

► RACER: Students excited to see Meier's car

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3AA

group down to the pits.

The young driver spoke at Garside in cooperation with the After School All Stars. The program offers middle school students involvement in a number of activities with themes such as health and fitness, computer tutoring and creative expression. It's geared to show youngsters that there are fun alternatives to watching TV or just hanging out after school. The program teaches special skills, arranges business tours and gets youth involved in community activities.

Mike Anderson, marketing manager for After School All Stars, said bringing Meier and his race car to the school was exciting for the students.

"They see something like a NASCAR sitting in the middle of their school courtyard and they say, 'Wow, I want to go check that out,'" he said.

The free Krispy Kreme donuts didn't seem to hurt, either.

Anderson predicted 30 per-

"People don't understand speed like I do. They don't realize that mixing drinking and driving is definitely not a good thing."

JACE MEIER

17-YEAR-OLD NASCAR DRIVER, GIVING A LESSON TO LOCAL STUDENTS

cent of those at the assembly would sign up for the All Stars program.

Wesley Hults, 12, said he was a real race fan and that

his favorite driver was Dale Earnhart Jr. He said he'd never heard of the After School All Stars program, but wanted to attend the assembly because he likes NASCAR.

As for the possibility of getting involved with After School All Stars, Wesley hedged his bets.

"I'm waiting to hear all the details," he said.

Another Garside student, Melanie Corral, 10, stayed after school to go to the assembly. She said she'd heard of Jace Meier's name through television and wanted to find out how he became a race driver.

Rising racer speaks at Garside Junior High

By JAN HOGAN

VIEW STAFF WRITER

Students at Garside Junior High School had a chance to meet local race car driver Jace "The Ace" Meier on Sept. 13. Never heard of him? The 17-year-old is a senior at Spring Valley High School.

Meier races at the Bullring at Las Vegas Motor Speedway in the NASCAR Late Model Series and in California as part of Ron Sutton's Winner's Circle Race Team.

Meier was at Garside to speak with students about racing and making responsible choices.

"I want to impress on them ... how drinking and driving can kill," he said before the assembly began. "People don't understand speed like I do. They don't realize that mixing drinking and driving is definitely not a good thing."

Meier knows a thing or two about handling a vehicle at high speeds. In his races, he can reach speeds as high as 140 mph. When he turns 18 in March, he'll be eligible for the NASCAR Touring Season

where he can take the track at a top speed of 180 to 190 mph.

The slick race car that powers him to those speeds sat in Garside's courtyard, set off with caution tape to discourage anyone from touching it. The 400-horsepower Chevy Monte Carlo SS, No. 11, drew plenty of attention as students were released for the day. Teachers directed the children to the gymnasium, where the assembly was held.

Dressed in his racing outfit, Meier spoke about his own choices and how they've had a positive impact on his life, specifically the rewards that can come from staying in school and doing well. Roughly 200 students crowded the bleachers to hear him talk.

Thirty-five lucky Garside students got the chance to dine with him on Sept. 30, then go to the Bullring at the Las Vegas Motor Speedway, where they watched Meier race in the NASCAR Dodge Weekly Series. After that, Meier's plan was to escort the



SHELLY DONAHUE/VIEW
Garside Junior High School Principal Stephanie Wing greets teenage NASCAR driver Jace Meier at a school assembly on Sept. 13.