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Volume 8

Texas What Are We doing

**The Blind vs The Future
The Lubbock Strip/La Linea**

**Little Joe Still King of the
Brown Sound**

**Takes Care Of:
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Letter from The Publisher



Hola, first as always thank you for supporting our publication, whether you are a reader or advertiser we genuinely appreciate you picking up Hola Texas in print or online. We do our best to provide our readers with a variety of articles, some on serious side, some just for fun and maybe some that you might learn a thing or Dos.

This issue we are looking at what our Texas Lawmakers are up to in Austin as written by our newest guest writer Dentons' own Lynn Hirhman. On this issue we reach back to 2014 for an interview we did with Little Joe AKA the King of the Brown Sound. Also check out Esto E lotro, this and that for some interesting observations. If you are a Catholic and even if you are not, I believe you will enjoy Joe's article on the Catholic Mass. Another article that you may find interesting if you ever visited Lubbock is the piece on the Lubbock Strip- La Linea, gone but not forgotten. We also join the FWISD in celebrating all graduates and their families.

Last if you live in a city with a runoff election please get out and make your voice heard or as the good people at the SWVP say "Tu Voto Es Tu Voz" Last the COVID-19 threat is not over, let us all get vaccinated and continue to be safe. Yes, Texas is open, but that does not mean we can forget to be safe and please continue to pray for those that have lost loved ones and their families. Last, please visit us at www.holatexas.us and subscribe for free, to receive our weekly Weekender edition. And also, if you have a minority or women owned or operated business, please become a member of Amigos N Business by going to www.amigosnbusiness.com Adios till next time.

Alberto T. Govea.

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Will The Willfully Blind give way to The Force of the Future?

Lynn Hirshman
Denton

This country is dramatically divided. Some would say Right vs. Left; some would say Conservative vs. Progressive; some would say Fascist vs. Revolutionary. I would probably draw the line between The Willfully Blind vs. The Force of the Future.

Case in point: our Willfully Blind legislature here in Texas (there are others even more blind, certainly, but here we are): in a state where the power grid gave up the ghost for days in February during one of our fairly rare cold spells and snowstorms, the Governor said his priority would be to ensure that this could never happen again. Bills were presented in the State House and Senate to winterize the grid and compel power producers and distributors to ensure that Texans would not freeze to death again.

And here we are, at the end of May and nearly the end of the legislative session, and

the Lege is still dickering over what minor changes will be made to the provision of electric power in the state. There is no improvement to the Public Utilities Commissions proposed, and the changes to ERCOT are barely worth mentioning. Worse, the House is now proposing to fund the “securitization” of the grid – all the winterizing, and the repayment of the exorbitant rates we paid during the power crisis – by issuing a \$10 billion bond package, to be repaid by us, the taxpayers, over 20 years.

Meanwhile, our do-nothing-real legislature has made all our lives more dangerous by passing a bill allowing people to carry handguns without a license. And neither background checks nor training are considered important. Oh, they also banned hotels from refusing to permit guns in guests’ rooms.

Another priority, it seems, is requiring that the National Anthem be sung before any game in the state played by a team receiving State funding.

And, speaking of team play, a little-known bill is close to being wrapped up that would permit home-schooled teens to participate in public school sports and other extracurricular activities. Why is this troublesome? Coaches and others involved in school sports point out that it would be possible for ringers to spend all their time in training (since they won’t have formal classes to attend), which would give them an unfair advantage in league play.

It looked for a while that the Willfully Blind would make it difficult for transgender children to participate in sports at all (since it would have required them to play on teams of their birth sex). These Bathroom Bill followers-up also would have made it “child abuse” to provide appropriate medical assistance to the trans kids. Fortunately, it looks like these will not make it off the floor in time for the end of the session.

And then there are the new restrictions on voting – all aimed, of course, at the people of color of Texas, who have shown an annoying



tendency to vote Democratic in recent years. The bill places more State control over how local jurisdictions can schedule early voting, place ballot drop-off boxes, organize mail-in ballots, and locate polling places. It’s not as bad as Georgia – we can still offer a bottle of water to those standing in the long lines these changes will inevitably make – but it’s clearly moving in that direction.

Concerned about out-of-control police? One Senate bill would require the state’s largest counties to hold an election if they choose to switch some law enforcement dollars to less-militarized methods of dealing with the mentally ill or those who are minor offenders. At the same time, these counties would be not be able to spending their own money to educate voters ahead of the election.

And, whatever one thinks about the issue of abortion, we cannot support Abbott’s smugness as he signed into law a clearly unconstitutional bill that virtually eliminates all abortions, thus throwing half of Texas’ citizens under the bus, while ignoring the fact that the vast majority of Texans support the availability of abortion under at least some conditions.

The Texas Legislature meets only once every two years. If we want to see changes in the way we are governed in this state, we need to be organizing and educating now, so we can be prepared for the next session. The Force of the Future MUST take over from the moribund Willfully Blind.



Mi Opinion

Jim Stodola

Republicans balking at the President Bidens' plan for recovery by using the "It costs too much" refrain. "Let me tell you something, Trump added 7.8 trillion to our debt, for his family and his rich buddies. Let us spend on the American people, they deserve it. For all the gangs and goons who still support Trump its' time to wake up! And come to realization that Trump did nothing for you. President Biden is working for you, the recovery program is for all Americans not just for a chosen few.

Esto E Lotro (This n That)

By Alfredo Sanchez



APPRECIATE THE UNITED STATES:

Recently I was talking to a friend who is a refugee from Iran. In our conversation he commented how much he loves this country. As a side comment he mentioned how people in this country do not appreciate the freedoms we share in this country. My friend's family was of the religion Baha'i in a country that is Muslim. Baha'i, he tells me when he lived in Iran, were persecuted for their religious beliefs. As a child he recalls his relatives being killed around him and him being the only survivor. He remembers crying alone until his mother came home. They immigrated to this country as religious refugees through Turkey and then to the United States. When you hear stories like this it makes one thankful for being born in the United States. More Americans need to talk to immigrants to get an understanding of how truly blessed we are. Is the United States perfect? No. It is a lot better than many other countries. I am still free to worship as I please no matter no matter how some people say that their religious freedom is being taken

away. They really do not have a clue what religion suppression is.

DEFUNDING POLICE:

What is meant by defunding police? Defunding of police does not mean getting rid of police completely in most cases. It means reappropriating police funds to include officers that are trained in working with mental illness, family violence, increasing de-escalating training for police departments and spending more money on evaluating future police cadets. These actions will free police officers to concentrate on crimes rather than spend most of their day dealing with recurring incidents of mental illness.

HOW DO WE FIX CHILDREN'S PERFORMANCE IN SCHOOL?

I am often perplexed regarding why within the same school, we have students that do extraordinarily well with extremely high-grade point averages (GPA) but then we have students from the same school who do very poorly. Often, I hear it has to do with the socio-economic status of the family, that the child comes from a poor

family. To some extent that is correct, but that is not always the case. I have seen students coming from poor families who do very well in school and students that come from rather affluent families that do not do so well. I believe it has more to do with the value the parents put on education. I do not believe that the schools and teachers can be blamed totally when students fail or succeed. Parents' emphasis on education, starting at a young age, contributes to the success of their child. So where do we start with helping students succeed? Where we need to start is when parents bring their children to pre-k. All parents should be required to attend a parent's orientation to teach parents the value of an education for their child. The state should also make it mandatory that students that are failing attend summer school all summer long. Students that are failing should not be allowed to take summer break. Having a good education is much more important.

THE LUBBOCK STRIP, LA REYA, LA LINEA, MINI VEGAS

By A. Govea

Whatever you called it if you anywhere in the Lubbock area if you wanted beer or liquor to take you went there. Lubbock was the largest dry county in the country, so the folks there had a shared monopoly forever which allowed for price fixing by this smug and entitled group. According to a report on the Lubbock A.J. Newspaper Fort Worth based Majestic Liquors owned most of the stores on the strip. But perhaps among the most popular package store was Pinkies known not only for beer and liquor sales but for their barbeque sandwiches and even more so for their gizzards. You could buy them by the half dozen or full dozen. They were so popular with area folks that people that had long left the area when they went back to visit a stop at Pinkies was top of the list, including this writer.

Once the weekend hit the lines grew on the Strip to maybe a mile long with flashing lights welcoming you in. Having to drive there was a drag, but also added to the excitement of TGIF. The worse part was when it got close to closing time people would haul A** to get there before closing. And if you missed out, that meant the party was over or there was your friendly bootlegger. Most thought all those people went out with the end of probation and you would be right, but not in Lubbock. Of course, their prices were twice what you would pay at the already expensive strip prices, beer came in quarts and you had a choice of 1 usually Falstaff. Pero if you had to go there it was your fault for poor planning or maybe it was because of that uninvited guest that showed up empty-handed and thirsty. Either way, that was life for the beer drinking Lubbock crowd.

To be clear, there were bars and clubs within the city limits, but you had to drink it there and again it was not cheap. All this changed in 2009 when Lubbock county finally went wet after half dozen or more tries. Every time they attempted it the Church Belt folks of teetotalers flexed their muscles and defeated the amendment. Someone always rumored though that they had strange allies in the fight, the people that owned the monopoly on the



strip. Their selling point was if Lubbock were to go wet, it would lead to public drunkenness and an increase in homeless population. When I moved away from there in 1996, I thought it might never change. But now the strip as I and many generations before and some after knew it, is no more. You now have car lots, tire shops, plumbing and other miscellaneous businesses in the place of Mini Vegas Strip.

I was there two years ago and went straight to Pinkies, this time about a month ago tried again, Pero they were no more. However, all was not lost as they now have a carry out restaurant in Lubbock proper and on my way out a town, I scored a dozen gizzards. And they were still good, but something was missing. The excitement of The Strip RIP. We invite to share your stories of the Lubbock Strip with us, and we will publish as space permits.

The City Manager; Understanding Your City Government

By Luis C. Castillo

A city manager is the chief executive officer of a municipal government in a council-manager form of city government. According to the Texas State Historical Association Handbook of Texas 251 of the 290 home-rule cities in Texas operate with a city council as a policy body and a city manager as the chief executive-administrative officer of city government. In North Texas city managers are plentiful.

City Managers are hired by the city council unlike the mayor or the city council itself, who are elected to office by the voters. A city manager manages all the city departments and other municipal facilities. Typically, depending on the city's population size, departments include the fire department, parks, and recreation department, police department, planning and zoning department, and water department. City Managers are fairly well compensated in recognition of the stress under which managers operate, particularly in large cities. City Managers serve at the pleasure of the city council and may be terminated at a moment's notice. Because of this, contracts and severance agreements are prevalent. If a city manager is involuntarily dismissed from employment, he or she receives a specified dollar amount of termination pay.



Specifically, what does a city manager do? A city manager's job includes managing responsibilities which may vary depending on the size of the city. A city manager interacts with many

people from inside government to the public at large. City managers supervise city employees and take part in city council meetings in which the city manager gives advice on various issues being considered by the city council and the mayor. It should be noted that the city manager has no power in the decision-making process. It is the city council that has the final decision regarding laws and ordinances, and it is the city manager's responsibility to ensure that these laws and ordinances are implemented and enforced.

The City Manager's responsibilities include but not limited to the following. He/she implements policy decisions made by Mayor and Council, prepares proposed annual budgets, coordinates City operations and programs, appoints and supervises City personnel not appointed by the City Council, and recommends improvement in city operations. Other responsibilities include representing the city government during social functions and formal meetings with municipalities and government officials; mediating between political groups when disagreement exists, and act as a spokesperson to the media regarding council activities.

One of the biggest challenges a city manager encounters is managing city council expectations against what is feasible and within the city's budget. Often it can turn into a balancing act because a city manager's job depends on how the city council evaluates his/her performance.

Given the high demand and expectations placed on City Managers they need to be skillful in diplomacy and tactfulness. They must possess strong written and verbal skills, excellent organizational skills, strong critical thinking skills, public speaking skills, and a solid understanding of governmental processes and key roles that others play in city government.

This narrative is not intended to be an all-inclusive perspective of the city manager's roles and responsibilities. I hope that at a minimum it has enlightened the reader with a better understanding of the city manager. But it is important to be mindful of the power that a city manager holds in city government. Always remember that the city manager serves as a policy advisor to the city council. So if you ever wonder why some things never change in city government even though the voters elect new mayors and city council members maybe just maybe the culprit is the city manager.

THE CATHOLIC MASS IS BEAUTIFUL

So, you go to Mass on Sundays because you were told you are supposed to go or you will surely go to hell after you die. After Mass is over you say to yourself, "Got-er- done, I put in my time. I should be all right with God". I am sorry to tell you, you may not be leaving the service with all the grace you could have gained if you knew what the Mass is all about.

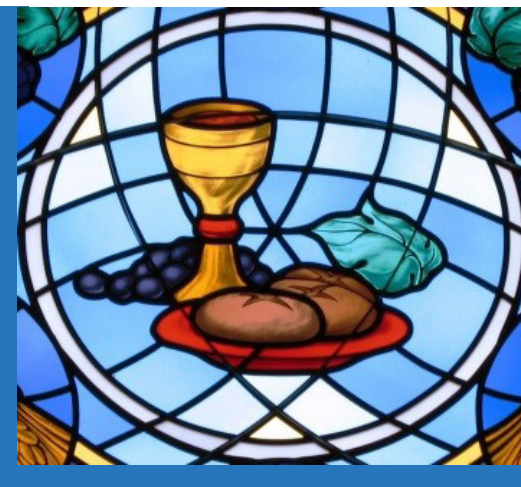
I will attempt to give you some information about what is going on up in front of the church on the Altar during Mass so that you can enjoy it more.

The first thing you must know is that Jesus was Jewish, and all the Apostles were also Jewish. The Jewish religion includes many rituals that God had instructed his chosen people to do for them to communicate and worship him. Everything was to be done a certain way. God knew his people needed to have a way to show their love and appreciation, so he told them what to do. It was to be done in an orderly way with certain procedures which were to become the custom. Some people I know believe that just by walking outside looking up at the sky and saying "thanks God" is all that is required. It could be alright but, nope, I think God is more formal than that. He is our almighty creator we should have structured ceremonial procedures that will please him. Instructions for all Jewish worship rituals were given to the Prophets and carried out by the Jewish Priest. The most important ones were performed on the Sabbath, which is also Saturday the last day of the week. Ok, here you ask why Christians worship on Sunday the first day of the week. Well folks, Jesus rose from the dead on a Sunday, so they consider it the Lord's Day and we celebrate that. (Your Pastor can explain it in more detail.)

Ok, back to the Jewish organized form of worship that was setup per God's instructions. When our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the

Messiah, was born, the Jewish Religious form of worship and procedures were well established and set. There was only one problem: the guys in charge of their church had become corrupt. Jesus pointed that out to them later, after he grew up of course. Well, the Pharisees did not want to lose their jobs, so they figured out how to have Jesus arrested and crucified. Before that happened though, Jesus had already set up his Church. He had many followers and more importantly he had the twelve Apostles who were his witnesses of all the great things he said and did. They were to spread God's message to the entire world. The message of love for one another and that everyone was welcome into Jesus's Church. It did not matter what country you were from or if you were rich or poor. His Church was setup for the entire world.

So, you see, the Apostles were to go about the entire world telling everyone about Jesus and setting up his Church and the methods by which people were to worship God in an organized way that would please Him. They did not have to start from scratch to set up any ceremonies dedicated to God for the forgiveness of sins; they followed what was already setup in the Jewish religion. Many of the ceremonies in the Catholic Church are like the ones that were being done by the Jewish priest.



There is one important exception. The Jewish priest made blood sacrifices using certain types of unblemished animals for forgiveness of sins. Jesus changed that. When Jesus made his declaration at the Last Supper that He was the final sacrificial lamb so that all sins were to be forgiven He ended that type of ritual. The shedding of his Blood and death was to end all those sacrifices. He took bread and wine and said this is my Body and Blood that will be given up for you so that sins may be forgiven. He made that magnanimous offering as part of the Passover ritual they were celebrating.

In this Last Supper Declaration he also told us to do the same offering in remembrance of him. So you see our Catholic Mass is like the Passover feast with Jesus as the Sacrificial Lamb. It's a beautiful thing that happens up front on the church Altar, the bread and wine becomes the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. So if you pay attention and take part in the prayers and singing that lead up to that moment you are going to love our Catholic Mass. Our ordained Catholic Priests, who to me are like angels in the flesh, lead us by following all the prayers and instructions written in the Catholic Missal. It is a precise ritual.



As a Catholic during Mass you are taking part in asking the Holy Spirit to cause the “Transubstantiation” of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the World. Then we also partake in the feast of the Unblemished Sacrificial Lamb Jesus Christ from which they give us the grace which helps us to be like Christ.

Our Catholic Mass is a long prayer where we honor, worship and thank our God.

Your Friend in Christ,

Joe M. Govea, a devout Catholic whose duty is to evangelize

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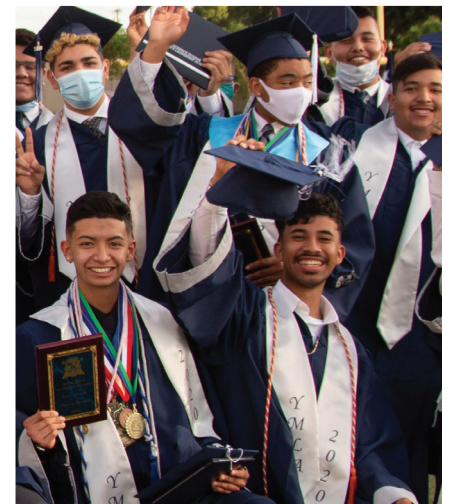
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New Immigration Bills Open the Door for Scammers

President Biden's proposed immigration reforms could provide a pathway to citizenship for over 11 million undocumented immigrants, but the proposed changes also offer fresh opportunity for scammers who know how to exploit the complicated and sometimes confusing immigration process.

"Scammers do follow the headlines," said Federal Trade Commission attorney Emily Wu, adding that with new immigration legislation in the news, it's the perfect time to approach potential victims.

Immigrants are often targeted because scammers know how to exploit their lack of familiarity with life in the United States, Wu said. They're also less likely to report scams for fear of having to reveal personal information to the government and with the recent influx of migrants on the Southern border also in the news, the FTC wants people to know it's safe to report.

"We do know that people in certain situations may not want to reveal personal information to the government. But we do want to hear about scams people may be facing on the Southern border and the workaround is that we have an anonymous reporting system," Wu explained. "We don't ask questions about immigration status and people can tell us as much or as little as they want. Reporting fraud helps the community and there are versions of the site in both Spanish and English," she said.

According to Wu, immigrants typically face three types of scams: form completion scams, government imposter scams, and affinity scams, which take advantage of things familiar to an immigrant's country of origin such as language, culture and laws.

Form completion scam attempt to charge people for USCIS forms. While there may be a fee to submit a completed application to the USCIS, you should never pay for blank government forms and you can download them for free at [USCIS.gov/forms](https://uscis.gov/forms) or order them by calling 1-800-870-3676.

Government imposter scams often take place on the internet with scammers creating websites that feature government seals and American imagery such as the flag. But if it doesn't have .gov domain, it's not official and can't be trusted.

Affinity scams are often run by notarios – people who charge for legal help but who are not lawyers and who don't have the authority to provide legal guidance. In Mexico and many Central and South American countries notarios can provide legal services and may even be experienced lawyers. But they are not authorized to practice in the United States, said Wu: "Notarios are not recognized or accredited and don't have a legal license to help, but they take advantage of the confusion about what a notario is and what they are allowed to do.

Misrepresenting legislation is a tactic frequently used by notarios.

"A scammer might say 'there's a new pathway to citizenship if you're a certain type of person, a farmworker, a dreamer,' but even if what they are saying is true, it's not yet passed into law," Wu explained. "By telling people they can take action based on a bill, you already know they are dishonest."

A good way to avoid being scammed is to be sure the person you're working with is authorized to provide legal services, Wu said. People seeking assistance with the immigration process can contact the Department of Justice directly, or they can get help from accredited representatives, which are organizations approved by the DoJ's Executive Office of Immigration Review to provide legal services and representation before the Department of Homeland Security, EOIR and Board of Immigration Appeals.

In Michigan, local immigration experts have reported scams related to Biden's proposed immigration reforms, including one that claims to enroll people in 'Biden's Amnesty plan.'

"Early in the Biden administration we started to get calls from people asking us about the Biden Amnesty program and attorneys who said they could help people sign up," said Susan E. Reed, Managing Attorney with the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center.

While Biden did implement a 100-day moratorium on deportations his first day in office, there is no Biden Amnesty program, nor have immigration reforms passed, Reed said. "There's no reason to charge people money in advance to help

them with programs that don't yet exist."

Reed noted that even legitimate attorneys may attempt to charge people for assistance with programs that don't yet exist: "Some sort-of reputable attorneys will argue that it's okay to offer [immigration services based on proposed legislation] but I don't think it's acceptable to take money for services that can't be provided. Some people will call it a retainer, but I just don't think it's ethical," she said.



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Nuevas facturas de inmigración abren la puerta a los estafadores

Las reformas de inmigración propuestas por el presidente Biden podrían proporcionar un camino hacia la ciudadanía para más de 11 millones de inmigrantes indocumentados, pero los cambios propuestos también ofrecen una nueva oportunidad para los estafadores que saben cómo explotar el complicado y a veces confuso proceso de inmigración.

“Los estafadores siguen los titulares”, dijo la abogada de la Comisión Federal de Comercio (FTC) Emily Wu, y agregó que, con la nueva legislación de inmigración en las noticias, es el momento perfecto para acercarse a las víctimas potenciales.

Los inmigrantes a menudo son atacados porque los estafadores saben cómo explotar su falta de familiaridad con la vida en los Estados Unidos, dijo Wu.

También es menos probable que denuncien estafas por miedo a tener que revelar información personal al gobierno y con la reciente afluencia de migrantes en la frontera sur también en las noticias, la FTC as que las personas pueden estar enfrentando en la frontera sur y la solución es que tenemos un sistema de denuncia anónimo”, explicó Wu. “No hacemos preguntas sobre el estatus migratorio y las personas pueden decirnos tanto o tan poco como quieran. Informar el fraude ayuda a la comunidad y hay versiones del sitio tanto en español como en inglés”, dijo.

Según Wu, los inmigrantes generalmente enfrentan tres tipos de estafas: estafas de completar formularios, estafas de impostores del gobierno y estafas de afinidad, que se aprovechan de cosas familiares para el país de origen de un inmigrante, como el idioma, la cultura y las leyes.

Estafa de completrmularios intenta cobrar a las personas por los formularios de USCIS. Si bien puede haber una tarifa para enviar una solicitud completa al USCIS, nunca debe pagar los formularios gubernamentales en blanco y puede descargarlos gratis en [USCIS.gov/forms](https://uscis.gov/forms) o solicitarlos llamando al 1-800-870-3676.

Las estafas de impostores gubernamentales a menudo tienen lugar en Internet con estafadores que crean sitios web que presentan sellos gubernamentales e imágenes estadounidenses como la bandera. Pero si no tiene el dominio .gov, no es oficial y no se puede confiar en él.

Las estafas de afinidad a menudo están a cargo de notarios: personas que cobran por la ayuda legal pero que no son abogados y que no tienen la autoridad para brindar orientación legal. En México y en muchos países de Centro y Sudamérica, los notarios pueden brindar servicios legales e incluso pueden ser abogados con experiencia. Pero no están autorizados a ejercer en Estados Unidos, dijo Wu: “Los notarios no están reconocidos ni acreditados y no tienen una licencia legal para ayudar, pero aprovechan la confusión sobre qué es un notario y qué está permitido. que hacer.

La tergiversación de la legislación es una táctica utilizada con frecuencia por los notarios.

“Un estafador podría decir ‘hay un nuevo camino hacia la ciudadanía si eres un determinado tipo de persona, un trabajador agrícola, un soñador’, pero incluso si lo que dicen es cierto, aún no se ha convertido en ley”, explicó Wu. “Al decirle a la gente que

pueden actuar basándose en un proyecto de ley, ya sabes que son deshonestos”.

Una buena forma de evitar ser estafado es asegurarse de que la persona con la que está trabajando esté autorizada para brindar servicios legales, dijo Wu. Las personas que buscan asistencia con el proceso de inmigración pueden comunicarse directamente con el Departamento de Justicia o pueden obtener ayuda de representantes acreditados, que son organizaciones aprobadas por la Oficina Ejecutiva de Revisión de Inmigración del DOJ seguridad Nacional, EOIR. y Junta de Apelaciones de Inmigración.

En Michigan, los expertos locales en inmigración han informado de estafas relacionadas con las reformas migratorias propuestas por Biden, incluida una que afirma inscribir a las personas en el “plan de amnistía de Biden”.

“Al principio de la administración de Biden, comenzamos a recibir llamadas de personas que nos preguntaban sobre el programa de amnistía de Biden y abogados que dijeron que podían ayudar a las personas a inscribirse”, dijo Susan E. Reed, abogada gerente del Centro de Derechos de Inmigrantes de Michigan. Si bien Biden implementó una moratoria de 100 días sobre las deportaciones en su

primer día en el cargo, no existe un programa de Amnistía Biden ni se han aprobado reformas de inmigración, dijo Reed. “No hay razón para cobrar dinero a las personas por adelantado para ayudarlas con programas que aún no existen”.

Reed señaló que incluso los abogados legítimos pueden intentar cobrar a las personas por asistencia con programas que aún no existen: “Algunos abogados de renombre argumentarán que está bien ofrecer [servicios de inmigración basados en la legislación propuesta] pero no creo es aceptable aceptar dinero por servicios que no se pueden brindar. Algunas personas lo llamarán anticipo, pero yo simplemente no creo que sea ético”, dijo.■

By Nina Mahon,

Translation by Felix Alvarado



From our Archives (2014)

LITTLE JOE: AN AMERICAN SUCCESS STORY

By A. Govea

Jose Maria Hernandez “Little Joe,” as we all know him—was born Oct. 17, 1940, to Salvador “La Cotorra” Hernandez and Amelia De Leon Hernandez in a 3-wall dirt floor car garage in Temple Texas. You cannot get more Central Texas than that, and that’s where Little Joe still lives today. “I didn’t let the Klan chase me out,” he says, laughing with a big smile.

Little Joe grew up in a predominately African-American neighborhood in a city that yielded both pleasant and bad experiences in the 1940s and ’50s, he recalled. There in Temple in those days, if you were less than “lily white” of skin, it bound you to experience racism at some level, especially if you grew up poor. Little Joe fondly recalls his cotton-chopping (hoeing weeds) and cotton-picking days on the West Texas Plains, particularly around Lubbock and Plainview and the smaller towns. He doesn’t remember those times as a personal hardship, but as a rite of passage that most poor people, especially his family and friends, had to go through.

Before we get to the Grammy Award-winning Little Joe, let’s talk about how it all started, with some Q&A:

Govea: “Why did you get into music, and what were your first goals?”

Joe: “One word survival. In 1954, they sentenced my dad to four years in prison for possession of marijuana (four joints). That is a year per joint. Luckily, if you can call it that, he got out in 28 months. “I was the seventh of 13 children and the oldest at home. I was always around music with my family. There was (it seemed) always a fiesta going on. My grandmother, who came to this country during the Mexican Revolution, was a professionally trained pianist. As for (my

other) musical influences, it was the music of Jose Alfredo Jimenez and the music that was played in my neighborhood, which was predominately black, which may have been Nat King Cole, Ella Fitzgerald and jazz and radio was widely C&W.”

Govea: “How did you get the nickname ‘Little Joe’?”

Joe: “When I was a kid, I may be weighed a hundred pounds, and I had a friend named Joe, who was a kind of big guy; so, he was ‘Big Joe’ and I became ‘Little Joe.’ But it (also) worked musically because there was Little Richard, Little Anthony, and so forth. So, ‘Little Joe’ just fit.”

When Joe described his upbringing as a cotton-picker, poor music in the home, it could have been the biography of most in our community back then, as it was for this writer and our editor, who was also in attendance at this interview. Little Joe’s first guitar cost \$150, which was not quite a million dollars, but it seemed liked it to him. Luckily, his father had a “compadre,” who was a plumber. What does that have to do with a \$150 guitar? Well, the plumber lent Little Joe the money, and he could pay it off at 50 cents an hour digging ditches for the lending plumber. That guitar now must be worth a lot more than \$150, and Joe still owns it. He took that guitar and joined his cousin’s band, originally named David Coronado and the Latinaires, not as the



front man, but just a member. Little Joe said he did not want to be a singer, as he was very shy. But when his cousin left for greener solo fields on tour, the band became Little Joe and the Latinaires. Little Joe was still shy, but there was a family to help support.

Govea: “So, how was the money?”

Joe: “Our first paying gig paid us \$22.50. That was \$5 each, plus \$2.50 for gas, as the gig was out a town.”

Not exactly rock star money! But hey, Little Joe said, “getting paid to do something you love to do is a monumental achievement. It certainly beat picking cotton all day.”

Govea: “Did you have a money goal back then?”

Joe, amid his laughter: “Back then my goal was to make and save \$15,000 and retire at the ripe old age of 35. Well, 35 has come and gone twice over, and I still have not achieved been able to retire.

Fast forward to 2014, Little Joe is now a Tejano music icon. Call him the King of the Brown Sound. He won a 1991 Grammy for Best Mexican American Album and since then, three Latino Grammys’ for Best Tejano Album of the Year. Joe has also appeared in movies, such as Las Pastorellas with Paul Rodriguez, Linda Ronstadt, Cheech Marin, Freddie Fender and Flaco Jimenez; he also appeared in Rangers and Down for the Barrio, plus many TV specials. Little Joe has performed with many other singing stars and legends such as Willie Nelson.

Joe: “In the ’80s, Willie put on benefit shows titled Farm Aid, fundraisers for farmers. I volunteered to perform, and that led to meeting many artists like Willie, of course, but also Kris Kristofferson, Merle Haggard, the Texas Tornados, to name a few. Included was also Ray Price, already a dear friend, who passed late last year.” (December 2013)

The accolades for Little Joe have been many and continue to this day. But I wanted to ask another long nagging question of mine.

Govea: “You have been called the ‘Tejano Frank Sinatra.’ What do you think about that?”

Joe: “That is really too much praise. It took me a while to really appreciate Frank’s talent. But clearly, he was a very one-of-a-kind performer and vocalist. But as for the comparison, I will take it. Who would not want that?!”

I was ready to end the interview, but happily found that Little Joe had more to say. The interview turned to the current social and political climate in our country.

Govea: “So what’s on your mind?”

Joe: “Los Cabrones in Missouri.”

His answer started a discussion of the growing divide between the haves and have-nots.

Joe talked about his lifelong stand on many community issues and support for leaders and groups, such as Cesar Chavez and his farm workers’ union, La Raza Unida, to name a few. I told Joe about having listened to him speak at rallies in Lubbock, where I grew up, during the “hey days” of the Chicano Civil Rights Movement. Little Joe said he feels extremely disappointed that many of the battles already won are now issues being contested again. From his point of view, the Republican Party has many members Tea Party types who are truly racists and liars and greedy.

Joe. “I do not want to be labeled a reverse Ted Nugent, but if you look at party platforms and policies, you will find out for yourself. This is La Verda.”

Joe said he’s concern for the children coming over the border and the misguided or grandstanding polices of Gov. Rick Perry concerning the immigration issues.

Summarizing Joe’s views: He’s convinced that those protesters carrying “We Want Our Country Back” signs and stickers really say that they want our society to go back to the way people were treated before they signed the Civil Rights Bill into law.

Little Joe said that he’s proud of his own family now being multi-cultural and multi-ethnic. Early in our interview, Little Joe said: “I appreciate all music. It is like a good meal, if prepared correctly, it is all good. I would add that people used to say America is a big melting pot, now I think it would be more correct to say “America is like a tossed salad, all the ingredients have value and add to “El Sabor” de America.

When I originally ended the article, I wrote Joe has a large mass of loyal fans statewide, that was a grave understatement. In fact, Little Joe has fans all over the US and Internationally. He has toured cities in Japan, Italy, Spain, and others. So, to have said Joe has fans statewide is like saying Mexico has a few Mexicans.

Little Joe has played for crowds more than 70,000 at Houston’s Reliant Stadium, home of the Houston Texans and at outdoor festivals to crowds of over 500,000. Truly Joe has been

responsible for keeping the Onda Tejana alive both in the US and abroad. His influence is still felt by all current and up and comers. After 50 years and 50 albums he is still the “King of The Brown Sound.” In addition, he performed at the Inaugural Ball for our last great Democratic Governor Ann Richards, inaugural festivals for Bill Clinton, numerous National Conventions and Balls. And to prove you cannot label Little Joe just a Tejano Band, he has also performed at the famous LA’s House of Blues.

But for most of us we still turn out to hear our favorites Las Nubes, Prieta Linda and so many others which most times makes even the fair weather Chicano scream AYA, AYA And so it was for me and a large vocal crowd at Billy Bob’s on an August Saturday Night. Little Joe came out which has become a standard salute to all our troops with a heartfelt rendition of America the Beautiful. He also revealed his support for Wendy Davis after taking of jacket to reveal a Wendy T-Shirt perhaps he did the same for our former governor the late Ann Richards, many hopes it is a good sign. I was happily impressed to see how he continues to cut a cross demographic age groups with people in their 20’s to senior citizens that have followed him his whole career, some showing up in scooters and wheelchairs. And so, the beat goes on, he has a new release titled Evolution that is filled with all your favorites, in addition you can now have Little Joe Salsa which comes in several flavors which I can personally say is Muy Bueno. To find out more about both and see our interview visit us at www.holatexas.us In conclusion, we all will have to agree that Joe kept his graveside promise to his younger brother Jessie a former band member that was killed in an automobile accident in 1964 “I promise you that I will take our music to the Top!” And so, he did, and we are all richer for it.

Update Joe has appeared to have recovered from the COVID 19 Virus he contracted in 2020 and has continued a 50 year plus career and in 2019 Released another album titled Better Than Ever, you can also buy his book on amazon about his life titled No Llore, Chingon! Visit us at www.holatexas.us to see the video interview.

Denton, We Can Do Better!

Property Taxes: Incompetence of the Denton Appraisal District and the Tax Office

The incompetence of the Denton Central Appraisal District and the Tax office sometimes blows my mind. A few months ago, I bought a property at a sheriff's sale. The sheriff's sale advertised it as house and land. That is how it was listed at the appraisal district. Before purchasing the property, I went to see the property and from a distance confirmed the house. We are not supposed to go on to the property prior to the sheriff's sale since it is private property. Once I bought the property, I went onto the property to review what I had bought. Turned out the house was not on the property but was on the adjacent land. So, the property was being overtaxed because they listed it with a house. The woman that lost the property was being overtaxed and I assume therefore could not pay the taxes. Instead of trying to fix the situation they tried to say to me, "you purchase as is". As is to me means you advertised it as a house and land but there was not a house. This is not "as is". Now if the property had had a house, and I determined it was not habitable, that then would have been my problem, "purchase as is". The appraisal district is supposed to maintain the correct property records. Here I learned that even when the discrepancy had been pointed out the appraisal district continued with the sale.

The tax office blamed the Appraisal District, and the Appraisal District blamed the Tax office. After many visits and phone calls, the attorneys that oversee sale worked with me and the sale was nullified. It was frustrating how none of the Government leadership was willing to take responsibility. Their only answer was to talk to the attorney.

In 2020, the year of Covid, the Appraisal District has been way behind on responding to tax protests. I have several houses. I submitted all my protests together in a package. When I received my appointments, they were on different days, different times, on the same day but different times or with different appraisers, etc. I called the Appraisal District to find out why they had me scheduled on different days and times. They blamed it on Covid. It was such a hassle to get things scheduled; I hired a company to fight my taxes (first time I had hired a company). I was told by the appraisal district that we would have to pay our estimated taxes before January 31 otherwise we would be assessed interest. We paid the estimated taxes. On January 23, 2021, my property taxes were agreed upon between the Appraisal District and the company we hired to dispute our property taxes. We had overpaid our property taxes. To date May 20, (4 months later) we have not received a refund for our overpayment of taxes. We were told the overpayment would be refunded to us 30 days after the taxes would be agreed upon. I have contacted both the Appraisal

District and the Tax Office about the refunds, but one blames the other that they sent the information and the other they have not received the information to disperse overpaid taxes. Last week, I received a tax bill on one property we had already paid the taxes on. I went to the tax office because I was concerned that my payment was not recorded. I was told I would receive a tax bill for each property I had prepaid and would have to contact the tax office to make sure I get credit for my payment. Thank God I saved my tax receipts. I will have to dispute each property that I have prepaid my taxes on. Today, I received my tax protest forms for 2021 but to date have not received my refunds after 4 months. When asked about paying interest for keeping my money for so long they say it is not their fault, they blame Covid. If I do not file my protest by their set date, my protest is not valid or pay my taxes by January 31, I pay interest. What amazes me about these two entities is how they set deadlines for everyone, but they cannot meet their own deadlines with no consequences. As Reagan said, "we are the government, and we are here to help". The problem with both these agencies is that they do not hide them not wanting to be bothered by you. They seem to have forgotten that as government agencies they are here to help not just show up for work and get paid. ■

By Alfredo Sanchez



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