



# The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club

## Special Edition Newsletter

December, 2008

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### Class of 2009

(From Left) Club President Glen Carter, Willie Burkhalter, Dave Colbert, Chuck Burkhalter, Angie Clifton, Matt Bowers, Buzzie Reutimann, Derek Putnam, Mary Anderson, Club Vice President Gerry Hafer. Missing from photo: Donna Davis, Katie Evans, K.P. Jones

### Second Hall of Fame Induction a Night to Remember!



I remember a song from a few years back that started out "Oh, what a night!" It may have been the "Four Seasons," but that's not important. The important thing is that this phrase is about the best way to sum up **The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club's 2008 Holiday Hall of Fame Induction and Awards Ceremony**. I thought our 2007 induction ceremony was spectacular, but this second annual event topped that one by a wide margin. In racing terms, I'd say we put a lap on the field with this one! From the stunning room layout, to the excellent program organization, to the fantastic dinner, to the presentation of well-deserved recognition and awards, to the simple company of our many

friends, it was a night of quality that has become the hallmark of our group of 200+ racing enthusiasts.

It's important to single out the people who went above and beyond the call to make this such an outstanding night. The logistics for the event were handled by an outstanding team headed by Barbara Nolan and Terri Howard, with Wayne Nolan doing his share of the heavy lifting. Of course, we can't say enough about the dazzling performance of our tuxedo-clad Master of Ceremonies Peter Tetrault, nor about Mike Touchette and his team's expert handling of the Colony Cottage Rec Center's room design and layout. Also, as you might

expect, Wendy Touchette's expertise in organizing big events played a major role behind the scenes in lining up many of the special presentations. With respect to the inductee awards, we also need to give a shout to Bob and Camille Sherman for once again producing the wonderful plaques presented to our honorees.

Folks, it was just a great night of teamwork, and a display of the kind of coordination a team like ours needs to continually reach the winner's circle. I've said it before, and I'll say it again: I'm proud to be your crew chief!

*Glen*

## The Class of 2008

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 2008," total membership in our "Hall" now stands at 25. 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!



**DONNA DAVIS** was born on a farm in the Cornhusker State of Nebraska and grew up in a farming family before setting sail for Illinois, Hawaii, and, eventually southern California. She became interested in aviation as a self-preservation measure when she began flying with her employer to various business and recreation destinations. Realizing that she would need to pilot the aircraft in an emergency, she took the plunge and became a licensed pilot in the early 1970's. But, it didn't stop there...once bitten by the airplane bug, she broadened her horizons, hooking up with the 99s, an International Organization of Women Pilots, founded by Amelia Earhart in the 1929 with 99 women in attendance (hence, the group's name). But it didn't stop there either: she bought her first plane in 1975, and with the encouragement of other members of the 99s, entered the wild world of airplane racing. She entered the Palms to

Pines Air Race, Santa Monica, California to Salem, Oregon (an 816 mile event) in 1975, and competed regularly until 1982, finishing as high as second, and logging a long history of absolutely fascinating stories. She still holds her pilot's license, but her flights these days are limited to takeoffs and landings in a golf cart. Through Donna, we got a glimpse of the another form of racing—one where the wheels are only on the ground at the beginning and at the end.



**CHUCK AND WILLIE BURKHALTER** are well-known in Florida's racing circles. Hailing from Groveland and Apopka, both are native Floridians, and come from a family of racing veterans, following the paths of their father, uncle, and older brother. The brothers have competed at most of the tracks in Florida, and also at places like Hickory, Anderson, and North Wilkesboro, racing against drivers like Dale Earnhardt Jr., Rusty Wallace, and others of that level. They have earned a reputation as a formidable team both on and off the track, and have even earned a local nickname—"The Brothers in Black."

As a team, one is a driver and mechanic, one is a car builder and fabrication specialist, and together they have achieved stardom at many local tracks here in north central Florida. With back-to-back track championships at Ocala Speedway in 1998 and 1999, the mere presence of their name in the lineup has brought fear to the hearts of their competitors. In fact, their accomplishments include victories in 24 wins in a span of just 12 weeks and the addition of yet another nickname attached the Burkholder name—"Kings of Ocala."



**EMIL L. (BUZZIE) REUTIMANN** is another Florida native, although his fame extends well beyond his home state. He was born in Zephyrhills, Florida and following in the footsteps of a racing father and a racing uncle, began what would become a 50+-year (and counting) career in racing at the age of 15. Along the way, he won a few races—more than 1200 major events (and also counting), from Florida to Canada—and carved a niche in history as one of the greatest stock car racers ever to hit the track. He is a true racing legend, having been inducted to several major Halls of Fame up and down the east coast, and having received a host of major honors, including for example Hard Clay Magazine's Most Popular Driver and Area Auto Racing News Driver of the Year to go along with modified stock car championships at several race tracks in the northeast. He's won the big ones: the Schaeffer 100, the Eastern States 200, and the Daniel Boone 200, just to name a few.

Some of the career highlights of this famous driver include: building his first car and driving his first race at age 13 at Lakeland's Silver Dollar Speedway (he finished fifth), sharing a race event with his dad at Eau Gallie and winning by 32 laps, his side-by-side finish to win the Eastern States 200 over Will Cagle in 1972, and being featured in an article titled "Elements of Style" by a major racing publication in 1996, again just to name a few.

This gentleman—and we mean that term quite literally—is still racing, still winning, and still enchanting his legions of fans today, and still showing no signs of heading for the pits. He can often be seen at NASCAR events around the country coaching and cheering for his son David in the Sprint Cup #44 entry.

## The Class of 2008 (Continued)



**ANGELICA (ANGIE) CLIFTON** is another Florida native. She was born in Ocala, Florida and, after graduating from University of Florida (where she served for two years as a Cheerleader), launched what would be a 21-year (and counting) career in banking and finance at Wachovia/South Trust. She currently holds the position of vice president in their marketing and community affairs area. Her personal hobbies include boating and traveling...in fact, she'd really like to be in a position where she could earn a living traveling. She has a passion for people and takes enjoyment from making things happen for them, and excels at teaching and coaching people labeled "not expected to succeed" and leading them to success.

A few years ago, Angie and her fiancé, Michael Peters (a 2007 inductee to our Hall of Fame), decided to take a leap of faith and purchased Ocala Speedway, where they work side-by-side as race track operators and promoters. Our club has visited the speedway several times, and has had the opportunity to experience their tremendous hospitality first-hand.



**DAVE COLBERT** is a veteran drag racer from the northeast who launched a long and solid career on the straight strips while still in high school. In the early 1960s, he competed with his 1959 Chevy Impala, powered by a 270 h.p. Corvette engine, and in 1962 he stepped up to a 1962 Chevy 409 and competed in the Super/Stock class at the U.S. National Championships in Indianapolis, Indiana. In 1963, he campaigned and match-raced one of only 36 aluminum fendered Z-11 Chevrolets ever produced. After a mid-1960's stint in the U.S. Navy, he resumed his drag racing career, campaigning a 1968 Chevy Z-28 in the F/Stock class and winning at several national events and holding the National Record in this class. In the 1970's he interrupted his racing career to focus on a business career and to start a family, but he couldn't stay away for long. In 1980, he built a 1969 Chevy Camaro, powered by a 425 hp 427 cubic inch engine to run in the Super Stock/E Automatic class, where he was generally favored to win every event he entered. He won the class that year, and was the 5<sup>th</sup> ranked qualifier out of more than 200 Super Stock entries. In fact, he was Super Stock runner-up at the U.S. Gatorna-

tionals in Gainesville, FL in 1983. He continued his competition through the 1980's, setting National Records in Super Stock/GTA class several times and won Super Stock Eliminator at the Keystone Nationals and the Dutch Classic at Maple Grove Raceway Park in Reading, PA.



**Derek Putnam** was born in West Palm Beach in 1976, and began a racing career at the age of 16. He has been an NHRA competitor for sixteen years, and has accumulated two NHRA Division two championships in his portfolio, along with a runner-up finish for the national title in 2003. He comes by the "need for speed" honestly, following in the footsteps of his father, who is still a competitor in NHRA in his 1967 Camaro at the age of 62. He tagged along with his dad to the races at the age of six, and the rest—as they say—is history.

Derek and his wife Cindy have been married for six and a half years. He has been associated with National Parts Depot in Ocala for the past ten years, and currently serves as a project manager charged with conducting research for NPDs GM car catalog. In addition, he was instrumental in arranging last month's fantastic tour of NPDs vintage and classic car collection up in Ocala—an event that received high marks from all who attended.



## The Class of 2008 (Continued)

**MARY ANDERSON** is truly a veteran of the racing world. She was born in Albany, New York but was raised a Floridian, having moved to Miami at the age of 10. After dating an up-and-coming young local racing star for some time, she eventually married him and began a lifelong commitment to the community of racing. Forty-one years later, she is just as committed to the sport as she was then, and carries her share of the load on a very active (and successful) racing team.



This daring lady brought a classic, feminine touch to the surly world of pits, racing tires, and rough-and-tumble promoters, standing side-by-side with her husband through the ups and downs of a racing career. Her direct involvement dates back to an era when women were not welcomed—in fact, not even allowed—in the pits. Her passion for the sport allowed her to overcome these obstacles and even enabled her to establish herself as a race promoter at Citrus County Speedway for several years. At that time, there was only one other female race track promoter in the country!

Despite a long history in the sport, she is keeping the rpms up, and can be seen doing things like scoring and timing for their team's famed #92 Super Late Model entry, or making parts deliveries, or just keeping her husband under control at the track or at their Wildwood, Florida homestead. In short, she pretty much does it all, and she is a true friend to our group.

**MATT BOWERS** is one of the brightest stars on today's Florida racing scene. Born in Mt. Dora in 1991 (that's right...1991). He began a racing career at the age of six, and is now in his 12<sup>th</sup> year of competition. Despite his age, he's compiled more than 100 major wins, as well as five major championships at the national level. Among these are three championships in Indianapolis Motor Speedway's Junior Sprint Cars of America series, a national championship in the Quarter Midgets of America series, and the prestigious Lowes Summer Shootout Legends Semipro series at Charlotte Motor Speedway. His name seems to have become synonymous with championship, and his track record in led to recognition by NASCAR legend Mark Martin and subsequently by Bobby Ginn of Ginn Motor Sports, a step that led to his being signed to drive the #84 Ginn Clubs and Resorts Legends car in 2005 at the age of 14. In 2007, his career took another step forward when he began driving in the FASCAR Pro Truck and Limited Late Model series and the Sunbelt Super Late Model series. At the beginning of 2008, he was tapped by Wayne Anderson and Dave Pletcher to drive the #84 Super Late Model entry in events in Florida, Georgia, Virginia, and the Carolinas.



To say that he's made a name for himself would be an understatement, and to say he has a great future would be even more of an understatement. About the future, all of us know of his joining Dick Anderson's New Dixie Racing team this fall to become the driver of "our car", Dick's #92...the premier car on Florida's SLM circuit. Matt competed in the 2008 Florida Governor's Cup 200 event, and looks to be a major force in the 2009 season. Combining with Dick and Mary Anderson (and, of

course, The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club) is clearly the right move at the right time for this rising star, and we're all elated to be playing a role in showcasing what we believe will be a great career in motor racing.

Two of this year's inductees were unable to be with us on December 2—**Katie Evans** (left) and **K.P. Jones** (right). Katie, you'll recall, was named as an Honorary Member of our Hall of Fame in May of last year, after participating with us at a number of club events and after providing some excellent news coverage of club activities in The Villages Daily Sun. We'll always consider her to be a part of our racing family. K.P. Jones, of course, was our guest speaker in July, and shared his expertise on the structure of Sports Car Club of America. Currently SCCA Treasurer, National Board member, and Area Director for SCCA's Southeast Region, Jones provided a glimpse of the organization of this vast network of racing venues, while sharing some amusing stories of his own career as a competitive racer in SCCA's various divisions.



## Glen Carter Crew Chief Award Established



A new award was unveiled at the December 2 event—the “Glen Carter Crew Chief Award,” a special commemorative item that Special Events Coordinator Wendy Touchette explained will serve two purposes. First, by virtue of its name, the award will serve as perpetual recognition for Carter (pictured in photo at left with wife Linda), the club’s founder and first President/Crew Chief, and second, to allow for the recognition of club members who have exhibited extraordinary efforts on behalf of the club. Touchette noted that plans are to have club members nominate fellow members each year, with a subset of the Pit Crew then determining future recipients based on their contribution to the club. Carter expressed sincere appreciation for the creation of the award and the opportunity it gives the club to recognize the outstanding contributions of its members. (Editorial Note: Carter was definitely caught off guard with this one, a fact he revealed the day after in an email to the Board indicating that he had a “delayed reaction” to the award carrying his name in perpetuity. He indicated that he is truly humbled at the honor, and expressed concern that his lack of emotion at the event might cost him his Crew Chief position.)



2007 Hall of Fame Inductee and Executive Editorial Manager of The Villages’ Daily Sun Larry Croom was then called to the podium to present the first Glen Carter Crew Chief Award to Gerry Hafer, club Vice President and Media Relations Representative. In presenting the award, Croom cited the club’s outstanding monthly newsletter, calling it “one of the best I’ve ever seen.” Croom was asked to make the presentation because of his extensive, 12-year background in reporting on racing-related activities. In accepting the award, Hafer cited the spirit the club’s members and the fact that their cooperation and participation provides a wealth of material for a newsletter.



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## Crew Chief Carter Presents “We Couldn’t Do It Without You” Awards

One of the evening’s many highlights was the presentation of a series of awards to the club’s 2007-2008 Pit Crew members. Titled the **“We Couldn’t Do It Without You”** awards, Carter observed that without a dedicated group of people standing with him, there would be no way to accomplish what The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club has been able to achieve during its first two years as an organization. He also cited the tremendous working relationships that all members of the group continually display, and the fact that the club’s success has been a team effort in every sense of the phrase.

Carter presented individual plaques to the following Pit Crew members:

Gerry Hafer, Vice President

Mike Touchette, Member-at-Large

Ted Cahalane, Treasurer

Dave Bockman, Member-at-Large

Silky Meegan, Secretary

Bill Wilkie, Member-at-Large

Wendy Touchette, Special Events Coordinator

Wayne Nolan, Club Merchandise Coordinator

Bob & Camille Sherman, Membership

Linda Carter, Club Historian

## Larry Croom Presents 2008 "Prediction Row" Awards



Larry Croom, representing The Villages Daily Sun newspaper, presented participation awards to the club members who participated in the 2008 NASCAR Prediction Row sweepstakes. You'll recall that five members of the club were selected to submit weekly predictions of the outcome of NASCAR Sprint Cup events, with a point system based on highest finishing positions among the drivers for whom predictions were made. Participating club members were (in order of finish in the competition):

- > Dave Bockman
- > Rich Freed
- > Wendy Touchette
- > Glen Carter
- > Gerry Hafer

Bockman's prediction prowess was honored with a gift certificate for a local department store, while all participants received a "goody bag," compliments of the Daily Sun. Croom indicated that the competition is expected to continue with the 2009 NSACAR season, with a new set of "experts" selected to challenge "Big Dave" for bragging rights. Stay tuned for details!

## Wendy Touchette Achieves Honorary Pit Crew Status With "New Dixie Racing" Team



Dick Anderson's New Dixie Racing team has begun preparations for its rapidly approaching 2009 season, with young Matt Bowers slated to drive the #92 Super Late Model entry. We were all aware of that, of course, but we were not aware that our own Wendy Touchette had quietly achieved team member status in this highly-regarded racing operation. Dick and Mary Anderson, in recognizing Wendy's awesome organizational talents, provided an official team polo shirt to commemorate her leap into the big leagues. In a segment of the Hall of Fame night polo program, club Vice President Gerry Hafer presented the team shirt to Wendy, citing the club's appreciation that we now have an insider at New Dixie Racing. Current reports are that she is in negotiation with the Andersons at their Wildwood, Florida race shop, with expectation that her team duties will be well-defined in time for the their January 3 season opening event at New Smyrna Speedway. All of us in the club join in saying, "Go Wendy!"

## Raffle Results—Richard Petty Experience Drawing

The long-awaited 2008 Club Raffle winners were drawn as part of the Hall of Fame Night event, with Matt Bowers doing the honors. And the winners are:

First Prize—the you-drive-it 8 laps at Daytona - **Buster Burt**

Second Prize—Ride along a track of your choice—**Joan Rybacki**

Third Prize—Walt Disney World Driving Experience—**Jake Loux**

Congratulations to this year's winners! We'll all be waiting to hear about their exploits as they redeem their prizes, especially Buster as he returns to Daytona. Many of you will recall that Buster drove in Daytona's very first race on the high-banked tri-oval back in 1959. Depending on when he goes over to drive the "hot laps," Wendy might have enough pit crew experience to assist in the adventure!



The Winners—Buster, Joan, & Jake



## Buzzie Reutimann Encounters The Long Arm of the Law



There was an unexpected guest at this year's Hall of Fame night. At the start of the evening's festivities, Lt. Nehemiah Wolfe of the Sumter County Sheriff's Office entered the room and requested an opportunity to address the crowd. Lt. Wolfe subsequently advised us that he was on assignment from the Coleman, Florida Police Department, and requested that a Mr. Emil L. (a.k.a. Buzzie) Reutimann identify himself and come forward. Buzzie, a solid citizen in every respect, did so, and was presented a Warrant for Arrest stemming from a traffic incident in the town of Coleman back in 1955. (Those of you who were at the club's June meeting will recall Buzzie's amusing story about the incident and his reluctance to this day to travel through Coleman lest the law catch up with him!) Lt. Wolfe advised Buzzie that the Warrant included a bill for the original fine, damages, late charges, and interest, all totaling \$40,269.17, payable in cash. The Lieutenant indicated that he would accept payment on Buzzie's behalf from the club, since it is

a well-known fact that The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club has a history of sponsoring race cars and drivers; however, Club Treasurer Ted Cahalane expressed immediate concern that club funds could not absorb a bill of that size. After intense discussion, and after threatening to take Buzzie for a ride in his "fancy Sumter County race car," Lt. Wolfe was persuaded by the crowd to recognize Buzzie's many years of clean living and his legacy as a true gentleman, and subsequently agreed to drop all charges against him. Visibly shaken and breathing a sigh of relief, Buzzie accepted the pardon and thanked Lieutenant Wolfe for his graciousness. He also promised to stay away from Coleman in the future.

## Scenes From The Big Event



## More Scenes From The Big Event

