Meeting Future President Richard M. Nixon

There is no denying that Richard M. Nixon was one of Orange County's own. Born in a small wood frame house in Yorba Linda, alumnus of Fullerton Union High School, matriculated up Harbor Boulevard (probably called Spadra Road then) and around the corner off of Whittier Boulevard at Whittier College. He was a regular American kid, working where he could to make a buck.

My father, Robert L. Torres, loves to tell the story of how he was working at the vast Murphy Ranch in Whittier one summer, picking oranges alongside his father, Rosario Torres and a large group of other pickers from El Modena. Late in the day, a large flatbed truck was inching its way through the orchard, loading the day's harvest. (Nothing was easy about harvesting oranges, neither picking nor loading the heavy, fruit-laden boxes on the trucks.) This day, the trucker (also called *swamper*) was running late, so he asked my father, "Hey, kid, would you please give me a hand loading these boxes of fruit?" Dad agreed and helped get the truck loaded, so that the trucker could race down to the local packing house to unload his bounty.

Slightly winded, the trucker said to my dad, "Thanks, kid, I really appreciate your help. By the way, what's your name?" Dad responded, "Torres, Bobby Torres." The trucker replied, "Nice to meet you, Bobby, my name is Nixon, Dick Nixon."

Lo and behold, a decade and a half later, that former *swamper* was vice-president of the United States of America, and my dad could say, "Hey, I used to know that guy!"

Thanks for your consideration.

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