

EL OBSERVADOR



The Mexican pop-rock group RBD comes to the Rose Garden on Friday, May 5.

'RBD' to Rock Rose Garden

Mexican pop-rock music group RBD comes to the Rose Garden Friday, May 5 at 8:30 p.m., as part of their North American Tour "Generacion RBD."

RBD grew popular from a prime-time telenovela on Univision called "Rebelde" (hence the name). The show has become amazingly popular among Latin American teenagers and

adults alike, spurring the creation of the band, which has had widespread success.

The band arrives with its first concert tour in the United States that will cover more than 30 cities. They have released three albums to date including "Rebelde," "En Vivo," and "Nuestro Amor" that were all released in 2005.

Two of RBD's albums have placed on the top five of Billboard's Top Latin Album chart since the beginning of the year. They have sold more than 2 million albums worldwide, and have sold out concerts throughout South and Central America.

Tickets are available at the Rose Quarter Box Office and participating Safeway outlets.

Soliders Torn by Immigration Debate

Loyalties clash for Latinos in military

(AP)—Marcial Rodriguez, a U.S. Marine who grew up in a Mexican farming village, is offended that the country he went to war for might deport his relatives who are living here illegally.

Three months after the lance corporal returned to Ohio from the fighting in Iraq, the U.S. House adopted a bill that would make Rodriguez's cousin a felon for being one of the nation's 11 million illegal immigrants.

Rodriguez, 20, said he enlisted in the Marine reserves to repay the debt he felt owed to a country that had given him an education and a home for his family.

"People from many different countries are fighting, not just from Mexico," he said. "We want to participate in this country."

It is unclear how many soldiers find their loyalties similarly divided, but at a time when the Pentagon has stepped up recruiting of Hispanics to fill recruiting quotas, experts say a crackdown on illegal immigration would undoubtedly cause resentment in the ranks.

"How do you tell them we're going to deport their parents and grandparents?" asked Hector Flores, president of the League of United Latin American Citizens, a group that has encouraged Hispanics who do not plan to attend college to join the military. "That's not America."

Hispanics are increasingly joining the military as their numbers have grown, according to a 2004 study on Marine recruitment by CNA Corp., a research firm in Arlington, Va. Hispanics accounted for 16.5 percent of Marine recruits last year, up from 13.4 percent in 2002 and 11.7 percent in 1997, the firm said.

Soldiers and veterans have been a popular presence at a wave of pro-immigrant rallies across the country in recent weeks.

"They stick out like a sore thumb," Medina said. "When (demonstrators) see people in uniform, it gives them tremendous pride and validates that we are contributing to this country."



Ernesto Rodriguez stands with a picture of his son, Marine Lance Cpl. Marcial Rodriguez, at his home in Painesville, Ohio. The younger Rodriguez is offended that the country he went to war for might deport his relatives living in the U.S. (AP photo)

Rodriguez enlisted in 2004 after graduating from high school in Painesville, Ohio. Nine months later, he was coming Iraq for insurgents

near the Syrian border. He barely escaped death when three friends of his were killed by a roadside bomb last June.

More Immigrants Seek Citizenship

Surge follows debates, protests

(AP) — Efforts by Congress and local governments to crack down on illegal immigration - and the protests that followed those efforts - have produced a surge of interest in learning how to become a U.S. citizen.

More of the nation's 8 million legal immigrants are showing up at citizenship classes and seminars sponsored by churches and community groups.

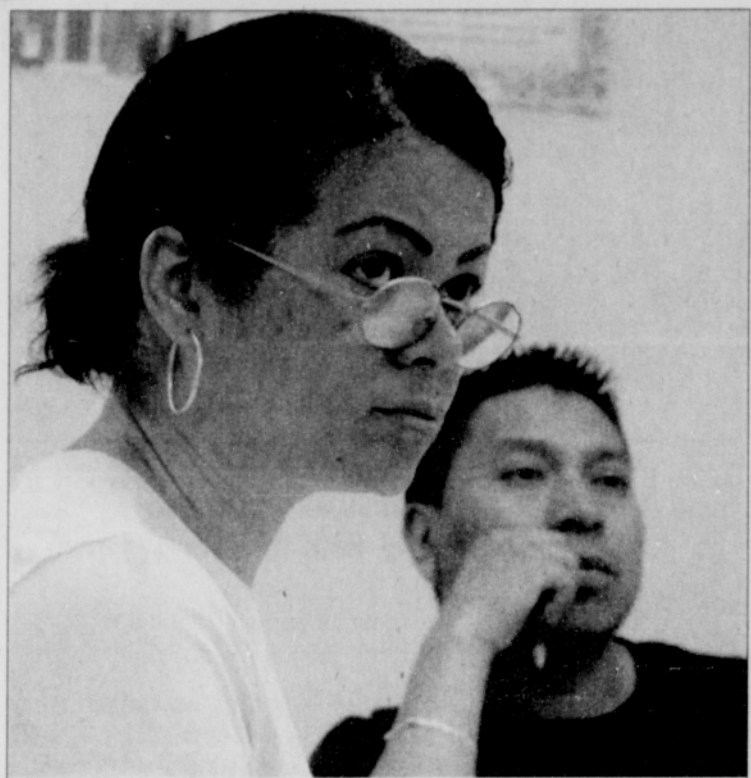
"I didn't think it was important before, but now I think it's very important to be a citizen," Leonida Santana said during a Saturday morning class discussion about the separation of powers among Congress, the president and the courts.

Santana, a Dominican Republic native, arrived in the United States in 1983 and a year later secured a green card, signifying permanent legal residency. She signed up for the 10 weeks of citizenship preparation classes after the House last year passed a bill that would deport illegal immigrants as felons and erect 700 miles of fencing along the U.S.-Mexico border.

"We are not criminals," she said, explaining that she decided to apply for citizenship because she now wants to vote.

Alfonso Aguilar, director of the Homeland Security Department's Office of Citizenship, said current events - most recently the 2001 terrorist attacks - have triggered naturalization surges in the past.

Legal permanent residents have the right to live and work in the United States and are protected by state and federal laws. They are eligible for some federal benefits. But they still can be deported if they commit certain crimes and cannot vote in federal and most state and local elections.



Leonida Santana and Nemecio Cotoc attend a citizenship class in Washington, D.C. (AP photo)

A legal permanent resident who has lived in the country at least five years is eligible to take required English, civics and history exams to become an American. If the resident is married to a U.S. citizen, the wait is three years.

Applications for naturalization have increased since December, when the House bill was approved. The Homeland Security Department received 53,390 applications for naturalization in January, 23 percent more than the same month a year earlier. In February, that number rose to 57,056.

The department's Citizenship and Immigration Services is experi-

encing heavy downloads of immigration forms, including 162,000 naturalization forms, said spokesman Christopher Bentley.

Nemecio Cotoc, 32, who fled a civil war in Guatemala and eventually became a legal resident, said he will never forget that he was once undocumented.

"We can't elect a Hispanic president, but if we can become citizens we can defeat those who have a mind-set against us," Cotoc said. "Really, what we want to do and look for is to work and maintain a good life and grow and pay our taxes on all we buy, like a house, food and other things."



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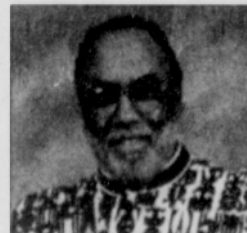


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- ♥ Thursday May 4th 2006 @ 7:00pm
- ♥ Friday May 5th 2006 @ 7:30pm

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