

# OPINION

## I've drawn a line in this so-called sandwich of mine

I was careful to look one way before crossing the road.

I pulled the Sunday newspaper from our rural mailbox. It was about my size, but I lugged it to my father who read the comics to me. The funny papers were a wonderland of color and wit. My father added sound effects. He brought "Dennis the Menace," "Marmaduke," "Peanuts," "Beetle Bailey," "Henry," "Ferd'nand," "Mark Trail" and "Dick Tracy" to life. I enjoyed "Pogo" and "Li'l Abner," although as a kid, I didn't always understand them. I got a charge out of "Blondie" for one reason.

The Dagwood sandwich was a tall, multi-layered sandwich made with a variety of meats, cheeses and condiments. It's named after Dagwood Bumstead, a central character in the comic strip "Blondie," who made the towering sandwiches. The creator of that comic strip, Chic Young, said the mountainous pile precariously arranged between two slices of bread was all Dagwood could prepare. Dad ended with Blondie. I knew he'd finished when he'd say, "I'll see you in the funny papers." That was another way of saying, "see you later." If he'd said, "See you later," I'd have been obligated to say, "Not if I see you first." A neighbor kid's parting words were, "See you in jail." I digress.

A sandwich is important. We have sandwich cookies. We sandwich appointments in and threaten to give another a knuckle sandwich. I consider putting a slice of bread into a toaster and taking out a piece of toast to be a completed DIY project and find some questions hard to say "no" to. One of them is, "Would you like a sandwich?"

I had an Elvis at Jack Brown's Beer & Burger Joint in Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina. No, it wasn't a cardiac incident while seated on the throne. It was a burger topped with peanut butter, mayo, bacon and American-cheddar blend cheese. I'd read on my flight to the Outer Banks that Elvis Presley's favorite sandwich had been peanut butter and banana—sometimes with bacon. I asked the server at Jack Brown's if she would put a banana slice on my sandwich. She put two.

Another sandwich fave for Elvis was the Fool's Gold Loaf—a sandwich made with a loaf of sourdough bread, a pound of bacon, a jar of peanut butter and a jar of jelly.

My sister Georgianna liked mustard and sugar sandwiches. I can't recommend them lowly enough. I like grilled cheese



Tales from Exit 22  
By Al Batt

or grilled peanut butter sandwiches with dill pickle slices on them. I enjoy a cheese sandwich with a dill pickle on the side. That provides a workout when opening a new pickle jar. My wife uses one of those jar lid rubber grippers. She calls it her second husband.

I did my research. I asked a stranger at a baseball game what his favorite was. It was a Spam sandwich. I could have stopped there, but I didn't. The most popular sandwiches I found in various surveys were grilled cheese, chicken, turkey, BLT, Reuben, ham and cheese, and ice cream. Cheesesteaks and radish sandwiches are good and many children grew up on bologna, honey, peanut butter and PBJ sandwiches.

When James Cook visited in 1778, he named them the "Sandwich Islands" (they became Hawaii) in honor of the Earl of Sandwich, who is the inventor of the sandwich. He spent long periods at gaming tables and carried a portable meal of beef between bread.

Somewhere, a guru sits cross-legged on a mountaintop as truth seekers ask whether a hamburger or a hotdog is a sandwich. Or a burrito or a taco. The Oxford Dictionary defines a sandwich as an item of food consisting of two pieces of bread with a filling between them, eaten as a light meal. That means hotdogs and hamburgers are sandwiches, but when Joey Chestnut ate 76 hotdogs in 10 minutes, that was no light meal. If potato salad, sliced hotdogs, graham crackers and maple syrup on white bread is considered a sandwich, a burrito and a taco should be. This definition leaves the familiar open-faced sandwiches often found in churches out of the sandwich club.

Sandwiches are sustaining. A young woman (20ish) tried to pass me on a walking trail. She couldn't do it because I'd just eaten a cheese sandwich that made me speedy. That and the fact she was wearing stilt-like high heels.

I've drawn a line in the sandwich. If it's deep-fried on a stick, it's not a sandwich.

I've got to go, my refrigerator is running.

*Al Batt's columns appear in the Tribune every Wednesday.*



### EDITORIAL ROUNDUP

## MINN. DELIVERS COMMON SENSE ON BALLOT BOXES

As the messy debate about voting rights continues across the country, Minnesotans can collectively sigh in relief that one new measure having to do with voting makes straightforward Midwestern sense.

The state Legislature passed a law during the most recent session that standardizes the use of absentee ballot drop boxes.

Who would have thought such a simple act would amount to such glorious logic? As the Texas Legislature proposes banning drive-thru and 24-hour voting, making mail-in voting more difficult, increasing criminal penalties for voting mistakes, and giving partisan poll watchers more authority at voting sites, Minnesota lawmakers just completed a session in which they decided the hodge-podge approach to dropping off ballots needed attention.

That doesn't mean voting rights won't continue to be

“Such a simple action as standardized those drop boxes is as comforting as knowing the postal carriers will make it through the snow, sleet and rain to deliver the mail.”

debated in the Midwest — there were measures at the Minnesota Legislature that members did not agree on — but at least the session ended with a practical measure that speaks to making voting better for everyone.

Minnesota statute now officially defines a drop box as a secure receptacle or container that is accessible 24 hours a day.

Yes, like a corner U.S. mailbox but for absentee ballots instead of letters.

And just like a mailbox, they must be secure receptacles or containers that are accessible night and day (with video monitoring during the voting period).

And like a mailbox, the boxes must be designed to prevent tampering, be protected from weather and emptied at least once per business day.

Yes, like the reliable mailboxes we've been using for a long time.

Such a simple action as standardizing those drop boxes is as comforting as knowing the postal carrier will make it through the snow, sleet and rain to deliver the mail. Voting should be as easy as mailing a letter, and as of today, Minnesota law says it is.

— Mankato Free Press, July 19

### ABOUT US

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## Write down your life while you still remember

I've always heard from a young age the importance of keeping a journal. As a teenager, I wrote in a journal fairly regularly, but as I have grown older, it is something that went by the wayside.

I used to have a blog in the early years of my family, which in a sense was kind of like a journal, posting photos and updates for other family members. Now, of course, I post photos and things on Facebook highlighting major life events.

I've also had these columns, which have probably been the closest thing to a journal I have had in recent years.

A few weeks ago, my sisters helped set my dad up with a subscription to StoryWorth, which is a company that gives you a year's worth of story prompts, and each week you answer one of the questions about something related to your life. At the end of the year, all of your stories and photos uploaded are made into a hardcover book — practically an autobiography.

So far Dad has had topics such as houses and apartments he has lived in throughout his life, if he had any great pranks



Nose for News  
By Sarah Stultz

or funny memories, his fondest childhood memories and the happiest moments of his life.

I have enjoyed each week receiving email notifications that a new story has been turned in and then going in and reading the stories that my father wrote — some of which have been familiar, and others which included information I had not known, or at least not to that degree.

I'm not sure if I have a horrible memory or if I really haven't heard many of these stories before, but they have been great to read and have given me a further appreciation for my dad, our family history and my own childhood. Reading the stories that involved my sisters and I was like walking down memory lane, and I felt myself smiling a few times as

I remembered about what he wrote. I'm sure there will be sad stories later down the road, too.

This book is going to be a treasure when it is complete.

The whole process has had me thinking a little about starting up a journal again — you know the paper and pen version instead of the kind on the computer.

Journals can be however in-depth we want them to be. I've seen journals that talked about daily happenings such as the weather all the way up to journals that talked about the highs and lows of life and how that person struggled, or at other times overcame, life's challenges.

If there's anything I've learned from my life thus far is that there are often others who can benefit from the lessons we've learned during our own life experiences.

Sometimes those people may be in our own families, and other times it could be a stranger we have the opportunity to meet.

*Sarah Stultz is the managing editor of the Tribune. Her column appears every Wednesday.*

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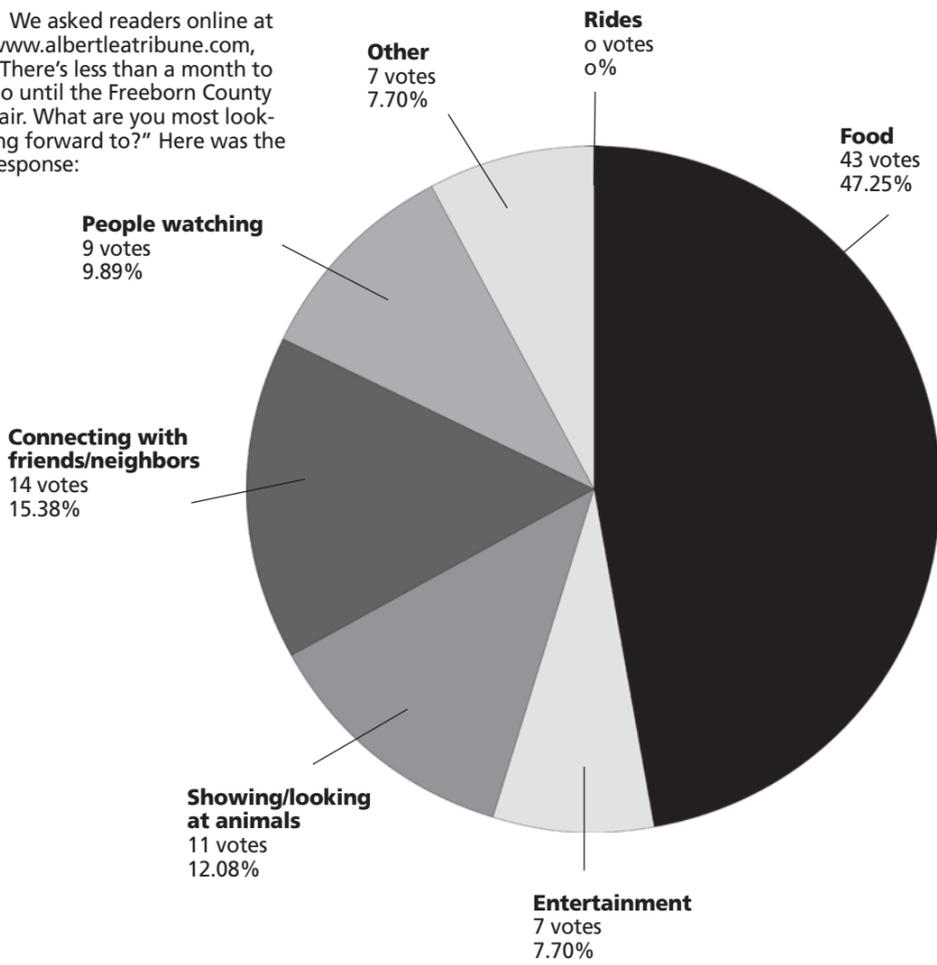
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**POLL RESULTS**

We asked readers online at [www.albertleatribune.com](http://www.albertleatribune.com), "There's less than a month to go until the Freeborn County Fair. What are you most looking forward to?" Here was the response:



**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

**Support Jensen for governor**

Wow. Recently, I had the chance to hear Dr. Scott Jensen talk about why he's running to be the next governor of Minnesota and the critical issues that we are facing. He was straightforward, confident and interested in my input. I appreciate how he handles the issues. He is no ordinary candidate, and I believe he actually wants to solve problems. I would encourage everyone to get behind Dr. Scott Jensen and support his candidacy for governor.

**Tony Schoepf**  
Albert Lea

**Thanks to help from youth group**

Kudos to the First Presbyterian youth group! They recently did a local mission project, and we were the blessed recipient. The Wilderness Prayer Center (Youth For Christ) outside of Wells, previously Rice Lake United Methodist Church built in 1861, looks amazing after all their work. We are in the process of refreshing and rearranging things to create a retreat setting — a space to lean into your relationship with Jesus through reading, Bible studies, a cup of tea, the arts, writing and sitting on a bench in eye shot of Rice Lake. These young people did cleaning (lots), washing dishes (all of the kitchen), a lot of sorting and organizing, hauling and moving furniture, assembling bunk beds, pulling old ceiling tiles down, working with insulation, dissembling broken-down heavy commercial stoves, just to name a few items on the three-page to-do list. These young people worked hard. They didn't grumble. They and their leaders did an amazing job. I really can't brag on them enough, Wilderness Prayer Center is so blessed. Thank you! The cherry on the top of this was as I drove to town to drop a thank you in the mail to them, my car got sidetracked to Caribou; thank you to the person who paid for my coffee treat. It has been a week of kindness and blessings!

**Robin Gudal**  
Director of Wilderness Prayer Center  
Youth For Christ

**What is really the Democrats' game?**

Democrats' current efforts to divide this country along racial, ethnic, sexual and socioeconomic lines is the most dangerous strategy that has

ever been foisted on America.

When we (white citizens) elected Obama president, it was with hopes that his legacy as the first Black president would be that of the "great uniter." Instead he squandered that golden opportunity and played the race card, portraying blacks as "victims of white supremacy," constantly fanning the flames of racism, distrust, hatred, fear and promoted anarchy.

Racism is a two-way street. Currently, systemic anti-white racism is rearing its ugly head and spreading like a wildfire across America.

Yes, slavery and segregation were cruel and inhumane. But take a good look at our decaying inner cities controlled by Democrats for generations, and you will find an entrenched welfare system that is every bit as inhumane as slavery and segregation ever were.

There was another class that was treated almost as badly as Blacks during this period, they were called "white trash." This group was cruelly ostracized and often shutout. I observed their plight.

President Lyndon Johnson established the current welfare system. His "Great Society" has cost America trillions, destroyed the Black family unit and failed to improve the plight inner city Blacks.

Single mothers are paid to have children who grow up in fatherless homes. Their children are having babies while still children. Inner city schools are abysmal! It takes an exceptional individual to escape into the real world as the system is structured to keep one in the system.

I was born in what many consider the "Golden Age," 1930 to 1945. We were born into a wonderful world. While many of us were poor, we never viewed ourselves as victims. We were full of hope, dreams and the determination to succeed.

Some state that this may have been the golden age for whites, but for Blacks living under segregation it was a nightmare.

I expect repercussions for the following statement: I believe life is worse now for inner city Blacks than it was under segregation.

Seventy-plus years ago most Black children had a mother and father living together in

a home that was deeply religious. Yes, they were poor, mistreated and hungry on occasion, but their streets were reasonably safe, drugs and gangs were not yet a problem and most had jobs. Black-on-Black crime and shootings were almost unknown.

With a two-parent household, young Blacks had role models and parental supervision. The Black youth of yesterday could dream of better life.

The Democrats' objective is to divide the country along racial, ethnic, sexual and socioeconomic lines. They are actively promoting anti-white racism to accomplish this goal.

Their game is to divide and conquer! The modern Democrat has no intention of lifting the poor out of poverty, but is striving for total governmental control of society. Under socialism there will become a small ruling class of elites, everyone else will be subservient.

America will not survive as a divided country.

**Don Sorensen**  
Albert Lea

**Thanks for those who helped with Art Center's Art and Garden Tour**

The Albert Lea Art Center would like to thank everyone involved in the Art and Garden Tour last weekend. The gardens were spectacular and the artists so creative. The beautiful gardens inspired those who toured with knowledge and possibilities. The variety of artists and the artwork showcased their talent and gave visitors ideas in many mediums. We want to sincerely thank all of the gardeners and artists for generously sharing their gorgeous spaces and amazing talents; the beautiful weather made it very enjoyable. A special thank you to the co-chairpersons, Beth Tostenson and Joyce Purdy, for all of their organization and attention to every detail. A big thank you to everyone who attended and supported the Albert Lea Art Center. We hope you loved it!

**Julie Drommerhausen**  
Art & Garden Tour committee member

**How to send a letter**

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**MY POINT OF VIEW**

**Why do conservatives detest the ideas behind socialism?**



**My Point of View**  
By Brad Kramer

Today, I filled up a five-gallon can and, after spilling far more fuel than necessary, was reminded exactly why government is not the answer to everything. They took a perfectly good gas can design and made some regulations from some unelected agency; now, instead of leaking fumes, every encounter with a gas can comes close to requiring a hazmat team to respond. Somebody had an idea to lower pollution and pushed it into law with consequences felt by everybody in the nation who has a boat, snowblower, lawn mower or teenager that runs out of gas. Now it will take a Herculean effort to reverse and get our simple gas cans back that worked.

This made me ponder further about socialism. Democrats believe the answer to almost every question is government. Health care? Government managed and paid. Job creation? Create government jobs. Government is not efficient.

Democrats believe government is the answer to most of those challenges. Republicans typically want to leave the mechanism for improvement in the hands of the people through the free market. While there are certainly instances where government should be the referee, conservatives are leery of government control over too many aspects of our lives.

The solutions that Democrats often propose fall under the umbrella of socialism. Socialism has been the cause of untold misery in our world and has been tried and failed, all over the world. Democrats frequently repeat the mantra that conservatives simply don't understand socialism, or that it's a buzzword by conservatives, like a boogeyman that doesn't really exist when we turn the lights on.

Why do conservatives detest socialism?

1. A government big enough to control that many aspects of our lives is big enough to control you. Governments do not last in the state that they are in. Only a handful of nations in world history have survived longer than 500 years, but at some point, every single government either fell from within, was physically destroyed or was conquered. In most cases, the fall was preceded by rampant corruption by those in power. Government is inherently powerful, and people who seek power gravitate toward control of government. Nobody in their right mind would argue that there is no corruption within the American government.
2. Socialism ignores human nature. Greed, corruption, individuality, desire to achieve big goals and other qualities are not considered.
3. Advocates of socialism are often people who have limited understanding of the means of production. Most strong socialism advocates have never owned a business. This is concerning because the

economy is dependent on production. The entire question of socialism and capitalism is essentially who owns the means for production. When a segment of society that has never started a business tries to change the means of production ownership, it's like a bunch of people, with no knowledge of piloting a ship, trying to demand the captain hand over the ship to let them steer it.

Business ownership is a very particular set of skills. Most of our great innovations never came from government-funded programs like NASA, but from the free market, where someone had an idea, that idea lit a fire in their belly and they built a company around it. They learned how to start a business and staked everything on it. When you don't have the principles of capitalism driving innovation, you don't end up with the same results. Even when the owner of that idea would still own it and depend on government approval or resources to move forward, that idea that might have changed the world could have languished on some bureaucrat's desk awaiting an ignored request because that college-trained bureaucrat didn't see the potential.

4. Social programs are not bad, in themselves, when properly managed and when they have sufficient oversight by the public. Having some socialist programs does not make us socialist, but at some point, you tip the scales and lose the efficiency and prosperity of a capitalist system. NASA, the Postal Service and many other government agencies do their jobs well (mostly). However, when devoid of an administrative agency that understands how to run a business, those agencies can become bloated, bureaucratic, ineffective and just plain frustrating for people forced to use them.

Conservatives typically don't view social programs as bad but recognize the need for effective management because resources are very limited. It's not just because conservatives don't care, but the reason many business owners become conservatives is they recognize and understand the rules of money, which are rules the majority can't just change because there are immutable natural laws that govern economics and business.

I'll keep my capitalist economy, thank you very much. And if you have an old-fashioned, good working gas can for sale, I'm a buyer!

*Brad Kramer is a member of the Freeborn County Republican Party.*

**QUOTATIONS IN THE NEWS**

"It would be very helpful if there was agreement among the medical community what the approach should be. When everyone wore masks last year, "it created a sense of community, a sense that we're all in this together. Now it ends up dividing people." — *Steve Matthews, superintendent of Novi Community Schools, outside Detroit, about masks for the upcoming school year. The American Academy of Pediatrics on Monday recommended universal masking in schools, even for those who are vaccinated against the virus that causes COVID-19. The CDC earlier this month recommended mask-wearing indoors only for students and staff who are not fully vaccinated.*

"This is a nationwide crisis and it could have been and should have been addressed perhaps by other branches of government. But this really is an example of the use of litigation for fixing a national problem." — *Paul Geller, one of the lead lawyers representing local governments across the U.S., in a conference call with reporters Tuesday. The lawyers announced they were on the verge of a \$26 billion settlement with the nation's three biggest drug distribution companies and the drugmaker Johnson & Johnson on opioid lawsuits.*

"The United States ganged up with its allies to make unwarranted accusations against Chinese cybersecurity. This was made up out of thin air and confused right and wrong. It is purely a smear and suppression with political motives. China will never accept this." — *Spokesman Zhao Lijian, rejecting an accusation that Beijing is to blame for a hack of the Microsoft Exchange email system. He demanded Washington drop charges announced Monday against four Chinese nationals accused of working with the Ministry of State Security to try to steal U.S. trade secrets, technology and disease research.*

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