



Bill Fortune took great pride in his vigorous good health.



Meals on Wheels run/walk honors a great local athlete

The Rockland Road Runners is an organization for runners and walkers in and around Rockland County. They promote fitness, friendship, competition, and charity. RRR hosts local races plus has a racing team that competes in NYRR races and other events.

One of the many runs hosted by Rockland Road Runners is the Bill Fortune Memorial 10K & 5K Run/Walk which benefits Meals on Wheels Programs & Services of Rockland.

The Bill Fortune Memorial 10K & 5K Run/Walk began in 2011 in honor of Bill Fortune. Bill did not take up running until he was 51 years, but as with anything he did, he committed himself completely to this new challenge.

Before long he established himself as one of the Rockland Road Runners' most accomplished masters' runners. He quickly gained national recognition in track and

road-running events ranging from 800 meters to the marathon.

In his 60's, he set five national age-group records and posted personal-best times faster than runners half his age. At the age of 64 he was running 5-minute miles and at the age of 70 he continued to compete with 6-minute miles.

Bill Fortune redefined the limits of competitive running for older athletes and took great pride in his vigorous good health, serving as a role model for athletes of all ages. His self-effacing and genial disposition endeared him to everyone, and his contributions to the Rockland running community were meaningful and enduring.

In doing all this, and so much more, Bill

inspired and taught us that it is never too late to set new goals and achieve what once appeared impossible! He showed us that in order to achieve your goals you needed to be committed and work hard each and every day.

He trained diligently and referred to his consistent training schedule as his "homework". A 40-year Pearl River resident, Bill could often be seen doing his speed-work at the Pearl River High School track or doing daily morning five-mile runs at Rockland Lake with fellow Rockland Road Runner members.

He believed that the physical and mental benefits of running were incredible. If you commit to the challenge, set goals for



That's Bill Fortune's daughter Mary wearing #44.

yourself and focus on the positive effects running will have on your life, anyone can become a runner.

Bill also believed in the importance of community service and the necessity of giving back to others. In his later years he was a volunteer coach at the Rockland Road Runner's summer track workouts, which have since been renamed, in his memory. He instilled in many who knew him the importance of service.

Meals on Wheels of Rockland, the recipient of the proceeds for this run, was an important cause for Bill.

Meals on Wheels has been improving the quality of life for aging Rockland residents for 40 years. Each week hundreds of dedicated volunteers support the agency's activities by delivering meals to frail, elderly homebound individuals, and providing general assistance in our Senior Centers and the Bobbi Lewis Adult Daycare Center. Bill would be honored to have the proceeds for this run given to support such a worthy cause.

The Bill Fortune Memorial 5K & 10K Run/Walk is a fitting tribute to a man who immeasurably enhanced the standing of the Rockland Road Runners in the eyes of the local running community and beyond.

We are gratified that the Fortune connection to the race was further strengthened in 2014 with the installment of Mary Fortune Scanlon, Bill's daughter, as race director. Mary, also a member of the Board of Directors for Meals on Wheels of Rockland, has graciously accepted the mantle of representing the next generation of Fortune family members in carrying on the legacy of their Dad, who would surely be proud – and smiling.

Please celebrate his life by joining the Rockland Road Runners Club in supporting the important work of Meals on Wheels Programs & Services of Rockland County (845-624-6325) by participating in the Bill Fortune Memorial 10K & 5K Run/ Walk on Saturday, May 10, 2014. New this year, all walkers will also be timed and the top three walkers will also receive a medal!

For race information, to register or print an application go to: www.rocklandroadrunners.org/races/Fortune/

Online registration closes on May 5, 2014, but people can register at pre-race pickup and on race day.

If you have any questions please contact the Race Directors at: fortunerun@rocklandroadrunners.com

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