

LANSING Fisher Body Historical Team  
10:20 am

1-24-06

Interviewer - Marilyn Coulter

Interviewee - Jose V. Rodriguez

Seniority - 10-7-64 Retired 2003

Married - Yes (5) sons (2) daughters

Education = High school graduate.

Military - None

A. Born in Galveston Texas, His father worked at Lindell Drop Forge.

B. Hire in process = Come to Fisher Body from the street and hired in 2 days later.

First Day = Jose saw the body shop when he first came in he hoped he didn't work in body shop. He went to 3X Trim dept. Became utility man or absentee replacement for someone who was missing. Had to learn 15 or more jobs.

Diversity = Very few Mexicans in 3X Trim but other parts of the plant were more.

Being utility had its perks to it.

= Good supervisor = Jerry Chamberlain, always wanted to help you out if you worked for him

= Problems = Take the driver but out of co-workers gun and hide it.

= One problem was the bathrooms were very far apart from one another:

\* Jose hired in on days but was bumped to night shift then he come back to day

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day shift in the trim shop.

# Boils then you could smoke in the plant  
at lunch you would normally go to Harry's  
place, which is a bar across the street  
from Fisher Body.

# Harassment = Jose was on a job that only  
Mexicans had to do, not blacks, whites  
or any one else had to perform this.

# Jose was asked to be a Spanish speaking  
foreman but declined to do the job.

# Sometimes he had to translate for some  
Spanish speaking employees.

# Wagon breaks = people would push the  
wagon around the plant and sell pop  
juice, doughnuts, sandwiches etc.

# Good Boss = when they treated you good, then  
you treated them good also.

# Bad Supervisor = Manuel Harada got in an  
argument with Jose and Jose pulled his  
tie off and was in trouble for a while.

# Jose felt in the long run that most  
all people got along good with him and  
he respected their beliefs also.

# He also played a lot of kuhn and other  
cards.

# Women were ~~scarce~~ scarce in the beginning  
but later on until today the population

Smoking was a problem in the plant in the 70's and early eighties.

Also back ~~then~~ there were numerous people ~~not~~ laid off because of injuries.

strikes = in the early years until know some of them were lengthy for days + months.

\* Union Involvement = Always voted but not getting involved on a daily basis.

\* Charges from 1964 till retirement = The body shop was dirty and smoky, but now the body shop is a preferred place to work. In 3x5 rim you could go up on the roof and watch the Sexton high school football games at night.

= In the beginning the cars were built on the same floor next to each other. Later years the lines were separated from 1 floor to another until the plant closed.

\* Passing the time in plant = Darning in the plant when the line went down or listening to radios on the job.

\* Check pool ~~or~~ betting say 1<sup>st</sup> each checks for each other on numbers and the closest would win.

\* After retirement = Jose misses the people he worked with and friendships. But he has kept in touch. He has

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monthly dinners at restaurants and also breakfast meetings with a few close friends or retirees.

\* = Name Changes = The plant will always be Fisher Body to him.

\* Plant Closing = had hate to see the plant torn down. 38 years seniority, missing the daily workplace events, and the card games, Check Pools, lunchtime meetings and after work etc.