



**To: Dr. Stathis Avramidis**

Associate, National Public Health Organization  
Teaching Staff, University of Athens  
elagreece@gmail.com, savramid@phed.uoa.gr

Malibu, USA, May 26, 2019

**Subject: Charlie the Savior**

I just received your children's educational book "**Charlie the Savior**" and it allowed me to have a profound and vivid flashback. Back in 90's, while directing and executive producing "**Baywatch**", I was introduced to young **Charlie Hayes**. He had visited the set to fulfill his dying wish as he was suffering from terminal cancer. He stayed with us for several months. I taught him swimming and paddling and even allowed him to direct and act in a few episodes that portrayed lifesaving sport, water rescues and the administration of CPR/AED. I know that the love and friendship he received by producers and cast strengthened his will to live a little longer. Eventually cancer overtook his phenomenal spirit. His suffering touched us so deeply that we dedicated an episode to him and named it after him: "*Charlie*."

Obviously, Stathi, you were inspired by this true story, and blended my life with fiction. And **Nikos Kouremenos** gave the "breath of life" to the text, illustrating wonderfully many of our Baywatch characters. It was fantastic to see **David Hasselhoff, Pamela Anderson, Michael Newman, Alexandra Paul, Tai Collins** and **myself** starring again; this time in a children's book! Helping children is as important to me as having a successful show. Actually, it is more important. Shows come and go, but helping a child achieve a better life, lasts forever.

In 2000, I received the Gold Medallion by the **International Swimming Hall of Fame** for contributions to the world of swimming via "*Baywatch*", "*Camp Baywatch*", *A Chance for Children* and lifeguarding. Back then, I had envisioned an international "*Learn to Swim*" program, dedicated to drawing awareness to the dire need of teaching children how to be safe in the water. The goal of such a program is to take drowning off the top of the list of killers of children. "*Charlie the Savior*" represents an elegant expression of my vision, through the spiritual "resurrection" of Charlie. It is easy-to-read and yet wise enough to excite children and adults. Its package (book, lessons, games, power point, certificate) represents an outstanding Entertainment and Education collection of material focusing on swimming, paddling, first aid, lifesaving sport, and survival at sea for primary schools, summer camps, and lifesaving organizations. Somehow, it also shows why lifesaving sport is important enough to merit Olympic sport qualification.

**Because of Charlie Hayes I have realized the huge impact that our show was having around the world. We had an obligation that Baywatch would stay special. Stathis' touching tale hopefully will serve a higher purpose; to save as many children from drowning across the globe as possible.** On behalf of *A Chance for Children Foundation*, I congratulate Dr. Stathis Avramidis, endorse the book and recommend it to parents, children, the **U.N. Friends of Drowning Prevention Group**, and to all relevant organizations of the world.

**With appreciation and congratulations,**

**Gregory J. Bonann**

Creator-Director-Producer, "*Baywatch*"

Co-Founder and President, "*A Chance for Children Foundation*"