

Viva Aztlan Festival to Start in Lubbock

On March 21 & 22, Lubbock Centro Aztlan will host the 3rd Annual Viva Aztlan Dance Festival featuring 13 Mexican Folkloric Dance Companies from Texas, New Mexico and Colorado in Competition and workshops at the Lubbock Memorial Civic Center. Admission will be \$2 per day general admission and \$10 per day reserved.

Groups that will be competing will be entering both children's and adult troupes are Ballet Folklorico Aztlan - Lubbock; Ballet Folklorico Nuestra Herencia - Lubbock; Ballet Folklorico San Patricio-Lubbock; Daniel's Compania de Danza Artisitica - San Antonio; St. Vincent Ballet Folklorico - Abilene, TX; Expresiones Academia de Artes - Albuquerque, N.M. Baila Baila - Albuquerque, N.M.; Ballet Folklorico Las Adelitas - Ralls, TX; Greeley Rodarte Dancers - Greeley,



CO; The following will only be entering an adult group Roswell Folklorico - Roswell, N.M.; Ballet Folklorico Tejas de Dolores del Rio - San Angelo; Mexico-Espania - San Antonio. For more information call 806-763-3841.

News Briefs

1,000 Protest Welfare Cuts in L.A.

About 1,000 people marched through downtown Sunday to protest new welfare laws they said will harm thousands of elderly immigrants who subsist on social services, reports The San Jose Mercury News.

The four-hour protest was peaceful and no arrests were made, police officer Don Cox said. The march was sponsored by about 50 civil rights and immigrant help groups.

A welfare reform law that President Clinton signed last year will cut off disability benefits to as many as 500,000 of the 803,000 non-citizens now receiving assistance.

It also affects 900,000 low-income elderly and disabled documented immigrants, who will lose Supplemental Security Income benefits this fall.

"The irony of all this immigrant, poor and elderly bashing is that the vast majority of Californians are not in agreement with the drastic effects of these laws," Juan Jose Gutierrez, executive director of march sponsor One Stop Immigration Center, said in a statement.

Clinton to Government: Hire Welfare Recipients

President Clinton ordered federal agencies today to recruit and hire welfare recipients and gave bureaucrats 30 days to find a way to do it, reports Associated Press.

"Government can help to move people from welfare to work, by acting the way we want all employers to act - demanding high performance from workers but also going the extra mile to offer opportunity to those who have been on welfare but want to do something more with their lives," the president said in his weekly radio broadcast from the Oval Office. His goal is to find jobs for 2 million welfare recipients over the next four years.

Clinton gave federal department and agency heads 30 days to present him with detailed plans for recruiting and hiring qualified welfare recipients - and asked for monthly progress reports thereafter.

Those plans, the president said, should include efforts to notify low-income employees of their eligibility for the Earned-Income Tax Credit and to help them find affordable child care and transportation.

Vice President Al Gore was to oversee the effort.

Union leaders have expressed reservations about the initiative and its potential to push other job applicants out of the pool, especially after the Clinton administration cut or contracted out more than 250,000 federal jobs over the last four years.

Gore: Feds Will Help Cities with Welfare Reform

Vice President Al Gore promised city leaders Monday that the Clinton administration will help them manage the aftermath of the welfare overhaul bill the president signed into law last year, reports Associated Press.

"We recognize that you cannot and should not do this alone," Gore told hundreds of officials at the National League of Cities annual conference.


Gore said the bill was "a beginning, not an end."

He noted President Clinton's call on churches, nonprofit groups and private businesses to "step up to the plate" and hire welfare recipients. Clinton's budget proposal also includes tax incentives for businesses that cull some employees from the welfare rolls, he said.

Gore also told the officials that Clinton recently named him to oversee an effort within the federal government - the nation's largest employer - to begin recruiting and hiring qualified welfare recipients.

Meantime, he criticized the denial of benefits to documented immigrants as "just plain wrong," and said the administration will try to change it. But congressional Republicans have shown no interest in amending the law.

"El Respeto Al Derecho Ajeno Es La Paz"
Lic Benito Juarez
ESTABLECIDO 1977
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EL EDITOR

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Legisladores Buscan Revisar Ley Para Permitir Utilidades en las Colonias

Austin - Familias quien viven en las Colonias de el Valle de Tejas todavia hacen sus queaceres con la luz de lamparas de aciete, velas o luzes de baterias. Esto aun que la electricidad esta accesible.

Familias y dueños de terrenos dentro de las colonias se juntaron en la capital del Estado para dar apoyo a una ley que rectificara la situación.

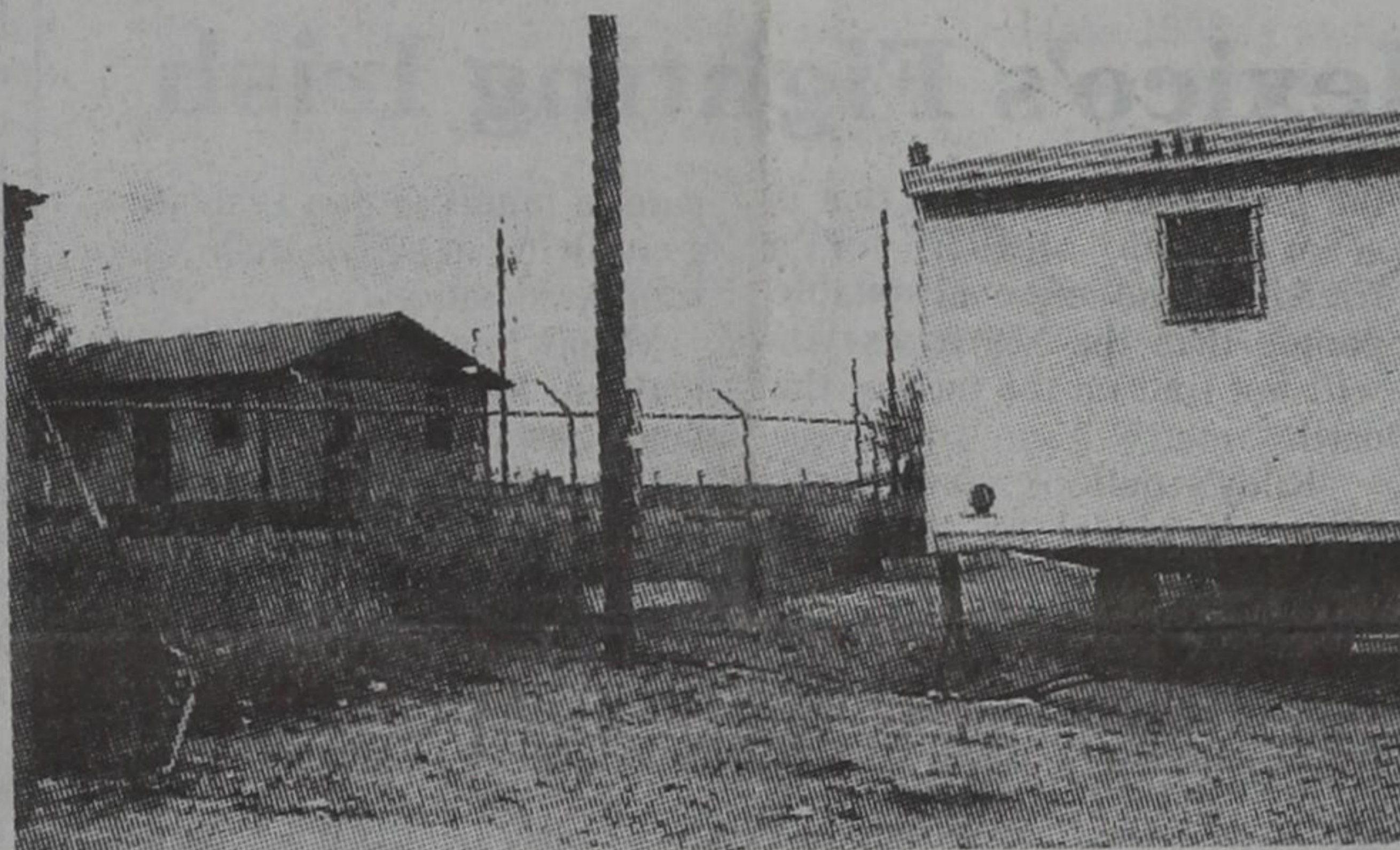
La amenda a una ley pasada en el 1989 que prohíbe que compania de utilidades conecten utilidades a casas fue presentada esta semana por la Legisladora Irma Rangel D-Kingsville. La ley fue pasada para desanimar a gentes que se mudaran a la colonias las cuales sufren de dilapidación.

Aun esto propiedades en las colonias se siguen vendiendo hasta el julio de 1995. Personas quien compraron terreno desde 1989 hasta 1995 no pueden conectar a las utilidades causandoles problemas segun las familias quien se juntaron en Austin.

"Previendo que familias se conecten a la electricidad aun que es accesible es cruel," dijo Blanca Juarez, residente de una colonia en presidente de Colonia Unidas. "Un ley que hace la los residentes de la colonia que sufran no es una buena ley y se necesita cambiarla."

La amienda a la ley permitaria el permiso de conectar utilidades a personas quien compraron su terreron antes de 1ro de junio de 1995 o a personas quien compraron antes del 1 de septiembre, 1995, si no habia conecciones.

"Nosotros queremos que nos ayuden pasar esta ley para poder tener electricidad," dijo Guadalupe Carmona, quien



hablo durante la conferencia de prensa en Austin atravez de un intérpete.

Carmona fue una de 22 personas residentes de una colonia en el Condado de Starr quien hicieron el viaje a Austin. La Sra. Rangel estimo que 5,000 a 10,000 Tejanos serian afectados.

"No somos los unicos que necesitamos la electricidad," dijo Carmona. "Estamos pidiendo por el resto de la gente tambien. Y no estamos pidiendo por nada gratis. Estamos dispuestos a pagar por el servicio."

Comentarios de Bidal

by Bidal Agüero

With all this talk about

cloning, I shutter to think what a person would be if they looked like me and thought like me. I really don't think that the world could stand two persons who like to write, procrastinate as much as I do, doesn't like to cut his hair, doesn't like to drive, likes to play softball, loves to go fishing, never likes to attend meetings, always stirring up trouble, always getting into trouble, like yogurt and fruit and never pays attention to anything. Oh an I forgot, LOVES BEER.

Another person like me is really not imaginable but at least he would be like me. I'd probably get along real good with him.

****Pico de Gallo****

Let's hope that all of you can make plans to attend this year's Viva Aztlan Festival. We can guarantee it will be worth your time. Special thanks to Southwester Bell Telephone, El Editor, the METTS board, and the Texas Commission on the Arts.

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Chicanos E. Irlandeses Americanos Edifican Sobre Los Vinculos Culturales Y Coloniales

Por LOUIS AGUILAR

Por años, el dramaturgo Luis Valdez ha descrito a los irlandeses como los "mexicanos de Europa."

El sentimiento parece estar floreciendo aquí en los Estados Unidos, a medida que los irlandeses-americanos y los chicanos continúan descubriendo y abrazando los profundos vínculos entre sus culturas.

Las conexiones históricas están siendo investigadas por eruditos y escritores. Las causas políticas están uniendo sus fuerzas. Pero lo que realmente conecta a los chicanos e irlandeses-americanos es un lazo espiritual intangible y creador.

Chris Matthews, un dramaturgo irlandés-americano de Santa Cruz, California, manifiesta el sentimiento: "Hermano, algo muy profundo y ultramundano existe entre los irlandeses y los chicanos."

"Muchas personas creen que es el catolicismo," dice él, "pero yo creo que es el colonialismo. Nuestro pueblo comparte una generosidad de espíritu, un coraje emocional, un sentido interior de la poesía y una historia de luchar por nuestra cultura."

Matthews es también el propietario del Poet and Patriot Irish Pub. El lo llama "un lu-

gar irlandés-mexicano clásico," completo con un mural dedicado al Batallón San Patricio de México, que combatió en contra de los Estados Unidos en lo que nuestra historia y nuestros libros de texto llaman "la guerra mexicana." La brigada es el tema de la muy aclamada obra de Matthew, titulada "Una Bandera para Ondear."

El "San Patricio" fue formado por más de 500 soldados inmigrantes, primordialmente irlandeses, que deser-

taron del Ejército de los Estados Unidos y unieron sus fuerzas a las de México durante la guerra.

La brigada, que una vez fue un asunto sensitivo, está siendo explorada ahora por muchos irlandeses-americanos. Algunos escritores y eruditos la ven como una parábola sobre el debate de inmigración que se enfoca ahora sobre los latinos.

"Es una lección dolorosa sobre la inmigración en masa.

Chicanos, Irish Americans Build On Cultural, Colonial Links

By LOUIS AGUILAR

For years, playwright Luis Valdez has described the Irish as the "Mexicans of Europe."

The sentiment seems to be blossoming here in the United States as Irish Americans and Chicanos continue to discover and embrace deep links between their cultures.

Historical connections are being researched by scholars and writers. Political causes are joining forces. But what really connects Chicanos and Irish Americans is an intangible spiritual and creative bond.

Chris Matthews, an Irish-American playwright based in Santa Cruz, Calif., puts it

this way: "Oh, man, something very deep and otherworldly exists among the Irish and Chicanos.

"A lot of people think it's Catholicism, but I think it's colonialism. Our people share a generosity of spirit, an emotional wildness, an inner sense of poetry and a history of fighting for our culture."

Matthews also owns the Poet and Patriot Irish Pub. He calls it "a classic Irish-Mexican place," complete with a mural dedicated to Mexico's San Patricio Battalion, which fought against the United States in what our history and textbooks refer to as the Mexi-

Continued on Page 2



Miembros de el American GI Forum se juntaron en Lubbock este pasado fin de semana para tomar accion sobre varios asuntos que afectan la comunidad Hispana y muy especialmente asuntos que afectan la educación. Presentes estuvieron el comandante nacional, Jake I. Alarid ademas de la mayoría de los oficiales nacionales. En el foto arriba el comandante local, Gonazalo Garza junto con el comandante nacional y otro oficial nacional quien asistieron la junta. En el foto de abajo la Riena Nacional del GI Forum, la Srita Venessa Ramirez quien tambien asistio las actividades.
fotos cortesia Francisco J. Gutiérrez



Los Irlandeses Combatientes De San Patricio De Mexico

Por MARK R. DAY

El 17 de marzo está aquí -- hora de sacar la cerveza verde, los botones que dicen, "Bésame, soy irlandés/a," y las tarjetas de felicitación cómicas como la de Snoopy llevando un Tam O'Shanter y ladrando orgullosamente, "ODWoof."

No hay nada de malo en eso. Después de todo, los irlandeses tienen un sentido del humor agudo, afinado precisamente por siglos de tratar creativamente con la opresión. El año 1997, sin embargo, es una época de reflexión solemne, a medida que conmemoramos el 150mo aniversario de la Gran Hambruna (Caresía de Papas), que se llevó a millón de vidas y obligó a dos millones de emigrantes a huir hacia nuestras costas.

En el centro de esto, una conexión irlandesa-mexicana continúa surgiendo -- a la cual no se le ha hecho por la mayoría de los libros de historia. En 1846, miles de inmigrantes, primordialmente irlandeses, se unieron al Ejército de los Estados Unidos y fueron enviados con el General Zachary Taylor a invadir México, en lo que algunos historiadores han llamado una guerra de Destino Manifiesto.

En duda sobre por qué estaban combatiendo una nación católica, y hastiados de los malos tratos de sus oficiales anglo-protestantes, cientos de irlandeses y otros inmigrantes desertaron las fuerzas de Taylor y se unieron a las fuerzas de México. Comandados por el Capitán John Riley, del Condado de Galway, se llamaron a ellos mismos el Batallón de San Patricio, "los San Patricios."

cios.D

Ellos combatieron valerosamente en la mayoría de las campañas del conflicto de dos años, pero sus esfuerzos fracasaron en detener la avanzada "yanqui.D Pronto, el Ejército de los Estados Unidos ocupó los salones de Montezuma, y México se rindió eventualmente, cediendo casi la mitad de su territorio a los Estados Unidos.

Hacia el fin del conflicto, en la Batalla de Churubusco, 83 San Patricios fueron capturados, y 72 enjuiciados en corte marcial. De este número, 50 fueron sentenciados a la horca y 16 azotados y marcados en las mejillas con una letra "D", por desertores.

Hasta este día, muchos historiadores estadounidenses consideran a estos hombres traidores, pero los mexicanos los ven como héroes, honrándolos todos los 12 de septiembre con una conmemoración especial. En 1993, los irlandeses dieron comienzo a su propia ceremonia para honrarlos, en Clifden, Galway, lugar natal de Riley.

Algunos historiadores, confiando en los testimonios de la corte marcial, pintan a los San Patricios como jóvenes confundidos y trastornados, que bebían en abundancia y después lamentaron sus decisiones. Otros analizadores se preguntan qué pudo haber motivado a un grupo de aventureros ebrios a vestir el uniforme del enemigo y combatir hasta la muerte.

"Los San Patricios fueron enajenados, tanto de la sociedad estadounidense como del Ejército de los Estados

Unidos," dice el Profesor Kirby Miller, de la Universidad de Missouri, experto en la inmigración irlandesa. "Ellos se dieron cuenta de que el ejército no estaba combatiendo una guerra de liberación, sino de conquista en contra de católicos tales como ellos mismos."

Riley era difícilmente un rebelde desenfocado. Como irlandés y católico, se sintió profundamente consternado y estremecido por la conducta de los Rangers de Texas y otros voluntarios, a quienes el General Taylor reconoció no poder controlar. Sus delitos incluyeron asesinatos, violaciones, robos y la profanación de iglesias católicas.

Mientras estaba prisionero en Ciudad México, Riley escribió a un amigo de Michigan, "No te dejes engañar por una nación que está en guerra con México, porque no existe en la faz de la tierra un pueblo más amistoso y hospitalario que los mexicanos."

La actitud de Riley podría servir como ejemplo para la sociedad multicultural de hoy. En verdad, los paralelos entre los inmigrantes irlandeses de la década de 1840 y los actuales recién llegados de México y la América Central deberían ser evidentes. Históricamente, ambos grupos han sufrido la dominación de opresores que procuraron destruir su religión y su cultura.

Ambos grupos han desafiado viajes peligrosos para llegar a los Estados Unidos. Los irlandeses atravesaron mares embravecidos en "bucos sarcófagos," cargados de pasajeros enfermos y hambrientos, mientras sus colegas latinos contin-

úan desafiando los desiertos desolados y las montañas congeladas, sin mencionar las burblas de los nacionalistas que los ven como amenazas económicas y culturales a la naturaleza de los Estados Unidos.

Además, ambos grupos comparten los valores de comunidad y familiares, una espiritualidad común y el amor por la poesía, el arte, la música y el baile. Recientemente, esto ha llevado a colaboraciones tales como una exhibición de arte irlandés-mexicano que se abrió el año pasado en Santa Mónica, California, así como a planes para un proyecto conjunto de murales por parte de artistas irlandeses y chicanos en San Francisco, una ciudad que tiene una Asociación Irlandesa-Mexicana activa.

Recientemente, Daniel Dultzin, joven y dinámico enviado de México a Irlanda, ha abierto de par en par las puertas de su embajada en Dublín al multiculturalismo. Dultzin quiere que los irlandeses, irlandeses-americanos y mexicanos canten, bailen y rían juntos.

De modo que traigan las tarjetas de felicitación cómicas, la cerveza verde y la cecina con repollo. Pero no olviden la salsa.

(Mark R. Day es periodista y cineasta de documentales. Es el autor de "Cuarenta Acres: César Chávez y los Trabajadores Agrícolas" (Praeger, 1971), y terminó recientemente "Los San Patricios", un documental de video de 48 minutos sobre el Batallón de San Patricio. Para más información sobre cómo adquirir el documental, llamen a San Patricio Productions por el teléfono (619) 630-7201.)

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The San Patricios: Mexico's Fighting Irish

By MARK R. DAY

It's March 17th -- time to roll out the green beer, "Kiss me, I'm Irish" buttons and funny greeting cards like the one with Snoopy wearing a Tam O'Shanter and proudly barking, "O'Woof."

Nothing wrong with that. After all, the Irish have a keen sense of humor. The year 1997, however, beckons us to reflect on more serious themes, namely the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of The Great Hunger (the Irish Potato famine) that claimed a million lives and forced two million emigrants to flee to our shores.

In the midst of all this, an Irish-Mexican connection that has been glossed over by most history books keeps popping up. In 1846, thousands of immigrants, mostly Irish, joined the U.S. Army and were sent with Gen. Zachary Taylor's army to invade Mexico in what some historians call a war of Manifest Destiny. President James K. Polk, incensed that Mexico refused to sell California and most of the present Southwest to the USA, sent Taylor down to provoke the Mexicans. War was declared against Mexico in the spring of 1846.

Dubious about why they were fighting a Catholic country and fed up with mistreatment by their Anglo-Protestant officers, hundreds of Irish, German and other immigrants deserted Taylor's army and joined forces with Mexico. Led by Capt. John Riley of County Galway, they called themselves the St. Patrick's Battalion (in Spanish, the San Patricios), and fought against their former comrades in all the major campaigns of the war.

The San Patricios, in the words of one Mexican general, "deserved the highest praise, because they fought with daring bravery." But their efforts were not sufficient to stem the tide of continuous U.S. victories. Eventually, Mexico surrendered, ceding almost half its territory to the United States.

After the Battle of Churubusco, near the end of the war, 85 San Patricio soldiers were captured and 72 were tried by a court martial. Fifty were hanged and another 16 were flogged and branded on the face with the letter "D" for deserter.

To this day U.S. historians regard these men as traitors, but Mexicans honor them as heroes every Sept. 12 with a special ceremony. Beginning in 1993, the Irish began their own annual ceremony in Clifden, Galway, John Riley's

hometown.

Some U.S. historians, relying on court martial testimony, have portrayed the San Patricios as confused and bewildered young men who drank heavily and later regretted their choices. Other analysts wonder what would have motivated a group of drunken soldiers to don the enemy's uniform and fight to the death.

"The San Patricios were alienated both from American society and the U.S. Army," says Professor Kirby Miller of the University of Missouri, an expert on Irish immigration. "They realized that Army was not fighting a war of liberty but one of conquest against fellow Catholics such as themselves."

Riley was hardly an unfocused rebel. As an Irishman and Catholic, he was undoubtedly appalled at the crimes inflicted on the Mexican populace by the bloodthirsty Texas Rangers and other volunteers who Gen. Taylor admittedly could not control. These offenses included murder, robbery, rape and the desecration of Catholic churches.

While imprisoned in Mexico, Riley wrote to a friend in Michigan: "Be not deceived by

the prejudice of a nation that is at war with Mexico, for a friendlier and more hospitable people than the Mexicans you will not find on the face of the earth."

Riley's outlook could serve as a role model for us today, when foreigners in our midst, specifically Mexicans and Central Americans, are regarded with suspicion for their distinct language and cultural mores, and despised for their poverty.

The parallels between the Irish immigrants of the 1840s and today's newcomers should be obvious. Historically, both have struggled against oppressors who attempted to destroy their cultures and religion. Both groups have faced extreme danger in reaching our shores, whether on precarious "coffin ships" or through desert wastes. And both have been regarded as economic and cultural threats to the so-called "character of America."

Other comparisons abound -- from family values to religion and spirituality, poetry, art and dance. Recently, an Irish-Mexican art exhibit opened in Santa Monica, Calif., and Chicano and Irish artists are planning a joint project to

paint a mural in San Francisco, a city with an active Irish-Mexican Association.

Meanwhile, in Dublin, Daniel Dultzin, Mexico's envoy to Ireland, has flung open the doors of his embassy to encourage an intense dialogue among Irish, Mexicans and Irish-Americans. "I hope that a new openness on the part of Irish Americans will lead to a better understanding of the Mexican people," Dultzin says.

At the very least, the ambassador wants the three groups to sing, dance and perhaps laugh together. So bring on the green beer, the funny greeting cards and the corned beef and cabbage. But don't forget the salsa!

(Mark R. Day is the author of "Forty Acres: Cesar Chavez and the Farm Workers." He recently completed "The San Patricios," a 48-minute video documentary on the San Patricio Battalion. It is scheduled to be broadcast in Ireland in September. For more information, or to purchase the video, contact San Patricio Productions at (619) 630-7201.

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which explores the connection between the sound of Ireland and the music of Galicia, Spain. It also took time to explore the Mexican connection, recording a song with Chicano artists Los Lobos and Linda Ronstadt. Or perhaps they can hire the Mollys, the Tex-Mex Irish conjunto -- musical recording group -- which flourishes in Tucson, Ariz.

Irish Mexican roots are not restricted to one region of the nation. Just ask Federico Kennedy, a 37-year-old musician born in Detroit. His ancestry was so common in his southwest Detroit neighborhood that they were often called "Mirish" (pronounced My-rish).

When he attended the University of Missouri, he quickly discovered many of his Irish-American classmates had Chicano relatives. He found a similar connection when he moved to Seattle last month.

"Mexican and Irish people will save the world," Kennedy expects. "We're poets, dreamers -- that's what the world needs."

(Louis Aguilar is editor of the national newsweekly Hispanic Link Weekly Report in Washington, D.C.)
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Sittin' Here Thinkin' Hello Dolly

by Ira Cutler

For two weeks now I have read everything I could get my hands on about cloned sheep and I must say that it has been a welcome change from stories about Asian business hustlers and cheap American politicians. The story of the sheep named Dolly is a classic Frankenstein story, a science fiction fable come true and, like Frankenstein, it is full of moral overtones and, for some, engenders a good deal of fear.

The facts are not in dispute, as best I can tell. This is not like the story a couple of years ago when some scientists falsely claimed they had created "cold fusion". In the Dolly-clone story there is no question that they did it -- none of the scientists question that, in fact, Scottish scientists manipulated DNA and produced a clone of an adult sheep. Rather the questions are all about where the technology behind cloning will lead us.

Everybody is all excited. There are sheep pictures on the cover of all of the major news magazines. Dolly was created by male human scientists and, because she came from a mammary gland cell, they named her after Dolly Parton. She is, without doubt, the most famous sheep since the one Little Bo' Peep lost. A New York radio station asked listeners which human being people would least like to see cloned and President Clinton came in first, narrowly edging out O.J. Simpson. And, within hours, Dolly's story went from a scientific achievement story to a morality story.

CNN reported that 66% of those surveyed found the cloning of animals to be immoral and 89% said that cloning humans which may or may not even be technologically possible was immoral. My guess is that some of the 11% who did not consider cloning humans to be immoral are right wing puritanical religious fanatics who see cloning as an opportunity for mankind to reproduce without all that icky, nasty sexual behavior.

Long before the existence of the first cloned human, we already are engaged in an orgy of clone-phobia and anti-clone prejudice. You would think they were immigrants. New York State Senator John Marchi, a conservative Republican from Staten Island, has sponsored a first-in-the-nation anti-cloning law. Marchi's bill would making it a 3-5 year felony to "commit a cloning" and makes it a 1-3 year felony for "conspiracy to clone."

President Clinton appointed an advisory committee to look into the ethical issues around cloning and gave them 90 days to report back. Three days later, seeing how fast the story was running and how quickly others were jumping in, he declared it illegal to use federal money to clone human beings although his advisory group had not yet met and no one, to the best of anyone's knowledge, was using any federal money to clone anybody.

The uproar and the reaction to this remarkable scientific achievement are familiar to old movie fans. In the old black and white horror movies there is frequently the theme of catastrophe befalling those who "tamper with things that man is not meant to know." Horror picture fans will no doubt remember the scenes of angry villagers, armed with torches, going up the hill to burn Dr. Frankenstein's home and laboratory. His life and reputation are ruined, his family destroyed, Dr. Frankenstein had gone too far -- he should have left life's fundamental mysteries alone.

Some suggest that the commercial applications of cloning are enormous. Animals who are unusually resistant to certain diseases, who carry or produce chemicals needed for medicines, who possess whatever needed or valued trait can, through cloning, be mass-produced without the danger that their favorable characteristics would be lost by mixing up their DNA with another's. Champion milk producing cows, sheep with abundant wool, even extremely fast race horses could be predictably re-produced over and over. Most importantly, the prospect of using cloned animals to mass-produce both chemicals and organs useful in human medical treatment holds the potential for dramatic human medical advances.

It is far too late in history, it seems to me, to offer moral objection to whatever methods of "animal husbandry" isn't that a wonderful bit of language? -- produces the best results. Humans have been breeding animals to produce desirable traits for centuries and have been widely using artificial insemination for decades. Cloning just does it better and, if cloning has the potential to be a booming business, we will, in the American tradition, find a way around our moral concerns.

The fear, though, is that what we do today to animals we may later do to ourselves. Imagine producing clones of ourselves for spare parts or to get the child we always wanted to have, i.e. the one who is just like us. The civil rights questions around human clones would be interesting -- are they free and independent creatures, fully endowed by their creator with inalienable rights or something not quite that? Who is their creator anyway? If, in some not so distant time, I use my home cloning kit to create another me and implant it into a rented sheep and later get a curly headed offspring with my exact DNA, does it (he/she)? get a separate and unique Social Security number?

Does a clone have its own soul or does it share an existing one?

If we can clone a body, preserve memories on computer chips and somehow transmit them into the new, healthy, exact copy of a body, then we can achieve virtual immortality. Might a rather young multi-billionaire computer guru, backed by The Powers That Have Always Been (TPTHAB), be pursuing this line of inquiry and following this trail?

I think the President would do well to have a White House conference on cloning to which he could invite the very best of science fiction writers -- the smart, creative people who have for fifty years written about the ethics of cloning and other scientific advances. They see the present world in very clear terms and, further, have the imagination to think up things like animals that are bred to shape themselves into chairs when humans want to sit down, uprisings and revolutions of persecuted clones and wars between androids and humans.

I would not invite them to sleep over, however. The best science fiction writers, the geniuses, tend to be strange and potentially ill-mannered folk who can and do strip away facades and get to essential truths. Their company, in too large a dosage, might be toxic to politicians.

Ira Cutler says he's seeking a semi-legitimate outlet for thoughts and ideas too irreverent, too iconoclastic, or just too nasty for polite, serious, self-important company. He promises us a Monday column most weeks. More recently Ira has become involved in communicating in another way, through speeches which he calls Standin' Here Talkin'.

SILENCING JOE'S 'GALLOS'

By CARLOS GUERRA

Roosters are -- ahem -- potent symbols in many cultures, and the Mexican-American culture is no exception, observes San Antonio artist Joe Lopez.

A self-described maverick, Lopez says his rich depictions come from his heart. He isn't rich and famous, but his work has not gone unnoticed, having been exhibited throughout the country.

"We must never forget where we came from," he says, which explains why so many of his works are of ordinary people doing ordinary things.

But his fascination with roosters -- or *gallos* -- is also obvious.

"*Gallos* are very common in our culture," he says, rattling off several common rooster-related vernacular references. He even named his shop, in the artsy Southtown area of San Antonio, the Puro Gallo Studio Gallery.

A cock will fight to the death, Lopez observes, just as people should fight for their rights. And a rooster's other qualities also dot the vernacular.

The *gallo madrugador* is a person who is an early riser, and a stand-up individual is often called *un buen gallo* or *puro gallo*.

An exemplary person can be *un gallo fino*, and the hero of black-and-white movies was called *el gallon* (the big rooster).

Gallo also can mean blood, as in *hubo gallo*

(blood was shed).

In 1993, Lopez silkscreened a rooster's profile on T-shirts, along with the label "Puro Gallo." He followed with "Gallo Fino" and "Gallo Indio" shirts. As the popularity of his rooster shirts spread, he registered the "Puro Gallo" trademark with the county, and when orders began coming in from other states, he tried getting a federal trademark registered.

"That's when they sent me this real nasty letter," Lopez recalls.

"They" are E&J Gallo Winery, perhaps the world's largest and most powerful corporate vintner. In February 1996, Gallo sued Lopez in federal court for trademark infringement, dilution of the value of their trademark and "unfair competition."

The Gallo trademark has been registered for wine since 1953, and it has since been extended to prepared meat products and cheeses and champagne.

Lopez was stunned. After visiting a number of lawyers, he finally found one, Filemon Vela Jr. of Corpus Christi, who would help him pro bono. But he'll have to raise funds to pay for other costs.

Recent changes in trademark law, Vela says, make it easier for Gallo to take such actions because proof of damages from dilution has been minimized.

And since Lopez may have sold some of his "Puro Gallo" shirts in California, the case may be stuck in federal court there, where the wine giant has been successful in similar suits in the past.

Ironically, while Gallo may be Ernest and Julio's surname, it also means rooster in Italian, and gallo references also pepper that language. *Al canto del gallo* is "daybreak" and *fare il gallo* means "to play the gallant."

In fact, *gallismo* is Italian for *machismo*. So what does Gallo Winery want from Lopez? He can keep on painting roosters, the company's lawyers say, but he must stop using their five-letter word, and anyone helping him must stop doing so.

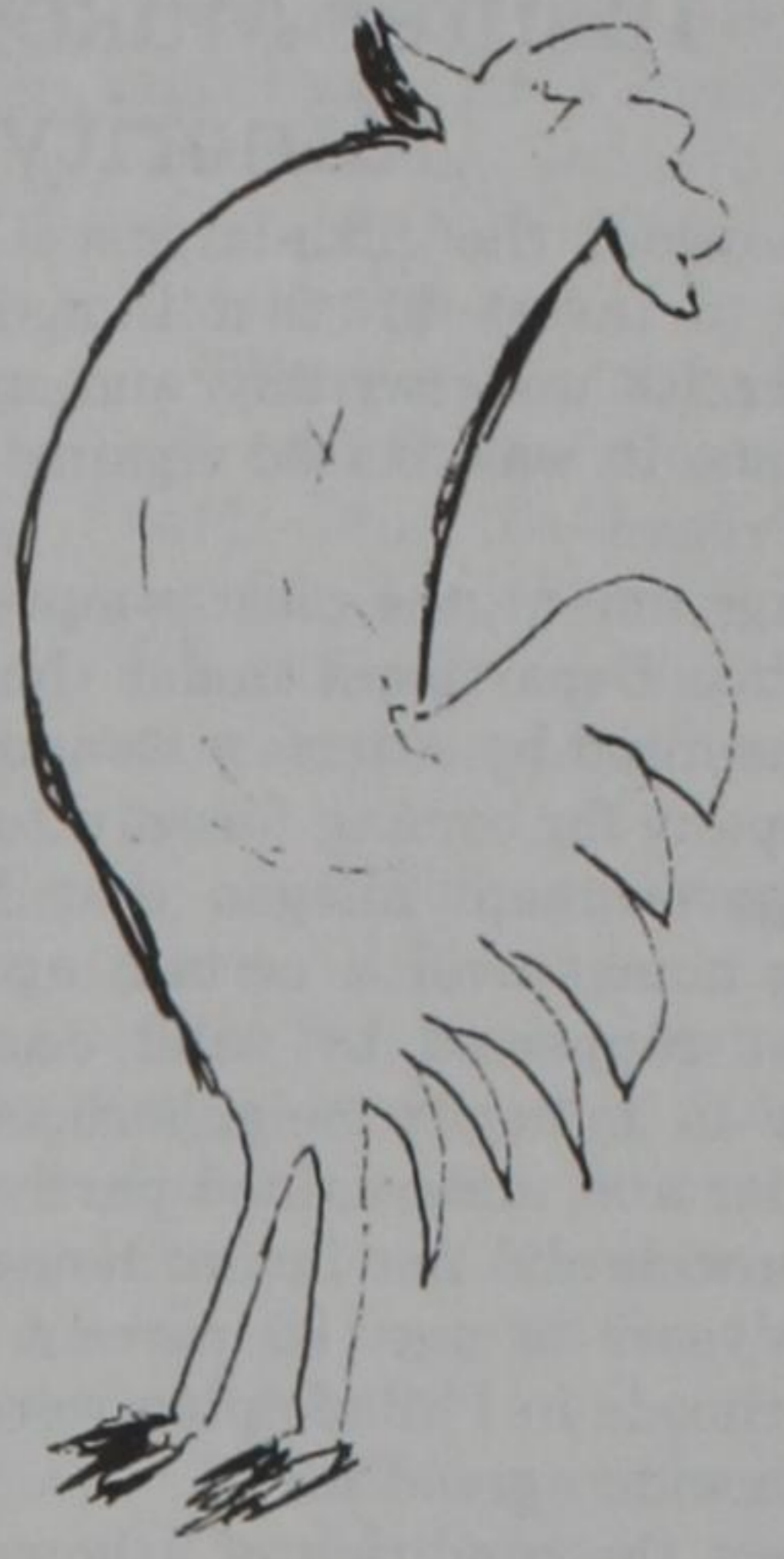
They also want all profits he may have made from his products, and they want damages.

Most threatening is that they also want Lopez to reimburse Gallo's costs of suit, including reasonable attorneys fees, and that, Vela says, "could easily go into the six figures."

The whole embroglio begs the question: Are lawsuits only frivolous when they're filed against corporations?

Excuse me, but it seems that if this is all over a few hundred T-shirts, Ernest and Julio are getting a little cocky.

(Carlos Guerra is a columnist for the San Antonio Express News.)



En realidad, *gallismo* es la palabra italiana para *machismo*.

De modo que, ¿qué quieren Ernesto y Julio de López? Sus abogados dicen que él puede continuar pintando gallos, pero debe cesar de usar la palabra de cinco letras y cualquiera que lo esté ayudando debe hacer otro tanto.

Ellos quieren también todas las ganancias que él pueda haber realizado por la venta de sus productos, y quieren que se les cubran los daños y perjuicios.

Lo más amenazador es que ellos quieren también que López les reembolse "los costos del juicio, incluyendo los honorarios razonables de abogados" y eso, dice Vela, "puede llegar fácilmente a una suma de seis cifras."

Todo el embrollo suplica la pregunta: ¿Son los pleitos únicamente frívolos cuando se presentan contra las empresas?

Perdónenme, pero parece que aquí se trata solamente de unos pocos cientos de camisetas. Ernesto y Julio están volviéndose un poco arrogantes.

Ernesto Y Julio Silencian Al Gallo De Jose

Por CARLOS GUERRA

Los gallos son -- ejem -- símbolos potentes de muchas culturas, y la cultura méxicoamericana no es una excepción, observa el artista de San Antonio Joe López.

Rebelde auto-proclamado, López dice que sus ricos dibujos vienen de su corazón. El no es rico ni famoso, pero su trabajo no ha pasado inadvertido, por haber sido exhibido en todo el país.

"Nunca debemos olvidar de dónde vinimos," dice él, lo cual explica por qué muchas de sus obras representan a personas comunes haciendo cosas comunes.

Pero su fascinación con los gallos es también evidente. "Los gallos son muy com-

unes en nuestra cultura," dice él, mencionando referencias del vernáculo relacionadas con los gallos. Hasta nombró a su taller, en la zona artística sur de San Antonio, el "Puro Gallo Studio Gallery."

Un gallo pelea hasta la muerte, observa López, igual que las personas deberían pelear por sus derechos. Y otras cualidades de un gallo salpican también al vernáculo:

Un "gallo madrugador" es una persona que se levanta temprano, y a una persona de buen porte y dignidad se le llama a menudo un "buen gallo," o un "puro gallo."

A una persona ejemplar se le puede llamar un "gallo fino," y al héroe de las películas del Oeste en blanco y negro se le

llamaba "el gallón."

Gallo puede significar también sangre, como en la expresión "hubo gallo," como que se derramó sangre.

En 1993, López pintó con estarcido de seda el perfil de un gallo en camisetas, y la etiqueta "Puro Gallo." El siguió con camisetas que decían "Gallo Fino" y "Gallo Indio." A medida que se extendió la popularidad de sus camisetas con gallos, el registro la marca de fábrica "Puro Gallo" en el condado; y cuando empezaron a llegar órdenes de otros estados, el trató de registrar la marca a nivel federal.

"Entonces fue cuando ellos me enviaron esta carta realmente desagradable," re-

cuerda López.

"Ellos" son E. & J. Gallo Winery, quizás la empresa de vinos más grande y poderosa del mundo. En febrero de 1996, Ernesto y Julio demandaron a López en un tribunal federal por infracción de marca registrada, dilución del valor de su marca registrada y "competencia injusta."

La marca registrada "Gallo" ha estado inscrita para vinos desde 1953, y se ha extendido desde entonces a "productos preparados de carne y quesos," así como champán.

López quedó asombrado. Después de visitar cierto número de abogados, halló finalmente uno, Filemón Vela Jr., de Corpus Christi, que lo ayudaría como servicio público. Pero él tendrá que recaudar fondos para pagar otros costos.

Los cambios recientes de la ley de marcas registradas, dice Vela, hacen fácil el que Gallo tome dichas acciones, porque las pruebas requeridas por daños de dilución han sido minimizadas.

Y puesto que López puede haber vendido algunas de sus camisetas "Puro Gallo" en California, el caso puede quedar atascado en el tribunal federal de allí, donde el gigante vinatero ha tenido éxito en demandas semejantes anteriormente.

Irónicamente, mientras Gallo puede ser el apellido de Ernesto y Julio, también significa "gallo" en italiano, y las referencias al gallo salpican ese idioma igualmente. Canto de gallo se le llama a la salida del sol, y *fare il gallo* (hacerse el gallo) significa "desempeñar el papel de galán."

Carlos Flores se puso a brincar de gusto cuando se enteró de que él y sus compañeros de trabajo de la fundación Alamo Iron Works habían ganado LOTTO Texas.

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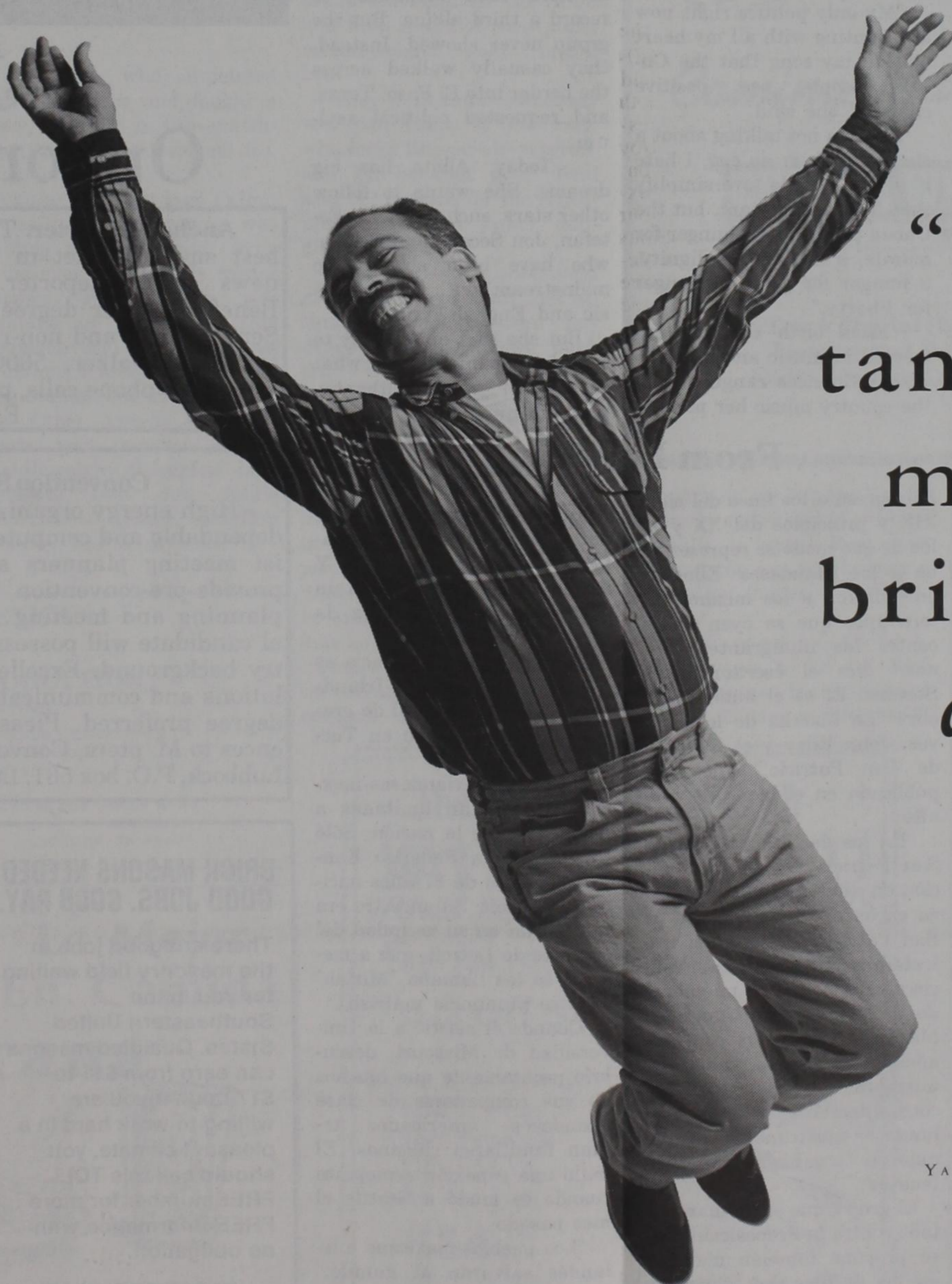
Lugar Donde Compró Su Boleto:

"Mi compañero de trabajo lo compró en una tienda de autoservicio."

Lo Bueno De Haber Ganado:

"Poder compartir con mis compañeros algo tan especial."

*Se pagarán durante 20 años.



"Estaba tan feliz que me puse a brincar como canguro".

CARLOS FLORES



YA HAY MÁS DE 200 MILLONARIOS. TÚ PODRÍAS SER EL PRÓXIMO.

News Briefs

Insurer Makes Deal with Minority Areas

Nationwide, the fifth-largest U.S. home insurer, agreed Monday to invest \$13.2 million in minority neighborhoods and alter its underwriting and marketing policies to settle complaints it was biased against minorities, reports Associated Press.

The agreement, the most comprehensive ever negotiated by the Justice Department under the federal Fair Housing Act, was announced by Attorney General Janet Reno, who praised the company for coming forward to resolve the complaints.

The government alleged that Nationwide's rules against insuring homes over a certain age or below a certain value were not supported by valid economic considerations, particularly in minority neighborhoods where homes are typically older and undervalued partly as a result of racial bias.

Nationwide did not insure homes valued under \$50,000 or over 30 years of age. 80 percent of the houses in minority neighborhoods in Philadelphia were valued below \$50,000.

Nationwide agreed to:

- Inspect the condition of a home's plumbing and wiring to decide if it should be covered rather than refusing coverage of homes over a certain age or below a certain dollar worth.

- Stop requiring a home's market value to be a minimum percentage of the total cost of replacement. Every customer whose home passes inspection will have the opportunity to buy replacement cost coverage.

- Not place geographic restrictions that bar homeowners insurance in minority neighborhoods.

- Target advertising to minority communities.

- Provide \$2.2 million in each of the next six years in up to 10 cities where Nationwide conducts business to assist home buyers in minority neighborhoods with down payments, closing costs, below-market mortgage loans, second mortgages and home ownership counseling.

Nationwide will choose the 10 cities from among these 15: Philadelphia; Cleveland; Baltimore; Louisville, Ky.; Richmond, Va.; Cincinnati; Pittsburgh; Atlanta; Charlotte, N.C.; Columbus, Ohio; Toledo, Ohio; Dallas-Fort Worth; Chicago; Memphis, Tenn.; and Indianapolis.

The company opened sales offices in minority neighborhoods of Chicago and San Antonio earlier, and will open similar offices in Baltimore, Cleveland and Philadelphia this year and in the other target cities later.

The investment money will go to the local office of the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corp. HN3458@handsnet.org or of the Local Initiative Support Corp

Poet Laureate Targets Literacy

The nation's poet laureate, Robert Hass, believes poetry can get America thinking about itself again, reports Associated Press.

Hass has kept an exhausting schedule of public appearances to promote poetry, with environmental threats and the decline in literacy as his primary concerns.

"How do you get people to master complexity and get into the other person's imagination?" he asked. "That's what literature does. It broadens, it humanizes people's imaginations, it gets them out of their own skin and into somebody else's."

Hass, 56, teaches literature at the University of California, Berkeley, and has won awards for his own verse and for his translations of Japanese haiku and the works of Polish poet Czeslaw Milosz.

Since accepting the post in 1995, he has continued teaching at Berkeley and published a new volume of verse, "Sun Under Wood." He is in the middle of his second and final term.

Hass has also taken poetry where it had never gone before, to call attention to the state of public schools. He visits Kiwanis and Rotary clubs and local chambers of commerce to talk about high school graduates who cannot read.

"If you knew half as much about the schools as you do about the linebacker corps of the Dallas Cowboys...we wouldn't be in this situation," he tells them. "If you people can run your businesses, you can figure out how to make the schools run."

Hass believes learning to read was not only a key to upward mobility in early America, but also a spiritual and patriotic mission. He says the ideal of universal literacy has always been close to the heart of American democracy. Yet he fears that ideal is vanishing.

Long before "Seinfeld" or even "The Jack Benny Show," mass audiences read poetry and fiction in newspapers. "I realized we had lost that," Hass said.

He went to The Washington Post to argue that poetry belonged in newspapers as much as comics or advice columns did. "Much to my surprise, they said 'Great! When can you start?'" Hass said.

Now his Sunday column spotlighting the work of famous and little-known poets alike is syndicated in more than two dozen newspapers.

HUD: "Empowerment Zones" Showing Promise

The Clinton administration said yesterday nearly all of the blighted urban areas across the nation that were selected two years ago to receive a wave of new federal grants and tax breaks to lure businesses and create jobs are showing some signs of promise, reports The Washington Post.

In its first review of the project, the Department of Housing and Urban Development has concluded that only five of the 72 urban sites designated as "empowerment zones" or "enterprise communities" are at risk of losing their eligibility for the grants and tax breaks. The rest have been recertified to continue their work.

"The overall picture we get from these reports is that nationwide the zones are stimulating billions of dollars in private investment," HUD Secretary Andrew M. Cuomo said at a news conference.

The areas are sharing more than \$1.5 billion in federal grants and more than \$2.5 billion in tax incentives. Businesses in the zones are eligible for wage tax credits worth \$3,000 for every employee they hire who lives within the zone's boundaries.

HUD officials said that since the initiative began, more than \$2 billion in private investments also have been made in the empowerment zones, and another \$1.4 billion has been committed to them. Once federal officials approve the boundaries of an urban area that desperately needs economic renewal and supply open-ended block grants for that task, it is up to the local communities to decide how to proceed.

Study Projects Prison Rates

By CASSANDRA BURRELL

WASHINGTON - One out of every 20 U.S. residents born today will spend time behind bars, if 1991 crime, incarceration and death rates remain constant, the Justice Department said Thursday.

For minority males, the chances of spending time in prison are much greater.

"At current levels of incarceration a black male in the United States today has greater than a one in four chance of going to prison during his lifetime," the report said. The chance for Hispanic males is 16 percent, compared with 4.4 percent for white males.

The projections by the Bureau of Justice Statistics are based on what is likely to happen to a hypothetical population of newborns over their lifetimes, the bureau said. They assume that recent rates of crime, imprisonment and

death will not change.

An estimated 5.1 percent of those born today - 9 percent of males and 1.1 percent of females - can be expected to serve time in a state or federal prison, the study said.

Nearly 1.1 million men and women were imprisoned in a state or federal facility at the close of 1995.

"We lock up a lot of people in this country," said Malcolm Young, executive director of The Sentencing Project, a nonprofit group that advocates less imprisonment and more use of creative alternatives.

The study "confirms our research and what we've published and I think it issues a pretty clarion call for some of the recommendations and solutions that we and groups like us have proposed," Young said. "I think the consequences of this kind of infor-

played to American rock groups such as Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath.

In Cuba, many youths rejected everything Cuban in favor of anything from the outside world. Not Albita.

"There was little interest in our culture," she said. "But because of the way I was raised I never rejected it. It was very natural for me to hear country Cuban music or other Cuban music."

By the time she was 19, Albita was the youngest performer on Cuba's musical television showcase "Palmas y Canas" ("Palms and Cane"), similar to "Hee-Haw" in the United States.

In Cuba she thrived, singing in tourist hotels and nightclubs, including the world famous Tropicana. And in 1991, Albita was allowed to move abroad under a recording contract in Colombia from which the Cuban government took a huge percentage of her earnings.

After releasing two albums as "Albita y su Grupo" ("Albita and Her Group"), they made their way to Mexico in April 1993 supposedly to record a third album. But the group never showed. Instead, they casually walked across the border into El Paso, Texas, and requested political asylum.

Today, Albita has big dreams: She wants to follow other stars, such as Gloria Estefan, Jon Secada and Selena, who have been able to go mainstream with Latin music and English lyrics.

But she isn't quite ready to abandon Spanish - it's what makes her music authentic, part of her art.

From Page 5

But her fans include young South Beach types, cigar-toting older Cubans and their wives, chic lesbians, yuppie Cuban Americans, tourists from all over the world and plenty of anglos.

"This has been a word of mouth phenomenon," she said. "And the Cubans always bring their friends out of pride."

The wide and peaceful acceptance of her by Miami's Cuban-American community is almost surprising. Often criticized as intolerant, Cuban exiles have in the past turned against artists who come from Cuba.

Albita says she tries to be apolitical.

She once faced an angry man who screamed at her as she finished a song. "How many times did you sing that song for Fidel?" the man jeered. Her quick response: "Too many. That's why I left."

"My only politics right now are wanting with all my heart and all my song that the Cuban people see positive change," she said.

"And I'm not talking about a simple steak or an egg. I hate it when people oversimplify this. That's important, but the Cuban problem is a hunger for morale, a hunger for dignity, a hunger for pride, a hunger for liberty."

From birth she was immersed in music and grew up with influences ranging from the country music her parents

From Page One

Se regresa a los fines del siglo XIX y principios del XX y se lee de qué modo se representaba a los irlandeses. Ellos se enfrentaron a los mismos estereotipos que se oyen ahora contra los inmigrantes latinos," dice el escritor Peter Stevens. El es el autor de la obra "La Marcha de los Bravos: John Riley y el Batallón de San Patricio," que será publicada en el otoño de este año.

En los desfiles del Día de San Patricio por toda la nación en este año, no es sorpresa encontrar una "Brigada de San Patricio" entre los manifestantes. Una de San Francisco se compone de miembros de la Asociación Irlandesa-Mexicana. El grupo, con tres años de existencia, tiene 180 miembros y recibe preguntas constantemente de otros irlandeses-mexicanos que quieren organizar capítulos locales.

El grupo, que se ha manifestado contra la Proposición 187, se propone también marchar en los desfiles del "Cinco de Mayo." Principalmente, sin embargo, el co-fundador Patrick Goggins dice que a sus miembros les gusta compartir "el calor automático" entre los chicanos y los irlandeses-americanos.

"Creo en verdad que las dos

mation is pretty serious."

The study did not include the likelihood of being imprisoned in a local jail, juvenile facility or other type of detention center. It also did not estimate a person's chances of simply being arrested.

The probability of a person committing a crime and being sentenced to prison for the first time declines steadily with age.

For example, 2.1 percent of white males age 30 with no previous record of imprisonment are likely to go to prison sometime before they die, the study said.

"Among those 35 years old, 1.5 percent will go to prison," it said. "Among those age 45, fewer than 1 percent will go to prison."

Most data for the survey were collected in 1991, but other statistics indicate that incarceration rates have remained stable since then even though prison populations have been increasing, the bureau said.

"One thing that occurred in the 1980s was a dramatic increase in the number of persons entering prison," Beck said. "In the 1990s we continue to see prison populations grow, but that growth has not been the result of growing number of admissions. ... Fewer people are being released."

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Un Rayito De Luz

Por Sofia Martinez

El escándalo es todo lo que induce al prójimo a ofender a Dios. Hay escándalo activo y pasivo, directo e indirecto. La palabra escándalo es un gravísimo pecado, porque ataca la vida del alma que vale mucho más que la vida del cuerpo.

Jesucristo decía: "Más les valdría ser arrojados al fondo del mar, con una reuda de molino atada al cuello, que escandalizar a uno de esos pequeñuelos que creen en mí. ¡Ay del munco de los escándalos! ¡Maldito aquél por quién viene el escándalo!"

Muy bien se comprenderá esta indignación si tenemos en cuenta que los daños del escándalo son muy graves, porque aquél que induce al prójimo a cometer el pecado, desempeña el oficio de "demonio" homicida de las almas, y arruina, en cuanto está en su mano, la obra de la Redención, arrojando el alma del prójimo en la eterna desgracia.

Los que han escandalizado tienen la obligación de reparar su pecado, rogando por los que han inducido al mal, y procurando atraerlos a la virtud, por sus consejos y por sus buenos ejemplos.

Para todo pecado hay misericordia, aun para el pecado de escándalo. Los que han escandalizado, no deben decir como Caín: "Mi pecado es demasiado grande para que tenga perdón." Deben, al contrario, humillarse delante de Dios y corregir su mala conducta, usando los medios que la Iglesia Católica les aconseja por medio de los sacerdotes. (San Mateo 18, 6-8). (Gen. 4,13).

El Editor

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Sugar Ray Robinson Hailed

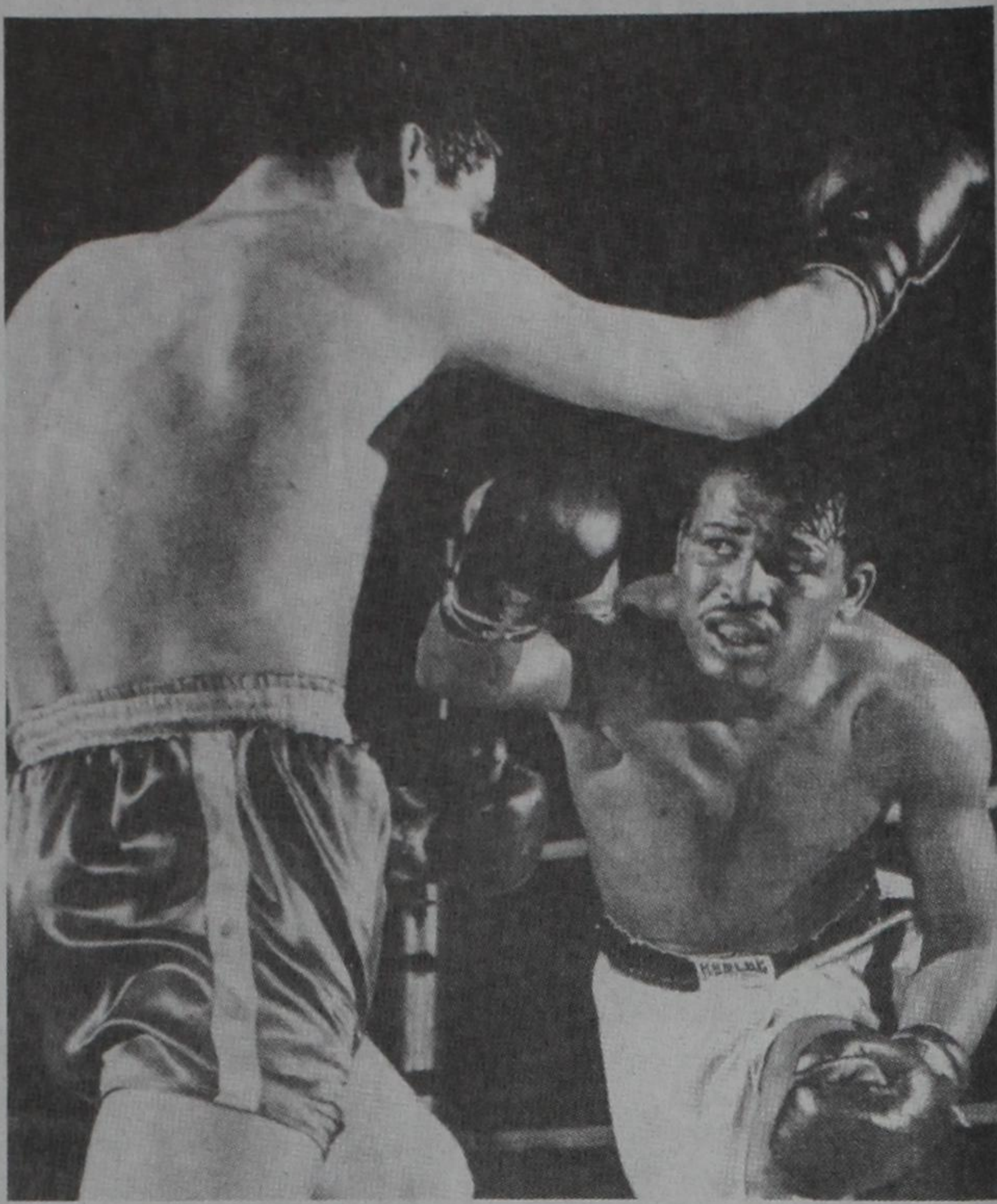
By ED SCHUYLER Jr. -Boxing Writer-

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. - Sugar Ray Robinson was hailed as the best fighter of the last 75 years night at dinner Saturday night marking the 75th anniversary of "The Ring" magazine.

Robinson, a former welterweight and five-time middleweight champion, was selected by editors of The Ring over former heavyweight champions Muhammad Ali and Joe Louis, and Henry Armstrong, who held the featherweight, lightweight and welterweight titles simultaneously in the 1930s.

Robinson, who died in 1989 at the age of 67, compiled a 175-19-6 record, with 109 knockouts, in a career that began in 1940 and ended in 1965.

Benny Leonard, lightweight champion from 1917 until 1923, was selected as the best boxer over Ali and former featherweight champion Willie Pep. Leonard, who died in 1947 while refereeing a bout at St. Nicholas Arena in New



Olympic Boxer to Make Pro Debut

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. - David Reid, America's only Olympic boxing champion at last year's Atlanta games, makes his professional debut next week brimming with confidence.

"I never worry about what my opponent is going to do, I know I'm a great fighter," Reid said.

Reid fights Sam Calderon on March 21 at the Taj Mahal in Atlantic City, N.J.

"Come the 21st, I know what I'm going to do, and I'm going to give the people what they want. And they want to see that I'm no fluke, who can't box, who can't punch," said Reid, who with a devastating right hand floored Cuba's Alredo Duvergel in the third and final round of their super middleweight gold medal bout.

"They want to see somebody who can think in the ring, who looks like an old veteran, and I'll be that guy," Reid said of his plans for the scheduled four-round junior middleweight bout.

Calderon, 10-0, opposes Reid in the opener of a bill that includes a bout between Roy Jones Jr. and Montell Griffin.

"What you are going to see is a more settled David Reid," Reid said. "In the Olympics, I was like fighting for my life. But I'm going to show that I can be smart, that I can think in the ring, and that I don't just hit hard, but I throw fast combinations. I don't want to be known as just a one-punch knockout guy."

Reid, 23, has not fought since the Olympics. He had two operations in December and

York, had an 85-5-1 record, with 69 knockouts, and also boxed in 121 no-decision bouts.

Robinson also was honored for the best knockout of the last 75 years - a fifth-round KO of Gene Fullmer with a single left hook that made him middleweight champion for the fourth time on May 1, 1957.

Other contenders were Rocky Marciano's heavyweight title-winning knockout of Jersey Joe Walcott with one right to the jaw in 1952, and George Foreman's 1-2-punch knockout of Michael Moorer in the 10th round to become the oldest heavyweight champion at age 45 in 1994.

Fullmer, who outpointed Robinson twice and fought a draw with him in title matches, attended the weekend festivities.

Of the knockout loss, Fullmer said, "My manager was holding me and I said, 'Why is he exercising in his corner between rounds?' He was jumping up and down. My manager said the fight was over and I knew if somebody was counted out, it was me."

Other awards were Joe Louis, best puncher; former middleweight champion Jake LaMotta, best chin; Eddie Futch, best trainer, and Don Dunphy, best broadcaster.

Albita: Latina Sensation

By EDDIE DOMINGUEZ
MIAMI BEACH, Fla.

When she crossed the U.S.-Mexican border, leaving behind her life as a Cuban music star, she feared she'd never again stand before a crowd of adoring fans doing what's in her blood - singing.

But more than dread, Albita felt rage and resentment. All she wanted to do was perform, but she was suffocating artistically.

"Why did I have to go through this?" she asked during an interview in her suburban Miami home. "Why did I have to leave my country? Why are governments so powerful? I hated leaving my parents and my brothers."

Her fear of failure was unfounded. She has been nominated for a Grammy and performed the Cuban classic "Guantanamera" as President Clinton and first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton danced during the inauguration in Washington.

Four years after defecting, Albita, born Albita Rodriguez, is called the Latin k.d. lang. Promoted as "The Diva of South Beach," she is Miami's hottest Cuban sensation.

But she's not sure about the title.

"It's done in admiration, but the divas of the past were really divas," Albita said. "I'm just a singer. I'm from the country - a woman that tries to bring to the stage how my people move, the way my people dance, the way my people talk."

The Cuban "guajira," or country girl, has come a long way, although she lives only a few hundred miles away from her isolated homeland.

When she performs, she wears dapper, tailored suits. Her dyed, blond hair is slicked back. She sings of a hunky Latin guy strutting down the street or remembers the Cuban countryside.

The percussion is powerful. And you don't have to understand the lyrics to be hypnotized by the beat and move your hips. But her trademark is a deep voice and masculine style.

Three months after she and her band fled Cuba in 1993, Albita was singing in Centrol Vasco on Miami's Calle Ocho in Little Havana. The club knocked down a wall and renovated to make room for the crowds.

One day, crossover king Emilio Estefan and Gloria Estefan came to see her, and that was the beginning of her rise.

"In my career, everything happens like in the movies," Albita said. "A good businessman always shows up. Someone offers me a contract. ... Emilio went to see me that Sunday and two days later I was in his office talking about a contract."

Months later she made her recording debut with "Que Manera de Quererte" ("What a Way to Love You"), on the soundtrack for the movie "The Specialist," starring Sylvester Stallone and Sharon Stone.

Since then, she's recorded two albums, including Grammy-nominated "Dicen Que" ("They Say"), which featured her popular tune "El Chico Chevere" ("The Cool Guy").

Almost every weekend she leaves Yuca, the South Beach

restaurant where she plays, and heads for a small venues somewhere, including Amsterdam, New York, Chicago and Los Angeles.

"We're trying to go to every corner of the country," she said. "But it's hard because my music is very authentic. It's difficult to reach Americans because they are American."

And Hispanics sometimes have difficulty connecting with her music because her style developed in Cuba while Cuban music in the United States and elsewhere took a life of its own in the salsa movement.

Her albums are loaded with all types of styles - conga, salsa, Cuban country music, Latin jazz and son, the predecessor of salsa.

The influence of her childhood can be heard throughout her music, especially in "Habra Musica Guajira" ("There Will Be Country Music"), the title track on her first release in Cuba that was also on her first album in the United States.

The style continues to be the backbone of her music, an effort to repopularize authentic Cuban music - and it's catching.

Backed by the powerful Estefan machine, Albita has been on the rise since signing with their label, Crescent Moon, a subsidiary of Epic and Sony.

Among her diverse fans, Albita counts Madonna. The pop superstar invited Albita to play at a recent birthday party. Madonna even moved the day of the party so Albita could make it.

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Selena

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LUBBOCK CENTRO AZTLAN PRESENTS THE

Viva Aztlan

Theatre & Dance Festival

Schedule for Viva Aztlan Festival - March 21 & 22

Friday AM

9:30 am to 10 am: Registration

10 am to 11:30 am: Free dance exhibition for Senior Citizens by Ballet Folklórico Aztlan, Ballet Folklórico Nuestra Herencia, Ballet Folklórico San Patricio and Las Adelitas

Friday PM: Children's Competition Ages 3-12

1:15 to 1:30 - Ballet Folklórico San Patricio - Lubbock

1:40 to 1:55 - Las Adelitas - Ralls

2:05 to 2:20 - Baila Baila - Albuquerque

2:30 to 2:45 - Ballet Folklórico Aztlan - Lubbock

3:00 to 4:30 - Workshops

4:55-5:10 - Ballet Folklórico Nuestra Herencia - Lubbock

5:20 to 5:35 - Daniel's Compañía de Danza Artística - San Antonio

Fri. Evening: Reception and Adult Competition

6:45 to 7:45 - Reception with El Mariachi Alegria

8:00 to 8:25 - Ballet Folklórico San Patricio - Lubbock

8:30 to 8:55 - Las Adelitas - Ralls

9:00 to 9:25 - Tradiciones de Mexico - Amarillo

9:30 to 9:55 - Ballet Folklórico Aztlan - Lubbock

Saturday AM:

9:00 to 10:00 - Workshops

Children's Competition

10:00 to 10:15 - Greeley Rodarte Dancers - Greeley CO.

10:25 to 10:40 - Expresiones Academia de Artes - Albuquerque

11:00 to 12:00 - Workshops

12:00 to 2:00 - Lunch

Saturday Afternoon: Adult Competition

2:00 to 2:25 - El Ballet Folklórico Nuestra Herencia - Lubbock

2:30 - 2:55 - Mexico España - San Antonio

3:00 to 3:25 - Ballet Folklórico Tejas de Dolores Del Rio - San Angelo

3:30 to 3:55 - St. Vincent Ballet Folklórico - Abilene

4:00 to 4:25 - Roswell Folklórico - Roswell, NM

4:40 to 4:55 - Expresiones Academia de Artes - Albuquerque

Evening

6:30 to 6:55 - Baila Baila - Albuquerque

7:00 to 7:25 - Greeley Rodarte Dancers - Greeley, CO

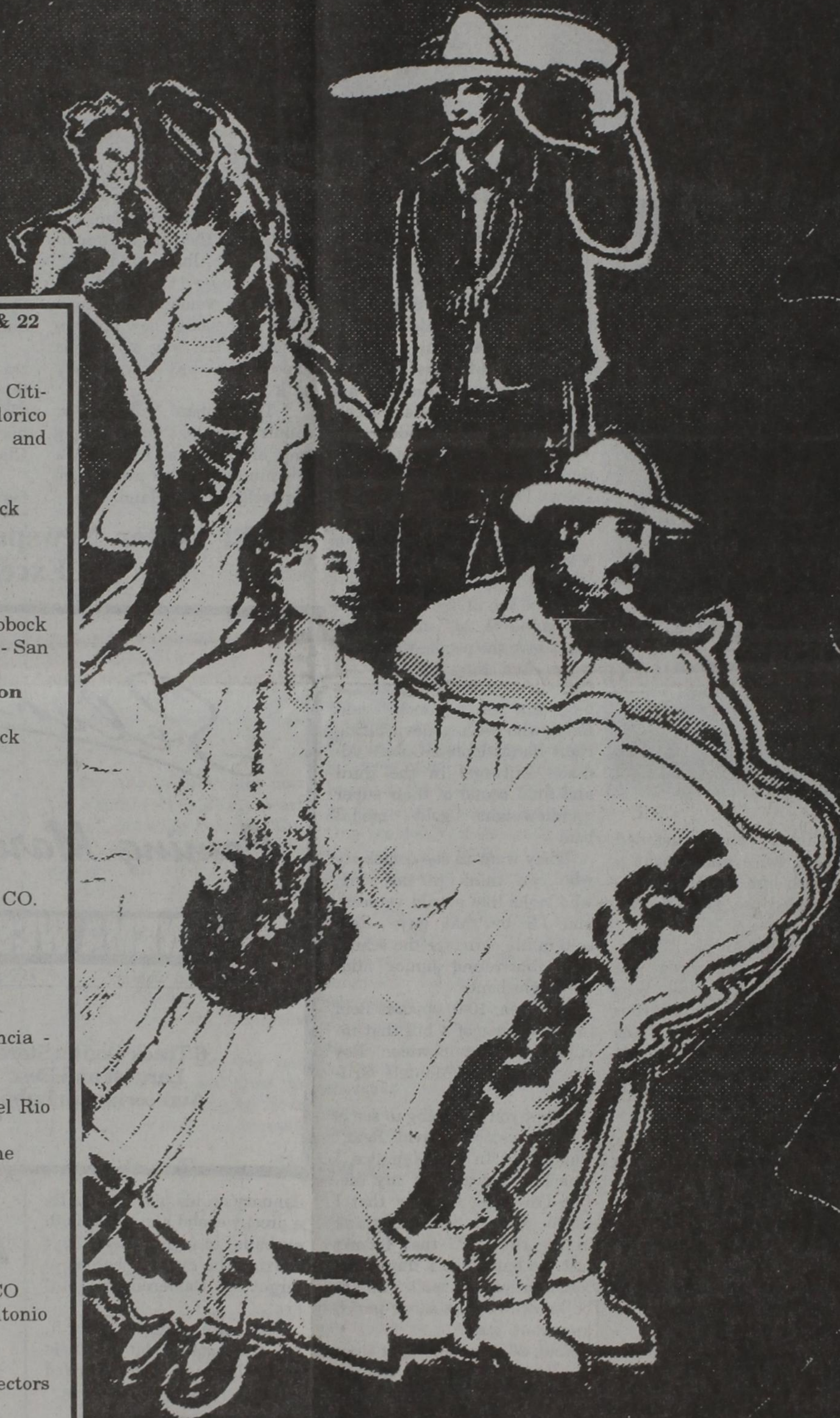
7:30 to 7:55 - Daniel's Compañía de Danza - San Antonio

8:00 to 8:30 - Top two childrens group

8:30 to 9:00 - Mariachi Alegria

9:00 to 9:30 - Individual Dances performed by Directors or Instructor of Each Group

9:30 to 10:00 - Awards



March 21 & 22, 1997
Lubbock Memorial Civic Center

PRODUCED WITH HELP FROM SOUTHWESTERN BELL TELEPHONE CO., EL EDITOR NEWSPAPERS & THE TEXAS COMMISSION ON THE ARTS.

Call 806-763-3841 for Information