

A Salute to our Soldiers,
past and present



Reyes Rewarded With Trip to DC Memorial Site Reyes es Premiado con un Viaje al Conmemorativo DC

BY JOE ARCE AND JOSE FAUS

Sistos Reyes of Kansas City turned 90 years old in March. It is safe to say the three years he spent in the service were the most memorable of his life.

He served in the Army during World War II from 1942 to 1945 and fought from North Africa through the European theater. On April 20, he was part of a group of veterans that traveled to Washington DC sponsored by Honor Flight. The organization provides a free airplane trip to Washington DC for veterans. The idea was the brainchild of Earl Morse, a physician and retired Air Force captain.

SALERNO WAS TOUGH / PAGE 2



Sistos Reyes and his wife of 62 years Catalina shared a joyful moment recently in their Westport home. Part of that festive mood came from thank you notes they received from young people in the metropolitan area following Sistos' trip to Washington DC to visit the World War II Memorial.

Recientemente, Sistos Reyes y su esposa, Catalina, de 62 años compartieron un momento alegre en su casa en Westport. Parte de ese ambiente festivo vino de notas de agradecimiento que recibieron de los jóvenes en el área metropolitana después del viaje que Sistos hizo a Washington, DC., para visitar el Monumento de la II Guerra Mundial.

TRADUCE RICO ROGERS

Sistos Reyes, de Kansas City, cumplió 90 años de edad en marzo. Es seguro decir que los tres años que él pasó en el servicio fueron los más memorables de su vida.

Él sirvió en el ejército durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial desde 1942 hasta 1945 y luchó desde el norte de África hasta el teatro europeo. El 20 de abril, él fue parte de un grupo de veteranos que viajaron a Washington, DC patrocinado por "Vuelo de Honor". La organización ofrece un viaje de avión gratis a los veteranos para Washington, DC. La idea fue la creación de Earl Morse, médico y capitán retirado de la Fuerza Aérea.

SALERNO FUE DIFÍCIL / PÁGINA 2

Storm Rips Through Heart of Joplin



PHOTO BY CHATO VALLALOBOS

A team of four area men headed to Joplin on Sunday night after hearing reports of the tornado that hit the town earlier in the day. Chato Vallalobos's Monday morning photo captures the sun shining on what remains of a neighborhood.

Exclusive report

BY JOE ARCE AND JOSE FAUS

The first signs that violent weather was imminent near Joplin, MO came shortly after 4 pm with the report of large hail across the state line in Crawford County, Kansas. By 5:41 pm last Sunday a tornado was reported on the ground in Joplin. In a matter of minutes, the tornado became the eight deadliest single such event in US history when the mile wide twister destroyed over 30% of the city and left over 122 people dead and 750 wounded as of press time.

The National Weather Service issued a statement upgrading the storm to a category F5 tornado with sustained winds over 200 miles an hour. A spokesperson for the service compared the force of the tornado to one that struck in May, 2008 and left a dozen dead in the same part of Missouri. "It very much looked like that supercell," he said. The storm is being described as a "multivortex" tornado, with two or more small and intense centers of rotation orbiting the larger funnel.

Joplin, a town of 50,000 people two hours south of Kansas City, had experienced a tornado tearing through the heart of town before. Just over 40 years ago on May 5, 1971 a tornado ripped through a 40-block area of central Joplin leaving one person dead and five injured. The Joplin Public Library maintains a photo album online - black and white photos

documenting the devastation. Not much in that collection approaches the level of destruction displayed across the Internet and television sets across the country and the world.

The familiar rush of photos and amateurs videos has brought the devastating aftermath to an international community. Twisted metal and splintered trees, cars tossed like toys to land miles away and houses; collapsed, flattened, destroyed, accompany the familiar scenes of people in shock walking to see the remains, looking for loved ones and mourning the loss of friends, neighbors and family.

There are the tragic stories and the heroic efforts of hospital staff at St. John's Regional Medical Center, which was in the path of the tornado. Five patients and one visitor died when the tornado hit the hospital. With only five minutes to evacuate patients after a fire erupted in part of the structure, staff set up a triage in a parking lot. They were soon contending with hospital patients and seriously wounded survivors of the storm.

Messages of grief and disbelief poured in. President Obama activated the full force of the Federal government and declared the area a national disaster area opening up the city to FEMA relief and compensation. The president will tour the area this weekend upon his return from Europe. Governor Jay Nixon and Senator Claire McCaskill have toured the area by land and helicopter and

"IT LOOKED LIKE ATOMIC BOMB..." / PAGE 3

RIOJAS RETRACES ITALIAN CAMPAIGN

BY JOE ARCE AND JOSE FAUS

Roque (Rocky) Riojas' return to Italy after 66 years was a triumphant, one full of pomp and solemnity. Riojas, a WWII veteran of the Italian and North African campaigns while serving in the 34th (Red Bull) Division), was a guest of honor in a series of ceremonies in the towns of Bologna, Reggio nell Emilia, Salerno, Leverno and Brescia.

These towns and Anzio, Monte Cassino, Monte Pantano and others areas were the background of his life from 1943 until he holstered his gun after the German 34th division surrendered after the fall of Brescia on April 29, 1945.

Roque's trip was the culmination of a serendipitous journey that began when Italian journalist Matte Incerti was researching a book (The Bracelet of Sterling)

"IM NOT A HERO / PAGE 7



Riojas received a hero's welcome in Italy, but reminded those attending Liberation Day that the soldiers who died in W.W.II were the true heroes. Riojas recibió una bienvenida de héroe en Italia, pero recordó a los asistentes Día de la Liberación que los soldados que murieron en la II Guerra Mundial fueron los verdaderos héroes

TRADUCE RICO ROGERS

El regreso de Roque (Rocky) Riojas a Italia después de 66 años, fue triunfante, lleno de pompa y solemnidad. Riojas, es un veterano de la Segunda Guerra Mundial de las campañas de Italia y el Norte de África sirviendo en la División 34ª (Red Bull). Riojas fue un invitado de honor en una serie de

ceremonias en las ciudades de Bologna, Reggio nell Emilia, Salerno, Leverno y Brescia.

Estos pueblos y Anzio, Monte Cassino, Monte Pantano y otras áreas fueron los antecedentes de su vida desde 1943 hasta que enfundó su arma después que se rindió la División 34ª Alemana después de la caída de Brescia el 29 de abril

NO SOY UN HEROE / PÁGINA 7

"Salerno was tough"

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The idea was to take some of the World War II veterans that Morse had taken care of while working for the Department of Veterans Affairs to Washington DC where they could see the newly constructed World War II Memorial. Morse knew that time was important. Many of the veterans were getting older and due to health or economic conditions some would never be able to see the monument created to honor their service.

The first flight took place in 2005 and was carried out by volunteer pilots. From that initial flight the idea has spread and now Kansas City is part of the Honor Flight network raising money to send area veterans to the DC memorial. To date, over a 60,000 WWII, Korean and Vietnam veterans have taken the opportunity to visit the memorials dedicated in honor of their service.

"I had wanted to go before but I could not afford it. It takes a lot of money. I had a chance to go and I took the opportunity to do it," Reyes told Hispanic News. He was supposed to make the trip with another veteran Raul Leyva. "He couldn't make it, he got sick and he died about two, three weeks ago - just before we left."

Reyes traveled with 22 other area veterans. He saw the memorial and the inscriptions and remembered places. "I recognized the names of Salerno and Sicily because that is where we made the landing." He was in an anti aircraft unit. "We were always in the front you know. We lost our equipment and they just moved us over to the infantry. We were trained in the infantry anyways."

The Italian campaign has always been on his mind. "I was in five

countries. I started in North Africa then Italy to France, Germany and I was in Austria when the war ended. I got five campaign stars. It was tough. I was never wounded."

"Monte Casino in Italy - that was tough, even the invasion at Salerno was rough," recalled Reyes. "They were waiting for us. The Navy wanted to shell them you know but the Army said, 'no, we want to surprise them.' We didn't surprise them, they surprised us. They were waiting for us."

He was in the 36th division and recalls that there were many Mexicans and most of them were from Texas. "We were in the front lines. ... We went in the first wave and I am glad we went in the first wave. It was still rough you know but it was dark. By the time the fifth wave came on, the day was breaking and they [Germans] just started raking the beach. The Germans just had them zeroed in. It has been a long time since the war and there are still things I can't recall but I will always remember Salerno and all that."

He remembered it enough that he shared some of the details with his son Mario who accompanied him on the trip.

"One thing I just found out that he just told me," marveled Mario, "when they were in Salerno they got only so far because the boat was grounded but they did not want to lower the gate. So the commander asked for volunteers and then he went you, you, you and you and my father was one of them. They went over the side and went to the beach to see what kind of fire they would take and then they had to come back and report before they would open the door."

Mario sat in silence absorbing what his father had told him. "I said, 'man I don't see how you went through all that.' It is overwhelming to me when I think about it. He just told me that on this trip. And there were more experiences like that. I just don't see how he got out after all those times he was in danger. ... He has let us in a little here and there and I have so much respect for him."

That respect extends to all the military. Though Mario never served, his son Christopher is in the Marines and will be shipping out soon to Afghanistan. "He made two tours of Iraq already but this is his first time in Afghanistan. When you are a parent and your son is over there, every day it is nerve wrecking," explained Mario. "He is getting ready to go again and here we go again. The thing is that I have the utmost respect for the soldiers that are over there fighting for our freedom."

For Reyes the trip was a measure of respect due. He was moved by the pomp and circumstance of the event because as he told Hispanic News, things were not like that for the returning Mexican GI's. He recalled that when he was drafted, he and some friends were travelling to Kansas City for a wedding and stopped at a restaurant. They were not allowed to sit and eat because they were Mexican. "We had to take our food to go."

He recalls many visits to Chanute, KS after the war where the same thing would happen "Like they say, when we came back there were places we could not go to."

Catalina Reyes his wife of 62 years told Hispanic News about those times.

"I used to tell him when he could not get a better job or a better education, 'but you went to war, why can't they give you this chance.' In those years they wouldn't and I thought it was unfair." Though Catalina was born in the United States she was raised in Mexico. "It was unfair when I crossed the border. I couldn't have breakfast in a restaurant. I could buy it but I would have to eat it outside. That was in 1949."

Catalina is proud of her husband's service and happy that they have been together so long but knows that time is not on their side. "There is not too much time left for us but when they teach our children in school about history, they have to know about what went on, and if they have a veteran to explain to them what it was about that would be nice. It is history."



The World War II Memorial was an impressive site for 22 area veterans on a recent visit to Washington DC. Sistos Reyes taxed his body on the trip. "I could barely move for three days." El Monumento de la II Guerra Mundial fue un sitio impresionante para 22 veteranos del área en una reciente visita a Washington, DC. Sistos Reyes se agotó durante el viaje. "Me pude mover con dificultad por tres días."

"Salerno fue difícil"

CONT./PÁGINA 1

La idea era llevar algunos de los veteranos de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, que Morse había cuidado mientras trabajaba para el Departamento de Asuntos de los Veteranos en Washington, DC., para que ellos pudieran ver el nuevo Monumento de la Segunda Guerra Mundial. Morse sabía que el tiempo era importante. Muchos de los veteranos envejecían y debido a la salud o sus situaciones económicas algunos nunca podrían ver el monumento creado en honor a su servicio.

El primer vuelo tuvo lugar en 2005 y se llevó a cabo por los pilotos voluntarios. A partir de ese primer vuelo la idea se ha extendido y ahora Kansas City es parte de la Red del Vuelo de Honor que recauda dinero para enviar a veteranos del área al Monumento de DC. Hasta la fecha, más de 60.000 veteranos de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, Corea y de Vietnam han tenido la oportunidad de visitar los monumentos dedicados en honor de su servicio.

"Yo quería ir antes pero no podía por razones económicas. Se requiere mucho dinero. Tuve la oportunidad de ir y la aproveché", dijo Reyes a Hispanic News. Estaba programado hacer el viaje con otro veterano, Raúl Leyva. "Él no pudo ir porque se enfermó y murió hace unas dos o tres semanas, justo antes de que saliéramos".

Reyes viajó con 22 otros veteranos del área. Vio el monumento, las inscripciones y los lugares recordados. "Reconocí los nombres de Salerno y Sicilia porque allá fue donde realizamos el aterrizaje." Él estaba en una unidad antiaérea. "Siempre estábamos en la parte delantera. Perdimos nuestro equipo y nos trasladaron a la infantería. De todos modos, fuimos entrenados en la infantería."

La campaña italiana siempre ha estado en su mente. "Estuve en cinco países. Empecé en África del norte, luego a Italia y después a Francia, Alemania y yo estaba en Austria cuando terminó la guerra. Recibí cinco estrellas de campaña. Fue muy difícil. Nunca fui herido."

"Monte Casino en Italia - fue duro, hasta la invasión en Salerno fue difícil", recordó Reyes. "Ellos nos estaban esperando. La marina quería bombardearlos pero el ejército dijo: 'no, queremos sorprenderlos.' Nosotros no les sorprendimos. Nos sorprendieron. Ellos nos estaban esperando."

Él estaba en la división 36 y recuerda que había muchos mexicanos y la mayoría de ellos eran de Texas. "Estábamos en el frente de batalla. ... Entramos en la primera ola y nos alegramos de que fuimos en la primera oleada. Todavía estaba difícil pero estaba



Though Sistos Reyes received many military honors while in the service, it was tough for him and his wife to accept the way they were treated simply because they were of Mexican descent.

Aunque Sistos Reyes recibió muchos honores militares mientras estuvo en servicio, fue duro para él y su esposa aceptar la forma en que fueron tratados simplemente porque eran de ascendencia mexicana.

oscuro. Cuando llegó la quinta oleada ya venía el amanecer y ellos [los alemanes] acababan de empezar a revisar la playa. Los alemanes nos tenían apuntados. Ha pasado mucho tiempo desde la guerra y todavía hay cosas que no puedo recordar, pero siempre recordaré de Salerno y todo eso."

Lo recordaba lo suficiente para compartir algunos de los detalles con su hijo Mario, que lo acompañó en el viaje.

"Una cosa que apenas se, es lo que me acaba de decir," se maravilló Mario, que "cuando estaban en Salerno llegaron sólo hasta cierto punto porque el barco fue a tierra pero no querían bajar la puerta. Así que el comandante pidió a los voluntarios y luego eligió los soldados y mi padre fue uno de ellos. Ellos salieron por la borda y fueron a la playa para ver qué grado de bombardeo tendrían que soportar y luego tenían que regresar y dar un informe antes de que abrieran la puerta."

Mario se sentó en silencio, absorbiendo lo que su padre le había dicho. "Le dije: '¡Ay, hombre! No sé cómo aguantaste todo eso.' Es abrumador para mí cuando pienso en ello. Sólo me lo dijo en este viaje. Y hubo más experiencias como esa. Yo no sé cómo sobrevivió todos esos momentos de peligro. ... Él nos ha revelado un poco aquí y allí y le tengo mucho respeto."

Ese respeto se extiende a todos los militares. Aunque Mario nunca hizo el servicio militar, su hijo Christopher se encuentra en la Infantería de Marina y será enviado pronto a Afganistán. "Hizo dos viajes a Irak, pero ya esta es su primera vez en Afganistán. Cuando uno es padre y su hijo está allá, cada día se preocupa", explicó Mario. "Él se está preparando para ir de nuevo y todo empieza de nuevo. Lo que pasa es que tengo el máximo respeto por los soldados que

están allá luchando por nuestra libertad."

Para Reyes, el viaje fue una medida de respeto que le debía a él. Fue conmovido por la pompa y circunstancia del caso porque, como le dijo a Hispanic News, las cosas no eran así para los soldados mexicanos que regresaron. Él recordó que cuando fue llamado al servicio, él y algunos amigos viajaban a Kansas City para una boda y pararon en un restaurante. No se les permitió sentarse a comer porque eran mexicanos. "Tuvimos que tomar nuestra comida para llevar."

Él recuerda muchas visitas a Chanute, KS después de la guerra en la que lo mismo ocurría "Como dicen, cuando volvimos había lugares donde no podíamos ir."

Catalina Reyes, su esposa de 62 años, dijo a Hispanic News acerca de aquellos tiempos.

"Cuando él no podía conseguir un buen trabajo o una mejor educación, yo le decía, 'pero fuiste a la guerra, ¿por qué no te dan esta oportunidad.' En esos años no lo harían y yo pensé que era injusto. "Aunque Catalina nació en los Estados Unidos se crió en México. "Fue injusto que cuando crucé la frontera no podía tomar el desayuno en un restaurante. Lo podría comprar pero yo tendría que comerlo afuera. Eso fue en 1949."

Catalina se siente orgullosa del servicio de su esposo y feliz de que han estado juntos por tanto tiempo pero sabe que el tiempo no esta de su lado. "No nos queda mucho tiempo, pero cuando enseñan a nuestros hijos en la escuela acerca de la historia, tienen que decirles sobre lo que pasó. Y si tienen un veterano que les pueda explicar de qué se trataba eso sería bueno. Es la historia."

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"It looked like an atomic bomb had been dropped."

CONT./PAGE 1

mourned the loss of life and property.

Nothing in the documentation compares to the reality of the actual scene. Chato Villalobos, a Kansas City police officer from the Westside CAN Center listened to the news report on television on Sunday evening and was moved by what he heard.

"I was thinking, just being in Kansas and my wife being from Oklahoma, we know the severity of those [tornadoes] and even locally here in Kansas what happens and knowing what people go through," said Villalobos.

His response was to gather some friends and drive to Joplin to offer any assistance possible. He posted the notice on his facebook page and within minutes had three people interested in going with him. The plan was to leave Monday morning but a text from one of his friends convinced him to take the trip that night. Soon four people piled into an SUV including Matt Hernandez, an ex-Marine and close friend of Villalobos, his neighbor Omid Ghavami, and police officer Jim Helton and headed for the southeast corner of the state.

"As we rolled into town it didn't look too bad. We got in by 1:30 or 2:00 maybe and the first thing you see is this black wall - so you know you are getting ready to go into a part of town that has zero power, no lights anywhere and you say 'okay, now we understand.'"

"The deeper we drove into the city the worst it got. It looked like an atomic bomb had been dropped into the city and it flattened everything out. There were streets covered like piles of splinters. The houses were leveled to nothing. ... There is no way anybody would have survived that if they were caught in it," added Villalobos.

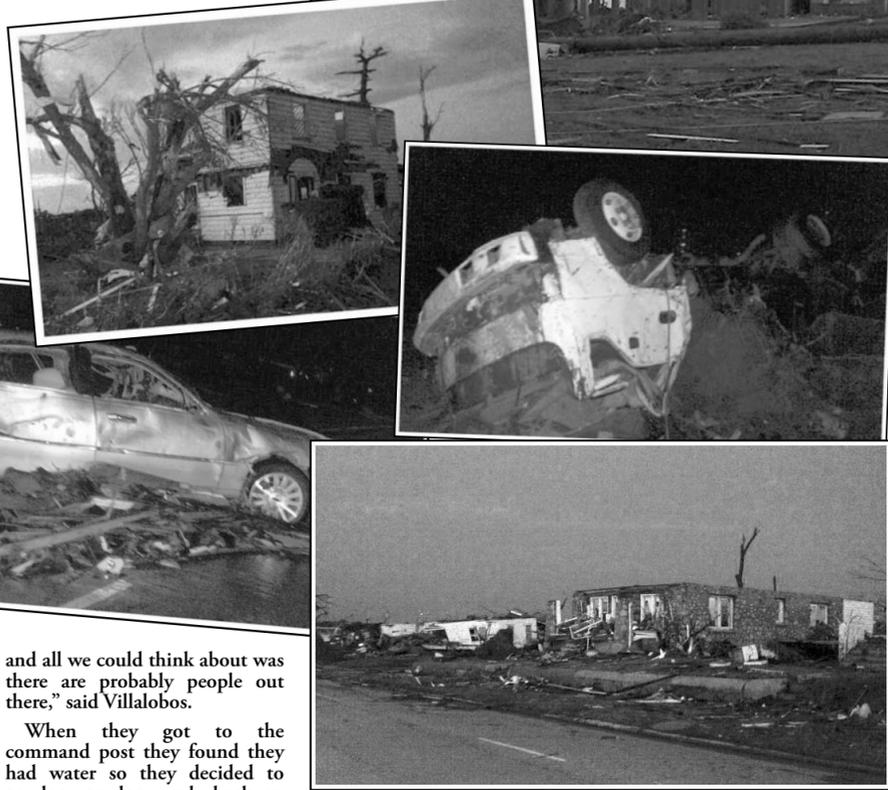


KCMO POLICE OFFICER CHATO VILLALOBOS

The scene was congested as many emergency vehicles were arriving from surrounding towns. "There was obviously a plan in place but when we went in they said 'well, we are not really going to do anything until morning

time." They left one of the ten cases of water donated to them by the Hy-Vee store in Gladstone and headed for a second command post across town.

"We saw neighborhoods with collapsed homes some with zero homes completely flattened out



PHOTOS BY CHATO VILLALOBOS

and all we could think about was there are probably people out there," said Villalobos.

When they got to the command post they found they had water so they decided to go door to door and check on people. They worked through the night covering 15 blocks, looking for survivors and talking to people. They logged the names of survivors and relayed them to websites tracking the information.

"We were all glad that we went," added Villalobos. "We didn't regret going. We were never in a situation where we actually threw someone in the van and we got them somewhere and saved their life at the last minute. It was definitely making contact with people and the people were thanking you for coming and being there because they did not know what was going on. They had nowhere to go, so we were able to reassure them that help was on the way."

As dawn came over the city, Villalobos and his friends were shocked by what they could clearly see.

"You could see literally a mile in front of you and it is flat. ... I am not sure what the size of this was but you could look for block and blocks away and see that it was leveled and you could see some structures that were up. You could see the hospital from where we were at and it was just annihilated. It looked like the thing went through the hospital like it was nothing."

"In my experience as a police officer and even seven years in the army I have never seeing anything that destructive and I have dealt with explosions and been on a lot of crime scenes I have never seen

anything so breathtaking - the severity of it."

Villalobos said that the next time he would not go down without a plan or as a part of a coordinated effort. "Because you end up duplicating effort, getting in peoples way or you put yourself in danger. There are many ways that people can help if they want to without having to get in their cars and drive down there."

Locally, Community Blood Center has learned from many of its hospital partners that victims are being transported to a number of Kansas City-area hospitals for surgeries and that the demand for life-saving blood will increase as the rescue and relief effort continues.

Those interested in donating with Community Blood Center at a mobile blood drive should go online to www.savealifenow.org or call 888.647.4040 to book an appointment. Additionally, donors can visit one of CBC's seven Neighborhood Donation Centers located in Kansas City, Topeka, St. Joseph, Gladstone, Blue Springs, Olathe or Overland Park.

United Way of Missouri is encouraging people to make donations to the American Red Cross at 211 W. Armour Blvd, Kansas City, MO 64111 or by going online at www.kcredcross.org.

Other donations can be made to Joplin Relief Effort c/o United

Way of Greater Kansas City, 1080 Washington St. Kansas City, MO 64105. All efforts will be coordinated with United Way of Southwest Missouri. Those seeking to volunteer can call 816 474-5112 for more information.

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HN SPORTS

Bravo's hernia has been a pain to Sporting KC

The inaugural season under the Sporting Kansas City banner started out with a bang. Designated player Omar Bravo scored two goals en route to a win on the first leg of a ten-game road odyssey with Bravo playing the role of Ulysses.

One of Mexico's most beloved players was going to provide goals, playmaking, and leadership for a club that has been inconsistent with their offensive output leading back to the retirement of Preki. During a 3-2 loss in the second match of the season in Chicago, Bravo picked up a red card. Fans were bummed he would miss the next match but were devastated to find out on April 8th after the mandated missed game that Bravo would be out 3-6 weeks with a sports hernia.

Since that announcement SKC dropped four consecutive road matches. Two of those contests had the same score: 1-0. Losing Bravo for what turned out to be six weeks destroyed any momentum the opening match win could have created. How many chances would he have created or finished in Columbus or New Jersey during those clean sheet losses? How much better would the team look after having that time to gel together on the pitch? How

much would youngsters like forwards Teal Bunbury and C.J. Sapong have been able to soak up while linking with Bravo during match play and through watching him train?

The former Wizards entered the Emerald City last Saturday with Bravo fit enough to start the match. On a wet evening there had to be concern that Bravo could re-aggravate the injury but manager Peter Vermes had little choice in trying to resuscitate his offense. Bravo nearly paid dividends in the fifth minute of the match when midfielder Ryan Smith caused Seattle keeper Kasey Keller to dive for a low shot. Keller could only block the shot and Bravo gathered the rebound. He got his attempt on goal but the legendary U.S. international goalie quickly recovered to snuff out the shot. It would be his only shot in 76 minutes of action.

Sporting would only get one more shot on goal for the remainder of the evening, but did play well in every other aspect of the game through 90 minutes. With the match scoreless and four minutes of extra time announced the Sounders pressured. By the third minute they were awarded a corner kick and former KC defender Tyson

Wahl served up a ball that defender Jeff Parke headed home for the match winner.

Losing their fifth in a row by another 1-0 tally leaves KC two more Saturday dates on the road before the big June 9th opening of Livestrong Sporting Park. It also puts SKC in a crater-sized hole as far as playoff thoughts are concerned. Now in ninth place in the Eastern Conference it will take a steady diet of points at home for the remainder of the season to consider postseason play.

If that is to happen Bravo will have to be fit enough to play 90 minutes (or close to it) game in and game out. At 31 years old that may be a lot to ask of him but that's why he gets paid the big bucks (at least by MLS standards). He'll have to lead the club when they start playing at home with a slightly different cast as Bunbury and a few others will likely receive invitations to play in the Gold Cup. Thankfully for SKC fans El Tri has made no public plans to bring back one of its most mainstays and take Bravo away from his new club for another month. They need every minute he can give them.

**PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARINGS SCHEDULE**

The Public Improvements Advisory Committee (PIAC), in cooperation with the Mayor and City Council, will be holding public hearings across the city. These hearings are being held so that the Committee and Council can hear from citizens about the city's public improvements needs. The PIAC will use information gathered through the hearings to recommend projects for funding to the Council for Year Twenty-Nine (Fiscal Year 2012-2013) of the one-cent sales tax for public improvements.

In addition to coming to the hearings, citizens can also tell PIAC about needed public improvements by completing a project request form. These forms will be available at the hearings or are available from the Capital Improvements Program (513-1322).

The deadline date to submit a request is August 31, 2011.

District One
Thursday, June 9, 2011
6:30p.m. - 8:00p.m.
North-East Branch Library
6000 Wilson Road
Thursday, June 16, 2011
6:30p.m. - 8:30p.m.
Kansas City North Community Center
3830 NE Antioch Road

PIAC representatives for District One are Paul Masao Matsuoka and David Olson. City Council members for District One are Scott Wagner and Dick Davis.

District Two
Wednesday, July 6, 2011
6:30p.m. - 8:30p.m.
Park Hill Community Education Center
7703 NW Barry Road
Room 230
Tuesday, July 19, 2011
6:30p.m. - 8:30p.m.
Northland Cathedral
101 NW 99th Street

PIAC representatives for District Two are Nelsie Sweeney and Christopher W. Byrd. City Council members for District Two are Ed Ford and Russ Johnson.

District Three
Thursday, June 30, 2011
6:30p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Gregg/Klice Community Center
1600 John "Buck" O'Neil Way
Thursday, July 28, 2011
6:30p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Robert J. Mohart Multi-Purpose Center
3200 Wayne

PIAC representatives for District Three are Forestine Beasley and Bianca Tillard-Gates. City Council members for District Three are Melba Curls and Jermaine Reed.

District Four
Tuesday, June 28, 2011
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Waldo Library
201 E. 75th Street
Wednesday, June 29, 2011
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Westport-Roanoke Community Center
3601 Roanoke Road

PIAC representatives for District Four are Greg Corwin and Jim MacDonald. City Council members for District Four are Jim Glover and Jan Marcason.

District Five
Tuesday, July 12, 2011
6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Ascension Lutheran Church
4900 Blue Ridge Boulevard
Thursday, July 14, 2011
6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Southeast Community Center
4201 E. 63rd Street

PIAC representatives for District Five are Karen Downey and W. Ruth Turner. City Council members for District Five are Cindy Baker Circo and Michael Brooks.

District Six
Tuesday, June 7, 2011
6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Trailside Center
9901 Holmes
Thursday, June 23, 2011
6:30p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Hillcrest Community Center
10401 Hillcrest Road

PIAC representatives for District Six are Stacey Johnson-Cosby and Vanessa Claborn-Welch. City Council members for District Six are Scott Taylor and John Sharp.

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Proposed Changes to Transportation Improvement Program Available for Public Review



The Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) serves as the metropolitan planning organization for the eight-county Kansas City region. MARC would like input on changes that have been proposed to the region's 2010-2014 Transportation Improvement Program.

The proposed amendment includes 10 modified projects and these new projects:

- Build a frontage road on Wolf Creek Parkway in Basehor
- Add turn lanes at the intersection of U.S. Highway 56 and Center Street in Gardner,
- Bus operation on shoulders along Interstate 35 in Johnson and Wyandotte counties

Details are available at the MARC offices during regular business hours, and on the MARC website at www.marc.org/transportation/input.htm. If you don't have internet access, you may use public library computer.

Send your written comments to MARC by Monday, June 6, 2011. The proposed amendment will be discussed at the Total Transportation Policy Committee meeting at 9:30 a.m. on June 21.

Mid-America Regional Council
600 Broadway, Suite 200, Kansas City, MO 64105
Phone: 816/474-4240
Fax: 816/421-7758
E-mail: tip@marc.org

www.marc.org

Revisión de los cambios propuestos al programa de transporte regional



El Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) es la organización metropolitana de la planificación para los ocho condados de la región de Kansas City. MARC desea saber sus comentarios sobre cambios a los planes de transporte del 2010-2014.

Los cambios propuestos incluyen 10 proyectos modificados y estos nuevos:

- Construir una calle lateral a Wolf Creek Parkway en Basehor
- Añadir carriles para doblar en la intersección de la autopista U.S. 56 y la calle Center en Gardner
- Operación de autobuses en los hombros de la carretera interestatal 35 en los condados de Johnson y Wyandotte

Hay detalles disponibles en las oficinas de MARC durante horas de oficina, o en la página Internet de MARC en www.marc.org/transportation/input.htm. Si no tiene acceso a la Internet, puede usar una computadora pública en una biblioteca pública.

Envíe sus comentarios a MARC antes de las cuatro de la tarde del lunes 6 de junio de 2011. La enmienda propuesta será discutida en la reunión del Total Transportation Policy Committee en MARC a las 9:30 de la mañana del 21 de junio.

Mid-America Regional Council
600 Broadway, Suite 200, Kansas City, MO 64105
Teléfono: 816/474-4240 Fax: 816/421-7758
Correo electrónico: tip@marc.org

www.marc.org

Public Notice

Key Construction, Inc. is soliciting proposals from certified MBE/WBE firms for all trades for the construction of a Courtyard Marriott at Briarcliff hilltop, 94,087 sq ft LEED Certified hotel and conference center. We invite all scopes of work to bid on both a prevailing wage or non-prevailing wage basis. A minimum of \$2.8 million of the work will be awarded as prevailing wage. The scopes of work that will be awarded prevailing wage will be determined post bid. We encourage all bidders to submit for all scopes of work for prevailing wage and/or non-prevailing wage.

Plans will be available to be viewed at: Black Chamber of Commerce, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, KCHAC, NAWIC, Minority Contractors Association, NACCC, HCAKC Inc, Mid-America Minority Business Council, and Women Construction Owners and Executives. Plans can be purchased at KC Blue Print 2106 Swift NKC, MO 64116 or 5002 State Ave KCK 66102.

Bids are due by Monday June 6th, 2011 at 12:00 noon.

Fax bids to Key Construction at 316-263-1161 or email to bcthrash@keyconstruction.com. If you have any questions please call 316-263-9515.

SECTION 3 BUSINESS INVITATION TO BID: A.L. Huber, General Contractor is seeking bids from qualified Section 3 subcontractors and suppliers for the Rose Brooks Center Addition and Renovation project, 3350 East 77th Street, Kansas City, MO. This project consists of a 4,043 sq. ft. addition and the partial renovation(8,100 sq. ft) of the existing space. This is a complete construction project involving site work, structural work, architectural, plumbing, HVAC, and electrical. Due to security requirements, all personnel working on site must pass a background check. This is a prevailing wage project; the owner is pursuing a HUD section 3 Grant, and other grants, which require MBE/WBE participation. The project is also tax exempt. Bids are due no later 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 1, 2011. Fax bids to the A.L. Huber office at 913-341-1940. Plans are available for review at the A.L. Huber office, the Builders Association, the section 3 Office of the Kansas City, Missouri Human Relations Department, 1601 East 18th Street, Suite 200, Kansas City, MO 64108, the Minority Contractors Association of Greater Kansas City, National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) c/o Mark One Electric, National Native American Chamber of Commerce and the Kansas City Hispanic Association of Contractors Enterprise. Interested parties can contact Andy Huber or Katie Daniels for more information at 913-341-4880.

Sealed bids will be accepted by the Purchasing Agent of the City of St. Joseph, Missouri for the **Demolition of 1624 Francis Street Bid #CD2011-44**

Until June 1, 2011 at 3:00 P.M. at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. If there are any questions concerning the specifications, please call (816) 271-4633.

Specifications and drawings are available from the Purchasing Department, 1100 Frederick Avenue Room 201, St. Joseph, Missouri, by calling (816) 271-4696 or downloaded from the City's website at www.stjoemo.info under Bid Opportunities.

The City of St. Joseph reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids. The City of St. Joseph is and Equal Opportunity Employer.

(s) Patricia A. Robbins, CPPB
Purchasing Agent



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Foley Company will be accepting subcontract and/or material bids on the following projects:
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Send bids to Foley Company @ 7501 Front Street, KCMO, 64120.
Tel: 816/241-3335, Fax: 816/231-5762."

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Advertisement for Proposals

Bidders are herein notified of the Kansas City Kansas Community College Advertisement for Bid the following project: KCKCC Campus Blvd. Renovations. The project consists of asphalt replacement, new curb and gutter, storm water management, and street lighting. Bid documents are available at: KC Blueprint & Planroom, 2106 Swift, N. Kansas City, Missouri 64116, 816.527.0900 or 5002 State Avenue, Kansas City, Kansas 66102, 913.788.5003. Bidders may procure bid documents for a refundable deposit of \$50.00 per set. Bidders will be limited to one (1) set. Additional sets may be purchased, however additional sets will be non-refundable.

The owner will receive bids by 2 pm, on Monday, June 13, 2011 at KCKCC, c/o Brian Bode, 7250 State Avenue, Kansas City, Kansas 66112. Bids will be opened publicly in the Board of Trustees Meeting Room at 2 pm. A Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled for 2 pm, Wednesday, June 1, 2011 at the KCKCC Maintenance Building. The Pre-Bid Conference is NOT mandatory and bidders are required to submit with their bid "Supplements to the Bid Form" Section 00310. Forms are available at Williams Spurgeon Kuhl & Freshnock Architects, Inc.

Additional information is available from the architect, Williams Spurgeon Kuhl & Freshnock Architects, Inc., 756 Minnesota Ave., Ste. 662, Kansas City, Kansas 66101, 913.287.1900 T., 913.287.1902 F. or 110 Armour Road, N. Kansas City, Missouri 64116, 816.300.4101 T., 816.300.4102 F. or abroockerd@wskfarch.com, email.

KCKCC is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution and encourages proposals and bids from minority owned businesses.



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The Dangers of Repealing Birthright Citizenship

by Philippe Nassif

People born on American soil are guaranteed automatic citizenship by a provision found in the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. This provision, often referred to as "birthright citizenship," has recently come under intense attack by conservative politicians. Conservative lawmakers in state legislatures throughout the country have introduced bills aimed at blocking children born in the state to undocumented immigrants—as well as professional workers and other noncitizens with long-term visas—from claiming a right to citizenship. House Judiciary Committee Chair Lamar Smith (R-TX) has declared his intention to hold hearings on the subject.

Opportunistic politics helps explain the reasoning behind this attack on the citizenship clause of the Constitution. A broken national immigration system coupled with a slow economic recovery characterized by sluggish job growth creates an opening for certain politicians to create short-term electoral gains by demonizing immigrants.

Nonetheless, numerous conservative scholars and politicians such as Linda Chavez and James Ho voice grave concerns about the political and policy ramifications of this trend.

A CAP report released this month from CAP Senior Fellow Sam Fulwood III and Director for Immigration Policy Marshall Fitz explains the cascading effect of unforeseen, unintended, and unwanted consequences a retreat on birthright citizenship would set in motion, among them:

- "Big Brother" in every hospital delivery room, a profoundly costly and intrusive process of checking and verifying documents for every baby born in the United States
- A new underclass of less-than-citizens who are marginalized from society and detract from our future economic competitiveness
- Women burdened with childbearing decisions depending on citizenship parentage, endangering the newly born and their mothers in our country
- An America that is suddenly and deeply anti-immigrant—contrary to our historical heritage and core

national values and undermining our cherished democratic system, built by and for immigrants

Nevertheless, the matter is not dead in the eyes of some politicians. On January 25, 2011, Sens. Rand Paul (R-KY) and David Vitter (R-LA) introduced legislation to amend the Constitution and restrict citizenship to those newborns who can prove that one of their parents is a U.S. citizen, a legal immigrant, or an active member of the Armed Forces at the moment of the child's birth.

The Center for American Progress and the American Constitution Society jointly hosted an event earlier this month featuring leading civil rights thinkers who discussed what our nation would look like should the birthright citizenship provision in the 14th Amendment be repealed, as well as its effect on all Americans.

"It's important to look at the arguments that people are making to repeal the 14th Amendment," said Fulwood at the event. "It goes to the core of what it means to be an American."

Margaret Stock, a professor at the University of Alaska, noted that "The 14th Amendment [was the] crowning achievement of the Republican Party after the civil war. ... it's appalling Republicans have proposed this amendment."

As President Barack Obama said in his speech in El Paso on May 10:

It doesn't matter where you come from; it doesn't matter what you look like; it doesn't matter what faith you worship. What matters is that you believe in the ideals on which we were founded; that you believe that all of us are created equal, endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights. All of us deserve our freedoms and our pursuit of happiness. In embracing America, you can become American. That is what makes this country great. That enriches all of us.

Amending the 14th Amendment to end birthright citizenship would create a very different America, one characterized by dual classes of residents born here—citizens and less-than-citizens.

Philippe Nassif is an intern with Ethnic Media at American Progress.

Los peligros de derogar la ciudadanía por nacimiento

Por Philippe Nassif

Las personas nacidas en territorio estadounidense son garantizadas la ciudadanía automática por una disposición que se encuentra en la Enmienda 14 de la Constitución de Estados Unidos. Esta disposición, a menudo referida como "ciudadanía por nacimiento", ha sido recientemente objeto de ataques intensos de políticos conservadores. En las legislaturas estatales alrededor del país, legisladores conservadores han presentado proyectos de ley dirigidos a bloquear el derecho de la ciudadanía de los niños nacidos en el estado de padres indocumentados, así como trabajadores profesionales y otros no ciudadanos con visas de largo plazo. El presidente del Comité Judicial de la Cámara Lamar Smith (R-TX) ha declarado su intención de realizar audiencias sobre el tema.

La política oportunista ayuda a explicar el razonamiento detrás de este ataque a la cláusula de la ciudadanía de la Constitución. Un sistema quebrantado de inmigración nacional, junto con una lenta recuperación económica caracterizada por el lento crecimiento de empleos crea una apertura para que algunos políticos obtengan beneficios electorales a corto plazo al demonizar a los inmigrantes. Sin embargo, numerosos académicos y políticos conservadores como Linda Chávez y James Ho expresan graves preocupaciones por las ramificaciones políticas y legislativas de esta tendencia.

Un informe publicado este mes por Sam Fulwood III, un Socio Principal y Marshall Fitz, Director de Política de Inmigración para el Center for American Progress, explica las múltiples consecuencias imprevisibles y no deseadas si la revocación de la ciudadanía por nacimiento se pone en marcha, entre ellos:

- Funcionarios de gobierno en cada sala de partos del hospital, un proceso profundamente costoso e intrusivo de comprobación y verificación de documentos para todos los bebés nacidos en los Estados Unidos.
- Una nueva clase inferior de personas que carecen la ciudadanía que se encuentran marginados de la sociedad, lo que puede resultar en el deterioro de nuestra competitividad económica en el futuro
- Las mujeres tendrían que cargar con decisiones de maternidad dependiendo de la ciudadanía de los padres, poniendo en peligro a los recién nacidos y a sus madres en este país

Un país que de pronto se vuelve profundamente anti-inmigrante, en contra de nuestro patrimonio histórico y el núcleo de nuestros valores nacionales y socavando nuestro apreciado sistema democrático, construido por y para inmigrantes

A pesar de todo esto, el asunto no está muerto en los ojos de algunos políticos. El 25 de enero de 2011, los Senadores Rand Paul (R-KY) y David Vitter (R-LA) presentaron legislación para enmendar la Constitución y limitar la ciudadanía a los recién nacidos que puedan demostrar que uno de sus padres es ciudadano de EE.UU., un inmigrante legal, o un miembro activo de las Fuerzas Armadas en el momento del nacimiento del niño.

El Center for American Progress y el American Constitution Society organizaron conjuntamente un evento a principios de este mes con pensadores principales de derechos civiles quienes debatieron sobre cómo nuestro país se vería si la disposición de ciudadanía por nacimiento en la Enmienda 14 fuese derogada, así como su efecto sobre todos los estadounidenses.

"Es importante tener en cuenta los argumentos que la gente está haciendo para derogar la Enmienda 14", dijo Fulwood en el evento. "Estos van en contra de la esencia de lo que significa ser un estadounidense".

Margaret Stock, una profesora de la Universidad de Alaska, señaló que "La Enmienda 14 [era] el mayor logro del Partido Republicano después de la guerra civil...Es terrible que Republicanos hayan propuesto esta enmienda".

Como el presidente Barack Obama dijo en su discurso en El Paso el 10 de mayo:

No importa de dónde vienes; lo que importa es que creas en los ideales de nuestra fundación; que creas que todos nosotros somos iguales y merecemos la libertad de ir en pos de la felicidad. Que al adoptar a Estados Unidos, puedes ser estadounidense. Y eso nos enriquece a todos.

Una modificación de la Enmienda 14 para poner fin a la ciudadanía por nacimiento daría lugar a un Estados Unidos muy diferente, que se caracteriza por dos clases de residentes nacidos aquí, los ciudadanos y los menos de los ciudadanos.

Philippe Nassif es un Pasante Universitario para American Progress.

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For any questions, Please contact Crispin Rea at 816-581-5616 Or crea@mattierhodes.org

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Después se servirá almuerzo y habrá una presentación de becas otorgadas por LAT (Red de Apoyo)



Para cualquier consulta, comuníquese con Crispin Rea at 816-581-5616 O a la dirección de correo crea@mattierhodes.org

HN IN MY VIEW

Cry, Beloved Community

The movie, Cry The Beloved Country, about a person dealing with a personal loss, has always been a real tear-jerker for me. It came to mind last Tuesday when I witnessed a group of KCKCC students file out of an impromptu executive session called by the Board of Trustees to address an issue that had recently caused a stir on campus. The students' eyes were filled with tears and they were being comforted by faculty and staff members who stood outside the door to the board room. The students had just pleaded with the trustees to reconsider a decision to not renew the contract of a 3-yr. employee of the college. When I looked at these students' faces, they seemed to be experiencing what my mom would have called "a broken heart." They were facing the prospect of losing a beloved instructor, mentor and friend.

Faculty and staff members

then filed in and out of that same executive session to show their support for their colleague, whom they knew to be an excellent employee with a 3-year history of positive evaluations from the students and up until January 2011, from supervisors. Many faculty and staff members found it unfair that this employee had been given no reason for non-renewal, even though it is apparently neither required by law, nor by past or current college process or practice.

How many of us would like to be fired from a job or position we loved and were good at---without being given a reason? Perhaps it might be a good time for the board to consider the morality of this process, keeping in mind the ethics of simply following the Golden Rule. In my humble opinion it would be undeniably more humane and reasonable for all

concerned. The college is, after all, here to serve the students.

Over 50 students signed a special petition regarding this matter, many also wrote letters to the board, and 13 of them showed up at an 8am board meeting to stand in support of their instructor. This was an unprecedented occurrence of great significance. It was also historic for so many faculty and staff to publicly display their support for a colleague. As a former trustee of the college (2005-2009) I stood alone before the board to represent the community I have served. I stood in solidarity with the students and employees, hoping with all of them for a positive outcome.

It was to no avail. At the end of the board meeting, the trustees voted to uphold the non-renewal of the employee who was loved and respected

by so many people. Students and employees who were still present to hear the final decision walked out immediately in silent protest. I am sure that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. would have been proud of their unified efforts to seek justice.

The grieving process of this loss to the students and college community will be felt for some time. It was a sad way to end the school year. Many at the college would say that there are some employees that simply cannot be replaced. I know some people who would disagree, and to them I would say, "Cry, Beloved Community--- you did not know this person like we did."

Karen Hernandez
Community Peace and Justice Activist/Advocate - KCK

It's Time to Revoke Big Oil's Allowance

by U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill

The American people have made it clear that we must do something to address our mounting national debt. We have some very tough decisions ahead of us in terms of cutting back here in Washington, but I believe that we should start with the stuff that should be easy to agree on.

Last week, I introduced a bill to end taxpayer subsidies to the most profitable corporations in the history of the planet.

Every year, billions of our tax dollars are given away to the five of the largest oil companies in the United States, companies that made \$36 billion in profits just in the last three months. It's a practice that must stop. In these tough economic times, that money should be used to

pay down our deficit and get our fiscal house in order.

My bill would have taken away \$2 billion in annual taxpayer-provided subsidies to the five largest companies and applied every dime to reducing the deficit. It is the essence of low-hanging fruit. This is the kind of idea that should receive unanimous support in the Senate. It's common sense.

Unfortunately not everyone in Washington agrees. The measure failed on the Senate floor with a vote of 52-48. I'm disappointed that too many of my colleagues decided to stand with Big Oil instead of taking this small step towards reducing our deficit.

If we cannot end subsidies to five of the wealthiest corporations in the world, then I don't know how Congress will make the truly difficult decisions about how to reduce the deficit.

The big oil companies don't need the money. Over the last ten years, they've raked in nearly \$1 trillion -- that's \$1,000,000,000,000 -- in profits. They've broken their own records for the most profitable quarter in economic history several times over. Passing this legislation would have meant \$123 billion in profits this year, instead of \$125 billion.

There's nothing in this bill that would have removed incentives for these companies to explore, drill, and produce more oil. And ConocoPhillips CEO Jim Mulva has said, and I quote, "With respect to oil and gas exploration and production, we do not need incentives."

Domestic oil production has been up in 2009 and 2010 and families are still experiencing record prices at the pump. In fact, recent reports have indicated that U.S. refiners are

cutting back on U.S. gasoline stockpiles in order to artificially keep prices high and inflate their bottom line. Since the beginning of 2011 U.S. refiners have seen over a ninety percent increase in their refining profits.

Big oil companies are not hurting, but Missourians are. While you pay record prices at the pump, you shouldn't be forced to also provide subsidies to an industry that clearly doesn't need them.

As we address our national deficit this year, there are going to be a lot of tough decisions about how to close gaps wherever we can. Taxpayer-funded handouts to oil companies should be one of the easiest cuts we make.

"I'M NOT A HERO"

CONT./PAGE 1

based on the Italian campaign and specifically the allied advance from Salerno to the Po River Valley. The 34th earned the distinction as the unit with most continuous days of fighting without reprieve of any US ground forces.

While compiling the information for his book, Incerti came across Riojas' facebook page and contacted him. He told him of the book and extended an invitation to come to Italy and be a part of the book release and accompanying celebration in the city of Bologna. Incerti promised to cover the costs of Roque's stay in Italy. Riojas would have to fund the trip there. Riojas was assisted by his American GI Forum friends who organized a series of fundraisers to help raise the needed money.

Riojas left on the 18th of April and came back on May 3rd. He was accompanied by Elisabeth Garcia who traveled as photographer and videographer for Riojas. The trip was scheduled to coincide with events that took place 66 years before. The itinerary was an emotional one for Riojas who over the years has been able to control his emotions when it comes to the memories of those campaigns.

Shortly after landing in Italy, Riojas was taken to Monte Cassino, a famous monastery destroyed during the war by allied bombers, a place he had longed to see after hearing it had been rebuilt.

"I was on cloud nine. ... It was mixed emotions. When we were met at the airport and taken to the hotel, I suppressed all those feelings that I had. But when I got to Monte Cassino, it was something else. That was totally different."

He stops and gathers himself as he tries to speak. "I lost some good buddies there. I hardly think about it because I know what happened. That was one of the worst battles of the war. President Truman came out

with a statement, 'I am going to bomb the monastery. I would rather have my enemies killed than my boys,' and he ordered the bombing. We were on the next mountain over. ... We saw the big 24s come over us and saw the first bombs drop and all we saw after that was smoke, rock and noise."

Roque's division was immediately ordered to attack. The allies were surprised to meet fierce resistance from the Germans and the advance was stopped after heavy casualties. Years later, the memories of that battle haunt him and the trip provided an answer to why the Germans had been able to withstand the bombardment at Cassino.

"This time when I went there, I found out why. People don't know that at the base of this mountain is a town - the town of Cassino. They had built a tunnel from the town up to the monastery. The Germans had everybody in that tunnel when the bombers came in so they escaped the bombing and that is how they stopped us. I did not know this till I went this time."

Riojas visited the beach at Anzio. "Again I could not suppress my emotions and they (hosts) understood. They came over and patted me on the shoulder and held me and that was it. All the other places weren't so bad, but those moments when thoughts and remembrances come to me, I remember what we were doing and how we were attacking. If we saw men fall we did not have a chance to see what was wrong with them. We just got up and kept on going."

Riojas' trip was filled with plenty of events to keep him from morosely dwelling on the past. He was the guest of honor at many Liberation Day ceremonies and parades. "I was treated great, like a hero. I told them 'the heroes are the ones that did not make it back home. Those are your heroes. Me, I thank God because he watched over me and that is the reason

that I am talking to you right now,' and they understood what I meant."

At Leverno, a Liberation Day parade featured Riojas riding in the lead vehicle, a vintage Army Willis Jeep. "They had over a hundred-vehicle parade and an Italian officer was going to ride in the lead jeep and the organizers said no. They put me in the lead jeep. A lot of things went through my mind. Why are they treating me as a hero? I am just a veteran, an ordinary GI. I think it is because I was the only GI from the 34th Division at that time and they acted accordingly."

One day after the morning festivities, Riojas was taken to a restaurant. He had no idea what was going on but when he entered, the place was full of people. When asked if he was hungry he said no though he was.

"I was hungry but I saw all those people. Later they made an announcement that they had a special occasion and soon here comes the chef and cooks from the kitchen. They had something in their hand and put it on the table and motioned me to come over. It was a big cake and in the center of it was the symbol of the 34th Red Bull Division. I could not say anything because I had choked up. It turned out that was the reason for the gathering, to welcome a veteran of World War II and one that was in the 34th Division."

One special moment for Riojas came when he was taken by his hosts on an outing. He arrived at a barracks which turned out to be a camp for the 102nd Airborne Division."

"I saw a lot of GIs walking around and I said 'what the hell is going on here?' We walked into this huge room like a reception area you might say. There were GIs standing all around the walls and as I walked in they came to attention and saluted. I looked around and was shocked. ... I returned the salute and hollered 'at ease' and they all relaxed and



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El viaje de Riojas estaba lleno de eventos para que no se sintiera melancólico por revivir el pasado. Él fue el invitado de honor en muchas ceremonias del Día de Liberación y desfiles. "Me trataron genial, como un héroe. Yo les dije 'los héroes son aquellos que no pudieron volver a casa. Esos son sus héroes."

started clapping. ... I was told it was a welcoming party to welcome me back to Italy."

Riojas takes pains to say that while he was in Italy it was not about him. "I tell people this was a trip of a lifetime for me. I had no idea that this was going to happen to me. I tried to take full advantage of it while I was there. I did not pat myself on the back or brag."

In the same breath Riojas confesses that there was one strange moment. A group of enactors were part of the parade. There were American, Russian, Italian and English vehicles of the period. Some of the participants were correspondingly dressed. Alongside a German vehicle was a man dressed in a German uniform.

"He came to me and he was grinning and I said 'you son of a bitch.' He looked at me and he knew what I had said. ... There was a guy next to me and he was dressed in an American uniform and as I turned he took out his 45 and gave it to me and then he motioned the guy with the German uniform and I caught on what he said."

Without thinking Riojas pointed the gun at the man and ordered him to his knees and asked him to surrender. "He said yes and raised his hands and I said, 'good you saved your life.' I handed the gun back to the guy and they all clapped. Later on facebook the guy said he would never wear that uniform again. That was a highlight ... and it was quite a satisfaction."



Riojas admits that he has no regrets about the incident. "I meant it when I pointed it at him because at that instant it all came back to me like a flashback and I think they realized that."

That incident explains why Riojas is not willing to talk about his experiences with anyone other than veterans. "As far as what I did in the service goes, I don't tell my children. The only time that we talk about it is when you talk to another WWII veteran that was in combat."

"NO SOY UN HEROE"

CONT./PÁGINA 1

de 1945. El viaje de Roque fue la culminación de un viaje fortuito que comenzó cuando el periodista italiano, Matte Incerti, investigaba un libro (La pulsera de Sterling) basado en la campaña de Italia y, específicamente, el avance aliado desde Salerno hasta el Valle del río Po. La 34 ganó la distinción como la unidad con la mayoría de días consecutivos de lucha sin tregua de todas las fuerzas terrestres de EE.UU..

Al compilar la información para su libro, Incerti encontró la página facebook de Riojas y se puso en contacto con él. Él le dijo del libro y le extendió una invitación para ir a Italia y ser parte del lanzamiento del libro y la celebración de acompañamiento en la ciudad de Bologna. Incerti se comprometió a cubrir los gastos de la estancia de Roque en Italia. Riojas tendría que financiar el viaje de ida y vuelta. Riojas recibió ayuda de sus amigos del Foro de Soldados Americanos (American GI Forum) que organizó una serie de eventos para recaudar fondos para reunir el dinero necesario.

Riojas se fue el 18 de abril y regresó el 3 de mayo. Él fue acompañado por Elisabeth García, quien viajó como fotógrafa y camarógrafa de Riojas. El viaje fue programado para coincidir con acontecimientos que tuvieron lugar hace 66 años. El itinerario fue emocionante para Riojas que a lo largo de los años ha podido controlar sus emociones cuando se trata de los recuerdos de esas campañas.

Poco después de aterrizar en Italia, Riojas fue llevado al Monte Cassino, un famoso monasterio destruido durante la guerra por los bombarderos aliados, un lugar que tenía muchas ganas de ver después de escuchar que había sido reconstruido.

"Yo me sentía en las nubes. ... Sentí una mezcla de emociones. Cuando nos buscaron en el aeropuerto y nos trasladaron al hotel, contenía todos los sentimientos que yo tenía. Pero cuando llegué a Monte Cassino, fue otra cosa. Eso fue totalmente diferente."

Se detiene y controla sus sentimientos para tratar de hablar. "Perdí algunos buenos amigos allí. Casi no pienso en ello porque sé lo que pasó. Esa fue una de las peores batallas de la guerra. El Presidente Truman salió con una declaración: "Yo

voy a bombardear el monasterio. Prefiero que mis enemigos mueran, no mis muchachos", y ordenó el bombardeo. Estábamos en la próxima montaña. ... Vimos a los 24 grandes pasar sobre nosotros y vimos caer las primeras bombas y todo lo que vimos después de eso fue humo, piedras y el ruido."

Inmediatamente, la división de Roque recibió órdenes para atacar. Los aliados se sorprendieron al encontrar una resistencia feroz por parte de los alemanes y el avance se detuvo después de fuertes bajas. Años más tarde, los recuerdos de esa batalla le acechan y el viaje dio respuesta a por qué los alemanes pudieron soportar el bombardeo de Cassino. "Esta vez, cuando fui allí, me enteré por qué. La gente no sabe que en la base de esta montaña es una ciudad - la ciudad de Cassino. Habían construido un túnel desde la ciudad hasta el monasterio. Los alemanes tenían a todo el mundo en ese túnel cuando los atacantes llegaron, entonces escaparon de los bombardeos y así fue cómo nos pararon. Yo no sabía esto hasta que fui esta vez."

Riojas visitó la playa de Anzio. "Una vez más no pude reprimir mis emociones y ellos (los anfitriones) entendieron. Me acercaron y me dieron unas palmaditas en el hombro y me abrazaron y eso fue todo. Todos los otros lugares no estuvieron tan mal pero esos momentos cuando los pensamientos y los recuerdos regresan, me acuerdo de lo que estábamos haciendo y la forma en que atacábamos. Si veíamos a los hombres caer, no teníamos tiempo para ver qué les pasaba. Sólo nos levantábamos y seguíamos el camino."

El viaje de Riojas estaba lleno de eventos para que no se sintiera melancólico por revivir el pasado. Él fue el invitado de honor en muchas ceremonias del Día de Liberación y desfiles. "Me trataron genial, como un héroe. Yo les dije 'los héroes son aquellos que no pudieron volver a casa. Esos son sus héroes. Yo doy gracias a Dios porque Él velaba por mí y esa es la razón que yo estoy hablando con ustedes ahora mismo', y ellos entendieron lo que quise decir."

En Leverno, un desfile de Día de la Liberación destacó a Riojas yendo en el primer vehículo, un Jeep Willis de la época del Ejército. "Tuviéron un desfile de más de cien vehículos. Un oficial italiano se iba a montar en el

primer jeep y los organizadores le dijeron que no. Muchas cosas pasaron por mi mente. ¿Por qué me tratan como un héroe? Yo sólo soy un veterano, un soldado ordinario. Creo que es porque yo era el único soldado de la División 34 en ese momento y ellos actuaron de acuerdo a eso."

Un día después de las festividades por la mañana, Riojas fue llevado a un restaurante. No tenía idea de lo que estaba pasando pero cuando entró, el lugar estaba lleno de gente. Cuando se le preguntó si tenía hambre, él dijo que no, aunque sí, tenía hambre.

"Yo tenía hambre pero vi a toda esa gente. Más tarde hicieron un anuncio que era una ocasión especial y de repente vinieron el chef y los cocineros de la cocina. Tenían algo en las manos y lo pusieron sobre la mesa y me indicaron que fuera donde ellos. Era un gran pastel y en el centro del pastel había un símbolo de la División 34 (Red Bull). Yo no podía hablar porque tenía un nudo en la garganta. Me di cuenta que esa era la razón para la reunión, dar la bienvenida a un veterano de la Segunda Guerra Mundial y que sirvió en la División 34."

Un momento especial para Riojas se produjo cuando sus anfitriones lo llevaron a una excursión. Llegó a un cuartel que resultó ser un campamento de la División Aerotransportada 102ª."

"Vi a muchos soldados caminando y yo les pregunté '¿qué diablos está pasando aquí?' Entramos a esta sala gigante como un área de recepción, se podría decir. Había soldados de pie alrededor de las paredes y al entrar se pusieron en posición de firme y me dieron un saludo militar. Yo miré a mí alrededor y me sorprendió. ... Les devolví el saludo y les grité '¡en descanso!' Y todos se relajaron y empezaron a aplaudir. ... Me dijeron que era una fiesta de bienvenida para recibirme en Italia de nuevo."

Riojas se esfuerza en decir que mientras se encontraba en Italia no se trataba de él. "Le digo a la gente este fue un viaje de toda una vida para mí. No tenía ni idea de que esto me iba a pasar. Traté de sacar el máximo provecho mientras estaba allí. No me di una palmadita en la espalda o alardearme."

Al mismo tiempo, Riojas confiesa que hubo un momento

extraño. Un grupo de actores formaba parte del desfile. Había vehículos americanos, rusos, italianos e ingleses de la época. Algunos de los participantes estaban vestidos de forma correspondiente. Junto a un vehículo alemán había un hombre vestido con un uniforme alemán.

"Se acercó a mí y él sonreía y le dije 'hijo de puta.' Me miró y sabía lo que yo había dicho. ... Había un tipo a mi lado y estaba vestido con un uniforme americano y cuando me di vuelta, sacó su pistola calibre 45 y me la dio. Luego señaló al hombre con

el uniforme alemán y yo entendí lo que él dijo."

Sin pensar Riojas apuntó el arma al hombre y le ordenó que se arrodillara y le pedí que se rindiera. "Él dijo que sí y levantó las manos y le dije, '¡Qué bueno! Te salvaste la vida.' Le entregué el arma de nuevo al hombre y aplaudieron todos. Más tarde, en facebook el hombre dijo que nunca más usaría ese uniforme. Ese fue un momento culminante... y fue una gran satisfacción."

Riojas admite que no se arrepiente de los hechos en el incidente. "Lo dije en serio cuando se lo apunté porque en

ese instante todos los recuerdos me llegaron como un flashback, y creo que se dieron cuenta de eso."

Este incidente explica por qué Riojas no está dispuesto a hablar sobre sus experiencias con nadie más que con otros veteranos. "En cuanto a lo que hice en el servicio, yo no se lo digo a mis hijos. La única vez que hablamos de esto es cuando se habla con otro veterano de la II Guerra Mundial que estuvo en combate."

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