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# La VOZ Newspaper

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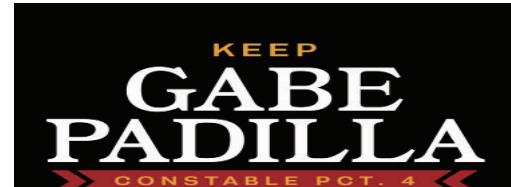
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BUILDING STRONGER  
COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

# People in the News



## Chito Vela Appointed Mayor-Pro Tem in Austin, Texas

Jose "Chito" Vela has been appointed as the mayor pro tem for the year 2026 by the **Austin City Council**. This appointment was made during a special meeting on January 6, 2025, and is part of the council's routine organizational step. **Vela's** term as mayor pro tem will run until a successor is elected by the council. He is currently the representative for District #4

**Vela** was born in **Laredo, Texas** and moved to **Austin** to attend **The University of Texas at Austin**. He earned his bachelor's degree in history in 1995 and a master's degree in public affairs from the **Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs** in 1999. He then went on to law school at **UT** and graduated with a J.D. in 2004.

**Vela's** career experience includes working as an attorney for **Walker Gates Vela PLLC**, an assistant attorney general for the **Texas Attorney General's** office, and a planning commissioner for the city of **Austin**.



## "Jacob M Garza Jr. to Begins Residency at Mexic-Arte Museum

**Jacob M Garza Jr.** is an artist, educator and academic advisor born and raised in **San Antonio, TX**, now rooted in **Austin**. When he is not creating, he can be found enjoying pan de dulce or exploring nature trails. He currently works with **Breakthrough Central Texas**, supporting first gen-students through mentorship, college access and community building and serves as an spring intern with DORF. His creative practice explores memory and identity, often shaped by family stories and lived experience. He graduated from Texas State University with a BFA in painting.



## San Antonio Native Cristina Rodríguez Selected as Next Dean of Yale Law School

**Cristina M. Rodríguez** is the **Leighton Homer Surbeck Professor of Law** and **Deputy Dean** at **Yale Law School**. On Dec. 19, 2025, **Yale University President Maurie McInnis** announced the selection of **Rodríguez** as the next dean of **Yale Law School**. She will assume the deanship on Feb. 1, 2026.

Rodríguez is a widely published and influential scholar. Shes authored more than 70 academic articles and essays in the **Yale Law Journal**, the **Harvard Law Review**, and numerous other scholarly journals, edited volumes, and media publications. She has been a sought-after expert by outlets such as **The New York Times**, **NPR**, **The New Yorker**, the **Washington Post**, and **The Wall Street Journal**.

She is also the author of the book "*The President and Immigration Law*," (Oxford University Press, 2020), an exploration of two centuries of presidential influence over the metes and bounds of American immigration policy, with **Adam B. Cox**. At a

2021 symposium, legal scholars called the book a "remarkable scholarly achievement" and a work of "*big arguments, grand scale, and historical sweep, yet also institutional detail, political acuity, and legal nuance.*"

**Rodríguez** began her academic career on the faculty of **NYU School of Law** in 2004, where she taught until 2012. She also has been a visiting professor at **Harvard**, **Stanford**, and **Columbia**. She joined the faculty of **Yale Law School** in 2013 and was named the **Leighton Homer Surbeck Professor of Law** in 2014.

Throughout her career, **Rodríguez** has displayed a commitment to the rule of law and to public service. In 2021, the president appointed **Rodríguez** to co-chair the bipartisan **Presidential Commission on the Supreme Court of the United States**. From 2011 to 2013, she served as deputy assistant attorney general in the **Office of Legal Counsel at the U.S. Department of Justice**. While there, she received an **Attorney General's Award** for Distinguished Service, one of the highest honors given to employees of the **Department of Justice**, as well as recognition from the **White House** for her outstanding work.

In 2020, **Rodríguez** was elected to the **American Academy of Arts & Sciences**, one of the nation's most prestigious honorary societies. She is a member of the **Council of the American Law Institute**, as well as the **Administrative Conference of the United States**, and has been a past member of the **Council on Foreign Relations**. In recognition of her passion and skill in the classroom, **Rodríguez** received the **Yale Law Women Excellence in Teaching Award** in 2020.

**Rodríguez** earned her B.A. in history from **Yale College** in 1995. She attended **Oxford University** as a **Rhodes Scholar**, where she received a master of letters in modern history in 1998. She earned her J.D. from **Yale Law School** in 2000. After law school, **Rodríguez** clerked for **Judge David S. Tatel** of the **U.S. Court of Appeals** for the **D.C. Circuit** and **Justice Sandra Day O'Connor** of the **U.S. Supreme Court**.



## Dr. Ronda Brulotte to Deliver Talk on Mezcal in Oaxaca

The **LLILAS Alumni Speaker series** is pleased to present a talk by **Dr. Ronda Brulotte** on her latest book, **Mezcal in Oaxaca: A Craft Spirit for the Global Marketplace**.

In her latest book, **Ronda L. Brulotte** traces mezcal's swift rise and its effects on communities that have distilled and enjoyed the beverage for generations. Only in the late 1990s did mezcal begin to escape its longstanding associations with Indigenous and working-class life, even as these very qualities supply the "authenticity" that elite consumers crave.

Through a detailed ethnography of the spirits industry in **Oaxaca**, **Brulotte** compares the ideal of the artisanal economy with the reality of participation in global markets. Her findings—focused on tourism-led development and gentrification, the exploitation of women and smallholders, and swelling regional migration pressures—raise troubling questions about the ecological and social sustainability of a new craft imaginary that rebrands rustic products as luxury goods.

### About the Speaker

**Ronda Brulotte** is an interdisciplinary scholar with training in sociocultural anthropology and Latin American Studies whose research focuses on craft economies. She is professor and department chair in **Geography and Environmental Studies** at the **University of New Mexico**, where she has also served as **Associate Director for Academic Programs** at the Latin American and Iberian Institute. **Dr. Brulotte** earned her master's at **LLILAS** in 1999 and her PhD in Anthropology in 2006 from **UT Austin**.

# PRODUCTION

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# Pensamientos

Bienvenidos once again to **La Voz Newspaper**. As I sit here typing this editorial, I still cannot believe that my good friend, **El Smiley**, has passed away.

I have had other good friends who have passed away in the last year, but **Smiley's** was devastating to say the least. In this issue of **La Voz** you will find a tribute I wrote and rewrote to him.

Moving on, well maybe not really, I will admit that I do not make it a point to watch the national news as much as I used to. *Las mentiras de Donald Trump* just go on and on. Nothing he says can make me smile.

A couple of stories I want to call to your attention in this issue include: the story by **Dr. Rogelio Saenz** on the looming decline of the population in the United States. I believe he is on target with his observations. Algo va a passar. The other story is one about **Genoveva Morales**. Here is a woman who spent more than half her life fighting with the **Uvalde Independent School District**. Read her story and think about how many people you might know like her.



# EDITORIAL



**Alfredo Santos c/s**  
**Editor & Publisher**

This photo was taken in 1980 in **Houston, Texas** when I was a school teacher at **Resurrection Catholic School** in **Denver Harbor**. I was all of 28 years old.



# Holy Family

## American Catholic Church

### An Inclusive & Compassionate CATHOLIC community

Re. Dr. Jayme Mathias  
M.A., M.B.A., M.Div., M.S., Ph.D  
Senior Pastor



9:00 a.m. English Mass at the Church  
10:00 a.m. Breakfast in the Parish Hall  
10:30 a.m. English Mass in the Chapel  
12:00 p.m. Misa en español en la iglesia

9322 FM 812 Austin, Texas 78719  
From Highway 183 going South, turn left onto FM 812

For more information: (512) 826-0280  
Welcome Home!



### A TODAS LAS PERSONAS Y PARTES INTERESADAS:

John B. Sanfilippo ha solicitado a la Comisión de Calidad Ambiental de Texas (TCEQ, por sus siglas en inglés) lo siguiente:

Renovación del Permiso 55250.

Esta solicitud autorizaría autorización continua operación de una planta de procesamiento de alimentos ubicada en 16435 Interstate Highway 35 North, Selma, Condado de Guadalupe, Texas 78154. Información adicional sobre esta solicitud se encuentra en la sección de aviso público de este periódico.

## Texas History is Tejano History

by Andrew "Andy" Hernandez

Of the 59 signers of the **Texas Declaration of Independence**, only two were Native Texans. They were both Tejanos, **Juan Francisco Ruiz** and **Jose Antonio Navarro**. The rest were first generation overwhelming Anglo immigrants. 52 of the 59 had immigrated into **Mexico's Texas** from the **United States**. Most were recent arrivals. Two thirds had lived in **Texas** for less than five years.



**Juan Francisco Ruiz** and his nephew **Jose Antonio Navarro** were both born in what was then **Spanish Texas** in **San Antonio de Bexar**. Both would serve the governments of **Spain**, Mexican, the **Texas Republic** and the **United States**. They would lead lives of adventure, intrigue and service.

**Juan Francisco Ruiz** was appointed as **San Antonio's** schoolmaster in 1803 and elected to the **San Antonio City Council** two years later. He was appointed as a lieutenant in **Bexar Provincial Militia** in 1811. He would lead the revolutionary forces that fought to win **Mexico's Independence** from **Spain** and took part in the **Battle of Medina** in which independence forces fought Spanish troops.

With the defeat of the revolutionaries in 1813 he was forced to seek refuge in the **United States**. For some time, he wandered in Louisiana with his nephew **Jose Antonio Navarro** who had also been forced to flee **Texas** because of his participation in the failed attempt to establish an independent **Texas Republic** some 23 years prior to the **Texas Republic of 1836**.

**Jose Antonio Navarro** would return to **Texas** in 1816 and would be eventually elected to the **Coahuila** and **Texas** legislature as well as the federal Congress at **Mexico City**. He would be elected to **Texas Congress** in the **Republic of Texas** as representative from **Bexar County**. Though a supporter of **Texas** independence, **Navarro** favored annexation of **Texas** to the **United States** ever more strongly. The sole Hispanic delegate to the Convention of 1845 he lobbied heavily for **Texas** annexation and was instrumental in writing the States first Constitution as part of the **United States**. He then returned to **Bexar** where he was elected twice to the **Texas State Senate**.

**J o s e Francisco Ruiz** would spend over a decade in exile, a good part of the time living among Native American tribes. In 1821 he was given the task by the Mexican government to make peace with **Mexico's** most hostile tribes – the **Comanche** and the **Lipan**. A year later he took a delegation of Indians to **Mexico City** where a peace treaty was ratified by the Mexican government. From 1823-1832 he served in **Mexico's** army as Captain with the rank of lieutenant colonel. He served also serve as a liaison between the Mexican government and Native American tribes in **Texas**. He retired in 1832. He took up the cause of **Texas Independence** and would represent the Bexar district as its first Senator of the **Republic of Texas**. He passed in 1840 in **San Antonio, Texas**.

That few contemporary Tejanos know their story and the formidable role they played in the history of our state has much to do with how **Texas** history is remembered and taught. For the most part **Texas** history is seen through a very skewed Anglo centric lens where Anglos are drivers of **Texas** history while Tejanos are its mere passengers. Their presence, role, and significance are seldom mentioned and when they are, they're minimized. To make matters worse the recent attacks on **Mexican American** curriculums and studies by conservative forces would take away the little progress that has been made in getting Texas history right.

Maybe one of **Tejanos'** collective resolutions for 2026 could be to start claiming our space and place in **Texas** history by educating ourselves and others on it. A good place to start is the online resource **The Handbook of Tejano History** by **The Texas State Historical Association**. Just Goggle it. So, when **Tejano Heritage Month** rolls around in September 2026, we will be more ready for it than we have ever been.



## Comunicado de Prensa

Internal Revenue Service  
Media Relations Office  
Washington, D.C.  
Media Contact: 202.317.4000  
Public Contact: 800.829.1040  
[www.irs.gov/newsroom](http://www.irs.gov/newsroom)

# IRS anuncia el inicio de la temporada de impuestos de 2026; las herramientas y los recursos en línea facilitan la presentación de las declaraciones

8 de enero de 2026

WASHINGTON — El Servicio de Impuestos Internos (IRS) anuncio el lunes 26 de enero de 2026 como la fecha de inicio de la temporada de presentación de declaraciones de impuestos de 2026 en Estados Unidos. Este año entran en vigor varias nuevas disposiciones de la Ley de un Gran y Hermoso Proyecto de Ley (en inglés) que podrían afectar los créditos y deducciones tributarias.

Los contribuyentes tienen hasta el miércoles 15 de abril de 2026 para presentar y pagar los impuestos correspondientes. El IRS espera recibir alrededor de 164 millones de declaraciones de impuestos individuales para el año tributario 2025 y se anticipa que la mayoría de los contribuyentes las presentarán electrónicamente.

IRS.gov tiene herramientas y recursos en línea que los contribuyentes pueden usar antes, durante, y después de la presentación de sus impuestos federales. Ley de un Gran y Hermoso Proyecto de Ley (en inglés) contiene información que podría ayudar a reducir la deuda tributaria y, potencialmente aumentar el monto de los reembolsos.

**“El presidente Trump está comprometido con los contribuyentes de este país y con mejorar la exitosa temporada de impuestos de 2025, declaró el comisionado interino del IRS, Scott Bessent. “Antes de la aprobación de la Ley de un Gran y Hermoso Proyecto, que otorga reducciones de impuestos a las familias trabajadoras, el Departamento del Tesoro y el IRS estaban trabajando diligentemente para actualizar los formularios y los procesos en beneficio de los estadounidenses que trabajan arduamente, y confío en nuestra capacidad para obtener resultados y fomentar el crecimiento tanto para las empresas como para los consumidores”.**

“El Servicio de Impuestos Internos (IRS)

está listo para ayudar a los contribuyentes a cumplir con sus obligaciones de declaración y pago de impuestos,” dijo **Frank Bisignano**, director ejecutivo del IRS. “Como siempre, el personal del IRS se mantiene alerta y comprometido con su misión de servir a los contribuyentes estadounidenses. Al mismo tiempo, los sistemas de información del IRS se han actualizado para incorporar las nuevas leyes fiscales y están listos para procesar las declaraciones de manera eficiente y efectiva durante la temporada de presentación de declaraciones de impuestos”.

**Cuenta individual en línea del IRS.** Contribuyentes pueden acceder su información a través de una cuenta individual en línea, incluyendo saldo adeudado, pagos realizados o programados, documentos tributarios y más.

**Nuevo Anexo 1-A.** Contribuyentes pueden usar el nuevo Anexo 1-A para reclamar las deducciones tributarias recientemente promulgadas, como las relacionadas a no impuestos sobre propinas, no impuestos sobre interés de préstamos para autos y/o la deducción aumentada para personas de edad avanzada.

**Inscríbase a una Cuenta Trump.** Padres, guardianes y otras personas autorizadas pueden establecer una nueva cuenta individual de jubilación para sus hijos. Visite [trumpaccounts.gov](http://trumpaccounts.gov) (en inglés) para más información.

**Abra una cuenta bancaria.** El IRS insta a los contribuyentes a que establezcan una cuenta bancaria para recibir sus reembolsos tributarios a través de depósito directo, ya que el IRS está descontinuando gradualmente el uso de cheques de reembolso tributario por orden ejecutiva de la Modernización de pagos de una a otra cuenta bancaria americana.

Formularios 1099-K y 1099-DA. Con-

tribuyentes deben visitar IRS.gov para saber qué deben hacer si reciben uno de estos formularios. El Formulario 1099-K, Transacciones con tarjetas de pago y redes de terceros, se usa para informar pagos recibidos por tarjetas de crédito, aplicaciones de pago y los mercados en línea. El Formulario 1099-DA, Activos digitales (en inglés), se usa para informar ganancias de activos digitales por transacciones de corredores de bolsa. Contribuyentes deben informar todos los ingresos tributarios en sus declaraciones de impuestos federales, aun cuando no reciban un formulario.

**¿Dónde está mi reembolso?** La información sobre el estado del reembolso generalmente está disponible aproximadamente 24 horas después de presentar electrónicamente una declaración del año en curso, o cuatro semanas después de presentar una declaración en papel.

**Esté alerta a estafas y fraudes tributarios.** Los contribuyentes pueden aprender cómo prevenir, reportar y recuperarse de estafas de impuestos y del robo de identidad relacionado con impuestos en IRS.gov.

**Elija un preparador de impuestos.** Los contribuyentes deben revisar la guía del IRS para Elegir a un profesional de impuestos, que incluye consejos para seleccionar a un preparador confiable y cómo evitar preparadores poco éticos.

**Centros de Asistencia al Contribuyente.** Los contribuyentes deben hacer de IRS.gov su primera opción para obtener ayuda. Si no pueden resolver su asunto en línea, pueden recibir ayuda programando una cita para visitar un Centro de Asistencia al Contribuyente.

**IRS Free File y Formularios Interactivos.** El programa IRS Free File comenzará a aceptar declaraciones individuales a partir del viernes 9 de enero para contribuyentes que cumplan con los requisitos. Los contribuyentes que se sientan cómodos preparando sus propios impuestos pueden usar los Formularios Interactivos de IRS a partir del 26 de enero, sin importar el ingreso.

**MilTax.** Los miembros de las Fuerzas Armadas y algunos veteranos pueden usar el programa del Departamento de Defensa, MilTax (en inglés), que ofrece preparación gratuita de la declaración y software para presentación electrónica.

**Voluntarios certificados por el IRS.** Los programas Ayuda Voluntaria a los Contribuyentes del Impuesto sobre el Ingreso (VITA, por sus siglas en inglés) y Asesoramiento Tributario para los Ancianos (TCE, por sus siglas en inglés) ofrecen preparación básica de impuestos sin costo para personas que cumplan con los requisitos.

**FERNANDEZ JR.**  
**GAVINO**  
“THE WORKING PEOPLE’S  
CHOICE CANDIDATE”

Paid political adv. by the candidate

# NHI Person of the Year, Volunteers

## ‘Originators from the very start’: Mary Helen and Dr. Hector Gonzalez, 2025

Thirty years ago, a young man from **San Antonio**, Texas, learned of a **National Hispanic Institute** summer leadership program, and signed up for it. But as his mother recalls, the night before the program was to start, he expressed he didn't want to go after all. *“We told him, ‘Well, I’m sorry, but like any other Latino family, we’re committed, and you’re going,’* she said.

Indeed, **Analco González** attended the **Lorenzo de Zavala Youth Legislative Session** that summer of 1995, and it changed his life. By the next week, he had assembled five other students who wanted to help spread the word about **NHI** throughout **San Antonio**, and asked his parents to serve as the first adult leaders for what would become **NHI at San Antonio** (NHI@SA).

Now starting their fourth decade affiliated with **NHI**, **Mary Helen** and **Dr. Hector González**, Analco’s parents, have been the leading force in the organization’s growth and development in **San Antonio** and **South Texas**. Primarily working to build up **San Antonio** into one of **NHI**’s most consistently engaged regions, they’ve also been MVPs in supporting **NHI** founder and president **Ernesto Nieto**.

*“They are originators from the very start,”* **Nieto** noted. *“They’ve been loyal to the organization almost as long as the organization has existed.”* Because of that work, **Mary Helen** and **Dr. Hector González** are **NHI’s 2025 Persons of the Year**. Previous recipients include, **Humberto Saenz, Jr.** in 2016, and **Allexandria Ocasio-Cortez** in 2017.



### The ‘aha moment’

As **Mary Helen** recalls, on the way home from her son **Analco’s LDZ** experience, *“He kept talking about ...all the platicas we used to have as a family, everything we spoke of in terms of community, because we’d been involved in the community in various activities. All of a sudden, it made sense to him. He had that ‘aha moment.’”*

### The growth of NHI@SA

Recruiting has been a continual quest for the couple. *“We bought a fax machine, brought it to our home, and we would fax to over 100 high schools,”* **Hector** recalled, noting that the sheer number comes from **San Antonio** having 16 school districts plus private and charter schools. *“It required research to understand how each school district allows for outside organizations to recruit as it was important to ensure that every high school had the information.”*

He also claims that when **Analco** learned of the program while at **Health Careers High School**, it was through a chance visit

to his counselor – seeing an **NHI** flyer that had been discarded in a trash can at the side of the desk. *“We didn’t want a student to go through what Analco did,”* **Hector** said, determined to build relationships with high schools and universities throughout the metro area to create a network of people who believed in **NHI**’s mission.

### Trinity University

Most recently, **Hector**, working with **Anita Fernandez** and then **NHI Executive Vice President Nicole Nieto**, rekindled **NHI**’s relationship with **Trinity University**, which became the new home of the storied **Texas LDZ program** in 2025. With **St. Mary’s University** hosting the **Texas Ambassador Great Debate** to continue its summer program history, and with **Our Lady of the Lake University** hosting the **Texas Star Great Debate**, three of **NHI**’s 11 summer programs take place in **San Antonio**.

And they haven’t limited their engagement to **San Antonio**. When work took him to **Laredo** in 2010, **Hector** involved himself in growing **NHI** in that border city while continuing to grow **NHI@SA**.

**Protecting culture, legacy, and tradition**

**Fernandez**, the 2023 **NHI Person of the Year**, who has also been instrumental in **NHI@SA**’s growth, praises and thanks **Hector** and **Mary Helen** for their leadership.

*“NHI at San Antonio wouldn’t exist if it wasn’t for them,”* she stated. *“They have never shied away from stepping up to be either the catalyst or the beginning or open a door so that opportunities can exist and can continue to exist.”*

She also recognized the work they’ve done across communities in the **United States** and **Mexico**. **Hector** has been a national leader in epidemiology and community health, and **Mary Helen** has been a visionary, co-founder, and executive of one of the state’s largest community health plans, with the two of them also collaborating for a time, running a rural clinic.

*“Through their work as leaders, mentors, advisors, and familia, the **González** family has touched the lives of thousands of young people across the world,”* **Fernandez** said. *“Had we not gone through NHI and not had the opportunity to be involved locally through the foundation that they created ... we wouldn’t have a company,”* she added. *“We wouldn’t have lifelong friendships, and we most certainly would not have the next generation of leaders for our community. For that, I, along with countless others, will be forever grateful.”*

# **Mexican American Heritage Day Association**

## **Mission Statement**

The commemoration of **Mexican American Heritage Day** each February 2nd is intended to embody the enduring spirit and cultural strength of our Mexican American communities and reflect their ongoing impact on U.S. social and economic growth as well as cultural enrichment by focusing on public activities which demonstrate the highest social and civic values to present and future generations.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

### **A PEOPLE ROOTED IN HISTORY RISING ACROSS AMERICA**

Our commemoration of **Mexican American Heritage Day** each February 2nd embodies the enduring spirit and cultural strength of our Mexican American communities. Rooted in the legacy of the **Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo**, we honor those who became the first **Mexican Americans** and thrived despite shifting borders and historical upheaval. We celebrate living traditions—our family values, music, food, language, and art—as vibrant expressions of our identity, resilience, and pride. Emphasizing our continuity from generation to generation, we invite you to reflect on our history, our heritage, our culture, our indigeneity and our contributions to U.S. society, its economy, and its defense in time of war. On this day, we honor the past, recognize the present, and prepare for the future, affirming that our Mexican American culture is not only preserved but powerfully alive.

From coast to coast, **Mexican Americans** have become a foundational thread in the fabric of the United States. No longer concentrated solely in the Southwest, our communities now flourish in every region of the United States, in urban centers, in rural towns, and everywhere in between. As one of the fastest-growing and most influential populations in the country, Mexican Americans are not just

## **Facts about Mexican Americans**

**Mexican Americans** are the largest Hispanic group in the United States, making up 61% of the population. They have a long history in the U.S., with families settling in the Southwest before the nation's existence, and their culture reflects Indigenous, Spanish, and Mexican influences. **Mexican Americans** have significantly contributed to the U.S. economy and served in its military, while also facing discrimination and complex identity struggles between cultures.

## **Demographics & Identity**

- Population: Mexican Americans comprise over 11% of the U.S. population.
- Heritage: Their cultural heritage is a rich mix of Spanish, Mexican, and Indigenous traditions.
- Long-Standing Presence: Many Mexican American families lived in the Southwest before it became part of the U.S., leading to the saying, “we didn’t cross the border, the border crossed us.”

**History & Contributions**

- Labor & Economy: Recruited for labor in the 20th century, Mexican immigrants and their descendants played a vital role in transforming the Western U.S.
- Military Service: Over 500,000 Mexican Americans served in the U.S. military during World War II alone, receiving 13 Medals of Honor.

# Latino Candidates on the March 3rd Primary Ballot in Travis County

Candidate	Age	Office Seeking	Incumbent	Political Party	Education	Year of Graduation	Occupation
1. Patricia Abrego	51	Governor of Texas	No	Democrat	M.S. Texas A&M Kingsville Ph.D Texas A&M Univ.	2001 2009	Educator
2. Javi Andrade	48	State Representative District 19	No	Democrat	B.S. Univ. of Maryland	2016	Cybersecurity Analyst Department of Treasury
3. Mica Arrellano	39	State Board of Education District # 5	No	Republican			
4. Jennifer Balido	66	Court of Criminal Appeals Place # 9	No	Republican	B.A. University of Texas J.D. Texas Tech University	1987 1990	Judge Crim. Dist. Court # 1
5. Michael Berlanga	66	Comptroller of Public Accounts	No	Republican	B.A. St. Mary's University	1980	Certified Public Account
6. Greg Casar	36	U.S. Representative District 37	No	Democrat	B.A. Imobrtdoyu of Virginia	2011	United States Congressman
7. Esther Amalia de Jesus Fleharty	38	U.S. Representative District 37	No	Democrat	B.B.A. UTSA MP.H. NYU College of Global		Epidemiologist
8. Eustaquio "Stock" Castro-Mendoza	64	U.S. Representative District 11	No	Democrat			U.S. Navy Retired
9. Arturo Espinoza	62	Governor of Texas	No	Republican	B.A. San Jose State Univ.	1989	
10. Mary Ann Espiritu	55	Judge County Court at Law No. 5	Yes	Democrat	B.A. University of Texas at J.D. University of Toledo	1992 1995	Judge County Court at Law No. 5
11. Gavino Fernandez, Jr.	72	Travis County Commissioner Precinct 4	No	Democrat	Attended Juarez Lincoln University		Retired
12. Benjamin Flores	55	Commissioner of the General Land Office	No	Democrat	Attended Universidad Nacional Nacional Autónoma de México		Bay City Councilman and Rancher
13. Maria Luisa "Lulu" Flores	71	State Representative District 51	Yes	Democrat	B.A. University of Texas J.D. University of Texas	1977 1980	Attorney at Law Texas State Representative
14. Bianca Garcia	41	Judge County Court at Law No. 3	Yes	Democrat	B.A. George Washington J.D. University of Texas	2009 2012	Judge County Court at Law # 3
15. Montserrat Garibay	46	State Representative District 49	No	Democrat	B.A. University of Texas M.Ed University of Texas	2003 2013	Bilingual Teacher
16. Raul Arturo Gonzalez	58	Justice of the Peace Precinct 4	Yes	Democrat	B.A. University of Texas J.D. University of Texas	1988 1995	Justice of the Peace Precinct # 4
17. Maya Guerra Gamble	53	District Judge 459th Judicial District	Yes	Democrat	B.A. Yale University J.D. Yale law School	1993 1996	Judge 459th Judicial District
18. Denise Hernández	36	Judge County Court at Law No. 6	Yes	Democrat	B.A. Uni Incarnate Word J.D. Texas Tech Law Sch	2000 2013	Judge County Court of Law 6
19. Gina Hinojosa	52	Governor of Texas	No	Democrat	B.A. University of Texas J.D. George Washington	1995 1999	Attorney at Law
20. Perla Muñoz Hopkins	48	Lt. Governor of Texas	No	Republican	B.A. Excelsior University Three Masters Degrees	2003	Education Advocate

# Latino Candidates on the March 3rd Primary Ballot in Travis County

<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Office Seeking</b>	<b>Incumbent</b>	<b>Political Party</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Year of Graduation</b>	<b>Occupation</b>
21. Susan na Ledesma-Woody	44	Travis County Commissioner Precinct 4	No	Democrat			Project Manager Advanced Micro Devices
22. Stephanie Limon Bazan	37	State Board of Education District 5	No	Democrat	B.A. St. Edwards Univ.	2002	Community Activist
23. Dyana Limon-Mercado	49	Travis County Clerk	Yes	Democrat	B.A. Texas State Univ. M.B.A. UTSA	2005 2008	Travis County Clerk
24. Neto Longoria	33	State Board of Education District 5	No	Democrat	B.A. University of Texas	2017	School Teacher
25. Samantha Lopez-Resendez	36	State Represenative District 50	No	Democrat	B.A. Texas A&M University	2016	Chief of Staff to Donna Howard
26. Jose Loya	44	Commissioner of the General Land Office	No	Democrat	Attended Thomas Jefferson University		
27. Ofelia Maldonado Zapata	65	Travis County Commissioner Precinct 4	No	Democrat	Travis High School Attended ACC	1978	Community Activist
28. Jessica Martinez	33	Texas State Representative District 51	No	Republican	No information found		
29. Georg e Morales 111	51	Travis County Commissioner Precinct 4	No	Democrat	B.A. Huston-Tillotson University	2018	Law Enforcement
30. Jose Navarro Balbuena	40	Governor of Texas	No	Democrat			Tax strategis
31. Dolores Ortega-Carter	75	Travis County Treasurer	Yes	Democrat	B.A. Texas A&M Univ. M.A. Texas A&M Univ.	1976 1980	Travis County Treasurer
32. Gabriel Padilla	45	Travis County Constable	Yes	Democrat			Travis County Constable Pct. # 4
33. Lauren B. Peña	45	United States Congress District 37	No	Republican	B.A. Southern New Hampshire University	2024	
34. Bernie Reyna	37	U.S. Representative District 10	No	Democrat			
35. Josh Reyna	43	State Representative District 49	No	Democrat	B.B.A. St. Edwards Univerty J.D. Univ. of Texas Law		Chief of staff and General Counsel
36. Pedro "Pete" Ruiz	47	U. S. Representative District 11	No	Democrat	No information found		
37. Al Saenz	44	Travis County Constable Precinct 4	Yes	Democrat	B.A. Texas State University	2004	Travis County Constable Precinct # 4
38. Marcos Veloz	42 /	Lt. Governor	No	Democrat	No information found		
39. Angela "Tia Angie" Villescaz	58	Governor of Texas	No	Democrat	Uvalde High School Attended University of Texas	1985	Para legal
40. Gisela D. Triana	59	Justice Supreme Court - Place 8	No	Democrat	B.A. Uni of Texas San Antonio J.D. Univ. of Texas at Austin	1985 1988	Justice - Third Court of Appeals
41. Judith Zaffirini	80	Texas State Senator District 21	Yes	Democrat	B.A. Univ. of Texas at Austin Ph.D Univ. of Texas at Austin	1972 1976	Texas State Senator Businesswoman

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For  
Uvalde County  
Commissioner  
Precinct 2

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CYNTHIA MILLONZI  
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\* INTEGRITY IN SERVICE \*  
\* INNOVATION IN PRACTICE \*  
\* EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNANCE \*

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*Feliz Año Nuevo*  
2026

**Lulu Flores**  
State Representative HD 51

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*Wishing you and Your Family a Happy New Year and Prosperous New Year!*



## *Mix 'n' Mash – On Repeat: The Musicians Who Shaped Us*



In this year's *Mix 'n' Mash*, Mexic-Arte invited artists to honor the musicians and performers who have made a lasting impact. The exhibition features work by more than 200 local and regional artists, each created on high-quality panels generously donated by Ampersand Art Supply.



The artworks celebrate the people behind the sound—legendary figures, emerging artists, and local musicians whose voices, styles, and stories continue to shape culture. Spanning genres, traditions, and generations from around the world, the exhibition reflects music's universal influence.

Through realism, abstraction, symbolism, and reinterpretation, artists capture the energy of performance, the intimacy of creation, and the qualities that make these musicians unforgettable. Together, these works highlight the power of music and the individuals who continue to shape how we listen, feel, and connect.

**Mix'n'Mash** is derived from the terms "mix-and-match" (to combine elements

harmoniously and interestingly) and "mash-up" (a work that blends two or more songs or pieces of art from different genres); *Mix 'n' Mash* is an original concept by Mexic-Arte Museum, which refers not only to the mashing of genres into one work of art, but also to the mixing of work by various artists to create a unique collector's set.

The art sale increases awareness about the community's visual arts and art collecting, provides funding for the museum's exhibitions, supports educational programming for children and adults, and sustains upkeep and care of the permanent collection. Artworks may also be purchased through the museum's Online Store.

Thank You!

The professional quality acid-free panels used by the artists are Gessobords, made in **Austin, Texas** and generously donated by Ampersand Art Supply. **Mexic-Arte Museum** would like to recognize and thank all the participating artists for their participation and support.

# The Looming Decline of the U.S. Population

by Rogelio Sáenz,  
2023 Ernest W. Burgess Fellow

Throughout the history of the U.S., its population has never declined. But now, it is about to. With its mass deportation operation, the Trump administration is eliminating immigration growth as the nation's most prominent component of population change. As the U.S. population continues to grow older with fewer births and a net loss of immigrants, overall population decline is likely to follow. The consequences of this will be monumental and felt widely across the economy, in educational and religious institutions, and beyond.

There is a long ongoing debate concerning the relationship between population growth and economic growth. Certainly, there are some countries with population decline and favorable economic growth, such as China, Japan, and Taiwan. Nonetheless, I take the position that mass deportation in the U.S. will have major negative impacts on the economy and beyond. Unlike some countries in Europe and East Asia where population decline was telegraphed well before it occurred, the impending decline in the U.S. has been a completely unanticipated, sudden jolt—not in declining births and rising deaths, but in the ouster of workers and consumers. Essentially, we are in uncharted territory.

I contend that dwindling numbers of immigrants mean fewer workers, consumers, students, innovators, congregants, soldiers, friends, and loved ones. The departure of children, many born in this country, signifies the future absence of community members and will result in more school closures and fewer college students in the years to come. On the work front, the job growth rate between January and August 2025 was slightly more than half of that a year ago, with nearly 1.1 million fewer non-citizen workers. The loss of workers creates greater challenges to maintain a Social Security system that will see rising numbers of beneficiaries with fewer workers to support them.

In early June, the editorial board of The Wall Street Journal published an op-ed titled "The Economic Drain of Mass Deportation." The editorial expresses concern over the impact of immigration declines on the GDP and concludes with a quote from the closing remarks of a report by the Fed-

eral Reserve Bank of Dallas: "There is good reason to be concerned that immigration policies that lead to a reduction in net unauthorized immigration relative to historical trends, all else equal, are likely to significantly lower real GDP growth relative to the counterfactual." The Dallas Fed findings are consistent with those of an article published by the Brookings Institution and a working paper from the Peterson Institute for International Economics.

## The Demographic Context

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. posted its historically slowest rate of population growth with an average annual growth rate of 0.49 percent between 2016 and 2022, well below the 0.72 percent average annual growth rate that occurred during the Great Depression. The growth rate improved somewhat in 2022–2023 and 2023–2024 when the nation's population grew by 0.83 percent and 0.98 percent, respectively. In fact, the growth rate of 2023–2024 was on par with the average growth rate between 2000 and 2010.

The latest Census Bureau estimate showed that the U.S. population grew by 3.3 million between 2023 and 2024, with 84 percent of the growth due to net immigration (the number of immigrants minus the number of emigrants) and the remainder due to natural increase (the number of births minus the number of deaths). Without net immigration, the U.S. population would have increased by a minuscule 0.15 percent.

If countries with declining fertility, like the U.S., are to grow, it will be primarily through immigration. The U.S. ratio of births to deaths fell from 1.51 in 2013 to



1.16 in 2023, and it is only a matter of time until deaths outnumber births. This has already been the case for the white population since 2016; in 2023, there were 0.77 white births for every 1 white death.

## A Declining Immigrant Population

Data on the number of people who have been deported as well as those who have left the country voluntarily are not readily available, making

it difficult to track the number of people who are no longer here. Nonetheless, there are a few estimates. The most recent figures from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, released in late October, show that more than two million people have left the country, "including 1.6 million who have voluntarily self-deported and over 527,000 deportations." In addition, the Pew Research Center estimates a net decline of 1.4 million foreign-born persons living in the U.S. from January to June 2025.

## Estimating U.S. Population Change

The Pew Research Center estimate alongside the U.S. Census Bureau's components of population change between July 1, 2023, and July 1, 2024, allow for an estimation of the U.S. population change between July 1, 2024, and July 1, 2025. To do this, I used Pew's net immigration estimate of -1.4 million and, in the absence of updated data, the natural change of 500,000 (rounded off from the figure of 518,638) that was in place last year. While the Pew immigration decline figure is for the January–June 2025 period, evidence shows that immigration was already dropping by the second half of 2024. In June 2024, amid his campaign for reelection to the presidency, President Biden initiated a ban on asylum seekers

caught along the southern border, which substantially reduced the entry of newcomers into the country between then and the end of the year. The number of border crossings dropped 81 percent between December 2023 and December 2024.

The net outmigration of 1.4 million and the natural increase of 500,000 yield a population decline of 900,000 in the June 2024–June 2025 period. Yet, even if the net outmigration was half as large (-700,000) as the Pew Research Center's -1.4 million figure, the estimate would suggest a population loss of at least 200,000. Ultimately, the U.S. Census Bureau will produce official estimates of the U.S. population in June 2026.

## The Lingering Impact of the Departure of Immigrants

The reduction of immigrants will have lingering impacts on natural change (the difference between the number of births and deaths), the other component of population change. Indeed, we are already seeing a decline among women of childbearing age, who traditionally have higher fertility rates. In addition, because immigrants tend to be relatively young, their absence will result in an even older U.S. population and rising numbers of annual deaths.

## The Disproportionate Impact on the Latino Population

Since the onset of the Trump administration's mass deportation operation, it has become increasingly clear that Latinos are a major target. While data are not available to confirm this speculation, news-media images of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids and apprehensions are mainly of Latino individuals. Analysis of data from the 2025 monthly Current Population Survey (CPS) shows a decline of 663,000 noncitizen Latino workers between January and August 2025, although part of the decline may reflect a lower survey response rate among these workers. The disproportionate deportation of Latinos will undoubtedly result in a major slowdown in the high levels of Latino population growth, which accounted for 56 percent of U.S. population growth between 2023 and 2024. The net immigration of

Latinos will certainly tank—but so will the number of births, as a substantial share of women giving birth are no longer here.

### Conclusions

Many countries around the world, most prominently China, worry about population decline. The U.S. has long been protected from this fate due to its attraction of immigrants, who tend to be relatively young, along with its youthful Latino population. This has changed dramatically with the Trump administration's mass deportation: We are likely to see an unprecedented decline in the U.S. population, and I believe that this will carry monumental negative consequences throughout all of our institutions. The Trump administration's hopes for increasing births will take a very long time to produce workers and taxpayers. Immigrants who are being rounded up and deported have long represented a valuable asset to this country, but sadly, many are no longer with us and many others will be gone soon as well.



# Genoveva Morales Refused to Quit! For 46 Years She Kept the Uvalde Consolidated Independent School District in Her Sights

## The Genoveva Morales Story

A woman in Uvalde, Texas recently passed away. She made it to 97 years of age. People who knew her remember what she did 55 years ago. Others have only heard bits and pieces of her story.

In either case **Genoveva Morales** will go down in history as a pioneer for having the courage to stand up and refusing to let a poor educational system destroy the hopes and aspirations of her eleven children.

**Genoveva** came of age during the famous **Uvalde** public walkout in 1970. At the time she was, 42 years old. Her oldest son, **Daniel**, we called him **Danny**, was a senior at **Uvalde High School**. He was going to be the first in his family to graduate from high school. But the winds of social change were blowing in a different direction in 1970 and **Danny** would not walk across the stage to receive his high school diploma.

For on April 14th, 1970, students in the **Uvalde** public schools begin the longest public school walkout in **Texas** history. They stayed out of school for a total of six weeks protesting at first the pending dismissal of a popular **Mexican American** teacher and then the poor delivery of a basic education to **Mexican American** students. **Danny** was one of the more than 600 students who boycotted classes during the walkout.

His mother, **Genoveva Morales**, would become part of the parent's group that decided to support the students. Operating as the **Mexican American parent's Association**, (MAPA) **Genoveva** followed **Frances Ybarra** as the second president of the organization.

While the walkout was started by members of the youth group called **MAYO** (Mexican American Youth Organization) and then spurred forward by the members of the **CYO** (Catholic Youth Organization), it was the parent's group, **MAPA** which represented the third change in the leadership of the walkout.

And while the all Anglo **Uvalde School District**

**Board of Trustees** refused to negotiate with the students or parents unless they first returned to class, the walkout came to an end in late May when the school year ended. But this was not the end.

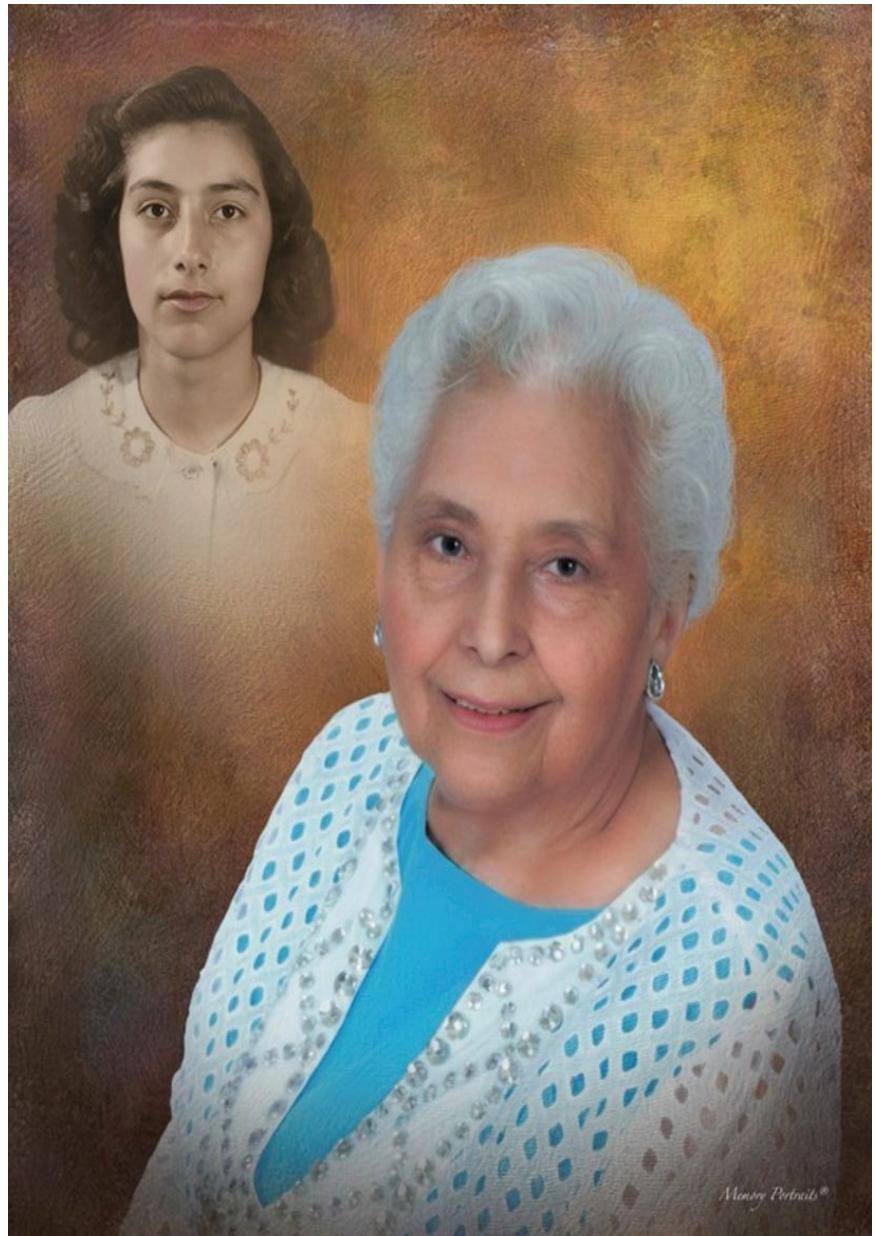
**Mrs. Morales**, with the assistance of **MALDEF** (Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund) soon filed a lawsuit against the **Uvalde** school district alleging discrimination and on going segregation. The lawsuit was titled **Morales vs. Board of Education**. The lawsuit asserted that the district failed to provide equal educational services to Mexican American students.

When the case went to court in 1971, the judge dismissed it stating the school district never did anything wrong. Mrs. disagreed and appealed to the 5th Circuit. In 1975, this court, said no, there is something wrong in Uvalde, Texas. The Uvalde school board appealed to the United states Supreme Court which refused to hear the case and

The school district was ordered to remedy the issues in the lasuit and report back to the court. But it refused and instead spent millions of dollars fighting the lawsuit. With the passage of time things in Uvalde changed, all be it slowly. Finally in 2008, **Mrs. Morales** and **MALDEF** signed a consent order which recognized strides the district had made over the years.

But it was not until 2016, that the school board finally came around and decided to come into full compliance with the demands of the lawsuit. **Mrs. Morales** was now 88 years old.

To be sure, there were those in **Uvalde** who privately critize **Mrs. Morales** for holding the district the account for all these years. But she knew in her heart that standing ewith her children and the for that matter all the children was the right thing to do. We are forever indebted to her.



**Genoveva V. Morales**

**November 11th, 1928**  
**December 15th, 2025**



# Still Making Texas: An Anniversary Symposium

David Montejano's seminal *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986* is celebrating 40 years in print by the University of Texas Press. A generation of scholars continue to cite Montejano's work as a model for revisionist historical sociology. This symposium will gather inter-generational voices to reflect on the book's lasting legacy and influence on new scholarly directions.

All are welcome to join us February 20-21, 2026 at the Gordon White Building for panel discussions with prominent scholars from across the United States, as well as a graduate student-focused showcase of emerging scholarship and two evening plenaries on the past, present, and future of the field of Texas history.

Featuring these and many more field-defining scholars:



David Montejano



Sonia Hernandez



Benjamin Johnson



Monica Muñoz-Martinez



Carlos Blanton



Emilio Zamora



Neil Foley

February 20-21, 2026  
Gordon White Building  
210 W. 24th St



The University of Texas at Austin  
Department of Mexican American  
& Latina/o Studies  
College of Liberal Arts

LATINO STUDIES



## Leadership with a Latino Twist.

The mission of the **Center for Mexican American Studies** (CMAS) is to serve Texas and the nation as a leader in the intellectual development of **Mexican American** and **Latina/o** studies. Faculty and students affiliated with **CMAS** study the cultural practices, historical development, and socio-economic conditions of Mexican American and Latina/o communities.

Born of the civil rights movement, the Center was established in 1970 with renown **Professor Américo Paredes** as one of its principal founders and its first director. The University's establishment and continued support of **CMAS** represents the institutional recognition that the **Mexican American** and **Latina/o** communities are crucial to understanding the past, present, and future of the United States and the Americas.



# Comisión de Calidad Ambiental de Texas

**SOLICITUD.** John B. Sanfilippo ha solicitado a la Comisión de Calidad Ambiental de Texas (TCEQ, por sus siglas en inglés) la renovación del permiso de calidad del aire número 55250, que autorizaría la continuación del funcionamiento de procesamiento de alimentos situado en 16435 Interstate Highway 35 North, Selma, condado de Guadalupe, Texas 78154. <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/newsourcereview/airpermits-pending-permit-apps>. Este enlace a un mapa electrónico de la ubicación general del sitio o de la instalación se ofrece como cortesía pública y no forma parte de la solicitud o del anuncio. Para conocer la ubicación exacta, consulte la solicitud. <https://gisweb.tceq.texas.gov/LocationMapper/?marker=-98.301882,29.591216&level=13> La instalación existente está autorizada a emitir los siguientes contaminantes atmosféricos: monóxido de carbono, óxidos de nitrógeno, compuestos orgánicos, material particulado incluyendo partículas con diámetros de 10 micras o menos y 2.5 micras o menos, y dióxido de azufre.

Esta solicitud se presentó a la TCEQ el 12 de Noviembre de 2025. La solicitud estará disponible para su visualización y copia en la oficina central de la TCEQ, la oficina regional de San Antonio de la TCEQ, y la Biblioteca Pública de Schertz ubicada en 798 Schertz Parkway, Schertz, Condado de Guadalupe, Texas a partir del primer día de la publicación de este aviso. El expediente de cumplimiento de la instalación, si existe, está a disposición del público en el San Antonio oficina regional de la TCEQ. La solicitud (cualquier actualización inclusiva) está disponible electrónicamente en la siguiente página web: <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/airpermit-applications-notices>.

El director ejecutivo ha determinado que la solicitud está administrativamente completa y llevará a cabo una revisión técnica de la misma. La información contenida en la solicitud indica que esta renovación del permiso no supondrá un aumento de las emisiones permitidas ni dará lugar a la emisión de un contaminante atmosférico no emitido anteriormente. La TCEQ puede actuar sobre esta solicitud sin buscar más comentarios del público o dar la oportunidad de una audiencia de caso impugnado si se cumplen ciertos criterios.

**COMENTARIOS DEL PÚBLICO.** Puede presentar comentarios púbi-



## AVISO DE RECIBIMIENTO DE LA SOLICITUD E INTENCIÓN DE OBTENER RENOVACIÓN DEL PERMISO DE AIRE (NORI)

### NÚMERO DE PERMISO 55250

**cos a la Oficina del Secretario Oficial en la dirección indicada a continuación.** La TCEQ considerará todos los comentarios del público al elaborar una decisión final sobre la solicitud y el director ejecutivo preparará una respuesta a esos comentarios. Cuestiones como el valor de la propiedad, el ruido, la seguridad del tráfico y la zonificación están fuera de la jurisdicción de la TCEQ para ser tratadas en el proceso de permiso.

**OPORTUNIDAD DE UNA AUDIENCIA DE CASO IMPUGNADO.** Puede solicitar una audiencia de caso impugnado si usted es una persona que puede verse afectada por las emisiones de contaminantes atmosféricos de la instalación tiene derecho a solicitar una audiencia. Si solicita una audiencia de caso impugnado, deberá presentar lo siguiente (1) su nombre (o, en el caso de un grupo o asociación, un representante oficial), dirección postal y número de teléfono durante el día; (2) el nombre del solicitante y el número de permiso; (3) la declaración “[Yo/nosotros] solicitamos una audiencia de caso impugnado”; (4) una descripción específica de cómo se vería/n afectado/s por la solicitud y las emisiones atmosféricas de la instalación de una manera no común al público en general; (5) la ubicación y la distancia de su propiedad en relación con la instalación; (6) una descripción del uso que usted hace de la propiedad que puede verse afectada por la instalación; y (7) una lista de

todas las cuestiones de hecho controvertidas que presente durante el periodo de comentarios. Si la solicitud la realiza un grupo o asociación, deberá identificarse con nombre y dirección física a uno o varios miembros que estén legitimados para solicitar una audiencia. También deben identificarse los intereses que el grupo o asociación pretende proteger. También puede presentar sus propuestas de ajustes a la solicitud/permiso que satisfagan sus preocupaciones.

**El plazo para presentar una solicitud de audiencia de caso impugnado es de 15 días a partir de la publicación del anuncio en el periódico. Si la solicitud se presenta a tiempo, el plazo para solicitar una audiencia de caso impugnado se ampliará a 30 días después del envío de la respuesta a los comentarios.**

Si se presenta a tiempo cualquier solicitud de audiencia de caso impugnado, el Director Ejecutivo remitirá la solicitud y cualquier solicitud de audiencia de caso impugnado a los Comisionados para su consideración en una reunión programada de la Comisión. A menos que la solicitud se remita directamente a una audiencia de caso impugnado, el director ejecutivo enviará por correo la respuesta a los comentarios junto con la notificación de la reunión de la Comisión a todas las personas que hayan presentado comentarios o estén en la lista de correo de esta solicitud. La Comisión sólo podrá conceder una solicitud de audiencia de caso impugnado sobre cuestiones que el solicitante haya presenta-

do en sus comentarios a tiempo y que no hayan sido retirados posteriormente. **Si se concede una audiencia, el objeto de la misma se limitará a las cuestiones de hecho controvertidas o a las cuestiones mixtas de hecho y de derecho relativas a los problemas de calidad del aire pertinentes y materiales presentados durante el periodo de comentarios.** Cuestiones como el valor de la propiedad, el ruido, la seguridad del tráfico y la zonificación quedan fuera de la jurisdicción de la Comisión para ser tratadas en este procedimiento.

**LISTA DE CORREO.** Además de presentar comentarios públicos, puede solicitar que se le incluya en una lista de correo para recibir futuros avisos públicos sobre esta solicitud específica enviando una solicitud por escrito a la Oficina del Secretario Oficial en la dirección que figura a continuación.

**CONTACTOS E INFORMACIÓN DE LA AGENCIA.** Los comentarios y solicitudes del público deben presentarse vía electrónicamente en [www14.tceq.texas.gov/epic/eComment/](http://www14.tceq.texas.gov/epic/eComment/), o por escrito a la Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Office of the Chief Clerk, MC-105, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, Texas 78711-3087. Tenga en cuenta que cualquier información de contacto que proporcione, incluyendo su nombre, número de teléfono, dirección de correo electrónico y dirección física, formará parte del registro público de la agencia. Para más información sobre el proceso de tramitación de permisos, favor de llamar al Programa de Educación pública de la TCEQ sin costo al 1-800-687-4040, o bien visitar su sitio web, [www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/pep](http://www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/pep). Para información en español, favor de llamar al 1-800-687-4040. También es posible consultar oportunidades de participación pública en nuestro sitio web, [www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/participation](http://www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/participation).

También se puede obtener más información de John B. Sanfilippo & Son, Inc., 16435 Interstate Highway 35 North, Selma, Texas 78154-1200 o llamando a Mr. Emilio Alvarado al (210) 748-1942.

Fecha de emisión del aviso: 11 de diciembre, 2025

# This was not a Merry Christmas

by Alfredo Santos c/s

*Hace uno días recibí la noticias que un amigo mio ya estaba en sus ultimas. I scrambled the internet for more information and found nothing except that his passing was imminent. ¿Pero como? I asked myself. We were basically the same age, 73. I had not been in touch with him for a while and his phone was not working. I called Maria, his main squeeze en San Antonio and she is the one who told me that he was at the end. He wasn't eating or drinking anything. She provided the address of the hospice care facility where he was staying but cautioned me that he did not recognize anyone anymore. I shook my head in disbelief.*

## Cuando Conoci a Smiley por la Primera Vez

I first met Rogelio "Smiley" Rojas in **California** in the early 1970s. He was a member of **El Teatro Campesino**. I was in a Teatro group called **Hijos del Sol** in **Stockton, California**. We connected because we had both spent time in **Texas** as participants in the **Chicano Movement**. **Smiley** was very involved in **Teatro de Los Barrios en San Antonio**. He was also involved con **La Raza Unida Party** during its formative years.

**Smiley** had a presence about him. Behind that ever present smile was a man who truly enjoyed interacting with people. After I transferred to **UC Berkeley**, I continued to stay in touch with **Smiley**. When **Luis Valdez** and others created **TENAZ**, (Teatro Nacional de Aztlan) **Smiley** and I became officers and helped organize the **4th Annual Teatro Festival en Mexico City**. We had two trains meet us at the border of **Laredo/Nuevo Laredo** and in **California** at **Mexicali/Calexico**. All together some 500 teatristas head to **Mexico City** in 1974 for two weeks of presentations, workshops and fellowship. **Smiley** was instrumental in making this event happen.

**Smiley** lived with his wife **Olivia** and their daughter in **San Juan Bautista, California**. In fact, the entire **Teatro Campesino** lived in **San Juan** in houses scattered around the little town. After graduating from **Berkeley**, I went to work for the **United Farm Workers Union** in **Watsonville, California** which was not too far from **San Juan Bautista**. As a labor organizer I would stop by the **ETC** in



the evening and watch them rehearse their latest plays.

In 1975, I came back to **Texas** for Christmas and **Smiley, Olivia** and a farm worker from **Crystal City** caught a ride with me. I had a 1956 Chevy and we dropped **Mr. Mata** off first in **Crystal City** and then drove to **San Anto** and dropped off **Smiley** and family. The plan was to pick them up in **Juarez, Mexcio** on such and such date and time. It was a long shot in terms of planning and execution but we did it. I arrived in the parking lot at the bus station in **Juarez** at the stated time and there was **Smiley** with family. (And this was in the days of no cell phones)

We spent the night at the house of a tia de **Olivia** and the next day crossed the border into **El Paso**. **Olivia** had somehow managed to get a hold of a parrot and convinced her aunt to put it in the trunk of her car. So we crossed the border and the tia technically smuggled the parrot. The operation was a success and we continued on to **California**. But the bird didn't make it. It died somewhere in the **Los Angeles** area.

In March of 1976, it was time for me to move on from the **UFW**. One day **Smiley**

and **Oliva** came over to the house and they brought a jug of wine. The purpose of their visit was recruitment. The **Teatro Campesino** had been working on a play called "**El Fin del Mundo**" and were going to take it on a nation wide tour.

They needed some more actors. *Pues con la ayuda del vino* they laid out the itinerary, how much we would get paid and other details. Regarding pay, I was making five dollars a week as a labor organizer for the union. **Smiley** said as an actor with **ETC**, I would be paid the grand sum of \$25

dollars a week! (What can say? It was the 1970s, we were young and the **Chicano Movement** was going full blast!)

The tour around the country lasted about 6 weeks. We traveled in two vans and one two ton 1957 truck. It seemed like in every state something broke and in addition to being an actor I became the tour mechanic. It was in **Wyoming** that the motor in the 57 truck finally blew up. We had to call **Phil Esparza** back in **San Juan** and tell him what happened. With shows still on our calendar, **Phil** had us dismantle as much of the wiring and hoses in the broken truck. He said he was coming to **Wyoming** with a mechanic and another engine.

Sure enough. **Phil** showed up and found us walking down the road where we had just picked up some Chinese food. He wouldn't even let us go back to the motel to eat. It was about three in the afternoon and we had to change out a motor in a big truck and be on our way. **Smiley** and I went in search of a tow truck with a long boom so we could lift the motor. We finished everything and got it running. It was now close to midnight. **Phil** insisted that we take off and get back on schedule.

We made back to **California** and did the final shows. I went to live at **Smiley's** for a short while and began working in the fields. I worked all summer in the lettuce and cauliflower and then headed down to **UCLA** for graduate school. **Smiley** and I continued to stay in touch over the years.

In 1998, I was now living in **Uvalde, Texas**. Some friends and I decided to get into the Charter school movement and wrote a proposal that got approved by the **Texas Education Agency**. We were a second generation charter school. It was called the **Gabriel Tafolla Charter School**, after a community activist from **Uvalde**. When it came time to hire teachers, **Rogelio "Smiley" Rojas** was at the top of our list. But he was living in **San Juan Bautista, California**.

## We made him an offer he couldn't refuse

We got a hold of some extra money and agreed to pay all of his moving costs if he would come back to **Texas** and teach at the charter school. *"Te mandamos la feria right now! Como vez?* He agreed and that is how **Smiley** came back to **Texas**. We had him on a flexible schedule and so he commuted every day to **Uvalde**. He had a great rapport with the students!

In the 2000s, I moved to **Austin** and **Smiley** and I continued to stay in touch. I was now in the newspaper business and **Smiley** became one of our distributors. I last saw **Smiley** at the **50th Anniversary** of the **Raza Unida Party** that was held in **San Antonio, Texas** 2022. I met his new girlfriend and we visited for a while. He was remodeling the family home where he lived and I stayed there a few times.

**Smiley** was one of those guys who you could not see for a while but when you did, you just picked up the conversation where you left off. As I think of his passing I am very sad to have to let go of our friendship. It has been an amazing 50 years plus of adventure and good times. *Y es con mucha pena* that I have say good-bye to a good friend. *Te watcho later*.

**Rogelio "Smiley" Rojas**  
August 20th, 1952  
December 26th, 2025

# Calender of Events

**January 10th, 2026** - Democratic Rallry in Donna, Texas at 121 South 8th Street dtarting at 6:30pm

**January 24th, 2026** - Oral History Training with **Dr. Sarah Zenaida Gould** of the Mexican American

**February 14th, 2026** - Celebrating 50th Anniversary of **Fiesta Ballroom in Seguin, Texas**. Headliner: **Little Joe y La Familia y La 45**. Event starts at 7:00om. For more information please call" 830-372-0161 Friday

**January 16, 2026** Day 1: SALSA XXX - Symposium About Language and Society, Austin Glickman Conference Center 6:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Celebración Date: Wednesday **January 21, 2026**

Time: 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Location: Gordon-White Building 2.206

Come together for Celebración as we do every January to launch together into the spring semester. We'll have free food, giveaways and games, PLUS we'll unveil the three student artworks of the Sam Z. Coronado Poster Art Contest, sponsored by the Center for Mexican American Studies. This year's theme is "Education is Our Strength" and we can't wait to share the winning entries with you! The contest is open every Fall and winners enjoy

**Celebrating 50th Anniversary**  
**FIESTA BALLROOM**  
Grammy Winning  
**LITTLE JOE y La Familia**  
A Special Farewell to Seguin  
&  
**LA 45**  
With Special Guest  
**Sunny Ozuna**  
Dinner & Dance  
**FEBRUARY 14, 2026**  
**7 pm to 1 am**  
**830-372-0161**

cash prizes and a lot of exposure of their art all year long by Latino Studies. Don't miss Celebración. All are welcome, so bring your friends!

**Thursday January 29, 2026**

Talk "A Life in Time: How One Historian Expanded His Boundaries" by A. G. Hopkins, Pembroke College - University of Cambridge  
GAR 4.100

**2:00 PM - 3:30 PM Friday January 30, 2026**

Alumni Speaker Series: "Mezcal in Oaxaca" Book Presentation  
SRH 1.313, LLILAS Hackett Room  
12:00 PM - 1:30 PMFebruary

**February 7th, 2026** - Toma Mi Corazón at La Peña in Austin, Texas. See back page for more information

**February 20 and 21st, 2026** - David Montejano and others will review and speak about the 1986 book. The Making of Texas 1836 1986-

**MUSEO GUADALUPE AZTLÁN**

**ORAL HISTORY TRAINING CAMP**  
WITH DR. SARAH ZENAIDA GOULD

Learn about oral histories, how to conduct them, and how to join the MACRI Oral History Corps to help preserve San Antonio's Civil Rights stories!

**Saturday, January 24, 2026**  
10 AM - 11:30 AM  
MACRI Visitor Center  
2123 Buena Vista Street  
San Antonio, Texas 78207

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LA PEÑA GALLERY PRESENTS

# DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY

In Light of Conversations with **Russell Lee**  
An Exhibition and Talk Series by **Alan Pogue**



Russell Lee Werner



Alan Pogue

- **Sunday, January 11, 2026 at 3:00 p.m.**  
*My Path in Photography: Documenting Movements for Social Justice*
- **Sunday, January 18, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.**  
*Demonstration of Photographic Printmaking*
- **Sunday, January 25, 2026 at 3:00 p.m.**  
*The Economics of Aesthetics: Reality Versus Artifice*  
(How I Cornered the Market in Impoverished 501(c)(3)s)

Exhibition dates: January 4 - 31, 2026

## La Peña's 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraiser



*Toma Mi Corazón Celebration*  
**Saturday, February 7, 2026**

Celebration begins at 3:00 PM

*Support La Peña's educational programs by acquiring  
beautiful hearts created by artists and patrons of La Peña.*



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Visit the gallery Monday through Friday 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM, Saturday 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM.

La Peña is funded and supported in part by the City of Austin through the Economic Growth & Development Services Office/Cultural Arts Division and by grants from the Alice Xiang Bryant Foundation, the Texas Commission on the Arts, César Chávez, and an award from the National Endowment for the Arts. Investing in investment in the Arts is an investment in Austin's future. Visit Austin at [www.visitaustralia.org](http://www.visitaustralia.org)

