

A black and white portrait of an elderly man with short, dark hair, wearing a dark suit jacket, a white dress shirt, and a dark bow tie. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is dark and out of focus.

Gregorio Ricardo
Pazos

February 28, 1923 - March 19, 2018



Gregorio Ricardo Pazos was born on November 28, 1922, in El Pilar, Piñar del Río, Cuba to his father, Ricardo Pazos and his dear mother, Benita Pazos.

Although his first name was Gregorio, he wanted to be identified with his father, and asked to be called Ricardo. He was the oldest of seven children.

His father was a hard-working gentleman who taught his son many lessons that would serve him well later in life.

Ricardo's mother was a kind and nurturing person, who was especially beloved to Ricardo, and she had a prophetic gift and she

would often encourage her friends and neighbors with a kind word, or a positive, "Estará bien, (It will be OK)". That gift was passed on to her granddaughters and is still in use today.

Ricardo was a good son and brother, and the Pazos family was very, very close.

Ricardo Pazos met Evangelina Morales in 1946 on the Rail Bus Line that ran in front of her house in the Cuban countryside, and their long courtship began after that. They married on September 24th, 1950 and he and his beloved "Vieja" lived together in a one-flesh relationship that lasted for 60 years until her passing on December 8, 2010. The couple did everything together, and there would have been no Ricardo without his beloved Evangelina.

Ricardo and Evangelina have three beautiful daughters, Liliam Maldonado, Carmen Vest and Kiki Trapasso. Kiki is short for Benita, and Ricardo named Kiki after his mother to honor and celebrate them both,

because Kiki was born on March 21st, which was the same day on which his dear mother was born. I cannot be sure, but I believe that the birth of Kiki on the same day as Ricardo's mother Benita may have also served as a Heavenly confirmation to a possibly lonely and struggling couple in a strange land that they had made the right choice by coming here, and that God had a big plan for the future. Ricardo and Evangelina also have ten grandchildren and one great grandchild, and Liliam, Carmen and Kiki, each grandchild and even their great-grandchild called them both Pipo and Mima.

In Cuba, Ricardo began his adult life working in the huge sugarcane refinery in his home town of El Pilar. Like most farming occupations, sugarcane was seasonal, but the work was fun, and Ricardo loved it, and the company had a great retirement plan. However, Ricardo was a visionary, so love for his country and family pushed him forward to pursue some of his dreams. As a result, in addition to working in the refinery, Ricardo soon became an entrepreneur, and he eventually began several businesses. He had a transportation firm in which he owned and drove rail busses. Along his long routes throughout the countryside, people would sit in the front in seats inside of what seemed like a large square box, and cargo would be carried behind. It was Ricardo's business, but it was a family affair, in which his parents and brothers would each help as they could. Besides rail busses, Ricardo also had busses that were on the street, and he had an employee that helped from time to time. Ricardo added to his repertoire by having a butcher shop and bodegas, which is a Cuban word for convenience stores. He worked hard, and he played hard.

Ricardo was a baseball player. He was a semi-pro catcher with a pistol for an arm on his local team. He was a candidate to be drafted by a professional team, but his heart got the best of him and he gave it all up for his beloved family, but that





never stopped him from watching a good game on television as time went on!

When the unfortunate Communist-Socialist Revolution came to Cuba, Fidel Castro took everything that Ricardo and Evangelina had

worked so hard to build, including his retirement, and that horrible socialist Government was so cold-hearted, that they closed Ricardo's transportation company, confiscated his busses, and then forced him to drive the same busses, now owned by the Cuban Government, and he was paid very low wages. The Pazos family became prisoners in their own country!

Love is a wonderful thing, however! Unchanging commitment is the only word that faithfully describes True Love, and that commitment of Love will impulse us to do things that can only be described as heroic, and sometimes the decisions made based on Love are extremely hard and make little sense. That Love is not reflected by looking around at others and asking what they are doing for us, but it is reflected by us looking within ourselves and asking what we must do for those God has given to us, and in Cuba, although they were the closest of families, Love constrained Ricardo and Evangelina. On a larger scale, Love moved Jesus of Nazareth out of Heaven on to a Roman cross to bear our sins and open the door for us to escape hell and to give us the only way into the loving Arms of God the Father, and that Love moved Ricardo and Evangelina to give up their family in Cuba for their daughters, Liliam, Carmen and Kiki (who was still in the womb). They boarded a boat to escape Cuba with nothing but the clothes on their backs, to go to a place where they had never been to achieve a better life for the girls. It broke Ricardo's heart to say goodbye to his mother, but he was called of God, and constrained by Love. As their boat left, Communist patrol boats could be seen scouring the seas, seeking that little freedom ship carrying the Pazos family and 56 other Cuban heroes, but with the protection of the Lord Jesus Christ and the help of a British freighter, in October of 1963, that precious

cargo was delivered and the Pazos family arrived in Texas. Moreover, when Ricardo and Evangelina boarded that ship bound for Beaumont, Evangelina was 4 months pregnant with their youngest daughter Kiki, who was born in freedom in Beaumont. Ricardo's beloved mother, who he was forced to leave behind in Cuba and he were reunited years later, when she too was able to come to him.

I have personally worked with Cubans for most of my adult life, having had a church in Miami, and I am always shaken to the core by their heroism. We native born Americans have no idea about the price of true freedom, and the Cuban people and other immigrants are always an inspiration to me, and they serve as a constant reminder of what the United States is, and why it exists.

It is interesting to note that Ricardo had two birthdays due to a clerical glitch, and although his true birthday was November 28, 1922, his documents listed it as February 28, 1923. Such glitches were common to immigrant families, some of whom had their last names changed by the misspelling of immigration officials and others had their birthdays altered.

When Ricardo, Evangelina, Liliam, Carmen, and now Kiki arrived in Texas, all they had was the clothes on their backs. They struggled,



but the economic system they found in Texas, unlike the socialist system of Cuba allowed them to profit from their hard work, and little by little it paid off. Ricardo was a frugal man with a heart of gold. He could not throw things away and seemed to be able to find a use for almost anything. It seems that Ricardo's trait of frugality has been passed on to three of the grandchildren: Tabitha, Mark and Christopher, who also seem to be able to find a use for anything. Although Ricardo was indeed frugal, his youngest brother had a heart condition, and Ricardo paid for his medical attention out of his own pocket.

In Texas, Ricardo found a job as a heavy equipment mechanic, and walked to work every day. Although he never learned to speak English, it turned out to be unnecessary because Ricardo proved himself to his employer as a strong man of integrity because he was honest to a tee, was never late and never absent, and they gave him the keys to the business so that he could open up every day. Eventually Ricardo got a bicycle, and then after a period of time, he bought an old car. Ricardo and Evangelina struggled for most of their lives, but they possessed an ability that so many Americans today would do well to learn and emulate, and that “secret to success” is honesty, a good work ethic (hard work) and hospitality. Ricardo and Evangelina refused any help from the Government, and in order to make a life for their daughters, they achieved what they acquired by their own efforts. Ricardo practiced what the Bible teaches in Romans 13:8 and refused to get into debt, and they paid cash for everything, and bought a beautiful home and paid it off very quickly!

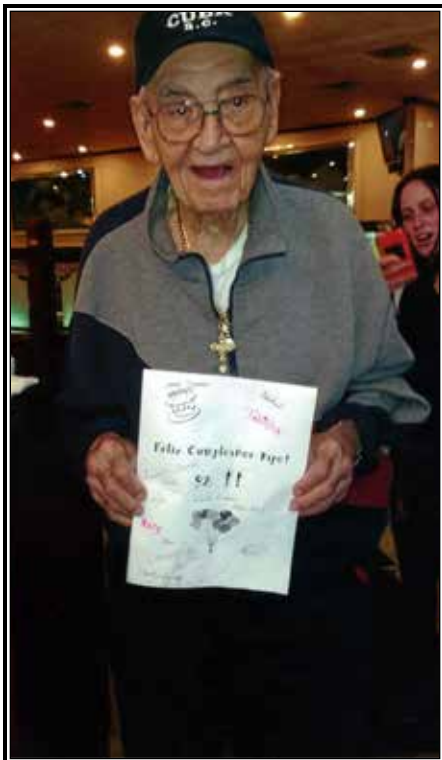
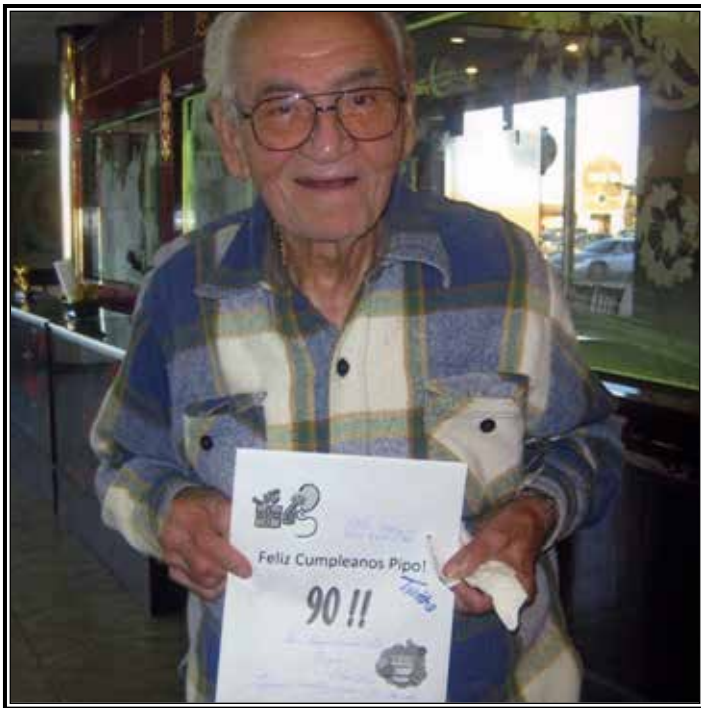
Mr. Pazos never met a stranger, and his home was always open for a friendly game of dominos, and there were two couples that regularly came by to play doubles, and often one or the other could be found sitting at his table. Ricardo was often invited to a play dominos in the homes of physicians and people of high education, because he was a champion and rarely lost! He had a great sense of humor and loved to tell a good joke. Some even called him a jokester, something with which I personally can identify. Laughter is a good medicine, and his great age proves that fact! I could talk about Mr. and Mrs. Pazos and their achievements for the rest of the day, but time is an issue, so I will say this: Mr. Pazos was a true American hero. He was a builder of the United States that we enjoy today. He achieved his status by hard work and sacrifice. We all should remember him and pass his legacy on to future generations. Someone should write a book.

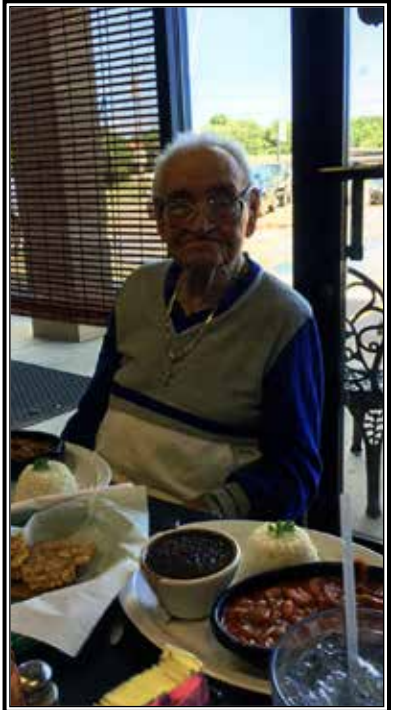
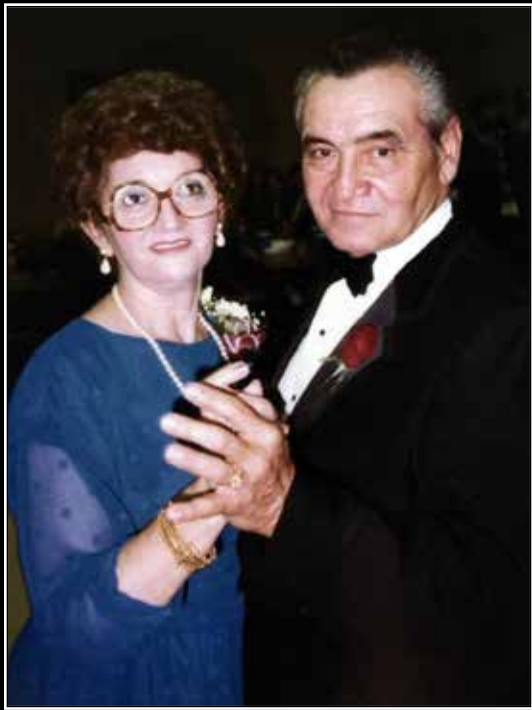
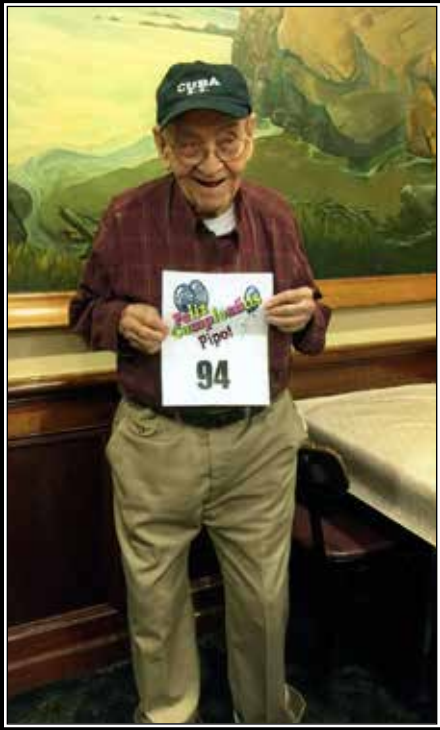
Being the visionary that he was, Ricardo was always a man of action who embraced change. He left Cuba for Texas in 1963, and a little before noon on March 19, 2018, he left Earth for Heaven. His departure was very peaceful and happened very fast. As was his custom in life, it is like he made up his mind to go and then went. He is more alive now than he ever was before because being the courageous man that he was, it was only natural that he receive the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Lord and Savior, which he did some years ago. As a result, at this very moment

he and Evangelina are in Heaven, walking a Street of Gold, down by the Crystal Sea.

When I am asked to perform this type of service, I always feel so inadequate. The other day when Mike, Carmen, Alma and I sat together with Ricardo at the Hospice, I told Carmen that I do not believe that I deserve to breathe the same air that Ricardo and men like him breathe. They are our fathers and are a different breed. Not knowing how to do him justice in such a brief time, all I can do is to dedicate my life to somehow be like him and attempt to do justice to his memory. His story must be told over and over and not be lost with the passing of time. If we could speak to Ricardo right now, I can't help but think that we would hear his voice asking us to take a moment and be sure that we are ready to follow him on his journey. He was a family man, and he wants his family to be together. Therefore, one thing that is so pressing on his mind now is to someday enjoy each one of your company again as one family, standing together before God's Throne. He wants to report to God the Father, "All that You have given to me, Father, I have kept and have lost none."

We are not talking about joining another church, we are talking about joining Jesus, as did Mr. Pazos. In honor of him, please, repeat this prayer with me from the heart. "Father, in Jesus's Name I come before You. I confess that I'm a sinner and I need a Savior. Jesus, You died on the cross, rose again on the Third Day, and You are now seated at God's Right Hand in Heaven with Ricardo. Jesus, come into my heart. Make me a new creation. I want to go to Heaven. I confess with my mouth that I am saved. I receive You as my Savior and am born-again. When I die I will go to Heaven, and while I live, I will live in abundance. In Jesus's Name we pray, Amen.

















Funeral Service

Wednesday, March 21, 2018 3:00 p.m.

Broussard's Chapel

Beaumont, Texas

Reverend Mark J. Scrivener, D.Min.M.

Pallbearers

Gregory Weghorst

Stephen Weghorst

Christopher Madonaldo

Mark Weghorst

Joseph Michael Trapasso

John Michael Trapasso

Interment

Haven of Rest Cemetery

Beaumont, Texas



Please sign Mr. Pazos' guest book and share your memories at
www.broussards1889.com