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Hispanic News

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Mel Albiso Promoted to Assistant to the Superintendent by San Bernardino USD

Mel Albiso
Assistant to the Superintendent
San Bernardino City Schools

The Board of Education of the San Bernardino City Unified School District has tapped Mel Albiso, director of Classified Human Resources, for an Assistant to the Superintendent position. A District employee since 1990, Albiso's first assignment was as the affirmative action officer, a position he held for four years. In 1994 he was promoted to director of Classified Human Resources, a key assignment in a District with more than 3500 employees in the Classified Service.

An active and hard working community volunteer, Albiso is a member of the 62nd Assembly District's Education Committee, a member of the Superintendent's Education Roundtable for the Colton Joint Unified School District, president and scholarship chairperson of the Kiwanis Club of Greater San Bernardino and a member of the Public Administration Advisory Board for California State University, San Bernardino. He serves on the Superintendent's Advisory Committee for the San Bernardino County Schools and the Chancellor's Advisory Committee for the San Bernardino Community College District, is a member of the Board of Directors for Arrowhead United Way and president of the Inland Empire Employment Roundtable.

Albiso is a lifetime resident of Colton and a United States Army veteran. He is vice chairperson of the City of Colton Planning Commission and a member of the Colton Civil Service Commission as well as vice chairperson of the Colton High School Site Council. He has an A.A. degree from San Bernardino Valley College, B.S. in Business Administration and M. A. in Management from the University of Redlands.

By Father Patricio Guillen

Ten years after Hernan Cortez and his army had brutally left the Aztec Empire in shambles and Tenochtitlan (Mexico City) in ruins, blessed ever Virgin Mary, mother of the true God appeared to Juan Diego, a native of Cuautitlan, the valley of the Eagles. The apparitions took place on the hillside of Tepeyac where supposedly the last bloody battle took place. When the narrator of the apparition says that the sword and shield were laid down it means that the Great Aztec Empire that had flourished for over 200 years had come to an end. The economic, political, cultural, religious, educational and social conditions were of a wounded, dominated people.

The apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ had one goal - to help this wounded people to rise from their oppressive situation. The narration begins with the beautiful singing of exotic birds and ends with the flowers in the Tilma of Juan Diego imprinting the image of the Virgin Guadalupe on it.

Continued on page 3
Riverside County Superintendent of Schools Dr. David Long is moving quickly to set up a teacher exchange program with education officials in San Luis Potosi, Mexico. Dr. Long added a new dimension to the program in November by inviting leading San Luis Potosi business officials to visit Riverside County next year.

Dr. Roy Wilson, Chairman of the Riverside County Board of Supervisors, accompanied Dr. Long on the most recent trip. He and Dr. Long met with the CEO's from many of San Luis Potosi's leading companies, some of whom have already signed up for a fact finding mission to Riverside County.

Dr. Long said the meeting with business leaders was important. Business education partnerships are crucial to improving local schools, as are good working relationships between schools and parents and other community members, he said.

Dr. Long laid the groundwork for the new program during a visit in June. Under his leadership, the Riverside County Office of Education is building the new California/Mexico Teacher Program with assistance from local universities and the California Department of Education.

The agencies will cooperate to establish an accreditation program for teachers from San Luis Potosi. The new program will help Riverside County schools meet the critical need for bilingual teachers who work with English language learners.

Another component of the program involves sending bilingual teachers from Riverside County to San Luis Potosi where they may study and hone their language skills. Dr. Long said this would help make them more effective in teaching English language learners. Teachers from San Luis Potosi can perfect their English skills during visits in California.

A third element of the program is to provide a rich cultural exchange between teachers on both sides of the border. It is also expected to promote good will between the peoples of two countries, Dr. Long said. Dr. Rocio Moss from RCOE said the trip was tremendously successful. She and Dr. Long had the opportunity to meet with Ana Maria Aceves Estrada, the San Luis Potosi Secretary of Education, and Eugenio Flores Villasuso, Director of Administration and State Planning, and other top education officials from the region.

Moss said the RCOE group visited both private and public schools on the trip. They gave information about the proposed program to more than 500 school supervisors from elementary, middle and high schools.

Each of the supervisors is in charge of six to eight schools, she said. The message would be carried to thousands of teachers.

San Luis Potosi is an important mining, agricultural and cattle raising state. It has undergone a dynamic process of industrialization during the past decades and is moving forward under a dynamic leader. The new California/Mexico Teacher Program is another step in that process.

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ARE YOU Y2K TOASTY? HAVING A PARTY? PLAN NOW FOR A DESIGNATED DRIVER!
La Virgen de Guadalupe still speaks to us today

Continued from page 1

This is a cultural expression that is used to emphasize that this is a sacred, holy event that contains profound truths. The message of the Virgen Maria de Guadalupe is there for a hopefilled one. She wants Juan Diego, the native of the people to ask the newly appointed Bishop Juan De Zumarraga to construct a temple for her on the hillside named Tepeyac. From this hallowed ground consecrated by the blood of the Aztecs who had given their lives in defense of their people and land she promised to provide, refuge, protection, assistance, and love to all the inhabitants of these lands and to all who honor and reverence her.

Rather than focusing on the apparitions as extraordinary phenomena, the Guadalupana narration named "El Nican Maphua", we need to appreciate the clear message that Juan Diego represents. It symbolizes how social change is brought about by the natives and not by the powerful represented by Bishop Juan Zumarraga. Juan Diego the humble native versus Bishop Juan Zumarraga with his co-workers made it difficult to get the message and the building of the temple accomplished. Juan Diego despite the failure of his first attempt valiantly assumes his active role in the liberating process of his people once La Virgen de Guadalupe Reconfirms Juan Diego’s role. The resistance and lack of faith of the bishop and his co-workers reminds us that often the poor are more open to God’s plan of establishing his kingdom here on earth, even if it is never perfectly completed wants the oppressed and oppressor to form a community of fraternity based on equality.

The construction of the temple on the Tepeyac hill symbolizes the temple of God’s creation. Even today as we witness the presence of activists demonstrating at the World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle, Washington, it reminds the world leaders to get input from the people, the poor, the forgotten. It is an ugly social sickness to see that the nations of the Northern Hemisphere live in abundance and those in the South live in misery.

Today the Southern Hemisphere symbolizes Juan Diego and the North symbolizes those in power and affluence. Both at the national and international levels, we should listen to God’s call through the cry of the impoverished, those who have been made poor by unjust social structures. What better way to begin the third millennium than by the rich Nations forgiving the debts of the very poor nations. To worry about our computers for Y2K and ignore the cry of the impoverished and the destruction of our environment by greedy persons and corporations does not make sense.

The Virgin de Guadalupe’s message is as true today as it was in December 1531. To celebrate this fiesta implies a commitment for people like Juan Diego to role up their sleeves and work for change and for those in positions of power to become servants of their constituents.-Viva la Virgen Maria de Guadalupe! Viva Juan Diego el sujeto de liberacion! Viva Cristo Rey el modelo de todos los pueblos y personas! Long lives the Blessed Virgen Maria of Guadalupe! Long five Juan Diego, the symbol of those who struggle for freedom and dignity! Long live Christ the King who became the model for all people and persons who seek freedom!

THE FINE ARTS INSTITUTE OF THE SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY MUSEUM IS SPONSORING A CHILDREN’S ART EXHIBIT GRADES KINDERGARTEN THROUGH SIXTH GRADES. ALL CHILDREN IN SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY AND CITY SCHOOLS ARE ASKED TO SUBMIT ONE PIECE OF ART WORK THAT IS MOUNTED ON A 12 X 16 POSTER BOARD. TAKE-INS IS ON DECEMBER 29, 1999 FROM 9 AM TO 12 PM AT THE SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY MUSEUM, 2024 ORANGE TREE LANE, REDLANDS, CA. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL DONNA LAURITA AT (909) 795-2733 or Lucille Von Wolfsdorff (909)792-4102.

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The occasion was one of "abrazos" and good talk about the early days while attending Casa Blanca Elementary School, when approximately 400 former students, staff, teachers and families gathered for a school reunion event to commemorate the "See The Past Come Alive-Gone But Not Forgotten" theme at the Villegas Community Center, in the City of Riverside's Casa Blanca area.

According to Rudy Chavez and Ed Martinez, class reunion co-chairs, organizing the event was a labor of love. They worked on the reunion for approximately a year, identifying former students ‘and the arduous task of locating them. "These people were scattered all over the United States," Chavez said.

The idea of the reunion and information on the community was actually nurtured in the early 1980's. Chavez felt, as Community Action Group Chair, that the community's positive profile should be published by the local newspaper, countering an adverse image of the area that existed at that time. The request for publication was denied.

"The outside public is unaware of the close relationships that were established while growing up and attending the local school. This reunion would be a once in a lifetime occasion for us to rekindle that closeness that exists to the present time," Chavez said.

The Casa Blanca Elementary School was built in 1923 and closed in 1967 when the Riverside School District implemented its desegregation program. The school was sold to Saint Anthony's Church in April, 1977. M. B. Madden served as principal from 1923 to 1964, and his son, Don, and daughter, Kathy, attended the reunion. Principals Bill Vernon and Ernest Robles served from 1964 to 1966 and 1966 to 1967, respectively. Elias "Leo" Baca served as vice principal/teacher from 1944 to 1964.

The program included a welcome speech by Ed. Martinez, retired probation supervisor for Riverside County, achievement awards ceremony, a talk by Ernest Robles, a walk down memory lane by Dr. Manuel Villapando, El Pachuco narration by Linda Peralta, Alonso Carrillo and Kelley Peralta and "La Cuadrilla", a descriptive commentary on the lives of an orange-picking crew by Rudy Chavez.

Many neighborhoods, like Casa Blanca, have residents with strong work ethics, traditions and produce professionals who contribute to our society. Unfortunately, said Chavez, the public (and newspapers) always stereotype a negative image of us. "We must continually be challenged to project the true image to offset that negativism."

Traveling from Godfrey, Illinois to attend the Casa Blanca Elementary School Reunion was Sally Martinez, above, who lived the further from her home town. Photo by IEHN

Pictured above (back row, I to r) Andres Melendrez, Jr., Helen Leon Melendrez, Andres Melendrez, Sr. (received the Silver Star), Antonia Lopez Rocha. (Front row, I to r) Helen Lopez Peraza and Vera Tasillas. Photo by IEHN

Brother George Torres and sisters (I to r) Angie Torres Yanez, Dolores Torres Saragoza and Antonia Torres Magdaieno. Photo by IEHN
John Sotelo: "Whenever there was a door closed, I tried to open it."

By Jessica Wyland

When John Sotelo set out to become the first Hispanic elected to Riverside's City Council, 35 years ago, his goal was to represent Hispanics fairly. Now, he wants Hispanics to get out and represent themselves by taking active roles in the community.

The road to city government was a rough one for Sotelo, who faced obstacles, but never relented. "Whenever there was a door closed, I tried to open it," recalled Sotelo, 74, who has retired after thirty years of public service.

As a boy, Sotelo's father took him to civic meetings all over town and encouraged him to get involved with the community. His father, owner of a small grocery business, also impressed upon him the advantages of working for yourself. After graduating from General Motors Institute in Michigan, Sotelo opened his own garage and towing company on 14th and Victoria streets in Riverside.

As a business owner in the community, Sotelo began to break down the barriers of prejudice and fear that kept other people away from Hispanics. He quickly became active in the NAACP, the Mexican-American Political Association, Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and the Eastside Neighborhood Council. He was also involved in presidential, federal senatorial and local election campaigns.

Before he was elected to council, Sotelo helped petition for a new Riverside City Charter so that minority groups would be represented. Victory was short-lived for Sotelo because after the establishment of a new charter he was stricken with polio. Before he had time to recover, he was asked to run for city council.

Sotelo ran and was elected to Riverside City Council, the dawn of his significant involvement in politics. He remembers forcing himself to walk each day, fighting the polio inside while he forced himself to fight the prejudice he faced outside. He also had the support of the community and especially his wife, Ramona and his family.

This was a time when Hispanics could only swim in the Fairmount Park pool on the days when the pool was drained.

Other members of the city council did not trust Sotelo and they doubted his abilities. Sotelo said he finally earned their respect, through words and deeds.

"You and I were both born in the city of Riverside," Sotelo told one of his fellow council members. "That flag is mine and it is yours."

When he got the call, Sotelo served in the navy during WWII. Once the war ended, Sotelo says he returned to find more respect given to Hispanics who had fought in the war, as if they had earned their acceptance by fighting for the United States.

Sotelo continued to encourage everyone, not just Hispanics, to get out and vote and take part in community issues. Because of his insistence, Sotelo's precinct recorded the highest percentage of registered voters.

While he was in office, Sotelo helped solve problems and fix the system to accommodate community members. One young man wanted a job with the Riverside Fire Department and despite his high test scores was disqualified because of his height. Sotelo had the height requirement policy changed and now that young man is one of the highest ranking firefighters in Riverside.

At a time when Hispanics received inadequate representation from the media, Sotelo procured $6000 from the University of California at Riverside to develop a Hispanic newspaper, "El Chicano."

Sotelo was also instrumental in establishing a Community Relations Commission to deal with tense race relations in Riverside.

Through the Sister City Program, Sotelo pushed Riverside to donate a fire truck, an ambulance and nine police cars to a city in Mexico.

President Nixon, President Johnson, President Kennedy and President Bush have met with Sotelo to congratulate him on his career or to discuss community issues.

Although he still works at his towing company, Sotelo has settled down some. He is mine and it is yours."

Continued on page 6
San Bernardino County Celebrates World AIDS Month

December is observed as World AIDS Month to expand and strengthen the worldwide effort to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS. This year's theme is "AIDS - End the Silence...Listen, Learn, Live!" Much silence still surrounds the AIDS epidemic. Whether the silence is due to fear, ignorance, or denial, the outcome is the same. Ignoring AIDS and its impact on our community ensures that our people will continue to be devastated by this deadly disease. There is still no cure or vaccine available.

Worldwide, 33.4 million people are estimated to be living with HIV. Almost six million people were infected with HIV in 1998; three million infections occurred among children and youth under the age of 25. In the United States, 650,000 to 900,000 people are living with HIV and 200,000 do not even know they are infected.

Dr. Thomas J. Prendergast, Director of the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health reported that, "as of September 30, 1999, 2,629 San Bernardino County residents had been diagnosed with AIDS." He stated that, "the number of new infections each year in the United States is remaining relatively stable but there has been a sharp decline in AIDS related deaths due to the successes of new drugs." While the decline in deaths in the United States is welcome, "access to these new drugs is not the same throughout the world," according to Dr. Prendergast. HIV infections and AIDS deaths are increasing at an alarming rate in a number of countries. In the United States, prevention remains the strongest weapon against HIV/AIDS. The two greatest risk behaviors for the transmission of HIV are unprotected sex and sharing needles. This World AIDS Day, all residents of San Bernardino County are urged to take time to remember those who have been lost to AIDS, support those living with HIV/AIDS, and promote prevention.

For more information on the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the new treatments for HIV, or for ideas on ways to commemorate World AIDS Day please contact the AIDS Program at (909) 383-3060.

CA/TX POLL

U.S. "WAR ON DRUGS" LATINOS INCREASINGLY CRITICAL

In the 1999 WCVI Intermestic Poll, the majority of Latino registered voters in California, 54.2% and a plurality in Texas, 46.3%, viewed the United States "War on Drugs" as ineffective in curbing the drug flow coming into the country. Only 35.3% of Latino registered voters in California described the "War on Drugs" as effective in curbing the drug flow. In Texas, this opinion was a bit more divided with 42.0% reporting that the "War on Drugs" has been effective in curbing the drug flow. Texas Latino registered voters did not have a majority opinion in either direction.

When asked if they felt drugs were a larger or smaller issue as compared to ten years ago, 71.4% and 73.7% of Latino registered voters in California and Texas respectively felt that drugs were a larger issue. Only 13.1% in California and 12.7% in Texas felt that drugs were a smaller issue. 10.3% in California and 9.0% in Texas felt the issue was about the same.

Sotelo From Page 5

registration party in his home to encourage Hispanics to take action, vote and become citizens.

"I see the progress we have made and I think maybe it wasn't wasted time," said Sotelo of his 28 years of service.

What he really wants is for every Hispanic member of the community, to be a voting member of the community. Sotelo and his wife, Ramona, were married in 1948. They are the parents of Phylis Sotelo Salinas, Kenneth, Michael, and Bradley. They also have nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.
COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
ANNOUNCES

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Short Term, Intensive Parenting and Peer Support Services for Welfare to Work/Cal WORKS Clients

The County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health - Family Support Services Program seeks to sub-contract with qualified, experienced parent education/counseling agencies to provide parent education, parent support, child development and babysitting services for a Jobs and Employment Services Department (JESD) funded project.

The applicant must be able to demonstrate five years experience in the areas of parentchild education and/or family counseling; data collection ability as required by JESD; orienting personnel to data collection tools; submitting data on an on-going basis; must have proof of insurance as required by law (i.e., worker's compensation, comprehensive general liability, errors and omissions liability); and conform to the County’s Child Support Compliance Program.

The Request For Proposal guidance packet contains additional information. Deadline for application is January 5, 2000. Interested agencies please inquire immediately to Linda LaRocco, 505 N. Arrowhead, Suite 211, San Bernardino, CA 92415-0048 or FAX: (909) 388-4392 or Call: (909) 388-4388.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
HSS 99-14
SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME LEGAL SERVICES

San Bernardino County, Human Services System (HSS) invites proposals from vendors interested in contracting to provide legal services for the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) appeals process. Public and private agencies and vendors with recognized expertise in providing such services are encouraged to submit proposals.

After approval of the Board of Supervisors, copies of RFP HSS 99-14 may be obtained on or after Wednesday, December 8, 1999 at 150 S. Lena Road, San Bernardino, CA 92415-0515 - Contract Administration.

A MANDATORY proposal conference will be held Friday, December 17, 1999 at 10:00 a.m. at the preceding address, Conference Room D.

The contract award will be contingent upon the successful applicant's ability to provide necessary services, liability and other insurance, and other requirements. Proposals must be received prior to 2:00 p.m., Thursday, January 13, 2000.

For further information, please contact Almea Payne, HSS Contract Administration, at phone (909) 388-0300 or fax (909) 388-0235.

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RIALTO HATE CRIME SYMPOSIUM
SET FOR SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11

On Saturday, December 11, 1999 at 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Rialto Community Playhouse, located at 150 East San Bernardino Ave. (corner of Riverside and San Bernardino Avenues), the Rialto Human Relations Commission and Rialto Police Chief Michael Meyers will host a symposium on Hate Violence and Hate Crime.

The purpose of the Symposium is to heighten public awareness regarding hate violence and hate crimes incidents. Police Chief Michael Meyers stated that “While there has not been a rash of hate crime reported in Rialto nor any major incidents. The best way to make sure they do not become a serious problem is to get people in the community working to prevent and respond to bigotry. Also, there are reasons why people do not report hate crimes and hate violence. They may not want others to know of their serious problem is to get people in the community to show their concerns before people will feel safe.”

The panel will consist of: U.S. Attorney’s General’s Office, Civil Rights Section; Fair Employment and Housing Commission; Novato Police Department; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights; U.S. Department of Justice, Community Relations Service; Simon Wisenthal Center; Rialto Unified School District; Fair Housing of San Bernardino County; Cal-State, San Bernardino; 62nd District Assembly Member John Longville; Rialto Mayor Ray Farmer.

This Symposium is sponsored by CAHRO, Rialto Police Department and Rialto Human Relations Commission.

People from the community who are aware of incidents of vandalism, threats or actual violence motivated by prejudice, please call the City Clerk’s Office for more information on the Symposium at (909) 820-2519.

Be a Friend This Holiday Season
Be a Responsible Host

December is Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month

This holiday season, millions of Californians will revel in holiday gatherings and New Year's Eve celebrations to mark the millennium. Parties will take place in homes, offices, hotels, and restaurants across the state. At the same time, hundreds of Californians, including teenagers, will be involved in alcohol-related crashes leading to serious injury and countless tragedies. Why? Because they, or someone else, left a holiday party impaired and got behind the wheel.

It is possible to enjoy the holidays with family and friends and still act responsibly when getting behind the wheel, said Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) Deputy Director Ray Biancalana. “Remember that guests at your party will end up sharing the roads with the rest of us, particularly on New Year’s Eve,” Biancalana said. “Do your part to make sure they celebrate responsibly.”

The Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) joins the OTS in promoting safe holidays. “It's never acceptable to serve alcohol to minors or obviously intoxicated people,” said ABC Director Jay Stroh. “We're counting on retailers to do their part throughout the year, but especially during the holidays, by obeying the law.”

While many feel that alcohol is an integral part of holiday functions, it’s the alcohol when mixed with driving—often leads to unnecessary tragedies. The highest incidence of alcohol-related collisions are among males 21-34. Unfortunately, teenagers 15-19 years of age are also involved in a disproportionate percentage of impaired driving collisions. Keep in mind that teens are likely to look at adults as role models. Unfortunately, young people witness more drinking and driving around the holidays.

The California Office of Traffic Safety urges motorists to consider these startling facts. Last year in California, 1,072 people were killed and 30,985 were injured in alcohol-related crashes.

To help make holiday parties safe and successful, the OTS suggests the following tips for being a responsible host at your holiday celebration:

• Hire a bartender who is trained at preventing alcohol from being abused.
• Serve food along with drinks.
• Offer soft drinks, fruit juices, bottled water, and other nonalcoholic drinks.
• Close the bar an hour before the party ends.
• Always have a designated driver on-hand to offer rides home. If not, make sure that cab service is available to transport guests home.
• Ask alcohol-impaired guests to stay away.
• Never let an impaired guest drive home.
• Never serve alcohol to minors.

“Responsible hosts can do their part to save lives and prevent injuries by providing and encouraging the use of designated drivers,” said Biancalana. “Calling a cab or giving someone a ride is a small price to pay for keeping friends and family safe. Set a good example and act responsibly.”

Riverside/Mexico

From page 2

few years Agriculture focuses on wheat, corn, beans, cotton, sorghum, and barley; sugarcane production ranks third nationwide.

San Luis Potosi is also a major producer of gold, silver, and zinc, and the country’s largest electrolytic foundry is located in the state. In addition, industrial facilities for the extraction of copper, fluorite, lead, manganese and mercury have recently been upgraded.

Industry has grown to such an extent in recent years that it is now the state’s most important sector. Companies are mostly medium-sized and are labor-intensive in fields such as mining, food processing, spinning and weaving.

The most significant branches of industry are engineering, construction, furniture, chemicals and petrochemicals, capital goods, food and beverages, and the sugar industry.