

The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club

Visit our website at www.villagesracingclub.com

June, 2007



Inside This Issue

- 1 Update from the Pit Crew
- 1 May's Meeting – Hearing from the Media
- 2 Special Events Committee Report
- 2 June 6 Meeting Preview
- 2 Special Report – Members attend Coca Cola 600
- 3 Local Racing Corner
- 4 So You Don't Need to Look it up!
- 4 Club Contact Information
- 5 Special Report – Members attend Coca Cola 600

Update from the Pit Crew – Glen's on the Mend



Many of you are aware, we're sure, that our Crew Chief and founder Glen Carter underwent some pretty significant surgery this past month. We're delighted to report to you that, despite the trauma of seven hours in the operating room, he is recovering well and will be back with us in the not-too-distant future. Although he was recuperating through the Memorial Day weekend, we suspect he enjoyed watching the major NASCAR and IndyCar events televised Saturday and Sunday. Anyway, we'll give you an update on his condition at our June 6 meeting.

In the meantime, we're pleased to report that our Club continues its growth. We now have 160 members, and every meeting or event brings with it another exciting chapter in our history. Our June 6 meeting will be no exception to this rule, so we're all looking forward to seeing you there.

The Crew, for Glen

May's Meeting – Hearing from the Media



Our May 2 guest speaker was Larry Croom, Executive Editorial Manager for The Villages Daily Sun. Larry gave us yet another view of the world of racing, recounting the experiences he has compiled during his eleven years of covering Nascar and Indy Racing League events. He spoke of the business side of media relations in the racing business, using examples of situations he experienced at such tracks as California, Las Vegas, Homestead, and, of course, Daytona. He shared a fascinating tale of two weeks spent covering Speedweeks at Daytona as editor of a Fort Pierce newspaper, explaining the "glamor" of two weeks on the road.

In addition to his tales of the road, so to speak, Larry discussed his views on a number of Nascar's current issues, including the "Car of Tomorrow", attendance trends at Nascar events and the pricing of tickets for events, the background associated with some of Nascar's sponsorship issues, and the importance of "soft skill" tutoring for Nascar drivers. He also gave us an insider perspective into the media center protocols in place at nascar venues.

In terms of interviews, Larry discussed his experiences interviewing such Nascar notables as Jeff Burton, Richard Petty, Tony Stewart, Dale Earnhart Junior, Kevin Harvick, Jimmie Johnson, and Jimmy Spencer, providing insights into the personalities of these drivers.

Special Events Committee Report

We only have about 20 raffle tickets yet to sell, so we're homing in on the drawing! If you want to increase your already-excellent odds to win one of the three exquisite prizes, just give Wendy Touchette a call and she'll fix you up with tickets. In case you need a refresher on the prizes:

- Richard Petty Driving Experience (*8 hot laps at Daytona*)
- Richard Petty Ride-along at a track of your choice
- Richard Petty Driving Experience at Walt Disney World

Really, you can't get a better deal on something like this...each ticket having a 1-in-50 chance of winning! Let's grab those remaining tickets and get to the drawing.

Our July trip to Daytona International Speedway is now only about a month away. The two-day package for the July 6 Busch Series race and the July 7 Pepsi 400 Nextel Cup race, including bus transportation to and from The Villages both days, is another excellent deal put together by Wendy and her Special Events Committee. The package includes a number of goodies, with welcome gifts, on-site assistance, and a "Fan Zone" add-on option. The most incredible thing about this package is the price: \$285 per person (\$305 with the "Fan Zone" option) for the whole two days. To make reservations, contact Wendy (at 430-0239 or email at mrswmt@comcast.net). Seats are still available.

In her April 30 email to members, Wendy provided an excellent photo essay on the highly successful "Horsepower at the Polo Grounds" event on April 29. Coming on the heels of a tremendous April 28 Club event at New Smyrna Beach, there can be no doubt in anyone's mind that The Villages Motor racing Fan Club is the "real deal".

June 6 Meeting Preview – A Local Driver's Perspective

Our June 6 meeting will feature local racer Steve Griffin, a regular competitor at Citrus County Speedway over in Inverness. Steve is veteran of several years in the world of racing, and has racked up some impressive credentials competing in various divisions. Steve is planning to bring his current car along with him to Laurel Manor, and will have it on display before the meeting. This will be a good time for you to get your questions answered about the ins and outs of the local racing scene.

Special Announcement – No July Meeting

Don't forget that there will be *no club meeting in July*. Our regular meeting date would be July 4, so that's a conflict with many members' personal plans. Any breaking news or important announcements will be posted on our club website...which is now back up and running after a momentary administrative problem.

Special Report – members Attend Coca Cola 600

Instead of a "meet your fellow club members" segment this month, we'll hear from Bob and Camille Sherman as they recap an awesome trip to Charlotte Motor Speedway for the Coca Cola 600 and Carquest Auto Parts 300 events (and a lot of excitement in between.) Look for this exciting report in the insert to this newsletter...do they sound excited or what??!!

Local Racing Corner

Local short track racing is moving right along! Here's the May schedule at our three closest local tracks:

- **Ocala Speedway**

Friday, June 1, 2007

Regular Divisions: (4 Cylinder Stock, V-8 Thunder Stock, V-8 Pure Stock, Sportsman & Modifieds). PLUS – Street Stock - 50 Laps - \$1,000 to win!! & Street Car Challenge & Figure “8” cars

Friday, June 8, 2007 ****SPECIAL**** 12th Annual - P O W E L L M E M O R I A L

125 Laps of Super Late Model Racing PLUS – V-8 Pure Stock, Street Stock, V-8 Thunder Stock & 4 Cylinder Stock

Friday, June 15, 2007 – *****SPECIAL*****

Regular Divisions: (4 Cylinder Stock, V-8 Thunder Stock, V-8 Pure Stock, Street Stock, & Modifieds). Drivers Note: DOUBLE POINTS
PLUS – TBARA Outlaw Winged Sprints & Figure “8” cars

Friday, June 22, 2007

Regular Divisions: (4 Cylinder Stock, V-8 Thunder Stock, V-8 Pure Stock, Street Stock & Late Models). PLUS – Kids Race Car Rides & Street Car Challenge

Friday, June 29, 2007 - (Wacky Friday)

Regular Divisions: (4 Cylinder Stock, V-8 Pure Stock, Street Stock, Sportsman & Modifieds). PLUS - Figure 8 cars. V-8 THUNDER STOCK - 30 Lap. Championship Race \$500.00 to Win. & (Kidney Bean Race)

- **Citrus County Speedway (Inverness) – Racing starts at 5:30 pm**

- Saturday, June 2, 2007 - Super Late Model, Sportsman, Mini Stock, Pure Stock, V8 Thunder Stock, 4 Cylinder Bombers, F.O.W.L.
- Saturday, June 9, 2007 - win 35 Open Wheel Modified, Sportsman, Mini Stock, Street Stock, Pure Stock, V8 Thunder Stock, Fig 8
- Saturday, June 16, 2007 - Happy Father's Day, 50 Lap Thunder/Pure Stock, Super Late Model, Sportsman, Mini Stock, Street Stock, 4 Cylinder Bombers
- Saturday, June 23, 2007 - Open Wheel Modified, Mini Cup, Sportsman, Mini Stock, Street Stock, V8 Thunder Stock, 4 Cylinder Bombers, Fig 8

- **New Smyrna Speedway**

- Saturday, June 2 - TBARA OUTLAW WINGED SPRINTS 30, Late Models, Modified, Sportsman, Super Stock, Mini Stock, Strictly Stock
- Saturday, June 9 - OPEN WHEEL MODIFIED 50, Late Model, Pro-Truck, Sportsman, Super Stock, Mini Stock, Strictly Stock
- Saturday, June 16 - Dad's Night Out - All Dads get in FREE (Front Gate), Super Stock 50, Late Model, Modified, Pro-Truck, Sportsman, Mini Stock
- Saturday, June 23 - ASA, FLORIDA MINI STOCK CHALLENGE, SOUTHERN SPORTSMAN
- Saturday, June 30 - BRIGHT HOUSE CHALLENGE SLM 50, Modified, Super Stock, Mini Stock, Strictly Stock

So You Don't Need to Look it up!

Since Bill Elliott's retirement from full time competition several years ago, Dale Earnhardt Junior has picked up the thread of dominance in the Most Popular Driver award category. If this continues, in just 13 short years, he'll pass "Awesome Bill" as the most frequent winner of this award. Anyway, here's a quick recap, courtesy of Nascar.com of the history of this award.

Year	Winner	Year	Winner
2006	Dale Earnhardt Jr.	1980	Bobby Allison
2005	Dale Earnhardt Jr.	1979	David Pearson
2004	Dale Earnhardt Jr.	1978	Richard Petty
2003	Dale Earnhardt Jr.	1977	Richard Petty
2002	Bill Elliott	1976	Richard Petty
2001	Dale Earnhardt	1975	Richard Petty
2000	Bill Elliott	1974	Richard Petty
1999	Bill Elliott	1973	Bobby Allison
1998	Bill Elliott	1972	Bobby Allison
1997	Bill Elliott	1971	Bobby Allison
1996	Bill Elliott	1970	Bobby Allison
1995	Bill Elliott	1969	Bobby Isaac
1994	Bill Elliott	1968	Richard Petty
1993	Bill Elliott	1967	Cale Yarborough
1992	Bill Elliott	1966	Darel Dieringer
1991	Bill Elliott	1965	Fred Lorenzen
1990	Darrell Waltrip	1964	Richard Petty
1989	Darrell Waltrip	1963	Fred Lorenzen
1988	Bill Elliott	1962	Richard Petty
1987	Bill Elliott	1961	Joe Weatherly
1986	Bill Elliott	1960	Rex White
1985	Bill Elliott	1959	Junior Johnson
1984	Bill Elliott	1958	Glen Wood
1983	Bobby Allison	1957	Fireball Roberts
1982	Bobby Allison	1956	Curtis Turner
1981	Bobby Allison		
Multiple Winners			
16	Bill Elliott		
8	Richard Petty		
8	Bobby Allison		
4	Dale Earnhardt Jr.		
2	Darrell Waltrip		
2	Fred Lorenzen		
11	Tied with One Win		

Club Contact Information:

Glen Carter, President	751-6442	glenlind@comcast.net
Silky Meegan, Secretary	259-2029	silkym@earthlink.net
Ted Cahalane, Treasurer	751-2638	tedanddiana@thevillages.net
Leigh Davenport, Program	259-7910	sandyjd@comcast.net
Gerry Hafer, Newsletter Ed.	751-3643	ghafer@comcast.net
Linda Carter, Admin. Asst./Historian	751-6442	glenlind@comcast.net
Wendy Touchette, Special Events Coord.	430-0239	mrswmt@comcast.net
Dave Bockman, Member at large	751-0381	dmbockman@aol.com
Bill Wilkie, Member at large	123-4567	wilkbilmar@earthlink.net

SPECIAL REPORT – A REAL-LIFE INSIDE LOOK AT THE BIG-TIME!!!

Have you ever heard of a HOT PASS? Well, let me tell you. Our daughter and her family live in Concord, NC about five miles from the Lowe's Motor Speedway (LMS), so we purchased tickets for the Coca-Cola 600 and the Busch race the day before. Our daughter, Denise, has lived there for about four years and she meets NASCAR personnel and driver's families all the time.

Through one of these contacts, she had made arrangements for all of us to have COLD Passes; the documents that let you into the pit area, but you have to leave before the race starts. On Thursday, Cup Pole Qualification Day, we went to the NASCAR Registration van to pickup the passes; we were told that NASCAR had upgraded our request and we would each have a HOT PASS.

A short golf cart ride later through the tunnel, we were on the infield of LMS with all the campers and RVs. WOW!!! Richard Petty just drove past us on his scooter heading to his RV. We walked around like four star-struck kids.

Since we had HOT Passes, we headed to the garage area. Each Driver's hauler was parked across from the Driver's assigned garage stall. Jimmy Johnson's was next to Jeff Gordon's, and that was next to Denny Hamlin and "Smoke" Stewart...they were all there...for real! Each car was being pampered by their crew; they looked like soldier bees tending to the queen bee.

Then it was time for Tech. Each car must pass a NASCAR inspection prior to taking the track for Cup Qualification. One by one in the order pre-selected by NASCAR. At the required time, each crew rolled their car out to the pit area. With HOT passes, we were able to sit on the pit wall or follow the cars as they inched closer to Qualifying. Then we started to see the real stars of NASCAR, the drivers. Now this was a real Kodak moment.

On the whole each driver was patient and polite with both the NASCAR fans and the press. We were able to watch Matt Kenseth (17) take the pole @ 185+ mph. As we left the pits, heading to the garages, we saw Matt giving yet another taped interview. When he was finished, he signed autographs and me with no sharpie or paper...another wasted opportunity. That night we must have seen at least thirty drivers – lots of pictures, but no autographs. Just being in the middle of the action...that's what a HOT PASS means.

Friday was a day away from the track. We toured some of the NASCAR owner's facilities around the greater Charlotte area. The Chip Ganassi Team had family day including a free lunch, Roush Racing, Hendrick Motor Sports, Joe Gibb Racing and finally Penske Racing. By the time we reached DEI, it was after five PM and they were closing for the day.

When we arrived at Roush we had no idea where to go, so like real tourists, we asked someone that had just come out of one of the buildings. He hooked us up with "Don", an employee who was about to give another family a guided tour. To our surprise, we entered the "secure area", the actual shops where the cars are fabricated...from start to finish. We toured the metal shops, engine shop, paint shop and all the small shops necessary to produce today's NASCAR and the Car of Tomorrow (COT), each to strict NASCAR specifications. Since both my wife, Camille, and I had worked for a major military aircraft manufacturer, building a NASCAR to specs was akin to building a tactical fighter and the facility/work area was just a clean. There must have been at least 150 Roush cars on the floor in various states of fabrication.

Saturday was the Cup practice, Busch qualification, final Cup practice and the Busch race. This time we came prepared with sharpie's, hats and HOT PASS. We became experts in the "autograph dash"; drivers and owners alike. You didn't have time to take both pictures and get autographs. More crowds everywhere. In general, there was less access to the drivers but we knew where the drivers' meeting was held and that was our focal point. As each event passed there was yet another opportunity to talk to the participants and take

pictures. After standing for six hours, it was good to relax and watch the race. Oh yes, Casey Kahne won the Busch race.

RACE DAY; the same thing all over again only hotter and longer. Another driver, another garage, another pit, another photo and another autograph only this time harder to get close to things because of the hoards of people. Race day is filled with guided tours of sponsors and their guests. The corporate sponsors have huge hospitality tents with lots of food and drinks.

Security was strict. With the HOT PASS and proper identification (ID) this time, we were able to enjoy the entertainment provided by the military and watch the opening ceremonies from the infield. We still had access to the garages and the pits. We spent time in the NASCAR Tech area as each car went through final inspection. The best place to see the drivers was at scheduled events such as the Driver introductions or the Driver’s meeting. By this time they were really starting to focus on the race and didn’t have time for fans or autographs. At last it was time for the race. With tired feet and sunburns all around, a chance to sit.

They say 175,000 fans attended the Coca-Cola 600, but we had the HOT PASS.

Camille & Bob Sherman

Here are a few photos of the “big day”

