

## **The Anatomy of a Successful Event**

**By: Faye Pierson**

**The Planning:** It actually began in mid September 2009 on our way back from Quincy – Mona, Medley and I brainstormed all the way home on Southwest and then for the next four months.

**The Purpose:** A really great reunion for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Adams with a huge tent gala, bar-b-que, a great show, six competition classes with two designated non-competition classes, really unique trophies, event pins, decals, and tee-shirts. All had to be tied in with the 50<sup>th</sup> bash of the Adams and the always enjoyable “Geritol Gang Luncheon” put on by John Julis.

**Track Time:** That offered plenty of time to run, play, test, and enjoy the challenging Adams track lay-out – or as Dave Williams (our entertaining track-side announcer) would say, “run with your knees in the breeze”.

**Safety:** Was crucial and our technical “guru” Louie Figone was put in charge of tech – we had the very best Race Director in Mona Sturgeon and assistant Race Director Terry Ives (both with years of experience behind them) - they both worked the track on Saturday and neither had any qualms at throwing the black flag – Jerry and Troy Adams were our experienced starters. The addition of the two “non competition” classes assured the drivers they could find a class they felt comfortable in. These two classes were not scored or awarded trophies. They were the “Historic” and “Sportsman” classes. We were happy to see these two classes worked well for the West Coast contingent who did not wish to compete. Next year we will split the Sidewinders by American and Foreign, as well.

The kart show was the best I had ever experienced – there was scarcely enough time (for me) to absorb every entry – I loved the five beautiful yellow Carettas, two of which took “Restored Original”, Vince Hughes, and “Peoples Choice” John Mullens – the very original Bug Sprint (untouched since 1968) entered by Jack and Marilyn Lehman), the little “snotty” black Stinger (a model that won everything in 1971 when raced by the Adkins bothers), and Steve O’Hara’s rare Scorpion ES-II. The judges had some tough decisions to make and my hat is off to Robert Stanton, Jack Murray, and Pearl Gamble.

The big transporter of the Bennet family – Bud, Kirt and Craig - was a welcomed sight as it brought some 26 karts belonging to our good friends from the Midwest and most of the VKA board – thanks for the effort – you helped make the show what it was. The coming together of the East, South, Midwest, and West is a dream come true at least once a year.

The Southwest Tri-tip, Chili Bean, Margarita bar-b-que was made possible by several generous donations – the Freemans, Bill and Doddie, Jim Donovan, Louie Figone (gee, what didn't he contribute to-?), and Dean Kossaras. The Tri-tip was brought down from the grass lands of central California by Rick Sturgeon and it was wonderful!!

Our Southern Californian gang who busted their butts to make a first class event were first and foremost, Tom Medley-ever young-ever dependable - designed the event logo, pins, decals, and along with Randy Holt and Dr. Jack, designed and constructed the beautiful trophies. Medley and Bruce Berieter were the “balloon boys” and got as much kick out of doing it as all of us did in having them. The Prechems, Pete and Carolyn always make us look good with computer “grid and score” sheets, and Bill worked ever so hard on keeping order on the grid. Added this year was Dave Cordier and his magnetic “class-line-up” board posted at the top of the pit.

The Sturgeon “girls” of the event (you couldn't miss them!) who did just about everything from registration to selling merchandise, to helping serve, to selling raffle were; Brooke, Jill, and Shanna. The other gals that helped with all of the above and more were; Gretchen Berieter, Carol Ives, and Barbara Gamble (and she was everywhere!) – thank you girls!!!

Richard Kennedy, the half-time entertainment, who always puts on a thrilling show (aptly named, “This Side Up”) was there. This year his act was accompanied by a huge smoke screen - just like the big boys (I know – it was your clutch!!)– right on Richard! Also, thanks for bringing our good friends from the far North.

We got covered: “National Kart News” (a big supporter of Vintage Karting), Gene Genebriel – “Karter News”, Bill Peacock – “Go Racing”, *ever cool* Sean Burr, British “Karting Magazine”, Frank Weir – two Riverside newspapers – and the best photogs in our sport, Jerry Imboden of Kart Art and Jeff Campbell of the VKA web site – look for all of these great pics on line. Jerry and Louie Figone will be sending a group/class picture to everyone – their gift to us – THANKS!

The enthusiastic celebs were back again – Leon and Carol Rippy, Bill and Doddie Freeman, and Ralph and Suzy Johnson and they never seemed to stop smiling. Our good friend from Sidney, Australia, Graeme Barwick made a repeat visit – this time he bought a '69 Dart with twin Macs on line and entered in the Rear Dual class along with Max Laybutt, also from Sidney, who got a ride from Terry Ives (thank you) on his dual and they both had the time of their lives. Max is the treasurer of the Australian Karting Association and has spent years at that post bringing computerized innovations to the national organization.

Mona is critical to this reunion – She emcees the three-day event with authority and class just so I can race-run (whatever). The Adams families are huge players in bringing it together–our two families go back to the beginning of the sport and the

preservation karting in Southern California - we think of them as “our good friends”. My family Tommy, Jon, Edith, Roilene, Billye, Kristie (Zoey, Braiden, Addie) kept myself, Colin (my grandson) and Eric (my great grand son) running – kept snacks in the pit –helped with the raffle and scoring – Duffy came all the way from Chattanooga, Tennessee (where he now resides) to sign autographs and spin great stories. Dick Miles, from Philadelphia, pushed my kart up and down the hill and onto the grid all day long – thank you!!!

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Now - a story about “the little kart that could” – In the beginning when they were first constructed in hundreds of garages across America, they wanted to “run” – from the moment they found the first parking lot, they had to “run, and hard” – and they ran their hearts out until they blew.... Now - some of them still want to run – run as fast as they can...and some just want to cruse around the track on a lazy afternoon with a big smile – while others yearn to be discovered in barns or dumps and restored to look as beautiful as they did when they were young – they are painted, chromed, polished and displayed in shows for all of us to admire and desire – they want nothing more then to be crowned “Best of Show” or to be sold to the highest bidder.

What I’m trying to say is - there *is* a place for all of you in our events – you just have to be patient while it sorts itself out. For those of you who left without trying harder to accomplish this, you took *your* knowledge and history with you and we will miss that– but *you* will also miss the future of what this ‘original’ vintage kart organization can offer – new by-laws, elections by the members, and success like other “Vintage Car Organizations” have experienced. Your enthusiasm will continue to grow the sport - more parts and accessories will be needed - what you collect will become more valuable. I tell you this from my own experience in the bz for over 50 years. I also think the chassis year should eventually be extended to 1979 (the end of the 1” axle and the beginning of the “modern looking kart”).

This is the second time around....and we are all so fortunate to be a part of it – Thank you all for the many ways you contribute to *my* sport.