

The Youth Parade

By H.B. Wise



Just over 30 hearty souls gathered Saturday morning (Jan. 2) for the rescheduled and renamed ATM in Grand Prairie's Mike Lewis Park. A One-Tenth Marathon (ATM) was renamed from the Autumn Trail Mile that was originally scheduled to run on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. Although cloudy and cool, the weather was considerably better than the original date.

The runners toed the line at about 9:30 a.m. for the unique distance of 2.622 miles. The race turned into a three-way battle among the top three finishers. Martin Chavez was the overall winner with a time of 16.01. He is 13 and attends Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic Academy.

Rachel Steffen, 20, was second overall and the overall female winner with a time of 16.05. Rachel is a sophomore at Washington & Lee University where she will captain the cross country team next season. She helped her team win the Old Dominion Athletic Conference cross country championship. She was in Grand Prairie for the race because her father, Michael Steffen, recently took over command of the Naval Air Station - Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth. Michael was fourth overall and the male master's winner.

Leland Allen, 14, attends Lamar Middle School in Flower Mound and finished third overall with a time of 16.07. He started running in the 4th grade and discovered he enjoyed it and was good at it. He plans on running cross country next year when he attends high school.

The Jenkins family of Midlothian helped with the youth parade as brothers Grady, 8, and Graham, 6, finished seventh and eight, respectively. Their dad, Jace, finished fifth overall for the 40-44 age division win.

Overall it was an impressive day for the young runners from the area. We look forward to more impressive efforts from all of them.