

Community Comment
January 12, 2018
Sam Pennisi

Sorry, no edits
needed
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Local Acknowledgements

There are plenty of issues that require our attention as we began a new year. ~~I sincerely hope this year brings new opportunities and prosperity to you and your family. All of us succeed a little as one of us succeeds. That's how communities build and strengthen.~~

Sometimes, however, people in our community deserve some attention. I want to mention three people who are community builders or products of our community and examples of some of the best of us. It so happens these three individuals are male. ~~This was not gender influenced but are simply timely.~~

The first is a newish member of the Arcata City Council. ~~I happen to think we have a pretty darn good council right now. In fact,~~ I think the administrative team at the city is a good match for these times and this community. When Mark Wheately resigned to take the position of city manager for Fortuna, a replacement was needed. ~~This could have happened by special election or by an appointment.~~ The council chose to appoint. ~~I think they did very well.~~ His name is Brett Watson and he is currently our Vice Mayor. I've had the opportunity to meet him on a number of occasions and an important trait stands out; he is a listener. He is new to politics and it is clear to me that he wants to learn. ~~This is how one begins in government.~~ Most of the people I had the pleasure to serve with had this attribute and served this community well. I wish him well.

Tyler Hunt may not be someone known to most like a local politician. He is from a local family going back some five generations in Humboldt County. I know his parents and grandparents and I know he had the good fortune of being a part of a family where character counts. As all of us parents want, his wanted him to be happy and successful at what he chose to do with his life. When he chose music, and percussion at that, they were concerned. They quickly saw his talent as he was ending his college days but, I'm sure, wondered how this would play out. To make a long story short, if you see the latest Star Wars movie, look for Tyler Hunt in the credits for his work on the steel drums. That is something in this world of very talented people. We will follow this career that has the support of so many from his home county.

Finely, We lost a member of this community but who leaves a legacy that is now built into the fabric of Humboldt. I met Nathan Smith when he and I were on the Humboldt State Campus at the same time. But mostly, our paths crossed because of our children. Among other things, there were ski trips sponsored by both the Arcata and Eureka Presbyterian churches that our kids enjoyed. These trips were great not just for the sport but mostly because of the parents and adults that would organize and lead the trip. As a parent, these activities helped me be a better dad by the people I met.

Nathan was one of these people. He served more than two decades in the military from World War 2 to Viet Nam. When he entered the service he couldn't go to Officer's candidate school because he was black. He retired in 1971 and went on to become an educator. Nathan was one of the most eloquent, thoughtful, kind, and giving men that I have had the pleasure to know. There is so much more to his story but I'll end with this: I'm a better man for just the knowing of him.

This has been Sam pennisi for community comment.