

## *Goodbye, Superman*

Superman is dead, and the world mourns his passing. The name of Christopher Reeve will be forever linked with the comic book hero he portrayed in the movies. But the strength, courage and tenacity he displayed in his personal life overshadowed the superhuman characteristics of the fictional character we came to love on the screen.

Reeve, from his wheelchair, had become the nation's most recognizable spokesman for spinal cord research when he died Sunday at a hospital surrounded by his family. He was 52 years old. In the last week, Reeve had developed a serious systemic infection from a pressure wound, a common complication for people living with paralysis. He entered a hospital Saturday. His wife, Dana Reeve, thanked her husband's personal staff of nurses and aides "as well as the millions of fans from around the world."

The actor's 6-foot-4-inch frame and love of adventure made him a natural choice for the title role in the first Superman movie in 1978. He insisted on performing his own stunts. His life changed completely, however, after he broke his neck in May 1995 when he was thrown from his horse during an equestrian competition in Culpeper, Virginia.

What was so inspirational about Reeve?

- His love of life. His example reminds us about how special and precious life is, and he clung to it bravely despite his disability.
- The focus he brought to health issues. Those of us who are fortunate to have good health should never take it for granted. And we should adopt a lifestyle that enriches it and aids it to the fullest.
- His determination to reach his goal to walk again, and his unwavering commitment to it. What is your goal?

Christopher Reeve has entertained us, challenged us, moved us and left a mark on our consciousness. Our prayers and condolences go to his family.

--Beecher Hunter