



## Message from EMPA President, Ron Hedger

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

**NEW MEMBERS** We welcome two new members this month. Phil Allaway of Troy, NY, is Editor and Senior Writer for Frontstretch.com while North Carolina's Adam Fenwick is Associate Editor of speedsport.com and Speed Sport magazine.

### MEMBER NEWS

Longtime EMPA board member and former President Len Sammons was honored in early 2018 by the Garden State Vintage Stock Car Club for his contributions to the sport. The more than well-deserved recognition is described below by another EMPA stalwart, Earl Krause, who made the presentation.

*The Garden State Vintage Stock Car Club (GSVSCC) was founded in 1991 with the purpose of preserving the history of Wall Stadium and of New Jersey stock car racing. Beginning in 1992, the GSVSCC has also honored New Jersey-based race drivers, car owners, mechanics, officials and those "behind the scenes" who have distinguished themselves in local stock car racing through its Hall of Fame and with special awards.*

*Inducted into the Garden State Vintage Stock Car Club Hall of Fame for 2018, at the club's annual banquet on March 18, were drivers Jerry Cranmer, "Smokin' Joe" Hall and the late Tom Michel; car owners Jim (deceased) and Ruth Bauma; and Area Auto Racing News publisher and chief editor Lenny Sammons. (Story continues on next page)*

### Board of Directors:

Ron Hedger, President  
 Dino Oberto, Vice President  
 Len Sammons  
 Earl Krause  
 Carol Houssock, Secretary

### Officer:

Jeff Gromis, Treasurer



(L-R): Earl (GSVSCC banquet MC and board member), Lenny, Ray Shea (GSVSCC president) and John Malsbury (GSVSCC secre-



(L-R): Danny, Shane Sammons (Danny's son/ Lenny's grandson holding copy of current and first (June 1963) editions of AARN), Lenny and Davey



[www.empaonline.org](http://www.empaonline.org)

Thank you to EMPA member, Jim Smith, for providing these pictures!



*Lenny Sammons is dedicated to Area Auto Racing News, founded by his parents Leonard Jr. and Maude in June 1963, as publisher, chief editor, columnist and feature writer; and to the history of our sport in New Jersey and overall. He is also a member of the Eastern Motorsport Press Association (EMPA), and has served on that organization's board of directors for many years.*

*Importantly, while guiding Area Auto to prominence in current day local and national coverage of our sport, Lenny continues to have an appreciation and dedication to preserving the history of racing. Indeed, Area Auto Racing News continues to be a place for racing memories to be documented and treasured for generations to come. Now, the third generation of the Sammons racing newspaper family, Lenny's sons Danny and Davey, are at the office alongside their dad to create each week's edition.*

*Lenny, joined by his sons and an equally dedicated staff, is also promoter of the annual Motorsports Show in Oaks, Pa. and the popular Indoor Racing Series of TQ Midgets, Slingshots and Champ Karts. Under the direction and integrity of Lenny Sammons, Area Auto Racing News continues to evolve and succeed in today's new media world. At the same time, it retains the important values that have made it a leader in today's racing while remembering and honoring the racers of the past who built the foundation of our sport.*

On a personal note, we thank Lenny for the countless tasks he has taken care of for EMPA over the years, with much of his work done behind the scenes and in addition to his thousand and one other duties with AARN and his many promotions. He quickly produces the annual printed newsletter and ballot after the November convention planning meeting, deals with the convention hotel, takes care of arrangements for the hospitality room, contacts Hall of Fame inductees and other award winners and any other tasks needed to pull off a successful convention. For that and more, we thank and applaud him.

## **MORE MEMBER NEWS**

Connecticut based photographer Mike Petrucci is seeing racing from another viewpoint this season, as he has taken a position as a corner flagger at the Thompson road course near his home. He tells us it is enjoyable and giving him a whole new perspective on road racing.



## **AARWBA**

A number of EMPA members did well in the recent American Auto Racing Writers and Broadcasters Association contest. The names and categories they scored in are listed below. Congratulations to all!

**Magazine Feature** (2<sup>nd</sup>) Ron Hedger, Speed Sport Magazine, "Heffner: Trophies and Photographs" (3<sup>rd</sup>) Bruce A. Bennett, CC Racer, "House of Payne"

**Magazine Column** (2<sup>nd</sup>) Karl Fredrickson, Speedway Illustrated, "God and Santa Claus" (3<sup>rd</sup>) Ron Hedger, Speed Sport Magazine, "The Long Look: 'Kramer' Theory Lives During Super DIRT Week"

**Magazine Technical** (2<sup>nd</sup>) Mike Adaskaveg, Speedway Illustrated, "How to Choose a Quality Fire Suit" (3<sup>rd</sup>) Linda Mansfield, Speed Sport Magazine, "An Evolution of Seat Safety"

**Magazine Event** (1<sup>st</sup>) J.A. Ackley, Speedway Illustrated, "St. Louis Spectacle" (3<sup>rd</sup>) Karl Fredrickson, Speedway Illustrated, "How Matt Hirschman Wins"

**Print Photography Action** (1<sup>st</sup>) Mike Adaskavey, Speedway Illustrated, "Hobby Stock Action"

**Print Photography People** (1<sup>st</sup>) J.A. Ackley, Speedway Illustrated, "Seasoned"

(2<sup>nd</sup>) David Moulthrop, Speed Sport Magazine, "Taming Texas"

(3<sup>rd</sup>) Karl Fredrickson, Speedway Illustrated, "How Matt Hirschman Wins"

**Online Media Deadline News Report** (2<sup>nd</sup>) Linda Mansfield, RestartCommunications.com, "Nolen Racing's Coons Finishes Third"

**Online Media Column** (2<sup>nd</sup>) Ron Hedger, speedsport.com, "Hedger: The Long Look"

**Online Media Photo-Action** (3<sup>rd</sup>) David Moulthrop, goupstate.com (Herald-Journal), "Road to Victory"

**Online Media Photo- People** (1<sup>st</sup>) David Moulthrop, speedsport.com, "Daytona Clash Bash"



**NASCAR HALL OF FAME**

We thank the members who took the time to send us their thoughts on who we should vote for in our final year on the voting panel representing the EMPA. Nothing is set in concrete but at the moment, we're locked into Jeff Gordon and Mike Stefanik and leading towards Ray Fox, Alan Kulwicki and Buddy Baker. That said, we have always changed our slate after the vigorous debate, so anything can happen. One famous broadcaster has often stated, "I always arrive here with six or seven solid choices in mind and after hearing all the input, find I've narrowed it down to 11 or 12 great choices." Such is the nature of the vote.

**MORE MEMBER NEWS**

Photographer Alicia Rossi recently completed her masters degree in Speech Language Pathology at Syracuse University. Congratulations on her achievement.

**THANKS TO ALL**



As we will be passing both the EMPA Presidency and newsletter writing duties to Dino Oberto in the near future, I'd like to thank everyone who has supported us over the years and contributed in various ways to the success and growth of the association. It has been a pleasure to serve, knowing that everyone was working towards a common goal and "had my back," as the saying goes.

Please extend the same support and courtesies to Dino. And make the transition easier by renewing at the end of each year, returning your ballots and convention info sheets well before the deadline and recruiting new members to keep the organization healthy.

Remember – It's your organization. The officers and board members can't do it all on their own.

.....Ron

**AND THANKS TO YOU, RON**

I think I speak for all of us when I say thank you for all that you've done over the years for EMPA. Personally, it's been a pleasure exchanging frequent emails regarding membership and preparing the newsletters. You're the consummate professional who has that dry, funny sense of humor I hope all of you have or will experience. Thank you again! Carol Houssock

President	Ron Hedger	rjhmedia@juno.com
Vice President	Dino Oberto	dlmo@ptd.net
Board	Earl Krause	earl@aarn.com
Board	Len Sammons	lhs@aarn.com
Secretary	Carol Houssock	carol2race@aol.com
Treasurer	Jeff Gromis	jg495299@comcast.net

