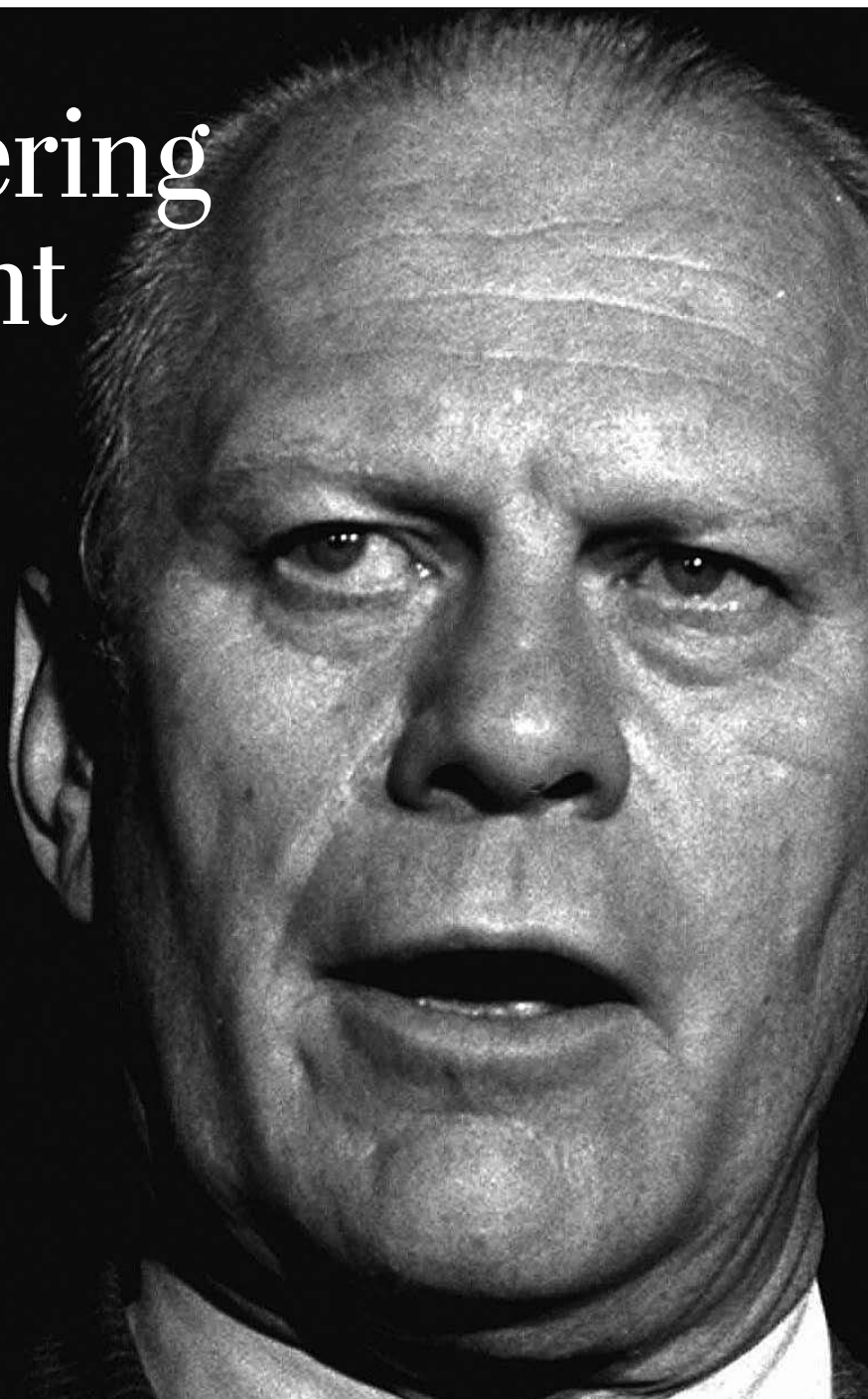


Remembering a President

*Paying Respect
in Ceremony and
Personal Gestures*



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vice President Gerald Ford addresses the media Aug. 9, 1974, after President Richard Nixon announced his resignation.

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Leader

An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

Remembering a President

“My family joins me in sharing the difficult news that Gerald Ford, our beloved husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather, has passed away at 93 years of age,” Betty Ford shared in a written statement on Tuesday, December 26, 2006. In the days that followed, the family — and the nation — would mourn and remember the 38th president of the United States, the longest living and the only one not to be elected to the presidency or the vice presidency.

In grand ceremonies and in simple gestures, the nation honors and expresses its respect for the president and the office. Each living president, current or former, must now have funeral plans in place upon becoming president. As time passes, the former president and his family may review and modify the details of the services and the place of final burial with officials of the Military District of Washington who then arrange all the logistics of the state funeral.

Personal preferences and tradition blend in the state funeral. Wanting to remove themselves from the pomp of British rulers, the funerals of the Founding Fathers were much simpler. George Washington’s service and burial was held at Mount Vernon. The funerals of the first two presidents to die in office were held at the White House which was draped in black ribbon. Abraham Lincoln, the first president to lie in state at the Capitol, shortly after the Rotunda and current dome were completed, was the first president for whom a nationwide period of mourning was declared. The black catafalque built for Lincoln and the basic plan for the ceremony have been used since 1865.

The individual’s faith, style and time period influence aspects of the funeral. Ford is the eleventh president to lie in state in the Rotunda. The state funerals of U.S. President Gerald Ford as well as Dwight Eisenhower (1969) and Ronald Reagan (2004) were held at the Washington National Cathedral. All four living U.S. presidents plan to hold funeral services at the Cathedral.

Protocol may determine where dignitaries and mourners sit, but the final resting place returns to the family members who have shared their private grief with a nation — and observing world. President Woodrow Wilson is entombed at Washington National Cathedral. Kennedy and Taft are buried at Arlington National Cemetery. Other presidents are buried on their presidential library grounds and in their home states.



Print Resources

Gerald R. Ford: July 14, 1913, to Dec. 26, 2006

www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/politics/special/9/index.html

Discussions Archives: Ford

www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/linkset/2006/12/27/LI2006122701292.html

Transcripts of online Q&A with Post reporters, historians and other experts

Camera Works

www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/photo/?nav=globetop
Collections include “Honoring Gerald Ford” and “Gerald R. Ford 1913-2006”

Remarks Delivered at Ford’s Funeral at the National Cathedral

www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/02/AR2007010200418.html
CQ Transcripts Wire

Review the Web sites of other news organizations for the archived material they may have available to the public.

NIE Online Guide

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An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

Remembering a President

Depending on the grade level of your students and course of study, there are many possible activities for using the material in this guide. We are providing a quick list to stimulate discussion and vary approaches.

- Aspects of the funeral events and services will reflect the personal faith, life of the deceased and family choices. Other elements will reflect tradition, such as the use of the Lincoln catafalque. Others will recognize the role of the U.S. President as Commander in Chief; this category includes the Armed Forces pallbearers and music provided by military bands and choirs. Make three columns, one for each category. Read the articles and list items that are appropriate for each dimension of the ceremonies.
- Compare and contrast the funeral events and services of presidents who died in office and those who died after leaving the presidency.
- After reading about the state funeral for President Ford, do some research. In groups find out about the funeral services of President Ronald Reagan, John F. Kennedy, Richard Nixon, Dwight Eisenhower, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Theodore Roosevelt, William Henry Harrison, Abraham Lincoln and Thomas Jefferson. Compare and contrast the state funerals: how they reflect the individual, the time period, communication and transportation, and national awareness.
- Read the commentary pieces and "Warm Memories of a Leader." Have students assume different personas to discuss the impact of President Ford on the people he met, the nation and the world.
- After reading the articles in this guide, answer the following questions:
 1. What are the national and international accomplishments of the Ford presidency?
 2. What essential contributions did Gerald Ford make to American society as president of the U.S.?
 3. What suggestion would you make to one of the living presidents for his funeral events? What would this add to the ceremony? Why do you think it should be included?
 - The four living presidents, their spouses, and Nancy Reagan attended the funeral service for Gerald Ford at Washington National Cathedral. Dignitaries from what other branches of government and agencies would you expect to be invited to a state funeral? Select one of the current living presidents and make a list of five international leaders whom you think should be invited to attend his state funeral. Why is each selected?
 - Group students by six stages in the life of Gerald Ford: Birth to College, College and Graduate School, Military Experience and Early Career, Political Involvement and Member of the House of Representatives, Family and Personal Life, and Vice Presidency and Presidency. Students are to read and summarize the articles and review the photographs about their focus. You may give them the Web resources as well. They are to correctly quote and give credit to sources. In addition to the written summary, they are to evaluate Ford's character, career and choices.

On the Web**Gerald R. Ford**

www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents/gf38.html

White House bio of the 38th President

Gerald Ford

<http://www.loc.gov/today/ford/>

Library of Congress site includes an essay on Ford at the time of the inauguration of the Gerald R. Ford Foundation journalism prizes (1988), photographs and links to his Presidential Inaugural Address.

Gerald R. Ford Library and Museum

www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/

Introduction to the person and president, timeline, photographs; link to library and museum programs including permanent and online exhibits.

Gerald R. Ford Foundation

<http://geraldrfoundation.org/>

Exhibits, speakers and excellence in journalism awards and scholarship grants.

Letter from House Minority Leader Ford to President Nixon

<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/ford-nixon-letter/>

National Archives lesson in its Teaching with Documents materials. Then House Minority Leader Ford provides suggestions for replacing Vice President Spiro Agnew who had resigned.

C-SPAN Ford Coverage

www.c-span.org/executive/ford.asp

Material includes American Presidents: Life Portraits and compilation DVD/VHS videos of the Ford funeral ceremonies.

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December 26, 2006

On the day after Christmas, the nation learns of the passing of Gerald Ford, the 38th President of the United States.

President Bush, on vacation in Texas, expresses condolences and offers one of the executive jets normally used as Air Force One to the Ford family. Members of Congress are on break and preparing for the change of leadership from Republican to Democratic members in January.

Word of the former president's death is received late on the East Coast, but in time for newspapers to pull their Dec. 27 front page stories and replace them with an obituary. Most newspapers have prepared obituaries for older statesmen and community leaders. The obit can be updated with the most recent information, but the details of the individual's life have been verified and the essay written without the rush of a deadline.

Gerald R. Ford, 93, Dies; Led in Watergate's Wake

By J.Y. SMITH AND LOU CANNON
Special to The Washington Post

• *Original Date of Publication:*
Wednesday, December 27, 2006

Gerald Rudolph Ford Jr., 93, who became the 38th president of the United States as a result of some of the most extraordinary events in U.S. history and sought to restore the nation's confidence in the basic institutions of government, has died. His wife, Betty, reported the death in a statement last night.

"My family joins me in sharing the difficult news that Gerald Ford, our beloved husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather has passed away at 93 years of age," Betty Ford said in a brief statement issued from her husband's office in Rancho Mirage, Calif. "His life was filled with love of God, his family and his country."

The statement did not say where Ford died or give a cause of death. Ford had battled pneumonia in January and underwent two heart treatments — including an angioplasty — in August at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn.

"With his quiet integrity, common sense, and kind instincts, President Ford helped heal our land and restore public confidence in the Presidency," President Bush said last night in a statement. Bush was notified of Ford's death shortly before 11 p.m., the White House said.

Ford was the longest-living president, followed by Ronald Reagan, who also died at 93. Ford had been living at his desert home in Rancho Mirage, about 130 miles east of Los Angeles.

Ford was the only occupant of the White House never elected either to the presidency or the vice presidency. A former Republican congressman from



Grand Rapids, Mich., he always claimed that his highest ambition was to be speaker of the House of Representatives. He had declined opportunities to run for the Senate and for governor of Michigan.

He was sworn in as president Aug. 9, 1974, when Richard M. Nixon resigned as a result of the Watergate scandal.

"My fellow Americans, our long national nightmare is over," Ford said in his inaugural address.

"I believe that truth is the glue that holds government together, not only our government, but civilization itself. That bond, though strained, is unbroken at home and abroad."

Ford had become vice president Dec. 6, 1973, two months after Spiro T. Agnew pleaded no contest to a tax evasion charge and resigned from the

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nation's second-highest office. The former Maryland governor was under investigation for accepting bribes and kickbacks.

In the 2 1/2 years of his presidency, Ford ended the U.S. involvement in the war in Vietnam, helped mediate a cease-fire agreement between Israel and Egypt, signed the Helsinki human rights convention with the Soviet Union and traveled to Vladivostok in the Soviet Far East to sign an arms limitation agreement with Leonid Brezhnev, the Soviet president.

Ford also sent the Marines to free the crew of the *Mayaguez*, a U.S. merchant vessel that was captured by Cambodian communists.

On the domestic front, he faced some of the most difficult economic conditions since the Great Depression, with the inflation rate approaching 12 percent. Chronic energy shortages and price increases produced long lines and angry citizens at gas pumps. In the field of civil rights, the sense of optimism that had characterized the 1960s had been replaced by an increasing sense of alienation, particularly in inner cities. The new president also faced a political landscape in which Democrats held large majorities in both the House and the Senate.

But Ford's overriding priority was ending the constitutional and political crisis known as Watergate. It had begun June 17, 1972, when five operatives of Nixon's reelection campaign were caught breaking into Democratic National Committee headquarters in the Watergate office building.

The White House denied any involvement. But as the situation unfolded, the central question was whether Nixon had tried to obstruct the subsequent investigation. A special prosecutor sought answers on tapes Nixon had made of his Oval Office conversations.



BY NICK UT — ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ford takes the oath of office, administered Aug. 9, 1974, in the East Room of the White House, by Chief Justice Warren E. Berger, with his wife, Betty, at his side. "The long national nightmare is over," Ford said in his inaugural address.

The president resisted turning them over on the ground that this would violate executive privilege, but in July 1974, a unanimous Supreme Court ruled against him. Within days, prosecutors found a tape on which Nixon apparently ordered a coverup. The House judiciary committee approved three articles of impeachment. Faced with the virtual certainty of a trial by the Senate, Nixon resigned.

Ford said he believed that his signal achievement was healing the national divisiveness caused by the "poisonous wounds" of Watergate, as he put it in his inaugural speech. "There is no question that this is the thing I contributed," Ford said 30 years later, in an Aug. 25, 2004, interview with *The Washington Post* at his summer home in Beaver Creek, Colo.

When he assumed office, Ford immediately made clear his intention to change what historian Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. called "the imperial presidency."

He was "acutely aware," he said in his inaugural address, that he had not been elected to the position he held, and he asked Americans "to confirm me as your president with your prayers." He said he had neither sought the presidency nor made any "secret promises" to attain it.

"In all my public and private acts as your president, I expect to follow my instincts of openness and candor with full confidence that honesty is always the best policy at hand. ...

"Our Constitution works; our great republic is a government of laws and not of men. Here the people rule. But there is a higher power, by whatever name we honor Him, who ordains not only righteousness but love, not only justice but mercy.

"As we bind up the internal wounds of Watergate, more painful and more poisonous than those of foreign wars, let us restore the golden rule to our political

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process and let brotherly love purge our hearts of suspicion and hate.”

A new spirit was soon evident in the nation’s leadership. The Oval Office, long a fortress for an embittered president who frequently fled its confines to his homes in San Clemente, Calif., or Key Biscayne, Fla., was thrown open to members of Congress, old friends, public officials and reporters.

The president’s approval rating reached 71 percent. He was photographed making his own breakfast. He was freely contradicted by his eldest son, and his aides said what was on their minds without waiting for official clearance. In the press office, he appointed Jerald F. terHorst, a respected Washington correspondent, as his chief spokesman.

This euphoric honeymoon lasted precisely one month.

On Sept. 8, Ford granted Nixon a full pardon for all federal crimes he had “committed or may have committed” when he was in the White House. The only acknowledgement he received in return was a six-paragraph statement from Nixon in San Clemente saying that “I can see clearly now that I was wrong in not acting more decisively and more forthrightly in dealing with Watergate, particularly when it reached the stage of judicial proceedings and grew from a political scandal into a national tragedy.”

Ford said the pardon was necessary to bring Watergate to a close, that he would have had to pardon Nixon sometime in any case and that it was easier to do it sooner than later.

The response was a tidal wave of criticism. Every opinion poll showed a large majority of Americans opposed the pardon. It was denounced in Congress, including by members of Ford’s own party. Republican officials gloomily and accurately forecast that it had reintroduced the Watergate issue into the 1974 elections, which proved to be a



BY NICK UT — ASSOCIATED PRESS

President Bill Clinton helps former President Gerald Ford affix the Medal of Freedom around his neck at the White House in Washington in August 1999.

Democratic landslide. TerHorst resigned in protest.

It was widely assumed that Ford had doomed his political career. By January 1975, his approval rating had plummeted to 36 percent. Not even two assassination attempts, both in California in 1975, generated significant popular support.

The consequences included a three-month delay in confirmation of Ford’s choice of former governor Nelson A. Rockefeller of New York as vice president. In congressional hearings, it was disclosed that Rockefeller had made large private gifts to employees on the New York state payroll and that he had played a hidden role in financing a campaign book against Democratic gubernatorial nominee Arthur Goldberg. The disclosures undermined his ability to play an influential role in the Ford administration.

Many conservative Republicans in Congress joined Democrats in opposing Ford’s programs. In mid-1975, Gov.

Ronald Reagan of California, the darling of the right wing of the GOP, announced his intention to seek the Republican presidential nomination in 1976.

Ford beat back the Reagan challenge, but he narrowly lost the general election in November 1976 to the Democratic candidate, former governor Jimmy Carter of Georgia.

Asked in his 2004 interview with *The Post* whether the pardon had hurt him in the 1976 election, Ford replied, “It probably did. It was a close election, as you know. ... There is a group of bitter people who never forgave me and probably voted against me, and the net result is that they probably helped that I didn’t win.”

Ford closed strongly against Carter after trailing by as much as 30 points in the polls but was damaged by asserting during a debate that Poland was not under Soviet domination. Against the advice of aides who told him this was a

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blunder, Ford stubbornly waited several days before correcting himself. The impression of bumbling was exacerbated by reports of his purported clumsiness. During a trip to Austria, he tripped and fell while leaving Air Force One, and there were several photographs of him falling while skiing.

But Carter began his own term with a graceful tribute that stands as the general assessment of the Ford presidency: "For myself and for our nation," he said in his inaugural address, "I want to thank my predecessor for all he has done to heal our land."

Throughout his years in Washington, Ford had a reputation for hard work, patience and self-confidence. These qualities gained him a place in the inner circles of the Congress. He was also helped by the fact that politically he was a man of the center. He was an internationalist in foreign affairs, a moderate on civil rights and social questions and a conservative on fiscal matters.

His standing in the government was evident in 1963 when President Lyndon B. Johnson named him to the commission that investigated the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. In 1965, he was elected minority leader of the House, the top Republican position in a Congress controlled by Democrats. He held that post until he became vice president.

When he left the White House, Ford wrote his memoirs, established his presidential library at the University of Michigan, served on the boards of various corporations, gave hundreds of speeches, played golf and divided his time between homes in Rancho Mirage and Beaver Creek.

He apparently had no second thoughts about his career. "Once I determine to move, I seldom, if ever, fret," he wrote in his memoirs. It was one of the most

notable aspects of his character, and he never wavered from it.

In 1983, he told *The Post* that losing to Carter "truly hurt" but that he had been "doing as good a job as possible under very difficult circumstances" and that he was not going to "sit around and cry about it."

Instead of complaining, Ford pitched in to help his party. In 1980 he campaigned hard for his old foe, Reagan, who decisively defeated Carter. "I'm a political realist," Ford told *The Post* in 2004 in looking back on that election. "You win some and you lose some, and you have to accept the responsibility to do what you think in the bigger perspective. I sure didn't want Jimmy Carter to be president again in 1980 because I was very sour on his performance as president."

In the late 1970s, the Ford family received expressions of respect and sympathy from all over the country when former first lady Betty Ford described her successful struggle with addiction to alcohol and prescription drugs and how her husband and children had convinced her that she needed help. The Betty Ford Clinic in Rancho Mirage was named in her honor and became one of the nation's leading centers for the treatment of substance abuse.

In 1981, at the request of President Reagan, Ford joined Nixon and Carter in representing the United States at the funeral of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. The three former chief executives flew to Cairo aboard Air Force One. Ford and Carter began a warm friendship during the flight.

In 1999, President Bill Clinton conferred on Ford the Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor. He also received the Congressional Medal of Honor. In 2000, when he was hospitalized after suffering minor strokes during the Republican National Convention in Philadelphia, there was an enormous outpouring of public affection and concern.

In *Years of Renewal*, the third volume of his memoirs, which was published in 1999, Henry Kissinger, Ford's secretary of state, offered this assessment of the former president:

"With Ford, what one saw was what one got. Providence smiled on Americans when — seemingly by happenstance — it brought forward a president who embodied our nation's deepest and simplest values."

In a passage on present-day politics, Kissinger drew an implicit distinction between Ford and subsequent White House occupants.

"The modern politician is less interested in being a hero than a superstar," he wrote. "Heroes walk alone; stars derive their status from approbation. Heroes are defined by inner values, stars by consensus. When a candidate's views are forged in focus groups and ratified by television anchorpersons, insecurity and superficiality become congenial. Radicalism replaces liberalism, and populism masquerades as conservatism."

In Kissinger's view, Ford was a leader in the heroic mold.

* * *

Born Leslie Lynch King Jr. on July 14, 1913, in Omaha, the future president was the offspring of a brief, failed marriage between Leslie King, a wealthy Wyoming wool merchant, and Dorothy Gardner King. The Kings divorced the following January, and she returned to her parents' home in Grand Rapids.

Soon thereafter, Dorothy King married Gerald R. Ford, a young paint salesman she had met at an Episcopal church social. He formally adopted her child, who was renamed Gerald R. Ford Jr. The Fords subsequently had three other boys.

Both Grand Rapids and Gerald Ford's paint-selling business prospered in the first years of the marriage. TerHorst,

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the former press secretary turned biographer, recounts that Gerald Ford Sr. "owned a touring car and there was enough money to take Mrs. Ford and young Jerry to Florida for vacations."

Ford was athletic, outgoing and happy in his youth. He became an adequate student, an outstanding football player and an Eagle Scout. Later, when his father's business declined during the Depression, he tried to help by taking a \$2-a-week lunch counter job.

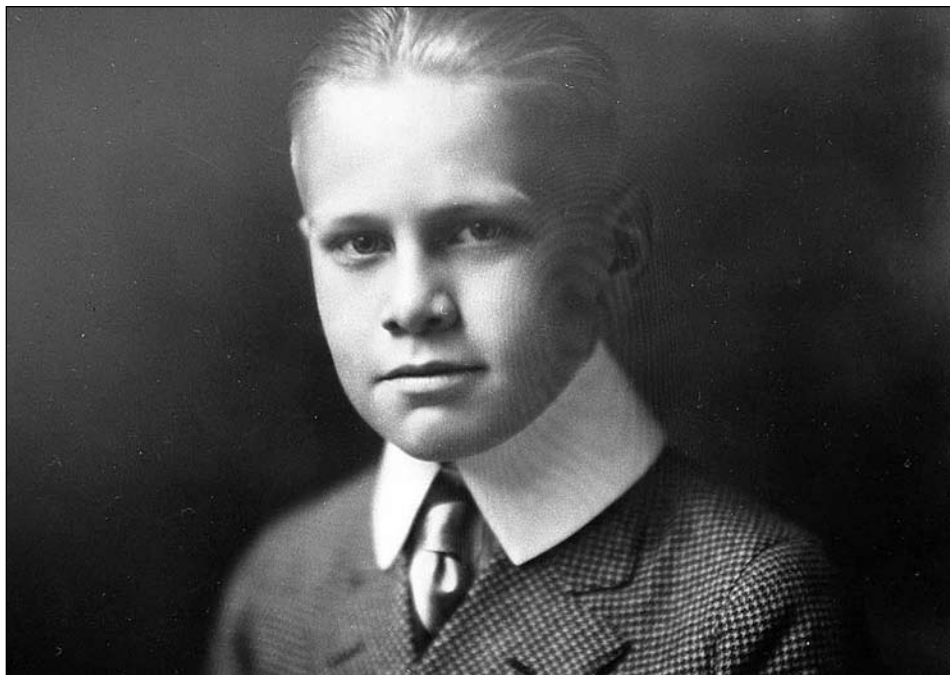
In the custom of those years, he had not been told that he was an adopted child. He found out abruptly when his well-to-do father, on the way to Detroit to pick up a new Lincoln, dropped by the lunch counter where his son worked and told him.

Leslie King invited his son to spend the summer with him in Wyoming after he graduated from high school. Ford turned him down, but he was shocked by the discovery of his adoption.

As terHorst recounted in *Gerald Ford and the Future of the Presidency*: "Inside Jerry Ford, the hurt was deep." He quoted Ford as saying: "I thought, 'Here I was, earning \$2 a week and trying to get through school, my stepfather was having difficult times. Yet here was my real father, obviously doing quite well if he could pick up a new Lincoln.'"

This incident occurred in 1930, the year Ford turned 17 and was a senior at South High School in Grand Rapids. He was an all-city center on the South High football team, which won the state championship that year.

Ford's football prowess opened a window to college, and his coach and some alumni from the University of Michigan provided him with a scholarship and a job waiting tables. He was a benchwarmer behind an all-American center for two years, while Michigan won back-to-back Big Ten football championships.



BY NICK UT — ASSOCIATED PRESS

As a child, Gerald Ford was athletic, outgoing and happy. He became an adequate student, an outstanding football player and an Eagle Scout.

Not until 1934, in his senior year, did Gerald Ford win a starting place on Michigan's football team. Then he was voted the most valuable player on a team that lost seven of eight games and was offered professional football contracts with the Green Bay Packers and Chicago Bears. But Ford said in his autobiography that he thought the law would be a better career.

Ford graduated from the university in 1935 with a B average. He accepted a \$2,400-a-year offer to serve as boxing coach and assistant football coach at Yale University, meanwhile applying to Yale Law School. The law school turned him down in the belief that he would not be able to do well in his studies while coaching.

Ford was accepted on a trial basis in 1938 and did well enough in a couple of courses to be allowed to enroll full time. He graduated in 1941 in the upper third of his class with his best work in a course on legal ethics.

Returning to Grand Rapids, he founded a law practice with Philip A. Buchen, a fellow Michigan graduate who had been partly crippled by polio in childhood.

Already Ford was drawn to politics. He had become active in Grand Rapids the previous summer in the campaign of Republican presidential candidate Wendell Willkie, who went down under Franklin Roosevelt's third-term candidacy, but who carried Michigan. Ford's interest in Willkie revealed a consistent internationalist bent that was evident in all of his succeeding political conflicts.

The Willkie campaign also drew Ford into local Republican affairs, where he sided with a reform group known as the Home Front, which was seeking to break the power of an entrenched Republican boss.

Ford's budding political interests were interrupted by World War II. He

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Early Life

1913 Born
He was born Leslie Lynch King Jr., but his name later changed.

1929 Eagle Scout
Ford had attained the rank in the Boy Scouts two years earlier.

1933 College
Ford played football at University of Michigan, where he was named most valuable player.

1944 Military service
He was an officer aboard the USS Monterey during World War II.



1948 Married
He and Betty Bloomer Warren were wed in Grand Rapids, Mich., after meeting the previous year.

Congress



1948 Elected to first term as U.S. representative
Ford, shown campaigning in Michigan, won with 60 percent of the vote.

1960 Michigan's favorite son
The Michigan delegation at the Republican Convention supports Ford as vice presidential candidate.



1963 Serves on the Warren Commission
He is appointed to panel investigating death of President John F. Kennedy.



1913: Born

Undergraduate

1910

1920

1930

Law school

Military

1940

1950

1948-1973: Representative of Michigan's 5th District

The White House

1973

Named vice president

Ford replaces Spiro Agnew as vice president in the Nixon administration after Agnew resigns.

1974

Becomes president

He walks with Nixon and their wives shortly before assuming the presidency.



1974

Pardons Nixon

Ford signs a document that grants Nixon a pardon.



1975

Survives assassination attempt

In San Francisco, the second attempt on Ford's life in one month is foiled.

1976

Campaigns for president

He campaigns for re-election with his wife in Michigan.



After the Presidency



1981

White House visit

He gathers with Nixon, Reagan and Carter before traveling to the funeral of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat.

1982

Golf with Bob Hope

The actor drives Ford during a pro-am tournament in England.

2006

With President Bush in April

Bush visits the Fords at their home in California.

PHOTO CREDITS: All photos in the ASSOCIATED PRESS archive. Ford's photo (FBI/REUTERS), as vice president with Bill Hoge (GETTY IMAGES)

1948-1973: Representative of Michigan's 5th District

V.P., President

1960

1970

1980

1990

2000

2006: Died

THE WASHINGTON POST—SETH WAINMAN/USA TODAY

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joined the Navy and spent 47 months on active duty, two years of this time on the aircraft carrier *U.S.S. Monterey*, where he was once nearly swept over the side during a typhoon. He left the Navy in 1946 with the rank of lieutenant commander.

He resumed his legal career in Grand Rapids and became active in a variety of community projects, culminating in 1949 when the national Junior Chamber of Commerce selected him as one of the nation's "10 most outstanding young men."

The year of 1948, when President Harry S. Truman was confounding pollsters by winning an upset victory over Thomas Dewey, was a time of decision for Gerald Ford. He ran for the U.S. House of Representatives in what seemed to be a hopeless battle against the entrenched Republican conservative, Bartel J. Jonkman, of western Michigan's 5th congressional district.

Jonkman was of Dutch descent, and the Dutch were the largest single ethnic group in the district. He was considered an isolationist who opposed American involvement overseas in general and aid to Europe as proposed by President Truman under the European Recovery Plan in particular.

In retrospect, Ford seems to have been in tune with the changing times. American involvement in World War II had dissipated isolationist sentiment in the nation's heartland. The internationalist Willkie had done well in Michigan as early as 1940, and Sen. Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan, the senior Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, had dramatically shifted from an isolationist to an internationalist position during the war.

Vandenberg was a political opponent of Jonkman, the senior Republican on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and he encouraged Ford's seemingly hopeless candidacy. Jonkman also was

considered by some local Republicans to be spending too little time in his home district. Ford waged a vigorous handshaking campaign, aided by members of the reform group he sided with before the war. He had the support of the largest daily newspaper in the district, the pro-Vandenberg and anti-isolationist Grand Rapids Press.

In the September primary, Ford defeated Jonkman, 23,632 votes to 14,341. He won the general election with more than 60 percent of the votes, a feat he repeated in each of the following 12 elections.

Ford had proposed marriage in February 1948, to Elizabeth Bloomer Warren, a dancer and former model, and she had accepted. But the couple kept their plans secret out of concern that her background as a dancer and a divorced woman would have an adverse effect in the Republican primary among Dutch Calvinist voters in the district.

They were married Oct. 15, 1948, in Grace Episcopal Church, which Ford attended. They had four children, Michael Gerald Ford, John Gardner Ford, Steven Meigs Ford and Susan Ford Vance.

In Washington, Ford occupied an office in what is now the Cannon House Office Building. Next door was a Democrat from Massachusetts named John F. Kennedy. Ford also formed a friendship with Richard Nixon, then a second-term House member from California.

Ford quickly established himself as a district-service congressman who answered every letter and made himself available to visitors from his state. He staffed a trailer with aides who traveled from town to town in his district. He won political points by taking stands that struck responsive chords among his constituents, such as a 1953 appeal that the United States admit 50,000 Dutch immigrants after disastrous floods in the Netherlands.

Constituent service also was the watchword of Vandenberg, whom

Ford admired almost reverentially and who in turn considered the new congressman something of a protege. When Vandenberg died in 1952, Ford briefly considered running for his seat but decided to stay in the House.

Ford became as popular among his House colleagues as he had been in Grand Rapids. He found time to golf, swim and ski, and he was accepted into the Chowder and Marching Society, a group of House members that has always welcomed former athletes.

* * *

The new congressman was named to the assignment of his choice, the politically helpful House Public Works Committee, in his first term. In his second term, in 1951, he was appointed to the influential House Appropriations Committee.

On foreign policy, Ford remained true to the issues he had espoused in his first campaign. He supported President Truman's "Point Four" program for aiding underdeveloped countries, and he consistently favored foreign military aid. His internationalism displayed itself again in candidate preferences, and he supported the nomination of Dwight D. Eisenhower at a time when Sen. Robert Taft of Ohio was favored by most Midwestern Republicans in Congress.

On domestic issues, Ford was an orthodox Republican. He voted against public housing, against the minimum wage and against repeal of the "right-to-work law" provision of the Taft-Hartley Act.

On civil rights issues, he was considered a Republican moderate during most of his career. He voted against the poll tax, a device to keep the poor — especially blacks — from voting, and he voted for the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act. But he also opposed school busing to achieve racial integration, a position

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that disappointed members of the Congressional Black Caucus, all of them Democrats estranged from the policies of the Nixon administration. Only one member of the caucus, Rep. Andrew J. Young of Georgia, voted to confirm Ford as vice president.

Republican colleagues in the House considered him progressive on making the House a more responsive institution.

His first vote in Congress was in favor of changing House rules to make it easier to bring a bill up on the floor without clearance from the House Rules Committee.

During the two Eisenhower administrations, Ford gradually advanced toward House leadership. He held a senior position on the Appropriations Committee and played a growing role in GOP strategy councils. In a 1960 poll of Washington correspondents, *Newsweek* rated him second among the ablest members of Congress.

Ford's breakthrough into a major position of leadership occurred in 1963 when he was the candidate of a group of younger Republicans, slightly to their party's left of center, to challenge 67-year-old Charles B. Hoeven of Iowa for chairmanship of the House Republican Conference.

One of the public highlights of the Ford minority leadership was a weekly news conference with Sen. Everett M. Dirksen (R-Ill.), which quickly became known as the "Ev and Jerry Show." Ford lacked Dirksen's oratorical talents, and he sometimes found himself on the losing end of exchanges with the Illinois senator.

It was during this period of his career that Ford was on the receiving end of two well-publicized gibes from President Johnson. The president once suggested that Ford couldn't "chew gum and walk at the same time" and also commented that "there's nothing wrong with Gerald

Ford except he played football too long without a helmet."

Ford incorporated the latter remark into some of his own speeches, correctly giving the original authorship to former Detroit Mayor Gerald Cavanaugh.

However, House colleagues on both sides of the aisle disputed the idea that Ford was less than bright. They pointed to his shrewd, effective leadership in the House and his mastery of such complexities as the defense budget.

Ford's accomplishments as a House leader were based not upon his public pronouncements but upon a talent for friendly persuasion attested to by many members on both sides of the aisle.

"It's the damndest thing," said Rep. Joe Waggoner (D-La.). "Jerry just puts his arm around a colleague or looks him in the eye, says, 'I need your vote,' and gets it."

...

Ford's consistent advocacy of military preparedness and his internationalism made him an early supporter of the Vietnam War. When President Johnson sent a half-million troops to Vietnam in 1965, Ford emerged as a partisan critic who said the United States should take sterner measures, such as the bombing of North Vietnam and a naval blockade, in an effort to end the conflict.

"It is President Johnson's war, because the president plays everything close to the vest," Ford said on June 18, 1966. "He has an unhealthy passion for secrecy."

The use of the phrase "Johnson's war" brought Ford a rebuke from some Republicans, among them his fellow minority leader, Sen. Dirksen.

Ford served as permanent chairman of the 1968 Republican Convention, which nominated Nixon for president. When Nixon became president, Ford loyally supported his Vietnam policy, including the incursions into Laos and Cambodia and the bombing of North Vietnam.

He later gave Nixon full credit for withdrawing U.S. troops from the war.

The new Nixon administration changed Ford's role from leader of the usually loyal opposition to outspoken advocate of the Republican president.

Ford's loyalty was rewarded after Agnew's resignation when Nixon nominated him for the vice presidency. Ford was the second choice after former secretary of the treasury John B. Connally, but Nixon was persuaded by various Republicans that Congress would not confirm Connally, a former Democrat.

Ford's nomination was the first made under the 25th Amendment, and it touched off a detailed inquiry into Ford's background and financial affairs by the two congressional judiciary committees.

He was confirmed by a 92-to-3 vote in the Senate and by a 387-to-35 vote in the House. Ford spent the better part of the next 10 months trying to defend President Nixon on the Watergate issue, while at the same time condemning the practices of political espionage, lying and obstruction of justice uncovered in the Watergate scandal.

While he never criticized Nixon personally, he tried on several occasions to distance himself from the Nixon White House, most noticeably on March 31, 1974, when he told a Midwestern Republican conference in Chicago that the party must "learn the lessons of Watergate."

But it was not until the weekend before Nixon's resignation that Ford stopped proclaiming belief in Nixon's personal innocence. And it was not until the day before Nixon bade farewell to his high office in a nationally televised speech that Ford actually assembled a transition team.

In the aftermath of the pardon, Ford's political vulnerability was evident in

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his efforts to deal with Vietnam and its legacy.

He surprised many Americans by unveiling, in a speech to a Veterans of Foreign Wars convention, a conditional-amnesty plan for Vietnam-era draft evaders and deserters. The proposal drew a swarm of critics. Veterans groups opposed any amnesty program at all, while organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union called for unconditional amnesty. Of the estimated 100,000 draft evaders, only about 20,000 took advantage of the program. Although U.S. combat troops had been withdrawn by the time Ford took office, the president proposed an increase in aid for the South Vietnamese government to help it resist what was expected to be a major effort by the North Vietnamese communists to drive it out of the country.

There was little support for this in the new Congress. Early in 1975, it rejected Ford's proposals, turning a deaf ear to arguments that Washington had to stand by its beleaguered ally to maintain its credibility in world affairs.

The communist offensive began in April 1975, and Ford ordered the small remaining contingent of U.S. embassy and security personnel to leave. The final evacuation produced painful pictures of Americans in retreat — officials scrambling to get aboard helicopters while Marines held back crowds of Vietnamese who had loyally supported the United States.

On April 23, 1975, in a speech at Tulane University, Ford announced that the war in Vietnam was “finished as far as America is concerned.”

A week later, Saigon fell to the communists and the long war was over.

Ford later came to the view that U.S. policy in Vietnam was mistaken. He blamed this on an unthinking inheritance of French colonial policy. “The French had the wrong policy, and we inherited it, and our State Department was not smart enough to realize that we should have been more objective about our policy in Vietnam,” Ford said in the 2004 interview with *The Post*. Asked if the United States should have withdrawn sooner than it did, he said: “Absolutely, in retrospect. Now, I wasn’t strong enough to make

that decision while I was in the White House but in reflection, there is no question.”

Ford continued the Nixon policy of using Kissinger as a mediator between Israel and the Arab states in the Middle East. An agreement signed in September 1975, halted fighting between Israel and Egypt.

In the previous month, Ford had traveled to Helsinki to sign an accord that recognized the existing frontiers between states, including the border between East and West Germany. This implicitly recognized Soviet domination of Eastern Europe. In return, Moscow agreed to respect basic human rights and to ease restrictions on the free exchange of information and on emigration and travel within the Soviet Union.

Ford was criticized for signing the Helsinki Accords at a time when the press was reporting numerous human rights violations in the Soviet Union. But the president said in his autobiography, *A Time to Heal* (1979), he regarded the agreement as “a real

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ASSOCIATED PRESS

From left, sons John Ford and Steven Ford, First Lady Betty Ford, President Gerald Ford, daughter Susan Ford and daughter-in-law Gayle Ford with husband Michael Ford pose in the Oval Office after the president's inauguration on Aug. 9, 1974.

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BY DAVID HUME KENNERLY — REUTERS VIA GERALD R. FORD LIBRARY

Secretary of State Henry Kissinger gives President Gerald Ford the latest information on the situation in South Vietnam during a meeting at the White House in April 1975.

victory for our foreign policy” because the Soviets had conceded that national borders could be changed by peaceful means.

But it was the domestic economy that proved the touchstone of Ford’s presidency. The problems included inflation, rising unemployment — it passed 9 percent, the highest level since the Great Depression — and skyrocketing energy costs.

Soon after taking office, Ford said inflation was “public enemy No. 1.” To fight it, he vetoed more than 50 spending bills. He also announced a 32-point program for fighting it, which he called “WIN,” an acronym for “Whip Inflation Now.”

Congress declined to enact most of Ford’s anti-inflation proposals, however, and the WIN program was overtaken by the events of deepening recession.

In January 1975, the president all but declared a ceasefire in his war on inflation and turned his attention to growing unemployment and sinking productivity.

In one of the most candid State of the Union messages ever presented to Congress, Ford in 1975 said:

“I must say to you that the state of the union is not good. Millions of Americans are out of work. Recession and inflation are eroding the money of millions more. Prices are too high and sales are too slow.”

Ford followed this message with a budget proposal that predicted long-term unemployment and massive deficits. His essential answer to what he conceived as the twin problems of the economy and the energy crisis was a quick tax rebate to stimulate the economy and

oil tariff increases to lessen American dependence on foreign oil.

Despite the seriousness and the variety of the problems that confronted him, Ford maintained his even-tempered composure and his optimism. He met frequently with a wide range of legislators, businessmen, labor officials, heads of state, reporters and other visitors.

He knew that his chances of winning a full term in 1976 were not good, but he approached it in the spirit of Harry S. Truman, whose bust he placed next to his desk in the Oval Office.

Truman, Ford used to say, “had guts, he was plain-talking, he had no illusions about being a great intellectual, but he seemed to make the right decisions.”

Many would say the same of Gerald Rudolph Ford.

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December 29, 2006

Services and viewing are held in the community that has been the Ford family's home for the 30 years since he left the White House.

12:20 p.m.: President Ford's casket arrives at St. Margaret's Episcopal Church in Palm Desert, Calif., for a family prayer service.

1:15 p.m.: Private visitation at St. Margaret's for close friends and guests.

4:20 p.m.: Public repose begins. The church is open until approximately 8:00 a.m. Saturday.

In the days that follow the announcement of former President Ford's passing, most sections of The Washington Post — News, Metro, Style and KidsPost, Sports and Business — cover an aspect of the former president's life.

AN APPRECIATION

Ford Always Managed To Be a Good Sport

By WILLIAM GILDEA
Washington Post Staff Writer

• *Original Date of Publication: Thursday, December 28, 2006*

Without question, Gerald R. Ford was one of the most athletic presidents in history.

Ford, who died Tuesday night at age 93, loved to take part in sports from his days as a youth in Grand Rapids, Mich., until he occupied the White House and during the many years afterward. He is best known for playing center at the University of Michigan, where he was on the Wolverines' national championship football teams of 1932 and 1933 and was the team's most valuable player in 1934.

Even after he became president in 1974, Ford still found the time to follow sports avidly — and to participate.

"I've always loved sports," he told a *Washington Post* reporter in 1976. "When I was a boy, I knew every batting average in the big leagues. I still look at the standings and I feel a day is wasted if I don't read the sports pages."

As president, Ford engaged in an array of sports: swimming, golf, tennis, skiing. As a younger man especially, he loved sailing.

"He was a good athlete and a wonderful person," said pro golfer Lee Elder, originally from Washington and now living in Florida. "One time the phone rang and the operator came on and said: 'This is the White House. The president is calling.' I thought, 'Sure, sure.' But it turned out that we played quite a lot together when he was in the White House and I was living in Washington. We played at Congressional Country Club

and especially at Andrews Air Force Base. It was a fun time."

Later, they continued playing golf together, usually in California, where Ford spent much of his time after his presidency. They also exchanged greeting cards because they shared the same birthday, July 14. "I also had lunch with him a couple of times in Palm Springs," Elder said. "He told me he was keeping active, playing nine holes."

During his formative years, Ford excelled in football, playing linebacker as well as center in high school and then for Michigan. During a speech when he was president, he made light of his accomplishments as a player while noting that 1934 was a down season for the Wolverines after their back-to-back national titles.

"That was the year we lost seven out of eight of our scheduled games," he said. "But, you know, what really hurt me the most was when my teammates voted me their most valuable player. I didn't know whether to smile or sue."

Nevertheless, Ford indicated a number of times that he derived much satisfaction from playing big-time football at Michigan. The 6-foot, 198-pound center, whose jersey number 48 has been retired by the school, was named to play in two major all-star games after his senior year, for the East squad in the East-West Shrine Game in San Francisco on Jan. 1, 1935, and that August for the college all-stars against the NFL champion Chicago Bears at Soldier Field.

Two NFL teams gave Ford the chance to turn pro, but instead he went to Yale to earn his law degree. While there, he

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served as an assistant football coach and a boxing coach.

"When I got through Michigan, I was offered opportunities at the Green Bay Packers and the Detroit Lions," he told CNN's Larry King during a 1999 interview. "But I had a chance to go to Yale as an assistant football coach and go to law school at the same time. So that opportunity was so wonderful I couldn't turn down the chance to further my education and earn some money in the meantime. ...

"I would, in retrospect, have liked to have played one year just to prove that I could. But the opportunity to go to Yale and be an assistant coach and go to law school at the same time might not have been available."

At Yale, he learned that "The Game" against Harvard "was as big as any game Michigan had with Ohio State," according to a 1993 *USA Today* article. With admiration, he recalled a pregame pep talk by Yale coach Raymond "Ducky" Pond before the 1935 game with Harvard. The coach seemed to make his points in much the same manner as Ford often would in public speaking throughout his life.

"Ducky wasn't a fiery speaker, but he spoke very movingly," Ford said. "He talked about the Yale alumni, his experiences and what 'The Game' meant to him. In a quiet way, it was very emotional."

In 1975, the NCAA named Ford the winner of the Theodore Roosevelt Award, given to a prominent American "for whom competitive athletics in college and attention to physical well-being thereafter have been important factors in a distinguished career of national significance and achievement."

Elder said that Ford gave him both "encouragement" and "praise" for breaking racial barriers as the first African American to compete in the Masters golf tournament, the first to

take part in a multiracial sports event in South Africa and the first to play on the U.S. Ryder Cup team. Ford paid tribute to Elder at a reception honoring the golfer at the Washington Hilton in 1974, and played in Elder's celebrity pro-am tournaments for charity.

"He was strong and could drive the ball a long ways," Elder said. "He and I played in the Bob Hope Classic and I remember him making several nice drives. At Congressional, he chipped up on one hole for a birdie. He had a great smile."

Before the 1975 Jackie Gleason Inverrary Classic golf tournament in Florida, the comedian presented Ford with a set of gold-plated golf clubs. But because Ford participated so often in sports as president, it almost was inevitable that he would be caught by reporters and photographers committing some gaffe.

One front-page photo showed him tumbling on the ski slopes, and on the golf course he plunked some spectators. But he remained active, expressing strong feelings about the importance of keeping physically fit. At age 62 in 1975, he told a *Post* reporter: "My health is the best. I'd be delighted to have my health record put on the table. ... I think it's good. I'd lay mine against anybody else's."

He described himself as "kind of amused" by depictions of him as clumsy. "Most of the critics ... have never played in a ballgame, never skied," he said. "I guess you have to live with it. The main thing is, you don't have to believe it."

But he didn't take himself so seriously that he couldn't laugh at quips by the likes of Bob Hope. "I love playing golf with Gerald Ford," Hope was quoted in the 2003 book *Bob Hope: My Life in Jokes*. "He makes me feel like I'm back performing in a war zone."

And Ford himself once was quoted as saying, "I know I am getting better at golf because I'm hitting fewer spectators."

But as people who played different sports with Ford in his later years would agree, he possessed a typical athlete's sense for what he was doing — in tennis, for example, he had a feel for how a ball might bounce when sliced or drop-volleyed. "There is no question that he thoroughly enjoys it," Rear Adm. William M. Lukash, then the presidential physician, told *Tennis* magazine in 1976. "He's an athlete and a competitor, and to that kind of a man, tennis is a very satisfying sport."

Those who played tennis doubles or a round of golf with him usually came away impressed by his genial personality, which he managed to retain even while trying to play his best.

One particularly happy day for Ford brought him together with his Grand Rapids South High School football teammates for a reunion at the White House in 1974. The president took them out to the Rose Garden and later showed them the Oval Office. The team's coach, Clifford Gettings, described Ford as a hard worker who developed into an excellent player.

"He came to me a spindly, awkward kid. 'What position shall I play?' he asked. I said, 'Center,' and he's been in the center of things ever since. He had a lot of drive. He always had a football in his hand and must have practiced centering that ball day and night. I used the Pop Warner double wing and the Fielding Yost short punt formation, so Jerry had to center the ball long and short. I never saw him make a bad pass. He was all-city three years and all-state in his senior year."

Notably, the group from Grand Rapids found Ford the president as unpretentious as they had remembered him.

"He was always a guy I loved," said Silas McGee, a teammate. "He was always down to earth like the rest of this group."

Staff researcher Julie Tate contributed to this report.

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Ford's Economic Record Belies His Reputation

Better Known for a Failed Anti-Inflation Gimmick, His Policies Helped Get U.S. Back on Track

By JEFFREY H. BIRNBAUM
Washington Post Staff Writer

• Original Date of Publication: Thursday,
December 28, 2006

The economic policies of Gerald R. Ford are usually remembered as a joke. Soon after he took over as president, in August 1974, he tried to tame runaway price increases by urging Americans to wear round red lapel pins emblazoned with the initials WIN, for “whip inflation now.”

That didn't work, of course, and the pins soon disappeared amid public ridicule.

But Ford didn't give up the fight against what was then called stagflation: a debilitating mix of rapid inflation, high unemployment and slow economic growth. In fact, before his 30-month administration ended, he discarded his original plans and cobbled together an unconventional set of programs that succeeded, at least for a while, in slowing the country's financial slide.

Among his economic policies, “what President Ford is most remembered for is the inflation campaign, which was kind of silly,” said Alice M. Rivlin, a former vice chairman of the Federal Reserve Board and a director of The Washington Post Co. “But in the end, I think, he did quite well.”

The U.S. economy was in sad shape when Ford replaced the disgraced Richard M. Nixon to become the nation's 38th president. Then it got worse. The economy fell into the steepest recession since World War II, coupled with an upward price spiral that was faster than at any time in modern memory.



BY NICK UT — ASSOCIATED PRESS

President Gerald R. Ford congratulates Alan Greenspan, the new chairman of Ford's Economic Council, in 1974.

Unemployment approached 9 percent, inflation ran at a 12 percent annual rate, and the gross domestic product was flat or declining. Energy prices, in particular, soared due to an oil shortage.

“The ‘70s were probably the most difficult decade in which to formulate economic policy,” Rivlin recalled. “Economists don't know how to cope with inflation, slow growth and unemployment at the same time.”

Initially, Ford believed that fiscal austerity, a tenet of his Republican Party, would solve the country's woes. He convened a summit called the Conference on Inflation, with economists and leaders of business and labor focusing on recommendations to slow price increases. He then proposed to cut federal spending and raise taxes

and, for a short period, he embraced the idea of a voluntary wage-price freeze.

Ford also hoped to jawbone his way out of the crisis by going on national television in October 1974 and urging citizens to “make up a list of 10 ways you can save energy and fight inflation.” In a separate speech to Congress, Ford declared that inflation was “public enemy number one” and asked Americans to wear the anti-inflation pins.

WIN was laughed into oblivion as a hollow gimmick, and Ford was forced to regroup. Under the tutelage of Alan Greenspan, then chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers and later Federal Reserve chairman, Ford

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was persuaded that the most pressing problems were unemployment and sluggish economic growth, not inflation.

As a result, Ford decided to accept exactly the opposite remedy that he prescribed at first. Under pressure from the Democratic-controlled Congress, he endorsed measures that increased spending and cut taxes rather than the other way around. The goal: to stimulate economic growth despite the danger, which he continued to battle with dozens of vetoes, that those actions might widen the federal budget deficit.

"When the chips were down, in the interest of providing stimulus, he agreed to a tax cut and other measures that helped the economy recover from the 1975 recession," said Charles L. Schultze, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers under President Jimmy Carter. "He came around to realize that the economy would be better off with a stimulus than without one.

In March 1975, Ford signed into law a bill that provided individuals with a 10 percent rebate on their 1974 tax liability, a fattened standard deduction, and a temporary \$30 tax credit for each taxpayer and dependent. For companies, the investment tax credit was temporarily increased to 10 percent.

Ford also accepted spending increases that he originally opposed. When, early on, Congress passed an anti-recessionary spending package, Ford was urged by his economic advisers to veto it. But he solicited other advice, including from his political staffers and Democratic economists such as Walter Heller and Arthur Okun. They told him the economy needed a boost. So Ford executed what his press secretary Ron Nessen termed a "179-degree" turn and signed the measure.

By 1976, these controversial efforts to rev up the economy had begun to pay off. When Ford ran for president, the economy was showing signs of recovery. Unemployment had dipped to about 7 percent, inflation had abated

to 4.8 percent, and the gross national product was humming along at a robust rate of growth.

"We were headed in the right direction," Ford later boasted.

Ford offered other ideas that might have benefited the economy even further. He proposed a long list of deregulatory measures, for industries ranging from trucking to airlines, as a way to make the economy more efficient. They didn't come to fruition until after he left the White House, however. His efforts to increase energy supplies also foundered on Capitol Hill.

The economy faced tough times after Ford left office. An oil embargo further fueled inflation until Paul A. Volcker, the new chairman of the Federal Reserve appointed by Ford's successor, Carter, began a painful increase in interest rates that finally squeezed rapid inflation out of the system but also threw the economy into recession and caused unemployment to skyrocket.

Finally, under President Ronald Reagan in the 1980s, a full-fledged recovery got underway — and it is that recovery that has stuck in the public mind as the real end of the disastrous economy of the 1970s. Ford's own temporary economic uptick had been so uneven and came so late in his short stay at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. that it went largely unheralded.

Voters focused instead on a non-economic issue: Ford's unconditional pardon of Nixon. After issuing that pardon, "he could not convince the American people that he deserved another shot at the presidency," said Bernard Firestone, a political science professor at Hofstra University and an organizer of a Ford retrospective.

Nevertheless, Firestone predicted that historians will eventually see Ford "as a much more capable president than the public gave him credit for," in large measure because of his economic policies.



GERALD R. FORD LIBRARY

Alan Greenspan with President Gerald Ford, his mother, Rose Goldsmith (left), Ayn Rand and her husband, Frank O'Connor, at his swearing in as chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, Sept. 4, 1974.

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December 30, 2006

The transition from private to state funeral takes place.

9:00 a.m.: Departure ceremony from St. Margaret's

9:40 a.m.: Ford's body transported to Palm Springs Regional Airport

10:15 a.m.: Remains flown to Andrews Air Force Base (AFB). (EST)

5:20 p.m.: Arrival ceremony at Andrews AFB

5:35 p.m.: A motorcade takes Ford's remains to the U.S. Capitol, traveling through Alexandria in remembrance of his residence in the city as a Congressman and Vice President. The motorcade pauses at the World War II Memorial. The tribute is open to the public.

6:20 p.m.: The casket is carried up the east steps of the Capitol to the door of the House of Representatives, to honor Ford's time in Congress.

6:30 p.m.: Rotunda arrival ceremony, open to President Ford's immediate family, members and members-elect of the House and Senate, visiting heads of state and invited government officials.

7:00 p.m.: State funeral begins in the Rotunda.

8:20 p.m. to midnight: Ford's body lies in state until Monday night; the rotunda is open to the public.

December 31, 2006, and January 1, 2007

Sunday-Monday, Ford's body continues to lie in state.

A Solemn Homecoming

Modest Salutes Mark 38th President's Return to Washington

By MICHAEL E. RUANE
Washington Post Staff Writer

• *Original Date of Publication: Sunday, December 31, 2006*

To the strains of a Navy piper's farewell, the clank of sword scabbards and the bang of an artillery salute, Washington welcomed the body of former president Gerald R. Ford last evening.

The ceremonies began four days of services and tributes in the city he left three decades ago.

The journey of the president's body, from its arrival at Andrews Air Force Base about 5:15 p.m. to its installment in the Capitol Rotunda about two hours later, took place in the early evening darkness that was broken by floodlights, streetlights and simple holiday decorations.

It was attended by modest but somber crowds that lined the avenues of Alexandria, where the former president once lived. People also gathered in silence as his hearse, and the limousine bearing his wife, Betty, 88, paused beside the flickering fountains of the World War II Memorial. The cortege of about 40 vehicles then moved slowly along the broad and empty expanse of Constitution Avenue toward the gleaming dome of the Capitol, bright against the night sky. The casket bearing Ford's body was carried up the steps to the grand, columned east entrance of the House of Representatives.

The casket was placed on the same bier as the one used for Abraham Lincoln 141 years ago and Ronald Reagan 2 1/2 years ago.

In the ceremony that followed, Betty Ford looked composed as she sat between Vice President Cheney and House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.). The service closed with the former first lady bowing her head over her husband's casket, her clasped

hands on the flag that covered it. It was Washington's second presidential state funeral in 31 months and different from the more elaborate leave taking accorded Reagan. But there was elegance to last night's proceedings, as the former chieftains of 30 years ago, several using canes, stood by with younger mourners who said they knew little more than that the former president had been an honorable and decent man.

"It was this man, Gerald R. Ford, who led our republic safely through a crisis that could have turned to a catastrophe," said Cheney, among those who eulogized Ford at the service. "We do know this: America was spared the worst, and this was the doing of an American president. For all the grief that never came, for all the wounds that were never inflicted, the people of the United States will forever stand in debt to this faithful servant we mourn tonight."

U.S. Rep. Vernon J. Ehlers (R), who represents the Grand Rapids, Mich., district where Ford was a congressman decades ago, teared up as he said, "People are finally starting to realize what he did for this country and how special he was."

President Bush did not attend last night's ceremonies. He and first lady Laura Bush plan to pay respects tomorrow, when they return to Washington from Texas. Bush also plans to speak at Ford's funeral Tuesday at Washington National Cathedral.

Bush, in his weekly radio address yesterday, said: "Gerald Ford distinguished himself as a man of integrity and selfless dedication. He always put the needs of his country before his own, and did what he thought was right, even when those decisions were unpopular. Only years later would Americans come to fully appreciate

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the foresight and wisdom of this good man.”

“In the nation’s darkest hour, Gerald Ford lived his finest moment. ... He knew the road to national healing began with the courage to forgive,” said Sen. Ted Stevens (R-Alaska), the Senate’s president pro tem, who also spoke at the state funeral.

Outside the Capitol, hundreds of people waited to pay their respects. Some waited five hours or longer before getting into the Rotunda late in the night.

...
As midnight approached, the crowd diminished, but people continued to come.

The day began with private services at Ford’s church in California. Then his body was carried aboard an official presidential jumbo jet for the cross-country flight to Andrews Air Force Base.

The plane arrived in darkness, and Ford’s flag-covered casket was carried from the aircraft to a black hearse by eight uniformed service members.

Black artillery pieces fired a 21-gun salute, belching smoke that drifted like fog across the tarmac, as a military band played “Hail to the Chief” and “America (My Country ‘Tis of Thee),” which had been requested by the family.

Standing by in the evening chill were several dozen honorary pallbearers, including former secretaries of state Henry A. Kissinger and James A. Baker III, former defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld, former transportation secretary William T. Coleman Jr. and Cheney, who had once been Ford’s chief of staff.

Once the music stopped, the quiet was broken only by a long roll of drums and the shouted orders of the military commanders.

Betty Ford, looking tiny on the arm of white-gloved Army Maj. Gen. Guy C. Swann III, watched as the casket was carried by and then took a seat in a limousine, where she could be seen wiping her face with a handkerchief.

The cortege left the air base at 5:53 p.m. and traveled via the Capital Beltway, which



BY NICK UT — ASSOCIATED PRESS

Betty Ford reflects at the casket of her husband in the Capitol Rotunda.

was briefly closed, to Alexandria, where the Fords lived when the former chief executive represented his Michigan district in the U.S. House.

Along Washington Street, a crowd of several hundred assembled around the intersection with King Street, and those who went to pay respects were joined by a throng of shoppers. Word spread through the crowd that Ford had once lived in Alexandria.

Sylvia Lukens, a 37-year resident of Alexandria, waited in the cold for about an hour to see the president who had once lived a few blocks from where the motorcade was passing. “I liked that Ford still had affection for this town,” Lukens said. “Even when he entered the high echelons of power he stayed here. That says a lot about the man.”

As the motorcade drove through, the crowd burst into soft applause. “He had no pretenses, that was what was so refreshing about the man,” Lukens said.

The procession then made its way north, crossing Memorial Bridge over the Potomac River and heading for the World War II Memorial.

At the Ford family’s request, the cortege paused on floodlit 17th Street before the

twin stone arms of the Mall’s World War II Memorial plaza.

Ford served as a navigator and gunnery officer on the aircraft carrier *USS Monterey* at the height of the war in the Pacific, and one of the memorial’s 24 metal relief panels depicts a frenetic moment on the deck of a carrier, with a plane about to take off amid hurrying pilots and crew.

As the hearse stopped, Navy Chief Boatswain’s Mate Carlos Ribbot, 41, stepped forward, saluted with his right hand and with his left raised a stainless steel boatswain’s pipe hanging from an ornately braided rope lanyard around his neck.

Ribbot, a native of Humacao, Puerto Rico, played the three long, solemn notes that constitute “piping the side,” the Navy’s traditional farewell.

As Ribbot piped, a group of 12 Eagle Scouts from local Boy Scout troops gave their three-fingered salute as they stood at attention in olive green pants and tan shirts, draped in merit badge sashes. Ford is the only president to have been an Eagle Scout, said Alan F. Lambert, scout executive of the National Capital Area Council.

...
The cortege moved along Constitution Avenue and just before 7 p.m. wheeled slowly around a corner into the Capitol plaza, which was illuminated by floodlights.

American flags on the front fenders of the hearse barely fluttered in the evening stillness, as the hearse pulled up in front of the broad stone steps leading up to the House chamber. In two lines, flanking the path of the coffin, stood dignitaries and celebrated figures from Ford’s past.

After cannon volleyed again in salute, Ford’s casket was carried slowly up the steps to the House portico. At 7:43 p.m., with the coffin on the Lincoln bier, in the Rotunda, beneath the dome, the service began.

Ford joins a list of presidents who have lain in state beneath the Rotunda. It includes Reagan, Dwight D. Eisenhower, William H. Taft, Warren G. Harding, William McKinley Jr., James A. Garfield and Herbert Hoover.

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January 2, 2007

President Bush declared Tuesday, January 2, a national day of mourning and ordered the federal government to close to mark the death of Gerald R. Ford.

8:30 a.m.: The casket is moved from the Rotunda to the U.S. Senate door for a period of repose.

9:15 a.m.: Departure ceremony on the east steps of the U.S. Senate followed by procession to Washington National Cathedral.

10:00 a.m.: Ford's remains arrive at the Cathedral.

10:30 a.m.: Funeral services begin.

11:30 a.m.: Casket leaves the Cathedral for Andrews AFB.

12:15 p.m.: Casket leaves for Grand Rapids, Mich.

2:15 p.m.: Ford's remains arrive in Michigan.

3:30 p.m.: Casket arrives at the presidential museum in Grand Rapids. An arrival ceremony for Mrs. Ford and guests follows. The body will lie in public repose through the night.

In State Funeral, a Farewell to Ford

First Families and Other Dignitaries Honor Him During a Fifth Day of Official Services

By PETER BAKER
Washington Post Staff Writer

• *Original Date of Publication: Wednesday,
January 3, 2007*

Gerald Rudolph Ford, the Boy Scout, football star and congressman thrust by history rather than ambition into the presidency at a fateful moment for his nation, was bidden farewell by Washington in a regal state funeral yesterday and taken home to Michigan for burial.

As cannons boomed and bells pealed and 10,650 organ pipes echoed through the cavernous Washington National Cathedral, Ford received a sendoff he could hardly have imagined as a young Midwestern boy abandoned by his father shortly after birth 93 years ago. A "Norman Rockwell painting come to life," as former president George H.W. Bush described him, Ford was honored as a man of little pretense whose impact extended beyond his 895 days in office.

"Gerald Ford assumed the presidency when the nation needed a leader of character and humility, and we found it in the man from Grand Rapids," President George W. Bush told 3,772 heads of state, justices, lawmakers, military officers, Cabinet secretaries, diplomats and other mourners. "President Ford's time in office was brief, but history will long remember the courage and common sense that helped restore trust in the workings of our democracy."

Betty Ford, 88, endured the fifth straight day of official ceremony with grief playing out on her face, and yet the former first lady never lost her composure and even smiled wistfully as Bush recounted funny stories from the early days of her 58-year marriage. She and her family then headed to Andrews Air Force Base, boarded one of the presidential jets that serve as Air Force One and took her husband's body to Grand Rapids, Mich., where more than 10,000 people waited in lines as long as a half-mile to visit his casket during an all-night repose at his presidential museum.

The day's events brought together all four living presidents and leaders of both parties for Washington's second state funeral in 2 1/2 years. Incoming House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) shook hands and sat behind outgoing Speaker J. Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.), while former presidents Bill Clinton and the elder Bush cheerfully renewed their friendship. But as Democrats assume control of Congress tomorrow, the bipartisanship that many extolled in Ford appears little more than a testimonial to the past. Just minutes before Ford's casket was brought into the cathedral, the office of House Republican leader John A. Boehner (Ohio) e-mailed reporters a statement assailing Democrats for being partisan in their plans for the new Congress.

Ford knew what it was like to be in the minority. A lawyer who served

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STAFF SGT. D. MYLES CULLEN — DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

President George Bush delivers one of four eulogies for former President Gerald R. Ford during a State Funeral service at the Washington National Cathedral in Washington, Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2007.

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in the Navy during World War II, the Republican was elected to the House in 1948 and over the course of a quarter-century rose to be minority leader in a chamber long dominated by Democrats. His greatest aspiration was to be speaker, but his fate changed when his party was engulfed by scandal.

President Richard M. Nixon appointed him vice president in 1973 to replace Spiro T. Agnew, who was forced from office by corruption allegations, and then on Aug. 9, 1974, Ford succeeded Nixon, who was forced from office by Watergate. In the process, Ford became the first commander

in chief never to have been elected president or vice president.

His pardon of Nixon for any crimes he may have committed became Ford's signature decision, one that may have cost him the 1976 election but over time has come to be seen as an act of statesmanship that saved the nation the wrenching ordeal of putting a former president on trial. Ford's eventful presidency also saw the ignominious end of the Vietnam War, a stubborn recession at home, a Middle East ceasefire, a daring raid to rescue a merchant marine crew captured by Cambodians, and arms control and human rights treaties with the Soviet Union.

"In recent days, the deserved commentary on Gerald Ford's character has sometimes obscured how sweeping and lasting were his achievements," former secretary of state Henry A. Kissinger said in a eulogy at the cathedral.

The state funeral was a classic Washington affair, soaked in power and pageantry even if not quite as elaborate as the one held for Ronald Reagan in June 2004. For two hours before it began, many of the men and women who have run the country for the past three decades flowed into the vaulted cathedral.

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As Aaron Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man" was played, Boy Scouts stood at strategic points holding up signs reading "SS" and "Green" to indicate sections where guests were supposed to sit, according to a peculiar Washington hierarchy that distinguishes between political rock stars and the merely powerful. The south transept was for congressional leaders and Supreme Court justices, including John Paul Stevens, the oldest member of the court and Ford's only appointee. The north transept was for the diplomatic corps and the honorary pallbearers.

In front of the altar sat the honored guests: the Ford family and the former presidents. Before the service began, Jimmy Carter, sitting in the front row with his wife, Rosalynn, leaned back over his chair to chat with Clinton, as Chelsea Clinton talked with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. When the elder Bushes arrived, Barbara headed straight to her seat, while the 41st president stopped to shake hands with former Israeli prime minister Shimon Peres.

As Carter, Clinton and the elder Bush greeted one another, it served as a reminder that the world's most exclusive club has shrunk considerably in the past few years. Nancy Reagan, last at the cathedral to memorialize her own husband, arrived wearing dark glasses. When former NBC News anchor Tom Brokaw forgot to mention her as he greeted the first families in his eulogy, she whispered to Rosalynn Carter, then made a slight, sardonic wave in Brokaw's direction.

Ford's Washington farewell began at the Capitol, where his casket lay in state over the weekend. About 36,000 people came through the Rotunda to pay respects, a considerable showing but a fraction of the estimated 100,000 who showed up for Reagan. The casket,

initially brought to the House doors to remember his time there, was moved yesterday morning to the Senate doors to mark his service as vice president and Senate president.

Draped in a flag and borne aloft by a nine-man military honor guard, the casket left the Capitol to a 21-gun salute, and the motorcade paused by the White House en route to the cathedral, where it was welcomed to the strains of "Hail to the Chief." As the organ played "America, the Beautiful," President Bush escorted Betty Ford down the center aisle, her eyes focused forward, never glancing at the crowd.

She stood in the front row amid her children, Michael, Jack, Steven and Susan, as the honorary pallbearers entered, including Vice President Cheney, former defense secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, former national security adviser Brent Scowcroft, former Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan and former secretary of state James A. Baker III, all Ford administration veterans. The honor guard brought in the casket and lay it on a catafalque before the pulpit.

Jack Ford recited a passage from Isaiah and Susan Ford Bales from James. Her voice quavered a bit as she read. The elder Bush lightened the atmosphere, telling stories illustrating the former president's less serious side. Ford, he said, understood the value of laughing at himself. Bush said he could elaborate but would not, then imitated comedian Dana Carvey imitating Bush: "Not gonna do it. Wouldn't be prudent."

Brokaw likewise mixed seriousness and humor, joking that some of Ford's 1970s-era jackets should be "eligible for a presidential pardon." But he praised him as "the most underestimated" president. "Gerald Ford brought to the political arena no demons, no hidden agenda, no hit list or acts of vengeance," Brokaw said. As he finished, he turned to the casket:

"Farewell, Mr. President. Thank you, Citizen Ford."

In his homily, Ford's pastor from California, the Rev. Robert G. Certain, recalled that the former president shortly before his death raised with him the subject of the Episcopal Church schism over the consecration of a gay bishop and the blessings of same-sex unions. "He said that he did not think they should be divisive for anyone who lives by the great commandments and the great commission to love God and to love neighbor," Certain said.

After two hours, the casket was brought out of the cathedral and the bourdon bell tolled 38 times for the 38th president as the cortege made its way to Andrews for the final trip home. Accompanying the family was Jimmy Carter, who defeated Ford in 1976 but later grew to be a close friend. At Ford's request, Carter will speak at today's interment.

In contrast to the Washington pomp, Ford's return to Grand Rapids took place on a more personal scale. The casket was greeted at Gerald R. Ford International Airport by the marching band from the University of Michigan, where Ford was a football star, playing the school's rousing fight song.

As thousands of Michigan residents lined the streets near the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum on a cold, windy afternoon, a sign in Beaner's Coffee read, "Gerald Our Ford." Outside the Gerald R. Ford Federal Building, a young fan wore a Michigan football jersey and draped a school flag over his shoulders in Ford's honor. Boy Scouts from the Gerald R. Ford Council saluted the passing hearse.

"Michigan's president," he was called by the state's Democratic governor, Jennifer Granholm. A man of intellect and achievement, she said, "in a plain brown wrapper."

Staff writer Peter Slevin in Grand Rapids contributed to this report.

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January 3, 2007

After individuals in his home state have been given opportunity to express their respect and affection, services are held in the church where Gerald Ford married Betty Bloomer and which they attended whenever in their hometown. After the funeral service, Gerald Ford's body is taken to its final resting place.

1:00 p.m.: Casket departs the museum with ceremony for trip to Grace Episcopal Church, arriving at 1:30 pm.

2:00 p.m.: Funeral services at Grace Episcopal Church in Grand Rapids

3:00 p.m.: Casket leaves for the Ford Presidential Museum.

3:30 p.m.: Casket arrives at the museum, with the private internment service immediately following. The president is interred at a hillside site north of the museum.

A Final Return Home

Ex-President Is Laid to Rest in His Beloved Grand Rapids

By PETER SLEVIN
Washington Post Staff Writer

• *Original Date of Publication: Thursday,
January 4, 2007*

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., Jan. 3 — Gerald R. Ford's family and closest friends laid the former president to rest beside a fast-flowing river in the heart of a city that adored him. During the last stretch of a somber week of benedictions, an admirer praised him as a courageous leader "who never confused moderation with weakness nor compromise with surrender."

A once bright winter sun melted into twilight as Ford's widow, Betty, received from Vice President Cheney the American flag that had adorned the coffin of the 38th president. Ford's death Dec. 26 at age 93 ended an odyssey that carried him from a humble start in the Midwest to a heartfelt national farewell.

Former president Jimmy Carter, who defeated Ford in 1976 and later became a friend, began and ended his benediction the way he began his inaugural address. Now white-haired, his voice breaking, Carter repeated: "For myself and for our nation, I want to thank my predecessor for all he did to heal our land."

The memorial service, held at Grace Episcopal Church, where Gerald and Betty Ford were married in 1948, brought together a lifetime of friends and acquaintances from the highly placed to the less than mighty.

Among the eulogists was former defense secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, who recalled the calamity of President Richard M. Nixon's resignation, which

thrust Ford into the Oval Office on Aug. 9, 1974. It was a time when "the pressures were enormous ... and the American people were holding their breath, wondering what would happen next."

When Ford reassured the country, Rumsfeld said, "his special magic" was that few doubted his word.

Historian Richard Norton Smith, who often visited Ford, described him to mourners as "utterly without pretense." He recalled that in the last chapter of his life, the former president told him, "When I wake up at night and can't sleep, I think of Grand Rapids."

The city returned the favor Tuesday and Wednesday. Tens of thousands of residents lined the streets to glimpse his passing hearse or stood for hours in the windy cold to view his coffin.

It seemed every third mourner had a personal story to share. Often, it was about a good deed that Ford had done, or a recollection that suggested a simpler, more civil time when the people felt closer to those in power.

Eagle Scout Jason Beaton, 18, related that his grandmother used to double-date with Ford. Linda Komejan, 52, said Ford interceded to get a driver's license for her mentally handicapped uncle, allowing him to get to work.

Retired teacher Marian Krupiczewicz, 59, recalled going to Ford's Capitol Hill office in the 1960s as a teenager and sitting in his chair: "There'd even be papers on his desk. It was different then."

"I remember as a kid going out to East Grand Rapids, riding my bike out there, because the president was

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coming to town,” said William Dekker, 46. “Thirty years later, it’s the same thing.”

Handmade signs declared, “Welcome Home, Mr. President.”

As the Episcopal service of thanksgiving began, many of the 31 men and women named honorary pallbearers took their seats, among them Cheney and golfer Jack Nicklaus. A maize-and-blue University of Michigan football blanket marked the pew that former coach Bo Schembechler, who died in November, would have occupied.

Son Michael Ford read the “23rd Psalm” and son Steven read in a quavering voice from Paul’s Letter to the Romans. Rumsfeld, who served as Ford’s White House chief of staff, recalled that Ford never lowered himself to the partisanship that often marked Washington dealings.

“He reminded Americans of who they were and he put us on the right path when the way ahead was at best uncertain,” Rumsfeld said, recalling Ford’s 895-day presidency. “It is commonly said that Ford healed the nation, and he did.”

After the church service, the cortege made its way back across town to the gravesite beside the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum. A military band played “Ruffles and Flourishes” for the final time, followed by a medley of patriotic songs, among them “The Star-Spangled Banner” and “God Bless America.”

The family followed the pallbearers and the coffin, Betty Ford helped from a wheelchair by Steven Ford and her military escort. As artillery fired a 21-gun salute and 21 military jets staged a precision flyover, the coffin lay beneath an inscription chosen by the Fords: “Lives committed to God, country and love.”



His voice breaking, President Jimmy Carter said of President Gerald R. Ford, “For myself and for our nation, I want to thank my predecessor for all he did to heal our land.” Carter defeated Ford for the presidency in 1976, but the two became friends.

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A Time to Reflect

As 2006 closed and 2007 began, columns, editorials, news reports and analyses and letters to the editor appear in publications across the country — another step in writing the first draft of the history of a presidency.

The following columns, letter to the editor and articles reflect the diversity of Gerald Ford's influence and the personal side of the "accidental" president.

DAVID S. BRODER

How Ford's Legacy Still Serves

• *Original Date of Publication: Thursday,
December 28, 2006*

The standard tribute to Gerald R. Ford is that he served the nation best simply by stepping into the presidency for the disgraced and banished Richard M. Nixon.

But to those who served with the man from Michigan, his achievements did not begin or end with his being available to help "heal our land" from the wounds of the Nixon presidency, as his successor, Jimmy Carter, said on the day he took over from Ford.

The alumni of the Ford administration — a notable group — insist that though he had never particularly aimed for the presidency, the "accidental president" developed a considerable mastery of the job and was on his way to building a legacy when the voters sent him into early retirement.

Instead of great deeds, they say, he left behind a great model of decency and integrity in office — and a generous gift of friendship that has endured for many of them for the three decades since they served under him. The annual gatherings of Ford administration alumni are unique in the modern presidency and offer evidence of the loyalty he commanded.

Many of those alumni who first exercised real power under Ford remained active in government. For all that he has borrowed from Ronald Reagan, President Bush owes the greatest debt to three stalwarts of economic and national security policy inherited from Ford — Vice President Cheney and former defense secretary

Don Rumsfeld, both former chiefs of staff to Ford, and former Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan, Ford's chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers.

In all his years, Greenspan observed, he has never been part of a more talented administration. Henry Kissinger was secretary of state, and Brent Scowcroft headed the National Security Council staff. Kissinger's personal staff included Lawrence Eagleburger, later secretary of state himself, and L. Paul Bremer. William Colby headed the CIA, and Daniel Patrick Moynihan was U.N. ambassador.

When Rumsfeld served as Ford's defense secretary, his deputy was William P. Clements Jr., later governor of Texas. The economic policy team included James Lynn and Paul O'Neill at the Office of Management and Budget, William Simon at Treasury, L. William Seidman and Greenspan at the White House, John Dunlop at the Labor Department, Carla Hills at Housing and Urban Development, Rogers C.B. Morton at Commerce, Clayton Yeutter at the Office of the Special Trade Representative, and Russell Train at the Environmental Protection Agency.

The Justice Department was headed by Edward H. Levi, a former University of Chicago president and perhaps the most nonpolitical attorney general in modern times. Serving under him, in various high staff positions, were such people as Rudolph Giuliani, Robert Bork and Antonin Scalia. And Nelson Rockefeller was vice president.

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It took a while for Ford to replace some of the key players he had inherited from Nixon, but when he was finished, he had a remarkably cohesive, competent group. The overall tone of the Ford Cabinet and White House reflected the moderate conservatism of Ford's own Grand Rapids, Mich., background — with more than a tinge of the progressivism embodied in the term “Rockefeller Republicanism.”

In terms of the subsequent development of the Republican Party — and the character of later Republican administrations — it is difficult to say that Ford left a lasting imprint. He was challenged for the 1976 nomination by Reagan, whose ambitions nearly thwarted the incumbent at the Kansas City convention. When Ford lost to Carter, Reagan was perfectly positioned to inherit the party leadership and, ultimately, the presidency.

So Ford's legacy lies more in his personal character than in his political inheritance. That character was epitomized by the strength of his friendships, which were far deeper than any partisan or ideological lines. Only days before Nixon resigned under threat of impeachment, Ford traveled to the home state of his political rival but friend, Democratic Rep. Thomas P. “Tip” O'Neill of Massachusetts, to play with him in a golf tournament.

In the final days of the Nixon presidency, Ford made a memorable visit to The Post. As vice president, he had defended Nixon against the Watergate charges, but he recognized in our meeting that he had a responsibility larger than any further claims of personal loyalty from Nixon. “I want you to know I am someone who enjoys having adversaries who are not enemies,” he told reporters and editors.

It was a signal, understood by everyone in the room, that a new — and welcome — era was about to begin.



BY BURI GRIPAS — REUTERS

Former secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld, left, and Vice President Dick Cheney were former chiefs of staff to President Gerald Ford.

It turned out to be a shorter period in office than Ford expected, but the standard of civility and good will he set for himself is an example that endures.

For more photos of Gerald Ford's funeral, go to <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/politics/special/9/index.html>

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Ron Nessen

Moral Leadership

• *Original Date of Publication: Thursday,
December 28, 2006*

One reason Gerald R. Ford was a good president was because he never wanted to be president.

After 25 years as a congressman from Grand Rapids, Mich., he told his wife, Betty, that he was going to run for one more term in the House and then retire to spend more time with her and their children. Then, suddenly, he was appointed vice president (after Spiro Agnew's resignation) and succeeded to the presidency (after Richard Nixon's resignation).

Unlike politicians who carefully calculate for decades how their every word and deed will sound and look when they eventually run for the White House, Ford moved into the Oval Office without having his persona distorted by lust for the presidency.

And the public sensed this genuineness. What a relief to have a regular person as president, particularly after the imperial presidencies of Nixon and Lyndon B. Johnson. Ford was "the man next door."

After the resignation, it took the Nixons a few days to move their belongings out of the White House. It took a few more days to freshen up the paint in the second-floor living quarters. So for 10 days after he became president, Gerald Ford, Betty and their children Susan, Steve and Jack continued to live in their modest suburban rambler on Crown View Drive in Alexandria. I always thought: What a perfect symbol for an ordinary-guy president.

One day Ford's dog, Liberty, made a mess on the rug in the Oval Office. A



Navy steward rushed to clean it up. "I'll do that," Ford said. "No man should have to clean up after another man's dog." As I say, it was nice to have a regular person as president.

Unlike some of his predecessors, Ford didn't take himself too seriously. He taped short bits making fun of himself for *Saturday Night Live*, then in its first season. He invited Chevy Chase, who made his reputation on the show by spoofing Ford's foibles, to play tennis on the White House courts. And after Chase had performed his "clumsy Ford" routine at the White House Correspondents' Association dinner, the president took the podium and topped the professional comic with a brilliant routine of self-deprecating humor.

One of Ford's favorite sayings about the political and legislative debates in Washington was that "you can disagree without being disagreeable." He not only said it, he lived it. How nostalgic that seems in these days of angry, divisive, polarized, downright nasty Washington rhetoric.

But as president, Gerald Ford did more than change the post-Watergate atmosphere in Washington. The

Vietnam War ended during his presidency. By what he did and what he said after the last helicopter lifted off the roof of the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, Ford headed off a bitter postwar campaign of recrimination about "Who lost Vietnam?"

One day during that dark period, I walked into the Oval Office and showed Ford an Associated Press story reporting that the House had rejected a bill providing funds to help resettle hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese refugees who would probably be targets of imprisonment and execution by the victorious North Vietnamese and Viet Cong. I'd never heard Ford curse before, but he did that day when he read the story.

He undertook a public lobbying campaign, including visits to refugee camps in Arkansas and Florida, which turned around public and congressional opposition to helping the refugees. It was his greatest display of moral leadership.

Ford also had a knack for finding and recruiting talented people to serve in government.

Henry Kissinger, Ford's secretary of state, gave a talk at the National Archives a few months ago assessing Ford's presidency. Kissinger noted that judgments about events and leaders made in the heat of the moment often must be modified or reversed when those events and leaders are reassessed from the perspective of 30 years of subsequent history.

President Ford and his presidency are viewed much more favorably today than they were the day he left office. It's good to know that he lived long enough to enjoy the reassessment.

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Quang X. Pham

Ford's Finest Legacy

• Original Date of Publication: *Saturday, December 30, 2006*

"Today, America can regain the sense of pride that existed before Vietnam. But it cannot be achieved by refighting a war that is finished as far as America is concerned. ... [T]hese events, tragic as they are, portend neither the end of the world nor of America's leadership in the world."

President Gerald R. Ford uttered those words in a speech at Tulane University on April 23, 1975, in the final days of Vietnam's long war. The rowdy crowd roared and gave him a standing ovation. The military draft had ended and American troops and POWs had returned home two years earlier. America had washed its hands of Vietnam, yet millions of lives were still at stake.

Halfway around the world, my family experienced the unfolding of those tragic events in South Vietnam. For us, it was the worst of times. It seemed like the end of the world to me. I was only 10.

Dwight D. Eisenhower had sent American military advisers to Vietnam to help contain communism and prevent the "dominoes" from falling in Southeast Asia. John F. Kennedy dispatched thousands more in a graduated response to a burgeoning insurgency. Lyndon B. Johnson broke his promise not to send "American boys nine or ten thousand miles away from home to do what Asian boys ought to be doing for themselves." Richard M. Nixon prolonged the killing for another three years despite having a secret plan to end the longest American war ever.

In the end, after two decades of flailing diplomacy in that tiny peninsula, Gerald Ford dealt with the aftermath: empty guarantees made to an ally, promises he could not keep and a "peace with honor" that the congressional Watergate class would not enforce.

Years later Ford wrote a letter to the group of Marines who had evacuated the U.S. Embassy in Saigon. In it he said, "April 1975 was indeed the cruelest month. The passage of time has not dulled the ache of those days, the saddest of my public life."

But Ford became the savior to those lucky enough to escape the taking of Saigon by the North Vietnamese army. "I pray no American president is ever again faced with this grave option," Ford said at a public forum on the legacy of the Vietnam War 25 years later. "I still grieve over those we were unable to rescue." He added that he was thankful America was able to relocate 130,000 Vietnamese refugees (less than 1 percent of South Vietnam's population) and that "to do less would have added moral shame to humiliation."

My family and those other blessed South Vietnamese found ourselves stuck in refugee camps across the United States. Outside the camps, public sentiment against Vietnamese refugees ran high, although at the time we did not feel it directly. The book on Vietnam had been closed for most Americans until the refugees arrived in unprecedented numbers. Only the Hungarian and Cuban refugee resettlements were of comparable scale. Newspapers portrayed the country as split on what to do with the refugees.

In a May 1975 article in the *New York Times*, Sen. Robert Byrd (D-W.Va.) commented that "barnmaids, prostitutes and criminals" should be screened out as "excludable categories." Sen. Joe Biden (D-Del.) "charged that the [Ford] Administration had not informed Congress adequately about the number of refugees" — as if anyone actually knew during the chaotic evacuation. "I think the Vietnamese are better off in Vietnam," sniffed George McGovern in *Newsweek*.

At the time, unemployment in the United States hovered near double digits. Perhaps

this had something to do with the anti-refugee emotion. In Larry Engelmann's *Tears Before the Rain: An Oral History of the Fall of South Vietnam*, Julia Vadala Taft, head of the interagency task force for refugee resettlement, recalled such opposition. "The new governor of California, Jerry Brown, was very concerned about refugees settling in his state. Brown even attempted to prevent planes carrying refugees from landing at Travis Air Force Base near Sacramento. ... The secretary of health and welfare, Mario Obledo, felt that this addition of a large minority group would be unwelcome in California. And he said that they already had a large population of Hispanics, Filipinos, blacks, and other minorities."

The refugees were extremely fortunate. Our biggest supporter, outside of Julia Taft, was the president of the United States. Even though he had described the Vietnam conflict as "a war that is finished as far as America is concerned," Ford's attention was now focused on the refugees. In May 1975 he visited the camps, and soon after refugees began leaving to start new lives across America. The government wanted to disperse the refugees to spread the cost among many states and communities. By Christmas of that year, all refugee camps had been closed, and the refugees were resettled in every state.

I am not aware of any other politicians, antiwar protesters, esteemed journalists or celebrities visiting Fort Chaffee, Ark., where my family was temporarily housed for two months. But Gerald Ford did.

April 1975 was indeed the cruelest month for us. But thanks to President Ford's leadership, we experienced America's kindness and generosity during our darkest days. We owe him our deepest gratitude in remembrance.

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A Final Public Service By a Steadfast First Lady

By NEELY TUCKER

Washington Post Staff Writer

- *Original Date of Publication: Wednesday, January 3, 2007*

Betty Ford, observed in these days of national mourning:

Frail. Determined. Quiet. Tired.

She was 88 and clearly exhausted.

She was resting on the arm of the president of the United States when she emerged from the darkness of Washington National Cathedral into the weak January sunlight yesterday, following her husband's coffin. She did not speak during the service, except to turn to her daughter, Susan, and mouth the word "beautiful" after a moving rendition of "O God, Our Help in Ages Past." She was surrounded by family, including her three sons.

She will bury her husband today on a hillside back home in Michigan.

Then, three decades after leaving the White House, she will finally be relieved of the duties of being first lady, a job that comes with no description but endless expectations. The final duty is burying one's husband under the glare of public attention. This has become a *de facto* job requirement in the past century, when first ladies began to routinely outlive their husbands.

"This is a very frail woman, and by God, she's in charge," says Dick Capen, a longtime family friend, a newspaper publisher and diplomat who visited with Betty Ford at the family's private service in Palm Desert, Calif. "You could see it in her face. She's 88 years old, and she wasn't going to sit down. She's an incredible lady."

"She's been great," says Melvin Laird, the former congressman and defense secretary, and a close family friend for nearly half a century, speaking by phone from his Florida home. "Jerry

always worried about her, but she was the one who really took over, really watched out for him."

Though Betty Ford has spoken no public word since her husband died (her statement announcing his death was a written release) she has nonetheless had a public role to play. First ladies leave the White House, but they never leave the job. They become the public face of the nation's grieving when their spouses die. Their role blends public duty and private emotion, but the public is expected to hold sway.

"When I reflect upon my Washington career I wonder how I ever faced it," Grace Coolidge observed late in life, after burying her husband. "There was a sense of detachment. This was I, and yet not I — this was the wife of the president and she took precedence over me; my personal likes and dislikes must be subordinated to the consideration of those things which were required of her."

When Woodrow Wilson suffered a massive stroke in office, paralyzed but not yet dead, his wife, Edith, virtually took over. She refused to let people see him, becoming the intermediary through which the nation dealt with its president. It caused a crisis and a furor. She was unmoved: "I am not thinking of the country now, I am thinking of my husband."

This is understandable but not practical: The love of one's spouse must take second place to national need.

It is the consensus among historians that Jacqueline Kennedy, in her bloodstained dress while Lyndon B. Johnson took the oath of office in Dallas, is the model image of this. She walked into the White House as the Queen of Camelot and walked out as a woman whose dignity helped hold together a shocked nation.

The Lincoln assassination a century earlier proves the point via an opposite example. Mary Todd Lincoln, already unstable of emotion and personality, dissolved after her husband was shot. She offered the nation no such grace note.

Since the Civil War, only three presidents have outlived their wives.

"The first lady is not a private person grieving, they're a public icon, and we look to them for strength and how to behave," says Myra Gutin, professor of communications at Rider University and author of *The President's Partner: The First Lady in the Twentieth Century*.

She says it has left one constant:

"If they cry, it seems like they did it privately, not on the public stage," she says.

Betty Ford spent her last official weekend in Washington with her family at the Renaissance Mayflower Hotel, a few blocks from the White House. She walked, resting on arms of a family member, a military official, the vice president, the president. She kept her gaze level, her eyes steady. She attended services at the Capitol Rotunda, the cathedral, the landmarks of official Washington.

Her lips were pursed, save for offering a quiet smile to family or friends. She shed no public tears.

She was being strong; maybe for the nation, maybe for herself.

Then, yesterday afternoon, the plane lifted her and her family up into the bright blue sky, heading north, heading home.

One last funeral, and then no more.

Leaving the pages of history must sometimes be an answered prayer.

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Warm Memories of a Leader in Everyday Life

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Even in the barber's chair, he brought along a handful of papers to work on.

In his Alexandria neighborhood, he was an ephemeral figure, known for his early-morning splash in the swimming pool before he reported to Capitol Hill. At night, neighbors would note the limousine idling outside the red-brick Colonial, waiting to take him to another function or another vote, his long workday not yet over.

Gerald R. Ford returns to Washington tomorrow, a setting where he was both the most powerful man in the world and Everyman. The longtime congressman and 38th president of the United States spent nearly three decades in the Washington area and has been gone for three decades more. But long before the rest of the nation recognized his signature qualities — his hardworking manner, his kind regard for others, his basic decency — friends and associates in the D.C. area knew that Gerry Ford was a prince of a guy.

"Oh, he was the nicest man who ever lived," said Nancy Smith of Alexandria, the Ford family's "backdoor neighbor" for many years.

Many of the people who knew Ford well are gone now. But as Americans mourn the passing of a leader who soothed a troubled nation at a critical time, those whose lives intersected with his in the Washington area cherish a special collection of memories.

Every 10 days, like clockwork, Ford would settle into Joseph Quattrone's big leather chair at the congressional barbershop for a 75-cent trim. Between cuts yesterday, Quattrone, 72, recalled his former customer "with a tear in my eye."

"I have all nice people, but he was exceptional," said Quattrone, who manages the Rayburn Building shop and cut Ford's hair from 1970, when he was House

minority leader, until he became president in 1974. "Maybe it was because of how he grew up or where he came from, but he was a gentleman and a half."

Ford would always hurry in with a sheaf of papers to study, but he never failed to ask Quattrone how he was doing. "We didn't talk about politics," the barber said. "Sometimes I would say, someday he's going to be a good speaker of the House, and he would say, 'It would be nice.'"

Those plans, of course, did not work out. After Ford became vice president in 1973, "I said, 'Now I'm going to lose you,'" Quattrone recalled. "And he said, 'No, you'll never lose me.' He came back after he was vice president. He came to me until the day before he got sworn in as president.

"He didn't talk too much that day — he was kind of sad."

For years, neighbor Nancy Smith could practically tell time from the sounds of the future president doing his morning swim in the pool outside her kitchen window. "I'd hear him hit the water when I was getting breakfast," said Smith, now 76, whose family moved into the Fords' neighborhood in 1962.

Ford did not make it to many community cookouts or parties, she said.

"My sense was they just didn't have time to do neighborhood things — they were too busy." When he was present, Smith added, "we would talk about our kids. He was never the big shot, which was very nice. He didn't have any inflated opinions of his own importance, as so many politicians do."

James Cannon, a former *Newsweek* editor who served as Ford's domestic policy adviser, said that description was always apt — sometimes to the president's detriment.

"He was not a charismatic man. He was a workhorse, not a show horse, and he was much better in person than on television," said Cannon, a Georgetown resident who wrote the 1994 book *Time and Chance: Gerald Ford's Appointment With History*.

"The White House is the first stage of the world, and the president, whether it's Reagan or Clinton or Kennedy, [is a performer], and Ford was not a very good performer. He was a plain-spoken Midwesterner, and acting was not among his attributes," Cannon said.

Sometimes, attempts to jazz up the stolid Ford image backfired. Former White House photographer David Hume Kennerly recalled the time he enlisted Los Angeles comic Don Penny to coach the president on his speech delivery during the 1976 campaign. "It took a lot for him to be angry," Kennerly said.

But during a practice speech in the Cabinet Room, after Penny had interrupted the president several times, instructing him to speak his words as if he meant them, Ford blew up. He reached into a pocket, pulled out a Cross pen and lobbed it at the comedian, missing and chipping the wall above Penny's head.

"He always had such a calm about him; it was great to get a rise out of him," Penny said yesterday. "It was a pleasure to work with him. He was a wonderful man."

Even his political opponents agreed. For 17 years, Ford and U.S. Rep. John D. Dingell both represented Michigan in Congress — Ford as a Republican, Dingell as a Democrat.

"Gerry Ford was a good, hard fighter, but he also knew how to come together on a set of common purposes," said Dingell, the longest-serving current member of Congress.

"From time to time, events happen that change the outlook, that cause people to reflect and perhaps change the way they function," Dingell said. "And frankly, Gerry Ford in his passing has reminded people that a White House and a Congress, even if they are opposing parties, can work together in the public interest of the country."