

Responsive

Balanced

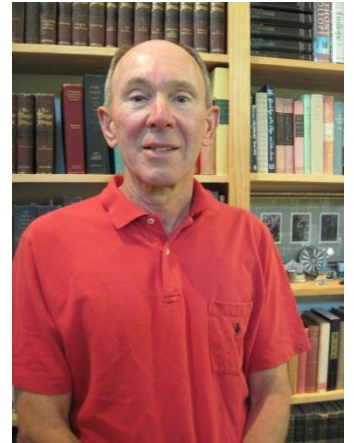
Experienced

Donald Williams for Mayor

Biography for a Council Seat

How does a candidate's story prepare him for a place on the city council?

Background: Until I moved to Calistoga in 1974, I lived in Noe Valley, in the center of San Francisco where I grew up. I still visit my mother there often. I'm quite familiar with the City and have a native's strong sense of how a small, semi-rural town like Calistoga must contrast with the urban life to maintain its special identity.



Education: After graduating from St. Ignatius High School and the University of San Francisco (majors in math and English), I studied at Sonoma State University in the evenings while working full-time, to earn a minor in business/accounting, and subsequently a master's degree in English literature. My education continues still---not with more degrees declaring what I know, but with an attitude of honest, open inquiry about what I don't know. So in any given situation, including civic affairs, I like to ask, "What is *really* going on here?" "Does this proposal enlarge or diminish us?" "What alternative approaches might serve us better?"

Work: That critical curiosity served me well in my working career in two different fields, construction and education. In 1984 I started my wood floor business in Calistoga, and built it



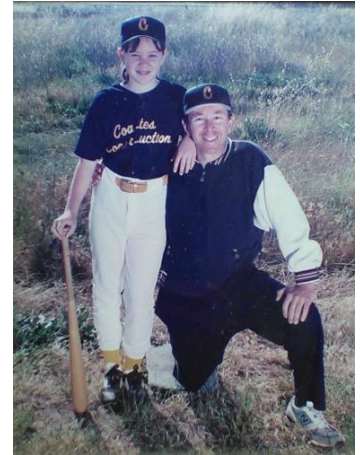
for 30 successful years. I grew familiar with county-wide concerns from my experience with a diverse cross section of Napa Valley residents. I and my eleven employees served 6,000 customers on almost every street in this county. (If you're not walking on one of the floors we worked on, you're certainly near one.) I organized all facets of the business---developing a business plan, hiring and training employees, conceiving marketing strategies, maintaining quality control

procedures, generating profit---experience invaluable for public service. My work involved management but also craftsmanship and aesthetics. I spent years in hands-on manual labor practicing my trade. (Kneeling on floors, by the way, provides a view of the world different from most politicians'---an uncommon perspective important in a diverse community.) Blue-collar craftsmanship is second nature for me. It is about production, not promises. Most of the intricate floors we installed I designed personally (see the photos on my website). In short, from my business career of management, craftsmanship, and aesthetics I bring to civic service the complementary qualities of pragmatism, sensitivity, and imagination.

At the same time I was running the floor business, for 19 years I also taught math classes at Napa Valley College. I challenged students energetically, with a rigorous, business-like, no-nonsense style. They responded positively. Some of their comments are posted on my website.

Teaching and contracting over many decades, I engaged with hundreds of Calistogans and thousands of Napa County residents to understand and appreciate their needs, and was able to help them achieve their goals effectively, with courtesy and genuine interest.

Community: I think of Calistoga as a community, not just a place to visit. My two children were raised in Calistoga. When not working, the decades saw me coach Little League baseball; volunteer as a Cub Scout Den leader; and participate on three different elementary and secondary school boards (three years as president). I also served on Calistoga's Water Advisory board. Now I help with the Men's Club at OLPH Church, and serve on Calistoga's City Council.



Beyond Work: I like working but I like playing too---cards, racquetball, tennis, piano, the baseball batting cages. I read a lot (mostly classics), and I garden (most of our vegetables are home-grown in our front yard). I like wood-working and walking (I sometimes ride the bus down-valley to stroll beyond Calistoga).

Summary: The theme of my life's activities is a well-rounded balance of unusual contrasts. Urban life/rural life---to appreciate their very different qualities. Mathematics/literature---to be fluent both numerically and verbally. Blue-collar/white-collar---to be very grounded, while also managing an organization. Business/teaching---to be pragmatic as well as idealistic. The breadth and balance of this background, as well as my interest in community affairs, and an open and inquisitive disposition, will be of particular service in the town of Calistoga where I've lived for 48 years with a strong work ethic, and where I'm now unencumbered by business or financial liaisons or obligations.

The Future: Why be a candidate for office? By being responsive to Calistogans' concerns, I'll establish a stronger connection between us and our council. I've been well served by this community for decades. It's an honor to offer my services in return. Candidacy is a way for me to contribute to Calistoga and make a difference. I bring a perspective that's educated, balanced, and grounded in deep experience in Napa Valley. I respect pragmatism, optimism, and soulful consciousness. I'll try to harmonize Calistogans' desires and goals. I wonder, "What do you think? How do you feel?" With interesting conversations with interesting people---like you---I'll be responsive to the citizens of Calistoga. In me you'll have a voice on this council. I look forward to hearing your ideas and questions.

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