

Hello, this is Tom Cookman with a Community Comment.

Here we are at the end of 2013 and it's time to reflect on the past and look forward to the future. I've used this forum to make bold predictions. Sometimes I've done this to try and shed some light on what I think is happening to our neighborhoods. I believe that Humboldt County is the greatest place to live in the United States. We have very mild temperatures on the coast and within an hour you can drive to 100 degree weather in the summer or snow in the winter. This unique climate along with our breathtaking scenery makes for a perfect place to raise a family. Unfortunately, outside of government work, it is an extremely difficult place to make a decent living. We have evolved from a timber and fishing economy to an economy where marijuana is the leading industry. This is sad. There are many reasons this culture exists.

It is my opinion that lenient marijuana laws and no fear of being prosecuted has attracted hundreds, if not thousands, of people to take up residency in Humboldt County. This is the reason for the explosion of crime we see today. For the first two terms Paul Gallegos has served as our District Attorney, I was one of his biggest critics. I haven't mentioned him by name, until today, since he was reelected in 2010. In 2010 there weren't any hidden agendas in his policies and Humboldt County reelected him with wide open eyes. Since then, the problems associated with the marijuana industry have fallen squarely on the shoulders of those who voted for Paul Gallegos. During my Community Comments I made many predictions about what I thought would happen if we were too lenient with marijuana. I wish I would've been wrong when I predicted we would see a huge increase in crime. Unfortunately, my predictions of an escalation in home invasion robberies, murders and every kind of burglary possible all came true. I

also commented that we would see a dramatic increase in undesirables wandering our streets. It only takes a short drive around Eureka to see how that prediction panned out. Paul Gallegos has announced that he will not be seeking another term. We will elect a new District Attorney in 2014. We have a great opportunity to reverse the culture we now find ourselves in. It is important that we elect a candidate that will not just rubber stamp the flawed policies that are in place today. We need a candidate like Worth Dikeman. I hope he will consider returning to Humboldt County. There are many officials that believe we should just legalize marijuana and that will solve our problems. I've heard well respected preachers claim that we should legalize this drug. This disturbs me coming from the pulpit. Alcohol is a drug that is legal. This drug is responsible for more economic ruin and social problems than all the illegal drugs combined. There have been millions of lives ruined by this legal drug. Families are destroyed by alcohol. Innocent lives are lost at the hands of the drunk driver. Just because there is widespread use is not a valid reason for legalizing any drug. Cigarettes are a legal drug. Millions of lives are lost at that hands of this drug as well. Gambling is a serious problem in California now that we have the casinos and the lottery. The economic chaos this has caused many California residents is sickening. I think that we are on a slippery slope if we just change the laws because we can't stop people from engaging in certain behaviors. Alcohol, cigarettes and now marijuana. We have rampant meth use. Should we legalize meth? How about heroin, LSD, cocaine or magic mushrooms? Drug use is a major problem that needs to be solved one step at a time. We can take a huge step forward by electing a new anti-marijuana DA in 2014. This has been Tom Cookman with a Community Comment