Runners tackle London Marathon to thank Essex & Herts Air Ambulance

Friday 15 February, 2019

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Runners tackle London Marathon for Air Ambulance

Mark Lanning from Rayleigh in Essex and Paul Cecil From Goffs Oak in Hertfordshire each have very personal reasons for running this year's London Marathon to raise money for Essex & Herts Air Ambulance

Last June **Mark Lanning** got a call to say that his close friend of 25 years was seriously ill and the Air Ambulance was on its way.

He recalls: "I got round there to find five paramedic cars and an ambulance. They had called the Air Ambulance on the off chance that they could get his heart started and to take him to Basildon Hospital (Essex Cardiothoracic Centre).

"Seeing what they did to try to save my friend's life was unbelievable. I worked with him for 25 years. For 16 years we drove in the same car each day, 106 mile round trip from Essex to Hertfordshire. Some people have said we were like we were a married couple! So I really appreciate what they did that night to try and save my mate and I wanted to give something back. I didn't know EHAAT were a Charity before the incident."

Mark says his friend's family will all be out cheering him round the marathon course on Sunday 28th April, but even when he is training he doesn't feel alone.

"Neil wasn't a runner, but when I'm running sometimes I hear leaves behind me and it sounds like someone is there, but there's not and wonder if it's him giving me that push I need to finish that run!

Paul Cecil is running the London Marathon to raise funds for Essex & Herts Air Ambulance because without the life-saving Charity he would not be alive today.

In February 2015 **Paul Cecil** was enjoying a Sunday run around Goffs Oak and Cuffley when he started to feel dizzy.

He explains: "That's all I remember before waking up in Queen's Hospital, Romford. I had fainted whilst running and fallen head first into a very shallow, and muddy ditch.

"I lay there for quite some time with my face in the water, slowly drowning, until my now and forever hero and friend Pascal Mcmanmon spotted me. Pascal pulled me out of the ditch and immediately tried to resuscitate me.

"Whilst applying CPR he also managed to call 999. The brilliant crew at EHAAT landed their helicopter in the field right next to me. I then spent three days in a coma and finally a few weeks resting in Queen's Hospital and St Bartholomew's Hospital.

"It was due to the bravery of Pascal and the speed, experience and professionalism of EHAAT, who all brought me back to life. With the amazing help of the staff at both hospitals and with the support of the best and loving friends and family, I am proud to say I am fit and well today."

Natasha Robertson, Fundraising Manager at EHAAT says: "Paul and Mark's stories show just how vital a service EHAAT is, and we are so grateful that they have chosen to raise funds for us.

"Thanks to their efforts, our Critical Care Team could be available to help save someone else's life. We wish him well with his training.

"If any other runners have a confirmed place in this year's London Marathon but haven't yet chosen a Charity to run for, we would be delighted to hear from them. We can support their fundraising efforts in a number of ways."

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To support Paul Cecil's fundraising effort, visit uk.virginmoneygiving.com/PaulCecil**.**

To support Mark Lanning's fundraising effort, visit https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/MarkLanning**.**

Runners with a London Marathon place can get more information about how to raise funds for EHAAT by visiting ehaat.org or calling 0345 2417 690 and speaking to a member of the Fundraising Team.

-ENDS-

Photographs: Paul Cecil and Mark Lanning:

For more information please contact Gavin Sherriff, PR Officer, on 0345 2417 690.

Notes to Editor:

Essex & Herts Air Ambulance (EHAAT) is a Charity that provides a Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) for the critically ill and injured of Essex, Hertfordshire and surrounding areas.

The service is provided free of charge but, unlike NHS emergency services, the Charity receives no direct funding from the Government or National Lottery. It costs in excess of £750,000 every month to keep the service operational and cover all charitable costs, and this would not be possible without the generosity and goodwill of people and businesses of Essex, Hertfordshire and beyond.

Each of the Charity's HEMS teams consist of a Pilot, a Co-pilot, a Pre-hospital Care Doctor and a Critical Care Paramedic.

These teams, made up of highly-skilled individuals, tended to 1491 patients in 2018 and are the backbone of your local life-saving Charity.

The fleet, consisting of two Air Ambulances, and four Rapid Response Vehicles (RRVs - cars) operates seven days a week from 7am to 9pm. After sunset, the Critical Care Team continues to provide the service using Rapid Response Vehicles.

In addition, a Rapid Response Vehicle is operational on a Friday and Saturday evening from 6pm until 2am with a Pre-hospital Care Doctor and Critical Care Paramedic.

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