

Hello, this is Tom Cookman with my last Community Comment.

Yes, after doing this for over twenty years it is time to let someone else have the privilege of expressing their opinions on the radio. I want to thank the Papstein family and the entire staff here at KINS Radio for allowing me this forum to express my views, even though they were sometimes very controversial. I also want to thank my wife Lavonne for going over the comments before I recorded them. She often tempered some of my more polarizing statements. Humboldt County is my home. I have always lived here and I think it is one of the greatest places in the world to raise a family. Our weather is mild and the scenery is spectacular. It saddens me to see how our economy has evolved into an economy where the best jobs are in government and marijuana instead of the renewable resource based timber and fishing industries. Tourism has steadily declined over the years because of a number of factors from high gas and motel prices to the number of homeless druggies wandering our streets. My criticism for the never ending string of tax increases and bond initiatives on the ballot has led to many situations that have had a negative impact on me personally. Publicly stating how our government wages have steadily increased beyond what our tax payers can afford and emphasizing the facts about how many public workers are taking home over \$100,000 a year of money the taxpayers are being forced to pay through higher fees and taxes has caused some of these government workers to limit the work they do when my name is involved. In the last eighteen months I have had some situations that have happened to me that needed attention from the county to only have my needs fall on deaf ears. Logic tells me it is because of my criticism of these various departments. I have even had a message conveyed back to me in the last week that I needed to tone it

down. The best way for me to tone it down is to make this my last comment. I can never change my belief that our ever expanding government is headed for a collapse and raising taxes is not the solution. I want decisions to be made on what is best for our community, not based on political favors or grudges held against certain individuals. My hope for Humboldt County is that we attract new manufacturing jobs and our tax base expands to cover the budgetary shortfalls. We need more taxpayers in the system, not more taxes from those already in the system. Somehow we need to differentiate between the poor and the lazy. I want to help those in need, not those who are abusing our giving nature. The hand that is stretched out seeking help needs to have a work glove put on it, instead of another freebie that only enables them to stay in their current situation. Somehow we need to convey that these handouts come from the wallets of those of us who are working and the government is just the conduit to distribute these funds. This money comes from people who have worked not some government office. Somewhere along the line people have lost their sense of pride in having a job. Over the years I have had more positive feedback than negative. For those of you who have taken the time to contact me I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. Your encouragement was really appreciated. Once again I want to thank everyone here at KINS for this opportunity; I will miss seeing you every two weeks.

This has been Tom Cookman with a Community Comment.