

IRWIN Tools to Celebrate One of America's Real Working Hands at the IRWIN Tools Night Race

HUNTERSVILLE, N.C. (Aug. 20, 2013) – IRWIN Tools is serious about celebrating our nation's professional tradesmen – the backbone of our great nation. On August 24, as part of the fourth running of the IRWIN Tools Night Race at Bristol Motor Speedway, IRWIN Tools will celebrate the efforts of one of America's real working hands, John Teeples from Columbus, GA. John will serve as Grand Marshal for the event, leading the command for 300 tradesmen to deliver the most famous words in motorsports: "Drivers, start your engines!"

IRWIN Tools Night Race at Bristol Grand Marshal John Teeples "Day in and day out, we hear stories about the significant contributions of America's tradesmen," says Rich Mathews, Senior Vice President of Marketing at IRWIN Tools. "We wanted to honor someone this weekend that could represent the millions of men and women that make up this country's real working hands – a tradesman who exemplifies how hard work and dedication to his trade play a vital role in his community. John does exactly that."

As owner of a contracting company, John has built houses, schools, stores, offices, arenas, parks, churches and more, and has been a driving force in the restoration work that is revitalizing uptown Columbus. John also combines his building talents with his love of long distance running to lead fundraising efforts and home-improvement and construction projects that help our nation's veterans. Since 2009, John has organized an event, Run for the Heroes, that has raised \$400,000 for non-profit organization House of Heroes™. Currently, alongside the Gary Sinise Foundation and the Tunnel to Towers Foundation, John is serving as general contractor to build a custom Smart Home for Sergeant First Class (SFC) Michael Schlitz. SFC Schlitz was severely injured in an IED explosion during a tour of duty in Iraq.

"Tradesmen like John, make my life work," says SFC Michael Schlitz. "My recovery hasn't been easy, but the vision and the effort John has put into building my house, will allow me to live my life as comfortably and as independently as possible. I am incredibly grateful to John and his crew for their hard work and I admire their dedication to their craft. "

John's passion for his work never wanes, and he recognizes the important role tradesmen play in society. "We make lives better by improving the places where we live," says Teeples. "I think I can speak for most tradesmen when I say I love working with my hands. We're proud that we can contribute to others through our trade and while the work is very rewarding, it also feels great to have people say, 'thanks'."

IRWIN hopes that by honoring John at the IRWIN Tools Night Race, they will encourage Americans to salute and honor all of our nation's trade professionals. In fact, IRWIN started a day just for tradesmen – a day to celebrate all that they do to contribute so meaningfully to our lives in so many ways. It is IRWIN's hope that the public will say "THANKS" to tradesmen everywhere on National Tradesmen Day, Friday, September 20.

The IRWIN Tools Night Race gets the green flag Saturday at 7:30 p.m. For ticket information, visit www.bristolmotorspeedway.com or call 866-415-4158.

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About IRWIN Tools:

IRWIN Tools manufactures and distributes a broad line of hand tools and power tool accessories under the IRWIN® brand including VISE-GRIP® pliers and wrenches, MARATHON® saw blades, QUICK-GRIP® clamping tools, SPEEDBOR® wood drilling bits, STRAIT-LINE® marking tools, UNIBIT® step drill bits, MARPLES® fine woodworking tools, and HANSON® taps and dies. IRWIN Tools is a part of Newell Rubbermaid's global portfolio of leading brands. For more information, call 1-800-GO-IRWIN or visit www.irwin.com.

About National Tradesmen Day:

IRWIN Tools initiated National Tradesmen Day to honor and celebrate America's professional tradesmen. The inaugural event was in 2011, and will occur this year on September 20, 2013. This national day of recognition will bring together all Americans to salute our nation's tradesmen – "The Hands that Build America and Keep it Running Strong." For more information, visit www.nationaltradesmenday.com.

About John Teeples:

John Teeples is a professional tradesman from Columbus, GA. He owns a contracting company, John Teeples Construction, which serves west-central Georgia and east-central Alabama. With over 30 years of building experience, John has built houses, schools, stores, offices, arenas, parks, churches and more. His passion for his work never wanes, and he recognizes the important role tradesmen play in our society. John's many contributions to his community also include fundraising and building projects that help our nation's veterans.

About House of Heroes:

House of Heroes, Inc™ (HOH) is a 501(c)(3) service organization established in 2000 to help and honor military and public safety veterans and/or their spouses who have served our country faithfully and sacrificially. Through service to these veterans and their spouses, House of Heroes (HOH) volunteers attempt to convey our nation's gratitude by making minor repairs to their homes at no cost to the homeowner/veteran. Recipients are then recognized at a special ceremony where they are presented a flag that has been flown over the Capital of the United States in their honor. For more information, visit www.houseofheroes.org.

About Run for the Heroes:

Run for the Heroes, or the Run Across Georgia, is a 260-mile fundraising run benefitting the non-profit organization House of Heroes. The race is the brainchild of John Teeple, an ultra-marathoner, professional tradesman, and small business owner from the Columbus, GA area. Teeple has been organizing the race since 2009, and it takes place during Memorial Day Weekend each year. The race, which starts in Columbus, GA and concludes in Savannah, GA, is open to individual runners or relay teams and is limited to five days. That equates to two marathons a day for five days, about one-100K-a-day for four days, or 87-miles-a-day for three days. For more information, visit www.runfortheheroes.com.

About Gary Sinise Foundation / Tunnel to Towers Foundation:

The Gary Sinise Foundation serves the nation by honoring its defenders, veterans, first responders, their families and those in need by creating and supporting unique programs designed to entertain, educate, inspire, strengthen and build communities.

In 2011, the Gary Sinise Foundation proudly partnered with Tunnel to Towers Foundation to create Building for America's Bravest™, a program designed to construct custom Smart Homes for our nation's most severely wounded veterans. Each house features fully-automated amenities to ease their unimaginable life changes and help restore their independence. Twenty-five Smart Homes will have broken ground or completed construction by the end of 2013, each for a wounded warrior and their family.

The Foundation also recently partnered with GE on their Get Skills to Work program to accelerate skills training for U.S. veterans, help veterans and employers translate military skills to advanced manufacturing jobs, and empower employers with tools to recruit, onboard and mentor veterans.

For more information, visit www.GarySiniseFoundation.org.

Additional assets available online:  [Photos \(1\)](#)

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