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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 10, 1975

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR: DOROTHY DOWNTON
FROM: JAMES E. CONNOR
SUBJECT: Letter from Jimmy Van Atta

The attached letter was returned in the President's Outbox with the following notation:

"Have Dorothy Downton write reply".

Please follow-up with appropriate action.

cc: Don Rumsfeld

—
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MR. PRESIDENT:

Warren Rustand thought
you would be interested in reading
the attached.

Downton

Jim Connor

*Have Dorothy
write reply!*

June 24, 1975

The President
c/o Warren Rustand
White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Jerry;

Don't know if you are aware that Harold McClure is putting up a heck of a battle with cancer, so if you have a moment, call him or drop him a note. You wouldn't believe the change in him, maybe he could have lunch or something with you in Traverse City. He still has his own planes but he doesn't fly himself anymore he has a pilot.

Paul Collins has asked me to collabrate with him on the mural he is going to do for the airport. He wants to show your rise to the present position and also the facts that you are truly liked by the blacks in the Fifth District.

I know that you would like to see Frank Meyer & Senator Dirks' face in the mural, but do you have any special black face? I know about the porter at the Pantlind and the boy you walked to school with, but everybody wanted to stop, talk and shake hands, so if you have anyone special that you want shown besides the family, please let me know because above all Paul wants to have it please you.

one of several

Please don't put an Astronaut in as FAA Administrator, we need someone that has had to pay his way and knows costs and values. Nassa and the Military have all kinds of expensive items that they as individuals didn't have to pay for or weigh their values. Did you ever consider Jay Ramsey, Head of the Michigan Dept of Aeronautics, he might surprise you.

I flew down with Amway in April, the morning after Mr. Howe died - couldn't get near you and didn't get to see Betty either but Martha gave me a real tour of the White House, I even met Liberty.

My next dream is to ride on Air Force One, so if its possible, let me know the next time you are coming to Grand Rapids and I'll fly down just to make the return trip on N27000.

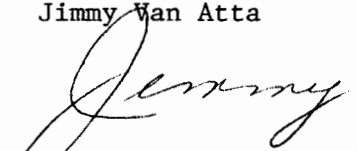
Just let me know when you want to open a Campaign office and I'll take over in the evenings.

Keep up the good work and please take care of yourself, because now as never before has a man been needed by this country as you are.

Give my best to the family, Betty really looks well when I saw her on television.

As ever,

Jimmy Van Atta



JVA/ldvt

P.S. I'm still trying to change the name of this airport

City, Kent Bicentennial Event Dates Tied to President Ford's Schedule

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.....

By Maury DeJonge

Local officials hope next year's area Bicentennial celebration will include a commitment from the White House.

The committee planning the county observance met Friday with Carl Eschels, executive director of the Grand Rapids Bicentennial-Sesquicentennial Committee.

It was agreed that all groups planning special celebrations will work together to have President Gerald R. Ford help his hometown observe the event between June 15 and Sept. 1.

Reason for the coordinated effort, Eschels said, "is so that President Ford will not have to pick and choose which invitation he would accept."

The invitation to the President will be signed by Mayor Lyman S. Parks and Commissioner Jackson J. Root, chairman of the Kent County Board of Commissioners.

City project for the Bicentennial is the development of the downtown west bank of Grand River into a park. The county's principal celebration will be an air show at Kent County Airport, depicting the history of aviation in the county, but including other subjects, too.

Heading the county organizational committee is Commissioner Robert Broersma, who said the official name of the committee should reflect that the celebration extends far beyond a one-day air show.

He said it is hoped the unveiling of a special mural by artist Paul Collins will be a major feature of the program at the airport.

collins is expected to go to Washington soon to begin sketching the President. The mural will be mobile and painted on a plywood-like surface in sections so it can be moved. It will be 8 feet high and 24 feet wide and will depict the life of Ford from early boyhood to the presidency.

The mural will be displayed permanently at the airport. A special committee headed by Bobbie Butler has undertaken the job of raising \$35,000 to cover the cost of the project.

Broersma noted that the President has made it a practice to visit the Lowell Showboat, and said that if Ford's schedule and security permits, it might be possible to tie all the events together.

Eschels said he would like to encourage business to take part in Bicentennial activities and that his committee is hoping for "horizon" projects. He explained that such long-term projects might take longer than a year to complete, but that the Bicentennial celebration could be a starting point.

"We don't want to tell any group what to do. All we are attempting to achieve is to get them to sit down and plan a program for this point in our nation's history," Eschels said.

Broersma's committee voted to send two persons to the Reading Air Show, Reading, Pa., next Thursday and Friday. They will review the format and report back to the committee.

Broersma said he is confident that the admission charge for the air show will cover the cost. Actual budget will be

developed in about a month.

The committee also is looking into the matter of hiring an executive director for the project on a part-time or full-time basis.

The position will be advertised and authorized for one year. The possibility of picking co-directors, a man and a woman, also is being considered, Broersma said.

A permanent name for Broersma's committee also is being sought. Eschels said it should be different than the designation for his committee so that no confusion develops.

Representing the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce at Friday's meeting was Stuart Cok, executive vice president. Robert M. Ross, aeronautics director, is serving as a special adviser to the committee.

Ross said it is possible that the federal government will establish a customs office at the airport in the next year. It would open the airport to direct international flights.

2-B

The Grand Rapids Press, Monday, June 9, 1975

