




## Message from EMPA President, Dino Oberto

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

Greetings, all -

With the convention now in the rear view mirror, I would like to take this opportunity to do some reflecting on the entire affair. Let me start by saying, "THANK YOU" to each and every one of you who helped in some way to make this a remarkably successful convention. 

I am humbled and grateful to everyone, starting with our amazing Board of Directors, all our chair persons, all those in attendance, the incredible staff at the Double Tree, and most importantly my wife Justine. (BTW she just retired and congrats to her!).

From what I gathered, everyone thought this was one of our best conventions. Friday night's Champions Salute went very well, Saturday's work sessions were a huge hit on all of the topics covered, Dave Moody did a fantastic job as our keynote speaker, and the awards dinner topped it all off and was completed in a very reasonable time frame.

**Board of Directors:**


- Dino Oberto
- Karl Fredrickson
- Carol Houssock
- Jeff Gromis
- Mike Mallett

Congratulations once again to all those who won awards, from the individual ones to all of the contest winners. It seems everyone had good things to say about the new statues too.

Of course, thank you also, to the great sponsors who truly made it all happen. We have a contact list for the sponsors on our website and we encourage you to take the time to send a word of thanks to them if you already haven't.

<https://empamedia.com/conventionsponsors.html>

Although it was all nice, we're not going to rest on our laurels. We'll be looking at our notes, reviewing your feedback and comments, and see what we can do to make next year just as good.

Speaking of the convention, we are planning on the same weekend for 2027. That will be confirmed soon. 



*The Mission of the EMPA is to acknowledge excellence in motorsports reporting and those whose who have excelled on the track and within the motorsports community. To foster an atmosphere to improve the quality of motorsports reporting through the fellowship and interaction of veteran media with less experienced members in a welcoming atmosphere where tips, techniques and ideas are exchanged and encouraged. To increase positive interactions between racetracks, sanctioning bodies and the working racing media.*

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



EMPA Award Winners

Seated l-r Jan Leaty, Rex Merritt, Ken Bruce, Cathy Ferkel  
Standing l-r Kevin Eyres, Walt Smith, Austin Beers, Alex Payne,  
Frank Cozze, Kolten Gouse (Photo by Jim Smith)



Announcers Roundtable Front row l-r Marty Czekala, Mel Thomas,  
Carol Houssock, Caleb Newlin, Stephanie Dobson, Earl Krause,  
Steve Williams. Back row l-r Steven Ovens, Dave Moody, Mike  
Warren, Barry Angstadt, Dino Oberto (Photo by Jim Smith)



Dino's annual panoramic picture of banquet attendees



Last weekend at the Motorsports show, held at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center in Oaks, Pa., Brent Smith, Debbie Gastelu and Todd Dziadosz did an excellent job setting up an EMPA display. Brent actually went down on Thursday to do the prepping. He also purchased new easels for the photo display. Debbie mentioned that there was plenty of interest and she handed out membership applications to several who inquired. Thank you guys for the amazing effort.

It's things like that that help show who we are and how we continue to grow as a respected media motorsports organization.

I have also been doing some correspondence with the Society of Professional Motorsports Journalists (SPMJ) group, and they are quite interested in how we do things. We'll have more on that later, including a writers and photographers contest which they are putting together.





Congratulations are in order for two special EMPA people, Carol Houssock and Earl Krause, who are receiving the Bill Hanna "Passion and Dedication to the Sport" Award from the American Racing Research Associates (ARRA).

The organization has a great website dedicated to the history of local and national motorsports, <https://sites.google.com/site/arradocumentingracinghistory/home>

Bill, who has passed away, was a founding member of the organization, which presents this award in his name.

Carol has been an avid announcer for 31 years at several tracks in the New York, Pennsylvania and elsewhere. She is also a contributor to Speedway Illustrated magazine. Carol is a hard-working Board member of EMPA, and her dedication to the sport has earned her this honor.

Earl is well known for his announcing skills and his widely requested availability to host auto racing gatherings. He serves as Assistant to the Editor at Area Auto Racing News. His loyalty and dedication to the sport, as well as his weekly column in AARN, are well documented. His great dedication to the sport is beyond reproach and earned him this award.

Lastly if you have updated your contact info, please let us know so we can do the same on our end.

There will be more news and info coming your way. Enjoy the pictures on the next two pages!

Until then,  
Peace, out  
Dino



Jim Smith photos



Steve Mesko photos





Random shots by Jim Smith



More pics from the convention, thanks to Tom Coughlin



**EMPA Board of Directors**

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