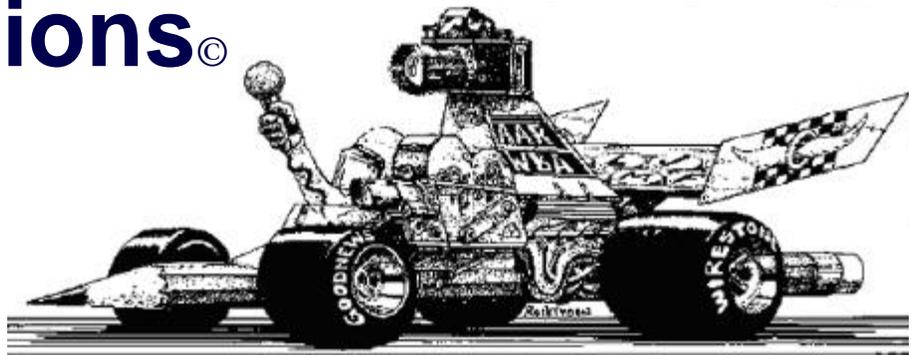


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The Official Newsletter Of The American Auto Racing Writers and Broadcasters Association

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2014! Good Times For Fast Friends!



Happy New Year



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

"Dedicated To Increasing Media Coverage Of Motor Sports"

Saxton Signs Off At Grandview

Ernie Saxton, the distinguished voice of one of America's great clay ovals, has concluded a 45-year career behind the mic at Grandview Speedway.

Since 1968 Saxton, 71, of Langhorne, Pa., called all the racing action for generations of fans as the track announcer at the one-third mile oval in Bechtelsville, Pa.



Ernie Saxton in his summertime Saturday night environment of 45 years, the track announcer's booth at Grandview Speedway in Bechtelsville. - Photo by Chris Budihas

Grandview is operated by the second and third generations of the Rogers family. Forrest Rogers built the track and opened it in 1963, and Saxton started working there in the late 1960s.

Based on a 22-week season over 45 years Saxton announced about 990 Grandview race nights. He said he missed no more than 10 events.

"Three of those nights were to attend White House Correspondents' Dinners," Saxton said. "You just can't pass up those opportunities, and I did get to meet several presidents."

He met a bipartisan trio of world leaders including presidents Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush.

Saxton enjoyed almost every race night he ever announced, and didn't retire from the booth because he lost enthusiasm for the job.

"Announcing is still fun," Saxton said. "My back has been bothering me for some time. Climbing the steps to the tower and sitting on a stool behind the microphone for four hours has been taking a toll," Saxton said.

Saxton said that from the beginning he enjoyed working with the Rogers family.

"Bruce Rogers and I talked about me coming to work for him and I started doing PR and writing press releases for Grandview in the late 1960s. I started out as an employee, but it came to feel like family. I felt appreciated," Saxton said.

"Ernie always did a great job and played a big part of Grandview Speedway's success," said Bruce Rogers, son of the track's founder and head of the family business. "He got the word out about the track by doing PR in addition to his announcing."

"He's been with us a long time and we're good friends," Rogers' wife Teresa said of Saxton. "We've vacationed together. "We hate to see him go."

While his final race as the full-time announcer was on Sept. 14, Saxton will remain available on a fill-in basis and will continue to maintain a weekly presence at the track.

Saxton announced his first race at the Atlantic City (N.J.) Speedway in the early 1960s. He was the publicist for the American Three-Quarter Midget Racing Association. The track announcer wasn't familiar with the division and asked Saxton, who knew all the cars and drivers, to stand in for him.

"I hadn't announced a race before and I was shy about public speaking. I was worried everyone would be looking at me. The track announcer convinced me that the fans would be watching the races and wouldn't even know I was up there in the tower," Saxton said. "Things were going OK and a side-by side battle for the lead developed. I was excitedly calling the action when a potato bug flew into my mouth. I choked and coughed for most of a lap. By the end of the day I did well enough that I announced another race the following week."

Saxton and wife Marilyn also operate Ernie Saxton Communications Inc., a motorsports consulting firm. The Saxton's company will continue to conduct Grandview's media and public relations efforts and publish the track's souvenir program, Grandview Groove.

Saxton was a 13-year manager of marketing at Chilton Book Company when he struck out on his own to focus full time on Ernie Saxton Communications in 1989. The company publishes Motorsports Marketing News, presents seminars on short track racing marketing and sponsorships, and consults with individual teams on sponsorship sales efforts. Saxton will also continue as columnist for Area Auto Racing News and several other motorsports and mainstream newspapers.

Saxton believes that even in the era of social media, a lot of short tracks today could improve their marketing and public relations efforts.

"It takes more than Facebook and Twitter to market and promote a track. To make it all work, a track needs to practice good public relations," Saxton opined.

Saxton said the late Jim Hunter, a NASCAR vice president who led NASCAR's public relations department for years, was the best when it came to PR.

"Jim preached that public relations efforts are built on personal relationships. He was an encyclopedia of NASCAR racing because he was in touch with people at every level including the NASCAR Whelen All-American Series. He could talk with Tony

Saxton Signs Off At Grandview



Stewart just the same as he could with any driver at Grandview Speedway.

"He'd pick up his phone and talk to promoters and racers and asked what was going on with them. He'd keep up with non-NASCAR tracks. He always wanted to see the big picture. He always found someone who knew something about whatever was on his mind."

Hunter passed away two years ago this month. Saxton was among his closest friends.

"My greatest memory of Hunter is from February 2011. I received the Russ Moyer Media Award from the Living Legends of Auto Racing group during Speedweeks. Hunter was battling cancer, but he arrived at the event wearing a tux and went on stage to help present the award. Jim Hunter was an exceptional friend," Saxton said.

Saxton said his own long-term success in multiple business platforms could not have been accomplished without the partnership and expertise of his wife of nearly 38 years. Their high quality Grandview Groove souvenir program is Marilyn Saxton's project. Despite Grandview's Saturday night race night, the next week's souvenir program is taken to their longtime printer Bill's Printing in Trenton, N.J. each Monday.

"Our work has gotten a little easier now that we're both retired from full-time jobs," Marilyn Saxton said. She was a travel agency consultant for about 25 years. "There are so many things to do and we always manage to make it work."

Her step-father, Ed Darrell, was a car owner and promoter of the east coast-based American Racing Driver Club, so she's a lifetime racer, too.

"I'd probably never accomplished anything without Marilyn," Saxton said. "She's a complete professional in what we do."

"It's been a good life," Marilyn said. "We've seen and done things we never imagined because of Grandview Speedway."

Her husband agreed.

"It's been good."

AARWBA reflects on the passing of a racing Icon, Andy "Mr. STP" Granatelli:

"We are truly sorry to hear of the passing of the outstanding racing icon, Andy Granatelli," said Dusty Brandel, president of AARWBA (American Auto Racing Writers & Broadcasters Association).



Dolly and Andy Granatelli

"Andy was a tremendous supporter of the American Auto Racing Writers and Broadcasters Association for many years, going all the way back to 1969, when our international organization was just beginning.

"As President of STP, Andy sponsored our annual AARWBA Media contest for many years. STP also sponsored our annual breakfast meeting the Saturday before the Daytona 500, and the Indy 500, which were always great media events.

"Andy was a gifted race car owner and marketer who left his indelible mark on the racing world, and much more.

"For all his generous sponsorship and his many outstanding achievements and contributions to auto racing, AARWBA was pleased to honor Granatelli in 2001 as our famed "Pioneer in Racing." He will be sorely missed from the sport."



Gorsline Company Announces New Deal with Ellis Clowes

John Gorsline, principal of Gorsline Company, the premier insurer of high-risk athletes in the U.S. for four decades, announced today that Gorsline Company has concluded a deal to secure the future development of its business. Following discussions between Gorsline and Karen Ellis, CEO of Gorsline's longtime Lloyd's of London brokers Ellis Clowes, a new organization, Ellis Clowes North America, has been formed to continue the legacy that Gorsline has created and nurtured in the auto-racing arena.



Gorsline Company

"We are delighted to have secured a growth and succession plan with our London brokers which satisfies my dream to ensure that our clients are looked after for many years to come," said Gorsline, who will stay on as Chairman, President and CEO of Gorsline Company and will be a director of Ellis Clowes North America.

Ellis Clowes North America has employed Andy Villa as COO. Villa is an insurance expert in New York and prior to this appointment had been with Gorsline Company for four years. Tim Nagle, Managing Director of Ellis Clowes, with his colleagues, will be making regular trips to the U.S. to assist in the expansion of the business.



"I am absolutely confident that through our efforts, as well as Andy's and Tim's, Ellis Clowes North America will continue my personal passion for motorsports and will serve our clients extremely well," added Gorsline. "Andy and Tim are a formidable duo and have the drive and energy to take the business to the next level. After all, they have youth on their side!"

Gorsline personally has enjoyed a longtime friendship with Tim Clowes, the original founding partner of T L Clowes & Company in 1977, both of whom share the same passion for motorsports. With Clowes' mentorship, Gorsline pioneered the concept of motorsports insurance in the U.S., and this latest development with Ellis Clowes North America came after 40 years of working together. Gorsline has long advocated Lloyd's of London Insurance as the premier specialist provider in the world. "Lloyd's of

London's market underwriters understand the business and risk of motorsports and thus have an impeccable claims-settling heritage," he said.

"I first met John in the '80s and between the two firms we have earned an enviable reputation in motorsports insurance." said Ellis. "I have had a long and successful career in this specialist motorsports field as a Lloyd's broker, and I have never been as excited as I am now at this opportunity. John can be confident that his hard work over the last four decades will continue to move forward with this new development, and I would like to express my thanks for the opportunity he has given us and the faith he has shown in Ellis Clowes."

About Gorsline Company - Gorsline Company, headquartered in Rochester, N.Y., pioneered the business of providing insurance for high-risk professionals in the U.S. The company specializes in providing racing drivers and team owners creative, custom-designed insurance packages and estate planning strategies. In addition to insuring top racing drivers in all U.S. racing series for over 45 years, the company has been instrumental in structuring successful Performance Bonus Packages for teams, tracks and series. Dedicated to the motorsports community, Gorsline Company has awarded the Gorsline Company scholarship since 1994 to talented up-and-coming drivers, as well as the Walter Mitty Award to the vintage driver who demonstrates the sportsmanship of the committed "gentleman vintage driver." Gorsline Company also supports the Bob Snodgrass Award, given to the TUDOR United SportsCar Racing Championship team owner and/or manager who shares the professionalism and dedication of the late Bob Snodgrass. Company principal John Gorsline has also been frequently mentioned in articles in the New York Times, USA Today and numerous motorsports publications. He is also a member of the Road Racing Drivers Club, the Automobile Club of Monaco, the Automobile Club de l'Ouest, and the Goodwood Road Racing Club.

About Ellis Clowes & Company Limited - The team at specialist Lloyd's Insurance Broker, Ellis Clowes & Company Limited, has been the world's leading provider to the international motor sport industry for more than 30 years. As well as strengthening its position in the motor sport sector, Ellis Clowes is also a specialist Broker for War and Terrorism, Commercial Combined and Rugby Union. Ellis Clowes & Company Limited operates from two offices: one in the heart of the City of London, Great St. Helen's immediately adjacent to the Lloyd's of London Building, and since October 2011 an office in the market town of Banbury in the heartland of the British motor sport community.

From Dusty

As the year comes to a close, may I wish for you a Happy New Year in 2014.

The Orthopedic Surgeon found me two new knees to start out 2014, it is just taking awhile to heal. I am behind in sending out the dues renewal form, so... if you already sent yours in, THANKS! For those who have not, just use the membership form here or go to PayPal directly from www.aarwbas.org.

Thanks so much, Dusty

News & Notes

Correction

We were provided with the wrong photo for our article on people in danger at the Auto Club Speedway MAV TV event that appeared in last month's issue. Here is the correct photo and revised caption.



Although all photographers at the IndyCar finale at Auto Club Speedway were instructed not to go in between the south pit wall and the race cars during IndyCar qualifying, because it was too dangerous, these people are doing exactly that -- leaning against the pit wall next to the race cars. This was happening while IndyCars were also qualifying on the racetrack directly behind them. They had their backs to the race cars which were running at high speed.

2014 Wishes From Bill Vartorella



May this coming year be one of sweeping right-handers, perfect ride-heights, effortless pit stops, no stop-and-gos, great sponsors and fans, competitors visible only from your rear-view mirrors, and a safe, fast ride.

Each of us has a formula for success.
Embrace it. Race it.
Best, Bill Vartorella

Rapidly approaching our 30th year
of global engagement.

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Comments on Shorts

Dusty recently received these notes from AARWBA members.

Dusty:
Happy Holidays!

I just got around to the newsletter with the article on the MAVTV 500 at Fontana and have a couple of comments.

While I haven't worked an IndyCar race for a long time, I do know that they always set the rules for wearing attire by photographers, and that always included long pants and no open-toed shoes. So, if there were shooters out there in shorts and the like, IndyCar is responsible for that, and IndyCar alone.

As far as turning your back to the cars, you're never going to be able to completely stop that, but I would add that those foolish enough to ignore the cars for even a second are usually the youngest, least-experienced shooters. Since they haven't yet been hit by parts and the like, they figure it won't happen. How wrong they are.

Again noting that I haven't worked an IndyCar race for a long time, I was nevertheless concerned about the paragraph that referenced people meeting the requirements to get a photo vest. If this was worded accurately, meaning that IndyCar wasn't determining a photographer's "legitimacy" until he or she was on site, that's ludicrous. Why would I, or anyone else for that matter, "invest" in the travel to get to a race and then be told I couldn't shoot? I wouldn't come out at all. Those decisions upon receipt of the photographer's credential request, not at the last second. If I for one second thought I'd be denied access, I wouldn't be there in the first place.

Thanks for listening.
Regards.,
Jon Asher

Dusty:
In regards to the MAV500, this is very, very minor, but if it helps with issues, here is what happened to me on qualifying day:

I wanted to go to pit road to get some quick video for the Web site. Track officials said my credential wasn't qualified. I went to Joann Young and told her track officials would not let me on. She said that of course my credential was cleared for that. I went back and told the same two track workers. They said it wasn't. Went back to Joann and she called the head of (I guess it would be) security/safety. He told her he would talk to the workers and let me through. I waited a few minutes, went back out and they still would not let me through. I told them I wanted to talk to that person. The man escorted me to the start of the pit road entrance (to about where the back of the pit box is) and told me he was that way, pointing toward the west. I asked if I really needed to talk to him. He said, "No." I walked out and started work with hundreds of people out there in shorts and sandals.

I was trying to add to our coverage of the event. People (who I wondered how and why where there--They might have had a legitimate reason, but it did not seem like it) were milling around.

Again, I consider this EXTREMELY minor and I never had a second thought about it until reading the newsletter. But if there were bigger issues, then something was seriously out of whack.

(And on that photog with his back turned, yes he should have known better and was told.... but we all have quick mental lapses. But if he does it more than once.....)

Keith Lair
Los Angeles Newspaper Group



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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 OFFICE (Please note that our newsletter, "ImpRESSIONs", is sent via e-mail)		
Preferred E-Mail Address For Newsletter:		

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL

Media Professional (\$45.00)	Affiliate Member (\$65.00)	Associate / Corporate (\$300.00)
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

Your
Photo
Should
Be This
Size

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.

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