

Politics and I

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Some personal memories of elections and politics of the past:

Case number one: When *my* candidate did not win.

The year was 1932. We're not talking about Franklin Delano Roosevelt challenging Herbert Hoover for the Presidency of the United States. We're talking about my father's run for the office of City Clerk of Hermosa Beach.

Dad had no regular job and no savings. What he did have was a keen mind, a can-do-it attitude, a wife, four hungry school-age children and a brand-new baby daughter.

Looking back now, his qualifications for that city office were almost entirely imaginary.

His early work experience was as a stock man in a hay and feed store in Denver, followed by years of off-and-on jobs in carpentry and commercial art in California. *Not* in things clerical.

He had a great sense of determination, met people easily and was quite persuasive. Maybe he was a salesman? His speaking, vocabulary, handwriting and arithmetic skills were good. A solid tribute to what an eighth grade education was around the turn of that century.

I suspect that the real reason he ran for this office was the prospect of regular work. There was precious little of that in Los Angeles in those days and even less of it in a small place like Hermosa.

He made colorful posters and had piles of hand bills printed. We children ran around nailing posters to telephone poles and spreading the handbills all over this small city. This was a big adventure, maybe a crusade, but I probably didn't know what a crusade was at that time.

Election Day finally arrived. The ballots were cast and counted. It couldn't have taken long. The population of Hermosa Beach was only about 1900.

The final results were posted the next morning. Our Dad, Walter Wolf, had not only not won the job of City Clerk, he hadn't even come close!

I was shocked! All of us children were. The possibility that he wouldn't win had never occurred to me. Maybe never to him?

Having to walk all over Hermosa and take down the now-dead posters was not a happy task. Some of the children at school poked fun at us. How cruel.

Dad wasn't the only loser. Herbert Hoover also lost.