



The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club

Pit Report

October—2015

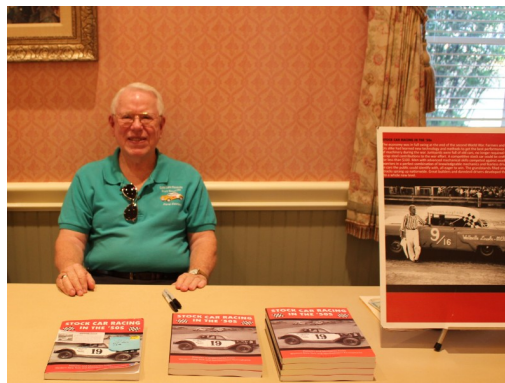
Next *Regular* Meeting—Wednesday, November 4, 2015

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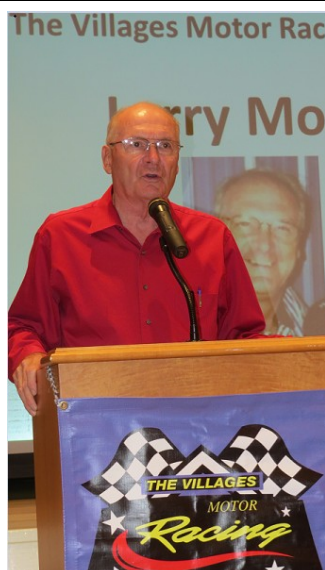
A Racing History Doubleheader



October 7—Noted motorsports journalist Ford Easton joined us for a discussion of his most recent publication, a 230-page history of race tracks in Western New York and Northwestern Pennsylvania. Ford reported that the book, published in 2012, is the result of an eight-year project documenting facts and stories from 48 individual race tracks.

In discussing the content of “Stock Car Racing in the ‘50s,” Ford explained that the book includes sections on various racing associations, track officials during the time, racing before the 1950s, and, a brief history of Dirt Modifieds. While it is a book about race track happenings, he noted, it is primarily a book about racing and the culture of drivers and fans during the era of the 1950s.

Ford used a series of photos from the book during his presentation, noting that the many visuals in the book have added substantially to its popularity, as evidenced by over 1800 sales worldwide in just the past year. He concluded with instructions on how to order the book in print and e-book (Kindle) format.

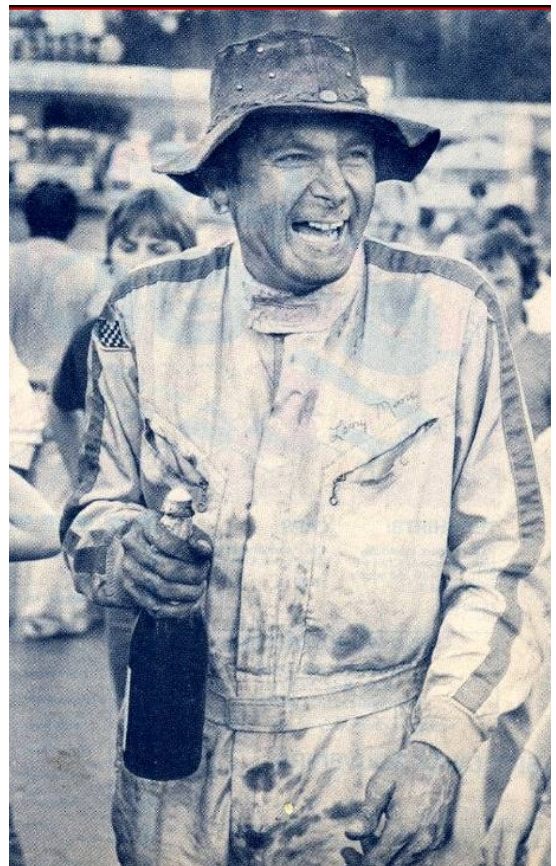


October 7—The second part of our October twin bill featured remarks from a legendary figure in the motorsports world, Larry Moore. A multiple winner of the most prestigious dirt late model event in the U.S.—the World 100 at Eldora Speedway—as well as the 1987 winner of the Dirt Track World Championship at West Virginia's Pennsboro Speedway, Moore is widely regarded as one of the greatest dirt racers in the history of the sport. Larry's career was recently chronicled in a his official biography, “On Top of the World...The Life and Times of a Racing Pioneer,” released on June 16 of this year. The book embraces Larry's career and his wide array of competitive venues, and explores in detail the development and evolution of dirt late model racing from a historical perspective. ==>

A Racing History Doubleheader (Cont'd)

At a recent book signing stop at the National Sprint Car Hall of Fame and Museum, museum curator Tom Schmeh provided these words on Larry's celebrated career: "Larry Moore was the first driver to win the World 100 at Eldora Speedway three times. In addition to his success in dirt late model stock cars, he was quite the pavement racer, too, with the Automobile Racing Club of America (ARCA), the American Speed Association (ASA) and the United States Auto Club (USAC), including in a sprint car."

Here a few photos of Larry in action around the country:



Clockwise from top left: at Summerville (S.C.) Speedway, 1980; at Tri-County Speedway (Ohio), 1971; Celebrating, sometime in the 70s or 80s; at driver introductions for the 1981 World 100 at Eldora Speedway

November Meeting Preview—Some Vintage Racing

November 4—Next week's meeting promises to be another great one for us, with our own Art "Fireball" Fehrman leading the way in another fantastic twin bill. Art is founder of the Illinois Stock Car Hall of Fame, former president of Illinois Vintage Racing, and a 25-year veteran of late model stock car racing. He will cover his personal racing career and the history of the motorsports organizations he's represented through the years.

Art will conclude his remarks by introducing close friend and former on-track adversary Jim O'Connor, a member of the Illinois Stock Car Hall of Fame. Jim is also a resident of The Villages, and will be sharing his racing experiences and accomplishments as a driver with multiple championships in the Midwest, as well as his long-time experience as a promoter and owner of the famed Kokomo Speedway in Kokomo, Indiana.



A few photos to whet your appetite: Top row, from left: Art at Santa Fe Speedway, Chicago area; Art exiting his car and waving to the crowd at Indiana's Crown Point Speedway in 2004 (yeah, the car is in fact upside down); Middle Row, from left: Art's vintage ride in all its glory; The Illinois Stock Car Hall of Fame logo; entrance to Jim O'Connor's domain; Bottom right: Art's a hands-on guy...you'll need to ask him for details on this one.



Club Represented at Honor Flight Event

October 9—With Pit Crew member Wayne Nolan and former crew member Peter Tetrault involved, you know any event is certainly going to be a success. That was the story at the October 9 Villages Honor Flight Golf Tournament at Eagle Ridge, where 236 golfers took to the course in support of Honor Flight's fund-raising event, where our group sponsored one of the 36 holes. "The event was a tremendous success," reports Peter, "raising \$12,000 that will be used to sponsor area veterans on their Honor Flight trips to Washington." Peter, who has been very active in the Honor Flight, was one of the primary organizers of the event.

Pit Crew member Tom Horrmann also received special recognition at the event, having been honored by a poster commemorating his 3 Purple Hearts and 4 Bronze Stars earned in service during the Vietnam War in 1968-1969. Wayne and Barbara Nolan sponsored the recognition for Tom.

Without question, the members of our group stand solidly behind the volunteers like Peter and Wayne who actively support this program.



Socks for a Good Cause



November 20—For the past several years, an organization labeled "Blanket Orlando" has been actively collecting blankets for distribution to the Orlando area's homeless population during the winter months. This year, the focus is changed slightly with a call for socks instead of blankets, and The Daily Sun's Larry Croom and his wife Gigi are spearheading the local effort to collect donations of socks for the program. Please bring a pack to the meeting next week and we'll see that they get to Larry and Gigi for delivery to the main distribution point. (Ed. note: I was able to purchase two six-packs of heavy socks at Beall's Outlet for less than \$8, so this is a very doable project! Gerry)

Ninth Annual Hall of Fame Planning Underway

January 23—Save the date! Our ninth annual Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony promises to be another stellar event for us. We'll be welcoming the "Class of 2015" to our select group of motorsports luminaries, including some of the greatest in racing. Just check the partial list of inductees on the draft flyer at right...that should bring back some recent memories of the remarks from speakers like Jack Hewitt, Merle Bettenhausen, Dave Dion, and David Rogers, just to name a few of our great visitors.

Note that our Keynote Speaker this year is scheduled to be Congressman Bill Posey, himself a veteran stock car racer and avid motorsports fan.

Janine Woodsford has again accepted overall responsibility for leading the organization of this event, so stay tuned for more information from her in the weeks ahead.



2015 HALL OF FAME INDUCTION AND AWARDS NIGHT
 Saturday - January 23, 2016
 La Hacienda Recreation Center
 7:00 P.M.

Join us as we celebrate the induction of these motorsports luminaries into our Hall of Fame

The Class of 2015 (So Far...)

Jack Hewitt	David Rogers
Merle Bettenhausen	Mike and Kenny Brewer
Paul Vitrano	Tony Kennea
Charles Poindexter	Chuck Kidwell
Jim "Jimbo" Chadwick	Ford Easton
"Dynamite" Dave Dion	Larry Moore

Keynote Speaker
 Rep. Bill Posey, U.S. Congress (Florida 8th District)

Doors Open at 5:30 pm
 Reception and Dinner - 6:00-7:00 pm
 Induction ceremony begins at 7:00 pm
 Dinner catered by Chefs of Napoli
 Pulled pork, pulled chicken, sides, tea and coffee will be served.
 BYO for other liquid refreshment.

RSVP - Janine Woodsford, ja9wacn@gmail.com
 Casual dress (members...no "yellow shirts", but wear your name tag!)

Local Racing Corner

These tracks represent the local roots of racing and they need our support! If you've been to an event at any of these tracks recently, you'll no doubt agree that attendance is down. Car counts are down as well, and it's easy to see that either of these facts represents a cause-and-effect situation. If the cars don't come, neither will the fans, and it's becoming a downward spiral that can only lead to the closing of tracks here in Central Florida. Let's do our part to keep the sport alive! These tracks are where the future big-league drivers cut their teeth, and they need us in the stands. Remember...without these tracks, there'd be no NASCAR!

Track	Location	Telephone	Web Contact
Auburndale Speedway	Winter Haven	863-551-1131	Auburndalespeedway.net
Bronson Speedway	Archer	352-486-4998	Bronsonspeedway.net
Bubba Raceway Park	Ocala (Zuber)	352-622-9400	Bubbaracewaypark.com
Citrus County Speedway	Inverness	352-726-9339	Citruscountyspeedway.com
Desoto Speedway	Bradenton	941-748-3171	Desotospeedway.com
East Bay Raceway Park	Tampa (Gibson)	813-677-7223	Eastbayracewaypark.com
Marion County Speedway	Ocala	352-812-3922	Marioncountyspeedway.com
New Smyrna Speedway	Samsula	386-427-4129	Newsmyrnaspeedway.org
Original Speedway Park	Fruitland Park	352-348-4336	Speedwaypark.biz
Orlando Speedworld	Bithlo	407-568-1367	Orlandospeedworld.org
Putnam County Speedway	Satsuma	386-649-6969	Putnamcountyspeedway.org
Showtime Speedway	Pinellas Park	727-561-9646	Showtimespeedway.us
Volusia Speedway Park	De Leon Springs	386-985-4402	Sportvolusia.com

Prediction Row—2015 Edition



OK...off to the "Eliminator Round." After three hours of holding your breath during the Talladega event, followed by a few seconds of chaos, most of us kind of walked away from the TV scratching our heads. The common phrase was along the lines of "What the heck was that?" (Editorial note: I'm being kind to NASCAR here.)

Anyway, it looks like our own Prediction Row competition is going to be a bit of a nail biter, with a few of the early favorites ejected from the closing segments. Darren Ivey is pacing the field for us, with a healthy lead over Tina Ivey and Don Day (the other predictors with a win), but as you all know, this could change in the blink of an eye if the bottom portion of the leader board gets some wins, especially Bob Woodsford who is only one point behind Darren. So, on to Martinsville, and from there to Texas and Phoenix before the final four land at Homestead.

Chase Segment Current Standings		
Predictor	Points	Wins
Darren Ivey	203	1
Tina Ivey	154	1
Don Day	134	1
Bob Woodsford	202	0
Lois Taylor	177	0
Jim Pappas	138	0

It's Been a Rough Year for Motorsports

Elzie Wylie ("Buddy") Baker, Jr.

Born: Jan. 25, 1941

Died: Aug. 10, 2015

"Many of today's fans may know Buddy Baker as one of the greatest storytellers in the sport's history, a unique skill that endeared him to millions," NASCAR chairman Brian France said in a statement. "But those who witnessed his racing talent recognized Buddy as a fast and fierce competitor, setting speed records and winning on NASCAR's biggest stages. It is that dual role that made Buddy an absolute treasure who will be missed dearly." (Courtesy of ESPN)



Tony Elliott

Born: Jan. 24, 1961

Died: Oct. 2, 2015

Elliott, one of USAC's greatest ambassadors, was a two-time USAC National Sprint Car Champion (1998 and 2000) and scored 26 Sprint victories plus nine in Midgits and five in Silver Crown competition. The 2000 and 2001 Hoosier Hundred winner, his "traditional" wins also included the 1999 "Ted Horn 100" at DuQuoin, the 1998 and 2000 "Summer Classic" at Terre Haute, the 1998 "Hurtubise Classic" Sprint at Terre Haute and "4-Crown Nationals" Sprint races in 1987 and 1993 at Eldora Speedway. He also was the 1999 Indiana Sprint Week Champion. USAC extends its sincerest condolences to his family and friends. He will be missed by all. He was 54. (Courtesy of USAC)



Finally—The Florida Governors Cup Returns to Sunday!



The 50th Anniversary of the Florida Governor's Cup 200-lap race for Super Late Models at New Smyrna Speedway is scheduled for Sunday, November 15. Read that

again...**Sunday!** Many of you are aware that we've lobbied track officials for many years in favor of a shift of the event from those long, late Saturday evening/Sunday morning events to a more fan-friendly Sunday afternoon schedule. Well, it looks like that's going to happen, although we're not sure what role our pestering had to do with it. We'll be discussing travel arrangements further at next week's meeting, but in the meantime mark the date on your calendar. As usual, the Speedway is expecting a great field of entries to compete for the \$15,000-to-win purse, the Hard Charger Pole Award, and other cash prizes.

The Speedway has also announced that the HTI Modified 75 will be run Saturday evening, November 14, along with their regular Super Stock and Bomber classes. This, of course, presents a bit of a dilemma for us, in that Club Godfather Dick Anderson is scheduled to enter his famed No. 7 Modified in the field for that event, and we won't want to miss that. With Josh Todd at the wheel, they've been blazing a path across Central Florida in the Open Wheel Modified ranks, winning (as of this writing) 12 feature events in a row!



So far, two groups are forming to take in these events, one group for the Sunday afternoon race and one for Saturday night. Stay tuned for more news on car pooling arrangements, and listen up at next week's meeting for more information. This is gonna be a great weekend of racing for Central Florida!



Breaking News—Corey LaJoie Getting Set for Snowball Derby

December 6—Many of you know that there's a subset of club members who assemble for breakfast each Thursday morning to deliberate on racing events, world politics, and life in The Villages in general. At our October 22 breakfast, we were honored with a drop-in visit from Lisa LaJoie, daughter of club member Ernie Battee, wife of two-time NASCAR Champion Randy LaJoie, and mother of rising motorsports star Corey LaJoie. During her visit with us, Lisa announced that Corey will be entering the Snowball Derby at Five Flags Speedway December 4-6. As most of you know, this is widely regarded as the most prestigious non-NASCAR Late Model Stock Car race in the country, and a contingent of club members will be making the trip to Pensacola to take it in. We'll be, of course, rooting for Corey and also for the venerable David Rogers!



Corey's Snowball Derby car and crew chief (or maybe car chief?) at bottom right.

Your Pit Crew

Jerry Conkle, President/Crew Chief (750-1185)
 Wendy Touchette, Vice President (303-9734)
 Silky Meegan, Corresponding Secretary (259-2029)
 Mike Anderson, Webmaster (217-714-2245)
 Gerry Greim, Recording Secretary (215-630-1402)
 Tom Horrmann, Treasurer/Official Photographer (430-0195)
 Darren Ivey, Special Events Coordinator (552-1977)
 Bob & Camille Sherman, Membership Coordinators (751-1771)
 Wayne Nolan, Member at Large (750-9082)
 John Angiolo, Member at Large (414-305-8094)
 Mike Touchette, Member at Large (603-5077)
 Syd and Nancy Baker, Hospitality Coordinators (750-2126)
 Gerry Hafer, Immediate Past President/Newsletter (396-9961)
 Glen Carter, Past President (874-8152)

The "Ringmaster" Adds to his 15 Minutes of Fame



As noted earlier in this newsletter, Lisa LaJoie visited our Thursday morning breakfast group on October 22 and, while there, was successful in getting Jim "Ringmaster" Hedlund to autograph copies of the photo that has made him famous...the fisticuffs at the close of the 1979 Daytona 500. Jim is now living a comfortable retirement with the royalties from this world-famous action shot.



Conkle's Corner...

I wish more of our members would attend more of the local racing in the area. You don't know what you are missing. It draws a lot of attention to our club, and has helped us make contact with many people in the racing community. Besides that, our visibility at local tracks has helped us extend our reach in the motorsports world.



Don and Frank, two old friends, met in the park every day to feed the pigeons, watch the squirrels and discuss world problems. One day Frank didn't show up. Don didn't think much about it and figured maybe he had a cold or something. But after Frank hadn't shown up for a week or so, Don really got worried. However, since the only time they ever got together was at the park, Don didn't know where Frank lived, so he was unable to find out what had happened to him.

A month had passed, and Don figured he had seen the last of Frank, but one day, Don approached the park – lo and behold – there sat Frank ! Don was very excited and happy to see him and told him so. Then he said, "For crying out loud Frank what happened to you?"

Frank replied, "I have been in jail." "Jail!" cried Don. "What in the world for?" "Well," Frank said, "you know Jane, that cute little blonde waitress at the coffee shop where I sometimes go?" "Yeah," said Don, "I remember her, what about her?" "Well, one day she filed rape charges against me and, at 95 years old, I was so proud that when I got to court, I pled guilty. The dam judge gave me 30 days for perjury!"

Children Are Quick!

Here are some comments from the younger set that many us grandparents can relate to:

TEACHER: Why are you late?

STUDENT: Class started before I got here.

TEACHER: Glenn, how do you spell 'crocodile'?

GLENN: K-R-O-K-O-D-I-A-L'

TEACHER: No, that's wrong

GLENN: Maybe it is wrong, but you asked me how I spell it.

TEACHER: Clyde, your composition on 'My Dog' is exactly the same as your brother's...Did you copy his?

CLYDE: No, sir. It's the same dog.