VINTAGE RACER GROUP
VRG
JAN, 2012 VOL. 9.1

# WINTER WARM-UP
# KARTING GRAND PRIX NY
# FEBRUARY 11, 2012 (1PM)

# NEWSLETTER

WWW.VRGONLINE.ORG

## What's Inside.....

Page 1. Bill Hollingsworth reflects on the success of VRG

Page 2. VRG Schedule of Events and contact information

Page 3. VRG remembers our friend Candy Stefani

Page 4. Mark Palmer & Tivvy present the first in a series of Tivvy's Tech Tips

Page 5-11. Photos from Turkey Bowl

Page 6-10. Cal Trumbo reports on a Turkey Bowl with all the trimmings

Page 12-13. David Fenton reports on his racing in New Zealand, (of course there must be beer involved!)

Page 14-15. Our Gregor Tarjan Tackles the Targa Newfoundland, and Takes home the class Trophy!

Page 16. An invitation from SVRA

Page 17. Bob Girvin discusses the newly-established position of Chief Steward & VRG Contact information & election results

## WHAT SEEMS TO BE SPECIAL ABOUT *VRG*

This is an emerging thought. While at two VRG events at the Glen over the past three years I observed the attitude of the participants when weather forced some bench racing in the garages. It was stikingly similar to the convivial attitude you would observe in the garages at New Hampshire. It was very much a gathering of friends. At the VMC meeting in Philadelphia the participants are asked to talk a little about their vintage racing organizations. Mark Palmer, who always attends, and I, a first timer, listened and spoke when it was our turn. The other clubs are faced with an inability to get volunteers. Having to hire workers for events almost financially ruined VSCDA. It was a constant that we heard as each spokesman for his organization spoke about his club. We stood out in describing the volunteer spirit we have found in the VRG. The others looked at Mark and me as if we were from the moon.

It is not about track time, although that has something to do with it; and it is not about car classification, although that has something to do with it; and it is not about the attitude on and off the track, although that has something to do with it. When discussing this with your Editor, Larry McKenna, he said it had to do with our being transparent as a Board of Directors and as an organization. In thinking about that for a few days I would say that Larry may be on to something. Some of you may have more to say. The Board started with the *Founders* and is weaning itself away from that dominance. By including what we refer to as *Key Volunteers* in our BOD meetings and/or discussions we have doubled the size of the group included in discussions about VRG. The VRG Forum allows us to stay in touch with each other. We encourage the car marques to be self policing and to be the sales force for expanding the membership. We feel that there is more to it than just bringing your car, racing it, and going home. I would say that it evolves from the spirit of a young organization. As each Event Chairman is autonomous, he is a profit and loss center and depends on a cadre of volunteers, often starting with his wife. We appreciate it when someone offers to help. It can be a wrench, a push, a lift, a ride, a drink, a smile.

I think it gets down to the basic human nature of giving instead of receiving. Those who only receive do not get much out of life. Those who give get a lot out of life. David Brookes analyzed the American electorate pretty well the other night on the *Newshour* when he said it was at its best when it was involved, making a shared sacrifice. Nothing has been asked of it since the 1960's, he said, and it shows. VRG seems to work because it is young, enthusiastic, growing, solvent, and most of the membership wants to be involved. Remember the World War II poster "Uncle Sam Wants You?" That could describe a lot of the members of VRG

Happy and safe racing in 2012,

Bill Hollingsworth

# VRG RACE SCHEDULE

# 2012

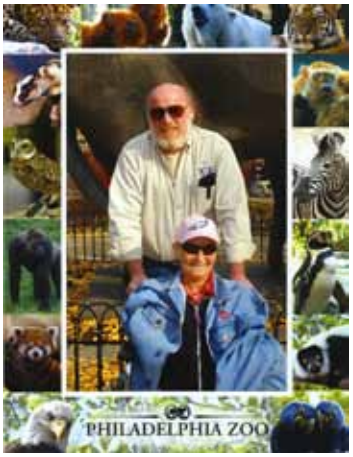
| | |
|---|---|
| FEBRUARY 11, 2012 | WINTER WARM-UP KARTING - GRAND PRIX NEW YORK, MT. KISCO, NY<br>Event Chairman: Darry Bova, Tel: 203-329-9710 Email: darry@vrgonline.org |
| MARCH, 2012 (TBA) | PITTSBURGH AREA VINTAGE RACERS WINTER DINNER<br>Event Chairman: Keith Lawrence, Tel: 412-995-7101 or Email: keith@vrgonline.org |
| APRIL , 2012 (TBA) | VDCA WILD HARE RUN, VIRGINIA INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY, ALTON, VA<br>Event Chairman: Mike Jackson, Tel: 561-622-7554 Email: vdca@vintagedrive.com |
| MAY 12-13, 2012 | VINTAGE CELEBRATION - NEW HAMPSHIRE MOTOR SPEEDWAY, LOUDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE<br>Event Chairman: Dave Fromer, Tel: 802-253-8854 Email: dave@vrgonline.org<br>Gary Hagopian, Tel: 413-537-8427 Email: gary@vrgonline.org<br>John Kieley, Tel: 603-878-1220 Email: kieley@vrgonline.org |
| MAY 17-20, 2012 | "JEFFERSON 500" AT SUMMIT POINT, WEST VIRGINIA<br>Including Free Test Day. Driver's School begins Wednesday, May 16th<br>Event Chairman: Steve Limbert, Tel: 717-432-4116<br>Asst: Cal Trumbo, Tel: 704-248-0321 Email: cal@vrgonline.org<br>Registrar: Jim Karamanis, Tel: 571-762-3125 Email: jim@vrgonline.org |
| JUNE 14-17, 2012 | VARAC - CANADIAN HISTORIC GRAND PRIX, MOSPORT<br>Event Chairman: Bob DeShane, Tel: 705-878-53305422 Email: bob.deshane@varac.ca |
| JULY 13-15, 2012 | PVGP HISTORIC RACES, BEAVERUN, WAMPUM, PA<br>Friday, July 13 is Optional Test & Tune<br>Event Chairman: Keith Lawerence, Tel: 724-941-5330 Email: keith@vrgonline.org |
| SEPT. 22-23, 2012 | "NEW JERSEY HISTORIC RACES," NJMP MILLVILLE, NJ, on Lightning Raceway<br>Event Chairman, Butch O'Connor, Tel 973-769-7707 Email: butch@vrgonline.org |
| OCT. 12-14, 2012 | VRG AT THE GLEN, WATKINS GLEN, NY<br>Event Chairman: Bob Girvin, Tel: 508-429-2818 Email: bob@vrgonline.org<br>Registrar: Mike Lawton Tel: 978-274-5935 Email: lawton@vrgonline.org |
| NOV. 23-25, 2012 | TURKEY BOWL XIII, SUMMIT POINT, WESTVIRGINIA<br>Event Chairman: Cal Trumbo, Tel: 704-248-0321 Email: cal@vrgonline.org |

Visit the VRG website at www.vrgonline.org for changes and updates to the schedule

# My Name is Candy & I Celebrate Life

Candy Stephani, loving wife of Ralph Steinberg and great friend of VRG, had a zest for life despite her 15 year battle with first Breast Cancer & then Pancreatic Cancer . These pictures, reflect Candy's joy for life, her caring, and her love of family and friends.

Candy lost her battle on December 1, 2011. She was at home with her family and friends and died on her own terms, just as she lived - could we all say as much. With much Love, We Will Miss You.



***This quilt is made up of 42 individual t-shirts representing a number of the walks and races that Candy has participated in alone and with her dragon boat teammates.***

# Tivvy's Tech Tips

*By Tivvy Shenton and Mark Palmer*

**Helmets for 2012:** SA2000 helmets will **not** be accepted at any VRG 2012 events – they have expired. VRG Rules state: "Helmets must meet Snell "SA" specification, of no more than ten years prior, as evidenced by Snell Foundation sticker inside the helmet, or equivalent FIA specification (e.g., as of 1/1/2012 helmets must be SA 2005 or later)." We granted a one-year grace period for SA2000 helmets in 2011, because the SA2010's were late in coming out, but that grace period will not extend into 2012. So for 2012, you must have an SA2005 or SA2010 helmet. Recently at the Turkey Bowl, we tech'ed a number of people who still had SA2000 helmets, and we reminded them that this was the last event for an SA2000.

The SA2010 helmets are readily available and have been for some time now. You might also find some discount priced SA2005 helmets on sale, but remember that these will only be good for 4 more years (the SA2005 helmets will expire in 2016). If you're only planning on racing for another 3 or 4 years, this might make sense. Otherwise, the SA2010 helmet would be a better deal, since you'll get ten years of service – assuming it is not dropped or damaged in the meantime.

So check your existing helmet and make sure you have a 2005 or newer one. The Snell sticker is usually found inside the helmet, up near the crown, and is usually buried underneath the internal padding. They can sometimes be a little hard to locate.

REMINDER: drivers of open cars **must** use a full-face helmet. Closed cars (coupes, sedans) do not require a full-face helmet, but it is recommended even for enclosed cars.

**Other off-season safety gear checks:** While you're checking your helmet, take a few minutes to inspect the rest of your race clothing. Look for holes, ripped seams, stitching that is unraveling, or any other defect. Gloves and shoes take a lot of abuse, and we sometimes catch them at Tech with holes or split seams. Occasionally these can be repaired using Nomex thread (do *not* use standard cotton sewing thread), but frankly if you find significant wear, you should really replace the item. There are many low-cost suppliers of racing gear, that meet the relevant SFI or FIA specs, so there is no excuse for trying to squeeze "just one more season" out of worn-out gear. Fortunately our cars do not catch fire often, but a burn is a very serious and painful injury that usually takes a long time to heal, and can result in other complications. So it is not worth the risk. Many of us never look at our race clothing until we pack for a race weekend, or unpack at the track. We may notice something but then forget to take care of it when we return home from a busy weekend. Take the time over the off-season, to check your gear and order replacements where necessary.

Also, it's very beneficial to pack a pair of slip-on "street" shoes with your race clothing. In between sessions, remove your racing boots and slip into the loafers for walking around the paddock. This saves a great deal of wear & tear on expensive race boots, and also helps to avoid getting dirt, mud, or fluids on the soles of your race shoes. Also, since racing boots tend to have thin soles and little support, it is much easier to turn an ankle while walking around a typical paddock (gravel, uneven grass, etc) in your racing shoes. So keep a pair of old loafers in your race kit, so they're readily available when you step out of the race car.

# VRG Turkeybowl 2011

## Summit Point West Virginia

view more photos www.billstoler.com

# Turkey Bowl XV : It's Green, Green, Green on Black Friday

Who's crazy enough to go road racing in Northeast West Virginia on Thanksgiving weekend? About 120 racers decided it was better to come to Summit Point than stand in line on Black Friday!

.

Turkey Bowl XV could be summed up as a near perfect weekend in almost every aspect. The weather was near 70F with clear blue skies all three days, lots of track time and schedule that ran on time thanks to Steve Hyatt (VRG Chief Steward) and his crew, not to mention a lot of great racing (lots of video on the web to prove it).

Racers at the Turkey Bowl are broken into five groups. The three vintage groups are : Small Bore (less than 2 liter), Big Bore, and, Open Wheel. Group 4 is for all modern raced prepared cars newer than 1972. Group 5 is made up of purpose built, motorcycle powered Legend and Baby Grand race cars. Roger Austin and his group have been supporting Turkey Bowl for many years and continue to grow in numbers with great drivers and great races for the spectators.

It is not uncommon to adjust the groups based on actual car performance and driver, as it is our goal for everyone to be comfortable and have a great experience on track. With a broad spectrum of vintage cars, most every driver was able to find a group of cars to dice with. The vintage small bore cars had over 35 cars and ranged from a 1965 Lotus Cortina driven by the father and son team of Michael Clifford to a 1958 Vervalen Special Crosley-Devin driven by Tom Wall. Norm Berke and Kevin Michael had a good race both driving Elva Couriers.

The vintage big bore group had some great cars ranging from Robert Andersson's 1971 Ford GT40 to David Mapes '66 Dodge Dart and included one of my favorites, Dave Edsinger's 1966 Yenko Stinger. Throw in a couple of Jaguars, Porsches and even a Corvette just to name a few of the more than 20 cars in this group. What a great recipe !

In order to get enough cars to have a separate race group for open wheel cars, this group tends to be a hybrid of vintage and more modern open wheel and sports racers. The cars ranged from Ralph Manaker in his Chevron B16 to Jim Garrington in his 1975 Lola T324 Super Vee to Michael Oritt in his 1958 Elva MK IV Sports Racer. Between Michael's Elva and Tom Grudovich's 1960 Lola MK1 Sports Racer, their excellent driving skills out drove a number more modern open wheel cars in their group. Also this year Entropy Racing filled out Group 3 with several of their sport racers. Great drivers who fit nicely and were a lot fun to play with!

Group Four is modern racing sports cars, open to any modern sanctioning body car. There was the full gambit of cars in this group from a former NASCAR road course stock car, to Porsche 911's and 944's, to Acura Integra's, BMW's, and Mazda Miata's. Even a modern Mini Cooper S joined the fray.

Group Five is Legends cars, which are a purpose built motorcycle engine powered race car. They have two different body styles, one is designed to look like a 1930's Chevrolet coupe and the other looks like a 1930's Ford Coupe. These cars are small, agile, and very fun to drive. Eleven Legends cars participated in the three day event. All of the drivers had a great time and vowed to come back for the 2012 event.

On Saturday afternoon the Turkey Bowl schedule usually has an enduro. This year to add a little flare we decided to have a modified Leman Start. The enduro was offered to the first 40 cars from Group 1 and 2 that signed up. The cars were gridded in the hot pit and backed in at an angle to the Armco. The drivers were strapped into their cars, engines off. At the signal, a crew member would run across the cold pit and tap on the car. The driver would fire up his car and drive off. This sounded like a good idea until it appeared that most of the cars headed for pit out at about the same time. A brief moment of chaos ensued but everyone managed to clear pit lane unscathed. Like every Turkey Bowl there is no timing and scoring so who finished first may never be known. However, we do know who was out of pit lane first : Michael Clifford shot through the pack like a bullet in his '65 Lotus Cortina! Check it on YouTube under VRG Turkey Bowl.

There was great racing to be had throughout the three day event. First time Turkey Bowl participant Brent Simonson, from Odenton, Md. Said "Where else can a SCCA ITA Mazda Miata race against a middle seventies Porsche 911 and come out ahead!" Judging from the smile on Brent's face he had a great time and will be coming back.

# Turkey Bowl 2011

Bill Stoler Photography

# Turkey Bowl XV : It's Green, Green, Green on Black Friday (con't.)

The Turkey Bowl XV dinner was held at the George Washington Hotel in downtown Winchester, VA. We had over 65 guests in attendance, the food was excellent, the service was great, and the company even better.

Our good friend Bob Schoeplein announced his racing retirement at the Turkey Bowl this year. He's hanging up the Nomex. Bob has been racing "Honeybee", his screaming yellow MGA roadster, for longer than I can remember (well, at least since the late 1980's). He has been a fixture at vintage events at Summit Point, including the Jefferson 500 and Turkey Bowl -- plus Lime Rock and lots of other places.

Bob may not realize this, but he has been an inspiration to many, many vintage racers, including myself. Bob isn't the fastest driver around (he actually tells an amusing story about the only race he ever won). But nobody has had more fun vintage racing that Bob Schoeplein. He always has a huge smile on his face. His enthusiasm is infectious, and exactly what we need at every vintage event. Bob has demonstrated to us all that it's not about winning, it's about taking part and having fun and bringing the car home in one piece. I really don't recall Bob pontificating about the state of vintage racing, he never organized an event or conducted a drivers' meeting -- he simply went out there and did it, leading by example. All anyone had to do was spend a weekend around Bob, and they'd be hooked on vintage racing. His "vintage spirit" has always burned brightly for everyone to see.

We'll miss Bob on the track, but I have a hunch we'll still see him and his charming wife Jane around the paddock at Summit Point and VIR. Happy retirement, Bob!

As part of the 15th event we recognized past event chairmen and volunteers who were instrumental in making the event successful:

Jo Blacker – Mid-Atlantic Motorsports
Lee Raskin – VSCCA
Mark Palmer – VRG and VSCCA
Cal Trumbo – VRG
Howard Weiss – Event Steward
Steve Hyatt – Event Steward

Few events have endured as long as the Turkey Bowl which is not possible without both the race participants and volunteers who have worked in the snow, rain and cold to keep the drivers safe. These volunteers are too numerous to mention but are the most appreciated by all who attend this event!

The Turkey Dinner has developed a few traditions of its own over the years. One tradition is to announce the Workers Choice Awards . These awards are voted on by the Turkey Bowl corner workers and safety volunteers and often select a car and driver based on appearance, how well it is driven, uniqueness and so on. Once again the worker's chose some great cars and drivers.

Group 1: Tom Wall, #756, 1958 Crosley-Devin Vervalen Special
Group 2: Robert Anderson, #80 1971 Ford GT40.
Group 3: Marc Evans, #44, 1979 Mallock MKX1B.

Each year we wrap up with the annual "Tom the Talking Turkey" award. This award is often voted on by a select few and most drivers cross their fingers and hope they are not selected for this prestigious award. Usually the award is given for something unique and often at the drivers' expense. At last year's dinner Tom was sent home with Sam Smith and back to where it all began for some much needed TLC and was reunited with his Turkey Bowl fans in perfect health. Tom even sang a few of his greatest cover hits like "I Fought the Law"" and always a crowd pleaser "Hit Me with Your Best Shot"!

This year's recipient was unable to bring his car to event but did what many of us have done under the circumstances and brought their race gear, along with a positive attitude and the camaraderie of the VRG family, found a ride. In this case it was the event chairman's Formula Ford. After getting strapped in and a little familiarization with the controls, he was ready. The first of three factors that helped solidify this year's choice was attempting to enter the pit lane from the wrong direction. It is understandable that there is some added pressure when you drive someone else' car and a lot is going through your head, "take it easy, don't bend or break it, just get it back in the same condition," and so on.

After a couple of laps the winner has a "four wheel off" and continues on, completing the session. At VRG events it is heavily emphasized that if you have a "four wheel off" the driver comes into pit lane for visual safety inspection, which he failed to do. Noticing this was the event chairman's car the corner workers energetically inform race control and

# VRG TurkeyBowl 2011 photography by Bill Stoler

# Turkey Bowl XV : It's Green, Green, Green on Black Friday (con't.)

race control contacts the driver's committee. This then prompted Mack McCormack to ask why I did not come in. Fortunately this was the first I had heard of any it.

Neither driving into pit lane from the wrong direction nor failing to get a safety inspection after a "four wheel off" spin are particularly a big deal unless you are driving the event chairman's car and you are the assistant event chairman! Congratulations to Dave Thomas for earning the Turkey Bowl XV "Tom the Talking Turkey" Award.

A bit of the luster was taken off this year's award when Sam Smith came down with the flu and was not able to attend. Not having Sam present was like not having turkey on Thanksgiving Day, just not the same!

Sunday was another beautiful day and capping off what may be one of the best ever Turkey Bowls! The highlight of the day was the MG Feature Race with over 20 eligible cars as well as the Turkey Bowl XV celebration with lunch provided by the Railside Market.

Dave Parker volunteers to manage group four and group five for Turkey Bowl and contributed significantly to the success of the event. Dave gives a capricious and arbitrary award every year to a driver whom does something spectacular, either good, bad or entertaining to Dave.

The award is called the "Broken Piston Cup" and is piston and connecting rod assembly mounted to a wood plaque. The piston has a giant hole in the top where a valve punched through it causing a catastrophic engine failure. Last year the Broken Piston Cup was presented to Roger Austin.

The 2011 Broken Piston Cup winner was Tony Pagonis. Tony came to the Turkey Bowl this year for the first time. Tony brought his Porsche 944 Cup race car. Tony was having a great morning on Friday morning until he went out for the morning qualifying session. Tony left the grid and as he went by Start /Finish his hood rose up and smacked the windshield and broke both the hood and the windshield.

Tony quickly pulled off track at the access road and came into the paddock via the "back door" or back gate. It seems that Tony forgot to put in the hood pins before driving up to the grid. Sadly, this resulted in a broken windshield, bent hood hinges and a bent hood, all unusable. Tony was ready to give up for the weekend. Dave Parker stopped by Tony's paddock space to make sure he was ok and suggested several options for Tony, none of which included quitting. Option one was to find a glass shop and have them come to the track and install a new windshield. Option two was to remove the broken windshield, remove the bent hood, and remove the rear hatch glass and run in that manner. Tony made some phone calls and found that no one had a windshield in stock ready to install on the Friday after Thanksgiving. Tony chose option two and removed the broken bits from his racecar and borrowed a full face helmet with a closeable visor. He ran the rest of the weekend and had a great time. At the driver's meeting on Saturday morning, Dave awarded Tony the Broken Piston Cup and a new nickname, "Hood Pin". Tony accepted both the Cup and the new nickname in great stride.

We would like to thank Tom and Trish Dick for introducing us to the George Washington Hotel which has been a five star experience on a racer's budget and seems to get better every year.

Of course no Turkey Bowl event or any other race event would be possible without the many volunteers. We would especially like to thank Steve Hyatt and his wife Tracy who helped to organize the workers and manage race control. With their leadership the schedule went like clockwork with little to no down time for broken cars or incidents, maximizing the track time for everyone. Thanks to Dave Parker for managing the modern/Legend cars. A big thank you to Summit Point Motorsports Park for supporting our event, and the countless others who contributed to its success.

We want to wish everyone a safe, happy and prosperous New Year and look forward to seeing everyone in 2012.

Cal Trumbo
Turkey Bowl Event Chairman

Bill Stoler Photos

# Why Our David Fenton Had To Spring For 28 Beers at the Lady Wigram Trophy Race

Fifty years ago I couldn't have conceived I would be spending winters in New Zealand racing my own Lotus 18. Never the less, here I am and have been for the past nine years, having been hooked, one might say, by the lure of the legendary Tasman Series. When Road & Track first began to report on the Series, I recall being full of wonder of how a country of only2 million or so could have developed world champion contenders such as Bruce McLaren, Dennie Hulme and Chris Amon in addition to hosting an international racing series. The series which was first run in 1964 attracted all the big name F1drivers as well as huge interest from motor sports enthusiasts and media all over the world – it put New Zealand firmly on the map as a motor racing center. Upon the completion of the 4 NZ races, the cars and drivers crossed the Tasman Sea to continue racing at four tracks in Australia. Series winners included Bruce McLaren, Jim Clark, Jackie Stewart and Chris Amon.

***David Fenton chased by the Austin Special of Avon Hyde***

But, times changed as Formula 5000 cars became the rage, and the Tasman Series rules were changed to allow them to race alongside the F1 entries in 1969. It wasn't a good mix though and the next year the F 1 cars along with most of its stars were gone. Still, there were many quality international F5000 drivers who continued to compete and the lasting popularity of these amazing cars has continued in New Zealand where the biggest F5000 retro series in the world is now held here – the Tasman Revival Series.

Even before there was a Tasman series, there was the Lady Wigram Trophy Race which was first held in 1949 at Christchurch, and still remains N Z›s most prestigious motor racing event. Nearly all the famous names in international racing have chased this trophy, but only a few can claim to have won it. The most noteworthy include Peter Whitehead, Archie Scott Brown, Ron Flockhart, Jack Brabham, Stirling Moss, McLaren and Jimmy Clark.

Last February, Christchurch was devastated by severe earthquakes in which most of the city›s buildings were damaged or destroyed. Luckily neither the Rapuna track, host site for the Lady Wigram race, was damaged nor was enthusiasm for motor sporting dampened. The course is 2.5 mile long and is comprised of one long and two medium straights and 12 corners. With the middle of the course very tight it gives the better handling cars a chance to catch up to those with faster straightaway speed resulting in laps full of action and lead changes.

Under the illusion I could somehow advocate for more timely repairs to my own damaged home by returning earlier than usual, I arrived just in time to enter this year's Lady Wigram in the supporting vintage car race in which just about anything built prior to 1962 is allowed. There are few requirements other than Dunlop tires and no limits as to motor size or body type. Replicas are accepted too, provided the mechanics are period faithful. The driver calibre is consistently excellent. In our class there were four drivers who had previously won national championships, two of whom had been professionals. Avon Hyde, whom many claim is one of the best drivers ever produced in N Z was driving a single seater, Austin powered Special which looked like a miniature Alfa P 3. With only a thousand ccs it should have been one of the slower cars but with Avon behind the wheel the little thing went like a bomb and in the final race he even set 2nd fastest time of the weekend for our group.

Besides the Austin other cars included a number of other Kiwi built G P type cars, one of the more historic being the Lycolming Special which has a aircraft motor and which Mclaren drove to 2 nd place just behind Moss in 1960. There were also three front engined Kiwi built Aces which looked like 250 f Maseratis, the fastest of which was driven by Graeme Hamilton who, due to his always steady smooth driving is usually leading the last lap of most vintage races. Another neat special was built on a chassis which started out as a HWM from the 50s. Powered now by a 4.2 Jag motor it was driven by Paul Goghill. There was also a perfect replica Lotus 23 with a twin cam 1600 plus the rear engine Stanton Special which has a 427 Chevy and looks exactly like a Can Am car. Rounding out the field was a couple of Jrs including my Lotus 18 and some other sports/race cars,altogether 28 cars.

# Why Our David Fenton Had To Spring For 28 Beers at the Lady Wigram Trophy Race, (con't.)

One of the things I like about racing here is the races are 6-8 laps, so old cars and old drivers are less likely to overheat and break. They also use the more demanding standing starts. Since I have battled with all these guys before, I had a good idea of what to expect. Except for Avon›s the Kiwi cars were very fast down the straights, pretty quick through the corners, but had brakes which when pushed hard enough faded towards the end of the race. Most drivers would give room to pass on the corners, but not all.

Race day Saturday was burning hot. Our qualifying times indicated the top 5 were all within 2.5 seconds while the Stanton with its two hundred extra horses was on pole. While the rest of the field sat on the grid the Stanton meandered towards his place. Tensions mounted and one wondered if the Stanton's driver had planned the delay in hopes one or all of the top competitors would overheat. But no, it was the Stanton which was overheating and soon pulled off. Then, the 30 second warning sign flashed, followed by the 4 red lights, and suddenly just like peals of thunder, we were off and I had my best start ever, so good I stayed ahead to the first corner and except for Graeme getting by a couple of time that's where I remained until the end. Ah, I thought, this is going to be a breeze -- yah, sure.

Unlike Saturday when the start went smartly and everything fell in place the two races on Sunday were really wild and wooly affairs. In the morning race I blew the start, getting so much wheel spin I just sat there while Graeme, Paul and Avon and even a couple of others all streaked away. For two laps all I could do was follow them as they were so close together there just wasn't any room for a my car. Finally, I got by the two interlopers. Then, Avon dropped back a car length and I was able to slip past him and attack Paul. Usually, I just swish past on braking, but not that day. With new tires he was flying and for two laps we passed and re-passed each other, perhaps a half dozen times. Finally, I got ahead a couple of car lengths. By that time though Graeme was way ahead, almost out of sight. With only two laps to go I set out to do what any sensible driver would have realized was impossible, to try and catch him. To my amazement I did pass him just as the checkered flag was waved. But, the pass was two feet after the start finish line. So, second for me and a well deserved first for Graeme, Paul 3rd and Avon a close fourth.

The main event: With Graeme and I each enjoying a first and second, the afternoon feature race took on a bit more significance. Having the fastest time in the morning race I again sat on pole. Although I had caught the field napping and made a perfect start to lead into the first corner on Saturday I knew a repeat was unlikely so I concentrated on just making a decent start. Graeme and Paul, given their superior acceleration, would probably beat me to the first corner, but if I could keep Avon from passing and adding to my woes there was a good chance I could repass the other two before race end. The start did go well and I did best Avon and even went side by side with Paul into the first corner. Paul, however, must have found more than just new tires for he was going even quicker and it took several swapping of positions to make the last pass stick. Next up was Graeme who was now a lot less willing to go down a position. In the meantime, Avon driving like a man possessed had blown past Paul and was giving Graeme fits. He was passing him on every corner before being repassed on every straight. With Graeme occupied I was able to cruise to a 20 second lead and my second win of the weekend. Graeme did withstand Avon›s onslaught to finish in second, only a few yards ahead of the little Austin and Paul was just a second or two behind them.

According to Kiwi folk law, or so I›m told, whoever wins the most races has to buy the beers for everyone who shows up at the track clubhouse. Why this is the law of the land only when I win hasn›t been explained to me as yet. But being a good Kiwi in training I followed the rules and cheerfully bought 28 beers. Some have suggested everyone showed up just for the free beer but I prefer to believe it was because my wins were so very popular.

I don›t know whether racing in New Zealand is more competitive or more anything than in the States, but it sure is loads of fun and very, very exciting. The big plus has been having the good fortune to drive a car very much like the one my heroes, Moss and Clark, drove here so many years ago. Granted its a long ways to come to fulfill a long ago fantasy, but, for me it has been more than worth the trip.

***David Fenton***

# Frankenstein takes on the Targa Newfoundland

*a hard-core, barely legal motorsports event in my 1973 Porsche 914/4*

*by Gregor Tarjan*
*photos by Gordon Sleigh*

"Take a good look at her- this is the last time you will see Frankenstein in this great shape" I vaguely remember telling my 2 boys Victor and Philippe these ominous words before heading to the "Targa". Readers of the VRG newsletter might know what this barely legal sporting event, aka as the ironman of motorsports encompasses: 5 days and 2000 miles of driving at insane speeds through the world's most beautiful roads in Newfoundland. Frankenstein is my 1973 Porsche 914/4. She was the Porsche Club's Californian autocross champion driven by the car's previous owner Evan Fullerton. Although fully sorted mechanically and dry as a bone, the 914 was possibly the ugliest one on the planet. Not necessarily known for the flowing looks, my car was a working class auto crosser. The previous owner did not think twice before letting his sledgehammer flare out the fenders, not necessarily in the most elegant fashion. Over the years I transformed the car into a GT spec racer- hence the name "Frankenstein" as she is known in my family.

5 months prior to the start of this legendary event I was invited to drive my 1923 Stutz 693 Speedster at the Indianapolis Speedway's 100 year celebration. Towing the car in the borrowed 24' long (non- braked) box trailer with my wife's Cayenne S was, let's say - interesting. Running this ancient Stutz around this Holy Grail of all race tracks I was convinced that I had reached my vintage racing pinnacle. Only just a few months later I would enter Frankenstein into a road race that would easily top the experience I had at Indianapolis. And honestly - my main love for cars revolves around the driving experience. With all respects to the Stutz, she basically is a farm machine.

If the Stutz gathering was somewhat of a journey back into motor racing history- my Targa Newfoundland stint was a test of mind, material and skill. I clearly remember the words of our Targa school instructor: "....doing well in Targa is 75% preparation, 20% driver and co-pilot skill and 5% luck" Considering that I would be driving at track speeds on roads that I have never seen before, purely relying on the information input from my copilot- I would need luck more than anything.

Peter Archey, my local tech guru, who helped me properly sort and prepare my 914 for previous track events with the VRG (Vintage Racers Group) was my obvious choice to act as copilot. He as well as myself have never driven Targa. Some of my friends were doubtful of our sanity and were understandably worried about the well being of my 914. "Long hours, small likelihood for glory - return not guaranteed" Think Ernest Shakleton's Endurance fiasco. Others were convinced that I would certainly trash the car. A 38 year old, air cooled 4 banger will never make the distance they warned.

The Targa Newfoundland is now in it's 10th year and running my 914 at this event automatically puts you into company of daredevils, multi millionaires and low brow motor heads. There was exotic Zahir from the driving with my Belgian friend Roland in an alien yellow Ferrari Enzo. Their spectacular crash into the ocean drew a staggering number of hits in the first 24 hours on YouTube. John and Elaine were a couple from Calgary who drove a Sauber, with their friends in the Lambo and Koenigsegg. We wondered how they would fair on roads, which would make the crater filled mess we have in NY look like a smooth airfield. Interestingly none of the super cars finished all stages of the Targa. They either withdrew, disappeared into the Atlantic or had mechanical problems. Nevertheless - hats off to these guys for showing up.

Days were long and usually started at 5:30am with a short car inspection, picking up our starting times and generally just trying to look like we knew what we were doing. Distances of up to 400 miles a day were covered on public roads and usually 4-7 special stages on closed roads was were men and the cars we put to the test. Some of these sectors were driven at over 100mph on long sweeping tarmac along the coast or through elk filled woods (we almost hit a wolf) while other stages were short 4 mile runs through ancient fishing villages. It was in these tight streets were our 914 excelled. In the few times when Peter fed me garbage, such as "hard left" and giving me a hand sign for a sweeping right some of my more sensitive organs tightened. Drifting with all 4 wheels through square turns made me realize what a gem this little car is. At the limit, and beyond - totally balanced and predictable. Frankenstein competed in many autocrosses and the suspension setup really showed. Targa raises money for autism and many afflicted kids participated as marshals. From what I was told over 2000 of them lined the special stages and kept things as safe as possible. Sadly on the second to the last day a competitor hit a spectator in the small town of Burin and almost put an end to the event. The driver's meeting the next day was one of the most tense I have ever experienced. On the positive side everywhere we stopped, friendly locals cooked a health freaks nightmare such as fried fish, elk stew and other calorie bombs. Literally hundreds of school kids asked for autographs and basically made us look like heroes. My advice: If you suffer from low self esteem or always dreamt be treated like a rock star,

# Frankenstein takes on the Targa Newfoundland (con't.)

*a hard-core, barely legal motorsports event in my 1973 Porsche 914/4*

participate in the Targa. You will sign hundreds of autographs and put a big smile on kids faces. Every evening cars were placed in a "parc ferme" where 1000's of paid spectators watched crews service their cars and prepare for the next day. There wasn't a day where we did not go o bed before midnight.

"End bumpy start rough". This was just one of the ridiculous instructions in our 3 inch thick road book that described most (not all!! ) turns. The strategy was simple. Keep the car on the road and stay smooth. My motto: drive 8/10ths although this was academic as we all know. In the heat of the battle we all crank it. Theoretically the Targa times are set so low that driving at 8/10 would make you fail most stages. Frankenstein was expertly prepared. Front oil cooler, 911 front suspension including upgraded brakes, re-jetted Webbers and a roof vent for comfort. Before the event I drove the car for months on a daily basis trying to break it. This was probably the most important (and fun) factor in our development of Frankenstein. During torrential rain storms - which we had allot in NY - I drove through puddles that were 12" deep. Good that I did that as on the last day of Targa we literally had to drive through the eye of hurricane Igor at speeds of 100 mph. Several cars lost it on that day transiting from one stage to the other. Winds were gusting to 80 and simply blew cars off the road. On the test runs before the event I ran through mud, gravel and drove at high speed over the nastiest roads I could find in my town- of which there are plenty. I forced to hit every tarmac crater full on. If something had to break it was to be in NY and not in Newfoundland. My tire choice was simple - they had to last the distance. The Comp T/A's were neither great in the wet nor provided grip in the dry, but they were bulletproof and withstood 2000 miles of incredible abuse. It is interesting to note that on an autocross course Frankenstein is as fast as my daily driver 996 Porsche TT. High speed tracks of course are a different story where the 130 hp of my 914 can never keep up with the mind blowing 500 hp boost of twin turbos.

Bruno was a co-competitor who drove a canary yellow 2002 Porsche 996 TT. He was a local Newfie who raced in the Targa 3 times and unfortunately never seemed to finish without crashing his beautifully prepared car. On the third day things got gloomy as nearly 20% of the cars were out of the running- Bruno was one of them. He was amongst the 5 cars that took a high speed crash into the ocean. No one was hurt, other than the pride and amazingly the next day his Porsche was not only running, but actually competing at full bore. Ok, he was missing some fender and bumper parts, but this tough little bugger was running strong. Bruno told me later that what saved the engine was his switching off the ignition as the car disappeared below the water. He is a pro at crashing I suppose. Probably the most attention getting entry however was not the beautiful blond in the Shelby but the 2 Canadian Iraq veterans who shared only one good leg between the two of them. They were the nicest guys with humor and courage. Unfortunately they crashed very hard in Gander and were out on the 4th day.

At the end we stayed focused, kept errors to a minimum and brought Frankenstein back in one piece. This earned us not only a class win but also the coveted Targa plate, which is awarded to the few teams that complete all 43 special stages in tightly set times. We seemed to have the 5% of luck. Peter and me are still on great terms although having spent days in a extremely noisy, small cockpit. It was a pleasure to be racing with him. He stayed calm under pressure and much of our success and total reliable behavior of our 914 can be lead back to his diligent work. Coming home after a tiring but fantastic week I told my wife that I could turn around on the spot and do the whole thing again. But she probably would not let me go - there is only so much free time you can negotiate. My brother who works as a cooperate pilot in Switzerland drives a 86 911 Targa. Why am I saving my playing time ? Because I signed us up with our 996 TT for the One Lap America- coming May. Maybe this will become my next pinnacle. Let's wait and see.

*Gregor Tarjan runs his specialty multihull yacht import business Aeroyacht from his office in East Setauket, NY. He is an avid vintage racer and also races his 3rd vintage car- a 1958 Peerless GT with the VSCCA. Peter and Gregor are now preparing his rare Peerless for the La Carrera Panamericana.*

**Our President, Bill Hollingsworth, received the following discount offer from our friends at SVRA**

***Good afternoon Bill,***

***My name is Jon McKnight and I have recently assumed the position of Director of Events for the organization. Peter is getting ready for a two week trip to Hawaii and is busy wrapping up the year end at Chicago-Soft. With all this on his plate, he has asked me to contact you.***

***I would like to extend an invitation to all Vintage Racing Group(VRG) members to participate in both our Historic 200/ Shelby American Automobile Club(SAAC) 37th Annual Convention, June 7-10, at Watkins Glen and the Mid Ohio Vintage Grand Prix, June 21-24. The inclusion of the SAAC convention as part of the Watkins Glen weekend promises to make this event very well attended. The track also recently announced that this event will be open to spectators, making the weekend even better. Mid Ohio, SVRA's second biggest event, drew over 200 entries in 2011. The "British Invasion" featuring the BMW/Alfa Romeo/Datsun Challenge and a possible feature race for S2000 cars should also be popular with VRG members.***

***As a thank you to VRG members we will offer the SVRA member discount to those who enter either(or both) event(s). The continued cooperation between both of our organizations offers our members a variety of venues, close competition, and well run events that are even more important in these challenging times. Should you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me.***

***Best wishes for a Happy New Year and a racy 2012.***

***Jon McKnight***
***Director of Events***
***Tel: 732.737.SVRA(7872) | Cell: 908.268.8368***
***oldracerjon@gmail.com | www.svra.com***

VINTAGE RACER GROUP

VRG

**MARK PALMER, SECRETARY**
**4493 Sarah Marie Court,**
**Nazareth, PA 18064**

WWW.VRGONLINE.ORG

# Steve Hyatt VRG Chief Steward

It is a goal of VRG to fine tune the management of our events. We would like to lessen the work load of our Event Chairman by establishing consistent support positions that spread the work load and help make our race activates safe and run smoothly. Steve Hyatt has worked as Chief Steward and Race Control at many of our events in recent years. We have been grateful for his help in formalizing the management of the on track activities at our events. Our Board of Directors has asked Steve if he would assume the official position of VRG Chief Steward. Thankfully Steve has accepted this responsibility.

The arrangements at various tracks are different in that the track may supply Race Control and flag and safety personal while others require us to provide these functions. As our Chief Steward Steve will make sure that these functions are properly staffed and coordinated. At most of our events Steve will be acting Race Control or working with the track Race Control to manage all on track activities. He may appoint a Steward to be his feet on the ground in the Paddock when required.

The Chief Steward working with Race Control deals with all on track activities and any driver issues such as failing to following flag instructions or rules of conduct on track.

Our primary goal is to provide our members the opportunity to enjoy safe, well organized events to enjoy their cars and the camaraderie of their fellow members. I am sure that Steve's influence will help us realize this goal.

VRG is a nonprofit volunteer organization. Anyone wanting to get involved in contributing some time to improving our events please contact any of our Event Chairman. The more folks that help out, even in some small way will help enhance the quality of our events. Please step up and get involved.

# Results for Election of 2012 Board of Directors:

**For the driver who enjoys racing with others who value driver attitude, skill and car preparation.**

**VRG 2012 Directors**

William Hollingsworth, President
Mack McCormack, Vice President
Mark Palmer, Secretary
Paul Bova, Treasurer
Cal Trumbo
Ed Valpey
Tivvy Shenton
Bob Girvin
Steve Limbert

You may also contact:
Bill Hollingsworth e-mail: info@vrgonline.org
phone: 516-236-7263

Larry McKenna - Editor-larry@vrgonline.org

Darry Bova - Layout and Production
darry@vrgonline.org

The VRG Board of Directors is pleased to announce the results of our 2011 election. Incumbent Directors Paul Bova, Bill Hollingsworth, and Mack McCormack were re-elected to three-year terms. We truly appreciate the enthusiasm and willingness shown by the three other candidates, Keith Lawrence, Christian Morici, and Paul Wilson and we look forward to their continued involvement in the club.

As you may know, under the club by-laws, there are a total of nine Directors on the Board, and each year three Directors are elected to serve a three-year term. Each Director is limited to serving three consecutive 3-year terms, or a total of 9 years. The 2012 Board of Directors will meet on October 29th to elect the club Officers (President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary) from among the nine elected Directors.

The 2012 Board of Directors consists of Paul Bova, Bob Girvin, Bill Hollingsworth, Steve Limbert, Mack McCormack, Mark Palmer, Tivvy Shenton, Cal Trumbo, and Ed Valpey. VRG members are encouraged to speak to Board members at any time with any concerns, comments, or suggestions about VRG business.

Congratulations to Paul, Bill and Mack and once again our heartfelt thanks to Keith, Christian and Paul.

Mark Palmer
VRG Secretary