

## Distant Memories Swim in eighth year

Fundraiser for Alzheimer's disease in memory of lifeguard Hal Daly

By Patricia Proven

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About 25 participants in the eighth annual Distant Memories Swim, set for Thursday, July 28 at 10 am, will join Harborfields High School physical education teacher Bryan Proctor of Northport in swimming the 3.5 miles from Asharoken Beach, Northport to Knollwood Beach, Huntington.

The group aims to raise at least \$15,000 to fight Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. By press time, the effort raised about \$1,000, Proctor said, who added that the bulk of pledges come in the day of the swim.

This year's event is in memory of Hal Daly, a 40-year Jones Beach lifeguard who died in 2003 after living 10 years with Alzheimer's.

His son, repeat swimmer Jim Daly of Huntington, said, "He was a terrific family man and terrific husband and not just a lifeguard but a hard worker his whole life. I'm one of five children and he worked many jobs to make sure that we went to good schools, had a good education and of course like all good dads he made sure that we were well provided for. I do the swim in honor of that and in honor of him, for what he stood for."

Also swimming again this year is Harborfields High School Class of 2000 graduate David H. Borg of Farmingdale.

Borg, who works at Borg & Borg Insurance in Huntington, gave an idea of how challenging the trek across Northport Bay can be. He competed in the 2006 Ironman triathlon in Panama City, Fla., has run the Boston Marathon and plans on participating in the inaugural Huntington Sprint Triathlon set for Sept. 25 at Crab Meadow Beach, yet he still sees the Distant Memories Swim as a particularly long and tough one.

"No matter how much you train, it's not a day in the park," said Borg, who recalled how choppy waves last year made it difficult to breathe and how stinging jellyfish were distracting, to say the least.

But, he said, "You just keep going."

Should the swimmers need assistance that day, the Huntington Bay constable, Huntington and Northport fire boats and volunteer kayakers and boaters will be close behind to lend a hand.

Borg said none of his loved ones has had Alzheimer's disease but he wants to support Proctor, a friend of his from SUNY Cortland. "It helps get the word out locally," Borg said.

Proctor started the Distant Memories Swim in 2003 after watching the devastating effects of Alzheimer's on his grandfather, Al Riviere, who died in September 2009. About a year earlier, Riviere's sister and Proctor's great-aunt Maddie Bini also died after a long struggle with Alzheimer's.

"The disease not only affects the mind of the individual with the disease," Proctor stated, "but also has a tremendous effect on the caregiver and family. My hope when starting the swim was to create awareness, raise funds, and create support for those affected or who may become affected by the disease in the

future."

Daly said, "It's almost as if it robs the soul of the person and just leaves this shell. And it's a very devastating thing to the whole family, not just the person who's suffering from the disease itself. And that's where the real hardship comes in with the disease — how it affects so many family members, and the primary caregiver and how it drains emotionally and physically and financially. By doing a swim like this, it really helps those that are going through those times right now, so that's real important to me."

Proctor swam the first year to raise awareness of Alzheimer's, which impacts over 55,000 families on Long Island. Since then, he, his brother, Eric, 24, and friends have raised over \$63,000 for research and programming for the Alzheimer's Association Long Island.

According to AALI, from 14 million to 16 million baby boomers will have Alzheimer's disease. The social, economical and emotional impact will be devastating. Damage begins 10 to 20 years before symptoms appear. "We must find a way to prevent Alzheimer's disease now, before the damage begins," Proctor stated. "By donating, the mind you save may be your own or a loved one's."

Donations can be made online at [www.memoryswim.org](http://www.memoryswim.org) or by mail to: AALI, attention Distant Memories Swim, 3281 Veterans Memorial Highway, Suite E-13, Ronkonkoma, NY 11779.

Anyone who wants to cheer the swim team on should plan on arriving at Asharoken Beach at 9 am on the 28th.