

For Pete's Sake team to run Gallagher 10-mile

BY CHRISTIE ROTONDO

For Pete's Sake, a nonprofit organization with roots in Sea Isle City, has partnered with the beach patrol for the 41st annual Captain Bill Gallagher Island Run. Race participants can collect pledges and dedicate their run to the organization.

For Pete's Sake, named after former Sea Isle City Beach Patrol member Peter R. Bossow, sends young adult cancer patients and their families on all-expense paid respite vacations to the East Coast and the Caribbean. The organization will be celebrating its 10th anniversary at the run.

Named after a former lifeguard captain, the Gallagher run started as a lifeguard fitness competition. Now the 10-mile run attracts more than 1,500 athletes, who compete for cash prizes including \$250 for first place, \$150 for second and \$75 for third. Runners in firefighter, police and lifeguard divisions will receive prizes as well, and trophies will be awarded to the top athletes in various age divisions and the top 10 overall runners. The race benefits the Sea Isle City Beach Patrol, as

well as the local organizations the beach patrol donates to throughout the year.

The race begins 5:45 p.m. at beach patrol headquarters on 44th Street and boardwalk, rain or shine. John Stevens, assistant coach of the L.A. Kings and former head coach of the Flyers, will be participating with a team representing For Pete's Sake.

To date, the group has sent more than 900 cancer patients and their families on vacations as a way to give them some relief from the stresses of dealing with cancer. The beach patrol has pledged to donate \$10 to For Pete's Sake for any team or participant who raises more than \$250 for the organization.

Marci Schankweiler, the founder of For Pete's Sake, said Sea Isle is where she fell in love with Bossow, the man she would later marry. She was working at her family's bakery, Maryann Pasty Shoppe, and he was working for the Sea Isle City Beach Patrol.

"Pete was a lifeguard. I was waiting on him, giving him doughnuts in the morning," Schankweiler said.

When Bossow was diagnosed with testicular cancer at the age of 29, their friends and family

gave the couple a two-week vacation.

"We returned feeling refreshed, reconnected, rejuvenated, and it kind of put in place and give us some hope that there was a lot more than just this life here. We realized that cancer never destroys love," Schankweiler said.

She added that before her husband's death in 1999, he set up the concept for the organization based on their vacation.

"Celebrate the love and joy that you have every day. Carpe diem — seize the day, is really our mantra," she said.

For Pete's Sake sent its first patient on vacation in 2000

to Sea Isle City, where Schankweiler had purchased a beach house for the organization to use. Each summer, cancer patients and their families visit the house, as well as others along the East Coast that have been



More than 1,500 runners take off when the starting gun is fired at last year's Captain Bill Gallagher 10-Mile Island Run organized by the Sea Isle City Beach Patrol.

donated by homeowners for a week's vacation.

"We really get a lot of support from Sea Isle businesses and residents," the founder said. "People just embrace the idea of helping another person. It's

good to be part of something good. We can play a small part in making the world a better place."

Registration takes place 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday before the race at the Lodge at 300 JFK

Boulevard. The fee is \$30 for individuals and \$32 for team or club members.

For information about For Pete's Sake see www.takea breakfromcancer.org.