

Why I Love & Hate Blogging

I began following the internet and blogging after my retirement in 2002. After 46 years as a writer, reporter, sometimes columnist and early-day editor I had a lot of ingrained values.

This new vehicle did not embrace many of them.

In the last almost nine years I have opened a dozen or more blogs and today sort of focus most on two Honolulu bloggers and Tiffany's Big Island Chronicle that succeeded Hunter Bishop when he shut down his as he joined Mayor Billy Kenoi's administration. (His cessation was a wise choice in my view.)

So almost daily I review Ian Lind's blog, David Shapiro's Volcanic Ash (now on a four-month hiatus) and the Chronicle. Less frequently I check out others such as The Kona Blog that Aaron conducts with good transportation and technology content but confusing political rhetoric.

These blogs undoubtedly fill some of the enormous gap left by the decline in newspapers particularly after June 2010's creation of what I call the hybrid -- an alleged merger of the Star-Bulletin and The Advertiser. It has become something less than either once was.

I approve of the quick news fix blogs provides. It reminds me in many ways of my first five years here when I arrived around 5 a.m. at the old Tribune-Herald to rip the overnight AP file and identify leading stories for the first edition and possible follow ups by the staff. The incessant clicking of the teletypes was not as annoying then. It was an early look at the world when there was no morning TV newscasts and just a little radio news following Japanese language programing.

But this comparison quickly ends because AP had standards: a demand for truth and balance and an innate sense of context.

Today's blogs are annoying. Voices often lack identity because of anonymous commentary by contributors with homemade pseudonyms, some using two or more handles I suspect.

There is the problem of truth or fiction. Some folks base their arguments on false facts, self-created history or just a set of uncorroborated notions. Their faulty conclusions are impossible to accept

(more)

Much like a contemporary West Hawaii Today editorial, the premise can be so wrong what follows is illogical and wrong.

And that's not all. There are endless claims by contributors and letters to the editor of some deep government conspiracy to raise money by enacting laws to collect the fines. This is cockeyed since in Hawaii fines all go to the state. The county does not even receive a handling fee.

Those at the Big Island Weekly flatly ignore suggestions they fix such erroneous material, thus adding to this growing myth.

Then there are the shockers who use curse words and sexual innuendo to bolster their weak points, -- reminiscent of schoolboys learning to write crude stuff on the bath room walls. Tiffany seems to attract these imbeciles somehow.

Finally, there is the crash of totally unrelated assertions that make no logical sense as if the contributor had wandered into the wrong house to rant, possibly while full of drugs or liquor. I think professional bloggers call this not following "the thread."

Blogs need more substance, more factual reliability and some serious editing to meet their potential. Until that happens it is reader beware, much like the old consumer warning of buyer beware.

Thank you.