



# La Voz de Esperanza

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- 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

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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 Letters with intent to slander individuals or groups will not be published.



Las Tesoros at Paseo in 2018, L to R: Rita Vidaurri, Beatriz Llamas & Blanca Rodríguez

**Ten years** have passed since the Esperanza Center began celebrating the Westside of San Antonio with the annual *Paseo Por El Westside*. It began as an observance of *Preservation Month* celebrated in May on a nationwide basis to promote historic places for the purpose of instilling national and community pride, promoting heritage tourism and show the socio-economic benefits of historic preservation. Historically, the observance did not include communities of color except as they fit into the American history narrative, but in recent years neighborhoods

like the Westside of San Antonio have awakened to the fact that our places matter, too!

Since *Paseo* began we have gone through many changes. The *Rinconcito de Esperanza* at 816 S. Colorado St. that originally included *Casa de Cuentos*, *Casita* and *Ruben's Ice House* has undergone major renovations in each building. In addition, a new compressed earth block building completed in 2017 now serves as the new home of *MujerArtes*, Esperanza's clay arts cooperative. *Ruben's Ice House* will undergo more changes as it transforms into San Antonio's *Museo del Westside* planned for next year. (see article pgs. 7-9).

Likewise, the future bodes well for other sites like *Giovanni's Pizza*, 913 S. Brazos, that was willed to non-profit groups in the Westside including Esperanza that are now planning for a food coop there that will offer vecinos of the Westside healthy and affordable food. And, let's not forget the continuing renovations at *Lerma's*, 1612 N. Zarzamora St., that is now listed on the *National Register of Historic Places*. It will soon return as a venue for the preservation of conjunto music and much more.

Even though we emphasize the preservation of places during *Preservation Month*, they can not be separated from the people that made them historic or culturally relevant. This year we will endure the absence of *La Calandria*, Rita Vidaurri of *Las Tesoros de San Antonio*, who passed into spirit in January, 2019. Her presence at the *Rinconcito* was there from the beginning and she will always be a part of us. Now only two *Tesoros* are left to celebrate *Paseo*: Blanca Rodríguez, aka *Blanca Rosa* and Beatriz Llamas, aka *La Paloma del Norte*. Janet Cortez, aka *Perla Tapatia*, who passed in 2014 also left an indelible mark as one of *Las Tesoros* and as a musical star of the Westside.

Returning to *Paseo* in 2019 will be the *Conjunto Heritage Taller* with a new generation of musicians, *Panfilo's Güera* fiddling her way into our hearts, *Azul de Noche Azul de Esperanza* and Juan Tejeda—all of whom present and preserve our musical traditions.

Ten years ago, *Paseo* began as a way to stop the demolition of *Casa Maldonado*, aka the *Pink Building* at 1312 Guadalupe St. The push to preserve that building was born in the memory of a great loss when in 2002, the historic *La Gloria* was demolished. *Paseo* also began validating Westside lives through the exhibition, *En Aquellos Tiempos: Fotohistorias del Westside* with photographic banners depicting the daily life of Westsiders exhibited throughout Westside streets and walls. Tours of the Westside with pláticas on the people, the architecture and historical events that make up the Westside began with *Paseo*. *Cuentos, juegos*, childhood memories and activities—all, make up *Paseo Por El Westside*. Our annual celebration of goes well beyond preserving buildings. Join us in 2019 as we celebrate the 10th anniversary of *Paseo* and the historic Westside of San Antonio.—Gloria A. Ramirez, editor

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**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.