

I'm a C-Span junky

50 And Up



A couple of summers ago my neighbor Martha, who has an apartment down the hall from me in our retirement complex, said "I'm a C-Span junky."

I was astounded. As far as I knew C-Span I (Channel 48 and C-Span 2 (Channel 49) in the mid-Cape area covered the

activity at the House of Representatives and the Senate in Washington, D.C. Knowing how the members pontificate and move as slow as molasses, I thought watching either House would be boring with a capital B. Then, too, the term "junky" meant someone mesmerized by

a habit, such as taking drugs. What could be mesmerizing about C-Span? However, knowing Martha was a very smart woman, I decided to watch C-Span and check this out.

First, I discovered that the two C-Span channels are provided in the public interest by the country's cable channels. It doesn't cost the taxpayers a dime! (So if you occasionally moan and groan about your cable company, chalk this up as a

Another thing I discovered was, what a news item headline indicated the day following a speech or hearing, was not necessarily the impression I received if I watched the hearing or speech itself.

Furthermore, C-Span repeats main events around the clock, so if someone was working and didn't hear the event, he or she could watch it late at night or early in the morning. I've noticed that around 8 pm there is a program guide to aid viewers.

My first impression was also true. Congress in session can be boring-and can give false impressions. I recall watching a Representative ask for time, and had it granted by the President of the House. The Representative spoke as if his audience was hanging on every word. Then another camera panned the house and, to my astonishment, the hall was empty. The only persons there were the two just mentioned! Another time I watched the Senate members sit around and wait at least a half hour during a Quorum Call. No business would be run like that.

Nevertheless I think the two C-Span channels are the best thing that has happened since sliced bread. I've joined Martha. I'm a C-Span junky, too.

[Redacted] is the author of eighteen books, including the history of the town of Yarmouth.

RSVP

The Retired Senior Volunteer Program helps seniors age 60 and over find challenging placements in a wide array

of nonprofit community agencies. The range of openings is so broad that there is something for everyone. The RSVP office is now located at 310 Barnstable Road, Hyannis. Telephone number is 775-8784 or 1-800-245-4113. Following is a sampling of some of the varied activities needed by their member agencies.



INSTRUCTORS/CLERICAL — American Red Cross - Hyannis
GALLERY ATTENDANT — Higgins Art Gallery at Cape Cod
Barnstable

REHABILITATION/TRANSPORTATION OF WILD LIFE —
Brewster

DATA ENTRY/WORD PROCESSOR — Independence House

PATIENT CARE — Hospice Association of Cape Cod - Yarmouth

ORGANIST/PIANIST/ENTERTAINER — Rosewood Manor -

LECTURERS/SLIDE SHOWS/CRAFTS — Heatherwood Adult
Yarmouthport

TUTORS — Town of Barnstable ReCreatiOn Dept. After School
Program - Hyannis

SECRETARY WITH COMPUTER SKILLS — Cape Cod Cooperative Extension
Service - Barnstable

GREETERS AT JOHN F. KENNEDY MUSEUM — Hyannis Area Chamber of
Commerce - Hyannis

PHONES — American Heart Association - Hyannis

BROCHURE DISTRIBUTION/GIFT SHOP/VIDEO ASST. — New England Fire &
History Museum - Brewster

SPORTS/ART/POTTERY/WOODWORKING — Stephen L. French Youth Forestry
Camp - Brewster

TYPIST — American Cancer Society - Yarmouth

DATA ENTRY/MAILINGS — Sea Education Association - Woods Hole

CPA/ACCOUNTANT — Association for the Preservation of Cape Cod Orleans

*I thought you'd
like to see this
Cordially*

W. Yarmouth, MA 02673

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Next, I found out that there is much more to C-Span than covering the actions of Congress. Once the official business is concluded, the channels pick up hearings, speeches, activities of the President, the evening news direct from Moscow and sessions of Parliament in England and Canada, to name just a few of the offerings. (Many people found this out by watching the Anita Hill/Clarence Thomas Hearings.)

I became a real addict when I watched the Inauguration and related festivities including the open house at the White House the day after President William Clinton took the oath of office. I loved watching a channel that didn't break for advertisements, or provide a commentary that summarized what I had just seen. It was also nice, when there was a break in the main activity, to have the camera pan around Washington to see what was going on-again without commentary except to identify sites.

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