

SugarGroveCars.com Sponsors a Marathon Race Team

The 31st Annual Chicago Marathon was on October 12, 2008. Sugar Grove Custom Cars, LLC. sponsored the race team of Keith, Craig, and Brian Benz.

It was just after noon on a bright and sunny Sunday that Keith, Craig, and Brian Benz crossed the finish line of the 31st Annual Chicago Marathon donning the bright orange shirts of their newest sponsor, Sugar Grove Custom Cars, LLC.

An estimated 45,000 runners started the 26.2 mile marathon course in a corral of seeded, then non-seeded runners that stretched for blocks. The Benz boys, along with their fan club (mom and brother Dave), did everything they could to start at the front, including rising at 4am to reach the downtown parking lot by 5:30 - well before sunrise and 2 1/2 hours before the gun start. Oh, what a patient fan club!



Craig, Mom (Peggy), Keith and Brian

By the time most of the sea of runners had moved into position behind the trio, the Benz brothers had ample time to sit, visit, snack on high-carb snacks, use the toilet, and repeat several times. Yes, there were plenty of butterflies to go around. Meanwhile, Mom and Dave looked for the highest perch to get a good view, first trying a set of stairs leading up and away from Madison Avenue, then a small 3-foot wall, then some small structure, each time being chased off by Chicago's men in blue.

The start of every marathon is always the most exciting and this proved no different; lots of energetic runners with a fresh spring in their step, and streets packed with runners from curb to curb. The course was flat and wound through about 29 historic and diverse neighborhoods. Over 20 aid stations and plenty more water options lined the course with locals even offering their own source of energy from candy to bubblegum to garden hoses spraying the ever dehydrating runners. It became clear that more was needed as the temperature rose to 83 degrees and course officials raised alert notifications from mild to high, cautioning runners to take in plenty of water. Aid stations appeared more and more full as the miles went by, and sounds of ambulance sirens reminded everyone still on the course to carefully monitor themselves and take in liquids as often as possible.



Craig, Keith and Brian Benz

Finally, after 26.2 miles, all three Benz runners crossed the finish line. For Brian, it was a personal best (Keith and Craig finished Grandma's Marathon last year with a sub-4-hour time!), for all three it is for the simple fact that they could tell their legs to stop running after hours of incessant heel pounding. But like many things anticipated for so long, the Chicago Marathon - an event that required months of training and countless sacrifices by Benz family members - ended with all three Benzes in good condition and no injuries to speak of.

Thanks to our families for allowing us to do such crazy things and to our sponsor, Sugar Grove Custom Cars, LLC., for providing outstanding uniforms in an otherwise sea of generic dry-weave!