

Graduation Time!!! Community Comment Mike Goldsby, May 22, 2014

Spring is ending. Summer is almost here and two big events are coming up: The Primary election and High School Graduations.

The four-way Race for District Attorney has been interesting. I appreciate the on-air time on KINS, KHSU and KEET. I normally dislike political debates for elected officials. A debate seldom clarifies much, except how well a candidate debates. The DA race is different, since a part of their job will be in the courtroom. I appreciate that all four candidates have participated in a fairly rigorous debate schedule.

The Journal did a great job a few weeks back, with a side by side comparison of the candidate's positions and experience. I found it a very useful way to compare the four and make my decision. I generally refrain from making a public endorsement of a specific candidate. I am not so vain as to think my opinion matters. And I am practical enough to understand that my endorsement could cost a candidate a few votes. But the local media has provided us the voter with plenty of information this time around.

Statewide election is June 3rd. And not far behind that are local high school graduations, with the obligatory graduation speeches; an opportunity to reflect on past accomplishments and look forward to new unknown challenges; An opportunity to hear quotes from famous people you have never heard of; A chance to hear platitudes and words of wisdom mined from the Internet or a self-help book. All of this delivered with long,,,,, uncomfortable pauses,,,,, between sentences.

I've heard some great graduation speeches and I've heard some torturous speeches. One of my mother's favorite graduation speech stories is when she took me to Ferndale High's graduation when I was 3 years old, 59 years ago. One speech went on and on. I was squirming in her lap and I started yelling "Full of beans", much to the delight of the audience.

I don't think it shortened the speech but it made time pass a little quicker, for everybody but my Mom.

I will soon have a chance to put my money where my mouth is, as I am one of the speakers at the Court and Community schools graduation. Hopefully, nobody will bring their three year old.

I admire the accomplishment of anyone who graduates high school, but some students have a few more barriers than others. An education is so important to our democracy and it is important to the quality of life of the graduates.

I think a lot of local youth have been enamored by the lure of easy riches through the marijuana industry. The Humboldt State Marijuana Institute conducted a survey in 2013 trying to determine how many HSU students made money off of marijuana. The survey information was self-reported and did have a low response rate. But it was clear that students working in the marijuana industry had lower median annual incomes than those working in other areas.

The study listed a number of positions in the marijuana industry, including grow site operator, house-sitter, guard, trimmer, trim boss, dealer, transporter and dispensary worker. Sounds glamorous, I know. All in all, it certainly convinced me that we need to encourage young people to stay in school and not get lured by a career in marijuana.

This is Mike Goldsby for Community Comment.