

**RACE DAY SPEECH
2017**

Good morning and welcome to the EIGHTH annual Running 4 Answers.

I promise to keep it brief. Over our first 7 years, we have donated \$250,000 to Cure Alzheimer's Fund.

We are happy to have John Slattery here today from that amazing organization. PLEASE stop by and say hi to him.

The money we have raised is a combination of Sponsorships, donations, registrations, and our fundraisers.

We HAPPILY welcome the return of
Verona Take Down Club
Regal Bank
St. Barnabas Health
Fox Rothschild

We welcome for the first time
Brandywine Living
Fitness 121
Barefoot Rehab

Our food and drink are provided by
Pomptonian Food Service
Manhattan Bagel
Rockn' Joe

I continue to rely on the technical support of Chris Gieger and Gieger Visual Communications.

Thank you to Ben Rosenberg and Chris Gieger for donating their photography skills.

Thank you to the towns of Roseland and Essex Fells, particularly Lieutenant Brian Maglio and Sergeant Scott Jones.

In addition, thank you to Tom from the DPW and the Recreation department of Roseland, our CERT volunteers and Amateur Radio Club.

Thank you to Coach Emering and Coach Cullen for the support of the WEST ESSEX track team...we LOVE having you here.

Our fundraisers! You guys just ROCK. Joanne Dowd, Kim Dixon, Brian Brooks and Donna Mufferi, Kristen Buckley.....

A special note...my sister – Suzanne Nelson, by my estimation has – in total – raised between \$25-\$30,000.

In addition to our awards for the race this year, we have a raffle with 3 GREAT prizes. For \$5.00 have a chance to win one of THREE prizes:

\$75 apparel gift card to Sneaker Factory in Florham Park
\$130 gift package from Caldwell Market Place which includes
5 pounds of EACH
hamburgers
hot dogs
chicken breasts
sausage

Lastly – we have this beautiful bracelet worth over \$300 from Brace URself...An organization that creates incredible jewelry and donates part of their proceeds to Alzheimer's organizations.

So stick around for the awards AND RAFFLE

A few of you commented last year about my race day speech. It was 6 months after my mom finally passed away and you expected a real tear-jerker.

The key word to that last sentence, I'm sure some of you noticed, is "finally". Those who will understand that word choice are either going through, have gone through, or are close to someone who is going through the same. After 17 years my mom passing away provided relief.

Relief for her, relief for my sister and me, relief for my dad and relief for his life savings.

Each year I struggle with how much to say. How much reality should be a part of these 3 minutes I spend up here? I will provide you with one number today. One statistic. To care for my mom, after years of taking care of her at home, in about 11 years, my dad spent over \$800,000 in a very reasonably-priced nursing home.

That's why fixing this disease is so important.

This year I realized that this is a project that comes from passion. I have started to describe it to others as a “passion project”. It is a project that comes from love and memories. It is a project that comes from fear. Again, I hesitate with the reality, but there is true fear. What we are doing here, I say every year, isn’t going to cure Alzheimer’s, but I KNOW it is a step in the right direction. Thank you ALL – there is no way for me to be able to say that enough – for being here.

Barbara – I think we may be on to something here. The question “Hey, what do you think about helping me out with this idea” has really turned into something. I am forever grateful that you are my partner.

I end as always: Today, while you are out on the course, think of those you love. Remember those who may not remember you. Be inspired by your own ability to do whatever you deem important enough to do. Have a great race and an enjoyable walk.