

Palm_School_Galindo_John_A_Raw_Transcript

Mon, Jan 13, 2025 11:12AM • 1:41:19

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Palm School, Tony Galindo, Travis County, oral history, community education, political participation, family life, restaurant business, Head Start program, Tupperware parties, language, education expectations, school experiences, neighborhood dynamics, school desegregation., Palm School, Tony Galindo, crossing guard, restaurant business, East Austin, community involvement, education challenges, speech therapy, junior high, East Austin Lions Club, fundraising, self-sufficiency, family struggles, Austin Texas, old Austin.

SPEAKERS

John A. Galindo, Tracy Flores

Tracy Flores 00:00

Today is Sunday, December 15. My 2024 My name is Tracy Flores. I am interviewing Tony Galindo in Austin, Texas for the Travis County oral history project. We are at the University of Texas at Austin campus. Thank you, Mr. Galindo, for agreeing to this interview. The raw unedited recording of this interview will be archived at the Texas at the Travis County archives, where it will be available to anyone who wishes to access it. And as we said earlier, if there's anything you don't wish to talk about, we respect your wishes. Also, if there's something that you want to discuss, please do not. Please do make sure that we discuss it. Please also let us know if you need to pause the interview today, we are going to talk about your life experiences, particularly as it relates to the palm school. We'll also discuss your relationship to community education and political participation. Okay, all right. Are you ready? Okay, can you please tell us your name and your relation to palm school?

John A. Galindo 01:01

Yeah, okay. My full name is John Anthony Galindo, but I go by Tony Galindo. I went to palm school from the first through the sixth grade. And it's in the six early 60s, late 60s. I was there so

Tracy Flores 01:16

and what was your childhood like?

John A. Galindo 01:20

Oh, it was, I'll say it was blessed. We had a I had a great time going to with my because I had two, three other brothers and sisters. So we all enjoyed going to school. You know, what were their names?

Oh, my oldest sister was Marie. She went by Nanette, Robert and then Fred Freddie. So we all and we lived there on Willow, and Navasota.

Tracy Flores 01:46

And what was your family like?

John A. Galindo 01:48

Well, it was like my dad was in the restaurant business. So for years, he worked, of course, being in the restaurant business, you worked late night, so I know when we would go to school in the morning, we had to be quiet because he was still asleep, because it was just a lunch through late night. So I know remember for years, we just knew he slept in that back room and we'd be quiet so we would go to school, and then when we came back, he was gone again because he was at school, he was working. But on Mondays, that's when the restaurant was closed, that's when we had good family time. We'd go out to eat or enjoy some time with him. What kinds of things did you enjoy with him? Well, you know, we went towards it in we went to other restaurants to eat the ones that weren't closed. But then also, I remember vividly, on Baton Springs Road and Lamar. There was a little kiddie park. And we would, he would take us there. There was, there was a boats and little horses there, and then. And then also, he was a golfer. So there was some times where we would go. There was a, I think it's still there, it's a little, Pitch and Putt, Butler, but Butler and we would go golf in there. So it was just some fun times. Those are some things you did on the Mondays with him. Yeah, Mondays. And it was mostly Mondays because they were closed, and we would go to the restaurant. Also we were, you were younger, but most of the time was we were around with my mom, and mom was on that really, we spent a lot more time with her, a lot of time during the summer at Palm Park, which is no longer there the pool, we would go to the pool every after five, I think that's when my dad would go back to work, and we would go swim in there at the at the pool there.

Tracy Flores 03:36

And so you said during the summer you'd go to the park with your mother. What kinds of things did she do with you during the school year?

John A. Galindo 03:42

Well, school year, she was always, she was at the school a lot. You know, I remember going, she always volunteered. She did the latter years, she was part of that Head Start program. I know, if you're familiar with the Head Start program, they she would, she was like a teacher's aid. But then had to stop doing that because she didn't have a high school education, so they had to not she wouldn't be able to either pay I think she did volunteer. I remember one time she would go there was kids that couldn't go to school because her parents were working. She would actually go pick them up and walk them to school. And there's a picture of her in the front page of American statesman walking, and there's a story about her. I was hoping to bring that picture. I didn't find it, though, but, but I know Lady Bird Johnson wrote her a beautiful letter also about thanking her for being part of that Head Start program. So I think that, I think that, I think Johnson is the one that started the head start program. And how did your mother get involved with that at first? Well, I think with other there was another lady, Esther Martinez, that she was part of that. And the, of course, they all call themselves comadres, you know, they were all but they're. Uh, her son, Donald, was one like it was, was one of my best friends in middle school, so

that's how she winded up going to work there with them. So who are your mothers comadres? Well, I know it was Esther Martinez. There's, uh, that's the other ones. I vaguely remember their name, but there was a lot of them. I know they always because I know my mom used to have these Tupperware parties at home.

Tracy Flores 05:25

What's that? Can you talk a little about Tupperware?

John A. Galindo 05:27

Yeah, are you familiar with Tupperware at all? Just so that we can it was, you know, it was, it's plastic stuff containers, and she have these big parties. And I remember they would be outside. We love being around there, because they would have appetizers and the punch the the finger sandwiches and all that stuff those, it was just great time to see them. And I guess the more you host it, I think you got product or something like that. And then so I remember seeing that a lot, and being around, it was mostly around the ladies and but she always made sure she had something to do for us, you know, you

Tracy Flores 06:07

know, and what languages were spoken in your home?

John A. Galindo 06:11

mostly English, you know. Because, I mean, that's what she was raised. And then her being in the in the service industry. You know, working in the Mexican restaurant, it was more English. I mean, my dad spoke English. I just remember my grandmother, Frances Reyes Cortinas, that's my mom. She would speak a lot of Spanish, though, and I know when we went to her house. We had to speak Spanish there, and so we would kind of try to get some of the but we didn't we only we didn't go into her house off there, like on a Saturday, but mostly English. We spoke English. And where did she live? My grandmother, the one off of 10th and Red River, she lived there for many years because then they never bought. They didn't buy. There's a hotel there. Now, I think she moved to a bomb road off of in East Austin area. There was a Johnson High School, so that's where her house is still there today. But I think my, my one of my uncle's daughter lives in that house there.

Tracy Flores 07:18

And how about your neighborhood? What languages were spoken in your neighborhood?

John A. Galindo 07:22

Here again, I just, I remember English, you know, because that's what most of that that Willow and Navasota was an English speaking and we were Mexican American, but it was mostly in English that we spoke.

Tracy Flores 07:39

Can you tell us a little bit more about your family? How did your parents feel about the role of education?

John A. Galindo 07:47

Well my mom, my dad? Well, they always wanted us to stay in school and work in school. But like I told you, I lost my dad at an early age, so I was I graduated from high school, started attending ACC but then I had the opportunity to go into into retail. I went to work for a drug store. I was still I was working for the drug store, but they offered me a management position. But at the time my dad passed away, we needed that. My mom needed income, so I chose to go into into management and and run those. Work for, I think I worked for 10 years for, for the drug store.

Tracy Flores 07:57

And what did do there?

John A. Galindo 07:59

at first, and when I first started, it was called Ward drug store. It was on my downtown 714, Congress, right across from the Paramount Theater. So I was a tobacco clerk there. So they had cigars, cigarettes. So I started just it was, I was part of, part of the in all in high school, they had a they called it distributive education, de...so you went to school half a day, and then you work. So I went to work for my first job was with another restaurant, or not a restaurant, but a little store called Guajadros grocery store, and that was right on Eighth and Lydia, also across the street from my dad's restaurant. So that family, old Austin family, called Guajadro They had the I became I was a sack boy there, but then I worked for a gentleman. I still remember name. His name was Ramiro. Ramiro was the manager, but grandma, Miss Guajadro was the owner. So he would tell me to do one thing. But then she came around and I said, she said, "yo mando", you know? And yes, Ramiro is her son in law. Was the manager, but she had the last word. Now finally, I just said, You know what? I need to find another job because somebody's telling me to do one thing, and then so then that's when I went to work for for Edgar or Wards, and I made a career with with him for a while,

Tracy Flores 09:51

and that job at Guajadro, yeah, was that part of that de program that you mentioned?

John A. Galindo 09:56

Yeah, it was.

Tracy Flores 09:57

Did you get school credit for that?

John A. Galindo 09:59

Yeah. You did Yes, because I remember the job. I forget that there was a we had a counselor that got us to jobs. He said, Go get an interview there. And at that time, also, I remember I wanted to they. We called them English racers bikes. I wanted a bike. And my dad said, Well, you know, you need money. Get a job. And that's when I told that counselor, I need to work. And went to work for that, that little grocery store, and got the bike, and I would and then I would like that we lived on Willow and Navasota. So it was a straight shot, going down, down, actually, going down hill to get home from. But it was, it was fun. I enjoyed working. I learned some stuff from Guajadros, you know, because there was a butcher shop in the bank, and there was a gentleman named another son in law that ran the butchery. His name was Sonny Falcon, I think was John Falcon, and he is one of the ones that introduced fajitas

here in Austin. You know, that was in the early within the 60s. I remember, and he, I remember, pulling me aside, said, Tony, here's the future. And he showed me. And he says, But the secret to this, Tony is, is how you cut it. You cut it against the grain, and you take it and put it on a grill. Or I went home, took some and I didn't follow directions. I cut it the wrong way. It was tough. People didn't... the family didn't like it. So that was my first experience in cooking something, you know, but, uh, but learn something from sunny.

Tracy Flores 11:31

And did you carry that into the work that you ended up?

John A. Galindo 11:35

Well, see and then sonny, going into fajita I never went into retail, but there's I wear this little pin lapel. If you notice, I'm part of the East Austin Lions Club. It was a, I don't know if you know what Lions Club is. It's, it's a group where I think Helen Keller started, but before the blind. So some of the money we raised goes to her, but it also we did stuff for the community. And so our big fundraiser was selling fajitas and and then Fiesta gardens. I know there's a picture there that, if we would do, we'll have a fajita booth there. And made a lot, raised a lot of money. It was all non profit, you know, but it was, it was an experience, you know that's was leading me in I was wondering why I was doing this, but then now I know why I did this fajita stuff, because then when I opened my restaurant, we specialized in fajitas.

Tracy Flores 12:32

How do you know? So thinking more about the education and the different experiences that you had, what kind of expectations did your family maybe have about education?

John A. Galindo 12:46

You know, here again, when I lost my dad, that was, you know, he was like the bread winner. My mom just raised us, you know. And you know, when my dad passed away, one thing I noticed was our food quality changed, because when my dad went, he did all the shopping, did all and so he bought, he knew, like in the restaurant, you use good product, people going to come back. So he did the same thing when he was feeding us. But then when, when he passed away, my mom was needed to make decisions so I could see we could feel the taste of the food was different, but it they had love in it. So we didn't complain, because we had food, but, but so my mom not being educated, she didn't. She just said, you know, it was about surviving. That's what I left ACC and went into retail to management, to have an income there. And then my sister, she went to UT for but then she, same way, went into management. And man, my brothers, all worked for HEB that had good success where they they were store directors. So it was more. We went more into the making money, I guess, is to survive. So education wasn't my youngest brother did graduate from Concordia. He got a business degree, so, but it helped him there to to get the store director position, though.

Tracy Flores 14:24

So can you tell me a little bit about how you got to school when you were younger?

John A. Galindo 14:29

Well, we would walk from first and from from Navasota and Willow to and where that heavy traffic, where, I don't know, you know, where palm school is. So every morning, we would get up and just go to the to school, you know, we would just,

Tracy Flores 14:49

was it you and your brothers and sisters?

John A. Galindo 14:51

Yeah, because we all together so and then the neighbors, without anyone, we would, you know, that we would all, for some reason, our house was, we had no grass. Our front yard, because that was our main place we played. So, so a lot of time my mom, we were like the staging place for for having fun. So there was the Malicias for another last I think they were Italian. Malicias were there. Martinez and Caballeros. We all hung out there in the in the area.

Tracy Flores 15:21

So all the family, like the kids from the community, came to you,

John A. Galindo 15:25

Yeah, there and then, and then, of course, they would all get there to stage, to walk to palm school, to the park. Because I remember on Fridays, they would have, they would have a movie, they would put a movie screen up, and everybody would get their blank kids. And I remember my mom popping some fresh popcorn, and just fun times.

John A. Galindo 15:51

It was just family being there, I mean, I mean, and then just getting the comadres. I don't remember names, but they were all there. We'd sit around in blankets and just have fun watching these movies, you know, and then getting back to walk and go back to and I could see that. And there was some people there that I don't know if they were. They saw us there, but, and I felt, I guess I felt bad because their families weren't doing that, but then I now understand they were probably working. They had to work, you know, so, so I think I was blessed to have my mom there, you know.

Tracy Flores 16:36

Do you remember a specific movie or a specific moment?

John A. Galindo 16:39

Well, a lot of the movies were like they were westerns, because I think whoever ran it was, it was part of the park the city of Austin, so they would have one at Palm. Then there was a Metz and then there's Zavala. I don't know if you know these, so, so they wouldn't have different I think we had Friday nights at Palm so there was, there was some scary ones, the old werewolves, the King Kongs and but, and then they were fun, just to watch and then hang around. You know there was some of the younger kids wouldn't pay attention to the movie because they were out playing in the playground.

Tracy Flores 17:22

Do you remember your first day of school?

John A. Galindo 17:28

Not really, but I remember, I don't remember one thing summer school. I remember one thing it was, I think it was in the second grade. And what, what stands out there was, we were doing a salad. It was a cooking for some reason, the teacher we're gonna and I remember I had to bring carrots, and then, and then everybody else bought some stuff, and we mixed the salad with, you know, and I think it was just an experience to learn how to cook and so. But that was like in the second grade, that summer school experience. It was a seven, yeah. And then, of course, in the first grade was that sad time about, you know, November 22, 1963 when John F Kennedy was assassinated. He was flying in. Was going to be it was in Dallas. It was San Antonio. Flew to Dallas, and then he was going to have a big gathering at Palmer auditorium, and they were going to land at Bergstrom Air Force Base, and their route was going to go Seventh Street and then come down first street, and so we all we had made posters, and they were going to school early to come back, but I remember hearing, seeing the teachers crying, and that's when we got home, we found out that he had gotten killed. So that was a that was Thanksgiving weekend a week ago. That was a sad, sad time, and we're seeing it on TV. You know, did they release you early that day? Yeah, they did. There were releases early because of that, but then also, but when we saw the crying, but then we knew were released because we're going to come see when we got home, mom explained that he had gotten, he had gotten killed.

Tracy Flores 19:17

What was that like? Her telling you what had happened? Well,

John A. Galindo 19:19

yeah, I just, I don't really, I remember she was crying because, I mean, JFK was loved by a lot of people. He was, he was another, he was a disrupter, like, that's what you call this guy, I mean, he wasn't well liked because he was doing some different things, you know. And then another thing about the school I remember, and it was, you know, we had Bergstrom Air Force base there, you know, so we were not too far from Cuba. I mean, it is far, but from four jets, there was some high power jets there. We had silos all over Austin. We. Ready for, you know, the Bay of Pigs before your time out of yours. But we would do these drills to go,

Tracy Flores 19:50

what were the drills like?

John A. Galindo 20:00

Well, you would hear the siren, and then you would go into the hallway, and then kneel and put your head down and and one of your hands behind your neck and clay glass fell and wouldn't hit you in the neck. And it was that means there was a and I think that years later I saw where in Cuba there was a missile that said Austin, Texas on it, pointed at us, because we were, we had some power here, and, and, but then, you know, the the Bergstrom lost its commission, and then it moved on, and now it's a airport.

Tracy Flores 20:45

And what was that like for you to experience that as a well? I just remember

John A. Galindo 20:49

I just remember we knew we were at war. You would hear the sonic boom, because those jets, they were going faster than, I guess, sound, and you could hear it loud and more, I remember it would scare you, because you hear that. I mean, it was loud, I know, with an after burn or whatever, when they would they would shoot out, but it was, but we knew we had, there was something going on. You know,

Tracy Flores 21:13

did your teachers ever talk about any of that? Or, you know...

John A. Galindo 21:17

They may have, but I don't remember hearing, but I just remember the drills when they would say no, and then because, of course, because they use the drills also for a case, for hurricanes or tornadoes. Another experience, I think I was in the fifth grade, that was on the second story, and we looked outside and there was this dark cloud that went across 35 and there was a tornado that had gone through there, and it took down. There was a, there was a hotel called Villa Capri that it took some of the roof top of there, though. So, so there's a that I remember that from the experience of the other tornado, and that was fifth grade. I think it was about fifth grade. I believe that was because there wasn't a second story, I think,

Tracy Flores 22:02

and thinking about these drills and some of the experiences that you had, what was your classroom experiences?

John A. Galindo 22:10

Like guys, it's so far back, you know, I'll be out of high school, it would be 50 years. So I don't it was just I had another friend named Manny Arredondo. Manny was like one of my best friends in first grade. But then one day he left, and I guess the family moved to a different location. They moved to like Metz I believe it was, but I remember always coming hanging out with Manny, with Donald, there was a guy named Victor. We just there was a playground. We always it's about recess, you know, you would have a break and go play outside, you know. But the learning was there. But my junior high is where I got a lot of that, because we went into creative writing. But that's not palm that's more junior high. So that's where we really started getting involved with with some of the creative writing stuff.

Tracy Flores 23:07

Tell me about some of that creative writing.

John A. Galindo 23:09

Well we had a teacher name Miss, I think her name was Gil, and we enjoyed about her classroom. It was like a living room setting. She had a big rug and in back then we had big stereo, the wooden stereo, and Bridge Over Troubled Water. And that was Simon and Garfunkel. So we listened to the music, and then we would, do we write poems, you know, I forget the name of that. I said Haiku, or hi something, the ones where 2-4-6-8, or I enjoy doing some writing. I think I still have some of the stuff at home.

Tracy Flores 23:47

What kinds of things did you write about?

John A. Galindo 23:51

Well, it was, I know one of the big things was pollution. I remember because there was still going on today. But I noticed when I was in, we were in that break area, there was a newspaper called la fuerza. It was, it was one of the first Hispanic newspapers, and I made a and it wasn't right, it just it was a collage that I made. And the collage was, you know, the collages you would grab magazines and pull out stuff. So I just started getting all this junk, trash all the way around. And then I put America the Beautiful with a question mark, you know. And I won something for that. And I won that poster, and then it winded up with a what? I got an award. I got put on that paper, I think. But that's been years ago. I'm not sure where that if la for la fuerza, I don't know if they had that archive. I heard that it's, it's in the Smithsonian, because it was one of the first Hispanic, there was a gentleman named Jesse Garza. I think he was the original, and he was a friend of a friend of my dad. So I remember the Garza. A family. It's an old Austin family also.

Tracy Flores 25:03

And so that collage that you made won an award.

John A. Galindo 25:06

I think he won an award for, I don't know if the paper was doing it, but I remember taking a picture with it and posing in front of the and we were, I was on that paper, and was

Tracy Flores 25:18

that through that teacher, Miss Gill, you said,

John A. Galindo 25:20

No, I think that was actually in Palm school. Okay, so I'm not sure what teacher. I just remember Gil. I remember Miss man, but I think that was junior high. Miss Wheeler was my first grade teacher, but the one another teacher that stood out was our PE teacher, Miss Swenson, because she always had activities that was activities, because we had barracks behind, not barracks. What do they call mobile what do they call those portables? Portables? And she that's where we had the gym, you know, because there was no gym at Palm school, but we're doing a lot of square dancing. She loved, I know we did a lot of dancing,

Tracy Flores 25:58

and it was fun. What kinds of dancing? What? What What kind of dancing?

John A. Galindo 26:03

Well, it was like we called square dance, and you would partner, and you would go around, and I don't know if we competed, but at the end of the summer, we had something called the May Fair. And there was, we would all have each grade, I remember wearing white and black, and we are, we had a sash, different, I think, with different grade, a different color, and it was, but it was mostly square dancing. I

remember, maybe that's what she liked or do, but that's what she taught us. But what was the Mayfair like? Well, it was a it was a was like a fiesta, and then with the the and then there was food and drinks. I mean, not but mostly funny, my mom would make food. My mom was famous for making praline candies. I don't know if you know what a praline can be, is tell me about those that she made. No she would make my, she'd make them and in but my dad, in between his shifts from work, once he sold the restaurant, he became a waiter. He would go sell them to some of the Mexican restaurants. Because one of the things that Mexican restaurants, you always got the option with a meal, sherbet or praline candy that was included into them in the meal. And so my mom would make them, and then my dad would go, I guess, sold them to the to the restaurants. You know, my dad was always had the side hustles, you know, which, you know, he had was doing. I remember back he also sold matches to he would go, I guess, to the restaurants and sell. He was always trying to find ways to make money.

Tracy Flores 27:43

And your mom made those pralines for this for the may fair?

John A. Galindo 27:47

I think she made them for the fair. But then one time I remember, and this was film somewhere, she went to the school and she did a demonstration on how she made them. I think it was my sister. It was in her grade. It was one of her projects, I guess. And so my mom came to the school, made the pralines, and I think it was in the paper. Also, we just got to check the American statesman, but it's all archived, I believe so it's there somewhere.

Tracy Flores 28:17

And going back to you, mentioned that you would listen to "Bridge Over Troubled Water "and write poetry and creative writing. Were there any songs that you learned in school?

John A. Galindo 28:27

Well, yeah, at Palm, I remember we did a lot of we would have, I guess, during the during the meeting the PTAs, they'd have a little showcase. And I remember we would do, what was the name of that song? We all dressed up as hobos. I think "Rain drop keeps falling on my head". Was one on one of the songs we danced to. I think one called "Pass me by". It's been so far back, but we're all dressed as we all dressed as hobos and danced around. But that was an experience, learning, doing musicals. I guess I never got into it. But one of, one of my reasons, probably that didn't get into because there was one summer we had a choir, and it was pretty warm, and I was, we're all dressed in white lights were on us, and we were singing, and I fainted, and I remember falling down, then another one fainted, and it was because it was so hot, you know, but then after that, so I didn't want to be I guess I got scared about going on to stage, so that ended my musical career.

Tracy Flores 29:43

How much did you learn about the Mexican American experience in the US and in Texas at the Palm school? Do you remember any of that?

John A. Galindo 29:52

No, but I know that it was around us. I know, but I didn't. I guess my dad didn't get involved. My mom didn't get involved with that. But I know there was some, I know there was a big deal with a strike with there was a furniture company that that they did some kind of a strike because better pay and but it was, I don't know. I guess being at Palm, I know the other schools going deeper into East were more more affected by that so but the only big thing that stands out is, and that was, I don't think we're at but we're already at Martin. Were those boat races? I don't know if you know the story.

Tracy Flores 30:33

Can you talk a little bit about that? Boat races?

John A. Galindo 30:34

The boat races was, you know, Austin Aqua Fest was a big fundraiser for an Austin Aqua Fest was a it was actually a social club, and they raised money. I think they raised money for themselves, and also they probably gave some money to scholarship. I'm not sure what it was, but they had built that Fiesta Gardens, and their main attraction was the boat races, Town Lake. If you go across the river, and if you look down, and I'm not sure, I don't know this is hearsay, but that is the best quarter mile strip in the world, the calmest it was back then. So you could get those boats go up at the 200 miles an hour faster. They were loud, you know, but you know, but I know there was an issue with but there was a lot of money being brought in. We as Lion clubs, we were able to go sell fajitas raise money for us. It was all everybody that sold food there at Fiesta gardens. It had to be a non profit group. It was either a civic group, the band club and what I enjoyed about in the early times it was they had ethnic nights. One night was Mexican night, one night was Polish night, one night was German night. And they would, that was, we still sold fajitas then, but the theme was different. The music was different, and it had it brought in people, locals could play music and get experience and but the money was being made through the boat races. That was our main, their main, because it was like the world national. So that's why they love they loved them. But then it got political, and I could understand, you know, they talked about being too much noise, so they got them moved. But there was some riots, and it got it got ugly, you know, so, and they eventually moved it on the other side of the river, but here again, the quarter mile strip, they couldn't do the boat races, so that the main attraction started to be the music. But then when you bring in major acts, you have to start charging, because when they were on the east side, you've got a little Skipper pin, and that got you in for the whole week, because the money was being made through these sponsors for the race. So, but that all went away, you know, so now you got ACL, but that's all profit. I mean, we're in the food business. We try to go put a truck, and it's \$10,000 just to put a food. So the big corporates get in there and make the big money, you know.

Tracy Flores 33:28

So when you say that the Mexican American experience and Texas history was around you, you're, you're, you're talking about the what was happening in the community. And

were you ever taught it in the school, like through curriculum, like stories, artists?

John A. Galindo 33:50

I don't, I don't remember. I don't. My dad taught politics, and then I would listen to some, some of his stuff. But I was young then, but there was, there was a, in later years, I started seeing, there's a

gentleman name Ramsey Ramsey Muniz. I don't know if you ever heard of Ramsey Muniz. He started the Raza Unidos. And it was, it was a, he really. I mean, this is my opinion. I know he started, if you look at Ramsey Muniz and east, the way he spoke, he was very aggressive. I know he was not well liked by some the Democratic Party or republican party because he was taking votes away, but he was a force at one time, but then he winded up going to prison and and I don't know if he was a political prisoner, but he didn't get out of prison until he got real sick.

Tracy Flores 34:44

What kinds of things was he advocating for or talking about?

John A. Galindo 34:47

Well, he was more and I said I haven't researched him a while back, and now he can go Google and and some of the stuff he talked about made a little sense, but he. Was more and another disrupter, you know, he was not, you know, the he didn't fit the mold and you've got in the politics you gotta and that's why, at my restaurant, I don't talk politics. You know, it's, it's everybody, and that's my opinion. I don't like to speak him and talk about too much about it.

Tracy Flores 35:21

And thinking back to your classroom, what kinds of posters or anything on the walls Do you remember or how the desks were set up?

John A. Galindo 35:32

No, but I remember the fourth grade. Miss, no, it started. Miss Sherman, we started with the Our Father, and we ended with the Our father. And that's that was a time when they started taking religion out of, you know, that was Madeline O'Hare, which I think she was here in Austin, the atheist she, she's the one that took religion out of, out of public school, but, but I remember she was an old German teacher, real. She was strict, but stern and and I respect when I saw that, I respected because my mom was stern, "tough love" I called it so, so, but the po... I didn't posters. I don't really remember posters at that now, when we got into junior high school. Yeah, that started seeing Farrah Fawcett. I don't know what year she was. That was, that may have been in high school that was, and she was from, she wasn't from Austin, but she went to the University of Texas far so, you know, do you know who Farrah Fawcett is? Okay, but that was my brother had that big old poster in on the wall there,

Tracy Flores 36:44

what subjects did you learn at the Palm school?

John A. Galindo 36:49

Yeah, I know math was was bad, and then I loved history, and I know history was especially some of the I think we briefly touch..., and I'm confusing... in elementary with but the Roman history, you know, all that stuff that's the going back far back then is, but that's all I remember. Really, I don't. It's a blur right now, you know.

Tracy Flores 37:21

And what were your you said history was your favorite subject. What was, go ahead,...

John A. Galindo 37:25

I liked History, you know, I liked, you know, just being part of history. You know, that's what I see, you know, you know the LBJ. And my, I keep saying LBJ, because he was JFK. And then also, in the 68 we had this tragic that happened at the University of Texas, the sniper and that that they would say, if you can see the tower, he can see you, because he was a marksman, you know. So that was, it was , it happened in the summer. So, so I was, I always experienced history. We do experience history, you know, just enjoying being part of it, you know, I mean, tragic, yes, but able to tell stories. You know,

Tracy Flores 38:13

what do you remember about your teachers and administrators at the Palm school?

John A. Galindo 38:17

Well the one that stood out, of course, Mr. Miss Sherman. The prayer was one. And then we had a sixth grade teacher, Mr. Condi, a male teacher, which was very rare. You know, in fact it was all, was all women. But Condi was our sixth grade and I remember he was also part of the University of Texas. I know he part of the he did something. He was always on the, on the, on the field with, with a football team. But he was very, also very strict. And back then, there was things, I mean, I mean, there were stern which, you know, you had to, you know, and you didn't. It was not you didn't fear it. But it's just like my dad when I My dad always told us, Son, I trust you, don't let me down that so he never laid a hand on us. My mom, with different stories. She the chancla, she would come out and but, but it was just, I understood, maybe that's what got me through. Because, you know, living in East Austin, it was, it was, it was interesting. Back then, different, you know, but it just...

Tracy Flores 39:39

How would you describe their sternness the teachers?

John A. Galindo 39:42

Well, well, there's an experience where I remember Mr. Condi, some kid comes in and I remember his name was the guy's name was Paul, and he was always like the bully. I mean, bullies has been around forever. I mean, he just stayed away from the from the guy. But he was always you. Right? And one time he said, he said something to Mr. Condi, and he got and he said, "I'm going to call my dad. And he said, I'm going to have him come here and", and, I mean, I don't want to use language, but he he said, "You know what? Get your dad here right now. I'll take care of both y'all," I mean, and then the kids just quiet down. And I'm not sure where Paul is today, but, but I saw that, but understood what the teacher was doing. I mean, he's in charge. But nowadays, I don't know. It's a different world, you know, you know, it's just like in the restaurant business. I don't want to go, I'm gonna go into a tangent, but I gotta watch myself, because it's that, you know, when I was in a restaurant business, you could yell at somebody because you were yelling at the moment and you were because that person had messed up. Now, if you do that, they're going to call HR, you're going to get in trouble because you were too stern with them. So that's why my daughter runs, and she does a great job doing that, and I got to hold back because, you know, because in the restaurant, you're in the restaurant business, you're screaming and hollering, but it's the moment, not, you know, act like that when I'm around socially. Then, yeah, these

guys, but, but it's all about being stern. I think that. And I keep going back to that word, but I think that's the word of the day,

Tracy Flores 41:29

and going back to that being stern. What? What did you think about their expectations? What? How did they show you their expectations at the school beat? Well, yeah,

John A. Galindo 41:38

I mean, but I miss man. I don't know if she was at if she was at Palm or at Martin, but she used a green felt pen to give your grade, and just to see that A A plus A minus in green. I think she used that for and of course, if you saw red, you know you were getting but just to experience to see that green, and I think, I think she was Ed. She may have been my fifth grade teacher. I'm not sure, something that confused the junior high with the with the elementary though.

Tracy Flores 42:14

Do you remember any of the folks who were in the office or, like the administrators?

John A. Galindo 42:21

there at Palm, no, I remember we would go to the office. It was a lot cooler than it was at the in the in the classrooms, because it was, it was, I guess they principal got there the privilege of having AC, because I don't know. I think palm may have had AC. I know I'm opening the windows a lot being warm, but, but the cafeteria is another I remember my mom, like when my mom was part of the Head Start program, you know, she was there, and a lot of young everybody got food, and the young kids wouldn't eat food, so she would save it for me, and it's as Isidro Escobel. We called him Lolo. We used to like we ate right after the younger kids and my mom would save us some. She told that there were comadres in the in the in the lunch rooms that saved this for our boy, my boy and his friends, because there were hamburgers that why go to waste, let somebody eat. But Miss Rocha, I remember that name she was, she ran the kitchen. And then so that, back then, was great food, because there was, it was all Hispanic women that were cooking, and I guess they had the freedom to cook. I mean, I'm not sure how it is now. I mean, I've been out of school for, you know, my kids went to to Catholic school, and I remember that they didn't we ran the lunch programs volunteer, you know, but, uh, but it's, but I remember the food was delicious back then when we were growing up because

Tracy Flores 44:03

what kind of food was it?

John A. Galindo 44:05

Well, beef tips and rice was one of my favorite ones. And then, of course, the burgers you had spaghetti, it was something different, you know. But, and then, going back, I remember every class that came in to eat. Right by the the when you went through the line, there was a chimes, and you would ring, and they would say a prayer, and you're a blessing the food. So and that was the big thing, was being able to be the one to ring the the chime. You know, they, I don't know how they picked the person, but I think I got to do it a couple of times.

Tracy Flores 44:46

So each class had a different only one, well, one?

John A. Galindo 44:49

yeah, and they got picked for that day, or maybe that week, though. So,

Tracy Flores 44:52

and what kind of languages do you remember hearing at Palm English?

John A. Galindo 44:56

It was all English. Except I remember in my. Me, I guess I'm okay. What grade there was a co... we had once the first national, Mexican nationals that came through Cesar, that was his name and his sister and but they learned how to assimilate right away, and so you had to learn English, you know, because that's what was taught. I mean, I had no problem with it, because I grew up speaking English, though, but I don't think I was held back. I mean, because here again, I was born here in Austin, and I had a great time here in Austin, like, because I learned from my dad, you know, we were just diverse, just like the music's diverse, you know, we enjoy it all.

Tracy Flores 45:51

so and were you able to speak Spanish in the classroom or other language?

John A. Galindo 45:55

You know, I don't remember, you know, I think I know there was, I've heard stuff that they would hit you if you did. I never saw it here again. It may have been there either, either. I chose not to see it. But I don't remember it personally. The only thing I do remember, and I think I told you, when I my dad wanted us to go to Catholic school, and I was there the first grade, and that little boy was crying, and I told him, what are you crying about? It said, gonna be okay. That priest grabbed him, pulled him aside, took his back, I can still see it, pull his belly, and just started beating the kid. I'm gonna give you something to cry about for. And I went. As soon as he turned around, I ran. So that was my only, that's, that's it. Let's go to because that at public school, they didn't do. Maybe they did, but I know I've heard some stories about Catholic schools about the thing, the ruler, but I didn't, I didn't see it. And now I know in junior high the paddle, because you did something wrong. Here again, you mess up. You're gonna go to the the to the what

Tracy Flores 47:07

kinds of things would they paddle you for?

John A. Galindo 47:08

Well, the fighting, maybe, you know, not paying attention. You know, how much it was since but and it was the same group, the same people, that did it, you know. And then one of the hit things I remember in it wasn't at palm school. It's at Martin, there were these two guys, and they were like the bullies. They were taking lunch money, being mean, but for some reason, they were coming to me, and they would not, they'd leave me alone. They wouldn't say they they would say hi. They would acknowledge me. I

never knew till years later, they worked with my dad. They were bus boys, and they were afraid I was gonna go tell my dad. So that was my protection, I guess.

Tracy Flores 47:55

How did you find out they worked with your dad?

John A. Galindo 47:57

Years later, when I saw him, I saw and somewhere I saw and they said, Hey, we worked. We were busses for your dad. And I said, Okay, so now, and I put two and two together. Why they didn't take my lunch money away, but Ledesma, Rendon and Ledesma and they were always nice. Even afterwards, they were nice to me. I was nice to them, but, and it was sad, that sad thing about them, they became brother in laws. But one night, they were coming down Pleasant Valley Road in a motorcycle, and they slammed into a telephone pole. And I think to this day, I think you still see a marker there, but I mean, they were, they were, they were all right, guys, but, but, but I know what they were, what they call bullies in school, you know.

Tracy Flores 48:51

And what was it like to what kinds of games did you play at the Palm school?

John A. Galindo 48:55

Well, I know the four square. No, what? Which was dodge ball, which is not allowed anymore, but there was a lot, of course, kick ball was big because we had a kick ball, because we had the park back there, so kickball was big. And then tetherball, there was always some kind of activity.

Tracy Flores 49:18

Did you have recess at the park?

John A. Galindo 49:20

I think they would let us walk down there. It was not too far. I think we I think we were allowed to go down to the park.

Tracy Flores 49:26

And were you in any clubs or sports?

John A. Galindo 49:31

I was in band for a little while in my sixth grade. But then I that's when the junior high teacher would come recruit, and she'd have, like, an after class to see what was going to move on to, because there was nothing. There wasn't really a band at elementary, but they she'd come down Miss Anglin, I think it was her name, but she'd come down. And see who was one of the be in the band at Martin junior high school.

Tracy Flores 50:05

What instrument did you play?

John A. Galindo 50:08

Drums? I played, and it was not the drum that it was some kind of a rubber board, because the drums would be way too loud to open. But my friend Donald, he winded up going and becoming a drummer, and I think higher credit, Richard Taylor, I don't know if he's being part of this group. I think he went to palm school. He wind up being on the UT marching band. I think he went to palm but I remember going to Martin junior high with us and then going to become a university. To this day, still, there's a place called Dance depot, I don't know. And there's a band called The Nash Hernandez band that plays there frequently. And I remember one year they came and played at Palm, it was a during the I think it was, it was a fall Christmas, but I remember it was a big orchestra. I always, I love listening to music, because even though I didn't become a musician, but I was around musicians, because on Willow, there was another gentleman named Roy Montelongo. He was one of the big back then big band, Alfonso Ramos, Ruben Ramos, they were, they were more East. They were, they were on the other side of Comal, but they're good friends of the family. Actually, my, I think my brother Fernando is married to one of the Ramos, oh, he is married to one of the Ramos family. But I don't think they were part of the palm school.

Tracy Flores 51:43

Were there any experiences in the classroom or the playground that you can remember vividly that stick out to you

John A. Galindo 51:54

during the summer? You know, at the pool, I remember there was, there was an incident where the guard, there was a guy that came in, he kicked he threw him out, and then the guy came back, and he he cut the, he stabbed or sliced the guard. But the guard kept running after him, you know, but he was causing trouble. But I remember seeing that I don't like through the who that was, but, I mean, I he didn't. It was just a minor cut. I'm the guard survived, though, but there was a but I ...the summers with a pool that's what I remember a lot, because enjoyed swimming. There was something to do, and I noticed on whether the Superior Dairy was right next to us. And I remember when we were there in the summer, there were guy would whistle at us, and they were throwing away the when the trucks came in, the ice cream that was going bad. We had a ton of ice cream. We couldn't take it home. It would melt, but we would sit there and eat it and then go jump in the pool and rinse out. I don't know that pool didn't look too clean after we got through it.

Tracy Flores 53:11

Were there any difficult experiences in the classroom or the playground that you remember?

John A. Galindo 53:15

just that one incident with that guard, but nothing and then that one time when Mr. Condie, that gentleman, approached him, and when he told him, "bring your dad". But other than dad, I didn't see any kind of

Tracy Flores 53:35

how did that make you feel?

John A. Galindo 53:38

Well, I mean, I said the guy deserved it, because after that, the kid settled down. He was and I'm not sure what he was going through, but after that, he respected the teacher, you know, and we respected him, and he saw that it wasn't gonna, it wasn't gonna be part of the routine, you know. So because it was early on that good school, they just started, you know, early part of the year. After that, everything was fine.

Tracy Flores 54:13

How did the other children treat you? That your peers?

John A. Galindo 54:17

I guess we all got along. I mean, there was some probably, we got along. I think I don't see I didn't see anything, because we were all part of the family there. We were all from the neighborhood. I guess. I know Rainey street, there was a big family. The Solis that lived there, there was a big family, but Benny ...Benedict, Solis, and then he had a bunch of sisters, and we all went to school, Palm, Martin all the way through Austin High. I hadn't seen him in a while, though, but I know there's still some Solises around. Yeah, because when at the restaurant, I always ask people where they're from. It's from East Austin. I tell you that I know your cousin, and sure enough, I wind up knowing somebody from from if you ask enough, you'll find a connection, you know?

Tracy Flores 55:18

And what was that like to grow up together with so many families?

John A. Galindo 55:22

Well, it was, to me, it was fun. Like, here again, my mom didn't work outside the house, so she was the one that made sure, like when the Carnival was in town, which was on Town Lake, so there was a trek. So we would start. And then as we went down Willow, somebody come out, where y'all going? We're going to the carnival. They get permission. Miss Galindo is going and, and, and back then you it was the different we my mom had the right to scold that person would not vice versa, too. If I was with with Esther my if I did something wrong, she had the right to get after me too. But I remember it would wind up with, it was six in front of us, a whole ton of kids going across to to go see the carnival there, off on my town. I guess it was dish fawn field ... auditorium shores. But there was a lot of gather those Tupperware parties. There was something always going on. You know, fourth of June, not Fourth of July. New Year is popping fireworks. There was probably a band, but we didn't know we were just but we were in. We stayed in the yards, you know, not, not going out, different. The only time we trek further out was Trick or treat, going out, getting into the candy zone. But I guess we were isolated. Maybe, you look at it, maybe that's why I didn't see what was going on, you know,

Tracy Flores 57:02

and who were some of your best friends? You mentioned Arredondo?

John A. Galindo 57:06

Well, yeah there was Manny Arredondo. I lost him in on the first grade. Then he left. But junior high, we connected again. And then from then on, we became, you know, we were best of friends, his parents, his grandmother, Maggie Hernandez, cooked with my grandfather at one of the restaurants way back in the 40s. So Manny's family had a restaurant. They were a big family in the restaurant business also. So then Donald Martinez, he worked for the University of Texas. He was in the book, in the, I guess, book in binding. I'm not sure he was a printer, but he worked for, he retired from the university. Now he lives in Bastrop. We still now with social media. The sad thing about we see each other at funerals, you know, and that my I lost Manny, I guess he passed away several years ago. I mean, we saw a lot of people. Then that's the only time we get to see it's sad. Oh, but then also, I invite them to the restaurant, so I see some of them at the restaurant, but mostly funerals start seeing some of the old the old family, the old friends.

Tracy Flores 58:19

Can you talk a little bit more about the May fair. Were there other special events?

John A. Galindo 58:24

There was something and look forward to big at the six train you did the May pole. I don't know it was. You would go around and it was like a braid. I don't do you know what a May pole is? Talk about a little bit more. Yeah, it's a pole that everybody has a colored string, not string, but it's vinyl. It's a material. And you're going up and down, going through at the end of the dance, there's music. You create, a beautiful braid, you know? And so that's the finale. All the younger kids are square dancing to or, I remember one year, this is, I don't know if it was me. I my mom dressed me up in a, like a mariachi suit, and I did some kind of a dance that was for the Mayfair, but that's the one where you put your hat on the floor, and the tapatio is that what it's called ?

Tracy Flores 59:19

is that what it's called Mexican hat dance. Is that the Mexican?

John A. Galindo 59:24

yeah, when you dance around, I think there's two of you, and then when we're doing that,

Tracy Flores 59:35

How did you learn that? sorry,

John A. Galindo 59:41

I guess maybe the teacher taught us that. But I read remember doing that, and it was at a young age, too. I remember doing that.

Tracy Flores 59:49

Did every grade have a different way they participated in the nature?

John A. Galindo 59:53

Yeah, I think they did. And then looking forward to was the sixth grade "one of these days that's gonna be us." You know, that was the big man on campus being able to and then not all the kids got to do it. It

depended, I don't know it was on how you learn to do that, but it was a big deal to do it, though it was fun times.

Tracy Flores 1:00:14

And how did the palm school fit into the larger Mexican American community?

John A. Galindo 1:00:22

To be honest, how much I just knew what we did. I don't, I remember. I do remember the politician, Jay pickle. I don't know there was JJ pickle. And he would come by anytime we had the fair, and he had a his lapel was a little pickle, vote for pickle, you know. And he would come shake hands. And my mom, I know she did a lot with, I think I was, I think palm was a where you went to vote. And so she would volunteer for that and do the, I know she got involved with some of that stuff sometimes.

Tracy Flores 1:01:00

How else was your mother active at school?

John A. Galindo 1:01:03

know, being part of the teacher's aid, and then whenever they needed volunteers, she was there. And of course, my my younger as we got older, she winged us off, and she was with my youngest brother, Fred, but she was always around the school, and she told the teachers that "this guy acts up, you let me know, because he'll get a--. You spank him there, and I spank him here". I never got, I mean, it was there and here again, the expectation, you just backed off.

Tracy Flores 1:01:38

what was it like to have your mother around at school?

John A. Galindo 1:01:41

I loved it, you know, it was just being a part of it, you know, I know it was, she was active with us, you know, that's why I enjoyed seeing her there. It was a lot of love. And that helps a lot love. You know, maybe she didn't know what we did, like she, when we had homework, she said, make sure it gets done, and she was there with us. But here again, I know there was some kids that didn't have that opportunity, because the parents had to go work. You know, I know she babysat a lot also after we got old, I guess she missed us, so she would babysit at home with some and they would have some kids that she, she actually raised, because the parents had to, they were both parents were working. Were they kids from the neighborhood? They were for the neighborhood. There's one group, one guy, the last name Acosta, and we still, we still see, I mean, they came to the funeral. My mom passed away. But they were from the they were from the neighborhood that she would, she would, I love the Acosta, I think she worked for the for the phone company. And Billy was a husband. He was a printer. But it was, it was BJ, Victoria and Angel, it was three, and they were like brothers and sisters, because they were always, they were at the house, you know. So we always had, there was always family around, you know, if not, I mean, I called even though we weren't related, I called them family, you know

Tracy Flores 1:03:12

did they also go to the palm school?

John A. Galindo 1:03:15

I know, I'm not sure if, BJ, they were a lot younger than we were maybe, because then they closed it down. What year they closed it down became Sanchez, 1976 Yeah, so and then for Sanchez is there right now, there was a place called The Salvation Army. It was a youth center. And that experience was, well, it kept we got to do organized sports there. There was a family. Last name was Reese Ruiz. There was a Jimmy Ruiz, and then Sonny Victor Ruiz. Now Victor. They grew up. Victor's kids went to school with us there at Palm. It was Victor the fourth was my age, and then, but we had organized sports there. It was a great time having something to do. They had basketball for us. Somehow there was uniforms there. I don't know it was part of the Salvation Army donation. We had football and we had a great time there. It kept us off the streets.

Tracy Flores 1:04:19

Did you play both of those sports?

John A. Galindo 1:04:20

Yeah there we did. It was, I never the I was, when I was in junior high, too small to play football, you know, but there was an experience to play. I did play football, but not it was for Glastron Boat Company. And it was, it was a big boat company. And getting back to the aquifers, when they started Aquafers, it was to promote the lakes and Glastron built the bat boat for Batman, the original Batman. And. And they, they made a movie, the original Batman. I don't know if you remember Adam Wes. They premiered it at the Paramount Theater to promote the Aquafers, the boat rides, the jet boats. And I remember going and seeing getting to meet all the, I mean, that person was seeing them there, all the the Riddler, the Joker, Ceasar, there was a Hispanic The Joker was, there was, it was an Hispanic actor. But we're talking, I went to the boat races, but it was just a we got the experience seeing that. You know, it was great time.

Tracy Flores 1:05:45

So what do you remember about the teachers and staff at Palm?

John A. Galindo 1:05:50

Well, I said that German the I think your Miss Sherman, and I think she was the prayer stood out, the Pledge of Allegiance. I mean, everybody had to stand up. And then, then Mr. Condi was stern, you know, he was always but he was, it was still fun to be around, you know, I didn't see any I had no issues with the teachers. Maybe it's because I didn't let anyone, I didn't want to let my dad down, you know. So we always stuck, stuck with the program, I guess, you know,

Tracy Flores 1:06:29

Did your family have the the choice of what school to go to?

John A. Galindo 1:06:35

You mean,

Tracy Flores 1:06:37

for palm where they did they choose to go there?

John A. Galindo 1:06:39

No, we know we were in that district, you know, come on west of Comal street. That's where I think palm ended. I think he went on the other side. You got to go to Metz, which was on Second Street. No, it was on Willow garden. Then you had Zavala. So there was territories, I guess, and then now for junior high. Here, I lost Manny again because he lived on the other side of Comal. He winded up going to Johnston, I winded up going in Austin High, because that's where the boundary was. So I think Comal West, you went to Austin High and if you were east of Comarl then went to Johnston.

Tracy Flores 1:07:25

How do you think that community felt about the palm school?

John A. Galindo 1:07:34

Personally, I think I mean everybody around us, we enjoyed being there. There was another teacher, Miss Johnston was another six grade teacher, and she put together in 68 also the World's Fair was at San Antonio. San Antonio was the World's Fair. And we did, we did two trips to go see the World's Fair, you know, which? That's part of history, you know? And that's why San Antonio has some great roads, because the fair was there, you know that, I don't know if you have you visited San Antonio, the the spear still there, the hemisphere arena, but it was, we would. We went twice, I guess during the I think, once during the summer and then during the school year, to get to experience that.

Tracy Flores 1:08:27

What was that like for you?

John A. Galindo 1:08:29

It was fun to see the good because some of the stuff was the future stuff. They were showing you what they thought. Well, they had that monorail at this time. We should have been flying cars. You know, that had happened yet, but the way the cars are designed, you're starting to see them, you know, especially Mr. Tesla, that that little truck, you see it going around, that's but it was, it was enjoying the experience, the food, because it was different. It was all the different cultures, and the music, the dancing. It was, it was, it was fun. I enjoyed going.

Tracy Flores 1:09:02

Had you traveled before outside of East Austin?

John A. Galindo 1:09:07

we were there to San Antonio, and then we would go to Six Flags. I think that was our senior trip, or not seeing it with the the sixth grade trip was, was going to to Six Flags. And one thing that stands out, we were there, and a couple of the people kids decided to shoplift, and we were held up. We're trying to get home, and back then there was no cell phone. Parents probably waiting for us, but the teachers and I felt bad for the teachers and man, they brought us up here, and for these kids to do that, and I don't know what was going through their mind. That's their issue, but it held us up. And. Having to get back later. The teachers were probably disappointed. I could see in their faces, you know. But that that

happened, that's an experiment with going to that. How does that make palm school look like, you know? But But nowadays it's no big deal. You know, the way everybody able to rob, steal, not here in Texas, but in California. I see it happening, you know. But it was sad. It was a sad moment for me. I mean, that's me personally.

Tracy Flores 1:10:37

Were you all able to go back after that? Grades after? Yeah

John A. Galindo 1:10:39

Yeah, I'm not sure. I'm pretty sure they, I know we win when we were in junior high school, yeah, but, but I'm pretty sure they did, you know? I mean, it wasn't the first, I bet you it happens a lot, you know, you know, but, but that stood out the delay, because we got home late that night, you know, and from Dallas to Austin. That's a long trek and then those busses weren't the most comfortable busses, you know.

Tracy Flores 1:11:06

And how do you feel? People who care about palm school, remember this school and the surrounding neighborhood?

John A. Galindo 1:11:16

I know they're trying to, you know, any which is a good thing to save it. I know they, they don't want to. I see it being saved for us, Hispanics, but there's all other cultures, the Lebanese families there that grew up in the area, the Joseph's, the Daywoods, the Hellos. There's Italians that grew up, the Patrons, Patronis, it was, it needs to be saved. And there is enough history of Austin, you know, of how Austin was, you know, it was a, it was a, it was a melting pot, like it, like the US is now, you know, because, and here again, I see a lot of the old people, because they come to the restaurant, you know, the Long family, the first Chinese kitchen in 1897 on Red River. They're still around. And there's a lot of people. There's a lot of old Austin. I like to see it as an old Austin. Yes, there should be a part about the struggles, which I'm not, I'm not saying there one, there was a struggle there. We need to learn that and learn from it, you know. So, yeah, there needs to be part of it, part of that. But it needs to be more than just. It needs to be some of the music. Stevie Ray Vaughn, Willie Nelson, I mean, there, you can go on all there's a lot of great musicians here in town. Ernie Durawa the drummer for the Texas tornado, frequents my restaurant, 83 years old, still playing music. Sunny Trujillo. Accordion player, still playing music, you know. And we need a we need to experience the add music to the the history, you know, like my aunt, my like my aunt, you know the blues players. You know, you know BB King, all those guys, all those greats that used to frequent Austin, and they still do. Everybody went, we're the music capital of the world, they say, so hey, let's, let's work on that. Let's maybe add that to that poem.

Tracy Flores 1:13:24

So alongside the struggles, and yeah, yes, the joy?

John A. Galindo 1:13:27

joy, yeah, your joy. You don't, you don't want to forget the struggles. I'm not saying that. You got to know they're there, you know. So we gotta, we've got to do that also, you know. But then also the

struggle, like my dad, when my dad went through the PTSD, you know, I don't know if you know, on you got palm school, the highway, there's a small little island there on 35, the Lions Club, we were the one of East Austin line, one of the first to recognize the Vietnam War. There's a statue. There's a monument there, and there's a flag pole every we have a, for Veterans Day and for Memorial Day. We honor all the everyone that fought, but especially, there was a lot of Hispanics from the neighborhood that died. But that was an ugly war and what everybody ignore or not they ignore, but we recognize that, you know, there's some great guys that live. Flores. I remember Henry Flores. He was a friend of our. Leonard has had a brother. I had some friends that lost their brothers. Didn't come back home, you know. So it was a tough war.

Tracy Flores 1:14:34

Did your father tell you stories about serving?

John A. Galindo 1:14:37

Yeah, you know, he would say about I was here. That was a political war. It shouldn't have been fought. The politicians fought that war, and that's what he told me, and I learned that from my dad. He said they should let the guys that do war handle that, and that's why we lost so many people and but I know he you, because he went, he never talked about what he did. But I know he mentioned the Vietnam War. I guess he brought back memories that, hey, it was the same type of War, the Korean War, and it was, it was, it was so but there was some, I know he had some struggles there, but, but he didn't show it to us, but, and then when we did lose him, we understood what happened. You know,

Tracy Flores 1:15:27

what have you heard? Excuse me, around the time of your attendance, and the country in Texas was navigating school desegregation. How did you experience at Did you experience any of this at the Palm school?

John A. Galindo 1:15:42

Not at Palm but, but at Martin junior high, we did. That's when they started the Palm, the riots. They called them. And it was said, it was mostly the, it was mostly the, the parents, the kids got along, you know, you know? And then there was a, I don't know it was, but it was, I didn't see it at Palm. I didn't start till after, when they started, when they closed down Anderson High School and moved it and well, Keeling junior high school, they they started moving people around, I guess.

Tracy Flores 1:16:20

And what was, what were some of the things you were hearing or or witnessing?

John A. Galindo 1:16:24

Well, I know we had a at Martin. There was a big in the lunch room. You know, after a while, they didn't give they only serve the spoons, no forks, no knives. There was a big fight there. Remember when one time it was me, Donald, Manny, my two my younger brother were walking to school, and a couple of he said, "Hey, where are y'all headed? We're headed to the school?" "Invite Y'all not to go right now". It's this issue. And as soon as he said he moved away, there was a car full of older black kid people they started. They saw us. There they go. And we ran because we knew the neighborhood we got. We knew

how to hide in the alleys, you know, but they were chasing us. And that was, that was our that was our seventh, eighth grade, I think.

Tracy Flores 1:17:13

And you mentioned the other schools about Keeling, what? How was that involved in everything? Well,

John A. Galindo 1:17:17

Well see that the Keeling and Anderson were a black school, and they shut them down. And that's when they started busting everybody. And then then I know some people that lived in West Austin had to come to the east Austin school. This is high school, but, but we went to, I went to Austin High now my senior year, we moved south, and I chose to finish up at Austin High my two younger brothers wind up going to Travis high school, but, but that was just that was in South Austin. Why did you all move?

Tracy Flores 1:17:55

Why did you all move?

John A. Galindo 1:17:56

Well, here my here again, my dad had the opportunity to buy. Willow and Navasota that was so the little house back in the day, I think, my the father of the of the of the my, my dad, the groom. They bought him the first house. So my grandfather bought that little house for my mom and dad, and it was just a two bedroom house and and they added on to it, but there was, we all slept in a one bedroom. And then my dad knew he had to get us out of there, you know, and to get it. And that's when he moved. And was ironic. It was, it was, we lived in East Austin. We moved south to a street called East Side drive, and we all had our own room then. And it was the, that's when, that's when he told me the stepping stone, my mom did not want to leave the neighborhood, you know, because they were all her friends, you know. But he was trying to explain to you, and she winded up liking it after a while, because there was some great friends there also. But it was tough getting my mom out of the out of the neighborhood.

Tracy Flores 1:19:10

Did she go back and visit a lot?

John A. Galindo 1:19:13

Oh, yeah, they would go. But then a lot of them also started moving. You know, Donald moved to West Austin, so it started changing. You know, people buying bigger homes. There were still some people that stayed in the area, but she winded up having some great friends in in South Austin.

Tracy Flores 1:19:34

And did you all continue to run the restaurant when you were in South Austin?

John A. Galindo 1:19:37

Well see. But when we were my dad had sold my when my grandfather passed away in the late 60s, my dad sold, or, I don't know if he sold it, or we no longer ran it. He winded up working for there was a restaurant called Carmen's La Tapatia that was there on on East sixth street. So he was in the

restaurant business, you know, so, and he worked as a waiter and back then waiters always good, make good money if you apply yourself, you know. So, so he did that.

Tracy Flores 1:20:17

Our research indicates that palm school around its closing was in somewhat disrepair, the lack of AC the building falling apart, as well as the challenge of getting to the school due to the newly constructed highway the 35 (Yeah). What do you remember about these challenges?

John A. Galindo 1:20:33

Well, I know one of the here again, like that, may fair pole when you get into the sixth grade. Well, at sixth grade, you got to be a Crossing Guard, so you got issued a badge. So we had to cross. And we had a flag post. So I'm not we had like a again, there was a gentleman in charge, or somebody, but we had, there were Captain sergeant. So we, the sixth graders. Got people across the we make sure, and I never saw an accident, the accident we did with were people coming off 35 went on a rainy day. You could see but kids being hit or run over. But it was.. nowadays. I don't see how kids would go across that but, but we had, we were, we had somebody right in front of the school, and you would cross over. There was another guard there, and then you would go across and make sure the everybody got through.

Tracy Flores 1:21:33

Though, about how many students did that on like any given day?

John A. Galindo 1:21:38

Well, you had one, two, guess, two, maybe six or eight, and then at the end of the day, you put the flag down and but you got to, you got only, you got to keep it, but it was like a strap that you got. It was like an honor to have that.

Tracy Flores 1:21:54

Did they train you or you?

John A. Galindo 1:21:57

I think, I think they trained us, but I remember, but it was kind of, you know, you just make sure everybody stayed behind the we had a flag, a pole, that you would put in front. Well, like the crossing guards are now, but they used us instead of they didn't pay us. Maybe, like, not how much a crossing guard makes, but they might go back and ask for some money.

Tracy Flores 1:22:16

Was it in the morning and the afternoon, before and after school?

John A. Galindo 1:22:20

Yeah, so you had to get there early to do the early shift, and then, and then after school.

Tracy Flores 1:22:25

Was it boys and girls who got to do that? Yeah?

John A. Galindo 1:22:29

Yeah, it was both, yeah. It was, it was, I were doing that for a while. It was good.

Tracy Flores 1:22:34

How do you think palm school and the neighborhood helped shape you into the person you are today?

John A. Galindo 1:22:42

I I think, like the Mr. Condi stands out as as a male figure, you know, and then just, I think that, you know, moving up, because it was a, you know, back then was, you know, losing my dad. And, I mean, I lost when I was 17, 18, but he was still, he was there. But then after that, I mean, I got with Mr. Condi. I saw, you know that he was a teacher and respected him. And years later we would see him, and to this day, I think he just passed away. My brother would keep because he was my brother and and my two brothers, teacher, also my adult. My sister didn't get to get him as a sixth grade. But we stay connected, you know, I think we stay connected with the teachers. I think that's one thing that my mom had the communication, the open line of communication with the teachers. We got to meet them. I know there was one lady named Miss Birch. She wasn't my teacher, but she was a second grade teacher, and she lived there in East Austin also. But my mom knew my first name basis, you know, so it was not we had some kind of interaction, and even through junior high, also, and Mr. the principal was a good friend, my mom would take them praline candies, maybe the praline but it was just we were active. And I think even though my mom wasn't educated, she had that, you know, being part of the being a part of us, you know part of us.

Tracy Flores 1:24:29

Where do you think that came from for her?

John A. Galindo 1:24:35

You know, she just, I don't know. She had love in her, I guess, something that maybe she didn't have one because she had a big family. There was a big family in there. And then, of course, they grew up in a different world, you know, and not in the 20s. Yeah, I know they, I never asked her, but I know the last time as they're older, and she got older, when my daughter opened that trailer. We're selling tacos at \$6 a taco, and people buying them in line, and she would say they would make fun of us.

John A. Galindo 1:25:16

So my mom went through the struggle. I

John A. Galindo 1:25:24

We didn't. She made sure we didn't. It was there, but, but I asked her how she felt. It was what it was, you know. But look who got the last laugh. Look how popular tacos are. Mexican food is now my and there's some friends that won't go eat at my restaurant because I we charged. We put our good product, and there's \$17 a plate enchiladas. They say you're too expensive. But hey, how are we supposed to make money? There's people out there, they'll spend on other things, but hey, but she went through the struggle my dad. I don't think, Well, my dad will, but I know there was some struggle there, but she never talked about it. She didn't, she didn't put it on us. She said, I'm going to raise you

on as best as I can. So, you know, we're all self sufficient, and that's one thing my kids are too. I got, I got, I got a 41 year old, 42 and my daughter, 44 they all self sufficient. I don't, if I die tomorrow, financially, they're not going to miss me. And I made sure that that that was my job, to make sure they were self sufficient, and in this beautiful country we live in, we have that opportunity. It's there. She's gonna want to "las ganas", you know? Yeah, we can fall back. Yes, my mom went through some bad time, but I'm not gonna, that was then and now, let's not use it. That's, that's you turn advantage, that we can prosper, and we are prospering, you know. But I don't know what they say I mean, but actually I know who I am, and I love what I do, and I love what my daughter is doing, and it just, it's just beautiful. I love this, this town of Austin, Texas. That's why everybody moves to it. I would never leave Austin. I mean, even though I don't live, I live in Buda now, but, but Austin is my home. All, like I said, All of Austin, not just East Austin, because true East Austin, where my mom was born, right there, where City Hall is, you know, that was original Austin, you know, but it's, it's different. But everybody has their journey, and God bless them, you know, they all have their special journey.

Tracy Flores 1:27:58

So what were the lessons learned for you, what would you say back to younger Tony Galindo?

John A. Galindo 1:28:03

You mean the well, like to learning how to survive, you know, like, like, I'm going back to during the summer, you know, we would go pick pecans. There was a company at East that would buy them. We would go sell pecans to raise little money. You know, we didn't eat much, you know, 25 cents. I go get a Dr Pepper, a baby, a baby Ruth and a bag of Fritos. You know, that was 25 cents, bottles back then you could pick up and collect and go sell. There was a place down on Fourth Street. We called it the paper company. There were, there was, there was maggies that were being thrown away, and the comic books, but we went after the Reader's Digest, because there was coupons on there. Now I know this guy probably got in trouble, but he we found one for a quarter or 10 cents. We took him to a store, and that guy would buy him from us, and then he would trade him in. I don't think it was right for him to do that, but we raised we found a way to raise money. We were never, we were broke, but not broke. We found ways to have fun, you know, and make money, you know, and enjoy life. You know, you just have to hustle. It's all about the hustle. You know.

Tracy Flores 1:29:29

Can you describe your life after finishing your palm school education?

John A. Galindo 1:29:33

Well in me going to junior high, you know, it was, you know, at Austin, at Palm you had one teacher, and then when you went into junior, you started having the different classes, the creative writing, the English class, the math teacher. So you went to different so to get used to it in seventh grade, I don't know how these sixth graders do it. I feel I. Think six should be part of elementary, but that's my opinion. But it was just getting used to going through the different learning, your schedule, learning to get moving around, you know, so, but palm was more. You stayed in that one class and everything was done unless you went to physical, I think. PE, but that one teacher taught everything.

Tracy Flores 1:30:22

Did you have other, excuse me, classes outside of PE like others?

John A. Galindo 1:30:29

one thing I've just thought I did have, I did have a speech problem, my s...my s..., I couldn't so I would go to a speech therapist because I got made fun of, but I knew who I was. I just knew I had an issue. So that person, I don't have that speech anymore, you know, but it was part of a there was a couple of us that went but I remember them laughing at us. There goes Tony going to a special ed class.

Tracy Flores 1:31:03

Who was your teacher for that?

John A. Galindo 1:31:05

It wasn't, I don't know if somebody came. It was a person that came in. We would go to a little another class, and we would, they would. There was only two or three of us that had that issue. So I don't know it was a it was coming from the university or a special program, but that just came back. I remember, I remember that though that went to go to to learn how to say, my, my, S's,

Tracy Flores 1:31:31

how long were you in receive those services?

John A. Galindo 1:31:34

Yeah, it was early on. I don't know when it was. I don't know what grade I was in. I was young, it's but I know we would go like, once a week, maybe, and I remember my glass, yeah, I was supposed to wear glasses. I had a, if I would have wore my glasses early on first grade, I would not have it it would have corrected itself, they said. But of course, you got made fun of so I my glasses stayed and I wouldn't wear the wouldn't wear the glasses.

Tracy Flores 1:32:09

Did your teachers in your speech therapy classes? Did they give you stuff to do at home? Do you know anything?

John A. Galindo 1:32:17

I don't remember that you know, but I remember another issue that I had. I mean, you know, I guess I was in the second or third grade, I didn't want to go to school, and I had issues being around a big group, so I would eat lunch by myself with a teacher. I know I remember having that issue. And then Then one day, finally, I would just say I was sick, and I would go home. My mom finally would drag me and said "don't let him come home". And that was early, I think, second, third grade. I mean, I got over it, though.

Tracy Flores 1:32:57

But do you remember what made?

John A. Galindo 1:33:02

I don't know what it was, but it was, I gotta go to counseling, but it was, it's gone, but I know now I love to talk, you know, but before, I guess it was, I was shy, I guess, oh, "he's just shy". But I forget what grade that was. It was early grade, so I had to, I would sit in the classroom, in each because I couldn't be around with it, somebody would be there with me. So they helped out. They didn't say you gotta. They didn't force me, but I didn't want to be around. I grew out of it, I guess.

Tracy Flores 1:33:35

And what schools did you attend afterwards?

John A. Galindo 1:33:37

Well Martin junior high school was my with a junior high six, I mean seventh through ninth, then Austin High, 10 through 12,

Tracy Flores 1:33:47

and what kind of educational or leadership opportunities were provided from the school or maybe the surrounding area compared to the palm school? Do you have any ideas about that?

John A. Galindo 1:33:57

Well junior high, I know we did, there was a lot of fundraising. We did car washes because, you know, we're part of the, you know, the band. I wasn't part of the band, but I hang around with them, and I would go help them. I remember doing car washes there was, and then we had, because you had the Spanish club, and I think I was part of that. And there was a couple other clubs, so the Junior Honor Society, I think I was part of that also, you know, so

Tracy Flores 1:34:30

and was that in junior high, that was

John A. Galindo 1:34:32

in junior high at Palm I don't think we had any, and that was something that you look forward to going when you went to.. I remember my sister was older, so she would tell us, getting us ready for the for what was going to experience in junior high school.

Tracy Flores 1:34:48

Did you look to your sister for advice or for what was coming?

John A. Galindo 1:34:51

Well, yeah, we would ask her, and she would tell us, you know, what was going on there, and it was exciting to get there, you know, it was. The learning experience, I guess,

Tracy Flores 1:35:01

as a girl, did she have different opportunities than you did different things?

John A. Galindo 1:35:10

I know her friends. I know they did. They did some, you know, to be honest, I wouldn't, because I was with my buddies and she was, you know, you know how that was. You were friends and but it was not. She had her own she did her own thing, you know, and, but she winded up going to college and all that. But then got into she went to work for, I know she worked for the there was a local movie theater here in town, back before theaters were small, and she was an assistant manager for one of the theaters for a while while going to college, but then she joined HEB, and then made that a career.

Tracy Flores 1:35:52

And what are some accomplishments that you'd like to highlight?

John A. Galindo 1:35:57

Well, I guess the East Austin Lions Club. You know, that was a group that that, but it was a social, not a social, an activity club, you know, like I said early when I won that award for that collage, that was, and I was always, one day I was trying to search, but couldn't find, you know, but it's got to be out there, because I just I noticed la fuerza, while we were in that break, there was a picture of talking about the new principal at Palm school, and I think it was that was that magazine. I know there's one called La Prensa now, I believe, but la fuerza is no longer around, but, but a compliment is just that, you know, when I joined, got into retail, became one of the youngest managers of the drug store, and that's already out of school. But, I mean, but I guess school got me ready for that distributive education in at Austin, Mr. Hardy, who was a teacher that would, you know, we would go to class, and then we would go work part time at a school, I mean, at a retail store. I know one year, I don't know what year that was. I was I in junior high. I did work at Bergstrom Air Force Base. I remember going to school half a day, and they would take a bus and go work in the there, at the at the Bergstrom, in the computer. It's a computer. There was a were those hanging shads from it was that the computers were different then, but I remember we were filing stuff. I mean, it's vague now, though, but I remember I worked at Bergstrom.

Tracy Flores 1:37:48

and I just wanted to ask you, when did you join the East Austin Lions Club?

John A. Galindo 1:37:52

That was, I guess it was already I was around it when we were younger, because some of the older Jesse Torres. He was a local real estate agent a Vino Mendoza. They were, they were, they weren't family, but then they were friends of my dad. When we would go to the fiestas, we would see him there, and that must have been the kids were already born. It was in the 80s, early 80s, I guess then we started being part of that and raising that money. And every year we would hang we would grab baskets. We would do baskets of food for the underprivileged, the ones that couldn't, and we would go to the school and and get the co...counselors knew what kids were hurt and the family. So we would, we were unannounced, we'd show up, I think it was Christmas Eve, with a basket of food.

Tracy Flores 1:38:46

And you continue to be in involved?

John A. Galindo 1:38:49

But we're still, I'm still involved with it. We don't do any major fundraising right now. We just, the major thing we do is we want to save that island, because they're going to expand 35 and they, someone said that island may be going before we have that monument. So we, the club had kind of died away, but then when we heard that there's a gentleman named Leon Hernandez. He's up and he's 87 years old. He's real. He grew up further east, but he's very politically involved with LULAC. I was a part of LULAC because he would, he got me involved in it, and I would go to some of the meetings because they needed people on their I don't know if you know what LULAC is or how it works. I mean, you need delegates. But Leon had said, so we're, we're forming another chapter, and I would give him my money, and but, but that we want to really save that little island. You know, I hate to see it go, so that's why we got the line. So we just, we don't do any fundraising, but have that going,

Tracy Flores 1:39:57

and then what does the palm school symbolize to you?

John A. Galindo 1:40:01

Well, it's early education, you know, right? Whenever I see it, you know, you know the palm tree. I think there's two other palm trees still there up front. I don't know. I haven't, I drove by there the other day, but it just I was seeing that fit, that that Fiesta that we used to have, the Mayfair, whatever it was called, the crossing guard being part of that, just the and then, of course, the park where that's gone, I think they've, they've demolished that I'm sad that they... I don't know they're gonna, they're digging up a lot. I don't know if they're gonna bring it back, but that was a nice area there and so but just, it's community, I guess I saw, and that's why I like to see it, like I said, part of... not just all of Austin. I think needs to be part of that thing, because it's old Austin. Let's not forget old Austin.

Tracy Flores 1:40:56

Is there anything else you want to know that?

John A. Galindo 1:40:59

No that, im just ...I'm glad I was I don't know if I was chosen or called. I enjoyed this experience. You know, it's hopefully we'll be able to see it and and see what where it takes us.

Tracy Flores 1:41:15

Thank you so much.

John A. Galindo 1:14:16

You're welcome.