

Hi, Fred Nelson for Community Comment,

The Humboldt Senior Resource Center is celebrating its 40th birthday this year. The Center's headquarters has been located at 1910 California Street, formerly an elementary school, since 1984 with additional new facilities just across the street. I would like to thank the Resource Center for all it has done over the years. The services they provide to the seniors of our community have expanded as the years go by and I believe that the population, as a whole, has benefitted. Too many people in the past have looked at seniors as a burden to society but I think that outlook has changed. Today, the senior is more respected and appreciated as it should be. After all, it is the senior who was once young and vibrant and is responsible for what we have today. Growing old is a process that touches everyone. Sometimes it can be quite harsh and debilitating, leaving some people afraid and very lonely. The Senior Center provides help to many of these people through nourishment of the body offering balanced diets and exercise and nourishment of the mind through companionship and a variety of mental exercises. It is a wonderful program and brings people together from all walks of life. The historical building housing the headquarters brings back many memories for me. Built as the "Washington Elementary School" in 1902, it served in that capacity until the late 1930s. I attended school there for six years starting in 1933. The school yard was gravel and dirt, no grass. The basement, where the large boiler to heat the school was located, was a haven after a rain soaked walk to school. Recess for the boys included kick ball, hand ball, mumbley peg (with real pocket knives), and marbles were played for keeps, milk cap tosses (the milk caps were from the tops of the old glass milk bottles) winner take all and carving pieces of soapstone with our pocket knives. I don't know about the girls' activities, I was too busy. When I was either in the fifth or sixth grade a new music teacher circulated among the Eureka elementary schools recruiting those interested in playing a musical instrument. That was my introduction to the trombone which I played through high school. Once in a while we would have a visitor, usually someone who was a world traveler, who would speak to the riveted student body about their world adventures. All too often, our class would be escorted to the music room where we had to dance the "minuet". During World War 2, the school became an army barracks with a lookout on the roof. Later it served the Coast Guard, Red Cross, served as a court house then a school district warehouse until 1984 when it became the Senior Center. Thanks again to all those who made the Humboldt Senior Resource Center possible. Happy 40th birthday.

Fred Nelson for Community Comment.