

## MuvStrong Owners Make Bold Pledge To Fight Cancer



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By Cailin Riley

Swimming is not the preferred exercise regimen for Gordon Trotter and Mike DeLalio. And pink Speedos are probably at the very bottom of their list when it comes to wardrobe choices.

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Swim Across America open water swim in Amagansett on July 11. Swim Across America is a national organization dedicated to raising money and awareness for cancer research, prevention and treatment through swimming events, including the one that takes place each year at Big Fresh Pond in Amagansett.

SAA events on Long Island benefit Fighting Chance, a free-of-charge cancer counseling and resource center in Sag Harbor, as well as Memorial Sloan Kettering, Cold Spring Harbor Labs, Mercy Medical Center, Children's Hospital at Montefiori, and the Feinstein Institute for Medical Research, North Shore LIJ.

To make sure they reach their goal of \$5,000, DeLalio, Trotter, and Mike Gaynor provided a little extra "motivation" for would-be supporters, promising to complete the swim in pink Speedos if they get to their goal with pledges. It looked like a pretty safe bet at the beginning of the week, as their fundraising page at Goodcircle.org listed them just \$100 short.

The attention-grabbing swimsuit choice was DeLalio's idea, but both Trotter and DeLalio said they are more than happy to "fully embarrass" themselves, given what's at stake and why they're swimming.

The MuvStrong team is dedicating their swim to the memory of Jane Gaynor, Mike Gaynor's mother, who died of cancer, and also to 4-year-old Drew Birdsall, a Water Mill resident currently undergoing outpatient treatment at St. Jude's Hospital for acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Trotter's family knows the Birdsall family through mutual friends, and Trotter said it just made sense to make the connection: "It made it a lot more personalized for us."

Trotter and DeLalio are no strangers to physical exertion—both play rugby with the Montauk Sharks team, and as personal trainers, exercise and fitness is central to their lives. But they admitted that they'll be going outside their comfort zone with open-water swimming, which they jokingly referred to as "open water floating."

"It's a challenge, and we're up for it," Trotter said. They will be attempting the half-mile swim, while Gaynor has committed to the mile distance.

The pair said they have started training for the event and will try to be in the water as much as possible between now and July 11, taking a dip when they can take a break from work obligations at MuvStrong.

DeLalio, a 2003 Southampton High School graduate, met Trotter in 2007 while playing with the Sharks. He worked as a physical therapist and decided to transition to personal training after making a big change in his own life, dropping significant pounds after tipping the scales at more than 350 pounds after graduating from college, he said.

Trotter, a Sagaponack resident, said the concept behind MuvStrong is simple: "We want to get people moving first, and then we get them strong."

The studio has been open for two months now, and Trotter and DeLalio, along with other coaches and trainers, provide individualized training for clients, working with a wide range of ages and abilities.

And while MuvStrong is a fitness-based company, Trotter said he and DeLalio are also fiercely committed to giving back to the community they provide services for, through events like Swim Across America.

"We both said from the beginning that we wanted to do events like this," Trotter said. "We are all about the local community."



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