



Message from EMPA President, Dino Oberto

EMPA is an organization of professional writers, broadcasters, announcers, videographers, and photographers working in the motorsports industry, along with Associate and Corporate members.

Greetings all,

Welcome to our post-convention newsletter. I would like to begin by saying how grateful I am for the amazing support by so many individuals in making the 2023 convention an unqualified success. From the entire Board of Directors and the many who worked tirelessly behind the scenes in various efforts, your hard work did not go unnoticed and it showed in the overall way the weekend played out.

I see just one problem with this year's convention...It's going to be a hard act to follow!

Our Friday night **Salute to the Champions** was fantastic with the champs who were on hand. They all acknowledged how much they appreciated the invite and enjoyed the mingling after the interview sessions.

This event has become a great kickoff to the weekend for us and so much so that drivers now reach out to us in hopes of getting an invite. We try to do our best to bring in a well-rounded group of local and regional champions while keeping it within a respectable time frame for driver interviews in order to have plenty of time for socializing.

Board of Directors:

- Dino Oberto
- Carol Houssock
- Karl Fredrickson
- Jeff Gromis
- Pete MacDonald



Front row, L to R: Tanner VanDoren, Isabel Barron, Kyle Taraska, Tyler Watner, Andrew Yoder, Nick Ross

Back row, L to R: Earl Krause, Carol Houssock, Brandon Edgar, Brett Tonkin, Austin Beers, Kyle Strohl, Roger Coss, Sam Ryan, Kasea Bauscher, Dino Oberto *Jim Smith photo*



www.empaonline.org



Kenzie Adams, Ryan Godown and Ryan Godown, Jr. left before the photo was taken.. Thanks to all!



Saturday was again a full day for us between the photo contest, press conferences, roundtable discussion and awards dinner.

There was no question the **Brice's NAPA Auto Parts Photo Contest** was another well-participated affair. It never ceases to amaze me the outstanding effort that all of our contestants put into the contest. Great job by everyone and a huge thanks goes out to **Bill Brice** for once again making the contest possible. Bill's support of us is a big part of the success of our organization.



Debbie Gastelu with photo contest judges Jim Smith photos

Likewise the **Pocono Raceway Writers Contest** was also hard fought with the excellent entries that came in. **Nick Igdalsky and everyone at Pocono Raceway** are to be commended for their ongoing support of the Writers Contest and EMPA in general.

Congratulations to the winners of both contests, and you can find the results posted on our website. Let me also add that if you did not win or place in a particular category please do not get discouraged. Keep working at your craft and I assure you the results will come. The entries, be it photo or writer, are all top notch and judging is nerve wracking to say the least. Don't ever hesitate to reach out to others for advice or tips, we're all in this together.

The Saturday morning press conferences went well. The guest speakers on hand had plenty of good info to pass along.



It was discussed at our Sunday morning general meeting about looking into ways on how to improve on this portion of the convention. Times have clearly changed on how we receive information and it would be good time to change-up from press conferences format to other topics of interest. Stay tuned. *Jim Smith photo*

Gary Camp and Dover Motor Speedway continue to be great supporters of the organization. The enjoyable luncheon we had was all courtesy of them. For years they have been a mere phone call away when asking to be part of the EMPA weekend and I speak on behalf of everyone when saying THANK YOU!

Karl Fredrickson once again did a great job in putting together the afternoon roundtable and having Hall of Fame recipient **Mike Joy** join in on the discussion made it all the better. If you were there you can attest it was a very captivated audience that clung to every word by both gentlemen. EMPA member Jim Smith captured a thoughtful moment, and there were many!



The evening's award dinner was such a great affair. You can read the full report courtesy of Carol Houssock on our webpage. For those individuals that received the unique EMPA statues and other noteworthy awards I can tell you they all were very humbled and left with such a sense of pride for not only themselves and those honored but a much more meaningful appreciation for EMPA.

I would like to thank a few others who made this convention another great chapter in celebrating the dedicated membership of EMPA...

Dan Luginbuhl, Wanick Construction, John Holland and New England Race Fuels, Speedway Illustrated, Cracker Motorsports, World Racing Group and Michael Jaworecki.

They all had a special hand in seeing to it that EMPA remains on solid footing as a viable leader amongst the motorsports media.

EMPA Strong

A few items. Our membership continues to grow, albeit one member at a time, but our numbers nonetheless are steadily improving. In the event you did not get your 2023 dues paid you should do so ASAP in order to keep getting newsletters and email blasts.

2024 Convention

We have sat down with the folks at Genetti's and secured blocks of rooms for both Friday and Saturday 2024. This has been a work in progress since moving to Wilkes-Barre in 2022. As many of you well know there was a whole new staff in place this year but we are solid with them. They understand what we want and look forward to working with us.

Continuous Quality Improvement

Over the past few years we have worked at trimming the Saturday evening dinner time frame. To an extent we have done that but still have work to do in tightening it up and getting done within a reasonable timetable and we will. Each year we see what can be adjusted while still keeping focused on the award recipients.

Also, it is our intent to do a complete website overhaul and several individuals have come forward to help with that project.

We can never stop improving as an organization and as times are changing so should we. Any input, good, bad or indifferent, is welcome.



Until next time next time,
Peace, out - to you—yeah you! (Jim Smith photo)
Dino

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Nick Ross and his beautiful daughter. Jim Smith photo



When he wasn't listening to everyone sing Happy Birthday, young Matt Hirschman's eyes were glued on the pictures of his father that were on the big screen.

Carol Houssock photos



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Tree Fest People's Choice Winners

By Kay Poeth



Winning first place in the Tree Fest People's Choice Award at the Rudy Gelnett Memorial Library was "The Princess And The Pony" decorated by Middleburg Elementary Kindergarten.



The top prize for wreath decorating was awarded to the Susquehanna Garden Club for their depiction of "Piney: The Lonesome Pine."

The Rudy Gelnett Memorial Library in Selingsgrove was transformed into a twinkling wonderland of trees decorated with children's book-themed decorations. 24 displays captured the imaginations and shared the love of reading with all the visitors: strolling through the festively decorated nooks and crannies of the library.

Congratulations to the People's Choice winners of the popular 2022 Rudy Gelnett Memorial Tree Fest. This year's number one vote getter was Middleburg Elementary Kindergarten. The featured book, "The Princess And The Pony" written by Kate Beaton captivated voters. Earning 2nd place was Summit Early Learning for their decorating touches for the book, "The Gingerbread Man Loose at the Zoo" by Laura Murray. It was filled with gingerbread cookies... if only you can catch them! The 3rd place tree was decorated by Selingsgrove South Den & High School Life Skills. Their rendition of How The Grinch Stole Christmas by Dr. Seuss was a favorite of visitors.

Kudos to the winners of the People's Choice wreath contest. Taking top honors was the Susquehanna Garden Club for their depiction of "Piney: The Lonesome Pine" by Jane West Bakerink. Second place was awarded to Mrs. O'Brien's reading group at Selingsgrove Area Intermediate School for their delightful rendering of "A Very Merry Christmas" by John Grigam.

Decorators can start planning now for Tree Fest 2023!

Locals Honored at EMPA Convention

By Kay Poeth



Congratulations to Todd Dziadosz on his winning placements at the Annual EMPA Eastern Motorsports Press Association Convention. Todd is shown here with Photography sponsor Billy Brice (center) of Brice's NAPA Auto Store from Freehold NJ during the awards ceremony.



Andrew Yoder of Middleburg is interviewed by Zina Obern, President of EMPA, during the Champions night at the Convention for being the 2022 Selingsgrove Speedway Limited Late Model Champion.

Local photographer Todd Dziadosz of Kwasner and Andrew Yoder, Selingsgrove Speedway Champion from Middleburg, were honored at the Annual EMPA Eastern Motorsports Press Association during the convention held on January 13-14, 2023, in Wilkes-Barre.

EMPA is an organization of professional writers, broadcasters, announcers, videographers, and photographers working in the motorsports industry. Since its founding in 1969, EMPA has grown from a handful of members to become one of the largest motorsports media organizations in the nation.

Todd Dziadosz has been an EMPA member since 1988 and has been recognized for many years for his accomplishments photographing Drag Racing events. This year was no different as he won two first places and honorable mentions. Todd's winning photos were in the Un-published category with his photo of the 55 Chevy blue and the other category in the Pure Art category of the Jet Dragster. All winners receive a plaque for their wins and the top 3 in each category were awarded a cash prize provided by sponsor, Brice's NAPA Auto Supply of Freehold, NJ. Todd received \$250 in prize money for his placements.

Friday night's activities included honoring Track Champions. Congratulations to Middleburg's, Andrew Yoder who represented Selingsgrove Speedway with his championship in the Limited Late Model Division.

Andrew's accomplishments at just 28 years old is outstanding! Andrew plans to continue racing in the 2023 Limited Late Model and Super Late Model races at Selingsgrove Speedway, Clinton County Speedway, Lincoln Speedway and Port Royal Speedway and possibly other racetracks.

For more information on EMPA please visit their website at: <http://www.empaonline.org>.

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in Select Areas

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Thanks to Paul Strout and Jim Smith for the pictures. Feel free to caption as you see fit!

