"El Respeto al Derecho Ajeno es la Paz"

Lic Benito Juarez

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Hispanic Experts Join White House Health Reform Strategists

By Soraya Schwartz

Following a March 5 White House meeting of some 150 major stakeholders in President Obama's promised national health reform package, a series of regional summits has been launched, starting in Dearborn, Mich. Through April, additional forums are set for California, lowa, North Carolina and

President Obama detailed the process and led the discussion at the White House session, where some half dozen Hispanic health reform advocates participated. The president said he expects to see Congress complete health legislation before the end of 2009.

Governors Jennifer Granholm of Michigan and Jim Doyle of Wisconsin were invited to moderate the March 12 Dearborn session, which brought together a diverse group to present their concerns and ideas. The day started with a video message from the president and summary reports on the White House interaction the week prior and com- administration. Also joining in the munity meetings that took place in first regional meeting were doctors, December.

council, represented the Obama political parties.



patients, insurers, policy experts Melody Barnes, director of the and health care providers, as well White House domestic policy as representatives from both major

Among those contributing ideas at the day-long White House event were National Alliance for Hispanic Health president Jane Delgado, National Hispanic Medical Association founding leader Elena

Ríos, National Council of La Raza president Janet Murguía, League of United Latin American Citizens executive director Brent Wilkes and U.S. Rep. Xavier Becerra (D-Calif.).

President Obama set the agenda: "We can no longer talk about whether we will have health care reform, but how we will have effective reform and how are we going to do it."

Those attending, among them numerous Democratic and Republican members of Congress as well as advocates representing both business and labor constituencies, were divided into work groups to discuss essential elements a bill should contain.

Rios and Delgado shared their assessments with Weekly Report.

Delgado commented on a major shift on how the nation will look at health care in the future. "The President is already clear. He's saying this is all a down payment. We'll get as much down as we can, but we're moving in the right direction. And we've never had this much momentum."

Rios emphasized, "Everybody wanted to work together and had great ideas. I am optimistic." She added the reminder: "The demographics of our country are changing. We need a bill that is responsive to all Americans."

Becerra had contributed to his session that it is essential to ensure

protections for the nation's undocumented immigrants in any plans.

Rios noted a key difference between 2009 and 1993, when the Clinton administration launched its ill-fated health care reform effort. While today the nation has a much larger and still growing non-white population, in 1993 Hispanics and other persons of color were marginalized. Now they are seen as part of the fabric of America and the backbone of the economy."

NHMA is ready to work with the White House and congressional leaders "to make the new legislation more responsive to our community's needs," Ríos said. Affordable inner city, rural and border health care will be vital to provide accessibility for Hispanics and other people of color, she cited, stressing the need for more interpreters, language services, cultural outreach programs and health information technology.

The White House issued an invitation to the general public to join the discussion by communicating their interests to: www.HealthReform.gov

(Micah Muscolino contributed to reporting and writing this article.)

Expertos Hispanos Colaboran con Estrategas del Casa Blanca Sobre la Reforma del Sistema de Salud

XPERTOS HISPANOS COLABORAN CON ESTRATEGAS DE Soraya Schwartz

Después de una reunión el 5 de marzo en la Casa Blanca de unas 150 personas importantes con interés en el paquete de reformas de la salud nacional que prometió el presidente Obama, se ha lanzado una serie de cumbres regionales, comenzando con Dearborn, Michigan. Mediante el mes de abril, habrá otros foros en California, Iowa, Carolina del Norte y Vermont.

El presidente Obama detalló el proceso y dirigió la discusión en la sesión en la Casa Blanca, en la que participaron una media docena de expertos hispanos que abogan por la reforma del sistema nacional de la salud. El presidente indicó que quiere que el Congreso acabe con la legislación dedicada a la reforma antes del cierre del 2009.

Fueron invitados a moderar la sesión en Dearborn el 12 de marzo los gobernadores Jennifer Granholm de Michigan y Jim Doyle de Wisconsin, la cual reunió a un grupo diverso para presentar sus inquietudes y sus ideas. El día comenzó con un mensaje por video del presidente y un resumen de los informes sobre la interacción de la semana anterior en la Casa Blança y de reuniones comunitarias que se realizaron en diciem-

Melody Barnes, directora del consejo de políticas domésticas de la Casa Blanca representó a la administración de Obama. También participando en la primera reunión regional fueron médicos, pacientes, representantes de compañías de seguro, expertos en las políticas y proveedores de cuidados médicos, así como representantes de ambos partidos políticos.

Entre los que contribuyeron ideas durante el evento de la Casa Blanca, que duró un día entero, fueron presidenta de la National Alliance for Hispanic Health, Jane Delgado, dirigente fundadora de la National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA), Elena Ríos, presidenta del Consejo Nacional de La Raza, Janet Murguía, director ejecutivo de la Liga de Ciu-Hispanic Caucus Meets with Medical Association (NHMA), Elena Ríos, presidenta del Consejo Nadadanos Latino Americanos Unidos, Brent Wilkes y representante de los EE.UU. por California, Xavier Becerra.

El presidente Obama marcó la agenda. "Ya no podemos hablar sobre si tendremos reforma del sistema de saludo, sino sobre cómo tendremos reforma eficaz y cómo lo vamos a lograr".

Los participantes, entre ellos numerosos miembros del Congreso demócratas y republicanos, así como representantes de grupos de interés de empresas y de mano de obra, se dividieron en grupos de trabajo para discutir elementos esenciales de un proyecto de ley.

Ríos y Delgado compartieron sus evaluaciones de la sesión con Hispanic Link Weekly Report.

Delgado comentó sobre un cambio importante sobre la manera en que "discussed how the administrala nación verá los cuidados médicos en el futuro. "Ya lo tiene claro el Presidente. Él está diciendo que todo lo que es esto es una cuota inicial. Pondremos lo más que podamos, pero estamos avanzando. Y nunca antes hemos tenido este ritmo".

Enfatizó Ríos, "Todos querían colaborar y tuvieron muy buenas ideas. tor of America's Voice, outlines Yo estoy optimista". Añadió un recordatorio: "La demografía de nuestro país está cambiando. Necesitamos un proyecto de ley que atienda a todos los estadounidenses".

Becerra había contribuido en su sesión que es esencial asegurar protecciones para los inmigrantes indocumentados de la nación en cualquier plan que surja.

Ríos notó una diferencia clave entre el 2009 y 1993, cuando la administración Clinton lanzó su malhadado esfuerzo de reforma de la salud. Mientras que hoy la nación tiene una población no-blanca mucho más grande y que sigue creciendo, en 1993 quedaron marginadas las personas hispanas y de otros grupos de color. Ahora se perciben como parte del mosaico de los Estados Unidos y la espina dorsal de la economía".

Ríos indicó que la NHMA está dispuesta a trabajar con la Casa Blanca y los dirigentes del Congreso para "hacer que la nueva legislación responda mejor a las necesidades de nuestra comunidad". Serán vitales centros médicos de bajo costo en el casco urbano, las áreas rurales y en la frontera para ofrecerles acceso a los hispanos y a otras personas de color, citó, enfatizando la necesidad que hay de más intérpretes, servicios lingüísticos, year. programas culturales de enlace comunitario y tecnología para la información médica.

La Casa Blanca invitó al público en general a participar en la discusión

comunicando sus intereses en: www.HealthReform.gov. (Soraya Schwartz es reportera con Hispanic Link News Service. Micah Muscolino también contribuyó con el reportaje y la redacción de esta nota). © 2009

U.S. Can Act Immediately to Halt Import of Ak-47 Rifles Fueling Gun Violence on U.S. Mexico Border PVP Tells Congress

Washington, D.C. The Obama Administration could act immediately to stop the import into the U.S. of AK-47-type assault rifles that have become one of the favored weapons of Mexican drug cartels, Violence Policy Center

Legislative Director Kristen Rand told a Congressional subcommittee today. For a copy of Rand's testimony, please see http://www. vpc.org/randtestify.pdf.

"Enforcement of the existing ban on the importation of foreign-made assault rifles would have significant impact on the firepower available to Mexican drug cartels," Rand testified before the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee

House Foreign Affairs Committee. The ban was first implemented by the George H.W. Bush Administration in 1989 and is separate from the now-expired federal assault weapons ban. It does not require congressional action to be enforced or modified.

"Unfortunately," stated Rand, "the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) "the federal agency charged with enforcing the import ban " has allowed the ban to collapse and has even helped to create loopholes to circumvent it, such as allowing importers to bring foreign-made assault weapons into the country in parts." Rand pointed out that ATF officials have stated in congressional testimony

that Mexican drug lords increasingly seek military-style weapons easily available on the U.S. civilian market, including

AK-47-type assault rifles.

Rand told the subcommittee that President Barack Obama and Attorney General Eric Holder could immediately direct ATF to strictly exercise its statutory authority to stop the importation of all semiautomatic assault rifles as "non-sporting" weapons under existing provisions of the 1968 Gun Control

Act. "Cutting off these imports is a simple, effective measure the U.S. government can take right now to ratchet down the firepower available to the drug cartels wreaking havoc along the U.S./Mexico border," said Rand.

The Violence Policy Center has issued numerous studies on the increasing lethality of military-bred civilian firearms legally available in the United States. These reports are available at www.vpc.org.

"ATF is undermining its own law enforcement efforts on the U.S./Mexico border by allowing importers to skirt the assault weapons import ban, a law that was put in place to reduce the firepower available to U.S. drug traffickers. These weapons are coming into the country by the thousands, are being acquired by traffickers who smuggle them into Mexico, and are used to attack law enforcement, public officials, and innocent bystanders," said Rand.

President Obama

Washington, DC - Today, President Obama had a robust and strategic meeting with members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC). The meeting's main focus was the topic of immigration reform. According to the White House, The President tion will work with the CHC to address immigration concerns in both the short and long term."

Frank Sharry, Executive Direchis take on the meeting:

"The CHC's meeting with President Obama is yet another in a long lists of signs that the

supportive of immigration reform. During his presidential campaign, Congressional Hispanic Caucus get unscrupulous employers' taking advantage of our country's low-wage workers." it, and we thank them for continuing to keep this issue front and center on the agenda.

moving forward on his commitin a way that lives up to our best ideals as Americans and not our

Administration and Congress are

worst fears."

NCLR Lauds Caucus and Obama's Commitment to Immigration Reform

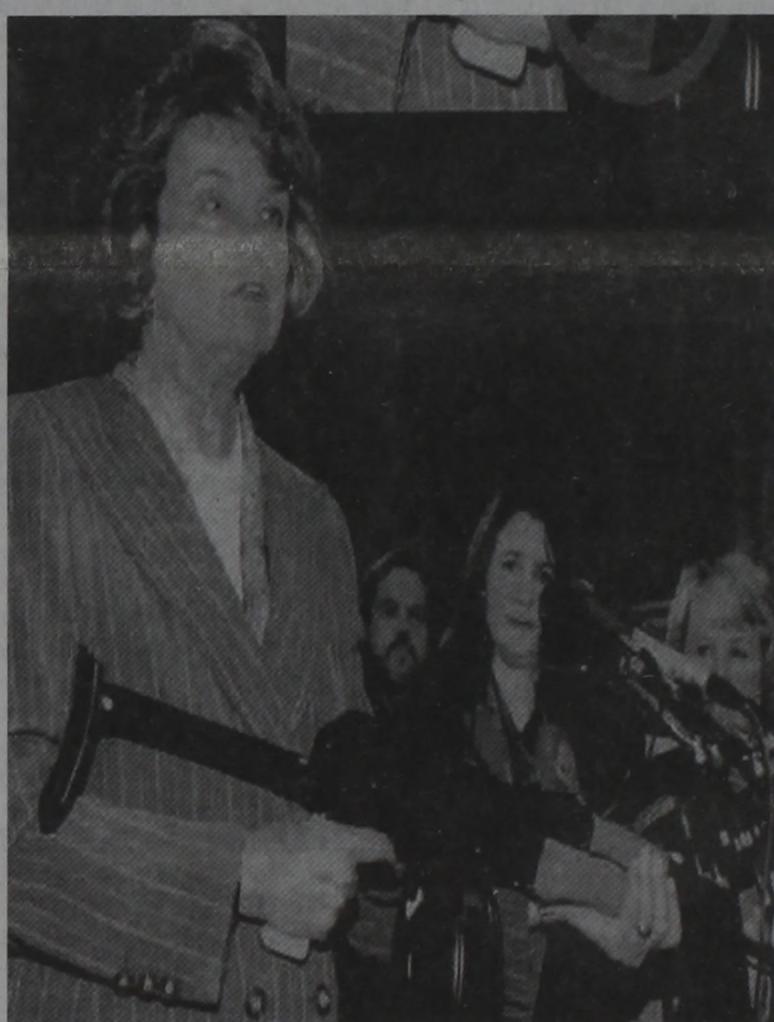
Washington, DC-Calling today's meeting between the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and President Obama, "a step in the right direction toward immigration reform," the National Council of La Raza's (NCLR) President and CEO Janet Murguía said she is optimistic that immigration reform will be addressed this

"The leadership on immigration reform from the Congressional Hispanic Caucus should be applauded, and we appreciate the President's continued commitment to this issue," said Murguía. "We are dedicated to working with the administration and leaders in the House and Senate from both sides of the aisle to make the President's campaign promise of immigration

reform a reality this year."

"The Latino community has high expecta- forward. tions for our leaders on this issue. It is critical to resolve the most important civil rights we agree that our priority should be fixing the initiate an immigration reform that will help us achieve long-term economic growth."

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GAO Report Shows Bush Administration Fails Workers **Opportunity for Obama Administration** to Chart a New Course

Washington, DC - A new report from the U.S. Government Accountability Office the President committed to tackling (GAO) shows that the Bush Administration's Department of Labor (DOL) failed this issue during his first year. We in its mission to protect workers and enforce labor laws. The report concludes that expect him to make good on that "Labor has left thousands of actual victims of wage theft who sought federal govcommitment. The members of the ernment assistance with nowhere to turn. Unfortunately, far too often the result is

"Under the previous Administration, unscrupulous employers were given a long leash to break laws and undermine workers through lax enforcement," said Frank Sharry, Executive Director of America's Voice. "The Obama Administration and We look forward to the President Congress are taking steps to undo the wrongs of the previous Administration, and place the Department of Labor's priorities on protecting all workers. In addition to ment to solving this moral dilemma a new emphasis on worker protection, the Administration must put forward an immigration reform proposal that creates a level playing field for all workers."

The report will be examined during a hearing held today at the House Education and Labor Committee chaired by George Miller (D-CA). Chairman Miller has been leading the charge against wage abuses, and has previously highlighted two separate investigations that have found that the DOL's Wage and Hour Division has failed to take the necessary steps to investigate and eradicate violations of the law.

Today's testimony comes on the heels of another recent GAO study that documented how Bush Administration immigration enforcement efforts were often directed at non-criminals instead of the truly bad actors, demonstrating the misplaced priorities of the previous administration. The White House is now charged with the responsibility of plotting a new course and re-evaluating their priorities moving

U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis has already pledged to reinvigorate the Wage and Hour Division in light of the GAO findings, saying "I am committed to ensuring issueof our time," continued Murguía. "While that every worker is paid at least the minimum wage, that those who work overtime are properly compensated, that child labor laws are strictly enforced and that every nation's economy, we also believe that we can worker is provided a safe and healthful environment."

"I applaud President Obama, Secretary Solis, Chairman Miller and others working in the current Administration and Congress to improve accountability and enforcement of our nation's labor laws," said Sharry. "They also know that we need comprehensive immigration reform to bring even more stability to the workforce, make sure all workers and employers are paying their fair share of taxes, and prove once again that we are both a nation of immigrants and a nation of laws."

America's Voice - Harnessing the power of American voices and American values to win common sense immigration reform.

Editorial Guest Commentary

Obama Flinches on Immigration

March 24, 2009 NY Times Editorial

In a little-noticed act of political faintheartedness, the Obama administration has pulled back from nominating Thomas Saenz, a highly regarded civil-rights lawyer and counsel to the mayor of Los Angeles, to run the Justice Department's civil rights division.

Mr. Saenz, the former top litigator in Los Angeles for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, or Maldef, was privately offered the job in January. The floating of his name led to fierce outbursts from anti-immigrant groups and blogs, which detest him for being so good at what he does.

He was a leader of the successful fight to block California's Proposition 187, an unconstitutional effort to deny social services and schooling to illegal immigrants. He has defended Latino day laborers who were targets of misguided local crackdowns, from illegal police stings to unconstitutional anti-solicitation ordinances. An editorial in Investor's Business Daily slimed Mr. Saenz by calling him "an open-borders extremist" and said Maldef wanted to give California back to Mexico.

None of it was true, but it was apparently too much for the White House. Mr. Saenz was ditched in favor of Maryland's labor secretary, Thomas Perez, who has a solid record but is not as closely tied to immigrant rights.

Immigrant advocates are stuck with the sinking feeling that Mr. Obama's supposed enthusiasm for immigration reform will wilt under pressure and heat. Representative Luis Gutiérrez of Illinois, a member of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, found it sadly unsurprising that a lawyer could be rejected for the nation's top civil-rights job because he had stood up for civil rights. "In what other position do you find that your life experience, your educational knowledge and commitment to an issue actually hurts you?" he asked.

Mr. Obama may have avoided a nasty fight this time. But if he is ever going to win the battle to put 12 million illegal immigrants on a path to citizenship, he will to have to confront and dismantle the core restrictionist argument: that being an illegal immigrant is an unpardonable crime, one that strips away fundamental protections and forgives all manner of indecent treatment.

The Constitution's bedrock protections do not apply to just the nativeborn. The suffering that illegal immigrants endure — from raids to workplace exploitation to mistreatment in detention — is a civil-rights crisis. It cannot be left to fester while we wait for the big immigration bill that may or may not arrive under this president.

Mr. Saenz would have been an ideal candidate to reaffirm values that have been lost in the poisoned immigration debate, had Mr. Obama dared to nominate him.

NO GOLDFISH ON ARIZONA'S DESERT

By José de la Isla

Hispanic Link News Service

It's said that goldfish have a memory that lasts three seconds. They live in the present all the time.

Human beings, on the other hand, have long-term as well as short-term memories. Our brains are perfect instruments for self-instruction. We learn from the past and the errors of our ways.

That's why I can't get Diego out of my mind.

We met up four years ago when photographer Wilhelm Scholz and I were on assignment in the Arizona desert, south of Tucson, in the Mexican town of Agua Prieta. There my new-found friend Diego told me of his travels north from the highlands of Guatemala to his apprehension when he attempted to cross the line into the United States without papers. Without work or resources, he told me he was trying to find his way back home.

The man cried intermittently throughout the day. "The whole village left their farm plots when the death squads came," he said as he spilled his odyssey. Some 2,000 refugees from his area fled across the border into the Mexican state of Chiápas. He and his wife resettled on a plot of land to do the subsistence farming they had known all their lives. His wife bore a daughter. Shortly thereafter, she died.

He was told that a farm worker in the United States could earn up to \$60 a sus terrenos cuando llegaron los escuadrones de la muerte", recontó al day, 663 pesos back then. Able to borrow \$1,200 for travel and expenses, he reached the border and paid a smuggler who promised to deliver him to a U.S. job. But he was caught. Stranded in the desert, Diego shared his experience and fears with me. He isn't a goldfish.

He had no way to pay back the loan or reclaim his land in Chiápas, nor to feed and educate his daughter — not even the price of a bus ticket. Mexican officials told me they feared that Diego didn't have the street smarts to keep from getting waylaid as he headed south again.

I have heard hundreds of stories from people trapped by similar circumstances. I've also received streams of comments from elements among my countrymen who fervently believe people like Diego brought it on themselves. They ought not to export their personal problems to the United States.

On March 17 the National Security Archive, a Washington, D.C., institute, disclosed documents confirming that our government knew all along that the Guatemalan officials we supported with arms and cash from 1960 to 1996 were behind the disappearances and assassinations that led to the flight of thousands of Diegos. It is no longer possible for the United States to claim we had no such knowledge — that we are goldfish when it comes to Guatemala.

That small nation's U.S.-backed army battled guerrillas in its highlands. More than 200,000 persons were killed or reported missing during those years. Most were Mayan Indians, forced to take sides or murdered if they wouldn't. Death squads ruled. Sometimes vengeful people used the political calamity as a pretext to settle personal scores, leveraging opportunities out of the horrendous situation.

We have been told before about what was happening, but by partisans and ideologues. So have others tried telling us, like novelist Francisco Goldman in his book The Long Night of White Chickens, Sister Dianna Ortiz who wrote about being sequestered and tortured in The Blindfold's Eyes, and Nobel-laureate Rigoberta Manchu in her autobiographical account about her family and village.

These new declassified disclosures of old documents simply verify what others have been telling us.

value of having a memory. Migrants who opted to flee their homelands are collateral damage, the human consequence of a script we sanctioned, if not wrote.

If we don't insist, even now, on full disclosure and appropriate remedy, we become three-second goldfish, endlessly swimming inside the bowl, reinventing reality at every turn, and going nowhere.

[José de la Isla's latest book, Day Night Life Death Hope, is distributed by The Ford Foundation. He writes a weekly commentary for Hispanic Link News Service and is author of The Rise of Hispanic Political Power (2003). Contact him by e-mail at joseisla3@yahoo.com.] © 2009

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The Meaning of Holy Week

By: Ysidro Gutierrez

Seens like yesterday but this year's celebration of Holy Week is just two weeks away. I love this time of year. Easter is my favorite holiday for many reasons but primarily because it is the day our Lord, Savior and Redeemer was raised from the dead. Every year people in the RCIA at our Lady of Grace Church ask the same question: (a question I love to get from them, and a question I love to answer) Who raised Jesus from the dead? Was it God the Father, God the Holy Spirit, or did Jesus rise by His own Power as God the Son. Every year I give the same answer.

Scripture answers this question for us. Romans 10:9 "For, if you confess ... that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Here St. Paul shows us that God the Father raised Jesus from the dead. Romans 8:11 "If the Spirit of the one ments for in-state tuition and establish a path to legal status and eventual who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the one who raised Christ citizenship for undocumented youth. These measures would address sigfrom the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also, through His Spirit that dwells in you." Here St. Paul tells us it was God the Holy Spirit, who were brought to this country at a young age and desire to fully contribute raised Jesus from the dead. From the Gospel of John 2:19-21, "Jesus anto American society." swered ... Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up. ... He was speaking of His body." And from John 10:17-18 "I lay down my life in tion for the DREAM Act. Help us build momentum for this legislation: order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again." When ators to co-sponsor the DREAM Act. Enter your zip code above to obtain we read these passages, we see Jesus raising himself from the dead. The contact information for your members of Congress. answer is: It was God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead. Here is the wonder and mystery of our DREAM Act in 2009. triune God.

But, for me, Holy Week is the time in Salvation History when God our DREAM Act in Congress! Father fulfilled His promise to us. He sent His only begotten Son to us in fullfillment of the Scriptures. During Holy Week, the will of the Father is done through the obedience unto death by our Lord Jesus.

Holy Week started on Palm Sunday or Passion Sunday: with Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem - Had the people not greeted Him, the rocks and stones would have. The Passion would follow in a few days

On Monday He cried over Jerusalem. Immediately after wards He cleaned our the Temple - Zeal for His house was the reason. He also cursed the fig tree which bore no fruit - which represented the Jewish nation of the day who refused to believe in Him.

On Tuesday He went to the temple to t.eaching in the temple - If you destroy this temple I will rebuild it in 3 days He said. In modern days we Catholics celebrate the Chrism Mass on Tuesday.

Wednesday of Holy Week Judas plots with the Jewish leaders to betray

Holy Thursday ws the night of the Lords Last Supper – Jesus foretells Peter's denial, He washes the feet of the Apostles and it is the day of the INSTITUTION OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST. He then goes to Gethsemane – where He suffers The betrayal and the arrest.

Good Friday are the events of St. Peter's Threefold Denial, The Trial under Jewish law, and the sentence by Pontius Pilate. But it is the day of His Crucifixion and Death on the Cross for us while we were yet sinners money for student fees and books at a state university? and burial.

Holy Saturday is the day of the Celebration of the Easter Vigil Mass during which we Baptize new Catholics and welcome them into our Community of Faith. This is followed by Easter Sunday the day we celebrate the Resurrection – and experience Easter Joy.

Have a happy Easter.

NO HAY PECES DORADOS EN EL DESIERTO DE ARIZONA

José de la Isla

Se dice que los peces dorados tienen una memoria que dura tres segundos. Viven todo el tiempo en el presente.

Por otro lado, los seres humanos, contamos con memorias a largo y a corto plazo. Nuestro cerebro es el instrumento perfecto para la instrucción propia. Aprendemos del pasado y de los errores que hemos cometido. Eso por eso que no se me quita del pensamiento Diego, viene sidewenes

Nos conocimos hace cuatro años cuando el fotógrafo Wilhelm Scholz y yo estábamos por razones de trabajo en el desierto de Arizona, al sur de Tucson, en el pueblo mexicano llamado Agua Prieta. Allí mi nuevo amigo Diego me contó de su trayecto hacia el norte desde las alturas de Guatemala y de su detención cuando quiso cruzar la frontera a los Estados Unidos sin documentos. Sin empleo ni recursos, me dijo que estaba buscando la forma de volver a casa.

El hombre lloró intermitentemente durante el día. "El pueblo entero dejó describirme su odisea. Unos 2.000 refugiados de su región huyeron al otro lado de la frontera al estado mexicano de Chiapas. Diego y su esposa se volvieron a asentar allí con un terreno para dedicarse a la agricultura de subsistencia que habían conocido toda su vida. Su esposa dio a luz a una government. Is that good or bad? hija. Poco después, la señora murió.

A Diego le dijeron que un campesino en los Estados Unidos podía ganar hasta \$60 al día, en aquel entonces equivalente a 663 pesos. Pudo prestarse \$1200 para pagar su viaje y gastos, y llegó a la frontera donde pagó a un contrabandista quien le prometió llevar a un empleo en los Estados Unidos. Pero lo capturaron. Abandonado en el desierto, Diego compartió conmigo sus experiencias y sus temores. Él sí que no es pez dorado.

No tuvo manera ni de pagar el préstamo ni reclamar su terreno en Chiapas, ni de alimentar y educar a su hija – no tenía tan siquiera para pagarse un boleto de autobús. Unos agentes de orden mexicanos me dijeron que temían que Diego no tuviera la viveza callejera como para evitar que lo acosaran en lo que se dirigiera de nuevo hacia el sur.

He oído cientos de historias de personas atrapadas por circunstancias parecidas. También he recibido caudales de comentarios de elementos de entre mis paisanos quienes creen con fervor que las personas como Diego se buscaron las malas circunstancias. Que no deberían exportar sus problemas personales a los Estados Unidos.

El 17 de marzo, el National Security Archive, un instituto en Washington, D.C., develó documentos que confirman que nuestro gobierno tuvo conocimiento desde un principio que los agentes del orden guatemaltecos a quienes apoyamos con armas y con dinero desde 1969 hasta 1996 eran prison. los responsables de las desapariciones y los asesinatos que llevaron a la huida de miles de personas como Diego. Ya no es posible que los Estados Unidos declare que no teníamos tal conocimiento – que somos peces dorados cuando de Guatemala se trata.

La fuerza armada de esa pequeña nación, con respaldo de los Estados Unidos, luchó contra la guerrilla en las alturas del país. Murieron o fueron reportadas desaparecidas más de 200.000 personas durante aquellos años. The decades of official denials that have come our way don't stand up. La mayoría de ellas eran indígenas maya, obligados a tomar partido o ser asesinados sin no se sumaban a uno u otro bando. Reinaban los escuadrones de la muerte. A veces personas vengativas se aprovechaban Unless we accept the truth and correct our course, we have missed the de la calamidad política como pretexto para ajustar cuentas o para sacar provecho de oportunidades surgidas de la horrenda situación.

Ya nos habían contado de lo que ocurría en Guatemala, pero los que nos contaban eran partidarios e ideólogos. Otros también han intentado iluminarnos, como el novelista Francisco Goldman con su novela La larga noche de los pollos blancos, la hermana Dianna Ortíz, quien escribiera sobre su secuestro y tortura en The Blindfold's Eyes, y premiada Nobel Rigoberta Menchú con su recuento autobiográfico de su familia y su pueblo.

Las décadas de negativas oficiales con las que nos han querido embaucar queda comprobado que carecen de fundamento. Estas nuevas revelaciones de viejos documentos ya no clasificados confidenciales sencillamente verifican lo que otros nos han estado diciendo.

A menos que aceptemos la verdad y rectifiquemos nuestro curso, habremos perdido el valor de tener memoria. Los migrantes quienes optaron por huir de su patria son un perjuicio concomitante, la consecuencia humana de un guión que aceptamos, si no redactamos directamente.

Si no insistimos, aun hoy, que haya transparencia completa y un remedio apropiado, nos convertiremos en el pez dorado con memoria de tres segundos, nadando sin parar alrededor de la pecera, reinventando la realidad con cada vuelta, sin llegar a ninguna parte.

[José de la Isla, cuyo último libro Day Night Life Death Hope, lo distribuye la Fundación Ford, redacta un comentario semanal para Hispanic Link News Service. También es autor de The Rise of Hispanic Political Power (2003). Comuníquese con él a: joseisla3@yahoo.com]. © 2009

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Dear Friends:

This month, the "Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act" will be introduced in both the House and the Senate. The DREAM Act would restore states' rights to determine residency requirenificant barriers to the success of hardworking immigrant students who

Today, advocates from across the nation will participate in a Day of Ac-

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Sincerely,

The National Council of La Raza

Hispanics lose with the American President's current stimulus plan

By Raoul Lowery Contreras

Billions, trillions of dollars are being tossed around by President Barack Obama to stimulate the economy. Unfortunately for Hispanics, they are being screwed by the deal.

Far more Hispanics work and pay taxes than the non-workers in the country. So, money will be taken from them in the form of higher taxes and given to those who do not work and produce.

Hispanics will be shortchanged because money will go to the wrong

Big-city Hispanic kids drop out in large numbers from high school, albeit in smaller percentages than blacks. So where is the program to keep these kids in school?

Why doesn't the president create "Opportunity Grants" that will award every kid that does graduate with enough money to get a start in life; money for a car, money for a year's tuition at a community college or

The money could be in the form of a direct expenditure to the school or retail outlet so it wouldn't be wasted on chips or beer.

Where is such a program?

What we find are plans to build new schools in Milwaukee while student numbers there dwindle. There are empty schools in Milwaukee.

To supplement teachers why doesn't the president send soldiers, sailors and Marines into the classrooms to teach kids skills they can use in their futures? Oops, we wouldn't want to anger the teachers' unions, would

Where are the Junior ROTC programs? Kids love these programs particularly in urban areas. Take San Francisco, for example. There, the peacenik "Better Dead Than Red" school board announced the elimination of a Junior ROTC unit in the only school that had the program.

Keep in mind that this is one example of direct federal dollars spent in a locality without being drained off by district administrators.

The mostly minority kids objected; their parents objected. I object. School boards and the federal government should encourage this type of program throughout all urban communities. Junior ROTC programs promote discipline, achievement and self-esteem among these minority kids. More importantly, these are voluntary programs that cost the individuals nothing but their time. They have plenty of time.

So, why isn't Obama promoting such programs? He doesn't really care about promoting discipline, achievement and self-esteem. He knows that such kids are dangerous to his long-term prospects. If all black and Hispanic kids graduated from high school they would leave the plantation.

Obama and his Democratic Party do not want kids who know who and what they are and want. We will see very few federal dollars spent on anything other than programs that make people more dependent on the

Robert Reich made a controversial statement that he hoped programs weren't passed that benefited only "white construction workers." He's right, Obama should create and support programs that benefit urban core kids. That's where the problem lies, not among unemployed union construction workers.

For every unemployed white construction worker, there must be dozens of unemployed and unemployable Hispanic and black "yuutes."

In case no one has noticed, more than half of the 2.3 million state/federal prison inmates are black and illiterate. In case no one has noticed upwards of 70 percent of all black births and upwards of 30 percent of Hispanic children are born out of wedlock with no father in the house. Almost 100 percent of these children are supported by state, federal and local welfare.

Why doesn't President Obama create a program and fund it that tracks down each father of an illegitimate child. Then it could force them to pay some child support. Every dollar they do pay is one dollar less that the taxpayers will have to pay. If they don't pay, to jail they go. There will be a net gain, it seems to me, for jail is not a fun place.

I take that back, every conceivable illicit drug is available in jail, every form of sex is available and informal same-sex marriages abound in

I ask the president to really stimulate the economy and work to change bad behavior among many that drag us down. That is, it seems to me, to be a worthwhile expenditure of stimulus dollars.

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\$700M Plan Announced in Border Drug War



The White House Tuesday announced it would provide \$700 million to strengthen border security against Mexican drug cartels.

The administration said it would increase security funding and border patrol deployments. Funds will help Mexico buy five helicopters for its army and air force, and new surveillance aircraft for its navy. It will double the number of border security teams and will place increased numbers of federal agents and other resources at the border.

Funding is also provided for improved communications technology for Mexican law enforcement and immigration officials, and for beef-

ing up efforts against spillover into the United

of a scheduled trip by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Homeland Security Secretary Janet

erating violence in Mexico and

States spurs increased intelligence

money and weapons into Mexico.

Obama's action enhances the Me-

billion program to assist Mexico's

The plan, developed by the Jus-

tice and Homeland Security de-

partments, was set to be unveiled

at the White House by Homeland

Secretary Janet Napolitano. The

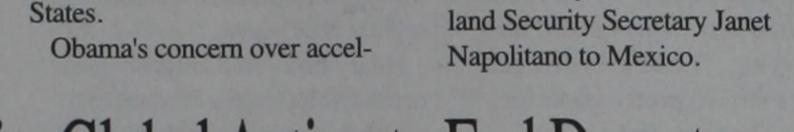
announcement comes in advance

ridia initiative, a three-year, \$1.4

war against drug cartels.

the effect it has in the United

sharing to curtail the flow of



Obama Calls for Global Action to End Downturn

U.S. President Barack Obama



called for "bold, comprehensive and coordinated action" to end a global economic downturn on Tuesday as he prepared for an evening news conference to explain his recovery strategy to a recession-weary public.

Writing in a column published in 30 leading newspapers around the world, Obama urged leaders of the Group of 20 major economies to follow the U.S. lead by taking action to stimulate their economies until global demand is restored.

"We are living through a time of global economic challenges that cannot be met by half measures or the isolated efforts of any nation," Obama wrote ahead of the G20 summit he will attend in London in early April.

"The leaders of the Group of 20 have a responsibility to take bold, comprehensive and coordinated action that not only jump-starts recovery, but also launches a new era of economic engagement to prevent a crisis like this from ever happening again."

In his second prime-time news conference, at 8 p.m. EDT on Tuesday, Obama plans to explain his economic strategy to Americans angered over executive bonus payments and concerned about the country's direction.

Difficult Week The news conference comes

a day after Treasury Secretary

Timothy Geithner announced details of a public-private plan to help rid banks of \$1 trillion in assets whose uncertain value plunged the global economy into crisis.

Markets reacted positively to the plan but some experts questioned whether it would work. Obama, who called the move "one more critical element in our recovery," was expected to explain his thinking in the televised session with the press.

"What the president will do tonight is update the American people on the steps that this administration is taking to get the economy moving again, to create jobs, put money directly back into their pockets," White House spokesman Robert Gibbs told NBC's "Today" show.

He said Obama would talk about his moves to stabilize the financial system, prevent home foreclosures and spur access to credit, as well as plans to reform the financial regulatory system to prevent a recurrence of the crisis.

The news conference, his first since Feb. 9 and second since taking office on Jan. 20, follows a difficult week for the president, who was hit with public outrage over the payment of \$165 million in executive bonuses by American International Group after the insurance giant received billions of dollars in taxpayer bailout money.

Obama was forced to repeatedly condemn the bonuses in different forums throughout the week while fending off calls for Geithner's resignation because his department was aware in advance of the payments.

Geithner and Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke are due to testify to a congressional

committee on Tuesday about the government's handling of AIG.

Geithner is expected to elaborate on the administration's plans for regulatory reform on Thursday, the White House said. The issue is expected to come up at the G20 summit in April.

Distraction From The Budget The furor over the AIG bonuses distracted attention from Obama's effort to build support for a huge \$3.55 trillion budget for the 2010

fiscal year. The president views the budget as central to his effort to lift the economy out of the worst recession in decades and lay the groundwork for future growth by making major investments in renewable energy, education and

healthcare reform. Republicans in Congress and some of Obama's fellow Democrats complained the spending outline was too costly, with deficits of \$1.75 trillion this fiscal year and \$1.17 trillion next fiscal year.

Obama defended the priorities in his weekly radio address on Saturday, saying they were not a wish list "picked out of thin air."

"They are a central part of a comprehensive strategy to grow this economy by attacking the very problems that have dragged it down for too long," he said.

The president also is likely to face questions about financial regulatory reform and his overture to Iran.

Obama, who has said he was willing to talk to Iran, made an overture to the Islamic Republic with a video message marking the Iranian New Year last week. Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, responded that Tehran wanted to see a real change in U.S. behavior rather than talk.

'Necesitamos ayudar más a México'

El presidente Barack Obama anunció ayer por la noche una masiva movilización de recursos humanos y materiales por "millones de dólares" hacia la frontera sur, en el inicio de una participación reclamada por México para compartir tareas en la lucha contra los carteles de la droga y la violencia que generan.

Obama dijo que si toda esta movilización "no da resultados, vamos a hacer más".

"Estamos enviando millones de dólares en equipos, proveyendo más vigilancia, centenares de refuerzos para la atención de asuntos de aduanas y estamos coordinando muy efectivamente con el gobierno mexicano", dijo Obama en una rueda de prensa en la Casa Blanca, que destinó casi íntegramente a hablar de sus planes

de recuperación económica. Dijo que el presidente Felipe Calderón, con quien ya se entrevistó en enero en Washington y lo hará otra vez en la capital mexicana a mediados del próximo mes, ha optado por "la tarea muy difícil" de enfrentarse a

los carteles de la droga. "Los pasos que hemos dado están destinados a la protección de las comunidades fronterizas en Estados Unidos, evitar la expansión de la violencia y ayudar al gobierno

mexicano a enfrentar una situación que representa un gran reto", afirmó el presidente.

Refiriéndose al tráfico de armas, una de las principales preocupaciones de Calderón que amenaza el éxito de su campaña, Obama dijo que "necesitamos hacer más" para cortar el flujo de armas y dinero a los carteles.

"Eso es lo que está financiando esta operación, lo que los está armando, lo que los hace peligrosos", dijo. "Esto es algo que tomamos muy seriamente

y vamos a continuar trabajando diligentemente en los meses por venir". Como parte de la movilización,

el gobierno está autorizando por primera vez estrictas inspecciones de los ocho servicios ferroviarios desde Estados Unidos a México, está trasladando equipos móviles de rayos X y desplazando decenas de personas especializadas en inspecciones de vehículos, contenedores y vagones en busca de armas y dinero de contrabando.

A TODAS LAS PERSONASY PARTES **INTERESADAS:**

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Immigration Reform One Priority Among Many for Obama

months ago, it would be irrespon-

President Barack Obama said last week that he wants to follow through on his promise to fix the immigration system. But that goal, always politically difficult, faces major hurdles: the crumbling economy, drug violence in Mexico, and a jam-packed agenda already facing Congress.

"The issue is where [immigration] falls in the range of a lot of pressing priorities," said Don Kerwin of the Migration Policy Institute, a group that studies immigration issues.

"Can you do them all together? Can they all be accomplished this year or next year?"

Hispanic lawmakers and pro-immigrant advocacy groups said the answer has to be yes, and they praised the president for renewing his campaign promise.

Obama discussed the issue in a California town hall meeting, as well as a West Wing meeting with the Congressional Hispanic

Caucus. "He's ready to work with us," said U.S. Rep. Henry Cuellar, D-Laredo. "He just asked for a little bit of time to take care of the banking [issues] and the economic situation and the budget first."

The recession not only dictates when legislation will happen, but poses political challenges.

"It's more difficult to argue now that immigration reform would bring together willing workers and willing employers for jobs that American citizens wouldn't do," Kerwin said. "Things are in such a flux right now. It's unclear what American citizens will or won't do to support themselves," he added.

Measures to overhaul immigration have flamed out twice recently in Congress. Conservatives objected to what they considered amnesty for illegal immigrants and said border security should be the first priority. Supporters of the legislation said their approach was a comprehensive solution to the issue and argued that it was time for the estimated 12 million people living in the country illegally to be brought out of the shadows. But with 4.4 million jobs lost

since the recession started 15

sible to bring forward any immigration legislation, said Rosemary Jenks, who directs governmental relations for NumbersUSA,

"It's wishful thinking," she said. arguing that giving legal status to millions of workers will drive down wages.

which opposes amnesty.

Avocates of an overhaul see the economy as playing the opposite role; it could be a trump card, said Frank Sharry, who heads America's Voice, a group that works on behalf of illegal immigrants.

"Getting tough on bad employers and legalizing workers will benefit taxpayers," Sharry said, citing a 2007 congressional report that said legalizing immigrants would generate \$48 billion in federal tax revenue over 10 years.

Sharry also said that legalization would benefit all workers, not just immigrants. If employers have to pay better wages to immigrants, he argued, they'll have to raise pay across the board.

Another obstacle to enacting new immigration policy is the sheer volume of issues facing Congress. Obama is pushing hard to enact his budget, and lawmakers want to tackle major healthcare policy this summer. Plus, lawmakers are still responding to the banking and housing crises.

Proponents of immigration reform know that the clock is ticking until the next campaign season, when lawmakers will be reluctant to tackle such a hotbutton issue. Latino groups are paying particular attention, keeping in mind that Hispanic voters backed Obama 2-to-1.

> "We believe we helped him turn this election, and we want to hold him accountable," said Janet Murguia, the president and chief executive of the National Council of La Raza, at a panel in Washington.

Obama reached out to some of those voters last month when he went on a popular Spanish radio show, Piolin por la Manana. He said that he's committed to immigration but has to work on the economy first.

He will discuss the issue next month in Mexico with President Felipe Calderon.

But of higher priority on the agenda will be the drug-related violence raging in Mexico, which has taken thou-

sands of lives there. Fears that such violence could spill over the southern border further complicates the immigration debate. U.S. Rep. Ted Poe, R-Humble, contends that security on the border -- where drugs and people are smuggled north and guns and cash flow south -- must

be handled first. "We'll never solve immigration issues until we solve the border security problem," said Poe, who serves on the House subcommittee that deals with immigration.

For El Paso Mayor John Cook, drug-fueled violence is overshadowing the need for a "holistic approach to immigration" -- his personal priority at a conference on border issues this week on Capitol Hill.

"That [holistic approach] should be the big elephant in the room. With this drug violence ... everyone's looking in a different direction," Cook said. "I see all the emphasis right now on border security."

Hispanic lawmakers, who are wrapping up a cross-country campaign on the effects the immigration system has on families, say the issues are separate.

"Some people argued the last time that timing was not right because we needed to secure the borders," said Cuellar. "You can always argue the timing is not right."

But the immigration issue, he added, is "not going to go away."

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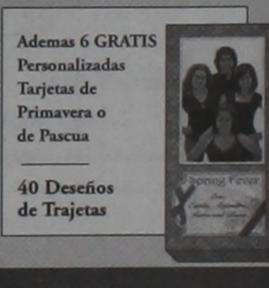






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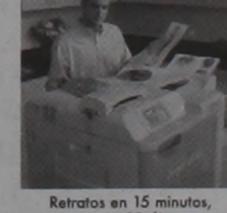
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Nació para triunfar



Con su look rockero y con tan sólo 16 años, Allison Iraheta logró establecerse como una de las 10 finalistas de American Idol.

Para la cantante angelina de padres salvadoreños, estar en el popular programa de competencia de canto de la cadena Fox, donde el ganador es elegido basado en las llamadas del público, era su gran sueño.

Es el segundo año consecutivo en el que un joven latino se coloca entre los finalistas de uno de los programas más vistos de la televisión estadounidense. El año pasado, David Archuleta llegó a colocarse entre los últimos dos finalistas.

American Idol se transmite regularmente los martes y miércoles pero esta semana, por el discurso de anoche del presidente Obama, se cambió a miércoles y jueves, a las 8:00 p.m., por Fox.

Los que la conocen aseguran no estar sorprendidos por el logro de Iraheta. Ni ella ni sus familiares pueden hablar con la prensa, porque así lo estipulan las reglas del show.

"Allison es una joven muy serena, decidida y dedicada. Y camina con pasos agigantados hacia el éxito. Ella dijo: 'Yo quiero ser parte de American Idol'. Luego audicionó en San Francisco y al ser seleccionada la reacción de ella era que había logrado su propósito", comentó a La Opinión Carlos López, el presidente de su club de fans que aseguró conocerla desde que ella tenía seis años.

De acuerdo con la biografía de la joven que forma parte de la octava temporada del show, Allison comenzó a cantar desde los cinco años.

Sin embargo, la joven residente de Downey no es extraña a ser parte de los programas estilo reality, ya que en el 2006 ganó el certamen de Quinceañera de la cadena Telemundo.

De acuerdo con López, los padres de Alison, Carlos y Sara Iraheta, se dieron cuenta de las aptitudes musicales de ella cuando apenas tenía tres años. Desde entonces, ha actuado en eventos para organizaciones como el Children's Hospital, Padres contra el cáncer y el equipo de fútbol Galaxy.

806-474-9725

En la página web del programa, la jovencita, quien también toca la guitarra, nombra a Pink y Michael Jackson como sus cantantes favoritos.

"La música es su pasión. Ella puede interpretar desde pop, rock, hasta country", comentó entusiasmado

López.

El fiel fan aseguró estar tan convencido del talento de Allison que aseguró que ella "tiene que estar dentro de los cuatro" finalistas "porque se ha preparado toda su vida" para dedicarse al mundo del entretenimiento. El ganador de American Idol recibirá un contrato millonario y la oportunidad de grabar su primer disco con una disquera de renombre.

López aseguró que no le preocupa el rumor que surgió hace unos días asegurando que la producción del show ya había seleccionado a los finalistas, contrario a las normas establecidas de que supuestamente son elegidos por el público votante.

"Quizás sean estrategias de mercadotecnia. Ella no puede estar afuera, ella va a ganar", manifestó contundentemente.

A pesar de no estar atendiendo la escuela, López comentó que Allison es una buena estudiante y sigue con sus estudios dentro del programa, a la par de sus clases de canto.

Agregó que sus mayores cualidades son su calidad humana. "Lo mejor de ella es que tiene un corazón gigante, es muy carismática, no es nada tímida, se ve pero no es. Es muy educada y respetuosa", aseguró agregando que cuenta con muchos amigos.

Al igual que sus compañeros, la joven pelirroja está aislada de su familia excepto de su mamá quien la acompaña por ser menor de edad.

En cuanto a los planes de Allison, López comentó que la mamá de ésta le compartió que la concursante tiene planes de dedicarse a la música pero también estudiar una carrera.

Por otra parte, adelantó que el próximo 27 de abril, Allison cumplirá 17 años. Si la celebración será dentro o fuera del show, depende de la votación del público. Por eso, López urge a otros hispanos a votar por la salvadoreña para que ella gane el concurso.

"Yo creo que Alison Iraheta es una digna representante de los hispanos en este país y debe de ganar por que tiene el talento nato, tiene la voz", afirmó.

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Anuncian artistas para los Billboard

Banda El Recodo, Cristian Castro y La Quinta Estación actuarán durante la próxima entrega de los Premios Billboard de la Música Latina 2009, a celebrarse el 23 de abril en Miami, se anunció ayer.

Estas presentaciones se unen a las ya confirmadas por el reggaetonero puertorriqueño Don Omar y la mexicana Paulina Rubio en la gala que será transmitida en vivo desde el Bank United Center de la Universidad de Miami por Telemundo.

Durante el evento, el guitarrista mexicano Carlos Santana recibirá el premio especial de Trayectoria Artística y Daddy Yankee será honrado con el galardón de Espíritu de la Esperanza.

El artista panameño Flex encabeza la lista de candidaturas con trece nominaciones y le siguen Iglesias con diez, el grupo Maná con ocho y los mexicanos Vicente Fernández y Jenni Rivera con siete.

La conducción estará a cargo nuevamente de Aylin Mujica y Alan Tacher.

Los Premios Billboard de la Música Latina, que se entregan a los artistas que han logrado la mayor suma de ventas de discos, descargas digitales y mayor cantidad de veces que sus canciones han sido puestas en las radios, son la culminación de la vigésima Conferencia de Música Latina de Billboard que se realizará del 20 al 23 de abril en Miami Beach, Florida.

Dave Letterman Marries Regina Lasko

David Letterman told the audience at the taping of his talk show in New York Monday that he has married his girlfriend Regina Lasko.

The ceremony was performed by a justice of the peace with the longtime couple's five-year-old son Harry in attendance, People. com reported.

"On Thursday, at 3 p.m.,
March 19, 2009, at the Teton
County Courthouse in Choteau, Mont, I was married to
Regina Lasko," Letterman
said during the taping of "Late
Show with David Letterman"
just after congratulating actor
Bruce Willis for getting married last week.

"Regina and I began dating in February of 1986, and I said, 'Well, things are going pretty good, let's just see what happens in about 10 years," Usmagazine.com quoted him as saying. "I had avoided getting married pretty good for, like, 23 years, and I -- honestly, whether this happened or not -- I secretly felt that men who were married admired me, like I was the last of the real gunslingers, you know what I'm saying?"

He dropped the big surprise, the Times said.

It is the second marriage for Letterman, 61, whose 8-year marriage to Michelle Cook ended in divorce in 1977.

George Lopez's Return to TV Will be as Late-Night Host

There will be more talk on TV come November, when actor-comedian George Lopez hangs his golf cap at TBS with a new late-night talk show, Time Warner, parent company of TBS, announced Tuesday.

"If change can come to the White House, then change can come to late night,"
Lopez said in a news release.
"Yes I can!"

Change is indeed in the late-night air these days, as Lopez will join Jimmy Fallon, Conan O'Brien's successor on NBC's "Late Night," and O'Brien himself, who will be the new host of NBC's "Tonight Show," succeeding Jay Leno. Other late-night staples are CBS' "Late Show With David Letterman" and "The Late Late Show" with Craig Ferguson, ABC's "Jimmy Kimmel Live" and Comedy Central's "Daily Show" and "Colbert Report." Leno is moving into primetime with a nightly NBC show.

Hilary Estey McLoughlin, president of Telepictures Productions, which is partnering with TBS and produces such syndicated programs as "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" and "The Bonnie Hunt Show," said Lopez "has an extraordinary ability to authentically connect with a diverse audience and will bring a really different point of view that will be a game-changer in late night."

The show, which as of publication time was unnamed, will mark a return to series television

for Lopez. Lopez's ABC sitcom, "George Lopez," which he co-created, wrote, produced and starred in, ran from 2002 to 2007.

Executive producer Jim Paratore said, "George will bring a fresh voice to late-night talk. He's done it all, from standup to television to movies. He's a proven writer, producer and performer with the kind of broad appeal that will have real impact and speak to an audience largely underserved in late night."

The network says the Los
Angeles-based show, which will
air Mondays through Thursdays
at 11 p.m., will have an "outdoor
street-party atmosphere" and will
include celebrities, music and
comedy acts. Audience members
will also interact with guests.

Mexican rapper Niña Dioz makes her U.S. debut

Friday night, as rapper Niña
Dioz was making her U.S. debut
at the South by Southwest music
festival in Austin, Texas, she
slammed her microphone down
midsong and started yelling expletives at the sound engineer from
the stage, telling the crowd, "This
place doesn't want me to give
you the show you deserve." She
had been asking for the bass to be
turned up, to no avail.

Niña Dioz, 23, is Mexico's answer to Grammy-nominated powerhouse M.I.A. or the diminutive rapper Lady Sovereign, and like those multiculti acts, she's used her innate grit and fire to carve out a spot in the largely male-dominated world of hip-hop in her native country. Now she plans to bring Mexican hip-hop to the rest of the world.

She's perhaps an unlikely candidate to do so. Standing 5 feet 6, with shoulder-length blond hair and blue eyes, Niña Dioz doesn't fit conventional notions of what a Mexican rap star might look like. The 23-year-old, whose given name is Carla Reyna, says that she's become accustomed to questions about her gender or skin color.

"When I started out, I remember being scared, because it was all guys with looks on their faces like they wanted to kill somebody," she said last month on the set of a video shoot in a tony part of her hometown of Monterrey. "But there are also guys who have respect and see a girl on the scene trying to rap and they support her."

She's definitely getting support from more established artists.

Monterrey is home to Control
Machete, one of the first Mexican rap groups to enjoy international exposure, and the former members of the now-defunct trio

are ardent fans of Niña Dioz's confident, laid-back style. "She's always been very clear about what she wanted to do and doesn't fail," said Pato Machete, a rapper with the group. "She's always moving forward."

It just spoke to her

Hip-hop culture and music grabbed Niña Dioz early: At 8, she took her first toke of marijuana and listened to Cypress Hill at the urging of a cousin (she's since quit smoking the herb).

In her early teens, she began cutting her teeth in Monterrey's hip-hop underground, at spots such as the Roche, where she kicked some of her first freestyle rhymes in the front of the club. She acquired her unusual moniker, which translates to female baby Jesus, after a woman in a cafe shouted it at her.

She hooked up with five other women to form Rimas Femeninas (Female Rhymes) in 2007, a collective of rappers from different parts of Mexico and Latin America, including Afro-Chilean artist Moyenei. The group performed all over Mexico but separated after a year to pursue solo projects.

Niña Dioz released the sevensong EP "Marcapasos" (or "Pacemaker") in 2007. She used it as a calling card, traveling to Mexico City to hand-sell discs at the huge flea-market known as El Chopo. One of the tracks found an audience on the city's pop-heavy Reactor 105.7 radio station.

Several months later, "Priefiero el Asfalto," a song from her upcoming debut album, "Nueva Escuela," was featured on the soundtrack to the Mexican boxoffice sensation "Rudo y Cursi," a comedy starring Diego Luna and Gael García Bernal that played at the Sundance Film Festival

in January.
(The movie is slated for fall release in the U.S.)

"She can
express
herself with
her lyrics and
she controls
the mike very
well," said
Frank "El

Medico" Rodriguez, a Miami recording engineer who helped handle production duties on Niña Dioz's upcoming full-length collection, which is due out April 15 on Mexico Citybased label Noiselab Records.

Some of the friends she's made in the local hip-hop community helped her land that record deal. Erick Santos, former lead singer of rapcore group La Flor de Lengua -- Monterrey's answer to Rage Against the Machine -- was the first to bring Niña Dioz into the studio. Together, they crafted her radio hit "Cuando, Cuando."

His goal with Niña Dioz was to push Mexican rap forward: "Control Machete created the standard for producing a Spanish-language hip-hop album," he said.

"The problem is that no one paid attention to try and surpass that level of production. Nothing that followed was as good."

Niña Dioz is hoping to fill that void -- and strike a blow for female empowerment at the same time.

"I think now's the time for those women who rap inside their

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changes are taking place.

homes to bring it out into the streets and do it for the people," she said. "Women rappers are evolving, and here in Mexico they've been coming up with some interesting styles and ideas. It's cool what's been going on in the last five years."

She's got vigor

Although technical issues plagued Niña Dioz's set at SX-SW's Latin showcase, her stage presence showed great promise. The bass thundered through the speakers as she sprinted to the front of the stage and launched into song, her words flying with serious vigor.

Afterward, the local media, including one reporter from Houston, surrounded Niña Dioz, who's next slated to appear in May at Mexico City's largest alternative music fest, Vive Latino.

Perhaps a signal of things to come.

"Carla always has a clear idea of what she wants," Santos said.

"If there were more people like Carla here in Mexico, rap would be on a whole other level."

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Cowboys needs: New approach should continue with draft

Until now the Big D in Dallas stood for Dysfunctional. The



Cowboys weren't just America's
Team; they were America's
Headache, with nightly reports
of a house divided against itself.
They were the Big Train That
Couldn't, and their failures
became the subjects of public
ridicule.

There was Pacman Jones trashing his own security ...
Terrell Owens throwing another tantrum ... incessant questions about the play calling. More than anything there were too many losses, with the Cowboys pulling their annual el foldo down the stretch to miss the playoffs.

Without Terrell Owens, more responsibility falls to Patrick Crayton. (Getty Images)

Without Terrell Owens, more responsibility falls to Patrick Crayton. (Getty Images)

They had the players to make it to January; they just didn't have the team, and it looks as if owner Jerry Jones finally understands there is a difference. He got rid of Pacman. He got rid of T.O. He got rid of Roy Williams, the safety, not the wide receiver. He gagged his coaches. He fought back against the media. In short, he tried to return direction to a club that didn't have one.

Maybe it works, maybe it doesn't. But it will be a relief to watch the Cowboys without another sideline meltdown by a disgruntled prima donna. So that's done. Now the Cowboys must fix their late-season slides, and you might want to include Tony Romo in on the conversation. Over the past three years the Cowboys are 5-10 after Dec. 1,0-2 in the playoffs.

If I were a coach, that would cause me to gag, too.

QB: Romo produces big numbers, but he doesn't win big games. He hasn't been successful in the playoffs, and he fizzled again in December. Importing Jon Kitna will help. He's supportive and, unlike predecessor Brad Johnson, can step in and win.

RB: The Cowboys never overcame the loss of rookie Felix
Jones, a big-play threat who
bowed out in the first half of
the season. With him they were
4-2; without him they were 5-5.
Marion Barber is terrific but
needs a decent backup to stay
healthy — and the explosive
Jones is more than decent.

WR: No longer will people wonder why the Cowboys can't get the football to Roy Williams. With Owens gone, Williams is the top outside threat. Patrick Crayton and Miles Austin are adequate supporting actors, with the two combining for 52 catches and seven touchdowns. But they take on bigger roles now, which means depth could be an issue.

TE: Jason Witten is one of the toughest and most productive tight ends in the game, while Martellus Bennett showed flashes of outstanding play. Together they're perfect short-to-medium targets, combining for 101 catches and eight TDs.

OL: Center Andre Gurode and guard Leonard Davis are solid, though Davis' play tailed off toward the end of last season. The concern was left tackle, where Flozell Adams was a liability. The return of Kyle Kosier at left guard should help. His replacements were no more than ordinary.

DL: The loss of Chris Canty will hurt. He didn't produce a lot of sacks but he was outstanding at stacking offensive linemen and pushing the pocket when he moved inside in the nickel. Jay Ratliff was the team's second-best defensive player, while Marcus Spears was solid at left end. The question is: Can Igor Olshansky replace Canty?

LB: DeMarcus Ware might be the best outside linebacker in the game. Not only did he have 20 sacks last season, but he had sacks in all but two games. Bradie James led the team in tackles, and Anthony Spencer looks to take over for the disappointing Greg Ellis. Keith Brooking is a younger version of Zach Thomas, but he is an improvement on the field and should help in the locker room.

Secondary: Williams is gone.
That means the Cowboys lose
a liability in pass coverage.
Anthony Henry is gone, too. So
is Pacman. Nevertheless, the
Cowboys have high hopes for
this group, largely because Mike
Jenkins and surprising Orlando
Scandrick will see more duty;
Terence Newman is healthy and
productive again; and newcomer
Gerald Sensabaugh adds range
at safety.

El Clásico Mundial rompe mitos y siembra dudas en las viejas potencias

De asombro en asombro, el béisbol asiático se ha robado por estos días la atención de todos gracias a su rotundo éxito en un Clásico Mundial de Béisbol que gana espacios, pero deja muchos sabores amargos a su paso. Nadie jugó mejor que Japón y Corea del Sur, ninguno de los otros equipos hizo más por la victoria que estos dos gigantes del Lejano Oriente y, nadie como los samurais brillaron en los momentos definitorios. Con un juego hecho de material de leyenda, los nipones derrotaron a sus enconados rivales de la región para reafirmarse como la primera potencia internacional, gústele a quien le guste y pésele a quien le pese. El choque por la discusión del título fue una bofetada sin mano para otras naciones que presumen de su poderío y que se desinflaron ante la magia de la pelota asiática, resultó un derroche de entrega y sacrificio que debe ser tomado como ejemplo por el resto del mundo. Literalmente, el resto del mundo. Mientras el lenguaje corporal de japoneses y coreanos dejaba entrever un orgullo cargado de pasión, el de algunas estrellas de las Mayores denotaba indiferencia y frialdad ante un evento que no les motivaba. Otros llegaron muy lejos de su mejor forma deportiva, como si el torneo se tratase de una simple práctica que les ayudase a prepararse para el real objetivo que perseguían: la temporada de la Mayores. No tiene justificación, ninguna, la humillación de República Dominicana, ni los fracasos de Venezuela, Puerto Rico y,

claro que sí, Estados Unidos -lo de la falta

de público de los anfitriones es para el olvido. Panamá y México dieron pena, y Cuba dio muestras de hallarse en un franco declive. Nadie puede decir que aquí estuvieron los mejores. No se puede asegurar que la crema y nata se apuntó para representar los colores de sus países. Tampoco nadie, y aquí esto vale hasta para Japón, podrá alardear que ha derrotado a lo que más vale y brilla de este deporte. La lista de los que se negaron a asistir al Clásico es larga, pesada, y deja una estela de malestar, porque sus equipos, de haberlos tenido, habrían sido medidos con otra vara. Por otro lado, el sistema de doble eliminación fue criticado por todos y la celebración del torneo en el mes de marzo gusta cada vez menos, pero esto, al menos por ahora, no tiene solución, porque los dueños de franquicias son los verdaderos amos y señores de las Grandes Ligas. En este punto, no puedo dejar de descargar mi malestar contra Selig y las Mayores, que son jueces y partes del problema: el evento es de ellos, lo organizan ellos, pero no tienen la convicción suficiente para doblar el brazo de las franquicias y obligarlas a liberar a sus peloteros. Quedan cuatro años para trabajar más duro, encontrar nuevas fórmulas y olvidar humillaciones. Cuatro años para reverenciar a los samurais-peloteros de Japón. Cuatro años para soñar con un Clásico cada vez más mundial en el exacto sentido de la palabra.

Jayhawks have grown up since they played Spartans



Michigan State's coaches and players will have no trouble picking it up on film. The Kansas Jayhawks have done a lot of growing up since they visited East Lansing 11 weeks ago.

In many ways, they hardly resemble the hesitant young bunch who let the Spartans go on a 19-1 run and absorbed a 75-62 shellacking on Jan. 10 at Michigan State.

Plus, the rematch on Friday night will be in Indianapolis, not East Lansing. And it will be the third round of the NCAA tournament, not the final non-conference game before the young Jayhawks got their act together and made a successful defense of their Big 12 regular-season championship.

"We played them the first time and we stunk offensively," coach Bill Self said Tuesday.
"We were a really bad offensive team. I think they had us down 37-18. And that's after we got off to a good start."

The Jayhawks scored 11 points in the first 4 minutes, 43 seconds of that game but man-

aged only seven points the rest of the first half as the Spartans, ranked No. 8 at the time, took command. Sherron Collins wound up with a game-high 25 points that night, but had only five points and six turnovers in the first half.

"Now we're older," said Self. "I think this team will be more confident."

One thing that hasn't changed much is Collins. He's still the point guard and leader of the defending NCAA champions.

"I think we weren't ready to play in that environment. We were still young, still trying to find our identify," said Collins, who scored 25 points in Sunday's 60-43 second-round victory over Dayton.

"But now I think we'll be ready for them. Them beating us is total motivation for us to come out and play like we never did before. This is the time of year your playmakers are going to make plays and everybody you expect to play well has to play well."

Against Dayton, the Jayhawks did not exactly flash the maturity and growth they believe they've achieved since January. Cole Aldrich, the 6-foot-11 center, had a triple double with 13 points, 20 rebounds and 10 blocks, to go with Collins' 25 points.

But the three other starters did not do so well.

"We had three starters combine for two points, and that can't happen (against Michigan State)," said Self.

As a team, the Jayhawks were given Monday off. But Self did reveal he had three players come in for a visit.

"Let me put it to you like this
- I'm not concerned that will happen again," he said.

"This is what I told them - no one can take away the fact we won the league," he said. "No one can take that away from us. Nobody can take away the fact we're in the Sweet 16.

"So if they can't take that from you, there's no reason to try to hold onto it. We've just got to get to where we're in the aggressive mode all the time."

Questions? Comments? Email us at eleditor@sbcglobal.net or call 806-763-3841 We want to hear from you! Call Today!



COMISIÓN DE CALIDAD AMBIENTAL DE TEXAS

EXAMPLE D

AVISO DE RECIBO DE SOLICITUD E INTENCIÓN DE OBTENER LA RENOVACIÓN DE PERMISO DE AIRE

PERMISO NÚMERO 41773

SOLICITUD King-Mesa, Inc., ha solicitado a la Comisión de Calidad Ambiental de Texas (TCEQ, por su siglas en inglés) renovación del Permiso Núm. 41773 de Calidad Atmosférica, el cual autorizaría el funcionamiento continuo de un/una cotton gin ubicada en 415 West Highway 180, Lamesa, Condado de Dawson, Texas. La instalación existente y/o las instalaciones relacionadas están autorizadas para emitir los siguientes contaminantes atmosféricos: particulate matter including particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter, organic compounds, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide and sulfur dioxide.

Esta solicitud se le presentó a la TCEQ el February 19, 2009. La solicitud estarán disponibles para ser revisados y copiados en la Oficina Central de la TCEQ, en la oficina regional de la TCEQ en Midland, y Dawson County Courthouse, 402 South 1st Street, Lamesa, Dawson County, Texas, empezando el primer día de la publicación de este aviso. El expediente de cumplimiento normativo de la planta, si alguno existe, está disponible para su revisión en la oficina regional de la TCEQ en Midland.

El director ejecutivo de la TCEQ ha determinado que la solicitud cumple con los requisitos administrativos y llevará a cabo una revisión técnica de la solicitud. Además de la renovación, esta acción con respecto al permiso incluye la incorporación de las siguientes autorizaciones o cambios a instalaciones autorizadas relacionadas a este permiso: amendments. Una solicitud de enmienda que no está sujeta al aviso público ni a una oportunidad para una audiencia de caso impugnado también está siendo revisada. Las razones para cualquier cambio o incorporación, hasta el punto a que puedan ser incluidos en el permiso renovado, pueden incluir las mejoras de los controles operacionales en la planta o la manera de asegurar la aplicación de la ley para el permiso. Para más información sobre esta solicitud del permiso o el proceso de acción al permiso, favor de llamar la Oficina de Asistencia al Público, sin cobro, al 1-800-687-4040. La TCEQ puede actuar sobre esta solicitud sin buscar comentarios públicos adicionales o dar la oportunidad para una audiencia de lo contencioso si se cumple con ciertos criterios.

COMENTARIOS PÚBLICOS Usted puede presentar comentarios públicos, o solicitar una audiencia de lo contencioso a la Oficina del Secretario Oficial al domicilio a continuación.

La TCEQ tomará en cuenta todos los comentarios públicos en la decisión final de la solicitud. La fecha límite para presentar comentarios públicos es 15 días después de que se publique el aviso en el periódico. Después de la fecha límite para comentarios públicos, el director ejecutivo preparará una respuesta para todos los comentarios públicos pertinentes y materiales, o significativos. Temas como valores de propiedades, ruido, seguridad de tráfico y zonificación están fuera de la competencia de la TCEQ para abordar en el proceso del permiso.

Después de que se concluya la revisión técnica de la solicitud, el director ejecutivo tomará en cuenta los comentarios y preparará una respuesta para todos los comentarios públicos pertinentes y materiales, o significativos. Si únicamente se reciben comentarios, la respuesta a los comentarios, junto con la decisión del director ejecutivo con respecto a la solicitud, será enviada por correo a todas aquellas personas que sometieron comentarios públicos o quienes se encuentran en la lista de envío para esta solicitud, a menos que la solicitud sea presentada directamente para audiencia de lo contencioso.

OPORTUNIDAD PARA UNA AUDIENCIA DE LO CONTEN-CIOSO Usted puede solicitar una audiencia de lo contencioso. El solicitante o el director ejecutivo también pueden pedir que la solicitud se presente directamente para audiencia de caso impugnado después de la revisión técnica de la solicitud. Una audiencia de lo contencioso es un proceso legal parecido a un juicio civil en el tribunal de distrito del estado. A menos que se presente una solicitud por escrito para una audiencia de lo contencioso dentro de 15 días de este aviso, el director ejecutivo puede autorizar la solicitud. Si no se recibe una solicitud para audiencia dentro del plazo de 15 días, no se dará otra oportunidad para una audiencia. De acuerdo a la Ley de Aire Limpio de Texas, § 382.056(o), sólo se puede conceder una audiencia de lo contencioso si el historial de cumplimiento normativo del solicitante se encuentra en la clasificación mas baja de acuerdo a los requisitos de historia de cumplimiento normativo que aplican y si la petición para la audiencia está basada en cuestiones de hechos debatibles que son pertinentes y materiales para la decisión de la Comisión con respecto a la solicitud. Además, la Comisión solo concederá una audiencia sobre cuestiones que hayan sido presentadas durante el período de comentarios públicos y que no hayan sido retiradas.

Una persona que puede estar afectada por emisiones de contaminantes atmosféricos de una instalación tiene derecho a solicitar una audiencia. Si se solicita una audiencia de lo contencioso, debe presentar lo siguiente: (1) su nombre (o para un grupo o una asociación, un representante oficial), dirección, número de teléfono de día y número de facsímile, si lo tiene; (2) el nombre del solicitante y número del permiso; (3) la declaración "[yo/nosotros] solicito/solicitamos una audiencia de caso impugnado"; (4) una descripción específica de cómo se vería afectado adversamente por la solicitud y las emisiones atmosféricas de la instalación de manera que no es común para el público en general; (5) la ubicación y distancia de su propiedad con relación a la instalación; y (6) una descripción de cómo usa la propiedad lo cual podría ser afectado por la instalación. Si la petición la hace un grupo o una asociación, deben de identificar el miembro o los miembros que tienen derecho a solicitar una audiencia y los intereses que el grupo o la asociación busca proteger. También puede presentar los ajustes que propone hacer a la solicitud/permiso que satisficieran sus preocupaciones. Las peticiones para una audiencia de lo contencioso deben presentarse por escrito dentro de 15 días después de este aviso, a la Oficina del Secretario Oficial a la dirección que se encuentra más abajo.

Si se registra a tiempo una petición para audiencia de lo contencioso, el director ejecutivo enviará la solicitud y cualquier petición para una audiencia de lo contencioso a los comisionados de la TCEQ para su consideración durante una de las reuniones programadas de la Comisión. A menos que la solicitud se presente directamente a una audiencia de lo contencioso, el director ejecutivo enviará por correo la respuesta a los comentarios junto con el aviso de la reunión de la Comisión a todas aquellas personas que hayan hecho comentarios o que se encuentran en la lista de envíos para esta solicitud. Si se concede la audiencia, el tema de la audiencia estará limitado a cuestiones debatidas de hechos relacionadas a intereses pertinentes y materiales de preocupaciones de calidad atmosférica que se hayan planteado durante el período de comentarios. Cuestiones tales como valores de propiedades, ruido, seguridad de tráfico y zonificación no están dentro de la competencia de la Comisión para abordar en este proceso judicial.

LISTA DE ENVÍO Además de presentar comentarios públicos, puede solicitar que le incluyan en la lista de envío para esta solicitud específica por medio de una solicitud enviada a la Oficina del Secretario Oficial de la TCEQ en la dirección que se encuentra más abajo. Los que integran la lista de envío recibirán copias de futuros avisos (si hay) para esta solicitud, enviadas por la Oficina del Secretario Oficial.

INFORMACIÓN Comentarios públicos por escrito o solicitudes para una reunión pública o una audiencia de lo contencioso se deben entregar a la Oficina del Secretario Oficial, MC-105, TCEQ, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, Texas 78711-3087, o por el Internet al www.tceq.state.tx.us/about/comments.html. Para mayor información sobre esta solicitud para permiso o sobre el proceso de permisos, puede llamar sin cobro a la Oficina de Asistencia al Público, al 1-800-687-4040. Puede encontrar información general sobre la TCEQ en el sitio web www.tceq.state.tx.us.html.

Se puede obtener información adicional también de King-Mesa, Inc., P.O. Box 304, Lamesa, Texas 79331-0304 o al llamar a Mr. Kelley Green, P.E., Director of Technical Services, Texas Cotton Ginners' Association o al número (512) 615-1102.

Fecha de Expedición: February 25, 2009

Chronic Kidney Disease Prevention & What You Need to Know

March is National Kidney Month, and the Texas Department of State Health Services urges Texans at risk



for chronic kidney disease to get tested. We ask that you help increase awareness of the impact of CKD on both the Hispanic and African-American communities by including an article in your publication. The DSHS message is succinct and clear: If you have high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease or a family history of kidney problems, you need to get

populations, and generally results in worse outcomes and higher treatments for some

minority populations.
African-American
and Hispanic patients
are 3.8 and 1.5 times
more likely respectively than white
patients to progress
to kidney failure, and
develop end stage
renal disease (ESRD),
kidney failure, at an
earlier age. Native
Americans and Asian/
Pacific Islanders are
also at high risk.

Texas is particularly vulnerable to high rates of CKD for several reasons. Diabetes and high blood pressure are the major risk factors for kidney disease. More than 10% of the nation's 18.3 million people with diabetes live in Texas. About 24% of Texans have high blood pressure. African Americans represent only 11.6% of the Texas population, yet among the adult

Staying Healthy

tested for kidney disease.

"What You Need to Know About Kidney Disease" provides facts/figures and messages about the burden of kidney disease, who is at risk, and the importance of getting tested because kidney disease can be treated and managed.

It is important to note that CKD disproportionately affects racial and ethnic African-American population, 13% have diabetes and an alarming 41% have high blood pressure. Within the Hispanic community, 12% have diabetes and 22% have high blood pressure.

Sources: United States Renal Data System, 2008 Atlas Report

Dept of State Health Services, Cardiovascular Health Facts 2001-2007, accessed from http://www.dshs.state. tx.us/wellness/PDF/facts/FactTexas. pdf.

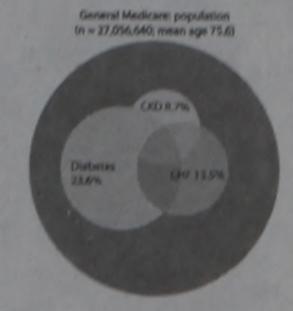
What you need to know about kidney disease!

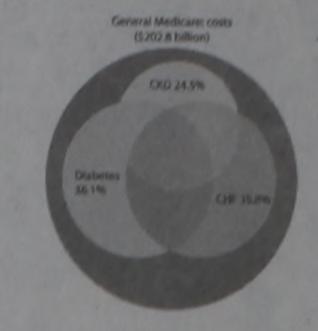
Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is common, harmful, and expensive!
 More than 500 million people worldwide – 10% of the adult population – have kidney disease, and millions more are at risk.

► The U.S. has the second highest rate of kidney disease in the world.

- 26 million Americans 13% of the U.S. adult population have kidney disease.
 Texas has the second highest rate of kidney disease in the nation, and the second highest costs.
- The U.S. spends more than \$49 billion each year on CKD 24.5% of the Medicare budget!

CKD Prevalence and Costs in the Medicare Population





United States Renal Data System 2008

The U.S. spends almost \$34 billion each year on patients with end stage renal disease (ESRD), when kidneys fail and patients must have ongoing dialysis or a kidney transplant to stay alive.

F Texas has the highest rate of new cases of ESRD in the nation.

Most kidney patients don't make it to ESRD because they die prematurely from heart disease and other complications. Kidney disease is a major risk factor for heart disease!

2. YOU or someone you know may be at risk!

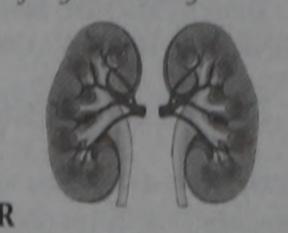
 YOU are at risk for kidney disease if you have diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, obesity, or a family history of kidney disease.

YOU are at increased risk for kidney disease if you are African-American, Hispanic, Native American or Asian/Pacific Islander.

- 3. Early detection is important because kidney disease can be treated and managed!
 - In the early stages of kidney disease, there may be no symptoms. Many people are not diagnosed until they are in kidney failure. The only way to know if you have kidney disease is to get tested.
 - If you have diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, or a family history of kidney problems, you need to get tested for kidney disease! Call your doctor today.
 - Your doctor will do 3 simple tests: urine test, blood test, and blood pressure measurement.
- The earlier kidney problems are detected, the better chance you have of slowing its progression and managing its many complications, including premature death. Treatment is available.
 - ✓ Know your risk factors!
 - ✓ Know your numbers!
 - ✓ Get tested!
 - ✓ Get treated!

And show a little love for your kidneys!





La depresión afectaría al corazón de las féminas

La depresión severa puede destruir silenciosamente el corazón aparentemente saludable de una mujer.

Los médicos saben desde hace tiempo qué la depresión es común después de un ataque cardíaco o una apoplejía y que empeora los resultados de esas dolencias. El lunes, investigadores de la Universidad de Columbia reportaron nuevas evidencias de que la depresión misma puede provocar enfermedades cardíacas.

Los científicos rastrearon a 63 mil mujeres del Estudio de Salud de las Enfermeras efectuado entre 1992 y 2004. Ninguna tenía signos de enfermedad cardíaca cuando comenzó el estudio, pero casi el 8% presentaba evidencias de depresión grave.

Las deprimidas tenían una probabilidad más de dos veces mayor de experimentar la muerte cardíaca súbita causada típicamente por una arritmia, concluyó el estudio de 12 años que se publicó el lunes en el órgano del Colegio Estadounidense de Cardiología (Journal of the American College of Cardiology). También tenían un riesgo ligeramente mayor de muerte por otras formias de enfermedades cardíacas.

La mayor sorpresa fue que la muerte cardíaca súbita parecía relacionada más estrechamente con el uso de antidepresivos que con los síntomas de depresión que reportaban las mujeres.

Eso podría significar sencillamente que las mujeres que usaban antidepresivos eran las que sufrían las depresiones más agudas, advirtió el director de la investigación, el doctor William Whang. Sin embargo, Whang agregó que las conclusiones merecían más investigaciones.

Los estudios de los antidepresivos más nuevos y de mayor uso actual no han indicado hasta ahora un riesgo de arritmia y algunos incluso han sugerido una protección, observó el doctor Redford Williams de la Universidad de Duke, especialista en los factores sicosociales que afectan la salud.

Williams dijo que la investigación apoya evidencias crecientes de que la depresión es un factor de riesgo independiente de la enfermedad cardíaca, además de los riesgos clásicos de la hipertensión sanguínea, diabetes, colesterol elevado y tabaquismo.

El estudio a mujeres predominantemente blancas podría subestimarla, advirtió Williams. "El impacto sobre las mujeres afroestadounidenses es probablemente mayor", dijo. Agregó que es hora de efectuar un estudio para determinar si el tratamiento adecuado de la depresión disminuye el riesgo.

¿Por qué la depresión tendría ese efecto? El estudio halló que mientras más graves eran los síntomas de la depresión reportados, más probable era que la mujer presentara los factores tradicionales de riesgo cardíaco. Asimismo, los factores de estrés como la depresión han sido vinculados a efectos físicos como un mayor pulso cardíaco en reposo.

Quizás hay un motivo más directo: La depresión puede hacer que la gente descuide más su salud.

La Asociación Cardíaca Estadounidense (American Heart Association) recomendó el año pasado que todos los que hubiesen padecido de enfermedad cardíaca se revisaran regularmente por depresión, ya que los pacientes deprimidos pueden omitir tomarse sus medicamentos, quedarse en espacios interiores en vez de ejercitarse y alimentarse inadecuadamente.



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