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## **Still Going Strong, Moore Celebrates 95<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

FREWSBURG – He still lives in the same 1890s-built house his father and grandfather grew up in, and died in. He still cuts his own grass, about two to three acres around the property he grew his roots on. He still attends the same church he has gone to since day one, about a mile over the closest hill. He's still married to his lovely bride Virginia, 60 years and counting. He is not only the oldest living NASCAR winner, he is also the oldest, living ARCA winner, and he turned 95 on Friday.

His name is Lloyd Moore, and he's alive and well living just outside of Frewsburg. And he is remarkably sharp in mind and body.

A school bus driver/mechanic and race car driver, Moore seemed to get more satisfaction out of delivering kids safely to school than he ever got out of racing. Nonetheless, it was fun while it lasted. In fact, his racing career, which includes a career-best fourth-place points finish in the 1950 NASCAR Grand National division (known today as the NASCAR Nextel Cup Series), lasted a brief six years. For Moore, there were more important things pressing – like raising his six girls.

“I had a big family,” said Moore. “Taking care of them was always more important than racing.”

While his greatest joys were always his six kids, and now 13 grandchildren and 30 great grandchildren, there is one prize in the cabinet he also holds dear – a trophy from his all-time favorite track – Dayton Speedway where on June 6, 1954 Lloyd Moore drove Julian Buesink's Ford to victory lane in the MARC (ARCA)-sanctioned Metropolitan 300.

Lloyd Moore was born in the house he still lives in on June 8, 1912, where he worked the family farm when he wasn't attending school.

“My father lost his leg just below the knee; I guess he make a poor choice to be a farmer because that put a lot of work back on everyone else.

“My mother used to get on her hay wagon, and we'd shovel it up to her the best we could.”

In 1930, Moore got a job with the local school system hauling school kids to and from school. In 1935, he went to work for Studebaker “slinging wrenches” for the next 17 years. During that time, he bought his first school bus in 1939 and continued to work for the school system maintaining the buses and delivering students.

Then in the mid-40s, his adventurous nature began surface, no doubt a sign of things to come.

“I bought an airplane in 1945. Never took a flying test but we figured out how to fly it. I remember my nephew wanted a ride. We cranked it up, took off and got up about 100 feet. Well, someone didn’t turn the gas back on, and the motor just quit. We came back down in the woods, chased the birds right out of the trees. We were lucky to climb out of the crazy thing; that ended my flying for a while.

From flying airplanes, Moore, interested in all things mechanical, started racing jalopies locally at dirt tracks known as Warren and Penny Royal. Moore won a lot of races in his jalopy at Penny Royal.

“Penny Royal was so dusty you really couldn’t see. I remember there was a maple tree in turn three, otherwise you’d end up in the cow pasture.”

Then Julian Buesink, a local car dealer out of Findley Lake, New York, started a NASCAR team in 1950. Buesink was credited with starting the first multi-car team, even utilizing different cars for different type of tracks. Little could he know how the precedent he set so long ago would take hold in the modern stock car era.

“Bill Rexford came here one evening and wanted to borrow my helmet. I asked him what he wanted my helmet for. He told me he was racing Buesink’s car at Langhorne. Well that peaked my interest.

“I was working at Studebaker at the time. Well, one noon I went up the street to Julian’s car lot, and I asked him to stop in the garage when he gets a chance. Couple days later, he walks in the Studebaker garage and said, ‘I hear you want to drive one of my cars Well, I’ve got one for Heidelberg if you’re still interested.’ I said, yah, I’d go over there.”

And so Moore did go to Heidelberg, thus becoming a teammate to Rexford, who would go on to win the NASCAR championship in 1950.

“That was my first NASCAR race at Heidelberg in 1949. I’ll never forget it. I go my ears pinned back by a girl.”

Moore finished sixth that day to NASCAR’s first female racer Sara Christian, who finished fifth.

“I remember getting down there. The car was a standard shift and we had the wrong gear ratio in the rear-end. Julian called back to his shop and told ‘em to get a rear-end out of a car from the showroom floor and have it ready. Julian and I drove the car back home, put a different rear-end in and drove it back to Pittsburgh for the race. Then we drove it home.

“Racing back then was an experience, sometimes good, sometimes bad. I loved every minute of it. There were a lot of tough guys on the circuit then, pioneers of sorts. Most were

short of money and equipment but tough as all get out when they got behind the wheel of a car.”

Moore fondly refers to Lee Petty as being one of the fiercest competitors of the era.

“We were best of friends,” Moore said of Petty, “Except on the track where we were bitter enemies. I remember once Lee booted me in the rear-end, and we had just started the race. When the race was over, I told Lee I didn’t think that was necessary. He looked at me and said, “I thought you needed a little help.” We had more fun than a bushel of monkeys!

“I remember one time on the way back from a race, we stopped at Lee’s house and he invited us in and fed us, so I guess we couldn’t have been too big of enemies.”

At the tail-end of the 1950 season Moore won the 200-lap NASCAR race at Winchester Speedway. Following Moore across the finish line were Buckie Sager in second followed by Bill Rexford, Chuck James and Ray Duhigg. The race paid \$1,000 to win, a pretty sizable payoff for 1950.

Moore also ran on Daytona Beach in ’50, ’51 and ’52 with best finishes of 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>.

“I loved running the beach. If you went over the bank at the one end, you’d end up in a junkyard. That happened to me once.”

Through it all, his favorite track was Dayton Speedway.

“When I first saw the place, I told Julian I didn’t like the place; it was down in a bowl. They were going around at a pretty good clip; it took me a while to get used to. But once I got on to it, I loved it. I remember sitting on the pole there with Fonty Flock. That was quite an honor for me.

“Darlington was the first real big track I raced on. I wasn’t crazy about it, but I raced there.”

As the mid-50s approached, Moore began to have a change of heart regarding his racing career.

“I never knew where I was going from one week to the next. Whenever Julian said we were going, that’s where we went. If he didn’t feel like traveling to wherever NASCAR was, we’d pick up a MARC race somewhere closer. But I was always leaving my family. This went on for five or six years... going all around the country. It just caught up with me. I just decided one day my family was more important than driving cars in circles.’

So at the end of the ’55 season Moore hung up his helmet for good. He attended one more race as a spectator in 1956 and hasn’t returned to a racetrack since.

After working at Buesink's Corry Ford Garage in Corry, PA for a couple of years, Moore returned to his roots and went to work for the local township running the Frewsburg High School bus garage driving and maintaining the buses for the school system. From there he retired in 1974.

These days, he lives with his wife of 60 years, Virginia. With kids, grandkids and great grandkids clamoring all around for photos with their old racing hero, Moore still tunes in every now and then to NASCAR races.

"He usually starts out watching the NASCAR race, then falls asleep," explained his wife Virginia. "Then I wake him up for the last few laps or so."

Always a Ford fan, he roots for anyone in a Ford, mostly from the Roush Racing camp.

"I have a lot of respect for Jeff Burton," added Moore.

"He's really a clean drive...earns his positions the hard way...passes people without moving them or wrecking them. He had a chance to put Matt (Kenseth) out of a race once, and didn't do it. I respect him for that. For most of the other catbirds it would have been different.

"The thing I don't like about NASCAR today is that it's too much Hollywood. I read where the race coverage gets going at 1, or whatever, I turn it on and the race don't start 'til 3. Way too much Hollywood; just give me the race.

"Now I see gas prices as they are, and it just doesn't make much sense to me...\$3 a gallon to go around in circles."

For many years, Moore was all but forgotten in terms of being a pioneer to NASCAR's top division.

"My nephew was watching a NASCAR race on the TV when he heard that Buddy Helms, 87, was being honored as the oldest living NASCAR driver in a parade at one of the races (Homestead-Miami Speedway)

"Well, he got right on the phone and got a hold of NASCAR and told them they had the wrong guy. He told them "the oldest, living NASCAR driver was my uncle, and he's alive and well in Frewsburg, New York. Everyone around here knew it but NASCAR didn't. Well, we finally go that straightened out."

These days, Lloyd Moore spends his days at home with his bride Virginia refusing to go much of anywhere outside of the doctor's office where the doctors continue to tell him he's in remarkably good shape.

In the warmer months, he can still be seen riding his 1949 Ford home-built tractor cutting his acres of grass on the ground he grew up on, and that suits him just fine.

When asked if he would ever move from his home to a more accommodating place, he answers quickly and sharply, "I beg your pardon. The next time I move it'll be halfway up the hill to Frewsburg cemetery,"...right next to the same Methodist church he still goes in the little mountain town that shall always wear the pride of nurturing one of stock car racing's true blue pioneers.

Outside of a small scattering of photos from his racing days, his only memoir is the trophy for winning the ARCA Metropolitan 300 at Dayton Speedway in 1954.

After all, he is the oldest, living ARCA winner, and quite fortunately he's alive and well in Frewsburg.

And he turned 95 years young on Friday. From all of us at ARCA, happy birthday Mr. Moore, and give our best to Virginia.