

# Track president Ruser remembered as visionary

Original Speedway Park racing director  
loses battle with cancer Sunday at age 53

The Villages Daily Sun  
Tuesday, June 4, 2013  
By Keith Pearlman

The local racing community suffered a huge loss with the death of Marty Ruser, president and racing director at Original Speedway Park in Fruitland Park.



Ruser, 53, lost his battle with cancer Sunday.

Members of The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club who knew Ruser well were saddened by the news.

"I think I can speak for our whole club when I say our hearts ache for Marty's family and for his racing family at the track," said Wendy Touchette. "Marty will be missed a great deal."

Gerry Hafer, former president of the club, said Ruser deserved credit for making Original Speedway Park, which was founded in 1958, a special place.

"Marty was just a super guy," Hafer said. "He was always very calm and quiet even in the midst of go-kart racing. He did some great things to make the track what it is today."

Touchette called Ruser a visionary for what he was able to do with the track.

"Marty was a very quiet person, but he was able to do some great things with the track," Touchette said. "When he wanted to do something, he found a way to get it done. He brought in motorcycles to race over there recently. He just always had good ideas."

Hafer said Ruser always welcomed members of the club to the track.

"The club considers that our home track," Hafer said. "Marty worked very hard to build a good relationship between our club and the track."

That relationship extended onto the track in 2010 and 2011 when members of the club raced go-karts around the 1/8-mile dirt track.

"Marty was instrumental in helping put together our two Villages Cup races," Hafer said. "Those events were very successful for us as a club and for the track. Without his involvement, we never would have been able to do it."

Touchette was one of those who raced in 2010.

"That was so much fun," Touchette said. "I even got to get in a kart and race against the guys. That was a great day."

The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club has also sponsored several events and young drivers at the track during recent years.

"We helped them out on a couple occasions to help out with some of their bigger events," Hafer said. "We've sponsored a couple young drivers there and I got to announce one evening. We haven't been over there as much as we'd like lately, I'm sorry to say."

Touchette said she always enjoys going to the track.

“It’s small and everybody over there is like family,” Touchette said. “Marty and everybody over there always treated those of us from The Villages like part of the family.”

Hafer said Ruser will be missed at the track, but he is confident Original Speedway Park will continue to thrive.

“Marty was the backbone of the organization over there,” Hafer said. “But he has a lot of good people who work for him. I’m sure they’ll keep things running well over there and make it something that will be part of Marty’s legacy.”