

9th annual  
**Sean's Run**  
2010



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**Register-Star**



**SUNDAY, APRIL 25**  
**CHATHAM HIGH SCHOOL**

**RUNNERS AND WALKERS**  
**OF ALL AGES INVITED**



*Sean Patrick French*

*11th grade • 2001*

## 9th Annual Sean's Run Again Celebrates Youth and Life

**By Mike Rivest**  
Runner

It has been a long, cold winter, but spring is back!

Spring is a time filled with the anticipation of wonderful things to come. For high school students it's the anticipation of upcoming proms, summer vacations, and graduations. But for us, spring means another Sean's Run is on its way!

Scheduled purposefully in the middle of prom season, Sean's Run is more than an annual event for runners and walkers - it's a reminder that a moment's bad judgment can result in tragedy. Underage drinking, impaired driving, or failure to use seatbelts can take the lives of our children.

The 9th Annual Sean's Run will take place at Chatham High School over the weekend of April 24 and 25.

On Saturday April 24 the Sean's Run organizing committee will present the first ever Sea Jem's Super Saturday Run for Special Needs Kids and offer packet pick-up and walk up registration for participants in the 5K and Meghan's Mile which will be produced on the following day. On Sunday, April 25, the 9th Annual 5K Run/Walk, Meghan's Mile youth race, the Battle of the Belts World Championship, the Prevention Education Expo, the Tribute to Victims and Survivors of Drunk Driving will be conducted. All the activities of Sean's Run are annual reminders that drunk driving crashes—like the one

on January 1, 2002 that claimed the life of Sean Patrick French—are preventable when communities work together.

At the time of his death, Sean was a champion runner, honor role student, and community volunteer. The crash also paralyzed his friend Ian Moore. The two juniors were passengers in a car driven by an intoxicated schoolmate. Sean and Ian were not wearing seat belts.

Thanks to your support, Sean's Run has raised \$135,550 that has funded prevention programs at schools and youth organizations and rewarded outstanding high school students with scholarships.

It is only right that a footrace memorializes Sean's life. From age seven until his death at 17, Sean compiled an astounding list of running accomplishments and became one of the finest local high school athletes of his generation. As a sophomore, he placed second in the New York State Public High School cross-country championships and the following spring ran the fastest metric mile of any sophomore in the State—4:18! That spring, at age 16, he took four firsts at both the Section II and the Patroon Conference championship track meets. That would be his final track and field season.

More extraordinary, though, were his “non-running” attributes. A Sports Illustrated article, published three months after his death, described Sean as “selfless,”

“gracious,” “caring,” “hard-working” — a “young goodwill ambassador who led by example in Chatham, in the running community, and beyond.” The article noted that, “When 3,000 people attend the funeral services of a 17-year old, it is evidence that a community has lost someone recognized as very special.”

But Sean's Run is more than a remembrance of one teen's life, it is a community rising to say that losses like this are unacceptable. Sean's Run says “Never again.” It is a reminder that underage drinking is no harmless rite of passage, but rather a dangerous flirtation with disaster.

Once again, First Niagara Bank has graciously stepped forward to sponsor Sean's Run by contributing \$10,000 to the event. “Sean's Run, the Battle of the Belts and all the other related activities of this event are a great way to reach young people,” said Thomas Amell, First Niagara Regional President. “First Niagara is the Presenting Sponsor of Sean's Run because we believe that investing in the safety of our teens makes good sense.”

We look forward to seeing you on Sunday, April 25! Be one of the 1,500 runners and walkers who will come together to celebrate Spring, remember one very special young man, and say “Never again.”

Bring your running shoes and your smiles!

# SEAN'S RUN SCHEDULE

*Chatham High School*

## SATURDAY, APRIL 24

2:00 – 4:00 p.m. *Early Packet Pick Up  
and Walk-In Registration  
Chatham High School gym  
First 300 to arrive will receive special gift*

3:00 p.m. *Sea Jem's Super Saturday Run  
for Special Needs Kids*

## SUNDAY, APRIL 25

10:00 a.m. *Prevention Education Expo Opens - gym*

10:00 - 11:00 a.m. *Meghan's Mile Registration  
and Packet Pick Up - gym*

11:00 a.m. *Battle of the Belts Teams sign in*

11:00 a.m. - Noon *5K Run/Walk Registration,  
Packet Pick Up - gym*

11:15 a.m. *Presentation of Scholarships and Grants  
—auditorium*

Noon *World Championship Battle of the Belts*

12:30 p.m. *Meghan's Mile  
Youth Race and 1-Mile Walk*

1:00 p.m. *5K Run and Community Walk*

2:00 p.m. *Running Awards Presentation*

7:00 p.m. *Results posted at [www.SeansRun.com](http://www.SeansRun.com)*

## TUESDAY, APRIL 27

Results and new coverage published in the Register–Star

*Photo by Scott Langley*

# Special Features of Sean's Run

### *Nice Giveaways:*

The first 1,500 to register for the 5K or Meghan's Mile will receive a top-quality short-sleeve event t-shirt. The first 300 to pick up their entrant's packets on Saturday, the day before the race, will be provided an extra premium and a chance to win a random draw prize.

### *Nice Amenities:*

"Feel the Spirit" is the event's slogan. Music abounds during the entire event, creating a fun and spirited atmosphere enjoyed by all. When they cross the finish line, participants hear their name announced and are invited to enjoy a spread of nutritious refreshments.

### *5K Run/Community Walk:*

An accurately measured and well-organized 3.1-mile race for runners of all ages and abilities and a community walk of the same distance. The 5K traverses a scenic course through historic Chatham village.

### *Meghan's Mile:*

Named in memory of Meghan Nicole Kraham, a friend of Sean's who at age 16 was a founding member of the Sean's Run Organizing Committee. In 2007 she succumbed to a rare form of cancer at the age of 21. This is a one-mile race for boys and girls age 12 years-and-under and a non-competitive walk for people of all ages.

### *World Championship Battle of the Belts:*

An exciting and fun seatbelt buckling competition for middle school and high school students to increase awareness and use of seat belts.

### *Prevention Education Expo:*

Information booths and exhibits from local and regional youth development groups to educate young people and parents about the dangers of drinking and driving, to encourage seat belt use, and to present positive alternatives to using alcohol, tobacco, and drugs.

### *Tribute to Victims and Survivors of Drunk Driving:*

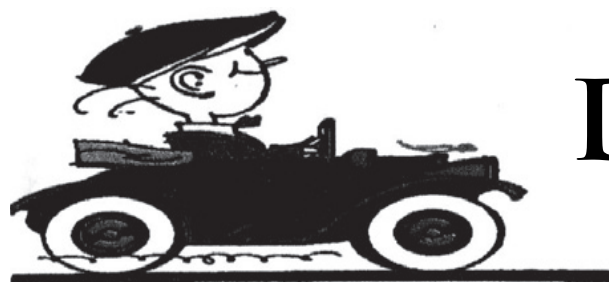
A show of empathy and support for local and regional residents who have been harmed or lost a loved one because of a drunk driver. It coincides with the annual observance of National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

### *Scholarships and Grant Awards:*

Scholarships are presented each year in three different categories to benefit college-bound high school seniors, both runners and non-runners. Grants are given to fund school and youth group programs aimed at increasing teens' use of seatbelts and reducing underage drinking and driving.

### *Sea Jem's Super Saturday Run for Special Needs Kids:*

Beginning this year a new activity for young people with physical disabilities. This special "race" on the Saturday afternoon before Sunday's Sean's Run 5K and Meghan's Mile is a special opportunity for special kids to feel the spirit of Sean's Run. With the assistance of the Albany Miracle League, this activity takes place at 3 PM, Saturday, April 24, at Chatham High School. All participants will be provided an event souvenir t-shirt and finishers momento.



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# Course and Age Group Records

## Sean's Run 5K

### Course Records

#### Male Course Record:

15:18 • (2008) • **Matthew Forys**, 22 • Howell, NJ

#### Female Course Record:

17:42 • (2005) • **Lilly Becker**, 20 • Pittsfield, MA

### Age Records

#### 12 and Under:

Male: 21:01 • **Ross Wightman**, 12 • Chatham, NY

Female: 24:22 • **Abigail Wheeler**, 12 • Chatham, NY

#### 13 to 15

Male: 17:56 • **Patrick Murray**, 15 • Rotterdam, NY

Female: 21:15 • **Haley Madsen**, 15 • Ghent, NY

#### 16 to 18

Male: 15:56 • **Craig Forys**, 16 • Howell, NJ

Female: 18:18 • **Brina Seguine**, 18 • Rensselaer, NY

#### 19 to 29

Male: 15:49 • **Matthew Forys**, 23 • Howell, NJ

Female: 18:16 • **Kara-Lynne Kerr**, 26 • Albany, NY

#### 30 to 39

Male: 16:26 • **Robert Irwin**, 32 • Guilderland, NY

Female: 19:50 • **Kim Miseno-Bowles**, 35 • Amsterdam, NY

#### 40 to 49

Male: 16:44 • **Derrick Staley**, 47 • Ballston Lake, NY

Female: 21:26 • **Lisa Mattilla**, 45 • Pittsfield, MA

#### 50 to 59

Male: 18:36 • **Rick Munson**, 51 • Prattsville, NY

Female: 23:38 • **Linda Reed**, 50 • Ghent, NY

#### 60 to 69

Male: 21:15 • **Tom Adams**, 62, Rotterdam, NY

Female: 24:37 • **Jayne Zinke**, 61, Valatie, NY

#### 70 and Over

Male: 23:36 • **Richard Shook**, 70, Pittsfield, MA

Female: 27:56 • **Anne Stockman**, 73, Rensselaer, NY

#### 80 and Over

Male: 47:58 • **Nelson Charron**, 82, Chatham, NY

Female: None

## Meghan's Mile

### Course Records

#### Male Course Record:

15:18 • (2008) • **Matthew Forys**, 22 • Howell, NJ

#### Female Course Record:

17:42 • (2005) • **Lilly Becker**, 20 • Pittsfield, MA

## Past 5K Champions

### The Jack McGrath Award

#### 2004

Male: **Darren Legere**, 18 • Ghent, NY • 17:02

Female: **Molly Montegami**, 20 • Pittsfield, MA • 20:59

#### 2005

Male: **Robert Irwin**, 32 • Guilderland, NY • 16:26

Female: **Kara-Lynn Kerr**, 26 • Albany, NY • 18:16

#### 2006

Male: **Craig Forys**, 16 • Howell, NY • 15:56

Female: **Libby Gamache**, 23 • Rensselaer, NY • 19:36

#### 2007

Male: **Macky Lloyd**, 17 • Voorhesville, NY • 16:20

Female: **Samantha Legere** • Scotia, NY • 20:13

#### 2008

Male: **Matthew Forys**, 22 • Howell, NY • 15:18

Female: **Brina Seguine**, 18 • Rensselaer, NY • 18:18

#### 2009

Male: **Matthew Forys**, 23 • Howell, NY • 15:49

Female: **Sam Roecker**, 17 • Charlton, NY • 20:02

## Past Meghan's Mile Champions

### The Newkirk Award

#### 2004

Male: **Ian Rasweiler**, 10 • Hudson, NY • 7:33

Female: **Wren Hoy**, 11 • Hudson, NY • 8:45

#### 2005

Male: **Henry Taylor**, 11 • Delmar, NY • 6:44

Female: **Kelly Forys** (Sean's Cousin), 11 Absecon, NJ • 8:33

#### 2006

Male: **Richard Cummings**, 12 • Stuyvesant, NY • 6:46

Female: **Hannah Riordan**, 11 • Nassau, NY • 8:07



2009 5K Champion and Course Record Holder,  
Matt Forys, cousin of Sean French.

#### 2007

Male: **Ross Wightman**, 11 • Chatham, NY • 6:33

Female: **Hannah Riordan**, 12 • Nassau, NY • 7:36

#### 2008

Male: **Ross Wightman**, 12 • Chatham, NY • 6:03

Female: **Raelyn Beaucauge**, 12 • Valatie, NY • 6:53

#### 2009

Male: **Jordan Healy**, 12 • Castleton, NY • 5:56

Female: **Kaylee Scott**, 11 • Castleton-on-Hudson, NY • 6:21

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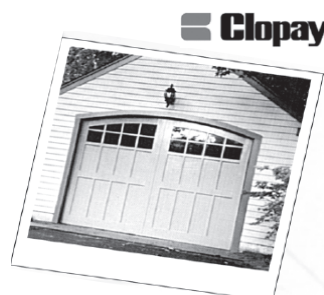
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# Sean's Run grows and grows

By more than 300 percent since 2003!

The first Sean's Run, on the last Sunday of April 2002, was produced just four months after Sean French's death. The inaugural event, the only one without timing the runners or a formal registration process, attracted more than 1,000 participants from a 14-county region and raised \$40,000 that was contributed in equal portions to the Sean Patrick French Scholarship Fund and to the family of Ian Moore to help retrofit his home to accommodate his wheelchair and other special needs.

In 2003, the first time Sean's Run instituted an entry fee and a participant registration process, there were 418 entrants. The Prevention Expo was added and the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation became the fiscal agent for the event, extending its non-profit charitable organization status to Sean's Run.

Beginning in 2004, the Committee implemented its Grant Making program to award the money raised the previous year as grants to schools and youth groups to implement anti-underage drinking programs. Also the Committee launched its new Web site, [www.SeansRun.com](http://www.SeansRun.com) and Sean's Mile, a race for youth ages 12 and under, was added as a new feature.

In 2005, a 12-county coalition of law enforcement officials, district attorneys, county and municipal officials, prevention specialists, schools and youth organizations used the 4th Sean's Run as the occasion to introduce the regional "Parents Who Host, Lose the Most" (PWHLTM) campaign.

The 5th Annual Sean's Run in 2006, despite a steady downpour, was the best to date with the most entrants, the most sponsors and contributors. Two new elements were added: A special Tribute to Victims and Survivors of impaired driving crashes, and the World Championship Battle of the Belts seat belt contest for high school students.

In 2007, the event grew to 818 people registered in the 5K and Sean's Mile. Chip timing of participants was introduced and continues as the method to time all participants.

The 2008 event grew to 1,085 entries. The Organizing Committee dedicated the event to Meghan Kraham, who as a 16 year-old, helped organize the first Sean's Run. She served on the Organizing Committee until her untimely death on December 18, 2007, following a 6-month battle with a rare form of cancer. She was just 21 years old. Event Chairman Jeff French said, "We miss Meghan's smile."

2009 was the largest and warmest event to-date: 1,371 entries, 80-plus degrees. Sean's Mile was renamed Meghan's Mile.

For the 2010 event, the Organizing Committee is preparing for 1,500 entrants in the 5K and Meghan's Mile and has added a new feature – Sea Jem's Super Saturday Run for Special Needs Kids.



Start of Meghan's Mile, 2009.

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Jessica Shufelt - Coordinator



# When these lawyers run, they run fast!

By Pamela Lappies

Sean's Run Committee

The personal characteristics and work ethic of two local attorneys, that results in exceptional legal counsel, also serves them well outside the courtroom in their athletic pursuits.

Jack Connor and Michael Howard, long-time Sean's Run participants and supporters, have distinguished themselves on the competitive running circuit as well as in the legal field. Both are dedicated to their profession, their clients, and their law firms, yet despite busy schedules, they reserve time to train and stay in shape. And they are among the area's top long distance runners.

Both attorneys graduated from Hudson High, where they participated on Blue Hawk track and field teams. Michael Howard, in addition to being a tough-to-beat quarter-miler in track and field, was a football standout. During summer breaks from his undergraduate alma mater, Davidson College, he played for the former Twin County Vikings. Following graduation from Davidson, Howard earned a law degree from Brooklyn Law School.

Jack Connor has been running—and running well—for 37 years. “I started in the 8th grade and have never stopped.” His success in high school running continued at Union College, where he ran four years of cross-country and track. In his senior year he was selected to be captain of the track and cross-country teams and was named the MVP of the track team. His personal record (PR) for the 5K in college was 15:24. Connor went to Wake Forest University to earn his law degree, continuing to train and finishing several

marathons (2:54:00 PR) and half marathons (1:11:00 PR).

Now age 50 and a member of the Kinderhook Runners Club, Connor averages about 35 miles of road workouts a week, and he also cross-country skis and kayaks regularly. A testament to his level of fitness is the fact that he is still able to run a sub 19-minute 5K (3.1 miles), his favorite racing distance. “I've always had a love of sports, especially running, and it is one of the great joys of my life that my children love running as much as I do.”

He shares that joy with his family. His wife, Anne, runs and also enjoys biking, kayaking, and cross-country skiing. Daughters Emily and Allison both take part in athletics. Allison is on the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute basketball team and ran on its cross-country team. She was Sectional Champion in the steeplechase her senior year of high school and was selected as a Sean Patrick French “Love of Running” scholarship winner in 2007. Son Brendan, 16, runs for the Hudson track and cross-country teams, coming in eighth at last fall's Patroon Conference Championships

Connor competes in about 20 races annually, his favorites being the Fair Street 5K in Kingston and the Hudson Turkey Trot. He likes Sean's Run because “it's a fun, low-key event; a good way to kick off the racing season. Just about everyone in Columbia County who runs is there. I always tell the new comers to be prepared for that up hill after the one mile mark.”

He keeps a poignant memory of Sean French, the event's namesake. “The memory I have is from the 2001 Patroon

Conference Cross-Country Championships at Maple Hill. Chatham and Ichabod had been battling all season for the top spot and it was going to be a tight team race. Sean had been in the top 10 in the State the year before, so it would have been easy for him to win comfortably. Instead, the gun goes off and Sean leads a breakaway of the top four Chatham runners, with Sean pacing the other three. As the race went on, you could see Sean looking back, encouraging the other Chatham runners to keep up and slowing down so they could keep up with him. At the end of the race, it was Sean and another runner from Chatham who were out ahead. Right before the finish, you could see Sean ease up and just subtly gesture to his teammate to take the win. If you hadn't run competitively, you wouldn't have even noticed it, and Sean didn't make a big deal of it. I always thought it was such a magnanimous act for a high school boy.

Then, less than 3 months later, Sean was killed by a drunk driver.”

Michael Howard, 43, has also instilled an interest in running in his family. His children, Charles, age 10, Griffin, age 7, and Winston, age 5, all run and enter local children's races. “It is in their DNA,” says their proud dad.

Known in running circles for both his fast pace and his wit, Howard says he brings his kids along on their bikes during his training runs because “a family that runs and sweats together stays together.”

Unlike Connor, long distance running has not been a life-long pursuit. He was nearly 30 when he ventured into distances beyond a single lap around the track.



*Hudson attorneys Michael Howard and Jack Connor at the 2009 Hudson Turkey Trot*

But, with a 5K PR of 18:48, he is obviously dedicated to his training, though his training workload has recently diminished to about 18 miles per week, due to the time spent working on a recently purchased home.

He likes to tell a funny story about running in the Walt Disney Marathon in 2002. Instead of getting to bed early the night before, he was out with friends until 2 a.m. and was on the starting line at 4:30 a.m. When he got to mile 19 on the course in Disney World, “I ran by a character dressed as the Wicked Witch who shouted, ‘Turn back! You are not going to make it.’ I didn't think I was hallucinating, but maybe I was!”

A member of the Kinderhook Runners Club, Howard has completed two marathons—including the Walt Disney Marathon, despite the Wicked Witch's prediction—and a half marathon, and in the past has competed in up to 15 races per

year. His preferred racing distance is the 5K, and Sean's Run, the Hudson Turkey Trot, and Dodge the Deer are his favorites. About Sean's Run, he says, “The event is important to our community and me personally. I have three boys, and I talk to them about Sean's tragic death. Life is so fragile, and it is important to celebrate it and the memories of others.”

Getting back to his humorous side, he added, “Plus each year I see runners that I have not seen for the past year and try to figure out why I haven't trained more to beat them all.”

He encourages everyone to try Sean's Run and quotes Jack Kirk from the film, “The Dipsea Deamon:” “You don't stop running 'cause you get old, you get old if you stop running.” Michael Howard has been a sponsor of Sean's Run for nine years.

# Age: Not a factor at Sean's Run

By Mark D. French  
Sean's Run Committee

Stan Card from Claverack will be 87-years-old when he toes the starting line on April 25, 2010 at Chatham High School. Stan is the most senior contestant registered to participate in the 9th Annual Sean's Run.

Stan Card recalled how, at last year's event, he was just a few hundred yards from the finish line when he caught up to two women who had been ahead of him the whole race. As he moved along side of them he said, jokingly, that he was going to beat them.

"For me," he said, "it's fun to see people who are younger than I am trying to keep up with me! Plus, out on the course I get a lot of encouragement from many of the participants as well as from spectators along the streets."

Debbie Oleynek described their side-by-side finish: "When this nice gentleman suddenly came along side of Shari and me, we were both sweating, tired and working pretty hard just to finish in a respectable time. He said he could beat us and we asked him his age. When he said 86, I thought there is no way this 86-year-old is beating me across the finish line,"

she said, laughing. "So I said, 'Let's finish together.' He smiled and Shari and I had to pick up our pace to stay next to him. It was my first-ever Sean's Run."

Shari Franks is the Recreation Director for the town of Chatham and she has served 9 years on the run/walk's Organizing Committee, helping to establish the event in 2002. "Lots of things makes Sean's Run special, one being the fact that our Committee is made up of so many caring volunteers who all do their part to make the event a success and do it well year after year."

Shari helps organize the Prevention Education Expo that includes exhibits by various youth serving organizations providing information to help parents and teens make healthy life choices. She is also the advisor of the Chatham Middle School chapter of Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD).

"The message we are trying to convey about the dangers of underage drinking, drunk driving and the importance of seatbelt use has stretched far beyond our community," she said. "The other club advisors who bring students to the event tell me how much

Sean's Run means to them and the work they do in their own communities." Students from more than 50 schools are expected this year.

Some participants take the time to prepare for the walk or run, and to use it as a reason to begin exercising. Others just show up for the fun, no preparation. Stan Card says he stays ready year-round! "At 87 years it's about staying active. Every day I walk for an hour starting at 5:30 a.m." He has a simple formula to his good health that he suggests others should consider. "Keep all your habits, don't change what has worked good for you."

Debbie Oleynek has been getting ready for the 9th Annual Sean's Run since January by working out with her friends at the Spencertown Fire House. "I'm coming back because it's a great race and a fun event. It offers me a sense of achievement."

Some participants also use the event as a way to honor or remember a friend or family member. "Last year was actually my first time completing the whole 5K course," said Shari Franks. "I have walked the mile twice at Sean's Run, but never the 5K



Stan Card, age 87, of Claverack, Debbie Oleynek and Shari Franks, both of Chatham, celebrating as they near the finish line at the 2009 Sean's Run.

because I typically like to be helping at the finish line and cheering on the participants."

But last year, Franks said she walked the longer distance in support of Nancy Zygmom, a committee member who was stricken with cancer and perished in September.

Many participants return year after year. Stan Card keeps coming back to Sean's Run and he brings his family with him. "There are three generations of my family there," he said. "Besides me, my daughter, son-in-law and

two granddaughters participate. We made this a family event. I especially enjoy the interaction with many people who you see there every year."

In talking about others in his generation who might be thinking of participating in Sean's Run, to walk the mile or the 5K, he said, "Do it. It doesn't matter what place you finish in. For me, this is not a race, but much more it is a feeling of accomplishment. Everyone who participates can feel the same thing. I'll be lined up again this year, the Lord willing."

## Sean's Run and The Marathon Project

By Bob Kopac

Runner and Marathon Project Supporter

What happens when two great programs meet? Answer: A WIN-WIN! In capital letters!

That's what happens when the Marathon Project meets Sean's Run. The Marathon Project, whose motto is "Empowering Youth through Running," is sponsored by the Council on Addiction Prevention and Education of Dutchess County, Inc. (CAPE/DC). It is an after-school distance running program to prepare youth to run a full or half marathon. The program's main goal is to reduce risk factors such as childhood obesity, gangs, dropping out of school, smoking, drinking, and substance abuse.

The program matches adult mentors with Hudson Valley youth in the Poughkeepsie, Beacon, Newburgh, and Webutuck school districts, as well as the Children's

Home of Poughkeepsie and the Dutchess County Department of Probation. The Marathon Project provides opportunities for students to accomplish goals, develop character, improve health, and provide youths with positive adult role models through mentoring. MP kids participate in Mid-Hudson Road Runners Club (MHRRC) races. However, there is one big exception: the Marathon Project kids travel north to Chatham to do Sean's Run.

The purpose of this 5K is to raise teen awareness of the dangers of underage drinking and the need to wear seat belts. As the www.seansrun.com web site says, "Sean's Run is more than a run/walk – it's a community's response to tragedy, a deadly underage drunk driving car crash on January 1, 2002 that claimed the life of high school honor roll student, community volunteer and running standout Sean Patrick

French and permanently altered the life of his buddy Ian Moore. Both juniors, they were passengers in a car driven by an intoxicated schoolmate. They were both unbuckled."

The money raised at Sean's Run is used for programs to combat underage drinking, impaired driving and teens' lax use of seatbelts. The funds also support scholarships for deserving senior high school students. \$141,000 has been raised in the past 9 years.

Besides the 5K, there is the Meghan's Mile community walk and kid's race. But wait, there's more! Before the running and walking events is the World Championship Battle of the Belts. Four-person high school and middle school youth teams battle to see who can buckle up the fastest by running around a car until each team member buckles up in all four seats. The purpose



Students and their Mentors who attended Sean's Run in 2009. Sitting in the center front is Thomas Amell, President of First Niagara Bank's Eastern Region, the Presenting Sponsor of Sean's Run. Also in the front row is Jeff French, Sean's Run Event Director, Susanne O'Neil, past Director of the Marathon Project, and Mark French, Sean's Run Committee

of the contest is to provide a fun way to raise teen awareness about the importance of seat belt use. It also provides a thrilling pre-race spectacle for the runners and walkers.

The Marathon Project kids attended the 2009 Sean's Run and Battle of the Belts. They came away excited by both events and eager to participate again in 2010.

Several youths at the year-end Marathon Project wrap-up party said it was their favorite race.

Sean's Run is April 25, 2010 at Chatham High School, in the village of Chatham, Columbia County, NY. Come participate in the 5K run or 1-mile walk and cheer on the Marathon Project kids in the Battle of the Belts.

## Molly Koweek's love of running

(Note: Molly Koweek, a Hudson High School senior, is a winner of a 2010 Love of Running Scholarship from the Sean Patrick French Memorial Scholarship Fund. In applying for the scholarship, she was required to write an essay about how participation in track and field has prepared her for the challenges of college next fall when she attends Boston University.)

My Junior year was when I realized that by joining the long distance group of the track team, I would be getting the best exercise at practice every day, which was my main reason for running track every year.

At the first meet of the season at Emma Willard, I ran the 1,500 for the first time. Not surprisingly, I came in last place, by quite a bit.

In fact, I was so far behind the second-to-last finisher that both teams and their parents were cheering me on. I thought to myself, OK, it can't get more embarrassing than this.

I was wrong. It was even worse when the same thing happened at a home meet, in front of all of my schoolmates. Once again, I didn't think that any track situation could be worse, and once again I was wrong.

At an invitational with 12 teams, I had 12 teams, and all of their parents, cheering for me. This was quite humiliating.

No, I didn't enjoy this extreme embarrassment.

However, it didn't change the way I felt about the sport.

Although I wasn't winning races, my times were dropping dramatically. Additionally, with all of the practices I was attending I could feel myself becoming more and more in shape. Staying healthy and active was always my main motivation for competing.

I know that in college, and in tasks that I'm assigned for the rest of my life, I may not always be the best. However, this will not stop me from doing my best. Living in a community where I've been the fastest girl on my swim team since freshman year, I was used to being the best.

Track taught me how to handle pushing through the aspects of life that aren't always easy. I'm very thankful for this experience, because I know that it has made me a better person, who doesn't give up due to inadequacies. Instead, I put forth all of the effort that I have, and in turn produce the best results of which I am capable.



Molly Koweek,  
Love of Running Scholarship Winner

# \$135,550 DONATED BY SEAN'S RUN

For nine years, the Organizing Committee has given the money raised at Sean's Run to support two specific areas of interest:

1. Scholarships to deserving high school seniors, and
2. Grants to schools and youth groups to implement programs to increase teens and 'tweens use of seatbelts.

Thanks to generous sponsors and donors, \$135,550 has been raised - and given away.

### THE SEAN'S RUN GRANTS PROGRAM

Cash grants are given to school groups and community-based organizations to support programs across the region designed to combat underage drinking, impaired driving and teens' lax use of seatbelts. Schools and youth groups eligible to apply for funding follow the instructions at the SeansRun.com Web site. This year Sean's Run is presenting \$500 grants to 16 schools and youth groups to plan and produce their own Battle of the Belts and compete in the World Championship Battle of Belts. Also, three regional organizations whose missions are to combat underage drinking and impaired driving will be presented grants to support their work.

#### 2010 Sean's Run Grant Awardees

Group	County
Amsterdam HS	Montgomery
Peer Leadership Group	
Averill Park HS SADD	Rensselaer
Berlin Jr/Sr HS SADD	Rensselaer
Chatham HS SADD	Columbia
Chatham MS SADD	Columbia
Columbia HS SADD	Rensselaer
Council on Addition Prevention and Education of Dutchess County	Dutchess
Fonda-Fultonville HS Student Government	Montgomery
Germantown CS SADD	Columbia
Hoosick Falls HS Youth Summit Team	Rensselaer
Hudson Dept. of Youth	Columbia
Hudson Valley Youth Action on Tobacco	Columbia
Lynch Literacy Academy Peer Leadership Club	Montgomery
Mohonasen HS SADD	Schenectady
Pine Plains Stissing Mt. HS SADD	Dutchess
Schodack/Castleton Community Partnership	Rensselaer
Mothers Against Drunk Driving	Albany
Remove Intoxicated Drivers	Schenectady
Choices 301	Albany

### THE SEAN PATRICK FRENCH MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS FUND

The Sean Patrick French Memorial Scholarship Fund was established in 2002 to recognize the positive achievements and good character of deserving high school seniors. To-date, 68 deserving seniors have been awarded scholarships in three categories. The fund was created using a portion of the proceeds from the inaugural Sean's Run and from ongoing contributions by individuals, businesses and community organizations. The Scholarship Fund is administered by the Berkshire Taconic Community

Foundation, Great Barrington, MA and all contributions to the fund are tax deductible in accordance with IRS regulations. Scholarship awardees are selected by a 5-person selection committee.

#### Scholarship Category #1

The Sean Patrick French Community Service Scholarship

**Who is eligible?** Chatham High School Seniors

**How to Apply:** Applications, available at [www.SeansRun.com](http://www.SeansRun.com) are due by March 1st.

Two \$1,000 scholarships, one to a boy and one to a girl, are awarded each year to recipients selected by a 5-person Selection Committee convened by the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation. Winners best exemplify the same personal characteristics for which Sean is remembered:

- Expresses and demonstrates compassion and sensitivity to all
- Includes all in his/her circle of friends
- Has an ever-present smile and positive attitude
- Provides volunteer service to his/her community
- Demonstrates good sportsmanship

#### Scholarship Category #2

The Sean Patrick French Good Sport Scholarships

**Who is eligible?** Cross Country runners from NYSPHSAA Section II who have qualified to compete at the NYSPHSAA State Cross Country Championship and have been named as Section II Good Sportsmanship Award winners

**How to Apply:** Runners who have been selected by the Section II Cross Country Coaches as the Good Sportsmanship Award winners will be invited to apply.

Two \$500 scholarships, one to a boy and one to a girl, are presented to the selected Section II Cross Country Good Sportsmanship Award winners.

#### Scholarship Category #3

The Sean Patrick French "Love of Running" Scholarships

**Who is eligible?** High School Seniors who reside in Columbia County and have participated in at least two seasons of varsity level Track & Field or Cross Country.

**How to Apply:** The Application is available at [www.SeansRun.com](http://www.SeansRun.com) and must be submitted by February 15th.

At least two \$500 scholarships, one to a boy and one to a girl, selected by a 5-person selection committee, are awarded each year to the applicants who best describe how their love of running has prepared them for the challenges of college.

#### 2010 Winners from Chatham High School

Recognizes Community Service, compassion for others  
Aimee Palleschi • Joseph Cozzolino

#### 2010 Winners from NYSPHSAA Section II

Recognizes Sportsmanship  
Rachael Cyrus • Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake HS  
Zach Nelson • Albany Academy

#### 2010 Winners from Columbia County

Recognizes Love of Running  
Emma Gryner • Taconic Hills HS  
Molly Koweek • Hudson HS  
Philip Mastro Simone • Chatham HS  
Cordero McCall • Hudson HS  
Chloe Meltz • Ichabod Crane HS  
Shevar Thomas • Hudson HS





*Running Forever for You, by Tom Warner*

## Berkshire artist/poet supports Sean's Run

Tom Warner, a Berkshire artist, poet and runner, was present at Chatham High School the day Governor George Pataki signed the bill enacting Sean's Law on September 27, 2002. He had met Sean as a participant in the Old Chatham 5K, a road race that was produced for six years and was founded and directed by a group of three local runners – Mark French, Jeff Lappies and Loring Ultimo. The Old Chatham 5K's final running was in 2002, the year of Sean French's death and the year that Sean's Run was first produced.

Tom Warner has been a participant at every annual Sean's Run and in 2009 offered to become a Gold Medal sponsor, contributing an original painting to the event that the Organizing Committee gives away as a Grand Prize in a Raffle.

The painting he contributed this year is entitled "Running Forever For You." He has also penned a poem about his preparation for this year's Sean's Run. His work is exhibited at the American Gallery Great American Painters Web site: <http://americangallery.wordpress.com>

### *Mind, Heart and Soul* by Tom Warner

*In winter the sun comes up  
the temperature stays down,  
I in my bundled clothing  
reluctantly go out the door.  
Into the deep New England winter.  
Once in the great outdoors  
my spirit lifts  
and step by step  
my confidence grows.  
My growth a gift  
inspired and appreciated.  
Every moment cherished  
I have a purpose  
to share with the world.  
Where am I to go  
on this journey  
only time does tell  
Step by step I go  
Reaching out with  
mind heart and soul.*

# The World Championship Battle of the Belts

The World Championship Battle of the Belts at Sean's Run helps reinforce to young people that it's not "un-cool" to be safe and always use seatbelts.

Both Sean French and his buddy Ian Moore were not buckled in the back seat when the car they were riding in crashed on January 1, 2002, killing Sean and paralyzing Ian. Both 17, both born on September 21, 1984 and both were juniors at Chatham HS.

"We designed the Battle of the Belts as a fast-moving, fun competition where teams of four teenagers see who can buckle-up the fastest. The kids love it, and they get the message about always buckling up!" said Sean's Run Chairman Jeff French, an uncle of Sean's.

To start, the teams, starting from a line 15 feet behind the rear bumper, run up to a 4-door car. Team members quickly get in,



*Students from Red Hook HS compete in the World Champions Battle of the Belts at 2009 Sean's Run*

buckle up, and throw their hands in the air until a Referee shouts "ROTATE!" Then they unbuckle, get out, run clockwise around the car to the next seat and buckle-up

again. They rotate twice more until they have been buckled in all four seats. The team with the fastest time after four "buckle-ups" will be declared World Champions!

## Past Winners World Championship Battle of the Belts

### Sr. High Division

2009

Taconic Hills • The Click Chicks • 31.00 seconds

2008

Mohonasen High School SADD  
Equipo de Colombia • 32.44 seconds

2007

Taconic Hills HS • Click It or Tickets  
31.00 seconds

2006

Berne-Knox Westerlo High School  
Little Walnuts • 37.18 seconds

### 2009 Special Award Winners

#### Best Team Name

Chatham HS • "The Buckling Linebackers"

#### Loudest Cheering Section

Stissing High School SADD, Pine Plains  
"The Slayers"

#### Best Team T-shirts

Mohonasen HS SADD

### Jr. High Division

2009

Chatham Middle School • Legally Blondes  
28.14 seconds, (world record)

2008

BSA Troop 42, Red Hook  
The Nice Guys • 37.87 seconds

2007

Chatham Middle School • The Buckle Up Bettys

2006

Chatham Middle School  
The Click-its • 44.50 seconds

### 2009 Special Award Winners

#### Best Team Name

Saugerties Opus 40 • "Sit, Click, Drive"

#### Loudest Cheering Section

The Marathon Project, CAPE, Poughkeepsie

#### Best Team T-shirts

Amsterdam Lynch Literacy Academy  
"The Four Belters"

## SEATBELTS AND TEENS

*The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says: Seat Belts Save Lives*

Teens have the highest fatality rate in motor vehicle crashes than any other age group. One key reason for high traffic fatalities among this age group is that they have lower safety belt use rates than adults.

In 2008 alone, seat belts saved an estimated 13,250 lives (Traffic Safety Facts: 2008 Data, NHTSA, DOT HS 811153).

Research has found that lap/shoulder seat belts, when used, reduce the risk of fatal injury to front-seat passenger car occupants by 45 percent and the risk of moderate-to-critical injury by 50 percent.

## Prevention Education Expo

The Prevention Education Expo includes informational booths and exhibits by a variety of community and government agencies, prevention education organizations, youth development programs and wellness providers. These groups are set up inside the gymnasium and from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., they distribute materials to:

- Educate young people and their parents about the potentially fatal consequences of underage drinking and impaired driving,
- Encourage young people to try positive alternatives and refrain from the use of alcohol, other drugs and tobacco,
- Underscore the importance of wearing seat belts, and
- Raise awareness about the valuable services and programs their organizations provide.

### 2010 Expo Exhibitors invited include:

Catholic Charities of Columbia and Greene Counties  
 Chatham High School SADD  
 Chatham Middle School SADD  
 Choices 301  
 Columbia County Sheriff's Department  
 Columbia County Stop DWI  
 Columbia Greene Community College  
 Cornell Cooperative Extension  
 KB Chiropractic  
 LEADD (Law Enforcement Against Drunk Driving)  
 from Suffolk County, NY  
 MADD, Capital Region  
 Parents Who Host Lose the Most  
 Remove Intoxicated Drivers (RID)  
 Taconic Driving School  
 Rip Van Winkle Tobacco Free Coalition  
 Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood STARS Program



## PROM SEASON—DANGEROUS TIME FOR TEEN DRIVERS

It's no coincidence that Sean's Run occurs each year on the last Sunday of April, in the middle of Prom Season.

Prom season is a dangerous time for teenage drivers. Car accidents resulting in teenage deaths are the highest during prom weekends. Depending on the location, these are the months of March, April and May.

This is because often teenagers add alcohol to the mix of dancing, prom pictures and corsages.

In 2005, there were 6,100 teenagers killed in car accidents and more than one third of these involved alcohol. Some facts about teenage driving and alcohol usage:

- *The more teenagers drink, the more apt they are to drive a car.*
- *80 percent of fatal car accidents occur within 25 miles of home and involve speeds of under 40 miles per hour*
- *Alcohol is the number one drug of choice for teenage drivers*

## Sean's Law

On April 18, 2002, after Mark and Cathy French spent several months meeting with a variety of elected and State officials at the State Capitol, both houses of the New York State Legislature unanimously passed "Sean's Law." The bill was introduced and championed by Senator Steven Saland. Then, on September 27, 2002, during a public ceremony conducted at Chatham High School, Governor George Pataki signed the measure into law.

"In this community we are blessed with ordinary people who do extraordinary things," Pataki told the packed gymnasium that day. "This is a tribute to the spirit of ordinary New Yorkers who reach inside themselves and use their tragedy to make a better future for others. Mark and Cathy, you didn't have to do this... you didn't have to re-live this tragedy... we are grateful for your courage."

Sean's Law fixed a flaw in motor vehicle law that was poignantly revealed following the fatal crash that claimed Sean's life. Just 18 days before Sean's death, his intoxicated 17-year old driver had been arrested on drunk driving charges. Prior to the enactment of Sean's Law, there were no provisions that required the immediate suspension of the teenager's license following their arrest for drunk driving. These youngsters could keep driving after having been arrested for drunk driving. Sean's Law now provides the mechanism for judges to immediately suspend the licenses of youths charged with alcohol-related driving offenses.

# SEAN'S RUN PAYS TRIBUTE TO THOSE IMPACTED BY DRUNK DRIVING

Every 31 minutes, someone is killed by a drunk driver in the United States—almost 50 per day according to Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). Hundreds more suffer physical and emotional injury because of drunk drivers, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. And the anguish caused by this trauma never fully dissipates.

This is why Sean's Run recognizes all victims and survivors of drunk driving. The volunteers who produce

Sean's Run wish to provide some consolation.

The organizers of Sean's Run extend a warm welcome to the hundreds of people in our region who have been impacted by an impaired driver. These people have been forced to endure the pain of suddenly losing of a loved one or have personally suffered physical injury.

Victims and survivors who participate in Sean's Run are provided complimentary entry and are invited to wear a small placard with the name of the individual they wish to

remember or honor as they walk or run. Those who wear placards give faces to the impact of drunk driving and the placards give names to those who have suffered.

The Tribute to Victims and Survivors of Drunk Driving coincides with the annual observance of National Crime Victims' Rights Week. Beginning in 1981, events have been produced around the nation each April to recognize the devastating impact of crime on individuals and to offer support to those impacted.

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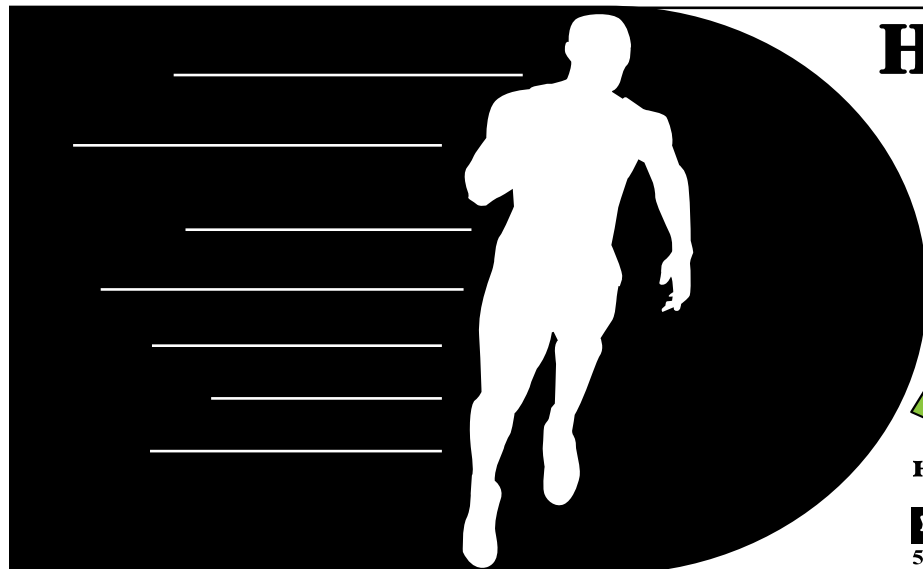


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## Sean's Run and First Niagara Bank add special feature

Sean's Run, the popular event presented by First Niagara Bank in Chatham each April to highlight the problems of underage drinking, impaired driving, and teens' lax use of seatbelts, is taking steps to ensure that more people have a chance to enjoy the fun and excitement.

Beginning this year, Sean's Run will add an additional foot race to an event program which already includes a 5K and Meghan's Mile youth race. These two races are anticipated to attract about 1,500 participants and will take place on Sunday, April 25. On the day before, Saturday April 24, the organizers of Sean's Run will produce a new race specially designed for Special Needs Kids.

The new activity has been dubbed "Sea Jem's Super Saturday Run for Special Needs Kids" in recognition of the Boston-based seafood wholesaler Sea Jem, which is sponsoring the newest component of the Sean's Run program. Sea Jem's fresh and frozen fish are sold in the Seafood Department at all Price Chopper Supermarket stores. Now kids with special needs and developmental disabilities will have their own special event associated with Sean's Run.

The Register Star and Chatham Courier are Media Sponsors of Sean's Run.

Registration for the Super Saturday Run is free, and all participants will be provided an event T-shirt and finisher's ribbon. Registration forms are available at all First Niagara Bank branches. Participants should be at the Chatham High School parking lot in time for the 3 p.m. start on Saturday, April 24. The races will range from 25 to 100 yards to, depending on the ability of the entrants.

In addition to the 5K and Meghan's Mile on Sunday, April 25, Sean's Run also includes a Prevention Education Expo, the World Championship Battle of the Belts seatbelt buckling competition, and a tribute to victims of drunk driving. All proceeds are given as grants to schools and youth organizations and as scholarships to deserving seniors from throughout the region. In March, the organizing committee also co-hosted a Points and Insurance Reduction Program safe driving class with Sean's Run sponsor Taconic Driving School.

Following the 2009 Sean's Run, the founder of the East Greenbush Miracle League ([www.capitalregionmiracleleague.org](http://www.capitalregionmiracleleague.org)), Burke Adams, contacted organizing committee member Mark French and indicated he was interested in working with the committee to determine how the disabled kids in his program could also be participants in Sean's Run. Adams indicated he was aware of the positive reputation of Sean's Run and wanted his kids to be able to experience the exhilaration of crossing under the Sean's Run Finish Line banner. He asked that the committee consider adding a new component to the existing program.

French said he did not think twice about taking "Burke's wonderful idea" to the entire organizing committee, which unanimously approved including the special activity beginning this April.

French has some experience in developing such opportunities for disabled people. In the early 1990s he was a cofounder of the county's first Little League program for disabled children, and in the early years of Sean's Run, he made provisions for wheelchair racers to participate. Two paraplegics



April Coughlin, past Sean's Run participant, Boston Marathon Champion.

who knew Sean from the starting lines of various road races in the Capital Region accepted French's invitation to compete in the wheelchair division. Both accomplished athletes, April Coughlin, then 20, and Marty Ryan, who passed away after last year's Sean Run following a battle with cancer, participated in several Sean's Runs. Coughlin is now a school teacher in New York City and has gone on to win the Boston Marathon and participate in the World Championship Triathlon in Switzerland. French recalled how well they navigated the hills on the Sean's Run 5K course and how they inspired everyone who witnessed their determination.

But those are not the only reasons why Mark French volunteered to lead the Organizing Committee's effort to start this new feature of Sean's Run. It is because his deceased son, Sean, had demonstrated a special compassion for children with disabilities, and because Sean's buddy, Ian Moore, became a paraplegic as a result of the deadly crash that claimed Sean's life. "That's what makes the success of this new feature personally important," he explained.

Working with the volunteers of the Albany Miracle League, the Sean's Run organizing committee is planning a safe and enjoyable athletic experience for the Saturday event, which will be conducted in a way, according to French, that will give kids a feeling of belonging and accomplishment. He added, "We hope Sea Jem's Super Saturday Run for Special Needs Kids brings hope, inspiration and the joys of achievement to people with disabilities."

For more information about this or the other components of Sean's Run, contact French at [MarkFrench@Fairpoint.net](mailto:MarkFrench@Fairpoint.net).

## THE COMMITTEE TO PRODUCE THE SEAN PATRICK FRENCH MEMORIAL RUN/WALK

### We Are About

Producing a well-organized community-wide event that includes:

- 5K Run/Walk,
- 1 Mile youth race Meghan's Mile
- Tribute to Victims and Survivors of Drunk Driving
- World Championship Battle of the Belts seatbelt contest, and
- Prevention Education Expo

### We Strive To

- Increase awareness about the problems of underage drinking and impaired driving
- Raise funds annually to give as grants to youth and student organizations to implement year-round programs that combat underage drinking, impaired driving and teens' lax use of seatbelts.
- Select deserving college-bound seniors from throughout the region to award scholarships from funds raised during the inaugural Sean's Run.
- Encourage healthy lifestyles and safe choices that lead to reducing the number of teens who drink, drive while impaired, ride with a drunk driver, or fail to use seatbelts.

### Thankfully We Have Generous Supporters

We would not be able to produce the event and meet our goals without the generosity of Sponsors, Contributors and Participants. Entry fees paid by participants cover approximately half of the expenses of producing Sean's Run. It's because of the generosity of

Sponsors and Contributors that the Committee is able to achieve its goals.

### Our Beginnings

The all-volunteer Organizing Committee and Board of Directors created Sean's Run in response to the tragic death of Sean Patrick French, the 17-year old Chatham High School junior, honor roll student, community volunteer and record-setting athlete who lost his life on January 1, 2002 as a passenger in a drunk-driving car crash.

Another passenger, 17-year old Ian Moore, sustained paralyzing injuries and is now a paraplegic. The intoxicated driver, also 17-years old, was a schoolmate who had been arrested previously for drunk driving, just 18 days before the fatal crash.

### The Need for Sean's Run

Sean's death prompted a group of adults and young people from the Chatham area to come together and ask the question: "What else can we do, as a community, to help kids make better choices? What more can we do to get them to better understand why they should never ride with an impaired driver, why they should not consume alcoholic beverages until they are 21, why they should always use their seatbelts?"

Sean's schoolmates who attended the inaugural organizing meeting expressed that they wanted to start an event to memorialize and honor Sean and to remind the community that such a tragedy can be prevented. They suggested a 5K race would be a wonderful tribute to their friend and their suggestion was the primary impetus to the founding of Sean's Run.

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 Carol Goold, Vice Chairman  
 Jenna Frederick, Student Liaison, CHS Class of 2010  
 Joanne Doyle & Tammi Menegio, Co-Treasurers  
 Mark D. French, Secretary

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