



# The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club

## Pit Report

November—2015

Next *Regular* Meeting—Wednesday, December 2, 2015

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## Old Racers Never Die, and They Don't Fade Away, Either!



**November 4**—With a racing career that has spanned six decades, Club member Art “Fireball” Fehrman is the embodiment of what racing is all about. With a record that started in 1968 with Rookie of the Year honors at Santa Fe Speedway in Illinois, Art went on to compile an incredible racing resume at many tracks in the Midwest. He recounted the beginning of his racing interest as an understudy to his dad, and in fact, reports that he got his start in a Quarter Midget through a deal his dad put together for intermission events at Mance Park, and star was born!

Art shared the history of Santa Fe Speedway, from its 1953 opening to its close in 1995, noting that one of its unique characteristics was its half mile configuration with a quarter mile track inside. He reported that Santa Fe was one of the first tracks to bring in the big names of NASCAR, like Bobby Allison, David Pearson, and Buddy Baker, a step that back in the day was an innovative thing for promoters to do.

During a stint in the U.S. Air Force, Art continued to race while stationed at Grissom Air Force base in Indiana. He was able to conduct a pretty ambitious racing schedule, racing Friday, Saturday, and Sunday throughout 1969. Then, after being deployed overseas for a year and a half, he returned to Grissom and resumed his racing career with a vengeance. He won 8 features at Santa Fe in 1971 and 10 in 1972, driving for many car owners and putting together an incredible history of on-track performance, at one stretch finishing top five 17 times in a row.

Art took a break from racing in the early 1990s, and in 2004 came back to the track in a modified entry at Crown Point Speedway. After three not-so-good experiences, he decided to focus his attention on Vintage Racing, founding the Illinois Vintage Racing series.

(Continued next page)



## Old Racers Never Die, and They Don't Fade Away, Either! (Continued)



Art served as President of Illinois Vintage Racing from 2006 to 2015, and is respected for growing the organization to its present state. In 2014, for example, the series ran 12 events, with car counts as high as 24 and a following that rivals similar organizations across the country. It's been a labor of love for Art, enabling him to stay active in a sport he loves, and it also afforded him an opportunity to experience two of his "bucket list"

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items...driving at the "Milwaukee Mile" in 2007 and Darlington Raceway in 2009. With financial support from Tibor Machine Products, the series has continued to prosper and has achieved substantial acclaim in motorsports circles.



Clearly, Art is one of those guys that can't say no, and in 2009 he took on the task of forming the Illinois Stock Car Racing Hall of Fame, another venture that has reached prominence under Art's leadership. Since its formation, the Hall has inducted 40 tremendous names in the world of stock car racing, including Fred Lorenzen, Andy Granatelli, Russ Wallace, Hugh Deery, and "Tiger" Tom Pistone, to name just a few. The organization is housed in the Historic Auto Attractions facility in Roscoe, Illinois.

Art ended his discussion by introducing Jim O'Connor, current owner of Kokomo Speedway and a fellow racing veteran with a 42-year racing resume. Jim is recognized for his expertise as a promoter, but also as a nine-time champion and all-time leader in feature wins (88) at Kankakee Speedway. Jim is a 2013 inductee in the Illinois Stock Car Hall of Fame, and his career was profiled in an article published in the

Kankakee Valley Daily-Journal. Here's an excerpt from that article: "With more than twice as many feature wins as any other driver ever to compete at the Kankakee County Fairgrounds dirt track, O'Connor easily was the most dominant driver here. And hall of fame voters across the state recognized that talent."

Jim and Art closed out the presentation with a discussion on how Jim got into track ownership and promotion, first at Kankakee and then at Crown Point and Kokomo. At the urging of his son, Jim accepted an invitation from the Kankakee Fairgrounds board to take over track operations, which subsequently led to a complete redesign of the racing surface. After fulfilling his five-year contract, he focused on Crown Point Speedway that he had purchased while promoting Kankakee. He subsequently took over operations at Kokomo, operating the facility for a former car owner and rebuilding the facility as he had done at both Kankakee and Crown Point.

Jim and his family (wife and eight children, all of whom are involved) ran the two tracks for awhile, eventually selling Crown Point and focusing on Kokomo. They've now operated Kokomo for 11 years, and the track is doing well.

Based on the feedback we've received, it's clear that we'll need to bring Jim back for an encore presentation sometime in 2016.





## December Meeting Preview—The Other Side of the Story

**December 2**—Hold on to your hats! Our next meeting is going to be one for the ages...a first time event...one that breaks new ground. We've been entertained throughout our 10-year history with stories told by the folks behind the wheel—the drivers themselves. They've certainly been fascinating, with tales like David Rogers at Talladega, Amanda Ferguson breaking into the late model ranks, Stan Butler plugging away in the Little 500, Geoff Bodine wrecking in spectacular fashion at Daytona, and on and on.

But as we were planning our speakers for the year, we thought it would be interesting to hear from the people outside the car...specifically, the spouses that tend to make it all happen, and who basically provide the steady influence that a race team needs to maintain balance in the confusing world of motorsports.

We've assembled a panel of speakers who will share a unique perspective on some of the things that have happened through the years on the racing circuit.

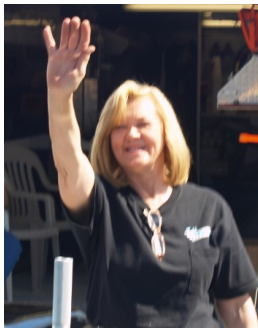
So, on Wednesday night, we'll hear from the other half of some of the most fascinating racers we've had the great fortune of meeting. Our panelists are:

- Mary Anderson, wife of Dick Anderson
- Pat Brack, wife of Bobby Brack
- Cheryl Brewer, wife of Mike Brewer
- Kim Garcia, wife of Billy Garcia

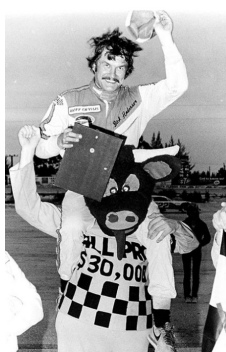
And, through the magic of Skype, we're planning on having Lisa LaJoie (wife of Randy LaJoie) join the fun.

This is gonna be a great night of stories!

### OUR PANELISTS



From left—Mary Anderson, Pat Brack, Cheryl Brewer, Kim Garcia, Lisa LaJoie



## We'll be Well-Represented at the Snowball Derby

**December 4-6**—As mentioned in last month's newsletter, a contingent of club members will be making the trip "up north" to the Snowball Derby at Pensacola's Five Flags Speedway December 4-6. Glen Carter, John Angiolo, Jerry Conkle, Lou Palmer, and Gerry Hafer, along with "The Ringmaster" Jim Hedlund, are making final preparations for an early-morning departure next Friday, so there will be a nice array of yellow shirts in the stands for the Snowflake 100 on Saturday and the Snowball Derby on Sunday. And to make matters even sweeter, our club logo will be carried on two cars set to compete: the 07 of Corey LaJoie (pictured at right) and the 11 of Orlando's David Rogers. David, of course, will be making his 31st start in the Derby, putting him just one shy of the all-time leader in Derby starts (Charles "Red" Farmer). Stay tuned for a full report in the December newsletter.



## 2015 Governor's Cup 200 Weekend

**November 20**—The weather was perfect, the racing was superb, the scoreboard was working, and the Governor was there...what more could you ask for on a late-fall **Sunday** afternoon? A handful of club members made it over to New Smyrna Speedway on November 14th & 15th for the 2015 edition of Governor's Cup weekend, and it was a blast. In the Saturday night event for Open Wheel Modifieds, we witnessed Josh Todd in Dick Anderson's No. 7 ("our car") put on a clinic for the 25-car field, qualifying 3rd, starting 6th, and taking (and keeping) the lead on lap 4, bagging the \$7,500 winner's purse. Returning on Sunday for the Super Late Model race for the Governor's Cup, we saw an incredible field of 40 cars slug it out (only 12 were left standing at the end) for the trophy and \$15,000. Wisconsin's Ty Majeski, a 20-year old star who's blazing a path to future stardom, took the honors with a dominant performance.

An absolutely great two days of racing in Central Florida, and here are some shots from the event:



From left: Dick Anderson and Josh Todd (center) celebrating with Circle Track Magazine officials (note club Hall of Famer Bob Bolles at right); Club members greeting Florida Governor Rick Scott before the race; Eventual Governor's Cup 200 winner Ty Majeski being briefed by fellow Wisconsinite John Angiolo before the drop of the green.



## Less Than 2 Months Till the Ninth Annual Hall of Fame Event

**January 23**—Get your ticket! 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	Mike and Kenny Brewer
Merle Bettenhausen	Tony Kennea
Paul Vitrano	Chuck Kidwell
Charles Poindexter	Ford Easton
Jim "Jimbo" Chadwick	Larry Moore
"Dynamite" Dave Dion	Art "Fireball" Fehrman
David Rogers	Jim O'Connor

**Keynote Speaker**  
 Rep. Bill Posey, U.S. Congress (Florida 8<sup>th</sup> 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 Chef's of Napoli  
 Pulled pork, pulled chicken, sides, tea and coffee will be served.  
 BYO for other liquid refreshment.

RSVP - Janine Woodsford, [ja9wacn@gmail.com](mailto: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	<a href="http://Auburndalespeedway.net">Auburndalespeedway.net</a>
Bronson Speedway	Archer	352-486-4998	<a href="http://Bronsonspeedway.net">Bronsonspeedway.net</a>
Bubba Raceway Park	Ocala (Zuber)	352-622-9400	<a href="http://Bubbaracewaypark.com">Bubbaracewaypark.com</a>
Citrus County Speedway	Inverness	352-726-9339	<a href="http://Citruscountyspeedway.com">Citruscountyspeedway.com</a>
Desoto Speedway	Bradenton	941-748-3171	<a href="http://Desotospeedway.com">Desotospeedway.com</a>
East Bay Raceway Park	Tampa (Gibsonston)	813-677-7223	<a href="http://Eastbayracewaypark.com">Eastbayracewaypark.com</a>
Marion County Speedway	Ocala	352-812-3922	<a href="http://Marioncountyspeedway.com">Marioncountyspeedway.com</a>
New Smyrna Speedway	Samsula	386-427-4129	<a href="http://Newsmyrnaspeedway.org">Newsmyrnaspeedway.org</a>
Original Speedway Park	Fruitland Park	352-348-4336	<a href="http://Speedwaypark.biz">Speedwaypark.biz</a>
Orlando Speedworld	Bithlo	407-568-1367	<a href="http://Orlandospeedworld.org">Orlandospeedworld.org</a>
Putnam County Speedway	Satsuma	386-649-6969	<a href="http://Putnamcountyspeedway.org">Putnamcountyspeedway.org</a>
Showtime Speedway	Pinellas Park	727-561-9646	<a href="http://Showtimespeedway.us">Showtimespeedway.us</a>
Volusia Speedway Park	De Leon Springs	386-985-4402	<a href="http://Sportsvolusia.com">Sportsvolusia.com</a>

(Note: It's our understanding that Citrus County Speedway will not re-open until after the March Fair event.)

## Prediction Row—2015 Edition



Team Ivey dominated the Chase segment, with Darren logging 3 wins in the playoffs and collecting a 43 point margin over the next-closest point total. Meanwhile, Tina bagged a pair of winning predictions to take second in this year's competition. With Darren's commanding display of racing knowledge, the Ivey household will have the honor of viewing the magnificent Prediction Row trophy for a full year.

Special thanks for another highly successful and continuously interesting competition go to Silky Meegan for her dedication to the race-by-race posting of predictions and the calculation of standings throughout the year. Likewise, a shout-out goes to Nick Feely and his associates at The Villages Daily Sun for their role in showcasing our panelists throughout the racing season, and to Mike Anderson for ensuring up-to-date information for members via our club website.

Recruiting for panelists to staff the 2016 edition of Prediction Row has already begun. This is an opportunity for 12 members to apply their prognostication skills in a vibrant club project, and to enjoy the heady spirit of competition. Besides, you could wind up with the trophy on display in your home, and you could earn bragging rights in the club and among your friends and neighbors.

## Ricky Anderson—A Third-Generation Champion



On October 31, the 15-year old racer from Wildwood put his name in Citrus County's record books as the 2015 Super Late Model Champion, logging two feature wins in the five-race season and compiling a 31-point margin over second place Jonathan Appleby. Anderson's two wins came back-to-back earlier in the month, following runner-up finishes in the first two races in the series. His average finishing position (1.6) far outpaced any of the regular challengers in the field of 23 drivers.

Ricky, of course, is the son of Florida standout driver and former NASCAR competitor Wayne Anderson, and grandson of legendary short track driver and club godfather Dick Anderson (a.k.a. "King of the Florida Short Tracks"). Randy Anderson, Ricky's brother, also competed sporadically in the Super Late Model ranks this year at Citrus County Speedway, finishing 10<sup>th</sup> in the points standings. Wayne Anderson competed once in 2015, bag-

ging a win in the season opener and finishing 12<sup>th</sup> in the final points standings.

With a substantial points lead going in to the final race, Ricky realized he'd only need to start the event to clinch the championship. Dropping to the back and just staying out of trouble is what some drivers might have done, but Ricky's an Anderson, and Andersons compete. So, from his sixth starting position, he moved up to second place by lap 3 of the 25-lap event, and mounted several strong challenges to overtake leader and eventual winner Tommy Schnader, falling short by half a car length. Brother Randy was also in the hunt throughout the event, finishing a close third.

Prior to the race, parental pride was evident in the Anderson pit, although mom Laurie Anderson revealed that she still has some nervousness when the green flag drops. "He is my youngest," she pointed out, "and you always worry about the baby." Dad was more level about it, reporting that Ricky's driving skills are developing well as a result of the experience he's acquired on the short tracks, especially the 3/8<sup>th</sup> mile Citrus County Speedway track. "It's a bull ring," Wayne said, "and stuff happens fast here. It's a better way to build reflexes and instincts than on the bigger tracks."

## 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)

## Club does well with food and sock drive

**November 4**—Once again, our club members answered the call for a food drive to benefit local pantries and the donation of socks and blankets as part of the "Blanket Orlando 4" project. A total of 10 cartons of food were delivered to the Christian Food Pantry in Leesburg, while nine cartons of socks and an assortment of blankets were dropped off at Larry & Gigi Croom's home for transport to the Lake Ivanhoe event on November 20. Gigi is expected to join us at our December 2 meeting to brief us on the 2015 "Blanket Orlando" event and share plans for a repeat of this program in 2016.



## Conkle's Corner...

If you weren't with us at New Smyrna Speedway for the 2015 Governor's Cup 200, you missed a great event. Sunday afternoon short track racing at its best, with 40 cars on the half mile beatin and bangin for 200 laps. As an added bonus, we got to meet the Governor, who actually came looking for us to get a picture taken with the "yellow shirts."



So, we can all take a break from NASCAR for a few weeks, until pre-season testing starts in January. I don't know what you may have thought about the Chase, but it did give my guy—Jeff Gordon—a shot at going out a champion. He didn't quite make it, but he still went out performing like one!

Now, for the lighter side...

I'm a senior, and this occurred at a Mountain Co-op store when I purchased ammo there yesterday. I was paying for my purchase, when the cashier pointed and said, "Strip down, facing me." I immediately made a mental note to complain to the National Rifle Association about the gun control wackos running amuck in this country, but I did just as she had instructed.

When the hysterical shrieking and alarms finally subsided, I found out that she was referring to how I should place my credit card in the card-reader. After I pulled my pants up they asked me to shop online in the future.

They need to make their instructions to us seniors a little clearer. I still don't think I looked that bad.

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### Understanding Baseball

This is a game played by two teams—one out, the other in. The one that's in sends players out, one at a time, to see if they can get in before they get out. If they get out before they get in, they come in, but it doesn't count. If they get in before they get out it does count.

When the ones out get three outs from the ones in before they get in without being out, the team that's out comes in and the team in goes out to get those going in out before they get in without being out.

When both teams have been in and out nine times the game is over. The team with the most in without being out before coming in wins unless the ones in are equal. In which case, the last ones in go out to get the ones in out before they get in without being out. The game will end when each team has the same number of ins out but one team has more in without being out before coming in.