

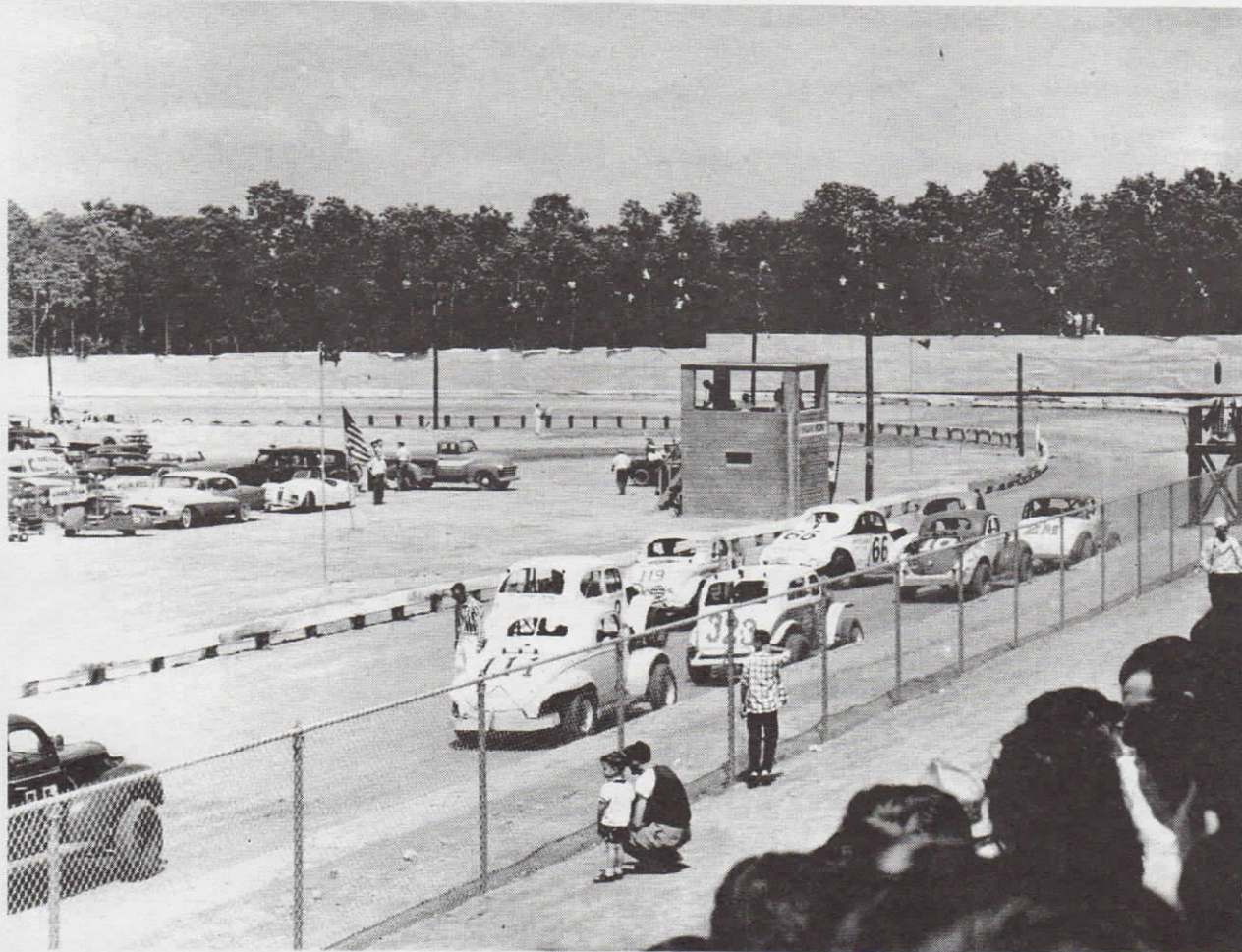
# Vintage Views

*The Official Newsletter of the  
Garden State Vintage Stock Car Club*

VOL 3, NO. 1

NOVEMBER 1993

## VINELAND SPEEDWAY



Vineland Speedway during the opening season in 1955. The pits and scorers tower were located in the infield when the track opened. They were relocated to outside the back stretch after the first season.  
(William Curley Photo)

**NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1993, West Long Branch Firehouse,  
Rt 70 (Monmouth Rd. and Cedar Ave., West Long Branch, NJ. 7:30 pm.  
For Directions or information call 908223-9388 or 908-840-6307.**

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**DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF STOCK CAR RACING HISTORY**



## MINUTES OF OCTOBER 20, 1993 MEETING

The meeting started on a sad note. A moment of silence was observed for the passing of founding member Pete Peterson. He will be missed. Our condolences to his wife Carol and the entire family. Also noted was the loss of Joe Barzda owner of California Speed and Sport Shop in New Brunswick.

Remember the Turkey Derby at Wall Stadium on Thanksgiving weekend, the club will have a "Show and Go".

Another jacket and hat order is being planned. See Bill Erbe for details. Also see Bill if you need help with your Williams Grove ticket refund. Nancy Shea has club sweatshirts on sale for \$15.00 each. Also, Nancy will be handling the tickets for the 3rd annual banquet. March will be here before we know it.

The club was presented with its new 27 inch TV and 4 head VCR. Thanks to everyone for your support in this project.

Bob and Earle IV, our slide show series is scheduled for 1:30pm on November 21st at the Monmouth County Library in Manalapan. Great photos, terrific narration. Come out and test your memory.

Car owners look for information concerning a meeting for the second Wednesday in January.

Wally Weaver donated a set of Modified Legends Series II models. As a Wall Stadium Limited Sportsman star many remember Wally as the "Flying Mailman". Many thanks.

Anyone going to Daytona in February may be interested in attending the "Living Legends of Auto Racing" festivities, February 16 - 19. The club has been extended an invitation. Detailed information is available. Our club has been receiving letters from many locations around the entire country. We are getting good media coverage and many with similar interests are requesting information.

## REMEMBER SEE NANCY FOR YOUR CLUB SWEATSHIRTS ONLY \$15.00

ATTENTION CAR OWNERS: Car owners meeting, Wednesday, January 12, 1994 at the West Long Branch Firehouse at 7:30pm. For more information call Ray Shea at 908-840-6307.

### ....VINTAGE VIEWS....

The official publication of the G.S.V.S.C.C. Evalina Erbe, Editor, Send info to: P.O. Box 228, Allenwood, N.J. 08720 or call 908-223-9388.

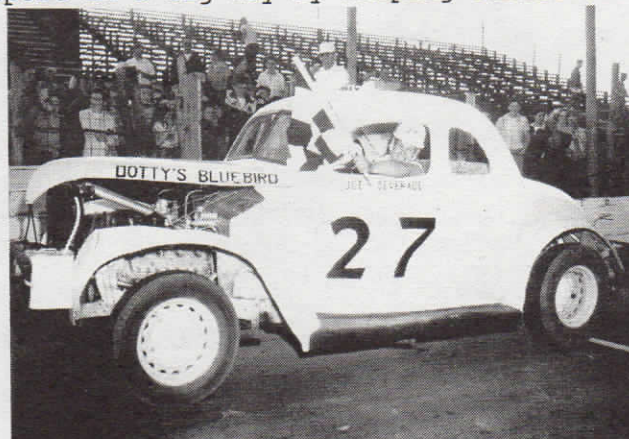
## "MEMORIES IN MOTION"



by Michael Shea

Let us go back to when you first learned how to drive. Who was it who taught you those early lessons on the do's and don'ts of proper driving? Maybe it was a school instructor, a friend, a relative, or possibly it was dear old Dad. For some of you, your natural ability has enabled you to say 'nobody taught me how to drive, I taught myself.' That might well be true, unfortunate though, in the sense that it may have helped you establish more confidence and patterns throughout your driving career. The constructive criticism might have been what you needed to turn yourself from an average on the road driver to a great pedal-to-the-metal race driver. Great drivers are not born they are made. How?, you might ask, the answer is simple, with practice, practice, practice. In any professional sport, along with practice, even the pros have a coach to help them master their craft, day in and day out.

One such young man who's eagerness to drive and willingness to accept the guidance needed in the beginning was Joe Severage. Joe's father, a real avid fan of, not just cars, but motorcycles as well, felt his son ought to know how to handle a machine in the roughest conditions. Those early explanations on how to pass cars while enroute to the Long Branch Stadium were the sparks that ignited the fuel of desire to become a race car driver. Along with Joe's Dad, his father-in-law, Red Howard, also loved stock car racing. Red, a driver himself, supported the sport in a big way by helping others drive



Joe Severage takes a checkered flag at Old Bridge during his Novice Championship season.



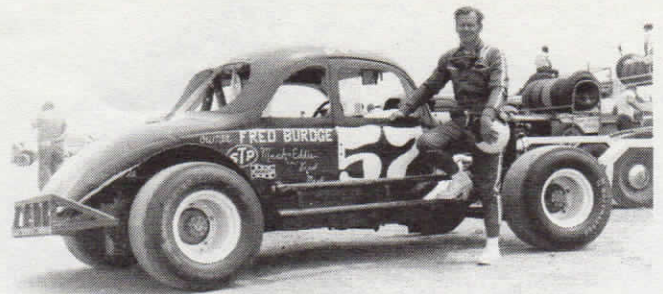
their first cars. When Joe was approached by him to pilot one of his machines, Joe immediately accepted a ride in the # 27.

Those early years of racing in the late '50's were times of great ingenuity and those who could stay abreast of the latest technology were the ones who came on top. With an ace in his hand, Joe's success was inevitable as Carl Gardella worked at Bendix with him and gave Joe the latest information to succeed. That's just what happened the following season when Joe captured the 1957 Wall and Old Bridge Novice Championships in the well known #27, "Dotty's Bluebird". The next big influence came in 1966 as car owner Fred Burdge approached Joe about driving his #57. Although they were right up front consistently finishing 3rd in points in '67 at East Windsor and 2nd at Wall in '69, the championships finally came again as they captured the Sportsman title at wall in '70 and again in '72.



Joe Severage stands next to Fred Burdge's #57 in the pits at Old Bridge in the '60's. (Ace Lane Photo)

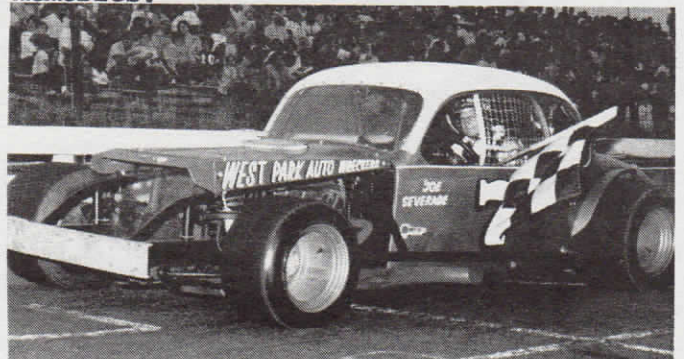
When it was time to move on to other teams, Joe's willingness to still give it his all led him to the highlight of a career that lasted some 20 years. When he was approached by Sal Parino to drive the #7, a car that he had dreamed of driving in '74, the dream of driving that car came into reality when he saw his name on the side of the car for the first time. When the '75 season was finished at Wall few dreamed of the Cinderella season that it had become, as they captured all the big races and the 1975 Modified Track Championship. As the end of his career was clearly in sight, the magic that was displayed in '75 was clearly not there. The Money had started to influence the sport at a rapid rate and without the dollars, it's tough to win with home made equipment. With that in mind and the injuries that accumulated over the years taking their toll, Joe hung up the helmet.



A later version of the Fred Burdge #57, with Joe Severage in the pits at Wall Stadium. (Ace Lane Photo)

Here is a man who had been given so much opportunity. Going back to the beginning with his father's guidance on how to control a car under extreme conditions. On to the belief of his father-in-law that he could drive a race car. Through the loving support of his #1 fan (even though she likes Gil Hearn) Dotty, who without he would of not been the success that he has become. Lastly, all the great car owners which Joe attributes as the greatest asset to his career, who without them his career would not have been possible. Many times through the tough times Joe thought of giving up, some of the accidents he had, would have made many hang it up early on.

When we look back at his career, those defeats which were 90% of the time, will all be blinded by the light that will shine on his trophies of the Championships that all will be able to admire. From the beginning days of our Club's existence, Joe and Dotty Severage have lain out their time and effort to support our Club in a special way. We appreciate them more than we can express on paper. We just hope that this article will be a tribute to all they have given to our sport. Without people like these our club would not be what it truly is, which is "One of the greatest Stock Car organizations that truly cares so much about all your memories of the sport you love." Joe, thanks for the memories.



Joe Severage takes a checkered flag at Wall Stadium during his 1975 Championship season. 3 (Richard L. Sprague Photo)



## OLD IRON TRADER



### FOR SALE

Old magazines, Speed Age, Stock Car Racing, Circle Track, Hot Rod and others. Send SASE with your wants to: Mike Bell, 221 N. Candler St., Apt.#1, Decatur, Ga. 30030.

Former Gil Hearne Pinto Mod. complete with drive train, trailer included, \$3700 Tom, 908-206-1260.

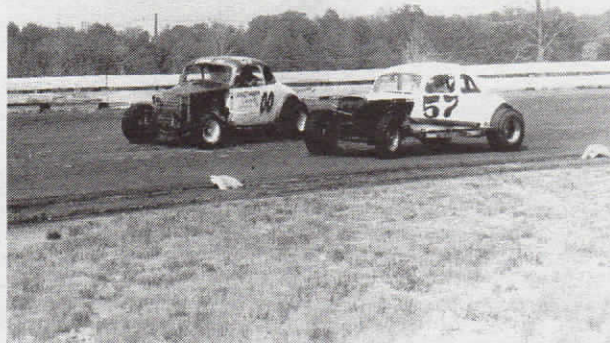
1939 Ford Standard Coupe with flathead motor, Edelbrock alum. heads, asking \$500 or best offer, Walt, 201-997-0110, Afton Autobody, Kearny, N.J.

### WANTED

10 spline Halibrand Quick Change rear, 3/4 ton Ford Truck ring and pinion style, (old style) and gear sets, Bill Erbe, 908-223-9388.

### SERVICES

Quality Overhead Garage Door Service, John Malsbury, 17 Brown Rd., Howell, N.J. 908-364-2907.



Joe Severage and "Buzzie" Reutimann battle at Wall Stadium in the '60's. (Ace Lane Photo)



### HOLIDAY SHOPPER

Ho-Ho-Ho. This Christmas snuggle up with your stock car or your sweetie with a CLUB SWEATSHIRT. Red, Green, Black or White. M,L,XL, \$15.00 delivered to meetings, \$19.00 by mail. Christmas orders by 12/8/93. Send check with order to: Nancy Shea, 438 3rd. Ave., Brick, N.J. 08724, 908-840-6307.

Stock Car Art, 8½ X 11, color and b/w prints, signed by artist, Deacy #707 and more. Joel Naprstek, 76 Park Pl., Morris Plains, N.J. 07950. 201-285-0692.

Wally's Racing Collectibles, NASCAR, Winston Cup die cast and racing memorabilia, Wally Weaver, 908-530-5799.

One of a Kind Gifts has photo albums, checkered flag magnets, checkered fashion accessories and more, Joyce Peak, 80 Oceanport Ave., West Long Branch, N.J. 908-222-7847.

Acjen Enterprises, Motorsports collectibles, 20% off anything in store for GSVSCC members and families, Bay Village Plaza, 950 Rt. 9 S., Bayville, N.J. 08721, 908-237-0106.

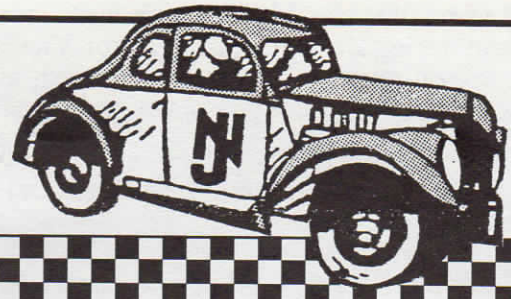
Checkered Connection Jewelry, some in stock or you can order from their catalog, Evalina Erbe, 908-223-9388.

VINTAGE RACING VIDEOS, Snyder Video production, 141 S. Whitfield St., Dept. B, Nazareth, Pa., 18064-2150. 215-759-8128.

Club hats and jacket orders are still being taken for the Fall order. Holiday delivery possible, depending on how soon we meet the minimum order required. For details call Bill Erbe at 908-223-9388 or see him at the November meeting.



# Checkered Past



## VINELAND SPEEDWAY

Part One  
By RUSS DODGE

The Vineland Speedway, located off Delsea Drive (Route 47), less than a mile south of Sherman Avenue, contributed an important ingredient to the development of auto racing in the State of New Jersey. Opening its doors with a dirt track, half-mile oval for stock cars on April 3, 1955 through its last event for sports cars in 1965, the facility had developed into a motorsports complex. In addition to the half-mile oval, Vineland Speedway housed a quarter-mile drag strip and a 1 1/2 mile road course for sports cars and motorcycles.

The speedway originated as the idea of stock car driver "Rocky" DiNatale and Millville, NJ businessman, Anthony Caccaro. Bernard Brown, owner of the 55 acre wooded parcel of land to be sold for the speedway, contracted with the Charles Nocco Construction Company to clear the property. After clearing the ground, the Charles Nocco Company got involved with DiNatale and Caccaro to excavate the oval and build the new facility. Bill, Charles Nocco's son and a principal in the construction company directed the work.

The Nocco Company had invested over \$60,000.00 when it became evident that a pending business deal involving a real estate sale had collapsed for DiNatale and there would be no money forthcoming to complete the speedway construction investment. Bill Nocco discussed the matter with his dad and decided to go on and complete and promote the new speedway himself rather than chance losing their investment. At that time, Bill Nocco had attended the stock car races at Alcyon Speedway in Pitman, NJ, a couple of times and would use that limited exposure to guide him and Tony Caccaro as promoters of the Speedway. Caccaro's portion of the management responsibilities were limited to operating the concessions.

The traffic coming into the speedway on the inaugural Sunday was reported to have backed up several miles on Delsea Drive. The SRO (standing room only) crowd saw Paul Walker from Milford, Delaware, take the first checkered flag by winning the first heat race. Al Tasnady, then residing in Atco, NJ, won the first feature event driving car #44, owned by local businessmen, Romeo Gelsi and "Toots" Armelini. The name "Tas" would become synonymous with Vineland Speedway As Al went on to win twenty-four features during the track's first two years of operation.



Ken Marriott after one of his 6 wins at Vineland Speedway in 1955.

Vineland Speedway was sanctioned by the Interstate Stock Car Racing Association its first two years and went to NASCAR in 1957. A switch was also made to Saturday night racing to allow cars from Alycon Speedway, the established Friday night track, to come to Vineland. It should be noted that Al Tasnady, a major draw at Vineland, left to run Flemington on Saturdays, leaving the promoter without his number one star. While Vineland had the best drivers in the East in competition, including '57 NASCAR Champ, Ken Marriott, Ralph Smith Elton Hildreth, Frankie Schneider, Reds Kagal, PeeWee Pobletts, and Steve Elias, to name a few, the local fans missed "Tas" because of his early success. Ken Marriott of Baltimore, won the last dirt race held at Vineland in October, 1957, ironically driving the Williams' #44 vacated by Al Tasnady, mid-season.



5

Al Tasnady after one of his 13 wins in 1956 at Vineland Speedway. (William Curley Phot



Tired of battling the "dust" which was a continuing problem during the three dirt years of Vineland, the 1958 season opened with the oval paved, as Nocco introduced asphalt racing to South Jersey.

Vineland Speedway, the "track with traction" as it would later be advertised, started a head-to-head battle with its old nemesis, the well established NASCAR dirt track at Pitman on Friday nights. Vineland returned to the Interstate sanction for the new season.

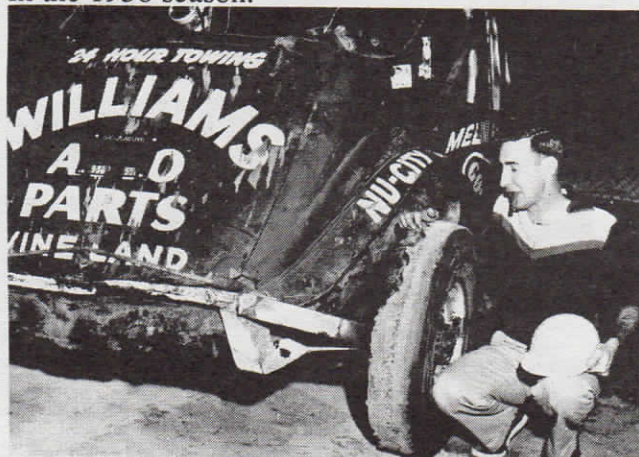
The opener on May 2, 1958 saw Elton Hildreth, in his newly acquired #16-J, take the opening feature event. This proved to be an indicator of the future as Elton "Wild Man" Hildreth would go on to be the all-time winner at Vineland with 32 features.



Elton "Wildman" Hildreth collects his trophy from starter Harry Reeves after winning the first feature run on the new asphalt track at Veneland Speedway, May 2, 1958. (William Curley Photo)

Promoter, Bill Nocco played it "shrewd" by publicizing how Elton had "shattered" all existing track records previously held by Al Tasnady, who was competing at Pitman, neglecting to acknowledge the change from dirt to asphalt.

Steve Elias, driving team cars with Ralph Smith in Neal William's #44's, won the next two shows. Norman Kidd, Frankie Schneider, and Jim Delaney, along with the aforementioned, controlled the wins in the 1958 season.



Steve Elias inspects his rear tire after the bent rear bumper shaved part of his Melini recap slick at Vineland Speedway, 1958. (William Curley Photo)

It was on May 10, 1958, that Bill Nocco started a four week trial of drag racing at Vineland. Nocco's impact on drag racing and the construction of the road coruse will be addressed in a continuation of the Vineland story in a later issue of this newsletter.

The 1959 season opened with "business-as-usual" until the end of May. Using the Interstate Association to sanction the races to open the season, Nocco announced on May 26th that Vineland was increasing its purse to a record high of \$2,500.00 and was going "open competition". Two weeks later, NASCAR, who was sanctioning nearby Alycon, penalized seven owners and 14 drivers for competing in unsanctioned events. Pat Purcell, NASCAR executive manager, announced the penalties for participating in unsanctioned events at Langhorne, Vineland, and Old Bridge. NASCAR was sending out a message that they wanted their drivers at their races.

This writer, who attended the races at Vineland at the time, didn't realize the driver in the Pontiac #5 and Woody's #95 racing under the name "Pancho" was really Jackie McLaughlin. McLaughlin, Budd Olsen, and Al Tasnady were among those penalized by NASCAR.

The '59 season saw Pete Frazee joining the other regulars appearing in the winner's circle at Vineland. Harry Moore, in the Wayne Carl #4 made his first two trips to the checkered, also. The big winner? The "Old Master", Frankie Schneider, with 10 feature wins.



Pete Frazee with "woody" Johnson's #68 at Vineland Speedway, 1961. (William Curley Photo)

In preparing for the 1960 season, Vineland Speedway promoter, Bill Nocco, would make a business deal that would have a drastic effect on South Jersey stock car racing. This will be discussed when the Vineland story continues next month.



The Atlantic Coast Old Timers (ACOT) and the Garden State Vintage Stock Car Club (GSVSCC) together displayed restored open-cockpit races and stock cars, from the 1930's through the 1970's. South Jersey racing legends 'Iron Mike' Magill, three time URC sprint car champion in the early '50's, and Elton 'Wildman' Hildreth, driver of dirt and asphalt modifieds in the '50's and '60's, were co-Grand Marshalls for the days events.

Many club members in addition to car owners attended the event. Everyone reports that the facilities were excellent and the hospitality of the track officials and promoters was super.



Wayne Hurd of Delaware made his first show with his restored #17A. Not only is this a fine stock car, it is also street legal. Let's go crusin'. (Jim Dooley Photo)



A group of club member's cars on display. The photo albums are as popular as the cars! (Jim Dooley Photo)

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At 18th AVENUE and F STREET  
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For Those  
**OUTSTANDING SODAS and  
SANDWICHES**

Racing supporters ad from a Shore Race Club program, 1949.

#### NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

This month's edition of Vintage Views is a little later than usual due to my having spent a few days in the hospital. It seems that our child wanted to make an early debut, but everything is back under control. Bill and I would like to thank everyone who has expressed their concern and offered their assistance.

Once again, I am asking for the loan of your photos and albums. Without access to the material in your attic and closets, we cannot continue to publish as many photos each month. Everything will be returned to you as soon as possible in the condition it was received in.

If you have racing memories you would like to share, we are always looking for topics for Checkered Past and Memories in Motion. You don't need to write the articles, just provide us with the information.

Let us know how we're doing with your newsletter, your comments are needed so we can continue to print what you want to read.

Call me at 908-223-9388 or write to:  
P.O. Box 228, Allenwood, N.J. 08720.

Evalina S. Erbe  
Editor, Vintage Views



## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**Robert & Alice Wagner**, Wharton, NJ. Bob "Invented micro stock racing at Pinebrook Speedway 1978 (mini 37 Ford bodies)". A collector of Dover (NJ) Speedway material & old stock car photo collector. Building a 37 Ford 2 dr. flatback sedan, a look alike of Ed Reed's # 109 that ran Flemington, etc. in the 50's.

**Jim Williams**, Grapevine, Texas. A fan of eastern modified racing growing up in the Pa/NJ area. Currently building models of various classes of stock cars; adding to our stable of model builders.

**Bill Meggison**, Matawan, NJ owner of the # 813

**Bob & Mary Jewett**, Dayton, Ohio. Have a '57 Buick - looking for any information on an authentic Buick stock car as he wants to replicate his car into a stocker - 3701 Pittsburg Ave., Dayton, OH 45406. Their son fabricates stock cars & races a Street Stock in Colorado.

**Joe Daniello**, West Orange, NJ built & ran a micro stock at Pinebrook, Mahoning Valley, Evergreen, New Egypt & Flemington. Recently sold the car and concentrating on his Race Car artwork; adding to our stable of artists.

**Carl Madsen**, Whiting, NJ. Been interested in racing all his life. His uncle owned New Market (NJ) Speedway where drivers such as Vern Cook from Red Bank, Joe Verby, Johnny Hannon & Frankie Bailey raced.



Wally Dallenbach accepts the 100 lap race trophy from Centennial Queen Judy Bell, Donna Marsicano looks on. Labor Day, 9/4/61. (William Curley Photo)



The crowd stands for the National Anthem as the first heat ever to run at Vineland Speedway lines-up on opening day, April 3, 1955. (William Curley Photo)

## GRANDSTAND GAB

Collected by Eleanor Hagerman, call or write with news by the 25th, 15 Fulton Ave., West Long Branch, N.J. 07764 908-222-4408.

The unexpected passing of Pete Peterson last month was a great shock to many of us. Pete began his involvement in racing as a Novice driver at Wall Stadium. Over the years he has sponsored many drivers, most recently Ken Wooley in the #40 Small Block Modified Division at Wall Stadium. When the GSVSCC was formed Pete was one of the first to join and became involved as Chair of our Banquet Committee. We will all miss him.

We were happy to hear that Ann McMann is back home after a recent stay in the hospital.

We would like to thank (?) John Dalton for his recent donation of a bucket of pennies, as yet uncounted, but appreciated none the less.

Joe Venezian, President of Perth Amboy Spring Works has recently located his father's files on the various stock cars that PA Spring Works made the suspensions for, among them the XL-1 and Purple 4. He is willing to help anyone who is building an old stock car with suspension parts, call him at 908-442-4420.

Mark your calendar!! Saturday March 26, 1994 is the date for our annual banquet. It will be held at the Castle in Lakewood. Reservation forms will be in the January newsletter. \$25 per person, for more information contact Nancy Sinea at 908-840-6307.

Slide program #4, featuring the slides of Bob Farlee and the narration of Earl Krause Wili be presented on Sunday, November 21, at the Monmouth County Library in Manalapan at 1:30pm. Refreshments will be served. If you would like to bring goodies to share or memorabilia for display, call Evalina Erbe at 908-223-9388.

**TURKEY DERBY AT WALL STADIUM:** The GSVSCC will once again have restored vintage stock cars on display during Turkey Derby. Friday, November 26 will feature a rolling display on the race track and Saturday, November 27 will feature a static display in the grandstand area. Car owners, please be at the track by 9:00am. Call Ray Shea for more info. 908-840-6307.