

# The Little White House NEWSLETTER



Roosevelt's Little White House - 706-655-5870 - 401 Little White House Rd. - Warm Springs, Ga. 31830

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## History of the Fireside Chats

The fireside chats were a series of thirty evening radio speeches given by United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt between 1933 and 1944.



According to Roosevelt's principal speechwriter Judge Clinton Sorrel, he first used "fireside chats" in 1929 during his first term as Governor of New York. Roosevelt faced a conservative Republican legislature so during each legislative session he would occasionally address the citizens of New York directly in the camel back room. He appealed to them for help getting his agenda passed. Letters would pour in following each of these "chats," which helped pressure legislators to pass measures Roosevelt had proposed. He began making the informal addresses as President on March 12, 1933, during the Great Depression.

On the day after he was inaugurated, President Roosevelt, invoking the 1917 Trading with the Enemy Act, closed all American banks for a "bank holiday." While the banks were closed, Congress developed a program of rehabilitation for the banks and the Federal Reserve released extra currency.

On March 12, 1933, the day before the banks were to reopen, President Roosevelt delivered his first "fireside chat" radio address to the American public. In his reassuring address, Roosevelt outlined the steps the government was taking to secure currency and bring equilibrium back to the banks. The chat, which reached an estimated sixty million people, restored public confidence and led to a short-term re-stabilization of the American economy.

source: wikipedia





## FDR's Voice

*"I never saw him but I knew him. Can you have forgotten how, with his voice, he came into our house, the President of these United States, calling us friends..."*

Carl Carner, April 14, 1945

### Chronology of the Fireside Chats

1. On the Bank Crisis - Sunday, March 12, 1933
2. Outlining the New Deal Program - Sunday, May 7, 1933
3. On the Purposes and Foundations of the Recovery Program - Monday, July 24, 1933
4. On the Currency Situation - Sunday, October 22, 1933
5. Review of the Achievements of the Seventy-third Congress - Thursday, June 28, 1934
6. On Moving Forward to Greater Freedom and Greater Security - Sunday, September 30, 1934
7. On the Works Relief Program - Sunday, April 28, 1935
8. On Drought Conditions - Sunday, September 6, 1936
9. On the Reorganization of the Judiciary - Tuesday, March 9, 1937
10. On Legislation to be Recommended to the Extraordinary Session of the Congress - Tuesday, October 12, 1937
11. On the Unemployment Census - Sunday, November 14, 1937
12. On Economic Conditions - Thursday, April 14, 1938
13. On Party - Friday, June 24, 1938
14. On the European War - Sunday, September 3, 1939
15. On National Defense - Sunday, May 26, 1940
16. On National Security - Sunday, December 29, 1940
17. Announcing Unlimited National Emergency - Tuesday, May 27, 1941 (the longest fireside chat)
18. On Maintaining Freedom of the Seas - Thursday, September 11, 1941
19. On the Declaration of War with Japan - Tuesday, December 9, 1941
20. On Progress of the War - Monday, February 23, 1942
21. On Our National Economic Policy - Tuesday, April 28, 1942
22. On Inflation and Progress of the War - Monday, September 7, 1942
23. Report on the Home Front - Monday, October 12, 1942
24. On the Coal Crisis - Sunday, May 2, 1943
25. On Progress of War and Plans for Peace - Wednesday, July 28, 1943
26. Opening Third War Loan Drive - Wednesday, September 8, 1943
27. On Tehran and Cairo Conferences - Friday, December 24, 1943
28. State of the Union Message to Congress - Tuesday, January 11, 1944
29. On the Fall of Rome - Monday, June 5, 1944
30. Opening Fifth War Loan Drive - Monday, June 12, 1944

The success of the Fireside Chats is evidenced by the millions of letters that flooded the White House. Americans from all walks of life wrote FDR, and many of these letters were written within days, even hours, of hearing their beloved president over the radio. In these letters, people often wrote about how they felt during these radio addresses, as if FDR entered their homes and spoke to each of them in a conversation.