

EVERYTHING MOTORCYCLING

Celebrating The Past, Present And Future by Rob Dingman

The September weekend that included all things motorcycling has come and gone in a whirlwind of activity. Columbus, Ohio, hosted the annual American International Motorcycle Expo, Sept. 21-24, at the Greater Columbus Convention Center and the AMA was able to include several of our major annual events in the weekend.

While the AMA has been a part of AIMExpo since first bringing the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony to the event in 2014, this year AMA Congress, the rule-making body for AMA-sanctioned recreation and amateur motorcycle competition, convened alongside AIMExpo for the first time. AMA Congress achieved a milestone, marking its 50th meeting since it was first held in 1968. (Incidentally, membership in the AMA cost only \$2 in 1968.)

The AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame welcomed five new inductees at a gala event on Friday evening, Sept. 22. The new inductees included FMF founder Don Emler Sr., three-time AMA Hare Scrambles National Champion and nine-time GNCC champion Eddie Lojak Sr., FIM world champion motocrosser and Road 2 Recovery co-founder Bob Moore, motorcycle-themed filmmaker Peter Starr, and *Roadracing World & Motorcycle Technology* magazine and Roadracing World Action Fund founder and 2017 AMA Dud Perkins Lifetime Achievement Award recipient John Ulrich.

Flat-track tuner and race team owner Bill Werner, who was inducted into the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame in 2000, also was honored as an AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame Legend. Hall of Fame Legends are existing members of the Hall of Fame who are recognized alongside the new class each year for ongoing contributions to motorcycling.

One of the great things about the Hall of Fame induction ceremony being in Columbus is that the new inductees can visit the Hall of Fame into which

they were just enshrined. This was not possible when the ceremony was in other locations, such as Orlando or Las Vegas. An example that comes to mind is that of Hall of Famer Pierre Karsmakers, who was inducted in 2014 at a ceremony in Orlando. Karsmakers travelled to Florida from Europe and was unable to visit the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame.

On Saturday, Sept. 23, AMA Board Chair Maggie McNally-Bradshaw led a ride from the Greater Columbus Convention Center to the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame museum and AMA headquarters for a bike night, the official AIMExpo after party. The event attracted more than 800 motorcycle enthusiasts. Highlights included a ribbon cutting ceremony for the latest museum exhibit, “Six Days — U.S. International Six Days Enduro Teams and the Chase for the World Trophy,” a bike show, live music and prizes from bike night sponsor, Kawasaki.

When we have these major AMA events, conducting the business of the organization seems unavoidable, and both the AMA and American Motorcycle Heritage Foundation boards met during the busy weekend. The AMHF board met on Saturday afternoon right after an AMA member meeting, held at the conclusion of AMA Congress.

The AMHF is a 501(c)(3) charity that accepts tax-deductible contributions to support the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame. The AMA is the sole member of the

foundation, and the AMA board governs its activities. The AMHF board exists to help raise money for the Hall of Fame.

Currently, the AMA provides virtually all of the funding needed to operate the Hall of Fame and museum. The AMA funds the annual induction ceremony and does all of the fundraising for the AMHF, including organizing and operating the two largest fundraisers for the Hall of Fame: AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days and the annual motorcycle raffles.

The AMA Board recently reconstituted the AMHF board after a period of inactivity. The newly reconstituted AMHF board has rededicated itself to the long-standing goal of establishing a sizeable endowment capable of funding AMHF activities with investment income.

Not long ago, the AMA board added a goal to the AMA strategic plan regarding the AMHF and the Hall of Fame: to contemporize and advance the AMHF and the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame. At the AIMExpo weekend board meeting, the AMA board reached a consensus that the Hall of Fame and museum would stay in Pickerington, where the Hall of Fame can continue to showcase motorcycling’s best for generations to come, and there would be no more discussion about moving.

All AMA members who care about preserving the heritage of motorcycling are encouraged to donate directly to the AMHF. Contributions are tax deductible, and every dollar we raise through direct contributions offsets the financial support required by the AMA. To donate, please visit www.motorcyclemuseum.org/give.

Rob Dingman is AMA president and CEO.



Bike Night at the AMA headquarters attracted more than 800 enthusiasts.