

# Many Hats Go Off For Hayden on his day at Eastwood Elementary in East Alton

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## SEE VIDEO FROM PARADE FOR HAYDEN EBERLIN-BROWN BELOW:

**EAST ALTON** - The entire community of **East Alton** joined 6-year-old **Hayden Eberlin-Brown** Friday afternoon for a parade in his honor.

Eberlin-Brown was diagnosed with a degenerative condition known as metachromatic leukodystrophy. The condition causes the child to not produce an enzyme enabling growth. Due to his condition, Eberlin-Brown is currently at the apex of his growth. His father, Jonathan Brown, said his son was losing his ability to walk and speak. Without a cure, the child's brain will continue to deteriorate.

After his diagnosis, Eberlin-Brown's family started the **“Love for Hayden Bentley Brown” Facebook page**. Brown said the page was dedicated to creating memories for the little boy. He insisted it was not for raising funds.

“Most of the best memories I could share with my son don't take money,” he said. “It's the little things which mean the most.”

The parade and proclamation in honor of Eberlin-Brown was anything but “little.” The entire community of East Alton was happy to donate their time and affection. Mayor Joe Silkwood offered a proclamation in his honor at Eastwood Elementary, and a parade around the block followed shortly after.

For the parade, to honor Eberlin-Brown's love of rescue vehicles and fast cars, the East Alton Police Department drove their black Hum-Vee with the young grand marshal inside. The East Alton Fire Department, the Rosewood Heights Fire Department and the Olin Brass Fire Department each lent a truck to the event.

A line of classic hot rods finished the parade, which also included superheroes. Besides cars and trucks, Eberlin-Brown had a large love of superheroes. Batman, Superman and Spider-Man each walked among the marching bands and cars.

Eberlin-Brown's teachers, **Julie Miles and Kristen Rowe**, said they dawned capes in their kindergarten classroom to celebrate with him. His face was also atop several famous superhero icons in the hallways of Eastwood Elementary School.

**Eastwood Elementary School Principal Matt Stimac** said the idea for a parade came from the school's teaching staff.

“They wanted to know what they could do to help Hayden (Eberlin-Brown) build more memories with his family,” Stimac said prior to the parade.

**East Alton School District Superintendent Virgil Moore** said he was happy the community could come through for the child.

“We're just trying to make a little boy's dreams come true,” Moore said.

More ideas to build memories for Eberlin-Brown can be submitted via the Facebook page in his honor. Eberlin-Moore's mother, Kaci Eberlin and his father, Jonathan Brown are asking the community to help make more such memories for their son, who has been forced to adapt to his degenerative condition.





