

Happy Father's Day

James J. Braddock. "Cinderella Man"
Boxer. Husband. Dad. Family Man. Business owner.
Significant milestones in life: Won Heavyweight Boxing
Championship. 1933 June 13, 1935. Defeats Max Baer for World Championship.

My father, Salvador Alaniz, Sr. was around 9 years old when Braddock fought Baer in the ring in New York. At age 17, Sal, Sr. had his own boxing matches, boxing for CYO (Catholic Youth Organization) in Chicago. He would box in approximately 14 bouts, winning most, without being knocked out. His weight class was 126 pounds. The year was 1943. A couple of years later, he would serve in the Navy in the Pacific.

In 1948, he married Thomasa Rita Alaniz (Tiny). The 50's would see Sal and Tiny start a family and begin working for many printing companies.

Many people within our community know him as a man who came to Mt. Pleasant and would eventually start Alaniz and Sons. Some people know him as a soft-spoken man, and some as a friend.

Back in grammar school, a vice principal by the name of Mr. Brown at Gladstone Elementary School, said to a group of other students and staff - "If you want to get something done, just ask Sal to do it". That comment by Mr. Brown had a very deep impact on my father back then, and it is still remembered to this day. My father probably considered himself an average student. Yet, this pointed comment by Mr. Brown would so move Sal that in that same school, he would become interested, involved and come to hold a school office.

Sal Sr. would come to know within himself an inner strength and rule. Never give up. Never quit. Persevere. And what of his legacy.

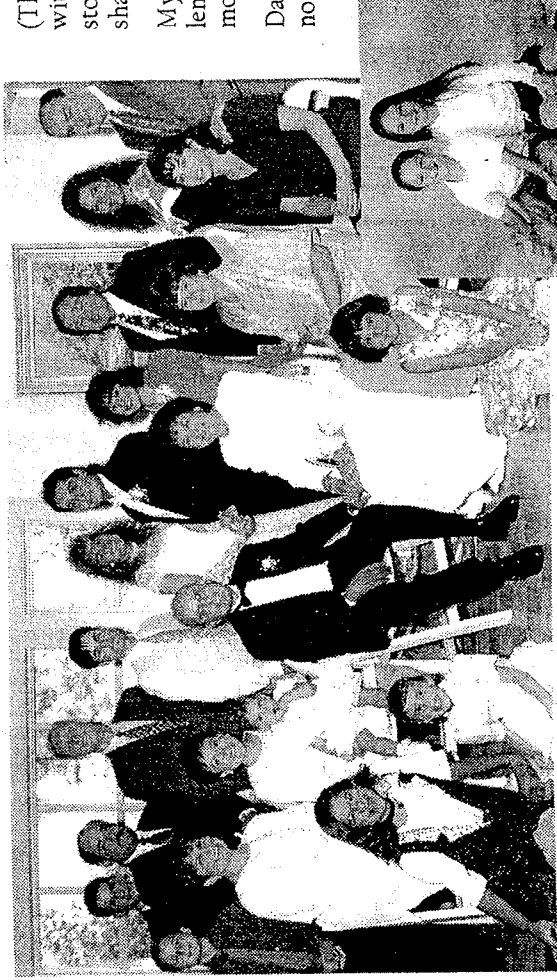
As a son, I honor him this Father's Day, by honoring his life and most importantly, what he chose to do, with God's grace, many years ago. Sometime in June of 1960, he gave up drinking. A legacy for us in his family. He is sober and remains so today. He quit drinking. He never quit his family. He never gave up on us. He never gave up on himself. He never gave up on the God he came to know - the Power greater than himself (AA-12 Steps)

As in life, his struggles and challenges continued. Mental health issues. Keeping a business going. Family concerns. The kids. Working out financial matters, when most but a few advised him to quit and close up shop. Yet he continued to meet each challenge...challenger, if you will.

And today, he faces challenges as others do as well. A failing memory, health issues and maybe some moments of feeling disconnected from the challenges and opportunities posed during younger days.

Although his short term memory may be wanting, he had no difficulty remembering the days and years of the James L. Braddock era- The Great Depression - of the many parents seeking the means to provide for their families, of those few who would hire hispanic workers, of listening to that boxing match on the radio so many years ago.

To my father - to each father reading this father's day story - *Happy Father's Day*. May the blessings and grace of our dear Lord, whose legacy is love, forgiveness and eternal happiness, be yours, this day and always.



Salvador Alaniz, Sr. "My Father"

Boxer. Husband. Dad. Grandpa. Family Man. Friend. Business owner. Navy Veteran. Mexican decent. American. A man of Faith. Significant milestones in life: Sobriety. Married, 56 years. Five children, 11 grandchildren. Loved.

Born: February 24, 1926
Birthplace: Chicago, Illinois
Parents: Matias Alaniz and Josefa Palacio Alaniz. Came to United States in 1917 as migrant workers. Settled in Michigan, working in Flint area picking vegetables. Moved to Chicago, Illinois area in 1923. Matias took job with International Harvester as factory worker. Worked at I.H. until retirement in 1959. Became United States citizen in 1936.

Baptism: Our Lady of Pompeii, Chgo., Illinois. 3/13/1926

Elementary School: Gladstone Elementary, Chicago, Illinois

High School. 2 years, then GED. Crane Technical. 1947

Military: Navy at age 18. USS Appalachian. 1944

(American Area Campaign Medal, Victory Medal, Asiatic Pacific Area Campaign Medal, Philippine Liberation Ribbon)

Married: Thomasa Rita Alaniz (Tiny): 1948

Early Years Career: First Printing job, 1950. Between 1950 and 1960, worked in approximately 21 Chicago area printing companies. First Mexican/American to work in Printer's Union in Chicago. In 1964, purchased first printing press for \$75.00. Money was supposed to be used for delivery of 5th child, Michael.

1964. Starts business in basement of home, Chicago.

1967. Moves business to downtown, Chicago. Largest Mexican/American printing company in Chicago.

1975. Printing company purchased by Nebraska based MetroMail Company.

1978. Opens Alaniz and Sons.

1993. Largest Hispanic owned Printing/Direct Mail company in U.S.

1994. Retires and moves to Chicago.

(This Father' Day story would not be complete without a mention of my mom, Tiny Alaniz. The story shares some areas of my father's life, a life shared with her, in love and marriage.

My father's joys and sorrows, struggles and challenges, continue to be shared, hand in hand with mom.

Dad's success with the challengers in his life, would not have been possible without her support and unconditional love.)