

Marching band's show catalyst for Macomb family reunion



About an hour after performing in front at America's Thanksgiving Parade in downtown Detroit on Thursday, the Dakota High School Marching Band then did a 20-minute mini-set in front of the home of Lisa and Keith Gillim in Macomb Township.

DAVID ANGELL -- FOR THE MACOMB DAILY

By [Mitch Hotts](#), The Macomb Daily

Posted: 11/27/14, 7:00 PM EST |



Parents and neighbors whipped out their cameras, camera-phones or iPads to capture images of the neighborhood concert.

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Sometimes, it takes a little incentive to get the family together for the Thanksgiving holiday.

How about a marching band?

That's the approach Lisa and Keith Gillim of Macomb Township took when inviting relatives from Kentucky and Tennessee for Thanksgiving dinner.

The couple won a 20-minute mini-concert in front of their home, courtesy of the Dakota High School Marching Band on Thursday through a \$10-a-ticket fundraiser raffle. Lisa Gillim said the spectacle was part of her pitch, as two of their sons, Austin and Anderson, are in the band.

“It was the catalyst for us all getting together,” she said.

The “flash mob” performance has now become a staple of Dakota’s Thanksgiving Day activities. The 175 band and color guard members had just performed for the eighth time on a televised segment of America’s Thanksgiving Parade in downtown Detroit, before heading out to Nola Drive for a second set.

By the time the band marched down the street playing a medley of Christmas tunes, close to 300 parents and neighbors had gathered to enjoy the short show.

“Welcome to my house,” shouted Keith Gillim, as he videotaped the set from the roof of his house.

The band performed several selections from their 2014 halftime show “Shades of Latin.” They also thrilled the crowd with a rousing version of “trombone suicide,” a choreographed line of players in close proximity.

Claire Kosky, 17, a drum major with the band, said this year’s show was special to her since she’s a senior and will be leaving behind many memories at the end of the year.

“It was pretty crazy downtown, but the crowd keeps you going,” she said. “They were chanting ‘Dakota, Dakota,’ so that made us feel good.”

For the Gillim family, the show paid off.

Lisa Gillim’s sister Lyn Beth Lorey and her children were able to get there in time from their home in Clarksville, Tenn., while parents Paul and Lois Neal drove up from Kentucky.

Paul Neal enjoyed it so much, he congratulated band director Rob Abend right after the performance.

“This was well worth the trip,” he said. “This is how a high school marching band should be.”

About the Author

Reach the author at mitch.hotts@macombdaily.com .