

TRACK MINISTRY NEWS

Race Track Chaplaincy of America, Pennsylvania Division, Inc.

"Sharing God's Love at Philadelphia Park"

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Mom holds little "Count Dracula," winner of scariest costume in the Infant-3 age group.

Costume Party 2008

The children all arrived in their funny, scary, or original costumes, ready to have a fabulous party. They did! Chaplain's Administrative Assistant Molly Shallcross and Palmer Seminary Student Intern Ethel Guy, with the help of the cadettes of Girl Scout Troop 996 and their leader, Maria Rucci, were prepared to make sure parents and children would have a time to remember! From the "Shine Your Light for Jesus" pumpkin pin and book mark crafts, to the "Parade of Costumes," to the hot dogs and trimmings donated by Ron's Backstretch Café, the afternoon was a smashing hit with everyone.



In the ages 7-9 group, the Angel girl won Prettiest.



Chaplains and Council Presidents take time for a photo op at their gathering on October 28. (L to R) Chaplain Peter Guilfoyle, President Nick Caras of RTCA New York Division, Rev. Linda Haughton, President of Pennsylvania Division, Region 7 Representative from New Jersey, Tom Herudek, Chaplain Joe DiDonato of the Meadows Racetrack and Rose Salios, RTCA National Board Member Emeritus.

Region 7 Enjoys Day of Fellowship

Several members of Region 7 of RTCA met together on Tuesday, October 28th in the Rec Hall at Philadelphia Park. Host Chaplain Jack Cordell, Chaplain Intern Ethel Guy, Chaplain's Assistant Emeritus Rose Salios, and Board President Linda Haughton represented RTCA PA. Other Chaplains and Council presidents attending represented the racetrack ministries at Belmont, Aqueduct, and Saratoga racetracks in New York, Meadowlands and farm ministries in New Jersey, and The Meadows Racetrack near Pittsburgh, PA.

On that cold, blustery day with snow, sleet, and rain coming down outside, we shared warm, wonderful fellowship together. It was a blessing to hear about the variety of ministries being carried on at the various tracks. We shared the positive things in our ministries for which we are thankful, first of which for all was relationships – whether with track management, security, the horse industry nationwide, or with our local communities, backstretch workers, churches, volunteers, and family. Needs were expressed and prayed for, including health concerns, financial support, responding to emergencies, as well as teaching people to do things for themselves and to become more independent.

We are grateful to Region 7 Representative Bill Gotwals whose support helped make this gathering possible, and to Molly Shallcross for making the arrangements for the food.

Reported by Rev. Linda Haughton



(L to R) Palmer Seminary Student Intern, Ethel Guy, Tom Herudek, Chaplain Guilfoyle, Chaplain Humberto Chavez and Chaplain Jack Cordell stand by the dramatic display used to present the work of RTCA of New York.

Chapel 'n Chow Nights, Plus

Lately, we have added a "Plus" to our Chapel 'n Chow nights. Area churches have been coming to lead our Chapel Hour in worship before we join in fellowship around a meal.

On September 10, we were blessed to have the worship team from Rey Roque's church, New Beginning Church of God of Bristol, PA. Their labor of love left all of us with good memories of how greatly God used them on that evening. Following the Chapel Hour we enjoyed a delicious meal together.

A favorite of everyone is the Buck's Country YWCA Board, because they bring such great food. They never miss in their effort to provide a delicious dinner. October 22 was no exception! Besides providing meals, Lorna Michelson, Executive Director, and Sandy Blitstein, Director of Family Services, and their staff and volunteers are a constant source of care and concern for those of the racetrack. Most recently, Carolyn Pachas, Family Center Coordinator, has been coming to the track each Friday to interview those who need help with contacting various community resources.

Ethel's Corner

It's good to be back. I took the summer off, spent time with grandchildren, took a short course at the seminary, and enjoyed my garden, but the racetrack was never far from my thoughts and prayers. It felt so good to drive back through the gates in September! I saw the same people, the same buildings and the same places that I had left a few months ago. As I breathed in the familiarity, I thought about how this reminded me of God's faithfulness to us. We can go away from God or get lost in our busyness to the point that we don't even see the world around us, but God never changes. God is always waiting for us to return. God was waiting for me, here at the racetrack, in the faces of the people for whom He cares, no matter whether I am here or not. And when I saw the smiling greetings on the faces of the people who welcomed me back, I knew I was seeing but a foretaste of God's welcoming embrace. This is how we are called to be. We are called to be the face of God to each other, every day, welcoming those who may never have known such an acceptance, as a way of saying, "This is God who greets you. Welcome."

As the hymn writer Thomas Chisholm has said: "Great is Thy faithfulness! Morning by morning new mercies I see! All I have needed Thy hand hath provided. Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord unto me." So be it.

By Ethel Guy, Palmer Seminary Student Intern

God Things at the Track

##A jockey stopped to ask me to explain the verse we used for the morning. As we finished our conversation, he stuck the verse inside his boot. After receiving a verse he always takes it to the track with him. It's common for jockeys to keep the verses either in their helmet or boot during a race.

##"Bill" has a severe drinking problem. He had been at the track about a month, and we had to take him to the hospital. In the car he turned to me and said, "Chaplain, I'm so glad we have you here to help." Many are grateful for the ministry of Chaplains at tracks across the country.

##We have badly needed a storage pod for our office. We found just what we needed – a 20-foot unit. The company sold it to us at half the regular cost because of the nature of our organization. God is good.

With the Churches

On Sunday, August 3, the Chaplain and Board member, Rey Roque, spoke at **Frankford Memorial Methodist Church** in Philadelphia. The Pastor is Rev. Tom Brooks, Vice-President of our Board. We enjoyed a delightful evening as well as a tasty potluck dinner together.

Roxborough Baptist Church (Rev. Kenneth Scovell, Pastor) in Philadelphia held a Missions Weekend on September 28, and invited me to speak for the occasion. We had a wonderful time of fellowship and sharing with the congregation, which included a savory potluck dinner.

Sunday, November 2, included a group of us traveling to **First Baptist Church**, Wildwood, NJ (Rev. Joe Mathis, Pastor). Since the congregation has been so involved with helping our work over the years, I thought it would be great to have them meet Molly and Joe Shallcross, Ethel Guy and Rey Roque (who had met them a few years ago). Rey sang a solo, and Ethel and Molly read Scripture and spoke briefly. The day was a blessing for all of us!



In September, members of Frankford Memorial UM Church toured the track. Rev. Thomas Brooks, Board Vice-President, is Pastor of the congregation. Jockey Tara Hemmings and her horse posed with the group.



After getting some TLC from Laura Todd, filly "Livin' Fast Forward" promptly went out and won the second race!!

Board of Directors - RTCA, PA Division, Inc.



Seated (L to R) Mr. Rey Roque, Secretary; Mr. Donald Hogeland, Treasurer; Mr. Dan Sourwine and Rev. Tom Brooks, Vice-President

Standing (L to R): Mrs. Bobbie Enke; Rev. Linda Haughton, President; Rev. Nelson Krute; Rev. Christine Holcomb; Mrs. Hilda Garcia and Chaplain Jack Cordell

Board Members Emeritus

Rev. Dr. Nicholas Salios, Chaplain Emeritus
Mrs. Rose Salios, Chaplain's Assistant Emeritus

