The Magic of Macy’s Believe Campaign Returns with The Wish Writer™

Benefitting Make-A-Wish®, the Wish Writer stylus and app will be available at Macy’s and on macys.com

“The Wish Writer” short film debuts in November

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Macy’s eighth annual Believe campaign launches this week with a new film that provides a modern take on the beloved “Believe” story and a new element that will delight children and adults alike – Macy’s Wish Writer stylus and app. The Wish Writer teaches children the importance of giving back to others during the holiday season, while “The Wish Writer” short film shares the same heartwarming story of the gift of generosity. From Nov. 6 through Dec. 24, customers can visit their local Macy’s store to drop their stamped letters addressed to Santa into the big red letterboxes, create and send a letter with the Wish Writer app, or send a letter to Santa through macys.com/believe. For each letter collected in-store, through mobile and online, Macy’s will donate $1, up to $1 million, to Make-A-Wish, an organization that grants the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions.

This Smart News Release features multimedia. View the full release here: http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20151103005970/en/

“We’re proud to partner with Make-A-Wish for the eighth annual Believe campaign, which continues to be one of our most beloved programs of the year,” said Martine Reardon, chief marketing officer for Macy’s. “After many months of development, we’re excited to launch Macy’s Wish Writer as a fun, new element of this year’s campaign, which will benefit Make-A-Wish and teach children how acts of kindness can spread holiday spirit this season.”

“We're glad to add a new and innovative way to believe in the magic of giving,” said David Williams, president and CEO of Make-A-Wish America. “We encourage everyone to join Macy’s and Make-A-Wish this holiday season to ‘believe in the magic of giving’ by submitting their letters to help us grant even more life-changing wishes, because we know that a wish-come-true can be a powerful part of a child’s fight against their illness.”

The Believe campaign was inspired by the true story of 8-year-old Virginia O’Hanlon, who wrote a letter to the New York Sun newspaper in 1897 asking if there really was a Santa Claus. The paper’s response, “Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist ....,” written by Francis P. Church, became one of the most famous newspaper editorials of all time. Macy’s has raised $90 million for Make-A-Wish since 2003, with $10.8 million donated over the last seven years through the iconic letter writing campaign during the holiday season.

The following are key elements of the 2015 Macy’s Believe campaign:

Wish Writer Sweeps the Nation

Macy’s Wish Writer is an interactive stylus and app, featuring a series of fun games to teach children about the
importance of kindness and generosity, while also providing a way to write the most magical letters to Santa. Dr. Steven Fox, a leading child psychologist and expert in play therapy and gaming, served as a consultant during the Wish Writer development to help create a motivating, relevant and positive game for children. The Wish Writer experience is designed to encourage a sense of adventure and exploration, while enhancing children's altruism and compassion toward others.

Compatible with both Apple and Android devices, the Wish Writer stylus will be available for purchase at approximately 600 Macy’s stores and on macys.com. To play, the stylus interacts with the corresponding app (free with the stylus purchase) and children can play the various games to spread holiday spirit and earn rewards for good deeds. The Wish Writer stylus also lights up when pressed on a surface.

In addition, children can write letters to Santa through the stylus and app, and for each letter sent, $1 will be donated to Make-A-Wish, as part of the $1 million goal. One dollar from the purchase price of each Wish Writer stylus (retail price of $14.99) will also go to Make-A-Wish.

To download the app separately on iTunes or Google Play, a free, limited-play version is available, as well as a full version for $1.99. One dollar from each app purchase will be donated to Make-A-Wish.

“The Wish Writer” Film

Macy’s and J. Walter Thompson created a special three-minute film that follows the journey of a little girl and her brother as they discover the power of kindness and generosity. With the help of a magic pencil, evoking the spirit of the Wish Writer, the duo learns how good deeds and kind acts toward others can go a long way. The film will launch in early November on macys.com/believe, and a 90-second version will run during this year’s Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade®.

National Believe Day

Friday, Dec. 11 marks the much anticipated, seventh annual National Believe Day. Dedicated to celebrating the season’s spirit of goodwill, Macy’s will continue its “Wishes Across America” initiative in partnership with Make-A-Wish.

“Yes, Virginia” Animated Special

A treat each holiday season, the “Yes, Virginia” animated television special will return to bring the story of Virginia to life. The award-winning, half-hour holiday program features an all-star roster including Neil Patrick Harris, Jennifer Love Hewitt, Alfred Molina, and Beatrice Miller in the title role. When the animated special first debuted, a wish came true for 11-year-old Make-A-Wish recipient Taylor Hay, whose voice and likeness were captured for one of the film’s characters. “Yes, Virginia,” presented by Macy’s, will air on ABC on Friday, Dec. 18 at 8:30 p.m. ET/7:30 p.m. CT (check local listings).

Believe Merchandise Benefitting Make-A-Wish

Along with writing letters to Santa and purchasing a Wish Writer, customers can give back to Make-A-Wish this holiday season by purchasing gifts that give back – the “Yes, Virginia” illustrated storybook and animated special DVD, available at Macy’s stores and on macys.com. Ten percent of the purchase price of each book and DVD sold will be donated to Make-A-Wish.

Additionally, in partnership with Macy’s Believe campaign, Godiva will make a $50,000 donation to Make-A-Wish, and sell Believe Bars exclusively at Macy’s stores and a 19-Piece Believe Holiday Ballotin available in-store and online at macys.com.

“Yes, Virginia The Musical”

Now in its fourth year as part of the Believe campaign, “Yes, Virginia The Musical” returns to local stages across the country. In addition to providing the play’s script and score to schools royalty free, Macy’s offered $1,000 grants to schools and organizations to support their local productions. New for this year, the grant program was open to high school groups and nonprofit community organizations, as well as past grant recipients. To meet the needs of schools with a smaller student population or limited musical resources, Macy’s also created a new Abridged Version, which makes the musical more accessible than ever. For more information about “Yes, Virginia The Musical” and to find a performance near you, visit yesvirginiamusical.com.

Virginia Stars in Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade
Virginia will charm millions of Americans as she returns as a balloon in Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade, along with larger-than-life Believe red star balloons to celebrate the season.


“Yes, Virginia The Musical” was adapted from the animated special “Yes, Virginia,” written by Chris Plehal, created and produced by Macy’s and J. Walter Thompson in conjunction with The Ebeling Group and MEC Entertainment, a division of Mediaedge:cia. “Yes, Virginia The Musical” was written by Wesley Whatley (music) and William Schermerhorn (book and lyrics), the Emmy® Award-winning creative team behind the original song “Yes, Virginia (There’s A Santa Claus).”

About Macy’s

Macy’s, the largest retail brand of Macy’s, Inc. (NYSE:M), delivers fashion and affordable luxury to customers at approximately 775 locations in 45 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam, as well as to customers in the U.S. and more than 100 international destinations through its leading online store at macys.com. Via its stores, e-commerce site, mobile and social platforms, Macy’s offers distinctive assortments including the most desired family of exclusive and fashion brands for him, her and home. Macy’s is known for such epic events as Macy’s 4th of July Fireworks® and the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade®, as well as spectacular fashion shows, culinary events, flower shows and celebrity appearances. Macy’s flagship stores -- including Herald Square in New York City, Union Square in San Francisco, State Street in Chicago, and Dadeland in Miami and South Coast Plaza in southern California -- are known internationally and are leading destinations for visitors. Building on a more than 150-year tradition, and with the collective support of customers and employees, Macy’s helps strengthen communities by supporting local and national charities giving more than $69 million each year to help make a difference in the lives of our customers.

For Macy’s media materials, including images and contacts, please visit our online pressroom at macys.com/pressroom.

About Make-A-Wish

Make-A-Wish grants the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions to enrich the human experience with hope, strength and joy. According to a 2011 U.S. study of wish impact, most health professionals surveyed believe a wish-come-true has positive impacts on the health of children. Kids say wishes give them renewed strength to fight their illness, and their parents say these experiences help strengthen the entire family. Headquartered in Phoenix, Make-A-Wish is one of the world’s leading children’s charities, serving children in every community in the United States and its territories. With the help of generous donors and more than 27,000 volunteers, Make-A-Wish grants a wish somewhere in the country every 37 minutes. It has granted more than 254,000 wishes since its inception in 1980; more than 14,200 in 2014 alone. Visit Make-A-Wish at www.wish.org to learn more.


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