



# The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club

## Pit Report-July, 2008

July 1, 2008

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### Pit Notes from the Crew Chief



Those of you who were with us at the June 4 club meeting had the opportunity to hear from one of racing’s all-time greats. Buzzie Reutimann joined the long list of excellent race-themed speakers we’ve been able to arrange to join us, and we were not disappointed. In fact, the line for autographs wound up being quite a bit longer than

we expected, so we were pleased that Buzzie brought a good supply of handouts to sign! All of us were impressed with Buzzie’s ability to engage the audience, as well as with his humble personality. All-in-all, another great night for the club.

And speaking of legends, things are heating up for our July 26 club picnic up at Dick Anderson’s New Dixie Racing facility in Wildwood. We’ve had several planning meetings with Dick and Mary, and the details are falling into place for what we believe will be a great event. We’ll cover the details again at our July 2 meeting but, in the meantime, make sure you have this date reserved on your

calendars. You really won’t want to miss this! This is a preview event for our August 2 club bus trip to Lakeland in sponsorship of Dick’s No. 92 SLM entry in the Sunoco Sunbelt Series second leg, so make sure that date’s also on your calendar!

At our July 2 meeting we’ll also have an excellent speaker, K. P. Jones from the Sports Car Club of America (SCCA). Mr. Jones is Treasurer (and former Chairman) of this 60,000+ member organization, and is Director of SCCA’s Central Florida Region. As we’ve said so many times before, this is gonna be great!

*Glen*

### A True Racing Legend Visits the Club

At its June 4 regular monthly meeting, our club continued its string of excellent speakers with a visit from the legendary Emil “Buzzie” Reutimann of Zephyrhills, Florida. As most of you know, Buzzie is one of the true giants in the sport of stock car racing, and has been recognized in most professional circles as a champion. In fact, his impressive portfolio includes

wins in over 1200 feature events in his more than 50 years of competition, and he’s been inducted into the Dirt Hall of Fame in Weedstown, NY; the Eastern Motorsports Press Association Hall of Fame; and, most recently, the New York



Buzzie Reutimann captivated our club members with a stream of tales about his life in racing.

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**SPECIAL NOTE**

*We're still participating in the "Help Them Call Home" program, so don't forget to bring to the meeting any old cell phones you may have.*

# A True Racing Legend Visits the Club

(Continued from page 1)

State Stock Car Association Hall of Fame. Of course, he'll be joining The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club Hall of Fame later this year! He's won multiple modified championships during his career, along with several major press awards through

the years. Buzzie delighted us with accounts of his days in racing, beginning with his first event at age 13. Some of his stories covered off-track exploits in the early days, including an explanation of his reluctance—even to this day—to travel Rt.

301 through Coleman! It was a great night with an icon of the racing world, and Buzzie lived up to the motto that appears on his business cards..."Go First Class." That's the Buzzie Reutimann we met on June 4.

We hope to continue our relationship with Buzzie later in June with a sponsorship of his "Double Nothin" dirt modified car in an event up at Ocala Speedway. More information will be provided later in June, and we anticipate a hearty group of yellow club shirts filling a section of the Ocala grandstands as we cheer Buzzie in the event. Stay tuned!



The packed house listens intently to Buzzie's racing stories!

## We Really Put Buzzie to work!

The photos at right attest to the level of interest our club had in chatting with this racing legend. In fact, the line for autographs resulted in this "work session" for Buzzie extending past the second half of the meeting. We promised Buzzie we'd put him at the top of the agenda so he could get an early start home to Zephyrhills, but that didn't work. He was one of the last ones out of the room, displaying a "King Richard Petty" attitude toward those who wanted to share racing memories with him.

The relationship that we now have with Buzzie Reutimann complements the long-standing association we have with **Dick Anderson**, **Buster Burt**, and **Buddy Pearce**...you could say we're doing our very best to keep the history of these great racing legends alive, at least in The Villages!



Clockwise, from top left: Dave MacTrinder poses a question; Joyce Varrone finally gets her jacket autographed; a fan shares a moment with Buzzie; a glimpse of the crowd waiting to meet Buzzie

### Special Events Roundup for 2008

Our Special Events Committee continues to work diligently to bring you the very best in activities and experiences. Here's a recap of what you can look forward to for the rest of 2008:

- **July 4-5**-Coke 400 and Nationwide Race, Daytona Speedway
- **July 26** - Club picnic at Dick Anderson's Race

Shop in Wildwood (Details will be covered at July 2 meeting)

- **August 2**-Sunoco Sunbelt Series Race at USA International Speedway, Lakeland, FL (Sponsorship of Dick Anderson)
- **October**-Poker Run (date TBD)

- **October 5**-Bus trip to Talladega for AMP Energy 500 Sprint Cup Event
- **November 22**-43rd annual FL Governor's Cup event at New Smyrna Speedway (Sponsorship of Dick Anderson)

Also, we're repeating last year's raffle for a Richard Petty Daytona driving experience; \$10 per entry. We're again limiting ticket sales to 150, so you're odds of winning one of the three prizes are excellent!

See Wendy Touchette or any Pit Crew member for details on any of these events.

### Local Racing Corner

Here are the operating schedules and the contact info for our neighboring tracks:

Ocala Speedway—Friday nights, gates open at 6:00 pm.

9050 NW Gainesville Rd  
Ocala, FL 34482  
(352) 622-9400  
(www.ocalaspeedway.com)



Citrus County Speedway— Saturday nights; Gates open at 4:00 pm, first event runs at 5:30 pm.

U.S. Highway 41 Two miles south of Inverness at the Citrus County Fairgrounds.  
(352) 726-9339  
(www.citruscountyspeedway.com)



New Smyrna Speedway— Saturday nights; Gates open at 5:00 pm.

Corner of State Route 44 and 415.  
P.O. Box 1500  
New Smyrna Beach, FL 32170  
(386) 427-4129  
(www.newsmyrnaspeedway.org)



USA International Speedway—Special events only...no regular series schedule.

Florida Triple Crown Series—Super Late Models, Second Leg of Three  
Saturday August 2; Main Event at 7:30 pm.  
(www.usaspeedway.com)



Speedway Park—Fruitland Park (Micro Race Track Road and Rt. 466A near The Villages)

Florida's oldest 1/8th mile clay oval Go-Kart track; less than a mile from The Villages! See website for schedule  
(www.speedwaypark.net)



Visit our website: [www.villagesracingclub.com](http://www.villagesracingclub.com)

### The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club—Officers

- Glen Carter, President (751-6442)
- Gerry Hafer, Vice Pres./Newsletter (751-3643)
- Ted Cahalane, Treasurer (751-2638)
- Silky Meegan, Secretary (259-2029)
- Wendy Touchette, Special Events (430-0239)
- Bob & Camille Sherman, Membership (751-1771)
- Linda Carter, Historian (751-6442)
- Mike Touchette, Member at Large (430-0239)
- Dave Bockman, Member at Large (751-0381)
- Wayne Nolan, Member at Large (750-9082)
- Bill Wilkie, Member at Large (350-2080)

### A Website with a Connection to The Villages



It's been brought to our attention that NASCAR veteran Randy Lajoie has a connection to The Villages via his in-laws, club members Ernie and Elaine Battee. Many of you will of course remember Randy Lajoie for his standout NASCAR career (two-time Busch Series Champion and multiple winner of the Busch 300 at Daytona, along with many other honors), but you may not be aware of his most recent career endeavor—the creation of the “Joie of Seating” aluminum custom-fitted race car seat used by a growing list of drivers (over 150 at last count) in just about all NASCAR series, as well as ARCA, USAC, Hooters ProCup, and other major series. The Joie of Seating website ([www.joieofseating.net](http://www.joieofseating.net)) contains a wealth of information about racing safety and seat configuration, as well as recaps of racing events won by drivers using Lajoie’s equipment. In fact, in the event that any of you would like to have a custom-fitted seat built for your golf cart, there’s a page on the website that tells you exactly how to record your specifications and where to send them to have your seat built. There are even video clips to step you through the measurement process.

### So you don't need to look it up...

One of objectives of The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club is to provide reference materials for our members so that they are always prepared to lead discussions in their neighborhoods, at parties, while on walks, etc. on racing-related topics. Suppose, for example, your neighbor says, “Man, for a half mile track, Bristol Speedway is amazingly fast!” Armed with the proper statistics embedded in your memory, you'll be prepared to offer an immediate correction, something like, “Actually, Bristol Motor Speedway is .533 miles in length. There are no half-mile tracks on the NASCAR Cup circuit.” If you do this often enough, you'll eventually find yourself with much more free time on your social calendar!

So, for that reason, this month's newsletter brings you an official listing of the NAC SAR Cup-level tracks, showing their classification, shape, and official course length. This chart is provided courtesy of covers.com, via USAToday Sports.

Tracks(click column headers to sort)				
Name	Location	Type	Shape	Distance
Atlanta Motor Speedway	Hampton, Georgia	Super Speedway	Oval	1.54 miles
Bristol Motor Speedway	Bristol, Tennessee	Short Track	Oval	0.533 miles
California Speedway	Fontana, California	Super Speedway	D-Shaped oval	2.0 miles
Chicagoland Speedway	Joliet, Illinois	Speedway	D-Shaped oval	1.5 miles
Darlington Raceway	Darlington, South Carolina	Super Speedway	Oval	1.366 miles
Daytona International Speedway	Daytona Beach, Florida	Super Speedway	Tri-oval	2.5 miles
Dover International Speedway	Dover, Delaware	Speedway	Oval	1.0 miles
Homestead-Miami Speedway	Homestead, Florida	Speedway	Oval	1.5 miles
Indianapolis Motor Speedway	Speedway, Indiana	Speedway	Oval	2.5 miles
Infineon Raceway	Sonoma, California	Road	Road Course	1.95 miles
Kansas Speedway	Kansas City, Kansas	Speedway	Tri-oval	1.5 miles
Las Vegas Motor Speedway	Las Vegas, Nevada	Super Speedway	Tri-oval	1.5 miles
Lowe's Motor Speedway	Concord, North Carolina	Super Speedway	Quad oval	1.5 miles
Martinsville Speedway	Martinsville, Virginia	Short Track	Oval	0.526 miles
Michigan International Speedway	Brooklyn, Michigan	Super Speedway	Tri-oval	2.0 miles
New Hampshire International Speedway	Loudon, New Hampshire	Speedway	Oval	1.058 miles
North Carolina Speedway	Rockingham, North Carolina	Speedway	D-Shaped oval	1.017 miles
Phoenix International Raceway	Avondale, Arizona	Speedway	D-Shaped oval	1.0 miles
Pocono Raceway	Long Pond, Pennsylvania	Super Speedway	Tri-oval	2.5 miles
Richmond International Raceway	Richmond, Virginia	Short Track	Oval	0.75 miles
Talladega Superspeedway	Talladega, Alabama	Super Speedway	Tri-oval	2.66 miles
Texas Motor Speedway	Fort Worth, Texas	Super Speedway	Quad oval	1.5 miles
Watkins Glen International	Watkins Glen, New York	Road	Road Course	2.45 miles

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### In Memory of Scott Kalitta 1962-2008



Scott Kalitta, an American drag racer who competed in the Funny Car class in the National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Powerade Drag Racing Series, was killed June 21, 2008 in Englishtown, New Jersey, after an accident during qualifying. He had 17 career Top Fuel wins and 1 career Funny Car win, and at his death he was one of fourteen drivers to win in both divisions. Scott won the NHRA Top Fuel Championship in 1993 and 1994. He made his home in Snead Island, Florida, with wife, Kathy and two sons, Colin (8) and Corey (14). He was a native of Mount Clemens, Michigan.

**An Excerpt from ReutimannRacing.com, written by Ben Smith.**

## Buzzie Reutimann

Emil Lloyd "Buzzie" Reutimann was born in Dade City, Florida, just north of Zephyrhills on May 7, 1941. Since his house was adjacent to the Zephyrhills Auto company, I'm sure that his father and mother, Agnes, had problems keeping the toddler out of the garage. The nickname, "Buzzie", could easily have been conjured up as the youngster would play with toy cars around the house and garage. Actually, he got the name while in the hospital as the nurses heard the baby making buzzing noises and called the infant "Buzzie".

Time passed and Buzzie witnessed his father's progress in racing. He remembers going to the one half mile Fair Ground track with his family and Dad disappearing only to be seen in the line-up in a flat-head powered sprinter. When Buzzie was 13, he told his father that he wanted to race, so Mr. Reutimann told him to build a car. He pulled a 1939 Ford coupe out of the junk yard to be his first racer. The original engine wasn't any good so he found a Sears and Roebuck rebuilt engine to replace the original. The interior of the car was stripped, a roll bar added, bumpers welded on and the number B-00 painted on the original black paint of the old Ford. B-00 was for Buzzie's 00, but we called it the "boo" car.

Uncle Lowell Steve was the shop foreman at the Chevrolet garage and helped Buzzie with the car and raced it a few times to get it set up. Then, at the one fourth mile dirt track in Lakeland called the Silver Dollar Speedway, Buzzie got in the car, started seventh and finished fifth. A very winded Buzzie got out of the car and sat on a rear wheel until he could catch his breath. He finished the season with the 'boo' car, but during the off season, Mr. Reutimann purchased a racer with a used up body, but with a Canadian block flat head that was hot. From then on, the 'boo' car was a front runner. Mr. Reutimann's strategy was to have Buzzie drive an under-powered car to develop Buzzie's skills and now it was time to add the power and help him to be competitive.

We towed the car to the races with the "shop coupe" which was a 1938 Chevrolet coupe with a pick-up type floor where the trunk used to be. This coupe was used to pick up parts and run errands at the garage. Even though we were too young for a driver's license, we drove it all over and never got stopped.

As competition became more even, the modified class that Mr. Reutimann drove began to go with lighter cars. To meet the challenge, Mr. Reutimann built a new frame from scratch utilizing a cross spring Ford front end and a quick change rear end to go with a very nice '35 Chevy coupe body and a stroked 283 Chevy engine. This made Dad's old '35 available for Buzzie to use as his Sportsman. The sportsman class could be flat-head Fords or any in-line 6 or 8 cylinder, but only one carburetor was allowed. Since Mr. Reutimann had tons of experience and success with Chevy 6's it was logical for Buzzie to use a 261 cu. in. truck engine of 1954 or later model to get the full oil system and insert rod bearings. The block was bored to 283 cu. in. and a roller tappet cam from Harmon Collins was used. The other goodies were Cadillac valves, pop-up pistons, balanced assemble, home made exhaust headers and an "enlarged" intake manifold with a Stromburg WW carburetor. This would be the car that was virtually unbeatable in the Sportsman ranks and competitive against many modifieds.

The first time out was a 500 lap race at Eau Gallie, a one fourth mile paved track. Mr. Reutimann drove the first 250 laps and Buzzie finished the race. The 00 car was 32 laps ahead of the second place car when the checker fell. We affectionately called the car a small "Sherman Tank". The frame was fish plated and the front end, rear end and transmission was Chevy truck. The only problems we ever had was if we put too much "pop" in the alcohol in order to beat a modified in a match race and burned a piston or if we got hit hard on one of the front wheels and sheared a spring centering bolt. The car took Buzzie through the late 50's and into the early 60's.

The Reutimann mystique features several major characteristics:

- The cars were clean, well built and well maintained
- The cars usually finished the race and had very little mechanical problems
- The drivers had an uncanny ability to stay out of trouble by seeing the problem develop and avoiding it. They had great reactions.
- Innovative ideas were used to be more competitive.
- The drivers were cool and unflappable and never appeared nervous.



Buzzie has many of the characteristics of his father. He is an excellent mechanic and fabricator and is a cool driver who has the uncanny ability to stay out of trouble.

Buzzie's history after leaving Zephyrhills to race in the northeast is well documented in magazine articles and in the information in the Hall of Fame. This web-site, for example, lists Buzzie's accomplishments that include Orange County Fair Speedway, Nazareth, East Windsor, and the New York State Fairgrounds. Buzzie's induction into the Dirt Motorsports Hall of Fame in 1997 is well documented in the Special Edition of "Dirt Trackin' Magazine '97." His accomplishments at Reading, Five Mile Point, Islip and Syracuse as well as the tracks listed before are mentioned. The injury in 1985 was scary to say the least. To see Buzzie with the "halo" brace fastened to his head unnerved me but he smiled and talked just like old times and that made me feel more at ease. After his recovery, he went on to race well locally and on the northern circuit finally putting his stamp on the 1995 Can-Am speedway Pabst Shootout winner list. My little sister tells of going to a Tampa track with her husband and cheering Buzzie on while some fans around them talked about Buzzie being over the hill. Little sister just sat back and said "watch him". One by one from the back of the field, Buzzie picked off the competition and won the race. At this writing, Buzzie is almost 59 years old and is still competitive at his most recent events at East Bay in Tampa.

To say that Buzzie is a great driver and mechanic/engineer is an understatement. The side of the man I want to focus on is the person, Buzzie Reutimann. In high school he was friendly, but quiet and unassuming. He never bragged or changed his demeanor even though he was very successful by the end of high school. Magazine articles say such things as friendly, loved by a legion of fans, most popular, respected, highest regard, admiration and well liked. To realize the extent of his popularity has come home to me. My racing buddy, Herb, is a Reutimann fan from New York who retired to South Carolina. Herb watched Buzzie at many of the tracks up north. Now as we go to the tracks where Buzzie and son, David compete, it is normal to meet someone in the stands who was a Buzzie fan in Florida or up north. We even met one of Will Cagle's crew who had come to a Slim Jim All Pro race to watch a third generation Reutimann compete.



One of the finest articles about Buzzie Reutimann, the person, was written by Todd Drew in "Trackside" in November of 1996. The article is entitled "Elements of Style". Mr. Drew describes an evening at Rolling Wheels Raceway when he was a small boy standing beside the fence before a race next to a blue and white coupe number "00". A driver named Buzzie Reutimann talked to him and make a difference in the boy's life. Buzzie has certainly lived up the slogan on his racers as he continues to "Go First Class".

Buzzie also has a sense of humor that many fans may not know about. For example, he used to paint the front springs on his modified different colors each week to keep his competition guessing. He has been heard to say, when someone chides him, that they shouldn't talk to a "legend" like that. Or quietly telling the crew to wear their team shirts since he had spent a lot of time washing and ironing them. You have to be quick to hear some of his humor because most of the time he is absorbed in his business: thinking - planning - trying something different - sounds like his Dad, doesn't he.

I have asked Buzzie a number of times who he thought was the greatest driver he had driven against. As you might expect, he will not pick a person, but will name many drivers as great. Names like Cagle, Balough, Tasnady, Schneider, and Tobias just to mention a few. Buzzie will admit, however, that his toughest race was a flag to flag, side by side battle with Will Cagle at the Eastern States 200 in 1972.

Buzzie has a great deal of admiration and respect for his only son, David. He told me a few years ago that David is better then "the old man" was (meaning Buzzie's dad). In his own modest way, he won't compare himself to his son or his father or any other driver for that matter. Maybe one of the reasons Buzzie has been so well liked is that he doesn't have a macho or attitude problem.

Thankfully, the last chapters in Buzzie's book have not been written. While he is concentrating on David's career and team, it is refreshing to see that he still wants to drive and compete. Those of us who have known him most of his life wish him well no matter what the future holds. Of course, I would like to see him progress and use his skills and abilities to help David continue to advance to higher levels of NASCAR of whatever circuit they wish to race. The family is quality - first Class.

### "The Tradition Continues"

