

Race into the Rock Island Library for a Sept. 16 program on the History of Quad City Auto Racing

Written by Lisa Lockheart

Thursday, 28 August 2014 15:03

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Rock Island, IL: The green flag drops on Hometown Teams programming with "Start Your Engines: Motorsports in the Quad Cities," at 2:30 pm on Tuesday, Sept. 16, in the Rock Island Main Library Community Room, 401 19th Street. Hometown Teams will bring national and local sports history to the Rock Island Public Library from Sept. 13 to Oct. 25 with a traveling exhibition from the Smithsonian Museum, local sports history displays and 12 free programs on local sports heritage.

The free program covers the rich history of auto racing in the Quad Cities, including what many believe to be the site of the first automobile race in Iowa. Area racing writer and organizer Roger Ruthhart will provide an overview of that history, from the speedways and drag strip that remain, to a look at the three landmark tracks that are now gone, lost to highway and housing construction, and even a lake.

Roger Ruthhart is the managing editor of The Dispatch and Rock Island Argus newspapers. He writes a weekly racing column for the newspapers, and is also president of the Rock Island Grand Prix, the world's largest karting street race held each Labor Day Weekend through the downtown city streets.

"Hometown Teams: How Sports Shape America, will be on view Saturday, Sept. 13 to Saturday, Oct. 25, 2014 at the Rock Island Library's Main Branch, 401 19th Street, Rock Island. The library will kick off the exhibit with a free opening day ceremony from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm on Saturday, Sept. 13, with tailgate hot dogs and bands in the library's 20th Street parking lot. The opening ceremony is free and open to the public.

Other Hometown Teams programs include talks on pro football and basketball teams in the

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Quad Cities, a guided tour of historic stadiums, and presentations on women in baseball, professional baseball, amateur softball tournaments, and a program on a true game-changer, Frederick "Duke" Slater. Additional Hometown Teams programs and displays will be offered in Moline at the Moline Public Library, Rock Island County Historical Society, and Butterworth Center, and in Rock Island at the Karpeles Manuscript Museum.

"Hometown Teams: How Sports Shape America" is part of Museum on Main Street, a unique collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service and the Illinois Humanities Council.

Support for Museum on Main Street has been provided by the United States Congress. Local sponsors include the Rock Island Community Foundation, Illinois Humanities Council, Modern Woodmen of America, Rock Island Public Library Foundation, and Sedona Staffing, along with media sponsorships from WHBF TV/CBS 4, Townsquare Media (ESPN Quad Cities 93.5, The HAWK 104.9, 97X WXLN, and B100), Mickle Communications, The Dispatch/Rock Island Argus and the River Cities Reader. In kind support has been received from Bill's Moving and Storage, Victory Enterprises, and Midwest Graphics Management.

All events are free and open to the public. Free Hometown Teams program brochures are available, or contact the library at 309-732-READ or www.rockislandlibrary.org for more details.

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Exhibit Venue: Rock Island Main Library: 401 19th Street, Rock Island, IL 61201, 309-732-READ (7323), www.rockislandlibrary.org. Second-floor exhibit space open from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm daily, during all scheduled library programs, and by contacting first floor service desk at other times. Exhibits close one-half hour before library closing. General library hours of operation are Monday-Thursday, 9:00 am to 8:00 pm, Friday and Saturday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. The library is closed on Sundays.