

Dying To Meet Her Idols

Eleven year old Margaret "Maggie" Mackey appears to be the same as any other spunky young girl her age. She is cute, has boundless energy, has an abundance of friends and has a crush on the boy wonder group N' Sync. But, she has one thing that many kids her age can do without and that is an unseen killer stalking her everyday of her life in the form of Cystic Fibrosis.

Maggie was referred to the Debbie Chisholm Memorial Foundation by Deputy Sheriff Fred Chisholm, the Father of Debbie Chisholm, for whom our charity was named in honor of in 1994. I contacted Maggie's Grandfather Steve Mackey, a California Highway Patrolman, and asked him what he thought his Granddaughter would want if she could have her fondest wish granted. Without hesitation Steve said Maggie would like to meet N' Sync in person. Having dealt several times in the past years with celebrities and their agents, I knew this would be a tall order if not impossible. I told Steve I would do my best and I set out on a journey that would test my patience and resolve to their limits.



In April of 2000 I sent a letter to the Wright Entertainment Group, N' Sync's management, and as usual I received no reply whatsoever. I next checked to see if the group would be playing in the Southern California area in the near future and discovered that June 9th they would be appearing at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena. With this in mind I asked Riverside County Sheriff Larry Smith to assist with the wish by contacting the Pasadena Chief of Police and having two of their meet Maggie and her Mom at the Rose Bowl. I called Petty Thomas of Thomas and Kobler, Inc., and she managed to procure four tickets to N'

Sync's concert, a limo was set up through Tom Walsh of West Coast Transportation and I got \$300 dollars spending money for souvenirs for Maggie's big night.

Maggie and her Mom arrived at the Rose Bowl two hours before the first act began and the Pasadena Police Officers, Lieutenant Uribe and Sergeant Aiken, told them to take their seats and keep the cell phone handy. The officers went backstage to meet with the event promoters and told them about Maggie's wish and that she was in the stadium awaiting permission to meet her idols. Fantastic as it may seem, her simple request was DENIED!!!!!! Still, Maggie enjoyed the concert immensely and was thrilled to just see her favorite group from afar and to ride home in a limousine like Cinderella going home from the ball.

Incensed at this snub of a sick child's wish request, I made this my personal quest and vowed to Maggie that she would indeed meet the young men she so idolized no matter what it took to make it happen. I contacted Riverside Sheriff's Association President Pat McNamara and updated him on the story. Pat put me in touch with Tom Pidgeon at the Word Mill and we

constructed a press release that went out nationwide. As the calls began to come in inquiring about this heart wrenching story I received a personal call from Mr. Johnny Wright, the Manager of N' Sync.

Mr. Wright was appalled when he heard the story about Maggie and said that the person that denied Maggie's request at the Rose Bowl did not have authority to speak in behalf of N' Sync and should have brought the request to him personally. Mr. Wright further stated that N' Sync was a loving caring group of young men who would never deny the wish of a sick child no matter what. That same day Mr. Wright had Melinda Bell, of Wright Management Group, call me and we worked out a date for Maggie to at last have her dream fulfilled.

On the 19th day of July Maggie and her Mom flew out of Los Angeles International Airport enroute to Philadelphia for a cozy personal meeting with the fabulous lads of N' Sync. There, at the First Union Spectrum, near the main stage, Maggie had her hearts desire fulfilled. Maggie and her Mom were personally invited to watch as N' Sync did a sound check by singing one of their many hit songs. Afterwards the entire group came down from the stage where Justin, Maggie's favorite, gave her a big hug and posed for a photograph with her. Eager to get in on the action as well were members Chris, Lance, Joey and JC all of whom made Maggie feel like she was their number one fan!

Since her return to the real world, Maggie has been the center of envy among her friends as she has regaled them with the stories about her private audience with the super great guys of N' Sync. None of this would have been possible without the compassionate work of N' Sync Manager Mr. Johnny Wright and Tour Manager Melinda Bell. They took it upon themselves to ensure that this special little lady met the boys of her dreams and even arranged for the meeting to take place with just Maggie and N' Sync privately enjoying that special moment. A million thanks to Johnny Wright, Melinda Bell and the group with the warmest hearts on earth, N' Sync. Thank you one and all for granting the wish of a very sick but, very special young lady, Miss Maggie Mackey.



Senior Deputy Sheriff Corky Bell

Executive Director, DCMF