June 26th 1996

Hispanic News

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Lino and Elisa Diaz retiring to San Antonio after 42 years service to San Bernardino

A group of friends are sponsoring a "despedida" or farewell reception for Lino and Elisa Diaz, long time educators and community persons, who are re-establishing their home in San Antonio after a 42 year residency in the Inland Empire.

"We are paying tribute to a wonderful couple who have significantly impacted our community, especially in the advancement of education and their contribution of time and energies to better our community," stated Richard Gonzalez, a close friend.

The open reception for the Diaz' will be held on Saturday, June 29th, at the Radisson Hotel, 295 N. "E" Street, San Bernardino, with a no-host beginning at 6:00 PM. For additional information call at (909) 824-1524 for (909) 687-6190.

In 1954, the Diaz' arrived in San Bernardino from El Paso, Texas, to continue their teaching careers and raise their family.

Eliza Diaz was an elementary school teacher in the San Bernardino School District for 23 years. During her teaching career in the District, Diaz was involved in a number of educational and community organizations, including the National Education Association, California Teachers Association, Association of Mexican-American Educators, American Association of University Women, Sister City Committee, American Association of Business Women, Somos Hermanas Unidas and San Bernardino County School Boards Association.

In 1981, Diaz was elected to the San

Continued on back page

EDISON INTERNATIONAL NAMES:

Frank Quevedo V.P. of Equal Opportunity

ROSEMEAD, CA - May 21, 1996 - Edison International's board of directors has elected Frank Quevedo vice president of Southern California Edison's Equal Opportunity Department, effective June 1, it was announced today by the electric utility.

Quevedo, who serves as Edison's Director of Equal Opportunity, manages the company's programs focused on equal opportunity employment, supplier diversity and Edison's workplace initiatives for employees.

"Frank Quevedo has extensive experience in equal opportunity and employee programs at Edison and other business institutions, said John E. Bryson, Edison's chairman and CEO. "He also brings to the position many years of involvement in the diverse ethnic communities within Edison's service territory."

"Frank's appointment as vice president is a reflection of Edison's continued commitment to diversity in its workforce and to various procurement programs directed at our customers and suppliers."


Cal-State, San Bernardino President Anthony Evans, in a press release, has indicated his strong support for the forthcoming Mariachi Concert to be presented by the Sinfonia Mexicana Society at Cal-State, San Bernardino's Coussoulis Arena on September 28th, 1996.

Evans stated, "I am delighted that Cal-State, San Bernardino will be the site for the Mariachi/Vikki Carr Concert on September 28th. Our University looks for opportunities to help promote the cultural diversity and richness of this region, but few, if any, activities offer as much artistic enjoyment as the Annual Mariachi Concert in San Bernardino."

"My own appreciation of mariachi music has developed over the past 20 years as my wife and I have taken eight extended trips throughout Mexico, from the Chiapas to Michoacan, from the Yucatan to Oaxaca and Guanajuato. The music of Mexico was always unforgettable and helped bring us back to Mexico again and again. Thus, we look forward with keenest anticipation to the September 28th Mariachi Concert on the Cal-State, San Bernardino campus."

The Mariachi Concert is a collaborative effort by the Sinfonia Mexicana Society and Cal-State, San Bernardino. The newly constructed Coussoulis Arena has a capacity of 5,000 persons; however, according to Esther Mata, president of the Sinfonia Mexicana Society, only 4,200 tickets will be sold. Continued on page 6
Mexican Author Carlos Fuentes Lectures at Kennedy Center

New Chapter for Hispanic and Latin American Writers

Renowned Mexican author Carlos Fuentes was honored by the American Council for the Arts (ACA) recently, having been selected as this year’s Nancy Hanks Lecturer at The John F. Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

The growing interest in Latin American and U.S. Latino writers is best illustrated by the recent appearance of Fuentes at the Kennedy Center. Fuentes is the first Hispanic selected by the ACA to receive the distinguished honor. Previous Nancy Hanks Lecturers include historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr., poet Maya Angelou and the late Congresswoman Barbara Jordan.

“Public support for the arts and humanities is a necessity in today’s highly integrated global community,” said Fuentes, who received Spain’s prestigious Miguel Cervantes prize, the top literary award for writers in the Spanish language. “The more education he or she will require and essayist, is best known receives, the more education an individual more education an individual throughout their lives.” for his 24 books, including

Old Gringo, a fictional account about American writer Ambrose Bierce, and The Buried Mirror, a non-fictional book about the Hispanic world.

“There is a strong relationship between the arts and public policy,” said Francis D. Gómez, director of public programs, Philip Morris Companies Inc. “By promoting the arts and culture, we stimulate the most important resource we have—human capital.”

Philip Morris Companies Inc., which has underwritten the Nancy Hanks Lecture for the past six years, is a major patron of the arts, supporting a broad spectrum of visual and performing arts.

Several diplomats and celebrities were present to hear Fuentes speak, including Mexico’s Ambassador to the United States, Jesús Silva-Herzog and actor Esaí Morales.
We wish to thank the City of Colton for selecting Taormina Industries as a service provider of refuse and recycling needs in the City of Colton.

On July 1, Colton Disposal, a Taormina Industries company, will begin providing collection services for residents who are now served by the City of Colton.

At this time, we will also begin refuse collection and recycling for some commercial businesses within the City.

Colton Disposal is pleased to join the community of Colton. We look forward to providing quality service and solutions for your refuse and recycling needs!

COLTON DISPOSAL
A Taormina Industries Company

(909) 370-3377

635 N. La Cadena Dr., Colton, CA 92324
Michelle Negrete's graduation is an extraordinary tribute to faith

Michelle Negrete's graduation is an extraordinary tribute to faith. One of the highlights of Michelle Negrete's life was graduating from San Bernadino High School in June, 1996 with a 3.0 grade point average in spite of tremendous barriers that this brave young person has encountered for many years.

A large number of students have admired what Michelle Negrete's has accomplished in her life.

After Michelle's eleventh birthday, she was diagnosed with a brain tumor and was operated on, which resulted in her becoming blind and unable to walk. She had to relearn simple tasks, including reading, speaking, and walking during the last seven years of her life. Since then, Michelle has regained the use of her legs and has partial sight which enables her to read with the aid of highly magnified mechanized lenses.

Michelle resumed her academic studies through home teaching and attended Arrowview Middle School, completing the eighth grade and enrolled at San Bernadino High School.

Michelle encountered short term memory lapses as a result of the surgery. In 1991, the tumor recurred which necessitated seven weeks of radiation therapy. During that interim, Michelle suffered a vascular stroke.

Aside from modern wondrous of medicine, persons have asked what other factors were involved in recovery of this extraordinary young person? Generally, people have observed that Michelle has a positive attitude, very determined, and very courageous.

"I have made great progress since surgery," she said. "And I hope to continue. I'm one of the lucky ones, surgery left me totally disabled, but each day I feel stronger and stronger."

Mrs. Annabelle Negrete, Michelle's mother, is the primary support and role model. She stated, "I am so proud of Michelle and what she has accomplished. I want to share her success story with other people, especially with young people, so that they can see what can be done when an individual makes the determination to overcome all obstacles."

Michelle has planned her future. She is making plans to attend San Bernadino Valley College to prepare for a career in education, specifically in education for physically impaired preschool children.

"Because of the difficulties that I have faced, I feel a deep and abiding empathy for the physically handicapped, but I also realize how much work and desire it takes to compete with the not-impaired. The strength to reach my goal is God-given, but I feel certain I will be successful working with these children since it will give me the opportunity to share what I have learned the hard way. I will share it with courage and strength, and the hard work ethic I have had to learn."

The Inland Empire Hispanic News salutes Michelle Negrete and her mother, Annabelle Negrete, for their fortitude, strength and courageous determination to overcome major barriers and ultimately achieve one of many goals that both will encounter in their lives. May this year be a tribute to all their personal attributes and faith in each other and for all to witness.

District Farewell Dinner for Elisa Diaz

You are cordially invited to a farewell dinner for Board of Education member Elisa G. Diaz who has resigned and is moving to San Antonio, Texas to spend more time with her family. The dinner will be held on Tuesday, July 2, No Host Bar - 6:30 p.m., Dinner - 7:00 p.m., $26 per person at the Arrowhead Country Club, 3433 North Parkside Drive, San Bernardino. Please RSVP for Swiss steak dinner or vegetarian dinner, 381-1245 or 381-1245 and send your check made out to Nelda Shoffner, c/o the Board of Education Office, Board of Education Building, 777 North "F" Street, San Bernardino, CA 92410, no later than June 27.

Local Students Win Edison Scholarships

Four College Scholarships are presented by Southern California Edison annually, according to Jim Burns, Edison region manager. Recipients, who are selected on the basis of merit, may use them at any accredited college or university in California.

The purpose of the Community College Achievement Award is to encourage promising community college students, such as Judy Ann, to pursue degrees in math or science and enter the teaching profession," Burns said.

Community College Achievement Awards are given annually to 26 students from throughout Edison's service territory in Central and Southern California.

Southern California Edison invests nearly half a million dollars annually in educational assistance for 147 students. More than 2,700 students have benefited since the Scholarship Program began 36 years ago.
EDITORIAL

Que Vayan con Dios, Leno and Elisa Diaz

The Inland Empire is losing two dedicated individuals whose commitment and efforts to the educational field and their civic involvement have been widely recognized and has benefited our young people and communities.

Leno and Elisa Diaz recently announced their decision to move to San Antonio to be close to their family and enjoy their grandchildren growing up, a very legitimate reason for grandparents to make. The decision, after forty-plus years in the area was, undoubtedly, an extremely painful and hard decision for this couple who have established many close relationships, both in education and community.

Leno and Elisa Diaz taught at the elementary level, utilizing their experiences, skills and development of educational enhancements to impact young children's minds in knowledge and challenging each young child to expand their education beyond what is the norm, especially in minority children.

They were also involved in many community projects and events. Leno Diaz, for example, was one of the founders of the Westside Democratic Club in the early sixties. He was also very active in the Association of Mexican-American Educations, a group that fosters and supports Hispanics into higher education.

Eliza Diaz was on the San Bernardino School Board for 15 years. During her board tenure, Mrs. Diaz was a strong advocate of bilingual education, educational enhancement and counseling programs for school dropouts, dropout intervention programs and the consistent need for minority teacher employment. She was well known for being a consistent visitor at every school in the district.

Diaz's advocacy and focused determination was the catalyst for her initiation of strong discussions at the board level to redirect administrative and programmatic approaches to educational or problematic areas. This action would, at times, cause reactionary discussions by other board members.

The unselfish contribution of Leno and Elisa Diaz to education and community throughout these years is immeasurable. However, we, who have looked up to this couple as our role models for these many years, can only say “GRACIAS.”

QUE VAYAN CON DIOS.

Outstanding CHC Students - Among the students recognized during the Crafton Hills College Honors Convocation recently were, left to right, Helen Aguilar, Spanish major; Ricardo R. Vargas, pre-law major; and Christine E. Cortina, respiratory therapy major. Aguilar and Cortina were presented with Latino Faculty and Staff Scholarships and Vargas was presented with a MECHA Scholarship. Also receiving a MECHA Scholarship, but not pictured, was Juana Corza, Optometry major.

Outstanding CHC Students - Among the students recognized during the Crafton Hills College Honors Convocation recently were, left to right, Helen Aguilar, Spanish major; Ricardo R. Vargas, pre-law major; and Christine E. Cortina, respiratory therapy major. Aguilar and Cortina were presented with Latino Faculty and Staff Scholarships and Vargas was presented with a MECHA Scholarship. Also receiving a MECHA Scholarship, but not pictured, was Juana Corza, Optometry major.

State Compensation Insurance Fund Adopts Monterey Elementary School

State Compensation Insurance Fund adopted Monterey Elementary School on June 10. Manuel Hernandez, representing State Compensation Insurance Fund, was present for the signing of the adoption certificates. He pledged financial help for kids who needed help with the cost of school uniforms, and academic enrichment programs, such as field trips. Principal Kathleen Stevens presented Mr. Hernandez with an appreciation plaque from Michelle Sumi's first grade class.

Since the Adopt-A-School Program began, more than 140 businesses have adopted schools in the San Bernardino City Unified School District. The Adopt-A-School Program is co-sponsored by the San Bernardino Area Chamber of Commerce.

King, New SANBAG Executive Director

San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) Board members have selected Norman R. King as the agency's new executive director. King, 53, has served as the City Manager of Moreno Valley for the past five years. He will assume his new position August 5, and will replace retiring Executive Director Wesley C. McDaniell, who has served as SANBAG's founding director since 1973. King, who has established a notable reputation statewide, will bring over 29 years of public sector experience to the position. "I am extremely pleased to have the opportunity to serve SANBAG, and to become involved in San Bernardino transportation and regional issues," said King. "As a city manager, I particularly enjoyed participating in joint city and county cooperative and intergovernmental efforts, and my new position with SANBAG will allow me to become more directly involved. I look forward to working with the leaders of the County and the cities of San Bernardino County."

King's career includes tenure as a city manager for the cities of Moreno Valley, Palm Springs and Claremont. Beyond municipal level experience, King has amassed expertise in intergovernmental and regional policy areas. He served as Assistant Director of the Office of Policy Analysis for the National League of Cities/United States Conference of Mayors, as well as a member of the Governor's Commission on Transportation Investment which explored methods to fund the various transportation strategies for individual mobility and goods movement throughout the state.

King has taught at the University of Southern California in the School of Public Administration, and is currently teaching at Claremont McKenna College. He earned his undergraduate degree from Claremont McKenna College, and a Master of Government Administration from the Wharton Graduate School of the University of Pennsylvania. A recipient of numerous awards, King was named the 1993 Management Leader of the Year by the Graduate School of Management of the University of California, Riverside. He was also honored with the 1993 Excellence in Government Award by the Valley Group, a prominent Riverside County business organization.
Crafton Hills College Implements Phone Registration

Starting this summer, Crafton Hills College (CHC) continuing and returning students with touch-tone telephones will be able to register for 1996 fall classes from their homes. CHC is implementing a telephone registration system, called Easy Touch Registration (ETR), which will replace the college's early access registration by mail.

"The idea of ETR is to make registration more convenient for our students," said Dr. Jim Bisi, CHC vice-president of Student Services.

ETR is scheduled for June 24 - July 25. Fall semester begins August 19.

Continuing students are students who attended CHC during the 1996 spring or summer semesters. Returning students are students who enrolled at CHC between 1981 - 1995. Although both continuing and returning students are eligible for ETR, returning students must go to the CHC Admissions Office in person to reenroll at the college before registering.

Also, continuing students and returning students who need to see counselors should do so before registering.

New students enrolling at the college for the first time must come to the Admissions Office in person to enroll and obtain appointments to register for regular arena registration. Continuing students and returning students who do not register using ETR must also come to the Admissions Office for appointments to register. Fall arena registration will be August 7, 8 and 12-14 at the CHC Cafeteria.

For more information about ETR, call the CHC Admissions Office at 389-3372.

Hill to Lead Parade

The Highland Chamber of Commerce has honored Margaret Hill by naming her Grand Marshall of Highland's annual 4th of July parade. Hill, principal of San Andreas High School, was chosen for this honor because of her outstanding community service. Hill is a member of the Kiwanis Club of Greater San Bernardino.

Opportunity House
THRIFT SHOP
3333 North E St., San Bernardino
10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Monday-Friday
Battered Women & Children

Development Director
The American Heart Association is seeking a professional fund-raiser with 3-5 years experience with emphasis on major gifts, donor management and special events. Marketing, volunteer management and organizational skills critical. Must be highly motivated and enthusiastic. Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience acceptable. Minority candidates encouraged to apply. Excellent benefits. $32,000 to $40,000 per year. Send resume with salary history to P.O. Box 1707, Colton, CA 92324. EOE/M/F/D

San Bernardino LightHouse for the Blind

La organizacion, Lighthouse for the Blind, localizada en el 762 N. Sierra Way, San Bernardino, esta ofreciendo servicios de proveedor al publico en su facilidad, incluyendo sala de banquete, cenas formales, sala de conferencias y buffet. Para mas informacion, llame al chef roberto Mata al (909) 884-3121.

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ATTENTION CONTRACTORS
LANDSCAPERS, PAINTERS AND GENERAL CONTRACTORS

The City of Redlands Redevelopment Agency, Housing Division, is soliciting landscape, painters, and general contractors who are State Licensed to establish an eligibility list of service providers whose expertise may be required to carry out home improvements under the Agency's Great Neighborhoods Program. Once established, the Agency intends to use the eligibility list as a resource from which bids for specific repair services will be solicited. This list will remain valid for two (2) years. However, the Redevelopment Agency will review each job performance and can at any time, due to job performance, failure to meet contractual agreements, or other issues, remove a contractor from the approved list.

Interested service providers must submit the following to the City upon request:

1. Service providers must hold a valid state contractor's license.
2. Service providers must hold a valid City of Redlands Business License.
3. Service providers must maintain Worker's Compensation Insurance as prescribed by state law.
4. Service providers must maintain Broad Form Public Liability insurance. (Minimum $1,000,000 per accident for bodily injury or death.)

The agency needs service providers who can perform one or more of a wide variety of repairs, such as roof repair/replacement, heating and cooling system repair, plumbing, electrical, installation of windows and doors.

The selected service provider for each job will report to and receive general direction from Redevelopment Agency personnel.

For additional information, contact the Administrative Services Department at (909) 798-7545.
NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Notice is hereby given that proposals will be received by the South Coast Air Quality Management District, 21865 E. Copley Drive, Diamond Bar, CA 91765 for award of AB2766 Revenues, until July 12, 1996, 1:00 p.m.

A MANDATORY BIDDERS CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD ON JUNE 27, 1996, AT 10:00 A.M. PERSONS ATTENDING SHOULD CONFIRM THEIR ATTENDANCE TO: LILY KAPUR AT (909) 396-2780.

A copy of this proposal no. 9596-52 may be obtained through the internet: http://www.aqmd.gov/fpd/9596-52.html or call Lily Kapur at (909) 396-2780.

Questions on the content, intent, or procedural matters of this RFP may also be directed to Lily Kapur.

The District hereby notifies all bidders in regard to this advertisement, minority business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to bid responses to this invitation. Moreover, the District will not discriminate against person or firm interested in providing goods or services to the District on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, marital status, national origin, age, veterans status or handicap. The District also encourages joint ventures and subcontracting with MWBE/WDB/DVs.

For Advertising
Call 381-6259

San Bernardino Lighthouse for the Blind
The San Bernardino Lighthouse for the Blind, 762 N. Sierra Way, San Bernardino, a non-profit organization, is offering catering services to the public at its facility, including banquet room, formal dinners, conferences and buffets. For further information regarding the services call Chef Robert Mata at (909) 884-3121.

FREIGHT CREDIT
9337 Milliken Ave., Rancho Cucamonga, CA.
Seeking assertive motivated people good communication skills, keyboard experience required. BILINGUAL A MUST
PT / Permanent Positions / Flexible Hr's / Advancement Opport. / Training Programs. Applications / Interviews M-TH 11AM - 4PM
Collections $8.81 / Customer Service $8.51 / Credit Investigator $7.26
EOE MF/DV

BARTER EXCHANGE
(The Personal Touch)
Addtional Business through Bartering
Why lay out your hard earned cash for your business expenses when you can be bartering and paying for them with the additional business we send you?
Conservate your cash outlay and reduce your overhead by bartering with Barter members for your business, personal, family needs and expenses.
When you pay $200.00 cash or charged card for mechanical, painting, legal, medical, office shop maintenance, supplies, etc., etc., you could have conserved that hard earned cash and paid for those ongoing expenses with the business/credit you have earned and accumulated. Additional Business paid for through bartering.
Using your WHOLESALE, buying power, your cost (Barter credits equal to cash dollars you are purchasing at the regular price). However actual cost out-of-pocket is your WHOLESALE COST. PLUS YOU STILL HAVE THAT $200 HARD EARNED CASH IN YOUR POCKET. Now doesn't that sound great? INTERESTED?

10 YEARS IN BUSINESS
(909) 881-6131 & 6132 • FAX (909) 881-6133
Ask for Joseph, Julie, Maryann or Tony

JOB OPENING
The Inland Empire Latino Lawyers Association, Inc. ("IELLA"), is seeking candidates from a pool of qualified individuals to fill a full-time position as the Executive Director of IELLA's Legal Aid Program. Attorneys are encouraged to apply.

IELLA is a nonprofit 501 (c) (3) corporation oriented toward delivering legal services via legal aid clinics, to indigent individuals, served by volunteer attorneys in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

POSITION: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL SERVICES

RESPONSIBILITIES:
 Responsible and accountable to IELLA's Board of Directors, for the day to day operation of the Legal Aid Program. The Director: defines, develops and administers the Legal Aid Program include but are not necessarily limited to the following: Coordination of outreach activities; recruitment of project staff and project volunteers; recruitment of volunteer attorneys; public relations; preparation of legal documents under the supervision and direction of attorneys; develop, write and submit funding proposals; preparation of fiscal and programmatic reports; ensures that the Legal Aid Program is in full compliance with Legal Service Corporation regulations.

QUALIFICATIONS:
Bachelor Degree or equivalent experience. Knowledge of Legal Service Programs including program development, management, and funding sources. Familiarity with the judicial system and a general understanding of legal procedures. Knowledge and experience in working with people of diverse backgrounds. Must have excellent oral and written communication skills. Knowledge of statistical methods is essential. Bilingual in Spanish is essential. Computer literacy skills are necessary.

SALARY:
Negotiable. Salary based upon experience.

APPLICATION DEADLINE:
The application deadline is July 31, 1996.

SEND RESUMES AND LETTERS OF INTEREST TO:
Luis Aguilar, Esq.
Chairperson, Board of Directors
Inland Empire Latino Lawyers Association, Inc.
2060 University Avenue, Suite 113
Riverside, CA 92507

IELLA is an equal opportunity employer. Minorities, women and persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply.
Lino & Elisa Diaz retiring to San Antonio
Continued from page 1

Bernardino School Board, being the first Latina elected to the school board. She recently tendered her resignation effective in July, 1996.

Regarding her tenure on the school board, Diaz stated, "I have been extremely interested in the educational needs of all children and especially children of color and students with limited English capabilities. As everyone is aware, I am an outspoken advocate to establish programs to provide guidance counseling to students, and more specifically, to students who have been suspended or expelled. I am opposed to the "throw them out in the street mindset."

Leno Diaz graduated from the University of Texas - El Paso with Honors and earned a membership in Kappa Delta Pi. At a later date, Diaz received his M.S. at Cal-State, Fullerton, and continued his studies at Kent State and La Universidad de Guadalajara.

Diaz began his teaching career in El Paso. He continued teaching at Riverside County Superintendent of Schools and San Bernardino School District from 1953 to 1979. He specialized in Bilingual Curricula Development and developed unique teacher workshops to utilize puppetry and other audio-visual techniques which would demonstrate alternative enhanced teaching.

His membership included the Association of Mexican-American Educators, National Education Association, California Teachers Association, National Association of Bilingual Education, San Bernardino Teachers Association, Kiwanis Club of Greater San Bernardino, Sinfonia Mexicana Society and founding member of La Casa de AMAE-the precursor of Casa Ramona.

He was instrumental in heading a committee to name a Westside branch library as the Villasenor Library.

"We have raised two wonderful children through the San Bernardino and California public school systems. They are gone from the area. We want to live close to our grandchildren in San Antonio while we have an opportunity to enjoy them as they grow up," Eliza Diaz said.

Frank Quevedo V.P. of Equal Opportunity
Continued from page 1

Active in community affairs, Quevedo has served as chairman of the Board of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) and currently chairs the Program and Planning Committee.

He serves on a number of other boards and advisory committees, including Coro of Southern California, Asian Pacific American Legal Center, Orange County Community Foundation, the United Negro College Fund Southern California Advisory committee, the Western Law Center for Disability Rights, and is the chair of the Orange County Hispanic Education Endowment Fund.

A Vietnam veteran, Quevedo earned a bachelor's degree in political science at the University of California, Riverside. On three separate occasions, he was included on Hispanic Business Magazine's annual list of "100 Influentials" in the Latino community throughout the United States.

Quevedo was born and raised in San Bernardino and attended local school. His parents reside in San Bernardino. Quevedo resides in Orange County with his family.

After 33 yrs. of waiting on others, Mercy Aguirre will wait no more

Mercy Aguirre has served politicians, officeholders, executives and persons of all ages, special people in her life, personal friends and last, but not least, the general public, all who have come to the well-known Mitla's Restaurant in the Westside, and on June 23, 1996, one of the most famous waitresses in San Bernardino retired after 33 years!

"Now is the time for me to pull the cord," she said. "All these 33 years I have enjoyed knowing so many wonderful people, getting so close to them and being able to serve them. It has been a beautiful experience. To retire will be a very hard thing for me."

Born and raised in San Bernardino, Mercy was the ninth child in a family of sixteen. She began working at nine years and attending Alessandro Elementary and has never stopped.

Mercy began working full time at Mitla's as a dishwasher and after four years, was promoted to waitress, when the late Vera Lopez, Mitla's owner and one of the most outstanding and noblest persons in the Westside, insisted that she work with her.

"Vera Lopez was my idol. She taught me so many things about the restaurant when I worked with her on banquets and special occasions. She was so generous to others and always gave good service. She was also my friend," said Mercy with moistened eyes.

Mercy has kept the tradition of good service that Vera Lopez had established throughout these many years. This has resulted in having a large number of steady customers that repeatedly request her services. This popularity among customers has generally been because of her gracious manners and sociability, many customers have indicated.

Vera Lopez established a special celebration for the American National Organization and Mercy has kept that tradition going these many years by being the hostess in her home.