

Anthem singer starts last but finishes first

Parkland High grad wins Lehigh Valley Health Network Marathon for Via, raising funds for the cause.

By Arlene Martínez
OF THE MORNING CALL

For Ian Maskowitz and the other four entrants from Lehigh University's Sigma Phi Epsilon 1, it was the second-place finish in the relay race that almost didn't happen.

Marathon participant Jennifer Lacroix almost missed the chance to make true these words on her T-shirt: "Our Mommy's First Marathon 2009."

Those participants in Sunday's Lehigh Valley Health Network Marathon for Via arrived to the starting gate several minutes past the 7 a.m. start time. Organizers had already begun cleaning up as they stood waiting, anxious to see if they'd be cleared to go.

They were, and off they ran, joining the 2,230 walkers and runners signed up for the second annual event, which featured a five-person relay race, a half-marathon and the featured event — the Allentown-to-Easton 26.2-mile marathon.

Please see MARATHON NEWS 2



Makovsky

Eric Makovsky approaches the finish line at Centre Square in Easton on his way to winning the Lehigh Valley Health Network Marathon for Via on Sunday. He started last and earned money for every racer he passed.

**HARRY FISHER /
THE MORNING CALL**

Participants in the Lehigh Valley Health Network Marathon for Via head on Fish Hatchery Road as they prepare to enter the Lehigh Parkway shortly after the start of the race at Lehigh Valley Hospital-Cedar Crest in Salisbury Township. The 26.2-mile course took runners through Allentown, Bethlehem and Easton, ending at the Center Square in Easton.

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MARATHON

Continued from NEWS 1

Racers started at Lehigh Valley Hospital-Cedar Crest and finished in Easton's Centre Square, on a gorgeous, sunny, runner-friendly day, where free Icees and cheering friends and family awaited them.

The first to arrive was someone many runners met earlier in the day. Eric Makovsky, 36, not only sang the national anthem, but he also started the race behind everyone else (well, except for those latecomers).

That was by design, as course designer and Runner's World chief running officer Bart Yasso told runners before the race: For every person Makovsky passed, sponsors would make a 75-cent donation to Via, the organization benefitting from the marathon.

Makovsky estimated he raised more than \$500 thanks to contributions by Strawberry Acres, Eberhardt Motors and his sponsor in Baltimore, Charm City Run.

All told, the event is expected to raise more than \$90,000 for Via of the Lehigh Valley, a nonprofit that provides support and services to people with developmental disabilities, including autism.

Makovsky has a special affection for Via and its work: His 5-year-old daughter is autistic.

"The work they do with siblings is phenomenal," said Makovsky, who also has a 4-year-old son.

Makovsky won the marathon in a time of 2 hours, 48 minutes, 15 seconds. Though he lives in Washington, D.C., doing marketing and publicity for the U.S. Navy band, he grew up in North Whitehall Township and graduated from Parkland High School in 1991.

The course took runners through the Lehigh Parkway and along the Lehigh River Canal Tow Path, and the gravel in those parts took its toll on Makovsky's feet.

"At around mile 19, 20, I knew the bottoms

RACE RESULTS

For a list of winners, go to www.vianet.org.

of my feet were shredded," Makovsky said as volunteers helped bandage his bloodied toes, "but if you start walking, it's pretty much a dead man's march."

The long run's effect could be seen on female marathon winner Lauren Sanders, 22, who stretched and grimaced as she waited for the awards ceremony to start.

Sanders, a recent graduate of Cedar Crest College who lives in King of Prussia, finished in 3 hours, 14 minutes, 18 seconds.

The top female finisher in the half marathon, which began at Main and Market streets in Bethlehem and finished at Centre Square, was Kathleen Jobs, 39, of Bethlehem (1:19:32), who nearly beat top male finisher Bill Harris, 36, of Allentown (1:18:28).

WE-R-WACKI nailed top honors among all relay teams, posting the fastest marathon time of the day (2:40:05).

So, back to the stragglers.

The first stop for relay teams after leaving the starting line was Parkettes Gym on Martin Luther King Drive — where Lehigh University's Sigma Phi Epsilon 1 fraternity team initially showed up.

"We went to the first exchange because we're not very good at reading," said Jonathan Rosen, 20, who anchored the Lehigh team.

It somehow worked out, and their time of 3 hours, 8 minutes, 49 seconds gave them the silver medal in the College Cup Challenge.

"The race officials were really nice," Maskowitz said.

Why Lacroix was late isn't known but things also turned out fine for her.

According to official race results, Lacroix became that mother who ran her first marathon. She did it in a more than respectable 4 hours, 7 minutes, five seconds.

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Paul Shotto of Bethlehem touches fellow Sands Bethlehem employee Christy Jones of Bethlehem on W. Lehigh Street in Bethlehem, the start of Leg 3 of the Lehigh Valley Health Network Marathon for Via. A five-member relay was part of the fundraiser.

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