## MEMORIES OF MY FATHER, DELIS NEGRÓN

## by David J. Negrón

Several things happened when I was young that impressed me very much about my father.

I remember one time when I was about 16 years old, I had an accident while fixing my grandmother's washing machine. I was burned while I cleaned the machine parts with gasoline. That day, thinking I had turned everything off the stove, I got busy taking the machine apart. I forgot I was sitting in front of a water heater behind me— the gas pilot still burning. Gasoline fumes crept around me and into the water heater, which suddenly exploded. I was taken to the hospital with third degree burns on my arm and nose. My father came rushing into the hospital emergency room. I could sense his distress—there were tears in his eyes. He was probably thinking I had been burned all over. He calmed down, once he saw me.

When I got a little older my father found a job for me. I would be working with the folks who painted huge movie billboards. These were to be placed in front of several local theaters. He was very proud to see all my paintings advertising upcoming movies. He came to visit me quite often at the shop. Then, thanks to my father, I learned a lot about painting. That experience led to my lifelong career in art as an American Impressionist.

My father was very well respected by police officers. One day, he was a passenger in my Uncle Tomas' car. My uncle got into trouble when he almost hit a police officer's car. The police officer was ready to give him a ticket, but my father got out of the car and walked over to him to talk. I saw him from a distance while the police officer tore up the ticket and left.

That was my father and I have many more great memories about him, but it would take too long to write them down.

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