

The Racing Against Cancer™ Team celebrated the 2007 season in grand-style on Saturday afternoon. The Foxwoods Resort Casino provided the setting for the 11th Annual Awards luncheon that honored the accomplishments of the charitable organization's strongest supporters. Unlike traditional banquets, the luncheon recognized the competitors for their contributions off the racetrack. In total, nearly 20 individual competitors and racing organizations were feted for a fundraising season that saw \$52,000 raised for the fight against cancer.

The Racing Against Cancer™ Program has come a long way since its humble beginnings in 1997, when a grieving husband vowed to deliver on his wife's last wish. The first year, the fundraising tally reached \$10,000. Now, some 11 years later, over \$585,000 has been raised for the American Cancer Society and other cancer related programs. Thanks to the vision of founder Jon Blanchette, the tireless efforts of President and Director of Operations Scott Gregory, the long-standing commitment of the Foxwoods Resort Casino, the determination of team members and the countless race fans that have supported the program, something good has come from Jodi Blanchette's valiant fight.

"Thanks to you people, Jodi's wish came true", said a gracious and fulfilled Blanchette as he addressed the 80 plus team members in attendance during his opening remarks.

Both Blanchette and Gregory acknowledged the importance of Foxwoods' involvement in the success of the Racing Against Cancer Program™. From the conviction of the Foxwoods Executive Team to the host of volunteers like Don Bailey, Laureen Smith, Terrance Welsh, Nadia Espanova, Gene Santiago, and Thomas Larandean, who were in attendance on Saturday; to the continued financial commitment; and allotment of other resources.

This always emotional event honors the accomplishments of racers for their variety of fundraising efforts on behalf of the Racing Against Cancer™ program, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to raising funds for cancer research, patient services, youth tobacco educational programs, and awareness.

The ceremony began with recognition of facilities like the Thompson International Speedway, Poughkeepsie Speedway, and Londonderry Raceway, who continue to provide a lucrative venue for fundraising with the "Racing Against Cancer™" nights. The Pro All Star Series and Northern Race Tire, who contribute a percentage of the proceeds from each tire sold, were recognized for their continued involvement with the program.

Cal Green, Director of Exhibit Sales, accepted the award on behalf of Speedway Illustrated Magazine. The fundraising season kicked-off for the RAC Program on a high note when over \$1,766 was raised at the show display provided courtesy of SpeedwayEXPO. While Darlene and Kevin Ashline of Richmond Raceway were honored during the ceremony, several of the young competitors at his facility took center stage.

Willie Pelotte of Oakland, ME, a 13-year-old Senior Sportsman competitor, established a new single-season individual fundraising record by a Richmond Raceway junior ambassador with over \$1,600 in donations. Fellow Richmond Raceway competitors Kayla Ashline, Tommy Stilpen, Dustin Whitcomb, and Jordan Brown were also recognized for their efforts.

Long-time supporters Sugar Hill Speedway returned to the annual awards banquet with pride in their fundraising accomplishments. In total over \$4,073 was raised by their Junior Ambassador Program and their 2nd Annual "Endure for a Cure" event. Owners Mark Piekarski and Bob Stanhope could not be in attendance on Saturday; however, former owners Archie and Debbie Archambault, who remain the driving force behind the fundraising events and activities at Sugar Hill Speedway, accepted the appreciation plaque.

The Junior Ambassador Program, established in 1999, has been a successful program enabling youth racers and their families to become involved in a number of fundraising capacities at the Speedway. This year the six ambassadors, Russ &

Laura Wood, Luke LaBonte, Austin Brehio, and Dillon Wyman, combined to raise \$2,463.

The Wood Family of Pelham, NH, raised \$630 by selling raffle tickets and spirit bands. Austin Brehio of Hopkinton, NH, sold "lottery squares" during the weekly race programs to earn \$500 for R.A.C. Luke Labonte of Litchfield, NH, raised \$500 while Brandon Allbee of North Haverhill, NH, and Dillon Wyman of Woodsville, NH, participated in their local town fair to bolster fundraising. The Hot Laps Karting Center hosted the "Endure For A Cure" endurance karting event to contribute \$1,610 to the track's cumulative total.

"We are committed to continuing in our efforts to help keep this wonderful organization active," said Debbie Archambault. "We cannot think of a better way to honor our friends and loved ones who are fighting cancer. In order to do so, we must all help out in whatever way we can to support critical research, education, advocacy and patient service programs."

It is an undisputable fact that there is strength in numbers; however, the will of an individual should never be underestimated. The proof of that was evident during Saturday's festivities as well. Five individuals were recognized for their Silver Level (\$250-\$999) involvement with the Racing Against Cancer™ Program. B&M Motorsports of Maine, Skip Culbertson of Iowa, Max Zachem, Steve Romjue, and Paul Tuthill each participated in personal fundraising activities in support of the R.A.C. Program.

"In 2006, we had one Gold Level contributor (a \$1,000-\$4,999 in fundraising)," said Vice President, Steve Fales. "This year we have seven team members that fall within that category."

Katrina Canney, a 17-year old Late Model competitor at Lee USA Speedway, turned her talents from racing to fundraising to earn \$1,152 for the Racing Against Cancer™ Program. Cortland, NY-based Team LaCross Motorsports helped raise not only funds but much-needed national attention for the R.A.C. Program while they competed in the ARCA RE/MAX Series. The fundraising efforts of Chase Racing, who fields cars in the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour, helped to raise \$2,500. Fellow Modified competitors, Czarnecki Brothers Racing, who field cars in the True Value Modified Racing Series for ace Ted Christopher, raised \$3,500 with their fun and festive pig roast.

Bill Doll, a World Karting Association and American Karting Association competitor, has worked tirelessly for several years to gain exposure for the program in the karting ranks. His efforts in 2007 also raised an outstanding \$3,692. Avid R.A.C. volunteer and active crew member on Gregory's AllStar Race Truck team, Dave Crout, has a portion of his paycheck donated directly to R.A.C. each week. With a corporate match from his employer, AETNA, Crout's total contribution exceeded \$1,800 in 2007.

Norm Moriarity, a long term member in good standing, was recognized as the lone Platinum Level member for his contributions of time, energy, and unparalleled commitment to the Racing Against Cancer™ program. Two prestigious specialty awards were presented to conclude the award presentations portion of the ceremony.

Gold Level fundraiser, Steve Pukas, a SHS Modified competitor at Sugar Hill Speedway, was honored with the William J. Fales Spirit of Sportsmanship award. Pukas embarked on his own personal crusade to bring exposure to the Racing Against Cancer™ Program. While participating in several racing shows, Relay for Life events, and community programs, Pukas also raised nearly \$2,000.

The East Coast Mini Sprint Association received the Jodi B. Blanchette Award as the highest overall fundraisers for the 2007 season. On June 16, the organization hosted a Racing Against Cancer™ Day at Whip City Speedway in Westfield, MA.

"It was very dirty, very exciting," said Blanchette of the ECMSA event, "and very lucrative for the Racing Against Cancer Program."

The event, which raised over \$4,200, received support from nearly every race team within the organization including notable fundraisers Kristen Phillips, Mike King, Brayton Round III, and John Marangio. Top fundraiser Kristin Phillips accepted the award on behalf of event coordinator, Robin Montessi, who could not be present at the banquet.

The most compelling portion of the ceremony came when all in attendance realized the fruits of their labor. A check in the amount of \$25,000 was presented to Bruce Marshall of the American Cancer Society.

"It is easy to get a cynical view of the world," said Marshall. "This program is the goodness of humanity."

From research to patient programs, the Racing Against Cancer™ Program assists in many aspects of the fight against cancer. Dick Cyr accepted a check in the amount of \$7,500 to help with the expenses incurred in the day-to-day operation of David's House, a haven for terminally ill children receiving treatment through Children's Hospital at Dartmouth at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center and their families.

"In the 24 years that I have been doing this," said Cyr emotionally, "the racing community is the most generous and most caring people that I have ever worked with."

At the banquet, the Racing Against Cancer™ Program announced a new beneficiary for the 2007 season. Foxwoods employee Paul Messina accepted a check in the amount of \$2,500 for The Tomorrow Fund.

"One day, I met Paul in the hallway," said Blanchette, a dealer at Foxwoods, "and we started talking about the treatment that his son had received at Hasbro Children's Hospital. I could tell by the look in his eye, that this charity had been very helpful to him, that is was very important to him. I knew that the Tomorrow Fund was something that the Racing Against Cancer program could get behind."

The Tomorrow Fund is a non-profit organization that provides daily financial and emotional support to children with cancer and their families who are treated at Hasbro Children's Hospital in Providence, RI. To learn more about the organization log on to www.tomorrowfund.org.

The remaining funds raised during the 2007 season will help the Racing Against Cancer™ Program achieve the goals set forth for the coming year. The continuation of the nationwide marketing campaign will ultimately help enhance awareness programs and membership and donation drives. Additionally, the Racing Against Cancer program will expand in 2008 to include an advocacy program. More information on the "Celebration of Life" event, planned for the summer of 2008, will be forthcoming.

Despite the fact that fundraising was down for the 2007 season, the future looks bright for the Racing Against Cancer program. Ken Davie, Vice President of Table Games for Foxwoods, delivered good news during the ceremony. "Foxwoods is very proud to be the sponsor of this fine program. We have been for years and will continue to be in the future. We have recently reached an agreement to extend our support of the program through the 2008 season."

With the backing of Foxwoods, the inspired work of Scott Gregory, and the unwavering commitment of the team members, Jodi Blanchette's dream will remain a reality.

The Racing Against Cancer™ program is a federally recognized 501(C)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to the raising of funds for cancer research, patient services, youth tobacco educational programs, and awareness.