

MARCH 4, 2003

CONGRESS HONORS MISTER ROGERS

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. House of Representatives today approved H.Res. 111, a resolution "Honoring the legacy of Fred Rogers and his dedication to creating a more compassionate, kind, and loving world for children and adults." Fred McFeely Rogers, creator and star of 'Mister Rogers' Neighborhood,' died on February 27, 2003.

The following is U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky's (D-IL) Congressional Record statement:

As a mother and as a grandmother, I rise to honor Fred McFeely Rogers, known to millions of children and their parents simply as "Mister Rogers."

Since first broadcasting "Mister Roger's Neighborhood" on Pittsburgh's public television station in 1966, Mister Rogers brought his message that "everybody's special" to children and adults around the world. Fred Rogers spoke to thousands of children every day, gently teaching each of them about the importance of acceptance-acceptance of others and acceptance of themselves. No matter what challenge children face in their lives it is always "a beautiful day in the neighborhood" that Mr. Rogers created for them.

Mister Rogers also acted as a role model for parents, suggesting creative ways for parents to speak-and to listen-to their children. Fred Rogers did not rely on fast-paced cuts and high-budget thrills to keep a child's attention. He wrote the scripts, was the host, operated the puppets, and even wrote the songs for each show. Mister Roger's formula for making kids care about what he had to say was to listen to them.

Mister Roger's co-workers at PBS honored his memory by carrying on his work. They quickly updated his website to offer advice to parents on how they can constructively talk to their children about his death. We can all honor his memory in much the same way: by carrying on his message, "There's only one person in the world like you," and then respecting those differences that make each of us so unique.

My condolences go out to Fred Roger's family and I thank him for his work to improve the lives of children.