



- Home
- news
- Local Opinion
- Columnists
- Obituaries
- Editorials
- Sports
- Local Business
- Lottery
- Features
- Out & About
- Food & Entertainment service
- Archives
- Base

- CLASSIFIEDS
- RECREATION
- REAL ESTATE
- EMPLOYMENT
- PERSONAL CHANDISE
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Bloggng: The soapbox of the new millennium

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By By MIKE WIGGINS The Daily SentinelBy BEVERLY CORBELL The Daily Sentinel

Monday, December 26, 2005

By MARIJA B. VADER

The Daily Sentinel

Go ahead. Offend a liberal.

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So begins the Weblog operated by Grand Junction resident Cindy Espinoza. Her Weblog, called blog for short, contains missives of Espinoza's opinions, sometimes laugh-out-loud funny, sometimes irreverent, often deadpan serious.

Personal opinions, stories, poetry, observations and photos posted on an Internet Web site, a blog allows the operator to communicate literally with the world with the click of a mouse. Some people use blogs to rail on political candidates. Others use them to keep their family informed about their lives.

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Bloggers gave eyewitness reports to the world about emergency response after Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans. They're now used to give an alternative view of the war in Iraq, a view not seen through mainstream media.

Espinoza began her blog at www.coloradowestslopedispatch.blogspot.com in June. She did it to disseminate "obscure information to people who are interested in some of the same things I'm interested in," she said.

Like "pro-life, pro-gun, pro-America" she said.

Her blogs have sparked discussion, and "peeved off some of the establishment Republicans, so that wasn't very good," she said. "I really didn't intend to offend anyone."

Others tell her they like what she posted and they forwarded her message to 500 of their friends. Espinoza touted www.anysoldier.com as one of her favorites.

Ralph D'Andrea's blog, junctiondailyblog.com, is less than a month old.

He has his own blog "because I can," he said. Flippantly, D'Andrea said he blogs, "Just because the Sentinel will only print one of my letters a month. We're seeing the same people in the letters to the editor."

But seriously, he said he started writing about local issues for the intellectual exercise.

"I wasn't using my brain on every given day, and I think it's important to exercise my brain every day," D'Andrea said. "Use it or lose it."

Having a blog definitely strokes his ego, he said. "I think there's a certain amount of ego involved in thinking other people might just be interested in what you have to say," D'Andrea said. "But that goes away quickly when you look at the logs and see that nobody is reading it anyway."

A member of the Joint Budget Committee, State Rep. Bernie Buescher uses his www.buescher.org blog to keep in touch with his constituents, to update them up to three times daily on the latest news from the Capitol.

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Erin McIntyre had written for The Daily Sentinel. Now that she's a student and an at-home caretaker of her puppy Max, she uses her blog, mcwigginses.blogspot.com, as a creative outlet and to inform her friends and family of her latest activities.

"It's kind of like your own little world where you can publish whatever you want," McIntyre said. "You can keep everyone up to speed on your puppy or how much you hate President Bush.

"You can make anything into a blog. You can have your own voice on the Internet and you can control everything that's on there."

McIntyre's blog relates the amusing story of finding a mouse in their home and how she and her husband got rid of it.

It also details the antics of Max and includes a map of every state McIntyre has visited.

Another "totally habit-forming" craze is video-blogging, Espinoza said. She enjoys logging on to rocketboom.com every day to see what Amanda Congdon will comment on.

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