

12TH Monson Memorial Classic

My name is Jack Perry and I live in Monson Massachusetts. I have lived here all of my life. I am writing to let you all know about the Monson Memorial Classic. It is an event that has been held since Nov. of 1996 in memory of my wife Kathy and my sister in law Kelly two very beautiful young ladies that lost their lives to cancer at the age of 34 and 36. My two very young sons lost their mother and aunt and my in laws lost two out of their three daughters in a span of eight months.

A close friend of our family, Lee Williams was touched so deeply by this tragedy that she found it in her heart to have an event in honor of Kathy and Kelly .She decided to have a running race in their honor with the proceeds benefiting selected charities. To name two we will donate to THE SHADE Foundation of America, founded by Shonda Schilling, a melanoma survivor and Griffin's Friends, and on a local level we have donated to the Monson Open Pantry.

The event consists of a competitive, certified half marathon and certified 5k race. For those who want to participate but aren't serious runners there is a two mile fun walk. Throughout the day there are plenty of food and beverages for all the participants and plenty of great music. The date of this year's event is Nov. 11th.

An event of this magnitude takes the effort of a large group of volunteers and as many donations as we can solicit. Donations no matter how great or small are appreciated.

To have shared my life with such a wonderful, loving person like Kathy was a blessing cut far too short. When I reminisce about all the "firsts" we experienced together it brings joy to my heart and a smile to my face. Our sons' first cries, their first steps and the first Christmas that Santa visited them to name a few. There have been many more "firsts" that I have experienced since 1996. Jesse and Jeremie's first day of school and feeling like I'm not the one that should be putting them on the bus. The first Mother's Day in school that the class made Mother's Day cards. That's one thing I never thought I would receive. Their first swing of a baseball bat, their first underhanded basket and their first goal. Step up night for freshman entering High School, their first dance, their first girl friend, and arriving home safely after my first time in the passengers' seat of a new driver. Don't get me wrong, every one is a blessing. My point is it's a shame not to have had shared all this with the one who gave two wonderful young men life.

Cancer affects all of our lives in one-way or another. In my case, four years ago, it was right under my roof. My mother lost her battle on Nov.13th 2003. Having all this happen so close to home gives me the drive to continue to participate in this event as well as others throughout the year. It will take all of us to eliminate this dreadful disease. I believe I share a common goal with many of you, to rid this Earth of cancer so all of our children will never lose a spouse or have to explain to their children why Mommy or Daddy went away.

If at all possible please support us in our efforts. I realize in these trying economic times money is tight. I also realize the economy will recover in time. Too many people, family and friends are running out of time.

Donations can be mailed to,
Monson Memorial Classic
P.O. Box 496 Monson, MA 01057

Thanks so much,
Jack Perry

A \$100.00 sponsorship will place your business name on this years race T-shirt. I need to know as soon as possible to ensure the information is submitted on time. I can be reached at 413-245-7144 or 413-267-4891.

