

# Peter Glavin, area road race pioneer, dies of cancer

Leo Roth • Staff writer • April 27, 2010

Peter Glavin, co-founder of the Genesee Valley Harriers, was known as the elite running club's "Pied Piper."

Mr. Glavin so loved running and wanted to see others succeed that he freely shared his passion with friends and strangers alike.

"It became contagious," GVH coach Mike Reif said. "No doubt, outside of his family, it was his life. He made running his great adventure and purpose for living and he dragged most of us along with him ... for which we are forever grateful."

Mr. Glavin of Greece, a fixture in Rochester running circles for three decades as an elite competitor, club official, race director and enthusiastic spectator died Friday after a long battle with cancer.

He was 47.

A member of the Greater Rochester Track Club's Hall of Fame, Mr. Glavin was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor late in 2008. He is survived by his wife, Christine; children, Donovan, 11, and Shauna, 9; and numerous family members.

A star distance runner at McQuaid Jesuit (Class of 1980) — where he ran for legendary coach Bob Bradley — and Rutgers University, Mr. Glavin later

became a top open class competitor.

Along with numerous Top 10 finishes in area races, Mr. Glavin won the 1991 Jacksonville, Fla., Marathon in 2:26:18.

Mr. Glavin's most profound impact was in the arena of race directing — the popular Lilac 10K was among his many credits — and helping start a national movement to have grassroots running clubs develop Olympic-caliber athletes. He founded the successful Upstate Cross Country Series in 1990 and the Genesee Valley Harriers in 1996 with Bill Quinlisk.

The club provides elite post-collegiate and masters class runners training and race opportunities that hadn't existed to this degree before locally. Under Mr. Glavin's direction, the club hosted the 2005 USA Track & Field National Club Cross Country Championships at Genesee Valley Park. The USATF honored Mr. Glavin with its Cross Country Council Award in December.

"He had endless energy," Reif said. "He was a hardcore runner who wanted to give others the chance to reach the highest levels that they could."

Mr. Glavin never forgot his roots and enjoyed helping young runners achieve their goals, too. He coached at McQuaid and since 2002 was director of the prestigious McQuaid Cross Country Invitational, taking over for Bradley, his mentor.

"He was one of the prime volunteers and every year did more and more," Bradley said. "He just had a special knack for making a meet as good as it could be. We're left with high standards to live up to."

Mr. Glavin spent the final six weeks of his life in

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hospice.

The Sunset House in Irondequoit became "Pete's House" as he received an endless run of visitors.

Friends and family, who recalled his zest for life and wicked sense of humor, said he inspired them with his courage.

"It was like he was running his longest race," said Christine, his wife of 15 years. "He fought with all he had."

On March 20, Mr. Glavin's multitude of friends organized a 5K run in his honor. "Pete's Run" drew 180 participants and raised nearly \$4,000 for Sunset House and a college fund for Donovan and Shauna.

Calling hours are today from 2-4 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. at Bartolomeo & Perotto Funeral Home, 1411 Vintage Lane, Greece. A funeral mass is at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday at St. Mark's Church, 54 Kuhn Road. For more information, go to [www.aliferemembered.com](http://www.aliferemembered.com).

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