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## West junior sets new American Rubik's cube record

By Katrina Homel  
SPECIAL TO THE PATRIOT

At the very mention of the Rubik's cube, the toy invented by Erno Rubik that became wildly popular in the 1980s, many people think of countless hours spent in vain attempting to find a solution to the mind-bending puzzle. For CB West junior Quinn Lewis, the cube is a new hobby that he shares with numerous people around the world.

At a May 28 cubing competition, Lewis set a new American record for solving the 3x3x3 cube in 13.41 seconds. Lewis competed against a field of 45 cubers, some traveling from as far as Japan and the Dominican Republic, in multiple categories at the Horace Mann Tournament in Riverdale, N.Y. With his time, Lewis now holds the second-fastest record in the world for solving the 3x3x3 cube. Shotaro Makisumi of Japan, who solved the cube in 12.11 seconds, has the distinction.

Lewis is also ranked fifth in the world for solving the 2x2x2 cube in 6.45 seconds, 14th for solving the 4x4x4 cube in 93.78 seconds, and sixth for solving another type of puzzle, Rubik's Magic, in 1.6 seconds.

Although Makisumi took the competition, Lewis finished strong, placing fifth overall.

Lewis began cubing two years ago after seeing a friend solve the puzzle.

"I always wanted to learn how to solve a Rubik's cube," he said. "I saw my friend Will with one at band camp, and I asked him to teach me how. My first attempt at solving the cube took about a week."

Although Lewis started with the 3x3x3 cube, he has since branched out to about 45 other puzzles, including a pyramid-shaped one. He has also attempted cubing blindfold.

"I never get bored," said Lewis. "Not only are there many more puzzles to try, but I know that I can always be faster."

Lewis described his record-breaking experience as "cool."

"The best part of the competition was that the American record was broken twice," he said.

"The person who went before me broke the old record, and then I went up and broke the old record."

The West junior's father, Marc Lewis, said that while there was some sense of a competitive atmosphere, it was mainly friendly competition.

"Quinn was not under any stress," said the elder Lewis. "He had been talking to some of the

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other competitors on-line for a year, so they felt like a community - it was very non-threatening."

In the future, Lewis said he has plans to attend the Rubik's cube world championships in November at Disney's Pop Century Resort in Orlando, Fla., which has an '80's section with a room devoted to the cube.

On average, Lewis said he practices cubing an hour daily with 100 to 150 solves, and has hopes of expanding upon the current method that he uses, the Fridrich method, most popular among cubers, to prepare for the championships.

Lewis said his life has remained largely unchanged since his accomplishment. However, he notes, "If someone doesn't know my name, they'll call me 'cube boy' instead."

Lewis has some advice for cubers planning on getting serious. "Work on having zero reaction time," he said. "The less you stop, the faster you will be able to solve the cube."

Besides cubing, Lewis is an active member of the West band and a juggler.

Katrina Homel is a graduating senior at Central Bucks West High School

