

# A Farewell to Guy Morse

The man who played a huge role in saving the Boston Marathon moves on.

**G**uy Morse spent 28 years—beginning in December 1984—with the B.A.A. and left the organization at the end of 2012, leaving it much better off than when he started. His accomplishments are many and have been documented such that a generation from now the organization and the city of Boston will look upon the growth under his tenure and will be able to put the era in perspective.

Though the B.A.A. marked its 125th anniversary in 2012, Morse started as its first employee when the club recognized the need to move the marathon to a professionally run organization. The marathon was growing and change was imminent; otherwise the event would be left behind, surpassed by progressive and more appealing approaches.

Morse knew the B.A.A.'s main event would require the assistance of many. Though the terms may be more prevalent today than in the 1980s, he effectively sought to rebrand and relaunch the Boston Marathon, though he did not have the luxury of employing the strategy in a vacuum. There would not be an ability to pause, skip a year, and come out with his guns blazing on an 18- or 24-month horizon. No, this challenge would have to be met within the many constraints and limitations that are inherent in an event with many distinctions and traditions. In fact, while they were assets, those same qualities were holding back the race from being able to be agile and adaptive.

Morse set out to rebuild internally and on the move. It was as if an automobile needed to have its engine *and* its body swapped out, but the work needed to be done while the vehicle was in motion, traveling at high speed down the highway. The complete makeover would occur not in a studio but rather during rush hour.

One by one the changes began to be implemented. The Boston Marathon would become not just a race, but an *event*. The idea of a single race would be replaced by a race weekend crammed with activities. Prerace events and parties, a celebration of Boston in the eyes of the community, and a projection that the Boston Marathon was important were among the first changes to occur. Major sponsors soon followed. These powerful name brands—John Hancock, adidas, Gatorade

► Jack Fleming (left) worked with Guy Morse for more than two decades.

(among others)—brought resources and marketing activities and had the effect of adding support where the B.A.A. needed it most. A race committee was formalized and committed to meeting regularly to concentrate on aspects such as the start, on-course logistics, the finish, and registration. These concepts seem straightforward in 2013, but they were novel and innovative when Morse and the B.A.A. instituted them.

Morse capitalized on the fact that runners and the community wanted the Boston Marathon to succeed. He allowed them to share in the sense of ownership. Morse's approach was that you can get more with honey than with vinegar, but he needed buy in if the Boston Marathon—and by extension the B.A.A.—was going to survive and live to write its next chapters. There was a lot to look forward to, but in many ways the challenge was when and how to pull the strings. In the most positive sense, Morse moved methodically and conservatively. He created stability and respect for the B.A.A. and the Boston Marathon, and then he moved the event into a leadership position.

With an emphasis on quality versus quantity, he paid special attention to the way in which the principal sponsor, John Hancock, regarded the event's status. He knew that Hancock was crucial to the Boston Marathon's future. Ensuring the principal sponsor's role would allow him and the B.A.A. to turn their attention to the details. He took nothing for granted and moved forward with playing to the event's strength: its attention to qualified runners, the relationship with the eight cities and towns along the 26.2-mile course, and the charitable efforts within the communities. Key relationships with the YMCA to lead the hydration station coordination and with the American Red Cross to aid on-course efforts were immensely helpful in providing coverage. These two programs became the core of the volunteer program, which is now more than 7,000 strong.



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Soon after, now in the 1990s, the residents of the communities along the course recognized that the marathon was once again a source of immense pride. If you lived in one of the towns on the course, then you were different. You were part of one of the world's most prestigious sporting events on an annual basis. Kids were participating on sponsored Little League baseball teams and Pop Warner football teams because of the B.A.A.'s contributions to the towns. Tennis courts were being resurfaced and decks at swimming ponds were being refurbished because of the marathon's success. A sense of involvement by nonmarathon participants emerged, and this had never before been the case.

Then the 100th Boston Marathon was held in 1996. It was the world's largest marathon at the time, and the industry stood up and took notice. The success of the event spawned rapid growth across the industry. Individuals running for charitable programs saw that training for and gaining support for worthwhile causes resonated with their friends, family, and the media.

At the B.A.A., Morse channeled the legacy of the centennial race into the establishment of its own youth and charitable programs. He assembled a staff that resembled the athletic and admissions departments at a university. Morse and the B.A.A. were running the organization as a business with clear objectives and long-term aspirations. Other events followed, such as the half-marathon, the Olympic Trials, and workshops, seminars, and clinics. Again, the focus was on quality rather than quantity. Every event would be an opportunity to leave a new, positive impression. Every event or program mattered. "You're only as good as your last race," Morse would often state.

But for all of the accomplishments, successes, and accolades, Morse will be best remembered for his style and demeanor and his manner of dealing with people. He was characterized by calmness, patience, and respect. Rarely angered, he was able to redirect frustration into retooling a presentation or thinking of a new angle worth trying. He was not averse to letting go of an idea if he thought it might result in long-term, negative repercussions. "Pick your battles," he said frequently.

Through it all, he maintained his sense of humor and held himself to the highest ethics. He knew that both his board and his staff would be watching as his leadership (and, over the decades, as the industry) took note of how he was able not only to navigate the B.A.A. through crisis but also to deal with success. "Lead by example" was another common phrase spoken by the man who did not wish for fame and recognition but who wanted the event and the organization to take center stage. In the process, he restored the B.A.A.'s reputation and defined its spirit and identity. It is in place—right in Boston's Back Bay—for all to see and experience each Patriots' Day.

**Jack Fleming** is the marketing and communications director for the B.A.A. and worked with Guy Morse for 21 years.

## Inside the box

At one time the Boston Athletic Association owned a grand clubhouse. It loomed over the city as an opulent symbol of athletics with a swimming pool, an indoor track, Turkish baths, a bowling alley, a boxing room, tennis courts, a barbershop, and a wine and cigar department.

After the clubhouse's completion in 1888 by rich men in Boston—the great Brahmin movers and shakers of the Hub of the universe, bolstered by money earned by their forebears in the China trade, whaling, and the triangular commerce of slaves, rum, tobacco, and cotton—the B.A.A. prospered for 40 years. Then all B.A.A. business and assets collapsed in the great economic crash of 1929 into not much more than a one-day event run out of a cardboard box.

The B.A.A. lost its money, most of its membership, and all of its activities except for the marathon and a track meet. The marathon, however, did not require a great deal of management past the Great Depression years when its numbers rarely exceeded 200. A few men as volunteers could manage the race with pencils and paper. During the war years, the number of runners decreased to a low of 67 starters in 1945. Numbers did not increase in the early 1950s when the volatile and dedicated Scot John Duncan Semple managed the B.A.A. and the calmer and just-as-dedicated Will Cloney managed the race. The 1960 race did not need a professional director with just 156 starters. Numbers had not changed for 50 years. But the remaining years of the 1960s changed all that.

Five hundred entered by 1966. The next year, Semple had his notorious run-in with Kathrine Switzer. Women wanted in. By 1969, 1,342 runners entered the race. The cardboard box could no longer contain them.

The number of runners doubled in the mid-1970s. Then, in 1980, disaster struck in the form of another runner, but this time instead of a courageous, visionary reformer, it was a cheat and a criminal. Rosie Ruiz jumped into the last mile of the race and duped

► Hired in 1984, Guy Morse was the first professional director of the Boston Marathon.



race management into crowning her with the winner's laurel wreath on the podium in front of the finish line crowd and media. She had stolen the race. Clearly, the marathon needed professional, full-time management, but it needed money to do that. Then the third great scandal of the marathon arrived.

Will Cloney struck a deal with a clever, opportunistic attorney named Marshall Medoff, who obtained the right in perpetuity to "sell" sponsorship of the marathon and keep for himself any amount of money above \$400,000. Medoff would own the marathon. The upshot of Cloney's trying to raise money to save the marathon caused an uproar in the B.A.A. board, resulted in his firing, and came near to the outright loss of the marathon. The board engaged Tim Kilduff as volunteer director. He quit after two years in frustration as the rest of the world paid prize money to athletes and Boston refused to do so. The world could not tolerate an amateur marathon run by amateur management. The Boston Marathon began to shrink in field quality and newsworthiness as top runners elected to go elsewhere to compete for a possible big-time payday—the fourth great scandal of the marathon. It needed professional, full-time management to survive the 1990s. Without such management, the marathon would have ricocheted from disaster to disaster—breaking into dusty pieces left only to be swept back into the cardboard box.

Just in time, Guy Morse, the first professional director of the Boston Marathon, took control in December 1984.

**Tom Derderian** is the author of *The Boston Marathon*, a columnist for *New England Runner*, and a sub-2:20 marathoner.

## The no-martini lunch

I first met Guy in 1983 when he worked at the Prudential Insurance Company of America as an associate manager responsible for all external communications and activities for the company and for Prudential Center property, where the finish line of the Boston Marathon was located. As such, he served as the Boston Marathon press officer and provided credentials for media, managed the finish line press room, and coordinated the marathon press conferences.

As a 1974 graduate of Northeastern University in Boston, he was hired by the Boston Athletic Association (B.A.A.) as its first full-time paid employee to coordinate all race activities, including sponsorship, working with the board of governors, acting as spokesperson, and coordinating the volunteer groups.

Guy entered the B.A.A. during a time of recent management turbulence. The organization was in turmoil, the survival of the marathon was in question, and new leadership was desperately needed. Will Cloney was forced to resign in 1981 and was replaced by Tim Kilduff, who resigned after directing two races. Guy was hired in December 1984.



© Marathon Foto

▲ Gloria Ratti (left) and Guy Morse (right) escort Boston Marathon legend John A. Kelley to the finish line at the 2004 Boston Marathon. Kelley served as the event's grand marshal after his retirement from running the race until his death.

He established the first official Boston Marathon headquarters at the old Boston Garden, where the only piece of furniture was a black telephone on the floor in an otherwise empty room. His first hires were Marja Bakker as his director of administration and then Jack Fleming as media coordinator. He went on to hire Dave McGillivray as the race's technical consultant. (McGillivray was given the title of race director in June 2000 when Guy was promoted to executive director.) In addition to his duties as executive director, Guy supervised a staff of roughly a dozen people in Boston and Hopkinton.

Guy's style of management was entirely different from the two-martini lunch that was perceived at that time in public relations circles as the norm. Guy had none of that flamboyant style. He hired the best people, encouraged them to collaborate on many new issues, and instituted weekly staff meetings. His low-key approach to management earned him the respect of his staff.

Married with four small children at the time, he approached his job with a quiet, no-nonsense attitude and was determined to "save the Boston Marathon" by whatever means he could. He quickly became the face and voice of the Boston Marathon and, most importantly, was able to earn the respect and admiration of city officials and community leaders as well as the officials of the cities and towns along the famed marathon route.

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In 1986, John Hancock Financial Services became the principal sponsor of the Boston Athletic Association. The introduction of John Hancock ushered in a new era, and for the first time, prize money was awarded to champions and top finishers as well as financial aid to cities and towns along the route. Guy improved the hospitality provided to runners and introduced T-shirts and pre- and postrace parties both for runners and volunteers. Also foremost was his decision to maintain qualifying times for the runners.

A little-known fact is that the B.A.A. lost its clubhouse during the Great Depression in the 1930s, along with all of its records, archives, and memorabilia. In 1995, with the 100th anniversary of the Boston Marathon looming the next year, Guy, an early advocate of maintaining our tradition, tasked me with seeking out and collecting B.A.A. Boston Marathon photographs, trophies, and any other memorabilia or artifacts. Guy must have known that I was a longtime collector of anything that didn't move, and today our offices house a respectable collection of these items. We continue to gather items pertaining to the early days of our history.

Guy has traveled extensively throughout the world promoting the Boston Marathon and was instrumental in establishing the World Marathon Majors, an organization of the major marathons consisting of Boston, Berlin, New York, Chicago, London, and Tokyo. He is also the Boston Marathon representative to the Association of International Marathons and Road Races (AIMS).

Several years ago, Guy was diagnosed with prostate cancer and was required to curtail his activities. After 26 years as executive director, he decided to accept the position of director of external affairs, which he has held for the past two years and from which he retired from the B.A.A. after 28 years.

Guy has indeed left his mark on the Boston Marathon and brought it through an era unprecedented in road racing. He is the recipient of many awards and leaves behind a template emulated by many large marathon races throughout the world. He has departed with a significant legacy in marathon circles and richly deserves the admiration and respect of all those who follow him. It has been a pleasure to work with him.

**Gloria Ratti** has been associated with the Boston Marathon for many decades; she is currently a vice president of the B.A.A. and a colleague and professional associate of Guy Morse.

## Tripping up

I owe my entire B.A.A. career to Guy Morse. After all, it was he who hired me back in 1988. This was the year after the infamous “trip rope” incident at the start of the marathon. The official starter shot the gun at high noon as was tradition even though race officials were still standing in front of the starting line holding a rope to keep the runners back. The B.A.A. decided it was best to hire someone to pay a little more attention to the start.

Thus started my 25-year “run” with the B.A.A. All I basically did then was remove a rope, and now I am the race director of the Boston Marathon. Go figure!

Guy has been a mentor to me and countless others over the years. He helped keep this venerable event from fading away and has kept it in the forefront of road racing throughout the world. We all will miss the guidance and the good, kind-hearted nature he has brought to the B.A.A. and to the running industry worldwide.

**Dave McGillivray** is the race director of the B.A.A. Boston Marathon and president of DMSE, Inc., a race management company.

## A good “Guy”

“Guy” has long been used as a term of endearment by many people to show appreciation for friends with whom they closely associate and appreciate. Guy Morse is no exception.

I have known Guy for four decades, having met him shortly after he came on board the B.A.A. in 1984. This was just after my last win in Boston in 1983 and alongside my win in the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles. It has been a friendship that has enjoyed numerous B.A.A. Marathons and other notable races around the United States and the world.



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▲ One of Morse’s final responsibilities for the B.A.A. was to organize a celebration of the its 125th anniversary at the TD Garden in Boston. Pictured (from left to right) are Joann Flaminio, B.A.A. president; Richard Johnson, curator of the Sports Museum of New England; Gina Caruso, B.A.A. treasurer; John Hanc, author of *The B.A.A. at 125* book; Joan Samuelson; and Morse.

From the starting line to the finish line, Guy has been there to support and encourage our sport and its runners through both challenging and celebrated times. He understands that the word “marathon” is a metaphor for life and has worked tirelessly to make sure that our sport is as inclusive as possible by bringing people, corporations, communities, and charities together in a way that has promoted marathoning and goodness well beyond our racecourses. He has waved the B.A.A. colors high and proudly. In so doing, he has supported and encouraged marathons of all sizes to aspire to achieve their own laurels that so define our sport and its rich and storied history.

It has been my pleasure and honor to share many exciting moments with Guy in Boston and beyond throughout the years, including the 100th running of the race in 1996. That year, I gave the bragging rights of running that greatly anticipated event to my husband, Scott, while I cheered from the sidelines with our two children, Abby and Anders. I am happy to say that they are both runners and have grown up associating the Boston Marathon with Patriots’ Day. Like our patriots who exude love and support of our country and each other, Guy has demonstrated those qualities and in so doing has given opportunity and a sense of well-being to millions of people who have benefited from marathoning for all the right reasons.

Guy, you are a true patriot and endurance champion. Thank you for all your good works.

**Joanie Benoit Samuelson** won Boston twice, was the first woman to win an Olympic gold medal in the marathon, and has been a leading spokeswoman for the sport for decades; she still competes at a high level in age-group competition.

## The epitome of calm

I don’t remember the exact moment that I met Guy Morse in 1992, but I do remember thinking after the first few months of our now 20-year friendship: *What a cool job, and what an even cooler ‘Guy.’* And when Guy invited me to my first 11:00 P.M. meeting with the rest of the B.A.A. staff during marathon weekend, I was hooked!

What I do remember and what has remained constant since that time is Guy’s calm demeanor regardless of the crisis or circumstance. He had the ability, quite simply, to always get through it, whether it was dealing with a nasty reporter or even nastier race conditions. Guy spent most of his professional career with the B.A.A. and grew up alongside the marathon. As it grew in prominence, so did Guy. His name is synonymous with running in Boston, and he has become a true running ambassador. He has traveled extensively representing the B.A.A. and has been to races in remote corners of the world. But the best race in his opinion? Boston, of course.

On a more serious note, what Guy oversaw in his 28 years of association with the Boston Marathon was both transformative and inspirational. In the first year of Guy's tenure, the marathon had 6,924 entrants, 5,290 finishers, and one sponsor. To give some perspective, that was about the same size as our most recent B.A.A. Half-Marathon. In his very last year, the marathon had 27,000 registrants and nearly 20 sponsors. He oversaw a charity program, started in 1989 with one organization, that has grown and has raised more than \$150 million if you include the program of our principal sponsor, John Hancock. The city of Boston and our race committees, local charities, sponsors, and the thousands of runners who cross the marathon finish line each year—all have benefited from the resurgence of the B.A.A. and the Boston Marathon under Guy's leadership.

The most important thing that can be said about any leader upon his departure is that he was true to his mission, gave it all he could, and persevered. The success of today's Boston Marathon is a true testament to Guy's vision, hard work, and steadfast commitment to marathon running. From all of us at the B.A.A., well done.

**Joann Flaminio** is the president of the B.A.A., the first woman to hold that prestigious position.

## “Common sense”

I met Guy Morse in April 2010 when I was accompanying our AIMS president, Mr. Hiroaki Chosa, in a visit to Boston—actually, to the grave of Will Cloney, first president of our association. Mr. Chosa, having decided not to stand for reelection for president at the upcoming AIMS World Congress in Athens some months later, wanted to give his recognition to what Will and the whole Boston Athletic Association had done for the whole running movement.

► At left, Dimitri Kyriakides, son of 1946 Boston Marathon champion Stylianos Kyriakides, and Paco Borao, president, Association of International Marathons (AIMS), flank Morse at the AIMS meeting in November 2012 when the Boston Marathon was recognized by AIMS as the oldest annual marathon in North America.



Courtesy of AIMS

Having been an AIMS board member since 1996, I was well aware of the Boston Marathon background, built up from many facts surrounding the race and making out of it one of the best running history in athletics, and in particular about someone called Guy Morse who had transformed the marketing way we all were dealing with sponsors by setting up so-called long-distance partnerships.

We just met that day, made a short tour of the B.A.A. offices, visited Will Cloney's grave, exchanged some view on our common running passion, and had a friendly lunch together—Gloria [Ratti], Tom [Grilk], and Guy for the B.A.A., and Chosa, Sasai [Mr. Chosa's translator], Horst [Milde], and myself for AIMS.

Things ran simply, warm, easy—so well and so deep that I immediately thought that our association and myself, should I be elected president, could not miss the opportunity of getting in our AIMS board the know-how, the sense of balance, the rational approach that I felt Guy had naturally within his personality. I immediately tried through mail and phone calls to persuade him to join us, he finally agreed, and our members voted him in unanimously.

These several years as a board member confirmed his professionalism, his teamwork, and his love for running. For myself, I finally found the right definition of “common sense”—simply, Guy Morse. I'm very proud to have him as a friend.

**Paco Borao** is the current president of AIMS and is the event director of Spain's Valencia Marathon and Half-Marathon.

## An iconic figure and a friend

I have known Guy ever since he took over from Tim Kilduff as director of the Boston Marathon. At the time, he managed to sever ties with Marshall Medoff, who had hoodwinked Will into a terrible sponsorship deal. If memory serves, the deal was that the Boston Marathon received the first \$400,000 and Medoff got the rest—an absurd deal. I found Guy a very forward-looking person who wanted to modernize the race and bring it into the 20th and then the 21st centuries, which he has done. Guy has managed to keep the finish line clean from commercial sponsorship while increasing sponsorship in other areas. It is beyond comprehension that he has managed to secure a 15-year deal with John Hancock after it was sold to another company. The running community will be losing an iconic individual and a friend who has blazed new trails for all of us. At every running-related occasion that I can think of, whether a press conference or informal get-together (especially at the Boston Marathon), I have never seen Guy in anything but his famous, professional-looking blue blazer. Sometimes he even gets down and casual by wearing the blazer without a tie. He is always a professional. He will be greatly missed on the world marathon scene.

**Allan Steinfeld** was the president of the New York Road Runners, was the race director of the ING New York City Marathon, and is still active in AIMS and RunningUSA.

## The Zelig of marathoning

Once a year, on a holiday dedicated to a group of citizens who were immortalized for standing their ground, Guy Morse did indeed appear to be Zelig, the Woody Allen character who had an uncanny ability to turn up out of nowhere. “Sometimes I’ve appeared to be in more than one place at a time,” mused the man who ran the Boston Athletic Association and, ex officio, the marathon for more than a quarter of a century. Each Patriots’ Day, Morse covered substantially more ground than did the Minutemen, making sure that the world’s most fabled road race stayed on course from the Hopkinton start to the Copley Square finish.

If glitches were rare, it likely was because Morse, race director Dave McGilivray, and their staff worked all winter behind the scenes to craft plans *b*, *c*, and *d* that could hold up to whatever April’s mercurial weather might throw at more than 20,000 runners. Their greatest challenge—and triumph—came in 2007 when wind-driven rain produced the worst conditions since the scorching “Run for the Hoses” in 1976. “A day that by all accounts shouldn’t have happened,” B.A.A. president Tom Grilk mused after that race had come off smoothly.

Not even prostate cancer and a pair of ruptured quadriceps tendons, which Morse dealt with simultaneously a year later, could daunt him. He simply shifted operations to the Copley Plaza across the street from the B.A.A. headquarters and did his work by cell phone and e-mail, orchestrating preparations for both the marathon and the women’s Olympic Trials a day earlier. Had the man not been up to it—and how many would have been?—his lieutenants and their troops would have soldiered on without him and handled things with military precision. That was what made Morse the best in the business. He had assembled a staff that was so skilled that it could function without him.

When Morse signed on in 1984, the Boston Marathon still was in its Jurassic Period, offering little more to competitors than beef stew and blisters. He oversaw the transition to the prize-money era and the professionalism of an event that still is amateur in its heart.

**John Powers** has worked for the *Boston Globe* since 1973; he shared the 1983 Pulitzer Prize for national reporting for a special *Globe Magazine* feature on the nuclear arms race. He is the author of eight books and has covered the Olympic Games since 1976.

## A true friend of the local media

Guy Morse is a truly likeable fellow, with a quick smile and a quick wit, delivered deftly and dryly. You get the impression he would rather conduct business with a handshake than a press conference, yet for a quarter century his *was* the face of the B.A.A. The public welcomed his appearance at the podium every Patriots’ Day weekend, the front man synonymous with the world’s greatest marathon. Away

from the office, Guy and his wife, Nancy, were raising four children, watching proudly as high school proms gave way to college and marriage and the arrival of the next generation. With the passage of time, from the bleak days in the early '80s onward, his passion for the sport never wavered.

In 2008, *New England Runner* and 16 like-minded running publications (including *Marathon & Beyond*) sought greater control and transparency in their endeavors and broke from their previous advertising-sale agency to form the Endurance Sports Media Group. It was a move fraught with anxiety. Many regional publications are mom-and-pop operations; plus, we were in the midst of a serious recession. With one paragraph in ESMG's inaugural press release, the move was legitimized and subsequently applauded in running circles. To wit:

“Regional running publications are the cornerstone for the sport's news and promotion,” commented Guy Morse, executive director of the Boston Athletic Association. “Local races and local runners benefit from the energy and effort that these publishers pour into their work. In our own region, *New England Runner* fills an advertising and information niche with no equal.”

As an internationally recognized leader in the industry, Guy Morse did not have to do this. That he did speaks volumes about who he is and what he stands for.

We wish Guy the best of luck in all his future pursuits. He has been a true friend. In a culture of self-aggrandizement, there is a tendency to underestimate those in prominent positions who don't seek out the spotlight. In reality, what Guy Morse brought to the B.A.A., and then sustained and expanded on for close to three decades, cannot be overestimated.

**Bob Fitzgerald** is the editor/publisher of *New England Runner* magazine.

## Welcoming “Home Dad”

We [his four loving children] have a running joke about “Work Dad.” Normally, we get “Home Dad” at home, whose corny one-liners and references to *The Birdcage* and *Big Business* are always well received. On the weekends, “Home Dad” trades in his navy-blue blazer for his Saturday uniform, which consists of a (very) faded denim button-down shirt and either plaid flannel pants or athletic shorts, depending on the season, always paired with adidas sneakers, untied. It's quite a sight. And his all-business attitude is replaced with an easygoing, small-town sensibility.

From time to time he does morph into no-nonsense, detail-oriented “Work Dad” at home, specifically when developing a meticulous itinerary for a family trip to Disney World or even a seemingly simple list of Saturday chores. He can't help but direct our annual holiday card stuffing/addressing/stamping/ mailing evening where he walks around the room with a glass of chardonnay, blasting Christmas music, and doing spot-checks over our shoulders as we work diligently (and



► Morse circa 1991 with his children, Kaitlin, Elizabeth, Daniel, and Jillian.



Courtesy of Morse family

merrily) at the dining room table.

We are immensely proud of his work with the B.A.A., the World Marathon Majors, AIMS, and beyond, but we are even prouder of what a strong, supportive, and inspirational man he is

at home. He is incredibly dependable, loyal, and surprisingly understanding and forgiving (especially considering some of the girly teenage antics he has had to deal with over the years). He has taught us by example to always do the right thing—even if it isn't the easiest or most popular option. His dedication to his faith and his complete adoration of our mother continue to impress us and inspire us to enjoy the little things in life (like those bad jokes) and revel in the big wonderful things, like family.

**Kaitlin Morse Creedon** is Guy and Nancy's second-oldest daughter; she is the integrated-promotion director at *Cosmopolitan* magazine, a member of the Hearst Corporation.

## The Easter Bunny needs help!

We decided to move from Marlboro to Cape Cod in 1980. Having vacationed here early in our marriage, we loved the quaint village atmosphere, and we realized the benefits of our children being near their grandparents. Commuting from the Cape to Boston would add 20 minutes to Guy's usual hour commute from Marlboro. In 1984, when Guy was offered the job with the Boston Athletic Association, he was already a pro at commuting the 90 minutes each way. A commute like that is a curse and a blessing. Yes, it is a long time in the car dealing with traffic, but Guy used the time wisely and always had a pad of paper to jot down his never-ending list of calls to return and additional thoughts from dealings each day. It was a time to clear his head, so when he arrived home, he was really home and could devote the evening to his family. During any given day, he could have met with elite athletes, business heads, or politicians, but at home, he made it clear that his family were the most important people.



► Guy and Nancy (his wife of 38 years).

One year early in his Boston Marathon career, the race and Easter fell on the same weekend. Guy had been staying in Boston for much of the week preparing for the race. Late Saturday night, after meetings and his other responsibilities had been completed (this was a simpler time, before the addition of the Sunday

5K), he drove home to “help” the Easter Bunny. He knew he couldn’t miss the all-important Easter egg hunt that his four young children so looked forward to. After sharing in the festivities on Easter morning, he was back in the car returning to Boston for any of the last-minute matters that tend to creep up the day before a Boston Marathon. He was completely devoted to giving his best to his family and to his job. How can you not love a “Guy” like that?

*Nancy Morse* has been Guy’s wife for 38 years.



Courtesy of Morse family

## Taking the long view

The Boston Marathon is well known as the world’s oldest continuously run marathon. It was begun in 1897 in Ashland, Massachusetts, a year after a crew of very fit B.A.A. athletes competed very well at the Athens Games of 1896—and the world saw a tiny Greek, Spiridon Louis, take the gold medal [in the marathon] and bring the first modern Olympic Games to a successful close.

Though many—myself included—consider the Boston Marathon the most prestigious marathon in the world, not all marathoners and fans of the sport know how weak the Boston Marathon had become in the middle of the 1980s. Because of the B.A.A.’s stubborn reluctance to change to a professional event—with prize money—the world’s top runners ran in other marathons that had already made the move to professionalism. The London Marathon is an example of one of those professionally run marathons.

Finally, after the involvement of numerous former champions like Amby Burfoot and Greg Meyer, the mayor of Boston, Ray Flynn, did a search [for a savior] and found the John Hancock Life Insurance Company. The Boston Marathon also changed at that time with a new race director, Guy Morse. Guy led the

B.A.A. out of the amateur wilderness and into the sunshine of professionalism. The marathon became bigger and better in every way, leapfrogging into the 21st century, past most other sports—the Boston Marathon gave equal prize money to men *and* women.

Under previous Boston race director Will Cloney, a group raising funds for multiple sclerosis was an unofficial fund-raiser via runners for several years. I was involved with Will in the effort, but it paled in comparison to the staggering results under Guy Morse's leadership: \$125 million has been raised by Boston marathoners for a wide array of groups that benefit all of America—groups like the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, the Melanoma Foundation of New England, the Alzheimer's Association, and scores more each year.

Under Guy's guidance, Boston organized the women's Olympic Trials marathon in 2008. This was a major step for the sport with a major city hosting the event in the United States.

Of course, hosting the 100th Boston Marathon and opening the entries to nonqualified marathoners led to the running of the largest marathon in the world in April 1996: 38,708 runners. This smoothly run race was organized by Dave McGillivray, who was originally hired by the B.A.A. and Guy Morse in 1988. Under Dave's direction, it was the best possible race for all participants on a uniquely historic occasion.

Finally, Guy led the B.A.A. to be more than a one-trick pony; it began to put on other road races: the B.A.A. Half-Marathon, the B.A.A. 10K, the B.A.A. 5K, and the mile before the annual running of the marathon.

Personally, I know Guy to be friendly, a strong family man, and supported by his gracious wife, Nancy. I also know that, like me, he is a prostate cancer survivor and that in 2008, despite surgery after slipping on ice, he worked hard on the Boston Marathon from the race hotel headquarters, the Boston Copley Hotel. Guy was getting around

► Guy with former Mayor of the City of Boston Ray Flynn, who ran the Boston Marathon while in office, and four-time Boston Marathon champion Bill Rodgers at the B.A.A. 125th Anniversary celebration in December 2012.



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on crutches but was steady as day after day he handled the business of keep[ing] the world's most venerated marathon going smoothly!

Thank you, Guy, from all of us runners!

**"Boston Billy" Rodgers** won Boston and New York four times each.

## Leading from the front

It was wonderful seeing Guy in Prague last May. More than 100 people from 50 countries, mostly race directors, attended the AIMS World Congress there. It was a special meeting because among other anniversaries, we were celebrating the 30th anniversary of the founding of AIMS.

Guy gave a tremendous presentation on involving communities in your marathon. Nobody knows more about involving communities in events than Guy Morse and the Boston Marathon—the race has been doing it for over 100 years! And then I thought about other communities that evolved through and were accepted by Boston, notably *women*!

Indeed, another anniversary AIMS was acknowledging was the 40th anniversary of women being allowed to officially run the marathon, and that permission was first granted at the Boston Marathon in 1972. In April 2012, Guy Morse and the B.A.A. beautifully acknowledged this anniversary for women and invited eight of us original runners from that race back to Boston. At the same time, Sara Mae Berman, one of our original '72ers, applauded the Boston Athletic Association for giving women equal standing and prizes in the marathon just as soon as doing so was approved by the AAU, then the sport's overall governing body. Since that time, women have played an increasingly important role, and during Guy's tenure as executive director, they have enjoyed their greatest growth in the great race. But this is only part of Guy's continuing legacy.

Currently, many big marathons—American ones especially—are looking inward, ironically becoming more provincial in a time of global expansion. However, Guy always maintained his connection and leadership within AIMS, reaching out, making Boston a bigger part of the global running community by doing more than just inviting a few foreign athletes. His presentation in Prague was typical: Boston willingly shared the knowledge it has gained as the world's oldest annual marathon, passing on philosophies and skills to younger races around the world.

It's a huge credit to Guy that he thought outside Boston in that way, and it has brought benefit to AIMS, the B.A.A., and running everywhere. It is our sincere hope that even in retirement, Guy continues to give AIMS some of his valuable attention, wisdom, and insight. We are especially grateful that he has passed his legacy to the B.A.A. team he has built so well and which will continue his work.

**Kathrine Switzer** has been a pioneer in women's running, a radio and television commentator on road racing, and an author of major books, such as *Marathon Woman*. 