

## Thousands brave elements for parade



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**By CHAD NATION**

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Fifty degree temperatures and 30 mile per hour wind gusts greeted those who attended the Council Bluffs Pride Parade on Saturday morning, but pomp and circumstance left everyone feeling warm inside.

Thousands donned jackets and braved the elements to show their pride and partake in the annual celebration of community.

With well over 100 entries in the parade, spectators had the opportunity to view dozens of variations on this year's theme of Family Near and Far.

The young - and the young at heart - were treated to candy, stickers and various other give-a-ways, as parade participants marched on Pearl and Main streets.

Five-year-old Keevan Robinson said that he liked the fire trucks and, of course, the sweets.

"I got a lot of candy," he said, and he couldn't wait to put on his Hy-Vee tattoo.

His mother, Jessi Young, said that she tries to attend the parade every year. "Especially now that Keevan is old enough to enjoy it," she added.

Dozens of businesses, non-profits, schools and area sports teams spent hours working on their floats to wow the crowd.

Kathleen Wolff said that the Iowa Blackhawks float received its finishing touches late Friday evening. Her daughters, Megan, Erin, and Allie, were able to ride on the float while team members passed out over 400 packages of candy.

Allie said that she had fun waving at people from the car.

Pride Week chair Lynne Branigan said that she was thrilled with the number of people that turned out for the parade and the festivities that followed in Bayliss Park.

She pointed out the excellent job the entertainment committee did in expanding activities for children after the parade.

"All of the committee volunteers are a great group," Branigan said. "I just can't say enough about the fantastic job that they have done all week long."

Branigan also wanted to thank the Tangier Shrine Center for providing numerous entries in the parade.

At the conclusion of the parade, the community lingered at Bayliss to hear the music stylings of Lovetap, Anonymous American and River City Classic, and visit with dozens of community organizations from the Council Bluffs Jaycees to Catholic Charities.

Members of the Iowa Blackhawks arena football team were also on hand to sign autographs and chat with fans.

And squeals of delight, and perhaps fear, could be heard from the carnival rides well into the night.

After this year's success, Branigan is already looking towards next year.

"It has been a great week," she said. "And we are already looking forward to a bigger and better event next year."