

A final plunge for man who boosted ALS ice bucket challenge

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In this April 13, 2015, file photo, Pete Frates, former Boston College baseball player whose Ice Bucket Challenge raised millions for ALS research, is applauded by Boston Red Sox general manager Ben Cherington, far left, and his wife Julie Frates, center, along with other family members prior to the home opener baseball game between the Boston Red Sox and the Washington Nationals at Fenway Park in Boston. Frates, who was stricken with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, died Monday, Dec. 9, 2019. He was 34. (AP

Photo/Elise Amendola, File)

Supporters of Pete Frates are taking one last chilly plunge for the former college baseball player whose battle with Lou Gehrig's disease helped spread the ALS ice bucket challenge.

The Frates family says Saturday's annual "Plunge for Pete" at Good Harbor Beach in Gloucester, Massachusetts, will be their last.

The event, in its eighth year, raised money for the Pete Frates #3 Fund, which helped pay for Frates' medical bills.

The former Boston College baseball player, who lived in Beverly, a suburb north of Boston, died Dec. 9 after a seven-year battle with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. He would have turned 35 on Saturday.

John Frates, Pete's father, said the event has come "full circle," as the first one was also held on his son's birthday. "It's aligning perfectly for this one to be the last," he told The Gloucester Daily Times earlier this week.

The family has accumulated roughly \$500,000 in debt for their son's [medical care](#), John Frates said, and the final fundraiser will hopefully help close the gap.

The family will continue to raise money for the separate Peter Frates Family Foundation, which helps other ALS patients cover home health care costs, he said.

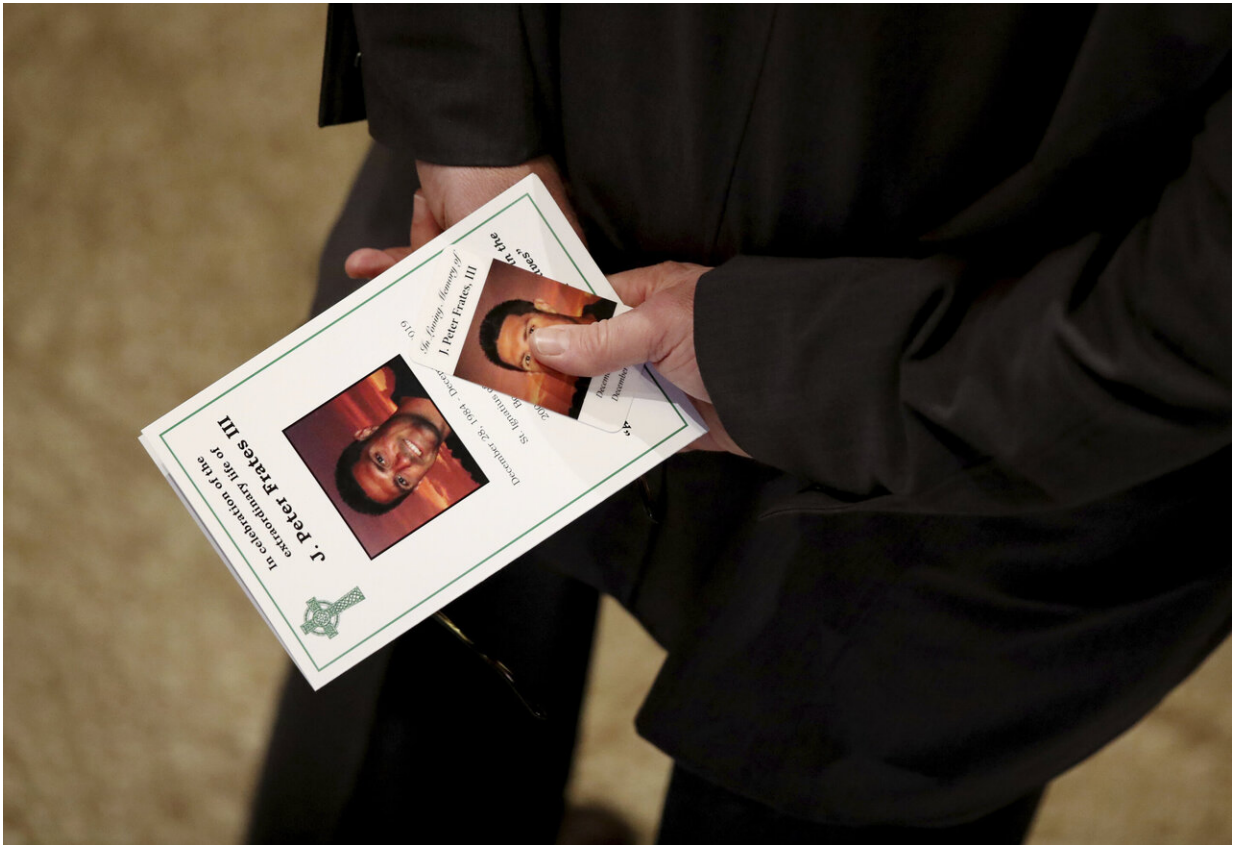
Pete Frates's wife, Julie, said she'll participate in the plunge for the first time.



In this Dec. 28, 2014, file photo, New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft, left, smiles with Pete Frates and his wife, Julie during a birthday ceremony for Pete during a break in an NFL football game between the Patriots and the Buffalo Bills in Foxborough, Mass. Frates, a former college baseball player whose determined battle with Lou Gehrig's disease helped inspire the ALS ice bucket challenge that has raised more than \$200 million worldwide, died Monday, Dec. 9, 2019. He was 34. (AP Photo/Elise Amendola, File)



Pallbearers escort the casket of Pete Frates, draped in a flag bearing his name, following a funeral mass at St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish church at Boston College in Boston, Friday, Dec. 13, 2019. Frates, a former college baseball player whose determined battle with Lou Gehrig's disease helped inspire the ALS ice bucket challenge that has raised more than \$200 million worldwide. (Craig F. Walker/The Boston Globe via AP, Pool)



A man carries a program during a funeral mass for Pete Frates at St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish church at Boston College in Boston, Friday, Dec. 13, 2019. Frates, a former college baseball player whose determined battle with Lou Gehrig's disease helped inspire the ALS ice bucket challenge that has raised more than \$200 million worldwide. (Craig F. Walker/The Boston Globe via AP, Pool)



The procession follows the casket of Pete Frates, draped in a flag bearing his name, during a funeral mass at St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish church at Boston College in Boston, Friday, Dec. 13, 2019. Frates, a former college baseball player whose determined battle with Lou Gehrig's disease helped inspire the ALS ice bucket challenge that has raised more than \$200 million worldwide. (Craig F. Walker/The Boston Globe via AP, Pool)



In this Sept. 18, 2017 photo, Pete Frates, who is stricken with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, listens to a guest at Fenway Park in Boston. Frates, a former college baseball player whose determined battle with Lou Gehrig's disease helped inspire the ALS ice bucket challenge that has raised more than \$200 million worldwide, died Monday, Dec. 9, 2019. He was 34. (AP Photo/Charles Krupa, File)



Friends and family arrive for a funeral mass for Pete Frates at St. Ignatius Church in Chestnut Hill, Mass. on Friday, Dec. 13, 2019. Frates, a former college baseball player whose determined battle with Lou Gehrig's disease helped inspire the ALS ice bucket challenge that has raised more than \$200 million worldwide. (Craig F. Walker/The Boston Globe via AP, Pool)



John Frates Jr., accompanied by Jennifer Mayo and Andrew Frates, delivers the eulogy during a funeral mass for his son Pete Frates at St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish church at Boston College in Boston, Friday, Dec. 13, 2019. Frates, a former college baseball player whose determined battle with Lou Gehrig's disease helped inspire the ALS ice bucket challenge that has raised more than \$200 million worldwide. (Craig F. Walker/The Boston Globe via AP, Pool)



In this Monday, Aug. 10, 2015 file photo, Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker, right center, and Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito, third from left, participate in the Ice Bucket Challenge with the man who inspired the event, Pete Frates, seated in center, to raise money for ALS research, at the Statehouse in Boston. Frates, who was stricken with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, died Monday, Dec. 9, 2019. He was 34. (AP Photo/Charles Krupa, File)



In this Aug. 20, 2014 file photo, Major League Baseball Commissioner-elect Rob Manfred participates in the ALS Ice-Bucket Challenge outside the organization's headquarters in New York. Pete Frates, who was stricken with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, and inspired the Ice Bucket Challenge, died Monday, Dec. 9, 2019. He was 34. (AP Photo/Vanessa A. Alvarez, File)

She has raised nearly \$300,000 and promises to jump into the winter waters of the North Atlantic wearing "Pete's favorite red white and blue bikini that I wore when we met on the Fourth of July, eight years ago," according to her Facebook fundraising page.

Organizers say nearly 300 people have signed up to take the actual plunge. That exceeds the peak of 250 participants the event saw in 2014, the year the [ice bucket challenge](#) went viral and raised more than \$200

million for ALS research worldwide, they say.

The ice bucket challenge involved pouring a bucket of ice water over one's head and posting a video of it on social media, and then challenging others to do the same or make a donation to charity. Most people did both.

The challenge began in 2014 when pro golfer Chris Kennedy challenged his wife's cousin Jeanette Senerchia, whose husband has ALS. ALS patient Pat Quinn, of Yonkers, New York, picked up on it and started its spread, but when Frates and his [family](#) got involved, the phenomenon exploded on social media.

ALS is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that leads to paralysis because of the death of motor neurons in the spinal cord and brain. There is no known cure.

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