

WHY I LOVE...

Washington, D.C.

AFTER 45 YEARS IN WASHINGTON, VETERAN BROADCASTER **BOB SCHIEFFER** REMAINS IN AWE OF THE NATION'S CAPITAL

Bob Schieffer spent one of his first days in Washington standing in the rain with muddy protesters during Richard Nixon's inauguration in January 1969. Back then, the unknown reporter thought living in his new city was a "great adventure."

More than 45 years later, Schieffer's name is one of the most enduring and trusted in broadcast news. The host of CBS' *Face the Nation* has interviewed every president since Nixon and covered all four major Washington beats: the White House, Congress, the State Department and the Pentagon.

But he still feels something special when he walks those hallowed halls.

"You just cannot escape the feeling that you're in a place where history is being made," Schieffer says. "Washington today is what Rome was when it was the capital of the known world."

Despite his appreciation, Schieffer, 77, is vocal about his frustration with D.C.'s political gridlock, which he says is especially bad in an election year like this one. Even so, he says, "it's still the most interesting place on Earth."

That's largely thanks to the fascinating people drawn to Washington from so many places, he says. They provide endless material for *Face the Nation*, which celebrates 60 years on the air in November. Schieffer

has hosted since 1991, though he chuckles when people ask him whether he's "been doing it the whole time."

Schieffer is proud of the show's longevity and focus on serious news, not what he calls "anchor antics" or "gotcha questions." *Face the Nation* is one of the longest-running shows on television.

"Basically, we do what they did on the very first program when *Face the Nation* debuted in 1954. We get the top newsmaker, we sit them down at the table, turn on the lights and ask them questions. There's still an appetite for that, if you look at our ratings," Schieffer says.

Schieffer and his wife of 47 years, Pat, both grew up in Texas, which helps explain his so-called "secret life" as part of a retro country music band called Honky Tonk Confidential. Schieffer is both singer and songwriter, and his lyrics often tell of Washington and its antics.

Of course, working six days a week at CBS doesn't leave much time for music. Schieffer says he'll retire someday—"before I start to drool"—and when he does, he and Pat will stay in Washington, near one of their two daughters and two of their three grandchildren. For now, though, Schieffer is staying put on Sunday morning.

"Why would I want to quit?" he says. "It's fun. I love doing it. I can't wait to get to work every day." —MEREDITH HEAGNEY



★ THE BEST PLACES TO ... ★

See the VIPs of D.C.

U.S. CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER

"It's the last place where you can have face-to-face meetings or sightings with elected officials. And there's always some Hollywood star ... there to lobby for their interests." **202-226-8000; visitthecapitol.gov**



Take the grandkids

NEWSEUM

"There's just a ton of stuff there to see," he says, recalling a time he took his grandchildren and "they asked if they could come back ... When kids are that interested in something, I just thought, what a great thing." **555 Pennsylvania Ave. NW; 888-639-7386; newseum.org**

Enjoy fall's colors

SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAINS OF VIRGINIA

"It's just beautiful out there, to see the seasons change. ... It probably takes you an hour to get out there, and it's like you're 1,000 miles from Washington." **540-999-3500; nps.gov/shen**

Have a date night

DeCARLO'S RESTAURANT

"We've been going there for a long time. It's just a neighborhood restaurant, in every sense of the word. ... We can go dressed any way that we want." **4822 Yuma St. NW; 202-363-4220; decarlosrestaurant.com**