

Des Moines Valley Region of the Sports Car Club of America January 2022





2500 Fairlawn Dr. West Des Moines, Iowa 50265

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Regional Executive: **Nathan Bickel** E-mail: <u>tlbickel10@gmail.com</u> Phone: 515-556-8437

Assistant Regional Executive:	Secretary:
Dan Doyle	Scott Mattis
E-mail: <u>ddoyey@gmail.com</u>	E-mail: <u>scott.mattis@yahoo.com</u>
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Fred Bell	John Haluska
E-mail: <u>fourbells1@mchsi.com</u>	<u>hjc9292@gmail.com</u>
Phone: 515-224-4179	Phone: 515-689-3963
Race Officials:	Solo Events: Boonie E-mail: <u>boonie@factorfabrication.com</u>
Racing Competition:	Solo Rules:
Harlan Donaldson	Chris Riester
E-mail:	E-mail:
hdonald234@hotmail.com	chris.m.riester@gmail.com
Phone: 515-263-4922	Phone: 712-592-0176
Time Trials Director:	Drifting Editor:
Robbie Vierhout	John Haluska
E-mail:	E-mail: <u>hjc9292@gmail.com</u>
<u>vierhoutrobbie@gmail.com</u>	Phone: 515-689-3963
Website Manager: Mikael Gustafson E-mail: <u>mtgustaf@gmail.com</u>	Stay Connected: FACEBOOK: Look for DMVR SCCA ONLINE: www.dmvrscca.org

A Day at the Runoffs – by Dave Eggert

If you ever have the chance to attend the SCCA Runoffs, I say do it!! Earlier this fall the dates and location for the 2021 national championship races aligned with a trip to see my son for Family Weekend during his first year at college in Indianapolis. So, like any good race fan, I added an extra day to the trip to check out the races at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Wow, what a fantastic day! Great racing, awesome track, tons of memories both new and old, lots of photos, and most importantly, time with family and friends. That's what SCCA racing is all about.

While I have been active in DMVR autocross racing for the past four seasons, it had been almost twenty years since I had attended an SCCA club race. As I drove into the track, it was neat to see how much this was still a club race, just on a larger scale. Tucked in among all the big-rig haulers and toter homes I could still see racers who had made it to the track with open trailers and much more modest budgets. Paddock spaces ranged from F1-style pit-side garages and rented stalls in Gasoline Alley to pop-up tents spread out across the grassy areas of the track infield. Regardless of where they fit in along this spectrum, the intensity and smiles on their faces implied that all the racers were excited to be there having *#FunWithCars*.

For me, the excitement started as I approached the entrance to the tunnel under the short chute between oval turns 1 and 2. I rolled down the windows and heard the sounds of the first race group of the day already out on track. My mind immediately flashed back to hearing the roar of a lone Indycar finishing a few last twilight practice laps while a group of wide-eyed college students unloaded our PrISUm II solar car from the trailer and pushed it into our garage stall in Gasoline Alley prior to our qualifying event. Those same goose bumps immediately returned and reminded me that this place

is special, no matter what cars are racing there. I never got to see the Indycar on track that day or find out who was driving it, but its sounds are etched into my memory. One of these days I will finally make it back to see Indycars in action at the 500.

The excitement and memories continued as I drove into the track and made my way to the media center to get my credentials. It definitely felt like I had moved up in the world from the memories of my 15-year-old self signing in at Blackhawk Farms or Road America as a photographer for Chicago Region SCCA's *Piston Patter* newsletter. Thirty years later I was now in a world-class media center getting an official IMS photo vest to shoot for DMVR's *Drifting* newsletter. Thanks to John Haluska and Nathan Bickel for letting me do this!





With my credentials in hand, it was time to explore the road course and find good locations to watch and photograph the racing action. My favorite locations ended up being the Turn 1-2 complex at the end of the front straight and the horseshoe-shaped Turn 6 just before the back straight. These were fun places to watch all the classes, especially the 72-car Spec Miata and the 60-car B-Spec fields. The cars just kept coming and coming, sometimes seeming to get three- or four-wide as they took a variety of lines through Turn 1 and then trying to get back to at most two-wide before Turn 2. Turns 12 and 13 were also a neat spot to watch the Formula Vees dive off the south short chute between Oval turns 1 and 2 before returning to the front straight. My photos from Day 1 of the 2021 SCCA National Runoffs can be found at <u>www.deggertphotos.com/2021-</u> <u>scca-runoffs</u>. In general, the racing was intense and clean. Most races had at least one full-course caution to retrieve a stranded car from a gravel trap. I only saw a few dangling side mirrors or bumpers and even fewer wrecked cars.

As I mentioned earlier, sharing the day with friends and family made it special too. I was able to spend some time in Gasoline Alley reminiscing with Tony Roma, a friend and fellow Spec Miata racer at Waterford Hills back in the early 2000s. It was great to catch up, learning about the last several years he has spent racing with his son in the growing B-Spec class. This newer class is for minimally modified sub-compact cars including Chevy Sonics, Ford Fiestas, Honda Fits, Mazda 2s and Minis. After struggling with his tires in qualifying, Tony (#55) started 12th and was able to improve one position to finish 11th. I was also able to spend some time with my sister and her husband who were at the track volunteering as Race Chairman staff. Late in the day I was also able to pick up my son after his last class of the day and bring him and my wife to the track for the last races of the day. It was great to be able to introduce him to SCCA club racing at such a grand event. I truly hope that he will be back and I look forward to sharing the 500 with him soon too.

In the end, my day at the 2021 Runoffs was a great experience, and I hope you enjoy the photos. I strongly encourage everyone to attend a future SCCA Runoffs race or any local SCCA club racing event, regardless of whether you are an autocrosser, rallycrosser, time trial racer, volunteer or just a general motorsports fan. There is so much to see and do and so many new memories to create. Go and have *#FunWithCars*!



DMVR Annual Banquet and Awards

Waveland Golf Course Clubhouse 4908 University Ave, Des Moines, Iowa

Please join us at the historic Waveland Golf Course Clubhouse this February 12th for our Annual Dinner and Awards Ceremony. Celebrate another season in the books and socialize with fellow DMVR members for an epic evening of festivities. Dinner will be buffet style and include a drink ticket for the bar! When: Saturday, February 12th, 2022 from 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM Where: Waveland Golf Course Clubhouse -4908 University Ave, Des Moines, IA 50311 Price: \$35 per Person

* Please RSVP by February 7th, 2022 either online (through the DMVR Facebook page or at <u>https://</u> <u>www.facebook.com/events/228366346107951</u>) or by mail.

* Checks can be made payable to DMVR SCCA and sent to PO Box 65176, West Des Moines, IA 50265. Payments at the event will be accepted!

Blast From the Past



Anybody remember this dash plaque?

Now Online or on your phone!



Have you signed

the WAIVER?

Did you sign the waiver?

Reminder: To be eligible for coverage under the SCCA Plan, one of requirements is a person must have signed the proper event waiver release. When arriving at the event, please remember to sign the waiver!

Thank you!

Don't forget your wrist-band!

FUNDAY SIT-DOWN

with John Haluska

I sit down with 58 year DMVR member and SCCA Hall-of-Famer Ron Sharp and dish with him about G Production Midgets, a career in Race Administration and everything in between!

JH

Ronnie, here's the cool thing about you. Not only are you a race car driver that has been there, been everywhere, done it all. But also been this race official, a professional race official! How in the world did you start all this?

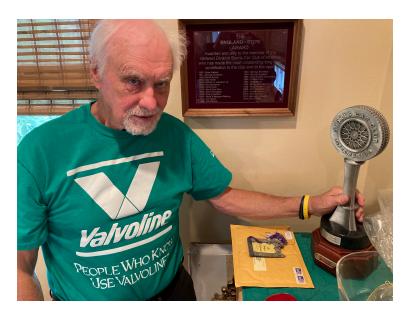
RS

To begin with, I got interested in the sport in 1954, I was 12 years old. My neighbor across the street came back from the service with an Austin Healey 100/4, wearing a cap and driving gloves. He gave me a ride and that just hooked me right then! I started taking every sports car magazine I could find, many of which I still have. But it wasn't until I had an MGA in 1962, that I ran my first autocross. And then we bought the Midget new from Dave Ostrem in 1963. And that year Bobby Hoover was racing a B Production Corvette, his '61. And I went with him to all his races, crewing for him. Plus we watched the June sprints. And then Lake Garnett. And that's when I turned twenty one and started racing the next year.

Jean and I got married in 1967 and we went down to Mid America Raceway for two races for our honeymoon. Jean had been a Greenwood girl at Greenwood Raceway, presenting trophies and everything. So she'd been heavily involved and we both started autocrossing in the sixties. And we autocrossed an awful lot. We both won a number of them. In 1967 DMVR had an award for a combination of rally and autocross, an overall award. There was only one rally, which Jean and I happened to win, plus we won our class in autocross each. So Sunray DX was giving an award out to each region and we got a big trophy for that. And in '67 and '69, northeastern Iowa used to be real big in autocrossing. They had a



weekend, a Sports Car weekend, and we went up there and Jean won ladies every time and I got first overall. So all through the 60s, 70s and 80s we autocrossing and at the same time we were racing.



The SCCA Hall-of-Famer with HoF Trophy

And in the late sixties, I worked with a guy who was big into rallying and we had run some rallies ourselves. And he wanted to get more serious about so he bought a Fiat 124 Sport Coupe and in 1971 we won the Volkswagen Club National Championship for Rallying. And then in the early seventies, he and I won three Midwest Division championships in Rallying. And so we went all over the Midwest and Central Region, running those road rallies. And at the same time, I was racing and autocrossing with two young kids, so I knew I had to cut back somewhere. So after '74, Mike and I got out of the of the Rally business.

We still stayed real active in the in autocross scene and racing in the Midwestern Council through the 1970s. We ran a lot of Midwestern

Council races and we were the 1980 G Production champion in Council. We raced Midwestern Council up until '82 and Grattan Raceway was our last race where we happened to brake a kingpin. Then we decided to get more serious about SCCA racing again and qualified for the Championship in '77 and always crewed for Frank Ince if we didn't qualify, going down there every year with Jean and the kids. Then we started running more SCCA races and we qualified 10 times for the Runoffs at Road Atlanta, up through 1993. We won a divisional championship in '87. We tied for it in 1986 with Buddy Fey but he beat us out of the tiebreaker with more wins than we had.

I got upside down twice. Memphis, Tennessee in 1969. And then again at Blackhawk Farms in 1979, the weekend before the June Sprints. We had gone over to try some things out before the Sprints and ran our fastest lap ever at Blackhawk. Decided to run one more lap. That was a mistake! Went off at turn six and when we came back on the track we broke a bead on the wheel with an edge there and started rolling. Two or three times, they weren't really sure and I wasn't sure either!

We had probably our worst couple of wrecks at Road Atlanta during the runoffs. In '84 qualifying, down turn five, when the wall was still close, then in 1986, first lap, first corner as part of an eight car pileup. One car tried to take the lead and just came across. That's the first time I had to go to the hospital, have my neck and back checked. But we were OK, just had to wear a neck brace for for a few days.

But yeah, we were still racing up and through the 1990s there and I think about 2004 was the last race we ran over at Mid-America (Wentzville, MO).

Actually, since the 1960s, we'd been interested in the administrative side. I think I was the DMVR Regional Executive first in 1970. And Jean and I both had held different jobs in the region through the years. In 1987, the rumors were coming up about Des Moines maybe having a race. And I got calls from National saying, "You know, this happens every year and most of the time it never pans out. But if it does, I'll let you know". So that's why I decided to run

for RE in '88, I wanted to be heavily involved and just appointed myself as race chairman! And through Tom Juckette, who was on the Grand Prix board of directors as vice president, he was able to get me assigned as an official member of the Board as the Liaison to SCCA. And after that, I always recommended to regions that were going to be involved in this type of thing to see if you can get in on or as close to the board as possible. And that helped us a lot from an SCCA standpoint. And of course, for that race when we started in 1989, DMVR had about one hundred and twenty members with an increase to nearly 400. It was such a blessing for the region, at the SCCA national convention, they have an award based on the size of your region, an achievement award and won it for 1989, with our increase in membership and the number of workers. We had about 385 workers that came from 22 states to work on that race. And so that was guite a thing! So in 1989, DMVR got the Regional Achievement award for for our size region. So that was a that was real nice.

Road Atlanta put on the Runoffs for about twenty five years in a row, and at that time the local region really put on the race. They assigned the officials and everything. In 1993, SCCA wanted to change the event, to be more of a national event. And that's when they asked me if I'd be race chairman beginning in 1994, when they moved to Mid-Ohio, and we ended up then using National Administrators as Chiefs of Specialties and those types of things, and it became more of a national event. But we did all the registration ourselves on the workers, and it was similar to the Des Moines Grand Prix except that it had over 600 workers that came from thirty five states plus Europe! To work the Runoffs! So, of course, Jean was a big help on all of that stuff. So that was guite a thing for the runoffs, as there were some 700 cars and 600 workers, so it kept us pretty busy! In 1995 or '96, I had been the Midwest division Race Administrator for licensing. And back in the early 90s they didn't have a national administrator for driver licensing. In 1996, they wanted to start that position to help coordinate things around the country. And I was honored to be asked to be the first national racing license administrator, which I held until 2005. That was sort of neat being the first to do that.

So the Runoffs were held 12 years there at Mid-Ohio and and that's about the time I decided it was time to back out of that. So we gave that up. But in the meantime, Jean and I both worked with SCCA Pro Racing World Challenge and TransAm at a number of races all around the country. And so one of our more interesting ones was in 2003, I'd been in Daytona for the 24 hours as a guest and seeing what was going on there. And I talked to the Central Florida region RE. That group helps at Daytona, Sebring and in the St. Petersburg race that was going on with IndyCar and TransAm. I asked how's it going? And he said, well, not too good. We've got so many races going on. We've told the SCCA that we just can't support it. So when I got back to the campground that evening, I got a phone call from Mitch Wright. He said I've got a problem. I said, Well, I heard you have been trying to get the St Petersburg race going. And that was iust three weeks away now! He asked if I would be race chairman of it and try to coordinate everything. So we end up doing that with a lot of support from a number of people in the SCCA. But getting all the equipment and getting all that set up. The Burns, Pat and Sandy, were a big part of that. And Cathy Malik was part of our crew. That was an interesting way to start the 2003 season. And then later that year, they were going to have a TransAM race in Puerto Rico. The first ever Puerto Rico Grand Prix, was sanctioned by SCCA. So they asked me if I'd be race chairman of that! They said, don't worry,



Ron (58 year Member) and Jean (55 year Member)

everybody's going to be bilingual, it won't be a problem. We only had one person that could speak English, including the corner workers and everything! And Jean worked with all of them getting them out to the corners. And so that turned out being quite an experience. I don't know if they had another one. That was something!

When the SCCA and USRC sanctioned the 24 hours of Daytona in 1998 and '99, IMSA had done it up to then and they got into some disagreements, I guess. And they told IMSA to pull out and SCCA became the sanctioning body for the 24 hours. So Bob Pearson, who had been the race chairman of the Detroit Grand Prix back when we were getting the Des Moines Grand Prix to go on, he sent me minutes from all of their races, from 1982 when they started with Formula One, minutes of all their board meetings. It was so helpful to me and so Bob was going to be the race chairman of the Daytona. So he asked me to be the Paddock manager. So we did that and and pace car driving and Jean had a National License for starter. So she was one of the starters for the 24 hours Daytona. And did it later in the year for Sebring. So just those two years and 2000, it went back to IMSA.



through several people in the SCCA that got us started into that. We didn't know what it was going to lead to, and IMSA went through a lot of management changes and ownership and everything for three or four years but we ended up being the Paddock chief. And drove the pace car or was right seat in the pace car for for many years. Jean worked with them for quite a few years too, and then she got out but I stayed on until NASCAR bought IMSA about seven years ago now. And I was too naive to think things were going to change. But it did change when you become just part of a big corporation. We had become employees of NASCAR and lasted two years. Then six years ago they said they were going in some new directions and my help wasn't needed any more. So they gave me a nice clock for my years of service!

But we had both started working for IMSA in 1997, it was just

When I retired from John Deere in 1992, we thought that we were going to get involved in the administrative side of a foreign owned corporation racing administrative services. And so I had motorhomes at the time to the company and all those things. So we had that company for twenty five years doing most of our work with SCCA, IMSA and Pro Racing racing through them. And so we just closed that company down, pretty much out of that. So now the only things that we've been involved in lately, after I was honored to get to be named to the SCCA Hall of Fame in 2015, I've been asked to serve on several committees for the SCCA Hall of Fame. I was on the selection committee for three years and now I'm on the steering committee, which is a five year commitment. So that's really the only active things that we have going on right now and keeping our membership up.

Mine is fifty eight years this month and Jean's is 55, so keep that going. After 50 years, you become a lifetime member and don't have to pay dues anymore! Sort of feel bad about that for the region, they don't get our money any more! But it's nice for the SCCA to do that!

JH Where did the Midget go?

Just... WOW!

RS

John Doonan was the head of Mazda Motorsports for North America for a number of years. He's from the Chicago area. His dad raced small sedans in the 1970s, Volkswagen and stuff, and they were usually in the same race group as we were. John is about the same age as my oldest daughter, he's maybe 53 now, and Terry is 51. And he was at the racetrack all the time as a kid and remembered my car and while we were working with IMSA and of course, Mazda was a big part of that. He told me if I ever wanted to get rid of it, he'd like to get it and restore it. He just remembered the car so much from when he was a kid. So we thought about that for several years and finally about six years ago, we told him we would sell it to him. And they came over with a 24 foot trailer and got the car and spare blocks and other motors and all the parts and rear ends and everything. He really hasn't done anything with it that I know of. He sent a video one time just showing it running. We raced the car for 40 years and we had it for 50. So, a long time.



Ron piloting his G Production MG Midget in 1981

I'd say Jean's been a big part of the whole thing as we've been married for 54 years now. Met through SCCA, she had an MGA at the time, an MGA coupe. She'd changed her own oil. And as we were racing, she changed front brake pads in the race car. And so she was always a big part of that. Plus all of the stuff we've been in, doing the Grand Prix and and the Runoffs. She's always a big help on everything. So, yeah, we've enjoyed it! Our kids pretty much grew up at the track. We enjoyed the family thing for years. I'm glad you're in Midwestern Council now. That was a lot of fun 40 years ago and hope it still is. I've been honored with a number of awards and really humbled by all that, both Jean and I getting the Hoskins award, separately and together. Greg and Sam Scharnberg each got one individually and together as a couple too. And Jean and I were the second pair, so that was a pretty neat deal. It was fun having the monthly meeting here last August and I think they were going to do that again if we can.

JH

Some of my very fond memories of you guys was the New Year's Day chili party. Always so much fun! And then being with you guys at Road Atlanta. In fact, that's where I learned to like coffee. The only time I had ever drank coffee was my wife's Hy-Vee instant, and she put sugar and milk in it. So when we were down there, you had just plain black coffee, and it was de-lish!. And now I'm that's my favorite drink!

The other thing is is, I don't know if you remember, but there was a little auto show or race car display at the little mall in Johnston. And we both had our cars in there. And I think that and Noah had a car there. I remember that Friday night we took our cars over there, and then we had a couple of beers at that little bar that was there. And anyway, any time I drive by that Mall, in fact, my chiropractors in that mall now, every time I go by there, I always think of that. So for the last 40 years, every time I drive by there, I think of you!

RS

So Noah had a car out there too, and we struck up a conversation about advertising I had on the car from Tom Juckette's Cherry Hill Ranch. And Noah said that was a good spot right there for Noah's Ark Restaurant. I said, Yeah, that sounds like a good deal to me! So I worked out a deal and after that always said Noah's Ark on the outside of the car. And that car show is how it came about.

And Jean mentioned the first auto show we had out at the Ice Arena. I think that was 1970, I was RE and Lyle Kreps was Assistant RE or Treasurer. But at that time, we made like \$750 off of that car show. We thought that was great because the year before our Treasury was just about zero, we had to get some extra money from the Christmas party to pay for the trophies for that year! So things were pretty tight. And then after that we got a lot of people involved in having the car show downtown, like Ron Hoyt and Denny Godwin and the Scharnberg's and during those years of having it down there is really when the region got well financially. So that was a really neat experience to have the car show down there.

JH

What's your favorite memory of racing?

RS

So I guess from an autocross standpoint, in 1963, after I got the Midget, DMVR had an across at Greenwood and it was like in September, and I got first in my class and got a trophy. It was the first trophy I ever won in autocrossing. And then at Elkhart (Road America) in 1964, when I started racing, my goal was to get my national license in time for the Labor Day weekend, the Labor Day 500. They had restricted regional races in conjunction with the 500. You had to have a national license to run and I got my national license just in time and went up there. And I was running third, and then we had a brake pad come off, we ended up fifth, but I got a nice little bowl, first trophy ever in Elkhart Lake, so that was what my favorite experience there.

I was fortunate enough to be able to race at Greenwood. 1964, '65 and '66, bringing home trophies from there. So that was a real good time, too bad they couldn't keep it going. But it was it was neat while it lasted and that helped the region a lot at that time. DMVR would

co-sponsor the races with Iowa region. And Iowa Region was part of Central Division, so for a few years there in the mid 60s, DMVR moved to Central Division, while Greenwood was going. After Greenwood was gone, I think James Strandberg might have been RE then and because most of our drivers were running in the Midwest division, we switched back to MidDiv for points. Iowa Region did a lot of the time and scoring and a lot of other things for us. Of course, the Silverbergs were a real big part of that. We've lost both of them now. He was one of the Charter Members. So yeah, not too many, of them left now. Dean Elder and Ron McConkey. They may be the only two charter members that we still have.

JH

Ronnie, thanks so much for your lifelong dedication to the sport we all love!

RS Mv P

My Pleasure!

Want to put YOUR

Business or Brand in the DMVR Spotlight?



Contact Drifting Ed. at 515-689-3963

DMVR 1/4/22 Minutes - SJM

Combined Member/Board Meeting Call to order @ 7:00pm TT

- Schedule is set and published on DMVR website. (Not included in meeting discussion)
 - May 21-22 Heartland Motorsports • Park, Topeka, KS
 - June 4-5 Ozark International • Raceway, Gravois Mills, MO
 - July 2-3 Brainerd International ٠ Raceway, Brainerd, MN (TENTATIVE)
 - July 23-24 World Wide Technology • Raceway, Madison, II
 - Aug 13 Motorsports Park Hastings, • Nastings, NE
 - Oct 15 Raceway Park of the . Midlands, Pacific Junction, IA
- Rules are updated but not released yet.
- (Rules and Class calculator not discussed in meeting • but are currently

available on DMVR website.)

- No date yet for TT/Road Race awards and meeting Assistant RE
- Joyce emailed request for award nominees
- Date for Annual Meeting finalized for February 12th
- RSVPS sent. \$35ea
- Payments can be sent to PO Box or will be set up on Motorsport Reg
- Nathan and Dan to finalize agenda for meeting Membership
- Looking forward to banquet
- Work on getting lapel pins for milestone members ٠
- Working on drifting with Tony

Workers

- Not much response on emails. No worker of the year nominations.
- March 19 and 20th Crash Fire Rescue School at Ozark
- April 2 and 3 RR at Gateway
- April 23-24 Super Tour at Hallet
- May 21st-22nd Heartland Park
- June 4 and 5 Ozark
- July 23rd and 24th Gateway
- August 13th Hastings TT only
 - October 15th RPM TT Only
- Looking to have Crash Fire Rescue School in DMVR area 2023 Solo
- April 3rd at Adventureland if weather allows.
- April 23rd and 24th currently set as opener.
- Knoxville raceway declined to host Solo this year due to freshly painted lines
- Still working on IA State Fairgrounds and Ankeny Airport
- Looking to set up go kart enduro(s) Treasure
- Fred says we have money.
- \$4,700 in the black for 2021 plus still waiting on Street Survival revenue.

Road Racing

- Racing trailer has been inventoried. Still need • to winterize radio batteries
- Will contact Ed for Hoskins recipient and for getting trophy to Adam

Joint Meeting Adjourned at 7:33pm

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