

# THE Carter Mondale *Letter*

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Special Edition

## Saying Goodbye and Thank You to President Carter

By David M. Rubenstein

Since the unexpected passing of George Washington in 1799 (when he had his wrists cut to let out the bad spirits that were causing him breathing troubles), the United States has generally honored its deceased presidents with several days of mourning, following a well-honed and somewhat ritualistic process that is quite captivating to the American public, most especially to the deceased president's supporters and admirers.

The United States experienced this process once again in January as President Carter, the only president to reach 100 years of age, was laid to rest in Plains, Georgia, near a home he built and lived in for more than 60 years. He will be alongside his Naval Academy sweetheart, partner in all his many activities, best friend, and wife of 77 years, Rosalynn Carter.

The process of burying U.S. presidents is now fairly well planned in advance. Currently, when presidents are in office, and subsequent to leaving office, their funeral plans are coordinated with the U.S. government (typically the U.S. Military District of Washington). That was not the case at the time of President Lincoln, where the appropriate mourning process was cobbled together quite quickly—Lincoln's coffin lay in repose at the White House, and then in state at the Capitol, before being transported by train to Springfield, Illinois. The current practice of



Jimmy Carter Library

**President Carter waves atop the steps of Air Force One on May 17, 1977.**

advance planning still had not really been put in place when President Kennedy was assassinated, and his family worked to put together a mourning ceremony somewhat modeled after Lincoln's, though President Kennedy was ultimately laid to rest, at his widow's insistence, at Arlington Cemetery rather than the Kennedy family burial plot in the Boston area, with Mrs. Kennedy also insisting on the eternal flame that still burns at the grave site.

**Read more about the life of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter at [www.jimmycartertribute.org](http://www.jimmycartertribute.org).**

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While President Carter approved all the funeral plans the nation saw unfold, the process is a bit unusual in that some who worked on the plans with him, like his wife and various government officials, did not live long enough to see them put into place. President Carter simply outlived many who had worked on this over the years. Two individuals President Carter wanted to give eulogies predeceased him—President Ford and Vice President Mondale, whose long-ago-prepared remarks were delivered at the memorial services by their sons, Steven Ford and Ted Mondale.

The basic funeral began in Plains, Georgia, traveled briefly to the Statehouse in Georgia, then The Carter Center in Atlanta on Jan. 4, where after a private service, the public was able to pay their respects to President Carter's flag-draped coffin at the Center. On Jan. 7, the coffin was flown to Joint Base Andrews in Maryland, transported by motorcade to the U.S. Navy Memorial in Washington—Carter was a naval officer early in his career—and then taken by horse-drawn military wagon to the Capitol, where members of Congress, other government officials, and the public were able to pay their respects.

Following the service, President Carter's coffin was driven back to Joint Base Andrews for a flight back to

Georgia for a final memorial service at Carter's church in Plains, and then a private burial. The 39th president was laid to rest in the city he grew up in, spent much of his life in, and resisted countless entreaties from friends and some family to move from because of its inconvenience and lack of big-city cultural and other attractions. But President Carter was never convinced—once he had made up his mind on certain subjects important to him, like where to live, he rarely could be persuaded otherwise by anyone, with the possible exception of Rosalynn. (Rosalynn was also from Plains but did not like it, and she was pleased to be living in many different places with her husband when he was in the Navy. But Carter decided to return to Plains upon his father's death, to take over the family peanut business. Rosalynn hated the idea of returning to the small city of her youth and barely talked to her husband as they drove back. But she came to love Plains, a city of about 600 people, as much as her husband did.)

I saw this kind of determination and commitment—some would say stubbornness—to what President Carter believed in many times during the four years I worked for him in the White House as a young and junior policy aide. (I was 27, three years out of law school, but I managed to convince Stu Eizenstat that I could serve adequately as his deputy at the White House following the general election campaign in 1976, where I had earlier

been hired to work by Stu at the campaign headquarters in Atlanta.)

White House staff positions are often filled by young men and women who work as volunteers or low-paid campaign workers to help someone become president, with the hope that a White House or administration job might follow if the campaign is successful. I was in that category—not qualified, not experienced, but eager and willing to work long hours, an occupational hazard of White House jobs.

When President Carter returned to Washington for the final time, it was full circle



***Military personnel flank a horse-drawn caisson as it carries former President Jimmy Carter's casket to the Capitol.***



**Article author David M. Rubenstein talks with President Carter in the Oval Office.**

from the time he arrived in 1977 and left in 1981. When he did arrive as the 39th president, he was lauded by many as a real man of the people—a peanut farmer from the Deep South who had slain the giants in the Democratic Party to get the nomination and then beat an incumbent President Gerald Ford to win the 1976 election. The hopes among Democrats and those who had voted for Carter were quite high. He was going to bring fresh perspectives, a new look at existing problems, and present a different type of president to the American people. He was not from the “Washington Establishment.” He was not a lawyer, had not been involved in Vietnam or Watergate, had a picturesque family including an 8-year-old daughter, carried his own bags, was as low-key and nonimperial as possible, and had a smile that lit up rooms and presented the image of a normal person who happened to get elected president by some type of political magic. (Carter was helped by the fact that Ford had pardoned Richard Nixon, made a terrible mistake in one of the debates when he said Poland was not under the domination of the Soviet Union, and lost his voice in the last few days of the campaign when he was otherwise closing the gap with Carter, who narrowly won 297-240 in the Electoral College.)

Four years later, Carter lost decisively to Ronald Reagan, someone Carter did not really take seriously, in a humiliating 489-49 Electoral College loss. He thought Reagan was not very substantive, did not have any real policy knowledge or interests comparable to Carter’s, and was more of an actor than a public leader. And so, President Carter had to go back to Plains and rebuild his life at age 56, with little clue about his future. His business left behind in Plains had almost gone bankrupt under the control of the trustees hired to manage it during his presidency. Initially, Carter did not think he could find support to build a library, or to be a public figure again of any consequence. (Ultimately, a library and museum were built, at a cost that seems trivial today—under \$30 million.)

In 1984, I offered with others to host a reception for Carter at the Democratic National Convention in San Francisco; he initially did not want to have one, thinking that so few people would show up, he would be embarrassed. His own former vice president, Walter Mondale, and his staff did not even want Carter to speak in prime time at that convention. But more than four decades later, the world turned around again. The man who left Washington so unpopular returned earlier this year as

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**On behalf of The Carter Center, President and Mrs. Carter help deliver river blindness treatment in Ethiopia.**

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a prime example of how to make a post-presidency actually work. He has become the role model for how former presidents—with no remaining legal power or constitutional role—can still serve their country.

Since leaving office, what Carter achieved is simply breathtaking: The Carter Center (including a library and museum) was built and opened in 1986 and has become a gold standard for presidential centers; President Carter led a successful effort to eliminate the scourges in Africa and elsewhere of river blindness and Guinea worm; he led election monitoring services in more than a hundred overseas elections; he led peacekeeping missions to Haiti and North Korea; he wrote more than 30 books; he led human rights missions throughout the world, won the Nobel Peace Prize, counseled many of his successors when they were president, continued to teach Sunday school regularly, built several thousand homes with his own hands for Habitat for Humanity, became a painter, woodworker, and poet (a rare combination), learned how to ski and mountain climb (in addition to his already expert fly-fishing skills that he further perfected), beat melanoma cancer in his brain, had 22 grandchildren and great-grandchildren (in addition to the four children he had before becoming president), and—hardest of all—did all of this while maintaining his humble, uninterested-in-perks-or-money, average-man approach to life.

Jimmy Carter was a highly intelligent man—but there are many highly intelligent men who achieve political power in this country and others, but they typically lack Carter's other unique qualities. Carter was also intensely curious, determined to learn what he did not know, and became, because of that curiosity and unique drive, what we rarely see in modern life—a true Renaissance man.

But a fair question might be asked: How did this highly intelligent man and political savior for the Democrats in 1976 go from being so popular when he took office to so unpopular when he sought reelection, and then again become so popular by the time he made his final trip to Washington?

Of course, the passage of time solves many problems and heals many wounds, but there is no one easy answer to the turnaround in Carter's popularity. As president, Carter was willing to try many things that were not popular.

He did not care about his personal popularity (ultimately to his political detriment) and always wanted to do what he believed was the morally right thing to do. He was against large dams that he thought were wasteful and environmentally damaging, and he canceled many politically popular dams at the beginning of his administration—to the consternation of many of his fellow Democrats and biggest supporters in Congress.

He thought there should be a national energy policy and developed one (largely in secret at the outset) that was politically unpopular initially and that overwhelmed Congress' ability to respond. (Carter did get most of this ultimately approved, though at real political cost in energy-producing states.)

He thought the Panama Canal should revert to Panama (as did his immediate predecessor), in part because of the problem of securing it militarily and because of the fairness of returning its control to the country in which it was built. That was politically unpopular, but he got the treaty through the Senate, at some real political cost.

He wanted to create two new Cabinet departments to make energy and education programs work better, and he was able to get the Departments of Energy and Education created, again at some real political cost.

He thought that airline ticket prices and rail and trucking rates should be set not in Washington but by the market and wanted to deregulate those industries. And he was able to get this done, as always, with some real



***Egyptian President Anwar Sadat (left), U.S. President Jimmy Carter, and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin make a three-way handshake at the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty on the White House lawn, March 16, 1979.***

Jimmy Carter Library

political damage.

He wanted to bring human rights into the country's foreign policy and did that regularly in ways that had not been done before. (He created the first assistant secretary of state for human rights.)

He wanted to bring peace to the Middle East and set out to negotiate a peace agreement between Israel and Egypt—military enemies since 1948—and did so through a diplomatic tour de force unrivaled in presidential diplomacy, using a nearly two-week period at Camp David to bring the two countries' leaders, Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat, together. And that peace agreement is still in effect today.

He wanted to recognize China, after the opening done earlier by Nixon, and got the approvals and authority necessary to bring about that recognition.

But all these actions, and many others, led to a less popular Carter. His style tended to be a little preachy for some. He tended to make decisions based on what he thought were the best policies, often ignoring the politics involved. Telling him that something would hurt him politically almost propelled him to move forward with the politically unpopular move.

Carter's style also grated on many. He was not a great orator and disliked the kind of Oval Office or highly scripted speeches his predecessors favored to explain difficult matters. His voice was high pitched with a Southern accent, a combination that some found less pleasant to listen to.

He surrounded himself with many who worked with him in Georgia, and many were simply not experienced in the ways of Washington. Carter did not like the social life of Washington, and he and his staff generally avoided that scene as well, which did not endear him to the Washington establishment or press.

And all of that was before the ultimate bad luck set in. The inflation inherited from President Ford—who actually created the “WIN” (Whip Inflation Now) buttons—continued and worsened. Problems in the Middle East reduced oil production and imports, and thus gasoline prices rose and shortages occurred. Russia invaded Afghanistan, and Carter could do little about it but boycott the Olympics, which was not popular in the United States. And after postponing a speech on energy for two weeks, Carter went to Camp David to think about the country's



**Former President Jimmy Carter meets with a group of American hostages after their release in January 1981.**

future. He ultimately gave his famous “malaise” speech, which did not actually use the word “malaise” but did admonish the American people for selfish and narcissistic attitudes. It was not a popular speech. Carter also made the mistake simultaneously of asking for the resignations of his Cabinet officers, which made the country, and the world, think his government was falling. (He accepted only a few of the resignations, but the damage was done.)

And then the ultimate bad luck—against his better judgment and after much lobbying by the foreign policy establishment, Carter let the former Shah of Iran into the United States for cancer treatment, and the result was the takeover of the U.S. Embassy and 52 hostages in Tehran. While that was initially expected to end in a few days, the hostages were held for over a year, paralyzing the Carter administration. Carter was determined to get the hostages out alive and focused a year of his presidency on that mission. He refused to use military force against Iran, thinking it could result in the hostages' deaths (which was abhorrent to him, having bonded to some extent with hostages' families against his advisors' recommendations). In time, he did authorize a rescue mission, but it failed miserably, resulting in no hostages being released, as well as eight American soldiers dying in the crash of a U.S. helicopter and transport plane in the desert. Undoubtedly it was one of the absolute low points of the Carter administration, compounded by the Secretary of State Cy Vance

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resigning to protest the rescue mission even being attempted.

Once all of this added up, Carter was very vulnerable politically. While Republicans argued that Carter was not tough enough or presidential enough, one prominent Democrat argued that Carter was not liberal enough—not hewing to traditional Democratic programs, such as support for universal health care. That Democrat was Sen. Ted Kennedy, who challenged Carter for the presidential nomination in 1980. Initially Kennedy stumbled in explaining why he wanted to be president, and the problems of his past personal life began to hurt him politically. Carter was initially able to use the early public support he was getting for focusing on the hostages in Iran, but that wore off as the primaries moved forward and Carter’s popularity within his party faded. Kennedy came somewhat close to getting the nomination, and although he did not succeed, Carter was wounded politically and Kennedy, along with his supporters, fell short of providing the support Carter had hoped for during the general election campaign.

Adding some further bad luck, Carter’s general election opponent was his opposite—and people seemed to want the opposite of Carter. Reagan was not interested in the details of policy; he had a simple message—lower taxes, less government, and stronger defense. And Reagan, a former TV and radio broadcaster and actor, had the charm and persona that contrasted with Carter’s somewhat dour demeanor and schoolmarmish attitude on matters.

There was only one debate between the candidates. I was involved in helping Carter prepare, but he did not feel he needed much preparation. (Incumbent presidents tend to think they know all of the issues, for they deal with them every day.) We had one practice session at Camp David. The person playing Reagan did very well; Carter was not happy with the result, stormed out of the session, and we never had another real opportunity to practice. When the actual debate occurred, Carter more than held his own on points, but Reagan’s friendly demeanor and jovial



***The Alaska Wilderness League donated a life-size caribou sculpture, installed on the Jimmy Carter Library grounds, to honor the Carter administration’s efforts to protect Alaska lands from development.***

style did not seem threatening to the voters, and Reagan was widely seen as having won the debate. (Reagan famously said, “There you go again” to Carter’s charge that Reagan had opposed Medicare initially; that was true, but the damage was done. Fact checking rarely catches up with the picture.)

This was one week before the election; not much time to turn around that performance or the impression Carter had given. But at the last moment there seemed to be a bright light. It appeared that there was a breakthrough in finally getting the hostages released. If they were in fact released before the election, it was widely thought that the good feeling in the U.S. would enable Carter to overcome what appeared to be a two- to three-percentage-point polling position behind Reagan. So, hopes went very high on the Carter side.

Carter interrupted the campaign to go back to Washington to try to get the release done. But it did not happen.

This failure, again, played to the image of Carter being weak. And it appeared to really impact the polling—certainly among undecideds, who broke heavily against Carter. (As now seems to be the case—not known then—William Casey, then Reagan’s campaign chair and later Reagan’s CIA director, appears to have had contact with the Iranians and implied that a better relationship could be had with Reagan if the hostages were released after the election. No one seems to have definitive proof of what happened in this regard. But there was a good deal of circumstantial evidence that something along these lines occurred.)

Carter was defeated decisively in the election and was so discouraged about the outcome that he conceded before the polls closed in California, likely impacting some of the close congressional elections there. But Carter knew he had lost badly and just wanted to get the concession out of the way.

After the election, Carter proceeded to try to do as much as possible by executive order—like taking large

parts of federal land in Alaska and barring oil and gas drilling there—but he still worked tirelessly to free the hostages. It was clear later that those holding the hostages did not want to give Carter the pleasure of saying the hostages were freed on his watch. The hostages were released just a few minutes after Reagan was inaugurated. But Carter did go visit the hostages in Germany, with a special plane provided by President Reagan.

Then Carter returned to figure out what to do with the rest of his life.

For those who worked for Carter, the same dilemma arose. One day you have power, and everyone tells you how great you are or what you can do to help them. And the next day you are hailing a cab in Washington and trying to get your calls returned by the same people who once told you how great you are.

For many young individuals who worked for Carter, the adjustment was tough. Some lost their desire to return to government and never did. Others did return to serve in subsequent Democratic administrations, and with distinction (such as Secretary of State Madeleine Albright). As Carter was laid to rest, the country no doubt felt better about him than it did when he left office. Forty-four years in the political desert gave him the time to show his intelligence, persistence, determination, morality, and humanity in ways that his presidency did not always do.

Whether someone with the qualities of a Jimmy Carter could ever again emerge from the current political process is doubtful. Carter was not willing to do what is probably required today to get to the top of the political

world. And while his administration was not at the time viewed that favorably by voters, in hindsight he accomplished a great deal—more than current presidents are expected to do. He wanted to do everything, would not prioritize, and the result was a batch of failures alongside a batch of successes. The percentage of successes would no doubt have been

higher had Carter tried to do less, but that was not in his nature. He seemed to want to do in one term what might normally take two terms—as if he knew he might only have one term. And maybe he did know. He seemed to have a direct line to God.

Jimmy Carter's mentor and role model was the head of the nuclear navy, Adm. Hyman Rickover, who brought Carter into the nuclear Navy and served almost as a father figure to Carter.

After an initial interview, when Carter was asked by Rickover whether he had done his best at some task and Carter honestly replied that he probably had not, Rickover instilled in Carter that one should always try to do their best. That was reflected in the title of Carter's first book, one that propelled his 1976 campaign—"Why Not the Best?" Carter was always trying to do what he thought was best, would not settle for second rate or anything other than the ideal. In politics, that does not always work. But Carter never changed his view on the importance of trying always to do his best and instilling in others that they try to do the same.

And anyone who wants to advance in their career, even if not to the presidency, should indeed consider whether they are doing their best at what they are attempting to do. And if not, why not?

One can do his or her best in ways different than Carter did. Everyone has their own personality, strengths, and weaknesses. But as one remembers Carter, and remembers how he came from essentially nowhere to be president, against great odds, and how he went through the depths of despair after losing to Ronald Reagan but came back to achieve so much after his presidency, one should always ask themselves—am I doing my best? Can I do better? Can I leave a mark on others' lives? Can I make the world a better, more humane place? Can I do something meaningful with my life, as Carter did with his?

We should all remember this legacy of Carter's—use your skills to the best of your ability, work as hard as possible, be persistent, be moral, have faith in what you are doing and in your potential to change the world. That is Carter's greatest legacy—showing people how to live one's life committed to helping others. And showing others what they can achieve if they always try their best. President Carter always did. Why not the best?

*David M. Rubenstein was deputy assistant to the president for domestic policy in the Carter administration. Original article appeared on Carlyle.com. Reprinted with permission.*

U.S. Navy



**Adm. Hyman Rickover instilled in Jimmy Carter the importance of always doing his best.**

# Colleague and Friend Reflects on the Continued Relevance of Jimmy Carter

By Jim Copeland

The last time I spent time with former President Jimmy Carter was 2019 in Nashville, for the occasion of President and Rosalynn Carter's 36th Habitat for Humanity work project. With the onset of the Covid pandemic a few months later, it would be their final Habitat work project.

In Nashville, the Carters and 1,000 volunteers built 21 new homes. President Carter, then 95, arrived with a black eye, the result of a fall which required 14 stitches. Undeterred, he traveled the same afternoon and participated in opening ceremonies for the build.

I saw Carter's exceptional work ethic many times over the years. My introduction to the Carter political operation took place in 1976 when I coordinated the Carter-Mondale general election campaign in Northern California. The enthusiasm in the campaign was incredible. Hundreds of volunteers walked precincts; thousands gathered to view a debate against Gerald Ford.

In 1977 I joined the Carter administration at the Federal Home Loan Bank Board, then moved to the White

House congressional liaison office in 1978, where I had a firsthand view of the president's legislative efforts on Capitol Hill.

Though not widely recognized at the time, Carter's legislative success scorecard was amazing—it has not been equaled since.

One of my jobs was preparation of a weekly legislative report for the president, a summary of the prior week's activity as well as a look ahead to the coming week. In those reports, we documented the successes and the failures.

Wins far outnumbered losses. Congressional Quarterly reported 76.6% of Carter's initiatives were passed by Congress. The victories included establishing two Cabinet-level departments, Energy and Education, and reform of the civil service system. Many industries, including airlines, trucking, and railroads, were deregulated. With passage of the Alaska Lands legislation in 1980, Carter achieved the largest expansion of protected lands in history, doubling the size of the national park system.

As staff, we worked long hours and only later did we understand that in our desire to implement the president's agenda, we spent too little time touting his accomplishments. Carter was also not inclined to take time to talk about his achievements. The end result: We did not tell our story well.

Biographies written in recent years by Jonathan Alter, Stuart Eizenstat, and Kai Bird have done much to fill in gaps in public awareness of his record. With time, the reassessment has continued and Jimmy Carter, who died on Dec. 29 at age 100, is being recognized not only for his post-presidential work with The Carter Center and beyond, but as a hugely consequential president. I am thankful to have been afforded the opportunity to work for and know him.

*Jim Copeland served as deputy assistant for congressional liaison in the Carter White House. Original article appeared in Monterey County Now. Reprinted with permission.*

Jimmy Carter Library



**On May 13, 1977, President Carter signs the public works jobs bill and appropriations bill for the economic stimulus package.**

# My View From Inside the White House: Our World Is a Better Place Because of Jimmy Carter

By Steve Simmons

**A**s a young man, I served on his White House domestic policy staff for almost four years and saw him occasionally in his post-presidential years. In my humble opinion, Jimmy Carter was an extraordinary man who led an extraordinary life of accomplishment and giving back to the world, representing the best of who we are as a country.

President Carter was very smart. I remember preparing a memo on the complicated civil service reform initiative we were working on to prep the president for a meeting he was about to have. While the memo took me two weeks to finish, he read it in a few minutes, understood it completely, and ran a flawless meeting in which he expertly fielded questions about the reform initiative.

He was very hardworking. I vividly remember him wearing jeans and carrying a load of briefing books on a Saturday as he walked to his West Wing office to dig in for the day.

He set strict ethical guidelines, sending out a memo on staff behaving at all times. My girlfriend—and wife-to-be—would drop me off at the White House gate most mornings. Perhaps going overboard, I stopped kissing her at the drop-off after the memo.

A couple of times I heard Carter rightly be offended when someone subtly implied that his presidency was a failure compared to his Carter Center work. Carter's one-term presidency accomplished a great deal—more than many two-term presidents. On the domestic front he was farsighted. Working with Congress, he deregulated industries suffering under stifling, anti-competitive old laws—including airlines, trucking, railroads, and telecommunications, as well as reforming the civil service (the last three of these initiatives I worked on). He created the Department of Energy that among other things pushed for U.S. energy independence as well as more efficient energy use, and he put solar panels on the roof of the West Wing—foreseeing the need for alternative energy in the future. He created the Department of Education to help our public schools and created millions of acres of new national parks. He appointed more women and African-Americans to federal positions than any president before him. He appointed Paul Volcker as chairman of the



Courtesy of Steve Simmons

**President Jimmy Carter at a meeting in the Cabinet Room in 1977. On the left is Steve Simmons, who served on Carter's domestic policy staff.**

Federal Reserve. Volcker was key to eventually lowering inflation. He was deeply religious and lived by a strict ethical code.

On the foreign affairs front, I remember my wife Eileen and I were watching TV on a Sunday when unexpectedly we were invited to the East Room of the White House. Carter was returning after 13 days of secret negotiations with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin at Camp David. We thought he would announce in nice diplomatic language that they had failed to reach an agreement after all this time. To our amazement, tears, smiles, and applause filled the room as he announced that terms for a peace between Egypt and Israel had been reached. When Eileen and I shook his hand to congratulate him, I jokingly said, "Mr. President, this is slightly more important than civil service reform." He and we laughed loudly. The treaty has stood the test of time and positively impacted the region.

President Carter also made human rights a critical part of our foreign policy, pushing governments far and wide to honor them; formally recognized China for the first time—greeting its leader on the South Lawn; signed a treaty with Panama on the canal, which prevented years of terrorist attacks on the vital waterway; and he kept us out of war.

There were, of course, mistakes Carter himself made,

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The Carter Center



**President Carter received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002.**

and some personality traits that didn't help in the political arena, like many presidents. And there were forces that significantly impacted his presidency that he had little control over—high inflation and interest rates, an oil embargo, and the Islamic revolution in Iran toppling the U.S.-allied Shah and grabbing U.S. Embassy personnel as hostages. Despite all this, his presidential record of accomplishment was outstanding.

Carter's post-presidential accomplishments are well known—his creation of The Carter Center in Atlanta; work to eradicate disease, saving millions of lives; monitoring of elections around the world, representing the values of our democracy; and helping build houses for Habitat for Humanity for so many years. He was a prolific and excellent author, a skilled woodworker, a fine fly fisherman, and—by the way—winner of the Nobel Peace Prize!

In the 1990s, I invited Carter to speak to a group of about 60 business leaders and their wives at our home in Connecticut. About 90% were Republicans, and there was some grumbling in the weeks prior about why we had invited this guy to speak. After Carter's presentation that evening, every member of the audience gave him a five-minute standing ovation. As I led him out following dinner, we passed the door to my garage, where the diverse catering and waiter staff were hard at work. Carter said to me, "Steve, these are my people. Let's go in and say hi." He shook every hand, much to their joy and amazement.

I can say without a doubt that our world is a better place because of Jimmy Carter. May he rest in peace.

*Steve Simmons was an assistant and then associate director of the Carter White House domestic policy staff. Original article appeared in the Greenwich (Connecticut) Time. Reprinted with permission.*

# My Service to President Carter and His Service to the World

By Andrew E. Manatos

**A**s I attended the funeral of President Jimmy Carter, under whom I served as an assistant secretary of commerce, I was struck by what a unique and extraordinary man he was in many ways that are generally unknown. For example, he showed his humanitarian focus, which later in life became widely recognized, soon after his election. He had his State Department establish an assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs. It created a hyper focus for America on these important topics.

President Carter's administration also accomplished major steps toward today's admired goals of attacking waste, fraud, and abuse in our government. Prior to President Carter, our country's ability to redress mistreatment of citizens by our federal government was terrible. Typically, citizens' complaints were referred to the office of the secretary of the department, who usually referred it to the department's general counsel. The problem was that frequently the general counsel was a long-term personal friend of the secretary who appointed him or her to this prestigious position. President Carter replaced that age-old,

"old boys" network with the establishment in each department of an inspector general. Those appointed had a background in such investigations and were beholden to justice for the citizen instead of the secretary.

Two long-forgotten acts of President Carter give insight into his deep concern about our African-American community. He moved each department to do whatever it could to help lift the African-American community. At the Department of Commerce, for example, we set aside 10% of federal government building contract funds for minority contractors. President Carter also presented the Presidential Medal of Freedom to the highest religious leader to join Martin Luther King in his dangerous Selma, Alabama, civil rights march. That leader was Greek Orthodox Archbishop of America, His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos.

President Carter showed to me personally his unusual humanity and understanding when I submitted my resignation. Every week at the White House, in a room next to the Oval Office, I and the other assistant secretaries for legislation met, led by President Carter's congressional

right hand, Frank Moore, to learn what the president wanted us to lobby in the U.S. Congress. In one of those meetings, I learned that the president's target was to lift the U.S. arms embargo on Turkey, imposed for Turkey's illegal use of American arms for its invasion and occupation of Cyprus. I submitted my resignation to Frank. I explained that I could not work to end such an important and just embargo that I had spent years on Capitol Hill enacting. I had led that lobby effort out of the office of philhellene U.S. Sen. Tom Eagleton and worked with fellow Hellenes Paul Sarbanes and John Brademas in the House. Our embargo success over President Nixon and Henry Kissinger was the only time in modern history the U.S. Congress overrode the White House on a major foreign policy issue.



**Under the Carter administration, the State Department established an assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs. Above: President Carter receives the first International Human Rights Award from the Synagogue Council of America in October 1979.**

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Generously, President Carter overlooked my insubordination and asked if I would stay if I was completely uninvolved with the effort to lift the Turkish arms embargo. I agreed.

Soon after President Carter's time in the White House, he became the first U.S. president to stand up for the oppressed spiritual head of the second-largest Christian church in the world, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Orthodox Christianity, by visiting the Patriarchate. His presence at the Patriarchate resulted in the government of Turkey allowing the repair of major damage to the Patriarchate. Following Carter's example, sitting President Bill Clinton visited the Ecumenical Patriarchate, as did sitting Vice President Joe Biden, twice.

Years later, I noticed that President Carter had a lasting impact on those who worked for him. Nearly to a person, everyone who worked for Carter spent a

good deal of their lives thereafter devoted to improving America, as President Carter had worked so hard to do. For example, Stuart Eizenstat, the person who in his early 30s led President Carter's domestic policy, among other things, successfully secured well over \$1 billion from outside of America for victims of WWII in the world Jewish community. Others in the administration similarly followed Carter's example of trying to leave the world a better place.



*Andrew E. Manatos was the assistant secretary of commerce for congressional affairs under President Jimmy Carter. Original article appeared on ekathimerini.com. Reprinted with permission.*

## Former PGA Commissioner Shares Impact of Jimmy Carter's Legacy

*By Tim Finchem*

**T**hroughout my life, I have had the privilege of playing golf with several U.S. presidents. I never played golf with Jimmy Carter because Jimmy Carter didn't play golf. And while I had many experiences with the former president while I worked for him during his administration, two memories stand out that took place not when we were together in the White House but, rather, when I was the PGA Tour's commissioner.

One spring, I decided to take some friends to Alaska for a combined skiing and fishing trip. The trip coincided with my birthday. Included in the group were a couple of Tour players, Davis Love III and Justin Leonard. After concluding the skiing part of the trip, we caught a plane to do some fishing. This was not exactly the most luxurious of trips. We were on a prop plane that moved very slowly and made a whole lot of noise. And we were jammed in there. There may have been enough seats for all of us to sit, but I really can't recall. As we're cruising along, with our single pilot in the cockpit, he says to us in a loud voice—he had to [shout] for us to hear him over the noise from the propellers—"Would you take a moment and look out of

your windows from both sides of the plane?"

We did as he instructed, and we saw mountains and land for as far as we could see—most of it snow-covered. It was an amazing sight.

The pilot continued: "Now that you've done that, I want you to know and take away one thing when you leave here. You need to know that everything you just looked at, President Jimmy Carter saved. All that land was going in the wrong direction, whether it was for (oil) drilling or for development. President Carter took office and eventually decided that he wanted to save all that land for future use, for people like us who were in Alaska vacationing. When you go back to your homes, you tell them that Jimmy Carter is this country's biggest friend of the environment."

As we all know, President Carter, since leaving office after the 1980 election, has also had a singular devotion to Habitat for Humanity, the organization that uses volunteer labor to build simple, affordable housing for people in need. Back in 2000, President Carter's office contacted me at Tour headquarters informing me that he was coming to Jacksonville, Florida, to build a house, and he wanted to know if the PGA Tour and its employees would be



**Long an advocate for Habitat for Humanity, President Carter arranged with PGA Tour Commissioner Tim Finchem (right) and PGA Tour staffers to help erect a home in Jacksonville, Florida, in 2000.**

interested in volunteering.

I jumped at the opportunity, and the response from Tour employees was tremendous.

It had been several years since I had seen the president, so it was great to reconnect, especially since we were all involved in such a worthy cause. Prior to getting started at the house site on the northside of Jacksonville, not far from Brentwood Golf Course, site of Cary Middlecoff's 1949 Jacksonville Open victory, President Carter said: "Now, Tim, are you familiar with hammering and nailing and what goes into framing a house?" I proudly responded with: "Well, Mr. President, as a matter of fact, I grew up in construction, and although it's been a while, I feel like I'll be OK."

He seemed satisfied with that answer, and he came back with: "Let's the two of us pair up, and we'll work together for the day."

Once at the job site, I put on my tool belt and went to work. I hadn't swung the hammer more than twice when

President Carter stopped me and told me I needed to work on my hammering. "I'm not so sure about your technique, Tim," he gently said. "Here, let me show you how to do it. You watch me for a few minutes, and you'll get the hang of it."

I thought I knew how to handle a hammer and what to do on a job site, but President Carter thought differently. He was not having it. I suppose I eventually contributed at least a little to the construction of that house. I had a great day working alongside him, and the Tour staff did great work getting that house built.

President Carter was a wonderful human being, soft-spoken and so easy to talk to, and I'll be forever grateful for all the interactions I had with him—both in the White House and otherwise.

I also can't look at a hammer and not think of him.

*Tim Finchem, former PGA Tour commissioner, served as President Carter's deputy advisor for economic affairs. Original article appeared on PGATour.com. Reprinted with permission.*

# Personal Tributes Honor President Carter

Many people who knew former U.S. President Jimmy Carter well wrote personal tributes to him, remembering his impact on the United States and in their own lives.

## A Modern-Day Renaissance Man

By Jay Beck

**J**immy Carter was always impatient with touting his achievements. The time it took to promote his accomplishments stole from the clock that could have been used for other tasks. His restlessness was encouraged by his knowledge of how many unfinished problems needed to be addressed.

His was a world that preferred an unadorned truth even if it was less appealing to mass audiences. Jimmy Carter's greatness is not calculated in his tangible wealth or his many public accomplishments but in his dedication to an honest purpose in life, in measured progress and an iron-willed determination. Those traits were nurtured by his early days on the farm, the structured systems in the military, and the organizational charts of government. He preferred the data of organizational engineering to speeches containing breezy platitudes.

His communications were exceptional with individuals and small groups, where his honesty could flow freely in direct conversations. He got better in the more formal public address formats by allowing his inner confidence, knowledge, and a sense of humor to be on display rather than delivering carefully structured comments written by others.

But within his engineering mind and passion for details

was a burning spirit for justice and fairness. His compassion for the human spirit and the need for all people to be treated fairly was not tempered with a need for recognition. He was driven by the engine of his compassion toward action regardless of how he appeared or his ranking in future judgments. He used the place he had created for himself in history to accomplish an incomparable array of achievements focused on improving humanity. If history judges his deeds fairly, it will see an overwhelming list of far-reaching accomplishments often motivated by trying to do what was best rather than by any self-interest.

There were few people on the earth who possessed his breadth of knowledge and ability to process and retain information. He was a modern-day Renaissance man with a passion for art, music, literature, hunting, fishing, sports, technology, faith, human rights, fairness, and family.

The criticism of his detractors who clung to worn clichés, many based on false assumptions, did not give him the slightest concern. He looked on them as poorly informed, small minds that deserved his Christian compassion and forgiveness, but he did not pay them much attention.

The importance of the loss of Jimmy Carter is not that there will be grief among the captains of industry and world leaders, but that he will be mourned by illiterate tribesmen and women, poor farmers, the kitchen help of the world who had met him, actually knew him, and counted him as their friend. We have never had such a president who chose to go among the unwashed to bring them the hope and promise of a better life. His years after the White House were not those of photo ops and improved golf scores but of days and weeks trekking in the backcountry to find the troubled and destitute in the remote corners of the world and becoming their friend. He would go back time and time again to those places of filth and strife and disease to make sure that those unfortunates who were destined to live there had a better life than when he first came. And for those millions who will never be able to comprehend the luxury of our lives in the United States, he was their champion.

There are tears in the Himalayan mountains, and the backcountry of Central and South America, and the jungles of Africa, in the craggy mountains of Korea and in the tents of Palestine. In those and hundreds of desolate places that did



**President Carter comforts a Ghanaian girl as a health worker removes a Guinea worm from her ankle.**

not even hear the news for many days after, they will dance for him, and the tears will be real and the loss personal, and that space in the heart will remain empty.

*Jay Beck is a veteran of the Peanut Brigade, Executive Office of the President, The Carter Center, and Carter-Mondale Alumni Association.*

## The Debate Story

By Terry Adamson

I first met Jimmy Carter in the spring of 1964. My high school debate team from Calhoun, Georgia, population 4,000, had just won the state championship and the Barkley Forum at Emory University. State Sen. Glenn Pelham of Cairo, who was also the debate coach at Emory, invited us to the state Capitol to be recognized. (Our resolution of commendation came just after the Watermelon Queen's.) Pelham's district, and his seat in the Senate chamber, adjoined Carter's. He introduced us to his neighbor.

Carter did not later remember that first meeting, but he did recall the trip he made from Plains to Atlanta in 1965 when, as a college sophomore, I invited him to speak to the Emory Young Democrats, probably about 30 of us. Carter was then running for Congress. Young and appealing, with a background as a naval nuclear submarine officer and head of his family's peanut farming business, he impressed the students, some of whom likened him to JFK.

Friendship has many dimensions, and ours had many iterations over the years. This was the start of ours. But the story Carter liked to tell for decades afterward was about my role the following year, 1966, when Carter ran for governor instead of Congress.

As a rising junior at Emory, I chaired the youth campaign for former Gov. Ellis Arnall, who was attempting a comeback 20 years after leaving office. After the surprising withdrawal of the establishment's candidate, former Gov. Ernest Vandiver, following a heart attack, Arnall became the leading candidate in a crowded Democratic field that also included segregationist Lester Maddox—and Carter.

Several times in 1966, I was a surrogate for Arnall at various candidate forums, in which the then lesser-known Carter would participate. In Carter's frequent retelling of the story, these were akin to the Lincoln-Douglas debates. He always closed the story by saying that a champion college debater stole the show. (Arnall and Carter placed first and third in the primary, and Arnall lost to Maddox in the primary runoff).



Courtesy of Terry Adamson

**Terry Adamson (third from left) ascended Mount Fuji in Japan with President and Mrs. Carter.**

Carter would retell the story in 1970 when I was a reporter for the Atlanta Constitution covering his gubernatorial campaign, which he won. He retold it in my presence during his time in state office, the few times we saw each other during his 1976 presidential campaign, during his time in the White House, and often afterward, especially when we celebrated his milestone birthdays.

During Carter's presidency, I was an assistant to Attorney General Griffin Bell, for whom I had been a law clerk on the Fifth Circuit. On June 28, 1978, the day the Supreme Court decided the affirmative action case *Bakke vs. Board of Regents*, I accompanied Judge Bell to the Oval Office. Since the decision's announcement earlier that day, I had studied the opinions with Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Drew Days and Solicitor General Wade McCree. Judge Bell had been testifying on the Hill, so he asked me to brief him and then the president. Carter was pleased by the affirmative action ruling, which said no to quotas and yes to goals. As I nervously started the briefing, the president of the United States interrupted me: "Every time I see you, I think of Ellis Arnall and you debating me." The president then told an assistant to be sure to invite Ellis Arnall to the next state dinner. (Arnall was invited, and he attended.)

After leaving the White House, Carter asked me to be his and Rosalynn's lawyer for a matter involving a falsehood concerning them that was published in the *Washington Post* on Oct. 5, 1981, in a gossip column called "The Ear." It took about four weeks to resolve what became a highly

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public controversy, covered extensively by major media. The outcome—all good news for the Carters—was widely publicized when the Post reported on page one about a letter its publisher, Donald Graham, sent to the Carters retracting and apologizing for the original report (and repudiating as well an editorial that had defended as good journalism the publication of “rumors” about public figures, including rumors known or believed to be false).

The Post matter resulted in a different level of engagement between the Carters and me, not only as their personal attorney on any number of matters, but increasingly over time as a confidant, and with a growing friendship for the next 44 years. One constant over that time was the creation, building, and nurturing of The Carter Center, a remarkable legacy truly worthy of the Carters. Another constant was the debate story.

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***I loved Rosalynn and Jimmy. I miss them. I am enormously proud of all they accomplished in their virtuous service to our nation and humanity.***

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He told the story many times to many people. After his presidency, I accompanied Carter to the Democratic National Conventions in San Francisco, Atlanta, New York, and Los Angeles. As he would introduce me to others, he would tell the debate story. He wrote me a short thank you note after the Atlanta convention in 1988 that ended, “Including the last few years’ work, you’ve more than made up for debating against me in 1966.”

The Carters hosted an arrival day reception for their family and personal guests attending the 2002 Nobel Peace Prize ceremony. Rosalynn and Jimmy worked the room to make sure that all their family and guests met each other. When Jimmy introduced me to Willie Nelson, he retold the story. Over the last 44 years, I traveled many times with them, including five times to China and three to Japan. With some frequency, the story would reappear. He told it in 1994 at a Japanese ryokan to a small cadre of climbers before our ascent the next morning to the top of Mount Fuji. He told it during a 1998 dinner in Caracas, Venezuela, to his three co-chairs of an election monitoring delegation.

In November 1996, many Carter Justice Department alumni gathered for a reunion, to which top officials of the Clinton Justice Department were also invited. The occasion

happened on my birthday. Judge Bell first read a letter from President Carter about the Justice Department’s remarkable accomplishments during his administration.

And then Judge Bell surprised me by reading to the group a very personal birthday letter from President Carter:

“I still remember you as a bane of my existence—a young college student and the surrogate debater for an older statesman who was my opponent in the 1966 race for governor of Georgia. I was always distressed, and almost always defeated, when your candidate was somewhere else, and I had to face you on one side and Lester Maddox on the other. I could usually handle Lester, and his pick handle, but had trouble with you and your youthful exuberance, quick wit, and mastery of nuance. With you out of the picture—or at least not facing me on the stump—I was able to do much better, as some of you may remember, winning a couple of elections in 1970 and 1976. Since then, you have been one of the bright spots of my life. First, you helped to guide and restrain my attorney general, Griffin Bell. And since he and I came back to Georgia, you have been a mainstay in shaping my life through our work at The Carter Center. I am equally grateful for the personal friendship that has developed between us and our families. In many ways, you have taken the place of my closest friend, Charles Kirbo.”

I loved Rosalynn and Jimmy. I miss them. I am enormously proud of all they accomplished in their virtuous service to our nation and humanity.

*Terry Adamson was former special assistant to Attorney General Griffin Bell and personal attorney for Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter.*

## **When I Think of Jimmy Carter**

*By Rex Granum*

**W**hen I think of Jimmy Carter, more often than not, my thoughts turn to the Summer of '76. At age 52, he was—unknowable at the time—barely halfway through his 100 years of life.

He was back in his hometown of Plains, resting up from his improbable race for the White House, preparing to accept his party’s nomination for president and setting the course for the fall campaign.

It was a long, hot South Georgia summer with relentless humidity. A large press corps was always on hand and, with diversions few, near-daily softball games were a dominant theme. The press corps team versus the Carter team, which the always competitive Jimmy Carter loaded up with young,

buff off-duty Secret Service agents.

Plains residents were abuzz with excitement that “our Jimmy” might become president and a bit startled by the flood of new visitors.

A steady stream of diverse personalities made the trek, seeking interviews: Barbara Walters, Walter Cronkite, Norman Mailer, Andy Warhol, Doris Kearns Goodwin, and Pierre Salinger, among others.

As the weeks wore on, would-be running mates arrived one by one, including Walter Mondale. Those being considered met at the Carter home, toured his farm, and were introduced around town before undergoing impromptu joint news conferences.

The July Democratic convention behind him and August days slipping past, candidate Carter continued to grant interviews, devour briefing papers, and soak up the joy and strength he so clearly drew from his hometown. Throughout, if he found the tasks at hand and ahead daunting, the challenges and pressure too great, he never let on.

On Labor Day, Jimmy Carter set off for FDR’s Little White House in nearby Warm Springs, Georgia, the kickoff to his general election campaign and all that awaited him in the second half of his extraordinary life.

*Rex Granum was a Carter White House deputy press secretary.*

## The Pioneer of Solar Power

By Jay Hakes

The accomplishments of American presidents often look very different decades after the presidents leave office. Such reevaluations rely on the power of hindsight, as amply illustrated by Jimmy Carter’s strong commitment to solar energy.

When dedicating a solar array on the White House roof in 1979, Carter set a goal of 20% of energy from renewable sources by the turn of the century. The passage of the Windfall Profits Tax let him keep his commitment to balance the budget while pouring massive appropriations into photovoltaic solar power.

By 2000, the share of renewables had barely budged, leading many to conclude that Carter’s bold initiative had failed. There was even a plaintive documentary called “The Road Not Taken” bemoaning the lack of progress. Yet, massive research and development had already sharply reduced the cost of solar, just not enough to compete with established fuels.

To the surprise of many, photovoltaics reached a tipping point in the new century. By 2012, the cost of solar had fallen 99% from 1980, enough to reconfigure the world of energy



Courtesy of Jay Hakes

### Jay Hakes recalls how President Carter installed solar panels on the roof of the White House.

and provide a much-needed tool to slow down the spewing of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. The cost of solar then declined even further.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration estimates that 93% of planned utility-scale electric-generation capacity additions in 2025 will be solar, battery storage, or wind.

I try to remind people of the link between Carter’s early solar investments and the current solar boom, whether speaking on university campuses or the 2017 dedication of a 10-acre solar farm on the Carters’ land in Plains.

At the celebration of the solar farm and Jimmy and Rosalynn’s 75th wedding anniversary, I talked with him about his clean energy legacy. He had lived to see the dawn of the new solar age he had envisaged as president. His famous grin never beamed more broadly.

*Jay Hakes worked for President Carter in many roles.*

## Our True North Star

By Rick Jasculca

Jimmy Carter long ago ceased being just a U.S. president for whom my family and I had the privilege to do advance. Indeed, Jimmy and Rosalynn became family—and for our family, our true North Star.

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Courtesy of Rick Jasculca



**Rick Jasculca (second from left) remembers President and Mrs. Carter as friends.**

My journey with the Carters began in 1975 and has continued unabated for 50 years, culminating with myself and my children playing key roles in Rosalynn’s funeral service in Atlanta in November 2023 and Jimmy’s state funeral in Washington, D.C., this past January.

I began doing volunteer advance work in the ’76 campaign and subsequently was a press lead, then advance lead for Rosalynn during the White House years, including trips by the Carters to Japan in 1979 and to Rome and the Vatican in 1980.

Honestly, when we lost in ’80, I thought, “What an incredible experience! So sad it’s over.”

Wow, was I wrong! Not only did my late wife, Judy, and I play a significant role in the grand opening of The Carter Center in 1986, but three of our four children (Aimee, Andrew, and Lauren) and I advanced the Carters over the succeeding decades throughout the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Most of the trips were focused on the priorities and work of The Carter Center, but some involved Jimmy Carter’s role as a member of The Elders.

Over that time, my family became very close to the Carters. But even I was stunned when, in 2014, my business partner, Jim Terman, and I received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Publicity Club of Chicago and President Carter agreed to be the keynote speaker at the award presentation ceremony.

Before the event, President Carter invited both of our families, including my oldest grandchildren, up for personal time. I was seated next to President Carter during the dinner, and while he chatted amiably with everyone at our table, I nervously worked on my notes for introducing him. Almost

90 at the time, he needed no notes and spoke effortlessly and beautifully about Jim and me and all the ways we helped him and Rosalynn. A class act. A true North Star.

*Rick Jasculca was an advance man and press lead for the Carters. He is chairman of JT Strategic Communications, based in Chicago.*

## **Banana Sandwiches, Imagination, and Scouts**

By Dot Padgett

I heard the name Jimmy Carter for the first time in a conversation with my husband after he returned from one of the trips required for his job as a young banker with a major Atlanta bank.

He told me that he had met the nicest couple, Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter in Plains, and had been invited to eat lunch with them.

“What did you have for lunch?” I asked. He responded, “Banana sandwiches.”

I later learned the real story, and it showed me the sensitivity and common sense of Jimmy Carter.

Rosalynn, who worked long hours in the peanut warehouse, was not pleased when Jimmy surprised her and invited someone for lunch at their home. She was not prepared, and her house was not in order.

Jimmy patiently explained that he understood how she felt but it was not the food or the house that was important, it was the hospitality.

In 1970, Jimmy Carter walked into my yard and asked this busy mother to volunteer in his campaign for governor. That day changed the direction of my life.



**Dot Padgett recalls President Carter using a small plane—which took off and landed in a peanut field—during his campaign for Georgia governor.**

In the campaign, Jimmy and Rosalynn had no boundaries. They used imagination to make up for the lack of money. Jimmy frequently flew in a small plane with a volunteer who was a pilot. To save time and fuel, they cleared a small landing strip in a peanut field. One time I was spending the night in Plains, and we got a call that the plane would be landing very late. We were told to go to the field in two cars, and when we heard the plane, to turn on the car lights at each end of the strip. I had some anxiety about a plane flying over my head and had to decide whether to stay in the car and risk being hit by a plane or get out in a peanut field that I knew must be filled with snakes.

Two scouts attending the National Scout Jamboree in Atlanta were staying with me, and Jimmy was on the program. The boys mentioned how exciting it would be for them to meet the governor.

I called Rosalynn, who told me to drive to the front door of the mansion, where she would meet us. The scouts were startled and pleased to enter the foyer just at the moment the governor stepped out of the elevator. He was dressed in a sweatsuit and eating out of a bag of potato chips. Sitting in the kitchen, Jimmy and Rosalynn entertained the two excited boys for 30 minutes or more.

I knew Jimmy's capacity for being a leader. In 1973, I had written in the guest book at the mansion: "Today, the Governor's Mansion. Tomorrow, The White House."

As an official member of the Office of Protocol, it was my pleasure to see him meet international leaders invited for official visits to this country with dignity and respect.

I was proud of every moment he was in the White House as president of the United States.

*Dot Padgett was a leader of the Peanut Brigade and the author of "Jimmy Carter: Elected President with Peanuts and Pocket Change."*

## A Historic Peace Agreement

By Phil Wise

**O**n Aug. 22, 1978, President and Mrs. Carter pushed off for a three-day float trip down the middle fork of the Salmon River in Idaho, guests of their good friend Cecil Andrus, the former governor of Idaho who was now secretary of the interior. I had no idea that this time of relaxation in the outdoors would set the stage for one of President Carter's most important accomplishments: the Camp David Accords.

While I spent three days on the raft dodging numerous



Jimmy Carter Library

**Egyptian President Anwar Sadat (left), President Carter, and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin meet at Camp David.**

fly-fishing casts gone off course, the Carters enjoyed a breathtaking trip through some of the most gorgeous wilderness areas of our country.

Once the trip was over, the Carters headed to Yellowstone National Park for a few more days of solitude. I flew back to Washington to assist in the logistical planning for the Camp David summit involving Prime Minister Menachem Begin of Israel, President Anwar Sadat of Egypt, and President Carter.

Camp David is very serene and private, providing a comfortable, well-maintained and secure environment. It just was not designed to host a major foreign policy negotiation with three heads of state. And no one thought the summit would last 13 days. After many ups and downs and sessions that tried everyone's patience and endurance, the talks led to the Camp David Accords that brought peace between Israel and Egypt.

On Sunday evening, Sept. 18, 1978, the three principals boarded Marine One for a helicopter ride to the White House for the announcement of the accords. I was onboard also. We left Camp David in twilight, and as we traveled across the Catoctin Mountains, the state of Maryland, and the bright glow of Washington at night, I reflected on the many adventures with President and Mrs. Carter that led to this important accomplishment in their lives and mine.

From a float trip to a historic peace agreement, this point in time was truly a blessing.

*Phil Wise was a White House staffer and Carter Center vice president of operations.*

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## Jimmy Carter's Big Year in 1976

By John Barrow

In politics I naturally followed my parents, and they took us the long way around the barn to get on the Carter bandwagon.

My parents were all for Arnall in '66, and for Sanders in '70. But after Jimmy gave that inaugural, we were on board for good!

In the Winter of '76 I was plucky enough to campaign for Jimmy as a "Peanut Brigader" in the Florida primary, where Jimmy finally ended George Wallace's role as spoiler in Southern presidential politics.

And that summer I was lucky enough to serve as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in Madison Square Garden. Thanks to friends like Charlie Kirbo, I was the youngest delegate from Georgia that year—the delegation that everyone wanted to know.

Then I was thick-skinned enough to endure the scrutiny of my classmates (and even a professor or two) at Harvard Law School, where I took my place as a I-L that fall, right before the election—the first presidential election I ever voted in, by absentee ballot.

What Jimmy did in that Bicentennial year of 1976—for me, and for the whole country—was to reverse a political tide that had been flowing against many of the things I was raised to believe in.

The election of Lester Maddox in '66 was the product of a backlash. So was Nixon's election in '68.



**Jimmy Carter speaks to a crowd from the platform of the Democratic Whistlestop train during his 1976 presidential campaign.**

Jimmy's elections—first as governor in '70, and then as president in '76—showed that no ebb tide is permanent. No matter how bad things may seem, we can still make them better.

That was an important lesson for me in the spring of my life, when America seemed to have lost her way. And, boy, is that lesson ever important today.

*John Barrow is a former U.S. representative and Peanut Brigade volunteer.*

## Protector of Rivers

By Rob Caughlan

It was October 1973. Georgia Gov. Jimmy Carter had come all the way to Hollywood to help me and a group of river lovers. Our group, Friends of the River, was trying to stop the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from building a big pork-barrel, boondoggle dam on California's Stanislaus River.



**Rob Caughlan recalls Gov. Carter halting the era of big dam building.**

River rafting and kayaking were very popular sports on California's great rivers. We had a fantastic volunteer campaign as 30,000 volunteers collected half a million signatures to put a ballot measure before the voters.

Gov. Carter was our guest celebrity at a fundraising event we organized at the home of Lorne Greene, the star of the cowboy television series "Bonanza." Greene's wife, Nancy, was a river lover.

Carter told us about stopping the giant Sprewell Bluff dam on the Flint River. He was proud of his training as a nuclear engineer by the fabled and feared Adm. Hyman Rickover and was indignant about the fact that he found significant environmental and economic problems with the Army Corps' cost-benefit ratios. He said their analysis was a "passel of lies."

I thought his military sensibilities were offended. He didn't think military guys were supposed to lie to each other. Afterward I said, "I'm not sure that you really want to say those things about the Corps. The sacred cow in Washington was always the sacred pork." Carter replied, "I know what I

wanted to say.”

Some congressmen freaked out when President Carter continued his efforts to save rivers and stop boondoggle dams. But his leadership brought about the end of the big dam building era. None have been built since.

*Rob Caughlan is a former White House environmental staff member.*

## ‘My Eleanor’

*By Eleanor Clift*

In the early spring of 1977, I was in the press room when Jody Powell tapped me on the shoulder and said the president wanted to see me. As a newly minted White House correspondent, I figured this must be standard procedure. For the record, it never happened again with Carter or any of his successors.

“You’ve come to talk about my Eleanor,” Carter exclaimed as Jody ushered me into the Oval Office.



**President and Mrs. Carter**

Newsweek was doing a cover on Rosalynn because the president had apparently overstepped some unseen line for first ladies by deciding to send his wife to Latin America as his representative. “Who elected her?” certain portions of the electorate demanded to know. We were going all out at the magazine, polling the public about this daring move by the new president. Carter wasn’t going to back down, and his reference to “my Eleanor” conjured up former first lady Eleanor Roosevelt and her activism, further alarming the troglodytes in the electorate. It wasn’t until years later when I visited the First Ladies Museum in Canton, Ohio, and saw Rosalynn’s portrait that I realized her full name was Eleanor Rosalynn Smith Carter.

In an interview granted Newsweek after the 1980 election, I was prodded by editors to ask Carter about the role religion played in his presidency. He didn’t say anything new or surprising, stuck to reading the Bible together, but he did deliver one memorable line. “Rosalynn and I have a religious experience every night before we go to sleep.” As Jody escorted the three of us from the Oval, he couldn’t resist muttering under his breath: “That’s not what we call it in Vienna, Georgia.” The line didn’t make it into the magazine, but Carter heard it and wasn’t happy.

*Eleanor Clift was a Newsweek correspondent.*

## Grateful for the Opportunity

*By Ray Marshall*

My favorite memory of Jimmy Carter is how his decisions combined strong moral values with very good, evidence-based analysis. This process caused him to strongly support democracy as the best way to protect and promote the rights people derived from their Creator, not kings or autocrats. He strongly rejected the dishonest credit-taking and blame-casting that characterized Washington politics.

President Carter’s domestic and foreign policies strengthened democracy through broadly shared economic growth by complementing macroeconomic policies with selective programs to help people and places left behind by competitive markets.

The Carter administration supported democratic labor organizations, especially in autocratic countries. Many of these leaders were elected presidents of their countries.

The power of President Carter’s values-based foreign policy is confirmed by historical evidence, especially the

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**Ray Marshall is sworn in as U.S. secretary of labor.**

outcomes of World Wars I and II. After World War I, the victorious Allies imposed crippling reparations on Germany, generating grievances that fueled the rise of Hitler and World War II. After the Second World War, the Allies helped Germany and Japan recover and imposed strong democratic governments and labor organizations, contributing to a relatively long period of peace between major world powers.

President Carter was very forward-looking. He did all he could to address America's most pressing problems but also established policies and organizations to address America's long-term problems. At our last Cabinet meeting, he said the people had invested a lot in us and we had an obligation to use our influence to work on the nation's important problems. He then outlined the challenging work he planned for The Carter Center: keeping the peace, strengthening democracy, fighting disease, and building hope.

I know of nobody who did more to improve the lives of people everywhere than Jimmy Carter. I am grateful for the opportunity he gave me to make a small contribution to that work.

*Ray Marshall is a former U.S. secretary of labor.*

## Amazing Grace

By Sharon Metcalf

**F**reezing rain greeted President Carter and his now former senior White House staff as they stepped off Air Force One at Rhein-Main Air Base on the night of Jan. 21, 1981. The entourage arrived in Germany exhausted but determined to personally welcome the 52 American

hostages on their first day of freedom after 444 harrowing days held captive in Tehran.

Journalists from around the world had gathered to cover the long-awaited return of the hostages. As a member of the White House press advance team, I had been sent by Jody Powell several days earlier when final negotiations prompted the belief that the hostage release was imminent. My assignment, as part of a discreet team sent ahead to the Wiesbaden Medical Center, was to coordinate onsite arrangements for media coverage of the president's anticipated meeting with the freed hostages before the inauguration.

Delays in the final negotiations meant President Carter arrived the day after Ronald Reagan was sworn in as the 40th U.S. president. Still, thousands of flag-waving supporters stood in the cold that night, some chanting "We love you, Jimmy!" and holding signs that read, "Welcome Jimmy—you're still number one with us." The show of affection seemed to lift the spirits of the beleaguered former president, who unexpectedly stepped up onto the hood of a security vehicle to wave gratefully to the crowd.

I was greeting the arriving press corps and the pool reporters who planned to cover the hospital visit. However, once they were offloaded on the tarmac, Jody advised us that President Carter wanted to meet with the freed diplomats in private. After all, this was the moment he had tirelessly fought for—the culmination of 14 months in which their safe release had become his administration's top priority.

As we waited outside the hospital, the press corps looked up at the third-floor ward. Through the sheer curtains, they could clearly make out President Carter's silhouette



**Former hostages Bruce German, Bruce Laingen, and Robert C. Ode (left to right) arrive at Rhein-Main Air Base.**

U.S. Military

as he shook hands and warmly embraced each person in the long line of liberated Americans. Afterward, President Carter beamed with amazing grace as he emerged with Bruce Laingen, the *chargé d'affaires* in Tehran. Later, he reflected on the meeting: "Before God and my fellow citizens, I wanted to exert every ounce of my strength and ability during these last few days to achieve their liberation."

Even 44 years later, I still remember the elation, pride—and profound sadness—of that evening. Seeing President Carter filled with joy and relief was deeply moving. Saying tearful goodbyes to former White House colleagues on what would be our final mission together was wrenching.

During President Carter's state funeral at the National Cathedral, two extraordinary moments brought me back to that night in January 1981. One was a stirring rendition of "Amazing Grace"—one of his favorite hymns. Especially this verse:

*Through many dangers, toils and snares,  
I have already come;  
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,  
And grace will lead me home.*

The other was a quote from Vice President Walter Mondale, who passed away in 2021 but had written a eulogy for President Carter a decade earlier, after the former president's cancer diagnosis. Mondale's son, Ted, delivered his father's words:

"We told the truth, we obeyed the law, and we kept the peace."

It will be many years before another president upholds that legacy.

*Sharon Metcalf was a White House press advance team member.*

## 'Don't Let That Happen Again'

*By Peggy Rainwater*

It was fall of 1969, and I was teaching in a public school in Atlanta. My old friend Bill Lynch had a party at his house to introduce his politically active friends to the person he said would be the next governor of Georgia. It was there that I met Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter.

Bill became campaign manager, and I joined the tiny staff as Carter's scheduler. I was told that the candidate wanted to visit every one of the 159 counties in Georgia during that eight-month primary campaign. He would not campaign on Sundays and would go home to Plains every night. Carter himself told me that the most important thing was for him to

**BE ON TIME!** It was my job to meticulously plan the travel details and to keep Carter **ON TIME**.

My schedules were prepared and approved a week or so in advance. The day began with Carter leaving Plains very early in the morning, flying by private plane with a pilot who donated his time and the use of his plane, being met by a campaign volunteer and taken to several events, then flying to another part of the state for the same routine. His day sometimes didn't end until he got home near midnight.

One day, after weeks of clicking along with very few problems, I became too confident and failed to double check the flight time that the pilot quoted me. The plane was late, and Jimmy Carter was late. As soon as they landed, Jody Powell, his traveling companion, phoned me and said they had kept dozens of people waiting at the airport who came out to greet them. The message from Carter: "Don't let that happen again." When I saw Carter next, he reiterated that he was embarrassed to keep all those people waiting. Lesson learned and an early insight into the values of the candidate: Jimmy Carter was not only disciplined, but considerate. He showed people his respect for them by being on time and giving them all his attention while he was with them.

One more insight gained from that 1969-70 role I had as his scheduler: Carter never changed the schedule once it was decided. He never asked me to call to "make an excuse" for something more important or to ask for forgiveness because "something came up." Carter said, "I told them I would be there, and I'm going."

*Peggy Rainwater is a former scheduler for Jimmy Carter.*

## Colorado for Carter

*By Wellington Webb*

I was a young Colorado state representative in 1974 when Georgia Gov. Jimmy Carter asked to meet me and my wife, Wilma, during his visit to Denver.

Carter, a peanut farmer, impressed us so much that



**Peggy Rainwater remembers the importance President Carter placed on being on time.**

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Wilma and I, raising four children without a lot of money, took out our checkbook and wrote a \$15 donation for Carter's presidential bid. This was his first donation from Colorado.

In 1976, I was a Carter delegate to the Democratic National Convention in New York City. Upon my return to Denver, Tim Kraft, who was the field director for the Carter-Mondale campaign, called me and said the campaign was sending someone from South Dakota to run the general election campaign for Colorado. I asked Tim why he would bring someone from outside Colorado to campaign in Colorado? He said I could do it, or an outside person would be coming in. So, I accepted the Colorado campaign manager position. Like other campaign managers across the country, I then headed to a campaign retreat at Pine Isle Resort in Georgia that lasted over the weekend. Then we all headed to Plains by bus to meet with our Democratic nominee in his hometown.

Finally, we headed to Atlanta to catch our flights to our respective states and begin campaigning.

Wilma and I were privileged to host Carter's sister in our home, where we watched a debate between Carter and President Gerald Ford.

It is one of the highlights of my life to serve as the Colorado campaign manager as the Carter-Mondale campaign went on to win the 1976 presidential election.

*Wellington Webb was Colorado campaign director for Jimmy Carter.*



**Wellington Webb directed Jimmy Carter's 1976 presidential campaign in Colorado.**

## A Big Drinker

*By David Aaron*

During President Carter's first campaign for president, I was often at the Pond House outside of Plains. In the late afternoon, Carter would often have a glass of whiskey (bourbon or scotch, I don't know which). That was also the time that his mother, Miss Lillian, would often drop by for a visit. Before she could enter the living room, he would hurriedly hand me his drink, pretending it was mine. Miss Lillian must have thought I was a big drinker to do it in front of the candidate.

*David Aaron is a former campaign worker and deputy national security advisor.*

## A Simple Can of Soup

*By Mark Cohen*

My favorite memory of Jimmy Carter is of him, bent down on one knee, holding a can of Campbell's Tomato Soup in one hand and digging for a saucepan in a kitchen cabinet with the other.

It was December 1976. I was one of the handful of staff posted to the Transition Office in Plains/Americus. On this December day, a group of senior advisors, including Walter Mondale, Bert Lance, Stuart Eizenstat, Charles Schultze, Hamilton Jordan, and others, flew to Albany for a daylong meeting with the president-elect to discuss economic policy. The meeting was held in the study of the Carter residence in Plains and, as always, I and a couple other staff were drafted to drive the group to Plains. (The Secret Service did not handle that in 1976.)

Rosalynn Carter was in Mexico that day, attending the inauguration of President José López Portillo. As everyone was filing into the study, Hamilton hung back and asked me to remain in the kitchen and answer any calls since no one else was home.

One call came in. It was from President Carter's long-time attorney Charles Kirbo. The group broke for lunch to go into Plains to get a sandwich, while Mondale and Carter would remain behind for a private lunch. I showed the Kirbo message to Hamilton and he pointed around the corner of



the L-shaped kitchen and told me to deliver it to Jimmy. I turned the corner and there was Jimmy Carter, soup can in hand, getting ready to prepare lunch for Walter Mondale, who was standing over Jimmy's shoulder.

A simple can of soup for the future leaders of the free world. Such a humble moment. So typical of the Jimmy Carter we got to know in the 1976 campaign.

*Mark Cohen is a former White House press aide and political assistant.*

## Privileges

*By Evan Dobbelle*

**I**t was a privilege at 31 years old to be sworn in as chief of protocol of the United States with the rank of ambassador on March 2, 1977, accompanied by my wife, Kit, who succeeded me and then went on to be Rosalynn Carter's chief of staff.

To travel the world with Jimmy Carter and witness the grace and integrity he displayed and the true warmth with which he was received in the capitals of the world was truly

remarkable to me, fresh from being the mayor of Pittsfield, Massachusetts.

Serving as treasurer of the Democratic National Committee, chairman of the Carter-Mondale 1980 campaign through the convention, deputy chairman of the DNC, chair of the Democrat 1980 Victory Fund, and having his counsel and confidence were distinct honors.

What an extraordinary man, consequential president, and later a global humanitarian.

Thank you, Jimmy. Always proud of you and Rosalynn and the family.

*Evan Dobbelle is a former White House staffer and political operative.*

## A Dream Fulfilled

*By Charles Graves*

**A**n event that evokes a fond memory of President Jimmy Carter's humanity occurred on June 10, 2015. My friend Dr. Bob Puckett and I had learned that a terminally ill fellow church member, Dr. Richard Cowan, a Shorter College professor, had a long-lasting dream that had never been fulfilled. He wanted to meet former President Jimmy Carter.

Working through Carter Center friends Phil Wise and Jay Beck, we arranged for Dr. Cowan and his wife Debbie to join Bob and me and our wives, Christine and Sara, to visit the Center. We did not tell Dr. Cowan it might include a personal visit with the former president.

Once at the Center, I slipped away to President Carter's



**President Carter works in his Carter Center office.**



**Evan Dobbelle was 31 years old when sworn in as chief of protocol of the United States.**

Courtesy of Evan Dobbelle

The Carter Center

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office while Bob and Phil led Dr. Cowan and the ladies on a short tour. President Carter was totally on board with the plan and even hid behind the office door just as our group arrived.

Once the president's office door opened, President Carter, with a big grin on his face, warmly welcomed each member of our group into his office. It would be hard to judge who enjoyed the event most, our group or the former president. Certainly, it was one his guests shall never forget.

*Charles Graves was Carter presidential campaign director for Georgia, Texas, and Kentucky.*

## Fitting End to a Long Saga

By Carlton Hicks

When the Carters were in the White House, they were determined to preserve the Alaska wilderness. But the oil and timber companies were dead set against Jimmy Carter. President Carter suffered constant abuse throughout his presidential term from the Alaskan contingent. During his one visit to Alaska while in office, people lined up to jeer at him. The politicians and the lobbyists ran a pretty strong propaganda campaign against him, convincing many hardworking people that the Carter Alaska lands bill was going to take their jobs. It did not, and he was successful in preserving 150 million acres of Alaska wilderness.

In 2017, our fly fishing group went to Alaska to fish the Copper River for trout. We had a very productive week on the river and caught and released some beautiful rainbow



**President Carter fishes in Alaska.**

trout. At the end of our week, we flew back to Anchorage, where we planned to spend the night in a hotel and fly home to Georgia the next day. We were all pretty tired and ready to go to bed, but we were also hungry. So, we decided to have dinner at a pizza place the Secret Service agent picked out. And something remarkable happened while we were there.

The restaurant was crowded, packed mostly with younger people and families. The serving staff all bustled about with big pizzas over their shoulders and pitchers of beer. It was loud with all the many conversations going on. Looking around the room, Rosalynn said, "Most of the people in here probably weren't even born when we passed the Alaska lands bill. I wonder if they have any idea what Jimmy sacrificed for them." The president just kept eating his pizza.

Suddenly, a few people stood up and looked over at our table. They started clapping. More people stood until everyone in the room was on their feet clapping, whistling, and cheering during an impromptu standing ovation for Jimmy Carter that lasted several minutes. The president looked around the room, smiled, and waved. I could tell the gesture was really good for him. It was a fitting end to a long saga and a resounding answer to Rosalynn's question. The following day, we got up early to catch our flight back home to Georgia.

*Carlton Hicks was President Carter's ophthalmologist, fly-fishing buddy, and co-author of "Jimmy Carter: Rivers and Dreams" with Jim Barger Jr. Parts of this piece are taken from that book, published by Bitter Southerner in October 2024 with a foreword by President Carter.*

## Pancakes and Historic Site Plans

By Russ Marane

Each year, President and Mrs. Carter would come to St. Simons to have their eyes checked out by Dr. Carlton Hicks. Carlton was a close fishing buddy of the president, and they took numerous fishing trips together, including one to Russia.

President and Mrs. Carter would stay with Elkin Alston (Philip Alston's widow) who lived on the beach on Sea Island. They enjoyed walking on the beach and visiting with her neighbors. My wife, Daphne Alston, would often have dinner at a local restaurant with other friends of the president when he was here. He always took time to visit with others in the restaurants, including families with young children. Lots of pictures were taken.

One of the things that he may have enjoyed most about



**President Carter addresses the crowd gathered in downtown Plains, Georgia, after the announcement that he had won the Nobel Peace Prize.**

getting out of Plains was getting to go to a local Waffle House and having pancakes. If you ever asked him what he enjoyed eating the most, it was pancakes, and the ones at Waffle House were right on top of his list—behind Mrs. Carter’s, of course. The news of his visits here always concluded with a picture of them at the local Waffle House as they departed to return to Plains.

And another one...

When I semiretired, I went to work with The Trust for Public Land. One of the projects we undertook, at President Carter’s request to the National Park Service, was a master plan for the historic site relating to the president’s life in Plains. On our final visit to Plains, we were to present the plan to the NPS and to President and Mrs. Carter. Since this was to happen on Saturday morning, we had arrived the day before and were spending the night in Americus at a motel.

I woke up around 6 and turned on the news. The headline was that President Carter had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. I told the staff that had accompanied me that our breakfast meeting with the president and the NPS was likely canceled, but we drove on over to Plains to the meeting site. To our surprise, President and Mrs. Carter were there, ready to discuss the plan as though nothing had happened. Toward the end of the meeting, he announced that he needed to go to a press conference, so we all left the high school and walked to the square in front of the shops in downtown Plains.

There were close to a thousand people from Plains and the surrounding area waiting on him along with the national

press corps. He graciously worked the crowd, made a few modest remarks, and told the crowd he would attend the ceremony to receive the award, but he had some work to do to finish the plan to make Plains a national historic site, and that ended the press conference.

He reconvened the meeting we had started, and the plan was approved an hour later. This was the true Jimmy Carter at work. He had priorities, and they were not focused on him but the things he thought were important.

*Russ Marane was the Carter campaign Southern coordinator and regional administrator of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.*

## **A Message to the Cosmos**

*By Robert B. Reich*

**I** had the pleasure of serving in President Carter’s administration as the director of the policy planning staff at the Federal Trade Commission.



**The Voyager 1 spacecraft launches from Kennedy Space Center in Florida on Sept. 5, 1977.**

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Carter wrote the following on June 16, 1977, and placed it in Voyager I, which is the most distant human-made object from Earth:

“This Voyager spacecraft was constructed by the United States of America. We are a community of 240 million human beings among the more than 4 billion who inhabit the planet Earth. We human beings are still divided into nation states, but these states are rapidly becoming a single global civilization.

We cast this message into the cosmos. It is likely to survive a billion years into our future, when our civilization is profoundly altered and the surface of the Earth may be vastly changed. Of the 200 billion stars in the Milky Way galaxy, some—perhaps many—may have inhabited planets and spacefaring civilizations. If one such civilization intercepts Voyager and can understand these recorded contents, here is our message:

“This is a present from a small distant world, a token of our sounds, our science, our images, our music, our thoughts and our feelings. We are attempting to survive our time so we may live into yours. We hope someday, having solved the problems we face, to join a community of galactic civilizations. This record represents our hope and our determination, and our good will in a vast and awesome universe.”

— Jimmy Carter, President of the United States of America, the White House, June 16, 1977

I’m struck today by this message’s optimism—the idea that we on Earth are becoming a single global civilization that might survive another billion years and someday join a community of galactic civilizations.

It all sounds charmingly naive now, when the world is wracked by war, famine, and the ravages of climate change, and when Donald Trump is getting ready to isolate America from the rest of the world.

Yet Jimmy Carter was an optimist about human nature. The word “civilization” appears five times in his short message. Carter believed passionately in the capacity of human beings to create civil societies that would contain the beasts in all of us. Civilization would prevail over brutality. Humanity over inhumanity.

Carter was a religious man who lived by this simple civil

religion. He not only saw the good in others, but he practiced the good. He was far from the best president America has had, but he was one of the best and most decent people ever to serve as president.

He never wavered in his optimism. He spread it throughout his life. He spread it to the farthest reaches of the cosmos.

May he rest in peace in that cosmos.

*Robert B. Reich was a Federal Trade Commission policy planning staff director during the Carter administration and later secretary of labor.*

## So Many Memories

*By Jane Harman*

**M**y connection to the Carter administration began in 1973, when I moved to Lowell Street Northwest in the Cleveland Park area of Washington. Fritz and Joan Mondale were a few doors down, and I bet they had never heard of Jimmy Carter, either. I was a senior Senate aide on the Judiciary Committee, and Sen. Mondale was a well-known and highly respected member—though not on the Judiciary Committee. My family got to know the Mondales as neighbors, and I remember their son Ted Mondale bagged groceries at the local Giant supermarket to earn extra money.

I was delighted when Fritz was nominated for vice president—never thinking that I too would be recruited. My senator (John Tunney of California) lost reelection, and I was seeking a senior job in the Justice Department. To my surprise, Jack Watson, head of the presidential transition, contacted me and asked me to be his deputy. I hesitated because I really didn’t want a staff job in the White House. But old friends like Andy Young persuaded me.

Heady times as a man who knew very little about how Washington worked took charge. My knowledge of Congress was useful, and I became a frequent contact for Robert Byrd, then Senate majority leader. The White House also turned out to be a great place to make new friends: I met Sidney Harman, the newly minted deputy secretary of commerce, in the Roosevelt Room early in 1977. We literally courted in the Rose Garden, and President Carter claimed credit for our union! (Actually, he deserved credit, and after we married, Sidney joined the board of The Carter Center, we visited the Carters in Plains, and they even stayed with us in New York City and joined us at the U.S. Open tennis tournament one year.)



**President Carter and Vice President Walter Mondale**

So many memories! Two are very personal:

First, as deputy Cabinet secretary I took minutes of the Cabinet meetings. Believe it or not, President Carter personally edited my minutes and corrected my spelling and grammatical mistakes! How embarrassing.

Second, when I was running for Congress for the first time in 1991, I received a check for \$500 with this note: "...[W]hen you are elected you will represent not only California but the Carter family." It is framed on the wall of my office.

How special! And how much their form of principled inclusive leadership is missed!

*Jane Harman was deputy Cabinet secretary in the Carter administration. She later served nine terms in Congress and is co-chair of Freedom House.*

## Queens College Town Hall Meeting

By Maria Legrand

In September 1979, it was the Rosh Hashanah weekend, and I had four days to organize a town hall meeting for President Carter at Queens College in Queens, New York. The advance team was staying in Manhattan. To save time, I got permission to hire a limo to take us back and forth to Queens. We put an ad in the Daily News and perhaps other newspapers to let people know that they would need to pick up a ticket if they wanted to attend the event. It was first-come, first-served, a risky proposition. News reports said we had 1,700 people.

The day of the town hall, we held a briefing for anyone who wanted to ask a question. I was under huge pressure not to have inappropriate questions asked of the president. I was scared to death. I got up and said, "Here is how we will proceed. I don't know you, and you don't know me. I am going to randomly choose people from the audience, and you will sit near one of four microphones." I tried to pick the least crazy-looking people. People started to yell at me, saying things like, "Wait a minute! This is not her meeting, this is our meeting." I let them yell themselves out; I had learned that from the president. I then disqualified the loudest yeller. That seemed to put an end to the yelling.



**President Carter visited Queens College on Sept. 25, 1979.**

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When the president arrived, I went to brief him. I told him there were crazy people out there and handed him a sampling of the literature being handed out. We had a little of everything out there. Carter could see how nervous I was and said, "Keech, you don't have any confidence in me." I told him I did but that these people were really crazy.

When Carter came into the town hall, he said, "You know, I had some prepared remarks, but I'm much more interested in what you have to say. I'll take the first question." The crowd went crazy with applause.

As always, the president did great. The questions were pretty sane for the most part, and I think he was elated by the experience, as was I.

*Maria Legrand was an advance staffer for President Carter.*

## The Magic Machine

By Peggy Rainwater

It was late in the summer of 1970, and Carter's speeches were being updated. The staff in Atlanta and the staff in Plains needed to send the various drafts of speeches back and forth. There were no computers or email. The only quick way to send several typed pages was by facsimile (fax) machine. To do so, one person lifted the phone receiver on the machine and dialed the number of the receiving fax phone. Someone at the other end would ensure there would be enough paper in the receiving machine, punch the receive button, and replace the phone in its cradle. Then the sender would replace their phone on the machine and hit "send." The fax machine would then copy and transmit the document. It was slow and tedious, with frequent paper jams. The process needed to be monitored so that if/when something went wrong, the two staff members could hang up the phones and start all over again.

One night the phone on an important fax transmission between Plains and Atlanta kept getting cut off. Phil Wise, who was from Plains, knew the Bell Telephone operator there. He phoned and asked if she knew what the problem was. She said she didn't hear people talking, thought we just forgot to hang up, and cut the call to save us money on long distance. Phil took a deep breath and said patiently, "We have two machines that are talking to each other; please keep the line open." A crisis was averted.

*Peggy Rainwater was a Carter scheduler.*

## Rainmaker

By Bob Russell

This story doesn't sound like something that actually happened, but I still have my copy of the article as it came across the United Press International ticker tape machine in Press Secretary Jody Powell's office on July 22, 1980.

DALLAS (UPI)—With only a wave of his presidential arms, Jimmy Carter delivered the goods to the parched citizens of Texas.

In winding up a speech Monday night to a gathering of Texas and Oklahoma Democrats at a Dallas home, Carter said, "I asked Lloyd Bentsen (the Texas senator) what you needed more than anything else...a fine long speech?"

"He said, 'No, Mr. President, what we need is rain.'

"And I said OK, we'll have rain," Carter said, spreading out his arms.

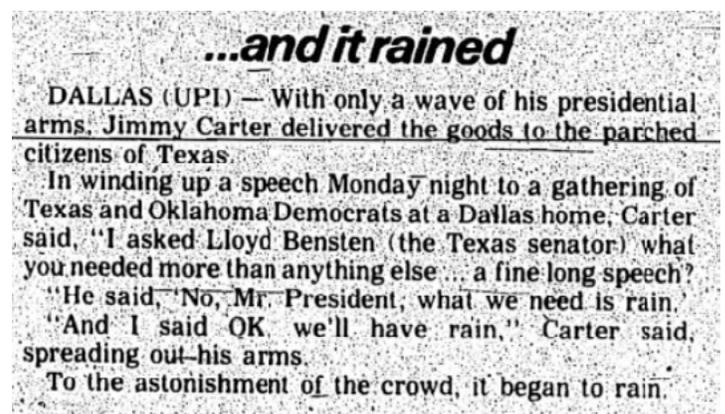
To the astonishment of the crowd, it began to rain. Everyone rushed and ran for cover.

Earlier, Carter inspected a 2,000-acre farm in Justin, Texas, where drought has destroyed many acres of crops.

"This is the kind of affliction many are going through around the country," Carter told the farmers. "Good luck, God bless you and I'll be praying for rain."

At mid-morning, rain fell over 20-30 percent of North Texas. It was the first rain since spring for most of the area.

*Bob Russell sent in this story.*



*This story ran in the Southwest Times.*

## Other Remembrances by Carter-Mondale Alumni

**A**fter President Carter's passing, many who served in the Carter-Mondale administration gave interviews or wrote essays for media outlets and websites. See below for links to videos and articles published online.

**Terry Adamson:** [Longtime Friend, Attorney for Jimmy Carter Shares Memories of Working With Him](#)

**Scott Burnett:** [What President Jimmy Carter meant to Kansas City residents | KCUR - Kansas City news and NPR](#)

**Doug Copeland:** [North Carolina Campaign Strategist Who Worked with Jimmy Carter Recalls Accomplishments | FOX8 WGHP](#)

**Doris Crenshaw:** [Former Carter staff member remembers president](#)

**James Fallows:** [Jimmy Carter, President and Citizen](#)

**Les Francis:** [Jimmy Carter's Legacy: Former Deputy Chief of Staff Speaks](#) and [Les Francis Reflects on Legacy of President Jimmy Carter](#)

**Jim Gammill:** [A Conversation with Jim Gammill, Tom Feran and Ted Allen](#)

**Hubert Harris:** [Carter Administration Employee Remembers Presidency | FOX 5 Atlanta](#)

**Robert Hunter:** [I Was There: Carter Tried to Put the Human in Realpolitik | Responsible Statecraft](#)

**Rick Hutto:** [Former Macon city councilman Rick Hutto Shares His Memories From Working for President Carter](#)

**Barry Jagoda:** [Former Jimmy Carter Staffer Living in La Jolla Remembers 39th President](#)

**Milton Jones:** [Columbus Attorney Who Went into General Assembly with Jimmy Carter in '62 Reflects on Their 60-year relationship | WRBL](#)

**Rev. Robert Maddox:** [UCC Pastor Who Served in Carter's Administration Remembers the President](#)

**Jim McIntyre:** [Jimmy Carter was 'very ambitious,' Former Cabinet Member Says](#)

**Margaret McKenna:** ['He Wanted to Do What's Right': Massachusetts Resident Reflects on Working with President Jimmy Carter](#)

**Gerald Rafshoon:** ["You Should Run for President": Jimmy Carter's Ad Man Speaks | The New Republic](#) and ['I Know Him as Being a Great Friend': Former White House Communications Director on Jimmy Carter | I!alive.com](#)

**Phil Wise:** [Jimmy Carter's Campaign Coordinator Recalls Memories With Late President and Campaign Coordinator Phil Wise Recalls Growing up With Carter](#)

**Andrew Young:** [Jimmy Carter Was More Comfortable With Black People, Andrew Young Says | FOX 5 News](#)

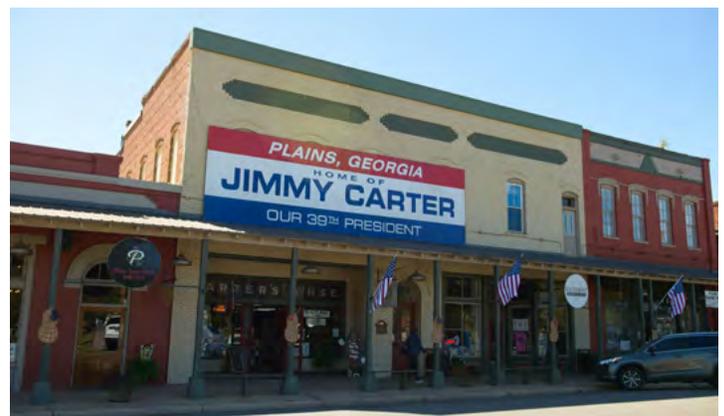
## A Saturday Evening in Plains

By Carol Saunders

**T**he Secret Service has closed off the main street; a small combo with amplifiers is playing in front of the firehouse, Rosalynn's lovely flowers and their pollinators in the background; just down the street is the train depot that had been converted into Jimmy's campaign headquarters; the little train had taken us to the boyhood home and adjacent grocery store. Two dear old friends who had shared so many times of anguish, suspense, and ultimate victory are catching up with each other, broad smiles as they reminisce. Picture Hal, in his navy zipper jacket with the Camp David logo on the left breast, and President Carter, appropriately clad in a red plaid shirt for the square dance. I stand back, not to intrude on their mutual recollections. But their body language says it all. What treasured moments. Now,

we've lost them both, but I like to believe they continue their reunion in heaven.

*Carol Saunders is the widow of Harold H. "Hal" Saunders, assistant secretary of state in the Carter administration.*



**Downtown Plains, Georgia**

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## A High Honor for a Freshman Legislator

By Calvin Smyre

**F**ifty-one years ago, in December 1974, Gov. Jimmy Carter announced his candidacy for president. Having been elected to the Georgia State House of Representatives in November, I was preparing for my first legislative session. In 1975, on my first day, I met the late Ben Brown, state representative from Atlanta and a faithful supporter of Gov. Carter's run for president.

Shortly thereafter, Rep. Brown arranged for me to meet with the governor for the very first time. I left the meeting inspired and excited about his campaign. He was so friendly, so personal, and so approachable.

During the meeting I agreed to join the campaign and to assist with outreach to state legislators outside of Georgia. It was such a high honor to be elected to the Georgia House of Representatives, and working on behalf of the Jimmy Carter presidential campaign allowed me to meet so many good people. Looking back, it was a great way to start! As a Georgian I was so proud when he was elected president.

Shortly after his inauguration, it was announced that former Governor and now President Jimmy Carter was going to visit the Georgia State Capitol. One of my fondest memories is having the honor, while serving in the General Assembly, of being named to the Presidential Escort Committee. The group was made up of six senators and six



*Calvin Smyre remembers meeting President Carter in his home state.*

House members who escorted the president to the joint session of the Georgia General Assembly. It was such a surreal, joyous, memorable moment to see President Carter step out of that motorcade and for me (a freshman legislator) to be escorting a proud, smiling Georgian into the Georgia State Capitol as president of the United States.

It doesn't get any bigger or better than that!

*Calvin Smyre is a former dean of the Georgia General Assembly.*

## Passages

**Bette B. Anderson Wood** of Savannah, Georgia, died Sept. 1, 2024, at the age of 95.

Anderson Wood was born Oct. 16, 1928, in Stilson, Georgia, to Burl and Melrose Beasley. She attended Georgia Teachers College (Georgia Southern University) and received certification from the Stonier Graduate School of Banking at Rutgers University.

Anderson Wood was the first woman to be named undersecretary of the U.S. Department of the Treasury. She was nominated to that position by President Jimmy Carter. As undersecretary she worked to introduce the Susan B. Anthony dollar coin. The Bette B. Anderson Scholarship

at Georgia Southern University was established in 1984 to memorialize these achievements.

Before becoming the undersecretary, Anderson Wood was affiliated for 27 years with The Citizens and Southern National Bank of Savannah, where she served as vice president and was the first female member of The Chatham Club in downtown Savannah.

Following her tenure at the U.S. Department of the Treasury, Anderson Wood formed Anderson, Benjamin and Reed Consulting and served on the board of directors of HealthExtras, ITT Corp., Sheraton Hotels and Resorts, The Hartford Financial Services Group, and United Payers &

Providers. In addition to her board memberships, she was a partner at Kelly, Anderson, Petchick & Associates, a management consulting firm.



Barry Bosworth

**Barry P. Bosworth**, an economist with the Brookings Institution whose wide-ranging research, prolific publications, and candid public statements informed and challenged at least two generations of economic policymakers in the U.S. and beyond, died on June 1, 2025, at his home in Silver Spring, Maryland. He was 82.

Bosworth was born and raised on a small farm in rural southwest Michigan. He graduated from the University of Michigan with a degree in economics in 1964 and completed his doctorate there in 1969. With a strong background in mathematics and early computing, he initially worked as a staff economist with the Council of Economic Advisers at the White House under Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon.

In September 1969, Bosworth became an assistant professor in the Department of Economics at Harvard University. He later joined the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C., where he spent more than four and a half decades.

From 1977 to 1979, on an extended leave from Brookings, Bosworth served as director of the Council on Wage and Price Stability under President Jimmy Carter. In this role, he earned a reputation as an unusually candid public official, speaking plainly about the successes and failures of efforts to control prices and wages in attempts to counter inflation.

Bosworth returned to Brookings in 1979 as a senior fellow in the Economic Studies Program. In this capacity, he was principal or co-author and editor or co-editor of at least 25 books and over 150 articles and working papers on a wide range of topics, including trade, productivity, monetary policy and capital formation, income inequality, social security and population aging, inflation, health care, and higher education. His aversion to narrow specialization and voracious curiosity also led him to investigate economic issues worldwide.

– Adapted from an article in the *Washington Post*

**Susan Sebesta Clough** of Ellsworth, Kansas, died on Jan. 1, 2024, in Louisville, Kentucky. She was 78.

Sebesta Clough was born March 11, 1945, in Fort



Susan Sebesta Clough

Jackson, South Carolina, to Col. Arthur J. Sebesta and Mary Sebesta. She spent her formative years moving often due to her father's military career. She noted 42 changes of address by the time she was 42 years old.

Sebesta Clough married at age 16 and had two children: Doug and Carol.

Following her divorce, she moved to Atlanta, where she worked as a legal secretary for Jerry Cohen at Sutherland, Asbill and Brennan, LLP. She also worked at a hamburger joint in Underground Atlanta called The Bucket Shop to make ends meet. There were days when she only had lettuce for dinner so her children could eat tuna casserole, a delicacy of the '60s. Her children's fondest memories of this time are not the casserole but watching cartoons on Saturday morning with her, eating cheese toast, day trips to Panama City Beach, Florida, and making fudge for Christmas.

In 1971, Sebesta Clough was hired by Jody Powell in the Georgia Governor's Press Office as a news assistant. She worked for Gov. Jimmy Carter and Gov. George Busbee until she joined Carter's presidential campaign in 1976.

The highlight of Sebesta Clough's professional career was her service during Jimmy Carter's presidency. She was President Carter's personal assistant and secretary from 1976 to 1981. During these years in Washington, D.C., and Plains, Georgia, Sebesta Clough was dedicated to the administration, her children, and our country. She accompanied the president on all of his trips and worked long hours, beginning before daylight, and sometimes was gone from home for days or even weeks at a time. She was an integral part of the administration and contributed in many ways, apparent to those who read the Camp David Accords. Sebesta Clough was keenly intelligent. She was humble, dedicated, and tireless. She valued everyone she met, from waiters, servers, and secretaries to kings, prime ministers, and ambassadors. She expected the same from all and gave the same to all—honesty and respect.

Sebesta Clough went on to a distinguished career after her time in D.C. She worked as a senior administrative officer and director for Galler Automation Industries, Sears World Trade, Inc., Continental Grain Co., Kelso and Company, and the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games before a back injury sidelined her for the rest of her life.

Sebesta Clough's hobbies included playing classical guitar

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and piano, tennis, and bridge. She was a feisty competitor. She was a member of Mensa and a fourth-generation member of Philanthropic Educational Organization, dedicated to helping women pursue a higher education.

One of the most beautiful things about Susan was her belief in the ability of her family to accomplish great things regardless of their age and current circumstances. She will be deeply missed for her generous encouragement and fighting spirit.



*Eleanor Connors*

**Eleanor Connors**, President Carter's secretary in the White House, died Oct. 12, 2024. She was 91.

During the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, Connors worked for the science advisor's office at the White House. This was the lead-up to the first moon landing, and she was able to attend several launches.

During the Nixon and Ford administrations, Connors worked for Leonard Garment, who was White House counsel. She went from seeing space capsules fall into the Pacific Ocean to seeing the greatest fall from power in U.S. history with President Nixon's resignation. She was secretary to the Cabinet in the later days of the Ford administration, being appointed by then Chief of Staff Dick Cheney.

In the Carter administration, Chief of Staff Hamilton Jordan reportedly asked Cheney who the best secretary in the White House was and Cheney recommended Connors. Her desk was right outside the Oval Office for the four years of the Carter administration. She had a candy jar on her desk that Vice President Walter Mondale regularly raided. Her family has a lovely photo of President Carter presenting her with a birthday cake one year.

When Hamilton Jordan left the White House to run President Carter's reelection campaign, he asked Connors to accompany him. She had always been a civil servant prior to this and had never been overtly political. However, she believed in President Carter as both a leader and as a human being of true integrity. When President Carter lost his bid for reelection, Connors chose not to return to the White House.

Connors instead worked for Occidental Petroleum's Washington office as a Special Assistant to Chairman Armand Hammer. Hammer had been appointed by President Ronald Reagan as chairman of the President's

Cancer Panel. Connors traveled for the panel's quarterly meetings and handled all of Hammer's work related to the panel. She strongly believed in the panel's mission.

When she retired from Occidental, Connors became a regular volunteer at the Washington Home and Community Hospices nursing home, which was near her home. She received multiple awards from the Washington Home for her dedication over the years, and a volunteer award was eventually named in her honor for all her service contributions.



*A.D. Frazier*

**Adolphus Drewry "A.D." Frazier**, the No. 2 leader at the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, died Sept. 23, 2024, at his home in Mineral Bluff, Georgia. He was 80.

Atlanta's Olympic Games in 1996 were a financial success—a \$1.7 billion initiative that essentially broke even—a feat often credited to Frazier, who had started his career as a lawyer working for C&S Bank in Atlanta.

His life was filled with amazing experiences. He managed the 1977 inauguration of President Jimmy Carter, and he went on to head the team that organized Carter's White House and Executive Office.

After the 1996 Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta, Frazier became president and CEO of Invesco before becoming chairman and CEO of the Chicago Stock Exchange.

Frazier later returned to Georgia, where he became owner and chairman of WolfCreek Broadcasting, a radio broadcasting company in North Georgia.

Frazier was a distinguished business executive who built a legendary career filled with success and amazing experiences. He served six years as an officer in the U.S. Army Reserve and later graduated from Harvard Business School Advanced Management Program.

He joined Atlanta's C&S Bank, which later became Bank of America, building business, civic, political and personal connections throughout Georgia and the Southeast. In 1976, he joined the administration of U.S. President Jimmy Carter, serving in the Office of Management and Budget. He managed the inauguration and headed the team reorganizing the White House and Executive Office.

He later moved to Chicago, where he was executive vice president at First National Bank of Chicago.

— *Adapted in part from an article in Saporta Report*



Heidi Hanson

In 1978, as a member of Jimmy Carter's State Department, **Heidi Hanson** went on a goodwill tour of Africa with the president's mother and unofficial envoy, Miss Lillian. On a stop at a remote village in what was then Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso), Miss Lillian pushed Heidi onto the lap of the *morho naba* (great lord) and suggested that she become the newest of his many wives. A voice called out from the crowd, "Heidi! ... Heidi Hanson? Did you go to our class reunion this year?" No matter where she went in the world, the odds were uncanny that Heidi would know someone, and this time it was a missionary who had gone to high school with her in Birmingham, Alabama.

Heidi Ann Hanson, who died Jan. 6, 2025, at 74 after a long struggle with cancer, had the sort of legendary charisma and beauty that one associates with a very favored youth. Friends and family called her "Heidi High School" throughout her life of serious purpose. There was some irony in her perpetual in-crowd aura, for during her childhood in Birmingham, her parents were classic "outside agitators" fighting the ruthless racism that prevailed in the city Martin Luther King Jr. called the most segregated in America.

Hanson landed a job as a Hollywood coordinator for Jimmy Carter's 1976 presidential campaign. After the election, President Carter put her at the State Department in Assistant Secretary Patricia Derian's groundbreaking Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, which made human rights a pillar of U.S. foreign policy. Hanson's flashiest assignment was to negotiate the fate of 101 destitute Haitians who washed up at Guantanamo in August 1977. After suggesting that the refugees be considered for asylum on a case-by-case basis (rather than treated collectively as a diplomatic albatross), Hanson was put on a military plane to Cuba to take on a job so unexpected of a 27-year-old woman that the nametag the Navy had waiting said "Mr. Hanson."

Hanson went on to other jobs in the Carter administration and became an intimate of the First Family, living in the White House for a time when she was dating Chip Carter. On Election Night 1980, she sat with the Carters in the White House watching the returns, and she flew out of Washington with them to Georgia on Ronald Reagan's Inauguration Day. In Atlanta, she joined Ted Turner's new cable television network and relocated to New York to produce CNN's Freeman Reports (forerunner of Larry King Live) out of the World Trade Center.

Making her way back to Washington, Hanson eventually became a successful lobbyist and maintained her Hollywood contacts. She served as a fixer for her pal Goldie Hawn's 1984 comedy set in Washington, "Protocol," and stayed in touch with Arnold Schwarzenegger, who had once been told by Hanson's mother that he would never make it in Hollywood because of his accent.



Alexis Herman

**Alexis Herman**, the first Black leader of the U.S. Department of Labor, died at the age of 77.

Former President Bill Clinton nominated Herman to the role, which she held from 1997 to 2001, following a career in social work, civil rights and Democratic politics.

Herman was born in Mobile, Ala., in 1947, at a time when Jim Crow laws imposed racial segregation and discrimination across the American South.

Herman graduated from Xavier University of Louisiana, a Catholic and historically Black university in New Orleans. She later worked on school desegregation efforts in Mobile. In 1977, when Herman was 29 years old, then-President Jimmy Carter selected her to lead the Women's Bureau at the Department of Labor.

In a 1977 interview with NPR, Herman described the bureau's mission to serve women in the workplace.

"That means help women to get jobs," Herman said. "That means to help women find out about opportunities for jobs. That means informing women of their rights if they're being discriminated against."

Herman went on to work on the 1988 presidential campaign of civil rights leader Jesse Jackson, and in 1992, she became the first Black woman to hold the position of CEO of the Democratic National Convention before joining the Clinton administration.

"I believe that our lives are a gift from God. And what we do with our lives is a gift to God," Herman said after receiving an award from the National Political Congress of Black Women in 1996. "I have been very blessed to have been used as an instrument for change in our ongoing collective struggle, for us as Black women, to say that we, too, 'sing America.'"

Throughout her career, Herman championed efforts to increase diversity in government and the workplace and encouraged young people to get involved in politics.

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“I fought for civil rights, I fought for voting rights, I fought for women’s rights in the ’70s,” Herman said in a commencement address at Agnes Scott College in Georgia in 2016. “But now it’s your turn.”

– Adapted from an article by NPR

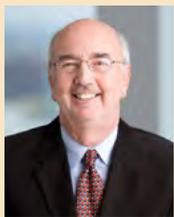


Jerry Jasinowski

**Jerry J. Jasinowski** of Washington, D.C., died Jan. 22, 2025, at the age of 86. He was a devoted family man and distinguished leader in the Washington business community. Jasinowski was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force. He served in Vietnam as an intelligence officer and went on to teach at the Air Force Academy. Jasinowski moved to Washington for a job with the Joint Economic Committee and later joined Jimmy Carter’s presidential campaign. He served in the Carter administration as the assistant secretary for policy in the Commerce Department.

Jasinowski devoted much of his career to the National Association of Manufacturers, where he was president and CEO from 1990 until 2004. Passionate about strengthening American manufacturing, he founded the nonprofit Manufacturing Institute to develop the industry’s future workforce and engage students, women, and veterans. Today, the institute leads in driving manufacturing recruitment, retention, and training nationwide, a testament to Jasinowski’s legacy and vision.

Jasinowski was born Jan. 4, 1939, in LaPorte, Indiana, to Estelle Carlson (nee Reznik) and Bruno Jasinowski. He graduated from Indiana University in 1962, earned a master’s in economics from Columbia University in 1972, and completed the Advanced Management Program at Harvard Business School.



Ian Lanoff

**Ian Lanoff**, former principal at Groom Law Group and prolific leader in the retirement industry, passed away Sept. 29, 2024, at age 82.

Lanoff had a long career in both public service and private practice. While serving as the administrator for pension and welfare benefit programs the Department of Labor during the Carter administration, Lanoff played an important role in the implementation of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, and his work laid the foundation for decades of jurisprudence,

according to Groom Law Group.

As an attorney, Lanoff also represented some of the nation’s largest public and private benefit programs, helping to protect the benefits for millions of workers and retirees.

Lanoff started his career as a labor attorney and represented the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. He then transitioned to benefits law when he became the general counsel of the United Mineworkers Health and Retirement Fund.

From there, Lanoff went on to serve as counsel for the Senate Labor Committee (now Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions) and one of the first administrators of the Department of Labor’s Pension and Welfare Benefit Program, which is now the Employee Benefits Security Administration. He joined Groom Law in 1996 and retired a few years ago.

– Adapted from an article in Plansponsor

**Marilyn Melkonian**, visionary and founder of Telesis Corporation, died Feb. 14, 2024, in Washington, D.C., her home of almost 50 years.

Melkonian was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1944, daughter of William Charles Melkonian and Constance O’Brien Melkonian. She graduated from Brooklyn College in 1964 with a degree in political science.

After graduating from Stanford University Law School in 1968, Melkonian was first involved in housing policy and legislation from 1967 to 1970 on the staff of Sen. Edward W. Brooke. Melkonian was a partner in the New York and Washington law firm of Tufo, Johnston & Zuccotti specializing in land use and development of housing through 1976.

Melkonian served as deputy assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development from 1977 to 1980 under President Jimmy Carter, first for insured and direct loans and later for all multifamily housing. In 1980, with a big leap out of Washington, Melkonian served as general counsel and business advisor to George Lucas and Lucasfilm, Ltd., where legend has it, she played a significant part in the (re) naming of the film “Return of the Jedi,” which initially was titled “Revenge of the Jedi.”

Returning to Washington to again pursue her passion for affordable housing and the regeneration of neighborhoods, Melkonian established Telesis Corporation in 1985. With its focus on livable, beautiful, safe neighborhoods, Telesis, with Melkonian in the lead, worked tirelessly on the preservation and construction of communities in the District of Columbia, Maryland, Connecticut, Tennessee,

Kentucky, North Carolina, Florida, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and California.



*Richard Palmer Moe*

**Richard Palmer Moe** passed away Sept. 15, 2025, in Washington, D.C., at age 88.

A native of Duluth, Minnesota, he chaired the state's Democrat-Farm-Labor Party that produced the likes of Hubert Humphrey, Gene McCarthy, and Walter Mondale.

Moe moved to Washington as a top aide to Mondale in the Senate and chief of staff to the vice president. He drafted the Carter-Mondale accords, which outlined the importance of a vice president having full access and being involved in all major issues. It's a model for successful White House partnerships.

After the White House he first became a partner in a prestigious law firm and then took over the National Trust for Historic Preservation, where he successfully opposed the Disney Company when it launched plans to build a theme park next to the Manassas Civil War battlefield.

Moe also led the efforts to preserve historic sites in New Orleans after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina and took a special interest in refurbishing Lincoln Cottage, the Northeast Washington home where the 16th president wrote the Emancipation Proclamation.

Moe wrote two books, "The Last Full Measure: The Life and Death of the First Minnesota Volunteers" and "Roosevelt's Second Act: The Election of 1940 and the Politics of War."



*Francis Boyd "Frank" Moore*

Georgia native **Francis Boyd "Frank" Moore**, President Carter's congressional liaison, died May 21, 2025. He was 89.

Early in his career, Moore initiated and ran Head Start programs in 14 Georgia counties as part of his work for multiple Georgia planning and development commissions. In 1972, he became special assistant to Gov. Jimmy Carter for state and city reorganization and later executive secretary to the governor.

When Carter began his run for the presidency, Moore took on a variety of leadership roles on his campaign. After Carter's successful election, Moore became assistant to the president for congressional liaison, a role he held for the four years of the administration.

Under President Carter's direction, Moore and his congressional liaison team racked up one of the best records of legislative accomplishments of any administration despite the turmoil and criticism that are part of life in the nation's capital.

After Washington, Moore worked for an independent oil company in Houston and then for Waste Management Inc., where he remained until retirement in 2001.

During his Waste Management career Moore and his wife, Nancy, lived in Chicago, where Moore was on the board and executive committee of the Lincoln Park Zoo and was an executive board member of the Illinois State Chamber of Commerce.

The Moores returned to Washington toward the end of his career and Frank served on the American Battle Monuments Commission, where he was one of four people on the site and design committee for the WWII Memorial on the Washington Mall. He was also a founding member of the Friends of the National WWII Memorial and was honored with emeritus status.



*Joseph S. Nye Sr.*

Former Harvard Kennedy School dean and prominent international relations scholar **Joseph S. Nye Sr.** died May 6, 2025, at 88.

Nye first joined the Harvard faculty in 1964 after receiving his Ph.D. in government. He alternated between Cambridge, other universities, and the White House for much of his career, serving in various national security positions in both the Carter and Clinton administrations.

Nye, who served as assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs under President Bill Clinton, was one of the most influential thinkers in contemporary international relations theory.

Nye was best known for developing the theory of neoliberalism alongside Princeton professor Robert Keohane. He also coined the term "soft power" in the 1980s to describe a country's non-military sway on the world stage.

Nye served as Harvard Kennedy School dean from 1995 to 2004, overseeing a period of growth during which the school increased its faculty by more than 40% and added five research centers.

Nye remained an active commentator on world affairs until shortly before his death.

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In an early March interview with *The Crimson*, he described President Donald Trump’s attempt to humiliate Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in the Oval Office as a strategic move for Trump—and a victory for Russian President Vladimir Putin.

“I think Putin has played Trump brilliantly,” Nye said. “I mean, he’s taken a narcissist and played him like a fiddle.”

—Adapted from an article in *The Crimson*



*John Hale  
Shenefield*

**John Hale Shenefield** died at his home in Great Falls, Virginia, on Dec. 9, 2024. Shenefield was a man of extraordinary accomplishments in both public service and the legal community. He set the tone for honor, integrity and transparency in everything he did.

Shenefield was a leading light of the U.S. antitrust bar in both public service and private practice. He handled some of the most complex antitrust matters of his time for a stellar roster of global companies, developing an enviable record of success before the United States Supreme Court.

After Harvard Law School, he began his legal career at Hunton & Williams in Richmond, Virginia. He joined Morgan Lewis after an illustrious career with the U.S. Department of Justice from 1977 to 1981, where he served as President Carter’s assistant attorney general in charge of the Antitrust Division and as associate attorney general of the United States. He served as chair of Morgan Lewis from 1996 to 1999.

Shenefield left an indelible mark on antitrust law, serving as chairman of the National Commission to Review Antitrust Laws and Procedures in 1978 and 1979 and on the Antitrust Modernization Commission from 2004 to 2007. He co-authored “The Antitrust Laws: A Primer,” a highly acclaimed book covering antitrust laws and court decisions.

His talents and interests were diverse. He was an associate professor of law at the University of Richmond in 1975 and at the Georgetown Law Center from 1981 to 1983. He was appointed to the Virginia Racing Commission in 1989 to guide the development of regulations for horse racing in Virginia. From 1992 to 1995 he served as chair of the ABA Standing Committee on Law and National Security. He was a strong proponent of the “rule of law” and of the

importance of expanding the field and understanding of national security law.



*William H.  
Webster*

**William H. Webster**, the former FBI and CIA director whose troubleshooting skills and integrity helped restore public confidence in those federal agencies, died Aug. 8, 2025. He was 101.

President Carter nominated Webster to lead the FBI in 1978, and he held that role until 1987. He led the CIA from 1987 to 1991, the only person to guide the nation’s top law-enforcement agency and its primary intelligence-gathering organization.

At the time Webster was selected to lead the FBI, the bureau’s reputation was badly damaged by congressional revelations that unearthed corruption and extrajudicial spying on Americans under longtime Director J. Edgar Hoover. Webster, who was previously a Republican-appointed federal judge from Missouri, sought to restore the bureau’s image: One of his first acts in office was to remove the bust of Hoover from the director’s office, *The Washington Post* reported in a laudatory 1987 editorial.

When his nine-year term leading the FBI concluded, Webster was quickly tapped by then-President Ronald Reagan to head up the CIA, which itself was in the middle of a public relations fiasco stemming from the Iran-Contra scandal. There, again, Webster moved to clean up the agency’s image, this time by cracking down on the kinds of secret practices that led to the arms sale scandal and disciplining lower-ranking officials who were involved, *The New York Times* reported. His time at Langley, from 1987 to 1991, coincided with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Persian Gulf War.

Webster was born March 6, 1924, in St. Louis, according to the FBI. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from Amherst College, a law degree from Washington University Law School and served in the Navy as a lieutenant during both World War II and the Korean War.

Webster served as a district judge in the Eastern District of Missouri from 1970 to 1973, and on the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit from 1973 to 1978, according to the Homeland Security Advisory Council, on which he held the title of chair emeritus. He was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1991.

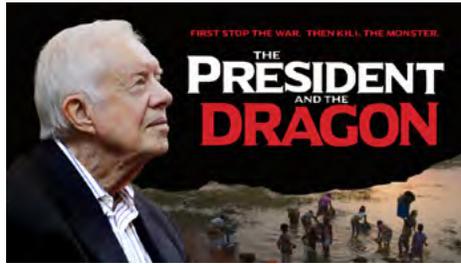
—Adapted from an article on *MSNBC.com*

# ‘President and the Dragon’ Documentary Debuts

“**T**he President and The Dragon,” a powerful new documentary chronicling former U.S. President Jimmy Carter’s decades-long fight to eradicate an ancient parasite, has set an Oct. 1 release, coinciding with what would have been President Carter’s 101st birthday. The film will debut on-demand across Amazon, Hoopla, and Verizon Fios, with additional platforms to follow.

President Carter championed the global effort to eradicate Guinea worm disease from 1986 until his death in December 2024. “The President and the Dragon,” directed by Waleed Eltayeb and Ian D. Murphy, tells how President Carter and an eclectic group of public health professionals, local volunteers, and ex-child soldiers braved treacherous terrain and armed conflicts to reduce Guinea worm cases from 3.5 million each year in 1986 to just 15 last year.

“My grandfather desperately wanted to outlive Guinea worm, and he came remarkably close to doing it,” said Jason Carter, Carter Center



board chair and the eldest grandson of President Carter and the late First Lady Rosalynn Carter. “He witnessed firsthand what freeing a community from this terrible disease meant to people’s daily lives, and The Carter Center will keep working until there are zero cases.”

Eltayeb, a Sudanese filmmaker based in Dubai, traveled with his crew to remote locations on the African

continent where the waterborne disease remains endemic, capturing the difficult — and often dangerous — work of the “Guinea worm warriors” working on the frontlines of public health. Guinea worm disease is close to becoming the second human disease ever eradicated, following smallpox.

“This is a story of hope, and of the power of ordinary people in even the most isolated communities to improve their lives,” Eltayeb said. “There is no vaccine for Guinea worm disease, so progress comes one village at a time when people work together in places like South Sudan and Chad. It’s a story the world needs to hear now more than ever.”

## New Stamp Honors President Carter

The U.S. Postal Service has issued a new Forever stamp to commemorate the life and legacy of President Jimmy Carter.

A dedication ceremony was held at The Carter Center in Atlanta on Oct. 1, on what would have been his 101st birthday.



## This Is the Last Issue of the Carter/Mondale Letter

Thank you for your readership, support, and friendship throughout the years.

The Carter Center continues to look to President and Mrs. Carter as guiding lights for our ongoing work to wage peace, fight disease, and build hope around the world.

### Ways to stay in touch:

- Become a Carter Center supporter through the Ambassadors Circle and receive invitations to exclusive events: [www.cartercenter.org/donate](http://www.cartercenter.org/donate).
- Attend Carter Center Weekend each year alongside many Carter-Mondale alumni: [www.cartercenter.org/cartercenterweekend](http://www.cartercenter.org/cartercenterweekend).
- Visit our website or follow us on social media: [www.cartercenter.org](http://www.cartercenter.org)



We look forward to hearing from you and continuing our special camaraderie.

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**The Carter/Mondale Letter was produced by The Carter Center and sent to individuals who were associated with the campaign and administration of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and Vice President Walter Mondale.**