

RMR ***Update***

Newsletter for the Friends of
Raceway Ministry Resources

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Formula for An Awesome TMS Weekend

*The biggest event of the year for Texas Motor Speedway is when the NASCAR Nextel Cup Series comes to town in the spring, hosting a crowd of nearly 215,000 people. Therefore, it is no surprise that the biggest weekend of ministry for Texas Alliance Raceway Ministries, of which I am co-chair with Dr. John Babler of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, coincides with that occasion, which occurred earlier this month. It was an awesome experience, too, resulting in 4 known professions of faith in Christ; the involvement of 82 volunteers from churches all over Texas and from other states; the distribution of over 13,300 pieces of literature bearing the gospel message; 160 in attendance at the Sunday morning camping area worship service; 125 handicapped transportation responses; over 30 occasions for ministry connected with injuries, illnesses and other emergencies; participation of 150 children in Pinewood Derby and Cardboard Box racing events; 200+ people involved in a Children's Carnival; 30+ people involved in a horse shoe tournament; and 1 wedding. **March 27 – April 4** now seems like a blur, but during those days of ministry to the fans and employees at TMS, it was busy and exciting. How do you prepare for a week of ministry like that? What is involved in coordinating and implementing such a ministry plan? What is the formula for "making it happen?" Here are a few of the factors that are important:*

Prayer. *As we all know, all ministry is performed effectively through the power of God. We should never dare to lead a person to Christ, preach a sermon, teach a lesson, offer spiritual counsel or encouragement, or do anything to extend Christ's cause, without prayer. In fact, it was Paul Billheimer who said years ago in his book Destined for the Throne, prayer is the work; everything else that happens is only the outcome of our prayers. Such certainly is true when it comes to doing ministry of the magnitude required at a major speedway event; everything must be bathed in prayer. And, indeed, for the events Texas Motor Speedway, we must pray—for the weather, for volunteers, for ministry details, for the lost. In a recent front-page article featuring the ministry at TMS in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram (Friday, April 2, 2004), Eddie Gossage, President of Texas Motor Speedway commented on what TxARM does for the speedway saying, "They pray for safe races; they pray for us to make the right decisions." It's true, pray must permeate all that we do at the speedway. Ministry there, just like ministry at any other level or in any other place, must be carried out only after it has been a matter of prayer.*

A Strong Team. *As is true in any endeavor, a strong team of leaders and workers is required, as well. Texas Alliance Raceway Ministries is blessed to have both. In fact, when I reflect on the spring*

2004 NASCAR week at Texas Motor Speedway, I don't know when the ministry group has worked harder, and I don't know that I have seen a better group of hard workers in the 8 years I've been involved. The TxARM leadership team—the Executive Council—includes some of the most dedicated, committed, loyal and “roll-up-your-sleeves-and-get-it-done” people I ever have known. And the ministry activity coordinators? Second to none. Add to that a long list of volunteers from as near as Roanoke, Texas and from as far as Piggott, Arkansas, and you have a winning team of people who want to honor God, lift up Jesus and share with others with creativity and hard work. My hat is off to our volunteers; second to prayer, these folks are the essential items in the tool box for ministry to race fans.

Preparation. Now here is a key factor; you don't sit down on Saturday night and decide to do ministry at Texas Motor Speedway on Sunday and then go out there and “wing it.” No, to reach almost a quarter of a million people in tandem with the staff and schedule of activities at a major speedway, involving dozens of organized activities led by 80+ volunteers, planning and preparation is required. When did we begin planning for the spring 2004 ministry activity at TMS? About a year ago. Following last year's spring NASCAR races, we gathered the TxARM leadership and reflected and evaluated. Then, in January of this year, the Executive Council attended a 1/2 -day retreat where we began to put together specific plans. In February, Volunteer Orientation occurred. Following that, another Executive Council meeting was conducted. In March some volunteers attended an orientation meeting led by TMS staff. And between all those meetings—lots of emails, phone calls, letters and other contacts; copying; purchasing; prayer; encouragement--to pull it all together.

Long Hours. If you don't like long hours of hard work, raceway ministry is not for you. Work at Texas Motor Speedway this spring began on Saturday, March 27, as campers began to arrive a full 8 days before the day of the NASCAR Nextel Cup race on March 4. I, along with TxARM volunteers were there when the gates opened at 8:00 a.m. on 3/27. Everyday for the next 7 days—TxARM volunteers were there. Wednesday, March 31, TxARM volunteers arrived with campers and began setting up the tent area. Thursday, April 1, the day began with prayer and devotional time for volunteers at 8:00 a.m., and from that point forward, 24-hour per day ministry activity began—complete with night shift and volunteers being available all through the night for the fans. As an example of a long day at the speedway, take Sunday, April 4. After leaving the speedway late on Saturday night, I went to bed at 12:30 a.m. on Sunday morning. I awakened at 3:45, left for the speedway at 4:30, attended a chapel service for the vendors on “Vendor Row” at 5:45 a.m., welcomed TxARM volunteers to the Information Booths at 7:00 a.m., conducted a wedding at the Speedway Club at 8:45 a.m., welcomed fans to the campground worship service at 9:30 a.m., headed into the speedway at 11:00 a.m. and led the invocation for the Nextel Cup race at Noon, worked an Information Booth in the concourse area from 1:00 until 5:00 p.m., helped with handicapped transportation until 7:00 p.m., assisted in tearing down and loading the ministry equipment until 9:30 p.m., and then returned keys to the speedway staff and headed home, finally getting in bed at 11:45 p.m. What a day!! And, you can multiply that many times, because many of our leaders and other volunteers experienced the same thing—and then had to go to work on Monday!! Yep, long hours.

Partners, like You! I have been blessed to have partners like you to provide support and encouragement for the work of raceway ministry. Through Raceway Ministry Resources I have been blessed to have the resources and time to offer leadership to Texas Alliance Raceway Ministries and the National Fellowship of Raceway Ministries. We continue to provide resources to people all over the United States who are starting raceway ministries groups, using “racing” as a theme for church and Christian school events, and/or broadening their currently existing ministry efforts at speedways all across America. It is an exciting privilege to be in the middle of it. Without your partnership, it couldn't happen. Like I often tell our folks at First Baptist Church in Tioga, you are part of a significant missions opportunity that is growing by leaps and bounds. **Thank you for being a partner with RMR!!**

In the Race by His Grace,

Keep Up with the Latest Raceway Ministry Activity by Visiting. . .

www.rmresources.org (Raceway Ministry Resources)

www.racewayministries.com (National Fellowship of Raceway Ministries)

www.txarm.org (Texas Alliance Raceway Ministries)



Next Race Dates

June 11-12, NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series & Indy Racing League

October 16-17, NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series & IRL Season Finale

For more details, go to www.texasmotorspeedway.com



Children's Ministry Resources Growing in Popularity

RMR Board member Don Schenck is one of the most creative guys around, and when he hits on an idea that works, it works great! Two examples are worth noting. First, a couple of years ago, Don came up with some "coloring pictures," traced from drawings he made of race cars—NASCAR, IRL, sprint cars, street stocks, late models, etc.—to serve as originals for making copies. These have been advertised at www.rmresources.org for people to order either quantities of the pictures or good single copies of each picture that they can use as an original to make copies. Over the past couple of years, and especially in the past 6 months, children's ministers at churches and leaders at Christian schools have been ordering the pictures quite frequently. Thus far, there is no charge for the pictures; when we mail a set of pictures to someone, we send a copy of the RMR Update, which includes information about making donations.

Another great idea of Don's worked beautifully at the recent NASCAR race week at Texas Motor Speedway. Don has created "race cars" by drawing NASCAR-style stock cars onto cardboard boxes. Children color the cars as they wish, and then the bottom and top are cut off the box so that a child can hold it up around their waist. Then, 6-8 children compete around a "track" in heat races. One pit stop is required (with Mom, Dad, siblings and friends as the pit crew): the child must take off his/her shoes and change socks, put the shoes back on, and then continue the race. Winners of each heat race then compete in a feature race called the "Trinity 7," which is a 7 lap race, with one pit stop required. Around 50 children competed in the "box races" at Texas Motor Speedway on Saturday, April 3, and then the final "Trinity 7" race was conducted after chapel service on Sunday morning, April 4, shortly before the NASCAR Nextel Cup races on the main speedway. The children and parents loved it, and many of them went out of their way to tell us how much they appreciated the effort. In addition, it provided tremendous opportunities to share Jesus with children and families.

Don is in the process of working with some box manufacturers to create "kits" that RMR can sell and ship all over the country for other groups that might be interested. Thanks, Don, for the fantastic idea!

Ft. Worth Star-Telegram Front Page!!!

Believe it or not, Roger's picture appeared on the front page of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram on Friday, April 2, 2004, along with a lengthy article covering the ministry at Texas Motor Speedway through TxARM and with references to the work with the National Fellowship of Raceway Ministries. The article included quotes from Texas Motor Speedway president Eddie Gossage and from raceway ministries leaders all across the United States—California, Kentucky, Missouri, South Carolina. Dave Ferman, writer for the Star-Telegram, contacted Roger in late March, indicating that there was interest in running the article during race week at Texas Motor Speedway, and after several interviews and picture sessions, the article was produced. If you spend time on the internet, you might want to email Roger at roger@rmresources.org so he can forward to you a message with a link to the article on the Fort Worth Star-Telegram web page. Or, if you would like to check it out yourself, go to www.star-telegram.com and search for the article entitled "Wishing Them Godspeed." It will be posted there for a limited period of time.



Where We're Going . . .

April

April 14. Roger will go to Fort Worth for a lunch meeting with the TxARM leadership team.

April 20. Roger will meet with the TxARM Executive Council to evaluate the recent ministry weekend at Texas Motor Speedway and to continue plans for the June and October events at TMS.

April 23-24. Roger will head to Kansas City, Kansas for two meetings. On April 23, he will meet with the Kansas City Alliance Raceway Ministries leadership team to begin plans for the 2005 annual meeting of the National Fellowship of Raceway Ministries, which will take place there in January. On April 24, Roger will share two sessions with volunteers of the KCARM group, as part of their Volunteer Orientation for 2004.

May

May 7-8. Roger travels to Richmond, Virginia. On Saturday morning, Roger will be the keynote speaker for a breakfast at the Mechanicsville Baptist Church. The breakfast is to increase awareness of Raceway Ministries work at the Richmond International Raceway, and to encourage prayer support, involvement and giving to the ministry effort there.

June

June 9-12. Roger will assist in leading the ministry effort of Raceway Ministries at Texas Motor Speedway during the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series and Indy Racing League events at TMS.

June 24-27. Roger travels to Sonoma, California to assist the Raceway Ministries effort at Infineon Speedway.

July

July 12-14. Roger will meet with the Board of Directors of the National Fellowship of Raceway Ministries for the group's mid-year Board meeting.

September

September 23-26. Roger goes to Dover, Delaware to assist Delaware Baptist Raceway Ministries during their Fall NASCAR Nextel Cup/Busch Series race week.

October

October 13-17. Roger helps provide leadership as Raceway Ministries at Texas Motor Speedway works to serve the fans and staff at TMS for the Fall NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series race and Indy Racing League season finale race.

Family Matters

Spring is rolling right along for the Marsh family. Marsha continues teaching her students at Pilot Point High School, and she has enjoyed attending some of the students' baseball and softball games. Spring break was good, and extra time was spent doing non-school things and spending some time with the boys. Speaking of the boys, Caleb continues his duties as advisor and instructor for orientation of pre-med students at Baylor University, which has been extremely busy as attention already is turning to summer and fall registration. In addition, Caleb is sponsor for the Baylor water ski team, so he has been involved with some travel as the team has gone to other colleges for competition. Travis continues to take classes and is involved in student teaching at Waco High School. He will also be registering for some classes this summer.

Church News

First Baptist Church, Tioga, continues to keep Roger and Marsha busy from week to week. Attendance has increased as a couple of new families have begun attending. On Sunday, April 18, Roger will baptize a college student, Candice Johnston. On Sunday evenings, Roger recently finished a teaching series that covered 1 Corinthians, and now the Sunday evening group is moving through a study of Christian doctrine.

In addition, the church family has discovered that some floor joists in the Fellowship Hall have rotted and need to be replaced. At a recent funeral service, over 100 people at dinner in the building, and after the event, it was discovered that the floor was sagging on one side of the building!! Removal of part of the floor unveiled the beams that were rotted where they rest on the concrete footings around the building. So, Roger currently is involved in replacing some of the floor joists and flooring! Summer will be here soon, so plans for Vacation Bible School will be getting underway before long.

Finally, the church, as well as Grayson Baptist Association, continue to provide some monthly financial support for Raceway Ministry Resources and we are very grateful.

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**RMR Working
with the . . .**



The 2004 Annual Meeting of the National Fellowship of Raceway Ministries was very exciting, as the group continues to grow and develop. With nearly 200 in attendance for the second year in a row, the meeting was full of great music, preaching, testimonies, break-out sessions, fellowship around the dinner table, and sight-seeing around the Darlington/Hartsville, South Carolina area. Chaplain Training took place prior to the meeting, with 35 in attendance, many of them desiring to proceed with the Volunteer Chaplain Certification that the NFRM now is offering.

One of the highlights for the meeting for Roger was the adoption of some organizational changes made by the NFRM Board of Directors. Having finished his third year of a three-year term as president of the NFRM, the group voted to eliminate the elected positions of officers, and created an Executive Director position, asking Roger to serve in that capacity. Though the position continues to be a volunteer position at this point, Roger is honored to serve in that capacity.

In addition, the group re-structured the Board of Directors, electing 9 members, each representing a geographical region of the United States. Also, Ron Bruce of South Carolina was installed as the Director of Weekly Racing Venue Ministry, and Kay Benner of Texas was asked to serve as Financial Secretary.

RMR Working with . . .



Work with TxARM is off to a roaring start for 2004. As described above, Roger has helped provide leadership for Raceway Ministries at Texas Motor Speedway during the recent NASCAR Nextel Cup & Busch Series races, and the group will be meeting soon to begin work on the June and October events at TMS. In addition, continued efforts to establish ministry groups for local, weekly speedways in Texas are in progress. Recently, Roger met the owner/manager of Bellmead Raceway near Waco, who is most interested in establishing a local ministry group for that speedway, and Roger soon will call him for a lunch meeting to talk about the details. In addition, TxARM Chaplain Cameron Moore, of Mountain City, Texas, reports that he has been invited to provide the invocation on a regular basis at Thunder Hill Speedway in Kyle, Texas. These are exciting developments, and follow up will take place, as well as continued encouragement for the ministry groups at Boyd Raceway, 281 Speedway, and Kennedale Motor Speedway. In addition, Roger will continue to work to establish a group for ministry at the Grayson County Speedway in Sherman, Texas.

A GOOD CHUCKLE WITH A POWERFUL TRUTH

Back in the days before self-service gas stations were so prevalent, a minister waited in line to have his car filled with gas, just before a long holiday weekend. The attendant worked quickly, but there were many cars ahead of the minister in front of the service station. Finally, the attendant motioned him toward a vacant gas pump.

"Reverend," said the young man, "Sorry about the delay. It seems as if everyone waits until the last minute to get ready for a long trip, you know?"

The minister chuckled and looked over the young man's shoulder for a second, and then looked the attendant right in the eyes and said, "I know exactly what you mean; it's the same in my line of work!"

HERE'S A CUTE ONE

A Sunday School teacher began her lesson with a question: "Boys and girls, what do we know about God?"

A hand shot up in the air. "He's an artist!" declared one young boy.

"Really," asked the teacher, "How do you know?"

"You know what the Bible says: 'Our Father does art in heaven!'"



How You Can Help and Support

RACEWAY MINISTRY RESOURCES

As RMR races into its third year of faith and work, you can help, as God lays upon your heart a burden and desire to do so. RMR is a 501.c.3 organization, so any gifts you might provide are tax deductible. General donations will be applied to various areas of need, as they arise. Or, you may designate your gift to be applied to certain areas of the work, such as:

- **Literature for Raceway Ministry Groups (New Testaments/Tracts)**
- **Postage (for Newsletters/Shipping Materials for Ministry)**
- **Start-up Money for New Ministry Groups**
- **Travel Expense (Plane Tickets/Motels/Rental Cars)**
- **Utilities (Monthly Mobile Phone bill/Internet & Email Fees)**

If you choose to donate financially, please do so by way of a check, made out to "Raceway Ministry Resources," along with a note indicating whether you want your donation to be applied generally or designated to one of the categories above.

RMR would like to say "Thank You" to the following who recently have provided donations and contributions:

- \$100 per month toward travel expenses, from First Baptist Church, Tioga, Texas
- \$100 per month from Grayson Baptist Association; Sherman, Texas
- Contributions toward travel expenses from NASCAR Vendor Ministry; National Fellowship of Raceway Ministries
- Contributions toward general expenses from Ralph Hill; Kentucky Raceway Ministries; Perry & Jean Marsh; Sam & Karen Montgomery; Ken & Ginger Stuckey Cecil & Jean Threadgill
- Contributions toward garage sales from Mellie Howard; Caleb Marsh; Perry & Jean Marsh
- Business cards provided by Amanda King (for TxARM); Ginger Stuckey (for NFRM)
- American Airlines Advantage Miles Certificates from Cereal Boxes by Travis Marsh

**Any of our contributors who have not received an acknowledgement letter, please contact us by way of email or phone and we will make sure we provide that as quickly as possible.*

Thank you for any assistance that you can provide. And, beyond individual gifts, if you know of any businesses or churches that might provide one-time grants or funding on a regular basis, please let us know. The work is plentiful and if we would move forward, financial support will be crucial. We trust, though, that as burdened and interested folks extend support, God will bless and provide.



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