In the spring of 1789, citizens crowded the New York shoreline, anxiously awaiting the arrival of their first President, George Washington. In a letter to his wife, Elias Boudinot captured the excitement:

New York, 24 April 1789
If it was in my Power, I could wish to give you an adequate account of the Proceedings of the Citizens of this Metropolis on the approach and the Reception of our President George Washington when he arrived here yesterday. . . . The Streets were lined with the Inhabitants as thick as the People could stand—Men, Women & Children—Nay I may venture to say Tens of Thousands, . . . Heads standing as thick as Ears of Corn before the Harvest when their [sic] stood up about 20 gentlemen & Ladies & with most excellent voices sang an elegant Ode prepared for the purpose to the Tune of God Save the King, welcoming their great Chief to the seat of Government—At the conclusion we gave them our Hails [sic] and then they with the surrounding boats gave us their Cheers.

More than two hundred years later, cities once again await the arrival of George Washington. And once again the mood is festive as museums across the country welcome the National Portrait Gallery’s exhibition “George Washington: A National Treasure.” Students, many visiting the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Tours Exhibition

Coming Soon to a Museum Near You

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Reynolds Foundation, the exhibition opened at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, Texas, on February 15, 2002, continued on to the Las Vegas Art Museum in Nevada, and opened November 7 at the Los Angeles County Art Museum (LACMA) in California. At the tour’s conclusion, the portrait will return to its permanent home in the Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C.

Painted in 1796 by artist Gilbert Stuart, the portrait was commissioned by Senator and Mrs. Bingham of Philadelphia as a gift for the British Marquis of Lansdowne, who sympathized with colonial grievances before the Revolutionary War. Thus, it is often referred to as the “Lansdowne” portrait. One of the most important visual documents of the founding of our nation, its historical and cultural significance has been compared to that of the Liberty Bell and the Declaration of Independence.

One year after the tragedy of September 11, 2001, Americans have paused to remember and reflect. The Wall of Expression that surrounds the Old Patent Office Building in Washington, D.C., still stands as a memorial to those who sacrificed, a tribute to those who served, and an expression of hope for the future. And across the country at the Las Vegas Art Museum, students place their wishes for America on the “Wish Tree.”

“T"hese are the times that try men’s souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman.”

THOMAS Paine, FROM THE AMERICAN CRISIS, DECEMBER 1776

Dedicated to those who sacrificed and served on September 11, 2001, and the weeks following, the Wall of Expression surrounds the Old Patent Office Building at 8th and F Streets in Washington, D.C. The building, home of the National Portrait Gallery and the Smithsonian American Art Museum, is currently undergoing extensive renovation while its collections tour the world.

“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.
Washington Wins Election to House from Fort Cumberland!

FREDERICKSBURG, 1758—George Washington, son of Augustine and Mary Ball Washington, has been elected to the Virginia House of Burgesses while serving with the British regulars at Fort Cumberland. His friends urged him to return to Virginia and “show his face,” fearing that he would lose the election. But he chose to stay with his men, and was still successful in winning a seat in the House.

General Washington Rallies Troops at Valley Forge

VALLEY FORGE, 1777–1778—General Washington struggles to keep his troops alive and well in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, this winter. Inadequate shipments of food, clothing, and supplies have left the regiments in shambles. Poor hygiene and serious disease threaten the lives of all the soldiers camped there. General Washington has appealed for more supplies, but has not been successful. In the meantime, General Washington struggles alongside his men, while his political enemies threaten to remove his power. Some critics feel that others are better suited to lead the Continental army.

Martha Washington Buries Fourth Child, John P. Custis

YORKTOWN, 1781—After losing two children in infancy and her daughter Patsy to epilepsy, Martha Washington lost her last child to camp fever. John Parke Custis, a son of Augustine and Mary Ball Washington, has been raised by his mother, his father’s widow, and his aunt. John has been sent to Virginia to be with his mother. He is the youngest of six children, and is the only son.

Washington Unanimous Pick for President at Convention!

NEW YORK, 1789 (AP)—After months of debate to establish our new American government, the first official election was held on February 4, 1789. George Washington received all 69 electoral votes! Washington, who will be inaugurated on April 30, this year, accepted the presidency, even though he wished to return to his estate at Mount Vernon and retire. “I was summoned by my country,” said Washington. He and his wife Martha will soon move to the country’s capital, New York City.

Washington Graciously Delays Retirement for a Second Term

PHILADELPHIA, 1793 (AP)—President George Washington has won his second election to the presidency of the United States! The inauguration will take place on March 4 in Philadelphia, the new capital of the United States. However, Washington is doubtful about being the President again. He wrote to his friend Henry Lee “that it was after a long and painful conflict in my own breast, that I was withheld from requesting, in time, that no votes might be thrown away upon me; it being my fixed determination to return to the walks of private life.” The next four years could be difficult; there are debates over the interpretation of the Constitution. Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, who helped create the National Bank and the National Mint, will continue to work with the President. Edmund Randolph will replace Thomas Jefferson as secretary of state.

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November 1796

RUNAWAY SLAVE. Mrs. Washington is greatly distressed by the loss of Olney Judge, her Mount Vernon servant so skilled in needlework. The girl, we hear, was lured away by a Frenchman who tired of her and left her stranded in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. President Washington has sent word that all will be forgiven if she returns to her mistress, but she has refused to come back unless promised her freedom. This puts the President in an awkward situation. Privately he has said that although he is sympathetic to her demand, setting her free would only reward her for running away and would spread discontent among the rest of his servants (as he calls them), who by being faithful are more deserving of their freedom than the runaway. Above all, the President cautioned that no violent means should be used to bring her back, lest a mob or riot be excited. Rather than risk this happening, he would tell Mrs. Washington she must get along without the services of Olney Judge.

December 1790

FREEDOM TOO GREAT A TEMPTATION. President Washington has brought a handful of servants from Mount Vernon, but he will be faced with the difficulty of complying with the Pennsylvania law freeing adult slaves who have lived in Pennsylvania for six months in a row. It is believed that the President, therefore, will have to shuttle these servants back and forth and suffer the inconvenience of sometimes being without his cook, Hercules. Asked if he feared his slaves might take advantage of being in the North to run away, the President has privately conceded that “the idea of freedom might be too great a temptation for them to resist.”

• George Washington was only 11 years old when he inherited 10 slaves from his father in 1743.
• By the time he was 22 years old, George owned approximately 36 slaves.
• At his death in 1799, Washington had 316 slaves at Mount Vernon, 123 of whom belonged directly to him.
• Approximately 75 percent of the slaves at Mount Vernon worked in the fields. Of these, nearly 65 percent were women.
• Washington did not buy or sell his slaves after the Revolutionary War.
• Washington allowed his slaves to marry, although such arrangements were not legally binding at that time.
• In his will, Washington freed all of the slaves he owned. His personal valet, William Lee, was released with a payment of $30 per year for the rest of his life, a considerable sum in those days.

December 1790

PRESIDENTIAL RESIDENCE, 190 HIGH STREET, PHILADELPHIA. Senator Robert Morris’s dwelling, at 190 High Street, has turned out to be the best house available for the President’s use, and Mr. Morris has graciously agreed to move around within a Mile of Philadelphia, for the advantage of being in the North to run away, the President has privately conceded that “the idea of freedom might be too great a temptation for them to resist.”

Possessions

Today, most of us own many more things than we really need to live on. When Washington was 11 years old, his family made an inventory (or list) of their possessions. Here is what they owned, besides their land:

• 16 pairs of sheets
• 17 pillowcases
• 13 beds
• A coach
• Desks
• Chairs
• A fireplace set
• Tablecloths
• Napkins

How many of these same items are owned by your family today? Are you surprised to see “slaves” listed as part of the inventory of possessions? If you were to make an inventory of every item in your home, how long do you think the list would be? How many items would be unfamiliar to George Washington?
April 23, 1789

HE COMES! HE COMES! George Washington, President-elect of the United States, has just set foot on the New York shore after an eight-day triumphal journey from Mount Vernon. The excitement here is unbelievable. Thousands line the streets—all you can see are heads standing as thick as ears of corn before the harvest. Ladies are crowded in every window, anxious for a glimpse of the illustrious man. “I have seen him!” we heard one young lady call out, “and though I had been entirely ignorant that he was arrived in the city, I should have fallen on my knees before him.” Washington, it can well be believed, is more popular than the new government he is to head.

May 14, 1789

WHAT IS THE PRESIDENT TO BE CALLED? Debate, we are told, rages behind the closed doors of the Senate over a proper title for the President. Vice President John Adams and a number of the senators have insisted that a grand and high-sounding name, such as “Elective Excellency” or “Elective Highness,” is necessary to give respect to the office. Sources tell us that the committee appointed to draw up a list of titles “of all the Princes of the Earth” has recommended “His Highness the President of the United States of America, and Protector of their Liberties.” But the House of Representatives refuses to agree, and Mr. Washington will be simply called President of the United States. As one member of Congress told us, no other title was necessary to add to the respect the whole country had for General Washington.

May 30, 1789

THE PRESIDENT’S LADY. Mrs. Washington, who needed some time to prepare for her journey, has now arrived in New York. The President’s lady will give no interviews to the press, but this correspondent has talked to many of her friends and acquaintances. Mrs. Adams, the Vice President’s lady, who first met Mrs. Washington when she came to be with the general in Cambridge at the beginning of the war, told us that Mrs. Washington is a lady of patience and prudence. “Her manners are modest and unassuming, dignified and feminine, nor the Tincture of hauteur about her.”

July 9, 1790

WHERE IS THE CAPITAL TO BE? Ever since the old Congress left Philadelphia in 1783, arguments have raged over where the permanent seat of government should be built. At last, the residence is decided. The government is to leave New York and spend the next ten years in Philadelphia. The permanent capital will be a new city created on the banks of the Potomac River, the exact location to be chosen by President Washington. Some folks speculate that it will not be far from Mount Vernon. New Yorkers, after they have gone to so much trouble and expense to accommodate the government, feel betrayed, and one angry letter to the editor speaks of the President as the country’s “former favorite guardian and deliverer.”

February 1792

POLITICAL PARTIES. Not a word about political parties in the Constitution, but they are here and with a passion. Federalists, who are friends of the government, and the Republicans, who find much to criticize, are at it tooth and nail. Most folks say the parties started over the differences between Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton and Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson. Hamilton, the friend of business and manufacturers, has pushed for a strong federal government; Jefferson, who wants to see America stay a land of farmers, is deeply suspicious of moneymen and banks. But what has really stirred things up is the war between France and England, with the Republicans being passionately on the side of France, which has beheaded its king and become a republic, and the Federalists seeing the old mother country as an important trading partner. The President, who wants to keep both Hamilton and Jefferson in his cabinet and to steer a neutral course between France and England, is beset by difficulties.

August 2, 1793

THE PRESIDENT ENRAGED. Sources tell us that the President lost his usually well-controlled temper at a recent meeting of his cabinet. Shown a satiric piece describing his head being chopped off by the guillotine, printed in Republican editor Philip Freneau’s newspaper, the President went suddenly into a towering rage, spoke bitterly of the newspaper abuse to which he had been subjected in past months, and defied any critic to indicate one selfish act committed by him in office. He said he would rather be a farmer than emperor of the world, and yet that “rascal Freneau” insinuated that he would like to be a king. To add insult to injury, Freneau sent three copies of every issue to the President’s dwelling.
George Washington Dies at 67

After riding outside during very bad weather last Thursday and Friday, George Washington became ill on Saturday, December 14. An infection known as epiglottitis gave him a sore throat, fever, and difficulty breathing.

Doctors tried a practice called bloodletting: they made small cuts on his arm to take out blood. They hoped to relieve the pressure in his throat so he would be able to breathe better. Unfortunately, bloodletting did not help. Doctors also gave him many different fluids to gargle or swallow, including a mixture of vinegar, molasses, and butter. None of these cures helped the former President breathe easier.

His friend Tobias Lear wrote that Washington grew calm late in the evening, checked his own pulse, and then died peacefully in his bed. His wife Martha was with him, as well as several servants, doctors, and friends.

An elaborate funeral is planned for Wednesday, December 18, including gun salutes and a procession.

W O U D L Y O U S I G N A L O Y A L T Y O A T H ?

During the Revolutionary War, the British would have required you to sign an oath similar to this:

“I voluntarily take this OATH to bear Faith and true Allegiance to His MAJESTY KING George the Third; — and defend to the utmost of my Power, His sacred Person, Crown, and Government, against all Persons whatsoever.”

Would you have signed? How many colonists do you think were loyal to the British crown?

**The President with No Teeth!**

When George Washington became the first President of the United States in 1789, he had only one of his teeth left in his mouth. As a boy, he had cracked walnut shells with his teeth and, as a result, many of them fell out before he was thirty! Over the years, Washington wore several sets of false teeth. Even though many people today believe that these teeth were made of wood, there is no proof that he ever had wooden teeth. His dentures were made of many things. They were often a combination of human teeth, animal teeth, and ivory. They were put together with wire and a spring, which allowed the dentures to open and close. Throughout his life, Washington had trouble speaking, chewing food, and smiling. The false teeth could be painful and they sometimes made his cheeks and lips puff out. Fortunately, modern dentistry now allows painless smiles for even the greatest of walnut lovers.

**Did George Washington Stand a Chance?**

Colonial Practice of Bloodletting Helped Cause Washington’s Death

—by Vicki Fama, assistant editor

Today, it is easy to think that medicine during the colonial era was crude and painful. Many doctors at the time were self-trained. If he had lived today, George Washington could have been cured with antibiotics. But in 1799, could Washington have gotten better after the treatments he received?

Colonial medicine was based on European medical methods and theories. No one understood how diseases or infection spread. One of the main theories focused on the need for a total balance of tension and fluids in the body. This delicate balance was essential to both physical and mental health. To achieve this balance, Washington’s doctors bled him several times. They may have thought that removing extra blood would lessen the swelling in his throat. Unfortunately they took so much blood that it was hard for Washington’s body to fight the illness.

Doctors also made Washington gargle with mixtures of vinegar, molasses, and butter. These were used to open up his throat. But his throat was too swollen, and he had a lot of trouble swallowing. He almost choked a couple of times too.

Finally, doctors tried to make him vomit to take out any bad fluids. This can cause the body to lose too much water, and that can make someone sicker.

Even though Washington’s doctors did a lot of things that modern doctors would not do, they tried very hard to help him. They used medical practices that were believed to be the most helpful. Washington knew that he was very ill, and he died peacefully.

A modern analysis by White McKenzie Wallenborn, M.D., concludes that Washington died from acute epiglottitis, which is a bacterial inflammation of the epiglottis, a flap at the root of the tongue that prevents food from entering the windpipe. However, some doctors today believe that the excessive loss of blood alone would have weakened Washington enough to kill him.
Imagine! Walking around in front of strangers in your bath. Immediately Melody began removing her blouse! I gasped and was in danger. Melody finally convinced me to stay, so I reluctantly put on the robe and sandals. An hour later I was completely relaxed and willing to consider this new religion!

It was only then, after they had lured me in, taken my clothes, and relaxed all of my muscles, that the torture began. Melody and I were ushered into another small room with several reclining chairs. Two women entered the room and asked us to sit in the large, comfortable chairs. One of the women approached me and began to put a hot, sticky glue on my face. “What is that?” I asked. The woman told me it was wax! “Wax!” I gasped. “You're making me into a human candle. This is a human sacrifice! Run, Melody, run!” I couldn't understand why Melody just sat there. Laughing, the woman told me to please sit back down. She said she was simply removing hair from my face. I sat back in the chair, still not completely understanding what was about to happen. After applying more hot wax to my face, the woman grabbed strips of paper and put them on top of the wax. After a moment, the woman told me to relax and, grabbing the edge of the paper, she ripped it from my face. “AAAAAHH!” I shrieked. “Why are you doing this to me? I will not succumb to your torture—I will not join your religion!” I struggled to get out of the chair, but the woman kept applying the horrible hot wax. I passed out as she began applying the hot wax above my eyes.

Rule 56: Associate yourself with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation. For 'tis better to be alone than in bad company.

I think you get Mistress Goody's point!

Mistress Goody,

At the lunch table most everyone eats and talks at the same time. I think that's pretty gross. What do you think?

The rules of dining etiquette are quite clear; let them guide you. 

Rule 90: Being set at meat, scratch not neither spit, cough nor blow your nose, except when there is a necessity for it.

Rule 100: Cleanse not your teeth with the tablecloth, napkin, fork, knife; but if others do it, let it be done with a pick tooth [i.e., a toothpick].

Mistress Goody,

My very best friend just broke up with her boyfriend. But now be asked me out, and she'll just die when she finds out. Should I go? What should I do? He's awfully cute.

My, my, this is a distressing dilemma. Mistress Goody recalls a situation of her own. It was 1796 at the George Town Ball. I cut quite a stunning figure that evening in my green taffeta gown and brocaded mules. Miss Prudence Petticoat of Philadelphia was pursued by a most evocative gentleman, but when her dance card was full, he pursued me! I'm afraid that a most unladylike tiff ensued shortly thereafter... but I digress. My advice to you, my dear, is found in

Rule 22: Show not your self glad at the misfortune of another. To join the gentleman in frivolity so soon after her heartbreak is unconscionable, not to mention terribly tacky.

It certainly shows little regard for your intimate friend and calls into question your upbringing. Here also Rule 180: Labour to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire called conscience.

Have you misplaced yours, my dear?
Philadelphia, January 1791

MRS. WASHINGTON'S DRAWING ROOM. On Friday evening at eight, your humble correspondent was among the ladies and gentlemen in attendance at Mrs. Washington's weekly reception. Mrs. Washington, plainly dressed, but in a gown of rich silk, sat on a sofa by the fireplace and arose to greet her guests with a curtsey which each lady returned. Each gentleman bowed low. Coffee, tea, and cake were served, and had I come in the summer, I would have been offered lemonade and ice cream. The ladies swish about, and as candlelight is a great improver of beauty, they appear to great advantage. President Washington circulated among the crowd, chatting agreeably with all the ladies. It is said that he keeps count of the numbers who come to pay their respects to Mrs. Washington and was pleased to find the room so crowded.

Philadelphia, February 1797

NEW THEATER ON CHESTNUT STREET. We are informed that the President of the United States intends visiting the theater this evening and has sent his carriage to bring the Vice President and his family to join him. The play to be performed is *Columbus*, or, *A World Discovered*, and it will display scenery, machinery, and decorations, the likes of which have never been seen before. A representation of a storm, an earthquake, a volcano eruption, as well as a procession of Indians, await all who enter. *Columbus* will be followed by a farce called *A Wife at Her Wit's End*.

Philadelphia, July 13, 1793

RICKETTS'S AMPHITHEATRE. Word that the President and his family were to attend a performance of Mr. John Bill Ricketts's dangerous feats on horseback brought a large crowd this evening to what is called the Circus. The acrobatic performance was held to raise money to buy firewood for the poor during the coming winter. Mr. Ricketts, demonstrating his agility by drinking a glass of wine while on horseback, raised his glass to the health of "The Man of the People." This produced an immediate clap of applause and a loud hurrah from every part of the Circus. Mr. Ricketts has expressed his agreement with those who call General Washington the finest horseman of the age, saying "I delight to see the general ride, and make it a point to fall in with him when I hear that he is abroad on horseback; his seat is so firm, his management so easy and graceful, that I who am a professor of horsemanship, would go to him and learn to ride."

Philadelphia, September 1796

PEALES'S MUSEUM. A visit to Mr. Peale's museum, Prudence Pudding tells us, is well worth the admission fee of one fourth of a dollar, if only to see the huge American buffalo. Peale's rooms are filled with monsters of the earth and sea, a rich array of birds, and great collection of the bones, jaws, and teeth of tigers, sharks, and many other fearful animals. In one room are rattle, black, and spotted snakes, confined in cases enclosed with wire and glass. She was astonished to see Mr. Peale take out a black snake about four or five feet long, which he permitted to touch his cheek and twine itself around his neck. In the yard and stable were eagles, owls, baboons, monkeys, and a six-footed cow. Mr. Peale is also a painter, and there can be seen in his museum more than a hundred portraits of the more noteworthy personages of our country, including our illustrious Washington.

June 1791

THE PRESIDENT ON TOUR. When he entered upon the duties of his office, George Washington decided he would visit all parts of the United States to please the citizens and to see how they felt about the new government. Silas Silvertongue, who is with the President's party, reports that they are nearing the end of their two-month journey of 1,887 miles. Everywhere there has been a remarkable outpouring of affection for the President, Silvertongue informs. Towns have been in a bustle of preparation, and at every stop the citizens have come out to meet him with addresses of welcome. Ladies, some rouged up to the ears, have bedecked themselves with sashes and headbands painted with images of the President and patriotic slogans. The festivities include the ringing of bells, bands of music, cannon salutes, and some very bad poetry. (See poetry box, upper right.)
The Patriot Papers Salutes the “Kids Who Care”

They “Pledged It Forward” and Adopted Grandparents at Silver Ridge

Fourteen 4th and 5th graders from Jacobson Elementary School in Las Vegas, Nevada, wrote a grant that enabled them to bridge the generation gap and “adopt a grandparent.” Once the grant was approved, the group grew to 44, and they adopted the entire Silver Ridge Healthcare Center. “They love it when we come to visit them, and we love to see their smiles,” remarked student Taylor Staisik. Under the direction of Gifted and Talented Specialist Barbara Kern, the students crafted colorful vases and flowers to brighten the room of each resident. And in celebration of Flag Day and the Fourth of July, the kids stitched 144 patriotic pillows decorated on both sides with the American flag, and presented them to their new “adopted grandparents.” “We were so excited,” said Tommy Nyomkoun. “When the day came, we were giving letters and pillows to everyone.” And when the whole school became involved, kids from kindergarten to 5th grade made 500 placemats for Silver Ridge. “It was fun to go to visit people who didn’t have much family in Las Vegas,” said Vivian Estrada. Josh Ceschi agreed, “Some of the people hadn’t seen a visitor for quite awhile. To have such a great impact just by visiting was amazing.”

“I’m so proud of my kids and how they have extended themselves into our community and into our country,” said Ms. Kern. “We celebrate their caring.” Student Michael Wray was more philosophical; “It was a unique experience. It taught me that being old is not a bad thing or a good thing. It’s a stage of life, and you can’t avoid it.” True, Michael. But life is much nicer for the residents of Silver Ridge, who now have a whole new generation of friends.

Kudos to Kern’s Kids,
Felice Pulles, Editor-in-Chief

“George Washington: A National Treasure” Creates Excitement Across America

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At the Las Vegas Art Museum, home to the portrait for the last 18 weeks, Lansdowne Tour Coordinator Cynthia Dunn reports that 15,000 students have visited “George” through school tours, and now wear lapel stickers claiming “I saw the President today.” Students in Lexington, South Carolina, hosted the first George Washington State Education Day. Their “commitment to country” shows in everything from their Veterans Day ceremony to a salute to New York’s firefighters. And in Pasadena, Texas, kids even drew their own versions of the portrait. Join the tour now in Los Angeles and let LACMA introduce you to this treasured portrait saved from the auction block for the American people, and to this true patriot, a man who shaped the American presidency and guided the country through the “fragile experiment” of democracy. Don’t forget our website: www.georgewashington.si.edu!

Teenage Republicans Get Political in Las Vegas

Every weekend the Teenage Republicans of Green Valley High School in Henderson, Nevada, hit the campaign trail. An affiliate of the National Teenage Republicans, the chapter encourages others to get involved in the political process. Led by adviser Regan Mitchell, a teacher of both United States and world history, they promote the “Kids Voting” campaign, now active in 38 states, by registering both student and adult voters. “We’re especially busy now because it’s an election year,” said Ms. Mitchell. “The kids actively campaign every weekend supporting candidates in assembly races all the way up through Congress. Many of these kids are interested in pursuing politics; this gives them an inside view.” The group also organized and led a flag retirement ceremony honoring those lost in the September 11 tragedy. Keep up the good work Green Valley—maybe your political journey will lead you to Washington!