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Guarded by Batman himself, the by-now familiar red six-pack carriage leads the parade to the candy bash in the West Patio Plaza on Thursday. Below, Gateway Child Care Center Director Marla Minden and entourage settle in for special treats at the Customer Call Center party hosted by Customer Relations. *Photos by Gayle Anderson*



Halloween Event Brings out Princesses, Super Heroes and a Tiny Banana

By Gail M. Harvey
Special to MyMetro.net

(Nov. 3, 2009) Super Heroes and princesses dominated the 5th Annual Halloween parade this year with Metro Customer Relations staff again hosting the event.

Gateway Child Care Center Director Marla Minden said she was thrilled to have the children participate in the Oct. 29 adventure that brought

out some 84 children.

"This is adorable. I had no idea it was to this magnitude," Minden said, noting that she took her job over the summer.

The parade has grown in popularity every year with parents and Metro employees coming out to watch the children parade around the plaza. This year's costumes included popular characters, and perhaps one of the cutest had to be the tiny banana outfit worn by Audrey Davis, daughter of Walter Davis, Transportation Planning Manager V.

Kindergarten teacher Mariano Blanco said his students couldn't wait to attend.

"They have been excited since yesterday. We had a pumpkin patch and they were waiting for this Halloween parade," he said.

At the Center, Chief Communications Officer Matt Raymond appeared as Darth Vader, welcoming the children to the party in his best Vader aqua lung-like voice.

"It's always fun to hang out down here. This is one of my favorite times of the year," he said.

As in the past, 23 photos of decorated cubicles in the Call Center were given to Minden before the event and then displayed for the children, who picked three winners.

The children awarded prizes to three Customer Information Agents – Maria Alamilla, who received 1st Place for her Batman creation; Yvonne Macias, who was awarded 2nd Place for her Super Heroes; and Maria Puentes received 3rd Place honors for her display of the most super heroes.

Host Gail Harvey, Director of Customer Relations, presented the Management's Choice Award to Customer Information Agent Jorja Jones, whose cubicle was the most uniquely decorated with her display of "My



The tiniest banana prize went to Audrey Davis, here asleep in her father's arm after a grueling round of candy picking. The little banana was accompanied to the annual bash by father Walt Davis, Transportation Planning Manager V, mother Amy, and Audrey's two sisters, Anna Bella and Amelia.

^ SLIDE SHOW With the exception of just one time when the Halloween holiday fit into the Metro work week a bit off schedule, amateur photographer **Brian Mahaffey**, a senior contracts administrator, never misses the annual Halloween candy raid at Metro. Mahaffey, always on the look out for things that 'catches his eye,' got a lens-full this time around as he captured a parade of candy-seekers in the full sunshine of the West Plaza patio.

Super Heroes of America – The Military Forces”.

“What better way to honor heroes than to honor those who risk their lives everyday for our safety,” said Jones, “This is my way of saying thank you family, friends and co-workers for all that you do.”



Customer Information Agent Jorja Jones decorated her work station with a display entitled of “My Super Heroes of America – The Military Forces.”

The Agents who participated in the costume contest were judged by Karen Kern, Lou Bendijo-Wong and Ron Jue, who selected three winners in the following categories: The most original costume that best represented the theme was Batman worn by Alamilla; the most creative/unique costume was Spider Woman worn by Carmen Barocio and the scariest – though not really scary - was Little Red Devil worn by Alicia Vasquez.

“This event is about our Kids, who are the primary focus for this entire program,” said Alonzo Williams, Communications Manager, “They do a great job of selecting the three best decorated cubicles, presenting prizes to the winners and pulling winning tickets for trick-or-treat gifts for the Agents.”



Gail Harvey and Darth Vader, here disguised as Communications Chief Matt Raymond, (at left, back row) congratulate the winners of the costume and work station contest. Customer Information Agent Jorja Jones' military

theme won the Management Choice Award. The most original costume that best represented the theme was Batman worn by Maria Alamilla; the most creative/unique costume was Spider Woman worn by Carmen Barocio and the scariest – though not really scary - was Little Red Devil worn by Alicia Vasquez.

The kids, said Harvey, “got to do what they came for – to get more goodies and the Agents had plenty to give. Just to make sure everyone got something, the Morale Committee members made 85 special trick-or-treat bags for distribution to kids who came and delivered the balance to the Child Development Center”.

Morale Committee Agent members Patricia Diaz, Jackie Exeart, Harriet Petitt, Virginia Sanchez, Marie Tervalon, Steven Texada, and Sr. Departmental System Analyst Paula Grigsby coordinated the event and assisted both Williams and Harvey.

“Thank you to all of our agents who were active in putting this together and other staff members who worked with us. It’s a good team effort,” said Harvey.

“But the most important people we want to thank are you little ones.”