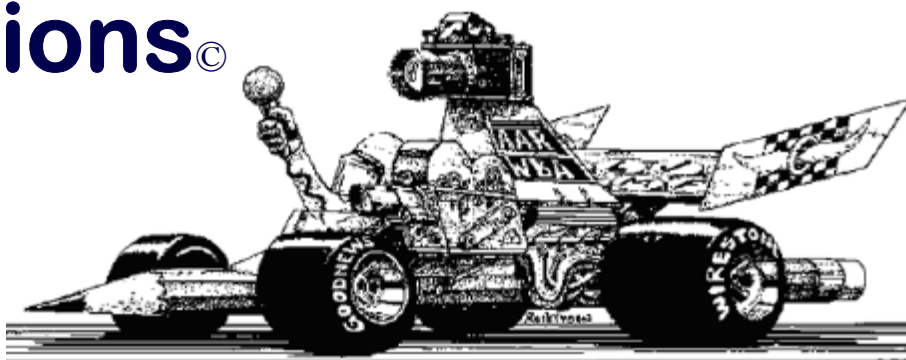


ImPRESSIONs[©]



The Official Newsletter Of The American Auto Racing Writers and Broadcasters Association

March 2009

Vol. 42 No. 3



Carl Edwards receives his AARWBA Horsepower Trophy from Eastern Vice President Lewis Franck at Auto Club Speedway in Fontana, California.

Photo by Anne Proffit



Russo Award Nominations Now Being Accepted Page 3

Artists! Express Yourselves!

Are you an artist? Do you like to draw, sketch, or paint illustrations of cars and the people who race them? Then why not showcase some of your work in this newsletter?

All artists are invited to submit an example of your work that you are proud of. Your name and contact information will appear with the drawing.

Are you proud of what you can do with a pen or pencil or brush? Prove it by letting us share your work with the other members of AARWBA.

Submit scans of your work to the editor at:
ashartwell@att.net

In This Issue:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| - Member Spotlight - Brian Wood | Page 2 |
| - Bob Russo Award Info | Page 3 |
| - Have You Been To Indy? | Page 5 |
| - From The Archives | Page 6 |
| - The Vintage Racing League | Page 7 |
| - Member Spotlight - Norm Froscher | Page 8 |
| - News & Notes | Page 9 |
| - Shooting NASCAR & NHRA | Page 10 |

Member Spotlight

New Member Brian Wood

As a new member of AARWBA, I'm pleased to have the chance to introduce myself to all of you and hope to meet many of you in person this May at our breakfast at Indianapolis.

To prove my love for drag racing, I left sunny South Carolina for cold, icy northern Ohio in December 2007 to become Editorial Director of the International Hot Rod Association's DRM (Drag Review Magazine). And I'm having a blast working with some truly creative people. I'm making it a personal goal to persuade as many of my colleagues as possible to join AARWBA, as well.

I got my start in motorsports journalism in 1996, when I began working as track photographer at London Motorsports Park in Ontario, Canada.

Beginning in 1997, I served as drag racing editor for Inside Track Motorsport News in Toronto. Two years later, I began working full-time for CompetitionPlus.com as editor in 2002 and editorial director in 2005. In addition, I served as web editor and photographer for the National Street Car Association (2003-05). Then in 2006, I joined the staff of 1320 TV.com as videographer and video editor.

My articles and photographs have appeared in Hot Rod, Car Craft, Drag Review, Fastest Street Car, Extreme Australia, Australian Drag Racing, Dragster Australia, Adrenalin, RPM/Street Shootout, Sportsman Drag Racing and Pontiac High Performance magazines, and on numerous Internet drag racing sites.

By the time this newsletter is published, the IHRA will have its season-opener, the IHRA Mardi Gras Nationals at Baton Rouge, in the books. We still have nine more, though -- in Rockingham, North Carolina; Dallas; Tulsa; Edmonton, Alberta; Grand Bend, Ontario; Martin, Michigan; Epping, New Hampshire; Budds Creek, Maryland; and again at Rockingham. For specific dates, please check our Website at www.ihra.com.

We welcome all AARWBA members and know you'll have a wonderful time at our events. Toward the end of last season, Feld Entertainment purchased the IHRA. They're the same innovative folks who bring us the Ringling Bros. & Barnum and Bailey Circus. So you can expect an action-packed weekend at our dragstrips!

Please feel free to drop me a line any time you have a question about drag racing or the IHRA. While we don't have any budget right now for freelance articles at DRM, we do have plenty of great stories among our racers that would be worthy of features for other publications, legitimate Internet sites, and local newspapers. I'll help you in any way I can. I'm there in the Norwalk, Ohio, headquarters at 419-660-4225 or by e-mail at bwood@feldinc.com.

I look forward to hearing from you!



This month's issue of ImpRESSions is sponsored by

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American Auto Racing Writers & Broadcasters Association, Inc. (www.aarwba.org)
"Dedicated To Increasing Media Coverage Of Motor Sports"

BOB RUSSO FOUNDERS AWARD

Nominations now being accepted

In 2004 President Brandel assigned Bill Marvel, the founding Secretary, to chair a committee of Deke Houlgate, Dick Mittman and Norm Froscher to establish the award, the rules governing the annual selection of the recipient and awarding the honor. In 2005 the Bob Russo Founders Award was inaugurated. Nominees must meet the requirement that they "have demonstrated profound interest, tireless efforts and undying dedication to auto racing, as exemplified by Founder Bob Russo throughout his lifelong career."

The following rules apply to the award:

- Only Professional Members of AARWBA, who have held membership for at least five years, may make a nomination.
- Nominees from the auto racing community must have been involved for at least five years.
- A nominee from the Professional Media Membership of AARWBA must be a member for five previous years.
- The award can be made posthumously.
- Each recipient will be added to the Award's Committee.
- No member of the committee may receive the award while serving on the Committee.
- As the original committee members leave for one reason or another, the committee will select a chairman by vote.
- The majority will rule on the final award recipient selection by vote,
- Nominations must be submitted in written form of 150 words, email or regular mail, to the Chairman of the Founder's Award Committee.

Nominations must contain the signature and year of initial membership of the one making the nomination.

Nominations must be received by March 21, 2009.

The award is an individual plaque with a likeness of Bob Russo, the AARWBA logo and the following wording thereon, "Presented Annually by AARWBA to an individual who has demonstrated profound interest, tireless efforts and undying dedication to auto racing, as exemplified by our founder Bob Russo throughout his career".

A permanent plaque, with the same information as the individual one, with individual nameplate spaces is displayed in the Media Center at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Gary and Collene Campbell, to celebrate the lives of Mickey and Trudy Thompson, Collene's brother and sister-in-law, sponsor the award.

**Send nominations to Chairman Bill Marvel at billmarvel@vvdsi.com
or mail to him at 4866 KY 49, Liberty, KY 42539**

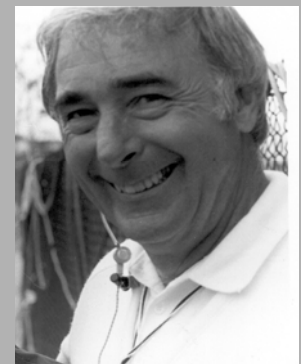
About The Russo Award

The Bob Russo Founder's Award is presented annually by AARWBA to a member who has worked diligently to further the organization in its goals to represent the media who cover the sport of motor racing throughout the United States.

Russo was the initiator in organizing AARWBA. In 1955, he felt there was a definite need for such a group to help in its coverage of all forms of auto racing. Often at that time communication between the track promoters and the media was very limited. He brought together the founding group at Indianapolis. Russo was a journalist and later public relations director for the National Hot Rod Association, Riverside International Raceway and Ontario Motor Speedway.

The winners to date:

- 2005 Michael Knight
- 2006 Wally Parks
- 2007 Chris Economaki
- 2008 Bob Jenkins



Bob Russo

2009 PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS OF AARWBA ELIGIBLE FOR BOB RUSSO AWARD

The AARWBA members (as listed in the online February 2009 directory) that meet the standards to nominate and/or receive the Award:

Argabright, Dave
Bell, Bill
Bull, David
Chess, Dave L.
Craft, John A.
Estes, Cindy
Franks, Dave
Grubba, Fr. Dale
Harris, Mike
Hewitt, Geoffrey
Hunting, Lynne
Kaminski Jr., Joseph G.
Lewis, Ron
McDonald, Johnny
Mittman, Dick
Murvin, Harry J.
Parsons-Vigants, Patricia
Pherigo, Lyn
Reeser, Tony
Roberts, Bob
Schilke, Nancy Knapp
Smith, Judy
Stokes, Doug
Truitt, Ken
Wong, Albert J.

Arthur, Mike
Bennett, Bruce
Busby MD, J. David
Chini, Jim
Dunn, Harry W.
Estes, Eddie
Froscher, Norm
Haddock, Tim
Hartwell, Andrew S.
Hoch, Harold E.
Jenkins, Bob
Lafond, Steve
Mahoney, John
McQueeney, Ron
Mobley, Dozier
Nicholas, Kay A.
Pash, Phil
Plotkin, Kenneth J.
Reininger, David S.
Roper, Bob
Shigenobu, Naoki
Smith, Steve
Taylor, Bill
Tuttle, Tim

Arthur, Nan-Kene
Berggren, Dr. Dick
Cademartori, Hector
Coffin, David
Economaki, Chris
Farace, Joe
Genat, Robert
Haines, Jim
Hatfield, Jim
Hollowell, Ed
Jennings, Joe
Lair, Keith
Marvel, William R.
Mendez, Mary
Monsehr, Wolfgang
Olney, Ross R.
Peters, Dr. George
Presto, Kay
Rider, Phil
Rose, Buzz
Sisich, Dick
Sotero, Ray
Titus, Rick
von Trebra, Dale

Beem, Gary
Brandel, Dusty
Campbell, Mary T.
Colgrove, Bobbie
Entriaken Jr., Rocky
Franck, Lewis
Gibson, Dave "Doc"
Hanna, John
Hedger, Ron
Houlgate, Deke
Johns, Tony
Lemasters Sr., Ronald R.
McClelland, Dave
Miller, Jerry
Moore, Michael R.
Parks, Richard Neil
Pettengill, Jim
Proffit, Anne
Riggs, Spencer L.
Saxton, Ernie
Smith, Georgiann
Squier, Kenley D.
Treffinger, David
Wilson, Jim

**Send nominations to Chairman Bill Marvel at billmarvel@vvdsl.com
or mail to him at 4866 KY 49, Liberty, KY 42539**



Have You Been To Indy?

If you have attended the Indy 500, please send us a note telling us how many times, when you first went and for what reason, and do tell us about your most memorable year at the Brickyard. (A paragraph or two is all we need.)

Send your memories to:

Andy Hartwell -
ashartwell@att.net

or to:

Dusty Brandel -
dusty.brandel@gmail.com



Photo Courtesy Indianapolis Motor Speedway

Norm Corners The Snake At Indy By Norm Froscher

I remember an Indy minute that sort of happened just for me. Here's what happened:

As you know, the press room is a very busy place and I heard from a non-writer that Don "Snake" Prudhomme was over in the Gasoline Alley. Yeah, that was when those Dutch pantry doors were present.

Well, I searched and couldn't find Snake any place, so I went quietly to ask if the USAC official on duty had seen him. That was all I wanted to know and didn't want to alert anyone else.

But lo and behold, he took the microphone and announced over the public address: "Will Don Prudhomme please go to the media center? Don Prudhomme, please head to the media center?"

I said 'oh lordy', I have to get over there before Prudhomme heads into the center. I knew I had to grab him for an interview for myself and get him before he entered the center.

Suddenly, he appeared at the door I was standing outside of and I immediately shook hands with him and let him know I had several questions for him.

I said I was the one who asked for him and I took him to friend Fred Agabasian and the Champion suite for the interview. Not only did writers probably wonder where Prudhomme was, Snake never knew the background, either. And other writers wondered how I came by the quotes.

Always Have Enough Film At Indy! By John Mahoney

After several years of listening to the radio broadcast of the Indy 500, my father and I attended our first race in 1955. I haven't missed one since. My first credentials came during college years in the early '60s, representing Indiana University's low power dorm radio station WQAD. After college, I managed to finesse passes through a variety of schemes until I began stringing for UPI in 1969. In those days, the rivalry between our Jim Schweiker-led partying bunch and the more serious and organized AP crew was relatively friendly. But whenever one of us "got the shot" of a crash, the other agency was in for some real ridicule! That rivalry was part of one of my most memorable Indy 500s.

I was shooting the 1971 race in the third turn. On lap 10, Steve Krisloff's blown engine oiled the track. With car after car spinning and Mel Kenyon tagging the wall, it didn't take long for many of the photogs to run through their 36 frames of film. Things were quieting down a bit when, out of the corner of my eye, I saw an orange blur heading for the crash scene. Luckily, my last two frames captured Gordon Johncock flying over Mel Kenyon just as he was exiting his crashed car. Luckily, Mel survived as well as the two firemen who had to jump out of the way at the last second. The UPI "runner" took our film to the track lab and returned about 30 minutes later with the news that I'd "gotten the shot"! The photo ran in papers around the world and was voted "UPI Sports Picture of the Month".

Along with a certificate, I think the check amounted to \$35.00!

More Indy Memories on next page!



He Has Qualified Memories Of Indy By Ed Hollowell

My earliest recollection of racing was going to 'Indy', but not for the race. I was with my family from the paddock penthouse on the day Parnelli Jones did the impossible and broke the 150 mph barrier in qualifying. Many, many years later I spoke to Parnelli and told him what I remembered of that day. His response was "You don't hardly look old enough!" which is understandable as I was but three years and three months old on that day in 1962.

Some 'experts' say that a child's memory is not working at that age but I do remember a lot of that day. Why we were there was a mystery to me at the time, though later I realized that it was because my older brother, John was in the Boy Scout Band in Indianapolis and they were playing before Time Trials began. What I do remember was the thunder the cars made when they came past us while we looked up on the front straight. I remember the bright colors the cars were painted in. I remember the excitement that was real and palpable as the Offy's thunder. I knew I liked this even though I had not a clue why it was happening.

I thought about it and I came up with a theory that it must have something to do with Christmas! It was just the only thing I could think of which compared to the feeling and the colors of that day. I saw the cars go out and go around accompanied by so much excitement. Then they stopped in front of the big tower and talked to a nice man where they got a 'place', what ever that was. It sure made them happy so it must have been good. Another got a "record" and that made everyone happy!

I was at Time Trials many times after that. I learned what a "Champion" was when Rodger Ward missed the 1965 race. I finally learned all the qualifying rules on the last day of 1969 and became a Hurtubise fan as I saw him turn three laps that were 'plenty' fast enough in the only roadster before the engine blew, just short of his goal. It was heartbreaking, but it left me dreaming of "next year" as we sat in traffic on the way out.

There is no more dramatic moment in sport than you will see, repeated many times on one good day of Indy 500 qualifying. The memories of it will always be a special part of me.



From The Archives



Veteran Journalist Dick Mittman is shown behind a smiling Mario Andretti in 1969.

Do you have a favorite old photo of you, at work, covering motorsports? If so, please send it to the editor - with a short caption - and we will run it in a future issue of **ImPRESSIONS.**

Why isn't your name in the Member Spotlight?

Because you didn't yet tell us you would like it to be!
Come on and get with the program!
Contact Andy Hartwell and let's make it happen!
ashartwell@att.net

The Vintage Racing League – The Oldest New Kid In Town

Stephen Page, VRL Co-Founder, Talks With The Editor

As we grow older we find ourselves drawn more and more to the allure of vintage racing. We sometimes find we prefer it to the racing scene today. Not that we dislike what is, but we sure love reminiscing about what was. We guess that is just the way it goes for us former Buffalo Bob audience members.

Recently we learned about a new website called The Vintage Racing League (VRL). Stephen Page is one of the founders of what he is calling “The world’s largest Social Network for people that love Vintage Racing and Vintage cars.”

We contacted Page and asked him for more information about the VRL that we could pass along in these pages because we think there are more than a few of our readers who date back to a time of Shari Lewis and Captain Kangaroo. What follows is Page’s reply to our inquiry.

“It has been estimated that there are 10 million Vintage car owners worldwide. Until the Vintage Racing League, these owners (and millions of fans who grew up watching racing in the ‘60s, ‘70s and ‘80s) didn’t have a global platform to find and communicate with each other.



“Vintage Racing is a well-kept secret. Despite the enormous Vintage Car ownership and fan base, relatively few attend events. We’d like to change that.

“MyVRL (www.myvrl.com) – the Vintage Racing League’s Social Network, took 2+ years to create. It consists of more than 7 million lines of code. MyVRL is the Facebook/MySpace for people who love cars.



“Our objective is to become the world’s largest repository of information about Vintage Racing and Vintage cars. We are constantly adding content describing 3,000+ Car Marques; 500+ Race Tracks; thousands of Events and Vintage Racing clubs world-wide and a Central Market for people who sell products and services to this community.

“America is host to approximately 27 Vintage Racing clubs with an estimated 30,000 members. The US produces approximately 200 Vintage Car events (Races, Car Shows and Concours etc.) annually. The UK & Europe have hundreds of clubs and produce a similar amount of events.

“A primary Vintage Racing League objective is to connect fans with Vintage racing clubs and events, local to them. We have created a guide – “How to get into Vintage Racing”. The Guide describes the 16 steps that prepare an individual to race.

“Vintage Racing is the most exciting sport I’ve ever been involved with. Participation also has unexpected benefits. Where else will your fellow competitors stay up all night to help you fix your equipment so that you can compete against them the next day? Where else will a father give up his ride so that he can mentor his daughter into the sport that he loves?”

Stephen Page races Vintage cars with CVAR in the Southwest. He has been a Vintage Racing participant for approximately 7 years. He can be found on MyVRL at: <http://www.myvrl.com/profile/Stephenpage>

If you have had a change in your membership information - in particular, your email address - notify: Dusty (dusty.brandel@gmail.com) and Andy Hartwell (ashartwell@att.net)

Also, please review your membership information in the AARWBA roster for typos and spelling errors.

Member Spotlight

Norm Froscher

Comes now into the Member Spotlight a former AARWBA president who received a bachelor's degree in journalism, but who dabbled in real estate and even writing for a Florida political campaign before writing for publications, period.

We're speaking of Norm Froscher, 78, who is still plying his trade, despite the dip in the economy.

"I'm going to continue to write, especially motor-sports, just as long as I am able and as long as it's fun and profitable," Froscher tells an interviewer from his Gainesville, Florida home. "I have had what I think is a profitable career and I look forward to continuing on."

Your early career and background. Touch on that.

"Well, my very earliest endeavor was going on the race track, washing horses, mucking out stalls and galloping along with Thoroughbreds, with the idea of becoming a jockey. I was always small of stature, about 5 feet and 90 pounds at age 15, so that was a good size."

Froscher says he spent one spring's weekend at Hialeah and then went north to Jamaica, Belmont, Aqueduct and Saratoga, New York,

"The being at the race track by six every morning agreed with me in the same way my earlier Marine Corps Organized Reserve training did and I gained weight and started adding inches to my height. I had no high schooling, so I didn't wish to become disabled and I returned to my high schooling and later to college, at the University of Miami and Florida.

"I had taken commercial art in high school, but decided to go to the writing area when I began college."

Froscher says he won a Homecoming Slogan contest his senior year, but his one job opportunity was as a sports writer in Sarasota, at a pay of 40 bucks a week.

"I figured there was more money elsewhere, so I hooked on traveling with a governor's candidate, writing releases and when that dried up I studied up and passed my real estate salesman's license and went to work for my dad. Oh, was that boring and the next step was to take a job, any job, back in writing. That was as chief copy boy and part time high school sports correspondent for the Miami News.

"That opened the way for my joining the Ocala Star Banner as sports editor and staff and covering the Florida Highway Patrol and Chamber of Commerce.



"I would stay there for three and some odd years, until I met the sports editor who would dictate my advancement.

"That was Jack Hairston, of the Jacksonville Journal whom I met at the Florida Derby (yes, Florida-bred Needles won the Kentucky Derby and Gulfstream Park did a hospitality get together of the state sport writers). We naturally shared rooms and Hairston was my roomie and he said he was going to hire me as Assistant Sports Editor as soon as he could."

Froscher says he did and he covered all sports and was responsible for the makeup of the section.

"It was here that I did my first motorsports interview, with the late Fireball Roberts, and that helped me to become further attracted to the sport.

Froscher says Hairston moved on, to Atlanta and then expanding Gainesville as sports editor and eventually he called on him to move in as executive sports editor. That opened the way for motorsports coverage.

"I glanced through that day's paper on my first time on the job and noticed the Daytona 500 qualifying was only like in a sports brief, so I went to the executive editor and said we needed to cover it better. Not having a staffer to do it, I volunteered and starting with A.J. Foyt's victory, we covered, it or staffed it, as we say.

Naturally it wasn't long before the late Bob Russo of NHRA was into town advancing the Gatornationals and that joined Daytona and Sebring on our growing calendar.

Member Spotlight *continued*

R.J. Reynolds Winston brand was becoming big in NASCAR and NHRA and with my activities, it wasn't long before I was AARWBA southern vice president,

"Then, when the late Ray Marquette went to USAC, I was voted to president for three terms and that brought Indy Cars into our coverage big time -- not just in the Sun, but in my freelancing, since there weren't rules against that in those days."

You mentioned Marquette and Russo. Who else helped you in those days?

"I will inject right here that my beloved wife Marilyn and son Teague deserve a lot of thanks for putting up with me all through my career and presently. I love them.

"I will say those who helped me the most in the field included Steve Earwood, now president of Rockingham Dragway, Jeff Byrd, now president of Bristol, Jim Hunter, now vice president of NASCAR and many more too numerous to mention."

What is your proudest achievement?

"Golly, that's hard to narrow down, but receiving the NHRA Media Award in 1975 was an honor as was naturally the Ray Marquette and Bloys Britt Awards and then having the press room -- now large and expanded, at the Gainesville Raceway -- named in my honor, was really neat.

"And, of course, on the table alongside my wall of fame is my trophy for induction into the NHRA Div. 2 Hall of Fame last year. And on that wall is also my Driver of the Year Lifetime Achievement presentation and the Bristol Motor Speedway salute and various plaques and trophies, such as the three-time national Thoroughbred media winner."

What would be your advice to a young person interested in following the same path you have taken?

"Gosh, things have changed so much in the past fifty plus years, I have to think about that a couple of minutes.

"First off, I would say get well versed in computer skills. That's how everything is done today. And then read everything you can glean on motorsports and perhaps begin by working for a neighborhood track or facility.

"I have been fortunate in that I have been at the right place at the right time. The Good Lord has blessed me."

News & Notes



Mark Armijo shows Susan Arnold of Budweiser King Racing his new culinary creation, the "Cookie Kebob," in the Firebird International Raceway media center. Armijo was covering the February NHRA Full Throttle series event for the Arizona Republic.

Photo by Michael Knight



Cruz Pedregon accepted his Horsepower Trophy from Vice President Susan Wade during the 49th annual NHRA Kragen O'Reilly Winternationals at Pomona in February. "This is really awesome," the 2008 Funny Car champ said.

Photo by Anne Proffit

NASCAR and NHRA

Two Wildly Different Assignments For Photographers

San Diego-based Ron Lewis is one of several longtime AARWBA members who photograph more than one type of motorsports. He primarily shoots NHRA drag races for such media outlets as *Drag Racing Action*, *Drag Racer*, *Car Craft*, *Motor Trend*, *Drag Racing Online*, and *Hot Rod Magazine*. However, he also attends a handful of NASCAR races each year for clients. Here's how he assesses the differences in preparation and execution:

"Photographing a NASCAR event is so much different than an NHRA event that it really demands a totally different mindset going into one. As for the race action, I have literally dozens of opportunities to shoot each car on the track, whereas at an NHRA event, I might get as few as four chances to shoot one of the pro cars, and that is if tire smoke doesn't obscure my field of vision!



One of Ron Lewis' strengths is capturing the human-interest photo at races. Here, at this year's Daytona 500, a crew member awaits his driver in the pits.

Therefore, I can be much more creative once I get the standard full-size, three-quarter front, and head-on shots.

"The number of photographers at a NASCAR event far exceeds that at an NHRA event, so I have to be much more careful not to get into someone's way and also to stake out a shooting position well in advance. This often means sitting by myself at one of the few openings in the retaining fence for more than an hour, waiting for the race or the practice session to start.



NHRA Funny Car driver "Fast Jack" Beckman gets ready to do a burnout in his Valvoline/Mail Terminal Services Dodge, and AARWBA member Ron Lewis is right there at the starting line with him.



The start of NASCAR's Auto Club 500 at Fontana, Calif., is a colorful spectacle, but it took a special strategy for AARWBA member Ron Lewis to record it.

"The spectacle surrounding a major NASCAR race is impressive: the crowd, the entertainment, the media crush, and the number of cars and drivers in a relatively small area. While an NHRA event has its own brand of excitement and spectacle, it is much easier to capture. NHRA event photography has a greater potential for dramatic images, in that the nitro cars spew large amounts of header flames at night, providing unmatched impact in my photos. On the other hand, NASCAR events typically have quite a few crashes that offer photo opportunities, but they are so spread out, that I can't count on recording very many of them."