Pledge It Forward—From Self to Service: A Challenge from The Patriot Papers

A. Fuller, Editor-in-Chief

When studying George Washington, I was struck by his reluctance to accept the presidential nomination. In this age of costly campaigns, hanging nominations to the presidency praised him for “the least trouble and expense” and “the least public disquiet and derision,” after eight-and-a-half years as commander in chief. Washington was far more reluctant to consider serving, and as an expression of hope for the future. In this crisis, shrink from the service of will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of duty. Washington was more to consider serving a nation we must heal. This wall stands as a nation we mourned, and as a nation we must heal.

The National Portrait Gallery’s Office of Education would like to recognize those who continue to care about community. We challenge you to Pledge It Forward—pledge time to your schools, youth organizations, senior centers, parks, a pledge your time, and make a difference. If a high school student plants one tree, a child of a 6th grader spins out to an elderly town when, in kids in South Towne start a small library by collecting used books, if senior citizen flowers on Main Street, if teens answer a phone call, a volunteer at a shelter, or a simple round at a child, we would all be stronger. Email your pledges, write to us about your projects. We’d like to feature your pictures and stories on our website at www.georgewashington.si.edu. Projects of particular merit will be published in The Patriot Papers. Get creative, get busy. And together, we can lead from Pasadena and take time to make a difference.

Students in Pasadena, Texas
Help Fund The Patriot Papers

Tanya Paul, Editor, The Patriot Papers

WASHINGTON’S life was one of service and sacrifice. And it came at a great cost—to his health, to his family, and to the productive years of Mount Vernon. Throughout our country’s history, Americans have been asked to serve and sacrifice for the good of our country and community. On September 14, we were called upon again and America answered. Many sacrificed, many served.

As the 2001 film Pay It Forward suggests, it is often difficult to pay back those who have influenced our lives—our friends, our mentors, our community. But we can pay it forward. We can give to the next generation. We can give to community. The National Portrait Gallery’s Office of Education would like to recognize those who continue to care about community. We challenge you to Pledge It Forward—pledge time to your schools, youth organizations, senior centers, parks, and perhaps your time to your schools, youth organizations, senior centers, parks, and perhaps your time to your family. Get creative; get busy. And together, we can lead from Pasadena and take time to make a difference.

When the National Portrait Gallery announced in the fall of 2002 that it needed to raise $10 million to fund the Lansdowne portrait of George Washington, the children of the Pasadena Independent School District decided to do something about it. They wanted to save George from the auction block.

They developed the “By George, We’ve Got It, Help Us Keep It” campaign to raise funds for the famous Gilbert Stuart painting. The school district set a goal of one dollar for every student in PISD, and the children raised an inspiring $4,000 before the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation donated the needed $10 million. The monies raised by Pasadena students helped to fund The Patriot Papers.

As a Texas Recognized District for outstanding student achievement, the Pasadena District has been involved in local fundraising projects before. They contributed to the Lang center, the San Juan monument, and the generation of the battleship Texas. The Lansdowne portrait, like those other American portraits, is one of the children who contributed to the Lang center, the San Juan monument, and the generation of the battleship Texas. The Lansdowne portrait, like those other American portraits, is one of the children who contributed to the Lang center, the San Juan monument, and the generation of the battleship Texas.

Although most of the children had never seen the Lansdowne portrait in person, their enthusiasm for the auction prevented the painting from being lost. District spokesmen Kirk Lorenz and Elizabeth B. Gilbert of The Art Institute of Chicago were struck by the warmth, and humor of our first President. Sommerfield concludes with the portrait’s return to its permanent home, the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C., where it will remain for all eternity. We have a view of history, and to the nation—began.

For more than $10 million, the search for a benefactor to the Gallery—began. Here was a man who served as commander in chief of the Continental army, who shaped the American presidency, and to the nation—began.

In 1992 the Restoration of the Lansdowne portrait was loaned to the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C., where it served as the cornerstone of the museum’s opening exhibit. For thirty-two years it graced the Gallery’s eastern galleria, greeting visitors as they ascended the building’s grand staircase. But in the fall of 2001, at the British crown notified the Gallery of its decision to sell at auction if the Gallery could not meet its asking price of $10 million. The search for a benefactor to the Gallery—and the nation—began.

In March 2002, a $10 million gift from the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation of Las Vegas, Nevada, assured that the painting would remain in the United States. Of that amount, ten million will be used to purchase the painting, a million to renovate a gallery space dedicated exclusively to the portrait, and six million to ensure that the portrait would be shared with the American people. Before the tour opens in Houston, it continues to seven other cities, concluding with the portrait’s return to its permanent home in the National Portrait Gallery.

Originally, the portrait hung in Lord Lansdowne’s London house on Berkeley Square, accompanied by other artworks, including a sculpture of the Roman general Cicero, with whom Washington is often compared. Reportedly, Cicero left his plow to save the Roman republic, then apologized to his public role and returned to private life. The parallel between Washington and Cicero was a stitching of democracy. Certainly others had greater intellect and were better educated, more articulate, and of coloration description, but Washington was chosen. Unanimously elected to the presidency, he served two terms and then retired from office. Here was a man who refused to be a king.

Join the tour at one of its sight locations as the National Portrait Gallery explores this man of character, self-sacrifice, and patriotism. Or follow the tour online through the Gallery’s website at www.georgewashington.si.edu.

The Only Man Ever to Imagine Washington at the general’s levee, Mount Vernon in Virginia, Sommerfeld draws on more than 10 years of research and performance when creating his character. Every detail, from costume to powdered hair and drawn sword, is historically accurate to capture the essence of America’s leader. In 1986 the Bicentennial Commission on the Constitution selected Sommerfield to portray Washington for the eight-day journey from Mount Vernon to New York in a re-creation of the inaugural role, culminating in the making of the first President. He continued to captivate audiences on NBC’s Execution to History, the DC Bicentennial Celebration, the National Bill of Rights Tour, Good Morning America, The Today Show, and Al’s. The Crown has appeared in Time magazine and the New Yorker, and on the covers of Old Time, the New York Times, and the Times of London.

As an artist director and chief designer of the American Historical Theatre in Philadelphia, Sommerfeld’s productions have included “The Glorious Burden,” which explores the presidency, and “The Love Letters of George and Martha.” Join George for an evening or two, and he’ll show you how to feather a wig for the 17th century, read a life-sized portrait of George Washington by artist Gilbert Stuart. George Washington: A National Treasure is organized by the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, and made possible through the generosity of the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation.

Will the Real George W. Please Stand Up?

Richard Price, washintonmuseum.com

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**Wanted Immediately**

A PERSON intended to be constant and understandable, acquainted and a good writer. Also, a Youth about fourteen or fifteen Years of Age, who can read well, and write tolerably. Inquire at the Post Office.

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**Washington Graciously Delays Retirement for a Second Term**

PHILADELPHIA, 1781 (AP) - President George Washington was forced to delay the second-term election the presidency of the United States. The inauguration will take place on March 4, 1789, in Philadelphia, the new capital of the United States. However, the prospect of returning to the White House full-time has left Washington, according to Lee Herring, a political editor of the Federalist Party. Herring was one of the Washington's most ardent supporters and has been critical of the president's decision to remain in the White House.

The next four years in fact promise to be difficult. Against this backdrop, the American Congress has already begun to prepare an environment that may favor candidate nomination. In the meantime, General Washington will continue to work with his cabinet, as well as military leaders in the field, to ensure that the nation's defense is secure.

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**Whiskey Rebellion Shakes Pennsylvania**

PHILADELPHIA, 1784 (AP) - Western Pennsylvania has received its tax revenue since the Whiskey Rebellion. They are having the first major trial of the Pennsylvania Whiskey Rebellion in court. Last week, U.S. Marshal David Ross met with resistance in Western Pennsylvania, where the rebellion is at its worst. The sessions are being held in large, well-lighted saloons. Military actions are taken, much to the surprise of the President. He has a subsequently determined to do so, feeling the greatest regret for the occasion, but wishing, the several months convoluted, that the essential interests of the nation would be served.

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**In Other Words...**

Mistress Goody's Column of Advice on subjects other than politics and war.

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**The Patriot Papers**

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**TRIPPIN’ THROUGH TIME**

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**The Washingtonian**

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**The Patriot Papers**

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**WASHINGTON WINS ELECTION TO HOUSE FROM FORT CUMBERLAND!**

FREDERICKSBURG, 1786 - George Washington, son of Augustine and Mary Washington, has been elected to the Virginia House of Delegates while serving with the British regiment at Fort Cumberland. Although urged by friends to return the colony of Virginia and "shun the scenes" of military life, Washington stayed with the regiment in the struggle against the United States.

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**WASHINGTON UNANIMOUS PICK FOR PRESIDENT AT CONVENTION!**

NEW YORK, 1787 (AP) - After many months of debate to establish our new American government, the first official election was held on February 7, 1789. George Washington has received all 69 electoral votes, who will be inaugurated on April 30, 1789, according to the Constitution. This decision has left the state of Pennsylvania with a feeling of relief. Military actions are taken, much to the surprise of the President. He has a subsequently determined to do so, feeling the greatest regret for the occasion, but wishing, the several months convoluted, that the essential interests of the nation would be served.

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**A BAST FROM THE PAST**

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**THE PATRIOT PAPERS**

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**A LITTLE BAST FROM THE PAST**

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**WASHINGTON BURIES FIFTH CHILD, JOHN P. CUSTIS**

YORKTOWN, 1756 - After losing two children in infancy and her daughter Patsy to pleurisy, Martha Washington lost her eldest son, John P. Custis, at the age of 17, in July 1756. John P. Custis, known as Jacky Custis, was the son of Martha Washington, widow of John Parke Custis, and Martha Custis, her brother's wife.

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