



Boletín

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Local immigrant rights advocate addresses Valiente membership

Farmers Branch businesswoman takes on anti-immigrant law

By Jesse Garcia
Boletín Editor

Latina businesswoman Elizabeth Villafranca, who took on Farmers Branch's anti-immigrant city council this past winter, will address the Valiente membership at February's mixer.

The mixer will be held on Thursday, Feb. 15, at 6:30 p.m. at Havana's, located on 4006 Cedar Springs Rd.

Villafranca will talk about her movement to defeat Farmers Branch Ordinance 2903, which goes to voters on May 12.

"We are not for illegal immigration. We simply want the federal government to decide this federal issue, not municipalities that will pick and choose how they are going to enforce their laws. I'm for fair and just immigration reform," said Villafranca.

The ordinance calls for strict measures against undocumented immigrants, requiring apartment renters to provide proof of citizenship or residency.

This version is a watered-down ordinance from the original one passed in November 2006, which called for English-only laws in the city and allowing local law enforcement to arrest undocumented immigrants. In early January, a Dallas County Judge ordered the Farmers Branch city council to revisit its ordinance in an open forum because the council passed the November ordinance behind closed doors - something prohibited by Texas Open Records & Meetings law.

The council followed the judge's orders, plus was forced by a petition coordinated by resident volunteers of "Let The Voters Decide," of which Villafranca is a part of, to allow the measure of denying rentals to undocumented immigrants to be left up to Farmers Branch voters on May 12.

Villafranca, a co-owner of the success-



Elizabeth Villafranca will speak at this month's mixer on Thursday, Feb. 15, about the Farmers Branch movement to defeat anti-immigrant Ordinance 2903.

ful Mexican restaurant chain "Cuquitas" throughout the metroplex, is a resident of Farmers Branch. The daughter of immigrants, Villafranca has spoken out for the immigrant community that has been targeted in her majority-Anglo town in northwest Dallas County. She has become the spokesperson for the movement to defeat this ordinance which has created national headlines.

The way the Farmers Branch city council has presented the issue (invoking 9/11 and terrorists images in its ordinance wording) one would think that the city of 27,000 is overrun with immigrants causing crime and becoming a detriment to city services. But latest the Farmers Branch police statistics show that in 2005 major crime was down 9.2 percent

And Farmers Branch's schools received "Recognized School District" status by the Texas Education Agency for the 2005-2006 school year because of high quality campuses whose students scored high on standardized tests. ▽

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Sitting (left to right) President Fernie Sanchez and Vice President Jerry Martinez. Standing (left to right) Secretary Ben Leal and Treasurer Rey Franco.

Valiente elects Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary

By Jesse Garcia
Boletín Editor

In January, the 2007 Valiente board of directors elected a new Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary.

The new Valiente Vice President is Jerry Martinez. Martinez joined in 2005. Valiente's projects have been successful thanks to his creativity in designing and promoting events. Martinez is originally from El Paso, Texas. He has been in Dallas since 1994. Martinez currently works as an instructor at El Centro College.

The new treasurer is Rey Franco. Franco joined Valiente in 2005. He has been helpful in coordinating Valiente's special events. Franco is originally from West Texas, lived in Piedras Negras, Coahuila, and has been in Dallas for the last 28 years. Franco works for AT&T.

Valiente's new secretary is Ben Leal. Leal joined Valiente in 2006. With advocacy and nonprofit experience in his resume, Leal is a perfect fit for Valiente. Leal works for Lambda Legal.

"I am very pleased with the new line up of officers," said President Fernie

Sanchez, who begins his second year as president. "All of them bring valuable experience to these positions, which will help Valiente produce bigger and better programs in 2007."

Sanchez has been a member of Valiente, since its inception in 2004. He is also native of El Paso. He has lived in Dallas for several years and currently works as a counselor at AIDS Arms, Inc.

In 2007, Valiente plans to host more social mixers so LGBT Latinos and Latinas have networking opportunities. Valiente will also team up with Lambda Legal to host bilingual workshops on how to prevent with discrimination in the workplace.

Valiente is an 100-member organization of North Texas Hispanic gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender residents. The group's purpose is to educate, foster pride, promote community building and increase advocacy within the LGBTQ Hispanic community. Valiente meets every third Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

For more information about Valiente and its future events, e-mail contact@valiente.org or call (214) 521-5342, ext. 1726. ▽

News Briefs



Membership and Fundraising Chair Cesar Reyna (left) hands Efren Garcia a check for \$100 for recruiting the most members in 2006 (a total of eight). Garcia will also get a free garment design by Fashion Designer Jerry Martinez.

Valiente welcomes 5 new members, gets 3 membership renewals:

Valiente received new memberships from John Ames, Joseph Hernandez, Michelle Luna, Vanessa Negron and Roman Smith. Special thanks goes to Raul Hinojosa, Ramiro Rutiaga and Noel Santini for renewing!

Valiente holds annual yard sale:

Valiente will be having a yard sale in April! If you have items that you would like to donate please make arrangements with Cesar Reyna at reyna_cesar@yahoo.com to coordinate a pick up/drop off. You can also drop off items on the day of the yard sale but notify Cesar if you will have any donations for the yard sale.

Valiente shirts design contest:

Valiente plans to sell official club shirts in 2007. The Membership and Fundraising Committee is asking members to design a T-shirt using the club's logo and submit it to contact@valiente.org. Judges will select one winner. The winner receives a Valiente T-shirt and a \$50 gift card. The logo can be obtained by emailing contact@valiente.org. Deadline for entries is March 31, 2007.

Gay LULAC meets Feb. 27:

Valiente members are invited to Gay LULAC's February general meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 27, from 6 to 8 p.m., at the LULAC Housing Commission, 6500 Greenville Ave., Suite 515, Dallas, TX 75206. The featured guest is Military Equality. ▽

Mundo Latino

Mexican LGBT Activist killed:

On Jan. 15, LGBT rights activist Jose Ernesto Leal Lopez was murdered in his residence. Leal Lopez was known for his advocacy for LGBT issues in his city of Matamoros, Tamaulipas. He was 42 years old. His murder is unsolved. Days before his murder, Leal Lopez held a press conference urging the state of Tamaulipas to pass a same-sex union law similar to the state of Coahuila.

Mexican border state of Coahuila passes same-sex civil unions:

On Jan. 11, the northern border state of Mexico, Coahuila, passed a civil union law for same-sex couples. The state follows the lead by other Latin American municipalities which allowed some sort of same-sex partnership: Mexico City, Buenos Aires, Rio Negro Province (Argentina), and Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil).

Mexico politician to introduce rights bill for transgender citizens:

In late January, LGBT activist and elected official, David Sanchez Camacho, a socialist congressman in Mexico's PRD (Partido de la Revolución Democrática) announced that he wanted to introduce a law to allow transgender Mexicans to legally change their gender and name. His proposed law for the Mexican constitution would read, "Every person has the right to the recognition and free exercise of their gender identity and their gender expression." Aside from being an elected official, Sanchez Camacho is the president of the Commission of Vulnerable Groups in the Congress of the Union of Mexico.

Italy votes to approve "civil pacts of solidarity" for Gays and Lesbians:

On Feb. 8, the Italian government allowed a vote on legislation that will grant civil union-type recognitions to Gay and Lesbian couples. Italy already has had unofficial same-sex unions occur. In 2004, more than 557,000 couples tied the knot symbolically. A recent poll of Italians showed that 51 percent are against "Gay Marriage" while 47 percent are in favor of recognizing Gay and Lesbian marriages. ▼



10 Questions

with
Sergio Chapa

In January, local Gay Latino reporter, Sergio Chapa, received a nomination from the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation for his September 2006 story on the first-ever League of United Latin American Citizens council made up of LGBT Latinos and Latinas and their supporters. Chapa has only been in Dallas for less than a year, but he hit the ground running covering crime and social issues that have made headlines in mainstream media.

Boletín: You were nominated for a GLAAD award. Tell us about it:

Sergio Chapa: "I'm not sure about the category, but it was for a story I did about Gay LULAC's 'coming out,' incorporation and officer elections."

Boletín: Is this first major nomination award you received in your career?

SC: "No. I have received Associated Press Managing Editor's awards for my work in Mexico and along the border."

Boletín: How long have you been working as a journalist?

SC: "About four years. I did three-and-a-half years of public relations before that."

Boletín: Where did you go to school?

SC: "The University of Texas at Austin, where I majored in journalism/public relations."

Boletín: What is your hometown?

SC: "I don't know. I kind of claim four places

depending on the company, but I'm a Texas boy for sure: I was born in San Benito, but my family is from neighboring Harlingen. I grew up in Austin but also lived in Brownsville for about three years."

Boletín: You work for the local Spanish daily, Al Dia. You've worked for English daily papers as well. Aside from the language, what's the difference in your assignments? **SC:** "Working in Spanish language is both liberating and restricting. Sometimes you get to do amazing stories that would get 'no play' in any other setting but other times you can't do a story because there is 'no Hispanic angle' or 'no Hispanic connection.'"

Boletín: You covered several important stories (Preston Hollow DISD Segregation, Farmers Branch anti-immigrant policies, alleged Garland Police abuse of Hispanics, etc.). Which one story really stood out in your opinion?

SC: "My favorite stories weren't about issues, but rather people. The ones that have stayed with me the longest are the deaths of 6-year-old Katherine Frances and the Alonso family. Both families faced tragedy but thought about the needs of others and decided to make life-saving organ donations. The strength and love of families is amazing. I both admire and respect Lucrecia Mayorga-Santamaria, Ana Gonzalez and the other parents at Preston Hollow. They are humble people who wanted a better life for their children and were brave enough to stand up against language, cultural and class barriers to fight something they thought was wrong and THEY WON."

Boletín: You just moved here in July 2006. Was it hard for you to establish your beat in this town, being a new kid on the block?

SC: "There is a lot of red tape, inertia and bureaucracy as far as getting public information around here. It's a lot easier in other places. The Dallas court systems are so large and impersonal. I think I got the hang of it now, but still get caught up every now and then."

Boletín: You lived in South Texas before moving to Dallas. What do you miss the most?

SC: "I miss my tacos de mollejas and C&C Wings from back in Brownsville."

Boletín: Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

SC: "Changing Sergio Jr.'s diapers!" ▼

Valiente to be featured in this week's GayBingo

By Cesar Reyna
Boletín Writer

This month Valiente will have the opportunity to partner up with GayBingo, a program from the Resource Center of Dallas.

What is GayBingo? Think of your abuelitas loteria/bingo games but with drag queens calling out numbers and adding that special entertainment that only drag queens can. That is GayBingo!

Valiente will be the 50/50 sponsor this month and will be in charge of selling raffle tickets. The money raised from the raffle tickets will be split between the winner of the raffle and Valiente.

"You sell raffle tickets for \$1 each at the event. If you pull a ticket and Elaine "Bingoplayer" Gomez wins from a total pot of \$1,000 she would get \$500 and Valiente would get \$500," said GayBingo organizer Henry Ramirez III, the RCD Center Programs Coordinator.

GayBingo will be celebrating its sixth

year anniversary this July and has benefited 55 non-profit organizations; LGBT sports teams, social groups and other agencies in the DFW area with the 50/50 raffle. Money raised from the bingo games benefit the Resource Center of Dallas which operates the AIDS Resource Center, the Nelson-Tebedo Health Resource Center and the John Thomas Gay & Lesbian Community Center. A list of their services and programs can be viewed on their website.

Last December, Ramirez went down to Houston to help Houston celebrate their first anniversary. "They call it Queer Bingo, they modeled many aspects of their Queer Bingo after Dallas. GayBingo is also played in Philadelphia, California and many other cities and states across the U.S.," said Ramirez.

February's theme is Fantasy Ball GayBingo and will be held on Feb. 17, at Lakewood Theater.

Doors open at 5 p.m. and the fun begins at 6 p.m. Reservations are encouraged and



Fantasy Ball GayBingo
Saturday, February 17
5 p.m.
Lakewood Theater
1825 Abrams Road
Dallas, TX 75214

tickets can be purchased at www.resource-centerdallas.org or at the window on the day of the event.

If you would like to volunteer with Valiente to sell raffle tickets on the day of the event contact Cesar Reyna at reyna_cesar@yahoo.com. ♡



Valiente

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www.valiente.org

Boletín is a monthly publication of Valiente. Views and opinions are those of the members. To contact the editor, e-mail Jesse Garcia at Jgarcia71@aol.com. No portion of this newsletter may be reproduced without permission.

President • Fernando Sanchez
Vice President • Jerry Martinez
Treasurer • Rey Franco
Secretary • Ben Leal

****Remember:

Valiente Mixer

Thursday, February 15, 6:30 p.m.

Havana's on 4006 Cedar Springs Rd.

Featured guest: Elizabeth Villafranca of Farmers Branch