



# SPOTLIGHT ON HEALTH



## Breast Cancer Survivors Honored...The Fight Continues

(NAPSA)—Racing cars and breast cancer awareness may seem like a strange combination, but they were a perfect fit at Kansas Speedway when 23 breast cancer survivors were honored during the Ford Credit Breast Cancer Survivor Victory Lap prior to the start of the NASCAR NEXTEL Cup Series race in October.

“These women are amazing,” said Ford Credit Sr. Vice President Cecelia Michalik. “It is truly an honor to be involved with such an important cause and be able to provide this avenue to celebrate survivorship and National Breast Cancer Awareness Month.”

The 23 Victory Lap participants included winners of an essay contest and representatives from the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. To qualify for the essay contest, applicants were required to submit an essay of 400 words or less describing why they should be selected. Winning essays are online at [www.racefansforcure.com](http://www.racefansforcure.com).

The Komen Foundation and Ford Credit have been working together in the fight against breast cancer since 1998, when Ford Credit began donating money to the Komen Foundation based on NASCAR driver Dale Jarrett’s on-track success. Since then, Ford Credit alone has donated in excess of \$700,000.

Additionally, since 2000, Ford Credit’s trackside program, Race



**STEERING THE RIGHT COURSE—At racetracks across the country, cancer survivors are honored.**

Fans for a Cure®, has raised over \$550,000 and distributed over 100,000 breast self-exam cards to race fans.

The breast cancer survivors wore pink T-shirts with “I’m a Survivor!” emblazoned on the backs as they rode around Kansas Speedway standing in the back of custom-decaled black Ford F-150s. The same pink ribbon graphic that adorned the hoods of the F-150s was also painted on the infield grass to further emphasize October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

One of the Victory Lap participants, Elizabeth Finkenhoefer of Davenport, Iowa, a 30-year breast cancer survivor, said the experience was incredible.

“To be 81 years old and riding around a racetrack,” she said. “Who’d believe it?”

Michalik would.

“This program is about hope, and it’s about education,” she said. “The two go hand in hand. Early detection is key.”

And that’s why her company teams up with the Komen Foundation at racetracks across the country. Each year, more than 200,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer and 40,000 die from the disease. Since approximately 40 percent of NASCAR’s large fan base are women, taking the program to a racetrack enables many, many people to be reached over the course of a weekend with the lifesaving message of early detection.

Earlier in the weekend, Jarrett, who has been nationally recognized for his work with charities, discussed his involvement with the Komen Foundation.

“It’s been a wonderful program,” Jarrett said. “There are a lot of people involved, and Ford Motor Company and Ford Credit, in particular, through our racing program and through the Race Fans for a Cure® are making fans aware of exactly how they can help and the input that they can have.

“And then the volunteers that we have are just fantastic. It’s unbelievable what has really taken place around the racetrack and the amount of money that has been raised and the awareness that there is right now.”