close and personal, because instead of just getting together to watch events on television, this club arranges trips to watch races live at area racetracks.

"We just have a big time at races," Carter said.

During the club meetings every month, a guest speaker usually talks about some aspect of racing, whether it's airplane racing, stock car racing, drag racing or just about any other type of motor racing.

At the March meeting, Duncan Paterson, a part-time resident of the Village of Sabal Chase, talked about Formula One racing.

Paterson is originally from Europe, where Formula One racing is more popular than American NASCAR. Paterson spent time working as a track surgeon, and he shared his experiences and talked about the differences between Formula One and NASCAR with the club members.

While he is in The Villages, Paterson said, he has been to races at Daytona, and he can appreciate what the Motor Racing Fan Club is all about.

"The point I've taken away from being here and going to races here in Daytona is a good car race is a good car race is a good car race," he said.