
Opinion: Setting Sam Strait

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Sometimes I think that the Triplicate is trying to goad me into writing my column again by printing an editorial by Sam Strait every week. Sam's column on May 14 was more overt. I disagree with almost everything that Sam says, but until now I have declined to respond.

I laughed when I read that Sam assumed when he started writing for the Triplicate, that the opinion page would take on "the form of polite discourse." This is not how I would describe his approach. While others may agree with his opinions, once a person resorts to insults and name calling, they have lost the debate.

I have learned not to argue with a wall. There are conversations that will not result in an honest debate when one person is irrevocably committed to biased talking points and unsubstantiated conspiracies.

It has been 10 months since my last column. People have told me that they miss my writing, and some have canceled their subscription. They won't debate Sam, they will simply stop reading what he writes.

Sam said one thing that I agree with, "The Triplicate's importance as a purveyor of news has declined." One problem with a weekly newspaper is the delay. If there is a news story or if someone wants to respond to an article, it can be two weeks before it is published. At best this is a slow motion debate.

The only reason I'm responding to this peculiar editorial is that Sam attacked me personally. He queried whether "the Kevin Hendrick clones are unwilling to be exposed." WTF!

The last thing we need are Kevin Hendrick clones! However, this exemplifies a common lazy habit. Any time someone says that all Democrats are this or all Republicans are that, this exposes their simplistic attempt to understand the world that we live in. People are more complicated than that.

I can tell you that the diversity of opinions from Democrats on any given subject is almost unlimited. All Democrats are not the same and it is erroneous to assume that we all agree on every issue.

This is something that I remind myself when I am speaking with or about Republicans. Even if I disagree with a Republican on a particular topic, it is important to provide space for that person to change. If I allowed myself to hate all Republicans, that would be counterproductive.

I have found in Del County that it is possible to find common ground and occasional agreement with my Republican neighbors. I've always been open to working across the aisle to achieve a common good.

Lately I have met a number of former Republicans that have re-registered to be Democrats because they are disillusioned with the Republican Party. This reinforces my belief that if I am respectful, compassionate, and patient with people who disagree with me, they may eventually come around.

I still think that there is a need for a local community newspaper, and Sam is correct that the opinion page would be more interesting if there is more diversity of opinions expressed. Anyone can do this.

But for now, this will have to be someone else. I've done my time.