



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.

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HALL OF FAME PRESENTATION

When the 2015 EMPA Hall of Fame induction ceremonies were held this past January, 17-time (1981, 1986, 1997 to 2003 and 2006 to 2013) National Hot Rod Association Top Alcohol Funny Car Champion Frank Manzo was unable to attend as he was in Doha, Qatar, by the Persian Gulf working on several Drag Racing projects.

However, that was rectified on June 6 when members Herb & Terri Anasor and Rich Grunert presented him with his Hall of Fame Award at the 46th Annual Toyota NHRA Summernationals at Old

Bridge Township Raceway Park in Englishtown, New Jersey.

“Being inducted into the EMPA Hall of Fame is

unbelievable,” said the 62-year-old Manzo, a former resident of Morganville, New Jersey, who now lives with his wife Michele in Mooresville, Indiana. “I started out driving Alcohol Funny Cars in 1974 and I asked the Good Lord to just win one race. I had an unbelievable career and I never realized how many races that I won; I wasn’t the type of person to just sit back and count.

Workin’ in a family construction business, racing and doing other things that I had to do in my life was pretty hectic, so I didn’t have much time to sit down and reflect. When the season was over I went right back to work on the following season.

“I loved to race and I loved to drive my Alco-

hol Funny Car, and I was just fortunate that the Good Lord gifted me with something that I could drive ’em, build ’em and tune ’em and I was fortunate enough to win with ’em. To be inducted into the EMPA Hall of Fame with some of the great racers that you have there is something that this young kid from New Jersey never thought would happen.”

Primarily cited for his outstanding on-track performances during a 44-year (1970-2013) driving career, the NHRA’s all-time leader in National Championships (17) and Total Victories (223 – 105 National & 118 Divisional) was also recognized for his well-known reputation as a mentor to young racers and a friend to fellow competitors.



Manzo is currently the crew chief on the Al-Anabi Performance supercharged and fuel-injected 1969 Chevrolet Camaro Pro Modified driven by former NHRA (2011), Arabian Drag Racing League (2010-2011) and American Drag Racing League (2009) Pro Modified Champion Khalid Albalooshi.

But the 11-time (1986, 1994, 1997, 2000-2002, 2005-2007, 2011 and 2013) TAFC winner at the NHRA's U.S. Nationals in Indianapolis – the most victories by any driver at the sport's biggest race – does admit that he misses being in his race car.



Photo: Terri Anastor

PHOTO CONTEST RULES

Contest Chairman Bob Yurko tells us that the rules will be the same this year as last. Boards will again be accepted Friday night to speed up the Saturday morning registration process, an innovation that made last year's contest run much more smoothly. Boards will still be accepted Saturday AM.

PHOTOGRAPHERS PLANNING ON ENTERING THE CONTEST SHOULD GO TO THE EMPA WEBSITE TO REVIEW THE RULES .

EMPA WRITERS CONTEST RULES

ATTENTION: Deadline Will Not Be Extended!

Entrants are responsible to enter their articles in accordance with the contest rules. Incorrect entries will not be judged and the judge's decisions are final.

PROCEDURES AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

You must be a 2016 EMPA member in good standing by NOVEMBER 1, 2015, to enter. All submissions must have been published in print from NOVEMBER 1, 2014, through OCTOBER 31, 2015.



All entries MUST have a BYLINE. Joint bylines are not permitted.
A total of (5) FIVE ENTRIES will be allowed. No article may be entered in more than one category.
Deadline must be postmarked by **NOVEMBER 4, 2015. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

CATEGORIES

COLUMN: This is the writer's opinion about a specific racing-related issue or topic. Judging based on style, writing quality, originality and appeal.

FEATURE: A single story that deals with some aspect of motorsports. Judging will be on human interest, reader interest, and quality of writing and thoroughness of reporting. No series, no sidebars and no submissions focusing exclusively on a person or persons. (no personality profiles).

NEWS: A story of immediate news development that occurred yesterday or the next closest date of print.

PERSONALITY PROFILE: A single story or series on a person or persons in motorsports.

RACE REPORT: This should catch the action, the drama, the excitement, the importance of the competition. Is there insight into why something happened? (You must have been present at the race for it to be an eyewitness account).

HOW TO ENTER

Because writing entries are judged on content and quality, entries must be void of photographs, advertising and/or copy writing by others, this includes headshots of author.

HEADLINES AND AUTHOR'S BYLINE MUST BE PRESENT.

Entries must be glued or taped onto a sheet of unlined 8½-by-11-inch paper. Entries larger than 8½-by-11-inch should be cut and mounted on two or more sheets of this size and type of paper.

Entries that are photocopied on 8½-by-11-inch unlined paper do not have to be remounted.

Internet entries – print and submit entire page(s). Entries must be void of headshots of author, photographs, advertising and/or copy writing by others.

HEADLINES AND AUTHOR'S BYLINE MUST BE PRESENT.

Identify on each entry on the back of its last sheet as follows:

Category:	Column
Publication:	Going in Circles
Date of Publication:	August 6, 2011
Title:	When Dirt Turns To Mud
Author:	<i>Pirmin Zurbriggen</i>

Questions about the contest should be directed to: Dino Oberto, 570-401-8168, or email him at dlmo@ptd.net.

Send all entries to:

Dino Oberto
211 Columbus Avenue
Hazle Township, Pa. 18202



VIDEO CONTEST RULES

Members with input regarding video contest rules should contact Contest Chairman Bill Channell immediately with their thoughts regarding possible changes. Otherwise, it is expected that the rules from last year will again be in force. Bill is at racevid@earthlink.net or 603-679-6796.



We're pleased to welcome track photographer and AARN contributor **Richard Corbett** of Owensboro, KY back to the EMPA after a 20 year absence. We also welcome newcomers **Jeff Karabin**, a Dirt Track Digest photographer from Scotia, NY and the lapsed members from 2014 who have recently renewed their memberships.

IF YOU ORDERED EMPA APPAREL -

Jeff Gromis is shipping the shirts and photo vests he just received from the supplier.

MEMBER PASSES

Member Rich Romer recently notified us of the passing of fellow member Ken Plotkin of Vienna, Virginia. He later forwarded Ken's obituary, which tells a captivating tale of an accomplished person for whom racing was just one of many interests. While we have many members who are employed full time in auto racing, we have a substantial number of dedicated part-timers who are equally accomplished and valued as members. To give others insight to Ken's career, we have included a shortened version of his obituary. Our condolences to his family and associates.

Dr. Kenneth J. Plotkin died on Friday, July 17, 2015, after a four-year battle with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. He was 70 years old. Born and raised in New York City, Ken attended college at the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn, where he earned his bachelor's degree, and graduate school at Cornell University, where he earned a Ph.D. in Aerospace Engineering. In April of 1972, he began his incredible career as an acoustician at Wyle Laboratories. Ken worked at Wyle Laboratories for 43 years, rising to the position of Chief Scientist.

During his time at Wyle, Ken did important work in the areas of aircraft and highway noise modeling, atmospheric sound propagation, community noise, rocket noise, high-speed fluctuating flow, truck tire noise, psychoacoustics, community noise, noise control, and sonic boom. He became a world renowned expert on sonic boom, a Fellow of the Acoustical Society of America, and a Member of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics.



Not only was Ken a brilliant acoustician and a loving husband, father, and grandfather, he was also a kind-hearted person with a wry sense of humor and a zest for life. Just two months before Ken's death, a United States Congressman arranged for Ken to ride in an SNJ-5 airplane as a thank you for the pro bono analysis that Ken provided of the expected noise levels at the National Mall from a historic aircraft flyover. Ken jubilantly described this airplane ride as the best one he'd ever had.

Ken loved cars as well as planes, and was an avid fan of motor racing. Never one to under-achieve, Ken went from watching car races to becoming an award-winning editor, reporter, and photographer for Motorsport.com. He is survived by his wife Barbara Plotkin; his daughter Sarah Paul; his granddaughters Sophia and Charlotte Paul; and his brothers Henry and Charles Plotkin.

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

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