



# The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club

## Special Edition Newsletter

Hall of Fame—Class of 2016

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### Class of 2016

(**Row 1**, from left: Rep. Bill Posey, Jaime Smith, Tim Ducat, Alan Sheppard, Rep. Daniel Webster. **Row 2**, from left: The Trophy; Camron Ray, Tom Ward, Terry Cordle, Roger Edmondson. **Row 3**, from left: Todd Morey, Josh Todd, Bruce Allen Griffin)

**Check out their individual bios on pages 3-7!**



### Our 2016 Hall of Fame Inductees

**January 21**—The tenth edition of our club's Hall of Fame Night was highlighted by the induction of 12 members of the motorsports' elite into our ranks. 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 2016" brings the total membership in our Hall of Fame to 136. In introducing the new inductees, Club President Tony Kennea 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 NASCAR to NHRA, from stock car racing to sprint car racing, from airplane racing to sports car racing, and from Monster Trucks to Speedboat and jet ski racing. And if you missed the trophy at the January 21 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.



## 2016 Hall of Fame Keynoter—Dargan Watts



This year, we continued the tradition started back in 2011 with the addition of a Keynote Speaker to our Hall of Fame Agenda, and since that first year we've had five extraordinary motorsports personalities fill that role for us. It started with the great Marvin Panch, and continued through the years with Tony Modica, Bobby Brack, Eddie Roche, and last year's address by Congressman Bill Posey.

As you can see, an extraordinary slate of speakers who have helped make this annual event a great night for our group. And we've kept the bar high again this year with Ocala, Florida's **Dargan Watts**, a gentleman who is truly one of the great forces in recording and retaining the history of motorsports, particularly Stock Car Racing. In his early days, he was a race car driver, car builder, and car owner (his driving career was relatively brief...and he shared an amusing anecdote about the brevity of his stint as a Street Stock driver). He was also known as a hands-on guy, serving as a pit crew member on a NASCAR team, and even stepping in on occasion as a flag man.

But the bulk of Dargan's contributions to motorsports came in the way of media and managerial involvement, first as a track photographer, and later as a track manager and promoter. In the media world, he's worked in radio, TV, and print reporting, at one point in his career being responsible for generating 18 separate racing-related news releases each week. He also produced multiple weekly racing columns for newspapers, all the while handling Public Relations work for four separate race tracks.

Outside of motorsports, Dargan has been active as a college football player, as a coach of youth and JV baseball, and as a high school football scout. In the community, he is involved in groups like Jaycees, Optimist Club, the Citrus Bowl Stadium Committee, and the "Give Kids the World Village" in Florida. As a member of the United Methodist Church, he's served in a number of leadership roles, leading multiple mission trips and flood relief trips domestically.

By the way, he did do some non-sports related things, including a career as a district sales manager for a national company supplying products to racing teams, and he founded a company specializing in supplying products to the hospitality industry.

Dargan currently is one of the key organizers of the annual Historic North Turn Legends Beach/Road Course Parade, scheduled again this year for Saturday February 18 as the kick-off event for Daytona Speedweeks. He also presently manages five separate racing-related Facebook pages, and administers four other racing-related websites.

So, as noted earlier, we've kept the bar high again this year with yet another great keynoter, Mr. Dargan Watts.





## The Class of 2016

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 2016," total membership in our "Hall" now stands at 134. 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!

### Bill Posey



Last year's Keynoter for our Hall of Fame event was Rep. Bill Posey from Florida's 8<sup>th</sup> district, a Co-Chair of the Congressional Motorsports Caucus and member of the Congressional Auto Racing Caucus. Bill is in his fifth term in the House of Representatives, serving on the House's Financial Services Committee and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. Bill carries the nickname "Our car guy in Congress," a tag that signifies his many years of stand-out stock car racing performances in Florida. He's also raced vintage cars and is skilled at the restoration of classic cars. With winning performances at many Central Florida tracks, like Orlando Speedworld, New Smyrna, Columbia, Hialeah, and East Bay Raceway Park, and with substantial experience as a racing promoter, this acclaimed "wheelman" is uniquely qualified to represent the sport in Washington.

### Jamie Smith



Our January speaker, Jamie Smith, helped launch our 2016 meeting schedule with an entertaining review of the making of the film "Harold & Lorna Wilson, World Water Speed Champions," the story of the record-setting Canadian Unlimited Hydroplane known worldwide as Miss Canada IV. As Manager of the BG Vintage Racing Team and a Director of the Classic Race Boat Association, Jamie was integral to the restoration project and shared with us his detailed knowledge of the world of speed boat racing and Canada's rich heritage in this dimension of motorsports. Jamie is a Past President of the Antique and Classic Boat Society, Toronto and a past Director of Antique and Classic Boat Society International. Since his retirement he has written a book on Wooden Boats, and he's consulted for the Muskoka Steamship and Historical Society's philanthropic programs, in addition to the awesome task of recapping the chronological history of

Miss Canada IV. Jamie lives in Bracebridge, Ontario, Canada where he is a Director of Muskoka Community Futures, a community based, not-for-profit organization promoting economic development.

## The Class of 2016 (continued)

### Tim Ducat



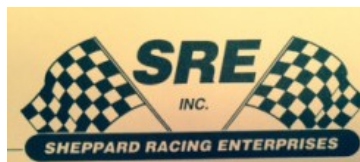
Local racer Tim Ducat joined us in February to explore the incredible world of Personal Watercraft competition. As a 20-year veteran of the sport, Tim is well-known in local, national, and international racing circles, having achieved a host of local and statewide titles to go along with his world champion status in multiple competitive classes, and this year competed in a variety of competitions, including the King's Cup competition in Thailand. In his career, he's been ranked nationally in the top three in his competition class, and four times worldwide in the top five. He's achieved recognition as a Florida State Champion, a Closed-Course World Champion, a Slalom World Champion, and Broward Motorsports World Champion in the Runabout 800 Superstock class. He is a 2001 graduate of Belleview (FL) High School.

### Alan Sheppard



Alan Sheppard served 15 years as a NASCAR technical and safety inspector, a sideline occupation he undertook in addition to operating his own business, Sheppard Racing Enterprises, formerly in Rockford, Illinois and now in DeLand, Florida. Alan is also a former race car driver, competing in ARCA, USAC, and the Winston Racing Series, running cars that he built and maintained. Earlier this year, he was tapped by ARCA to be an official in that series, and is now serving as their Lead Inspector. Alan gave us a true "inside" perspective on the intricacies of stock car racing's technical inspection process, sharing some war stories as a long-time NASCAR official affectionately known in the garage area as "Inspector Gadget" (well, it's probably not always affectionate...and sometimes he's referred to simply as "Gadget"). Alan also works with local drivers

in stock car set-up and maintenance, and specializes in tool and part manufacturing services.

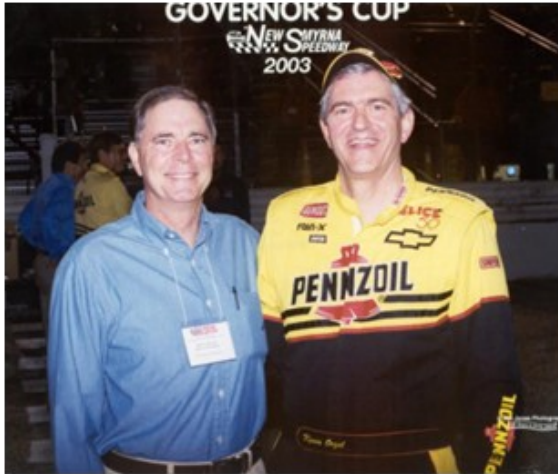




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## The Class of 2016 (continued)

### Daniel Webster



For the second time in 2016, we were fortunate to have a sitting Congressman join us to share some insights into motorsports. Rep. Daniel Webster, representing Florida's 11<sup>th</sup> District, is a member of the Congressional Motorsports Caucus, and is known locally for his sponsorship of a vintage car racing series. He's served as Grand Marshall for the Florida Governor's Cup 200, and serves on the House of Representatives' Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. In Washington, Rep. Webster is a co-sponsor of "The Recognizing the Protection of Motorsports Act of 2016 (RPM Act)," introduced to block the EPA from an attempt at regulating stock car racing.

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### Camron Ray



Our July meeting brought us in touch with the General Manager of the newly re-born Citrus County Speedway. At age 18, this third-generation racer stepped into the challenge of managing and promoting a racing enterprise, first by overseeing the massive renovation project leading up to the track's July 16 re-opening, and then by assuming responsibility for managing promotional tasks and race-day operations at the Speedway (our home track). Camron's behind-the-wheel experience started in go-karts at our "other home track," Original Speedway Park in Fruitland Park, and progressed to Legends, Pure Stocks, and Street Stocks before moving in to the Open Wheel Modified and Monster Truck ranks.

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### Tom Ward



For the first time in a few years, the National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) took center stage at one of our meetings. Our August 3 meeting featured remarks from NHRA competitor Tom Ward of nearby Weirsdale, Florida. Ward, at age 76, is still a regular competitor in the NHRA ranks, and is best known for his 1984 Stock Class victory at the Gatornationals against a field of more than 80 rivals.

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## The Class of 2016 (continued)

### Terry Cordle



Our next inductee, Terry Cordle, is known in racing circles by the handle "Logistics 1", a nickname that comes from his ability to handle a seemingly infinite list of behind-the-scenes tasks that make Daytona International Speedway's events come off so smoothly. His proficiency at supporting and assisting the Speedway's Emergency Services and Safety personnel, as well as his skills in conducting corporate-type show-and-tell tours between events, have made him an indispensable part Daytona's army of field-level operatives. In his ten years working with the Speedway, he's pretty much done it all...literally, since he actually started as a cook in the hospitality squad.

### Roger Edmondson



Roger Edmondson is a 25-year veteran of race series management and promotion, and is the former Chairman, Managing Member, and CEO of the AMA Pro Racing series, headquartered in Daytona. Roger is former President and CEO of the Road Racing Drivers Club, and the former president (and first employee) of the Grand-American Road Racing Association established in 1999. He served as Grand-Am president during the organization's 2008 acquisition by NASCAR Holdings, Inc. and helped promote crossover appearances between the two racing groups. Roger's resume also includes his orchestration of the Daytona Motorsports Group's purchase of AMA Pro Racing from the American Motorcycle Association in 2008.

### Todd Morey



Todd Morey joined us for our November meeting and introduced us to the wild world of Monster Trucks, a venue that he both promotes and drives in. He's as comfortable being interviewed as he is conducting an interview, as evidenced by his extensive experience as a NASCAR track announcer at Charlotte Motor Speedway and Atlanta Motor Speedway and his occasional stints on ESPN, the ARCA Radio Network, or locally as a Speed 51 radio announcer. Todd broke into motorsports as an announcer covering local dirt track events, but his resume includes experience wheeling race cars on dirt and asphalt in everything from Karts to Late Models. He currently drives the "Bounty Hunter" Monster Truck for the "2Xtreme Racing Team." And just to show you an example of Todd's diversity, he's noted for being the creator of a unique brand of repair tape called X-Flex crash repair tape, now a staple in garages in the NASCAR, ARCA and Australia V-8 Supercar Series.



## The Class of 2016 (continued)

### Josh Todd



(Photo credit—Richard Golardi)

Josh Todd is a 16-year racing veteran, starting out in go-karts at Lakeland Speedway at age 6 and eventually moving to the Street Stock class at Auburndale and Desoto Speedways. At age 15, he made the jump into open wheel modifieds, where he quickly distinguished himself as a pretty sharp wheelman...sharp enough to catch the eye of our club's Godfather, Dick Anderson.

For the past five years, Josh has been driving for Dick, and for the past several years has been the primary driver on Dick's No. 7, often referred to as the prettiest (and fastest) car on the track. Together, they've teamed up to be the "car to beat" whenever they unload, racking up dozens of major wins—including 14 in a row at one point. And many of us have had the good fortune of watching Josh put on some of the most awesome displays of driving skill.

### Bruce Allen Griffin



Bruce Allen Griffin's racing resume features 10 years of competition in Central and South Florida, on tracks that we're familiar with, like New Smyrna Speedway and Orlando Speedworld, and on tracks that we've only heard about, like Hialeah Speedway and Palm Beach Fairgrounds Speedway. For many years back in the 1970s and 1980s, he raced against the greats of the time, including our own Club Godfather and Hall of Famer Dick Anderson. He campaigned in Thunder Cars, Limited Late Models, and Late Models winning often. One of his most notable accomplishments was a streak of five consecutive feature wins at Hialeah in 1980. Later in his career, Bruce turned his attention to the preservation of South Florida's racing history, and showcases his work on two fantastic websites...Florida Racing Memories and Hialeah Speedway Reunion, both of which you

can view on Facebook. It's a labor of love for Bruce, since he represents a family with a true racing heritage.

# Florida Racing Memories



## Jerry Conkle Named Glen Carter Crew Chief Award Winner



Club founder and past president Glen Carter presented the 2016 "Glen Carter Crew Chief Award" to Jerry Conkle, another outstanding contributor to the club. Glen stressed that it's truly an honor to have his name as a permanent part of this on-going award recognizing team members who make major contributions to our success as a group. So far, this recognition has gone to Gerry Hafer, Wendy Touchette, Wayne Nolan, Mike Touchette, Silky Meegan, Tom Horrmann, Mike Anderson, and Bob and Camille Sherman, so you can see the caliber of the recipients we've chosen and the contributions they've made.

In presenting the award, Glen recalled Jerry's knowledge of Indy 500 history that he shared with us a few years ago. Carter also noted his entertaining "standup comedy" that he brought to our meetings during his tenure as Crew Chief.

## Harry Scheiblin Crowned 2016 Prediction Row Champ!

## Special Awards



Harry Scheiblin earned the honor of displaying our Prediction Row Champion's traveling trophy for a full year. Along with the coveted bragging rights that go along with this incredible display of racing knowledge, Harry will be defending his crown against a new slate of predictors in 2017. The names of these previous champs are also inscribed on the trophy: "Big" Dave Bockman, Silky Meegan, Bill Tharp, Alan Stone, Wayne Nolan, Syd Baker, Shirley Birchwale, and

last year's champion, Darren Ivey. We thank club Godfather Dick Anderson for donating this beautiful trophy from his private museum collection in Wildwood.

The Daily Sun has agreed to carry the race-by-race competition in 2017, so keep an eye out for the competition as it unfolds.

This edition of our Hall of Fame Induction event was the tenth 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 ten of our years, though, are factors that don't really get seen by attendees...only the results are clearly observable.

With that in mind, the club provided recognition to three members whose behind-the-scenes work has continued to enable the club to excel. First, Janine Woodsford was recognized for her incredible work in organizing the logistics for the Hall of Fame event, as well as for assuming responsibility for production of the club's monthly newsletter.

Mike Anderson was also recognized for his tireless compilation of our monthly trips down memory lane throughout 2016, a feat made much more difficult by the fact that wasn't even here for most of it!

Finally, former President/Crew Chief Gerry Hafer was recognized for his work in recruiting an impressive slate of monthly meeting speakers, a task he has been handling since the club's formation a decade ago.





Scenes From The Big Event

