

# BOYD BUZZ



## Got Talent: Curt Ehlinger gets 'Boston Strong'

by Elisabeth Daniels

For **Curt Ehlinger, CRM Business Analyst at Boyd Gaming's corporate office in Dubuque**, Iowa, the road to the Boston Marathon started last year when he set a goal to qualify to run the legendary race in 2015.

He's been an avid runner for the past five years, and he likes the long haul. Marathons aren't new to him. He's completed seven half marathons and now eight marathons. Boston wasn't on his radar for this year until a friend pushed him to up the pace of his workouts. He improved by over a minute per mile and qualified for Boston a year ahead of schedule.

People kept asking him if he was afraid to run the Boston Marathon so soon after last year's attack. He wasn't. "I think it

is important to continue to live our lives and do what we love to do in spite of what a few evil people do to take our security and freedom away from us," says Ehlinger. "It may be a little thing, but we're showing all those around us how to persevere and be strong in spite of challenges and uncertainty."

Staying strong in the face of adversity is an Ehlinger family trait. His mom was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis 35 years ago. "Rather than choosing to be 'woe is me', she has defied the odds and gets out and walks one to three miles every day," Ehlinger says.

Defying the odds is what this year's marathon was all about, and the "Boston Strong" rallying cry reverberated through the throngs of people lining the running route. Ehlinger eventually turned his iPod® off because the cheers and shouts of encouragement made it impossible to hear his music. "Everybody was just unbelievable: before the race, wishing you good luck - after the race, you couldn't move five feet without someone stopping you and thanking you for coming back to their city and running the marathon," he says.

Over the 3 hours, 26 minutes and 44 seconds it took Ehlinger to finish, he was continually impressed by his fellow runners. "I've never seen so many amputees running a race. Their grit and determination was extraordinary."

Ehlinger sums it up this way. "When I finished, all I thought is that I am well and truly blessed. I just had to give thanks, and it gave me a new perspective on a lot of things."