



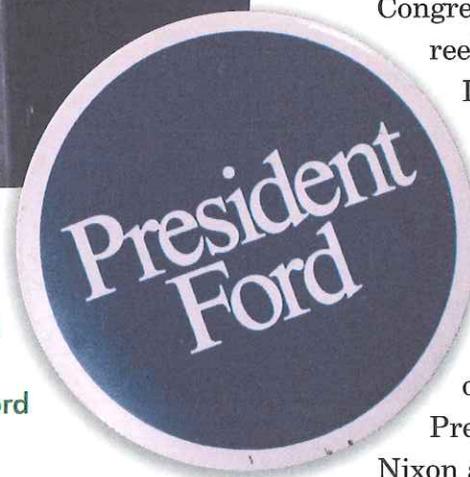
## Gerald R. Ford



Photos Gerald R. Ford Library L otherwise noted

On August 9, 1974, Chief Justice Warren

Burger swears in Gerald R. Ford as the 38th president of the United States. Mrs. Ford looks on.



**G**erald R. Ford was born in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1913. He was named Leslie Lynch King, Jr. A few weeks after his birth, he moved with his mother to Grand Rapids, Michigan. Following a divorce, Mrs. King remarried a man named Gerald R. Ford. Mrs. Ford then changed her son's name to Gerald R. Ford.

Nicknamed "Junior," Ford became an Eagle Scout and attended South High School.

A good football player, he won a **scholarship** to play for the University of Michigan in 1931. Ford was voted the team's most valuable player in 1934. After graduation, he had a chance to play professional football. Instead, Ford entered Yale University and earned a law degree.

At the outbreak of World War II, Ford joined the U.S. Naval Reserve. He served in the South Pacific aboard an aircraft carrier. Ford's closest brush with death came during a terrible typhoon in December 1944. He almost was swept overboard. After the war, Ford returned to Grand Rapids and became a lawyer.

In 1948, Ford entered politics and was elected to Congress. Ford was reelected 12 times.

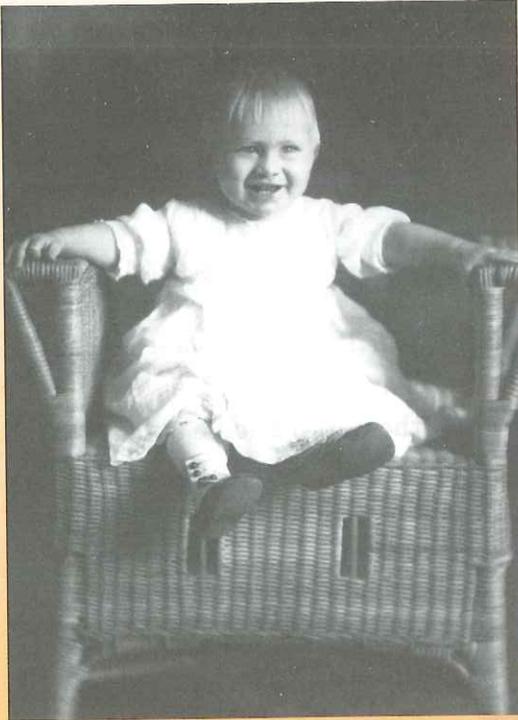
In 1965, he became a leader of the Republican party. After Vice President Spiro Agnew resigned his office in late 1973,

President Richard Nixon asked Congressman Ford to become the new vice president. Ford said yes.

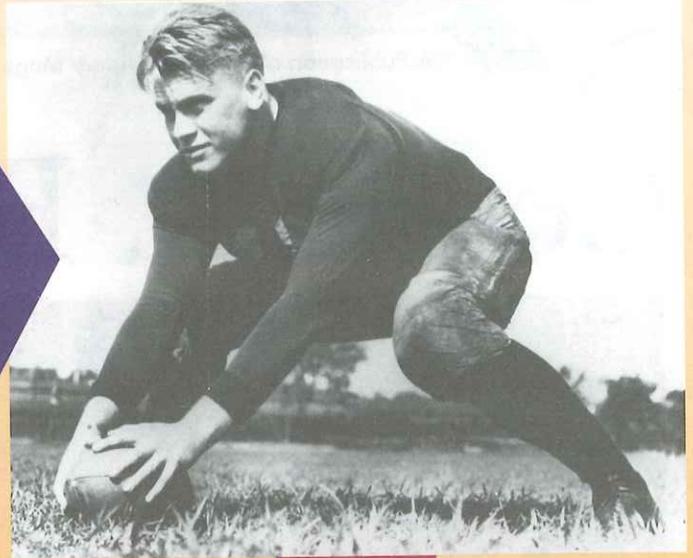
At this time, President Nixon was being criticized for his actions in a political **scandal** called the Watergate affair. During the summer of 1974, Congress charged Nixon with **obstruction** of

*(continued on page 3)*

# A FORD TIMELINE

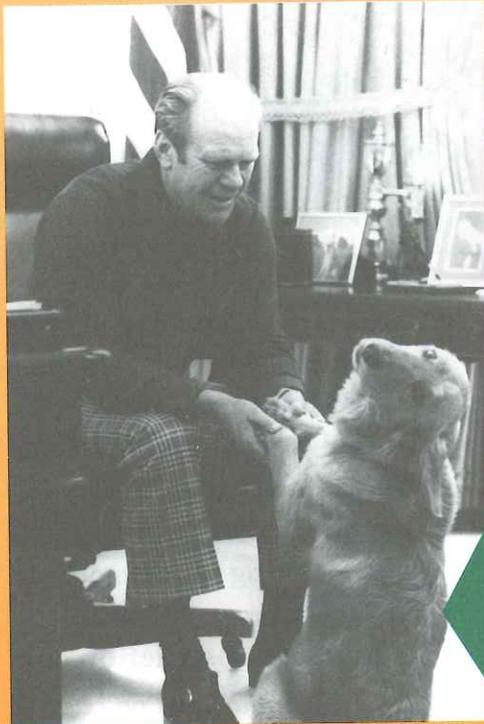


One-year-old  
Gerald R. Ford  
Jr. in 1914.



Ford was a star  
football player  
for the University  
of Michigan from  
1932-34.

Ford relaxes in  
the Oval Office  
with his dog,  
Liberty.



Betty and Susan  
Ford make  
Christmas dec-  
orations in the  
White House.

## Gerald R. Ford (continued from page 1)

justice and misusing the power of his office. If Nixon did not resign he would be **impeached**. On August 9, 1974, Nixon resigned the presidency.

At the same time, Vice President

Ford was sworn in as the nation's 38th president.

When Ford became president the country was facing many problems, especially rising **inflation**, unemployment and energy shortages.

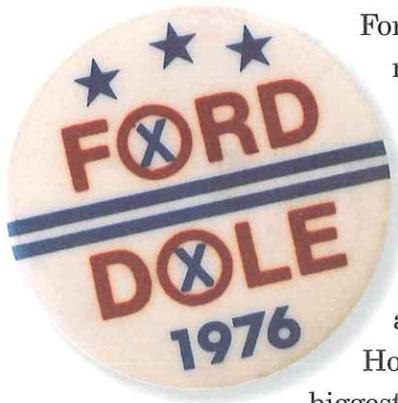
However, one of Ford's biggest challenges was restoring the **credibility** of the presidency.

At first, the Ford presidency went well. The country liked the Fords. Gerald, Betty and their children, Michael, John, Steven and Susan, appeared to be a normal, middle-class family. For example, Susan refused to stop wearing blue jeans in the White House even after the staff told her that it was improper.

One month after Ford became president he **pardoned** Richard Nixon for "crimes he committed or may have committed." Ford believed that Americans needed to stop discussing Watergate. However, many Americans were angry about the pardon.

During the 1976 presidential campaign, the Republicans chose Ford to run against Jimmy Carter, a former Democratic governor of Georgia. Carter started the campaign with a big lead. Ford cut the lead, but lost in one of the closest presidential elections of the 20th century.

After leaving the presidency, President and Mrs. Ford moved to California. In 1981, the Gerald R. Ford Library in Ann Arbor and the Gerald R. Ford Museum in Grand Rapids were dedicated. Today, President Ford continues to speak out on important political issues.



## Where to Take Your Family



Carolyn Damstra

## The Gerald R. Ford Museum

Located in downtown Grand Rapids, the Gerald R. Ford Museum is one of the best presidential museums in the country.

A tour of the museum begins with the sights, sounds and political issues of the

1970s. Visitors then journey to Ford's childhood through his days at the University of Michigan.

Elsewhere, a typical day as the president is recreated. Visitors see a full-size replica of the Oval Office—the room in the White House where presidents hold their most important meetings.

The museum also offers visiting exhibits from the Smithsonian Institution. For information on visiting the Gerald R. Ford Museum, telephone (616) 451-9263 or visit on-line at [www.ford.utexas.edu](http://www.ford.utexas.edu).



# What Did You Learn?

## BONUS:

Gerald Ford pardoned \_\_\_\_\_.

### Vocabulary WORDS



**Credibility:** deserving to be believed

**Impeach:** to make an accusation against, or to remove someone from office

**Inflation:** an increase in the cost of things

**Obstruction:** something that stands in the way of, or stops something

**Pardon:** to release from punishment, forgive

**Scandal:** an act or event that brings about disgrace or shame

**Scholarship:** financial aid awarded to a student

1. What university football team did Gerald Ford play on?

- a. Michigan State University
- b. The University of Michigan
- c. Grand Valley State University

2. When did Gerald Ford become president?

- a. August 9, 1974
- b. June 9, 1948
- c. January 11, 1981

3. Who was Ford's Democratic opponent in 1976?

- a. Jimmy Carter
- b. Ronald Reagan
- c. Spiro Agnew

T W T N I V G B Q N I M B Y O  
 E N T A V H H T A X M E F N Q  
 Q X E N R A P C Y Z P N O J P  
 V W J D C C I G Y D E O R W B  
 Q D U M I L O W C E A D D X M  
 D S X M B S P M G H C R L P A  
 X E S U Z O E Q E Z H A O U F  
 X G P E S S R R N D E P J N D  
 Q E O M R W W E P H D V W O C  
 R R R I L G Y N H H O G N Q W  
 S Z V Q Q E N V F M A B I Z F  
 X W I M J W F O K Z X R L W S  
 L Z C W L U O B C N X O H L K  
 D L J R L F B X J D U R I U M  
 Z O P R O L N K B D E R Z L C

Find the following  
**GERALD R. FORD**  
 words

**CONGRESS  
 DEMOCRAT  
 FORD  
 IMPEACHED  
 PARDON  
 PRESIDENT  
 REPUBLICAN**