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BRAZILIAN TEXAS MAGAZINE

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Image Credit: NASA/Ames/JPL-Caltech

Editorial

My name is Sergio Lima. Please, allow me to introduce myself.

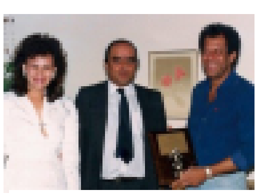
Let me begin saying that the last 24 years of my live living in America has been a wonderful ride. I have always stayed close of my community,

Sergio Lima

knowing almost everybody and having the privilege of seeing them growing and transforming in many political and cultural activities.

It has been exciting to help in promoting shows, lectures, events, and much more on behalf of the Brazilian culture. I have seen this young generation being born. Today many of them are adults with ages from 20 to 30 years old. I have constantly meet a new generation of young Brazilian-Americans with ages from 3 to 15 years old whose parents were my students and their grandparents my long lasting friends. Nobody asked me, and it's true! But I think that I'm only doing my part and have been giving my contribution as a Brazilian living abroad. In the last 10 years, the Brazilian community in Houston Texas has become a community that is extremely self sufficient and I can also say, elitist. The Brazilian community counts with large number of highly educated people. Many of these professionals came from the best schools in Brazil and other parts of the world. Scientists, engineers, medical doctors, dentists, teachers among others, help make this community distinct from others distributed in the United States.

Sometimes, this diversification makes more difficult to organize some of the cultural events. I believe that many of the Brazilian Community are interested in learning the local culture, leaving in the background anything that has to do with the Brazilian culture. It is not a criticism, but a simple observation.



Carlos Alberto holding the award

Due to my background of a professional soccer player in Brazil and Mexico, in 1986, I founded the **Brazilian Soccer Academy**. I brought renowned soccer stars from Brazil to participate in the academy. For instance, the Captain of Brazilian National Team in the 1970 Soccer World Cup in Mexico, where Brazil was the first Country in the world to conquer the World Cup for the 3rd time. Yes, I'm talking about Mr. Carlos Alberto Torres. In the last three years, we also had the presence of Mr. Edu (Jonas Eduardo Americo) another soccer star of the Brazilian National Team. Mr. Edu participated in 3 World Cups; 1966, 1970, and 1974 and I consider him the best striker in the world. We have opened the opportunity for several Brazilians to establish themselves working with soccer here in Houston.

[illegible]

The first Tri-lingual Newspaper called **Vida Brazil**, was created for the Brazilian community and has been in existence since September 1992. In 1998 we promoted the first fashion show and also the **Community Spotlight Awards** that took place on that same year. As a music contribution, we featured the band called *Atravessados*. It's important to know that the band Atravessados joined and played in a lot of the events and did not seek for profits. They just did it for fun and to help the Brazilian Community. In 1997 I had the opportunity to participate in recording a CD with the band Atravessados, I was also blessed to be able to record some of my own compositions.

I became the first Brazilian to coach a **South Texas State Select Team** from 1994 to 2001. I introduced to the city of Houston along with a project created by the Consulate of Mexico a program called **Sports and Education**.

It was approved in 1994 and still going strong until today at the City of Houston where I work as a public employee. I also would like to add that I'll be retiring from the City of Houston in January 2011.

We repeated the **Fashion Show and Awards Highlight** in 1998 promoting the Irade Boutique.

In 2004 the **Brazilian Texas Magazine** was created with intent to disseminate our culture. All its content is in English to be able to reach another market and promote companies interested in strengthening a relationship with our community.

We put together another Awards Highlight in 2007. We also organized the **Talento Brasil 2008 - 2009** in Houston. I received an award in 2008 in Miami, Florida by the Brazilian Press Award.

I received two trophies and the title of Community Leader for having more than 10 years of publishing the Vida Brazil Newspaper.

[illegible]

I had the honor to participate in 2008 – 2009 Meeting of the World, organized by the Brazilian Foreign Ministry in Rio de Janeiro, the Itamaraty. I was invited to participate in this Ceremony by the Consulate General of Brazil in Houston, and I was truly honored to represent the Brazilian community of Houston. We achieved with much struggle and help from the Brazilian Center of Miami, the donation of 473 books that were given to the Public Library of Houston for a small collection at a location within the library. The next step for me is the publication of my children's storybooks and Eagle Fly Houston Brazil Foundation in January 2011.

I was a witness to Maria Araujo Campos arriving with Miller America Inc, the first steps of Petrobras America, the growth of Transatlan, the high-tech instrumentation and control devices from SMAR International Corp, the first Brazilian steak house called Los Gonzales, and support from Eduardo e Telma that have helped me significantly with the Brazilian Texas Magazine.

I was also here to see the first restaurant Cafe Brazil, owned by Francisco and Henri, the first Travel Agency owned by Moses and Ana, and then another Travel Agency owned by Sergio and Doris.

It is also important to mention; The first House Cleaning Business was owned by Mrs. Rita, whose business gave employment opportunities to many Brazilians; The Clothing Store owned by Dona Elza and Lady; The music of Guilu, Robinho, Sergio, and Susana Sharpe; The sophistication of the pianist Vania Pimentel and the talent of Marcelo Maia with his clarinet; The efficiency and the wisdom of the best Houston Vice-Consul Claudio Teixeira, interacting with the community without prejudice and favoritism; Dr. Soares with his Medical Clinic and Valter Alvim who promoted several Brazilian cultural events in Houston. I am very proud of my community and of the first Brazilian immigrants that arrived in Houston.

They have never forgotten their roots, and they always have honored their country of origin. They are among many, Marinete, Conceicao, Bia, Lucy, Ana Maria, Dr. Sadi, Keila, Alaide, Nadir, Meire, Raquel, Marcos, Joe, Fernando Camara, Andre, Sandi, Andrea, Ivan, Leonora, Evani, Juanna, Ritinha, Eliane, Betty, Quita Fatima, Paula, Maria Amelia, Luisa, Dave, Rosinha, Fernando Frias, Paulo, Claudio Mariah, Marcio, Antonio, Regina, Marcel, Elvira, Vanessa, Angelica, Jaci, Mauricio, Vilma Gaucha, Maria Soledade, Rosalia, Fabiana, Edna Gisele, Stella, Neta, Gustavo, Marinho, Augusto, Sabrina, Claudio Lima, Jorjao, James, Darlinhos, Valfredo, Nasser, Andre, Ernesto, Ernesto 2, Lucy, Barbara, Serginho, Rosa, Jaci, Serginho Caneca, Alex, Andres, Regis, Claudinho, Vilma, Simplicio, Roberto, Carminha, Ana Maria, Francisco, Rosilene, Cristina, Dra. Teresa Leal, Jorge Gomes, Cira, Rita, Pastor Antonio Carlos and all the Churches, and in Dallas, Dilce, Teodoro, Diego, Mercedes, Betty, Marcia, and many others.

FUTURE OF DEEPWATER OIL & GAS PRODUCTION IN THE GULF OF MEXICO

From the early beginnings of oil & gas production in Gulf of Mexico, which began in the late 1940's, the great potential for the vast energy reserves that exist there have been known. Today the region provides America with approx. 30-40% of all of her domestic production. This production has reduced the need for foreign imports greater than any other producing area of the country. As time has passed production rates have varied depending on the availability and price of oil. With prices reaching the $80-$100 per barrel mark this has allowed oil companies to become more aggressive about drilling in deeper water, which had previously not been economically feasible due to the extremely high production costs. For this reason areas of the Gulf which were previously considered out of reach are now open to oil exploration. The deep water drilling/production technology is highly advanced and is continually being improved as companies explore deeper areas of the Gulf. The conventional fixed platforms (which sit on the sea floor) are limited to shallow water depths no greater than 1700 ft. The deep water Production platforms are commonly called floaters and can produce oil in much greater water depths. There are basically four different types of floaters: TLP's (Tension Leg Platforms), Spars, Semi-Submersible Platforms and FPSO's (Floating Production Storage & Offloading).TLP's are floating platforms which are anchored to the sea bed by mooring lines in such a way to eliminate vertical movement. TLP's can be used in water depths up to 6,000 ft. Spars are anchored to the seabed in much the same manner as TLP's, but a Spar has more conventional type mooring lines which help give it greater stability. Up to now there are basically three types of Spar designs: the conventional one-piece cylindrical hull, the truss spar with a permanent ballast tank and the cell spar which is built from multiple vertical cylinders. The Spar has greater stability than the TLP since it has a large counter weight at the bottom and therefore does not depend on mooring lines to keep it upright. The mooring lines tensions are controlled by computerized chain jacks that adjust tension on the lines as required to keep the platform and production equipment stable for better process results. Up to now the deepest water depth for a Spar type production platform is 8,000 ft. of water. Semi-Submersible Platforms have hulls, which in most cases consist of pontoons and are usually cube-shaped. This gives this type of platform sufficient buoyancy to stay afloat and keep the structure upright. These structures are also anchored to the sea floor and are kept consistently level by computerized chain jacks which control the tensioning on the mooring lines. Semi-submersibles are also mobile and be moved from place to place allows them to double as a drilling platform or a production platform. Currently the deepest water depth for Semi-Submersibles is 10,000 ft. Lastly the FPSO, as the name suggests, is mainly used for oil storage. Generally is shaped like ship and is anchored to the seabed as are most deep water platforms for extended periods of time.

Gulf of Mexico on April 25, 2010. Oil shows silvery on this NASA picture

As these four main types of deep water production facilities illustrate the technological advancement in the area of deep water oil & gas production has occurred in relatively short period of time and is continuing move forward. The future of Gulf of Mexico oil & gas production is in deepwater and the water depth will increasingly rise as exploration in these areas continues to be economically rewarding. The USA currently consumes approx. 21 million barrels of oil per day and domestic production is around 5 million barrels per day. In an effort to become less dependent on foreign imports we must continue to develop our drilling & production methods in the deep water regions of the Gulf to make it cheaper and more efficient to produce oil here at home.In addition to this the political environments that exists in most OPEC nations makes this dependence on foreign imports very unstable which is even a greater reason to raise our levels of production to keep us from being at the mercy of foreign governments should they decide to become hostile to the USA.

Chris Singleton

Brazilian Texas Magazine Interviews Antonio J. Galafassi, President and CEO of Tramontina USA, Inc.

TRAMONTINA

Antonio J. Galafassi is President and CEO of Tramontina USA, Inc. The Sugar Land company coordinates product development, item and packaging assembly, sales, logistics and distribution for products and services primarily focused within the U.S. market.

In 1986, Antonio and Regina Galafassi moved to the Houston area from Sao Paulo to establish Tramontina USA, Inc.

1.You worked with Tramontina for a long time, before founding Tramontina USA Inc. How did this business relationship start?

My career with Tramontina began in 1974 in the sales department at the stainless cookware, servingware and flatware factory located in Farroupilha, Rio Grande Do Sul, Brazil. This initial sales experience was a great career foundation, as I learned the manufacturing side of the housewares business. In 1978, I was invited to work in Tramontina's Sao Paulo office, as assistant general manager working with the sales team in business development, and later promoted to general manager of this division. In the mid-1980's, the Tramontina Group, an international consortium founded in 1911 by Valentin Tramontina, began exploring the establishment of a Tramontina distribution center within the United States. I was extremely honored to be asked to lead the creation of Tramontina USA, Inc. (TUSA), and in 1986 moved to Houston with my wife Regina. TUSA, a U.S. corporation based in Sugar Land, Texas, was founded in 1986 and today is one of the largest corporate affiliates of the Tramontina group from Brazil and a leading supplier of cookware and other kitchen related products for the U.S. market.

2.How dependent is Tramontina USA, Inc. (TUSA) to Tramontina in Brazil?

The Tramontina Group, an international consortium, operates a network of 13 factories, including domestic manufacturing in the United States, as well as many distribution centers and representative offices in key regions of the world, and provides products to national and international retailers. From a product development, sales and marketing perspective, the companies are actually quite independent. TUSA is the marketing and distribution arm for North America. The Sugar Land operation includes product and packaging assembly, sales, logistics and distribution. Additionally, the company operates a cookware factory, Tramontina U.S. Cookware, Inc. (TUSC), in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. All marketing, advertising, packaging and product development efforts are concentrated at Tramontina Design & Services (TDS), also located in Sugar Land. TUSA's product development efforts are extremely focused on the needs and trends dictated by the U.S. consumer, as the distribution of TUSA products and services are primarily focused within the U.S. market. However, with retail globalization, some TUSA products are shipped to Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Central and South America and many other countries in Europe and within the Pacific Rim.

3. Who are some of Tramontina USA's partners?

To date, neither TUSA nor the Tramontina Group has entered into partnerships with any other companies, and Tramontina continues to be a privately held company.

4. Who are your biggest clients?

TUSA is extremely fortunate to work with most of the leading retailers in the United States across all segments of the retail market, including specialty stores, large-format value stores, warehouse clubs, internet, drug and grocery. Our customer list includes Crate & Barrel, Chef's Catalog, Bed Bath & Beyond, Walmart, Costco, Sam's Club, Kohl's, Ace Hardware, IQVC, Amazon.com, Walgreens and HEB, among many other specialty retailers. Throughout the last two decades, by focusing exclusively on the housewares market segment, which includes cookware, cutlery, flatware and kitchen tools,TUSA has successfully established itself as a leading company and is continuing to grow Tramontina's brand within highly competitive U.S. and foreign markets.

Brazilian Texas Magazine Interviews Antonio J. Galafassi, President and CEO of Tramontina USA, Inc.

TRAMONTINA

5. How do you handle large emergency requests from a new client?

Extensive warehousing and logistic capabilities are an integral component in TUSA's long-term business strategy. Both allow TUSA to easily provide a solution to retailers who may be experiencing delivery problems with overseas suppliers. From 2004 – 2007, TUSA heavily invested in establishing an outstanding infrastructure for product assembly, warehousing, distribution and logistics to effectively respond to the market and its customers, both of whom are highly-demanding. This investment allows TUSA to carry a generous amount of safety stock for all current programs with our major retailers, as well as abundant inventory of regular stock items. The warehousing flexibility, along with domestic manufacturing for a large portion of our items, allows TUSA to respond to retailer needs very quickly during peak seasons. For example, a retailer may be short on items planned for an ad, or may have encountered difficulties with shipments from overseas. In many cases, the retailer is facing a 90 – 120 day timeline for replacement product, which is usually too late. With available stock, as well as our central geographic location in Sugar Land, we can get the needed merchandise to the retailer's distribution center in a matter of three to five working days.

6. What is Tramontina USA's key to success?

Due to the competiveness of the U.S. market, TUSA has strived to distinguish itself by providing the best possible service to our customers.
At all times, we work to provide solutions to our buyers. The investments we've made over the last five to six years in product development, domestic manufacturing and/or product assembly and inventory, has given us an edge in securing additional business.

More than ever, buyers are coming to us for solutions with projects such as private label programs, once only considered on a direct import basis.

7. What are some of the biggest challenges currently facing Tramontina USA?

Like nearly all businesses, we are facing challenges posed by economic uncertainty and high unemployment rates, both directly affecting consumers buying power, along with rising prices in raw materials and services.
As a manufacturer, we're seeing that while most retailer buyers are still eager to plan for new product introductions and promotions, they are now more skeptical than ever about placing commitments with long lead times for deliveries, as the economy has not yet fully-rebounded to ensure confidence in buying decisions.

8. The last hurricane that swept through Houston caused major damages to residences and local businesses. What are some of the measures you have taken to prepare yourselves for a possible disaster like this again?

When Hurricane Ike struck the local area in September 2008, TUSA sustained only minor damage to buildings,exterior structures and landscaping. We were extremely fortunate we did not experience major damage from the hurricane, and resumed normal business operations the first business day following the storm. TUSA actually experienced greater damage from a November 2003 tornado, which caused significant damage to the corporate office, warehouse and inventory. As we navigated through the claim process with insurance companies, and worked to replace lost inventory and rebuild our offices, we learned a great deal through this extremely challenging endeavor. Since 2003, we have taken many steps to improve TUSA's disaster planning, including computer and system data protection and recovery, better communication with customers and the formal implementation of a disaster recovery plan. At the same time, we have diversified our business operations across three buildings, which provides flexibility to move operations if needed, and provides a lesser risk of our entire operation being impacted from a single disaster.

9. What are some of the long-term goals for Tramontina USA?

The continued development and building of the Tramontina brand within the U.S. market is a major long-term goal for Tramontina, along with the aggressive business expansion with alternative accounts, such as internet retailers, supermarkets, drug stores and private label programs.

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Administration

Technology and People Involvement Make a Whole Difference

by Joe Rondan

It's not a new thing, for years, we have experienced that automation and good management in any type of production activity have generated more competitive products and with better quality. In this competitive world it is essential to produce fast and efficiently. A balance between time-to-produce, costs, and final quality should always be in the entrepreneur focus. Of course these are not the only conditions to have a successful product, however, automation and quality will be the focus of this article.

The automation process does not necessarily means to use high technology to do things.

It is important to count with appropriate tools and equipment while at the same time having an involved and competent management that is also concerned with the concepts for dealing with personnel in the most rational way possible to achieve better and fast results.

When it comes to tools and equipment, we definitely need to look at what does technology offer. We need to seek for tools and equipment to automate the path to our final product and to simplify the process for personnel that will be working with them. Automation needs to improve product output and eliminate all possible margins to mistakes.
Remember, appropriate tools will not only accelerate the production process but they will lead to better products and more satisfied working personnel.

Quality is really mandatory and in any business it counts strongly to the success and future of the company. The impression that the product gives to the user is fundamental and long living. A bad experience caused by the product could be devastating, specifically if a problem is found right when the product is pulled out of box. Product failures can retract that particular client forever, specifically if there are many competitors for similar products. The user experience with the product needs to be flawless regarding on what the product is supposed to do.

A company has to be very methodic when placing a new product to the market. While the company knows of any development, performance, or production problems, it should intensively dedicate time and carefully place modifications targeting to solve all known issues accordingly. A miscalculation or lack of interest in solving the product problems can really be devastating for the company image. A particular "bad" product can induce consumers to extrapolate the overall bad impression to other products manufactured by the company without even trying them. This will consequently depreciate the overall name of the company.

Another factor that cannot be discarded is that good tools and resources to associates also have a significant impact on the morale. People feel motivated knowing they are working with great tools, methods and procedures to reach better results.

People need to be motivated and feel responsible.

In the same way, a good working environment needs to be present. What will expensive tolls really do for the company in a hostile working environment?
It is a waste of investment if workers don't care about what they are doing and they don't care to go a step forward to achieve quality in what they are doing.

It is always imperative to consider that – "Human resources are the main asset of a company. People are the real back-bone of a company. Company associates are the ones that make the real difference."

The best way I've found to achieve a good working environment is by doing frequent meetings and giving people the chance to expose their ideas as well as their problems. Conducting these meetings with openness and equal opportunity to the participants will definitely help to improve everybody work and to solve issues that may be hidden to the managers. I'm not just talking of problems that are discussed during these gatherings, but generally people bring ideas that may help the working environment, and most importantly, ideas that will lead to produce with more effectiveness, speed, and quality.

There are valuable rewards when people can sit together and share their problems and concerns. I've caught, many times, criticisms to others that stopped after good conversations and discussions held in meetings. It is like participants begin to understand issues and difficulties that other colleagues have to perform a good work or for behaving in an erratic or unfriendly way. You will be surprised seeing that the awareness of these situations drives meeting participants to contribute in cooperate to solve all kind of difficulties. It doesn't take too much for them to realize that their involvement is valuable and can make a significant difference on the working site. It frequently occurs situations that they conclude that the misunderstanding was actually lack of communication or proper analysis.
You will even find people willing to help and give ideas to make other partners' job easier. It is a natural process, when everybody understands other person's issues they will join and turn more cooperative.

Just look around to find ways to automate.

We can observe and contribute with the automation in everyday working activities. At our jobs we can observe people and ourselves working methods. We should develop a critical mind to help in the improvement of everyday simple and complex tasks in a way to optimize the overall output. We should always be looking for time expended, costs and quality results. Exactly, a smart associate looks to find ways to automate tasks to produce faster, saving money, and with quality.

Awareness is fundamental.

For instance, making people work to understand what they are doing can make a huge difference. If you can, from time-to-time, or use regular meetings to explain to your co-workers the application or main objective of what they are doing, they will feel more responsible and self-motivated with their jobs.

Let's say there is a section in the factory that is allotted to weld a part that is used in one of the devices manufactured by the company.

Now, let's assume that this piece that will be submitted to high gas pressure and a bad weld can cause not only a malfunction to the device but also a possible injury to users. I think it is of common sense to understand that people involved in the welding procedure, whoever they are from the production or quality assurance sector, they should know the importance and the risks that a bad performance in the manufacturing process in a product can possibly cause.

Knowing that a mistake in welding or in the inspection of a part can cause a device to fail and possibly hurt someone. Don't you think they will act more responsibly and be willing to do a better job? Of course they will! It is human nature! They will definitely get more involved and be more meticulous in their work. You will even be surprised that the most creative ones will bring ideas to improve the welding process or the quality inspection to avoid those failures to occur.

That is not all; turning these ideas into actions can definitely make a difference.

Every product has its own purpose, from the simple ones to the most complex ones, we should always the expectation that it will perform accordingly to previously established goals. The automation process and the dedication of the personnel involved in the manufacturing of the products can make the real difference. A successful product is the one that delivers and fulfills user expectations and definitely provides a pleasant experience. Remember, companies are made by people and they need always to be part of the equation for the success.

Please notice that all the assumptions on this article are based on the idea that the product doesn't have design flaws and that its competitiveness will only depend on costs to produce with quality. It is far more complex to have a successful product in the market, however the final product itself must perform as announced or it will produce frustrations that can possibly debunk itself among competitors in the market and even worse, affect the overall image of the company.

About the Author: Mr. Joe Rondan is an Electronics Engineer with 26 years of experience in process control and management. He worked for the space industry as an Engineer and Researcher before he joined SMAR in 1983. Since he has worked in many positions in the Company, such us; R&D Engineer, R&D Manager, Technical Director, technical sale calls, technical support and training manager. In 1994 he was one of the founders of SMAR Laboratories Corporation where he worked as CEO and R&D Manager. In 2004 he was assigned President and CEO for Smar International Corporation in Houston, TX. Use joe.rondan@hotmail.com to send comments to the author.

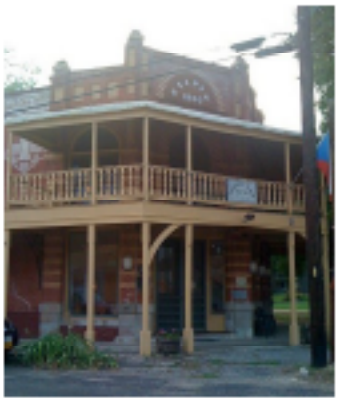
Adventure

Time to Ride

Since the age of 15, I have been riding motorcycles. I started with a Honda ML 125 cc and, eventually, went through several makes and models. I left behind a Yamaha VMAX 1200 when my family and I moved from São Paulo, Brazil, to the United States, five years ago. Now, I ride an Aprilia Shiver 750.

THE nice thing about the United States is that one can afford buying a nice motorcycle and drive it safely on the smooth roads of Texas, where there are amazing locations to explore within a hundred miles radius. Every weekend is a different adventure. To riders, what matters is not just a nice destination, but the trip itself; a trip where you find yourself wandering in lost thoughts, watching the scenery, with the noisy wind blowing on your face and your machine. The feeling of freedom is a powerful sensation, particularly for first-timers, where they extend the boundaries to unknown territories, challenging their imagination. From my travels and experience in Texas, I recommend some one-day routes that are quite pretty around Houston. The Bay area, for instance, the Bolivar Peninsula, and League City. There are also several stunning routes such as going south to Galveston Island, to Matagorda, Brazoria Park, Surf Side Beach, and Victoria. And, coming back from Bellville, one can enjoy the marvelous views of Fayetteville, La Grange, and Brenham. And, around Austin, one can certainly delight himself on the beauty of Lake Travis, and Canyon Lakes Park. From the Woodlands, one will be pleasantly surprised with the mesmerizing view of Lake Conroe and Sam Houston Forest, where one can smell the fresh scent of bluebonnets in the meadows and enjoy the lakes and bayous reflecting the blue sky and golden trembling sunrays of the approaching sunset.

The local malls are always interesting with many antique shops that, somehow, bring back history and let us know how people lived not long ago. One may also find nice restaurants and typical bars with their own personality. They are so different from the chain restaurants everyone is used to. One should pay special attention to the details of the walls, the bathrooms and the buildings. And the bartender is a special treat; he will fill you in the entire history of the place. You will feel like he is taking you into a movie set. You will feel like time is standing still. Enjoy the moment by closing your eyes and try to listen to the different sounds and scents these particular unique places have. Unfortunately, sometimes the cellular telephone goes off, bringing you back to 2010. But that's okay. This gives you the opportunity to share the wonderful experiences you have had. After all, what is the point if you cannot share with someone the wonderful experience you've had? Riding alone with your girlfriend or wife, or with a group of people, the experience can be delightful when you stop at several spots along the road, where you learn about the local cultures and you make acquaintances and chat with different people, who, in some cases, may have been part of building the old West and yet live almost the same way as back then. But the difference is that now they have air conditioning, pick-up trucks, etc



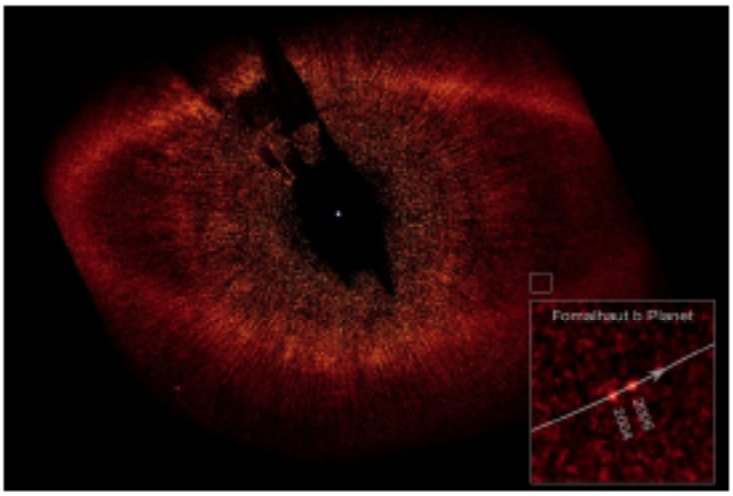
Rey Cintra is a business consultant specialized in financial planning and import/export business. He has been working with Atex International Corp in Houston, TX, developing procurement for companies, some of which are Brazilian.

Due to the fantastic acceptance of the material about Astronomy posted in the BT Magazine of the last April of 2010, we are going, from time-to-time, to keep placing news about our Universe. The number of recent discoveries in astronomy is just incredible. Nevertheless, they are so important that they are part of the equation to better understand the place we live. Human curiosity is unstoppable, and the search to increase the understanding of the universe and its origin continues to involve more scientists and the use of the most advanced equipment ever made.

This time we are going to talk, a little bit, about planets out of our Solar system. They are called exoplanets, or extrasolar planets, and we've already detected almost five hundred of them. This is indeed impressive and at the same time disappointing because even though they are very hard to detect, they are believed to exist in very large amounts. It is estimated that at least 10% of the stars have planets.

It is also important to remember that most of the matter in our universe isn't visible. Actually what we observe optically is only a tiny fraction of the universe. Exoplanets are planets orbiting other stars, similar to the planets in our Solar system orbiting the Sun. If similar systems exist, as we have already confirmed, we can study them to better understand the formation of our own system. We can probably find exoplanets that are similar to Earth or others that present basic conditions to life formation.

Most typically we can say that ours instruments today cannot see planets out of our Solar system. Many detection methods are used but most of them don't have a direct view of the exoplanet itself. They use properties that indicate their presence. However, we do have impressive exceptions images captured buy the famous Hubble Space Telescope (HST). Actually it contributed for the first optical image to directly observe an exoplanet.



The light from the star Fomalhaut was blocked to spot the dust and planets around.
NASA Picture

HST found exoplanets around a star in our galaxy called Fomalhaut. This is a very bright star in the sky and can be seen without any instrument aid; however, HST had to cover the strong light from the star to be able to see the dust surrounding it. The picture in the left, clearly shows the movement of an exoplanet orbiting the star in a period of two years.

I also want to mention the Kepler satellite that was launched in 2009 with the mission to find worlds that could be similar to ours. This is because it can detect exoplanets that have sizes similar to Earth. So far it has discovered seven exoplanets and has pointed to other possible ones. To send comments to the author use: joe.rondan@hotmail.com .

Personality VIP

Mr. Jocemar Pinto

MY career as an engineer started in 1976 after I'd finished my degree in Chemical Engineer at Rio de Janeiro Federal University (UFRJ) and started working for PETROBRAS at the Duque de Caxias Refinery. A year later, I was nominated Chief of Operations, accumulating administrative and management functions. I was then already married and had two kids, Alinne (32) and Amanda (29). After 20 years working at REDUC – PETROBRAS, as Head of the Oil and Wax Production Division, I retired in 1995. During this period of time, I divorced and married my second wife. It was at that time that I became a first-time step dad to Bruno (18) and later a dad to a baby girl, Beatriz (12). In 2005, I finished a postgraduation course in Safety Engineering at Fluminense Federal University (UFF), Rio de Janeiro, creating a Work Accident data-base and analysis system called Standard Tool for Fault Management (FPTA - Ferramenta Padrão de Tratamento de Anormalidades). This tool has its theory and concept basis registered at the National Library in Brazil and its software patent registered at the National Institute of Industrial Property (INPI). It is considered a unique tool in the whole country. As a Health, Safety and Environment Engineer I had other exciting professional experiences at the PETROBRAS Offshore Platforms Projects in Macae, RJ, where I moved my family and where we still call it home. Since June 2008 I've been working as an Industrial Safety Consultant. I have participated on the Risk Analysis Process for the approval of the Project COMPERJ/ PETROBRAS and last year I spent 3 months in Houston working together with the team from Worley Parsons as a Process Consultant for this project. That was also when my first granddaughter Laryssa (2) was born and later my grandson Lukas (1). Contracted as a Safety Consultant by Cezar Tavares Consultores to supervise the Process Units for the Project SONAREF, I came back to Houston in September last year, where the Project is being developed. Since then I've been going back and forth to attend meetings and other project activities in USA, which can be very tiring. But I like the excitement and I'm happy to contribute to this important Angolan project and to be able to fulfill my dreams, and to face the job challenges counting on the support and love of my lovely wife, family and friends.

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Brazilian Independence Day Celebration

The Consul General of Brazil Consulate in Houston.

From left. Ambassador,Mr. Mario Saade, Deputy Consul General ,Mr. Paulo Fontoura

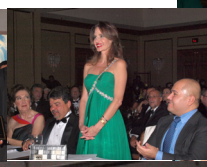
B R A Z I L

Houston Texas

This year,the Consulate of Brazil in Houston and Petrobras. Celebration the Brazilian Independence Day. The reception took place at the Houstonian Hotel.Important people from the Brazilian Community officials enjoyed the occasion, and many groups took advantage of the opportunity to renew old contacts, to the new Consul General. Mr. Mario Saade and his wife Marcia Saade. .

The Miss Brasil USA Texas is not just about physical beauty. Physical beauty should be also complemented with intelligence, talent, personality, and integrity. The key for this is which the contestants must have: discipline, persistence, academic preparation, and the desire to have a goal or a dream to become an excellent ambassador of beauty. These are the specific qualities that we are promoting of Brazilian women.

W/love Rosangela Salazar



Congratulations V

Miss Brasil USA Texas

Date of Birth: July 28 - City: represented: San Antonio Texas

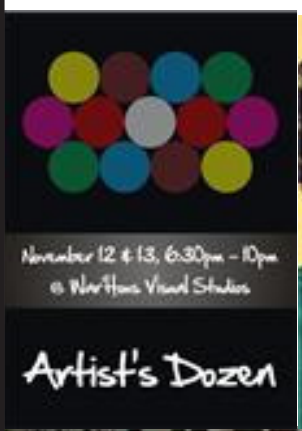
Height: 5'9 (1,75cm)
Occupation: International Business Student and Finance and Operations Support for an Oil Company.
Goals: Achieve the Miss Brasil USA 2010 title
Personal Quote: "The true measure of a beauty queen is not only in her appearance, but in her character, intelligence and determination."
Hobbies: Working out, spending quality time with friends and listening to live music.

Wonderfull Night

Miss Brasil USA Texas 2010

Brazilian Artist, Tony Paraná, Art Show

Born in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, a place fulfilled with colors, culture and traditions which make the Brazilian artist, Tony Paraná,one of the highlighted artists for the upcoming art event:Artist Dozen Show 2010. The event will be held on November 12th & 13th at War'hous Visual Studios, 4715 Main St, Houston TX 77002. Tony Paraná will be showing all new art pieces. For more information:
323 919 1660
Tony Paraná
Art Studio, 3400 Montrose Av Suite # 227,
323 919 1660
www.tonyparana.com
www.montroseartsociety.com



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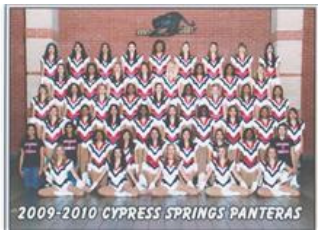
Community

Leonidia Mone Glasper was a member of the Pantera dance team that took home a Regional Championship trophy in February of this year.

The Pantera dancers from Cy Springs High School won the Regional Championship in San Antonio, Texas. The dancers were extremely excited when they found out they had beaten Kingwood (also a great team of dancers). At the time of the Regional Championship in February, the Panteras were under the direction of Ms. Sally Provenzano, Ms.Christy Groschke and Ms. Wendy Shair. We will miss Ms. Provenzano and Ms. Groschke as they made the decision to take a different direction in their careers, we thank these wonderful directors for the great work they have done in the past few years. However, this fall the Panteras will be under a new director, Ms. Samantha Cockerham and Ms.Wendy Shair. We welcome Ms. Cockerham as our new director and we wish her the best in the “Panteras’ years to come”.This drill team has won several championships and it will continue to shine. It is really a high kicking, competitive, head turning drill team, as the website says. These young ladies form a terrific group. They not only perform extremely well, but they also behave as first class ladies. They are truly an exceptional team that can be considered a role model for many young ladies watching them. Leonidia, is a Pantera alumni. She graduated from Cy Springs high School in June 2010 and is starting her undergraduate degree at Sam Houston State University this fall, where she intends to pursue a career in Law. Leonidia is a great singer, dancer and an excellent student. She is also a young Christian leader, and she has lead many young ladies to a life with Christ. She is a beautiful young lady, with a great heart, a wonderful attitude and a very promising future. Her parents are very proud of her accomplishments and they are grateful that at the age of 17 years old, their daughter has made very positive decisions in her life. They consider themselves blessed and are certain that their success in raising their children, is a result of the relationship that the family has with the Lord Jesus Christ. Even though Leonidia intends to pursue a career in Law, she says that she will continue with her passion for music. She prays that pretty soon her singing career will take off. We consider her to be "God’s little song bird”.