

# TRACK MINISTRY NEWS

Race Track Chaplaincy of America, Pennsylvania Division, Inc.

*"Sharing God's Love at Philadelphia Park"*

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**Spring 2006**

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The leaders (Standing) pose with members of Cadette Troop 996. The Troop offered much needed assistance to Molly for the Easter Party (Did you notice the Smarty Jones tees?)



Look, Mom, I won the Bunny!!

## **RTCA Chaplains and Board Members Gather in Houston, Texas . . .**

Houston, Texas was the site of the Annual Meetings of the Race Track Chaplaincy of America. Under the leadership of Dr. Enrique Torres (Ordained American Baptist minister) the organization is expanding to become a worldwide outreach for the sake of the gospel of Christ. We heard from Dr. Karin Sowada from Australia, who cast the vision for providing chaplains in her country. Dr. Torres has been in discussions with tracks in Spain, Chile, Japan and Hong Kong, for example. The Chaplain ministries in Canada have been thriving in recent years. RTCA is indeed becoming an international outreach!

Chaplain Cordell was also accompanied to the meetings by Council President, Dr. Val Hastings, Sr. and his wife, Audrey, as well as our Treasurer, Don Hogeland, and his wife, Nancy. Besides the trainings and worship times, we had time to visit the Johnson Space Center and the Lakewood Church, which now meets in the former Houston Rockets home arena!

We had fabulous times of laughter, fun and uplifting Christian fellowship. Indeed, God has provided a wonderful group of people to serve on the RTCA, PA Division, Council.

### **SPECIAL THANKS**

We sincerely thank St. Mary Medical Center of Langhorne, PA, for printing the copies of our quarterly newsletter. Council member, Rey Roque, graciously does the work.

## **Easter Egg Hunt 2006 . . . . .**

The rains came but so did the children for our Annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 8. Molly not only had the faithful assistance of several members of First Baptist Church, Levittown, PA, she also enjoyed the enthusiastic assistance of a local Girl Scout Troop. The craft for the day included a paper cross decorated by each child, and everyone went home with a goodie bag of many items sure to please the kids. Each bag had in it an excellent bilingual story of Easter.

Some very special guests also showed up for the event --- the Easter Bunny and the Old Country Bee. One boy came over to me and said, "Take my picture with the bee, please." I did.

Always a hit with the children are the "Prize Eggs" prepared by Molly and Joe Shallcross. Those who found one received a \$15.00 gift card to Wal-Mart.

We offer thanks to the Backstretch Café for supplying the hot dogs and trimmings as well as the PTHA (Horsemen's Association) for providing funds for the event.

## **With the Churches**

What a special privilege it is to experience the support of the churches. For example, as a commissioned Home Missionary of the American Baptist Churches many of the congregations send us cards and expressions of encouragement as their Special Interest Missionary. We are blessed more than we can convey in our words. Knowing that the churches and AB women's groups care about and pray for us humbles us and spurs us to remain faithful to the God we serve.

We had a wonderful luncheon with the women of Calvary Baptist Church of Norristown, PA, when they met in Lansdale, PA on February 21. Their enthusiastic response was such a blessing.

On Sunday, February 26, the Chaplain gave a "Missions Moment" at First Baptist Church of Levittown. The new pastor, Rev. Chris Holcomb, is very much involved with the ministry. She even filled in for Chaplain Cordell one day while he was away for the RTCA meetings in Houston, TX.

One of our faithful supporting churches is Grace Baptist Church (formerly Baptist Temple) of Blue Bell, PA. On Sunday, March 12, I had the privilege of sharing at their "Missions Moment" during the worship hour. Interim Pastor, Rev. Stephen Crane, is also an enthusiastic supporter of our ministry.

Another strong supporter of our work is Springfield Baptist Church, Springfield, PA (Rev. Wiley Johnson, Senior Pastor). We had an exciting time of ministry and fellowship with them for their missions emphasis on Sunday, March 19. Pastor Wiley was away on duty as a Reserve Chaplain (LTC) in the Army. Wiley, we thank you for your service to our great country.

We look forward to speaking in several churches in the months of April, May and June as well as at the Annual Pennsylvania and Delaware AB Women's meetings at Shippensburg University.

Thanks to all of you who so faithfully pray for and give items and finances in support of this unusual ministry.



Mr. Ron Davis (Center) Director of Diversity and Community Development at Philadelphia Park, assists Lorna Michaelson (L) and Kathy Fluehr (R) serving food for the Chapel 'n Chow meal provided by the Bensalem YWCA on March 29. Ron is a retired NFL player for the San Francisco 49ers and Cleveland Browns.

### **2006 Special Event Dates**

Friday, June 30 - Independence Day Picnic  
Friday, September 1 – Pig Roast  
Saturday, October 28 – Fall Costume Party  
Saturday, December 16 – Christmas Party

## **Chapel 'n Chow Nights**

We sincerely thank the following area organizations and churches for providing delicious meals following our Chapel Service on Wednesday evenings: Texas Roadhouse Restaurant (Jan. 18 and 25); Bensalem Presbyterian Church (Feb. 22); Building a Better Bensalem Committee (Feb. 8); First Baptist Church Levittown, PA (March 15); Gerry Brooks Youth Ministry (March 22); Bensalem YWCA Board and Staff (March 29).



Easter Bunny captured two new friends.

## **God Things at the Track**

One morning I walked into the jockey room and saw two of the jockeys reading their Bibles. Of course, that caught my attention and I stopped to chat with them. One of the jockeys said, "Chaplain, this Bible is from the Chaplain at the track in Cleveland." Sure enough, my friend, Chaplain Harris, had written in the Bible. I learned that Chaplain Harris had led the jockey to Christ a few years ago. We currently are planning to baptize the jockey in the coming weeks.

A few days ago a letter arrived from a church in Rhode Island. In it was a gift of \$3 for the work at the track. Someone in the church found the gift in a box that was to be sent to the racetrack. The sender was pretty sure that it was from someone of limited means – a "widow's mite." God provides for this work through the sacrifices of many.

One evening recently, Jan and I had to come to my office in the Rec Hall to pick up something. Near the entrance was a man who looked ill. When I walked back out of my office, the man was clutching his chest and complaining of severe pain. Since he had a history of heart problems, we called the ambulance. It was God's timing that placed us there for "Tom," whose health has recovered.

### ***COUNCIL MEMBERS***

**RTCA, PA Division, Inc.**

**Rev. Dr. J. Val Hastings, Sr., President**  
**Rev. Linda Haughton, Vice-President**  
**Mrs. Hilda Garcia, Secretary; Mr. Donald Hogeland,**  
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Chaplain Emeritus: Rev. Nick Salios

