

## Fallen Marine To Be Remembered At Marathon Sunday

By ERIN MAGUIRE  
 THE BULLETIN

The 33rd Marine Corps Marathon (MCM) will attract over 30,000 people to run from Arlington, Va., to Washington, D.C. Oct. 26.

The fourth largest marathon in the United States, MCM earned the nickname "The People's Marathon" as the largest in the world that does not offer prize money.

Participants run to promote a positive military image and to remember those who have served. At least 100 runners will run to remember one Philadelphian who gave his life for his country last year.

In March 2007, Janet Manion received a phone call from her son Travis in Iraq. He asked her to sign him and his dad, Tom, up for MCM. Mrs. Manion registered them, but her son never made it.

During his final patrol mission on April 29, 2007, Travis was killed by enemy sniper fire in the al-Anbar Province of Iraq while defending against an enemy ambush. A week and a half after Travis' death, Mr. Manion and a few family friends sat around the table remembering his life.

Mr. Manion told the group about his son's desire to run the MCM and they said, "Let's do it anyway," Mrs. Manion recalled.

Team Travis was then formed with 100 marathon runners and 80 10K participants. The team ran to raise money for the newly created Travis Manion Foundation, which provides services and support for families that lost loved ones in the Global War on Terror.

Last year, Mr. Manion completed this first Team Travis race in memory of his son wearing both of their numbers. This year, he will join over 100 team members to carry on his legacy.

The Travis Manion

Foundation not only supports families, but also helps wounded veterans become citizen leaders and provides education scholarships in Travis' name.

Last year's efforts supported two fellowships for wounded Marines and a Good Grief seminar for families of fallen service members.

Matthew Trotter, a Navy veteran who was injured in Iraq, used his fellowship to create a Pipe Creek, Texas-based therapeutic equine center for handicapped children staffed by veterans. And the Good Grief seminar attracted counselors and nearly 100 families from as far as North Carolina and Connecticut who attended a Phillies game and shared stories.

"It was a very emotional weekend, but it pulled all of us together," Mrs. Manion said of the seminar. "We were able to talk about our loved ones."

Mrs. Manion said this year's MCM goal is \$50,000 to fund more fellowships and the construction of Manion Square, a community designed tile art project to raise awareness of military service in Doylestown.

The Travis Manion Foundation also hosts a golf tournament and silent auction as fundraisers. In one short year, the foundation has donations pouring in from all over the country and even England.

"It's not a hard sell," Mrs. Manion said of the foundation's success. "The people that knew Travis knew what he was about: strength, love for his country, and motivation to help others ... he was a humble human being who gave credit to others before he took it for himself; I think it's fitting to give him credit now. I think our son is working from heaven."

One man touched by Travis' life is first-time marathoner and former Chester County Commissioner Colin Hanna.

The 61-year-old was inspired to run a marathon after his daughter ran the New York Marathon two years ago. The Navy veteran heard Travis' story when he ran part of the Philadelphia Distance Run alongside Mrs. Manion, who wore a T-shirt commemorating her son.

Earlier this year, Mr. Hanna told friends he was training again for the Philadelphia Distance Run, but secretly planned to increase distances over the summer to see if he could do the MCM. A pulled calf muscle put him off course for four weeks and Mr. Hanna thought he missed his chance.

Just a week and a half ago, however, Mr. Hanna completed 22 miles and thinks, "with adrenaline," he can finish 26. The \$5,000 he raised will be sweated for Sunday when he hopes to stay ahead of "the struggler's bus," but expects to finish last for Team Travis.

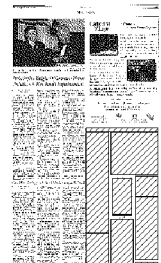
Overall, Team Travis is an opportunity to watch her son "grow" Mrs. Manion said. "I can continue to see the good that he can do; it means the world to me."

To donate to the Travis Manion Foundation, visit [www.travismanion.com](http://www.travismanion.com).

Erin Maguire can be reached at [emaguire@thebulletin.us](mailto:emaguire@thebulletin.us)

**"The people that knew Travis knew what he was about: strength, love for his country, and motivation to help others ... he was a humble human being who gave credit to others before he took it for himself; I think it's fitting to give him credit now. I think our son is working from heaven."**

Janet Manion  
 Travis Manion's



**Mother**



*Courtesy of [www.travismanion.com](http://www.travismanion.com)*

Brothers Chris Manion, left, and Tom Manion participate in last year's Marine Corps Marathon as part of Team Travis to honor fallen Marine and Tom's son, Travis Manion. Tom is wearing his and Travis' numbers.

Printing imperfections present during scanning