

MARCHING IN A TRADITION Moscow student in Macy's parade

High school flutist to perform in New York City



Dean Hare/Daily News

Meadow Poplawsky plays her flute in Friendship Square on Thursday in Moscow. Poplawsky is playing in the Macy's Great American Marching Band during the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City.

Posted: Tuesday, November 20, 2012 12:00 am | *Updated: 9:24 am, Tue Nov 20, 2012.*

By Estelle Gwinn, Daily News staff writer | [0 comments](#)

As families start preparing their Thanksgiving dinners on Thursday, Moscow High School flutist Meadow Poplawsky will be performing for millions of spectators in the 86th annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

Poplawsky found out in June she would be playing in the Macy's Great American Marching band, which features almost 200 high school musicians from across the country in the event that traditionally begins the holiday season.

Poplawsky, a sophomore at MHS, has played the flute since fourth grade. She was inspired to apply for the band after a friend marched the streets of New York last year.

"I've always loved watching the parade and when she talked about it, she said it was the best experience of her life. So I decided I had to do it," Poplawsky said.

She was nominated by her former band director, Tom Garrett.

Diane Prorak, Poplawsky's mother, remembered Moscow students marching in the parade in past years and hoping her daughter would get to go someday. This year, Poplawsky is the only Moscow student in the parade.

"We watch the parade every year, but to be in it is amazing," Prorak said. "She will get to meet kids from all over the country."

Poplawsky chose to play the flute because it's the same instrument her mother played in school. When she left for New York on Saturday, her mother's flute went with her.

Prorak said she was nervous about her daughter flying to New York after Superstorm Sandy, which devastated the East Coast in late October, but plans for the parade remained unaffected.

"We wondered if the parade might be canceled and, of course, I became a little more concerned about her traveling alone with the weather they have had, but the parade is hardly as important as the difficulty and loss people have experienced there," Prorak said.

Macy's announced Saturday they would donate 5,000 parade tickets to residents in the neighborhoods hardest hit by the storm. Students in the Great American Marching Band will also be giving donations.

"I'm just hoping another storm doesn't hit anytime soon," Poplawsky said.

The band students will be in New York until Friday. While in the Big Apple Poplawsky is roommates with students from Rhode Island, North Dakota and Missouri.

"I'm a little nervous because I'm from Idaho, and we don't have as many musical opportunities as people from big schools and the East Coast, but more than anything I'm just really excited to go to New York," Poplawsky said.

She's never been in the city and hopes to run into some celebrities, she said.

"I started looking up the famous people who will be in the parade," Poplawsky said.

During their week in the city, students will visit the World Trade Center, Times Square and see a Broadway play to reward their hard work on Thanksgiving Day, which begins at 2 a.m.

"They have to rehearse every act in the parade before the actual parade starts so rehearsal starts at two in the morning. It's going to be a crazy long day," Poplawsky said.

The band will be marching more than 2.5 miles in the parade, which is estimated to last about three hours.

Poplawsky was also recently accepted into the National Association for Music Education's All-Northwest Honor Band.

"Over 1,500 students from Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming auditioned for this honor," said Joel Pals, the high school's music teacher.

The musicians selected for the honorary band will meet in February to perform under the direction of world-renowned conductors.

Estelle Gwinn can be reached at (208) 882-5561, ext. 301, or by email to egwinn@dnews.com.