

President George Washington

1. I believe that George Washington was **not just the first president** of the USA, but he was the **best President** we have ever had, **or ever will have**. However, he did NOT have **wooden teeth**, and **did NOT chop down** a **Cherry Tree**, nor did he throw a **silver dollar** across the **Potomac River**. Have you seen the Potomac River? But, there **were no silver dollars** at that time. As a young boy he **may** have thrown something across the **Rappahannock River**, since the river is fairly narrow and located adjoining **Ferry Farm**, where he grew up across the river from **Fredericksburg, Virginia**. He did **through a rock** over the **Natural Bridge** that is **215 feet high**. Most of what we know about the childhood of George Washington was written **after he became famous**. As President of the USA, he did mail the **first Air Mail letter** in **1793** by giving a letter to **Jean Pierre Blanchard**, a balloonist from France. **The letter went 15 miles**. He was **the only Founding Father** to arrange for the **freeing of his slaves**. There is **one state, 31 counties, 17 cities, numerous schools**, & our **National Capital** name for him. He is credited with **starting the mule industry** in the USA. As a farmer he **raised Marijuana** on his farm to use as **hemp for ropes**, and soil improvement. He was the **largest whiskey distiller** in Virginia. He is our only President to **NOT live in Washington, DC**, but he oversaw the building of the city named after him.

2. Now let's go back **285 years** to **February 11, 1731** when George Washington was born to **Augustine Washington** and his **2nd wife, Mary Ball** on his father's farm on **Pope's Creek** in **Westmoreland County, Virginia**, located some **40 miles south of Mt. Vernon**. The name of this farm was **later called** the **Wakefield Plantation**, and the name was **changed again** to **Mt. Vernon** by Lawrence Washington, the ½ brother of George. When George was a youth his parents moved to **Ferry Farm** across the **Rappahannock River** from **Fredericksburg, Virginia** because his father had **purchased a foundry** near there. This was where his **father died in 1743**, when George was **12 years old**. This would have been the area where he would have chopped down the cherry tree, if it were true. **Parson Weems** made up these stories after George Washington became famous, when he wrote the books. The Washington family goes back to the 1600's with the arrival of **John Washington** in America, but his line has been traced back to the 1400's in England. We had a member in New Braunfels SAR Chapter, (**Bill Washington** who was directly related to **Dr. Samuel Washington**, and I am connected by marriage through a later cousin, but **Lovell Aldridge** is directly

related many generation back in the 1400's. There is a society you can join if you are related to any US President.

3. Did you catch the date I mentioned when George Washington was born? The **Julian Calendar** was still in use in England and the British Colonies on **February 11, 1731**, O. S. when the **month of February** was **the last month of the year**, with **the year beginning on March 25th**. In ancient days the **first day of the year** became **the day the new Emperor took office**, so many days had to be added or subtracted from February to match the seasons. In **1752**, England, which included the **American and Central America Colonies**, changed to the **Gregorian Calendar**, which had been in affect since **1582**, in many countries, **but not in England**, where **King Henry VIII** had tried to do away with the Roman Catholic Church. **On Wednesday, September 2, 1752**, the British Empire officially adopted the **Gregorian Calendar**, but **due to the different number of days** in the **Julian Calendar** and the **Gregorian Calendar**, it was necessary that **11 days had to be omitted** to make the date match with the rest of the world, so the next day became **September 13, 1752**, instead of **September 2, 1752**. Riots broke out over this change and people who were opposed to the change shouted, **"Give us our 11 days back!"** People began to **add the 11 days** to **anniversary dates**, and one of those became the birthday of George Washington, whose birthday had just begun to be celebrated in **1790**. George Washington **never added the 11 days** to his birthday, but now we celebrate his birthday on February 22nd. As you know we have had a float and been marching in the George Washington Birthday Parade in **Laredo, Texas** for the past **16 year**, but **President's Day can never be on February 22nd** because of the **1968, Monday Holiday Act** which made the **3rd Saturday in February President's Day**, which can only be a maximum of February 21st at the most. It was actually in **1832**, when **Speaker of the House Henry Clay** called for the vote which made February 22nd the official birth day of George Washington.

4. George Washington had **very little formal education** but with the help of his half-brother, Lawrence, he did try to join **the British Navy when he was age 14**, but his **mother stopped him** from this effort. After a **major argument with his mother**, George Washington began to **study math**, and work with his **father's survey instruments**. With the **help of his older half brother, Lawrence**, George became a **surveyor at age 15** for **Lord William Fairfax**, and with the help of his brother, Lawrence, he also joined the **British Militia in 1752**. Lawrence Washington arranged for

young George Washington to meet Lord Fairfax, and serve as a surveyor along with his son, George William Fairfax. They became life-long friends.

5. In **1752**, **Major George Washington** was sent by **Governor Robert Dinwiddie** to the **Ohio Territory**, to what is now **Erie, PA** to deliver a political demand that the **French stop building forts in the Ohio Territory**. England had claimed this area since **1606** when the **Virginia Company** contract was issued. France's claim came from **La Salle's** trip down the **Ohio River in 1681**. Major George Washington **wrote a report** of his trip to the Ohio Territory, which was published all over the British world. This book made young George Washington famous. **Show Book**.

6. One of the **few childhood documents** we have that was actually written by George Washington at the **age of 16**, was when he copied the **110 Rules of Civility & Decent Behavior in Company**, which had been composed by **French Jesuits** in **1595**. This effort is said to have been an **assignment in penmanship** by his school master. **Show copy**.

7. George Washington **loved hunting dogs**, & his favorite was named **Sweet Lips**, who he brought to Philadelphia, & chanced to meet **Elizabeth Willing Powel**, the wife of the wealthy **Mayor Samuel Powel**. This chance meeting may have resulted in helping with his election as the **Commander-in-Chief**.

8. During his **2nd term** as President he took another favorite **Greyhound dog named Cornwallis** with him on his tour of the southern states. **Cornwallis died** in **Augusta, Georgia** & was buried in a tomb with a stone along the bank of the **Savannah River**, which was maintained by the citizens for years, in remembrance of President George Washington's visit. **Show the book**.

9. On **July 22, 1752**, **Lawrence Washington**, the half brother of George Washington **died** and **George inherited ½ interest** in Mt. Vernon just six (6) **months** after both **returned from Barbados** where George had gone with his brother Lawrence, who had **contracted Tuberculosis**. In **1760**, George Washington's sister-in-law, **Anne Fairfax Washington**, the **widow of Lawrence Washington**, and sister of George William Fairfax, died George Washington inherited the remainder of Mt. Vernon.

10. While in **Barbados** George contracted a **mild case of Smallpox**, & his recovery **probably saved his life** during the Revolution. Some historians say that his

requirement that all Colonial soldiers be **inoculated for Small Pox** may have been the **most important decision** he made during the American Revolution.

11. George Washington's ½ brother, **Lawrence** had inherited **Little Hunting Creek** farm when their father had died in **1742**. **Lawrence Washington** (1st wife, **Jane Butler was his mother**) had served in the **Battle of Cartagena, which was NOT a part of Columbia** in **1742**, under **General Edward Vernon**, (Considered the finest General of his time) which Lawrence admired so much that **he named the plantation home his father built for him; Mount Vernon**.

12. In **1754**, Governor Dinwiddie **sent Lt. Col. George Washington** back to the Ohio Territory to **guard a new fort** that was being built by the **Ohio Company**, of which **Lawrence Washington was a stockholder**. The British never gave the fort a name, but the **French named it Fort Duquesne**, after the leading French General in America at the time. This mission became a disaster, when his ally, **Chief Tanacharison**, called the **Half-King killed** (representative of the **Iroquois Nation**) killed the French Diplomat, **Joseph de Jumonville**, beginning the **French and Indian War**. This was when George Washington built **Fort Necessity**, & was defeated by the French, surrendering on **July 3, 1754**. However, he **became even more famous** & later sent again with General Edward Braddock, the British General, to remove the French from the Ohio.

13. In **1753**, at **age 24**, **Governor Robert Dinwiddie** appointed George 2nd in command of the **Virginia British Militia** and sent him to take command of a fort along the **Monongalia, River** which the **Virginia Company** was building, but this mission turned into the battle that **began the French and Indian War**, and **Lt. Col. George Washington** was **blamed by the French for starting the war**. This fort became **Fort Duquesne**, named by the French, and located in present day Pittsburg where the **Allegheny** and **Monongahela Rivers** come together.

14. In **1755**, George Washington became an **aid-de-camp** to **General Edward Braddock**, who died **July 13, 1755** during a disastrous battle with the French called **The Battle of the Monongahela**. Almost all the British officers were killed by the French, and George Washington organized the retreat, and with **4 bullet holes** in his uniform and **two horses** shot from under him, he became the **Hero of the Monongahela**. Two other survivors of this battle were **Daniel Boone**, who acted as a teamster and **Capt. Thomas Gage**, who lived to become leader of the British Army in the Colonies during the **Midnight Night Ride** of Paul Revere.

15. George Washington was elected to the House of Burgesses on July 21, 1758, and married the widow Martha Dandridge Custis (born June 2, 1731, some 7 months before her 2nd husband) on January 6, 1759, who was the wealthiest widow in Virginia at that time. Because of the differences of the Julian Calendar, she was considered six (6) months younger because of the changes in the Gregorian Calendar.

16. The same week he proposed marriage to Martha Dandridge Custis, he wrote what some call a love letter to Sarah "Sally" Cary Fairfax (1730 – 1811), the daughter of Wilson Cary, and the wife (they married in 1748) of George William Fairfax, who was George Washington's best friend, and the brother of Anne Fairfax Washington, the wife of George Washington's ½ brother, Lawrence Washington. George Washington had met Sally Cary Fairfax for the first time in 1748 at the age of 16. Sally Cary was the 18 year old bride of George William Fairfax, and the couple became good friends of George & Martha Washington. Sally Cary Fairfax taught George Washington to dance, which was a life-long passion for him. It is said that young George Washington fell in love with Sally Fairfax the minute he saw her coming down the stairs at Belfour Plantation, where she and George William Fairfax lived.

17. In 1774, George Washington was elected to the 2nd Continental Congress, and on June 14, 1775, John Adams nominated George Washington as Commander-in-Chief of the Colonial Army. George Washington (who wore his Militia uniform to the meetings every day) told the Congress that he was not qualified, but would do his best, and would not accept a salary. George Washington did have considerable military experience, but no one was qualified to take on England. The next day, Congress established the first U. S. Army. He arrived in Cambridge, MA to take command of the Colonial Army on July 3, 1775, 21 years after his surrender at Fort Necessity. The American Revolution was a terrible 8 year war and General George Washington only won 3 battles, Trenton, Princeton and Yorktown.

18. On June 27, 1778, the Continental Congress abandoned Philadelphia because of the British Army take over, and moved to Lancaster PA for one day. On June 28, 1778, the Centennial Congress moved to York, PA, where they met for 9 months. Much work on the Articles of Confederation was accomplished in York, PA with the act finally passing on November 15, 1777. The Articles of Confederation were then sent to the 13 Colonies for ratification, which happened when Maryland became the last Colony to Ratify on March 1, 1781. George Washington did not support the Articles of

Confederation because the Federal Government **did not have the authority** to demand supplies and troops from the Colonies. Because the **Continental Army almost starved to death**, and **the war was delayed** because of lack of troops and supplies, George Washington developed the opinion that the **Federal Government had to be superior** to the Colonies. This **idea was not popular**, and this is what the discussion was about concerning the **Second Amendment**. The majority of the founding fathers believed that a Militia was what they needed not a standing army, which George Washington almost demanded.

19. One other major event took place while the **Continental Congress** was meeting in **York, PA**. Because **General William Clinton's** conquering of Philadelphia instead of supporting **General Horatio Burgoyne**, the British Army had to **surrender on October 17, 1777**, as he was planned to accomplish, this victory became the **most important** victory in the American Revolution, because it brought France into the Revolution directly. **England realized** that the **French Navy could trap** the British Army in Philadelphia, so General Howe moved his army back to New York on **June 18, 1779**.

20. While the **Colonies would not have prevailed** during the American Revolution without the leadership of George Washington, **he did have some serious problems** during his time as Commander-in-Chief of the Colonial Army. After the **loss of Philadelphia** during the Revolution, and the **victory at Saratoga**, under command of **General Horatio Gates**, talk began that George Washington was **not qualified** to lead the Colonial Army. This incident became known as the **Conway Cabal**, named for **Major General Thomas Cabal, who was a volunteer French officer, born in Ireland**. While **General Thomas Cabal** only had a **minor roll** in the effort to **replace George Washington** with **General Horatio Gates**, the hero of our first major victory over the British, his name came to represent the affair. One of the main instigators of the effort to promote General Horatio Gates to replace George Washington was **Col. James Wilkinson**, who worked for General Gates. Both **Col. James Wilkinson** and **General Thomas Cabal** were forced to resign from the Colonial Army over their efforts. Both were forced from the Colonial Army.

21. An event occurred at **Arnold's Tavern** during the **winter quarters** of **1779 – 1780** in **Jockey Hollow** outside of **Morristown, NJ**. This winter was the worst **weather of the war**, however, the officers continued to have parties and dances during the winter. Martha Washington was in camp as was **Katherine "Kitty" Greene**, the beautiful young

wife of General Nathanael Greene, and the story is that Kitty Greene went up to General George Washington and told him that the word was that he was the **best dancer in Virginia**, and she wanted to give him a chance to prove the rumor. **The story is that Kitty Greene and George Washington danced for 3 hours with out returning to the table where Martha and Nathanael sat.**

22. **The Battle of Yorktown** ended on **October 19, 1781**, with the surrender of General Lord Cornwallis, but the British did not sign the **Treaty of Paris** until **September 3, 1783**, and it was not ratified by Continental Congress until **January 14, 1784**, so **George Washington & Nathanael Greene** had to keep their armies in the field for **over 2 years** after Yorktown, waiting for the Treaty to be ratified end the Revolution.

23. George Washington did not believe the victory at Yorktown would end the Revolution. During that time, the **Congress had no money to pay the soldiers**, so on **March 15, 1783** the **Colonial Officers** held a meeting at **Newburg, New York** to discuss a **possible takeover of Congress**.

24. On **August 7, 1782**, at **Newburgh, New York**, General George Washington created the **Purple Heart** (then called the **Badge of Military Merit**) and gave the **first 3 awards** to **SSgt. Elijah Churchill, William Brown, and Daniel Bissell**. Others received this award from other officers in the Colonial Army, but the **Book of Merit**, where their names were inscribed was lost. In **1932**, General **Douglass MacArthur** re-initiated the current Purple Heart. **Show Dad's Purple Heart**

25. This was a dangerous event which was "**nipped in the bud**" by General George Washington which was called the **Newburg Conspiracy**. Near the end of the American Revolution, & after the victory at Yorktown, **General George Washington & General Nathaniel Greene**, both **spent the next two years keeping their Army in the field**, since the British Army was still occupying **New York & Charleston**. The Continental Congress had been at the mercy of the Colonies to raise money for the war. Finally, in **1783**, with the Continental Congress ran totally out of money, the officers of the Colonial Army began talking about **launching a coup to take over the Continental Congress**, & declare **Martial law to secure their back pay**, which had been promised for several years. So, in **March of 1783**, the Colonial officers in **Newburg, New York** area held a meeting in what was called the "**New Building**" which was a 40 by 70 foot building, located on the military base where the Colonial Army was camped.

26. A meeting of the officers was called for **March 15, 1783**, which began with **General Horatio Gates** chairing the meeting. Just as the meeting began, **General George Washington** entered the room to the surprise of everyone, and asked to speak. The **stunned General Horatio Gates** relinquished the floor, and General Washington prepared to give a **short speech** about the **precarious finances of the nation**. The officers surely knew about the financial condition of the Continental Congress, & their inability to raise funds. In addition, George Washington was not a good speaker, so as he took out a letter, **probably from Alexander Hamilton** to read to the Officers. General Washington **fumbled** with the letter (**some say on purpose**) and finally took out some new **reading glasses** that he had just received. Most of the **Officers had never seen General Washington wear spectacles**, as they were called, and General Washington said, **“Gentlemen, you will permit me to put on my spectacles, for I have not only grown gray, but also blind in the service of my country.”** As General Washington read the letter, his officers all realized how long & hard their leader had served to free the Colonies from England, & the conspiracy collapsed, as many of the men were reduced to tears. General George Washington then left the meeting, & **General Henry Knox introduced a resolution reaffirming their loyalty** to the Colonial Government, which was accepted, thus ending the Newburg Conspiracy. **One month later, April 19, 1783**, the end of the Revolution was announced and the Colonial Army was **furloughed**, and **ultimately disbanded** without the salaries being paid. Many of us have located a document given to our Patriot Ancestor for land, which was given because his salary was never paid. This incident caused **George Washington to believe that a strong Federal Government was necessary**.

27. The **Treaty of Paris** was signed on **September 2, 1783**, and General Washington’s Army took control of New York City for the first time since 1776, and on **December 4, 1783** General George Washington gave his **farewell speech** to his Colonial Officers at **Fraunces Tavern (built in 1719, the oldest brick structure in Manhattan, still owned by the SR)** in New York City. Then on **December 23, 1783** he **resigned as Commander-in-Chief of the Army** to the **Colonial Congress**, then meeting at **Annapolis** in the **Maryland State House**. **Thomas Mifflin** was serving as **President of the Centennial Congress**, at the time, which was interesting since he had been involved in the **Conway Cabal**, and some scholars believe it should have been called the **“Mifflin Maneuver.”** This is considered by some historians the **most important action** that George Washington ever took. General George Washington had **a carriage drawn by 6 white horses** waiting to take him away when he resigned his commission, which was **returned**

to him in a gold box several years later. **Thirteen toasts** were given and a **13 gun salute** was fired. This was one of the very few times in world history, that the leader of a victorious army volunteered to give up the Greek leader **Cincinnatus**, the Greek farmer who, after a great victory in **460 BC**, gave up his command and returned to his farm. Of course this was the motivation for forming the **Society of Cincinnati**, of which George Washington was the **first President**.

28. When the **Constitutional Convention** met in **1787 in Philadelphia**, the delegates quickly realized they needed George Washington to lead the Convention, because **without his prestige** the country would **never accept** a Federal Government **having control over the Colonies**. George Washington was **very reluctant** to be a part of the Constitutional Convention because the **purpose of the convention** was to **only modify** the **Articles of Confederation**, & George Washington wanted to completely **do away** with the Confederation of States. Once the new Constitution was approved, George Washington **almost single handed** got the Colonies to vote to approve the new Constitution.

29. On **February 4, 1789**, George Washington was **elected unanimously** as our **First President** of the United States of America, with the election being held between **December 15, 1788** & **January 10, 1789**. **New Hampshire** had voted to ratify the new constitution on **June 21, 1788**, being the **9th Colony to ratify**, making the Constitution official. Electors were chosen **January 7, 1789**, and they were to **meet in their State capital** and vote on **February 4, 1789**.

30. There were **many problems** & some interesting events that go along with the first presidential election. The Constitutional Convention had established that only the **elected officials from each of the Colonies** (Senators & the Representatives) or their replacements (**Electoral College**) could vote for the President. **Only 10 of the 13 Colonies voted** in the first election for President. Each Colony had to **first vote to ratify** the **Constitution** before they could become a State, & vote for the first President. Neither **North Carolina** (voted to **reject** the Constitution on **August 2, 1788**, but voted again on **November 21, 1789** (to approve) or **Rhode Island** (voted on **May 29, 1790**) had voted to ratify the new Constitution by **June 21, 1788**, when **New Hampshire's approval** became politically important. Also, **New York** had voted to ratify the Constitution on **July 26, 1788**, but they had not elected **their 8 Electors** (Congressmen & their two Senators), so on **January 7, 1789, only 69 white men in 10 newly founded**

states, who owned land, voted, and they had been either appointed or elected by a State official voted. The public did not vote.

31. The new U.S. Senate elected John Langton of New Hampshire as President Pro Tem of the Senate, and he did the counting. John Langton then wrote a letter to George Washington & John Adams telling them they had won. Each Elector voted twice, with one vote not allowed for someone from their Colony. Charles Thomson, Secretary of the Continental Congress, delivered the letter to George Washington at Mt. Vernon on April 14, 1789, at about 1:00 p.m. George Washington acted as if he did not know he had been elected, even though he had been working on the appointments, so he wrote a letter back to John Langton telling him that because of the unanimous vote, he had little choice, and he accepted the position, and would leave for New York on Thursday, which was April 16, 1789, accompanied by David Humphreys and Charles Thomson. Thousands of people waited for hours along the way as he proceeded from Mt. Vernon to New York, arriving April 23, 1789. As he boarded a new boat in Elizabethtown, NJ for the passage across the Hudson River, the Spanish Ship, Galveston fired the first 13 gun salute to him. The salute was returned by the U.S.S North Carolina. He landed at Murray's Wharf at the foot of Wall Street, and welcomed by New York Governor George Clinton and several members of the House and Senate.

32. We are still saddled with the Electoral College, in which our National elected Electors vote for the President, and now the Vice President, many without being required to vote as the public voted. You may recall that Al Gore received more popular vote than George Bush, but did not receive the majority of the Electoral vote for President. This is not the first time this has happened.

33. In 1824, Andrew Jackson received more popular votes than John Quincy Adams, but since there were 5 nominees running for President, neither received the majority of the Electoral vote, so the election went to the House of Representatives, who voted John Quincy Adams as President, because the Speaker of the House, Henry Clay. Andrew Jackson had a fit, & spent the next 4 years telling everyone about the "unholy alliance." Thomas Jefferson had to withstand 36 votes of the House of Representatives to become President over Aaron Burr.

34. The U.S. Constitution was set up to be revised through amendments, and we have had 27 Amendments pass into law, but since 1992, there have not been any Amendments ratified by 2/3 of both our Senate and House, because our government is so divided that there have not even been any seriously suggested Amendments anymore. The last time a serious Amendment to the Constitution was attempted was in 1972, when the Equal Rights Amendment was given 10 years for ¾ of the states to Ratify. Not only did this Amendment fail, but many States did not even form a convention to vote on the Equal Rights Amendment. 24 States (2/3) had to vote to ratify. We still have some amendments pending because Congress did not specify a time limit for the states to vote.

35. The First President of the USA, George Washington was sworn in as President by Robert Livingston on April 30, 1789 at City Hall (then called Federal Hall) in New York City. Everything he did became historic. He added the words: “So Help Me God” to the induction ceremony, and he kissed the Bible, brought at the last minute from the local Masonic Lodge. The Bible was quickly obtained from the St. John Lodge #1, and was randomly opened to Genesis 49. This Bible can still be seen in the Lodge with a plastic cover over the pages that the Bible was opened to. After the induction ceremony everyone attended a religious service at St. Paul’s Chapel, conducted by the Right Reverend Samuel Provoost, who became the first Chaplain of the U. S. Senate. It was decided to call George Washington Mr. President, not “His Excellency” or King! George Washington did not want to serve as President, but realized that he was the key to success and survival of a new type of government in the world. General George Washington did not accept a salary to be Commander-in-Chief, and he did not want to accept a salary to serve as President, but Congress insisted. One strange custom was that President George Washington decided to stop shaking hands. He would bow, but did not shake hands. Imagine a President now who did not shake hands.

36. During his first term as President of the USA, he lived first on 3 Cherry Street, but moved to 39 Broadway before the Capital was moved to Philadelphia. President George Washington visited every town he could in the north east. He traveled by a very nice coach with his Coat-of-Army on the door of the coach. His favorite white horse, Nelson, ran along behind the coach until they got within a mile or so of a town, when George Washington would get out of his coach, put on his Colonial uniform, and get on Nelson and ride into town waving at everyone. Thomas Jefferson,

who opposed most of the positions of President George Washington, said that **Washington on horse back trumped anything the Republicans could do!**

37. During his 2nd term he toured the towns in the south, and took his dog named **Cornwallis** with him. **Nelson died** and was replaced with **Prescott**. **Cornwallis** also died and was buried on the banks of the **Savannah River**, with a tombstone that citizens took care of for years, as a tribute to the President's visit.

38. Washington **did not want to serve a 2nd term** as President, but he was concerned that the division between **Alexander Hamilton** and **Thomas Jefferson** would **cause the USA to dissolve**, so he allowed his name to be presented to the **132 Electors** of the **15 states**, for a second term. **Vermont** and **Kentucky** had become States. No one actually ran for President, but because George Washington did Not want to be President, this became a tradition for years. Again the vote was unanimous. Remember that each **Elector was allowed to cast two (2) votes**, & one of their votes could NOT be for someone from their home State. **Six (6) of the 15 States had some form of public voting for the 2nd election**. The Capital moved to Philadelphia for the 2nd term.

39. **The Farewell Address** was written **before the end** of his **first term** mostly by **James Madison**, and updated near the end of the 2nd term by **Alexander Hamilton**. Some of the advice that George Washington gave the public in his **farewell address** was: **Guard against the impostures of pretended Patriotism**. He advised against forming **Political Parties**, that he called "**Factions**," which seek power over other groups, for **revenge on political opponents**. He warned against the party system. **"It serves to distract the Public Councils, and enfeeble the public administration....agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one...against another...it opens the door to foreign influences and corrupts...thus the policy and the will of one country or subjected to the policy and will of another."**

40. **Stepping down as President** was the **most unbelievable event of his time!** **No one in the WORLD had ever given up control of a country voluntarily**, so when he first **surrendered his commission** as **Commander-and-Chief**, he was compared with **Cincinnati**, and the **Cincinnati Society** was formed near the end of the American Revolution. When told George Washington had stepped down voluntarily as President, **King George** did not believe that he had stepped down, but he commented

that **if true, he was the greatest man in the world.** **Commander-in-Chief** General George Washington volunteered his **commission** to the **Continental Congress (Thomas Mifflin, President)** temporarily meeting in the **State House** in **Annapolis, Maryland.** The commission was later returned to him in a **gold box.** George Washington arrived back at Mt. Vernon on **Christmas Eve 1783,** which was the first time he had been home since being named Commander-in-Chief **on June 14, 1775, some 8 years!**

41. After declining to serve a **3rd term** as President, he returned to Mt. Vernon and **expanded his farm and the Mt. Vernon Mansion.** **Augustine “Gus” Washington,** the father of George and Lawrence Washington built this original **modest plantation home** for his **son Lawrence,** in **1735,** and he called it **Little Hunting Creek Plantation.** The **name was changed** to **Mt. Vernon** in honor of Admiral **Edward Vernon.** George Washington began expanding the mansion in **1758,** even though he did not totally own the property until **1761,** when **Lawrence Washington’s wife Ann Fairfax Washington Lee died.** His last addition to the Mount Vernon farm was to build a **brewery** and he became the **largest distiller of whiskey in the USA.** A replica of **his distillery** has been **built in 2006,** and Virginia allows **5,000 gallons of whiskey** be produced each year, however it must be sold in the **Mt. Vernon Gift Shop.** The **King of Spain** had given him **two large male Jacks,** and George Washington is credited with started the **mule industry** with these Jacks.

42. In **July of 1799,** George Washington wrote his will, which is one of the most important documents we have, since it tells a lot about the man. **He was the only Founding Father to freed his slaves,** upon the **death of his wife,** and he divided his estate between **23 heirs,** which **was not common** at that time. George also **left 4 of his swords** to his nephews in his will, and he left the **Crab-tree walking cane** he had inherited from **Benjamin Franklin** to his brother Charles. There is a list of his slaves, as well as the “dower” slaves, which belonged to the estate of Martha Custis Dandridge Washington attached to his will, but only **William “Billy” Lee** was freed in his will. We do know more about **Hercules** and **Oney Judge,** than any of the other slaves.

43. Now the **sad part of my story.** On **Thursday, December 12, 1799,** George Washington rode out on a **cold rainy day** to inspect the farm, as he did almost every day. **He arrived back home about 3:00 p.m.,** which was when dinner was served at that time, and even though his clothes were wet, he did not want his guest to wait, so he had dinner in wet clothes. There were **always guest staying at Mt. Vernon,** and he and Martha **did not always know them.** George commented to Martha one time that

they had not sat down alone to **have a meal alone in over 20 years**. That night he **developed a cough** and had difficulty breathing. However, the next day (**December 13, 1799**) he again rode out to mark some trees for cutting, and that night he woke Martha up **with a very sore throat**. The next day his **doctor, & friend for over 40 years, James Craik** was called, and he **BLED** George Washington, **four times**, and extracted **over 5 pints** of blood. Two other doctors were called, **Dr. Richard Brown & Dr. Elisha Dick**, to aid in the diagnoses and treatment. After a discussion all 3 doctors decided to **bleed George Washington again**, but **no blood would flow**. Finally after **10:00 p.m. on Saturday** night, **December 14, 1799** the Father of his Country died.

44. Washington requested that he **not be buried for 2 days**. At that time, many people believed that people who were **not dead, had been buried alive**, and that was where the term "**Wake**" came from. George Washington was **buried after 3 days** in the family crypt at Mt. Vernon. **Later a new crypt was built and both George and Martha Washington** are still there today. For the past few years members of the **Sons of the American Revolution National Color Guard** have stood watch outside the tomb of George Washington for the 24 hour period on **December 14th** each year.

42. **Bushrod Washington**, a **nephew**, and member of the **U.S. Supreme Court** inherited Mt. Vernon, but over the years, the mansion fell into disrepair, and after 5 years, **John Alexander Washington** offered to sell Mt. Vernon to either the U.S. Government or the State of Virginia. **Both declined!** **Martha Dandridge Custis Washington died May 22, 1802**, but she **freed all of her husband's slaves on January 1, 1800**, and **burned all the letters** they wrote to each other, **except 2** letters. Both wills are conserved by the County of Fairfax, Virginia. Her slaves were passed on to her heirs.

43. In **1858, Ann Pamela Cunningham** formed The **Mount Vernon Ladies' Association**, and they raised **\$200,000 (valued today at \$5 million)** to buy the **run down home** in 1860. **Ann Cunningham had been paralyzed** in a riding accident in her teens, but she started the **first and oldest preservation society in America**, and today is the oldest organization of its type in the USA.

44. One of the projects that the SAR has been in association with the Mount Vernon Ladies Association in promoting the effort to place **portraits of George Washington in as many schools as is possible**. I have been **involved with 4 of those efforts in 2 states**. For years, a photo of President George Washington was in every school, but in current

times you do not see these photos, so I believe this is a most needed project which I encourage our chapter to promote.

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