

Bob Dole



NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, July 18, 1994

Contact: Clarkson Hine
(202) 224-5358

TRIBUTE TO OVERLAND PARK'S CHRIS RAHIMIAN

DOLE RECOGNIZES UNCOMMON GENEROSITY OF YOUNG CITIZEN

WASHINGTON -- Kansas Senator Bob Dole today made the following tribute to Chris Rahimian on the floor of the U.S. Senate:

During a recent unexpected series of events, Chris Rahimian, a 16-year-old resident of Overland Park, Kansas, became a true hero by demonstrating uncommon generosity which gained the respect of the entire community.

With a great deal of admiration, I join his supporters from Kansas and throughout the Midwest in saluting this young man.

Chris attended a used car auction sponsored by the American Cancer Society with the intention of using the \$1,500 which he had saved by doing yard work to buy a car. It happened that the wheel-chair accessible van used by his late father had also been donated for the auction. John Rahimian had relied upon that van prior to his death on May 23rd of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis.

Bidding for the van began at \$2,000, the maximum that Mary Hendricks, who also has "ALS" could afford to spend.

Chris saw Mary break into tears of frustration as the bids went up. He quickly realized that he could not allow a \$2,700 bidder who planned to do hauling and repair work take the van away from Mary. In a flash, Chris shouted the winning bid of \$3,700.

Amid tears of joy, Chris gave the vehicle to Mary Hendricks after his mother, Bonnie, paid the \$2,200 difference. Chris explained, "...They were taking something away that was valuable to us. My dad meant more to me than something you could just haul around wood with. That van gave him life, and without that van he wouldn't have gone anywhere."

Chris's kindness is setting off an outpouring of generosity from citizens who have been deeply touched.

An anonymous gentleman set up a trust fund for Chris at a local bank, donating the first \$100 toward a car. An area automobile dealer agreed to credit Chris for \$1,500 toward purchase of a car. Another man convinced six people to put up \$250 each and hopes to attract more. A minister offered to give Chris his 1980 Lincoln.

Others are signing up for the annual George Brett celebrity golf tournament benefitting "ALS" or are making donations to the "ALS" research fund. Cars for future auctions and cash donations are coming in to the local chapter of the American Cancer Society.

At the young age of 16, Chris is a true American hero. His generous act of compassion is a fine tribute to his late father and an outstanding example for all of us.

Mary Hendricks can now enjoy the freedom that John Rahimian cherished.

Chris has my highest respect and deep admiration.

###