

TEN YEARS RUNNING

SEAN'S RUN 2011



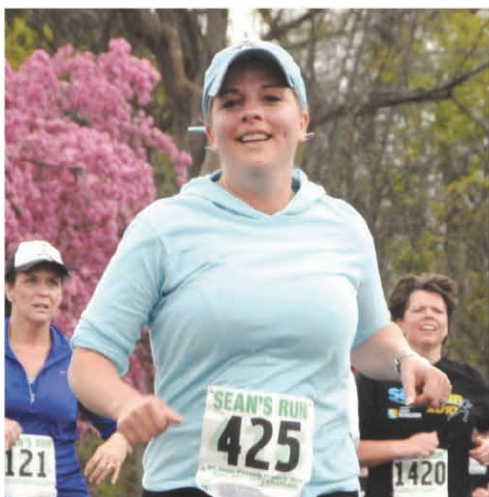
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Sean Patrick French, age 17, Fall 2001, cross country meet at Saratoga State Park.

Sean's Run Hits the 10-Year Mark

By Michael Rivest
Runner

For Capital Region road runners, it wouldn't be spring without Sean's Run. What started ten years ago as just a simple idea has become a tradition, an annual marker event telling us it's time to break out the lawn furniture and flip-flops.

Ten years. Come to think of it, that's exactly how long Sean French spent running the same roads and paths we will on May 1, 2011. From the age of seven until his death at 17, Sean would lace up his running shoes and run like the Chatham wind, putting together a list of victories and honors so long that if we listed them here there would be little space for anything else.

We'd have no room to tell you that, in addition to a 5K Run/Walk, Sean's Run also features Sea Jem's Super Saturday Run for Special Needs Kids, so that ALL kids know that they're welcome at Sean's Run; Meghan's Mile, in honor of Sean's friend Meghan Nicole Kraham who helped found Sean's Run and was an inspiration to us all as she battled with cancer; the Battle of the Belts World Championship, where winners earn the right to call themselves the fastest seat belt bucklers on the planet; the Prevention Education Expo; and the Tribute to Victims and Survivors of Drunk Driving.

Sean was special. One of the best local high school athletes of his generation, he placed second in the New York State Public High School Cross-Country Championships as a 10th grader. That same year, he ran the fastest metric mile of any sophomore in the State: 4:18! No, that's not a typo.

But Sean was more than a great athlete. Ask those who knew him. That's what Sports Illustrated writer Steve Rushin did before he wrote a feature column about Sean, calling him "selfless," "caring," and a "goodwill ambassador."

"When a girl stumbles on the stairs at school," Rushin wrote, "and her books fly and her cheeks turn crimson and the hallway echoes with laughter, Sean

helps her to her feet, silencing his schoolmates."

That's who Sean French was.

When 3,000 people come to a 17-year-old's funeral services, it's a sure sign that they know someone extraordinary is gone. But his memory sure isn't.

Sean's Run is more than a race; it's a reminder that a moment's bad judgment can result in tragedy. Underage drinking, impaired driving, or failure to use seatbelts takes lives.

The fateful crash on New Year's Eve 2001 also paralyzed Sean's good friend, Ian Moore. The two juniors were passengers in a car driven by an intoxicated schoolmate. Sean and Ian weren't wearing seat belts.

Because of your support, Sean's Run has given away \$138,050 to support youth programs and scholarships.

Youth groups also turn Sean's Run grants into programs that combat underage drinking and encourage young people to always, always wear their seatbelts.

As it has from the start, First Niagara Bank has once again 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.

"Sean's Run... [has] such a positive impact on so many communities," Amell said. First Niagara is honored to be a part of these inspiring events that have brought awareness to a life-saving cause for ten years running."

Enough said. Now, it's time for you to sign-up. We look forward to seeing you on Sunday, May 1. Join the 1,500 runners and walkers, kids, adults and senior citizens, as we celebrate spring in a way much more important than taking out lawn furniture.

We're going to remember one very special young man - and we're going to RUN!



Top 10 Reasons to Participate

- ▶ **1. 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. Plus the first 350 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.
- ▶ **2. Nice Amenities:** "Feel the Spirit" is the event's slogan. Music abounds during the entire event, including on the course, 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.
- ▶ **3. 5K Run/Community Walk:** An accurately measured, USATF Certified 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.
- ▶ **4. Meghan's Mile:** 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.
- ▶ **5. 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.
- ▶ **6. 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.
- ▶ **7. 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.
- ▶ **8. 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.
- ▶ **9. Sea Jem's Super Saturday Sean's Run for Special Needs Kids:** An exciting activity for young people with physical and developmental disabilities. This special "race" on the day before the 5K and MeghansMile 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 p.m., Saturday, April 30th at Chatham High School. All participants will be provided an event souvenir t-shirt and a finisher's memento.
- ▶ **10. World's Best Volunteers and Generous Sponsors:** Nearly 100 volunteers are waiting to make your experience enjoyable and memorable. Thanks to the generous support of our Sponsors, we've been able to improve the event each year.

10th Annual Sean's Run Schedule

Chatham High School

Saturday, April 30

- 2:00-4:00 p.m.** Packet Pick Up and Walk-In Registration
Chatham High School Gym
First 350 to arrive will receive special gift
- 3:00 p.m.** Sea Jem's Super Saturday Run for Special Needs Kids

Sunday, May 1

- 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.-12:00 Noon** 5K Run/Walk Registration, Packet Pick Up - Gym
- 11:15 a.m.** Presentation of Scholarships and Grants — Auditorium
- 12:00 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



Tuesday, April 27

Results and new coverage published in the Register Star



Chatham High School grads, (Class of '88), Kristi McGurgen Buchan (121) of Spencertown, Penny Law Dolack (254) of Huntington, PA and Liza Bloomberg Munson (682) of Walden, NY as they approach the 5K finish line. They all signed up, trained and then ran the 5K last year as their "Turning 40 Challenge." Based on their smiles it seems they accomplished what they set out to achieve.



Two finishers of the 2010 Sea Jem's Super Saturday Run for Special Needs Kids talk with Sean's Run volunteer, Mark French.



The Boham family, Tismark (#93), Eric (#91) and Ama (#92), from Valatie.

The Safety Tree Living Billboard

Sean's Run is the impetus behind the creation of a new partnership of local organizations whose aim is to reduce the numbers of lives lost in Columbia and Greene Counties because of impaired and drunk driving. Sean's Run has joined forces with the Taconic Driving School, Remove Intoxicated Drivers—USA, Columbia Memorial Hospital, Columbia County Stop DWI and Twin County Recovery Services to establish the Columbia-Greene Safety Tree Living Billboard in Hudson. The living billboard, a Blue Spruce evergreen, is now planted near the entrance of the Emergency Room of Columbia Memorial Hospital.

The eight-foot Safety Tree Living Billboard will be decorated with white lights as an anti-drunk driving project originally developed by RID-USA and has now been adopted by communities in 41 states. The unveiling and inaugural lighting of The Safety Tree Living Billboard was Friday, April 1st, one month prior to the 10th Annual Sean's Run at Chatham High School.

The white lights on The Safety Tree Living Billboard will remain lit every day of the year, signifying that no drunk driving fatalities have occurred in Columbia and Greene Counties since the Safety Tree was planted. It is the sponsors' hope that the tree remains lit solely by white lights for years to come. However, if unfortunately an alcohol-involved traffic fatality does occur in the twin counties, one of the tree's white lights will be replaced with a red light bulb to memorialize the individual whose life was lost. This living, permanent billboard will remind the public that drinking and driving is still a major menace to life and health. In years to come people can look at the tree and see how safe drivers have been in Columbia and Greene County.

Last fall the blue spruce was donated and planted by Callander's Nursery of Chatham on the sloping lawn new the Emergency Room entrance of Columbia Memorial Hospital. A special marker was designed and installed by Cantelle Memorials on a rock provided by A. Colarusso and Son and placed near the tree. Carol Gould, the Vice-Chair of Sean's Run, and her husband David Gould, purchased the lights for the tree.



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.

Kinderhook Runner's Club and Sean's Run:

A Lasting Collaboration

After a tough winter running season, the Kinderhook Runner's Club looks forward to spring and the local race that has become its highlight, Sean's Run. When winter arrives in our area, many runners try to stay in shape by taking an occasional run when weather permits. The KRC "SlowPokes" winter series on Saturday mornings appealed to this crowd. We also hosted ongoing runs for local diehards who ran almost every day throughout the winter, training for marathons coming this spring and summer.

would likely be joining the club in training runs and races throughout the year.

Among the KRC'ers that had the opportunity to know Sean during his short life are local running legends Jim Tansey and Jack Nabozny, both of Valatie. Jim and Jack started the Summer Fun Runs on Wednesday evenings in the Village of Kinderhook almost thirty years ago.

Jim recalls running with Sean and Mark at these events: "Sean was obviously a really elite runner. He always left all of us well in his dust. But Sean was also a very fine young man. He always had a smile. He talked to everyone before and after all the runs, and I'm sure he inspired all the younger runners to give just a little more.

I also remember the early morning of January 1, 2002. My daughter Jaime was at a party that Sean was supposed to be at. She was an Ichabod grad and Sean went to Chatham, but that made no difference. Everyone knew and loved Sean. That morning she called me and told me about what had happened to Sean. She was shaking as any one her age would. I was shaking as well, because I knew what

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But for all runners, a spring 5K is a refreshing change to all those cold winter runs. The marathoners use their preparation for Sean's Run as a chance to work on speed. The rest of us use it as motivation to get back into daily running. But, of course, Sean's Run is much more than that. For the Kinderhook Runner's Club, Sean's Run is a time to remember a fellow runner and friend who if not for the sad events of January 1, 2002



Last year, Kinderhook Runners Club members in front of 2010 Sean's Run Billboard.

she was going through, how badly I felt about Sean, and because I'm friends with Mark and what he and Cathy were going through clearly is the worst nightmare any parent could ever experience.

Another friend of mine had also lost his son to an alcohol related accident that year. I'm so pleased that Sean's Run is there to promote alcohol free parties and driving."

Jack has many pleasant memories of Sean and two running related ones clearly come to his mind. "The first involves Sean running down Best Road on the

OK 5K course during our weekly Summer Fun Runs for many summers. Sean was somewhere around 11 years old, and just a skinny and gangly kid, when he started running 5Ks. At his first Fun Runs he would take off like a rabbit and then after a mile at Best Road he would begin to slow. I could catch up to him at that point, offer him encouraging words, but he would not give up and he tried to prevent me from overtaking him. In following summers it would be further down Best Road before I could catch him. Then one summer Sean shows up following a

growth spurt and that was the end of our weekly 'battles'. Sean always was a very polite kid saying, 'Hello Mr. Nabozny' when he would see me; most kids that age don't acknowledge adults.

The second memory was when Sean ran his school record setting 4:18 mile at the Section 2 State Meet qualifying race in early June 2001 at Johnstown. Sean was the only sophomore in the 'fast' heat that was loaded with the best runners. Early in the race the pace was quick as the runners were jockeying for position. During the third lap the best runner in the



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field, a national caliber runner, began to push the pace and the other runners began to spread out. Sean accelerated and stayed up with the lead pack. At the end of the third lap when the gun lap started Sean was right there with the leaders but he looked really exhausted. His form was beginning to unravel and his face looked pained. At that point, I remember thinking "the kid ran well with the big guys, hopefully he won't fall back too far, he's only a sophomore."

But, though he trailed off at the beginning of that final lap, he started to come back. With about 200 meters left he was gaining on the leaders. With about 100 meters to go he was very close to the two leaders, one of them being Oliver Tassinari from Spencertown who ran for Albany Academy. During that final stretch Sean kept his strong pace coming to within just a stride or two of the winner at the finish line. He took third in a spectacular race. My heart was beating like crazy because of what I had just witnessed and what Sean had accomplished. He just wouldn't quit, just like he wouldn't quit when I was chasing him on Best Road those hot summer nights. The determination and toughness he showed was inspiring. I found Mark and Cathy about ten minutes after the race and Mark's feet were six inches off the ground as we talked about Sean's mile."

Among all the other races on the calendar, Sean's Run is must for KRC members. In 2010, 37 red-shirted members participated, and the KRC's collaboration with the race begins long before race day. Sean's Run is the first local 5K road race in our annual Grand Prix Series of Races. Several weeks before the race, the KRC holds a training run of the Sean's Run course. Then on race day, we show up with our game face on! You will see us shouting out support to each other at the turnaround at Pond Hill Road and at the finish line. After the race is over the club rolls up its sleeves and members help to clean up.

We also see Sean's Run as a perfect opportunity for recruitment of new members, and our welcome tent can be seen in front of Chatham High School for the duration of the two day event. All new members receive their own red KRC running shirt so that they can add to the "sea of red" that appears on race courses all over the region. In May we commence our Spring Running Clinics held at the Ichabod Crane track on Wednesdays at 6 p.m. This is a program for runners of all levels including beginners, a speed work group, and a children's program. KRC was formed in 2009, and has over 150 members. For more information about the Kinderhook Runner's Club, go to www.kinderhookrunnersclub.com.

Ten Years Running and Growing

The total number of runners and walkers in the tenth running of Sean's Run is anticipated to exceed 1,500 – up 300% since 2003!

The inaugural Sean's Run, on the last Sunday of April, 2002, was produced with just four months of preparation under the direction of the original event director Jack McGrath. It was inspired by Sean's schoolmates and running buddies who encouraged Sean's family to consider the event as both a memorial and a reminder. Meghan Kraham, a friend of Sean's, was instrumental in getting the student body at Chatham High School behind the idea.

When McGrath, a family friend, heard what the students at Chatham High School were suggesting, he immediately stepped forward and assumed the role of event director, sponsorship developer and promoter. He assembled an energetic committee of volunteers including students. That first event, the only one without timing of runners or a formal registration process, attracted approximately 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 Ian Moore to help retrofit his home to accommodate his wheelchair.

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 began to award grants to give the moneys raised the previous year to schools and youth groups to implement anti-underage drinking programs. Also the Committee launched their new website, www.SeansRun.com and added SeansMile, a race for youth ages 12 and under.

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 SeansMile. Chip Timing of participants was introduced and this technology continues as the method for timing all



Mary Bean of Old Chatham enjoying the 5K in 2010.

participants.

The 2008 event grew again: 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. At the opening ceremony 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. Seans Mile was renamed Meghan's Mile.

Last year Sean's Run became a 2-day event with the addition of a new feature, a "race" for young people with physical and developmental disabilities, dubbed Sea Jem's Super Saturday Sean's Run for Special Needs Kids. Total entries continued to increase to 1,462 people.

For the 10th Annual Sean's Run, the Organizing Committee anticipates over 1,500 entries.

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Jessica Shufelt - Coordinator



Sean's Run an Annual Reunion for Close Friends

Closest of friends and running buddies - these are just two ways to describe a special relationship between two women who after undergraduate school went their separate ways but come together for an annual reunion each year at Sean's Run.

Jessica Oehlke, a Chatham High School graduate, met Alison Wiederhold of Rochester, when they arrived at SUNY Albany in 2003.

"Our friendship literally began when I saw another pair of running shoes dangling from a backpack. It was the first day of pre-season training for SUNY Albany's cross country team and I hoped that the individual carrying those shoes might be a member of the team as well, so I approached her. It was our love for running that initiated and strengthened our friendship," says Jessica.

"My love for the sport began in high school, I was in Sean French's class and on the track and cross country teams with him; he was my friend and we took many runs together. So Sean's Run holds special meaning for me. Even when I got to college, I wanted to never miss the event and I would bring Ali home with me to participate in Sean's Run."

Alison explained that she learned about Sean and Sean's Run from Jessica.

"She told me Sean's story and the importance of the run to her and the entire Chatham community. I wanted to be a part of it. So I went home with Jessica to participate,

and loved with the event. Everyone involved created something truly special and inspirational."

When they graduated, Alison headed home to Rochester, NY, started a career in optics, and now has a daughter, 4-year old Livvie. Jessica went to San Francisco, CA and is now in Medical School at Albany Medical College.

While these busy women remain in regular contact throughout the year by e-mail and phone, they say Sean's Run is their one time each year to again run side-by-side, like they did so often in college.

Alison brings Livvie now and this year the four year old will participate in Meghan's Mile. The mom says "She's really looking forward to putting on her bib number, timing chip and joining the other kids on the starting line. She knows what it is all about after watching Jessica and I for the past few years. Previously she participated, but we pushed her in a stroller. This year she wants to run herself." "Like Jessica does each year, I think my daughter will also make sure we continue this reunion at Sean's Run into the future. Sean's Run presents a powerful message, one that I'm honored to share with my daughter."



Jessica Oehlke of Albany, a Chatham High School graduate, and friend Alison Wiederhold of Rochester crossing the 5K finish line at 2010 Sean's Run

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.

2011 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



Starting Line for Meghan's Mile 2010.

DJ Provides Runners and Walkers with Special Experience

Jack Bogarski loves to make people smile. He's a professional DJ from Valatie who has performed at hundreds of weddings, anniversary parties, holiday gatherings and just about every other kind of celebration over the years - throughout Columbia County and beyond. For 13 years he has been a mainstay entertainer at the Chatham Fair. His enthusiasm, music selection, top-shelf sound system, bubble-making machine and fun and humorous commentary make parties memorable - he knows how to get even the most reserved types out of their chairs, on to the dance floor - moving and smiling.

But once a year he plays to an entirely different audience, nearly 1,500 people of all ages who are in motion before he even cues-up the first rock and roll number from his library. They are the runners and walkers at Sean's Run. And Jack Bogarski is an expert in getting them all to smile.

Each spring Jack Bogarski joins his co-workers from First Niagara Bank who are serving as volunteers at Sean's Run. On event day, while other bank employees are busy assisting with registration, packet pick up and t-shirt distribution, Jack is setting up all of his DJ equipment in a strategic location along the course.

"I set up right near the library on Woodbridge Avenue, this way I get to play for the participants in both Meghan's Mile and the 5K. They all pass by me two times, coming and going," he explains.

"My favorite thing is to give 'High 5's' to as many as possible. I like to see their smiles light up when I call out their names and bib numbers, and encourage them to keep doing a great job. For the 5K runners, when they pass by the second time, they have just a half mile to go to the finish line. At that point, many are showing signs of getting tired but they seem to pick up their pace when they hear the music."

Last year he used his bubble machine to cover the street with bubbles creating excitement and a special experience for Sean's Run participants, a wonderful compliment to everything the Sean's Run organizers are trying to achieve in providing a fun time for all.

If you'd like to know more about Jack Bogarski's DJ services, you can contact him at 518-758-1392. He'll make you smile!



Jack Bogarski, professional DJ from Valatie, entertaining participants on the course during 2010 Sean's Run.



Robert Sansaricq, 1260, and his dad Ralph, 1261, nearing the 5K finish line at 2010 Sean's Run.

First Race for Runner with Autism was Sean's Run

By John Mason
Hudson-Catskill Newspapers

Robert Sansaricq, 19, began running competitively last April. In seven months, he shaved more than five minutes off his time in the 5K run, dropping from a time of 25:37 at his first 5K, Sean's Run in April 2010, to 20 minutes flat at the Chatham Turkey Trot in November.

Robert was diagnosed with classic autism at the age of 2. He is not mentally retarded, but he is non-verbal — the part of his brain that controls communication does not function normally.

Robert has always been a good athlete. He likes to ski, bowl and swim. But it wasn't until his father, Ralph Sansaricq, 53, came up with a running injury last year that Robert began to take up running seriously.

When Ralph was slowly working back into form, he took Robert along with him on runs. "We started with one mile last April. I found he had a good stride," Ralph said.

So they tried the Sean French Run later that month. Ralph, a former track standout at Iona College, was amazed at how well his son did.

Next, they entered the OK 5K race in Kinderhook, where Robert shaved off more than two-and-a-half minutes, coming in at 22:58. That was followed by the Silks-and-Satins 5K in Saratoga Springs, where he finished in 22 minutes flat.

"It's a rare thing for a Special Olympics athlete to perform at a high level with regular runners," Ralph said.

"Everyone was applauding." Since then he's run in about a dozen races and has five medals to show for it.

"I start with him, get him out in front with the top runners," Ralph said. "We're trying to get him to stay in front. Right now his pace is 6:30 minutes a mile."

Ralph varies their training regimen. One day a week they do roadwork with the Kinderhook Runners Club to get used to running in a group. Another day they'll run on the track. Another day they'll run on Ostrander Road. Another day they run on forest trails.

They run 15 to 20 miles a week.

"Robert's significant impediment is in speech," Ralph said. "It affects his motivation and his ability to imitate. So it's important for him to have a trusted coach, a running buddy and a dad, all in one."

"It appeals to him because it's a chance to express himself physically in a way he's comfortable with," Ralph said. "He loves to be outdoors. He likes trails and roads, not a track. That's a little too regimented. He prefers to run in a natural environment."

Ralph said the experience has also created a stronger bond between father and son.

Robert helped Ralph get back in shape and Robert has become more connected, more verbal and a better student at school.

"We communicate non-verbally," Ralph said. "I sense just where Robert's at. There's nothing like doing an activity with your son. This ongoing process has been a joy."



Youngest finisher to walk entire 5K course in 2010, Katelyn Thomas (#1392) age 3 from Chatham, with mom, Amanda Thomas (#964).



Most senior 2010 Participant - Stan Card, 87, from Claverack.

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.

Car crashes, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are the leading cause of death for teens. The statistics are alarming - in 2009, eight teens ages 16 to 19 died every day from motor vehicle injuries. The Center for Injury Research and Prevention has found that nearly 2/3 of those who perish were not using safety belts.

Per mile driven, teen drivers ages 16 to 19 are four times more likely than older drivers to crash (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration). Alcohol consumption greatly increases the likelihood that teens will forego use of seatbelts; nearly three out of every four teen drivers killed in motor vehicle crashes after drinking and driving were not wearing a seat belt. (CDC)



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.

Theta Kappa Beta Fraternity Brothers Support Sean's Run

By Pete Bucci

Participants in Sean's Run over the past few years may have noticed some new faces at the event: men dressed in black shirts with strange letters on the front. No, it's not a secret government agency that tracks alien visitors to Earth. It's a fraternity; Theta Kappa Beta fraternity — more commonly known as just Beta.

Theta Kappa Beta was founded at Plattsburgh State University in 1959 by seven Korean War vets who wanted to perpetuate the bond they forged on the battlefield. Today, it is the only remaining independent Greek organization at the school.

Mark French pledged Beta in the spring of 1972 and was Fraternity President in fall of 1974. His brother, Lee, is a member of the pledge class of Fall 1978. However, they were the only Betas participating in Sean's Run until four years ago, when Mark says he saw a familiar name on an entry form.

"I'll never forget when I saw an early entry form from my big brother, Larry Fischer, who came from Long Island," Mark says, adding that while the circumstances were less than ideal, the reunion was a great source of comfort. "I was so happy to see him after many years."

For those unfamiliar with fraternities, every pledge (recruit) has a big brother, who serves as a mentor to his little brother during pledging, often creating a life-long bond between them. Also as a result, every Beta has a "family tree" that can be traced back to one of the founding brothers of Theta Kappa Beta.

Being reunited with his big brother would not be the last surprise for Mark. As the social media phenomenon was sweeping the Internet, hundreds of Beta alumni nationwide were reconnecting with each other and the active brothers in Plattsburgh. In 2008, a Beta alumnus living in Southern California named Brad Bach posted an announcement on a fraternity social website and on Facebook, calling on brothers to participate in Sean's Run. Mark says he didn't know about Brad's efforts until Lee found out there was a group of about a half-dozen Betas planning to attend, but he appreciates the gesture of support from a brother.

"I was really taken aback," Mark says. "To think these guys would come together after all those years and offer a fraternity brother such support — so bittersweet for me."

Since then, a growing number of Betas have turned out each year at Sean's Run to join the cause and support a brother's efforts to combat underage drinking and impaired driving and encourage teens to use seat belts. Mark says there were about 15 brothers participating last year. He says he found a measure of solace in the presence of his Beta brothers.

Ed Schwartz, a fraternity brother who lives in Chatham says, "I'm proud that members of our fraternity are enthusiastically supporting this important event. It's turned out to be an "on the calendar" event for us. We've had members come from Massachusetts, Connecticut, and from all over New York — from Long Island to the Adirondacks. We get together, following the event, for lunch at a local restaurant."

"Looking back, seeing those guys really was the beginning of my 'getting better' period of recovery and healing," Mark says. "I think they really helped in that regard."

Looking forward, Mark wants to build on Brad Bach's initiative to get more Betas involved in Sean's Run. He's also hoping to encourage some younger alumni and active brothers to come out and "show their stuff" on the course on Sunday, May 1st.



Theta Kappa Beta fraternity member Ron Sacks nears the finish line last year

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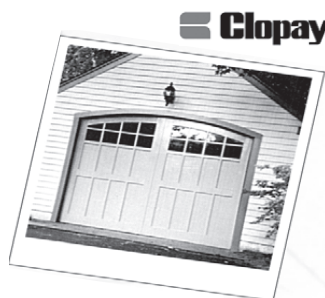
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SEAN'S RUN - RECORD HOLDERS & PAST CHAMPIONS

5K COURSE RECORDS

Male Course Record: 15:18
Matthew Forsys, 22, Howell, NJ

Female Course Record: 17:42
Lilly Becker, 20, Pittsfield, MA

AGE GROUP 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 Forsys, 16, Howell, NJ

Female: 18:18 - Brina Seguire, 18, Rensselaer, NY

19 to 29

Male: 15:49 - Matthew Forsys, 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: 23:31 - Deb Mataracchiero, 52, Valatie

60 to 69

Male: 21:15 - Tom Adams, 62, Rotterdam, NY

Female: 24:37 - Jayne Zinke, 61, Valatie, NY

70 to 79

Male: 23:36 - Richard Shook, 70, Pittsfield, MA

Female: 27:56 - Anne Stockman, 73, Rensselaer, NY

80 and Over

Male: 41:49 - Gene Carlough, 81, East Chatham

PAST 5K CHAMPIONS JACK McGRATH AWARD WINNERS

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 Forsys, 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 Forsys, 22, Howell, NY, 15:18

Female: Brina Seguire, 18, Rensselaer, NY, 18:18

2009

Male: Matthew Forsys, 23, Howell, NY, 15:49

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

2010

Male: Chuck Terry, 27, Albany, NY, 15:58

Female: Emma Gryner, 18, Craryville, NY, 21:05

PAST MEGHAN'S MILE CHAMPIONS THE NEWKIRK AWARD WINNERS

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 Forsys, 11, Absecon, NJ, 8:33

2006

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

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

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 Beaucage, 12, Valatie, NY, 6:53

2009

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

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

2010

Male: Drew McAuley, 12, Schenectady, NY, 6:12

Female: Samantha Taylor, 10, Philmont, NY, 6:50

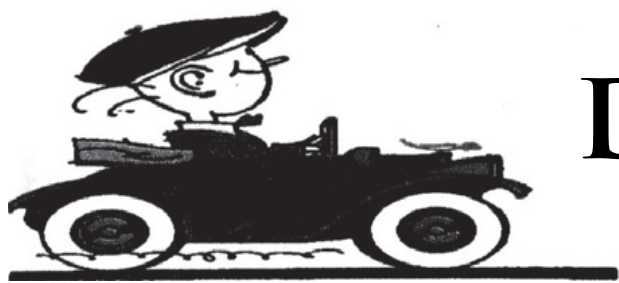
MEGHAN'S MILE COURSE RECORDS

Male Course Record - Jordan Healy, 12, Castleton, NY, 5:56

Female Course Record - Kaylee Scott, 11, Castleton-on-Hudson, NY, 6:21



2010 5K Champion, Chuck Terry of Albany breaking finish line tape held by Jeff French, the event's general chairman.



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For ten 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 combat underage drinking, impaired driving and teenagers' lax use of seatbelts. Thanks to generous sponsors and donors, \$148,450 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. This year Sean's Run is presenting \$500 grants to 12 schools and youth groups to plan and produce their own Battle of the Belts and compete in the World Championship Battle of Belts. Also, two regional organizations whose missions are to combat underage drinking and impaired driving will be presented grants to support their work.

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, 74 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.

2011 Sean's Run Grant Winners

ORGANIZATION	COUNTY
Averill Park HS SADD	Rensselaer
Berlin Jr/Sr HS SADD	Rensselaer
Council on Addiction & Prevention Education - The Marathon Project	Dutchess
Chatham HS SADD	Columbia
Chatham MS SADD	Columbia
Fonda-Fultonville HS Student Government	Montgomery
Hoosick Falls HS Youth Summit Team	Rensselaer
Hudson Department of Youth	Columbia
Lynch Literacy Academy Student Council, Amsterdam City School District	Montgomery
Mohonasen HS SADD	Schenectady
Pine Plains Stissing Mt. HS SADD	Dutchess
Schodack/Castleton Community Partnership	Rensselaer
Remove Intoxicated Drivers	Schenectady
Choices 301	Albany

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, are due by February 15th. Two \$1,000 scholarships, one to a boy and one to a girl, are awarded each year. The winners best exemplify the positive personal characteristics for which Sean is remembered.

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 are invited to apply. Two \$500 scholarships, one to a boy and once to a girl, are awarded.

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 and must be submitted by February 15th. At least two \$500 scholarships, one to a boy and one to a girl, are awarded each year to the applicants who best describe how their love of running has prepared them for the challenges of college.

2011 Winners from Chatham High School

Recognizes Community Service, Compassion for Others

Melyssa Sweet
Ryan Behrens

2011 Winners from NYSPHSAA Section II

Recognizes Sportsmanship

Betsy Edinger - Greenwich HS
Kevin Terbush - Burnt Hills HS

2011 Winners from Columbia County

Recognizes Love of Running

Cailey Nieto - Chatham HS
Max Ocean - Hawthorne Valley HS

First Niagara Bank's Tom Amell, front left, with members of The Marathon Project from Poughkeepsie who were awarded a Sean's Run grant in 2010.

The First (2002) Scholarship Winners An Update

Princeton, RPI, Johnson and Wales — schools that three of the students who won the first Sean Patrick French Memorial Scholarships have attended. Awarded the scholarships in 2002, these winners continue to do well and accomplish much.

Justin Corelli, a 2002 graduate of Shaker HS and a Good Sport Scholarship winner, now resides in Philadelphia. He was a running buddy of Sean's after competing together in the Junior Olympics as 8 year olds. Justin matriculated from Princeton University with a double degree in Economics/Finance and Education and, after a 2-year stint teaching high school, is now an entrepreneur educating consumers about energy choices in his role as a Senior Consultant for Ambit Energy L.P. His work schedule allows less time for the grueling training schedule he knew in college. "I only compete in a few races each year," he says, "and try to never miss Sean's Run. I see running now an excellent past-time to relax and refocus."

Reflecting on running days past, Justin says, "Sean has not been with us for almost a decade, yet his impact continues to touch more and more lives for good. Over the years, I've seen how a tragic and untimely death has become the catalyst that continues to bring families and this community closer together. The spirit surrounding Sean's Run continues to spawn better awareness of underage drinking and hopefully building safer communities for those influenced by all the efforts involved."



Justin Corelli a Princeton graduate was awarded a scholarship in 2002.



James Crannell, Law Student, former teammate of Sean French and past Scholarship awardee

James Crannell, a Chatham High School graduate and track-and-field teammate of Sean's, was awarded a scholarship in 2002 based on his community service and the level of empathy and compassion he exhibited for others. He graduated from RPI in Troy and is now a Juris Doctorate candidate at Vermont Law School, where he also serves as staff editor for the Vermont Journal of Environmental Law. James is ranked in the top 20% of his class. Still is a runner, Jim claims he's stronger than ever with no plans on giving up on the sport in the future. He has missed only one Sean's Run — though he registered for all — when attending graduate school out-of-state for a year.

"Put simply, I think Sean's Run is a wonderful event. I was a friend and teammate of both Sean and Meghan Kraham, and the event is a deserving tribute to them both. It was an honor to be named the first male recipient of the Sean Patrick French Memorial Scholarship, which helped pay for my tuition at RPI," noted Jim.

Christen Lill, Chatham High School class of 2002, attended Johnson and Wales University before moving to Orlando, FL, where she works for Marriott's Orlando World Center as the Coordinator of the Chef's Office. She has completed several marathons and has plans to return to New York in the next few years when her daughter, Mackenzie, is ready to begin school. "I will miss being able to run every day in the warm sunny Florida weather," she says, "but I definitely miss our family and friends more. Plus, I love the hill work outs I can do up north. Everything is flat down here."

One of Christen's favorite memories of Sean from their high school days is when their amusement ride at the Chatham Fair, The Zipper, broke down and they were stuck for over an hour at the top. They passed the time by rocking and spinning their cage until operators finally got the ride working again.

Because Christen has been living away from our area, she has attended only two Sean's Runs in person. But on the date of the event, no matter where she is, she takes a good long run in memory and honor of Sean, noting, "It is one run I never miss."



Christen Lill and daughter Mackenzie



Berkshire Artist/Poet Supports Sean's Run

Berkshire watercolor artist/poet and runner Tom Warner has again created a painting for Sean's Run. The special watercolor for the tenth annual event is titled "Running With Sean". The painting will be one of two grand prizes in the Sean's Run Raffle with all the proceeds going to the event. The painting is a rendition of a household cork bulletin board displaying running items related to the artist's first few times he met Sean and his family.

"The painting is about the first time I met Sean at a race in Philmont that was organized by his uncle, Jeff French. Then a couple of years later we met again at the Old Chatham 5K road race. It also depicts how we remember him today through Sean's Run." Warner explains.

"I was so impressed with what a wonderful, thoughtful, kind young man Sean had grown to be. After Sean's tragic death, I just wanted to do something to help in the cause of stopping underage drinking and the tragedies that can follow. If my effort of donating has helped in this loving cause to help our youth, then I am thrilled to have helped," he adds.

This year's painting is on display at First Niagara Bank in Chatham until Sean's Run on May 1. A small limited edition of Giclee Prints of this painting "Running With Sean" can be seen and purchased at www.tomwarnerwatercolors.com



"My running buddy" is how Berkshire artist Tom Warner remembers his canine companion of 13 years, Snuggles, who joined him on many runs through forest and dale. Snuggles left this earth for the Rainbow Bridge in March, where he is waiting to someday be reunited with his beloved owner and to run into eternity.



To Your Howl with Forgotten Spirit

by Tom Warner

*Mile by mile we ran
with you by our side.
There by the wood's edge
set free on the count of three.
You bolting like lightning
and only your howling
a hint of your distant
presence.*

*No coyotes would I fear
no bears a bother.
You ran with the deer
with beauty and grace.
Only stopping for a
brief moment, to meet
by the stream that
babbling brook.
Come on in Dad,
bring the kid 'cause
water's great.
Too late, I'm out
up that mud bank.*

*What, me too wet,
no problem, I'll wait.
Pet me, pet me
as I shake, shake, shake.
Now to Home.
Where you would sleep
Keeping memories
and the children
content and safe.
Today you left
this earth, your body.
Your journey in time
never a long enough stay.
I held you, I cried
and your spirit went away.
As I go to those scared woods
where we ran and played.
I'll go and stop and listen
and pray.
To your howl with
forgotten spirit.*

event. His race galleries are searchable and easy to browse through all the activities of Sean's Run. His pricing is very athlete friendly, and you can choose from both print and digital options of your photos. Because Greg Wolcott process every order individually, he allows our participants a huge amount of options, which cannot be provided by companies which use auto order fulfillment. Five Pines has an outstanding reputation and will provide a wonderful way to remember the fun you had at Sean's Run.

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 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.

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. Ian Moore, another passenger also 17 at the time, sustained paralyzing injuries. The 17-year old intoxicated driver, was a schoolmate who had been arrested previously for drunk driving, just 18 days before the fatal crash.

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Want a professional photo of you crossing the finish line at Sean's Run? Just go to the Five Pines website www.gregwolcott.com/photocart/index.php where you can search for your photo using your bib number and purchase a high quality print image or order a digital version with the Sean's Run logo.

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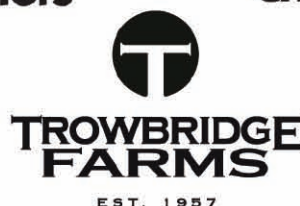
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