



Babette G. Augustin/Staff photographer
Steve Parrish, captain of the McQuaid cross-country team, organized this year's 25-hour marathon Aug. 3. The event raised more than \$600 for the Francis Hospitality Center.

McQuaid athletes endure 25-hour run for homeless

By Barbara Ann Homick
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Although 12 McQuaid runners battled fatigue and the weather during their 25-hour fundraising marathon last weekend, none of the athletes complained.

The McQ athletes realized that the people they were trying to help through the marathon endure uncomfortable conditions, not just for 25 hours, but every day of their lives.

This year's McQuaid marathon, which annually benefits a different charity, raised more than \$600 for the Francis Hospitality Center. The center, which opened in June, is a year-round, 30-bed, 24-hour shelter run by the Catholic Family Center.

According to Steve Parrish, captain of the McQuaid cross-country team and marathon coordinator, the runners took the lead to help the homeless from McQuaid graduates Brian Mack and Ed Mangan.

The two men returned to Rochester in July after raising more than \$4,000 for the Francis Center while biking from San Francisco to Rochester. The cyclists are still collecting pledges toward their \$10,000 goal.

Parrish said the marathon wasn't quite as complicated as the cyclists' excursion, but that the runners were pleased they could help the same cause.

According to Mary McGuire, department director of homeless and housing services at the CFC, the agency is appreciative of the fundraising efforts for the fledgling center.

Since the shelter has been open only two months, the shelter director said funds are still needed for such expenses as recreational equipment, towels, bedding and fans.

Parrish, who ran track for two years before joining the McQuaid cross-country team as a sophomore, said he began organizing the marathon — along with Coach Bob Bradley — in May.

The marathon began at 11 a.m. on Aug. 2. The relay was structured so that as one runner finished a mile — four laps around the McQuaid track — he handed the baton to the next runner. Since only 12 runners signed up for the marathon, each athlete had to run about once every two hours.

A major problem occurred about 16 hours into the marathon when heavy rain soaked the Rochester area. That meant the runners, who were tired and sore by 3 a.m., were also getting cold and wet.

Despite the messy conditions, Parrish said the runners would not quit.

"We started slowing down and it brought our morale down a little, but we kept on going," said Parrish.

The marathon ended at noon on Aug. 3. Although the runners were tired and some even sick, Parrish said he felt the fundraising event was a success.

"We are tired now, but when you think about what we've done, it was worth it because it is for a good cause," said the McQuaid senior after the relay.

Dan Lesser, a sophomore runner, noted that even though the race was difficult, he was glad he got involved with the project.

"I was glad to make a sacrifice for them (the homeless), but it's nothing compared to the way they have to live," concluded Lesser.

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EDITORS' NOTE: Those wishing to send contributions to the shelter can contact Mary McGuire at: Francis Hospitality Center, 547 Joseph Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14605.