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SPEAKERS

Teresa Velasquez, Speaker 1, Brittany Mendez

Brittany Mendez 00:02

Okay, Hi, I'm Brittany Mendez again. Today is February 720, 25 this is I'm here with Teresa Velasquez for our final photo voz session. Yes. And so we shall get started. Okay, so I'm going to share my screen. Can you see this? Yes, okay, cool. And then, so, okay, I think

00:36

we,

Brittany Mendez 00:41

I think we did this one. I think we did this one as well. Your brother, Roy. His last name is Velasquez. Yes, um, oh, okay, I think this is where we left off. Do you recognize anyone in this picture?

Teresa Velasquez 01:15

I'm trying to see? Let me see if I can zoom in. That's either, let me open it up, that's the macarzel. Yeah, that's the macarzel guy, uh Edward Mcarzel. And then that girl's name was Mickey. I don't know her first name. I mean her last name, but that was Edward. That looks like Edward Mcarzal and this is Mickey. The girl was Mickey, uh huh. I don't remember her last name.

Brittany Mendez 02:01

Oh, Yeah, that does look like him. Do you know what Mickey's last name is?

Teresa Velasquez 02:26

I don't remember her last name.

Brittany Mendez 02:35

What this would have been at the El Paso

Teresa Velasquez 02:37

that Probably, I'm pretty sure, was El Paso as well.

Brittany Mendez 02:46

Ya here's the next one,

Teresa Velasquez 03:10

if you could slide it over to the left a little Oh, let's see. Maybe, okay, yeah, I think maybe I moved it. I think that's Tony. Let's see that boy. Let me see if I have this, Tony. His name was Tony, and I can't place who that girl is, because it's the back of her, yeah, but I know his name was Tony, and he might have been a Renteria as well. I think Tony, Benny and Irene we're all siblings or cousins.

Brittany Mendez 04:25

I'll just, I guess. I'll just leave it as Tony. And I'm assuming this is probably El Paso, yes. So I guess, so basically, all of these people that were in the square dancing photos went to palm school, correct, yes, okay, um, but I guess from some of them, you might have been already out of palm school. Correct,

Teresa Velasquez 04:57

I'm guessing, but I see that, that's the thing I don't remember going like, I'm trying to guess what year that would have been,

Brittany Mendez 05:07

because I know for the El Paso, hold on, if I can remember,

Teresa Velasquez 05:17

did that one have a year on it?

Brittany Mendez 05:18

We said 1970s but there was like, oh, maybe it was this one, that was, that was the city that was in 1975

Teresa Velasquez 05:31

that one was Kansas City, yeah. So maybe the other one would have been earlier years, the El Paso.

05:39

Yeah. So

Brittany Mendez 05:42

El Paso is probably when you guys are still like, starting,

Teresa Velasquez 05:46

yeah, younger. I was younger than

Brittany Mendez 05:53

because you guys do look really

05:55

young.

Brittany Mendez 05:58

Let's see. Okay. Felix and Irene, you did that one.

Teresa Velasquez 06:16

That one we haven't done that one is funny because I talked about the Terry well, did we do it yesterday? The Terry M, the Terry v, and the Terry p. That middle girl is Terry Pardo, who is the other guy, David, the one I'm dancing with, he had a brown shirt on. That's his sister, Terry, and her and I know we were in the same class, third, fourth and fifth grade.

Brittany Mendez 06:43

Okay, so can you describe like, what we're looking at and where these are

Teresa Velasquez 06:49

We're probably at recess out on the playground, and I don't know if that great building is still back there. That used to be part, I believe, of Parks and Recreation. I know they used to have, like, there were restrooms in there, and then right in front of there, there would have been a tetherball like pole where we would play tetherball, and it was a concrete slab, like, for, for playing, like four square with, I mean, what is it? Yeah, with the with the ball, I guess, I don't know. I think that was called Four Square, where you bounce the ball and pass it to, you know, the other players. And it looks like there's some picnic tables there, back under the tree, but I know that was part of the playground. Oh yeah, you could see the tether tether ball like the the space there on the left behind Terry. You can barely see the pole there with the white at the bottom, like gravel, I guess. But that was a tetherball I used to hang there and play. And then these were the swings we would play on the swings. And I remember there was a slide out there, and there was that, I guess, Mary, go round, where we would, you know, ride on and go round and round. I remember one year, God, I don't remember what year it was, but a girl named Yolanda, God, what was her last name? Anyway, her finger got stuck on the metal of the slide and sliced her finger in half. And that was just so traumatic. I remember just, you know, all the blood and you know, just being terrified, you know. And after that, it was like a big thing about not wearing jewelry out on the playground while we were out there. But yeah, and that girl next to Terry is her name was Candy, candy, Candlaria Flores. I think she was real shy, but real sweet. And then the girl on the left in that picture, her name was Beatrice Escobar, and I don't know, somehow she, she ends up in my, in my wedding pictures, she attended my wedding, and I don't recall, like, I don't remember us being close at the time, years and years later On, like 1990, 1993 I think I got married. Uh, she's in the pictures and, yeah, just end up at my wedding. But apparently I think she was dating somebody that my former husband worked with, or something. But it was so funny recognizing her in my wedding pictures way later, I believe she she now lives in Hutto. Vanessa, my other friend Vanessa, have has reconnected

with her, I guess, on Facebook, and I've just not been able to go when they meet out for lunch or whatever. But yeah, there's the concrete. See the concrete slab in front of the brick building we used to play there alot. And then there was that big field behind there, like for kickball, way back in there on the field.

Brittany Mendez 10:09

What was Candy's last name again, Flores.

Teresa Velasquez 10:11

Oh, candy, I believe it was Flores.

Brittany Mendez 10:16

So it's the at

Teresa Velasquez 10:18

Beatrice Escobar, Terry Pardo and Candy Flores

Brittany Mendez 10:27

So

Teresa Velasquez 10:28

And this was right. I mean, like right alongside I 35 like the frontage road there to the right where candy is. It was just like a little space there, where, where it was night, where it was the East Avenue, which was the frontage road to to i 35

Brittany Mendez 10:48

um, do you have any like, favorite memories from like recess or like, do you remember like, what you did during recess or if you were hanging out

Teresa Velasquez 10:58

with, uh, probably these girls, and then my friend Terry and Vanessa, and I remember, you know, sitting on the swings and just talking, and then, you know, being active later, going on that merry go round. And would, you know, push each other and be, you know, go around and round and round on the merry go round. I do remember, like, one of my earliest memories of that playground is my first grade teacher. I remember she would sit like, kind of it the the grounds kind of sloped down from closer to the school building, and there was a tree and Miss Birch, my first grade teacher, she used to take a chair outside and sit up, sit under the tree and watch us. And so it was, it was neat that we always knew the teachers were around somewhere. And but I remember, you know, vivid pick, you know, memories of her sitting in, you know, our carry, we'd all want to carry the chair for the teacher, you know, even in other grades, because I guess all the teachers did that take a chair out there to sit and watch us. So we always felt safe, you know, because our teachers were out there with us. But yeah, there was always something to do. Like, you know, we could go play, you know, kickball, or play on the swings, or do the merry go round, or play tetherball or go down the slide, you know, like I said, there was, and then there was this other game we played that, I think they kept it in that building there, that that building, it was these

boards, like these wooden like, flat wooden crates, and they have this little holes, and you played this game with a stick that you would push this little ball of some sort into the hole. I don't remember the name of the game, but I remember playing that, or liking to play that. And you know, talking with my brother about this, he remembers that as well. But that might have been part of, like, part, like, after school, you know, activities, but I remember they kept it in that in that building there, and it was kind of open. It was like, kind of like had two sides, maybe the girls restroom, and the boys restroom, and the other side and in the middle, it was kind of open, like a covered part in the middle of that. This we're looking at is, like the side of that building. It was kind of a breezeway in between.

Brittany Mendez 13:34

So I noticed, so you mentioned, you know, like I 35 was like, right there and then, like, other picture that I had seen, I think at Palm Park, there's like, two girl there's a, I saw a picture of two girls, like, standing at the edge of the park, and, like, I 35 is like, right behind them, like the, I don't know, did you have any sort of thought, like, when you were at school, like, for the highway to just be Like, right there. Or, I don't know,

Teresa Velasquez 14:01

I mean, I always knew it was dangerous, because, like I said, my parents didn't even let us walk to school. So I always was very aware of the danger. And, you know, just knew to stay away from like, like I said, I think it's sloped right there, so it was not like, like, flat next to us. It was a little higher up the hill, like Where the Sidewalk would be, but I knew, you know, not to hang out or not to be near there, like I said, I was always, you know, doing something, you know, probably with the swings or slide or the merry go around. Or, actually, I think there was picnic tables out there too, or maybe just sitting around, you know, just talking with my friends, I'm sure, talking about boys.

Brittany Mendez 14:57

Okay. Oh, we talked about this. So I guess with this, I wanted to ask you so you said that this is the portable, like PE thing where you guys would you fancy? And I was basically wondering if you had any memories of, like, you know, I remember you mentioned that Miss Swenson would go pick everyone up, you guys would come for practice. If there's anything else that you remember, any particular practice that stands out in your head, or just any or also, just like, in general, like, how was it for you, like, getting into square dancing? Like, yeah, like, you know, just such a new thing, a new dance. You know, I don't know

Teresa Velasquez 15:53

Not, not in particular with, like, associated with the building itself, but I do remember, like, you know, they had these, like there was a since we didn't have basketball, like, in like a regular gym would have basketball, but I remember she would put up like laundry baskets at at either end of the of the room, so we had the opportunity to play like basketball within the room, and then on one, and I don't know if they would move all these, all this equipment, or what, but I remember having access to like the parallel bars and the uneven bars, like for gymnastics and the mats. And I'm not sure if you're familiar with the the Jerry Clifton center. It's a facility, I believe, within the school system, over by Reagan, or part of Reagan High School, where it's named after this teacher. Apparently, he was a teacher at Palm at that time, he was paraplegic or quadriplegic. I don't know he I remember him being in a wheelchair, but I would be

mesmerized by the ability of his gymnastic abilities of that disabled person working on the parallel and uneven bars. I mean, he would just get up there and just do all kinds of, you know, flips. And it was just so neat, just to be able to see that and inspired. I remember, you know, trying to get up there and, you know, do things on the bars as well, like, you know, dipping into gymnastics and, you know, being a larger girl. I mean, that was just fun to even have the opportunity to try to do that. And I know my brother, you know, got into that too. But I think a lot of other kids, I think that was something new for all of us to be able to experience that aspect of physical education and and, you know, like I said, See that teacher coming in being disabled, and how well, you know, and skilled he was. It was like it, I think it inspired us to at least try. And, yeah, I thought I always remembered that being really neat to see that. And then later on, you know, knowing of that school that was named after him, was like, Oh, I knew. I knew Jerry Clifton way back, who he was, you know, like, a lot of times these schools are named after people you've never heard of. And you know, that was just something that kind of takes me back. Like, wow, I witness who this who this teacher was. He was amazing. But, yeah, it was just neat to be able to see that. And like I said, I remember distinctively the laundry baskets, as far as, like, the nets for the basketball within the the room. I mean, we had basketball hoops and stuff out on the tennis courts where we could play basketball. But I know, again, within the classroom, you know, that was accessible to us as well, yeah? Because, you know, we did PE just like everybody else, but you know, it was just odd that it was in the a portable building,

Brittany Mendez 18:53

yeah, so I know you already did this, like, kind of like we've already talked about it, but I was wondering, like, if you could right now, like, kind of just kind of retell the story, of like, you know, of how Miss Swenson would go pick you guys up, your memory from that, and then, like, What we're seeing right here in this picture, yeah,

Teresa Velasquez 19:21

yeah. Yeah. She was a PE teacher, and we ended up forming a square dance group called the Early Bird square dancers. And the reason we were called the early birds was because we practiced before school, early in the morning in this portable, which was the gym, her classroom. And you know, she'd pick us all up. And, you know, I don't know how, how would she fit us all in her little car, but was one of those long, I guess, Buick or something like that. But she'd pick us up, and my brother and I were the first ones that she would pick up. And then we we'd pick up Linda and Mario down the street, and then, you know, we'd circle around to Holly Street and pick up Vanessa and James, which they were brother and sister. And again, Linda and Mario were brother and sister, and then we end up going to pick, you know, I still remember the route, but mostly the order we would pick people up, and Rosa Lopez was another girl, and Becky Castillo were two other girls that we pick up, and then the Delgado boys, Lonnie and and Raymon Delgado. But you know how she felt? You know so many kids in her car, and we'd get to school, and she'd have a package of cinnamon rolls, those glaze with all the sugar on top, probably not the healthiest, healthiest breakfast, but a lot of times that, that's what it was, and orange juice or cranberry juice or grape juice, but it was something you know, that I'm sure she paid for out of her pocket. But in order for us to have that opportunity. That was the time that was available or convenient for her. So, you know, with us, you know other, you know, other activities that we might have been involved in. So that's what worked. So, you know, we, that's what, that's when we did it. And, you know, the early bird square dancing group, she ended up ultimately ordering us little name badges were in

some of the pictures you can see where we're wearing I remember they were blue and that, I believe they had white writing on them with the name early bird, and then our names on printed on them. As you know that we would be identifiable as part of the group when we would travel to the different places to go and be involved in the square dancing, not only the local ones here in town, but you know, state and national conventions. And you know, Dallas, Houston, Dallas, Beaumont, San Antonio, El Paso, and the furthest one was Kansas City, Missouri, which, you know that was a lot of traveling for young kids that you know grew up in East Austin, and, you know, it was just remarkable that, you know, those friendships, like I said, that, that we created. I mean, unfortunately, we have lost, I have lost touch with a lot of these other kids that were maybe older than me, but for the most part, I still, you know, can find, or, you know, see, on occasion, some of the other kids that were involved in it during the time that I was I was a dancer. Now, like that boy here in the middle, he actually lived on Rainey Street. His family was the Solis family, and he wasn't a part of the square dancing group. I believe this particular picture is the actual PE class. So that was part of the, I guess, the curriculum that we did during regular PE class. But, you know, I went to school with him all throughout and he had a very large family, which later when I was married. I lived across the street. I lived on Rainey Street, which is directly across the street from his family home.

Brittany Mendez 23:05

So just for audio purposes, like editing audio, so I know who you're talking about when you say she, but if you could just say like, Oh, Miss Swinson, who, oh, okay, just like, for right now, you could just say it like, say it like, oh yeah,

Teresa Velasquez 23:24

Miss Swinson, when she would pick us up and and, you know, take us to the conventions and picking us up in the morning and providing our breakfast. Like I said, a lot of the cost for the little snacks that she would provide would come out of her pocket for Miss Swinson. But you know, we were very I know I was very grateful. I way later on, wrote a letter thanking her, and I wanted to recognize her, and never had the opportunity, and since misplaced the letter, but I did, I was able to Vanessa, and I Vanessa Estrada and I went to her celebration of life, and got to look at a lot of pictures that are were associated with our time at Palm school.

Brittany Mendez 24:13

So you said this particular picture is just of the of a PE class? Yes, okay, and then, okay, also, so, um, so, so, like, okay, like, for me personally, like, I feel like, like, there's been, like, you know, a few, like, educators, teachers in my life that I've had that kind of really stick out and have done a lot for me, you know. And I feel like that's like some in element, like one maybe in elementary and then one in high school that have really, like, shaped who I am, and, like, you know, stuff like that. And so I was basically wondering, like, you know, like with your teachers, such as Miss Swenson, like. I don't know. Like, what would you say, like, how having palm school and all these certain teachers has really shaped you as a person, and like has affected like, how you view the world, and like, also, like your career and stuff and,

Teresa Velasquez 25:19

Oh she, definitely miss Swenson definitely impacted my life. You know, she was instrumental in getting me involved in, you know, not only Girl Scouts, but the square dancing group. And anytime I run across

anyone that maybe went to pump school, even nowadays, I, you know, talk about, oh, you know, square dancing or Girl Scouts, they they automatically associate. Oh, well, you were part of Miss Swinson's group. They, they are familiar with the impact that she made at that school, and not only in elementary school. As I mentioned another day that she ended up relocating to the Middle School, which is Martin, Martin junior high at when I went to sixth grade, she ended up transferring, and she became a sixth grade PE teacher at at middle school. So I stayed involved with her even, you know, later, later on, and, you know, with through the scouts, and I'm assuming square dancing too. I didn't realize that, you know, I'll stay in square dancing, but apparently I did according to the dates that we were trying to calculate and, you know, come up with, but I think a lot of the work that I ended up ultimately doing later in life, not only working with parents as a parent educator, but having The opportunity to get involved in grant writing for extracurricular programming for students, primarily when I was working as a parent support specialist at Allen Elementary School, which is also located in East Austin, near seventh and Springdale there were some funding, local funding with The City of Austin through prime time, and I worked with my principal and community members in writing grants to access funding for after school, for students in the in the school, and ultimately, I mean I would get, like the top rating many times year after year, and at one point, we were eligible to apply for a federal grant the 21st century community of learning program. And those were like a lot of money, like hundreds of 1000s of dollars, and I was one of, one of the, one of four campuses that got both funding for a couple of years, and we provided like enrichment activities for students, not only for students, but because of my work in the primary day with parents, we incorporated a family component To provide learning experience for students and their families. For instance, we try to coordinate it with something the students or the grade level was learning during the school day. I'm going to use fifth grade. For instance, they were studying a voyage of the Mimi, their novel that they were reading, and we coordinated a trip to the University of Marine Science Institute, and we took the teachers to Corpus, to go through and develop the curriculum, because in a few weeks after that, we were taking the entire grade level. We chartered busses because the funding allowed it, and took all ever you know, all the kids in the grade level and the parents that could go as chaperones, and there was one particular parent that didn't want to let his little girl go. And you know, he was a Hispanic man, and he was just real afraid of letting his little girl go. And I gave him the opportunity, I said, was no "pues no puedes ir con ella?", and I asked him, and he had to give it some thought, because it would mean, you know, him losing a couple days of work. And he he said, "Let me think about it". So the next day he comes, he says, "okay, po si puedo". Y, well, I was expecting at the time, and I was on bed rest, so I couldn't go on the actual trip with them, but I was there to greet the busses when they came back, and just the expression and the gratitude I still get real

29:40

well touched

Teresa Velasquez 29:42

by the expression of gratitude that that man gave me for giving him the opportunity to share that experience with his daughter. He said he would never have imagined, you know, a trip to the beach to be so enriching. And he's glad that I talked him into, you know, giving him the opportunity to share that with his daughter. You know, they did beach combing, they got they went out and did, you know, boat rides and scraped the bottom of the ocean. And, you know, it is just and then they, you know, had laboratories where they were going and inspecting their specimens that they brought. And we had a big

tank at our school, so they brought some species home with them to put into our tanks. And it was just a real rewarding experience. And, you know, just trips like that, that that we provided for the students, not only them, but their parents as well. Another one was a fourth grade, you know, they do a unit on Texas, and we took them to the Institute of Texas cultures here in San Antonio. And, you know, we took bus loads of kids and their parents and just the, you know, the the the faces that these parents had where they're, I think, those one section where they could lie on the for on the carpet and look up. I don't know what they were looking at anyway, just they were just mesmerized by the amount of learning that they experienced with their children. Another trip was we went to the Dallas world aquarium and looking, you know, studying the rain, we're studying the rain forest and different layers, you know, of the the earth, and it is just in the species and so forth. It was just, you know, experiences like that, that we were able to give the students and their parents to share together. But you know, along those, those enrichment trips, we had daily classes. You know, we provided Suzuki, violin classes, karate classes. We incorporated scouting, which also gave the parents opportunity to get involved in the after school program. Many of them ended up getting jobs with the with the program they were they were hired to help facilitate or be assistance to the teachers in the after school program. So, you know, it did a lot, it provided a lot of of opportunities for kids and their parents, which I feel like I got a lot of growing up. So sorry, I'm a big cry baby.

Brittany Mendez 32:44

No, you'd have apologize. But yeah,

Teresa Velasquez 32:56

I think it's important to for kids, especially kids whose parents can't afford you know ballet lessons and you know baseball league teams. Have a friend right now. She's a single mom, and she she has three boys and doesn't get a lot of help from her former spouse, and she was sharing with me, it cost \$300 for her kids to play ball at the, I guess, South Austin Optimist Club. And I'm just like, Oh, my God, I couldn't afford, you know, \$300 if I had three kids, you know, to put them on, and that's just to play softball. And, you know, that's just a lot of money, and I think programs like that should be free. But again, I understand the need to be able to maintain the facilities, and, you know, provide the equipment and and all of that. You know, the upkeep of the fields and and the the programming you know that it takes to operate. But I think, you know, probably the city, or somebody whoever manages all that needs to really take a look at the need for providing those programs for kids and not have it fall on the parents to have to pay just for the kid to play ball.

Brittany Mendez 34:18

Just kind of going back a little bit, you know, like you mentioned, like, the dad and stuff, and like, you know, that's like, and you've been talking about your mom and, like, all her involvement and stuff. And then also, like, your brother is also there. Like, you know, your whole, like, your family was there with you whenever you were, like, experiencing all these things and whatnot. Like, whenever, you know, that moment with the Father, you know, did you get reminded of your mom and like, you know, like all your experience in elementary and stuff like that,

Teresa Velasquez 34:50

Oh, yeah. When, when I, you know, when that parent came to me? Me, yeah, yeah. It just kind of came full circle because I think, you know, I put it on part of the culture, because I reflect, like my dad, you know, he's old school. You know, girls don't go off and, you know, like, go move away and live on their own till, you know, you're married or whatever. But that was one of the big things when it came time to go away to college. They didn't want me to move. I was going to go here to Texas State. And, you know, he didn't want me moving, you know, into a dorm. You know, why move? You're just 20 minutes down the road. You know, you're going to live at home. And, you know, being the rebellious young adult I was at the time, I said, Well, then I'm not going. And, you know, who did I hurt in the long run myself? You know, I had every opportunity. I graduated top 10% of my class. I could've got anywhere, and because my dad didn't want me to be a young girl living on her own, even just as far away as San Marcos, which is just down the road. And, you know, I think back when that parent didn't want to allow his little girl, it's part of the culture, you know, we're they're taught to take care of their kids and and it was just a fear of the unknown. And, you know, I ended up going to school. You know, I didn't not go at all. I went. I started here at Austin Community College, and, you know, then just got a job later on, after a couple of years, and just never fit, went back and finished. And you know, I have a lot of regret in that that, like I said, I had every opportunity to do that, even at one point, you know, one of my employers, one of my principals, said, You know, we would work out a schedule where I could go, you know, if I had to leave for a class or something during the day, that we'd negotiate, I could make up my time later, at a different time. And I had a lot of opportunity to do it, and I just never pursued and followed through. And you know, my brother after me, he tried college. College was not his thing. He was a hands on person. He ended up becoming a mechanic, and, you know, had a good career. He worked for the Travis County Sheriff's Department as a mechanic, and retired after, I think, 25 years, and now he still dabbles, and he ended up owning his own business, and he went into the limousine, which was again, part of transportation that our family always provided. And then my younger brother, he did graduate college, but he went on scholarships from baseball, and he's now a teacher in his, I think, 31st or 32nd year as a teacher with the school system. And again, he gives a lot of time. I mean, he's always working. You know, a coach is a life is not their own. It's their that of their players, and the players families, and it's just a lot the I admire the dedication that he has to his career, because it did a lot for him. It paid off. And you know, how much more rewarding could it be to have a job that is not really a job? It's something that you love doing. And his core best baseball player, I mean, that's his life. And you know now he's got a daughter fixing to go off to college, and he has a junior and, you know, they're both involved. Well, the older one has since stopped, but they've, they've been ball players. They played softball since they were T tiny, and soccer. And the the younger one, she's, I mean, very athletically inclined. She's, she's doing power lifting, and she plays softball, and, you know, she if basketball, baseball, a you name, you name the sport she's in it. And you know, it's just part of, you know, the experiences that they were given, you know, growing up. And I think a lot of it comes from that, you know. And like I said, our family has always been very supportive of each other. My brother, after me, his niece played college ball, and she played. She started playing at the age of eight. And our family, we ended up buying a RV just to travel. Those were our summer vacations following her, even my brother, you know, when he played in college, those you know that we were always at the softball or baseball field growing up, and she pursued, you know, she's a doctor. She's a doctor now. And you know, it's just, you know, part of all our family, we would be there to to show support. And you know, we're lucky we have a big, supportive family, because it's not even our only immediate family, it's our extended family. You know, everybody shows I have a little cousin that's playing at Su Rauls university

or college rather, in he his team played in San Antonio this weekend, and I was looking at. Which is on Facebook, a whole lot of the family went out to go see him. He unfortunately didn't get play time, but it was just the fact that the family made an effort to go out there and support him, you know, and that that means a lot to the kids and their parents. Couple weeks ago, another little cousin, she's a senior, and she plays basketball at Austin High School, and it was her senior night. We almost took up an entire section in the bleachers at Austin High just in support of, you know, supporting her, her senior night in basketball. And she was, she's the sweetest little girl. I mean, very she's like number two in her class, and she's been accepted at various universities and including the United States Air Force. I think she's waiting on that one, and she's already been accepted to the Naval Academy. So, I mean, she's very, very bright little girl, but she was just so touched. Oh, that's so sweet. She's real soft spoken. "I'm so glad I didn't realize all of y'all were here", because we were all spread up until after, after the game was over. So, you know, just things like that, support, being supportive, and being there and and coming out as a family,

Brittany Mendez 41:10

that's nice, yeah? Very, very nice. Yeah. I

Teresa Velasquez 41:15

think this, this either was El Paso, I, I believe this was in San Antonio, that was just another group that was performing. I'm pretty sure it was San Antonio. So Oh, yeah, does it say July 74 Yeah, I don't know who wrote on these. I didn't. It's not my writing. Oh, here's this. Yeah, that's class. That's, that's a, that's PE class, and that's that guy, Tony again. Tony Renteria, Renteria.

Brittany Mendez 42:14

So were you guys square dancing here? Like, was this, or was this a, the a gym class,

Teresa Velasquez 42:20

it's gym class, but we're square dancing. This is the on the right there, that girl, Irene.

Brittany Mendez 42:27

This is one of the morning session, or no,

Teresa Velasquez 42:30

it's not the early morning. It's just regular class, just regular, I guess, square dancing class, or PE class, rather, when we happen to be square dancing.

Brittany Mendez 42:45

How do you Renteria?

Teresa Velasquez 42:48

Renteria? Yes, R, E N, T, E R, I a, Renteria and the guy behind our next to Tony, that's Gilbert, somebody that I think I'm in another picture, dancing with that Gilbert, yes,

Brittany Mendez 43:16

you know Gilbert, Gilbert's last name, or I can look At the other picture.

Teresa Velasquez 43:18

I think it was Martinez.

Teresa Velasquez 43:27

I don't recall the other people in the picture.

Brittany Mendez 43:38

Here's this picture.

Teresa Velasquez 43:39

Okay, this is actually where I grew up. That's we called it. We refer to this as the big house. I lived at 90 East Avenue, which was the office of Roy's taxi. And that's me and my my brother, Roy, or probably, I guess, maybe about I look probably about four. He's probably he's a year and a half younger than me, so I'd be like two and a half, and that's on the side of the house there, as you go up those little stairs, if you go in the door that's on the left that would take you directly into the office of the Roy's taxi, which was the the dispatching office, where they would disperse the calls and actually take the calls at that time the phones were in that same area, and then the door directly in front, or that would be into the like the family part of the house, which later became the offices, but that, at that time, it was the family home.

Brittany Mendez 44:54

Oh, and so what? What did like? Do you remember what the inside of your family home look? Like,

Teresa Velasquez 45:01

We didn't we didn't actually live in this part of the the like I said, it was a compound. This was the main house, if you go up those side stairs there. But they never really used those stairs. The the room where the window is next to the pole up the top, that was my grandfather's room, and he basically had, like, an entire suite. My grandmother died when I was probably one or two years old, so I never really knew her, but this was like called, we refer to it as the big house. That was the primary house that that the family occupied, but mostly the times that I remember it was already mostly office. As I grew up, it started becoming more of an office. There's other pictures where, you know, there's family and furniture and stuff, where we gather, every year, we gather on Christmas Eve, and there's a lot of pictures of that. Later on, there's going to be a, like a teller window, where these two windows are to the left, they ended up building a platform so that when the drivers would come in to pay their leases on on their cab lease, they would step up to that there, there was, like a podium that they Not a podium, but a platform, and they had it covered, and it was a big teller window for security purposes. They would slide, slide it in, just like a like a bank, slide their leases there, and then those polls are. It was a Reagan sign, like one of those big billboards. And, in fact, I don't know what, what the deal was with that that it's still there to this day. Uh, drove my dad somewhere the other day, and we glad story, because, God, everything looks so different. As I remember that sign being so big all the time and very prominent, and now you can barely see it. Our house was further to the left. It's not in this picture, but there's other other shots of it. There was this, this look at the time looks like it was probably like gravel. It ultimately ended up in

the front of where we're standing, there being all concrete at one point, for the dry, for the all the cars and taxis that would come in, in and out, but our house was further to the back, like on an adjacent property. But nobody, I don't remember. Remember anyone living in that big house, besides my grandfather. I know my uncles would come and go. As you know, one of my uncles was in the in Vietnam, so he wasn't really there. And then my other uncle, that's around his age, I remember him living there growing up. I remember, I think, he got hurt one time, and his teacher drove him home on crutches. I remember him, him, you know, being young and living there. But I don't remember, like, I kind of have, like flashback, little memories of different time periods of like, well, who really lived there? I just remember, like, my grandfather, his room was, like his bedroom, and then he had, like, a, I guess, like a living area where he did a lot of business, and, you know, upstairs.

Brittany Mendez 48:26

So, okay, so basically, this is you and Roy in front of what you guys called The Big House, the big house that basically were the taxi operation. Yes, okay,

Teresa Velasquez 48:38

that's actually the side entrance to the house.

Brittany Mendez 48:45

And what did you say the address was, or

Teresa Velasquez 48:49

like the 9 zero East Avenue.

Brittany Mendez 48:53

Nine zero East Avenue?

Teresa Velasquez 49:02

Yeah. When we got wind that they were going to be knocking that house down, my dad and I went, and he got me the the numbers 9 , 0 off the house, so I still have the 9, 0 little numbers. And this is my brother and I with my uncle, Carlos. I

49:24

I see, I think that's Carlos.

Teresa Velasquez 49:31

Carlos or Bobby? Yeah, I think I'm pretty sure it's my uncle Carlos.

Brittany Mendez 49:39

What is Carlos' last name,

Teresa Velasquez 49:41

Velasquez, one of my dad's brothers. He had 11 brothers and sisters, so there were a lot of them. And

Brittany Mendez 49:47

this is basically the same area, uh huh.

Teresa Velasquez 49:55

And you could see the little house in the back there, the little you. Yeah, that was, that was for my cousins. My uncle, Gilbert and his family lived there. His wife, Doris, and they had, at the time, I think they had four kids. It was just three rooms in that house. It was probably a bedroom, a kitchen and a living room, very tiny area. And when my aunt had the young or the other youngest, Sharon, they moved to Holly Street, which was the house where that my uncle was born and my dad was born, and my aunt Mary and the top half of the 11 kids, they were born on Holly street, but that later became my uncle, Richard and his family moved into that house after Gilbert moved out, after Richard came back from Vietnam, he married, and he and his family lived there. And then, after Richard moved out, my mom, when I was in high school, my mom went into the floral business, and it became my mom's floral shop, Marie's florist, and that was my job, and my I could believe my, oh, my senior year, or maybe junior or senior year, and my mom had a flower shop, and that was my job. I would get out of school early and come and work in my mom's flower shop there. And then gradually the garage is part of that same structure where they would work on the cars there to the left. It was kind of a long, long field. Little by little, the garage kept extending and took over. And then after my mom closed her shop up. I guess it all became a part of the garage.

Brittany Mendez 51:46

Were you close to your uncle, Carlos at all? Or no?

Teresa Velasquez 51:48

Oh, yeah, he actually lived right downstairs, because, like, I'll show him a little bit one of the other pictures, we lived upstairs, and he lived downstairs, so I was always real close to him. He ended up being becoming involved with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and I did some work with him when I was in high school. And he had a TV show "Austin Presenta", and it was always real active and in in the community, and I think he and my, my Uncle Bobby, they, they still work on the radio a whole lot in the weekends. Do radio programming.

Brittany Mendez 52:34

Is this a picture referring to or no,

Teresa Velasquez 52:36

This is a no. That's a different picture. That's actually my house on Rainey Street, before I moved there that my my my dad and his brothers ended up purchasing this property that was 91 Rainey Street, and it was a one house, and they converted it, remodeled it, and made it into a duplex. And when I got married in 1983 I moved into this house, into the A side which would have been the opposite side of this picture, which in this in this property, is directly behind where my parents lived.

Brittany Mendez 53:18

Okay, yeah, who this is in the picture. I

Teresa Velasquez 53:20

don't trying to see who that is. I can't, I don't know who that is. So

Brittany Mendez 53:28

basically, your dad purchased this, and it was just kind of there for a while, and then you moved in later on.

Teresa Velasquez 53:35

Yeah, they were, they worked on it. They remodeled, they they completely refinished the floors. I had new cabinets redid the bathroom. It had a one of those claw foot tubs, I remember, and I was always used to taking a shower, so I had them take out the tub and put a shower in. But yeah, I I did move in there till 19, probably 1993 94 after I got married, and I think I ran across the papers when I pulled out yesterday, my rent was \$350 a month.

54:16

Oh, my God, this

Brittany Mendez 54:19

was directly behind your parents home. Correct, yes,

Teresa Velasquez 54:23

it was an alleyway that separated. Yeah,

Brittany Mendez 54:29

okay, one second i

54:40

Hmm, ok we have this.

Teresa Velasquez 54:47

That's my parents. This would have been my Aunt Mary's God, well, did she turn I don't know if it has a date, my would have been my Aunt Mary's birthday party was at a hotel here, I believe, the called the Omni, the hotel here at Ben White and I 35 my mom was very sick. This was during the time my mom was battling cancer, and I remember she was very sick that night, and this my brother Roy on the far left, and my dad, Roy, Roy, Roy, my mom, myself, and my younger brother, Steven,

Brittany Mendez 55:46

wait, it was three. Your mom's name was Trini. I'm sorry. Your mother's name was oh,

Teresa Velasquez 55:54

they called her Marie, but her name's Jean.

Brittany Mendez 56:03

Oh yeah, It's j, e, a n, uh huh, Steven or Steve.

Teresa Velasquez 56:16

His name is Steven, but he goes by Steve. Actually he goes by coach.

Brittany Mendez 56:28

They have this

Teresa Velasquez 56:30

now this, there's a lot of pictures that are very similar to this, the little girl in the green dress. That's my daughter, Sophia. This is the Velasquez Christmas parties, okay, at the big house every year. As long as I can remember, on Christmas Eve, we would all gather that was one of the only days of the entire the entire year that my grandfather, big Roy, would be off. You know, he was in his business with the Roy's taxi, and so it was a customary thing that we all knew we would gather at the Big House on Christmas Eve. But as the family grew, this was like the third generation here in this picture, as the family grew, we outgrew the house, so we started having it at hotels and different locations, trying to figure out where this one was. I don't recall, but I'm assuming it was at a maybe a hotel, and we would give gifts to all the kids you'll see in some of the other pictures. At like outrageous. I think I have 26, or something, first cousins this, and the little boy in the red vest, that's my nephew Roy, Roy the fourth. And then the girl in the back in the red, the the bigger girl. That's my little cousin, Gabriella Ramirez. She actually is the Secretary to one of the associate superintendents with the school district. She ended up getting a job at the school district. So she works for AISD, the girl in the white that's my niece, Candice, the one that's a doctor now that played softball in college.

Brittany Mendez 58:25

Wow, that's crazy. You guys...

Teresa Velasquez 58:29

My daughter here in the green she's in her fourth year as a teacher. She works at Oak Springs Elementary School, teaching pre k3 Wow. Mm, and I can't place you this, I'd say the little guy in the front here trying to place who that is. Again, these are more of the kids. I can't place who that kid is.

58:58

Oh, it's okay, yeah,

Teresa Velasquez 59:01

I can't, I can't place them. These are, again, another, another year. This is another year. That's Candice, and that's probably, I think, little Roy. Then that's next on the left of her, that's Nicholas Longoria, my cousin's son, oldest son. He graduated from university. He has his own band now. And then those two boys next to him, those are his brothers. And then that's my uncle, Bobby at the DJ stand. He does, He He's always loved music. He's, he's, he's his name is Robert, but we everybody calls him Bobby. He has a program on Spanish radio on Saturday mornings.

59:53

Wow. Yeah.

Teresa Velasquez 1:00:00

That looks like my office, and that's my office. I don't know why that picture is in here

Brittany Mendez 1:00:11

your office when you were

Teresa Velasquez 1:00:13

a parent educator at Allen, I

1:00:21

don't like that

Brittany Mendez 1:00:27

is Allen elementary school.

Teresa Velasquez 1:00:30

It was an elementary

Brittany Mendez 1:00:35

in Austin. Yes, I

Teresa Velasquez 1:00:45

when I would do programming with parents like this chart looks like some kind of health health pyramid, working with parents on teaching them, you know, giving proportionate foods to their children. And then we'd often do books like they would we would work with, I would work with public education, TV, what is it? PBS, and they would sponsor books and book series where we would come in and do manipulatives and different kind of activities, and then they would get a book for every time, every session they would come to. The parents could build their home libraries with the books that we were given.

Brittany Mendez 1:01:35

Wow. What... What do you know? What year this would have been when?

Teresa Velasquez 1:01:41

let's see. I started working in probably the 90s. My daughter, 96 maybe 97 early 90 late 90s. Yeah, because I took this job over in 1996 that's my dad. He's the eldest of the Velasquez brothers. They're five boys. They've lost one last year, Gilbert, the middle one. My dad's my dad's 88 now that's what I do now. I'm his primary caregiver.

Brittany Mendez 1:02:25

How would you describe your dad? And also, like, we haven't really touched base about, like, Roy's taxis and stuff. You could tell me, like, about that, and like, I don't know your dad running a taxi business and stuff like that. No.

Teresa Velasquez 1:02:39

So actually, in 1931 my grandfather started Roy's taxi. He was having trouble, you know, helping to support his family. He worked in McNeil, in God, of course, my mind goes blank. Anyway, the lime limestone business, and anyway, he wanted to help provide and support his family. He was the eldest of the boys and his family, and he ended up at the at that time, there was a lot of discrimination, and Mexican Americans were not allowed to ride and be transported in taxis up to a certain point, or, I don't know if they weren't allowed at all at the time, but he got the idea to maybe start a business. So he had purchased a vehicle, believe it was a 1928 model A Ford. And he went to inquire about what it would take to start a business. And he went to a friend and borrowed \$5 and I believe \$2 or \$3 I get the story confused for the permit, and then the rest was for the gasoline. So he started up his Roy's taxicab business in 1931 he would pick up a lot of people at the trolley stop, which was, I guess, at six and Near East Sixth Street, which was that was the end of the line. But a lot of times on rainy days, people had to get to work. So he would, you know, pick them up. Pile, however many people, he could pile into the car and take them and get them to where they needed to go. And within a year, a story goes, I believe he had like, 35 cabs under his wing, and the business just grew and grew. And in 19, oh, let's see, I'm sorry, and 2000 God, of course, it all left me. Anyway, he was in business for over 75 years. At the 50th year, we celebrated at the Irwin Center, which is now gone, but they had a huge, huge celebration acknowledging the 50th anniversary of the cab business. And this was a man that only achieved education up to second grade. He ended up becoming very involved in politics, as he became, you know, such a inspiring businessman. Even though he didn't have the schooling he he was bright, he he had a lot of determination. And he is, there's some of these oral histories on him as well. And he always talks about like, you know, they asked him why he did that, and he said, Well, I had a family to feed, and when you're hungry, you do what you have to do. And so he helped, you know, support his siblings, and over the years, you know, got married and had 11 children of his own, and, you know, just really encouraged his family to pursue and provide, you know, the the core family values and and, you know, just like I said, he not only had the the taxicab business. He invested his money wisely. He invested in many properties the family ended up having, and then he went into the night club business. He tells the story, and it's funny to hear him, he's like, Yeah, my sons were always going out and spending three or \$400 a night on the weekends. He goes, I figured they might as well keep it in the family. So he bought, he purchased a nightclub in Maxwell, Texas, which is out in the middle of nowhere, and called the Capricorn ballroom. And the Capricorn my my grandfather was, you know, his birthday is January six. So that was the name he gave it because, you know, it symbolized, you know, his astrological sign. And they had a, like, a mural on the dance floor, I remember, and it was painted in, like, was it neon paint of all the, all the background of Capricorn in the back. But, you know my dad, and I'm sure his his siblings, his brothers, ran that that nightclub, they would, you know, secure bands. My uncles were music promoters, and they would get bands and come and play on the weekends and run the bar and sell the beer, and you know, all of our parties, all of our family parties, you know, our quinceneras. And yet, as they were all there. My my quinceanera, you know, was at the Capricorn. My cousin Jeanette, her quinceanera was there. My cousin Judy's quincenera, my Uncle Bobby, got married there. So it was like, you know, place where, you know, the family all gathered. We had special events. And then later, years later, he bought another property in Troy, Texas, which is just the other side of or just the side of Temple, or just the other side of Temple, a huge, huge property, and my uncle Carlos primarily operated that one. But again, another night club. And you know, just stayed in business, and, you know, just kept on going. But due to his health declining, trying to remember the

year when it started becoming more difficult, my grandfather had diabetes, and as a result of it, they had to amputate one of his legs, and then he lost his eyesight. He was, I believe, 72 when he passed away. But it was, it was very difficult at the time that he had to pass the, you know, the business over to the boys, because they were the ones primarily renting it. Of course, he had this the final say, he was always upstairs. And you know, he knew what was going on the money, who he knew, everything you know. But little by little, we all started, you know, having jobs at work, either we worked in dispatching or answering the telephones. I started working answering the telephones at one point, and then later on, as I grew older, I worked in the office alongside my Aunt Mary, who was the office manager that would collect all the payments of the leases people that lease, the businesses that own their cars on their own. They would come every Tuesday and pay their leases, and I would go make the deposits, and then also manage the rental properties and people that can pay their rents on the other properties that that was owned by the family. So, yeah, they, you know, they had a board, you know, they were all elected, you know, President, Vice President, they alternate year after year, having their turn at treasure or or secretary, you know, with the different businesses that they would deal with or with banks and to keep the business running afloat, they ended up becoming their own insurance. They were self self insured. So there was a lot of negotiation, and, you know, daily business dealing with that over the time that I was working there, but my dad's primary efforts were primarily keeping the the vehicles running. He was a mechanic. He had served in the Air Force, actually, when I was born, he was in the United States Air Force, but after that, he ended up having his own taxi rent. He operated a taxi cab, as did all my other uncles, but at one point he he was the mechanic that kept up the vehicles, and that's where my brother that I mentioned, that ended up working for Travis County. He also learned, alongside my dad, working on the cars. You know? So he, I don't recall. He my dad, he , He ended up attending some classes at ACC and when he was stationed in Sherman, and I believe, in Fort Worth, at some time when he was in the Air Force, he started taking classes at TCU as well. So he, you know, has a couple, I think he has a associate's degree in college, and not sure if any of my uncle, Richard, I believe, finished college after he was in the in the Marines. He served in Vietnam, but yeah, all the other ones. They went off to other ventures. Michael Gilbert, he owned a restaurant, Gilberto restaurant, and on East First Street and East Seventh Street and Carlos, like I said, he was involved with the Hispanic chamber. And then Bobby. Bobby always worked at the IRS for many years until he retired. So they had jobs outside of the family business, but they were always really tied to, you know, maintaining the upkeep of keeping the family business running. But as they were aging. It was harder because of, you know, the time of, you know, people getting lawsuit happy, it was harder to to keep things afloat. And so trying to think what year they closed, I had the little, there's a little, a little thing that I brought the little statue of when they closed. I can't remember the top of my head right now going blank of when they they sold out. They sold out to yellow cab and stepped away from the business because their health was declining. And I always thought it was interesting that they had to get approval from the city to close their franchise. They, they, they, because it was a public transportation within the city, they had to petition the city to be able to sell their their own business, which I thought was weird, but they had to get permission. But I remember going that night, there was a lot of opposition, because it meant putting a lot of people out of work, and though, so there was a lot of up to, what is it? Um, a lot of people opposing it, specifically the taxicab drivers and then some customers as well, because it left them, well, well, who's going to get me to work? And this and that, and it was taking away a service to them. But what I wrote in my note, I had wanted to speak that night, but my jitters got to me. I just wasn't I said, Well, you know, they need to think about all the effort and time that that, you know, my

father and his brothers have put, you know, they put their life on hold to doing this day in and day out. You know, it was a time where it was their time to enjoy and live life within their own immediate family. So I didn't have to read it, thank God, but it got approved and they sold and, you know, were able to enjoy retirement. You know, it was just, it was taking a lot, it took a lot of time away. But you know, after retirement, you know, he and my mom, like I said, they enjoyed time in their RV. They got involved with getting involved in loving conjunto music. So they would, they met friends, and they started a group, and they would go to conjunto festivals throughout the state of Texas, and they had a lot of friends from other places like Chicago and California. And, you know, really developed some really, really good friendships with all these people. And I'm very grateful that you. You know, before my mom passed, that he and I'm she and my mom, she and my dad got to enjoy, you know, those years together and travel and and, you know, be with their friends. Wow, yeah, um, you know, and my dad's still active, I would take him to my niece's games when he can, and and it's, it's not always easy. Like I wanted to take him the other night to Austin high to the basketball game, but I knew the gym was on the second floor because I went to Austin High, and I didn't know how accessible it would be for him. So he ended up staying home that night. But he would have loved to go. He tries to stay as active as he can. But again, you know, as you know, get up in age, your body doesn't always do everything you wanted to do. So, yeah, yeah.

Brittany Mendez 1:15:48

So, if I understood correctly, so your father, he was the eldest brother, and basically, he worked as a mechanic at his father's taxi, yes, and so I guess, like whenever you were at Palm school, he was doing mechanic stuff correct?

Teresa Velasquez 1:16:13

And driving and driving a cab. He would also drive a cab. I remember he probably was driving when I was in elementary school, but I know specifically, when I was in junior high, he would drive me to school, to Martin. I remember, on the first day of school when I started sixth grade, I didn't want to pull up in a cab. I was embarrassed, and like, God, you know, nobody's going to come in and taxi. So I said, I'll pick up, pick up Judy and Judy and Jeanette, my cousins. They lived on holly street, so of course, you know, they were further out of the way, so he picked them up, and then he got stopped. You know, the speed the school zone, and he's, we're not picking them up anymore. He was all mad at me because he, he said it was my fault that I made him go out of the way. But no, after that, after that, I would tell him, just drop me off at the corner.

Brittany Mendez 1:17:06

Well, so, well, so basically, like, you know, when you're in elementary your mom was very involved. Your dad was doing the fixing taxis, and I um, did your dad ever attend any of your, like, square dancing stuff or anything like that?

Teresa Velasquez 1:17:34

Um, don't recall him going going, but he was always very supportive, you know, like, you know, as long as my mom was with us, like that was one thing, like, we couldn't do anything else my mother, you know, my mom was with us. So yeah, and like I said, he was always busy working to be able to provide, you know, for us. So and my dad, you know, even to this day, he prays every day, twice a day.

He has a lot of faith. He's very, very he was very involved for over 30 something years as a Usher at church at Guadalupe, Our Lady of Guadalupe, and that's actually where he went to school. Him in the upper half of the of the 11 brothers and sisters attended school at Our Lady of Guadalupe. So he has a very strong connection to the church, and I remember him being the one that like taught me how to pray and instilled a lot of faith in in and in me and, you know, staying connected to the church. We kind of separated a little bit from the church during COVID, because, because of his safety, health wise, and mine as well, were immuno compromised, the both of us. So it was very hard to, you know, risk being exposed. And we kind of just, you know, because of health and and the physical mobility of, you know, getting in and out, it just, we just kind of fizzled out and going, which I know he would love to go every, you know, every week, but I just, I just still have the fear, especially now it's coming back again, all the illness and the flu and so forth. But he has a channel that he reaches out to. I was, we were very grateful they were doing it, you know, like zoom, you know, the church on Zoom, we were able to stay connected. And then that kind of stopped. And then I think my cousin is a Eucharistic minister was it was even bringing him communion to the house at one time. But you know now, he just relies on watching it on TV, a local channel that, or I don't know what channel, but he watches mass on on TV, and stays connected and does his prayers every day, and then our family. As a whole. In 2012 my aunt passed. One of my aunts passed away. My aunt Isabelle, Uncle Richard's wife from cancer. And after that, we started doing monthly family rosaries, where we would pray The Get together at different people's houses and pray the rosary and then come together and fellowship and have a meal. And we did that for years, for years, and when COVID came around, we were still doing it even virtually, you know, coming together, and it kind of just fizzled. And now, you know, we try to do it like on special occasion or somebody's going through something. We'll, we'll call, you know, rosary, but we're not doing it like we, you know, like we had been for so many years. And again, it was a time for us coming together and connecting, because these were guys, you know, my my dad and his brothers that saw each other. I every single day, almost their entire life, you know, being there part of running the business, and then when they sold, you know, everybody kind of went their own way in their own homes. And this was a way of bringing them back together at least once a month and reconnecting, which I thought it was very good and and also passing it on to our younger, you know, younger generations. Because everybody would come, even the kids, and get involved in, you know, praying. And then those that wanted to what volunteer to sign up to to pray a decade. You know, we all go around with our rosaries. And, you know, okay, whose doing one, whose doing two? You know, still, but like when we gather for our Christmas party, that's the first thing we do. And, you know, again, special occasions. Now, unfortunately, it's not, it's not like, like we were doing it on a regular basis. I don't know why these pictures are, what is no, I have no idea. That's probably my office again at the same. Parent handouts, yeah. Parent handouts, it's weird. That would have been Alan, yeah, recognize those pictures.

1:22:19

There's this picture?

Teresa Velasquez 1:22:23

Dang? Why are these pictures in here? I don't know. Anyway, that's a parent room. You know? Parent No, my all part of my office. God, my little refrigerator. I'm guessing it's Alan, microwave coffee. Yep, this part of my office

Brittany Mendez 1:22:48

was it just like a parent waiting room, a parent,

Teresa Velasquez 1:22:50

a parent. The parent room would be a place where parent volunteers would come in and they would pick up assignments, or I would have assignments in there given to me by classroom teachers say, if they had some projects to be laminated or copies to be made, parent volunteers would come and pick up the items and work in my class. That was a room where they could work and do do volunteer activities for their child's classroom or whatever teacher needed help. This was just a place where they would gather to do it, or where, if I had a parent educational event or a parent meeting, maybe a Friday parent coffee, this is the room where I would host that. So I was actually had my own classroom as a parent educator. Mm, hmm. Now this was at the Palmer auditorium. That's my grandfather there in the middle. And all this is one of the only pictures that I think exists of all 11 children. He would have a big party every year for his birthday. And I don't know how old he was in this this picture.

Brittany Mendez 1:24:05

So this was at Roy's B Day party,

Teresa Velasquez 1:24:08

Roy senior's birthday party at the

Brittany Mendez 1:24:10

Parmer auditorium. This is all of his, all the

Teresa Velasquez 1:24:17

all the kids, all his children, his children.

1:24:27

Well,

Teresa Velasquez 1:24:29

yeah, so the one on the far left is my aunt Mary, Who's the oldest the far left on the end, oh,

Brittany Mendez 1:24:40

so not right here in the yellow dress,

Teresa Velasquez 1:24:42

that one, yes, that's Mary. And then Anabelle. Her name is Amparo. And then Carmen. Carmen said the green dress. And then Esther, Mary has passed away. Almost all the girls are gone. There's only two living Esther has passed in the pink dress, and then Rosie, she's passed. And then Clara is the one right behind him. She passed. Clara, she passed a long time ago, and then Gilbert, he's the only brother that has passed, and then my dad, Roy, and then Bobby is the youngest. And then Richard, wait, Richard, and then Carlos.

Brittany Mendez 1:25:58

Wow, did I spell their names correctly?

Teresa Velasquez 1:26:01

Oh, I don't know where you're writing them. Oh, I guess you can see that. So Mary and Anna Bell is not spelled right? I don't even know how to spell just put on Paro, A M, P, A R O,

Brittany Mendez 1:26:19

A M, P, R O,

Teresa Velasquez 1:26:21

A ,M, P, A R O, Amparo. Carmen, Esther, Rosie, Clara, Gilbert, Roy, yeah,

Brittany Mendez 1:26:37

so he would always have a really big party for his birthday.

Teresa Velasquez 1:26:43

Oh, and you forgot my grandfather in the picture, Roy junior, and Roy on this on the kids would be Roy Junior, my dad, I

1:27:11

Yeah.

1:27:20

January, 1971

Teresa Velasquez 1:27:26

Oh, it says it on there,

Brittany Mendez 1:27:27

yeah, I just can't read. I can't read the bottom part. It says,

Teresa Velasquez 1:27:36

oh, maybe it was the Commodore Perry Hotel. Oh, maybe that's what or that That party was. I always thought it was the auditorium. Maybe was the Commodore Perry that that looks like what it says on the back my door. I don't

Brittany Mendez 1:27:56

know how to spell that, but I'll look that up later. I

Teresa Velasquez 1:28:03

yeah, that's my mom. Oh, that's your mom. That's my mom. And that's probably a school picture she took when she worked at Allen, does that have the air there on the side? Yes,

Brittany Mendez 1:28:23

I believe it says 1987

Teresa Velasquez 1:28:25

it's probably about right,

Brittany Mendez 1:28:27

is that when she was also a parent,

Teresa Velasquez 1:28:32

she was a parent, her position was that that same position has changed names a zillion times, but I think when she was doing it was called parent training specialists, but basically it's a parent educator.

Brittany Mendez 1:28:55

So is this the role that you basically like you are you now? Are working as what your mother was?

Teresa Velasquez 1:29:03

Well, I when I before I retired, yes, yeah, I applied for her job. When she retired, she was one of the original parent training specialists. Well, they were called in the beginning. They were called community representatives, but they were primarily at the I believe it was 16 Title One schools, and those were the those campuses with the higher percentage of lower socioeconomic background students, which she was one of the original, one of the original parent educators at the time.

Brittany Mendez 1:29:47

Do you ever, do you remember, like, did your mom ever talk to you about work and like, what it was like for her or anything like that? Oh,

Teresa Velasquez 1:29:55

I was always alongside her every time because I was working already as a teacher assistant. So any, any opportunities she went to for training, I always traveled and went with her, attended, so that I could get that background, because of my interest with the education system and meetings, parent meetings. They had these meetings called the parent advisor councils, which was part of the title one initiative. They had to get parent involvement and parent voice to policies regarding the funding for those programming. So they would get parents to go and attend these meetings monthly. And so I would go. I probably was like the child care provider, if I, if I, if I can. You know, line, line, my ducks up. I probably was hired as a little extra person there to watch the children while the parents and the parent educators were, you know, having their meetings. Because I remember always being a part of, you know, going to these or knowing of them.

Brittany Mendez 1:30:59

That's so cool that you that you didn't even bomb did and whatnot.

Teresa Velasquez 1:31:03

Yeah. This is Uncle Richard, my cousin Craig, Richard, Craig, and that's Mario. This is the inside the big house. These are the stairs my grandfather would come down because, like I said, His room was upstairs, and at Christmas time, we were so many there. There were like two adjoining rooms. They had those, like French doors, and this was like the the front entrance to the main entrance of the house, and the little stairway this came into that front little room. And there was also a little stair part that went back in the back side, into the kitchen, and then there on the left, those stairs will go up to my grandfather's room. And this was a Christmas gathering where we're waiting, a waiting, probably grandpa to start passing out all the presents. That's Mario, the one in the red. His daughter actually graduated from University. His older daughter graduated from University of Texas, and she actually I was when I went to the meeting, she probably went in that same building. Her degree was radio, television and film. And she now lives in New York, and she has a lot of interest in Broadway and working, you know, working in New York. And the guy behind him, behind Mario, the one the red, the guy behind him, that's my cousin Chuck. His son, is a Baptist minister in Fort Worth and, oh, and I forgot Mario's other daughter, he has another day he has two daughters. Mario's other daughter is a freshman at Penn State. So like this, next gen, like this, next generation coming up, all of these kids are wanting to go off to college, which was something like, remember I talked about, like, back when our parents didn't want us to go away because the fear of the unknown or whatever, and now it's like everybody wants to leave the state and go go elsewhere. So he, his oldest daughter is living in New York, and his youngest daughter is at Penn State. And then Craig, Craig Craig has two boys, and one is pursuing, I believe his masters at SMU right now, and his younger son graduated from Texas State. So like this whole generation of these kids, these, like my cousins, all of our kids are as many of them as I can think, are all college educated? Wow, yeah, I wrote a little, a little blurb this year. I was trying to do a little something special at Christmas time about the family. And, God, I wish I could know where it was. Don't think I saved it. But anyway, it was something to the extent of how amazed grandpa Roy would be in where his legacy is now, of all the kids that have pursued or gone on or are pursuing careers in different things, like, you know, radio, television and film, ministry, education, engineering. I have another cousin living in upstate New York. He's an engineer. My nephew's there in New York. Also he's working with the stocks. You know he's, he's ut business. What is it? A MBA at University of Texas, and now he's living in New York and working in New York with the stock market. His sister is a doctor. It's just amazing that from a man that I. I only achieved a second grade education where his grandchildren are now, his great grandchildren. Yeah, it's just, it just amazes me. No, my niece, my niece, Malia, will be attending University of Arkansas, and she wants to study psychology. So it's, it's just, it's, it just amazes me.

Brittany Mendez 1:35:36

No, yeah, that really is something like, Mm

Speaker 1 1:35:40

hmm. And

Teresa Velasquez 1:35:44

the boy in the middle there, you can only see half of his face, his kids, his son. These are Carlos. That's Carlos, his only son, Chuck. And his son is a minister, and his daughter just graduated. I'll be OK. Oklahoma Baptist University, os always OSU or something anyway, but I believe her background is

going to be also in in psychology or something like that. Just, it just amazes me. Oh, and how close the kids are. Like this generation, they're all There's pictures of Chuck and Craig and Steve and my brother and Mario every year. For some reason they all gather to take a picture, and now their kids all take pictures together, like it. It's neat to see them. You know the bonds that because the cousins make with each other, even though they don't see each other a lot. Now this, this actually was a picture somebody gave me, I think, on the back side. These are the people that own 90 East Avenue before my grandfather bought it. This is the front of the house. Yeah, Fred and Ofelia Adams, 90 East Avenue. They were, I guess, the owners of the house prior to my grandfather purchasing it. And I have a picture of my grandfather sitting in that exact same bench there. Like, those are, like, part of the house, the steps. And then I remember, in fifth grade, I took a picture there too. So I have a picture of me sitting in that same spot. This was one of the Christmas those are a lot of those Christmas pictures.

Brittany Mendez 1:37:42

I trying to see if that picture was in here that you were talking about. Oh, let's see where were we.

Teresa Velasquez 1:37:57

This was, again, this was on East Avenue. That's the girl, the the one where she's a little girl, and the other picture Gabbie, Gabriella. That's her in the red that now works for this. AISD, and that's her mother, Denise. She's married to my cousin, Julius. She she ended up becoming a parent educator also, and she works for del Valley School District, but now I believe she's like more of an administrator. She works with the administration office, and then this is on the left of her. That's my cousin Raymon. Raymon Vallejo, it's my Aunt Anabels son, Grace, Phil, V, A, double, L, E, J, O,

Brittany Mendez 1:38:52

la Hill, is this just like another holiday Christmas party?

Teresa Velasquez 1:38:56

Yeah, it's just a Christmas gathering that it's probably Christmas Eve at the big house and that that sign in the back makes you think the when I worked during the time I worked at Allen, I'm sure Roy's taxi was probably an adopter, like you have adopt a school. I'm not sure if you're familiar with businesses that partner with the school district or a particular school to help sponsor different events anyway, as a way of giving that as a gratitude the school would, you know, acknowledge the business, and I know this particular sign was made by a teacher that I worked with at Allen, giving thanks to something. I guess the Roy Taxis donated something to us at the school, and this was a sign that I know John Reyes. He was a teacher that I worked with when I was a teacher assistant. He was very crafty. And I tell him when we would jump around, yeah, when you were little, all you had to play with was scissors and tape and a stapler, because he's very crafty. So I was amazed how quick he put those pin, set us together, just cutting paper, and next thing you know, he stapled, and it was a poinsettia, yeah, but I know there's a lot of these kind of pictures, and that's my mom. Actually, that's her with she was probably doing a presentation. I recognize that book very, very well. It's a hunger Caterpillar, because I use that same book way later on, years later, she was probably doing a parent workshop for the Hungry Caterpillar. I

Brittany Mendez 1:40:44

do you know where she's at?

Teresa Velasquez 1:40:47

No, at least,

Brittany Mendez 1:40:50

was this probably like in the 80s too? Um,

Teresa Velasquez 1:40:52

let's see No. Um, probably was earlier, either way, late, late, uh, hold that other picture the way late 80s or early 90s. Yeah, that might have been like a library or something. Sometimes we would do those parent meetings at libraries, as I see a plant might have been somewhere in our office. I don't know. Don't recognize it. I That little boy there in the strip, it on the left, that's Adam Tristan. Actually, he's now Dr Adam Tristan. He was a student at Allen Elementary School, and in fourth grade, he was my mentee , I was his mentor. He was running for school president. And, you know, they partnered students up with a with a staff person, and we were to help them, you know, get through and write, and they could read the read us their speeches before going, you know, in front of the whole class or grade level. And I remember this kid didn't need any help from me. Believe me, when he read me, he practiced reading his his speech. I was like, boy, you are ready to run for President, you don't need my help. But he I have this little mug that he gave me for thanking me for being his mentor. Anyway, he went on to pursue his his degree here at Texas State, and I went to his graduation here, when he graduated at Texas State, and I've stayed in contact with his mom, and his mom ended up becoming a parent, parent educator as well, years and years later, and he ended up going to get his doctorate at the University of Kentucky, and recently graduated with his doctorate. So he's now professor at the University of Kentucky, but we stay in touch, you know, with his mom. His brother is a well known local dis. What is that a DJ? Or what is that he performs? He's called the The Tejanoman, Chris the stone. That's his brother and his sisters, Lori, but, yeah, a little old Adam, but

Brittany Mendez 1:43:21

he was running for what, again, he

Teresa Velasquez 1:43:23

was probably running for class president. This was way earlier on that he was probably, like maybe second grade in this picture. But he was always a bright boy. He loved school. He was a I told him he was always going to be a professional student. And basically the he loves school. This kid loves school.

1:43:46

His parents.

Teresa Velasquez 1:43:47

His parents were, I mean, they were the top notch every day involved in school, every single day his mom and his dad would be at the school with whatever help we needed for parents to be involved. They were there. They, you know, helped set up the school carnival. They sold tickets. They helped sell, you know, with fundraisers. They were all whatever we needed. His mom and dad were always,

always involved. Unfortunately, he lost his dad. His dad was very young when he passed away. His dad was diagnosed with cancer, and he lost his father way early on. Real nice man.

Brittany Mendez 1:44:31

Do you know what they're holding in their hands?

Teresa Velasquez 1:44:36

I trying to see it looks like some kind of ticket of some sort.

1:44:47

I don't know it's okay.

Brittany Mendez 1:44:51

His last name. Do you know how to spell that?

Teresa Velasquez 1:44:53

T, R, I S, T, a n, okay. Tristan. I

Brittany Mendez 1:44:57

just wanted to make sure. Mm.

Teresa Velasquez 1:45:05

Yeah, oh, Dr Adam. And that's him again, right there. And that's his wall. That's him already grown. This was a Christmas program we had at the school. All, the all the classes performed, and we had a big, huge, like dinner. We would, I guess, we would sponsor and provide like the main course, like maybe turkey and dressing. And then I would assign every grade level to bring like side dishes, so the families would bring different things as according to the grade level their children were in. This is Linda in the red. That's That's Adam's mother, Linda Tristan, and then the guy in the middle, he was a computer teacher, Joel Amanza, Unfortunately, he passed away. He we would stay in touch over the years, but he was always role involved in after school programs as well, but they were huge events that we would have. I mean, literally, the entire school would come to Yeah, and Adam probably came back to volunteer. He could, obviously, he's not in elementary school. At this picture, when he came back to volunteer,

Brittany Mendez 1:46:35

was his mom working at the school then? Or No?

Teresa Velasquez 1:46:37

No, she was probably like I said, just volunteering. I do

Brittany Mendez 1:46:49

you know if Linda spells her name with an i or a, y,

Teresa Velasquez 1:46:54

I, I, N, D, A, Linda, and this isn't these are other parent, parent volunteers. And these actually these. This is Vicky Trevino, the first one on the left, I guess we were having tamales that time. And Dora Dora Rivera. These two ladies, they were parent volunteers, but they also by their volunteering efforts, they ultimately ended up getting jobs with the after school programming to help help enrichment programming for early about like the four year old kids. And there's a story with Vicky you have to tell Vicky Trevino, I would be involved in, in presenting at statewide parent involvement conferences, and they would be held different places, and I remember, think, mostly in Corpus. But anyway, I was wanted to to have Vicky come and share you know her, her perspective as a Hispanic woman, and what it has meant to her to you know now be employed with the school system as a result of her volunteer efforts, and share with other parents like importance of Getting involved with your kids, in other words, and how it could lead to opportunities for employment. And her husband didn't want to let her go. You know, again, that macho, no, "debes estar en la casa cocinando y planchando," and he didn't want to let her go. You know, she had four boys, and so I was like, I really want her to come and talk about, you know, again, how it has led her to having a paying opportunity as a result of her being involved as a volunteer. She didn't drive. She would come on the school bus. Again, we had to get special permission for her to even get to the school, because she would come on the bus with the kids. But anyway, so the the husband finally agreed to let her come, but it was a stipulation. And I remember this year specifically because I just had my daughter. It was 1996 um, he she could only go if she took one of the boys with her. So that was a stipulation. "si pero vas a tener que llevar uno de los muchachos" okay, then no problem. So that particular year, my mother had already retired, and I was taking my mom because I had just had a baby, so my mom was going to come so she could help watch Robert right the son, and my daughter, my my daughter, was an infant at the time. So it worked out. I was like, oh, okay, well, good, we'll bring him. Well, we included the son into the panel because the principal had also gone and some of the other teachers to do this presentation about volunteer opportunities and and talking more about our after school program. And so we put Robert up there. What, what is after school, and how has after school programming enriched his life? So again, the other kid gets up there and says, Oh, I get to have my mom here. And, you know, yeah, she comes on the bus with us, and, you know, yeah, she starts to go home and cook and, you know, iron and all that. But I feel safe because my mom's here all the time. And, you know, just whatever his perspective was. But every year thereafter, we would go on the same conference and probably do the same spill again and and, you know, from a different, you know, probably talking different things about the classes. I think so by the time the third kid came up, his his sharing was about how it helped him to get over his shyness, because at the time, we were doing programming with the something with the arts, with Zucker Scott theater, and he he was real interested in that class, but he wasn't one to Get out in front of the audience and and perform. But it he was like a stage hand, and anyway, it just, it was really neat, because it got, got him over his shyness. That's what the after school program gave to him. But after that, for some reason, I don't know what happened, we didn't end up the the last child never got to go. The fourth, the fourth brother didn't go. But every year it was like, no big deal after the first one, the dad was like, "okay, you know, I'll see y'all when y'all get back". But I remember it was a struggle to get him to let the wife go the first year. Yeah. Yeah. It was fun, funny, yeah, but we, we had a lot that we provided. And then this parent, this is Blanca Perez. She, she had very limited educational skills, but she had a heart of gold. She was so dependable, so dependable. I could ask this lady to show up at any meeting when I needed child care provided, and she'd be there. She'd go out of her way, even when I moved on to other schools, I would call her, "hey, you know, we're having this meeting. They need child care, child care provider". And I

knew she was already within the system, because she also had already been on payroll with the school system. And she'd drive, you know, like, like I said, if I went to Heart elementary from Allen, I went to Heart, you know, she'd drive all the way north and go help me out. Or, or if it was a Saturday morning, and we were having some other kind of special programming for something. And they, they would ask me, "Hey, do you have any parents that that are available to come and help us out?" I called Blanca, and she was so skilled by that time of her experience, she would even bring activities with her in a little box, you know, of materials, just things to do, like papers to color or games to play, like card games or whatever, just to entertain the kids she she got so skilled at her job, and again, her reliability, you know, all the the three of them, they God sent to me getting my job done. And Vicky actually helped a lot with I would, I would do the school newsletter. And you know, we were high predominantly Spanish speaking community, and my, my writing skills were not that great, but I would have Vicky be right there at my side, and I was like, "como transducir esto", and she would help me write this school newsletter. And, you know, it was just amazing that, you know, again, you they think they're getting so much from my opportunities that I helped them get. They don't know what they're giving me in return that they could never get my job done without their help. They would often, you know, make the copies or go hand them out to the teachers of you know, last minute notices say if there was no school tomorrow and we hadn't sent anything out, I mean, they'd hadn't walk all these notes at the last minute to to the classroom teachers or anything, anything dispersed, any kind of fundraiser we would be making, they would get it all out or come help me with anything. Oh, yeah, opportunities, oh yeah. Just great, great, great things. And like I said, you know, from the spread here, these are all things that, you know, whatever grade level was responsible for, desserts. I mean, they came through. You can tell, look at all the abundance of food, I mean, and literally, to feed the entire school and their families that we would have.

Brittany Mendez 1:54:46

Oh, wow, that's really cool though. Like, yeah,

Teresa Velasquez 1:54:49

I love my job. I loved it. I. This was probably one of my mom's this was the same classroom I ended up having, but they they partnered with a bank I know, and they would have, like a bank that was like an adoption partner of the school, where they would be able to open a bank account, and the kids could go and make deposits either weekly or monthly. And this was probably like a Christmas time where the bank people would come and do something special with the kids. Maybe that's what those little green papers were on the other picture. But these don't look like staff members that I recognize, so I'm sure maybe it was the the partnering.

Brittany Mendez 1:55:51

Was she just going inside a classroom?

Teresa Velasquez 1:55:53

Yeah, there's my mom in that picture there too. Yeah, they were probably going making rounds to the classrooms. Yeah, I'm recognizing how sharp a dresser my mother always was. I mean, she, she just always was all decked out. Her little brooch. Yeah, I now. This is back to the family. This is a family gathering trying to see that's that's at the big house. It's look, it looks like it's in part of the office. This is

my aunt Mary, and my cousin Ramon, his daughter, is the one that the basketball player from Austin High that's that's got accepted, like the number two student in the class. That's my Uncle Pete back there. That's my grandfather's one of his probably his youngest brother there. He lived on Holly Street as well. And then the one in the Red Hat, that was my cousin's. That's my cousin's former husband, Rudy. Rudy Longoria. He was married to my cousin Lisa. I now this, this is that's Willie Kasserick, and that's a parent volunteer. Her name was Geneva Govea she actually worked mostly with my mother. I remember talking about how my mom and myself push parents to be advocates for going to city council. This was a particular, probably a city council meeting where Geneva attended to seek out help with the either after school funding or that getting that bridge built. She ended up, she becoming, first she was a parent volunteer. She ended up later getting hired by the school district as well, and I think she still works, actually, at Sanchez Elementary School. I know she worked for many, many years with AISD.

Brittany Mendez 1:58:34

Do you know how to spell her name?

Teresa Velasquez 1:58:37

Geneva, G, E, N, E, V A, Geneva, what is there? I'll go via G O V E, A, go via Geneva. Govea.

Brittany Mendez 1:58:53

G O V A, word, sorry.

Teresa Velasquez 1:58:58

G O V, E, A, yeah, yeah. I'm sure it's different now, because she's been married a couple of times, but that was her maiden name.

Brittany Mendez 1:59:10

And then some people, who are these other people?

Teresa Velasquez 1:59:14

Again, that's Willie kasserick. I think was he mayor at one time? I I can't recognize that lady. I think he was mayor, and I don't know who that lady is. I I don't know how these pictures got in. Like, there's a lot of pictures of when my mom worked the this, what this would have been one of them. I don't know how they got mixed in with mine. My pictures, I.

Brittany Mendez 2:00:07

Do you know how to spell Willie's last name? Oh,

Teresa Velasquez 2:00:12

I just try looking right. Yeah, I kind of figure out it was he may or I know he used to have a commercial. He was a local businessman, but I he would come on on TV a lot. K O, sir, well, there's a school named after him, actually, kasrick. K, O, C, u, r, e, k Kocurek. Kocurek Elementary school is named after him. I,

Brittany Mendez 2:00:47

okay, and so this is they're basically at an event.

Teresa Velasquez 2:00:52

Yeah, I don't know where they're at. I was gonna say I thought it was city council, but they're holding balloons. I don't know why they would be holding balloons. You can take that picture out if you want. Like I said, I don't even know what that is. I

Brittany Mendez 2:01:30

Oh, here we are again.

Teresa Velasquez 2:01:34

Okay, maybe will. He wasn't the mayor, because I think this guy was the mayor. God, what was his name. This was the Mayor. There's my mom. There's Geneva, that that had to be some kind of city council thing. Yeah, I mean this, this really is just depicting, like, the parent leadership thing about encouraging parents to get involved in speaking up for their kids, like where they would go to city council and speak on behalf of whatever issue was coming up. Because I believe that man was the Mayor. I can't place his name, but that's Geneva and my mom. No, the other ones I recognize. Now we're back to Velasquez Christmas on East Avenue. That's my cousin Connie in and she's the eldest cousin of the first of you know my cousin. She's the eldest of all of us, and that's her daughter, Nicole. Now Nicole, her and her husband owned a local bar on six street called La Perla, it's one of the oldest. Wait, seriously, yeah, one of the oldest, the oldest bars left on East Sixth Street.

Brittany Mendez 2:03:14

I go there all the time. Yeah.

Teresa Velasquez 2:03:16

Yeah, she, her and her husband, Eddie. They own la Perla, Nicole.

Brittany Mendez 2:03:23

Wow that scares me. I was there like a day yeah, wow. Sorry, it's taking a little while.

Teresa Velasquez 2:03:41

This was again, Christmas gathering. This probably was at a hotel. That's my niece, Candace, in the black skirt, the doctor. And then I can't place little girl in the middle. I think she was my cut, my my aunts, step step daughter. Think her name is Crystal. And then my cousin Linda, this is my Uncle Pete's daughter, and she Oh, my God, she was like our little treasure. She had Down syndrome, and she passed away, oh God, about maybe three years ago, actually, during COVID, she she passed from COVID, and it was just so sad that she was just always the life of the party. I mean, she was ready to dance the minute the music came on. She was out there. And obviously, she's, she loved dancing. She was always on the dance floor. I have a little video clip of her dancing at my aunt's birthday party, and she's just all out there. She just loved to dance.

Brittany Mendez 2:04:45

So this is another,

Teresa Velasquez 2:04:47

yeah, Velasquez, Christmas. Oh, 12, well, 95 Yeah. Another Velasquez, another Velasquez Christmas.

2:05:07

Let's see.

Teresa Velasquez 2:05:11

This was at a hotel. I don't know which hotel. That's my stepson in the plaid shirt in the back, the taller one my stepson, Gian Carlo, and then my cousin Woody's son, we would have entertainers like this was a magic show, this guy we brought in to do magic with the kids. Or a balloon, maybe a balloon artist that looks like that. He was a balloon guy, cuz they the balloons in the kids hands.

Brittany Mendez 2:05:46

Wow. I feel like these Christmas parties were crazy. Yeah,

Teresa Velasquez 2:05:53

they were. They were, I mean, we go all out. When this was back at the house, this, this was probably the year my grandfather passed away, my uncle Gilbert's dressed as Santa Claus. And every year my grandfather would pass out, like the tree would be piled with gifts, and my grandfather would come down, and he'd start like everybody would gather around, like I said, it had adjoining rooms, and everybody knew, like, you better find a spot, because in a few minutes, a gift was going to be tossed across the room. So we would always, you know, shout, "Oh, Grandpa, grandpa, don't throw it. Don't throw it. It breaks. It breaks". And he'd holler out, "Well, you better catch it then", you know, or we tell him who, who the gift was for. And he had nicknames for all of us, and my brother, Steve. He called him moon face. So we tell him it's for Steven. Steven. He's trying to be thinking, okay, okay. He goes. And then we tell him, cara de luna, so, okay, okay, moon face. Better catch it, toss it out, you know. But it was always a lot of fun because that was just him, you know, he'd spark it up, you know, just the fun of us gathering around, you know, to enjoy Christmas. That's my cousin Sally. There the little girl. That's my Uncle Pete, my grandfather's youngest brother, my aunt Tony, and then this lady on the end in the white sleeved dress that was my grandfather's companion, or one of them, he was, he was, what is that? I don't know how to put it. He had, he had different women a lot, and this was one of his companions. Her name was Irma, yeah. See, oh, that's, that's a picture of him tossing the gift that one see how we we'd gather there was like adjoining rooms. That's my mom with the hands up in the green shirt with the wig on, and my grandfather's tossing a present. And my whoever that is next to my mom's tilting their head, because he would just toss the gifts everywhere. And my aunt Irene, that's Carlos' wife with the plaid pants. That's my cousin Judy in the chair with the red pants. And I think that looks like Irma next, yeah, next to my grandfather. And he loved red. He always either had a red robe or a red shirt. And if you could see, on his left hand, he was missing a couple of fingers. He had been involved in a dynamite explosion and lost his fingers at a very young age. And that, that hat he's wearing, that's a that's one of his trademarks, Stetson, LBJ brand, LBJ style Stetson hat. My dad has that same hat, or has that same one. And then my brothers, then now my cousin Jose. He's on the on the city council. He has taken up that, that same look of my grandfather wearing that, that same style hat. I'm trying to see who that is next to my mother, but I can't place who that is, although it looks like Connie, but, yeah,

that's just then she, you see the present flying right through my mom's hands. But this was like typical Christmas right there. Well, everybody's laughing in the picture. So this is at the big house. At the big house, I. I see all the gifts around. They would be piled just everywhere. That's Candice, my niece and Boomer. Oh, it's Boomer, what's his real name, Rudy, Rudy Velasquez, Rudy Estrada and Candice Velasquez. But look how high the gifts go on the side of the tree. Rudy or how we called him Boomer,

Brittany Mendez 2:10:41

with this, would would this have been at the big house?

Teresa Velasquez 2:10:49

Yes, it's probably one of the last years at the big house. Now, this was my parents 50th anniversary and my daughter's quinceanera. We didn't call it either or we called it a family Velasquez family celebration. That's all my immediate family. I my step son is missing, my step daughter is there with her daughter,

Brittany Mendez 2:11:29

Velasquez family celebration. Do you know what year this would have been, or where you guys were at?

Teresa Velasquez 2:11:35

Oh let's see. We headed at the See, was this a church that's Our Lady of Guadalupe church. And then we had a reception at at the Marriott got what year? See, she graduated in 2015 so it would have been what, three years before that, So 2012 or 2013 I think it was 2012 i Oh, now this okay. This is a LULAC, a junior LULAC meeting at my uncle Gilbert's restaurant, at the Gilbertos restaurant. My grandfather was, he was the founding member. He brought LULAC to Austin. LULAC had already existed, but he was a founding member of the local chapter of council 85 here in Austin. And we were always involved with LULAC. You know, my mom was a lady LULAC, or my dad was in the same Council as my grandfather. So we would go to the national and state conventions for LULAC. So we developed friendships with kids, you know, throughout the state. So they had talked to us about, oh yeah, their involvement with LULAC that, you know, we ought to make a group here. So we did. We formed a local chapter of the youth LULAC, and that looks like me leading a LULAC meeting, and I know it was there at my uncle's restaurant.

Brittany Mendez 2:13:30

So this is you right here, and it was his restaurant just called Gilbertos. Do you know what year this might have been

Teresa Velasquez 2:13:55

close to, like 1980, 81 somewhere around there. I now this is the Greater East Austin youth association down on river view and, oh, God, what's that street down by by town lake there the East Austin Youth League. And they ended up dedicating the whole Sports Complex and renamed it. There's another good picture of the sign. They renamed it to the Velasquez Youth Sports Complex in honor of my grandfather. That's my uncle Gilbert. My Uncle Bobby, you could see he's he ended up his his son played there, and he was coaching there at the time. My Uncle Carlos, my aunt Mary, and my dad, my

brother, my brothers both played there. My. Mary's son Woody, played there. Michael Gilbert's son Joseph, played there. And even as recently as, like a few years ago, my niece, that's now junior in high school, when she played little league, we have a picture of her playing with her gear next to the sign, the billboard sign, that's the complex. Yeah. So three generations have played at these fields.

Brittany Mendez 2:15:27

Oh, so from left to right. Can you tell me who's who? Again, sorry, Uncle Gilbert,

Teresa Velasquez 2:15:37

Uncle Bobby, Uncle Carlos, my aunt Mary and my dad, Roy Junior.

Brittany Mendez 2:15:51

And is everyone's last name, Velasquez.

Teresa Velasquez 2:15:52

Mary is Estrada. I I think just my uncle Richard's missing from this picture, as far as the brothers go, I now this is the year, probably that my grandfather passed away, that my where my uncles dressed up as Santa Claus. My dad helped pass out the presents, and we try to continue the tradition of tossing. You can see the the gift flying over here on the right, where my my dad. That's me in the white dress behind my dad. I'm reading the names off of who the gift is and handing it to my dad, and he's tossing them out to everybody. So between him and my uncle Gilbert, they kind of took over the tradition of passing the gifts out.

Brittany Mendez 2:16:58

Is this also at the big house?

Teresa Velasquez 2:17:01

Yes, yes, I have a call coming I'm trying to hang it up. Oh, wait What? What happened? Okay, there you are. Now. This is a LULAC. Oh, God, what do we have here? This was Linda Gail White, uh, right. Her husband was Mark White, I guess he was governor, I think. And we're doing some kind of LULAC activity here with the youth LULAC there on the far left, my friend Paul Magianus, I guess he was representing our council there on the on the panel. But again, that was a state level of involvement with our youth LULAC group. We hosted, we actually were on the committee to host a state LULAC convention here in Austin, back, I guess, probably I don't know 8081 at the Hilton over by Holland Mall. So we were very involved in coordinating, like, breakout sessions, and, you know, getting what is that? Activities planned for our guests that we're coming from all over the state?

Brittany Mendez 2:18:40

uh, so this was at the Hilton Hotel,

Teresa Velasquez 2:18:48

uh, probably

Brittany Mendez 2:18:52

for a junior LULAC.

Teresa Velasquez 2:18:55

It was for a state LULAC convention,

2:19:01

state and Austin, Excel news.

Brittany Mendez 2:19:15

But this was specifically like for the youth correct?

Teresa Velasquez 2:19:18

this this session was for the for the youth.

Brittany Mendez 2:19:24

And her name was Linda Gail white?

Teresa Velasquez 2:19:27

Yes, she was the governor's wife Mark. Mark White was her husband.

Brittany Mendez 2:19:42

Oh, so what was your and how was your involvement in the you LULAC chapter.

Teresa Velasquez 2:19:50

This is Paul and I. This is on the House chamber. That was one of the breakout activities, I guess, that we did during that time. We took I guess, invited some of the kids that had come to go and actually sit on the on the House floor, just to show, you know, how they vote and and, you know, the little buttons and the seating, how it is in there. And this was a picture taken of Paul and I during that and he and I were best. I mean, just best of friends. I lost him when I was pregnant of my daughter, and he has a twin brother. And when I was getting divorced, his twin brother, just like, knocked at my door one day, and we have been, you know, as close as Paul and I were, and to this day, every time I go to the cemetery, I go and visit his grave and change flowers. Me and his brother try to meet there on a monthly basis. And, you know, fix the flowers up.

Brittany Mendez 2:20:52

How did, how do you spell Paul's last name? Oh,

Teresa Velasquez 2:20:55

God, M, A, G, A, L, L, E N, E, Z. Maka yanas,

Brittany Mendez 2:21:09

M, a G, A L, L, E, N, E, Z

Teresa Velasquez 2:21:12

Yes, Magallenez, I don't know if it's a Z or s, think it's a z,

Brittany Mendez 2:21:31

and so, how was your time involvement in the LULAC youth chapter?

Teresa Velasquez 2:21:35

in the LULAC. It was just again, another opportunity to, you know, get involved in issues pertaining to the youth across the state, and speaking up for us to have our voice. And again, another opportunity to meet with people. You know, we develop friendship. So we ended up, I remember, taking a trip to visit some friends that we had made, that were involved in LULAC, that lived in Galveston one year. And I think maybe somebody was having a quinceanera. And my aunt, one of my mom's sisters, lived in Houston at the time. And I think it happened to be that this quinceanera that we were invited to was going on. And of course, you know, they don't want to let us drive from Houston to Galveston to go to the quinceanera. My dad primarily, and he's trying to get my mom to go with us. And "no they can't go on their own". And my mom finally put her foot down and said, "well, then you go with them". This was like our early like we were probably barely 16. Or what is it? 17? You know, 18, and, you know, barely, like, I think I don't even know was that legal to drink at that time anyway, but partying, you know, those partying days and driving and so forth. And so my dad took us, and we go off to the quinceanera, and we're out all, like, practically all night. And friends, you know, they they come back, and we're close to the pier, I remember, and they're teaching us how to hunt for, what is it? Crab fishing, where you tie some like chicken to a string, and then you you pull the string up and catch a big crab. And I remember pulling it up, and we were like, Okay, what do we do with it? Now, is huge. So we took it back to the hotel and dumped it in the in the bathtub, and it was like the wee hours of the morning, and, you know, we were just, I mean, we had partied all night, just doing crazy stuff, and because we, you know, didn't get to see these friends very often, and my dad's, like, waking up. My dad typically has always woke up at the crack of dawn and he's like, "it's alright. Y'all need to get up". We're just barely going to sleep because "nobody had y'all out there all damn night. Get in the car. Let's go". So we're like, "oh man, let us sleep a little bit". But it was funny I remember, but he never not let us go. I mean, even though here, my mom had to go with us, but we got to do whatever, we never missed out on opportunities, so that was a good thing. But yeah, that was fun. But yeah, this was actually that LULAC State Conference, and that's Roy Pulido. He was a member of LULAC. That's me. And with the yellow lei on there, and I think that's Peter, that the one in the other yellow lei here in the middle, in the front, that's Paul's twin brother. And I think in the background you could see a sign. I don't know if you could zoom in on, it says, I was running for state office. I think, does it say you state director, or something like that? I can't really see what it says. I was running for state office, and this was a hospitality party. This is where I think back then. This is how. You kind of like, like, solicit for votes and stuff. Like, you, you know, make friends. You invite them over. This was like a welcoming kind of thing where we had all the people that attended the conference to come in. And it was like a really nice it was a suite there at the hotel that they designated specifically for the youth to utilize during the conference. And I remember, again, it was Aloha theme, and some of the other kids from, you know, the other places that came and, you know, we had a good time. And it wasn't always meetings and stuff like you saw we were at the State Chamber, and then we were in that meeting. But when we would have fun, we would have fun.

Brittany Mendez 2:25:49

So this was?

Teresa Velasquez 2:25:52

Probably like 1980 maybe, I think, actually, I think it was 1980 because one of their cousins that I had just met had attended a prom with this girl that ended up being my my cousin's sister with later on my this girl married, I think she's there with the elbow here in the front. That's Denise Gabby, the the little girl the red earlier. That's Gabby's mother. She ended up marrying my cousin and her sister Diane, attended a prom that night, and they came after the prom to this party.

Brittany Mendez 2:26:33

So, okay, so this was for, this is a welcoming party,

Teresa Velasquez 2:26:37

yeah, LULAC, LULAC at the

Brittany Mendez 2:26:40

Hilton Hotel, because that's where the state convention was in Austin. Okay, wait, so did you win? Like, would you were you part of the

Teresa Velasquez 2:26:54

No, I didn't win. And then my friend Paul was running, I was gonna, there's his name on that he was running for something I don't know. I think maybe he won because he was on that panel later on. This is Paul's sister, Mary Lou here the cup, and that's Sophia Delgado, another member. And then I think this girl on the other end, I think she might have been from out of town. I don't remember her name.

Brittany Mendez 2:27:28

I just put that party for something youth press, San Antonio. I was he originally from San Antonio? Or let's

Teresa Velasquez 2:27:46

see, what does it say you Paul McGannis youth something? What does that say? I guess president,

Brittany Mendez 2:27:54

I don't know, San Antonio, Texas, June, 30 through July, 4.

Teresa Velasquez 2:28:02

Oh, it has a note on there.

Brittany Mendez 2:28:05

Yeah. It says something, San Antonio, Texas, June 30th, July, 4.

Teresa Velasquez 2:28:10

No, that this, but this particular picture was for sure, at the state, at the state thing here at the Hilton. I don't know what that July thing has to do with it. Okay? Now this picture. This is one of my parent

volunteers when I worked later on at Heart Elementary School. And that's my daughter, Sophia, here the red jacket, and then that's Juan Betties, Berriologe and Juan, and that's their daddy, Gabby. Gabby, that little girl now works with con mi madres, yeah, and just, they're just a family that have stayed in contact with over the years. She was really, really involved with me as a parent when I worked at Heart Elementary School, and both of them actually the mom and the dad. But you know, with all this immigration mess going on, it worries me a lot for families such as this particular family that I know that are undocumented, and it just worries the heck out of me, yeah, thinking about them. But this particular night, we had got together and went to. To trail of lights. They had never been to it before, and we met, and, you know, we ended up, I think, riding together, or took the bus. I actually parked near Saragundae Hall over there, on, what is it, whatever, near there, and rode the bus together and went to trail of lights. They had a son too, but he's on the picture.

Brittany Mendez 2:30:29

What's your daughter's last name?

Teresa Velasquez 2:30:31

The least, s, o, l, y, z,

Brittany Mendez 2:30:36

and then, um, sorry, uh, the two parents,

Teresa Velasquez 2:30:43

Juan and Betty, Betty, Betty,

Brittany Mendez 2:30:52

and that's her daughter, Gabby. Gabby, yeah, a lot of Christmas related things.

Teresa Velasquez 2:31:13

Yeah, this was that same night, just getting together, going to trail of lights.

Brittany Mendez 2:31:25

Were these just some of

Teresa Velasquez 2:31:27

the other kids, you know, some of the other kids. This little boy was John. He was being raised by his grandpa, John, William. And then I've got a kid. Maybe that's one that maybe that's their son. Is there gabby being that's one their son, and then the girl in the green, that's another family, sulemas kids, I can't remember their names. The volunteer their their mom was sulema and Betty, sulema and Minerva. They were three other volunteers that I had when I worked at heart, and they call themselves las Chicas Super Poderosas. And I was like, What the heck does that mean? And then they're, they're, they're teaching me, they said, like the Power Puff Girls, as they call themselves the chicas super poderosas. But I always get, would get a kick out of bet, because, you know, over the years, she's always having a lot of gratitude, you know, for the things that I brought to their life in, you know, providing those those learning opportunities, with the book clubs and so forth. And you know, different

parent meetings, and, you know, being a volunteer, you know, daily at the school, and then meeting other parents, and I said, "Oh, Betty. I said, you don't even know. I said, What y'all have given to me? I said, I've learned just as much or more from y'all that y'all have learned from me". Because I never had been exposed to like the Posadas. I didn't really understand all about that, and and the baby and the bread the king. What is it? The Rosca, yeah, pan de rosca, I never had heard of any of that kind of stuff. And I remember they were having different events in the classrooms, again, a predominant, predominantly Hispanic community, and they were doing things in the classroom, and they invited me to participate, you know, oh, vengase Terri vamos a tener Posole. And I was like, never had heard the word Ravano. Oh, which is the radish and the the cabbage that you put in the in the Posole? I was like, Oh, my God, and things like that that I never seen. And then Gabby's teacher, she would put together the dia de Los Muertos altar. And again, that was something I'd never been around or seen, even though I worked in the schools, I never actually saw it in the classroom. And her teacher would go, I mean, all full blown, and really do a really nice one. And, you know, I learned a lot of things from from the parents too. And you know, just, I have a lot of gratitude to the work that they helped me do at school. Really nice people. Really, really nice people. This, okay, this is the back of the big house. Uh, remember I said at first it was gravel, and then it was a concrete slab. That's where they would work on cars. That's my brother Steve and my uncle Richard. There's a couple of cabs all back there. Later after my dad stopped mechanicing, Richard pretty much took over the mechanicing part and and they would hire different people to come and help them. There's like, what four cars working on at a time.

Brittany Mendez 2:34:54

Wow. Wow. This is crazy, I don't know, just like your family,

Teresa Velasquez 2:35:01

that was my backyard.

Brittany Mendez 2:35:06

Wow, this was your backyard.

2:35:15

Wow.

Teresa Velasquez 2:35:19

That's one of my students from, from Allen. Davila, Lorenzo Davila, this was his, I think was this his high school graduation? Yeah, guess that was his high school graduation. And he ended up graduating from Texas State, and he was like the head of his fraternity, and his mother and I have another group, core group of friends. One is the Fab Five, and the other one is, we're the Golden Girls, and his mom and I were part of the Golden Girls. We play bingo together. We like to gamble. And she's a very dear friend of mine to this day. He recently, he has like a little two year old baby. But I kind of stay connected to a lot of these kids. It's just, it's really neat. And when his brother got married, I got invited to his his brother's wedding, and it made me go up to the to the bride and say, "You must be one special girl, because this boy, I swear, he loved all the girls in elementary school". We would do little fundraisers where we would sell, like, what is it flowers or candy, little things fixed up, and the mom would come with her hands all full on. I was like, Ah, those for the boys? No, these are just for Arthur. I'll call him the

school lover boy we want to give to all the girls. But I never really knew him for Arthur. We always called him Tootie, but I tell you when he like I said, when he got married, I said "you must be one special girl, because he loved all the girls." He has, he has four kids now. He joined the military, and he takes care of his babies. He's, like, involved with them in their sports activities. So, yeah, all these kids, they turned out really good, really good kids. And this is me and my daughter in Girl Scout and a Girl Scout event we were at the Oh, God, what was it? What's it called, like, the Renaissance, Renaissance Festival. And, yeah, that was on a cat. We went camping out there. Stayed in our tent out at the Little did I know I should have took the RV. I was like, terrible putting up that tent. But, yeah, it was a different experience going to the Renaissance Festival.

Brittany Mendez 2:37:45

So it was just an activity that y'all did with the Girl Scouts.

Teresa Velasquez 2:37:53

We all was always trying to stay, stay involved with her, her activities. Mm,

Brittany Mendez 2:38:02

this one was in Austin, right?

Teresa Velasquez 2:38:04

No, it was actually in Magnolia, Texas.

Brittany Mendez 2:38:12

Do you know what year it was 2000s or

Teresa Velasquez 2:38:15

let's see, what year would that be? She was born in 96 so 2000 early, 2000 maybe 2001 or so somewhere. No, that would have been she would have barely been in school. Let's see. Let's see, 96 I six, maybe, 2003 2004 maybe. And she attended palm school, the other palm school over here in my neighborhood, they they rebuilt palm school.

Brittany Mendez 2:39:08

So you said you were, like, heavily involved in, like, your daughter's activities and stuff.

Teresa Velasquez 2:39:14

Well, I tried to be like I said I was a single mom working two jobs, so I did, you know extracurricular? She was in folklorico, she was in cheerleading, she was in Girl Scouts and, you know, any of those kinds of things. But like on the like PTA and stuff, like a daily thing, I didn't really get to because of my job, but my mom was in my place, so my mom was on the advisory council here at the school, and very involved on the daily with being involved with PTA here at the school in my place. You guys. I mean, when I could be there, I was, yeah, whenever I could arrange it.

2:40:06

It my brother,

Teresa Velasquez 2:40:10

yeah, there was always a mess everywhere. So this is Richard, Richard my uncle, Richard and my brother, Steve i What the behind the big house?

Brittany Mendez 2:40:34

That's funny

Teresa Velasquez 2:40:45

this is that was the Cub Scout picture the parade, not when it popped up.

Brittany Mendez 2:41:02

Cub Scout you said?

Teresa Velasquez 2:41:06

I don't see my mom, but I think that's Miss Camacho. That would have been Steven's group. No, that's Miss Camacho, but my mom was the den mother with her they would march in the scout parade every year Congress trying to see if I see she was a den mother, my mom, yes. Oh, was Miss Camacho or no? Miss Camacho was also and my aunt Grace as well.

Brittany Mendez 2:41:37

And this was on Congress Avenue

Teresa Velasquez 2:41:39

Congress Avenue, Mm, hmm. I

Speaker 1 2:41:40

make

Teresa Velasquez 2:41:44

up my brother, but I don't see him. Might have been on a different row, unless that's him holding the sign. Might look like that might be him here. I think that's my brother here on the left, holding the sign. Yeah, that looks like Steven. But I'm surprised I don't see my mom in here. Okay, that one has the date that's a year into my mom's first cancer diagnosis. And we did Race for the Cure, as we did other years with this was this might have been our first or second race. It's my daughter, my mom, me, my sister in law, Tracy, and my brother. And can I step away for a second? I need to run. Oh yeah, just for a Second, I'll be fine. You. Water. That's our church, Our Lady of Guadalupe, ninth and Lydia. My dad went to school there. They were married there. We were baptized there. Took my mom there when she passed.

Brittany Mendez 2:44:30

You said your father got married here, right? So this church was like, very, like very important

Teresa Velasquez 2:44:44

oh yes, still, is

Brittany Mendez 2:44:50

it still up? Is it still Oh yeah, I. Is it when you were younger and stuff, did you guys spend a lot, I guess, yeah, from what, yeah.

Teresa Velasquez 2:45:10

Well, we go to church. And I remember we we knew better that we were supposed to behave. And I remember, you know, my brother and I, the one right behind me, we we were always like at each other, and I remember my mom would just give us that look like I better be quiet. But I remember, like, getting those looks of us, you know, probably making noise or doing something we weren't supposed to be doing, and, you know, her giving us that look like I better behave right now.

Brittany Mendez 2:45:49

Did a lot of other people from the community go there as well?

Teresa Velasquez 2:45:53

Oh yeah, oh yeah. I

Brittany Mendez 2:46:04

is this?

Teresa Velasquez 2:46:06

That's just a picture of the brothers on the porch at the front of the house on on East Avenue. Yeah, going back to the church, we've always stayed close to the church. I even up to this year, do a basket for the Jamaica operates a booth all the time, and the family goes and helps. And this year, my brother was asked to do the brisket taco booth. So we'll be involved in helping with that this year, this year so JAmaica, this upcoming year. You know, these are all the brothers, Bobby, Gilbert, Carlos, Roy Junior and Richard.

Brittany Mendez 2:47:04

Bobby Gilbert, Carlos, Roy Richard i

Teresa Velasquez 2:47:28

and over the years, they've always been involved in donating and supporting the community with various things. This is the the the lot to the property. You can see, I 35 right there, as close as it was. This is my younger Steve, my brother, younger brother, Steven. I remember when he was in high school. He comes one day and he says, I need a truck. I want it to be maroon and white, so my parents went out and found him a used maroon and white pickup truck. You know that other blue truck in the back? That's my brother Roy's. That's my brother Roy here in the middle, here with the mechanic. Yeah, then that's Steven washing his truck in the front there. This is my cousin Louis on my mom's side of the family. He happened to be visiting, I guess, and the red shirt and khaki pants, he's a federal he's a federal security officer at a federal prison. He served in the the Marines, but there was always cars

everywhere, like I tell people, I learned how to drive backwards before I learned how to drive forward, because I was always having to maneuver my way out of the to the parking lot.

Brittany Mendez 2:48:53

So this, this lot right here is basically

Teresa Velasquez 2:48:59

this, this this parking lot right here was directly in front of my house where I lived. It's to adjacent to the picture where I'm with my little brother. Is right there, where the blue car, is back the older picture that would have been the side of the house. So our house was kind of back further behind this concrete slab in the back, I'm sure you have another picture here somewhere, showing where we lived, like looking out from my bedroom window, this is what I would see, I 35.

Brittany Mendez 2:49:44

Well, you guys were, like, super, super close,

Teresa Velasquez 2:49:46

yeah.

Brittany Mendez 2:49:50

And so, like, you're a house. So basically, because you said it was kind of like a compounds, kind of. Hmm. So basically, where the big house is, it's kind of very near this home, correct? Or this,

Teresa Velasquez 2:50:06

oh, yeah, there was, like, it was one big lot in, like, three different houses on the lot. Well, actually four, because it was, like, ours is on top, Carlos on the bottom, then the garage on the side, and then where Richard lived, or my my mom's, later on, my mom's flower shop, and then that area where the cars were being worked on while ago, that was like the back patio. And then this was all the front patio, and then the big house in the front Wow. But there was always somebody around, like, all the time. What is it? High, high traffic, coming and going.

Brittany Mendez 2:50:50

So does. Sorry, I think you might have mentioned this. Like, where you guys live? Does that still exist? Like, this kind of,

Teresa Velasquez 2:51:00

No, all of this property was all it's a hotel now, or actually, I think it's an apartment complex now, it's all been demolished. This is my uncle Carlos, my dad, my uncle Carlos, and that's Lloyd Doggett, Congressman, Lloyd Doggett and my uncle Gilbert,

Brittany Mendez 2:51:29

and this is at the same lot right in front. So was the lot like basically just a mechanic shop. Or was it specifically like,

Teresa Velasquez 2:51:42

it was, like the parking lot there were the the cabs were kept until somebody would come in, lease a cab, or whatever. This is where, like, the main headquarters for the for the office, where the coming and goings, like, say, they would have a day shift. People would come in and pick up a vehicle and then lease it out for the day, and they'd go drive cab all day. Then they would turn in their lease fee and then park the car, and then the night shift person would come and take it back out.

Brittany Mendez 2:52:13

You know why Lloyd Dockett is there?

Teresa Velasquez 2:52:17

No telling. My grandfather was involved in politics a whole lot, as was, you know, the rest of the family. He a lot of politicians would often come to Him to help get the vote out for the Hispanic population, and, you know, supporting candidates, you know, with elections and so forth. I know my uncle Gilbert at one time ran for county commissioner. And I don't know if Uncle Carlos did at one time, but there was always political people there. And this goes way back to like Harry Tru you know President Truman. I know my grandfather. You know, knew him, and did work for him, and LBJ and you know, like I said, he was very well connected, because they look to him as a leader and a spokesperson for Hispanics within the community, and again, wanting their support. As far as voting, he he sold the poll tax at one time to help encourage Hispanics to have their voice heard and and be able to vote again. Another work with LULAC as well. Yeah,

Brittany Mendez 2:53:33

you guys are very like, like, involved with each other, heavily involved in community, and even now, like later on, like as you you know, or as you grew up, or whatever and stuff,

Teresa Velasquez 2:53:50

yeah, my uncle Gilbert, God, him and his son, they were the ones who who put together the Fiesta patrias. They it was a non profit that provided scholarships for kids in the community, and they would bring bands and performers in from all over and they would rent out Fiesta gardens, I'm not sure if you're familiar with Fiesta gardens, and they would have like, a three day festival of vendors and performers that would, you know, showcase different types of music, and primarily, you know, conjunto, or, you know, prime Hispanic music at these festivals, and then have all the, you know, the gorditas and the tacos and tamales and you name it, and his daughter would do a Gilberto's Hamburger booth, and they made the best hamburgers, I tell you. And you know, different people would, you know, sell, you know, their arts and crafts and so forth. But they, they did that for over 40 years, providing that until his health got bad. He battled Parkinson's disease for more than 14 years, and he lost his battle here in May, May the 16 this past year, and passed away. You This was our inside, our apartment house where we lived there on the property at East Avenue. It was where we lived. It was like upstairs. And I remember growing up, there were like rooms. I guess they rented rooms there, and we only had maybe three of the rooms that were our where we lived, our living area. And over the years, as people would move out of the rented rooms, my mom would take over one of the other rooms. So before long. I mean, by the time, I think I was probably in I know for a fact, by the time I was in fifth grade, we had the

whole place to ourselves. It was all of ours. But this was probably like a Christmas time where cousins came over and we were up there. I think it has a year there on the side, does it?

2:56:22

Mm, 73

Teresa Velasquez 2:56:25

Yeah, so that's my younger brother Steven holding the dog, our dog, Chico, and then my brother Roy with the glasses, and my cousin Julia's, the white, my cousin Edward, he ended up having a business. Edward had his own mechanic shop. His parents, my aunt Carmen, they owned a liquor store. And then this, this guy, he was my mother's adopted brother that lived with us for a time period. His name was Arthur.

Brittany Mendez 2:57:12

The dog is so tiny.

Teresa Velasquez 2:57:13

Yeah, he was so little, and he happened to get run over by a taxi cab, and oh god, we were so devastated. And the driver, he felt so bad. I guess the dog had followed one of the kids out and and got one or one of the cars. And I remember the driver was named Johnny Malaya. He felt so bad because we were just heart broken that our dog had, that he had run over our dog, and he just he was beside himself because he felt so bad. But the dog was little, beady, beady, but we always had a dog. We had one dog. It was a white poodle. And my mom would tell, tell the dog, go, wake up the kids, and he'd come and, you know, we put the covers over our head because we didn't want to get up to go to school. And the dog would come and just dig and dig and dig and wake us up in the morning. But we always had a dog. I'm looking at the decoration. It was Christmas time because I see the center piece on the table. What said? God, my mom like decorating even way back then. I think I see the tree in the shadow back there, but it's always been a tradition that the house gets totally decked out at Christmas time. In fact, right now, I have boxes all over my living room downstairs because I've tried to keep the tradition up. I have six Christmas trees that I just recently had taken down. Well, you know, I've been six, I hadn't been able to do anything, and I had a little boy that comes and helps me, and he I said, just help me pack them up. I said, we don't have to put them in the storage. Just help me put them in boxes, take them down and, you know, just put them, put them on the side. So my living room just got boxes everywhere. But, yeah, we we traditionally put six Christmas trees. That's just downstairs. I used to do upstairs too, but over the years, I'm like, I can't do it all. Can't do it anymore. It's too much. And every year I say, I'm not going to put them all up. I'm not going to do it again. I'm just going to put one tree. And every year I do more and more and more. It's like, God, it started way back when. See, like, I see the decoration there. I said, my mom really like, Christmas.

Brittany Mendez 2:59:36

So okay, so this is basically just a mixture of like, yeah,

Teresa Velasquez 2:59:40

just cousins, yeah, hanging out. My brother probably got that gift for Christmas, and they were probably testing it out some kind of card game.

Brittany Mendez 2:59:50

And this was at your East East Avenue.

Teresa Velasquez 2:59:52

Yeah, yeah, it's East Avenue, but it's not inside the big house. It's actually inside where we lived upstairs. Yeah. In our living room. 1967, that was at Kresis. It was like a, like a five and dime store. It was at Oltorf. If I don't know if you're familiar with Oltorf and Congress, where that heb used to be that they recently rebuilt. It was a strip mall there, and it was in the very corner a store called Kress. I remember specifically taking that picture there.

Brittany Mendez 3:00:43

Yes, it was a K or C, R, E, S,

Teresa Velasquez 3:00:47

yes, with a K, with a K,

Brittany Mendez 3:00:50

Kress, you said it was like a like

Teresa Velasquez 3:00:56

a five and dime,

Brittany Mendez 3:01:00

fine and dime,

Teresa Velasquez 3:01:01

Five and Dime, like, yeah, kind of like a Woolsworth, I don't know if you're familiar with Woolsworth store. It was kind of like that. They just had, like, different things they sold in there, kind of, kind of like a Walmart, what way back then,

Brittany Mendez 3:01:18

okay, got it. No.

Teresa Velasquez 3:01:27

And there I am with my bangs

Brittany Mendez 3:01:31

Congress, and it was like at a strip mall, right?

Teresa Velasquez 3:01:39

Yeah, this, this makes me think of seeing how light skin my brother is here that oftentimes my mom would get question is if we had the same father, because I was always so much darker than my younger brother. And I remember one time being at my aunt's house, somebody's bridal shower or baby shower, and I have a cousin, and she was looking, you know, I'm sitting on the floor near my mom, and she's looking, and she looks at me, and she looks at my mom, and she just blurts out, she's she adopted or something, because my mom was also light skinned, but that little cousin says she adopted or something. Oh, my God, because I was always always said, so darker than everybody else.

Brittany Mendez 3:02:26

And this is Steven, right, no, that's Roy. Oh, Roy, here's the next image.

Teresa Velasquez 3:02:43

I don't know why Craig's pictures are That's my cousin Craig. That's Richard's son, Richard, Craig. Now, like I said, these pictures might have just gotten mixed in.

Brittany Mendez 3:02:54

Was this Christmas sort of thing?

Teresa Velasquez 3:02:56

It's probably a Christmas program of his at school. I don't know. I don't know why it's mixed with mine

Brittany Mendez 3:03:07

at the school that he attended,

Teresa Velasquez 3:03:08

probably now this, this is on 90 East Avenue. This is up at our place, kind of that same environment, because Steven looks older here in this picture, probably maybe the following year. This is my cousin, Patsy and myself. My Gugga boots is so good I had to be in junior high. Here was that 1975 or 76 somewhere around there, 73 Oh, 73 Wow, but I yeah,

Brittany Mendez 3:03:45

It says Jen, 73 on the side. Yeah. Your cousin's name again, Patsy, and that's your brother,

Teresa Velasquez 3:03:57

Steven. That's Steven. There you but

Brittany Mendez 3:04:03

during another Christmas event or Christmas party at

Teresa Velasquez 3:04:12

this was at our house, same property on East 70, But we just a different house. You. That Stephen I and it looks like possibly he's on a field trip because he has a name tag on. We always laugh. I said, would you have to write your name on your jacket? Do you? Would you forget your name? But we laugh because I tell you, he had the same hair cut. I said, I wonder if my mom cut his hair too. Oh,

because he had the same bangs, like I did. You remember that? Remember that one picture yesterday I was telling you that my first grade picture, I said, me and my brother resemble each other. This is the picture I was talking about, because I swear that could be me right there.

Brittany Mendez 3:05:16

Honestly, you're right. Or, yeah, like this picture against this one,

Teresa Velasquez 3:05:28

the one where I'm it has like a white, like a white bib in the front, though the single picture of mine.

Brittany Mendez 3:05:36

Oh, yeah, true. Okay, just another Christmas.

Teresa Velasquez 3:05:46

Let's see. Yep, that's just Christmas at the Big House, the last piles of gifts.

Brittany Mendez 3:06:03

Do you know what year this might have been? No or, I guess, like if it was in the 80s seven days, or 60, I think, see,

Teresa Velasquez 3:06:27

that's probably 80s, I guess. Let me think, if not, it's okay. Yeah, I don't, I don't know that's all right. Well, that's Steven, my brother Steven, that's at the big house, laughing at that tree, because usually the trees were so tall and big, it was a little scrawny old tree for being in that house, because I swear that the ceilings were like 14 foot ceilings. I remember one year there was a tree so big we had, we had a hard time fitting it. We had to cut the bottom of it. But that tree looks a little scrawny. That's my brother Steven. And then this, this is the big house Christmas tree with, I guess that's Boomer there. But I laugh because literally, that would be typical with all that many gifts of what all the cousins that we had, we would buy for all the kids. I remember way later on, when I worked at Allen, we would have like professional development days, where they would give us a gift of time, or whatever we could take, take the afternoon off, or whatever to get Christmas stuff done, and me and a friend of mine that worked together, and she says, Okay, what do we have this year? Where I would buy like, five between five for a girl between the ages of five and nine? Okay, I got three boys between the age of 10 and 12. You know where I would have my list? Because I would just lose track of just get everybody the same thing, where we've gone the on the shop T drop day to buy all these gifts. Because it was crazy, just keeping up with everybody.

Brittany Mendez 3:08:17

Wow, that is, like, a lot of gifts. Yeah, that's

Teresa Velasquez 3:08:20

typically how it would look. And every year it's just funny, you know, talking about and seeing, now going back and seeing all the different trees I remember, I guess, probably like I was very young. I remember distinctly this aluminum tree, and it was just so mesmerizing. It had this, this, this wheel. It

was like a color wheel that would illuminate on the tree, and as it went through the different colors, the tree would turn different colors. And I could just lay there on the floor and just look at the colors change on the tree. Huh?

3:08:57

I was trying

Brittany Mendez 3:09:00

I was trying to see if there's a picture of that tree, but I don't No,

Teresa Velasquez 3:09:02

I don't think I don't have one that that far back. Wow.

Brittany Mendez 3:09:08

So did you guys have like, a specific theme each year, or is

Teresa Velasquez 3:09:13

No, it was just random whoever could get up there? And it's kind of that way now, like, you know, everybody gets busy. And, like I said, we, my mom used to be the one that coordinate everything, and since she passed, it's like, Okay, guess who? Guess who got nominated to be the coordinator of the party at one particular time, we had a committee where a representative from each family would, you know, we, we had a bank account. Everybody would contribute, and they come up with the theme, or whatever, whatever meal we were going to have, and that kind of fizzled out. And, you know, since then, it's been like, Okay, well, where are we going to have it, you know, all this stuff. So now, you know, typically, at my uncle's ran, she's got like, um, like, a building out there, covered, covered place, and we have it up there. And. A there's a kitchen and refrigerators and everything, and so it's, it's good and spacious enough. My other uncle would host it, but we just kind of grew out of his other place. But, you know, we have a tree. I took a tree out there as a y'all could keep it, but, you know, every year it's like, okay, where's all the decorations? This year, there was a few things, just odds and stuff. But things get, you know, tossed out or moved. At one point, we used to have everybody bringing up family ornament, you know, with the names of people in your family. And then we, we did one where everybody had their own ornament. Things get lost, you know, like I said, we used to go to hotels and, you know, just picking it up and, you know, keeping track of everything. It's just everything's kind of got lost in the shuffle over the years, but now just kind of random, whatever we have at the time, whatever day we happen to be there watching a football game, and I guess all this playoffs, and there was enough of us there, I said, Okay, we're going to take the tree out, since we have help today. So I don't even know whoever went over and took it down, because my uncle's real, like, y'all put it up. Y'all better come take it down. I kind of stayed out of that conversation since I've been so sick, I did good at being part of putting it up.

Brittany Mendez 3:11:18

Do you know who's in this picture, or is it just, should I just that's,

Teresa Velasquez 3:11:21

that's my uncle Gilbert, and let's see. That's his daughter, Jeanette. She passed away from COVID, and then my cousin Andy, those are the only ones I recognize Gilbert.

Brittany Mendez 3:11:33

This is Jeanette.

Teresa Velasquez 3:11:35

Let's see. Yes, that's Jeanette. I and then this is just random cousins, the Velasquez That's Steven on the floor there the black jacket, that's my brother that would still be at the big house. This is the big house. That's Sally.

Brittany Mendez 3:12:09

What's Sally's last name? Gomez, at the big house, Christmas. So with all these pictures, are they on actual Christmas Day or Christmas Eve?

Teresa Velasquez 3:12:23

It would probably be Christmas Eve. That's all we would get together.

Brittany Mendez 3:12:27

Would you guys do anything on would people just stay over for Christmas day? Or was it just not?

Teresa Velasquez 3:12:33

No. They would go on to their like, their like, their own families gatherings, like Gilbert's family would go do stuff at their house. Our family would do stuff with my mom's family. This is, this is the big house of God. Look at all those gifts. That's Jennifer. And then Viviana. Viviana just had a birthday. Yesterday got out. Did she turn yesterday was her birthday? The one in the red,

Brittany Mendez 3:13:07

oh, the Viviana is the older one.

Teresa Velasquez 3:13:11

And yeah, Viviana is the older one and Jennifer's the younger one

Brittany Mendez 3:13:20

is her last name, Velasquez,

Teresa Velasquez 3:13:21

no. Jennifer. What's her last name? They're all married now let's see Gorman. Gorman, G, O, R, M, a n, Gorman. And then Viviana, I think she goes by Velasquez. She's divorced now.

Brittany Mendez 3:13:50

So this is, that's

Teresa Velasquez 3:13:52

Vivian again, the big house, so look at the ugly floor. This is, again, the this is sorry. These are all this would have been that see that white dress wearing my dad with the jacket. This was the year my grandfather died. I believe it was 1981 i this picture.

Brittany Mendez 3:14:23

This is also Christmas time. Yes, Christmas,

Teresa Velasquez 3:14:27

uh huh. This is the year my grand this is the year of the big house that my grandfather passed away. Yeah, he had just died that month before. Oh, Mm, hmm. He died in November. This probably was that same time. My cousin Judy, her husband, Gilbert, that's Viviana. And then Irma, this is Christmas at the big house. Cousins, more cousins.

Brittany Mendez 3:15:24

Is that your dad and?

Teresa Velasquez 3:15:25

that's Sharon. My cousin Sharon is helping him read the name.

Brittany Mendez 3:15:37

So then is this Sharon?

Teresa Velasquez 3:15:41

Oh, no, that looks like Jeanette. They're sisters. Oh, okay.

Brittany Mendez 3:15:50

I was like, it looks like the exact same person.

Teresa Velasquez 3:15:52

Oh, wait a minute, maybe it does. Yeah,

Brittany Mendez 3:15:56

it is the same person because the jackets,

Teresa Velasquez 3:15:58

okay, then it's Sharon. Then, yeah, the side one, the other one was, I mean, I thought was Jeanette. It's sharon.

Brittany Mendez 3:16:31

and is that your dad?

Teresa Velasquez 3:16:33

Yeah, that's my dad. I'm laughing because that's Jeanette with her hand in her mouth.

3:16:49

Oh, that's funny

Teresa Velasquez 3:16:50

and that's my uncle Gilbert, my dad. I this is my cousin Sandra and my uncle Gilbert. One thing that my grandfather used to do as we were children, on Christmas, he would do trivia games with us, and he would come down with a satchel full of money, usually, those, like, you know, those purple bags that, like the Crown Royal, are in, yeah, liquor, and have sacks of, like, 50 cent pieces and half dollars. I mean, half dollars in silver. What is it? Silver dollars? And he would do trivia questions about the business or about the family, and he would give us these coins if we could answer the questions or do something that he would ask us to do. And we try to continue that, that tradition with, you know, doing things like that. I have my little questions from this year, and it, you know, that was a way of him educating us and teaching us like, for instance, one of the questions growing up would be, what is the colors red and green signify? Why did I have my taxi cabs that was a color red and green? And the reason being, is that he was proud of his heritage, and red and green were colors of the Mexican flag, so he had a lot of sense to the things that he did. And then what was the first phone number to the Roy's taxi? So we'd all go run to our parents and like, well, I don't know what's enough. What's the number? You know, we'd say the number it was at the time. But, you know, those weren't always the original numbers. And 25134, and so, like, over the years, we've learned it. Because I remember, like, when I first learned about the taxi, it was like, gr 66911, because the the phone number started with gr and and ultimately, you know, like, now, like the younger kids would know, what was the what was the last phone number to the Roy's taxi was 482, double O, double O. So, you know, just over the years, like, those are questions now that we try to keep up doing with the kids. Who is the man that was born on January 6, 1921 and we'll ask them, and I make them come because we have, like, one of those karaoke machines with that, with the microphone. And then it was, you know, Grandpa Roy. And I'm trying to find the little cards here that I have this year. Oh, oh, I didn't write the answers. I don't remember. Oh, they shouldn't wrote the answers on here. Anyway, there was a radio handle that every time the radio would go offline, they would. Say, or every hour on the hour, also on the radio frequency, it would say, kk I 565, the time is now one o'clock, or KK I 565, this is Roy's taxi, and we're signing off the air. So that was a question this year that even some of the brothers couldn't even remember. Oh, wow. And then now, like for the younger kids, name Roy's senior, five brothers. So, you know, my, even my great uncles, we, we try to tie them into, into the questions for this year, yeah,

Brittany Mendez 3:20:35

well, that's really neat.

Teresa Velasquez 3:20:39

Like this year one of the questions was, what was the name of the national organization that Roy senior founded locally in Austin, Texas, that was LULAC. LULAC was a national organization. And so I have like different dollar amounts. We handed out dollar bills, \$10 bills, \$2 bills. And what was the old man he he was referred to the old man, to the big you know, Roy senior, the old man, Grandpa Roy. What was the name of the old man's black and white border collie? His dog was Sam Bo so that was one of the questions. Wow. Now, what was grandpa Roy's original birth name. His actual birth certificate, name was Reyes, because he was born on Dia de la Los Reyes, January six.

Brittany Mendez 3:21:32

Wow, that's really neat that you'll do that.

Teresa Velasquez 3:21:33

I try to, I try to, you know, keep the the thing going for the younger kids.

Brittany Mendez 3:21:39

Yeah, that's important, yeah, okay, I guess this is another,

Teresa Velasquez 3:21:45

yeah, that's still, that's still Christmas at the big house.

Brittany Mendez 3:22:02

This is your dad

Teresa Velasquez 3:22:04

another year, passing out gifts. And like, I've stopped taking pictures, so I have to get with, like cousins, because now I'm the one like coordinating or calling out, like handing them to them like I don't even know now, where are the pictures are going to end up? Little cousins, so Andy and Viviana right here. Uh huh, their brother and sister. This. This was, again, this was probably in the kitchen. It looks like maybe this was the man in the White is my Aunt Mary's husband, my uncle, Buffo. We called him Buffo. His name was Rudy. And then this man in the blue shirt, he was a cab driver, slash handy man. His name was Bill Harbert. He was always around, you know, he drove a cab for a while, and he just kind of hung around the family for, like, a lot of years. Think he was, I'm not sure, was he a homeless man, but I don't know. I know he was a struggling man.

Brittany Mendez 3:23:27

Was this also Christmas time? Because I think I might see Christmas tree in the background.

Teresa Velasquez 3:23:32

Yeah, I'm pretty sure a lot of times we would invite other people to Christmas. I know there's one with one of our families that my mom worked with that were that came, yeah, because there's a little boy right there, we would invite other, other families to come and join us. And then later on, when we started having them at the hotels, we would have, like, dances with the band and everything. And we would invite family, other other family people. These were all the boys,

Brittany Mendez 3:24:05

cousins, cousins.

Teresa Velasquez 3:24:12

More cousins. It's my mom here in front I lots of cousins you like even her cousins, cousins, the little girl was my cousins. That was their cousin on the other my brother. That's my brother, Roy and his ex wife, Gloria. Where are they? There in the it was Christmas time, but by then, the house had become the

office. So that's why all this office equipment's there. That's why that, like I said, these are probably some of the last Christmases that were held there, because later on, we started having them at hotels, because we grew out of space, because this was actually the office that that area that used to be the living room had, at this time, become, see, like, here, oh well. The other one had furniture. This one now has file cabinets and desk.

Brittany Mendez 3:25:49

Okay, so this is still Christmas time. Yeah,

Teresa Velasquez 3:25:51

that's Christmas. That's me sitting on the desk.

Brittany Mendez 3:25:55

X must have my big house, but it had fully it was

Teresa Velasquez 3:25:58

the office slash Royce taxi office, like the management office and these two little boys. This was a family that my mother worked with, and we had invited them to come and join us, the Zubiate family. This was Abram and God what's the other one's name. Jesus. Anyway, this the the bigger boy. He became an engineer, and they take all these really fancy trips now, but we stay in touch with them on Facebook. They're really sweet family. God, what's the boy's name? I forgot

Brittany Mendez 3:26:39

what was their last name, Zubiate,

Teresa Velasquez 3:26:42

Z, U, B, I, A, T, E, Zubiate Rosa and Adan, Rosa and Adan, that was the mom and the dad.

Brittany Mendez 3:26:54

I mean, just say Zubiate brothers, ya thing that your mom looked after you, said

Teresa Velasquez 3:27:00

my mom, my mom worked with them. They were in the bilingual program, and my mom just stayed friends with them. I Here we are. That's that's Richard and Isabel. It's my cousin that me and my aunt that passed after she passed, that's when we started doing the family rosaries. But this is just like it was probably a pot luck this year, I can see all the lunch, lunch meat platters of food. It was always a smorgasbord. Mean, from anything to everything to eat. We had a kitchen, but this looks like it's in that front room where there was extra table set up with more food.

Brittany Mendez 3:28:09

So this is Richard. This is Isabelle, and

Teresa Velasquez 3:28:13

that's uh, Elisa. She's the youngest of the first cousins that the one in that picture right there. That's a Elisa Vallejo

Brittany Mendez 3:28:28

is V, I

Teresa Velasquez 3:28:29

V, A, double, L, E, J, O, yeah, she would, I think she would be the youngest of all the first cousins of us on the Velasquez side. Those that's Sally and Craig.

Brittany Mendez 3:28:56

Is this also at the big house? Or is this somewhere else?

Teresa Velasquez 3:28:58

Yes, no, that's the big house. Okay. My uncle still has those that furniture, those pieces in the back. They're like corner cabinets. My uncle still has those.

Brittany Mendez 3:29:13

Yeah, there's this one that's Viviana, or Viviana.

Teresa Velasquez 3:29:16

My mother would tell her, do cheesecake, do cheesecake. And she would cross her legs and smile. And that's my aunt Tony. That's my great aunt, my uncle Pete's wife. And then here's a big group of the cousins all in a row. We're sitting now. That's Jeanette over here on the far right, and that's me next to Jeanette. This is that's me, and then Patsy. Patsy is next to me, and she's also in that other picture where I'm in the Go, go, go. Yes. That's Patsy. And then this is Rico next to her. He was adopted by my aunt Rosie. Rico. He actually ended up working with him. He was a parent educator at Webb Middle School and Barrington, so I used to see him working. And this is Sharon here in the front, the one that was in that other picture. You know that Sharon and then Craig, and then my brother Roy, at the glasses, and then this lady is my aunt, Rosie. You but like I said, I was always a big girl, and my cousin Jeanette and my cousin Judy and my grandfather would call us crane, bulldozer and steam roller. Those were his nicknames, like when he would call the call the gifts out and he would interchange it. He wouldn't call it specifically, but we all knew. We all knew he was talking to one of us. That's a picture of the way the stairs are coming. That's my uncle buffal coming from the kitchen, and that's Gilbert coming down the stairs. And then the stairway comes forward to where, where bubbles coming out of the kitchen. It'll come into that front room. Yeah. But usually by the time my grandfather would come down, we would all be aligned on the banister there, I mean, spread out from the other room to this room and everywhere in between, where we'd try to find a spot to to Sit, to catch our gifts. Just saw her yesterday. Angela, yep, they're sitting on the stairs. See there, I tell you wherever that's Sally. This one, Sally, no, the one on the other end is Sally. That's that other girl, Sally's cousin, the cousin's cousin, that's Sally's cousin. I don't know her. He's all cousins, though. No, except that girl on the right, I mean, on the left, that's one of the cousins, cousins who she is, how to say that.

3:32:29

is, that's just Christmas.

Teresa Velasquez 3:32:34

Yeah, just Christmas. Christmas.

Brittany Mendez 3:32:43

That's your dad.

Teresa Velasquez 3:32:51

Looks like he's passing out dollars. So he might have been doing the trivia questions. Sometimes it would be like my grandfather would say, Okay, I'm gonna give \$1 whoever? No, I'm going to give \$5 whoever can sing a Christmas song. Of course, yeah, I'll take \$5 I'll sing a Christmas song. And then, you know, we'd all get near him, and then he'd come out with but you got to do it in Spanish. All of our arms would go down. So I remember one year, specifically my cousin Sandra. So I'll do it and she starts Feliz Navidad, Feliz Navidad. He gave her \$5

Brittany Mendez 3:33:32

here's this one.

Teresa Velasquez 3:33:35

Yeah, that's still a boomer. I now this is, this is my mom and me and my grandfather. That's my grandfather, my mom's dad. This would be in Dallas. He was a truck driver, and I guess we were visiting visiting with my my grandma

Brittany Mendez 3:34:04

is this in their home?

Teresa Velasquez 3:34:09

In her yes, they, they, yeah, that's their home. And they lived in a real, small duplex. It was the living room, the bedroom and the kitchen. I guess that's the way the houses were made back then. And then my aunt lived on the adjoining side my aunt, my mom's youngest sister, she lived right next door. And then this is the front part. This is like the living room. We're there. I'm there with my mom. And then my aunt Nora is laying down right there. No that couldn't have been Nora because she lived next door. I don't know. Maybe she didn't live there yet. What year does that say? Does it have a year on there?

Brittany Mendez 3:34:47

Um, it is not.

Teresa Velasquez 3:34:52

But this was probably like a sofa bed or something that pulled out, because when we would be there, we would be like burritos all lined up on the floor whenever my mom and. Sisters would go, we would all be just all aligned on the floor there in the middle of the living room.

Brittany Mendez 3:35:05

What was your mom's dad's name? Felix,

Teresa Velasquez 3:35:09

Felix Castillo,

Brittany Mendez 3:35:13

so this is y'all visiting Felix in Dallas. Oh, I think this is another one that we haven't talked about. Same thing.

Teresa Velasquez 3:35:24

This was probably the same, or let me see, that might have been. Now, this was at my aunt Gracie house, the one that lived in Montopolis that I would say we would go and combine our dinners and stuff together. Yeah, that was my brother and me and my cousin, Missy, Melissa, that would be an aunt Gracie house and Montopolis.

Brittany Mendez 3:35:59

So I think that was everything. I think all this other stuff is self explanatory. I could just read that and figure it out. Um, and obviously I heard about, like your, you told me a bit about, um, Roy and the taxi company and stuff like that. Um, hmm, oh, and these are your badges. Yeah,

Teresa Velasquez 3:36:26

those would be my badges from Girl Scouts selling. You would get the badges for however many cookies you would sell to be able to go to, like, camp. And I think, what is like four years? Let's see 7273 74 and 75 Yeah, pretty much. I think that's, I think we got all all the pictures covered.

Brittany Mendez 3:37:01

And so I guess, like, I'm gonna stop sharing. I guess, like, just to end this, I kind of just wanted to ask two questions, or, yeah, three questions. So basically, you know, like, this whole entire project is about palm school, and your time at Palm school, and the significance of palm school, like, for the students who attended, for like, you know, like, because it was basically, like a predominantly, like, you know, Mexican American or, like, school for Mexican Americans and stuff like that. And so, you know, the purpose of you doing the oral history and stuff is so that, like, the building of palm school is, like, preserved and stuff, and so people know the history. And so I just wanted to ask you, you know, like, what does palm school mean for you, and having been a student at Palm school, and why, like, you know, preserving a place such as palm school, like, why that's important?

Teresa Velasquez 3:38:02

Well, it's sad to see, you know, with all the changes occurring and the Regentrification of, you know, East Austin, the because so many people from the community attended school there that I think it's important in saving a little bit of of you know, our history, and being able to show like our children and our children's children, yeah, this is where I used to live, and this is where I used to go to school. You know, there's so much construction, you know, yeah, I understand the importance of, you know, moving forward, and, you know, getting the buildings built. And, you know, everything all around but leave a little bit of nature, you know, leave a nice park for families to go to, you know, leave the structure of the

building. And I think it would be good use to put to maybe creating a museum of some, some sort, to to reflect on, you know, like even maybe donating some of these archives of materials that you know, collectively, some of us have acquired over the years or donating them back, or, I don't know, doing some something beneficial, to give back to not only students, but the community itself. Because there's a rich history like even not even realizing that my mom attended palm school, even though I always knew she was raised in Dallas, they started school here. They used to live on Ninth Street, so my I was talking to my aunt that lives in Dallas, and she's like, even I went there, I remember going there, and she told me up to what grade, but I didn't even realize that, you know, my mom and her sisters attended school at Palm school, and to me, that's important. You know, obviously, from seeing all the stuff that I shared, I like I like history, I like reflecting and seeing, and I think it's important, like I said, that that you have something to share with those that come after you and, you know, if we keep knocking things down and rebuilding new things, what happened to what happened before, and what was there before, it's, it's sad to see, even the the grounds, how much of a shamble it is like. I don't even think the pools there anymore. I think they dug it up. The tennis courts probably all gone. I'll just see piles of of, you know, bulldosed junk and trash. To me it looks like, mean, yeah, maybe in the future it will be nice and pretty, but right now they, they've just done a terrible job, and, and, and that it's sad. It's just sad that a lot of this is gone. And I know it's like a high, I guess, economical money maker that would be for the county or city or whoever owns I think the county owns it, but, you know, preserve some something of the legacy of where we came from, and I'd like to see them save the building I, you know, just for future generations does, because also it's the center, the core to me, the center of Austin right there. I remember being able from where I lived, right there, block away, I could get anywhere in Austin in 20 minutes. I can't even get out of my own neighborhood in 20 minutes nowadays. This is traffic, traffic, traffic, and it's, it's just crazy. But I feel like I, I was very fortunate to be raised in the core central Austin. I mean, I was, I could go downtown, I could walk home, you know, I didn't never have to, because it was always a cab somewhere, you know, even growing up, you know, I was tease people and say, I laugh about it. So yeah, when Sixth Street was popular, and that was around the time I was, you know, going out and stuff, I said, never had to worry about getting home. Go ahead, do this walk to the corner, and there was a Roy's taxi, and they all knew where I lived, so I just hop in the cab and get home safely. But you know, it's just like my daughter now. You know, she's in her late 20s, and you know, she talks about wanting to go out, and I worry a lot because I'm like sixth street, not sixth street like it used to be. You know, Austin is not Austin like it used to be. And like I said, I understand the change, but save and preserve a little bit of what used to be, you know, it's just, you know, I would like to see them save it and create something that gives back and has A reflection of what was.

Brittany Mendez 3:42:39

And so that was like, more on the preservation side of it, but I guess like to like, simply, like, you know, what does palm school mean to you? Like, Oh, it was a

Teresa Velasquez 3:42:53

place where, I mean, my life was enriched by the things I learned there and the experiences that I had there, you know, was a wholesome place where, you know, I could play safely, I could meet friends. I mean, like I mentioned, I still have that same core group of friends that I developed at second grade, and have had all of these years. I'll be 64 this year, and that's a long time to have like best friends that you know are going to be there. You know, we've been through marriages, divorces, deaths and and

you know our parents now are aging, and she lost her father, and I lost my mother, but we're there through thick and thin. I remember when she was having her children, you know, she, she had her first child. You know, one of my best friends had her first child. We were in high school and and, you know, she struggled through sometimes, you know, financially, and it was just like we were there for each other, and we continue to be there for each other. And I think it came from having that core sense of being a really good friend, even from way back. And it's just, it's just awesome, like, you know, like I said, I could go without seeing somebody for a long time, but I bet if I ran into them, we'd probably stand and talk for hours. And, you know, I have one friend in particular that I'm thinking of that I haven't talked to in a long time. But I said, you know, I think to myself, if I was just to message her on because we found each other on Facebook, I said, if I messaged her, I bet we could carry a correspondence for a good while, because we have some some of the same experiences and memories from our time at Palm and and, you know, even just in the community too, just, you know, we went to the same church, our parents, you know, knew each other. And it's just, and it's just amazing that you grow up with those same experiences and the same core values, and you stay connected, like I said, you know, even with the church, like we went to school, but we also went to church together, and we can go to church now. And, you know, see our same friends. I have another, another dear friend that was in Girl Scouts with me. And we try to get together. Her birthday and my birthday are on the same month and a few days apart, and we try to get together and celebrate our birthdays. And she came from a very struggling family that, I mean, I don't know how, but her parents put all of them through, through school, and they've all become very successful, and they lived, you know, in the community and and I admire, you know, the the commitment that their parents had to providing their all of them, to get their education and be supportive as a family. And we're very close that her brother and my brother were roommates at one time, and, you know, they consider my brother their brother. And, you know, like, like, I know they, they'll, they're there in a heartbeat, you know, and they're very caring and and considerate and respectful and and I just, I appreciate the fact that we've stayed friends, and have those friendships from from way, way, way, way early on.

Brittany Mendez 3:46:18

Yeah, well, is there anything else that you want to add about palm school or anything like that? Or say,

3:46:26

um,

Teresa Velasquez 3:46:28

yeah. I mean, like I said, I just, I feel like it's an integral part of the community because of its location in proximity to the core, like right right at i, 35 and East First Street. I mean, well, Cesar Chavez. I still call it first street. I mean, that's like, to me, East Cesar Chavez is like Main Street. It's the thoroughfare from east to west. And to me, that's like Central, like, right, right the cross point of I, 35 and and Cesar Chavez. I mean, that's like, X marks the spot, like, right in the central part of of Austin. To me. I mean that to me, like, if I looked at a map, I would pinpoint that spot where the school is as the central point of Austin. And why not preserve it? You know, like, like the star on a map that shows Austin, representing Texas. That's the way I see Palm School representing Austin. It's just right there in the core, central part of town.

Brittany Mendez 3:47:38

Yeah, that's so, yeah,

Teresa Velasquez 3:47:42

I don't know if that makes sense. But that's, that's the way I see it.

Brittany Mendez 3:47:45

No, yeah. That makes a lot of sense..yeah.

Teresa Velasquez 3:47:49

And I was just lucky that. I mean, my house was, like, I probably was the only student that lived that close. I mean, there was a couple other kids that lived, you know, like, the the Solis family, but like, I feel like I was lucky because I live so close to the school, you know, it was right there, I could probably run home and eat lunch at home and go back, but, you know, I never did. But you know, I was just really lucky to be raised in close, such close proximity to the school. Well, that's nice. And I really appreciate you all you know, going through and putting all of this together, because I know it was a lot of work and a lot of collaboration with Travis County and with the university to get these done, but I can't wait to see all of them and see everybody's stories. I think that's gonna be a whole nother. Wow, wow. Moment to get to see it all together. Yeah,

Brittany Mendez 3:48:52

yeah, I'm gonna Okay, so I'm gonna stop the recording right now. One second. Okay, so this concludes the photo of us with the rest of Velasquez on palm school and so, yeah, so I'm going to stop this recording now. I.