



SAN FELIPE DEL RIO CISD

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KOREAN WAR VETERAN TO BE AWARDED HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA 69 YEARS AFTER LEAVING DEL RIO

Reymundo (“Raymond”) Barron Ruíz, a former Del Rioan and veteran of the Korean Conflict, will be awarded his high school diploma 69 years after he joined the U.S. Army in 1950, and less than one month away from his 90th birthday. Under the Texas Education Code (TEC), §28.0251, a school district may issue a high school diploma to certain veterans. This Veteran’s Day, Reymundo Barron Ruiz, will be recognized as a 2019 graduate of Del Rio High School.

According to Reymundo’s son, Rogelio, Raymond was born on December 1, 1929, in Torreon, Coahuila, Mexico. As a small child, he moved to Del Rio, Texas, and spent his entire youth in the San Felipe neighborhood under the care of his mother, Felicitas Barron Ruíz, his four sisters and three brothers. He was the youngest child in his family.

Consistent with the Great Depression, Raymond and his brothers went to school; but they all had to work, too. In 1935, his mother enrolled him in school, and he attended San Felipe School Number 1, commonly known as “La Escuela Amarilla”. In the 1940’s, his older brothers were all called to service in the U.S. Army during World War II. His brother Eulalio “Lalo” Ruíz, served in the European Theater. During this war, he was seriously injured and received a Purple Heart. His brother Pedro Ruiz served in combat in the Pacific Theater, and his brother Jorge, served at several bases throughout the United States. During that time, Reymundo, only a teen, had to work to help support his mother while his brothers were serving our country. When WWII ended in 1945, Reymundo’s brothers Lalo and Pedro returned to Del Rio, gravely injured in the war; and his brother Jorge relocated to Oregon. At this point in his young life, Reymundo found himself primarily responsible for supporting his mother while his brothers convalesced.

In 1946, Reymundo, by then 17 years old, was attending the “Escuela Amarilla” as a 7th grader. One day, his teacher told him that he was “too smart” for the 7th grade, so he enrolled Reymundo at San Felipe High School. Reymundo, still responsible for his family, remained the primary breadwinner while he attended high school. He acknowledged that his attendance wasn’t always perfect, but he wanted to learn, so he went to class whenever he could. One of Reymundo’s regrets is that he never graduated and never received his high school diploma.

In 1948, Reymundo and his mother would regularly travel to the Santa Clara Valley in California for work in the orchards and fields and then return to Del Rio to attend classes once again. In 1950, he was inducted into the U.S. Army, and he served in combat in the Korean Conflict until he was Honorably Discharged on October 8, 1952. Neither Reymundo nor his brothers were U.S. citizens or even lawful residents at the time of their military service. All of them, however, proudly became U.S. citizens as a result of their combat and military service.

Reymundo eventually settled in San Jose, California, married, and together with his wife, raised six children and 49 grandchildren. They were taught to value education and the opportunities this country has to offer. His family includes a generation of teachers, law enforcement officers, active and retired military, including a grandson who is currently serving in the U.S. Army Special Forces and a great-grandson serving in the U.S. Army in South Korea, an attorney, social workers and other public servants.

Reymundo, who still lives in California, will be honored in the Veteran's Day Parade in Fresno, California.

