

John Nessa was born and raised near Thor, Iowa. He attended Eagle Grove High School before enlisting in the Marine Corps.

Always a horse lover, John was introduced to harness racing by Leo Baker. John raced in Iowa for many years and spread his passion for the sport to many friends, leading them into the business. John and his wife, Nori, were well known at the Humboldt Fairgrounds, as were their children: Shawn and Stacie.

While training and racing out of Humboldt, The Nessa's had many successes in the Iowa and Illinois fair circuits. The family subsequently moved to Richland, Iowa, to train for Kermit Hinshaw. After two years, they relocated to Du Quoin, Illinois, where they continued to race for several years, having much success.

John went to his final race on June 10, 2005, and was laid to rest in Du Quoin. His son, Shawn, carries on the tradition still racing there, while Nori resides in Fairfield, Illinois, and Stacie lives in Spanish Fort, Alabama.