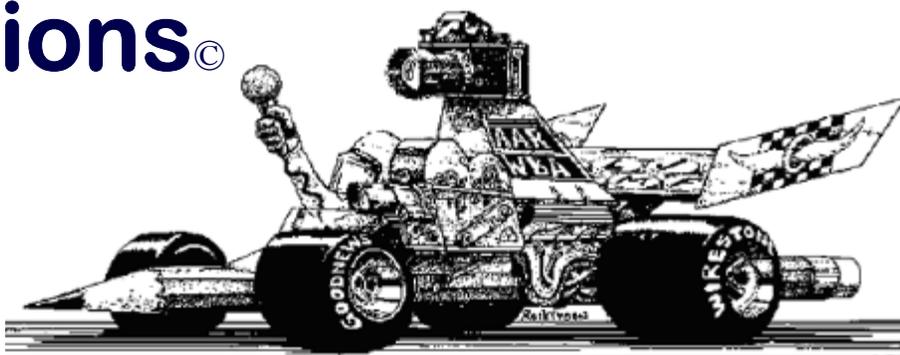


# ImPRESSions©



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

April / May 2008

Vol. 41 No. 4



## Indy 500 AARWBA Breakfast

Saturday Morning, May 24th, at 8:00 a.m.

Brickyard Crossing Inn & Golf Resort - Pavilion.

Tickets at the door, or from Dusty in the Media Center.

Journalism Contest - Co-sponsored by the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and The IndyCar Series - Winners To Be Announced!

Support our breakfast sponsors HONDA and Firestone



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### Special Guests At The Breakfast!

*Tommy Johnson Jr. and Melanie Troxel, husband and wife who are competing against each other for different teams in the NHRA Funny Car class, will be special guests at the breakfast. They will speak to guests and be available for interviews.*

American Auto Racing Writers & Broadcasters Association, Inc. ([www.aarwba.org](http://www.aarwba.org))

"Dedicated To Increasing Media Coverage Of Motor Sports"

## From The National Vice-President, Mike Hollander

Long ago, when Champ Car first came to Long Beach, the deadline press corps was relegated to a ladies' locker room with narrow aisles and wide tables, making for a difficult situation. The old promoter learned his lesson, and for many years now, Jim Michaelian, Chris Esslinger and his staff have provided first-rate facilities for the media in the state-of-the-art Convention Center. There are separate rooms for those on deadline, Internet/Photography, Radio and General media outlets, each serviced by a wonderful group of volunteers from the Committee of 300 who provide media with everything they need.

The staff came in for special kudos from this reporter for understanding and compassion this year. Because this is one of the years during which Passover coincides with race weekend, the staff provided strictly Kosher meals for Jewish members of the media corps. I expect they'd have done the same for others whose religious practice required a sacrifice. That's in addition to the fine meals provided to other members of the working media. Wow! Talk about "above and beyond," these folks went WAY out of their way, at no small expense, to make it happen for us.

Speaking of those who've stepped up their efforts to aid the media, NASCAR's media website ([www.nascarmedia.com](http://www.nascarmedia.com)) has improved enormously even since the beginning of this season.

They're now providing materials of use to journalists whose outlets are online and through social networking sites. What a change in philosophy from the "olden days" when no one wanted to recognize what on-line media was all about. Sometimes, though, I have to laugh when I hear people describe what social networking is all about. The graphics are prettier, the bandwidth is larger, but really, they're not doing anything that we didn't start doing from the start on the old CompuServe Motor Sports Forum in 1983 - using chat rooms, integrating photos and words, and creating a community. Everything old is new again. (Continued next page)



**This month's issue of ImPRESSions is sponsored by**



### 2008 Schedule

April 20 -- Long Beach	Aug 17 -- Streets of Trois-Rivieres, Quebec
May 18 -- Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca	Sept 14 -- New Jersey Motorsports Park
June 29 -- Circuit Mont-Tremblant	September 21 -- Miller Motorsports Park
July 25 and 26 -- Rexall Speedway, Edmonton	October 3 -- Road Atlanta
August 9 and 10 -- Road America	

**Nate Siebens, Communications Director, Atlantic Championship**

**Office: 386-624-7603 Cell: 386-216-9884**

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## Mike Hollander Continued

The combination of Champ Car World Series and Indy Car Series this year gives the naysayers another chance to complain, but in my own observations, it's been the most positive possible outcome for the sport. There are, of course, casualties in any such combination, and those who suffer "collateral damage." All of us should take a moment and think about those who don't have work any more, helping them to locate an appropriate position.

Long Beach, the first street race to begin in modern history, stands out in another way. They hold their pre-event news conference at a different facility each year. Those facilities aren't racing shops, they're community facilities including such places as an art museum, the Boeing aircraft manufacturing plant, the Sea Launch satellite launching facility and many, many more. They bring racing into the community and bring the media out to learn about places off the beaten track or otherwise unavailable. This year, the event was held at the Rancho Los Alamitos park, where your observer noted a tree bigger around than anything I've ever seen - and yes, I've been to Redwood National Park.

On a personal note, I want to express my profound appreciation for all those of you who've sent cards and letters since I was diagnosed with peritoneal mesothelioma (a very rare cancer - "lucky" me). If you were exposed to asbestos while you were in the Navy, you might just want to get some preliminary scans done. This one hides until all of a sudden, "wham." I could decide to get up each morning angry about what's happened, but I choose to get up each morning and select happiness. With your help and prayer, and that of my family and other friends, I'll take this one day at a time and, in the words of Lance Armstrong, "Live Strong."

Michael F. Hollander

***The members of the AARWBA wish to again thank all of our sponsors for their support!***

## Long Beach Photos

*By Dusty Brandel*



The Toyota compound was full of celebrities, drivers and media on the Grand Prix of Long Beach weekend.

(Top) Member Bobbie Colgrove is pictured with '07 Funny Car Champion Tony Pedregon before the Pro-Celebrity race on Saturday. Member Jamie Little finished first overall in the race and Tony finished 5th.

(Middle) Member Alan Wong didn't want to be left out of the photo-shoot with Pedregon, and was trying to talk Tony out of his great looking helmet.

(Bottom) Following the the Champ Car finale press conference with the winners, the media had a press conference with Twin Ring Motegi winner Danica Patrick. She looked fresh and handled the hour-long interviews easily.



# News & Notes

## William C. "Dutch" Eggert Passes - A Founding Member of AARWBA

*Member Jim Wilson passed this sad note along to us.*

William C. "Dutch" Eggert, 89, former sports writer and copy desk chief at the Indianapolis Star, passed away March 30, 2008 in Indianapolis.

"Dutch" as he was known to media and friends, was a sportswriter and editor at the Indianapolis Times, before joining the Star sports department in 1955.



He was one of the early founders of the Auto Racing Writers and Broadcasting Association in 1955. (His passing leaves just Bill Marvel as the sole surviving founder.)

Dutch was a 1942 graduate of Butler University and an Army veteran of WWII. A member of American Legion Speedway Post 500, a life member of Speedway Old-Timers Club, and the Indianapolis Hardscrabble Press Club.

Eggert retired from the Indianapolis Star in 1987. His newspaper career began as a correspondent for the Indianapolis Times, covering Manual High School athletic events.

Survivors include: wife Betty (Wendling) Eggert; sons, Kyle (Tambla), Kim (Linda), Kris (Donna); daughter, Kelly (Vince) Delaney and 10 grandchildren.

## Kay Presto Poem Honors Eric Medlen

When NHRA Funny Car driver Eric Medlen passed away in a practice car crash in 2007, AARWBA past Western Vice President Kay Presto wrote a heartfelt poem and sent it to John Medlen, Eric's father. Recently, she was informed that her poem has been put on the [johnforceracing.com](http://johnforceracing.com) Web site, in tribute to Eric.

To read the poem, go into [johnforceracing.com](http://johnforceracing.com) and click into the Eric Medlen Tribute section. Kay recently received a letter from a drag racing fan saying how Eric was his idol, and how that poem in Eric's Tribute section has been an inspiration to him.

For the benefit of our members, the poem also appears below.

### A Tribute to Eric

The sun is at its' brightest, and bluest is the sky  
And there is Eric Medlen, that famed twinkle in his eye  
Roaming around in his new Heaven, meeting everybody new  
Shaking hands and smiling, saying "I am so glad to meet you,"

He's roped and raced his way through life, a  
mark he's left behind  
And brought a ray of sunshine in every way he could  
He learned to speak some Japanese so to them he'd relate  
And taught his roping skills to all and told them  
they were great

An interview with Eric was a fun and pleasant time  
Because he made reporters feel so happy and sublime  
And now his soul's in Heaven, Darrel Russell and some more  
And when they saw him coming, they swung open  
Heaven's door

And took him in to welcome him, in a land where  
there's no pain  
But only love and happiness, and sunshine, but no rain

He's in a special place right now, a full smile on his face  
'Cause he still races every day, and he wins every race!

So when you think of Eric, just look straight up above  
Because he's smiling down on us, and sending us his love!

....Kay Presto, Presto Productions

# News & Notes

## Bill Pittman Passes

Past AARWBA First-Vice President William "Bill" Pittman, Professional Journalist and long-time former Indiana University journalism instructor, died at a Bloomington Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. He was 82.

Pittman was the Indianapolis News' Bloomington bureau chief from the late 1960s until his retirement in 1990, covering Indiana University and southern Indiana. He was an instructor at the IU School of Journalism for a number of years prior to his retirement.



He was born on July 9, 1925, in Indianapolis. He graduated from Shortridge High School in 1943, and his mother signed a release for him to join the Navy when he was 17. He served as a naval flight mechanic in Corpus Cristi, Texas, until he broke his knee and received a medical discharge.

Bill attended Butler University on the GI Bill, where he earned a bachelor's degree in business administration and was a member of the Sigma Nu fraternity. While attending Butler, he met Winifred Ham, and they were married on Sept. 12, 1948. He later earned a master's degree in American literature from Butler.

Pittman worked at the former Indianapolis Times, the Indianapolis Star and the Noblesville Daily Ledger from the late 40's to 1957. He also served as editor of the Sigma Nu magazine, and when the fraternity moved its headquarters from Indianapolis to Lexington, VA, the Pittmans moved there.

The Pittmans returned to Indiana in late 1958 and Pittman returned to work for the Indianapolis Times. In the early 1960's, he joined the Indianapolis News, where he would spend the remainder of his journalistic career. In 1966, he began producing the newspaper's annual Indianapolis 500 record book. The same year, the family moved to Bloomington so Bill could

cover IU, Bloomington and southern Indiana for the News, an assignment he held until his retirement. Over the years in Bloomington he received a variety of award for reportorial and writing excellence.

He was hired as a part-time instructor in the late '60s, for the IU School of Journalism. During that stretch he served for a short time as Interim publisher for the Indiana Daily Student.

Pittman's first love was the Indianapolis 500, and event he first saw as a boy after sneaking into the track over a fence. Aside from covering the race for many years and maintaining the News' annual record book, he served as First Vice-President with the American Auto Racing Writers & Broadcasters Association. After his retirement, he continued to handle the judging of Association's annual media contest.

After retiring from the News in 1990, the Pittman's moved to Bloomington to Oak Island, N.C. on the Atlantic coast, where they survived several hurricanes and Pittman continued to play a fiercely competitive game of golf until his hip prevented him from playing any further, early this year. He scored four holes-in-one while living in North Carolina.

Pittman is preceded in death by his parents and one sister, Carol J. Wright. He is survived by his wife, Winifred; by three sons, Carey (Leslie), Jonathan (Katy) and Andrew; three grandsons, A.J., Mitchell and Maxwell Pittman; and three nieces.

The family said contributions may be made in Bill's name to the American Cancer Society.

## Women Come First



Member Jamie Little was the overall winner of the Toyota Pro/Celebrity race at Long Beach the day before the Long Beach Grand Prix. Jamie was the first female winner of the weekend. She was followed by Danica Patrick's victory at Motegi in Japan, for the Andretti-Green Indy Car Series team.

Sunday, a young Simona De Silvestro captured the Atlantic race driving a Mazda powered car for the Newman Wachs Racing team. Simona was the first female driver to win in the series.

Congratulations ladies!

# News & Notes

## Deke Houlgate Getting Stronger

Olga Houlgate recently sent Dusty this update on her husband Deke.

*Just to let you know the Deke is walking again! Handsome Dr. Bulkin (from the Ukraine) said Monday afternoon he wanted Deke to start walking and he has. Things are really looking better and now we're talking skin graft which Deke has had before and knows how to deal with that. Thanks for all your great cards...all that really helps.*

- Olga Houlgate



## Laski Named Honorary Starter

Jon Laski, Ted Halibrand's grandson and member Linda Halibrand's son has been named as an honorary starter for one of the Indy 500 Practice Sessions this month.

Jon also won a prestigious racing event conducted by Purdue University where he is a student in their engineering department. He is also now competing in local Indiana Midget racing events.

## Bob Markus Now A Blogger

Member Bob Markus sent this note to Dusty and we are passing the information along to you.

*Hi Dusty,  
I thought you might be kind enough to pass on to the brethren the fact that I have started a sports blog that will run every Tuesday until I run out of ideas.*

*I've posted five so far. Have no idea if anyone is reading it. It can be accessed at <http://www.bobmarkus.blogspot.com>.*

Bob Markus

## AARWBA Members:

This is YOUR newsletter.

Your editor, **Andy Hartwell**, would love to hear from you. Write in and let him know what you are up to in the world of motorsports. We need good news content from professionals like you that we can share with all the other professionals in the AARWBA. And this newsletter is a great vehicle for announcing your recent successes to your peers!

And you can even have your company or organization sponsor an issue!

**Send your words and photos to [ashartwell@att.net](mailto:ashartwell@att.net).**

For issue sponsorship information contact:

**Michael Knight**  
at [spindocor500@aol.com](mailto:spindocor500@aol.com)

or our President, **Dusty Brandel**,  
at [dusty.brandel@gmail.com](mailto:dusty.brandel@gmail.com).

## Member Spotlight?

We don't have a "Member Spotlight" feature in this issue, and that's a shame. But you can fix the problem by volunteering to be the next member in the spotlight! Simply send Andy Hartwell a quick email saying you are interested and he will contact you. A telephone conversation will follow at a mutually acceptable date and time. And you will have an opportunity to review the final write up before it goes to print. Easy, right? And what a great addition to your resume! "I was interviewed for the AARWBA newsletter!"

Andy's email address is  
[ashartwell@att.net](mailto:ashartwell@att.net)

# 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](mailto:aarwba@compuserve.com)  
National Vice President: Mike Hollander, [racing@motorsportsforum.com](mailto:racing@motorsportsforum.com)  
Eastern Vice President: Lewis Franck, [lfranck@ix.netcom.com](mailto:lfranck@ix.netcom.com)  
Southern Vice President: Mike Harris, [msharris@ap.org](mailto:msharris@ap.org)  
Midwest Vice President: Ron Lemasters, [rlemasters14@comcast.net](mailto:rlemasters14@comcast.net)  
Western Vice President: Susan Wade, [susanw7754@aol.com](mailto:susanw7754@aol.com)  
Secretary-Treasurer: Dr. George Peters, [BarJean@prodigy.net](mailto:BarJean@prodigy.net)  
Ombudsman Committee Member: Michael Knight, [SpinDoctor500@aol.com](mailto:SpinDoctor500@aol.com)



**AARWBA Once Again Thanks  
Valvoline for Renewing Its  
Founding Sponsorship  
Of the  
Ombudsman Program**



# Why You Should Join The American Auto Racing Writers and Broadcasters Association!

*AARWBA - The Professional Organization for Motorsports Professionals!*

- ✓ AARWBA is the only national voice for all motorsports journalists, editors, broadcasters and photographers. In operation for over 50 years, it is recognized by every major sanctioning body, and virtually all major sponsors of motorsports, as the premier national association for motorsports reporting professionals.
- ✓ Members are connected to one another through a free monthly newsletter that is sent out via email and is also distributed to leaders in the motorsports industry. The newsletter includes information from our members about our members, as well as information about upcoming events and more!
- ✓ Members are encouraged to submit items of interest to the newsletter editor. This is a great way to get free exposure to the movers and shakers - as well as your peers, editors and publishers - in the motorsports industry.
- ✓ An annual membership directory is made available to every member in both print form, and on-line at the AARWBA.org web site. This important tool facilitates networking with your peers and industry leaders who too belong to AARWBA.
- ✓ As an active member you will participate in the election of the members of the All-America Team each year. This prestigious award is given to the people in auto racing - by category - who have exemplified the best of racing in that year.
- ✓ You will be invited to attend an annual breakfast held at the Indianapolis Speedway in the days leading up to the Indy 500.
- ✓ You will be invited to attend the annual All-America Team dinner, also held in Indianapolis. This event is attended by many of the biggest names in motorsports and is an outstanding opportunity for you to network. And time is provided to allow for interviews with the honorees.
- ✓ In the event you have difficulties doing your job - credential hassles, access limitations, other issues - you will have the benefit of the AARWBA Ombudsman program. This member-only initiative provides you with organizational support that often leads to a swift and satisfactory resolution of the issues in dispute. And there is no cost to you for this effort on your behalf.
- ✓ Complete the attached application or apply on-line at [www.aarwba.org](http://www.aarwba.org)!



**American Auto Racing Writers & Broadcasters Association Inc.**

**922 North Pass Avenue, Burbank, CA 91505-2703**

**Phone: 818-842-7005**

**FAX: 818-842-7020**

**"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**

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

**PERSONAL INFORMATION**

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

**MEMBERSHIP LEVEL**

<b>Media Professional (\$45.00)</b>	<b>Affiliate Member (\$65.00)</b>	<b>Associate / Corporate (\$300.00)</b>
<b>Signature of applicant:</b>		<b>Date:</b>

**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