

Russell's dig was aimed at the man credited with discovering him, Sid Yudain, founder, publisher, editor, and even occasional delivery boy of Capitol Hill's own newspaper, Roll Call. Now, this weekend Mark and his wife Ali are hosting—and perhaps roasting—Sid at a party celebrating his 80th birthday.

Sid, who had spent several years in Hollywood following World War 11 where he became a columnist and raconteur for movie stars, had come to Washington in the early 1950's to work as press secretary for Congressman Al Morano of his home state of Connecticut. He soon noticed an ongoing void of information about what was going on around the Capitol Hill community. Sure, there were plenty of newspapers in town that wrote about Congressional legislation and political debates. But an incident involving two Ohio Congressmen, who were exchanging greetings when one expressed total surprise at learning from the other that a member of their state delegation had died, provided the spark that finally led Sid to create his own newspaper, Roll Call, in 1955.

Interestingly, Roll Call was not to be a newspaper about Capitol Hill, but as its masthead boldly proclaimed, "The newspaper of Capitol Hill." Judging by the names of those who wrote its early columns and stories, it lived up to its assertion, because Members of Congress and their staffs eagerly contributed to its pages. Vice President Richard Nixon insisted on writing a piece about a doorman who had passed away, and Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson related through the pages of Roll Call his experiences and thanks following his recovery from a recent heart attack.

For the 32 years that Sid owned Roll Call, the paper chronicled life on the Hill and promoted a community spirit where Members and staffers of all political persuasions could come together to celebrate their common service to the American people. Roll Call nurtured clubs and organizations, issued the "Outstanding Staffer" award each year, sponsored Congress' annual baseball game, and gave gifted and often famous writers of all backgrounds the opportunity to inform and entertain arguably the most influential readership on the planet.

And, all this time Sid was having the time of his life. His Capitol Hill townhouse parties featuring steaming cauldrons of his homemade soups fed to noteworthy musical and journalistic friends were legendary, and his zany humor brought raucous laughter to any occasion.

Sid sold Roll Call in 1988 to spend more time with his family, friends, and saxophone, and to get more use out of the stage he built in his back yard for his music parties, a facility dubbed by associates as "Sid Trap." Mr. Speaker, his get-togethers fall somewhere between a Pavarotti concert and a Don Rickles roast.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me with Sid's wife Lael; their children Rachel (and husband Amar Kuchinad) and Raymond; Sid's other family members; and his cadre of friends in wishing him a most happy 80th birthday. And, with all that talent he still holds in reserve, perhaps it's time to get started on the book he's promised to write.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2003

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, on June 11, 2003, I was unable to vote on the motion for the previous question on the rule for H.R. 2115. Had I been present, I would have voted yes (rollcall 257). I was also unable to vote on the rule for H.R. 2115. Had I been able to vote, I would have voted yes (rollcall 258). Finally, I was unable to vote on H. Con. Res. 110, recognizing the sequencing of the human genome. Had I been able to vote, I would have voted yes (rollcall 259).

## CONCERN OVER ILLEGAL USE OF PAINKILLER OXYCONTIN

### HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2003

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today I want to bring attention to the illegal use and abuse of the powerful painkiller OxyContin that is destroying families and crippling communities, particularly in rural parts of the country. Southwest Virginia, western Kentucky and Maine have been hit particularly hard.

OxyContin does serve a very real and useful purpose for people with chronic, debilitating pain or who are terminally ill. It is hailed as a miracle drug for terminally ill cancer patients. I know what it is like to see people suffer from cancer. Both my mother and father died of cancer.

My concern is that this powerful painkiller has increasingly become a drug of choice for people who choose to abuse it; for people who have no legitimate need for this pain-killing drug. When taken properly, OxyContin is a wonder drug. But when it is ground up or chewed, the time release mechanism in the tablet is disabled, providing abusers with a heroin-like high.

I am also concerned about how this drug has been allowed to be marketed. Clearly, OxyContin should be available for the terminally ill. It should also be available to those people who suffer with severe chronic pain. I do not believe it should be prescribed to treat moderate pain.

Earlier this year I wrote to the Honorable Tommy Thompson, secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, asking him to review the marketing of OxyContin and its classification for treatment of moderate to severe pain. Here is the text of the letter:

DEAR SECRETARY THOMPSON: In December 2001, the Commerce-Justice-State and the Judiciary appropriations subcommittee held a hearing on the illegal diversion of the prescription drug OxyContin, a pain-killing Schedule II narcotic manufactured by Purdue Pharma L.P. One of the witnesses, the father of a recovering OxyContin addict, told a gripping story of the devastating impact the drug has had on his family and his son, who was in his early 20s. He proudly told the committee how his son had just finished rehab and had kicked his addiction. Sadly, a few months after appearing before the subcommittee, the son died as a result of abusing the drug.

When used properly, OxyContin is considered a wonder drug, especially for terminally ill cancer patients. I know what it is like to see people suffer from cancer. Both my mother and father died of cancer. I can remember my mother constantly asking the nurses for more morphine but being told she couldn't have any more. My mother was in a great deal of pain. OxyContin, if it had been available when she was dying, probably would have made her a lot more comfortable at the end.

When used illegally, however, OxyContin destroys families and communities. It also can lead to death. This powerful painkiller has increasingly become a drug of choice for people who choose to abuse it by chewing it or grinding it up. By disabling the time release mechanism in OxyContin, abusers get a heroin-like high.

Initially, cases of abuse and illegal diversion occurred primarily in poor, rural communities in Virginia, Kentucky, West Virginia and Ohio. Abuse is no longer limited to Appalachia. The drug has found its way to urban areas and there are now reports of widespread abuse as far away as Arizona. Florida, I am told, has been hit extremely hard.

Several pharmacies in my congressional District have been robbed at gun point in recent months for OxyContin. No money was taken; the robbers only demanded the drug. Earlier this month, a prominent defense lawyer in northern Virginia who twice served as a local prosecutor in Prince William County pleaded guilty to federal drug charges linked to a large-scale investigation into the illegal distribution of OxyContin and other painkillers.

Communities where the illegal drug has taken hold are being completely destroyed. I am told there is one county in southwest Virginia where no one isn't either using the drug, knows someone using the drug or been the victim of a crime by someone needing the drug.

When a professional baseball player recently died after taking the dietary supplement ephedra, your agency immediately issued fact sheets regarding potential serious risks of dietary supplements containing ephedra. You were even quoted as cautioning all Americans about using dietary supplements that contain ephedra.

According to fact sheets produced by the FDA, two deaths, four heart attacks, nine strokes and five psychiatric cases involving ephedra have been reported. More than 240 people have died from the abuse of OxyContin and countless numbers of families and communities have been torn apart by this drug.

Your agency has done a good job educating the public about the dangers of ephedra and other dietary supplements. I urge you to initiate a similar public information campaign about the dangers of abusing OxyContin.

I have previously written to your department asking for a review of the marketing of OxyContin and its classification for treatment of moderate to severe pain. The Food and Drug Administration did change the warning label on OxyContin but more needs to be done. The drug should not be marketed to treat moderate pain. I urge you to no longer allow OxyContin to be prescribed for moderate pain.

Too many people have died, too many families have suffered and too many communities have been devastated by the improper use of this drug.

Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,  
Chairman,

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
State and the Judiciary