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South Colton Oral History Project

Interview Summary

Interviewee:

Rebecca Lozano, Lori Sanchez

Interviewer:

Tom Rivera

Interview Date:

March 31, 2019

Interview Location:

Grand Terrace, CA

Length:

01:19:58

Interview Summary completed by:

M. Camacho Nuno, 2024

Description:

Tom Rivera interviews Rebecca Lozano, a native of South Colton. Lozano talks about her early family history in the city and expands on the early members of her family who came to Colton. Rivera asks her questions about her life such as living during the Great Depression, the de facto segregation in the city, and segregated schools. When questioned about her favorite memories of the city, Lozano speaks about her family. The memories she made with her cousins and family were the best times of her life. Lozano speaks of how she was kicked out of the Whites-Only school, moving to Fresno, and how her father eventually left the family. The latter half of the interview revolves around the topic of Lozano's brother Rudy. He was a soldier during the Korean War and won many awards, bringing pride to his family and Colton. The interview concludes with Lori Sanchez, a family member, recalling going to see an exhibition on Rudy in the Airborne and Special Operations Museum in Fayetteville, North Carolina. There is then also a brief discussion on more about the family history.

Subject Topic:

- South Colton
- Mexican Civil War
- Repatriation Act
- Mexican American Heritage
- World War II/Japanese Internment Camps
- De facto Segregation
- Korean War
- Veterans

Spatial Coverage:

Name of Site (if relevant)	General Location/Address
South Colton	California
Ulysses Grant Elementary School	550 W Olive St, Colton, CA 92324
Garfield School	Colton, CA (Defunct Location)
Fresno	California
Airborne & Special Operations Museum Foundation	100 Bragg Blvd, Fayetteville, NC 28301

Temporal Coverage:

Early 1900s - 2019

Key Events:

- Rebecca Lozano's family history in Colton from the early 1900s.
- The Great Depression and the effect on South Colton families, like Lozano's.
- De facto segregation and Lozano's memories of being forced to literally run out of the Whites-Only school.
- Lozano's family took over the home from the Japanese family that was forced into the Japanese Internment.
- Lozano's brother Rudy and his achievements, and recognition, of his time in the Korean War.

Key Organizations:

- Veterans of Foreign Wars in Colton
- Airborne & Special Operations Museum Foundation

Interview Index:

Media Format	Time (hh:mm:ss)	Topic Discussed
Digital Video	00:01:17 - 00:04:59	Rebecca Lozano's predecessors and their history in South Colton.
Digital Video	00:13:24 - 00:14:42	The Great Depression in 1930's South Colton.
Digital Video	00:15:27 - 00:18:04	The siblings get thrown out of the Whites-Only school.
Digital Video	00:22:10 - 00:24:20	The Japanese family that lived in South Colton was forced into the Internment Camps, so Lozano's lived in the house and took over the

		farm.
Digital Video	00:38:34 - 00:55:18	Lozano's brother Rudy and his hard work at home and during the service.
Digital Video	01:01:56 - 01:03:14	Rudy, the Medal of Honor, and other winners from the Inland Empire.

Related Materials

Additional oral history interviews are available from the South Colton Oral History Project at CSUSB, <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/colton-history/>

Full interview transcript can be found below.

Interview Transcript

Start of Interview:

[00:00:00]

TOM RIVERA: Good afternoon. My name's Tom Rivera and welcome to our Oral History of South Colton Presentation. Today is March 31, 2019 and we are taping this afternoon at 23170 Vista Grande Way. Behind the camera is Mr. David de Rozas from Cal State San Francisco. Our other associates that's working with this project is Mr. Frank Acosta, who's also with us, and Mr. Henry Vásquez. Welcome guys and thank you very much for being with us this afternoon. We also have some other guests, the family of our guest this afternoon. We have Lori Sanchez and Lori, who is your cousin from Chicago?

LORI SANCHEZ: Sister in law [Jackie Tostado?].

TOM RIVERA: Your sister in law is Jackie Tostado. We also have in the audience [00:01:00] Mr. Paul Ramirez from Texas. Welcome everybody and more welcome for Becky Lozano. Becky, thank you for very much for being with us this afternoon. We truly appreciate it. Becky, let's talk about you. Let's talk about you and your family. Mom and dad, your mom and dad you said were born and raised here in Colton.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes.

TOM RIVERA: Where did they live?

REBECCA LOZANO: With my grandfather [Servillano?]. We lived on O Street.

TOM RIVERA: O Street?

REBECCA LOZANO: O Street.

TOM RIVERA: In Colton?

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes.

TOM RIVERA: Was that next to the railroad tracks, the Santa Fe Railroad

tracks?

REBECCA LOZANO: No. My grandfather John lived by the railroad tracks. I think he lived on Maple.

TOM RIVERA: Which is close to O Street, in that area.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yeah, they didn't live too far away from each other.

TOM RIVERA: You lived in the barrio of [00:02:00] La Calle Cinco, in that area?

REBECCA LOZANO: I don't know. (laughs)

TOM RIVERA: La Calle Cinco, that area? Tell me, mom and dad and -- where did your grandparents come from?

REBECCA LOZANO: From what we've learned from an Ancestry document we're doing is my mom was from Michoacán, had been born there. Then my grandfather brought the family across the border. My mom talks that my grandfather -- that they came in the train from Mexico. I guess my grandmother was ill already because my mother became an orphan, my grandmother died when mom was three, and then they were raised by the other family.

TOM RIVERA: So you were here in Colton in the early 1900s then.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes.

TOM RIVERA: Early 1900s. Why did your [00:03:00] family come to Colton?

REBECCA LOZANO: My mom said, and this is what my grandfather told me, they said it was during the Revolutionary War in Mexico, and there was a lot of propaganda, and the people were being made to spread the propaganda, and I guess my grandfather didn't want to so he packed up his family and brought them across the border. We had family here already.

TOM RIVERA: Tell me about your family that you have here. Who were your relatives that you had here?

REBECCA LOZANO: My mother was raised by my -- by her brother's -- by her mother's brother, Miguel. Miguel [Domingues?] and [Pachica?]. I never knew her by any other name but Mama Pachica. They raised my mom, but my [00:04:00] grandfather had two other children which were ma tío Lorenzo and ma tío Carmen, well they ended up with the other family, so there had to be other aunts and uncles that were living here in Colton when they arrived here because I don't think my grandfather lasted very long. She died in Loma Linda and my mom became an orphan at three years of age and was raised by ma tío Miguel. My dad had family here too and I'm thinking that my dad, my grandfather had family here already too because this is where they settled. They came across the border through El Paso, that's where my dad was born, in El Paso, Texas. My dad was a citizen right away. (laughter)

TOM RIVERA: Anyways, they came to Colton because they had connections here in Colton, they had family here in Colton.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes, they had family here already. [00:05:00] We were raised -- in my grandfather Servillano -- on my dad's side of the family, we were raised by grandfather's house. We never lived any other place, I remember that. I was three when my grandmother [Arcelia?] passed away and I remember that. I'm a pretty nosey lady.

TOM RIVERA: Well that's okay, that's why we have you here today.

REBECCA LOZANO: Because whenever my mom -- because mom lived with me in later years and I would ask my mom about her family, and she would tell me. I always remember, I tell ever-- people should inquire about their families of many years ago. My mom just said that she went to live with ma tío Miguel and my Ma Pachita and she never returned. Then my grandfather Juan remarried [00:06:00] when she was sixteen, and he tried to get her to come and live with him, and she

wouldn't, she was used to living with the then [Negrettis?] because that's what they become, my Aunt [Lupe?], which is Lori's grandmother.

TOM RIVERA: Now the other family that you had here in Colton you said Negretti were the other family.

REBECCA LOZANO: They were my aunt -- ma tía Pachita had a family, which was, that I remember, was my Aunt Lucy, I think, and then there was ma tío [Chilo?], and then there was another one but I can't remember their name. But ma tía Lupe was the same age as my mom, so my mom grew up with them, it was the same family.

TOM RIVERA: Were you also -- was there [00:07:00] the Sanchez family that was related to you?

REBECCA LOZANO: I don't know Sanchez.

TOM RIVERA: Because Lori Sanchez.

REBECCA LOZANO: No, but by marriage.

TOM RIVERA: By marriage, okay.

REBECCA LOZANO: The Negretti's -- my Aunt Lupe married ma tío Andreas, which is her grandfather, and he was Negretti's, and he had a brother that lived right down the street which would be their great-grandfather. We all knew each other because we all lived in the same neighborhood.

TOM RIVERA: The neighborhood was O Street, Birch and Walnut, in the barrio of La Kia Cinco, in that area.

REBECCA LOZANO: All I know is there was a dance hall down the street and it's still there.

TOM RIVERA: Caldera Dance Hall.

REBECCA LOZANO: It was called something else.

TOM RIVERA: What was it called?

REBECCA LOZANO: Because we went to church at San Salvador. I made my first communion. I remember the dance hall because [00:08:00] my mother and my dad were dancers. That's how they met.

TOM RIVERA: (laughs) You know, before I forget, what was your dad's name?

REBECCA LOZANO: My dad's name was [Davi?] and his middle name was [Navarro?]. My grandmother's name was Navarro, Arcelia Navarro. My grandfather on my dad's side was Servillano. Servillano Hernandez. That's where the Hernandez comes from.

TOM RIVERA: And mom's name?

REBECCA LOZANO: My mom was [Perez?], so we have Perez, Navarro, and Hernandez, Domingues, what else? (laughs)

TOM RIVERA: Everybody in Colton.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes, it seemed like we had a lot of cousins, we never lacked for cousins. We never lacked for family. It was really nice because you don't have those things nowadays. [00:09:00] You meet once in a while, but we were together all the time.

TOM RIVERA: You had a wonderful group that you could pal around with, play with.

REBECCA LOZANO: And depend on, depend on. You needed something you could always go to ma tía's. I'm going over to ma tía's and getting so, so, so. You know? That relationship we had with them was really very close. We stayed close even though we left later on. They would come to visit us, especially her aunt, her name was [Florencia Chata?], her name was Florencia. Chata was her -- the oldest one in the family. There was a Pete, and there was a Tony, and [Kika?], and [Carmelita?], and [Avella?]. I keep forgetting your mom.

LORI SANCHEZ: And my Aunt Sally.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes, and her aunt. [00:10:00] My aunt --

TOM RIVERA: Aunt Sally.

REBECCA LOZANO: -- Sally was a late bloomer, she was born really late.

Because I palled around with Francis, and Carmelita, and Avella, when we were growing up. Not the boys, but the girls. But my oldest sister, [Anne Chata?], which is Florencia, they were very close, they were very close. We were --

TOM RIVERA: Tell me, where did your dad work when he came to Colton?

REBECCA LOZANO: My dad was an all-around -- how would you call it? He knew how to do everything. No schooling, my dad never had any schooling.

TOM RIVERA: None at all?

REBECCA LOZANO: Not at all.

TOM RIVERA: Not primary, not --

REBECCA LOZANO: Not at all, no. He never had any schooling and he used to tell us, he never had any schooling. But he was a citizen, he always reminded us, "I was born here." No, my dad never had -- but my dad had a [00:11:00] green thumb, my dad could fix everything. We had all kinds of animals in the house like having a farm. Whatever my dad brought into the house my mother would can for us and that's how we lived. I remember him one time they had a fire up on the San Bernardino Mountains and he went and fought the fire. Or he'd pick oranges. Or he'd do whatever it was. He worked for the WPA when they built the streets in Colton. He did that. He had no credentials, I guess, that's what you could say.

TOM RIVERA: But if there was work to be done your dad would be there.

REBECCA LOZANO: Oh yes. We never starved to death, that's for sure.

TOM RIVERA: You said he picked oranges.

REBECCA LOZANO: He did. He fell off a tree one time and broke his ribs and he never to the day he passed away we never knew about it. My mom [00:12:00]

knew but we never knew about it until the end. My dad was a hard worker who provided for his family. I think all our relatives were the same way. In those days there was nothing -- though it was during the Depression.

TOM RIVERA: In the 1930s.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes.

TOM RIVERA: The 1930s where the Depression at.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes.

TOM RIVERA: Talking about the Depression, were your family involved or invited to return back to Mexico? Because that was a period when the government, local governments were encouraging Mexican families to go back to Mexico. It was called the Repatriation Act.

REBECCA LOZANO: No, not that I know about it. Later on my mom became a citizen but when she was here she wasn't a citizen. What we used to laugh about, and this happened and I'm going forward here, [00:13:00] when they were doing write-ups on Rudy, there was several people that kept writing that my dad was a migrant worker. My dad was never a migrant worker and I got into it with several of them. I said, my dad was never a migrant. He was a farmer, we ran a farm, he ran a farm all during the war by himself with his family.

TOM RIVERA: The 1930s were hard years for the families in Colton. We've interviewed several people and they mentioned that they took advantage of the Welfare Program because it provided food for them and also some clothing. Anyways, I imagine there were a lot of families that took advantage of that program during the 1930s.

REBECCA LOZANO: Well you know what? I never remember my dad -- they had a stamp program and if you had a certain amount of stamps, you had so many [00:14:00] coupons dependent on how many you had in your family, and I

remember my mom because she used to can a lot, so because we were a large family, there was seven of us -- no, six of us -- my mom would get sugar stamps. She'd trade them off.

TOM RIVERA: The coupons would be you would be able to trade them for --

REBECCA LOZANO: You could only buy X amount of food with the coupons. It was like rationed during that time. I remember that. I remember that because we were quarantined one time, my dad got chicken pox, and they quarantined us, put a big old sign in the front of the house, like a neon sign, quarantined, stay out, and we couldn't go nowhere.

TOM RIVERA: You stayed inside the house for how long?

REBECCA LOZANO: We couldn't go to school [00:15:00] until the doctor, Dr. Pritchett came and said okay, you're fine.

TOM RIVERA: What was his name?

REBECCA LOZANO: Dr. Pritchett, yes. He was the only doctor in town. He was the only doctor in town. We only had one father at San Salvador. I think he's long gone, of course. And I can't remember his name.

TOM RIVERA: How old were you when they quarantined your house?

REBECCA LOZANO: I was already in school. I was probably in first, second grade, because I was -- when we left the school that's on the other side of town and we went to the school for the Mexicans -- there was three schools. The one for the white, the one for the Mexicans, and the one for the cholos, we used to call them cholos. Mixed breed. My godfather was married to a German lady, my godmother was German, so her -- his kids went to the cholo [00:16:00] school. That's what we called it.

TOM RIVERA: Well they were cholos.

REBECCA LOZANO: That's what we called it, cholos, because they were

mixed breed, and we weren't mixed, we were just Mexicans, so we went to the Mexican school, and then the white school. But when we started school we went to the white school. Well when I was a little kid I had blonde hair and blue eyes, believe it or not.

TOM RIVERA: You still have kind of greenish eyes.

REBECCA LOZANO: I have greenish eyes, yes. I think they thought we were Italian. I was in first grade and in the middle of class my brother came in, picked me up, and says let's get out of here. I said, "Where are we going? I'm still in school." And he goes, "No, we're going home. We've just been thrown out of school." They chased us out of school. I remember running -- my brother -- was little but my brother was carrying me almost to get out of the way [00:17:00] because they were going to chase us out of school because we were Mexicans.

TOM RIVERA: About what year would that have been?

REBECCA LOZANO: I was in first grade. I was born in 1929, five, thirty-one, probably about 1931, 1932. No, I had to be older than that.

TOM RIVERA: About 1934, 1935, yes.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes, because I started school before I was five.

TOM RIVERA: The school would have been Lincoln?

REBECCA LOZANO: I don't know. All I know is we went up a hill so I always called it the Hill Street.

TOM RIVERA: Could have been Grant too.

REBECCA LOZANO: Grant. That's it. That's it.

M1: The school that you went to, the cholos went to, what school was that?

REBECCA LOZANO: I don't know.

M1: San Salvador maybe?

REBECCA LOZANO: No, no, they were further down from -- their school was

further down from where Garfield is. Is it Garfield?

M1: Yes.

REBECCA LOZANO: The elementary school?

M1: It would have been San Salvador.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes, was further down. There was three schools here [00:18:00] in Colton. The white school, the Mexican school, and the cholo school.
(laughs)

TOM RIVERA: You mentioned your brothers and sisters, how many brothers and sisters did you have?

REBECCA LOZANO: I had five brothers and there was three of us, three girls. My oldest sister, me --

TOM RIVERA: Can you name your sisters?

REBECCA LOZANO: I can even give you the birthdates.

TOM RIVERA: I challenge you to do that for me.

REBECCA LOZANO: My sister [Delphina?], she was born in March the 10, my brother Gilbert was born in November, I think his birthday is the 13, I'm not too sure, and I was born September 23, 1929, then Rudy was born April 14 in 1931, and then we had David. Rudy and I were the closest ones, the closest ones, a year and seven months. [00:19:00] Most of them were two years apart. David, my brother David is May 30, my brother -- let's see, who follows David? Rudy was older than David. Tom, Tom, mom had Tom, and Tom was born in 1934 I think. Then we didn't have children any more, we didn't have any kids. We went to Fresno and mother had two more children over there, my brother John.

TOM RIVERA: You mentioned that your brother picked you up from school and took you out of school, which one was that?

REBECCA LOZANO: My brother Gil.

TOM RIVERA: Brother Gilbert?

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes, he was -- probably he was in -- let's see, he was five -- he was five years ahead of me because when I was in fifth grade he was in eighth grade, so he had to be -- if I was in first grade then he had to be in sixth grade. [00:20:00] All three of us went to that school, I don't know, Grant School, I guess.

TOM RIVERA: Then all of you were taken out of that school. Where did you go to school after that?

REBECCA LOZANO: Then we came down and they put us in the Mexican school.

TOM RIVERA: Which is Garfield?

REBECCA LOZANO: Which is Garfield. We had to go over that little bridge. I think it's still there.

TOM RIVERA: Still there, still there.

REBECCA LOZANO: We had to go over the little bridge to get to the school. When we got to the school, and this I remember, they made us take a shower because we had bugs. Mexicans all had bugs, so they made us take a shower.

TOM RIVERA: And the showers were off to the side of the school.

REBECCA LOZANO: The showers were on the outside. Showers were on the outside, so were the bathrooms, and everything like that, yes.

TOM RIVERA: How long were you at Garfield?

REBECCA LOZANO: I was there until I was in fourth grade and then we left, and then we moved to Fresno. My mom's sister lived in Fresno, my [00:21:00] Aunt Carmen. She was older than my mom.

TOM RIVERA: Why did you move to Fresno?

REBECCA LOZANO: Dad couldn't find any work. Dad couldn't find no work.

When we went to Fresno he met -- or I think my aunt or my uncle must have told him, introduced him to a Portuguese dairy man, and my dad became a dairy man. He milked cows for I don't know how many years. Which was perfect for us because we were all growing up and milk was part of the diet. (laughter) Yes, so my dad worked there. When the war came, in those years if you lived in the neighborhood you were always helping the farmers because that's all it was, was farmland, and so we were always helping each other. [00:22:00] Can you come over? Oh yes. My dad would say me and my boys and it was me and my sister [Dede?] that would go and help him, and the boys would do something else. But we used to help the farmers in our area. We had worked for this man before and when the war came along, they asked my dad if he would take over a ranch, a Japanese ranch, because they were picking him up. Sure enough, they came and they hauled them off just with the clothes on their backs. They lived in a beautiful home. We lived in that beautiful home, it was an eighty-five acre ranch. My dad did all the work there. For a man that never had any --

TOM RIVERA: I completely forgot about the Japanese being --

REBECCA LOZANO: Interred.

TOM RIVERA: -- interred, the interred program. You just [00:23:00] happened to be part of that because they were interring Japanese into the various camps throughout the country.

REBECCA LOZANO: I think they took our family to Kansas. We took over the ranch, and the house, and they had a big barn in the back with brand new cars, and furniture, and everything. Of course in all those years the rats ate everything up. The house was fine. But my dad ran that ranch by himself.

TOM RIVERA: What kind of crops did you raise?

REBECCA LOZANO: You name it, we did it. We worked twenty-four-seven.

We had apricots, peaches, nectarines, cotton, grapes of about four or five different -
- because we picked grapes, the wine grapes, in October-December. We had
cotton, we had everything, everything was on that -- it was a beautiful ranch.

TOM RIVERA: How big was it?

REBECCA LOZANO: Eighty-five acres. [00:24:00]

TOM RIVERA: Eighty-five acres.

REBECCA LOZANO: Eighty-five acres and my dad did it all. We used to think
how my dad could do -- he'd go out there in the middle of the night to water
because the water would come in every so often and you'd have to water your
crops when the water came in through the canal. There was a canal in Colton.

TOM RIVERA: Yes, yes.

REBECCA LOZANO: I remember because I got dumped in the canal one time
when I was little.

TOM RIVERA: There was a canal next to your -- close to your house --

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes.

TOM RIVERA: -- on Fifth Street there was a canal, it was open canal that
came from the San Anna River through M Street and then through Fifth Street, and
I guess that's the canal that you used as a swimming pool for your body.

REBECCA LOZANO: No, no. When I was still up in Grant School our buddies,
which were the [Aguileras?] [00:25:00] -- we had the Aguileras and the [Padillas?].

The Padillas were my sister's buddies, the girls, and the Aguileras -- I went to
school with Bobby Aguilera. I wish I knew where he's at because we'd be the same
age, unless he's gone. But he was -- him and I were in the same grade. We're
coming home one day and we were going over the canal, and the canal would
come this way, and then turn, and go down the street like this, so this was covered,
the street was covered. We dared each other to throw each other in the canal and

he says okay and off I went into the canal.

TOM RIVERA: Now the Aguileras, were these the ones that owned the market there on what is it, N Street, almost at the corner of Fifth and N Street?

M1: La nueva reforma?

TOM RIVERA: What's the name of it?

M1: La nueva reforma?

TOM RIVERA: La nueva reforma was the name of the grocery store.

REBECCA LOZANO: I don't know, we called it the Aguileras. We went to school with them. Then the [00:26:00] Padillas lived across the street because we lived in that corner and the store was here and the Padillas lived here so we were like --

TOM RIVERA: The Padillas, were they [Tula?] Padilla?

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes, yes.

TOM RIVERA: Maria Padilla?

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes, yes.

TOM RIVERA: Manuel Padilla?

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes, yes.

TOM RIVERA: Lori, everybody is related in Colton. Everybody is related in Colton. I read about the background of Rudy, your brother Rudy, and they mentioned that when you moved up north that you moved to Fowler and then --

REBECCA LOZANO: That was later on.

TOM RIVERA: Tell me, you moved to Fresno first?

REBECCA LOZANO: We lived in Fresno first. We lived in Fresno first. That's when my dad was a dairy man, he milked cows. Mr. [Silvaria?] had a dairy ranch, and he lived here, and we lived across the street, so my dad had to get up early in the morning and bring the cows from the field, cut them across [00:27:00] the street

and milk them, then he'd take them back to the field, across the field. But we had a little house right there.

TOM RIVERA: And then Fowler was where --

REBECCA LOZANO: When we moved to Fowler my dad wasn't with us no more, my dad left us when I was -- I was in elementary school. I graduated from elementary -- in those years you went from kinder to eighth grade in one school and then eighth grade -- from ninth grade to twelfth in the high school. There was no junior high school. Gilbert and I went to school in -- when we lived out in Fresno he went to -- then we went to Fowler and by that time he had already graduated.

TOM RIVERA: Now where was the eighty-five acre ranch?

REBECCA LOZANO: It was on Fresno County, out in the countryside, [00:28:00] not downtown. I went to school in Fowler, high school. I graduated from the elementary school in eighth and then I went two years to high school. Then they took me out of school because I was fifteen, almost sixteen, and you could leave school by that time. It's not like it is today. A little different. My dad had left us. I think my dad was just tired because he had all the years that we lived with my grandfather, Servillano, he was the sole support of all the family, and my grandfather had a big family. I think there was five in there and then all our kids. Then after grandma died it was even harder for him.

TOM RIVERA: When he left the family were you responsible or who was responsible for the family?

REBECCA LOZANO: I was. I was pulled out of school to take care of the little ones, which was [00:29:00] Rudy, David, Tom, Rose, and John, and I took control because mama went to work. Mama had never --

TOM RIVERA: Where did she work?

REBECCA LOZANO: She worked in a chicken factory. She worked for

Cudahy for many years, many years. She was a chicken plucker. (laughter)

TOM RIVERA: Before we leave -- we left Colton a little while ago, but before we completely leave Colton, tell me what are your best memories about living in Colton?

REBECCA LOZANO: The best memories?

TOM RIVERA: Yes.

REBECCA LOZANO: Being with my cousins because we were so close. We could sleep outside the house, we had no fences. You could go all over town. We could go to the movies. My Uncle [Chilo?] on the weekends would give us twenty-five cents and you could go to the movies, you could buy popcorn and a candy with twenty-five cents. [00:30:00] So we would go to the -- he would make sure that we had money. Me, and [Kika?], and Avella.

TOM RIVERA: Which movie theater did you go to?

REBECCA LOZANO: Downtown.

TOM RIVERA: The Colton Theater?

REBECCA LOZANO: There was only one theater.

TOM RIVERA: The New Colton?

REBECCA LOZANO: There was only one theater in town. Yes.

TOM RIVERA: Do you remember being segregated?

REBECCA LOZANO: No. There was no such thing. I didn't even know segregation. If it hadn't been that they chased us out of the school. I said, "Why are they chasing us out of school? We didn't do anything wrong." I loved my teacher. We were all doing good except I guess there was a law that was being passed that you had to separate the browns from the whites.

TOM RIVERA: You were not aware that the railroad tracks were the --

REBECCA LOZANO: No.

TOM RIVERA: -- dividing line between North Colton and South Colton?

REBECCA LOZANO: I used to walk those railroad [00:31:00] tracks every day. I have the knees to prove it. (laughter) My mom would dress me real cute and pretty soon I'd be back at the house and, "What did you do? ¿Qué hiciste?" "Me caí." My knees are all scarred up from walking. I loved walking down the railroad tracks. That's what we had to do. But it was just very pleasant. I never remember fights or gunshots or anything like that like there is now. You can't even stay outside. I have a gate that's twelve-feet high in front of my place only because of the security where I live now. Otherwise --

TOM RIVERA: But in the old days you leave your doors unlocked.

REBECCA LOZANO: You left your doors open. We slept out on the porch in the summertime. We had a porch. We slept outside in the porch. It was just fun. [00:32:00] It'd be dark and we'd still be playing. Kika and I, Francis and I, would be running back and forth because they lived two doors down from us. "Oh, I'm going to walk you home." "Okay." "I'm going to walk you home," and then we'd go back and forth.

TOM RIVERA: What games did you play?

REBECCA LOZANO: Everything. I loved to climb trees. Kika and I would get on top of -- we had a lemon tree in the front of the us, we'd climb the lemon tree to eat lemons.

TOM RIVERA: Did you play escondidas?

REBECCA LOZANO: Of course. We played everything. Jump rope, Jack's, hide and seek, tag. (laughs)

TOM RIVERA: Anyway, you were complete as far as recreation was concerned.

REBECCA LOZANO: Oh yes. Like I said, we did -- there was no danger. We

never had any problems. But her grandma and my mom because they had been raised [00:33:00] together were very close. They were more like sisters than anything else. They were very close to each other. So when we moved to Fresno they would come to visit us and they would stay a week, two weeks, all the gang, and we'd have a good time, my mom cooking with my tía. Then we'd come to Colton to visit them and we'd stay with them. It wasn't --

TOM RIVERA: Was there any difference between living in Colton and living in Fresno?

REBECCA LOZANO: When we lived in Fresno it was more like we lived in the countryside so there was nobody unless you -- at school, you know, when you had friends at school. When you lived in the country, like I told you, my father in law always said you could take the country out of me, and he's right. I love the countryside. There was -- [00:34:00] we didn't have neighbors to play with or anything. It was just us. But we kept busy. Of course when we lived on the ranch we worked twenty-four-seven. It was five o'clock in the morning, let's go. My father was really funny because in the summertime when it got real hot he said, "Vámonos." And we'd go home, and we'd take a nap, wait till it cooled down, and then we'd go out in the field again.

TOM RIVERA: So it was a long day.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes. And we'd come in, have dinner, go to bed, for the next day, getting ready to go for the next day. It was easy life compared to what it is nowadays.

TOM RIVERA: It occurred to me -- Se me ocurrió, okay? When you mentioned food, did you have [00:35:00] -- in Colton I imagine you had tacos, enchiladas, and the traditional foods, mole, and that sort of thing. Was that also true in Fresno?

REBECCA LOZANO: I don't know about Colton, but when we lived in Colton I don't think we had enchiladas or anything like that. I don't remember it. We ate just normal food, sopita, [carlitos?], soups. I need to have -- my eyes are burning with that -- it was nothing fancy. Once in a while when we had a feast we'd kill a chicken or a rabbit. We had rabbits, and we had chickens, and pigeons, and we had a goose, and one year we raised a turkey. The damn turkey ran away, flew away the night before Thanksgiving. (laughter) [00:36:00]

TOM RIVERA: It wasn't a dumb turkey, was it?

REBECCA LOZANO: Mom forgot to clip its feathers. So we had goose for Thanksgiving. And we had it with her family. We'd get together my aunts on my dad's side of the family. They'd come over. It was just a big family reunion. That was fun to do.

TOM RIVERA: Let's talk about your brother Rudy. How young -- how many years younger was Rudy than you are?

REBECCA LOZANO: He was a year and seven months younger than I. I was born in September of 1929 and he was born in April of 1931. He was --

TOM RIVERA: Now did he go to Garfield School?

REBECCA LOZANO: No. They [00:37:00] -- he hated school. He hated school.

TOM RIVERA: He didn't like school.

REBECCA LOZANO: He didn't like school. He didn't like school until we moved to Fresno and then he started going to school, he loved school. Then he loved sports. He was a runner. There's -- what do you call it? They used to run, my brother David and him used to run the West Coast Relays they used to call it. It was a race they ran for kids in elementary school. He won quite a few ribbons, so he loved to run. He loved to do everything. He was a good eater too. He loved

candy.

TOM RIVERA: What was his favorite candy?

REBECCA LOZANO: Chocolate. To the day he died he loved chocolate.

[00:38:00] He was very athletic. He loved sports, he loved sports.

TOM RIVERA: His hobby and activities were sports activities.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes. Yes.

TOM RIVERA: Not school, not academics.

REBECCA LOZANO: He did pretty good in -- he was an average student.

When he first started school I don't know if it was a school that he didn't like, he'd hide. When we moved to Fresno and we were living out on the countryside and he'd hide.

TOM RIVERA: He would hide?

REBECCA LOZANO: He would hide and he wouldn't go to school. My father got mad and he said, "Well, since you don't want to go to school then you come home and you will go to work." And he put him to work. That kid would pitch hay, would do everything my father told him to do.

TOM RIVERA: So he was a good worker.

REBECCA LOZANO: He was a good worker. He was a good worker. Then when we lived in the ranch, the Japanese ranch, [00:39:00] we had -- my father would say, "Okay, the girls are going to make so much and the boys are going to make so much." Their limit was they had to pick 500 pounds of cotton, the boys did, Gilbert, and Rudy, and David. The girls had to pick 300. Then when we picked grapes, the same thing, 500 -- and that guy would be sitting at the edge of rope by twelve o'clock. "What are you doing there?"

TOM RIVERA: "Ya acabé."

REBECCA LOZANO: "Ya acabé. I'm done." "No, you're not!" "Go count

them. Go count them." He was a good worker. He was always a good worker.

One thing about Rudy, he loved --

TOM RIVERA: How old was he when he became a -- you know, when he did well in the fields?

REBECCA LOZANO: Oh, since he was a little kid. I wasn't even in high [00:40:00] school, we were in elementary school. He probably was ten, twelve years old. I mean, he was just a good -- we'd tell him, "You're putting rocks in that sack, that's why it weighs so much." He'd go, "No, no, I'm--" but he was a good fast worker. He loved to make that money. This was the funniest part is my mom would give us five dollars a week, that was our allowance. He loved ice cream. We'd go to town on the weekends. Of course we had to go by --

TOM RIVERA: Which town was this?

REBECCA LOZANO: When we were in Fresno. When we were living out at the ranch. We would go into town on Sundays, my mom would go buy groceries, and we'd go to the movies, and mom would give us five dollars [00:41:00] so we could spend on whatever. He would spend his five dollars on comics and ice cream because there was a malt shop in town. He would eat -- then he wanted my five dollars. (laughter)

TOM RIVERA: He wanted your share.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes, we'd have good fights. But we always stayed close until he left to the service.

TOM RIVERA: The comic books that he bought, can you remember some of the comic books?

REBECCA LOZANO: Of course. Marvel Comics, Superman and what have you, Batman. He had stacks of them. At those times those comics were only ten cents.

TOM RIVERA: They were at the time, yes.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes. Then the malt that he bought was probably ten, fifteen cents, because he liked a triple Sunday or a banana split.

TOM RIVERA: He was an ice cream junkie [00:42:00] then.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes. Candy.

TOM RIVERA: Chocolate junkie.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes, he loved his sweets. Yes. Lots of nice memories of him when we were growing up. Lots of nice memories. My oldest brother went to the service in the Second War and so that left us even more dependent on him.

TOM RIVERA: On Rudy?

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes. Yes. Because he didn't go -- well Gilbert went to Japan. Gilbert was in -- he was a paratrooper, 182nd. He was a paratrooper.

TOM RIVERA: Rudy had to get permission to sign up for the Army. How old was he when he had to get permission? [00:43:00]

REBECCA LOZANO: Seventeen.

TOM RIVERA: Seventeen? What motivated him to join the Army?

REBECCA LOZANO: My mother said it was my fault.

TOM RIVERA: Why was it your fault?

REBECCA LOZANO: Because him and I were like this and I got married at that time.

TOM RIVERA: Oh, lo dejaste.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes, and he got ticked, and he joined the service when I got married. I was nineteen and he was seventeen and so he joined the service. When Rudy was in the service, you know, he was always very responsible, and he always worried about mother. He, when he went into the Army, because he was in Texas first -- well, he was in Fort Ord, and then he went to Texas, and then from

there he qualified for the paratroopers. Then they sent him to Fort Benning and then Fort Benning [00:44:00] -- when he came home after he finished his training in Texas, he came home, and we made up, and he started writing to me. But he wouldn't talk to me for a long time. He wouldn't talk -- I would write to him and he would never answer me. He was really mad because I had gotten married. He went to Fort Benning for his training. Actually he went to Fort Campbell Kentucky for the first time and then he went to Fort Benning. He would shine shoes, he would iron uniforms, he would do jumps for the guys just to make extra money and send it home to my mother.

TOM RIVERA: He was worried about your mom and your mom being well in Fresno.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes, my mom kept working and she kept saving all the money he would send her. Sometimes his check for the month he would [00:45:00] send it to her and she saved it and bought her little house, the little house we had in Fresno. She lived there until we moved her. But he was always concerned about her. To the day that mother died, Rudy called her every Sunday at nine o'clock. Nine o'clock our time, twelve o'clock his time, every Sunday. He never missed. Then when she passed away, he started calling me. But he would call me too every so often but not like when mom was around, when mom was still alive.

TOM RIVERA: Now did Rudy graduate from high school?

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes. He came back -- he came back and then he took classes. He even went to the junior college there for a while before he got married. After he got married I think he took a couple of other classes, but [00:46:00] when he came back he was a mess. He was a big mess.

TOM RIVERA: From Fort Benning he was transferred to Germany?

REBECCA LOZANO: No, he never went to Germany.

TOM RIVERA: He didn't?

REBECCA LOZANO: No.

TOM RIVERA: Some of the reports that I read said that he was stationed in Germany when the Korean War broke out.

REBECCA LOZANO: He never went. He got shipped out of San Francisco. When he left they took him from San Francisco to Korea, he never went to Germany. None of them. Not even -- because see, I had four brothers who were in the service. My brother Gil was in the 182nd Division with the paratroopers, Rudy was with the 187th Division, David was in the Navy. David's ship is in Long Beach right now, he was aboard the Iowa. Tom was in the 3rd Marine Division, [00:47:00] so all four of my brothers except for John. John never made it because he had gotten hurt when he was a little kid so he never made it to the service. He was old enough, but he never made it. The four boys went to the service.

TOM RIVERA: What was Rudy's rank when he in the service?

REBECCA LOZANO: I think he was just a corporal. I don't think he ever went any higher than that.

TOM RIVERA: He was -- what division was he?

REBECCA LOZANO: He was 187th Airborne Division, yes, and his group -- they were -- and he was really good about writing to my mom. He would write to my mom so when we didn't hear from him for months we knew something was wrong. But who do you contact? We didn't know who to contact to find out [00:48:00] where he was at or if anything was missing or he was gone, we just didn't know, we just waited and waited.

TOM RIVERA: You just waited until you got a letter from him.

REBECCA LOZANO: We waited. What had happened is when he got hurt they -- well, they tried to kill him in the first place, and what they did is they stole his

dog tags, and his I.D., his wallet, and his watch, everything that he had. So they couldn't identify him. What they did was when they found him, the guy that found him, the medic that found him --

TOM RIVERA: This was in the battle, the battle that --

REBECCA LOZANO: After the battle, after the battle.

TOM RIVERA: Do you know anything about the battle? Did he ever talk about the battle?

REBECCA LOZANO: He did. He did. He was very good about telling us what had happened.

TOM RIVERA: Can you tell us a little --

REBECCA LOZANO: He said that they were on a hill and they wanted -- they were called to go back, [00:49:00] retreat. He said at just about that time he got hit and he had blood all over his face. Rudy had a temper, always had a temper, and he said I was so mad, he says, I'm going to get you, you so-and-so's, and he advanced, and that's where they found him. They found him surrounded by five or six guys. He had bayoneted -- because his rifle had gotten --

TOM RIVERA: Jammed?

REBECCA LOZANO: -- jammed and he just went with his bayonet and killed the guys with his bayonet. They found him -- they didn't find him that night. They didn't find him for another day or so. When they found him, the medic that found him was putting him in a bag already, he's dead. You know, all these guys are dead, so is he. They put him in, as they were putting him in the back he moved his hand, and they said, "This guy's alive! This guy's not dead!" They matter -- the helicopter pulled him out [00:50:00] and took him to Japan.

TOM RIVERA: You mentioned they took his I.D.s away from him and they couldn't identify him.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes. Because when they did that -- when they got Japan, to the Army base in Japan or the hospital in Japan, they fingerprinted him, and that's how they found him. But you know how long that takes? It took months to find out from the finger prints who he was. When they did, by that time, he was already in San Francisco at Letterman Hospital. He couldn't talk, he couldn't walk, he was completely paralyzed on his right side. The only thing that he could say for about two, three months was, yep, nope, nothing else.

TOM RIVERA: What about the injury on his head?

REBECCA LOZANO: What they did, what they found out is the guy, [00:51:00] the Korean guys, hit him with the butt of the rifle in his right here, I think they were trying to reach his neck but they hit him right here, and then they hit him at the top of his head with the butt of the rifle. He had a sunken -- his mollera, you know how when you're a baby you have that? Well he had that. You could stand by him and you could see his brain going up and down. Then this lip was connected to his chin. That's how he came home. They finally -- the Red Cross mailed my mom a letter and told her that he was at the hospital. She calls me and says, "Can you come and take care of the kids?" Of course I went right away to stay with them. She says, "I'm going to go to the hospital. Rudy is at Letterman and I don't know how bad he is." My mother all she could say, because Rudy had beautiful green eyes, my mother would say, "Oh, I hope he's not blind [00:52:00] because those beautiful green eyes." That's all she would say. Nothing else. This is another thing, like I said, I'm a nosy person. I always used to listen to what my mom would say about our family. When she got to the hospital my cousin on my mom's side of the family had taken her to Letterman Hospital, and she's walking down the hallway, and this guy's coming towards her with a medic attending to him, he was helping him walk. He went by her, she didn't recognize him. He came around and put his

arms around her and just said, mama. Of course mama said, "Don't cry. You're not supposed to cry when you see him." She spend the weekend with him. He came home about maybe a month later he came home.

TOM RIVERA: How long was he in the hospital?

REBECCA LOZANO: Years. Years. Because the first surgery [00:53:00] they did, they wanted to do something with his head, but they couldn't do it, he had to go to a specialist to have it done. They did it in San Francisco. But this they did right away, they connected this, and he had stitches in here. They connected -- disconnected his lip from his chin. He had no teeth because they broke all his teeth in the front, so they fixed his teeth. Then he came home. Did you ever see the movie *The Mummy*? It's an old movie. I remember seeing it in Colton. The mummy drags -- like walks --

TOM RIVERA: Oh yes, I saw it, I saw it, yes.

REBECCA LOZANO: Well, that's Rudy.

TOM RIVERA: That was Rudy when he came out of the hospital?

REBECCA LOZANO: Because he was paralyzed completely. He was paralyzed on his right hand side. This arm was like this and then he dragged this leg. [00:54:00] Then he was having seizures because the brain was exposed, so he was having seizures, and every time he had seizures he would lose everything. The first time it happened mother wasn't at home. He had come home to recuperate for the surgeries -- from the surgeries that he was getting because he had other injuries, and so he was recuperating, and mother was working and didn't know he had fallen in the bathroom, and that's where she had found him in the bathroom. Who knows how long he had been in there. So after that --

TOM RIVERA: He was very seriously hurt that he needed somebody to --

REBECCA LOZANO: You know what, Tom? I really am surprised he's lived

that long -- he lived that long. I really am. [00:55:00] Because he went through so much hell. But he never, never -- you never saw him complain. He never said it hurts me here or it hurts me there. He never, never did. He would just smile, how are you doing. He'd smile. How are you doing, Rudy? Oh, fine. Like I said in the beginning, he couldn't talk, so he had to have therapy. After they finish in San Francisco with him, they flew him -- no, they took the train, and brought him to Long Beach, and he spent about three years in Long Beach in therapy that taught him how to -- Rudy never used shoes that he could slip on, he used shoes that he could tie, he always wore a tie. He learned to tie his shoes, he learned to speak, he learned to write. He did speeches. Oh my god, [00:56:00] he'd pound on the podium so people would listen to him. He did speeches and everything and yet he couldn't say anything when he got home, just yep and nope.

TOM RIVERA: Who nominated him to receive the Medal of Honor?

REBECCA LOZANO: The buddies from his company did because they had found him. But the one who gave him his medal was Truman.

TOM RIVERA: What year was that?

REBECCA LOZANO: I think that was in 1952, 1953, something like that.

There used to be pictures of him with every president -- every time they had an inauguration, he was invited. All the Medal of Honor recipients were invited to the inaugurations. I got to go to one of them when Reagan ran for the second term. That was fun to see. Yes, he loved it. [00:57:00] People were really nice to him. The only place where he had problems with in Fresno, that's why he got out of Fresno. Because they just wanted to exploit him, that's all, they wouldn't do nothing for him. In later years --

TOM RIVERA: Who? This is when he came back from the service and he was a recipient of the Medal of Honor?

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes.

TOM RIVERA: He went back to Fresno?

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes, we lived in Fres-- well, mama lived in Fresno. He was still -- he wasn't married yet. They would invite him out, get him drunk. He wasn't supposed to be drinking because of all of the medication he was on. They he would get seizures. We lost him one time and we went bananas trying to find him. He finally showed up at the house. Where were you? So we think he had a seizure. But he had seizures all the time he was [00:58:00] alive. I was back east with him because I went to live with him. In 1983 I went to live with him. I was by myself, my kids were all married and everything, and I went to live with him. He says, "Come over here, you can go to school here." So I did. I went back east. I went to school over there and lived with him.

TOM RIVERA: What city was this?

REBECCA LOZANO: In Fayetteville.

TOM RIVERA: That's what state?

REBECCA LOZANO: In North Carolina.

TOM RIVERA: North Carolina, okay.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes, that's the only place he ever lived, in Fayetteville. He had a home there. He had seizures all the time. If he didn't take his medicine he'd get a seizure. He had to take medicine every day because of the brain injury. Later on he went to San Francisco and they did like an arch on his forehead, you could see his stitches here, and they put a cap on him. [00:59:00] Then the last four or five years that he was alive, all of the sudden the cap -- I don't know why they never did anything else, he started getting a lump here. So when he passed away he had a lump on his head. But he used a wig for a long time and then after a while he just said, I'll wear my hat.

TOM RIVERA: You moved and took care of him.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes. I went -- well I was with him when he passed away. He called me, "Can you come?" That's all he had to do was tell me, "Can you come?" And I said of course, I would never neg-- I never said -- the several times he was in the hospital he just called me, "I'm in the hospital, can you come?" "Okay." I'd tell my kids, "Okay, I'm going to go with Uncle Rudy." "Okay, mom." But that's the way -- like I said, that's the way we were. We were really close.

[01:00:00] Five days before he passed away he called me, "Can you come? I'm sick, I'm going to the hospital." His daughter was with him. I said to her, "How bad is he?" She said, "Stage four cancer." I said, how did it get this way, he had just been to Duke about two months before, why didn't they catch it then. But they hadn't. He was at the hospital at Fort Bragg for the last five days. He had been married. He had married this young lady from North Carolina, little Southern lady. Perfect lady. But she got all (inaudible) -- on the last -- the last trip they took to Seattle that they went to, convention, she started having problems. They noticed [01:01:00] she was getting lost, she would get lost. When they were there in Seattle she went to the bathroom and locked herself in, and they had to get her out. After that they took her to the -- he took her to the hospital. He calls me, "You know I took [Denzel?] to the hospital? They're telling me she has dementia." I said, "Dementia, I know what dementia is." He goes, "Yeah, what is it?" I said, "Well, look it up." Within a month she was in the hospital, she was in a nursing home. He would take her and leave her there for the week because he was busy and then on the weekends he would go and get her, and bring her home, and take care of her. He did that for a long time.

TOM RIVERA: He had serious problems [01:02:00] with his health, the wounds and everything, and being in the hospital for a long time. Then he received the

Medal of Honor. How did it effect his life, receiving this award from the country?

How did this effect his life?

REBECCA LOZANO: I don't think that it affected him anyway. He was just -- never thought about anything. What he would get mad is when people would tell him, oh you're the Medal of Honor winner, huh? He'd say, no, I didn't win anything. (laughs) We got to meet a lot of his Medal of Honor -- there's another -- there's, I think, two more boys that are here from Colton that are Medal of Honor recipients.

TOM RIVERA: We have them, San Bernardino, that's --

REBECCA LOZANO: Jose.

TOM RIVERA: Rodriguez, Joe Rodriguez. The one from Riverside, Casa Blanca, [Miell?], I forget his last name.

REBECCA LOZANO: And there's a Benavidez too. Benavidez was [01:03:00] big time. I got to meet several of them. But Joe Rodriguez, we were very good friends because mama knew the family from Colton, and then they moved to San Bernardino. Then he and his wife, Rose, moved to Texas. We'd see them at the convention centers because I always went with Rudy to the conventions. If he was in this area, if he was in California, I'd go. It didn't matter to me. Long Beach, San Diego, whatever. I always followed him around.

TOM RIVERA: Was Rudy married?

REBECCA LOZANO: He married (whispers) five --

TOM RIVERA: Cinco?

REBECCA LOZANO: He married three güeras, four güeras, and one Mexican.

TOM RIVERA: Did he have any kids?

REBECCA LOZANO: He has three kids. Two girls and one boy. They were [01:04:00] -- they live in Canoga Park. Well the girls -- his ex-wife, his first wife, lives in Canoga Park, and his daughter, his oldest daughter. The other one lives in

Washington and the boy lives in Fayetteville, he lives in the house that he left. Yes. I don't get to see them.

TOM RIVERA: Then his memorial, his memorial was -- tell us about his memorial.

REBECCA LOZANO: His memorial, I think I need a box of Kleenex, his memorial was something else. It was in the church that he went to. They brought his body in and brought him in the front of the altar, and every half an hour a guy in the service from the paratroopers would come and stand there. They'd stay half an hour, [01:05:00] they'd leave, somebody else would come in, all the time he was out there. The people were lined down the street. My hand hurt me from shaking hands because we were there -- well I was there because I had gone to see him before he passed away. But he was so funny. He was so funny. We never knew that he was in pain. We never knew. We'd go into -- he had a private room, of course, Rudy Hernandez Medal of Honor, we'd have a special parking space where we could park, we didn't have to bother at the hospital. We would go and he'd say, "Did you have breakfast?" "Yes, we had breakfast." "Okay." Then he'd look at his watch, it's almost noontime. "You have to go eat lunch." We'd have to go eat lunch because he told us. You're not leave-- we couldn't leave until ten o'clock, made sure that we stayed with him until [01:06:00] ten o'clock. Then one day, I think it was on the third day, because he only lasted five days after he got into the hospital, they tried to do chemo on him and he couldn't take it. He passed out. That's when they kept him in the hospital. They said we're not sending him home, we've got to monitor him. He's reacting really bad to the chemo. Okay. They never got to the chemo. Then they put a port on him and they tried to put the port on his good arm, which was his left arm, and it wouldn't go through, so they had to put it on his bad arm. Then he had a reaction to it so then they kept him in the hospital. While we

were there, he would just hi, I'm hungry, I need to go to the bathroom, we'd take [01:07:00] him to the bathroom. Every time we'd take him to the bathroom --

TOM RIVERA: But no complaints?

REBECCA LOZANO: He never -- he just smiled. He just smiled all the time. He never said he was hurting or anything. One nurse came -- one of the nurses came in and she got to be real friendly with him. She'd say, "He never complains that he's hurting." I said, "He's always been that way. He just smiles." "I know, he's got a beautiful smile." Anyways so one day we had a different nurse and he looked at her and he goes, "Where are you from?" She goes, "I'm from Korea." "Oh, I killed several of you." I told him, "Rudy!" He goes, "Well, I did." "Ay ay ay, Redolfo." That was the other thing, every time they came to give him medicine while he was there in the hospital, those five days, they would come in and they [01:08:00] would say, "What is your name?" He would go, "Rodolfo Perez Hernandez." "What?" "Rodolfo Perez Hernandez." "I don't understand." And he'd yell, "Rodolfo --" Aye, aye, Rudy. Then the one day the nurse kept -- they were giving him shots for something, I don't know what, but they must have come about four times in a row, and they had to ask him what his name was, and he just "I already told you, my name is Rodolfo Perez Hernandez!" Okay. Oh, he's a comic, he was a comic till the last. They put him in a nursing home two nights before he passed away, he said, "I'm going to nursing home that my wife is at." They took him to the nursing home and he says, "I want you to bring my wife to see me," and they brought this little -- and there she was. [01:09:00] Who knows where she was at because she didn't know anything. They were feeding her through her stomach, she didn't talk, she didn't smile or do anything. And they sat her like there in the front and he started singing to her. I go, oh my god. I just started crying and walked away. He started singing to her in Spanish.

TOM RIVERA: ¿Y que le canto?

REBECCA LOZANO: “Creí.”

TOM RIVERA: (starts singing) “Creí que tu vida era mía, y que yo te quería como yo quiero a ti.” (stops singing)

REBECCA LOZANO: “Como tú me quieres.”

TOM RIVERA: Yes, yes, that's a nice song.

REBECCA LOZANO: That's what he sang to her. Then they took her away. Then that night his fever went up really high so they transferred him back to Fort Bragg and on the following day he died, he passed away.

TOM RIVERA: Did they mount a statue for him, [01:10:00] or a park, or anything like that?

REBECCA LOZANO: I'll show you what they did. There is a building, there's a building that they made for soldiers that are coming back that had PSD, PST -- is that what it's called?

M1: PTSD.

TOM RIVERA: What is it, Frank?

M1: PTSD.

TOM RIVERA: PTS.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes.

TOM RIVERA: Post Traumatic Syndrome?

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes. There's a whole thing of it. I'll see if I can find it because I wanted to show you. It's really a really nice -- it's [01:11:00] a whole hospital. It's right across the street from Fort Bragg, where it's at, and we didn't know about it, but it has his name and everything on it. I'm getting close. I have his -- the grave site where he's buried too. We went to see him. We went to see where he's at. Well, we knew where he was buried at. When they did the ceremonies for

him, the trail behind him must have been five miles long, maybe even more, and at [01:12:00] every corner were police, and they were off their cars and saluting him as they went. That was another one. But the biggest part was just before we go into the memorial gardens, a fire station, a fire engine was parked, and all the guys were lined up on top of the fire station, on top of the fire engine, and below with the flags, and saluting him. That was the most beautiful thing I had ever seen. It was just -- it was too much. Of course I think I used about twenty boxes of Kleenex that day. That's not it. It's really [01:13:00] -- are we going to take a break pretty soon?

TOM RIVERA: Se lo llevó. Rudy took it with him.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes.

TOM RIVERA: Yes. What I'd like to do, Rebecca, is let me ask you my last question.

REBECCA LOZANO: Go ahead. Go ahead.

TOM RIVERA: Were you aware that two years ago in 2016, Colton named their VFW hall after Rudy?

REBECCA LOZANO: No.

TOM RIVERA: No? Let me show you. Frank, can you show her those pictures that are underneath there.

REBECCA LOZANO: I need to take a break.

TOM RIVERA: A picture of him. [01:14:00]

REBECCA LOZANO: I need to take a break.

TOM RIVERA: This is a picture -- that one, Frank?

REBECCA LOZANO: Oh yes, I saw that already.

TOM RIVERA: Now this one is in the -- this is VFW hall in Colton. It's on the corner of Orange Street and Eighth Street. This is Post 6476. Inside the building you have a picture of Rudy honoring him for -- they named the building after him.

That was just two years ago.

REBECCA LOZANO: See, I'll have to get my kids to take me. I need to take a break.

TOM RIVERA: Let's go ahead and take a break. Thank you so much, thoroughly enjoyed it, and let's take a break.

REBECCA LOZANO: Yes, I need to go to the -- been sitting too long.

(break in recording)

TOM RIVERA: Becky, we just got through with the first part of the interview and I'm delighted that [01:15:00] you've hung in there so well. The first part was an hour and fifteen minutes. That was a good interview from you, so thank you very much. Then we started talking about Rudy's museum back east. I think Lori visited the museum a few months ago and possibly Lori can give us a wonderful -- a good description of the museum that Rudy was involved in. Lori Sanchez was related to the family, to Rudy's family. Lori?

LORI SANCHEZ: Okay. We went a few years ago to the Airborne and Special Operations Museum. We were on a business trip in Charlotte and it was like a three-hour drive, so we had to do this, we were never going to be back in North Carolina that we knew of. I called Becky and I asked her exactly where, and we googled it, and we found it. Thinking it was just going to be a statue of Rudy, [01:16:00] what we have read on the internet, and it was actually a big exhibit of him, of the killing field on, I want to say, Hill 46, if I can remember correctly. There's a You Tube of him describing exactly what happened on that day. Everything looked real. It was made out of papier-mâché and I thought to myself, why did they make it out of papier-mâché, I thought it was going to look like a piñata. Oh no. It looked live. It looked like Rudy in the pictures when he was young and they just captured it beautifully. When the workers knew that we were Rudy's relatives they

were like very, very impressed that we came all the way from California to see this. We must have stayed about five hours. I was in front of it and the music would come on again and [01:17:00] I just couldn't get enough of it, thinking about the family, thinking of everything he went through. My mom would say, my cousin the hero, you guys have to meet my cousin the hero. So for him to make history like he did and receive the Medal of Honor, it was amazing.

TOM RIVERA: How are you related to Rudy?

LORI SANCHEZ: Cousins. Right, Becky? Like third, fourth cousins.

REBECCA LOZANO: No, second. Because your mom was our first cousin, so she'd be our second cousin.

M1: Can you name some names that link the families?

REBECCA LOZANO: Her grandma -- okay, her great-grandma is the one that raised my mom. Her great-grandma and ma tío Miguel -- ma tío Miguel was my mom's brother -- my mom's -- [01:18:00] ma tío Miguel was my mom's mom's brother. Her mom and ma tío Miguel were brother and sister. Okay? They were the ones that raised my mother when she was three. I'll have to show a picture of my mom when she -- what they did to her. Anyway, she was spoiled rotten, let's just put it that way, because she was three years old, nobody else around. Of course ma tío Miguel and my grandma were very close, that's how we ended up here. Then ma tío Miguel and ma tía Pachita had children and her grandma is part of that family.

LORI SANCHEZ: Mama Pachita and Miguel were my mother's grandparents.

Right, got that right. Were my mother's grandparents.

TOM RIVERA: Lori you have a [01:19:00] large family in Colton.

LORI SANCHEZ: I do.

TOM RIVERA: So everybody is related to Colton, to Colton. (laughter)

LORI SANCHEZ: Just about.

REBECCA LOZANO: Most of them are gone though now, most of them are gone.

LORI SANCHEZ: I have one aunt on my mom's side alive and one aunt on my dad's side. So we're like the elderly generation now. Our kids come to us for questions.

M1: With lots of cousins.

LORI SANCHEZ: Yes, with lots of cousins.

TOM RIVERA: So you encourage your family to go visit the Rudy monument?

LORI SANCHEZ: Yes, it was just amazing and beautiful. I just couldn't believe it.

TOM RIVERA: Thank you, Lori and thank you, Becky. This concludes our first part of the interview. David from California State University San Francisco will do the second part of the interview.

End of Interview:
[01:19:58]