



The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club

Special Edition Newsletter

Hall of Fame—Class of 2013

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Class of 2013

(Row 1, from left: Bobby Brack, George Wagner, Rick Schmidt, Gerri Prusko & Bill John. Row 2, from left: Gary Gourley, Devin McLeod, Mark Lutes & David Vanderwall, Elaine Harrold & Jane Route. Row 3: from left: Jake Perkins, John Peters, Gary Laplant, Dora Thorne.

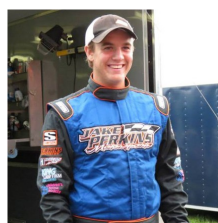


Our 2013 Hall of Fame Inductees

January 11—Our Hall of Fame took another major leap forward on Saturday, January 11 with the induction of 15 new representatives from a variety of motorsports and general car-related areas. As has been our tradition, these great ambassadors are honored for their contributions to the activities we take pleasure in, and most importantly for their willingness to spend time with us and share their stories.

Induction of the “Class of 2013” brings the total membership in our Hall of Fame to 92. In introducing the new inductees, former Crew Chief Gerry Hafer invited attendees to take a close look at the names inscribed on the trophy, remarking that they represent a major slice of motorsports history, from NAS-CAR to NHRA, from stock car racing to sprint car racing, from airplane racing to sports car racing. And if you missed the trophy at the January 11 event, you can see it in the lobby at National Parts Depot in Ocala, where it will be on display until next year’s induction.

Here’s a quick rundown on our newest members, the “Class of 2013,” and check the next few pages for a little bit of history about these great folks.



2013 Hall of Fame Keynoter—Tony Modica



Tony is the host of the "Tony Modica Show" afternoon sports talk show at Sports Radio 930, Jacksonville FL, owned by Clear Channel Media. He launched his on-air career as a local weather reporter, moving to Clear Channel career in 1998 as a Traffic Reporter in Tampa. In 2011 made the jump into sports radio.

Now in his 24th year as a race announcer, Tony has become a force in motorsports broadcasting. In 2013, he called over 12,000 laps of racing, covering a variety of racing venues from Stock Cars, to Karts, to Monster Trucks. His talents have graced many famous Florida tracks, including Daytona International Speedway and Miami Homestead Speedway, as well as many local short tracks and kart tracks. Tony continues to appear in national and local TV commercials and radio voiceovers, and you may have seen him in motion pictures (for example, "Armageddon").

In addition to his radio broadcasting talents, Tony is expecting to release his first book this summer based on his life.

On hand for the event was Meta Minton, Editor and Producer of Villages-News.com, a premier source of daily updates on major happenings in and around The Villages. Her January 12 update entry featured the following recap of Tony's keynote address:

Race car drivers can be bitter foes on the track. But then can also be a friend in deed when a friend is in need. That's how Sports Radio 930 personality Tony Modica summed it up when speaking at the Hall of Fame induction ceremony of The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club on Saturday night at Colony Cottage Recreation Center. "I mean look at it. You have Bobby Brack sitting next to Dick Anderson," Modica said. "It's freaking me out."

Brack, a South Florida racing legend, was one of the inductees. Known as "The Chief," his trademark #57 race car was a fixture on the Southern circuit for more than three decades. His races at the Palm Beach Fairgrounds Speedway are legendary, and his on-track performance led to him acting as a stunt driving double in the 1967 biker cult film, Wild Rebels.

Wildwood resident and the driving force behind The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club, Anderson, was known around the state by various nicknames, "Tricky Dicky" or "King of the Short Tracks." "These guys used to holler and cuss at each other," Modica said as the two former rivals sat side by side the audience. "And now look at them." (In photo at right, Dick Anderson, left, and Bobby Brack chuckle at Modica's characterization of their epic relationship on Florida's race tracks.)



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Follow Tony @ <https://www.facebook.com/tonymodica> and <https://twitter.com/TonyModica2>.
You can listen to the "Tony Modica Show" M-F 4:00-7:00 pm EST @ <http://www.sportsradio930.com/>.

The Class of 2013

On the next few pages, we'll give you a recap of this year's inductees into The Villages Motor Racing Hall of Fame. With the addition of this "Class of 2013," total membership in our "Hall" now stands at 92. We expect this number to continue to grow as we bring additional racing-oriented personalities into club meetings to share their experiences with us. It's one of the ways we have of keeping our members informed on the wide variety of racing venues, and it's just one of those things that makes our club great!

Bobby Brack



Bobby Brack is a South Florida racing legend. Known as "The Chief", his trademark #57 race car was a fixture on the Southern circuit for over 3 decades. His races at the Palm Beach Fairgrounds Speedway are legendary, and his on-track performance led to him acting as a stunt driving double in the biker cult film, *Wild Rebels* (1967). As a NASCAR Winston Cup competitor, he had raced at such tracks as Daytona, Atlanta, Charlotte, Rockingham, and Talladega, and recorded a 12th place finish in the 1971 Firecracker 400 at Daytona. Bobby has achieved acclaim in the sport of fishing, and his son Steven Brack followed in his footsteps. Steve raced for a number of years and like his father achieved Championship winning status.

Bobby has been inducted into the Hialeah Speedway Hall of Fame and the Palm Beach Fairgrounds Speedway Hall of Fame, and holds the distinction of winning at 14 different race tracks in Florida. Bobby is a native of South Florida, and he and his wife Pat reside in Miami-Dade County, where he is still very much active in sport fishing.

George Wagner



For our February meeting, we turned to one of our own and welcomed George Wagner as our speaker. As many of you know, George competed from 1962 to 1982 at many of the great tracks of the Northeast, like Islip, Freeport, West Hampton, and Riverhead, enjoying the opportunity to race against many of the greatest names in area stock car racing, like Charlie Jarzombek, Richie Evans, Tom Baldwin, Greg Sacks, and, of course, Buzzie Reutimann. George shared an incredible string of stories about the "old days" of racing in the 60s, 70s, and early 80s, including a slew of tales about the rougher side of the sport as it was "back in the day."

To say George was successful would be an understatement. He was recognized as NASCAR Modified Sportsman Champion at Islip Speedway in 1968 and Co-Champion at Freeport Speedway in 1975. These days, George stays involved through his son George III who is an active pit crew member, and his two grandsons, both of whom are involved in NASCAR racing, one with Joe Gibbs Racing, the other with Kyle Busch Racing in the Truck Series.

George's "day job" for many years was with the Nassau County (NY) Highway Patrol, where he retired in 1991 as (no surprise) their Speed Expert assigned to testify in vehicle homicide trials.

The Class of 2013 (continued)

Rick Schmidt



In March, we welcomed National Parts Depot's Chief Operating Officer Rick Schmidt to share the company's amazing history, and to give us an opportunity to have a real, honest-to-goodness "Car Guy" with us for the evening. Rick gave us an extensive account of NPD's journey from a home business to a nationally-known auto parts distributor and premier supplier of concours-correct parts and accessories for such All-American brands as Thunderbird, Mustang, Camaro, Chevelle, Firebird, Trans Am, El Camino, and Ford Truck, with facilities in Michigan, California, and North Carolina complementing their main operation in Ocala.

Rick spent much of his time with us describing the incredible street-ready collection of more than a hundred classic cars housed in NPD's Ocala warehouse where, as many of you know, our Hall of Fame trophy is on display year-round. NPD management extended the offer to us to display the trophy for us two years ago, and we gratefully accepted their hospitality. After all, what better place could a motorhead group find to display its signature item?



Gerri Prusko & Bill John



In April, we ventured in to the area of boat racing, with the husband-wife team of Gerri Prusko and Bill John joining us to give us an overview of the activities at the Classic Race Boat Association based in Tavares. Gerri and Bill gave us a high-powered glimpse into yet another form of motorsports, and even brought along a visual aid—their 635 horsepower vintage race boat "My Precious" (Gerri, of course is the owner/captain, and Bill is the "riding mechanic"). Gerri and Bill



gave us an update on the variety of events their group hosts down at Wootton Park in Tavares, and invited us to join them for either their monthly "fun runs" or their bigger regatta events. We understand that a few of our members did venture down there for the Fall Thunder Regatta event.



The Class of 2013 (continued)

David Gourley



In May, we had the great fortune to recruit a representative from Sebring International Raceway, a place where only a few of us have been but where many of us would like to go. David Gourley, Sebring's Assistant Director of Marketing, made the trip to The Villages and gave us a complete picture of one of the country's most enduring and best known racing venues and brought us up-to-date on NASCAR's 2012 acquisition of Sebring. He also covered the new series titled United Sports Car Racing set to debut in 2014, and presented a video recap of the 2013 "12 Hours of Sebring" event.

In addition to all of that, he brought along his "company car" for our Corvette lovers to drool over at intermission.



Devin McLeod



Our June 5 meeting featured a visit from Devin McLeod, a rising young star on the Florida racing circuit. As is the case with most of the younger drivers these days, at age 19 Devin had already compiled an 11-year racing resume, starting in Champ Karts in 2002, then moving to Mini-Cup cars in 2006, then Legends Cars in 2009, Pro Late Models in 2012, and Super Late Models in 2013. He also races Open Wheel Modified at a number of Florida tracks.

His honors so far include multiple championships in the Jr. Sportsman Kart ranks, a Mini-Cup Pro Division Championship, multiple Legends series Championships, and a Florida Pro Late Model Challenge Championship.

2013 was a big year for Devin, starting off with feature win at New Smyrna's World Series in only his second time in a Super Late Model. This win was made even more significant by the level of talent in the field, including former NASCAR Nationwide competitor Stephen Wallace, Camping World Truck series competitor Joey Coulter, and a host of Florida standout drivers like Steve Nasse, Anthony Sergi, and the wily veteran David Rogers. By the way, Devin finished second to David Rogers in the opening night feature, and logged two more top-ten finishes during the 9-day series, so it wasn't a fluke!



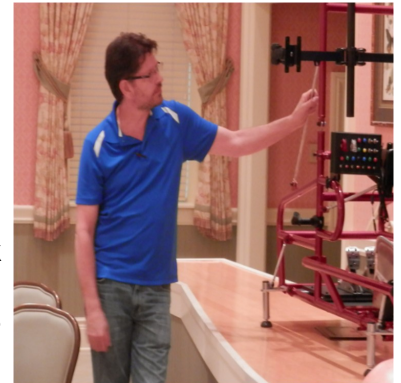
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The Class of 2013 (continued)

David Vanderwall, Mark Lutes



Always on the lookout for new and different topics, we happened onto new club member David Vanderwall (left) and his passion for iRacing. After convincing him that he needed to share his passion with us, we were even more surprised to find that David was in fact getting ready to take possession of a brand new, major league iRacing rig from Fast Track Sims in Atlanta, Georgia. But it gets better... David went on to coordinate the delivery of his new toy with the designer and builder of the unit, Mark Lutes (right) of Fast Track Sims.



What resulted from all this was a fantastic display at our August meeting of David's new unit, and an equally fantastic explanation of iRacing and how it takes place. We were even able to talk Devin McLeod (an accomplished iRacer) to return to check it out. All-in-all, another great night for the club!



Elaine Harrold, Jane Route

In September, two former residents of Speedway, Indiana joined us to share the inside story of what goes on each May during the running of the Indianapolis 500. Speedway, Indiana, of course is actually where the 500 is held...not Indianapolis.

Through their stories and accounts of personal encounters with racing legends through the years, Villages residents Elaine Harrold and Jane Route gave us a feel for what it was like to live so near the famed Speedway and to breathe the rarefied air surrounding the world's most famous racing venue. One of the more fascinating stories was Jane's sharing of her experience having Jeff Gordon as a grade school student.



The Class of 2013 (continued)

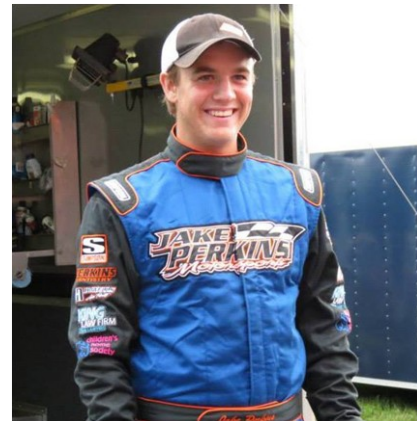
Jake Perkins



Our October meeting gave us an opportunity to meet another future motorsports star, Jake Perkins of Ocala. At a mere 16 years of age, "No Brake Jake" has compiled an impressive 8-year racing resume, from his 2005 Novice Championship at Original Speedway Park to a string of local and state-level championship runs in the Bandolero and Legends ranks. At age 14 he stepped up to the Super Late Model level, earning "Rookie of the Year" in the Florida United Promoters Series. He backed up his rookie year honors with a 4th place finish in the 2012 FUPS standings.

In the Fall of 2013, Jake's race team took a major step forward, tabbing veteran NASCAR spotter and Cup-level insider Shawn Reutimann (also a TVMRFC Hall of Famer) as Crew Chief, a move that is likely to pay enormous dividends down the road.

In addition to his on-track performance, Jake is a student at Belleview High School where he carries a 4.9 GPA.



John Peters



In November, we re-visited another famed piece of Americana—the Lincoln Highway, but this time the visit was focused on celebrating its centennial. Villages resident and Antique Automobile Club of America member John Peters gave us a riveting account of his personal trip on the 3389 mile highway, sharing a fantastic selection of photographs of vintage gas stations, barns and stops along the way.

The subject was natural for John, since his favorite destination is the open road, preferably away from the Interstate Highway System. With a strong interest in drag racing that began in his high school years, John easily qualifies as "one of us"—motorheads, that is, and the 1959 Cadillac Sedan de Ville he inherited from his grandfather is further testimony. In fact, the Cadillac is what he used for his trip on the Lincoln Highway (part of it, anyway).



The Class of 2013 (continued)

Gary Laplant



Citrus County Speedway is considered to be our “home track” and on any given Saturday night you’re likely to find a group of “yellow shirts” clustered somewhere around the start/finish line grandstands. We try to stay close to the action over there—the racing action and the track operations—and were fortunate to have the new owner, Gary Laplant, visit us at our December meeting. Gary, a former racer himself, gave us a rundown on the plans for 2014, as well as a preview of the scheduled events throughout the year.

Gary also pledged the use of the track’s two Hornet Class cars again this year, so this fall we’ll be organizing the third annual “Hornet Classic.” Stay tuned! Gary also approved the placement of our club logo on the wall between the 1st and 2nd turns at CCS, so we’ll have an even greater presence over there in 2014.



Dora Thorne



The last—and clearly not the least—motorsports personality to visit us in 2013 was a charming Street Stock racer from Floral City, Florida. At the young age of 52, and with a mere four years of racing experience under her belt, Dora Thorne has distinguished herself as an accomplished driver. She’s no stranger to the winner’s circle at Citrus County Speedway, and in fact was the Street Stock champion in 2012. She’s the first American-born member of a Scottish family, and is a former tree trimmer, utility lineworker, veterinarian technician, and undefeated competitive mud wrestler.

In addition to Street Stocks, Dora’s racing resume includes Demolition Derby competition and Figure-8 School Bus racing, and she’s considering stepping in Street Stock Figure-8 competition in 2014. Noted for her refreshing outlook and her willingness

to openly share her thoughts, Dora summed up her racing experience this way, “It’s one of the most exhilarating, most liberating things I’ve ever done in my life.”



Tom Horrmann Named Glen Carter Crew Chief Award Winner



Club founder and past president Glen Carter presented the 2013 "Glen Carter Crew Chief Award" to Tom Horrmann, another outstanding contributor to the club. Glen stressed that it's truly an honor to have his name as a permanent part of this ongoing award recognizing team members who make major contributions to our success as a group. So far, we've given this recognition to Gerry Hafer, Wendy Touchette, Wayne Nolan, Mike Touchette, and Silky Meegan, all of whom you undoubtedly recognize as individuals who have been instrumental in our accomplishments and who have served our "pit crew" well.

Once again this year we're pleased to present this award to one of the solid "behind-the-scenes" people that we've relied on through the years to get things done. He's another one who's always there, who's always willing to pitch in and do what needs to be done, and on top of that does a steady job of keeping our finances in order. Many of our newer members recall him as the guy who harasses them to get their picture taken for their moment of fame in our newsletter.

Syd Baker Crowned as 2013 Prediction Row Champ!



A new era of Prediction Row begins with the awarding of the new, official Prediction Row trophy. Syd Baker, the first predictor to win this prize, can proudly display this trophy accompanied by official bragging rights until a new champion is crowned

next year. The names of these previous champs are also inscribed: "Big" Dave Bockman, Silky Meegan, Bill Tharp, Alan Stone, and Wayne Nolan. We thank club Godfather, Dick Anderson, for donating this beautiful trophy from his private museum collection in Wildwood.

Beginning in 2014 we have more space in The Daily Sun to showcase our expertise with more insightful and knowledgeable reasons for our predictions. Our club has 36 weeks to not only generate conversation about racing but produce a lot of trash talk as well.



A Special Award



This edition of our Hall of Fame Induction event was the seventh in our club's history, and each of these events has carved a place in our collective memories. One of the common denominators in all seven, though, is a factor that doesn't really get seen by attendees...only the results are clearly observable. The common denominator is the behind-the-scenes careful planning and logistical coordination provided quietly and expertly by **Barb Nolan**. Without her guidance, the event would be thrown together by a bunch of motorheads, and who knows what would happen! In recognition of her tremendous efforts, her second-in-command (husband Wayne) was presented a floral bouquet. Barb was unable to attend, but we understand Wayne was able to get the flowers home safely!

Scenes From The Big Event



More Scenes From The Big Event

