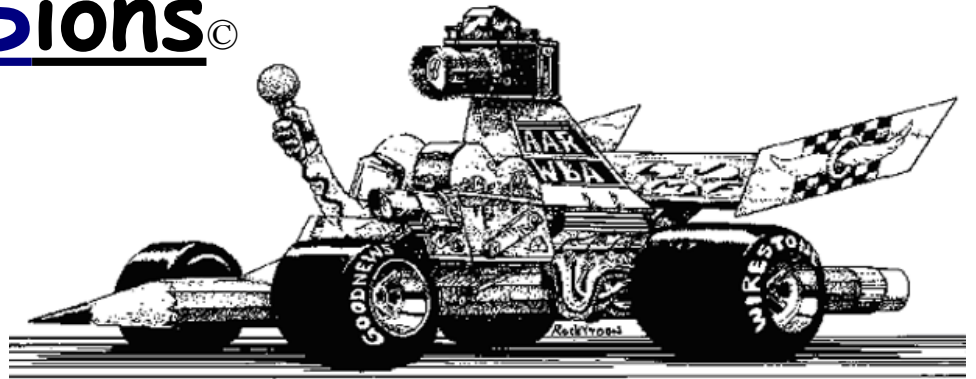


ImpRESSIONs[©]



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

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Vol. 40 No. 6

Economaki Honored



Former AARWBA President Chris Economaki (left) received a Lifetime Media Award from NHRA in ceremonies last month at Englishtown, N.J.

A letter of congratulations from NHRA founder Wally Parks came along with the plaque.

Jerry Archambeault, NHRA's VP-Communications and PR, made the presentation.



ESPN 1st Co-Host Of All-America Pre-Dinner Reception

Details on Page 2

"Wally" At Indy



(Left to right): President Dusty Brandel, Western VP Susan Wade, All-America Team and breakfast chairman Michael Knight, and National VP Mike Hollander admire "Wally" — the trophy given to every NHRA national event winner. What was "Wally" doing in the Indianapolis Motor Speedway media center? "He" was on loan, courtesy of Don Schumacher Racing Senior VP Mike Lewis, for use in a video feature Susan and Michael were doing for Wade's 1320tv.com site.

Inside this issue:

- ESPN To Co-Host Dinner
- Member Spotlight
- Member News & Notes
- When A Picture Is Worth 1,000 Wrong Words
- About The AARWBA Ombudsman

ESPN 1st Co-Host Of All-America Pre-Dinner Reception

Important changes are coming for the 38th annual All-America Team dinner, set for Saturday, January 12, at the Indianapolis Hyatt.

There will be a shift in format to make this as much a NEWS event as it is a SOCIAL occasion. So, the evening will start at 5:30 p.m., with a news conference. We anticipate a series of brief news announcements.

The pre-dinner reception will be at 6 p.m. AARWBA is offering a new opportunity for sponsors/teams/tracks/sanctioning groups: Co-host of the reception. The first confirmed co-host is ESPN, marking the all-sports network's first official involvement with AARWBA. Our thanks to George McNeilly, ESPN's senior director of communications, and Andy Hall, media relations manager. Both are AARWBA affiliate members. Several ESPN announcers are AARWBA professional members. Read more on Page 7.

The reception hour is the key time for journalists, PR people, executives and newsmakers to "network," enjoy conversation, and to make "contacts" and build relationships.

Dinner service will begin at 7 p.m. in the Hyatt ballroom. The award ceremonies will begin at 7:45 p.m. Both of these times are 30 minutes earlier than the last dinner. Bob Jenkins will again serve as MC.

In addition to the All-America Team driver awards, and announcement of the Jerry Titus Memorial Trophy winner, other honors to be presented that evening include: Dusty Brandel President's Award, Jim Chapman PR Award, Legend in Racing and Safety and Humanitarian Award. Check upcoming newsletters and aarwba.org for updates.

For more information on reception co-host sponsorship, please contact AAT dinner chairman Michael Knight at SpinDoctor500@aol.com or AARWBA President Dusty Brandel at aarwba@compuserve.com. Dusty will have details on tickets, tables and program advertising soon.

MAKE YOUR PLANS TO ATTEND NOW!

This month's issue of ImpRESSIONS is sponsored by



For transcripts, pictures and information regarding Team Lowe's Racing please go to media.lowesracing.com.
Lowe's Racing is proud to support AARWBA!

American Auto Racing Writers & Broadcasters Association, Inc. (www.aarwba.org)
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Member Spotlight

We continue our Member Spotlight series with this issue. If you would like to be featured here, please contact our newsletter editor **Andy Hartwell** at ashartwell@att.net, or **President Dusty Brandel** at AARWBA@compuserve.com.

John Davison, Director of PR at VIR



John Davison recently moved into the position of Director of Public Relations at Virginia International Raceway. He started out in the world of motorsports rallying, autocrossing and flagging SCCA races and later moved into the realm of motorsports journalism by writing for a Washington, D.C. area racing weekly, "The Stopwatcher." His love of cars found him pursuing a career in writing about racing that included a position with SPEEDVISION, before it was bought out and converted to SPEED Channel.

"I started at VIR as a corner worker back in 1974. In fact, I will be flagging an SCCA race this weekend and we have over 375 cars entered! I have always enjoyed being a corner worker and hopefully my health will allow me to remain a corner worker until the day I die."

Like many of us who started out in this line of work by first enjoying the role of enthusiastic spectator, Davison too saw an advantage to moving onto the other side of the fence. "I was standing behind the fence with a long lens on my camera and I wondered how much those people got paid to get so close to the action. I learned that those folks got in free too! I had to ask how I could do that! I asked, I found out, and my life hasn't been the same since!"

Davison got started writing about his interest in cars at the local level and his early years included covering NASCAR. "I started writing about autocrosses and rallies for a local sportscar club newsletter. I worked my way up from there to 'The Stopwatcher'. For a few years I was one of their NASCAR competition editors. I am mostly self-taught in journalism. While I did take a few college level journalism classes, I primarily learned by reading incessantly and learning what I liked and trying to emulate it.

"I've been on the other side of the Press Box desk so long that I know how I want to do things, now I just have to carry through with that desire.

"I have always been a car nut. My dad owned a gas station then went to work for General Motors for over 35 years. This was in Georgia near Athens and later in North Carolina. We were both racing fans and would listen to the races on the radio. I was always reading car magazines and when we would take rides in the family car I would always be reading the NADA guide book! I loved to read about the cars and see the illustrations. Like so many young people I could identify all the different models we would see on the road as we traveled. I can't do that anymore though!"

"I live about less than 10 minutes from the infield parking lot at Charlotte Motor Speedway. I bought the house when I was working for SPEEDVISION.com, when they were a real news bureau. When Rupert Murdoch bought out SPEED they knew they could capture the market they needed to promote NASCAR. Our Charlotte news bureau was so far removed from their home offices that they came to us on New Year's Eve of 2001, and said, 'goodbye guys'. As they say, SPEED is now 'All NASCAR, all the time!'"

Davison also continues to contribute to Mike Hollander's Racing Information Systems website and keeps himself busy - and away from his interest in fishing - through his involvement with the Future Stars In Racing Driver Development Academy. "I liken it to a charm school for young drivers coming up. We teach them the media skills and people skills they need to possess outside of the car. We work with very promising drivers whose parents or sponsors are willing to foot the bills and put in the effort to be trained on how to succeed with the all-important media. Just last night we did a web based presentation on establishing an identity and avoiding becoming a vanilla wafer, stamped from the same mold. We cited examples like Smokey Yunick, Buck Baker, and Richard Petty, people who had strong individual personalities and never lost that. We encourage them to break the mold of mediocrity so they can stand out and be noticed."

For more information on the driver's program visit www.futurestarsinracing.com

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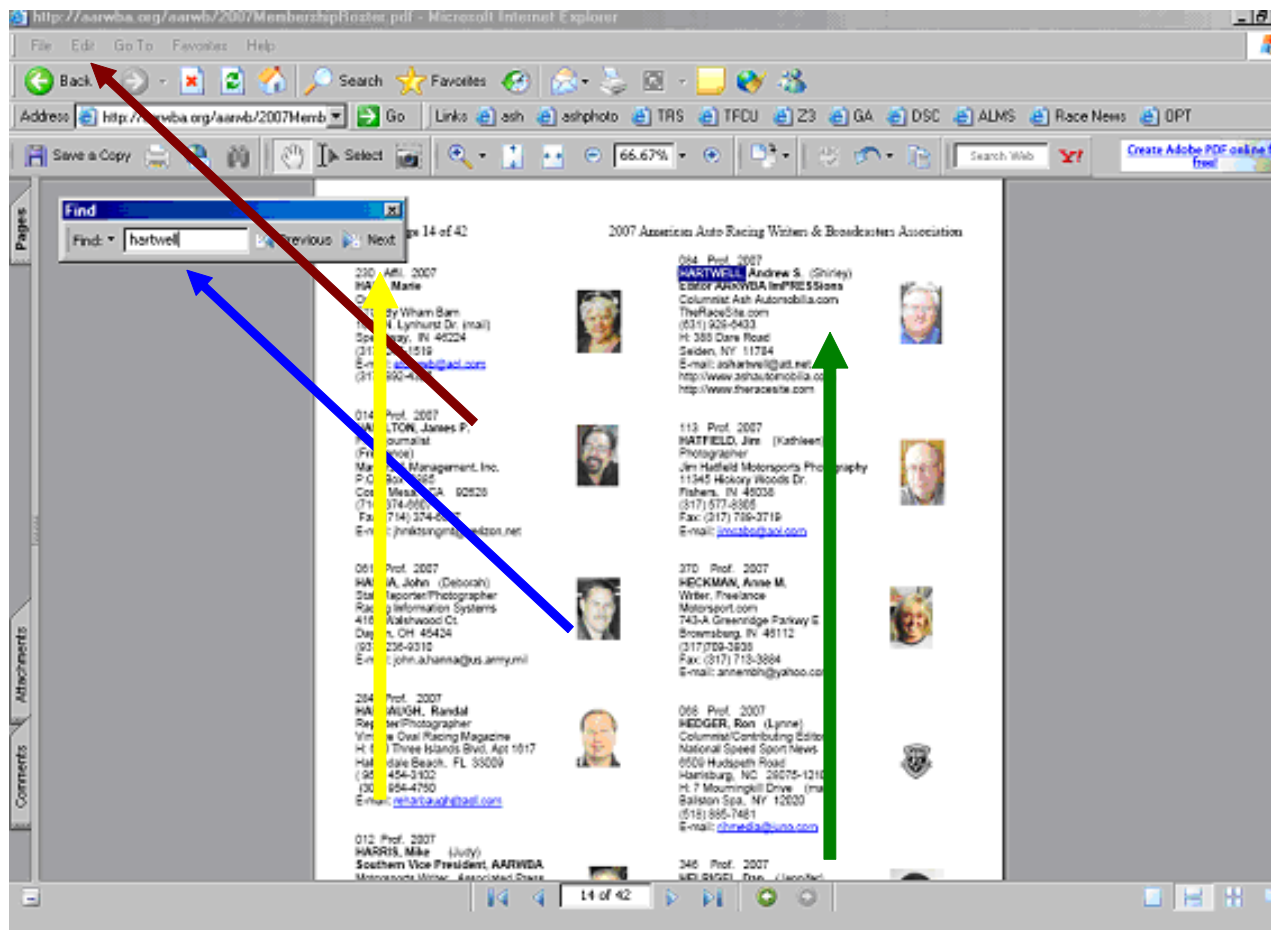
News & Notes

Looking For A Member? Here's A Tip:

If you want to find someone who is listed in the on-line version of the AARWBA directory, did you know your Acrobat Reader (the software that lets you open the directory - and the newsletter - on your PC) has a "FIND" feature? It's easy to use and will take you right to the page of the directory the person you are looking for is listed on. See the photo below and follow these simple directions.

Click on "EDIT" on the top of your browser (Red Arrow on picture below.) When the little menu opens, click on "FIND". When the small "FIND" window opens, type in the last name of the person you are looking for (Blue arrow) and then click on "NEXT" (Yellow arrow). If you typed the person's name correctly, the reader will show you the page(s) on which that name appears (Green arrow shows the entry on the page).

By the way, the FIND feature can be used on web pages too! Try it. Your PC won't explode - honest!



And Speaking Of Finding Members..

When was the last time you encouraged a friend or media peer to join the AARWBA? Well, whenever it was, now is a great time to do so! This month's newsletter has a membership form attached to it. Why not print one out and bring it with you next time you are covering a race? Or, simply forward the newsletter to someone you know should be a member. It's easy to do and helps our membership grow!

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News & Notes

Photographer Earl Ma Passes



Earl Ma receives his prize from Fred Nation

Racing Press Publisher Tony Johns sent us this heartfelt obituary for his friend Earl Ma who recently underwent cancer surgery and soon after lost his battle with the dreaded condition.

It is with great sadness that I report that Earl Ma, longtime supporter and member of the AARWBA, passed away on June 7, 2007 due to complications from a long battle with cancer.

Earl was born and raised in Honolulu, Hawaii, but he truly lived at the racetracks at which he worked. Often heavily-laden with twice his body weight in cameras and other tools of his trade, Earl and his photo vest were unmistakable in media centers across the world. That guy you saw toiling away long after the lights went out and the less-hardy shut down their laptops and headed for the hotel — that was Earl.

His passion for the sport was matched only by his dedication and work ethic. Earl epitomized the spirit of the AARWBA in everything he did — his skill and perseverance in motorsports journalism as a freelancer earned him the kind of respect one usually saves for bigger fish in the racing media pond.

In the last month of his life, Earl defied the odds to attend this year's AARWBA breakfast and watch his good friend Phil Giebler race in his first Indianapolis 500. Even confined to a wheelchair, Earl was still loaded for bear with cameras and his laptop; he cheerfully informed me that he had several articles and at least one video feature in the works only days before he passed.

I worked with Earl for nearly a decade at RacingPress.com and will never cease to admire him and appreciate him for everything he accomplished and contributed — both to myself and to racing in general. He was a good friend and a credit to his profession.

Godspeed, Earl.
Tony Johns, Publisher - RacingPress.com

PS - I've started a "guestbook" thread at RacingPress.com for people who knew Earl to post remembrances and stories about him. If you would like to read it and/or participate in it, visit the following link:

<http://www.racingpress.com/forums/showthread.php?t=1545>

Please pass the link around to Earl's friends and family that you know. Also, I'm working with the AARWBA to set up an Earl Ma New Media Award which I will be sponsoring. If any of you know of any good plaque or award designers, please drop me a line -- I'd like this to be a first-class award to honor a first-class guy. Send your thoughts to publisher@racingpress.com



News & Notes

Joe Wisniewski Passes

JoAnn Naticchia, the sister of AARWBA member **Joe Wisniewski** informed us that Joe passed away suddenly just after returning from the Indy 500. He had a massive heart attack. JoAnn told us: "My brother was so proud of his photography and loved Indy cars."

Below is a copy of the obituary as it appeared in the Trenton Times & Trentonian on June 4 & 5. There is an online guest book at the paper's website: <http://obits.nj.com/trenton/Obituaries.asp>

Joseph V. Wisniewski TRENTON - Joseph V. Wisniewski, 53, was the dearly beloved brother of Jo Ann and her husband Flory Naticchia of Marlton and David and his wife Jennifer of Georgia and loving uncle to Cameron, Patience and Barbara Ann. Joe was born and raised in Trenton, graduated from Notre Dame High School '72 and was a freelance sports photographer. Many photographs he took were printed in local and national publications such as the cover of the Pro Football Weekly and the Area Auto Racing News. As an avid Indy Race Car fan, he attended the race in Indianapolis for over 30 years and was a lifetime member of the Indianapolis 500 Old Timers Club and a member of the American Auto Racing Writers and Broadcasters Association. Also, as a member of the Living Hope Church, he spearheaded the founding of the Urban Youth Racing School for the youth of the Trenton area. Joe was known for his dedication and compassion. As an advocate for the homeless, many a night he had people sleeping in his house who were homeless.

Dusty's Note To NASCAR About Bill France Jr.

Dusty Brandel added these comments to the NASCAR website space set aside for fans to send messages to the France family.

"Bill France Jr. was a pioneer like his father 'Big Bill', and pushed the growth of stock car racing into a national pastime during NASCAR's modern era.

"Bill France Jr. was a man of his word. When AARWBA honored NASCAR at the All America Team Banquet at the Spruce Goose in Long Beach, Bill was unhappy that none of the NASCAR Team winners attended the event. Bill promised that he would see that NASCAR was represented in the future. The next banquet both Rusty Wallace and Mark Martin attended to receive their "Horsepower Trophy". And each following year, at least one NASCAR driver would attend, until our event date conflicted with the Winston Preview. Since that time no NASCAR driver has been able to join the other six category winners at the event.

"AARWBA offers our condolences to his wife, Betty Jane, his children, Brian and Lesa, the rest of the family and all who mourn his loss."

Dusty Brandel, President

Kay Sends Dusty Her Thanks

Dear Dusty,
I certainly missed being at Indy this year, but was delighted to receive the envelope with my three awards. My sincere thanks to the faithful sponsors of this contest, and to contest chair Jerry Miller and all the judges who took their valuable time to evaluate each entry. All that dedication is much appreciated.
Sincerely,

Kay Presto

A Note From Bloys Britt Winner Ron Hedger

Dusty: Thanks for the newsletter and for sending along the awards from Indy. Once again, I regret not coming out for the breakfast but the recognition is still great. The Bloys Britt plaque went right on the wall alongside my pair of Frank Blunk awards from EMPA.
Thanks again, Ron Hedger

Double Winnings!

All the AARWBA Contest winners from Dick Berggren's Speedway Illustrated will get double the amount of their winnings as Dick matches what they won in the contest!

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News & Notes

Presto Presented With Girl Scouts Award

The Girl Scouts of San Geronio Council presented their first Lifetime Achievement award to Ontario businesswoman/reporter **Kay Presto**, owner of Presto Productions, during the Girl Scouts' Women of Distinction Awards luncheon at the Riverside Marriott in Riverside.

It was awarded to Presto for her 37 years of successful coverage of motorsports of all types. "We as Girl Scouts pride ourselves in building the leaders of tomorrow," said Michelle Eklund, director of public affairs and marketing for the Girl Scouts' Council, "and that is very much what Kay has done in her career. She is the perfect choice for this award."

Presto was also honored in April as a "Rising Star" at the "Women Making A Difference" business luncheon held by the Los Angeles Business Journal at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles..

ESPN Covers Racing Across Many Media Platforms

With a return to his motorsports roots in 2005, George McNeilly (george.mcneilly@espn.com) has come full circle in his career, now senior director corporate and consumer communications for ESPN multi-platform businesses.

ESPN's motorsports programming now includes the four major North American sanctioning bodies: NASCAR, IndyCar, Champ Car and NHRA. NASCAR NEXTEL Cup returns to ESPN with the July 29 Allstate 400 at the Brickyard. ESPN and ESPN on ABC will have comprehensive, multi-platform coverage featuring telecasts of the final 17 NASCAR NEXTEL Cup races, including the 10-race "Chase for the NASCAR NEXTEL Cup" championship on ESPN on ABC. Additionally, ESPN2 is the home of the NASCAR Busch Series all season.

ESPN's multimedia NASCAR coverage extends to ESPN.com, ESPN Deportes, ESPN Deportes Radio, SportsCenter, ESPN The Magazine, ESPN Classic, ESPNEWS, ESPNRadio, ESPN360.com and ESPN International, among other ESPN platforms.

Based at Walt Disney World, McNeilly guides an award-winning PR team that also is responsible for ESPN Regional Television and BASS – the world's largest fishing organization, acquired by ESPN in 2001.



Before joining BASS in 1999, McNeilly was a sportscaster for the NBC and CBS Radio Networks, covering Summer and Winter Olympics, Super Bowls and motorsports. As a teenager, he did pit road interviews at Daytona for NBC and was recruited by the late Dave Overpeck to join AARWBA in 1983. Through the years, McNeilly took home several first-place awards for radio reporting.

From 1997 to 1999, he wrote, produced and hosted a weekly trackside TV segment for CBS Cable's Home Team Sports. The program was recognized by AARWBA for Best Television Reporting.

The ESPN PR team for motorsports also features former NASCAR Director of Public Relations and IndyCar marketing alum Andy Hall (andy.hall@espn.com), a 25-year veteran of the motorsports industry, and Jenny Zimmerman (jennifer.j.zimmerman@espn.com), a former sports copy chief and NASCAR writer for The Palm Beach Post and Daytona Beach News-Journal – both media relations managers – and Kimberly Jessup (kimberly.jessup@espn.com) who serves as a senior publicist.

For more information about motorsports on ESPN, please visit espnmediazone.com or call George, Jenny, Andy or Kim at (407) 566-2208.



(Left to right): Marty Reid, ESPN senior director of communications George McNeilly, Rusty Wallace and Scott Goodyear. Reid, McNeilly and Goodyear are AARWBA members.

When A Picture Is Worth 1,000 Wrong Words

Michael Knight's weekly industry blog, SpinDoctor500blog.blogspot.com, recently pointed out what can happen when unknowledgeable people mix with the so-called "new media."

When a Pro Mod drag car crashed during a charity parade in Selmer, Tenn., resulting in several spectator fatalities and injuries, the home page of Miami-area radio powerhouse WIOD used a photograph of a John Force Funny Car to illustrate the story. As Knight said, this was wrong and misleading, as the Force team and sponsors had no involvement at all in the incident. Knight called it "completely unacceptable from a journalistic standpoint."

AARWBA affiliate member and long-time Force publicist Dave Densmore took note and immediately wrote the station's program director. "I would ask that if the station has not already done so, that it immediately remove the image of John Force's Castrol GTX race car from the site. The car involved in the Tennessee accident WAS NOT this type of car and, even by association, to suggest that a team of this caliber would consider putting an actual RACE CAR on public roads is incredibly naive . . ." This drew a fast response from Andy Friedman, VP-news content, Clear Channel Online Music & Radio: "As soon as we were notified about the use of the picture in the news story that showed the John Force car, we removed it. We sincerely regret the error and will make sure it never happens again."

Knight's blog also highlighted former British Prime Minister Tony Blair's comments about the Fleet Street media. Blair, Britain's leader for 10 years, said the following at a Reuters conference.

Blair called out the media for acting like "feral beasts" with reduced standards and an emphasis on promoting sales. "In these modes it is like a feral beast, just tearing people and reputations to bits, but no one dares miss out." Blair said the difference between comment and actual news stories is now so blurred that politicians must respond immediately to counter false reports before they are perceived as fact. "News is rarely news unless it generates heat as much as or more than light. Second, attacking motive is far more potent than attacking judgement. It is not enough for someone to make an error. It has to be venal. Conspiratorial . . . Of course the accuracy of a story counts. But it is secondary to impact. It is this necessary devotion to impact that is unravelling standards, driving them down, making the diversity of the media not the strength it should be but an impulsion towards sensation above all else."

Blair admitted he was describing "something few people in public life will say, but most know is absolutely true: A vast aspect of our jobs today — outside of the really major decisions, as big as anything else — is coping with the media, its sheer scale, weight and constant hyperactivity. At points, it literally overwhelms."

Agree or disagree, it is worth thinking about what Blair said.

One More Photo From The Indy Breakfast



Bruce Bennett happily accepts check
from Fred Nation

Breakfast co-sponsored by Firestone and Honda

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
National Vice President: Mike Hollander, racing@motorsportsforum.com
Eastern Vice President: Lewis Franck, lfranck@ix.netcom.com
Southern Vice President: Mike Harris, msharris@ap.org
Midwest Vice President: Ron Lemasters, rlemasters14@comcast.net
Western Vice President: Susan Wade, susanw7754@aol.com
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**

American Auto Racing Writers & Broadcasters Association, Inc. (www.aarwba.org)

"Dedicated To Increasing Media Coverage of Motor Sports"



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"Dedicated To Increasing Media Coverage of Motor Sports"

The AARWBA is the oldest and largest professional organization of its kind. Founded in 1955 in Indianapolis, it has grown to more than 400 members throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. Each year the AARWBA members select a 14-driver All America Team from Open Wheel, Stock Car, Sports Car, Drag Racing, Short Track, Touring Series and At Large championship categories. An annual banquet is held to honor these drivers each January. AARWBA also sponsors several contests for its members and established the "Legends in Racing" auto racing hall of fame.

AARWBA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION

Name:		Date:
Company:		
Title:		
Business Address:		
City:	State:	ZIP Code:
Phone:	E-mail:	FAX:

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Home address:		
City:	State:	ZIP Code:
Phone:	E-Mail:	FAX:
Preferred Mailing Address: HOME <input type="checkbox"/> OFFICE <input type="checkbox"/> (Please note that our newsletter, "ImpRESSIONs", is sent via e-mail)		
Preferred E-Mail Address For Newsletter:		

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL

Media Professional (\$45.00) <input type="checkbox"/>	Affiliate Member (\$65.00) <input type="checkbox"/>	Associate / Corporate (\$300.00) <input type="checkbox"/>
Signature of applicant:		Date:

Active Media Member

Applicants for active media membership status must submit the following materials to the membership committee for consideration. Materials must be submitted with your check.

- ✓ A fully executed membership application. **(This information will appear in the membership directory unless you specify otherwise. Attach a note to this application if necessary.)**
- ✓ Two 1" x 1.5" head shot pictures for use in the directory and for an I.D. badge.
- ✓ Tear sheets or samples of work as follows:
 - Two published articles on the subject of auto racing in a publication of general circulation within the past year.
 - Photographs on auto racing appearing in two publications of general circulation or two separate times in one publication, within the past year.
 - One video or audio tape of any race broadcast where spectators attended and exhibited the applicant's work within the past year.
 - One book on the subject of auto racing within the past year or three books on the subject of auto racing, or one book contracted from any trade publisher for a book on auto racing



Affiliate Member

Open to public relations, team representatives, motorsports advertising personnel. Full voting rights and privileges except to hold office.

Associate/Corporate Membership

Open to any person, regardless of affiliation or professional orientation, who is interested in furthering the aims of the American Auto Racing Writers & Broadcasters Association and/or motorsports in general. Corporate membership is limited to three (3) non-voting memberships for the \$300 fee.

Mail completed application, photos, and your check to the address shown above.

The American Auto Racing Writers & Broadcasters Association 922 North Pass Avenue Burbank, CA 91505-2703 (818) 842-7005