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Pittsburg band shows up in grand style at Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade

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Slide show

- [Pittsburg band at Macy's Thanksgiving parade](#)

NEW YORK — It was difficult to guess that members of the Pittsburg High School marching band were operating on a few hours' sleep for the 83rd annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

They showed no signs of fatigue Thursday as they performed "Alive and Amplified," a garage rock song recorded by the Mooney Suzuki in 2004, at Herald Square. During the rest of the 1½ hour parade route they cycled through a medley of staple songs.

"It was amazing being in Times Square," said Michael Gonzales, a senior trumpet player. "I kept looking up at the sky, taking it all in. I was tired at the beginning of the parade but now I want to go eat."

Lined up between the "Artie the Pirate" balloon and "Sailor Mickey Mouse" was a fitting position for the Pittsburg Pirates.

"They looked awesome," band leader Jennifer Martinez said. "Being able to watch it and see the whole thing happen was pretty remarkable."

Freshman flute player Laura Dunn, 14, had four families at her house in Pittsburg watching the parade.

"I already had dinner with my family before I left for New York, so I'm not missing anything," she said.

Through donations from the Pittsburg community, \$221,000 was collected to transport, house and feed the 167-member band. Families were asked to pay at least a portion of the costs.

Chaperon Michael Scheffler was elated to join his sons Alek, 15, and Austin, 14, and called the group the most well-behaved group of teenagers they could have asked for.

Pittsburg, one of 10 high school and college

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marching bands performing, was the only band from west of the Mississippi River. As some of them put it, the band was representing the entire West Coast.

But there was no added pressure, Martinez insisted.

"I think when we had our rehearsal this morning, it finally came together for all the students and made them realize how great this whole experience is going to be for them," she said before parade.

While they were lining up, band members got acquainted with the other groups, finding out where they were from, and how their tenor saxophone section sounded.

Not one of them seemed even a bit intimidated.

"I think we're all pretty confident, not so much nervous," said senior and sousaphone section leader Edner Monter. "We've been anticipating this for a really long time, so it's time to take care of business."

After the parade the band left on buses en route for a dinner cruise on New York's Hudson River. There they enjoyed Thanksgiving dinner while the euphoria from the parade faded and sleep deprivation caught up with them.

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