

My Visit to the New Nixon Library

One down, 12 more to go

By **Kat Avila**, Contributing Writer | Published on LatinoLA: October 22, 2016



I was at the Richard Nixon Presidential Library reopening on the first day which was October 14, 2016. I wasn't expecting it to be Democrat-friendly when I passed a couple Trump & Pence supporters sitting on the corner waving to supportive honking traffic. But there I was standing in line waiting for a group of VIPs to clear the main exhibit area.

Fellow visitors inevitably started talking about the current election campaign, about how they couldn't wait for it to all be over. I said it didn't bother me because there were issues that needed discussion that the election was bringing out. Namely, for me, those issues included sexual assault and sexual harassment, racism, and the state of local and world affairs.

One elderly white man in line pulled out a "Nixon for President, 2016" button to show me. Another person said it was hard to determine the facts, which I rebutted. The facts are all over the place, but objective sources must be sifted out like panning for gold. Also, second opinions can be easily gotten from English-language media outside the country.

But I admitted that many of us didn't have the time to do the research, because we are too tired after putting in a full day's work and worrying about how to pay our bills. Day-to-day survival is more pressing.

Back to "Tricky Dick" -- as some of you know Nixon, he was president when I was growing up. This was the time of the Cold War with Russia, Vietnam War, opening of diplomatic relations with China, and first man on the moon.

Watergate notwithstanding, he was an "Iron Butt" Republican who served in the Navy during World War II and put in a lot of governmental public service before becoming our 37th President. He had a strong interest in world affairs and world leaders, and his accomplishments reflect that.

I offered to take a picture of the Nixon-button guy with his Asian immigrant wife in front of the Great Wall of China. He waved at the photo wall mural and said, "See? What's wrong with a wall between the U.S. and Mexico?" I just gave him a surprised look, wondering if I really wanted to argue this right there. No, I wanted to take my pictures and get through the exhibit. There would be plenty of time to do that in the days to come.

At the museum store, I bought a Passport to Presidential Libraries. There are 13 libraries, two of them are here in California. I got my passport stamped with the date of my visit and the Nixon Library stamp. The next stamp I need to collect is the Ronald Reagan Library in Simi Valley.

If you want to see a few before-and-after photos of the Nixon Library that I put together, visit my Flickr page at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/katavila/>

Kat Avila is a Hillary Clinton supporter.

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