Celiabren a life lost too soon
Cangelosi family holds Mitch's Run scholarship fundraiser

By JACK WHITEHOUSE

SAILOR'S HAVEN — To celebrate the life of a beloved lifeguard, teacher, friend, brother, son and fiancé who lost his life suddenly on August 11 of last year, the Cangelosi family of Sayville held the first-ever “Mitch’s Run” last Saturday.

The family and all those who participated in this unique and heart-warming event considered it a tremendous success. Pre-registered runners and walkers exceeded 400 in number with many more signing up the day of the race.

The family wanted the event (hoping to be annual) to serve as a fundraiser for a college scholarship fund in Mitch’s name, and they clearly exceeded all expectations. Immediately prior to the start of the run/walk, Carl Cangelosi, Mitch’s brother, gave a moving talk and announced the fund had collected more than $25,000, not including proceeds from the raffle yet to be counted.

Judy Furci, owner of Elaine’s Shoes, arranged for donations of gift baskets from many generous Sayville business owners, including the Cull House’s John Casey and Sayville Inn’s Pam Raymond.

Cricket’s, Café Joelle, Courtney’s, Violets Blue, the General Store, and many other businesses also contributed. An active sales force sold a total of 6,000 raffle tickets, significantly adding to the total income for Mitch’s fund.

Cari Cangelosi said Mitch’s scholarship would be awarded annually to a Sayville High School student/athlete who “exemplifies Mitchell’s spirit, as well as his dedication to academic and athletic excellence.” Sayville High’s head football coach Rob Hoss, would be awarded the first-ever “Mitch’s Run” scholarship to a Sayville High School student/athlete.

In keeping with the family’s desire to have as many people as possible participate in this memorial to Mitch, no one was turned away and as many as 43 otherwise homeless and destitute children between the ages of five and 17 years of age.

A book about the Sayville Cottages is in progress. If you have any information about the Cottages that you would be willing to share for this project, please contact Jack Whitehouse at 567-9148.

One observer said it reminded her of a giant moving artwork—everyone working together in unison as part of one whole—a fitting landscape for a Fire Island lifeguard lost too soon before his time.

The Cottages Connection

Ken Stein III seemed a fitting representative for the generous local people who contributed to making the “Mitch’s Run” so successful. The Stein family has owned and operated the Sayville Ferry Service, Inc. for many years, and has an equally long history of contributing to local causes.

Nearly 75 years ago, in July 1932, at the height of the Great Depression, Mary Erhard, writing in her monthly column for the Episcopal Church Charity Foundation newsletter, wrote: “Through the kindness of Fred Stein, operator of the ferries, the children, with Miss Coen (housemother for the younger girls) and me, were taken free to Cherry Grove on July 13th.

A happy day was spent on the beach, where we bathed in the ocean, which is more exciting than the bay or the river—our usual swimming places.

“It was the first time some of the younger ones had seen the ocean. Pals and shoves provided entertainment for the eight youngest, while some a little older unentertained enough to dig in the sand a considerable amount, too. Captain Stein found time to be an ideal host on the boat, besides his duties in operating.”

From 1890 to 1915, Erhard was the director of the Episcopal Church Charity Foundation “Cottages” on Middle Road in Sayville, home to as many as 43 otherwise homeless and destitute children between the ages of five and 17 years of age.

A book about the Sayville Cottages is in progress. If you have any information about the Cottages that you would be willing to share for this project, please contact Jack Whitehouse at 567-9148.