

# La VOZ de Esperanza

San Antonio, Texas • September 2005 • vol. 18 issue 7 •



## *Arboles de MujerArtes*

*Recuerdos, tradiciones y vida*

*exhibition and sale*

*September 17, 2005 at 6 pm*

*celebrando 10 años*

*1412 El Paso St.*

# La Voz de Esperanza

© 2005 Esperanza Peace & Justice Center.  
All Rights Reserved.

## Editor

Gloria A. Ramírez

## Layout • Design

Estevan H. Arredondo

## Contributors

Antonio Cabral, Denise McVea, Suzanne Pharr, Roberto Rodriguez, Ninfa Ruiz

## La Voz Collective

Inez Valdez, Monica Velásquez, Imelda Maldonado, The Buena Gente of Esperanza y MujerARTES

## Esperanza Director

Graciela I. Sánchez

## Esperanza Staff

Elizandro Carrington,

Jessica Fuentes,

Cindy Rodriguez, René Saenz

## Esperanza Board

David Zamora Casas,

Anel Flores, Amy Kastely,

Michael Marínez, Kamala Platt,

Gloria A. Ramírez & Rudy Rosales

Opinions expressed in La Voz are not necessarily those of the Esperanza. We advocate for a wide variety of social, economic & environmental justice issues.

Inquiries/articles can be sent to:

[lavoz@esperanzacenter.org](mailto:lavoz@esperanzacenter.org)

or mail to:

**La Voz de Esperanza,**

is a publication of

**The Esperanza**

**Peace & Justice Center**

**922 San Pedro, San Antonio, TX 78212**

(on the corner of Evergreen Street)

**210.228.0201 • fax 210.228.0000**

**[www.esperanzacenter.org](http://www.esperanzacenter.org)**

## Policy Statements:

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 Letters with intent to slander individuals or groups will not be published.

Esperanza is funded in part by the Americans for the Arts Foundation/Animating Democracy, Astraea National Lesbian Action Foundation, Funding Exchange, National Endowment for the Arts, Open Society Foundation's Southern Initiative, Public Welfare Foundation, Alice Kleberg R. M. Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Southern Funding Collaborative, Texas Commission on the Arts, and la buena gente de nuestra comunidad.

## Featured cover artist:

*Arbol de Vida* by Carmen Lujan

In mid-July el canto de las chicharras arrives. The constant ehhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh of the cicadas is always soothing to me. It signals the beginning of the end of summer, the fast approaching school days ahead and the desperate last minute excursions into the waning days of summer. Autumn will soon be here and summer once again will be a mere memory, if that. For children, summer is over and school has begun one again. ¡Buena suerte, niños!

This issue of La Voz begins with a personal story of starting school. Ninfa Ruiz has graciously allowed the use of one of her many memories to wish children well as they begin yet another school year. Ninfa is a woman who has written her many life memories in a manuscript as she tries to understand her life choices and help guide her own grown children in their lives. Perhaps, she will share more in coming issues of La Voz.

Mujeres with life stories abound and any one of the women who are part of groups like MujerArtes and Fuerza Unida can tell you that. MujerArtes, the arts cooperative of the Esperanza has an extraordinary group of women who have honed their skills working with clay and have dared to try out their hands building an art form right here in the Westside of San Antonio that is venerated in Mexico. Celebrating 10 years of existence, MujerArtes presents a special exhibition and sale of árboles de la vida depicting scenes from their own lives. Even noted international artist, Verónica Castillo, their former teacher from Azucar de Matamoros, Puebla is expected to come check out this event.



...and celebrating their quinceañera this year are the women of Fuerza Unida who began their activism in response to las costureras being laid off by the Levi's plant here in San Antonio in 1990. Mujeres like Petra Mata and Viola Casarez have traveled worldwide and throughout the U.S. advocating for worker rights and human dignity. From the kitchen of their homes to the world arena of globalization they have made connections to women throughout the world who experience the same hardships around jobs and family that the mujeres of Fuerza have experienced. On November 19<sup>th</sup>, Fuerza Unida will honor the displaced workers of Levi Strauss & Co. with a quince celebration. Anyone wanting to give Fuerza Unida a quinceañera gift of funds for their continuing work should call 927-2294. Read more on their recent luchas on pages 12 and 13 of Voz. ¡Felicidades, y adelante!

As always, thanks to the many writers who keep La Voz afloat month after month. Un abrazo especial a Denise McVea en Real de Catorce, México for giving us her insights from "el otro lado" on pages 7 and 8. Look for her upcoming book, **Making Myth of Emily**, which will be published by Wings Press in the coming months.. En fin, gracias, todos.

-La Editora, Gloria

**ATTENTION VOZ READERS:** If you have a correction you want to make on your mailing label please send it in to [lavoz@esperanzacenter.org](mailto:lavoz@esperanzacenter.org) If you do not wish to continue on the mailing list for whatever reason please notify us as well. La Voz is provided as a courtesy to people on the mailing list of the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center. **The subscription rate is now \$30 per year.** The cost of producing and mailing La Voz has substantially increased and we need your help to keep it afloat. To help, send in your subscriptions, sign up as a monthly donor, or send in a donation to the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center. Thank you. -GAR

**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.

# Behind the Cafeteria Lady's Smile

By Ninfa Ruiz



I remember the day I had to go to school the first time. My mother woke me up and told me to get dressed and ready for school. I did as I was told, but I was very afraid. Here I was being sent into an unknown world. My older sisters had told me very little except that the teachers were mean and we weren't allowed to speak Spanish. I was six years old, and I had not yet learned English because I had never needed it at home.

At 7:30 a.m., my mother told me it was time to go. I started walking to school and began to cry. I remember standing with my sisters in front of our house by the street and looking at that long dirt road before me. Behind me was my mother with her belt in hand forcing me to go.

Now that I am an adult with children of my own, I find that my children's experience with school was quite different than my own. Both my son and my daughter were very eager to go to school.

I thought that attending school was the worst thing that could have happened to me. At least when I was at home, nobody made fun of the way I dressed, or the way my hair was done. As a family of nine people living in a two-room house, we didn't have enough money to buy clothes or shoes. My parents didn't have enough money to give to my sisters and me to buy lunch at school. Milk was two cents a bottle, and I didn't even have that.

We were very poor and my mother was also very lazy. I don't recall her getting up in the morning to prepare breakfast or to make sure we got dressed. I remember waking up from sleeping on the floor, and if I wanted to go to school, I would just straighten my clothes so they wouldn't look all wrinkled. With my hands I fixed my hair. I would put on whatever shoes I could find. Sometimes, if I could find tortillas and beans in the house, I would take tacos to eat at noon. Then, I would start walking.

Upon arriving at school, I felt so out of place. The girls in my class were neatly dressed; their hair was all combed in different ways. They looked so pretty. They would laugh and play, and I would just stand there wishing that I could be one of them. Sometimes, I would wear the same clothes to school two or three days, which also meant I was sleeping in them,

too.

Lunchtime was the most humiliating. The boys and girls would buy lunch in the cafeteria, or take a snack lunch with goodies like sandwiches, apples and cookies. They would also buy milk. I would walk to a table that didn't have that many children and find a place to sit down. Whenever nobody was looking I would bend down below the table to take a bite from my taco that was hidden out of sight in the bag.

The cafeteria ladies in their white uniforms served all the food that I craved but could not have. I looked up to them. Theirs was the only other profession that I had seen besides teachers! I became one of those cafeteria ladies in a crisp white uniform, then later a manager and now I am head of my division for all the schools in the South San Antonio Independent School District.

Though I work in an office now, when I was a manager trainee, I often had to work as a cashier. Students would bring me their lunch trays and give me their ID number. Often the students that walked up were replicas of me as a child: unwashed faces, uncombed hair, dirty and wrinkled clothes, sad and bewildered looks. In them, I saw a mother that didn't care about her children. Although I tried to be pleasant to everybody, when such children came to my station, I would put on my biggest smile and give them whatever they needed immediately. In this way, I felt I was assuring them that they were just as important as anyone else. Because of my childhood I knew how they felt. I didn't want them to feel the same way I felt when I ate at the cafeteria. I wanted these children to at least remember the smile of the cafeteria lady with a white uniform so they would keep coming to school.

I want to make a difference in their lives.

Often, they may feel that other students make fun of them or that the teacher ignores them. I think this is very sad because some of these students have the potential to be very smart, except that they are not given a chance. I want to continue to encourage them even if it is only with the biggest smile I have.

*Bio: Ninfa is currently working in food service management for SSAISD and has written her memoirs with the hopes of sharing her life experiences with other women. La Voz hopes to publish more of Ninfa's stories.*

# The Marriage Issue as a Distraction ...watching for canaries in the coal mines

By Suzanne Pharr

When talking about people or the environment under attack, people these days use the metaphor of “canaries in the coal mine”. It is a common reference to how canaries were placed in the coal mines because, if the oxygen supply decreased, they were the first to die. Their death was the warning signal for everyone else to know what was moving toward them.

*“I believe queers, immigrants, and prisoners are the proverbial canaries in the coal mine for the destruction of civil liberties and human rights in this country. How these three groups of people are treated raises essential questions about human rights...”*

Using this metaphor, I believe queers, immigrants, and prisoners are the proverbial canaries in the coalmine for the destruction of civil liberties and human rights in this country. How these three groups of people are treated raises essential questions about human rights: How much can people be restrained, denied human dignity, treated as inhuman? How much will society allow? How much can be placed under the name of so-called safety and morality and stability in a society that is inching toward totalitarianism.

Immigrants, prisoners, and lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgendered (LGBT) people are struggling to breathe the air of freedom in a climate of increasing restriction. Watch these canaries closely for what they tell us about changes in our country. While these three groups share commonalities to be explored, for now I want to focus on LGBT people and how vital we are to a vision of a free and equal society. We are critical to the Right Wing’s strength and also to the fulfillment of a progressive vision for change.

We cannot underestimate the importance of our daily struggle to make change and its effect on society at large. LGBT opposition to Right Wing authoritarianism and our efforts to envision greater freedom offers breathing space—lifesaving and creative—to all sexual beings who desire relationship with another. Within us, there is the possibility of the potential integration and freedom of mind, body and spirit. In our work for liberation we are trying to carve out, expand the space for all people to live as full human beings.

We are vital to struggles for freedom. In our very bodies and aspirations we call the question: **What does it mean to be fully human? Where does sexuality fit? Do we have the right to relationship? Do all human beings have the right to relationships? Do we have the right to our own bodies?** We as LGBT people struggle for self-determination and choice, the foundation of freedom for individuals and communities, the



Mountain Pride Media in Burlington, VT.

*“The narrow definition of family affects not only LGBT people but also everyone whose family does not fit the definition of one man and one woman married with children.”*

center of our belief in human rights.

Homosexuality and “gay” marriage are used by the Right Wing not just to divide people on the issue of sexuality but to build authoritarianism, sending the message that obedience, rigidity, contraction of rights will save us, save our crumbling society. The messages are cleverly crafted to play to people’s very real fears about a changed world in which public institutions are gutted, distant corporations unsettle our work lives, and families are struggling to survive.

The marriage issue is only a very small part of the Right Wing’s much larger agenda to define family narrowly, to restrict relationships (benefits and social recognition tied to compulsory heterosexual marriage), to narrow who is allowed to adopt or foster children, to increase control over our lives closely defining who has a legitimate place in society. It is part of an agenda that restricts our freedom to express our full humanity. The narrow definition of family affects not only LGBT people but also everyone whose family does not fit the definition of one man and one woman married with children.

Here is a place where we can play a critical role. **No one understands family better than we do.** We are the only oppressed group that, as a people, has to fight for inclusion in and support from our families. We have struggled with ours, sometimes lost them, sometimes gained them, and we have always created family. We know family. We can bring a new focus on families as they are now diversely configured in a constellation of social arrangements that has adapted to our changing culture. We can be a frontline defense against a Rightwing movement that creates a hierarchy of acceptable and unacceptable, legitimate and illegitimate families.

**We must make the expansion of family the ground we will constantly build and defend.** There is a small moment of opportunity because, as we speak, family is being defined in the narrowest way: one man, one woman married with children. We all stand to lose: single parents, blended families, families that differ from the white U.S. cultural norm—and especially single low-income women who are parents because they will be in the first line of attack, along with LGBT folks.

In the midst of this marriage debate (or distraction), our work is to join others who are harmed by narrow definitions of family and to create definitions that include us all. Should the definition of family include only male/female relationships plus biological children sanctioned by both church and state?

*“Our task is to figure out in our lives, in our work, in our interactions how to broaden our definitions of family and community, of gender, of self, of choice and self-determination, how to expand our dream of democracy.”*

Or should family include those who are bound together by mutual responsibility and accountability, by common interests and a commitment to one another's well being? If family is the basic building block of society, then isn't it better to expand rather than limit it?

In the discussion of marriage and family, we must be careful. The Right Wing depends on LGBT people wanting to mainstream, to be “just like everyone else.” Mainstreaming is important to the Right Wing because it takes us back to central

norms: white, able-bodied, middleclass—and they figure we will always default to the power of the norm. For example, in the rush to gain traditional marriage, we can easily position ourselves as “uncontroversial” couples who espouse the very same so-called norms that oppress poor people, people with disabilities, people of color, trans people, immigrants, etc., etc.

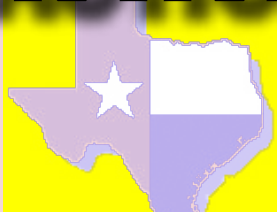
Election season is upon us again, and anti-gay marriage amendments are on the ballot. It is time to beware: we've had too much experience with campaigns run by white, middleclass people who afterwards explain that people of color were not available to be hired. Our lesson from this: expediency always defaults to power, not to liberation. Campaigns often appeal to some middle ground of conservatism, promising a commitment to stay true to conservative institutions and mainstream values. We cannot let the issue of gay marriage serve to maintain or increase oppression.

The marriage issue provides a fine opportunity to work for liberation. For liberation, for the human right of relationship and full sexuality, for our desire for control of our bodies and choice, for our desire for freedom for all our identities—we must seek the leadership of those who help us expand our place in the world: for instance, trans people and queer youth of color who open new ways of thinking about the fluidity of gender, race, and sexuality. It is not conservative institutions that will save us but those who have the courage to explore new paths to freedom. Our work is to expand possibility. Our task is to figure out in our lives, in our work, in our interactions how to broaden our definitions of family and community, of gender, of self, of choice and self-determination, how to expand our dream of democracy.

Remember: the canaries, most at risk, can not only warn us but also can lead us into the sunshine and fresh air with lives of equality, justice, and freedom.

*Bio: Suzanne Pharr, author of **Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism** and **In the Time of the Right: Reflections on Liberation** is former director of the Highlander Research and Education Center. A founding member of the Women's Project of Little Rock, Arkansas she worked as a media officer for the No on 9 Campaign for a Hate Free Oregon and continues working against the Religious Right.*

**ACTION**



**ALERT!**

**Texans will be asked to amend the Texas constitution (HJR 6) to ban gay marriages and civil unions on a statewide ballot this November. Passing this amendment could mean the loss of benefits for many different kinds of families. The wording will appear as follows:**

*The constitutional amendment providing that marriage in this state consists only of the union of one man and one woman and prohibiting this state or a political subdivision of this state from creating or recognizing any legal status identical or similar to marriage.*

Join a coordinated statewide campaign to defeat this amendment. Contact the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center for local organizing information and state-wide actions: CALL 210/228-0201 or email [esperanza@esperanzacenter.org](mailto:esperanza@esperanzacenter.org)

# The Anger Against Immigrants

By Antonio C. Cabral



*"We diminish ourselves as a society if we continue allowing employers and landlords to treat Mexican immigrants as anything other than human beings."*

During June and July 2005 I crisscrossed the U.S. again from Texas to New York to California and I witnessed, once again, in every city where I spent several days, the growing anti-immigrant anger and the inhuman ordeals that Mexican and other immigrants endure day after day. These realities emphasize the urgency for civil societies and governments on both sides of the border to find solutions that will (a) cease the massive exodus of Latino workers from their countries and (b) enable those already in the U.S. to live and work with the degree of freedom of movement needed so that they can be organized and integrated into the daily social struggles of the broader working class.

One particular incident that took place during my visit with community activists and academics emblemizes this human drama. On June 19, 2005, Farmingville, New York, authorities raided a two-bedroom house at 33 Woodmont Street and evicted 64 Mexican immigrants living in extremely unsafe and unsanitary conditions.

Inside there were 44 bunk beds and several old and dirty mattresses scattered on the floor throughout the 900 square foot house. The electrical system was dangerously overused with extension cords plugged into each other throughout every room. Inspectors identified many similar city code and safety violations that could have easily led to a catastrophe. City officials justified the eviction of the 64 tenants as a preventive measure. The majority of those evicted are now homeless and living in a wooded area in Long Island, New York.

The incident reinforced the anti-immigrant anger among homeowners and long-time residents of Farmingville. This community has been the scene of physical attacks against immigrants and the burning of two houses they occupied. Ray Wysolmierski, leader of the Farmingville Homeowners Association, said that its members are "mad as hell and are not going to tolerate this invasion anymore." He was referring to the homeowners' charges that Mexican workers stash trash all around the rental houses as well as using the front and back yards as restrooms. Other charges include having loud weekend drinking parties that often turn into fights and that some immigrants sexually harass neighborhood women.

This situation in Farmingville offers a microcosm of the volatile reality developing in several other U.S. cities. It also reflects the immigrants' ordeals at the hands of abusive employers and landlords. Groups like Global Rights ([www.globalrights.org](http://www.globalrights.org)), Human Rights Watch ([www.humanrightswatch.org](http://www.humanrightswatch.org)) and others are trying to bring home the issue of human rights by instilling a culture of understanding that this struggle must be waged here in the U.S. and not only in foreign countries.

We cannot dismiss these situations as isolated cases. The exploitation of immigrants by employers and landlords rely on the systemic disregard of existing rules and laws. In the New York case, for example, Rosalina Dias, the owner/landlord of the Woodmont rental house should be punished for violating the immigrants' human rights and not simply for violating local housing codes. She was charging each of the 64 tenants \$250 monthly collecting over \$9,000 every month while knowingly exposing her tenants to danger. Similar greedy landlords exist in Texas, Chicago, California and other states.

We diminish ourselves as a society if we continue allowing employers and landlords to treat Mexican immigrants as anything other than human beings. I will not suggest possible solutions in this work. Human rights activists and progressives in both Mexico and the U.S. know better than I what must be done in each country. In the case of the U.S., however, I will only state that it is not enough to serve as liberal missionaries helping immigrants obtain more social welfare services or legalize their status. Mexican and other immigrants have a greater fundamental need: respect and dignified treatment.

At the National John Steinbeck Museum in Salinas, California, I saw a large plaque with the words of a Mexican farm worker. During the historic 1970 farm worker struggles, Mr. Gonzales said, "Let the people and the government know that we are ready to work...but we ask that they look upon us as human beings." Today, thirty-five years later, Mexican immigrants continue getting only "Paisano Hero" Medals in Mexico and inhumane treatment in the U.S.

*Bio: Antonio C. Cabral is a San Antonio freelance writer who has worked for years as a community and labor organizer. His essays are published in the U.S. and in Mexico.*



# Fox's Tragic Insult

By Denise McVea

*Editor's note: The cartoon figure above is Memín Pinguín cited by the author of this article and also in the article that follows by Roberto Rodríguez, Column of the Américas.*

Even before pobre Memín Pinguín showed up on a Mexican stamp, Mexican President Vicente Fox had already stoked international ire with an artless comment he made about American Blacks. Fox had been speaking to a group of Texas businessmen when he made the remarks, in a speech criticizing proposed Texas/Mexico border policies aimed at reducing illegal immigration to the U.S. What he said was this: "There is no doubt that Mexicans, filled with dignity, willingness and ability to work are doing jobs that not even blacks want to do there in the United States."

To many, the words "not even" spoke volumes. The natural conclusion, of course, is that Fox has a limited view of the status and worth of Black Americans. He and his cabinet quickly defended his remarks as non-racist, pointing out that Fox has always demonstrated respect and admiration for minorities and is a staunch supporter of human rights. Critics were taking his comment out of context, he said. And let's face it: that could be true. No one doubts that Black Americans still struggle in terms of equality in the United States, that we have often been relegated in disproportionate numbers to work deemed unappealing by the ruling class. Perhaps it's not such an insult to acknowledge that.

Still, as a black woman living in rural Central Mexico, the comment outraged me. But not for the reasons you might think. Let's leave aside for the moment what the comments might suggest about American Blacks. Instead, let's look at what they suggest about Fox's government and its persistent, barefaced failure to provide for the Mexican people.

What Fox might as well have said is this: "We, the Mexican government, are not providing jobs to our people, and we have no plans to start doing so. In the United States, there are jobs that even the lowest classes in your country Won't do. How fortunate for us. Since we have no plans to provide even menial opportunities for our people, we'd appreciate it if you could make it easier for them to mop your floors, wash your dishes and clean your gutters." President Vicente Fox Quesada as labor hall pimp.

Fox, then, has come out with it. There is no longer any uncertainty, any doubt. If there ever was a pretense that the Mexican government under Fox intended to improve the

Mexican economy by providing jobs at home, there isn't any now. Not only does Fox apparently condone emigration as a primary survival tool of the Mexican family, he seems to be quite unashamedly fretting that security concerns in the U.S. (known here as *el otro lado*, the other side) are threatening to make that tool inaccessible.

Of course tightening border controls is a problem for the Mexican people. But It's also a problem for the Mexican government, and here's why. Mexico has remained relatively peaceful by Latin American standards despite its grinding poverty precisely for one reason: the bravery, perseverance and generosity of the Mexican *paisano*. This year alone, Mexican immigrants in the United States will send up to \$20 billion in cash home to relatives in Mexico, according to some estimates. The *paisano* will spend millions of that hard won cash on infrastructure items that local governments can't or won't provide, things like street lights, ambulances and decent sewer systems. The Mexican government has ridden on the backs of these hardworking men and women for decades. On the other hand, corruption in Mexico remains rampant, costing the country up to \$60 billion a year. Much of this theft is official. While taxpayer funds in Mexico continue to finance massive private homes in out-of-the-way places, or weekend jaunts to Reno, or unmerited favors for family and friends, the *paisano* continues his perilous journey to *el otro lado*, and works to keep Mexico afloat.

In an effort to fight corruption, Fox in 2002 signed into law Mexico's first Freedom of Information Act. This could have been one of his most important acts as President, since for the first time in Mexico history, government agencies are required to provide public information- contracts, programs, expenditures, salaries, etc.- to Mexican citizens. National and international observers agree that the new government transparency reforms are a primary step for reducing official corruption. But the law has had mixed results at the local and state levels, and many local governments continue to routinely withhold basic public information.

I live in Catorce, San Luis Potosí, one of the state's most marginalized municipalities. The municipality is made up of 120 small rural villages scattered over 725 square miles of rugged mountain and desert terrain. The approximately 10,000 residents are mostly poor farmers and goat herders. Since moving here, I have witnessed the types of abuses that the lack of government transparency inflicts on poor Mexicans. Despite millions of development dollars being earmarked for

# “Although the Mexican government pretends otherwise, human rights abuses do not start at the border. Therein lies the insult.”

the region, only 3 km of Catorce's 100 km roads are paved. The federal electric commission in the past has routinely overcharged Catorce residents. The monopoly telephone company has charged for free services, the local social services agency has charged for free services. Regional development agencies promise development programs, but the resources disappear somewhere between the agency and the municipality. There is virtually no trickle down in Catorce.

Meanwhile, the municipality holds on to public information as a child holds on to his toys. In lieu of being public servants, local government officials work to maintain the illusion that they are lords of the manor, and that their citizens are their serfs. Most everyone in Catorce sees local government in this light. Without information, residents have no idea about any of the workings of the local government, or their rights, or their responsibilities. They have no way of knowing what needs paying and what has already been paid for.

Last year, for instance, without providing any information about a public works program to pave a central street in Catorce, local government officials went door-to-door, requesting \$100 U.S. per household to finish the project. Did the residents end up paying for a project where public money was diverted? Just try asking the municipal government a question like that. And this is in Mexico's Age of Transparency.

Meanwhile, the village population shrinks. My neighbors continue to look for avenues to the other side, and they become less and less concerned about the costs -in terms of money or safety- to get there. Many are turned back, settle for a time in Monterrey or Nuevo Laredo, and later try again. Others make it, find work, and begin the life of the paisano. But the success has a dark side. The toll on the Mexican family is enormous. Many of my neighbors fret constantly about their family members on the other side. Some have lost contact completely with their relative

and often do not know if that person is dead or alive. The distance and the time apart make relatives into strangers. So where is that discussion?

What Fox could have said was this: “There is no doubt that Mexicans, filled with dignity, willingness and ability to work should be able to work in Mexico, and it is the responsibility of this government to make that happen.” But it's not happening. Fox is essentially abdicating his government's responsibility to provide for his people to an increasingly intolerant neighbor. He seems out of touch with his people's suffering and the sacrifices they are making to keep his government afloat. Although the Mexican government pretends otherwise, human rights abuses do not start at the border. Therein lies the insult.

Author Luis Alberto Urrea knows about this. He wrote “The Devil's Highway,” a shocking account of 14 Mexican illegal immigrants who died in the Arizona desert in 2001. The book was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in 2004. Urrea, a native of Tijuana, summed up the complexities and desperation and horrors of illegal immigration to the U.S. from Mexico as only one who has lived it can. What he said is this: “Raise the standards in Mexico, and these good people will go home.”



Bio: Denise McVea, award-winning writer, journalist, researcher and communications professional, is the Executive Director of the Auris Project, Inc. and the author of the upcoming book, **Making Myth of Emily**, to be released this year by Wings Press. A native of San Antonio, Texas, Ms. McVea lives in Real de Catorce, San Luis Potosí, Mexico. Visit [www.aurisproject.org](http://www.aurisproject.org) and access Denise's blog to learn more about this and other issues.



**BENCHMARK  
MORTGAGE**

Setting the Industry Standard

*Christopher L. Hoffman*

Branch Manager

**Purchases • Refinance • Equity Loans**

Phone: 210-641-5469

Cell: 210-317-5740

E-Fax: 210-579-8444

Email: [choffman@benchmarklends.com](mailto:choffman@benchmarklends.com)

6034 Cedar Path

San Antonio, TX 78249

*“...walk on the San Antonio river, to downtown  
and in the King William district”*

*Classic Charms*

*Bed and Breakfast*

*302 King William St.  
San Antonio, Texas*

*Call 271-7171*

# The GONZALES DEBACLE and THE LIMITS of NATIONALISM

By Roberto Rodríguez, Column of The Americas



When Clarence Thomas was up for consideration to the U.S. Supreme Court, many African Americans found themselves in a bind: Should they support his candidacy and maintain a Black on the court, or fight against him and possibly end up “unrepresented”?

The dilemma stemmed from his extreme hostility toward civil rights. Some chose to be silent or actually supported his nomination. Others demurred, holding on to the belief that Thomas would eventually come around. The “wait” continues.

With the nomination of 50-year-old judge John Roberts to replace Sandra Day O'Connor, a showdown is lurking over *Roe v. Wade*. A Roberts confirmation would also surrender government and the environment to the war-industrial complex.

At the same time, with the possibility of another court vacancy (William Rehnquist), we may again find ourselves with a Thomas-like situation with the potential nomination of U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzáles. Some Latino/Hispanic civil rights groups are giddy at the prospect that if confirmed, he would become the “first Hispanic Supreme Court Justice.”

When Gonzáles was up for attorney general, it was several Hispanic/Latino organizations that ran interference for the president in support of his candidacy. Principle lost out to blind ethnic loyalty.

Apparently, they turned two blind eyes to the fact that it was Gonzáles who wrote the memos that, in effect, authorized torture by U.S. forces worldwide and put forth the notion that the Geneva Conventions on war are obsolete (particularly in regards to “The War on Terror”). In fact, his memos served as guidelines on how the administration could artfully avoid international treaties and conventions against torture, while avoiding prosecution.

In one sense the conundrum that these Hispanic/Latino groups find themselves in is that they have to weigh the balance between domestic vs. foreign policy. Domestically, these groups claim that Gonzáles - as well as the president - has a moderate agenda in regards to immigration and prison sentencing reform. That was why they supported him.

Five years into this administration, and the only thing that the president has managed to do on the immigration front is to funnel all the nation's 9-11 and “war on terror” fears into the jingoistic belief that the solution lies

in closing the Mexican (not the Canadian) border. (Under his watch, anti-immigrant fervor has reached a crescendo).

Of course, Gonzáles has been in office but several months, thus, too early to pass judgment on his effect at the Justice Department. Too early for that, yet apparently not too early to catapult him to a lifetime appointment to the nation's highest court. (This would also ensure a complete right-wing stranglehold at the court for the next 20 years - even though he's not trusted by extremists within his own party).

Giving Gonzáles a pass because he would become the first Hispanic on the court demonstrates the absurdity of what the right wing has long-termed: the racial spoils system (they actually play it better than the Democrats).

There was a time when a judge was considered to be a person of wisdom. On this count alone (the attorney general is not yet 50), he cannot be considered wise even though admittedly, age alone does not confer wisdom. With Gonzáles, however, his age and lack of experience, tell us that on those counts alone he should be disqualified.

Yet, the short record that he has - as a torture enabler and a rubber stamp on death penalty cases for then Gov. Bush in Texas - sends a quite troubling and disqualifying message. The message is one regarding loyalty and cronyism. Couple that with that blind ethnic support and it becomes even more troubling. (These groups, have no problem denouncing the Memin Pinguin Mexican stamp -- for its harmful effects on race relations -- yet they are seemingly unable to see the incredible harm the torture memos have wrought upon the cause of human rights worldwide).

There are respected human rights groups that consider the entire Bush administration (including Gonzáles) to be guilty of foisting an illegal war upon the world based on false intelligence. For Hispanic/Latino groups to act as though that is a minor matter proves the absurdity of what is permissible when one is guided by a skewed allegiance to that form of ethnic nationalism.

Perhaps, like Thomas, he will become some sort of role model... but at what cost? Hey... let's not discount right-wing pundit Linda Chávez as the next nominee... and on the affirmative action scale, she'd be a two-fer.

© Column of the Americas 2005

The writers can be reached at: 608-238-3161 or [XColum@aol.com](mailto:XColum@aol.com) or Column of the Americas, PO BOX 5093 Madison WI 53705.

# We want Democracy Now!

By Tom Keene

When readers of La Voz and supporters of Esperanza scan the radio dial and TV channels for any voice of hope, peace and justice we search in vain. What we hear and see are entertainers whose jobs depend on drawing audiences for advertisers. That is why we read La Voz, but why not have daily newscasts on peace and justice issues available to all in the Greater San Antonio area? Why not have news analysis that cuts to the heart of the matter instead of what pleases advertisers? Other metropolitan and rural areas have that kind of news. So can we. It's called Democracy Now!

Democracy Now, co-hosted by Amy Goodman and Juan Gonzales, is listened to and watched on radio and TV stations in dozens of cities. Listeners hear a wide range of voices seldom heard on commercial media. They include independent and international journalists and ordinary people here and around the world as they are affected by their governments' policies. Listeners hear from writers, poets, grassroots leaders, professors and independent analysts on events and issues of peace and justice. We can hear cutting edge news along with vigorous debates that are not restricted to the usual liberal versus conservative boxes. Democracy Now covers events and issues that barely get sound bites on commercial stations: the impact of CAFTA on working folks, here and in Central America; Chile's dictator Pinochet and criminal court proceedings; race relations; torture at Guantanamo, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

Democracy Now is funded entirely by listener contributions and is one of the United States' most independent sources of daily news and analysis. Its staff has won awards for journalistic excellence including many Golden Reel Awards from the National Federation of Community Broadcasters. Local broadcasters of public radio find that Democracy Now helps them raise contributions for their own stations. Christine Ahern, station manager of WJFF in Jefferson, NY says, "The response to Democracy Now over the last six years has been overwhelming. The show raises more money for us than either Morning Edition or All Things Considered (on National Public Radio). The message from our community is clear. Democracy Now is an essential part of our programming schedule."

Those of us who have access to the Internet, or have friends who are on line, we can watch and listen to Democracy Now by going to [democracynow.org](http://democracynow.org) web site. Under the War and Peace Report find "watch and listen to entire show." Click on "watch and listen." The screen will give today's date followed by "choose a stream below." (If your computer does not have Real Player, click on the Real Player logo and follow easy moves to download it.) Click on "watch entire show." For audio only, click on "listen to entire show." Wait about five seconds for Democracy Now to begin.

Some of us are working to get Democracy Now on San Antonio's public airwaves. Esperanza and the Media Empowerment Project are circulating petitions asking KSTX to carry Democracy Now. To get petitions contact Esperanza at 228-0201 or the Media Empowerment folks: Deanne Cuellar at 320-7561.

Bio: Tom Keen is a poet-activist and educator in San Antonio.

## Stripping the Gaza

By Thein Wah

There has been a great deal of coverage on the anguish of the Jews forced by their government to leave the Gaza strip. Israel is, of course, depicted as making a great sacrifice for the sake of peace.

The major reason for the evacuation is simple. Gaza has become increasingly indefensible militarily and a drain on Israeli financial resources. Another reason, never mentioned in the popular media, is the rapidly deteriorating situation in Iraq. One reason for invading Iraq is certainly for oil, but another factor which motivated the Neoconservatives in their passion for the war was the prospect of an Israel supreme in the region after the subjugation of Iraq. Things, however, have panned out so differently that even some Republicans are calling for a drawdown of American forces.

Cindy Sheehan's courageous stand near Bush's Crawford hideout would not have received nearly so much attention but for the virtually hopeless situation in Iraq.

Circumstances seem to have conspired to make both Israel and the U.S. to face up to some very unpleasant realities. That is why Bush is refusing to meet with Cindy Sheehan and Condeleeza Rice is feverishly engaged in spindoctoring.

Nations that invade and occupy other lands do not give up conquered territory for idealistic reasons. Nobody has given this land back to the Native Americans.

Most of the land areas of the world have changed hands many times and will continue to do so as long as military force remains the accepted method of land transfer. The U.N. was created to put a stop to this practice. So far it has not worked.

Bio: Thein Wah is a retired professor living in San Antonio and a longtime contributor to La Voz.

# Harvest of Redemption



*Harvest of Redemption/Por Unos Elotes* premieres in San Antonio Saturday, September 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Guadalupe Theater, at 7 pm with a reception open to the public, \$10 admission.

A second screening will take place at the Guadalupe on Sunday, September 4<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm. \$6 Admission.

## El escritor: Eddie Howell

Eddie Howell, a Chicano, (despite his surname), from the Río Grande valley (Mercedes, Tx), strolled into the Esperanza promoting a book and film that he wrote and ultimately produced. Eddie and his brother (from San Antonio) stopped in to let us know about the premiere in San Antonio. Eddie was short on time because he needed to catch the afternoon bus back to McAllen. A retired school teacher, Eddie took on the task of writing a book based on a family historia which actually happened and had been told and retold in his family. He enlisted the help of Laura Elysa Pérez of Mission, Texas and an old college friend of hers, Javier Chapa, of San Manuel to develop an authentic screenplay based on the cultura and society of the 1920s in el valle de Tejas. Javier Chapa ultimately took on the task of directing the movie with a 24 day shooting schedule done in HD video. It premiered for the first time on April 30, 2005 at Cine El Rey in downtown McAllen. In spite of heart problems that threw off Eddie Howell's plans temporarily, *Harvest of Redemption* may well be the first full-length feature film written, produced and filmed on location in the Rio Grande Valley. The synopsis of the story follows:

## La Historia: *Por Unos Elotes*

Pedro Escobedo, his wife Nena, his son Oscar, and his parents Juan and Maria traveled the land surrounding the Rio Grande by foot and buggy every season looking for work. On July 31st, 1925, they arrived in central Texas at a town called Arroyo, known for its fertile soil and pleasant climate. After a praising recommendation, Pedro was hired as the foreman for the estate and farm of a local, wealthy, and politically affluent family, the Wilkens. The Escobedos moved into the servant shed neighboring the Wilkens estate, hoping for a peaceful and comfortable life.



One early evening, Pedro and his son, Oscar were coming home from a long day's work. On their way, they passed the fields whose soil has been sown by the work of their hands and whose crops had been gathered by the sweat of their brow. Despite Mr. Wilken's strict instructions to the contrary, Pedro gave in to temptation and decided to stop and pick a bushel of corn for tasting. This act did not escape the frugal eye of Mr. Wilkens who descended to the field quickly to distribute his militant reprimand. What seemed like a harmless defiance provoked an irreparable dispute fueled by pride, hatred and prejudice. When

Mr. Wilkens pulled out a gun, Pedro attempted to walk away, but it was too late. At the moment of truth, Pedro, unarmed, turned around and looked at Mr. Wilkens in the eye before facing his demise. The verbal quarrel ultimately ended in cold blood with two gunshots to Pedro's chest and an enraged Mr. Wilkens holding a pistol in his hands. A lifeless body was all that was left for Oscar to hold onto after witnessing the brutal murder of his father.

Although the evidence was plain, Mr. Wilkens was never indicted, tried, or punished for his crime, leaving Oscar a bitter, angry, and resentful child. Respect, honor, and tradition were virtues that were well instilled by his father, but forgiveness was a virtue that Oscar had yet to learn. Ultimately, the Escobedos returned to their home in Mission, Texas where they attempted to put back the pieces of their broken hearts and divorce the tragic memories of Pedro's death.

The story of *Harvest of Redemption* follows Oscar in his struggle to overcome the demons of hatred and resentment that continually invade his life.

For more contact Eddie Howell, Historia Entertainment at 956/565-6942 or [eddiehowell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:eddiehowell@sbcglobal.net).

# Diary of a Campaign to Save our Jobs and for Women & Workers!

By Mujeres of Fuerza Unida

*Editor's note: As Fuerza Unida celebrates their Quinceañera they continue to fight for justice in the workplace particularly when it affects women. What follows is a diary of their latest struggle in the fight against CAFTA which was lost by a very small margin.*

Our campaign for Economic Justice began January 20th, 1990, the day Levi Strauss & Co. gave their first 1500 workers their pink slips. Since that day, Fuerza Unida's mission has not strayed away from that Lucha. After a year of transition, Fuerza Unida has come back with a vengeance as we joined the struggle to stop the passage of the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). For Fuerza Unida, CAFTA was another bill that would devastate our community and hurt women with no regard of how NAFTA (it's older brother) had destroyed the San Antonio community.

After working in collaboration with other local groups, we came to the conclusion that once again the voice of those most affected were not being heard, las mujeres. In a last ditch effort to affect some change we called to action a meeting of mujeres on Friday, July 16, 2005.

On Monday, July 18th, 2005 a strong diverse group of students, community leaders and community came together where the topic of discussion was CAFTA. The goal was to



establish a united voice of women in opposition to CAFTA. As a result, the group concluded that it was essential to support Fuerza Unida and its campaign to stop CAFTA. We would mobilize our base for a united press conference, phone banking and letter writing campaign.

On Tuesday, July 19th, 2005, Fuerza Unida held a press conference in front of the Federal Building where about 30 mujeres and supporters came together to express their opposition to CAFTA. The press conference included Patti Radle (City Councilwomen, District 5), a representative of Delicia Herrera (City Councilwomen, District 6), LULAC, Community Leaders and affected workers.

On that same day, after a series of attempts over two weeks to get a meeting with Representative Charlie Gonzalez we stormed his local office. Before entering, we were threatened by building security with arrest if we did not follow their rules that only two individuals could enter at a time. After negotiations with Gonzalez's office we all gained access to his office. About 20 strong mujeres entered and spoke with Rep. Gonzalez's staff to address our concerns about CAFTA. I know we had made our presence felt but we were here to stay on the issue of CAFTA and we wanted to have a face-to-face in our own house, the Fuerza Unida office.



Protesting CAFTA at the federal building in San Antonio

The next day were notified that the Congressman would be available Saturday July 23, 2005 at 10:30 am.

With great pleasure we opened our doors to Rep. Charlie Gonzalez and his staff. The goal of the meeting was to have a dialogue and share experiences regarding free trade policy, provide a space for real-life experts of free-trade policy to tell their stories and to demonstrate our united women's position in San Antonio against CAFTA.

### Taking Our Lucha To The Capitol-

On a hot and steamy day (July 26th, 2005), we jumped on a plane to Washington D.C. to take our story to the capitol on this very important issue, CAFTA. We had been invited by the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) to bring a real human face to free trade. Petra Mata, co-director of Fuerza Unida, accompanied by Amy Casso took part in a larger press conference.

Our day began with an early meeting with the Chair of the CHC (Grace Napiliano of CA), the Director and staff of CHC. As we talked, Petra had the opportunity to speak of her experience and the experience of other displaced workers of San Antonio who had lost everything when their jobs moved to Costa Rica and China due to free-trade policy and globalization. Her moving story spoke of how people lost their homes, cars and lives due to NAFTA and its devastating impact on women.

Around 10:30 am, we walked together down the underground tunnels to the press conference at the lawn in front of the nation's Capitol. Into the sunlight, we joined about 150 people, which included 15 Representatives, Labor Unions, Ranchers, the Sugar Industry, other Anti- CAFTA individuals and ourselves. As a key person who was available to the media, Petra Mata conducted about six interviews with television and radio programs.

But our work was not done we made an important call to Rep. Charlie Gonzalez's office in a last effort to connect once again on the issue of CAFTA. At 1:30 pm we met with Charlie and his staffer, Michael, where we reaffirmed our position on CAFTA. Not only did we speak about our opposition we were also concerned about finding solutions for the devastation that NAFTA had left behind. We also reaffirmed that Fuerza Unida would continue this struggle and will be using his open door policy to ensure that workers get what they need.

After all was said and done on this balmy 100-degree day, the event and meeting with Charlie Gonzalez was a success. Our objective was completed. We had brought a real face to CAFTA and felt that we had:

- **Reaffirmed our position on CAFTA;**
- **Attempted to build a bridge between Fuerza Unida and displaced workers with Gonzalez's office; and**
- **Reclaimed Fuerza Unida's voice in the national debate on free trade that has had many serious ramifications for women workers in San Antonio.**



Meeting with Congressman González on CAFTA by a margin of 2 votes. Regardless of the outcome, we had successfully

When all is said and done our campaign for Economic Justice prevails and the Lucha continues.

On Wednesday, July 27th, 2005 we received a great win in our Campaign to stop CAFTA when Gonzalez's Office called to notify Fuerza Unida that he would be voting NO on CAFTA. We felt all our hard work had paid off but our struggle for Economic Justice was not over; an early morning vote showed that CAFTA had passed

by a margin of 2 votes. Regardless of the outcome, we had successfully mobilized our base and brought the voice of displaced women workers to the forefront. But what we say for those like Rep. Henry Cuellar who voted YES, is that you will have to be accountable to your constituents who will remember come next election.

## Attention!

### Ex-Levi's Workers

Fuerza Unida is celebrating our 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary. If you or someone in your family are ex-Levi's workers we invite you to a reunion to recognize the workers.

## November 19, 2005

To be invited or to contribute to the reunion call:

### 210.927.2294

## ¡Atención!

### Ex-Trabajadores de Levi's

Fuerza Unida está celebrando su quinceañera. Si Ud. o alguien de su familia fueron ex trabajadores de Levi's, les invitamos que se anpartede un convivio para reconocer los trabajadores.

## 19 de noviembre, 2005

Para ser invitado o para contribuir llame al:

### 210.927.2294

## \*community meetings\*

**Amnesty International #127** meets the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm at Ashbury United Methodist. Call 829-0397.

**Bexar County Green Party** meets first Sundays at 2 pm at Picante Grill, 3810 Broadway.

**DIGNITY S.A.** holds mass Sundays at 5:15 pm at St. Ann's. Call 735-7191.

**Fuerza Unida** is located at 710 New Laredo Hwy. Call 927-2297.

**Habitat for Humanity** holds Volunteer Orientation on first Tuesdays at First Presbyterian Church, 404 N. Alamo, Rm 302 at 6 pm.

**Parents/Friends of Lesbians/Gays (PFLAG)** meets the first Thursdays at 7pm at the Resource Center, 121 W. Woodlawn. Call 655-2383.

**Proyecto Hospitalidad Liturgy** meets on Thursdays at 7 pm at 325 Courtland. Call 736-3579.

**The Rape Crisis Center** is located at 7500 US Hwy 90 West, Building 2 in San Antonio. The 24 hour hotline number is 210/349-7273. Call 210/521-7273 or email Drominishi@rapecrisis.com

**San Anto MEXA** meets on Tuesdays at 6:30 pm at the Esperanza Center. Contact: www.sanantomexa.org or mexa@riseup.net

**San Antonio NOW** meets on fourth Wednesdays at La Madeline on Broadway at 6:30pm. Call: 210/673-8600 Mail: Box 34551, 78265-4551

**The Shambhala Buddhist Meditation Center** offers meditation instruction on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7pm and Sundays at 11:30 am. Practice is on Tuesdays and Thurs

days at 7pm and on Sundays from 9:30 am-12:30 pm at 1114 South St. Mary's. Call 222-9303.

**The Society of Friends** meets on Sundays at 10 am at The Friends Meeting House, 7052 N. Vandiver. Call 945-8456.

**The Society of Latino and Hispanic Writers of SA** meets 2nd Mondays @ 7:00 pm at Barnes and Noble, San Pedro Crossing (north of Loop 410). Open to the public.

**Solidarity: Peer Support for Mental Health Consumers**, meets the first and third Saturdays at 10:30 am at the Travis Park United Methodist Church, Rm 210. Call 734-7527.

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

**S.N.A.P. (Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests)** meets the last Wednesday of each month at 7 pm at 1443 S. St. Mary's. Call 725-8329.

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

**Voice for Animals** meets the last Saturday of each month in the meeting room of Whole Foods Market in the Quarry 3 - 5 p.m. Call 737-3138 or visit www.voiceforanimals.org

**Texas Media Empowerment Project** meets every 1st and 3rd Wednesday @ the Esperanza Center @ 6:30 pm. Contact: Deanne Cuellar deanne@tokyo.com phone: 210.320.7561

Submissions, deletions or changes to community meetings may be made by contacting lavoz@esperanzacenter.org or mail in to La Voz, 922 San Pedro, San Antonio, TX 78212

*Do you work for a public school, the City of San Antonio, Bexar County, the State of Texas, or the Federal Government?*

*The Esperanza is part of Another Way Texas Shares. Sign-up to donate monthly to the Esperanza directly from your paycheck at work through the State Employee Charitable Campaign*

*Bexar County Government Local Charitable Campaign*

*City of San Antonio Local Charitable Campaign*

*and the Combined School District Charitable Campaign*

*Esperanza Peace & Justice Center Code #8035*

*Call us at 228.0201 to sign-up with our electronic direct deposit program or to access employment site codes.*

# 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.

Enclosed is a donation of

- \_\_\_ \$1000
- \_\_\_ \$500
- \_\_\_ \$250
- \_\_\_ \$100
- \_\_\_ \$50
- \_\_\_ \$25
- \_\_\_ \$15 La Voz subscription
- \_\_\_ \$10
- \_\_\_ other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

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.

# 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: [lavoz@esperanzacenter.org](mailto:lavoz@esperanzacenter.org) or by snail mail to: 922 San Pedro, San Antonio, TX 78212. **The deadline is the 12th of each month.**

*Ground Luminosity: Photographic Etchings & Cyanotypes* by Deborah Keller-Rihn and Marcia Brown will be on exhibition at the **StoneMetal Press Gallery**, in the Blue Star Arts Complex, S. Alamo at Probandt from September 1<sup>st</sup> to October 2<sup>nd</sup> with an opening reception on first Thursday. Call 227-0312.

The **Judith Rothschild Foundation** offers grants to present, preserve, and interpret work of the highest aesthetic merit by lesser-known American artists who have died after September 12, 1976. The foundation has no restrictions on the amount of requests, although grants have not exceeded \$35,000. Check: [www.judithrothschildfdn.org/](http://www.judithrothschildfdn.org/) for more.

The **Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, AFL-CIO Texas** President, Jaime Martínez and the **Southwest League of United Latin American Citizens** Vice President, Rosa Rosales and others are marching in Austin to protest the Minuteman Project's presence in Texas. A non-violent caravan will assemble on Saturday, September 17th at Windsor Park Mall (between JC Penny and Montgomery Wards) at 9:25 am and depart to Austin at 11:30 am arriving at 2:30 pm for the March in Austin.

The **Earthbound Gathering** conference seeks to bring together Native and non-native people who share a passion for the earth. It will be held in Northeastern Minnesota, Sept 23<sup>rd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>, 2005. Contact: 1-800-669-8418 or [earthboundcollective@hotmail.com](mailto:earthboundcollective@hotmail.com) for details.

Help take back our country (and the world) from corporate greed and build a new movement for workers' rights and economic and social justice. Come to the **Jobs with Justice** National Annual Meeting in St. Louis, Missouri September 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> to build a movement. Register at [www.jwj.org](http://www.jwj.org) or call 202/393-1044.

**ALLGO**, (Austin Latina/o Lesbian Gay Organization) presents **LUNAWORKS:**

**The Work Of CARMEN NORIEGA, A Journey Through Carpentry, Architecture & Stained Glass** opening Saturday, September 24<sup>th</sup> at the Snell Building, 1050 East 11<sup>th</sup> (at Waller) in Austin, Texas.. Contact Sharon Bridgforth at 512/472-2001, ext 106 or check [www.allgo.org](http://www.allgo.org)

People from all around the U. S. plan to join **United for Peace and Justice** for three major days of action against the war in Washington, D.C., from September 24<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> with a host of anti-war activities planned throughout the weekend. For more check [www.unitedforpeace.org](http://www.unitedforpeace.org) or call 212-868-5545.

**Societies of Peace, The Second World Congress on Matriarchal Studies** takes place September 29<sup>th</sup> to October 2<sup>nd</sup> at **Texas State University's** Performing Arts Center in San Marcos, Texas. Matriarchal societies, spirituality and policy plus more will be the focus of this conference sponsored by the **Center for the Study of the gift Economy, USA**. Check [www.second-congress-matriarchal-studies.com](http://www.second-congress-matriarchal-studies.com) or call 512/444-1672.

San Antonio's 3rd Annual **South African Festival, "SA to SA,"** takes place on Saturday, October 8<sup>th</sup> from noon to 7 pm featuring music, food, dance, crafts and drum making. A film festival follows from 7-9 pm. Sponsored by **Prima Donna Productions** it will be held at the Continental Café, 6390 Fairdale (near Rittiman Rd. and I-35). The event includes a Silent Auction and benefits Long Distance Bookmobile, which provides reading materials for seventy schools and four township libraries near Cocolan, South Africa and scholarships for South Africans to study in San Antonio. COST: Adults \$5, Children, 12 & under, \$2. Call 210-822-3552 or visit [www.primadonnaproductions.com](http://www.primadonnaproductions.com)

**Mexico Solidarity Network** presents: **International Campaign for Justice in Juárez and Chihuahua** from October 20-30, 2005. An activist from Ciudad Juarez

or Chihuahua will speak on the struggle to end the femicides and a representative of MSN will discuss the economic and social context in which they occur. Contact MSN at [www.mexicosolidarity.org](http://www.mexicosolidarity.org) or call (773) 583-7728 or (202) 544-9355 on the East Coast.

How do women truly feel about their breasts? **Rack: Women Write about Their Breasts** will aim to explore this question sharing the stories of women highlighting a specific moment or experience involving their breasts that made a significant impact on their life. **Deadline for entries is November 1st.** Length: 3,000-5,000 words. Essays must be typed, double-spaced, and paginated. Include address, phone, email, and a bio on the last page. Essays will not be returned. Mail to: Abby Schwartz, P.O. Box 620720, San Diego, CA 92162-0720

You are cordially invited to submit poetry or artwork for a wonderful anthology (**Dreamcatcher**), and the chance to perform/exhibit at the Awaken The Sleeping Poet/Awaken the Sleeping Artist festival at the Scottish Rite theater. **Submission deadline Nov. 1, 2005.** Details at [www.laurelcrown.org](http://www.laurelcrown.org).

The promotion of literacy is a noble cause! To bring a performance, youth class, adult workshop, or teacher in-service to your organization (poetry/creative writing or general creativity), contact Beverly Monestier at **CINERGI** 824-5379 or e-mail [beverlymonestier@hotmail.com](mailto:beverlymonestier@hotmail.com)

The producers for the **411 Show**, (airs on Tuesdays, 6:30pm), are currently looking for youth, ages 9 to 19 years old, to appear as talk show guests and performers during filming. No experience is necessary. All types of talents will be considered. This is a non-paid position and gives youth the opportunity to develop experience in the media arts. Call **Patsy Robles, 411 Productions**, at 789-3143 or e-mail to [411show@sbcglobal.net](mailto:411show@sbcglobal.net)



# Ana Castillo

## Reading at the Esperanza Center

### October 2, 2005 at 3pm

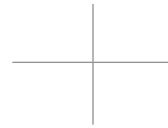


**La Voz de Esperanza**

922 San Pedro San Antonio TX 78212  
210 . 228 . 0201 • fax: 210 . 228 . 0000  
www.esperanzacenter.org

address SERVICE requested

Non-Profit Org.  
US Postage  
PAID  
San Antonio, TX  
Permit #332



## Prepare for Día de los Muertos'



**Calaveras Writing Workshop:** Gloria Ramirez  
Saturdays, 9am to 12 pm, September 3<sup>rd</sup> & October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2005\*



**Creating the Altar:** Verónica Sandoval  
Saturday, 9am to 12 pm, September 24, 2005\*



**History of Día de Los Muertos:**  
Ramon Vásquez and Denise Cadena  
Saturday, 9am to 12 pm, October 1, 2005\*

\*Workshops are at the Esperanza Center,  
922 San Pedro for Info. call 228.0201

## Doña Enriqueta Contreras

A Zapotec Indian from Oaxaca,  
recognized internationally as a  
midwife, master herbalist and healer  
presents a workshop on:

### **Remedios Caseros**

Home Remedies

Sunday, September 11, 2005

un exhibicion de plantas curativas y  
plática con Doña Enriqueta

exhibit and talk on curative plants

3pm to 6pm

Casita de Cuentos  
816 S. Colorado  
(near J.T. Brackenridge school)

Call the Esperanza at 228-0201