

Do You Ever Lose the Passion?

By George Banker

Those who knew Karen Erb knew of her passion for running, while being competitive, was always hidden behind the smile that she wore while she ran. She was born April 11, 1951, and passed away on May 25, 2012. Her three big races were Cherry Blossom, Annapolis, and Army. It was through the heat and humidity at the Annapolis 10-Mile Run that she even smiled when climbing the bridge after the four-mile mark. I had the rare opportunity on many occasions to be the one to capture her moments along the course. I know that each time she tried to slip, by but I made sure that I got my shot. To this day, there is one picture that I only shared with her because she made a face which she thought that I could not get, and I did. I did promise her that, as long as I never got upset, I would not send it to the newspaper. I can state that the picture remains in my files.

There were many Saturday morning runs with the National Capital Track Club (GNATS), from the Washington Sailing Marina, off the George Washington Memorial Parkway, that many miles were logged over the years. There are many runners from the Club who knew Karen, and no one can ever gauge the impact which she had on our lives. The smile she wore was contagious.

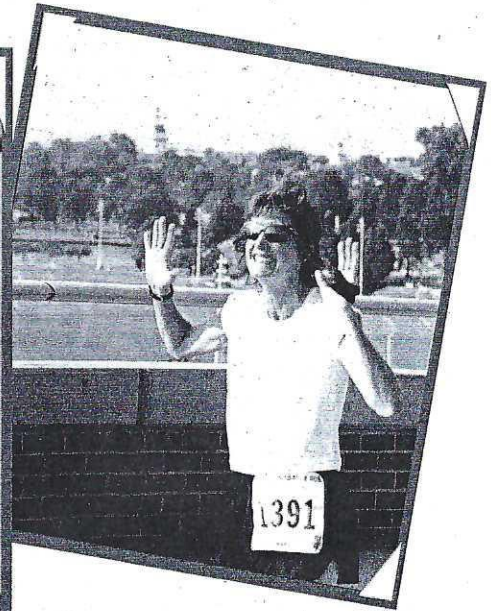
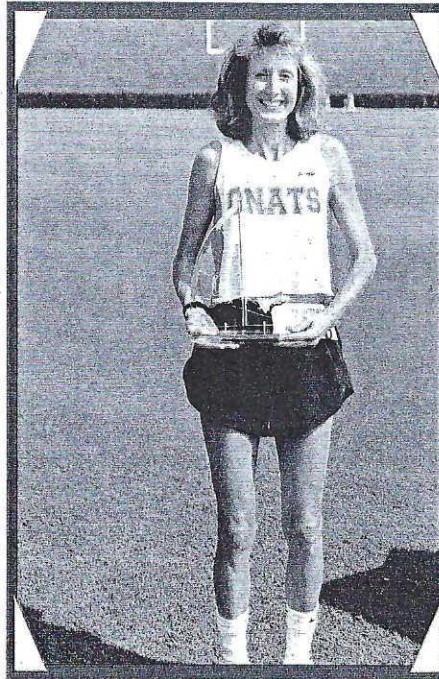
Too many were jealous because, when you watched her run, it was without any effort, and she could not be caught. Look at her times over the years, as she was very consistent and as each foot was planted, it was well thought out.

I never had the time to share with Karen that each holiday season in December, we sent holiday cards to each other's family through the years, and I still have the cards in my files. It's just one of those silly things which I do, but, now, they will mean even more as they will serve as a reminder of Karen.

There are many races which Karen will not have the opportunity to run, but we all have shared the road with Karen. We can still take to the roads and carry her in our hearts and thoughts.

The love of her family, John (Jay), Melissa, and Stephanie, was that moving force.

The passion to run never fades away, but Karen is just running in another place, because it keeps the heart happy.



(Above) Karen Erb running in the Annapolis Ten Miler.
(Left) Karen Erb with her A-10 award in 1999.

(George Banker photos)

Editor's Note: Karen Erb was a stellar runner and well known in the Washington, DC area. We send our condolences to Karen's family and friends. RG writer George Banker's beautiful words will comfort those who loved her.

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