

Letter: The power of story

To the community,

Obviously, history has been made since the beginning of time but wasn't recorded until relatively recent times. One thing certain is that the travelers, teachers, and troubadours of old told and sang stories that informed and entertained. Circles around campfires and huddles around hearths created communities.

The means of the telling have changed dramatically but the personal stories with the important element of humanity provide the power. We can read and enjoy stories. Story's power comes from seeing the face and hearing the voice of the person with feeling, gestures, smiles, and tears. It is so evident as we watch and listen to those who have spoken at the Republican and Democratic conventions. Political platitudes, promises, and programs are a part of the communication but don't have the impact of those who bring personal stories to the podiums and the public. This is the case for the stories of cancer survivors and of those who have overcome addiction to drugs.

There are many quotes about storytelling. JK Rowling says, "There's always room for a story that can transport people to another place." Tahir Shah said, "Stories are a communal currency of humanity." There is an understanding that storytelling has always been the best tool to communicate ideas, persuade others, and get what you want. In other words—tell, don't sell.

There is always cynicism and skepticism about the truth of what we hear, but with the available fact checking, there is risk in playing with the truth. It is important to note the words of Herbert Spencer, a British sociologist, who said, "There is a principle which is a bar against all information,

which is proof against all arguments and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance—that principle is contempt prior to investigation.” Mark Twain said, “The trouble with the world is not that people know too little, but that they know so many things that ain’t so.” The public will have some due diligence to perform through this election process.

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