

About Kathy Roy Johnson...

I would love to tell you that I have been writing forever—and in a sense that's true. I have always LOVED to write and I even managed to when a scholarship from Guide Posts Magazine. Although I began my college career as an English major I soon changed my major and graduated with a B.A. in Psychology.

It was after graduating college that I entered the School-of-Hard-Knocks! I went looking for a job my newly-minted degree tucked safely under my arm. I looked for a job for over a year—and finally received a job offer to become a Ward Clerk at Walter Reed Army Hospital. (I should explain that I happen to have cerebral palsy which limits all of my motor functions—including my speech. Hence actual job offers were few and far between!!)

I grew to love that job and was mulling over going back to school in a medical field. Then I received a phone call at work that would change my life: it seemed that Senator Harrison Williams of New Jersey was looking for a 'handicapped person' who could write to work on 'handicapped issues'. I applied never imagining that I'd get the job. The day Senator Williams hired me was one of the happiest days of my life! I worked for the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources. There I learned the legislative process, become familiar with how to hold effective hearings—and answering constituent mail...tons of mail!

Three years later, I joined United Cerebral Palsy Associations Inc.'s Washington Office as a lobbyist. I will tell you only two things about this job. First, I've never worked so hard in my life. Second, I've never loved my work so much. On the one hand—you are keenly aware that what you are doing matters. On the other hand, your life is not your own. Those wonderful days are a blur of Congressional hearings, writing deadlines, and Hill appointments. Still, I loved every minute!

In the mid-eighties, I went to work for the Federal government first working for the National Council on Disability (NCD). While working at NCD I had the privilege of being part of a team working for the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA became law on July 26, 1990, a day I'll never forget. That day is forever etched in my mind as the apex of my career. Soon after that, I went to for the U.S. Access Board where I worked as a Legislative Analyst for the remainder of my career. The Access Board develops Federal guidelines and standards built environment, transportation, communication, and information technology. I followed legislation, wrote several major policies, and assisted with numerous public hearings and out-of-town events. I really enjoyed my colleagues at the Access Board and found it difficult to say 'Good-bye' to people I'd worked with, laughed with, and shared so much. Yet, in May of 2015, I bade farewell to my Access Board buddies and became a Federal retiree!

Right after I retired, my husband Ed and I set out for a six week road trip—our two dogs in tow. It was the trip of a lifetime!!! I'll tell you more about some of our adventures in my future blog post. Still, I will say this: if you're thinking about a road trip—do it! We will never forget that trip and the wonders we experienced together.

Upon returning from our grand trip, I began drafting *Capitol in Crisis*. My first attempts were rudimentary and—well—embarrassing. I worked on mechanics and tried to refine the plot. I took time "off". We traveled, we "downsized", we worked out. Yet, even as a supposedly took time off from writing—some little aspect of the book would nudge its way into my consciousness. Perhaps driving home on the New Jersey Turnpike, I would see a character in a new light. Or I'd rewrite a scene with clarity after months of struggling. Thus, the book I present to you is the culmination of my creative process.

I truly hope that you enjoy *Capitol In Crisis!*