

## Living

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# Racing cars is just one ambition of Las Vegas teen

*Spring Valley High School senior also pitches in to help charitable groups in the community*

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Jace Meier would love to make his NASCAR Nextel Cup debut at the Las Vegas Motor Speedway. But until that day comes, the 17-year-old senior at Spring Valley High School has plenty to keep himself busy.

Meier, who races in the U.S. Auto Club association and NASCAR Late Model series, is senior class president, a member of DECA and leadership clubs, and an honor student. He also helps local charity organizations, including the Greater Las Vegas After-School All-Stars program and Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada.

On Saturday, Meier will combine his charity work with his racing when he hosts the second annual "Kids on Track — Night at

### YOUTH SPOTLIGHT

the Races" at the Las Vegas Motor Speedway's Bullring. The event will feature 35 youths in the Greater Las Vegas After-School All-Stars program who have done well in school and have been involved in the community through after-school programs.

At the event, part of the speedway's NASCAR Weekly Series, Meier will drive in the NASCAR late model race. The youths will be treated to dinner before the race, and visit the pit area after the race to see Meier's car up close and meet some of the other drivers.

Meier says charity work is "common practice" in his family because of the influence of his parents, Scott and Shari Meier, who have worked with Shade Tree shelter, among other charitable groups.

Working with charities "helps promote community good will," says Jace, who adds he often looks for ways to be involved in the community.

Meier's racing career began when he was 12 as a way for the Meier family to spend time together.

"I wasn't as involved with my family, school and stuff," Meier says. But with racing, his parents and sister, Kami, worked together as a team.

"Dad was the mechanic, Mom did the timing and my sister cleaned the car," he says.

Although Jace was first interested in Formula 1 racing, he wasn't considered for the series because of his height. But, NASCAR was another story.

"NASCAR had bigger cars," says the 6-foot-1-inch driver.

A member of Ron Sutton's Winner's Circle Race Team, a

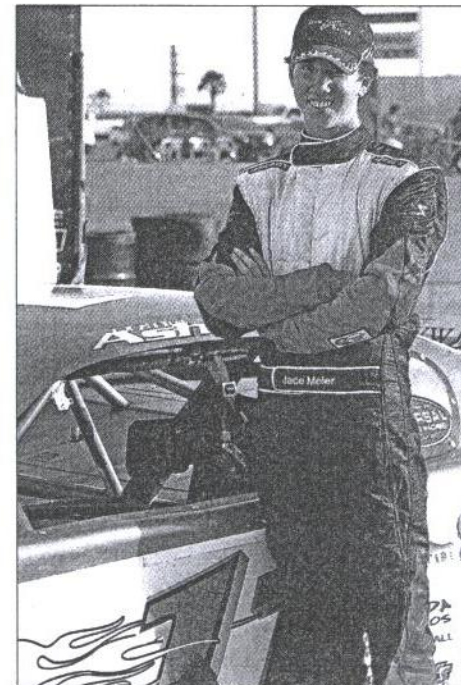
professional developmental team, Meier won two USAC Ford Focus Midget Car events last year, and won at Altamont Speedway in California in June.

With school, racing and charity work, Meier says he manages to stay balanced with the support of his family. And if he ever feels like he has too much on his plate, he holds himself accountable.

"I sit back and think no one is forcing me to do this, the charity work and the racing," Meier says. "I have no one to blame but myself."

Regardless of how far he goes as a professional race car driver, Meier plans on remaining involved in the sport.

"If I don't make it as a driver, my goal is to start my own NASCAR racing team," says Meier, who would like to attend Belmont Abbey College in North Carolina for its motorsports management



Jace Meier, 17, hosts "Kids on Track — Night at the Races" at the Las Vegas Motor Speedway's Bullring this Saturday.

program.