

al Farewell



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
ANA E. SANDOVAL
CITY COUNCILWOMAN
DISTRICT 7

To the family of Rita Vidaurri:

Rita's passing marks the end of an era. Era La Calandria, a trailblazer, a beloved queen from San Antonio's westside. She brought verve and dynamism to every stage she graced. When I heard that she grew up boxing, I wasn't surprised; her singing had already knocked me off my feet—visualizing her as a boxer just seemed fitting.

You are in my thoughts,

Yours in public service,
Ana E. Sandoval

Missing my best friend, Rita

I met Rita, La Calandria, a couple of years ago while attending a performance by Las Tesoros del Westside at the Rinconcito de Esperanza. Later on, she and I became the best of friends. My mom, Carmelita, had passed away before I met Rita and then later my husband, Jim, also passed away. I was very lonely and depressed and so was Rita.

She became like a mother to me. She would always worry about me and everyone else and would call me to make sure I got home okay. We would attend events day and nights, go home, then talk all night over the phone then be ready for breakfast the next morning. And, to church we'd go on every Sunday at San Martin de Porres.

Rita would drive herself everywhere until she got sick and couldn't drive anymore at the age of 94. At church one day she saw Albino Alonzo, who is a musician that plays at the Flor de Chiapas Restaurant on Bandera Rd. every Tuesday and Thursday mornings. I invited Rita to go join him and the other musicians. Rita told me: I've known Albino all my life! So, I told her: "Let's go! You sing and I'll dance!" We did and everyone enjoyed our performance. The word got around and more people came to the restaurant on Tuesdays and Thursday mornings. We had a lot of fun and enjoyed it very much. It was good therapy for the both of us. It took some of our depression and loneliness away.

Then, one day, Rita invited Hector Saldaña from the Express-News to the restaurant and the following week he brought his photographer with him. He liked it so much that we came out in a front-page article of the Express-News, [*Classic Mexican ballads still mainstay of San Antonio café*, Thursday, February 25, 2016]. We thank you, Hector, with all our heart because you made us so very happy.

I miss you a lot, Rita. Vaya con Dios, my friend.

—*Maria Velásquez Miller*

P.S. Thank you Rita for all the good memories



Rita surrounded by friends and musicians at Flor de Chiapas Restaurant.



Hector Saldaña with Rita at Flor de Chiapas Restaurant located on Bandera Rd.



Maria Velásquez Miller dances to the music at Flor de Chiapas Restaurant.