



Running man: Left, Jim Maxfield signs a banner representing all runners in the Nov. 4 New York City Marathon. He's pictured above with parents Bob and Sara.

Superintendent sees son run in NYC

By Sue Buck
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Jim Maxfield, 32, who teaches at Walden Middle School in Lake Orion recently finished in "United We Run," the Nov. 4 marathon in New York City.

The elder son of Farmington School Superintendent Bob Maxfield, Jim was one of 30,000 runners drawn in a lottery from 60,000 who entered. He applied in spring of this year and, in June, was selected to compete. Maxfield finished in a time of 3 hours, 43 minutes and 59 seconds. Tesfaye Jifar of Ethiopia, who won the men's competition finished in 2 hours, 7 minutes and 43 seconds.

The run represented training six days a week for 20 weeks, a level of dedication that would make any parent proud. Bob Maxfield and his wife, Sara, were among the roughly 3 million spectators that day.

"We mapped our course," Bob Maxfield said. "We figured we would get to Brooklyn at catch him at Mile 9."

They hopped the subway with other spectators. "We thought we were really adventuresome until we found out we were with people from all over the world chasing marathoners on a Sunday morning."

They went from there to Queens to try to catch him at Mile 14 but found they missed him. "He ran faster than the

subway was able to get us there," Bob said. "Then we got into the most jammed subway we have ever been in to get back to Manhattan and we caught him at Mile 25. He circled to get back to the finish line."

As parents it was a thrill to watch. "It was a study in perseverance," Bob said. "Three years ago, he decided he gained weight and wanted to get in shape. He lost over 100 pounds in about a year. Running is what he chose to start doing."

Two years ago, Jim ran in the Chicago Marathon; he participated in the marathon at Portland, Ore., last year.

"This course was the hardest of the three," Jim said. "It was hilly and constant. There were five bridges on the course."

Though Jim may be the only person in the Lake Orion school district to finish in the New York Marathon, he modestly describes it as "not that big a thing."

The crowd's patriotism, the runners' resilience and the theme stood out that day, the Maxfields said.

Participants and spectators who spoke to them said they felt they needed to be part of the marathon.

"There was a heightened sense of purpose in the race this year," Jim said. "People were running in tribute to firefighters and police. It was extremely obvious. People were dressed up in Amer-

ican flags. It was neat, I'm glad I did it."

A few days after the marathon, still remembering the pain at the finish line, Jim said he was "unofficially retired" — maybe until the next marathon.

"Unless something better comes along," Jim added.

Jim is married to Elise. They have a son, Ethan, 2. Elise chose not to attend the marathon, because the couple felt New York was vulnerable right now.

For Jim's parents, the New York City trip was a bittersweet experience.

Bob debated and then decided to take his family down to Ground Zero, the site of destruction in and around the World Trade Center, which was struck down by terrorist attacks on Sept. 11. He took pictures of the destruction, including what was left of a Borders store.

"There was a layer of dust everywhere," Bob said. "You can smell it for hours. It stays with you. A fence goes around the site."

At every firehouse in New York memorial displays, many from school children, were set up. The Maxfield's younger son, Scott, who teaches fifth grade at Orion Oaks Elementary in Lake Orion had his class write a book for NYC firefighters. They later received a grateful response from a command officer there, Bob said.

Falcon band pulled out the stops

By Diane Hanson
Special Writer

The Farmington Falcon Marching Band still has a few tricks up its sleeves and it pulled them out at the Great Lakes Invitational marching band competition held at South Lyon High School on Oct. 20.

A spirited addition to their already spirit-filled Christmas program, "A Holiday Spectacular," was none other than St. Nicholas himself. Santa arrived pre-packaged in the guise of a giant-sized gift in the middle of the marching field and burst forth, to the delight of the audience, as the last strains of music rang forth.

"Santa's arrival had been planned all along," said Falcon Band Director Norman Logan. "It was the one part that was missing."

The entire holiday-themed competition piece was in preparation for a trip the band was

planning to England and Scotland around Thanksgiving time. But the trip was cancelled.

Said Logan, "We just simply don't want to put the kids in harm's way."

Logan added, "If the only thing that happens in Farmington is that we have to sacrifice a trip, wouldn't that be a wonderful thing?"

Mike Steele was another new addition this week. He stepped into the vacant slot of assistant band director at Farmington. The Detroit native had been on staff at Eastern Michigan University for three years and most recently taught in Taylor Public Schools.

Steele said that even though the European trip was cancelled, "The kids are keeping their chins up and still putting in spirited rehearsal."

That was evidenced by the students' enthusiasm.

"Most of the color guard was very happy with their perfor-

mance," said Laura Jacquin, a junior guard member. "This is a fun show to do."

Kylie Saughnan, a junior in the percussion section, is also having a good time with this year's show. "This is probably one of the best performances we have ever done, including rehearsals," she said. "I think everyone just put as much as they could into the show this week. There is such a difference from last week."

And the difference showed up in the band's score. The Falcons jumped more than five points from the previous week's competition at Clarkston to 64.85 for fifth place in Flight II competition.

"The kids did wonderfully today," said Logan. "I was really proud of them. They had a lot of energy and we had a great night for it. There was no rain and we didn't have to worry about them slipping and sliding."

Harrison sweeps Great Lakes invite

By Diane Hanson
Special Writer

Oct. 20 was a great day for raking leaves and equally as great for the Harrison High School Marching Band to rake in the trophies at the Great Lakes Invitational held at South Lyon High School.

"This was their best performance of the year," said an excited Peggy Babcock, director of the 90-member band. "They are at the same level of performance now as they were at state finals last year and that's still two weeks away."

The Harrison marchers captured the Flight III first-place trophy with a score of 78.6 along with all three captions for Best Music, Best Marching and Best General Effect.

"We did one of our best shows yet," said freshman baritone player Neil Schlick. "We really had ourselves together. Our practice this week was really solid."

And it has taken hundreds of hours of practice to put the

show, "A Day in the Life," together—every day after school for at least two-and-a-half hours, at football games, and all day on Saturday until show time—rain, sleet or shine.

"Considering all the hours of practice we have put in, I think it has really paid off," said junior flutist Sara Kirsten. "I think we did a really good job today. The show is a lot harder this year too."

The eight-minute show tells the story of the nine-to-five day of a corporate office worker. At this invitational senior Mark Shirey played the part of the businessperson, complete with suit, hat, tie, a bag lunch and a park bench.

The bench is just one of the many props added to this year's show—a first for having any props at Harrison. Those props, along with a number of other factors—including nailing down the marching precision, have boosted Harrison's visual effect numbers.

Of the 25 competing bands at

the invitational, Harrison had the highest score for visual effect and the fourth highest comprehensive score overall.

Other local bands included, in Flight II—Livonia Franklin, fourth, 66.15; Farmington, fifth, 64.85; in Flight I—Novi, first, 86.5; West Bloomfield, sixth, 70.15; South Lyon, seventh, 68.85; and Westland's John Glenn, eighth, 60.85.

The Plymouth-Canton Educational Park Marching Band played in exhibition as hosts of the invitational, which was moved just three days before the event to South Lyon's artificial turf after a day of rain left the CEP field too mushy for marching.

The nine-hour extravaganza ended with four of the bands—Plymouth-Canton, Novi, South Lyon and Lake Orion—gathering on the field to play several patriotic songs as red, white and blue balloons were released into the night sky.

HOLIDAY 2001 EVENTS: BIRMINGHAM COMMUNITY TREE LIGHTING: Wednesday, November 21, 6 p.m., Shain Park.
SANTA HOUSE OPENS: Wednesday, November 21, 7 p.m., Shain Park. HOLIDAY VISIONS: Friday, December 7, 1-10 p.m., Stores.
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