

SUPPORTING HISTORY

Advancing The Cause

Somebody asked me at this year's AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days to name my favorite part of the event. My response was that I really liked the sidecar road racing, the off-road racing, the trials, the motocross, the swap meet and the Wall of Death... and don't forget the dirt track racing at the fairgrounds in Ashland. Before I knew it, I had listed nearly everything that goes on at AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days! It really is hard to say what I like best because there truly is something for everyone at this annual event benefitting the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame.

Although Friday threatened rain, and it did rain most of Sunday, this year's attendees were treated to spectacular weather on Saturday. I can't recall a larger one-day crowd at AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days than what we saw on Saturday of this year's event.

Vintage bikes are cool, and while you can spend a fortune acquiring and restoring a classic, the cost of entry to become a vintage motorcycle enthusiast can be quite affordable. The atmosphere is a mix of old, new, excitement, relaxation and a little bit otherworldly. If you have never been, put AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days on your bucket list. The camaraderie among motorcyclists at this event is nothing short of amazing.

At AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days each year, we see a lot of families that are experiencing vintage bikes for the first time together. Many participate in the numerous types of vintage racing available, while others spend time shopping at the swap meet for an elusive part for a project bike. This year, a couple of AMA staff members got in on the fun and competed in the hare scrambles.

Perhaps the best part is that all the activities at AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days contribute to a good cause. The event is the most significant fundraiser for the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame and museum. All of the money earned (after expenses and Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course gets its share) goes to the American Motorcycle Heritage Foundation, a wholly owned subsidiary of the AMA tasked with raising money for the Hall of Fame and museum.

Because of this, the companies that financially support AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days deserve our gratitude for contributing to the mission of the Hall of Fame, which is to celebrate and preserve the rich tradition of motorcycling in America. They include, in no particular order, Moto Armory, Federal Motorcycle Transport, Nationwide Insurance, MAD Maps, the American International Motorcycle Expo, Hagerty Insurance, KTM and BMW.

A legion of volunteers and partners also support this event. Many are compensated, typically by sharing in the revenue generated by the activity they are supporting, but some help simply for altruistic reasons—to support the Hall of Fame.

These include many Hall of Famers, one of whom is, of course, the grand marshal. This year David Aldana filled that role admirably. Aldana, a dirt tracker and road racer, remains one of



By Rob Dingman

the most engaging personalities in racing. As usual, he went the extra mile to make everyone he met feel special. In typical Aldana fashion, he didn't pass up an opportunity to race either, lining up for Saturday night's half mile in Ashland.

Another supporter I would like to thank is Hall of Famer Tom White. Tom donates long hours each year, in whatever weather Mother Nature serves up, announcing two days of motocross. He even presents the podium awards. It's a real treat for the racers to have an icon of motorcycling involved in this event. Thanks, Tom!

There are many others (such as Hall of Famer Jeff Fredette, who races the vintage hare scrambles and helps score the post-vintage event). Suffice it to say that we are thankful for all those who support AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days and the AMHF.

Recently, the AMA Board of Directors has improved several aspects of the Hall of Fame induction process and the AMHF. AMA board members are in the process of adding members to the AMHF board who can assist with fundraising. This effort is critical, because the AMA and its members pay the bills for the AMHF—with both direct payments and indirectly through organizing and staffing events like AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days. It is crucial that we identify additional funding sources for the Hall of Fame.

Another change that has taken place is to make the annual AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony more accessible to motorcycling fans while upholding the show's high standards. Although the event has always been open to the public, the ticket price necessary to cover the cost of the elegant dinner at a Las Vegas venue made the ceremony seem overly exclusive.

Last year the induction ceremony moved to Orlando, Fla., to be held in conjunction with the American International Motorcycle Expo at the Orange County Convention Center. You can buy tickets to the ceremony at www.motorcycliumuseum.org. Regular entry is just \$25 a person. VIP tickets that include a reception, reserved seating and AIMExpo admission are \$90 a person.

While the ceremony format remains much the same, the setting is "academy awards style" in the Chapin Theater. Everyone is invited and the tickets are affordable. And just as with AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days, all proceeds benefit the Hall of Fame.

This year's inductee class includes road racing champion John Kocinski, former Harley-Davidson CEO Richard Teerlink, off-road racing champion Rodney Smith, entrepreneur and industry patron John Parham, dirt tracker Alex Jorgensen and longtime Yamaha Motor Corp. U.S.A. race team manager Keith McCarty.

In addition, we're honoring the career of Hall of Famer and three-time world champion road racer Wayne Rainey as our annual Hall of Fame Legend. Hall of Fame Legends are selected from existing Hall of Famers to have their lifetime accomplishments showcased as part of the annual induction ceremony of a new class.

Many years ago, the AMA took on the responsibility for preserving the heritage of motorcycling for future generations. To that end, one of the strategic goals of the AMA is to contemporize and advance the AMHF and AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame. AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days and the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony are critical to the AMA's pursuit of this goal.

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