

February ²⁶~~12~~, 2018

I often remind myself of the beautiful area we here in Humboldt County live in. The diversity of this area is truly amazing and can not be overlooked. We have rugged coastlines, towering redwood and fir trees, lush grazing land for all kinds of livestock, wild rivers and clean air to mention a few things.

Humboldt County is a gem in many ways but it also has its share of problems and issues much like many communities throughout California and the nation. This area is a gift and was well designed and entrusted to us by it's creator.

Humboldt County is at a crossroads with many paths leading in a variety of directions. The question is what is the right path for our county and communities such as Eureka, Arcata, Fortuna, Rio Dell, Ferndale, Blue Lake, Trinidad and the other unincorporated towns.

Each of the cities and communities that make up Humboldt County have a variety of priorities along with their own individual needs and concerns. What is appropriate for one may be entirely different for another and common ground can be difficult to find.

Some of the big issues today deal with the expanding Marijuana industry, homelessness, drug and alcohol abuse and crime to name a few. Each community has its own concerns and also believes in dealing with such issues in a variety of ways. The

common theme though is to reduce the stress of these societal problems and return to a normal lifestyle or at least as close to a normal lifestyle as possible.

We hear a great deal about the opioid epidemic in our country and how it is impacting the lives of both the user and his or her family members and friends. This is a very real threat and should be dealt with in a meaningful way utilizing all the resources available including both health practioners and law enforcement.

The opioid issue results in criminal activity, homelessness, assaultive behavior and broken lives. The answer to this one issue is very elusive based upon the depth of the problem. These folks live in our community and require intervention to reverse their addiction to these harmful substances.

Despite these issues we need to always look to the future and what that means for our area and future generations. The decisions made today set the course for those future generations. It is important that we as a community be involved and accountable.

We have the ability to create a great legacy and to be good stewards of what has been entrusted to us. This has been Mike Downey for Community Comment.