



TRACK MINISTRY NEWS

Race Track Chaplaincy of America, Pennsylvania Division, Inc.

www.rtca-pa.org

Sharing God's Love at Philadelphia Park

SUMMER 2012



garden, because people are going to steal it.”

The Chaplain just says, “Anyone is welcome to take whatever they want. It won’t be stealing. I am planting it for you.”

The gardens are also helping to beautify the grounds and areas around the track. They are giving people a sense of accomplishment and a sense of home. We pray that people are feeling a little better about the Backstretch – more hopeful, more proud (in a good way) – and we know

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Gardening at the ‘Park’

Race Track Chaplaincy is always seeking and searching for ways to minister in Jesus Name to the whole person – body and soul, and we all know how good fruits and vegetables are supposed to be for us. Well the Chaplain’s Office has been providing seeds, plants, and tools for many on

the backstretch to plant gardens – and the gardens are really starting to produce fruits and vegetables.

We even have a garden in front of the recreation hall. Several people have told the Chaplain, “I hope you don’t expect to get anything from the

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Race Track Chaplaincy of America, Pennsylvania Division, Inc.

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAPLAIN

This has been a summer of challenges and even tragedies for many of us. It is only natural that some have considered quitting, questioned the value of continuing, worried whether they would be able to go on, and “why?” was wringing through their psyches. Know that our prayers, hearts, and hands are reaching out to you; and, may we all be encouraged with this story that bespeaks of the inextricable connectedness of triumphs and trials.

In August of 1965 Robin Lee Graham set out to sail around the world alone at 16, making him the youngest, at the time, to do this great feat. He set out in his own 24 foot fiberglass sloop, the Dove, a boat usually regarded as a day-sailor. The voyage was to take him nearly 5 years. National Geographic has three articles on his experience.

He started as an immature, searching kid. He experienced, as you would expect, many trials. There was an ocean storm that smashed his boat broadside, his mast snapped in two by a wave, he barely missed total destruction in a water spout, and twice when he forgot to hook-up to the lifeline he was washed overboard (Isn't that just when it would happen). He went through such despair in the doldrums – a windless, currentless portion of the sea around the equator – that he completely gave up. He, insanely, doused his boat with kerosene and set it on fire. He changed his mind, quickly, and nearly burned himself to death putting the fire out. Weird things are done when one is out in the middle of the ocean for months on end.

After five years he sailed into Los Angeles harbor and was greeted by boats, banners, crowds, media people, and blasts from steam whistles. The joy of returning was far different and deeper from any other sailing experience he had known. He would have never felt those emotions though if he was only returning from a pleasure outing off the coast. The pain and agony of his around the world trip made possible the powerful pleasure of his return. He left a 16 year old kid and returned a 21 year old man.

Many were impressed by the mental health which this self accomplishment had brought to him. There were publishers and movie agents who tried to entice him with around the country trips, all the hype and fame of

talk shows and the comfort of fat expense accounts. He declined them all. He proceeded with his plans for college at Stanford, but the foolish ideas being espoused there made it seem more alien than any of the islands and nations he had visited in his great trek and more frightening than the waves and winds of the most stormy seas. Robin was instead drawn to buy himself a farm in Montana and build a cabin from hand cut logs where he still lives ‘the good life’ today with his family.

Your life's journey may not be printed in any earthly publication, but it is being recorded more completely than those of the rich and famous and will be more rewarded than anyone on earth could compensate you. You will look back, one day, and celebrate the triumphs as well as the tears. Philip Yancey writes in his book *Where is God When It Hurts* (at the end of ch.4), “Pain cannot be extracted from life's experiences and roundly condemned. A kneejerk reaction against God for allowing pain is futile. It is too closely woven into the fabric of our sensations and often it is necessary to pleasure and fulfillment. When I am old I hope I do not die between sterile sheets, hooked up to a respirator in a germ free environment. I hope I am on a tennis court straining my heart with one last...smash, or perhaps huffing and puffing along a trail to lower Yosemite Falls for one last feel of the spray against my wrinkled cheek. If I spend my life searching for happiness through drugs, comfort and luxury it will elude me. Happiness recedes from those that pursue her; happiness will come upon me unexpectedly, as a byproduct, a surprising bonus for something I have invested myself in and most likely that investment will include much pain. It is hard to imagine pleasure without pain.

My friends remember this promise to you from God's Word, the Bible,

**“the eyes of the LORD move
to and fro throughout the earth
that He may strongly support
those whose heart is completely His.”**

2 Chronicles 16:9 (NASB)

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eating healthier always helps us feel better too.

We hope that these gardens will be another way that the love of Jesus might touch some unsaved heart and feed many bodies of the saved and unsaved. Pray that all that is done by the staff and volunteers of the Racetrack Chaplaincy will honor and glorify Jesus. For we believe when He is lifted up He will draw all unto Himself!



Generous Girl Scouts

The Backstretch was recently blessed by Girl Scout Troop 1252 from Northeast Philadelphia. Their home base is Frankford Memorial United Methodist Church. They are a special troop in many ways, one of which is that they have combined into a group that covers many ages. Their numbers were starting to decrease and rather than have to disband they combined a few age groups into one troop.

As I say they are a great blessing to one another, to their community and beyond. They recently sponsored a Chapel n' Chow for some of our workers on the Backstretch. They brought enough Spaghetti and Meatballs, and salad and more to feed a couple hundred people at least.

Do you know where the money came from to pay for all that food? They used the money that they had raised from selling those wonderful Girl Scout Cookies. The money is usually used for the girls to go on a trip for training and fun, but this year they chose to use it for charity! Who says the younger generation is selfish? That would not apply in any way to these girls. God bless them and their wonderful leaders!

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Special Needs:

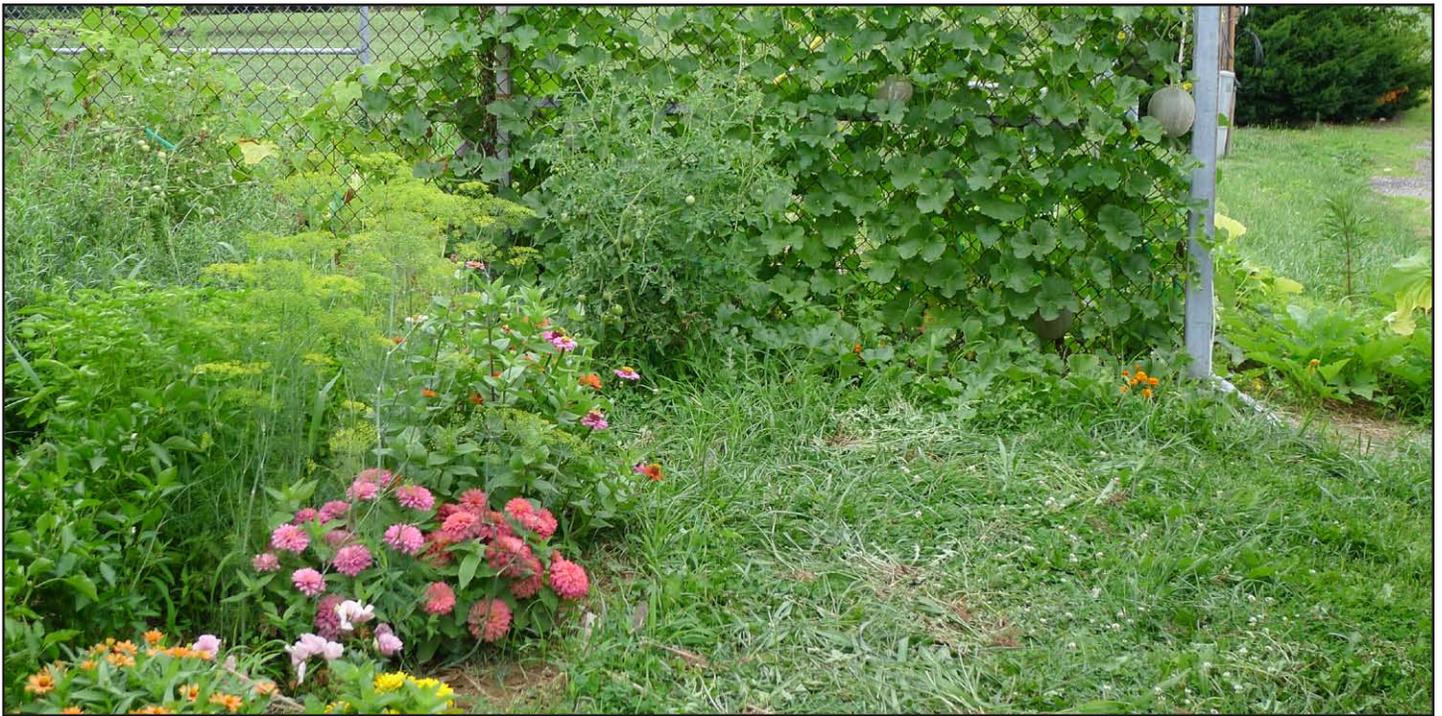
We have many basic needs for household items, clothing, and food. Donations can be accepted seven days a week from 8 am – 9 pm. For special arrangements do not hesitate to call the office. Please do call ahead and/or leave your name and organization's name so we can send a thank you.

If you are not sure whether we can use what you would like to donate feel free to call, but most likely we can use it or have a friend who needs it.

We now especially need:
WORK BOOTS (of all sizes),
BELTS, WORK PANTS,
TUNA FISH,
PEANUT BUTTER, and
SCHOOL SUPPLIES.

Upcoming Special Events:

- ◆ 8/31 'Labor Day'
Picnic/Field Day
(We will be giving out
Backpacks filled with
School Supplies that day)
11-3
- ◆ 10/27 Harvest
(Halloween) Party
1-3



Evidence of God's Work at the Track

Roy is a security guard on the track. He has been here for over 25 years and gets paid about \$11 per hour. He is full-time but has very few benefits from PARX. He has to work Sundays so the Chaplain is who he considers his pastor.

A few weeks ago he asked me if I would baptize him! I of course said, "Yes." Shortly after that we had my first baptism service for a front side employee. I had a devotion on my birthday about being born again and later that day was the day that he asked me about being baptized. He talks with me almost every day and asks questions about the Bible and other spiritual things. Pray for this young child in the faith and that many others would come to faith through his witness.

One of the most successful trainers at Philadelphia Park

had to leave over a year ago. I remember talking with her that day and praying for healing and health. She returned about a week ago with a conditional license. She is an assistant trainer now with less stress and responsibility, but many are concerned that she might be overcome by stress and the same 'people, places, and things' that caused her to have to leave before. Part of having a conditional license is the requirement to meet with the Chaplain. This is hard for her because she is embarrassed. Pray that all that needs to happen will happen for her to be stronger and more stable – especially that she come to know Jesus as Lord and Savior.

These are just a few of the many that are growing and being helped in and through our ministry – all over the track!

Racetrack Chaplaincy Joyful Thanksgivings:

We are blessed with six men who fill the position of Recreation Hall Supervisor: Dan Sourwine, Rey Roque, Bob Valentine, Gerry Beaty, Ed Mason, and Bill Foster. Dan Sourwine also volunteers his time to coordinate the scheduling, each month, so that one of them is here everyday during the hours of 8 AM – 9 PM. This is a modestly paid position and the shifts are from 8-3 and 3-9. It has been a few years since we have had to close the recreation hall because of not having someone to be here. **Thank God for their commitment – AND would you pray for a few more?** Maybe you or a friend – call us for yourself or for someone else. We could use some more workers – thanks.