

Dear Pedro Pan Brothers and Sisters,

On Friday July 12<sup>th</sup>, the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners held a Street Naming Ceremony in Honor of our Pedro Pan brother Ralph Sanchez. The event was hosted by the Homestead-Miami Speedway, fittingly at their Champions Club. It was a great honor to see such tribute paid to one of our own and to show our solidarity with his family.

We heard emotional testimonies from Mayors, Senators, Commissioners, Pastors, Speedway representatives, race car drivers, family and friends, yet nothing compared to the emotion felt as we watched little Nicolas and Victor, Ralph's grandsons, recite the Pledge Allegiance to our flag before an Honor Guard.

Love,  
Carmen Valdivia

***The official Pedro Pan Newsletter of Operation Pedro Pan  
Group Inc.***

**OPERATION PEDRO PAN GROUP, INC. (OPPG)**

**A National Charitable Organization**

[www.pedropan.org](http://www.pedropan.org)

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***July 16, 2013***

***Pedro Pan News***



### **Pedro Pan III... Our Legacy!**

**Nicolas and Victor Abril hold the Ralph Sanchez Speedway Boulevard sign honoring their grandfather.**

July 12, 2013/ Homestead-Miami Speedway

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## **Stories about Msgr. Bryan O. Walsh**

### **# 16**

**Father Walsh-** by Juan Pujol- June 16, 2013

Today is Father's Day and I have decided to sit down and write a few lines about someone who I consider that although he was not a father himself became a true Father to many of us.

The first time I saw Father Walsh, as we used to call him back then, he was visiting Matecumbe to meet with some of us and listen to our grievances about the way meals were being served. Very respectfully, we explained what we thought was going on, he listened and we saw a change.

Shortly after that, I was sent to St. Raphael's Hall and our contact was more often, especially when I had to see him because I did not meet curfew.

On certain weeknights I would work for a few hours in a window factory near St. Raphael's. I needed the money to buy medicines for my dad in Cuba and to go out with my girlfriend and friends. One night Father Walsh was waiting for me. Very patiently he heard all the good reasons that I had for working, he understood, but had to enforce the rules already known to all of us. I understood and I switched to daytime Saturday jobs.

I was part of a musical group called "The Eagles". One night at the DuPont Plaza Hotel we had our premier performance as the backup band, the dance lasted longer than we had anticipated and when we returned to St. Raphael's happy, full of enthusiasm and making plans for the future, Father Walsh was waiting for us. He was very clear and to the point, we were under his care and had to accept the established rules. We had mutual respect and in all these occasions of reprove he never faltered my dignity or talked to me in a bad way. That was the last time "the Eagles flew."

In February of 1965 I turned 19 and could no longer be part of the program but still had until May to graduate from La Salle High School, Father Walsh told me my tuition would be taken care of, I worked part time to sustain myself and to continue sending medicines to Cuba.

The day of our wedding he took time from his busy schedule to concelebrate along with Fr. Pala.

Years later we started to see him more often, every 26<sup>th</sup> of December we visited him at a Camp on Biscayne Blvd and 114 St where he lived with the last group that participated in the program. He would tell our children that he was their "abuelo".

Whenever I saw him he would introduce me as one of his "muchachos" and always gave me the impression that he said it very proudly.

An Indian proverb states that we will be known forever by the tracks we leave behind. Father Walsh has left so profound tracks in me that I feel that the least I can do is to try to keep alive the torch he ignited with his "Fiat" when he was asked to be in charge of an "operation" that nobody had a clue how complex and important was going to be for the lives of so many.

## Victor A. Triay's Book Presentation The Struggle Begins

Our Trustee, Dr. Victor A. Triay will present the first of a trilogy of books called: "The Struggle Begins." He is also the author of the book about Operation Pedro Pan: "Fleeing Castro: Operation Pedro Pan and the Cuban Children's Program." Please join us in the presentation of his latest work.

Place: Books and Books, 265 Aragon Ave., Coral Gables, Fl

Date: Monday, August 19th, 2013

Time: 8 pm

Havana, Cuba, 1960. The euphoria following the nation's successful Revolution the previous year has waned among large sectors of the population. Cuba's new leader, Fidel Castro, after having promised to restore democracy to the troubled island, is forcibly dragging the country down the road to Communist dictatorship. As a dark Stalinist cloud begins to envelop the country, democratic forces launch an anti-government insurgency with the hope of saving Cuba from the totalitarian darkness that threatens her.

***The Unbroken Circle*** series is the story of the fictional León family, whose peaceful, middle class existence is swept suddenly into a tempest of warfare, betrayal, and separation during the early years of the Cuban Revolution. In Book I, ***The Struggle Begins***, Goyo León, a devoted teacher and family man, is recruited into the anti-Castro underground after his father is killed at the hands of Castro's henchmen. Unbeknownst to Goyo, his young cousins Roberto and Emilio have also secretly joined the anti-Communist resistance through acquaintances at the University of Havana. With the three cousins becoming more deeply involved in the pro-democracy struggle every day, tensions rise as the stakes for their homeland reach an all-time high. Told with the heart-pounding suspense of a Cold War saga and the poignancy of a family drama, *The Struggle Begins* sets the stage for *The Unbroken Circle* series with electrifying power.

## **About the Author**

**Victor Andres Triay**, Ph.D., was born in Miami to Cuban exile parents. He has published three non-fiction books on Cuban exile history, one of which, *Bay of Pigs*, won the Samuel Proctor Oral History Prize in 2001. For over twenty-one years, he has been a professor of history at Middlesex Community College in Middletown, Connecticut. He resides in Connecticut with his wife, Emilia, and their three children, Victor Andres, Jr., Gabriela Elena, and Francisco Xavier.

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## **History Corner**

Documenting our history is an important part of our threefold mission statement and for that purpose OPPG's Historic Committee has been conducting research, oral history interviews and collecting objects and documents as well as preparing exhibitions aimed at spreading the knowledge of our exodus.

If you have a Pedro Pan mother or father who would like to participate, through filmed interviews, in our oral history project, please let us know as soon as possible, for we are conducting them with great urgency.

Please consider making our extensive Operation Pedro Pan Group, Inc.'s Collection the official repository of your Pedro Pan photos and memorabilia.

Contact us at:

[members@pedropan.org](mailto:members@pedropan.org)

Carmen Valdivia (305 519 5022)

Carmencita Romañach (305 335 4999).

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## **Future Events Calendar:**

### **Saturday, July 20, 2013 at 11 AM- Let's do Lunch at OPP Ave!**

Place: Lisboa-Habana Restaurant, 4590 W 12 Ave. (Operation Pedro Pan Ave), Hialeah, FI

### **Saturday, August 17, 2013 at 10 AM- Breakfast**

Place: Las Vegas Restaurant, 11500 NW 41st. St., Doral, FI

### **Monday, August 19, 2013 at 8 PM- Victor Triay's Book Presentation**

Place: Books and Books, 265 Aragon Ave., Coral Gables, FI

### **Saturday, September 21, 2013 at 10 AM-Breakfast**

Place: Las Vegas Restaurant, 11500 NW 41st. St., Doral, FI

### **Saturday, October 19, 2013 at 10 AM-Breakfast**

Place: Las Vegas Restaurant, 11500 NW 41st. St., Doral, FI

### **Saturday, November 23, 2013 at 6:30 PM- Annual Thanksgiving Gala**

Place: Coral Gables Country Club, 997 North Greenway Drive, Coral Gables, FI 33134

### **Friday, December 20, 2013 at PM- Memorial Mass**

Place: St. Dominic Catholic Church, 5909 NW 7 St., Miami

### **Saturday, December 21st, 2013 at 10 AM- Christmas Breakfast**

Place: Las Vegas Restaurant, 11500 NW 41st. St., Doral, FI

## **Operation Pedro Pan Group, Inc**

**A National Charitable Organization of the former Children of Pedro Pan**

161 Madeira Avenue, Suite 61 Coral Gables, FL. 33134 - (305) 554-7196

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