



Mattie J.T. Stepanek Foundation

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Peace is possible!

For Immediate Release

Peace Celebration to commemorate 10th anniversary of 9/11 & Mattie's vision of peace

Peace Celebration, Sept. 3 (10:30 am – 1:00 pm)

Mattie J.T. Stepanek Park (1800 Piccard Drive, Rockville, MD 20850)

- On September 11, 2001, late teen poet and peace activist Mattie J.T. Stepanek wrote in his world-renowned *For Our World* poem that “We have, we are, a mosaic of gifts, to nurture, to offer to accept.”
- Ten years later, our world continues to struggle with violence and a lack of personal and world peace.
- To commemorate the 10th anniversary of 9/11, the **Mattie J.T. Stepanek Foundation** will host a **Peace Celebration** in the Peace Garden area of the Mattie J.T. Stepanek Park in Rockville, MD.
- The Peace Celebration is a **free event for people of all ages and abilities**. Participants can expect inspiration and information, craft activities and games, all rooted in Mattie's message of *Heartsongs*, hope, and peace.
- Event sponsors include 48HourPrint.com, King Farm Citizen's Assembly, Gaithersburg Party Rental, & Safeway.

10:15 am – Welcome Station & Peace Shop open (Free Raffle Tickets offered)

Participants pick up their “Passports” for the *Pathways to Peace*® Stations

10:45 am – Remarks by Jeni Stepanek (“Mattie’s mom”)

11-12:40 pm – *Pathways to Peace*® Stations open; Moon Bounce & Food Vendors available

Each *Pathways* Station -- *Heartsongs, Hope, Peace, Life, Rebuild the Mosaic, Play After Every Storm, and Celebrate & Reflect* – offers an inspirational theme postcard, along with crafts, activities and games that help participants explore the theme.

12:45 pm – Free Raffle Drawings (Must be present to win).

Background on Mattie J.T. Stepanek

Mattie Stepanek was born in July, 1990, the youngest of four children who each inherited a rare and fatal neuromuscular disease. Mattie's mom, Jeni Stepanek, was unaware that she had the disease at the time or that her children were inheriting it from her until 1992, when she was diagnosed with the adult onset form, which led to the children's diagnoses. The first three children died very young. Mattie lived until June, 2004. During his almost 14 years, Mattie penned countless poems and essays, delivered many speeches related to hope and peace, and authored seven bestselling books. His creations reflected his spirituality, his personal philosophies for balancing burdens and blessings, and a message of *Heartsongs*, hope, and peace for all people. A frequent guest on talk shows, Mattie also served as an advocate for peace- and disability-related organizations including the *We Are Family Foundation* and the *Muscular Dystrophy Association*. Mattie had a unique gift that combined a deep spirituality with a belief in hope and peace despite the many challenges we face in life. Mattie's personal, medical, and spiritual life are all detailed in his biography, *Messenger: The Legacy of Mattie J.T. Stepanek and Heartsongs*, written by his mother, Jeni Stepanek.

About The Mattie J.T. Stepanek Foundation

The Mattie J.T. Stepanek Foundation is a volunteer-run not-for-profit organization established in 2005 to continue spreading Mattie's message of hope and peace. The Foundation develops educational and recreational programs and outreach activities for children and adults that encourage peacemaking as a deliberate action.

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