



# The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club

## Pit Report

### March, 2012

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#### Another Stellar Night for the Club!

**March 7**—Well into our sixth year as a group, we just seem to keep rolling along, with one high point after another! Our March meeting raised the bar even further, with a pair of absolutely dazzling speakers from deep inside the world of motorsports. Opening up the night's festivities was ESPN's Diana Hubbard (pictured at left), who delivered spectacular commentary on the intricacies of live-event broadcasting, including a recap of the detailed timing that goes into capturing race-day activities. Using an 11-page handout as a guide, Diana conducted a "virtual tour" of the ESPN compound layout at



Daytona, a mapping of the 40+ individual camera locations deployed around the track, and the layout of the garage area and the pit reporter assignments for the Daytona 500. Following this high-level overview, she explained the daily schedule for coverage of an event, including live segments, driver/crew interview schedules, and pit road coverage assignments. By the time she concluded her remarks, the entire audience had received a complete analysis of what goes on behind the scenes to make TV coverage of a major race appear seamless.

Diana noted that ESPN will be covering the entire 2012 Nationwide schedule, as well as the final 17 races of the Sprint Cup schedule (including the Chase). She also reviewed her history in Indy car ownership, expressing the excitement she and her husband felt having had three cars in the starting grid for the Indy 500. As part of her remarks, she also shared some amusing anecdotes about driver interactions during interviews, as well as some darn funny examples of some of the unexpected things that happen on race day. (Diana was introduced to the audience by her dad, Villages resident David Leedke, who opened with an amusing story about Diana losing a contact lens at the start of an Indy 500.)

The second part of the March 7 program featured a fascinating array of subjects delivered by NASCAR veteran Geoff Bodine (pictured at right). From his "Take a Ride With Geoff Bodine" DVD to his open and honest



(continued on page 2)

## Diana Hubbard/Geoff Bodine Visit (cont'd from page 1)

responses to the questions thrown at him, Geoff amazed and delighted our capacity crowd with insights to the life of one of "NASCAR's 50 Greatest Drivers." By the time he concluded his remarks, everyone in the room had acquired a new, deeper appreciation for the Chemung, New York native and his multi-faceted personality.

Beginning with a photo of his first race car (age 5), Geoff described his introduction to racing and his early years, learning from his father and uncles. He also touched on many of his career milestones, including his 1994 win at North Wilksboro Speedway, where he was the only car on the lead lap—the last time that happened in a NASCAR event. (He also displayed a photo of the winner's circle for that event, pointing out his wife Lori celebrating with him and his crew. He noted that Lori is also a veteran of racing circles: she's the daughter of noted northern dirt track racer Butch Jelly.) Geoff touched on his successes at Daytona, from his 1986 victory in the 500, to his "almost wins" in 1987 and 2002. In a sobering series of video segments, he also described his 2000 Daytona Speedweeks accident in the Craftsman Truck Series and his miraculous survival through what many historians consider the most incredible wreck in racing history.

Extending his life story beyond the race track, Geoff described his four visits in support of the U.S. military to the Middle East, including visits to Baghdad, Kuwait and other locations, as well as his time speaking to sailors on a variety of Navy ships and his experience firing warning shots (flare guns) at fishing boats trespassing on protected facilities.

Geoff also spoke of his personal philosophy of "giving back," as evidenced by his 1992 start-up of the "Bo-Dyn Bobsled Project" created with an



From left: Tom Horrmann, Silky Meegan, Glen Carter, Lori Bodine, Gerry Hafer, Geoff Bodine, Jim Boyd, Diana Hubbard, David Leedke, Mike Touchette, Wendy Touchette

objective of bringing the United States to prominence in four-man competition. Using his design, the U.S. team did in fact reach premier status, earning the Gold Medal in Vancouver in 2010, winning what he described as the "biggest, baddest race of them all." He also reviewed his efforts to have bobsledding added as an event in the paralympic Olympics in 2018, explaining that six years ago he designed a bobsled for a paraplegic to use in competition (incidentally, the converted bobsled featured a seat built by Randy Lajoie, son-in-law of club member Ernie Battee).

Geoff closed his remarks with a discussion of safety innovations that he has played a part in bringing to NASCAR, including full-face helmets, power steering, and others. Overall, he commended NASCAR for their aggressive stance on safety equipment and standards.



Clockwise, from top left: Buster Burt and Geoff share a moment; Geoff showing off his "New World Racing" helmet; the crowd absorbing a great meeting; Geoff's Daytona 500 and Olympic Gold rings





## Buzzie Reutimann Honored by LLOAR in Daytona

**February 21**– Club Hall of Famer Buzzie Reutimann was honored February 21 by the Living Legends of Auto Racing, Inc. (LLOAR) at the group's 2012 annual Awards Banquet in Daytona Beach Shores. With a racing resume that is now in its seventh decade, Buzzie has long been regarded as a "living legend," and was elated at LLOAR's decision to recognize him with their "Pioneer of Racing Award." Also on the award list for this year's festivities was Junior Johnson (whose award was accepted by Geoff Bodine), Richard Childress Racing, Ken Ragan, Eddie MacDonald Sr., Joe Mihalic, and media great Claire B. Lang.



(Above) Buzzie and sister Joy display the legendary driver's latest award; (Left) A close-up look at the award that will now grace the walls of his Zephyrhills race shop. (Photos compliments of Jim "Ringmaster" Hedlund)

## 2012 Prediction Row Off and Running!

**March 26**—We're just five races in to the first segment of Prediction Row 2012, and we've already had a good dose of drama. First, there was the dilemma of how to calculate the points in the wake of the 48 team's penalty applied between the first and second events, then there was the struggle between Gary Civiletti and Jerry Conkle for the points lead, then there was Wendy Touchette's miraculous rebound from disasters in the first few events. Along the way, our talented band of motorsports experts

have been fairly consistent in their display of prognostication skill, logging two winning predictions in these first five races (both of the winning picks, by the way, were Wendy Touchette's forecasts of Tony Stewart grabbing the checkers at Las Vegas and Fontana, and yeah, it was a rain win, but it looks the same on paper!)

But the real measure of consistency in Prediction Row competition is the overall stats. Here we find our group of six have seen 10 of their picks place in

the top 5 (out of 30 picks, that's a top 5 rate of 33%...not too shabby!). Even better, the group's picks have reeled off 16 top 10 finishes. Translated, that says that our predictors wind up in the top 10 more than half of the time.

One other observation, since Jerry Conkle's an Indy-type guy: the group has logged six podium finishes, including a 1-2-3 sweep in race No. 3 (Las Vegas). With this type of consistency, we can expect the remaining eight segment one races to be pretty wild!

## "Big Dave" Pulls Off Another Great Bingo Night!

**February 27**—Well over 100 avid Bingo enthusiasts converged on Colony Cottage of February 27 for the first of what we hope will be several successful 2012 fund-raisers for the club. Our Bingo Caller extraordinaire "Big Dave" Bockman once again had things well in-hand for the night, with his band of about 15 eager club member volunteers helping to ensure a great evening for all of the highly competitive players. As in the past, Dave was able to secure a variety of great door prizes to augment the bingo games, making the night even more interesting! Here's the list of area merchants who

contributed to the night's prize list:

- Bob Evans Restaurant—CR466
- Carrabba's—US 441
- City Fire—Lake Sumter Landing
- Cody's—Lake Sumter Landing
- IHop Restaurant—CR466
- R. J. Gator's—Lake Sumter Landing

- The Villages Car Wash—Spanish Springs
- Cal's Barbershop (Nan Pike) - Spanish Springs
- Quality Tire & Repair—US441 & CR466

"Big Dave" calling the numbers



## Scholarship Review Committee Set To Go

Special Events Coordinator Wendy Touchette announced recently that a committee of four club members is poised to review all applications received for the club's 2012 Scholarship award. Working with Wendy on this important assignment are:

Joanne Howard, John McGinnis, and Dan Fiddick.

Wendy also reminded club members recently that applications must be received on or before Saturday, March 31, 2012 to be eligible, and email submissions are

acceptable. A copy of the full application package and its guidelines is available as a download from the club's website. Go to [www.villagesracingclub.com](http://www.villagesracingclub.com), click on the "Scholarship Program" link at the bottom of the homepage.

## April Meeting Preview

Our April 4 meeting will feature remarks from Michael Reed, owner/operator of Citrus County Speedway (CCS). As many of you know, CCS is essentially our "home track" for asphalt racing, located in Inverness and a short 26 mile jaunt from Laurel Manor Rec Center.

Those of you who have followed Florida short track stock car racing for some time know that this

venerable racing facility has been active since it's formation in 1954, starting out as a quarter-mile dirt track operating as Inverness Speedway. It was paved in 1960 and expanded to its present 3/8 mile configuration, and eventually became know as Citrus County Speedway, due largely to its location on Citrus County Fairgrounds property.

CCS has long been a favored destination for our group, and it was in

October of 2007 that our group conducted a sponsorship deal for Steve Griffin. Steve went on to win the Mini-Stock championship that year, making our trip that day even more memorable. Most recently, our group has visited the speedway to watch club Hall of Famer Randy Anderson excel in the Modified ranks. Randy's dad, Wayne (another club Hall of Famer) is also a frequent winner at CCS (SLMs).

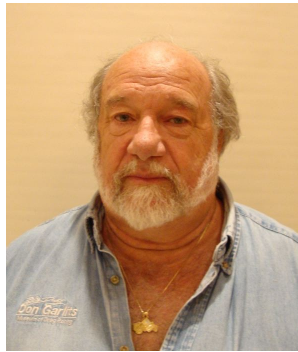
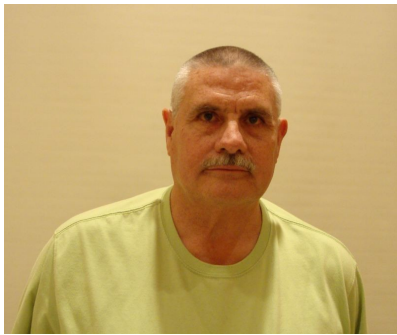


## Welcome, New Members

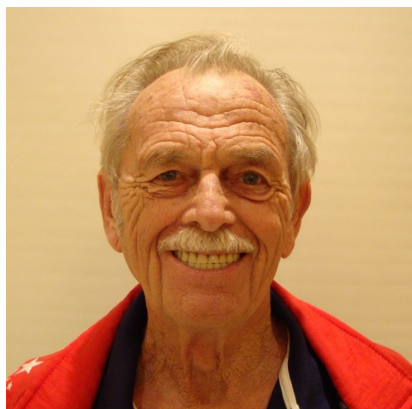
Our ranks keep growing! At our March meeting, we welcomed 18 racing enthusiasts to our group—eight from the state of New York alone. Be sure to greet them next time you see them and strike up a conversation about their interest in the wide world of motorsports!



Left-to-right: Steve Barton—Spenceport, NY; Joan & Mike Crippen—Cooperstown, NY; Ronald De Graaf—Frankfort, IL



Left-to-right: Mike Ellmo—St. Louis, MO; Joe Henselder—Sound Beach, NY; Frank & Cyrette Kiely—Secaucus, NJ



Left-to-right: Jim King, Oswego, NY; Joseph Moser—Long Island, NY; Bill & Fran Ried, St. Louis, MO

## Welcome, New Members (continued)



Left-to-right: Ron Schexnider, Hackberry, LA; Tom Soeder, Baltimore, MD; Larry Sumner, Norcat, KS



Left: Tony Torgersen, Akron, OH; Right: Jack & Mary Wilbur, N. Syracuse, NY

## Local Racing Corner

Track	Location	Telephone	Website URL
Original Speedway Park	Fruitland Park	352-348-4336	originalspeedwaypark.com
Citrus County Speedway	Inverness	352-726-9339	citruscountyspeedway.com
Bubba Raceway Park	Ocala (Zuber)	352-622-9400	bubbaracewaypark.com
Volusia Raceway Park	Barberville	386-985-4402	volusiaspeedwaypark.com
New Smyrna Speedway	Samsula	386-427-4129	newsmyrnaspeedway.org
Orlando Speedworld	Bithlo	407-568-1367	orlandospeedworld.org
East Bay Raceway Park	Tampa (Gibson)	813-677-7223	eastbayracewaypark.com
Marion County Speedway	Ocala	352-812-3922	ocalamicrospeedway.com
Auburndale Speedway	Winter Haven	863-551-1131	auburndaleracing.com
Punta Gorda Speedway	Punta Gorda	941-575-7223	puntagordaspeedway.com
Desoto Super Speedway	Bradenton	941-748-3171	desotosuperspeedway.com

## Special Events Roundup



How about that March 7 meeting!! Whether or not you are or were a Geoff Bodine fan, I think it's fair to say all of us have acquired a lot of respect for him as a NASCAR veteran, a humanitarian, a citizen of the world, and just a fun guy to be around! And, on top of that, how about Diana Hubbard!! Without question, this was one of the most action-packed meetings we've had to date—further proof that our group just keeps getting better and better with each passing year. Just in the past four months—two Daytona 500 winners and representatives of “NASCAR's 50 Greatest,” the God-mother of the NHRA, an ESPN VIP, and one of the officials involved in the construction of Iowa Speedway. Our schedule for the rest of 2012 promises to continue the trend of great speakers from all areas of the racing world, so keep the first Wednesday of each month open! See you April 4.

*Wendy*

Date/Event	Event Details
Friday, March 30 Bright House Challenge Race	“Our car” is entered in the Bright House Challenge 100-lap event at Orlando Speedworld, with Dalton Zehr at the wheel. Call Gerry (751-3643) for details.
Wednesday, April 4 Regular Club Meeting	Our April meeting will feature Michael Reed, owner/operator of Citrus County Speedway, and the club will be providing hot dogs and hamburgers at 5:15 pm in the picnic area at Colony Cottage. Meeting starts at 7:00 pm.
Wednesday, April 11 R/C Racing	Our radio-controlled racers will be in action on the side parking lot at Colony Cottage, from 9:00 am to noon. Come out and watch (or join in) the fun!
Saturday, April 14 Speedway Park Event	Florida VEGA Dirt Series event at Speedway Park in Fruitland Park. See the track's website for details ( <a href="http://www.originalspeedwaypark.com">www.originalspeedwaypark.com</a> ).
Saturday, April 21 Speedway Park Event	Regular points races at Speedway Park (club Hall of Famer Nic Fernandez is, at this writing, still in command of the Jr. Purple Division.
Saturday, April 28 R/C Racing	Our radio-controlled racers will be in action on the side parking lot at Colony Cottage, from 9:00 am to noon. Come out and watch (or join in) the fun!
Wednesday, May 2 Regular Club Meeting	Our May meeting will feature Villages resident Denise Sullivan, a former jockey of note. Denise will discuss her career in the equestrian sports. (As we've said repeatedly, “racing is racing, and horsepower is horsepower!”)
Wednesday, May 9 R/C Racing	Our radio-controlled racers will be in action on the side parking lot at Colony Cottage, from 9:00 am to noon. Come out and watch (or join in) the fun!
May 3, 2012 Saddlebrook Golf Course	Nighttime Golf Scramble at Saddlebrook Executive Golf Course (Details TBA)



## Your Pit Crew

Gerry Hafer, President (751-3643)  
 Mike Touchette, Vice President (430-0239)  
 Silky Meegan, Corresponding Secretary (259-2029)  
 Gerry Greim, Recording Secretary (215-630-1402)  
 Tom Horrmann, Treasurer/Official Photographer (430-0195)  
 Wendy Touchette, Special Events (430-0239)  
 Bob & Camille Sherman, Membership (751-1771)  
 Dave Bockman, Member at Large (751-0381)  
 Wayne Nolan, Member at Large (750-9082)  
 Buster Burt, Technical Consultant (751-4643)  
 Jerry Conkle, Technical Consultant (750-1185)  
 Peter Tetrault, Member at Large (205-8503)  
 Glen Carter, Immediate Past President (751-6442)  
 Ed and Janet Ott, Hospitality Coordinators (753-6872)

## A Satisfied Customer Speaks Out

As you know, the Daytona 500 had some challenges this year. Despite that, one of our trip participants took the time to send the following note to Wendy, and we thought it made pretty good reading. As usual, Wendy and her team went above and beyond to produce a good result!

Hi Wendy,

"THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU SO MUCH". I can not begin to tell you how much I enjoyed my Daytona experience. As a first time attendee, I am so appreciative of your very helpful advice, hints, and suggestions. Because of your excellent tips I was totally prepared to take on the challenge of my first visit. Your recommendations on what to take along with me, to the must check out driver haulers area, and to the trackside corporate sponsor area, was spot on information. By the way, I won a race tire at the drop the tire event at the Goodyear tent, and I plan to make a coffee table out of it. Likewise, your advise to walk the fence to get the real feel was an unbelievable experience.

Also to Aimee at Lake Limo, what a truly professional manner in handling and making my venture a great experience. The logistics of dealing with the weather (rain) issues, and still getting us in a position to enjoy the total event was outstanding. Likewise, our driver John deserves a lot of credit for his handling of not only the changing and challenging conditions, but also keeping forty some people happy. THEY DID A GREAT JOB AND SHOULD BE PROUD OF THEIR OPERATION.

For your efforts I would give you a score of 99.9. It would have been 100 if only your PREDICTION ROW pick would have been Matt Kenseth. Just so you know, we live in Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, which is seven miles from Cambridge Wisconsin where Matt lives. Likewise, we have provided services to him and his family for years. So take it from a Wisconsinite and please pick Matt the next time.

Some have said, as I have, that this was a Bucket list activity. However, I will not cross this one off the list, but will most certainly take the opportunity to once again enjoy the Daytona experience.

Thanks so very much for your TERRIFIC help. Roger

## Conkle's Corner...

At our Thursday morning breakfast sessions, and at many of our trips to local racing venues, Jerry Conkle continues to delight us with a steady stream of commentary on the state of the human condition. Maybe it's his deadpan deliver, or maybe it's that you need to think about his comments before the humor sinks in. But whatever, he makes you laugh!



Here's Jerry's contribution for this month:

- A guy I know had to have some surgery done, and he wanted to have his son, a well-known surgeon, do the surgery. To guarantee success, he told his son before the surgery, "Just remember—if anything goes wrong, your Mother will be living with you for the rest of your life!"
- After being married for thirty years, a wife asked her husband to describe her. He looked at her for a while, then said, "You're A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K,." She asks, What does that mean? He said "Adorable, Beautiful, Cute, Delightful, Elegant, Foxy, Gorgeous, Hot. She smiled happily and said, "Oh, that's so lovely, What about I, J, K?" He said, "I'm Just Kidding." The swelling in his nose is going down and the doctor is fairly optimistic about saving his eyes.

### • EXERCISE FOR PEOPLE OVER 60 OR CLOSE TO 60

Begin by standing on a comfortable surface, where you have plenty of room at each side. With a 5-lb potato bag in each hand, extend your arms straight out from your sides and hold them there as long as you can. Try to reach a full minute, and then relax.

Each day you'll find that you can hold this position for just a bit longer. After a couple of weeks, move up to 10-lb potato bags.

Then try 50-lb potato bags and then eventually try to get to where you can lift a 100-lb potato bag in each hand and hold your arms straight for more than a full minute. (I'm currently at this level.)

After you feel confident at that level, put a potato in each bag.

- Evening news is where they begin with 'Good Evening,' and then proceed to tell you why it isn't.
- Whenever I fill out an application, in the part that says, 'In case of emergency, notify:' I put 'DOCTOR.'
- A clear conscience is the sign of a fuzzy memory.