



TRACK MINISTRY NEWS

Race Track Chaplaincy of America, Pennsylvania Division, Inc.

www.rtca-pa.org

Sharing God's Love at Philadelphia Park

SPRING 2013



Celebrations of Christ Jesus' Resurrection are Teaching Times:

Steven Polanco is now 13 and he asked Chaplain Bunker if Chaplain was going to start each 'round' of Easter Egg Hunts the same way again this year. Chaplain Bunker asked Steven what he meant, wondering if he meant what the Chaplain was thinking. Chaplain was happy to hear what Steven said next. Steven said, "I remember you always ask us who rose from the dead on Easter morning

and we are to shout Jesus as we take off looking for the eggs."

Chaplain smiled and said, "I am glad that you remember that and do you think I should start the hunts that way again this year?"

Steven said, "Yes, I like it. And I like the way that you take your time having us practice as we get ready for the official start."

Well you can be sure that we started

off each round of Easter egg hunts that way this year and will be sure to do that in years to come, should Jesus tarry, as well. I think that we have to try and create as many ways as we can to joyfully teach, instruct, and remind one another, starting with our babies, the real reasons behind the celebrations that we have if they are going to be truly meaningful and uplifting. We started a new tradition this year. Chaplain Bunker asked Bobbi Templeton to make something for the Easter Bunny to wear that would declare that Easter is all about Jesus and His Rising from the Tomb. Some time ago the chaplaincy mission got

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAPLAIN

⁵ Trust GOD from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own. ⁶ Listen for GOD's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he's the one who will keep you on track. ⁷ Don't assume that you know it all. Run to GOD! Run from evil!
– Proverbs 3:5-7 (The Message Version)

A funny thing happened to me on the way to this corner; a whole bunch of funny things happened to me on the way to this corner; some funny ha-ha and some funny peculiar; but, obviously, I made it. Life is full of surprises. They say that it is a good thing that we don't know the future because we would get overwhelmed and excessively stressed. We all need at least a little stress or else, purportedly, we would die from not enough stress, but then too much stress can kill us too. In order to stay alive I guess you could say we have to stay on the straight and narrow.

You know if we do stay on the straight and narrow we would not be overly stressed by knowing our future. The bigger problem comes when we worry about what the future is going to be like, imagining all sorts of things that could happen but don't. Mark Twain once quipped, "I have suffered many a tragedy in my life – thankfully most of them never happened." I think we all know that what he means is that most of our worries are a lot worse than our realities.

I know that many of our realities do include tragedies that strike us to our very core, injustices that leave us struggling just to catch our breath, hurts and hardships that throw us into a spin from which we can take so very long to recover our bearings; and yet there is the promise from the One who keeps His promises, Who wants only the best for us, and is abundantly able to give good to us. The promise is that if we are willing to give ourselves into His care He will work all things together for good. We will actually come through even the greatest of difficulties and challenges and be better than we were before!

I wouldn't believe this if anyone else other than God had made this promise. I probably wouldn't be telling you this promise if it weren't also restated in a number of different ways throughout Scripture. I often have

to be told something a few times in order to 'get' it. I also wouldn't be putting this down in writing if I hadn't found this to be true. One of the amazing qualities of God is that He has the ability to transform us right down to our very nature – if we ask Him to. Transform us into people that we never imagined we could be.

Annie Johnson Flint knew this. She had only been teaching a couple of years and she developed arthritis so severe that she was unable to walk or teach. She was 'retired' to what in that day was called a sanitarium. She would go on to become famous for her poems and songs. One of my favorites of hers is, "He Giveth more Grace." I was going to simply quote a line or two, but as I look at it again, I think it best that you see her message without my editing:

*He giveth more grace as our burdens grow greater,
He sendeth more strength as our labors increase;
To added afflictions He addeth His mercy,
To multiplied trials He multiplies peace.
When we have exhausted our store of endurance,
When our strength has failed ere the day is half done,
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources
Our Father's full giving is only begun.
Fear not that thy need shall exceed His provision,
Our God ever yearns His resources to share;
Lean hard on the arm everlasting, availing;
The Father both thee and thy load will upbear.
His love has no limits, His grace has no measure,
His power no boundary known unto men;
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus
He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again.*

Annie had suffered greatly and unjustly, but she pens these verses that inspire us to know that her suffering was more than counterbalanced by God's blessing; and to think she wrote this before she had even gotten to heaven! It reminds me of St. Paul's statement in the letter to the Romans: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (8:18). Those funny things that happened on the way to this corner will have to wait 'til some other time, maybe over coffee.

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a high quality Easter Bunny Costume and it has come out at parties for several years. Chaplain Bunker is not an Easter Bunny fan but he came up with the idea of using the Easter Bunny to be another teaching tool about Jesus. Please share ideas and things that you do to help keep the focus on Jesus at Easter, other holidays, and throughout the 'average' week. We look forward to sharing your ideas in future newsletters. Extra special thank you to two churches and one Christian group that made up over 150 beautiful Easter Baskets that were age and gender appropriate – Bensalem United Methodist Church, Newtown United Methodist Church, and Mission Possible. These Easter Baskets had many items to meet personal and practical needs, wonderful Christian books and coloring books as well and, of course, candy as well.



Mary Anne (Molly) Shallcross (April 29, 1945 – May 11, 2013)

Molly was a part of the ministry of the Chaplaincy here at Philadelphia Park for 15 years until her retirement in April of 2011. She began volunteering for special events while Chaplain Nick Salios was still here and her tenure of service extended throughout Chaplain Jack Cordell and into Chaplain Rick Bunker's first years at Philadelphia Park.



She was a bridge and an important source of information to the Chaplains. Her involvement in the community was extensive and another invaluable asset to the mission to the workers and their families at Philadelphia Park. She has been missed since she left and now her final departure for home is most somber for us at the track.

Her dear husband of 50 years, Joe, who also was a devoted servant to the mission here, covets our prayers for his healing. She is also survived by her two sons, their wives, and her two grandsons.

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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 have to donate feel free to call, but most likely we can use it or have a friend who needs it.

We now especially need MICROWAVES, WORK BOOTS/ SHOES (of all sizes), BELTS, WORK PANTS, T-SHIRTS, GRANOLA BARS, TUNA FISH, SMALL JARS OF MAYONNAISE, PEANUT BUTTER, CANNED STEWS/ CHILIS, CANNED FRUIT and SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Upcoming Special Events:

- ◆ 5/27 Memorial Day
- ◆ 6/14 – Flag Day
- ◆ 6/16 – Father's Day
- ◆ 7/4 – Independence Day



Evidence of God's Work at the Track

John is new to Philadelphia Park but not as new as he was when I shared a bit about him in the winter issue. I want to thank you for praying for him and his wife. His wife is coming to chapel now. She is not in very good health and this puts extra stress on an already stressful life for both of them. Tears were flowing at chapel last week. Keep praying that the Holy Spirit would break up the rocky soil of their hearts. Hearts made stony from sin, difficult circumstances, and family dysfunction. God can certainly regenerate as He created all from nothing in the beginning.

There are so many others like John. Pray that all those who do not know Jesus as Lord and Savior would come to accept Him. Last week there were many in chapel, in addition to John, who were shedding tears. I cannot know all that was behind those tears but pray with me that there be tears of repentant commitment to our Lord Jesus. Pray that we not grow weary or discouraged from continuing to faithfully serve and proclaim the Good News even without visible fruit.

Continuing with the vein we started with John I will tell you a bit more about Jane from last month. Again, thank you for praying for her, it seems that there were much evidences of answers to prayer. One point of progress with her was that before moving she began to address some 'unfinished business'. She came into my office a few weeks before she left (she did end up moving to the Midwest) and asked me a strange question. As we unpacked what was behind the question I said that this move should not be an attempt to run away. She made some confessions and connections with family as a result of our talk. She moved on in more than one way. When she returns to at least visit there will be peace and love that would not have been there otherwise.

Keep praying because God is answering better than I ever imagined. 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:

God is blessing the ministry here in many, many ways. We have received many new things in the past few months – let me share some of them. We have a brand new 22 cubic foot refrigerator that is helping us store left-overs and buy other items when they are on sale. We also got a huge, used barbecue grill that is in great shape. Bobbi says that she can cook anything on the grill and we are happy to put her to the test.

Speaking of food our pantry has been well stocked so far this year, even though we have given out more than ever! Special thanks to a couple of groups in particular: Linda Shea, President, of Angels of the Glen organized a food drive in her neighborhood; and Mission Possible has been bringing us large quantities of food from time to time. Thanks to all of you who are helping our feeding and food ministries!