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Mark McNamara, 56, From a Youth Sailing Dinghies at Noroton Yacht Club to a Career in Youth Sailing

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Mark Jeffrey McNamara of Houston died on Aug. 20, 2021 following a difficult battle with cancer. He was 56.

Mark was born in Stamford to Francis J. McNamara Jr. and Noreen O'Connor McNamara, and he lived in California, Washington, D.C. and Connecticut before relocating to Houston in 2011.

Mark was devoted to his family and loved spending time with Karen and Patrick. Mark and Karen were married in 2009, and Karen had an immeasurable impact on the course of his life. Mark enjoyed going with Karen and Patrick to an Astros baseball game or a Texans football game, taking an occasional family

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vacation, participating in all of Patrick's school and athletic activities, and just being with them while grilling dinner in the back yard.

Apart from his family, Mark's second love in life was sailing. Mark was a lifelong sailor, having grown up sailing dinghys at the Stamford and Noroton yacht clubs. His passion for sailing continued into adult life, and his career spanned almost all aspects of the competitive sailing world. Mark was a boatyard worker, race boat captain, sailmaker and finally an integral cog in the youth sailing world for the past 15 years.

In 2007 Mark began a business specifically to service youth sailing in the United States. In 2011 he acquired KO Sailing in Seabrook, Texas, where he was able to continue the programs he had developed and add a variety of new ones.

His vision was to help sailors and their parents in whatever way he could, and he became a fixture at youth sailing events. Mark was always stationed at the "KO Truck" to help any sailor, from the Opti beginner to the most competitive young sailors on a national and international level.

He did all this while always maintaining the emphasis on kids having fun sailing. This attitude was most clearly demonstrated when it came to his son Patrick. There was nothing Mark loved more than watching his son learn to sail.

He is survived by his wife, Karen, and his son, Patrick; his brothers, Frank (Lisa) of Marblehead, Massachusetts and John (Christa) of Darien; his sisters, Moira (Lance) James of Marblehead and Kathy (Bob) Hugin of Summit, New Jersey; his stepmother, Lois McNamara, of Vero Beach, Florida and many nieces and nephews.

A memorial service in Connecticut is planned for the fall.

— [This obituary](#) was published by the *Darien Times* on *Legacy.com*, where online condolences may be left.