



Thomas Jefferson was one busy man! He was a scientist. He was an architect. He designed his own home and all of the buildings for the University of Virginia. He invented the dumb waiter, and the swivel chair, and lots of other things. He played the violin and was an excellent horseman.

However, Jefferson wasn't quite perfect. Everyone who heard him agreed that he was a poor speaker! Sometimes the snores in the audience were louder than the words he was saying. That was all right, because he was a good writer. He was the main author of the Constitution of the United States!

When Jefferson became president he was a widower. Most of the time he lived alone in the White House with his pet mockingbird for company. He wasn't much of a party person, so there were very few parties held at the White House. Jefferson's daughter, Patsy, helped out at the two receptions given each year.

Jefferson was also very good at making bargains. He convinced France to sell to the United States the Louisiana Territory which stretched from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico and from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains. The price was \$15,000,000. What a bargain! You couldn't buy an acre in Manhattan for fifteen million dollars today. Not only did Jefferson buy all that land, but he bought it without looking it over first. Of course, there was quite a bit of land to explore, and some Native Americans on the land weren't too friendly to sightseers.

Jefferson sent Lewis and Clark to explore the new land for him. They were gone two years from 1804 until 1806 and traveled past the Rocky Mountains all the way to the Pacific Ocean. The explorers not only brought back maps they had made and journals of their travels, but they brought back two grizzly bears that were displayed in cages on the White House lawn! Imagine ringing the president's doorbell and hearing a growl instead of a hello!

People called the visiting grizzlies "The President's Bear Garden!"