



Harford County Public Library Foundation Hosts Wheelchair Costume Workshop and Inclusive Trunk or Treat

Harford County Public Library Foundation held a Wheelchair Costume Workshop and Inclusive Trunk or Treat October 4-5 to provide children who use wheelchairs with a fantasy Halloween costume.

Held at The EPICENTER in Edgewood, more than 100 volunteers transformed wheelchairs for six children, ranging in age from 2 to 10, into the following costumes:

- Wheel of Fortune with working wheel and letter board
- Buzz Lightyear spaceship
- Finding Nemo featuring a coral reef
- PAW Patrol bulldozer with working scoop and spinning auger
- Hercules riding Pegasus
- Princess Peach from the Mario Games

Six teams of volunteers gathered October 4 and 5 to design, build and fit the costumes. Over the summer, children who use a wheelchair were invited to apply to have their wheelchair transformed into a dream costume.

Through the generosity of sponsors, Harford County Public Library Foundation provided the materials such as paint, fabric, cardboard, wood, glitter, tape, dowls, etc. Artists, carpenters and engineers were on site to provide support as was a seamstress.

The volunteers came from various backgrounds. Some were interested members of the community, and some were from local companies like SURVICE Engineering Company, which participated in this activity as a way to give back to the community while also providing a team-building experience for its staff. Other companies and organizations providing volunteer teams included APGFCU, Rosedale Federal Savings and Loan Association, The Harford Center, Service Coordination Inc., Bayside Commercial Building Services, Coppermine Bel Air Athletic Club, NuMotion, Jarrettsville Sealcoating, Harford County Public Library, RG Group and McCormick & Company.

The inclusive trunk or treat, which was open to everyone, took place on the parking lot of The EPICENTER late in the day October 5. It began with the children in the wheelchair costumes parading out together, showing off their new costumes. Vehicles were decorated for the inclusive trunk or treat, which was open to the greater community. Approximately 300 children and their families attended.

The Spooktacular Sponsors of the Wheelchair Costume Workshop and Inclusive Trunk or Treat were APGFCU and The Harford Center. Pick of the Patch Sponsors were American Design and Build Ltd., American Sentry Solar, Bayside Commercial Building Services, Coppermine Bel Air Athletic Club and Rosedale Federal Savings and Loan Association. The Hocus Pocus Sponsor was Mt. Washington Pediatric Community Rehabilitation Services. Additional support was provided by Harford County Public Library, The Harford Center, The EPICENTER at Edgewood, McCormick & Company, Jarrettsville Sealcoating, Jones Family Farm, Pat's Pizzeria and the Robbins, Turner and Harbin families.

"We are so grateful to the incredible volunteers, sponsors and trunk hosts who made this year's Wheelchair Costume Workshop and Inclusive Trunk or Treat a huge success. Their generous donation of time, resources and creativity allowed us to turn dreams into reality for children and create magical moments they will never forget," said Mary Hastler, CEO of Harford County Public Library. "The smiles on their faces as they proudly displayed their custom-designed costumes and were welcomed to the Trunk or Treat with rounds of applause remind all of us of the power of community and kindness. Many thanks to all our volunteers for helping us to make this Halloween truly unforgettable for everyone involved."

Harford County Public Library operates 11 branches located throughout Harford County offering access to ideas that inform, entertain and inspire. Last year the Library interacted with its residents more than 12 million times – borrowing free materials, visiting branches and the website, using free WiFi, and attending classes and events. In 2023 Harford County Public Library received Graphic Design USA's American Inhouse Design Award™ for graphic excellence, the third time in five years. For more information, visit HCPLonline.org.