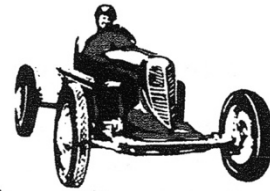


# GOLDEN WHEELS

FRATERNITY  
*Auto Racing Pathfinders*



*Museum Pieces In Action*

**President's Message:** It's nearly year's end, so time to look back and wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

2025 was an interesting year, with a few highlights, and definitely some low lights. I'll first go over the highlights. We had another Golden Wheels event at the Shoreline Historical Museum. This year it was a combined celebration of the Aurora Speedway and its history, and Playland Amusement Park. Both of these former Seattle landmarks are very important to the museum. While we had probably the fewest cars representing Golden Wheels in my memory, we were blessed with nice weather and over all the event was a success. On display was the club midget, and Samco big car of Jim Edwards, Dan Blair's V8/60 Kurtis copy Bob Scott brought his recently acquired street legal track roadster. It was my first time to see the late Dave Tatom's now beautifully restored midget owned by Jeff Peterson of Peterson's Customs. I want to say that Jeff's restoration is an example of some of the finest work I have ever seen.

Also on the bright side, our new relationship with Ray Townsend (the fountain of all the history relating to Evergreen Speedway) culminated in Golden Wheels being represented at Evergreen's annual tribute to all the classes of cars that race there, and the drivers who race those cars. Again, a small but representative display including my bringing the club car, along with Dan Blair in his Kurtis Copy V/8 60 and Jeff Peterson with his beautifully restored midget mentioned above. For many of us, the highlight of the event was to see Ray's collection of Evergreen memorabilia displayed under the grandstand. I didn't actually measure the distance his display covered, but I'd guess when added to the other historian's displays it was probably over 100 feet. Pretty impressive!!! We added the club Hall of Fame board to his displays, and Dave Craver brought some of his photo albums. The event culminated in a memorial lap of Evergreen's 5/8s of at least 60 cars representing all the classes that run there. That was one hell of a show.

Now while discussing the Evergreen event, I can add that Kay and I just attended the planning session for next year's event which is tentatively scheduled to take place in July next year and will be bigger and better than ever. Golden Wheels has been invited back, and we've been assured that there will be push trucks there if we have any cars running and we will be added to the memorial lap display.

Also in the good news category, Jerry Day reacquired the beautiful #76 sprint car that he built for Jan Opperman to run the western circuit. This car had been residing in the Los Angeles area for several years and gone through several owners. This car is an example of some of Jerry's finest work, and we hope we see it on the track again soon.

Now the downside. That would have to be the fire at Dave Craver's shop which included the famous Ranger Roadster. I don't want to go into too much detail, but Dave lost the majority of his extensive shop, its contents, and he's been climbing out of this disaster for most of the year. We wish Dave and Teresa the very best in their recovery from this most unfortunate situation.

We were not above losses this year, as we lost Joanne Edwards in May. Joanne was the wife of Golden Wheels Hall of Fame member Jim Edwards. Joanne is greatly missed. On October 5, long time member and racer Loren Day passed away. Loren was a member of a racing family with brother's Paul and Art. Loren raced modifieds back in the Sky Valley days and ran his beautifully restored modified with Golden Wheel in vintage events. Ironically, the late brother Art Day drove Kay's and my car at Aurora Speedway in the 1950's.

And as I write this, a call from Dave Craver last night said that Golden Wheels Hall of Fame member John Wood passed away on Saturday Dec. 13th. John had a long career in midget racing in the Washington Midget Racing Association (WMRA) beginning in 1964. A former president of WMA John raced 5 different midgets over his long career, ending with his famous turbo charged VW. After his WMRA career ended he raced with us in GW events, often bringing two cars to on track events, and being a multi car fixture at our static shows. John is survived by his wife Sue, and sons Kevin and Kenny, all of whom were active participants with WMRA. John was an iconic figure in NW racing and will be missed by all.

Again, Merry Christmas, and I look forward to the coming year being an exciting and productive for Golden Wheels, and each and every one of you. *Hal*

Thanks Hal, for the good introduction to this newsletter and bringing us all up to date on what is going on in Golden Wheels. For those that may not have heard the news, Golden Wheels Hall of Fame member Bob Gregg has been inducted into the National Sprint Car Hall of Fame.

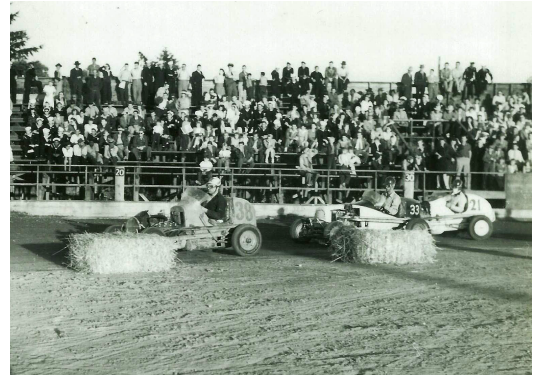
Here are some comments from the National Sprint Car Hall of Fame on Bob's driving career: He began driving in 1938 in the Pacific Northwest and raced for almost 50 years. His last event was in 1986. He scored wins in every decade. The Golden Wheels Vintage Racing Club based in western Washington named him "Driver of the Century." Bob was one of the most decorated drivers in that region of the country. Much of his early success came in midgets, where he won 13 season titles in Oregon and Washington. He also won racing in sprint cars, supermodifieds and roadsters during this time. In 1951, he won the ARA sanctioned 100-mile sprint car race in Reno, and won the eight-race US/Canada Gold Cup for sprints/supermodifieds in 1962. Bob's career included 22 championships. He passed away in 2002.



Bob Gregg on the track



NSCHoF&M Photo



Bud Green-Jack Turner-Bob Gregg-Bremerton-1945

\*\*\*\*\*

I think we can start this off with a few pictures from our annual gathering at the Shoreline Historical Museum. As Hal mentioned we didn't have a lot of cars there, but it was an interesting and fun day with a very nice variety of people enjoying the display. A few photos from the event below. Enjoy.....





It's always nice to see people enjoying our shows, and especially the children.

\*\*\*\*\*

If you, or someone you know, is interested in an Edmonds midget roller, be it for parts, a project or any other reason, here are some photos that may be of interest to you. Also available is a pile of tires.



**For More  
Information  
contact  
Curt Warner  
425-301-1496**

While rummaging through the archives, I came across this clipping in one of Pike Green's boxes. A report by Marge Sandlin on the first annual Golden Wheels banquet. I remember attending it, and reading about the event stirred up and brought back many forgotten memories. I am sure it will do the same for some of you.

MARCH 10, 1976

## "Nerfing Around Washington"

by MARGE SANDLIN

Puyallup, Wash. . . The first annual Golden Wheels banquet, conceived, organized and ramrodded by Pike Green, drew a full house at the Moose Lodge in Seattle. 364 enthusiastic racing supporters of all ages crammed the barn-like structure and had a ball despite the lousy acoustics and inadequate sound system. It was almost impossible to understand the speakers at times.

The star-studded gathering, headed by Jan Opperman, included Alan Heath, who flew in from Los Angeles for the event; Johnny Rutherford, who walked across the street from the Wayne Crumm-promoted car show at the Seattle Center; George Henley, national unlimited hydroplane champion; Jack Turner, Eric Koch, Bob Gregg, John Wood, Jr., president of WMRA; Bob Cochran, president of WRA; Don McLeod and more whose names I didn't get down on paper.

Rutherford made a surprise appearance and was awarded an honorary membership in Golden Wheels Fraternity (that designation has gotta go - there are a number of us females who are members). Rutherford was given number 501 - for his win at Indy - and was obviously speechless for a second or so. "You didn't tell me you were gonna do this!" He seemed impressed with what Opperman is attempting to do at his Noxon, Mont. rance and also stated that he'd been trying to persuade Jan to drive at Indy for a long time.

Jan has a backup ride behind Gary Bettenhausen, although he's trying to get sponsorship for a car himself.

Meanwhile, Jan is trying to finish his church so that the people he's rehabilitating can move out of his house and into the church, which will also serve as living quarters. He needs insulation for the roof and gable ends, kitchen equipment, plumbing fixtures and pipe, windows, electric wiring and fixtures, a large capacity hot water heater and

a van or 9-passenger station wagon, to mention a few of the many items necessary to complete the facilities. To date, he's received about \$6,000, and in addition was presented a check for \$2,200 from the Golden Wheels. He grinned happily, saying, "This will just cover the cost of the roof and the doors."

Other awards went to Devon Smith, Grand Old Driver; Neely Burkitt, Grand Old Sprint Car Owner; Kenny Hutch, Grand Old Midget Car Owner; Digger Caldwell, Henry Kissinger Int'l Complication (he smuggled a sprint car across the Canadian border twice within a few days time, both assembled and disassembled); Syd Carr, Houdini Magician's Midget Reconstruction (he completely rebuilt a midget 14 times in one season); Jimmy Seim, the Forgotten Man (he held the Langley, B.C. track record for 12 years without recognition); Jack Turner, Indianapolis Aerobat; Bud Green, Weyerhaeuser Lumberman's Award (single-handedly kept one sawmill in operation cutting fence material); Alan Heath, Evel Knievel Award (longest jump in a midget); and Rookie of the Year, John "Rouschmidt" Fasnacht. The latter was decided by coin flip to break a tie with another driver, whose name I couldn't understand, both of whom began their racing careers Aug. 24, 1975.

New, young blood for WMRA and Ray Stebbins, Arlen's 16-year-old son, will be driving the Triumph that Rocky Mountain bought from Jack Corley a few years back. Don Wright, Des Moines, WA, is looking for a car to buy. Don is 17 and has driven stock cars in drag races, but has never been in an oval track car.

Ron Smith bought Mel Kenyon's midget, promptly entered it in the car show at the Seattle Center and won the first prize for open wheeled cars. Ed Shefchik, according to Smith, took second prize by three points (Ron checked the point totals).

Carl Larson is the owner of the car Chuck Rude will drive this year - Jim Hendrick's Offy that blew two years in-a-row before the season ever got underway. Carl and Chuck will put a Chevy II powerplant in the car and expect to be ready for the first race May 22 at Eugene Speedway.

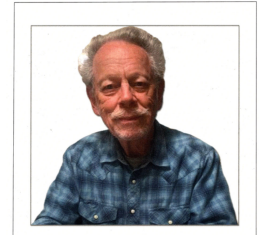
Add two more confirmed races to the 1976 super midget schedule - July 24 at East Wenatchee and July 31 at Skagit Speedway, the latter the superb dirt track.

Here are a couple of photos of drivers mentioned in Marge Sandlin's article. Alan Heath and Jack Turner.





As Hal mentioned in his Presidents Message, we have lost long time member Loren Day. Loren was always there when needed. Along with attending Golden Wheels ontrack events, carshows, meetings and other events, he helped with anything that needed to be done at the Shoreline Historical Museum with whom Golden Wheels has had a long standing relationship. As seen in the photo Loren had a beautiful race car that he was always happy to display at car shows. Rest In Peace, Loren.



In Loving Memory of  
*Loren P Day*  
 May 16, 1942 - October 26, 2025

**Info update:** A little over a month ago, my computer was hacked, and I lost my e-mail program at comcast. If you have me on your email list at firsturn@comcast.net, erase that info and enter my current email address. It is now dirtnsprints@hotmail.com.

**BIRTHDAYS!!** – The first newsletter of 2025 covered the birthdays of members born in the first six months of the year. We will now name the members celebrating in the last half of the year. Blowing out the candles in July were Jerry Day, John Gregg, Delmar McClure, & Brian McMurtry. In August Joe Winkler and Mike Adkins celebrated. In September Ruth Hespe had the month to herself. Bob Scott and Brian Pratt celebrated October birthdays. Vicki Westberg and Bill Bowers shared November and Jim Edwards had December’s only celebration.

Looking ahead, in January Hal Schlegel, Dave Craver and Bill Blackwell will do the huff & puff program to celebrate. No birthdays to report in February and Ralph Hunt and Ed Williams finish out the first quarter of 2026, celebrating another trip around the sun in March. **Happy Birthday to All and Very Best Wishes for the coming year!**

**Don’t Forget Breakfast:** The next **Saturday Morning Breakfast at Shay’s in Shoreline will be January 10<sup>th</sup>**. Meeting starts at 9:00 am but you can come early and stay late if you so wish. Hope to see you there.

I know I’m getting older and slower and try to be alert. Still think Racing Wheels owner Gary Sterner’s sign off on his editor’s collum is good advice when on the road. “Until next time .....**Keep Your Wheels Down!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**”

Yes, once again it is time to pay our dues. Please do so soon. Thank You!

## Golden Wheels - 2026 Membership / Renewal - Golden Wheels

Please Print

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse/SO Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell) \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Month(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Email/Web Address \_\_\_\_\_

Member-\$30 Spouse/Significant Other-\$10 Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ (US \$)

Brief Profile (owner, driver,crew, fan, etc) or change from last year. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**Mail to: Golden Wheels, P.O. Box 33832, Seattle, WA 98133**

◆◆◆◆◆ == BUY=SELL=FINN=TRADE == ◆◆◆◆◆

Email - dirtnsprints@hotmail.com Mail - PO Box33487, Seattle, WA 98133 - Phone - 425-879-0213

ADS ARE FREE TO ALL MEMBERS - PLEASE NOTIFY EDITOR OF ANY CHANGES - ADS ARE SUBJECT TO REMOVAL AFTER THREE ISSUES IF SPACE IS NEEDED FOR NEWER ADS - THANK YOU



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40's - 50's era midget race car PROJECT  
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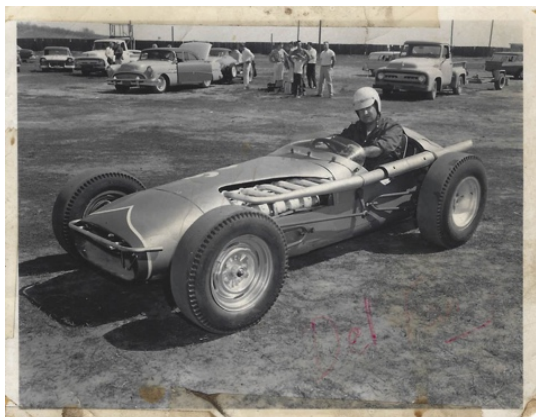
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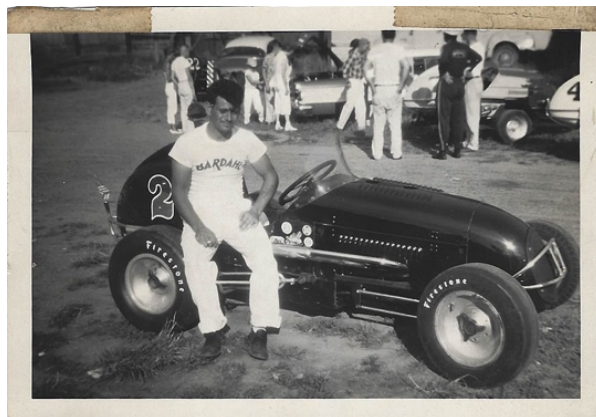


As we close out this issue of the Golden Wheels Newsletter we leave with some photos from the collection of Lee Elwell. Some of the photos may have been in previous issues.

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#1 Dell Fanning Ranger



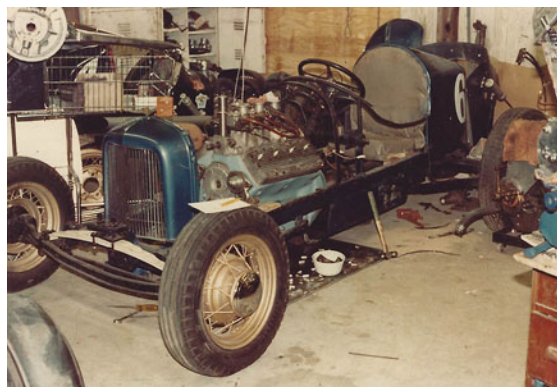
#2 Cliff Spaulding at Portland, Or.



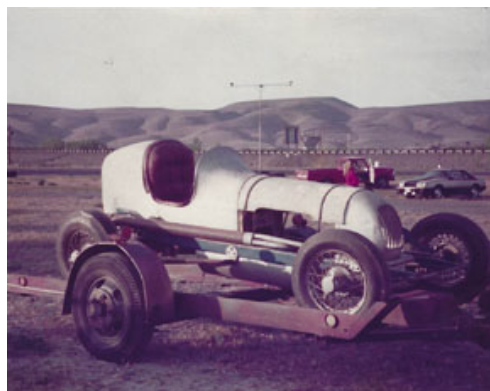
Pike Green, Bud Green, Pat Vidan, Lee Elwell, Jack Benson, Digger Caldwell-Union Ave Speedway 1981



Lew McMurry, Gordy Youngstrom, Bud Green



#25 with V8-85



Russ Duffield-Nywening's D. O. Fronty



Jack Benson #44 and Le Elwell #25 - Evergreen Speedway



Lee Elwell Spin - Port Angeles

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P.O. Box 33832, Seattle, WA 98133

*Incorporated  
October 20, 1975  
Memories of the Past  
On the Track Today  
Museum Pieces In Action*

**Golden Wheels Fraternity**

*Preserving The  
Golden Age of Motorsports*

**2025 Officers**  
 Pres: Hal Schlegel  
 Vice-Pres: Brian McMurtry

**Board Members**  
 Frank Volz - Jerry Day  
 Dave Graver - Bob Scott  
 George Hespe - (President Appointment)

PO Box 33832, Seattle, WA 98133

**The Object of Golden Wheels Fraternity**  
 Encourage the preservation of vintage auto racing.  
 Promote and advance the interest of said Fraternity.  
 Honor those auto racers who are no longer with us.  
 Join in fellowship and camaraderie.  
 Collectively render such financial assistance as possible  
 to worthy distressed auto racers, ex-racers, their widows,  
 orphans and accepted humanitarian associations.

For information on Golden Wheels  
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[www.goldenwheelsautoracingpathfinders.com](http://www.goldenwheelsautoracingpathfinders.com)



**In Memory  
of  
Jan Opperman  
and  
Silent Members  
of Golden Wheels  
Fraternity**



*anonymous*