



March 20, 1995 Wyandotte Distinguished Graduate Inductee



Richard (Dick Dean) Sawitskas Class of 1951

Richard Dean Sawitskas distinguished himself as a designer and builder of custom cars. His creations have been the focus of many television and movie productions.

While a student at Roosevelt High School, Richard's creativity was encouraged by his art instructors. His career began customizing old cars in the back of his father's car dealership. After graduation, he served in the United States Air Force as a M.A.T.S. Personnel and performed in a Pitts Aerobat. Following his military service, he studied at the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California. His custom car designs for prominent individuals

helped spread his fame.

Richard's unique concept of automobiles gained the attention of Hollywood. Under the name of Dick Dean, Richard created vehicles for the following productions: "Mannix," "The Beverly Hillbillies" (truck), "The Munsters" (coffin car), "Ninja Turtles" (car and van), "The Flintstones" (car), "Beach Party," Hard Rock Cafe Cadillacs and "Jurassic Park." Richard built the world's longest limousine, which is recorded in the Guinness Book of World Records. He designed the futuristic Bricklin Automobile in 1973. Richard's talents were not limited to automobiles, as he designed special props for the James Bond movie "Diamonds Are Forever". His career also included toy design for the Mattel Toy Company, working on the projects "Blaze the Wonder Horse" and the "X-15".

Richard Dean Sawitskas was inducted into the "Grand National Hall of Fame" in 1988 and the West Coast Hall of Fame in 1989. His cars are featured in two museums, Peterson Auto Museum and the Indy Speed Museum of Indianapolis, Indiana. San Jacinto, California is currently the home of his business, Dick Dean and Son Imagineering. His current projects include a local air museum, as well as creative designs for the film and toy industry.