



Nina Louise Kuscsik

January 2, 1939 - June 8, 2025

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Nina Louise Kuscsik, a cherished daughter, sister, mother, grandmother, aunt, friend

and human being, and a pioneering force in women's athletics, passed away peacefully,

early Sunday morning, June 8, 2025, at the age of 86, after a long battle with Alzheimer's disease and a shorter struggle with respiratory failure. She was a longtime

resident of Huntington Station, New York since 1965, where she raised her family and

became a cornerstone of her community.

Her Early Years

Born in Brooklyn NY on Jan 2, 1939, Nina grew up with her loving mother Louise, father

George, and siblings Connie, Helen, and George.

At an early age, she was active and engaged with physical activity, reaching beyond

traditional limits. In her neighborhood, she played stickball, ringolevio, stoopball,

basketball, enjoyed roller skating, bike riding, and loved going to Riis Park. In

her later
teen years, according to Nina, she was the NY State champion for bicycle
racing, ice
speed skating, and roller skating all in the same year.
Following in her mother's footsteps, she attended Nursing school, graduating
at the age
of 18 (since she graduated high school early at 16). Realizing that New York
State at
that time would not grant a nursing license until age 21, she petitioned the
powers that
be and "got the rules changed" and received her nursing license at age 18.
She worked
as a nurse at Brooklyn Hospital before she had children, and then at Mt Sinai
Medical
Center in Manhattan for approximately 40 years, taking on the role of patient
representative to advocate for others that could not.
She met and married her husband Richard Kuscsik and brought three children
Christina, Stephen, and Timothy into the world. After her divorce, she single-
handedly
raised them, all while being the sole provider for her household, working a full-
time job
in NYC, and spending countless hours training, running and legislating for
women's
running.

A Trailblazer in Women's Distance Running

When her bicycle broke in the late 1960's, she took up running as a way to
stay in
shape. These "first steps" began what turned into an amazingly accomplished
legacy
of running achievements.

After her first marathon in 1969, she continued to run, or attempt to run, many marathons and long-distance races. Unbeknownst to her, there was a major impediment in her way, whereas women were not officially permitted to participate in most long-distance running events. This also started Nina's endless advocacy for women's running.

In 1970, she was the sole woman participant in the inaugural New York City Marathon.

In 1971 she became just the second American woman to run a marathon in under three hours. Nina made international headlines as the first official female winner of the Boston Marathon, in 1972 finishing in 3:10:26. That same year, she took first place for women in the New York City Marathon, a feat she repeated in 1973. She was women's winner in the Cow Harbor 10k in Northport, 1977, and continued to run that race every year, continuing to walk the race after she stopped running due to her knee replacement.

Her many achievements continued, and included setting the American record for a 50-mile run (1977) and winning the Empire State Building Run-Up three consecutive years (1979–1981). She completed over 80 marathons, and had countless leading finishes at races around the globe.

In 1999 she was inducted into the Long Distant Running Hall of Fame, in 2012 was

inducted into the NYRR Hall of Fame, and in 2022 she received the Abebe Bikila Award from the New York Road Runners for her lifelong contributions to the sport. More so than her individual running accolades, she was a driving force advocating for women's rights and equality in the world of running. Along with other notable running influencers, she joined the famous "six who sat" protest at NYC Marathon in 1972, and spent many years on the Amateur Athletics Union and USA Track and Field committees drafting and implementing legislation for women's running. She later co-founded the world's first (and now oldest) all-women's road race—the NYRR New York Mini 10K. Nina's ongoing advocacy efforts continued and resulted in successfully lobbying the international Olympic Committee to create a women's marathon, which became reality in 1984. None of this work was done in isolation, and Nina was quick to generously acknowledge the many other influential forces who assisted in these efforts over the years. She went on to coach the US Women's long distance running team, assisted with youth running programs, hosted the "Marathon Minute" radio broadcast on 1010 WINS news, and has been included in a number of books and films on running. As she watched her last NYC marathon November 2024 from the sidelines in Central

Park, accompanied by her daughter and other family and friends, she was extremely proud not only of her son, grandson, and daughter-in-law who were running, but also of the approximately 25,000 women runners that day, which were all allowed to run due in part to Nina's advocacy. A stark contrast to 54 years prior when she was the sole woman running in 1970 NYC marathon.

A Devoted Mother, Sister, and Friend

Notwithstanding her legacy in the world of running, she is most affectionately known by

those who knew her for her positive attitude, friendly demeanor, and always warm

smile, and laugh.

Nina found and brought joy to every occasion. She especially looked forward to

spending time with her children and grandchildren, being around her numerous friends,

attending family functions, gardening, interacting with loving and supportive neighbors

and caregivers, attending dances, and taking scenic walks at Caumsett Park and Fire

Island.

Nina is survived by her children: Christina Wiese (Cameron), Stephen Kuscsik (Jill),

and Timothy Kuscsik (Marilyn); her grandsons Alex and Ryan Kuscsik; her sister

Helen Flamini; her brother George Marmorino (Paige); brother-in-law Larry Busini,

sister-in-law Joan Daly, and many loving cousins, nieces, nephews, and extended

family members.

She was predeceased by her mother Louise Marmorino, father George Marmorino,

sister Connie Busini, and ex-husband Richard Kuscsik.

Now that Nina has set off on her last run, she will forever be with us on our own long-

distance journeys through life, and we have been incredibly touched by her warmth,

inspiration, advocacy, and friendship.

Services and Celebration of Life

A funeral service will be held on Saturday, July 12, 2025, at Union United Methodist

Church, 1018 Pulaski Road, East Northport, NY.

- Visitation and viewing: 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

- Service: 11:00 a.m.

Immediately following the service, a Celebration of Nina's Life will take place from

12:30 to 4:00 p.m. at the Huntington Moose Lodge, 631 Pulaski Rd, Greenlawn, NY,

a cherished place where Nina enjoyed dancing every Tuesday night. Food and drinks

will be provided, and guests are warmly encouraged to attend, connect, celebrate

Nina's vibrant life, and share a favorite memory or story of Nina. We will have a few

prepared tributes to share, and we welcome any others that would like to speak at

her celebration.

Please RSVP for the Celebration of Life, so that we may get an idea of how many seats

and the amount of food that we will need.

RSVP to: <https://ninak.rsvpify.com>

Burial

Interment will take place on Monday, July 14, at 10:30 a.m., at Nassau Knoll Cemetery, 500 Port Washington Blvd., Port Washington, NY. An optional funeral

procession will depart from Jacobsen's Funeral Home, 1380 New York Ave., Huntington Station, at 9:30 a.m. For those attending the interment, you are welcome to

join the processional or meet at the cemetery.

In Loving Memory

In lieu of flowers, it is requested that donations in Nina's memory be made to one of the

following:

- The Alzheimer's Association: <https://www.alz.org>
- The NY Road Runners: <https://www.nyrr.org>
- The Arbor Day Foundation: <https://www.arborday.org/donate>

Your support of these causes would continue Nina's legacy of resilience, compassion, and advocacy for others.

Cemetery Details

Nassau Knolls Cemetery

500 Port Washington Blvd.
Port Washington, NY

Previous Events

Saturday Visitation

JUL 12. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Union United Methodist Church
1018 Pulaski Road
East Northport, NY 11731

Church Service

JUL 12. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Union United Methodist Church
1018 Pulaski Road
East Northport, NY 11731

Burial

JUL 14 (ET)

Nassau Knolls Cemetery
500 Port Washington Blvd.
Port Washington, NY

Tribute Wall



“ *A.L. Jacobsen Funeral Home, Inc. created a Tribute Video in memory of Nina Louise Kuscsik*



A.L. Jacobsen Funeral Home, Inc. - July 10, 2025 at 04:34 PM

CT

*Nina
My dear friend of many years, kind smart, caring and more. Will miss you every day.*

carmela Thone - July 11, 2025 at 02:15 PM

“ Sara Mae Berman

MY MEMORIES OF NINA

Because Nina lived in New York and I in Cambridge, MA, early on we didn't see each other except at track meets or races. Though Nina and I competed against each, we friends, not enemies. We respected each other, and pushed each other to run our best for that day. At first, I finished marathons ahead of her, but each time we ran, she got closer. In 1970, the Road Runners Club held a marathon in Atlantic City, NJ (on a flat course, the road between the beach and the houses on the other side of the street—a very boring course). They could include women because we were all RRC members. I ran a 3:07; she was second woman in 3:14. I cherish the wonderful picture of the two of us after the race, sitting with our arms around each other.

In the April 1971 BAA Marathon, Nina and I actually ran against each other. Amid a whole crowd of male runners, I had just crested the hill by Boston College, when Nina and 2 NY teammates sailed by me—we hadn't seen each in the race other till then. Suddenly, I knew that I didn't want her to beat me, and I managed to pick up my pace. By Cleveland Circle I had caught and passed her, and managed to stay ahead of her. I finished half a minute ahead (3:08:30 to 3:09). But later in the fall at the NY Marathon, in second place, she finished under 3 hours—something I was never able to do.

As a New Yorker, she was familiar with the NY AAU byzantine organization, and worked with others to help push for the marathon for women to be into the Olympics, and they succeeded by 1984. As a prelude to this, the BAA was able to accept women as legal entries to their marathon in 1972. Eight of us ran, proudly. (I ran, even though I had the flu—and only a slight fever—but I couldn't NOT run. I finished with my slowest marathon time 3:48.) Nina had her own challenges: she really needed a porto-potty along the way, but there were none. But she was first in 3:10:26, a very

gutsy effort. All of us were proud of her. Even as legal entries, we knew that we were battling the AAU organization, as well as each other.

In recent years, when we met at BAA celebrations around marathon time, it was like a family reunion to see her, and the other “early” women—we really felt that we were a family.

Nina was sweet, kind, a good friend, and a respected competitor—we will miss her.



Sara Mae Burman - June 29, 2025 at 07:52 PM

BP

“ *Nina's effort and support in the fight to create a separate Women's Long Distance Committee will never be forgotten. She was always there , along with several others, as we battled and struggled in the first 4 years as an autonomous committee, fought to have the AAU back our effort to have the USOC request the IOC include distant events for women. Her advise and friendship in those early WLDR years will never be forgotten. Thank you my friend and rest in peace*

Barbara Palma - June 22, 2025 at 11:31 PM

EW

“ *I met Nina in Greenville sc , through her son timothy and Marilyn, She was so active lady and We took her to zumba and she enjoyed it so much. It was a pleasure meeting such great lady and inspiration For All of us . I am sure she is in heaven running through the gardens of God 🙏.*

Elizabeth Wilkerson - June 22, 2025 at 10:59 AM

MA

“ I had the great fortune to care for Nina in the 1990s, always happy to see her on my schedule. What a huge smile, warm, genuine, contagious! I loved hearing her stories about her marathons. She was a bright light. I send my sympathies to her children. Dr. Mary Bayno

mary - June 18, 2025 at 07:35 PM

RG

“ When Nina came to our program, there was never a day where she came in without a big smile on her face and a contagious laugh. She was kind, helpful, and full of stories and knowledge. Nina would always brighten mine, and everyone else's day with her presence alone. I was so amazed by her history as both a nurse and a runner. I'll never forget her sweet, welcoming personality, she will be very missed!

Raymond G. - June 18, 2025 at 09:16 AM

DB

“ I read about Nina Kuscsik and her running accomplishments and just wanted to offer my condolences to her family. Simply an incredible lady!
R.I.P.

DB - June 18, 2025 at 03:07 AM

SK

“ As a young girl growing up in South Huntington I remember always seeing Nina out doing her training runs. As a female athlete myself she was an inspiration to me. Her image is ingrained in my mind. I will always remember her and her impact on my life. Condolences to her family.

Sharon Kaler - June 17, 2025 at 08:50 AM

SG

My deepest condolences to the Kuscik Family and all friends near & dear, Sending lots of Strength, Prayers, Love & Hugs to the entire family, All the wonderful times I will forever remember in my heart, She was a Special, beautiful person with A heart of Gold, Her children were and still are incredible & outstanding individuals, I remember her showing up at my twin Willie's Celebration of Life, Speaking with her was more than a blessing, R.I.P. A Guardian Angel she is... xoxxx

Sara Goldmeer - June 17, 2025 at 05:38 PM

LJ

“ *Nina forced open the doors so my cohort could race through. We raced with her cheering us on, a tailwind of grand proportion.*

The marathon, the 10,000m, the 3000m became Olympic events because Nina knew women were more than strong enough. She collected others who felt the same way and together they changed the arc of all athletic women's trajectories.

Nina did it the old fashioned way: she scoured the details and presented them with gobs of light and bravery. We will always be indebted to her and I raced knowing she was part of my tailwind.

I admired Nina deeply. Thanks Nina. You were finest kind.

Lynn Jennings

Lynn Jennings - June 17, 2025 at 07:16 AM

KS

“ The entire running world is deeply saddened by the June 8 passing of one of our greatest leaders, Nina Kuscsik. Nina was not only a champion runner, but was instrumental in the official acceptance of women in distance running because she did years of tough work of changing rules, regulations and submitting medical evidence to prove women's capability. How she attended all those endless meetings while raising three kids as a solo mom, holding down a responsible medical job, and training is miraculous. In 1972, the Boston Marathon had to accept us as official entries. Eight of us could meet the qualifying time of 3 hr 30 min; 8 of us registered, 8 of us showed up, and all 8 of us finished. It was a stunning moment-- and a blistering hot day--but appropriately enough, Nina won. (Elaine Pedersen was second and I was third). 50 years later, in 2022, the Boston Marathon celebrated our 'golden' anniversary and brought back the surviving originals for a reunion, and adidas even dedicated the official shoes and clothing line to US, the original eight. It was marvelous...but we wouldn't have been there without Nina. RIP, dear friend. Kathrine Switzer

Kathrine Switzer - June 16, 2025 at 08:14 PM

RB

I remember meeting Nina in 1997 at then Boston Mayor Menino's Boston Marathon reception in the Grand Ballroom of the Copley Plaza Hotel in Boston. She was humble, kind and funny. I remember telling her she looked like one of my cousin's from my mother's Italian side. She said she also had Italian heritage! I called her "Cuz" for the rest of the night. Such a genuinely nice person who put up with a group of "regular guys" from Chicago that night! She signed autographs for all of us. Grateful to have met her

Rick Barrett - June 17, 2025 at 04:08 PM

RB

Rest in Peace, Nina! You've finished the race and left a huge legacy!

Rick Barrett - June 17, 2025 at 04:09 PM

JG

Nina was such an inspiration to countless women runners over the years. She was humble. She did not seek the limelight. Her efforts were for others. It is fitting that she died one day after the Mini race in Central Park. That race has endured for more than fifty years, in large part, because of Nina! May she RIP.

Julianne Grace - June 22, 2025 at 03:02 PM

JR

“ *Rest in Peace*

Jeff Rawlins - June 16, 2025 at 07:49 PM

NH

“ *What an amazing woman, amazing life. I remember many times when Nina would stop me in the hallway at the USATF meetings and ask me about MUT (mountain ultra trail) projects. Her smile and laughter would light up a room. Nancy Hobbs, USATF MUT Chairperson*

Nancy Hobbs - June 16, 2025 at 07:02 PM

PR

“ *Nina was a friend of mine since the mid 70's. We were on the NYRRC board together and I could always depend on her wisdom. I think we meant a lot to each other as last year, at the marathon, she immediately was so happy to see me. Then, I heard her ask her son, "Why do I know him?" Automatically, she had felt what good friends we were even without cognition. It meant so much to be part of her heart!!! Peter Roth*

Peter Roth - June 16, 2025 at 09:19 AM

GB

Peter, you were blessed to know Nina. Unfortunately I never met her but she certainly inspired me to train for the Boston Marathon which I ran 8 of them and was fortunate to win the Boston Marathon in 1978. She was an amazing athlete and she will be missed by all who know her. Gayle Barron ❤️🙏

Gayle Barron - June 16, 2025 at 03:21 PM

JR

“ Steve, Jill, and Family-

What an exceptionally well done obituary that did an extraordinary job of capturing Nina's enormous accomplishments in women's sports. Her list of achievements was truly remarkable.

There was also such a nice recapturing of Nina's interests and personality in the writing. She lived life to the fullest. From an early age she simply refused to accept artificial, misplaced barriers. Her determination and spirit was a hallmark of her life.

What a woman! What a life! Our deep sympathies to her family, her friends, and to her admirers.

Jim and Anna Ronk

Jim and Anna Ronk - June 16, 2025 at 08:54 AM

BD

“Nina was such a special person and was an inspiration to us all. We heard the stories of her advocacy for women in sports and achievements in long distance running long before we got to know her as “Aunt Nina.” She was so humble about all that she did, and quite matter of fact when asked directly, as if she had no other choice but to change the world. When Nina joined our family gatherings, she brought her unique blend of energy, humor and kindness, as well as carrots straight from her garden and her own homemade bula bread - three loaves, so we could enjoy it for days to come. She was forever an advocate for the power of eating healthy and moving your body to some type of exercise each day. Her laugh was infectious and her curiosity endless. She will be missed forever. Our hearts are with Chris, Stephen and Timmy, Cam, Jill, Marilyn, Alex and Ryan and Nina’s entire family. We are forever blessed to have known her.

Barbara D - June 15, 2025 at 04:35 PM