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Remembering Gabe Dalmath, longtime news anchor

By [JEREMY MOULE](#)

Messenger Post Staff

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Mr. Dalmath was also a devoted volunteer who spent 23 years hosting an annual muscular dystrophy telethon.

Amongst his colleagues, Gabe Dalmath was known as a serious newsman, at least on screen.

Off the screen, Mr. Dalmath, who was an anchor for WHEC Channel 10 for 25 years, had a reputation for having a goofy sense of humor, said his longtime co-anchor Rebecca Leclair.

"He was very witty with self-deprecating humor that would just make me laugh," Leclair said.

Mr. Dalmath, 60, of Pittsford, died Friday at Strong Memorial Hospital after a battle with kidney cancer, according to the WHEC Web site. He was diagnosed with the disease in June. A public memorial service is scheduled for 4 p.m. Thursday at Asbury First United Methodist Church, 1050 East Ave., Rochester.

He had a knack for making the newsroom a fun place to work, Leclair said.

A stickler for accuracy and detail, he would read all of the scripts before the anchors went on the air, Leclair said. When he found a misspelling or grammar mistake in those scripts, he'd playfully tap the person on the head with a toy hammer he kept on his desk.

"Once you got in the studio, it was time to be serious," Leclair said.

But there were times when he got to let loose a little on-air. That was

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particularly true when he joined her on WHEC's morning show. Mr. Dalmath, she said, enjoyed its lighter format, which included segments that had the pair milking goats or barbecuing, because he could relax and be himself.

He also had a tremendous work ethic, she said. On his second-to-last day of work, he came in for the morning show, left, then came back and stayed on air until 11 p.m. for the channel's tsunami fund-raiser. He signed off from the station on Dec. 31, 2004.

He was born Nov. 4, 1946 in Budapest, Hungary. His father was a resistance fighter and his family fled when he was 10 years old. They lived in Vienna and London before settling in Queens.

He attended Hunter College and majored in economics, though in his last year he took broadcast journalism courses.

When he finished college, the United States was involved in the Vietnam War and he was drafted into service. He was stationed in Korea.

He would later volunteer with the effort to build a Vietnam veterans memorial at Highland Park.

"He knew that freedom wasn't free," said Vicki Brown, a friend of the Dalmath family.

Brown said Mr. Dalmath would do everything he could for people who needed him. For 23 years, he hosted the Jerry Lewis Labor Day Telethon for the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

He also assisted with annual campaigns for the United Way, served as the community spokesman for the Multiple Sclerosis Society Upstate New York Chapter, and was co-chairman of Junior Achievement of Rochester.

"He really believed that people and relationships were the most important thing," Brown said.

He served on the adjunct faculty of Rochester Institute of Technology, St. John Fisher College and SUNY at Geneseo. He also authored "The Image is Rochester," a pictorial essay book.

After his retirement from WHEC, Mr. Dalmath joined his wife Jean at Dalmath Associates, their marketing communications firm.

He was an active man who enjoyed soccer, wind surfing and cycling. On the winter days he worked split shifts at the station, he'd often go downhill skiing before returning to the studio, Leclair said. He was also a ski instructor.

Mr. Dalmath is survived by his wife of 28 years, Jean, his daughter, Amanda, his mother, Katalin, and nieces and nephews.

Memorials may be sent to The Wilmot Cancer Center at Strong Memorial Hospital, Box 704, P.O. Box 230299, Rochester, NY 14692-9804; the Interlakes Oncology Foundation, Southview

Commons, 211 White Spruce Blvd., Rochester, NY 14623; or Asbury
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