

## ALL THINGS MOTORCYCLING

AMA National Convention Assembles In Orlando

The first AMA National Convention of the modern era is in the books. The convention took place on Oct. 16-19 and was held in conjunction with the American International Motorcycle Expo, or AIMExpo, in Orlando, Fla., where there was no better place on the planet to immerse yourself in all things motorcycling.

The festivities got under way with a kick-off party hosted by EagleRider of Orlando at their nearby store. Attendees were treated to live music and got the opportunity to meet and greet a number Hall of Famers who were on hand to sign autographs.

The next day started with an early morning AMA members' breakfast meeting, sponsored again by Orlando EagleRider. At this meeting Jeff Skeen, CEO of Affinity Development Group, was elected as an at-large member of the AMA Board of Directors.

After breakfast, convention attendees participated in seminars that covered a wide range of topics on everything from what it's like to ride a 1915 Harley cross country, to how you can protect your riding freedoms, to the latest information on motorcycle antilock braking systems and just about everything in between.

The conference luncheon featured AMA Board of Directors Chair Maggie McNally-Bradshaw as the luncheon speaker. Her message that, as motorcyclists, "We're all in this together," was an appeal for unity among riders at a time when threats to motorcyclists' freedoms have never been greater.

The seminars continued after lunch and the annual meeting of the AMA business members was held in the afternoon as well. At this meeting, the AMA business members elected Robert Pearce of KTM and Paul Puma of GE Capital to the AMA Board of Directors. Robert Pearce had previously been appointed to the board to fill a vacancy, so his new term began at the meeting. Paul Puma was elected to replace John Ulrich of Roadracing World Publishing, who due to term limits will be leaving the board in February 2015.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the contributions John has made to the AMA as a board member since 2005. I have yet to meet anyone who understands amateur and professional motorcycle road racing better than John, and he will be sorely missed on the AMA Board of Directors.

Friday evening began with a gala AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony VIP Reception, presented by Kawasaki Motors Corp. USA. During the reception, we presented three of our 2014 AMA Awards. I want to acknowledge the winners of the AMA Dud Perkins Lifetime Achievement Award, Mike and Margaret Wilson, for their lifelong commitment to fostering the growth and acceptance of motorcycling, and their dedication to the AMA and the Hall of Fame. Sadly, Margaret passed away in July, but Mike was there to carry the torch. Mike and Margaret have been enthusiastic AMA supporters for decades and are among the Hall of Fame's principal benefactors.

Friday culminated with the American Honda AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, presented by Harley-Davidson Motor Company. This event—as it has been for six previous years—was emceed by actor and AMA Board Member Perry King. Perry has a way of pulling us all in as motorcyclists and taking us on a fun ride—he even rode onto the stage this year!

Hall of Fame inductees included race tuner and innovator Byron Hines; motocross pioneer Pierre Karsmakers; Tom White,



By Rob Dingman



acclaimed motorcycle collector, former nationally ranked racer and founder of White Brothers Cycle Specialties; George Barber, founder of the Barber Vintage Motorsports Museum and the Barber Motorsports Park; national off-road racing champion Scott Summers; AMA motocross champion and current Supercross/motocross team manager Mike LaRocco; and legendary tuner, engine builder and team owner Rob Muzzy.

Also honored was AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame Legend William "Willie G." Davidson. Willie G. is the grandson of Harley-Davidson founder William A. Davidson and is responsible for many of the innovative motorcycle designs that ushered in a new era for the iconic company.

A standing ovation ended the show when several dozen Hall of Famers were called to the stage in a tribute to the inspiration they've given us when we reflect on all they have achieved.

The convention also included plenty of riding, of course. The morning following the induction ceremony, Maggie rode with the Orlando Ribbon Riders to raise money for those battling breast cancer. That same morning, I participated in an adventure ride organized by Dixie Dual Sport. Thanks to the Orlando Ribbon Riders and Dixie Dual Sport for organizing these great rides!

In addition to the many AMA activities, convention participants were provided access to the AIMExpo, including exclusive early signup for demo rides for AMA members. We also hosted Hall of Famer autograph sessions throughout the weekend.

I would like to thank Larry Little, Mike Webster and the entire Marketplace Events team that organized AIMExpo for including the AMA National Convention in their event. Having attended the first AIMExpo last year, I was impressed with the growth of the show this year. There were 500 vendors, and both dealer and consumer traffic was much greater than last year.

Next year's show is certain to be even bigger, and the AMA plans to be part of it.

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