From: Hovish, Joseph J.
Sent: Tuesday, September 02, 2008 11:34 AM
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Subject: FW: Auto racing great Tom Sneva received Legion's 'Good Guy' Award

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From: March, Joseph H.
Sent: Monday, August 25, 2008 6:29 PM
To: Public Relations Division
Subject: Auto racing great Tom Sneva received Legion's 'Good Guy' Award

Auto racing great Tom Sneva received Legion's 'Good Guy' Award

PHOENIX (Aug. 25, 2008) - Former auto-racing star Tom Sneva enjoyed a successful career in the IndyCar series, winning 13 races – including the 1983 Indianapolis 500 – and being inducted into the Motorsports Hall of Fame of America. But one race in particular set Sneva apart to America's veterans.

In 1981, he threw his support behind a somewhat controversial project at the time: the Vietnam Veterans National Memorial. During the Indianapolis 500 that year, Sneva raised nearly $100,000 for the memorial's fund while racing with both The American Legion and Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund logos on his car. He later attended the ground-breaking ceremony for the memorial on the National Mall in Washington.

Sneva's support for the project rivaled the passion he showed on the race track. On Monday, he was recognized for that support when he received The American Legion's 2008 James V. Day "Good Guy" Award. Sneva was honored during The American Legion's Past Department Commander's Club Luncheon during the organization's 90th National Convention in Phoenix.

"We're honoring today a great friend of ours for years," American Legion National Commander Marty Conatser said. "That's what real good guys are. They're friends who stay with you year after year."

Sneva – the first driver to qualify for the Indianapolis 500 with a speed faster than 200 mph – turned the compliments back toward The American Legion.

"Everyone in this room is a good guy, and I'm just proud to be a part of this group today," he said. "I was glad to be able to help out in the past. I just want to thank you guys for all your service on behalf of all the people in this great country who have had the opportunities and freedom to pursue our goals. It's nice to live in a country where you can follow your dreams."

Sneva finished second in the Indianapolis 500 three times, including 1980 when he started the race in last place.

"Sneva truly epitomizes what The American Legion is all about: tenacity and service," outgoing PDCC President Fang Wong of New York said.