



MATTIE J.T. STEPANEK FOUNDATION
E-PEACE UPDATE – SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER, 2011
WWW.MATTIEONLINE.COM

**Hello Peace Champions, members of Mattie’s Peace Network,
and friends of Mattie’s Foundation!**

General update – Inaugural Peace Celebration a Success!

Mattie J.T. Stepanek’s personal philosophy for life was “Remember to play after every storm!” Participants of the 2011 Peace Celebration not only played *after* the unanticipated storm that lingered over the Mattie’s Park in King Farm a few weeks ago, they played right *through* it! Despite the rain, hundreds of people of all ages and abilities from all over the United States and from right down the road in Rockville, Maryland attended the event. They danced and played, and they learned more about the message of hope and peace that Mattie offered through his many books and speeches.

This free event launched some of the early materials being developed for the Foundation’s new “Pathways to Peace Program.” After registering, participants received ‘passports’ that guided them through a series of pathway station stops, each of which offered a key element of Mattie’s message. Through hands on activities, keepsake crafts, games, and conversation, volunteers and participants explored and celebrated concepts like: *Heartsongs – Our Reason for Being; Hope is Real; Peace is Possible; Life is Worthy; Rebuild the Mosaic of Humanity;* and yes, *Play After Every Storm!*

In addition to station activities, visitors enjoyed learning about the *Alpacas for Peace* from Simple Faith Farms, playing in the moon bounce, music, food, face painting, creating their own Celebrate Peace flags, and posing with Mattie’s statue in the Peace Garden for an upcoming “We Are Peace” photo album (to be displayed on www.mattieonline.com). The closing ceremony included readings of Mattie’s “For Our World” poem in English, Chinese, and American Sign Language. Mattie hoped that this poem, which he penned on September 11, 2001, would one day serve as “an international passage for peace.” During the past year, the poem was translated into more than 50 languages that can be downloaded for free as a part of the Foundation’s “For Our World Campaign.” The Foundation hopes to reach 100 translations

The 2011 Peace Celebration, which received local television and radio media coverage, was free to participants because of sponsors like **King Farm Citizen’s Assembly, Gaithersburg Party Rental, 48HourPrint.com**, and donations of time and materials from other businesses and individuals who supported Mattie’s Foundation in the effort to ‘make peace sensational.’ Dozens of volunteers – young and old, from near and far, and always with a smile and encouraging remark – were also key to the success of the event. Mattie’s Foundation will be discussing plans for a 2012 Peace Celebration in the near future, with the hope of bringing on experienced and new volunteers to help with the planning of the event.

Mattie was a NY Times bestselling author and well-known peace activist who died in 2004 just before his 14th birthday from a rare neuromuscular disease. The Mattie J.T. Stepanek Foundation was created to continue spreading Mattie’s message of hope and peace through educational and recreational programs and activities.

For more information, visit www.mattieonline.com

September/October inspiration:



Timely news:

- ♥ The first print materials for our “**Pathways to Peace**” program are now available through our **Peace Shop**, including posters and postcards celebrating Mattie’s message of hope and peace. During the coming year, more materials and Teacher Tip modules will continue to be created. Also, the Foundation will be seeking sponsorships that will support the dissemination of these materials (as well as activity ideas and books) in schools.
- ♥ **Celebrate Peace T-shirts** for both youth and adults are now posted on the website!
- ♥ **COMING SOON: “We Are Peace” photo album** being created from the 9/3 Peace Celebration festivities
- ♥ Check Mattie’s website for updates, and for the latest list of upcoming presentations, school visits, and Skype chats
- ♥ Please continue to send translations for the **For Our World Campaign** – we are a long way from the 100+ languages we hope to post. And please continue to download current 50+ translations and post on b-boards, websites, and fridges!

If you would like to be removed from our e-mail list, please send a note to heartsongsbooks@aol.com. Thank you! Peace!