

Vintage American Race Cars Traveling Museum

President – Jim McDermott 440-552-8149
jbmcflyboy@yahoo.com
Vice-President – John Morton 517-404-5524
jmorton3323@gmail.com
Secretary/Treasurer – Dori Ordos 423-836-0730
dorio7177@gmail.com
Marketing Director - Bill Layton 517-861-7308
jwlaytonathome@aol.com
Newsletter - Melinda Ahleman 517-423-6109
vintageracecars@hotmail.com



NOVEMBER 2018

Notes from our President Jim McDermott



The time has come for the snow to start flying, we got our first snow of the year last night and had some cars in the ditch this morning. It's like they forgot what that white stuff is. I bet the members in Michigan have already got their first flakes and have sent the cold down over Lake Erie to us. Well, just keep that cold up there we don't want it down in Ohio.

That brings up my next thought. It is time to renew your membership. You will be getting a membership renewal in the mail so don't be like me and set it under a pile of papers on your desk. We really appreciate it when you get this in early. It makes it much easier for our secretary and treasurer to put it all together. Remember after the first of the year there is an additional \$5 fee to help you remember to renew early.

We already have a date scheduled for next year. The promoters are starting to work on their 2019 schedules. We would like your help in scheduling our shows. Our goal is to schedule as many back to back races as possible. That would save on fuel and hopefully get a better car count. Most tracks offer overnight camping and at some tracks we have cookouts.

Please look at this year's schedule and let me know what tracks you would be able to attend. We would like everyone to commit to attending 5 shows next year. You can e-mail me, send a message on facebook or use the old fashion way and call me.

I am also working with other vintage clubs to schedule shows to help with a better car count for both groups.

Looking toward next year 2019.

Thanks for now Jim

Notes from our Vice-President John Morton



WOW- What a season.

We started out the season slow with threats from cold weather and rain at Attica, Fremont, and Waynesfield. We just missed the bullet at Lorain County and then the season took off. We had good car counts at most tracks but always wanted better. We got to see some new cars and meet some new people. I really enjoy the friendships built throughout the year. These are as important to me as racing. I had the pleasure to announce at three races this year. That was a good time for me. I think this group makes good connections between the racers and fans. When I hear fans looking for "Big Block Bob" I knew the connection was made. It thrilled me to see "Big Block Bob" making the connection to the young fans. Guys that is what it is about, building loyalty to the fans, thanks Bob.

If it seems like I am ranting on you are right, Monday after the banquet I went and had my left knee replaced. It is a lot more than I ever thought it would be. Hats off to all of you who have experienced this. We finished the season with a great banquet, lots of awards, plenty of door prizes, great guest speaker and we got the privilege of the veterans group joining us. I want to thank all of the recipients of my awards. You are a good-natured bunch, if you missed the banquet, shame on you, it is a great time and a great way to finish the season by making plans for next year because you can never know is going to happen next. John

*July 28
Butler
Speedway*



The Butler event went off very well with 17 affiliated members and 5 others with Butler heritage that just showed up. Thirteen of the 17 club members took track time in 2 separate heat races and I am not sure who won either.

An added attraction to the first heat is that it was paced by a 1950's Chevrolet truck that was from the original South Bend, IN Speedway, The truck was driven by Ray Freeburn. The Freeburn's are the original owners of Butler Speedway and always in attendance at this Old-Timer's event. They also owned South Bend for several years.

The Old-Timer's event is the nicest one of these events (I believe) that we participate in. It is hosted by John Newberry, a 60's & 70's racer at Butler, and he goes all out, with sloppy joes of the original Butler concession recipe prepared by the Freeburns, chips, water, and a cake. He also supplies name tags on lanyards with the Butler logo on them for the 60 or so Old-Timers in attendance. He puts up a canopy with tables and chairs and there are tons of photos and other memorabilia to be shared, and also a group photo. He does all of this with very little help.

It is an event that everyone should try to attend. Because the track was so rough we had a driver's meeting before the feature to see if we wanted to run it and 7 of us decided to run. I was in my midget and dropped out after a couple of laps, but the other 6 tough guys stuck it out and I believe it was won by "Hurrying Hank" Lower in his working wing modified. All in all it was a great event with a great display area a lot of fan participation.

*Aug. 3 & 4
Winchester
Speedway*



Winchester Speedway had a 3 day Old-Timers Reunion. There were over 50 cars and the quality and variety was really worth the time it took to haul there. We would like to thank Mickey Thompson for all the work that he and his volunteers put into this annual event. They were right there with instructions for the drivers and kept us informed of the timing of events. This is a well-organized program and if you have never been to one of these events you are really missing out. The track management also deserves a big thank you as they work our running time into the day's events.

Everyone got as much on track running as they wanted. There were several sessions over the three days. We had over 20 VARC members that made the show and it was fun between sessions talking with everyone. We have such a variety of experience among our members and the fellowship is great. Some good-natured joking always gets tossed around, but everyone has a good laugh. It was good to see Mike Mason show up on Friday. Mike has been having some health issues, but he felt he had to at least come out, so he could talk with all his friends. He also had a good time pushing the cars with a four-wheeler. I could see in his eyes that he was ready to jump into a car and blast around the track. Mike has a history on the track and offered some wisdom on what to watch out for on the tricky high banks.

There were several veterans of the high banks there. Hank Lower, Johnny Lawhorn, Butch Evans, Olyss Lykins, Sham Kiser and Tom Burkey were just a few of the people that stopped by with some info on the cars and the track. It is always fun to listen to them relive stories of the past. This is our mission "keep the history of oval track racing alive".

Thank you Ron Verash for his efforts in taking photos and the interviews he does capture the history from many of the people that ran in the "good ol' days".

*Aug. 10
Spartan
Speedway*



There were 15 very nice cars participating in our annual event at Spartan. 10 of those cars took track time. Not sure who won the heat, but believe it was the Hurrin' Hoosier, and I am sure he too won the main after a spirited battle with Rick Kilbourn in the #1 Dowker funny car.

It was great to see Gary Fedewa show up with 2 very nicely recently restored cars. One of those being the #71 Dowker Jet Rod roadster that had many famous drivers. Sam Sessions was just one of those drivers. This car however didn't go on the track. The other car that he brought was the #51 big block super modified that was driven by Leon "Cowboy" Wieske in the 70's at Sandusky, Oswego, and other tracks. It was driven by Randy Goodman at our event.

Another car that was presented was the nicely restored V6 powered #61 former Genesse Beer Wagon roadster owned by King Kramer who has a long history with USAC. This car also did not go on the track.

All and all it was a very nice event that rolled off smoothly with some very nice quality cars, and I was told by the track owner Jim Leasure that he would see us next year.



*Aug. 12
Rockabilly
Ruckus*



The Rockabilly Ruckus at Expo Speedway in Warren, Ohio was a good time for everyone that showed up. Brandon Bebout took advantage of the promoter's offer and ran his new car on all 3 days. He is excited about his newest addition to his racing stable. A 1980's Osborne sprint car. Brandon was indeed enjoying the new car and was learning the quirks about sprint car handling. He even got a chance to do some laps in Jim Kirkwood's hot vintage modified. Thanks to Dingo for his mentoring one of the younger drivers into the vintage car scene.

The Event was held at the big 5/8-mile dirt track and was split up between the VARC group and the Penn Vintage Dirt Modified group. The track has long straights and short flat turns that require care when running there. The weather was hot and dry which required the water truck between each race in order to knock down the dust.

The race for VARC's Feature was down to the same two drivers as last year with Johnny Lawhorn squeezing by Jim McDermott and Bob Shelhorn with five laps to go. One of the older sprint cars stalled on the back stretch bringing out the yellow. After lining up for the restart Shelhorn went off the track and McDermott and Lawhorn battled it out for the last five laps putting on a good show of passing and repassing each other. On the white flag lap McDermott got some good bite off the number two turn and slipped ahead of Johnny and held a slight advantage to the checkered flag.

It was a fun time for everyone involved. We then watched a good show when the PA modifieds got on the track even though it was a little dusty it didn't slow those guys down.

Aug. 18

*Springport
Speedway*



The event at Springport went off very well with 14 cars in attendance, 11 took track time. We haven't been to Springport in a couple of years and the new management couldn't have treated us any better. In fact my hat is off to their competition director and pit steward, Donnie Ritter, who kept us abreast of our track times with plenty of time to get on the line.

We were the first heat to go on the track and were a little slow getting started as a couple of cars had issues getting fired up. In fact, Johnny Lawhorn swore we must have run 30 laps. We started John and Ron Gunderman on the pole but it wasn't long before the winged cars of Hank Lower and Rick Kilbourn were on the front. The finishing order was; Hank Lower, Ron Gunderman, Dick Slagle and John Lawhorn.

The track then had their annual autograph night on the front chute and we were invited to participate. There seemed to be quite a lot of interest in our cars even though we were clear back on the 4th turn. At the conclusion of that, we were then the first feature of the evening.

We started the two winged cars on the front, and the rest of us followed with a lot of hard wheel to wheel racing. There were no yellows and the finishing order was; Hank Lower, Rick Kilbourn, John Lawhorn, Dick Slagle, Ron Gunderman, John Morton, and Mike Layton. It was a great night of racing with no dust, bumps or ruts.

I am looking forward to booking them next year and hope we can once again schedule along with Spartan for a two day event That would make it much nicer for some of the long distance members to make an effort to attend.

Aug. 25

*Sandusky
Speedway*



Sandusky was once again threatened by the weather, but we had a good turnout. A special thanks to our pit steward for the night, Melinda Ahleman. She kept busy running around getting the lineup for us and making sure we were in line when it was our turn on the track. I think her feet were sore after the night was over. It happens often, we get to sit strapped in waiting but it is the way that we have of showing the track management that we always try to avoid any delays to their program. With her doing all the leg work it keeps us in order.

We got out for two heat races with the stock and modified cars running together and then the open wheel cars. Larry Smith won the stock heat in his beautiful purple Camaro. Dick Slagle won the open wheel heat with his offset super modified but Lawhorn and McDermott were hot on his tail. The top three cars were closely matched but Dick Slagle was determined to stay ahead. And on the last lap Larry Smith push his stock Camaro right into contention with the open wheel cars. It shows that Larry, a former champion, really knows his way around Sandusky Speedway and his stock car is a match for the open wheel cars. It was great fun and a good show for the fans of vintage car racing.

The feature was very exciting with Johnny Lawhorn holding onto a slim lead. Once again Slagle and McDermott were in hot pursuit. Where else would you get to see different types of racing cars run together like this?

As we were pulling in the rain started and put a halt to the program. A special thanks to the track management for their appreciation of the effort we all go through to get our cars to the track. We have been going to this track for several years and it is a historic racing facility. Always a good show. This is another track to put on your list of places to go to.



Sept. 1 & 2

*Angola
Motorsport
Speedway*

The Labor Day weekend at Angola Speedway once again had a great turnout, with 15 cars from Michiana and VARC racing groups. With the support of the track management we were able to get in several heat races and a feature. The action on the track was very exciting with "Hurrin" Hank Lower showing the rest of us the way around the track. It is a real honor being able to watch the way a veteran racer handles his car.

Many of the fans commented that they were grateful for our efforts in preserving the history of oval track racing in this country. The fans like our traveling museum of vintage racing cars. Everyone involved in this effort should take some pride in what we have accomplished. With this our 40th year anniversary we have the right to feel like we have a great thing going.

Sunday started out with a great breakfast provided by the track. Then it was on to some racing with practice time on the track. Then the real racing started with heat races and feature event. The



feature was once again dominated by Hank Lower. Jim McDermott stayed on his bumper until the power steering line broke and gave him one "HOT" foot.

Angola is one track that you MUST see. The track management and staff take great care and pride in their facility and take care of their racers. Thanks to Pam, Angie and the rest of the staff for all they do for us.



Sept. 8 & 9

*Fremont
Speedway
Johnny Auxter Days*

Rained Out



The Rebel Run

*Sept. 21
& 22*

The Rebel Run Lima Fairgrounds

The Rebel Run Car Show at the Allen County Fairgrounds was a great show for the members that made the trip. In spite of the weather forecast we had 23 cars show up. With the warm conditions they had to water the track to keep the dust down. Mother Nature helped with the watering. Once the rain stopped Max McClure with his tractor and other trucks had to work in the water to make the track race ready.

Then it was time for our heat races. The midgets went out together followed by the modifieds and stocks then the open wheel cars. The first heat saw 3 cars locked in a tight battle with John Lawhorn passing Carl Robinson and Jim McDermott for the lead. Carl brought out the yellow which left John and Jim racing for the win. John won by half a car length over Jim. The second heat saw Scott and Bob Shelhorn battling for the lead with the veteran Larry Smith on their tale. Gene Steele ran a good race without using his brakes. The midgets then had their turn with Butch Evans taking the win.

Due to the rain we had to run all the cars in one feature. You would think a high-powered open wheel or big-block late model would have the advantage, but it was the little midget with small tires finding the fastest way around the track. Butch Evans held off the big-block late model of Bob Shelhorn for the win.

Saturday's event was just as much fun. We had the track for 2 hours and we put on three heat races and three features. What was very rewarding were the comments from the fans that took the time from all the other activities to enjoy seeing the cars on the old fairgrounds track. This was how racing was done in the past. No superspeedway or meticulously groomed racing tracks just plain fun at the county fairgrounds.

Our members expressed their enjoyment of being a part of this program. We will look forward to next year. We want to thank Max McClure and his staff for all their support. It would not have gone off well without their enthusiasm. A special thanks to Joe Hicks and everyone that helped with the flagging. They were on the ball and kept things moving. We can't forget the push truck drivers and a special thanks to the announcer, John Morton. John did a great job keeping the fans informed about our cars and drivers.

I think we developed an interest in vintage car racing among the hot rod crowd. We had one gentleman with a street legal sprint car take some laps with us and another with a NASCAR type stock car at the car show tried out the dirt track with our stock car races



Sept. 29 Lawrencebug Speedway

The season finale was once again at the famous Lawrenceburg Speedway. The turnout was a good one with 15 cars making the trip. We had a very interesting group of cars with six modified/stock cars, a couple champ cars, midgets and open wheel sprint cars from different eras. The cars were split up into different heat races with the modified/stock cars running together then the open wheel cars. The feature event was run with all the vintage cars running together. This race has been videotaped and can be seen on our web site thanks to Sef DeChristopher. Thanks, Sef.

We would like to "Thank" the track management at Lawrenceburg for their years of support. They have us on their schedule every year without fail. It is always the last event of the year and this year it was special because we ended our 40th year running on such a great track. This is a great dirt track and they put-on top-quality shows. Put this one on places to visit. The USAC and UMP series are great shows so if you are looking for some real entertainment with lots of excitement you owe it to yourself to go see them in action



WINCHESTER SPEEDWAY

2018 AWARDS

BY MIKE THOMPSON

Jim McDermott is the President of Vintage American Race Cars (VARC), an organization that is celebrating its 40th year in 2018. Jim came very close to causing me to have a heart attack at the 2018 Old Timers Reunion when his engine broke and locked up, at race speed, going into the first corner, forcing me to throw the red flag for the first time in six years. Fortunately Jim was running in the middle of the track and didn't find either of the walls when he spun. The Winchester Speedway Old Timers Reunion is not officially a VARC event,

but Jim and his crew always leave a hole in their schedule so that the VARC members can participate in the Reunion. Congratulations to Jim, recipient of my Director's Pick!



Mike Swain had to leave the Reunion a bit early before I could present him with a Director's Pick trophy. I had to track him down to his home outside Springboro, Ohio to make the presentation. **Congratulations** to Mike and his bride Loretta Swain.



Bob & Judy Moore made their Staff Pick the totally amazing and just completed "big car" owned and restored by Mike and Loretta Swain. When Mike bought this car, it had been in the basement of a building that caught fire and collapsed...onto the car! To everyone but Mike this machine looked like a total loss and a waste of time. It just goes to show you



what a little love and a lot of buffing can do! That's Bob and Judy on the left with Loretta and Mike on the right with Scott Swain.

Near the end of the event and no staff members remaining on the grounds meant that Scott Miller, aka "Pockets" got to make another Staff Pick. This one went to John Fork and his immaculate sprint car once driven by Larry Rice, among others.



Volunteer Jim Baugh has been the Reunion Chief Inspector for longer than I have been connected with the Reunion and longer than the guy who preceded me, Gene Ingram, has been connected with the Reunion. Jim can spot a gem of a vintage car from half-a-mile or more. For his Staff Pick, Jim chose the beautiful sprint car belonging to Bob DeBolt.



Volunteer Bernie Coppock has been involved in racing for most of his 80+ years, so when he says that a particular car is worthy of his Staff Pick you'd better believe that car is something special. This year, Bernie's Staff Pick went to Johnny Lawhorn and his #5 champ car.

This car was in blue/white livery for years but for 2018 Johnny tried something new, and it really pops on the track.



The Luttmer Gang entered three vintage race cars this year to be driven by three generations of Luttmers. It goes without saying that all three of the machines were beautiful and in perfect (or near perfect) working order. Here Scott "Pockets" Miller presents his Staff Pick to Kevin Luttmer while I make the second half of the presentation to Randy Luttmer. Well done, gentlemen!

Well done, gentlemen!



Well done, gentlemen!

DIRECTOR'S PICKS: 2018 WINCHESTER SPEEDWAY OLD TIMERS REUNION

At the 2018 Reunion I presented three "Director's Pick" trophies to Old Timers I thought deserved some recognition.

"Gentleman Jim" Jim Wyman got one for his over-the-top support and encouragement of my efforts over the years I've been Director.

Jim McDermott carried one home after his heart-stopping spin going into Turn 1, a result of a broken rod and seized engine. It forced me to throw the first red flag in six years as Old Timers Director.

The final Pick went to Mike Swain who debuted his just-completed restoration of the Fankhauser Special.

Thanks and **congratulations** to each of my Director's Picks for 2018!

Thank you for the Banquet Donations

ThorSport Racing

Sandusky Speedway

John & Jeff Morton
Continental Service

Terry Wells

Edelbrock Racing

Gene Steele

Dave & Dori Ordos

Melinda Ahleman

Indianapolis Motor Speedway

Jellico Creek Crafts

SAVE THE DATE

Pizza Party October 25, 2019

Banquet October 26, 2019

Anjulina's in Fremont

Banquet Notes from Jim

The 40th year of VARC was indeed a good one. We were able to fulfill our goal of keeping the history of oval track racing alive through our traveling museum of vintage racing cars. We went to a variety of tracks in three states and put on our show before many fans. This is through the efforts of our members. VARC members are a dedicated group with so much knowledge and so many skilled restoration minded individuals. I can truly say I am blessed to be in this group of people.

We had a great end of the season awards banquet that was enjoyed by all. Those that were not able to attend missed out on a lot of fun and an entertaining time. We gave out our annual awards for the points leaders with Johnny Lawhorn taking the top honors. The members that make up this group have really shown that they are a dedicated and an outstanding bunch of people. It takes a great deal of effort, time, and money to do what this group has done for our organization. I am especially grateful to them for being part of this group. Beside the top ten there were also many other members that deserve to be recognized for the effort they put into our programs. Without this dedication our organization would not be successful.

Woman of the Year for 2018 went to Melinda Ahleman for all that she has done for our organization. She has been a track steward at events. Worked tirelessly on our newsletters and many other things that benefit VARC. She is always ready to help when called upon and is truly deserving of this award. Thanks, Melinda, for all you do.



Jack Layton Think- And- Do Founder Award. This year's winner is a very deserving member who is a thinker and doer. Terry Wells was selected because of the effort and dedication he shows in his level of participation. He has worked tirelessly in keeping his cars ready and attended as many of the shows as possible. He finished a close third in points after a tie for first last season. He is always willing to lend a helping hand to anyone that needs it. His mechanical skills are top notch and his driving has steadily improved. Terry is one of our members that did not have any previous experience as a driver, but he has the desire to learn and is focused on safety. He doesn't push beyond the limits of the car or the track and is therefore truly deserving of this honor. Great to have you with us Terry.



Kenny Berends Memorial Driver of the Year Award. This award is given to the driver that exemplifies the spirit of this organization through their on-track driving and assistance to others and this organization. Ron Gunderman is truly that person. He is always ready to help and is rock steady while on the track. Everyone looks forward to seeing him show up at an event. He is dedicated to this effort and works hard to help at the shows. Great job Ron.



Promoter of the Year is given to a track that VARC feels has done the most for our mission. We were invited to participate at the Allen County Fairgrounds track during the Rebel Run Car show this year. Although this is not a typical race track the promoter did everything he could to make it a great time for our Traveling Museum of Vintage Race

Cars. We had a great turnout of cars and the fans from the car show



showed a great deal of enthusiasm for our races. The Promoter is Max McClure and he was impressed with our show and has extended an invitation for next year. Thanks Max we will plan on next year.

Now onto the special awards that were presented by our Vice President John Morton. You have to be ready for these as they come from the truly "creative" (evil) mind of John and no one knows what to expect.

For Johnny Lawhorn he found a special jacket that is embroidered 2018 Champion and it fit.



For Bob Shelhorn he found a jacket that was embroidered "Almost Champion". And it almost fit.

For Dick Slagle he found an old medicine bottle and filled it with a mixture of dirt from all the dirt tracks we ran this year. He told Dick he had to rub a little dirt on his face each night, so he would be ready to run more dirt races next year.



For Hank Lower he had a special trophy made up called the "Corny Award" because of Hank's gift of hot "corn on the cob" at the cook out at Angola Speedway this year. Good hot



corn on the cob!!! Look on our facebook page for pictures of this award.



For Jeff Morton he was presented a large pair of fancy sunglasses, but he didn't want to try them on.

Gene Steele got a book of lame excuses. I think he said he didn't need any.



Dave Ordos got a "Humanitarian Award".



Thanks to all the people that put in such a great effort into getting door prizes for the banquet. We need to remember the suppliers, friends and businesses that donated the prizes. We had a large number of door prizes that made the night special. Gene Steele needs special recognition for all the work he puts into the banquet. Thanks Gene.



Johnny Lawhorn got a bag of large rubber bands.



Top 10 in Points

Terry Wells, Jim Pitchford, Brandon Bebout, Jim McDermott, Dick Slagle, Bon Shelhorn, Gene Steele, John Morton, John Lawhorn, Butch Evans

You had to be there to understand the significance of all these special awards. So next year put this event on your calendar.

Also in attendance was a group from Veterans Motorsports Association out of Lansing, Michigan that discussed their mission. Bill Layton is working with this group to have them help us to honor all veterans at the tracks we attend.



Our speaker for the evening was Grayling Call. Grayling starting working on his Dad's cars at the age of 5. After High School he starting running Sprint cars for his Dad. He then went to work at D & S Machine Shop as a Manager and Engine Builder.

On to ARCA as an Inspector. Then went to NASCAR as a Pit Inspector then advanced to Chief Inspector. Went back to ARCA where he is now Senior Director of Competition and Operations.

Note from Helen Belliveau

Just wanted everyone to know Hector Belliveau received the card that everyone signed. He was happy to hear from the group and thanks everyone for thinking of him! 📄 😊





University of
Rio Grande

2018 Athletic
Hall of Fame Inductee

John Lawhorn



NAIA District 22
Coach of the Year

1985, 1987, 1991, 1995

Mid-Ohio Conference
Coach of the Year

1985, 1987, 1989,
1991, 1995

10 Years as Athletic Director

Basketball Coach Record
408 – 161 in 17 years

Fun Times at the
Pizza Party and Banquet



