

Large Crowd of NASCAR Fans Lines Up for Kyle Petty Autographs at St. Ignace

By David Latva

NASCAR racer Kyle Petty, along with about 120 riders participating in the 14th annual Kyle Petty Charity Motorcycle Ride, made a pit stop at the Holiday Station Store in St. Ignace Sunday, July 13, on a more than 3,000-mile trip that began in Traverse City Sunday morning and will finish in Savannah, Georgia, Sunday, July 20. His St. Ignace stop drew a large local crowd seeking autographs and photos.

"This trip will take us through Michigan and Wisconsin for the first time, as well as Illinois, Kentucky, West Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia," said Mr. Petty, as he worked his way along a long line of fans waiting for autographs and pictures in St. Ignace. "The trip across the Mackinac Bridge was awesome. We had to be escorted because of high winds."

The foundation has raised more than \$10.5 million for various children's hospitals and charities across the country, during the 14 years of the ride.

Mr. Petty is the son and grandson of racing legends Richard Petty and Lee Petty, respectively.

Kyle, and his wife, Pattie, founded the Victory Junction Gang Camp in honor of their son, Adam, a fourth-generation NASCAR driver who was killed at the age of 19 in May 2000 during practice for the Busch Grand National Series Race in New Hampshire.



Kyle Petty signs the shirt of Otto Hyslop Sr. of St. Ignace. Mr. Petty signed autographs for 30 minutes before leaving for the ride's Wisconsin destination.

"The mission of the Victory Junction Gang Camp is to enrich the lives of children with chronic medical conditions or serious illnesses by providing life-changing camping experiences that are exciting, fun, and empowering, in a safe and medically sound environment," said Mr. Petty. "The camp provides children from seven to 15 years of age the opportunity to spend a week at summer camp..."

More than 6,000 eligible children have attended the camp free

of charge to their families, owing to the ongoing financial support of the annual ride.

Pediatric specialty physicians, nurses, and a fully-equipped medical center are available 24 hours a day to provide for medical needs of campers.

Joining Mr. and Mrs. Petty on the ride was Davis Love III, a professional golfer who will cut his trip short in Wisconsin to join the PGA Tour at the British Open, and former Dallas Cowboys star running back Hershel Walker.



Kyle and Pattie Petty take a break during their annual charity ride at the Holiday Station in St. Ignace Sunday, July 13.

The 120 accompanying motorcycles were fueled at St. Ignace before the group left for its next stop in Gladstone. Overnight stays were planned in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin, Lombard, Illinois, Lexington, Kentucky, White

Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, Charlotte, North Carolina, and Peachtree, Georgia, before completing the ride in Savannah, Georgia.

Visit the charity ride's Web site at www.VictoryJunction.org or



Davis Love III, a PGA golfer, was one of the many riders in the annual Kyle Petty Charity Motorcycle Ride. Hershel Walker, former Dallas Cowboys running back and the 1982 Heisman Trophy winner, was another celebrity participant of the ride.

telephone (817) 844-2267 for more information.

Graduate of Substance Abuse Program Shares Experiences Sobriety Court Helped Woman Face Challenges

By Karen Gould

Rita Burgess of Levering is the first person to be graduated from the 92nd District Sobriety Court program for Mackinac County.

Last spring, Ms. Burgess was driving along US-2, returning from visiting family in Wisconsin, when she was pulled over by an officer from the Mackinac County Sheriff's Department. Intoxicated, she was arrested and taken to jail, where she spent the next two nights.

Eventually, Ms. Burgess pleaded guilty to impaired driving, her second offense. She spent two more nights in jail, was assessed a fine of \$1,600, sentenced to a total of 365 days in jail, and given 18 months probation. Her drivers license was revoked.

To avoid spending the next year as an inmate, she accepted an offer by the 92nd District Court to join the new Sobriety Court treatment program. With her arrest in Mackinac County, she was entered into the program, although her residence is in Emmet County.

Now, one year later, she has become the county's first Sobriety Court graduate.

"I didn't realize I was an alcoholic," she said.

Facing a year's sentence in jail was a clue she had a problem.

"Everyone has their own bottom," she said, "and I knew I didn't want to go any lower."

She made up her mind to complete the program.

"It was quite the experience," she said. "And I graduated in the minimum amount of time. I never had any violations and was able to graduate in 12 months."

The goal of the Sobriety Court is to help offenders achieve continued sobriety. For the county, the goal is to reduce repeat offenses and drug abuse. The program is available for repeat offenders arrested in Luce and Mackinac counties. Sobriety Court is a coordinated effort among substance abuse professionals, the court, and the alcoholic or addict. Designed to help those with addictions get better, the drug court offers a rehabilitation program that keeps habitual alcohol and drug offenders out of jail and at their jobs.

The court began introducing people to the program in January 2007.

"The program worked for me," said Ms. Burgess. "I can't guarantee it will work for everyone."

While some may think the program is an easy way to avoid jail time, said Ms. Burgess, they would be wrong.

Meeting the cost of the program, she said, was a challenge. Initial counseling charges average \$200 a week. As she progressed through the counseling phases, the cost was reduced to \$120 a week and finally to about \$40 each week. She also had court fees and fines to pay as a result of her arrest. She had gas expenses and bridge fare to pay to attend her counseling sessions in Mackinac County, and since her drivers license was revoked, she had to find transportation.

"I had no idea how to pay for it," she said. "As my sobriety kicked in, God works in mysterious ways."

Her employers in Cross Village

were supportive. They went out of the way to work around her court schedule, her counseling sessions, and they gave her overtime hours whenever possible. The court also worked with her, offering her community service hours as a way to work off the court fines. She was working 40 hours a week and spending an additional 20 hours performing community service.

None of it was enough. Her only option was to take out a mortgage on the home she already owned. She soon learned no financial institution was willing to offer her a mortgage based on the potential jail time she faced if she failed in the Sobriety Court. When she was

about to give up, one of the few agencies left on her list approved the mortgage. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development gave her the mortgage and enough funds to pay the costs associated with the program.

Educated as a registered nurse, she left the profession a few years ago, citing job burn out. Now she enjoys restaurant work and

has worked as a cook, waitress, and fills in wherever she is needed. She has a grown son, who moved home to help her during her Sobriety Court program.

She came from an alcoholic family, she said, and she married an

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"It was just life. I was never a drinker."

— Rita Burgess, looking back at what fueled her drinking problem.

Les Cheneaux Antique Wooden Boat Show Is August 9

Restored Lady A Will Be Featured at Hessel



This yacht tender coupe, Lady A, will be featured this summer at the Les Cheneaux Antique Wooden Boat Show. It won Best of Show at the event in 2007 and went on to win awards throughout the year.

Winner of Best of Show and People's Choice last year, the Lady A, a coupe yacht tender, returns as a featured vessel to be admired at the 2008 Les Cheneaux Antique Wooden Boat Show Saturday, August 9, at Hessel.

Since winning in Les Cheneaux, the Lady A won Best Launch in September 2007 at the Geneva Lake Annual Antique and Classic Boat Show in Wisconsin. It also won Best Interior at the 2008 Vintage Car and Boat Festival in Petoskey Saturday, June 21.

The Lady A is an "owner's launch," explained owner Chuck Andrews. Originally, it would have been secured to the top deck of a yacht, swung outboard, and lowered to water level for use. The boat was used to transport its owner between an anchored yacht and shore, he said.

The coupe was designed to shelter its owner from wind, rain, and spray, while the chauffeur, or operator, sat in the front cockpit forward of the engine compartment. A sailor stood in the aft cockpit to assist in landings, Mr. Andrews explained.

His ownership of the elegant launch is result of lifelong interest in wooden boats. Mr. Andrews built several when he was a teenager, and several more during his early years of marriage. When he purchased a home on Orchard Lake in southeastern Michigan, his interest in wooden boats expanded, and he acquired several Chris Crafts

and Century vessels.

Over time, Mr. Andrews became less interested in power and speed vehicles and sought leisurely paced cruises. This is how his quest for a launch-type boat began.

He found a lead in *Rudder*, a publication by the Antique and Classic Boat Society.

Lady A was in Grand Rapids, having been transported on a trailer from Florida. No history of the boat before its transport to Michigan was available, and it was in bad repair. He found the vessel appealing because of its manageable length, peculiar seating arrangement, and unusual operating configuration.

To evaluate the boat's potential, Mr. Andrews enlisted the help of a boat restoration professional, Don Danenberg of Danenberg Boat works in Manistee. Mr. Danenberg concluded that Lady A could be restored. The hull was in reasonable condition. The interior was in modest shape, despite the effects of severe deterioration. Owing to exposure, the deck had deteriorated, however, so replacing several planks would be critical.

Mr. Danenberg worked on the hull, which had been constructed by Consolidated Shipbuilding as revealed by a carved logo in the shear plank.

To obtain drawings of the hull and several components, Mr. Andrews traveled to Mystic Seaport Museum of America and the Sea in Mystic, Connecticut, where he also dis-

covered marketing documents.

Mystic Seaport holds a lot of information about Consolidated boats, Mr. Andrews said. Owing to a similar, gray boat he discovered in Annapolis, Maryland, he was able to gather joinery and hardware details, allowing him to precisely replicate the coupe and hardware. The coupe was replicated in as authentic a manner as possible, he said.

The boat contained a Universal Marine Engine. The original was a Speedway engine. A Speedway was not available, so Mr. Andrews obtained a marine engine in southeastern Michigan through Mike Murley of Fair Haven.

Mr. Murley supervised the restoration of the engine, a four-cylinder, 40-horsepower Gray Phantom, which had downdraft carburation. Such engines were built for a limited time in the mid 1930s.

Much of the vessel's equipment is original, and using examples from the Annapolis boat and the drawings from Mystic Seaport, the rest was replicated by Mr. Danenberg and other local craftsmen.

It took five years for the Lady A to be completely revamped.

"It definitely was worth that wait," Mr. Andrews said.

Lady A has been entered in several shows this year, and has won People's Choice or Best of Show several times. The vessel's home port alternates between Orchard Lake and Glen Lake.

Locals on the Bay and Bayside Live! Outdoor Concerts Offered at St. Ignace



Kate and Bill Isles (Photograph courtesy of Bill Isles)



The band Common Cent\$ offers classic rock music. (Photograph courtesy of Common Sense)

Bill Isles will be featured in a Locals on the Bay concert Wednesday, July 23, at 7 p.m. at the St. Ignace Marina. Mr. Isles is a Minnesota folk singer and song writer and his songs are reflections of life experiences.

Also at the marina, Common Cent\$ will perform for Bayside Live! Thursday, July 24, at 7 p.m. They are a high-energy classic rock band featuring three-part harmonies.

The outdoor concerts are free of charge. Audience members may bring lawn chairs, and bleacher seating is also available.