



BY BETTY KAISER
For the Sentinel

The Chatterbox

I'm with Gracie!



getting worse. This was the era of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Thomas E. Dewey. Laughter was in short supply.

Gracie's new political party was called "The Surprise Party." After all, she said, her mother was a Democrat, her father a Republican and she was born — a Surprise!

Gracie made unannounced appearances on many radio shows to offer her views on the issues of the day. One day she could be found at Fibber McGee and Molly and the next on The Jack Benny Show. When Ken Murray, host of The Texaco Star Theatre, asked her which party she was affiliated with, she answered in typical Gracie form: "I may take a drink now and then, but I never get affiliated."

Eventually she and George crossed the country on a whistle-stop campaign tour. They promoted her book "How to Become President" and performed their radio show live from Hollywood to Omaha. There, at the Surprise Party Convention she was nominated for President of the United States.

When asked what made her qualified to run for President she said, "...let me tell you that women are getting very tired of running a poor second to the Forgotten Man, and with all the practice we've had around the house the time is ripe for a woman to sweep the country. I'll make a prediction... that a woman can and will be elected if she is qualified and gets enough votes." Gracie continued adlibbing as she shook hands and kissed babies. She garnered a few hundred votes and tens of thousands of smiles — which is all she really wanted.

Fast forward a few years and another Hollywood face entered the political arena. Pat Paulsen was a long-faced comedian and satirist who was well known for his hilarious monologs on The Smothers Brothers Comedy.

Paulsen was approached by the Smothers Brothers to run for President in 1968. He is reported to have said, "Why not? I can't dance; the job has a good pension plan and I'll get a lot of money when I retire." His slogan was "Just a common, ordinary simple savior of America's destiny." Sounds a little familiar!

Viewers would tune in to listen to his campaign promises that were outright lies and tongue-in-cheek attacks on the major candidates. His so-called campaign was comedy based and a big hit. The long-faced comedian's response to any and all criticism was "Picky, picky, picky."

Tongue in cheek, Paulsen addressed issues that we still face today:

Problem solving: "I will not claim to solve all the world's problems. If I did, I'd have to run as a Republican or a Democrat."

Gun laws: "A gun is a necessity. Who knows...you might be walking down a street and spot a moose!"

National Debt: "Will I obliterate national debt? Sure, why not?"

Immigration: "All the problems we face today can be traced to an unenlightened immigration policy on the part of the American Indian."

To everyone's surprise, his pseudo campaign took on a life of its own. In the 1996 New Hampshire Democratic Primary, Paulsen polled 921 votes to President Clinton's 76,754. He came in second place! Ultimately he ran five campaigns with gentle humor aimed at political arrogance until he died at the age of 69 in 1997.

Paulsen had some final words of election wisdom as he paraphrased another wise man: "You can fool some of the people all of the time and all of the people some of the time but you can only make a monkey out of the voters every four years!"

Don't be a monkey! Get informed and vote intelligently! As for me, I'm with Gracie and Pat. Truth goes down best with a little laughter.

Betty Kaiser's Chatterbox is about people, places, family, and other matters of the heart. Contact her at 942-1317 or via e-mail — bkhatt@bettykaiser.com

CG's Neigh hopes to help others in the World Race

Calling to serve others and see the world has prompted a Cottage Grove resident to race around the globe this winter.

Courtney Neigh moved here last year from Cleveland, Ohio after the disappointment of not being accepted into a nursing program and in search of her next step.

"There's a whisper inside all of us that says, 'There must be more,'" Neigh recently wrote, and she believes she may have found more with her plans for this winter.

The World Race is an 11-month mission trip to 11 different countries that aims to serve "the least of these" in many communities. Neigh said she will spend one month in each country working with local churches and organizations to meet the needs of each community while also spreading the Gospel.

"Racers serve for 11 months while living out of a backpack," Neigh wrote. "They experience how others live as they are immersed in new cultures, forming lasting relationships with people who bring fresh perspective."

Neigh will be traveling to India, Nepal, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and South Africa starting in January, but she's aware that her route is subject to change. Along the way, she'll be preaching in churches, visiting kids in orphanages, doing community construction work and ministering to sex trafficking victims, experiences she expects to be "life-giving and life-changing." But these will not be her first foray into service, as Neigh has volunteered her time and talents from a young age. She participated in Young Life in high school, volunteering summers working at a camp either baking for hundreds of campers or serving them in the dining hall. In college, she served as Vice President of Service on Student Government, helped with a few Habitat for Humanity trips in Florida and did mission work in West Virginia. Neigh also did mission work in Haiti through Mission of Hope, where she helped paint houses and worked in the orphanages while experiencing the culture. She later went to Guatemala with nursing professors to aid medical clinics in several cities and villages.

"Those experiences have been some of the most rewarding times in my life; knowing that you helped make someone's life a little brighter is an amazing feeling," Neigh wrote.

Before Neigh can begin her journey, she must raise the approximately \$17,000 her trip is expected to cost. Those interested in learning more about the World Race or contributing to Neigh's participation can visit her blog at courtneyneigh.theworldrace.org.



Courtney Neigh plans to visit and work in 11 countries beginning in January.



NATIONAL SAVE YOUR SMILE WEEK

Dental care can help prevent periodontal disease

Kids often lament daily dental care. Mom and Dad might insist kids brush their teeth each morning and before bed, but that doesn't mean kids enjoy these daily dental rituals.

While it's notoriously difficult to get kids to take dental care seriously, many adults also approach dental care with something less than an enthusiastic effort. Dental hygiene routines or visits to the dentist might not be welcomed with open arms, but their importance, especially with regards to preventing periodontal disease, is paramount. To understand that connection better, it can help to get a firmer grasp on periodontal disease, its potentially negative consequences and how to prevent it.

What is periodontal disease?

Periodontal disease is commonly referred to as gum disease. An infection of the tissues that surround and support the teeth, periodontal disease is a major cause of adult tooth loss. According to the American Dental Association, periodontal disease is often painless, and many adults may have it without even knowing it.

What causes periodontal disease?

Periodontal disease is caused by a sticky film of bacteria that forms on the teeth. This film is called plaque, and the bacteria that forms creates toxins that can damage the gums.

Are there signs of periodontal disease?

There are signs that indicate the presence of periodontal disease, and anyone who notices these signs should see a dentist immediately. Indicators of periodontal disease include:

- gums that bleed when you brush your teeth
- red, swollen or tender gums
- persistent bad breath
- pus between the teeth and gums
- gums that have pulled away from the teeth
- loose teeth

Can periodontal disease be prevented?

As harmful as periodontal disease can be, men and women should know it can be prevented. Taking good care of your teeth and making those dental appointments, no matter how much you might fear the dentist's chair, are great ways to prevent periodontal disease.

Keeping gums and teeth healthy requires a daily commitment, but that commitment is easy to make. The following are a few daily routines that can help prevent periodontal disease.

- Brush twice per day. Brushing twice daily removes plaque and reduces the risk for damaged gums. When brushing, the ADA recommends a soft-bristled toothbrush and toothpastes that contain fluoride, which strengthen the teeth and help prevent decay.
- Clean between the teeth every day. Floss or interdental cleaners remove bacteria from those areas a toothbrush just can't reach, such as between the teeth. Flossing is important, as the ADA notes that early periodontal disease can be reversed by daily brushing and flossing.
- Don't skip dental visits. Fear of the dentist's chair is not uncommon. Be it kids or adults, many people harbor a fear of go-



Routinely visiting the dentist for cleanings and other checkups is one way to prevent periodontal disease, which is usually unrecognizable in its early stages.

ing to the dentist, no matter how irrational that fear might be. But skipping dental visits is a recipe for disaster. When detected early, periodontal disease is rather easily reversed. But the longer men and women go between dental visits, the more time periodontal disease has to advance, and serious damage can result. When gum disease has progressed to an advanced stage, this is known as periodontitis. At this point gums can be seriously damaged, possibly resulting in loose teeth or tooth loss. So no matter how much you might fear the dentist's chair, those trips are necessary.

Periodontal disease often goes unnoticed, placing great emphasis on the individual to be proactive and take care of his or her teeth while visiting the dentist at least twice annually. More information on periodontal disease can be found at www.ada.org.

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