

Flower Mound Leader > News

Bieber grants wish for local student

By Chris Roark, croark@acnpapers.com

Published: Tuesday, November 29, 2011 2:45 PM CST

Like many girls her age, 10-year-old Sydney Hicke has had the dream of meeting pop star Justin Bieber.

But unlike most, she was fortunate enough to do it.

Sydney, a fourth-grader at Prairie Trail Elementary School, was among 30 girls who got to meet Bieber on Nov. 18 in New York as part of an event sponsored by the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

Each year, the Make-A-Wish Foundation delivers an experience to children with terminal or life-threatening illnesses by asking them who they would like to meet, where they would like to go, etc.

Then, the foundation simply makes it happen.

Sydney, a Highland Village resident, is in remission from an ependymoma brain tumor, which comes from the cells lining the ventricular system of the brain or spinal cord.

Her prognosis is good as she has been cancer free for three and a half years.

"She was on the list to meet Justin Bieber for 11 months," said Kerry Hicke, Sydney's mother. "We got a call that said Justin wasn't making any more wishes for the rest of the 2011 year, but then we got another call about four weeks later that said that he changed his mind and wanted to meet Sydney and 29 other girls from all over the world."

With Bieber's worldwide popularity, Sydney wasn't the only girl who wanted to meet him. So the Make-A-Wish Foundation arranged an event where a group could see him at one time.

It was fairly easy to accomplish since the Make-A-Wish Foundation is Bieber's main charitable organization, Kerry said. In fact, with the Nov. 18 event, Bieber has now granted 60 wishes in his two years of stardom.

"Her original wish was for him to come to Prairie Trail so that several students can meet him too," Kerry said.

Instead, the 30 girls gathered at Hard Rock Cafe early that morning where Bieber took the stage to talk about his life as a celebrity and to answer questions from the audience.

Bieber talked about his life as a student and how, like many others, he was picked on by classmates. He also discussed bullying and how it's important to treat others right.

"He encouraged people to go up to someone who may be sitting by themselves and to treat them well," Kerry said. "That's a different way of dealing with bullying."

Later, each girl had the chance to ask him a question. Sydney's question was if Bieber would give her a piggy-back ride. And he agreed to.

"My favorite part of the day was getting the piggy-back ride," Sydney said. "I was shocked."

Sydney also gave Bieber a bracelet that a teacher's husband had made.

"He was really excited to get it," Kerry said.

While Sydney and her mother were thrilled about the trip, they weren't the only ones. Kerry's fellow teachers made T-shirts with Bieber messages on them for Sydney to wear every day on the trip. Members of the Chi-Omega sorority at the University of North Texas hosted a kickoff party for Sydney that included a life-size cutout of Bieber, posters and gifts.

In addition to meeting Bieber, the group toured the city and attended Broadway shows -- all thanks to the foundation. The pop star signed two autographs for Sydney, one for her and one she plans to take to Prairie Trail.

It was a shining moment for a girl who hasn't always had one.

She was diagnosed with the ependymoma when she was 6. Before that, she had gone to numerous doctors to try and find the cause of her constant stomachaches.

When the family wasn't convinced with the answers they were getting from doctors, they decided to take her to the Trinity Wellness Center in Highland Village for a non-FDA-approved acupuncture test. Kerry said that test revealed the tumor. Sydney then spent two weeks at Children's Medical Center, where she underwent a risky surgery -- a craniotomy of the brain and 32 rounds of photo radiation.

Kerry said the acupuncture test results couldn't have come soon enough.

"One doctor told me that if we had waited any longer, I could have found her in bed in a coma," Kerry said.

During the ordeal, someone contacted the Make-A-Wish Foundation to put Sydney's name on the list. Kerry said she doesn't know who it was, and she doesn't know if she will ever try to find out.

But when Kerry looks back at this experience, she will be happy to know that her daughter made it through an illness and got to do what many other girls only dream of doing.

"I know that if the tumor ever comes back, at least Sydney got to do this," Kerry said.

And as Sydney looks back on her trip, she will remember it in a slightly different way.

"He was nice, petite and he wears makeup," Sydney said. "And he's really hot."

Copyright © 2011 - Star Local News
