

For Feb. 24, 2007

Hi, all,

Here is the weekly update on the Burns WWII documentary, scheduled to air on PBS this fall, which excludes the Latino WWII experience.

### **1. MEDIA ATTENTION**

Carlos Guerra has written a column that appeared in today's San Antonio Express-News. His previous column, published on 2-9-07, has been picked up throughout the country. If you google Burns and Latinos, you'll find websites where it has been posted.

### **2. RELEASE DATE MOVED AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH EMPHASIZED**

PBS issued a news release on Thursday, Feb. 22, emphasizing the outreach effort by local PBS affiliates and also saying it would air the documentary on Sept. 23. The original press release, which can still be found at

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Latinos\\_In\\_WWII/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Latinos_In_WWII/), had the release date as Sept. 16, Mexican Independence Day. The news release does not provide a reason for the change. It is known, however, that many letters to PBS (and relayed to Gus Chavez in San Diego and me) noted that airing this documentary, which excludes any mention of Latinos and, most importantly of the Latino WWII experience, on the 16 of September was a particular slap in the face of the Latino community. The press release also emphasizes that local PBS affiliates will be conducting their own community outreach. To which we respond: not enough; the national, Burns documentary is the one that will be available for sale and will be re-broadcast for several years and that will be viewed by the entire country. While it is also important to have the Latino perspective in the local programs, it is essential that the national documentary also include the Latino experience.

### **3. ORGANIZATIONS VOICING CONCERNS TO PBS--**

The **National Association of Hispanic Journalists** sent a letter to Paula Kerger, President and CEO of PBS, with ccs to all the sponsors, CPB. I'm attaching that letter, and it's also posted at the yahoo group site:

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Latinos\\_In\\_WWII/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Latinos_In_WWII/)

**Tejanos in Action**, out of Austin, has sent a letter to Congressman Lloyd Doggett, asking for

ask Congress to pass in a joint resolution a call for a full and complete accounting of Hispanic-Americans in the annals of American History. (letter attached)

**4. MEETING WITH PBS --** Gus Chavez, the San Diego organizer of this effort, me, and Marta Garcia, the chairwoman of the National Hispanic Media Coalition, have a meeting scheduled with Paula Kerger, president and CEO of PBS, and John Boland, chief content officer, on March 6, at their Washington, DC, office. We think it's important to meet with them face-to-face and give them the opportunity to address the problem. Many of you are already contacting us, with various suggestions to make things happen. It is very apparent to both Gus and I that there is a great pent-up frustration not only with

PBS, but also, in general, with several other omissions concerning WWII and Latinos over several years.

**5. BOOK-SIGNING IN WASHINGTON, DC, SUNDAY NIGHT, MARCH 4 --** To help defray the costs of our DC trip, as well as to meet with our supporters and well-wishers in the DC area, we'll be holding a book-signing event in Washington on Sunday night, March 4. **We have one sponsor so far: HISPANIC LINK NEWS SERVICE. We're looking for other sponsors for our book-signing.** Sponsorship entails lending your organization's name, and getting the word out, via email. The time is short, so it will entail phone calling, etc. For sale will be the book, A Legacy Greater than Words: Stories of U.S. Latinos & Latinas of the WWII Generation (\$30 in cash or check made out to the University of Texas at Austin). All proceeds go to the U.S. Latino & Latina WWII Oral History Project. Gus and I will also be on hand to discuss the Burns Documentary and possible strategies for the future. **Please contact me with commitments (and make sure you have the OK of the group) to add your organization to our list of sponsors. Our location is still to be determined -- we have a few people scouting for a good place. It will likely be a little late in the evening, 7:30-8:30, as Gus, coming completely across the continent, will be coming in later...**

#### **5. INDIVIDUAL LETTERS**

Gus and I have received several emails from folks around the country, throwing their support behind this effort. It is very heartening to hear from everyone. More importantly, we know that organizations and individuals are contemplating sending letters to people at PBS and Mr. Burns, and the documentary's sponsors. Addresses and contact information are available at the yahoo groups site set up at [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Latinos\\_In\\_WWII/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Latinos_In_WWII/)

**Some of you very busy folks are asking us to write letters so that you can print them out and send them. Neither Gus nor I feel that is appropriate (nor do we have the time to do that). Our job is to create an awareness of the problem. If you wish to communicate with people who should hear your concerns, the above website provides contact information, of people at PBS, at Florentine Films (Burns' production company), and the documentary sponsors.**