

POLETTI, Frances & Kristina Yee. *The Girl Who Ran: Bobbi Gibb, The First Woman To Run the Boston Marathon.* illus. by Susanna Chapman. 48p. chron. photos. Compendium. Jun. 2017. Tr \$16.95. ISBN 9781943200474.

Gr 3 Up—In this lively narrative, the authors recount the true story of Roberta “Bobbi” Gibb, the first woman to run the Boston Marathon. Growing up in the 1950s, young Gibb loved to run “into the woods, over the hills, through the fields and by streams.” Years later, when she went to Boston to watch the marathon with her father, the young woman was enthralled and later resolved to enter the race. Despite her parents’ objections (“Good girls don’t run”), she began to train, traveling across the country to practice on different terrains. Her race application was rejected (“Women cannot run marathons”), but undaunted, Gibb disguised herself as a man and joined the runners at the starting line. As the miles flew by and the temperature rose, she had to shed her bulky sweatshirt and reveal her true identity. As she crossed the finish line, history was made. The story is accompanied by rhyming lines of verse that capture Gibb’s unquenchable need to run. The old-fashioned charm of the softly colored retro illustrations reflects the essence and style of a bygone era. In a particularly appealing spread, Gibb runs by Wellesley College, buoyed by the support of the coeds. Their words of encouragement are printed above the scene in an eye-catching script. An appended biographical note and time line provide a brief history of the famous race. **VERDICT** Bobbi Gibb’s unrelenting determination will resonate with readers of all ages who dream of accomplishing a seemingly unattainable goal. A pleasing addition to biography and sports collections.—*Linda L. Walkins, Saint Joseph Preparatory High School, Boston*