 Presidents' Day 2021 -- A Message from the Executive Director, Gleaves Whitney

Dear Friends of Ford,

Happy Presidents' Day. Or is it President's Day? Or Presidents Day? Because there is no settled convention for dealing with the apostrophe, the commemoration has rightly been called "the most grammatically infuriating holiday of the year!"

The holiday is also frustrating to presidential historians because the day was always meant to summon the memory of George Washington, a point not lost on Gerald R. Ford.

The morphing of the federal holiday from “Washington's Birthday” on February 22 to “President’s Day” earlier in the month came in two steps. The first step involved a calendar change when Congress passed a law in 1968 that aimed to simplify federal holidays. Up to that point, Americans across the nation celebrated Washington’s birthday on February 22, and in the North celebrated Lincoln's birthday on February 9—their respective birthdays. To collapse the two days into one, Congress designated the third Monday of February a federal holiday to split the difference between Lincoln's birthday and Washington's birthday. Despite the calendar change, then-House Minority Leader Gerald R. Ford, in correspondence with constituents, kept calling the newly appointed day “Washington’s Birthday.” Like many Americans, he believed it important to honor the first president for his outstanding character and precedent-setting achievements.

The second step involved a change in the name of the holiday. It came about when “Washington’s Birthday” started being called “President’s Day” by Main Street. The name change occurred when retailers increasingly adopted the sound bite, “President’s Day Sale!” because it was catchier than “Washington’s Birthday Sale!”

Now that most Americans believe our nation observes Presidents’ Day to celebrate any number of favorite chief executives, our own Gerald R. Ford springs to mind. In integrity and strength of character, he can stand with Washington and Lincoln; he had the courage to do the right thing and didn’t need a poll to give him spine. Also like Washington and Lincoln, he gets high marks for healing our nation in the midst of a crisis; his ability to restore trust was central to his leadership. And in our celebrity culture, he never sought the limelight for its own sake; instead, in his own selfless way, he pursued policies that helped promote the general welfare and form a more perfect union. Gerald R. Ford was just the president our nation needed at a dark time in her history.

President Ford’s way of leading continues to teach us much—in fact, it is more necessary than ever. In these tumultuous times, we at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation are committed to projecting the President’s values in the marketplace of ideas, not just on Presidents’ Day but every day.

Thank you for all that you contribute to the important work we do.

All my best,

Gleaves Whitney

Executive Director

Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation
“My fellow Americans, our long national nightmare is over. Our Constitution works; our great Republic is a government of laws and not of men. Here, the people rule.”

Gerald R. Ford
In Memoriam: Marvin DeWinter (1932 – 2021)
Marvin DeWinter was a renowned architect who was a fundamental member in the development of many established Grand Rapids buildings, including the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum. Prior to designing the Ford Museum, Mr. DeWinter restored the former Pantlind Hotel, and developed & designed the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in 1980.

In Memoriam: Mary Ann Keeler (1925 – 2021)
Mary Ann Keeler strived to bring art related endeavors and other cultural events to the community in the Grand Rapids metropolitan area. Mrs. Keeler played a key role in the decision to locate the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum in downtown Grand Rapids and served on the committee that chose the sculpture “Man in Space” by Judson Nelson to be placed there.
Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum 40-Year Anniversary

2021 is the 40-year anniversary of the construction of the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum. The 44,000 square foot sleek two-story triangular museum, which was built at a cost of $11 million including site preparation, was designed by Marvin DeWinter Associates of Grand Rapids. Also instrumental in the planning of the Museum was the Gerald R. Ford Commemorative Committee chaired by Jordan Sheperd. The Museum is the pivotal attraction in a 20-acre park complex along the west bank of the Grand River in downtown Grand Rapids. Dedicated in September 1981 with a gala celebration attended by President and Mrs. Reagan, the Museum has a 300-foot glass wall providing a panoramic view of the river and the skyline of Grand Rapids. A reflecting pool and fountain welcomes visitors at the front entrance and a broad pedestrian bridge links the Museum with downtown hotels and shops.

The main exhibition floor is devoted to President Ford's life and career and to the nature of the presidency. Candid photographs of Gerald Ford and his family also offer the visitor a view of the man at informal moments. A full-scale replica of the Oval Office, furnished as it was when Gerald Ford was president, is one of the highlights of the Museum. Special exhibits on the 1976 bicentennial and the role of Mrs. Ford are also popular.

Learn more at www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/history.asp
A Moment in History

Gerald R. Ford Signing a Proclamation Confirming the Termination of Executive Order 9066 in the Cabinet Room 2/19/1976

President Ford signed the proclamation “An American Promise” formally announcing the termination of Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1976.

Signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 19, 1942, Executive Order 9066 resulted in the forced uprooting of 120,000 Japanese Americans and their detainment in relocation centers during World War II. Although that order had ceased to be effective once hostilities had ended in 1946, the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) and others petitioned the White House to have the termination officially recognized. Representatives from the JACL as well as Senator Hiram Fong, Congressman Spark Matsunaga, and Congresswoman Patsy Mink attended the ceremony in the Cabinet Room.

“We now know what we should have known then – not only was that evacuation wrong, but Japanese-Americans were and are loyal Americans. On the battlefield and at home the names of Japanese-Americans have been and continue to be written in America’s history for the sacrifices and the contributions they have made to the well-being and to the security of this, our common Nation,” President Ford said in his remarks at the signing ceremony. “I call upon the American people to affirm with me the unhyphenated American promise that we have learned from the tragedy of that long-ago experience – forever to treasure liberty and justice for each individual American and resolve that this kind of error shall never be made again.”

Credit: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum
For more resources about Gerald R. Ford, please visit www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov
Opinion: All 10 Living Former Defense Secretaries: Involving the Military in Election Disputes Would Cross into Dangerous Territory


The Washington Post Jan. 3, 2021

As former secretaries of defense, we hold a common view of the solemn obligations of the U.S. armed forces and the Defense Department. Each of us swore an oath to support and defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic. We did not swear it to an individual or a party.

As senior Defense Department leaders have noted, “there’s no role for the U.S. military in determining the outcome of a U.S. election.” Efforts to involve the U.S. armed forces in resolving election disputes would take us into dangerous, unlawful and unconstitutional territory. Civilian and military officials who direct or carry out such measures would be accountable, including potentially facing criminal penalties, for the grave consequences of their actions on our republic.

Transitions, which all of us have experienced, are a crucial part of the successful transfer of power. They often occur at times of international uncertainty about U.S. national security policy and posture. They can be a moment when the nation is vulnerable to actions by adversaries seeking to take advantage of the situation.

Given these factors, particularly at a time when U.S. forces are engaged in active operations around the world, it is all the more imperative that the transition at the Defense Department be carried out fully, cooperatively and transparently. Acting defense secretary Christopher C. Miller and his subordinates — political appointees, officers and civil servants — are each bound by oath, law and precedent to facilitate the entry into office of the incoming administration, and to do so wholeheartedly. They must also refrain from any political actions that undermine the results of the election or hinder the success of the new team.

We call upon them, in the strongest terms, to do as so many generations of Americans have done before them. This final action is in keeping with the highest traditions and professionalism of the U.S. armed forces, and the history of democratic transition in our great country.

Statement by the Gerald R. Ford Family and Foundation Trustees Regarding the Tragic Events in Washington, DC, on January 6, 2021

Mike Ford

All of us at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation are deeply disturbed by the tragic events that unfolded last Wednesday, January 6, 2021, in our nation’s capital. Those who attacked our Capitol and did violence to fellow Americans need to be fully accountable to the law. We mourn the loss of life and pray for those who were injured. We are dismayed by the harm done to our democracy and by the damage done to our Capitol building.

In these troubled times, we are inspired by the example of President Gerald R. Ford. He held the rule of law to be sacrosanct. When confronting the crises that challenged the U.S., he leaned into the Constitution, declaring, “our great Republic is a Government of laws and not of men.” His words are as wise today as they were in 1974, when he uttered them amid a difficult presidential transition prompted by the resignation of President Richard Nixon.

Almost three years later, President Ford (a Republican) found himself in a close race with then-Governor Jimmy Carter (a Democrat). Once the votes indicated that Carter had won, our 38th President accepted the result with grace and humility. Both leaders insisted on a dignified transfer of power. Their spirit of bipartisan comity remains a high point among modern presidential transitions. Indeed, they helped bring about much-needed healing to our nation. We hope for similar healing in the days ahead.

For more Ford in the News articles, please visit https://geraldrfordfoundation.org/foundation-news-archives/
Community Partnerships and Events
December 2020 - February 2021
Wine and the White House: A History
With Frederik Ryan Jr. and Adam Fortuna

On Friday, December 18th, the Gerald R. Ford Foundation and Museum celebrated the holiday season in socially-distanced style with a virtual program and at-home wine tasting featuring Frederick Ryan Jr. and his latest book, “Wine and the White House: A History.”

Gleaves Whitney, the Foundation’s Executive Director, facilitated a spirited evening of conversation with Ryan discussing the long-standing role of wine in White House history. In between entertaining tales of presidential history, Grand Rapids sommelier, Adam Fortuna, provided tasting tips and notes for guests at home enjoying wines selected to complement the program.

Ryan, who serves as Chairman of the Ronald Reagan Foundation as well as publisher and CEO of the Washington Post, regaled viewers with stories — some informational, some humorous, and some slightly scandalous! Even from a distance, all enjoyed an evening of connecting and learning together.

A recorded version of this program can be found on our website: geraldrfordfoundation.org/wine-and-the-white-house-a-history.

Copies of “Wine and the White House: A History” can be purchased online: shop.whitehousehistory.org

Holiday Train: From Mall to Museum

For generations, the train display at the Breton Village Mall had become a holiday tradition for families throughout West Michigan and beyond. When the mall closed for remodeling and the first Christmas passed with no train to enjoy, Clare Shubert, of the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation, went on a mission.

Determined to find the train and give it a new home, her journey led her to the loving family of Herb and Shirley DeVries… and a storage shed full of train cars, tracks, and miniatures. After months of work, the train was given a new home and a new life at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum, where visitors of all ages have flocked to visit the beloved display, now expanded to include landmarks telling the story of Grand Rapids’ own, President Ford.

Though the Museum was closed over the 2020 holiday, a team of Museum staff and volunteers continued to work off-site to maintain and expand the train exhibit. Next year, visitors will be able to enjoy new additions to the layout including a model of South High School and the Ford’s holiday vacation destination- Vale, Colorado.

We couldn’t let a holiday season pass without a visit to the train display, so Foundation and Museum staff teamed up with Wrinkle Creative to produce a short documentary sharing the history of the train and a behind-the-scenes look at the construction of this fantastic layout.

The video aired on the Foundation’s Facebook page as well as local PBS affiliate, WGVU. Interested viewers can still catch this heartwarming piece on our website: https://geraldrfordfoundation.org/holiday-train-from-mall-to-museum/
The Presidency: Ford Family in the White House

Susan Ford Bales, daughter of President Gerald R. Ford and Betty Ford, relived the Ford family’s time in the White House with former ABC News White House correspondent Ann Compton. They focused on First Lady Betty Ford and her impact on American society.

Susan and Ann described Betty Ford as fearless, and with her husband in office, it opened many opportunities for her to demonstrate that attribute. Betty believed that it was her duty as a public figure, to communicate her message to the public. She would campaign her own beliefs even if they differed from her husband, President Gerald R. Ford.

Susan also discussed her own experiences while living in the White House. She described the constant surveillance and the difficulties it brought as a teenager. The only break the family truly had, were their vacations to Camp David.

Please visit https://www.c-span.org/video/?507426-1/ford-family-white-house to watch the full conversation. You can also watch Susan Ford Bales and Ann Compton via the American History TV C-SPAN YouTube Channel.

Families with patients at Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital may have a long list of things to worry about, but worries of missing school are certainly eased by the incredible team at the Dick and Linda Antonini Hospital School Program. The program serves to bridge the gap between schools, families, and the medical team while children are receiving treatment. The team also provides educational opportunities and helps kids stay involved in normal routines.

The program invites community partners into the classroom to provide fun, engaging, educational experiences for patients. Since 2018, the education team at Gerald R. Ford Foundation has been proud to be one of those partners. Once a month, two of our educators team up with the Hospital Program teachers to deliver an hour-long lesson. Activities have included reading about White House pets, creating campaign buttons, and decorating presidential paper bag puppets.

Since visitor restrictions have increased due to COVID-19, the delivery of these classes has gone virtual. Through platforms like Zoom and the hospital’s closed-circuit television system, our teams are able to provide a fun and educational experience that is sent right into patients’ hospital rooms.

Whether in-person or on television, our partnership with the Hospital School Program is one near and dear to our hearts. We appreciate the invitation to provide a fun distraction for these young patients while teaching them important lessons about President Ford (and his beloved dog, Liberty, too!).

To learn more about the Dick and Linda Antonini Hospital School Program, visit: www.spectrumhealth.org/patient-care/childrens-health/hospital-school-program-for-children
Exploring the White House
With Kate Andersen Brower

On January 13th and 14th, hundreds of kids had the chance to “explore the White House” with journalist and bestselling author, Kate Andersen Brower. Through two virtual programs, the audience got a special look at Kate’s latest publication, and her first book for young readers, “Exploring the White House: Inside America’s Most Famous Home.”

Kate discussed White House traditions and ceremonies with a special focus on presidential inaugurations, teaching students what “moving day” at the White House historically has looked like. Students learned about some of the special features of the White House and the loyal staff members who serve there. Kate shared funny stories about kids and pets who have resided in America’s most famous home and was happy to answer questions from the young audience, ranging from White House ghosts to her own career as a journalist.

“Exploring the White House: Inside America’s Most Famous Home” can be purchased through Schuler Books or Amazon. A recording of this program can be found on our website.

Teacher Workshops with NCC

During the month of February, Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation teamed up with the National Constitution Center to offer a series of online professional development workshops for educators. The virtual workshops, held each Wednesday evening throughout the month, were titled “Constitutional Conversations: Building the Foundations for Dialogue and Deliberation in the Classroom.” Teachers were invited to deepen their knowledge of the Constitution while gaining strategies and tools for fostering civil dialogue in the classroom.

Nearly 50 educators from 15 different states enjoyed digging into hot topics surrounding the Amendments while learning about the resources available through both organizations including a Civil Dialogue Toolkit and guides for facilitating deliberations with students. Participants used the information and strategies they gained throughout the sessions to engage in their own civil dialogue to decide: “What’s the 28th Amendment?”

Many thanks to the National Constitution Center team as well as all of the educators who participated in this engaging and educational series.

For more information about resources available through the National Constitution Center, visit: www.constitutioncenter.org

For more information about educational opportunities available through Gerald R. Ford Foundation, visit: www.devoslearningcenter.org

Chief Isaiah McKinnon Policing from the Inside

Isaiah “Ike” McKinnon, former chief of police and deputy mayor of Detroit, joined the Hauenstein Center for a virtual discussion on January 21, 2021 as part of an annual celebration of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration Week at Grand Valley State University. The event was in partnership with the Hauenstein Center for Presidential Studies at Grand Valley State University, Grand Valley’s Division of Inclusion and Equity, as well as the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation and the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum.

In the wake of the police killing of George Floyd last May, outcry and demonstrations sprang up in cities throughout the United States. Debates ensued not just over the techniques police use to subdue suspects, but also the role of police in our communities. During the debates, one man’s story of creating lasting change rose to national prominence. Isaiah McKinnon, former chief of police and deputy mayor of Detroit, exemplifies a life dedicated to creating the change you want to see in the world. As a young police officer, he experienced racism firsthand, and as a public servant he rose to positions of authority in which he could do something about it.

Isaiah McKinnon noted at the beginning of his remarks that his opinion piece “George Floyd Could Have Been Me”, which appeared in dozens of newspapers throughout America and the world, was part of his lifelong reflection that began when he himself was beaten by police officers as a 14 year-old boy in Detroit, Michigan. His lecture on “Policing from the Inside” was in part a reference to what made him the way he was, and what he had done with his life.

Watch the recording at https://www.gvsu.edu/hc/chief-isaiah-mckinnon-policing-from-the-inside-429.htm
Slavery in the President’s Neighborhood: The Complicated Past and the Paradoxical Relationship between Slavery and Freedom in the Nation’s Capital
Presented by the White House Historical Association with Matthew Costello and Lina Mann

In 2016 Michelle Obama famously commented, “I wake up every morning in a house that was built by slaves, and I watch my daughters—two beautiful, intelligent, Black young women—playing with their dogs on the White House lawn.”

This sparked interest in many and inspired historians at the White House Historical Association to look more deeply into the role enslaved individuals played in the building and staffing of the White House from its construction until emancipation took place in Washington D.C.

This work led to the “Slavery in the President’s Neighborhood” research initiative, which launched in February 2020 and seeks to identify enslaved and free African Americans who built, lived, and worked at the White House and bring their voices and their stories to the historical forefront.

https://www.whitehousehistory.org/spn/introduction

A Terrible Thing to Waste: Arthur Fletcher and the Conundrum of the Black Republican
Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation, Library & Museum

In celebration of Black History Month the Foundation, Library, and Museum welcomed author Dr. David Hamilton Golland to discuss his book “A Terrible Thing to Waste: Arthur Fletcher and the Conundrum of the Black Republican.” Brooke Clement, Acting Director of the Gerald R. Ford Library and Museum moderated the discussion with Dr. Golland. For many, the talk was an introduction to Arthur Fletcher, who was the father of affirmative action, the first Black player for the Baltimore Colts, and adviser to four Presidents.

When asked about the most surprising “find” during his research, Dr. Golland told the story of locating Arthur Fletcher’s papers. Unlike other collections, the papers were still held by the family and therefore not located in an archive. Dr. Golland worked for three weeks with the family to digitize the collection and discover the history the papers held! Questions from the audience ranged from Fletcher’s work within the Republican party and his importance in various administrations.

Miss the program? Watch the recorded version, by visiting https://geraldrfordfoundation.org/arthur-fletcher-and-the-conundrum-of-the-black-republican/

Presidents’ Day: Writing a Presidential Biography
Bookmarks

We celebrated Presidents’ Day with a special presentation from Bookmarks, a literary arts non-profit organization and independent bookstore located in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, the community Foundation Chairperson, Mike Ford, calls home.

The program, intended for families and young viewers, featured Ford along with children’s author, Lindsey McDivitt. McDivitt discussed her passion for writing non-fiction books for kids and the process of writing her biography of President Ford, “Truth and Honor: The President Ford Story.” Mike Ford shared his experiences and memories of his father becoming president, the lessons he learned from his parents, and even shared about a few of his favorite spots inside the White House. The interactive audience members had great questions about writing, the White House, sports, and the secret service!

To learn more about Bookmarks or to purchase a copy of “Truth and Honor: The President Ford Story,” visit: www.bookmarksnc.org
U.S. Representatives Elissa Slotkin and Peter Meijer: Voices across the Aisle in a Challenging Time
Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation in partnership with Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy

The violent events that transpired in Washington, DC, on January 6, 2021 shocked the country. In the wake of the capital siege, many Americans wonder if common ground between Democrats and Republicans is another casualty of that day's chaos. But if there is any roadmap to finding common ground in the future, it may be in the hands of problem solving Representatives like Elissa Slotkin (D-MI) and Peter Meijer (R-MI). They joined Michael Barr, dean of the Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan, on February 16 for "Conversations Across Differences"—a virtual event cosponsored with the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation. The Michigan representatives shared their experiences during the January 6 riot on Capitol Hill and opined on the prospects of enacting bipartisanship legislation as members of the Problem Solvers Caucus. Slotkin and Meijer also plumbed recent controversial events like President Trump's impeachment and Senate trial. Watch a video recording of the discussion on the Ford School's website to see how two of Michigan's newest congressional members plan to reach across the aisle in today's volatile political climate.

Watch the recorded program at www.fordschool.umich.edu/event/2021/us-representatives-elissa-slotkin-and-peter-meijer-voices-across-aisle-challenging-time

Bill Barker: Presidents' Day Celebration - Man and Legacy
Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation in partnership with the Hauenstein Center at Grand Valley State University

In celebration of President's Day, the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation, along with our partners at the Hauenstein Center and the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum and Library, welcomed veteran historical actor-interpreter William Barker to a virtual discussion on February 18 with Ford Foundation executive director Gleaves Whitney. Barker, in his role as Thomas Jefferson, addressed the audience from his Monticello, Virginia, residence as if it were the year 1821. During the spirited discussion with Whitney and audience members, our nation's third president delved into topics including Black emancipation, religious freedom, and Jefferson's relationship with John Adams. Barker did not shy away from answering questions probing his paradoxical life. For example, how could it be that the man who penned the idea that "all men are created equal" in our Declaration of Independence is the same founder who owned hundreds of slaves through the course of his life? The answer to this question and many others posed during the event can be viewed on the Hauenstein Center’s YouTube page.

The Constitution, Elections, and Democracy: Presidential Roundtable Discussion with Jeffrey Rosen
Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation in partnership with the Hauenstein Center at Grand Valley State University

How can a bitterly divided nation keep its faith in civil dialogue? How can Americans cultivate “faculties of reason” in a time of rampant misinformation? Jeffrey Rosen, president and CEO of the National Constitution Center, joined Grand Valley State University President Philomena Mantella and past Presidents Thomas Haas, Mark Murray, and Arend Lubbers for a virtual discussion cosponsored by the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation. Despite the challenges presented by an acrimonious election and the January 6 Capitol riot, Rosen asserted that the Constitution still works and provides a strong framework to address the many challenges our nation faces. Rosen also discussed the surprisingly broad scholarly consensus that our nation’s founding document can evolve with the times, and challenged the audience to look to it, the Federalist Papers, and other primary source documents that would inform a more thoughtful political discourse. Hungry for more? Access the video recording of Rosen’s remarks and the subsequent Q&A on the Hauenstein Center's YouTube page.

Background photo provided by the Hauenstein Center at GVSU

View all previous events at https://geraldrfordfoundation.org/recent-event-archive/

Our Partners:

- White House Historical Association
- The Hauenstein Center at GVSU
- The Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital
- Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park
- Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore
- Scouts of America
- Michigan Center for Civic Education
- WGVU
- Gerald R. Ford Academic Center (GRPS)
- Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy

Background photo provided by the Hauenstein Center at GVSU
Learn About: The White House Easter Egg Roll

The White House Easter Egg Roll is one of the oldest annual events at the White House. Long ago, kids would gather for egg races on the lawn of the U.S. Capitol Building on the day after Easter, called Easter Monday. Some members of Congress, though, were worried about the grass being ruined and passed a law that there could be no egg rolling on the lawn! After that, in 1878, President Rutherford B. Hayes welcomed kids to the White House to roll eggs instead. Since then, children have been invited to the White House for this special event. It has only been canceled a few times during World War II and in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Egg Roll has changed over the years, with each President and First Lady putting their own unique stamp on it. Music was added in 1889 when President Harrison asked the Marine Corps Band to play at the event. 1969 was the first time the Easter Bunny appeared at the event, when Mrs. Pat Nixon was first lady. When President George H.W. Bush and First Lady Barbara Bush hosted the egg roll, the White House staff hard-boiled over 5,000 eggs! 23,000 wooden eggs were used for the egg hunts. (Over the years, first ladies had discovered that real eggs started to smell when they weren't found in time!) In 2014 the event included cooking and craft stations. President and First Lady Obama visited with kids, along with Cookie Monster, Spiderman, and of course, the Easter Bunny.

So how do kids get to go to the Egg Roll? Tickets are available online through a lottery, so not everyone will be lucky enough to get to go, but we can certainly have fun learning about this fun and historical tradition at the White House!

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS:
1. Which president first invited kids to the White House for an Easter egg roll?
2. What year did the Easter Bunny first attend the event?
3. Why do you think traditions like this one are important?

CHALLENGE: The White House Easter Egg Roll is an annual event. “Annual” means it is something that is done once a year. What kinds of annual traditions do you have in your community, your school, or in your family? Choose one of these annual events and interview someone about it. When did it start? What makes it special? How has it changed over time? Write a paragraph to tell about this event.

To learn more, you can visit: www.whitehousehistory.org/collections/white-house-easter-egg-roll

Valued Vocabulary

Caucus (noun) -- a group within an organization or political party which meets independently to discuss strategy or tactics.

Democracy (noun) -- a system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives.

Opine (verb) -- hold and state as one's opinion.
**Decorate your own Easter egg!**

After President Ronald Reagan and First Lady Nancy Reagan hosted an egg hunt with special wooden eggs in 1981, those wooden eggs soon became the official keepsake of the event. Each year the egg is a little different, reflecting the theme of that year’s event. How would YOU design a White House Easter egg? Use the template to decorate and color your very own keepsake egg.

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**National Student Art Competition**

The White House: An American Story

The White House Historical Association seeks submissions from K-12 students across the country that depict and reflect the White House, its collection, and its diverse history – that of presidents and first families, enslaved workers, dedicated staff, and the American public.

- Submissions will be broken into grades K-3, 4-8, and 9-12.
- First, second, and third place will be awarded for each.
- The competition will be open for submissions from February 1, 2021, to May 7, 2021.
- Winners will be announced in July 2021


Questions? Contact artcomp@whha.org
Each year, the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation awards two distinguished journalism prizes, one for Distinguished Reporting on the Presidency and the other for Distinguished Reporting on National Defense. These prizes, initiated in 1988, recognize reportorial excellence and the fostering of a better public understanding of the presidency and national defense. The two prizes are presented to the winners in June and include a $5,000 award.

With these annual awards, President Ford wanted to recognize and encourage thoughtful, insightful, and enterprising work by journalists covering the presidency and national defense. The Foundation is proud to continue this tradition. The Foundation is a private, nonprofit, nonpartisan corporation whose programs are supported entirely by contributions and bequests in an effort to honor President Ford’s sustained commitment to public service.


The 34th Annual Gerald R. Ford Journalism Prize Competition

A competition for distinguished reporting in 2020

The Foundation is proud to continue this tradition. The Foundation is a private, nonprofit, nonpartisan corporation whose programs are supported entirely by contributions and bequests in an effort to honor President Ford’s sustained commitment to public service.


The 34th Annual Gerald R. Ford Journalism Prizes competition submissions closed on Friday, March 19, 2021.

More information about the Gerald R. Ford Journalism Prizes can be found at www.geraldrfordfoundation.org
A Message from Acting Director of the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library & Museum, Brooke Clement

Winter greetings! Though both facilities remain closed to the public due to the pandemic, the staff of the Ford Library and Museum continue to make content and programming available. The Library staff recently launched a new digital exhibit dedicated to the American Bicentennial Celebration, featuring documents and gifts from our holdings. You can find this exhibit and others at: https://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/collections-digital.aspx.

The Library and Museum hosted or co-sponsored some really wonderful virtual programs in the last few months. If you missed the A Terrible Thing to Waste: Arthur Fletcher and the Conundrum of the Black Republican book talk with author (and Ford Foundation research travel grant recipient) David Hamilton Golland, you can watch the recording on the Library and Museum’s YouTube channel. We also hope you attend our upcoming book talks: The Daughters of Yalta: The Churchills, Roosevelts, and Harrimans with author Catherine Grace Katz (on March 4) and Call Sign Chaos: Learning to Lead with author General Jim Mattis (on April 21) via Zoom or Facebook.

In January, Supervisory Curator Don Holloway participated in a University of Michigan program discussing children’s literature that influenced President Ford. And in February, Archivists Stacy Davis, Elizabeth Druga, and Lauren White were invited to discuss library operations and digitization efforts with a University of Michigan Applied Liberal Arts class.

You may have also heard that ArtPrize will be returning to Grand Rapids in 2021. Details are still being worked out, but the Museum is excited to participate as an outdoor venue this year.

In conclusion, we have had some staffing changes this winter. At the end of 2020, we bid farewell to Museum Store Manager Janice Berling. Janice had been with the Ford Museum for the past 18 years and we wish her all the best in her retirement. We also recently onboarded a new staff member at the Museum. Please help us welcome Noelle Ward, who joins us as the Museum Registrar. Noelle hails from Florida and is getting a baptism by fire to a cold and snowy Michigan!

As always, thank you for your continued support for all that we do!

Brooke Clement
Featured Books

**After the Fall: The Remarkable Comeback of Richard Nixon**
by Kasey S. Pipes

On August 9, 1974, Richard Nixon became the first and only U.S. president to resign from office—to avoid almost certain impeachment.

**A Terrible Thing to Waste: Arthur Fletcher and the Conundrum of the Black Republican**
by David Hamilton Golland

Arthur Fletcher was the most important civil rights leader you've (probably) never heard of.

**Exploring the White House: Inside America's Most Famous Home**
by Kate Andersen Bower

A special inside look into the most famous home in America—and the lives of hardworking staff members and first ladies who've maintained it.

**Call Sign Chaos: Learning to Lead**
by Jim Mattis

A clear-eyed account of learning how to lead in a chaotic world, by General Jim Mattis—the former Secretary of Defense and one of the most formidable strategic thinkers of our time—and Bing West, a former assistant secretary of defense and combat Marine.

**April 21, 2021 -- Upcoming event with General James N. Mattis.**

**The Zealot and the Emancipator: John Brown, Abraham Lincoln, and the Struggle for American Freedom**
by H.W. Brands

Gifted storyteller and bestselling historian H. W. Brands narrates the epic struggle over slavery as embodied by John Brown and Abraham Lincoln—two men moved to radically different acts to confront our nation's gravest sin.

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