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A Story About Pancho Clos

The legend of Pancho Clos starts a long time ago. So far back that some say snakes used to walk.

One thing we need to make clear before we go on with the rest of the story is that a long time could mean one day, a year or maybe 1,000 years.

But anyway, in those times there lived a family named Santa Claus. The rest of this story might be a bit full of twists and turns but with a bit of imagination, we can find out how two cousins, primos hermanos, now work together to bring joy to all children.



The Claus family, Papa Santa and Mrs. Claus and a family of workers called elves made toys in a small town called the Land of Santa at the North Pole. The town was named after Papa when the elves, to whom Santa granted full civil rights, voted to honor his generosity of giving toys to children during fiestas.

Because he worked with the toys that brought happiness, Papa built-up magical powers then added the power of speaking all languages. These powers helped him expand his work to include making and giving toys to all the children of the world.

After Papa and Mrs Claus remained married for a long time, some say that snakes had even run into problems and were condemned to crawling instead of walking, they decided to expand their family.

As luck would be, they gave birth to twin boys. The tradition in those days was that the first-born would get the father's name. Everyone in the town wondered what Papa would do.

Papa and Mrs Claus seriously thought about it for a long time. It was not an easy decision. They wanted both to be named Santa. Mothers always seem to have the right answers, so both were named Santa with the first being called Nicholas and the second Nick. This because Papa was sometimes called Nicholas or Nick in honor a kind man that helped people and lived at the North Pole many years ago.

As the sons grew, Papa Santa carried on his work delivering toys. Both boys went to school and learned how to read and make toys. Nicholas learned how to make traditional dolls and bicycles but Nick was more interested in inventing new toys and machines that would make work easier.

Papa Santa grew older and both sons grew to be young men but also chubby enough not to be allowed to eat desert by Mrs. Claus.

Papa grew older and wanted to retire and let his sons take over his work. Because of the many hurdles of what was a non-profit business and because Papa Santa believed in equal rights, Papa let the elves vote and choose the next leader of the town and take Papa's job.

By that time, maybe a few hundred years, Nick had really already decided that he wanted to continue his work of inventing. He had already invented fax machines and was working with a guy named Gore on finding out how the internet worked.

Nick knew he needed more room than available at Papa's North Pole workshop. He needed his own place and thought this might be the perfect time to let everyone know that instead of possibly becoming the new leader of the Land of Santa, he would make the elves job easier and move to the South Pole to set up his workshop at the South Pole.

Nick jumped on one of his inventions, a sleigh powered by engines that ran on reindeer manure, and started his trip.

On his way he topped to do some fishing in Texas at Buffalo Lake. The Lake was named in memory of the many buffalo that were killed by an American soldier named MacKenzie. While there Nick met members of the American G.I. Forum who, to his delight, were also dedicated to helping less fortunate children. The Forum was having a fajita cooking contest trying to raise money for scholarships.

Nick loved the taste of fajitas. After eating as many faitas as his chubby stomach could hold, Nick jumped back on his sleigh and started back on his trip.

Nick did run into one problem in México, not many reindeer ma-

Continued on Page 2

Felicidades a Todos



Traditional Hispanic Christmas

Guest Author - Rebecca M. Cuevas De Caissie
Hispanic Christmas Traditions

For Hispanics Christmas remains a predominantly religious holiday. Even though more and more Hispanics are moving away from the Catholic religion, the ties and traditions that are well established into the culture itself

there are three purple colored candles and one that is rose colored. The rose colored candle is lit on the third Sunday of Advent. The purple candles are to remind the celebrants to turn their hearts to God and the rose colored candle is to symbolize joy. The white candle, lighted on Christmas, is called the Christ Candle, and represents purity.

Posadas is a tradition that many Hispanic

*The feast of the Immaculate Conception is celebrated on December 8th.

*The Feast of the Holy Family is celebrated on the Sunday after Christmas or on December 30 when Christmas falls on Sunday on Dec. 31. The Epiphany, the oldest of the Christmas feasts, is also known as Three Kings Day for the three magi who found the Christ Child after following a star to Bethlehem. It is celebrated

Stores embrace Hispanic tradition of 3 Kings Day

By Mindy Fetterman, USA TODAY
If you think the holiday shopping season is over, you're wrong.

A growing number of retailers are promoting the Hispanic tradition of celebrating Three Kings Day every Jan. 6 as a way to extend the buying season past Christmas and connect with Hispanic customers.

El Día de los Reyes celebrates the day in Christian tradition when the three wise men visited the baby Jesus.

Known as the Epiphany, the day is as important as Christmas in Mexico, Puerto Rico, Spain and many Latin American countries. Children put their shoes out the night before or leave grass for the wise men's camels. They wake the next day to unwrap presents.

For retailers, that means two more weeks of shopping.

"It used to be that after Christmas, everything was pretty much dead," says Ignacio Hernandez, CEO of MexGrocer.com, which began offering the traditional Rosca de Reyes (King's cake) five years ago. "Now it's still busy."

For the first time, actors dressed as the three wise men began wandering through Florida Mall in Orlando on Sunday and posing with children for photos on a repurposed Santa display. "Now we have three thrones," laughs general manager Brian Peters.

Wal-Mart, (WMT) which began promoting the tradition in a big way last year, is expanding. This year, the three kings are visiting Wal-Marts in the Southwest, and more than 300 Wal-Marts have displays and products geared to the celebration. And Kmart (SHLD) is sponsoring the Three Kings parade in Miami on Jan. 13 and an appearance by José Feliciano at its Bronx, New York, store Thursday.

"It makes all the business sense in the world if you can extend the selling season," says Alex López Negrete, CEO of López Negrete Communications, the nation's second-largest Hispanic marketing company. The firm worked with Wal-Mart on its Three Kings campaign.

"It tells your customers that you know their traditions," López Negrete says. "It makes you relevant to them."

Catching the growing Hispanic market is a goal for many businesses. At 44.3 million people, Hispanics are the largest minority in the USA, according to the Census. They will control an estimated \$1.2 trillion in spending power by 2011, a quadruple increase since 1990, according to Mediastat Research.

Promoting Three Kings Day helps retailers compete, says Juan Pablo Quevedo, research director for Images USA, a multicultural marketing firm in Atlanta whose clients include Sears and Kmart. Until recently, the tradition had been dying out as newly arrived Hispanics became assimilated, he says.

But other retailers will follow Wal-Mart's lead, he says. "With Wal-Mart coming into the scenario, things are going to change."



have remained. The holiday of Christmas is a season more than a day to celebrate. As with most traditions in the Hispanic culture, the celebrations of the Christmas season are devoted family times. The season of Christmas traditionally lasts from the beginning known as Advent through the Baptism of Jesus.

Traditionally the holiday season begins with Advent. Advent is the Latin word for arrival or coming. It is the time when the traditional Catholic prepares for the coming of the Lord. Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas. One of the most popular traditions in celebrating Advent is the Advent wreath. Traditionally

cultures share. Posadas mean literally shelter or lodging. It is a reenactment of Joseph and Mary's journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem and their search for shelter. This tradition is celebrated by a group of people traveling from house to house through out a community asking for shelter. All are to refuse them until they come to the last house in which they are all invited to come in. The ritual lasts for nine days (December 16-24).

*There are some other traditionally catholic days of celebration that are a part of the Hispanic culture.

on Jan. 6 and is the major holiday of the Christmas period in the Eastern Church. This is the day traditionally to give gifts as opposed to Christmas day as in other cultures.

*The Baptism of Our Lord brings the Christmas season to a close. It is celebrated on the first Sunday after the Epiphany. There are also many unique traditions for celebrating the Christmas Holiday seasons that each nationality has.

El Editor

A Story About Pancho Clos

from page 1

nure around. Now he had to figure out how to power his sleigh. Then was when he ran into a herd of burritos grazing on nopalitos, in English called "prickly pear".

Nick by then had discovered his Dad's magical powers of talking different languages. He found out that he could also speak to animals. While chatting with a burrito named Cleto, he told Nick that these burritos were a prize-winning herd with extra long ears. Nick snapped and knew that if he really put his mind to it, he could invent a way to make the ears spread out straight. Nick figured that he could use his manure powered engines to boost the burritos up into the air, they could then glide to wherever needed.

A unique characteristic of Cleto the burrito was a copper tooth that according to legend was put into his mouth after a cave-in of a copper mine. Locals told the story of how Cleto rescued miners. His tooth would also later come in handy later. Cleto's story is also complicated and we can tell it later.

After inventing everything needed, Nick got hungry and craved more fajitas.

He went to a little Mexican restaurant where Nick met the cook, a beautiful girl named Bonita. It was love at first sight between them. After a long time, Nick talked her into marriage and joining him on his trip. Nick, trying to translate her name, called Bonita Pudi. Pudi Claus always spoke Spanish and Nick had no problem understanding

The two lived happily at the South Pole. Nick kept working on his inventions. He invented email, Barbie dolls and transformer toys. Soon, and by now you know how time runs in this legend - maybe a few months, a few years or a few decades, Nick and Pudi had a son. Nick wanted to follow the tradition of naming their son Santa but Pudi insisted a change was needed. She wanted to name her son after her father, Francisco.

Nick with his belief in equal rights for everyone and especially for women, he agreed with Pudi and their son was named Francisco or Pancho for short.

During that time Nicholas at the North Pole also had a son that he named Santa after Papa.

By then both Nicholas and Nick had started helping Papa deliver toys. Nicholas would deliver to kids of the northern part of the world and Nick to children of the southern part.

Pudi taught her son Spanish and all the traditions of her people in México. Pancho grew up fast to be a handsome young man who spoke Spanish, danced Mexican folklorico, sang Mariachi music and loved tortillas and beans.

As Pancho was growing up he made many trips to México, danced, sang, enjoyed the fun and even started to grow a black mustache. The people soon started to call him Pancho Clos mainly because in Spanish it was hard to pronounce the name Claus. Pancho grew to embrace the Mexican culture.

In following Mexican traditions, he kept in close contact with his primo hermano Santa, son of Nicholas.

Both sons grew up and soon because of a tragedy, that once again adds twists to our story and can be told later, both were called to take over for their fathers. Santa, son of Nicholas was now officially in charge of the northern part of world and Pancho, son of Nick, the southern.

Pancho never got over his love for fajitas so he made sure of was that he would have México as part of his area. One day he even traded in his sleigh for a carreton made of wood that was easier for burritos to pull.

While growing up, Pancho made several trips to Buffalo Lake to visit his father's friends in the GI Forum so his delivery area also included the Southwestern United States.

During Christmas time, Santa in the north carried on his father's tradition of wearing a red pajama hat, a red suit with white trimming and driving a sleigh pulled by reindeer. Pancho on the other hand started wearing a sombrero with mariachi trim on his red suit and zarape. His burrito powered carreton never failed and would easily carry him throughout the world.

As we said when we started, this legend might be hard to believe but one thing for sure is that when kids in San Antonio, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Albuquerque, Mexico and many other parts of the Southern part of the world hear the galloping hoofs of burritos on their roofs and you see a jolly man with a black beard that for some unexplained reason stays a dark black regardless of Pancho's age, you can be sure that it is Pancho Clos delivering toys to the kids.

And as Pancho rides his carreton pulled by his burritos named Jaime, Santos, Clemente, Santiago, Herminia and of course Cleto, who you remember is different because of his bright copper tooth that lights the way for Pancho's carreton, you can hear him shout Feliz Navidad and viva la raza. And how can we forget to mention that instead of shouting ho, ho, ho, Pancho shouts the traditional Mexican grito of ajuuua!

Other short stories in addendum.

How Cleto got his copper tooth.

How Nick and Nicholas died and left their kids Pancho and Santa in charge.

Rod Blagojevich Out on Bail

By: Ysidro Gutierrez

The biggest story for the remainder of this year is the story of political corruption of the Governor of Illinois, Rod Blagojevich. I wonder if it is coincidence that the movie "Frost/Nixon" will open on Christmas Day and be out on DVD in 2009.

The definition of "Stupid" is when a person has full knowledge and understanding of the benefits and consequences of an issue and decides to ignore the benefits and risk all the consequences. This definition fits Richard Nixon's approval of the break in at the Watergate hotel in 1972 and Rod Blagojevich's alleged misdeeds in 2008.

Both Richard and Rod had everything going for them. Both had the victory in hand, both had the executive power to accomplish their goals and fulfill every dream - but both took the stupid option. The consequences are that both Rob and Dick, no matter their accomplishments, will instead of being remembered as great American's, will go down in history as corrupt politicians. This is a fate worse than death. And, all they need to do was "Be Honest"

Two of Nixon's famous quotes were, "Sock it to Me" while the investigation was in full swing and "I should have burned the tapes." Both statements were in defiance of investigators, prosecutors, the media and the American people. Nixon thought he was "Bullet Proof" that is to say, he thought he was above the law. He even said so, "It's not a crime if the President does it." History records that he was wrong.

Like Nixon, Blagojevich believed himself to be bullet proof. "Go ahead and tape me" is the statement attributed to him in national news reports. Even the novice would say he was bragging. The reality is that, like Nixon, he believed he was untouchable. Having full knowledge and understanding - he continued to weave his get rich scheme knowing his conversations were being taped by investigators.

Governor Blagojevich is charged with two counts of alleged criminal conduct. The first charge is the most serious because of the potential to taint our Democracy. The affidavit charges that "He and his Chief of Staff John Harris conspired with each other to devise and

participate in a scheme to defraud and corruptly solicit." That's legal talk for "He was taking bids from the highest bidder for the Senate seat vacated by President Elect Barack Obama." It is unfathomable that a governor would put a Senate appointment up for sale - that is what investigators are alleging. Every American should be concerned about this scandal because it is possible for a corrupt governor to pull off a scheme like this if done discretely. Thankfully, this particular governor wasn't too smart and got caught.

Rod Blagojevich became Governor of Illinois through hard work, ambition and a hefty "Ego." If one wanted to explain how the Governor came to this end one would have to conclude that it was his ego that caused him to set prudence and good judgment aside. Like Nixon he allowed his pride to rule over his good sense.

Where the charges will lead is an open question. In America every one is innocent until proven guilty. The Governor is out on bail and back at work in his office. His arrogance seems to know no bounds.

Some news sources claim that political corruption is common in Illinois. Several of its ex-governors have been unhappy guests of the Federal government. In a State with a culture of corruption, one must wonder if the legislature will forego impeachment or if they will allow him to exercise his authority as Governor to fill Obama's vacant Senate seat. America will have to wait and see if evil will triumph as good people remain silent.

It is normal for a story of this nature to draw parallels and generate speculation. One headline is asking the Nixon era question - "What did Obama know and when did he know it?" Obviously Obama denies all knowledge and already his denial is in question. He claims that he had no contact with the Governor about the matter of his vacant Senate seat but in a November TV interview, one of his staff members is quoted as saying that Obama and the Governor were discussing the issue. The facts in this case will be revealed slowly. This scandal promises to cast a giant shadow over the new president - and he hasn't even started yet.

"Freedom of Expression"

An Open Forum Where Readers Express their Views and Opin-

Las Posadas celebrates culture, tradition

BY KEVIN DUGGAN

In an event rich with culture and seasonal music, Mary and Joseph roamed North Fort Collins streets Friday in search of shelter from the cold night air.

As tradition dictates, they were turned away at every stop. But they found comfort, and the warm embrace of the Hispanic community, at the Museo de las Tres Colonias.

Then hot chocolate and tamales helped take away the chill.

An annual Las Posadas and community celebration went off without a hitch Friday in the historic Andersonville neighborhood, southeast of the intersection of Lemay Avenue and Vine Drive.

Strolling through the neighborhood under the light of a brilliant full moon, a crowd of more than 100 people sang in English and Spanish as they re-enacted Mary and Joseph's search for shelter in Bethlehem before the birth of Jesus.

The third annual event took on some controversy this year when Fort Collins officials told staff members of the Northside Aztlan Community Center city resources could not be used to support the festivities.

On two previous events, city-paid staff members helped coordinate the event and provided materials promoting it to the community. The center also supplied hot chocolate and cookies.

Concerned the city was supporting a religious event - and sensitive to such issues because of past battles over its policy on holiday displays - officials said a separation of church and state had to be maintained.

Longtime local resident Rich Salas, who played guitar and led the singing, told the crowd packed into the museum the event was intended to be a cultural, educational event.

There are many ways to view the tradition - religious, historic, cultural - and other holiday celebrations, he said.

"We are not here to promote any religion, one over the other," he said. "We are here to embrace each other as human beings and celebrate an important element of Latino culture - Las Posadas."

Salas said politics cannot be allowed to complicate "communities preserving their culture."

"Celebrating the rich fabric of diversity our country is built on is everyone's right," he said.

When the city withdrew its support, other community sponsors stepped forward, including a fourth-grade class at St. Joseph School. Participants in the event varied in age and cultural heritage.

Adella Medina brought her young children, ages 2, 3 and 5, to the celebration to teach them about the neighborhood and the tradition.

Gloria Balderrama, a native of Fort Collins, said she wanted to share the experience with her 11-year-old niece, Alta Elena Villarreal.

"I want to pass it on to the younger generation," she said. "To me, it is a religious thing."

Villarreal said she would come again, despite the cold.

"It is a neat experience, the re-enacting of it, because it is such a big part of religion," she said.

Mary was played by Gianna Bueno; Joseph by Luis Casas. Daisy the donkey and a host of costumed angels completed the scene.

St. Joseph School fourth-graders Riley Thomas and Erin Mallory said they were happy to participate in the event as part of a class service project.

It also "feels good to be doing this and getting a little closer to the true meaning of Christmas," Thomas said.

A RETIRED PROFESSOR'S LETTER TO SANTA

By Raymond Rodríguez

Hispanic Link News Service

Dear Santa, I know you are busy so I am submitting a single Christmas wish list for all the children. I am sure you are working under tremendous pressure due to the unsettled conditions in much of the world. So please be careful in making your rounds. All the kids are depending on you.

Due to the condition of our economy, some families are in dire financial straits. Therefore, my list may prove useful because these gifts cost nothing.

The best part is they keep on giving all year long because they are wrapped in love.

Here is my wish list:

Santa, please tell parents and guardians to spend more time with their children. Just being together, hugging them and sharing a quiet moment can be very fulfilling. Let them know that you care and they can count on you.

Santa, have someone read to the children regularly. Children who discover the joys of reading early in life are never at a loss for something exciting to do. Spending time with a good book is like being with a dear friend.

Santa, remind people to let the little ones cook or bake something. Children like to cook and the atmosphere of even the smallest kitchen creates bonds of affection that last a lifetime. Yes, sometimes they make a mess, but the glow of their faces makes it worthwhile.

Santa, please advise the grownups to relax and get down on the floor and join in the fun and games, no matter how foolish they may feel. Everybody loves having a good time and the shouts of joy are contagious. The children will like seeing the adults join in their merriment.

Santa, encourage families to plant something, even if it's only in a clay pot. Let the kids tend it, make it their project. Children are fascinated by growing things. They see the miracle of life evolving before their eyes. They discover that all living things have certain needs in common. The learning process is intriguing and endless.

Santa, also have them build something together, even if it is made out of an old cardboard box. A child's imagination is boundless. The simplest things can be transformed into marvelous objects. You can hop into a box and rocket to the moon! Making things allows children to use their own ideas and their talents. Please be careful with the tools.

Santa, remind adults to take children on outings. Trips to libraries, museums, concerts in the park or to parades enable them to enjoy the fullness of life. Such experiences are priceless. They help children develop an awareness of the richness of their own and others' cultural heritages and inspire them to dream of what they can some day achieve.

Santa, let fathers assist children in developing a love and appreciation of nature and its wonders. Take them for walks along the seashore, a riverbed, a rustic trail or a stroll through the park. Let them lead and set the pace. You will be amazed at how much more you will see through the eyes of a curious child.

Santa, remind Mom and Dad to let the kids help with the household tasks. It makes them feel they are useful members of the family. "I helped!" is always said with pride. Praise them for their efforts and contributions, no matter how small they may seem to be.

Santa, be sure to tell parents to teach their youngsters the true meaning of Christmas. We all have so much to be thankful for. Best of all is being part of a loving family that works, plays and prays together. Such children will never stray far from the values they learn to cherish.

Goodness, Santa, I am asking for a lot. Feel free to make any changes you deem appropriate to make this the best Christmas ever for all the boys and girls around the world.

Santa, I would like to make a final, personal request: Please bring all of us the gift of peace. ¡Mil Gracias!

P.S. Enjoy the leche and pan dulce.

(Raymond Rodríguez, of Long Beach, Calif., is a retired university professor. He may be reached by e-mail at rayrodriguezearthlink.com. This Hispanic Link Christmas classic ran in 2002. The author reported it was translated into several languages and carried around the world.)

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Obama sets record for top Hispanics

By: Mike Allen

President-elect Obama has already broken White House records for the number of top Hispanic officials, and is expected to name two more in the next day or two, according to transition officials.

"Based on what I can pull from records, we have more Hispanics in senior positions in this White House than under either President Bush or President Clinton," incoming White House chief of staff Rahm Emanuel said in an interview.

"Diversity wasn't the driving force here," Emanuel added. "I'm proud of the fact that it is a diverse staff. But most importantly, the quality is of a single standard. We wanted to make sure that we got a great staff of seasoned people - both on the policy front and on the political front - who know their stuff."

Emanuel said that was achieved partly by drawing from a combination of the campaign, Capitol Hill and policy-development organizations. According to research by the Obama transition:

- The maximum number of Latino Assistants to the President at any one time was two: under President Bill Clinton in 1998 and 2000.

- The maximum number of Latino Assistants and Deputy Assistants to the President combined at any one time was five - in the current Bush White House and in the Clinton White House in 1998.

Obama has already named these well-known Hispanics to his government:

- New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson to be secretary of commerce

- Nancy Sutley to be Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality

- Moises "Mo" Vela to be Director of Administration, Office of the Vice President

- Louis Caldera to run the White House Military Office

- Cecilia Munoz to be director of the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

The following announcements are likely in the next day or two:

- U.S. Sen. Ken Salazar (D-Colo.), for secretary of the interior

- Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrion is rumored to be the president-elect's choice to head the new White House Office of Urban Policy.

El Editor

Feliz Navidad y un muy Prospero Año Nuevo 2009

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ADVERTISE CALL

Teach Holiday Songs to Children

Give Your Child the Gift of Music this Holiday Season with Tips from a Certified Music Teacher

With the holidays fast approaching, parents are often trying to find age-appropriate songs to teach their young children. But according to one certified music expert learning songs can be difficult for young children. The key is to teach using techniques that focus on movement, tempo, and rhythm rather than complicated words and phrases.

"There is no better time to start teaching your child easy and effective methods to help build a strong singing and music foundation," says Carol Jurs, owner of Music Box Arts (www.musicboxarts.com) in the Capital Region. "For kids under the age of five, learning through rhythms and movement help simplify the song and make singing fun for the whole family."

Jurs, a certified children's music teacher who focuses on teaching children music through experience to develop richer lives, shares tips on how to choose the right "learning" songs for your child.

1. Start with Chants. "Chants are good because children do not have to think about two separate elements, the language and



music," says Jurs.

2. Keep it Simple. Jurs suggests that children tend to get frustrated with songs that are too difficult, which complicates the learning process. "Choose songs that are simple and that have the ability to teach children about tonal and rhythmic concepts, dynamics (loud/soft), tempo (fast/slow) and steady beat," she says.

3. Add Movement. "Movement is important in learning music whether it be finger play or small and large movement," Jurs says. "Some children learn by moving, known as 'kinesthetic' learners."

4. Limit the Range. "Look for a song with a limited range that fits within the child's singing range, which is actually higher than the untrained adult range," she says.

5. Limit the Words. "Few words or no words are also important," says Jurs. "Children are bogged down and frustrated by learning so many words."

By ALAN SCOTT NOBLITT from the Daily Citizen

Submitted On the first posada, children do a play of the Christmas story.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is one in a series of holiday stories being written by the Daily Citizen staff that uses a Christmas song as a theme.

Feliz Navidad

Feliz Navidad

Feliz Navidad

Prospero ano y Felicidad

I want to wish you

a Merry Christmas

I want to wish you

a Merry Christmas

I want to wish you

a Merry Christmas

From the bottom of my heart

The lyrics are simple and repetitive, yet the tune has already become a classic holiday song. Even those who speak no Spanish know the two words for Merry Christmas — *Feliz Navidad*.

As the Daily Citizen looks at how Christmas songs are connected to the community, no song better gives a reason to consider an ever-growing population in the area; the Latino community is estimated to be around 2,000.

A Beaver Dam resident in touch with the Hispanic community in the city is the Rev. Carlos Florez, an associate pastor at St. Katharine Drexel Parish. He described the Latino Christmas as a religious time when people pray and go to church

"The celebration of Christmas in the Spanish-speaking community is made of up the 'posadas,'" Florez said. The posadas are a nine-day period that begins on Dec. 16 and ends on Dec. 24 with nine houses to be visited — one each day. On each day, a group visits a home chosen to hold the posada and asks

for a room inside, much in the same way that Joseph and Mary did on Christmas Eve.

"People knock on the door asking for lodging at each place," Florez said. At the

dalajara, Mexico, and has been here for six years, described the day.

"The most important of all is to place the baby Jesus in the manger in the nativity scene at midnight. (Then) we

Latino community, Florez said, it is not emphasized as much. He admits that many children in the Hispanic community simply belong to American culture and naturally recognize Santa Claus.



outset, the answer is invariably a rejection, that the owners have no have room.

"But we keep asking and asking and asking, and eventually, the owners say, 'OK, we do have room,'" he said. "Once we are in the home, we bless the house, we pray together and then we feast and play music."

What is important, Florez said, is the symbolism of the gesture, "The family opens the door to God who comes to live in that house."

"On the ninth day, we go to the church, knock on the door and ask for lodging, and again, those inside say, 'No, we don't have room,'" Florez said, "But the other group keeps insisting until they are let in. Once they are in, we pray together, we bless the church and again, the celebration of food and music starts."

Hortensia Garcia, who originally comes from Gua-

sing and share presents."

There are two other days in the Latino celebration of Christmas, Florez said. Dec. 29 is the "vigil night" and Jan. 6 is the celebration of the three kings (known as the feast of the Epiphany in the Catholic Church).

"We select three men from the community who have to invite others into their homes. We bless their house, pray and we eat," he said. "Then these three men go to church and bring gifts for all the children in church."

That means there are actually two days when children may get presents.

"Our kids usually got presents from the three wise kings, but now Santa is becoming popular and our kids are asking Santa for presents," said Garcia.

Although the idea of Santa Claus is used as well in the



As for the Christmas tree, many houses have one and they are decorated as anyone else would do.

The commercialization of Christmas affects Hispanic traditions, he said, but the holiday is, after all, a religious one.

"When we do the posada, we emphasize that the main meaning of Christmas is be together, to worship together and to know that God is with us."

Still, it is a festive time of year.

"We have food, pinatas and gifts, music and dances," he said. "They do have a lot of fun."



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A Los 80 Años, Raymond le Escribe una Carta Especial a Papa Noel

Raymond Rodríguez

Papa Noel, al irme haciendo mayor, y más sabio (así espero), se reduce más y más mi lista de deseos de Navidad, mientras que crece más y más mi lista de cosas por las que doy las gracias. Este año habré celebrado ochenta veces la Navidad - toda una vida. Ya no deseo nada más para mí mismo. Eso sí, te voy a fastidiar con sugerencias de regalos que hacerles a los niños por todo el mundo. Los dones que recomiendo no cuestan casi nada, y sin embargo, siguen regalando durante el año entero.

Papa Noel, haz, por favor, que los papás y las mamás pasen más tiempo con sus hijos; que les den abrazos y los alaben. Que sepan hablar con ellos al nivel de madurez en el que se encuentran. Que con cariño los orienten y los disciplinen.

Papa Noel, haz que los papás les lean libros a sus hijos todos los días. Los deleites y las maravillas que en los libros se encuentran son alegrías que todo niño se merece. Un niño o una niña a quien le gusta leer nunca se aburre ni siente la soledad.

Papa Noel, que las mamás y los papás pasen más tiempo con sus pequeños en la cocina, ayudándoles a preparar pasteles y dulces. Es verdad que a veces ensucian, pero el resplandor de su rostro colma hasta el calor del horno.

Papa Noel, convence a los adultos que se pongan a jugar con los chicos en el suelo, sin importarles lo tonto que parezca el juego. Que jueguen por el simple placer de jugar. A veces la educación necesita un recreo.

Papa Noel, recuérdales a las familias que siembren algo, así sea en una maceta de barro. A los niños les fascinará ver crecer su plantita. Que ellos la rieguen y la cuiden. Quedarán encantados con verla echar brotes y florecer. Tal vez intuyan el milagro de su propia creación y desarrollo.

Papa Noel, anima a las familias a construir cosas juntos. La combinación de las destrezas de los adultos con el entusiasmo y la imaginación de los chicos puede transformar un pedazo de madera o una caja de cartón en algo mágico. No tiene importancia alguna lo que se construya. Lo que cuenta es sentir orgullo por haber logrado algo.

Papa Noel, que las familias no se olviden de compartir siempre las tareas caseras, porque así sienten los niños que juegan un papel importante en la familia. Los jóvenes que crecen con una familia que disfruta colaborando, rara vez se derivan de los valores que han aprendido en casa. Aprenden tanto por precepto como por concepto.

Papa Noel, no dejes de asegurar que alguien lleve a los niños a la biblioteca, al museo, a un concierto al aire libre o a otro evento social, para que aprecien la riqueza de su comunidad. Estas experiencias nutren la esencia de la persona que algún día serán.

Papa Noel, haz, por favor, que alguien lleve de paseo a los chicos al parque, a la playa o por un sendero rústico. Que los chicos mismos marquen el paso, y que los adultos se acucillen para ver lo que ellos ven, a su mismo nivel. Se sorprenderán de lo mucho más que verán al mirar el mundo por los ojos de un niño.

Yo sé que estás muy ocupado, Papa Noel, pero te pido que me revises la lista dos veces por si se me olvidara algo importante. Si falta algo, sárvete de tu gran amor y sabiduría y agrega lo que te parezca mejor. Y, por favor, recuérdales a los adultos que el amor, aquel regalo que más necesitan los niños, no se compra en una tienda. Del amor brota el amor cuando damos sin recelo de nosotros mismos todo el año.

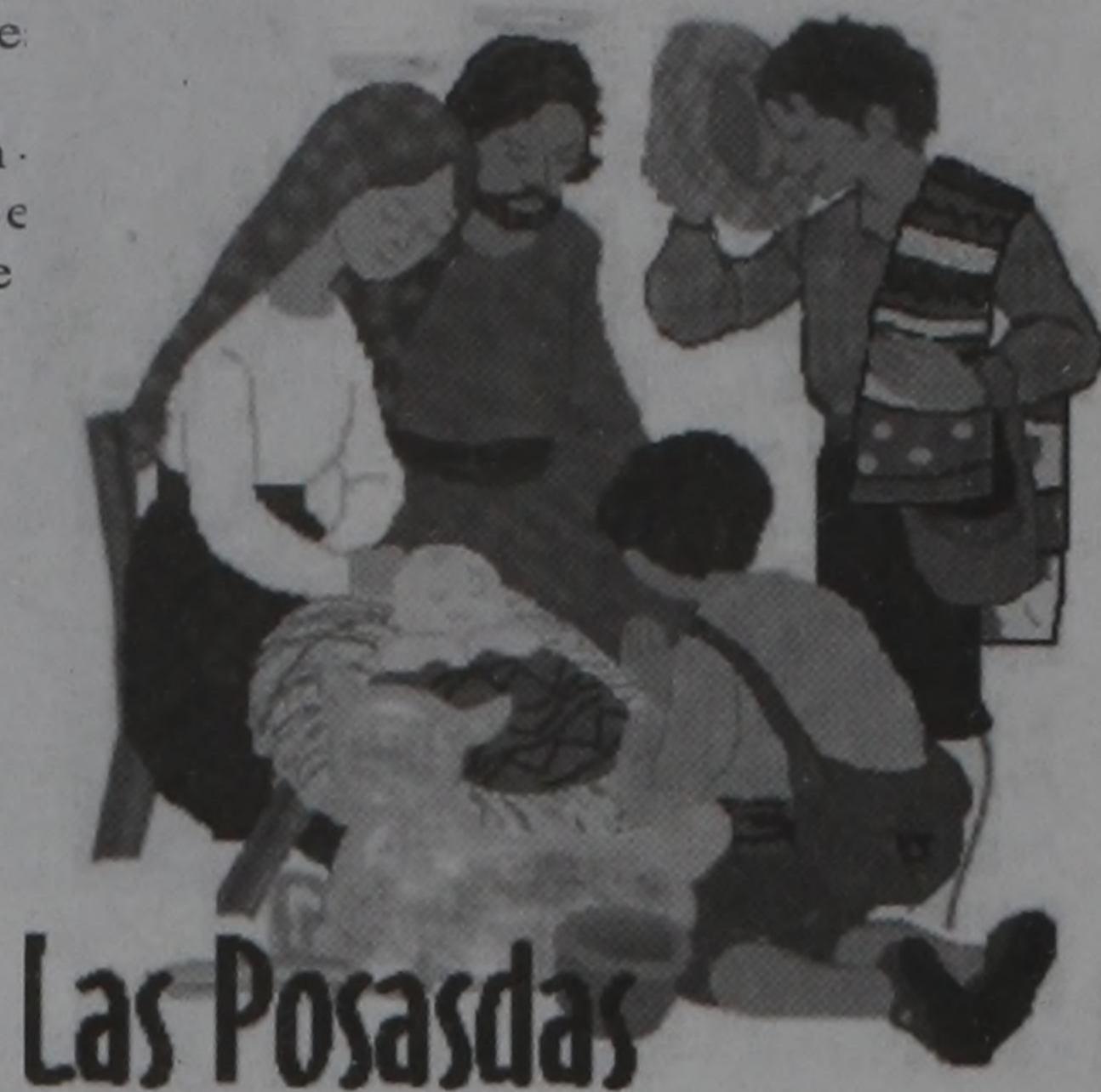
Y lo mejor -- no hay que envolverlo.

Las Posadas

What Are the Posadas?

Las Posadas is a traditional Mexican Christmas celebration that is quickly becoming a cherished custom of both Hispanics and non-Hispanics alike throughout the United States. Posadas tradition takes place the last nine evenings before Christmas between December 16 and 24. The traditional Posada song tells the story of Mary and Joseph. The nightly procession is a way of re-living Mary and Joseph's search for shelter (cf. Lk 2:4-7). Posadas means "inn or lodging." How to Have a Posada: Those celebrating the Posadas gather together. Children can be dressed as Mary and Joseph. Adults, carrying candles and representations of Joseph and Mary (these are called los misterios), and in some places even the little donkey, form a procession with the children and prepare to go in search of posada (shelter).

The procession visits homes (usually three per night), which have been designated ahead of time. Mary, Joseph, and those in the procession approach the door of the first home, singing in



Spanish: "Do you have lodging?" The people inside the house respond by singing, "Go away. This is no inn." The procession moves to other houses, and again they are refused lodging. At the last house, however, the "inn keepers" relent and welcome the exhausted travelers. They sing, "Enter, holy pilgrims. Come into our humble dwelling and into our hearts. The night is one of joy, for here beneath our roof we shelter the Mother of God." Everyone enters the house and a celebration begins. There is usually food, beverages, and a piñata for the children.

The Posadas Song (English)

Outside

In the name of heaven, I ask you for shelter because my beloved wife can continue no longer.

Inside

This is no inn, continue on your way. I am not about to open. You may be a scoundrel.

Outside

Don't be inhuman. Have charity. For the God of the heavens will reward you.

Inside

Now you can go and don't bother us because if I get angry I will hit you.

2 Outside

We come exhausted all the way from Nazareth; I am a carpenter by the name of Joseph.

Inside

I don't care what your name is. Let me go back to sleep, I am telling you I am not about to open.

Outside

The queen of heaven is asking for shelter, dear landlord, just for one night.

Inside

Well, if it is a queen who is asking, how is it that at night she travels so alone?

3 Outside

My wife is Mary, she is queen of Heaven, and she will be mother of the Divine Word.

Inside

Are you Joseph, your wife is Mary? Come in, pilgrims, I did not recognize you.

Outside

May God reward your great charity, good people, and fill the heavens with happiness.

Inside

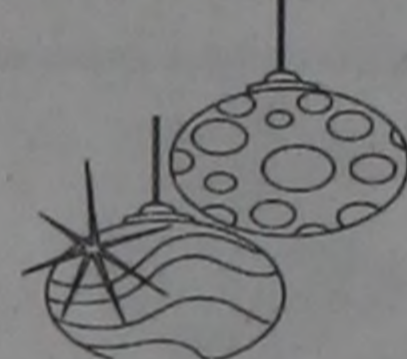
Blessed the house that shelters this day

the pure Virgin, the beautiful Mary! Final verse upon entering. Enter holy pilgrims, pilgrims; Accept this corner. Although the dwelling is poor, I give it to you with all my heart. Let us sing with joy, joy. Let us reflect together, that Jesus, Joseph and Mary, have come today to honor us. (Repeat)



Que usted y su familia tengan una

Feliz Navidad



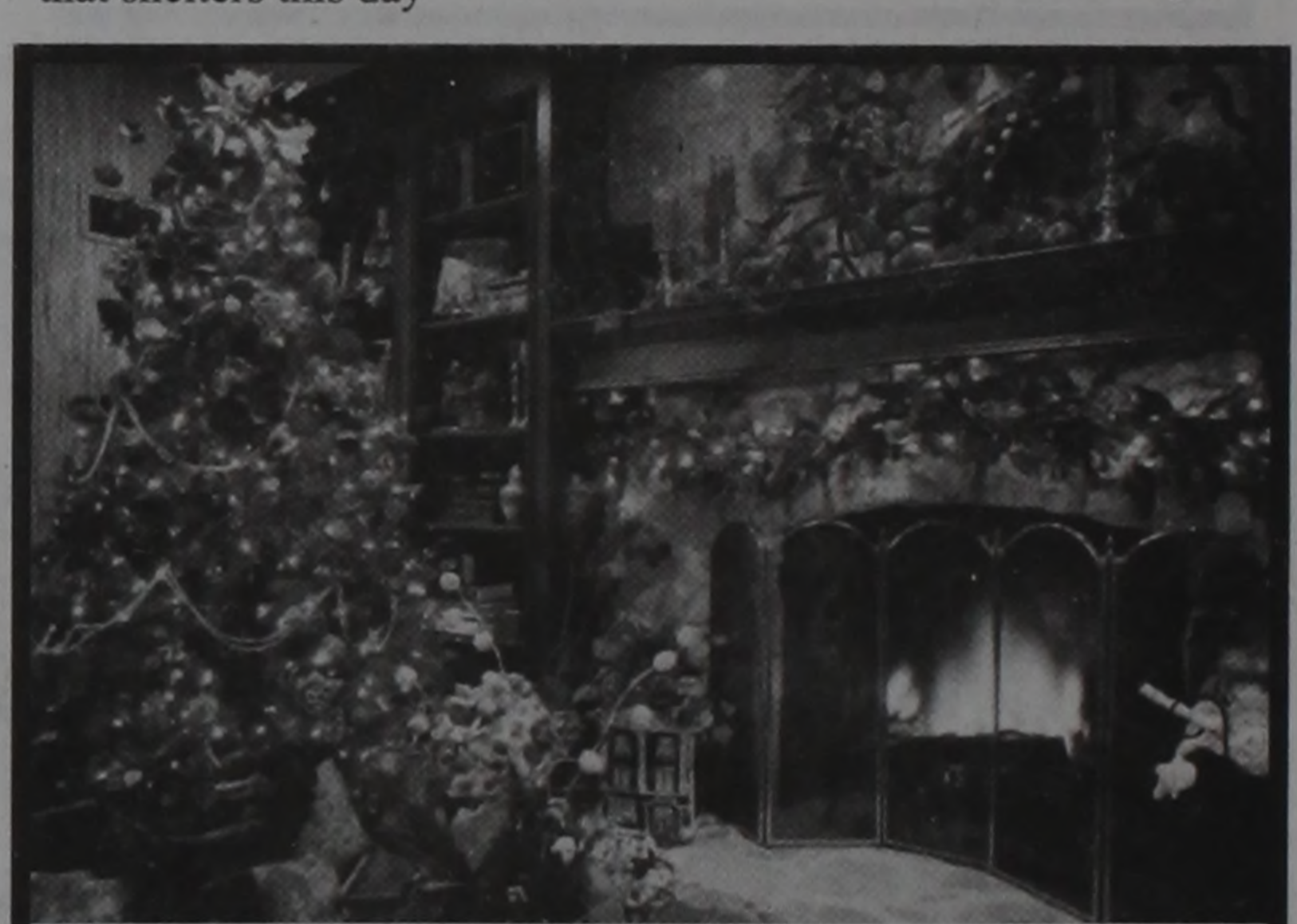
y que tambien todos tengan mucho

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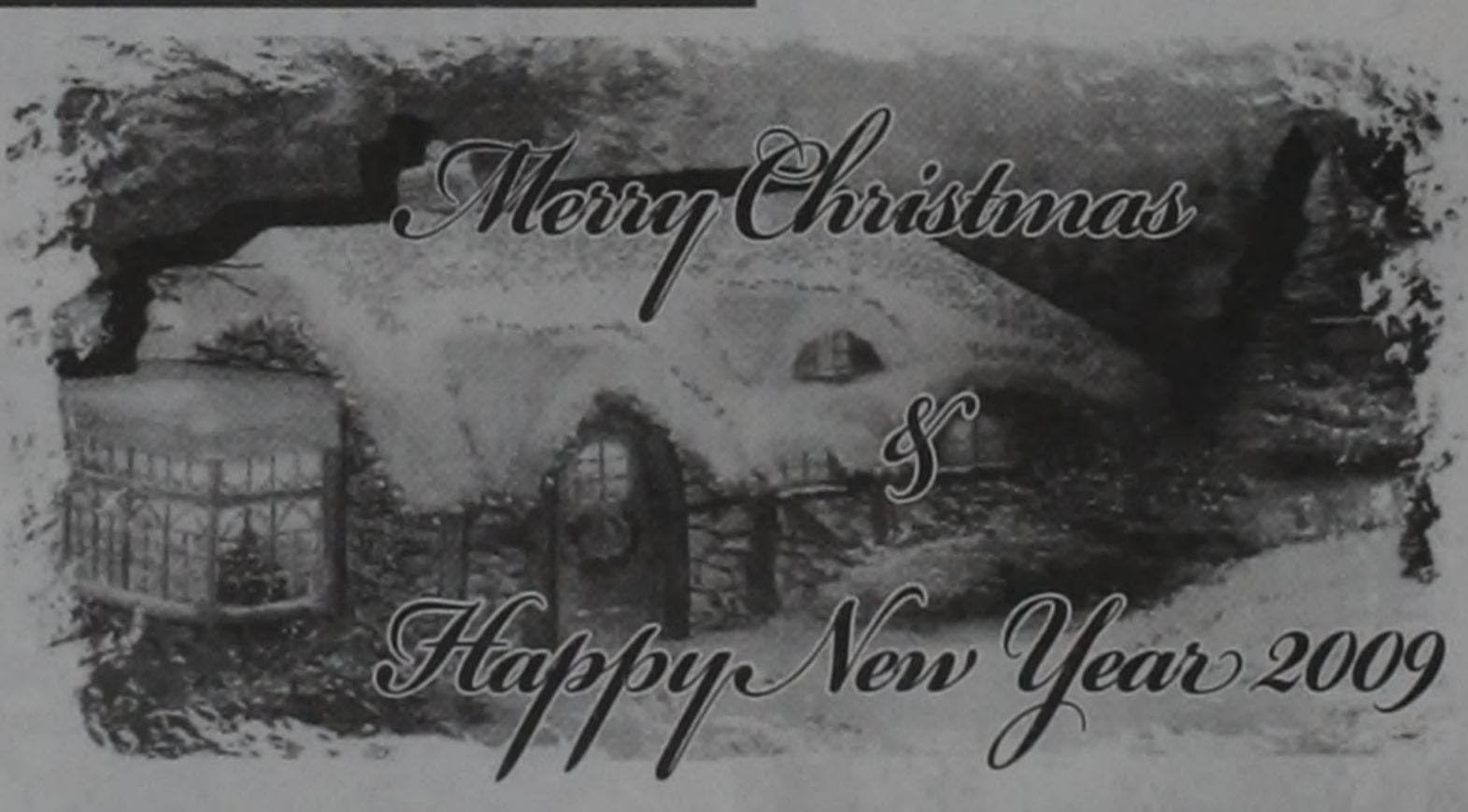


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Great Gift Ideas: Kids' Christmas books

The Grinch is a half-century old.

To celebrate, Random House has released a retrospective of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" that includes the original text plus 32 pages of commentary compiled by Charles D. Cohen, a Dr. Seuss expert.

From Dr. Seuss' Grinch with his heart two sizes too small to Lemnony Snicket's screaming latke and a chicken named Minerva who follows Santa down the chimney, plenty of delightful characters are featured in holiday children's books this year.

Here's a sampling of child-oriented works:

• "How the Grinch Stole Christmas: A 50th Anniversary Retrospective." Written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss (ages 4-8; Random House Books for Young Readers). Did you know the Grinch was initially black and white with pink eyes? Or that the song the Whos were singing was different the first time Seuss composed it?

"Who noo neebu!" "Who doo deebu!" "Welcome, Christmas! Christ-mas cheer!"

"Nuh who norbick!" "Duh who dorbick!"

Fortunately Dr. Seuss was a perfectionist for words, and he reworked the song. These tidbits of info from Dr. Cohen make the Grinch story even more precious.

• "The Latke Who Couldn't Stop Screaming: A Christmas Story." By Lemnony Snicket with illustrations by Lisa Brown (ages 6-9; McSweeney's). Knowing the author is the creator of the "Series of Unfortunate Events" sets high expectations for his first picture book, and

Snicket delivers.

At first the latke is screaming because he's put in hot oil to fry, but, after he escapes he screams in frustration at the misunderstanding about his holiday, which is definitely not Christmas.

Readers know the eventful ending because Snicket sets up the book with, "This story ends in someone's mouth ..." but his dark humor along the way makes a fun tale with a bit of learning thrown in.

• "Olivia Helps With Christmas." Written and illustrated by Ian Falconer (ages 4-8; Atheneum). Waiting for Santa passes quickly for Olivia (sort of) when there are so many things to do in preparation for his visit.

Falconer relies on his own childhood traditions to illustrate his familiar black-and-white pig dotted with patches of green and red in holiday activities.

• "The All-I'll-Ever-Want Christmas Doll." By Patricia C. McK

issack with illustrations by Jerry Pinkney (ages 4-8; Schwartz & Wade). Nella wants a Baby Betty doll for Christmas, but she and

her sisters don't dare wish for anything that extravagant during the Depression. So 7-year-old Nella secretly writes a letter to Santa.

When Baby Betty arrives,

Nella claims her. She soon finds out that sharing with her sisters is more fun than a boring old doll that just sits there. Beautiful watercolor images and realistic conversations make this book a holiday treasure.

• "Minerva Louise on Christmas Eve." Written and illustrated by Janet Morgan Stoeke (ages 3-6; Dutton Juvenile). Minerva Louise is not exactly the brightest hen in the barnyard, so young readers will be delighted to be in on the joke when Santa arrives at the farmhouse. Simple drawings in bright colors will encourage readers to enjoy the story more than once.

• "Russell's Christmas Magic." Written and illustrated by Rob Scotton (ages 4-8; HarperCollins). Santa's sleigh breaks down in Firefly Wood, so Christmas may have to be canceled.

Not if Russell the sheep has anything to say about it! Russell turns a junker car into a new sleigh and joins Santa on his magical trip. Scotton's whimsical illustrations of the bug-eyed sheep and his sidekick frog are full of details plus text that winds around the images.

• "N is for Navidad." Written by Susan Middleton Elya and Merry Banks with illustrations by Joe Cepeda (ages 4-8; Chronicle Books). This alphabet book uses the Spanish alphabet, so there are 30 letters to illustrate the traditional Hispanic holiday season that begins Dec. 16 and continues to Jan. 6, when the three kings arrived to greet Jesus.

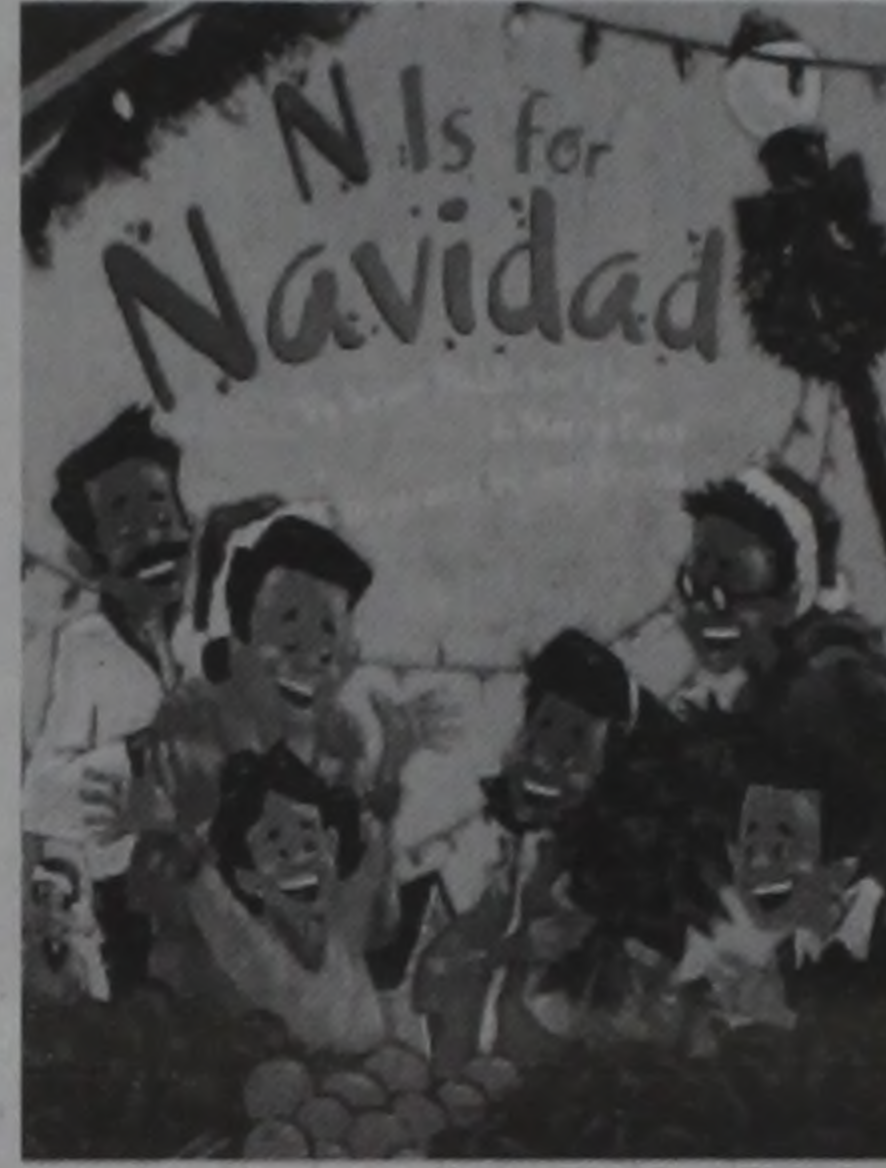
A simple glossary in the back of the book explains the words, although most of them are self-explanatory from the vibrant illustrations by Cepeda. The delightful book reinforces the alphabet and teaches about

other customs.

• "Angela and the Baby Jesus (Children's Edition)." By Frank McCourt with illustrations by Raul Colon (ages 4-8; Simon & Schuster). Pulitzer-winning author McCourt's first Christmas book is a wonderful story about family based on a memory from his mother, Angela, when she was 6.

Little Angela thinks baby Jesus must be cold lying in the manger, so she takes him home to warm him up. This children's version with luminous illustrations by Colon is being

published simultaneously with an adult edition - same words, different illustrator.



COMISIÓN DE CALIDAD AMBIENTAL DEL ESTADO DE TEXAS



AVISO DE RECEPCIÓN DE SOLICITUD E INTENCIÓN DE OBTENER RENOVACIÓN DE PERMISO ATMOSFÉRICO

PERMISO NÚM. 39214

SOLICITUD Beck Steel, Inc, ha solicitado a la Comisión de Calidad Ambiental del Estado de Texas (TCEQ por sus siglas en inglés) renovación del Permiso Num.39214 de Calidad Atmosférica el cual autorizaría la operación continua de una facilidad para la fabricación de acero ubicada 401 North Loop 289, Lubbock, Lubbock Condado, Texas. La planta existente tiene la autorización de emitir los siguientes contaminantes atmosféricos: compuestos orgánicos, agentes contaminadores de aire peligrosos, y materia de partículas incluyendo materia de partículas menos de 10 micrones de diámetro.

Esta solicitud se le presentó a TCEQ el Noviembre 14, 2008. La solicitud está disponible en la oficina central de TCEQ, para revisarla y sacarle copia, en la oficina regional de TCEQ en Lubbock, y Lubbock County Courthouse, 904 Broadway, 1st Floor, Lubbock, Lubbock County. El expediente de cumplimiento de la planta, si existe alguno, esta disponible para su revisión en la oficina regional de TCEQ en Lubbock.

El director ejecutivo de TCEQ ha determinado que la solicitud está administrativamente completa y llevará a cabo una revisión técnica de la solicitud. La información que se incluye en la solicitud indica que esta renovación del permiso no resultaría en un aumento de emisiones permisibles y no resultaría en la emisión de un contaminante atmosférico que no hubiera emitido anteriormente. **TCEQ puede actuar en esta solicitud sin buscar comentarios públicos adicionales o dar la oportunidad para una audiencia de caso impugnado si se cumple con ciertos criterios. COMENTARIOS PÚBLICOS** Usted puede presentar comentarios públicos, o solicitar una audiencia de caso impugnado a la Oficina del Funcionario Jefe al domicilio a continuación. 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 importantes. Valor de la propiedad, ruido, seguridad de tráfico y zonificación se encuentran fuera de la jurisdicción de 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 solo se reciben comentarios, la respuesta a los comentarios, junto con la decisión del director ejecutivo con respecto a la solicitud se enviarán por correo a todas aquellas personas que presentaron comentarios públicos o que se encuentran en la lista de correos para esta solicitud, a no ser que la solicitud se refiera directamente a una audiencia de caso impugnado.

OPORTUNIDAD PARA UNA AUDIENCIA DE CASO IMPUGNADO

Usted puede solicitar una audiencia de caso impugnado. El solicitante o el director ejecutivo también pueden presentar una petición para que la solicitud haga referencia directamente a una audiencia de caso impugnado después de la revisión técnica de la solicitud. Una audiencia de caso impugnado es un proceso legal similar a un juicio civil en el tribunal de distrito del estado. A menos que se presente una solicitud para una audiencia de caso impugnado dentro de 15 días de esta notificación, el director ejecutivo puede autorizar la solicitud. **Si no se recibe una solicitud para audiencia dentro de 15 días, no se dará otra oportunidad para una audiencia.** De acuerdo a la Ley del Aire Limpio del Estado de Texas 382.056(o) solo se puede conceder una audiencia de caso impugnado si el historial de cumplimiento del solicitante se encuentra en la clasificación mas baja de acuerdo a los requisitos de historial de cumplimiento que aplican y si la petición para audiencia está basada en cuestiones debatibles de hecho 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 se presenten durante el período de comentarios públicos y no se retiran

Una persona que puede estar afectada por contaminantes de emisiones atmosféricas de una planta tiene derecho a solicitar una audiencia. Si se solicita una audiencia de caso impugnado, debe presentar lo siguiente: (1) su nombre (o para un grupo o asociación, un representante oficial), dirección, número de teléfono y número de facsímil si lo tiene; (2) el nombre del solicitante y número de permiso; (3) la declaración A[yo / nosotros] solicito una audiencia de un caso impugnado@; (4) una descripción específica de como se vería adversamente afectado por la solicitud y emisiones atmosféricas de la planta de manera que no es común para el publico en general; (5) la ubicación y distancia de su propiedad con relación a la planta; y (6) una Descripción de como emplea la propiedad la cual puede ser impactada por la planta. Si la petición la hace un grupo o asociación, el miembro o miembros que tienen derecho a solicitar una audiencia y los intereses que el grupo o la asociación busca proteger, también se deben identificar. También puede presentar los ajustes que propone hacer a la solicitud / permiso que pueden satisfacer sus preocupaciones. Las peticiones para una audiencia de caso impugnado se deben presentar por escrito dentro de 15 día después de aviso, a la Oficina del Funcionario Jefe a la dirección a continuación.

Si se registra oportunamente una petición para audiencia de caso impugnado, el director ejecutivo enviará la solicitud y cualquier petición para una audiencia de caso impugnado a los comisionados de TCEQ para su consideración durante la reunión programada de la Comisión. Excepto si la solicitud se refiere directamente a una audiencia de caso impugnado, el director ejecutivo enviará por correo la respuesta a los comentarios junto con la notificación de la reunión de la Comisión a todas aquellas personas que hayan hecho comentarios o si se encuentran en la lista de correspondencia para esta solicitud. Si se concede la audiencia, el tema de la audiencia estará limitado a casos debatibles de hecho relacionados a intereses pertinentes y materiales de calidad atmosférica que se hayan presentado durante el período de comentarios. Cuestiones tales como valor de la propiedad, ruido, seguridad de tráfico y zonificación no están dentro de la jurisdicción de la Comisión para abordarse en este proceso judicial.

LISTA DE CORRESPONDENCIA Aparte de presentar comentarios públicos, puede solicitar que lo / la incluyan en la lista de correos para recibir en el futuro avisos públicos para esta solicitud específica que envía por correo la Oficina del Funcionario Jefe enviando una petición por escrito a la Oficina del Funcionario Jefe de TCEQ a la dirección a continuación.

INFORMACIÓN Los comentarios públicos o peticiones para una reunión pública o audiencia de caso impugnado se debe presentar a la Oficina del Funcionario Jefe, MC-105, TCEQ, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, Texas 78711-3087. Para mayor información acerca de esta solicitud para permiso o el proceso para permisos, favor de llamar a la Oficina de Asistencia al Público, al 1-800-687-4040. Si requiere información general de TCEQ dirigirse al portal electrónico www.tceq.state.tx.us.

Se puede obtener información adicional de Beck Steel, Inc., 401 North Loop 289, Lubbock, Texas 79403-2703 o al llamar Mr. Roger Reyna en el (806) 783-9944.

Fecha de Expedición: Diciembre 1, 2008

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Photography
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El Editor Newspaper
806-763-3841

Keeping Family Traditions is hard work

When everything Christmas comes with a shortcut - the pre-signed Christmas card, the pre-decorated tree, even cookies already cut because who has time for slicing - the high-maintenance homemade holiday tamale is facing grim times, indeed.

Tamales are a beloved icon of local culture, but those lovely, luscious bundles can take three days to prepare. The recipe has to be extracted from generations of memory: Many of those nanas refused to write it down. And assembling the precious dozens requires a horde of helpers who must eke a spare Saturday out of December's insanity. All of this, and you can get a dozen from the drive-through for \$18.

The cultural sellout is tempting: You'd still have tamales for

Christmas. But there would be guilt. And disappointed chil-



53, of Phoenix, who has pared her yearly 35 dozen tamale tradition to a trim 20 bundles. "It was just too much. Nobody likes to do it anymore. It's just a lot of work. It can be fun. . . . And then it's like I still make 'em because I don't wanna lose that knowledge."

Then, when the cooking is done, "you have so many pots to wash out, and it's 'Oh, my God, who's gonna do the pots?' But we all enjoy that day, even if we're dead tired."

In today's rapidly merging Hispanic and American cultures, "there are a lot of traditions that kind of dissipate," says Abelardo de la Peña Jr. of Los Angeles, a strategist with Iconoculture, a consumer research group. "The use of Spanish as a primary language, the telenovelas. But (tamales) are something that can

be passed on in a cultural way, a culinary way, in an authentic, real fun way of passing on food and party and enjoyment."

Of course, this "passing on" means that you get yourself to a kitchen and you watch and help and learn. The first ingredient in this recipe is time, and the rest is absorbed just by being there and getting your hands into some dough.

Twelve-year-old Lorena Ledezma of Phoenix has been haunting the kitchen at tamale time for as long as she can remember. She can't wait until it's her turn to learn - maybe this year, her mother says. She loves being in there with her mother and all of her aunts, everybody focused on making morsels of joy.

"Everybody's all talking and talking and making tamales and it's 'pass me the meat' and 'pass me the chile,' and I'm in charge of cleaning up the leaves," Ledezma says.

Ledezma walks with agility between her two cultures. She loves Hello Kitty and Rebelde, translates Spanish into English for her parents at home, and worships Jack in the Box. But the tamale is something she plans to hold dear.

"So that when I grow up, I'll be able to make some for my children. So I won't have to be like, 'Mom, what's the recipe? Will you help me make them?'"

Tamale-making is learned by rote. After 40 dozen, you've figured out the right ratio of masa to meat. You've memorize how to fold the corn husks into neat packages after doing it again and again.

Being there is how this custom is carried on, and there is immense pressure, even if you're working, even if you have kids and a household, to be at tamale day and uphold your culture.

"If you don't go, you hear it from everybody," says Stephanie Gonzales, 27, a receptionist in Phoenix. "It's 'Where were you? Where were you? Where were you?'"

And if you're not there, well, there may be no tamales for you. The handmade tamale is a rare treat, a labor of love, and doled out accordingly. The temptation to horde is strong.

"My husband promises everybody tamales," says Rosie High-tower, 50, of Phoenix.

"We grind the masa, boil up the chile, the whole works. We'll make 25 dozen, and I think there's two dozen left for us. And I'll say, 'OK, that's it, we're not going to do any more of this.'"

So the official word this year is that she's not making any at all.

"If I say I'm not making any, they'll leave me alone," High-tower says. "If I just make 15 dozen, it won't be so bad."

"You've gotta keep 'em going," she adds. "It's too easy, too easy to just buy 'em. It's about the feelings that you put into it when you're making 'em. You think of who you're making them for and how they appreciate the tamales."

Specifically, she thinks of her husband's friend, who got his hands on a dozen of her

effort," the 51-year-old Tempe woman says.

Their dedication to the tamales involves considerable schedule wrangling, and they all have to be there because no one knows the entire recipe. They have to pool their memories of Mom.

"We're all working, we all have families, we all have different priorities," Luera says. "We start the conversation via e-mail: 'What's a good date?'"

This year, Saturdays were shot, so they're all taking a Friday off of work to celebrate each other and their culture and to make their familial holiday magic.

"You just can't do it one person on their own," Luera says. "But once we come together, we remember all those lessons that were taught over the years



tamales and in his glee ate all 12 on his drive home.

The tamale was almost lost in Anita Luera's family. Her mother died about a year and a half ago, and she "was the glue who used to hold the tamales together."

In their sadness, Luera and her siblings were tempted to just let it go, but instead "it's developed into a family rebuilding

of fixing the ojas and how to spread masa. If one doesn't remember, then the other reminds."

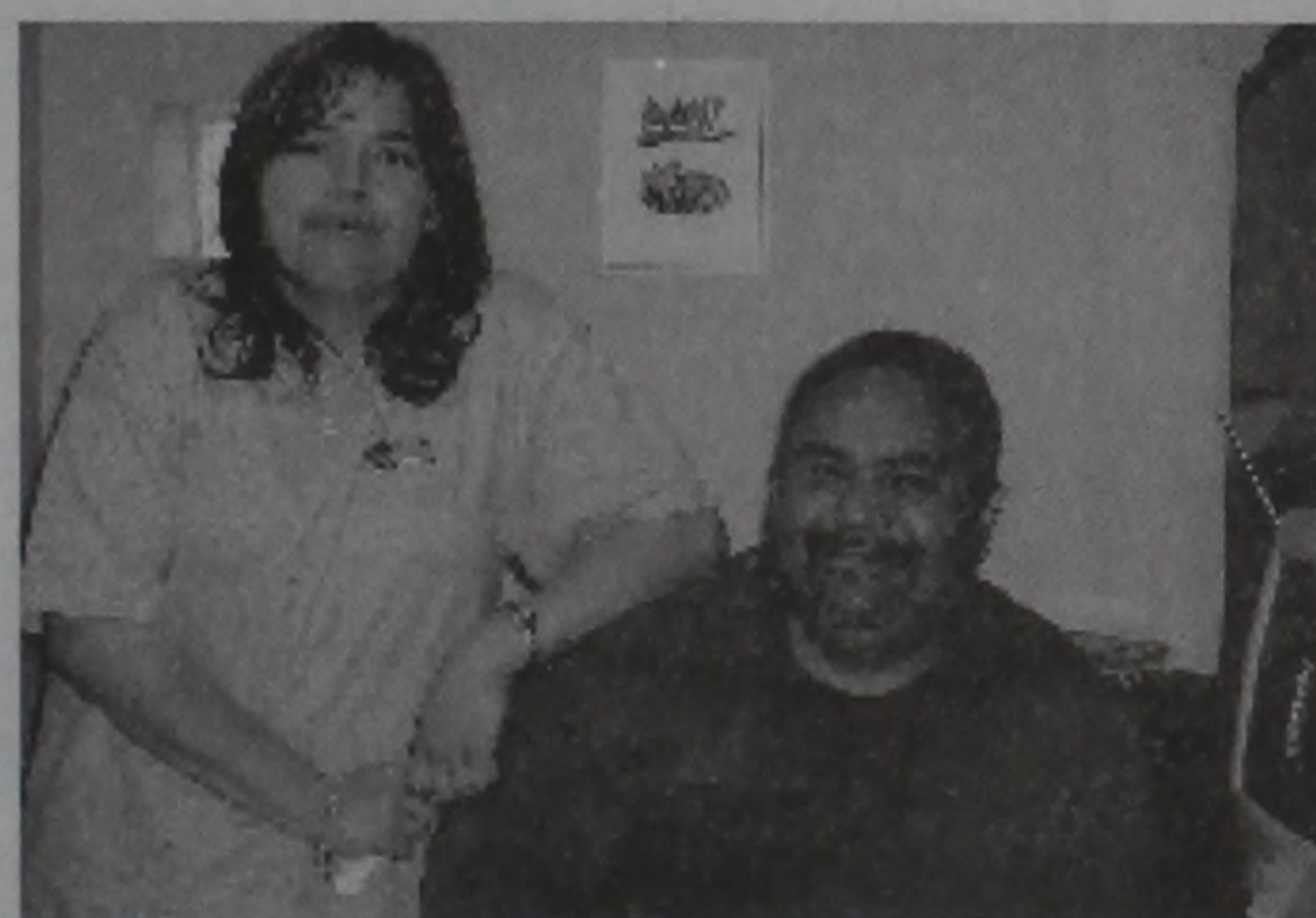
And sure, there's a shortcut involved - store-bought masa - but in the end, it really doesn't matter.

"Being from a big family," Luera says, "the best blessing is that we can all come together for this tradition."



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El Editor Newspaper

A TODAS LAS PERSONAS Y PARTES INTERESADAS:

Beck Steel, Inc. ha solicitado a la Comisión de Calidad Ambiental de Texas (TCEQ) la RENOVACIÓN del Permiso Num. 39214 para Calidad Atmosférica, que autoriza la continua operación de una facilidad para la fabricación de acero ubicada en 401 North Loop 289, Lubbock, Lubbock Condado, Texas. En la sección de avisos PÚBLICOS de este periódico se encuentra información adicional de esta solicitud.



Mexican Traditions for Christmas

Christmas for Mexicans, in traditional homes and rural areas, is a religious holiday.

It is a celebration of the Nativity. This means the birthday of Our Lord Jesus. In order to prepare for the day of symbolic commemoration, we have the "Posadas". These celebrations are a "Novena" or nine days before the 24 which is the "Noche Buena" or "Holy Night".

These Posadas are an enactment of looking for lodging of St. Joseph and Virgin Mary, called The Pilgrims going to Bethlehem for the Census according to the Scriptures. In Spanish we called them: "Los Peregrinos, San José y la Virgen María". Each family in a neighborhood, will schedule a night for the Posada to be held at their home, starting on the 16th of December and finishing on the 24th on Noche Buena.

Every home will have a Nativity scene. The hosts of the home are the innkeepers, and the neighborhood children and adults are Los Peregrinos, who have to request lodging through singing a simple chant. All carry small lit candles in their hands and lit teenagers of about the same height are chosen to carry Los Peregrinos, which are two small statues of St. Joseph leading a donkey, which Virgin Mary is riding sidesaddle. The head of the procession will have a candle inside of a paper lamp shade that looks like an accordion but open at the top and it is called a

"Farolito" or little lantern.

The Peregrinos will ask for lodging in three different houses but only the third one will allow them in. That will be the house that is supposed to have the Posada for that evening. Once the innkeepers let them in, the group of guests comes into the home and kneels around the Nativity scene to pray the Rosary. The Rosary is a traditional Catholic prayer, which consists of the following prayers: 50 Hail Mary, 5 Our Father, 5 Glory and the Litany, which is a series of Praises for the Virgin Mary, plus singing traditional songs like Holy Night in Spanish of course!

After all the prayer is done, then it comes the party for the children. There will be a Piñata, (pronounce Pignata, for it has an ñ instead of an n), filled with peanuts, oranges, tangerines, sugar canes, and seldom wrapped hard candy. Of course,

there will be other types of chants the children will sing while the child in turn is trying to break the Piñata with a stick while he/she will be blindfolded.

Although the Piñata was originally from Italy, it has become a Mexican tradition for celebrations where there are children involved. The Piñata was made out of a clay pot and decorated with crepe paper in different colors. Today's piñatas are made out of cardboard and paper



mache techniques and decorated with crepe paper. This change was made to prevent the children from cutting their hands when going for the fruit and candy when the Piñata was broken and the clay piece would become a hazard. They have all kinds of designs besides the traditional star.

For the adults there is always "Ponche con Piquete" (sting), which is a hot beverage or "Punch" made out of seasonal fruits and cinnamon sticks, with a shot of alcoholic spirit. A good substitute here in Ohio is hot apple cider with fruits, without the "spirits".

On Noche Buena, December 24, everybody goes to Misa de Noche Buena which is at midnight. After the Mass, everyone goes to their respective homes to have dinner with family and any friend who does not have a family is always welcome to be part of a family celebration, and most important of all to place the Baby Jesus in the manger in the Nativity scene.

The presents are not received on Christmas, for Christmas is a celebration of Life of Our Savior.

The New Year's Eve, there is a Misa de Gallo, (Rooster's Mass) that takes place at midnight also. Some families go to church early to give thanks for all the blessings received during the year.

The children's celebration of receiving presents is not until

January 6th, "el día de Reyes", the day of the Kings, or the Wise Men Day. It is the Magi who brought the presents to the Baby Jesus, thus, they bring the toys to the boys and girls who have been good. The children

place their shoes by the window, so the Magi place the present in the shoe. If the present is bigger than the shoe, it will be placed next to it. Many children, get a new pair of shoes for a present.

El día de Reyes is celebrated with a "Merienda" consisting of hot chocolate and "The Rosca de Reyes". "La Merienda is the meal that takes place any time between 5 P.M. and 7 P.M. it is not a heavy meal but the equivalent of "High Tea".

The Rosca de Reyes is a big oval wreath made out of egg bread (like an egg bagel, but huge) with dry fruit decorations and sprinkled sugar on top, but inside, there is a little ceramic doll which represents the Baby Jesus. The person who gets the piece of bread with the Baby, must be the Godparent of the Baby Jesus in the celebration of the Candelaria,

on February 2nd.

"El día de la Candelaria" is the day of the Candle or Light, known as the Day of Purification. That day, the Nativity scene is put away with a party given by the person who got the Baby Jesus in his/her piece of bread during the Rosca de Reyes celebration. He or she will be responsible for making a "Ropon" or christening gown for Baby Jesus. Generally, they have a Dinner with Tamales (Tamales are corn bread filled with meats in a sauce or raisins wrapped in corn husks).

Lately, these traditions have been modified. For example, the Posadas are now nine parties that are celebrated in diferentes friends homes before Christmas. Also, with the North American Free Trade Agreement, known as NAFTA, Christmas is now celebrated the American style, with Santa Claus, the meals and presentes, mostly among the affluent people. Others take trips to sky resorts in the United States or Europe, or travel to turistic places within Mexico.

All the education institutions are on vacation during the holidays, they do not get back to school until after January 6th. Also, the government offices and the other institutions connected with the government close during those two week



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Tradiciones Mexicanas para La Navidad

La Navidad es una festividad religiosa entre las familias tradicionales y en las zonas rurales.

La Navidad significa el nacimiento de Nuestro Señor Jesucristo. Para prepararnos para ese día en que celebramos simbólicamente Su Nacimiento, tenemos Posadas. Estas posadas son una "Novena" o nueve días antes de la Noche Buena, que es el 24 de diciembre.

Las Posadas son una actuación de la penuria que pasaron San José y La Virgen María para encontrar posada

la Piñata ya que los pedazos de barro rotos eran peligrosos. Hay todo tipo de diseños, además de la estrella, que es la piñata tradicional de Navidad.

Para los adultos siempre hay "Ponche con Piquete", es una bebida caliente hecha con trozos de canela y con un poco de aguardiente (ron, tequila, mezcal, cognac, jerez, etc.). Un buen sustituto en Ohio es la sidra de manzana con frutas, sin "piquete".

En la Noche Buena, el 24 de diciembre, todos van a la Misa de Noche Buena que es a las

El día de la Candelaria es el día de la Luz, el día de la Purificación. Ese día se recoge el Nacimiento con una fiesta organizada por la persona que se sacó el Niño Jesús en la Rosca de Reyes. Dicha persona es responsable por hacerle el Ropón al Niño Jesús. Se acostumbra a celebrar ese día con una cena con Tamales. (Los tamales son un platillo típico de México que se hace con masa de maíz y se rellenan con carnes en salsa o con pasitas y se le agrega azúcar para hacerlos dulces y se envuelven con las hojas del elote).

En la actualidad, estas tradiciones han sido modificadas. Por ejemplo, las posadas son fiestas que se celebran en diferentes casas nueve días antes de la Navidad, y son simplemente fiestas seculares. Asimismo, con la influencia del Tratado Libre de Comercio conocido como el TLC, ahora se celebra la Navidad al estilo de los Estados Unidos entre la gente adinerada, con Santa Claus y todas las tradiciones norteamericanas con sus platillos y los regalos. Otra gente se toma vacaciones para ir a esquiar a los Estados Unidos o a Europa, o viaja a lugares turísticos en México.

Todas las instituciones educativas tienen vacaciones por tres semanas y no regresan a las clases sino hasta después del 6 de enero. Asimismo, las oficinas de gobierno y sus dependencias cierran durante esas dos semanas.



o albergue en su viaje a Belén para cumplir con el Censo de acuerdo con las Escrituras. En español les llamamos "Los Santos Peregrinos José y María". Cada familia en un barrio se turna una noche y celebra con una posada en su casa; empiezan 16 de diciembre y terminan el 24 en la Noche Buena.

En cada casa hay un Nacimiento. Los anfitriones representan a los hosteleros y los niños del barrio, así como los adultos, representan a "Los

12, o a la medianoche. Después de la misa, todos se van a sus respectivas casas a la Cena de Navidad con su familia y cualquier amigo que carezca de familia, siempre es bienvenido a participar en la celebración, pero lo más importante, es poner al Niño Jesús en el pesebre en el Nacimiento.

Los regalos no se reciben en la Navidad porque la Navidad es la celebración del Nacimiento de Nuestro Salvador.

La noche del año nuevo, hay



Peregrinos" quienes piden posada con un cántico simple a sus versos. Todos llevan en sus manos velitas encendidas y se escogen cuatro adolescentes para que carguen a Los Peregrinos, que son dos pequeñas estatuillas de San José jalando a un burro en el cual va montada de lado la Virgen María. La procesión va guiada por una vela dentro de un "farolito", que es como un acordeón de papel de colores con una apertura arriba y una vela adentro.

Los Peregrinos piden posada en tres diferentes casas pero sólamete la tercera les dejará entrar. Esa es la casa a la que le corresponde la posada esa noche. Cuando los hosteleros les permiten pasar, el grupo de invitados entra en el hogar y se arrodilla alrededor de el Nacimiento y reza el Rosario. El Rosario es una oración católica que consiste en 50 Ave Marías, 5 Padre Nuestros, 5 Glorias, y la Letanía, que es una serie de alabanzas para la Virgen María, además también se cantan canciones tradicionales de Navidad, como Noche de Paz, en español ¡por supuesto!

Después de todos estos rezos, sigue la fiesta para los niños. Se les celebra con una Piñata, la cual está llena de cacahuates (maní), naranjas, mandarinas, cañas de azúcar, y a veces caramelos envueltos. Por supuesto, también hay cánticos para entonar mientras que el niño en turno trata de romper la piñata con un palo y con los ojos vendados.

Aunque la Piñata es originaria de Italia, se ha convertido en una tradición mexicana para cualquier tipo de celebración en la cual hay niños. La Piñata se hacía con un jarro de barro y se decoraba con papel crepé de diferentes colores. Hoy en día, las piñatas están hechas de cartón y de papel maché y se decoran con papel crepé. Este cambio fue hecho para evitar que los niños se cortaran las manos cuando se tiraban al suelo a recoger las frutas y los dulces al quebrar

una Misa de Gallo, se celebra a la medianoche también. Algunas familias optan por ir a la iglesia al anochecer para dar gracias por todas las bendiciones recibidas durante el año.

La celebración en la cual los niños reciben los juguetes no es sino hasta el 6 de enero, "el día de Reyes" o Los Reyes Magos quienes le llevaron los regalos al Niño Jesús, por consiguiente, son ellos quienes traen los regalos a los niños y a las niñas que se han portado bien. Los niños ponen sus zapatos cerca de la ventana para que los Reyes Magos le pongan el regalo en su zapato. Si el regalo es más grande que el zapato, entonces lo ponen al lado. Varios niños reciben un par de zapatos (calzado) nuevo como regalo.

El día Reyes se celebra con una merienda que consiste de chocolate caliente y la Rosca de Reyes La merienda se lleva a cabo entre las 5 y las 7 de la tarde y no es una comida pesada, sino algo así como lo equivalente al "High Tea".

La Rosca de Reyes es un pan en forma de guirnalda que está hecha con muchos huevos y es muy grande, está cubierta con frutas cristalizadas y azúcar encima, pero adentro hay una figurita de cerámica que representa al Niño Jesús. La persona a la que le toque la pieza del pan con la figurita, tiene que ser el Padrino o la Madrina del Niño Jesús en el Día de la Can-

delaria, el dos de Febrero.



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