

Written by Monica Frey, granddaughter of Joe and Marie Diaz Speak delivered at the memorial rock dedication ceremony on March 29, 2009 in Loreto Plaza, Hermosa Beach, California.

I'd like to tell you a little bit about Pop. As many of you know and have already heard today, my grandfather was a big part of activities and organizations that helped shape the community of Hermosa Beach. However, his philanthropic, humanitarian and leadership efforts were not just spent on his community, but as the corner stone that helped shape his family.

My grandfather was a man who never "just settled". There wasn't one aspect of his life that was handed to him on a platter, and that was a good thing, because it helped shape the man who would later become a husband, father, grandfather and a great-grandfather in his lifetime; and that enabled him to be a leader and mentor to his family, as well.

He was taught at a very young age the value of working and providing for yourself and your family, as he was from a very large family, with many brothers and sisters, that all started working at a very young age. My grandfather showed his entrepreneurial spirit as a teen, by having the foresight to start his own business by renting wall space at a gas station to start his own car washing business. It was this kind of creative thinking that would set him on his path.

He was a wonderful husband to my grandmother, Marie. They had a wonderful life together, with many memories of good times and sometimes tough times. They were together through World War II, and all that that entails; they shared a love for travel; entertained family and friends at their famous enchilada and margarita parties; raised two daughters, as well as their grandchildren; and were blessed with 3 great grandchildren. One memory I have of Pop and his love for my grandmother,

was how the flower delivery man would deliver a dozen red roses on the 10th of every month, in honor of her birthday all year long. He had her by his side in every event that happened in this community and in others, be it club organization membership, humanitarian efforts, etc.

He only wanted the best for his family, so in the early 50's he moved his wife and children to Hermosa Beach. That was Gardena's loss and Hermosa's gain! My grandparent's are very family oriented, so the environment that was provided for their family was that of many aunts, uncles and cousins. He instilled a deep love and respect for family on my Mom and Aunt from a very early age; and, their childhood was filled with many happy family times. He was a strict dad; but, in the end was an inspiration to my Mom and Aunt, like no other. They both share his love of community and he has instilled the idea of giving back, which they both do.

As a grandfather, well my life with him was very special. As I child, I saw a man who could do anything he set his mind to. Living in my grandfather's home, I never had a fear of anything, because I had such faith in what my grandfather could accomplish. He provided such comfort to all of us in many, many ways. I've never met anyone else that could take trash and turn it in to treasure. The man could fix or build anything he set his mind to.

My grandfather had a great love for Mexico. His involvement in the Loreto Sister City Exchange program is something I personally am very proud of; and, proud to have been, in part, an inspiration to him to start the program in the first place. I believe that his love for his grandchildren, my brother John and I, was his true inspiration to teach brotherly love across cultures.

After 95 years of life, I think his greatest accomplishment was to be a great grandfather to Leina, Sabrina and John John. I know for the time they had together, they learned from him, as

well. His accomplishments and achievements will live on through them; and, will continue to inspire their choices in life.

My family and I are deeply grateful for the honor you have bestowed on my grandfather today. He was a man of many accomplishments, gave to this community, but most importantly, was our Pop. By honoring him today, you honor his family, as well. We, the Diaz Family, promise to continue my grandfather's efforts for the communities of Hermosa Beach and Loreto, as well as they many others we are involved with in church and work activities.

On behalf of my grandmother, Marie; my parents Bruce and Rosalie Schjeldahl; my Aunt Martha; my brother John and his children, and my husband Rick and I, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Your very generous honor of Joe Diaz helps keep his memory alive. Thank you.