

A LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Food, fun and music. These are among the treats of summertime, which we're offering in this issue of SPAN. It starts with a delicious cover photo of strawberries, a fruit that is plentiful in the summertime in the United States as well as in India. This hints at the goodies inside, a whole section of recipes for summertime food and sharing of memories from Americans about what their families do in the warm, relaxing months of the year. Try the strawberry shortcake, an American traditional dish. It's also interesting to read about how many American children become fruit and vegetable harvesters in the summertime, and fondly remember the experience! We hope you'll write to SPAN and share your summer memories, too.

Music is an essential part of summer for Americans, conveying a change in workaday routine, relaxation, joy, romance and fun, as Laurinda Keys Long relates in "Summertime, and the Livin' is Easy." That's a line from one of America's most famous summertime songs, from 1934, and the theme is still a popular one for songwriters, right up to the rap generation. We invite you to log on to SPAN's Web site, <http://span.state.gov> and click the links to listen to a host of American summertime songs and videos. Let us know which ones you like best, and why.

One favorite summer song from the 1960s is *If You're Going to San Francisco*. In case you are going to San Francisco this summer, we've included "A Cable Car Ride Off the Tourist Trail" by Kim Clark. If you are headed to the East Coast, don't miss the Franklin Institute. It's showcasing a unique astronomy exhibit this summer, and specializes in hands-on science exhibits, as Vibhuti Patel explains in "Practical Science."

Summertime in the United States is also a time for patriotic holidays, starting with Memorial Day in late May, Flag Day in June and Independence Day on the 4th of July. The still mysterious history of how the U.S. flag came to be is highlighted in "A Grand Old Flag." The story of how *The Star-Spangled Banner*, the U.S. National Anthem, was written and the meaning behind its words are illuminated by Edwards Park in "Our Flag Was Still There."

We also hope you'll interact with us about our other articles. What do you think of "For Many Americans, Home is a Boat" by Steve Fox? It seems like a relaxed lifestyle, yet the boaters tell us it's also a lot of hard work, just like maintaining any home. We've also started a dialogue with several Indian journalists on the subject of "Inbox Journalism." Their opinions are in our pages, with more comments on our Web site about the news media's use of the new technologies—e-mail, instant-messaging, SMS, even Twitter. What is your opinion?

For those interested in becoming a Fulbright scholar, researcher or professor and participating in one of the oldest and most successful U.S.-India exchanges, now is the time to contact the U.S.-India Educational Foundation at <http://www.usief.org.in/> and apply. To give you a taste of what the Fulbright world is like, start with Chargé d'Affaires Peter A. Burleigh's profile, on the inside front cover. Artist Kathryn Myers, scientist Beth Middleton and writer-director Sadia Shepard—Fulbrighters all—share their experiences in our pages.

Enjoy your summer holidays and please take a moment to write to us.