



Message from EMPA President, Ron Hedger

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

With another Florida Speed Weeks in the books, it's time to jump into the 2017 racing season in the great Northeast. Before everyone gets totally immersed in their media activities, we wanted to share a couple of things with the EMPA membership.

EMPA CONVENTION

The dates for the 2018 EMPA convention at the Crowne Plaza in King of Prussia, PA, our location for the last few years, will be slightly different. With the Allentown indoor TQ program set for the first weekend in January, EMPA will shift to the following weekend, January 12-14. This was our traditional date before calendar shifts and date conflicts moved us to the weekend after New Year's.

Board member Len Sammons, who handles negotiations with the hotel, has done a great job in fighting off a proposed rate increase for two or three years. But inflation has finally caught up with us and for 2018, room rates will increase by a very modest \$3, which still makes our group rate less than half the regular room rate.

As always, more details will be sent along as the keynote speaker is confirmed and contest deadlines are set. For now, please mark the dates on your personal calendar and plan on joining us for the convention, which will again kick off Friday night with the popular Champions Night and end with the Sunday election and business meeting.

Board of Directors:

Ron Hedger, President
 Dino Oberto, Vice President
 Len Sammons
 Earl Krause
 Jeff Gromis, Treasurer

Officer:

Carol Houssock, Secretary

LAST CALL FOR RENEWALS

We still have a small number of members who have not renewed their memberships for 2017.

Following the January convention, we sent a note to those who had not renewed and many either sent their dues or replied that they were not going to participate in 2017. But we have yet to hear from a number of you. Please renew asap, as we will be dropping those who have not renewed from the database before the next newsletter is distributed.

Just send your check for \$50 to treasurer Jeff Gromis at 632 Eastside Drive, Landisville, PA 17538 and he will tell me to mail your membership card. If you have any changes to your contact info, please send it along to me at rjhmedia@juno.com. This arrangement works better while we are in Florida, as mail forwarding has proven to be shaky at best. After May 1st we will go back to the normal procedure of using my 20 Everson Way, Ballston Spa, NY 12020 address.



www.empaonline.org



MEMBER NEWS

VP Dino Oberto continues to struggle with the aftereffects of his knee replacement. Despite a vigorous rehab program, he has had trouble getting the knee to extend to the normal range and has been scheduled for a procedure where he will be sedated and the knee manually manipulated to the required angle. Hopefully he will then progress to normal use of the knee.

Notes of encouragement will reach Dino at the email address in the directory of board members we enclosed last time, or email him at dlmo@ptd.net.

Former treasurer Bill Yoder recently went through another struggle with health problems in Florida but at last word, had been moved from the hospital to a rehab facility and was much improved. His email is brantbeach@comcast.net or brantbeach1@comcast.net if you would like to send him a note.

And congrats are in order for Steve Barrick, who was voted into the Garden State Vintage Stock Car Hall of Fame! Well deserved! Thanks to Jim Smith for the picture of Steve with his wife, Pam, along with daughter, Gretchen, and her husband, Will.



CONTEST ADJUSTMENTS

It seems that the rules for all three of our contests have been tweaked to the point that they work well and everything runs smoothly. But if you have something in mind that would improve the process, now is the time to send your thoughts to writing chairman Dino Oberto, photo chairman Bob Yurko or video chairman Mel Thomas for consideration.

Bob's email is bobyurko31@gmail.com while Mel is at melthomas63@gmail.com.

SAFETY

The two incidents at Volusia Speedway Park where flipping cars landed in populated areas should serve as a reminder to everyone to pick your vantage points carefully this season.

We had been in the backstretch bleachers hit by Joey Saldana a few minutes earlier, waiting for UMP qualifying to conclude so we could cross the track to our normal infield perch for the sprint car feature. And many photographers were right on the fence in that area throughout the program. Thoughts of what could have been should go through everyone's minds as they go about their duties this year. BE SAFE OUT THERE!

RECORD SINGLE-DAY SNOW IN TIOGA COUNTY, NY



Thanks to Dave Boland for sharing some Owego, NY history!

Until next time..... *Ron Hedger*

President
Vice President
Board
Board
Board
Secretary

Ron Hedger
Dino Oberto
Earl Krause
Len Sammons
Jeff Gromis
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