



Carol Paul Answers Your Questions

Guest: Carol Paul

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Carol Paul has been married to former U.S. Congressman Ron Paul for 57 years.

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WOODS: Carol, I announced that you were going to be a guest and then I solicited questions from my listeners. They rose to the occasion with a bunch of really interesting things to ask you. I'm just going to run through them. Are you ready?

PAUL: Ready!

WOODS: This first one is sort of a personal question, but we're all curious. We want to know: all those years ago, when you first met Ron, what was it about him that made you say this guy's a keeper?

PAUL: Oh, goodness. There's so many things. First of all, the first time I ever saw him was he was running a race in track. He was the last runner. The other person was almost a whole half a track ahead. He took that baton, and he ran. He won the race for them. I was impressed with his athletic ability, and then I learned more about him. He ended up president of the student council. Just did everything in the right manner. He was very quiet. Sports was his stronghold, not girls, so I had a lot of work cut out for me.

WOODS: Did you take the initiative with him? I realize we have absolutely no business asking you this, but here we are doing it.

PAUL: My birthday is the 29th of February, and it only comes every four years. When I was a little girl, my dad kept saying when you're 16 we're going to have a wonderful party. We're going to have a band and a dance. He talked it up. Lo and behold I became 16, so all the girls in my class were invited. They were to invite a date. So I invited Ron. I guess I was the initiator.

WOODS: Good for you. I've got some other pretty good ones here. Let's suppose you had become the first lady. Of course, in our hearts you are the first lady, but had you thought about what the proper role of the first lady is or what you would have done as first lady? You wouldn't be telling us what to eat and all that sort of stuff, right?

PAUL: No. I think that the role of the first lady is, number one, to be a lady in the true sense of the word. Someone that everyone can emulate. I know no one can be perfect and everybody has their strong points, but I think that mothers and wives in American have a huge role. I don't think they always see that role as important as it really is. I guess I would have stressed really being a wife and true to your beliefs would be a good starting place.

WOODS: Carol, here's a tough one. You have a husband in public life. You have a son who's now in public life. One of the costs of that is that you have to endure a lot of attacks. A good portion of those attacks are

nasty and downright unfair. How have you coped with that? How do you respond to that? How do you feel about that? How do you address this whole problem?

PAUL: There are a couple of ways to respond. One is, the female of the species is more deadly than the male, so I would just as soon they not cross my path. You know about a mother bear and her cubs. Well I'm a mother bear and don't particularly take to—now constructive criticism is another thing. I can take that. But out-and-out lies and innuendos don't sit very well with me. I'm not afraid to let them know.

WOODS: Nice. I notice sometimes even on your Facebook page you will come roaring to the defense of your family, and that's just great. Here's another listener-supplied question. Is Ron Paul different on stage, let's say in a presidential debate or giving a speech, where the general public might see him, that he is at home?

PAUL: I would say no. He's pretty genuine. People that meet him here at home are amazed that he is just an ordinary person, and of course people love to catch him out on his bicycle or out for a walk. He walks every morning, rides his bike every afternoon that the weather is nice, just like every other citizen. He doesn't have a big ego. I mean, he's a real person, and he pretty much is that person on stage or off stage.

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WOODS: Did you ever imagine that it would come to this, that your husband would be a beloved international celebrity?

PAUL: Well, no. I probably didn't think of that in the beginning. But what I did know, I was certain, that he was my choice, and that whatever he did would be the right thing to do. I had no doubt about that. He wasn't finished in his training—we were 21 and 22 when we married, and he hadn't finished medical school yet—but I knew that I could trust whatever he was going to do to be the best thing for our family, which we had none yet.

WOODS: Right. That reminds me: when I had you on as a guest on the Peter Schiff Show a couple years ago, you told a story the details of which I'm sorry I've forgotten, in which one of your kids wound up having to be delivered by Ron quite unexpectedly. Can you tell us that story?

PAUL: He always promised that he would be right there, and if something happened, there wasn't anyone else there that had more training than he did, that he would be there. I guess our second child, Lori, decided to come a little quickly. I know he was sitting there, and I said to him, "You, know these contractions are a little harder than I remember." And of course Ronnie [TW note: one of their sons] and Lori are just a year apart. So it hadn't been too long since I had delivered our first child. He said, "Oh, you've just forgotten." To keep me happy and all, he decided that he would just check. He looked down. He said, "Oh, my gosh. I see black hair. You're crowning!" So then everyone believed me, and everyone started racing around. The resident came racing in, and they said, "No, you can't move the bed." He opened the sterile pack, and Ron stood there and held her head, and the resident did the rest of the delivery. It was a teaching hospital at Duke University. By the time the doctor got there, she was all delivered, and I had a gorgeous eight-pound baby girl. So he was really the first one to touch her.

WOODS: That's a wonderful story. I love that story.

Another question is: we all know that there are some libertarians who can talk about nothing but libertarianism all day long. There's a road closure, they give you a ten-minute lecture on the government roads; they're watching a movie, they have to talk about whether or not it's a libertarian movie. Somebody wants to know if Ron is like this. I can't imagine that he would be. I don't think he is, but I might as well ask you.

PAUL: No. First of all, Ron never gives an opinion if he's not asked for it. He says, "Unsolicited advice is

worth nothing.” Even as a doctor he would be glad to do anything for anyone, but he would not come up and say, oh, I think you ought to do this. That would be a presumptuous thing in medicine or in life. If you jump in and think you know everything, I think that starts a conversation off pretty poorly, and it doesn’t help the person come to your way of thinking at all.

WOODS: Let’s move ahead to this question: “Besides her family and her husband, what causes is she most passionate about?”

PAUL: The men in my family take enough care of the things like that. If I have something that I want to do for me it would be something in the craft vein. I am a quilter and love to spend time in my quilt room, which Ron says is the nicest room in our house because it has the most light. I can look out and I can see some deer. I can see some wildlife. If you’re looking for issues, one of my top issues is of course is right to life ,if you want serious things. If you want fun things you get the quilting.

[time 00:11:49]

WOODS: Well, we like both. We like serious and fun. On the fun topic somebody asks about your musical tastes and Ron’s musical tastes. Are they the same or do they differ?

PAUL: We have pretty much the same taste. I like all music. Ron, he’ll like some of the singers that we had in the 1950s that we first danced to and things like that. And of course, I’m interested in the ballet and things like that. All types of music is something that I’m interested in, and his would be more—he likes music it would be more of a background. You wouldn’t think of it first.

WOODS: Suppose we are sitting at the Thanksgiving table in the Paul house, which would have to be a pretty big table.

PAUL: Yes. That was one reason why I wanted to go ahead and build our house. We had 40 acres for probably 40 years and had not done anything with it, and Ron used this place to get out when there was no one else that he could sign out to.He would come and ride out here and had a tractor and do things. Finally, I talked him into building our house out here, so we could build a house—not as a showplace, but a house that had a big enough room so we could have Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner all in one room. I got my wish about three years ago, and we have probably between 42 and 45 people for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

WOODS: The question that has my listener curious is: what’s talked about around a Paul family table like that? Are people talking about politics and the economy? Do they generally just keep it light and enjoy each other’s company and forget those issues? What’s talked about?

PAUL: We have enough young people—when I say young, we have six great-grandkids who are from age seven down—so there’s a lot of just trying to keep everybody’s food on their plate and get it in their mouth. It isn’t one table. It’s one room, but each table might have a different conversation. We don’t have place cards. Everybody gets to sit where they want. We do have a couple of little tables, and the kids get to sit at tables by themselves. Moms are up and down helping kids with plates and things like that and dads are, too. We have wonderful married grandchildren and their spouses, boys or girls, are wonderful with their kids. We get along well. The family likes to do things together.

There might be some political conversation, but there’s no arguments anywhere. People may be saying my, what is going to happen because of this, that, or the other if it’s economics. It would usually steer into economics or foreign policy or something like that. It’s not a dominant feature when they’re here. It might be sports, because we have one grandson playing for the University of Houston right now in baseball. It might be baseball. We have a lot of issues. We have one granddaughter in veterinary school at Cornell in New York. We have one that’s a principal at a school. He’ll have all kinds of stories about what happens at

school, and we have several teachers. We are just pretty versatile.

WOODS: I've always wanted to ask you this. I can't imagine what a mental and physical toll it must take to be involved in a presidential campaign, to be a candidate. We all know your husband's in excellent physical condition. Everybody knows that. Nevertheless, was there any time during those campaigns in which you as his wife were concerned that he was simply putting too great of a strain on himself?

PAUL: He always does things all the way, not half, but he does believe in exercise. He believes if he isn't healthy and strong that he's not any good to anyone else in the country. So he makes it a point even in campaigning that he has some time to do a little walking. He doesn't get to bicycle as much during campaigns. He always makes sure he gets out and is able to walk. He really believes exercise is important. We pretty much go along to make sure he's protected as much as possible in a way that he does get that time to exercise. If he does that, he's a pretty happy camper.

WOODS: Great. I'm glad it works. Here's another one. "I think it is wonderful to have a spouse who does the right thing and speaks the truth despite the personal cost, but I wonder how Dr. Paul's unpopular principles have given Mrs. Paul any trouble as well. Anything on that?"

PAUL: No. I can't even think of an incident. My biggest job is to try to get him color coordinated and ready for the next event. Sometimes that's a job, because he doesn't think it's as important. He's into issues. He's not into dress and design. That would be the only place where I might say, I really don't like that tie. He might complain a little bit, but usually he'll change it. He might be a little grumpy about it. That's the only thing I can think of. As I say, we can talk. My grandmother was always the one that said, "A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger." I try to remember that. I'd be the quickest one to cause a problem if there was. I would be a shorter fuse. Ron is very kind, very gentle, very slow to anger. Unless you get him on foreign policy and killing people unnecessarily he's pretty even keel.

WOODS: Did you live most of the time in Texas when Ron was in Washington?

PAUL: When Ron was in Washington, yes, we always lived in Texas. We had a condo up there in Washington, so he had a place where he could go and get away from the world when he left Congress, because anything that happens in the evening up there is not anything that helps our government. We did have a condo, and we had it for 25 years, and even when he was out of office he kept it, because they always are welcome on the floor of Congress or Library of Congress. He kept it to keep in contact and up to date on everything that was going on.

We had five children in five different areas. A couple were in high school, grade school, elementary, and for us to go to Washington and live there with that many kids and have a second house that costs that much to run. We were before the homeschool era. Had we been in the homeschool era, it would have been different, because I think it's something I would have tried. It never even entered our minds. We're very blessed to have pretty smart children. The first one went through; I never had questions. They did what they were supposed to do, and I didn't know mom was supposed to be in there behind them doing stuff. They made all A's. What could I do? I've learned a lot over the years.

[time 00:20:33]

WOODS: Did you personally spend enough time in Washington that you might ever have gone to dinner parties in Washington with Ron, things like that?

PAUL: No. I went to Washington when he wanted me to go to something. We had dinner at the White House and some things like that. Yes, I did those. Ron is not one to do social things really without me. He did his job that he was called upon to do, and he was there. It wasn't for social things. We've gone to a couple of the inaugurations, but that's not his thing to do, either. I would be more interested in the social area. I

belong to the Congressional Wives Club, and I attended as many of their things that I could. They meet once a month, but I wasn't in Washington every month. Maybe every two or three months.

I'll tell you one story that you'll like. When Ron was first in Congress I was up there, and we had a little tiny Chevy Chevette. I knew how to park it in the parking lot at the Capitol. I was out one day, and I was coming back to the Capitol. I only knew one way to get to it, but I had to cross eight lanes of traffic to make the turn I needed to. There was a policeman standing on the corner, so I pulled over to the corner. I told him my dilemma. I said, "I don't know much about Washington yet," but had the congressional plates on the car and everything. I said, "I need to get that turn to be able to turn to get into the garage," and he said, "Oh, that's not a problem," and he stopped all eight lanes of traffic and let me turn to get in the right lane, so I could get back in the garage. I'm not a really brave driver in all that, and it is bumper to bumper. Of course, it wasn't as much then as it is now. You have to be aggressive. I'm a good driver, but it was a fun story.

WOODS: Who was president when you had dinner at the White House?

PAUL: We went to one event with Reagan. I'm trying to think. I can't remember.

WOODS: Did you ever meet Bill Clinton?

PAUL: We did. We went to one of the events when Hillary was off somewhere with something, and it was a rain-out for the picnic. They had it the next day at the White House, and we went. I know that one of the photographers was saying, "Come over here if you want your picture with the president," and we quietly kept moving on, because that wasn't something we felt we needed. The one time we were there for the Reagans I think Frank Sinatra sang, because he was friends with Nancy. That was nice. I found her to be a very gracious first lady and hated the fact some of the things she had to go through in the press, because she was a really very nice person, really was supportive of her husband. The press can change a lot of things every now and then. I'm used to looking and saying, if it's in the paper it's probably not true.

WOODS: One more question before I let you go. What was your relationship like with the other candidates' wives during the presidential campaigns?

PAUL: It was all cordial. I probably knew Ann Romney the best. I thought she was a really nice person. I thought she was a good mother and grandmother. We had more in common being married to the same person for so many years. One of her sons is a doctor in his residency, and of course, we have kids who are doctors. We had things to talk about, and she was very nice. No one was not nice. It was a very interesting situation, and each time it was different.

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