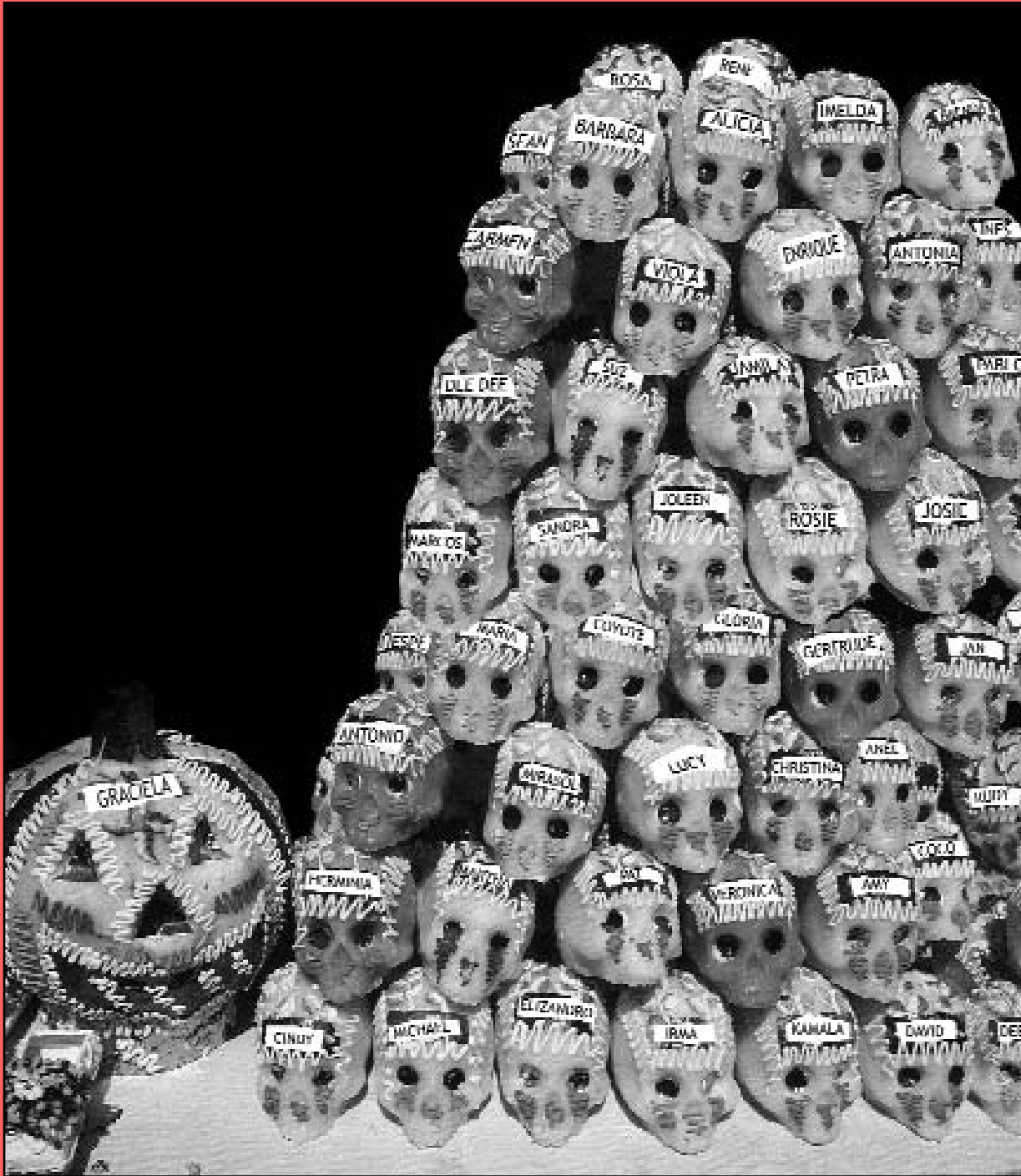


La Voz de

San Antonio, Texas

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Esperanza



Calaveras pa'l dosmiltres

La VOZ de Esperanza

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Editor

Gloria A. Ramírez

Layout/Design

H. Esperanza Garza

Contributors

Elvia Arriola, Antonio Cabral, Verónica Castillo, y Los calaveristas: Alicia Gaspar de Alba, Josie Méndez-Negrete, Gloria A. Ramírez, Enrique Sánchez, Manolo Sánchez, Kamimyla

La Voz Volunteer Collective

ArtEscuela Interns, Fuerza Unida, MujerARTES, & Sean Danweber

Esperanza Director

Graciela I. Sánchez

Esperanza Staff

Pat Benitez, Elizandro Carrington, Verónica Castillo, Brenda Davis, Joleen Garcia, Herminia Maldonado, Irma Mayorga, Mirasol Riojas, Jamila Reyes Gutierrez, Cindy Rodríguez, René Saenz, Ines Valdéz, Christina Valero

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Inquiries, articles, and letters should be addressed to:

La Voz de Esperanza,
922 San Pedro,
San Antonio, TX 78212
lavoz@esperanzacenter.org

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We ask that articles be visionary, progressive, instructive, & thoughtful. Submissions must be literate & critical; not sexist, racist, homophobic, violent, or oppressive. Articles may be edited for length. All letters in response to Esperanza activities or articles in La Voz will be considered for publication. Letters with intent to slander individuals or groups will not be published.

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922 San Pedro, San Antonio, TX 78212
(on the corner of Evergreen Street)
210-228-0201 • fax 210-228-0000
www.esperanzacenter.org

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TRADICIONES Y CONSTUMBRES DIA DE LOS MUERTOS

por Verónica Castillo

La celebración del día de muertos viene desde la época prehispánica; la sociedad azteca era jerárquica; exigente y violenta. Por ejemplo, un padre azteca aleccionaba a su hija de 6 años para quien realizaba el rito del paso de la infancia a la niñez, "aquí en éste mundo hay lagrimas, amargura y fracasos; un oscuro viento sopla sobre nosotros, no es un lugar de bienestar no hay alegría; ni felicidad."

Los aztecas no temblaron ante MICTLANTECUHTLI, su dios de la muerte, mas bien temían a la incertidumbre de la vida. Ellos pensaban que mictlantecuhtli no castigaba al muerto por los pecados de su vida en la tierra, si no todo lo contrario; lo liberaba de sus penas; y los muertos iban al lugar que era determinado; no por su manera de vivir sino por su manera de morir.

Los guerreros alzaban vuelo alrededor del sol convertidos en colibris y mariposas; así también las mujeres que habían muerto de parto, dadoras, ellas mismas, guerreras. Aquellos que habían muerto relacionados con el agua; ahogados, fulminados por un rayo y los enfermos de hidropeca jugaban dichosos en el paraíso de eterna primavera.

Los niños iban al árbol nodriza que goteaba leche para ellos. Todos los demás iban a MICTLAN con sus nueve mundos subterráneos y frios donde se desvanecía paulatinamente hasta la quietud total.

Algunos eran cremados o enterrados de acuerdo a su jerarquía en una cámara subterránea muy bien vestidos y sentados en una silla con su arma, joyas, hasta su perro y alimentos a la mano para el largo viaje a través de los nueve mundos subterráneos de mictlán. Se le hacían ofrendas adicionales, ochenta días después del entierro y una vez al año por los siguientes cuatro años al final de los cuales

se suponía que el difunto había llegado a su último lugar de reposo.

Pero con la conquista se implantó en México un nuevo protocolo de rituales funerarios con los cientos de frailes católicos que se extendieron en todo el país, trajeron una cosmología paralela en ciertos aspectos a la de los aztecas y sus ideas llegaron a impregnarse con las creencias indígenas. Los santos se unieron a la jerarquía de los dioses aztecas. El cielo y el infierno añadieron nuevas dimensiones a mictlán.

En México los difuntos son invitados de honor en el día de muertos. Se celebra con una mezcla de veneración por los difuntos y de diversión, como reto al miedo de la muerte misma y para alegrar su visita.

El 27 de octubre los espíritus de aquellas almas sin sobrevivientes y sin hogar, son recibidas en algunos pueblos con pan y jarras de agua colgadas afuera de las casas; en otros pueblos se juntan las ofrendas que se colocan en un rincón de la iglesia, éstas ofrendas son muy pobres pero al menos las almas huérfanas encuentran algo.

El 28 de octubre aquellos que murieron por accidente, asesinato o de otras formas de muerte violenta se les ofrece alimentos y bebidas afuera de la casa o en el patio para evitar que entren los espíritus malignos de aquellas almas sin perdonar.

El 31 de octubre para todos los inocentes o sea los niños les ponen el altar en la casa porque vienen a visitar el hogar. Para el medio día del 1 de noviembre ya tendrían que haberse ido. Las campanas tocan para saludar a "LOS FIELES DIFUNTOS"; la familia da la bienvenida formal.

Al los difuntos más recientes y a través de ellos saludar a los otros antepasados, en algunos pueblos vecinos, parientes dan el

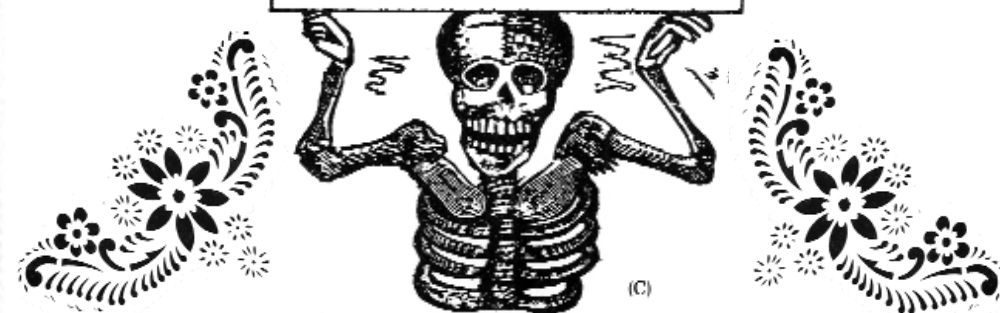
VOZ VISION STATEMENT: La Voz de Esperanza speaks for many individual, progressive voices who are gente-based, multi-visioned and *milagro-bound*. We are diverse survivors of materialism, racism, misogyny, homophobia, classism, violence, earth-damage, speciesism and cultural and political oppression. We are recapturing the powers of alliance, activism and healthy conflict in order to achieve interdependent economic/spiritual healing and *fuerza*. La Voz is a resource for peace, justice, and human rights, providing a forum for criticism, information, education, humor and other creative works. La Voz provokes bold actions in response to local and global problems, with the knowledge that the many risks we take for the earth, our body, and the dignity of all people will result in profound change for the seven generations to come.

pésame a aquellos que han perdido a un ser querido en el curso del último año; los visitantes se sientan calladamente con sus anfitriones y beben ponche caliente antes de seguir a otro velorio. A la puesta del sol la familia se traslada al panteón para acompañar a todos sus fieles difuntos. Se prenden velas sobre las tumbas. Las visten de flores y en algunos casos se les agrega frutas, comidas y todo lo que le quieran agregar. También, agregan una veladora por cada alma ida. Las mujeres se ponen a rezar durante toda la noche. El cementerio se encuentra lleno de flamantes seras o velas en el aire nocturno de otoño. Corre un frío á través del aire penetrando hasta los huesos anunciando que pronto entrará el invierno.

Tanto como la gente de la ciudad, la gente de las provincias pasan el 2 de noviembre acompañando a sus muertos, pero también disfrutan de convivencia de los vivos al chismorreo, cuentos, historias, anécdotas de los difuntos, y la bebida que se comparte en la lápida o tumba sepulchral. Músicos caminan en todo el cementerio ofreciendo tocar las piezas favoritas de los difuntos. Para la noche del 2 de noviembre, la fiesta ha terminado y las almas regresan al mundo de los muertos. En algunas ocasiones son estimuladas a partir con disfraces por todo el pueblo cuya misión es asustar a las almas más renuentes o rebeldes a salir de este mundo viviente; y así los vivos y los muertos quedan en paz otro año más.

Verónica es artista de barro policromado trabajando con MujerArtes en Esperanza.

Calaveras pa'l dosmiltres



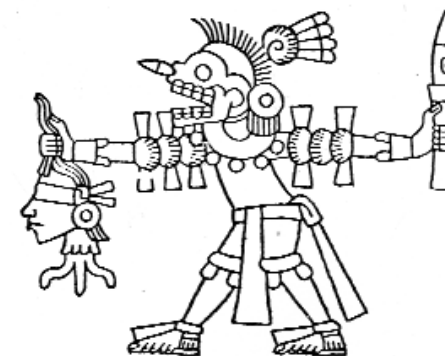
Dejen de estar aturcidos y pongan mucha atención
Las calaveras llegaron pa'que se den gran quemón
En éste tiempo presente, en el mero dosmiltres
Que ha causado torbellino y volteado todo al revés
Gozábamos economía estable y sobraba además
Se acabaron los amigos; nuestras vidas, hacia atrás
El chanchullo del Arbusto no tiene comparación
Junto con toda su gente a dañado a la nación
"¡Me llevo al Arbusto chico y también me llevo al grande!"
Les gritaba la Huesuda, "¡Quedaron mal, vamos, anden!"
--Enrique Sánchez



CALAVERAS de PERSONAJES

El estaff de Esperanza

La huesuda entró a la oficina de la Esperanza
Y encontró a todos poseidos por las computadoras
Nadie levantó la cara a saludar
Ella solamente dijo- "Mira,
Como están hipnotizados,
No notan mi presencia aunque
he venido a liberarlos
de estas maquinas infernales."
Se llevó a todo el estaff.
Ahora, reposan y descansan
Leyendo y escribiendo
obras de arte para la pelona.
--Verónica Castillo



La Malinche

La Traicionera, le decían
A Malinalli Tenepal
Mujer, de lenguas conocía
De las castas, el umbral.

La muerte de la raza desafia
Luce en cada rostro hoy en día.
Nuestra madre primordial
En la historia no tiene igual.

--agda/gar



Cala-Vero

Madre Tierra la parió
Por su vientre la arrojó
Para jugar en su masa
Y Arboles de vida dar

La Veronica Castillo
Artista con mucho brillo
A Beto Salas pesco
Y huesuda apadrino

Traí legado de artesana
oriunda de quinta rama
Hija de una gran realteza
Que hacen arte con finesa

De tal palo tal astilla
Tierra de tal tepalcate.
Le dijo Doña Calaca
"No dejare petatearte."

Obras de Vero acumula
Ahí es donde esta el detalle
Hasta que Alfonsina raye
No dejara que alguien falle.
Josie Méndez-Negrete



Calacalicia

De UCLA llegó con afán
la valiente profesora
Po's según cuenta la plebe
ya se ha vuelto cazadora
de matones, asesinos
y violadores de niñas.

Aunque libritos escriba
Sobre monjas y artisas
Son la jóvenes muertitas
Que la tienen bien tiricia.

Ponganse truchas señores
ahí viene Gaspar de Alba
coordinando con destreza
pa' limitar la violencia.



Sor Juana
Musa décima y soñadora
En su día fue poeta
De hombres necios, retadora
Hasta que le llegó su meta.

Como fénix, de las cenizas
A renacido en las feministas
Chicanas, Latinas, y de todas matices,
Dejando huella en escritores y artistas.
--agda/gar

Ay, mis hijas! Ay, mis hijas!
Chilla la calaca triste
Lamentando las matanzas
Rechazando impunidades.

Vuelen, vuelen palomitas
Haganle de portavoces
Que artisas y escritoras
ya se han vuelto luchadoras.
Vayan pasando La Voz
que en el Fowler recordarán
a las mujeres de Juárez.

J. Méndez-Negrete



Michael Marinez

La tilica y flaca se encontró con
un personaje controvertido
La huesuda preguntó, "Quien eres?"
"Michael Marinez,
en que puedo ayudarle," el contestó.
La pelona se sonrió.
"Que pelo tan bello tienes,
y yo sin cabellera.
Te vas conmigo para que me des un
tratamiento, a ver si me sale pelo."
Ahora Miguelito se encuentra
descansando con la huesuda
Ahora es su damo de compañía
hasta que le salga pelo a la pelona.
-Verónica Castillo



Los Modelos
Para Don Enrique
y Doña Isabel

Los muy estimados abuelos
Han llenado todos sus anhelos—
Baile, comida, música, y cuentos,
En ellos no hay un pelo de lentos.

Hasta la última tanda
La vida plenamente vivieron,
Y cuando llegó La Pelona
Un campito le hicieron.
--agda/gar



CALAVERAS POLITICAS

Los partidos

El hablador no esta conforme con el gobernador y su chamba
Quiere cambiar los distritos porque Arbusto lo demanda
El asno y el elefante, los partidos populares,
Están como perro y gato y sufren los escolares
"Mejor regimos nosotros," dijo un elefante fino,
"Los asnos solo se hicieron pa' la carga y el camino.
La revancha es de nosotros, tienen que sufrir ahora.
Tendremos control completo si nada se nos atora."
Con la ayuda de la tele y también la propaganda
Sabrán todos los burritos quien deveras los manda
--Enrique Sánchez



Callejón sin salida

No tiene usted una idea la furia que me causó
Cuando supe que Arbustito a la guerra nos llevó
No tuvo razón alguna de meternos al fogón
Más como buen tejano se valió de la ocasión
Hoy día estamos metidos en callejón sin salida
Quizás tengamos la culpa; ¡Tanto gasto, cuanta vida!
Dice un dicho entre nosotros, y el dicho dice muy bien:
"El enfermo y su mal nunca completan los cien."
--Enrique Sánchez

Los Mineros
Para Antonia Castañeda
y Arturo Madrid

Catedráticos de gala
Don Arturo y Doña Toña
Siempre amables y
de buena gana
Echaban las mejores parrandas.
Los invitados de mucha o poca lana
Pero en sí, todos con fama.

Hasta que les tocó la Catrina,
Y esa no les calló fina
Porque los arrastró a la mina.
--agda/gar



El gobernador

Obscura noche de risa
En Hollywood, un actor
Se le ocurrió que sin prisa
Podría ser Gobernador

Del infierno se salieron
Estos diablos por montones
En California lo pusieron
Pa' llenar esos panteones

No te "arruges" mi flaquita
Ya sea temprano o sea tarde
A lo mejor y quien quita
Te carges hasta a su madre

Deje diablo y sus androids
Y les llegará la hora
Cuando y los steroids
Se le pudran en la cola
--Manolo Sánchez

CALAVERAS de AMOR



¿Amor o muerte?

Como siempre, me persigue la muerte
Tanto como el amor
Esta vez, mi corazón fue capturado en un ascensor

En mi historia de amor
La pelea ha sido fuerte
Y cada vez ha ganado la muerte

Por más que quiero que gane l'amour
Solo dura 5, 10, 15 años
Y acabamos haciéndonos daños

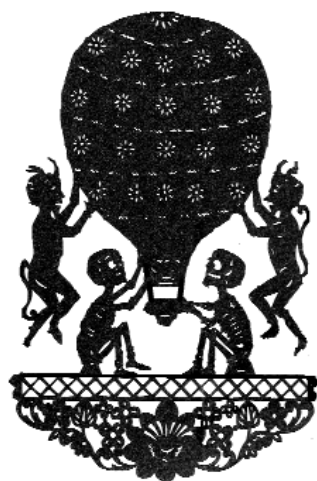
Felizmente, la muerte baila igual que mi corazón
Sigue terca y entremetida
Mientras sube y baja con mi vida

Sabiendo que al final de cada relación
Nos lleva a todas, sueltas y solteras
o amarradas en parejas al panteón

- gar

Amores peores

Si crees que con tu rechazo
Di el cuartazo, Ay mamita,
Sólo mi alma se desprendió.
Porque esta Calaca flaca
Contigo se quedó,
Eternamente bailando,
en la mesa de tu comedor.
--Kamimyla



Dolores y Soledad

A Dolores le gusta la soledad
A Soledad le atormentan los dolores
Una vive contenta con la ambigüedad
La otra busca el anzuelo de los amores

Amigas eran, sin conocer
Lo que les esperaba de placer
Iba cada quien por su camino
Cuando una noche La Llorona les cantó:
"Vengan, mujeres de duende fino,
Una sorpresa les tengo yo."

"Bailen juntas y verán
Que el destino no miente
Pues esto es más que un afán
O pasión, únicamente."

Amigas eran, sin conocer
Lo que les esperaba de placer

Tengo miedo, dice Dolores
De perder el corazón
A Soledad le doy flores
Y pide todo el cantón.

No seas mala, dice Soledad,
Cásate conmigo y dejo todo atrás
Si no me quieres dime la verdad
Este cariño no es de Satanás.

Amigas eran, sin conocer
Lo que les esperaba de placer.

La Llorona les aconsejó
Que se dejaran de estupideces
Y cada una decidió
Seguir adelante como merece.

"Entréguense a las percancias
Y recuerden de ser feliz.
Entre sombras y distancias
El amor tiene raíz."

Amigas eran, sin conocer
Lo que les esperaba de placer.
--AGDA



I wonder if they made a difference. All the rosaries Abuelita and Mom said during their lives. Between them how many? Probably millions and millions. Both of them could always be found with a hand in the pocket of a coat, or an apron or daycoat looking as if they were fumbling for change and muttering something to themselves, but really they were silently praying the rosary. They prayed for their salvation, for that of relatives, for me and my brothers and sisters, for neighbors. Praying was a remedy for small sins and big sins. I remember the rosary prayers as a typical "penance" doled out by the priest who'd just heard you spill your guts in the confessional booth about the week's sins. Little or "venial" sins got you a few Hail Marys and one or two Our Fathers. Big ("mortal," i.e., killer) sins, like thinking about sex or even worse attempting it through "necking" as they called it when I was growing up, got you whole rosaries. For a single rosary that meant at least 55 Hail Marys and 10 Our Fathers and very sore knees when the punishment was over.



Rosaries are primarily a beseeching to the Holy Mother Mary of Jesus, appropriately viewed as a symbol of patience given how unpopular her Son was to his contemporaries. After Mom kicked Dad out of the house she prayed many many rosaries for patience with the stressful circumstance of being powerless over the fact that Dad had remarried, yet that "in the eyes of the Catholic Church" she and Dad were still married and "he was living in sin" as a spiritual bigamist with his second wife. Yes, rosaries, prayed out of devotion rather than penance, were a guaranteed spiritual tool for serenity and a sense of having changed if not a person or a situation, at least the attitude of trying to control an outcome, confident that the burden was now on the shoulders of la Virgen Maria, or la Virgen de Guadalupe, or la del Perpetuo Socorro or one of the hundreds of variations on her apparitions in various countries, languages and cultures. Holy Mary Mother of God's tasks were not to be confused however, with those of other spiritual beings, like Saint Anthony, who had his own set of prayers, dedicated to smaller miracles, like finding lost keys and credit cards as opposed to the major social reforms potentially accomplished by praying the Rosary. The distinction could be found in the story of the Miracle of Fatima, where Mary appeared to two little sisters and a brother in Portugal and predicted many twentieth century world disasters that she particularly associated with a Communist takeover and that could be avoided, she promised, if more families would just pray the rosary.

Mom owned about 20-30 rosaries. I'm not kidding. I'm the one who emptied her apartment after she died. All colors and shapes and sizes. Blue beads, black with that glitter that looks like the back of a beetle or a black widow spider. Red, white, pink and blue, pearlized, plastic, glass, fancy and not so fancy. As she lay dying in a coma, most of my ten brothers and sisters knelt in a circle around her bed, just the way we had circled her sewing machine as children, when we would all chant the Hail Marys and Our Fathers above the din of the motor as she sewed hundreds of sleeves, collars and belts for dresses at piece rate wages for some huge garment factory Mom worked for in downtown L.A. It was a good thing she had all those rosaries around for those of my brothers and sisters who weren't prepared to see her die and needed something to nervously cling to.

By the time of our adulthood, praying the rosary had become a mixed bag of experience among my siblings. I'm sure it's why Mom and Abuelita said so many throughout their lives, to make up for the ones their lapsed Catholic children and grandchildren no longer prayed. Of course, people like my sister Constanca could be counted on to carry on the family traditions. A strict interpreter of them, I remember her enforcing the household practice of the daily rosary with a rather heavy hand on her only son. At some point I know she had to give up against his stubbornness and her exhaustion. But generally, in the matriarchal scheme of our familia, La Chata, as Abuelita called her, was a great stand-in for Mom and Abuelita's mandates from on high as to moral conduct, belief in the Church and obedience to one's elders (Mexican style). After all, we'd had the sense of duty instilled from the time we could speak. "Mande Usted?" was a phrase I didn't translate until so much later in my life and when I did I said, "aha," it literally means "Command me," the "Usted" signifying a formal, non-familiar contrast to the "Tu." In other words, do as I say or face the penalties. I still remember the sting of the day I told Mom at Constanca's house that I was not going to have a Catholic Church wedding and how Mom didn't even have to say anything, because Constanca just ordered me out of her house, rendering me an official family outcast for a couple of years. So at this last rosary at Mom's deathbed you could count on Constanca's pulling out her own rosary out of her purse for the occasion.

In contrast, my big sister Rocío, a highly successful corporate

executive, was far far away from the mandates of our youth when not praying the rosary might as well have earned you a ticket on the bus to Purgatory, the waiting room for lost souls hoping to get to Heaven, or at least the dreaded Silent Treatment from Mom or Abuelita. The Silent Treatment was pretty painful although it might last only a few hours or days. In some ways the message of the Silent Treatment was the same to the Family Outcast except that the F.O. got a stronger version of the Silent Treatment. My own bout with outcast status came from Abuelita when I chose to “live in sin” with my first husband. It ended only after I gave in and formalized my vows two years later in a Catholic ceremony. If you got the silent treatment you could still talk to your elders and could come around the house, but if you were Family Outcast why even bother. The Silent Treatment looked a little like this— Mom and Abuelita would still talk to us, but almost as if they were talking to a white person or some stranger on the street, not with the warmth and affection that we expected from them as they handed us a bowl of *caldo* or a new blouse or set of *pijamas* they’d cut and stitched from scratch for you.

At the last rosary with Mom, I’m sure Rocio held the record among the sisters for getting the Silent Treatment and negotiating the role of Family Outcast, which she could do because she was married to the Favorite Son-in-Law and mother of two favored grandchildren. I’m sure Rocio was getting back on the bicycle of praying the rosary after years of not riding and moving in and out of the semi-outcast role. She’d earned the title by divorcing Favorite Son-in-Law. Poor Rocio, who ran from her marriage as if running from her past and all of the gendered rules for *Una Buena Mujer y Madre*. Divorce may have brought liberation but no peace and carried a big emotional pricetag—the constant reminder that she topped the list of unsaved souls in Mami and Abuelita’s moral register. But she knelt there with the unpracticed knees and fingers in place her gestures bringing up memories of rosarios in the old house, in Abuelita’s bedroom or on nice summer evenings in the backyard before a statue of Mary, the smell of freshly cut roses rising to our bored little noses. We all knew it was our last rosary as a family together, and this one for her might have been the last ditch to heal the gash in her heart etched four years earlier from Abuelita’s sudden passing after a brief two-day illness. Barely enough time to be grateful for her very long life. For Rocio, always the businesswoman on the road, that had meant no time to heal

her semi-outcast role with Abuelita, no opportunity for a last hug y *te quiero mucho Abuelita* quickly uttered as she rushed out the door for another assignment in London, New York or Tokyo. In total denial of how long Abuelita would make it she never made it to her sickbed, had been devastated by her death, and seemed now hell bent on preventing a similar emotional trauma with Mom’s sure passing.

Now, my two sisters Emilia and Araceli were not at Mom’s deathbed for the last rosary because they lived out of state. Araceli eventually made it to the funeral. Emilia and her husband drove 16 hours straight through from Pennsylvania to be at her deathbed with enough time for Emi to whisper in Mom’s ear “you can go, we’ll be OK...” which she did about an hour after’s Emi’s arrival. Both of these sisters were absolutely gun-ho about their faith, especially Araceli, whom, if she *had* been there would not only have pulled out her own rosary, but might have also offered some charismatic or New Age interpretation of how we didn’t have to feel guilty for being lapsed Catholics or that it was time to let go of any unhealthy buried rage towards the Church and the Irish or Mexican priests and nuns we had at once feared and revered in our youth. Then there were the fence-sitters about the value of saying the rosary like me. I had a rosary, or at least rosary-like Indian mala beads that I preferred to use for chanting Om Namah Shivaya.

Considering how many of us became lapsed Catholics it was amazing to see so many of us willingly surround Mom’s deathbed for that last rosary. Lucy, or Mama Lucy to the grandkids, lay on a hospital bed in an average sized bedroom of a senior citizens’ apartment complex. Between brothers and sisters and grandkids present we were about ten in all, squeezed in a circle around her bed like a big set of rosary beads and focused on Mom’s rhythmic breathing as her spirit prepared for takeoff, leaving behind a body ravaged by cancer. A huge factory style sewing machine was at the corner of the room, piled high with blankets, unfinished sewing projects, books, clothes, medicines and the mounds of towels and sheets Rocio, Tonchi and I were constantly washing and changing as we watched over our patient, guided occasionally by a phone call to a hospice nurse.

Praying the rosary was a major household obligation when we were kids, performed several times a week, usually in the evening after

we’d had dinner and before being sent to bed. I remember the sleepiness the practice invoked as better than any sleeping pill or warm glass of milk. But for a number of my brothers and sisters the practice had been tossed into the bin of forgotten talents once we left home for good. Well, that’s not true. Some of us started a littler earlier. Like Pablo, who had been sent to the seminary in Mexico for one year, for what might have been his sixth grade, and who by the time he was in high school was sure he hated my Dad, Richard Nixon, the Republican Party and praying the rosary or going to Mass on Sundays. Pablo was in town during Mom’s illness but there was no pretense at all that he would ever join us in a rosary given the stages of rebellion he’d shown from the days after his embittered experiences as a young priest-in-training, to radical high school campus protestor, to Mormon missionary (a great boon for dating the Bishop’s girlfriend at the Mormon college he briefly attended) and finally, to complete atheist.

Of the other siblings who didn’t kneel with us around Mom’s bed for the last rosary I also always remember my defiant younger brother Daniel, whom, once an adult regarded himself an avowed and angry socialist-atheist exile (from the family) living in Europe and who showed the earliest signs of dreading the practice of the rosary, the ultimate form of oppression by parental authority. Even if he had been in this country as Mom lay dying, I doubt Daniel would have joined us in the Last Rosary. Yes, Danny, who flushed baby turtles down the toilet as a toddler, was always the first one hit by Dad for fighting in the back seat of the station wagon, and once snuck out of the large rosary prayer circle and started a fire in a trash can in the backyard. How could I forget the night I think I saved us all by noticing the fire just in time? We had all knelt around one of those painted chalk statuettes of La Virgen Maria that you can still get real cheap today from hawkers at *la frontera* as you wait in long long lines to cross back into the U.S. The blue and white robes of the saintly Madre Santisima stood against the window facing the backyard on a little nightstand in between two twin beds in what we called Abuelita’s or the big sisters’ bedroom. I can still conjure up a little bit of guilt and pride as I recall that I opened my eyes just in time (they should have been closed in spiritual bliss) and noticed through the curtain sheers that one of our trash cans

was on fire. “*Lumbre!*” “*Fire!*” *Ay Dios Mio!* I heard Mami cry. That was the end of the rosary! We all rushed out to put it out. Yes, Daniel, the killer of pet turtles, strangler of little ducks and budding pyromaniac, in adult life managed at most family gatherings to start firestorms of anger. These were very dramatic marchings out of the house after a confrontation with Mom, Abuelita or one sibling or another. We began to set records as to how quickly after his arrival at a family *fiesta* it would happen. “*Aliciaaaa!!! Vámonos!*” That was the command to his wife that she stop all conversation, grab the kids and their coats and leave, “*now!*” My guess is that if Daniel had been in town he would have never joined the prayer circle and would have been fuming outside in a diner with a cigarette, a strong cup of coffee and his big bellyful of ancient resentments.

So there we were in her last hours gathered around her bed and praying, guided by a taped cassette that chanted out the prayer responses and that Mom had apparently loved (according to my more devout baby sister Tonchi). And all of us probably conjuring up old memories of the first rosaries we had learned and prayed in front of home altars, around Mom’s sewing machine while she worked late into the night to make extra cash at the garment factory, or in long drives in the car to go camping or shopping in Tijuana. Surrounding our now dying mother we muttered once again the dozens of “*Hail Marys* full of grace, blessed art thou amongst women...” over and over, sounding by the end like real pros. Mom loved to take pictures. I like to think that it was classic Mom, to have orchestrated a snapshot moment even in her last days, souvenir and all, what with all those dozens of rosaries in her home to accompany everyone’s personal creation of an everlasting memory. Her children strung like the beads of a really big rosary around her bed, an image filled with so much more poignant love than the wooden beads of the even bigger rosary beads we would eventually place under the gently curled fingers of her hands in final sleep.

I grew up hearing often that “the family that prays together stays together.” So having your own set of rosary beads was good, and so was praying it, but even better if you could do it with others. In fact, in my family rosaries served a number of functions. They were gifts at one’s first

Liz Davies Our Neighborhood Leader

Liz Davies, founding President of the Beacon Hill Neighborhood Association died on Friday, October 3. Our city and our neighborhood have lost a great leader, mentor and friend. BHANA expresses our deepest sympathy to Liz’ husband, Fritz and their children and their families. We celebrate her life and her spirit of generosity, wisdom, honesty, hard work and compassion. With great integrity she served our entire city, but her heart was in Beacon Hill where she and Fritz raised their children, educated them and where she stood in solidarity with us - her neighbors - in working for quality of life issues.

We are especially grateful for the strength and leadership she provided in protecting our neighborhoods, our history, our water and the human resource of a diverse community. Before it became fashionable, Liz was honoring the history and diversity of our older neighborhoods like her own Beacon Hill.

Liz’ voice was the voice of neighborhoods. She represented us on the Zoning Commission, served as President and other offices of the San Antonio Conservation Society, provided key leadership in the mid 70’s in the formation of the Aquifer Protection Association, and served in many other capacities. Liz was one of the strong pillars of the neighborhood association movement. Politicians sought her advice and support. She trained many of us.

It was her commitment and the support of Fritz that provided the impetus to create BHANA in the late 1970’s. When her children were young she devoted much time to activities for children and young people in the community and at her parish of St. Ann’s.

While Liz used her life to do many things it was her BEING that was her gift to us. Her life WAS devotion and commitment to her fellow beings. Liz could SPEAK truth to power eloquently with wisdom and integrity, but she could also BEND to serve the most needy with compassion and love.

We have lost a mentor, a friend, and an outstanding leader. But her work is still with us. The needs are still there. The biggest tribute we can give Liz Davies is our commitment to continue our work of neighbors helping neighbors.

Liz Davies, may she rest in peace.

Maria Antonietta Berriozabal
On behalf of all of Liz’ neighbors.
October 6, 2003

AN EVENING OF POETRY, FILM AND DIALOGUE

PRESENTED BY UTSA’S DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND THE ESPERANZA PEACE & JUSTICE CENTER

VOICES
FROM TEXAS
by DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER
RAY SANTISTEBAN

SATURDAY,
NOVEMBER 8TH
7:00 PM AT
THE ESPERANZA

PROCEEDS WILL GO TO TX-NALIP A CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LATINO INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS WHICH PROMOTES "THE ADVANCEMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDING OF LATINO/ LATINA FILM AND MEDIA ARTS IN ALL GENRES."

Holy Communion, and if blessed by a priest they held magical powers that connected us to María, the Special Lady in the sky who could intercede like a good mother to her Important Son on the appellant's behalf. Abuelita was never without a rosary. At home in her bedroom she preferred using her "Gordo," the big fat three foot long wooden set of rosary beads that were owned by members of the Third Order of Franciscans or devotees of St. Francis of Assisi. *El Gordo* was always nearby, like a friend, who would wrap himself around Abuelita's arm, or sit on her lap as she meditated, prayed and dozed off into a gentle snore in her white plastic lawn chair as she sat watching *telenovelas* or *Univisión* for the news broadcast from Mexico City. As they aged, both Mom and Abuelita were always praying the rosary because it got harder and harder for them to have their growing and separating children and grandchildren pray along with them.

Mom definitely used her rosary beads like a security blanket, a tool for dealing with fears about the future, or about some loved one's spiritual fate. The function of praying the rosary could come between pesky children wanting answers to questions. "Shhh! Can't you see I'm praying the rosary?" They could be especially useful when one didn't want to confront an uncomfortable emotion (like anger) or an uncomfortable situation (like meeting me in the presence of my lesbian lovers). My partner remembers too well the time we took Mom to New Orleans for a weekend trip. She drove and I, of course, fell asleep once we were on the highway. My sweetie has yet to forgive me for falling asleep so quickly that day. Mom had barely acknowledged her existence the whole weekend, lapsing often into Spanish with me so as to create the needed mother-daughter intimacy that she both craved and resented considering that I had "ruined" our time together by insisting that the three of us take this vacation together. My honey says that putting me in the passenger seat and hitting the highway is like giving me a sleeping pill. So off I went to dreamland leaving Mom, a regular insomniac with a bad back, sitting uncomfortably and therefore less unable to snooze in the backseat of a little Toyota, together with my overly cheerful partner who kept trying to engage the "mother-in-law" in friendly chatter. Only to be met rather quickly with Mom's spiritual artillery— her longest and loudest glass bead rosary. From the amount of swish-click-swish-click-swish-clicking that proceeded down the interstate for several hours I estimated Mom had racked up a lot of prayers in what she referred to as her spiritual bank account for getting into heaven, meanwhile communicating quite well in body language, "I'm busy, don't speak to me, I am talking to God."

Yes, rosaries were so important that she carried a Really Big Rosary into the casket she was buried in. Tonchi found it the morning after they'd taken her body to the morgue. Tonchi and Mom had always had a special relationship. She was the baby, the one that didn't get sent to boarding school like me and Emilia and Araceli, the one that became Mom's anchor at the young age of thirteen, right after Dad was ceremoniously kicked out for his drinking and womanizing. Even though she was two years younger than Martin, who was also abandoned by our divorcing father, Tonchi quickly turned into the more mature of the two kids who in our family were hit hardest by our parents' divorce. She could at once be the baby with Mom and yet she could also be like a girlfriend with her, whereas I had felt only oppressed by Mom from the time I was young enough to judge her imperfections (probably three). It was only after I saw how rotten a deal she'd gotten with Dad's affairs and his cheapness with alimony payments that I began to soften towards Mom and eventually made her my friend and in her later

years my "child." So Tonchi knew some things about Mom that I never did because while they could irritate the hell out of each other they could also forgive each other quickly because that's what good friends do. It was no surprise then that I, the overly responsible daughter who took care of Mom's legal affairs and who introduced her to all sorts of alternative remedies for dealing with her cancer, and Tonchi, would become the primary caregivers when it was time to call in hospice. This is how close they were. A few hours before she lapsed into her 40 hour coma Tonchi got Mom to sing that classic Mexican lullabye *Que leche que atole, que pan pan pan*, only Tonchi knew all the words in Spanish. Now I had lived in Mexico for four years during boarding school. I spoke, read and conversed in Spanish a hell of a lot better than Tonchi. But Tonchi knew all the words to "*Duérmase mi niña*" which could only have happened because Mom had sung it to Tonchi and she lived long stretches of time with Tonchi and sang it to her two babies.

The morning after she'd died Tonchi and I sat in the now empty living room of Mom's tiny one-bedroom apartment that had been crammed for days with about twenty-some visitors. It was another hot and bright Spring day in the high California mountain desert and we had drawn the shades to keep out the searing brightness. We had sprawled ourselves on the couches because the only other sleeping area contained a somber hospital bed. Tonchi had turned out the lights around 3:00 a.m. a few hours after the morgue wheeled Mom's body away and following a wired, late night talking with our brother Roberto who methodically drank lots of scotch to cope with his pain. We sat in shock staring out at Mom's meager but cherished possessions scattered throughout the apartment— books, photographs, trinkets, knick knacks, stitched pillows, cheap jewelry, plastic flowers and vases and piles of clothing. We avoided the bedroom with the hospital bed. Neither of us had slept or eaten much in over a week. In varied states of exhaustion and numbness we began to sort through items, especially photos we wanted for ourselves or displayed at the wake and funeral.

And that's when I began to find the rosaries— everywhere. New ones, old ones, broken ones. Moving through her personal items we would stop to recover a story or a memory, talking like only sisters can with each other. Raising memories from the dead. Remembering, laughing and crying. The burden of emptying her apartment was going to fall on me and so was the task of distributing some kind of memento to her children and grandchildren. That turned out to be easy because the ones who were practicing Catholics got rosaries and photos and there were plenty to go around. Each of us kept discovering some photo that had meant something to us in our relationship with Mom or our family history, which would only make us laugh or cry some more. I know I cried more than Tonchi did. That's one thing about Tonchi. In some ways she had been too close, had been too adult too young and been taught to hold in the hurts too easily. She and my little brother Hector were the same in this way. Much too able to put away their own hurts and not reveal them to anybody. Always there for somebody else and more likely to use humor to cover up feelings. So no matter how much she was hurting Tonchi just wouldn't cry around me.

I think that day I also marvelled at Tonchi's coping methods which included a hilarious touch of irreverence. Now only Tonchi, who sees herself a devout Catholic, could have gotten away with what I'm about to describe. It seemed to accompany her belief system, not one I shared but could appreciate. Only someone who

knew "Mom" was no longer in the body that lay on the bed could have stood by the stiffening body and mimicked the grieving practices of that creature guy who was the security officer on Star Trek. Yes she did that. She stood against the wall right by Mom's bed, no longer having to do anything other than to make sure people didn't knock her stiff body off the bed accidentally. A couple of hours into the standing and waiting around as relatives came up from L.A. to pay their last respects I sat on the couch peering from there into Mom's bedroom, and that's when I saw Tonchi open her mouth really wide and pretend to unleash a guttural scream, while others were crouched over Mom's body sobbing and saying

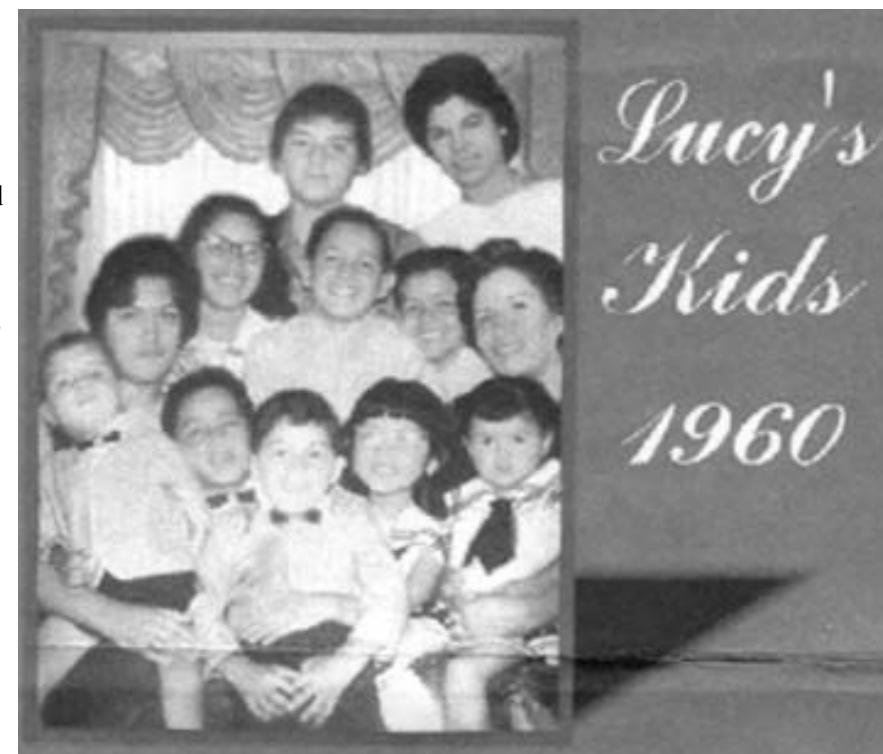
goodbye by stroking her face and hands. Our brother Roberto was in the room and he, spoiled by Mom virtually all his life, was a wreck. An avid Star Trek fan who had every film ever made about the characters, Roberto was a handsome, spoiled, Mexican son who also had a special relationship with Mom. They had been teacher and student in matters of the Catholic faith and practice, roommates, neighbors and mutual headaches to each other. We who loved him worried about how he would handle Mom's death, because she'd spoiled him with home

cooked meals and ironing his shirts for years. In return he'd allowed her to function as his spiritual coach and he endured a constant stream of Mexican style guilt tripping over the care of his only son, the way he treated good girlfriends, his relationship to our younger and chronically irresponsible brother Martin, and so on. She had the magic for keeping him on the "right" path of Catholicism, persistently nagging him in between deliciously home cooked meals about whether he'd gone to Mass or confession or whether he was being a good divorced father.

So in one of those moments after Roberto had recovered from his shrieks of pain at knowing that indeed his mother had taken her last breath, Tonchi did him a favor. She threw her head back and opened wide for a silent scream with Roberto in the room. Roberto knew immediately that she was mimicking a Klingon and because there were mourners in the room he had to snicker and turn away, covering his mouth to contain a guffaw, trying not to let any of the other visitors and relatives who'd hovered over Mom's bed in the stiflingly tiny apartment know that he was laughing. Hard.

In that act Tonchi reminded us that we are not our bodies. I never saw it as a disrespectful act. It was probably her confidence in the shared beliefs with Mom as well as the shared history that allowed her not only to humor our grieving brother, but in another incident also to honor Mom's self-constructed identity as a youthful and attractive older woman. In her final stage Mom's lifeless body appeared achingly beautiful to us all. She had always

looked so much younger than her real age of near eighty. Tonchi and I had been with her when she slipped into the coma. When Rocio joined us after taking her scheduled break for some rest at a nearby motel, hospice confirmed that she was in fact in a coma and we changed her sheets and put a nice gown on her. And that's when Tonchi found Mom's dentures and suggested that we put them in, because she said, "Mom would have been mortified for people to see her without her teeth so I'm going to put them back in." Of course it was the right thing to do. With a combination of bravado and love, she ever so gently opened Mom's mouth and inserted the dentures, preparing her for the sleeplike state in



which she remained for the next 40 hours until she was taken out on a stretcher much like she had predicted about a year before when she had first moved in. I had told her, "Mom, you've got to settle down and stop moving around so much," and she'd responded, "I am, I am, I absolutely love this apartment and the only way I'm going out the door will be feet first and carried on a stretcher." And so she did.

It was Tonchi who had suggested that we say the rosary together with the taped cassette and it was Tonchi who

found Mom's really big set of Franciscan rosary beads in the messy messy apartment the next morning as we tried off and on to regain more than a week of lost sleep. We had pretty much figured out that most of the planning for the funeral was being taken care of by Constancia and Rocio, for that seemed to be one of the unwritten family rules, that the oldest sisters just sort of take over when it comes to the planning, cooking and preparing for major family events like funerals, or Mom's 80th birthday or Abuelita's 100th birthday. It was in the midst of the waking up and sorting through photo albums and talking that Tonchi suddenly went to the kitchen and looked up high to the top of the kitchen cabinets where Mom had lined up rows of large pictures of grandchildren and old and dusty fake flowers and vases and a cookie jar. Tonchi never knew what drove her to look in the cookie jar, but she got up on a chair, pulled it down, and the next thing I hear is "I found it!" Out of the cookie jar she pulls out like a long dancing cobra snake this really humongous wooden rosary that stretched out at least body length. Not unlike the shape and size of the big rosaries usually seen in pictures and paintings of St. Francis of Assisi and, in fact, traditionally made of shiny dark wood and rope and carried by members of the Third Order of Saint Francis. The latter is an organization whose lay members take vows of poverty, chastity and simplicity in dress. It was a twin to Abuelita's "*Gordo*."

The Really Big Rosaries were symbols of piety, faith and devotion to both Mom and Abuelita. Yeah, but so much for Mom's symbols.

Rosary continued on page 11

Cantinflas, the Bush Team and Israel

by Antonio C. Cabral

I nominate Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to be the next Cantinflas.

His evasive double-talk reminds me of Mexican comedian Cantinflas' trade-mark rhetoric.

For example, here's part of Rumsfeld's response to a question about why he and his fascist conspirators in the Bush Administration keep lying about Iraq:

"There are things we know. And then we know there are things we do not know. There are things that we know we don't know."

Cantinflas would be proud of Rumsfeld.

Of course, the problem with this comparison is that Cantinflas dedicated his life to make people happy while Rumsfeld, like most of the Bush Team, have a history of causing destruction, death and poverty to millions all over the world.

Rumsfeld typifies the psychopathic personalities in the Bush Team. They are masters of deceit and ruthless in pursuing their agenda.

For example, they keep scamming U.S. taxpayers out of billions to continue their senseless occupation of Iraq while giving Israel's Zionists over \$3 billion annually.

The Bush Team, which includes more convicted criminals than any administration in U.S. history, last month bullied the UN to transfer to Israel \$20 million of funds belonging to the Iraqi people as part of the \$70 million that Israel is demanding for damages it suffered during the 1991 Gulf War.

Yet, US bullying has blocked UN help to Palestine where Israel's destruction and its apartheid occupation policies are causing over 50% unemployment and the destruction of vital infrastructure such as hospitals, schools, churches, electrical and water plants, etc.

Now Israel's Likud regime headed by Ariel Sharon, a Rumsfeld-like individual known all over the world as a terrorist, is planning, with US approval, the assassination of Yasser Arafat, the democratically elected president of Palestine. Only the

fascists in the Bush Team can believe that such acts will bring security and peace to Americans and to the world.

Undoubtedly, Zionists and their apologists will consider this piece "anti-Semitic." That's the weak defense they use to intimidate critics and suppress justified criticism of Israel's apartheid program against Palestinians.

The fact is that a person can be against Zionism while respecting Judaism. Zionism is an imperialist and racist political movement that can and should be condemned like South Africa's apartheid policy was condemned by the international community. Everyone who practices Judaism as part of their culture and religious identity should reject Zionism as the group Jews Against the Occupation (www.jewsagainsttheoccupation.org) have done in Israel and the U.S.

Most of the world is waiting for US taxpayers to challenge their government's economic and military support of Israel, a state that has been considered an outlaw for almost 60 years; An international outlaw that has ignored countless of UN resolutions since 1948 ordering it to stop invading Palestinian territory; that has admitted to have several nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction; that has murdered countless of innocent men, women and children; a country has

"There are things we know. And then we know there are things we do not know. There are things that we know we don't know."



sent agents to help evil dictatorships all over the world.

Yet, most US intellectuals, academics, politicians and others who cry crocodile tears over alleged human rights violations in countries like Cuba, remain silent about the direct US government support of Israel's terrorism.

Most of the world is waiting for people in the US to remove the Bush gang from power and to throw them into the trash bin of history.

In the meantime, Rumsfeld's impersonation of Cantinflas will continue.

Antonio Cabral is a freelance writer and longtime activist.

Contaminated Fish Found in Leon Creek: Students Seek Answers

On October 15th, the Lackland AFB Community Council had a meeting on the contamination in Leon Creek. They discussed concerns with the PCBs (Polychlorinated Biphenyls) in the creek which have gotten into some fish. Many feel the PCBs are coming from Lackland since their golf course is built over an old landfill. The Texas Department of Health issued a Fish and Shellfish Consumption Advisory stating, "some samples of the fish taken from the stretch of the Lower Leon Creek indicate the presence of PCBs that may pose a threat to human health." The council may have had good intentions, but seemed to be holding information back.

We asked, "What is Lackland going to do about the community on the outside of the AFB?" We weren't satisfied with the response we got from Mr. Roberson, the speaker. He dismissed our question as if it was not important. Basically, he said that he could only use his money to take care of Lackland. Mr. Roberson was acting as if we didn't know what we were talking about. He could have answered the question in a more respectful manner. During break we had a chance to speak with Richard Treviño, a civil engineer with Lackland. He answered some questions, but it sounded as if they were still not telling everything.

Mr. Treviño said we could take a tour of the golf course and creek. He said they have nothing to hide. We want to see for ourselves. Maybe we will find answers to our questions. We want to gain more information on the PCBs in Leon Creek, and hope to spread the word to other people that don't know.



Sharita Schumo and Dana Dilworth are high school students involved in the Esperanza Environmental Justice Project.

Our sacred water is threatened once again...

Joleen Garcia

Our water is sacred. Our people know this; it's innate in our bodies and our history. Native peoples thrived and later cities were built around water. In San Antonio, our city began with the Coahuiltecan people and their water source, the San Pedro Springs. We need to protect our sacred water as fervently as we protect our existence.

A year and a half ago, during the struggle against the PGA (Professional Golfers Association) Village resort, we learned about the Edwards Aquifer Authority (EAA). The EAA is responsible for protecting the aquifer, our primary source of drinking water in San Antonio and the larger region.

The Edwards Aquifer is one of the most productive aquifers in the world and is also home to endangered species. George Rice, a groundwater hydrologist, sits on the EAA board and can be counted on to protect our water. He has reminded us many times that the best way to protect the water in our aquifer is to stop building impervious cover (cement, roofs, asphalt roads) over the recharge zone (where water drains into the aquifer through holes and pores in limestone rock).

George Rice sent out a RED ALERT, calling our attention to developer's maneuvers that would harm the aquifer. The developers (people who buy-up land and build) are up to their same old tricks. It's similar to what happened in our struggle to protect the water against the PGA Village. The people are on one side demanding clean water and developers are on the other side, downplaying the importance of clean water and simultaneously prioritizing their business profits.

Here are the latest threats to our water:

What developers want: Create a committee to decide how far the EAA should go in protecting the aquifer. Work out a "compromise or deal" where the EAA will agree not to enact certain protective rules. Stack the committee with a majority of people who desire this pre-determined outcome.

What the people want: CLEAN WATER. Enact water quality rules, including impervious cover limits over the recharge zone that would protect the aquifer and our water source.

What actually happened: Led by the board chair, the EAA decided to form a committee and are proceeding to stack the members according to the pre-determined outcome.

What can we do about it?

Don't leave it up to your representatives to protect the aquifer. Take matters into your own hands! Learn about the aquifer, and tell others about the story of our precious water source in San Antonio. With a little study, you are guaranteed to know more than your elected representative.

Keep an eye on the EAA! Make sure that your elected representatives (and other decision-makers) know that you favor strong water quality rules that really protect our water.

And stay tuned for more opportunities to protect our water!



Joleen is a community activist currently working with the Esperanza Environmental Justice Project.

Rosary continued from page 11

Mom, like Abuelita, certainly died poor and always gave anything extra she had to someone in need. But while Abuelita always dressed simply, never wore make-up or bright colors or jewelry, Mom was the absolute opposite. And what in the world was the big one doing inside of a cookie jar, on a shelf that had never been dusted from the day she had moved in? But here it was anyway, found and destined for its journey into the grave with Mom. In my exhausted and sleepy state I indeed thought it rather curious as Tonchi yelled out, "I found it... I kept trying to ask Mom where she had it put away because she told me she wanted to be buried with it." Yeah, Tonchi would be the one to know something like that. What this meant was that Mom was going to wear this ugly coarse brown thing you could hardly call a dress and laying on top, curled into the fingers of her hand would be the really big rosary, as if she was praying it in death.

I was happy for my baby sister's intuitive discovery but I did find it odd. In life Mom had been a person who loved jewelry, bright red lipsticks, dyed hair, frilly patterns and flowers and glitter and gold spray paint, huge Christmas decorations that took up her whole apartment, and fantasy dolls and toys, lace and everything that was *not* a dark brown coarse cassock to wear into the grave. But these were the instructions the devout little sister had undoubtedly been given at some time when she was still alive—to be buried in the traditional dress of the members of the Third Order of Saint Francis and with her really big rosary. And yet maybe not so out of the ordinary, at least for Mom. For in life she also absolutely thrived on being complimented on her good looks, or some outfit she had designed and stitched herself, and she especially wanted people to think well of her. Of course that would include the final image of her as a devout and pious Christian woman carrying around her really big rosary.

So Tonchi climbed down from the chair with the really big rosary in hand, all happy that maybe it was intuition and maybe it was Mom's spirit making a last visit to her apartment. Maybe amidst the shambles and our tiredness she had gotten her baby's attention drawn to the top of the kitchen cabinet. Maybe only someone like Tonchi would

have guessed that her really big rosary would end up on the top shelf of a kitchen cabinet, inside of a decorative cookie jar layered with dust and the grease from one of Mom's true joys in life—cooking. Of all the rosaries we found in the apartment it was the biggest and the grandest and the most symbolic of Mom's commitment to her faith. In life praying the rosary had been a tool, an anchor, a source of discipline for her children and succor for the painful rites of passage that accompanied marriage, divorce and the various ways in which her children had rejected or modified family traditions. As she lay dying the last rosary we said together might have been, for a few of us, more of an act of convincing her that we loved her rather than of our true faith and devotion. But, in death the really big rosary resting on her body was the symbol of the security blanket she had used for getting through the difficulties of life with faith and moving into the next without fear.

Elvia is a lawyer and a founder of the organization Women on the Border, working for immigrant rights.

As a thanks giving to the community and friends who have walked the road for justice with them, Maria Antonietta & Manuel Berriozabal are offering a special mass and celebration on Friday, November 7th at 6 pm at St. Anís Church. RSVP by e-mail to maberriozabal@swbell.net or janefact@yahoo.com or by phone at 734-8484 or 349-3489 or call 492-3276.

Community Meetings

San Antonio NOW First Monday of each month at the Resource Ctr, 121 W. Woodlawn. Call Maggie Cronan, 673-8600.

Parents/Friends of Lesbians/Gays (PFLAG) First Thursday of each month at 7 pm at the Resource Ctr, 121 W. Woodlawn, call 655-2383.

A Multicultural Worship Service is held Sundays at 11 am at **Spirit of Life Lutheran Church**, call Rev. Kay Johnson at 691-5937 in sanctuary of Los Angeles Heights Methodist.

Amnesty International #127 Fourth Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm at Ashbury United Methodist, call 829-0397.

Fuerza Unida at 710 New Laredo Hwy., Call for information and meeting times, 927-2297.

DIGNITY S.A. holds mass every Sunday at 5:15 pm at St. Ann's Convent, call 735-7191.

Society of Friends Sundays at 10 am at Friends Meeting House, 7052 N. Vandiver, call 945-8456.

Bexar County Green Party First Sunday of each month at 2 pm at the VIA Transit Center, 1021 San Pedro, across from Esperanza Center.

Circle of the Re-Formed Congregation of the Goddess Third Thursday of each month, 7 pm at the Esperanza, 922 San Pedro. Call 822-9105.

Habitat for Humanity holds Volunteer Orientation on first Tuesdays of each month at 1st Presbyterian Church, 404 N. Alamo, rm 302 at 6 pm.

Xicana Xicano Education Project Wednesdays at 6 pm at the Bazan Public Library, 2200 W. Commerce St., call 437-5196.

S.N.A.P. Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests meets the last Wednesday of each month at 7 pm at 3534 Ave. B, call 725-8329.

Proyecto Hospitalidad Liturgy Thursdays at 7 pm at 325 Courtland, call 736-3579.

Notas Y Más

Brief notes to inform *La Voz* readers about events, issues and happenings in the community. Send announcements for *Notas y Más* to: lavozy@esperanzacenter.org or by snail mail to: 922 San Pedro, San Antonio, TX 78212. The deadline is the 12th of each month.

The first **SisterSong: Women of Color Reproductive Health and Sexual Rights National Conference** will take place November 13-16, 2003 at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. The conference will bring together women of color activists, direct service providers, policymakers, and allies to discuss and develop strategies to improve the reproductive health of women of color in the U.S. To register online and for more information contact: www.sistersong.net

Jump-Start Performance Co. in association with the **Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center** and **Palo Alto College** will present **One/Two/Three**, a series of one-act plays. Jump-Start will present *Black Lily*, *White Lily* by Sterling Houston, Palo Alto College will present *The Sound of a Voice* by David Henry Hwang, and the Guadalupe will present *Confessions of a Southside Karaoke Singer* developed by the **Voces Feminias Project** and directed by Marisela Barrera. All three plays will be presented on the same bill at each site. Opening weekend is November 7, 8, and 9 at **Jump-Start Theater**, and the following weekend November 14, 15, and 16 at the **Guadalupe**

Theater and the final weekend November 20, 21, and 22 at **Palo Alto College**. Call 227-JUMP for reservations.

Saturday, November 15, from 8 to 10 pm, **Jump-Start Co.** will host **Giggles & Glamour**, a benefit evening in honor of the late entertainer Tootie Finnell. Proceeds will go to the purchase of a tombstone for the late beloved drag artist and party planner who died several year ago from complications with diabetes. Admission is \$20. Host for the evening is John McBurney. Call 227-JUMP for reservations.

A joint meeting of the **National PCA/ACA & Southwest Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association** will take place in San Antonio at the Marriott Rivercenter 101 Bowie Street on April 7-10, 2004. Find full meeting details at: <http://www.swtexaspca.org> A call for papers has been issued. Deadline for submission is November 15, 2003. Papers accepted from any discipline.

The Southwest Workers Union founded in 1988 celebrates its 15th Anniversary - *Quince Años de*

Lucha on December 13th, 2003 in San Antonio, Texas. Everyone is invited to celebrate this important occasion. More information is forthcoming. Save the date and don't miss this upcoming pachanga! Contact: Co-Directors: Che López or Genaro Rendón López (210)299-2666 swu@igc.org

MIL GRACIAS to Cynthia Bustamente and friends for volunteer gardening and do landscaping on the Evergreen St. side of the Esperanza. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. **La gente de Esperanza**

Todos somos esperanza...

I would like to donate \$ _____ /month by automatic bank withdrawal. Contact me to sign up.

I pledge to send \$ _____ each _____ month _____ quarter _____ six-months through the mail.

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I would like to volunteer!

Make checks payable to the Esperanza Peace & Justice Center. Send to 922 San Pedro, SA TX 78212. Donations to the Esperanza are tax deductible.

**Texas Solidarity Demonstration
with Rally against School of the Americas**

Fort Benning in Georgia is the home of the School of the Americas, SOA. Lackland AFB is the home of the Inter-American Air Forces Academy.

Sunday, November 23, 2003

1 pm at Lackland Air Force Base

"... Citizens opposed to everything the SOA represents must be aware of numerous other training programs ..." - Witness For Peace

For details see www.iconmedia.org/mdp/iaafa/ and call 228-0201 or 224-HOPE

La Voz de Esperanza
ESPERANZA peace & justice center
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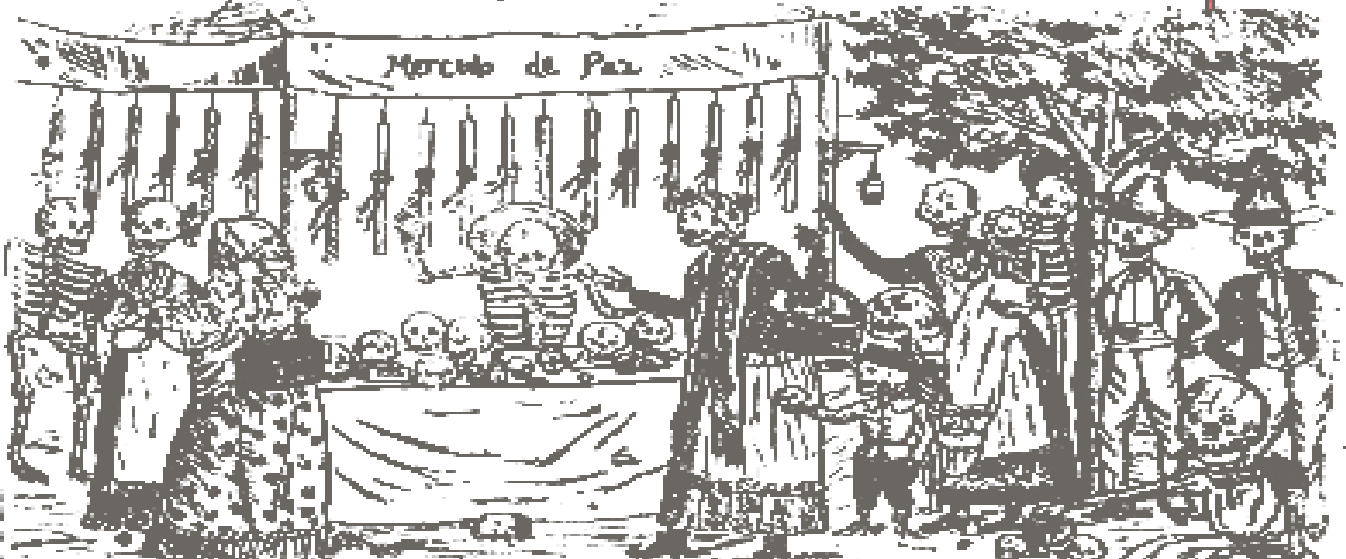
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14th Annual Peace Market

**Friday & Saturday
November 28 - 29, 2003**

**Shop in Peace for Justice
from 12 noon - 6 pm**



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