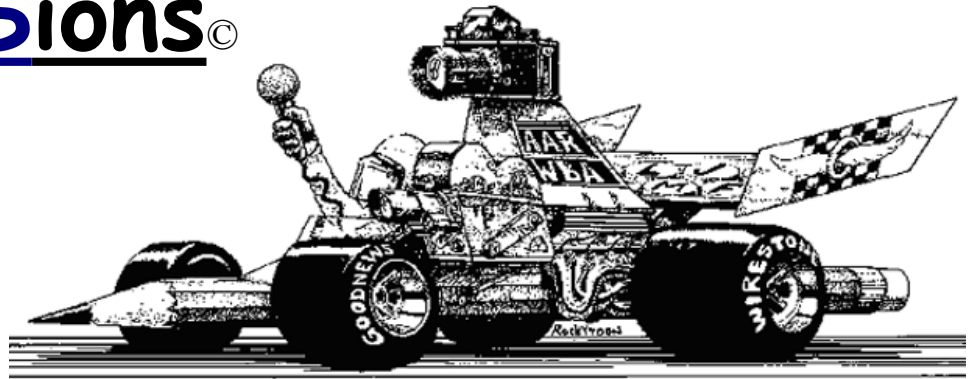


ImpRESSIONs[©]



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

May 2007



Vol. 40 No. 4

MARK YOUR CALENDAR! The annual AARWBA Indy 500 Breakfast is Saturday, May 26, at 8 a.m at the Brickyard Crossing Inn and Golf Resort (the Speedway Motel) in the Pavilion.

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New "NEWS" Format For All-America Dinner 2008! Details on page 2.



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New 'NEWS' Format For All-America Team Dinner

2008 Event Set for Saturday, January 12 at Indy Hyatt

AARWBA's 38th annual All-America Team ceremony will have a new "look" when we return to Indianapolis and the downtown Hyatt Regency for the third consecutive time. The date has been set for Saturday, January 12, 2008.

"The dinner, traditionally, has been mostly a social occasion and a good chance for people to 'network' during the reception," explained Michael Knight, who has agreed to serve as chairman for the fourth consecutive ceremony. "Those are essential parts of the evening, however, it is in AARWBA's long-term interest to make this as much a NEWS event as it is a SOCIAL occasion. Therefore, we are reformatting the schedule to provide some new opportunities and make AARWBA's most important night of the year even more important."

Things will begin at approximately 5:30 p.m. with a news conference, to be held in a separate room, near the Hyatt ballroom where dinner again will be served. For between 30 and 45 minutes, drivers, teams, sponsors, sanctioning bodies and tracks will have the opportunity to make brief news announcements or offer updates on what is happening within their series or organizations. "None of us can predict what will be newsworthy next January," said Knight. "If there is legitimate 'breaking' news, we, of course, will allocate sufficient time for that announcement. Otherwise, we envision this to be a fast-paced session with a number of speakers. In addition, we plan for some of the All-America Team drivers to be present for the news conference and be available for interviews." Further details will be provided in future newsletters and on our AARWBA.org site.

For those not participating in the news conference, the pre-dinner reception will begin at 6 p.m. Those in the news conference will be able to join the reception by about 6:15 p.m. (The conference room will remain open for one-on-one interviews.) Dinner service will begin a half-hour earlier than in the past, at 7 p.m. The awards ceremony will start about 7:45 p.m.

The tentative schedule:

- 5:30-6:15 p.m. — News conference.
- 6-7 p.m. — Reception.
- 7 p.m. — Dinner service.
- 7:45 p.m. — Awards ceremony begins.

Information on ticket and table sales, and Hyatt room reservations at the discounted AARWBA rate, will appear in upcoming newsletters. Reserve the date NOW: Saturday, January 12, 2008 at the Indianapolis Hyatt . . . and plan to bring your notepad, recorder and camera to cover the NEWS!

Also, for the first time in AARWBA's history, a long-term plan for the future of the All-America Team dinner has been researched and is currently being developed. Stay tuned for more news on that in future months!



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News & Notes

Densmore Returns After Surgery



Dave Densmore's return to the track was a happy sight at last month's NHRA event at The Strip at Las Vegas Motor Speedway. Densmore, longtime PR guru for Castrol and John Force and an AARWBA member, had quintuple heart bypass surgery just prior to our last newsletter. AARWBA Western VP Susan Wade was among many welcoming Dave back to the media center. AARWBA extends its condolences to John Force Racing and Eric Medlen's family, friends and fans on the young driver's death following a testing accident at Gainesville.

Photo by Michael Knight

PIR Expands Media Work Area

A small but positive step to improve media working conditions at Phoenix International Raceway was the introduction of an auxiliary tent during last month's NASCAR weekend. The tent was used primarily by photographers and PR reps and for food service. The deadline media room for writers remained in the cramped main infield media center, just a few steps away from the tent.

Photos by Michael Knight



Bill Claren Tells Dusty He Is Back Up To Speed

Dusty:

Thought you might like to know that I finally found what was creating the medical problems I have had over many months. My heartbeat was too slow. They put in a pacemaker and I feel much better. 2007 is my 60th year as an active participant in auto racing. The first 21 years were occupied with driving and the balance in media.

Hope all is well with you, will try to get to California sometime in 08.

Regards,
Bill Claren

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News & Notes

William Randolph Wins Economaki Award

William Randolph was named the winner of the annual "Economaki Aspiring Journalist Award". Randolph, 22, is a native of Highlands Ranch, Colo.

This award rewards young print and broadcast journalists with a passion for motorsports. The award honors legendary journalist and AARWBA past president Chris Economaki, who has been omnipresent in motorsports.

The award was launched in 2005, spawned from the Red Bull Driver Search Program, and has evolved into a larger stand-alone program.

In the photo at right, Economaki presents the award to Randolph at the Red Bull Energy Station at the Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach.



Photo By Mike Hollander, Racing Information Systems

2007 Allen Wolfe Winners Receive Award



Cathy Telaneus and **Bud Ehlers** are the recipients of the 2007 Allen Wolfe "Spirit of the Grand Prix" award, given annually by the Press-Telegram in conjunction with the Long Beach Grand Prix Association. Telaneus and Ehlers have run the deadline pressroom at the Grand Prix for all 33 races, and are lifetime members of the Committee of 300, the volunteer support group of the Long Beach Grand Prix. Telaneus is one of the group's founders. AARWBA member Allen Wolfe, who covered the first 24 Grand Prix races for the Press-Telegram, died on the Monday before the 25th race in 1999.

Photo by Dusty Brandel

Heading To Indy? The Police Suggest You Avoid The Fast Lane!

President Dusty Brandel forwarded this heads up concerning a police crackdown on speeders and those who change lanes without signaling, or generally do anything that isn't in the spirit of driving responsibly.

Indiana State Police are going to start cracking down on speeders. Their new slogan is "Lower Speeds, Less Crashes, Save Lives".

Per their Superintendent they are going to start issuing citations for

- 1) 6 miles over the speed limit.
- 2) Failure to Yield
- 3) Improper Lane Movement (which includes not signaling 300 feet before you change lanes if traveling over 50 mph or not signaling at all)
- 4) Following too close (this is a \$160.00 ticket by itself!!!!)
- 5) Passing an Officer

News & Notes

Bob Falcon's Shoehorn Saves Jason Priestly's Lifestyle

AARWBA member Bob Falcon, the inventor of the Shoehorn Rapid Extraction Tool, has a success story to tell. Falcon was the 2005 recipient of AARWBA's "Pioneer in Racing" Award.

The actor playing a roll in the "Medium" show this month, may not have been in a position to take the "Gig" if it weren't for The Shoehorn Rapid Extrication Tool.

Jason Priestly, at one time was heavily involved with Indy Car racing, and was in a bad crash a few years ago—which probably didn't enamor him with the movie producers, and his agents!

He hit the fence during an Indy Car Pro Series event and sustained serious spinal injuries. He was rescued from the wreckage by the superior IRL trackside safety crew who used the "Award Winning Shoehorn" to safely extricate him from the tight confines of a race car cockpit. The Shoehorn saved his lifestyle, and probably-his life! And also his acting career!

This episode of the series is scheduled to be broadcast on NBC on Wednesday nights, at 10 PM (PDT)...check TV listings for your area.

The remarkable Shoehorn has been the extrication tool of choice for the Indy 500 for over 30 years. Priestly is one, of many racing accident victims who owe their continuing lifestyle to this device.

Membership Updates

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Meet The Racers

Kenny Koretsky

(First in a new, occasional series of features about racers AARWBA members would enjoy getting to know; people not always in the media spotlight. Michael Knight met Kenny Koretsky last month at the NHRA SummitRacing.com Nationals at The Strip at Las Vegas Motor Speedway. If you have a racer you think AARWBA members would like to learn more about, contact newsletter editor Andy Hartwell at ashartwell@att.net)



The next time you cover an NHRA national event, be sure to stop by the Nitro Fish pits and say hello to Kenny Koretsky. It's worth the time to meet the Pro Stock driver, who is one of drag racing's most colorful and media-friendly personalities.

It shows on his Chevrolet Cobalt, which carries the distinctive graphics of Nitro Fish ultimate gear, a company featuring caps, T-shirts, diecasts and other accessories (Nitrofish.com). Koretsky smiles and says legend has it the Nitro Fish was a species dating back to the dinosaurs, known as resourceful and aggressive, but which mysteriously passed into history. Believe what you will, but remember, Kenny is always good for an entertaining quote and is fondly known as "Captain Chaos."



At Phoenix, in 1989, he became the only driver to qualify both a Pro Stock and Top Fuel car in the same NHRA national event. He won in the first round of both classes, but in the second round of Top Fuel, an engine failure put him into the sand trap and the impact cracked a vertebrae in his back. Later, he knocked in the winning run for the NHRA team in a highly-publicized softball game against NASCAR drivers.

Koretsky, 49, is from Richboro, Pa., He's president of KPK Development, a real estate investment company, and enjoys golf, aviation and boating. He's still trying for his first Pro Stock victory but was runner-up at the 2004 U.S. Nationals.

Both photos courtesy of www.nhra.com

Bob Snodgrass - A Champion Is Lost To Us



Excerpts from the Grand-Am website tribute:

"Robert F. "Bob" Snodgrass Jr., President and CEO of Brumos Racing, Brumos Motor Cars Inc., Brumos Porsche and Lexus of Jacksonville and Vice Chairman of Grand-Am passed away on April 24th at his home in Jacksonville, Fla. of an apparent heart attack. Snodgrass was born on September 25, 1942.

"Snodgrass was instrumental in the development and implementation of the Daytona Prototype category. He was honored by Daytona International Speedway in January with his induction into the speedway's Legends Walk of Fame. (Photo at left)

"Snodgrass was also a supporter of many charities through Brumos, including RITA (Research is the Answer) to prevent and cure Breast Cancer, Greyhounds As Pets, Police Athletic League, Boy Scouts of America, Jacksonville Zoo and the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office "Officer of the Month" program."

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The AARWBA Ombudsman

How to Get Help Resolving Work Concerns

Mission Statement: "To provide AARWBA members who have legitimate concerns (regarding issues such as credentials, access, and treatment by drivers, owners, officials, track and sanctioning organization personnel and other media sources), which affect their ability to perform their work assignments, an intermediary through which to address and attempt to resolve those concerns."

Process: An AARWBA member who believes he/she has a legitimate concern to bring to the AARWBA Ombudsman will follow this process:

1. The member will contact his/her appropriate regional Vice President, or a Vice President in attendance at the event.
2. The Vice President will review the situation and will have full discretion to determine if the matter falls under the Ombudsman Mission Statement. If so, the VP will attempt to quickly resolve the issue or achieve a reasonable settlement.
3. The VP will report back to the AARWBA Board. If necessary, the VP may request the President to activate the full Ombudsman Committee. The Committee will consist of three persons:
 - a) The VP who first reviewed the matter, who will lead the Committee;
 - b) A person, appointed by the President, who may have special knowledge of, or expertise in, the area of concern;
 - c) Michael Knight, who has experience on both the media and PR side of the motorsports industry, will serve as a permanent member of the Committee.
 - d) If, for any reason, it is deemed inappropriate for any Committee member to serve, the President will appoint a replacement.
4. The Committee will have complete authority from AARWBA to attempt to bring the member's concern to the best obtainable resolution.
5. The appropriate regional VP will keep the member informed of developments throughout the process. The Committee's on-going work activities will be considered "confidential" and not for the knowledge of anyone beyond the immediate parties and the AARWBA Board.
6. The Committee, upon completion of its work, will report back to the AARWBA Board. The Committee will then communicate its final report to all involved parties. The Committee will recommend to the Board what, if anything, to report to the full membership via the AARWBA newsletter. The Board will have the final decision on what information, if any, to make public.

AARWBA Ombudsman Contacts:

President: Dusty Brandel, aarwba@compuserve.com
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Secretary-Treasurer: Dr. George Peters, BarJean@prodigy.net
Ombudsman Committee Member: Michael Knight, SpinDoctor500@aol.com



**AARWBA thanks Valvoline for renewing its
Founding Sponsorship of the Ombudsman program**

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This month's issue of ImPRESSions is sponsored by
Playseats: The Ultimate Gaming Seat



Two-time Indy 500 winner Arie Luyendyk, associate and ambassador for Playseats, has announced the introduction to North America of the Indianapolis 500 Playseat, which will be available on the Indy 500 and Playseats websites.

With its worldwide registered trademark and unique patented folding system, Playseats is on its way to becoming a well-known brand internationally, pleasing racing and gaming fans around the world.

Playseats offers the authentic racing feel, featuring a real racing seat with a steel structure that can be fully adjusted in height, length and depth, resulting in perfect comfort for racing gamers of all shapes and sizes. Adjustable to every game computer and steering wheel, including PCs, Playstation2, Xbox360 and Logitech, it is ready to go in just a couple of easy steps.

Playseats also has announced a license agreement with Tony Stewart Racing, and the launch of the Tony Stewart Home Depot seat, which will be available trackside at NASCAR events, as well as on the Playseats.com and TonyStewart.com websites.

For more information, please visit www.playseats.com or infoUSA@playseats.com.

AARWBA members can have a good look at the Playseats Indy 500 model at the May 26 breakfast meeting. Arie Luyendyk will be there to show it to members and guests.