



La Voz de Esperanza

December 2018/January 2019

Vol. 31 Issue 10

Editor: Gloria A. Ramírez

Design: Elizandro Carrington

Contributors

Elliot Benjamin, Sarah Bergenfield,
Victor M. Córtez, Tammy Gómez,
Jan Olsen, Ire'ne Silva

La Voz Mail Collective

Alicia Arredondo, Juan Díaz,
Pauline Enriquez, Josie Martin, Ray McDonald,
Angie Merla, Katy Morales, Edie Ortega,
Ray & Lucy Pérez, Blanca Rivera,
Mary Agnes Rodríguez, Yolanda Salazar,
Mike Sánchez, Vanessa M. Sandoval,
Guadalupe Segura, Roger Singler,
Cynthia Spielman, D.L. Stokes,
Margaret Valdez, Helen Villarreal

Esperanza Director

Graciela I. Sánchez

Esperanza Staff

Elizandro Carrington, Yaneth Flores,
Sarah Gould, Eliza Pérez, Paul Plouf,
Kristel Orta-Puente, Natalie Rodríguez,
René Saenz, Susana Segura, Amelia Valdez

Conjunto de Nepantleras

—Esperanza Board of Directors—

Norma Cantú, Rachel Jennings,
Amy Kastely, Jan Olsen, Ana Lucía Ramírez,
Gloria A. Ramírez, Rudy Rosales, Tiffany Ross,
Lilliana Saldaña, Nadine Saliba,
Graciela I. Sánchez, Lillian Stevens

- We advocate for a wide variety of social, economic & environmental justice issues.
- Opinions expressed in La Voz are not necessarily those of the Esperanza Center.

La Voz de Esperanza

is a publication of

Esperanza Peace & Justice Center

922 San Pedro, San Antonio,

TX 78212

210.228.0201

www.esperanzacenter.org

Inquiries/Articles can be sent to:

lavoz@esperanzacenter.org

Articles due by the 8th of each month

Policy Statements

* We ask that articles be visionary, progressive, instructive & thoughtful. Submissions must be literate & critical; not sexist, racist, homophobic, violent, or oppressive & may be edited for length.

* All letters in response to Esperanza activities or articles in La Voz will be considered for publication. Letters with intent to slander individuals or groups will not be published.

When the Calaveras issue of November comes around each year—somehow, we wind up fitting together all the calavera poems and literary ofrendas to our dearly departed into that special issue. Inevitably, having cast the net wide and beaten the bushes to find all the calaveristas who might possibly write a calavera or even a literary ofrenda—I will get some late arrivals for the Calavera issue with profuse apologies and the hope that these late escritos might be snuck into the December/January issue of La Voz, if not the November issue.

As it happens, the December/January issue is perfect for orphaned calaveras and literary ofrendas looking for a new home. It's perfect because the issue is about endings (like death) and beginnings (like rebirth and resurrection).

When Tammy Gomez emailed *Sliding on mute: a sonata for Botham Jean* with the short note: *Thanks for your consideration. Gloria had invited me to submit something. It may be too late.* I wondered why she labeled it—for DDLM. But, of course, for Día de los muertos! We had run out of room when it arrived and it wound up in the December 18/January 19 issue. We were to find out that a significant ruling would come down by the end of November in the Jean Botham case. Had the writing made it into the Calaveras issue, it would not have been as timely!

So it happened with a number of poems and calaveras that they made their way into the December 18/January 19 issue to end the year or begin anew. It is as if each poem talked about the past and death or about renewal and resurrection. As this issue begins and ends each poem, calavera, obituary, article, or ofrenda seems to give tribute to an ending, destruction, or death and or resurges with some hope as Ire'ne Silva's poem does when it wraps up the issue with *Nextpuah, we many weep—but even our ashes will sing!*

I want to thank everyone who made this issue possible simply by sending in your poem, article or musing. Especially at this time of year, after Peace Market, La Voz seems like an impossible task but buena gente like you make it possible to put out yet another end of year issue. Heartfelt thanks to all and I wish a better New Year for us all!

Finally, I wish to express my thoughts on the passing of our dear friend, Ruth Lofgren who always had a spark of curiosity in her eye and a willingness to learn more. At 100, she was still questioning her being and her place in this world and beyond. She never lost her sense of childhood wonder. May Ruth rest in the power of the universe.

—Gloria A. Ramirez, editor of *La Voz de Esperanza*

Beware of Answered Prayers

The past:
more present to me now
than I would like.
A function of my advanced years?
“At least,” you say
“you still remember.”
Luckier than some
whose memories have frayed
like fabric on chairs
the cats have worried
beyond repair.
But I want some people back:
my son Martin and Joy
my dearest friend.

I am not greedy,
just these two for starts.
And what would they
make of me?
An old woman
with so much to tell
them,
and they, still young,
impatient
to move on with the
promise
“We'll get back to you.”

—Marilyn Wallner



Artwork: Remedios Varo

ATTENTION VOZ READERS: If you have a mailing address correction please send it to lavoz@esperanzacenter.org. If you want to be removed from the La Voz mailing list, for whatever reason, please let us know. La Voz is provided as a courtesy to people on the mailing list of the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center. **The subscription rate is \$35 per year (\$100 for institutions).** The cost of producing and mailing La Voz has substantially increased and we need your help to keep it afloat. To help, send in your subscriptions, sign up as a monthly donor, or send in a donation to the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center. Thank you. -GAR

VOZ VISION STATEMENT: La Voz de Esperanza speaks for many individual, progressive voices who are gente-based, multi-visioned and milagro-bound. We are diverse survivors of materialism, racism, misogyny, homophobia, classism, violence, earth-damage, speciesism and cultural and political oppression. We are recapturing the powers of alliance, activism and healthy conflict in order to achieve interdependent economic/spiritual healing and fuerza. La Voz is a resource for peace, justice, and human rights, providing a forum for criticism, information, education, humor and other creative works. La Voz provokes bold actions in response to local and global problems, with the knowledge that the many risks we take for the earth, our body, and the dignity of all people will result in profound change for the seven generations to come.