

El Editor

Casualties of
War in Iraq
2937
as of Dec. 14
2006

VOL. XXX No. 12

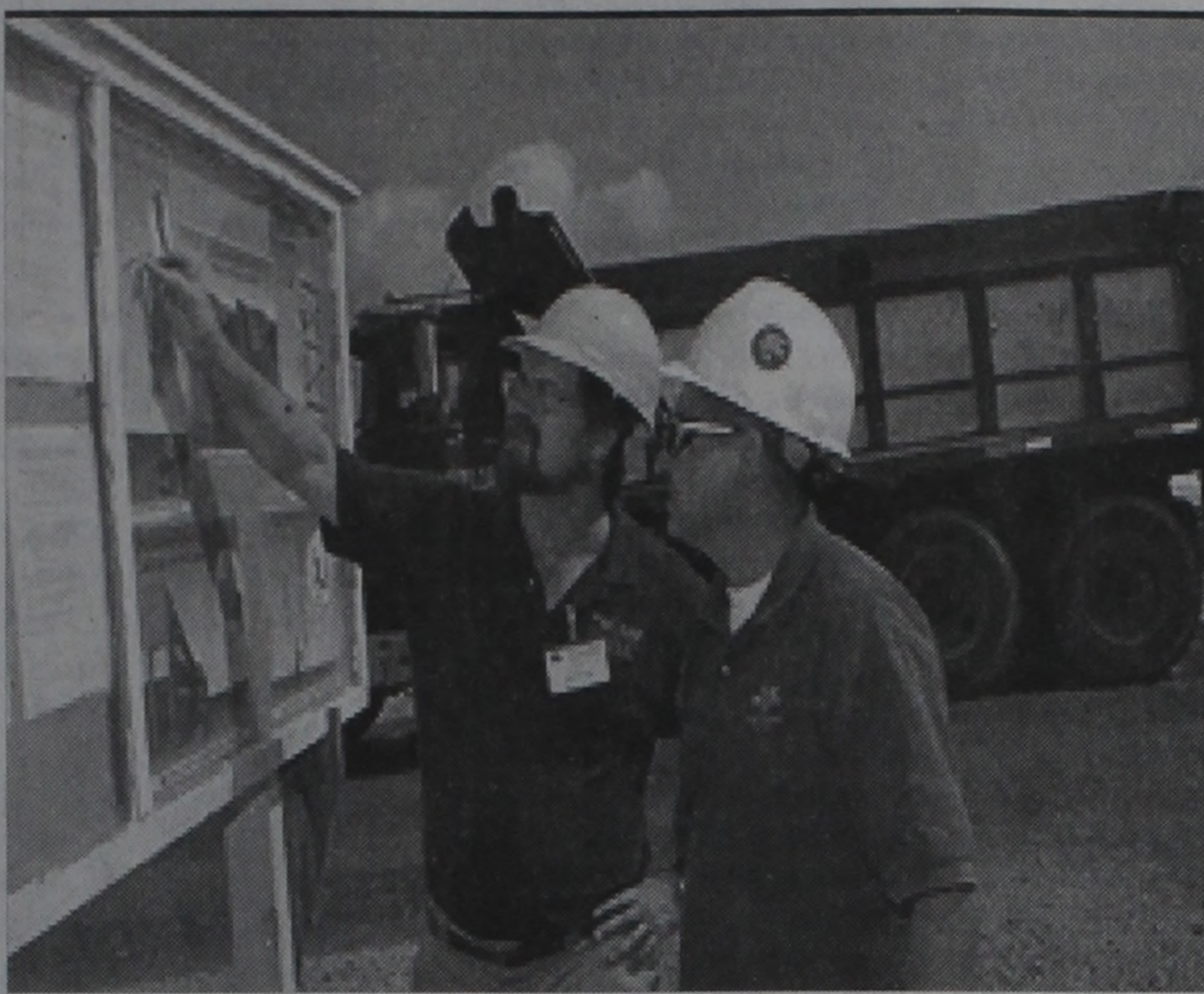
Week of December 14-20, 2006

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Lubbock, Texas 79401

Undocumented workers add \$17.7 billion to the gross state product.

Comptroller Carole Strayhorn, ending her term in statewide office, today released a first-of-its-kind report stating that undocumented workers add \$17.7 billion to the gross state product. While arguments that immigrant workers are an important part of the state's economic base have been legion, this is the first time a dollar figure has been attached to their impact.



The \$17.7 billion was assigned to fiscal year 2005. Strayhorn added that the workers produced \$1.58 billion in state revenues.

"This is an historic report," Strayhorn said. "It is the first time any state has done a comprehensive financial analysis of the impact of undocumented immigrants on a state's budget and economy, looking at gross state product, revenues generated, taxes paid and the cost of state services."

"The absence of the estimated 1.4 million undocumented immigrants in Texas in fiscal 2005 would have been a loss to our gross state product of \$17.7 billion. Undocumented immigrants produced \$1.58 billion in state revenues, which exceeded the \$1.16 billion in state services they received."

Strayhorn said local govern-

ments did pay more in health care costs than they received, but the state received more than they paid out in services. She added that because the state relies heavily on the sales tax and other consumption taxes, undocumented workers pay a higher portion of state revenues than in other states.

Strayhorn estimates the state spent \$957 million on K through 12 education for children of undocumented workers during the 2004-05 school year, as well as "\$11.2 million for higher education for undocumented students, classified as Texas residents and thus paid in-state tuition during the 2004-05 school year; \$58 million for health care services for undocumented immigrants in FY 2005; and \$130.6 million on incarceration for undocumented immigrants in FY 2006."

Language as an Essential Weapon of Warfare

By José de la Isla

"All of our efforts in Iraq, military and civilian, are handicapped by Americans' lack of language and cultural understanding," says the Iraq Study Group report.

The commission, headed by former Secretary of State James Baker III and former congressman Lee Hamilton, further notes, "Our embassy of 1,000 (in Baghdad) has 33 Arabic speakers, just six of whom are at the level of fluency."

One strategy alternative now under consideration to get our soldiers out, as a consequence to the report, is to imbue about 20,000 U.S. military advisors with Iraqi soldiers. That way U.S. troops diminish their role and the Iraqi army takes over security of its own country.

But how are U.S. troops going to talk with Iraqis?

That's the rub. How many U.S. soldiers speak the languages of Iraq well enough to help get us out?

The 25 million Iraqis mainly speak standard Arabic. Portions speak Kurdish. At least 100,000 also speak Egyptian Arabic and Turkmen.

Language and culture skills, like body armor during the early stages of the war, were not standard intelligence and nation-building issues. No deep thinking went into those logistics.

That's not to say nothing has been going on. In January of this year, President Bush launched the National Security Language Initiative through the State Department. The idea was to increase, from kindergarten through university, the number of U.S. students learning critical foreign languages. These include Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Hindi, Farsi and others.

Since 2003, the National Defense University has explored ways to obtain such skills. A pilot project called The Language Corps is expected to begin in 2007.

All this lightning and thunder

might sound like a storm of activity but it isn't. It is too little, too late. Already in 2001, before 9/11, more than 80 federal agencies alone were known to lack the foreign language proficiency to execute their responsibilities effectively. Meeting at the University of Maryland in 2004, language experts tried to stir up interest in "A Call to Action for National Foreign Language Capabilities." They thought - incorrectly - the 9/11 attack would affect language studies the way the Soviet's Sputnik prompted the National Defense Education Act in 1957.

Now we have a jumbled response to immediate needs. James Crawford, president of the Institute for Language and Education Policy, brings sobering context as to why we don't get it.

He notes intelligence leaders have been concerned since the 1980s. "But nothing seems to be done about it. The U.S. government does not have a real language policy of any kind."

The administration has tried every year to cut and even to eliminate foreign language programs, particularly at the elementary and secondary level. "We haven't gotten serious about it yet," says Crawford about a comprehensive and sustained approach.

Historically, speakers of foreign languages were plentiful here. In 1900, 13.6 percent of the population was immigrant. But that proportion dipped to 4.8 percent by 1970. We became accustomed to a more homogenous population.

Our foreign-born population now stands at about 12 percent. However, the insular years gave rise to values that are a drag on national foreign-language capacity. It explains why the strongest opponents of local dual and bilingual policies, mainly directed at Spanish, are mostly past their 50s.

In the last 20 years, says Crawford, "I have seen a real attitude change. But it's a relatively small number who see the advantages of bilingualism."

Counting body bags is too big a price to pay because we lack the will to provide our military with foreign-language capability.

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The Legend of Pancho Clos

The following is a story about a Christmas tradition celebrated in Lubbock and other towns mainly in Texas. The Pancho Clos program was originated and organized by the American G.I. Forum of Lubbock in 1970. The program provides candies and fruit for poor children in West Texas. The original version in Spanish was written by Jesse Reyes from Lubbock, Texas based on a song recorded in Spanish by Cuco Sanchez about a black bearded Santa named Pancho who has burritos plus his sleigh instead of reindeer.

This version written by Bidal Agüero

Santa Claus and Pancho Clos are cousins. Son primos hermanos.

The story is somewhat complicated but maybe with a little bit of imagination, we can all find out about what people, mainly in Texas but also in Wisconsin and Hawaii, are celebrating as they all join together to welcome Pancho Clos to each of their towns throughout the United States.

It all started many years ago in the North Pole when the original Santa Claus married Mrs. Claus. No one ever knew what Mrs. Claus' first name was since in those times once a woman got married everybody forgot about her first name. Nevertheless, all that later changed with

women's suffrage and Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus led a good life in the North Pole and had two sons. One they called Santa Jr. and the other Santa II.

Well their lives went on in what was now called Santa Land. For many many years, Santa Sr. kept delivering gifts to children with the help of elves. Elves were said to be grown on elf trees planted many years ago by a man named Johnny Elfseed. Santa Sr. worked until he was old until it was time for the sons to take over. Santa Jr. was ready to start working for his father taking gifts to all the children of the world, but Santa II was not quite ready.

It seems that Santa II was more interested in trying to develop jet propulsion for reindeer sleighs and had an idea to develop a new system of delivering that he wanted to be called Friendly Express.

Well both brothers continued to live together and Santa Jr. married to another Mrs. Santa but Santa II continued to work on his experiments instead of working with his big brother delivering gifts for Christmas.

Well finally one day, Mrs. Santa, the one that married Santa Jr. and who had by then joined the women's suffrage movement and now wanted to be addressed as Ms. Santa, got tired of Santa II not contributing to the work that needed to be done. She gave him an ultimatum.

Ms. Claus insisted that Santa II either start helping her husband, Santa Jr., or get out and set up shop somewhere else to continue with his experiments.

Well Santa II could not be taken away from his experiments and decided to leave. But just to show that there were no hard feelings, Santa Jr. gave a big party and invited the Elf band to play for the big gig. That was when Benny Goodman was one of the invited guests and was so impressed with the music that he formed his own big band that became famous and played elf music throughout the world. That's another story.

Continued on page

Rodriguez's Upset Win in Texas 23 Yields Another Seat for Dems

Democrats in Texas celebrated this past Tuesday a news that former Rep. Ciro D. Rodriguez upset Republican Rep. Henry Bonilla in a House runoff election in southwestern Texas' 23rd District. The win pushes the Democrats' net gain to 30 House seats and concluding Campaign 2006 with one final stunning come-from-behind victory for the new House majority party.

Rodriguez, who served in the House from 1997 to 2005 in an adjacent district, scored a surprisingly strong 55 percent of the vote with 97 percent of precincts reporting. Bonilla, who was seeking an eighth term, had 45 percent of the vote. Bonilla fell well short of the nearly 49 percent he received in the Nov. 7 "blanket primary" that set the matchup for Tuesday's runoff.

Rodriguez' victory added insult to injury for Republicans, who suffered their worst election losses since the Watergate era election of 1974. One of Rodriguez' biggest added advantages in the runoff campaign was that he could boast of being a member of the House majority if he were to be elected — something he could not definitively claim before the primary, which coincided with the national Election Day.

Rodriguez was given a second chance to run this year when the Supreme Court ruled in June that the 23rd District violated the provisions of the Voting Rights Act by hindering the ability of the district's Hispanic voters to elect a candidate of their choosing.

The Republican-controlled Texas legislature had redrawn the 23rd to strengthen Bonilla's political security prior to the 2004 election, as part of a sweeping and controversial mid-decade redistricting that netted the GOP five seats in that year's House elections. But the court this year invalidated the 23rd District map as unconstitutional because its Hispanic voting-age population (VAP) — 51 percent of the district's total — was deemed insufficient to protect the voting rights of that constituency.

A federal court, acting under the Supreme Court's ruling, in August redrew the 23rd to have a Hispanic VAP of 61 percent — mainly by attaching the heavily Hispanic south side of San Antonio, which is Rodriguez's base.

The demographic changes had the effect of decidedly weakening the Republican lean of the 23rd District, thus making Bonilla much more vulnerable to defeat. Even though Bonilla is one of a small handful of Hispanic Republicans in Congress and its only Mexican-American Republican, his conservative views and voting record garner him much more support from white non-Hispanic voters, or "Anglos," than from Hispanics, who here, as in most places, have strongly Democratic tendencies.

Texas Democratic Party chairman Boyd Richie, in a statement Tuesday night, trumpeted this year's redistricting as setting the stage for Rodriguez' ouster of Bonilla. "I am glad to say that today, the Hispanic community was given an opportunity to elect the candidate of their choice, and they made good on that opportunity by putting their faith in Ciro Rodriguez," Richie said.

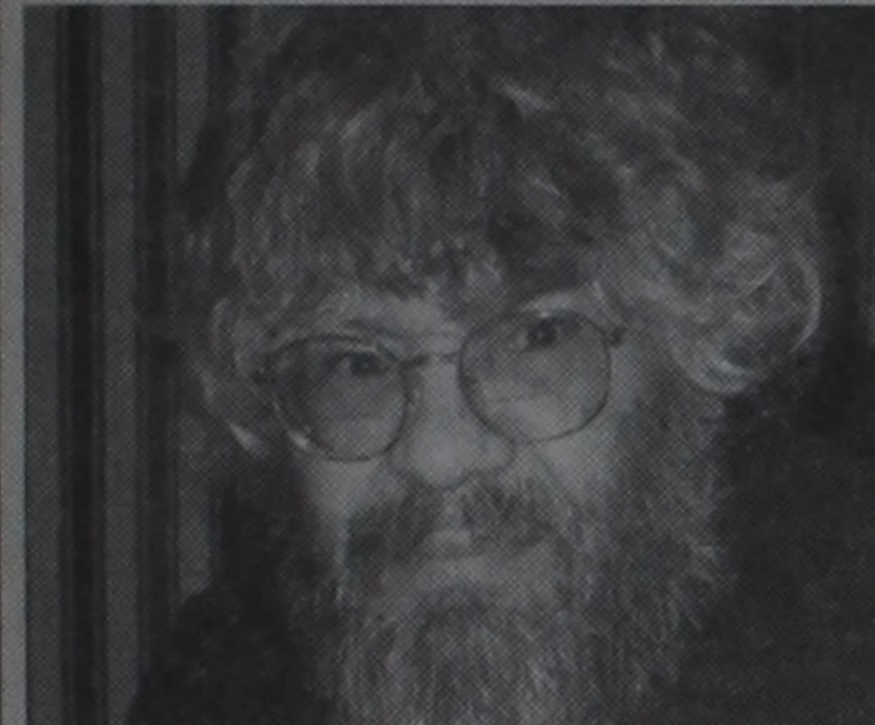
"Voters sent a message in November and they sent another one tonight, that change is coming to Washington," Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) Chairman Rahm Emanuel of Illinois said in a statement.

Despite the alterations to the district, Rodriguez had to overcome several advantages with which Bonilla entered the abbreviated contest — especially the Republican's long incumbency and strong name recognition across the 23rd District.

Rodriguez defeated Bonilla by 56 percent to 44 percent in Bexar County, which includes the district's portions of San Antonio and where about 65 percent of the district's vote was cast. Bonilla ran well in some of the district's vast rural areas, but his margins there could not overcome Rodriguez's advantages in and around San Antonio. But Rodriguez even narrowly led Bonilla in the areas of the 23rd outside of Bexar.

Comentarios

de Bidal Agüero



A story in the local newspaper wrote about a fact that has been evident in Lubbock for almost 5 years. It wrote about Lubbock's Hispanic student population now being the majority. "Duh!"

But the story did accomplish one thing. It brought to mind something that has been on my mind for some time. Although we are the majority in the schools, how come there are no classes that we can relate to. Where are the Hispanic history classes? Where are the folklorico classes? Where are the mariachi classes? Isn't it time for these type of classes to be provided in our schools? Isn't it time for our school board member, Mario Ybarra, to start asking questions?

Our thanks to everyone who attended this year's staging of "The Wondrous Santa Suit" and many thanks to Leticia Tafoya, the director and all the actors. Our special thanks to Riche Lopez at Guadalupe Economic Services and the Lubbock Grants Committee.

"Ya se, un burrito de papas con huevo and an extra cup of ice" she said as she leaned out the window and smiled.

Those were the words of Letty Cavazos as she greeted me every morning that I went to get breakfast at Lala's.

On Wednesday friends, Lala, Conrado, Beto and Celeste gathered at Our Lady of Grace to say good-bye to Letty.

Her memorial service was full of friends who took the pulpit to say a few words of remembrance to a young lady that filled the hearts of very many people and to this writer gave the privilege of saying...fue una amiga.

Our condolences to all the Cavazos family on the loss of Leticia.

QUE DESCANSE EN PAZ



Are Democrats Heading Over a Cliff?

By David Bacon
Guest Contributor

Oakland, California - Having used Latino and labor votes to recapture control of the US Congress, some influential Democratic Party power brokers now seem intent on attacking the very base that produced their victory.

According to the William Velasquez Institute, seven of ten Latino voters chose Democratic candidates. A large percentage of Latino households have family members born outside the US, and millions of Democratic votes came from families where both documented and undocumented members live together. Union families voted for Democrats by about the same margin - seven of ten.

Democrats cannot win elections without Latinos and labor, yet conservative party leaders want to cooperate with Republicans on an immigration-enforcement program that targets them both.

At issue is the enforcement of employer sanctions, a provision of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act. Sanctions bar employers from hiring workers who don't have proper immigration documents. They don't really penalize employers, but they do make holding a job a federal crime for an undocumented worker. Sanctions enforcement has led to the firings of thousands of immigrant workers, including many this year.

Newly appointed House Intelligence Committee head Silvestre Reyes (D-Texas), a former Border Patrol agent, wants this wave of firings to grow. Behind him is the party's eminence gris, Rahm Emanuel (D-Ill.). According to an interview earlier this year with The Hill Magazine, Emanuel thinks it's the key to winning support among voters who view immigrants as a threat. Even leading Washington lobbyist Frank Sharry, head of the National Immigration Forum, recently advised immigrant-rights groups that Democrats, having just won the election, should agree to this enforcement scheme in order to placate Republicans.

Rahm, Reyes and their Republican colleagues say sanctions have never been enforced on employers. "There has been almost zero enforcement," Rahm told The Hill.

Rahm is wrong. When the Clinton administration mounted its highly publicized Operation Vanguard program in the meat packing industry in 1998, more than 3,000 workers were forced from their jobs in just one enforcement action, according to the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The Democratic administration mounted other workplace raids as well. In Washington State's apple packing sheds, more than 600 people were fired in the middle of a union organizing drive the same year. Needless to say, with its leaders gone, the union lost.

That's why the AFL-CIO, in 1999, began calling for the repeal of sanctions, and for giving the undocumented legal status.

Under Bush, the firings continue. Today, most enforcement is based on letters sent to employers by the Social Security Administration, listing the names of workers whose numbers don't match its database. Although the letters caution employers not to assume that discrepancies indicate a lack of legal immigration status, thousands of workers have been terminated anyway.

Many firings target immigrant workers trying to organize unions, or enforce legal wages and working conditions. At the Cintas laundry chain, more than 400 were terminated in November alone, as a result of no-match letters. Cintas is the target of the national organizing drive by UNITE HERE, the hotel and garment workers union.

In November also, hundreds walked out of the huge Smithfield pork processing plant in Tarheel, North Carolina, after the company fired 60 workers for Social Security discrepancies. That non-union plant is not just the national organizing target for the United Food and Commercial Workers Union. Smithfield has also been found guilty repeatedly of firing its employees for union activity, and threatening to use their immigration status against them.

When workers at Woodfin Suites in Emeryville, California, tried to enforce the city's new living-wage law, Measure C, they too were suddenly hit with a no-match check.

To Rahm, Reyes, and their fellow sanctions supporters, these casualties don't count. When they say sanctions haven't been enforced, they mean that the government hasn't collected many fines against employers who violate the prohibition. That's news? The government has a lousy record collecting fines against employers for violating overtime laws, mine safety laws, health laws, anti-discrimination laws, or pretty much any laws that protect workers.

But unlike these other laws, sanctions don't protect workers. The true victims are the fired workers themselves, who pay with lost jobs, by the tens of thousands. Unions also lose, because their drives are busted when their supporters are driven from the workplace.

Predictably, the government collects no statistics on no-match firings.

To appeal to right-wing Republicans, this fall the Bush administration proposed a new regulation, which would require employers to fire workers listed in a no-match letter if they can't resolve the discrepancy. Reyes and fellow Texan Charles Gonzalez (D-Texas) introduced a similar proposal this year, in cooperation with one of California's most anti-labor, anti-immigrant Republicans, Rep. David Drier (R-Calif.).

Employers now claim anti-union firings are simply an effort to comply with Bush's new regulation, although it hasn't even been issued. If it is enacted, and if the Democrats support the administration in enforcing it, additional thousands will lose their jobs. Rather than leaving the country, as proponents hope, workers will simply go underground, accepting pretty much any job at any wage, under any conditions. And if they try to organize unions and lift wages, companies will have a ready-made excuse for the same kinds of firings.

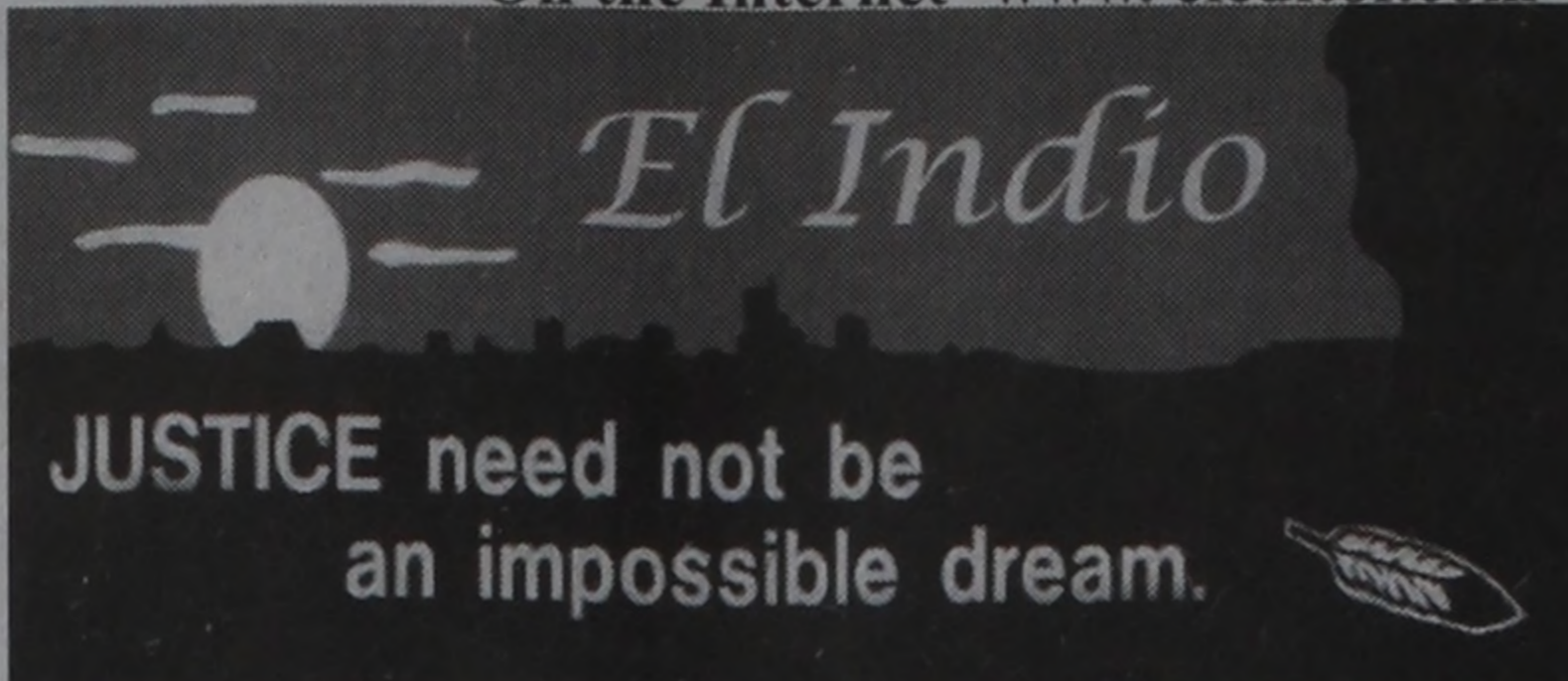
Last month, 5,300 Houston janitors won their first union contract. Men and women earning minimum wage, working only 20 hours per week, got on the road to a better life. When Social Security sends its next no-match letter to their employers, hundreds will lose their jobs - a punishment for organizing. Their coworkers, whether white, black, or greencard-holding immigrants, will also suffer, because the terminations will tear their union apart.

The Democratic Party could fight this. It could defend its growing union base. It could propose a bill in Congress, as did Houston's Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee (D-Texas) last year, to give green cards to those undocumented janitors and their families, and set them on the road to citizenship and voting rights.

Or it could follow Rahm Emanuel and Silvestre Reyes over a cliff.

David Bacon <<http://dbacon.igc.org/>> is a California photojournalist who documents labor, migration and globalization. His book *Communities Without Borders* was just published by Cornell University/ILR

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Congratulations Are In Order... Chancellor Kent Hance, Congressman Ciro Rodriguez, and Playwright Bidal Agüero!

By Roger Quannah Settler El Indio

This writer was pleased to attend the reception last week at the United Spirit Arena to welcome Texas Tech's new Chancellor, Kent Hance.

Kent and I have had many times together after meeting way back in 1970, the same year I met our Editor, Bidal.

Kent ran for the State Senate in 1974, and I vividly remember distributing his especially printed newspaper about his candidacy. This was a publishing first...a tabloid-sized paper devoted to one candidate. He defeated longtime Sen. H.J. "Doc" Blanchard, and served one term before running for the newly vacated 19th District seat in Congress. The seat had been held for decades by popular Democrat George H. Mahon, chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. George Mahon had just completed over forty-five years in Congress...just like we once said that Tom Landry was "the only coach the Dallas Cowboys ever had"...we used to say then that George Mahon was "the only Congressman that the Lubbock District ever had".

The year was 1978, and the Republican nominee was none other than...George W. Bush, our current President. Hance handed the future President his only political defeat, and may say to this day that he is the only man who has ever bested President Bush in a political race.

When longtime U.S. Senator John G. Tower retired in 1984, Hance entered the Democratic Primary, and made the runoff with State Senator Lloyd Doggett, now the Congressman from Austin. "The Democrats, in their own primary, split their votes almost evenly for the liberal Doggett, the moderate ex-Congressman Bob Krueger, and the conservative West Texas Congressman Kent Hance." [According to Wikipedia] Doggett narrowly won the hard-fought runoff with Hance, and went on to lose to maverick Democrat-turned-Republican former Congressman Phil Gramm.

Bob Krueger was later appointed to the U.S. Senate for a brief interim term by then governor Ann Richards.

In 1986, Hance ran for Governor of Texas as a Republican, but lost in the Primary to Bill Clements, who appointed Hance to a vacant seat on the Railroad Commission in 1987. Hance ran one last time for Governor in 1990, but lost the Primary to Clayton Williams, who was defeated in the General Election by Ann Richards.

We are indeed fortunate to have a man of the calibre and experience of Kent Hance to represent us as Chancellor of Texas Tech. This writer is honored to call him a longtime friend, and I personally know of his dedication to the advancement of Hispanic causes. We're proud of you, Kent...we know you shall do well!

Many of us who recall the glory days of La Raza Unida in the 1970s are very proud of Ciro Rodriguez, who helped the fledgling Chicano political party in its early days. He was born in Piedras Negras in Coahuila, and was educated in San Antonio. From 1975 to 1987, Rodriguez served as a board member of the Harlandale Independent School District. He was a member of the Texas House of Representatives from 1987 to 1997.

Ciro won his first term in Congress in a special election in April of 1997 following the death of the 28th District's incumbent Congressman, Frank Tejeda. He defeated Juan F. Solis III with 66.7% of the vote.

He was a victim of the Redistricting fiasco of 2003 engineered by the infamous Tom DeLay, with the connivance of Governor Rick Perry and Speaker of the House Tom Craddick. DeLay moved Laredo into Ciro's district, knowing that conservative Democrat Henry Cuellar would be able to leverage that area into defeating Ciro. In March of 2004, Ciro lost the Primary to Cuellar, who posed with President Bush and emphasized his ties to Perry, who had appointed him Texas Secretary of State in 2001.

Ciro tried to regain his old seat

in 2006 by running against Cuellar again, but lost with 48% of the vote. However, within a few months the old activist was running again, because a three-judge panel overturned a few of DeLay's gerrymandered districts, and the new 23rd District included Ciro's home and most of his old San Antonio base. He entered the race against vendido Republican Congressman Henry Bonilla in the new 23rd.

Six Democrats ran against Bonilla, and kept him below 50%. On November 7, Bonilla emerged with 48.1% and Rodriguez with 20.3%. Unlike the Governor's race, Congressional races require a runoff in such cases, and Ciro was pitted against Bonilla in a special election on Tuesday, 12 December. The new 23rd district has a voting age population that is 61% Hispanic, compared to the old percentage of 51%, and that made the difference. Bonilla, a staunch friend of President Bush, had little support among the Chicano majority. Ciro defeated Bonilla 57% to 43% in the last Congressional election in Texas this year, increasing the Democratic majority in the House.

Those of us who remember Ciro's activism for La Raza Unida hail his return to Congress. We are proud of you, Ciro...¡Sí, Se Puede!

This writer was proud to participate in the fourth restaging of El Editor's Christmas play, "The Wondrous Santa Suit" last weekend at the Underwood Center for the Arts Ice House. The play, first directed by Nephtali de León and El Teatro Campesino in 1999, was restaged by Rudy Alvarado in 2002 and by Hershell Norwood in 2005. Jose Luis Rodriguez did a film version in 2002. It is now available as a children's book via lulu.com.

Daniel Sanchez, writing for the Lubbock Avalanche-Journal, states: "The play, based on a short story Agüero wrote many years ago, provides a wonderful glimpse into the life of humble, hardworking Jose, played by County Commissioner Ysidro Gutierrez, and his family." The character of Jose has its roots in Bidal's own father, Ignacio Agüero, who worked for the City of Lubbock Sanitation Department for 27 years.

The cast members and musicians gave life to this heartwarming story of Milagros and spinning tops and Santa suits and Pancho Clos. Rosa Salazar, accompanied on the guitar by Gabriel Gonzales, added a new and welcome note to the proceedings. Porfirio Bas, Mike Salsman and Ruben Montelongo, and Ballet Folklorico Atlan serenaded and danced for the audience. A good time was had by all...wish you had been there! This writer echoes the spirit of the night...

"Feliz Navidad!"
Merry Christmas
to All!"

EL EDITOR

is a weekly bilingual newspaper published by Amigo Publications in Lubbock and Midland/Odessa Texas. El Editor has been published on a weekly basis since 1977. Our physical address for overnight delivery is 1502 Ave. M in Lubbock, TX 79401. El Editor is available on the internet at <http://www.eleditor.com> and is distributed throughout West Texas in retail outlets. Opinions expressed in El Editor are those of the individual writer and not necessarily those of the publisher or the advertisers. Advertising information available by emailing us at eleditor@sbcglobal.net or by calling us at 806-763-3841. Opinions and commentaries are welcome and can be sent to the same email address. All opinions and letters to the editor must contain the writer's name, address and phone number but name can be withheld at the writer's request. Address and telephone number will not be published.

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Super Precinct Experiment Inconclusive, Say Commissioner Ysidro Gutierrez and Democratic County Chair Johnnie Jones

By El Editor Staff

According to Lubbock County Commissioner Ysidro Gutierrez, "The information derived from the Super Precinct pilot program did not provide data which can be used to make conclusive statements about the promised benefits of the Super Precinct experiment".

This week was the deadline for the Lubbock County Elections Administrator, to receive final comments about the November 7, 2006 General Election Super Precinct Pilot Program.

Lubbock County was the sole county in Texas to conduct the November General Election under Texas HB 758 "Countywide Polling Place Pilot Program." Essentially what the experiment called for was for the county to come up with voting locations known as "super precincts", whereby voters in the county could vote at the location of their choice. The process called for voters to be able to vote at the location of their choice both during the early voting period and on Election Day.

Part of the attraction for Lubbock County to apply with the state to participate in this experimental program was the promise of a quicker and easier access to polling places for voters, convenience, cost-savings, and higher voter turnout; including increased participation of first time voters. The whole process was described as the reduction of the "Cost of In-Person Voting"; which according to election officials was something defined as a savings of time, convenience, and accessibility for voters.

One of the expectations of the program was increased voter turnout. But according to Johnnie Jones, Lubbock County Democratic Part Chair, increased voter participation did not materialize. Jones stated that "The November 7, 2006 Super Precinct pilot program did not produce the desired result of increased voter turnout, and furthermore, the decline in voter participation disproportionately affected voters in minority precincts".

According to Jones, Election Day votes, that is votes cast on November 7, decreased by 7,287 when compared to Election Day votes in 2002; the last gubernatorial election year.

Total votes in 2006 declined from 2002 by 2,155. This represents a 3.8% decline in total votes from 2002 to 2006. Opposite of what election officials had hoped for.

Interestingly, a comparison between Democrat and Republican voters produced opposite results.

The following are the ten precincts with the highest percentage of Democratic straight party votes in the November 7, 2006 election: 20, 40, 6, 4, 5, 3, 19, 38, 1, and 17. All of these precincts are located in mostly minority populated precincts. There were 1,220 fewer votes cast in 2006 than in 2002 from these precincts, representing a 25.53% decline in votes for these precincts. Votes in these minority precincts declined more than six times that of the county average.

In the ten precincts with the highest percentage of Republican straight party votes in the November 7, 2006 election: 115, 117, 112, 104, 66, 75, 60, 78, 62, 110; which exclude precincts that were created since 2002 to allow for accurate comparison, there were 615 more votes cast in 2006 than in 2002 from these precincts, representing a 12.41% increase.

Gutierrez added that voting history is usually a "reliable predictor" of future election numbers. But in this case, the 7,287 fewer votes cast on election day in 2006 vs. 2002, in a voting setting which was supposed to make it easier for a person to cast their vote, the outcome was completely unexpected. Super Precinct voter turnout in 2006 was 24.638; while the traditional voting process produced 31.925 votes in 2002.

In addition to fewer voters casting their votes than in 2002, of the 24,638 votes cast, only 252 were "first-time voters" who cast their vote on Election Day; with an additional 63 voters casting their vote for the first time during early voting. This led Gutierrez to conclude that "There is no evidence to support a conclusion that Super Precincts appeal to first time voters. The number of first-time ballots was small in comparison to the total number of ballots cast".

"Cost of In-Person Voting" also includes how much time it takes and how convenient it is for a voter to cast their vote. In this case, the expected benefit to the individual voter cannot be confirmed. Some polling sites experienced long lines and waiting time from 20 to 45 minutes. Other polls had no lines and only a 2 to 3 minute wait time. Most of the traditional neighborhood polling sites were not used for the pilot program.

At the end of this experiment it seems that one of the main obstacles to reaching a completely accurate conclusion is the absence of any comparable historical data. But both Democratic County Chair Jones and Commissioner Gutierrez have their doubts about whether the "super precinct" system of voting is the way to go in the future.

Ms. Jones, was a participant on the panel which heard public testimony regarding the Super Precinct system and worked with the Lubbock County Elections office and Lubbock County Commissioners Court to select appropriate Super Precinct polling locations. She says that she "entered into this pilot program with the anticipation that this pilot would increase voter participation in Lubbock County. Unfortunately, this was not the outcome of the experiment". Her conclusion: "I would recommend that this program not be repeated unless the number of polling locations is increased to 2004 levels". Gutierrez is not so sure that a valid conclusion can be reached. He cites two Rice University professors, M. Stein and Gregory Vonnahme, who have studied Super Precincts and who conclude in their work that "Hidden biases are possible due to the lack of data to indicate measurable patterns and trends". He agrees that "Except for the actual number of ballots cast, all else is based on observation".

Gutierrez concluded: "There is no conclusive evidence of significant benefits from the Super Precinct Pilot Program and there is no manner available to conclusively ascertain the causative or contributing factors of the reduced voter participation. However, lower voter participation, indicates the Super Precinct Pilot Program did not facilitate individual electoral participation. Based on observations of the November 7, 2006 General Election in Lubbock County, there is no evidence on which to recommend the Super Precinct program for implementation in the other 253 counties in Texas".

In this super experiment, one can only conclude that contrary to popular expectations, the experiment produced neither super numbers nor super results.

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La ciudad de Los Angeles da vida a la bella y centenaria tradición navideña y cada uno puede representarla en su propio hogar con rezos, cantos, velas, dulces y confeti

Entren santos peregrinos, reciban este rincón, que aunque es pobre la morada, os la doy de corazón...

Para muchos estas frases son nostálgicas, porque recuerdan una infancia saturada de alegría y emociones y porque las noches de Posadas son mágicas: frío, peregrinos, rezos, confeti, cantos, velas, dulces y la infaltable piñata.

Todo es parte de las tradicionales Posadas, una costumbre que los inmigrantes también han establecido en algunas ciudades de este país. Las Posadas son una de las celebraciones navideñas más coloridas. Conmemoran el viaje de María y José la noche en que nació Jesús.

Esta representación consiste en la solicitud de alojamiento que estos dos peregrinos hicieron a

En diversas partes las Posadas se realizan con una festividad distinta, cada región de México le da "un toque" singular, pero la esencia no cambia. Hay algunos estados donde se realizan en la calle, con música en vivo, vestimenta especial y donación de comida a todo el que llega.

Si así lo decide, usted puede organizar una o las nueve posadas en su casa, para ser parte de los que fomentan esta costumbre milenaria.

Andale Juana, no te dilates con la canasta de cacahuates.

No se necesita una casa enorme ni invitar a cientos de vecinos o familiares para que su celebración sea inolvidable. De acuerdo con la guía Consejos para organizar una Posada, de la Junta Nacional de la Miel, éstos son algunos pasos que debe seguir:

Establezca una fecha. No tienen que ser las nueve posadas, puede ser una. Pero la celebración debe caer entre el 16 y el 24 de diciembre.

sus hijos de María y José. También considere cuántos invitados desea tener y qué les va a ofrecer.

Invitación. Llame a sus vecinos y explique a los que no saben de qué se trata la celebración; dígalos que pueden llevar a sus hijos. Los niños disfrutaban mucho de las Posadas.

Para la Posada necesitará, si lo desea, un libro de rezos y cantos. Si no lo tiene, puede buscarlo en internet. Es opcional si desea dar a sus invitados velas para encender durante la noche, serpentinas y confeti.

Planifique el recorrido. Debe determinar si desea hacer la Posada sólo en su casa o hacer un recorrido por las calles. Si su caso es el primero, entonces, de acuerdo con el espacio, debe considerar dónde colocar a los peregrinos y dónde reunirse para el rezo. De realizarlo en la calle, defina las paradas, es decir, las casas donde llegarán a pedir albergue y el tiempo que se necesitará para llegar a la última casa donde se pedirá.

Interprete el recorrido de María y José. Pueden ser sólo los peregrinos, que ya no son difíciles de conseguir en California, o bien puede escenificarlos con un niño y una niña que representen a estos dos personajes; además, los puede hacer acompañar de pastores, angelitos y los tres Reyes Magos.

Prepare los alimentos que repartirá con anticipación. Tenga listas las bolsas con dulces para los niños y la piñata.

¡A pedir posada! Una vez que concluya el rezo, llega el momento de pedir la posada. Si la organizó en casa, divida a sus invitados, unos que se queden dentro de la casa y otros afuera, defina quiénes serían los que pidan la posada y quiénes los que respondan a esta petición.

Planee con anticipación. Decida a qué hora quiere comenzar la Posada, en qué parte de su casa la va a realizar, consiga los peregrinos o vista a



varios habitantes en Belén para que naciera el Niño Jesús bajo cubierto. Este simbólico paisaje comienza el 16 y termina el 24 de diciembre.

RECETAS DE FAMILIA EN VÍSPERAS DE NAVIDAD

Los iberoamericanos transitamos por la Navidad como los excitados y locuaces cronopios de Julio Cortázar, amigos de la bulla, dejándonos arrastrar por el arrebato de los aromas de la cocina navideña.

Estamos en vísperas de Navidad, y los cronopios iberoamericanos acudimos a los platos y buenos vinos que van poblando de sabores, olores y recuerdos las conversaciones a mesa y mantel y los días.

Fogones mandan, de modo que el manoseo de deliciosas recetas de familia constituye en estas fiestas que se avecinan una especie de orgullo visible y público, una suerte de utopía que marca a los que la practican.

Dejemos a un lado a la fracción de los aguafiestas, los de cara triste o lacrimosa, capaces de chafar la celebración navideña a cualquiera con tal de mantener vivo el pulpo gelatinoso de sus pesares.

De lo que hablamos es del gozo de guisar, de la alegría de fogones, que es siempre la distancia más corta entre el horno de asar y la mesa, una ceremonia que, la verdad, apuntala nuestra vida como ninguna otra.

Pues bien, a esta constelación de sartenes mayores pertenece la cocinera madrileña Rosa Martínez, artífice del establecimiento de tapas y guisos caseros más celebrado en Miami: Las Tapas de Rosa (449 SW 8 St.)

Las Tapas de Rosa es el enclave donde puede uno, cronopio cocinillas, solazarse con la sabrosa cocina española de viejo cuño, con el retorno de lo vivo lejano al plato.

Propuestas demoradas; confeccionadas a fuego manso, que recuperan para Navidad "los secretos entrañables pasados", dice Martínez, quien comanda los fogones del restaurante con mano inspirada.

Una eclosión de sabores anclados en la memoria que brotan de platos como el puré de patatas con chistorra y coronado con huevos fritos de codorniz, o los lomos de bacalao de la abuela, propuestas que, en palabras de Martínez, "me unen a mi pasado y mi niñez, a mi madre y a mis vecinos" en las fechas navideñas.

El puré de patatas con chistorra hay que probarlo. Fórmula modesta, sin duda, es un puro regocijo palatal: peladas, cortadas en pedazos y cocidas las patatas en abundante agua con sal, chorrito de aceite de oliva y laurel, se reduce a pasta en el mortero.

Aparte, salteamos la chistorra cocida y pedacitos de chistorra fresca y freímos los huevos de codorniz. Disponemos del puré en el centro del plato, vertemos la chistorra o chorizo frito y coronamos con los dos huevos fritos.

Los lomos de bacalao al horno, hechos a base de bacalao fresco y un sofrito de tomate natural, ajo, cebolla, pimientos de piquillo triturados y una ligera capa de mayonesa, son una de las cotas del menú de Martínez.

Las Tapas de Rosa es un establecimiento que va a más en Miami y es todo un éxito en su renglón de tapas caseras y rotundas.

Como el salpicón de marisco, los callos a la madrileña, el pisto manchego, el pulpo a la gallega, el revuelto de morcilla con ajetes, etcétera, un vaivén mareante de tapas que habla de la rica despensa regional española y de la pericia culinaria de Martínez.

Raciones aparte, caldo gallego o cocido madrileño, Rosa Martínez propone como plato de fondo especial para estas fiestas la codorniz (guineo) picante rellena de queso fresco, nata, cebolla y queso gruyere, bien doradita, manjar oloroso por el toque del brandy, adictivo como lo es siempre la buena cocina.



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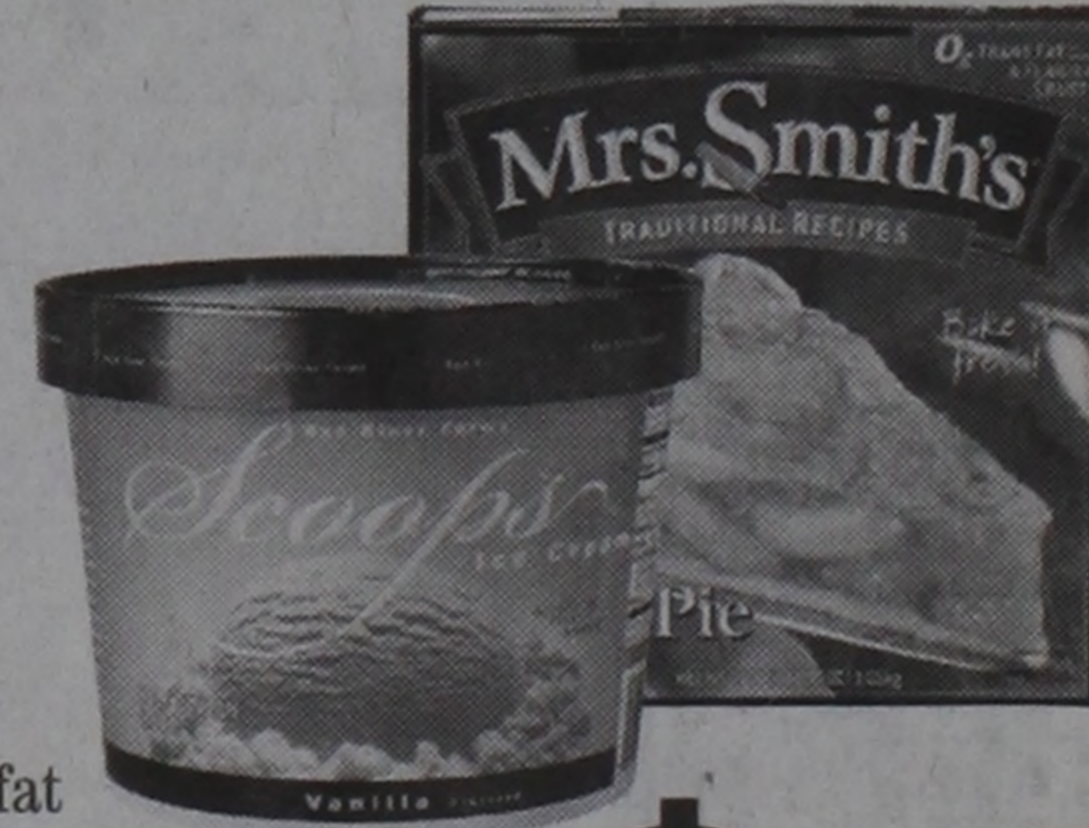
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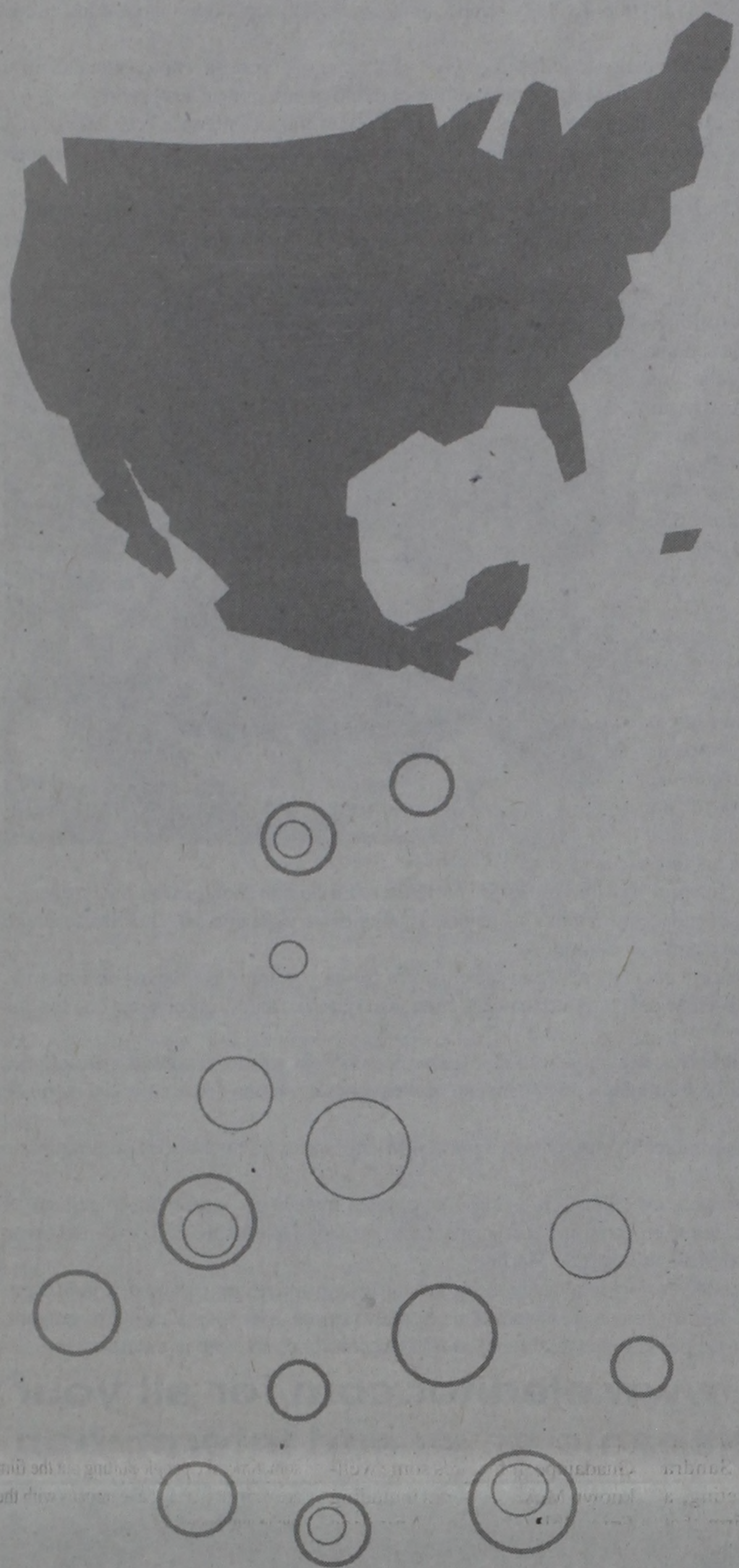
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THE SMALL INDIE WITH HIGH ASPIRATIONS

Writer/director Aragon, and pro-know the odds are they are nonetheless challenge. The recently announced release of their low-budget film Hollywood Familia on December 8, 2006 Sunset 5 in Los Angeles to qualify for an Academy nomination.

Produced by the famous Entertainment company, Hollywood Familia is a dramatic comedy about four women living in Los Angeles dealing with their big budget Academy campaign. The only film which is gathering Oscar buzz is the Spanish language Pedro Almodóvar film Volver, which is being released by the mini-major, Sony Pictures Classic. "We are a small company, a tiny fish in a giant ocean but we can swim, and we will even if we are limited financially, we will do what ever it takes," says Frank Aragon, who also served as producer.

"We have a wonderful supporting cast performance by one of our actors Renee Victor, and an original song by Wilman Murcillio titled Hollywood Familia says ...

Aragon a native Angelino originally from the tough streets of Boyle Heights. "We are chasing a long shot, but we have a couple of horses that can win their races if given the opportunity," says fellow partner Ken Sitnick. Renee Victor (Weeds), Doralicia Sitnick (also the screenwriter), Larissa Asuaje, Priscilla Medina, Scott Roberts, Carlos Montilla and Lilly Melgar.

In a year that saw only Nacho Libre which starred Jack Black, a non-Latino in the lead role, and the recent Quincenera and Goal, it's been a pretty dry season for the largely untapped Latino English-speaking movie going consumer market, which represent over 9 billion dollars in buying power.

Hollywood Familia will first be in limited release theatrically in Los Angeles, qualifying the film for possible consideration for the 79th Annual Academy Awards (AAMPAS). 1211 Pictures Entertainment holds a library of material aimed at the under served 13.4 percent population of Latinos in the U.S. and this is their first film out the gate.



director Frank duer Ken Sitnick against them, but less up for the indie filmmakers nounced the re-budget independent wood Familia on at the Laemmle Angeles, in time possible Academy tion.

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THE LATINO NICHE: STUDIO RELIES ON WORD OF MOUTH FOR 'GUADALUPE'

During a scene in the newly re- leased Mexican film "Guadalupe," a Jewish character reveals that he is a devout Guadalupano, or follower of Our Lady of Guadalupe, a traditional Mexican and Catholic icon.

When questioned by another character, the Jewish man notes that Mary and Jesus were Jewish, after all, and that in Mexico, who isn't a Guadalupano?

The scene demonstrates the film's attempt to appeal to a universal audience using the common denominator of faith.

The film, which was released in 18 Bay Area theaters this past weekend to coincide with today's celebration, has received little attention here despite its potential to do well with local audiences.

"Guadalupe," which has several religious ties to the "Passion of the Christ" and the "Da Vinci Code," joins other bids to bring Spanish-language entertainment to the American market -- including iTunes Latino, which sells Telenovelas and Spanish music, and MTV's Tres, the music network's latest spin-off aimed at young Latinos.

"The market is there," said Teresa Carrillo, an associate professor at San Francisco State who teaches courses in political science and cultural studies. "If the film was heavily promoted, it would have a big impact on its opening weekend."

The movie, produced by Dos Corazons films and distributed by Slowhand Cinema, was not reviewed by major newspapers even though it was released to 150 theaters nationwide in major markets such as Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Dallas, Seattle and Miami.

Most of the marketing and distribution of the film was aimed at areas with high concentrations of Latinos and channeled through Spanish language radio stations and publications, said Sandra Eckardt of Sentir Marketing, a Newport Beach-based firm that

promoted "Guadalupe."

The distributors were relying on word of mouth generated through e-mails and Catholic parishes, she said.

"The core audience are the Spanish-speaking Latinos that are religious," Eckardt said. "The movie has a lot to do with the Mexican culture and beliefs of Our Lady of Guadalupe. It has appeal to first-, second-, third- and fourth-generation Hispanics. It can help later generations tap into their culture and the way they were raised, especially from a religious standpoint."

The content of the movie could make it a big movie here," Carrillo said. "La Virgen is a very traditional symbol that at the same time is very contemporary and links Latinos in the United States to their culture and families in Mexico."



Constructed with documentary style and dramatic elements, the film introduces a modern plot surrounding two Spanish siblings who travel to Mexico for a scientific exploration of the 475-year-old story of Our Lady of Guadalupe. It features some well-known Mexican actors including Eric del Castillo, Angelica

Aragon and Pedro Armendariz.

The story contends that in December 1531, Mary, the mother of Jesus, appeared dressed as an Aztec princess before a native Mexican and Catholic convert, Juan Diego, as he crossed a hillside called El Tepeyac.

She asked Juan Diego to tell the Bishop of Mexico City to build a church in her honor on the Tepeyac hill. The bishop asked for a sign, and Juan Diego later returned with the image of la Virgen impressed on his tunic, which remains intact and is displayed in a basilica at the site.

The apparition is credited with bringing an end to the indigenous practice of human sacrifice and the successful conversion of millions of natives.

"She's a representation of indigenous resistance to colonization and Catholicism coming from Spaniards," Carrillo said. "She's a figure of spirituality and resistance, and enduring of indigenous culture."

The Rev. Ricardo Chavez of St. Peter Martyr Catholic Parish in Pittsburg, which hosted a celebration for Our Lady of Guadalupe on Sunday, said he had heard "absolutely nothing" about the film.

"I'm surprised," he said. "When the 'Passion of the Christ' came out, I heard much about it, and our youth group organized groups to see it."

Using word of mouth is an effective way of reaching Latino audiences, but also a slow one, said Mari Gonzalez, founder of Ixmati Intercultural Communications, a market research and consulting firm based in Walnut Creek.

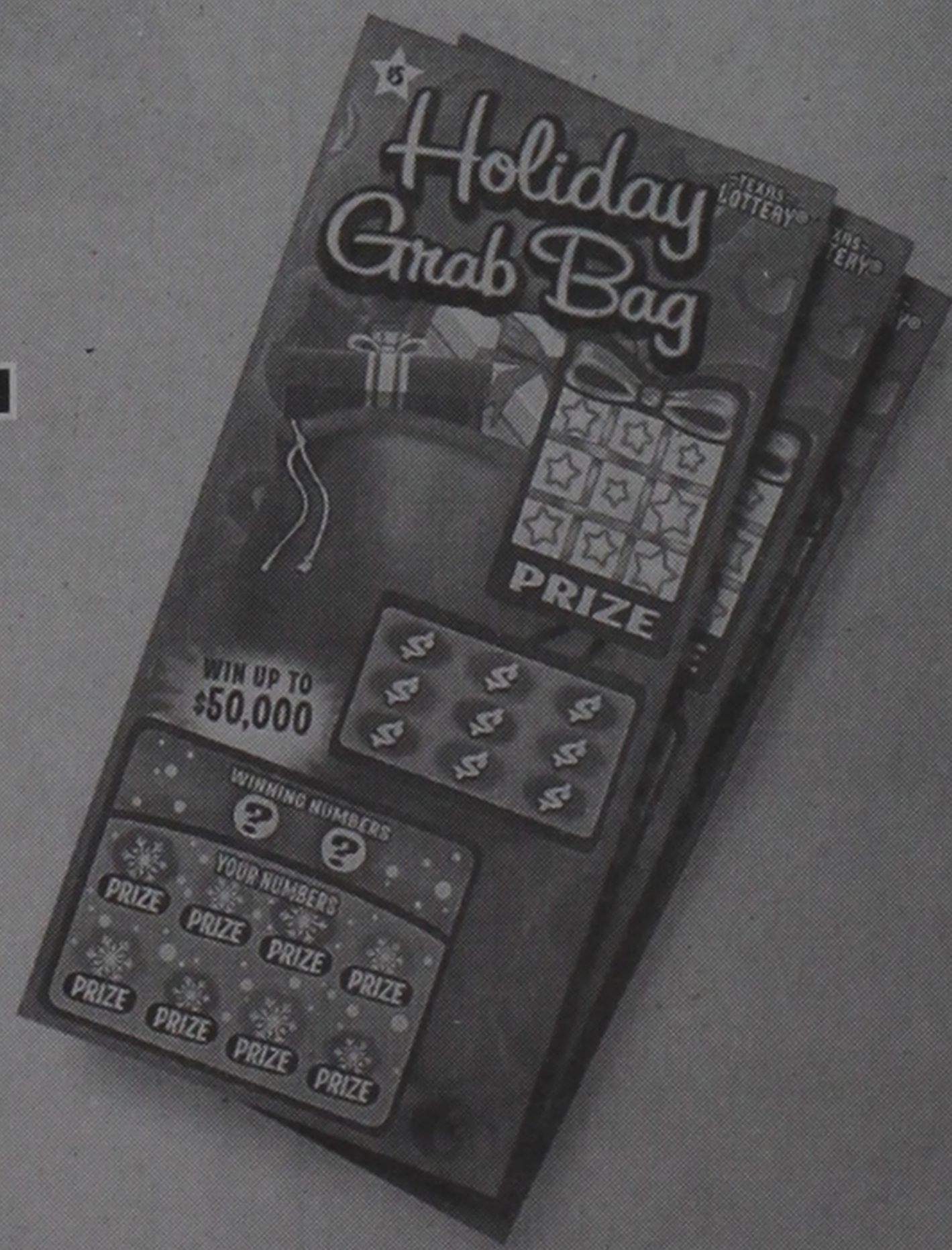
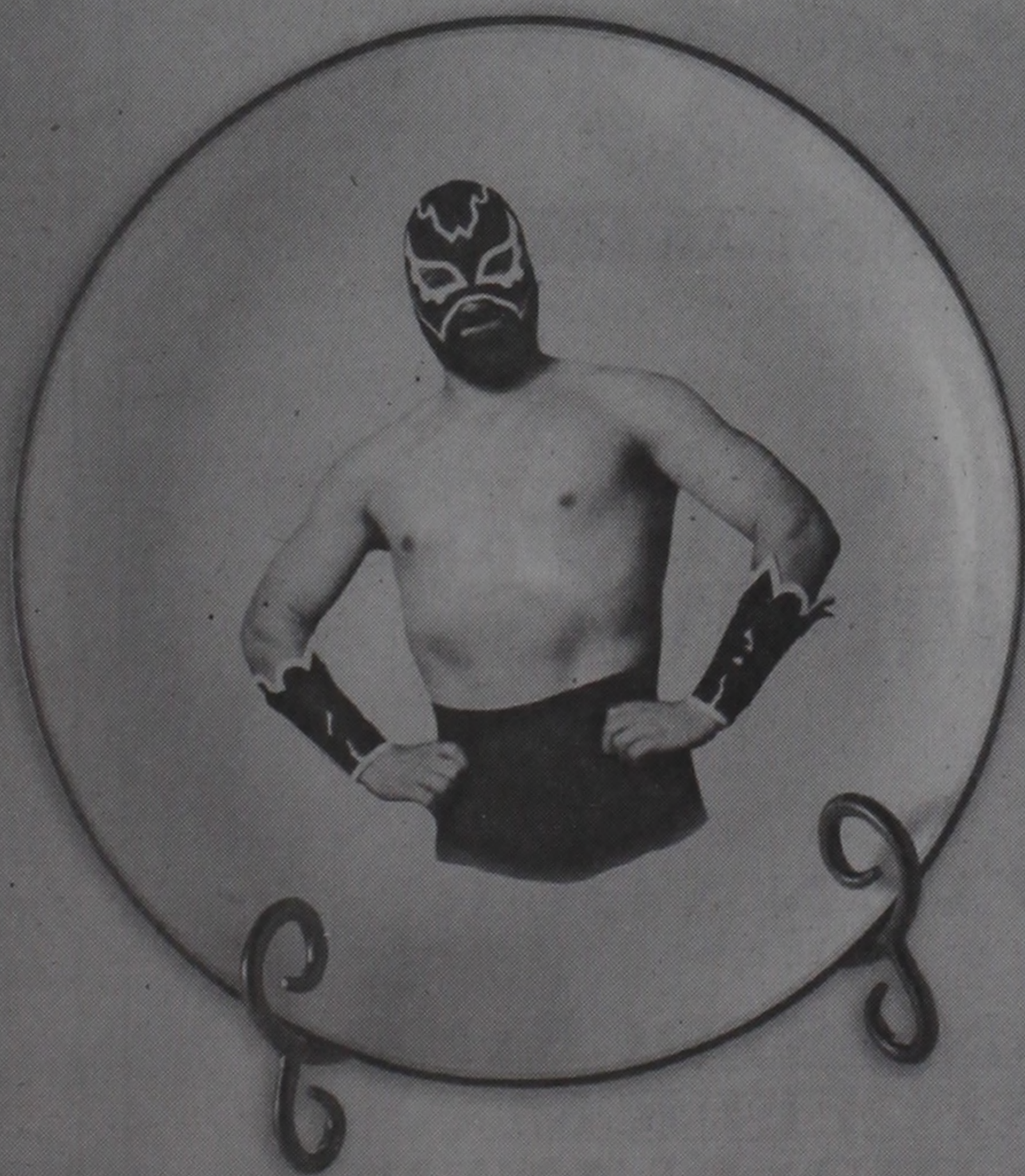
"The image is so powerful you don't need a lot of words; all you have to say is a movie about the Virgen de Guadalupe in Spanish, and people will watch it," Gonzalez said.

Steve Indig, a publicist for Landmark Theaters, said, "It's a mystery to me but, sometimes the people putting out the film are convinced they have inroads with the niche audience."



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The Legend of Pancho Clos

(Continued from Front Page)

Santa II was so happy with his going away party that he gave Santa Jr. a gift of one of his inventions or what some people might call creation. Santa II knew that Santa Jr. often had problems with fog. Santa II had invented a neon light that was powered by reindeer smell. (Everyone knows that reindeer don't smell very good.) Well he put this neon light onto the nose of one of the reindeer and it lit up the whole area in front of where the sleigh was traveling. It's said that eventually the light became permanently attached to a reindeer named Rudolph. That's another story too.

After the big party Santa II packed his bags and started south. He had heard that saying "Go south young man" and was truly convinced that he could make it on his own. By that time Santa II's invention of what he called an Etsel was almost perfected and ready for him to ride south.

Santa II drove south through what is now Canada, took a little time to fish for salmon in what is now Washington State and drove through the Rocky Mountains. He encountered only one problem on the way, the Etsel was driven by reindeer manure so after passing Canada, Washington and the Rocky Mountains he had to start using buffalo manure.

He finally got to Texas, which was part of Mexico in those times, and in a land called Llano Estacado by the Native Americans, Santa II met a mestizo woman (half Native American and half Mexican) named Puri. Santa II had developed pretty good relations with the Native Americans since he would often talk to them while gathering manure for his Etsel. One thing lead to another and Santa II learned Spanish, fell in love with Puri and married her. Because the Native Americans and Mexicans couldn't pronounce the name Claus, the locals would call them Santa and Puri Clos.

After a while and after many inventions which included Puri dolls, with different costumes some Native American, some Mexican, Spanish and even an English costumes, Santa II realized that what his father had taught him — that someone had to provide gifts to all the children of the world — was what he really wanted to do.

Santa II decided that he would go further south — to the south pole — and establish a Santa Land of his own. He knew that he could invent many toys for children and perhaps could even help his big brother Santa Jr. in delivering gifts.

So, off they went, Santa II and Puri to establish their own Santa Land at the South Pole. Santa II even called Santa Jr. one time, told him of his plans and asked Santa Jr. to send him a seed so he could plant his own Elf Tree. By then Elfs had joined together in a Union called EWOW - Elf Workers of the World - and were demanding not only better wages but more trees to be planted in order to increase the population of elves. They were even demanding that a new string of trees be developed in order to grow female elves, to be called elfis — not to be confused with elfi the cow.

Santa II and Puri reached the South Pole and worked hard to establish Santa Land South. After the first batch of elves was harvested off the trees, Santa II was quick to reach an agreement with EWOW. More trees were planted and even an elfi tree was planted. You can bet that all the elves were very anxious to harvest the first elfi tree.

In order to keep Puri happy, Santa II insisted that the new elves speak Spanish and form mariachi bands just like the one that played at Santa II and Puri's wedding.

Many years passed and Santa II continued working on his inventions. He was determined that he would create many new toys for the children of the world and then join with his brother Santa Jr. in spreading cheer throughout the land.

Through the years Santa kept inventing more Puri dolls, who could drive an Etsel and had a house of her own called a Puri house. He also invented a game that could be played on TV that was called Puritiendo — which had Puri fighting with demons in order to rescue Santa II. He even came up with a new doll developed from his experiences in Texas. The doll was in the shape of a horny toad standing up, with big muscles, wore a red mask and knew karate.

During all this time Santa II and Puri did not neglect their love life. The year in which their son was born they happened to be in Lubbock visiting with friends from the G.I. Forum. Their son was born in Lubbock. Santa II thought about naming their new son Santa III but they found out that Santa Jr. had also had a son in his home at the North Pole and named him Santa.

Puri convinced Santa II to name their son Pancho, after her father. No one really knows the date that Pancho Clos was born but some say that it was in the Chinese year of the child close to Christmas.

After Pancho was a little grown up, Santa II finally knew that he had enough inventions to start helping his brother to — as his father had wanted — spread cheer throughout the world. Santa II had even developed a way in which they wouldn't have to climb through the chimney in order to deliver the toys to the kids. When he was inventing this, he had in mind the many poor kids who had no chimneys. The invention was called a transporter. Santa would just stand at a designated spot and have his elf engineer, Bones, energize and move him from one place to another. He would really get a thrill out of saying "one to beam up".

Santa II faxed (another of his inventions) his brother Santa Jr. a message to the North Pole asking for a meeting. Both brothers agreed to meet somewhere in Texas, in the middle of the North and South Pole. Santa Jr. would travel in his sleigh pulled by reindeer and Santa II would travel in his sleigh pulled by burros (since there were no reindeer in the south pole and really the burros proved for a smoother ride).

Both Santas took off from their home at the same time and met over Cape Canaveral near Houston. Both Santa stopped in mid-air and started to talk over old times, Santa Jr's troubles with EWOW, Santa II's new inventions and especially about Santa Jr's son, Santa and Santa II's son, Pancho.

The Santas had no idea that at the precise minute that they were having their reunion, Cape Kennedy had just launched one of their rockets to the moon. Well the rocket hit both Santas and sent them burning toward the earth. Their remains landed on Easter Island which then was engulfed in a revolution between the Easter Bunny and his chickens who laid all the Easter eggs.

It seem that the Easter Bunny was demanding that more and more eggs be laid by the chickens. The chicken, taking the suggestions of EWOW and the Elfs were also demanding a union called CUTE (Chickens United To the Environment). The Chickens claimed that the Easter Bunny was threatening the environment since she kept demanding that the chickens lay more and more eggs and, in order to lay eggs, chickens had to build nests that would make them break more and more limbs off the trees and eventually eliminate the trees in the rain forests. But that's another story.

Back to the story about the Santas.

Well after Santa Jr. and Santa II died, the job of spreading cheers and gifts to all the children of the world fell upon their sons Santa and Pancho.

Both sons, cousins, agreed that they would help each other in delivering. Santa — Santa Jr's son - would deliver to all the kids of the northern part of the world. Pancho, since he knew Spanish, would deliver to all the kids of the southern part of the world.

Throughout the years Santa, Santa Jr's son, had maintained his tradition of wearing a red suit and cap, having reindeer pull his sleigh, and shouting ho-ho-ho. And of course growing a white beard.

Pancho, Santa II's son and cousin to Santa from the north pole, had changed a little. Because of his Mexican influence, Pancho now wears a sombrero, a Mexican zarape and has continued to us his father's burros pull his sleigh. Some of their names include Clemente, Camilio, Valente and Susana - Pancho really is dedicated to equal opportunity. Pancho also sports a long black beard. His wife is not called Ms. Clos but is named Conchita.

The biggest difference in Santa Claus and Pancho Clos is that instead of shouting ho-ho-ho and Merry Christmas when Pancho delivers his gifts to the kids, we hear a tremendous — AAAA-Jooooo-Ah, que viva la Raza y Feliz Navidad!

As I said before, you might think that this story is a little hard to think that it is true. What we do know for sure is that Pancho Clos will be in Lubbock on December 17th at Maggie Trejo community Center at 2 pm to give goodies to all the kids. Everyone is invited and it is totally free. Maybe you take the opportunity to can ask him in person if this story is really true!

End copyright Bidal Aguero



The American GI Forum
Invites You to Come and Meet
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This project made possible through fundraising by the American GI Fourm, the Low Rider Club, grants from The Lubbock Area Foundation and donations from Lubbock Power and Light and El Editor Newspaper



The Knights of Columbus Council 3008 celebrated their 60th Anniversary on Nov. 11 at the Lubbock Country Club. Special guests were Worthy State Deputy, Larry Zapatae and wife Susan and Worthy Supreme Director Ron Gay and wife Terri. Councilmember Phylis Jones recongnized Council 3008 with a special proclamation from Mayor David Miller's office and the City of Lubbock.

Special recognitions were made to S.J. Neylaner (Charter Member) and Paul Meyer (61 years) and other brother Knights for 50, 40, 30 and 20 years of service. Past Grand Kinights of Council 3008 were also recongnized.

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Lubbock Centro Aztlan
would like to thank the following for this year's production of "The Wondrous Santa Suit Montelongo's Restaurant Lubbock Arts Grant Committee
Alicia Tafoya-Director
The Cast - Ysidro Gutierrez, Jaime Ponce Zenaida, Azelia and Eliana Reyes, Nicholas Riojas, Lile Medina Quirino, Debbie Petrick, Roger Quannah Settler
Music by Rosa Salazar
Supporting Crew
Emily Diller, Olga Riojas, Aguero, Marisol Aguero, Mollie Riojas
Gracias y Feliz Navidad