

Batkid Saves San Francisco



Before Reading

- Describe what you see in the picture. What are the people doing?
- Why do you think these two people are dressed up as Batman?

San Francisco, USA

The Make-A-Wish Foundation is one of the world's leading children's charities. The foundation has helped thousands of children with life-threatening medical conditions to fulfill a dream that they have. On November 15th, 2013, the Make-A-Wish Foundation and the people of San Francisco came together to help a little boy named Miles.

Miles is a five year old California boy who is in remission from leukemia, a deadly kind of bone cancer. The young boy's dream was to be a superhero, so the Make-A-Wish Foundation sent out emails asking for help in San Francisco. This request for help went viral on social media sites like Twitter though, and soon over 12,000 volunteers signed up to change San Francisco into Gotham City for a day!

Miles big day started out by taking a ride in a "Batmobile" (a Lamborghini donated by a volunteer) with Batman to save a woman trapped on cable car rails. When Miles arrived in the Lamborghini, thousands of fans were waiting for him, taking pictures and cheering him on.



Batkid saves a woman from danger

After saving the woman in distress, Batkid was called to another emergency. The Riddler was robbing a nearby bank! Batkid sprang into action and took off for the bank in his Batmobile. With the help of local police, Batkid was able to catch the Riddler before he could escape with the money. Another great job Batkid!



It's straight to jail for the Riddler

After defeating the Riddler, Batkid took a break to enjoy a delicious burger at Burger Bar in San Francisco's Union Square with the Mayor and the Police Chief. While Batkid was eating lunch, the chief of police gave him a special message to look out the window overlooking the square. Outside the window, a huge group of volunteers were jumping up and down, screaming for Batkid to help.

This time it was the Penguin! One of Batman's worst enemies, the Penguin had kidnapped Lou Seal, the San Francisco Giants' mascot. Batkid was

ready for action, and quickly **departed** the Burger Bar to chase the Penguin. Batkid caught up with the Penguin at AT&T Park, the home of the San Francisco Giants, and was able to free the Giants' mascot and return him to safety. Batkid then watched a thank you message from San Francisco's Police Chief on the baseball stadium's **jumbo** screen, and took off in his Batmobile for City Hall and a final celebration.



Batkid is cheered on by his fans

At city hall, a huge group of fans cheered Batkid as he met outside with the Mayor and the Police Chief. San Francisco's Mayor then presented Batkid with a key to the city and **declared** November 15th "Batkid Day" to thank him for all of his hard work.

The story of Miles' transformation into Batkid and the huge amount of support from the people of San Francisco caught the attention of people all around the country. Famous Batman actors Christian Bale and Ben Affleck sent messages congratulating Miles. Even President Barack Obama sent a quick video message, thanking Miles for saving "Gotham City".

For Miles and his parents, this amazing day was a way to bring closure to a four year long battle the boy has had with leukemia. For most of his life, Miles has been very sick, and being able to live his dream of becoming Batkid was a way of celebrating a new beginning in his life.

"This wish has meant closure for our family and an end to over three years of putting toxic drugs in our son's body," his mother Natalie said to the San Jose Mercury News.

While Miles' dream to become Batkid may have turned into the biggest event ever for the Make-A-Wish foundation, the children's charity does work like this every day to help young people fulfill a dream. The Make-A-Wish foundation is hoping that the attention that Miles' wish has received will help it to raise more money and sign up new volunteers to help other children's wishes come true.

Vocabulary

Complete the sentences with the vocabulary words and sayings below

bring closure declare jumbo depart mayor
spring into action cable car went viral in remission
fulfill a dream mascot

1. A _____ is usually a kind of animal that is a symbol for a group.

2. To _____ is to end something.

3. The airplane _____s in one hour. Let's hurry!
4. A _____ is the leader of a city.
5. Psy's video for "Gangnam Style" _____ on YouTube.
6. _____s are a famous mode of transportation in San Francisco.
7. Myles' leukemia is _____, so his health is improving.
8. To announce something officially is to _____ it.
9. Lions _____ when they see a young buffalo.
10. If something is very large in size, it can be called _____.
11. The Make-A-Wish Foundation helps sick children to _____.

Short Answers

Try to answer each question in a full sentence.

1. What is the Make-A-Wish Foundation?

2. What was Myles' wish?

3. Why do you think Myles' wish got so much attention from the public?

4. How can the attention that Batkid received help the Make-A-Wish foundation?

5. What does "go viral" mean?

Discussion

With so many negative stories in the news every day, how does this story make you feel? What do you think about all of the strangers who got together to make Miles' day special? Do you think something like this could happen in your hometown? Why or why not?

Writing

This story shows the power of social media to get large groups of people together. Write about some other recent examples of how social media can bring crowds of people together quickly.
