



I am running the Boston Marathon to raise money for a local charity, LEE'S FRIENDS, which provides support to families with cancer. I am asking you my friends, neighbors, fellow parishioners and acquaintances for your support.

LEE'S FRIENDS is a support program for cancer patients and their families located in Hampton Roads. The organization provides person-to-person help and emotional and practical support for those who are facing the crisis of diagnosis and treatment of cancer. A more complete description of the organization and its services can be found at www.leesfriends.org.

As a stay-home mom I have realized the importance of my personal goals, as I sometimes need ancillary fulfillment away from the daily norms of domestic duties. I have been blessed with a wonderful husband, three loving children, forever friends, good neighbors, parish and a wonderful community. I would not change my life for anything but there are times I want to do more. I was on the cross-country team in high school and due to various life decisions I put my running passion on the shelf. With my three kids finally out of diapers and my 40th birthday approaching I decided to revive that passion. I set my sights on running the Boston Marathon for my 40th birthday.

I had not run competitively since high school and, thus, I knew this would be a true challenge. I set my sites on my first half-marathon, the East Beach run in Norfolk. Winning my age group gave me the confidence I needed to run my first full marathon. I choose the OBX Marathon in November 2007. I completed my on-line registration and the real training began because not only did I have to finish the marathon but my time had to be good enough to qualify for the Boston event. Training at 5 am every morning proved challenging at times. During those long days and many early morning runs I decided I would not only run for myself but for a worthy cause. I was determined to find a local charity to share my goal.

Over that last ten years cancer has been a large influence on my life. Friends, family and neighbors have struggled with this complex disease. Two of my long time friends lost their battle with the disease in 2007. Jeanne B. Arcuni of Vienna, Virginia lost her battle with cancer last year. Prior to her passing she and her husband, Al Arcuni, were paramount in starting support groups for families struck with this disease. LEE'S FRIENDS offers those same services and more to families and individuals with cancer.

My goal is to raise funds and awareness for LEE'S FRIENDS and I am asking for your support. No donation is too small and I have included a self-addressed envelope for your convenience. I also strive to inspire others to go after their goal to take a class, finish that degree or go after that lifelong dream. Life is too short. Thank you in advance and God Bless.

Sincerely,

Claire

Claire J. McCrary