

Hi, Fred Nelson for Community Comment,

On Monday, May twenty fourth, Humboldt County lost an outstanding citizen. A fisherman, former Humboldt County Supervisor, statesman with exceptionally high standards, gentleman and a friend to all Jimmy Smith was the epitome of what a member of a county governing body should be. Being polite, soft spoken, and a good listener might first lead you to believe that Jimmy might be a pushover but, believe me, you would be wrong. Beneath that gentle appearing exterior dwelt fearlessness and a sense of purpose that allowed him to forge ahead, no matter the challenge. His faith in fellow man and a sense of fair play allowed Jimmy to talk to his fellow citizens and discuss the subject matter, regardless of the subject and the citizen's station in life. With these gifts, Jimmy was one of the best liked, most respected supervisors that Humboldt County has ever produced. I have had the pleasure and the honor of knowing Jimmy since infancy. He was just a few weeks old when my wife Rita held him in her arms. His father Jim and I worked together in the Postal Service for many years. I also knew one of Jimmy's grandfathers and delivered mail to his business for a short time. I only saw Jimmy once in a great while during his younger years although his father did keep me informed as to his progress in life. It wasn't until after Jimmy's father's death that I began to communicate with him. Jimmy's entry into local politics led to a renewing of our acquaintanceship. I followed his political career and communicated with him on occasion which led to a mutual respect for each other. Even though I was not a resident in his supervisorial district, he listened just as intently to what I had to say as if I were. Even though I considered him a friend, I tried not to lean on Jimmy too much as he was kept very busy with his own constituents. He appreciated my Community Comments and would send me words of encouragement on occasion. I was very flattered by his attention. Upon my wife Rita's death in January of this year, Jimmy and Jacque shared some beautiful, comforting thoughts with me which I will cherish. We were trying to get together for lunch over the past few weeks but his health problems prevented the setting of a date. In closing I would like to add that I believe Jimmy's success and popularity was faithfully supported by his wife of forty years, Jacque. It is much easier to function and communicate when you have a loving partner. God speed Jimmy! You will always be part of my memories. It has been a privilege and a pleasure to know you. Jacque, my heartfelt sympathy goes out to you and Gary.

Fred Nelson for Community Comment