SINFONIA MEXICANA TO PRESENT TWO PERFORMANCES

Sinfonia Mexicana will present its first Children’s Holiday Concert on Wednesday, December 13 at 10 a.m. at the historic California Theatre of Performing Arts in San Bernardino. Funding from The James Irvine Foundation and City of San Bernardino Fine Arts grants will allow elementary students from prearranged schools from Colton, Redlands and San Bernardino school districts free admittance to the event. Featured artists are Grammy nominated Mariachi Sol de Mexico and Pacifico Dance Company, who will perform at the annual “Merri-Achi Christmas” concert Saturday evening, December 16.

Student performers are Sara Ordaz, Junior at Colton High School, Chelsea Rodriguez and Maritza Martinez, students at Manuel Salinas Elementary in San Bernardino. Ballet Folklorico Cultural from San Bernardino and students from El Teatro Universitario en Espanol and Sigma Pi Alpha at CSUSB will also perform.

Sinfonia Mexicana Board of Directors President, Maurice Calderon, stated, “This children’s concert will display the rich traditions and culture of Mexico. I extend a sincere thank you to The James Irvine Foundation and the City of San Bernardino for supporting Sinfonia’s goals and advocacy of the vibrant and beautiful music of Mexico which is enjoyed by so many people in this area.”

Sinfonia’s objective is to provide a culturally enriching experience that will engage the students and instill an appreciation for different types of music and dance. The concert will feature mariachi folk music and colorful ballet folkloric dances from various cultures around the world.

ART ALCARAZ INSTALLED PRESIDENT OF M.V. HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Moreno Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce celebrated its 15th Annual Installation of Officers and Community Awards at the Moreno Valley Convention Center with over 200 members, elected officials and businesspersons in attending the annual event.

The Center’s dining area was elaborately decorated, with a theme of “Flamenco Nights”, entertainment by an exciting flamenco show and a Spanish dinner of Paella Valenciana, Paella Ruespestre and Paella Vegetariana catered by Sevilla Restaurant, Riverside.

Moreno Valley Mayor Bonnie Flickinger and Jaime Hurtado, field representative for Supervisor Marion Ashley, presented the annual recognitions: Education “Estrella” Award; Harvest Riggio-Moreno Valley Youth Trust; Partner of the Year Award- CRP Staffing; Member of the Year Award-Renne & Pedro Hernandez; Corporate Business of the Year-Walmart; Small Business of the Year Award-Sandy Ramirez, Flower Box; Sponsor of the Year Award-Southern California Edison; Romelio Ruiz Humanitarian Award-Samuel L. Jones, Jr., Moss Bros Group; and Lifetime Achievement Award- William Di Yorio, Riverside County Sheriff’s Department.

Alcaraz, a product of the local school system, attending North High School in Riverside, Riverside Community College and Cal Poly University in Pomona.

His professional experience includes 34 years in the field of Human Resources, including 25 years at the directorship level. He has served as Human Resources Director for the former Riverside General Hospital, the City of Riverside, the Health Services Agency and the City of Moreno Valley.

He was first Latino HR Director for the Riverside General Hospital, City of Riverside, and City of Moreno Valley. He is currently the Director of Diversity and Human Resources for the Riverside Community College District with campuses in Riverside, Norco and Moreno Valley.

Alcaraz’ community involvement includes the Moreno Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce’s Board of Directors.

S. B. COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD APPOINTS NEW TRUSTEE

San Bernardino Community College Board has appointed Marie Alonzo as board trustee to replace Mary Sampson, who resigned last month. The board made the selection on December 7, 2006, after a round voting process failed to select a majority vote of the nine candidates, and on the third round, a four-vote finalized for Alonzo.

Alonzo will complete the two-year term of office and will be a candidate for the next San Bernardino Community College election in 2008.

Alonzo began as a permanent employee of the County of San Bernardino, starting as a clerk II, and retired after 36 year service, the final position as director of facilities management.

During her county service tenure, Alonzo was involved in six major county facility development and implementation projects. She also was a member of regional external faculty project developments.

Alonzo has been actively involved in community and professional affiliations. Previous involvement included 35 affiliations, including the YWCA, Symphony Association, American Women’s Business Association, and Greening of the Inland Empire Committee, S. B. County Children’s Network, and San Bernardino’s Women’s Task Force, among others.

Her current 15 community and professional affiliations include chair, Arrowhead Credit Union Board of Directors (and member of associated credit union components), Credit Union National Association-Hispanic Task Force, S. B. Police Department’s O.P.A.L., Hispanic Lifestyle Magazine Advisory Board, and other professional and civic affiliations.

The Inland Empire’s only Hispanic-owned English language newspaper
San Bernardino School District officially opened the long-awaited Family Resource Center with a ribbon-cutting ceremony conducted by Superintendent Narciso Cardona and other elected officials, administrators, and many neighborhood families.

Master of ceremonies Assistant Superintendent Narciso Cardona welcomed the public, and introduced school district board of trustees, administrative officials, and special guests-NFL players.

Marcelino Serna, Parent/Family Involvement Officer spoke on the mission and service functions of the Family Resource Center. School Board Trustees Elsa Valdez, Teresa Parra, Judy Penman spoke on the advantages of having valuable resources available to parents and young children, and the ideal location for the neighborhood. The trustees also encouraged parents to sign up for available workshops.

The Center offers free workshops in parent education, parental conflict, nutrition, financing, and other family-oriented courses. A computer lab is available for references and job referrals.

Free child care is available for children under three, while parents are using the services.

The Family Resource Center is located at 1525 West Highland Avenue, San Bernardino (adjacent to the previous Classified Employees Center). The telephone no. is (909) 880-4057.

Wednesday, December 13, 2006

MEJICO-A NOVEL
THE CONQUEST OF AN ANCIENT CIVILIZATION
By Ruffo Espinosa, Sr.

The year is 1584. Sitting in a crumbling adobe house in the Oaxaca Valley of Mexico, an old man puts pen to paper to tell the story of his own patrornity and the birth of a nation.

That my mother was the Ohtlant princess Malintzin, no one doubts. Nor that Hernán Cortez, conqueror of the Aztec Empire, gave me his name. But the Indian whispers say that the Aztec’s Great Speaker, Cuauhtémoc, Cortez’s most relentless enemy, held me as an infant in his heroic arms.

Thus begins the story of Martín Cortez and Ruffo Espinosa’s new book.

Méjico: The Novel. Using the written testimony of Hernán Cortez and a secret diary of his mother, Princess Malintzin, Martin pieces together a history of war, greed and violence. But he also finds a passionate love triangle that tangle the lives of the Spanish conquistador, the Indian princess and her childhood sweetheart, the mighty warrior Cuauhtémoc.

While the history of the Spanish conquest is more than 500 years old, with Méjico, Espinosa offers a more human version of the tale. Princess Malintzin, who has historically been viewed as a traitor to her country, is vindicated as Méjico shows her allegiance to Cortez as a way to avenge her father, murdered by Moctezuma and his bloodthirsty priests, and as a way to honor her One-God-One, Quesaltzalcatl.

Méjico shows us a different Cortez, a boyish adventurer and prankster who made his way to New Spain to fulfill a childhood dream. Instead of a ruthless warrior, Méjico shows a man who strove to unite the many kingdoms of the land to live in peace. In the end, it is the land and the people who win his heart, not the legendary gold of El Dorado.

And while historians have called Moctezuma a coward, Méjico shows a ruler drugged and terrorized by his priests, unscrupulous men who caused many innocents to die in his name. Moctezuma, restored to his senses while the prisoner of Cortez, comes to see the wisdom of peace with Spain and a new future for his country.

And yet Méjico unfolds as tragedy: Moctezuma perishes of a broken heart. Malintzin takes her place among the dead in the Temple of the One-God-One, and Cortez dies penniless and reviled by his people. Martin, certainly the firstborn of the new mestizo race, lives his life as an outsider, rejected by both nations that make up his bloodline. With Méjico: The Novel, Espinosa gives us a new look at the events of the 16th century that changed the world forever.

Ruffo Espinosa, Sr., the author
Ruffo Espinosa, Sr. was born in the Mexican state of Sinaloa in 1907. After immigrating to the United States, he attended the University of Southern California and the University of Arizona, ultimately earning a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English and a Juris Doctorate Degree in Law.

Espinosa worked as a reporter and editor of the Nogales Herald in Nogales, Arizona. In 1942, the governor of Arizona appointed Espinosa to the post of attorney general for Santa Cruz County. He held that position for 14 years.

In 1956, the family moved to California where Espinosa became a deputy county defender for Ventura and Los Angles Counties. He eventually moved into private practice from which he retired in 1976.

A lifelong reader and writer, Espinosa became captivated by the story of the Spanish conquest of Mexico and with its central characters — conqueror Hernán Cortez, Aztec Montezuma, and Oluitla Princess Malintzin. Espinosa felt that all three had been wronged by history and strove to tell their story. Méjico: The Novel is a romance, a history and a tale of war.

Over four decades, Espinosa traveled to Spain and Mexico tirelessly researching the events and people tied up in the telling of this tale. Along the way, Espinosa studied Spanish and Nahuati literature to delve deeper into the story of these three characters. Espinosa passed away in 1987 before the book could be published.

Ruffo Espinosa, Jr. undertook the work to get the novel into print as a way to honor his father. Méjico: The Novel is Espinosa’s second book. One Bears the Cross was published by iUniverse in 2005.

For more information, or of Méjico: The Novel, contact Eileen Garvin at (541) 231-3279 or eileen@mac.com
WHY UNIONS MUST SUPPORT THE IMMIGRANTS RIGHTS MOVEMENT

By Karega Hart of the SEIU

"The essence of trade unionism is social uplift. The labor movement has been the haven for the dispossessed, the despised the neglected, the downtrodden, the poor."

A. Philip Randolph

When A. Philip Randolph spoke the above words during the 20th century he was the leader of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters was a union mainly of African American workers. Other unions refused to organize African American workers and accused African Americans of taking jobs. Lowering wages and striking breaking.

Today’s labor movement is faced with some of the same challenges. Should we organize the dispossessed, the neglected, the downtrodden and the poor? Should we organize undocumented immigrant workers? Should we continue to organize African American workers? The U.S. Labor Movement can not survive unless we are willing to organize undocumented immigrant workers, African American workers, Latino’s and women throughout the South and the Southwest, and everywhere. Union density will continue to decline, unless organizing is escalated and combined with a broad new social and economic justice vision and agenda.

In 1955 organized labor was 35% of the workforce, today it is only 12.5% of the workforce. Technological changes combined with the movement of work abroad and other factors has contributed to the decimation of union density. High wages and benefits cannot be sustained for any union as long as undocumented immigrant workers, African Americans, Latinos and the poor remain outside the organized labor movement. Union members should be tireless supporters of the immigrant rights movement and advocate support for civil and human rights struggles. Standing along side undocumented workers, for civil and human rights should be seen as a badge of honor in unions and not issues that organized workers reluctantly support. But, this will not happen unless the level of discussion, debate and education takes place at the deepest roots of the Labor Movement. Avoiding discussions and debates on immigrant rights, organizing the poor and workers of color, will only lead the Labor Movement further and further into self-centeredness and decline.

While expanding union membership is important, we must stand firmly on the side of those in the fight for social and economic justice, concretely this means supporting the rights of undocumented immigrant workers, African American workers, Latinos, women and the poor. The organized Labor Movement must do more than fight for the rights of union members. Masses of people, most arc workers, many are women and workers of color, all are being forced into poverty. Organized labor cannot win in a fight with Global Corporations without allies from other exploited and oppressed classes and communities.

Does The Organized Labor Movement Have Enemies?

Many union members have been educated to believe that the system of Global capitalism supports the existence of trade unionism and will assist hard working American workers. Workers have been taught that problems in the organized labor movement exist because we just have some bad employers.

Today’s Global Capitalist and neo-liberals see unionism as their enemy and are committed to putting the nails in the coffin of organized labor. Shallow discussions among union members about bad employers will not raise the level of awareness of the problems that workers and the oppressed are facing.

Intense, deep and substantive discussions need to be held at work sites, schools and communities about immigration reform and rights. Avoiding the discussion on immigration reform will only contribute to further weakening of the organized labor movement, the attacks on immigrants and the erosion of worker/civil and human rights. The real enemy of organized labor is not immigrants, it is Global Capitalism. Global Capitalism continually drives workers from poorer countries abroad, displaces more workers and forces them into deeper and worse poverty.

Immigrants Rights Are Workers Rights

Immigrants are fighting for basic rights such as the right to organize, equal wages and benefits and a path to citizenship without obstacles and more. Immigrant-bashing, violence, exclusion and discrimination is as deadly as White Supremacy. Make no mistake, these attacks are meant to crush the spirit and subjugate and neutralize union and unorganized workers. The Labor Movement has an opportunity to rise up and play a leading role in the fight for the rights of immigrants. And, the Labor Movement should never forget the unfinished business of organizing and fighting for the rights of the millions of African American workers and Latino workers in the South and Southwest.

ART ALCARAZ INSTALLED PRESIDENT OF M.V. HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Continued from page 1

Directors, Riverside Community College’s Puente Mentor Council, Riverside Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Convinced for Spanish Speaking of the Inland Empire’s Board of Directors, and Latino Network’s Board of Directors, and its chair of the Youth Education Motivation Program (a program he has been involved with since 1974). He also is active in his church, coaches and plays on a variety of softball teams. He enjoys music and sports, relaxing with family and friends.

His motto is “La Vida es Deliciosa”.

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Send completed application packet to: Riverside Community College District, Office of Human Resources, 3845 Market Street, Riverside, CA 92501.

Phone: (951) 222-8595
MALDEF CONTINUES TO BATTLE AGAINST ANTI-IMMIGRANT ORDINANCES

MALDEF lawyers in courtrooms and city halls across the nation are fighting anti-immigrant ordinances passed in a handful of local communities frustrated by federal inaction on immigration. The local solutions - most recently an ordinance enacted by a Dallas suburb - conflict with the Constitution and threaten to pit neighbor against neighbor. Similar to the cities of Escondido, California and Valley Park, Missouri, where MALDEF has ongoing litigation, the city of Farmers Branch, Texas has now passed an anti-immigrant housing ordinance that forces renters to prove citizenship or immigration status and penalizes landlords who fail to verify the immigration status of tenants.

MALDEF attorneys testified before the Farmers Branch City Council warning of the measure's constitutional flaws prior to the enactment of the ordinance on November 13, 2006. “The ordinance unfairly makes landlords immigration agents. The ordinance will force landlords, who have no federal training, to review and verify a confusing variety of immigration documents,” stated Nina Perales, MALDEF Southwest Regional Counsel. MALDEF has recently filed lawsuits against the cities of Escondido and Valley Park, who have passed similarly discriminatory and unconstitutional ordinances. On November 17, a federal district court judge granted a temporary restraining order (TRO) barring Escondido from enforcing the anti-immigrant housing ordinance at least until the next step in the legal process. The court expressed “serious concerns” about the constitutionality of the ordinance. Judge John A. Houston stated that the city’s effort to “step into the shoes of the state and federal government” was troubling, and that the ordinance appears to deny due process rights to landlords and tenants, and relies on a flawed immigration verification process. In essence, the city was requiring landlords to do the job that the federal government has failed to do, and then not provide them the means to do so without discriminating against Latinos.

The Farmers Branch ordinance presents similar constitutional violations. Moreover, the Farmers Branch ordinance would require all tenants, even children and infants, to provide original documentary proof of citizenship or immigration status, such as a United States passport, in order to legally rent an apartment. “MALDEF is on the frontlines against this wave of unconstitutional ordinances. We will fight vigorously against the eviction of Latinos from our communities,” stated John Trasvina, President and General Counsel of MALDEF. “2007 will be the year we enact comprehensive immigration reform - a far preferable solution that will provide paths to legal status, a steady labor force, and accountability and security in our immigration system.”

Founded in 1968, MALDEF, the nation’s leading Latino legal organization, promotes and protects the rights of Latinos through advocacy, litigation, community education and outreach, leadership development, and higher education scholarships.

KIWANIS CLUB OF GREATER SAN BERNARDINO SCHEDULES TOY GIVEAWAY

Kiwanis Club of Greater San Bernardino has scheduled a toy giveaway for neighborhood children at the Placita Park, Mount Vernon and 7th Street, San Bernardino, on Saturday, December 16, 2006, at 8:00 AM. Children are urged to wear warm clothing for a long wait for Santa Claus.
The holiday season leaves many people feeling anxious as they face holiday office parties and social events they rather would avoid. That's understandable. While such events can be a great time to socialize with relatives, friends and co-workers, they also can lead to disaster.

We've all heard, or experienced, the office party where someone did permanent damage to his or her reputation. Or that family gathering where Uncle Louie had one drink too many and decided to tell everyone what he really thought of them.

If upcoming holiday celebrations have you feeling tense and seriously considering not attending, here are some suggestions to help make such events less stressful and more enjoyable:

- **Do go.** Whether it's an office party, a family gathering or a neighborhood get together, it's good for you and your reputation to make an appearance. At the very least, show up early in the party, stay for short time, and then thank your host and leave. That's better than being a no-show and you just might enjoy yourself and want to stay.

- **Skip the alcohol.** Even one or two alcoholic drinks can affect your judgment, and poor judgement leads to most party disasters. Stick to juice or soft drinks and you'll lessen your chances of looking foolish or saying the wrong thing.

- **Plan ahead.** Find out how others will dress and you'll feel less anxious about how you're dressing. If there will be gift giving, check out what gifts and dollar values are appropriate. Don't do gag gifts that will be embarrassing or risque.

- **Avoid being critical.** Negative comments at a party always get repeated later to all the wrong people. Venting frustrations at office parties almost always produces negative results.

- **Mind your manners.** Don't overeat at the buffet table. Do remember to thank your host.

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MORE STATES NEED COMMISSIONS TO ADDRESS LATINO/HISPANIC NEEDS

By Marisa Trevino

The U.S. Census reveals that Utah is pretty much a homogenous state when it comes to ethnic diversity. In 2004, 93.8 percent of the population was categorized as "white." Hispanics, the largest population of color, comprised only 10.6 percent of the population.

With those numbers, Utah doesn't even rank in the top 13 states with the highest number of Latinos but that didn't stop Utah Governor Jon Huntsman from naming Jesse Soriano as Director of the state's Hispanic/Latino Affairs department earlier this month.

It's commendable that Utah recognizes the need to establish such a department because it makes good sense. What better way to combat the problems that exist in their home communities?

And who better would know the limitations, the opportunities, available assistance and resources than people who know firsthand what their state can, cannot and does not do for Latino communities.

Several other states recognize, along with Utah, the importance of establishing councils or state agencies focused solely on addressing the needs of Latinos living in their particular states.

Latina Lista conducted a very unscientific survey of those states that had similar state commissions and found that among those that do are: Kansas Hispanic and Latino American Affairs Commission, District of Columbia's Office on Latino Affairs, Minnesota's Chicano Latino Affairs Council, Iowa Division of Latino Affairs, and Oklahoma's Governor Advisory Council on Latin American and Hispanic Affairs. We hope there are more.

But what was interesting, a quick visit to the state government web sites of Illinois, New York, North Carolina, California and Texas - states that are each home to half a million Hispanic residents - had no specific department (or one that was readily identifiable on the agency/commission web page) focused on the particular needs of their resident Latinos.

Now some would argue that having such an agency would be a waste of money since Latino residents would benefit from existing state agencies, but that is not the real issue.

The issue concerns recognizing those disparities between Latinos and the rest of the state's population, for whatever reasons, are growing wider in too many cases. Before the chasm becomes too wide, doesn't it stand to reason that there should be a concentrated effort to identify the problems and enact statewide solutions?

Aside from ensuring that all areas of a state, rural and urban, would receive the same attention and benefit from centralized efforts, accountability should be easier to measure when one community is benchmarked with another, because everyone should be following the same guidelines.

It stands to reason that if states want to have a future workforce that will sustain their local economies and make them competitive in the national and global business arena; an investment of a special commission focusing on the largest group of future workers makes sense.

But as we too often see these days, the things that make the most sense are too often ignored until it is too late.

Marisa Trevino-
http://latinalista.blogspot.com/2006/11

LATINOS UPSET OBAMA VOTED FOR BORDER FENCE

By Rafael Romo (CBS2-Chicago)

CHICAGO - While U.S. Sen. Barack Obama outlined his battle plan Monday for troops to gradually pull out of Iraq, a powerful group is criticizing the popular senator for his stance on another issue.

Reports from Chicago have stated that some Latinos are upset that Obama voted for a fence to go up at the border with Mexico. "I am confident that, if you look at my track record, there hasn't been a stronger friend to the Latino community than me," Obama said on Monday.

But Hispanic leaders say he has betrayed the trust of the people who always gave him their votes. "He's lost his vision; he's lost his feet on the ground," said Hispanic leader Carmen Velasquez.

Obama is being criticized after siding with Republicans in the Senate to approve a 700-mile wall across the Mexican border. The vote happened almost two months ago.

But CBS 2 News has learned exclusively that Obama has met privately with Hispanic leaders in an effort to convince them that his vote is part of a larger strategy.
SAN BERNARDINO - In an effort to support parents and caregivers of children with special needs ages 0 to 5, First 5 San Bernardino recently invested in A Special Place Hands-On Museum Children's Museum parent support group. This support group assists families of children with special needs to better understand their children's development.

"Parents of children with special needs often run into obstacles while trying to obtain services for their child," said First 5 San Bernardino Executive Director Richard Jarvis. "First 5 San Bernardino is trying to provide parents with a support system to help positively impact the healthy development of their children."

The Parent-to-Parent Support Group will meet weekly at A Special Place Children's Hands-On Museum in San Bernardino, starting in January 2007. Led by experienced staff members, this parent support group will engage in observing their children at play, as well as scrapbooking and journaling their children's progress.

As part of the program, parents also agree to record each session for a future television documentary to be shared with the community and agencies focused on affecting the services of special needs children. This documentary will lead to increased awareness and education of special needs challenges.

"First 5 San Bernardino's investment in this parent support group truly empowers families," said First 5 San Bernardino Commissioner Josie Gonzales. "Parents and caregivers will learn how to better understand their children's needs and abilities, which directly benefits the children involved."

For more information about the Parent-to-Parent Support Group or other First 5 San Bernardino programs, please call (888) 9FIRST5 or go to www.first5sanbernardino.org.

Jennifer Celise-Reyes is communication specialist for First-5

LATINOS UPSET OBAMA VOTED FOR BORDER FENCE
By Rafael Romo (CBS2-Chicago)

"It's a done deal, he did it. You know, what am I going to say? Well, I know you made a mistake and we were told it was part of a bigger strategy. What strategy?" Velasquez said.

Other Latino leaders say when it comes to the Latino community, you have to look at Obama's entire record and not just one vote. "He has a good record of supporting immigrant issues, and I think that will continue. And so I'm confident that he will be able to mend those fences, no pun intended," said state Sen. Miguel Del Valle.

On Monday afternoon, Obama wouldn't get into the details of his vote on the border wall. When asked what he would do to regain the Hispanic vote, he stopped short of saying he's never lost it. "Are you suggesting that I lost it?" he said.

In voting for the wall, Obama joined eight other Democratic senators who sided with Republicans to approve the bill, including Hilary Clinton.

Sen. Dick Durbin did not vote for the bill saying it was the wrong approach to deal with the immigration problem.
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