

Memories of my father, Al Wasserman, By Harvey Wasserman

Good afternoon, everybody. I thought I might share some fragments that came to mind as I was pondering what to share with you today.

Most of you will be more or less familiar with dad's political life – sit ins at Van Ness Auto row, Picketing and sit ins at the Oakland Induction Center – I was with him when he was picked up and charged with sedition - Selma, Alabama; The March on Washington, his trip to China.

But some of you may not know that in the 60's, dad was a black panther. Really! He had the jacket, the beret, and he had a Black Panther bumper sticker on his lovely little red Alpha Romeo. A bushois Black Panther!

Like many father-son relationships, I struggled for many years with my father, but beginning about 13 years ago, we both decided it was time to change and we did, growing closer as the years progressed.

I shall be forever grateful for the time that I spent with dad as an adult, especially over the past 5 months or so when he was so sick, and am particularly appreciative of the help, comfort and support that my wife, Marte was able to provide both to him, as well as to myself.

Late in life, Dad confided in me that he had found within him the pleasure of giving. He found ways of reaching out to people he noticed in need, and found ways, personal ways to help them. Most of these people will be unknown to you, and are in fact unknown to me as well. But some of them are here with us today.

Some of these people became a core group of support for dad: visiting, having a glass of wine, and dad's favorite pastime, talking politics together. As dad's health failed I think one of the greatest testaments to what he created here in Boulder Creek is that many of these people stayed by his side to the end.

I don't think it necessary to point them out, but do feel I would be remiss in not thanking one of them in particular. Albert was not only dad's tenant but became a very close and dear friend, a constant companion as dad's health failed, and he stayed there right up to the end. Albert became another son to dad, or perhaps more accurately, the brother I never had, doing the things for dad that I was unable to do myself from so many miles away. Thank you, Albert. From the bottom of my heart, I thank you.

And to all of you, thank you so very much for being here this afternoon, for being a part of my father's life, and for making it richer than it otherwise would have been. If I had a glass of wine I would raise it in a toast to all of you..., and then I would raise it again: To my father. I shall always love you and shall miss you deeply. To Al...