

Hi, Fred Nelson for Community Comment,

The headlines in the Times Standard edition of May Twenty Ninth read: "Officials see tourist dollars in airport name". Maybe it should have read "Citizens see taxpayer dollars in airport name". The "Arcata/Eureka Airport" is now called the "California Redwood Coast – Humboldt County Airport". The estimated cost of the name change is Twenty Thousand dollars which the county aviation division hopes to raise through donations. If the donations are not forthcoming, where does the money come from; thin air? The reason for the name change leaves me puzzled. From what I read, officials see the need for the change to increase tourist dollars, especially the international tourist. I am not much of an air traveler but, if I were, I would be interested in visiting some type of an attraction which could be a city or an area, not a particular airport. For instance, if I am interested in visiting New York City, Paris, France or the Grand Canyon, I am either going to contact a travel agent or an airline. I will be told what airlines serve the area and what airports they use. When I reach my destination airport, I will walk from the aircraft through the air terminal, to the baggage claim and maybe have a bite to eat before exiting the airport. End of visit. I don't care what name the airport is called. I am happy that it is possibly attractive and provides the necessary services for the air traveler, but it is not my intention to stick around for a visit. I want to continue to my final destination. An interesting aside is the fact that, for a number of years, the print on the tickets used at the parking facility located at the Arcata/Eureka Airport reads "Arcata/Eureka International Airport". What now? Most of us understand that our airport serves the region so what is wrong with a simple name such as Redwoods Regional Airport? If the international tourist is looking for names, "Redwoods" will grab his attention a lot faster than "Humboldt County" unless he is into "weed". Speaking of names, does the name "Smithfield" sound familiar to you? For many, it denotes the very famous hams that have been produced in Smithfield, Virginia for the past three hundred years. In my book this makes it a part of "Americana", a part of the history of our nation. Now a company from China wants to buy Smithfield Foods, the U.S. Company that produces the famous hams. You and I know that foreign companies could care less about "Americana", their interests are only about making investments pay off. The deal has not been totally approved as yet. I hope that the locals in Virginia will see it for what it is. Look what happened when a company from China bought our local pulp mill. Not too much to show for that now-a-days.

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