

Charlie shows up around 7:30 a.m. and spends several hours scanning newspapers, journals and magazines. Then he doodles with the vast array of ideas the %\$#@! muse has dumped into his lap, cranks out three or four potential cartoons for the next day, decides on one, colors it and saunters out the front door, carefree as a hoppy toad.

I, on the other hand, am lucky to wake up in time to grab lunch, pour a cup of coffee, exchange office gossip with colleagues, compare fishing stories over the phone with friends, e-mail the latest bawdy jokes I've heard to everyone in my address book, drink more coffee, loudly curse the moron who didn't rebrew coffee, check my parlay sheets, drink even more coffee—and then type myself into a furious, sweaty, nail-biting panic till deadline, milking the lone thread of creativity I stole from someone else until it is toast-dry. Is this fair?

OK, so here's the serious truth: Charlie Daniel is blessed with the quickest wit this side of Hollywood. Plus the ability to take that humor, reduce it to a drawing and zing his point home in a panel the size of a Kleenex.

Try it sometime. After you've spent a week in frustration, you might understand how difficult the task is day after day, year after year.

Yet he dismisses the silly notion that he's ever had a real job.

"I'm doing what I did in the second grade," he says. "I've never gone high-tech. I still draw with a pen and paper, not on a computer screen."

Perhaps. But you don't stay on top of this game without a keen eye for news and a comedian's sense of timing.

"Some of my earlier work was overdone," he said. "I've learned to know when to quit a drawing. Just make your point and stop."

"Also, editorial cartoons have a short life span. Next week, somebody might look at it and say, 'What the heck was that all about?' At the same time, you can't be too quick with an idea or else you'll be ahead of the public."

An excellent example occurred recently when NASA announced it was sending plumbing materials to the International Space Station to fix a broken toilet. The next morning, Charlie's cartoon showed a giant plunger blasting off. When confused readers began calling, he realized he'd struck too soon.

"I probably should have given that one a day or two more," he said. "But you're always juggling with the fact that bloggers and late-night TV folks are already using the same material."

Let me tell you a few things I've learned about "Cholly" after working with him over most of 40 years:

The same fellow who has rubbed shoulders with presidents and barons of commerce is one of the most laid-back, down-to-earth, genuine nice guys you'll ever meet.

He can, and often does, make a serious point without having to dip his pen into poison ink.

He is a five-time nominee for journalism's highest award, the Pulitzer Prize.

He is soft-spoken, leads a quiet life of humble service to society's lost and downtrodden, and is quick to laugh at himself.

He takes immense delight in sharing with me visceral hate mail from the occasional reader who either misunderstood a cartoon or was its most-deserved target. Or, as one nutty reviewer ranted in misplaced criticism of country music legend Charlie Daniels (with an "s"), "I hate your music, too!"

I was sitting in the audience in 2005 for a humor-in-politics seminar hosted by the Howard Baker Center at the University of Tennessee. The panel featured some of the

nation's most noted political wits, including the late syndicated columnist Art Buchwald.

Ask anyone who saw this performance: The others were funny, but Charlie brought the house down with self-deprecating lines, one after another.

That same shy attitude is reflected when he talks about the impact of his editorial cartoons:

"I'd be happy hitting .350."

Trust me, his batting average is exceedingly higher. Ol' Ignatius Daniel has made journalism's All-Star roster 50 years straight—and counting.

#### MEDICARE IMPROVEMENTS FOR PATIENTS AND PROVIDERS ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

#### HON. SILVESTRE REYES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 15, 2008

Mr. REYES. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of overriding the President's veto of H.R. 6331, the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act.

For the past several weeks, Congress has debated an issue that should not be considered controversial—health care for our Nation's seniors. This important piece of legislation addresses impeding cuts to physicians' Medicare payment rates. The issue not only affects seniors in my district of El Paso, Texas, but also hurts access to health care for all El Pasoans.

The most important issue to consider when discussing this bill is that the provisions not only stop the impending 10.6 percent cut, but it ensures that seniors and people with disabilities can continue to see the doctors of their choice.

It is also critical to understand that a cut to Medicare will have a significant impact on similar programs. For instance, these cuts would not only affect those covered by Medicare, but it would also threaten access to health care for military members and their families under the military health program, TRICARE. Physicians serving our troops also face the 10.6 percent cut due because TRICARE payments are directly tied to Medicare.

Also, private insurance companies look to Medicare to base their physician reimbursement rates. Physicians in El Paso and across the Nation rely on reimbursement by Medicare and other health care insurance groups to cover health care services rendered when a patient does not pay the full cost of care. In a recent survey of Texas physicians, more than 60 percent stated they would be forced to stop seeing Medicare patients should their reimbursement rates be cut.

H.R. 6331 is significant legislation that eliminates the cuts to Medicare payments for the remainder of 2008 and provides a 1.1 percent increase for 2009. The bill also extends and improves low-income assistance programs for Medicare beneficiaries. Finally, the bill protects seniors' access to therapy services.

I am extremely disappointed at President Bush's obvious disregard for Congress and the people they represent by vetoing this critical legislative proposal. By doing so, the President has sent a clear message to seniors

that he does not believe providing them with access to quality health care is a priority of his administration.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of overriding the veto and by doing so, support Medicare beneficiaries' ability to choose their physicians.

#### RESOLUTION RAISING A QUESTION OF THE PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

SPEECH OF

#### HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 15, 2008

Mr. POMEROY. Madam Speaker, today I will vote to refer House Resolution 1345 to the Judiciary Committee. My vote does not reflect a belief that this Resolution deserves continued consideration in the House of Representatives, instead it was a vote cast to preclude consideration of the Resolution on the floor of the House.

As you know, the Constitution provides for "impeachment for, and conviction of, treason, bribery or other high crimes and misdemeanors." Whether we agree or disagree with this President, most Americans—including myself—do not feel this high threshold has been met. Furthermore, as the lone representative for North Dakota in the United States House of Representatives, I take the responsibility of representing the beliefs and values of my State seriously, and I believe I am reflecting prevailing view among the majority of North Dakotans on this issue.

Again, I do not believe that the House of Representatives should be considering the highly partisan issue of impeachment at this time. Bringing up this Resolution on the floor of the House would not only waste valuable floor time, but would also distract from far more pressing national issues and undermine the bipartisan cooperation that is necessary to pass effective and timely legislation.

#### CARIB NEWS EDITORIALS SPEAK OF PROGRESS IN THE CARIBBEAN

#### HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 16, 2008

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to enter into the RECORD two editorials from the June 24, 2008, publication of *CaribNews*.

The first editorial is entitled "Caribbean Heritage: Building on Its Foundations In a Foreign Land." The piece reminds us of the distance that those of Caribbean heritage have traveled both physically and figuratively. "Confidence in their inner strength has helped people from the Caribbean to win their independence from an imperialistic stranglehold, fight alongside their long-standing African-American allies, in the battle for respect for people's human rights, and succeed in opening up new vistas for the generations that come after them." Caribbean Americans have come a long way from being strangers in a foreign land to gaining recognition for their contributions to American culture.