



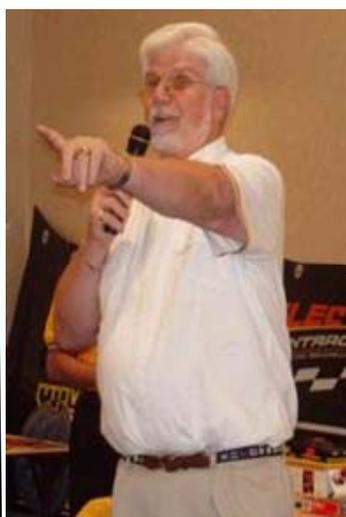
The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club Pit Report-February, 2009

February 1, 2009

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February Meeting Preview—It's Auction Time!



“Big Dave” In Action!

Here we go again...it's time for “Big Dave” Bockman to

to spring back into action as our premier auctioneer, a title he earned two years ago and defended in grand style in the 2008 edition of our annual Charity Auction. If you were on hand at last year's event, you'll recall Big Dave's stirring performance as he orchestrated the conversion of assorted racing memorabilia into a nearly \$1500 pile of cash. The three charities our club supports—Operation Shoebox, “Help Them Call Home”, and the “Victory Junction Gang Camp”—were once again grateful for our support. In the two previous auctions, our club has

raised almost \$2700 for these charities, along with a \$300 contribution to the 2007 tornado recovery fund.

So, even though we're about racing and motorsports, it's plain to see that we're also about community. Your Pit Crew commends all of you for your efforts!



Pit Notes from the Crew Chief

As you read this newsletter, you'll note that we're about halfway through the winter season. Although it's been pretty cold (well, relatively cold, anyway), I think its fair to say the motorsports scene has been pretty hot. The January 3 “Red Eye 125” over at New Smyrna Speedway was a great event, and Citrus County Speedway ran two excellent events in January, so once again Florida

has demonstrated that it doesn't really have an “off season.” Meanwhile, your pit crew has been hard at work laying out events for 2009, and we're happy to say that things are shaping up rather nicely. We're all gearing up for Buster Burt's return to Daytona International Speedway on February 1 (we'll talk more about this at the February 4 meeting), and we have a

hearty contingent heading over to the Speedway for the February 7 “Bud Shootout.” At last count, we also had more than two dozen signed up for the Daytona 500 trip, and I'm hearing that there will be quite a few of our members traveling to New Smyrna Speedway for the “World Series of Asphalt” beginning Friday, February 6.

(Continued on Page 2)...



Pit Notes from the Crew Chief (continued from page 1)

In addition to all that, I'm thrilled to report that we've filled the bus for our March 13 trip to the NHRA Gaternationals up in Gainesville. This the first club field trip to an "other-than-in-a-circle-racing" event, so it's further proof that we're truly a diversified, all-motorsports crowd! Many thanks go out to Dave Colbert and Wendy Touchette for organizing this milestone event for us. 8,000 horsepower...it's gonna be great!

Looking further out in the year, we're already beginning to lay plans for local race trips, the annual picnic at Dick Anderson's

Wildwood race shop, the golf scramble, and even some "special" field trips designed to pique your interest. All in all, I think we're in for another great year!

On another note, I wanted to let you all know that our club is continuing to gain prominence in many quarters outside of The Villages. In a recent conversation Gerry Hafer had with the Daytona News-Journal, for example, their sports editor commented on the impressive showing of our group at the November, 2008 Governor's Cup event. Also, our newsletter now goes to a variety of NASCAR-connected recipients, including John Bickford (Jeff Gordon's stepdad), Randy Lajoie, Andy Santerre and Mike Skinner, just to name a few.

And, from feedback we've received, we know they read it!

I hope to see all of you at our February 4 meeting. We have several important items to discuss, and we'll be previewing the last-minute logistics for some of our upcoming events. As always, we'd like all of you to bring your thoughts and suggestions for activities later in the year, as well as your thoughts on how we can continue this club's development as one of the greatest in The Villages!

By the way, if you haven't renewed your membership for 2009, don't forget that your annual dues are now payable. Bob & Camille Sherman will look forward to seeing you at the registration table on February 4.

Let's go racing!

Glen

Another Great Story from the Christmas Parade

At press time last month, I was not aware that we had a special guest in the lineup for this event. It has since been called to my attention that riding shotgun on the field was club member Linda Turecek's dad, 92 years young, Gail Henry. Mr. Henry is a resident of La Cresenta Villas, having relocated there from Rockford, Illinois to be near Linda and her husband, Brad.

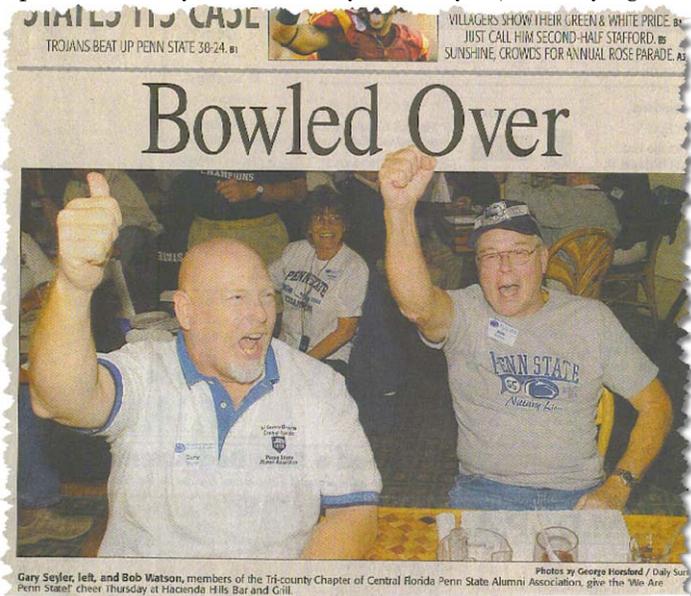
Gail is pictured in the top left photo eagerly anticipating the start of the race (sorry...the parade), although it looks like he and son-in-law Brad needed to top-off before taking the green. In the bottom photo, the race (parade) is now underway and Gail is keeping the checkers ready to go.

This is further evidence that age doesn't mean anything when it comes to racing! (At least, in a golf cart.) We'll expect to see Gail in many more club events, now that he has the honorary flagman's job!



More Club Members in the News...We Really Are Everywhere!

As we pointed out last month, our club members just keep popping up around The Villages. I couldn't believe it when I opened the Daily Sun on Friday, January 2 (while crying in my coffee over Penn State's New Year's Day thrashing by Southern Cal) and spotted Gary Seyler and Bob Watson cheering the Nittany Lions on.



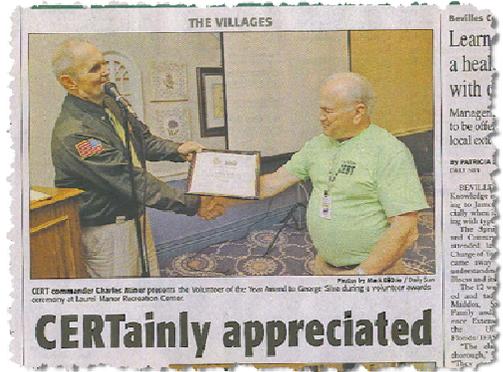
Gary Seyler, left, and Bob Watson, members of the Tri-county Chapter of Central Florida Penn State Alumni Association, give the 'We Are Penn State' cheer Thursday at Hacienda Hills Bar and Grill. Photos by George Horsford / Daily Sun

Then, two weeks later while catching up on my newspaper reading after my trip to the frozen north, I was fascinated by the January 9 Daily Sun article (and photo, of course) reporting on Wendy Touchette's stunning win in the contest to name the upcoming Senior Games. "Witness the Fitness"...that says it all! Congratulations Wendy! Rumor has it that she received a Caribbean Cruise as her prize?



Also in that same January 9 edition I then found a photo of our Club Historian Linda Carter participating in an honors ceremony with The Villages Community Improvement Council. Linda is vice president of this citizen-government organization, is working hard to continually improve life here in The Villages. Later in the month (Daily Sun, January 26), I was pleased to see club member Charles Miner proudly presenting the Volunteer of the Year Award to a member of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

Charles has been active in CERT for some time, and is serving as CERT Commander. We applaud his efforts on behalf of this important service group.



John Rohan, right, presents a certificate of appreciation to Bert Salk during the Villages Community Improvement Council meeting Thursday at Laurel Manor Recreation Center. Looking on from left are Howard Horvitz, Linda Carter and Jerry Potter. Salk received the certificate, left, for his money-saving idea of installing green air conditioning units at the center.

Finally, as I dug through my stack of papers, I stumbled across an article and photo of Mike Heinke from the January 3 edition of The Daily Sun commemorating his efforts, along with his group of USA Pickleball Association Ambassadors in their quest to become the largest pickleball community in the nation. They're currently

number two, but trying harder in the friendly competition with Sunrise, Arizona to grab the top spot. The final count of registered players will be taken January 31...perhaps Mike will update us at the February 4 meeting on how they fared in this campaign?



As I mentioned at the last meeting, I'm asking all of you to keep an eye out for club members in the news and call them to my attention. Depending on the strength of my morning coffee, I tend to miss a few!

Special Events Roundup



It's full speed ahead as we launch our club into 2009. The first quarter of the year will feature a number of NASCAR/Daytona events, and we're developing plans for visits to additional venues later in the year. As always, we'd like to hear suggestions from club members for trips, club events, visits, and anything that helps promote our mutual interest in racing. So far, here's what we have on the schedule for 2009.

- **Sunday, February 1**—"Buster Rides Again" at Daytona International Speedway. So far, we have about 20 club members making the trip.
- **February 6-14** - Speed Weeks at New Smyrna Speed-

way. We hope to have a definite schedule for when "our car" is running to review at the 2/4 meeting.

- **Saturday, February 7**—Bud Shootout at Daytona (1-day, \$99 package)
- **Sunday, February 15**—Daytona 500—1-day, \$255 package

- **Friday, March 13**—NHRA Gaternationals in Gainesville, FL. Dave Colbert has put together a great package for this event, and at this point the bus has been filled!

See you all on February 4!

- Wendy

Local Racing Corner

| Location | January Event Schedule |
|---|---|
| <p>Ocala Speedway 9050 NW Gainesville Rd Ocala, FL 34482 (352) 622-9400 (www.ocalaspeedway.com)</p> <p>Citrus County Speedway U.S. Highway 41 Two miles south of Inverness at the Citrus County Fairgrounds. (352) 726-9339 (www.citruscountyspeedway.com)</p> <p>New Smyrna Speedway Corner of State Route 44 and 415. P.O. Box 1500 New Smyrna Beach, FL 32170 (386) 427-4129 (www.newsmyrnaspeedway.org)</p> <p>Orlando Speedworld 19164 East Colonial Drive (Highway 50 just west of 520 Cocoa cut-off) Orlando, FL 32833 407-568-1367 (www.OrlandoSpeedworld.org)</p> <p>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)</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>February 15, 2009</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Open practice session for all divisions. Regular season schedule begins in March.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Regular season begins Saturday, February 7, with events weekly through the month of February</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>February 6-14, 2009</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">World Series of Asphalt</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Regular season schedule begins Saturday, March 14</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No season schedule posted yet. Next event: Winter Nationals, February 10 INEX/600 Racing Legends, Bandaleros, etc.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No season schedule posted yet.</p> |

Welcome, New Members!

Who would have thought that there were so many Villages residents with a common interest in motorsports? When we launched in late 2006 with a hearty group of about 60 race fans, we optimistically talked in terms of perhaps more than a hundred as our eventual membership level. Well, we blew through that number in a hurry, and it just keeps growing. We added 16 new members at the January 7 meeting, and we attribute this phenomenal progress to the dedication of each and every one of you...your interest in club activities, your participation in club events, and your enthusiastic fascination for all forms of racing.

In keeping with a practice started late last year, we'd like to identify our newest members with a photo so that you can greet them at upcoming meetings. Unfortunately, with the pace of the January meeting and the crowded agenda, we were only able to grab 11 of the 16 new members. We'll try to get the remaining photos for the next newsletter but, in the meantime here are *some* of the new members:



From left: Jay Coats, Jay Cowley, George & Carol Wagner



From left: Tom Kingma, Sandy Lichterman, Duncan Paterson



From left: George & Beverly Rutkoski, and Doug Hartranft

Visit our website: 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)
- Dave Colbert, Technical Planning (751-3851)
- Buster & Zoe Ann Burt, Senior Advisors (751-4346)
- Tom Horrmann, Official Photographer (430-0195)

**Website Review
SceneDaily.com**

Give a shout out to Wendy for digging up this impressive website chock full of fascinating information about NASCAR. The site covers Sprint Cup, Nationwide, and Camping World Truck Series events, and gives readers not only up-to-date data on breaking news, but well-formed opinions as well. The site claims to be “powered by the largest NASCAR newsroom in the country,” and a quick look at the content on any given day will affirm that. In addition to news items on drivers and teams, the site offers in-depth profiles on selected drivers, driver videos, and a weekly roundtable featuring many of the premier NASCAR sportswriters. For example, the “Hot Topics” page features coverage of issues and subjects drawing the attention of a wide variety of racing fans, while the “Races” page provides a schedule of upcoming events in all three series. For you team owner wannabees, there’s even a full webpage dedicated the site’s free fantasy season competition that allows you to select up to three drivers (you can even select multiple sets), project their points, and potentially win a trip to the “big show” in New York City. It’s definitely worth a look-see (www.scedaily.com).



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

You may not have noticed it, but the 2008 NASCAR season was, from a car owner’s perspective at least, a better season due to less crashes. This, of course, makes the body shop workers breathe easier, and makes their Monday mornings a bit more leisurely.



There was an average of 5.9 accidents per race last year, down from 6.7 the year before and a high of 7.0 in 2005. Cautions per race were also fewer, at 8.8, despite the tire debacle at the Brickyard. 2005 again represented the high point in recent history at 10.4 cautions per race. This may mean that the drivers are getting more careful, or it may mean that the owners are leaning on them harder to preserve equipment, or it may be a benefit of the COT design (although that would appear to be counter to driver complaints about visibility.) Who knows. In any event, less accidents means

a cleaner, faster race, with less boring caution periods.

In case you’re wondering, here’s a track-by-track run-down on where the accidents happen. Again, it’s surprising that Bristol doesn't head the list! Martinsville takes top spot, but I guess that’s to be expected. At least at that speed they’re usually not major wrecks.

And here’s one more Drivers failed to finish the race 10% of the time

Of all 1,546 starts in the 36 races this season, crashes accounted for nearly two-thirds of the times a driver did not finish the race (DNF).



Tracks with the most accidents

| TRACK | RACES | ACCIDENTS | RATE |
|---------------------------------|-------|-----------|------|
| Martinsville Speedway | 2 | 25 | 12.5 |
| Richmond International Raceway | 2 | 21 | 10.5 |
| Las Vegas Motor Speedway | 1 | 9 | 9 |
| Daytona International Speedway | 2 | 16 | 8 |
| Lowe's Motor Speedway | 2 | 16 | 8 |
| Kansas Speedway | 1 | 7 | 7 |
| Bristol Motor Speedway | 2 | 12 | 6 |
| Pocono Raceway | 2 | 12 | 6 |
| Talladega Superspeedway | 2 | 11 | 5.5 |
| New Hampshire International Spe | 2 | 11 | 5.5 |
| Phoenix International Raceway | 2 | 10 | 5 |
| California Speedway | 2 | 10 | 5 |
| Atlanta Motor Speedway | 2 | 10 | 5 |
| Dover International Speedway | 2 | 9 | 4.5 |
| Darlington Raceway | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| Infineon Raceway | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| Homestead-Miami Speedway | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| Michigan International Speedway | 2 | 8 | 4 |
| Indianapolis Motor Speedway | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| Texas Motor Speedway | 2 | 5 | 2.5 |
| Chicagoland Speedway | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Watkins Glen International | 1 | 2 | 2 |

trivia item for you. Accidents accounted for 65% of the situations in which a driver did not finish the race. Engine failures, transmission problems, suspension issues, etc. accounted for a mere 10%. Again, COT? Maybe.

(Data Source = USAToday.com)

A SPECIAL NOTE TO MEMBERS

The item appearing below is the result of discussions at a recent Pit Crew meeting, in which concerns were brought to our attention. We thought it best to attempt to clarify the situation with a statement of our collective thoughts.

As all of you are well aware, The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club is a very active club, and we offer members a wide variety of trips and special events throughout the year. These trips and events are conducted with a “break even” objective, although we have had situations in which last minute situations have resulted in a loss for the club. Through dues payments, 50/50s, and other specific fund raisers, we’ve been able to absorb these occasional expenses, but under no circumstances have we designed trips or special events as a profit-making venture.

Put simply, our broad goal as an organization is to provide our members a wide range of activity choices to fulfill their personal interests. This wide range, however, at times causes it to appear that we are an “expensive” organization, and that we are constantly seeking payment from members. This concern has been brought to the Board’s attention, and we want to assure everyone that our intent is to offer *choices*, and that any individual member’s option to participate or not participate in any offered activity is a personal decision.

We know that some of our trips or activities do not appeal to some of our members, and we respect our members’ decision to only participate in activities that are of interest to them. Please know that we value and appreciate all members, regardless of their level of participation in special activities. Frankly, just seeing a room full of interested members month after month is considered enough of a reward to the Board.

Thank you, and thank you all for your continued interest in the club and its activities.